Donor Perspective on Security Sector Reform as a Governance Issue

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“Good governance, of course, means much more than democratisation in a formal political sense. Another very important aspect is the reform of Public Services – including the security sector which should be subject to the same standards of efficiency, equity and accountability as any other public service.”

Much has been written in recent years about the role of bi-lateral and multi-lateral development agencies in security sector reform (SSR). There are some agencies that still hesitate on the brink, unsure about the legality of assistance to reform in this sector. But for significant number of others, including the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the focus is already shifting from a debate about the legitimacy of such activities, to a process that seeks to establish a deeper understanding of the nature and scope of such involvement, in order to deliver more effective SSR assistance. The compelling need for a holistic approach to SSR is also becoming more widely accepted by those institutions that embrace the SSR mandate. The debate in these agencies is moving on from the ‘why’ and the ‘what’ we do in SSR, to working through problems about ‘how’ and the ‘who’.

Security Sector Reform is a governance issue. “International support for security sector reform should be provided in ways that reinforce the responsibility of both civilians and the military for achieving effective security sector governance.” It is also, quite clearly a development issue and for many countries in or emerging from conflict, a pre-condition and a foundation for development. For those in the donor community that recognise the primacy of governance and the development imperative in relation to SSR, arguments about legitimacy fall away. In this context SSR, can be mainstreamed into country development assistance programmes and its poverty reduction strategy (PRS).

However, as others have noted, adopting the current wisdom on holistic approaches is not without its problems for the development community. The necessity to engage with a multiplicity of agencies and institutions across the security spectrum in a client state is, to an uncomfortable extent, mirrored by the number of agencies ‘back home’ with legitimate claims to a piece of the SSR action. And no one needs reminding of the challenge that remains in achieving effective coordination amongst bi-lateral and multi-lateral partners engaged in the host country. It is clearly important to make progress on defining and achieving consensus about what constitutes a holistic approach and in uniting the agencies that need to work together. We then have to face the fact that our collective experience, understanding of methodology and approach is limited as is the range of knowledge, skills and experience required to support the SSR process. So just how do you achieve joined up government, find the knowledge, skills and experience to produce integrated strategies and programmes? Strategies that will deliver the kind of joined up solutions to often exceedingly complex governance and development issues, involved in the transformation of a country’s security sector.

1 Kofi Annan, “Peace and Development-One Struggle, Two Fronts,” Address of the United Nations Secretary-General to World Bank Staff October 19 1999, p.5.
This paper provides a perspective from recent experience of how donors engage in security sector governance work. It contains an overview of the content and process of donor engagement in SSR and the linkages to broader governance issues. It addresses the need for a coordinated approach within government amongst stakeholder ministries and departments and the challenges involved in making this a reality. The paper discusses the equally important issue of effective coordination in the wider development community and other institutions involved SSR. It draws primarily on UK experience in Africa and Asia and UK government experience of developing joined up approaches and inter-ministry co-ordination mechanisms. It uses the successful example of the UK Defence Advisory Team (DAT) to offer some insights from this experience that includes work in Sierra Leone, Uganda, Indonesia and Afghanistan. The paper reviews the nature and limitations on the use of conditionality and suggests situations in which it might be helpful. Reference is made to some key challenges for practitioners, including the need for improved problem and political analysis and the application of development approaches and principles in support of SSR initiatives. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author who has however, attempted to broadly reflect the policies and experience of the UK government.

**The Governance Environment**

The focus here is on countries in conflict, emerging from conflict or at serious risk of returning to conflict. These are countries where the systems of governance have failed or are seriously flawed and where the actions (or inaction) of the security sector are perceived to have contributed to such failures. In several cases these are countries that have hosted or continue to host UN or international Peace Support Operations (PSOs). From a development perspective, the priority countries are the poorest in Africa and Asia. What we see in these countries, to varying degrees, is serious damage to the fabric of governance that includes its legislative, parliamentary and democratic processes, its constitutional, legal and regulatory environment and an absence of the rule of law.

In these conditions the average citizen is terrified and at the mercy of undisciplined troops (government or otherwise), often bent on a course of intimidation, brutality, torture and murder. There is no recourse to law or to any political authority. The police are ineffective or compromised; the judiciary is weak or non-existent. This is a failure of governance and needs to be addressed as such. With notable exceptions the international community has begun to respond to such situations and, normally with the authority of a UN mandate, has been able to deploy troops to secure and keep the peace, restore a semblance of personal security and create the conditions for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

*Where do we start?*

Obviously both the military and the deliverers of humanitarian aid have a vital role to play in establishing and maintaining the peace and protecting and sustaining the population. But lessons from experience of Peace Support Operations (PSOs) indicate the need to deploy development agencies at a much earlier stage to address the overriding need to engage in initiatives to restore the governance framework, re-establishing civilian administration and its key institutions including those that manage and control the wider

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4 I use the Department For International Developments’ definition of “…governance to mean how the institutions, rules and systems of the state – the executive, legislature, judiciary and military – operate at central and local level and how the state relates to individual citizens, civil society and the private sector. We use government to mean the executive function at central and local levels. The political system or politics is the way power in the state is acquired and how people and groups inside and outside government influence the use of that power.” DFID Making government work for poor people. Strategies for achieving the international development targets. Department for International Development, 2001.
security sector. In the absence of development agencies, the military and emergency aid personnel will, more often than not, respond to the governance vacuum that exists and begin to develop initiatives to re-establish the institutions of law, defence and local government. It is here that all actors need to seek more effective ways to work in concert, coordinate their efforts, define and allocate resources and I suggest, learn new skills and approaches.

Approaches appropriate in the immediate post conflict reconstruction phase to restore utilities, main services and infrastructure will include a rapid situation analysis, a necessarily hands-on quick response and a will-do mentality. Using such approaches in the longer-term development phase is not appropriate.

We have found that where SSR initiatives have evolved in this way the common characteristics are programmes that start too far downstream with the application of technical solutions and the imposition of unsustainable models, structures and processes. We find a ‘hands on’ approach adopted with limited attention to skill transfer or the promotion of local ownership. We see an often unbalanced and piecemeal approach that, for example may cover police training but not address fundamental weaknesses in the justice system or include any dialogue with the MOD on achieving consensus about the respective roles of the police and the army. Such a silo approach risks both duplication of effort and leaving important gaps in the governance and institutional framework. It threatens sustainability and reduces the quality and impact of each initiative.

A Holistic Approach

Our experience supports the conclusions of other commentators that an effective SSR programme is one that is informed by and integrated with wider governance reforms. A holistic approach will address the main institutions of governance within the Security Sector, ‘the security family’. Programmes are likely to include initiatives designed to address weaknesses in the constitutional and legislative framework for civilian oversight and management of the security sector, reform of the criminal justice system, the judiciary, police and prisons, paramilitary and border guards, the military and the intelligence service. However, the success of such initiatives may not be achievable, and they are certainly unsustainable, unless they are effectively integrated within a governance reform programme that at the very least addresses weaknesses in the democratic process; deals with corruption;...

5 The UK experience in SSR, beyond PSOs, has hitherto been generally confined to reform of defence forces, although there may be occasions when the police are the subject of unconnected, parallel initiatives. The term ‘wider security sector’ is used to describe what has become a more common and developmentally appropriate view of what constitutes the security sector. This embraces both the military and police, intelligence, justice and the legislative framework, checks, balances and oversight mechanisms designed to, limit, manage and control their behaviour. See 9 below for a fuller description. The UK government partners in SSR are gradually moving towards this more common view of the security sector. This is beginning to feed through to its policy, operations, programmes and projects.

6 Recent accounts suggest that such lessons were applied in East Timor where under UN leadership a developmental, long-term institution building approach was adopted almost from the outset of the engagement. What is puzzling for obvious reasons is that those lessons were not applied in Afghanistan.

7 We have found similar weaknesses in programmes that did not start with a PSO. The common thread is the failure to ensure effective coordination and recognise the linkages to the wider SSR and governance environment.


9 The security forces (armed forces, police, paramilitary and intelligence services); the relevant ministries and offices within the executive branch charged with managing and monitoring the security forces (…) defence, finance, internal and foreign affairs, national security councils, and budget and audit offices) Nicol Ball 2001 ‘Transforming Security Sectors: The IMF and World bank approaches.’ Conflict Security and Development 1(1): 45-66.
parliamentary oversight mechanisms; public expenditure management (PER) and more often than not, civil service reform.

Within such a programme it is vital that government policy and the decision making process for the management and control of the security sector is strengthened, along with the parliamentary monitoring and scrutiny committees specific to the armed forces and intelligence services, as well as the audit function and public accounts committee. It is also important to help to establish the legitimate role of civilian and civil society involvement in monitoring the performance of its security services and influencing its role and conduct. Some observers question the feasibility of achieving such a holistic and coordinated approach:

At the conceptual level, SSR is thought of holistically – at least in development circles. This is both a strength and a weakness. Its strength lies in a perceived need not to end up with a programme that does little more than enhance efficiency and professionalism or, indeed, the capability to operate modern and sophisticated military technology. Maintaining a focus on the broader picture helps to relate individual projects and processes to a wider goal, especially that of governance and democratisation (…) But the weakness lies in the attainment of the wider objective.10

It is suggested that with such a plethora of agencies involved at home, in the client country, and often internationally the task is just too onerous to take on and would be impossible to achieve. We accept that it may be difficult, but it is certainly not impossible to ensure that an overall strategy is in place to guide what should be, a small number of carefully designed and coordinated projects and programmes. Moreover we firmly believe it is essential to follow such a course if we are to deliver any meaningful, long-term benefits to the worst affected developing countries. Perhaps it is worth emphasising the symbiotic relationship between security sector reform and reforms in the wider governance environment designed to stimulate growth and address poverty. Anyone working in Sierra Leone would identify with the statement that:

It is widely accepted that security sector reform (…) is an essential prerequisite and the foundation upon which the long-term development of Sierra Leone will be built. There can be no development without achieving SSR therefore (it) must be treated by government and donors alike as an integral part of Sierra Leone’s reconstruction and development programme. By the same token, the success or otherwise of other key elements of the reform programme will impact on the potential for success in SSR. The most important elements to address include enhancing revenue collection, stimulating growth, controlling government expenditure, improving health and education and above all, tackling corruption.11

Coordination – Working with Development Partners

Few would disagree with the view that development partners have to work effectively together if they are to deliver such holistic approaches. However, pleas for improved cooperation and better coordination by the development community are recurring themes in country reviews, annual reports and evaluations for almost any major mainstream development programme in any country or region. Bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors sling mud at each other with UN institutions, more often than not, coming in for the most serious criticism. The World Bank and the UN lead agencies seem never to agree, INGO and NGO leaders despair and the client country will suffer as efforts are duplicated or vital gaps in programmes are allowed to persist. Host governments may respond by playing one donor off against another or by taking advantage of such disunity by ignoring its counterpart.

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11 Defence Advisory Team 2002 ‘Sierra Leone Security Sector reform Project II. Output to Purpose Review’
undertakings and commitments in the certain knowledge that donor’s are unlikely ever to agree a unified sanctions policy.

Coordinating Security Sector Reform

In the light of such experience, one might question the chances of achieving much needed consensus and a unified strategy in the infinitely more challenging environment of security sector reform. This is an unfamiliar environment for many donors and one that might be populated by a complex web of emergency, humanitarian, political, military and non-government agencies, all of whom seeming to work to differing agendas, in different time-frames, adopting different models and approaches. But, given the threat to sustainability and the high cost of failure, be it human, developmental, political or financial, it is clearly vital that development and other partners in SSR redouble their efforts to coordinate strategy and programmes that support reform. They must work to ensure this extends to consensus on broader strategies designed to strengthen the wider governance framework in order to build an appropriate enabling environment for sustainable change.

There have been many false dawns and what follows may just be a triumph of hope over experience. However, there are indications that improved coordination may result from commitment to policy convergence amongst some donors, institutional changes in others and the wholesale adoption of common aid policy frameworks and instruments for the poorest countries. The Utstein Group provides a useful model for bi-lateral cooperation and coordination. New agencies dedicated to addressing conflict issues, including post conflict reconstruction, have been created within the World Bank, UNDP, USAID and UKMOD. Implementation of the Brahimi report should help to create better coordination amongst the UN agencies including peacekeepers, and more rapid, informed and strategic decision making in post conflict environments. These initiatives will be strengthened by further decentralisation of resources and decision-making planned by the UN and World Bank. Over time, such improvements should enhance the credibility of the UN lead agency, usually UNDP, and help it to assume its putative position as the host governments’ main interlocutor for development assistance coordination.

Agreement on a comprehensive ‘Poverty Reduction Strategy’ (PRS) is now mandatory for countries subject to debt relief under the ‘Highly Indebted Poor Countries’ initiative (HIPC). From an SSR perspective, the most significant features of the PRS process is that must be produced by the recipient country through a participatory and consultative process. And its scope now embraces the wider security sector. One can see the advantages of working through such a comprehensive development strategy and one that no donor or SSR stakeholder might ignore with impunity. Only time will tell if these initiatives will contribute to improving coordination amongst most donor agencies. However, the challenge still remains of how to make development partners of peacekeepers, military trainers and the emergency aid community.

Can Conditionality Help?

If conditionality is to be used in whatever guise, it will be pretty meaningless in the absence of complete agreement amongst donors as to the terms and sanctions to be imposed. However, both multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors today claim that the conditionality of the

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12 The Utstein partners – UK, Germany, Netherlands and Norway - have for example, recently commissioned a study of peace building intended to contribute to a joint policy agenda.
13 Although there is less optimism expressed in informal feedback from on ongoing review of experience in Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.
14 However, concerns continue to be expressed about the actual level of civil society participation achieved in any PRS process to date.
15 Producing a full-blown PRS can take some time so a preliminary, less detailed PRS is completed at an early date.
nineteen-eighties and nineties is discredited because it was not effective. Current wisdom therefore suggests that we do not impose conditionality but will work in partnership with the recipient government to develop a shared vision for development assistance, agreed and recorded in instruments like a PRS Paper (PRSP). Obviously, if there is no real ownership of governments’ development policies and programmes, if these are perceived to be imposed by donors, then they will not be sustainable in the long term and any number of conditions will not make them stick.

The nature of Conditionality

The fact is that some kind of conditionality or contract is implicit in any donor/recipient relationship, particularly in one that follows conflict or is designed to prevent conflict. In these circumstances any UN (or international coalition) Mandate authorising the deployment of PSO will contain conditions about the deployment, behaviour and treatment of combatants and the policies of government designed to address the conflict. Where donors are signatories, conditionality is implicit in international law and all of the UN charters and resolutions concerning conflict, for example the rights of woman and children (Resolution 1325). In Eastern and Southern Europe conditions (and some attractive incentives) exist within the entry tests for NATO or EU membership. The World Bank might describe it differently but the production of a PRS is a condition to be fulfilled before funds are released. And recipient governments have to comply with conditions on where and how the debt relief is to be spent. Any arrangements for budgetary aid, will, at the very least, attract conditions addressing development policy (e.g. a PRSP) and fiduciary risk. Within conventional development projects and programmes, recipients will acknowledge obligations and commitments in exchange for a development package. In the case of a subsequent breach of these conditions sanction will range from the withdrawal of peacekeepers to cancellation of a development programme or project. In practice donors are reluctant to walk away from defaulting governments and will bend over backwards to restructure its assistance or extend the time frame for compliance. Understandably, it is very difficult to abandon an SSR programme if this means withdrawing a military assistance programme that might leave the civil population at risk.

Conditionality to Support Change

Despite these reservations, I believe conditionality, recorded in an MOU or some form of development assistance agreement and backed by a degree of donor unity, can be effective when it is used to strengthen the hand and support the policies and plans of a reforming administration. Or perhaps one engaged in the precarious task of returning a country to civilian rule. In this context the agreement will spell out the policy framework within which key governance issues will be addressed, including SSR and the establishment of democratic processes. Any such document needs to be clear about how changes will be brought about (e.g. legislation, creating new institutions, parallel processes to fast track solutions to key problems) record how progress will be measured and specifying targets, timeframes and milestones. Such an arrangement can provide an initially weak but, well intentioned administration with the security, space and time to initiate much needed reform whilst building consensus and a critical mass of change agents and supporters.

Coordination – Joined Up Government: The UK Example

Achieving a holistic approach to SSR requires not only effective coordination of policies and resources between the key international actors but also between stakeholder agencies within a donor government. The UK government provides a positive example of the

16 Something similar forms the basis of DFID long-term partnership with Sierra Leone. At this stage, it is without the formal donor community buy-in that would strengthen the arrangement.
kind of progress that can be achieved. In April 2001 three ministries, DFID, MOD and FCO, committed substantial funds\(^\text{17}\) to ‘Joint Conflict Prevention Pools’ (CRP) designed to address conflict issues worldwide, including through support to SSR initiatives. Projects and programmes funded from the pooled resources are subject to a policy framework and require the approval of each ministerial partner. DFID leads on pool management in Africa, the MOD leads in Eastern Europe and the FCO covers the rest of the world.

**Cultural Differences**

As might be expected, each ministry brings its own experience, culture, processes and approaches to bear on the issues. At the outset, some observers, within and outside of government feared clashes between what is perceived to be the FCOs culture and desire for rapid results, narrow focus and short term interventions, the MODs Defence focussed, linear approach and hands on, ‘can do’ mentality; and DFIDs long view, torturous approval process, and obsession with ownership and sustainability. However, whilst there were, and perhaps still are conceptual and cultural differences, the anticipated clashes have been far fewer and far less serious than feared. The reasons for this are perhaps twofold. Firstly that most of the key ministry stakeholders recognise that we are breaking new ground here and are sharing the experience of a very steep learning curve. Secondly, the main differences that have emerged, aside from administrative teething problems, have been primarily focussed downstream at practical project management or project implementation level. Achieving consensus on the nature of the problems and issues has not presented too many difficulties, nor has adopting a problem solving approach to agreeing a way forward.

CRP partners have spent more and more time working together as the workload has intensified over the last year. During this period we have seen a gradual fusion of language, understanding and approach amongst the key actors. Whilst much remains to be done to better inform policy, improve programme quality, levels of understanding and coordination, it is fair to say that the global pool concept has, over time, delivered far more in terms of a convergence of vision and the development of worthwhile initiatives than most observers expected.

**The Defence Advisory Team**

The most striking manifestation of joined up government was the creation of the Defence Advisory Team (DAT) funded from the Global Conflict Pool. Initially conceived by the MOD to complement and support on-going in-country training and capacity building initiatives delivered within the framework of its Defence Diplomacy Mission. It was anticipated that the DAT would provide short-term advisory and/or training input to countries needing assistance in improving their defence management capacity and help to identify and facilitate the provision of longer-term advice. Driven by demand and helped by willingness to adapt, the initial concept has rapidly transformed into a more strategic and influential role. A role for the DAT that embraces the provision of expertise for the design, management and review of more substantial and broader security sector reform initiatives in countries emerging from or in danger of returning to conflict. That fusion of knowledge, experience and approach mentioned earlier is most apparent in both the composition and the developing institutional culture of the DAT. This brings together governance and development expertise from DFID, ministry of defence civilian management, change management experience and military expertise from a wide range of backgrounds including PSO in the Balkans. There is recognition that the DAT will benefit from the addition of police and justice expertise to its skill base.

\(^{17}\) These are: The Department for International Development, Ministry of Defence, Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Approval was granted for a three 3-year programme of around £60m per year for Africa and £60m rising to £76m for the rest of the world.
As with any new entity perhaps the greatest challenge (apart from establishing its own credibility) has been forming effective working relationships with the ministerial and inter-ministerial bureaucracy of the CRPs. Inevitably, this has involved working through a fairly complex web of management and coordination mechanisms. At the joint level there is a ministerial committee, cabinet committee(s), a liaison committee and programme/project committee(s). Within DFID, aside from the country desks there are about five key institutional stakeholders, in the FCO and MOD there are up to four each at home and abroad. In some cases at the programme level, e.g. Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, the Joint Permanent HQ (PJHQ) will also take an interest. Whitehall partners are actively seeking ways to simplify this institutional tangle both jointly and within two of the stakeholder ministries.

**Donor Support to SSR – What we do and how we do it**

Developing country programmes in Africa include those underway in Sierra Leone and Uganda, proposed engagements in Ghana, Nigeria and in a number of other countries emerging from conflict in southern, eastern and central Africa. Elsewhere in the world we are, for example, helping to inform an on-going programme in Indonesia and are in the inception phase of an institutional development programme in Afghanistan.

In **Sierra Leone** DFID, in collaboration with the UK MOD and the FCO is managing a programme designed to help GOSL reform and retrain its armed forces and bring them more effectively under civilian control. The programme will also help to create a sustainable policy, institutional and legal framework and acceptable national security and defence strategies enshrining the principles of civilian control, accountability and transparency. A military assistance force has been engaged in training and other initiatives designed to build a professional armed force. And both military and civilian technical assistance has been deployed within the SLMO to help build capacity and work with counterparts drafting legislation and regulations for the management, control and oversight of the military. The people on the ground in Sierra Leone are drawn from the ranks of the IMATT forces, the UKMOD, retired intelligence personnel and UK police special branch. The DAT have completed a review of the project and made recommendations for strengthening in-country management and governance expertise the delivery modalities of the programme. Integration with the wider security environment and linkages with the governance reform programme will feature in the next phase.

In **Uganda** the same set of UK government partners are providing assistance to GOU in conducting a Defence Review. Informed initially by a broad strategic assessment of the security environment, the review will enable the GOU to more clearly determine the role, mission and tasks of its defence forces, taking full account of resource issues and informing priorities for other ministries. This process embraces the need to review the legislative and regulatory environment, focussing on accountability and transparency and to involve other parts of government and civil society in the debate. DAT personnel assisted by King College are providing the technical assistance, working in Uganda with a GOU review team and DFID.

We have adopted an incremental approach in support of the UKG strategy for working with the security sector in **Indonesia**. This has included a number of UK study
tours, and in-country seminars and workshops designed to enhance mutual understanding, develop trust and good working relationships with parts of the military and government. This has helped to identify opportunities for a constructive engagement that will support the process of democratic reform, widen the scope of SSR and linkages to the internally driven governance reform agenda. Clearly there are major challenges for GOI in transforming its prevailing military culture, performance and management systems.

In the August/September this year the DAT visited Afghanistan in the company of American colleagues to review progress on SSR and suggest options for supporting the change process. Approval has already been obtained for an important programme of institution building that will help the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) address its priorities for SSR.

The progress made and resources devoted to these and other initiatives in Eastern Europe, South America and South Asia are indicative of the importance attached to the CRP programmes by the ministerial partners. It is also testament the effectiveness of the inter-ministerial team approach exemplified in the DAT. With good monitoring and review mechanisms in place, experience from each engagement will inform those that follow. Whilst supporting the view that each countries needs are different, making a ‘blue-print’ approach inappropriate, there are a number of generic lessons from our early experience that can be widely applied in the future.

Some Early Lessons

Are we responding to need?

This issue was touched on earlier but it a key question we should ask of people whose interests we are there to protect. What is their experience? What are their immediate concerns? Are they interested in national or personnel security? Whilst it may be necessary to develop effective armed forces able to secure and protect a country’s border, it is more often the case that the overriding priority is to change the way the military behaves in its own country and how soldiers treat their fellow citizens. Addressing the absence of internal security is the priority for most people, not training an army to defend its borders. In situations where there is no national capacity this clearly requires the development community to support a wide-ranging programme of SSR. However, what is needed is a programme, which not only works with the military to restore discipline, provide human rights training and creates a professional body of officers and men. But one that gives as much, or more attention to development strategies which will quickly reduce the number of men and boys under arms through DDR programmes, restore the rule of law, fast track police training, establish or re-establish a functioning judiciary and address weaknesses in the wider governance environment. In the longer term any security sector review should address non-military routes to enhance security through improvements in diplomacy and the use of effective negotiating and mediation strategies. If the lions share of our support is to the military then, however well intentioned, we are unlikely to be responding to need and what we achieve will not be sustainable.

Better Analysis

We need better analysis to help us make the decisions about the nature of the problems faced in addressing a countries security needs, identify the underlying governance issues and develop a holistic strategy for change in partnership with the civil authority. Where possible we should seek an entry point that provides for a wide-ranging security sector review encompassing both the internal and external security environment and the linkages to the enabling governance framework. The outcome from such analysis will obviously inform the assistance programme but it will also provide the basis for donor coordination and

20 Disarmament, demobilisation and Reintegration.
commitment. We also need tools to deliver important political analysis that will help donors validate programmes in the context of countries competing political factions and their policies and influence, ethnic allegiances, the nature of society and the political, military and economic power blocks.

We should promote greater use of the tools already available including DFIDs Conflict Assessment model and the Governance Review Framework for SSAJ and SSR which pose pertinent questions about the level of individual safety, access to justice, behaviour of the armed forces, accountability mechanisms and so forth\(^21\) (These last two, should of course, be combined to provide guidance embracing the whole ‘security family’). Application of a ‘Sustainable Livelihoods Framework’\(^22\) will help stakeholders understand the issues from the bottom up. This is a people centred approach that can help donor agencies test assumptions about need against the reality of peoples’ lives. Perhaps the most obvious point to make here is that better analysis contributing to any overarching development model or strategy is more likely to identify the need to address governance issues within the security sector and beyond.

*Use Appropriate Models and Behaviours*

In the absence of such analysis initiatives tend towards down-stream technical solutions. Whilst it will be necessary to address technical and systemic weaknesses, more often than not it has been western experience and models inappropriate in developing country conditions that have informed these technical solutions. Such models range from ideas about the size, shape and role of the armed forces, to the application of human resource management policies that are at odds with national and institutional culture. Enormous effort and resources can be wasted in creating institutions, structures and processes that are not ‘owned’ by counterparts, will not work in the local environment, are unaffordable and are therefore not sustainable in the long term.

One reason why there are so many examples of dysfunctional models can found in the experience of those that introduce them. There are peace-keepers from the ranks of the military and police, emergency/humanitarian aid personnel, rapid response teams, civil servants on their first mission abroad, academics, consultants and trainers with no previous international experience and those working on DDR and small arms control; the list goes on. As yet, few have a complete understanding of the whole SSR canvass and its practical application and even fewer have experienced work in a developing country. Most will, quite naturally fall back on the models, processes and structures with which they familiar back home without validating them in the local context. Others will find it easier to take on a function or complete a task rather than help to develop their counterpart. Some will fail to understand and adapt to the local culture and norms.

The GCP partners have recognised these weaknesses and are seeking ways to enhance the training and orientation of personnel deployed in this way. They also recognise the need to improve the in-country management of SSR programmes and plan to strengthen some in-country teams by appointing governance advisers to lead, provide a mentor role and coordinate broader SSR programmes.

*Apply Development Principles and Consulting Skills*

We are more likely to use appropriate models and behaviours if we can help practitioners to understand and apply certain basic principles and individual skills in the development environment. These address the nature of donor, client government


\(^22\) There are a number of versions. DFIDs can be found in Caroline Ashley and Diana Carney, *Sustainable livelihoods: Lessons from early experience*, DFID 1999
relationships and the approach and behaviour of individual development agents. They may seem obvious but it is surprising how often these principles are honoured in the breach.

Fostering a partnership approach with government and key change agents is the first priority. Promoting widespread ownership and participation amongst key stakeholders with a view to long-term sustainability is equally important. That participation, especially in post-conflict situations should extend to supporting the voice and access of civil society. In this way we adopt a people centred approach that can address empowerment needs of men and women, their concerns about personal safety, the behaviour of the military and the failure of the police and the judiciary.

All engaged in SSR in whatever capacity need to develop cultural sensitivity (an understanding and appreciation of both national and institutional culture). In working with counterparts we would expect the application of empathy, listening, mentoring, coaching and facilitation skills, conflict resolution skills and a team and problem-sharing approach. Such behaviour will ensure that we validate our assumptions and ensure we work in partnership to develop appropriate models and solutions, adapting from our experience or helping to create new and workable models.

**Conclusion**

The nature and scope of donor involvement in SSR is still evolving. Whilst recognising that there is more to SSR than addressing concerns about levels of defence expenditure, donors are yet to share a common language or understanding of the need, nature and scope of their engagement. Most governments have made far less progress that UKG in bringing together ministerial and departmental stakeholders to focus on policy and strategy for SSR. The challenge of bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation in this complex field remains. However, I suggest it is time for the donor community to move on from the debate on the ‘why’ and the ‘what’ to address, as I have attempted to do in this paper, the practical application of the ‘how’ and the ‘who’.

Roderick Evans
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