

Women in politics: Case of South Sudan (National Consultation on Gender Equality Fund Strategy 4th April 2024 at Palm Africa)

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Accepted: 7/8/2024

Published: 6/9/2024

Abstract Women's presence in politics has changed dramatically, but there are still issues on a global scale. This study examines the various obstacles that women encounter in the political sphere, such as institutional bias, cultural standards, and systemic discrimination. It looks at striving for gender parity with case studies of South Sudan. In South Sudan, women hold some parliamentary seats. The study emphasizes how important it is for women to lead when it comes to advancing social justice and inclusive policy. By examining the effects of grassroots movements and advocacy organizations, the study emphasizes how important it is to create conditions that encourage women to participate in politics.

Keywords: Women, Politics, South Sudan

Publish by IJAH 2024.

Objectives of the session

- Understand the need for women's political participation and the related legal framework within global, regional and country-specific contexts
- Understand the need for and status of women's participation within political parties
- To identify barriers for women in political parties
- To consider entry points for promoting women's leadership and participation in politics

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- Women's political participation: history and trends
- Global, Regional and South Sudan Context
- Emerging issues for women and moving forward
- Benefits of women political participation
- Why do women need parties?
- Why do parties need women?
- Obstacles to women political participation
- Strategies to empower women in politics
- Conclusions

Background of women's political participation

- *Women's political participation is a relatively recent development.*
- *Numbers growing but not quickly enough. Women are increasingly finding their way into leadership positions but are still not adequately represented.*
- *When women participate actively in politics, it brings many benefits to their communities.*
- *There are many obstacles and barriers to women's political participation.*
- *It is possible to create an enabling environment so that women are able to participate and advance into leadership positions.*
- *International/regional/national frameworks are supportive of women's equality and right to participate in*

Global perspective of women's participation

- Prior to presenting the national statistics of women in politics, it is worth looking at the world statistics of women participation as compiled in 2019 available on <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

WORLD CLASSIFICATION									
Rank	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats*	Women	%W	Elections	Seats*	Women	%W
1	Rwanda	03.09.2018	80	49	61.3%	26.09.2011	26	10	38.5%
2	India	12.10.2014	130	69	53.1%	12.10.2014	36	17	47.2%
3	South Africa	07.05.2014	393	168	42.7%	21.05.2014	54	19	35.2%
4	France	11.06.2017	577	229	39.7%	24.09.2017	348	112	32.2%
5	Kenya	29.04.2017	121	44	36.4%	24.07.2015	39	18	46.1%

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL STATISTICS CONT.

Uganda	18.02.2016	459	160	34.9%	---	---	---	---
Uganda	30.07.2015	279	86	30.8%	30.07.2008	80	35	43.8%
Netherlands	15.03.2017	150	47	31.3%	26.05.2015	75	27	36.0%
Cameroon	30.09.2013	180	56	31.1%	25.03.2018	100	26	26.0%
Sudan	13.04.2015	481	133	27.7%	01.06.2015	71	19	26.8%
United Arab Emirates	03.09.2017	48	6	12.5%	---	---	---	---
Kenya	08.07.2017	349	76	21.8%	08.07.2017	68	21	30.9%
Senegal	18.09.2014	498	71	14.3%	N.A.	179	31	18.2%

COUNTRIES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST									
180	Nigeria	28.03.2015	359	20	5.4%	28.03.2015	109	7	6.4%
181	Thailand	07.08.2014	240	13	5.4%	---	---	---	---
182	Sri Lanka	17.08.2015	225	12	5.3%	---	---	---	---
183	Lebanon	06.05.2018	128	6	4.7%	---	---	---	---
"	Maldives	22.03.2014	85	4	4.7%	---	---	---	---
185	Kuwait	26.11.2016	65	3	4.6%	---	---	---	---
186	Haiti	09.08.2015	118	3	2.5%	20.11.2016	28	1	3.6%
187	Solomon Islands	19.11.2014	49	1	2.0%	---	---	---	---
188	Oman	25.10.2015	85	1	1.2%	07.11.2015	85	14	16.5%
189	Yemen	27.04.2003	301	1	0.3%	28.04.2001	111	3	2.7%
190	Micronesia (Federated States of)	07.03.2017	14	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Papua New Guinea	24.06.2017	106	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Vanuatu	22.01.2016	52	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---

NOTES

COUNTRIES	RANKS	COUNTRIES	RANKS
Burundi	29	UAE	84
Tanzania	28	Kenya	90
Uganda	33	Brazil	132
Switzerland	37	Russian Federation	130
Zimbabwe	41	Sudan	58
Netherlands	42	Cameroon	43
United States	76	Japan	47

South Sudan Context

- The women of South Sudan have played and continue to play a critical role in the shaping of their country.
- South Sudan's long history of conflict and instability has had detrimental effects on women's political participation
- During and after the civil war, women's voices and perspectives were often marginalized or excluded from decision-making processes.

South Sudan Context

- In 2010 elections, women in South Sudan contributed 65% as voters and 25% as political candidates.
- At that time all political parties were headed by men. With increased awareness and engagement of women in peace and security issues, political parties headed by women have been established. Currently, 2 out of the 28 registered political parties in the country, are

headed by women – Sudan African National Union (SANU) – Hon. Theresa Siricio and National Congress Party (NCP) – Hon. Agnes Lukudu.

South Sudan Context

- The R-ARCSS offers a roadmap to guide women's engagement and participation. A concerted effort needs to be made by all—women's coalitions/Networks, political parties, and the international community—to ensure and increase women's ongoing and meaningful participation to ultimately build sustainable peace.
- In post-conflict South Sudan, women's participation in politics and the electoral process holds crucial importance for achieving sustainable peace and promoting gender equality.
- Understanding this context is essential to address the barriers that women face in contributing to political processes

Representation of women among mediators, negotiators and technical experts in formal peace negotiations

- Women's participation in the peace processes got better over the years. In the renewed 2018 peace effort, one of the mediators was a woman and female leaders of civil society groups served as official observers.
- Women made up 25 percent of official delegates, and members of the Women's Coalition.
- One of the successful negotiation of the R-ARCSS is the 35% affirmative action against the constitutional (TCCS 2011) provision of 25%.

Women's participation in the peace process

- Women representatives were given signatory status in the (R-ARCSS) which gave them a key role of stakeholders for monitoring the implementation of peace agreement. Whereas there were no women signatories in the CPA (2005), in the ARCSS there were seven women representing Women's groups and CSO alliance, academia and youth.
- Women were included in the various committees of the transitional period, albeit not in large numbers. For example, Angelina Teny's appointment as the Chairperson of the Strategic Defense and Security Review (SDSR) board

Women's participation in the peace process

- Women successfully advocated for a gender adviser to be appointed to key institutions including JMEC. In the *Women's Agenda for Peace and Sustainable Development* strategy document developed with support of UN Women, the women leaders called on the IGAD mediation to include gender specialists in all the technical and administrative structures of the mediation process including the secretariat.
- This advocacy point was also taken up in the R-ARCSS process where UN women seconded a Senior Gender Adviser Ms. Rabab Baldo to the Office of the IGAD Special Envoy on South Sudan in May 2018

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN ELECTIVE & APPOINTIVE POSITIONS BEFORE THE RTGONU								
Position	2016				2020			
	Male	Female	Total	Female %	Male	Female	Total	Female %
National Assembly	274	109	383	28%	116	350	33%	
Council of States	44	6	50	12%	2	50	4%	
Governors	10	0	10	100%	1	9	10%	
Electoral management					1			
National Ministers	30	8	38	22%	10*	35	28%	
Undersecretaries					2	35	5.7%	
East Africa Legislative Assembly	6	3	9	33%				
National Dialogue Steering Committee members	81	21	102	26%				
Independent Commissions	19	2	21	10%	17	3	20	3.3%

*one female is a deputy minister

GAINS FOR WOMEN IN THE R-ARCSS

Parties	Ministers	35% women Ministers	D/ Ministers	35% women DiMin	TNLA	35% women in TNLA
I-TGONU	20	Not less than 6 (7 seats)	5	2 seats	332	116 seats
SPLM/A- IO	9	3 seats	3	1 seat	128	45 seats
SSOA	3	1	1	0	50	18 seats
FDs	2	0	0	0	10	4 seats
OPP	1	0	1	0	30	11 seat

WOMEN IN THE EXECUTIVE(COUNCIL OF MINISTERS)

PARTY	NO. OF WOMEN	QUOTA FOR WOMEN	NUMBER OF WOMEN APPOINTED	(%) OF WOMEN APPOINTED
ITGONU	20	7	4	
SPLM-IO	9	3	3	
SSOA	3	1	1	
FORMER DETAINEES	2	1	0	
OPP	1	0	0	
TOTAL	35	12	8	
TOTAL (%)				23%

WOMEN MPS AT REVITALIZED NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

PARTY	NUMBER OF NATIONAL MPs	ACTUAL APPOINT	% FOR WOMEN	NUMBER OF WOMEN	% FOR WOMEN
SPEAKERS	4		100%		
ITGONU(SPLM)	332	303	106	103	34%
ITGONU(NATIONAL AGENDA)	0	23	8	3	13%
ITGONU(SPLM DC)	0	6	2	1	17%
TOTAL ITGONU	332	332	116	107	32%
SPLM-IO	128	128	44	44	35%
SSOA	50	47	17	10	21%
FORMER DETAINEES	10	10	3	2	23%
OPP	30	30	10	7	25%
TOTAL NUMBER	550	547	190	170	31%
MISSING WOMEN'S SEAT					20

OVERALL WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN THE R-TGONU

POSITIONS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	FEMALE(%)
Ministers	26	9	35	23%
D/Ministers		1	5	20%
RTNLA		170	550	31%
Governors	9	1	10	10%
Deputy Governors	7	3	10	30%
Independent Commissions	17	3	20	15%
State Ministers	143	37	180	20%
State Advisors	55	9	64	14.1%
Undersecretaries	31	5	36	14%

State secretary Generals	13	0	13	0%
County Commissioners	81	2	83	2.4%
Town Mayors	11	2	13	15.3%

WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN THE NCRC, NEC & PPC

INSTITUTION	MEN	WOMEN	% OF WOMEN
NCRC	39	19	32%
NEC	7	2	22%
PPC	5	4	44%

Women representation in the judiciary

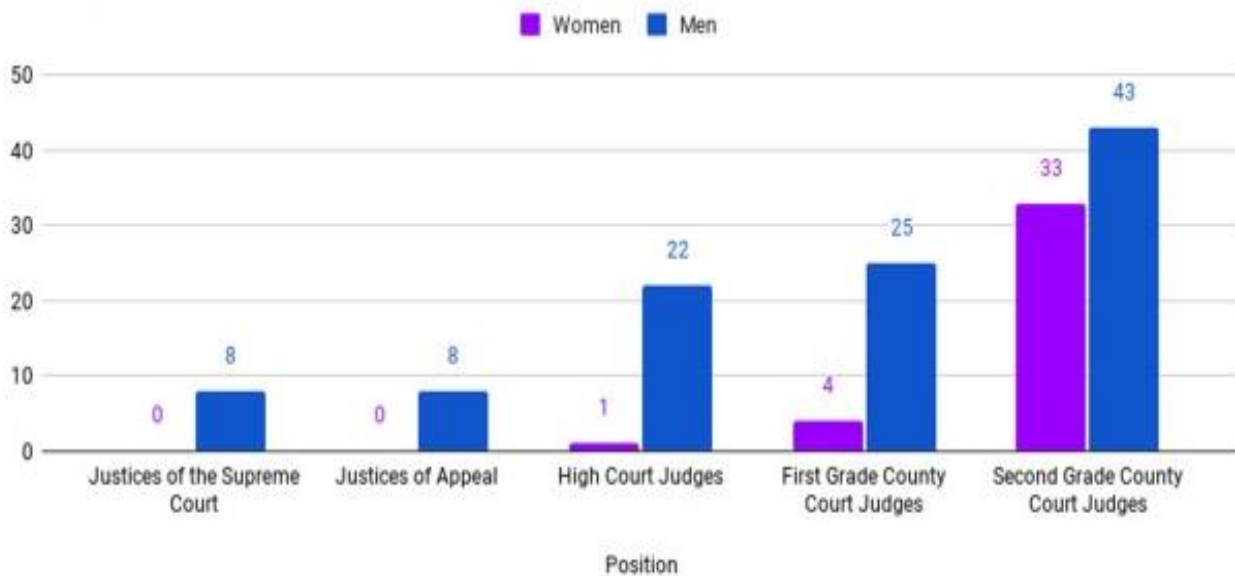
- Only 38 out of 144, (that is 26.3%) women have ever been recruited in the judicial function of the Judiciary. This is below the 35% minimum prescription in the R-ARCSS.
- Of the 38 women ever recruited in the judiciary, 37 of them (97.3%) are in the lower courts (County Courts).
- Of these 37 in the lower courts, 32 of them (84.2%) are in the Second Grade County Court (lowest of the government court)
- There is 0% women representation in the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal which are the highest and most powerful courts in the country.
- There is only one female High Court judge ever recruited in the whole country out of 23, (that is only 4.3%). This means there is negligible representation of women in the mid-level courts in the country

- The number of women appointed increases the lower the level of the courts. This means that even though the total quantitative representation of women in the judiciary at 26.5% could be said to be commendable progress from a roles and responsibilities framework given the cultural context of the country, it is qualitatively dismal when viewed from a power and decision-making framework.
- There is a high level of attrition of judicial employees generally at 22.9%. This is especially significant given the already small size of the employee body vis-à-vis the population it serves, and the high demand for their services. The level of attrition may be higher given the unconfirmed statuses of those on extended sick and unpaid leave.
- There is a higher attrition of women judicial employees compared to men. 31.6 % of all women recruited have left their jobs compared to 14.5% of men.

- Similarly, 50% of all women appointed to the First Grade County courts and 30.3% of women appointed to Second Grade County courts have left compared to 31% and 7% of men respectively.
- There are currently only 26 women in judicial positions at 24.5% compared to 80 men at 75.4%.
- There is 0% representation of women in all the judiciary's administrative bodies and their leadership (at the government courts)

- Women occupy only 30.4% of all support staff positions compared to men's 69.5%
- 71.4 % of those positions occupied by women are in the lowest unskilled and unclassified cadres of messengers and cleaners

Judicial officers in office in the Judiciary of South Sudan as of 1st May 2020



In the Judiciary and Legal System at the ten states and three administrative areas:

- 1 out of 8 (14.8%) of the 54 legal advisors are female.
- At the High Court, there are 4 (11%) female judges out of the 36 judges.
- Only 1 female first judge of the 15 first high judges,
- 2 females' second judges of the 13 second high court judges and 1 female third high court judge of the 8 third high court judges.

States Statistics on judicial representation

- Women are underrepresented in support staff positions in the judiciary as illustrated by the cases of Wau (15%) and Bor (30%) of all positions compared to men at 85% in Wau and 70% in Bor.
- Majority of the women support staff are in the unskilled and unclassified cadres of messengers and cleaners as illustrated by the cases of Wau (70%) and Bor (71%)

- Only a dismal number of women are represented in the professional levels of support staff positions with 5.2% in Bor, and 11% in Wau.
- Women are underrepresented in judicial positions in the customary courts compared to men at 10%-30%, with the majority being around 10% of membership in most courts.
- Women representation in leadership positions in the customary courts is negligible and mostly zero in most areas, with only a few Deputy Chairs and only one Chair heard of in Wau.

Statistics of women representation in the states, GEPA study, 2022

- There is systematic under-representation of women and gender inequality in the public sector:
- Out of the States/Administrative Areas public workforce of 77,874 (excluding the South Sudan People's Defense Force (SSPDF), women constitute only 32.3%; Most of the women in the public administration have low educational qualifications:
- At gubernatorial level, there is only one female out of 10 state governors (although 3 out of 10 deputies). All the three Chief Administrators are male.

- Similarly, there is low proportion of women appointed as Advisors and County Commissioners. Out of 64 State Advisors, only 9 (14.1%) are female.
- At the State and Administrative Areas, out of 180 ministers/executive level, women constitute only 20%, falling short of the 35% quota.

Emerging issues for women

- Gains in the agreement is one thing but implementation is another
- Women fall short in the implementation mechanism of the agreement- parties claim there are no women or they are not technical enough
- Are there enough women in the political parties? How can we call out the parties to ensure that they have enough women in their parties to fill these positions
- Lack of follow-up mechanism to monitor progress in implementation of the 35% and hold parties accountable
- A gap persist between policy and practice making it challenging to achieve full implementation- Hence, continuous advocacy is critical

Emerging issues for women in the states

- There is limited documentation and inadequate data of women's representation in the security sector which undercut women, peace and security initiatives
- The quest for equal gender representation and diversity in the judiciary is an ongoing endeavour across the African region and the world.
- Efforts to appoint one third of judges as female have not been sustainable, with a large proportion opting to leave the sector to low/delayed payment of wages and salaries;

Moving Forward-What should Women Do?

- Engage the parties to the agreement to commit to their obligations to the agreement e.g. The 35% in the agreement is not being filled by org or faith based groups, but by women politicians.

- Development of the Affirmative Action law and the establishment of Oversight mechanism for implementation is critical in an effort to avert under appointments of women in other positions
- Securing high numbers/percentage for women representation is one way to go and then strengthening capacities for meaningful participation becomes the next priority
- Establishing a women's political fund to support women candidates is another key area to engage in

Women's Political Participation: Benefits

- Higher standards of living
- Concerns of marginalized voters represented
- Collaborative leadership styles
- Work across party lines
- Peace building

Better decisions

- Success without democracy is improbable. Democracy without women is impossible
- The political participation of women results in tangible gains for democracy, including greater responsiveness to citizen needs, increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and more sustainable peace
- - Madeleine K. Albright

Why Do Women Need Parties?

- Parties are gateway to political leadership
- Parties inform the policy agenda
- Yet parties are often the greatest challenge
- Women continue to be under-represented

Women in Political Parties

- Importance of women as party members and leaders
- Benefits to the party
- Women's wings



Exercise: Women in Political Parties

- True or False?
-



Why Do Parties Need Women?

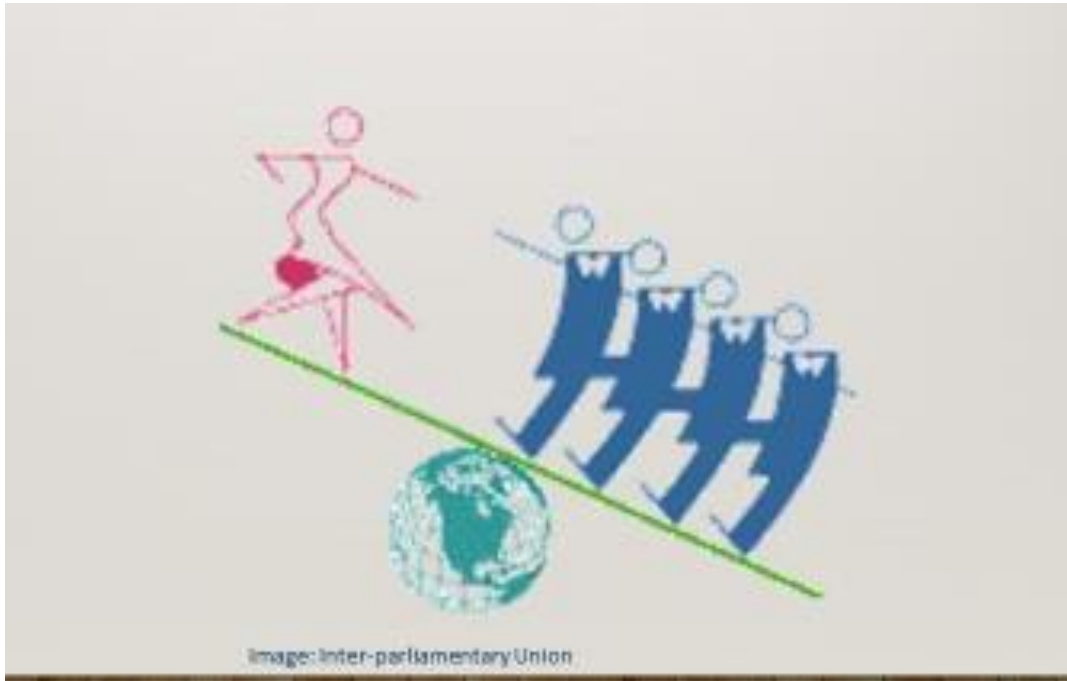
- To gain party supporters
- To help develop a platform that includes interests of all voters
- To win elections! *Women voters outnumber men voters in most countries simply because women tend to*

live longer. As such, women voters have the potential to deliver the margin of victory in elections.

- *When there are only a few women in power, it can be difficult to mobilize for change =women have yhr power of mobilization*
- *For most parties, committing to women's participation requires self-reflection and significant change.*

Exercise

Women's political participation: identifying helping and hindering forces



Obstacles to Women's Political Participation

- Patriarchy
- Legal
- Economic
- Educational
- Social/cultural/ religious



Obstacles to Women's Political Participation

- Time
- Space
- Physical security
- Lack of confidence
- Political parties

South Sudan's: FUTURE?

- More than 35% of MPs are women
- 35% of governors are women
- 35% Cabinet Ministers are women
- 50% local elected officials are women



Strategies for empowering women within party structures, during the electoral cycle and in government

- *To achieve these gains, parties must approach women's participation from both a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, ensuring that women are represented in leadership in sufficient numbers (at least 35%) and that they are able to exercise real power.*
- *Internal party organization: creating an organizational framework for gender equality in legal frameworks, decision making, structures, policies, etc.*
- *There is need to engage men to empower women within parties by debunking myths and presenting compelling arguments*

- *Empower women to participate in politics through financial inclusion*
- *Women's economic empowerment: The ability of women to attain financial autonomy or access to economic resources is also necessary for their greater participation in political life.*

Funding of Parties and Election Campaigns

- Key Issue: Raising funds to win the nomination and finance campaign More challenging for women
- Lower economic status
- Limited fundraising experience and networks



Funding of Parties and Election Campaigns

- i. Establish fundraising networks
- ii. Establish internal party fund
- iii. Provide subsidies to women
- iv. Limit nomination and campaign expenditures

Funding of Parties and Election Campaigns

- i. Public funding of parties
- ii. Funds for training women
- iii. Gender responsive budgeting



CONCLUSIONS

- Evidence shows that women's participation in politics is beneficial to both their own communities and societies, and broader peace and stability.
- But despite the ratification of a number of international conventions and legal frameworks guaranteeing women's political rights by South Sudan, we remain far from the goal of gender parity.
- This needs to change and women must have the chance to exercise their political rights and participate in all political decision-making.
- By removing barriers to women's political participation, increasing their representation in elected offices, and recognizing the unique perspectives they bring to the table,

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