

# UNESCO CHAIR ON INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES WEBINAR SERIES

## Women Beyond Victimhood: Indigenous Peacebuilding and the Gendered Politics of Repair in South Sudan

Presented by

**Dr Akuch Kuol Anyieth, PhD**

Research Fellow | Postgraduate Programme Convenor  
Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and the  
Reparative Quest (AVReQ)  
Stellenbosch University, Western Cape, South Africa.

**24 March 2026, 15:00 CAT**

**[Register here](#)**

UNESCO Chair on Intercultural Competences hosted by  
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## About the Webinar:

Discussions of South Sudan frequently position women primarily as victims of conflict, displacement, and gender-based violence. While these realities are profound and ongoing, such narratives risk obscuring women's active and strategic roles in sustaining community life and shaping peace from below. Drawing on recent fieldwork on indigenous peacebuilding, family mediation, and intercommunal violence, this webinar examines how women intervene in everyday conflict processes, from household disputes to cattle-related tensions and broader communal negotiations. Within customary systems that often formally marginalise them, women operate as mediators, moral authorities, advisors, and custodians of social continuity. Their influence is frequently informal yet consequential, embedded in kinship networks, relational authority, and moral discourse. The presentation argues that meaningful peacebuilding in South Sudan cannot be understood solely through formal state or international frameworks. Instead, attention must be paid to the gendered, everyday practices of repair that occur within indigenous governance structures. By foregrounding women's agency alongside structural constraints, this talk offers both a conceptual reframing and practical insights for scholars and practitioners seeking more contextually grounded approaches to peacebuilding and justice.

## About the Speaker:



Dr. Akuch Kuol Anyieth is a South Sudanese Australian scholar whose research explores gender, law, and cultural practices in contexts of displacement and post-conflict societies. She holds a PhD from La Trobe University, where her work examined the intersections of Australian family law and South Sudanese cultural approaches to family violence. Currently a Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and Reparative Quest (AVReQ), Stellenbosch University, and affiliated with La Trobe University, she investigates gender-based violence legal interventions, intercommunal conflict, and the politics of repair in South Sudan and the diaspora. Her scholarship

blends feminist theory, trauma-informed methodologies, and decolonial perspectives to interrogate how cultural norms shape responses to violence and justice. As part of her decolonial research methodologies, Dr. Anyieth has collaborated with Indigenous communities in Australia through yarning circles to Centre relational and community-based knowledge systems. She has written extensively on family violence, trauma, African masculinities and healing within migrant and refugee communities. A frequent keynote speaker and policy consultant, she has advised on gender, justice, and peacebuilding for organisations including the UN and the Australian Family Law Council.