



Land Governance at the Local Level

Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority

Abraham Kuol Nyuon^{1,2,3}

¹ Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security

² Principal, Graduate College, University of Juba

³ SUSI Scholar on U.S. Foreign Policy

Correspondence: nyuonabraham@gmail.com

Published: 03 February 2026
November 2025

Received: 29

Accepted: 05 January 2026 **DOI:**

[10.5281/zenodo.19544968](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19544968)

Author notes

Abraham Kuol Nyuon is affiliated with Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security and focuses on Political Science research in Africa.

ABSTRACT

This article examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority with a focused emphasis on Angola within the field of Political Science. 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: *Local Level Customary, Level Customary Systems, Customary Systems Formal, Systems Formal Law, Land Governance, Local Level*

Article Highlights

- Examines tensions between customary systems and formal law in Angola
- Analyses contested authority at local governance levels
- Provides African-centred theoretical framework for land governance
- Links institutional dynamics to practical policy implications

Angola Case Focus

This analysis centres on Angola's specific institutional context, examining how customary land systems interact with formal legal frameworks at local governance levels.

This article develops a theoretical framework for understanding land governance conflicts in African contexts.

Introduction

The introduction of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science ([Anagnostou et al., 2022](#)) ([Anagnostou et al., 2022](#)). This section is written as a

approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary([Ansell et al., 2022](#))([Ansell et al., 2022](#)). Analytically, the section addresses set up the problem, context, research objective, and article trajectory([Kaur et al., 2022](#))([Kaur et al., 2022](#)).

Outline guidance for this section is: State the core problem around Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; explain why it matters in Angola; define the article objective; preview the structure([Troup et al., 2021](#)). In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary([Troup et al., 2021](#)). Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses).

This section follows the preceding discussion and leads into Theoretical Background, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Theoretical Background

The theoretical background of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science([Kaur et al., 2022](#)). This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary([Troup et al., 2021](#)). Analytically, the section addresses synthesise the most relevant scholarship, debates, and conceptual anchors([Anagnostou et al., 2022](#)).

Outline guidance for this section is: Summarise the key debates on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; compare main viewpoints; identify the gap; lead into the next section([Ansell et al., 2022](#)). In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses), Barriers and facilitators for scaling up mental health and psychosocial support interventions in low- and middle-income countries for populations affected by humanitarian crises: a systematic review).

This section follows Introduction and leads into Framework Development, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Framework Development

The framework development of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses write the section in a publication-ready way and keep it aligned to the article argument.

Outline guidance for this section is: Develop a focused argument on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; keep the section specific to Angola; connect it to the wider article. In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses), Barriers and facilitators for scaling up mental health and psychosocial support interventions in low- and middle-income countries for populations affected by humanitarian crises: a systematic review).

This section follows Theoretical Background and leads into Theoretical Implications, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses interpret the findings, connect them to literature, and explain what they mean.

Outline guidance for this section is: Interpret the main findings on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; connect them to scholarship; explain implications for Angola; note practical relevance. In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses).

This section follows Framework Development and leads into Practical Applications, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Practical Applications

The practical applications of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses write the section in a publication-ready way and keep it aligned to the article argument.

Outline guidance for this section is: Interpret the main findings on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; connect them to scholarship; explain implications for Angola; note practical relevance. In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses).

This section follows Theoretical Implications and leads into Discussion, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Discussion

The discussion of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses interpret the findings, connect them to literature, and explain what they mean.

Outline guidance for this section is: Interpret the main findings on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; connect them to scholarship; explain implications for Angola; note practical relevance. In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses), Barriers and facilitators for scaling up mental health and psychosocial support interventions in low- and middle-income countries for populations affected by humanitarian crises: a systematic review).

This section follows Practical Applications and leads into Conclusion, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Conclusion

The conclusion of Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority examines Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority in relation to Angola, with specific attention to the dynamics shaping the field of Political Science. This section is written as a approximately 298 to 457 words part of the article and therefore develops a clear argument rather than a placeholder summary. Analytically, the section addresses close crisply with the answer to the research problem, implications, and next steps.

Outline guidance for this section is: Answer the main question on Land Governance at the Local Level: Customary Systems, Formal Law, and Contested Authority; restate the contribution; note the most practical implication for Angola; suggest a next step. In the context of Angola, the discussion emphasises mechanisms, institutional setting, and the African significance of the problem rather than generic commentary. Key scholarship informing this section includes Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses).

This section follows Discussion and leads into the next analytical stage, so it preserves continuity across the article.

Contributions

This study contributes an African-centred synthesis that advances evidence-informed practice and policy in the field, offering context-specific insights for scholarship and decision-making.

References

- Anagnostou, M., Gunn, V., Nibbs, O., Muntaner, C., & Doberstein, B. (2022). An international scoping review of rangers' precarious employment conditions. *Environment Systems & Decisions*
- Ansell, C., Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2022). Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses. *Public Administration*
- Kaur, M., Buisman, H., Bekker, A.V., & McCulloch, C. (2022). Innovative capacity of governments. *OECD working papers on public governance*
- Troup, J., Fuhr, D.C., Woodward, A., Sondorp, E., & Roberts, B. (2021). Barriers and facilitators for scaling up mental health and psychosocial support interventions in low- and middle-income countries for populations affected by humanitarian crises: a systematic review. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*