

THE ROLE OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT

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Security sector reform is the transformation of the security system, which includes all of its actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions, so that it is managed and operated 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 (Ball, 2011). Responsible and accountable security forces reduce the risk of conflict, provide security for citizens and create the right environment for sustainable development. The overall objective of SSR is to contribute to a secure environment that is conducive to development (Brzoska, 2013). The focus for international actors should be to support partner countries in achieving four overarching objectives: Establishment of effective governance, accountability and oversight structures in the security system; improved delivery of security and justice services; development of local leadership and ownership of the reform process; sustainability of justice and security service delivery (Bryden and Hänggi, 2010).

Security sector reform, sometimes also called security systems reform, has become a prominent “buzzword” within the international donor community. The intended reforms are meant to transform the security system into a well-functioning security framework (Born, Hans, Caparini and Fluri (eds.), 2013). SSR is promoted by the understanding that an ineffective and poorly governed security sector represents a decisive obstacle to peace, stability, poverty reduction, sustainable development, rule of law, good governance and the respect for human rights (Brzoska, 2010). The underlying assumption is that responsible and accountable security forces reduce the risk of conflict.

Security sector reform addresses security problems and tries to improve the situation through institutional reforms (Brzoska, 2013). Security and peace are seen as a public good. Society as a whole, as well as its individual members, benefits from an increase in security. Security sector reform must be understood as a broad concept, which also entails a more efficient use of scarce resources to improve security (Hänggi, 2014). It seeks to align the contributions of military, diplomatic, development and security actors. Democratic, civilian control over security forces is crucial for the provision of security in the interests of the population. Democratic decision-making requires transparency and accountability (Cartney, Fischer and Wils (eds.), (2014). Thus, the public at large needs to be involved. Security sector reform is measured using attributes like; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and initiatives pertaining to small arms and light weapons (Brzoska, 2013).

A comprehensive concept of SSR addresses four dimensions: the political dimension of democratic and civilian control, the economic dimension of appropriate allocation of resources, the social dimension of guaranteeing citizens’ security and the institutional dimension of professionalizing the various actors ((Cartney&Wils, 2014, 19-23).

The political dimension

Democratic, civilian oversight of the security sector forces. The core task of reform in this area is good governance, including the capacity of the civil society (e.g. media, NGOs, researchers, the public at large) to facilitate debate on security priorities as well as civilian oversight of the security forces (Brzoska, 2013).

The economic dimension

The allocation of resources. The rational allocation of human, financial and material resources to the security sector is a precondition for it to function efficiently (Wulf, Herbert, 2014). Maintaining an excessive security apparatus deprives other policies (e.g., sustainable development) of scarce resources and creates an inefficient security sector (Hänggi, 2014). At the same time, an under-funded security sector cannot ensure the security of the population. Reform here includes identifying needs and key objectives, determining what affordable, prioritising resource allocation is, and ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources (Bryden and Hänggi, 2010).

The social dimension

The actual guarantee of the security of the citizens. The prime task of the security sector and its actors is to guarantee the internal and external security of the population. Security is not identical with security of the state provided by the military. Rather, it includes the security of the population from attacks of all types on their life, health or property (Mobeck, 2010).

The institutional dimension

The structure of the security sector and the institutional separation of the various forces and institutions. The different forces can only be efficient and be held accountable if the various institutional tasks are clearly defined (Short & Clare,

2013). An institutional overlap between domestic public security and external defense increases the danger of intervention by the military in domestic affairs (Ball, 2011). A security sector concept should not become an excuse for having militarized police forces or a major internal role for the armed forces.

There is a relationship between Security sector reforms and Sustainable development because the four dimensions underline how broadly SSR can be and is understood, if it is not only narrowly perceived as the technical or institutional reform of the security or the security/justice sector but instead as a governance and democratizing program, as well as a development and security program (Ball, 2011). It has been made abundantly clear in the literature that SSR is a relatively new area for development cooperation; in the past this was the prerogative of agencies engaged in questions of territorial defense (especially military assistance and police assistance programs), while development cooperation largely shied away from engaging too closely with security actors (Bryden and Hänggi, 2010).

2.3 The factor structure of good governance and Security

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