

Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform

Review of Spending on Security Sector Reform
through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool –
Key messages and recommendations

May 2008

About this study

Security sector reform (SSR) is a key area of work for the UK government, and the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) has been a major UK vehicle for supporting SSR. The decision to reorganise UK conflict prevention funding starting in April 2008 has offered an opportunity to assess lessons learned from implementing SSR activities through GCPP in order to provide a sound basis going forward.

This review examined the GCPP's decision-making process on SSR, as well as the coherence, effectiveness and impact of GCPP funded SSR activities. While the review identifies several strengths of HMG's SSR work such as applying a strategic approach to SSR programming, promoting joined-up approaches, influencing partner governments and other members of the international community and seeking to co-ordinate international SSR efforts, it also identifies opportunities to further strengthen the UK's investments in SSR.

This review has been authored by Nicole Ball, Center for International Policy, and Luc van de Goor, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael. It has been commissioned through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and published by PricewaterhouseCoopers as part of its work for the UK government on governance, justice and peace-building in conflict-affected areas.

Key messages and recommendations

1. Along with the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP), the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) has been one of the UK's main vehicles for supporting security sector reform (SSR). This review was undertaken as Her Majesty's Government (HMG) decided to merge the two pools into the Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP) and create a new Stabilisation Aid Fund (SAF) for 'hot stabilisation' countries. It has afforded the opportunity to assess lessons learned from implementing SSR activities through GCPP in order to provide a sound basis going forward.
2. This review confirms HMG's role as the 'market leader' in SSR. The UK plays an important role in applying a strategic approach to SSR programming, promoting joined-up approaches, influencing partner governments and other members of the international community and seeking to co-ordinate international SSR efforts.
3. This review identifies eight areas that could benefit from additional attention in order to maximise the strategic and sustainable use of CPP resources. Many of these areas have already been identified as high priority by GCPP and the following recommendations are intended to further strengthen CPP practices.

1. Policy foundations

4. There appears to be an increasingly shared view of what constitutes SSR across the three CPP departments. Nonetheless, the UK lacks one of the key elements of conflict sensitive SSR interventions: a formal policy explaining HMG's definition of SSR and its objectives in promoting SSR. From a CPP perspective it is important to consider how SSR can address the underlying causes of conflict. Given this growing alignment of departmental views, the environment might be favourable for the development of an HMG SSR policy.

Recommendation 1: That HMG develops as a matter of priority an SSR policy that recognises the multi-faceted nature of SSR, i.e. promoting security and justice broadly, strengthening governance, and preventing conflict.

2. Clarifying the role of CPP

5. GCPP's value-added has not always been well defined or transmitted to the individuals making funding decisions. GCPP SSR funding has often been used without adequate consideration of its contribution to conflict prevention. The availability of funding appears to have been the driving force rather than a strategic decision on how to use funds most effectively and with the greatest impact. Some GCPP activities appear to have been chosen to support stabilisation activities that were not necessarily sustainable or accountability oriented. In addition, many SSR activities funded through GCPP have been relatively small, limited in duration, and geographically dispersed. While this might raise the profile of SSR more widely, it is likely to have implications for overall effectiveness and impact.
6. Going forward, expectations of what can be delivered through Public Service Agreement (PSA) 30 and CPP may be at odds with reality given the level of CPP funding and the new requirements for Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility (see paragraphs 15 below and paragraphs 66-68 in the main report). Furthermore, while new options for three-year programming are welcome, experience shows that most SSR programming requires an even longer time frame.

Recommendation 2: That HMG clarifies whether CPP should address longer-term needs or be used as seed money to jump start longer-term SSR activities:

- If CPP funding is used as seed money, it will be important to consider the options for longer-term funding for the SSR projects started by CPP and the agreements necessary between CPP and other HMG or international funding mechanisms before commencing programming; and
- If CPP funding is used for longer-term SSR activities, it will be important to ensure that it does not duplicate work carried out by individual departments, by international partners, or with other funding streams and that adequate funding is available over the longer-term.

3. Strengthening the Security and Small Arms Control (SSAC) programme

7. In the past, GCPP's SSR strategy did not fully meet the needs of HMG officials in country in providing guidance on how to engage in SSR or adequate additional resources to develop and implement SSR activities. As a result, there are unnecessary and counterproductive differences in how country teams respond to SSR needs. To mitigate these problems the SSAC programme should provide value-added over and above the activities that it funds.

Recommendation 3: That in developing the new SSAC programme, CPP consider how best to maximise operational support. In particular, CPP may wish to consider how the SSAC can promote:

- Formal SSR policy development to help guide CPP SSR programming;
- A deeper understanding across HMG of the value and objectives of engaging in SSR in the short, medium and longer term, with special attention to senior officials, and greater clarity on the contribution SSR can make to improved governance, economic and social development and conflict prevention; and
- Greater geographical focus and longer-term engagement, to enable the Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT) to deepen their knowledge of context in order to improve effectiveness and impact of CPP investments, without limiting the flexibility to engage as short term needs arise.

4. Joined-up SSR programming HMG-wide strategies

8. The importance of a joined-up approach to maximising the effective, coherent and sustainable use of GCPP resources is increasingly well understood. HMG-wide strategies that guide all HMG activity (Afghanistan) or all joint HMG activities (Nepal) constitute significant steps in the direction of enhancing the complementarity of the various conflict prevention mechanisms at the disposal of HMG.

Recommendation 4: That HMG draws on GCPP experience to develop HMG-wide strategies to guide all activities in priority CPP countries.

SSR strategies

9. To assess how SSR can promote conflict prevention in a specific country or region, it is important to understand the full range of entry points for engaging in SSR (conflict prevention, broader aspects of justice and security, and democratic governance). This in turn requires:
 - Developing an adequate, joined-up understanding of the security and justice environment, including the drivers of conflict
 - Agreeing a strategy for addressing priority needs
 - Demonstrating concrete progress over the short and medium term
 - Obtaining input from all departments.

Recommendation 5: That where SSR is a priority in the HMG-wide strategies, focused SSR strategies should be developed to clarify the role SSR plays in conflict prevention and the value-added of different departments in implementing SSR.

Evidence-based programming

10. Programming often has to begin before the security and justice environment can be reviewed in detail or an in-depth strategic approach can be developed. In these cases, it is essential to consider all readily available information at the outset and to progressively increase access to the information needed for strategy development and longer-term programming. UK officials currently collect information on each country context, but the methods used often do not produce adequate information to underpin effective and sustainable SSR programming.

Recommendation 6: That CPP takes the necessary steps to develop an adequate appreciation of the security and justice environment to guide the development of an SSR strategy, including scoping studies, combining ongoing project work with informal assessments, and using inception phases to gather information, in addition to full assessments of the security and justice environment.

Monitoring, evaluation and risk management

11. Monitoring and evaluation is an area of weakness for HMG, especially with regard to SSR work and risk management. As CPP supports more multi-year programmes, the importance of monitoring and evaluation will increase. GCPP has taken steps to improve risk management, with Middle East / North Africa leading in terms of practice. One tool that has been underutilised by both GCPP and ACPP is scenario development. Building scenarios can provide options for next steps when projects succeed or run the risk of failure.

Recommendation 7: That CPP strengthens monitoring, evaluation and risk management procedures for multi-year programmes, with a view to issuing specific guidance for CPP regional programmes.

5. Reconciling long-term objectives and the need to demonstrate results

12. UK country teams face the twin challenges of supporting SSR activities designed to provide sustainable changes in the delivery of security and justice and demonstrating concrete progress in the short term. The highly political nature of SSR and its foundation in institutional reform and transformation means that outcomes will be achieved over a period of years. Nonetheless, there are many concrete steps that will need to be taken to achieve desired outcomes that can and should be highlighted.

Recommendation 8: That where focused SSR strategies are produced, in addition to specifying the medium to longer-term outcomes, these strategies should:

- More clearly identify specific outputs that will contribute to achievement of outcomes during each six-month period; and
- Contain a communication strategy aimed both at local stakeholders and UK policy-makers.

6. CPP bidding process

13. UK officials have expressed the desire for more guidance on what constitutes a good SSR project and good bid.

Recommendation 9: That the CPP SSAC programme develop guidance for CPP bidders to assist them in thinking through the core principles of successful SSR programming and potential synergy with related activities.

7. Flexibility of resource use

Breaking down funding silos

14. Funding silos within CPP, especially the new SSAC programme, are a potential constraint on financing the highest priority conflict prevention SSR activities.

Recommendation 10: That CPP consider exploring how to break down funding silos within the SSAC programme to promote and link the flexible allocation of resources to the highest priority conflict prevention activities.

ODA eligibility issues

15. HMG's international partners have consistently praised the flexibility of the conflict prevention pools and their ability to finance a wide range of activities without having to consider ODA limitations.

Recommendation 11: That CPP assess the impact of ODA requirement on its ability to support the highest priority conflict prevention activities with a view to presenting the evaluation to HM Treasury at the end of the first year of CPP operations.

8. Human resource needs

In-country programme officers and administrative support

16. GCPP experience demonstrates that the quality and consistency of regional and country strategies and interventions improves with the addition of sufficient dedicated capacity at the strategy and programme management level both at headquarters and in-country. CPP intends to appoint strategy managers for all regional programmes, which will be an important step in strengthening the strategic use of resources.

Recommendation 12: That CPP considers appointing full-time programme officers in countries where security and SSR are identified as a priority and the magnitude of programming warrants such an investment and determines how to provide requisite administrative support.

SSR advisory support

17. In 2008/09, CPP work will account for 40 per cent of the SSR adviser's time and 10 per cent of the justice adviser's time. The new SSAC programme and the need to provide increased support for multi-year projects will generate additional demand for advice. Additionally, in order to deliver and evaluate SSR programmes, specific skills will be required within the SSAC and HMG more broadly. This could be promoted by establishing a competency framework to determine the skills required to design, deliver and evaluate SSR programmes more effectively. It could also be promoted by further training and capacity development activities, including existing activities such as the SSR practitioners course and routine Defence Attaché training. These activities should ideally be undertaken in partnership with other bilateral and multilateral partners to the extent possible.

Recommendation 13: That CPP consider whether additional London-based SSR/ justice advisory support is desirable to improve the quality of SSR interventions, as well as to maintain HMG's position as 'market leader' in SSR, and if so, how to obtain and improve that support.

How to contact us

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) is working on two major framework agreements with the UK government in conflict-affected areas: on governance, justice and peacebuilding and public administration reform. We would be pleased to discuss how we can make the frameworks work for you or to provide you with more details of our work. For information on how we can assist please contact any of the following members of PwC's Framework Management Unit:

Luc Moens

O: +44 (0)20 7804 6966

M: +44 (0)7710 344 069

luc.moens@uk.pwc.com

Carine Escoffier

O: +44 (0)20 7804 3523

M: +44 (0)7739 449 182

carine.escoffier@uk.pwc.com

Hugo Warner

O: +44 (0)20 7212 4912

M: +44 (0)7801 066 381

hugo.warner@uk.pwc.com

Address

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
80 Strand
London
WC2R 0AF

PricewaterhouseCoopers UK website:

www.pwc.co.uk/internationaldevelopment

PricewaterhouseCoopers International Development Assistance website:

www.pwc.com/prodev

This document has been printed on recycled paper.

pwc.co.uk

In the event that, pursuant to a request which you have received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (as the same may be amended or re-enacted from time to time) or any subordinate legislation made thereunder (collectively, the "Legislation"), you are required to disclose any information contained in this report, we ask that you notify us promptly and consult with us prior to disclosing such information. You agree to pay due regard to any representations which we may make in connection with such disclosure and to apply any relevant exemptions which may exist under the Legislation to such information. If, following consultation with us, you disclose any such information, please ensure that any disclaimer which we have included or may subsequently wish to include in the information is reproduced in full in any copies disclosed.

©2008 PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. All rights reserved. 'PricewaterhouseCoopers' refers to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (a limited liability partnership in the United Kingdom) or, as the context requires, other member firms of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, each of which is a separate and independent legal entity. Design: 0800680_PIC_JT