

A father with his son and homemade firearm shelter after fleeing attackers who destroyed their home. In northern Central African Republic, an estimated 125,000 people have fled such attacks.
SVEN TORFINN/PANOS

THE SECURITISATION OF AID? RECLAIMING SECURITY TO MEET POOR PEOPLE'S NEEDS

Both in countries where fragility is widespread and in those that are more stable, there is a moral case for ensuring aid effectively addresses the insecurity many poor people face.

To date, the international community has had only mixed success in this regard and so the recent focus on conflict and security within the development agenda is to be welcomed. But many worry that the attention being given to these issues is motivated less by a concern for ordinary people and more by the perceived security interests of donors, one aspect of what is often referred to as the 'securitisation' of aid.

We are right to reject such securitisation but, whilst doing so, must not lose sight of aid's potential to promote genuine security and justice for poor people. Merely defending 'business as usual' would be to let down some of the very people our aid is meant to serve.

This briefing is aimed at the UK's development community and does two things:

- Firstly, it distinguishes between the potential for 'securitisation' to influence, on the one hand, *where* and *why* aid is allocated and, on the other, *how* that aid is used.
- Secondly, it sets out a 'developmental' approach to meeting poor people's security needs and calls on the UK's development community to champion such a positive vision through its advocacy and programming.

BOX 1 THE 'DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY'

Throughout this briefing, Saferworld makes extensive reference to the 'development community'. We recognise that this describes a diverse set of actors including, amongst others, officials from donor governments and aid agencies, international NGOs of varying sizes, national civil society organisations, beneficiaries, parliamentarians, the media, academics and engaged members of the public.

However, in this briefing we use the phrase to specifically denote the community of UK-based NGOs engaged in international development, of which Saferworld is a part. Whilst this is also the primary audience for this briefing, it is hoped that the wider development community will also find it of interest.

“The problem with debates around development and security is that ‘Security’ can be used to denote very different things.”

South Sudan has limited basic services: meeting people’s expectations for progress, including in security provision, will be crucial for a peaceful future. PETE MULLER/SAFERWORLD



BOX 2 CONFLICT AND INSECURITY UNDERMINE DEVELOPMENT

This briefing is about the role that aid can play in helping to meet poor people’s security and justice needs, which Saferworld believes are development goals in their own right. However, insecurity is a frequent driver of violent conflict and there is much research to show that conflict and insecurity are extremely corrosive to sustainable development – escalating the disparities between rich and poor, weakening institutions, fragmenting communities, reversing economic growth, causing hunger, destroying roads, schools and clinics, and forcing people to flee across borders.

Paul Collier, Professor of Economics at Oxford University, estimates that for a low income country the average cost of a civil war is about \$54 billion (*Conflict and Development: Peacebuilding and Post-conflict Reconstruction*, House of Commons, 2006) and has

DEBATING AID AND SECURITY

Poor people want to feel safe just like anyone else. Security and access to justice for poor people are development goals in their own right whether in the midst of endemic violence, such as in parts of Somalia or Afghanistan, or in more stable countries where the police and judicial services may still be inadequate, unfair or abusive. Basic security and the rule of law are also necessary for other areas of development to take root and flourish.

Although programme staff often recognise this through their experience on the ground, we in the development

community have largely failed to engage with aid’s potential to help address poor people’s insecurity. Instead our focus has most often been on addressing the humanitarian need generated by conflict and insecurity, and calling for other parties to protect civilian populations.

Without doubt, it is *essential* to address humanitarian need and protect civilians: adequate material resources and political will *must* be dedicated to these goals. But such efforts can only ever be ‘sticking plasters’, mitigating the worst effects of conflict and insecurity on civilian populations. So alongside these vital efforts, we must also play the most constructive role we can in addressing the root causes of violence and meeting poor people’s security needs.

However, the problem with debates around development and security is that ‘security’ can be used to denote very different things. Donors nearly always have multiple competing interests in developing countries and this is particularly true in many of those considered ‘fragile’ or ‘conflict-affected’. Sometimes action taken in the name of ‘security’ has little to do with the wellbeing of poor or vulnerable populations. So when it is suggested that aid is used to ‘promote security’ the key questions are about how it is to be used, where, and for what purpose. While we must guard against the potential negative effects of linking development more closely with security, we must equally recognise aid’s potential to promote increased security and justice for poor people. ‘Throwing the baby out with the bathwater’ – rejecting *any* role for aid in promoting security out of fear it will be misused – would be failing vulnerable and marginalised populations just as much as inappropriately diverting or manipulating development funds would.

And so, if we are to ensure that our aid truly meets the needs of those we seek to represent, all of us in the UK development community need to have a more sophisticated, interconnected conversation about aid, development and security; and how to translate this into effective, equally coherent programming.

Not engaging constructively with this issue only risks further ‘securitisation’ as other policy communities step in to fill the vacuum in thinking. However, if we use our collective advocacy to define and champion a positive agenda then there is real opportunity to ensure the UK’s aid plays a more effective role in meeting the security needs of poor and vulnerable communities.

written of conflict as one of the ‘traps’ that can prevent poor countries from successfully developing.

In a 2007 report into the illicit arms trade, *Africa’s Missing Billions*, Oxfam, Amnesty International and Saferworld calculated that armed conflict had cost Africa around \$284 billion between 1990 and 2005 – which is almost as much as the total amount of aid the continent received in the same period.

And, according to DFID staff estimates from 2009, ‘fragile’ countries appear to be way off-course for meeting the Millennium Development Goals, with only:

- 14% on track to achieve the maternal health MDG
- 17% on track to achieve the HIV/AIDS MDG
- 28% on track to achieve the gender equality MDG

A women's paralegal committee in Nepal mediates disputes and provides a link to formal justice mechanisms. TOM VAN CAKENBERGHE/SAFERWORLD



BOX 3 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'AID'?

In this briefing, 'aid' is used only to refer to the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) and not the broader range of resources that the UK directs overseas, such as military co-operation or commercial support. Captured within the strict definition of ODA are many different types of aid (such as debt relief, technical co-operation and budgetary support) but, for this briefing, the key distinction is between two broad 'purposes' for ODA: humanitarian aid and development assistance.

'Humanitarian aid' aims to provide immediate relief and dignity to those in crisis. It is inherently short-term, crisis-oriented and reactive. Ensuring that they can always reach populations in need regardless of political considerations has led humanitarian actors to establish principles of 'independence, impartiality and neutrality' to guide their work.

By contrast, 'development assistance' aims to transform the physical conditions

and societal or power relations that keep people living in poverty. It is long-term and as much concerned with empowerment, justice, combating marginalisation and promoting rights as it is with 'technical' or 'infrastructure' support. In this way, and because introducing *any* new resources to societies has consequences, development is *always* political at the point where it happens, even if donors succeed in untying it from their own political ambitions.

Although Saferworld believes humanitarian aid should always be 'conflict-sensitive' and attempt to best lay the foundations for peace within the restrictions of the humanitarian principles, it is primarily *development* aid that has the potential to promote long-term, sustainable security for vulnerable populations. This is important as whether we are discussing humanitarian aid or development aid will have a bearing on how we think about 'securitisation'.

In the complex realities of 'fragile states', however, there are rarely such clear cut distinctions between development and humanitarian aid. Crises rarely resolve themselves and in protracted crises there may be humanitarian need despite many years of relief efforts, especially if the root causes of these crises are neglected (as has largely been the case in Somalia, for instance). In such situations, the distribution of humanitarian relief can become enmeshed in the way a society operates – another set of resources to be controlled, capitalised on and fought over.

These 'grey areas' between humanitarian aid and development aid pose a challenge because the traditional humanitarian principles alone may be an inadequate framework for humanitarian actors to use in navigating the complex political and security context of which they may have become a fundamental part.

‘SECURITISATION’ AND THE WHERE AND WHY OF AID ALLOCATION

STARTING FROM THE SAME PLACE

‘Security’ is a small word with many meanings; similarly ‘securitisation’. Without being clear about exactly how we are using these words there is potential for ambiguity. The risk is that we use the same words to discuss different things, perhaps without even realising we are talking at ‘cross-purposes’.

In order to help cut through this confusion, it may be helpful to think about different approaches to ‘security’ in terms of *what* issues are considered important for achieving security and whose security is in question.

In terms of what contributes to security: ‘hard security’ approaches tend to emphasise the importance of physical

force and countering perceived threats, while ‘softer’ approaches often stress the role of influence and addressing long-term drivers of insecurity.

When thinking about whose security is in question, there has historically been an assumption – and often still is – that ‘security’ refers primarily to states or regimes. More recently, however, alternative approaches have gained ground, such as the concept of ‘human security’ which takes the security of individuals and communities as its starting point. This has widened the idea of security beyond physical safety and ‘freedom from fear’ to highlight other important aspects needed to ‘secure’ human wellbeing – such as political empowerment or ‘freedom from want’ (having access to health

and education services, for instance).

The concepts of state and human security are not mutually exclusive. The human security of vulnerable individuals and communities relies, at least in part, on the services of a functioning and responsive state – which itself needs security. In this way, the relationships between donors, national governments and individual communities are *all* important. Similarly, whilst hard security interventions (such as the technical aspects of small arms control or professionalising a country’s armed forces) will often be a necessary measure, they are far from the whole story when it comes to meeting poor people’s security needs.

Instead, we need to think about an ‘inclusive’ approach to security that



A Saferworld and FIQ community safety site in Kosovo – residents were concerned about their children walking down a dangerous road with no pavement. SAFERWORLD



BOX 4 THE ORIGINS OF ‘HUMAN SECURITY’

The UNDP’s groundbreaking 1994 Human Development Report introduced a new concept of ‘human security’. As its forward put it:

“For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with the threats to a country’s borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security.

For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime

– these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world.”

The report sought to deal with these concerns through a new paradigm of sustainable human development, capturing the potential peace dividend, a new form of development co-operation and a restructured system of global institutions.

However, the HDR did not pull its punches when it came to recognising the political role aid could have in promoting human security, suggesting that “...donor countries should reduce allocations of official development assistance if a recipient country insists on spending more on its armies than on

the social welfare of its people.” (See also Box 9: ‘Security sector reform’ – a development aspiration?)

And as ‘security from crime’ suggests, it recognised that freedom from fear was a legitimate concern as well as freedom from want.

More fundamentally, even if we recognise the primacy of human security as an objective we cannot ignore the role of hard security in helping to deliver it. Neither hard *nor* human security will deliver the development outcomes we want on their own – both are necessary and the real challenge for development actors is to ensure that the needs of poor people are met throughout.

recognises the needs of both states and communities, responds to the wide range of factors that constitute sustainable security, and always places a premium on democratic accountability and transparency.

WHERE AND WHY AID IS ALLOCATED

If a short-term vision of national security was to begin to define the aid agenda, with aid and development being seen as tools of 'soft power' useful for advancing national interests, then the question would be who is 'holding the purse strings' – which parts of government make decisions on where programmes are targeted, what criteria do they use to make these decisions, and what pressures do they face? Oxfam's recent report, *Whose aid is it anyway? Politicising aid in conflicts and crises*, explores these issues in valuable detail.

Saferworld believes that the populations of 'conflict affected and fragile' countries have a genuine developmental need (see Box 2: Conflict and insecurity undermine development) and that the additional complexities of getting development to 'stick' in these countries means they are deserving of additional attention from the UK – which has led international efforts to find more appropriate ways to 'do development' in such challenging contexts. However, we strongly support the idea that the allocation of the UK's development assistance should be predicated on a global assessment of the needs of those it is intended to benefit, rather than the UK's own interests.

Moreover, the issue of *where* aid is allocated is a product of *why* it is being allocated. Sometimes, 'realpolitik' may tempt donors to consider their aid as a political lever, rewarding policies that are seen as in their interest in strategically important developing countries or supporting the survival of regimes they consider friendly. Saferworld firmly believes that, where aid is given conditionally, conditionality should be seen as a tool for promoting good governance and combating corruption, ensuring adherence to



Kyrgyz and Tajik neighbours celebrate Eid together. Cross border relations are strained and this event is the first step towards a joint community security project. MAIJA PAASIARO/SAFERWORLD

BOX 5 NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring the security of their citizens is a legitimate concern for all governments, including donors. It is worth taking a moment to distinguish the subordination of international development to national security interests from the more progressive idea that donors' sustainable, long-term 'national security' relies in part on genuine development contributing to a more stable world order where everyone is more prosperous, peaceful and secure.

But the relationship between donors' own national security and the safety and security of vulnerable populations overseas is complicated and the 'devil is in the detail'. Saferworld believes that aid should always be given first and foremost to meet the needs of the world's poorest or

most vulnerable populations. However, working with these populations to ensure aid supports genuine, locally owned measures to address insecurity, along with broader poverty reduction, is a crucial step in supporting the development of more stable, resilient societies better able to manage their conflicts without resort to violence – and so contribute to a more stable world order.

In this way, effective aid may well have 'knock on' benefits for donors' own security over the long-term (and this is a legitimate point for donors to communicate to their taxpayers): but to actually be effective in this way, aid should always be targeted primarily at the genuine needs of poor and vulnerable populations.

human rights standards and providing an incentive for peace.

This is particularly important as, beyond influencing where aid is spent, such an instrumental view of aid is likely to affect the way programming is conceived and

delivered. Successfully meeting poor people's security needs will need more than just 'throwing money' at the problem: aid needs to be appropriate to these environments and so asking 'how' is at least as important as 'how much'.

'SECURITISATION' AND HOW AID IS USED



A village elder in the Karamoja region of northern Uganda. Karamoja is affected by high levels of conflict and insecurity intimately connected with its low level of development.

MARC HOFER/SAFERWORLD

BOOTS, GUNS AND DEVELOPMENT AID

A 'hard' vision of security may tend to emphasise interventions aimed at supporting the operational capacity of defence and security forces in developing countries, so called 'train and equip' programmes. A prominent concern for the UK development community is that development assistance risks being spent on such programmes, so it is worth noting that the UK is subject to both international and national rules on what it can spend its aid on.

Internationally, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's 'Development Assistance Committee' (OECD-DAC) sets rules about what kind of spending can and cannot be counted as Official Development Aid (ODA). This is more than technical 'bean counting': when it comes to spending on conflict, peace and security, the OECD-DAC rules provide a firewall against the misuse of aid (for more information, see the OECD-DAC 'ODA casebook on conflict, peace and security activities').

ODA can be spent on:

- Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution
- Building civil society's capacity to scrutinise the security system
- Supporting parliaments, government ministries, law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to improve democratic governance and civilian control of the security system
- Technical co-operation to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons
- Training of police in civil policing (but not in counter-subversion, the suppression of political dissidence, or intelligence-gathering on political activities)
- Some bilateral expenses incurred as part of the post-conflict peacebuilding phase of UN peace operations

But specifically **excluded** from counting towards ODA is:

- The supply, or financing, of military equipment or services. This rule is so strict that even training military personnel in non-military matters such as human rights law is excluded and must be funded outside of ODA.

In the UK, the work of DFID is protected by the International Development Act 2002 which provides the legal authority for most of DFID's expenditure. The act establishes 'poverty reduction' as the over-arching purpose of British development assistance, either by furthering sustainable development or promoting the welfare of people.

Saferworld supports the International Development Act, and sees it as helping to define an approach to addressing conflict and promoting security and justice that promotes the welfare of people in developing countries as a component of sustainable development.

However, despite these firewalls, an overly simplistic approach to promoting security could still lead to the 'securitisation' of aid and points to why it is important we develop a progressive, nuanced approach to what really promotes poor people's security and access to justice.

A Soldier discusses plans for a new school and health center with community leaders at a meeting Mian Poshteh, Helmand Province, Afghanistan.
KATE HOLT/IRIN



BOX 6 CIVILIAN-MILITARY CO-OPERATION BEYOND AFGHANISTAN

The prosecution of the 'War on Terror', particularly in Afghanistan, has seen the military giving aid in order to win the 'hearts and minds' of local populations, often through 'Quick Impact Projects' such as building a new mosque or school in a village the armed forces have just secured. Or armed forces may expect civilian development advisers to consolidate combat gains by 'doing development' in areas that have been cleared of insurgents.

In both these cases, of aid being given by or for the armed forces, whilst it may be understandable that the military want to use every means possible to achieve a positive outcome, this approach shows little understanding of what development means, the time frame it involves, or what kind of engagement with local communities produces successful development outcomes.

Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that such approaches are largely ineffective and often counter-productive to even short-term military ends, let alone the long-term wellbeing of the communities

involved. But is this better thought of as the 'militarisation' of aid, rather than its 'securitisation'? And does it mean there is no role for the defence community beyond the deployment of armed forces in promoting the security of vulnerable populations?

Much of the current thinking on how to approach 'fragile states', both from the UK government and civil society, is being generated by recent experiences in Afghanistan. But Saferworld urges both the UK government and the development community to look beyond Afghanistan when developing ideas for how to promote security overseas. UK troops are due to withdraw from Afghanistan in 2014 and a military-led stabilisation response is unlikely to be appropriate or feasible for addressing overseas insecurity in future contexts. So extrapolating lessons, good or bad, from Afghanistan alone will not be sufficient for determining how best to help the populations of range of conflict-affected and fragile states.

This is particularly true when looking at the appropriate relationship between civilian and military actors.

Although there are certainly serious issues around how Western civilian and military actors could – or should – work together whilst pursuing different mandates in Afghanistan, this is not the only possible relationship between civilian and military actors attempting to promote improved security conditions for poor people.

It is in the interests of ordinary communities in developing countries that their military and security forces be overseen by civilian agencies and held publicly accountable. Ensuring this level of accountability, and that security actors are responsive to the populations they serve, will mean national and international civil society being supported to engage closely with security actors. At the same time the reality is that, in some contexts where the armed forces enjoy privileged access to power or influence, UK defence representatives may enjoy greater traction in working to support democratic reforms than their civilian counterparts and so should be included as part of co-ordinated UK efforts to promote reform.

In rural Yemen, children are encouraged to carry guns as manhood is linked to bearing arms.
ADEL YAHYA/IRIN

THE 'SECURITISATION' OF THE DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE

Saferworld firmly believes that security and justice have an important place within the development agenda and that poor people's security and access to justice are development goals in their own right. However, the fact that sustainable development is unlikely without basic security does not mean that *any* 'security' intervention is 'developmental' or will have a positive development gain.

As in the rest of development, good intentions alone are not enough. Even if delivered in good faith, a simplistic understanding of the relationship between security and development is likely to be translated into bad programming (for instance, investing heavily in the 'capacity' of local security forces without supporting concomitant measures to help the public hold them to account).

The answer lies in the basics of good development practice. Years of research and analysis from around the world show that aid works best when it meets communities' real needs, is locally-owned, and planned and implemented with the full and meaningful participation of those that it affects. Aid that aims to promote poor people's security is no different: to be *effective* in both promoting security and broader development gains, 'security interventions' need to be based on the real needs of local populations and not on predetermined ideas of what will help promote security, however well-intentioned.

“There is a strong argument for the ‘developmental-isation’ of the security discourse.”

Rather than a securitisation of the development discourse, Saferworld believes there is a strong argument for the 'developmental-isation' of the security discourse. But for this to happen, we in the development community will need to find ways of engaging with notions of security that go beyond simply rejecting a link between security and development or dividing interventions into 'security' and 'development' silos. Instead, we must find a way to articulate a fuller, more positive vision of what can be done to promote poor people's security and access to justice.



BOX 7 YEMEN: DELIVERING NEITHER DEVELOPMENT NOR SECURITY

Yemen faces a number of social, economic and political challenges. The country is experiencing low-level violent conflict fuelled by widespread poverty, high unemployment, limited and uneven access to services and increasing radicalisation – especially among the country's youth (around half of Yemen's citizens are under 16).

Conflict over dwindling resources affects all levels of Yemeni society, from localised conflicts over land and water to national-level political struggles. Oil revenue supports Yemen's patronage system but reserves are estimated to run out in the next ten years. Water resources are diminishing rapidly and a water crisis is imminent. The country is also heavily dependent on food imports, making it especially vulnerable to global price shocks.

Added to this, there is a widespread proliferation of illicit small arms – per capita Yemen is the second most armed society in the world with around 6–10 million weapons for a population of 23 million people.

And stuck between a judiciary struggling to address corruption, a state that is unable to enforce the rule of law in much of the country, and deteriorating traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, many Yemenis find themselves in a vacuum when it comes to law enforcement and the provision of security.

But external Western involvement frequently plays into these complicated dynamics, particularly 'hard security' counter-terrorism policies and state-heavy 'stabilisation' measures. Inter-

national assistance that targets only conflict-affected areas risks neglecting the wider competition over resources in Yemen and worsening internal conflicts. The way the international community has conceived the 'problems' in Yemen, and defined the solutions, has sometimes become part of the problem itself: support to state institutions may do more harm than good because the legitimacy and competency of the state itself is in question.

For instance, the approach of some in the international community has focused on strengthening the state-level security apparatus whilst delivering 'quick wins' at the community level rather than long-term sustainable development. This risks exacerbating conflict since state security mechanisms are perceived by many in the local population as an aggressor that threatens their livelihoods and wellbeing – security assistance will not contribute to stability if the public fears the military and does not want it strengthened.

Instead, whilst security sector reform is a crucial element of the support Yemen needs from the international community, it should, firstly, aim to empower ordinary Yemenis to become meaningfully involved in security decision-making and oversight and, secondly, be part of a broader package of measures that seek to address some of Yemen's other economic and political challenges. Focusing only on a limited vision of 'security' will, ultimately, deliver neither security nor development.

MEETING POOR PEOPLE'S SECURITY AND JUSTICE NEEDS

“The development community has a central role in promoting poor people's security.”

A Dhaka slum community identified its security need as a lack of day care facilities for the children of working parents. SONIA RAI/SAFERWORLD

THE SECURITY PEOPLE WANT

'Security' is a public good that people in developing countries want and deserve just as much as anyone else. But communities must be given the opportunity to define their own vision of security. In some places it may mean ending violent attacks and rape but in others it could mean livestock being safe from theft, the monsoon not washing away crops, or not being unfairly exploited in commercial transactions.

The international community can do much to help communities identify their security concerns and develop appropriate solutions, support the development of capable, accountable and responsive security and justice services that work for the populations they serve, and support a dialogue between civil society and government in developing countries about how to meet the security needs of both people and the state.

But such a 'developmental approach' to security and justice is far from assured and this subject is a live debate *within* as well as between donor governments. The notion of 'security system reform' has its roots in the development agenda, but it is a vision of a developmentally-led process itself that is at risk of being 'securitised' (see Box 9: 'Security Sector Reform' – A development aspiration?). Far from seeing security as an imposition into the development agenda, the development community must claim its central role in promoting poor people's security and access to justice.

And we must not confuse 'problems' with 'actors'. Some have suggested that, to counter the risks of aid securitisation, development actors should stick to 'development' whilst security actors stick to 'security'. Yet 'security' is not something that 'security actors', such as the police or armed forces, can deliver alone. In fact, it is vital that development actors engage seriously with the issue of how to promote security and justice precisely *because* sustainable, equitable, people-centred security is so much more than a product of security actors alone.



BOX 8 COMMUNITY SECURITY

It is important that we do not presuppose what makes communities feel unsafe or insecure, or restrict our definition of what constitutes 'promoting security' to a narrow set of interventions.

Building on existing good practice such as 'participatory rural appraisal', Saferworld has elaborated a 'community security' methodology that works with communities to identify and define their own security problems. We specialise in issues such as small arms control and police reform, but the communities we have worked with in Bangladesh, the Caucasus, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sudan and Somalia have identified a diversity of concerns ranging from dangerous traffic and inadequate police patrols to school safety, armed cattle rustling and run-down, poorly lit streets.

In the village of Nyong in southern Sudan's Eastern Equatoria state, the community identified their 'security need' as the need for better dialogue and relations between them and the local police. Saferworld worked with the community to establish a regular forum where community members and officials from the police, judiciary and local authority can come together to discuss issues. As a result of the forum, the police and community agreed on a number of measures such as launching an emergency number for the police and establishing a regular police foot patrol.

By contrast, in two pilot sites in Bangladesh, communities identified their insecurity as stemming from a lack of day care facilities (in a Dhaka slum community with high levels of child abuse which meant parents could not leave their children alone whilst they went to work) and the sexual harassment of women while they were bathing (in a rural village). Having worked with the two communities to identify these issues, we helped bring them together with local businesses, schools, the police and other local officials to develop solutions to these problems – such as raising awareness of the penalties for sexual harassment and establishing a day care centre for the children of working parents.

In doing so, not only did the communities benefit from feeling a directly improved sense of safety and security but a closer relationship and increased levels of trust was built between them and local officials – one small, but important, step towards building a more resilient, peaceful society. In the case of the community in Dhaka, family incomes also rose significantly.

In all these cases, the important lesson is not to presuppose what makes communities feel 'unsafe' or 'insecure' but to work with people to help them identify and define their own needs and develop appropriate solutions.

A Moldovan traffic policeman talks with children.
MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, MOLDOVA



A CALL TO ACTION

Saferworld calls on all members of the UK's development community to ensure the current opportunity to influence the UK and others' approach to development and security is not wasted. As well as articulating what we 'don't want to see', it will be important to develop a vision of what we *do*.

To ensure that the UK's aid is playing the most effective role it can in meeting the security and justice needs of poor and vulnerable people – and so that security and justice reform successfully lays the foundation for broader development gains – the UK development community needs to become more proactively engaged with this neglected part of the development agenda.

“We must develop a vision of what we want to see, as well as what we don't.”

To help start the detailed discussions that are needed, Saferworld offers the following agenda for how development actors could approach security and justice within their advocacy and programming:

BOX 9 'SECURITY SECTOR REFORM' – A DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATION?

In her forward to *The Future of Security Sector Reform* (Mark Sedra ed., CIGI, 2010), former UK International Development Secretary, Claire Short, provides her perspective on the evolution of 'security sector reform' (SSR) programming.

The end of the Cold War, she suggests, provided an opportunity to rethink development and to move away from aid being used as a tool for 'propping up' friendly regimes regardless of how they treated their populations. Part of this was to recognise the obstacle that 'bloated, repressive, undemocratic and poorly structured security services' pose to many developing countries – taking up resources better spent on development and committing human rights abuses, for instance.

Similarly, Short notes that DFID were 'well aware from participative poverty assessments, which give the poor the chance to voice their own concerns, that safety and security both at home and in the wider society were among their

major priorities' and that DFID's SSR thinking was 'thus entirely shaped by our development aspirations'.

In 2001, however, with the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York and subsequent launch of the 'War on Terror' the situation shifted. Although many remained committed to a vision of security sector reform that was developmentally-led, an alternative vision began to take precedence in Afghanistan and then Iraq which prioritised building up the armed forces of these countries in order to maintain stability and allow Western forces to withdraw. This is a far cry from engaging in SSR to meet developmental objectives and Short argues that 'the proposed numbers for the armed forces are completely unaffordable for the Afghan economy... Here we have bloated military spending and terrible problems of corruption as a consequence of Western policy.'

Whatever one thinks about this analysis, the current debate around the

'securitisation of aid' presents a chance for the development community to reclaim security and justice as a key part of meeting the needs of poor and vulnerable populations, as well as defining a progressive role for aid and development in promoting 'security' more broadly.

SSR is only one – important – area of programming within the broader objective of promoting security and access to justice but, in part because the UK's development community never really 'got behind' security and justice as key principles for development, SSR has become the dominant approach. Consequently, the pool of actors engaged in security and justice programming has, in practice, come to mean just those who are involved in SSR. If we are to successfully guard against the range of pitfalls 'securitisation' presents, we must look afresh at how 'security and justice' are areas of relevance for all our work, not only for those engaged in SSR programming.

- **Recognise that poor people are entitled to security and access to justice just as they are to health, education and other basic services.** And recognise that aid has a vital role in promoting security and access to justice for poor, vulnerable and marginalised populations – including in the basic services programming that development NGOs pursue.
- **Take an inclusive approach that recognises the importance of human security.** Efforts to promote security and justice should be based on the needs of people and the state, but always with an ultimate focus on the security of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups. *This may have positive, long-term benefits for the UK's own security – but that must not be the driving principle if security and justice interventions are to be effective.*
- **Always put people at the heart of efforts to promote security and justice.** Security and justice reform must be locally-owned, informed by a good understanding of realities on the ground, and involve the meaningful participation of those it affects. At the same time, support for security and justice reform should not just aim to

help develop capable, accountable and responsive services (the 'supply') but also to empower communities to critically assess and engage in security and justice related decision-making (the 'demand').

- **Recognise that security and justice are indivisible and that we cannot 'deliver' security or 'provide' access to justice.** The 'security sector' and 'justice sector' are both parts of the wider 'security and justice system' and cannot be treated as separate areas to support. In the long run, neither the international community's civilian nor military actors can provide security or access to justice. Instead, the role of the international community is to *promote* and *support* the supply and demand of quality security and justice services as basic entitlements.
- **Always begin with the context.** The challenges to equitable security and justice provision vary greatly from society to society, within countries as well as between them. Our support must always be locally appropriate and what security and justice institutions look like in some societies may be very different than in others. Related to this, we should always look at what

already exists, the 'informal' security and justice mechanisms that communities often use in the absence of state provision, to see what can be built on and supported.

- **'Co-ordinate', even 'integrate': but don't 'subsume'.** Meeting the diverse needs of people living with insecurity will take co-ordinated action across a range of policy areas and from a variety of actors. For instance, some states may see reforms to their security services as weakening their grip on power and high-level political dialogue with partner governments may be necessary to support such initiatives. Coherent development, diplomatic and defence policy, in pursuit of common goals and based on a shared understanding of the context, will be vital. However, this should not mean subsuming development into defence or foreign policy, or altering the focus of UK aid from reducing poverty.

BOX 10 UK POLICY: ELABORATING DETAIL, BRIDGING THE 'IMPLEMENTATION GAP'

Through the OECD, the UK is already signed up to technical guidance for both working in fragile states (Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations) and supporting security and justice provision (OECD-DAC Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance). Saferworld believes both these sets of guidance provide valuable principles that outline an approach to addressing conflict and insecurity that is focused on meeting the needs of poor and vulnerable populations.

DFID's own 'Statebuilding and Peacebuilding' approach to addressing conflict and fragility, as articulated in its 2009 White Paper, also provides a good policy basis for development programming in conflict-affected and fragile states (especially the recognition of security and justice as basic services).

And the UK government's recent 'Strategic Defence and Security Review' commitments to investing in more effective *upstream* conflict prevention

provide a valuable framework for improving co-ordination and coherence between Whitehall departments, as well as the opportunity to further elaborate an approach to conflict-affected countries that prioritises addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity – an ambition which development will have a central and fundamental role in delivering.

But to ensure that the ongoing detailing of this policy is appropriate to meeting the needs of poor and vulnerable populations, the UK development community must engage fully and constructively with these policy areas.

And if this policy is to mean anything in practice, HMG will need appropriate implementation partners. Partly because the development community has so far had only limited engagement in this area of programming, the majority of development money currently directed towards security and justice work is spent through private sector consortia. Saferworld believes the private sector

has a valuable role to play in delivering UK aid and such consortia are often good at delivering the 'supply' side of security and justice reforms (such as providing police training or building courthouses, for instance). However, the development community has a range of skills and expertise – particularly around crucial areas such as community engagement, participatory approaches and civil-society capacity-building – that will be crucial for ensuring that security and justice reforms are also effective in empowering and supporting poor and vulnerable populations to effectively demand the services they really want.

One of our key roles as the UK's international development community is to help advocate the concerns articulated by people who live with poverty. If we do not engage seriously with security and justice, policy development and spending in this area will not simply stop: but the voice of the most vulnerable and marginalised populations risks being absent.

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