

**EC Partner**

Sudan centre for  
educational research

**Facts and Figures**

- Project duration:  
2008-2010
- EC contribution:  
€270 000 (73% of  
total)



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

# Civil Society

## Enhancing the participation of students and youth in decision making and civil society in Sudan

*The EU-funded project aims at increasing political participation of the youth in Sudan and influencing policies favouring youth participation in the political process.*

**Context**

Youth in Sudan are often marginalized and deprived. Their lack of involvement in the political process is a crucial problem and violence is affecting university campus. Youth are unaware of democratic values and practices due to decades of authoritarian rules, also in the education sector. The project seeks to change mentalities and practices by raising awareness of youth, university staff and political leaders about the need to involve youth in decision-making processes at all levels.

**Objectives**

- To influence policies favouring youth participation in the political process
- To raise youth awareness about the vital link between engaged citizenry and a healthy democracy
- To build capacities of youth organisations to increase their participation in civil society

**Impact**

- Youth are aware of participatory mechanisms and are more involved in decision-making: 2 national conferences gathering youth, political leaders and media
- Violence on university campus decreases thanks to increased knowledge and skills to resolve conflicts peacefully: 4 training sessions in 8 universities; 10 youth trained as trainers in 8 universities
- Youth organisations and student unions are equipped with skills and knowledge to interact with local authorities and to engage in their local communities

### **Awareness-raising to promote youth participation and tackle violence on university campuses**

The project targets students and staff of 8 universities both in the capital, Karthoum, and in the province.

It organises a **massive awareness-raising campaign** addressing not only youth and students but also media, political leaders and civil servants of the Ministry of High Education.

One of the objectives is to make these groups aware of the positive role youth can play in society and why it is important to let them have a role in decisions and policies that affect them.

Several activities are proposed to serve this purpose:

- **Research:** there is little information at present on attitudes, values, knowledge and skills of university students. Research work focuses on youth disinterest in politics and roots of violence in universities, which is an issue particularly neglected by political leaders. A particular attention is also given to **gender** as women make up for more than 50% of the student population, and for the first time ever a young women has been appointed director of the Khartoum University's Student Union.

The project designs a wide range of research tools like questionnaires and structured interviews and **uses existing materials developed under other projects** e.g. the US-funded Bridge project, and translates them into Arabic.

- **2 national conferences:** besides gathering people from different sectors e.g. media, universities, ministries, these conferences addressed issues never addressed in public before: prevalence of youth violence on university campuses, political participation of youth and experiences of these issues in neighbouring developing countries and in developed countries.
- **face-to-face discussions** with major political leaders to raise their awareness and devise possible actions like including civic education in schools and university curricula and measures to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- **information sessions** in the 8 target universities on civic education and voting.