Towards Better Security Governance: Learning from the Road Travelled

An independent review of United Nations support to security sector reform in peace operations, 2014–2020

> *Reaffirming that a representative, responsive, efficient, effective, professional, and accountable security sector without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law is the cornerstone of peace and sustainable development and is important for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace*

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Security Council resolution 2553 (2020)

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United Nations Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions

Dear ASG Zouev,

In April 2021, you commissioned an independent lessons-learned exercise on United Nations practice in implementing Security Council mandates on security sector reform (SSR). This initiative is a concrete step towards implementing Security Council resolution 2553, which "Reiterates the importance of sharing experiences, best practices and lessons learned, knowledge and expertise on security sector reform among Members States, and regional and subregional organizations, expert institutions including academia and research organizations".

The imminent third Secretary-General's report on SSR will mark 15 years since the introduction of the conceptual and operational framework for United Nations engagement in SSR. It will be his first opportunity to reflect on progress and challenges in the implementation of Security council resolutions 2151 (2014) and 2553 (2020), which encourage a more political approach to SSR and specifically recognize the importance of security sector *governance*.

As our terms of reference rightly indicate, it is broadly recognized that success or failure in advancing SSR has a deep impact on the overall success of a peace operation, and this heightens the need to review the current practice in SSR. We therefore agreed to conduct an independent appraisal of the "state of play" of United Nations engagement in SSR in peace operations that could assist the United Nations Secretariat in providing an accurate and complete update to the Security Council on efforts to strengthen the United Nations' approach to security sector reform.

I had the honour of serving as Team Leader of an esteemed group of SSR experts: Hervé Auffret (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance/International Security Sector Advisory Team, DCAF/ISSAT, and Dr. Fairlie Chappuis (independent expert), Erwin van Veen (Netherlands Institute for International Relations - Clingendael). We commenced work during July 2021 and completed the task at the end of November 2021, notwithstanding the presence of COVID among the team. We were unable to travel to the mission areas due to COVID restrictions, resulting in limited access to national counterparts, and we acknowledge this as somewhat of a gap in this review. Regardless, United Nations Headquarters, mission colleagues and many others were helpful and we hold the opinion that we were able to capture in essence the most important lessons .

Our core finding is that the impressive development in SSR policy at the United Nations that has been carried out over the past 15 years has not shaped SSR interventions in the field in a decisive way. In fact, our review identifies serious deficiencies in the SSR practices of United Nations missions related to mandate, strategy, organization, implementation and learning that must be addressed in an integrated fashion if mission performance in this area is to improve.

To be clear, SSR is not easy to implement as it touches the heart of sovereignty, especially in immediate post-conflict settings, and we wish to acknowledge that fact from the start. In many missions, the Security Council in its wisdom elected to proceed with mandating missions when conflict was ongoing, hugely complicating the question on how to engage in SSR. You will find some suggestions on this, in particular considering the local context and the "type of SSR" to consider at each stage of

the process. We have to point out that building institutions, including in the security sector, will take decades, as acknowledged by the World Bank. It is therefore important for the United Nations to build on this fact to ensure that missions and agencies work together on SSR from the earliest moment to also enable smoother transitions and to ensure success over the longer term. This prompts the question: why does SSR not feature more prominently in development planning?

Our review found that implementation guidance is lagging behind. This is most certainly not to suggest that a standard "one size fits all" approach should be followed by missions, but to acknowledge that missions have to a large extent been expected to find their own solutions. This situation has complicated mission performance on SSR immensely and is potentially the reason why, in some cases, missions opt not to work in this critical area. The lack of professional standardization (via implementation guidelines) and the political nature of SSR causes senior leadership to limit or prioritize their engagement, across the United Nations as a whole but especially in the field. There is a clear opportunity for the United Nations to assume its rightful place as a global leader in this complicated domain by setting the pace with sound and useful guidance for the benefit of its operations in mission (and non-mission) settings.

I kindly call on you to study the report with an open mind. While much progress has already been made, we are certainly making some thought-provoking recommendations. It is our opinion that business as usual will not suffice if the United Nations intends to foster a more political approach to SSR and specifically to recognize the importance of improving security sector governance in mission contexts. It is with this conviction that we arrived at our conclusions and recommendations. SSR cannot succeed in the current set-up where it is left on the shoulders of the SSR colleagues in missions. Progress on SSR rather requires an upgraded mission-wide (and United Nations-wide) approach, notably by increasing the strategic use of political good offices, building partnerships and delivering as one. We thus recommend that change should be driven from the top to ensure system-wide implementation. It remains your prerogative to decide how to proceed from here, but SSR is too important to be left behind.

Allow me to thank you personally for making this review possible. I also wish to inform you that my team has been exceptional in their commitment to this review. They are obvious SSR experts with much experience and have been committed, professional and dedicated in completing this task. I wish to thank them for their dedication to the review and their support to me.

We wish you success with your considerations and response to this review and look forward to seeing the United Nations lead the global way forward on SSR implementation, as difficult as the task is.

Assuring you of our highest regard,
Waldemar Vrey (signed)

14 December 2021

Acknowledgements

The Independent Review Team wishes to thank the Assistant Secretary-General of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions of the Department of Peace Operations, Alexandre Zouev, for making this review possible, as well as the entire team at the Security Sector Reform Unit for the time they took to share their expertise. We are especially indebted to Oana Raluca Topala and Charlotte Thyra Lunde for their tireless work in facilitating interviews at Headquarters and across field missions, as well as Khalil Alwazir and Patrick Geoffrey for their precise and insightful work supporting data collection during the interviews.

The Independent Review Team wishes to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Jerry Kramer for his analysis of budgeting and financing modalities for SSR in mission contexts, and we thank the International Security Sector Advisory Team of DCAF for providing the financial support that made this possible.

Finally, the Independent Review Team wishes to the thank all of the more than 154 individuals who found time to share their analyses and experiences with us.

While this review would not have been possible without the support of all those referred to above, all opinions, positions, omissions and inaccuracies contained in the following report nevertheless remain the full and sole responsibility of the Independent Review Team.

About the Independent Review Team

Team Leader: Waldemar (Wally) Vrey served the United Nations formerly as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political and Rule of Law in Liberia until mission closure in March 2018. Vrey has also served in various other United Nations peacekeeping and political missions in different capacities in Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Burundi, where he worked on sensitive areas including SSR and rule of law. Since completing his service with the United Nations, Vrey has been used as trainer by the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, the Crisis Management Centre Finland, the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre and the United Nations System Staff College. Before joining the United Nations, he served in the South African National Defence Force, retiring as Chief of Staff of 46 South African Brigade. He also served as operational commander of the South African forces deployed in Burundi, including as Chief of Staff of the African Union Mission in Burundi, before joining the United Nations.

Hervé Auffret is Senior Security Sector Reform Advisor in the International Security Sector Advisory Team of DCAF. Previously, he directed the Joint Mission Analysis Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, a position he took after heading the Policy and Doctrine Team in the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for four years. Auffret is a retired Captain of the French Navy, where he served 33 years. During his career, he held interdepartmental positions in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister's Office/Secretariat-General for National Defence. He also served as head of the Policy Branch in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allied Command Transformation Headquarters (Norfolk, Virginia). He has been awarded with national order medals as Officer of the Légion d'Honneur and Officer of the Ordre National du Mérite. He holds two master's

degrees, from the French Naval Academy and from the Ecole nationale Superieure de l'Aeronautique et de l'Espace.

Erwin van Veen is a Senior Research Fellow at Clingendael – the Netherlands Institute of International Relations. He leads a team of five experts that researches coercive organizations, conflict dynamics and prospects for political reform in the Middle East. Previously, van Veen co-created major policy innovations such as the International Security Sector Advisory Team of DCAF, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, as well as the Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law, a knowledge brokerage. Van Veen is a member of the United Nations SSR Advisory Network and of the advisory group to NATO Mission Iraq and a fellow at the Center for Syrian Studies at the University of St Andrews. His previous experience includes roles as peacebuilding specialist at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010–2013), security and development advisor at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006–2010) and human resource advisor at Shell (2003–2005). He obtained university degrees in public administration, security sector management and European Union politics, all with distinction.

Fairlie Chappuis is an independent specialist who has worked on security sector governance and reform for 17 years. She has published widely on these topics and completed research, policy and operational support projects for a variety of organizations, including the United Nations, the Danish Refugee Council, and Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. She is a rostered expert for DCAF's International Security Sector Advisory Team, an adjunct faculty member with the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University in Washington, DC, and a member of the United Nations SSR Advisory Network. Previously she held positions as Programme Manager for the Policy and Research Division at DCAF and Research Associate at the Collaborative Research Centre SFB 700: Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood. Chappuis has been a visiting scholar at the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia, and the Stimson Center, Washington, DC. She holds graduate degrees from the University of Auckland and the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, as well as a doctorate in political science from Freie Universität Berlin.

Executive summary and priority recommendations

The context

In countries moving out of conflict, (re-)creating effective and accountable security and justice institutions is essential to anchor peace and accelerate development but only if these institutions can serve their populations within a constitutional order based on respect for human rights and the rule of law. An important success factor for the United Nations in creating a conducive environment for sustained peace and the promise of development thus depends on whether United Nations peace operations are effective in fulfilling their Security Council mandate to support national authorities in making security institutions more people-centred, more effective and more accountable. The dramatic consequences of failure in building compliant and accountable institutions have been demonstrated time and again.

In such contexts, security sector reform (SSR) is the effort to change the capabilities, organizational cultures and institutional frameworks that govern the security and justice sectors so that organizations with the power to coerce provide security – instead of insecurity – in a legitimate manner. The central insight of SSR is that security organizations must function as public service institutions in an accountable and efficient manner if they are to support broader developmental progress. SSR contributes to this endeavour by gradually increasing the extent to which formal, hybrid and informal security forces act as professional providers of public service based on international standards of human rights, gender equality and accountability.

The problem

The reality in countries moving out of conflict is that security and justice institutions are in disarray, politicized, corrupt or violent. They are the diametric opposite of what is needed. While this is unfortunate, it is also unsurprising. From an SSR perspective, it means that pragmatism, patience, coherence and context must be leading factors in shaping international support for SSR work.

SSR is a critical area of support for United Nations peace operations, as recalled by two dedicated Security Council resolutions (2151 and 2553), two reports of the Secretary-General, the 2015 High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and the imminent third report of the Secretary-General on SSR, to be published in early 2022. It is therefore of concern that the impressive development of SSR policy at the United Nations that has been carried out over the past 15 years has not shaped SSR interventions in the field in a decisive way. In fact, this review identifies serious deficiencies in mandates, strategy, organization, implementation and learning in United Nations mission practices regarding SSR. These include:

- Limited awareness of, and interest in, SSR on the part of senior mission leaders
- The absence of dynamic mission strategies on SSR that mobilize levers such as good offices or troop presences behind context-based SSR objectives
- A poor coordination between different mission units relevant to SSR – such as political affairs, human rights, gender equality and rule of law teams – based on such strategies
- The dominance of military profiles among mission SSR personnel and an overly militarized focus in SSR
- Limited financial resources dedicated to SSR work

- Poor political economy analysis of the national security sector and its possibilities for reform
- An almost non-existent ability to learn from past SSR experience across missions, and even across the United Nations system as a whole

What can be done

We offer five strategic recommendations to improve the SSR practices of United Nations field missions. These are based on an extensive desk review of internal and publicly available documents describing United Nations support to SSR in United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) and mission contexts; and over 131 interviews with senior leadership and key stakeholders across most peace operations currently implementing an SSR mandate, several United Nations entities at UNHQ level, critical multilateral and bilateral partners, as well as host country representatives. The recommendations are summarized in the figure below and detailed in part 4.
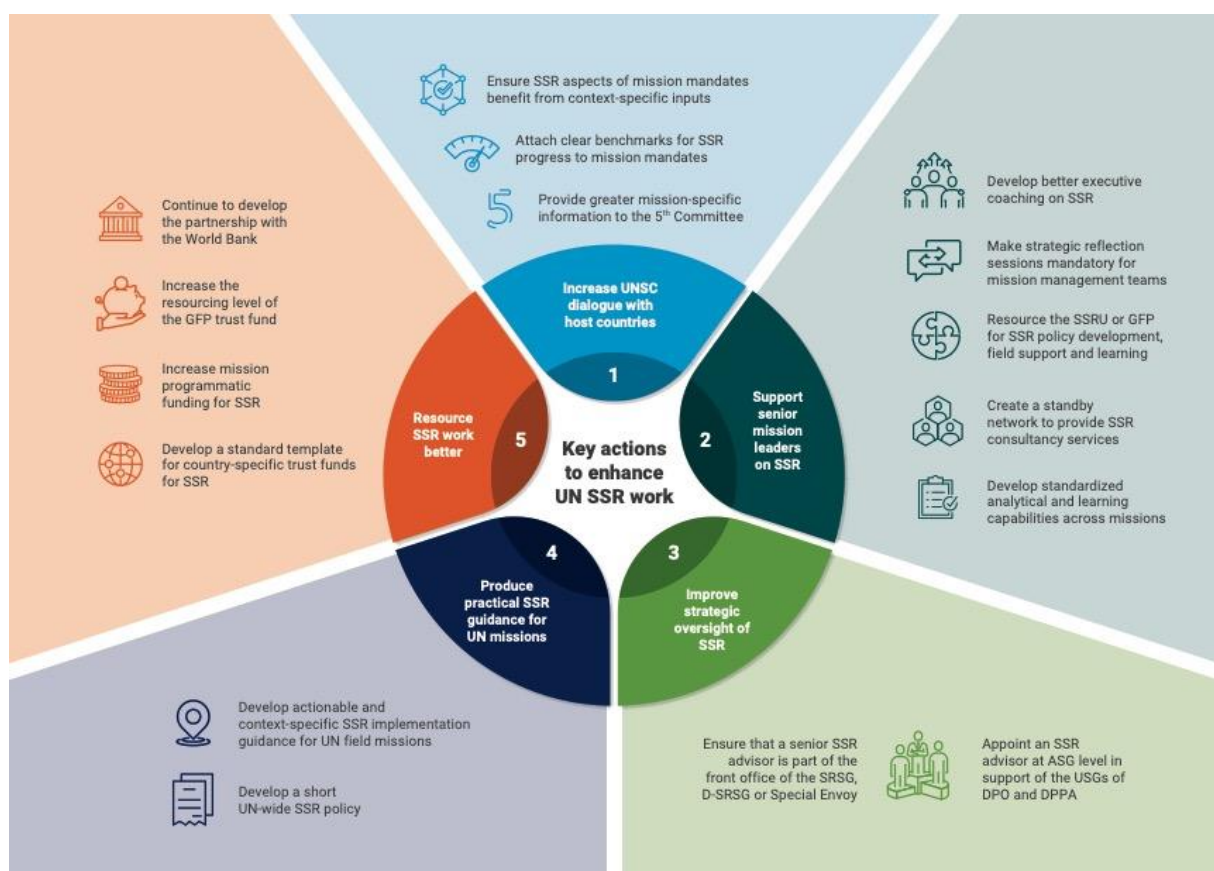
Since existing structures, such as the Inter-Agency SSR Task Force or the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law, do not have sufficient leverage or seniority to address the problems we note, we advise that achieving system-wide implementation requires the Executive Committee be seized of the above recommendations and appoints the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, in her capacity as oversight authority of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, to guide and monitor implementation through the formation of a task force. The task force should include representation at the level of Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Peace Operations, the United Nations Development Programme Crisis Bureau, the Development Coordination Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, as well as a newly appointed SSR advisor at ASG level.

List of abbreviations

ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DSR	Defence sector reform
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
GFP	Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law
HIPPO	High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations
IASSRTF	Inter-Agency Security Sector Reform Task Force
IOT	Integrated Operational Team
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
OROLSI	Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PER	Public Expenditure Review
REC	Regional economic community
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	Security sector reform
SSRU	Security Sector Reform Unit
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHQ	United Nations Headquarters
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WPSA	Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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Introduction: Meeting the challenges of the road ahead

Security sector reform (SSR) is a critical area of support for United Nations peace operations because of its central role in preventing conflict, sustaining peace and laying the foundations for sustainable development, as emphasized in 2014 by United Nations Security Council resolution 2151. In the spirit of this resolution, this independent review focuses on how peace operations can improve their support to SSR.

There has been much development in the policy on United Nations support to SSR as well as some progress in the practice domain since the concept was first developed in the Policy Committee decisions of 2007 and 2011. Yet in the field, the unique comparative advantages of support by the United Nations for SSR results from its role as a multilateral convenor of unmatched legitimacy as well as the scale of the resources – not least of which is political will – that it can mobilize in support of peace and stability have remained underutilized.

The context of international security, armed conflict, peacemaking and peacebuilding has changed since the United Nations first began to develop its approach to SSR. Globally, both cross-border and intra-State conflicts are on the rise and peacekeeping missions are increasingly expected to intervene while fighting is ongoing. There are high levels of distrust in governments and their ruling elites, increasing the need to engage more directly with people and communities to identify and respond to underlying drivers of conflict, including gender-based conflict drivers and the State's failure in its duty to provide security to the most vulnerable groups, especially women and children. Reconciliation is an essential component of peace to which SSR can contribute but on which it also depends. Yet the context of peacemaking has also changed: a greater focus on cessation of hostilities and less and less comprehensive peace agreements are providing a thinner basis for SSR in stabilization settings.

The costs of such efforts – in both blood and treasure – as well and the complexities of trying to prevent conflict, sustain peace and lay the foundations for sustainable development thus seem greater today than ever before. At the same time, faith in the ability of the international community to keep its promises is eroding under the weight of accumulating setbacks. Progress has been made since the United Nations first began to focus on SSR, but more must be done if United Nations support for SSR is to adapt to and overcome the challenges of contemporary mission contexts.

The aim of this study is to identify lessons from United Nations mission engagement in the area of SSR between 2014 and 2020 – between the two landmark Security Council resolutions – in order to recommend how the United Nations can improve its support to SSR. This review identifies a need to focus on the further standardization and professionalization of support to SSR, in particular at the level of the missions' higher leadership, where focused support could be of greatest effect. Opportunities to strengthen procedures exist across mission components, ranging from mission capabilities for context analysis and SSR strategy formulation, to management capacities, monitoring and learning.

Progress on the functional and professional capacity of United Nations missions to support national SSR processes is a critical component of realizing the longer-term benefits of sustainable peace and development, which the HIPPO report also points to. Neglecting these issues increases the risks of conflict recurrence, with the heaviest price of failure paid by those most vulnerable to the rape, abuse, murder and poverty that result. SSR is thus critical to the protection of civilians and the defence of

human rights – both cornerstone United Nations responsibilities in peace operations, as well as larger frameworks such as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPSA) and the Sustainable Development Goals. Failure to make progress on SSR undermines mission progress on every other indicator and damages the reputation and credibility of the United Nations itself. In sum, what should be a mission-critical priority has come to be treated as a marginal area of support. Action will be needed in every quarter: from mission leadership and across SSR and related areas of work, to United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) and from Member States that aspire to support SSR.

Objective, scope and structure of the report

The two thematic United Nations Security Council resolutions, in 2014 and 2020, provide the context for our review of United Nations support to SSR. The Independent Review Team analysed United Nations peacekeeping and special political mission practices in SSR since 2014. We asked how missions go about their SSR work in terms of mandates, strategies, organization, implementation and learning. We extracted lessons from mission experiences and practices based on a review of available documentation and interviews across most United Nations missions, UNHQ representatives and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Adjacent to the United Nations system, we also consulted with key stakeholders including Member States – among them China, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and France – and multilateral partners including the African Union, the European Union and the World Bank. In-depth reviews of missions in Mali, the Central African Republic and Libya nourished the analysis (see annex 5 for a list of mission personnel consulted in the study and see annex 4 for other methodological aspects). We focused tightly on strategic and organizational issues within the United Nations from mission perspectives because it is in the field that United Nations support to SSR can have the greatest impact and because solving these types of organizational challenge is squarely within the remit of the United Nations.

Special analytical focus was directed at the positioning and operationalization of SSR-mandated tasks in the context of transitions of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as the role of the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in SSR support and the cooperation and coordination practices between UNCTs and peace operations. Issues of coordination and cooperation with key partners and bilateral actors was also a central theme. Defence sector reform (DSR) was also considered as an integral element of SSR throughout the review, in line with the joint DSR policy of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) of 2011, and its significance in the context of current mission settings was given special attention throughout the review within the broader understanding of SSR.[1]

The analysis and recommendations of this review are rooted in existing frameworks for SSR in stabilization settings, in conflict settings and as a conflict-prevention method. The agenda-setting frameworks for peace operations most relevant to SSR include Our Common Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, the WPSA and Action for Peacekeeping (A4P). Besides these core frameworks, the review also sought consonance with other reference points such as the Pathways for Peace report and the HIPPO report, as well as the emergent logic of strategic partnership and collaboration between the United Nations and other major multilateral and regional actors, including the World Bank, the African

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[1] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "Policy: Defence Sector Reform", Ref. 2011.17, 27 June 2011, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/un_defence_sector_reform_policy_2011.pdf.

Union and the European Union. At the same time, given the current state of international relations and their impact on international engagement in mission settings, the review also reflects an understanding of the major political interests that shape how the United Nations Security Council situates SSR in mission mandates.

Part 1 of the report reiterates the argument for why SSR matters. Part 2 presents the most important overarching lessons distilled from the experiences and practices of United Nations field missions covering five areas: mandate, strategy, organization, implementation and learning. Part 3 presents a framework for rethinking SSR in ways that can ensure better alignment between critical context parameters and the types of SSR work that United Nations missions initiate. Part 4 describes our major findings and recommendations.

Part 1: Why SSR matters

The mobilization of coercive force through State security forces is at the core of a State's ability to rule. The performance, organization, management and political oversight of these forces determines whether they can perform their missions accountably while upholding a constitutional order that is based on respect for human rights and the rule of law: in brief, whether State forces provide security or insecurity for a State and its population depends on their respect for law and human rights. Where a United Nations mission deploys under conditions of intense violence, justice is usually dysfunctional and populations suffer the consequences. In turn, this means that both peace and development are harder to achieve. But overhauling, altering or even tweaking the governance, management and organization of the security sector has direct ramifications for the power relationships and institutional equilibria that maintain a particular political order while it can also affect life, liberty and property. In consequence, overcoming the resistance of vested political interests to establish better governance and accountability through SSR is difficult. It is essential to undertake this work developmentally, that is, to pursue a long-term path of incremental change to re-establish people-centric security based on local methods, requirements and possibilities.

What we understand by "security sector reform"

SSR is the effort to change the capabilities, organizational cultures and institutional frameworks that govern the security sector so that organizations with the power to coerce provide security – instead of insecurity – in a legitimate manner. The central insight of SSR is that security organizations must function as public service institutions in an accountable and efficient manner if they are to support broader developmental progress. SSR contributes to this endeavour by gradually increasing the extent to which formal, hybrid and informal security forces act as professional providers of a public service based on international standards of human rights, gender equality and accountability.

It is key to underline that accountability is an inseparable part of the definition of force effectiveness. Security forces that are not accountable for the extent to which they provide security— and manner in which they do so—are by definition ineffective in their mission of protecting the nation and its people. An unaccountable security sector usually becomes a source of tension, grievance and abuse and, ultimately, a core factor in crisis and armed conflict.

While such principles are universal, every society must grapple in its own way with the challenge of ensuring that the forces tasked with societies' protection do not come to threaten it. For this reason, the capabilities, organizational cultures and institutional frameworks that govern the security sector are unique to each national setting. Because of the context-specific influences of history, politics and culture, the reform of each security sector will also differ significantly, even when apparent institutional similarities suggest useful points of comparison or learning between different systems. In consequence, no two approaches to SSR are identical.

At the extreme end, security forces may have been deployed against sectors of the population, become active parties to a conflict, committed human rights abuses or behaved in ways that are seen as corrupt or nepotistic. The result is typically a dramatic deficit of trust and legitimacy in the eyes of the public as the social fabric degrades severely. Misbehaviour by security forces can result as much from the neglect of their professional development as the abuse of power by political elites who instrumentalize the security sector to gain an edge in their domestic competition. Defunct security institutions, moreover, typically represent the ears of the hippopotamus of broader deterioration of the quality of

public sector governance, which leaves public sector institutions politicized, bloated and incapable of enacting policy.

To improve a country's state of security, SSR must make simultaneous and interlinked progress on improving security sector oversight and control, security sector capabilities, and the culture of security forces. Oversight and control is the most important dimension for the simple reason that it is the power structure of security sector decision-making and enforcement that determine how security capabilities are used in terms of efficacy, transparency, accountability and respect for human rights.

In United Nations missions, support to national SSR is a strategic priority that is crucial to restoring and maintaining a fragile peace. The central element for United Nations missions in supporting SSR is to bring developmental expertise to bear on the design of SSR strategies and plans while advancing these in a diplomatic rhythm and by the use of good offices, which can be amplified using uniformed resources in peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations has accomplished much . . .

Reflecting the above understanding, SSR has acquired an increasingly prominent role in the mandates of United Nations peace operations. The United Nations has, furthermore, established an inter-agency capacity – including both the Inter-Agency Security Sector Reform Task Force (IASSRTF) and the Security Sector Reform Unit (SSRU) – to undertake strategic policy development, assure coordination and provide backstopping support for field operations (from 2007); developed a set of guidelines to direct its SSR assistance to Member States, including a DSR policy (in 2011) as well as Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on Security Sector Reform (in 2012), an array of Security Council resolutions, presidential statements, reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), and thematic reports on SSR (2014–2021); and launched development of a series of "Crossroads" guidance notes.[2]

In June 2015, HIPPO further elevated the profile of SSR in peace operations by stating unequivocally:

> The security sector must be a particular focus, owing to its potential to disrupt peace in many countries, with the United Nations in a convening and coordinating role, if requested. A significant change in policing approaches is needed to better support national police development and reform. Those efforts should be linked to the whole "justice chain", ensuring an integrated approach between human rights and rule of law capacities.[3]

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[2] The Crossroads series consists of new guidance notes to be drafted from early 2022 with completion within two years.
[3] A/70/95–S/2015/446.

Additional high-profile United Nations policies relevant to SSR include the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy for United Nations Support to Non-United Nations Security Forces (2015), two Security Council resolutions on peacebuilding (resolution 2282 of 2016 and resolution 2558 of 2020), the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the United Nations–World Bank study "Pathways to Peace" and two Security Council resolutions on SSR (resolution 2151 of 2014 and resolution 2553 of 2020). In addition, the United Nations Secretary-General's report of 2008 first articulated 10 foundational principles (see box 1) for United Nations support to SSR, which still provide a solid normative foundation for SSR policy

Box 1: Foundational principles of United Nations support to SSR

(a) The goal of the United Nations in security sector reform is to support States and societies in developing effective, inclusive and accountable security institutions so as to contribute to international peace and security, sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights by all;

(b) Security sector reform should be undertaken on the basis of a national decision, a Security Council mandate and/or a General Assembly resolution, the Charter of the United Nations and human rights laws and standards;

(c) In order to be successful and sustainable, support in the area of security sector reform must be anchored on national ownership and the commitment of involved States and societies;

(d) A United Nations approach to security sector reform must be flexible and tailored to the country, region and/or specific environment in which reform is taking place, as well as to the different needs of all stakeholders;

(e) A United Nations approach to security sector reform must be gender-sensitive throughout its planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases. It must also include the reform of recruitment processes and improvement in the delivery of security services to address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence;

(f) A security sector reform framework is essential in the planning and implementation of post-conflict activities. Ideally, security sector reform should begin at the outset of a peace process and should be incorporated into early recovery and development strategies;

(g) A clearly defined strategy, including the identification of priorities, indicative timelines and partnerships, is required for the implementation of a security sector reform process;

(h) The effectiveness of international support for security sector reform will be shaped by the integrity of motive, the level of accountability and the amount of resources provided;

(i) Coordination of national and international partners' efforts is essential. Lead national entities and a designated international counterpart should be identified wherever possible;

(j) Monitoring and regular evaluation against established principles and specific benchmarks are essential to track and maintain progress in security sector reform.

Source: A/62/659–S/2008/39, para. 45

and practice in United Nations contexts. Together, these documents deepened the anchoring of SSR in the United Nations system and strengthened its doctrinal basis.

Moreover, SSRU has recently joined the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law (GFP), which promises to expand the pool of SSR experts that GFP can draw on in the SSR domain. This may provide increased access to resources, while linking SSR work more closely to the wider rule-of-law agenda on reform of justice, police and corrections. This innovation provides potential for a more coherent and strategic system-wide approach and creates a new impetus for raising the responsibility for SSR to a level of authority that can overcome the silos between United Nations entities – UNDP, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the Development Coordination Office (DCO) – while also bridging some existing funding gaps.

It is now two decades since the Security Council first acknowledged the need for SSR in a mission setting (Sierra Leone in 2002) and a decade and a half since the first attempts to forge a comprehensive, integrated and system-wide SSR approach were first launched in 2007 with the creation of IASSRTF and SSRU. Beyond the realm of policy at UNHQ, United Nations missions have in various cases made full, qualified, temporary or partial progress in supporting host countries to advance SSR. For example, they have done this by supporting extensive revisions to the legal architecture of security governance, to security sector organization or to the quality of service provision, thereby helping to move the security sector towards a more accountable public service-oriented standard of performance. While success is never unequivocal in SSR, notable progress has been made at different points in contexts including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Kosovo, the Solomon Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Tunisia, the Central African Republic, Mali and the Gambia.

The issues reflected above help explain why SSR has become a cardinal tool for preventing conflict, sustaining peace and creating a basis for sustainable development in conflict-affected contexts. As a result, SSR has also acquired an increasingly prominent role in the mandates of United Nations peace operations. Although not driven by SSR, four major normative frameworks provide further foundation and context for SSR policy and implementation: Our Common Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, the WPSA and Action for Peacekeeping (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Key normative frameworks for SSR in peace operations

United Nations Common Agenda
- What – An agenda of action designed to accelerate the implementation of existing agreements, including the Sustainable Development Goals
- Link with SSR – Equitable, effective and accountable security provision is especially critical to restoring social trust and the social contract in (post-)conflict settings, but it is also key to ensuring human rights and justice, as well as addressing gendered security problems

Sustainable Development Goals
- What – A blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all, by 2030
- Link with SSR – Equitable, effective and accountable security provision is especially critical to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions (Sustainable Development Goal 16)

Women, Peace and Security Agenda
- What – Addressing sexual violence in armed conflict and increasing women's participation in peace processes and political institutions (building on Security Council resolution 1325)
- Link with SSR – The professionalization of security forces is key to reducing human rights violations and a means to greater inclusion of women in the governance of the security sector, as well as in the provision of security

Action for Peacekeeping
- What – A renewal of the collective engagement of United Nations Member States with United Nations peacekeeping operations, and an agenda for the improvement of these operations
- Link with SSR – United Nations missions are critical levers to discharge the United Nations' stewardship role in stimulating more equitable, effective and accountable security provision in situations of crisis and post-conflict when local ownership must be nurtured and accompanied

. . . and yet the United Nations has many improvements still to make

Beyond policy-level challenges of SSR (see below), the key finding of this review is that SSR has insufficient traction in the operational practice of most of today's United Nations field missions. This observation applies to both special political missions and peacekeeping missions. There are a number of reasons for this state of affairs that are beyond the influence of the United Nations (and these also affect SSR more generally), such as UNSC instructions to missions and bilateral 'SSR competition'. Yet, our review finds that there are also important reasons for this lack of traction that are internal to the organisation and therefore within its power to address. Although SSR is frequently said to be critical to mission success, the attention it receives both at UNHQ and in the field tends to suggest that this is more lip service than a commitment to strategic and professional operationalization of policy. One reason for this that we identify is the fact that mediators and senior mission leaders struggle with the complexity of the concept and its context-specific implementation, and thus prefer to ignore the issue. This should not be understood to suggest that all support to SSR was "bad", rather it means that SSR is hard and the quality of support offered can and should be assessed separately from its impact. As a result, a significant range of organizational barriers prevent United Nations missions from undertaking effective SSR work. These include wide discrepancies between mandates and resources, inadequate human resourcing (both in quality and quantity), inadequate internal organization, a failure to anchor

the SSR work of a United Nations mission in the UNCT, regular absence of context-specific analysis of SSR possibilities or starting points, and SSR not benefiting from mission good offices or substantive dialogue at the highest political level with host country governments.

The consequence is that United Nations missions do not yet perform well on those elements of SSR work for which the United Nations must be held accountable, namely the quality of its support to SSR efforts in conflict-affected countries and the quality of its engagement on SSR with national authorities. This is a matter of poor international stewardship that concerns not only the United Nations but also Member States and other international actors, which may often instrumentalize SSR as an entry point to advance their own security objectives. The 19 lessons we identify in part 2 substantiate this key finding. It should, however, be noted that even if the United Nations were to professionalize its own support to SSR efforts and its dialogue on SSR with national authorities, both spectacular improvement and spectacular failure remain distinct possibilities.

Why is this the case?

This is the case because making progress in reforming a security sector, including United Nations support efforts, depends on the extent to which conflict-resolution efforts, national power interests and international security interests are in – or can be brought into – approximate alignment.

Primacy of guns. Conflicts create new armed groups, new entrepreneurs of violence and new lines of (illicit) revenue in a climate of impunity and a culture of violence. To reverse or contain such developments through SSR is an inherently difficult endeavour. Conflicts often recur and this means, simply put, that SSR often fails. Conflict recurrence can happen for many reasons, including an imperfect peace agreement, continued trans- or international support for one or several fighting parties, deteriorating socioeconomic circumstances, direct foreign intervention, political mobilization against peace based on ethnic, religious or other group characteristics, or divisions in the United Nations Security Council that prevent coherent international intervention.

Primacy of politics. The international community, United Nations missions included, tends to assume that meaningful national ownership of its SSR efforts is possible directly after conflict and that "national owners" are in fact willing to engage in reform. Yet, reforms that tame the coercive capacities of ruling elites – capacities which are often also used to enable corruption and facilitate theft of public resources – tend not to be their priority for understandable if egoistic reasons. Consequently, leaving reform in the hands of such elites is problematic, and yet they are who the international community – the United Nations included – must work with. As a result, the United Nations has a difficult and delicate role to play as steward of a country's SSR agenda (where mandated by the Security Council),[4] at least until there is adequate reconciliation and dialogue to enable the development of ownership beyond government.

Primacy of security interests. In addition, even when the guns fall silent, a fragile peace is established and SSR efforts are tentatively initiated, a notable number of United Nations Member States pursue their national security interests in-country through bilateral deals in parallel to the missions and SSR efforts authorized by the United Nations Security Council. Such pursuit of national security interests is

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[4] The idea of international stewardship of SSR in United Nations mission contexts is further developed later in the report, especially in lesson 1 of part 2.

often focused on controlling terrorism, organized crime and migration, and typically results in train-and-equip initiatives in favour of government forces, with lip service paid to governance and human rights. This makes effective SSR work difficult and enables "national owners" to shop around for support without fundamentally addressing the quality of governance or accountability of "their" security forces.

In brief, how United Nations missions support national SSR efforts matters. There is significant scope for improvement to upgrade the operational SSR practice of United Nations missions to the more advanced level of SSR policymaking in UNHQ, even though it remains somewhat siloed and rather conceptual. Yet even if a United Nations SSR improvement initiative for field missions were to be initiated based on this report and implemented with resounding success, SSR remains difficult work that is subject to halting progress, regular threats of mandate reversals and occasional failure for the reasons indicated. This, however, is no reason for the United Nations not to take its own policy and commitments more seriously in a bid to make the positive difference that its Charter calls for.

What is it then about SSR policy?

The importance of developing sound policy on a relatively new concept like SSR is easy to underestimate and these developments deserve recognition. Moreover, the case above indicates that SSR can only progress under the right circumstances. Yet serious gaps remain between the existing SSR policy framework and the reality of the practice and politics of security in many (post-)conflict settings. On the basis of the broader literature on SSR and our review, we consider the following four issues as crucial:

National ownership is a cornerstone principle of United Nations support to SSR, which anchors the partnership between a host country and a United Nations mission. Yet this framing neglects the reality of multiparty and multi-stakeholder competition that is part of political arenas in every country as well as the many sociopolitical divisions that may be the legacy of a recent conflict. Asymmetric distributions of power based on ethno-sectarian-, minority-, or gender identity among others are typical of such SSR contexts together with the fact that national authorities (or at least particular factions) will often have played a significant role in creating and maintaining the conflict. The dilemmas that fragmented political authority pose for national ownership of SSR, as well as responsible international stewardship of support, remain to be dealt with.

Security sector governance is central to SSR but has not been defined in the United Nations context, despite featuring in the latest Security Council resolution, resolution 2553. A thorough discussion of the formal and institutional power structures in fragile and post-conflict countries is absent, including what levels, standards and linkages are adequate to speak of governance improvements, as well as a basis for understanding parliamentary control and public oversight. In the absence of such a discussion, SSR tends to rely implicitly on Western models and institutions of security sector governance, which may be a poor fit to the context and may actually hobble reform agendas.

Hybrid and plural security provision is a reality in the fragile and conflict-affected contexts that SSR engages with only through the lens of Weberian concepts of sovereignty, separation of power and the State monopoly on the legitimate use of force. While these principles may or may not be relevant as long-term goals for security sector governance, in the short-to-medium term there is an immediate need for guidance on how to begin gradually transforming a security landscape characterized by plural control over coercive force, including actors beyond and between the binary of State versus non-State armed groups.

Non-State armed groups are often not recognized and there are few ideas for dealing with these informal coercive organizations. There is a spectrum of groups in play, ranging from crime

syndicates to community defence forces, among others, with different options for engagement: some are indirectly accountable to religious authorities; others are part of the State on paper but not in practice; yet others are funded by foreign actors. Simply assuming that armed groups should be disbanded or integrated into the official security forces is not feasible given prevailing socioeconomic conditions and geopolitical competition in a number of places. More diverse security architectures that incorporate some of these groups into new frameworks for governance and accountability are needed, particularly considering SSR in the context of United Nations peace operations.

We found that the gaps highlighted above place too much onus on field leadership to seek new solutions in unchartered and difficult territory. While this review will not suggest fixed solutions for every challenge, more must be done to provide effective field guidance and options to help answer these difficult questions. Guidance notes are useful but should be developed in the framework of a system-wide policy to articulate and comprehend clearly what it is that the United Nations will focus on in SSR and how it will achieve it through comprehensive field guidance and options. At this time, there is little useful implementation guidance on specific SSR issues, and the lack of an overarching United Nations SSR policy also clouds understanding of a system-wide approach to SSR. There is a need for a clearer statement of what aspects of SSR the United Nations considers itself to be the global lead for, and how others may benefit from working together with this effort on a global stage. The following lessons identified by this review demonstrate the need to bridge existing gaps with a brief policy description and accompanying implementation guidance.

Part 2: Good practices since 2014 and lessons to learn

In 2014 the United Nations Security Council passed its first resolution dedicated exclusively to security sector reform. Resolution 2151 created a capstone for efforts to operationalize a more integrated approach to SSR support at mission level, which had already begun with the establishment of SSR units at field levels and the launch of the Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on SSR to support work in the field. With the passage of the second Security Council resolution dedicated to SSR in 2020, it is timely to take stock of progress in implementation up to this point. Part 2 of this report thus synthesizes the key insights from the research in the form of 19 lessons learned and good practices from across peacekeeping and special political missions.

Because no two national contexts are identical, no two approaches to SSR are alike either in approach or in effectiveness. What has promising outcomes in one context might be hopelessly inappropriate in another. This fact complicates the work of comparison and makes it challenging to draw general conclusions that are relevant across contexts. This challenge notwithstanding, the review finds substantial evidence of common patterns in both approach and impact.

The evidence base for the following findings consists of an extensive desk review of internal and publicly available documents describing United Nations support to SSR in UNHQ and mission contexts. Building on the desk review, over 131 interviews were conducted with senior leadership and key stakeholders across several United Nations entities at UNHQ level and in most peace operations currently implementing an SSR mandate, as well as with critical multilateral and bilateral partners and host country representatives.

Overarching challenges

While the study pursued five clear lines of enquiry, three overarching themes emerged from the research as challenges that cut across the work of missions and frame the conditions for United Nations support to SSR in these contexts.

Lesson 1: The progress by United Nations missions on SSR depends in part on United Nations Member States taking responsibility in the field for the mandates they authorize in New York

Key message: United Nations missions can only make progress on mandated SSR tasks if United Nations Member States in their bilateral capacity support the mission mandate faithfully and responsibly. In reality, there is a large accountability deficit in supporting SSR as a mandated task of United Nations missions.

When the Security Council mandates a United Nations field mission to support SSR, it chooses to intervene in the domestic political affairs of a United Nations Member State. This can happen in the "softer" style of a special political mission or in the "tougher" style of a peacekeeping mission. In both cases, the United Nations assumes a role as temporary steward of, among other things, the SSR agenda in a particular country. The nature of that stewardship varies from coach (special political missions) to guardian (peacekeeping missions). It is an intervention of last resort, saved for cases in which geopolitical consensus combines with the failure of alternative modes of dialogue or intervention that are more respectful of national sovereignty. In both cases, the effectiveness of United Nations support relies in part on other United Nations Member States working towards mission-mandated objectives or, at a minimum, not interfering with such objectives. A United Nations mission can only carry out its

role as steward when Member States enable it to do so. Hence, bilateral support must follow the lead set by Security Council mandates and would – ideally – be seamlessly embedded in an international partnership built on this mandate. Yet our review found that Member States often refuse to be coordinated in the field, pay only lip service to coordinating their initiatives with United Nations field missions, and even regularly contravene it.

Recent experiences in Libya, the Central African Republic and Mali have shown the negative impact of Member States acting in their capacity as bilateral actors in pursuit of their own agenda, rather than in support of the agenda of the United Nations mission. As a result, SSR tends to become supply- rather than demand-driven. Security assistance that is primed to increase the capabilities of host country security forces to address foreign security priorities rather than domestic ones is likely to detract from efforts that seek to make security provision more people-centred, more accountable and more effective. Areas that often fall victim to "foreign reprioritization" include border control, counter-terrorism, countering illegal migration and regional defence cooperation. Our interviews highlighted many examples where the activities of Member States, including those on the Security Council, directly undermined host country efforts and international support for SSR.

United Nations Member States, United Nations missions and host country authorities (which are also United Nations Member States; see lesson 14 on national ownership) are all accountable for the progress or the failure of mandated mission objectives, including SSR. Moreover, given existing United Nations SSR policy, they have an obligation to define their support to SSR in people-centred terms and base it on an inclusive analysis of national needs, instead of simply providing what they happen to have available, whether it is recycled templates for reform or disused equipment. Yet, it is mostly United Nations missions that are interrogated at the Security Council in New York. Member States do not report to the Security Council on their bilateral security programmes in mission settings, and host country authorities are rarely subjected to critical interrogation by the Security Council either. In this sense, the United Nations system perpetuates a double deficit in accountability for the quality of SSR as implemented by host country authorities or offered in their support by other United Nations Member States.

Lesson 2. Gender-responsive SSR is still not systematically mainstreamed in either SSR support or related work on gender equality and women's empowerment

Key message: Treating gender equality as an add-on to SSR rather than an integral part of it generates significant missed opportunities for programming.

Gender equality in security provision and within security sector institutions as well as women's meaningful participation in the security sector are central to building effective, legitimate, accountable and responsive security institutions. Gender-responsive SSR can help make the distribution of power more inclusive. Especially in patriarchal societies characterized by top-down control by older males over youth and women, this can directly contribute to peace and security. Yet gender-responsive SSR is either treated as a subset of larger programmes to promote equality through women's empowerment (which tend to lack a strong SSR focus) or is reduced to simply having more females in uniforms and in meetings (which is tokenistic and also neglects larger issues of institutional and cultural change).

What gender equality and SSR work in mission contexts have in common is that both are mostly regarded as the responsibility of a single unit, and so garner only marginal attention in other

substantive areas. Instead, what is required is a system-wide approach to gender-responsive SSR that is mainstreamed in all relevant areas of work, with only technical support from the thematic units.

While progress has been noted in the field, our review has found a persistent tendency to regard women only as victims of failed security and justice systems and not as potentially powerful contributors to these systems and their transformation. Instead, programming tends to focus on increasing the number of women in the ranks, often without creating the institutional conditions necessary for their success. Good practices include specific attention to aspects such as barrier assessments, consideration of gender-parity quotas, gender-responsive monitoring and learning, and delivering advanced mentoring and training to women security officers to ensure that they benefit from equal career opportunities. Women's participation in security sector decision-making must also be prioritized and experience from the field shows that capable women with expertise in security are present in almost every context: deliberate efforts to find and bring them into SSR discussions need to be a mission priority.

Raising awareness of gender-responsive SSR can also provide foundations for wider change: for example, engaging communities on the roles played by women in security and SSR, equipping mid-level leaders to lead change on gender equality and providing recognition of male allies in the security sector who advocate for gender equality. Mission and non-mission settings should benefit from accumulated good experiences to learn from each other and to strengthen the work done in gender-responsive approaches to SSR.

Ultimately, gender-responsive SSR requires strong national leadership and political will. United Nations leadership should encourage national partners to continuously aim at this objective, emphasizing the value of a more inclusive security sector and a more inclusive vision of professional security provision. Civil society, traditional and religious leaders, as well as local communities can be strategic partners in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. However, extensive effort may be required to understand and identify where local or national norms, models and expectations align (and do not align) with human rights protections and international standards of professional service provision.

> *To respond to persistent neglect of gender equality in the Liberian security sector, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) supported the government to establish a National Gender and Security Sector Taskforce, co-chaired by the defence and justice ministries. This task force enhanced coordination, information-sharing and advocacy among gender advisers of all security sector institutions in Liberia, including an advanced education course on the WPSA for gender advisers in partnership with the University of Liberia. As part of the transition process, UNMIL partnered with UN Women to develop a $2 million Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project, which maintained support to the task force and assisted the security institutions in identifying measures to increase women's representation.*

Lesson 3. Emphasis on the term "reform" can create a negative framing that stokes resistance and skews programming priorities towards problems instead of opportunities

Key message: The emphasis on reform implicit in SSR may be misaligned with the interests of both national elites and foreign actors. Thinking about security sector development or transformation can offer a more positive framing that may have greater resonance.

SSR has alternatively been referred to or confused with terms such as security sector governance (SSG), security sector transformation (SST), security sector development (SSD), security *system* reform (SSR), security sector stabilization (SSS) and security sector assistance, among others. While these terms cover similar conceptual ground, they do not have the same effect. This is not just a matter of semantics: words matter in the sense that variations of language invoke different perceptions and reactions that, in turn, might enable different attitudes, frames, conversations and pathways for action. Our interviews point to a few common implementation problems linked to perceptions of the term "SSR" and especially the project of "reform".

Security sector *reform* evokes the spectre of large-scale and potentially radical change across the organizations tasked with security provision and frames their current status as defective[5]: this is both intimidating and alienating for national stakeholders, whether political representatives, local communities or armed groups. In many post-conflict situations, a negative characterization of the security sector may be entirely justified due to the fact that a dysfunctional security sector is typically a contributing factor in conflict and may have violated international law and human rights at scale during the conflict. Yet control of a dysfunctional security sector is also typically what assures the ability of a narrow elite to rule and the sector tends to be closely controlled through informal networks. Reform that emphasizes accountability and transparency – as is the case with SSR – is not an attractive prospect from the point of view of national authorities who wish to monopolize political power through direct and unexamined control of the security forces. No government likes to admit to wholesale failure that incriminates its own power brokers, let alone act on it. At the same time, security sector personnel can also experience the call for reform as a slight against their professional competence. Thus, calls for reform of the security sector can actually limit the scope for change due to its inherently negative framing of the past performance, the status quo and, by implication, the national elites who are responsible for the state of dysfunction.

Ambitious reform of the kind implied by "security sector reform" is not always attractive to foreign actors either if they pursue their own national security interests. To begin with, they may not be capable of supporting such reform in a manner suited to national contexts as this is a subtle undertaking requiring high-grade resources, patience and persistence. But more commonly, foreign actors tend to be quite content to focus on operational improvement of the elements of the local security sector most relevant to their own national security interests: consider efforts invested in building security sector capabilities to stem drugs and human trafficking, prevent illegal migration, and counter terrorism. Seen in this light, foreign assistance to train, build and equip security forces often represent a "marriage of convenience" between host governments disinclined to undertake governance reforms and outside actors focused on short-term pursuit of their own security priorities.

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[5] In contrast, but just as problematically, the idea of reform can also suggest only marginal or technical adjustments when a clear break with the past or a more far-reaching project for change might be a more politically useful framing.

In this manner, foreign actors and domestic elites can act in tandem *against* the security needs of the population, and against the objectives of reform inherent in SSR.

The terms "security sector development" and "security sector transformation" are potentially more useful if one considers "transformation" as a positive way of reframing "reform". What appears a linguistic sleight of hand can open new vistas for action and soften resistance to change. A positive dynamic might result from a more empathetic approach to the views and sensitivities of key stakeholders and can be useful in easing the introduction of potentially controversial issues such as improving governance, gender equality and behavioural ethics in security forces.

To be clear, we are not making a case for a general change of terminology. SSR has become a standard term that serves its purpose in demarcating a useful policy discourse. But, depending on context, it can be more productive to use alternative nouns which allow for more positive framing of discussion and actions.

Mandates

Under this line of enquiry, the review considered the drivers, logic and coherence of SSR-relevant provisions in United Nations Security Council mandates and the broad strategic parameters that they set for implementation. The review considered the political objectives of mandates and the compromises inherent in their making, the resourcing of SSR, and how conflict- and context-awareness have shaped SSR tasks, including links between SSR and considerations of mission exit strategy.

Lesson 4. The scope of a mission's SSR mandate, whether broad or narrow, is less important than how senior mission leadership translates the mandate into an effective strategy for implementation

Key message: While greater or lesser degrees of precision in mandated SSR tasking each have advantages and disadvantages, a political strategy for supporting SSR is decisive to implementing mandates successfully.

Comprehensive mandates are important. Whether broad or narrow, vague or precise, each formulation offers distinct opportunities for supporting SSR. Broader formulations allow for more flexibility in interpretation and are less likely to be outpaced by circumstances, while more precise formulations can buttress political support at the national level for a particular course of reform but may also complicate coherence of approach among international actors. The political acumen of senior mission leadership can be decisive in ensuring a strategic positioning of SSR that will create entry points at the political level. The leadership is more likely to see strategic progress in SSR when it is not treated as a specialist technical programme, but is coherently integrated into political strategies and discussed regularly at the highest levels with national and international counterparts. Such strategic political dialogue can also provide a forum for developing more context-sensitive approaches and strategies.

Broad mandates require a deliberate in-depth analysis and interpretation at senior mission leadership level to unite different elements of a mission and the UNCT behind a single agenda that can integrate seamlessly into political and other strategies and ensure the UNCT is able to bridge the period before and after the mission departs.[6] This does not imply that all elements of a mission must participate in

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[6] This assumes that senior leaders have been equipped with sufficient knowledge on the strategic operationalization of SSR in the context of a host government and multiple partners all working in this area.

all tasks, but rather that the full spectrum of the approach is reflected in a clear – and coordinated – division of labour among specific areas. Realizing the benefits of a broad mandate within the scope of available programming resources thus depends on the mission's leadership translating generic language into more explicit action when drafting the mission concept as well as dependent strategies and operational concepts. However, we observed a pronounced tendency in some cases for missions to prefer to navigate delicate political controversies by treating SSR as a technical issue, focusing good offices elsewhere while actively avoiding engagement on SSR at the political executive level of the host country as well as with international partners. When SSR staff are not supported politically at the strategic level, the result is that missions tend to focus on train-and-equip approaches that are often more popular with host country security sectors but will not have positive long-term outcomes for security sector governance.

Considering the detailed guidance on SSR already provided by the United Nations Security Council, mandates could instead focus on mission- and country-specific issues and should include an expectation that the mission prepare the ground for long-term and comprehensive SSR by building national political buy-in for reform. This should not be understood to imply that it is ever "too soon for SSR", but rather the more nuanced understanding that SSR in its early stages needs to focus on dialogue to create a national consensus that will provide a sound foundation for the institutional and technical reforms, which can then follow. Reversing this order by launching apparently technical reforms without broader political support for SSR at the highest national levels is unlikely to result in tangible or sustainable progress.

Senior leadership profiles do not necessarily include skills to analyse and interpret broad SSR mandates politically or an ability to guide strategic deliberative processes that can unite different United Nations entities and mission components behind a single agenda for the sake of mission success. Senior leadership rarely employ political good offices for SSR to its fullest advantage, and further training may be an important consideration before deploying senior leaders to the field.

A more political approach should include efforts to address the governance issues of SSR through other pathways, for example, by integrating SSR with other work focused on protection, gender or human rights, by supporting civil society and media to engage in governance, by advocating for the renewal of security governance architecture, and by ensuring that institutional development focuses on more accountable, transparent and effective administration. Such an approach promises to have an impact on trust building with national and international partners in the short term. In addition, the judicious use of country-level good offices is best combined with clear support at the Security Council level, where members could seek to hold host countries accountable against the same benchmarks used for missions for their implementation of agreed SSR strategies.

Lesson 5. SSR is often confused or conflated with stabilization, leading to unrealistic objectives and poorly adapted reform strategies

Key message: While both SSR and stabilization involve improvements in the effective capabilities of national security forces, these programmes have fundamentally different objectives, approaches and timelines, which must not be confused.

The transformation of the security sector requires parties to a conflict to articulate common national goals and agree to resolve their differences non-violently through political dialogue. These conditions are not indispensable for engaging in early discussions on the reform of the security sector, but

experience has shown that progress on SSR will be limited when these conditions are not met. When parties are still fighting, the pressures to halt the slaughter of civilians, save lives or avert a humanitarian catastrophe may lead the Security Council to deploy United Nations operations for stabilization without a firm commitment to peace from the parties. Today, United Nations peace operations and special political missions are primarily deployed in these environments, where security sector actors, especially the armed forces, left without proper oversight, play a dramatic role in the crisis and abuse of human rights.

Stabilization operations focus, as a matter of priority, on silencing the guns and stopping the violence. An end to the fighting is expected to be achieved with the deployment of significant international military forces in support of a political agreement. In many cases, this international operational effort is complemented by efforts to train and equip national forces, with the expectation of improving their tactical effectiveness in the short term so that they are better able to contribute positively to the stabilization of their country. However, because of the need to act urgently with limited knowledge of national needs, these one-size-fits-all train-and-equip activities are often conducted without consideration for the accountability or civilian oversight of national forces or the sustainability of these efforts.

SSR aims to address institutional shortfalls within the security sector and to improve its ability and willingness to provide security as a public service for the population and the State accountably, effectively and with ever increasing respect for human rights and the rule of law. This is not a short-term endeavour: SSR interventions aim to improve accountability and civilian oversight of security institutions while enhancing their ability to ensure stability and peace over the long term. SSR also aims to contribute to changing the mindsets and behaviours of security sector actors at all levels, which is an essential step to fostering improved trust and relationships with populations. From this perspective, train-and-equip activities undertaken by multilateral or bilateral actors in the context of stabilization operations can facilitate, but also undermine or even contradict SSR efforts.

Several interviewees highlighted the damaging effects of some training especially when undertaken by externally funded mercenary type organisations and that, in some cases, it has strengthened the traditional predatory behaviour of the national armed forces, increasing human rights abuses. This training may enhance the tactical effectiveness of national forces in the short term, but it undermines other SSR efforts to make forces more accountable and respectful of human rights and to rebuild trust between the security forces and the local population.

While stabilization operations aim at achieving a limited but often essential reduction of violence in the short term, they should not be confused or conflated with SSR, which has different long-term strategic objectives. Engagement in supporting national SSR processes is part of brokering a political consensus for an inclusive and sustainable national vision of security. The confusion often stems from the Security Council mandates. While the Security Council has increasingly prioritized SSR support in its mandates, the SSR tasks that are mandated remain largely technical and insufficiently focused on security sector governance, allowing for confusion between SSR and stabilization. These dynamics unrealistically raise expectations that train-and-equip activities and early redeployment of newly trained forces can bring a sustainable end to violence, which has rarely proven true. The disappointments and setbacks that tend to result, squander political capital for reform and undermine confidence in SSR programming.

We note a risk of confusion and lack of a longer-term perspective in United Nations support for SSR when mandates place little emphasis on good governance and institutional capacity-building for the security sector or on more sector-wide efforts to build a truly national consensus for change. The primacy of politics and governance is acknowledged in United Nations Security Council resolution 2553 (2020) and could provide a basis for mandates that would better reinforce the mission's use of good offices to advance SSR and to strengthen coordination of international interventions.

Lesson 6. Designing SSR work primarily to facilitate mission exit tends to overemphasize train-and-equip support for national forces

Key message: A narrow focus on SSR as a crucial element of a mission exit strategy skews SSR efforts towards train-and-equip activities compared with other essential components of SSR. This makes train-and-equip results vulnerable to reversal and distracts from other elements of SSR.

A standard item in a mission's repertoire for SSR support is to help develop national State security institutions to the point of minimum operational capability in the short term so that peace can mature over the longer term. Once this feat has been accomplished, and a legitimate form of political stability has been provisionally established, mission forces exit and support transitions to longer-term peacebuilding and development-focused work. The perception persists that the easiest way to bring national security institutions to this point is by training and equipping uniformed personnel. Yet experience shows that this is also the shallowest route to security sector professionalization, and recent events in Mali, the Central African Republic and Afghanistan have shown that the results of such programmes are also easily reversible.

The weakness of train-and-equip approaches to military professionalization stems from the fact that forces working at minimum operational capability remain fragile to abuse and political capture, as well as corruption and acts of predation, if their governance has not been improved at the same time as their abilities to use force. The innovation of the SSR concept lies in the realization that only well-governed security forces actually provide security for the public and for the State. For this reason, essential questions to guide security sector professionalization include: How and for whom are strategic security decisions taken? How transparently and fairly are human and financial security resources managed? To what extent are security leaders accountable for the performance of their forces? Do security forces operate with respect for the population that counts on their protection?

Developing responses to these questions requires little in the way of activities that train, build and equip forces at tactical operational levels, even though this can be necessary from the point of view of capability. Rather, it requires new rules, institutional practices and organizational routines. But institution-building is a long-term endeavour, and most United Nations missions are not in the field for the decades that this task requires. This means that mission support to SSR must be premised on the idea that work on SSR must continue after the mission has left. In turn, this means that a mission exit is not the end of United Nations support to SSR but merely a transition point when other United Nations entities step into roles of international stewardship. While missions can use their political heft to conduct "exploratory" and "foundational" SSR work to pave the way for the UNCT, they will typically not be present long enough to support "constructive" SSR work.[7]

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[7] See part 3 of this report for details of context-specific approaches to SSR.

Shifting from a vision of mission exit as the objective of United Nations support to SSR to viewing mission exit as a transition to UNCT leadership on SSR support requires United Nations mission and country leadership teams to develop, maintain and implement a joint and strategic long-term SSR agenda from the very start of a mission's tenure. It must be as integrated as the core security problems warrant. It also means that missions need to think of their support to SSR in a long-term perspective even though the mission itself will not be around to see out the support of SSR over that timeline.

Strategy

This line of enquiry focuses on how missions define the current situation compared to a desired end-state in SSR and the quality of their plans to work towards that end-state. We assume that the resources mobilized and the nature of the environment will influence alignment between mandate objectives, mission capabilities and environmental requirements. Key elements in this part of the analysis include clarity of leadership and the division of labour among various United Nations entities involved in SSR; the quality of the strategy-making processes, strategic analysis and the ability to include SSR; as well as familiarity with UNHQ dynamics and the national conflict context.

Lesson 7. Foundations for SSR must be laid early on in peace processes by establishing dialogue mechanisms

Key message: Mechanisms for the continuing and inclusive negotiation of SSR during stabilization and political transition periods need to be embedded early in peace processes, with objectives for reform drawn directly from an analysis of local conflict conditions.

United Nations support to SSR is often part of the implementation of a comprehensive peace accord or, more often, assistance to realize conditions for a ceasefire and related security arrangements. Yet, peacemaking is a messy and imperfect process of compromise that also produces imperfect provisions for future SSR. During negotiations, SSR is often dealt with only piecemeal or as a technical matter to be discussed as part of transitional security arrangements. Provisions for the implementation of SSR by national authorities deserve the same political and normative urgency in negotiations as the organization of elections, but discussion on SSR is avoided because avoiding contentious topics helps to reach agreements. Agreements reached in this way cannot provide workable foundations for SSR because they are built on strategic ambiguities and these ambiguities will be laid bare at the moment of their implementation.

Attempting to work out the so-called technical details of SSR later in a transition ignores the reality that all changes to the security sector will affect the balance of power and are fundamentally political matters. Negotiating implementation of vague SSR provisions can amount to renegotiating power sharing, with destabilizing effects for political settlements. This is also why apparently technical reforms often meet with strong political resistance at the implementation phase. Indeed, the political nature of apparently technical discussions is often underestimated, including by the conflict parties themselves. International actors and the United Nations exacerbate the deficits of this approach by treating SSR provisions in peace agreements as a proxy for government commitment to comprehensive (and rapid) reform, only to decry a lack of national ownership when attempts at reform predictably meet resistance from stakeholders who never endorsed the reform agenda to begin with.

The solution does not lie in drafting more specific or detailed reform plans for peace agreements. These processes are often exclusive dialogue forums, where negotiations take place among parties that lack democratic legitimacy or credibility, and more detailed provisions cause their own problems.

Instead, peace processes must be organized and structured to ensure maximum input on SSR, including essential conditions, broad and inclusive consultations, and an analysis of foreign interests and support. Exploratory SSR should be rooted in the reality that provisions for SSR included in peace agreements are nothing more than a starting point for national dialogue on security, and a fragile one at that. Space should be made and, where possible, priority given to creating platforms for knowledge-sharing and confidence-building that may create favourable political conditions for reforms in the short term by allaying fears and creating a joint forum for future problem solving.

Platforms for inclusive dialogue, especially including women, have advanced agreement on joint decisions in the context of national dialogue processes and can also become the locus for international coordination of SSR support. Such dialogue has a role to play early on, at the stage of "talks about talks" before formal negotiations begin, and during negotiations; perhaps most crucially, they must continue after the conclusion of agreements and throughout implementation. SSR is often left off the agenda in peace processes because State parties refuse outright to negotiate on core elements of national sovereignty. Where important openings to SSR are excluded out of hand, peace agreements must be conditional enough so that doors to SSR can still open in the future. The use of incentives will be key in inducing power brokers to agree to something that leaves open the door to inclusive dialogue, consultation and decision-making, including on SSR. International supporters of SSR have a key role to play in structuring such incentives.

Such dialogues should be positioned explicitly as exploratory efforts to build consensus for SSR, permitting a shift away from the popular fiction that conclusion of a peace accord on its own represents sufficient political consensus for the implementation of SSR. Provisions on SSR in peace agreements need to be treated as the fragile basis for further dialogue that they are.

Lesson 8. The integration of ex-combatants into weak security institutions makes reform of security sectors in difficult circumstances even more difficult

Key message: The integration of ex-combatants into weak security sectors through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) creates systemic challenges for future SSR that need to be better addressed in both peace processes and the design of DDR programmes as well as SSR.

DDR and SSR are implicitly linked because both have immediate effects on how the security sector functions in a society recovering from an armed conflict and in particular through the integration of ex-combatants into the State security forces: this has been called the DDR–SSR nexus. In order for such military (or security sector) integration projects to succeed, they need to break up former command structures while also maintaining control over both State and non-State forces until new (civilian democratic) command structures are in place. At the same time, integration processes need to provide viable livelihoods and a new sense of identity and dignity to people who have recently been engaged in a violent fight to the death. In time, integration processes will also need to provide for the transformation of popular perceptions among people who bear a heavy legacy of abuse. Experience from mission contexts has shown that weak security sector institutions are almost by definition unable to meet these challenges.

Even if experience has also shown that accommodation of the demands of armed groups through integration into the State security forces can succeed in avoiding a return to open violence in the short term, it does so by locking institutional governance into a negative compromise that can ultimately undermine transitions and generate instability. Integration models can provide powerful incentives to

lay down arms in the short term in the context of a negotiated peace agreement because they are a type of power-sharing agreement that provides safety guarantees to armed groups by allowing them to maintain (limited) access to weapons and the implicit potential to mobilize. But our interviews indicated that it is precisely the same short-term advantage in securing a cessation of hostilities that becomes the reason why peace and stability cannot be guaranteed in the medium-to-long term: integration can make permanent the threat of secession or rebellion, or a threat to constitutional order from within the security sector itself at the same time as it places a heavy burden on the same weak security institutions to realize other reform goals.

Integration agreements can impose far-reaching decisions about future national defence posture, force structures and affordability of the security sector that are based on a political calculation of the balance of power at the time of an agreement. Such deals run the risk of freezing security policy in the moment of the conclusion of hostilities and hobbling future efforts to improve the performance of security sector forces by basing critical personnel decisions on political accommodation instead of institutional competence.

This approach is fundamentally incompatible with the aim of improving the effectiveness and accountability of the security sector. Politicizing security sector personnel policies (even in the interests of stability and peace) and rooting critical national security policy decisions in exclusive and undemocratic decision-making processes work at cross-purposes with the objective of depoliticizing security affairs and recruiting competent candidates for public service against merit-based criteria. A strong emphasis on integration of armed groups into the State security sector also tends to distract from the reintegration programmes that should ultimately contribute to the demilitarization of conflict-affected society by helping ex-combatants to return to productive and peaceful civilian lives. Integration models need to be negotiated in peace processes and planned out in DDR–SSR programming in ways that will help mitigate the problems they cause for reform of the security sector while renewing focus on efforts at reintegration.

Lesson 9. Defence sector reform dominates SSR, leading to a militarization of concept and approach

Key message: SSR work in mission contexts has been conflated with DSR, which has in turn been narrowly interpreted as reform of the military. The resulting militarization of approaches has overemphasized both the reform focus on national military actors and the need for military expertise among SSR practitioners.

In field missions, support for DSR tends to draw the attention of national and international stakeholders, sometimes leaving other areas of SSR neglected. During the interviews, we noted that when speaking about SSR many key informants in UNHQ and field missions referred only to technical support (training and deployment) and focused mainly on armed forces and less on police. This focus on the military is partly because government authorities in conflict-affected countries often consider the reform of their armed forces a matter of priority over all other reform areas. At the same time, Security Council members, the international community (bilateral actors and regional organizations) are often ready to support efforts in this area; they have the relevant capabilities readily available and this support is both tangible and typically short-to-medium term in scope.

However, this approach means that support to DSR is not always handled in alignment with the United Nations DSR policy of 2011. This policy stresses that the defence sector is an integral part of SSR efforts

and emphasizes that both DSR and SSR must balance effectiveness and accountability in the context of good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. In practice, the support for national military capabilities often neglects the governance aspects that are fundamental to DSR and instead remains narrowly technical, focusing overwhelmingly on the training and equipment of national forces. This approach meets the expectations of host authorities, who tend to be more focused on strengthening the operational readiness of their army than on improving security sector governance. It also meets the needs of international and bilateral actors, who are keen to steer clear of the political sensitivities and programmatic uncertainties that come with engagement in areas of democratic security sector governance, such as strengthening civilian oversight, building defence institutions, or improving transparency and accountability.

In United Nations missions deploying large military contingents with protection mandates, force commanders play a prominent role in defence issues, mainly when United Nations forces help train national forces or deploy with them. The heads of the national military also typically prefer to speak about reform with force commanders, who they perceive as sharing a similar military culture and mindset. This perception explains also partly why key personnel working on SSR in a civilian capacity – including the heads of SSR components – are often former military or police officers.

The reduction of SSR to its DSR dimensions, together with the presence of large United Nations military contingents in peacekeeping contexts, reinforces existing national tendencies towards militarism. A better pathway to reform would instead seek to embed DSR capability development in an overall SSR strategy, and to situate it within the larger need for governance and institutional reform across the entire defence sector and within a broader framework of national security policymaking. Such institutional reform includes establishing civilian control and oversight of the defence sector through reform of executive and ministerial functions as well as legislative and judicial functions. Crucially, it also means giving more attention to strengthening the institutional support functions internal to the armed forces so that they have the logistical, administrative and personnel management as well as command and control necessary to deploy newly trained and equipped troops in a way that will protect the population while providing for national defence and security.

The failure to address oversight issues and institutional shortcomings – from internal management to civilian government control and public oversight – has had dramatic consequences in a number of contexts where unsupported troops are deployed into hopeless situations. This leaves them with little immediate alternative but to relapse into predatory behaviour against the population and encourages defections at the first sign of danger. A sample of the kind of practical tool that can guide more

comprehensive design of, and reflection on, DSR interventions is proposed in annex 2. The 2011 DSR policy also provides a solid basis for more governance-driven approaches to DSR from the very outset of peacemaking and SSR (see box 2).

Box 2: DSR provisions in peace agreements

Important Defence Sector Reform considerations to be promoted as part of peace agreements and related arrangements

1. A commitment from the parties to undertake DSR in a strategic and transparent manner in accordance with national legislation and international norms and standards;

2. A commitment for the census and identification of all defence sector personnel and the vetting of such personnel (civilian and military) for past human rights violations with the support of the international community and by engaging civil society;

3. A commitment to the establishment in the Constitution or national legal framework of civilian oversight of the defence sector and its institutions;

4. A commitment to respect international norms and standards and protect human dignity, maintain and uphold the human rights of all persons, and respect the independence of the judiciary;

5. A commitment for meaningful gender and minority representation in the defence sector and its institutions;

6. A commitment to the establishment of national human rights monitoring and education mechanisms for the defence sector, its institutions and personnel;

7. A commitment to undertake an assessment of national needs and subsequent reforms without imposing details in relation to the size and the structure of defence sector institutions that may have to be renegotiated later;

8. An acknowledgement and mention that the reform of the defence sector must take place as part of a broader security sector reform process and, therefore, in an integrated manner with the reform of justice and other security providers, in particular the national internal security sector. There should also be linkages with demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes;

9. A commitment to help depoliticize reform efforts, there should be a recommendation for the establishment of a specific commission for DSR made up of professionals, technocrats in the domain, as well as representatives of civil society; and

10. A commitment from all parties to support national DSR efforts in a way that contributes to an early draw down of UN peacekeeping assets.

Source: United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "Policy: Defence Sector Reform", Ref. 2011.17, 27 June 2011, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/un_defence_sector_reform_policy_2011.pdf, annex 3.

Lesson 10. United Nations missions have a comparative advantage in developing a strategic SSR agenda that the international community can opt into, but this rarely happens

Key message: The legitimacy and convening power of the United Nations to create buy-in for a strategic SSR agenda is among its key comparative advantages. Realizing this potential requires an upgrade in United Nations mission skills and structures regarding SSR.

Our interviews suggested that members of the United Nations Security Council, host country populations, United Nations entities and segments of national elites often welcome a role for a United Nations mission as steward of a country's SSR agenda due to the universality of the organization's membership, its normative SSR framework and its convening power. Guiding the process of articulating and helping to implement a strategic national SSR agenda is a valuable service that United Nations missions can render to these stakeholder groups. Doing so does not demand deep pockets, but our interviews suggested two conditions must be in place: first, responsible international stewardship and, second, a viable United Nations strategy for in-country support to SSR.

To meet the first condition, United Nations Member States must ensure greater alignment of their own in-country bilateral SSR efforts with the mandates that they subscribe to in New York (as emphasized in lesson 1 on the need for responsible international stewardship).

To meet the second condition, our interviews suggested that the development of a strategic in-country SSR agenda by a United Nations mission requires an upgrade of mission skills and structures along the following lines:

- *Ensuring stronger engagement by senior mission leadership*. This means developing, coordinating and communicating a strategic SSR agenda as part of a mission's broader political objectives while using good offices to ensure that the agenda resonates sufficiently with key high-level stakeholders. It also requires senior mission leaders to develop leverage to overcome inevitable resistance to SSR work. Sources of leverage may include, for example, partnerships with organizations like regional economic communities (RECs); the presence of United Nations forces; sanctions; informal mediation initiatives; dialogue or round tables hosted by the United Nations Secretary-General to break a deadlock.

- *Providing missions with more diverse and better placed SSR units*. These must be capable of diplomatic advocacy, deep contextual analysis, bringing a stronger governance and gender equality focus to SSR work, and providing clear and consistent messaging. Such teams ideally consist of a mix of internationals and nationals, with individuals staying in post for 3–6 years at a time.

- *Developing a more sophisticated understanding of national ownership*. This should reflect the fact that elites, social groups and citizens are divided after conflict and means that missions need to expend significant effort to map and understand the different security interests and priorities of elites and the population. Using such insight to serve the mission's role as steward of a strategic SSR agenda requires a careful balancing act that keeps formal authorities and powerful informal elites onboard while creating space for civic involvement and consideration of the population's

security priorities. It also requires missions to make sustained efforts to capacitate national ownership – with "national" extending well beyond "governmental".

- *Ensuring strategic collaboration between different United Nations entities in-country.* This is an essential condition for United Nations SSR stewardship as it is difficult to seek unity in the views of others if one's own house is divided (see also lesson 11). The basis for such collaboration is the priorities of the emergent SSR agenda, existing United Nations agency engagement on SSR and clear articulation of the added value that each United Nations actor can bring to the agenda.

Lesson 11. SSR aspects of United Nations mission mandates must be built into a broader United Nations SSR country strategy

Key message: Work by a United Nations mission on SSR are best nested in the longer-term strategy and planning of the UNCT (that is, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks). SSR approaches that are compartmentalized between a United Nations mission and the UNCT have less impact.

Although some missions operate in their host country for over a decade, their presence is based on a series of mandate extensions or roll-overs of a year (or less) each time. This risks a loss of strategic continuity as the same (relatively short-term) mission mandate tends to repeat every 12 months without significant adaptation or a long-term approach. Consequentially, long-term planning is often difficult since neither staff nor funds are allocated beyond the mandate period. Short-term mandates also invite mission leaders to take a narrower view of the future, which is amplified by the urgencies that local conditions of crisis and conflict create. Finally, a short time-horizon pushes naturally towards actions that can be initiated and completed within the same short time-horizon. Yet, developing a minimally functional security sector after conflict is a decades-long effort because of the need to restore confidence in security forces, create effective oversight, and change gender perceptions and roles, as well as rebuild force effectiveness. It may take a year – the typical duration of a mission mandate – just to get the right stakeholders around the same table to discuss a sensitive SSR topic. In addition to this long-term strategic planning challenge, there are usually several United Nations entities active in the country to which the mission is deployed. Many of them will have been there before, and many will be there after the mission leaves. In brief, SSR work by United Nations missions must be embedded in both a longer time-horizon and a broader field of United Nations actors.

We have not found convincing evidence that a series of synchronized short-term plans shared between a mission and the UNCT (even when pursued with a shared objective) can solve these challenges, mostly because such an approach does not tackle the fact that essential SSR reforms cannot be realized in a short time frame. A sequenced series of short-term plans also carries a significant management burden that tends to supplant strategic thinking with operational business. Instead, our interviews suggested that a better method is to nest the SSR aspects of a mission mandate in a broader United Nations country strategy on SSR via the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. If such a country strategy does not exist, or is of insufficient quality, a mission's SSR strategy and plan can serve as an interim basis for reform and can then be developed into a broader SSR country strategy in the first years of mission operations.

Yet, we find two limitations in internal United Nations coordination that hamper a more strategic approach to planning:

- *In the field* – The resident coordinator would have to be incentivized and enabled to faithfully connect the mission with the UNCT in the area of SSR based on his or her double-hatting. Yet, our interviews showed that this is not necessarily the case because the DCO is insufficiently resourced with SSR capacity and knowledge.
- *At United Nations Headquarters* – There are currently two SSR expert bodies at UNHQ that can support strategic nesting of the SSR agendas of a United Nations mission and the UNCT by developing joint programming between United Nations entities and the mission: GFP and IASSRTF. Yet, on paper at least, they have overlapping tasks insofar as they relate to supporting field missions. This leads to duplication and efficiency losses because there is no clear centre of gravity for tasks like advocating for coherent in-country SSR strategies via DCO and DPO/DPPA, liaising effectively with DPO/DPPA to align the views of the Security Council and the General Assembly's Fifth Committee on mission SSR objectives and budgeting, or forging stronger thematic partnerships with the likes of RECs and the World Bank.

Organization

Within this line of enquiry, the review team examined how strategies and modalities for mandate implementation determine the scope and possible methods for SSR intervention in a given environment. This part of the study considered the structure and authorities of the relevant mission elements tasked with SSR, their unity of effort and the implications for SSR of human, financial, and political or diplomatic resource distribution.

Lesson 12. The organizational fragmentation of SSR in missions and at UNHQ leads to conceptual fragmentation that hampers the ability of senior leaders to achieve an integrated SSR agenda

Key message: SSR in missions is fragmented, with the typical SSR unit only covering a small proportion of the actual SSR agenda. In reality, many mission elements work on SSR without their work being labelled as such. SSR thus appears to be the primary responsibility of the unit that bears its name, but this unit is in fact responsible for only a part of the mission's SSR work. This fragmentation impedes strategic coordination of SSR as a mission-wide priority

SSR is a broad concept that involves many of a mission's units working on domains that are part of or directly related to SSR. However, this work is often not identified as SSR. For instance, United Nations Police (UNPOL), Justice and Corrections, Civil Affairs or Political Affairs Divisions usually lead a number of SSR interventions, but these activities are not consistently recognized as SSR agenda items, and staff working in these elements do not necessarily recognize their work within a larger SSR framework. This fragmentation is related to mandate formulation and is both the cause and the effect of the fact that SSR is generally not addressed within a coherent, integrated SSR strategy and suffers from an absence of adequate coordination and guidance. The office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) often appears to lack the appropriate level of SSR knowledge and advice to ensure this coherence through the mission.

Instead, SSR is typically treated as the responsibility of a single specific unit in field missions – the SSR unit. Despite their all-encompassing title, SSR units usually focus on only a limited part of the SSR portfolio, often with a focus on military and defence reforms since this is the part of the SSR agenda with the least overlap with other areas of work. SSR units work on their part of the mission SSR portfolio alongside other mission units and most often report either to the Deputy SRSG/Political (DSRSG/P) or

the Deputy SRSG/Resident Coordinator (DSRSG/RC). In yet other missions, SSR units have been disbanded, and the SSR staff are embedded in the Political Affairs Division or used to fulfil other responsibilities. Despite this variety of configurations, none has overcome the fact that SSR is treated as the responsibility of a single unit instead of a mission-wide priority that requires a well-coordinated and politically sensitive strategic plan for implementation across mission elements.

The fragmented organization of the SSR portfolio in missions creates a gap between SSR as a strategic concept that requires support from different mission units under the guidance of senior mission leaders and SSR as a limited area of mostly military- or defence-oriented work conducted by SSR components. In turn, this leads to inaccurate reporting on SSR. At UNHQ, this gap is mirrored between SSR as a United Nations system-wide policy concept that should underpin all relevant United Nations peacebuilding and development work versus SSR as narrow policy domain handled by SSRU within the Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI). The current lack of access and capacity to provide strategic advice on SSR to senior United Nations leadership levels within DPO/DPPA and DCO, as well as in mission contexts, means that SSRU is limited in its capacity to support global SSR implementation from within OROLSI.

Our interviews indicate that organizational fragmentation of SSR work in both missions and at UNHQ leads to conceptual fragmentation, which in turn skews reporting and underplays the need for strategic coordination and integration of SSR work by senior (mission) leaders.

Lesson 13. Only budgeted mission tasks are implemented, regardless of how the mandate is formulated, and so internal funding arrangements must align to reform intentions

Key insight: Mandate-renewal and budgetary processes are not aligned and follow different cycles, but mandated tasks that come without resources remain wish lists that will not be implemented. This gap damages the image of the United Nations and undermines confidence in missions.

The Security Council is responsible for formulating SSR mandates, but the resourcing of these mandates is the purview of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly with advice from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). Mandate-renewal and budgetary processes are thus not aligned and follow different cycles. Broad mandates may support comprehensive and inclusive resolutions, but if they are not accompanied by resources, they run the risk of reducing the impact of mission-level SSR and ultimately damaging the reputation and credibility of the United Nations as a whole. Due consideration for both the affordability and the comprehensiveness of mandates should be a key consideration for the United Nations Security Council in its drafting of strategically focused mandates that can meet the needs of the national situation within the framework of the purpose of the United Nations. [8]

Arrangements for financial support of SSR and closely related activities by peacekeeping mission budgets have improved with the emergence of programmatic funding as a visible feature of the funding of most missions. Programmatic funding promises potentially exponential impact in proportion to its miniscule share in the cost of peacekeeping if its use in missions can be optimized: programmatic funding for rule of law, human rights and SSR represented only about 0.2 per cent of

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[8] Maintain international peace and security; protect human rights; deliver humanitarian aid; support sustainable development and climate action; uphold international law.

peacekeeping budgets in the past three years. [9] Opinions are divided as to the usefulness of programmatic funding. Some see it as a tool enabling the flexibility to undertake more work in support of the mandate, while others say that flows are so small as to have little impact and are barely worth the onerous processes of accessing them. This challenge is exacerbated by shortfalls in implementation capacity in missions since substantive units typically lack project-management personnel. Moreover, implementation lags because the annual mission planning cycle is too short to support longer-term institution-building: a constraint which becomes an incentive to seek partnerships with other institutions.

According to our interviews, an appropriate solution to overcome deficiencies in funding is to commit to an integrated planning process that bridges the mission, the UNCT and, where it operates, the PBF to help shape the country-specific funding model for peacebuilding tasks. Mission and inter-agency pooled funds offer tools to achieve coherence by assembling multiple actors and establishing transparent and inclusive governance arrangements, and also by providing professional management and oversight that focuses on a common set of deliverables. Pooled funds have proved attractive for sharing risk by uniting the resources of multiple donors and the capacities of multiple implementing partners. The use of pooled mechanisms can also strengthen system-wide coherence, reduce fragmentation, exert financial leverage, display agility in responding to emerging needs and enhance accountability at high levels of mission leadership.

> *The Sudan Financing Platform[10] is a multi-partner, multi-window vehicle for developing a more coherent financing architecture across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Its initial window brought together international donors, International Financial Institutions and the United Nations to that end.*

To mitigate these challenges, missions should consider more careful sequencing of SSR funding. In the early stages of SSR, which focus on assessments and use of good offices, comparatively little funding may be necessary. Later, once potential interventions are possible, it is critical to have timely access to sizeable funding. In some cases, missions may develop and cost five-year plans linked to an agreed SSR strategy so that resources are more predictable and scheduled sequentially over a longer period. Such predictability, together with a higher level of reliance on integrated plans funded through the PBF or multi-partner GFP trust fund modalities, will reduce the financial shortfall significantly.

Implementation

In this line of enquiry, the review looked at how implementation skills and modalities directly influence SSR practices and results within the broader strategic and organizational parameters of United Nations missions. Aspects considered include staff profiles, expertise, languages and soft skills, administrative and financial procedures as well as mobility and staff security.

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[9] A/73/776, annex IX; A/74/736, annex VIII; A/75/786, annex VIII.

[10] Other good examples are the South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund, established in 2018 and the Somalia Multi-Window Trust Fund, one of the largest country-level pooled funds globally.

Lesson 14. Both host governments and international actors use national ownership of SSR more as a political strategy than as a basis for agency in reform implementation

Key message: Meaningful national ownership has several dimensions and must be built up over time in order to go beyond political rhetoric and become the basis of national agency in implementation.

Security Council resolutions on SSR have been particularly explicit about the need to make national ownership of reform the fundamental principle of support for SSR. While national ownership remains an unimpeachable normative commitment, the principle has been subverted in practice when national stakeholders have proven unable to formulate strategies for reform that are both politically feasible in divided contexts and operationally realistic given limited institutional and bureaucratic capacities. The international practice of treating high-level governmental acquiescence to externally driven reform agendas as meaningful national ownership has resulted in formalistic national commitments to SSR that subsequently fail at the implementation stage. National ownership depends on a national desire to implement reform that is reflected in a broad and inclusive political commitment and the institutional capability of the security sector to effectively envision, strategize, plan and manage the implementation of that reform. Several foundational conditions for national ownership support these aspects:

- *Knowledge about security sector governance and reform*: One cannot own what one does not understand and so commitment to reform depends on developing a shared understanding of the objectives and means of improving SSG among those responsible for carrying out reform.
- *Institutional strength*: Institutional capacity for strategy, planning, resource allocation, and effective management and administration are the means by which national political commitments are enacted. Weak security sector institutions emerging from conflict and instability cannot be expected to exercise ownership if they lack the capacity to fully exercise their responsibilities. Extensive efforts to support institutional capabilities are a prerequisite for building meaningful national ownership of reform over time.
- *Time*: National ownership must not be treated as a one-time commitment by political leaders. Instead, it must be continually built up over time and regularly renewed based on increasing knowledge of SSR and institutional capacity, investment of national financial resources, and popular support for reform priorities.
- *Inclusivity*: Inclusive national dialogue is necessary to broaden ownership of reform agendas beyond governmental actors. United Nations support to SSR that engages with national authorities without inclusive public consultations runs the risk of conflating elite government bargains with national ownership of reform. Engagement of a broad range of civil society, media and oversight actors in SSR should be standard practice, yet is often resisted by government stakeholders and treated as non-essential by international partners.
- *National priorities*: International actors must avoid seeking national acquiescence to reform proposals that are based on external priorities (and on the configuration of resources and support that external actors may be primed to provide). This practice has resulted in SSR programmes that are divorced from institutional history, capacity and social context, while also confusing bilateral security interests with SSR (for example, in focusing on counter-terrorism capacity, border management or strengthening bilateral defence cooperation, instead of making national security provision more accountable and effective).
- *Accountability*: Meaningful national ownership of SSR incorporates accountability for reform progress, which itself can be shaped by positive incentives and negative consequences for those

who support or obstruct transformative measures. At a national level, lack of progress on SSR should be linked to respect for human rights and access to wider funding, while obstructive individuals could be targeted with personalized sanctions such as travel restrictions and the freezing of foreign financial assets. But accountability cuts both ways, and national ownership also depends on responsible international partnership.

Due to the more simplistic prevailing conception of national ownership, complaints about its deficiencies remain ubiquitous: in every context, external supporters attribute slow progress to national governments that fail to appropriate international support as intended. This framing of national ownership of reform is fundamentally misguided and provides neither a practical basis for operative partnerships nor demonstrates substantive respect for the rights of host countries. Expectations of meaningful national ownership need to be premised on an operational understanding of international partnership that supports capacity development and knowledge over time, reflects broad-based national (not government or external) priorities, and develops modalities for support that are based on accountability for progress and the quality of international support.

Lesson 15. Affordable and accountable financial management of national and public security is a priority SSR task that has not been treated as such

Key message: Management of public finances needs to be prioritized as an area of SSR support and mainstreamed into every aspect of programming. Gradually aligning the size of the security sector and its expense with host country revenue to ensure sustainable reforms is essential.

Public financial management is a key lever of accountability and effectiveness of the security sector that has often been neglected in reform programming. The impetus to stem corruption among security sector institutions was key in the original emergence of SSR as a development-driven agenda for peacebuilding. Yet finance ministries and questions on financial planning both at systemic levels and within institutions have been routinely left out of SSR programming in peacekeeping contexts. Progress has been made and recent work by the United Nations Secretariat and the World Bank, as well as missions and their international partners, demonstrates a willingness to support host governments to develop their capacities for financial management. However, coordination and consideration of the host's fiscal situation (including the extent of corrupt practices) seldom occurs until the late stages of programming. This omission carries two distinct risks: on the one hand, critical opportunities for improving the performance of the security sector and anchoring accountability practices within security institutions are missed, and on the other hand, reform strategies may be premised on unrealistic and unsustainable models.

Ensuring that security sector institutions are resourced and staffed at sustainable levels is necessary to secure progress. Predation against the population is often the result of a failure to pay salaries within security institutions, a defect in public financial management that creates insecurity and contributes to corrupt practices.[11] National financial mechanisms that support distribution of resources on an accountable and transparent basis are critical to preventing diversion and corruption while ensuring that the security sector receives the resources it depends on to perform its missions.

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[11] The lack of operating and logistical resources for security institutions further compounds this risk.

The introduction of Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs) began to address this gap, and progress has been made in recent years, yet aid dependence and corruption in the security sector require further attention and a shift in approach. Some initial interventions that are externally sponsored, especially in the context of stabilization, may well be too much for the host to afford. Well-meaning donors and the United Nations can fill this gap over the very short term with a clear commitment of the host to step in as soon as possible (potentially linked to specific benchmarks in a mutual commitment-type agreement). The World Bank can help gauge this moment of affordability when good partnerships have been established. However, reliance on external funding support for SSR in the medium-to-long term poses dangers for the national host because donor funding can be unreliable while a reliance on outside resources weakens both national ownership and incentives for reform. International attention to public financial management is essential to maintain political momentum in settings with weak institutions. Being able to pay for a right-sized security sector might also allow countries to engage in reforms that increase State revenues by, for example, broadening the tax base and strengthening the customs regime.

For these reasons, tasking missions to make public financial management a focus area in SSR support could become part of mandates. This may help to engage hosts early in the conduct of a PER for justice and security provision, including specific attention to gender deficiencies in these sectors. PERs have also proven useful in designing a comprehensive strategy for SSR based on national requirements over the longer term. National ownership can also be significantly enhanced by a commitment to financially sustaining, or at least contributing initially, to reforms. In this case, OROLSI's Security Sector Reform and Governance Standing Capacity in Brindisi might consider having an SSR Budget Expert available who could provide expert support to the United Nations and the host.

Lesson 16. The psychosocial and economic aspects of SSR are systematically neglected in programming

Key message: SSR fails to address how psychosocial and economic factors shape the behaviour and choices of people working within the security sector. As a result, reform efforts are slow at making meaningful improvements to institutional management.

At the most granular level, progress on SSR depends on security personnel, civilian staff and political authorities making extensive changes in the way they do their jobs on a daily basis. Yet approaches to SSR rarely focus on the psychosocial and economic factors that structure the incentives and choices of the people working within the security sector itself. [12] Reforms fail when premised on simplistic assumptions like the idea that new rules will simply be followed or that one-off training will change deeply held beliefs about values and norms central to security, identity and duty. Reforms that aim to achieve a people-centred vision of security need to better consider the mindset, motivation, personal dilemmas and commitment of people working at the centre of the structures undergoing reform.

SSR rightly focuses on legal frameworks, institutional capacity-building, internal procedures for planning and management, and extensive technical training and equipment. But SSR routinely faces barriers to change when the people working within these processes choose not to follow new procedures, not to adopt new techniques and not to respect new rules, or when they are personally

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[12] Considering the psychosocial factors of SSR means looking at the intersection and interaction of social, cultural and environmental influences in the mind and behaviour of the people who are at the centre of reform efforts.

not engaged with the values at the heart of these changes. These choices are never completely individual or completely voluntary and are instead conditioned by the expectations that people working with the security sector have of their personal situation as well as the expectations others within and beyond the system place on them.

Institutional analysis of clientelist systems is important to SSR programme design in the same way that conflict and context analysis is essential for SSR strategies. Numerous examples show how the failure to consider the people at the centre of reform efforts undermines the logic of support to SSR: the best-quality anti-corruption training is of little use to a recruit who is hungry or knows that her family is; a soldier or a police officer must first feel relatively assured of her own safety in order to protect others. It is central to understand that a person who is responsible for the maintenance of an extended kin network because of her status as a public servant works under enormous duress and going against these invisible yet powerful social forces can be personally very hazardous.

The first officer or civil servant who seeks to apply new laws or regulations against standard nepotistic recruitment practices does so at great personal risk in an environment where there is no reasonable expectation that new laws and rules will take hold in the long or even medium term. If she takes this risk, she does so without any of the protections an established system might offer her because she has no guarantee that her colleagues, subordinates or hierarchy have made the same personal calculation, and the institutional checks and balances that should provide guardrails for such behaviour are not yet in place. She must face the potential consequences of being professionally or socially marginalized, perhaps losing her valuable position or in some cases facing physical danger in a national social context that is already riven by the close memory of violence and future uncertainty.

Our review suggests that SSR support programmes are based on the idea that individuals can and will take such personal risks on a widespread basis and that they will continue to do so in the face of resistance. Reforms stumble in part because they offer little incentive and no safety to the people who need to run these risks in order for changes to stick. Instead, the resistance to change within institutions that these kinds of barrier create is dismissed as a general lack of capacity or political will.

Gender-responsive SSR is the one area of SSR practice that does systematically structure reform around the psychosocial and economic factors that shape individual behaviours and group interactions, and thereby institutional norms and organizational cultures. Men and women who have limited social or cultural context for gender equality will face challenges overcoming their societal and personal prejudices when asked to interact with others on a new and unfamiliar basis, and institutional settings need to be primed to support positive change. Mainstreaming gender-responsive SSR across programming would help address the gender-specific elements of this problem while also providing a methodological basis for wider analysis and programme design that could better integrate these neglected psychosocial and economic factors in reform. From this perspective, obvious entry points include closer consideration of service conditions and human resourcing, including training and personnel development, payroll, pension schemes and severance packages so that conditions of service can become a bulwark against politicization and corruption of the security sector.

Lesson 17. SSR staff profiles skew perceptions of SSR towards policy work and technical approaches

Key message: SSR staff at UNHQ tend to lack field experience, while SSR staff in the field tend to be technical experts. The lack of diversity in profiles and the lack of opportunities to gain

complementary experience tend to exacerbate gaps between policy and practice and the disconnect between UNHQ and field realities.

In the field, SSR experts are mostly former uniformed personnel (police, military), often with limited practical experience in designing and driving strategic transformation across multiple civilian (and military) institutions and with gaps in knowledge on promoting a gender-responsive approach to SSR. It is of symbolic and political significance to appoint civilians to lead SSR units, and it is necessary that they bring a more integrated and political mindset to the task, particularly with competence in governance reform and development, and a less "uniformed" and technical mindset (while also reflecting gender balance). At UNHQ, SSR experts (including beyond SSRU) are mainly policymakers knowledgeable in the political and technical dimensions of SSR. The combination of limited field experience with the operational exigencies of running missions makes it difficult to engage senior leaders on the practical SSR improvements they can initiate. In other UNHQ entities, expertise on SSR varies; for instance, most officers in the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) have minimal knowledge of SSR and consider it mainly through the train-and-equip lens with an exclusive focus on armed forces. In UNPOL we found a mix of operational and reform experiences, but its advocacy of the centrality of police in SSR does not always promote integrated approaches.

There appears to be an unmet need across the organization for SSR staff that pair an in-depth understanding of the political and strategic dimensions of SSR with operational experience in translating political objectives into contextually relevant and pragmatic SSR programmes. Within SSRU at UNHQ and SSR units at mission level, there is a lack of military and police officers who are capable of pursuing integrated approaches to SSR while also applying the specific professional expertise they bring from their uniformed service. It is understandably very difficult to find uniformed colleagues who are sufficiently knowledgeable on SSR and it may require specific outreach to Member States for support on standardized job descriptions. We also found little interaction between GFP members and SSRU, but since SSRU has joined the GFP recently, we trust that this relationship will improve rapidly. Greater mobility of SSR staff that alternates field with UNHQ postings can help address these challenges, but mobility should never be the priority consideration over SSR capacity. At present there is no provision for rotation of UNHQ and mission colleagues to expose officers to all dimensions of the security sector within the United Nations. There is also no standardized online training to upskill new staff during recruitment processes to ensure that new SSR recruits fully comprehend the extent of security sector work in the United Nations. The United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) has offered to produce an interactive and engaging training – this opportunity should be exploited.

Recruiting experts in a wider range of reform areas (for example, institution-building, finance specialists, administration, human resources) is a challenge due to limited availability, and bridging solutions are necessary to provide timely and flexible support to United Nations missions. SSR Expert Rosters are not maintained on a system-wide basis and the current roster is not up to date. For example, criteria reflecting gender and range of expertise and experience appear to require review. The recently created SSR Standing Capacity is a promising tool for managing a system-wide expert pool because of its proximity to field needs, the range of specialist skillsets it could offer, the experience it could accrue and apply over time, and the effect of having a single team deliver against a coherent approach across all United Nations entities where there is demand. SSR experts are not easy to find and should not be wasted waiting passively for deployment, yet no system-wide capability or funding

mechanism currently exists to provide for the rapid deployment of experts from wherever they are to mission or non-mission settings.

We found no evidence that missions emphasize the recruitment of experts from the host country or the subregion, which can create an imbalance of competencies and widen significant gaps between international expertise and national realities. We also found little evidence of close cooperation with the African Union and RECs of the type that could facilitate the identification of relevant experts. Building national capacities paves the way for more sustainable reform. The co-location of United Nations SSR experts with their national counterparts has demonstrated its added value in terms of sharing mutual knowledge, respect and trust-building. Such approaches involving teaming up SSR generalists with government staff should be more systematically implemented. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and UNPOL are already demonstrating the value of these co-locations.

Our review did not find evidence of a well-established learning curve. The complexity of SSR requires a permanent link between the practical realities of programme implementation in the field and policy development. Yet the review did not find evidence of any process to support lesson identification and learning for SSR of the kind that would facilitate a permanent improvement of collective expertise on SSR. GFP appears to be better equipped for such a process and could better catalyse a data strategy for SSR. The review did not find that SSRU and IASSRTF or GFP organize regular engagements with mission staff – beyond the current annual SSRU event that has suffered understandably due to recent COVID restrictions – of the kind that might support a deeper understanding of mission realities. Yet, such cooperation could be an important step in closing the policy–practice gap and empowering SSRU and IASSRTF or GFP to become a more integrated system-wide back-office capacity for field missions. In other words, engagement with mission staff will serve as priority-setting platforms based on the sharing of knowledge and experience from the field, but the current configuration is not meeting the field-level demand for more punctual support on practical and mission-specific aspects of implementation.

Learning

This line of enquiry considers the organization's ability to understand how implementation efforts are faring, what performance improvements at implementation, organizational, strategic or mandate levels are necessary as a result, and the missions' abilities to upgrade efforts on this basis. We focus on quality of performance monitoring and progress reporting, leadership focus and intervention, quality of "inconvenient-truths-challenge" processes, mission culture, and definitions of success (and changes therein) in relation to monitoring performance.

Lesson 18. Conflict-centred political economy analysis is essential to design and implement a mission SSR strategy that is achievable

Key message: SSR strategies, if they exist, tend to be poorly informed by political economy analysis centred on the conflict and its context. This jeopardizes their viability.

SSR typically seeks to re-orient security priorities, security institutions and security forces' behaviours away from the interests and influence of specific members of a country's ruling elite and towards the public interest. This means that, sooner rather than later, SSR efforts will touch directly on the interests of powerful people. Instead of doing so accidently and running into roadblocks, United Nations missions should anticipate and organize the inevitable confrontations about whose security interests will be pursued and how, thus giving a better chance of success. Among other things, this requires an

excellent understanding of the political economy of the security sector landscape. Mission SSR work thus risks swift breakdown if it is not based on a thorough understanding of the political economy of the security sector, the population's security priorities (for example, along ethnic, gender and religious lines) and international security interests, including insights into the leverage required to influence such interests and priorities. But missions do not typically generate such analysis on a regular basis and fail to connect it with mission strategy processes or to bring it to the attention of senior leaders.

Political economy analysis of the security sector that is useful for SSR contends with the power relations within and between formal, hybrid and informal security institutions, politics and business, as well as with organizational and gendered cultures of security institutions and their sources of revenue and legitimacy. In addition, the political economy of the security sector encompasses the security priorities of the population and how they perceive existing security providers – taking account of diverse gender, ethnic and religious views – in relation to the (in)security provided by prevailing power structures. Regular population surveys can be a powerful component of political economy analysis with regard to this particular issue, not least because they equip mission leaders with information on popular views and priorities relevant to security, which can be important when negotiating with national elites who may or may not be representative of the wider public.

Combining an understanding of elite and popular security interests, as well as their linkages, will help establish what SSR is desired and what is feasible. In most mission settings, there will also be international security interests that need to be factored into this equation. Such analysis can provide the basis for context-specific approaches that are more likely to find entry points and less likely to antagonize.

Political economy analysis that sheds light on security institutions, population security needs and international security interests must be conducted regularly because events in mission settings are often fast-paced. Such analysis must be readily available to senior mission leaders and tied directly to decision-making processes if it is to influence mission strategies, planning and activity. But our interviews showed that the production of analysis in United Nations missions is an underdeveloped professional field: for example, in one mission, journalistic experience was considered adequate for serving in a Joint Mission Analysis Centre, even though journalism and research are different crafts. In other words, a significant upgrading of mission analytical capabilities would need to be part of any effort to improve United Nations SSR work.

Lesson 19. Insufficient monitoring of SSR in the field undermines the ability to draw insights from mission experiences across contexts

Key message: Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning are insufficient at project, programme and mission levels. The lack of feedback loops between working levels and mission leadership as well as mission contexts and UNHQ limits the ability of programme designers, policymakers and senior leaders to adapt to prevailing conditions and learn from experience.

Knowing what one seeks to achieve is a fundamental condition for gauging progress towards the stated goal. Given the lack of strategic goals and planning for SSR at mission level (described above), it is perhaps unsurprising that the review found limited evidence of purposeful design of feedback loops or strategic deliberation based on the monitoring of SSR implementation experiences at mission level. The pathways and capacities for passing insights up the hierarchy of a mission and to UNHQ level are

weak to non-existent and need to be rethought, together with existing procedures and support for evidence-based leadership and decision-making.

Sufficient context analysis is critical to effective strategy and planning and therefore also in assessing what is feasible under prevailing conditions. Within these parameters, a designated process for learning from ongoing monitoring can be put in place. In missions where senior leadership does not create the space for strategic SSR agenda setting, including deliberation and challenge, feedback from mission frontline staff is unlikely to make it up the hierarchy officially, especially to UNHQ level. Apart from personal connections, there are no alternative procedural routes to bring critical counter-analysis to the attention of senior leaders beyond the mission. The development of mission strategies based on higher quality context analysis should be applied to support more sophisticated frameworks for monitoring and evaluation in the context of a data strategy for SSR.

Our interviews also found little evidence of regular and focused data collection and analysis to inform SSR strategies at mission levels. Beyond project specific and programming frameworks, which may apply monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) tools as a matter of standard operating procedure, SSR appears to be largely politically determined without sustained or systematized monitoring. In many cases, even SSR section workplans are missing. Siloed approaches to MEAL – whereby programme-level progress across a range of SSR-related work (such as civil affairs, justice, human rights, protection and gender equality) are not covered in SSR monitoring – also contribute to gaps in programmatic linkages. These gaps in planning and learning allow for omissions in strategy and focus: gender equality cannot be mainstreamed into learning systems that do not exist, for example. United Nations support to SSR must aspire to higher professional standards of accountability in its programme development, monitoring and implementation.

Stronger data collection and analysis as well as continuous monitoring and context analysis are not only critical resources for mission leadership to develop and implement SSR strategy, but also a resource for political dialogue and coordination among partners. Missions are missing an opportunity to support data collection and analysis with national partners – an essential prerequisite for stronger national policy and also for planning at strategic levels for both SSR and larger longer-term efforts at peacebuilding and sustainable development. There is scope to explore opportunities for more strategic monitoring with other organizations, including integrating SSR into existing joint monitoring activities or initiating them.

This gap in mission-level practice has systemic impacts on United Nations SSR support because it means that there is no mechanism for results-based insights to inform system-wide approaches or policy development and ties in with the larger question of situating SSR in the United Nations data strategy. Currently SSRU at UNHQ lacks the capacity to monitor mission-level SSR and develop guidance or policy that makes use of these experiences. Further consideration needs to assess what type of regular analysis would be necessary and how it will be used systematically in strategic decision-making with the goal of creating complimentary feedback loops between levels and generating practice-based insight across mission contexts.

Part 3: A new framework for context-based SSR in UN peace operations

The cumulative message of the lessons and practices described above is that a more granular understanding of governance-focused reform is going to be necessary in order for United Nations support to security sector reform to gain greater traction. One of the core challenges of doing so is identifying what approach to SSR programming will find best traction in a certain national context given the prevailing political conditions. To help navigate this challenge we propose a new model for context-based SSR that may guide programme development in mission settings. Context-specific SSR is by no means a new idea and the insight that SSR will adapt depending on whether the contextual focus is on peacebuilding, democratic transition or development has long been a part of United Nations support that also features in the Integrated Technical Guidance Notes. What we are proposing is a new operationalization of this idea through a more granular analysis of SSR in conflict-affected settings. While the following is only a brief outline, it serves as proof of concept and a potential basis for further policy and guidance development to work from.

Part 2 articulates lessons from the SSR experiences of United Nations missions since 2014. One common observation is that contextual variables – the nature of the conflict in all its political and socioeconomic dimensions – largely determine how a mission can approach SSR and, in consequence, the leadership, strategy and resourcing that a United Nations mission needs in order to deliver on the SSR elements of its mandate. In brief, it is the context that sets the main parameters for progress on SSR. Even though mission mandate and mission resourcing are important conditions in their own right, they must be based on contextual variables if SSR work is to progress.

Our analysis shows that the contextual variables that most directly influence prospects for SSR include: (a) the extent and intensity of ongoing fighting or, where fighting has ended, the inclusivity of the political settlement; (b) the extent to which key security institutions of the State are fragmented or dysfunctional; and (c) the extent to which foreign (non-multilateral) actors influence the conflict, for example by lending diplomatic support to one of the conflict parties in multilateral political forums, by supplying local conflict parties with arms or deploying their own forces in direct support, or by pursuing their own competing political priorities through direct bilateral cooperation on security matters.

Based on these variables, three broad contexts for SSR work can be distinguished (see table 1). Recalling the 2008 Capstone Doctrine, it is worth noting that the transnational, multilayered and multiparty nature of contemporary intra-State conflict means that different contexts can coexist within a single country at the same time.[13] Just as conflict-prevention, peace-enforcement and peacekeeping tasks may have to be executed in parallel, so may this be the case for different kinds of SSR work.

Table 1: A simple typology of context-based SSR in special political and peacekeeping missions

Context 1: Violent instability	Context 2: Temporary stability	Context 3: Fragile stability

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[13] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines* (United Nations: New York, 2008), www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/Capstone_Doctrine_ENG.pdf.

Intensity of armed conflict	There is open warfare between two or more main conflict parties. A negotiated end to hostilities may or may not be under discussion (e.g., pre-negotiations or "talks about talks").	Open fighting between the main conflict parties has ceased. A negotiated end to hostilities may or may not have been reached (e.g., a cessation of hostilities).	Conflict parties resolve their differences mostly through dialogue. The main conflict parties have reached agreement on the outline of a non-violent transition (e.g., via a power-sharing agreement or elections).
Foreign forces engaged in armed conflict	Foreign actors are directly engaged in fighting and combat support in conflict zones.	Foreign actors remain directly engaged in the conflict, including through support activities, but foreign forces have ceased direct combat.	Foreign actors remain engaged in the conflict, but their forces have left the country or have obtained international sanction.
Security sector governance	Security institutions are politicized and incapable of core management functions. The constitutional framework for security provision and oversight is defunct or contested.	Basic principles for future national security and public safety are under active discussion. The broad structure of key security institutions is under negotiation or has been re-agreed or re-established.	Basic principles for future national security and public safety have been agreed. Legitimated security institutions exercise rudimentary forms of control over security forces, which are minimally capable of extending their presence across most of the national territory.
SSR approach	⇒ **Exploratory SSR work**, i.e., build an understanding of the security landscape, its key actors and points of leverage; engage national stakeholders on key normative parameters and possible trajectories for reform (accountability, effectiveness, rule of law, human rights including gender equality).	⇒ **Foundational SSR work**, i.e., begin identifying entry points for positive security sector change; engage national stakeholders on possible reform trajectories; gauge bureaucratic capacity to implement.	⇒ **Constructive SSR work**, i.e., initiate larger-scale SSR support based on a re-emergent national security architecture; provide direct support to national institutions to improve accountability and effectiveness of security provision and management at all levels.

Note: Each condition (set) can be operationalized by developing quantifiable and qualitative indicators to track both programme and process benchmarks.

The different contexts are not clearly delineated or mutually exclusive categories. Instead, they represent a fluid and interconnected continuum. Table 1 should therefore not be used to find and tick the right boxes. Instead, it is intended to invite reflection on what combination of factors pertains to a particular situation, which can include elements from different contexts. Assessing prevailing conditions and which contexts dominate is a matter for detailed political economy analysis. This makes recurrent and high-quality analysis an essential part of all SSR work, which should be reflected in the size and staffing of the mission's Strategic Planning Unit and Joint Mission Analysis Centre, as well as Political Affairs and SSR units. Failing to calibrate SSR approaches to context risks doing significant harm and is irresponsible.

A context-based approach to SSR means that objectives and methods will have to change in sync with environmental developments. This requires both flexibility and regular recalibration of mission activities. It also raises questions about the ability of United Nations missions to adapt their leadership, mindset and resources. Based on our analysis, table 2 provides a starting point for reflection and discussion.

Table 2: Points of adaptation for SSR work by United Nations missions in different contexts

	Exploratory SSR work	Foundational SSR work	Constructive SSR work
Main United Nations objective	Build understanding of the security landscape, its key actors and points of leverage	Analyse and identify entry points for positive security sector change	Upscale SSR support based on the re-emergent national security architecture
Focus of national support	Sensitize national stakeholders to core reform parameters, especially through inclusive dialogue	Support the creation of national decision-making processes based on inclusive and public dialogue	Support reforms benchmarked to progress and process indicators
Types of SSR activity	• Analysing resources, interests and objectives of key conflict stakeholders • Building relations and dialoguing with parties through good offices • Mapping security needs of non-combatants • Identifying sources of leverage over conflict parties, including inter- and transnational • Supporting platforms for inclusive public dialogue	• Developing a portfolio of small programmatic interventions that test where potential for change towards more effective and accountable security institutions exists • Providing critical security providers and decision makers with initial support to professionalize • Support the development of national strategy-making and planning • Supporting broad and inclusive public discussion of reform-objectives	• Developing multi-annual programmatic interventions based on a nascent national SSR strategy and national fiscal limits • Negotiating a compact for long-term SSR progress with national authorities in support of a more stable political settlement
Leadership focus	External – Help steer conflict parties to a compromise based on an understanding of their core security interests Internal – Provide clear guidance on what security issues are critical to long-term mission success; stimulate debate	External – Ensure key national and foreign conflict actors are involved in the mission's SSR agenda and work Internal – Encourage innovative and varied SSR support interventions with clearly defined risk tolerance; implicate all related mission elements in strategy development	External – Work with national stakeholders to develop a longer-term strategic SSR agenda[a] Internal – Deepen connections between the mission and the UNCT to ensure sustainability of effort (including transition)
Resourcing (staff)	Staff require familiarity with national history and culture, extensive local networks, and proven analytical credentials Understanding of political economy of security and security governance should be emphasized	Staff require expertise in adaptive programming and an understanding of the political economy of security Some specialist expertise in particular services will be needed	Staff require solid experience in running large programmes and security sector public expenditure Advisors seconded into key national security organizations are also needed
Resourcing (budget)	Significant funds or large programmes are not necessary at this point	A series of small and adaptive pilots require modest funding	A multi-year and multi-donor trust fund is essential to ensure continuity and coordination
Mindset	Analytical equidistance to parties, curiosity about national realities, linking findings to internal planning and resourcing	Try, fail fast and move on; build leverage over, and relations with, the security actors that the mission intends to work with	Patience in working on the basics of SSR and adapting the pace to fit national capacities: "doing with – not doing for"

[a] The longer-term strategic SSR agenda must take account of at least four elements: (a) the interests of key political actors as dispersed through the political economy of the security landscape; (b) the existing national security culture and norms; (c) the prevailing security expectations and needs of the population; and (d) the national fiscal capacities to maintain a professionalized security sector.

In a context of *exploratory SSR work*, mission focus ought to be on mapping and deconstructing key security problems to support both effective mediation and planning for longer-term SSR work. Such mapping must include developing an understanding of objective constraints linked to resources and prevailing conditions, [14] as well as diverse national views and insights as to the origins of current security problems and what should be done about them. These basic building blocks can build towards a political understanding between the main conflict parties that frames the parameters and priorities for initial SSR work. Such a national understanding is the basis for moving on to *foundational SSR work* and provides the United Nations with counterparts and platforms with whom to work in a more stable fashion. This type of SSR support should emphasize exploring by trial and error where SSR headway can be made without overburdening programmes with transformative outcomes in the short term. Once analytical insights and practical experience combine with greater local stability and partially legitimized counterparts, *constructive SSR work* can begin that focuses directly on an institutional agenda for more effective and accountable security provision and decision-making. Missions can work towards an SSR compact with national authorities as a way of explicitly formulating mutually agreed priorities, objectives, processes and resources.

These three different approaches to SSR are not mutually exclusive and nor are the different contexts in which they ought to be pursued. Both are best viewed as overlapping areas on a continuum rather than distinct boxes in a table. Indicators that suggest a particular context has transformed into another or tipping points that imply a swifter pace of change are best defined locally through regular political economy analysis but should be grounded in the above framework as a starting point. By using such indicators and tipping points, a context-based approach to SSR can undertake regular "synchronization moments" at which shifts in context are assessed and appreciated from an analytical perspective and at which mission SSR objectives, resources and activities are recalibrated to noted shifts in context.

It should be kept in mind, however, that such shifts can be progressive as well as regressive. Although SSR work seeks to influence the context from which it emerges, it will normally follow rather than drive political and security conditions. Planning must be premised on the assumption that progress is just as likely to falter as continue. Provision must be made to adapt support strategies, including withdrawing SSR support entirely if fundamental assumptions required for progress are not borne out, including a national commitment to act on agreed reform strategies.

Grounding SSR in a better differentiated understanding of the context factors that disable or enable progress makes it possible to define and pursue more achievable reform objectives. In turn, this provides a basis for defining mission SSR objectives and, equally important, the kind of mission leadership, resources and mindset necessary to deliver on such objectives.

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[14] By way of example of an objective constraint, if tens of thousands of individuals are under arms in a country with few alternative livelihood opportunities, there is little point in setting up a large-scale post-conflict DDR intervention or in conditioning post-conflict support from International Financial Institutions on reducing the public payroll.

Part 4: Conclusions and recommendations

Security sector reform is a critical tool to anchor peace as it encourages institutions to produce security as a public service in an accountable and citizen-oriented manner. It is also a critical enabler of other United Nations priorities such as human rights, the rule of law and gender equality – none of which can be realized when parts of a population live in insecurity. A professional, rights-based and accountable security sector is, moreover, essential to ensure that policies seeking to deal with radicalization, migration and organized crime are implemented in ways that prevent the creation of new causes of conflict.

It should therefore be of significant concern to the United Nations that this report concludes that work on SSR presently garners little traction in most of its field missions. It also finds that the operational SSR practice of many United Nations missions requires significant upgrading and upskilling before mandated SSR tasks can be correctly executed. Operational practice in missions to implement SSR mandated tasks is insufficiently standardized, and implementation suffers as a result. Current strategy and programme guidance is not closing the long-standing policy–practice gap. This situation is problematic because it means that United Nations missions do not avail themselves of SSR as a tool to create enabling conditions for fragile peace to take hold.

United Nations mission problems in the area of SSR have different dimensions that include:

- Limited awareness of, and interest in, SSR on the part of senior mission leaders
- The absence of dynamic mission strategies on SSR that mobilize levers such as good offices or troop presence behind context-based SSR objectives
- Poor coordination between different mission units relevant to SSR – such as political affairs, human rights, gender equality and rule of law teams – based on such strategies
- Dominance of uniformed staff (serving or retired) among mission SSR personnel and an overly militarized focus on SSR
- Inadequate consideration of the financial resources required for SSR in mission strategies and budgets and of the affordability of SSR work in relation to national budgets
- Poor political economy analysis of the national security sector and possibilities for reform
- An almost non-existent ability to learn from past SSR experience across missions, extending even to the United Nations system as a whole

Aggravating this problematic situation is the fact that such findings are not necessarily new. Indeed, many were already articulated in the Secretary-General's reports on SSR of 23 January 2008 and 13 August 2013, as well as Security Council resolution 2151 (2014).[15] The official recycling of critical SSR shortcomings in field-level performance points to limited learning and innovation occurring in the United Nations as an organization. It also suggests substantial and repeated failure on the part of senior leaders – both within the organization and in the Security Council – to accelerate the marginal rate of progress in the SSR practice of the United Nations. After all, it is in mission contexts that SSR can make a real difference to the States and populations that the United Nations is pledged to serve.

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[15] A/62/659–S/2008/39; A/67/970–S/2013/480; S/RES/2151 (2014).

This state of affairs in the field is further compounded by the failure at UNHQ level to ensure meaningful implementation of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee Decisions on SSR of 16 February 2007 (2007/11) and 24 January 2011 (2011/1); the inability of the Inter-Agency SSR Task Force to chart, organize and fund a common United Nations agenda on SSR beyond the paper of Security Council resolutions 2151 (2014) and 2553 (2020); the oversupply of policy papers and technical guidance notes with limited relevance for United Nations field missions, and the undersupply of SSR expertise in New York that can inform mission development and support mission work including, for example, in the standing mediation capacity and Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs).

This is not to say that progress has been absent. Over the past decade, an elaborate SSR policy framework has been developed and basic SSR capabilities have been put in place that include:

- The creation of IASSRTF and SSRU in a bid to develop a United Nations-wide SSR agenda
- The creation of SSR units inside United Nations missions with, more recently, programme funding to support their work and a standing capacity to provide SSR backstop expertise
- The development of Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on different aspects of SSR and, more recently, a new initiative for updated policy notes
- The increasing inclusion of SSR in mission mandates and more systematic reporting on SSR in SRSG reports
- The referencing of SSR in 6 of the 10 resolutions passed under the WPSA
- The development of a partnership with the World Bank on financial aspects of SSR

The combination of critical shortcomings and progress outlined above produces a paradox: United Nations policy development on SSR is well advanced but barely extends beyond a limited New York bubble. The development, institutionalization and standardization of a United Nations SSR mission practice remains in its infancy, the existence of pockets of promise notwithstanding. Meanwhile, the United Nations community of SSR practice has shrunk and differences of view on SSR between Security Council members remain, resulting in unrealistic SSR mandates that are regularly misaligned mission resourcing, among other things. There is, moreover, little evidence of experimentation or innovation in SSR across missions or UNHQ. The new United Nations data strategy may improve this situation, but so far seems rather abstract and lacking in relevance to SSR. In brief, United Nations SSR policy has not yet transformed itself into a dynamic practice that resonates throughout the organization, including at mission level.

We base these headline conclusions on 131 interviews across most existing United Nations missions, relevant United Nations departments and entities in New York, and a range of United Nations partners; in-depth studies of UNSMIL (Libya), MINUSMA (Mali) and MINUSCA (Central African Republic); as well as focus group discussions with the likes of IASSRTF and the Group of Friends of SSR (see annex 4, Methodological note).

Our conclusions come with a few caveats. To begin with, SSR remains a relatively young field of policy and practice in the United Nations. Since the Policy Committee Decision of 2007, 15 years have passed. This seems a long time, and yet transforming the nominal recognition of a new policy area into standardized field practice is a difficult business. Expecting an integrated policy–practice dialectic on SSR to develop and embed in a global political-administrative organization within a decade is not necessarily realistic.

Moreover, achieving SSR progress in the real world requires three notoriously divided, challenged and sometimes difficult actors to operate professionally and in tandem: host governments running (post-)conflict countries, United Nations Security Council members and senior United Nations leaders. Host governments have to tame "men with guns" who often hold positions of significant power by improving the organization, management and morality of the security sector. Security Council members must ensure the mandates and resolutions they agree to in New York are supported and acted upon in the field by their diplomats, soldiers and developmental officers. United Nations officials have to cooperate seamlessly across organizational units and find the courage to engage national power brokers in difficult conversations that incentivize them to subject their coercive capabilities to new rules and expectations of accountability.

Unsurprisingly, these elements never operate in perfect unison and the misalignment between them leaves only narrow margins within which the United Nations can support SSR. The constraints as well as the opportunities of this situation are often ignored in mission mandates and country programming. Disregarding the facts that constrain United Nations support to SSR in mission settings leads to unrealistic expectations: for example, the fact that a United Nations mission can only act as a steward of SSR work (not as the owner); the fact that a mission is constrained by divisions in the Security Council; or the fact that a mission must manage local ownership with caution where it seeks to public support for reform beyond the national government.

Despite such caveats, our report shows that it is time to consider a targeted and large-scale United Nations SSR business-improvement initiative. It ought to centre on a highly practical effort that enables United Nations field missions to deliver better SSR work by upskilling their senior leadership on SSR and by upgrading their organization, resourcing and implementation of SSR. Failure to do so will diminish the extent to which United Nations missions can help create the minimum level of security required to anchor an often fragile peace and open new pathways for development.

Recommendations

We propose five core recommendations for improving United Nations mission performance in SSR. They are based on our desk review, 131 interviews, three case studies, several focus group discussions and the above conclusions. Together, these recommendations would represent a substantial effort at change that can further professionalize and upgrade United Nations SSR practices in mission contexts, beyond the policy realm at UNHQ level where appreciable progress has already been made.

Our five core recommendations are intended as a package, not a menu of options. This is because only an integrated and interlinked initiative for improvement in United Nations SSR practice at mission level will make a substantial difference. Incremental tinkering at the margins will not.

In addition to our five core recommendations, we propose a number of smaller improvement initiatives that can be undertaken with near immediate effect at the discretion of the entities or departments involved (see annex 1). They will not radically upgrade the United Nations' SSR agenda as a whole, but will bring about smaller, issue-specific improvements.

Recommendation 1: Increase substantive dialogue with host countries at the highest political levels

Initiate more substantive and strategic dialogue with host countries at the highest political levels regarding the quality of their engagement with United Nations mission support to SSR – based on the local context *(actionable by United Nations Security Council members)*

SSR is a process that ultimately needs to be led by national authorities since the organization and exercise of coercive force is a sovereign prerogative as long as it respects international commitments such as human rights. Yet, in situations of intense political crisis and conflict, national governments are often unable or unwilling to exercise coercive force in a manner that meets their international obligations. In such cases, local ownership of SSR work is hard to ensure since significant population groups may be excluded from national decision-making on, and enforcement of, security arrangements. It is in such cases that a United Nations mission can act as a steward of a national SSR agenda until the national authorities are able to discharge their responsibilities in a people-centred manner. This means that United Nations Security Council members must ensure host governments engage seriously and with commitment with missions regarding SSR mandated tasks during such transition periods. It also requires Security Council members to be adequately informed about the local context and its possibilities for SSR. To achieve this:

(a) *Ensure that SSR aspects of mission mandates benefit from context-specific inputs*. Such inputs include political economy analysis of the security sector in the host country, security perception surveys (see recommendation 2(e) below) and national dialogues on SSR. United Nations missions can facilitate these dialogues, which also serve the purpose of generating much-needed dialogue between different groups of national stakeholders, including host country authorities.

(b) *Attach clear benchmarks for SSR progress to mission mandates*. This will provide a better framework for critical dialogue between the host country, the United Nations Security Council and mission leadership on the kind of SSR that is necessary and feasible. For example, one benchmark could be to introduce to the extent possible a Public Expenditure Review of the security sector in the early phase of mission deployment.

(c) *Provide greater mission-specific information to the Fifth Committee*. This would represent a bid to close part of the gap between mandate development and approval by the Security Council on the one hand and mission budget development and approval by the General Assembly's Fifth Committee on the other. Our analysis suggests that mandated tasks that do not come with resources are unlikely to be executed.

Recommendation 2: Support senior mission leaders on SSR

Provide better support to senior mission leaders to deliver on SSR mandated tasks *(actionable by USG DPO, USG DPPA and ASG DCO)*

Our findings indicate that senior mission leadership teams tend not to be aware of how SSR is interwoven with the core political mandate they usually prioritize, do not necessarily command sufficient knowledge of the topic or can be concerned about the impact on their relation with the host country government of the political sensitivity of SSR. This suggests that the SSR knowledge and support base for senior leaders like SRSGs, DSRSGs, Special Envoys, Directors of Mission Support, Chiefs of Staff and Heads of Joint Mission Analytical Centres requires improvement, in addition to

strengthening senior level SSR oversight (see recommendation 3) and developing better implementation guidance for SSR (see recommendation 4). To help close such gaps:

(a) *Develop better executive coaching on SSR*. Participation in an executive seminar on SSR should also be mandatory for mission management teams upon commencement in their role. A complementary executive coaching facility could be created that is accessible to senior mission leaders for mission-specific SSR advice. Such a facility should consist of seasoned United Nations and external SSR experts who are available on-demand. The existing SSR expert network created by SSRU in DPO/OROLSI offers a starting point for putting such a facility together, as does UNSSC and United Nations University experience.

(b) *Make at least two strategic reflection sessions a year mandatory for mission management teams*. This will ensure that mission priorities are clearly articulated throughout the United Nations system and drive activity in the field, featuring SSR as one standard item. A mixed team from DPO, DPPA and UNDP can be created to organize such retreats, with DPO providing logistical support given that most missions are of the peacekeeping variety. Such sessions would also become a linchpin in broader learning strategies (see recommendations 2(c) and 2(e)). Their results should, moreover, feed into senior leadership compacts and performance appraisals.

(c) *Resource SSRU, and by extension IASSRTF or GFP, for three tasks: field support, policy development and learning*. This should be done while ensuring that these tasks are all designed in a manner to support United Nations field practice on SSR. At the moment, these tasks are formally allocated to SSRU but are insufficiently resourced and organized for effective execution. As a result, there is no comprehensive SSR service provider in the United Nations system.

(d) *Create a standby network to provide SSR consultancy and backstop support services to missions on the request of their senior leaders*. This could take the form of a team of two or three staff in Brindisi that administers a larger network of experts based on a service level agreement with UNHQ and standardized contracts to be deployed as missions request.[16] Part of the network can double as executive coaches.

(e) *Develop standardized analytical and learning capabilities across missions*. These should be anchored in a knowledge hub in New York and based on the emerging United Nations data strategy as well as the SSR implementation guidance for missions proposed below (see recommendation 4(a)). Analytical capabilities should make provision for the conduct of regular security perception surveys and political economy analyses of the security sector to enable better in-mission decision-making on SSR, as well as better dialogue with host country representatives (see recommendation 1). Learning capabilities should focus on identifying, absorbing and disseminating mission SSR experiences. They will also help upgrade the proposed SSR implementation guidance for missions, once drafted (see recommendation 4).

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[16] Ideally, such an expert support network would take the form of a standing team of 15–20 staff covering the regular range of SSR functions, themes, and countries or languages. While funding is likely to be an issue, expecting to progress the United Nations SSR agenda in the field without allocating resources proportionate to the task is in fact much more problematic.

Recommendation 3: Improve senior-level strategic oversight of SSR

Put in place senior strategic oversight of United Nations SSR work both in the field and at United Nations Headquarters *(actionable by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General)*

The past years have shown that coherent and strategic United Nations-wide engagement on SSR in the field and at UNHQ is difficult to achieve when SSR teams operate in missions as one SSR actor among many, or operate from deep inside the DPO hierarchy at UNHQ; when senior leaders like Special Representatives, Under-Secretaries-General (USGs) and the Secretary-General do not provide regular leadership guidance; and when cooperation on SSR in United Nations Country Teams, missions and UNHQ depends on the goodwill of participants. In brief, senior leaders in the United Nations undersupply organizational guidance on SSR and there is too much fragmentation of units, entities and teams that work on SSR by themselves. The aim of this recommendation is to increase senior-level support for the United Nations SSR agenda and to make sure that it is supported by sufficient knowledge:

(a) *Ensure that a senior SSR advisor is part of the front office of the SRSG, the DSRSG or the Special Envoy in each mission*. He or she should preferably sit on mission leadership team meetings. The responsibility of this individual would be twofold: (a) advise the SRSG, DSRSG or Special Envoy on the development and monitoring of a context-based mission-wide SSR strategy; and (b) ensure that units across the mission engaged in SSR work operate on the basis of the same strategy (for example, the force commander and police commissioner and the Rule of Law, Political Affairs and Human Rights units).

(b) *Appoint an SSR advisor at ASG level in support of the USGs of DPO and DPPA*.[17] It is essential to recruit a civilian candidate for this role who has extensive field experience in several dimensions of SSR. Appointing a well-qualified and experienced woman candidate to this role would signal the commitment of the United Nations to gender equality through SSR while also signalling a break with traditional male dominance of security affairs. Her or his task is to ensure strategic SSR coherence in both DPO and DPPA and to advise their USGs by means of a double reporting line. The position can be temporary for a 10-year period. It should be ensured that the advisor has a small office of three or four staff to support her or his efforts such as rethinking mission organization for SSR and developing field guidance on SSR in close consultation with SSRU, IASSRTF or GFP.

Recommendation 4: Produce practical SSR guidance for United Nations missions

Develop actionable and context-based SSR implementation guidance for field missions *(actionable by USG DPO, USG DPPA and ASG DCO)*

Our analysis shows that the organization of SSR within missions is highly diverse, as is the quality of existing levels of knowledge, working practices and approaches to SSR work. This makes reliable and good quality performance of mission SSR work difficult. Upgrading the ability of United Nations missions to deliver on their SSR mandated tasks can be done by developing guidance that focuses on professionalizing the design, management and delivery of SSR interventions, including how to develop a mission SSR strategy that is context-based and respects SSR principles as much as possible; how to

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[17] An alternative is to appoint a senior SSR advisor in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General with the same purpose.

organize human resources and budgets for SSR; how to create effective SSR learning processes; how to increasingly enable local ownership of SSR; and how to develop in-country SSR partnerships.[18] Such guidance should make allowance for the different contexts in which SSR has to take shape (see part 3) and differentiate between intervention-management modalities on this basis. It can benefit from the current "Crossroads" exercise but should focus on essentials and on the management of SSR. The Integrated DDR Standards are not an example to emulate.[19]

(a) *Develop actionable and context-based SSR implementation guidance for United Nations field missions*. The guidance should be short and actionable and should differentiate between different contexts in which SSR has to take shape. It ought to be supported by a repository of mission SSR experiences and practices that senior SSR advisors in missions and UNHQ can consult (see recommendations 2(c) and 2(e)). A temporary task force consisting of DPO, DPPA, DCO and UNDP representatives led by a senior leader of repute, such as the proposed ASG-level SSR advisor (see recommendation 3(b)), can deliver such guidance.

(b) *Develop a short United Nations-wide SSR policy as a preliminary step to generating such United Nations SSR implementation guidance for field missions*. The policy should summarize the present surfeit of United Nations SSR policy documents in an easily accessible manner; update the 2007 and 2011 Policy Committee Decisions on SSR based on lessons identified over the past decade (including those articulated in this report); and reintegrate DSR into a broader SSR policy framework. The purpose of this step is to re-commit senior leaders to the organization's SSR principles.

Recommendation 5: Increase resources for SSR work

Increase resources available for SSR work, increase access to such resources, and ensure that they support long-term and integrated approaches to SSR *(actionable by USG DPO, USG DPPA, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office and the UNDP Administrator)*

Even though much SSR work does not have to be expensive as long as the United Nations does not enter into the train–build–equip business, current resource levels in mission budgets are marginal. For example, mission programmatic funding used for SSR, rule of law and human rights together represents about 0.2 per cent of peacekeeping budgets.[20] Given the state of the security sectors in the countries where United Nations missions are deployed, this is a drop in the ocean. While mission funding for SSR is only a small piece of a larger funding framework, missions do need to be equipped to play their part. One key to effective SSR work by United Nations missions is availability of greater funding and another is whether such funding is organized to enable long-term engagement beyond the horizon of a mission. To these ends:

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[18] The guidance should focus on practical problems that pertain to all, or a subset of, SSR functions (e.g., armed forces, police, justice, intelligence, prisons) and themes (e.g., governance, finance, oversight, DDR, gender), highlighting any differences where appropriate.

[19] United Nations, Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, "Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards", 2009–, https://www.unddr.org/the-iddrs/.

[20] A/73/776, annex IX; A/74/736, annex VIII; A/75/786, annex VIII.

(a) *Increase mission programmatic funding for SSR*. This should be done in a manner that is in line with the Secretary-General's view of such funding as a "critical mandate delivery modality".[21] In other words, it should ensure support for missions in proposing and accessing the budgets required, strengthen mission implementation capacity, and support longer term projects, while also ensuring that programmatic funding is conditional on the existence of a mission SSR strategy. USG DPO should lead a review to update the 2017 DPKO–DFS guidelines on programmatic funding to this effect.[22] Similar guidelines should be established for special political missions.

(b) *Develop a standard template for a pooled country-specific trust fund for SSR and related peacebuilding tasks*. This fund should be co-managed by the United Nations mission for the duration of its deployment. It could be administratively hosted by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office or UNDP and would enable long-term, system-wide support for SSR and related peacebuilding tasks during and after a United Nations peace operation, complementing any United Nations mission trust fund that focuses on the short-term. Alternatively, if a general pooled country-specific trust fund already exists, or will be created, a standard template for a "SSR window" in such a fund should be created.

(c) *Increase the resourcing level of the GFP trust fund to provide a collective SSR support facility for missions*. A number of improvements in United Nations mission SSR practices extend beyond individual missions, such as executive training, a greater standing capacity in Brindisi, an SSR knowledge repository and an SSR executive coaching facility. The GFP trust fund is a proven instrument for financing such enablers.

(d) *Continue to develop the partnership with the World Bank*. This partnership should ensure that SSR support from the international community, United Nations missions included, does not outstrip the fiscal and budgetary capabilities of host countries. The World Bank has valuable experience to offer on Public Expenditure Reviews, public financial management and support for the development of finance ministries and related institutions even though its commitment to SSR overall will remain limited.

An implementation pathway for the recommendations

Our recommendations are broad in scope and profound in potential impact. Their implementation requires hard-to-get agreement and monitoring at the very top of the organization to prevent falling victim to narrower departmental and entity interests.

With this consideration in mind, in order to achieve system-wide implementation, we advise that the Executive Committee is seized of the recommendations and appoints the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General in her capacity as oversight authority of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to guide and monitor implementation through the formation of a task force. The task force should include ASG-level representation from DPPA, DPO, the UNDP Crisis Bureau, DCO and PBF, as well as a newly appointed SSR advisor at ASG level (see recommendation 3(b)).

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[21] A/75/786, para. 110.

[22] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "Guidelines: Mandated Programmatic Activities Funded through Peacekeeping Assessed Budgets", ref. 2017.25, 1 November 2017.

Furthermore, we advise that this task force is supported by the GFP as the foundational platform for system-wide implementation with the provision that its remit continues to cover the whole of SSR instead of only the criminal justice chain. IASSRTF could also be tasked as a foundational platform, but while this forum was suitable for inclusive SSR policy formulation in the early 2010s, our analysis casts doubt on it being the best platform for a focused drive to improve SSR field practice. In part this is because of the decline in its participation and efficiency, and in part because the GFP trust fund endows the GFP with additional implementation capabilities. While our review did not generate definitive evidence in favour of one alternative over the other, the United Nations cannot afford two structures. This suggests that, at a minimum, a decision should be made as to which platform will best enable system-wide progress on SSR.

Finally, we suggest that the ASG-level task force reports twice a year on its progress to the Executive Committee, with an independent follow-on review of the implementation two years after the eventual adoption of our recommendations.

Annexes

Annex 1: A longlist of actions for system-wide improvement of United Nations SSR work

The review gathered many suggestions for improvement of security sector reform across the United Nations system, but given the state of the United Nations' SSR agenda in mission contexts, we have chosen to indicate only priority recommendations in the main report for consideration by the senior leadership. Nevertheless, we have captured a fuller list of recommendations and actions in two tables below since each of these points individually can also help bring about incremental improvement. One table focuses on United Nations missions in the field, the other focuses on United Nations Headquarters.

We used our five-point framework for analysing mission SSR work to structure each table – mandates, strategy, organization, implementation and learning – to cover the entire intervention cycle of how Security Council-authorized missions (political as well as peacekeeping) go about the business of implementing SSR elements in their mandates. The summary below must be read in conjunction with the detailed lesson (cross-referenced) that provides the rationale and background.

United Nations mission-level actions for improvement

Framework	Action
Mandate development	Launch deliberate in-depth analyses to unite all mission components and the UNCT behind a single SSR agenda (Lesson 4)
	Raise the importance of governance in SSR through integration with other protection-, gender- or human rights-focused work, supporting civil society and media (Lesson 4)
	Consider country-specific context and prepare the ground for SSR that is adapted to that context (Lesson 4)
	Develop models for "how to" implement SSR at mission level considering the suggested approach in part 3 of this review (Lesson 4)
	United Nations senior leadership teams (UNHQ and field) to develop, maintain and implement a joint and strategic long-term SSR agenda at the start of a mission's tenure (Lesson 6)
Strategic operationalization	Prioritize women's participation in security sector decision-making since experience from the field shows that capable women with expertise in security are present in almost every context: deliberate efforts to find and bring them into SSR discussions need to be a mission priority (Lesson 2)
	Consider alternative SSR terminology better adapted to local sensitivities (Lesson 3)
	Reform the governance component of the defence sector to ensure proper support (logistical, administrative or personnel management) and good command and control (Lesson 9)

Framework	Action
	Adjust international emphasis away from practical support to national DSR in the context of the redeployment of State authority and towards an approach focused on governance and inclusion (Lesson 9)
	Support development of host country capacity to strategize its own priorities inclusively and thoroughly. Seek to accelerate direct action where interests overlap and enable longer-term convergence where they do not (Lesson 10)
	Forge strategic partnerships with international partners that will improve political leverage in exchanges with the host country and make use of partnerships for more effective messaging especially when issuing joint statements (Lesson 10, Lesson 11)
	Promote strategic collaboration (and integration) between different United Nations entities through a business case exercise to clarify what kind of cooperation is necessary, between which United Nations entities and to what end (Lesson 10)
	Recruit competent SSR staff (programme implementation, political sensitivity, strategic advisory capacity, planning experience, etc.) with a balanced mix of internationals and nationals (Lesson 10, Lesson 17)
	Target mission-level coordination at different audiences: At SRSG level, make use of regular strategic and political coordination on SSR with in-country ambassadors and RECs to build partnerships that can ensure common approaches (Lesson 11)
Organization	Introduce different but connected levels of coordination and partnerships and create an SSR task force (Lesson 9, Lesson 10).
	Ensure the design of a mission-wide (including the UNCT) approach to SSR to which all components, where relevant, will contribute (Lesson 12)
	Instead of planning a significant SSR budget at the outset, sequence the funding over 3–5 budget cycles based on an agreed SSR strategy including the development of programming tools (as per annex 2 on DSR) for other areas of SSR (police, justice, etc.) (Lesson 13)
	Consider including programme officers in mission structures or developing formal training for staff on managing programmatic funding, and ensure coherence with the systems of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to promote better integration (Lesson 13)
Implementation	Consider supporting governments to establish a national gender and security sector task force (Lesson 2)
	SSR strategies must consider service conditions and social cohesion for the people who work within the security sector, including linkages with reform contexts afflicted with wide-spread politicization and corruption to prevent limited impact (Lesson 16)

Framework	Action
	Recruit more national experts, including from the subregion, and co-locate these experts with their national counterparts; Co-locate knowledgeable UNPOL and Military Advisors within SSR units to promote stronger integration (Lesson 17)
Learning and adjustment	Schedule regular updates of initial analyses of the security sector so that programming is based on a deep understanding of local context(Lesson 18)

United Nations Headquarters actions for improvement

Framework	Action
Mandate development	Consider incentives for all non-United Nations partners to collaborate with the United Nations Security Council in the spirit of mandate resolutions on SSR along the same benchmarks used for missions (Lesson 1, Lesson 4)
	Formalize ways to equip of senior leaders with sufficient knowledge on the strategic operationalization of SSR at UNHQ and mission levels (Lesson 4)
	Consider focusing SSR mandates on mission- and country-specific contexts: Develop models for "how to" implement SSR at mission level, considering the approach suggested in part 3 of this review (Lesson 4)
	Utilize existing United Nations resources within the United Nations University and UNSSC to strengthen the understanding and practice of United Nations leaders on the use of political good offices (for SSR) (Lesson 4)
	Place more emphasis on governance and institutional capacity-building dimensions in SSR mandates (Lesson 5)
	DPO and DPPA should emphasize the role of missions in terms of good offices and coordination of international interventions (Lesson 5)
	Shift the focus from seeing mission exit as the end-state of SSR to viewing mission exit as a transition point for SSR work (Lesson 6)
Strategic operationalization	Provide guidance to mediation teams to include technical details of SSR during peace discussions (and DDR, including reintegration). Include more SSR expertise in the DPA roster for mediation support (Lesson 7)
	Include SSR earlier in discussions of political settlements and strengthen the articulation between Mediation and SSR units to ensure that conditions for the continuing negotiation of SSR are articulated and agreed (Lesson 7)
	Involve the African Union and sub-RECs in negotiation of political processes over SSR activities to create a basis to strengthen the political efforts of the mission leadership should they be able to do it together (Lesson 7)

Framework	Action
	Rethink the United Nations (global) approach to DDR especially to reconsider integration and reintegration with links to reconciliation, longer-term psychological accompaniment, the WPSA, civic education, social cohesion and affordability (Lesson 8)
	Develop a more comprehensive SSR policy and implementation framework in order to better translate the lessons from the field captured since the adoption of Policy Committee Decision 2007/11 (including on ways to demilitarize the security sector) in order to facilitate a better connection between support to DSR and support to other reform areas (Lesson 9)
	Adjust the global view away from practical support to national DSR in the context of the redeployment of State authority and towards an approach focused on governance and inclusion (Lesson 10)
	The Security Council may consider reinforcing in mandates the convening authority in missions' coordination role as steward of a country's SSR agenda. (Lesson 10)
	Ensure implementation guidance emphasizes a practical understanding of national ownership in local contexts including creating space for civic involvement and taking into account the population's security priorities (Lesson 10)
	The Security Council may consider stronger oversight over the SSR activities of external actors in mission settings to ensure a common strategic SSR agenda (Lesson 10)
	To develop more effective SSR work (long-term and strategic), the Security Council may consider nesting SSR aspects of a mission mandate in a broader United Nations country strategy via the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal framework, anchoring mission SSR work in the UNCT on the basis of complementarity and functional integration. (Lesson 11)
	Use coordination to improve guidance on SSR policy and implementation to United Nations entities based on learning from the field and (new) global expertise, including forging stronger partnerships with RECs and related non-United Nations bodies (Lesson 11)
	Promote sufficient working knowledge on SSR with important decision-making bodies in the United Nations, such as the Fifth Committee members (Lesson 11)
Organization	Consider a structure for improving coordination on system-wide SSR strategies and guidance to missions, including IOTs, GFP and IASSRTF, the "Friends of SSR", United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international partners, International Financial Institutions, etc. (Lesson 9, Lesson 10))
	Introduce the deployment of senior SSR advisors to serve USGs DPO and DPPA, SRSGs and IOTs (Lesson 12)

Framework	Action
	GFP should provide guidance to missions on integrated planning processes that bridge the mission, the UNCT and the PBF, to help shape the country-specific funding model for peacebuilding tasks, benefitting much more from the global GFP trust fund modality (Lesson 13)
	Noting the related challenges, the United Nations Security Council and Secretariat should pay due consideration to affordability of mandates to increase the impact that missions may have (Lesson 13)
Implementation	In gender monitoring and learning, provide guidance for undertaking barrier assessments (Lesson 2)
	United Nations (global) approaches and challenges to national ownership must be reconsidered to better nurture the procedural capabilities that can result in meaningful national ownership of SSR (Lesson 14)
	The United Nations Security Council and Secretariat may consider that a host country's diplomatic agreement to ownership does not constitute broad or local ownership – enhancing national ownership by engaging national authorities more systematically during mandate discussions is essential (Lesson 14)
	IASSRTF and GFP should seek more formalized arrangements with the World Bank for the conduct of Public Expenditure Reviews, including developing the United Nations' capacity to support World Bank experts in conducting these reviews, potentially as experts in the SSR Standby Capacity (Lesson 15)
	The Security Council may consider greater attention to public financial management as essential to maintain political momentum in settings with weak institutions. Support better integration, affordability and sustained solutions. by promoting closer partnerships with the World Bank and International Financial Institutions at all levels (Lesson 15)
	The Security Council may consider the introduction of Public Expenditure Reviews in mandates and linking financial support to specific benchmarks in a mutual commitment-type agreement with the host country (Lesson 15)
	UNHQ should consider co-locating specifically recruited and knowledgeable UNPOL and Military Advisors with SSRU to promote stronger integration (Lesson 17)
	OROLSI should consider redesign of SSRU to include components for policy, implementation and learning, while strengthening the SSR Standing Capacity, or introducing a rapidly deployable expert roster. Make use of the fact thatUNSSC is ready to support the development of online training to upskill new staff (Lesson 17)
	SSR staff profiles across the organization should require sufficient operational experience while also demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the political and strategic dimensions of the SSR. Co-location with police and military colleagues is to be encouraged although staff mobility should not be at the cost of expertise (Lesson 17)

Framework	Action
	Facilitate a more permanent improvement of collective expertise on SSR through the establishment of a process for identification and learning of lessons on SSR. Equip the IASSRTF and GFP with the materials provided by such a process and connected to the data strategy for SSR. To this end, SSRU and GFP could organize more regular engagements with mission staff to develop a better understanding of the mission realities, an important step in closing the policy–practice gap and empowering SSRU (or IASSRTF or GFP) to become the back-office capacity called for in the 2007 Policy Committee decisions (Lesson 17)
Learning and adjustment	Formalize guidance and provide expert capacity for comprehensive analyses on the local context before engaging in strategic planning, preferably during the initial review stages before mandate construction (Lesson 18)
	Formally address the near absence of MEAL across many peace operations in order to demonstrate progress and impact and to support strategic decision-making. GFP and the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division could consider such system-wide guidance and relevant data strategy, including the use of independent surveys among the local population (Lesson 19)
	The Security Council may consider higher levels of accountability from host governments on progress with SSR by not relying on United Nations reporting. An alternative may be independent assessments of benchmark achievement by both host and missions (Lesson 19)

Annex 2: Supporting note on practical areas to consider in United Nations support to defence sector reform

Defence sector reform has come to dominate the conception of security sector reform in parts of the United Nations. In a number of missions, it is poorly connected to other dimensions of SSR as a result, which risks stovepiped approaches. It often features a heavy emphasis on the military as well. Within these parameters, DSR tends to be reduced to "train and equip" (see also lesson 6), not least because it suits the limited willingness of host countries to engage in real reform and satisfies the short-term security interests of bilateral actors.

However, DSR is a broader and more complex area than the tactical performance of the armed forces. This is set out correctly in the DPO policy on DSR, but United Nations mission practice does not consistently reflect some of its key parameters. The practices of many bilateral partners are far worse than those of United Nations missions. In brief, considering just a dimension of DSR (the military) through the narrow lens of operational capability improvement (train and equip) is likely to fail if broader DSR organizational, institutional and power aspects are not taken onboard. Table 3 provides a quick reference card to the true scope of DSR. It does not intend to argue that DSR interventions must address all its dimensions, but it does ask for consideration of the relevance of each dimension to a particular DSR problem. Mapping all these dimensions will contribute to equipping United Nations field missions to better advise host authorities and guide international stakeholders engaging in DSR.

With this in mind, greater use of "functional approaches" should be considered in DSR. This amounts to approaching DSR problems in three steps: (a) How is the problem defined locally? (b) How is the problem situated in the DSR area as a whole (see table 3) and to which dimensions does it relate? (c) What solutions reflect local operating conditions and can function in the broader DSR institutional configuration at hand? The imposition of external models, however well they work in their original context, usually leads to poor results.

Beyond the issues of the scope of DSR and approaches to DSR problems, our review also suggests that the planning of external interventions in the defence sector tends to be poor, even when such interventions are grounded in a broad understanding of DSR and apply a functional approach. In consequence, DSR planning practices require upgrading. The following questions provide a simple initial template for doing so:

- What is the expected impact and end-state of the intervention? For a portfolio of interventions, are they coherent with one another and do they contribute to an overarching objective?
- For each intervention, what are the timeline, key milestones and potential benchmarks? How are different timelines synchronized in case of a portfolio of interventions?
- What are the main activities and sub-activities supporting each intervention? That is, how will it be practically executed?
- What are the resources to support each (sub-)activity?

Table 3: A quick-reference card on the scope of DSR

Category	Focus area

Interaction and coordination mechanisms (at <u>State</u> level)	**Ministry of Defence and interactions with other States entities:**
	 • <u>Head of Government:</u>
	     o What is the purpose of the defence in the national context: defence of the State, the people and the territory?
	     o What is the role of the Head of Government and the relationships with Ministry of Defence?
	 • <u>Ministries:</u>
	     o Finance:
	        ▪ Definition of available resources, authorized expenditures
	        ▪ Customs: delineation of responsibility
	     o Security:
	        ▪ Delineation of roles and responsibilities of police and gendarmerie
	     o Health:
	        ▪ Possible role of the military in support to public health care (pandemic management, mass vaccinations, provision of hospitals)
	        ▪ Possible role of the ministry in defining medical training and standards for military personnel
	     o Education:
	        ▪ Relationship between the military and the population – the necessity of civilian oversight of the military
	        ▪ Creating a defence spirit in the population built on a sense of citizenship and a good understanding of the necessary values and behaviours
	     o Industry/economy:
	        ▪ Defence industry
	     o Justice:
	        ▪ Structural relationship of military justice with the rest of the justice system
	
	 • <u>Legislative bodies:</u> Relationships between the Ministry of Defence and legislative bodies
	
	 Ministry of Defence and interaction with the population:
	 • Existence of interaction mechanisms
	
	 Ministry of Defence and interaction with international actors:
	 • Multilateral actors (Roles? Mapping of areas of intervention)
	 • Regional cooperation (Regional ministries of defence, cooperation mechanisms?)
	 • Bilateral cooperation with neighbours (bilateral agreements?)
	 • Bilateral intervention from outside the region (need for or status of defence agreements?)
	 • International Financial Institutions
	
	 Ministry of Defence and interactions with other defence and security actors:
	 • Existence of other actors (self-defence groups, mercenaries, etc.) dealing with defence?
	 • Relationships to formal security and defence apparatus?
	 • Legal foundation for these other actors to play a role in defence and security

Capstone documents	**Legal framework underpinning the defence sector:** Missions often support national actors to address problems with the legal foundations of a defence system. For a DSR programme, the critical legal aspects to be considered are: • Whether the defence sector is based on a Constitution or Defence Act • Whether the legal framework effectively supporting defence

	Strategy level:
	A Strategy should at least cover the following areas.
	• The purpose of defence: Threat assessment – SWOT analysis
	• Definition of national interests
	    o Vital Interests: population, territory, State
	    o Strategic Interests: critical points of strategic interest (mines, harbours, airports, necessary strategic roads, Etc.)
	• Posture (Defensive [a])

	Policy level:
	• Organization of defence as a "**State function**" (instead of the <u>military only</u>)
	• Mindset and values (accountability)
	• Defence (armed forces, populations, other entities)
	• Delineation of responsibilities with other security services (gendarmerie, police, others)
	• Delineation of responsibilities with other actors (self-defence groups, mercenaries, etc.)
	• Justice (military justice)
	• Education (citizenship, values)
	• Finance (budget cycle, authorized expenses, reporting)
	
	• Organization of Defence as an **"institution"**:
	    o Articulation of the level of authority (highest level of authority, minister of defence, other ministers, chief of defence staff or equivalent, regional commands)
	    o Role of these different levels – limits – accountability
	    o Organization of oversight and external control
	    o Role of the executive and legislative bodies (parliament)
	    o Office of inspector general (reporting to a civilian authority)
	    o Inspections (at military level, reporting to military authorities)

	Doctrinal level • Organization and use of the military in support of the defence function • Headquarters: roles and responsibilities – reporting • Units: types, roles and responsibilities – reporting – rules of engagement • Interaction/coordination/deconfliction with other actors (self-defence groups, mercenaries, etc.)
Organization (at ministry and armed forces levels)	• Command and control (Control involving the internal oversight) • Finance (definition of budget and organization of resource flows from HQ to unit level, resources, including salaries, control of expenses at unit level, reporting, accountability) of/to commanding officer • Human resources (garrison, expeditionary, both) • Procurement (how is the procurement organized? Definition of the needs?) • Organization of logistics support • Territorial (capital, rest of the country) • Organization of HQ, forces and units: coordination between the HQ, forces and units
Training	• Individual training – organization of training – Key training objectives • Certification of individual training. • Collective training – organization of training – certification of units
Equipment	• Definition of the needs • Procurement

	• Logistic support – maintenance • Management – allocation of equipment – responsibilities – reporting
Leadership	• Selection criteria (review of potential connections with political sphere) • Training • Values and behaviours
Personnel	• Value and behaviours • Recruitment (social origin, ethnic origin, gender) • Management (definition of the needs and management of the positions) • Training officers, NCOs, soldiers (initial, consolidation and high levels) • Career management (recruitment, promotion, punishment, retirement)
Working and personal conditions	• Working conditions (facilities, health support) • Personnel conditions (leadership must be aware of the conditions of those working in their units)
Interaction and coordination (at military level)	• At the military level: national and regional HQ connection – command and control of HQ and units • At unit level: the ability of units to work together

[a] It is very unlikely that the United Nations would support any other posture.

Annex 3: Funding modalities for SSR in peace operations

When considering resourcing of security sector reform tasks in mission contexts, it is quickly evident that mission funding is far too limited a lens to apply to the financial architecture that supports SSR. SSR is part of the funding of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and should be considered within this larger framework of investment in peacebuilding through the Peacebuilding Fund and partnerships with International Financial Institutions and other regional and national development actors. Against the backdrop of the reform of the peacebuilding architecture and the needs identified and the financing recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his 2018 review,[23] mission funding is clearly only a small piece of a larger puzzle.

But the puzzle pieces need to fit together so that SSR funding arrangements reinforce the principles governing the approach of the United Nations to SSR and to peacebuilding. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council have expressed their expectation for joint analysis and effective strategic planning across the system in its long-term engagement in peacebuilding. The General Assembly called for a common strategy for sustaining peace, and for more coordinated, coherent and integrated peacebuilding efforts, including among United Nations missions, United Nations Country Teams, and national, regional and international development actors.[24] Funding arrangements should therefore strive to overcome a history of fragmentation and competition in order to drive coherence. The long-term nature of the process, which goes beyond the life of most missions, necessitates financial arrangements that support post-mission transition. This objective demands action on the financial tools under the control of missions as well as those that enable a system-wide approach.

At the mission level

The resources to support tasks mandated to missions in SSR and closely related rule of law areas are: (a) the resources under the direct control of the mission, in particular the approved budgets but also mission-controlled trust funds (when they manage to attract support), and (b) other voluntary contributions aimed at similar objectives, which the mission may influence but which are not under its control. This may be the PBF or other mechanisms controlled by members of the UNCT or other donors, acting through their own programmes or a variety of financial instruments, such as multi-partner country-level trust funds and various forms of thematic or joint trust funds.

In implementing the findings of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, arrangements for financial support of SSR and closely related activities by peacekeeping mission budgets have improved over the last five years. Programmatic funding has emerged as a means to remedy the problem of missions deploying people with no access to programmatic resources to help deliver their mandates, while also enhancing accountability for results. But the usefulness of programmatic funding as a tool for missions to support their mandates needs to be improved so that its relatively minor role in the overall financial architecture can be effective.

Drawing on information in the Secretary-General's reports on the overview of peacekeeping operations in the last three years, we can see that programmatic funding represents about 3 per cent

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[23] A/72/707–S/2018/43.

[24] A/RES/72/262, operative para. 14.

of peacekeeping budgets, which is mostly for mine action. The portion devoted to rule of law, human rights and SSR is about 0.2 per cent of peacekeeping budgets.[25]

Yet the Secretary-General has argued that programmatic activities provide a tool to more effectively pursue political progress and mandate delivery through the implementation of specific time-bound interventions; incubate longer-term processes; offer value in carrying out stabilization mandates. Perhaps most importantly, they are instrumental in facilitating sustainable transitions from peacekeeping to development-oriented engagement, preventing gaps in mandate delivery and safeguarding gains in peace consolidation as missions draw down. At mission level, experiences are mixed: staff cite increased flexibility against increased project-management burdens for which missions are not appropriately staffed, as well as short timelines in mission contexts.

This mission budget programmatic funding enhances the agility of the mission, enables timely support to host governments, and facilitates cooperation with and transition to other partners. It has the secondary attribute of sharing the financing burden of supporting peacebuilding beyond the narrow set of countries that contribute the lion's share of voluntary peacebuilding contributions.

Many interlocutors spoke of self-censorship in the formulation of budget proposals. Thus, one key measure to support SSR and related functions in the budget process is for SRSGs to make full use of their authority to request what they require for SSR and related peacebuilding tasks, including programmatic resources. This would be in the spirit of the new management paradigm proposed in September 2017, centred on the direct delegation of authorities to heads of mission.[26] SRSGs are thus in a better position to propose what they think they need; yet, for that to happen, senior mission leaders or Chiefs of Staff need to work with SSR and other substantive and police components to ensure that programmatic needs based on the mandate are integrated into proposed budgets. This includes an understanding of the longer-term perspective required, in contrast to current guidance, which is focused on short- and medium-term projects.

There is no reason why special political missions should not be treated in the same way as peacekeeping operations with respect to programmatic funding. There is no evident legislative basis for excluding special political missions from such resources, which should be proposed where merited by the mandate. If it is mandated with SSR tasks, the mission should be able to request programmatic funding. It may not in fact need to do so, but the point is that the cultural practice of special political missions appearing ineligible for programmatic funding should be overcome.

Articulation with other funding actors

An integrated planning process that bridges the mission, the UNCT and, where it operates, the PBF could help shape the country-specific funding model for peacebuilding tasks. But in any event, inter-agency pooled funds offer pathways for driving coherence by assembling multiple actors and establishing transparent and inclusive governance arrangements, as well as professional management and oversight.

The PBF is perhaps the premier pooled fund in the peacebuilding space. Its performance in increasing contributions, sustaining its level of new approvals, responding to transitional contexts and advancing

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[25] A/73/776, annex IX; A/74/736, annex VIII; A/75/786, annex VIII.
[26] A/72/492.

investment in gender-responsive peacebuilding is impressive. The latter represented 40 per cent of investments in 2020, according to the annual report. Missions have a strong voice through the DSRSG/RC, both in the initial proposal for PBF presence and in governance. But only a small share of PBF resources goes to the rule of law/security sector reform cluster – about 16 per cent. The PBF considers SSR a costly activity for which other sources of funding are available. The PBF established a window for support of transition settings, to help address the financing cliff after a mission leaves and the deepening of its evaluative work is also valuable. Yet even as it increases its resources, the PBF is still designed to be a catalytic actor, without long-term engagement. Additional funding vehicles are required.

Pooled funds have proved attractive for sharing risk by uniting the resources of multiple donors and the capacities of multiple implementing partners. They can help ensure complementarity instead of competition among funding mechanisms for peacebuilding, which in turn is a critical aspect of strategic and integrated action. It will be recalled that in the dialogue leading to the Funding Compact, pooled funding was featured as a vehicle for diminishing the excessive earmarking that had come to mar the financing landscape.

The use of pooled funding mechanisms, such as multi-partner trust funds, merits active consideration because they can strengthen system-wide coherence, reduce fragmentation, exert financial leverage, display agility in responding to emerging needs and enhance accountability at high levels of mission leadership. Overall design can allow for a consolidated financing framework across pillars, with a specific window to fund coherent attention to peacebuilding tasks. The South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund, the Sudan Financing Platform, and the Somalia Multi-Window Trust Fund have shown promise.

Yet pooled funds undoubtedly give rise to challenges, such as trade-offs between speed and inclusivity, and diverging views on risk and national ownership. But with the mounting experience and expertise in the United Nations system in the design and management of financial instrument to help make these trade-offs, pooled funding should be seen as a key feature of the toolkit that draws actors and interests together around common objectives and strategies.

Mission trust funds

For 2020, the United Nations financial statements indicate 23 trust funds established in support of peacekeeping operations, with a total financial balance of about $179 million at the start of the year. But half that total was for the Department of Peace Operations plus a small sum for another centrally managed activity; so, for the mission level, there were 22 trust funds with total balance of $88.3 million. Eight were inactive but the paperwork to close them had not been submitted or completed. Some are issue specific, but others are more broadly aimed at supporting peace processes or the work of specific missions and most appear to be poorly funded. As a general proposition, it is suggested that the decision-making process for the establishment of such funds actively considers the merit of working through more consolidated instruments, such as pooled funds.

Gender dimension

Security Council resolution 1325 laid a foundation for the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in peace and security, including a seven-point action plan for gender-responsive peacebuilding laid out by the Secretary-General in 2010. The plan included a commitment in partnership with Member States for 15 per cent of United Nations-managed funds in support of peacebuilding to be dedicated to

projects that address women's specific needs, advance gender equality and empower women as a principal objective. The PBF reports 40 per cent of its projects reaching this general objective, yet it is unclear how much of this funding is focused on gender-responsive SSR.

Recommendations

1. The Secretary-General, in the context of missions that have SSR mandates, should consider putting in place early in the life of a mission financial tools – such as pooled funds – that would facilitate an integrated and coherent approach to programming and resource mobilization and management between the mission, the UNCT, and other bilateral and multilateral actors.

2. With respect to the financial role of missions, SRSGs should make full use of their authority to formulate proposed budgets to request the programmatic and other resources required for the support of SSR and related peacebuilding tasks. The USG of DPO should consider sending a code cable to encourage SRSGs to do so.

3. The USG of DPO, in consultation as required with counterparts in the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, should review and update the 2017 DPKO–DFS guidelines on programmatic funding both to bring them more in line with the role for programmatic funding envisioned by the Secretary-General and to reflect more recent General Assembly decisions about longer-term programming.

4. The USG of DPO, working with SRSGs, should support periodic independent assessment of the effectiveness of mission's programmatic activities in SSR and related fields.

5. Special political missions should be placed on the same footing as peacekeeping operations with respect to access to programmatic funding and the USG of DPPA should provide guidance to mission leadership accordingly.

6. The USGs of DPO and DPPA, in consultation with the United Nations Controller, should review the experience with using mission-specific trust funds to finance SSR and other peacebuilding activities in order to learn lessons on the attributes of successful trust funds and to formulate guidance on when to consider participating in consolidated funding mechanisms instead.

Suggestions for mission-level resourcing

- In monitoring the exercise of the delegation of authority (in line with section 6 of ST/SGB/2019/2), the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance could usefully consider assessing the leadership and support offered to substantive units for budget formulation.

- Multi-year projects could be envisaged that would be subject to annual budget approval. The General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that missions prepare implementation plans for medium-to-long-term projects despite annual deadlines.

- The requisite capacity could be provided for direct implementation by missions in formulating job descriptions and establishing a roster for project or programme management personnel.

- Periodic independent assessments of the effectiveness of programmatic interventions could be carried out to sustain credibility.

Annex 4: Methodological note

The purpose of the review was to identify lessons from security sector reform in mission contexts that could form the basis of actionable recommendations for how the United Nations should engage in support of SSR in the near-to-medium-term future. The review focused on a survey of evidence from United Nations mission practices (political missions as well as peacekeeping missions) to identify lessons identified from United Nations mission experiences supporting SSR in the field, especially since 2014.

The policy context for the review was provided by the following documents, which trace the evolution of SSR in the United Nations between 2007 and 2020:

1. Securing peace and development: the role of the United Nations in supporting security sector reform, A/62/659–S/2008/39 of 23 January 2008
2. Securing States and societies: strengthening the United Nations comprehensive support to security sector reform, A/67/970–S/2013/480 of 13 August 2013
3. United Nations Security Council resolution 2151 (2014), S/RES/2151 (2014) of 28 April 2014
4. United Nations Security Council resolution 2553 (2020), S/RES/2553 (2020) of 3 December 2020
5. Secretary General's Policy Committee Decisions on SSR of 16 February 2007 (2007/11) and of 24 January 2011 (2011/1)

In line with the United Nations DPKO–DFS policy on defence sector reform of 2011, DSR was to be considered as an integral element of SSR throughout the review and given appropriate attention in the broader conceptual constellation of SSR elements throughout the review.[27] Furthermore, the review's analysis and recommendation were set within existing agenda-setting frameworks, primarily the Sustainable Development Goals, the Women Peace and Security Agenda, and Pathways for Peace, and also drew on the emergent logic of United Nations–World Bank collaboration.

An analytical framework for the research was developed based on the logic of the intervention cycle for United Nations Security Council-authorized political and peacekeeping missions that implement SSR as part of their mandates (see table 4). This integrated analytical focus on "strategy–organization–implementation" of SSR-type programming allowed the review to consider diplomatic interventions related to SSR and SSR-linked force deployments and interventions in issue areas adjacent to SSR that aim to contribute to its success, such as governance- and rule of law-oriented interventions.

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[27] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "Policy: Defence Sector Reform", Ref. 2011.17, 27 June 2011,
https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/un_defence_sector_reform_policy_2011.pdf.

Table 4: Analytical framework for the review of United Nations support to SSR

Area	Description	Key issues	Focus
(1) Mandate gestation	The drivers, logic and coherence of the relevant SSR provisions in a Security Council mandate set the broad strategic parameters for implementation	• Political objective(s) of the mandate • Political compromises inherent in the mandate • Resourcing of the mandate • Conflict/context-awareness of the mandate • Early consideration of an exit strategy	Security Council, UNHQ and regional bodies
(2) Strategic operationalization (mission concept and plans)	The definition of the current v. desired end-state of SSR, resources to be mobilized and environment to be navigated will influence the level of correspondence between mandate objectives, mission capabilities and environmental requirements	• Clarity of leadership and role among various United Nations entities involved • Quality of strategy process • Quality of strategic analysis and thinking skills • Familiarity with UNHQ dynamics • Familiarity with conflict/SSR context	Mission leadership
(3) Organization	The manner in which the strategy for mandate implementation is organized determines the scope and possible methods for SSR intervention in a given environment	• Structure and authorities of the relevant mission elements tasked with SSR • Unity of effort • Human, financial and political/diplomatic resources	Relevant mission units
(4) Implementation practices	Implementation skills and modalities directly influence SSR practices and results within the broader strategic and organizational parameters,	• Staff profiles, expertise, languages and soft skills • Administrative and financial procedures • Mobility and staff security	Relevant mission units
(5) Adjustment and learning	The ability to understand how implementation efforts are faring and what performance improvements at implementation, organizational, strategic or mandate levels turn out to be necessary determine the mission's ability to upgrade efforts	• Quality of performance monitoring and progress reporting • Leadership focus and intervention • Quality of "inconvenient-truths-challenge" processes • Mission culture • Definition of success (and changes therein) in relation to monitoring performance	Mission leadership and Security Council

On the basis of the broad analytical template, the team identified core research questions, which were subsequently pursued through a combination of desk research, consultations and interviews. While the data collection was divided into four phases, the short timeline provided for overlap in their implementation. In total 131 interviews were conducted as well as 3 consultative focus groups.

Phase 1: Desk review, August–September 2021

In order to gain sufficient understanding of the context and precedents that shape current approaches to SSR with regard to the analytical framework, the Independent Review Team conducted an extensive documentary analysis. The analysis drew on a repository of general and mission-specific documents pertinent to the policy, planning and implementation of SSR in peace operations in United Nations contexts, as well as wider publicly available resources. SSRU was instrumental in ensuring access to necessary documentation. The documentary analysis supported the development of a synopsis of lessons from United Nations engagement on SSR since 2014 that covered both overarching issues across missions as well as the specific missions identified as possible candidates for deeper analysis.

Phase 2: Headquarters and mission leadership interviews, September–October 2021

On the basis of the desk review and the advice from SSRU, a list of interview respondents was drawn up encompassing a range of major stakeholders at United Nations Headquarters level both within and beyond DPO and DPPA; mission leadership and the chiefs of SSR units in field missions in almost all peace operations currently implementing an SSR mandate; and officials of a range of United Nations Member States and multilateral partner institutions. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted based on a strategic set of cross-cutting questions developed based on the desk review and adapted for each respondent. In total, 82 headquarters and leadership interviews were conducted (see annex 5).

Phase 3: Mission-specific deep-dives, October–November 2021

On the basis of the desk review and initial results from the interview stage, three mission contexts were selected for closer study: Mali, Libya and the Central Africa Republic. A more detailed review of the evolution of United Nations support to SSR in these cases relied on documentary analysis and interviews with a wider range of stakeholders. Deep-dive interviews used a semi-structured approach and targeted key actors involved in SSR support in each context:

(a) SSR-relevant staff within missions, including senior leadership, SSR leadership, stakeholders working in related areas such as gender or DDR, as well as staff stationed in the field and capitals

(b) United Nations staff supporting SSR in-country beyond the mission, including, for example, in UNDP and UN Women

(c) Key bilateral and multilateral stakeholders engaged in SSR in each case, for example, World Bank representatives and European Union Training Missions, where relevant

(d) Host government representatives and wider national stakeholders, as relevant and feasible

(e) Mission-specific staff working at UNHQ, including IOT desk officers and SSRU staff assigned to each of the three cases

Thirteen interviews were completed for Libya and 18 each for Mali and the Central African Republic.

Phase 4: Focus groups and wider stakeholder consultations, October–November 2021

In order to gain further insight into the political and operational dynamics of United Nations support to SSR, focus group sessions with selected UNHQ entities and staff were held to discuss preliminary findings, including meetings with SSRU in New York, IASSRTF and the Group of Friends of SSR. A one-week visit to New York by the Team Leader provided for in-person briefings and further one-on-one semi-structured qualitative interviews with representatives of the five permanent members of the

Security Council, top troop-contributing countries and Security Council members particularly active in the SSR area.

Limitations

The principles limitations faced at the data-gathering stage were (a) short timelines for scheduling and completing interviews, (b) travel restrictions related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and (c) the inability or unwillingness of some interview respondents to engage with the review process. The latter limitation was particularly problematic in phase 3 of the data collection, where engaging SSR stakeholders beyond the missions presented significant difficulties.

Annex 5: List of interview respondents

	Name	Position /Organization
1.	A. Heather Coyne	Senior SSR Officer, Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
2.	Abdel-Fatau Musah	Director of West Africa Division, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
3.	Abderrahim Fraiji	Project Manager, World Bank, Central African Republic
4.	Adedeji Ebo	Former Chief of SSR Unit, MONUSCO
5.	Adnan Mithani	United States Liaison Embassy Office
6.	Ahmed Ghanem-Ali	Director of Justice and Corrections, MINUSMA
7.	Alejandro Arturo	Military Planning Service, Office of Military Affairs
8.	Alexander Walsh	SSR Officer, International Security Sector Advisory Team, DCAF
9.	Alexandra Shoeri	Political Affairs Officer, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
10.	Alexandre Olmedo	West Africa (Mali, G5/Sahel, Boko Haram, Guinea Bissau, UNOWAS), Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations
11.	Alexandre Zouev	Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peace Operations
12.	Amadu Shour	Deputy Director of Human Rights Division, MINUSCA
13.	Ameena Al-Rasheed	Senior Gender Advisor, UNSMIL
14.	Amy Martin	Head of Office – Bamako, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
15.	Anicia Lala	Head of Advisory Field Support, International Security Sector Advisory Team, DCAF
16.	Ankush Goyal	Military Planning Service, Office of Military Affairs at Integrated Operational Team, South Sudan
17.	Ann-Marie Orler	United Nations Police Adviser, Department of Peace Operations
18.	Antje Kraft	Senior Representative of United Nations Development Programme, Central African Republic
19.	Anton Antchev	Director of Mission Support, MINUSMA
20.	Armand Tchi	Civil Affairs Division, MINUSMA
21.	Atul Khare	Under-Secretary-General, Department of Operational Support
22.	Ayaka Suzuki	Director of the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
23.	Benjamin Hubin	South Sudan, Sudan and East Africa Specialist, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations
24.	Bertrand Njanja Fassu	Chief of Political Affairs, MINUSMA
25.	Bettina Patricia Boughani	Police Commissioner, MINUSMA
26.	Bibi-Masumeh Eng	Head of Political Affairs, MINUSCA
27.	Bintou Keita	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MONUSCO
28.	Birame Diop	United Nations Military Adviser, Head of Office of Military Affairs, Department of Peace Operations
29.	Brice De Schietere and team	Head of Division at the European External Action Service, European Union
30.	Bruno Mpondo-Epo	Director of Political Affairs, MINUSMA
31.	Bruno Ouayolo	Senior SSR Advisor, Central African Republic
32.	Calin Trenkov-Wermouth	Security Governance Advisor, United States Institute of Peace
33.	Carlos M. Peralta	United Nations Police, Department of Peace Operations

34.	Carole Baudoin	Head of SSR Unit, MINUSCA
35.	Carolyn Strainic	Foreign Affairs Officer at the United States Department of State
36.	Catherine Renee Andela	Chief of Gender Unit, MINUSMA
37.	Caty Clement	Associate Fellow, Geneva Centre For Security Policy
38.	Charlotte Thyra Lunde	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
39.	Cheng Gong	Office of the Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations
40.	Cheryl D'Andrea	Security Institutions Service Gender Focal Point, UNSMIL
41.	Christina Serena Rosati	Senior SSR Officer, UNMISS
42.	Christophe Kabango Bizimungu	Police Commissioner, MINUSCA
43.	Christophe Pradier	SSR Officer, SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
44.	Christopher Suna Kayoshe	SSR/DDR Division, African Union Commission, African Union
45.	Claudia Banz	Chief of Staff, MINUSMA
46.	Damien Hendrickx	European External Action Service (EEAS/SEAE), European Union
47.	Daniel Prins	Chief of SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
48.	David McLachlan-Karr	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, MONUSCO
49.	Diler Erdengiz	Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
50.	Dmitry Titov	Founding Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations
51.	Donatella Giubilaro	Principal Political Affairs Officer, Integrated Operational Team, South Sudan
52.	Elsa Dazin	Head of Outreach and Knowledge, International Security Sector Advisory Team, DCAF
53.	Emily Kenney	Policy Specialist, Transitional Justice, UN Women
54.	Emmanuel Fanta	Chief of Strategic Planning Unit, MINUSCA
55.	Eric Lajouanie	Chief of Military Planning Service, Office of Military Affairs
56.	Filippo Di-Carpegna	Rule of Law Senior Advisor, United Nations Development Programme Mali
57.	Francesca Fraccaroli	Chief of Protection of Civilians, MINUSMA
58.	Francisco Osler De Almeida	Head of Office – Menaka, MINUSMA
59.	Frederic Mollard	Police and Homeland Security Adviser, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations
60.	Garima Bhatnagar	Chief of Mission Management and Support, United Nations Police, Department of Peace Operations
61.	Georgette Gagno	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator, Libya
62.	Germana Dalberto	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
63.	Ginevra Cucinotta	Learning Portfolio Manager, UNSSC
64.	Glady Atinga	Senior Representative of UN Women, MINUSCA
65.	Gloria Rusun	Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations
66.	Graham Maitland	Director of Integrated Operational Team, East Africa
67.	Guang Cong	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Political), UNMISS

68.	Han Fraeters	Country Manager, World Bank, Central African Republic
69.	Hawaa El-Tayeb	Policy and Doctrine, Office of Military Affairs
70.	Helen Olafsdottir	Team Leader/Technical Specialist, United Nations Security Sector Governance Programme for Somalia, United Nations Development Programme
71.	Helen Seese	SSR Advisor, International Security Sector Advisory Team, DCAF
72.	Henk-Jan Brinkman;	Chief of Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships, Peacebuilding Support Office, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
73.	Houssem Eddine Ishak	Technical Specialist Security Sector Reform, United Nations Development Programme, Central African Republic
74.	Hugh Van Roosen	Former Deputy Military Advisor, Office of Military Affairs
75.	Ildiko Bubor	Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations
76.	Ilene Cohn	Deputy Director and Officer-in-Charge of UNMAS, Department of Peace Operations
77.	Jacqueline Sneck	Director of Integrated Operational Team North Africa
78.	Jalal Harchaoui	Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime
79.	Jared Rigg	Deputy Chief of SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
80.	Jari Jussi Pellervo Vuorela	Military Planning Service, Office of Military Affairs
81.	Jean Alexander Charar	Political Affairs Officer, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
82.	Jean Pierre Lacroix	Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Department of Peace Operations
83.	Jeff Sims	Strategic Security Adviser, UNSOM
84.	Jocelyn Nahimana	SSR/DDR Division, African Union Commission, African Union
85.	Jonathan Marley	Policy Analyst, Crisis and Fragility, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
86.	Jordan Ryan	Senior Counsel, Hamilton Advisors Inc
87.	Juanita Millan Hernandez	Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisors – Security Arrangements, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
88.	Julia Goehsing-Mellinghoff	Rule of Law Officer, United Nations Police, Department of Peace Operations
89.	Jun Tan	Deputy United Nations Police Adviser, Department of Peace Operations
90.	Karin Grimm	Policy Specialist, UN Women Mali
91.	Katy Thompson	Head of Rule of Law, Security and Human Rights, United Nations Development Programme
92.	Khalil JK Alwazir	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
93.	Khetase Yiwombe	United Nations Police Analyst (Police Liaison Officer), Integrated Operational Team, South Sudan
94.	Kulmiyeh Mohamed	Division Team Leader, Africa (Sudan, East)
95.	Lance Malin	Programme Manager, UNMAS Libya
96.	Liani Kennealy	Military Liaison Officer, Women Peace and Security Team, UN Women
97.	Lippy Chowdhury	Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
98.	Lizbeth Cullity	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Deputy Head of MINUSCA
99.	Luis Carrilho	United Nations Police Advisor, Department of Peace Operations
100.	Makram Malaeb	Political Affairs, UNSMIL

101.	Mankeur Ndiaye	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, MINUSCA
102.	Marcus Lenzen	Senior Adviser and Deputy Chief of the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
103.	Maria Begona	Country Representative, UN Women Libya
104.	Mathu Joyini	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Co-Chair, Group of Friends of SSR, New York
105.	Matthew Brubacher	Political Affairs, UNSMIL
106.	Maureen O'Brien	Deputy Military Advisor, Office of Military Affairs
107.	Maurizio Galata	Head of Joint Analysis and Reporting Section, UNSMIL
108.	Michal Mlynár	Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations, Co-Chair, Group of Friends of SSR, New York
109.	Mody Berethe	Police Commissioner, MONUSCO
110.	Mohamed Souef	Head of Office – Gao, MINUSMA
111.	Mpako Hortence Foaleng	Chief of Security Sector Reform Standing Capacity, Department of Peace Operations
112.	Nannette Ahmed	Integrated Operational Team Desk Officer, Central African Republic
113.	Niagalé Bagayoko	Chair, African Security Sector Network
114.	Nicholas Haysom	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS
115.	Niklitschek Maurin	Military Planning Service, Office of Military Affairs
116.	Oana-Raluca Topala	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
117.	Obianuju Nwobi	Chief of SSR Unit, MONUSCO
118.	Paolo Pereira	Deputy Force Commander, MINUSCA
119.	Patrick Geoffrey	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations
120.	Paulo Soares	Head of Mission, European Union Advisory Mission, Central African Republic
121.	Philip Helminger	Desk Officer, Integrated Operational Team, Libya
122.	Raffaele Ascione	European External Action Service, Libya, European Union
123.	Raisedon Zenenga	Assistant Secretary-General and Mission Coordinator of UNSMIL
124.	Riccardo Maia	Head of Office – Tombouctou, MINUSMA
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126.	Robert Walker	Economic Advisory Unit, UNSMIL
127.	Rory Keane	Head of Office, UNLOPS
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132.	Samba Tall	Head of SSR–DDR Unit, MINUSMA
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135.	Silvio Gonzato	Ambassador, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations
136.	Snezana Vuksa Coffman	SSR Unit, Department of Peace Operations

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