# Between Aspiration and Reality: Digital Dialogue in Post-Conflict Sudan

**Author(s): Eilaf Salaheldeen Ahmed Mohamed**

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- **Email**: sudandemocracy@amelproject.org
- **Facebook**:https://www.facebook.com/democracyactionproject

**About the Author:** Eilaf Mohamed is a computer science student and aspiring digital governance and AI safety researcher with a background in policy advocacy, STEM education, and entrepreneurship. As part of her fellowship with AMEL, she is researching the impacts of technology on Sudanese society and the potential of technology in advancing democracy in Sudan.

# Executive Summary

Digital dialogues provide a space for citizens to actively engage in policymaking through apps, websites, and online forums, provided an enabling political environment exists. They are relevant for Sudan now because of the current displacement crisis, with 13 million people displaced both within and outside Sudan (UNHCR, 2025). They also hold promise in addressing the current lack of citizen participation in governance, tokenism, and eroded trust. Furthermore, digital dialogues can bridge the gap between local advocacy and actionable policy by strengthening public-civic partnerships. While significant barriers exist for their implementation in Sudan's context due to low digital literacy, weak institutions, and high digital authoritarianism, in this paper, we argue that these platforms, if designed and implemented correctly in a post-conflict setting with political will for change and sufficient citizen trust, can gradually establish inclusive governance and democratic norms in Sudan. We advocate for a past-conflict national digital dialogue for Sudan, focused on thematic consultations and the deliberation of national priorities. The platform must focus on inclusivity and transparency through hybrid two-tier deployment models while stressing cautious implementation to avoid failures, as a failed attempt might have a detrimental impact on public trust.

# Introduction

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its post-war roadmap, stated, "Launching an all-inclusive national dialogue in which all political and societal components participate." They further stated that "all those who adopt a patriotic stance and renounce the aggressors are welcome to join." This was presented as an essential step for fostering peace and a democratic transition (Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2025). If this vision is to succeed, there must be a practical implementation strategy for this large-scale dialogue, which we argue is best pursued through digital platforms.

As the focus of our proposed digital implementation, National Dialogues—in their conventional, non-digital form—are political procedures led by national stakeholders to reach a consensus during times of crisis, post-war scenarios, or amid wide-ranging political

transformations (Paffenholz et al., 2017). According to the Berghof Foundation, there are two goals for national dialogue:

1. National Dialogue as a mechanism for crisis management: In the context of Sudan, crisis management, particularly conflict resolution and power and wealth sharing, was the objective of most of the dialogues. Examples include the processes that led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the Darfur Peace Agreement (Abuja), and the Juba Peace Agreement (JPA).
2. National Dialogue as a mechanism for fundamental change, in which the different groups inform law and policy making by building a national consensus, such as the National Dialogue 2014 (al-Bashir initiative) or transitional reforms (2019 Draft Constitutional Charter, Post-2021 Coup Framework Agreement). This is where we see digital dialogue as useful, but through structured processes.

First, we provide the context for the dialogue and peace processes in Sudan. Second, we examine several case studies in Taiwan, Iceland, and Libya, focusing on the digital dialogue setup, process, and impact, with less attention to the different technological features of the platform. In the final part of our investigation, we contextualize the case studies for Sudan and suggest recommendations for the successful deployment of these technologies in Sudan, informed by our expert interviews.

# Problem

Although dialogues and their declared agreements are processes rather than events and can have a series of successes and failures, by tracking the history of dialogues in Sudan, it is safe to assume that most dialogues have included limited citizen participation and have either failed or been partially implemented. According to Barnes (2017), the interaction between ownership, inclusivity, legitimacy, and power dynamics is responsible for the success or failure of national dialogue. Below, we examine each of these factors to explain how they contribute to the failure.

1. Power dynamics: Here, we examine political manipulation and the lack of political will for change. It is important to highlight that the outcome of the dialogue is subject to the equilibrium of forces. The lack of public monitoring will make the governing

side dominate and control the dialogues and manipulate their direction (Saeid, 2017). One of the main critiques of the national dialogue in 2014 was the state's dominance and the reunion of the al-Bashir, al-Torabi, and al-Sadig al-Mahdi trio with a directed strategy to weaken the opposition, which started to gain momentum before the dialogue, undermining the political will for real change. This can be contextualized by looking at the refusal of the Revolutionary Front and the Communist Party to participate in the national dialogue in 2014 because they demanded proof of good intent from the government (Hamad, 2014).

2. Inclusivity refers to the broad inclusion and engagement of different groups in the dialogue. It is critical to include all power players to reach effective agreements (Servaes & Bloomfield, 2024) . Craze and Khair (2023) localized this when examining the Juba Peace Agreement and how it ended up being a power-sharing agreement between elites in contrast to what it was supposed to be. Therefore, a balance must be struck to ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders, both power players and disadvantaged communities, especially in Sudan, where the previous regime was only inclined to engage in dialogue with the opposition if they posed a military threat (Hamad, 2014).
3. Legitimacy: Here, we consider trust as a component of legitimacy. The lack of mutual trust to uphold their commitments was a real bottleneck for the successful implementation of agreements in Sudan (Cheeseman, 2015). Game theory can provide insights into why defection is the dominant strategy. In the absence of reward or punishment, there seem to be fewer incentives for cooperation between parties and agents and a greater tendency for free-riding (Hendrycks, 2024). This was also the case in the Juba Peace Agreement (Craze and Khair, 2023).
4. Ownership: In dialogues where international actors play a role, one reason for failure is the lack of ownership and suspicion of external actors' intentions. This was evident during the 2023 conflict negotiations, the Jeddah Talks, and the Post-2021 Coup Framework Agreement. Viewing national dialogues from a liberal peace lens prioritizes the agendas and goals of external actors and therefore marginalizes local needs and priorities (Barnes, 2017; [4]).

In this study, we identified two additional problems:

1. Shallow citizen engagement: The current dialogue mechanism utilizes representation of groups rather than genuine participation. Political market theory suggests that the motives of leaders and representatives can easily diverge from those of the public (De Waal, 2019). It was also observed that while political deliberations were generally elite-captured, seats for civil society organizations and civil representation were mostly captured by the same people [5, 7]. A participatory dialogue offers a more inclusive pathway; however, the logistical barriers to large citizen engagement through deliberation pose a serious bottleneck.
2. Lack of accessibility: In addition, the lack of accessibility poses a significant challenge. The current process of national dialogue relies on face-to-face interactions and therefore poses accessibility barriers, including cost, safety, and logistics when initiating inclusive deliberative processes, which can hinder the democratic transition. Although the limited accessibility can be attributed to the closed nature of the political institutions, this study operates on the premise that meaningful reform is possible and that the institutions may over time become more open for citizen engagement. Within this context, we explore how digital dialogue platforms can provide a practical and scalable solution for accessibility constraints.

# Pathways For Harnessing Digital Dialogue In Sudan

In this study, we examine the potential usage of digital dialogue in the context of Sudan through the following policy options:

## Digital Dialogue for Building Consensus on National Priorities

Digital dialogue platforms can be used as tools to bring together different political parties, civil society groups, and minority groups, as well as to mobilize public political participation for citizens. In this study, we mainly advocate for this pathway as the most relevant in the near future, assuming an enabling political environment. While this category might overlap with the second and can be seen as a sub-goal leading to either one of them, as we will see in the case studies (Iceland’s value identification in the second constitution crowdsourcing

attempt and in vTaiwan through the proposal stage), it can serve as a stand-alone pathway for consensus building for thematic consultations, which we mainly advocate for in this paper.

## Digital Dialogue for Engaging Citizens in Constitutional Changes

This is also very relevant for Sudan, where attempts to create a permanent constitution have failed and resulted in many versions of the constitution with limited consensus [7][1]. This pathway might also be relevant to post-conflict constitutional reforms that reshape the military's role and ensure a successful democratic transition in Sudan (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). Iceland provides a notable example of this pathway. In Iceland's first constitutional crowdsourcing attempt, citizens were engaged through social media and official websites. The approved changes were discussed by the constitutional assembly and live-streamed on TV and online. Although it has received many critiques regarding its actual impact, as the final draft has not been passed, it remains an early working example of social constitutionalism (Landemore, 2015). It also laid the groundwork for the second attempt, which we discuss in the case studies. We also examine the famous example of vTaiwan, which uses a digital dialogue platform to engage citizens in executive and legislative lawmaking in Taiwan. However, we argue that this pathway requires strong institutions, sufficient resources, and high transparency, which are extremely low in the case of Sudan right now. This pathway might be plausible in the long-term future if organizational capabilities are in place.

## Digital Dialogue for Surveying Citizens on Peace Agreements

Informing political processes in conflict settings through public views can significantly increase the likelihood of a peace agreement's sustainability (Irwin et al., 2021; Warrell, 2021). The inclusivity of negotiations results in different insights into conflict drivers and increases ownership of the peace process. Peace polls in Northern Ireland provide an early working example of this. They were very effective in increasing the inclusivity of the negotiations and therefore producing successful agreements that ended the civil war (Irwin et al., 2021). The UN adopted this approach to deploy digital dialogues in Yemen, Iraq, and Libya. In the case studies we look at the Libyan example. This is extremely relevant in

[1] Bracketed numbers in the text refer to expert interviews, which are detailed in Appendix A.

Sudan, as the public has mostly been out of the loop throughout the peace negotiations. However, we found that citizen engagement in peace processes only complements the official processes, and public opinion surveys are only as strong as the trust that the population has in the system that is overlooking and conducting them, highlighting the low probability of their success in surveying public views on peace agreements, as they will only reflect the low trust in both internal and external actors [2, 5]. That being said, it is important to note that if platforms are harnessed for two-way communication, even if they only inform citizens about peace processes, they may empower them to react through various means [8].

# Case Studies

In the section below, we evaluate the process of the dialogue platforms in three structured case studies using a comparative rubric (inclusivity, accessibility, technology features, policy impact, and conflict sensitivity). The case studies were selected based on their successful implementation of digital dialogue models, as seen in Taiwan and Iceland. Additionally, the Libyan example was included to explore the dynamics of conflict settings. We also used the case studies to inform our interviews with subject matter experts, which informed the recommendations and considerations.

## vTaiwan

vTaiwan was led by g0v.tw , the Digital Ministry, and the Parliament[2] to engage citizens in decision-making on issues related to the digital economy because at that time there were no digital ministries [6]. 80% of the vTaiwan dialogue is focused on the executive branch, and 20% focuses on judicial feedback (Alte, 2018). The platform collected input from 200,000 citizens. vTaiwan was developed by g0v.tw at the request of the government after their work in engaging civil society post-Sunflower Movement, where concerns over democracy were raised with the introduced regulations on economic interaction with China. The vTaiwan process involves four stages (GOVLab, 2020). First, the proposal stage is, in theory, where citizens and civil society come into a series of online and offline hackathons to

[2] Pronounced as "gov-zero," which is a community of civic tech activists

suggest topics, but in practice the ministries are tasked with the topic suggestion (Hsiao et al., 2018; [6]). This is followed by an opinion stage in which digital platforms are harnessed to get citizens' and stakeholders' input. Next comes the reflection stage, which includes live-streamed meetings conducted for in-depth conversation. Lastly, the refraction stage is when policy recommendations are put forward to shape government action.

An important aspect of the Plois platform is engineering the process of consensus building by mapping user voting behaviors according to their agreements through the k-means algorithm, focusing on agreement rather than disagreement when viewing the statements. This is the unique element of Polis that sets it apart from social media algorithms that use attention as an optimization metric, which could expose users to similar thoughts and engage destructively with those who have opposing views (Cushing-Rodriguez, 2023). It is also worth noting that Polis does not measure quantity but rather focuses on making sense of the diversity, meaning that hundreds/thousands of identical opinions are represented as one dot, and therefore it optimizes for uniqueness (Atlee, 2018; Chien, 2018). Another Taiwanese digital dialogue platform is Join, and one major difference is its topic openness compared to vTaiwan, where citizens can propose petitions, and after 5,000 petitions, the government is inclined to respond (GOVLab, 2020; Chien, 2020). In 2017, each ministry was required to have an open government participation officer (PO) for open government participation meetings to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Join platform, but soon it was integrated with vTaiwan as well (Participedia, n.d.; [6]).

Apart from engineering consensus building, we perceive the strength of vTaiwan to be in the process, particularly the transparency it introduced to the political deliberations, the effective stakeholder management, and the deliberative nature of the process. Although vTaiwan resulted in policy change in many of the proposed topics, the main breakthrough was the increased transparency and access to information related to governmental processes, which is one of the main values of the g0v.tw community along with accountability, participation, and collaboration [6]. Despite being government-funded, vTaiwan is somewhat independent from the government as a partnership between the civic and public sectors, which increased its legitimacy. Moreover, the strategic move of giving the ministries

the role of suggesting the topic or deliberation theme ensured that the government seriously attempted to take action while not being forced to accept the dialogue in areas that are less feasible [6]. Lastly, the deliberative nature of the process generally and polis specifically, is a major factor in the vTaiwan's success by creating an environment where constructive disagreement is the norm, as it was observed that when participants vote to disagree with a statement, they often write their own statement (Atlee, 2018)

When it comes to vTaiwan drawbacks, we consider the limited dialogue topics and the lack of institutionalization to be among the most important drawbacks. The focus on technology- or digital-related and non-controversial issues seems to constrain the dialogue domain. While the strategic ambiguity was useful in the beginning, it should have laid the ground for the open proposal stage (GOVLab, 2020; [6]). The unsustainability and lack of institutionalization pose the risk of the process being changed or cancelled by future regimes (GOVLab, 2020; [6]). This is somewhat evident in the adoption of two distinct strategies adopted by the two different digital ministries for running the vTaiwan project. The first ensured that ministries actively provided topic suggestions through short feedback loops. While the second one was less restrictive, and therefore relatively fewer topics had been suggested [6]. Critiques in the literature also include the lack of consensus among ministers on its effectiveness, along with the inefficiency of consensus building—which is the core of vTaiwan—in the case of an urgent response, as it takes a long time. Additionally, while most of the consultation topics led to government actions, there are some cases where it did not translate because of contradiction with existing laws (Hsiao et al., 2018).

## Iceland

The Icelandic government, the University of Iceland, and the Citizens Foundation led the digital dialogue attempts at constitutional change during the 2018-2021 election period. Over 39,000 people visited the website and generated 1,092 debate points. It is important to note that this dialogue attempt was built on the first digital dialogue attempt in 2015, which we discussed earlier. The changes in the attempt included prioritizing support from all Icelandic political parties before initiating a new crowdsourcing attempt while also improving the methodology by introducing deliberative polling along with crowdsourcing

and ensuring the citizens are supported with information throughout the process (Lironi, 2023). The dialogue process engaged Icelandic citizens using a combination of crowdsourcing through the online debate platform Your Priorities, questionnaires, and a 300-person deliberative poll. The process was supplemented by an educational online game, Make Your Constitution, designed to improve citizens' grasp of the constitutional process. Engagement strategies also included targeted outreach initiatives on social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube (Icelandic Constitution Crowdsourcing, n.d.). The sampling strategy for the different dialogue stages varied. For example, the questionnaires randomly selected respondents from the national registry and online panel of the Social Science Research Institute, while the face-to-face deliberative poll included a representative sample of these respondents. In contrast, the crowdsourcing exercise used self-selected individuals on an open-access platform (Lironi, 2023).

Apart from constructing a dialogue in a high-stakes domain, like the national constitution, the strength of the Icelandic experience lies in its structured modes of engagement, high content moderation, and diverse partners. Having different levels and modes of engagement ensures that everyone who wants to participate gets a chance without forcing citizens to do so. The content moderation resulted in high-quality, low-toxicity content. Having multiple partners, including the government, parliament, the University of Iceland, the Citizens Foundation, and other partners, each with diverse expertise and roles, ensures successful implementation and strong legitimacy.

For its drawbacks, we believe the lack of interaction between respondents on the platform, as the responses were stand-alone, represents a drawback in the sense that it undermines the deliberative nature of the online debate platform. For the policy impact measurement, it is important to note that the process is organized for a total of seven years (2018–2025), in accordance with Article 79 of the current constitution, and requires approval from two consecutive parliaments, meaning that the formal policy change will not materialize until after 2025, which poses a barrier for our ability to assess its policy impact at this stage.

# Libya

UNSMIL, UN DPPA, Innovation Cell and Ramesh AI, the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, and Diwan (polling company) led attempts to initiate inclusive civic dialogues on the impact of civil war, ceasefire, domestic militias, international fighters, economic issues, human rights concerns, and future elections. 1000 citizens engaged in each of the five digital dialogues. The conversation started on social media, and the participants were invited to participate anonymously through the Ramesh platform. It was moderated by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General (ASRSG) and the senior-most UN Official in Libya, Stephanie Williams, which increased its legitimacy. The results were broadcast on the news channel.

In another dialogue on January 31, 2020, the ASRSG collected questions for Candidates for the Government of National Unity (GNU) in the LPDF elections, which achieved social media audiences of 1.7 million, a third of the Libyan population. The main impact of this was a relative increase in election transparency, which was a concern raised in the first series of dialogues (Irwin et al., 2021). Conflict sensitivity was evident in the process, as the platform operated on low internet bandwidth and ensured secure digital experiences in which user comments were encrypted. As a research platform, Ramesh collects user demographics, which enables a better analysis of the dialogue while also ensuring privacy.

The main drawbacks in the Libyan experience are the limited policy change as well as the limited national ownership of the process, as the platform was led by the United Nations. Regarding inclusivity, although the dialogue was in Arabic (with translation features) and was accessible through mobile phones, no more than 15% of self-identified women participated in any of the five dialogues. Moreover, Libya has an e-participation index of 0.0137, ranked 190 out of 193 globally; this means that the digital aspect of the dialogue excluded people with no internet connectivity (United Nations, 2024a).

Finally, we would like to shed light on a local example of CMI in 2023 for Sudan. The CMI–Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation used the Ramesh platform, the same platform used

by the UN in Libya, Yemen, and Iraq, to perform two rounds of dialogues between 1,000 individuals from women's networks and alliances and resistance committees to understand their priorities and build consensus among them. While it did not utilize the platform for policy change through partnership with government agencies as most of our case studies did, it harnessed the power of this technology to engage grassroots actors in a broad digital discussion, which brought some hope to the transferability of this technology to the context of Sudan (Thompson & Piirtola, 2024).

**Table 1**

*Case studies using a comparative rubric.*[3]

| Case | Inclusivity | Accessibility | Tech Features | Policy Impact | Sustainability | Conflict Sensitivity | Total (30) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Libya (Remesh AI) | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 16 |
| vTaiwan | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 20 |
| Icelandic Constitution | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 19 |

# Contextualizing Case Studies And Digital Dialogue Models For Sudan

Below, we list the considerations for the deployment of digital dialogue platforms in Sudan:

## Political Will

[3] The rubric explanation is shown in Appendix B.

Just like the previous dialogues, the lack of political will for change will hinder the translation of the digital dialogue outcomes into reality. The vTaiwan story, while primarily concerned with deliberating digital issues, illustrates how government-led digital democracy projects can successfully promote public involvement and informed regulation. However, its success might be attributed, in part, to the comparatively low political risks and the technical nature of the issues covered. Applying similar technologies to more politically sensitive issues, such as transitional justice or broader democracy reforms involving powerful actors such as the military, which are concerning for the public in Sudan, may face significant opposition due to the high perceived cost of reform, particularly if the platform's adoption is prompted by external pressure or moderate reformists ("softliners") in the post-conflict transition (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). This dynamic is especially important in Sudan, where the dangers of political punishment and the price of keeping office may prevent leaders from pursuing substantial reforms (Cheeseman, 2015). While the digital dialogue in the context of Iceland offers debates on a broader variety of themes than the case of vTaiwan, the comparison is limited. As Iceland is a well-established democracy with experience in digital deliberative dialogues, Sudan is still dealing with basic democratic issues, making the political situation and stakes quite different. This encourages careful implementation and being very transparent with the dialogue objective and ensuring citizens have realistic expectations, as a failed attempt might have a deteriorating impact on the trust level [2].

## Internet Penetration

Even if political will is established, Internet penetration is a structural barrier emerging in Sudan's digital capacity. All the examples have mostly been implemented in countries with high internet penetration relative to Sudan. In 2025 Sudan has Internet penetration of 28.7% compared to 90% in Taiwan (Freedom House, 2024a), 99% in Iceland (Freedom House, 2024b), and 88.4% in Libya

(DataReportal, 2024). During the conflict, Internet services have been inaccessible in many cities during different time intervals due to military activities, electricity outages, fuel shortages, and issues transporting gasoline and maintaining infrastructure as a result of the security situation (DataReportal, 2025). Even if internet access is available, the Internet service prices relative to the purchasing power of individuals are unbalanced, as the internet connection is unreasonably pricey. Looking ahead to a post-conflict setting, the situation is still concerning, as the current conflict has led to serious critical infrastructure damage in various cities in Sudan and a rapid decrease in foreign investment in ICT infrastructure, which suggests weak internet services. However, the huge potential of the technology to bring displaced Sudanese together and generally reduce the logistical complexities of broad negotiations suggests that instead of completely disregarding digital solutions, we use them in a hybrid format along with on-the-ground processes.

## Inclusivity

Even if internet penetration barriers are overcome, a concern we have is for digital platforms to introduce new forms of exclusion for users with low literacy and low-skilled users. Digital spaces in Sudan are already exclusive, with males constituting 72.6% of users compared to 27.4% females (DataReportal, 2025). Women and other disadvantaged communities might be among the most vulnerable; therefore, their input in policymaking is critical [1]. Moreover, when defining national priorities, it is important to consider that different communities may have divergent or conflicting interests. This is not necessarily a question of underrepresentation, assuming that these groups are represented in the dialogue platform, but rather a challenge in how the platform is designed to capture, process, and reflect such differences. Without careful consideration of feedback loops and conflict-sensitive design, broad national frameworks run the risk of overlooking local tensions and leaving too much room for policy interpretations

that fail to address the needs of vulnerable or marginalized populations [8].

## Malicious Use

Another serious concern we consider is the weaponization of these technologies by key leaders to track dissent or to fabricate false information about public opinion to crowdsource policies in their favor. Sudan has a history of digital authoritarianism, ranking third globally and first in Africa in the 2021 Access Now report (Access Now, 2022). The state attempted to control digital spheres through privacy violations, data protection, surveillance, suppression of free speech, limiting access to information, restricting Internet access, and influencing public opinion through technological and legal means (Global Voices, 2023). Both SAF and RSF have used misinformation and disinformation campaigns during the war, a tactic also seen during the 2021 coup and Elbashir regime's cyberjihad (Freedom House, 2024c). So instead of reducing the security concerns, our fear for digital dialogue platforms is increasing them. This is, of course, if no privacy concerns were put in place and data was centralized so future authoritarian regimes have the ability to use the dialogue history for suppressing the public and phishing activists [5].

Taken together, these arguments demonstrate that digital dialogue platforms in Sudan cannot be imported directly from other settings. Instead, they must be properly integrated with offline procedures, anchored in political reality, and built with protections against exclusion and authoritarian abuse. Only then can they be credible tools for inclusive post-conflict dialogue.

# Recommendations

The main condition for a successful implementation of national dialogue is a post-conflict setting with sufficient citizen trust and political will for change. With this in mind, we recommend the following:

1. Ensure inclusivity and accessibility to engage different societal components in an inclusive dialogue. This can be done through a hybrid model that complements online activities with offline deployments, especially in areas with low connectivity. It also has to be accessible for Sudan's diverse demographics, including marginalized communities through offline mode and the diaspora through online mode [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8]. Furthermore, the platform must be tailored to support dialogue in Arabic and various Sudanese languages. It is equally important to incorporate the accessibility features recommended by UNESCO to accommodate low digitally skilled and low literate individuals and people with disabilities [2, 3, 4]. Lastly, the platform must enable effective two-way communication. This involves providing citizens with ample documents and civic participation skills prior to discussions [6, 8].

**2.** Start small and local. In conflict contexts like Sudan, launching large-scale digital deliberation efforts similar to those in Iceland or Taiwan may not be practical due to lower civic literacy and fragile institutions. Instead, national dialogue should begin with localized initiatives, focusing on small-scale governance engagement, civic education, and thematic development consultations [2, 4, 5, 8]. Adopting multiple pilots and small-scale iterations before large-scale deployment for national priorities dialogue will ensure that the design aligns with users' expectations [1].

3. Assign an independent commission to oversee and host the platforms to ensure legitimacy and reduce co-option. This is informed by Sudan's history of political manipulation of public institutions [1, 4, 5, 7].

4. Establish strategic ambiguity that respects context sensitivities and builds incremental momentum. It is critical to identify sensitive issues that may limit the participation of key stakeholders [9]. The commission should be tasked with defining an acceptable range of dialogue topics, those that stakeholders are willing to engage in without jeopardizing the integrity of the process. This approach is similar to the Taiwanese model, in which government agencies choose the dialogue topic. It also corresponds to the concept of a "pact" as described by O'Donnell & Schmitter (1986), in which negotiated agreements among elites lay the groundwork for democratic transition by limiting the agenda to issues that do not threaten the core interests of powerful actors. That being said, it is crucial to ensure transparency and communicate

the dialogue domain and its scope clearly with citizens to avoid false expectations [5]. Moreover, the commission should also lay out a clear, step-by-step plan for engaging citizens in the proposal stage within the predefined domain and widen the domain in the future [4, 7].

5. Implement a structured participation model inspired by the Taiwan and Iceland cases that channels grassroots' input to inform high-level policy with experts who translate public views into legislation when possible. To reduce the risk of symbolic participation, we advocate for the following dialogue architecture:

5.1. Dialogue Phase: This phase should enable broad citizen involvement through a self-selected hybrid participation model with a special focus on local networks and grassroots.

5.2. Practical Recommendation Phase: In this phase the goal is to form representative coalitions and expert roundtables, including experts in the diaspora and civil society organizations, to translate public views into feasible recommendations for the relevant ministry, similar to the Participation Officer (PO) model in Taiwan [5, 6].

6. Engage Diverse Stakeholders: The Icelandic model proved that an inclusive governance model not only spreads ownership and prevents accusations of manipulation, but it also brings together varied skills, experiences, and resources. We propose the following model for Sudan [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8]:

6.1. Ministries and government bodies (for funding, integration and legitimacy)

6.2. Grassroots and Civil society organizations (for outreach and facilitation)

6.3. Universities and research institutions (for design and analysis)

6.4. International organizations (as technical partners).

7. Respect Privacy by Design: By drawing lessons from the Libyan experience and Sudan's own context of digital authoritarianism, we recommend utilizing data

encryption and other design principles to safeguard participant confidentiality [1, 3, 5, 6].

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# Appendix A

| No. | Interview Citation | Interviewee Name | Expertise/Role |
|---|---|---|---|
| [1] | (Anonymous, personal communication, June 25, 2025) | Anonymous | Humanitarian and Media Expert |
| [2] | (G. Abou Faycal, personal communication, June 27, 2025) | Ghea Abu Faycal | Digital transformation and E-Governance Researcher |
| [3] | (H. Altayeb, personal communication, June 30, 2025) | Huzaifa Altayeb | grassroots action and international advocacy |
| [4] | (G. Hamror, personal communication, June 30, 2025) | Dr. Gussai Hamror | Public policy and industrial policy Expert |
| [5] | (K. Dalasgard, personal communication, July 3, 2025) | Kristian Dalsgård Svendsen | Peace tech and Crisis Management expert |
| [6] | (Ael, personal communication, July 4, 2025) | Ael | G0v.tw contributor |
| [7] | (M. Albahi, personal communication, July 4, 2025) | Marafi Albahi | Constitutional reform and democracy researcher |
| [8] | (M. Alneel, personal communication, July 7, 2025) | Muzan Alneel | Industrial policy expert and activist |
| [9] | (G. Abou Faycal, personal communication, July 12, 2025) | Ghea Abu Faycal | Digital transformation and E-Governance Researcher |

# Appendix B

| Feature | Description |
|---|---|
| Inclusivity | 0 = exclusive, 5 = highly inclusive |
| Accessibility | 0 = inaccessible, 5 = widely accessible |
| Tech Features | 0 = basic forum, 5 = advanced AI/ML tools |
| Policy Impact | 0 = no impact, 5 = direct legislative change |
| Sustainability | 0 = one-time event, 5 = ongoing institutionalized |
| Conflict Sensitivity | 0 = none, 5 = fully tailored to fragile contexts |