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SSR:  
Concepts and Linkages

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**Paul Jackson**  
**GFN-SSR/UoB**

# Aims of the session

- **What is SSR?**
- **What do we mean by the ‘security sector’?**
- **Related definitions of SSR**
- **Key tasks**
- **Key challenges**

# What is SSR?

- Security sector reform has emerged since the late 1990s as a key concept amongst security experts, development practitioners and democracy advocates.
- Loosely it has come to refer to the 'effective and efficient provision of state and human security within a framework of democratic governance' (Hanggi,2004)
- Obviously, there is much room for debate within these areas and SSR is a partly contested concept

# Broad SSR contexts

- Donors have adopted SSR as an instrument to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of development assistance
- SSR is also used as a tool to facilitate the practical co-ordination and integration of defence and internal security reforms in post-authoritarian states, e.g. in Eastern Europe
- SSR has strong practical relevance in the context of post-conflict reconstruction as a key issue in rebuilding 'failed' states

# What do we mean by 'security'?

- Characterised by a widening and deepening of the idea of 'security' since the late 1990s, along with a shift from emphasis from national security to security of the individual, recognising also that individuals could need security from dysfunctional states
- On the one hand, non-military security issues have become broadly accepted, including environmental, economic, societal and political factors
- On the other, the nature of military security has changed, with terrorism, asymmetrical warfare, intra-state warfare, criminalisation and privatisation of conflict

# Human security and poverty

- Human security is certainly a contested concept
- Essentially covers a wide range of threats to the security of individuals including landmines, small arms, child soldiers, lack of access to justice, people trafficking, criminal gangs, as well as environmental and economic factors such as social exclusion
- In other words, what is 'new' about this is not the issues themselves but the fact that they have become 'securitised'

# Poverty, justice and security

- 'security matters to the poor and other vulnerable groups, especially women and children, because bad policing, weak justice and penal systems and corrupt militaries mean that they suffer disproportionately from crime, insecurity and fear. They are consequently less likely to be able to access government services, invest in improving their own futures and escape from poverty.'  
(OECD, 2005)

# Given this, how has SSR been defined?

- ‘...the transformation of security institutions so that they play an effective, legitimate and democratically accountable role in providing external and internal security for their citizens.’

Clingendael Institute, Netherlands

# OECD/DAC Guidelines on Security System and Governance Reform

- (The security sector) ‘...includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework’

- 'Security from violence is fundamental for reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs...for sustainable economic, social and political development... Democratically run, accountable and efficient security systems can help to enhance security of the people and reduce the risk of violent conflict: this is the goal of SSR'

OECD/DAC, 2004

- ‘Any SSR programme must be looked at holistically. No one actor or institution can conduct its activities independent of the other if a fully accountable and transparent security sector, under control of civil authorities, and adhering to the rule of law, is to be established’

UK SSR Policy Brief (2003)

<b>Perspectives</b>	<b>Definition A</b>	<b>Definition B</b>	<b>Definition C</b>	<b>Definition D</b>	<b>Focus</b>
<b>Narrow</b>	<b>Security forces</b>	<b>Groups with a mandate to wield instruments of violence</b>	<b>Core security actors</b>	<b>Organisations authorised to use force</b>	<b>State-centric</b>
	<b>Civilian management and oversight bodies</b>	<b>Institutions with a role in managing and monitoring</b>	<b>Security management and oversight bodies</b>	<b>Civil management and oversight bodies</b>	
<b>Broad</b>		<b>Judiciary, penal system, human rights ombudsmen</b>	<b>Justice and law enforcement institutions</b>	<b>Justice and law enforcement institutions</b>	
			<b>Non-statutory security forces</b>	<b>Non-state security forces</b>	<b>Human-centric</b>
				<b>Non-statutory civil society groups, media, etc.</b>	

# Key tasks of SSR 1

- Improving the capacity of security forces, including military and police
- Improving the capacity of judicial and penal systems
- Strengthening civilian management, review and evaluation of security services, including audit, review boards, etc.
- Promoting respect for human rights

# Key tasks of SSR 2

- Strengthening the monitoring review of security services through civil society
- Strengthening transparency
- Demobilization and reintegration
- Reduction in the proliferation of small arms
- SSR needs to be integrated into mainstream political dialogue

# Key challenges of SSR 1

- Local ownership required for sustainability
- Balance between external assistance and local ownership is difficult to manage – external donors are not always interested in long-term commitment, whereas local elites may not be interested in transparency, accountability and democracy
- Responsibility of external actors is more than just providing funds. In the early days of intervention they may be responsible for putting SSR on the ‘right’ path

# Key challenges 2

- Gender
- According to Laurie Nathan, the underlying assumption is that local actors may not necessarily develop good policies
- The bottom line, however, is that reforms that are not shaped and driven by local actors are unlikely to be implemented properly and sustained

# Key challenges 3

- The lack of a clear, shared definition of SSR makes it difficult to give a clear overall statement of progress
- International support has been driven by the UK but has been relatively ad hoc (this is changing with the IF-SSR framework)
- The ad hoc nature exacerbated by radically different contexts and abilities of recipient countries to carry out SSR

# Key challenges 4

- Cross-border nature of much conflict mitigates against national strategies and may lead to problem displacement, i.e. shifting narcotics networks from one country to another
- Capacity of all elements in the process, e.g. civil society may be underdeveloped
- SSR programmes are long-term and messy
- Developing indicators is difficult

# Conclusion

- There are lots of conclusions that could be drawn, but one important issue that we haven't really discussed is:
- SSR involves a lot of politics. It has technical elements, but successful SSR must always exist within realistic political goals.