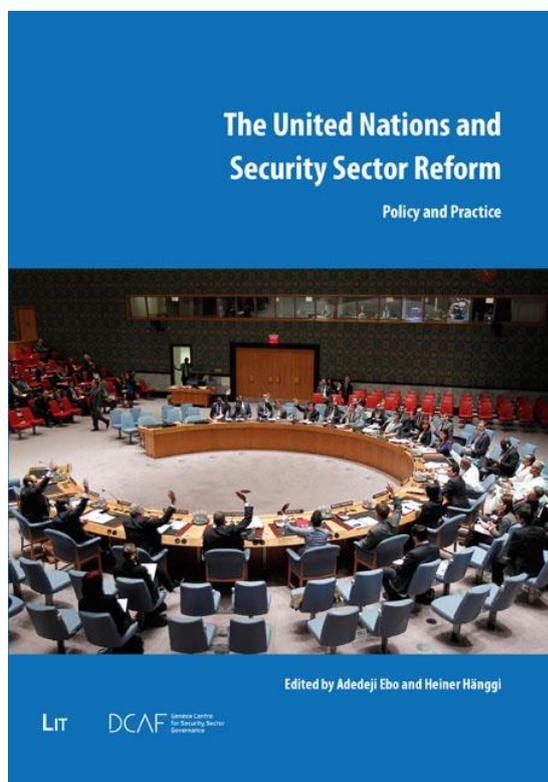


The United Nations and Security Sector Reform: Policy and Practice

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Multilateral organizations, and the United Nations in particular, have played and continue to play a vital role in shaping the security sector reform (SSR) agenda. Drawing from the experience of UN practitioners, combined with those of external experts on SSR, this volume offers an in-depth exploration of the UN approach to SSR from a global perspective.

‘This book skilfully captures the intricacies of the United Nations’ efforts in supporting the reform of the security sector in both peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping contexts. It highlights that supporting nationally-driven SSR processes is of relevance to all efforts to prevent violent conflict and sustain peace.’

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly

Introduction

Chapter 1 Conceptualising UN support to security sector reform *Heiner Hänggi*

Security sector reform (SSR) is a fundamentally national process. Nevertheless, many countries that are engaged in SSR processes draw on support from external actors offering financial resources, technical expertise, and lessons learned in various contexts. As a result, multilateral organizations have been influential in shaping SSR agendas, by developing normative frameworks and providing a range of SSR support on the ground. This applies in particular to the United Nations (UN), which has undertaken a concerted institutional effort over the last

decade to achieve a consolidated, organization-wide approach to SSR, starting from an initial narrow focus on post-conflict settings, and evolving further to include broader peacebuilding and development perspectives. The purpose of this introductory chapter is to provide a framework and some benchmarks against which UN support to SSR, as discussed in this volume, can be better assessed. Following a brief discussion of the SSR concept, with a particular focus on the UN context, the chapter traces the development of the UN's extensive policy framework which outlines a set of shared principles and standards, normative and operational roles in the context of SSR support, and the institutional capacities that enable the UN to support SSR processes.

Part I: Contexts

Chapter 2 The UN and SSR: Between the primacy of politics and the echoes of context

Eboe Hutchful

Because SSR is at its core a political process, specific political contexts have a significant impact on the SSR interventions pursued in various countries, as well as their potential outcomes. While the UN has played a leading and unique role in defining the principles and normative frameworks that should guide SSR processes, this chapter posits that a combination of political factors and contextual specificities continue to define and constrain the impact of reform. A particular focus is on the political challenges associated with stabilization and state authority, as well as on interventions where political contexts and leaders “are not what they seem”. With the growing consensus that SSR must be reimagined, this chapter identifies and discusses a number of considerations going forward: (i) taking governance, and the “political” in SSR, seriously; (ii) rethinking the security-development nexus; (iii) engaging security and justice actors and institutions beyond the State; (iv) dealing with armed non-state actors; and (v) strengthening social inclusion – less state-building, more nation-building and social cohesion.

Chapter 3 The UN approach to SSR from a development perspective

Alejandro Alvarez, Marije van Kempen, and Helen Olafsdottir

Since the first debates surrounding the security-development nexus, the UN approach to SSR has necessarily adapted to changing times and specific contexts. By tracing how the UN SSR agenda has evolved on the political, institutional, and operational levels from a development perspective, this chapter identifies several key challenges that have emerged as the UN SSR agenda has progressed. SSR has frequently been misconstrued as exclusively a national security project, rather than a development priority. Generalized blueprints have also tended to dominate over context-specific plans, with an impact on policy and institutional structures. Financing remains unpredictable, and monitoring and evaluation of SSR support is limited. One of the most important priorities for UN SSR support from a development perspective is to demonstrate the effects of SSR on the accountability and effectiveness of security institutions, and that this heightened accountability and effectiveness has led to increased safety, security, poverty reduction, and human development.

Chapter 4 From peacebuilding to sustaining peace and preventing conflict: What role for SSR?

Funmi Olanisakin, Adedeji Ebo, and Alagaw Ababu Kifle

The last two decades have witnessed a range of intra-state conflicts across the developing world that have led to the breakdown of states and to humanitarian crises of various proportions. In the course of addressing these challenges, UN policy has moved from post-conflict peacebuilding to a more comprehensive sustaining peace approach, which is central to the UN SSR agenda. Based on the linkages between peacebuilding and SSR, this chapter identifies and discusses a number of key elements to consider as the UN moves towards a more preventive, sustaining peace approach, including: (i) the political nature of security; (ii) the recognition that transformation does not occur overnight; (iii) the UN's comparative advantage with “helping states help themselves”; (iv) the impact of regionalism and multiple levels of security governance; (v) the imperative that fragmentation necessitates “working better together”; and (vi) the importance of funding.

Part II: Case studies

Chapter 5 Sustaining peace in West Africa: UN SSR support in non-mission settings

Badreddine El harti

Through UN Security Council mandates, SSR has been progressively introduced in conflict settings to support political and peace processes, particularly where mediation attempts rely on the adherence of armed groups to peace agreements. While lessons learned from past peace agreements mediated by the UN have formed some of the basis for longer-term and preventative SSR approaches over the past decade, experiences from recurring UN engagements, the re-emergence of threats to peace following the withdrawal of UN peace operations, and the perception of “mission creep”, raise concerns. In this chapter, cases from West Africa, including Burkina Faso, Mali, and Guinea, will be referenced to delineate the contours and challenges of UN SSR support in conflict prevention settings and further shed light on how those experiences have benefited from South-South lessons learned, including from neighbouring post-conflict experiences, to explore untapped opportunities.

Chapter 6 UN support to SSR in peacekeeping contexts: A case study of Côte d’Ivoire

Ely Dieng, Adedeji Ebo, and Christopher Sedgwick

In 2010, Côte d’Ivoire witnessed a post-electoral crisis which resulted in protracted turmoil and unrest. Between 2011 and 2017, the UN Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI) worked with different national stakeholders and supported various Government-led SSR initiatives. This chapter analyses the impact of UNOCI’s SSR engagement in Côte d’Ivoire, focusing on support for: (i) national SSR policy and strategy; (ii) sensitization and national dialogues on SSR; (iii) efforts to decentralize security; (iv) democratic oversight and security legislation; and (v) coordination of UN and international SSR efforts. Despite UNOCI’s success in supporting a range of national SSR activities and frameworks, persistent challenges remain, and the transformative impact of reform will continue to be a direct function of the political underpinnings of reform and the quality of social cohesion and national reconciliation. This chapter ends with a call to address a number of urgent challenges going forward.

Chapter 7 UN support to SSR in peacekeeping contexts: A case study of the Central African Republic

Adedeji Ebo, Christophe Pradier, and Christopher Sedgwick

The Central African Republic (CAR) faces longstanding challenges with a security sector that has historically been focused primarily on the capital (Bangui), is known to be exclusionary and unaccountable, and lacks legitimacy among much of the population. Insufficient domestic political will, weak statutory institutions, inefficient coordination mechanisms, and limited international commitment have hindered past SSR attempts in CAR. This chapter traces the evolution of SSR in CAR since 2005, including the roles of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and African Union (AU). The mandate and work of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) since its deployment in 2014 is examined in detail. With the SSR process still ongoing, this chapter argues that the future of SSR support in CAR depends on expanded work by the UN and international partners in further strengthening coordination, enhancing accountability and oversight, expanding security services beyond Bangui, developing a culture of inclusivity towards a security sector that serves all citizens, and bolstering the country’s ability to respond to internal and external threats.

Part III: Themes

Chapter 8 Preventing and resolving conflict: SSR and national security policies, strategies, and plans

Jared Rigg

In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, national security policies, strategies, and plans (NSPSPs) are critical to the success of SSR. Not only do these documents provide the strategic framework required for effective SSR, they also guide security sector budgeting and financing, and help improve the social contract between a state and its people. The UN approach to NSPSPs is based on principles laid out in its broader approach to SSR.



Prioritising national ownership, the 2012 Integrated Technical Guidance Note (ITGN) on UN Support to National Security Policy- and Strategy-Making Processes also stresses the need to incorporate a human rights perspective. This chapter identifies a number of important challenges and opportunities for UN support to NSPSP development in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, including the urgent need to develop NSPSP frameworks, and the need for development and implementation of national security plans beyond SSR.

Chapter 9 UN field operations' contribution to defence sector reform

Vincenza Scherrer and Alba Bescos Pou

The effectiveness and accountability of defence institutions is a key element for sustaining peace. Given their dominant power and potential for coercion, reforms in this field should seek to address key governance gaps. The UN has recognised the need for a shift in its approach to defence sector reform (DSR) support, as reflected in its first ever DSR Policy in 2011. This chapter offers a comparative analysis of the mandated and reported on support to national DSR efforts by UN field operations, with a particular focus on peacekeeping operations and special political missions with DSR-specific or SSR-related mandates. The analysis highlights the increasing involvement of the UN in assisting national actors to reform defence institutions and examines the extent to which this support is aligned to the provisions of the DSR Policy. The chapter underlines the need to increase efforts to frame DSR support within an institution-building lens and identifies opportunities to strengthen mandating and reporting practices in line with broader UN reform efforts.

Chapter 10 Strengthening the DDR-SSR nexus: A practitioner's personal reflections

Ayaka Suzuki

As a time-bound process, DDR is aimed at transitioning fighters from active combatant status to civilian life and is a programmatic intervention meant to support political aims, such as implementation of a peace agreement or post-conflict reduction of armed personnel. Conversely, SSR is usually a longer-term process meant to enhance both the provision and governance of security, with support increasingly taking place not only in the context of post-conflict peacekeeping, but also in preventative special political missions and non-mission settings. Recognising that synergy between the two processes is difficult to achieve due to the inherently political nature of both, this chapter argues that going forward, there is a need for new types of engagement to strengthen the SSR- DDR nexus in peace operations. This includes: (i) strengthening the political links to and between SSR and DDR; (ii) pairing DDR programming with an SSR strategy; (iii) enabling better planning for missions and improved linkages; and (iv) and developing further guidance to reflect evolution in practice.

Chapter 11 Conflicting means, converging goals: Civilian protection and SSR

Fairlie Chappuis and Aditi Gorur

While the protection of civilians (POC) and SSR agendas share the same goal of human security, the lack of clarity and consistency in approaches to implementation inevitably leads to friction. In the context of UN peacekeeping, this stems from two main differences between POC and SSR and relates to conflicting (i) short- and long-term objectives, and (ii) relations with the host-state government. This chapter argues that an approach to POC and SSR that treats them as separate but overlapping agendas provide opportunities to implement both in more complementary ways, with tasks that constitute both such as the vetting of security forces, training for these forces on human rights and international humanitarian law, and monitoring and reporting on abuses by these forces. At the same time, this helps to identify potential points of friction that stem from their different approaches to promoting physical security. Ensuring that POC and SSR activities respond to the perceptions of communities to strengthen a mission's impartiality further offers an entry point to mitigating this friction.

Chapter 12 Following the money: The role of public financial management in SSR

Thorodd Ommundsen, Bernard Harborne, and Rory Keane

One major question facing states undergoing reform, and the peace operations supporting them, is how the reconstitution of the security apparatus will be resourced and sustained in an accountable and transparent way.



Drawing upon the work of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the World Bank, this chapter discusses the impact of the Public Expenditure Review (PER), a tool that has been widely employed to assess questions such as the affordability, efficiency, and effectiveness of government allocations in the context of a country's macroeconomic framework and sectoral priorities. In elaborating the critical role PERs have played in placing issues of affordability and sustainability at the heart of policy dialogue in the security sector, this chapter also discusses the efforts towards the strengthening of public budgeting as it relates to two key tasks of government: (i) public expenditure policy, particularly regarding fiscal stability, efficiency, and effectiveness; and (ii) public financial management of budget implementation and systems.

Chapter 13 Human rights and UN engagement with SSR

Anthony Cardon and William Lifongo

While historically the relationship between security and human rights practitioners has been strained at times, much progress has been made in recent years. The cross-cutting nature of human rights and their contribution to peace and security, as well as to development and governance initiatives, makes their integration into SSR processes essential to achieving the mutually shared objectives of the UN system and security actors in local contexts. This chapter (i) situates human rights as a key component of security, (ii) addresses certain recurring myths or misunderstandings about the relationship between human rights and SSR, and (iii) considers the specific implications of the UN's Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) for UN support to non-UN security forces and SSR efforts.

Chapter 14 The UN approach to gender-responsive SSR

Sarah Douglas

A growing body of Security Council resolutions has followed the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security to call on Member States and UN entities to consider women's security as a matter of national and international security, while the Secretary-General's 2008 report on SSR affirmed the centrality of a gender perspective to SSR. If SSR initiatives are to be far-reaching and sustainable, they must be gender-sensitive, including by focusing on the role of women in gender-responsive SSR. This chapter highlights four modes of support that have proved effective in promoting gender-responsive SSR, namely: (i) increasing women's participation in uniform and in decision-making; (ii) establishing institutional policies and mechanisms to promote gender-sensitive SSR and service delivery; (iii) building on indigenous security and justice mechanisms where appropriate; and (iv) facilitating partnerships between local women's organisations and security institutions.

Part IV: Partnerships

Chapter 15 National ownership and SSR: Towards a common framework for action

Adedeji Ebo

National ownership is widely recognised to be essential for the viability and sustainability of SSR processes. However, its operationalization and application face several challenges, ranging from a lack of conceptual clarity to political realities. This chapter discusses the basic elements of an SSR process based on national ownership (i) a common national security vision; (ii) national implementation capacity; (iii) monitoring and evaluation; and (iv) financing, including mobilization, allocation, and public expenditure. Challenging realities faced by the UN identified in this chapter include: resisting the pressure of expediency and ensuring follow-up; placing the people at the heart of reform efforts; noting that national ownership extends beyond 'state ownership'; the need for UN mission leadership to back national ownership at the highest level. While national capacity is an essential element of ownership, capacity development cuts both ways, as related to the capacity of both national and international actors.

Chapter 16 Enhancing the inter-agency coordination of UN assistance to SSR

Snezana Vuksa-Coffman

Since 2007, the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force (IASSRTF) has been tasked with ensuring that support provided in the aftermath of conflict is aligned with the long-term needs of sustainable development and national capacity building. This chapter examines inter-agency support at both HQ and country levels; it discusses the successes and challenges in enhancing the coherence of SSR efforts in the field and how to ensure successful transitions from post-conflict to long-term development support. It concludes by recommending that the IASSRTF should (i) develop more knowledge, analysis, and advocacy to strengthen the practice of international coordination of SSR support; (ii) further enhance its function as a facilitator of dialogue and work with senior leaders, partners, and national counterparts to strengthen international dialogue on SSR processes in the field; (iii) remain focused on developing methodologies and knowledge products to improve analysis, assessments, and high-level policy advice to member states and senior UN leaders.

Chapter 17 Better together: Partnering with regional organizations in SSR

Kristiana Powell and Norman Mlambo

Since the 1992 Agenda for Peace, collaborating with regional organisations has been a priority for the UN, particularly with regards to preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peace-making, and post-conflict peacebuilding. However, some limitations to partnerships remain, such as the different normative bases and priorities for SSR, the recipient/provider divide, and the lack of clarity related to roles and dedicated counterparts. This chapter focuses on the UN and African Union (AU) partnership and elaborates on the two pillars that have underpinned their collaboration: (i) UN support for the development of an AU SSR Policy Framework, and (ii) building the capacities of the AU to implement this Framework across the continent.

Part V: Conclusions

Chapter 18 UN support to SSR: From peacekeeping to sustaining peace

Adedeji Ebo

Since the first report on SSR by the Secretary-General in 2008, SSR has moved from the periphery to the centre of the UN's peacekeeping and peacebuilding agenda. Normative frameworks and guidance have been developed and operationalized both at HQ and in the field, and the UN has, within political and organizational constraints, made substantive progress in positioning SSR as a key element of multidimensional peacekeeping, with a primarily post-conflict focus. This concluding chapter suggests that there is a need and opportunity to fully integrate SSR into the UN's sustaining peace agenda more broadly, spanning the entire peace spectrum to cover conflict prevention, stabilization, and post-conflict contexts. Drawing on the rich experience captured in the edited volume, the chapter outlines a number of recommendations which contribute to defining the focus of a next generation UN SSR agenda. These include, but are not limited to the development and operationalization of a framework for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 on SSR, including National Action Plans; the demystification of SSR and building legitimacy through national security dialogues; taking steps to address the hybridity of the security sector; partnership building between various actors; and the enhancement of South-South cooperation in security sector governance and reform.

