



## Beyond Implementation – making EU SSR effective

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*EU discourse and practice strives towards the effectiveness and efficiency in efforts towards crisis management and civilian missions. The majority of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions are on Security Sector Reform (SSR), particularly dealing with police and defence reform. This article discusses the practicality from experiences and lessons learnt by looking at the perspectives that make SSR work.*

### The need for all perspectives

Process and perspective are essential elements for creating sound Security Sector reform (SSR) and these are derived from well-thought out consultation, as well as encompassing context and views of all stakeholders – including the perceptions and attitudes of SSR implementers. Despite developments over the past 10 years, all gender groups are still not naturally nor efficiently included, consulted or considered in assessments and planning, let alone decision and implementation processes. Stable and sustainable reform must account for this. The Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence notes that “[g]ender is an issue that never stands alone. It is a cross-cutting issue in peace and stability operations that affects everything from building a bridge or well, delivering humanitarian relief, security sector reform (SSR), demining, the rule of law, decision-making processes, how priorities are set for development activities and so on”.<sup>1</sup> Thus, mainstreaming gender - that is taking into process and account the perspectives, behaviours, roles and needs of all stakeholders - has a considerable and necessary role in improving the desired impact on the ground. Of particular focus for SSR is how ‘security’ is perceived/implemented. In this manner, the behaviours, appearance, attitudes, social and cultural roles of gender groups must be incorporated into SSR design. This article focuses on the importance and the impact of integrating gender into police and defence reform, both within a mission and externally.

Even with the mainstreaming of gender as now being widely recognised as an important aspect to increase effectiveness and efficiency both within a mission and throughout its impact on the ground, SSR policy makers and implementers on the ground – and those with whom they interact - are nevertheless often lacking the awareness, or access to and knowledge of the concrete tools to integrate gender into their work.<sup>2</sup> Thus the emphasis is now on training to raise awareness for non-‘gender’ experts and on provision of practical best and worst practices through lessons learnt (and dissemination of those lessons learnt).

### ESDP missions and SSR

With 12 of 14 current ESDP missions being civilian<sup>3</sup> and with 10 of these 12 being SSR missions<sup>3</sup>, the EU is now dominated in its foreign interventions by efforts to advise or assist in governance and reform of security systems across two continents. This is also coupled with the work over many years through Commission instruments in supporting SSR programs.<sup>4</sup> There have been efforts over the past

<sup>1</sup> “Gender Makes Sense: A way to improve your mission”. Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence (CIMIC), 2008, pg. 7

<sup>2</sup> For an in-depth analysis of ESDP missions on the importance of gender mainstreaming and on the role of UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820 in improving immediate and long-term security for women, please visit the Gender and Security section of our website: [www.isis-europe.org/index.php?page=gender](http://www.isis-europe.org/index.php?page=gender).

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of ESDP missions see [www.esdpm.org](http://www.esdpm.org)

<sup>4</sup> For many years, “Through Community instruments the EU has supported reform processes in partner countries and regions in different parts of the world and under a wide range of policy areas.... In recent years the EU has developed additional capacity to support SSR under its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as reflected in the European Security

few years in the EU to align these more closely through concepts such as the security-development nexus.<sup>5</sup> However, one critique to note, is that “EU SSR lacks a single institutional home, a consolidated means of budgetary support, and a single SSR concept. SSR mainstreaming relies on EC spending without a strategic political-administrative base, and so practical implementation may be problematic.”<sup>6</sup> With this sort of institutional flaw, ensuring coherent and consistent application of gender perspectives is difficult and often left up to the individual.<sup>7</sup> Even still, despite the attention to SSR under the Swedish EU Presidency (which is concentrating on pooling SSR expertise and instigating the creation of an assessment tool for SSR), the EU is unlikely to create its own SSR concept. Rather, it will focus on the base of the OECD-DAC Guidelines, which now also include a good (if not perfect, as it was ‘tacked-on’ as an extra chapter) gender overview.<sup>8</sup>

Why the EU is engaging in SSR in ESDP has several dimensions. Some of these efforts are to advise countries on military and police reform in dire security situations - such as the DRC with corruption in payment to army soldiers and the horrific ongoing problem of conflict rape. Other efforts are to assist countries where the weak security system creates not only instability in the State itself, but contributes to weakness in international security - such as drug trafficking through Guinea-Bissau. There are efforts of the EU and Member States to contribute to global coalitions in the latter’s ideas of rebuilding a security police - such as in Afghanistan and Iraq. Still along the lines of police, are EU efforts on advice on realigning the security structures - such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina – and on police reform in Palestine. In a broader and more controversial dimension are efforts to assist in rule-of-law reform - such as in Kosovo. Finally, the more obscure and little known efforts to assist with border security in Georgia, Ukraine/Moldova and Palestine - the latter of which is still in limbo due to change in Palestinian administration.

### **Towards implementation**

How the EU is interacting, is the basis of this briefing. At this stage, several aspects need to be raised as the EU attempts to travel towards a comprehensive SSR approach.

The first challenge is the territorial tension between the Commission and Council vis-à-vis authority for SSR. The second challenge is bridging the divide between short term ESDP action and long-term reform and governance under Commission funded activities. The difference between pure military/police SSR on one hand and Security Sector Governance (SSG) indirectly related to military on the other, when there exists a division of labour and power structures, is a grey area in post-conflict situations. This influences not just the design of an SSR approach, but also lines of power and authority in implementation, as well as donor and funding possibilities for varying aspects of SSR. Perspectives of power, authority and donor interests can highly hinder or affect how gender perspectives are taken into account in SSR.

In designing a comprehensive approach, a danger involves ignoring contexts, gender perspectives and not accounting for differences in governing and reform of police vs. military vs. intelligence. Perhaps that seems to be stating the obvious, but placing design in a context of SSR - for example integrating

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Strategy. In this way European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions and Community action in the area of SSR can complement each other, especially in countries in crisis or post-crisis situations.” [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0253en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0253en01.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Council of the EU, “Security and Development - Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council” Doc 15097/07, 20 November 2007.

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/council\\_conclusions\\_security\\_development\\_15097\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/council_conclusions_security_development_15097_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Fluri, P. & Spence, D. (eds.), 2008, ‘The European Union and Security Sector Reform’, DCAF, Geneva, Switzerland [www.ssrnetwork.net/document\\_library/detail/4123/the-european-union-and-security-sector-reform](http://www.ssrnetwork.net/document_library/detail/4123/the-european-union-and-security-sector-reform)

<sup>7</sup> For example, see the study on gender in ESDP missions in the DRC – two of which are SSR missions - conducted for UNIFEM and used as background for the French EU Presidency conference on 1325 and 1820 in October 2008. [www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2009\\_artrel\\_242\\_esdp&drc-gender-report.pdf](http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2009_artrel_242_esdp&drc-gender-report.pdf) More details on the conference here: [www.unifem.sk/index.cfm?Module=articles&Page=ArticleShow&ArticleID=93](http://www.unifem.sk/index.cfm?Module=articles&Page=ArticleShow&ArticleID=93)

<sup>8</sup> Security System Reform and Governance - DAC Guidelines, OECD, 2005 [http://www.oecd.org/document/33/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33693550\\_33800289\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/33/0,3343,en_2649_33693550_33800289_1_1_1_1,00.html) . Updated in 2007 with the OECD-DAC Handbook on SSR [http://www.oecd.org/document/6/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33693550\\_37417926\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/6/0,3343,en_2649_33693550_37417926_1_1_1_1,00.html) and Gender chapter in 2009: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/39/42033010.pdf>

gender perspectives or the environment - can reveal ignorance of the subtleties. CIMIC, for instance, writes about the challenges of interrogating an Iraqi woman. In 2004, the Coalition Forces in Iraq wanted to interrogate a woman from a Shiite-dominated village in a known fundamentalist area. In order to interrogate her, they took her away to the military compound, without her husband or any of her male relatives being present. When the military brought her back to her community, her family distrusted her and believed she had been raped during her time at the military base, as the villagers' perception of the coalition forces was based on local perceptions and stereotypes. The woman was subsequently stoned to death and her husband committed suicide because of what he saw as his failure to protect her, which was considered shameful. As CIMIC points out, the overall result of the military's action was more hostile villagers; spread of negative feelings towards the Coalition Forces to other villages; less contact with the local population thus less situational awareness and more negative publicity in the media.<sup>9</sup> This is an ideal case for SSR *within* 'western' institutional practices themselves, as better gender sensitivity could have avoided this outcome. The message of this example is that incorporating gender perspectives or looking through an environmental/social lens is not an "added plus" if one has time in an SSR design, it is added *value* and essential for effectiveness and efficiency.

Another danger in designing a comprehensive approach is the imposition of one person's SSR as another person's insecurity. For instance, in the EU SSR mission in Guinea-Bissau, the EU assumed that its definition of reform would be the same for the people of Guinea-Bissau. However, in a meeting with participants from the Council, the EU mission, the Commission, researchers and representatives from Guinea-Bissau, it was discovered that reform for Guinea-Bissauians means 'retirement' and that resources of the EU mission in their opinion should be used for paying the pension of former independence fighters.<sup>10</sup> There is also a need to recognise that security is different for different people. Security for women in Liberia for example, is more about health and education than physical protection.<sup>11</sup> SSG needs global resonance and intelligent application of context - not just reform programmes for the 'South' by the 'North'.

Some States may want advice on SSR but others may just want financial or organisational assistance to develop their own SSR in order to catch up with global levels of security systems, even for basic elements such as uniforms and equipment. This is the particular case for example of States in the Pacific, which call for flexibility and appropriate scaling of possible solutions.<sup>12</sup> It is especially relevant for the need for the EU and its partners to acknowledge challenges for their own SSR, which includes violations of Human Rights and civil liberties in consequence of State responses to terrorism.

### **On the Importance of Training**

While both military and civilian personnel on the ground are often well aware of the existence of tools to integrate gender, including UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (relevant to the Iraq example) as well as other documents, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the UN Economic and Social Covenant,<sup>13</sup> appropriate training on the implementation of such instruments is frequently lacking. Surprisingly, basic cultural and historical knowledge of the country (relevant to the Guinea-Bissau example) is also often lacking. It remains crucial to integrate such training into the structures of the mission in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Training on gender and human security in SSR, as an integral part of any gender-responsive reform, should occur at multiple levels: (i) gender perspectives should be incorporated into all training – not just as a 'gender module'; (ii) gender training to SSR implementers should be offered on specific subjects and should be both internal (eg. Code of Conduct; gender equality; equal participation and input at higher decision making levels) and external (eg. gender perspectives and behaviours as

<sup>9</sup> CIMIC 2008, *op.cit.* pg. 22

<sup>10</sup> Responsibility to rebuild – Guinea Bissau. ISIS Briefing Note 2008-1 by Giji Gya, with Daniel Fiott and Liisa Vainio. European Security Review nr. 41 November 2008. [http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2008\\_escg\\_21\\_esr41-guinea-bissau.pdf](http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2008_escg_21_esr41-guinea-bissau.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Discussion with medica mondiale, Liberia, July 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Security Sector Governance in the Pacific. Regional Conference hosted by the UNDP – Pacific Centre in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga; 27 April – 30 April 2009. Co-Chairs' Statement.

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_cescr.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_cescr.htm)

affecting reform planning and implementation; social and cultural awareness; gender based violence; women's access and protection in justice sectors) and (iii) in-depth training modules on contextual aspects for that particular country should be developed and offered.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, it is essential that the content of the training is highly practical, contextual and targeted to the mission.

Interestingly, from a military perspective, many are coming around to the idea that gender is a useful tool. For example, CIMIC is seen as a 'Force Multiplier' and following their logic, "gender awareness can further improve this principle. It should spread unchecked and should influence other non-kinetic military elements".<sup>15</sup> According to CIMIC, analysis will begin with identifying the commander's intent, which is followed by an assessment of gender aspects including an assessment of the needs, views and ideas of women and men towards a particular issue. CIMIC argues that, to this extent, it is sometimes advisable to avoid standardisation, depending on cultural context. For instance, in some cultures, friendly discussions will be preferred to formal interviews.<sup>16</sup>

As previously noted, definitions of human security differ between men, women, boys, and girls, as each group has differing security needs. Training on gender needs to make this very clear for SSR. Violence against women might actually increase after the end of a conflict: their male relatives, having experienced much violence and having been unable to protect their wives during the conflict, might turn their anger and frustration towards their spouses when the conflict ends. On the other hand, men and boys face the risk of being unable to reintegrate into non-military structures and pursue a normal post-conflict life. A gender sensitive approach to SSR will have to take those differences into account in order to be efficient.

To conclude, two sectors of EU SSR – defence and police reform (relevant to EUPOL and EUSEC RD Congo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUPOL COPPS, EUSSR Guinea-Bissau) are discussed to demonstrate some lessons identified to better implement SSR.

### **Integrating Gender in Defence Reform**

Although men are traditionally associated with the defence sector, such as within Ministries of Defence, military structures and armed forces, the impact of the defence sector is nevertheless felt within all gender groups and the integration and consultation of all groups is therefore crucial in order to ensure effectiveness.

When discussing the reform of the defence sector and the importance of gender, it is useful to use a mnemonic such as "9Ns"<sup>17</sup> to realise the broad scope to consider. This mnemonic is as follows: (i) **N**umbers - meaning equal access, equal representation and opportunities for women and men is crucial. For example, in Liberia, a female only peace-keeping force has been established; (ii) **K**nowledge - the social and economic roles of different gender groups means that they have different knowledge on and for SSR. This will ensure that strategic planning is undertaken for the long term sustainability properly the first time; (iii) **N**ew perspectives - including differing views and priorities are essential; do not assume that your definition of security or reform is the same as that of the recipients; (iv) **N**uances and differing behaviours – these must be taken into account. For example, when deciding on an UXO mine clearance policy in specific areas, it is crucial to consult with women, girls, men and boys, as all have differing behaviours and needs. Young girls are often exposed to mines when they leave their village in order to gather for food or water, while young boys face those risks when they leave the village border in order to play in potentially dangerous areas. For both, this implies a very different gender perspective and to be efficient, a mine clearance policy must take all those needs into consideration; (v) **N**orms - including appearance, differs from culture to culture. Boys often face the risk of being enrolled as child soldier in a conflict while girls are confronted to other risks, such as rape and other forms of violence against women. Yet girls are also associated with armed forces and may be neglected in DDRRR programs; (vi) the **N**eeds of each groups therefore differs; (vii) **i**nclusion of all gender groups to allow for a fully consultative decision making process,

<sup>14</sup> Based on OECD DAC Handbook on SSR – Supporting Security and Justice. OECD, 2009 Edition, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> CIMIC 2008, *op.cit.* pg. 36.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 35.

<sup>17</sup> Developed by Giji Gya for use in training on Gender and SSR.

access for women is therefore crucial in order to have their voice heard; all these lead to (viii) effectiveness and (ix) efficiency.

Charlotte Isaksson, Gender Advisor in the Swedish Armed Forces, argues it is central to integrate the gender advisor within the same structure and level as the Head of Mission. The gender advisor should be able to work in all areas of work of the mission and be consulted on all projects, not solely the ones relating to women. Furthermore, a Gender Focal Point (GFP) should be established in all the divisions of the mission,<sup>18</sup> as it is essential to integrate gender at all the levels. For example, within the human resources department (J1), it is important to ensure equal representations and opportunities for women and men within the mission or to ensure that women and men are entitled to an appropriate maternity or paternity leave. A mission Gender Advisor should work together with J9 (Civil Military Cooperation - CIMIC) in OHQ and FHQ to integrate both a gender and women's focus on QIPs (Quick Impact Projects) that the mission instigates and supports.

### **Integrating Gender in Police Reform**

As the police are responsible for ensuring the safety of all its citizens, it is crucial that police officers understand how security threats vary for men, women, boys and girls. Integrating gender in police reform implies that such integration occurs at all stages of the SSR programme: design and planning; implementation and monitoring; evaluation and assessment.

Police reform in Afghanistan has, for instance, failed in ensuring an appropriate number of female recruits, leading male recruits to complain that the lack of female officers jeopardises security at checkpoints, as men are unable to perform searches of people dressed in burqas – a handicap that has led to smuggling of arms and militants.<sup>19</sup>

Most importantly, a gender-sensitive police reform must be linked to similar actions in judiciary and penitentiary reforms, as failing to do so will lead to failure at all stages and within the police. Without a reform of discriminatory laws and regulations and the equitable delivery of justice, the police will not be able to perform their tasks as needed and will not be trusted by the population. Moreover, reform within the prison system, including a decline in human rights violations, the promotion of prisoners' rehabilitation and the improvement of public health within prisons, will also have a positive impact on the police forces.

### **Operationally strategic, but make it focussed**

While gender has become a 'trend' over the last few years with rhetorical ticking of the box once accounting for "gender issues" is mentioned in policy, policy makers and implementers alike must target gender awareness as enhancing sustainable implementation of SSR. Demonstrating practical feasibility and facilitating understanding of what 'gender' is, will enable this. In the meantime, we must also be aware of running the risk of being faced with 'gender fatigue' and thus ensure that, quite simply, logic of effectiveness and awareness (i.e. taking into process and account the perspectives, behaviours, roles and needs of all stakeholders) is incorporated.

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<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed picture, please see the graph on p. 30 in "Gender Makes Sense: A way to improve your mission". Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform – Supporting Security and Justice. OECD, 2009 Edition.