

# OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE NOTE: THE SECURITY AND JUSTICE SECTOR REFORM ADVISER

Advisers have become an integral and important part of the diplomatic, development and security landscape that is put in place by bilateral and multilateral donors in developing and conflict-affected countries. There are many different types of advisers. These include: political advisers; development advisers specialising in many disciplines from governance through education and health to conflict prevention; security and justice advisers encompassing, national security, defence, security sector transformation and justice sector reform. Some focus in highly technical fields such as human resources or direct budget support. Others, depending on their responsibilities and levels of advice, are designated “strategic”, “senior” or “special” advisers. Although the organisational and security-development contexts within which advisers work may vary, there are a number of common and unique qualities, attributes and characteristics that set them apart from their counterparts working in political, diplomatic, development or security staff appointments. Like any professional a good adviser also needs good advice and guidance.

“Better let them do it imperfectly than to do it perfectly yourself, for it is their country, their way and your time is short”

TE Lawrence, The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, 1926

## SUMMARY OF CONTENT

This Operational Guidance Note (OGN) examines the role and responsibilities of the adviser in the context of Security and Justice Sector Reform (S/JSR) in transitioning states. This note also seeks to:

- IDENTIFY THE NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOOD ADVICE
- EXPLAIN HOW BEST TO CREATE A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR GENERATING AND DELIVERING ADVICE
- ESTABLISH A SET OF OPERATING PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVISERS
- HIGHLIGHT SOME PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AS A GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF ADVISERS

In the sections below, potential risks are shown in [red boxes](#). Quotes, and suggested readings are in [blue boxes](#). Extended explanations are in [grey boxes](#).

## WHAT IS AN ADVISER?

There is no clear definition of an adviser; the word adviser and mentor tend to be used interchangeably<sup>1</sup>. So, it is usually the organisational context that determines how an adviser should work, as well as the type of services the adviser is expected to deliver to the “host” Government/Organisation or the adviser’s principal interlocutors. For example, the role of a conflict prevention adviser working for a development agency will vary from the role of an S/JSR adviser embedded in the structures of the Defence Department of a host Government where service expectations differ. Job descriptions or terms of reference give some insight into the role of advisers, however, in all circumstances, the heart of this occupation is a dedication to sustainable development and security and a deep passion to bridge the information, knowledge and skills gaps. All advisers must genuinely believe in the value of mentoring, be excellent communicators and adept at building trust and confidence, and, in general, commit themselves to creating pathways for progress and new opportunities.

The role of an adviser is limited to the delivery of advice often in the form of recommendations for moving forward or transforming an organisation. The adviser has no executive function; however, he or she does have a professional liability for the nature and quality of advice, and shares in the responsibility for the unfolding of subsequent activities and action. Advice may be delivered following a specific request or it may be offered based solely on the personal initiative of the adviser. Acceptance of advice by the principal is not mandatory. The principal may choose to ignore advice for a number of reasons. Unless there is a bond of trust between the adviser and the principal it is unlikely that substantive advice and recommendations will be readily accepted.

Poorly thought through advice can quickly destroy trust leaving the adviser without the respect and confidence of the principal. In such circumstances, the adviser’s role - and potentially that of an ongoing project or relations with a donor - has been compromised and they should be replaced. Before providing advice it is important to consider the principle of ‘Do No Harm’.

For the purposes of this OGN an adviser is considered to be full time, permanently deployed in support of a host government, delivering advice on real events connected with security and justice sector reform. Ideally, the adviser will be embedded or at least co-located with his or her principal interlocutors.

## THE NATURE OF ADVICE

Advice takes many forms. It may be of a general or technical nature based on research or experience, or a combination of both. Advice based on research should be attributed and referenced so that there is no misunderstanding about its source. When delivering advice based on experience it is best to

<sup>1</sup> The concise Oxford Dictionary defines an adviser as a person habitually consulted and a mentor as an experienced and trusted adviser.

provide examples and short case studies so that the context of the experience is captured. Advice may need to be delivered in two directions: directly to a host government (eg. a Minister) and also to a donor government (eg. a Head of Mission) or through a reporting line to a department back in the donor country. An adviser may also take on the role of a “conduit” passing on the advice of others (usually from someone in an equivalent role) to the principal. For example, a new Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) might welcome specific advice from a fellow CDS in another country, especially if he or she has been in an appointment for some time and they have had the opportunity to meet and forge a relationship.

Having discussed and established terms of reference with the principal, it is also wise to agree on the format that advice should take. Establishing a regular reporting pattern helps to maintain good communications and an open relationship. For example, a routine (eg. monthly) report followed by a meeting to discuss key points tends to focus the work of both the adviser and the principal.

If more than one principal is involved then the adviser should be meticulous in delivering the same report with consistent advice to all, avoiding mixed messages and ensuring that the whole organisation benefits from the same advice.

An embedded adviser within the host organization such as a Ministry of Defence or Police Service HQ will have the opportunity to work right alongside national counterparts and will gain many advantages from having ready access to the recipients and key contextual information. The adviser will also be able to assess the capacity, culture, teamwork and working practices within the immediate environment where advice has to be absorbed. This enables an adviser to be much more nuanced in providing advice; he or she can make finer judgments concerning the strength and timing of any recommendations. However an embedded adviser should be wary of stepping beyond the boundary of delivering advice into the domain of planner and implementer. In short, advisers ‘don’t do’; they should confine their work to mentoring support and advice. It might be helpful for an adviser to view his or her role as part of a ‘scaffolding’ arrangement put in place for state or security sector building. At some point when the ‘building’ is well on its way to standing on its own foundations, the scaffolding can be dismantled and taken away from the building site.

Advisers working within bilateral donor organisations are in a particularly strong position to influence the behaviour of the donor and donor objectives but less able to assess the goals and immediate needs of the primary beneficiaries. This physical separation from the recipient can be problematic; it means that special efforts are needed to arrange regular meetings and events which keep the adviser in the information loop and the recipients mind, and vice versa. Face to face meetings are essential and should be followed up on a routine basis by phone conversations, email messages and, if appropriate, short confirmatory notes.

In general, advice should be delivered in a form that best suits the principal and the occasion. Informal advice can be reinforced by written reports or advisory notes, usually with recommendations or considerations for next steps. In some cases a formal presentation may be required when the principal decides to engage a wider group.

The most effective advice tends to be that which is delivered informally, on request (often in the margins of meetings or when travelling together), based on the experience and expert knowledge of the adviser. These requests are unlikely to come until the adviser has built up a rapport and confident working relationship with the principal.

## CREATING A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ADVICE

To generate and deliver good advice, it is necessary to create an environment that is conducive to sharing experiences and knowledge. The right environment with an atmosphere that encourages information sharing enables the adviser to carefully manage expectations and influence the future direction of planning. In simple terms the “stage needs to be set” so that the actors can all play their part creating the best impact for the beneficiaries. The first step is to focus on relationship and network building. This leads on to the process of building trust and confidence.

### Relationships and Network Building

On arrival in a post new advisers might well feel at a disadvantage because they have few established contacts, and little background or contextual knowledge. On the contrary new advisers have many advantages as they make a fresh start unhindered by reputation or past performance. Most local interlocutors will welcome the opportunity to build a new relationship, especially if there is something in it – added value - for them. As advisers change over there will be a renewed enthusiasm to share and engage with the incoming adviser providing rich opportunities to forge strong bonds and a good working relationship.

New advisers should be meticulous in making a good first impression; dress and appearance are important. They should take careful notes including the personal details of those that they are meeting for the first time. From the outset it is important to focus on both the personal and professional side of the relationship if you want to seriously win friends and influence people.

A good adviser should quickly exchange calling cards on first meeting sending clear messages that he or she is committed to working alongside national counterparts. Within 24 hours of first meeting an interlocutor the adviser should follow-up the contact by phone or email conveying sufficient information to indicate a clear intent to establish an honest and open partnership. Maintaining and nurturing open communications at meetings, by phone or email requires planning, energy and commitment by the adviser. Opportunities should be sought to meet key interlocutors informally and socially to help galvanise the relationship and broaden levels of understanding of personal circumstances and challenges.

“Building trust takes time, patience and the ability to empathise with those that you are advising. Know where they are coming from and do what you can to make their life easier. Try to establish a personal relationship and go out of your way to deliver sound advice at the right level, at the right time, and in a form that is really useful to them.”

UK Conflict Prevention Adviser in Africa

The concept of the ‘invisible hand of influence’ in Jo Owen’s book on *How to Influence* (2010, Prentice-Hall) is worth a special study by all advisers; fortunately, effective influencers display some consistent skills and behaviours, which anyone can learn .

“Influencers do not want a one-off success; they want to build commitment that lasts. They tend to see the world through other people’s eyes, and adapt their message and behavior accordingly. The ideal outcome for a successful advisor who knows how to influence is to build an alliance of mutual trust and respect. Achieving this is a huge investment of time, effort and skill. But it is an investment that yields rich dividends over the long term.”

How to Influence, Jo Owen

An adviser should undertake his or her own stakeholder analysis in order to establish where the real influence lies amongst his or her interlocutors. From this analysis the adviser should determine the principal recipient(s) of his or her advice. It may be a President as Commander-in-Chief, a Prime Minister, a Defence or Home Affairs minister, a senior military commander or inspector general of police. The analysis should extend to those key staffs that support the principals and especially include those that have ready access to the main actors. This latter group may be regarded as the “door openers”. Who can get you to where you want to be and connect you to the person you need to influence? There is value in paying particular attention to those in the outer office of principals – for example, special advisers, executive officers and military assistants. They can hold the keys to access.

Effective advisers rarely miss opportunities to extend their range of contacts and build networks. Network building is personally stimulating and professionally rewarding. And it is not just about building your own network. An important aspect of networking is to assist others in extending their contact base so that they can reach further and draw on a wider range of expertise and experience. An adviser can reap rich dividends by sharing contacts, and acting as a link or conduit for others. Effective networks become like investment banks; as the adviser invests experience and knowledge by sharing information the network bank pays back handsome dividends in the form of support and advice, often coming from unexpected sources at unexpected times. So, forging partnerships and building networks lies at the heart of the adviser’s work.

### Trust and Confidence

The building of trust and confidence between an adviser and the principal is essential for success. “Nothing is as fast as the speed of Trust. It is the One Thing that Changes Everything.”<sup>2</sup> Trust has two components: integrity and competence. The first is the most important and a personal characteristic; the second is a product of experience and expertise. Building trust requires honesty and openness; it takes time, energy, persistence and patience and a selfless approach to relationship building. It is generated by good personal chemistry and professional mutual respect. Without trust effective advice cannot be generated, delivered or received with any confidence. Trust is a pre-requisite for good advice. It is not easy to build trust when there is distance between the adviser and the principal. Separation can breed suspicion. Whilst recognising that the principal will not wish to have an adviser “in his pocket” at all times, it is important to try and co-locate in the same HQ or building where possible. This contributes to building trust and teamwork.

### Managing Expectations

When creating the right environment it is important to determine what your principal expects, and then to devise a strategy to manage those expectations. The start point for managing expectations is to establish the “ground rules” through an early discussion about the particular areas around which you plan to offer the advice. Boundaries should be established. At the beginning it is best to confine advice to those areas where you have specialist knowledge and personal operational experience. In addition to the subject areas it is also useful to ascertain how your principal

“From the outset I co-located with the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS); our offices were opposite each other. His staff officers were accessible so I soon became part of the Army HQ team. I learned a lot from CDS, especially during coffee and lunch breaks. We are still good friends.”

Adviser to a CDS

likes to receive advice: in written format, verbal briefings, a combination of both, and in an open or closed environment. The frequency of meetings and office calls should also be established at an early stage. All this can be set out in a short note to make sure that there are no early misunderstandings. Expectation management is a continuous process extending well beyond setting the initial ground rules. For example, it is wise to alert your principal to any significant issue that you feel needs some detailed analysis. He or she may then seek advice from alternative sources to either validate your recommendations or benchmark your advice. The secret is to be frank and open, always honest, and never catch your principal by surprise. The art of the good adviser is to get right inside the head of the principal.

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## ATTRIBUTES OF GOOD ADVICE

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Good advice needs to be built on solid foundations and well focused in order to achieve the right outcomes. For an S/JSR adviser these outcomes are related to preventing conflict, maintaining the stability of a security and justice sector, promoting transformation, and fostering the democratic control of security forces/agencies, which are adequate, accountable, appropriate, and affordable within the wider national budget. For a security or justice adviser working in an environment where organisational redesign is the main focus area, it will be important to strike a balance between promoting accountability and maintaining or building operational effectiveness. Advisers should differentiate between “supply-driven” and “demand driven” advice and the important balance between both. Supply-driven advice will appear to be overly prescriptive and may not find fertile ground with national actors; however it may be necessary to communicate some unpalatable recommendations in order to correct false assumptions and move a process forward in the right direction. On the other hand, demand-driven advice based on requests from interlocutors, is likely to be well received and indeed lead to real progress. An effective and experienced adviser - through careful negotiation - can influence national actors to actually request advice in areas which might otherwise be seen as being “pushed” and supply-driven by the donor.

The main attributes of good advice leading to effectively managed security sectors are:

- Sustainability
- Context Based
- Culturally sensitive
- Consistency, continuity and confidentiality
- Knowledge
- Timely
- Empathetic
- Rigorous

### Sustainability

Providing advice that can contribute to the sustainability of a S/JSR programme requires a very clear understanding of the host nation’s strategic options and security/development objectives. It also requires a distinction to be made between the national interests and/or policy objectives of the donor and the long-term goals of the recipient. At times these may be at odds. An adviser should be wary of being pressurised by his or her chain of command or superior to prioritise output/results over process

and local ownership. For example, there may be a political imperative for a donor to deliver a quick result - such as a reduction in deployed troop levels or advisers - prior to a domestic election. This short-term (donor) objective might not be aligned with the proper sequencing of activities which form part of a long term sustainable S/JSR Plan. In these circumstances the adviser must recognise the contradiction between separate reporting lines (Employer and Host), and reconcile these differences without compromising his or her relationship with the recipient government. An adviser's primary concern should always be to promote the sustainable development and successful transformation of the security sector in the country to which advice is being delivered.

### **Context Based**

The setting of advice in its correct context will always pose a challenge to an adviser. This requires a special set of skills. It means that the adviser must deliver appropriate and relevant advice for the country in which he or she is working. This need not necessarily be based on the experience and "way of doing things" that the adviser has gleaned from his or her own country, or from experiences gained working in other operational settings. In fact it is probable that experiences and good practice from same sized countries in a similar geographic and development context, neighbouring countries or the region will be much more appropriate. Getting the context right also implies understanding the history, legacies, size and sophistication of the country, development trajectories and challenges, local alliances, culture and customs. It is by knowing where a country has come from that an adviser is able to plot potential pathways into the future. All advisers should be encouraged to study and research their host countries and the region from multiple disciplinary views (e.g. historical, political, economic and anthropologic) before taking up their appointments. In addition to these research perspectives, building capacity to communicate the local language(s) can prove invaluable to gaining credibility with local contacts and access to information. Advisers should also extend their networks to regional contacts to whom they might turn for advice on specific issues or examples.

### **Culturally Sensitivity**

Being sensitive to local culture and customs requires a combination of good diplomatic skills and a genuine desire to learn from interlocutors. Cultural sensitivity ranges from active listening, providing adequate personal space, through learning how to greet guests using local customs to understanding the rules of local hospitality and observance of special and religious events. Local hosts are invariably tolerant of misunderstandings but unforgiving when outsiders flaunt their own imported standards/customs and fail to acknowledge that they are guests in someone else's country.

### **Consistency, Continuity and Confidentiality**

Recommendations offered by an adviser should take full account of previous advice and what is generally termed international good practice. Often this international good practice is not well codified but can be researched in, for example, UN best practice notes or ISSAT Operational Guidance Notes. Best practice can also be based on personal experience from knowing what works best in specific circumstances. Consistent advice means that an adviser is helping the principal build upwards and forwards along S/JSR pathways, which can be sustained. The consistency applies not only along a

Advisors should be prepared to plant seeds that grow into trees whose shade they know they will never sit in.

Old Proverb (adapted)

time line but also through advice that is delivered across an organisation. This promotes continuity and unity of effort. Good advice is delivered in a confidential environment within which the recipient can confidently extract the advice and weave it into his or her forward plans without having to reveal its source. Advisers who seek credit, recognition or acclaim for their efforts are likely to fail; a better strategy is to ensure that the principal succeeds. An adviser's reward comes from observing a sustainable set of S/JSR programmes unfolding within the host country based on his or her recommendations and best practice.

## Knowledge

It is generally accepted that an adviser is an expert in his or her area of endeavor and is highly knowledgeable and experienced. In this respect the adviser is an important source of knowledge for the principal; indeed the adviser is a Subject Matter Expert. However, there is a difference between being the master of a body of knowledge based on experience and being a subject matter expert based on research. There are many S/JSR international experts but few have experience working on, in and around the whole range of security sector/ system forces/agencies or components. So, it is best that the principal understands from where the adviser has gained his or her professional knowledge and experience. It is wise for an adviser to highlight a broad understanding of international best practice across the security sector but that his or her professional experience has, for example, been built working with guerrilla armies on military integration and defence transformation. A knowledge expert is a curious and inquisitive adviser – someone who seeks to learn, to research and network. This can lead to the adviser becoming the natural focal point for a wide range of knowledge and an influential member of an S/JSR Team. It is this influence that can yield effective and sustainable results.

"If only I knew the big questions that kept the Minister awake at night. Then I developed a strong working relationship with the Minister's special advisor based on mutual trust and confidence. We both benefitted from sharing our ideas and information. I soon discovered not only what kept the Minister awake, but where he and his Department most needed my expert knowledge and advice".

Advisor to a Minister of Defence

## Timeliness

Advice that is late or untimely is usually wasted. Finding the right time to deliver advice can create the best opportunities to influence. It is wise to try and find out the "research question" before it is asked, so that the adviser has had the opportunity to discuss and consider options and the implications of the advice that is planned to be offered. Pre-empting a request for advice can be achieved by careful networking through third parties such as key staff officers or outer office advisers and staff. They will be alert to the principal's agenda and the challenges that is faced by the principal. Nothing works better than to offer potential options to solving a problem that is foremost on the mind of the principal but has yet to be shared outside his or her office. Advice that is delivered late in a dense, lengthy report 10 minutes before an important meeting is unlikely to attract favour from a busy minister/principal.

## Empathetic

For an adviser to be empathetic, it first requires an understanding of both the context and culture in which a principal is operating, and then to go a step further and try to understand the principal. This can be difficult to attain and may take months of working with a principal to get to know his or her own personal traits and the specific conditions the principal is working within. One step that may help guide this process for the adviser is to abandon initial moral judgments on a principal's actions – they are neither good nor bad – but instead view actions as just reality driven by certain motivations. This

does not mean that an adviser necessarily has to agree with every action taken by a principal, but this exercise in understanding root motivations can help in developing sound advice and delivering it to a principal in a way he or she may find more palatable than if advice had been formulated solely on personal moral opinions.

### Rigorous

Part of being context specific and being knowledgeable, is to be rigorous in researching the institutions one is operating within. An adviser's inputs will be useless if they completely contradict laws and institutional frameworks that a principal works with. An adviser would be wise to test the advice he or she plans to deliver by seeing if it will feasibly work within the parameters of existing laws and institutions first. Most advisers do not approach a new mission as a blank slate and can often have some preset – although well meaning - ideas on advice to provide. Exercises in rigorousness can aid in checking these preconceived ideas to make sure they can actually be implemented in a new context.

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## PRINCIPLES FOR THE DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE ADVICE

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Based on the role and responsibilities of an adviser and the attributes of good advice the following principles have been identified:

- Get to know your principal recipient(s) and interlocutors on both a personal and professional level. Build trust and confidence at every opportunity.
- Seek to provide solutions and options rather than problems and obstacles.
- Become a valuable source of experience, expertise and knowledge. Extend your networks.
- Do not seek the limelight or recognition. Promote success for your recipients.
- Deliver advice in its proper context and at the right level.
- Seek to be consistent and maintain confidentiality.
- Be sensitive to culture and traditions. Listen actively. This may mean that you do not offer advice for potentially up to the first three months without a request.
- Do what is right for your Host Government and beware of responding to the call for quick results from your own Government.
- Be flexible. Respond to new windows of opportunity.
- Get close to the point of delivery. Co-locate if possible.
- Maintain continuity in the delivery of advice. A rapid turn-over of advisers can lead to “advising fatigue” by national actors. For tour lengths – longer is better. The minimum should be one year; two years is about right.

### Core Partnering Principles

- Equality - because it leads to Mutual Respect
- Transparency - because it leads to Trust;
- Mutual Balanced Benefit - because it leads to Sustainability;

The Partnering Initiative, UN, 2007

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## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL ADVISER

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The key characteristics and traits of a successful adviser can be summarised as a mature person with:

- Strong ambassadorial/diplomatic skills.
- Good vision and strategic planning skills.
- A capacity for creativity and ingenuity.
- Excellent inter-personal and communications skills.
- Linguistic skills. Advisers should be able to communicate with their principal in the local/working language. Demonstrates commitment to host country.
- Technical knowledge based on experience, education and research.
- An able negotiator and teacher/mentor.
- Patience, humility, modesty, and empathy.
- Extensive knowledge and experience across the fields of politics, diplomacy, development and security, based on international good practice.
- A selfless attitude but realistic and tenacious outlook.
- A passion for sustainable security and development.
- A culturally sensitive approach to business.
- A capacity to deal with complexity and uncertainty.
- An approachable manner and a good sense of humor.

Following selection donor governments should consider pre-deployment training for new advisers. This training should be undertaken by experienced advisers and knowledgeable experts in areas such as diplomacy, negotiation skills and international (S/JSR) best practice. The training could also provide an opportunity for new advisers to build contextual knowledge and clarify the strategic objectives, nature and planned outcomes of the mission.

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## SUMMARY

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In summary, an effective adviser is able to build trust and confidence leading to influence. Having created the right environment the adviser is then well placed to use his or her experience and knowledge, based on international good practice, in support of the principal and host Government. The adviser recognises the boundaries between advising, supporting and doing, and the need for balance between promoting transformation and building operational effectiveness. Above all, the adviser has a passion for sustainable security, justice and development.

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR ADVISERS

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### Q. What should be your top priorities when you first arrive in country?

A. Establish your advisory base; confirm your terms of reference; identify your principals/interlocutors; know your political, technical and advisory reporting lines; start networking.

## Q. How should you approach difficult/unpalatable issues?

**A.** Seek alternative perspectives from others with whom you have already built trust and confidence, including your Ambassador. Be diplomatic but do not compromise your principles or the integrity of your appointment. Prepare for face-to-face conversations with a difficult principal – this is best pre-arranged and done in confidence and in private.

## Q. What should you do in the face of issues such as corruption<sup>3</sup>?

**A.** Tread carefully. A host official may regard your understanding of corruption as simply “oiling the wheels”. Understand the context and customs. Prepare to discuss specific clear cases of corruption, misuse of resources and other unethical or dishonest behaviour with your principal. Register your concerns and establish your own position early concerning endemic corruption; there should be no place for corruption in a future security sector. Do not compromise your own integrity.

“Stemming corruption requires strong oversight by parliaments, a well performing judiciary, independent and properly resourced audit and anti-corruption agencies, vigorous law enforcement, transparency in public budgets, revenue and aid flows, as well as space for independent media and a vibrant civil society. The international community must find efficient ways to help war-torn countries to develop and sustain their own institutions.”

Chairman, Transparency International

## Q. How should you balance local ownership with the need to make progress?

**A.** This is a challenge for all advisers. Be mindful that sustainable progress takes time. Consider the advantages/disadvantages of assisting individual senior officials rather than a whole department/organisation. Providing assistance to the latter leads to a more sustainable approach but usually takes much longer to achieve results. But there is much to be gained by supporting individuals, especially progressive “champions for change”. However, keep in mind that individuals move on and get replaced.

## Q. How should you agree on Terms of Reference (ToRs) with both your host and own country/organisations?

**A.** Without agreed ToRs you can cause more harm than good. Know where you are going, and where you want to get to – a detailed “route map” (which can evolve) is less important. First, draw your inspiration and direction from the political agreements that should exist between your country/organisation and the host government, possibly in the form of an MOU. As a new adviser you may have to draft your own ToRs, or review your predecessor’s ToRs. Seek advice from your SRSG or Ambassador. Focus on the political goal and strategy, purpose, technical S/JSR objectives and outcomes; the detail concerning resources can follow. Discuss with your own and host Governments, then draft your ToRs, and - following agreement in principle - circulate final draft ToRs for comment and agreement by all parties.

<sup>3</sup> When essential institutions are weak or non-existent, corruption spirals out of control and the plundering of public resources feeds insecurity and impunity. Corruption also makes normal a seeping loss of trust in the very institutions and nascent governments charged with ensuring survival and stability. Investors and donors should be equally vigilant of their operations and as accountable for their own actions as they are in demanding transparency and accountability from beneficiary countries (Transparency International).

### Q. How should you work with other international advisers in the same setting?

A. You have a special responsibility to work in a coordinated way with other bilateral and multilateral donors in support of your host country. This requires building networks of key staff working in the field of S/JSR and related disciplines. Although this will take a great deal of your energy and time, the payback is invaluable. Get to know all the key international actors, their strengths and limitations, and exactly what technical assistance they are providing – short, medium and long term. As a start point a picture of the international advisers landscape can be drawn up through a mapping exercise followed by a stakeholder analysis. In order to properly coordinate your work you should discover which international committees, mechanisms and meetings are running, and which ones you must attend, and which ones would be “nice to attend”. Is there a gap? Do you need to set up and chair your own “coordination forum”? Do not try to go it alone – this will do harm.

### Q. An adviser brings his or her own personal/mission/donor baggage to the host country. How can you ensure this does not affect your work?

A. The key here is to bring a disciplined and objective mind to your role as an adviser. Constantly strive to understand the perspectives of your principal and host government. Some of your “baggage” will be good stuff, and should be unpacked carefully and methodically, especially the bits which are based on real experience. Other parts of your baggage will simply be out of context and should be kept stowed in your rucksack. You should strive to adapt your experience and knowledge of good practice to the context and circumstances of your hosts. Be humble enough to draw on the experience of other international experts, which you can then blend with your own. Be HOT! – Honest, Open and Trusting. This is how best to mobilize the expertise, experience and good practice from other international advisers in support of your own S/JSR advisory efforts.

### Q. How can you avoid getting drawn into host office politics?

A. The short answer is just don’t go there! Unfortunately, there are a range of negative features that characterise weak governments and dysfunctional organisations. These include poor collaboration/coordination; power struggles between senior officials which result in other staff getting caught up in personality politics; so called turf wars and budget battles; incompetent and misguided officials; straight forward spoilers; and those that are more concerned with W11FM (What’s in it For Me!) than being professional and making progress that can be sustained. From the outset you should demonstrate your professionalism and commitment lifting you above the distractions of office politics.

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**FURTHER READING:**

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The Speed of Trust, 2008, Stephen M.R. Covey (FreePress)

How to Influence, 2010, Jo Owen, (Prentice-Hall)

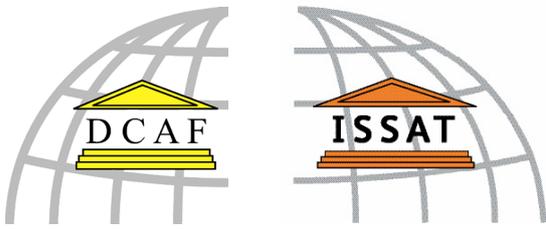
Blink, 2007, Malcolm Gladwell, (Back Bay Books)

The Role of The Ministerial Adviser in Security Sector Reform, April 2009, Liz Panarelli, USIPEACE Briefing

On Corruption – Transparency International. Website: [www.transparency.org.uk](http://www.transparency.org.uk)







The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)

## The International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT)

# SUPPORTING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S SSR CAPACITY



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