Hybrid Security: Challenges and Opportunities for Security Sector Reform

Insights from Burkina Faso, Colombia & DRC

Research Team:

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Photo: Niabybwe village - The town of Niabybwe mostly relies on the extraction of coltan and cassiterite. © Della Valle 2020.

Executive Summary

The concept of hybrid security typically evokes non-state security actors, often framed as either formal or informal, licit or illicit, armed or unarmed, and sometimes as 'good guys or bad guys'. Looking beyond categories of actors, hybrid security offers a way to examine security governance relationships that might involve or impact state security but are outside the direct control of the state. While this includes non-state actors (such as security companies, private sector security clients, community self-defence groups, militias, armed groups, and others), hybrid security is about more than just non-state actors. It describes how security of both people and the state is affected by the interactions and relationships these actors might simultaneously have with the state, with communities, and with one another. The impact of these interactions may be positive or negative depending on the context, making hybrid security both a challenge and an opportunity for security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) programmes.

Hybrid security has always been more the norm than the exception, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected contexts in which the state tends to play a more limited role in providing security as a public good (whether due to a lack of legitimacy, lack of capacity, or other factors). These contexts are also increasingly the focus of SSG/R programmes. Hybrid security features in all major SSG/R frameworks, including those of the OECD, UN, AU, EU, and ECOWAS. However, while DCAF and others have often *described* the 'top down and bottom up' of hybrid dynamics including security privatisation and the roles of armed non-state actors, this paper goes a step further by *applying* a new analysis to help policymakers and practitioners develop more nuanced and impactful approaches to SSG/R in hybrid security contexts, particularly those characterized by high levels of fragility and conflict. Specifically, this study offers:

➤ Context-based insights for SSG/R from case studies carried out in Burkina Faso, Colombia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC);

➤ Concrete and broadly applicable recommendations for tailoring SSG/R approaches to a range of hybrid security contexts;

➤ Frameworks to support context mapping and programme design; and

➤ An articulation of key opportunities and risks for partners engaging in these spaces, as well as suggestions for doing no harm, as the stakes of getting it wrong are high.

Key observations from the study include:

➤ **Hybrid security arrangements tend by their nature to be exclusive and transactional, focusing on the needs of one or several groups in society.** Therefore, even in contexts in which state security institutions are ineffective and/or illegitimate, there is still a need to support better state security and justice provision since the state holds the broadest mandate to provide security for all people.

➤ **Hybrid security can be highly fluid, with the roles and legitimacy of state and non-state actors shifting relatively often and on a transactional basis**. For example, at mining sites explored as part of this study, the same police units were considered both helpful in catching criminals and predatory to the community, and these units displayed varying degrees of cooperation with other actors including self-protection groups and criminals. Similarly, self-protection groups were initially considered effective, then later criticized for turning to extortion.

➤ **State security sector actors and institutions also engage in hybrid security in ways that may have positive or negative impacts for different parts of the population** or different aspects of the state security mission. For example, state security agents sometimes cooperate with illicit actors in ways that actually improve public security but may also use the same relationships for personal or political gain.

When designing SSR programmes in hybrid security contexts:

➤ **It is important to understand the specific security needs that hybrid security arrangements are meeting, regardless of the actors engaged**. This is essential for people-centred security and can produce different perspectives on options for reform and requirements to do no harm (e.g., by avoiding the creation of local security vacuums).

➤ **Focusing on the logic of hybrid security relationships is an essential step in situating SSR in complex social terrain and better understanding what SSR can and cannot do.** The prevalence of hybrid security arrangements that emerge to protect livelihoods, for example, is a good reminder of the need to recognize the many factors which affect experiences of security - and which, if addressed, may be more helpful than security sector solutions alone in creating long term stability and resilience.

➤ **Practitioners need to start with what currently works (well) and why by exploring local understandings of and processes related to principles of good security sector governance (SSG) - including accountability, transparency, and responsiveness.** This analysis can guide SSG/R practitioners away from attempting to replicate structures that have worked in other contexts but may not be well adapted to local conditions.

➤ **Public sector corruption can become a vector for hybrid security to develop in a way that contests state authority** when public security actors are influenced to act against the public interest or in violation of their institutional and professional integrity. Elements of personal identity and the social norms which shape individual choices can provide a basis for hybrid security relationships which undermine the state security sector.

➤ **Engaging more deeply with hybrid security is an invitation for external partners to reflect on the roles they might play in highly complex contexts,** where a more modest role aimed at creating spaces for dialogue may be more appropriate and effective than an emphasis on changing formal procedures or strengthening formal institutions.

We can learn from:

➤ **Examples of hybrid security divisions of labour that show a respect for human rights and legitimately augment state capacity,** such as regulation and oversight of private security companies and security management by the private sector. While divisions of labour may be more complex when it comes to state integration or collaboration with other actors, such as self-defence groups or militias, even in these situations opportunities may be present to strengthen oversight or engage in dialogue around providing security in accordance with basic principles of good governance.

➤ **Successful work in the field of gender and security, which inherently recognizes the ways in which different aspects of identity shape the provision and experiences of security.** This differentiated approach to security can be instructive in contexts in which community, ethnic, and other aspects of identity strongly influence the security options available.

➤ **The variety of options for reform that arise from a differentiated understanding of the hybrid security relationships and security needs at stake.** SSG/R approaches require a clear understanding of where a particular context exists on the continuum from peace to contestation and conflict. On the peaceful end of the spectrum, a wider range of possibilities may exist, including many familiar aspects of institutional reform (the development of legislation and policies, management reforms, and skill building for security forces and regulation and oversight actors). At the other end of the spectrum, there may be a focus on dialogue aimed at how best to address mutual security needs within a framework of good governance and respect for human rights, thus laying the groundwork for future reforms.

The cases explored for this study in **Burkina Faso, Colombia and the DRC offer insights into the complexities of localized hybrid security dynamics** and highlight entry points for working with local communities in ways that build on and reinforce locally legitimate means of exercising control, regulation, oversight, and accountability. The approaches described in this study can and should be piloted, both by adjusting current programming where SSG/R processes are insufficiently grounded in an understanding of hybrid dynamics, and by designing new projects that are based on a better understanding of locally realistic and potentially effective pathways for change in hybrid security relationships.

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Photo: Burkina Faso.

Introduction

The goal of security sector reform (SSR) is to improve how all people experience safety and security. Applying the principles of good security sector governance through a process of reform aims to make the security sector better at providing state and human security, effectively and accountably, within a framework of democratic civilian control, rule of law and respect for human rights.[1] Because the state is supposed to be the ultimate guarantor of safety and security for the entire population, efforts at SSR have in the past tended to focus primarily on the governance and reform of state security and justice institutions. However, the safety and security that people experience on a daily basis is not only a matter of state security and justice provision (and its shortcomings): a range of actors and influences beyond the state shape whether people feel safe and secure and whether they live in an environment where their basic human rights are respected and protected in a reliable and orderly way. For more than a decade, DCAF has already included private security companies and the role of private sector security clients in its programming, and the SSR community overall is becoming increasingly aware of the need to engage with security and justice beyond the state security sector.

In its simplest definition hybrid security addresses the range of actors, processes and interactions beyond the state's control which, either by themselves or in conjunction with state actors, impact the security of a state and its people. Specifically, it addresses the myriad interactions and relationships these actors (such as private security companies, private sector security clients, community self-defence groups and militias among others) might simultaneously have with the state, with communities, and with one another. Hybrid security is only one of a range of terms that attempt to describe how non-state actors and governance processes affect the state's efforts to impose social order and provide security. Others include security pluralism,[2] security assemblages,[3] security arenas,[4] violence entrepreneurship,[5] hybrid violence,[6] multichoice policing,[7] and vernacular security.[8] While each of these is nuanced in its own way, the proliferation of terms describing security governance beyond state control attests to the challenge of sufficiently communicating the scope of interests and influences at stake in what in this study is called 'hybrid security'.

The notion of hybrid security challenges us to think about how security provision, management, and oversight by the state is affected by or shared with actors and influences beyond the state's immediate control and how this affects the security and justice experienced by people. Hybrid security can be perceived as a potential challenge to state authority, and a barrier to more equitable, accessible, and reliable security and justice provision by the state. Hybrid security can offer access to security and justice that may in fact be more equitable, accessible, reliable, and efficient, as well as more legitimate, than state security and justice processes. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that the act of meeting the daily security needs of any person or community is benign or neutral. In some cases, hybrid security arrangements meet these needs in ways which actively do harm.[9]

Thus, the same hybrid security and justice processes that some people find satisfactory may be experienced by others as unfair, illegitimate, extortionate, restrictive, threatening, or even dangerous. Moreover, these differences in perception and experience may depend on traits such as gender, ethnicity, religion, age, wealth, or social status, reflecting the very real risk that hybrid security can be discriminatory. Still, perceptions and experiences notwithstanding, hybrid security is often the only viable option where state-based security and justice is dysfunctional or absent entirely; or where state security and justice are institutionally present but functionally or normatively absent, because the population has such low levels of confidence in these institutions.

From an SSR perspective, there are clear reasons to engage with hybrid security, including:

1. Hybrid security arrangements are more the norm than the exception, particularly but not exclusively in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

2. Hybrid security affects both security sector institutions and people's lives, sometimes in ways that are considered to be more locally effective and accountable than security provided by the state.[10] Experience has shown that reform strategies which ignore these facts are unlikely to succeed.[11] This is especially true in contexts where the effectiveness and reach of state security and justice providers is limited.

3. Positive aspects of hybrid security and justice arrangements can be leveraged to provide fairer, more accessible, and more legitimate security and justice, thereby off setting some of the state's own shortcomings and improving outcomes more quickly than through state reform.[12]

Faced with a plurality of security and justice arrangements, not all of which are controlled or influenced by the state, what can and should SSR try to achieve? Taking a people-centred approach to SSR rooted in the key principles of good security governance means placing respect for rule of law and human rights at the heart of all security and justice provision, no matter the provider. But effectively ensuring that all security and justice – whether provided by state or non-state actors – is subject to the principles of good governance is a tall order, and there is insufficient guidance for SSR practitioners on how to translate insights about the realities of hybrid security into practical SSR programming.

How should the objectives of SSR programming be adapted to these realities? What difference is made by the type of hybrid process targeted for reform, the nature of engagement, or the scale of change a programme hopes to achieve? How can progress be monitored, and what can be done to anticipate and mitigate potentially harmful consequences? And how can the fluidity of hybrid security be factored into SSR programming, along with questions around legitimacy? These are among the most pressing questions facing SSR practitioners who engage with hybrid security and are also the focus of this study.

Answering these questions is an iterative process, and one to which this study is intended to contribute.[13] Its findings are drawn from a review of academic and policy-oriented literature on hybrid security, interviews with SSR practitioners working either in external support roles or within national authorities, and on-site research conducted by national research teams in three contexts: the Cauca region of Colombia, the South Kivu region of the DRC, and a selection of sites across Burkina Faso. These case studies offer an overview of typical hybrid security dynamics in different conflict-affected contexts where attempts at SSR are underway and provide a basis for generating more broadly applicable insights into hybrid security in a range of other settings. The comparative analysis presented in this report is grounded in evidence collected by national research teams as they explored non-state responses to fragmentation of the security sector and the character of state security provision in each context. Security around mining sites became a focus as natural resource extraction emerged among the economic drivers of violence and fragmentation dynamics in several contexts.

The research teams conducted exploratory mapping exercises in each study location, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of different methodological approaches in a variety of contexts. All three case studies examine the micro-dynamics of specific actors, sites, or themes of hybrid security, and all on-site research was conducted by teams of national researchers whose subject area expertise, contextual knowledge, and cultural proximity facilitated data collection and analysis. The findings discussed in Part One of this report reflect the nuance and complexity of hybrid security and serve as a basis for generalized guidelines put forth in Part Two, intended to help SSR practitioners tailor programming in a way that most effectively engages hybrid security.

Photo: Ruzizi plain © Josaphat Musamba, 2022.

1. Hybrid Security in Practice

For the purposes of this study, hybrid security is considered to address the range of actors beyond the state which, either by themselves or in conjunction with state actors, impact the security of state and people. This includes both formal and informal actors, ranging from private security companies and the private sector overall to community self-defence groups, militias and more. Because hybrid security (and the range of similar or adjacent concepts) attempts to define all security actors beyond the state's control by their relationship to the state and its legitimacy and authority,[14] it is a concept that is loaded with implicit assumptions about the state's powers and responsibilities over security and justice provision. Unpacking these assumptions clarifies what is to be expected from both state and non-state security provision as well as security governance and thus approaches to SSR.

1.1 Unpacking hybrid security relationships

It is helpful to start from the fact that the wish for safety, security and fairness is a basic principle of human community. This means that individuals and groups hope for safety from violence at the hands of others but also safety from violence at the hands of larger political authorities. To meet this demand for security, political authorities of all kinds (both state and non-state) impose social order and rules about the use of force, but they do so according to a variety of principles and beliefs.[15] A sense that the rules are fair and imposed impartially makes justice integral to security.[16]

Hybrid security shines a light on the many ways that non-state security and justice shape social order (and disorder). Yet, it is important to note the three specific features of states that make them different and significant among other forms of social ordering and the security and justice that results:

1. **States are global units of governance:** For better or worse, states are currently the fundamental unit of an international system of global governance that impacts aspects of all other kinds of social order, whether transnational, national, or hyperlocal, hybrid or otherwise.

2. **State-level reform has greater scale and reach:** States aim to govern the lives of more people at once than almost any other form of social (or political) order. In theory, changes to a state security sector can therefore have greater influence over the experiences of security and justice for more people, more quickly than almost any other type of intervention.

3. **States have a national mandate for security and justice:** Under the terms of the current international system, the state has the obligation to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights of persons within their territory and jurisdiction without discrimination.[17] While in practice not all governments fulfil this responsibility, and few if any are completely successful, this national mandate is nonetheless a key difference between state and non-state security and justice provision. Hybrid security actors do not seek to protect an entire population equally, and they may provide security and justice for some at the expense of others.

In the absence of effective security and justice arrangements – or in lieu of them - a range of non-state actors will take on the work of creating a viable social order through their own security and justice processes. Armed actors with political or criminal motives are also able to pursue their own agendas and their activities impact people's security while also making it harder to strengthen state security and justice provision.

Hybrid security can take a wide range of forms, some common types of hybrid security relationships include:

➤ **Elite capture of state institutions:** State actors who use their official positions for personal or political gain (political control, corruption, criminal activity) may also develop hybrid security relationships with other actors for the same purpose. States may also use relationships with private or informal security providers to avoid responsibility for certain actions or omissions, thus undermining the accountability and transparency of public security. Sometimes the relationship goes in the other direction, whereby actors who hold a high degree of legitimacy or credibility—for example because of their status as a traditional leader or religious authority—informally and indirectly strengthen an institution of state by the act of holding public office.

Impact on people-centred security → While some individuals and less often communities may benefit from access to resources or influence that elite capture provides, the effects for people-centred security are usually negative, for example when corruption decreases the capacity of the state security sector or equality of security provision is undermined.

➤ **Commercial actors:** Many companies can operate only with adequate security and take action to guarantee it in a number of ways, sometimes relying on state security providers, sometimes hiring a private security provider, and sometimes creating in-house security structures. Private sector clients of security services run the gamut from small and informal businesses to transnational corporations. Typically, formal businesses accept the authority of a state and work within its regulations to ensure their own security. They can have positive spill-over effect on other actors, for example in cases where effective and accountable provision of security services for commercial sites creates positive security spin-offs for adjacent communities. Commercial interests can influence the provision of state security – both positively, through legitimate channels of advocacy and public lobbying; or negatively, through the forceful imposition of self-interests or collusion with forms of state capture – and this can become its own sort of hybrid security arrangement. In addition, businesses both formal and informal may opt to pursue illegal security practices, enhancing their security to the detriment of other actors.

Impact on people-centred security → Commercial interests may thus have a spectrum of effects on people-centred security. Exclusionary practices can undermine state authority and endanger the population, for example, whereas beneficial relationships can make security more accessible and bolster the ability of the state to provide it.

➤ **Community self-protection:** Where people feel insecure, they tend to establish needs-based groups to provide the security and justice they require, typically forming units based on geography, identity, or activity. Money or resources may change hands in these arrangements, but they are distinguished from commercial security or criminal ventures by the fact that financial motives are subordinate to the main goal of providing security to a clearly defined group. The interests of self-protection units can align with visions of public security, but the security provision of these units is always limited to specific beneficiaries, and the activities of these groups may become criminal or political if their means or motivations become pecuniary or power driven. Such groups can take a wide variety of forms, manifesting in vigilantism, explicit self-defence groups, militias, neighbourhood watches, community-based or traditional associations aimed at protecting resources (cattle protection, forest rangers, anti-poaching, etc.), and more. In some cases, they may serve as points of contact and cooperation with state security services (for example, in community policing forums or civil society representatives), but may also engage in criminal or political uses of violence.

Impact on people-centred security → Community self-protection and self-defence groups may be viewed negatively or positively, depending on the perspective of those whose security is at stake, how or whether they use violence, the degree to which they show respect for rights, and the relationships between these groups and other hybrid security arrangements.

➤ **Criminality:** Though it is generally considered a factor of chaos, criminal activity thrives on a certain degree of predictability (especially organized crime functioning at a large scale or with a high degree of complexity). In hybrid security contexts, the threat or use of violence can be a tool for creating more predictable conditions for criminality and can also be used as a weapon with criminal intent, such as through intimidation, protection rackets, kidnappings, or extortion. Criminal use of violence as a factor in hybrid security can extend from petty criminals to transnational organised crime groups. These actors may accept the authority of the state even as they actively seek to circumvent its rules and laws, including through collusion with other hybrid security arrangements or the subversion of state authority (through corruption).

Impact on people-centred security → Typically, the effects of criminality on people-centred security are structurally negative, even if some individuals and communities depend on it for their livelihoods or protection.

➤ **Politically-motivated violence:** Among groups that aspire to a public governance function and use violence to impose their vision of social control, the use of armed violence for political means is not uncommon. This includes armed insurgents, political rebel groups, and terrorist or violent extremist groups, all of which seek to provide alternative political and social order in contestation of state authority and legitimacy. The provision of security, a function of public governance, is sometimes used by these groups as a potent symbol of their own claim to authority and legitimacy. Groups such as this – which may or may not remain ideologically exclusive,

Photo: Kamituga mining site - View of the Northern part, where the mineral extraction is mechanized. © Della Valle 2020.

and may engage in the criminal use of violence only pragmatically – also interact with or attempt co-opt community self-protection arrangements in some cases, because of the symbolic legitimacy and authority such grass-roots mobilizations can confer on their cause.[18]

Impact on people-centred security → Politically-motivated violence is often if not always justified by a claim that it is in the best interest of all or part of a population, and yet the humanitarian cost of any violent contest for political power, much less the actions of many of those who gain this power, belie such justifications.

1.2 Hybrid security case studies: overview and findings

These elements of hybrid security, and others, interact in complex and overlapping ways, and their relationships are part of what makes hybrid security so complicated to analyse, especially as these relationships and the characteristics of various hybrid elements can change quickly. Yet, in many places where hybrid security thrives, the dynamics among these elements are clear to see and experiences from the three countries where research was conducted for this study provide compelling examples. The DRC, Burkina Faso, and Colombia represent distinct contexts, but all are marked by certain similarities when it comes to the dynamics of non-state and informal security and justice provision and its relationship with communities and state-based security and justice actors. Understanding the dynamic, organic nature of hybrid security arrangements in such contexts is key to understanding how SSG/R might improve security and justice in these contexts. And while examples from these three research settings cannot reflect the breadth, depth, and richness of every other context, they do offer insight into characteristics that are common to hybrid security and justice across different settings.

Table 1 : Overview of hybrid security case studies

	DRC			Burkina Faso (multiple mining sites)	Colombia (Cauca)
	Insufficient public security and justice provision in the context of ongoing armed conflict has created space for armed actors to emerge with their own agendas -with informal and private security providers responding to meet local security needs				
	Misisi	Bukavu	Luhihi and Nyabibwe		
Context	Mining centre characterized by intensification of mining activity and unregulated extraction of natural resources, as well as the presence of a non-state armed group with political ambitions	Rising crime in an urban commune	Insecurity at artisanal mining sites	Spill over violence from neighbouring countries, absence of (or in some cases abuse on the part of) state security forces contributing to a rise in banditry and a search for alternative security providers, increasing economic value of extractive industries attracting illegal armed groups.	Ethnically diverse region with violence perpetrated by armed actors competing for the profits of drug trafficking and illegal mining. Security characterized by distrust between state security forces and communities due in part to heavy-handed state attempts to suppress violence.
Security Actors	DRC Armed Forces (FARDC) Territorial police Mining police Miners' cooperatives Armed group (CNPSC)	Police Prosecutors Forces-Vives Asbl: self-protection group	DRC Armed Forces (FARDC) Mining police Mining site guards Miners' cooperatives	State security services Private security companies Self-defence groups (Koglweogo) Armed groups (including transnational trafficking networks)	Colombian National Police Ancestral guards Armed groups (criminal groups including narcotraffickers)
Key Observations	Control over security shifts according to location and time, i.e. the security actors who patrol or control a given area during the day may be different from those who do so at night. Relationships between the same set of (formal and informal) security actors may range from collaborative to competitive, depending on the specific issue at stake. State security forces implicitly recognize the roles of informal security actors by creating "zones of neglect" in which they will not operate.	Relationships between the community self-protection group and formal police and justice authorities have been formalized, with the former sometimes apprehending and referring suspects to the latter. Community self-protection may provide positive benefits for public security within a framework of delegated authority that provides for adequate oversight – although oversight may be difficult to achieve in practice in contexts in which formal security institutions are weak enough to have given rise to hybrid arrangements in the first place. Hybrid security relationships that begin as community self-protection can take on criminal dimensions over time.	Police are unable to cover their geographic area of responsibility and have come to rely on miners' cooperatives, with a relatively clear division of responsibilities (cooperatives are unarmed and may not issue fines). Civil society supports and takes part in discussions between the cooperatives and police, providing a degree of transparency and public accountability.	State cooperation with private security companies and not-for-profit self-defence groups is formalized in legislation/regulation; registration and permits required for self-defence as well as commercial security actors. National Office for Protection of Mining Sites established to channel the support of state security services to mining companies (considered to be a strategic priority due to the economic significance of the mining industry). Koglweogo legitimacy as a security actor at the community level dates to precolonial times and has been formalized, but reports of illegal/abusive behaviour indicate stronger oversight is required.	Hybrid governance is built into the legal foundations of the state; on Afro-descendant and indigenous reservations governance and security are the exclusive domain of local councils and ancestral guards. Some municipalities see ancestral guards as stabilizing influences and include them in community development plans, resource them, and plan joint operations with police. Fundamentally different understandings of security (shared communal responsibilities for safety vs giving up the right to use force in exchange for state provision of security), sometimes lead to tensions in a region in which state security forces are actively pursuing illegal armed groups.

1.2.1 Findings from the DRC

In the eastern regions of the DRC, insufficient provision of public security and justice in the midst of ongoing armed conflict has created space for armed actors to emerge, and informal and private security providers meet the security needs of parts of the population. Economically, the country is highly dependent on the mining sector, so the DRC national research team focused its attention on locations where significant numbers of people and entire communities rely on artisanal and small-scale mining for their livelihoods: in the vicinity of the town of Bukavu, the Itara Luvungi area (including Ndolera village, Lubalika, and Luvungi centre), the town of Baraka, the mining centre of Mukera and the village of Kimbi-Misisi, and the mining centres of Luhihi, Nyamukubi, and Nyabibwe. The team focused in particular on sites where the diversification and intensification of mining activities – at varying levels of industrial, small-scale, and artisanal production – is intensifying security challenges. With an uneven presence of ineffective state security forces and insufficient law enforcement capacities to respond to security needs around DRC's extractive activities, populations have turned to hybrid security solutions.

➤ **Layers of security governance and tacit divisions of labour in Misisi**

The mining centre of Misisi illustrates the complexities of security provision that can arise around sites of natural resource extraction. Located in a rural area in eastern DRC, the Misisi mining centre combines two administratively distinct units – a customary village and a mining site– and is a gathering place for people from across the sub-region who are hoping to better their circumstances through gold mining. In an effort to control this environment, where many people are competing for unregulated access to natural resources, the national armed forces (*Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo*, or FARDC), territorial police, and mine police are all present. Yet the sheer number of people in Misisi and the intensity of activity in the area has also pushed miners to organize themselves into cooperatives for their own self-protection. At the same time, the Coalition Nationale du Peuple pour la Souveraineté du Congo (CNPSC), a non-state armed group with political ambitions, is also active in the vicinity. Composed of Mai-Mai (community self-protection) groups from in and around South Kivu province, the CNPSC has been able to establish its own local government, including arrangements for security and justice provision in Misisi. As this dynamic demonstrates, **political conflict and insecurity related to crime can co-exist with attempts to bring law and order, even in densely populated areas where a variety of actors have different stakes in security.**

In Misisi, this has resulted in a patchwork of hybrid security relationships whereby **different actors control certain physical spaces. Control over these spaces is also temporally regulated,** such that different actors take the lead on different security tasks at different times of day. Thus, in the daytime, the state services control the administrative centre, track down criminals, and harass artisanal miners; while the government and CNPSC fighters are on duty in the mountains, where minerals are mined. There are also some areas exclusively reserved for control by the FARDC or the CNPSC, which cannot be accessed by the police or the FARDC respectively, but other mining sites where all security actors interact. As this illuminates, **complex and subtle relationships can develop when the responsibility for security is fragmented between state and non-state actors**, in this case the FARDC, the police, the miners' cooperatives, and the armed groups.

Further complicating matters is the fact that **aspects of interaction between non-state actors can be controlled by different means at different times.** In other words, state forces that otherwise aim to suppress armed groups may develop relationships of collaboration with those same groups, in response to criminal activity, or at specific times and places as needed. For example, circumstantial or pragmatic cooperation between the FARDC and the CNPSC sometimes takes place in the fight against crime, for which these two structures exchange security information without influencing each other or their command hierarchies. The police are aware of this information exchange as it relates to criminals who escape their control and take refuge in CNPSC-controlled areas, and communication channels are in place to facilitate their arrest and referral to the FARDC or the Congolese national police for trial. The same channels work in the opposite direction, too, and this research found that CNPSC leaders had some influence over the representative of the local justice administration (Tribunal de Paix) and could call the Misisi police commander to request the release of arrested CNPSC combatants. These **relationships of collaboration may develop intentionally or unintentionally, can be ad hoc or standing arrangements, and may or may not serve legitimate state security objectives,** as this example shows.

The complex dynamics and interplay of these factors make it difficult to get a grasp on how everyday security arrangements function, and even more so, to predict what might happen as the result of an effort to exert influence in such a context. Still, the case of Misisi highlights that **security sector dysfunction is a key**

reason for the emergence of hybrid security relationships. Even though the FARDC and the national police are officially entrusted with the mission and authority to provide security, the reality on the ground in Misisi is that **a range of actors are involved in controlling security, based on competing discourses of legitimacy and complex security relationships**.

There are three miners' cooperatives in Misisi with unarmed security cells that aim to manage local tensions, enforce discipline in mining sites, and support the Mines and Hydrocarbons Police – which provide security support to the Congolese mining sector – in their tasks. Indeed, the Congolese Act, which organizes mining activities in the country, stipulates that these cooperatives may form their own security units, subject to state authority. In practice, however, the boundaries between their work and that of the police are unclear and the cooperatives sometimes usurp the police.

Meanwhile, the military and police officers who operate in Misisi inspire little confidence among inhabitants. At best, they and are perceived as a source of harassment, and during night patrols, as a potential source of extortion or even armed robbery. The FARDC are also suspected of collaborating with criminals and perpetuating insecurity at local levels for pecuniary benefit. While people recognize the necessary role of the military in national defence and the fight against armed groups, this mission is compromised by the informal involvement of these forces in the gold mining business, despite sanctions and restrictions intended to prevent this activity.

In the face of such considerable dysfunction among state security sector actors, sources interviewed tended instead to turn for security to non-state armed groups active in the area. This is particularly true of the CNPSC, who have contributed to reducing incidents of abduction and killing in Misisi and have limited the expropriation of property belonging to miners and their families. While the situation remains highly changeable and there is little predictability regarding the degree of security that can be provided by non-state armed groups, the example of Misisi illustrates how **hybrid security arrangements can arise from need when state security provision is ineffective**.

The dynamics observed in Misisi also underscore that **hybrid security relationships often emerge from circumstantial collaboration among formal and informal security actors.** Examining responses to crime across the mining site, the research team found evidence suggesting that the FARDC, the police, guards from cooperatives, and CNPSC combatants all collaborate in both criminal activity and its repression. Researchers noted that an **ambiguous balance of power between actors on the ground favours hybrid relationships that adapt based on the circumstances of collaboration over more structured operational planning based on a formalized division of labour**. Thus, the FARDC and the police pool their efforts to conduct night patrols in Misisi, limiting their activities only to the centre and excluding the Mai Mai, while other parts of the mining site fall entirely under the control and security of the CNPSC.

This kind of tacit division of labour is based on the fact that although the FARDC and the police will not involve combatants from an armed non-state group in their patrols, they do implicitly recognise the contribution they are making in some areas and the sense of security some parts of the population may feel as a result. The division of labour may be pragmatic, but the security forces have few alternatives given the capacity challenges they continue to face despite efforts at SSR. Thus, this tacit division of labour also reflects the reality of their thin presence in outer lying villages around Misisi and chronic understaffing. Moreover, the population tends to harbour deep suspicion towards the state security forces, due to their pronounced interest among the different police forces in maximising opportunities for revenue collection of both official and unofficial kinds. The compartmentalization of security between institutions and through specific exclusion clauses is evident in the fact that even if non-state armed groups do not provide security proper at the mining sites, they certainly assist in securing Misisi centre, its surrounding mining sites and the access routes that pass through areas controlled by the parallel rebel local government. Thus, **by creating zones of neglect or exclusion that are both geographical and based on specific types of activities, the state security forces tacitly implicate hybrid security relationships in security provision**.

➤ The multiple hybrid security relationships among the Forces-Vives Asbl in Bukavu

Hybrid security often involves community self-protection and the *Forces-Vives Asbl* is a classic example of this. In eastern DRC, in Bukavu, the national research team found that residents of the commune of Ibanda have formed the *Forces-Vives Asbl* to protect themselves from rising crime in their urban community. The group was founded to stop crime, cooperate with the police and other security forces in detaining criminals,

and help the poorest of their community access justice and exercise their rights. The *Forces-Vives Asbl* are well organized – structurally, administratively, operationally, and financially – with a general command structure, advisors, and branches in the territories of Kalehe (in Bulambika) and Mwenga (in Kasika).

Increasingly, the group resembles a paramilitary force, with a command structure aimed at pursuing criminals, studying their modus operandi, and tracking their movements. The *Forces-Vives Asbl* share information with the police, but are also subcontracted in the execution of police decisions through the policy of urban security and in the re-establishment of public order. Members of the group apprehend and arrest alleged criminals before referring them to a prosecutor or peace court; and in some cases, may even hear testimonies or facilitate mediation themselves. **This represents a formalization of hybrid security relationships between the group and police and judicial authorities.**

Although they have not managed to completely suppress crime in Bukavu, a certain number of residents appreciate their contribution and they have gained some measure of legitimacy as a result. As this shows, **community self-protection arrangements can provide benefits to public security within a regulated framework of delegated authority that incorporates adequate oversight**. Still, the cooperation of the *Forces-Vives Asbl* with law enforcement and justice is only partially formalized, and is otherwise based on personal relationships, and so **the case also highlights the difficulty of adequately controlling the use of force in hybrid security relationships**. The group has illegally detained and used violence against alleged criminals in violation of their rights and the law. Some members of the local community have thus expressed doubts about the value of cooperation by the *Forces-Vives Asbl* with state security and justice providers, and confusion about the extent of their powers and authority.

There is also a financial agenda to the operations of the *Forces-Vives Asbl*, which often demands financial 'incentives' from victims of crime as well as from the state security and justice authorities they assist. Although the group claims to be focused on citizen security and characterizes any money collected from the beneficiaries of their services as 'voluntary contributions' meant to 'encourage' their work, police and justice officials have denounced this practice. What's more, an internal schism emerged in the group when some members carried out a number of petty thefts, breaks-ins at fuel depots, and looted local shops. This illustrates how **community self-protection measures can take on more sinister criminal dimensions**, further complicating some hybrid security arrangements. **Groups that use force outside the remit of state control may form hybrid relationships with corrupt or politicized elements of state institutions, too**. Indeed, some members of the *Forces-Vives Asbl* have been accused of colluding with national intelligence and local authorities for political purposes. This clearly demonstrates that **the same actors may maintain several distinct types of hybrid security relationships simultaneously**.

Ultimately, the *Forces-Vives Asbl* exists because some of the group's activities improve local security in the face of urban crime, which benefits some local residents. From an SSR perspective, **the question is how to isolate and preserve these positive effects while also putting an end to any criminal, corrupt, or even politically destabilizing aspects of hybrid security relationships**. Frameworks for legitimate cooperation with the formal security and justice sector attempt to do this, but **this case reveals the challenges of creating and maintaining a regulatory system that can sufficiently channel and contain the use of force in hybrid security relationships while also competently protecting rule of law and human rights**. This underlines why engagement with hybrid security through SSR must focus on improving state security provision, management, and oversight, since it was the failure of security sector institutions to adequately meet the needs of local urban communities that led to the formation of the *Forces-Vives Asbl* in the first place.

These same security sector deficiencies were also a factor in the elite capture by which some elements have become a vector of inappropriate influence. And such deficits in management, oversight, and resources are the cause of security and justice sector weaknesses that compel police and justice actors to maintain their reliance on the *Forces-Vives Asbl* to assist them in their work in Bukavu, despite the problems this also causes. This is a typical dilemma in SSR vis-à-vis hybrid security, as **cooperation with hybrid security providers is most prevalent and most valuable in security sectors that lack the capacity and resources to effectively oversee and manage delegated authority for security in a hybrid security arrangement.** As a result, the *Forces-Vives Asbl* work in an ambiguous hybrid security relationship of both collaborating and competing with local law enforcement and justice authorities. The outcomes for people-centred security have been mixed.

➤ **The collaboration of state and non-state actors in security governance in Luhihi and Nyabibwe**

The DRC research team examined the nature of hybrid security at the artisanal mining sites of Luhihi and Nyabibwe as well. There, security dynamics are complicated by the presence of multiple state security forces – including the military, other security services, and specialized law enforcement mandated to police mining sites – all of which have overlapping and sometimes contradictory jurisdictions and mandates. Insecurity persists despite this range of state security providers, which led miners themselves to establish informal cooperatives to fill in the gaps, for example by patrolling at night where state forces do not. **These cooperatives are a classic example of self-help-style hybrid security, developed in response to the immediate challenges of an insecure environment and the inability of a security sector to provide safety and security to a community,** in this case a community of workers.

State security forces can interact with and even come to depend on hybrid security arrangements such as those in Luhihi and Nyabibwe, where collaboration has emerged between the miners' cooperatives and police as a pragmatic response to insecurity. There are simply too few police to cover their geographic area of responsibility, so they depend on the cooperatives, as well as mining site guards, to cover their assigned territory. The cooperatives are not armed, however, and the right to impose fines is strictly reserved for the police. **Clear limits on the powers exercised by these cooperatives demonstrate how state security sector actors can delegate some functions to hybrid security arrangements on the basis of an explicit division of labour.**

With support from civil society, this collaborative relationship is structured through joint participation in meetings and monitoring committees, where members of the miners' cooperatives contribute to decision-making and gain some degree of legitimacy from their inclusion in discussions of security issues. This has contributed significantly to a reduction in tensions between the cooperatives and the police, and underscores that **well-structured collaboration based on participative dialogue can help build trust between state and non-state actors.** Moreover, when arrangements or meetings such as these are open to participation by a broad set of stakeholders and are monitored by civil society, they offer some transparency and public accountability regarding the joint activities of non-state actors and the state security sector.

The potential pitfall of engaging hybrid security in this way is that informal groups may be strengthened by the legitimacy and capacity they gain from such collaboration, which may change the nature of such a group, or its function, role, or goals. Based on a closer study of the situation in Luhihi and Nyabibwe, the national research team in the DRC thus recommends capacity building and support for state forces responsible for security at mining sites, together with enhanced processes to channel the support activities within a formalized framework. This example shows why such support would need to **anticipate the possibility of changes in the nature or function of hybrid security arrangements and provide for monitoring and accountability processes to prevent abuses of power.**

1.2.2 Findings from Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso has faced political turmoil in the context of deepening insecurity. Facing the spill-over effects of instability in neighbouring Mali and Niger, security has appreciably deteriorated as armed insurgents and extremists have penetrated deeper into the territory. Inter-communal violence, the growing ostracization of certain ethnic groups and abuses committed by the security forces are exploited by the armed groups to strengthen their influence. The absence of state security across much of the countryside has also led to a rise in banditry and land disputes, generating a self-sustaining cycle of violence and declining confidence in state security provision in rural areas. It is within this volatile context that the country has experienced a major economic transformation, with the country's revenue from extractive resources increasing dramatically, especially in the last decade.[19] But profits from mining activities have attracted illegal armed groups, who take advantage of weak public security provision to levy taxes on illicit mining sites and, sometimes, to establish themselves as security providers at these sites. This has raised the security costs for legal mining sites, for example by requiring intensified coordination and cooperation with public security actors and an increased use of private security services. The combination of rising insecurity due to armed groups and an escalation in resource extraction has intensified the emergence of hybrid security in Burkina Faso, where the state security apparatus now competes with private security companies and self-defence groups, among others, to carry out security provision in a context of rising socioeconomic tensions, violence, and population displacement. The national research team in Burkina Faso opted to analyse locations that are geographically distributed across the country, with a focus on mining sites in Ouagadougou, Ziniaré, Kaya, Tenkodogo, and Fada N'Gourma.

➤ **Commercial security in hybrid security arrangements at Burkinabé mining sites**

At some mining sites in Burkina Faso, a range of political and criminal violence co-exists and local populations therefore face a spectrum of threats – from armed groups committed to violent extremism, to opportunistic criminals, to well-organized transnational networks of traffickers. This insecurity has prompted local communities to call on hybrid security providers for services the state has been unable to deliver. For the same reason, mining operations have become key clients of commercial security companies based on a for-profit business model with private companies that officially and formally registered. Other actors also operate in some mining areas on a not-for-profit/self-help basis, as community security providers, self-defence groups, or local vigilantes. In other words, security around Burkinabé mining sites is provided by a tapestry of hybrid relationships and variously motivated actors. This highlights that **the same security context can generate many hybrid security relationships incorporating actors with varying degrees of official authority, popular legitimacy, and effectiveness.**

The example of Burkina Faso shows, too, how **hybrid security can cut across institutional definitions of formal or informal, and private or public, and legal regimes can be developed to accommodate this complexity.** Thus, hybrid security relationships that have formed to provide security in response to the needs of the Burkinabé mining sector vary according to the legal status of the commercial security provider in question (since not all operate as formal businesses) and the nature of the client-provider relationship (not all services are provided on a contractual basis). Starting in the 1980s, relatively sudden and intense growth in the mining sector created the need for legal frameworks that could feasibly regulate activities in this area. The legal basis for the state's provision of security was developing at the same time, with several successive reforms in both the mining and security sectors. These reforms focused in part on creating space for private actors to operate on delegated state authority through a liberalization of both commercial security market as well as the mining sector. **This approach may bring some challenges regarding limits on the delegation of power, as well as processes for oversight and monitoring, but experiences in Burkina Faso – especially with formal commercial security providers – indicate that these can be overcome.**[20]

The legal framework regulating hybrid security arrangements at Burkinabé mining sites has now been in place for some years and is composed of various legislative and regulatory texts that distinguish between for-profit providers (i.e., commercial security companies) and not-for-profit providers (typically self-defence groups, which must register their activities with local authorities and receive a permit). Any other private actor providing security services is considered 'informal' (i.e., vigilante groups lacking a permit). While this framework is not without problems, this example nonetheless shows how **interactions between state and non-state security providers can be managed through a legal structure that establishes a clear division of labour adapted to the nature of each hybrid security relationship.**

➤ **Engaging hybrid security relationships from the bottom-up and the top-down in Burkina Faso**

The case of Burkina Faso is instructive in that it highlights how **legal frameworks for security governance can engage with hybrid security from the bottom up by creating and structuring interactions between hybrid security providers and state institutions.** Indeed, over time, the framework for security governance that regulates security for the Burkinabé mining industry has made space for the emergence of self-protection groups known as the Koglweogo. Because the roots of the Koglweogo stretch back to precolonial times, state authorities faced a stark choice when faced with the widespread and needs-driven emergence of self-mobilizing community security groups: either repress structures that gained much of their legitimacy from alternative political narratives older and perhaps more deeply socially rooted than the modern Burkinabé state, or attempt to absorb them into the modern security governance architecture. The state chose the latter, and through several attempts at community policing reform, the Koglweogo have gained a formalized (i.e., legalized) role in delegated security provision.

While this offers a useful model for engagement, it also provides an opportunity to consider the challenges of such an approach. For example, as noted earlier, granting formal recognition and delegated authority to such a group runs the risk of legitimizing and perhaps ultimately strengthening local security providers who may not have a mandate to provide security equally to all of a population. This elevates the importance of oversight, accountability, and monitoring processes; and makes it vital that an individual or community with a complaint to make knows where and how to do so.

Notably, **engaging with the state also carries risks for non-state security institutions.** For, where hybrid security actors depend on alternative sources of political legitimacy, their role and credibility may be undermined by a new or closer association with a state administration that lacks popular legitimacy. Additionally, reorienting these hybrid relationships towards the purpose of state delegated security and justice provision can distract them from their initial roles and functions and may reduce their effectiveness. This may be especially true where hybrid security is based on long-held traditions that must quickly be changed or adapted, or if there is a sudden influx of resources or opportunities associated with newly mandated tasks. This is why **the potential for unintended consequences must be weighed carefully in a hybrid security arrangement, and options for mitigation should be developed with the intention to do no harm**.

The experience of Burkina Faso also demonstrates how **legal frameworks for security governance can engage with hybrid security through a top-down approach wherein state institutions themselves become sites of hybrid security arrangements.** In the same way that the state recognized the role non-state actors were already playing in providing security to communities, the state also aimed to formalize and legitimize the role its own security services were already playing in the provision of security at mining sites through semi-privatized relationships with mining companies. Hence, the National Office for the Protection of Mining Sites (Office National de Sécurisation des Sites Miniers, or ONASSIM) was established to serve as a formal and regulated entity by which state security services can be channelled to respond to the security needs of these businesses, which are of national strategic significance to the country due to their economic output.

Still, though well intended, both the bottom-up and top-down approaches used by the Burkinabé government to co-opt the positive elements of hybrid security relationships into a system of state-based security governance have failed in some important ways. The regularization of the Koglweogo has not prevented abusive and illegal behaviour among communities, and ONASSIM is not yet fully operational a decade after its creation. Thus, **these examples illustrate the usefulness of absorbing hybrid security into state-based frameworks for governance reform as an alternative to potentially violent repressive strategies, but also the difficulties associated with reframing incentive structures and creating oversight processes that can effectively bring previously uncontrolled behaviours and actors under the remit of state control.**

1.2.3 Findings from Colombia

In Colombia, the implementation of the 2016 peace agreement in the ethnically diverse Cauca region laid the groundwork for security governance changes, but this did not necessarily translate into greater security for the population. Cauca is an ethnically diverse region where multiple armed actors have continued to fight for territorial control despite the 2016 agreement, which formally ended a long-running conflict between the government and the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), and levels of violence in the region remain high, driven by competition for illicit profits from drug trafficking and illegal mining. The burden of this violence, as well as the insecurity associated with illegal criminal economies, weighs heavily on the local civilian population.

Colombian police who now operate in areas formerly controlled by the military have found themselves facing a multiplicity of hybrid security arrangements and high levels of armed group activity for which they are insufficiently prepared. The use of heavy-handed (i.e., violent) efforts by the state to suppress illegal criminal groups in the Cauca region has also generated resentment and resistance among indigenous and Afro-descendent communities. As a result, **security in the region is characterized by distrust between state security forces and local communities, impacting the measures taken by these communities to protect themselves through hybrid security as well as the ability of the state to improve its security provision in a part of the country experiencing the highest rates of violence.** To explore these dynamics, the national researcher in Colombia mapped the hybrid security landscape in Cauca and interviewed local stakeholders to build case studies of indigenous security concepts and modalities.

➤ **Linking levels of hybrid (security) governance in Colombia**

Colombia offers another example of how **hybrid governance can be built into the legal foundations of the state itself**, in this case extending from the 1991 Colombian Constitution, which granted special status and protections to indigenous and Afro-descendent communities and recognized their right to self-determination. In the Cauca region, these communities have used this special status to consolidate their own governance, including through localized security and justice responses to regional insecurity. The 'resguardo' (reservation) system by which indigenous communities in Colombia are organized represents a distinctive legal and socio-political institution that enables a form of self-government under the administration of a 'cabildo', a council of

elders and traditional authorities.[21] Since the 2014 adoption of Decree 1953, the government has provided funding to support the operation of cabildos. Afro-descendant communities also have a special legal status in Colombia, through organization in legal entities called 'Consejos Comunitarios' (Community Councils), which manage collective property within the lands granted to these communities.[22] Each Consejo Comunitario is led by a 'junta' (board) that acts to direct, coordinate, implement, and internally administer the community in which the Council is formed.[23] **These structures of self-determination are examples of how a national legal system can accommodate a range of hybrid governance arrangements while also integrating security functions.**

Although these arrangements receive support from the state, they work because local communities are heavily invested in making them work. For instance, the Consejo Comunitarios are led by juntas, but decisions are taken by a 'Asamblea General' (a General Assembly), made up of members recognized by the community in accordance with its own legal system and registered in the internal census.[24] Similarly, the indigenous cabildo are elected by the communities they govern. These types of arrangements **demonstrate how accountability, and transparency in decision-making – including over security provision itself – can come from the bottom up and be delivered by local institutions that fall outside the more familiar formal models classically associated with institutions of national government.**

The Cabildos in the Cauca region, which typically govern in relatively small community units, come together under the leadership of the Council of Cauca (CRIC). The CRIC represents more than 90 per cent of the indigenous communities of the department of Cauca, currently constituting 115 cabildos and 11 Associations of Cabildos, and is recognized as the traditional authority of indigenous peoples of the region.[25] As a special public entity, the CRIC currently leads negotiations with the state on issues affecting the communities it represents and has the legal capacity to sign agreements and contracts with the state and other entities. The 'Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas de la Zona Norte del Cauca' is another important umbrella organization for 22 cabildos in northern Cauca.[26] **These and similar structures are examples of how hybrid governance at the most local level can be linked to national decision-making processes as part of a broader security governance framework.** In principle, this is analogous to federal political systems that centralize decision-making for some matters at higher levels and delegate decision-making for other matters according to a principle of subsidiarity. This also reflects literature on hybrid security, such as by Herbert Wulf, discussing a theoretical framework for multi-level systems that establish a legitimate public monopoly on violence.[27]

➤ Self-determination and self-help in the ancestral guards of Cauca

Most indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in Cauca rely on what they call an 'ancestral guard' for protection of the community and territory. These include the Guardia Indígena (Indigenous Guard), Guardia Cimarrona (Afro-descendant Guard), and Guardia Campesina (Peasant Guard).[28] Generally speaking, the ancestral guards are un-armed (or claim to be) and seek to maintain order within their territories by non-violent means.[29] They have jurisdiction to act within their delimited territories, answer to the traditional authorities of their communities, and intervene in many aspects of people's everyday lives. In security affairs, their involvement emphasizes dialogue-based conflict resolution.[30] These guards are empowered to patrol, inspect, confiscate, expel, and detain people within their jurisdiction and in accordance with their own justice systems, provided these are not contrary to the Colombian constitution or legislation.[31] The traditional authorities of Afro-descendent and indigenous communities are also allowed to judge and punish individuals for violations committed within their territory, as a result of their constitutionally protected legal status.[32] The police have no right to intervene in territory under this jurisdiction without permission from its custodians.

As these security arrangements in Cauca reveal, **hybrid security can draw credibility and legitimacy from a connection to local communities.** However, there may be considerable variation in the social and cultural foundations of this legitimacy. For example, indigenous people, Afro-descendants, and peasants in Cauca share similar views on security, but each of these social groups has distinct traditions and is organized in different political structures. And whether a resguardo, Consejo Comunitario, or peasants' organization may or may not establish a guard depends on the disposition of its leadership.[33] Indeed, in some cases, ancestral guard units may protect more than one community, depending on how those communities are organized. Lines of cooperation and responsibility are not fixed according to identity or entity, and indigenous, Afro-descendent, and peasant organizations have created an inter-group process to work together on common issues, with the purpose of mobilizing when necessary.[34] This process rests on meetings among representatives of the three groups aimed at defining common positions and actions, and has facilitated joint trainings for members of ancestral guards from all three communities.[35] This arrangement has allowed the guards to leverage shared

resources for cooperation while providing a non-violent means of resolving competition and conflict over resources, in this case confrontations over land rights, and illustrates how **hybrid security can take the form of cooperation among non-state actors to manage relationships with each other and/or with the state**.

➤ Hybrid security as a stabilizing or destabilizing influence on security

Some state authorities in Colombia view hybrid security arrangements in Cauca as a stabilizing factor and consider it an imperative to integrate many of the security concepts of local communities into their own municipal security plans. This is the case in Santander de Quilichao, a municipality located in north Cauca, which elevated community-based security in its local development plan by offering financial and other support to local ancestral guards.[36] The municipality has also implemented successful joint security operations involving these guards and local police to protect important events such as elections.[37] While there is still much room for improvement, this kind of cooperation between the local municipal government and ancestral authorities is viewed by some local officials as very promising, especially as a way to bridge historical divides and improve general security in Cauca.

The choice by officials in Santander de Quilichao to actively support ancestral guards in the municipality shows that **hybrid security can be brought into constructive cooperation with state authorities when the resources, technical expertise, legal framework, and political will to do so all exist and align.** At the same time, this case reveals how controversial hybrid security can be, even when its social and cultural roots run deep in local communities; as there are actors in Cauca who dispute the non-violent nature of the ancestral guards and suggest that these forces do in fact exercise violence (the guards do not generally carry firearms, but they do carry traditional wooden batons).[38] Some political parties have also intimated that communities in Cauca support or are allied with armed groups in the region.[39]

In a series of national strikes in 2020 and 2021, the ancestral guards of Cauca gained national notoriety when they blockaded commercial routes that connect the region with the central and northern parts of the country.[40] As far as the merchant's guild in Cauca was concerned, the actions of these indigenous and Afro-descendant guards were the cause of considerable damage. In 2021 alone, 90 business were paralyzed for 41 days as a result of the blockades, affecting 35,000 workers.[41] Yet, while some sectors of Colombian society see the use of blockades as an aggressive expression of protest that affects the rights of the majority and subverts the legal order, their use has been seen by local communities and civil society movements in Cauca and other regions as a peaceful expression of protest against the state. This highlights **a typical feature of hybrid security: the interests of some are defended against the interests of others, whether the beneficiaries are defined by territoriality, identity, legal status, or some other social marker**. Moreover, it underscores that **hybrid security which draws its legitimacy and credibility from alternative social or political sources may have a destabilizing effect when it comes into conflict with the views of wider society or of those who are not included in a particular security arrangement or concept.**

➤ Alternative approaches to security and sources of political legitimacy in Cauca

As indigenous self-governance through the Guardia Indígena in Cauca shows, **communities can develop hybrid security arrangements that do not depend on the state for their legitimacy or effectiveness.** Ancestral communities in Cauca have been practicing stewardship of their territories and their peoples through their own a community-based approaches since long before the modern Colombian state existed, much less before recent deteriorations in security. Indigenous concepts of security and justice therefore draw no legitimacy from the state, and communities that rely on ancestral guards view them as a community-based approach to security that falls outside the framework of state-based security provision. From this perspective, there is no social contract wherein the duty to provide security is transferred to the state in exchange for giving up the natural right and ability to use force for self-protection. Instead, safety and security for all is seen as the natural responsibility of every member of the community, and all of the community is actively involved in keeping each other and the territory safe.[42] Hence, ancestral guards include all members of their respective communities, men, women, and children alike.[43] This is an example of how **security provision can be an expression of historical, political, and cultural self-determination based on a social foundation with only very loose ties to the state (if any)**.

Yet, the case of the ancestral guards of Cauca also brings to light some of the ways in which **practices of protection can change even in the context of hybrid security arrangements that are strongly embedded in traditional cultural and social practices.** For example, it was only in the 1990s and early 2000s that the term 'guard' emerged in relation to how these communities exercise their right of self-determination and

self-protection. This word is hardly neutral, and it has dominated press coverage, supporting the narrative that these units should be understood as armed security or police forces that somehow replace or challenge the presence of the state. Moreover, members of indigenous communities have themselves challenged the use of ancestral guards as a means of guaranteeing security and justice,[44] with some local leaders questioning whether this concept of guardianship is really ancient at all or is in fact a modern concept developed in the face of Cauca's worsening insecurity.[45] This kind of local resistance to the work of these guards illustrates how **hybrid security can be contested even within the communities from which these arrangements emerge.** Still, in Cauca, communities that contest the authenticity and legitimacy of the ancestral guards in their own communities remain wary of state security forces as well, and do not tend to see either of them as viable security providers.[46]

➤ Hybrid security at the centre of state contestation in Cauca

Insecurity can lead to confrontations between state-based and hybrid security solutions, as it has in the Cauca region, where the Colombian military has launched sustained operations against criminal armed groups and illegal economies and has grown to see local ancestral peoples as obstacles in this effort – arguing that members of these communities are being manipulated by criminal organizations or are collaborating with them.[47] This accusation is not wholly unfounded, as these communities have a history of establishing independent relationships with guerrilla groups in an effort to maintain their own stability and protection, and have at times gone as far as offering these groups some measure of protection.[48] But relationships in Cauca have shifted, and ancestral peoples have actively distanced themselves from armed groups. An increasing number of fatal attacks on their leaders by armed groups is a consequence of the opposition that ancestral peoples have shown to the violent expansion of criminal armed groups in the area.

The fact that armed groups in Cauca do not express political or ideological motivations but are driven instead by profit from illegal economies points to their lack of social embeddedness within the communities affected by their violence. However, standing against criminal armed violence does not mean that ancestral peoples are necessarily aligned with the military's objectives to stabilize the region. Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and peasant communities in Cauca distrust national security forces and feel they do not respect local traditions or sufficiently include their communities in decision-making processes. Thus, these communities oppose attempts by the state to enter their territories, and ancestral guards have actively barred state security forces from doing so.[49] This encumbers the military in its mission and leads to tensions between state forces and ancestral communities.

The rejection of state authority means ancestral communities make no distinction between state security forces (whether military or police) and other armed dissidents such as the FARC and the ELN: they are all simply armed groups.[50] The narrative of the state that its fight against irregular armed groups is a confrontation between legality and illegality is not viewed as legitimate by these communities, which reject the armed approach of state security forces and see this violence as the principle obstacle to establishing peace.[51] This exemplifies the complicated reality that **hybrid security can reflect different visions of a conflict and of the nature of a state's political authority, as well as distrust on both sides.** As further illustration of this, the army has expressed publicly that their actions to safely eradicate coca in the Cauca region are coordinated with indigenous communities, but indigenous authorities have rebuked these assertions, stating:

> *[The state] sees the population as a link in its military dynamics, but the indigenous guard is a civilian, unarmed body, whose leadership is headed by the indigenous authorities whom it supports in activities related to indigenous jurisdiction and its own territorial control, which by definition is not compatible with armed dynamics.[52]*

The military has also claimed publicly that protocols are in place to allow operations against criminal armed groups and illegal economies on ancestral territories, and that they communicate regularly with ancestral communities about these operations.[53] Yet, at the same time, the military has declared that it does not require the permission of these communities to announce its intention to enter an ancestral territory, because 'no territories are off limits' to the national army.[54] These kinds of **fundamental tensions over political authority in a state can surface in the context of hybrid security,** in this case because the exercise of rights by ancestral peoples to self-determination in providing for their own security and justice has come to be seen as a challenge to the established constitutional order. And yet, the constitutional framework of Colombia explicitly protects the rights of ancestral peoples. Hence, **this example underlines the need to address security sector attitudes, community engagement and outreach while also working with hybrid security arrangements to strengthen cooperative relationships with the state.**

1.2.4 Cross-cutting observations

These experiences with hybrid security, as captured by researchers in the DRC, Burkina Faso, and Colombia and described above, offer insights into how the good governance objectives of security provision may be confronted by the ineffectiveness or absence of a state, or by competing or alternative security arrangements that do not always fall under the control of a state. Moreover, they point to the fact that populations can be exposed to significant threat if they are caught in the middle of attempts by a state to regain control of certain territories. Across the globe, states have responded to hybrid security relationships with everything from repression meant to eliminate them, to conciliatory measures aimed at stabilization, to co-optation through cooperation.

When states engage in militarized, 'iron fist', or security-first approaches to controlling hybrid security actors, which aggressively seek out non-state actors and use violence in an attempt to destroy them, their efforts tend to be extremely violent in the short term and often fail to achieve any sustainable order.[55] Nevertheless, this kind of response is typical where states are faced with armed insurgencies, violent extremism, or high rates of gang violence and organized crime. It is in contexts where hybrid security is premised on self-help that more conciliatory and less violent approaches by the state tend to be deployed, as these forms of hybrid security pose less of a direct threat to state authority.

When hybrid security provision is forged in the midst of violence, as in conflict-affected contexts, its components may be particularly resistant to peaceful change.[56] Conflict and insecurity can also drive hybrid relationships involving elite capture, if governing elites come to rely on private security to shield themselves from the consequences of insufficient public security provision. This reflects a key characteristic of hybrid security in that the security of the population as a whole is either not taken into account or is provided for unevenly (in contrast to public security, which should be focused on providing security to an entire population, at least in theory, even if the practical reality is far from this goal).

Understanding security in these terms makes it evident that security is multifaceted, subjectively experienced, and unevenly distributed across populations. Despite speaking of 'security' in the singular, there is not just one concept or type of security, as different actors provide different degrees and forms of security and the same actor may provide security differently over time. Crucially, these distinct forms and services are not mutually exclusive, from the point of view of their providers or the people who make use of them.

Developing a clearer view of hybrid security does not constitute an approach to reform on its own, however, and there is a need for more practical guidance on how to translate this kind of analysis into programming. Using these lessons learned as a basis, Part Two of this study tackles the question of how SSR practitioners can engage with hybrid security, with a view to improving security outcomes for communities.

Photo: Panoramic images taken in the Ebonga mining sites in the locality of Misisi, Fizi territory © Josaphat Musamba, 2022.

2. Insights for SSR Practitioners

Engagement with hybrid security has the potential to reveal both blind spots and opportunities for innovation in SSR. This section therefore begins with a brief summary of ways in which hybrid security can be helpful in challenging practitioners to develop context-specific and more holistic approaches to reform. It is followed by an overview of practical implications for SSR, and finally a series of frameworks which may be helpful to practitioners in identifying entry points and co-designing, together with local partners, realistic and effective SSR programmes.

2.1 Why hybrid security matters for SSR

1. **Hybrid security is an opportunity to refocus SSR on people-centred security.** While people-centred security is a stated goal of SSR, programming typically focuses on capacity building for official actors and their institutional environment, from a top-down and state-centric perspective. Yet, where the security of communities is at stake in SSR processes, people experience hybrid security as a reality of everyday safety and security. This fact can be harnessed to refocus SSR programming on security strategies already in use by local populations. Even in contexts where SSR involves predominantly state actors and processes, reform must be developed with a clearer sense of when, where, and how these measures impact people-centred security.[57] A bottom-up approach to SSR tends to take a wider view of the social determinants of security[58] and recognizes that while a security sector may have only a small part to play in positively influencing the lives of most people, its potential negative influence can be considerable.

2. **Hybrid security brings attention to the quality of security provision by the state.** As Price and Van Veen point out, the state remains the only entity that aspires to provide equal access to safety and justice on a universal basis.[59] In most cases, the failure of a state security sector to meet this standard does not typically lead people to reject the idea of the state as a security provider, in favour of other non-state alternatives. Communities may turn to non-state security providers for pragmatic reasons, but these hybrid security arrangements often underline the urgency of improving service delivery and raising standards within the state security sector. The concept of state security provision as a public good should be positioned as a programming objective for SSR, not a programming assumption.[60]

3. **Hybrid security provides a more realistic assessment of the social terrain SSR processes aim to change.** The absence of state security providers or institutions is sometimes mistaken for an absence of order, authority, and social (or political) control over violence, when in fact 'ungoverned spaces' are more often 'alternatively governed' spaces.[61] If SSR practitioners confuse one for the other, reform processes may collide with invisible yet powerful barriers to change, written off as a lack of political will and leaving pathways for addressing these barriers unexplored. The most nuanced possible reading of the social terrain in a given context, as well as a comprehensive political economy analysis, makes the best starting point for reform.

4. **Hybrid security makes the challenges of reform clearer.** Hybrid security may represent a response to forces of rapid social change that strain systems of social cohesion. These include changes linked to insecurity (such as armed conflict or high rates of homicide and crime), environmental hazards and climate change (such as resource access limited by droughts, desertification, the degradation of marine resources, or deforestation), or economic development (such as rapid urbanization, price or commodity shocks, or currency devaluations). Analysing the logic of hybrid security relationships can contribute to a deeper understanding of emerging measures for resilience and can also help to clarify what can and cannot reasonably be expected from SSR over specific periods of time.

5. **Hybrid security invites a focus on the principles of good security sector governance.** Challenges arise in SSR programming when elements that worked well in one security sector are applied in a new location and context with an expectation that they will function the same way and produce the same effects. A focus on formal institutional arrangements can distort how the principles of good governance, such as accountability or transparency, take form in different contexts or at different levels of governance. Analysing hybrid security dynamics to understand context-specific patterns of power and decision-making can help SSR practitioners consider reforms that are institutionally more eclectic but more tightly focused on the practical local implementation of good security governance principles.[62]

2.2 Adapting SSR to hybrid security

Findings from this research suggest several ways in which SSR programmes in hybrid contexts can be designed to be more effective and responsive to local needs:

1. Understanding hybrid security relationships

While many approaches to mapping already include a focus on informal actors, incentives, and other factors essential to understanding how (in)security is produced, security in hybrid contexts is the product of specific relationships – for example, between a local community and its self-protection group, police and a local militia with which a tacit understanding exists, or miners' cooperatives and the police to whom they report crimes. As seen in the DRC and Burkina Faso case studies, relationships range from cooperative to extractive to competitive and may shift depending on time, location, and the issue at stake. Understanding their nature is key to identifying entry points for reform.

Focusing on relationships and their logic helps to ensure a focus not only on the "who" (actors) but also on the "what" (which security needs are being met) and can in turn sharpen the focus on the security needs communities identify as the most important. And while complex contexts involve a range of what may be quite fluid relationships, this does not mean the task of mapping these contexts is impossible. However, as described in more detail in Section 2.3.1 below, it does indicate a need for a sound logic that can facilitate **prioritization of mapping exercises, to include examining which relationships, localities, or thematic aspects of security are most important to understand.**

2. Thinking differently about the scope, scale and starting point of reforms

Traditionally, many internationally supported SSR processes have started from the top down – the top being the national level, with an emphasis on formal security providers, the ministries which oversee them, and other bodies which have an oversight role. This has often, although not always, pulled the focus toward the national capital, where actors are generally accessible but their ability to affect change in particularly fragile or conflict-affected areas of the country may be limited. Formal, national-level security institutions should remain a focus of reform efforts; as described above, they are uniquely mandated to provide security for all, rather than for specific groups. At the same time, these institutions may have limited bearing on security in communities where their help is most needed.

The **highly localized nature of hybrid security arrangements should not be a deterrent when it comes to investing in more effective, accountable security** in areas affected by high levels of crime, violence, or conflict. It does however imply **a need to think about where to work and why.** It may be possible, for example, to support or build on existing community oversight mechanisms; or to connect SSR with local programmes working on other aspects of human security, such as economic development or environmental conservation. Local experience and lessons learned might also be captured in a way which can inform more effective national security policy and legislation.

Security governance is closely linked with governance more broadly, as seen in the case of Cauca, where indigenous forms of governance serve as the starting point for providing and managing security and justice. Seen from this perspective, it's important to ensure security governance is placed in a broader context and informed by lessons and good practices from other aspects of governance. Decentralization, for example, has been a focus of public sector reform for decades, based in part on an understanding that **those closest to particular challenges are best suited to address them, and managing resources locally contributes to greater accountability**. While responsibilities for security in many contexts tend to rest at the national level, it is still valuable to consider how communities can more actively inform security priorities and responses which directly affect them. The case of Cauca also demonstrates that there are sometimes ways to connect localized forms of security governance to higher levels of governance. Whether or not it's possible to scale up local gains in security will depend on local dynamics, but it is certainly possible to **share emerging good practices derived from the local level, both within and across regions**.

3. Analysing the benefits and limitations of formalizing hybrid security

The case of Burkina Faso offers an interesting example of state formalization/legalization of hybrid security relationships, both with private security actors and self-defence groups, and offers insight into the potential advantages and limitations of this approach. The requirement for both categories of actors to register and apply for permits provides important **transparency and visibility of the range of actors involved in security**. At the same time, continued reports of abuses on the part of self-defence groups makes it clear that **formalization and registration of relationships is not by itself sufficient.** While acknowledging the limited ability of state institutions to respond effectively to violence across the country, there is room to explore approaches in which state institutions and communities work together to strengthen oversight of self-defence groups and **raise the perceived cost of future abuses**. Reported abuses on the part of state security forces also point to a broader need to develop a greater culture of accountability and strengthen the role of oversight actors at the local and national level.

Although its operationalisation has been slow and seems to have encountered various obstacles, the National Office for Protection of Mining Sites in Burkina Faso (ONASSIM) is also an interesting example of formalizing not only the role of private security actors but also the role of state security institutions in protecting private sector activities deemed to be vital to the national economy. Establishing a formal framework in this area offers several potential benefits. First, **transparency regarding the involvement of state security forces in protecting economic activities** is important, particularly when it comes to identifying and addressing risks of corruption. Second, a framework which integrates the security provided by various actors around mining sites could in principle play an important role in **analysing and preventing violence in a context in which attacks on mining sites have been increasing**.

Finally, the case of Cauca is an important reminder that some locally legitimate forms of governance, even if foreseen in the constitution, do not derive their legitimacy from formal relationships with the state. Rather than assuming all forms of security governance should eventually be incorporated in formal structures, it's important to think carefully about the potential benefits and drawbacks of defining roles and relationships in legislation or regulation. As part of this process, **consideration should be given to where non-state actors themselves might see added value or risk in a more formal or structured relationship with the state**. There could for example be benefits in terms of resources granted to the local level or the ability to better inform state responses to local causes of insecurity. At the same time, formal relationships may pose risks in terms of legitimacy or even security in contexts in which visible cooperation with the state might prompt punitive responses from local armed groups.

4. Grounding governance and oversight in local practices

Just as they play a key role in producing (in)security, **non-state actors also have the potential to play an impactful role in strengthening oversight and accountability.** In DRC, for example, the participation of civil society groups in meetings between miners' cooperatives and local police provides an important degree of transparency and helps to increase the likelihood that security provision by both formal and informal actors might meet what communities perceive to be their most important security needs. In Cauca, ancestral guards are part of an approach to governance that is rooted in a connection to local communities, which also provides a form of accountability at the local level. A relatively clear division of labour among different security actors, as seen in several cases in this study, is also an important foundation for greater accountability.

These examples point to the value of **a principles-based approach to security sector governance and reform that focuses less on creating or strengthening formal institutions and more on ensuring security is provided in accordance with certain universal principles** – accountability, transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness, for example – no matter who the provider is. There is significant scope for exploration and innovation when it comes to supporting local actors in identifying opportunities to strengthen these qualities in local security provision, whatever form that may take. As part of this, there is a need to **reflect on whose voices are heard in reform processes**; at the local as well as the national level there may be clear barriers to participation based on gender, ethnicity, or other factors.[63] Failure to address these barriers can serve as a contributing factor to continued insecurity.

5. Integrating security and development programming

Several of the cases in this study have highlighted the degree to which hybrid security relationships emerge to protect livelihoods, a reminder of the importance of understanding the range of factors which influence individual and community experiences of security. And while understanding is a first step toward designing more effective programmes, it is not enough. There is still **a need for better integration of SSR with more traditional development programmes focused on locally sustainable improvements to the economy, education, and other sectors**. As other research has shown, linking and sequencing programmes related to alternative livelihoods and stronger law enforcement, for example, can lead to a more sustainable reduction in criminal behaviour.[64]

There are also opportunities for SSR programmes to learn from and connect with effective approaches being piloted in other fields including justice and the rule of law, community violence reduction, weapons control and disarmament, business and human rights, social entrepreneurship and commercial regulation, public health, and environmental conservation. **Programmes may be more likely to achieve lasting results if they are seen and designed as part of broader strategies to increase local resilience** and the health of both local communities and the economic, agricultural, and other systems on which they depend.

6. Rethinking roles for partners

The more localized SSR becomes, the more SSR practitioners (local, national and international) need to think about who does what when it comes to the design and implementation of effective programmes. Local dynamics are complex and are rarely easily understood by 'outsiders,' whether international partners or national authorities. **There is a clear need for external partners to proceed with caution, to prioritize the role of local partners who know the context, and to reflect critically on what role they themselves might usefully play.** Imparting best practices and institutional models, for example, may not be the most impactful contribution at the local level. However, there is scope for mutual learning if partners work together to explore locally meaningful ways of strengthening key principles of security sector governance.

External partners can sometimes play a role in **convening stakeholders who might not ordinarily work together and creating space for new multistakeholder approaches**. There may also be opportunities to **build bridges between different levels and systems of governance**. Previous DCAF experience in Colombia[65], for example, has demonstrated how highly localized and participatory approaches to collecting and analysing data and defining security needs can result in changes to national security protocols. Similarly, experience in Yemen[66] has shown that working across different systems of governance (e.g. state/formal and tribal) can lend legitimacy to processes and identify important commonalities when it comes to a shared commitment to principles of good governance which might underpin future reforms. States need to earn the trust of local communities and informal actors, particularly in contexts affected by high levels of violence and conflict. There may be opportunities to support sustained dialogue around issues of common interest, while keeping in mind that ultimately the relationship between governments and communities (like any other in hybrid contexts) will be judged on the basis of concrete outcomes.

Finally, it's worth noting that many of the insights above are not entirely new, although understanding the highly local dynamics in play in different contexts sheds new light on opportunities and challenges associated with better governance of security in hybrid contexts. The importance of community-based needs assessments, of working with informal actors, and of designing inclusive multistakeholder approaches have been well documented for some time now. **Considering how to improve SSR in hybrid contexts should therefore also challenge practitioners to fully integrate past lessons in future programmes.** This should include an honest assessment of existing barriers (whether related to funding mechanisms, levels of risk tolerance, skill sets of practitioners, or other factors) to translating policy insights into concrete changes to practice.

2.3 Frameworks for practitioners

2.3.1 Mapping hybrid security

Understanding the hybrid security landscape, with its diverse actors and sources of legitimacy, is a key challenge for SSR in hybrid contexts and the first step in developing context appropriate approaches. Security sector mapping methodologies have traditionally concentrated primarily on institutions and interests involved in security provision, management, and oversight by the state, although certain non-state actors such as customary security and justice providers or commercial security companies are sometimes included.[67] Figure 1 depicts a standard security sector (which should of course be adapted to reflect the particularities of any specific context).[68]

Figure 1. A traditional approach to security sector mapping
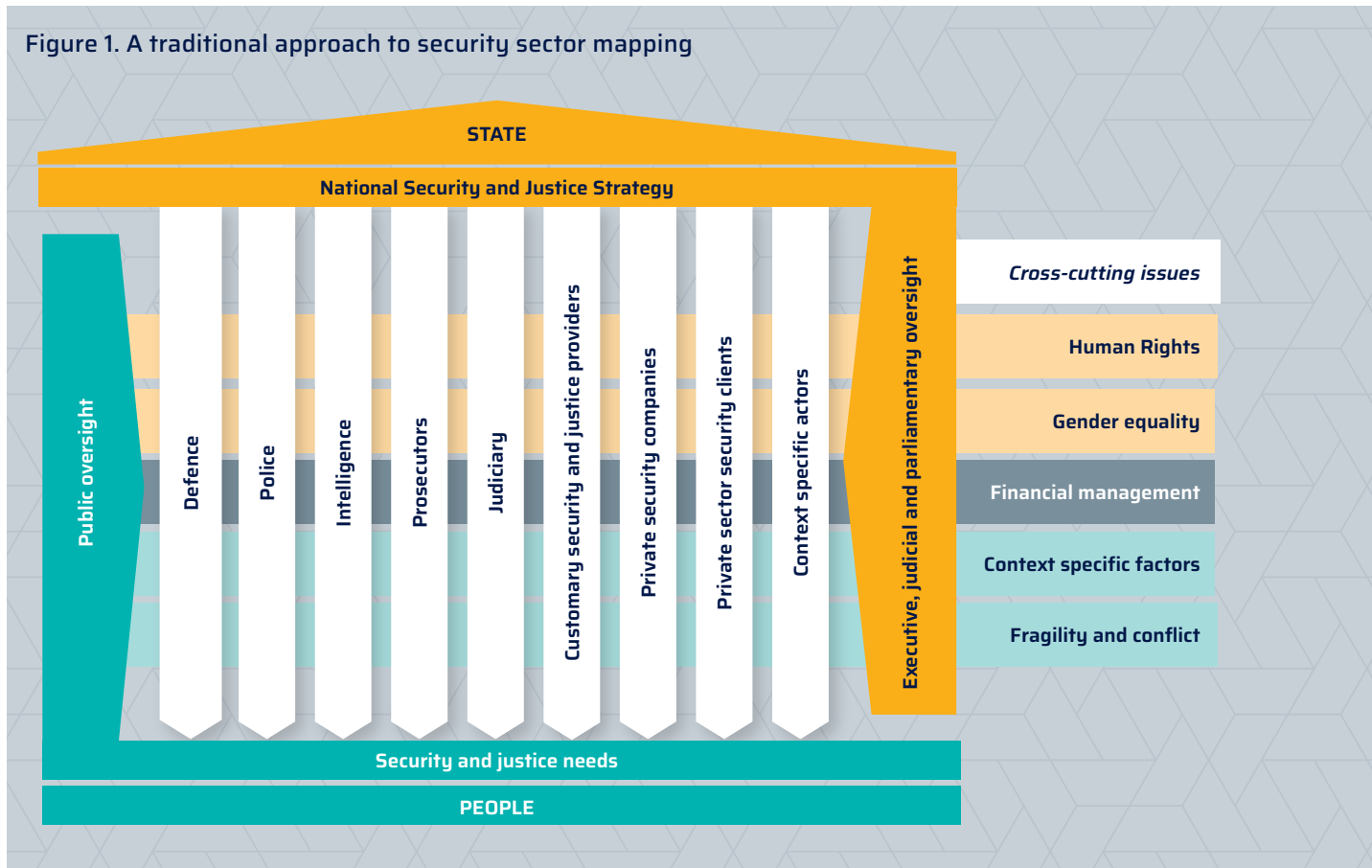
Within this schema understandings of the roles and mandates of non-state actors, such as civil society, customary justice authorities or commercial security companies, do feature but analyses of their role and function tend to be derived more from principles of good security governance or existing legal frameworks than an **analysis of actual practice and influence**. Bagayoko et al. have summarized this challenge clearly, noting:

> *Whilst references to the informal security and justice sector have crept into the SSR and state-building toolkits, thus far they have been based upon incomplete empirical understanding of how this sector actually functions, and in particular of the complex interplay between formal and informal actors and institutions, which determine how policies play out on the ground and impact (or not) on the lives of citizens and communities as well as on the security of the state.[69]*

Indeed, even when politically motivated violence is among the context-specific factors or post-conflict concerns plaguing a security environment, formal institutions and state-based actors have often remained the focus of theories of problematization and thus of reform strategies.

A failure to fully acknowledge and engage with hybrid security in reform strategies has been widely identified as an impediment to SSR implementation[70] and it makes sense to expand security sector mapping so that it includes hybrid security, broadening analyses to encompass different actors and dynamics and their interactions with the state security sector.[71] That said, there are some significant methodological challenges to doing so. A mapping of hybrid security dynamics is very different than a mapping of more formal institutional security sector relationships because hybrid relationships are fluid, hybrid actors work across multiple identities, and hybrid arrangements are usually not formalized. Unlike formal structures, hybrid systems can be highly responsive or reactive to change, and each change, even small ones, can sometimes reorder systems and their power dynamics. Ideally, since change is constant, the roles, relationships, and functions captured in hybrid mapping exercises should be subject to continuous monitoring. **An analysis of hybrid security should ultimately serve to satisfy two critical questions: 1) Why do these patterns of security provision exist such as they do? 2) How are they repeating or reproducing themselves?**

Just by selecting the institutions and interests included in a mapping exercise, the results are potentially biased by in-built blind spots or analytical preferences. And while hybrid security actors may seem like a natural starting point for hybrid mapping, actor-based mapping tends to focus on form over function and can overemphasize the official role of a security actor, giving little acknowledgement to the dual or competing roles they may play. For example, some security officials engage in corruption that reinforces parallel chains of command or informal power structures, and some power exercised in formal functions actually hinges on informal power wielded as traditional authority. A more nuanced view focuses not only on actors, but also on the logic of hybrid security arrangements and the ways these arrangements interact with the political and social order in which they operate. Figure 2 illustrates some of the typical relationships and interactions that may be present in hybrid security. As illustrated by the case studies above, the same actors can be simultaneously active in multiple relationships with state security provision, and this may be experienced positively or negatively by different stakeholder groups. Moreover, hybrid security dynamics can form and become self-sustaining without direct engagement by the state.

Figure 2. Mapping illustrative hybrid security relationships
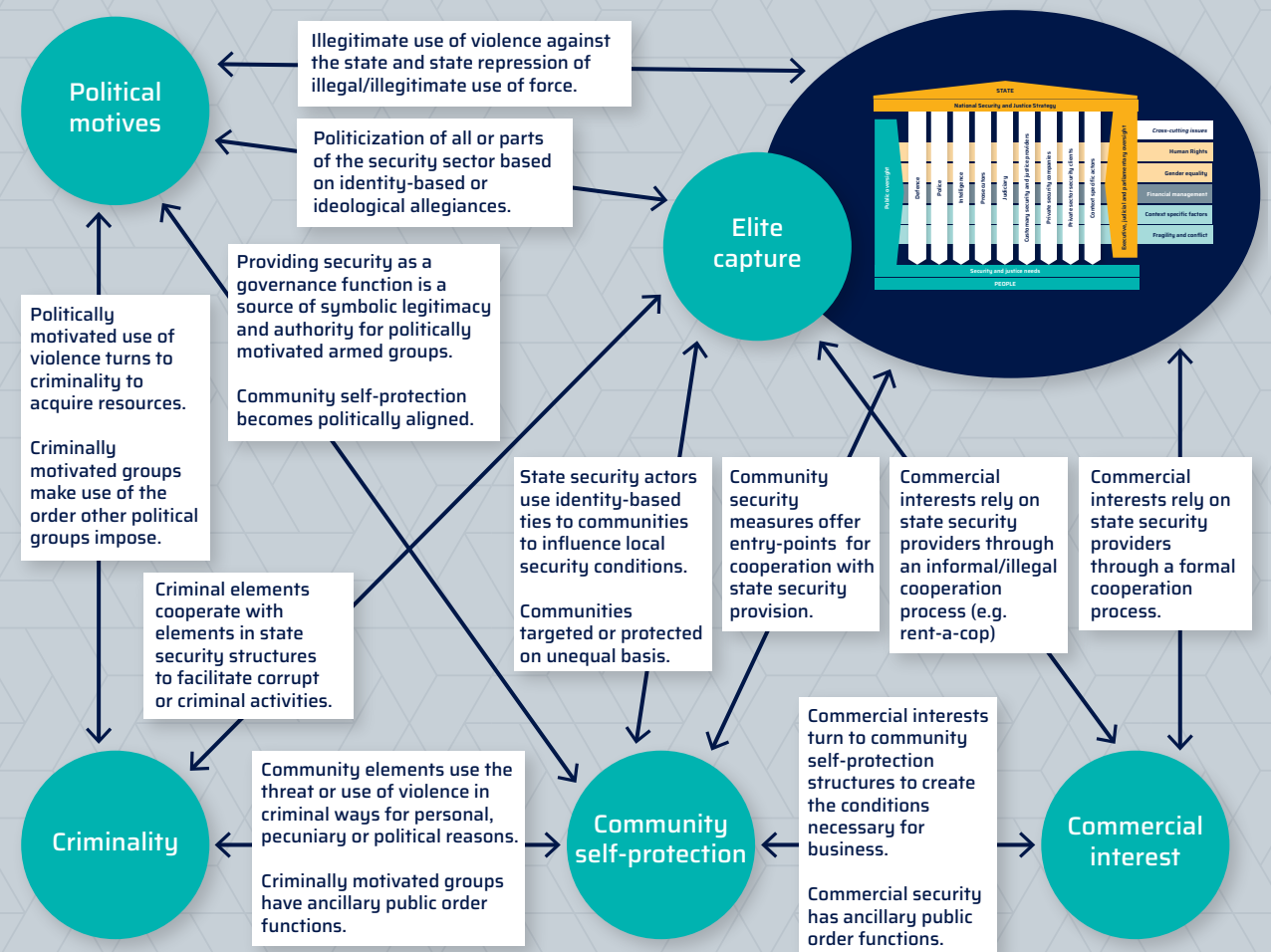
Many tools already exist to support stakeholder or sectoral mapping; a political economy analysis, for example, focuses on incentive structures, which may be particularly important to understand in a contexts of hybrid security. However, as hybrid security arrangements tend to be quite fluid and in theory should be monitored continuously, SSR practitioners need to find pragmatic ways to develop an understanding of the terrain in which they are working. **Defining and limiting the scope of hybrid security mapping** is thus a critical step in creating a valuable basis for programming. Unlike the mapping of a state security sector, which is naturally limited by its focus on institutions and their legal frameworks, the hybrid security environment is practically unbounded, with infinite actors and relationships, many of which could be reasonably included in such an exercise.

The scope of mapping may be limited by focusing on:

➤ thematic aspects of hybrid security, such as national security, public safety, border security, environmental security, economic security, or natural resource extraction;

➤ geographic areas where hybrid security arrangements exist, whether highly localized zones, larger administrative units, or areas naturally defined by other features;

➤ social, political, or demographic criteria; or

➤ types of relationships (e.g., criminality or community self-protection), experiences, or interactions that are especially relevant to SSR.

2.3.2 Practical and ethical considerations for working with hybrid security

SSR practitioners must understand the motivations and resources that constrain or enable certain types of hybrid security relationships; and to develop evidence-based programming, this understanding must be based on reliable data. Yet, getting this data is difficult for several reasons, not least of which is that fact that **the places where hybrid mapping is likely to be most relevant and useful are often the places most difficult to access, and perhaps the most fragile**. Hybrid security may be prevalent in geographically remote areas that are isolated by poor transport networks and language barriers (and thus from state service provision), and also in places where the risk of violence to researchers is too high or communities are hostile to perceived outsiders.

In-country research teams for this study encountered these challenges in their work, describing research contexts as 'complex security spaces'. They were able to gain access to these spaces by applying their detailed knowledge of relevant areas – making use of pre-existing networks, building on trust-based relationships with local authorities, and carefully applying safety protocols to protect researchers and interviewees. Factors that enabled their access to these spaces included:

➤ experience working in affected areas or with affected communities;

➤ long-standing and trust-based relationships with affected communities or their authorities;

➤ knowledge of the physical terrain (climate and geography);

➤ knowledge of the social terrain (language, culture, history, politics);

➤ existing networks of contacts with the capacity to offer advice regarding local political conditions;

➤ referrals and introductions from trusted third parties;

➤ shared identity or a recognized interest; and

➤ responsible organizational safety protocols, including for communication, transport and liability

These factors can be distilled into several key considerations for SSR practitioners working in hybrid security contexts: linguistic and cultural competency, and care for the safety and security of both practitioners and stakeholders:

Competency in communication: Because hybrid security never provides security equally to all members of a population and may focus exclusively on certain identity groups, not only competency in language but also cultural understanding may be required to understand a given environment. For example, despite developing their mapping exercise in French, the research team in the DRC translated their interview protocols into Swahili to ensure they could access relevant populations. Working exclusively in French would have potentially skewed results because of specific socio-economic characteristics of a French-speaking sample could also reflect different experiences and knowledge of hybrid security. While it may seem only natural to work in the language specific to a context, in linguistically complex environments, this can be a choice fraught with political sub-text and resource implications.

Photo: Mining site, DRC © DCAF.

Cultural proximity: The views of local populations are essential to data collection on hybrid security but ensuring clear comprehension and communication requires an act of translation of concepts as well as language. Specific religious, social, economic, or historical experiences of danger and safety, and authority and legitimacy, can shape what people expect from security providers and how they express their views of security itself. It should not be assumed that internationally recognized frameworks for safety and security premised on individual rights and the principles of good governance are viewed as legitimate, as this carries the risk of failing to recognize substantive differences in values or beliefs that may affect how hybrid security operates in practical terms.

Specialists with a sufficient cultural proximity to populations who experience hybrid security arrangements are thus very important to identifying any alignments and contradictions in understandings of security. This cultural proximity is not necessarily a matter of nationality or citizenship, as it may extend from cultural links such as religion or language, ethnicity, or even gender, age, or education. For example, many government stakeholders in national capitals lack this proximity, having benefited from a high level of education, often with no knowledge or experience of the cultural practices of their co-citizens from different social contexts, and external actors may be ignorant to or prejudiced against cultural practices or beliefs with which they are unfamiliar.

Safety and security protocols for personnel and respondents: In the research for this study, participants in interviews and focus groups were anonymous and gave informed consent, and researchers were transparent about their purpose. This may seem like a baseline standard for qualitative, population-based research or data collection, but the question of safety is even more sensitive in the context of hybrid security, especially when the results of data collection are meant to be used in the development of socio-political interventions (i.e. SSR) that respondents may or may not endorse. This makes the stakes of consenting to participation (and to the use of related data) explicitly political.

2.3.3 Identifying context-specific opportunities to engage hybrid security

One way to identify potential opportunities for reform is by considering where hybrid security relationships fall on a spectrum, ranging from compliance and cooperation with state authority and legitimacy, to co-optation, coexistence, and outright contestation. In the real world, the modes of hybrid engagement with state authority are somewhat blurred and relationships can shift with fluidity as the nature of engagement and the use of violence changes in response to an environment and its incentive structures. Nevertheless, Table 2 provides an initial framework for considering where and how SSR might positively influence the provision and governance of security in hybrid contexts.

Table 2. The spectrum of hybrid security relationships to state authority

	Compliance	Cooperation	Co-optation	Coexistence	Contestation
Relationship to state authority	Full compliance with state authority	Recognition of and voluntary compliance with state authority	Passive resistance to state authority; compliance under duress	Neutral; neither controlled by the state nor working against it	Rejection and active defiance of state authority; possibly linked to alternative governance model
Examples from this study	Commercial security providers working within a legal framework in Burkina Faso or the DRC; civil society organizations taking part in bottom-up oversight in the DRC	Community self-defence groups working under the permit system in Burkina Faso; ancestral guards cooperating with municipalities in Colombia; community policing meetings in the DRC	Community self-defence groups without permits in Burkina Faso; case-by-case cooperation with security forces in the DRC	Self-governing indigenous and Afro-descendent communities in Colombia; the Koglweogo in Burkina Faso	CNPSC in the DRC; violent extremists in Burkina Faso; criminal gangs involved in drug trafficking in Colombia
Engagement with the state	Willing acceptance of state authority; no effective means of resistance	Active and constructive engagement with state; some accommodation by the state; some capacity for resistance	Actors offer only the minimal necessary accommodation of state authority; superficial compliance and the appearance of cooperation; resistance through subversion	State does not engage (may isolate/ignore)	Suppressed and/or criminalized by the state and actively targeted for elimination; at least partially successful in avoiding state control
SSR approach	Manageable within existing security governance framework	Manageable within existing security governance framework, provided approach is suitably adapted to hybrid security	Seek to align with modes of compliance and cooperation	Seek to bring more in line with modes of compliance and cooperation	Serious threat to public and national security; not directly amenable to SSR; danger of indirect legitimation through engagement or diversion of resources
SSR programming focus	Strengthen laws and regulations, including formal monitoring, oversight, and redress	Clarify and formalize a division of labour within the security sector; develop specialized codes of conduct; create opportunities for dialogue and consultation to establish minimum compliance standards; ensure a means of oversight and redress, both bottom-up and top-down; consider regulatory and permit systems	Analyse incentives and structural conditions (e.g., PEA); closely monitor processes and outcomes; strengthen oversight and redress mechanisms to respond to potential abuses; remain alert to changes in interactions, processes, incentives or attitudes	Take part in active outreach and engagement based on dialogue; use consultative and participative approaches; analyse incentives and structural conditions (e.g., PEA)	Engage with the aim of violence and conflict prevention; seek entry-points for addressing underlying grievances regarding modes of compliance and cooperation, especially through dialogue; address underlying economic and social drivers of insecurity

	Compliance	Cooperation	Co-optation	Coexistence	Contestation
Points of influence for SSR	Broadest range of influence possible: Programming that is needs-driven, inclusive, and consultative; legal reform	More scope to focus on cultures and mindsets (to foster positive compliance and cooperation); negotiation of rules and conditions; reinforcing trust through positive incentives	An emphasis on rules and consequences (besides cultures and mindsets); building trust through positive incentives, to encourage greater cooperative engagement; identifying the needs and grievances that pose barriers to cooperation	A focus on cultures and mindsets; creating a foundation for engagement through positive incentives; developing a structured framework for engagement and dialogue; understanding that rules and regulations are difficult if not impossible to implement	While direct engagement on reform is unlikely, elements of PVE/CVR/DDR or dialogue processes might pave the way for future SSR efforts; SSR practitioners can help to inform these processes with a focus on principles of good SSG.
Potential harm and unintended consequences	Risk of creating perverse incentives that might disrupt or distort functional security governance	Risk of imposing inappropriate institutional models or regulations that disrupt or undermine alternative governance models; risk of creating perverse incentives through resource provision	Risk of alienating key stakeholders and disrupting informal social safety nets that are may be difficult to identify; risk that failed engagement feeds grievance narratives and rejection of state authority	Risk of disrupting or undermining alternative social authorities and functional security processes, including informal accountability processes; risk that failed engagement feeds grievance narratives and rejection of state authority	Risk of violence, indirect legitimization; risk that failed engagement feeds grievance narratives and rejection of state authority

Understanding a hybrid security actor's **relationship to state authority** is one starting point for considering entry points for programming. Where hybrid security arrangements are in harmony with the law and follow regulations for the use and delegation of force, their hybrid nature is not a challenge to state authority. Commercial security provision that functions in respect of the law and human rights is the most prominent example of this, but there are many other instances of hybrid security relationships grounded in compliance and cooperation, such as the ancestral guards in Cauca or self-defence groups in Burkina Faso, which researchers identified as having a similarly cooperative relationship with the state. At the other end of the spectrum are relationships that directly challenge the authority of a state through contestation. While some examples of political violence, such as by terrorists or armed resisters, fit neatly within this category; it can also include community-based security providers that rely on coercion and violence outside the rules set by a state, which poses a threat to the authority of that state regardless of whether force is used in the (perceived) best interests of that community or not.

Different modes of **engagement with the state** are possible depending on a hybrid actor's relationship to state authority. Relationships of compliance and cooperation are often marked by engagement with state security actors; where hybrid relationships tend towards co-optation or co-existence, hybrid actors may passively resist or simply avoid state control. This emerges, for example, in communities where the presence of the state and state security service provision are weak or non-existent, either due to logistics (inadequate transport infrastructure) or politics (territory controlled by hostile actors). At the extreme end of the spectrum are relationships of contestation that the state seeks actively to counter, for example, by suppressing the political use of violence, fighting crime, and limiting corruption.

For each type of hybrid security relationship, some programmatic approaches and areas of focus may be more helpful than others:

Relationships shown in green **are manageable within an existing framework of security governance.** For example, laws exist to effectively regulate commercial security providers or delegate authority to community-based security providers (such as the ancestral guards in Cauca). While tensions may arise in these relationships, requiring further investment, they are fundamentally open to cooperation. This means that adapted regulatory frameworks, dialogue, and the development of professional standards and accountability, may all offer opportunities to ensure security provision and oversight are based on principles of good governance. Needs-driven, inclusive programming can serve to reinforce existing positive hybrid dynamics, especially if relationships are strengthened, e.g. through community fora that work with local police and municipal authorities, or private sector representatives who shape public policy to reflect the conditions necessary to encourage business and trade.

Relationships in orange **are likely to involve a certain degree of resistance to state authority and the rule of law.** A careful analysis of the incentives and push/pull factors that produce a need or demand for these hybrid security relationships is therefore necessary. It is also likely that access to relevant stakeholders will have to be negotiated, sustained investments will have to be made in dialogue-based awareness raising and trust-building, and processes of oversight and accountability will have to be developed to identify infractions and prevent impunity. Here, a relevant goal for SSR may be to provide the necessary rationale and incentives for actors involved in relationships of co-optation or co-existence with state authority to move towards greater compliance and cooperation. Awareness-raising and sensitization efforts that seek to influence cultures and mindsets may also be effective (e.g. concerning the gender dimensions of violence and security).

Relationships in red **pose a more immediate danger to public security.** While reform based on the principles of good security governance may not be possible as long as violence is actively being used, entry points for negotiation and dialogue can be sought nonetheless and may eventually lay the groundwork for reform efforts that would shift these relationships towards other non-violent modes of action. Support to violence prevention agendas, ceasefire negotiations, community violence reduction programmes, or disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), can create entry points for reforms which address the most pressing security needs. In such cases, it is also important to design approaches which directly address grievances that stand in the way of a more cooperative relationship.

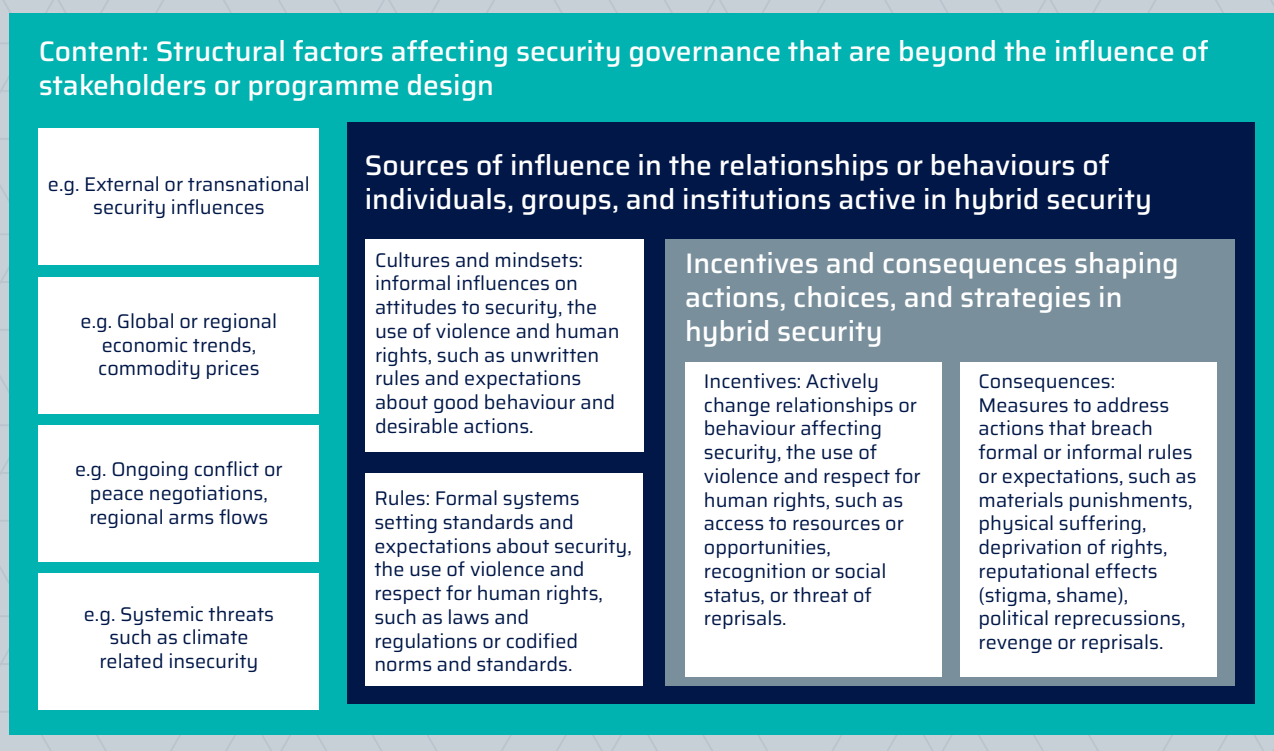Photo: Sajacek Force-Vives' Office - Bukavu Village.

2.3.4 Identifying points of influence for SSR

As part of the programme design process, SSR practitioners will need to consider the possible **points of influence** through which hybrid security actors can be engaged in SSR programming as a function of context, sources, and incentives. In other words, what elements set the context for reform; what sources influence the relationships and behaviours of individuals, groups, or institutions; and what incentives and consequences shape the actions, choices, and strategies that create hybrid security relationships? In contexts in which the identity and role of different security actors may be relatively fluid, a realistic approach to facilitating change is likely to involve a **context-specific combination of incentives and consequences which encourage certain forms of behaviour and discourage others**.

Figure 3 offers a framework for designing SSR programmes which account for and engage with key points of influence in hybrid security relationships:

Figure 3. Points of influence in hybrid security relationships

Content: Structural factors affecting security governance that are beyond the influence of stakeholders or programme design

e.g. External or transnational security influences

e.g. Global or regional economic trends, commodity prices

e.g. Ongoing conflict or peace negotiations, regional arms flows

e.g. Systemic threats such as climate related insecurity

Sources of influence in the relationships or behaviours of individuals, groups, and institutions active in hybrid security

Cultures and mindsets: informal influences on attitudes to security, the use of violence and human rights, such as unwritten rules and expectations about good behaviour and desirable actions.

Rules: Formal systems setting standards and expectations about security, the use of violence and respect for human rights, such as laws and regulations or codified norms and standards.

Incentives and consequences shaping actions, choices, and strategies in hybrid security

Incentives: Actively change relationships or behaviour affecting security, the use of violence and respect for human rights, such as access to resources or opportunities, recognition or social status, or threat of reprisals.

Consequences: Measures to address actions that breach formal or informal rules or expectations, such as materials punishments, physical suffering, deprivation of rights, reputational effects (stigma, shame), political reprecussions, revenge or reprisals.

Key **elements of context** that must be considered in SSR include structural factors that affect security governance but are beyond the influence of stakeholders and cannot be influenced by programme design. This could include external or transnational security influences, global economic trends, systemic threats such as climate related insecurity or other factors related to fragility and conflict. The context for reform will determine programme design and shape possible **sources of influence** over hybrid security, hence understanding the elements that make up this context can be crucial to the success of SSR. Indeed, identifying sources of influence over hybrid security can become the basis for a programmatic theory of change that is a central to moving engagement from the analytical to the practical.

Informal sources of influence on attitudes to security, the use of violence, and human rights – such as unwritten rules and expectations, moral codes and traditions, or behavioural norms – fall under the umbrella of *cultures and mindsets,* and may be amenable to change through advocacy, dialogue, and public outreach. To that end, practitioners can find precedents for programming in previous work to raise awareness of human rights and gender equality, as well as training and capacity building work, and in community policing methodologies. The potential for this type of socially focused, bottom-up approach to SSR programming has so far been underexplored; but there is considerable room for innovation.[72]

Another source of influence on hybrid security relationships lies in reshaping the rules on use of force. In other words, reforming the systems that set formal standards and expectations about security, the use of violence, and respect for human rights, such as laws and regulations or codified norms and standards. These rules provide the legal and institutional parameters for hybrid security, whether explicitly or not, and may also reflect or reinforce cultures and mindsets that shape the use of violence. Thus, a clear distinction must be made between the use of force as a matter of public authority and any limited authority delegated to non-state actors on a regulated basis. Achieving this is likely to take time, and other investments, but involves a process that may itself contribute significantly to developing a new basis for security and justice provision. That said, top-down changes to formal rules may have little if any relevance to actors on the ground, particularly in contexts where the rule of law is weak.

Beyond formal rules, there is room for improvement when it comes to designing programmes which effectively engage with the **incentives and consequences** that shape behaviour in hybrid security contexts. Incentives that can produce real change in relationships or behaviours vis-à-vis security, the use of violence, and respect for human rights include access to resources or opportunities, new levels of recognition or newly acquired social status, and protection from threats of reprisal. Conversely, among the consequences that may be imposed when formal or informal rules are breached, or expectations about the use of force in hybrid security relationships are not met, are material punishments, physical suffering, deprivation of rights, reputational effects (stigma, shame), negative political repercussions, and the threat of revenge or reprisals.

2.3.5 Do No Harm: anticipating unintended consequences in hybrid security contexts

For many people, hybrid security is the dominant reality of their security and justice experiences, and for this reason alone, it is impossible to imagine how SSR could succeed if it fails to engage with hybrid security. However, caution must be taken to avoid unintended consequences that could have dramatic repercussions for the people whose security is most at stake. This section outlines potentially problematic assumptions about hybrid security and some key points meant to guide approaches that will do no harm.

1. Leave safety nets intact when engaging with hybrid security.

Hybrid security arrangements can help communities cope with poverty and insecurity, and therefore represent a significant source of social resilience and stability. Yet, they also threaten and undermine state authority. This poses a dilemma, in that strengthening state security and justice provision can endanger existing social coping strategies. While long-term development measures addressing poverty and insecurity may eventually do away with the need for these strategies, short-term efforts to affect change can pit the interests of a state against the immediate human security of its population. Hybrid security arrangements that rely on criminal or illegal activity should not necessarily be tolerated or integrated into the state system (though this may be an option, depending on the nature of the hybrid security relationship in question), but careful analysis and a do-no-harm approach should always be paramount and efforts to dismantle or disempower hybrid security structures should always be accompanied by efforts to understand and mitigate any negative short-term consequences of these changes.

When SSR is mistimed or ill-judged, the people who are intended to be the ultimate beneficiaries of improved security governance can experience more harm than good, so it is critical to centre these beneficiaries in any analysis of whether a programme is primed to protect those it is meant to serve. The long-term interest of strengthening state-based order cannot be used to justify, excuse, or ignore the harm such efforts may do in the short term. **A failure to analyse and address the potential consequences of removing hybrid security relationships on which individuals or communities depend is not only ethically unacceptable, but also counter-productive in operational terms**, as new relationships will simply emerge to replace them if the need for safety, security, and justice is not met.

2. Analyse who hybrid security protects and who it endangers.

Practitioners should not assume that when state security and justice fail, hybrid security is better or favoured. Hybrid security may be romanticized, particularly in contexts in which state institutions are rooted in illegitimate colonial legacies or state security sectors are repressive and abusive. However, **a reliance on hybrid security does not necessarily imply its efficiency or legitimacy**. For many, it is merely the only viable option; and in some cases, arrangements are made under duress. Similarly, the fact that these arrangements can be easier to understand or more accessible does not mean they are fair, effective, or inclusive. Even if hybrid security can be a source of social resilience and stability, it may not be compatible with the consolidation of state

authority (which is often the overarching goal of SSR in UN peace operations). SSR practitioners can expect to encounter what may be competing objectives, and certainly competing expectations, and need to think carefully about the benefits and limitations of specific hybrid security arrangements.

3. Approach hybrid security with the understanding that positive public security effects may be unintended and variable.

When hybrid security benefits public security, it is likely a by-product of calculated efforts to achieve a separate (if not necessarily incompatible) goal. For example, even when the only objective of private security companies is to provide security to clients, these companies may have a positive net impact on public security if their presence deters crime in the areas where they work and their cooperation with police benefits law enforcement efforts. Self-help community protection can have a similar impact. **Positive public security effects deserve acknowledgement, and care should be taken not to create perverse incentives through ill-planned reforms, but by the same token, it should never be assumed that these effects are intentional or even beneficial.** Proximity to centres of power may be more determinant of outcomes than rule of law in some cases, and the nature of hybrid security makes it extremely difficult to predict outcomes and therefore to mitigate harm.

As Lawrence points out, engaging hybrid security 'implies that we can understand and predict the motivations, behaviours and world views of non-state actors: these are dangerous assumptions considering the potential for getting it wrong'.[73] Indeed, when the goals of hybrid security actors no longer match those of their national or external supporters, resources – whether material or social or political – can be reappropriated in ways that contradict the intended purpose of national or international stakeholders. Moreover, hybrid security based in localized control of violence often becomes highly resistant to change because, as De Lauri and Suhrke note, 'militias once built up, are hard to build down'.[74]

4. Apply the same standards of good security governance to state and hybrid security alike.
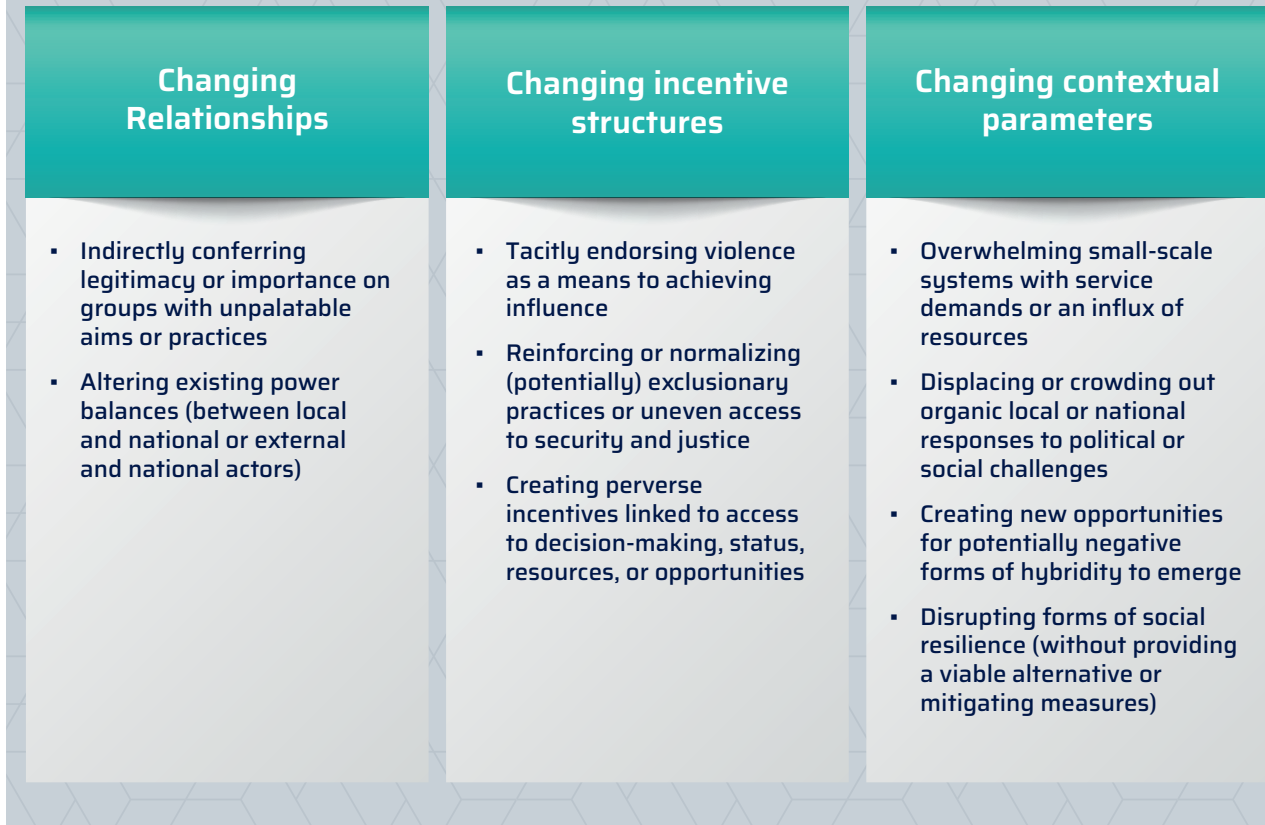
Good governance standards – accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and respect for human rights – are central to good security and justice provision, no matter the provider. And while the dubious human rights record, lack of accountability, and patchy history of service provision associated with hybrid security should not be ignored, SSR practitioners should avoid stigmatizing hybrid security as an anomaly, or as proof that a culture or society is incompatible with the values of justice and accountable, fair, and effective security. **Mapping studies should therefore focus on the specific roles played by various actors, rather than on identifying the 'good guys and bad guys.'**

5. Evaluate the potential consequences of any intervention and develop a mitigation plan.

Attempts to engage with hybrid security can affect the perceptions, incentives, and behaviours of the people involved in ways that may ultimately weaken or damage these arrangements. For example, **hybrid security arrangements that provide security or justice can be damaged by engagement with a state security sector or external actors if this undermines their social or functional legitimacy, dilutes their competency, or changes their incentive structure**. Measures of accountability and protections against impunity should therefore be built into engagement strategies from the beginning. In the case of hybrid security, **accountability should be delivered to the intended beneficiaries of security provision from the bottom up**, which is likely to be much more accessible, practical, legitimate, and effective in controlling hybrid security actors than top-down enforcement by the state. While top-down, state-led control and accountability processes do matter, where the state can undertake them there is typically no need for hybrid security provision in the first place.

The risk of unintended consequences can never be eliminated entirely in the context of reforms designed to transform complex social governance systems. However, SSR practitioners should take steps to anticipate and potentially mitigate some of these consequences by thinking through their origins and impacts. In Figure 4, unintended consequences that may result from reforms aimed at changing relationships, incentive structures, and contextual parameters are described.

Figure 4. Sources of unintended consequences in engagement with hybrid security

Changing Relationships	Changing incentive structures	Changing contextual parameters
▪ Indirectly conferring legitimacy or importance on groups with unpalatable aims or practices ▪ Altering existing power balances (between local and national or external and national actors)	▪ Tacitly endorsing violence as a means to achieving influence ▪ Reinforcing or normalizing (potentially) exclusionary practices or uneven access to security and justice ▪ Creating perverse incentives linked to access to decision-making, status, resources, or opportunities	▪ Overwhelming small-scale systems with service demands or an influx of resources ▪ Displacing or crowding out organic local or national responses to political or social challenges ▪ Creating new opportunities for potentially negative forms of hybridity to emerge ▪ Disrupting forms of social resilience (without providing a viable alternative or mitigating measures)

Moral quandaries are practically inevitable wherever hybrid security is concerned. Making a clear distinction between the analytical and programmatic can help ensure that decisions regarding security governance are made in the best interest of public safety and national security. For example, suppose a community identifies a local gang as a significant positive factor in their protection. The positive influence of this gang on local perceptions of security does not mean action to disrupt or destroy its criminal activities should not be taken, but that this action should be carried out differently than if the gang were merely a criminal group threatening public security.

Accounting for hybrid security in this case can help avoid the unintended consequence of disrupting an existing hybrid security relationship in a way that has negative consequences for the local community. If mitigation plans are prepared in advance, and the community itself engaged in an inclusive and participative way, the creation of a local security vacuum may be prevented.

Indeed, **SSR that engages hybrid security often seeks to change social coping strategies developed by individuals and communities in response to complex challenges and fragile conditions; for these people and communities, the stakes of getting SSR wrong are exceptionally high**. Hence, it is essential that actors engaged in SSR at the state and international levels embrace and honour their ethical responsibility to ensure that reform efforts do no harm, whether they target hybrid security arrangements or state security actors.

Photo: Josaphat Musamba, DRC 2022

Conclusion

The findings articulated in this study are based on research in three national settings, from various localized hybrid security contexts, and demonstrate the importance of SSR engagement with hybrid security as well as some of the opportunities and risks this entails. The nuance and complexity of each of the research locations under study provided valuable insights to begin closing the gap between a descriptive analysis of hybrid security and practical guidance on how to improve security provision and governance in hybrid contexts. **Engaging more effectively with hybrid security through SSR programming will take time, along with careful experimentation and a good deal of creativity.** It will also be necessary to understand the micro-dynamics of local security and justice provision in each context so that general insights, such as those presented in this study, can be properly tailored.

Even where state security and justice provision is deeply flawed or has limited or no reach, the state remains a unique entity in the security governance landscape by virtue of its mandate to protect all of a population. In contrast, even the most effective, accountable, reliable, and rights-conscious hybrid security relationships are only partially inclusive. Moreover, the ways in which popularly legitimate hybrid security and justice processes may be a source of harm, by providing security and justice to some, perhaps at a cost to others, remains insufficiently understood. Attempts to engage with hybrid dynamics through **SSR must therefore acknowledge that hybrid security can be a source of social resilience and stability while also potentially being incompatible with the consolidation of state authority or the extension of fundamental rights to all people**.

The fact that many hybrid security and justice arrangements actively reject women's rights should temper expectations regarding a linking of conservative social institutions to universalist projects for human rights protection. In reality, **hybrid security simply does not protect all people equally**, which is perhaps the most important reason that state security sectors must continue to be emphasized in SSR. At the same time, **SSR practitioners should also recognize the ways in which governments and elites themselves use hybrid security for politicized and pecuniary purposes that do not serve the principles of good governance**. These actors may actually be among the principal end users of hybrid security, whether by creating zones of neglect or exclusion from state services for political gain, tacitly implicating hybrid security in state security and justice delivery, co-opting state security institutions for corrupt or politicized objectives, or dodging sovereign responsibility by delegating unpopular or onerous security functions to non-state actors. A state's resistance to institutional reform may even stem from the very hybrid security relationships in which it is engaged.

If there is no accounting for the social realities of security governance beyond the direct influence or control of a state, state-based attempts at reform will have limited results at best. Hybrid security is a facet of every security governance setting, but its operations and consequences tend to be most visible in transitional, fragile, or conflict-affected contexts where state-based security and justice provision is weak. Notably, these are the contexts where state security and justice sectors may benefit most from the added resources, legitimacy, and capacity that can result from well managed cooperation with hybrid security arrangements. This can present a dilemma in fragile contexts, where **engaging hybrid security may be most useful and impactful at precisely the times when institutions are least equipped to make hybrid relationships work in a way that is rights-based, fair, and inclusive**. This dilemma also represents an opportunity, however, for cautious and context-sensitive support to SSR from external sources. This could include the necessary expertise and structural or political incentives to negotiate, develop, implement, and oversee well managed hybrid security arrangements.

What hybrid security demonstrates is that **security provision** itself, as well as accountability and transparency in decision-making (including over security), **can come from the bottom up and be delivered by local institutions that do not resemble those classically associated with top-down security and justice provision by states**. Hence, as the insights presented in this study underscore, SSR practitioners should be less concerned with the formal status of actors mandated to provide security and justice, and more concerned with how accountably and effectively security and justice are provided in practice, whether by states or through hybrid arrangements.

Paying heed to the variety of social and cultural bases on which hybrid security is deemed credible and legitimate

can also facilitate the development of more nuanced approaches to reform. As examples from this study have shown, both state- and non-state-based practices of security and justice provision become vectors that shape social behaviours, expectations, and norms; and in fact, this is what makes hybrid security a basis for social resilience. If complex social issues are to be meaningfully addressed through SSR, reforms must be rooted in a more sophisticated analysis of how security and justice affects people's lives, and hybrid security offers a perspective for this analysis.

Engaging hybrid security through SSR promises more context-specific and people-centred approaches to reform, which can support more sustainable progress toward better security sector governance within a framework of the rule of law and respect for human rights. Most importantly, a hybrid security perspective changes how we view the nature of security at its core, and thus the objectives of reform. By centring people's lived experiences of security and safety in the context of the security governance to which they are actually subject on a daily basis, **hybrid security reorients SSR away from theoretical analyses of what is ideal or desired** in relationships between security sector institutions. SSR programming through a hybrid security lens is not necessarily aimed at reforming non-state actors, but rather at improving people's practical experience of security by asking how state security providers can positively affect local dynamics of security provision and oversight.

The cases described in this study offer insights into the complexities of these localized hybrid security dynamics, but also reveal entry points that may help SSR practitioners **engage with communities in a way that builds on and reinforces locally legitimate means of control, regulation, oversight, and accountability of security**. The findings also suggest a need to carefully consider the most appropriate role external stakeholders might play in these contexts, and to emphasize making space for local partners to define the context-specific contours of transparency, responsiveness, accountability, and other principles of good SSG.

The fragile and conflict-affected contexts in which the dynamics of hybrid security tend to be most visible have for some time been a focus of SSR funding and programming, making it particularly important to focus on tailoring reform approaches to the realities of these contexts. The approaches described in this study can and should be piloted, not only by adjusting current programming where reform is insufficiently grounded in an understanding of hybrid dynamics, but also by **designing new programmes which are based on thorough analyses of both state and non-state security provision and take a risk-informed approach to engaging with a wider range of actors in pursuit of realistic and effective pathways for change**. DCAF looks forward to working with its partners to develop and implement integrated approaches that incorporate insights from this research, with the goal of helping both state and non-state actors provide more effective, accountable, and inclusive security and justice.

Photo: Landscape of Cauca. © Edgar Delgado.

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Endnotes

1. DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, *Security Sector Reform*, SSR Backgrounder Series (Geneva: DCAF, 2015).

2. See: Souhaïl Belhadj, et al., 'Plural security provision in Beirut', Policy brief, the Knowledge Platform Security Rule of Law, October 2015; and Megan Price and Michael Warren, 'Reimagining SSR in Contexts of Security Pluralism,' *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, Vol. 6: No. 1 (2017).

3. See: Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, 'Security Beyond the State: Global Security Assemblages in International Politics', *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2009), pp. 1-17.

4. See: Tim Glawion, *The Security Arena in Africa: Local Order-Making in the Central African Republic, Somaliland, and South Sudan* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

5. See: Oliver Jütersonke, Robert Muggah, and Dennis Rodgers, 'Gangs, Urban Violence, and Security Interventions in Central America', *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 40, No. 4-5 (2009), pp. 373-397.

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11. For example, see: Bagayoko, Hutchful, and Luckham, 'Hybrid security governance in Africa'; Emadeddin Badi, *Exploring Armed Groups in Libya: Perspectives on Security Sector Reform in a Hybrid Environment* (Geneva: DCAF, 2020); and Ursula C. Schroeder and Fairlie Chappuis, 'New Perspectives on Security Sector Reform: The Role of Local Agency and Domestic Politics', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2014), pp. 133-148.

12. For example, see: Sebastian Angzoorokuu Paalo and Abdul Karim Issifu, 'De-internationalizing Hybrid Peace: State-Traditional Authority Collaboration and Conflict Resolution in Northern Ghana', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2021), pp. 406-424; and Sarah Detzner and Mary Kaldor, 'Security and Justice Reform: Findings from the Conflict Research Programme', London School of Economics, 2021.

13. This study complements work undertaken by DCAF's International Security Sector Advisory Team on *People Centred Security and Justice: Linking Policy to Programming*, which was commissioned by the Dutch, Swiss and Swedish Ministries of Foreign Affairs and aimed at developing the evidence base and building the case for international partners to better integrate people-centred approaches to security sector reform. The study provided evidence that state-focused reforms fall short of holistically addressing drivers and root causes of fragility and conflict. It also highlighted that while SSG/R has been influenced by the concept of human security since it was conceived in the 1990s, over two decades of programming has shown a disconnect between the 'statebuilding' approach and grassroots-focused peacebuilding efforts. One contributing factor has been the lack of understanding of the hybrid nature of security systems, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

14. Paul Jackson and Peter Albrecht, 'Power, Politics and Hybridity', in *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical Conversations*, edited by Joanne Wallis, et al. (Australian National University Press, 2018).

15. As Luckham and Kirk note, security can be viewed 'on the one hand as a process of creating and maintaining social orders, including those we call states; and on the other hand, as an entitlement of those who are protected by these social orders, i.e. of end-users'. See: Robin Luckham and Tom Kirk, *Security in Hybrid Political Contexts: An end-user approach*, JSRP Paper 2 (Justice and Security Research Programme, London School of Economics, 2012), pp. 10-11.

16. This is why SSR is a practical element in the renegotiation of a social contract. For more, see: Mark Knight, 'Security Sector Reform, Democracy, and the Social Contract: From Implicit to Explicit', *Journal of Security Sector Management*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2009), pp. 1-20.

17. The idea of the state's right to impose order through the creation and enforcement of law is captured in the idea that the state can and should monopolize the legitimate use of force.

18. This multilayering of governance by armed groups has been described by Kasfir, Frerks, and Terpstra. See: Nelson Kasfir, Georg Frerks, and Niels Terpstra, 'Introduction: Armed Groups and Multi-layered Governance', *Civil Wars*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2017), pp. 257-278.

19. See: Moïse Ouedraogo, 'Impact of New Mining Technologies on Large-Scale and Artisanal Mining in Burkina Faso', Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development, December 2021.

20. See how security, sustainable development, and respect for human rights are being supported by the DCAF Business and Security Division, at: DCAF Business & Security Hub, https://www.businessandsecurity.dcaf.ch/en (accessed 27 December 2022).

21. Esther Sánchez Botero, 'Reflexiones en torno de la jurisdicción especial indígena en Colombia', *Revista del Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos*, Vol. 41 (2005), p. 227.

22. Jhadiana Lucía Cuesta Rentería and Lisneider Hinestroza Cuesta, 'Análisis jurídico de las funciones de los consejos comunitarios en territorios colectivos de comunidades negras', *Justicia*, Vol. 32 (2017), pp. 160-181.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. There are 84 resguardos for eight different indigenous communities in Cauca: the Nasa-Paéz, Guambiano Yanaconas, Coconucos, Epiraras-siapiraras (Emberas), Totoroes, Inganos, and Guanacos.

26. Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas de la Zona Norte del Cauca, *Report: Reconstruyendo el derecho propio protegemos la vida, para seguir en resistencia* (Santander de Quilichao, 2004).

27. Herbert Wulf, *Good Governance Beyond Borders: Creating a Multi-level Public Monopoly of Legitimate Force*, DCAF Occasional Paper No. 10 (Geneva, 2006).

28. While not an ethnically defined group with constitutional protections, campesinos (peasants) in Cauca represent an important share of the community and act as a politically distinct group based on a shared socio-economic status and history.

29. Alhena Caicedo, María Juliana Rubiano-Lizarazo, and María Alejandra Vélez, 'Las Guardias Indígena, Cimarrona y Campesina en el Norte del Cauca: resistencia comunitaria no violenta para el control territorial', Centro de Estudios sobre Seguridad y Drogas, (Universidad de los Andes, 25 January 2022). Available (in Spanish) at: https://cesed.uniandes.edu.co/las-guardias-indigena-cimarrona-y-campesina-en-el-norte-del-cauca-resistencia-comunitaria-no-violenta-para-el-control-territorial/ ; and Jairo Vladimir Llano Franco, 'Relaciones interculturales entre comunidades indígenas, negras y campesinas del norte del Cauca: Intercultural Relations Between Indigenous, Peasant and Black Communities in the North of Cauca', *Revista de Derecho*, Vol. 53 (2020), pp. 10-29.

30. Llano Franco, 'Relaciones interculturales…'.

31. Jaime Antonio Álvarez Soler, 'Diálogo de saberes: justicia indígena del Cauca y justicia ordinaria, un intercambio cultural posible', *Revista Historia de la Educacion Latinoamericana*, Vol. 21, No. 33 (2019), pp. 35-59.

32. The ruling of the Constitutional Court of Colombia on the jurisdictional autonomy of indigenous peoples to resolve conflicts by their own authority and according to their own community standards (Autonomía Jurisdiccional de Pueblos Indígenas para Resolver Conflictos por Autoridades Propias y Según Normas y Procedimiento Establecido por Cada Comunidad), Judgement C-463/14, Corte Constitucional de Colombia, 2014. Available (in Spanish) at: https://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/relatoria/2014/C-463-14.htm See also: Caicedo *et al.,* 'Las Guardias Indígena, Cimarrona y Campesina en el Norte del Cauca'; and Llano Franco, 'Relaciones interculturales …'.

33. Indigenous leader in northern Cauca, interview by researcher, March 2022; Leader of a peasants' organization in Cauca, interview by researcher, (January 2022).

34. Leader of a peasants' organization in Cauca, interview by researcher, January 2022.

35. Caicedo, *et al.,*, 'Las Guardias Indígena, Cimarrona y Campesina en el Norte del Cauca'; Llano Franco, 'Relaciones interculturales…'.

36. See: Alcaldía de Santander de Quilichao, *Plan de Desarrollo 2020-2023*. Available as a PDF (in Spanish) at: https://www.santanderdequilichao-cauca.gov.co/Transparencia/PlaneacionGestionyControl/Plan%20de%20Desarrollo%20Municipal%20Quilichao%20Vive%202020-2023.pdf

37. Former public official who led security operations in a northern Cauca municipality, interview by researcher, (May 2022).

38. Representative of the guild of industries/enterprises in Cauca, interview by researcher, (January 2022).

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49. 'Tropas del Ejército fueron expulsadas de territorio indígena en Buenos Aires, Cauca', *W Radio*, (20 January 2022). Available (in Spanish) at: https://www.wradio.com.co/2022/01/20/tropas-del-ejercito-fueron-expulsadas-de-territorio-indigena-en-buenos-aires-cauca/

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52. Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca, 'El Ejercicio del Control Territorial es Aplicación del Principio de Autonomía y de la Jurisdicción Propia, Exigimos Respeto por Parte del Ejercito en sus Declaraciones', press release, (23 April 2021). Available (in Spanish) at: https://www.cric-colombia.org/portal/exigimos-respeto-por-parte-del-ejercito-en-sus-declaraciones/

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54. Ibid.

55. For example, see: Jütersonke, Muggah, and Rodgers, 'Gangs, Urban Violence, and Security Interventions in Central America'.

56. For example, see: Antonio De Lauri and Astri Suhrke, 'Armed governance: the case of the CIA-supported Afghan militias', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (2021), pp. 490-508; and Markus Virgil Hoehne, 'Limits of hybrid political orders: the case of Somaliland', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2013), pp. 199-217.

57. This is what Luckham and Kirk would call an 'end-user' perspective. See: *Security in Hybrid Political Contexts*.

58. The potential for hybrid security to provide a more inclusive and responsive starting point for governance assistance has been widely recognized. For example, see: Kevin P. Clements et al., 'State Building Reconsidered: the Role of Hybridity in the Formation of Political Order,' *Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (2007), pp. 45-56; and Bagayoko, Hutchful, and Luckham, 'Hybrid security governance in Africa'.

59. Price and van Veen, *From entitlements to power structures*.

60. Megan Price, *Setting the Aperture Wider: A synthesis of research and policy advice on security pluralism in Tunis, Nairobi and Beirut* (Plural Security Insights, 2016); Niagalé Bagayoko, 'Explaining the failure of internationally-supported defence and security reforms in Sahelian states', *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2022), pp. 243-269.

61. Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, eds., *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (Stanford University Press, 2010); Thomas Risse, ed., *Governance without a State? Policies and Politics in Areas of Limited Statehood* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

62. See: Clements et al., 'State Building Reconsidered'. Several cases highlighted in this study demonstrate this possibility, such as the modalities of community consultation among police and community security groups at mining sites in the DRC, or the participation and consultation embedded in indigenous governance approaches in Colombia – both of which are examples of bottom-up public oversight of security governance.

63. Originally developed in the context of gender and security, DCAF's NAPRI Tool (Needs, Access, Participation, Resources, Impact) can be a useful starting point for understanding how different members of society may experience security very differently. DCAF-Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, *Tool 15, Gender and Security Toolkit: Integrating Gender in Project Design and Monitoring for the Security and Justice Sector*, DCAF and OSCE/ODIHIR, UN Women (2019), p.12-13. Available at: https://www.dcaf.ch/node/13624

64. Davis, John-Michael, and Garb, Yaakov, 'Toward Active Community Environmental Policing: Potentials and Limits of a Catalytic Model,' *Environmental Management*, Vol. 65, No.3 (2020), p. 385–398.

65. DCAF-Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, *Bridging the Distance: Lessons Learned from a Bottom-up Approach to Gender and Security in Rural Colombia*, Lessons learned paper (2020). Available at: Bridging The Distance_Gender_Security_Colombia.pdf (dcaf.ch)

66. DCAF-Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, *Building Confidence through SSR: lessons learned from Yemen* (2021). Available at: Building confidence through SSR: lessons learned from Yemen | DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance

67. As the creation of a new state security force or the demobilization of an existing force normally requires a major mobilization of resources and political will, which occurs quite rarely in most contexts, these relationships also tend to remain relatively fixed over time.

68. The International Security Sector Advisory Team, *SSR in a Nutshell: Manual for Introductory Training on Security Sector Reform* (DCAF-ISSAT, 2012), p. 11.

69. Bagayoko, Hutchful, and Luckham, 'Hybrid security governance in Africa'.

70. Ibid.; Bagayoko, 'Explaining the failure of internationally-supported defence and security reforms in Sahelian states'; Ursula C. Schroeder, Fairlie Chappuis, and Deniz Kocak, 'Security Sector Reform and the Emergence of Hybrid Security Governance', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2014), pp. 214-230; Michael Lawrence, 'Security Provision and Political Formation in Hybrid Orders', *Stability: International Journal of Security Development*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2017), pp. 1-17; Bruce Baker and Eric Scheye, 'Multi-layered justice and security delivery in post-conflict and fragile states', *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (2007), pp. 503-528.

71. This approach to mapping reflects the idea of a 'security arena', used to analyse SSR and DDR programmes by Detzner and Kaldor. See: 'Security and Justice Reform: Findings from the Conflict Research Programme'.

72. For work that begins to explore these options in the format of overlapping areas of practice, see: Christopher von Dyck, *DDR and SSR in War-to-Peace Transition*, SSR Paper 14 (London: Ubiquity Press, 2018); Ursign Hofmann et al., *Linking Mine Action and SSR through Human Security*, SSR Paper 15 (London: Ubiquity Press, 2018); and Mark Sedra and Geoff Burt, *Integrating SSR and SALW Programming*, SSR Paper 16 (London: Ubiquity Press, 2108).

73. Lawrence, 'Security Provision and Political Formation in Hybrid Orders', p. 3.

74. De Lauri and Suhrke, 'Armed governance'.

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