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TRANSFORMING INTERNAL SECURITY IN SIERRA LEONE: SIERRA LEONE POLICE AND BROADER JUSTICE SECTOR REFORM

Peter Alexander Albrecht

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Abbreviations

ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AIG	Assistant Inspector-General
APC	All People's Congress
B2B	Back to Basics
CCSSP	Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CDIID	Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investigation Department
CRP	Community Reintegration Programme
DIG	Deputy Inspector-General
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
FSU	Family Support Unit
UN CIVPOL	United Nations Civilian Police
CPDTF	Commonwealth Police Development Task Force
DfID	Department for International Development
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives
IGP	Inspector-General of Police
IMATT	International Military Assistance Training Team
IASJP	Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme
JSDP	Justice Sector Development Programme
JSRS	Justice Sector Reform Strategy
JSRS-IP	Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan
LCU	Local Command Unit
LNP	Local Needs Policing
LPPB	Local Policing Partnership Board
LUC	Local Unit Commander
MACP	Military Aid to the Civil Power
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NSC	National Security Council
NSCCG	National Security Council Coordinating Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office of National Security

OPR	Output to Purpose Review
OSD	Operational Support Division
PRO	Public Relations Officer
POCDI&PA	Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence, Internal and Presidential Affairs
PTS	Police Training School
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLIRP	Sierra Leone Infrastructure Reconstruction Programme
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Summary[1]

It is a striking feature of current international interventions that state institutions, even if their monopoly over the means of violence has disappeared, if indeed it ever existed, receive by far the most attention – and money. Peacebuilding and state-building continue to be considered two sides of the same coin.

This report analyses how Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and broader justice sector reform has been integral to the process of the country's state-building process since before conflict officially came to an end in January 2002. The report begins with a summary of the political and security context in which SLP reforms began and an overview of key aspects of the SSR process in Sierra Leone. It then analyses the reform effort specifically, under four broad headings. First, it provides an account of the institutional and political framework within which reforms took place. Second, it reviews a number of technical and operational initiatives undertaken to move reform forward. Third, it reviews institutional reforms to support rebuilding of the SLP. Finally, it addresses broader justice reform efforts that began with initiation of the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP) in 2005 and designed to be continued in the Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme (IASJP), scheduled to begin in 2010.

[1] The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any of the agencies or individuals mentioned throughout. Analysis and interpretation have been added to all sources, primary and secondary.

Lessons learned from police and broader justice reform in Sierra Leone

1. The importance of personalities and relationships
There is an underlying assumption in much development thinking and practice that discrete institution-building activities in themselves can lead to sustainable solutions. However, the case of justice sector reform in Sierra Leone clearly shows that the 'human factor,' i.e., the personalities, political behaviour and cultural attitudes and beliefs of internal actors, is vital and impacts directly on how external advice is received, absorbed and acted upon.

2. Long-term affordability of activities: prioritising the urgent over the long-term
Many reform activities undertaken in support of the SLP in the late 1990s and early 2000s were not calibrated against what was affordable in the long-term. Consequently, once external funding for certain programmes, such as equipment procurement, decreased or ended, the Government of Sierra Leone could not afford to continue to fund such programmes.

During the early reform period, urgent needs of police force mobility took priority over strategic planning, national ownership and sustainability. But, as international programmes often discover, what is needed is not always sustainable. This realistic approach must be accepted from the very beginning of police reform and related programming. Finding the balance between short-term needs that concern stabilisation and longer-term thinking that concern sustainable development is key.

3. Visibility and communication
Despite the issue of long-term sustainability, in the short-term the SLP vehicles and communications project did play an important role in increasing police visibility. Improved force mobility meant that officers could respond more effectively to crimes and garner public respect through the quality and use of their equipment.

4. The importance of language
Policing skills needed in the late 1990s and early 2000s included completing entries in notebooks, interviewing skills and identifying key investigative issues. To the outside observer, these were considered basic skills; in fact, the programme devised

to address the gap was called 'Back to Basics.' However, while these skills were needed, the concept that they were 'basic' did not go down very well with the SLP. As a consequence, there was some reluctance on the part of police officers to engage with the programme.

5. Do not assume a trickle-down effect

In the early stages of SLP reform, heavy emphasis was placed on training the top cadre of the police force. The underlying assumption was that their improved capacity would then trickle down through the ranks. This, however, did not happen, which leads to the conclusion that the trickle-down effect cannot simply be assumed. Later reform efforts launched in the early to mid-2000s have targeted the lack of management and supervisory skills at middle and junior levels of the organisation.

6. Create team spirit; encourage independent decision making

In stark contrast to police operations before the civil war, teamwork is now much more of a benchmark of the SLP. Collective decisions at the highest level are made by the Executive Management Board. Commanders down to the level of the Local Command Unit now have considerable room for independent decision making.

7. Finding the balance between operations and general duty

Since the early reform period of late 1990s, striking a balance between operations and general duty policing has been a challenge. This issue has been particularly contentious in Sierra Leone due to the advisers involved and due to the fact that the operational arm of the Sierra Leone Police has been armed, while general duty police officers have not.

8. Make difficult decisions earlier

Difficult decisions have been made throughout the life of police and broader justice sector reform in Sierra Leone. The ranking system has been flattened and the scope of reform efforts has been broadened. At the same time, support for the development of appropriate oversight mechanisms and Cabinet-level representation of the police has been weak. From this follows that the longer advisers wait to make difficult decisions, the more difficult it becomes to make them. This is particularly pertinent in Sierra Leone where many external advisers occupied executive positions. Because they were not part of already established power networks, they were in a better, if not easy, position to make politically sensitive decisions that their national counterparts may not have been able to.

9. Transitioning from police to justice reform programming
The transition from police to justice sector reform was a relatively painful process in Sierra Leone. The dramatic expansion of reform efforts was not clearly communicated to SLP leadership and was resisted by advisers to the police, some of whom had been in post since the late 1990s.

When the direction of programming – and funding – changes dramatically, substantial effort needs to be made to communicate these changes to relevant national and international stakeholders. In the case of Sierra Leone, this effort was not made; different messages were delivered to different actors during the critical phase of programme transition.

10. Engage non-state actors
Sierra Leone's tribal[2] chiefs, who play a central role in the provision of security and justice at the local level, have only been engaged to a limited degree in justice reform programming. While there are indications that this will change in the coming years, Sierra Leone provides a good example of how difficult it is to engage traditional security providers in broader justice reform and, at the same time, how important it is.

[2] I use the concept of 'tribal' rather than 'ethnic' since they are commonly used by Sierra Leoneans themselves.

Introduction[3]

Since the late 1990s, international support to re-establish the SLP and the broader justice sector has been substantial. While the trajectory of justice sector transformation has gradually changed since it began in 1998, it has always been predominantly concerned with building a stronger – if not strong *per se* – central state. In the case of Sierra Leone, collapsed but internationally-recognized state institutions were to be rebuilt. Security was seen not as only a prerequisite for this process to take place, but the very foundation of managing and protecting state sovereignty (Albrecht and Buur 2009:292; Buur et al. 2007).

It is a striking feature of current international interventions that state institutions, even if their monopoly over the means of violence has disappeared, if indeed it ever existed, receive by far the most attention – and money. Peacebuilding and state-building continue to be considered two sides of the same coin. This is also the case in places where internationally funded programmes acknowledge and incorporate the so-called layer of 'non-state actors' in their design. In Bangladesh, Malawi and Nigeria, the importance of engaging institutions that are not directly governed by state institutions figures centrally in UK-funded programmes.

However, success ultimately remains tied to a governance system, a state. This entity, actor, if you will, is loosely defined as follows in the United Kingdom Department for International Development's (DfID) 'Building the State and Securing the Peace': "The *state* equates with: (a) the *institutions or rules* which regulate political, social, and economic engagement across a territory and determine how power and authority are obtained, used and controlled (e.g., constitutions, laws, customs)..." (DfID, 2010, draft). This paper also acknowledges the central role of non-state actors, but they are predominantly defined as either marginal to decision-making (civil society organizations) or as 'informal groupings' (e.g., gangs and drug cartels) (DfID 2010, draft). As implied in its title, state-building and peacebuilding are inherently linked. While the paper was written in 2009-2010, its concept of the state as central to peace was central to the thinking of external advisors in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s. Police, broader justice sector development, and security sector reform as a whole were pre-

[3] Special thanks to Keith Biddle for input on consecutive drafts of this report and extensive interviews carried out in June 2009. Also thanks to Anthony Howlett-Bolton for reading a draft of this report and Brima Acha Kamara for interview time in May 2009. Finally, thanks to Susan Michael for her substantial editorial work.

dominantly funded by the UK, and, by extension, led by UK policies and thinking at the time.

Re-establishing Sierra Leone's justice sector has so far spanned more than a decade and has informed international thinking and best practices of justice sector transformation as it is designed today. In particular, the Sierra Leone process has helped change the focus from separate police and justice reform programming towards the justice sector as a whole. It has also generated increased attempts to incorporate non-state providers of security and justice into programming. Both these approaches are clearly detectable in the justice sector programmes that have been or are now being implemented in Sierra Leone.

The emphasis of this report is on the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP), which began in the midst of war during the second half of the 1990s. One could argue that the CCSSP constitutes the 'heyday' of police reform in Sierra Leone, when massive donor investment occurred and the position of Inspector-General of Police (IGP) was held from 1999-2003 by a retired UK police officer. During the life of the project, from 1999-2005, a total of £25 million was spent on the SLP alone, not the broader justice sector. This imbalance reflects the fact that a holistic approach to justice sector reform – and security sector reform (SSR) – had not yet taken root.

In addition, some attention will be given to the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF), the CCSSP's predecessor. Leading figures of the CPDTF continued to work in the CCSSP and the focus of the two programmes, i.e., police reform *per se*, was largely the same, even if the latter had an expanded mandate and more weight. Only with the initiation of the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP) in 2005 did a change of direction take place, when the reform focus moved from police to the justice sector as a whole. This programme is explored later in the report, together with the Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme (IASJP). The latter programme, which at the time of writing is being designed and thus has not begun implementation, will for the first time centre predominantly on the role of traditional leaders in providing security and justice in Sierra Leone.

The bulk of research for this report was carried out in April-May 2009; an earlier draft informed the 2009 report *Reforming the Afghan National Police*, a joint report of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (London) and the Foreign Policy Research Institute (Philadelphia). In finalising this report,

previous research conducted by the author has also been incorporated (see Albrecht and Malan 2006; Albrecht and Jackson 2009). Fieldwork was conducted in 2008-2009 in rural Sierra Leone; interviews were conducted in the UK.

As envisioned in the late 1990s, the SLP transformation process was at the very heart of Sierra Leone's SSR efforts. It was clearly understood that while the process of transforming the country's security system had been initiated out of a concern over the involvement of the armed forces in politics, the brunt of security tasks in a stable Sierra Leone would fall on the SLP. At least, this was the perception of the state's chief executive and external actors supporting what was perceived as the democratically-elected and thus legitimate Government of Sierra Leone.

The context in which SSR began in Sierra Leone – an overview

When SSR began in Sierra Leone during the 1990s, the country was experiencing continued conflict and state collapse. Sierra Leone was one of the first and only countries where support was given to comprehensive SSR, a concept coined by DfID in 1999. As it turned out, given the UK's military intervention on the side of the Government of Sierra Leone, it was also a successful attempt to stabilise a country – well before 9/11 and interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and before the notion of 'stabilisation' itself had gathered momentum.

While police transformation began prior to the transformation of other security actors such as the armed forces and intelligence agencies, efforts ground to a halt when the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) mounted a coup in 1997. Amid the ongoing conflict, the Sierra Leone government, after returning from exile in Guinea in 1998, was receiving support from a number of external agencies that were scrambling to help stabilise the country and establish peace. It was in this context that the UK, recognising that any long-term development strategy would be futile without a stable security environment, began to develop an extensive SSR response. In the years to come, the SLP would take centre stage in actively providing that secure space.

2002 was a pivotal year for Sierra Leone. Although there were significant areas of the country that were not under the direct control of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's government, the conflict officially ended in January. Apart from the issue of prioritising and balancing the differing needs of important issues, including SSR and economic development, two significant hurdles characterised the period from 2002-2005 and beyond.

First, there was what can be referred to as a 'perception-reality gap'. Principal stakeholders up to the Presidential level might have supported SSR as a concept, but had different views as to what it meant in practice. The previous years had been about winning a war, stabilizing the country and building the capacity of state institutions to do so. However, in the new reform context, intelligence officials began to expose corruption within state institutions. Certain officials, whose vested interests in the status quo were inevitably exposed, began to resist SSR (Albrecht 2009:4). Moreover, even though the newly-established Office of National Security (ONS) was hailed as one of the key successes of externally-supported SSR, there were clear indications that it

was supported more by external advisers than by the President whom it was instituted to advise. Indeed, while the ONS was being established, Kabbah continued to use an informal group of trusted individuals to advise him on national security issues.

Second, and following from the above point, because the country had been generally stabilised, President Kabbah began to lose interest in the SSR process. Kellie Conteh, Sierra Leone's National Security Coordinator and head of ONS noted: "By 2003 there was some attention [to the SSR process], in 2004 less, in 2005 they were so comfortable [with the security situation] that they didn't listen at all. Defence Councils were postponed several times. The NSC [National Security Council] had not been convened for two years until we pushed for one major meeting, where we said that the government needed to be aware of the issues. By 2007 most ministries cared less about security" (Kellie Conteh quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:128). For example, while various security-providing agencies prepared for the 2007 general elections, Kabbah displayed little interest in election security planning. The fact that the elections were relatively free of violence speaks to many of the successful elements of the country's SSR process rather than to the institutionalisation of a reform approach at the Presidential level.

The scope of SSR in Sierra Leone

All levels of Sierra Leone's SSR process, from concept and policy development to programming, had an impact on the country's peacebuilding process and on future international SSR development approaches (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:81). Support was given, primarily by the UK, to contain and ultimately overhaul the armed forces, which had staged two coups during the 1990s. Support was also provided to the central government to fight a war against rebel forces, institute national security sector coordination mechanisms and improve intelligence capacity. Considerable assistance was provided to re-establish the SLP. The collapsed, but internationally-recognised Sierra Leonean state was to be rebuilt and security was seen as not only a prerequisite for this process to begin, but its very foundation (Albrecht and Buur 2009:6).

At the same time, it was also clear that neither Sierra Leone officials nor international donors and advisors had agreed on what SSR would entail. According to one definition circulating in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s, SSR only dealt with security and defence management, specifically institutions such as the National Security Advisor's office (later the ONS) that provide security oversight. An alternative definition of SSR discussed at the time included the intelligence services (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:26-27). It was unclear which institutions were to be included in SSR activities and how they were to be interlinked. What was clear, however, was the fact that neither the police nor the judiciary was included in this definition. Effectively, this meant that while SSR support in the Sierra Leone context was comprehensive, individual programmes took place in relative isolation from one another.

It was not until 2003, when Sierra Leone began the two-year process of producing a Security Sector Review, that definitions of the security sector would include institutions beyond the military and the police. However, despite halting progress defining the breadth of SSR and applying a more holistic approach, the first police programme, CCSSP, operated in parallel to the Law Reform Programme. Even within the justice sector, silo-thinking prevailed.

Nonetheless, from the very outset of Sierra Leone's SSR process in the late 1990s, support to Sierra Leone was comprehensive – and unique. UK Assistance was tri-departmental, with funding coming from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), DfID and Ministry of Defence (MoD). Ensuring financial support from

all three departments meant that DfID could steer clear of operational matters and logistics regarding police, defence and intelligence institutions. However, while DfID has always been reluctant to engage in operational support, their involvement in the recruitment of Sierra Leone's first (and non-native) post-war police chief rendered this distinction somewhat moot.

In the late 1990s, before the UK's African and Global Conflict Prevention Pools had been established, SSR-related programming in Sierra Leone was an early attempt to establish whole-of-government collaboration. Once DfID developed the concept of SSR in the late 1990s and officially launched it in 1999, SSR became a clear manifestation of the need to merge security and development. The latter, it was concluded, could not take place without some degree of the former. In particular, never before had a development agency been engaged in reforming the MoD of another country, let alone its intelligence capabilities.

Nevertheless, DfID's comprehensive police, intelligence, national security coordination and defence programming for Sierra Leone has never been attempted elsewhere by the UK. This is striking, if only because Sierra Leone is hailed again and again as a UK success story in peacebuilding programming in general, and SSR specifically. DfID's reluctance to engage in defence and intelligence matters is related to the fact that both lie at the core of state sovereignty. However, it certainly also reflects a general reluctance within DfID to engage with matters relating to national security, which are not seen as the 'core' business of UK international development programmes.
In many ways, Sierra Leone's SSR process happened in a relative policy vacuum; it was a reaction to the imminent collapse of the state and supported by London at the highest political level, including the Office of the Prime Minister. The fact that DfID today is talking about 'security and justice' rather than 'security sector reform' is an indication of its continued uneasiness with involvement in national security/sovereignty issues. This uneasiness notwithstanding, DfID is now conducting defence-related programming in Sudan.

Establishing the SLP as the primary provider of internal security was a key priority for the Government of Sierra Leone. As early as 1996, newly-elected President Kabbah had requested support from the UK (Albrecht 2009:4). As noted, both Sierra Leone officials and DfID were focused at the time on the SLP as primary internal security provider; limited attention was given to the need to improve ministerial capacity, prisons and other justice sector institutions. (While the Law Reform Programme, active during the early days of SSR, supported the judiciary,

its relatively narrow remit primarily targeted logistical support and capacity-building).

The ONS, headed by a National Security Coordinator, was organised as a new body loosely based on the Office of the National Security Adviser, to ensure that advice intended for the President was properly coordinated and assessed. This was an attempt to ensure that activities of security sector actors were properly coordinated in the face of crises – of which there were several in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Moreover, the entirely uncoordinated manner in which Sierra Leone's leadership had received intelligence in the past had to be rectified. Under the previous system (or lack of it), the Force Commander of the armed forces and the Police Chief had provided the President independent, often conflicting, intelligence reports. This had led to inaction by the President, including in 1998-1999 when early warning reports of the rebel attack on Freetown in January 1999 were ignored. Equally important, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), a largely Nigerian peacekeeping force and the primary security provider in Sierra Leone at the time, ignored these reports as well.

Essentially, intelligence had become little more than rumour peddling, and was predominantly used against political opponents. To ensure that an information processing network was established across the country, support was provided to establish provincial and district security committees to serve as localised security coordinating bodies (essentially the ONS writ small) and early warning mechanisms.

After July 1999, military support to the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) was provided through the International Military Assistance Training Team (IMATT) and funded from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP). In addition to setting up a comprehensive training scheme, IMATT instituted a comprehensive military training schedule, mentoring of RSLAF members located in the newly re-established MoD and support for the military reintegration programme. Ministerial support initially focused predominantly on the MoD, which in the late 1990s consisted of four individuals and was referred to as little more than a 'post box,' signing off on disbursements requested by the armed forces command. Subsequent IMATT support included institution-building to ensure greater civilian control of RSLAF, civil-military integration and training in appropriate budgetary management procedures.

While this section does limited justice to the detail of how SSR was implemented in Sierra Leone (see Albrecht and Jackson 2009), it indicates the comprehensive nature of reform that took place. Indeed, the collapse of Sierra Leone's governing structures led the UK Government, and DfID in particular, to rethink how it would provide support in what was a context of war. SSR occurred at a very basic level of state-building and peacemaking-cum-building in support of one of the primary markers of sovereignty: the monopoly of the means of violence.

Transforming the Sierra Leone police (SLP)

The UK-Government of Sierra Leone partnership to transform the SLP and the broader justice sector resulted in several initiatives begun in 1998 and continuing to this day. Both development partners benefitted from the historic ties that have existed between Sierra Leone and the UK in recent history. Moreover, the UK was the only significant actor in-theatre from the mid-to-late 1990s and, as it turned out, has remained the *only* major bilateral donor in Sierra Leone until today.

In particular, the reform mandate given to the CCSSP and the unique relationship that existed between its leadership and Sierra Leone's executive illustrate how important the human factor is in development programmes – for better or for worse.

Sierra Leone's first post-war Inspector-General of Police, Keith Biddle, was a retired UK police officer appointed upon the request of then-President Kabbah. In Biddle, Kabbah got a police chief fully committed to him and to resurrection of the SLP, who did not carry the political and historical baggage that a Sierra Leonean might have brought to the position. Biddle's appointment reflected the President's interest in securing substantial police reforms; evidence of vastly improved SLP operations and morale today speak to Biddle's success in turning around the SLP. While public perceptions of the SLP continue to reflect concerns about police corruption, citizens also recognise that as an organisation it has come a long way. At the same time, this does not mean, of course, that the SLP is now the only organisation providing internal security in the country at the local level.

Mandate, focus and management of the CCSSP

When the CCSSP began implementation in October 2000, DfID had been supporting the re-establishment of civilian policing in Sierra Leone for two years through the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF).[4]

[4] The overall goal of CPDTF was to assist the Government of Sierra Leone to develop an efficient, effective and accountable police service in order to maintain a politically stable, peaceful and relatively crime-free environment conducive to economic development. The CPDTF first deployed to Sierra Leone in July 1998, included a Leader, Deputy Leader/Planning and Development Officer; Uniform Operations Officers, Crime Development Officer and Human Resource and Training Development Officer. The original work was to have lasted six months, and was supported by £500,000 for immediate operational and logistical support needs. Due to delays caused by various factors, including a major attack by the Revolutionary United Front on Freetown on January 6th, 1999, the CPDTF continued to work on its original mandate.

From October 1999, DfID had also been funding Biddle (who had arrived in Sierra Leone initially to lead the CPDTF) as IGP. (It is worth noting that even though the project had Commonwealth in its title, it was a wholly UK-funded endeavour, albeit with staff members from several Commonwealth countries). These officials helped produce a comprehensive needs assessment in advance of CCSSP implementation, which was conducted in close collaboration with SLP leadership. Keith Biddle notes: "We were doing, if you like, a health check of the organisation, looking at what the organisation needed to recover" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

There was a distinct sense that the SLP had to be re-built from scratch, and that basic policing had to be reintroduced. Adrian Horn, the CCSSP manager and also a former CPDTF member, notes: "There was a need for a complete restructuring of the police service in Sierra Leone. Restructuring necessitates not merely the drawing up of a new organisational structure. To achieve sustainable change, there has to be alteration in the attitudes and behaviour of all police officers, together with a critical shift in the management culture of the organisation" (Adrian Horn quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:31).

The mandate of the CCSSP was essentially the same as that of the CPDTF (see note 1) and was designed in three overlapping phases. *Phase 1* was primarily aimed at enabling the SLP to police within a post-conflict context and during the 2002 elections. This phase included the procurement of equipment, including uniforms, vehicles and radios. *Phase 2* focused on longer-term SLP development by equipping police officers with the skills necessary to improve performance and service delivery and by promoting community involvement and accountability. *Phase 3* was designed as a consolidation period during which change would be institutionalised and leadership handed over to the SLP. In addition, during this phase, the CCSSP collaborated with officers from United Nations Civilian Police (UN CIVPOL). Since late 2002 the development roles of CIVPOL and CCSSP have been coordinated by a Steering Committee chaired by the IGP. There is a distinct sense in all the reviewed material that the UN was following the CCSSP lead, not the other way around. This is perhaps not surprising, since the current IGP was a UK citizen, and given the financial strength of the CCSSP compared to the UN in the case of Sierra Leone.

The main areas of CCSSP intervention, in addition to rebuilding overall management structures of the SLP, included the following:

- Complaints, discipline and internal investigation;
- Criminal investigation (including fingerprinting and scene of crime investigation);
- Finance and administration;
- Fleet management;
- Local Needs Policing (LNP) that reflected the overall ethos of the SLP;
- Media management;
- Operational Support Division (OSD), the armed wing of the SLP charged with crowd control;
- Traffic management;
- Training; and
- Development of the Special Branch (intelligence).

By 2003, strategic advice by the CCSSP to the SLP became more disjointed; management of the programme was less visible. There was also a delay in appointing a successor to the project manager (Adrian Horn) who had been in post for four years. (It has been alleged that DfID had known about the impending end of Horn's contract for a year, but did not treat it with the necessary level of urgency).

This delay had an adverse effect on the project's momentum and highlighted the key relationship that had existed between the SLP and the individuals in charge of CCSSP, the importance of timely succession planning and the view among SLP leadership that the rank and experience of many incoming advisers was too low. As a general rule, police forces around the world place great emphasis upon rank and experience. The SLP was no different, and the issue seriously affected CCSSP-SLP relations (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:93).

As a result of the management hiatus, too much was being done by a fragmented group of consultants. Management of inter-agency relationships critical to reform efforts became progressively weaker. It came to a point where even the IGP – who was a Sierra Leonean from 2003 and onwards – was not involved in discussions about consultants' terms of reference and was informed rather than engaged in discussions about future implementation (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:93).

It also became clear that some of the activities of the CCSSP were starting to add limited value. For example, training was being provided in techniques that would have required expensive equipment which the government would not be able to afford in the short to medium-term. Moreover, the strength of the long-term ad-

viser to the OSD was compromised. Some simply considered him to have begun to identify too closely with the armed wing of the SLP, which he was only meant to advise. As a consequence, and in particular in the management vacuum between 2003 and 2005, the focus on general policing was severely weakened (see Albrecht and Jackson 2009:92).

Many international advisers in the CCSSP assumed that the programme would be rolled into the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP). The notion that JSDP was simply an extension of CCSSP was instinctively taken onboard by SLP leadership (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:94). However, at the same time, it had not been entirely clear from the outset of the JSDP to what degree police reform would continue under the new contract and equally important, if this was the case, what that re-configuration would look like. There is a sense among some former CCSSP advisers that the consultants hired by the British Council, which had won the DfID tender to implement JSDP, actually changed the programme's intended direction. That the SLP would play a role within the broader justice programme was clear. But what was not so clear, apparently, was that its role would be a greatly reduced. To this day, central figures within CCSSP insist that the JSDP made a relatively abrupt decision to disengage, relatively speaking, from the SLP.

JSDP was developed to cover the justice sector as a whole, a very different remit from the CCSSP. Certain elements did migrate from CCSSP to JSDP. These included strategic planning and management, operational intelligence activities, crime management and training, support to finance and administration systems and support to training and development, especially of middle and lower ranking officers. This left a gap in security-style operations, the support of which was transferred to DfID from the justice sector orientated JSDP. In turn, this created confusion about management and funding mechanisms among SLP leaders, and reflected tension between personalities as much as convictions of what good practice in justice sector reform is.

By the end of 2004, full-time management of CCSSP had given way to temporary management by DfID staff with a wide-ranging portfolio of diverse programmes, many of which were entirely unrelated to the police, let alone the security sector. Due to delays in the start-up of JSDP, DfID came to oversee the closure of CCSSP over an extended period of time. Strategic day-to-day management was not happening and individual CCSSP consultants filled that gap themselves (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:94).

The JSDP began implementation in March 2005. Because this programme was, and remains, a justice sector programme, its organisational and management elements are examined below in the discussion of rule of law and judicial reform.

Lead nation and coordination with other actors

Unlike the reform efforts taking place in next-door Liberia – or later in Afghanistan – SSR in Sierra Leone was predominantly led and funded by one country: the UK. However, even with one lead nation in charge, it was difficult to find the right balance of coordination. In brief, the CCSSP was very much a stand-alone project.

The fact that no one UK Department (FCO, MoD or DfID) had *de facto* charge of SSR in Sierra Leone meant that there was an inevitable lack of coordination, and to a degree, leadership in-theatre. Although the High Commission is the principal political authority among UK institutions overseas, this was not reflected in relations between the High Commission, DfID and IMATT. DfID has the financial muscle and is rarely willing to take orders from High Commission staff. This sense of separateness was exacerbated by the fact that each organisation reported back to London separately. Indeed, with respect to Sierra Leone, DfID executive decisions were made in London, as it did not have an office in-country until 2005.

Ultimately, levels of coordination were therefore directly linked to how individuals on the ground cooperated with each other. The fact that there was no sense of urgency around a comprehensive approach to SSR in the late 1990s and early 2000s made the human factor even more important (Albrecht and Buur 2009:399). This was linked with ongoing turf wars among advisers within host government institutions that were in the process of being established. In hindsight, there is a sense that in some cases project managers identified too narrowly with the organisations they were advising, both with respect to funding and political buy-in from national leadership (Albrecht and Buur 2009:400).

There were instances of coordination of police reform, however, particularly between CCSSP and UNCIVPOL. CCSSP led this coordinated effort, both financially and in terms of strategic direction. Given the dominant role played by CCSSP, coordination was relatively smooth and the potential for conflict was limited.

Relationship between the CCSSP and the Government of Sierra Leone

Relations between the SLP, the Government of Sierra Leone and the various police and broader justice sector programmes went through several phases.

From 1999-2003, relations between the police mission and the Sierra Leone government were unusual, even unique. President Kabbah appointed Biddle as IGP in 1999 for an initial two-year period (later extended until June 2003). This appointment, more than any other joint UK-host government decision, ushered in a new era in both police reform and police-government relations.

From the outset of his tenure in Sierra Leone, Biddle observed disconnects between UK funding agencies and SLP realities of the IGP position. As Biddle himself subsequently indicated it is not entirely clear that there was full realisation within the UK camp, i.e., the High Commission, of the powers held by the Sierra Leone police chief. "The High Commissioner thought that the Inspector-General was like the French Inspector-General, that you [the IGP] were there to advise on policies and look at the efficiency of the force on behalf of the Minister. You weren't actually involved in the day-to-day operations. But the truth is that in Sierra Leone, the Inspector-General of Police is the head of the police force and head of operations. The High Commission was ready to fund it [Biddle's position as IGP], even though DfID had said no" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

Relations between the IGP and the President of Sierra Leone were personal and close: Biddle had direct access to the President. Indeed, one DfID staff member close to the events noted that Biddle insisted on having direct access to the President or else he would not take up the position.[5]

Biddle's insistence on direct access to the President was based on his perception that a more structurally appropriate channel, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), had limited capacity and political will to make things happen. "I realised that he [the President] was the only person who could get anything done. And I needed the top man to say yes. I needed it directed from the top" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

[5] Biddle's position reflected that of the International Military Training Advisory Team (IMATT) Commander, who was the President's designated military adviser.

Biddle's appointment and the establishment of the CCSSP were not of a piece. However, relations between Biddle and the future CCSSP manager, Adrian Horn, were, and remain even today, extremely close. In other words, even if formally separate, links between the IGP and the CCSSP were strong, and access to the executive relatively easy as a consequence.

Biddle's support of and belief in Kabbah was unwavering, and remains so to this day: "When history's written and everybody's calmed down, I think Kabbah will be seen as a, possibly a saviour to some degree. And I personally, I like him as a man, as a person and I enjoyed working for him as a President" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

The issue of political will to transform the SLP

Prior to UK support to civil service reform in Sierra Leone, which began in late 1998, training was initiated primarily with the police and the legal sector. However, this work consisted of a series of uncoordinated initiatives during the UK's transition from a Conservative to a Labour Government and the establishment of DfID as separate from the FCO.

From the perspective of the Government of Sierra Leone, re-establishing security for the civilian population was secondary to re-establishing state legitimacy as the primary, if not sole, provider of internal security. Not only was Sierra Leone at war, but a number of strongmen that supported the Government of Sierra Leone had considerable forces at their disposal. Indeed, concerns about state legitimacy were behind a Government of Sierra Leone request to the UK Government in 1996 for total transformation of the SLP. Project appraisal activities began in 1997, but were disrupted by the AFRC coup; the CPDTF began its activities in July 1998.

In sum, political buy-in, or 'local' or 'national' ownership, was strong from the very outset of the police reform process. However, this political buy-in was the result of the political will of the state executive and the elected government; not all relevant political leaders in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s supported widespread reform. Indeed, as the SLP gained in strength, IGP Biddle arrested a number of those leaders, including Hinga Norman and Foday Sankoh, who in the late 1990s and early 2000s were being considered war criminals.

Chief executive support for police reform was compounded by a number of additional factors. The role of the armed forces in Sierra Leone politics and its perceived col-

lusion with rebel forces and attacks on the civilian population caused the President to consider disbanding the army altogether and expand the SLP instead. For a short period of time, the army was in fact disbanded, only to be reinstated in December 1999 (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:23). In any case, the SLP was regarded by most political stakeholder as the agency which would provide long-term internal security.

Another reason for the prioritisation of the SLP relates to one of the most controversial decisions taken in the late 1990s, i.e., to invest heavily in the armed wing of the SLP, then called the Special Security Division (SSD) and renamed the Operational Support Division (OSD) in March 2003. Up until the 1992 military coup, the SSD had been regarded as then President Siaka Steven's personal security force; it allegedly consisted primarily of members of Steven's Limba tribe. Indeed, among the SSD's many names was 'Siaka Stevens' Dogs' (Stevens belonged to the All People's Congress (APC), while Kabbah was Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP)).

Consequently, following the war, there was a strong inclination in the executive branch to dismantle the SSD. However, when rebel forces attacked Freetown in January 1999, the SSD played a vital role in the defence of the city. This perceived loyalty allegedly led Kabbah to change his position about the SSD's value and support SLP reform even more strongly. Moreover, as will be explored below, IGP Biddle was convinced that armed police officers were an outright necessity if the state was to reclaim its role as the primary security provider in Sierra Leone.

Local ownership, transfer of SLP control to local leadership and sustainability

After four years as Sierra Leone's IGP, Biddle was replaced by the first post-war Sierra Leonean, Brima Acha Kamara in June 2003. With the handover came fears that a native Sierra Leonean leadership would resort to police methods similar to those used before the conflict and that UK support would disappear. Indeed, access to funding did change significantly in the sense that a Sierra Leonean IGP could not make the same demands as those of an expatriate IGP, particularly on donor resources (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:89).

At the same time, in the words of current IGP Brima Acha Kamara, "it became easier because we started to own the thing – everybody became involved in a very active way. The umbrella [of international leadership] was gone, and the message that had been very much conveyed to us was that in any situation there must be one leader,

but that we could only make it as a team. There was that awareness among us that we should be seen to sustain what had been done. We started to review some of the policies, whether they suited us, and the Executive Management board [the highest decision-making body in the SLP] became much livelier. Before, we said that whatever Keith decided was the right thing – without much discussion. Confidence started to come; we became bolder and dismantled a lot of the check points that existed across the country. Our own situation in the SLP had been unique. Keith was British, but the whole team was Sierra Leonean. In our various roles we were able to assist him; he worked through us. If you take Keith out, all the key players were still in place" (Brima Acha Kamara quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:89).

For the senior level of the SLP, this confidence does not seem to have weakened over the years. First of all, a strong sense of pride in what has been achieved remains among leading SLP figures. An assessment carried out in 2009 noted, "[t]he SLP senior management team at Police Headquarters in Freetown appear confident, having a firm understanding of the reform agenda and its associated processes" (JSDP OPR 2009:17).

In the run-up to Kamara succeeding Biddle, there was a good deal of confusion about when and how police leadership succession would take place. In fact, however, a plan to that effect had been in the making since early 2001. The President and the Police Council, together with the largely defunct Ministry of Internal Affairs and substantial input from Biddle, approved the final succession plan. Chief among the plan's directives were that the IGP be appointed by the President on the advice of the Police Council and with approval of Parliament.

The succession plan placed police officers with the potential to occupy top leadership positions into three categories:

- Those with the potential to fill the highest positions of IGP, Deputy Inspector-General (DIG) and Assistant Inspector-General (AIG);
- Those with the potential to advance into the first category; and
- Those in junior ranks with the potential to succeed to higher levels.

Comprehensive discussions took place in the Police Council on the strengths and weaknesses of potential candidates for various high-level positions.[6] Police Council

[6] Candidates were split into three categories. Tier one was for those with the strongest potential for next appointment to IGP and DIG. Tier two was for those with potential to fill what was called Assistant Commissioner at the time in the near future (now AIG). Tier three was for those of developing potential for senior appointments.

members and the President subsequently observed identified candidates. Those having potential to rise to inspector-general ranks were frequently tasked to make presentations to the Police Council. Many were tasked to brief the President and accompany him on official functions throughout the country (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:91). The mix of potential candidates was across the ethnic spectrum, but was limited in terms of gender equality: there were only two women officers of sufficient seniority for consideration (both are now AIGs).

The selection procedure for Biddle's successor included the scrutiny of nine candidates. It is said that neither political consideration nor tribal preferences were part of the selection equation (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:91-92). While this may be difficult to verify, Kamara, Biddle's successor, and many of the senior officers who were trained during the life of the CCSSP, remain in post in 2009 as the Government has changed from the SLPP to the APC.

Local buy-in

Spoilers and drivers within the SLP

There was a clear understanding from the outset of the reform process that resistance to what was an organisational overhaul would be a reality. On a general level, senior officers would resist change because they would have to put in more effort and comply with new, demanding accountable systems and procedures. In addition, external advisers and Biddle with executive powers held unprecedented powers to replace senior officers with officers who were reform-friendly. It was therefore almost a given that changes in power structures would be resisted. Resistance was also coming from the lower ranks as they, too, had to work harder under better supervisory systems.

CCSSP and Biddle also dealt with spoilers in more direct ways. For example, the head of the Police Hospital and his officers were resisting change for what was deemed to be "obvious corrupt reasons" (CCSSP Report, December 2000). After being briefed on the issue by the project adviser, Biddle decided that an "honest and capable officer" should be trained as the officer-in-charge of the Police Hospital (CCSSP Report, December 2000). Furthermore, he mapped out a course of action to "revamp this unit" and "get rid of the suspected corrupt conglomerate of officers from the unit" (CCSSP Report, December 2000). This no-nonsense approach underscored the reality that external advisors – those in CCSSP and the IGP – were in charge of the

SLP. In the end, resistance to their decisions to clear the organisation of obstructive elements was futile, and the SLP was effectively run by the UK.

At the same time, however, there was also a strong sense among a number of officers within the SLP that changes were necessary. Many of these officers, who were relatively young when reforms began, ended up in management positions as they were hand-picked by the IGP to move the SLP from a 'force in a crisis' to a 'force for good' (the idea of the concept and slogan - 'force for good' – came from a piece of stationery from a police force in Kent, UK (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009)).

Among the officers hand-picked by Biddle, and one of the key figures of the SLP transformation process, was Assistant-Inspector General Training Kadi Fakondo (currently considered third in command in the SLP). Fakondo was in no doubt as to why change was necessary: "There were people that were benefiting from the system, how it used to work. We were yearning for change, we had an idea about what change should be. We had three groups of people standing, those who were ready to jump onboard, those who were confused and those who didn't want to see change. It was the responsibility of those who wanted change to lead the way. Even if we don't have the funding, we have put in place systems. We need to look at the terms and conditions of the SLP. We have tried to convince the executive board to have a female committee. The executive board is saying that we have a police board. However, this is the policy of gender mainstreaming. Why are we able to bring this up? Because the foundation has been laid. I have always wanted to be a proud police officer; I have been to forums where I've been pushed aside, where someone would be verbally highly abusive of the police. Because I had support, I had the confidence to speak up – and you can only speak your case when others are listening. I knew what I wanted, I wanted to be a proud police officer. Where else would I go? The war in fact made it possible for people to speak up" (Kadi Fakondo quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:143-144).

While this quote cannot be taken as representative of the SLP as a whole, it reflects the strong sense of achievement and pride among many SLP police officers, particularly at the management level.

Popular perceptions

Results of a survey of 250 citizens across Sierra Leone were published in a recent book written by Albrecht and Jackson (2009:189-197) in collaboration with key actors in Sierra Leone's security sector institutions. This survey was conducted in 2008 in

four of the country's Eastern, Southern, Northern and Western regions. One district was chosen in the Western and Southern regions; two were chosen in the Eastern and Northern regions.

Survey results make clear that security forces across Sierra Leone are far better deployed and enjoy a better reputation than before or during the war. Survey respondents across the districts cited the increased visibility of security forces as well as their deployment in areas where they had not previously been present (or where the perception was that they had not been present). Given the all but complete collapse of the SLP and the fact that district police stations and posts were disconnected from Freetown and attacked during the conflict, the reach of the police was no doubt limited, in many places non-existent.

According to the survey, communication between security forces and the civilian population has improved greatly. (Prior to and during the war, citizens feared and sometimes attacked the police in certain towns and districts). Respondents in general (96% in Bombali) stated that their security has also improved.

However, while the army is now regarded as out of politics and no longer a security threat to civilians, the situation with the SLP is more complex. Since the police interface with local communities and play a key internal security role (often in close cooperation with local chiefs), there are increased opportunities for miscommunications and conflicts. In addition, while SLP's reputation has improved greatly, citizens see SLP corruption as endemic and intractable.

While citizen perceptions of SLP corruption may be somewhat exaggerated, they still have a point. Police prefer certain SLP positions because they provide access to money (e.g., traffic work); in the provinces checkpoints are set up to extort money from ordinary citizens. In Kono, for instance, such checkpoints are sometimes set up right next to the police station and employ young, chronically unemployed men to question citizens.

At the same time, cooperation between local communities and the SLP is undeniably stronger. The former hand over criminals that they apprehend to the nearest police post (many villages are not easily accessible to the police due to their small number, Sierra Leone's infrastructure, and transportation options). In cases where the divisional Local Unit Commander takes a personal interest, there is also widespread use of Local Policing Partnership Boards and SLP Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investiga-

tion Departments. One of the SLP units cited for effectiveness most frequently in the survey is the Family Support Unit, which deals with domestic violence.

Many Sierra Leoneans still refer to the SLP as the 'most corrupt' state institution in the country. This, however, should not detract from the fact that up to 98% of the respondents in Kambia, for instance, said that the SLP, relatively speaking, had improved.

Technical and operational reform and long-term sustainability

The CCSSP will above all, if a bit unfairly, be remembered primarily for its heavy focus on technical/operational support, including procurement of equipment and training. While the CCSSP and Biddle were also very much involved in overhauling the SLP organisation, they certainly regarded new hardware as absolutely essential. Procurement of vehicles, uniforms and radios was seen as vital to enhance movement, visibility and communication of the SLP across the country.

In 1998, uniforms were provided for all operational police officers (according to one assessment, uniforms had not been purchased since the early 1980s). Approximately US$219,416 was earmarked by DfID to procure two new pairs of uniforms (made in Sierra Leone) and a pair of shoes for each operational police officer, from Constable to Chief Inspector. Police identity cards were also introduced to strengthen SLP visibility and authority.

The biggest technical/operational support issue was, and remains, the long-term affordability of hardware bought in the late 1990s and early 2000s. To put this into perspective, the affordability issue is also critical with respect to paying salaries. Indeed, limited affordability of state services cuts across all state institutions. The issue of affordability of the Sierra Leone security sector was substantiated in an expenditure study by Middlebrook and Miller in 2006. Apart from limited state revenue and corruption, off-budget funding, which has been significant in Sierra Leone, frequently leads to undisciplined fiscal practices.

In Sierra Leone and other post-conflict countries where revenue mobilisation by state institutions is weak, Middlebrook and Miller note, there often is too great a prioritisation of building physical assets like infrastructure, without planning for or even taking into account associated recurrent expenditure requirements. Certainly, the urgent need to enhance SLP mobility took priority over strategic planning, national ownership and sustainability. Inevitably, this has long-term implications for service delivery. The cost of the SLP vehicle fleet, for instance, is for now beyond the capacity of the state to pay for, but nonetheless critical for the SLP to be able to provide public service.

Certainly the case of Sierra Leone indicates that the process of transforming the SLP in terms of force size, increased pay and grading and improved facilities has taken place

without realistic life-cycle cost considerations. This issue was brought to the attention of the Government of Sierra Leone, but not acted upon (indeed, the donation of vehicles and communication equipment was conditional upon the Government agreeing and planning to undertake future financing).

However, given the urgency of the country's situation in the late 1990s, wholesale criticism of the government's inability to grapple with the long-term financing issue is a bit 'cheap'. When the CPDTF and CCSSP began implementation, Sierra Leone was fighting a war; there was an urgent need to improve visibility, mobility and the ability of the SLP to communicate across the country. Clearly, the Government of Sierra Leone was completely incapable of financing what the UK could provide.

At the same time, both host governments and donors have much to learn about the appropriate balance between quick impact and long-term sustainability. Sierra Leone can be accused of avoiding the eventual need to pay the piper. Donors can be accused of turning a blind eye to the reality that what is needed is not always sustainable, which must be addressed at the outset of police reform and related programming. However, a more appropriate approach to long-term planning might be to conclude at the outset that initial investments by donors are *not* considered sustainable. As noted by DfID's Deputy Programme Manager in charge of security-related programming from 2003-2006: "In 2006, when I left Sierra Leone, the SLP needed to replace 100 vehicles a year of their 800-strong fleet; they could afford to replace 10" (White 2008:8). And he continues: "The only thing worse than not having any capacity is having temporary capacity that is then taken away" (White 2008:8).

The investment in infrastructure and equipment

Buildings

The year 2002, when the war in Sierra Leone was officially declared over, marked a critical change of context. Access to areas such as Makeni, Kabala, Koidu and Kailahun was now possible. The police entered these areas first, together with UN peacekeepers. In most places there was very little in terms of infrastructure, which had not been maintained during the pre-war regime under Stevens or Momoh and had been targeted during Sierra Leone's conflict by the warring factions, particularly the RUF.

In Motema Division, Kono District, the RUF had mined for diamonds under what was the only divisional police station before and during the war (town min-

ing, in general, was widespread during the war). Indeed, it was believed that the police station had been put in this location because the area was diamondiferous. Moreover, even if the police as a state agency did enter many areas of Sierra Leone cut off during the war, the capacity of individual officers was at this point in time very low. As noted by an observer at the time, the presence of the SLP was primarily a matter of making the state visible again – they certainly were not capable of providing comprehensive security faced with the warring factions (interview, Benjamin Kamara, 2009).

At the time, the CCSSP had limited funds available to re-build police infrastructure, an issue that still hampers full SLP deployment across the country today. According to Biddle, then UK Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short believed in the early 2000s that other bilateral and multilateral donors would begin to provide support, a belief held across the board of UK-funded SSR programmes. This, however, did not happen and the UK's DfID (referred to, at times, as Sierra Leone's wealthiest Ministry) has remained the country's primary donor agency.

During the life of CPDTF, some money had been spent on painting the exteriors of police stations to give the impression that changes were taking place. Similarly, superficial renovation of police cells was undertaken.

However, in the early 2000s, the UN began to assist in larger SLP building projects. Alan Doss, UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General at the time, mobilised United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which built makeshift barracks for the police. In time, the UNDP would rebuild a number of more permanent structures for the SLP, including police stations in the communities of Makeni, Lokomossa and Kamakwie. These activities were conducted under the Sierra Leone Infrastructure Reconstruction Programme (SLIRP) and the Community Reintegration Programme (CRP). Money was also found through the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives (HIPC) (interview, Keith Biddle, 2009).

However, this investment in police accommodation created tension with the armed forces, who were not receiving the same quality buildings as the police.[7]

[7] Aldo Gaeta (draft, 2008), Operation Pebu, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 5, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

The Police Training School and Police Hospital

Advisers arrived in Sierra Leone with expertise developed in their respective home countries, primarily the UK; their solutions to SLP reform reflected perspectives honed in their original contexts. Apart from providing substantial training, CCSSP concluded that little sustainable progress could be made by the SLP in the delivery of a range of training programmes without appropriate training infrastructure to support their implementation. A training facility was perceived as vital to accommodate the anticipated increase of SLP personnel from 6,000 to the target of 9,500.

Initially, CCSSP project funds financed the majority of the emergency rebuild and rehabilitation of buildings, which provided the SLP with a basic training facility that could accommodate up to 200 students. Subsequently, in 2003, the UN provided funding to build additional classrooms and student accommodation for a further 100 officers. DfID agreed to fund additional build at around US$2.4 million for another 300 student places. By the end of 2004, 900 recruits were undergoing training.

As with the Police Training School, support was also given to the Police Hospital, including construction of an additional building to house the administration section. Necessary furniture, racks and cupboards for the store and other office requirements were supplied. All existing buildings were repainted after necessary additions were finished.

Provision of equipment – vehicles and communications

Before CPDTF and subsequent CCSSP implementation, the SLP had not only been targeted by warring factions, but had suffered from severe neglect by the pre-war government. Police procurement had ground to a halt. This, of course, changed as CPDTF and CCSSP began implementation. Procurement became comprehensive, ranging from office pens to transportation systems. For example, CCSSP programme funds provided the SLP Media Department with computers, photocopiers, a television, a video camera caption generator, a video cassette rewinder, video decks, an editing machine, stationery, micro tapes, cameras and handouts.

DfID began to supply vehicles and communications equipment as well as technical assistance to support operationalisation of the equipment in 2001. (It should be noted that in 1998, the German Government had provided 20 jeeps to the SLP, which were immediately deployed in the Western Area, the peninsula where the capital of Freetown is located. (Project Completion Report, September 2007)). In the short-

term, SLP vehicles and communications projects did increase police visibility and improved police response to crimes.

Procurement of uniforms also increased visibility and helped re-establish police presence and credibility. Before and during the war individuals without uniforms or identity cards, claiming to be police officers, would make arrests. The mere presence of uniformed personnel began to function as a deterrent (and, of course, in some cases, a provocation) to crime.

Apart from externally-funded projects, the spread of mobile phones in recent years has greatly enhanced police communication. Mobile telephone communications is likely to be more sustainable in the long run since the Government is unable to replace SLP's communications system, at least in the medium-term. The spread of mobile phones has also enhanced communication between the police and public, including some members of Local Policing Partnership Boards, who have been given the telephone numbers of the Local Unit Commanders.

Reviews conducted during the phased delivery of vehicles and communications equipment highlighted weaknesses in management, deployment, and maintenance of the kit – another reflection of the tension between short-term needs and long-term sustainability. Final shipments of vehicles and communications equipment was delayed and subsequently conditioned on a strategic review of the vehicles and communications programme and a presentation by the SLP to DfID justifying use of the hardware. In addition, while it is unquestionable that the vehicle fleet and nationwide communication system have improved the SLP's ability to deploy and enhanced their ability to respond, there is little management information to support this (institutional memory through proper recording of activities and events is a weakness throughout Sierra Leone's civil service) (Project Completion Report, September 2007).

As already indicated above, the biggest challenge facing the SLP is the ability to allocate future funds to meet the high costs of maintaining and replacing vehicles and the communications system. While the SLP include bids for these purposes in their annual budget, their actual allocations have fallen far short of what is required. This reality has already hit the provinces, greatly reducing movement in a country that has poor road infrastructure. Indeed, in some areas, the police use private vehicles on duty, and local police officers request transportation money from villagers when called upon to investigate crimes. In other words, there is a slide towards what some may refer to as pre-war conditions.

Recent assessments suggest that although there was an emergency need for rapid delivery of vehicles and communication equipment in the early 2000s, an earlier longer-phased delivery approach linked to the organisational development process should have been adopted (Project Completion Report, September 2007). This was the conclusion reached by external evaluators, though such a plan had, in fact, been drafted in 1999 (interview, Keith Biddle, February 2010). It has also been argued that insufficient attention was given in the early stages of the CCSSP to explore the financial implications for sustaining a large vehicle fleet and an extensive communication network. This need was only properly identified by DfID in 2003. The same tension between short-term needs and stabilisation and longer-term thinking and sustainability can be observed to an even greater extent with respect to military support (see Albrecht and Jackson 2009:97).

In hindsight, too much logistical investment took place at a time when the SLP did not have the know-how, capacity or discipline to maintain it. The Government of Sierra Leone lacked the financial strength – and still does – to replace vehicles and communications systems. Moreover, there was an insufficient number of SLP officers trained to use and maintain the vehicles and communications system. There have been a number of serious accidents and vehicles being written off; communications equipment has been regularly broken, lost, abused or stolen (Project Completion Report, September 2007).

In an ideal situation, capacity-building should have taken place prior to provision of logistical support. However, in the emergency situation that existed in Sierra Leone in 2000, the supply of logistical support to help stabilise the country and begin the state-building process was considered more important than long-term sustainability.

The importance of wage levels

Low – or non-existent – salaries of state employees were a contributing factor to the collapse of state institutions in the first place. Poor conditions of service have a destabilising effect on the public sector. They cause a high rotation of trained staff, reduce overall efficiency of service delivery and contribute to police corruption. In turn, poor conditions of service have made it difficult to recruit and retain well-qualified staff: it remains next to impossible to attract skilled Sierra Leoneans in the Diaspora to the public service without donors topping up their salaries by a significant margin (Albrecht and Malan 2006:55).

Salary levels of security personnel, combined with general conditions of service, have the potential to destabilise Sierra Leone again. Current low salaries are not enough of an incentive to carry out a challenging public service such as the provision of internal security. Indeed, the absence of wages was allegedly one of the very reasons why junior officers in the armed forces staged a successful coup in 1992.

Curbing corruption

Corruption – the use of public office and access to government money for private gain – is rampant in Sierra Leone. This is to a degree accepted, even expected, by citizens and officials alike. Many Sierra Leoneans respect wealth – as well as conspicuous consumption – and care relatively little about where the money comes from. Criticism of corruption is less about the harmful practice of abusing public office than it is about limited or no access to resources through what is considered by external actors to be corruption.

The consequences of corruption have implications for the country's internal security institutions, both due to perceptions in the public and the reality of slow development. Corruption is not exclusively political in societies such as Sierra Leone's; it is social, and therefore unlikely to be remedied by external pressure to establish oversight mechanisms. Donors sometimes seem to forget that it is the people working in institutions, not the institutions themselves, who act.

Combined with the generally low public sector salary levels, SLP corruption can not be considered in isolation. It is found at all levels of public service. Police leadership takes bribes to stop investigation, decide not to prosecute and promote certain officers. As noted above, lower ranks will set up checkpoints with youth groups to extort money. Theft of exhibits also occurs. Because of access to money and resources, favourite police assignments have been traffic management; work in diamond-rich areas, check point duty and, until recently, immigration (the immigration function was removed from the police in 1998 and moved to the Ministry of Internal Affairs). In diamond-rich areas, virtually all levels of the SLP, from Constable to Local Unit Commander, are affected by illicit mining and trading and the potential for personal gain.

Nonetheless, steps have been taken in an attempt to strengthen accountability within the SLP. Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investigation Department (CDIID) was instituted early in the reform process. Overall CDIID responsi-

bility rests with an Assistant Commissioner; a Chief Superintendant heads the Department. There is a small administrative section which records all complaints from the public and internal discipline procedures. The administration section also produces statistics information for the benefit of the Police Council, IGP and the police in general.

Between February 2000 and February 2001, the CDIID recorded 410 complaints from members of the public, 239 discipline cases and 127 miscellaneous matters. As a result, a number of police officers were prosecuted for criminal and discipline offences (CCSSP Report, June 2001).

The introduction of satellite CDIID Units in the provinces has been another important step to decentralise the SLP and promote stronger police ethics in the police force. However, while all police stations now have some form of CDIID presence, exposing corruption is generally compromised due to the traditional sense of loyalty among police officers. Many, if not most, police officers feel that bearing witness against a colleague is against their code of honour. Depending on their level of seniority, those who do so will be socially sanctioned.

Legislation in the form of The Police (Discipline) Regulations became operative in June 2001. This legislation established internal processes to encourage professionalism and accountability within the SLP, whilst instilling confidence in the public that their complaints about poor police performance will be pursued. Three-man (formerly one-man) tribunals were created to adjudicate infractions. For the first time the discipline code applied to all, from the rank of Constable to Inspector-General (previous legislation had exempted senior officers from prosecution). All members of the SLP receive personal copies of the Regulation; CDIID officers are expected to discuss ethical issues with each officer.

Tribalism, while it does not meet the strict definition of corruption, remains a factor not only in the SLP, but in public service as a whole. A common understanding in Sierra Leone is that if a person from a particular tribe holds a key position, he or she will support only fellow tribe members and ignore or denigrate members of other tribes (for a more in-depth discussion of aspects of tribalism within the SLP, see section below on 'Tribalism, favouritism and nepotism').[8]

[8] I use the terms 'tribalism' and 'tribe' – instead of 'ethnic group,' for instance – because they are widely used by Sierra Leoneans themselves.

A simple, but effective measure to lessen social and political pressure that can foster police corruption is the introduction of a rotation system, whereby police officers (in theory) are to serve no more than two years in the same Local Command Unit. This rule has been difficult to uphold, particularly among the lower ranks. Efforts have also been made to ensure that an officer does not serve in his or her home area, so to avoid the most obvious tribal allegiances. Within the OSD – the armed wing of the SLP – the norm has been that officers would serve in a particular group for a set period before being trained and transferred to another group. Rotation between groups would depend on the officer's performance and, in the case of armed officers, on the results of periodic test shoots. If the officer fails, he or she will be transferred to the Police Support Group or outside the OSD.

Recruitment and requirements

With the introduction of the one-party constitution in 1978 and the appointment of the Commissioner of Police as a Member of Parliament from the ruling party, the SLP had effectively been transformed into a political organisation and its leaders into political players. At the same time, there were direct links between the political elite and SLP. Thus, police recruitment changed from a system based on competitive examination (established during the British colonial era) to a system based on patronage. Senior officers routinely promoted their favourites up the police hierarchy.

President Kabbah and CPDTF advisors began to establish modern civil service standards in the SLP in the late 1990s. The 1998 police charter, published by Kabbah and written by CPDTF advisers, emphasised that "personnel policies of the Sierra Leone Police will be the same for all members, regardless of sex or ethnic origin. All recruitment, training, posting, promotions and opportunities for development will be based on a published equal opportunities policy" (Policing Charter quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:30).

On the basis that there "has been no clear policy regarding recruitment to CID [Criminal Investigation Division] for as long as anybody can remember" (CCSSP Report, October 2000), a recruitment scheme was designed and operational by 2002. Recruitment experts estimated that approximately 1,200 new recruits had to be trained annually to take the force from 6,500 members at the end of the war to a recommended force of 9,500. According to former IGP Biddle, the appropriate, number of police officers should be approximately 12,000 (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

Recruitment was complicated by the fact that the Police Training School needed more classroom buildings, billeting facilities, furniture and staff training. Another challenge that underscored the need for increased recruitment was that in order to maintain a modicum of internal security, officers would have to work beyond retirement age. In 2002 a quarter of the force was estimated to be due for retirement before 2012.

Another related difficulty was finding educated and capable youth for enlistment. This has proven particularly difficult because of the disruption of schooling facilities during the conflict. To address this issue, recruitment programme designers decided to lower academic qualifications to the equivalent of grade five. All those who qualified at the written examination conducted by the department would go for an interview (at one examination held in November 2002, out of 1250 applicants who sat for the exam, 500 were found suitable to progress to the interview stage).

The issue of illiteracy was a major concern to external advisers. By the end of the war, external advisers estimated that 1,141 sworn police officers – 17.69% of the force – were illiterate. One assessment of the SLP in the late 1990s suggested that illiterate officers were more than likely to adjust poorly to changing social, economic and political conditions and less likely to understand complex human behaviour and police work, communicate effectively, understand modern technology and earn the confidence of fellow officers. However, even as the issue is currently being addressed, and has been since the early 2000s, illiteracy will probably remain an obstacle to developing a professional police force for many years to come.

Procedures for screening of recruits were also put in place, which, according to CCSSP documentation, included an initial reference to records and subsequent interviews. However, the reference to 'records' in much of the documentation in the late 1990s and early 2000s must be seriously questioned. Most records had not been kept or had been destroyed during the war. There is no evidence that police officers, as soldiers, after satisfactory screening of 'service records' had their names posted at strategic places throughout the country for vetting by the public.

This, however, has been picked up by the current IGP Kamara, who noted in 2009: "Because we don't have criminal records, we go to the community, because this is where the service is being delivered, the community people, how do they see the performer? This is how they became part of the promotion board and recruitment process. These are the people who live with these young guys in the community" (interview, Brima Acha Kamara, June 2009). There is no doubt that

this is the best solution in Sierra Leone, where costly – and technology demanding – systems are likely not to be maintained, simply because the resources to do so are not available.

In 1998, The CPDTF published an equal opportunities programme to remove much of the "morale-sapping mistrust that presently surrounds the issue of promotions, postings, training opportunities and transfers. The programme will also ensure that political favouritism and undue influence is removed from these issues" (CPDTF Report, July-August 1998). While such a goal is laudable, it was not realistic. In effect, political control of the SLP remains firmly in place, a circumstance which has been compounded by a Ministry of Interior, which is considered to exist in little more than name. The Police Council continues to appoint high-level positions within the police (as well as confirm rank, dismissals, reduction in rank and disciplinary control). Ultimately, this is a remnant of pre-war demands by the President to centralise power in as few individuals as possible, and was from 1991 embedded in Sierra Leone's Constitution. It means that the SLP has no dedicated political leadership at Cabinet level, an issue which I will return to in greater detail below.

Tribalism, favouritism and nepotism

Though empirically unproven, the general perception is that Northern tribes dominate Sierra Leone's public service, and that Limbas and Temnes have been the majority tribe in the police force. The All People's Congress (APC), the party in power before the war and also currently holding office, is dominated by northern tribes. In turn, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there have been numerous allegations against the first post-war Government led by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) that it has catered to the Mendes, dominant in the south, while actively excluding the Temnes.

There is no doubt that tribalism in Sierra Leone still plays a political role in the SLP. As noted by IGP Kamara, referring to the early 2000s: "If you don't come from a certain tribe, believe me, they make sure they wreck you" (interview, Brima Acha Kamara, June 2009). Regardless of the actual impact of tribal identity on the SLP organisation, the perception that it is vital remains to this day.

At the beginning of UK involvement in re-building the SLP, external advisors did not understand the complexities and nuances of tribalism. When Biddle arrived in

Sierra Leone in 1998, he and his team were told that all SLP promotions, transfers and appointments were made on a tribal basis and that the hierarchy and 'best posting' – those from where the most money could be extorted – were in the hands of members of the Limba tribe (as noted above, former Presidents Siaka Stevens, but also Joseph Momoh, his successor, were Limbas).

As IGP, Biddle therefore supervised a staff review of the tribal make-up of the SLP. The review concluded that SLP recruitment, promotions, transfers and appointments were not tribally-based, but that there was clear evidence of political bias due to previous recruitment practices. Politicisation of the SLP had resulted in potential recruits and serving officers of all tribal backgrounds approaching politicians to try to influence the IGP and were – for a fee – given a politician's 'calling card' (a similar system existed in the army). On the reverse side of these cards there was an instruction that the officer was to be appointed to such and such a position or that he or she was to be recruited into the SLP. As IGP, Biddle had some politicians call on him to have an officer transferred or promoted. This practice stopped, however, when Biddle had some politicians escorted from police headquarters by OSD – i.e. armed – officers.

According to Biddle, in the course of a large force promotion process in 2000, promotions reflected tribal percentages of the population without social engineering or political interference. When the inevitable complaints about tribal under-representation arose from the youth wing of the Mende-dominated governing party, the President rejected these complaints and the promotions stood.

Based on new recruitment procedures that include objective selection tests and criteria, the present hierarchy within the police, many of whom were chosen by Biddle, reflects the national tribal distribution. The IGP is a Limba, the Deputy Inspector-General is a Mende; among the 10 AIGs there are three Mende, one Shebro Mende, three Temne, two Kono and one Krio. By contrast, in 1998 the top team, over whom the CPDTF had no influence, consisted of five Mende, one Loko, one Kissy, two Limba and two Krio.

Regardless of the actual impact of tribal identity on the SLP organisation, however, the perception that it is vital remains to this day. Indeed, politics in the country is directly linked to tribal identity. In Sierra Leone more generally, it has a strong ordering effect, *inter alia,* on social status and on access to land. It therefore has to be factored into the analysis of any social institution in Sierra Leone.

Training and mentoring

By the end of the war, the SLP had lost its ability to provide meaningful public service. As noted by Kamara, the current IGP, "premium was not given to training" (interview, Brima Acha Kamara, June 2009). As noted above, external advisors concluded that the SLP had to be rebuilt, starting with the basic building blocks of policing across all roles within the SLP (investigation, traffic control, etc.). The notion of 'Back to Basics' (B2B) was introduced to conceptualize this initiative.

Skills addressed in B2B included completing entries in notebooks, interviewing skills and identifying key investigative points, recording statements from complainants, witnesses and suspects, compliance with rules of evidence and obtaining accurate descriptions of persons and properties. While these skills were indeed needed, the concept that they were 'basic' did not go down very well with the SLP. As a consequence there was some reluctance to engage with the programme (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:88-89). Interestingly, the concept of B2B is now being introduced into the security and justice programming of DfID in Nigeria.

Initial training cantered on the establishment of the SLP through recruit training; only subsequently was the full range of courses from recruit to senior management level introduced. Parallel to building the SLP's own training capacity, a heavy emphasis was initially placed on building the capacity of the top cadre of the police force through mentoring as well as training. These officers, many of whom were picked by Biddle himself, garnered by far the most attention in the initial stages of the CCSSP.

The approach was based on a perceived need to prepare for the transition from an expatriate to a Sierra Leonean IGP. The current IGP, the Deputy Inspector-General and three of the Assistant Inspector-Generals have all attended the UK Senior Command Course at the Police Staff College in Bramshill, UK, designed to train future UK Chief Constables. This focus of training within the SLP remains visible today. In the words of one of the advisers who came in to begin JSDP implementation: "The initial impression of the SLP as an institution – I was impressed with what had been done. The strategy of taking the senior team away, bringing them to the UK, exposing them to Western [i.e., UK] policing. The concern is not about the current generation, but the generation below" (interview, Anthony Howlett-Bolton, 2008). Training of the SLP's top cadre has run quite deep; approximately 70 or so officers have undergone training specific to the Sierra Leone context in the UK. According to Biddle, 55 of these trainees are estimated to occupy chief superintendent and superintendent positions (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

While some elements of the retraining process was delivered by the staff of Sierra Leone's own Police Training School (PTS) in Hastings, other elements of the retraining required, by their very nature, more specialised input. Training curricula would therefore be discussed with the Project Adviser (e.g. of the OSD or the Criminal Investigation Department), and subsequently be developed. As indicated in note 8, the training strategy emphasizes the importance of developing the capacity of Sierra Leonean officers to provide training.[9]

Given the extensive period over which CCSSP ran, the quality as well as number of trainers/mentors varied. It appears that after the tenures of Biddle and Horn, IGP and CCSSP leader, respectively, trainers came from lower ranks than during the early life of the project. There were also instances of forensics training, for instance, which would have required sophisticated equipment that the SLP was not financially able to buy, let alone maintain.

[9] A training strategy was presented in 2001. While the first phase had revolved around giving personnel the necessary understanding of their role within society and the knowledge, phase two, around which the training strategy revolved around a greatly expanded mandate. The second phase of development of training capacity had five objectives, including:

1. Improve and develop the infrastructure of the Police Training School and Operations Training Centre as well as establish three regional training centers, capable of supporting a maximum of 810 students under training at any one time.
2. Establish an accountable line management structure within the Training Branch.
3. Create an administrative unit and systems, capable of supporting the day-to-day operations of the Police Training School, and providing management data on personnel and their development.
4. Introduce a range of courses that address the operational needs of the organisations whilst allowing personnel to develop on both a professional and individual basis.
5. Increase the number of trainers, proportionate to the demand placed on training. Enhance the professional and technical skills of the training staff.

Institutional transformation

The pre-war SLP has been described as a 'rank-conscious military style force' with little or no reference to either modern-day policing or planning. There was no transparency or accountability. Everything was secretive as indeed were all matters concerning national security. Sierra Leone was a state in which all decisions that the executive deemed of importance were taken in Freetown, and often by the President himself.

Guided by advisers, Biddle and Horn in particular, the SLP's rank system was simplified, decision-making was decentralised and the concept of 'Local Needs Policing' was introduced to guide the basic approach of a new police force. The aggressive and regime-preserving style of the SLP, dominant up until the first military coup in 1992, gave way to a realisation that engaging with the population and rebuilding a degree of trust, would be vital to ensure that the force could recover.

This is all the more important since Sierra Leone is a country where 'policing by consensus' with other actors such as paramount and section chiefs is a reality. At the same time, because the CCSSP began implementation during open conflict and because Kabbah was keen on re-establishing the SLP as provider of internal security, there was a strong emphasis on the armed wing of the force. Officially, at least, this means that the SLP has ended up with strong components of both community-policing and paramilitary policing in the spirit of Local Needs Policing. However, even if the SLP is presented abroad as the only African police force that is unarmed, its armed wing, the OSD, constitutes one-third of its strength.

One of the conspicuous weaknesses of the CCSSP has been limited, if any, results with respect to building the political capacity, i.e., the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Parliament, to support and manage the SLP. Instead, the Police Council, the highest decision-making body of the police has been kept in place; it is chaired by the Vice-President as proscribed by the 1991, pre-war Constitution. The executive therefore remains in full control of key SLP decisions, the police have no dedicated representation in Cabinet and parliamentary oversight remains weak.

Management style

A key element of the SLP's ongoing transformation process has been its change management programmes, which have sought to initiate, implement and monitor organi-

sational and operational interventions designed to improve police effectiveness. Essentially, change management involves outlining strategic direction for the future police force. In November 2001, IGP Biddle opened an office within the SLP to administer and accelerate the change process. This office produced a number of policy documents, including:

- Strategic Development Plan;
- Competency Framework;
- Training Policy;
- Allocation of houses belonging to the SLP;
- Policing Plan for 2002; and
- Job Descriptions of Assistant Inspector-Generals.

At the level of police stations, including those in Freetown, basic, day-to-day management practices were introduced. Books and records had not been maintained for almost twenty years due to lack of resources, a desire to leave room for manipulation and most likely also due to inertia. It was also necessary to put in place a proper division of labour according to identified tasks and activities. Indeed, it had come to a point where the officer in charge would not be able to answer even the most basic questions about his jurisdiction: How many officers are working under you? How many have come for work today? Have you got a list of officers who are posted for different duties today? Have you dealt with absenteeism at any stage during the last three months? On what date did a senior supervising officer visit your station and checked your needs, work and conduct? To the external observer, the fact that these questions could not be answered was a true indication of the extent of the decay within the SLP. The response to this decay was technical, i.e., the reintroduction of skill sets into the police.

Reorganisation at first took place from a very basic set of activities: 1) handling complaints, managing investigations and preparing files; 2) assigning duties, recording movements of officers as well as enter duty rosters; 3) maintaining books, such as lock-up registers, property receipt books and warrant registers; 4) maintaining inventories of government and departmental property; 5) monitoring the work and conduct of subordinate officers; 6) preparing for inspections by senior officers; 7) handling pay and finances; and 8) developing technical skills. The concept of KISS – 'Keep It Simple Stupid,' – was used, which was also the rationale behind B2B.

It quickly became clear that merely instructing the police on how to do the work would not be sufficient. Necessary rules, procedures and standing orders had to be formulated, and change agents identified to initiate this aspect of the SLP change process.

Organisational structure – from centralised to decentralised

It is difficult to underestimate the role played by Biddle in terms of transforming the internal organization of the SLP. Coming from the outside and with direct access to the donor community, he was able to make difficult decisions, act on them and attract funding to see them through. Previously, the IGP had been so powerful that everything emanated from and ended in his office. There was, in the words of Kadi Fakondo, one of the SLP's current Assistant Inspector-Generals, "no recognition of the value of teamwork in decision-making, let alone freedom to use one's own initiative" (Fakondo 2008:2).

Upon assuming office, Biddle appointed a team of officers from the senior cadre to assist him in managing the SLP. This body became known as the Executive Management Board, the highest decision-making body in the SLP. Regional Commanders (REGPOLS) were also appointed to assist the IGP in the four regions of the country. Local Command Units (LCU) were set up at District Level. The introduction of LCUs clearly sets the benchmark for the devolution of decision-making within the organization and was based on the new police ethos of local needs policing (more on this below). The LCU was set up to reflect the following key concepts:

- Devolve decision-making;
- Reflect roles and functions, rather than ranks;
- Manage in a caring, professional, and effective style;
- Make best use of available resources;
- Meet the principles of the Policing Charter; and
- Meet the principles of the Mission Statement.

Teamwork became the benchmark of the SLP. While the Executive Management Board was, and remains, the highest decision-making body in the Force, Commanders down to the level of the LCU have considerable room for independent decision-making. This is a fundamental break with the past; as the LCU Commander in Motema

Division, Kono District explained, the local police chief can now act in relative independence from the leadership in Freetown and can object to orders given from headquarters in the capital.

Internal organisation: rank reform

One of Biddle's first restructuring moves was to flatten the ranking system in the SLP from 22 to 10 (see Table 1) in order to focus the force on their roles and responsibilities (the idea came from previous SLP studies undertaken in 1993). This was a sensitive decision because it meant demotion for some police officers. At the same time, it was deemed necessary because decision-making in the SLP was both top-heavy and closely linked with personalities at the very top of the Sierra Leone government. As one of the SLP's current Assistant Inspector-Generals has noted: "We needed a neutral person to come in. He cleaned up" (Desmond Buck quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:36). Another Assistant Inspector-General has commented that "if outsiders had not come, there would have been a lot of political pressure on the IGP at the time" (Kadi Fakondo quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:36).

The flattening of ranks provided the necessary space to clarify and redefine roles and responsibilities of police personnel, but also sent shock waves throughout the force. The ranks of Sub-Inspector and Corporal were removed completely; those affected were demoted to Sergeants and Constables, respectively. Given the SLP's military-style, rank-conscious organisation – status by title is of great significance in Sierra Leone – the move was not well-received. This has been felt continuously within the organization until today, and many of the officers demoted by Biddle were targeted for promotion under Kamara.

Biddle recalls: "I had to stand a lot of flak from the press on that – and from politicians. With the parliamentarians I was able to say to them at the select committee: 'You asked me how I was going to change the force when you interviewed me. I did tell you this. I would have to break the seniority rules and nobody said 'no, you can't'. And the force to me seems to be far better managed than it was. They'd made their noise, and it went away" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

Key effects of reducing the number of ranks was the shortening of internal lines of communication and flattening of the hierarchy by decentralising decision-making

power. By extension, this meant an increased number of people involved in decision-making throughout the organisation.[10]

Relations between the SLP and other security organizations
During the war, anything resembling a clear distinction between internal and external security providers disintegrated. As the war was coming to an end, it was clear what the role of the SLP would be in Sierra Leone as the main provider of internal security. However, a clearly identified and redefined role for the armed forces and its mandate in Sierra Leone was also needed, given its previous central role in the politics of the country. As already noted, more than anything, the Sierra Leone SSR process was designed to contain the armed forces. Inevitably, this created tension, because ultimately the status inherent to being an army officer was being degraded through the transformation process.

In 2004, it was suggested that although awareness existed of the message of police primacy, lack of clarity nonetheless persisted. Furthermore, tension between the armed forces and the SLP was a result of perceived discrepancy in reward levels rather than a desire by soldiers to take back elements of the police's domestic security role (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:150). Such vagueness in roles and responsibilities appeared less pronounced in 2006, with members of the armed forces "perceiving their role in relation to the police more clearly with less need to make direct comparisons between themselves and the police" (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:150).

Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP)

One reason for this shift in perception no doubt relates to the formulation by the ONS of the policy defining Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP). In the words of one senior army officer, the current Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Alfred Nelson-Williams: "Before the advent of the MACP policy, there was bitter acrimony, misconception and rancour between the SLP and RSLAF, which eventually led to

[10] In summary, rank reform was done to:
1. Remove some anomalies of command and control in the operational sphere.
2. Sharpen the rank structure.
3. Clarify roles and responsibilities.
4. Remove the temptation to pass problems upwards and, therefore, should encourage decision making and problem solving to be done at the level of service delivery.
5. Remove outdated nomenclature.
6. Reduce the management overhead.
7. Increase the importance and responsibility of the superintending, inspector and sergeant ranks.

the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) delineating army-police responsibilities" (Nelson-Williams 2008:6).

According to the findings of a seminar held in 2005 in Accra with representation from key actors in the security sector, slight puzzlement was expressed over the centrality and weight conferred upon the MACP. Yet, it gave much needed clarity to relations between the SLP and the army and as such was crucial in outlining precisely when and how the army may play a role in internal security in Sierra Leone (Albrecht and Malan 2006:127-128).

MACP itself revolves around when and how the army may be employed in support of the 'civil power' in conditions of relative peace, stability and normality and in the absence of any substantive threat to the territorial integrity of Sierra Leone. It falls into categories of 'standing' and 'emergency' MACPs:

- *A standing MACP* task is one where authority is granted by the National Security Council (NSC) for the RSLAF to conduct a defined operation in support of civil power agencies for an indefinite period. The period will end when the relevant government authorities, the NSC specifically, decide that military support is no longer required.
- *An emergency MACP* task is one where specified support is provided to the civil power by the RSLAF after a specific request and NSC authority has been granted. Each task will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Tasks in this category will only be conducted in specific situations of dire emergency where the civil power is unable to deploy sufficiently appropriate resources to cope with the emergency confronting them. This includes counter-terrorism and crime in the event that the SLP is unable to provide sufficient resources in a timely manner. This type of MACP also includes point security: providing armed or unarmed RSLAF personnel to secure installations (e.g., the Presidential Lodge or a critical infrastructure site) and specialist assistance to the police in dealing with civil disturbances (Albrecht and Malan 2006:128-129).

It was within the MACP framework that the army supported the SLP during the 2007 general elections. Upon request by the SLP through the National Security Council Coordinating Group (NSCCG), the army provided pre-positioning troops before, during and after the elections, even though there were apprehensions about the viability of these activities by major stakeholders (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:151-153). The involvement of the army was made public knowledge through a press statement.

It is the prerogative of the President of Sierra Leone to call a MACP. Nonetheless, the military is often called upon to support the SLP in order to deter rioting, even at chiefdom elections. In Nimikoro Chiefdom, during Section Chief elections in November 2009, the Local Unit Commander called for the assistance of the 9th Battalion, because of tensions about specific candidates who were running for office. While it could not be verified whether the Office of the President had in fact authorised this particular MACP, there is little, if any, doubt that the decision to engage the military in elections at community level was made locally. It indicated a hierarchy of security actors, expressed in actions and words, where soldiers are more of a deterrent than police officers, including when they are unarmed.

In recent years, concerns have been raised within the ONS over the widespread use of MACP, which in turn has been used to argue for strengthening the OSD, an issue which I will return to below. In sum, while MACP has outlined the specific role that the army might play within the borders of Sierra Leone, it could end up blurring those exact boundaries that it was written to establish between police and military security tasks. Certainly, in the case of Section Chief elections in Nimikoro Chiefdom, it could legitimately be questioned why RSLAF was present.

Model of policing

The model of policing envisioned for the SLP was introduced in August 1998 when President Kabbah announced the Sierra Leone Policing Charter. The Charter was said to have been written by Biddle and Horn, Kabbah's two primary police advisers at the time. At this point the two men were operating under the mandate of CPDTF, as Biddle had not yet been appointed IGP. The Charter established the primacy of the police in the provision of security for the people of Sierra Leone and acted as a catalyst for police reform, a statement of intent.

Under the heading of the role of the police, the Policing Charter instructed that the SLP should act in a manner, which would:

- Eventually remove the need for the deployment of military and paramilitary forces in villages, communities and city streets;
- Ensure the safety and security of all people and their property;
- Respect the human rights of all individuals;
- Prevent and detect crime by using the most effective methods which can be made available to them;

- Take account of local concerns through community consultation; and
- At all levels be free of corruption.

The policing doctrine, also conceived by Biddle and Horn, introduced to implement these principles was defined as Local Needs Policing. This concept has guided police reform to this day. In its basic form, Local Needs Policing, a variety of community policing, was defined as: "Policing that meets the expectations and need of the local community and reflects national standards and objectives" (Adrian Horn quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:32). Today, all policing activities ideally, and to a degree also in practice, fall within Local Needs Policing.

Community-based and paramilitary policing in the spirit of Local Needs Policing

The SLP is often presented as one of the few unarmed police forces in Africa – with the exception of the Operational Support Division (OSD), previously the Special Security Division (SSD) – and relies upon building relations with local communities for intelligence gathering.[11]

The SLP policy of concentrating all police firearms in the OSD has meant that there are higher levels of:

- Security of the firearms;
- Standards in the training; and
- Performance under the Rules of Engagement.

Both community-based and paramilitary policing have played fundamental roles in shaping post-war SLP practices and its sense of itself as an organisation. Local Needs Policing has been the guiding principle for both, an attempt to make explicit that the SLP is serving the people, not the executive. Paramilitary policing was arguably an extension of already existing structures within the SLP, established to preserve the executive. The concept of policing on the basis of local needs, however, is a novelty compared to levels of police violence before and during the war. In addition, clashes between the police – including the OSD – and youth groups happened before the war and are still taking place. Indeed, in Koidu Town, Kono District, if an arrest by

[11] The SSD changed its name to the OSD on 12 March 2002 – immediately after the war – to signify a new start for the unit.

the police is considered unjust, it is not inconceivable that the police station is attacked by youth groups, referred to as ex-combatants who are often in their 40s. It is a reminder that the means of violence – and defining security – is not the prerogative of the police. The SLP is constantly challenged in this regard.

At the same time, the SLP has been relatively successful in turning around popular fears or outright disrespect of the police to a relationship of great collaboration – both in towns and rural areas. Indeed, there is a recognition from the central level in Freetown down to the local level in the Chiefdom headquarter towns, in words and in practice, that working closely with the communities is a vital element of effective policing. This realisation is as much driven by need as by ideological conviction. There is shortage of personnel as well as equipment within the SLP, which means that the government essentially does not know what happens in many parts of the country, and particularly in the porous border regions to Guinea and Liberia. The SLP is dependent on communities to acquire this information.

Community-based policing – LPPBs and FSUs

Two SLP initiatives of particular importance in terms of building relationships with communities are:

- Local Policing Partnership Boards (LPPBs)
- Family Support Units (FSUs)

In 2002-2003, LPPBs were established in each police division, following the new ethos of Local Needs Policing. The current IGP, Kamara came up with the idea to establish LPPBs when he witnessed similar police structures in Northern Ireland while studying at Exeter University. LPPBs were set up in Sierra Leone to ensure stakeholder participation in the process of policing, and thus signify a clearly perceived need within the police to rebuild relations with the civilian population.

On the flip-side, the LPPBs are a pragmatic response to the need to engage citizens in their own security provision. In isolated towns and villages, the SLP relies wholly on LPPB members drawn from the communities in which they live to police their own areas. Only if deemed necessary are they expected to bring the matter to the nearest police post/station, which might not be easily accessible due, primarily, to the poor conditions of the country's infrastructure. Murder, severe beatings (referred to as 'blood crimes' in some communities), substantial theft and sexual abuse of children

are all cases that will be dealt with by the police. LPPB members are also expected to pass on relevant information, effectively intelligence, to the SLP.

In places where the partnership boards are functioning, there is no denying their importance in linking police and population, but it is important to emphasize that the police benefits as much from the LPPBs in their work as does the population. The biggest constraint to LPPB members, and something that is a cause of complaint, is that they have no budget, and therefore receive no money for their efforts, not even for transportation to attend LPPB meetings.

For these meetings to take place there is a reliance on the commitment of police officers and community representatives. In Motema Division, Kono District, this means that a disproportionate amount of time during meetings concerns fund-raising for the partnership board. For instance, an agricultural committee has been set up in Motema Division, which has suggested to establish a Cassava (vegetable) farm that could generate an income for LPPB members. Other suggestions include fund-raising parties on bank holidays. Because the state cannot, indeed will not, fund the LPPBs, these bodies have in eastern Kono turned into a police-supported, semi-private entity, supporting security provision or wholly providing it. What the LPPBs look like, indeed whether they exist at all, depends on the individual Local Unit Commander and his or her personal commitment and ambition. In Motema Division, one important incentive to establish LPPBs has thus far been the current IGP's personal involvement in designing the concept in the early 2000s.

However, in Kenema and Kailahun, for instance, vast areas with limited road systems makes it difficult for LPPB members to meet (though aside from Motema Division, Eastern Kono, Kailahun is the only other Division, covering the whole District, which has LPPBs in each Chiefdom). The issue of understaffing combined with lack of vehicles thus hampers the effectiveness of the LPPBs, as it does the SLP itself (Hanson-Alp 2009). In Eastern Kono, there is a corridor between Koidu/Sefadu, the District headquarter town, and the Guinean border from where neither the police nor the army receive any information. In short, no official information exists on the movement of goods and people. Kono is divided into two divisions, Motema and Tankoro, and LPPBs are few and concentrated in and around Koidu/Sefadu within the jurisdiction covered by Tankoro Division.

It is worth pointing out that when involvement of the community is mentioned by police officers, 'community' usually means the local authorities, i.e., chiefs (town

chiefs, officially referred to as headmen, section and paramount chiefs), not the general population. In addition, the LPPB is not necessarily tribally or socially representative of the locality in which it operates. In Tombodu, the headquarter town in Kamara Chiefdom, Kono District, the police explicitly state that they are working *for* the chief. It is said that the paramount chief, for instance, can have any police officer, even the Local Unit Commander, removed at will, by contacting police headquarters in Freetown. By extension, this is also the case for the LPPB chairmen who can only operate if they are accepted by the Paramount Chief. Indeed, LPPB members are often appointed by the chiefs.

At town/village level, the LPPB Public Relations Officer (PRO), essentially an SLP representative, will be one of the authorities of the town. When a criminal act takes place, the PRO will be supported by the young men of the village/town to make an arrest. These youth groups are the physical force of community provision of security. They could be referred to as vigilantes, but they do not act in isolation from the local authorities and are carefully selected according to their allegiance to the local chief.

Women have their own hierarchy regarding dispute resolution, led by the so-called Mammy Queen, usually an older woman, and what may best be described as a council of elder women. In serious cases, however, when abusive language is used against a woman, the case is taken to the headman, i.e., town chief, for litigation. The fine for using abusive language can be substantial.

If the crime relates to physical harm, for instance if it is a 'blood crime,' it will be seen as being 'above' the town to deal with, and the SLP will be summoned. This particular division of labour between the communities on the one hand and the police on the other is not unlike the set-up prior to the conflict. Certainly, communities have also had to provide for their own security in the past; state-sanctioned security provision by the police has been regarded as somewhat of an external imposition.

'Policing by consensus,' as referred to by the current IGP in talks about rolling out the SLP immediately after the conflict, remains a reality. It is also clear that the LPPBs are the most important effort, on a national scale, to engage the so-called level of non-state actors, i.e., chiefs, in policing efforts and security provision. It is telling that the initiative to establish the LPPBs did not come from expatriates, though they are now being supported by the UN. Donor's general discomfort with engaging chiefs, particularly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, can likewise be seen in their dealings

with the Chieftain Police[12]. Moves to integrate the Chieftain Police into the SLP were rejected during the life of CCSSP, and have not been reconsidered during the Justice Sector Development Programme, CCSSP's successor. In the words of Biddle: "The practical aspects, due to the inept management of the Chieftain Police by the Ministry of Local Government and the chiefs and district officers, proved to be too problematic" (interview, Keith Biddle, June 2009).

The importance of the chiefs, having them on your side, as it were, to ensure effective policing is readily acknowledged at the highest level of the SLP. The IGP explains how the opinion of the chiefs does matter: "So the other thing I did was I personally visited, spoke to them [Paramount Chiefs]. I went all over the country, spoke to them and it was the first time Paramount Chiefs started acknowledging the different role of the police. And in those meetings perhaps they will recommend some Constable: 'This Constable is very good.' So in order for them [Paramount Chiefs] to have that importance, I will promote that Constable immediately in their presence" (interview, Birma Acha Kamara, May 2009).

The Family Support Units (FSUs), dealing primarily with domestic violence, have also been acknowledged for their role in building up stronger relations between communities and the SLP. Their success was reflected in other organisations, with NGOs not only supporting the concept, but also actively seeking association with the newly-established SLP institution. Already in November 2002, an external observer noted that "when one considers that, two years ago, there was open hostility and distrust of the police by almost all NGOs, particularly those working in the area of sexual abuse, the success of the FSUs becomes even more apparent" (quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:97). The FSUs were initially established in the eastern part of Freetown by one of the SLP's current Assistant Inspector-Generals to support women who had been attached to a warring faction. The significant rise in domestic violence led to the establishment of this new unit with support from CCSSP (Fakondo 2008).

Paramilitary policing – OSD

In the more benign security environment in which JSDP was being implemented, from 2005, perceptions were changing about the need to sustain the size of the Operational Support Division (until 2003 called the Special Security Division (SSD); for ease of reference OSD will be used below). However, in the late 1990s,

[12] The Chieftain Police were created through a separate act than the SLP and were previously the enforcement arm of the District Commissioners and Paramount Chiefs as 'Court Messengers.'

following the Lome Accord, Biddle (IGP) and Horn (CCSSP leader), supported by Sierra Leone's President, saw it as absolutely crucial that the SLP was at least partly armed. Without arms, the SLP would not have been able to take over the responsibility for internal security in the country from ECOMOG[13], government forces and the SLP.

"Even in a more established peaceful environment," an assessment in the late 1990s suggested, "there will undoubtedly be considerable violent lawlessness from both 'rehabilitated' and renegade rebels, as well as the criminal population. Despite disarmament, there will be large numbers of illegally held firearms available. Consequently, it will be impossible for the SLP to maintain law and order without a high level of armed response available to them. There is no police service in the world that is not armed completely or to some degree. However, it is not envisaged that the SLP will be a wholly armed service, but will have a permanently armed component, equipped with specialist police weapons and ammunition designed to neutralise only the selected target, and not military weapons and ammunition designed to kill as many people as possible as quickly as possible" (SSD Report, October 1999).

Indeed, as indicated above, the OSD became central to police reform in Sierra Leone and ensuring that it was armed became a priority for the CCSSP (Incidentally, neither DfID nor FCO supported the procurement of arms, which occurred through the UK MoD). In the late 1990s, there was no clear idea of the size of the OSD, but the role of the OSD at the time appeared to an external assessment to be (SSD Report, October 1999):

- Bolstering of ECOMOG military units with additional armed personnel for operations (155 OSD officers were attached to ECOMOG battalions);[14]
- Manning of road check points jointly with ECOMOG soldiers (it was assessed that 205 OSD officers were deployed to road check points);
- Protection of Presidential residences (32 officers); and
- Protection of Government ministers and their residences (104 officers).
- Future functions of the OSD were seen as comprehensive (SSD Report, October 1999) and included the following tasks:

[13] ECOMOG, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, was mandated by ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States. It was effectively a Nigerian peacemaking force, who had become intimately involved in fighting the war in Sierra Leone.

[14] In particular, the reinforcement of ECOMOG units was deemed to be an inappropriate role for the OSD, but so was its involvement in the protection of private individuals and property.

- Public Order – unarmed policing of crowds, large assemblies, sporting events, demonstration marches, violent disorder and riots (it should be noted that today, if deemed necessary, the OSD is armed at public events).
- Provision of formed units for cordon and searches for wanted criminals, illegal firearms, drugs and contraband, for raids on arms caches, and for assistance at major disasters and incidents.
- Protection of key points and the offices and residences of key personnel.
- Response to armed incidents and attacks by criminals, renegade rebels and terrorists.
- Resolution of armed sieges and hostage taking.
- The restructuring of the OSD was led by Ray England, a UK expatriate, who under Biddle's leadership, divided the force into professional units, including (SSD Report, October 1999):
- The Police Support Group, responsible for maintaining public order, conduct of cordons, searches and raids and assistance at major disasters and incidents;
- The Static Protection Group provides protection for key installations, institutions, premises and strategic locations;
- The Mobile Armed Response Group responds to armed attacks on key individuals, installations, institutions, premises and strategic locations;
- The Armed Intervention Group resolves armed sieges and hostage situations;
- The Close Protection Group provides guards for key personnel, e.g., the President, Vice-President, cabinet ministers, diplomats, visiting VIPs, judges and senior police officers (it should be noted that the current President, Ernest B. Koroma, established his own security force, consisting of ex-combatants who have been retrained and integrated into the SLP); and
- The Training Group trains all the units mentioned above.

By the end of the war, the SLP as well as external advisers regarded the OSD as the most efficient arm of Sierra Leone's state-sanctioned policing organisation. By 2004, the role of the OSD had become of such central importance that the IGP intended to increase its size from 2,400 – its strength in late 2004 – to 2,900, a figure based on both threat assessments at the time and an expanding portfolio to man some 600 protection posts. In September 2004, for example, the OSD took over UNAMSIL responsibilities in the Eastern Region (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:90).

A concern raised by some SLP officers, and echoed in JSDP, was that the heavy focus on OSD was diverting too many resources away from general duties policing. Even if OSD officers are trained in general policing – referred to by some as 'justice'-related

policing – they apparently only do security-related operations work. However, in 2004, with OSD filling the security gap left by the UN, an increase of the Division appeared justified. On a less positive note, this circumstance, it could be argued, was compounded by the lack of a more comprehensive approach to the justice sector, limited management at the time and the strength of certain personalities, notably those of international advisers working with the OSD.

Nonetheless, the OSD was in 2003 "cited by the outgoing IGP as the critical success factor in developing improved relations with the community" (OPR cited in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:92). While this might have been the case, it was also clear that careful monitoring and management vigilance was considered necessary to ensure that the OSD did not become an alternative 'elite force' or lost sight of its primary role and purpose: an SLP police unit in support of Local Needs Policing. As noted in 2003: "To ensure that the new human rights-based training and operational procedures, including safeguards such as rules of engagement, are institutionalized, support from the CCSSP needs to continue" (OPR cited in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:92). In fact, there is now a perception among international advisers and SLP officers that the OSD is operating as a semi-independent organisation within the force.

From the perspective of Sierra Leone's primary security sector coordination body, the ONS, support to the OSD is clear, and remains strong today. Their numbers in 2007 were 3,055, and they were important during the last general elections in 2007. Support is related to a general reluctance on the part of ONS to call on the army through the MACP policy.

As noted by the current National Security Coordinator: "Sometimes you just need normal officers to enforce the law. We wholeheartedly support the strengthening of the OSD. Overusing the MACP because people claim that the police is not able to do A, B and C is inappropriate. We hope that messages to the NSC are heard: refrain from using the RSLAF too much. We want to keep in the police – if guns are needed, strengthen the OSD rather than RSLAF" (Kellie Conteh quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:139).

The weak link – ministerial and parliamentary oversight

Oversight of the security sector in general, and the SLP specifically, has been neglected, and remains a weak point. An interesting development, unique to Sierra Leone, is the role that the ONS has come to play in this process. In essence this body – established

as a new agency in the late 1990s and loosely structured around the institution of the National Security Adviser – appears to have taken over responsibility for oversight across the security and justice sectors. This has happened in the relative absence of other credible and, perhaps, more appropriate institutions. In turn, the ONS is only accountable to the President and its efficiency and dominant role – in the eyes of external observers – makes it vulnerable to abuse. For this reason it can hardly be considered an external oversight body; certainly its independence is directly related to its current leadership.

This section of the report will not focus on the role of the ONS as an oversight body, but rather look at the role of the so-called Police Council, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and parliament in this regard. It is likely that the ONS has taken on the role described above by default rather than intent. This is compounded by the fact that the MIA and parliament have received little attention, both by externally-led programmes and from the Sierra Leonean executive. Instead, the Police Council, controlled by the executive through being chaired by the Vice-President, has been kept in place as prescribed in the constitution.

Oversight #1 – the Police Council and the Ministry of Internal Affairs

A sticking point was – and remains – relations between the SLP and the executive, at least from the perspective of many outside observers and their perception of 'good governance'. The relationship is defined in the fundamental law of Sierra Leone, the pre-war Constitution of 1991. Sections 155 to 158 contain the provisions relating to policing, which outline an institutional set-up that is democratically compromising.

The fact that it has not been dealt with, and that it was not consistently dealt with from the outset of reform efforts when they began in the late 1990s, has meant that weak oversight of the police has been consolidated. Just as down-sizing the army has proven increasingly difficult because there is limited political will to do so, there is little appetite within the executive to give up control of the police. This is further entrenched by the fact that a Constitutional change would require a referendum (the current arrangements mirror the 1964 Police Act).

Section 156 of the Constitution outlines the establishment of the Police Council and prescribes its composition and functions. It is chaired by the Vice President and its other members are the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Inspector-General of Police, the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, a member of the Sierra Leone

Bar and two appointees of the President (subject to parliamentary approval). The Police Council secretariat is provided by the permanent secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

According to international perceptions – or standards – of appropriate division of power, the Police Council remains one of the fundamental barriers to good governance, ultimately standing in the way of establishing proper oversight of the SLP. This is not a novel observation, indeed, it was recognised in 1999: "At the heart of the difficulty [of reform] lies the Police Council (whose existence is entrenched), a body made up of members who represent both wide strategic policy and resource interests, others who are responsible for operation deployment of police officers and other police service assets, and yet others with presumably a wider "social" remit (such as the Sierra Leonean barrister and the two presidential nominees). No matter how good the intentions or formidable the abilities of its members, the Police Council thus itself stands firmly in the way of effective police governance" (CPDTF Report, December 1999).

After the CCSSP came to an end, the question that has been asked time and again is why Biddle, holding an executive mandate over the SLP, did not ensure a much strengthened Ministry of Internal Affairs to allow for Cabinet representation of the police. Biddle himself notes, that "you can only do what the climate allows you to do. The Ministry of Internal Affairs [MIA] was not seen as SSR. The development of the MIA was included in the CCSSP with the Permanent Secretary as Project Director. However, due to the political dynamics at the time, work with the MIA wasn't taken forward, it just didn't happen" (Keith Biddle quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:80). While from the perspective of the CCSSP there was no political will to move ahead with transforming the MIA, a study to this end was produced in December 1999 by a UK advisor, collaborating with the Permanent Secretary of the MIA. It eventually formed the basis of provisions made in the project memorandum for the CCSSP. External advisors felt, however, that a Police Directorate that was transparent and accountable was resisted because it would enforce similar discipline regarding budgets of immigration and prisons that the Permanent Secretary of the MIA also managed.

The logical consequence was that from late 2000 until today, the political interface between the SLP and the executive has been through the Vice President as chair of the Police Council. This is in perfect line with pre-war centralisation of executive decision-making and clearly does not fit well with the democratic ideals embedded

in development thinking. In the early 2000s, it was hoped and expected that this Constitutional anomaly would be dealt with, as it effectively removes all powers over police policy from the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Apart from the 'difficult political climate' that prevailed in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s and early 2000s, a number of other circumstances prevented robust reform of the Ministry of Internal Affairs as well as the Police Council. First, one main stumbling block has undoubtedly been that the top level of the executive – i.e., the President and the Vice President – was reluctant to cede their powers over the police to a separate ministry (just as the President, until recently, and for the same reason, was the Minister of Defence with a Deputy handling day-to-day work of the Ministry).

Second, the fact that Biddle led by example, as it were, by insisting on going to the President and the Vice President rather than through the MIA is significant. Third, the CCSSP was somewhat narrowly focussed on police reform and *not* reform of the breadth of justice sector institutions. This meant that while the MIA is an important institution vis-à-vis management of the police, it was nonetheless less of a priority than core police business. Fourthly, and related to the previous point, it is worth remembering that a 'holistic' concept of SSR which included the justice sector did not exist at the time. Such a concept only began to gather momentum around 2004-2005.

Finally, the personalities of advisers as well as consecutive Ministers of Internal Affairs led to confrontation. Charles Margai, Prince Harding and Sam Hinga Norman, consecutive Ministers of Internal Affairs, were all regarded as corrupt, and indeed, Biddle was personally involved in arresting Sam Hinga Norman.

Today, as the JSDP has taken over from CCSSP, the MIA continues to be weak and politically (i.e., financially) under-prioritised by the Government, though attempts are underway to turn this around. Since the change of government in 2007, the MIA was transformed into a Ministry of Internal Affairs, Local Government & Rural Development (MIALRD) (for ease of reference it will be referred to as MIA below). This transformation has arguably made the ministry's mandate even wider and more unmanageable.

As noted by Desmond Buck, Assistant-Inspector General: "The whole ministry has to be rehabilitated with respect to overseeing institutions. The Chairman of the Police Council happens to be the Vice-President. Otherwise we [the SLP] would be in a

very bad state" (Desmond Buck quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:132). Kadi Fakondo, another Assistant Inspector-General, has noted that papers prepared to rationalise legislative or institutional changes as well as SLP budget proposals have often stalled or simply been sidelined (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:132). Strictly speaking, it would have been the task of the MIA to take forward any suggestions containing with political implications. However, Cabinet representation remains limited, if it exists at all.

In 2007, the formal mandate of the MIA remained unchanged: oversight of the SLP, prison services, immigration department, national registration department, fire service and coroner's office. Regardless of the professionalism of the Police Council, this organisation of police affairs and centralization of decision-making power does of course, to the outside observer, call into question whether appropriate mechanisms for accountability are in place.

Limited ministerial oversight capacity is not unique to the police in Sierra Leone. A lesson that is easy to identify, but difficult to practice is that if such technicalities with real practical consequences are not dealt with early on, they will be consolidated and more difficult to address later on. "Keith [Biddle] set the precedent for those who followed. De facto, the IGP was a Cabinet Minister before the conflict. There has never been a history of accountability. The issue is that it set the standards for the future. In fairness to the current IGP [Kamara], he understands the importance for that not to happen. He says that he wants the Ministry to be strong" (Anthony Howlett-Bolton, 2008). In 2009, a review of the JSDP noted that 'a lasting impact' on the Ministry's capacity and performance by JSDP, CCSSP's successor, seemed unlikely (JSDP OPR 2009:16).

Oversight #2 – Parliament

There is no evidence to suggest, either in CCSSP – including CPDTF – or JSDP documentation that work has been carried out to build the capacity of the parliament to oversee the actions of the SLP. Specifically, it does not appear to have been seen as a matter for the CCSSP to deal with.

However, given that Parliament is one of the primary external oversight bodies, it is worth briefly looking at how it operates in Sierra Leone vis-à-vis the SLP and the security sector in general. As point of departure, the weakness of oversight is captured by one of JSDP's advisers with specific reference to SLP, but also the ONS: "One wonders where the oversight and accountability exist, because I have seen

no evidence of oversight or accountability of any of these institutions" (Anthony Howlett-Bolton quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:165).

The Constitution of Sierra Leone provides legal authority for parliamentary oversight of government agencies, including ministries, the defence sector and security and intelligence agencies. The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence, Internal and Presidential Affairs (POCDI&PA) is specifically responsible for oversight of the security sector.

According to an assessment carried out by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Conciliation Resources in April 2008, there continues to be lack of clarity about the Committee's functions. In the context of this report, it is important to note that while POCDI&PA's mandate is restricted to issues of defence, internal and presidential affairs and does not include security as it relates to the police and intelligence, it has effectively extended its remit to these areas. However, the SLP, Ministry of Defence and the National Security Council continue to approve national and security policies (Hanson-Alp 2008:8).

There is also an overlap between the Committee's mandate and other parliamentary oversight bodies. The POCDI&PA does not have exclusive power and authority over defence appointments or budgetary issues, for instance. The assessment conducted by Conciliation Resources notes: "There was general concern about the existence of a plethora of oversight bodies provided for in the 1991 Constitution... and lack of clarity of the specific role of the Committee dealing with defence matters. Almost all those interviewed called for clarity of the functions of this Committee" (Hanson-Alp 2008:8). The assessment concludes that "the lack of clearly-defined legal authority to address complex defence and security issues such as procurement, budgeting and preparedness of military units for international cooperation adversely affects the political will to effectively promote democratic control and transparency on security matters" (Hanson-Alp 2008:8).

According to the assessment, the selection of the 16 Committee members, of whom only one is a woman, is not based on knowledge of the security sector. Appointments occur through consultation with party leaders in Parliament (Hanson-Alp 2008:8). A gross, but nonetheless appropriate generalisation is that politics in Sierra Leone is about access to resources and opportunity through appointment to public office; it is often not about actual political substance. This issue is compounded by the fact that in the 2007 general elections, 70% of elected Parliamentarians were elected for the

first time, many having returned from the Diaspora, who have little, if any, knowledge of the formal and informal political systems in Sierra Leone.

NGOs such as 50/50 Women's Group, the Campaign for Good Governance and the National Democratic Institute have facilitated workshops and training sessions to build Parliament's capacity around SSR and oversight. However, there has been little evidence of the impact of these initiatives. A 2009 review of the JSDP specifically concluded that "[t]heir inability to debate and progress justice-relevant legislation is of concern, as is the lack of parliamentary oversight of the security and justice sectors..." (JSDP OPR 2009:13). The review concludes that even though parliamentary support was part of the overall JSDP design, the fact that it is to end in 2011 (within 18 months of the review) leads to the recommendation that this component of the programme is withdrawn altogether (JSDP OPR 2009:13).

Rule of law and judicial reform

Until 2005, while the SLP had received considerable support, support to the judiciary and the broader justice sector did not take place to the same extent. There is no denying the huge importance and significant impact of CPDTF and CCSSP on the police. In the words of one of the JSDP advisors who arrived in Sierra Leone in 2005: "The SLP is the only functional unit in MIA, there is a huge imbalance. The SLP is frustrated in terms of the judiciary, which is better, but not functioning" (interview, Anthony Howlett-Bolton, 2008). It was the strength of the CCSSP that it resurrected the SLP, but also its weakness, because other institutions in the justice sector were left behind.

This is partly due to the personalities of advisors involved, but also because there was little clarity in the early 2000s as to what the implications of 'holistic' approaches to justice sector development were. This did not mean that support was not given to the judiciary. However, in hindsight, it is clear that support to the police and the judiciary was not linked, and certainly, the former was prioritised over the latter. Furthermore, Sierra Leone in the late 1990s and early 2000s was what today would be considered a stabilisation context. In this situation, all resources will normally be deployed to realise this short-term aim and fewer to plan longer-term (i.e., beyond stabilisation). CCSSP was essentially developed to this effect: to re-establish a state monopoly of providing internal security. The JSDP, in turn, was developed to be implemented during peacetime in a post-conflict development context.

This section looks at some of the initiatives taken under the JSDP programme, which began implementation in 2005 and expanded the focus substantially from what was primarily police reform to broader justice sector reform. Particular emphasis will be on JSDP's attempt to engage the Local Courts, presided over by Paramount and lesser chiefs.

How to incorporate this layer of actors – often referred to as non-state actors – in security and justice programming is being hotly debated internationally. This section concludes with a brief discussion of some of the plans for future justice-related reform work in Sierra Leone. A project is currently under development, which will begin implementation in 2010. Supposedly it will, to a much greater degree, engage the chiefs, non-state actors, in justice reform. The exact outline of the project, let alone the impact of implementation, will only be available in a few years' time. The novelty

of the programme should not be underestimated, however. For the first time in justice transformation in Sierra Leone, state and non-state security and justice providers are formally linked in programming.

The Law Reform Programme

The Law Reform Programme, begun in 2001, was implemented in relative isolation from the CCSSP (it also received considerably less funding with a budget of between £3-4 million compared to £25 million of the CCSSP). Effectively, there is little evidence that linking police and judiciary was dealt with effectively prior to the initiation of JSDP implementation. Indeed, in some of the documentation produced by the CCSSP, the tone seems to be outright hostile and impatient towards the judiciary, which was regarded as corrupt, unprofessional and inefficient. In other words, CCSSP leadership and consultants did not regard it as their responsibility to support judicial reform – and, indeed, strictly speaking, it was not.

The Law Reform Programme formally covered three main areas:

- The ability, capacity and working effectiveness of the judiciary, including higher courts and local courts applying customary law;
- Reform of the legal code to better reflect contemporary needs and the presentation of this redrafted legislation to Parliament through the Ministry of Justice; and
- Training of all levels of legal personnel, including High Court judges.

The first 18 months of the project focused on logistics and infrastructure, i.e., building refurbishment and the supply of equipment, including the main Law Courts Building in Freetown and combined magistrate courts in Bo and Kenema. In 2002, it was noted that this process had a significant psychological effect, representing a process towards restoring normality and the rule of law (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:41). Relatively little was done in terms of capacity-building, which was addressed during the second half of the project cycle, with training of 20 Court Registrars/Administrators, Under Sheriffs and Bailiffs.

Nonetheless, the following issues with the judiciary, identified in 2002, remain significant today:

- The backlog of cases and lack of capacity within the formal legal system of Sierra Leone, which is based on English Common Law;

- The vital area of corruption prosecution, which has been patchy; and
- Customary Courts and 'traditional justice,' including integration of the latter into the Government Legal System. As early as 2002, the empirically-unverified, but 'well-accepted' statistic was that 80% of Sierra Leone's population found judicial access and redress from the Customary Courts or from the informal (and presently illegal) alternative dispute resolution mechanisms operated by the Paramount and Lesser Chiefs (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:42).

The remit of the JSDP reached beyond the police and the judiciary, engaging the MIA and the prisons. However, the JSDP dealt in a very real way with the legacy of both CPDTF/CCSSP and the Law Reform Programme.

Justice sector development – difficult beginnings

The JSDP constituted a fundamental break with both the approach and management of CCSSP. The most radical change was the switch from a focus on efficient internal security provision to a focus on the governing structures of the justice sector and on the delivery of services at the local level (and outside Freetown). The CCSSP and Law Reform Programme had begun implementation during a period with little appreciation of holistic SSR approaches and apparently limited control of activities from London. Indeed, at this point in time, neither the police nor the broader justice sector was considered part of SSR.

With the start of JSDP implementation in 2005, this situation had fundamentally changed, both internationally and specifically in the UK. SSR had to a large extent been developed as a policy concept, pioneered by the UK, DfID specifically, and multilaterally by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It was also evident that DfID as an organisation was becoming more reluctant to finance projects that had an explicit security focus and were not developmental in approach. On the one hand, this meant a stronger focus on the institutions that govern the justice sector, i.e., a governance perspective. On the other hand, it meant more direct and explicit interaction with the ultimate beneficiaries of security and justice provision – the people.

It was therefore almost a given that there would be a number of complications involved in broadening the focus from what was predominantly a police project – CPDTF/CCSSP – to a sector-wide justice sector project – JSDP. First of all, the £25 million were now earmarked not for the police alone, but for the police, judiciary, prisons

and MIA. The CCSSP had focused heavily on supporting SLP equipment procurement; this focus disappeared with JSDP. As already noted above, the Government of Sierra Leone has, for various reasons, not been able to replace this equipment. In turn, the JSDP supported infrastructure such as prisons and separate office space for Family Support Units.

This change in programming signified a shift in external advice, which became much less personalised. Keith Biddle, Adrian Horn and Ray England had played an integral role in stabilising Sierra Leone in close collaboration with Sierra Leone's executive, not only through advice, but through active involvement. Indeed, certain members of CCSSP, who had practically become core staff members of the SLP according to some sources, actively fought against a broader focus on justice sector institutions, because it clearly had negative consequences for the SLP – and for their own positions.

The difficulty for the SLP has been that as support was refocused into other areas, the financial burden that remains for the Ministry of Finance in terms of both recurrent and capital replacement expenditure has, not surprisingly, turned out to be unaffordable. Furthermore, the SLP is now dependent on contributions by external actors. Arguably, this is something of a double blow. In the words of one of the JSDP advisers taking over from the CCSSP, "withdrawal of international funding inevitably leads to short-term paralysis and degradation of service with a real danger of attrition to the *status quo ante*" (Howlett-Bolton 2008:8).

Realisation of a need to establish a sector-wide justice programme had in fact come during Biddle's time. Indeed, the design of what would later become the JSDP took place from June 2002, but was only approved in April 2004. Implementation began in March 2005 and the CCSSP officially came to an end in June 2005. This timeframe created significant start-up challenges, with some stakeholders impatient to see activities starting and others concerned that the nature of support that had come through CCSSP, in particular, would end. In the event, the JSDP incorporated elements of both CCSSP and inherited funding of Commonwealth judges and prosecutors as well as a legal draftsman post (Howlett-Bolton 2008:6; Albrecht and Jackson 2009:132-133). Furthermore, based on discussions around the remit of 'security' and 'justice' respectively, remaining components of support to the OSD were removed from the JSDP portfolio and transferred to other security sector-related programmes led by DfID (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:138-139).

JSDP management

Unlike the CCSSP and other SSR-related programmes supported by the UK, JSDP was designed to be led by the government. This had important implications for JSDP's ability to redirect its spending without express approval of a JSDP Steering Committee, which was not always appreciated outside the programme. It was an explicit departure from the personalised form of management that dominated CCSSP implementation. Given the mandate, during the inception phase, partnership arrangements between the government leadership, civil society and JSDP staff team members were now established as central to the programme (Howlett-Bolton 2009:7).

Under the direction of a programme director and a programme manager, the JSDP staff management team was divided into three outward-facing components: 1. Safety and Security; 2. Administration of Justice; and 3. Informal Justice (including all non-state actors, a topic discussed in greater detail below). These were supported by a monitoring, evaluation and research component as well as by the engagement of an infrastructure development expert (Howlett-Bolton 2009:7).

The role of the Steering Committee and a Task Force was to engage in the formulation and approval of work plans and implementation. The first year of JSDP implementation provided largely 'stand-alone' assistance, with government involvement resting primarily in planning and oversight functions through the Task Force and Steering Committee. This first period of JSDP implementation was intended to strengthen government involvement and foster acceptance of a justice-wide approach and improved relationships and credibility.

Building on this, an increased focus was given to the primary objective: the development of a costed, sector-wide Justice Sector Reform Strategy (JSRS) aligned with the government's Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and annual budgeting processes and with the donor objective of moving away from 'stand-alone' assistance. The JSRS was adopted in December 2007 and is designed to lead to a sector-wide approach that is fully-integrated within government processes. By the end of JSDP in 2011, it is expected that consideration should be given to supporting the JSRS through sector budget support (Howlett-Bolton 2008:6).

At the time of writing, there is a sense within JSDP that to achieve sustainable and affordable change, work needs to be undertaken across the board of justice institutions to develop and enable the capacity of the constituent parts of the sector. This

takes time and whilst accepting that it is a long-term process, 'quick wins' are also necessary.

The immediate impact of CCSSP support – the procuring hundreds of vehicles and uniforms – and the effect of a retired UK police officer taking over the position of IGP was massive. Similar radical change could hardly be expected from the JSDP. But how has assistance been delivered, keeping in mind that the programme is ongoing?

The scope of support by the JSDP

With a focus on the justice sector as a whole, priority reform areas were clearly expanded to a disparate number of activities and institutions. First of all, there was a need to produce a long-term, costed sector-wide justice reform plan. Furthermore, in 2007, a raft of different priorities was considered of importance, as expressed in one of the so-called 'Output to Purpose Review,' an assessment produced by UK-based experts in collaboration with a Sierra Leonean counterpart. It shows the fundamental change of direction of the JSDP, and, essentially, a general move away from direct support to security-related programming by DfID. Priority reform areas included out-of-date and inaccessible laws and procedures, including the indexing of customary law, prison overcrowding, delays in courts, absence of adequate juvenile justice provision, lack of support mechanisms which meet the 'needs of the poor, vulnerable and marginalised' to access justice and the lack of connection between community needs and police operations (JSDP OPR 2007:9-10).

The focus on the SLP as an institution, ensuring that it would be able to perform effectively as provider of internal security, was definitively and understandably, perhaps, being taken over by a focus which fit DfID's preoccupation with development. In short, this had a great deal to do with the political direction coming from London and the inherently hesitant approach DfID to security-related programming. This shift in focus has been held consistently by the JSDP, both at the central level and in Moyamba District, which has been the programme's so-called 'pilot district' outside Freetown and the Western Area.

In Freetown, a heavy emphasis was put on what can best be described as governance-related activities. A Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan for 2008-2010 (JSRS-IP) was launched in February 2008. As a strategic document, it has been regarded as an important contribution to Freetown-based reform

efforts across the justice sector. A Justice Sector Co-ordination Office was established in July 2007, located adjacent to the Attorney General and Solicitor General's offices within the Ministry of Justice in Freetown. Again, this body has by external assessors been viewed as a pivotal link within the overall justice sector. The Anti-Corruption Commission, established in 2000, has also been supported by the JSDP.

The actual impact of these initiatives and their long-term sustainability are difficult to ascertain from available sources. The JSDP's activities with respect to parliament and the MIA have briefly been considered above. The fairest conclusion from these brief considerations is that transforming how a justice sector operates is a process that spans several decades and is ultimately about social engineering.[15] Few justice sector advisers would disagree with this assessment.

The Moyamba District JSDP pilot

Moyamba was selected as a pilot and the first district outside of Freetown in which the JSDP would begin its work. The District was selected because it included a number of state-related justice institutions, including a prison, four police stations and five police posts and encompassed 14 chiefdoms and a population of 260,000. It was also chosen because of its relative proximity to and easy accessibility from Freetown.

The original programme concept suggested that further districts would be added, which did not happen; thus, direct JSDP impact at the community level has been limited outside Moyamba District. Indeed, a 2009 review referred to Moyamba in the context of JSDP as little more than "a district test-bed for new projects and ideas" (JSDP Annual Review, March 2009).

The general focus of the JSDP in Moyamba has been on community access to courts and more generally the police institutions such as LPPBs and FSUs, which interface with the population. A so-called 'circuit court' holding sessions across Moyamba has been established, which helps to overcome the inaccessibility to many parts of the

[15] Prison service transformation has been a central preoccupation of the JSDP, the results of which are believed to make a considerable impact on the manner in which the service is managed and directed (It is worth emphasizing that no attention was paid to the prison services during the life of the CCSSP and therefore quick wins are more realistic). The complete absence of juveniles in prisons in Freetown is considered a considerable achievement, as is the building of a female prison in Kenema District, which has vastly improved the conditions for inmates and staff (JSDP OPR 2009:17).

district. An assessment from 2007 notes, however, that there is limited understanding of how the court overcomes other types of exclusion. An example is given of four juveniles that were sentenced to beating with a cane in open court, for instance, and there has been limited defence representation or paralegal support. Civil society does, however, provide some oversight and also contribute to awareness raising (JSDP OPR, April 2007).

One of the most visible results of the JSDP in Moyamba has been the refurbishment of the District prison. Prior to the JSDP, Sierra Leone's prison services had received no coordinated support. Inmates now sleep on beds rather than on the floor, receive three meals a day and attend classes as opposed to doing nothing. More importantly, inmates actually know why they are being detained, which is not the case in other prisons across the country, including the prison in Koidu, Kono District.

Effectiveness of the LPPBs is directly related to how important it is found to be by the Local Unit Commander; the only two police divisions where they exist in each Chiefdom are Motema (western Kono) and Kailahun (District-wide). The JSDP revived the LPPBs in Myamba, extended them to Chiefdom level, where they amounted to, in part, what appeared to be external assessors as a 'House Watch' scheme. Indeed, a decrease in some crimes, including larceny (63%, 297/109) and housebreaking (67%, 22/7), was reported in 2006 compared to 2005. Supposedly, an assessment notes, the "pilot neighbourhood watch scheme set up by the youths is working well and is helping in the reduction of crime" (JSDP OPR, April 2007). (Organisation of youth groups as security forces is not new in Sierra Leone. It has been a common method to provide a semblance of community security in places where the SLP has not been present).

As fieldwork carried out in Kono by the author suggests, the absence of state-sanctioned security provision does not by definition mean that chaos and insecurity prevails. Assessments conducted by consultants sometimes give credit to intervention programmes for results that, in fact, they did not deliver. This may simply be out of ignorance of the context in which a given programme is being implemented, in this case the JSDP in Sierra Leone.

Non-state actors in security and justice

In December 2005, a National Policy Framework for the Justice Sector in Sierra Leone was presented within the framework of the JSDP. It represented a "holistic

sector-wide approach to support the development of an effective, efficient, impartial and accountable Justice Sector that is capable of meeting the needs of all the people of Sierra Leone" (JSDP, December 2005:2).

The document is not short of formulations around the importance of including what are referred to as 'Customary/Traditional Laws and Practices.' These include, *inter alia*, development of policies on the judicial role of traditional leaders, implementation of initiatives that promote Constitutional principles and human rights and enhanced accountability of traditional leaders to the public. Likewise, the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan, launched in February 2008, has as one of six targets to "improve public satisfaction levels with Local Courts, Paramount and Local Chiefs" (GoSL, December 2007:V). As one of the initial advisers to the JSDP notes: "Each system will have its own advantages and disadvantages and both need support, even if the state system will inevitably require a greater share of financial resources" (Howlett-Bolton 2008:8).

Even if Paramount Chiefs would be considered 'non-state' in current SSR policy-thinking, they certainly cannot be considered, in discourse or in practice, as separate from the state. A 2007 assessment says, "[l]ocal courts constitute the lowest level of the formal system" (JSDP OPR, April 2007). They are under oversight of, but not managed by, the Ministry of Local Government, which remains too weak – and apparently lacks the will – to actively regulate the local courts. At the same time, as suggested by the current IGP: "our own role is quite different from the Chiefdoms, because we are accountable to the law" (interview, Brima Acha Kamara, June 2009).

As noted above, substantive work has been and is still being undertaken in Freetown, where the focus is on distribution of power among the recognisable institutions of the state. Inevitably, as the focus moves to Chiefdom level, as in Moyamba District in the case of the JSDP, any attempt of JSDP programmes to impact institutions controlled by the chiefs touches on local level distribution of power, and is therefore deeply political. During JSDP implementation there have been no attempts to fundamentally alter the institution of the Local Court. Rather, focus has been on how to confine chiefs to their legally defined role in arbitrating cases, a management role which presumably can only be played by state institutions – the Local Councils and the SLP.

(Programmes in local communities occur within the context of national- level politicians, who want to dominate the local communities enough to access politi-

cal (voters) and economic (e.g., diamonds) resources. However, it is doubtful that state institutions would take it upon themselves to openly interfere in dealings of Paramount Chiefs).

In Moyamba, apart from supporting the Magistrates Court, direct work with the Chiefs has channelled through human rights training. Inevitably, conflicts occur; a 2009 assessment reported a Local Court Chairman complaint about cases no longer being reported to him. Such complaints could reflect redistribution of power in the Chiefdom, but also could be due to the fact that local court fines are a source of income for court employees, who are not paid regularly, if at all. This implies, of course, that JSDP has had some impact on how justice is delivered. As the assessment suggests, however, this is also partly due to civil society activities in the District, in particular in Local Courts, where officials have presided over cases that were not under their jurisdiction. The question remains, however, whether the balance of power in Moyamba has been fundamentally altered.

Given the role of chiefs as providers of 80% of local level justice (according to estimates), it is still striking how little direct attention they appear to have received from the JSDP.[16] Apart from providing support to the drafting of a Local Courts Bill and a restatement programme around customary law (in Moyamba District), the JSDP has not prioritised support to Local Courts and traditional justice systems. The 2007 assessment quoted above notes that "the majority of disputes are resolved through the informal system outside the Local Courts (headmen, section chief, village elders or paramount chief). This is a weakness of the programme, which has put greater emphasis on formal justice institutions" (JSDP OPR, April 2007).

This circumstance ultimately reflects the difficulty of working directly with chiefs to change their practices.[17] This is also reflected in assessments of the JSDP carried out in 2007, 2008 and 2009, where remarkably little space is devoted to this layer of primary powerbrokers in Sierra Leone's local communities. There are several reasons for this, some of which I have discussed elsewhere at a general level and with a specific reference to Sierra Leone's SSR process (Albrecht and Buur 2009).

[16] A World Bank baseline survey carried out in 2007 in fact revealed that the two most popular institutions for reporting crimes in rural Sierra Leone are the village headmen and elders. A total of 85% of the crimes and conflicts cited in the survey are reported first to these village-level traditional leaders. Of these, 60.8 of which are first reported to the village headman court (also referred to as town chief); and 24.7% of which are reported to village elders, followed by the section chief courts.

[17] £679,950 out of £1.5m allocated invoiced to October 2006 for formal justice, versus £369,440 out of £1.3m for informal justice.

First of all, the function and rationale of how chiefs operate is not well-understood by external actors. While they understand and accept the importance of including Chiefs in justice programmes, donors and their consultants have difficulty designing appropriate programmes targeting Chiefs. Second, because Chiefs are obliged constitutionally to serve the 'government of the day' and because they are deeply political in their own right, it is difficult for donor agencies to find the appropriate balance between support of state and non-state actors. This in turn leads to the vital issue of state sovereignty: while national actors might agree that Chiefs are vital leaders in Sierra Leone, national-level officials might not accept that donor support is not passed through them.

In 2009, DFID/Sierra Leone produced a document, proposing a 'new intervention,' Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme in Sierra Leone (IASJP), which is meant to run for a three-year period until 2013. At the time of writing, the project design process has not taken place, but the document, outlining terms of reference for that process, suggests that the programme will place delivery of improved access to security and justice in Sierra Leone "at both the centre of our ongoing state-building and human development interventions" (IASJP TOR, 2009).

The document also suggests that among the six key threats to building sustainable peace in Sierra Leone is "a lack of individual or community legal redress or rights" (IASJP TOR, 2009). The programme is expected to support achievements and the ongoing activities of the JSDP, which is described as "operating in several districts" (IASJP TOR, 2009). The most important aspect of the document, however, is that for the first time in the context of Sierra Leone's SSR process, there is a recognition in programme design documentation that informal security and justice providers are at least as vital as formal providers.

However, apart from referring to 'informal' and 'traditional' security and justice service providers, and indicating that they will be consulted and engaged in the new programme, they are not dealt with in any depth. Therefore, even if paramount and sections chief and village headmen are not mentioned in this short document, it must be assumed that these are the actors that are referred to. For the first time it looks like Sierra Leone will have a programme that focuses on the 'non-state' and the 'state,' but what this will look like in practice, and what the impact will be, remains to be seen.

Conclusion

This report has reviewed a number of key reforms implemented to resurrect the SLP in the late 1990s and early 2000s. 'Resurrecting' is used intentionally here. It is no coincidence that the intervention, which was to introduce 'effective visible policing' in Sierra Leone, was dubbed Operation Phoenix. The SLP quite literally rose from the ashes with significant support from the UK to ensure that the police would not revert to what it was prior to the conflict. Injection of £25 million through the CCSSP and Biddle's appointment as IGP were crucial intervention events that contributed substantially to making the SLP *look* and *act* like a police force again.

Under the CCSSP, rebuilding the SLP with a mandate to provide internal security in Sierra Leone was an explicit state-building exercise. Its collapsed, but internationally-recognised, state institutions were to be rebuilt. Security was seen as not only a prerequisite for this process to begin – not least by DfID – but the very foundation of the state's existence. Support began with no clearly defined concept of what SSR entails; police reform in the late 1990s under CCSSP took place in relative isolation from other SSR-related activities. While SLP programmes were coordinated (in the sense of information exchange) with Ministry of Defence, intelligence services and national security programmes, they were not coordinated within one overall programme framework. Even within the justice sector, the CCSSP had a remarkably narrow focus on the police force itself. CCSSP implementers saw their programme as both distinct from the concurrently running Law Reform Programme and not responsible for supporting the establishment of a Ministry of Internal Affairs.

To this day, the SLP has no dedicated political representation in Cabinet, and very little external oversight from a parliamentary body or civil society. Only with the advent of the JSDP was the reform perspective broadened to encompass the justice sector as a whole, including not only the police but also the Ministry of Internal Affairs, prisons and courts. The approach of the JSDP was dramatically different to the earlier reform phase; it reflected DfID's much clearer idea of what they were willing to fund.

JSDP's programme focused on the governance system of the justice sector as well as institutions, such as prisons, that had received no attention during the life of CCSSP.

On the other hand, by 2004-2005, DfID's advisers had developed a much clearer sense of what 'security and justice' programming ought to look like from a development perspective. This meant more direct and explicit interaction with the people, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of security and justice provision through enhanced public services (in development parlance, the people are referred to as 'the poor'). While the 'interest of the people' was always implied by CCSSP advisers, they ultimately saw themselves as more accountable to the President, who in turn was seen as representing the Sierra Leonean population. The authority of Kabbah ultimately was never questioned, and as Biddle has noted "Why should he have been [challenged]? He was after all elected with a 70% majority in what was seen as free and fair elections in 2002" (interview, Keith Biddle, February 2010).

The Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme (IASJP) currently under development at DfID is intended to take the line of thinking begun by JSDP one step further. State and non-state, i.e., chiefs, will now be engaged in programming on equal footing. This approach was never considered by the CPDTF/CCSSP; indeed, there is very little evidence that chiefs and other 'traditional providers' were seen as anything other than obstacles to proper police – not justice – reform. Moreover, because the CCSSP was considered to be a police programme, work with the Local Courts of Sierra Leone were considered to be within the remit of the Law Reform Programme. After 2005, JSDP began more robust work with chiefs; this work is meant to be taken forward by the IASJP.

This is not to downplay what the CCSSP and Biddle achieved in an extremely challenging environment. Early police reform in Sierra Leone has been criticised for too heavy a focus on supporting operational capacity of the OSD, the armed wing of the SLP and buying equipment. While this is true to a degree, the CCSSP also helped turn a rank-conscious, regime-preserving and centralised force into a much less aggressive, more forward-thinking organisation.

The SLP is now guided by a concept of 'Local Needs Policing,' introduced by Horn and Biddle, and actively pursues collaboration with communities across Sierra Leone. The Local Policing Partnership Boards, part of the SLP's variety of community policing, have not only been established to engage local communities in their own security, but also to rebuild trust. They are also a reflection of the limited mobility of the force, their relatively small number and weak infrastructure. Local Unit Commanders across the country are now dependent on communities feeding them information in order to properly police their jurisdictions.

There is no question that the CPDTF/CCSSP was a state-building 'vehicle.' External advisors and the government agreed that the SLP should be the main provider of internal security. At the heart of the matter, however, lies an uncomfortable political question: does 'the state,' i.e., those individuals who populate state institutions, in fact want to impose their will as the only service providers across the territory of Sierra Leone? What is certain and very much operational in Sierra Leone is that resources are accessed through those institutions recognisable to the outsider as being part of 'the state.' Development aid is one such resource.

This matter is also clearly reflected in what we refer to as corrupt practices of state employees who are expected by their families and peers to exploit their access to public funds. Indeed, it is clear that most Sierra Leonean actors, whether they acknowledge this openly or not, see funds channelled through donors as simply another avenue for private gain. This circumstance, linked to limited economic development in Sierra Leone, leads to the threat that is most likely to undermine efforts of the past ten years: long-term affordability. The issue of paying officers salaries at an appropriate level and finding the funds to maintain and replace equipment is currently beyond the ability of a state, which is often referred to as bankrupt by external advisers.

Where does this leave Sierra Leone's police force and broader justice sector beyond the life of JSDP? Certainly police reform and subsequent emphasis on justice sector reform has put Sierra Leonean security professionals on a steep learning curve and yielded measurable improvements in security service delivery. The country's security is in better shape than it was before the war. But whether the efforts recorded here will, in the end, be sustainable is a viable question for discussion, and not for external actors to ensure.

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