



THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SECTOR ADVISORY TEAM
THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF ARMED FORCES

German SSR support in practice - Nigeria

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to start documenting good practice evidence from German SSR activities. Major German involvement in support to SSR is relatively new, and has tended to focus on train and equip approaches.

The below examples of German support to SSR in Nigeria may not involve full-fledged reform processes, they may, however, provide an insight into some good practices from the ground that could be used as entry points for wider SSR engagement and strategic Security Sector Governance reform.

I. Trust

Background

Mine Advisory Group (MAG), supported by Germany, is implementing an arms management and destruction programme in Nigeria. The programme started in February 2016, and two international personnel have been deployed since May 2016. The Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PRESCOM) is their main interlocutor, who also made the formal request for the programme and coordinates with all Nigerian forces. The Committee consists of 18 members from the government and security institutions. It was created in light of the Boko Haram terrorist threat and the porous borders in the region that allow for trafficking of SALW.

Relationship building & trust with national stakeholders is central to the success of any SSR programme. Trust needs to be gained as an institution and as an individual programme staff. Due to the sensitivities of SSR, such an approach needs to be long-term in nature. At the strategic level, this relationship can be built around a national action plan based on national ownership. The core aspect that the programme understood is that relationship building takes time, and requires constant communication. The needs for the project, expressed by PRESCOM, were identified in a series of national conferences. MAG then conducted an operational plan, stakeholder mapping and undertook armoury assessments, with all work jointly elaborated by MAG and PRESCOM. Thus, the programme focused first on building relationships with national stakeholders before tangible outputs could be achieved.

While the holistic approach of the programme should be clear from the beginning, a phased methodology focussing on certain entry points is advisable to gain trust and build the relationship between partners. MAG started with pilots on arms destruction and mobile arms storage in Benue State. This pilot established the modus operandi between the partners, including the involvement of national and regional actors, the openness about the organisations of the process, the donor input as well as regular information sharing. These elements allowed the replication of this approach in other Nigerian states. This technical and operational level project provides opportunities for entry points into more strategic level and accountability-related activities (such as weapons marking and access to munition storage facilities), if the momentum is seized.



II. Sustainability

Background

Supported by Germany, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) has been facilitating dialogue among communities (Hausa, Fulani and indigenes) in Plateau State since 2013. The objective of the project is to facilitate peaceful coexistence between the communities of the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria, following the establishment of a culture of dialogue. HD Centre employs the means of community dialogue sessions where community representatives air grievances through a series of meetings and an ongoing channel of communication among citizens. The project uses a bottom-up approach and no segment of the community is left out.

In Plateau State, the HD Centre facilitated dialogue led to an accord, which resulted in the reduction of violence in the area. Even as the formal process on the part of HD Centre in Jos and support has ended, it continues to be taken forward by the local communities through a self-organised Tension Management Committee—created by the programme—that involves all relevant local stakeholders (including women, youth, traditional leaders, religious leaders, business community, and respected opinion leaders). This structure gives the community a sense of ownership over the process. The government buy-in is key to the sustainability of the process and also provides it with legitimacy; in Plateau State, the government, with the support of HD Centre, established the Plateau State Peacebuilding Agency, a permanent peace bureau at State level to continue building confidence with the local population.

Background

The German Armed Forces Technical Advisory Group (GTAG) has been providing the Nigerian armed forces, among others, with vocational training in a mechatronics school and car repair workshop. It developed maintenance concepts in conjunction with the Nigerian armed forces to ensure long-term operability. The programme started in 2001 and runs through 2020. Overall, GTAG deploys four military personnel for three to five years. The continuity of personnel and trust building with local counterparts is essential for the success of the project. Germany prioritizes previous experience as an advisor in selection of staff for roles in this programme.

An interesting approach to also support the local economy through a train and equip project is the German Military Advisory Team's car repair workshop in the Nigerian Army headquarters. The training is adapted to the local context, while ensuring high quality of training. The apprenticeship, based on the dual education system, takes two years. At the end of the programme, students receive a certificate, recognised by the Ministry of Education that allows them to work and become trainers in any Nigerian car workshop. Some students of the initial years are now trainers in the workshop, and contribute to its sustainability in the long run. For the military, this ensures quality maintenance of its vehicles. The workshop infrastructure is provided by the Nigerian Army, which can be considered the Nigerian contribution to the project. The GTAG is fully embedded in the Nigerian Army and directly attached to the Chief of Defence Staff, which could also support deeper engagement on SSR at a strategic level.



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III. Coordination

Background

GIZ has been present in Nigeria since 1974. The police programme started in 2015 and it is expected to run through 2018. GIZ cooperation with the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigeria Immigration Service is aimed at capacity building and advising, the partners with special focus on the training institutions and border posts in North West Nigeria. This includes Human Rights trainings, for which an MoU has been established. As buy-in for impact oriented projects, an equipment package was also delivered as a quick and visible measure to the training schools and selected border posts. The project thus aims at better equipped security forces schools, qualified trainers and coordinated curricula. While the project needs, timelines, responsibilities, and budget were identified through a planning workshop in 2016, a top-down approach was used to ensure leadership buy-in and political traction.

The Human Rights Training for the Police provides a division of labour and coordination around a specific project. The programme funded by several donors (including Switzerland, Germany, and UNODC) and implemented by the local NGO PRAWA, led to the joint development of training materials that are now used by several donors. This created training synergies (trainers from one donor are used by another, for instance one of the EU-funded trainers was used in a training funded by Germany), but also common standards based on Nigerian needs. The partners are part of the M&E process of the project, and the indicators to measure success were designed with the partners during the planning workshop. Monitoring meetings are held every six months to review achievements. As a consequence an informal donor working group on Human Rights was formed, headed by Switzerland. The entry point for this was a demand by the then Inspector-General of Police (IPG), who acted a champion to improve the NPF Human Rights record.

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