The Hybridisation of Security

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AU	: African Union
CDF	: Civil Defence Forces
CJTF	: Civilian Joint Task Force
DFID	: Department for International Development
ECOWAS	: Economic Community of West African States
EUISS	: European Union Institute for Security Studies
HPO	: Hybrid Political Orders
IDS	: Intrusion Detection System
INCAF	: International Network on Conflict and Fragility
LDF	: Local Defense Forces
LGBTQ	: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PER	: Public Expenditure Reviews
RoL	: Rule of Law
SSG	: Security Sector Governance
SSR	: Security Sector Reform
UN	: United Nations
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
WAC	: Warrior Affairs Commission
WBG	: World Bank Group
WDR	: *World Development Report*

Introduction

Prevailing approaches to peacebuilding and security sector reform (SSR) – and the associated policy literature – have tended to stress Westphalian and Weberian notions of the state characterised by state monopoly on legitimate violence and legal-rational norms framing public authority. SSR processes have tended to concentrate on structural and formal arrangements of the state and its security and justice institutions, focusing on tangible policy goals such as training and professionalisation of the armed forces, stronger mechanisms of civilian control, better budgetary management of security spending, police and courts reforms, mechanisms of parliamentary accountability and the provision of alternative livelihoods for ex-combatants. In practice, however, it has proved extraordinarily challenging to implement even modest programmes of reform let alone significant transformations in security governance.

One of the reasons for the difficulties experienced by an important number of SSR programmes lies in the fact that many of their premises are fundamentally at variance with the underlying realities of the many countries in the Global South where many political and social transactions (not least in the security sector) take place in the context of informal norms and systems, and where a wide array of institutions operate alongside, or within, nominally formal political institutions. This may well account for many of the limitations – if not failure – of efforts to reform the security sector and its governance systems.

Indeed, the efficiency of many of SSR policies often turns out to be limited because they tend to focus mostly on state institutions, governmental established stakeholders, legal frameworks and codified standards. Although understanding and controlling the state dimension of security remains essential, the complexity of many local contexts calls inexorably for a deep understanding of societal realities, often informal, within which security governance is rooted. Furthermore, analysis of recent crises that have occurred in many countries involving the security apparatus demonstrates the need to better understand the broader societal and cultural contexts within which SSR policies are implemented.

Even if references to the informal security and justice sector have increasingly crept into the SSR and 'state-building' toolkits, they are still so far based upon insufficient empirical understanding of how this sector actually functions in many Southern countries, or of the complex interplay between formal and informal institutions, which determines how policies play out on the ground and impact (or not) on the lives of citizens and communities.

The core hypothesis of this policy note is that formal and informal systems overlap, interrelate, and interpenetrate at complex levels and that states and informal networks are not mutually exclusive but should rather be seen as embedded in each other. There is, consequently, a need to identify those informal networks, actors and processes which, alongside legally established structures, influence decision-making, as well as policy implementation in the security sector. The concept of 'hybridity' is particularly relevant to capture these intersections of formality and informality, and to illuminate the complex nature

of security governance in many countries, thus, providing a more informed and realistic understanding of decision-making processes and power distribution in the security sector, where a variety of actors draw on different sources of authority and legitimacy.

a. Context/Background

The policy literature on both stabilisation and security reforms have been on major growth areas. Yet to a large extent, they have been couched in the short-term language of statecraft rather than based on serious analysis of the way security institutions operate, sustain or transform power relations in 'fragile', or, indeed, 'stabilised', states. The voluminous policy literature on security sector reform (SSR) – and on its place in stabilisation and state-building processes – have been largely prescriptive (DFID, 2002; 2010; OECD, 2007; 2007b; 2011; World Bank, 2011). Even when the political obstacles to reform are acknowledged, they tend to be discussed in terms of the absence of political will or the lack of 'local ownership' (Nathan, 2007a; 2007b). At the same time, there has been some recognition of the downside to international action. The interventions of well-resourced international actors are recognised to be mediated through their reliance on local (and oftentimes, corrupt and unreliable) elites and armed groups. This can divert them from their mandates and damage the security and welfare of the local people and communities they are supposed to protect (Autesserre's, 2010; Veit, 2010). Thus, the internationals have, arguably, internalised some of the characteristics of the very hybrid political orders they are seeking to transform; international peacebuilders and humanitarian actors are all too often accountable only to their own agencies and governments, and not in any meaningful way to the people they aim to aid or protect.

The UN policy framework on SSR[1], which led to the emergence of UN Security Council Resolution 2151 of 2014[2], provides clear insights into the design of the SSR agenda. The policy conceived SSR as a process to ensure the enhancement of an effective and accountable security sector for the state and its people without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law (RoL).

However, it seems that new modes of analysis are also increasingly influential in policy circles. For instance, the OECD's International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) has called for deeper understanding of hybrid political orders (HPOs). In this context, the World Bank's 2011 *World Development Report* (WDR) represents an important step forward and potentially provides the basis for shifting the paradigm for understanding security. While it remains firmly within a framework that insists on legitimate and capable institutions as the policy solution to citizen insecurity, the WDR also acknowledges that building such institutions is a long-term exercise and need not necessarily follow a Western model. The fact that the World Bank, as

[1] https://www.un.org/en/events/peacekeepersday/pdf/securityreform.pdf
[2] https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11369.doc.htm

the premier multilateral development institution, is publishing such an argument is as significant as the substance of the argument itself. However, although there is good reason to be sympathetic to the arguments developed in the WDR, the research and analysis it presents falls well short of rigorously demonstrating the variety of possible ways forward.

The African Union (AU) SSR policy framework was conceived as the process by which countries formulate or re-orient the policies, structures and capabilities of institutions and groups engaged in the security sector to make them more effective, efficient and responsive to democratic control, and to the security and justice needs of the people.

ECOWAS also established a Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance to ensure a robust and proactive framework to assist member states to implement efficient, effective, accountable and transparent security sector structures and processes[3] Regional leadership in this field is critical to achieving common thinking on the nature and form of SSR across Africa[4].

Recent work by EUISS has highlighted the need to invest in (informal) social and communal resilience to better fight violent extremism, moving away from military approaches by government actors[5].

More generally, the importance of customary institutions in the SSR process is increasingly reflected in emerging policy documents, senior policy level debates and guidance notes on SSR. Yet, there remains little evidence that such policies and debates have influenced programmes or donor funding priorities. There are only a handful of examples of donors substantively providing support to such customary institutions, and even in such instances, engagement is a relatively minor component of the overall SSR funding at country level[6].

However, there is a dire need to resolve the deep ambivalence around this issue of hybridity in the international policy discourse, not to mention the lack of candour and transparency on the part of some governments. While the endorsement of the AU and ECOWAS appears, on the face of it, unambiguous (even though there is little evidence of implementation), deciphering the position of the international community and development agencies is rather more challenging. For instance, in its major 2011 policy paper on the role of governance in

[3] ECOWAS Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance | Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

[4] Mac Ginty, Roger (2011) *International peacebuilding and local resistance; Hybrid forms of peace.* Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan; Schroeder, U. C., Chappuis, F., & Kocak, D. (2014). Security Sector Reform and the Emergence of Hybrid Security Governance. *International Peacekeeping*, *21*(2), 214–230. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2014.910405

[5] https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/salafi-jihadism-africa#_conclusions__buffers_against_violent_extremism

[6] *ISSAT Annual Report 2016*, Geneva: DCAF-ISSAT 2017, p12 And significantly, SSPERs –increasingly a crucial tool in Security and Justice programming-- are silent on the role and contribution of traditional and customary institutions, even in contexts such as Liberia where these are acknowledged to be important providers (presumably because these cannot be 'monetized').

peacebuilding, the UNDP places emphasis on 'strengthening informal institutions and networks' as one of the key strategies for fostering 'resilient societies' as a pathway to recovery from conflict', and key to strengthening local governance, promising to 'broaden participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups, and to provide flexible support to state and non-state institutions alike'[7]. Similar statements appear in major multilateral and donor policy documents such as the 'New Deal'. However, the reality is that 'in peacebuilding, international agencies have shown ambivalence toward customary structures, sometimes seeing them as socially regressive and sometimes as valid helpmeets for peace'[8].

To conclude**,** dominant approaches to SSR have scarcely begun to touch upon the deep politics of reform or to draw in any systematic way upon the critical literatures on the state, hybrid political orders [HPOs] and security. References to the 'informal' security and justice sector have become a standard fixture in the global SSR and 'state-building' toolkit. But this has remained largely at the level of rhetoric with little real understanding of how this sector functions, or the complex character of the intersections between formal and informal institutions, or the implications (importantly) for reform efforts that aim to build Weberian ideal-type institutions. Yet, in reality, security governance is based on an important number of countries on a complex amalgam of statutory and non-statutory actors and institutions, which, together, constitute the security sector.

b. Objective

The main objective of this policy note is to describe the state of play of hybrid security systems on the varied terrains on which hybridity is constructed, instrumentalised and recalibrated over time and around the world. It is also to outline challenges and opportunities in this area, in particular, to the UN and WBG understanding of security sector governance, and to their efforts to prevent conflict.

To meet those two requirements, this policy paper has formulated the following core research questions:

- First**,** *how is informality embedded in formal institutions; how does it influence the way the latter functions, and with what implications for reform efforts?* This requires considering the extent to which the security institutions of the states might combine both formal (legal) and informal (non-codified) norms and networks in the way they function and are governed. This entails investigating the penetration of non-formal dynamics, logics and solidarities into (nominally) formal structures and decision-making processes. Put differently, such a question amounts to exploring the "informal" in the formal and likewise the "formal" in the informal.

[7] UNDP, *Governance for Peace: Securing the Social Contract,* UNDP 2011, p12; Jamil Chade, *Governance for Peace: Strengthening Legitimate Politics, Securing the Social Contract,* UNDP and Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, 2012, p.3

[8] *Engaged Societies, the Social Contract in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Concept Note,* NOREF [Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre] and UNDP, April 2016, p.12.

Within the formal (codified) systems, actors are not necessarily (and in any case not exclusively) motivated by rational-bureaucratic logics, but take decisions which refer to norms and codes often rooted in customs, traditions or new emerging norms and practices. Indigenous, generational and informal solidarities embedded in state structures can become the subject of power struggles between competing social groups. Such contestations often explain the underlying politics (and, hence, failure) of SSR programmes. Particular attention can also be paid to gender-related issues and on the ways in which gender promotion within the armed forces, for example, can be undermined by deeply-rooted customs, as well as traditional and religious practices;

- Second, *how do non-state security actors interact with, and seek to influence (openly or covertly), the formal security institutions of the state?* There is a need to understand the nature and implications of the local-level interactions between the security institutions of the state and the traditional and customary societal structures (such as extended families, clans, tribes, religious brotherhoods, village elders, religious leaders, headmen, chiefs, healers), as well as the 'newer' non-state actors (self-defence groups set up by populations themselves, militias, vigilante groups and others) involved directly or indirectly in the delivery of security, including, in some cases, the mutual convergence of these actors with criminal and/or insurgent networks. Informal systems have a paradoxical relationship with the formal organs of the state: while they undergird the state, supplement and subsidise the functioning of its institutions (in this case, security delivery), and provide it with a modicum of resiliency, at the same time, they erode its rational-legal norms. While this is testimony to the complexity of security governance in some contexts, the nature of such interactions (and their implications) remains little understood, particularly in relation to the security sector;
- Third, *how do political elites and other power-brokers instrumentalise security institutions to consolidate their grip on power and negotiate the contradictory political terrain between formal and informal orders?* When and how do local-level institutions become co-opted by powerful and non-accountable interests? The issue at stake here is to capture the role of political elites in the development of formal and informal security policies and the ways in which they influence the exercise of policing, power and representation. In Africa, both formal and informal institutions are often seen as functional by the politico-administrative elites and are both mobilised to legitimise their power and authority. What emerges are dual, overlapping hierarchies and systems of power in which both modern and traditional elites are invested, but which are almost certainly regulated (if at all) by norms emanating from outside the 'rational-legal' sphere;
- Fourth*, what is the impact of hybridity on the security and entitlements of citizens in African states and, in particular, on populations in situations of vulnerability, social exclusion and inequity?* Who benefits, or conversely, who suffers from hybrid security arrangements; to what degree, and in what contexts and/or arenas? In this regard, there is particular need to pay close attention to the subjective beliefs and practical experiences of social actors affected by such security arrangements. In other words, to investigate how 'security' and 'insecurity' are perceived and experienced at the 'grassroots' level. One aspect of this is to examine the manner in which citizens navigate and even legitimise these complementary, as well as contradictory, spheres in their daily lives. More often than not, informal relationships determine the ways citizens perceive, experience and respond to state and local security

institutions in hybrid systems: both negatively – as informal relationships may reinforce national and local-level patronage, corruption, exclusion and disempowerment – and positively, insofar as informal relationships may enable citizens to identify with, through, for instance, more effective security and justice delivery and popularly accepted dispute-resolution mechanisms, and

- Fifth, *how does one build viable and accountable institutions in a context characterised by hybridity and informality?* Indeed, how do oversight mechanisms work in situations where parallel channels of political influence and of distributing resources are in operation, and organised around informal networks and traditional relationships? Can the concept of hybridity provide a new sensibility regarding the idea of legitimate and accountable authority? Or does it wholly undermine this as a possible goal? How – if at all – can oversight mechanisms 'work with the grain' and be reinforced through informal mechanisms? There is a need to explore the extent to which different forms of checks and balances, rooted in both traditional and modern sources of legitimacy, in sum, "*hybrid security governance mechanisms*", can be mobilised (and, indeed, coalesced) to reinforce democratic oversight and accountability and guarantee "democratic and human security". Thus, the purpose of this policy note is also to establish a linkage between a theoretical and practical conception of "hybrid security governance" and notions of accountability and legitimacy.

c. Methodology

By relying on a *neo-institutional* theoretical framework, as well as the perspectives offered both by sociology and anthropology in the daily functioning of state bureaucracies (both at the central and local levels), this policy paper hopes to provide new and refreshing insights into networks and alliances, as well as on competition, tensions and conflicts within defence and security services which may help to explain the failure of SSR processes, or at least, difficulties in implementing them. It seeks also to explain how hybrid security systems are experienced at the grass roots by supposed beneficiaries, and in particular, how they impact the lives of vulnerable groups and shape citizen expectations of security and security entitlements. These different strands of analysis need bringing together to provide warts – and – all diagnoses of how hybrid security arrangements work and for whom.

In addition to contributing to strengthening the research and evidence-base of SSR, this policy paper carries important policy implications for how we approach security governance all over the world. In this regard, the ultimate intent behind the document is to go beyond the use of 'hybridity' as an analytical tool to inquire as to the extent to which the concept can provide the underpinnings of an approach to building more effective security and security governance systems, hence, more durable peace-building processes.

d. Key categories of analysis and concepts

The *neo-institutional* theoretical approach (ref) defines institutions as the set of formal and informal rules, norms and standards by which decisions are made concerning the distribution of power and the organisation of a given society.

Deriving from this:

- Formal institutions can be defined as those structures grounded in the organisational and bureaucratic order derived from the constitutional and legal architecture (established and perpetuated after the independence of an important number of Southern countries) such as constitutions, laws and decrees, as well as corresponding administrative structures such as legislatures, ministries, rule of law institutions and political parties. They are promoted and enforced by legally-instituted actors who are acting according to official mandates.

- In contrast, informal institutions are based on implicit rules. The essence of these informal institutions can be summarised as follows: (1) actors share a common set of expectations; (2) they rely on simple forms of reciprocity; (3) rules are unwritten but understood by each actor; (4) exchanges are non-specified in terms of time; (5) they are implemented through unofficial channels and with no particular attention to detailed objectives or methods, and (6) they rely on enforcement by informal actors in case of a breach of the perceived agreement. They can often reflect socio-cultural routines and norms, as well as underlying patterns of interactions among socioeconomic classes (for instance, caste systems) and communities (different ethnic groups). Their decisions tend to be influenced instead by prevailing power relations, by the social networks in which they are immersed, and by alternative norms and codes of behaviour. They partly can be framed in the language of 'custom', 'tradition' or 'religion', or by various forms of patronage. But it is also absolutely key to pay attention to new socially embedded forms of reciprocity, which inform leadership, recruitment, promotion and social networks, both in and beyond the security sector.

To summarise, the word "formal" refers to codified institutions and the word "informal" refers to non-codified institutions. The value of historical and sociological institutionalism lies in recognising that these distinctions (between the formal and informal) are hardly manichean in nature, and that a wide variety of institutions operate alongside, or within, formal political institutions and are at play in decision-making processes and public policies, much of them informal in nature. That is the reason why recently, a number of scholars have proposed to analyse and understand political orders in the Global South using the concept of 'hybridity'. The concept of 'hybridity' is meant to capture the interpenetrations of different social spheres and the subsequent interactions between the formal state apparatus on the one hand, and informal institutions on the other hand (cf. *literature review below*). This concept is offering an alternative to concepts such as 'fragile states', and also to the legal-rational approach which underlies most of the public policies promoted by international donors and policymakers, particularly in peacebuilding processes. It is also important to state that 'hybridity' can mean quite different things in different contexts. A related challenge is the Janus-face of many of these actors and institutions, dispensing 'security' in some contexts and

for some populations, and at the same 'insecurity' in other contexts and for other groups, or gravitating over time from protecting neighbourhoods to preying on them, or constituting a resource which can be mobilised by ambitious politicians and criminal enterprises alike. This makes it difficult to arrive at consistent perceptions or predictions of the character, role and outcomes of both formal and informal institutions, particularly in the absence of regulation or some structures of accountability.

Why is it important? Major conclusions and data findings on hybrid security systems made by research and academic data and literature

There has been little study of how security bodies and structures interact with the power and patronage structures of hybrid political orders, either locally or nationally. We still know very little about how the formal security arrangements interconnect with the parallel powers, including systems of patronage, and the manipulation of ethnic and religious identities as instruments of security policy (the work of Enloe (1980) on the latter remains unrivalled). There is a particular lack of detailed empirical micro-analysis of security institutions and practices, either in the state or in non-state security contexts. Terms like 'hybrid political orders' (HPOs) or 'hybrid governance' have been introduced to capture the contested nature of governance and security arrangements in fragile and post-conflict states. In particular, it is argued that the state's failure to provide public goods does not necessarily lead to an anarchic state akin to Hobbesian reality. Actors, organisations and institutions adhere to norms that merge informal, formal and globalised codes, and this mixture results in hybrid modes of political order. Security provision in hybrid contexts is negotiated, bargained and enforced through both formal and informal processes that coexist, overlap and intertwine. According to this stream of literature, reforms almost invariably imply shifts in the balance of power within governments and within security establishments.

The research literature herein surveyed includes a number of studies of local level security, policing and justice arrangements of somewhat variable empirical quality. Many of these studies aim to provide best practice examples of how these can, and do, provide alternatives to failing state security provision. Analyses of governance contexts juxtapose diverse political and social actors and aim to explain the interactions of traditional, personal, kin-based, or clientelistic logics with modern, imported, or rational actor logics (Boege et al., 2009; Richmond, 2009; Mallet, 2010; MacGinty, 2011). However, the literature's use of hybridity does not denote the 'grafting' together of separate actors and institutions to make new entities (MacGinty, 2011). Instead, it denotes the '(re)negotiation and transformation' or 'unmaking' and 'remaking' of political orders (Mallet, 2010). HPOs aim to uncover the deep tensions that often arise between the declared or manifest functions of security actors and institutions, and their undeclared or latent agendas. The invisible faces of power and security are a major area of interest. For instance, Mallet (2010) uses Lund's (2006) concept of 'twilight institutions' to describe the security and authority roles accorded to Northern Mozambique's local chiefs through associations with state officials and international donor organisations;

while Goodhand and Mansfield (2010) argue that Afghanistan's warlords use their domination of illicit economies and patrimonial 'joint extraction regimes' to build political legitimacy through the provision of security and social services to client communities (Snyder, 2006). Similarly, Menkhaus (2006) introduces the concept of the 'mediated state' to explain the manner in which the Somali government must partner, co-opt or sub-contract state security functions to localised coalitions of religious, clan and business leaders eager to create secure trading markets, set up local courts and maintain traditional patterns of domination. The ultimate object is to understand 'how best to manage, exploit and coexist' with HPOs and to help public authorities 'to provide human and national security to their populations' (Clunan and Trinkunas, 2010). Thus, in countries dominated by corrupt or abusive institutions, such as Mexico and Uganda, those responsible for delivering security and justice are often the perpetrators of insecurity (Serrano et al., 2011; Baker, 2010). Conversely, the alleged agents of insecurity, such as warlords in Afghanistan or firebrand clerics in Somalia, may offer alternative forms of protection or even claim to act as liberators (Goodhand and Mansfeld, 2010; Renders and Terlinden, 2010).

All of these examples take place within hybrid political spaces in which international and national actors coexist, collaborate and compete to achieve their ends. Thus, they are far from the neutral, uncontested and self-contained spaces found in the mainstream security literature. Moreover, policy analyses have a tendency to edit the political interests and calculations of the major players, including the international ones. The most important contribution of the critical literature (Chandler, 2006; Pugh et al., 2008; Richmond and Franks, 2009; Richmond, 2011; Keen, 2006; Howell and Lind, 2009) has been to place these external actors firmly into the analytical frame as objects of study – rather than taking their policy agendas as the starting point for inquiry, as in so much of the state-building and security reform literature.

As for the way African states relate to 'hybridity', certainly one is inclined to agree with Scheye that '[b]ecause of the political sensitivity of justice and security, not to mention its oft-times tenuous legitimacy, the post-colonial fragile state may be reluctant and/or averse to permit or recognise other actors' participation in its distribution and delivery, whether it be 'contracted out' or provided by a non-state actor', often preferring opaque and largely informal arrangements, hence, the grey zone – somewhere between formality and informality-- in which hybrid formations have tended to exist in many contexts. The *shadow existence* of these structures elsewhere allows for their unaccountable use by a variety of political interests. So, the considerations go beyond those identified by Scheye[9].

This literature review shows that HPOs are difficult to empirically investigate and categorise. Furthermore, analysis of how the contests and negotiations within HPOs work, and for whom, must be carefully separated from assertions about their political or normative desirability. It

[9] Eric Scheye, 'State-provided service, contracting out, and non-state networks: justice and security as public and private goods and services', 2009 p. 4.

has to be acknowledged that HPOs can include actors and institutions that reinforce insecurities or patterns of social or gender exclusion. Thus, the constitution of public authority and the provision of public goods rarely correspond to global normative standards for governance.

That is the reason why hybrid structures, undoubtedly, raise important and challenging questions: to whom are they accountable, and how is the 'public interest' protected in the face of patronage and the profit motive of private parties? Do they simply legitimise the inclusion of spoilers within government? Is it possible to institutionalise what may be fluid and personality-dependent structures?

The "Global Uncertainties: Security in an Africa of Networked, Multilevel governance" led by Professor David Leonard at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) began to answer some of these questions. The programme was built on the observation that all governance (especially in Africa) is multi-level and networked – from the level of the village to that of the international organisation – and well beyond what is specified in formal government structures. Thus, the focus is not only on the ways in which key conflict-management institutions evolve, but also on the changing ways in which the networks they are embedded in actually operate. The main objective is to improve the functioning of the various institutions responsible for the production of security and the management of conflict in sub-Saharan African societies, particularly in the presence of violent conflict (Bagayoko, 2012; Leonard, 2013).

The analysis of hybridity in the literature also reflects an interest in the subjective beliefs and lived experiences of social actors affected by security arrangements. As stated by Bagayoko, Hutchful and Luckham (2016), diverse forms of hybrid political authority, in which formal chains of command and accountability have been supplemented or even superseded by informal patronage, have penetrated state security structures**.**

In their view, understanding 'hybrid security orders' in Africa is far from being limited solely to non-state actors but, on the contrary, requires developing a thorough knowledge of the "socially embedded forms of reciprocity" which inform leadership, recruitment and promotion in the security sector, such as the role and influence of:

- So-called "*joking relationships*" (*sinankunya* or *rakiré* in West Africa);
- Caste systems and social obligations deriving from them (reflected as well in the division of labour);
- Secret societies and initiation rituals;
- Regional ties and solidarities (including those overlapping geographical boundaries);
- Kinship networks (extended definition of kinship such as godfather sponsorship);
- Symbolic struggles for social positions and vertical and horizontal links among individuals of different ranks;
- Intergenerational relationships (eg. between elders and youngsters within the armed forces);

- Negotiation of internal hierarchies within the informal chains of command;
- Rejection of women by male colleagues based on cultural stereotypes of women's roles in society.

Why is this topic essential?

This policy paper stems from an analytical shift away from state-centric security to the perceptions and experience of those at the receiving end of security arrangements. The assumption underlying this policy note is that Weberian legal-rational legitimacy has been over-emphasised in Southern countries and that the failure or limited impact of security reform processes suggests we also need to explore the significance of different types and sources of legitimacy. In our perspective, it is essential to recognise that much political activity in Africa (like most social transactions) takes place in the context of informal norms and systems. Decision-making processes are not exclusively nested in formal institutions but also reflect influences emanating from traditional and newly emerging socio-cultural institutions, norms and standards, which are, by their very nature, much less visible, particularly in the influence that they exert on 'public' conduct. Contrary to the assumptions of the 'state-building' literature, the state and the informal networks are not mutually exclusive but should be seen as embedded in each other. Hence, studying 'hybrid security governance' requires investigating the processes of informalisation and instrumentalisation of legally-established security structures, as well as the ways in which these cohabit with traditional or new ones, both at the central and local levels, particularly in countries emerging from conflict.

Therefore, this policy paper acknowledges the possibility that they may have the agency (power and resources) to shape the security agenda, as well as be subject to it, whether as creators of security or, alternatively, as agents of insecurity. In fact, the crucial issue at stake entailed by an analysis in terms of hybridity is not only to address the policy concerns of security decision-makers but also to tap the experience, perceptions and needs of end users. SSR interventions are all too rarely evidence-based or grounded upon proper consultation with those whom it is supposed to benefit. Policy-makers sometimes grumble that the social research that arrives on their desks does not address their most pressing policy concerns. Researchers, for their part, complain that policy-makers disregard their findings in pursuing quick policy fixes in situations of great historical and social complexity. At the same time, *both* researchers and policy-makers tend to be remote from the day-to-day lives and security concerns of poor and vulnerable people. These end-users have to cope with risks and insecurities that stem partly from global dislocations they may barely understand. They interact with a range of international actors, including researchers, who are accountable in the final analysis to those who mandate, fund or organise their activities, rather than those they study. End-users cannot hope to hold either policy-makers or researchers to account without better empirical understanding of how and by whom their security is determined, including, where possible, access to the research upon which the framing of policy is based.

That said, the notion of 'security from below' should not be taken on face value, and if anything, it requires substantial qualification. For one thing, these local/informal actors are as liable to dispense *in*security as security (easily bent, for instance, to sectarian and/or criminal ends); often have limited, if any, structures of accountability or regard for due process and human rights, and incorporate power hierarchies and networks of their own that do not necessarily serve the collective interest. This reminds us that hybrid security systems have complex origins and political dynamics: suffice to say that they are not uniquely the product of striving for 'security from below', but oftentimes result from deliberate efforts by states, political elites and dominant orders to capture, mobilise and bend such subaltern structures (and their political and coercive resources) to their own designs, not inconsistent with the wider historical tendency of states and political elites to tap into or outsource to private circuits of violence as a way of consolidating their own power. In other words, informal actors, norms and networks can sometimes be just as exclusive and oppressive as formal security provision. It is, therefore, absolutely crucial to seek to understand how the forces of hybridity generated from below intersect with those generated from above. Equally notable is the tendency for an autonomous 'enforcement cadre' with its own separate and distinct interests to develop at the nexus of these networks, in some cases, able to tap into resources and 'legitimations' from above and below, and all too often, posing their own problems of control. It is not enough that hybrid security arrangements be rooted in local custom and new informal practices. They should also demonstrably benefit those whose rights and safety they are supposed to protect.

What have we learned? (Empirical examples)

Between 20014 and 2017, the African Security Sector Network (ASSN) conducted a multi-country study on Hybrid Security Governance in Africa – and various case studies emerged. For example, in Sierra Leone, the decade-long rebel war (1991-2002) brought to the fore the role of informal security structures, both in the prosecution of the war and the post-conflict security landscape. Human rights abuses committed by some members of the armed forces who were known as 'sobels' led to mistrust between the civilians and the military. In a bid to assume the responsibility of the security of their areas, ordinary citizens established Civil Defence Forces (CDFs) which were a combination of groups of local hunter militia. This is like the emergence of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in the Borno State of Nigeria and the Arrow Boys networks in Central African Region and South Sudan who were positive early responses to the Lord's Resistance Army.

Still, in post war Sierra Leone, there was a deliberate and pragmatic effort to integrate customary institutions into the national security and justice architecture through the philosophy of 'decentralisation'. Chiefdom security committees were set up and aligned to the Provincial and District Security Committees which meant integrating traditional chiefs into the national security and intelligence structure. The hybridity of the justice system which

exists through the lens of legal dualism is also seen in Sierra Leone where the national constitution recognises the traditional institutions and their sphere of influence.

Cote d'Ivoire had the *Dozos* who were hunters in the northern part of the country. They are members of a confraternity which was made up of initiated hunters and sons of *Dozo* called a *Donzo Ton*. Note that they are not an ethnic group – they exist across different ethnic groups in the country. In the 1990s, their influence grew when President Houphouët-Boigny called on citizens to assist the police in crime control. They proved to be quite successful in this task and their fame spread across the country into the rural areas; they gained political influence and prominence during the civil war when they were hired by locals on both sides of the conflict as combatants, escorts, traffic controller and guards. This success fed into the growth of *Benkadi* groups (a network of *Donzo Ton*) in all parts of Côte d'Ivoire, as the civil war and fragile peace drove demand for local security. The success of the *Dozos* has been attributed to the magical abilities with which they are supposedly endowed. In Abidjan and Bouaké, *Donzo Ton* leaders opened security offices. Unemployed men from around the country came to Korhogo and Odienné, home of Benkadi leadership, to be initiated into the *Donzo Ton*, and, thus, have access to work as well-paid security guards. The problems associated with the *Dozos* (human rights abuses and extortion.) at the end of the war have been highlighted in various media as have the ambivalent responses of the new government to contain these groups while at the same time continuing to rely on them to keep the remnants of the insurgency at bay, particularly in the west of the country.

The experiences of both Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire speak to the fact that in the same way that 'security' lies at the very core of the peacebuilding process, so the character of decisions about how to respond to the complex (and multi-layered) landscape of force in post-conflict contexts can be critical to the success of efforts to restore or bring about 'security', particularly in the light of the state security and 'rule of law' vacuum that tends to emerge during conflict and at its supposed end'. In this respect, the perspectives of end-users, that is, at ground-level, may differ from the top-down perspectives of state security sector managers, political élites and the international community that tend to inform 'state-building' processes.

It is not enough to simply dismantle irregular and customary force structures which emerged to perform security and policing functions without addressing the fundamental dynamics and deficits that generated them in the first place. Decisions about these structures and their functioning have to respond in some way to both demands for security and order from below and for state needs from above. These decisions and the associated processes will be crucial to the evolution of any future state-sanctioned security structures.

Liberia also provides a good model where non-formal security and policing mechanisms were integrated into the formal security structure like that of Sierra Leone. Liberia also has Peace Huts which started after 14 years of war throughout the country. These spaces provide

conflict resolution and mediation services to disputing community members. Peace Huts are modelled on the century-old Palava Hut system used to address disputes but were ran mostly by men. Liberian women adapted this system to suit their needs in establishing gender sensitive transitional justice and security sector reform processes. Another good example of this ambivalence appears in the Liberia PER, which acknowledges the positive role that traditional and customary institutions have played in delivering a modicum of security and, in the same breath, castigates their cultural shortcomings[10].

In Nigeria, transformation of the security landscape is currently characterised by the emergence of grassroots security actors, with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), vigilante and neighbourhood watch groups playing key roles in this process, either working as stand-alone entities or jointly with state security actors. The (often gross) abuses by these 'self-defence groups' also point to the urgent need to bring them into the ambit of security governance. The CJTF in the northeast region of Nigeria is in the front-line role in the battle against insurgency and is officially recognised and supported by the state as a key actor that complements the work of the armed forces and police. The current spate of insecurity necessitated the formation of state-level and regional security structures at the sub-national levels, with the establishment of *Amotekun* in the south-west[11] and *Ebube-agu* in the south-east, which are funded directly by the governments of the respective regions, outside the federal government that otherwise has the exclusive mandate for the provision of security services. In the case of the state-level structure, Operation Rainbow currently functions as a security agency funded by the Plateau State Government, with personnel drawn from the security organisations under the control of the federal government, in strong partnership with community-level neighbourhood watch groups that provide local intelligence for response activities[12].

The situation in Somalia also provides a classic example of the process of hybridisation regarding the Somali custom of *abbaan* which typifies the traditional system of governance where security is provided for outside travelers, merchants and migrants moving through clan territory. This system of hybridisation of security dates to the precolonial era, and today, it has been reinvigorated following the collapse of the Somali state and proliferation of international aid workers in need of safe passage[13]. This situation was further underscored by the fact that:

"Communities that have been cut off from effective state authority – whether out of governmental indifference to marginal frontier territories, or because of protracted warfare, or because of vested local and external interests in perpetuating conditions of state failure

[10] World Bank/UNMIL, LIBERIA Public Expenditure Review Note: Meeting the Challenges of the UNMIL Security Transition, Report No. 71009-LR, Africa Region, July 2012

[11] Yahaya, U.J and Bello, M.M., An Analysis of the Constitutional Implications of Southwest Regional Security Initiative: Amotekun, *African Scholar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(6), 2020, 161-192.

[12] Kwaja, Chris, State Response to Violent Conflicts in Plateau State, Monograph Series 2, Directorate of Research and Planning, Governor's Office, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, 2014.

[13] Menkhaus, K., Non-State Security Providers and Political Formation in Somalia, CSG Papers, 2016, Available in https://secgovcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/NSSPs_in_Somalia_April2016.pdf

– consistently seek to devise arrangements to provide for themselves the core functions that the missing state is supposed to assume, especially basic security."[14]

Another key example from the Somali context is the Somali Police *Darwish* concept.[15] The model, fully endorsed by the international community, as outlined in the National Security Architecture and the New Policing Model, takes progressive steps to co-opt locally trusted traditional clan-based security providers within their home territory at a sub-federal level as a form of police with some paramilitary capabilities. While still in the early stages of implementation, and not without challenges, there are questions of majoritarian-minoritarian clan composition, appropriate vetting/screening and universal Police Basic Recruitment Curriculum training, as well as standard concerns over misconduct[16]. Despite these questions, however, even critics of the co-opting clan militias model project their potential in terms of community policing and counterterrorism[17,18], as well as reducing the incidence of clan militias outside any chain of Government control or accountability.

Other examples of where hybridity has worked in Africa are:

1. Rwanda exhibits a remarkable achievement in the preservation of peace and order by employing neighbourhood militias called "Local Defense Forces" that work closely with the police.
2. Ethiopia incorporated traditional leaders into a consultative council of regional governments beyond the elected regional council.
3. In Somaliland, tribal practices and institutions were integrated into the peacebuilding process; for example, through the election of traditional elites from their respective clans into the Somalia Federal Government in 2012. Although controversial, Somalia continues to favour a clan representative model in which clan elders elect Parliament, which, in turn, elect the President. This follows the legacy of the 4.5 method introduced in 2000 during the peace and reconciliation conferences in Arta, Djibouti. Under this system, Somali communities were divided into four major and one-half clans (the half being a concession to collective minoritarian clans) insofar as power-sharing, that is, representation in the House of the People and other government structures. This coexistence allowed for state institutions and local communities to

[14] Menkhaus, K., Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoiler, State Building and the Politics of Coping, International Security, 31(3), 2007, 74–106, Winter.

[15] The term Darwesh is variable in its use, some academic sources use it as an umbrella category including all Federal Member State forces, while others limit it narrowly to units of local or federal *gendarme*. For purposes here we refer specifically to; "units of the Somali Police [which] are traditionally well accepted security providers and are foreseen in the setup of security organizations at a Federal and State level, as mapped out in the National Security Architecture and Somalia's new Policing Model". UNSOM (2019) Somali Police Darwish Concept.

[16] Adam Day, Vanda Felbab-Brown, Hybrid Conflict, Hybrid Peace; How militias and paramilitary groups shape post conflict transitions, Case 3 The Problem with Militias in Somalia, 2020.

[17] Ibid.

[18] https://theglobalobservatory.org/2019/11/state-level-military-forces-potentially-turn-tide-war-al-shabaab/

work together to establish legitimate political systems to facilitate peace and state-building processes[19].

4. In response to the crisis in the Sahel, myriad programmes have been set up with the aim of improving the performance of the defence and security forces in the region. These programmes are often run or supported by international partners. Yet, as the security situation in the region has been worsening, most of the programmes designed to build the capacities of, and restructure or reform, the armed forces in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, have failed to grasp that these security systems function on a fundamentally hybrid basis, with a combination of – and often a clash between – legal and rational approaches, on the one hand, and informal dynamics, on the other, and that this can often hinder implementation of reforms[20].

In the Middle East and North Africa, hybrid actors are pivotal drivers of conflict and governance challenges. They arose in response to states' failure to provide security or services but now there are primary in efforts to re-establish authority[21]. Non-state actors are used decisively in shaping the power struggles between major state powers in this region; for example, in Iran, Libya and Saudi Arabia. The relationship between the Iranian government and Hezbollah shows how regional powers carry on their antagonism through their relations with a non-state proxy and the transborder activities of such groups.[22] This also shows that a non-state actor can be a challenger to one state and a partner to another. Hybridity has also worked in Iran where they have played a role of state sponsorship in the creation and evolution of hybrid actors and has enjoyed singular success in partnering with such groups.[23] Hybrid actors may be the single greatest impediment to the reconstitution of state authority, having established themselves as an enduring feature of the landscape in the Middle East and North Africa.

In Libya, local armed forces were pivotal to the 2011 revolution which ousted former President Muamar al-Gaddafi**.** Transitional authorities established after the initial state collapse financed the creation of new brigades as sources of security, initiated disarmament programmes and transferred armed groups into newly created state structures. Despite these attempts, major control challenges arose which gave rise to inter-group rivalries and a scramble for scarce resources. This led to some groups diversifying their sources of income beyond state control, transforming Libya's economy into one shaped by conflict with serious consequences of state control of its political landscape. In a bid to address these challenges,

[19] Daniel G. Kebede, The hybridization of state security governance for peacebuilding and state-building in Somalia. The Southern Voices Network: Research Paper No 2, 2014.

[20] Bagayoko, Niagalé, 2022, Explaining the failure of internationally-supported defence and security reforms in Sahelian states. *Conflict, Security & Development*, *22*(3), 243–269.

[21] https://www.panoramas.pitt.edu/larr/violent-nonstate-actors-and-emergence-hybrid-governance-south-america

[22] See for example, Schroeder, Ursula C., Fairlie Chappuis, Deniz Kocak, Security Sector Reform and the Emergence of Hybrid Security Governance. *International Peacekeeping, 21*(2), 2014, 214-230.

[23] Cambanis, Thanassis, et. at. Hybrid Actors: Armed Groups and State Fragmentation in the Middle East, A Century Foundation Book, 2019.

The Warrior Affairs Commission (WAC) was established to reintegrate armed groups into state-controlled structures with the mandate of eliminating terrorism. This did not work because too many factors hampered its effectiveness. Most of the former rebels did not want to sever ties with their regional communities, and the revolutionary brigades were given better welfare, weapons and equipment packages compared to those provided through this programme.

The approach in terms of hybridity can also help to better capture gender inequalities. Hybrid security structures are not insulated from the patriarchal dominance that has permeated formal security mechanisms. In some contexts, this patriarchal structure is reinforced by law, religion and the cultural values of social groups. The importance and value of accommodating cultural norms and values is, unfortunately, at times, at odds with advancing women's rights. Indirect suffrage electoral systems, which affirm the historic clan system in Somalia limits the ability of women to maximise the impact of the female vote. A similar dynamic exists in efforts to accommodate customary judicial systems, which may be more accessible and enjoy more public confidence but may also be more prejudiced towards women. Women's secret societies can also be as gender-biased as men. It is important to note that there can be tensions in the day-to-day regulation of social norms and security of certain groups that could be tagged vulnerable or marginalised, such as persons with disabilities and members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and queer (LGBTQ) communities. Most times, these tensions are carried out with the support of religious institutions and further legitimised by traditional authorities – enforcement could be carried out by the non-formal security or policing structures they control.

Those very different contexts, different dynamics and different outcomes point to the intrinsic difficulty of developing a consistent narrative of 'hybridity', and the tension between the 'benign' and the 'demonic' narratives not only in that discourse, but dominant in particular regions.

The following lessons can be drawing from the analysis of the empirical examples presented above:

- *First,* there is a need to identify and analyse the networks and processes that span the divide between 'formality' and 'informality', and, as a result, to develop a better and more realistic understanding of decision-making processes and power distribution in the African security sector.
- S*econd,* the role of non-state/non-formal/customary security institutions (community security organs, militias, vigilante groups, etc) and the interactions and interface between these and the formal security institutions of the state have to be clarified. Hybrid security orders are characterised by the existence of multiple non-state providers of security, as the state shares 'authority, legitimacy and capacity' with other actors, networks and institutions. Such a phenomenon requires analysts but also policy-makers to gain empirically grounded knowledge.

- *Third,* the 'real economy' of security provisioning in hybrid systems surely should be best understood, and the patterns of inclusion and exclusion associated with such systems (in particular, the role of gender youth where the notion of 'double jeopardy' may well apply). At a broader level, the lens of social inclusion should help to distinguish those HPOs that provide for workable public authority from hybrid security orders that merely reinforce 'elite bargains', 'coalitions' or 'pacts', or only seek the capacity to contain violence and to secure the property, economic interests and opportunities of pact members.
- *Fourth,*the hybridity approach excludes any idealisation or 'romanticisation' of the informal domain. While presenting systematically all the stakeholders, standards and network influencing informal institutions of a given country, this analysis should not only assess their operational efficiency but also their relevance in terms of human rights and the satisfaction of the security and development needs of the African people. It is, therefore, important to recognise that many hybrid security orders may be inclusive in certain respects but also remain 'limited access orders' in many other respects, particularly as regards patriarchism, inequalities and human rights abuses.
- *Finally,* the concept of 'hybridity' has to be more than an analytical tool (to explain functions and dysfunctions in security systems) and can become a guide to action. The approach in terms of 'hybridity' in its broadest sense can furnish a strategy for building more effective security systems, if these 'crossover' networks (or the values underlying them) can be mobilised as checks and balances to inform and reinforce a more equitable security governance.

Key conclusions

The issue at stake in this policy note has been to **to inquire as to the extent to which the concept of hybridity can support an approach to building more effective security and security governance systems** and inform the agendas of national and international partners who wish to participate in programmes aimed at reaching this objective. That is the reason why its value goes well beyond the academic products. Its ambition is to contribute to a change of reality in a feasible way and to create a strong linkage between research results on hybridity and UN and WBG SSR-related agendas by:

- Determining how hybridity of security orders can be converted on the ground into syncretism of security governance[24], based on best practices of both informal and informal security systems;
- Providing insights to further shape conceptual debates and improve SSR agendas, targeting national decision-making circles, as well as the donor community, and
- Identifying how national governments, as well as the UN and international partners should engage with non-state security actors that belong to those hybrid security arrangements.

[24] A fascinating example of this 'syncretism' applied to the international arena is the publication *Providing Security in Times of Uncertainty: Opting for a Mosaic Security System,* Report of the FES Global Reflection Group on the Monopoly on the Use of Force 2.0 , Berlin 2017 : Providing Security in Times of Uncertainty (fes.de)

Indeed, in addition to contributing to strengthening the research and evidence-base of SSR, the approach based on the hybridity concept, undoubtedly, carries important policy implications to approach security governance in a different way. The challenge for UN and the WBG is how to support SSR processes seeking to effect transition towards more locally-based and inclusive systems of public authority and of security governance, without incorporating or, indeed, reinforcing the non-democratic tendencies inherent in some informal structures. If the typical security sector is in reality hybrid and, hence, far removed from the ideal-typic conceptual understandings underlying current SSR and SSG initiatives, this should have significant and concrete implications for the way both institutions understand and approach reform and governance of the security sector, in particular:

- **Including a thorough analysis of informal security arrangement in any assessment mission.** Such an analysis should constitute a major part of any political economy analysis of the security sector. This entails that all the assessments and mapping exercises which are meant to constitute the basis of any SSR programming should integrate – in addition to the mapping of legal and state actors and institutions - a thorough analysis of informal actors, norms and networks which do have an impact on the security system of a given country.
- **Identifying empirically which hybrid processes, on the one hand, foster inclusion and accountability, and which, on the other hand, reinforce exclusion and violence and impede the emergence of democratic security governance.** This crucial exercise entails clearly defining benchmarchs (such as respect for human rights and protection/promotion of human dignity) against which different kinds of hybrid security arrangements can be evaluated;
- **Developing relations with hybrid security arrangements that are considered legitimate** (according to the aforementioned criteria) to help to build more effective and accountable security sector governance. This entails a **better understanding of how and for whom oversight mechanisms work in situations where parallel channels of influence and informal networks actually determine the allocation of resources and security provision**. The conduct of **large surveys and focus groups among populations beneficiating or suffering from hybrid security governance** should be an essential tool to be mobilised in any SSR process. This will serve to explain how hybrid security systems are experienced at the grassroots level. It will also help to decentralise SSR processes, which mostly focused on central institutions (in the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary) and national capitals or larger urban centres and important cities;
- **Incorporating hybrid security arrangements into programme design,** especially when it comes to reforming security sector legal frameworks, a process which should seek to bring on board those informal norms, standards and customary arrangements that impact security governance on the ground. More broadly, the objective of programming should be to **develop better empirically-grounded policies to address the impact of hybrid security arrangements on the security and entitlements of citizens, vulnerable and excluded people and communities in particular.**

- **Expanding approaches to public expenditure reviews (PERs) to include research and new data on how non-state security mechanisms are actually financed.** Such research may also generate new insights into when and how local actors (both formal and non-state) seek to exploit international/multilateral resources to consolidate their power and local control.
- **Taking into account non-state actors who show respect for human rights in the design of oversight and control mechanisms of the security sector,** such as parliaments and other independent institutions like the Human Rights Commission, audit bodies and ombudsman.
- **Integrating informal actors, norms and networks into monitoring and evaluation processes. This** may require new **indicators, much more qualitative than quantitative, to unearth informal practices;** for instance, the ways in which **human resources** (recruitment, promotion, retirement, military condition) and **budgetary procedures** are functioning on a daily basis;
- **Building capacity of non-state actors to orient their activities in the security and justice sector and their interface with the formal security institutions of the state towards support, and not hindrance, of SSG, and**
- **Strengthening the (notoriously weak) expertise, research and evidence-base of SSR in Southern countries,** by enhancing the capacity of local institutions and actors well-grounded in the social, political and security environment that SSR programmes aim to reform. This **local expertise** has to be deeply involved in the assessment, planning, programming, implementation and monitoring of SSR processes aforementioned. This 'local expertise' (as opposed to *local knowledge*) does not pre-exist, but (by implication) needs to be cultivated trough external support, and, thereby, asserts its ability to engage issues of security sector reform and governance in their respective countries.

Such an approach should help not only in identifying obstacles (including embedded cultural and political resistance) likely to undermine the success and legitimacy of security sector reform processes, but also opportunities to enhance their impact on the ground.

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