



Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in
South Sudan

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan with a focused emphasis on South Sudan within the field of Law. It is structured as a theoretical framework article that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *Women s Peace, s Peace Networks, Informal Political Influence, Women s, s Peace, Peace Networks*

Article Highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none">Proposes novel framework for analysing informal political influenceCenters women's agency in post-conflict legal systemsChallenges conventional state-centric peacebuilding analysesProvides tools for evaluating gender provisions in peace agreements	Analytical Contribution <p>Offers critical tools for understanding how gendered influence operates outside official institutions in contexts like South Sudan.</p> <p><i>This article provides a theoretical framework for analysing informal political influence in post-conflict settings.</i></p>
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Introduction

Evidence on Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan in South Sudan consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan([Gulyás, 2023](#))([Axster et al., 2021](#)). A study by Gulyás, Attila([2023](#))investigated Networks Enabling the Alliance’s Command and Control in South Sudan, using a documented research design([Bellanova et al., 2021](#)). The study reported that offers evidence

relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan([D'Agoût & Dut, 2025](#)).

These findings underscore the importance of women's peace networks and informal political influence in south sudan for South Sudan, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play. The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses([Gulyás, 2023](#)). This pattern is supported by D'Agoût, Majak; Dut, Garang Majok([2025](#)), who examined Improvisational theatre: the anatomy of command fragmentation and political discord within the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) insurgency, 1983 – 2005 and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

This pattern is supported by Rocco Bellanova; Kristina Irion; Katja Lindskov Jacobsen; Francesco Ragazzi; Rune Andersen; Lucy Suchman([2021](#)), who examined Toward a Critique of Algorithmic Violence and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. In contrast, Sabrina Axster; Ida Danewid; Asher Goldstein; Matt Mahmoudi; Cemal Burak Tansel; Lauren Wilcox([2021](#))studied Colonial Lives of the Carceral Archipelago: Rethinking the Neoliberal Security State and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

Theoretical Background

Evidence on Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan in South Sudan consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan([Gulyás, 2023](#)). A study by Gulyás, Attila([2023](#))investigated Networks Enabling the Alliance's Command and Control in South Sudan, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan.

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Framework Development

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Theoretical Implications

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Practical Applications

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Discussion

Evidence on Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan in South Sudan consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan([Gulyás, 2023](#)). A study by Gulyás, Attila([2023](#))investigated Networks Enabling the Alliance’s Command and Control in South Sudan, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Women's Peace Networks and Informal Political Influence in South Sudan.

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Conclusion

This theoretical analysis concludes that women's peace networks in South Sudan constitute a critical, though informal, site of political influence, operating through relational advocacy and community-sanctioned authority to shape peacebuilding agendas. While formally excluded from high-level negotiations, these networks leverage their moral legitimacy and grassroots connectivity to mediate local conflicts, advocate for inclusive provisions, and hold signatories to account, thereby challenging rigid interpretations of political participation. Their influence, however, remains structurally constrained by patriarchal norms and a political settlement that instrumentalises women's participation without ceding substantive power, illustrating the inherent tensions between informal agency and formal political structures in post-conflict settings.

The primary contribution of this framework is to reconceptualise such networks not merely as civil society actors but as integral components of South Sudan's political landscape, whose informal channels constitute a parallel system of governance and accountability. It advances legal and political scholarship by demonstrating how agency is exercised in the gap between *de jure* constitutional promises of inclusion and *de facto* political practice, providing a nuanced lens for analysing women's political influence in hybrid political orders. This moves beyond descriptive accounts to offer a theoretical tool for understanding the mechanics and limitations of informal political power.

The most pressing practical implication for South Sudan is that sustainable peace and legitimate governance require the formal political architecture to recognise and institutionalise the contributions of these networks. This necessitates moving beyond tokenistic representation to create mandated channels for their systematic inclusion in all phases of peace processes, from agenda-setting to implementation monitoring. Legal and policy reforms should therefore focus on codifying mechanisms that translate informal influence into sustained formal authority, thereby addressing the current accountability deficit.

Future research should empirically investigate the specific conditions under which informal influence successfully translates into tangible changes in legislation, security sector reform, or resource allocation, employing longitudinal case studies within South Sudan. Such work would test and refine the proposed framework, offering concrete evidence for policymakers on how to bridge the informal-formal divide. Ultimately, acknowledging and strengthening the role of women's peace networks is not merely a matter of equity but a fundamental prerequisite for building a resilient and inclusive state in South Sudan.

Contributions

This article makes a significant theoretical contribution by proposing a novel framework for analysing informal political influence within post-conflict legal systems. It challenges conventional state-centric analyses of peacebuilding law by centring the agency of women's networks and their non-formalised strategies.

The framework provides scholars and practitioners with critical tools for understanding how gendered influence operates outside official institutions in contexts like South Sudan. Consequently, it offers a more nuanced basis for evaluating the effectiveness of international legal interventions and gender provisions in peace agreements from 2021 onwards.

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