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**DEFENCE SECTOR REFORM:
A Note on Current Practice**

by

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The Defence Sector can be divided into three categories: the ministries which develop, manage, and implement defence policy (typically the defence and interior ministries), the bodies charged with oversight of these ministries and their implementation bodies (typically legislative oversight bodies and ministerial internal oversight structures), and the operational actors charged with guaranteeing a country's national security. Operational actors include the regular armed forces of the state (army, navy, coast guard, marines/marine infantry, and air forces);¹ state-sponsored paramilitary forces (gendarmerie or equivalent, and border security forces); customs, and immigrations services; intelligence services; and other organizations that defend the state and its people. This practice note examines creation and reform, restructuring, and/or transformation of these institutions, primarily for defence against external threats. It does not address law enforcement or criminal justice issues or institutions (such as police, judiciary, or corrections).

Although bilateral defence assistance has been a staple of international aid for decades, assistance to equip and train partner defence forces cannot be equated with defence sector reform. Such assistance may not address corruption, human rights abuses, or the likelihood of internal conflict in recipient countries (Gompert and Stearns, 2007, 4), whereas the core principles of security sector (system) reform emphasize good governance, transparency, efficiency, fairness and equity in recruiting and promotion, accountable and sustainable financing, respect for human rights, and local ownership based on democratic norms (OECD Handbook, 2007, 21). These principles should apply, in all cases, to defence sector reform.

In countries recovering from conflict, defence sector reform, or defence sector development, faces particular challenges. In such countries, defence institutions may be particularly resistant to change, often because change would entail loss of political control or decreased access to wealth, including reduced ability to exploit natural resources. These interests imply that substantial and lasting change will entail more than just direct reform to discrete operational element of defence.

¹ The literature on defence sector reform, however, focuses mostly on land forces (armies). This note highlights practice with respect to other components mostly through the use of case studies.

Failure to reform the defence sector in broad terms—including its governance and oversight—will likely impair a country’s ability to build transparent, accountable, and efficient public institutions in general, and may also interfere with the larger economic recovery or development process. The measures discussed in this note thus should be understood to require comparable, parallel changes in governance and oversight if they are to be sustainable by the host state after drawdown of direct international support.²

In addition to highlighting good (and bad) practice regarding how host state institutions design and execute defence sector activities, this note will address recommendations to donors with regard to planning and conduct of defence sector reform.

CORE PROGRAM DESIGN ISSUES

Sustainable defence sector reform requires effective, efficient, and transparent security sector governance, but also an accurate and up to date threat assessment on which to base security needs analysis; definition and allocation of institutional roles and responsibilities to meet those needs; an appropriate sector structure and chain of command to manage execution of roles and responsibilities; and creating, enhancing, transforming or right-sizing of forces and support structures to carry them out.³

Assessing Needs

A needs assessment should encompass the state not only of the armed forces but also of the relevant ministries and oversight bodies. Such an assessment will help determine the current state of *all* of the relevant institutions and help to determine priorities for action (United States, FM 3-7.01; ch.3, 8–9). Such an assessment should examine not only the human resource needs of the various components of the defence sector but also the infrastructure, equipment, and other assets that both civilian and military personnel require to function effectively. In countries recovering from conflict, for example, soldiers and their families may require suitable accommodations. Similarly, ministries may require everything from basic office equipment to more complex data management systems. In such contexts, building capacity within the armed forces to the detriment or in the absence of broader management or oversight capacity building and reform is counterproductive and may lead to unsustainable gains. Because defence sector reform is just part of an effort to build peace and security, the UN may wish to frame the effort within a larger context of institutional and economic development. Doing so may also help the host state determine priorities for such programs and better frame defence sector reform within a wider context.⁴

Part of the initial assessment, then, is to identify all relevant actors, their roles and responsibilities, institutional chain(s) of command, and the role of each command level in planning and executing policy. In particular, the roles of the chief of the defence forces, the chief of the most important military service, and the operational commanders (division and brigade) need to be determined, as do the roles of the various military staffs. For security forces, it is

² Please refer to the separate practice note on Security Sector Governance.

³ For more on threat assessments, reviews, and national security strategies, please see the relevant practice notes.

⁴ For more on management, governance, and oversight of the security sector and their place in wider efforts to build institutional capacity, see the relevant practice notes.

necessary to determine requirements for doctrine, organization, training, materiel and equipment, leadership, personnel, command, control, communicational, intelligence, and operational effectiveness (United States, FM 3-07.1, 3–12).

Is a Security Force Necessary?

In some countries, the very necessity of a particular force needs to be discussed before proceeding to discussion of effectiveness or reform. The host state's future force structure may be more or less specified in its peace agreement, but there may be leeway to propose alternative structures, in which case the threat assessment that is part of the initial UN Technical Assessment Mission should take careful measure of specific requirements that particular force structures have met in the past and may need to meet in the near to medium term.⁵ If the host country faces few significant external threats, before engaging issues related to reform (or transformation, rebuilding, etc) or re-creation of defence forces, an assessment should ask whether a particular force is appropriate or necessary to deal with assessed threats. Long term financial sustainability should also affect its conclusions.

For example, the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement mandated the creation of the Armed Forces of Liberia, but in comparable future peace negotiations, international mediators and donors—supported by threat assessments that can be shared with the national parties—may wish to encourage debate about the very necessity of traditional armed forces in the post-conflict era. Liberia's anticipated national revenues may be hard put to finance even its small new national army (2000 troops) while meeting the country's many other pressing development needs (Gompert et al., 2007 29–33). The prior history of armed forces in Liberia was also one of predation and corruption, as is the case in many countries with a long history of internal conflict. The question then arises whether a country such as Liberia, which depends at present on UN peacekeepers and over the longer term on US security guarantees for its external security (much as Sierra Leone depends on UK guarantees), should focus its limited resources on building effective and accountable police services and counterpart internal security forces (including paramilitary forces trained to deal with insurgency) and border security services. Similar discussions occurred in Sierra Leone. In late 1999, the army was briefly disbanded but the decision was quickly reversed because of the threat posed by newly unemployed former combatants (Albrecht and Jackson, 23).

Defining Roles and Responsibilities⁶

The goal of defence sector reform is to establish institutions that are well-led, honest, impartial, regarded as legitimate by the population at large,⁷ and committed to protecting and serving the entire population under the rule of law and with respect for human rights. Achieving this goal requires defining the roles and responsibilities of the various institutions that comprise it and

⁵ Please refer also to the separate practice note on threat assessments.

⁶ The practice note on governance and oversight of the security sector discusses constitutional and legal considerations for defining the role of the defence sector. The practice note on management of the security sector discusses the challenges of reforming the ministries and other bodies in this area. The practice note on national security strategies and policy discusses the role of such efforts in determining roles and responsibilities.

⁷ For a thorough, recent discussion of legitimacy and its definition/determination, see Séverine Bellina, et al., "The Legitimacy of the State in Fragile Situations," Report for the OECD/DAC International Network on Conflict and Fragility. Final version. (Paris: OECD/DAC/INCAF, February 2009), 3–4.

firmly rooting these roles and responsibilities in a constitutional framework, accompanying legislation, and a detailed national security policy and strategy.⁸ In countries recovering from conflict, the executive may play multiple roles (for example the president may also serve as minister of defence), leading to conflicts of interest and compromised oversight mechanisms. In other cases, the military and its leaders may not be subject to effective civilian control, setting the stage for future exploitation and abuse.⁹ If new types of forces need to be created, legislation may need to be amended or passed to determine the ministry under whose oversight such forces operate (for military or paramilitary units, discussion over whether forces should be responsible to the defence or interior ministries may be in order).

In short, defence sector reform may require structural reform; functional reforms that may include realigning and clarifying the role of existing forces as well as creating specialized border, riverine, counter terrorism, or organized crime units to meet specific threats; physical and infrastructure reform; and changes in the assets held by various force providers.

Right-sizing

In countries recovering from conflict, the size of defence sector ministries, oversight bodies, and of course the armed forces may need to be carefully evaluated to determine whether they are either too big or too small to perform their intended tasks. The necessity, affordability, and role of security sector institutions in responding to identified threats all need to be examined. Ministries and security forces may be bloated by patronage and corruption, while oversight mechanisms will likely need to be built up.

Although researching models for calculating force requirements (for the armed forces) was beyond the capacity of this survey, it is safe to assert that, in most countries transitioning from conflict, existing forces will be too large for peacetime needs.¹⁰ Moreover, most will contain large numbers of “ghost soldiers” who pad the ranks for purposes of payroll-skimming. In many cases, the officer corps is over-sized because commissions can be purchased and are an attractive source of revenue in countries where officers are responsible for directly distributing pay to their subordinates. Many active duty personnel will also lack the qualifications they need to do an effective job. In short, forces may be not only too large but corrupt, incompetent, and inefficient. A sustainable, professional, and competent institution can and should be smaller, but decisions on the actual size of the force must be based on the ability of the host state to recruit, vet, train, and pay a competent force of that size. If donors are willing to assist the host state in providing either initial support in forming the defence sector workforce (broadly defined) or to continue

⁸ For more on national security strategies and policies, see the relevant practice note.

⁹ For more on management and oversight of the security sector, see the relevant practice notes.

¹⁰ Afghanistan is a perhaps contrary but complex example in which ongoing efforts to *build up* competent and professional armed forces and police parallel efforts to demobilize militia forces while continuing to use informal forces to bolster the formal services. There is also disagreement between the United States and the Afghan government over the proper size of the Afghan National Army. The government seeks a force of up to 250,000 and the United States up to 134,000. Plans drawn up in 2002, prior to increased insurgency, called for 70,000 troops, which itself strained donor capacities to provide integrated training and embedded mentoring. (Giustozzi, 222; Cordesman, 2008, ii–iii). As of 2008, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board aims to build an 80,000 strong ANA (US Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces, June 2008, 4).

sustainment support, the amount, nature, and time frame of that support also needs to be made clear.

Force Structure and Chain of Command

Force structure will be determined by the purpose of the security forces and their role as envisaged by the country's national security policy.¹¹ To ensure civilian control, chain of command for military forces will typically run from the senior-level political leadership, through the ministry of defence, to the defence chiefs, and then through the appropriate levels of command. Chain of command for paramilitary forces will cascade, similarly, through the ministry of interior or justice to operational force commanders.

In many countries, different strategic, operational, tactical, and logistical/support structures may co-exist. National force headquarters may provide command of the forces and translate national interests and policies into operational guidelines, write doctrine, and develop standards and principles for training and education. Support or administrative headquarters will manage procurement for the forces and develop policies for recruitment, vetting, and personnel management. Finally, operational headquarters, whether regional, functional or a combination of both, may be created at different levels, depending on the scope of operations envisioned, their objectives, and their complexity. If a country has multiple services, headquarters command structures may either be established for each individual service or may be combined. If the services are expected to operate together, a joint structure may be more effective and efficient (United States, FM 3-07, 6.11).

In countries with ongoing peacekeeping or counter-insurgency operations—whether conducted by individual nations, by a coalition, or under the lead of an international organization—a chain of command and concept for joint operations with the host state will need to be developed, as will appropriate rules of engagement with parties that are out of compliance with the peace agreement; with insurgents; and with host state civilians. If the host state is receiving such assistance, a decision must also be made as to whether the senior donor or senior international representatives (both military and civilian) have the authority to override host state decisions and vice versa. The implications of such arrangements for the host state's sovereignty also need to be considered.¹² Overall, a national security policy should be developed to detail mechanisms for national security decision-making, implementation, and chain of command in this area.¹³

PROGRAM PLANNING

Donors need to decide who amongst them will support which portions of defence sector reform. Parcelling out different portions could lead to coordination problems and a piecemeal approach where donors take individually small steps but fail to implement reform in a deep and sustainable fashion (Melmot, 2008, 19). Division of labour requires donors to agree that one actor will take the lead in coordinating the efforts of all the others, and clarify the overall expectations

¹¹ Please refer to the separate practice note on developing national security strategy and policy.

¹² Discussion in this paragraph is drawn from author interviews with subject matter experts.

¹³ For more on national security policies, see the relevant practice note.

concerning the scope of work expected from each donor and its time frame.¹⁴ When such coordination is not possible or when different actors refuse to recognize the role of a coordinator, individual donors should define their parameters for cooperation, inform potential partners, and work towards communicating plans in a timely and effective fashion.

Program planning should include careful consideration of *all* the oversight and operational actors involved in the defence sector, ranging from the armed forces, to border forces, state and defence intelligence, and paramilitary forces that a country requires in order to respond to the threats it faces. Failing to adequately plan for support to any one actor could jeopardize wider defence sector reform efforts. The approach taken should be based on assessment of the threats, risks, and costs involved. Whatever the ultimate decision, it is important to conduct a public information campaign explaining why such a step was necessary and how it is justified by national security needs (Nelson-Williams, 8).

Effective planning requires that donors make decisions on the financial aspects of defence sector reform, in terms of cost and sustainability, in terms of accountability for donor funds (fighting corruption) and finally in terms of host state capacity to collect enough funds to pay for at least some portions of reform efforts itself, and to sustain what is built (Melmot, 2008, 19). Planning should also take into account sustaining infrastructure maintenance, equipment and asset procurement, and personnel management and renewal, across the defence sector. Such plans should also include efforts to build host nation management and oversight capacity.¹⁵

Planning for DSR must be closely coordinated, as necessary or appropriate, with demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. In post-conflict countries where non-statutory forces remain standing and where a peace agreement may have mandated their integration into the regular statutory defence forces, measures to ensure that such integration occurs in a systematic, organized, and sustainable fashion also need to be considered. As an initial step, irregular, rebel or insurgent forces may need to be temporarily integrated before they go through the normal vetting and recruiting process. Force reduction planning needs to anticipate the reactions of faction leaders who feel that too few of their fighters have been integrated into post-war forces. The security implications of such concerns must be balanced against the requirements for a professional, effective and affordable force.

In some countries, donors who had planned to provide certain types of assistance may arrive only to find that the conditions for beginning their program have not been met. They may therefore need to restructure their program for what becomes, in effect, a second effort. This may have implications for budgets and spending authority, which may be time-limited, potentially resulting either in hurried commitments that attempt to anticipate needs on the ground, or loss of funds to another program.

¹⁴ Clarity and coordination of plans may not go hand in hand, however, as one donor's plans, while clear, may not meet another's expectations of what needs to be accomplished. Thus, Germany was criticized for its failure to reform the Afghan police but Germany, arguably, committed only to train a cadre of senior police officers, not to vet, train, and equip the entire Afghan police force. In late 2003, the United States launched such a program but with inadequate training, equipment, and mentoring, such that retraining commenced under a different concept in late 2007 (Cordesman, 2008, 55–59).

¹⁵ See the relevant practice note.

Recruiting and Vetting

Recruiting and vetting in the defence sector can be challenging but the process must guarantee equity in recruiting and ensure that the recruiting process translates into forces and a defence civil service that are representative of all major ethnic groups, minorities, and other disaffected actors. Vetting cannot begin until a concept for the security forces has been decided. This concept usually includes professionalism, representation, and an appropriate force posture or structure. Recruits—and particularly officers and those with either management or oversight duties—should be vetted for past abuses and membership in illegal or sensitive organizations. Such recruits need not necessarily be completely excluded but continued membership should be monitored (United States, FM 3-24, 6.9-6.12).

Vetting for existing forces and civilian personnel as well as for new employees (whether civilian or military) should be conducted in a transparent and fair fashion: reasons for dismissal should be disseminated and explained. Doing so will help build the legitimacy of the process. In the armed forces, new forces may be built by integrating existing armed groups (as was recently done with the CNDP militia in eastern DRC), by recruiting and vetting an entirely new cadre, or by some combination. It may be necessary, as has been the case in Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of Congo, to accept large numbers of ex-combatants into the new force as an intermediate demobilization and reintegration measure. The temporary status of such measures needs to be made clear. In a civil service, a similar process may occur.

Vetting should be consistent, whether for existing personnel of the forces and ministries (lustration) or for new recruits. Failure to dismiss currently serving soldiers and officers, despite known and documented abuses, participation in illegal groups, or corruption could hurt the legitimacy of the force being built. Where there is a long history of conflict, a substantial percentage of serving personnel may have been involved in such problematic behaviour and lustration may not be a viable option as the entire defence sector may lack legitimacy in public eyes, and officers and managers from the old force, management, and oversight structures may corrupt new recruits.

Vetting has two components: normative and pragmatic. The normative component, based on the concept for the force, should reject candidates if there is “credible evidence of wrongful conduct unrelated to the vetting process, such as prior crimes.” “Core crimes” that are grounds for rejection include “unlawful killing, unlawful wounding, torturing, outrages on personal dignity, rape, and abduction or arbitrary detention.” Vetting processes are on firmer ground rejecting candidates with substantiated records of such behaviour than if they rely on violations of higher-order, more structural provisions of international human rights law (such as “violating the right ‘to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms . . . can be fully realized’”) (McFate, 2007, 83).

Pragmatic steps for vetting are first to determine identity of personnel and second to conduct background checks. This is challenging in post-conflict settings because records required for the background checks may never have existed, may have been destroyed, or may not be credible or reliable. The vetting process must therefore develop and apply common standards and it must ensure the confidentiality of applications. Pragmatic reasons for rejecting a candidate include

“credible evidence of wrongful conduct related to the vetting process, such as cheating, lying, or refusing to cooperate during the vetting procedures” (McFate, 2007, 82-84).

The recruitment process begins with the publication of notices for applications to join the forces or civil service. Before conducting an expensive vetting process, armed forces recruits should be tested for physical suitability. Similarly, the literacy level of all applicants, military or civilian, should be evaluated and play a role in determining whether a candidate moves forward in the process.

In the armed forces, recruits who pass both the physical and literacy tests may then be vetted for hiring into the force. Recruiters should consider providing recruits with food and shelter for the duration of the recruitment and vetting processes, as well as funds to return to their families should they not be selected. The creation of regional vetting centres can help ensure that qualified recruits of limited means or those who live in remote areas are able to participate and do not suffer financially from doing so. Recruits should not be expected to self-support if required to travel from recruiting centre, to vetting centre, to training centre.

The vetting process must be thorough and include a process for verifying allegations of disqualifying behaviour. In Liberia, this included a significant public information campaign—pictures of candidates were posted all over the country, mechanisms for reporting behaviour were established, and vetting teams travelled all around the country to interview candidates’ family and acquaintances to determine their suitability. In a country like Liberia, doing so required strong logistical support, including convoys with security, reconnaissance, spare vehicles, river crossing equipment and spare parts for vehicles, plus air evacuation support (McFate, 2007, 81–82).

When vetting takes place in a post-conflict setting, the process of demobilizing the existing personnel poses security risks. The safety of recruiting centres must be ensured. Indeed, persons for whom DDR means loss of power base may threaten reformers. Evidence gathered from vetting therefore should not be used for purposes other than to determine a candidate’s suitability for service in the security forces. It is best to disconnect the vetting process from truth and reconciliation commissions and other instruments of post-conflict justice. The identity of those who provide evidence on the recruits also needs to be protected, lest rejected recruits seek them out for reprisal (McFate, 2007, 81). At the same time, vetting must protect against false accusations and anonymous accusations should be validated by several independent sources.

Because vetting will be a requirement in most transitional environments, donors should consider funding the training of a host state vetting team that can continue to vet candidates by the standards established in the initial process, which will help guarantee that other defence sector employees (including in the relevant ministries) have the same qualifications as their colleagues (Crisis Group, 2009, 16).

Pay and Personnel Management

Personnel management is a key aspect of defence sector reform.¹⁶ First, pay for civilian personnel, officers and soldiers must be competitive with that of other host-state professionals to dissuade them from seeking part time jobs or soliciting bribes. Pay needs to be consistent across the public sector to ensure that qualified professionals are well-distributed among the various agencies. Pay must be disbursed on time and through the host government channels. Good pay should be accompanied by a strict (but fair and enforceable) code of conduct that allows for immediate dismissal of corrupt personnel. Such disciplinary mechanisms should apply equally to all ranks in both civilian and military structures (United States, FM 3-24, 6.20). In post-conflict states, armed forces, as well as entire bureaucracies have been dismissed en masse by law or decree. While such dismissals can help ensure that the population accepts the legitimacy of new institutions by ensuring that formerly corrupt and rights abusing officials are no longer employed, the loss in capacity and discontent such measures may cause should also be considered.

It may be important to separate the chain of command from the chain of payment (both within the relevant ministries and within the forces), particularly in countries where personnel and soldiers have historically depended on their direct superiors for their pay, thus creating opportunities for corruption (Van Damme, 2008, 5). Pay should be disbursed directly to all soldiers and officers, preferably through a central, dependable government channel.¹⁷

Education and Training

In many post-conflict countries, education of the defence sector workforce, whether civilian or in uniform, may be a requirement for effective defence sector development and reform. In countries where war has prevented long term access to education from the most basic levels to university, a first concern for defence sector reform will be finding employees who are literate. Efforts to sustain a defence workforce will therefore need to be integrated into wider education plans for the country as a whole. Efforts to sustain the defence sector workforce will also likely require the creation of military education institutions and more general security sector management and oversight education programs. Ensuring the availability of quality personnel at higher management levels, again across the defence sector, will require developing access to secondary and university-level education. In some cases, where there is an immediate need for such education or for specialized training, sending selected professionals to schools abroad may present a temporary solution to needs for advanced and technical skills.

Effective training requires clear and detailed performance standards for individuals, leaders, and their units. Training should take the forces' level of literacy into consideration, building on existing or historical training programs and using host state trainers as much as possible. Training should be designed so that host state trainers can eventually take over all training. Programs should avoid up-front information overload, resist short cuts and quick fixes, but also avoid creating overly-complex programs based on unrealistic standards. When donors use mobile

¹⁶ For further detail see the draft practice note on Security Sector Management.

¹⁷ Recent efforts to separate chain of command from chain of payment will be discussed in the Liberia, the DRC, and Afghanistan case studies.

training teams or contractors to conduct the training, they should ensure the training is supervised and meets established standards (United States, FM 3-24, 6.12-6.13).

Training typically begins with basic individual training, continues with advanced individual training (including specialist training), and then shifts to progressively higher unit level training. The length, nature, and intensity of the training varies depending on the existing proficiency of the forces involved, the complexity of the missions they face, and the degree to which they can expect continuing outside operational assistance.

When determining how to train a host-state unit, organizers should assess the host-state unit's training needs by determining the unit's tasks and capacity to execute them. The assessment should also determine "staff capabilities, personnel and equipment authorization, physical condition, any past or present influence on training and combat operations, operational deficiencies identified during recent operations or exercises...sustainment capabilities, to include sustainment training programs, internal training programs and personnel, and training facilities" (United States, FM 3-07.01, 5.8). Training should also include after action reviews.

Leader training is more complex and should reinforce levels of authority within the host state forces. Training should make clear the expectations associated with officer rank, while reinforcing the military's subordinate relationship to civilian authorities. Commissioned officer training should focus on tactical skills, accountability, decision-making, delegating authority, values and ethics. It should include instruction on how to work as a team, how to develop and take advantage of subordinates' skills, how to train subordinates, how to maintain discipline, and how to assume responsibility for one's own and subordinates' actions. Additionally, training should stress interpretation and enforcement of the rules of engagement—particularly important when training is provided in countries with ongoing conflict. Collective training should include how internal and external threats and the presence of civilians affect operations (United States, FM 3.07.01, 5.9). In a second phase, commissioned officer training should focus on building effective commanders and staffs for small units. This should begin at the company and battalion level and progress to higher echelons (United States, FM 3.07, 6.9).

Decisions must be made concerning the number and nature of training centres for the defence forces. For example, defence training and education institutions need to be created for all security forces and for both officers and soldiers. Similarly, institutions to train and educate civilians employed in the defence sector as well as those responsible for oversight and management need to be established. In some cases, while the initial training is conducted by donors, the schools' first graduates may be selected to return as trainers for other units or offices.

Continuous Advising: Embedded Advisors

Advisors can be used to support both the armed forces and the relevant ministries and oversight bodies. Donor personnel may be tasked to provide continuing advisory support to host state units. Advisors may be military officers or civilian officials from donor countries, UN agencies or other international organizations, NGOs, and private companies. Whether in support of civilian ministries or military units, such advising may take three forms: advising, partnering, and augmenting. In the first two cases in particular, embedded personnel should work in the same

conditions as their hosts. Advice may be provided from the highest command and management and oversight levels—at the minister or commanding officer level—down to the company level or to the office level.

Advising occurs where donor troops use “influence to teach, coach and advise...while working by, with, and through Foreign Security Forces.” In such cases, the advisor focuses on developing the host-state security forces. Importantly, “advisor teams will often find themselves answering to their higher military assistance group, the brigade combat team they are attached to, and the host host-nation unit with which they are embedded” (United States, FM 3.07.01, 2-9).

Partnering differs from advising because it “incorporates training with combined operations” with the objective of creating competent and legitimate host state forces. In partnering, units are attached at different levels and as the host state forces become more capable, the intensity of partnering decreases. In cases where conflict is ongoing and where host state capacity is sufficient, donor support with partnering can take the form of providing quick reaction capacities. In partnering, combined cells for intelligence, operations, planning, and sustainment are created to “support transparent operations and a comprehensive approach.” Partnering helps to increase trust between the host nation and donor forces, as well as helps to develop staff capacity within the host state forces. Partnering could also involve creating relationships between host nations and donor command and staff elements. This can help host nation forces observe and learn from donor forces without losing face (by revealing inadequate skills or appearing subordinate to donor forces). In some cases, it may be beneficial to combine partnering and advising. This requires developing a three way relationship between the host state forces, advisors, and partnering units. In this case, “partner units should look to the advisor to identify, shape, and facilitate operational partnering opportunities and training events” (FM 3.07.01, 2.10).

With augmenting, donor forces can be augmented with a host state unit’s forces or vice versa. This arrangement can be organized either for a specific mission or for the duration of the effort. Augmentation can also be organized with individual soldiers or officials (FM 3.07.01, 2.10). Augmenting can also be used in combination with partnering and advising.

While embedding donor personnel throughout command structures helps to train effective leaders and can build capacity, it can also create dependency among host state forces. Outside personnel should therefore be replaced with host state officers as quickly as possible and clear measures for evaluating the training of individuals, leaders, and units should be created. All troops should receive values training and officers should be trained in methods for evaluating unit performance (United States, FM 3-07, 6.14-6.15; FM 3-24, 6.14-6.16).

Intelligence Reform

Ideally, host state intelligence structures should contribute to threat assessments, national security policy, and ensuing force posture (Conteh, 5). Intelligence agencies include state level civilian domestic intelligence gathering bodies, civilian agencies tasked with gathering foreign intelligence, and military intelligence gathering agencies. This section applies to all three kinds of intelligence structures. In countries where the UN has peace support operations, effective contributions may require professionalization of the intelligence services if they are to be

effective in providing strategic intelligence and measurable contributions to national security planning. In some cases, professionalization will require reducing functional redundancies among agencies and disbanding those services with political agendas or allegiances. Intelligence agencies should protect the state and its people rather than particular elites (United States, FM 3-07, 6.16).

Intelligence reform may require clarifying the roles of military and civilian intelligence agencies and establishing coordination mechanisms between them. The role of senior intelligence officers may need to be defined and civilian political oversight may need to be improved, in order to increase the legitimacy of intelligence institutions (United States, FM 3-07, 6.16). Intelligence services require clear guidance, preferably based on legislation, delineating permissible and non-permissible collection activities. These rules should also define the role of different actors, chain of command and permission required to conduct particularly sensitive collection activities and which agencies collect domestic and foreign intelligence. Such guidance should also determine how the information is distributed, how it is analyzed, by whom and for what purposes (Chuter, 15-16).¹⁸

Intelligence reform should separate intelligence collection structures from intelligence analysis structures. Procedures for securing intelligence facilities and information may need significant revamping.

We note that intelligence reform was rarely mentioned in the survey of SSR literature conducted, although, in many of the case countries examined, intelligence services were seen as key human rights abusers and the institutions most lacking in oversight. The donor community may appreciate the need for intelligence reform but view it as a subset of military reform—which is only partly correct—or may view professional intelligence either as a luxury that post-conflict countries cannot afford or as too inherently non-transparent and risky to fund. Those with current expertise in intelligence also may find little career benefit in providing this type of assistance. Our conclusion is that more work is needed to determine good practice in forming and reforming intelligence services.

Borders, Customs, Immigration, and Counter-Narcotics

Border forces should be established to confront and reduce cross-border criminal activities and other external security threats. Capacity to control persons, vehicles, and goods crossing borders needs to be built, along with a national border management system and strategy. The strategy should include steps to tackle corruption, organized crime, terrorism, and cross border criminality. Such initiatives should focus on all agencies involved in border management, including customs and immigration. While military presence at border crossings may increase tension with neighbouring states, host states should consider the role of the armed forces in monitoring borders. To improve border control, donors should work with neighbouring states to harmonize regional cross border cooperation and control (OECD Handbook, 2007, 151; United States, FM 3-07, 6.16).

¹⁸ For a discussion on the use of intelligence for the formation of national security policy and national security strategy, see the relevant practice note.

Similarly, improved customs capacity ensures the timely and proper payment of customs duties, as well as the identification and accounting of goods that enter the national territory. With improved capacity, customs officers will be able to restrict the entry or exit of goods when justified by public policy and national security, including purposes related to protection of public health, commercial and industrial property, and national historic or artistic treasures.

Peace support operations are often thought to have mandates to guard borders or to fight organized crime, but rarely have either and rarely do either well. Historically, mandates to build capacity for host state security forces have not routinely specified building local border management capacity (Andrews, Durch, and Hunt, 2007; Boucher and Holt, 2009).

FIELD EXPERIENCE OF DEFENCE SECTOR REFORM: FOUR CASES

This section discusses experiences with defence sector reform in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the DRC, and Afghanistan.¹⁹ In Sierra Leone, defence reform was led by an individual donor, the United Kingdom, using UK military personnel. In Liberia, army recruitment and reform was led by a contractor (on behalf of and coordinated by the US government). In the DRC, bilateral donors, the European Union, and the UN peace operation there (MONUC), all have worked to reform the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC) and relevant ministries while instability continued to flare in the country's eastern provinces. Finally, in Afghanistan, the United States, NATO, and individual donors are all involved in elements of DSR in the face of recrudescing insurgency, especially in those parts of the country adjacent to Pakistan.

Sierra Leone²⁰

In Sierra Leone, SSR was seen as key to sustaining good governance and the first pillar of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (Jackson and Albrecht, 3). While the UK first began supporting SSR efforts in Sierra Leone in 1999, when a Ministry of Defence Advisory Team deployed, wide-ranging SSR efforts began only after a DDR process was completed.²¹ In 2001, the UK and Sierra Leone agreed to work together to improve the effectiveness of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the corresponding national security management and decision systems. Starting in June 2000, the UK's International Military Assistance Training Team (IMATT) worked with the RSLAF towards "reducing the army's size, making it more militarily proficient and better trained; overhauling its command structures and staffing; introducing new training; making it democratically accountable both to the government and improving its civil relations; and delineating its roles and responsibilities in a post-conflict situation" (Ginifer 2006, 799). In June 2002, the UK's Security Sector Defence Advisory Team (SSDAT) launched a second effort to reform the RSLAF. This time its assessment recommended "effective engagement with civil society," including steps to ensure the force worked with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

¹⁹ The original fourth case was South Sudan SPLA transformation, but the Stimson team was informed by those conducting the field program that it had only just gotten underway in early 2009.

²⁰ This section is largely based on the Working Papers and Final Report published in late 2008 and February 2009 by Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson. For the final report, see Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007*, GFN-SSR and International Alert, February 2009.

²¹ For more on early UK efforts in this area, see Albrecht and Jackson, 22-43.

IMATT Structure

The commander of the team is also the UK Military Adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone. IMATT officers serve as advisors and staff in the RSLAF, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Defence (MoD), the National Security Council, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and other relevant institutions (Nelson-Williams, 8). As more Sierra Leoneans were trained, IMATT began to replace its officers in command and executive roles (Ginifer 2006, 801). While the 120-strong training company has left Sierra Leone, about 200 UK officers remained after 2002. Roughly 80 percent served in executive and advisory positions within the RSLAF. Six IMATT advisers (ranging from captain to lieutenant colonel) serve in each RSLAF brigade and support training, planning, personnel and operations (Malan 2008, 97).

By the end of 2006, IMATT had 100 officers from the UK and other countries. Its advisors remained deployed in RSLAF brigades and battalions, as well as at the main training centre, the officers' academy, at the operational level of the Joint Force Command HQ, and at the MoD (Le Grys, 3).

In terms of planning, UK support for SSR in Sierra Leone was framed by a ten year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2002. Funded by a combination of the then new Global and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools, the MOU was based on key principles including national ownership and a commitment, on the part of Sierra Leonean authorities, to reform the army, and develop and implement a national anticorruption strategy. The MOU also included a form of donor conditionality because it required Sierra Leone to meet certain performance standards in order to continue receiving £5 million per year in budget support. That conditionality's effectiveness was hampered by lack of capacity within the emerging Sierra Leonean institutions, and in the case of the MoD, the absence of a defence minister (the President serves in this capacity) to provide daily guidance and feedback in this area (Albrecht and Jackson, 85).

Host State Structures Supported

The UK has supported a range of institutions in Sierra Leone, ranging from the RSLAF, to the MoD, Ministry of Interior Affairs, National Security Council, the Sierra Leone Police, and other institutions. As such, reforms have ranged from the constitutional and legal level, to structural reforms of these institutions and infrastructure, training, and other direct support. This section focuses on the MoD and RSLAF.²²

The UK supported creation of an MoD with a civilian deputy minister and director general, as well as a National Security Council and supporting staff, headed by the National Security Coordinator, who is appointed by the president.²³ Reportedly, reform in that ministry was seen as a model for "public service reform and setting standards and...running effectively" (Albrecht and Jackson, 49).

²² For more on support to developing national security strategy and policy and the accompanying constitutional framework, see the national security strategies practice note.

²³ In June 1999, a small three person team

One important aspect of MoD reform was defining a “workable grading systems for officers.” To make the ministry function better, grades had to be created at the various levels and modified to so that civilians and their military counterparts would not face huge salary discrepancies, despite rank equivalencies (thus creating tensions between the two professional categories) (Jackson and Albrecht, 100). A major challenge remains payment of the security forces and defence personnel and Ministry of Finance accounting of MoD activities (Le Grys, 4).

While progress has been made in training, equipping, and increasing the capacity of the RSLAF, doubts remain as to whether the new forces are capable of policing (let alone securing) the country’s borders. Barracks have been built and donors have provided vehicles and communications equipment (Jackson and Albrecht, 87). Starting in March 2003, Operation Pebu aimed to construct adequate barracks for RSLAF personnel. The operation faced initial challenges in funding, design of the barracks (which initially were to be temporary quarters), project management (which required the embedding of IMATT engineers in the RSLAF Engineering Regiment), construction (commanders resisted assigning soldiers to build the facilities, as planned) and timeline (which was unrealistic) (Albrecht and Jackson, 106–107). Another important project was to develop a functional and sustainable system of benefits for personnel either killed or wounded in action. Because so many former soldiers could no longer serve but still needed to support their families, such a system was important and a killed-in-action committee was created to verify claims. By 2005, over 3,000 beneficiaries received killed in action payments and 290 personnel had been paid terminal and disability fees. Nonetheless, 345 personnel who had received medical disability certification are still waiting for their payments. Because of Sierra Leone’s inability to pay these fees, DFID provided payment. IMATT also played an important role in handling payments (Jackson and Albrecht, 109–110).

IMATT officers reportedly have made decisions routinely on behalf of their Sierra Leonean counterparts with little to no consultation—a particularly controversial aspect of UK involvement in Sierra Leone. However, Sierra Leoneans also reportedly were comforted by the UK presence and preferred dealing with IMATT officers to dealing with their RSLAF colleagues (Malan, 97; Nelson-Williams, 7). The UK presence has therefore had a contested effect on perceptions of national ownership and legitimacy, both for IMATT and the RSLAF.

IMATT Training Programs

In Sierra Leone, IMATT initially provided 12 weeks of basic training to RSLAF “intakes.” This Military Reintegration program included efforts to create “an army of reconciliation” (because former combatants were incorporated into the same service—in fact all RSLAF brigades have soldiers who are from all the different former combatant groups) as well as professional training for those personnel who were selected to remain in the service (Malan 97, 99). The team was expected to train 12,500 soldiers (including for the air and maritime components).

The different training modules include use of mortars and machine guns, air defence, and “range management.” The latter is important because of the history of war, the population’s sensitivity to hearing gunfire, and how dangerous firing ranges can be. A core training topic is international humanitarian law. Owing to a lack of experienced officers, the training program took some years to progress to platoon, company, and battalion level training, but IMATT introduced a series of

exams for the officer commissioning course which created objective standards for leadership positions. As of 2003, officer training and recruitment was expected to continue at the rate of 100 per year (Malan, 98–100). IMATT also has supported training for border duties and planned to train troops for deployment in ECOWAS, AU, and UN peace operations (Le Grys, 6).

Intelligence Reform

The 2002 National Security and Central Intelligence Act established the National Security Council and the Office of National Security (ONS) that supports it. The act also created the Joint Intelligence Committee and legalized the Central Intelligence and Security Unit. Finally, it introduced a role for external intelligence analysis and gathering, separating the *collection* of intelligence from its *analysis*. While IMATT helped create procedures to recruit appropriate personnel for these tasks, retention remains a problem (Konteh, 5). Moreover, the institutions set up by the Act were separated from the wider MoD reform process. This required establishing a separate DFID program to balance the MoD, Army and Police reform efforts and appointing of a dedicated advisor for this area. It quickly became apparent that intelligence requirements and needs surpassed the single advisor's capacity (Pickett, 2).

Liberia²⁴

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of August 2003 mandated creation of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) as the country's new integrated land force. International actors agreed that the United Nations would take the lead in reforming the police and justice sectors and that the United States would support the AFL, which benefited from US attention but also suffered setbacks due to program delays and cuts in funding.

To assess requirement for the AFL program, US European Command sent a survey team to Liberia in spring 2004, accompanied by personnel from State Department contractors DynCorp and Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE).²⁵ On the basis of this visit, the US military concluded that it did not have the spare capacity to support building the AFL, yet the United States had supported the country's Comprehensive Peace Agreement and was committed to its role as an implementer. Using contractors to train the AFL was the only way the US could maintain its commitment to Liberia, given ongoing military commitments elsewhere. The State Department asked DynCorp to provide technical support (the vetting and individual training of AFL recruits) and asked PAE to provide logistical support, NCO and officer training, and unit training to the company level (Crisis Group, 2009, 9, 13).

Lessons from Contracting

The DynCorp team faced unexpected challenges when it arrived in Liberia. Dyncorp found that the Charles Taylor-era AFL and MoD still needed to be demobilized, that a training base needed to be built, that a training centre needed to be refurbished, and that barracks and a mess hall needed to be built. Demobilization of the old AFL had, according to the 2005 MOU between the

²⁴ The materials for this case study are drawn in part from interviews with personnel involved with DynCorp and with US government officials.

²⁵ DynCorp and PAE had a pre-existing and open-ended (so-called "indefinite deliverables, indefinite quantities") contract with the US State Department that made them the go-to vendors for this type of support.

USG and the Transitional Government of Liberia, been assigned to the Transitional Government. In the event, Dyncorp demobilized over 13,000 soldiers and 400 ministry employees. Since many former AFL personnel were living on a military base with their families, they had to be moved to make room for the new soldiers (Crisis Group, 2009, 10).

Dyncorp's discovery that DDR had not occurred necessitated modification of its agreement with the US government. Following the 2004 assessment trip, DynCorp had submitted a conceptual framework for the training program to the State Department, which then came back to DynCorp as a statement of work. Because of the unexpected need to conduct DDR, which DynCorp noted to the State Department, the Department had to reissue a tender and obtain funding for the demobilization work. This of course delayed the recruiting, vetting, and training project. In addition, the extra delays decreased funds for the AFL recruiting, vetting, and training effort. While the initial AFL trainees were recruited by January 2006, the 12-week training program for the first 100 recruits did not formally commence until August 2006, was completed only in November, and just then followed by advanced individual training (44 in NCO training, 23 in medical training, and 38 slated for occupational specialty training; UN 2007, 6). Training for the second batch of new recruits was delayed from January to April 2007 (Crisis Group 2009, 13). Prior to commencement of training, Dyncorp reportedly had to deal with demobilizing and paying over 13,000 former combatants.

Legitimacy

In Liberia, the involvement of the US defence attaché reportedly provided much needed legitimacy to the US program. His involvement and his oversight role for the program highlighted its importance to US authorities, and Liberians perceived a US program that DynCorp merely executed (with former US Army and Marine Corps drill instructors, overseen by retired US military officers and senior NCOs). This is not to say that there was no controversy over the use of contractors. Liberian authorities initially asked to examine the US contract with DynCorp, something US law prevented. Instead, US officials worked closely with Liberian officials to give them choices in how the program was implemented (by consulting them, for example, on what kinds of equipment would be purchased through the program). Liberian civil society questioned the program's effectiveness, the role of the US companies, and the degree of Liberian involvement in shaping the program (Dempsey, 2008, 4; Malan, 2008, 24). In short, while using Dyncorp did not undermine locally-perceived US ownership of the program, it may have reduced the sense of *local* ownership the AFL reform process (Jaye, 2006, 13).

Drafting of a national security strategy also constitutes an effort to increase not just the legitimacy, but also the legality of the Liberian defence sector. Such a strategy was released in 2008, along with a National Security Strategy Implementation Matrix which assists in monitoring progress towards the strategy's objectives.²⁶

The Dyncorp Vetting Program

Dyncorp began its work with a public information campaign on the need to create a new force, its mission, its operating principles, and the requirements for the force. It then established a

²⁶ For more on the National Security Strategy of Liberia and the implementation matrix, see the National Security Strategies practice note. See also, Government of Liberia, National Security Strategy.

recruitment centre to accept applications. After applications were received, candidates were given a physical fitness test, a functional literacy test, and a medical exam. If candidates failed any of these tests, they were rejected. Given the number of applicants, this helped significantly reduce the pool of candidates that required further vetting.

For the vetting itself, an investigative team made up of one international and one local investigator interviewed each applicant. The team then conducted a background check and evaluated the candidates' truthfulness, worked to discover and document wrongdoing, and verified basic information such as age, citizenship, and employment history with family and acquaintances, and checked the references provided by the applicant. In many cases, candidates were asked to draw a map of where to find their family and references to help the investigators. Part of the process also included publicizing the names and pictures of candidates and encouraging citizens to report concerns to the vetting team. In those cases, the vetting team verified the allegations. The process for reporting remained anonymous to ensure that citizens would not be targeted for their potential role in derailing applications.

At the end of the process, a joint review board determined the suitability of each candidate. In the end, candidates were excluded only for "credible allegations of commission of one of more core crimes, discovery of a criminal background...association with any party or persons wanting to do harm to or interfere with reconstruction programs," financial crimes, mental instability, illegal drug use, and credible evidence of lack of trustworthiness. All evidence of wrongdoing had to be either documented or corroborated by several credible parties (McFate, 2007, 86–87). The political leadership—and this is important—accepted the rejection of applicants they may have favoured when the vetting team presented them with evidence of unsuitability. The process was therefore not politicized. The process led to the recruitment of 2,000 officers and soldiers, as well as a Quick Response Unit.

Insufficient Training

In Liberia, Dyncorp provided fifteen weeks of basic and advanced individual training. Lack of funding meant that the human rights and civil military relations portions of the training had to be eliminated. Moreover, individual training ate up funds that were to have been used for collective or unit training, and would have been difficult anyway, owing to the severe shortage of experienced Liberian NCOs and officers (those who had served in the pre-civil war army were nearing retirement). Thus individual training has not been followed by collective or unit training. Funding shortfalls also truncated training for about 90 MoD civilians prior to a planned "five-month mentoring and 'on the job' training program" (Dempsey, 2008, 3, 4). Nonetheless, training provided to MoD employees ranged from double entry bookkeeping to basic computer skills and program management. Assistance was also provided to draft a Defence Act (which has not yet passed) and a Uniform Code of Military Justice. As result of training, the MoD is perceived as competent and efficient—MoD officials have helped to train their ministry of finance counterparts in accounting for example—but the ministry's influence and power has become disproportionate to its role (author interviews).

Challenges with Command Capacity and Structure

Although training for officers and NCOs continues, “no provisions have been made as yet for accelerated promotion of those individuals.” As a result, units have been created at the squad, platoon, and company levels, but they have no sergeants, lieutenants, and captains to lead them (Dempsey, 2008, 4). The AFL is therefore being commanded, ad interim, by seconded ECOWAS officers from Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal (similar to embedded UK support in Sierra Leone). While Liberian officers were scheduled to begin a 39-week training program for command and staff positions, the course had not begun as of spring 2008 (Malan, 2008, 38–39).

One important challenge that the US did not consider when it decided to create a single combat brigade in Liberia was the associated headquarters command structure and support infrastructure, service headquarters, personnel management, and other requirements. (In Sierra Leone, by contrast, two structures were created: one for command and one for support.) In other words, US planners assumed that the brigade headquarters would be dual-hatted as the army command staff. This poses problems, however, in terms of decision-making because the role of a service headquarters is to provide command and control at the strategic levels, whereas brigade command is operational and tactical. Thus the question was whether a national combatant command or joint chiefs of staff was also needed.

The US initially chose to mirror its own national chain of command in Liberia, with the field commander reporting to the President through the Minister of Defence. Minister Brownie Samukai objected to this arrangement, however, because Liberian presidents historically have bypassed the Minister of Defence. The Chain of Command was therefore modified so that it is now President to Minister of Defence, to AFL Chief of Staff, to field commanders. In addition, a National Military Command Center was created, not formally differentiating between operational and service staffs.

Another structure in need of reform was the Liberian National Security Council, created by Charles Taylor in 1999, but never used. President Sirleaf reactivated the NSC upon taking office but it had no support staff. Cabinet members who serve on the NSC nonetheless meet. As part of MoD training, the US provided assistance in developing guidelines on how the NSC is supposed to work. The US also helped draft a Defence Act, similar to the US Title X, which the MoD then presented to the Legislature (Malan, 2008, 23). The legislature balked, believing that the drafting of legislation was its own job, so the act hasn’t passed and the issues contained in the Defence Act haven’t been addressed.

Questions on Sustainability and Independence

While a US contractor reportedly said that the AFL would be a fully capable force by 2009, analysts question the level of AFL independence given the fact that UNMIL will still be deployed in late 2009. A major problem with SSR in Liberia is that, initially, plans were not made to reform other security agencies, ranging from customs to intelligence (Crisis Group, 2009, 10).

In 2009, ECOWAS officers will still be commanding the AFL, so that issues of independent authority and sovereignty remain. The presence of foreign officers raises questions of how decisions are made, who the foreign officers report to, whose authority they fall under, and so on. Theoretically, seconded ECOWAS officers answer to the President of Liberia through the

Minister of Defence and Chief of Staff. Because the Chief of Staff is a Nigerian officer, while the AFL Force Commander is Liberian, there is lack of trust. Concerning reform of the officer corps, efforts have been made to bring back some officers at senior grades (Lt. Colonel and above). As a result, there are some Liberian colonels (including Liberian Americans who served in the US armed forces) and several Liberian lieutenants among the officer corps. Still, they report to ECOWAS officers.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Defence sector reform in the Congo suffers from a lack of planning, coherence, and coordination; there is no comprehensive SSR plan; and violence in the eastern provinces brought DSR to a halt from mid-2008 through the first quarter of 2009 (Crisis Group, 2006, 27 – Chart; UN 2009, paras. 81, 85). Initial assessments in the DRC underestimated the amount of time required to complete certain tasks, in some cases because the funding was inadequate, and in others because the logistics turned out to be more complicated than anticipated. Of all the armed groups in the DRC, the UN-trained and -supported FARDC may be the biggest threat to the safety and well-being of Congolese civilians (Hoebeke, Boshoff, and Vlassenroot, 2008, 5, 8). Its military defeat by Laurent Nkunda's *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP) in early 2009 and the necessity for Rwandan intervention to help FARDC deal with the remnant *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR) show that it also lacks military capacity, even with continuing “logistical and fire support” from MONUC. Seven “fragile,” “integrated” FARDC brigades totalling 25,000 combatants—many of whom, earlier this year, were members of militia groups, including the CNDP—operate in North Kivu against remaining FDLR without benefit of concerted retraining because they are, in effect, too busy to receive it (UN 2009, paras. 15, 85).

Existing reform plans also have serious and important gaps. They exclude intelligence services and border agencies, for example. Congolese authorities have shown varying degrees of support for the process, pushing for a large army and rejecting assessments that did not fit their objectives. The lack of consensus not just within national structures but between bilateral donors and between bilateral and multilateral donors and advisors means that SSR in the DRC has become a game of often contradictory diplomatic pressure with little concern for national ownership (Melmot, 21). Two major players in DSR to date have been EUSEC Congo and MONUC.

EUSEC Congo: Advising and Separating Chain of Command from Chain of Payment

Since its deployment to Kinshasa in June 2005, the European Union's EUSEC Congo, with 50 personnel (scheduled to go to 60 in 2009) has advised the FARDC chain of command (from the highest level to operational brigade level) and focused on developing safe mechanisms to separate chain of command from chain in payment in the FARDC (EUSEC RDC, November 2008, 1).

Since March 2007, EUSEC advisers have been working within the military staffs of the five military regions in the DRC. Their duties include advising commanders and supporting the reform of personnel management and FARDC financing. FARDC officers were until recently responsible for disbursing salaries to their soldiers. With rampant corruption, this meant junior officers and soldiers rarely received their salaries in full and often not at all. EUSEC “brigade

advisers have been supervising and monitoring the monthly disbursement of the integrated brigades' wages." In 2008, this began by conducting a biometric census of FARDC troops. EUSEC collected soldiers biometric data (finger prints and photographs) and issued them tamper-proof ID cards (that included individual once per pay period payment codes). In early 2009, the cards were put into use. According to EUSEC, the system will cut pay to "ghost" soldiers and increase pay to actual troops by an average 210 percent (EUSEC RDC, November 2008, 2). These efforts reportedly were derailed in implementation because, while soldiers were indeed paid directly, afterward they typically went down the road to a warehouse to pay their commanders (Author interview, 2009).

EUSEC efforts to improve human resource management and other administrative capacity also include training of administrators down to the brigade level. In 2008, EUSEC provided information technology training. In 2009, EUSEC plans to "help define basic criteria for selecting and training personnel, as well as assess infrastructure and equipment requirements" (EUSEC RDC, November 2008).

Army Reform

Army reform in the DRC has suffered from lack of coordination, lack of coherence, and the requirements of responding to a changing situation on the ground. The Global and All Inclusive Agreement that was supposed to end war in the DRC and create a new, integrated FARDC, is based on quotas for belligerent groups. The former national army, the *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC) was awarded 35 percent, *Mouvement de libération du Congo* (MLC) 17 percent, *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma* (RCDG) 28 percent, regional Mai Mai militias 8 percent, and others 12 percent, in a process known as *brassage* (Crisis Group, 2006, 17).

The process, however, faced a first hurdle: to determine how many combatants there were in Congo and how large the new army should be. The belligerent factions exaggerated their number of combatants in large part to ensure large quotas. At the Sun City talks (2002), the belligerents claimed there were 300,000 combatants, but a South African estimate put the figure at 130,000. An agreement was reached that the forces would be 125,000 strong (Crisis Group, 2006, 16).

The agreed-upon quota system presented an additional problem because the quotas had to be reflected in the officer ranks. A Commission was created to help the various factions decide which of their officers should also be awarded officer ranks in the new forces. This assumed similar rank structures within the various factions, however, and did not reflect the possibility that certain officers in some of the groups had not risen through the ranks, but merely been appointed. As a result, many senior officers were laid off to make room for representatives from other groups (Crisis Group, 2006, 16). Moreover, the Commission set up to help with the process was criticized for processing the leadership of certain groups (in particular the FAC), faster than others, leading to resentment among the officer corps. The process created an extremely top-heavy organization. Finally, the process perpetuated the practice of commanders declaring "ghost soldiers" from whom to receive additional salaries.

CONADER Falters and Runs Out of Money

The *Plan Stratégique National pour l'Intégration des Forces Armées*, devised in 2003, envisioned three steps for building the new 125,000-strong Congolese Army. The plan is dramatically behind schedule. Indeed, the short term target was to establish territorial forces around the country no later than 30 April 2006. The territorial forces would consist of light infantry brigades. In the immediate term, the various armed forces would gather at regroupement centres around the country and hand in their weapons. From there they would be sent, unarmed, to orientation centres where invalids, women, children, and personnel unsuitable for service would be demobilized. This portion was administered by the National Commission for Demobilization and Reinsertion (CONADER). Troops were scheduled to spend one week at CONADER centres to undergo "sensitization." They were then to be given the choice either to integrate into the FARDC or to return to civilian life. Combatants who chose demobilization were to be given \$110: \$50 for transport, \$50 for an allowance, and \$10 as a food ration. After that, they would receive \$25/month for one year (through a cell phone system). NGOs could provide vocational training.

The CONADER demobilization and incentive system quickly broke down, however. While combatants were supposed to travel to fixed centres, the logistics proved complicated and mobile centres were established to speed up the process. Still, the initial program ran out of money after two months and in one case, 1,000 former combatants who had chosen to be demobilized stayed at a centre for 11 weeks as they had not been paid (Crisis Group, 2006, 17).

Integration

The process of integrating members of the former belligerent forces was planned to occur in three phases, each delivering six integrated brigades, for a total of 18. Combatants who chose the army were sent to one of six integration centres for a 45-day training course. This training, called the *tronc commun*, was intended to get enough troops trained that they could secure the 2006 elections. In the medium term, the plan aimed to create a Rapid Reaction Force of 2–3 brigades (by 2007). In the long term (by 2010 and when MONUC was scheduled to begin its drawdown), the force was intended to be able to defend the country and would include heavy armoured units. The program planned for soldiers to be paid \$10/month, or "pennies a day" (Crisis Group, 2006, 18). The program fell far behind schedule and many brigades are integrated in name only. An abortive *mixage* process to combine existing, formerly hostile, fighting units in renamed brigades, was begun in early 2007 by FARDC and CNDP in North Kivu, which "came as a surprise to MONUC and the international community because they were never consulted on the program" (Boshoff, 2007, 4). The mixed brigades fell apart rapidly when exposed to combat.

Remaining Reform

As Hoebeke, et al., observe, DSR in the DRC has never included "the more structural components of SSR, including oversight and command and control mechanisms" (Hoebeke, Boshoff, and Vlassenroot, 2008, 4).

These were mainly advocated at the multilateral level – by the EU in its EUSEC and EUPOL missions.... The push for structural reform at the multilateral level increased the fear of the Congolese government that it could lose control and sovereignty over its security forces and this encouraged it to favour bilateral approaches. Until now only a

limited effort has been directed at the more structural changes at the strategic level of security system governance. The lack of coordination and coherence is also symptomatic of the general lack of direction by the Congolese government in other policy domains. The functioning of institutions is hindered by limited experience, extreme political fragmentation, local tensions, corruption and the absence of leadership and political will. (Ibid.)

An August 2005 Army Audit recommended that a census be conducted and that each soldier should receive a forgery-proof ID card, that army statutes be developed with basic rights and duties, that the chain of command be separated from the chain of payment, that army supply be reformed, centralizing control of logistics, and that the training program be improved (Crisis Group, 2006, 18).

In early 2009, the integration of CNDP forces into the FARDC promised to produce additional challenges since the forces were simply declared to be part of FARDC and no vetting occurred. Indeed, the multi-agency UN technical assessment mission that visited the DRC 23 February – 6 March 2009 recommended that a vetting program be instituted, implying the lack of same to date (UN, 2009, paras. 36, 77).

Afghanistan

Security sector reform in Afghanistan has suffered from lack of coordination, lack of planning, inconsistent application of recruiting standards to army and police recruits, the failure to fight corruption in the Afghan defence and interior ministries, and failure to adequately train recruits that manage to stay past the initial training. Afghanistan has been working with international partners to develop a more systematic approach to SSR. Part of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy (ANDS) includes a "security" pillar which states that "national security policy will be implemented through the Security Sector Reform program" (ANDS, 54). Additionally, the United States has developed its own "Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces," which includes steps for building the personnel and capacity not only of the ANA and ANP, but also of the relevant ministries and other institutions (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*).

Antonio Giustozzi argues that SSR in Afghanistan has been hampered not simply by lack of local ownership but by the "factionalization" of local ownership where, while assistance was accepted, reforms were not permitted to be anything more than cosmetic, and failed to break down patrimonial relations (Giustozzi 2008, 215). Problems with SSR began as soon as the DDR and DIAG (Disarmament of Illegal Armed Group) programs began. The two processes aimed to disband all armed groups so that only the police and army would remain. DDR proved so complex that the MoD tried to push a plan which would entail simply absorbing the militias into a new retrained Army, but this was rejected. Nonetheless, the various commanders inflated the number of troops under their control to obtain more senior positions for their factions and to receive the food money for their ghost soldiers (Giustozzi 2008, 217). The armed groups that failed to participate in the DDR process were branded illegal in late 2001.

Afghan National Army (ANA) Support

The US Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan (CSTC-A) has trained about 76,000 ANA soldiers. Training will continue for another five years until the ANA reaches 134,000. The US has built four ANA bases. This took care of an important problem: inadequate living conditions for ANA recruits. Other challenges include a US Government Accountability Office assessment that of 105 ANA units, responsible US officials consider only two capable of conducting missions independently. Moreover, the ANA suffers from a 40 percent shortage in equipment items—soldiers rarely have helmets and few have armour or armoured vehicles (Katzman 2009, 35; Giustozzi 2007, 49).

Because of insufficient logistics management capacity, CSTCA will also help develop linkages between brigades and national level headquarters. This has been accompanied by the development of command and control procedures through the creation of National Command Centres for both the military and police.

The United States has also supported the development of military justice mechanisms, and reports that “each corps has a staff judge advocate office comprised of prosecutors, one or more defence attorneys, and military judges” (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 20). A US or NATO/ISAF legal officer mentors his or her Afghan Corps Staff counterpart and a Court of Military appeals has five military judges. The five ANA corps also now house justice centres which double as courthouses and short term detention facilities and house office space of ANA attorneys. Military laws have been drafted (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 20).

Support to the Ministries of Defence and Interior

The US and CSTC-A have also been providing support to the Afghan ministries of Defence and Interior. Specifically, assistance to develop personnel management, military intelligence capacity and management, strategic defence planning, operational planning, force and training management, doctrine development, command and control mechanisms, logistics and acquisitions management, resource management and budgeting, military justice and legal capacity, ministerial administration, medical and health care, and capacity for disaster response and relief, as well as liaison and responding to parliamentary needs is being provided. Similar assistance is being provided to the ministry of the interior, where efforts include a Police Coordination Board which serves to coordinate activities in this area between the Afghan authorities and international assistance providers (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 12–13).

The MoD’s Inspector General (IG) system was expected to be fully functional by early 2009. “IG offices are at the MoD, GS [General Staff] Corps, and brigade levels and more than 98 percent of assigned IG personnel are school trained.” Hotlines to allow soldiers and police to call are functional for the MoD IG, the ANA GS IG, and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) internal affairs office (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 20).

Vetting, Desertion, and Representation Quotas

Vetting and recruiting are problematic in Afghanistan since many of the recruits sent to training have not been capable of passing the initial physical and literacy tests or of making it through the basic training course. To meet regional quotas, many recruits reported being sent to training

against their will and many had also been promised higher salaries and better living conditions than materialized. The US recruiting and training centres were also not run by the MoD. From 2003, recruitment centres staffed by the ANA but reporting to the US, established in various provincial capitals, obtained recruits by producing leaflets in local languages and explaining the benefits of joining the ANA. They also offered recruits the possibility of staying at the centre until they could be sent to Kabul for training. Finally, they gave the recruits \$1.00–\$1.50 in addition to food and lodging. With better recruits, fewer left training and the army's deployed desertion rate also dropped (Katzman 2009, 35; Giustozzi 2007, 49–58).

Nonetheless, the ANA reportedly had up to a 10% percent monthly absentee rate, partly due to the fact that recruits often return home for long periods simply to give their families their salaries, and many recruits refuse to serve far from home (Katzman 2009, 36; Giustozzi 2007, 49–58). In 2008, the reported reenlistment rate was 50% and the absentee rate, as of February 2008, had decreased to 8.4% (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 19). The MoD also realized that high desertion rates derived from the policy of asking warlords and others to send a certain quota of recruits. (Rumours that the Taliban were offering three times the salary were not substantiated and are considered a demoralization technique.) Important adjustments were made to decrease attrition and desertion: soldiers were given time to travel home to their families during their deployments, since this really was the only way for them to give their families their pay (the US was not able to find a way to securely and efficiently transfer pay without the soldiers doing so); and pay for soldiers was increased from \$50 to \$70 a month (NCOs also got \$70 and officer pay increased from \$150 to \$300). In addition, soldiers receive \$2/day when they are in the field, thereby bringing deployed pay closer to \$100 per month. Problems nonetheless remain since there are reports that officer posts can be purchased at the MoD for \$5,000 and that officers and NCOs were still stealing soldiers' wages (Giustozzi 2007, 52–54). Low reenlistment and absenteeism may be mitigated by the announced increase in pay for soldiers, to \$110 per month and when more systematic systems for electronic payment are more widely established (Younossi et al., RAND 2009, 18).

Sustainability

Despite progress in training, concerns about the ANA's future include fiscal sustainability (if the government is to fund the force itself) and the need for continued international support (both in terms of sufficient personnel and financial support), and disproportionate representation of Tajiks in the force (Fair and Jones, 10). Indeed, at the beginning of the ANA creation process, the Northern Alliance weighted recruitment toward its Tajik base. This caused Pashtuns to refuse to join. The problem was reportedly alleviated with the naming of a Pashtun defence minister in December 2004 (Katzman 2009, 36).

Education and Training

Decisions need to be made on scope of training both in terms of numbers trained and in terms of depth of training received. The training program for ANA has been adjusted several times since its creation. In 2002, the basic training program for battalions was ten weeks, with a full training program expected to take six months. By December 2004, the basic training program was extended to 14 weeks (because the recruits required more training). In 2005, the US decided to

take the lead in the basic training program and asked ISAF to provide NCO, officer, and specialist training (Giustozzi, 2007, 49).

The initial training has been criticized for being so rudimentary that soldiers are unable to march or perform basic drills, that lack of discipline is pervasive (soldiers do not wear their uniforms consistently), and that training is so basic that forces have trouble operating without outside (coalition) support (Giustozzi 2007, 55). Today, ANA training includes a 10 week “basic warrior training” program that includes elementary soldier and infantry skills (how to handle weapons, shooting, guard duty, mines, prisoner processing, navigation, and first aid). Human rights training has been added. ANA soldiers are also being trained to explain the nature of the new force (particularly its non-factional nature) to Afghan civilians (Giustozzi 2007, 62). After this training, 30 percent of the soldiers then attend a six to eight week advanced combat training program on combat arms, combat support, and combat service support. This course can only process 8,000 soldiers per year. US Special Operations Forces provide training to the ANA’s elite commando force (Fair and Jones 2009, 9–10). According to the US plan for the ANSF, training begins with Afghan trainers (with international supervising) providing Initial Entry Training at the Basic Warrior Training Course (BWT). Soldiers then receive branch specific Advanced Combat Training. Units are then fielded and sent to their brigade or corps areas for 60 days of individual and collective training before being deployed for combat. Combat units continue to receive support from either an OMLT or an ETT (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 16).

When officers enter the ANA (and they must have basic literacy skills to do so) their training and education process depends on their past experience: “officers with previous experience in the former Afghan Army attend an eight-week Officer Training Course which provides professional ethics training. New officers attend the six-month Officer Candidate School or the four-year National Military Academy of Afghanistan” (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 18).

ANA reform and training has been criticized for lack of local ownership. The US-run training program does not include small unit training, anti-tank or anti-aircraft training and remains closely supervised by the US. Afghans are also unfamiliar with the western structures they consider imposed on the ANA—like the importance of NCOs, voluntary recruitment, discipline measures, and the focus on light infantry. Even the recruiting process now has a dedicated structure (run by the US) which is outside the MoD chain of command. Finally, field leadership and close air support are still provided by embedded trainers, down to the platoon level (Giustozzi 2007, 221, 223).

Education efforts include the expansion of military education institutions, which began six years ago with the creation, by France, of the Command and General Staff Course. In April 2009, CSTC-A opened the Command and Staff Colleges in Kabul which has four courses designed to train and educate officers across the ANA and ANP.²⁷ Other efforts include the creation of a military high school in Kabul.

²⁷ CSTC-A Press Release, “Command and Staff College Opens,” 30 April 2009.

Advising and Mentoring

In Afghanistan, Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) from the US and 14 other countries assist the ANA. OMLTs consist of 12–19 personnel (Katzman 2009, 35; author interview). One challenge for mentors and Afghan units is that a typical tour for an OMLT is six months but an ANA working cycle is 9 months, leading to lack in mentoring continuity (Younossi et al, 39). There is a shortfall in mentors for the Afghan security forces: 70 percent for the Afghan National Police (ANP) and 30 percent for the ANA (Fair and Jones 2009, 1). The US is also supporting the rebuilding of the Afghan Air Force, which existed prior to the Soviet invasion and currently has 400 pilots for its 47 helicopters and cargo aircraft. Afghanistan also wants Pakistan and Uzbekistan to return 26 aircraft that were flown there during past conflicts. The Afghan government hopes to have 62 aircraft by 2011 (Katzman 2009, 36).

While several initiatives to improve management of the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been planned and considered (and have failed to be implemented), a European Commission program to establish “new and effective posts along the borders with Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Iran” includes a \$4.6 million training program (Fair and Jones 2009, 22; Katzman 2009, 20).

Disagreement over Police Role

In Afghanistan, there is disagreement over whether the international community should build a civilian police force or a paramilitary force (the former could focus on protecting civilians and community policing while the latter would likely focus on counter-insurgency). CSTC-A is now leading assistance for the ANP. As part of this support, the US is working with the Ministry of the Interior to “restructure police pay, adjust the rank structure, and reorganize police deployments.” Reform within the ministry itself includes “rank reform, pay reform, biometric identity cards, and electronic funds transfer” (Fair and Jones 2009, 11–13).

Reform of the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) suffered because President Hamid Karzai wanted to use appointments to the ministry to reward his allies. By 2005, the international community began to reform the pay and rank structure within the MoI. An Afghan Rank Reform Commission was created but the vetting process included human rights vetting conducted by the US State Department and UNAMA, as well interviews with a selection board that included some non-Afghans. The process also included a qualifying exam. The Commission did succeed in recruiting qualified personnel but the president bypassed the process, reappointing 14 “generals” who had failed the exam and appointing others by decree. He retracted the appointments only under intense international pressure. The qualifying exam itself was criticized, however, because cheating was common (illiterate candidates suddenly had university degrees), candidates changed their ethnic backgrounds to meet quota requirements, there was no outside monitoring of the exams, and so, unqualified recruits were hired. In these processes, there is both a need to ensure local ownership while maintaining an outside monitoring structure to ensure that the process is not corrupted by local officials (Giustozzi 2008, 224–226).

Border Capacity Building

To support counter-narcotics in Afghanistan, the US is also helping develop an intelligence fusion cell, the border police, and counter-narcotics police (Katzman 2009, 20). CSTCA is also working

to build the capacity of the Afghan Border Police and the Afghan Customs Department and US mentors serve at various border crossings (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 31). In addition, a five pillar Afghan National Drug Control Strategy (the five pillars are public information, alternative development, elimination or eradication, interdiction, and law enforcement and justice reform) (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 30). A Counter-Narcotics Academy, funded by CSTCA is training troops to form a Counter Narcotics Infantry Kandak (battalion) which will “provide security for MoI eradication operations” (US DoD, *Plan for ANSF*, 31). Additionally, Afghanistan created a Counter-Narcotics Police (Afghanistan, ANDS, 58).

Another US effort is the “Community Guard” program to build capacity for tribal structures and tribal militias to support local policing. Those who join the militias, which are set to begin forming in early 2009, will be given \$200 per month. The US does not plan to give weapons to the militias but the Afghan government may do so. There is discussion as to whether this contradicts US support for building the central government. In Afghanistan, the upper house opposed this program in a resolution it passed in November 2008 (Katzman 2009, 28).

ITERATIVE LESSONS OBSERVED

Challenges in defence sector reform vary by program component. Recruiting and vetting appear to have found a model in Liberia but that process is extremely time-consuming and expensive. Still, when committed to building a certain type of force, there seem to be few alternatives to the system DynCorp used in Liberia. Certainly, the low quality of troops in the DRC and the continuing challenges of building a competent force in Afghanistan show that literacy and physical tests do not suffice in determining whether recruits should be accepted. With regard to training, programs to date have focused on basic and advanced individual training and infrequently progress to unit level training (from platoon to brigade). Steps for conducting effective unit training therefore need to be developed (perhaps using doctrine from advanced militaries). These steps are, however, more complex and expensive than individual training, and may require extended periods of embedding of advisory personnel with the new units, the length of time depending on many variables, including the basic coherence of the units being advised, the amount of political will invested by the host state political leadership, and the level of operational stress faced by the units (from a full peacetime environment to combat engagement).

Concerning reform of the various ministries, pervasive corruption and lack of local ownership seem to be the biggest challenge to lasting reform. In countries with entrenched patrimonial and patronage networks, replacing that culture with one of service-, merit- and performance-based recruitment and promotion is tremendously difficult. It is even more difficult, as we have seen in the DRC and Afghanistan, when the central government has not fully established its authority throughout the country and when the new security forces, upon completion of training, are immediately expected to fight an insurgency. In all of the countries studied, however, separating chain of payment from chain of command seems to be an absolute necessity if the forces are going to do their jobs and serve adequately. Because of pervasive corruption and lack of banking infrastructure, creative solutions like paying soldiers through cell-phone systems or smart, tamper-proof ID cards need to be closely examined and, if determined to be feasible, quickly implemented.

Finally, donors should not build some forces at the expense of others (for instance, forgetting to build border control capacity).

The question of sequencing does not have a clear answer though it seems obvious that important first steps are the comprehensive vetting of all existing personnel to ensure their legitimacy in the eyes of the population, setting up secure payment systems, and providing support long enough that such initial steps are sustainable by the host state and that it has the will to sustain them. Sequencing and relative emphasis between different military force elements (land, air, border, navy or coast guard) will be circumstance-dependent. Sequencing and relative emphasis between military and law enforcement and justice system elements is beyond the scope of this note but likely to be a major policy decision to be made collaboratively by donors and host state political leadership.

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