**Sebastian Angzoorokuu Paalo, Ph.D.**

Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), PBM, Kumasi-Ghana. Email: sebastianpaalo@gmail.com/sapaalo@knust.edu.gh

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**Profile**

Sebastian is a lecturer at the Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology-KNUST (Ghana). He is also a Member of the Board of Directors for the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation, the Assistant Director for Research at the Institute for Research and Policy Integration in Africa (IRPIA), and a Fellow for energy policy research at the Brew-Hammond Energy Centre, KNUST. Sebastian’s publications and policy engagements focus on peace and conflict, African governance and politics, and international relations. He has worked on several independent and collaborative projects, the latest being his collaborative policy research with Chatham House on Forest Governance in Africa, and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) APN Individual Fellowship project on ‘inherent disempowerment in women’s empowerment in peacebuilding’ (in Ghana and Sierra Leone).

**Education and Qualifications**

2022PhD, Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia.

Specialized in African politics and governance, democratization, peace and conflict.

Dissertation title: Local Ownership, NGOs, and Peacebuilding in Africa: A study of conflict-affected zones in Ghana.

2017MSc. African Studies, University of Oxford, UK.

Specialized in African politics, governance, peace and conflict.

Thesis title: More Laws Less Peace: The Politics of Managing Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Ghana.

2016 MSc. Governance & Development, University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Specialized in Governance, Peace and Conflict.

Thesis title: Political party youth wings and political violence in sub-Sahara Africa: A case of Ghana.

2012BA. (Hons.) History, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana.

Specialized in African history & politics, world history, and international relations.

**Academic research and teaching experience**

2021- Lecturer, Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana.

**Courses Taught:**

* International Political Economy (Pol 565), MPhil/MA Political Science.
* International Relations (Hist 455/456), year 4 B.A. History.
* Regionalism and International Organisations (POL 465/466), year 4 B.A. Political Studies.
* International Peace and Conflict (POL 367/368), year 3 B.A. Political Science
* Politics and Development (POL 255/256), year 2 B.A. Political Science.

**Supervision:**

* I supervise postgraduate (MPhil and MA Political Science) and undergraduate (BA Political Science) research in the areas of peace and conflict, governance and politics in Africa, and international relations.

2019-2021 PhD researcher and course tutor, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia.

2016-2017 Steering committee member, Oxford Network for Peace (Oxpeace), Oxford University, UK.

* Part of a team of Oxford scholars who conducted research and organized conferences on global peace and security, as well as advocating for the establishment of a centre for pace studies at Oxford University

2012-2013 Research and Teaching Assistant, Department of History and Political Science, KNUST.

* Organize tutorials in African history and politics for 200+ bachelor’s students
* Organize tutorials in history and politics of Ghana for 200+ bachelor’s of law students, Law faculty-KNUST
* Assisted lecturers at lectures, in research, organized conferences, and marked scripts

**Publications**

***Selected journal articles***

Anderson, E. A. B., **Paalo, S. A.**, and Dramani, A. (2025). Pandemic-induced border closures in West Africa and the perils of cross-border Ghanaian women traders. *Women’s Studies International Forum, 109*(10), 30-48.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Degraft Arthur, D., Dramani, A., & Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2024). Exploring hybrid security strategies in Ghana: State and private sector partnerships. *African Security Review*, *33*(1), 81-97.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu‐Gyamfi, S., & Arthur, D. D. (2024). Nationalist secessionism and global order: A comparison of the dynamics and impact of secession movements in Africa and Europe. *Nations and Nationalism*, *30*(2), 219-234.

Banchani, J. P. S., **Paalo, S. A.,** Acheampong, M., Kipo-Sunyehzi, D. D., Dramani, A. (2024) The Challenge of Attaining Resilient Local Structures in Grassroots Peacebuilding: A Study of Post-1994/95 Peacebuilding in Northern Ghana. *Global Society*, 1–22.

Anderson, E. A., Bob-Milliar, G. M., Adu-Gyamfi, S., & **Paalo, S. A.** (2024). Students' and Governments' Entanglements in Ghana's Political Transition: How (Not) to Understand Students' Relations with Civilian and Military Regimes, 1960–92. *Africa Today*, *70*(3), 75-97.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Banchani, S. J-P, Dramani, A., and Atule, D. (2024). Global Governance, Glocalisation and Endemic Instability in Africa, *Journal of African Politics, 4*(2), 20-39.

Paalo, S. A., Dotsey, S., Dramani, A., and Apeamenyo, R. (2024). Democracy as Electoral Ritualisation? The Illusion of Democratic Consolidation in Ghana. *African Journal of Democracy and Election, 4*(2), 29-47.

Adu-Gyamfi, S., **Paalo, S.A**, & Issifu, A.K. (2023). COVID 19 Border Policing in Ghana and its Impact on Trans-border Migration and Healthcare in West Africa. *Africa Development*, 48 (4), 103-123.

Dramani, A., **Paalo, S. A.**, Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2023). Emerging local voices and new possibilities toward attaining sustainable peace in Bawku, north-eastern Ghana, [*The African Journal on Conflict Resolution*](https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr/), 23(1), 107-134*.*

Paalo, S. A. (2022). Intergenerational gaps in women’s grassroots peacebuilding in Ghana: A critique of “inclusive peacebuilding”. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 14 (4), 287-303.

Issifu, A. K., Darko, F. D., and **Paalo, S. A.** (2022). Climate change, migration and farmer–herder conflict in Ghana. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *39*(4), 421–439.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., and Arthur, D. D. (2022). Xenophobia and the challenge of regional integration in Africa: Understanding three cardinal dynamics, *Acta Academica*: *Critical views on society, culture and politics*, 54(2): 1-18.

**Paalo, S. A**., and Issifu, A. K. (2021). De-internationalizing hybrid peace: state-traditional authority collaboration and conflict resolution in Northern Ghana. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *15*(3), 406-424.

Penu, D. A. K., and **Paalo, S. A.** (2021). Institutions and pastoralist conflicts in Africa: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, *16*(2), 224-241.

Paalo, S. A. (2021). A Systemic Understanding of Hybrid Peace: An Examination of Hybrid Political Orders in African Peace Governance. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, *11*(1), 1-31.

Paalo, S. A. (2020). The politics of addressing farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana. *Peacebuilding*, *9*(1), 79-99.

Boafo, J., **Paalo, S. A**., and Dotsey, S. (2019). Illicit Chinese small-scale mining in Ghana: Beyond institutional weakness? *Sustainability*, *11*(21), 5943.

Paalo, S. A. (2017). Political party youth wings and political violence in sub-Sahara Africa: A case of Ghana, *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 8(1), 1-14.

**Paalo, S. A.** andDramani, A. (forthcoming). The labyrinth of state intervention in communal conflict in Africa: Ghana’s maiden official state-led efforts in resolving the Bawku conflict, *African Studies.*

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., and Dramani, A. (forthcoming). COVID-19 governance, border closures, and emerging security risks in West Africa: A critique of pandemic-human security nexus, *African Security*.

***Journal articles under review***

### **Paalo, S. A.** and Brigg, M. (under review). Digitalisation versus structural realities: The politics of online participation in youth peacebuilding in Ghana, *Third World Quarterly*.

### Arthur, D. D., Paddy, C., **Paalo, S. A.,** and Agbesi, E. K. A. (under review). Mapping the Local Perspectives on Driving Forces for Preventing Coups D’état in Postcolonial Africa: Experiences from the Fourth Republic of Ghana, *African Security Review*.

### Banchani, J. S. and **Paalo, S. A.** (under review). Affirmative Action from below? Grassroots economic empowerment and women’s agency in public policy in northern Ghana, *Oxford Development Studies.*

### **Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., Badu Mills, G., Aggrey, K., and Ahensah, C. (under review). Social embedded practices, economic frustrations, and the new contentions of vote-buying in Ghanaian elections, *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*.

Dramani, A., **Paalo, S. A.,** and Qwesi, A. (under review). New dynamics in long-standing challenges in local governance participation in Ghana: A case of the Ahafo Ano South-East District, *Regional and Federal Studies*.

**Paalo, S. A.** and Dramani, A. (under review). Masculinity, Gun Culture, and Conflict Protraction: How Local Norms Reverberate in Security Volatility in Northern Ghana, *Conflict, Security and Development.*

Adu-Gyamfi, S., **Paalo, S. A,** Bilijo, D. W., Opoku, S., and Cobbina, A. (under review). Endemic vote-buying trends and democratic consolidation in Ghana, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Bob-Milliar, M. G., and Mohammed, K. W. (under review). Theorising chieftaincy’s resilience and implications for post-pandemic political order in Ghana, *International Politics*.

Paalo, S. A. (under review). The NGO-local ownership nexus in peacebuilding: Establishing an enhanced understanding of ‘the local’? *Conflict, Security and Development*.

Paalo, S. A. (under construction). Tragedy of the (un)commons: Conflicting institutions and natural resource governance in Ghana (for World Development special issue: "Scarcity, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa").

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***Book chapters***

**Paalo, S. A.**, Banchani, J-P. S. (2025). “Foreign Military and Security Bases: Implications for the Practice of Peace and Security in Africa.” In Bah, A. B. (ed.) *Glocalized Security: Domestic and External Issues in International Security* (pp. 227- 256). New York: SUNY Press.

**Paalo, S.A.,** Issifu, A.K. (2022). “De-internationalizing Hybrid Peace: State–Traditional Authority Collaboration and Conflict Resolution in Northern Ghana.” In: Spiegel, E., Mutalemwa, G., Liu, C., Kurtz, L.R. (eds) *Peace Studies for Sustainable Development in Africa. Advances in African Economic, Social and Political Development*. Springer, Cham. pp. 663–682.

Banchani, S. J-P and **Paalo, S. A.** (forthcoming). “Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).” In Iroulo, L. and Boateng, O. (eds.) *The Evolution of African Regional Organizations*. Oxford University Press.

**Paalo, S. A.** and Banchani, S. J-P (under review). “Regionalism and endemic instability: How to (not) understand the illusion of regionalism dividends in Africa.” In *Essays on Global Regionalism*. United Nations University Press.

***Policy Notes***

Throp, H., **Paalo, S. A.**, Oduro, K. A., Obeng, E. A., Guuroh, T. A., Andoh, J., Boudiaf, A., and Uehara, T. K. (2023). “Net-zero’s nature knot: A tug of war with rural realities”, *Chatham House*. https://forestgovernance.chathamhouse.org/publications/net-zeros-nature-knot-a-tug-of-war-with-rural-realities#:~:text=In%20the%20race%20to%20create,in%20forests%20and%20rural%20areas.

Boafo, J., **Paalo, S. A.** and Dotse, S. (2019). “Ghana’s traditional and state powers must collaborate to halt illegal mining”, *The Conversation,* 12 November 2019. <https://theconversation.com/ghanas-traditional-and-state-powers-must-collaborate-to-halt-illegal-mining-126072>.

**Editorial and peer review experience**

**Journal peer review:**

* *African Affairs*
* *Third World Quarterly*
* *African Security Review*
* *Peace and Conflict Studies*
* *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*
* *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*
* *Peace and Development Studies*
* *Politics & Policy*
* *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*
* *Contemporary Journal of African Studies (CJAS)*
* *Cogent Arts & Humanities etc.*

**Grants application reviews:** I undertake regular reviews of applications for:

* The International Peace Research Association Foundation (IPRA Foundation) Grants.
* Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Research Fund—KNUST Research Fund (KReF).

**Selected conferences, seminars, workshops, and summer schools**

Paalo, S. A. (2024). Conference on *Re-imagining Africa: Prospects and Opportunities*, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, paper presented: “Optimizing youths' contribution to sustainable peace in Africa: A decolonial reading of youth peace-building in Northern Ghana”, April 18-20, 2024.

Paalo, S. A. (2023). Research Workshop: Annual Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, the Maxwell School, Syracuse University, Certificate acquired, June 20-30 2023.

Banchani, S. J-P. and **Paalo, S. A.** (2023). Workshop on *The Evolution of African Regional Organizations*, Georgetown University Qatar (Doha), Paper presented: “The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)”, January 29-30, 2023.

**Paalo, S. A.** and Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2022). Conference on *Stereotyping in Africa: Root causes, consequences, and Solutions,* by The British Academy and Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST, paper presented: “Understanding stereotypes and the violence of Western universalism in pandemic governance: A case of the Madagascar COVID Organic”, November 9-10, 2022.

Paalo, S. A. (2021*).* *Global Minority Rights Summer School 2021*, “Conflict Prevention and the Human Rights of Minorities”,by the Tom Lantos Institute (TLI, Budapest-Hungary), the National University of Public Service (NUPS, Budapest-Hungary), the Human Rights Consortium (University of London), and Minority Rights Group International. Paper presented: “Language governance, linguistic discrimination, and the question of linguistic minorities in Ghana’s educational system” Online, July 5-16, 2021.

Adu-Gyamfi, S., Paalo, S. A.,Arthur, D. D (2021). *Peace and Conflict Studies Journal Conference,* “unilateralism, nationalism, and globalism—the ‘isms’ these schisms create.” Paper presented: “Nationalism, separatism and the pursuit of international peace: A comparative study of nationalist movements in Africa and Europe”, February 10, 2021, Nova Southeastern University, Florida, United States.

Co-convener, and discussant: The *University of Queensland School of Political Science and International Studies and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) collaborated seminar*. Theme: ‘Political Violence in Africa: The Role of Political Parties’, 29 October 2019, POLSIS, UQ, Australia.

Paalo, S. A. (2016). *Oxford University Research Colloquium*. Paper "Dangerous Mentorship? Assessing the relationship between Political Party Youth Wings and Political Violence in Sub-Sahara Africa: A Case of Ghana", 17 November 2016, St. Antony's College, Oxford University, UK.

Co-convener and discussant: *Oxford Network for Peace* (Oxpeace) Ninth Annual Conference. Theme: ‘Positive Peace: Concepts and Practice’, 6 May 2017, St John’s College, Oxford University, UK.

**Selected research grants and projects**

2024/2025(No. SSRC-34990) The Social Science Research Council’s (SSRC) African Peacebuilding Network (APN) 2024 Individual Research Fellowship Award, for project, “Ambiguous Empowerment? A Feminist Critical Peace Reading of Women’s Empowerment in Peacebuilding, Ghana and Sierra Leone”. Principal Investigator (PI).

2023 Chatham House Africa Porgramme on Forest Governance, “Net-zero’s nature knot: A tug of war with rural realities”. Researcher and co-author.

2022/2023 (No. KReF7) 7th KNUST Research Fund (KReF) Award for project, “Enhancing inclusive local governance through economic interventions for women: A case of Ghana”. Co-PI

2021 Tom Lantos Institute grant for participation in *Global Minority Rights Summer School 2021* on “Conflict Prevention and the Human Rights of Minorities”.

2019/2020(No. PRG 2019) International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation Grant (2020) for field research in Ghana.

2019-2021 University of Queensland Graduate School Fellowship, PhD (Political Science and International Studies).

2016-2017 Oxford-Mitsui Fellowship, Oxford University.

2017 Patrick Duncan graduate research grant, Oxford University.

**Selected policy-based experience**

2024-2028 **Member of the Board of Directors**, International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation.

* Provide oversight of management and finances.
* Participate in strategic planning.
* Contribute to the organization’s development.
* Improve organization’s visibility etc.

2024- A**ssistant Director for Research**, Institute for Research and Policy Integration in Africa (IRPIA),

* Leading a renowned network of scholars and policy experts and institutions conducting research and policy analysis in the areas of Security and Peace, Environmental Sustainability, Public Health, Education, Migration, and Governance in Africa, the United States, Europe, and Asia.
* Drafting grant proposals, collecting and analysing data, and writing and implementing scholarly and policy works in the areas of governance, peace and security.

2024- **Fellow**, for energy policy research and seminar planning The Brew-Hammond Energy Centre, KNUST

* Contribute to research proposal development, management, and coordination of projects to address energy sector challenges in Ghana and Africa.

2023- **Co-founder and Director**, *Sankofa Analytics*, Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST

* Conduct and supervise research, advocacy, and partnerships with governments and civil society.
* Monitor Working Groups on: Governance; Democracy and human rights; Peace and Security; Education; Health; Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability; International Relations; Economic and Financial Sector Management.

2023- **Founding Assistant** **Director**, Democracy Without Borders (DWB)-Ghana.

* Sourcing project grants and developing proposals for funding DWB-Ghana activities.

2020- **Partner**, National Peace Council, Ghana

* Part of the Ashanti Regional Peace Council community outreach team, which engages in routine forums, seminars, and other programs targeting social cohesion and democratic governance in local settings.

2018- 2020 **Policy, Networks, and Partnerships Coordinator**, YouthLEAD Africa (YOLA).

* Coordinated the policy advocacy desk of YOLA
* Created a network of young people, both vulnerable youth and young achievers so that they benefit from YOLA programming
* Established and sustained YOLA partnerships including donors, professionals, and collaborators
* Organized YOLA clubs interested in youth-related research to explore opportunities for their contributions to ongoing research works
* Led the development of YOLA’s ‘Club Development Plan (CDP)’which is being implemented.
* Led and coordinated activities and actions of Regional Coordinators
* Ensured that all Regional Coordinators develop action plans and are implementing and reporting on their plans etc.

2017 **Volunteers’ Trainer and Facilitator**, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO-London).

* Trained VSO 100+ international volunteers
* Facilitated conferences and events for VSO-UK

2017 **Assistant team leader**, Oxfordshire County Council National Citizen Service (NCS).

* Led teams of young people to carry out social action programs, targeting three crucial pillars of social cohesion, civic engagement, and social mobility

2017 **Consultant**, Oxford Student Consultancy Team.

* Consulted for businesses, NGOs, and the public sector.

**Professional Membership**

* International Peace Research Association Foundation
* Member, Africa Peace and Development Network
* Associate Member, International Society for Development and Sustainability (ISDS)

**Committee roles since permanent appointment at KNUST**

***Member of the following committees of the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, KNUST:***

* Faculty Conferences and Public Lectures Committee
* Faculty Disability Committee
* Faculty Alumni and Fundraising Committee

***Member of the following committees of the Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST:***

* Research, Conferences, Publications Committee
* Examinations Committee
* Tracer Studies Committee
* Welfare Committee
* Accreditation and Programmes Development Committee
* Media and Digitilisation Committee
* Appointed Department’s Assistant Exams officer, November 2022-

**References**

Available on request.