

Sudanese Organization for Nonviolence and Development (SONAD)

PO. Box 6426, Khartoum

Telephone: +249 155144977, Fax: +249 915544988

Web site: www.sonadsudan.org



Participants of Urban Community Dialogue workshop on Referendum, Khartoum

Report of a 3-day Urban Community Dialogue on 2011 Referendum organized in Khartoum 14-16th August, 2010 in collaboration with Concordis International and funded by the European Commission

Reported by

Mr. Moses Monday John, Mr. Desmond Edward and Mr. Paul Genaro Solomon

Executive Summary

Sudanese Organization for Nonviolence and Development (SONAD) in collaboration with Concordis International and the European Commission organized from 14-16th August 2010 a 3-day workshop on Urban Community Dialogue on the 2011 Referendum in Khartoum. The total of 25 participants (10 female, 15 male) attended the workshop. 15 participants come from the local Urban Community of Northern Sudan residing in Khartoum, representing the ethnic groups of Rezegat, Fur, Zagawa, Bagara, Hawosa, Jaliya, Dongala, Jawaesima, Rekabea, Nuba and Hawazima. 10 come from Southern Sudanese Communities residing in the Greater Khartoum State representing ethnic groups of Dinka, Bari, Odthoho, Lokoya & Moru. Participants were comprised of Community leaders, Religious Leaders, Youth & Women and Internally Displaced Persons.

The workshop discussed potential risks and challenges Urban Communities face ahead of 2011 referendum, agreed on challenges, developed activities for the communities to undertake to mitigate conflicts in the context of the referendum and developed a number of recommendations to other peace stakeholders to contribute to peaceful referendum. Concordis International was represented by Mr. Mohamed Musa, the Program Manager, and the closing ceremony was officiated by Mr. Abdul Azim Mohamed of the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), Khartoum State who hailed the role being played by SONAD since 2004 in promoting dialogue and peaceful co-existence among the Sudanese People. He urged participants to be agents of peace in the community.

Participants' expectations

Participants' were led through a process to share their expectations for the workshop and the following are their responses:

- To understand what the Referendum is all about
- Identify crucial challenges ahead of 2011 referendum
- Evaluate whether South Sudan would be able to rule itself in the case of independency
- Give unity of Sudan a one more chance
- Will referendum really take place? What will be the choice of the people of Southern Sudan?
- What will happen to the Internally Displaced Persons from the South currently living in Khartoum in case the South votes for independency?
- Understand the role of the community in mitigating conflicts in light of referendum
- What role can UN Agencies play to ensure successful referendum
- Will there be trade between the North and South in case of secession?
- The workshop will be closed before 3-days
- Implications of referendum on Darfur conflict and other parts of Sudan

Golden Rules for the workshop Community

Participants agreed on the following as guiding rules for the workshop community:

- Be open and transparent about your ideas
- Respect other's opinion
- Punctuality in all sessions
- Be loud, brief and to the point
- Switch mobile phones to silent or vibration
- Observe confidentiality
- Keep the environment clean

Workshop objectives: *workshop objectives were then introduced to the participants as follows;*

1. Engage leaders from the minority communities and their neighbors in the urban capitals of the North and the South of Sudan (i.e. Khartoum and Juba) to identify and agree upon the risks and challenges that they face in connection with the referendum and its potential outcomes.
2. Build consensus across these minority communities on what measures should be taken to ensure that their needs are met and their rights are upheld, whatever the outcome of the referendum.
3. Develop a set of activities that communities in the urban areas can undertake ahead of time to prevent and manage potential inter-communal conflict associated with the different post referendum scenarios and articulate which support they would like from others, e.g. governments or international actors, in order to implement them effectively.
4. Compile recommendations, developed by the minority urban communities in conjunction with their neighbors, stipulating specific policies to be included in post referendum arrangements (for either scenario) which would meet their needs and ensure their human security. Disseminate these recommendations to the CPA parties and other stakeholders.



Mr. Mohamed Musa from the Concordis addressing the opening session

Referendum Context

After the opening session and drawing participants' expectations and fears for the workshop, a session was introduced to understanding referendum with reference to regional and international context. The People of East Timor in 1999 exercised the right to

self determination whether to unite with Indonesia or to separate, and the process was organized by United Nations mission in Eastern Timor (UNAMET), whose responsibility was to supervise the registration, campaign, voting as well as counting activities.

In 1993 the people of Eritrea conducted a referendum case with one question that required "yes" or "no" to choose whether they wanted Eritrea to be independent or remain part of Ethiopia. The referendum in Eritrea was organized and undertaken by an independent referendum commission, and it was observed by the United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Referendum in Eritrea who sent out 120 international observers to ensure that the referendum was conducted freely and fairly. One challenge faced by Eritrean in Ethiopian was the forced repatriation and the consequence of loosing their citizenship after the referendum which resulted into independency of Eritrea.

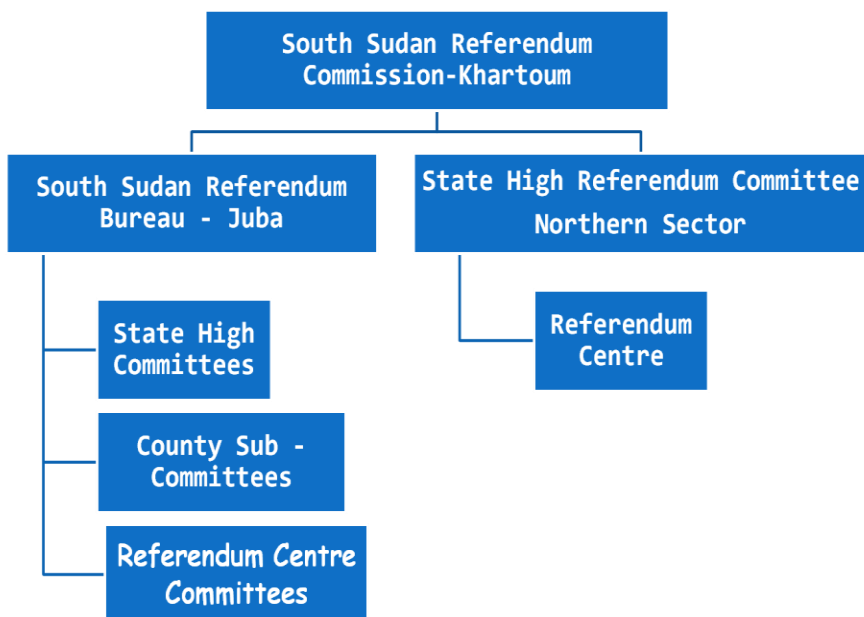
Other examples of referendum in Africa was the referenda of Kenya held in November, 2005 and August, 2010 on the New Constitution Reform. In July 2005 Uganda also exercised referendum on multi – party system.

This session was meant to introduce participants to wider understanding of referendum conducted in other countries.

Session on the legal frame work of referendum

A presentation was made about the legal framework of the 2011 referendum starting with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), Interim National Constitution of the Sudan, South Sudan Interim Constitution and the Referendum Act 2009.

THE DIAGRAMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE SOUTHERN SUDAN FERENDUM COMMISSION



South Sudan Referendum commission:

It is an independent body responsible for the regulations and supervision. The South Sudan Referendum commission (SSRC) has 9 members (chairperson, deputy chairperson and 7 members). they are appointed by the president as well as approved by the simple majority of national legislature.

South Sudan Referendum Commission:

This commission is based in Juba and its responsibility is direct supervision of all state high referendum committee in Southern Sudan, it's responsible for all operational and logistical arrangements in southern Sudan

The Southern Sudan referendum Bureau:

The bureau has 5 members (chairperson and 4 members). The chairperson is also the deputy chairperson of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission.

Key steps in the referendum process:

- Referendum Act 2009
- Establishment of Southern Sudan Referendum commission
- Development of Referendum Rules and Regulations
- Voter registration
- Exhibition of Referendum register
- Objections/appeals to register
- Polling, counting and tabulation
- Announcement of results
- Appeals

Group Discussion

What are your expectations and fears about the upcoming referendum and post referendum situation and its impact on your lives?

Participants' responses:

Below are what participants reported as fears and expectation about the forthcoming referendum in January, 2011 and how they see it will have impacts on their lives:

Risks

- Time constraints to conduct referendum on time
- Arrests as a result of campaigning for separation in Northern Sudan
- Lost of citizenship incase the result of the referendum is secession and its impact of the live and properties of Southern Sudanese in the North.
- Nomads may loose green pastures for their livestock especially in border areas
- Lost of lives and properties from both sides
- Conflict and war will erupt again
- Fear that the conflict in Darfur may escalate
- Security and safety of minority communities in both Southern and Northern Sudan.

- Delay in formation of Abyei referendum Commission and its effects on the 2011 referendum
- Reckless and conflicting media messages about the upcoming referendum and its process and results
- Southerners will fight themselves over power and resources
- Presence of Militia and armed Groups
- Working officials from minority groups may lose their job
- Fear of Intimidations

Challenges

- Delay tactics in the referendum processes
- Freedom of expression to freely campaign for separation in the North and Unity of Sudan in the South
- Lack of funds for civic and voter education
- How to avoid corruption and fraud before during and after the referendum.
- Lost of citizenship and its implications on the lives of the minority communities
- South North Borders Un-demarcated
- Abyei referendum Commission not formed.
- Not many NGOs in the North are interested in carrying out awareness raising on referendum issues
- Is Southern Sudan ready and had the ability to be an independent state?
- If Southern Sudan separates it may lead to fragmentation of Sudan
- Negotiation of the Nile water and oil agreements/ contracts may lead to disagreements between NPC & SPLM
- The political and economic situation will be un-stable and the market prices will rise
- In case of separation what will happen to pensions' funds??
- There are southerners in the north who have lived here long time and they have intermarry

Day Two:

The facilitator asked the participants to sit in pairs to do recap of what happened and was discussed in day one of the workshop. The following are their responses:

- The comprehensive peace agreement and the experience of other countries that had referendum
- We talked about the referendum Act 2009 in the Sudan, we heard the experience from Asia (Indonesia – East Timor) as well as the referendum of Eritrea from Ethiopia also in Kenya we have referendum on the constitution.
- Talked about participants' fears and challenges associated with 2011 referendum
- Opening remarks
- Getting to know one another
- Developed golden rules for the workshop community

Session two:

Brain storming about what is violence or what comes to your mind when you hear the word violence?

- Disagreement
- Hatred
- Injustice
- Insult
- Dehumanizing others
- War and its outcomes (displacement, rape)
- It's any act against humanity
- Discrimination

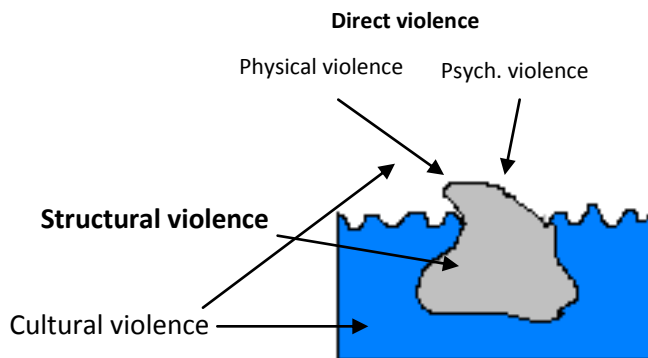
Johan Galton divides violence into two main things:

Direct Violence:

He divides direct violence into (physical violence and psychological violence)

Indirect Violence:

The indirect violence also divided into (structural violence and cultural violence) he also said that the cultural violence can be the worst type of violence because communities protect it.



What is Nonviolence?

- It's a means by which to overcome violence
- It's a means by which we persuade oppressors
- Resolve conflicts nonviolently
- Culture of peace
- Creates common bond
- Acceptance of others
- Love
- Forgiveness
- Equity and equal trial
- Peaceful ways to achieve rights
- Tolerance

- Resistance to injustice

Different definitions of nonviolence

Nonviolence is a difficult concept to define. It is like the word democracy. There are many different ways of looking at democracy. We can see that from participants' many different thoughts about nonviolence. Nonviolence was like wise defined by different scholars as detailed below:

Stellan Vinthagen presented his PhD dissertation in October 2005 – the first one on nonviolence in Sweden. His definition of nonviolence is: Without violence + against violence = nonviolence. To Stellan Nonviolence is a Struggle against violence without use of violence.

Gene Sharp, an American researcher, is perhaps the one in the world who has studied the methods of nonviolence the most. He sees nonviolence as a method, nothing else. He identifies 198 different methods of nonviolence. He writes: "Nonviolent struggle is identified by what people do, not by what they believe in."

Mohandas Gandhi saw nonviolence as much more than just a method. He had a religious belief in the power of nonviolence to transform human hearts.

He said: "Whenever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love."

Principles of Nonviolence

The heart is the symbol for our values and our convictions. It is with our hearts we feel connectedness, empathy and love to our fellow human being. Nonviolence principles often govern our actions. The following are some of the principles of Nonviolence developed by nonviolence movement which says;

- ♥ Search for the centre of conflicts – Nonviolence calls for action, not for passivity. We are called to act where people are suffering under violence, oppression and injustice.
- ♥ Show respect for you adversaries – Treat all people in a conflict as equals regardless of their ethnic, sex or religious background.
- ♥ Remember that everyone can change, and that there is something good in all people.
- ♥ Ends and means have to be compatible, e.g. if we want peace we have to pursue it in a peaceful way. *Gandhi said that peace is the road not only the goal.*
- ♥ If suffering is unavoidable, take it on yourself, rather than harming someone else. The cycle of violence stops with me.
- ♥ No one has monopoly on the Truth – The challenge is to bring our own and our adversaries' truths together.

Methods of Nonviolence

The methods of nonviolence can be used in everyday life to transform injustice and provide nonviolent solutions to the problems. It can be used to challenge the unjust laws and rules of the society and act where things are going wrong. Gene Sharp has constructed three main categories for the methods of nonviolence:

1. Protests and Persuasion Demonstrations

This is where people or individuals use protest letter to express their dissatisfaction about unjust decision taken or against a change of unjust laws or policies. Peaceful demonstrations are typical example of protest. Like the demonstration organized by the opposition political parties on 7th December, 2009 in Khartoum demanding democracy, full implementation of CPA and approval of referendum Act and other laws. The result was that on 13th December, 2009 the referendum Act for South Sudan, Abyei and the popular consultation for the Southern Blue Nile and Southern Kordufan was passed all in one day.

2. Non-cooperation

This can take many forms such as Boycott or to refuse to buy a commodity or a service to show dissatisfaction with the one selling it. An example is the boycott of South African products during the apartheid regime. *Strike* or to refuse to work and *Political non Cooperation* are examples of non cooperation.

3. Intervention

Blockades to place your body in the way of something. Examples are the Israelis and Internationals who get in the way of Israeli bulldozers that are about to demolish Palestinian homes.

The methods of nonviolence have been used all around the world to build up more justice and democracy. In Sudan October revolution of 1964 and April 1986 uprising were typical examples of nonviolence protest and persuasion. The October revolution and the April uprising brought down the two dictators of Abdu and Nimeri respectively and subsequently, Sudan set a democratic system of Governance.

Nonviolence is not only about resistance against injustice and oppression in the world. It is also about building up and supporting good systems and initiatives. Gandhi called it the constructive program.

Reactions from participants:

Participants spent much time discussing how violence has taken deep roots into Sudanese Society and its structures to the point that people are made to believe that violence can bring results and whoever, claims rights nonviolently is considered working against the state. This point was clarified by facilitators that Nonviolence is like a small seed that needs time to grow for others to see and appreciate. Nonviolence accepts the fact that everyone can change and there are many examples to cite about how Sudanese people used Nonviolence and were able to achieve and meet their aspirations as cited under methods of Nonviolence. Nonviolence can therefore bring good results with less expenses of lost of life, effort and money. It starts with oneself and conviction to refuse violence

Methods of Nonviolence

The methods of nonviolence can be used in everyday life to transform injustice and provide nonviolent solutions to the problems. It can be used to challenge the unjust laws and rules of the society and act where things are going wrong. Gene Sharp has constructed three main categories for the methods of nonviolence:

1. Protests and Persuasion.

Demonstration:

This is where people or individuals use protest letter to express their dissatisfaction about unjust decision taken or against a change of unjust laws or policies. Peaceful demonstrations are typical

example of protest. Like the demonstration organized by the opposition political parties on 7th December, 2009 in Khartoum demanding democracy, full implementation of CPA and approval of referendum Act and other laws. The result was that on 13th December, 2009 the referendum Act for South Sudan, Abyei and the popular consultation for the Southern Blue Nile and Southern Kordufan was passed all in one day.

2. Non-cooperation

This can take many forms such as Boycott or to refuse to buy a commodity or a service to show dissatisfaction with the one selling it. For example the boycott of South African products during the apartheid regime. *Strike* or to refuse to work and *Political non cooperation* are examples of non cooperation.

3. Intervention

Blockades to place your body in the way of something. For example Israelis and internationals that gets in the way of Israeli bulldozers that are about to demolish Palestinian homes.

The methods of nonviolence have been used all around the world to build up more justice and democracy. In Sudan October revolution of 1964 and April 1986 uprising were typical examples of nonviolence protest and persuasion. The October revolution and the April uprising brought down the two dictators of Abdu and Nimeri respectively and subsequently, Sudan set a democratic system of Governance.

Nonviolence is not only about resistance against injustice and oppression in the world. It is also about building up and supporting good systems and initiatives. Gandhi called it the constructive program.

Session Three:

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

This session was introduced with a brainstorming session (what comes to your mind when you hear the word human rights);

Participant's responses:

- Right to life
- Right to own any other country identity
- Equality among the law
- Right to movement
- Elimination of all kinds of discrimination

The facilitator then introduced the thirty articles of the universal declaration of human rights as adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948. Part two of the Interim National Constitution of Sudan 2005 specifically the bill of Rights was also introduced.

DISCUSSION IN PLENARY

Participants in a plenary have raised number of concerns and commented on basic rights as stipulated in the universal declaration of human rights and how it relates to the context in Sudan:

- Most of the fundamental rights are not respected in Sudan. Examples cited included the right to use public media to campaign for unity in South Sudan and separation in Northern Sudan. State own radio and TV are strictly controlled.
- Rights are subject to political incentives such as do this to us and we shall do that for you meaning rights are not seen as rights
- Freedom of movement need to be respected
- Pensioners should get their pensions if Sudan remained united or South separates
- There is no where to complain against human rights violation and whoever, raises a complain is perceived as a traitor not a nationalist
- The status of IDPs in Khartoum is unclear. Authorities should listen to IDPs and the repatriation should be voluntary
- The parties to CPA should protect the minority groups
- Both Southerners and Northerners should be allowed to freely express their opinion about the referendum options

Group discussion:

What activities can urban communities under take to prevent potential violence during referendum?

Participants' response:

- To spread culture of peace and nonviolence through awareness
- Set peace as a goal to achieve not focus only at unity or secession
- Conduct join dialogue meetings
- Involve politicians in the dialogue process as politicians are influential
- Abstain and denounce any kind of violence
- Handover criminals who may do violence to the police
- Write positive articles about the referendum in the daily Newspapers
- Compose songs that promote peaceful co-existence among Southerners and Northerners
- Encourage inter-marriage between Southerners and Northerners and vis versus
- Refute aggression
- Youth participation in development projects
- Perform other offices for southerners and northerners in both sides to ensure the protection of the properties of the citizens.

Day three:

The facilitator asked the participants to sit in pairs and discuss what we have benefited from yesterday session:

What are the mechanisms that can guarantee the referendum process and its result what so ever it will be?

- They should put indicators concerning the process and after.
- There should be jointly body from local and international to help in the process of dealing with the results.
- Lectures about referendum to enlighten the people as well as there should be a private court to deal with the offences of the referendum process.
- There should be jointly police unit from the north and the south to supervise the referendum process.
- The national organizations and other civil society organization to go the local communities to enlighten them about referendum process.
- There should be jointly body like the African union to help in the process a wearing the community on the coming referendum this may make the process easy.
- I don't know being as Southerner in the north in case of separation I don't think that there are things that can bring conflict.

Input:

I learn from your discussions that you have concern about the coming event that we are approaching, but what I want to assure you that the Sudan government and the Sudanese people's liberation movement or government of the south they are to provide security 100% to everybody in its borders.

The theater of the oppressed:

The theater of the oppressed was developed by Brazilian **Dr. Augusto Boal**. He idea is to transform the theatre by involving the audience in the theatre. This tool was used by workshop participants to play out different possible challenges communities are likely to face before, during or after the referendum and how they can intervene in stopping injustice from happening and hence contribute in mitigating conflicts.

Group's presentation:

Group one:

Group one resented a role play in the referendum centre, where a referendum officer was intimidating people on what decision to make in the referendum. In the role play there are oppressors, oppressed and the passive. The Blind man (voter) was identified as an oppressed and polling staff (2) as oppressors and the two citizens who were around at the time of the incident as passive.

Participants through the role play had a chance to practice to stop the injustice by telling the polling officer that the referendum act 2009 says that voting will be in secrecy and that intimidation is an offense. Another trial was just to ignore what the polling officer says and

to proceed a head with the processes showing that the voter knows his rights. The third intervention was to raise the issue to the high referendum authorities in the presence of the local and international observers whether its right to question the choice of the voter or not.

Facilitator input:

The theater of the oppressed is not about explaining what you know about the theatre but about doing and doing it differently to change unjust situation to a normal and hence stop injustice and violence from happening. Nonviolence is not only about knowing the different methods but its about using it .

Group two

The second group played a scenario during the campaign period where voters were again intimidated to vote for a specific option against the other. One person wanted to vote for his choice but was denied the right by member of a political party. He later was informed that his name was not on the voter registry. The second voter came and she was promised a car to vote for an option (Unity).

Participants from the role play intervened by condemning bribery and threaten to make it known if the agent insists to harass people in the referendum centre. The agent felt afraid and said this is a voluntary choice and that what he called as an incentive is to help a voter but not intended to bribe. Therefore, Voters who are influenced by the political argents were changed from being passive to positive by the audience. The person doing campaign was stopped and suspended from the centre by his boss. The police men intervened and the process was again on the right track.

Group discussion

The facilitator asked the participants to go into group of three to discuss the questions below:

1. How do you want the negotiation on post –referendum agreements to ensure rights and needs of urban communities?
2. What role can your community or organization play?
3. What do you want SONAD and other actors to do?

Group Response:

The following points are how participants would like the negotiation on post –referendum agreements to ensure rights and needs of urban communities:

- Keep citizenship or allow dual for the minority communities for atleast two years after the post referendum period.
- The negotiation should ensure that the safety and security of the Southern Sudanese in Northern Sudan and Northern Sudanese in the South including in the border States/Areas.

- Maintain the rights of the people from the minority communities to work and own properties in both the North and the South employers rights before and after the referendum.
- Allow free trade and freedom of movement between the North and the South and access for pastures for the nomads in the Border Areas.
- The South in case of separation should fairly share oil and water resources with the North
- Maintain the Sudanese Pounds as a currency in both North and South Sudan
- Negotiate how the South and North can share and protect their mutual interests regionally and international especially in the area of security and global politics
- The rights of Christians and non Muslims should be respected in the north and likewise the rights of Muslims in the South in case of unity and secession
- Pursue Development activities in the South and other marginalized Areas and ensure power and resources are equitably shared to avoid fragmentation of Sudan
- Maintain political stability
- Respect to human rights and fundamental freedoms including democracy, rule of law and good governance

What Community and Community Based Organizations can do will include:

- Awareness raising through workshops, seminars and meetings on the importance of the referendum and what communities can do to overcome possible challenges.
- Train More community and religious leaders.
- Students unions and associations should play an important role to avoid violence
- SONAD should raise more support for the communities to conduct workshops in nonviolence and peaceful referendum and promote peaceful acceptance of the referendum result.
- SONAD should Lobby and advocate for the rights of minority groups in both the South and the North and ensure that they are protected and respected whatsoever, the result of the referendum will be
- Organize public debates and a national conference for the minority communities.
- Support the local and international observers and the monitors in the referendum processes.

Recommendations for SONAD and other actors:

- Organize the conclusion workshop in Torit or Juba instead
- Organize the second referendum dialogue after eid for better participation of Muslim participants
- Support the follow up activities of the project beneficiaries
- Organize similar workshops in the Border areas before and after the referendum

- Participants agreed to meet once every month to share the progress of the workshop and how communities look at the dialogue process and bring in more recommendations for the different stakeholders.
- UN Agencies and other international organization should support the minority groups and ensure that their rights are respected.

Recommendations to CPA Partners

- Acceptance of the results
- Conduct Free and fair referendum
- Involve the international community and the civil society in the process
- Provide security during and after the referendum process
- Fair court judgment and decision on appeals
- Involve other political parties
- Stay committed to the terms of CPA
- Never go back to war

Conclusion

The workshop was concluded with closing remarks from Mr. Abdul Azim Mohamed of the Humanitarian Aid Commission who hailed the role being played by SONAD in engaging communities in a kind of what he called constructive dialogue on crucial issues such as referendum. He encouraged participants to act as peace agents in their various communities. Mean while Mr. Moses Monday the Director clearly explained the position of the organization in regards to the referendum that SONAD as a peace organization seeks not to take side on what direction the referendum will take but will rather contribute in making the referendum a peaceful exercise through timely engagement of Minority communities in discussion on possible challenges Communities are likely to face in relations to forthcoming referenda and how these challenges and potential conflicts can be mitigated a head of time.

He informed the participants that there will be a conclusion workshop in Khartoum for participants from Juba and Khartoum according to the plan and that participants recommendation to organize conclusion workshop in Torit/ Juba will be reviewed and decision will be made known about it. Its worthnoting that participants recommended that the two days conclusion workshop should be organized in Torit or Juba instead of Khartoum. All Participants then had Ramadan fatur (breakfast) together as a sign of solidarity and peaceful religious co-existence.



Participants during the Ramadan fatur in the closing session