

The Security Governance Initiative

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The White House estimates that between 2009 and 2014, U.S. assistance to sub-Saharan African militaries and police combined to total more than \$3 billion.¹ Of this total, the United States spent approximately \$900 million on support to peacekeeping efforts alone. The U.S. government also provided approximately \$90 million in foreign military financing and sold more than \$135 million worth of arms.² Despite these substantial expenditures and investments, the ability of African states to address their security challenges remains insufficient. Some African peacekeepers are falling short in peacekeeping performance; terrorism and other transnational threats impede human development in several parts of the continent; and African citizens often mistrust their police and military forces. When the fundamental responsibility of the state for the security and justice needs of its citizens is inadequately executed, the result is often increased insecurity and de-legitimization of the government.

Based on years of security assistance delivery, the U.S. government concluded that if the aim was to develop sustained and effective African capacity to tackle security and justice challenges, then the traditional approach for providing security assistance was incomplete. The Security Governance Initiative (SGI) was introduced in 2014 as a new approach to respond to this quandary. The SGI approach seeks to align partner priorities with U.S. national interests, resources, and expertise to enhance the management, oversight, and accountability of the security and justice sectors. SGI also offers a more comprehensive, effective, and efficient approach for partners addressing security challenges, and for the U.S. government in providing security assistance.

Security sector governance is defined as the transparent, accountable, and legitimate management and oversight of security policy and practice. This chapter presents an overview of security and justice sector governance challenges in Africa, a review of U.S. security sector assistance on the continent, and a description of SGI, its key principles, and the progress made on implementation. This chapter also discusses defense institution building (DIB) through the SGI lens, and the role of other stakeholders in the governance of the security sector. While SGI is focused broadly on security governance, because of the centrality of defense institutions to the security sector, DIB is a key component of the SGI framework. In some cases, such as in Mali, Niger, and Nigeria, partners specifically identified the enhancement of defense institutions as one of their priorities for SGI. Although SGI activities for these focus areas will primarily benefit the defense sector, the

holistic approach that SGI promotes will ensure that these governments consider defense institutional capacity building in relation to overall security priorities and resources.

African Security and Justice Sector Challenges

Security and justice sectors that are weak, poorly managed and coordinated, and affected by corruption, present significant obstacles to sustainable development, democracy, stability, and peace across Africa. Democratically governed security sector institutions and professional forces rooted in the rule of law and held accountable to civilian oversight are critical. Governments are more effective in the delivery of services to their population—and are better partners for addressing shared security interests—when they can communicate priorities, capabilities, and requirements, and can efficiently and transparently manage human, material, and financial resources. It is no coincidence that the first pillar of President Obama’s 2012 Presidential Policy Directive for Africa is to strengthen democratic institutions.³

Decades of imbalances in power between military and civilian security institutions, including allocations of resources that heavily favor the military and, more specifically, military operations, have left many African countries with civilian security institutions that do not have the capacity or confidence to carry out their core functions. This imbalance has further perpetuated the reliance on and favor for the military. The dynamic created has led to security institutions that do not trust one another and a stove-piped approach for planning and budgeting for security requirements. This paradigm inhibits governments from meeting the demands of complex security challenges that require a whole-of-government effort. The stove-piped approach also leads to redundancies, confusion of roles and responsibilities, and wasteful practices.

While the mismanagement of personnel and resources might preclude efficiencies in the security sector structure, the lack of oversight and accountability of the entire security system has allowed corruption and abuse to thrive. Tolerance for corruption and abuse not only erodes security capabilities, but also the trust of the population in the government and its security services. The U.S. government recognizes that professionalism and sustainment challenges are faced by security institutions around the globe, not just in Africa. However, given that African states are earlier in their state formation process and continue to be dominated by problematic relations between the population and government security forces, the African continent was selected first for this initiative. It is likely that SGI will expand to other parts of the globe as demand for this partnership increases.

Similar problems plague African judicial sectors, which have frequently been marginalized or otherwise neglected by the continent’s strong, executive-centric governments. Conceived of as the formal institutional mechanism that ultimately holds individuals—including government representatives—accountable for civil and criminal infractions, judiciaries are an integral part of the security sector apparatus. Without effective, independent courts that are able to hold security actors accountable, there is

nothing to assure citizens that predatory acts will be punished. While traditional justice systems will continue to play an important role in mitigating conflict and assuring justice for Africa's citizens, SGI focuses on strengthening modern systems wherever able, and establishing citizen confidence in the justice process.

SGI is distinctive in the broad scope of its institutional mandate including armed forces, civilian oversight agencies, police and other internal security organizations, legislatures, and civil society, reflecting a holistic understanding of security. The program emphasizes collaborative processes and U.S.-host country partnership in pursuing shared national and international security goals.

U.S. Government and Security Sector Assistance

For more than a decade, the U.S. government has supported security sector reform and defense institution building efforts in Africa, primarily in countries transitioning from conflict, such as Liberia and South Sudan. The Department of State (DOS) Bureau of African Affairs not only led policy formulation of these efforts, but also played the lead role in implementing DIB of the fledgling Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of southern Sudan and eventually South Sudan. In Liberia, DOS similarly led the early planning and execution of the reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) starting in 2004. These major attempts at reform produced results that were both positive (Liberia) and mixed (South Sudan), which are worthy of close study for DIB practitioners operating in post-conflict contexts.

In South Sudan, U.S. assistance began following the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, with a focus on transforming the SPLA from a largely guerrilla force to a professional military, respectful of the rule of law and civilian control. These efforts occurred along with similar work to improve South Sudan's police and justice systems. In addition to building headquarters and unit infrastructure, and supporting the development of tactical and operational capabilities, U.S. assistance focused on enhancing the command, control, and administration of the force, as well as the establishment of policies, strategies, and procedures to guide the transformation process. Partly owing to the lack of Department of Defense (DOD) personnel resources and a permissive security and political environment, DOS led the DIB mission using training and advisory teams composed of mostly retired U.S. military personnel embedded in the offices of the Sudan People's Liberation Army leadership and later, a second U.S. team, embedded within the offices of the South Sudanese Ministry of Defense directorates.

Despite some tangible progress, a number of challenges stymied the overall military professionalization and DIB efforts for South Sudan. These included: 1) a lack of sufficient South Sudanese buy-in as indicated by a lack of resources invested in the sustainment of the force; 2) a lack of coherence with the wider budget and immature public financial management; 3) the inability of leaders to delegate responsibilities; 4) the lack of a human resource management system to strategically vet, develop, and employ personnel;

5) an entrenched antagonism to civilian control, even from the Ministry of Defense; and 6) the preoccupation of South Sudanese leadership with ongoing conflicts and other political priorities.

On the other hand, the commitment by the Liberian political and security leadership to the defense reform process, assisted by significant U.S. assistance, resulted in the formation of a professional, competent, and civilian-led Liberian defense force. The DOD joined with DOS in reform efforts early on, playing a significant training and mentoring role for the AFL, alongside work by the Economic Community of West African States and other international partners.

U.S. assistance and Liberian political will were instrumental in disbanding the entire existing defense force and re-constituting it from scratch. This fresh start allowed the government to establish institutional norms, infuse national purpose in the AFL, and undertake necessary reforms that would have been resisted by personnel from the AFL serving under the former head of state Charles Taylor. Liberia's Ministry of Defense drew from shared U.S. best practices, such as the recruitment of personnel from across Liberia's regions and thorough military induction standards.

Alongside this AFL rebuilding effort, the Liberia National Police (LNP) was maintained and was able to provide public order management in coordination with the United Nations (UN) Mission in Liberia so that the AFL development could advance without distractions. The increasing competence of the AFL, and Liberia's demonstrated ability to protect its people and borders, has permitted the UN to draw down its peacekeeping mission and plan for its complete withdrawal within the next few years—the mark of a successful exit strategy for U.S. security sector reform efforts. This relatively successful endeavor took place in conjunction with LNP reform, economic progress, and other post-conflict reconstruction work that has buoyed the Liberian body politic and placed the country on a solid reconciliation path.

As the different outcomes of these two U.S. government experiences illustrate, certain conditions are necessary for successful institutional reforms to endure. Without political will, absorptive capacity, credible and effective institutions, willingness to independently manage U.S. and other international donor investments, an equal stake in the success of security sector initiatives, and policy commitment to security sector reform, governments will not sustain reforms undertaken with U.S. assistance over the long term. In addition, it is imperative that civil society engagement and parliamentary oversight be strengthened to ensure that the security system has checks and balances, and over time can produce increased government legitimacy.

In 2013, Presidential Policy Directive 23 on Security Sector Assistance (PPD-23) endorsed a comprehensive U.S. strategy for building sustainable partner security sector capacity.⁴ PPD-23 provides a framework for the U.S. government to coordinate efforts and ensure transparency and consistency in security sector assistance delivery. The policies and guidelines offered in PPD-23 also provided the foundation for developing a whole-of-government approach to address the governance obstacles that prevent the sustainability

of security sector assistance. PPD-23 reaffirms the State Department's lead in policy, supervision, and general management of security sector assistance. DIB is crucial to these general security assistance management efforts since defense institutions play a pivotal role in the governance of a major component of the security sector. For greatest impact, these efforts must be jointly planned and monitored by the Departments of State and Defense, and other relevant agencies.

New Approach: The Security Governance Initiative

President Obama launched the SGI at the August 2014 United States-Africa Leaders Summit, offering a new approach to improve security sector governance and capacity in Africa. SGI is a coordinated interagency process that promotes inclusivity and partnerships. The Initiative is informed by consultations with a broad audience, including U.S. government experts, civil society, international donor partners, and other international nongovernmental organizations. This approach is to ensure a thorough understanding of issues and efforts to address security sector governance challenges.

SGI is not intended to replace training and equipping assistance programs. Rather, SGI's central objective is to complement these other efforts, and enable countries to develop policies, institutional structures, and systems that allow them to more efficiently, effectively, and responsibly deliver security and justice to their citizens.

Through SGI, the United States partners with countries to undertake strategic and institutional reforms required for governments to tackle key security challenges, both in regard to the mission of protecting state institutions and assuring citizen security. As a Presidential initiative, SGI calls for high-level, bilateral commitments. A foundation based on shared goals and commitments ensures appropriate management, coordination, and prioritization of efforts undertaken under SGI. The SGI focus is intended to foster resiliency within partner governments to not only address short-term disruptions in the security environment, but also to be better able to make strategic choices about their future security posture. SGI also emphasizes productive dialogue with civil society stakeholders.

SGI Process and Principles

To coordinate this new initiative that will initially focus primarily on sub-Saharan Africa, DOS established an SGI Coordination Office in the Bureau of African Affairs. This inaugural SGI Office includes liaison officers from other U.S. government agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security, as well as the U.S. Agency for International Development. Applying PPD-23's central tenets of transparency and coordination across the U.S. government, DOS convenes an SGI Working Group to coordinate with the broader SGI interagency community. The SGI Working Group includes all relevant U.S. government agencies to synchronize efforts, reduce redundancies, minimize assistance-delivery timelines, ensure consideration of the full range of policy and operational equities, improve data collection, and measure effectiveness. The SGI Working

Group also provides an opportunity to share best practices that DOD and other agencies can apply to DIB.

The SGI Coordination Office works closely with U.S. Embassy country teams in partner countries, which play a critical role in SGI program development and implementation. Specifically, U.S. Embassies maintain regular contact with key partner-country SGI interlocutors, provide real-time information about the dynamics in a country, and assist with Leahy vetting and other foreign assistance reporting requirements. The interagency quality of embassy country teams also offers a natural forum for SGI coordination to take place between the various U.S. interagency implementers.

Before engaging in an official visit, U.S. government officials gather information and organize briefings with U.S. government and nongovernmental country and subject matter experts. This includes arranging sessions with U.S. Embassy teams to develop a shared understanding of the U.S. interests at stake, inventory current and planned U.S. assistance and programs, discuss the security situation, and identify potential areas for engagement. The intensive study and preparation informs the SGI team prior to engaging the partner country by providing awareness both of the relationships between the defense sector and other security sector stakeholders, and of the partner-country security sector institution capabilities, including defense institutions. The study also considers the relationship of the state security and justice institutions to the wider public they are in principle expected to serve.

The SGI approach applies key principles to ensure the commitment of governments and the sustainability of good security sector governance. These key principles include: promoting partnership and collaboration; coordinating interagency and interministerial efforts; and adopting a flexible and adaptable approach based on the needs of the SGI partner and the evolving environment.

Partnership and Collaboration

The SGI process was developed based on the premise that sustainable solutions to security sector challenges must come from within the partner country. Through SGI, the U.S. government launches a dialogue with the partner to identify opportunities to tackle urgent and emerging threats. After securing head of state commitment to the principles endorsed by SGI, U.S. delegations are dispatched to actively listen to the concerns articulated by high-level government officials. U.S. Embassies also facilitate conversations between the U.S. SGI interagency teams and other stakeholders, such as representatives from parliaments, local nongovernmental organizations, academics, and other international donors.

This open dialogue creates a space to explore options for addressing systemic security sector governance problems, reinforcing the necessity for burden-sharing, managing expectations of U.S. resource commitment, and confirming partner priorities. Frank communication establishes a feedback loop where ideas, best practices, and lessons learned can be readily shared. It also builds relationships that can lead to productive dialogue on other shared bilateral interests not necessarily in the SGI realm.

This diplomatic engagement is a key component of SGI and cannot be overemphasized. Engagement at all levels, including dialogue between senior leadership and between working-level counterparts, allows the U.S. government to gauge government interest and commitment to undertake the difficult and often sensitive reforms required. Over time, it also builds trusting relationships, and allows U.S. government officials to better understand evolving security challenges from the partner's perspective, and appropriately link good governance principles to a country's ability to address current security threats.

Consistent diplomatic engagement provides the opportunity for the United States and partners to manage expectations and proceed at the pace in which reforms can occur. Despite good will and intentions, partner institutions might lack skilled human capital to receive assistance, and governments might not have the resources readily available for reforms to which they have committed. The United States and its partners must consider the absorptive capacity to take on the reforms and present a realistic timeline to set up the government for success. SGI program design is, therefore, founded on a developmental approach to help manage expectations and undertake the appropriate efforts at a tempo that does not place undue burden on the partner government.

Based on priorities and requirements articulated by the partner country through the consultations and dialogue, the U.S. government proposes specific focus areas for SGI engagement. Focus areas not only reflect partner-country interests, but are selected to draw on a range of available expertise and experience from the U.S. interagency, present options for improving systems to sustain and complement other U.S. security assistance, and provide opportunities for addressing underlying governance challenges that prevent partners from meeting their security objectives. Focus areas proposed also align with U.S. national interests.

Several partners identified DIB as a priority area of focus, including Mali, Niger, and Nigeria. Partner countries expressed a desire to improve resources management in particular. In Niger, for instance, a main component of SGI programming is focused on improving the defense sector's human, material, and financial resource management. Enhancement in these areas not only helps countries to overcome their own security challenges more effectively, but also makes them more capable and sustainable long-term partners for the United States, with the ability to contain local conflicts and prevent them from rising to a threat level that could more directly threaten U.S. interests.

Once partner governments agree on the proposed SGI focus areas, a Joint Country Action Plan (JCAP) is co-drafted to define the parameters of the SGI partnership. The JCAP development process illustrates the importance SGI places on collaboration. U.S. and partner-country experts jointly conduct an analysis of the challenges and opportunities available in each focus area, which includes reviewing any related and parallel activities. These expert teams then articulate the desired end state for each focus area, and recommend activities, required steps, and milestones for achieving these ends.

Best practices and lessons learned can be shared through sustained, high-level engagement and through the process of conducting a joint analysis in which government

officials are more likely to openly discuss any capacity gaps and root causes of security sector challenges. Consultation teams have been able to build a rapport with officials in partner countries, which has facilitated honest and open exchange. This process also establishes a common understanding of the current environment and allows the U.S. government to offer better informed and targeted assistance to address the systemic issues unique to the partner's context. Hence, the final JCAP presented to U.S. and partner leadership for signature is the product of in-depth conversations between partner and U.S. government subject matter experts.

SGI activities are developed and implemented using the JCAP as the roadmap. A senior-level SGI Steering Committee, co-chaired by the U.S. ambassador and a senior partner representative, is established to regularly discuss SGI activities and progress. The Steering Committee, comprised of U.S. representatives and senior officials from the partner country, including ministers, deputy ministers, and representatives from the Office of the Presidency, meets approximately every six months to review progress made on the focus areas and intermediate objectives outlined in the JCAP. SGI relies on the embassy team and the partner to ensure that SGI points of contact have the backing of the head of state. This coordination mechanism ensures that JCAP implementation reflects joint expectations, is pragmatic and resource-informed, and gains and maintains senior leader support.

Periodic review by the senior SGI Steering Committee is required to determine the relevance and effectiveness of SGI activities, whether objectives should be added or omitted, and the level of continued partner commitment. The Steering Committee assesses whether the completed activities have contributed to moving closer to the desired end state for each of the focus areas, and discusses planned SGI activities intended to meet the objectives articulated in the JCAP that have not yet been reached, or new objectives identified.

Interagency and Interministerial Coordination

SGI leverages expertise and experience from throughout the U.S. government. Interagency coordination and collaboration both within the U.S. government and with the partner is a hallmark of SGI. SGI applies a comprehensive, whole-of government approach for addressing complex and emerging security challenges. Liaisons from the relevant U.S. government agencies and departments are detailed to the SGI Coordination Office in order to maintain a constant flow of information between home agencies and SGI planning. The SGI Office also facilitates weekly meetings to provide frequent updates and solicit feedback from the broader SGI interagency community. Regularly scheduled meetings allow for the interagency to discuss and coordinate the most appropriate U.S. implementer and resources for SGI programming, and to adjust the programs as the environment changes.

The SGI approach adopts the premise that governments that have a comprehensive understanding of their security sector capabilities, gaps, and deficiencies can more efficiently align resources to address security priorities, and that well-developed policies, systems, and processes allow governments to more effectively manage their security and justice sectors. To be truly impactful, laws, policies, and procedures must be clearly stated

and widely understood. More transparent and effectively managed security and justice sectors, in turn, lead to better coordinated and formulated plans, and more targeted and organized operations.

Harnessing the expertise and resources of the entire government can lead to new collaboration and creative solutions; however, the practice of collaboration and cooperation is difficult and time consuming for any country. For some countries, interministerial coordination can be especially challenging. Often, partner governments need to overcome years of mistrust and rivalry between ministries, and systems that perpetuate stovepiped decision-making processes. The lack of reliable and practical information-sharing between security sector organizations can undermine the effectiveness of each organization. One of SGI's key strengths is its convening power. The majority of SGI engagements identify, organize, and call together interministerial representatives to discuss shared interests and challenges. Repeated interactions over the course of the life of SGI, which is expected to be several years, can create and cultivate important governmental relationships.

Despite existing hurdles, SGI countries have voiced a desire to attain the benefits of this approach, recognizing that interministerial coordination and a whole-of-government approach to security builds resiliency and efficiencies into the security sector. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each organization, as well as systems for sharing information help to reduce redundancies, ensure a common mission, and institute a process for ministries to hold one another accountable. For example, in Kenya SGI has encouraged improved border management by breaking down stovepipes and providing opportunities to communicate between agencies.

A Flexible and Adaptable Approach

As threats evolve, priorities shift, and a better understanding of the environment emerges, SGI endeavors to be flexible to adapt to changing requirements. The SGI Steering Committee provides a forum for the U.S. and partner leadership to assess progress and determine whether the objectives presented in the JCAP reflect the evolving environment. For SGI to remain relevant to the partner and, at the same time, satisfy U.S. interests, modifications to the JCAP are open for discussion and must be mutually agreed upon by both the U.S. and partner senior leadership.

Defense Institution Building Through the SGI Lens

While SGI is not solely focused on DIB, there are direct and indirect contributions that SGI makes to enhance the governance of defense institutions. There are also many lessons learned from U.S. government experience in undertaking DIB efforts in Africa that have informed the SGI process, most importantly, that success depends on the partner's political commitment and embrace of institutional reform.

Through SGI, mechanisms for information sharing and coordination between ministries are being established, new relationships between the defense sector and other

security agencies are being formed, and the distinct roles and functions of the various security agencies are becoming more clearly defined and understood. These outcomes have the potential to result in the military relinquishing some of the *de facto* responsibilities it acquired from its colonial legacy or might have acquired over time, and allow ministries of defense to more effectively and efficiently target their efforts and resources to fulfill their primary defense functions.

In some cases, such as in Mali and Nigeria, partners specifically identified the enhancement of defense institution systems as a priority for SGI. For example, defense human resource development and management was selected for Mali, and the enhancement of defense procurement and acquisition processes were selected for Nigeria. Although activities to support these areas primarily focus on and benefit the defense sector, the holistic SGI approach encourages the partner to consider institutional capacity building in one sector in relation to broader security priorities and public budget resources.

SGI Progress

The U.S. government selected SGI partner countries based on existing relationships, a commitment by the governments to the guiding principles of the initiative, and an expressed desire to undertake necessary security sector reforms. Kenya, Niger, Mali, Ghana, Tunisia, and Nigeria are the six initial SGI partners. Since the August 2014 launch, SGI has enjoyed modest successes, and the approach to SGI implementation has been well received.

Kenya

Kenya is the most advanced in SGI implementation. The Government of Kenya was the first of the SGI countries to: receive an interagency consultation team; finalize a JCAP, which was signed on the margins of President Obama's visit to Nairobi in July 2015; appoint a senior representative as the primary SGI point of contact; and host SGI Senior Steering Committees. The SGI engagement with Kenya has informed the SGI process, including validating the importance of sustained high-level communication and feedback. Progress made to date is mainly due to excellent bilateral collaboration at the senior and working levels, and proactive steps taken by Kenya to meet desired SGI objectives. An example is the development of a plan and process to establish a new Kenyan Customs and Border Protection Agency to integrate border management capabilities and capacities. Without the support of senior Kenyan leadership, working-level officials would not have been empowered to propose the new structure and offer innovative ideas for advancing an integrated border management framework.

The three mutually agreed areas for SGI-Kenya do not directly address DIB, but rather focus on enhancing and coordinating internal security processes and responses. In addition to establishing a holistic approach to border management, which involves elements of the defense sector, SGI is working to enhance police human resources management and the administration of justice. An overarching goal of SGI, and a national security priority for the Government of Kenya, is to foster greater public confidence in security and justice

institutions, and prevent the marginalization and radicalization of segments of Kenya's population. Building institutional capabilities—beyond the defense sector—to detect, deter, prosecute, and eliminate terrorists and violent extremists, will ensure a comprehensive approach for addressing threats that require more than a military response.

Niger

Niger is a country with significant security challenges, including fighting a three-front battle against extremists along the Malian, Libyan, and Nigerian borders, and facing major budgetary challenges as one of the least developed countries in the world. The country has a relatively small military (estimated 12,000) to handle the difficult tasks with which it must contend. As such, SGI programming in Niger seeks to assist the Nigerien Armed Forces and has a large DIB component. Two of the SGI focus areas, while not dedicated solely to supporting the defense sector, require inputs from the Ministry of Defense and seek to enhance defense institution capacity. Specifically, focus areas are aimed at improving decision-making processes that determine the allocation of human, materiel, and financial resources for security sector requirements. SGI work to date with Nigerien defense institutions includes reviewing processes for managing military personnel, logistics, and budgets, and establishing systems for multi-year planning to more effectively anticipate and respond to current and emerging threats. For example, SGI is supporting the Ministry of Defense to enhance human resourcing procedures, including ensuring consistency in job qualifications and developing a merit-based promotion system. As a result of active participation by senior level defense officials in SGI activities, the government has begun to institute several of these reforms.

Mali

Mali has been in a crisis since the coup and collapse of the government in 2013, and the subsequent routing of the military by terrorists. This catastrophe weighs heavily on the country today as it simultaneously works on the peace process, institutes systematic security sector reform, and conducts limited counterterrorist operations. Mali's security institutions, including its defense sector, are addressing several challenges as they work to consolidate and build on the 2013 restoration of democracy and implementation of the 2015 Algiers Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. SGI has provided a forum for the Government of Mali to engage in interministerial discussions on security sector governance priorities, and the opportunity to explore innovative reform options outside of the current system of governance. Through SGI, the U.S. government has facilitated discussions with Ministry of Defense officials to strengthen internal decision-making processes and improve systems that manage the budget, human and materiel resources, strategy, and policy.

Enhancing its defense institutions' human capacity and budget management will allow the Government of Mali to be more efficient in directing defense resources and governing the defense sector. Establishing processes for managing defense logistics and matching resources to identified needs will enhance the effectiveness of defense efforts and assist the Government of Mali in rebuilding defense institutions that address its national

security, and enhance citizen security throughout the country. This foundation will allow the Malian military to better address the requirements of the peace process, as well as the fight against terrorism, in a more sustainable way, which is certainly part of the exit strategy for the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

Ghana

As a partner with arguably stronger democratic institutions and a closer connection between the security institutions and the state, Ghana does not have the severity of security challenges faced by some of the other partners. Still, Ghana contends with increased threats along its maritime and land borders, and must continue to be an able contributor to UN and regional peacekeeping operations. The SGI focus in Ghana is to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that address key security sector challenges, which include maritime security, border management, and cyber-crime and cyber security. At the same time, SGI seeks to improve the administration of justice within these domains.

Enhancing defense systems to more effectively coordinate and communicate with other maritime and border-related agencies is a component of SGI in Ghana. Through SGI support, the roles, responsibilities, and legal authorities of the various agencies involved in maritime and border security will be clearly defined. For example, to protect the future of oil production and the fisheries, both of which are important for state revenue generation, the Ghanaian Navy must engage with civilian security entities. SGI is working to improve the ability of Ghanaian defense institutions to coordinate policies and procedures with other agencies responsible for providing maritime security, and to respond more effectively and efficiently to maritime threats. A clear definition of roles will ensure that suspects and evidence are properly gathered and handled following a maritime event, such as piracy, armed robbery at sea, human trafficking, or illegal fishing. Demonstrating its commitment to SGI, the government of Ghana has established interministerial working groups to support the implementation of SGI activities.

Tunisia

In the wake of the Arab Spring, Tunisia has had to contend with a major political transition, following free and fair elections and the establishment of a new government with high public expectations. SGI in Tunisia focuses primarily on enhancing the legitimacy, capacity, and transparency of the civilian security and justice sectors. Specifically, through SGI, the U.S. government will work with the government of Tunisia to improve police policies and procedures, particularly with respect to community engagement, and strengthen the judiciary and law enforcement agencies to address key drivers of radicalization. DIB will be addressed in Tunisia through the SGI focus on integrating Tunisian border management functions. SGI aims at defining the roles and responsibilities, and coordination and decision-making mechanisms for all border-related agencies, including the military. The coordination and communication between defense institutions and other border-related agencies is critical to stem the flow of extremists, weapons, and illicit goods in and out of

Tunisia and, at the same time, facilitate trade and the safe movement of people across the borders.

Nigeria

Following the corrupt and poorly run administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria under President Muhammadu Buhari faces major challenges and opportunities. Popular expectations are high and the country must contend with significant security challenges, from militias and oil bunkering in the Delta region to the terrorist group Boko Haram in the northeast of the country. The Nigerian military has significant operational missions with which to contend and still requires significant reform to maximize its capacity to support the Nigerian public.

Corruption has long diverted resources away from development and governance in Nigeria, fueled instability and violent extremism, and hindered military readiness and effectiveness on the battlefield. The enhancement of defense procurement and acquisition procedures and processes is one of the SGI focus areas for Nigeria. SGI aims to improve the Ministry of Defense resource management systems through targeted reforms to procurement and acquisition processes. Established and transparent procedures for needs identification, management, and accountability of defense materiel acquisitions could improve the performance and morale of Nigeria's defense services by ensuring that service members have the equipment they need and that equipment is maintained and replaced on an appropriate schedule. Systems that ensure that budgetary resources for military acquisitions are used effectively also establish safeguards that can deter corruption.

SGI activities will also contribute to the development of Nigeria's nationwide emergency response planning and coordination, and the reestablishment of civilian security and justice in Northeast Nigeria. While these two areas primarily focus on determining the roles and capacity of civilian agencies to address these goals, current and future defense sector roles and responsibilities must be reviewed and considered in these plans. Establishing a plan for transitioning civilian responsibilities from the military to civilian agencies, and mechanisms for defense institutions to effectively communicate and coordinate with civilian agencies, especially in the event of an emergency, will be essential for either of these two focus areas to achieve their objectives.

Lessons for DIB from SGI Implementation

A number of insights can be drawn from SGI's initial years of implementation and applied to DIB efforts. Partner governments, for instance, have expressed an appreciation for the consultative nature of SGI, and have been pleased that focus areas were determined and shaped based on their priorities. Investing the time to understand a partner's defense sector priorities from their perspective could reveal opportunities where a commitment to DIB exists on the part of the partner. In addition, understanding the role that the leadership expects defense institutions to play in meeting national security priorities, as well as the

military's relationship to other security sector agencies, can contribute to more effective and efficient security assistance programming. As described below, it is important to ensure that civil society better understands and appreciates the role of the military in serving national security interests, and therefore provides greater support for defense resources, both in terms of human capital and operational requirements.

An SGI partnership requires demonstrated political will in support of improved security sector governance and support for SGI at the highest levels of government. This commitment can be gauged through regular diplomatic engagement and an active plan for monitoring and evaluation. Similarly, through regular dialogue with senior defense officials and military to military engagements, a commitment to DIB can be determined. To ensure sustained senior-level commitment, the United States and the partner nation should share key security interests as well as a common understanding of security threats and the evolving political environment. The types of long-term reforms recommended through the SGI process, and for DIB, are often sensitive, difficult to implement, and even disruptive to existing government processes and structures. A government's unwavering commitment to expend the necessary influence and often limited resources to support the SGI process and principles, and for DIB alike, is imperative. This is the only way that the United States will be able to positively impact the force generation, executive management, and operating functions of the DIB enterprise in a sustainable way.

Like SGI, DIB must be a partnership. A government needs the capacity and political stability to contribute to the dialogue and share the burden in meeting DIB objectives. Defense officials must be able to articulate priorities, make strategic decisions, and implement DIB activities. The success of DIB relies on strong leadership and commitment by a partner. This commitment is weakened by political instability. Low-capacity countries with weak political frameworks may increase the risk of stalling or even completely ending SGI and DIB implementation.

Finally, the active involvement of other stakeholders that support the DIB process is critical for its success. Such stakeholders include the legislature, particularly the defense and finance committees, civil society organizations, and other international actors involved in the partner country's defense sector. Their roles and importance are discussed in more detail in the following section.

Role of Other Nongovernment Security Sector Stakeholders

Civil Society Organizations

Civil society plays a critical role in the governance of the security sector. Civil society organizations serve several different functions, including monitoring the performance of security sector actors and articulating the public demand for safety and security. Their vigor and courage in demanding transparency and accountability can be a force that pushes government agencies to be more open in their interactions with the population.

Civil society organizations, both those located in the United States and in the partner

countries, perform various roles. Organizations that focus on human rights conduct thorough investigations and publicize their findings, thereby increasing the pressure for governments to conduct their own investigations and take remedial actions. Other types of civil society groups devote their talents to assist in elections and the functioning of institutions such as legislative bodies to make these institutions more democratic and responsive to the political priorities of the public. These non-partisan institutes take the lead in making the political process more closely represent the electorate and its priorities. Think tanks and academics present a long-term view of trends and events from the scholar's point of view. They provide the historical perspective as one measure of how the current government is likely to handle long-term issues and deficiencies in governance.

Countries with a vibrant, professional, and corruption-exposing press provide an important source of information for reform elements. By their nature they emphasize transparency and accountability, and cover every element of reform: gross misconduct by military and police, the fairness of elections, the ability of the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute corruption in the governmental sector, and the ability of the government to engage in budgetary planning and then carry out priorities transparently. The press also monitors the ability of the legislature to pass legislation that meets the needs of the nation and to serve in an oversight capacity to governmental institutions.

In some cases, however, a government may feel threatened by public criticism and pressure from civil society actors to change its policies and approach for providing security. Despite these tensions, through SGI, partner governments are encouraged to value the voice of civil society and the population more generally, and explore means for engaging in constructive dialogue with these groups. Demonstrating the value the U.S. government places on civil society, U.S. government SGI interagency leadership, the SGI Office, and U.S. SGI implementers meet regularly with civil society representatives in Washington, DC, and while visiting an SGI partner country, to learn from their perspectives and solicit ideas on the challenges and solutions to security sector governance. In Niger, where formal venues for civil society and Government of Niger interaction were lacking, SGI activities will include support for media and civil society actors aimed at strengthening their professionalism and capacity to report on and discuss security issues.

SGI also helps security sector institutions to develop channels for communicating security policy, plans, and activities with its population, and establish systems for receiving feedback from communities on their security needs, interests, and priorities. For example, SGI in Kenya includes programs to enable border management agencies to effectively communicate with the media and share information directly with border communities; SGI in Tunisia includes programs to enhance police policies and procedures for engaging and sharing information with communities; and SGI in Niger includes programs to develop the capacity of the ministries of defense, interior, and justice to communicate security sector related information to the population. By establishing more transparent and accountable security sector institutions, citizens will trust and be more confident in the government's ability to effectively, efficiently, and responsibly deliver security and justice.

Legislatures

African legislatures should be one of the most important stakeholders in ensuring the success of any reform effort. Unfortunately, owing to colonial heritage and a preponderance of executive-heavy systems, many African parliaments are not able to perform a robust oversight role. They often lack the legal authority to perform essential functions such as budgetary review, or the technical capacity to scrutinize the government's security institutions. At this early phase of implementation, SGI is primarily focused on enhancing national-level security strategies and policies, and building the capacity for institutions to better manage and oversee the delivery of security and justice. However, in order for SGI objectives to be achieved, partner government security sector institutions must engage with competent legislatures. As an SGI program evolves, strengthening parliaments to effectively conduct their oversight role will be required either through SGI programming or other activities.

International Partners

In many African countries there is sizeable investment by other international partners in the security and justice sectors. These partners include the European Union, UN, United Kingdom, France, and many others. The United States must ensure that other donor activities are considered along with SGI and DIB programming. International partners provide a vital perspective. Establishing an SGI and DIB community is critical to share best practices and ideas, provide for a more rigorous analysis of security sector governance, and prevent the duplication of efforts.

Conclusion

The comprehensive approach that the United States is pursuing with SGI is the culmination of years of lessons learned through providing security sector assistance to African countries in a range of developmental and fragility settings—from extremely poor to institutionally solid, and from post-conflict to steady state. The Department of State prioritizes good governance and has learned that the solutions to Africa's security challenges rely on both the political will of the partner and its adherence to good governance policies and practices. SGI is helping the U.S. government to avoid past disappointing results from earlier “train and equip” efforts that were not founded on a solid political and governance dynamic.

SGI provides a blueprint for linking democracy and governance programs and objectives with security assistance to improve the management, accountability, and oversight of the security and justice sectors. Involving a multi-year approach and an active system for monitoring impact, SGI is poised to assist partners to develop security sectors systems that more effectively and efficiently respond to security challenges, while also supporting African countries' need for greater transparency and accountability of their institutions. This new approach SGI offers also increases the likelihood that U.S. assistance will be responsibly used and sustained.

The whole-of-government approach to providing security sector assistance allows the U.S. government to better coordinate interests and assistance, apply our collective understanding to designing programs, and present to partners the wide range of expertise and experience our government has to offer. Engagement with multiple stakeholders, including incorporating the voice of civil society into the process, allows SGI to support a path for greater accountability of security institutions, and enhanced legitimacy of African governments.

Notes

1 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa,” June 2012, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/africa_strategy_2.pdf>.

2 U.S. Department of State, Diplomacy in Action, “Foreign Military Financing Account Summary,” January 2016, available at <<http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/sat/c14560.htm>>.

3 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Support for Peacekeeping in Africa,” August 2014, available at <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/08/06/fact-sheet-us-support-peacekeeping-africa>>.

4 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Security Sector Assistance Policy,” April 2013, available at <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/04/05/fact-sheet-us-security-sector-assistance-policy>>.

