



## AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

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**TITLE: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE POLITICS OF “SERVICE DELIVERY” IN SOUTH SUDAN**

**AUTHOR: SARA DE SIMONE , UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI, L'ORIENTALE (sara.desimone@gmail.com)**

### **ABSTRACT:**

Recent scholarly literature has focused on the role of the provision of public services in state-building and state-formation processes in developing countries, particularly in the African context. Actors expected to participate in the delivery of public services include central state bureaucracies, local governments and international aid agencies, whose approach to state-building in conflict-affected contexts such as South Sudan shows increasing awareness of the role of ‘service delivery’ to strengthen the local state. Drawing on field research in Yirol West County, this paper argues that the expectations of receiving services impact on the way local communities define themselves and shape their relation with the State. Through a mixture of appropriation of international agencies’ and national government’s lexicon on decentralization and service delivery, and instrumental use of the historical local governance institution of traditional courts, local communities seek better access to ‘external’ resources as well as political representation, which is considered to be essential for accessing State resources in a more sustainable way.

### **AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:**

*Sara de Simone is a PhD candidate in African Studies at the University of Naples L’Orientale in a joint program with the Doctoral School of Political Science of the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. She works on state formation in South Sudan looking at decentralization and land governance at the local level.*