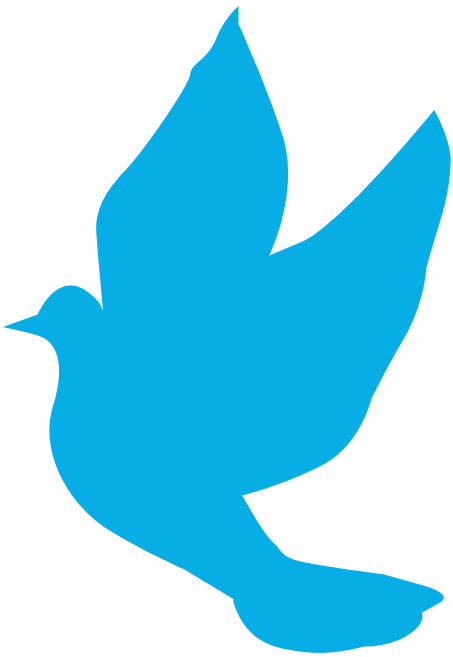
INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR THE
CHALLENGES OF PEACE OPERATIONS

Challenges with Assessing Impact in International Police Reform and Assistance

MARK ANDREW REBER



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THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE OPERATIONS

The Challenges Forum is a strategic and dynamic platform for constructive dialogue among policymakers, practitioners and academics on key issues and developments in peace operations.

The aim is to shape the debate by promoting awareness of emerging issues, identifying key challenges facing military, police and civilian peace operations, generate practical recommendations and support their effective implementation. It is a global network of partner organizations from all continents of the world.

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Preface

Since 1948 when peacekeeping operations were first initiated by the United Nations, they have been structured to provide a range of services. Peacekeeping has been used to achieve ceasefires, separate warring factions, as well as to support host governments focused on building sustainable peace after conflict. To meet the challenges resulting from the broadened range of activities, police and civilians joined the military as the principle stakeholders needed to achieve complex mandate objectives. The UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC, 1960-1964) marked the first formal inclusion of police contingents; their task was focused on the safety of local populations, and to a limited degree, providing basic policing services. Over time, the roles and responsibilities of police peacekeeping has become a critical component of every mission, resulting in a distinct area of expertise termed Security Sector Reform.

As peacekeeping became part of the international toolbox for addressing conflict, it has become increasingly evident that we need to better understand how to measure success as a means for informing future decision-making. That has opened a dialogue for asking the hard questions of impact assessment and evaluation: what are we measuring; for whom are we measuring; and for what purpose.

This study addresses the specific issue of evaluating and assessing the role of police. It is structured to provide a background on the involvement of police, and then focuses on current practices in police peacekeeping regarding measuring their contribution to meeting the mission mandates. The strengths and weaknesses of current impact assessment and evaluation practices are discussed, along with research gaps. The paper includes three case studies – Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Ireland, and Palestine – to illustrate the issues, and concludes with lessons identified and recommendations.

This paper is part of a larger Challenges Forum work strand in 2012 – 2014 focused on Impact Evaluation and Assessment in peace operations, co-led by the Pearson Centre and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS). The aim

of this working group is to contribute to the debate on how we can improve and make peace operations more effective by measuring the effectiveness and impact. A central part of the working group's undertaking has been a comparative inventory linking tools, toolkits and reviews used to measure the effectiveness and impact of peace operations. I am grateful to Dr Ann Livingstone (Pearson Centre) and Ms Annette Leijinaar (ISS) for so ably leading the working group and to Dr Michele Lipner (supported by the Australian Civil-Military Centre) for managing the project. I would like to thank Challenges Forum Partner organizations for their contributions to the work strand. The Challenges Forum also gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy, which helped to make possible the commissioning of the present study on Challenges with Assessing Impact in International Police Reform and Assistance.

Annika Hilding Norberg
Director, Challenges Forum

March 2014

Abbreviations

ADB Asian Development Bank

CSO Civil Society Organizations

DCAF Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

DPKO UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

DRC Democratic Republic of the Congo

ECHA UN Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs

EUPOL European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

ONUC UN Operation in the Congo

OOC Office of the Oversight Commissioner

OROLSI Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions

OSCE Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PCBS Palestinian Central Bureau for Statistics

PCP Palestinian Civil Police

PNC Police Nationale du Congo

SSR Security Sector Reform

UN United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive Summary

Since the first United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in 1948 the international community has been involved in an increasing number of similar efforts around the world. With the formal inclusion of policing contingents in the 1960 ONUC mission in Congo, policing and other justice sector reforms have since become an integral part of most UN missions.

Policing is now rightly seen as both critical to any host country's overall development and the most visible expression of its government's abilities and authority. Policing reform remains difficult, expensive and time consuming however and being inherently political, depends enormously on local political will to succeed. Police organizations are also among the more conservative and change-resistant.

As international policing reform initiatives are being implemented multilateral and other donors will wish to know how their funding is being applied and whether it is having the intended effect. With increasing pressure to demonstrate value for money, evaluation practitioners have begun to recognize the importance of adopting more sophisticated approaches to evaluating impact.

Unfortunately many UN missions are not resourced to effectively assess impact, and time and other constraints have made this practice extremely challenging. In addition, the long term objectives of many policing reform initiatives are often highly aspirational and can be phrased in ways that only add to the challenge of effective assessment; thus it may be difficult to define what success means and to whom, and to develop effective indicators to evaluate policing reforms particularly from a 'client' perspective.

In order to address these challenges the UN is increasingly looking to consider more robust approaches to impact evaluation, and many practitioners have begun to employ more participatory forms of monitoring and evaluation as a result. Although participatory evaluation is a varied field and is not a panacea for impact assessment, participatory approaches are built around increasing

the involvement in and ownership of a reform initiative by the local population, and can often work to support program implementation as well as greater institutional accountability and responsiveness.

Although participatory approaches are not yet widely used in policing reform programs they have a particular relevance in this field, not least because the views of the 'policed' are crucial to any assessment of impact. This and other practical insights into the process of impact evaluation are bourne out by the three case studies highlighted: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Ireland and Palestine.

Among the key lessons learned are the importance of determining precisely what is being measured, and by whom, and that a narrower evaluation scope can often prove more appropriate and reliable. In addition, evaluations should be undertaken at appropriate phases in a policing reform program's implementation particularly if the initiative involves multiple actors with overlapping program objectives; if done too early there may simply not be enough change to assess. Finally, most if not all policing reform initiatives will reach a point when true progress and impact can only be meaningfully assessed and informed by eliciting the direct input of the local community itself.

1. Introduction

The long-term objectives and results that guide the implementation of most international policing reform and assistance initiatives can neither be effectively evaluated and assessed in ways that most monitoring and evaluation frameworks are currently constructed, nor within the times under which most UN peace operations function. Resources, time and conceptual constraints counter the accurate and meaningful determination of whether or not the long-term goals and effects of a given police reform or assistance scheme have in fact been achieved, particularly to the satisfaction of one of the primary clients of any modern police organization: the local community it serves and professes to protect.

Any attempt to significantly assess and evaluate the overall impact of international peacekeeping and peace operations missions is fraught with challenge. This is particularly the case for aspects of peace operations that involve policing reform and capacity building. Many international peace operations and policing assistance initiatives, as well as their associated logical frameworks and project plans, are able to track the implementation of short to medium-term program outputs and objectives relatively well. However, they are rarely mandated, structured or funded in ways that permit an effective assessment of the lasting consequences. This is partly because most international policing reform initiatives, particularly those under UN mandates, are not in place long enough to allow for a successful assessment of their long-term effect. Such mandates almost always have insufficient funding to develop or engage with those local institutions that might have helped to assess the long-term impacts, and possibly provide insight into their success – or otherwise.

While the more structural and technical aspects of a policing reform initiative can be monitored and assessed relatively well during a peace operation, these 'outputs' and even 'outcomes' to a certain extent, might have to act as proxy measures on the broader impacts an initiative might have,

and may well have to suffice with regard to a meaningful evaluation. The assessment of longer-term impacts, however, might ultimately have to depend on gathering different types of data from various sources, including local communities.

How one of the primary clients of any police organization –the community– perceives the effects of a given reform is often by survey-based evaluation accompanied by methodological rigour, which is usually the best way of finding out whether or not a particular initiative is working and if it will ultimately succeed.

Background

Since the first United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in 1948, the international community has increasingly involved itself with similar operations around the world. Their ultimate goal is to provide a range of services – from peacekeeping to peacebuilding – to support host governments in transition from instability, conflict or natural disaster to state stability and viability where government and institutions are viewed by the populace as legitimate and are responsive to its needs.[1]

In the past a focus on achieving ceasefires and the separation of warring parties led UN peace operations to rely heavily on military roles and functions. While this practice continues, UN peace operations have begun to include larger components of civilian capacity-building experts, as well as sizable police contingents. This is partly in recognition of the changing nature of conflict and the increasingly multidimensional and integrated aspects of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Missions now progressively include specific peacebuilding and institutional development components that are seen to improve the chances of long-lasting success.

The formal inclusion of police contingents in UN peace operations, in this instance the military provost police, began with the ONUC mission in the Congo in 1960.[2] The initial focus of these contingents was on keeping local populations safe and free of crime and informal armed groups, as well as

1 Michele Lipner and Ann Livingstone, *Impact Evaluation and Assessment of UN Peace Operations: What is the State of the Art?*, Challenges Forum Occasional Paper, (*forthcoming*), p. 2.
2 This would prove to be an ongoing commitment for the global community and continues to the present day. The specific challenges of assessing the impacts of policing assistance in the DRC are discussed in greater detail below.

providing limited policing services. In many instances these missions made available the only effective policing service to be found, and began to supply host governments with different types of technical advice and assistance. Local police were aided on training and mentoring and given help with certain types of investigations.

UN peacekeeping operations have become more closely integrated and are now deployed as part of a comprehensive multidimensional assistance effort that includes development, political aspects, security, rule of law and human rights components, all within a common approach. This is viewed as a means of improving both the management and the potential impact of a peacekeeping mission.[3]

Multidimensional and integrated UN mission structures routinely include tasks such as the restructuring, training and operational support for judicial, police and prison reform initiatives, as well as assisting civil society and constitutional processes.[4] Among other things a more integrated structure underscores the recognized importance of actors of all types and approaches, all of which are managed and implemented within a single coherent framework.[5]

As the UN began to be tasked with ever more complex peacebuilding missions in the late 1990s[6], a focus on the security sector, particularly on policing reform, became one of the more substantive aspects of change to take place in UN peace operations.[7] The term that developed to encompass and describe these activities was Security Sector Reform (SSR).

Over time SSR has become a complex and multidimensional undertaking in its own right, and many UN and other efforts now involve multiple levels of assistance modalities including multilateral, bilateral and private sector, often acting simultaneously. While not all UN operations are mandated to carry out SSR initiatives, mission mandates now routinely include efforts related to SSR, particularly in post-conflict contexts.[8]

3 Heiner Hänggi and Vincenza Scherrer (eds.), *Security Sector Reform and UN Integrated Missions: Experience from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, and Kosovo*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, 2008, p. 8.
4 DCAF, 2008, p. 3.
5 DCAF, 2008, p. 9.
6 United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *Reform, Restructuring and Rebuilding of Police Law Enforcement Agencies,* UN Peacekeeping PDT Standards, Specialized Training Material for Police 1st Edition, New York, 2013, p. 3.
7 Hänggi and Scherrer, 2008, p. 16.
8 Hänggi and Scherrer, 2008, p. 14.

The central role of policing in any peacekeeping and peacebuilding initiative is now firmly established and police organizations are seen to be both critical to the overall development of a host government and as the most visible expression of a local government's ability and authority.[9] Unfortunately, in many post-conflict or fragile states the public does not trust its police owing to its involvement in the recent conflict, or for perceived or actual corruption, or human rights abuses. Many local police officers also struggle to establish legitimacy in the eyes of the community because of their perceived lack of effectiveness and concern for the security and stability of the local population.[10]

The public's image of its police service thus has a remarkably strong influence on its perception of its own collective and individual security. Strengthening its policing and other law enforcement institutions is therefore one of the first positive signals to a population that a host government is re-establishing its authority.[11] This is an area, however, where the prospective interests of donors and hosts can clash, which can either delay or immobilize the changes and reforms required – particularly where the security or financial interests of local elites might be adversely affected.

This is compounded by the fact that policing is inherently political and immensely dependent on local political will for successful reform, adding uncertainty to any meaningful change.[12] The often deeply conservative and entrenched cultures evident in police organizations further obstruct change, as can the colonial backgrounds of many policing institutions in the developing world. In the past this implied a large group of often poorly skilled and badly equipped local police officers who were intended to support a small group of well trained and equipped colonial officers, administrators and investigators.

In the course of time, as UN missions became increasingly integrated and more sophisticated, SSR initiatives were able to adapt to and overcome many of these challenges and are now rightly seen as critical to any integrated peacebuilding program. Unfortunately simple and conclusive metrics of the long-term success and impact of various SSR initiatives have proved to be frustratingly elusive.[13]

9 Challenges Forum, *Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,* Stockholm, 2010, p. 108.
10 Challenges Forum, *Considerations,* 2010.
11 Challenges Forum, *Considerations,* 2010.
12 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 10.
13 Fatemeh Ziai, *Developing a Strategy for Early Peacebuilding: Priorities, Sequencing and Delivery of Rule of Law and Security-related Activities by UN Peacekeeping Operations*, Background Paper, Challenges Forum, Stockholm, March 2010, p. 3.

In recognition of the importance of more sophisticated assessment approaches the international donor community and the UN have been promoting better monitoring and evaluation and have reviewed their own practices and experiences in these fields to develop more sophisticated rule of law indicators and evaluation tools.[14] These adaptations also recognize that a given reform initiative will require significant and long-term commitment and investment if reform has any hope of succeeding.[15]

One would assume that with the significant funds and global attention paid to SSR that such efforts would be routinely successful. Experience, however, has shown that this is not the case. There continues to be a tendency for the international community to underestimate the tests associated with meaningful SSR, particularly within policing.[16] With recent global economic concerns, there comes a growing donor and member state demand for results. UN missions have come under progressive pressure from donor governments to show the effects of their rule of law and police reform initiatives.[17]

At the same time, donors and member states are under pressure to articulate clearer notions on what types of impact they might be looking for from the UN's peace operations, and what specifically they wish UN and other evaluators to focus on in a particular mission.[18] Given the importance of establishing meaningful definitions around critical terminology, as well as for the purposes of this paper, impact is defined thus:

> The effects, positive or negative, primary and secondary, direct or indirect, intended or unintended, that are produced by an initiative or intervention.[19]

In broad terms, impact assessments look for overall results that lie beyond the immediate outcomes or sphere of an intervention,[20] and attempt to determine what has resulted from a given initiative and what real differences have been made.[21]

14 United Nations DPKO, Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) and DCAF, 2012, *Measuring the Impact of Peacekeeping Missions on Rule of Law and Security Institutions*, Workshop Report, New York, 12 March 2012, p. 3.
15 Ziai, 2010, p. 3.
16 Ziai, 2010, p. 3.
17 United Nations DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 3.
18 United Nations DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 12.
19 The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility: Improving Learning for Results.* DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, OECD Publishing, Paris, November 2012, p. 57.
20 OECD, 2012, p.57.
21 The Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Policing Reform within the Framework of Criminal Justice Reform,* TNTD/SPMU Publication Series, Vol. 11, Vienna, July 2013, p. 164.

It is clearly recognized that there are a number of meaningful impact indicators that can be measured in the short to medium term that go beyond the security sector, such as improved governmental and institutional stability, physical infrastructure, community health and wellbeing. There are also more specific justice indicators, such as improved institutional stability and management, enhanced community access to justice institutions, greater collaboration between different sectoral actors, such as police investigators and criminal prosecutors, and ultimately, improved public perception.[22]

While some evaluation practitioners consider the assessment of impact in the short term to be impossible, asserting that several years must pass before a meaningful assessment of impact can be undertaken,[23] others argue that there is no need to wait that long and that programs aimed at evaluating impact should be built into the design of any initiative.[24] Apart from helping to establish ongoing impact, this would allow a determination of where future program efforts and funding might best be aimed.[25]

Despite the many challenges facing monitoring and evaluation, the UN is increasingly being encouraged to consider more robust 'real world' approaches to evaluation that acknowledge changing realities and move away from some of the more traditionally accepted evaluation methodologies.[26]

22 OSCE, 2013, p. 11. Not all of these would normally fall to a police organization to address and correct.
23 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 11.
24 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 11.
25 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 3.
26 United Nations DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 3.

2. Current Practice

As noted earlier, given the need to demonstrate progress and sometimes to show greater value for money, most policing reform initiatives include a bespoke monitoring and evaluation component, even if somewhat small compared with other program elements. In turn, initiatives, plans and objectives are laid out in complex and highly detailed logical or results-based management frameworks that attempt to guide the implementation of the program by spelling out short, medium and long-term objectives and outcomes, ideally in relatively measurable terms.

A typical long-term impact objective for a policing reform initiative would encompass the provision of better services by local police – including imp roved patrolling, response times, criminal investigations, citizen complaints mechanisms and communications – with the overarching objective of enhancing the community's access to an efficient, accountable, trustworthy and responsive police service. While such objectives are laudable and entirely legitimate, they are also somewhat amorphous and difficult to measure. This presents significant tests on developing an accepted and meaningful empirical or evidentiary data set that demonstrates progress and efficiency.[27]

More specifically, UN documents intended to guide mission leaders in almost every aspect of peacebuilding and institutional reform set in place output objectives such as having the local "law enforcement sector strengthened".[28] While this is certainly a reasonable and desirable objective, the difficulty lies in defining what that means and to whom, and in developing useful indicators that will allow the meaningful assessment of whether such an objective has been met. Similarly ambitious long term goals can include:

- Proper legal frameworks and the jurisprudence;

27 Charles Hunt, *Policing Transformation, Transforming Police: Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of Police in UN Peace Operations,* University of Queensland, Brisbane, (*abstract*), 2012.
28 Challenges Forum, 2010, p. 112.

- Police that are held accountable to the law;
- Police that are able to respond to the needs of the population;
- Police that are trained to operate within a human rights framework;
- Police that are more representative of the population; and,
- Police that have proportionate opportunities for women and minorities.[29]

Again, worthy as these impact objectives are, they are difficult to measure and their ultimate achievement, even if measurable, might also extend well beyond the specific mandate of a given UN peacekeeping mission.[30] These objectives may also be achieved through a number of different initiatives, spanning beyond the UN's own involvement, and may result from the cumulative efforts of numerous actors rather than the dedicated work of a single one. The lack of understanding regarding how difficult such objectives are to be achieved in practice, within the time limits normally seen in UN peace operations, is demonstrated by the fact that the UN's principal guidance document for mission leaders and reform practitioners devotes only six out of a total of 93 pages to the intricacies and vicissitudes of police reform.[31]

In any case the many goals and objectives that are specified also require a significant amount of monitoring and evaluation. These in turn are driven by many factors, including the need for donors to determine how the funding they provide to UN operations is being allocated, and what impact the application of their resources might have had.[32] As evaluation practices have adapted the most effective now employ a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measures and draw on a number of different data sources to facilitate an evaluation. The findings of these evaluations are then ideally fed back into program design, as well as into policy development and other activities,[33] including training design or equipment purchases.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) suggests that evaluations should begin with a determination of what specifically the evaluation is intended to measure, how this relates to original program objectives, and how the information gathered in the course of the

29 Challenges Forum, 2010, p. 112.
30 Hänggi and Scherrer, 2008, p. 12; UN Security Council Resolution 1526 (MONUC) of October 2004 mandates: "The training and monitoring of the police, while ensuring that they are democratic and fully respect human rights and fundamental freedoms."
31 Hänggi and Scherrer, 2008, p. 12.
32 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 3.
33 Ziai, 2010, p. 37.

evaluation will ultimately be used.[34] The methods suggested by the OECD for gathering information include desktop reviews, structured interviews, stakeholder surveys and increasingly, host population surveys.[35]

Only recently have evaluation practitioners begun to grapple more seriously and concretely how the overall effectiveness and impact of a peace operation can be assessed with significance.[36] This in turn has led to an increase in the use of more participatory forms of monitoring and evaluation,[37] as stakeholder participation is seen to support greater institutional accountability, governance and responsiveness, as well as the sustainability of reforms.[38]

Participatory evaluation has its roots in international development that go back more than 40 years spanning diverse development concepts and contexts.[39] Though there are different forms of participatory evaluation, and appropriate timing is critical, the ultimate objective is to involve and empower local populations in decision-making on their own futures[40] and to encourage partnerships between evaluation practitioners and members of the local community in question to cooperatively develop evaluative knowledge.[41]

In policing reform such approaches, as well as others developed along similar lines, seek to promote and encourage the involvement of local citizens in decisions on how they are policed, particularly in later phases of many reform initiatives, and attempt to increase the focus of police organizations on citizens and how they engage with the police. Direct participation is the objective and to an increased extent focus groups are being used to examine levels of public awareness, seeking its views on policing and accountability.[42]

Some UN missions and host governments employ local cellular telephone networks in order to distribute SMS text messages to a widely disbursed

34 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 6.
35 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 16.
36 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 4.
37 Terry Smutylo, *Outcome Mapping: A Method for Tracking Behavioural Changes in Development Programs*, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, The Institutional Learning and Change Initiative, Montpellier, 2005.
38 Asian Development Bank (ADB), *Strengthening Participation for Development Results: An Asian Development Bank Guide to Participation*, Manila, February 2012, p. 1.
39 Jill A. Chouinard and J. Bradley Cousins, *The Journey from Rhetoric to Reality: Participatory Evaluation in a Development Context*, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, 2013, p. 1.
40 Rolf Sartorius, *Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: Improving the Performance of Poverty Reduction Programs and Building Capacity of Local Partners*, Social Impact, 1998, p. 1.
41 Chouinard and Cousins, 2013, p. 2.
42 Maria Docking, *Public Perceptions of Police Accountability and Decision Making*, Online Report 38/03, Home Office, London, 2003, p. 5.

pool of potential respondents as a means of assessing local experiences and perceptions of policing.[43] Another development in monitoring and evaluation is in results monitoring. This is applied to a range of interventions and programs and includes an increasing focus on perceptions of change among stakeholders.[44] Used carefully, these approaches allow missions and hosts to get 'street level' views and a picture of institutional performance that otherwise might be difficult or risky for respondents to share through conventional polling methods.[45]

It is obvious that more intense local participation, even in real time, is no panacea for impact assessment, and that such approaches are inherently limited and bear significant practical costs. Impact can also be measured in other ways, with broader societal indicators such as increased political and social stability, population health, and the accessibility of health and other government institutions being among the more critical ones.

There remains, however, a need to assess both the performance of reforming or evolving policing institutions and the public's perceptions of any actual reform.[46] The UN has recognized that it cannot continue to function on the basis of unquestioned assumptions about progress and effectiveness without feedback from local populations.[47] This form of greater transparency can also serve to further mobilize civil society participation and involvement in the reform process and in the end can build on a community's trust and faith in its policing institutions.[48]

Recognition is gaining that community support for and cooperation with the police is critical to its operational success and can have a positive impact on overall public safety. In the absence of any change to community perceptions of safety and security, however, communities rapidly lose faith in their policing institutions and cease to support them. Such lack of support can only hinder and delay the implementation and sustainability of any reform program[49] and will ultimately have a negative impact on operational effectiveness and community safety.

43 William Durch, *Understanding Impact of Police, Justice and Corrections Components in UN Peace Operations*, Stimson Center, July 2012, p. 108, http://www.stimson.org/books-reports/understanding-impact-of-police-justice-and-corrections-components-in-un-peace-operations/.
44 Jody Z. Kusek and Ray C. Rist, *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System: A Hand book for Development Practitioners,* The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington DC, 2004, p. 17.
45 Durch, 2012, p. 108.
46 OSCE, 2013, p. 165.
47 Ziai, 2010, p. 35.
48 OSCE, 2013, p. 165.
49 OSCE, 2013, p. 14.

Research Gaps

Monitoring and evaluating research in traditional international development initiatives is now relatively well established. Evaluation practitioners are becoming clearer on what should be measured and at what level: output, outcome and impact.[50] Greater care is also being taken to ensure that any monitoring and evaluation framework contains a sufficiently broad range of both qualitative and quantitative indicators.[51]

These approaches are now being augmented by research on the benefits of more participatory approaches in development studies, as well as on the increasing need to reflect more local perspectives and priorities in evaluation studies. This has made it easier for practitioners to link cause and effect within the initiative (or program) and to attribute specific aspects of it to the achievement of aims and objectives.[52]

Unfortunately, similar approaches to evaluating the impact of SSR initiatives in general and policing reform programs in particular remain somewhat new or have yet to be fully developed.[53] As the UN strives to develop a more common, comprehensive and coherent approach to SSR in general,[54] significant gaps remain in conclusive research on the effective measurement of long-term impacts of international policing reform and capacity-building initiatives.

This is particularly the case with the more participatory approaches to evaluating policing reforms and in helping to link initiatives with their effects.[55] Most police reform assessments are either centred on technical or functional outputs, or remain confidential and unpublished. Added to these challenges is the fact that most monitoring and evaluation programs suffer from limited finance for providing skilled personnel together with limited local capacity to support the sustainable development of evidence-based assessments.[56]

Monitoring and evaluation processes in SSR and policing reform contexts are also hampered by their frequently operating in politically unstable (if not

50 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 5.
51 OSCE, 2013, p. 23.
52 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 16.
53 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 7.
54 Hänggi and Scherrer, 2008, p. 3.
55 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 14.
56 Catherine Elkins, *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for Development in Peace-Precarious Situations,* North-South Divide and International Studies, International Studies Association, Tucson, 2006, p. 5.

'peace-precarious') circumstances[57] where even moving beyond a capital city can prove impossible because of continual unrest or logistical challenges. This in turn means that information generated in such circumstances is often less reliable. This reduces confidence in measured values and overall evaluation results[58] and by extension any formal assessments that flow from or are based upon such a data set.

It is also recognized that static logical framework-based indicators, often developed in the initial phases of an initiative, if not at an even earlier stage, do not alone substitute for robust methodologies for measuring true impact, and do not provide adequate means of assessing impact owing to their inability to demonstrate clear causal links or attribution.[59]

Greater effort must be made in the gathering and analyzing of information on local perceptions and sentiments and by this means attempt to determine the level of the public's confidence in its institutions and the degree of success of the international community's efforts.[60] However, it must also be acknowledged that the ultimate success of a reform initiative might depend less on the program's structure, budget and modalities and far more on local political circumstances – such as the commitment of local leaders to push reforms through to their intended ends.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths in Current Approaches

In recent years monitoring and evaluation has enjoyed a growing profile in development work.[61] A focus on monitoring and evaluation is now being built into all initiatives and programs. This is now considered to be essential for policymakers, program planners and service deliverers in establishing clear, relevant and measureable objectives as part of an initiative.[62] Among other things, this has translated into extensive and often required reading on monitoring and evaluation for UN personnel deployed to field missions, particularly as police experts and trainers.[63]

57 Elkins, 2006, p. 12.
58 Elkins, 2006, p. 12.
59 United Nations DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 4.
60 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 9.
61 Elkins, 2006, p. 15.
62 OECD, 2012, p. 24.
63 United Nations DPKO, 2013, p. 5.

It is accepted that the most effective use of monitoring and evaluation data is to better inform management and implementation decisions during the life of an initiative, in order to maximize impact and the probability of sustained change.[64] Monitoring and evaluation should therefore be ongoing in order to help adjust a mission's approach and to ensure it stays relevant and attuned to the circumstances of an often evolving operation.[65]

Also noted is the increasing use of participatory approaches in monitoring and evaluation. Effectively gauging the views and perceptions of local populations can generate valid and reliable data on intervention performance and results.[66] For agencies working in poverty reduction in particular, there is a recognized opportunity to strengthen programs by combining more traditional results-oriented evaluation approaches with those focused on local participation.[67]

Among the more progressive participatory methods are those that rely on texting and crowd sourcing. While these have their acknowledged limits and challenges, and are not designed to put right the issues they might confront, they do allow for a given problem to be better observed.[68] Among other lessons learned by evaluation practitioners over the years [69] has been the value of greater concentration on local perspectives. Many note that the host government and its population should be more involved in the design and implementation of methods of evaluation and assessment.[70]

More practitioners are therefore developing methodologies around measuring impact from the perception of host governments and their populations.[71] There has also been a concomitant shift from the more traditional implementation-based approaches to those focused more on results-based frameworks.[72] Apart from any benefit to the evaluation itself, such approaches can also further involvement in and ownership of a reform initiative by the local population.[73]

But participatory evaluation approaches must be distinguished from one another. They have their own limitations. For example, participatory

64 Elkins, 2006, p. 12.
65 Durch, 2012, p. 106.
66 Elkins, 2006, p. 12.
67 Sartorius, 1998, p. 1.
68 Durch, 2012, p. 108.
69 United Nations DPKO, *Supporting National Prison Systems: Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Peacekeeping Operations,* Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit, New York, December 2005, p. 6.
70 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, p. 19.
71 UN DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 12.
72 Kusek and Rist, 2004, p. XI.
73 ADB, 2012, p. 57.

approaches can raise concerns both among host governments and organizations under scrutiny. Not all institutions will have the necessary resilience to face public criticism or possess the ability to respond effectively to any concerns raised.

Yet to truly understand whether or not a security sector is beginning to function as desired, a more community-focused assessment must remain one of the most effective means of determination. This is especially the case in fields where local stakeholders gain a clear benefit from their participation.[74] The rule of law and policing would certainly fall into that category.

Weaknesses In Current Approaches

As indicated earlier, many of the long-term objectives of SSR and policing reform are difficult to measure. Evaluation practitioners are therefore at a crossroads. There is an urgent need to develop meaningful tools, methodologies and good practice guidance to ensure that what is measured is actually that which matters most.[75] In other words, to answer the "so what" question donors and aid organizations now understand implicitly that success can be achieved in the implementation of a program or initiative, but this success does not necessarily mean that the desired end states or impacts of the program have been achieved.[76]

To some extent this is a factor of knowing what should be measured. There is a growing understanding that successfully achieving and measuring in-program outcomes, even impacts, is not the same as being able to demonstrate overall institutional reform. For example, newly trained public order police units operating under a strengthened Command and Control system can have an immediate effect on how a reforming police organization handles public demonstrations. Thus there might be clearer chains of command, greater unit control and targeted engagement by public order units and individual officers, and (it is to be hoped) a reduction in civilian injuries or casualties as a result.

However, such impact cannot say anything on the continuing reform of the entire police organization. The organization within which such public order

74 ADB, 2012, p. 96.
75 United Nations DPKO, 2013, p. 4.
76 Kusek and Rist, 2004, p. XI.

units operate may be as dysfunctional, hierarchical or corrupt as before. Monitoring and evaluation initiatives that dwell too much on the technical aspects of an initiative or program are thus increasingly seen as weak. Other criticisms range from faulty conceptual frameworks to the lack of commonly accepted definitions of key concepts such as 'justice', 'access', 'responsiveness' and 'compliance' to guide both the evaluation and the analysis of results.[77]

The use of outside evaluation experts is more and more being called into question. Such people are unlikely to possess the required familiarity with the location and the key issues in question to be able to undertake a meaningful assessment. This is especially true in highly political or sensitive environments, or with regard to politically complex and sensitive initiatives involving policing.[78] Furthermore, the solutions that might be applied by outside experts are often described as 'templates' borrowed from other peacekeeping backgrounds and perhaps misapplied to a local context and leading to invalid conclusions and assessments.[79]

As a result important practical questions on how best to monitor and evaluate the impact of police in peace operations remain unanswered.[80] Even participatory approaches cannot be guaranteed to effectively assess longer-term impacts and outcomes. Apart from the need to distinguish between varying approaches, and appropriateness in terms of timing and the perspectives of external or local actors, the mutual trust and cooperation that participatory approaches imply might take years to develop after a conflict.

While engagement with local actors, including Civil Society Organizations (CSO), may allow for the development of more nuanced findings and assessments, there are certain disadvantages. For example, where a CSO may be extremely knowledgeable and engaged on a certain topic (perhaps policing) to the point where it can hardly be said to represent the wider community.

With regard to engaging in more participatory approaches to support monitoring and evaluation – including ongoing policing reform – even the increasingly integrated UN mission structures are challenged to develop consistent ways of establishing more effective outreach programs among

77 Lipner and Livingstone, 2014, pp. 4-5.
78 Ziai, 2010, p. 2.
79 Ziai, 2010, p. 2.
80 Hunt, *op. cit.*

local populations.[81] In fact few UN mandates accord little attention to the development of civil society participation or other perhaps legislative oversight mechanisms.[82]

Moreover, it is widely recognized that the UN lacks a significant monitoring and evaluation budget and that its capacity to conduct significant impact assessments is limited.[83] Even where program budgets include a monitoring and evaluation component, the resources assigned to those functions are well below the UN's own suggested levels.[84] Measuring what truly matters, particularly in policing reform initiatives, may therefore simply stretch beyond the UN's immediate resource capabilities, as well as the time frames within which many of its peace operation missions operate.[85]

81 Espen Barth Eide et al., *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*, Integrated Missions Report, UN ECHA, *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR), Geneva, May 2005, p. 40.
82 Barth Eide et al., 2005, p. 40.
83 United Nations DPKO, OROLSI and DCAF, 2012, p. 5.
84 Durch, 2012, p. 107. The UN has put forward a nominal benchmark of 1% of program resources that should be devoted to monitoring and evaluation. This equates to an annual budget of approximately $80M across the UN, however in reality funds and personnel are far fewer.
85 Durch, 2012, p. 4.

3. Case Studies

The following three case studies are designed to illustrate some of the implications of the issues raised in this paper. The studies involve three separate police reform initiatives: the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Northern Ireland; and Palestine. These studies are not intended to be exhaustive in their representation of the strengths and weaknesses of current monitoring and evaluation practices, nor are they necessarily representative of most UN-led peace operations or policing reform initiatives.

Their selection is due in part to the fact that most long-term policing reform initiatives that take place anywhere in the world now involve a multiplicity of actors. The programs that support a policing reform initiative in fragile or post-conflict states are progressively being provided through specific bilateral initiatives rather than by large multilateral programs, or work in close conjunction with multilateral efforts. This is borne out by the author's own direct experience in policing and justice sector reform, which falls outside the traditional multilateral engagement model.

These three case studies were also selected to illustrate some of the challenges that face impact assessments. These include the difficulty of attributing progress in situations where the UN is present but where other actors have largely assumed responsibility for policing reform; the limitations of certain approaches to monitoring and evaluation with respect to determining the long-term impact of policing reform programs; and the key role and critical importance that public opinion and perception research play in supporting the legitimization of a reforming police organization by accurately assessing the longer-term impacts of reforms.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The dual challenges of attribution and appropriate timing

In their various iterations the UN missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have helped to avert additional violence and bloodshed in what has already become one of the most violent and costly civil conflicts in the world. Among the essential objectives of the UN and the international donor community was the rebuilding and strengthening of state institutions, including the *Police Nationale du Congo* (PNC). This critical undertaking was one of the UN's first and most pressing concerns.

The modality that was developed around this important endeavour reflected past UN experience with multinational police contingents, and through its deployed police officers, the international donor community began the long and laborious task of helping the PNC to become an effective and responsive police organization. This effort was assisted by a number of other international actors including the European Union and the International Organization for Migration, the latter having assumed responsibility for conducting a formal census of PNC personnel. Knowing the exact number of police officers in the PNC's employ, a figure which had eluded definition, was critical to the support of any number of other assistance initiatives such as equipment donations, uniform purchases, training courses, and so on.

In time the UN's role in the direct support of the PNC and its engagement in that authority's ongoing reforms began to diminish in proportion to the adoption of those programs by other actors and their respective assistance programs. In the field of policing reform this fell particularly to the United Kingdom and other bilateral actors. Though this transition was both appropriate and consistent with accepted practice this meant that the impact objectives and aspirations that the UN had set down at the beginning of its engagement, policing reforms were now largely left for others to achieve.

In effect the ongoing reform of the PNC had become the simultaneous responsibility of numerous multilateral, national and private sector actors, often working in isolation, if not at cross purposes. This not only made reporting against stated objectives increasingly difficult for the UN, but significantly exacerbated the difficulty of attributing and evaluating progress in certain areas of policing reform to the efforts or funds of a given donor or

program. This made the effective evaluation of any one program or initiative, all of which adopted the same goals and aspirations, virtually impossible in any true sense - particularly as the program was still in its initial phase.[86]

Ultimately, and largely as a result of the evaluation, the challenges faced by the private sector service provider in implementing the objectives spelled out in the program plan resulted in significant and relatively rapid program changes, as well as a closer integration of efforts between donor officials and private sector service providers. Left unaddressed was whether the findings were in fact the result of program administration and management or were more a matter of the evaluation's timing, given that the program was still in its inception.

Northern Ireland

The importance of determining what is being measured

Following decades of civil conflict in Northern Ireland (or centuries depending on one's perspective) the Good Friday Peace Agreement of 1998 offered the most promising means of ending the violence and discord that had come to define Northern Ireland. Given the role of the local police organization in the past conflict, effective policing reform was an essential part of the overall peace agreement, and led to a separate international effort to review circumstances and recommend fundamental reforms.

This review resulted in the Patten Report, published in 1999, which made 175 recommendations for sweeping change to the local police organization and its associated governance structure. Among other recommendations, it recommended the creation of a specific, though time-limited statutory body, which would oversee and report on the pace and degree of change in policing: The Office of the Oversight Commissioner (OOC), which was established by the government in 2001.

What the creation of the OOC was intended to demonstrate was the acknowledged importance of an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to permit the ongoing assessment of the pace and degree of

86 A view based on the author's own involvement in a comprehensive evaluation of the inception phase of a significant bilateral PNC assistance initiative on behalf of the donor government.

reform implementation to a wary and partly marginalized community. This was seen as crucial, since the pace and sincerity of implementing the recommended reforms lay at the heart of establishing a police organization that all parts of the community could and would support. What the OOC was not mandated, resourced or equipped to do was to determine whether the overall impacts and objectives of policing reforms in Northern Ireland, in other words the full Patten 'vision', were in fact being achieved.

The OOC could and did routinely review and assess the pace and degree of implementation of the many Patten recommendations, and did so three times a year over five years. However, determining whether collectively the implemented recommendations had the desired effect, and showed that policing in Northern Ireland had fundamentally changed for the better, was left to others. This was due largely by design, as the OOC was never intended to evaluate the ultimate outcome of the Patten reform program, and lacked the time span sufficient to make such determinations, as well as the necessary resources to perform this function effectively. The determination of impact was thus left more appropriately to local agencies, both statutory and ad hoc, which were also created as part of the Good Friday Agreement or which followed its confirmation.

This work is now routinely being carried out by the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the Northern Ireland Statistics Agency, and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, among others. Repeated and structured survey research is now used as a matter of course both to demonstrate to all parties that the intended reforms are having the desired effects, to identify areas that still require improvement, and to suggest areas for future policing focus.

Palestine

The value of public opinion at an appropriate time

The Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) has benefited from significant international assistance over many years. Barring any unforeseen political upheavals, these assistance initiatives, particularly those involving the provision of equipment and training, will continue for the foreseeable future. As in other policing reform initiatives where there is significant involvement

on the part of the international community, efforts to reform and assist the PCP have been guided by the same aspirational language and impact objectives as those found in other parts of the world.

The considerable attention and effort that has been focused on the PCP should not be seen as a reflection of its inability or unwillingness to modernize, however. It could well become a model for other regional forces, particularly those emerging from long periods of one-party rule. In many respects the PCP has been in existence long enough, and has acted more or less independently of direct assistance by the international community, to be seen by the local community to act with relative autonomy.

This means among other things that for the local population the PCP is synonymous with policing in Palestine, and the community looks to it for a meaningful response to its concerns rather than to any other body. In addition, Palestinians have now been exposed to the role and actions of the PCP for long enough to form an opinion of its services, without the need to compare it with any other organization – for example, a body of UN police. It is increasingly anxious to voice its collective opinion, both good and bad, regarding the delivery of its services.

The key to the ability of the Palestinian community to express its views in ways that are both legitimate and compelling, and which will elicit an appropriate response from the police, is the work of the local public opinion agency, the Palestinian Central Bureau for Statistics (PCBS). As the statutory survey body for Palestine the PCBS has now carried out a number of robust public opinion surveys centring on the evolving justice and rule of law institutions. This includes specific questions on the public's views and opinions about the PCP, and on its abilities and weaknesses.

The ability of the PCBS to conduct meaningful public opinion surveys, and the role of research results in holding the PCP to account and (it is to be hoped) for improving its services, is now well established and acknowledged. All international assistance initiatives, including those of the UNDP and EUPOL, now engage routinely with the PCBS to provide relevant feedback on the impact of their respective assistance initiatives. All of their assistance programs contain provisions for funding or supporting ongoing public opinion surveys to inform their work and understanding of results into the future.

While all international actors routinely work with local CSOs, and gather valuable data on the impact of their programs, it is only through the use of public opinion research that legitimate and reliable 'baselines' of perception can be established, assistance programs adjusted accordingly, and extent of impact established.

4. Conclusion

In the field of monitoring and evaluation it has been shown that engaging with local actors such as civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and others can assist the development of more nuanced findings and assessments. Those involved in evaluation have perceived an opportunity to strengthen their practice by combining traditional results-oriented evaluation approaches with those focused more on local participation. Existing approaches are being augmented by a greater emphasis on participatory methods to effectively gauge the views of local populations.

A growing number of evaluation practitioners across the development spectrum have begun to establish methodologies that concentrate on greater engagement with local participants and which evaluate impacts from the perception of host governments and populations. This approach is intended to bring the evaluation process closer to determining whether or not reform initiatives are having the intended effect from the perspective of the 'client', and to generate more reliable data on, for example, the performance of a reforming police organization.

These developments have a special relevance to determining impact in SSR and policing reform programs. Apart from any benefit to the evaluation process itself, and its ability to effectively assess impact, participatory approaches can increase the involvement in, and ownership of, a police reform initiative by the local population, thereby assisting implementation and strengthening sustainability. Unfortunately, participatory and similar evaluative approaches have not yet been widely adopted in policing reform programs, and such approaches to evaluating SSR effectiveness generally, and policing reform particularly, remain new or have yet to be fully developed. This represents a significant gap in practice.

As has been shown, monitoring and evaluation programs will continue to suffer from limited financial resources and skilled personnel, particularly in

policing reform, as well as from limitations on local capacity in supporting in-country work. Moreover, as is clearly borne out by the literature, UN missions are rarely structured or funded in ways that permit the effective assessment of progress and impact. The UN itself has been seen to fall short of its own benchmark for resources allocated to evaluation.

Furthermore, UN mandates rarely include sufficient funding to develop or engage local institutions that might help assess long-term outcomes, and by the time any real impacts become discernible the UN might well have pulled back its resources or been replaced by bilateral actors.

In a comprehensive recent evaluation of a major international UN justice sector reform program the evaluator noted that while indicators and data showed that the program was being implemented largely as intended and had made significant gains, it also lacked the necessary baseline and statistical data to show that "outcome-level" system changes were also being achieved.[87] The statistical and baseline data referred to would arguably be informed largely by public opinion.

It must be acknowledged that participatory approaches also have their challenges. Over reliance on CSOs, for example, may provide a somewhat skewed community perspective, particularly in terms of levels of community understanding of, and engagement with, policing issues. This is because CSOs tend to be highly knowledgeable and motivated, and in that regard alone may no longer mirror the broader community. In other instances participatory methods may be perceived as too threatening to the local host government or police organization, or may simply be too complex or risky to undertake effectively.

The often deeply conservative nature of police organizations, with entrenched and notoriously change- resistant cultures, will also continue to impose demands on both police reform initiatives and on the evaluations that are supposed to assess their progress. All of these challenges will have a specific effect on the UN, which would tend to operate during the most testing and formative periods for host government institutions, including those in policing.

87 Richard Langan, *Independent Outcome Evaluation of the UNDP Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme in the occupied Palestinian territories,* UNDP Program Evaluation, UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, Jerusalem, 2013, p. 4.

Despite these challenges, however, once sufficient time has passed for a police reform program to have made an impact, whether good or bad, it is largely the community that receives the policing service that is best placed to provide a telling assessment of whether or not a reform program has had the intended impact, and whether police reforms have made the community feel safer and more secure.

Lessons Identified

In addition to the learning and developments identified in this study, as well as those implied by the changes that monitoring and evaluation practices have undergone in recent years, the three case studies provided also identify certain lessons to be learnt that might inform future monitoring and evaluation practices.

As the Northern Ireland example shows, ensuring that the right things are measured, and that the scope of assessment is appropriate to the questions that evaluators are attempting to answer, are critical to a successful outcome. What the OOC was intended to provide was an ongoing assessment of the pace and degree of reform implementation, rather than an assessment of whether or not the long term cumulative effects of the entire reform program were being achieved.

1. Determining precisely what is being measured is of critical importance. On occasion a narrower evaluation scope may ultimately provide more appropriate and reliable data as well as greater overall clarity. This approach can provide an effective assessment of the implementation of a police reform program, particularly in its institutional building and strengthening manifestations, if not necessarily an assessment of longer-term effects.

It is critical that evaluations are undertaken at appropriate phases in a program's implementation, and that any shortcomings or challenges are attributable to the program rather than to other variables. As the example of the DRC might indicate, some assessments were undertaken so early in the process that they will have little chance of establishing any impacts of consequence, and will therefore have little to commend them with respect to determining whether or not a program is achieving its long-term ends.

2. Evaluation practitioners must take into account the timing of an evaluation and ask themselves whether an assessment of outputs, outcomes and impacts is based on a realistic time frame. Practitioners, as well as the UN itself, may therefore need to be more realistic about the aims and objectives they set themselves for an evaluation.

As the example of the DRC shows, with so many donors and different programs in place simultaneously the process of determining appropriate attribution and causal linkages with respect to effectively assessing impact became particularly demanding.

3. Clearly-defined objectives are crucial to a policing reform initiative, as well as to any subsequent evaluation. This becomes even more important when a reform initiative involves multiple actors and programs of assistance, with many overlapping program areas and objectives with respect to intended impact. In the absence of longer term impact measures, it may also be necessary to substitute shorter or medium-term indicators instead, and to develop a 'set' of carefully chosen proxy measures that cumulatively might inform an assessment of wider impact.

Occasions will arise where true reform progress and impact can only be meaningfully informed by the direct input of the community itself. As the Palestine example shows, following many years of international support in training, logistics and equipment, as well as dedicated institutional strengthening and development, the reform program reached the point where more searching and potentially sensitive questions needed to be asked, particularly of the public, which had repeatedly been held up as the primary and principal 'client' of policing services.

This demonstrated, among other things that while public surveying was recognized as complex and potentially risky, political and organizational cultures had progressed to the point where they were increasingly comfortable with the notion of asking the public its views on service delivery and potential shortcomings. It was also recognized that public feedback might become a central part of future operational and organizational plans and strategies.

4. The subject matter experts who directly support policing reform initiatives worldwide are rarely versed in the skills and practices of monitoring and evaluation, especially because they begin to involve

more participatory and opinion survey methodologies. The skills of policing reform experts should be augmented by specific expertise in impact assessment and evaluation, and in public opinion research and analysis.

As previously noted, local populations perceive their relationship with the police to be critical to their sense of safety and security. Accordingly, they need to see their concerns and priorities reflected in the policing services that they receive. In the absence of any difference to perceptions of safety and security, any community will lose faith both in the reforms process and the police and will withdraw its support. This in turn will delay or completely inhibit the implementation and sustainability of any reform program and can only negatively affect overall community safety.

If the police are intended only to act as a prop to an unstable regime, or are engaged in widespread corruption and extortion, then the views of the public will most likely be of little concern to them or other officials. However, in such instances, the international community has a far more pressing concern on its hands and should be asking searching questions about its ongoing relationship with such a host government and about continued financial support to SSR.

5. Difficult though it might be, the UN might establish more robust means of increasing host government support for a given police reform initiative, and of ensuring the long-term local political will to see that reforms are carried through, such as:

   a) Defining clearer and more sequential initiatives that together support or lead to a broader objective such as public perceptions of safety;

   b) Linking future political, financial and other support to agreeing and achieving specific performance objectives or milestones of the reform program;

   c) Identifying an appropriate point in a reform program's implementation to gauge public views and perceptions; and,

   d) Identifying the types of public opinion measures and indicators that can confirm progress or the achievement of intended impacts.

Even in situations where trust and faith in government institutions and in policing are being restored, the assessment of longer-term impacts ultimately depends on gathering different kinds of data from a variety of audiences, including local populations.

Taking a longer view and ensuring that any evaluation is informed by a significant element of public opinion data may therefore be the best way for the international community to truly determine whether or not its policing reform efforts are having the intended effect, and whether its original intentions have been realized – even if its impacts and results are not discernible for many years.

Challenges with Assessing Impact in International Police Reform and Assistance

As peacebuilding missions have become more complex and resource-intensive, the need to demonstrate that they are having the intended effect has become more pressing. The Challenges Forum Impact Evaluation and Assessment working group therefore commissioned a series of papers analyzing how the different components involved in peacebuilding missions, including police, evaluate their impact and effectiveness.

The paper is focused on impact assessment in policing reform, and argues that determining long term impact remains a challenge. UN missions are rarely funded or structured in a way that facilitates this endeavour, and although many in-program evaluations track implementation relatively well they are less capable of assessing long term impacts.

The ability to assess long term impacts ultimately depends on gathering data focused more on the perspectives of local communities. Such approaches increasingly employ survey-based methodologies, an area where the UN has not traditionally allocated significant funds, but which arguably remain the most reliable way of determining whether a policing reform initiative had its intended impact.

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