ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Non-Technical Summary

A 1000 word (maximum) summary of the main research results, in non-technical language, should be provided below. The summary might be used by ESRC to publicise the research. It should cover the aims and objectives of the project, main research results and significant academic achievements, dissemination activities and potential or actual impacts on policy and practice.

Objectives

1. Understand internal security needs of Rwanda/Liberia: perceptions of the public, policing agencies, state.
2. Explore internal security needs re international crime/terrorism: perceptions of the security agencies, government and donors.
3. Evaluate policing provision: availability and effectiveness of state and non-state policing in Rwanda/Liberia.
4. Investigate government capacity to provide state policing.
5. Establish policy options for internal security.

All but Objective 2 (where data was unobtainable or only anecdotal) were met, as the published outputs confirm.

Results

1. The transformation of the ‘multi-choice policing’ analytical framework into a strategy for access to justice and security sector reform policy. In collaboration with a security consultant, a ‘multi-layered approach’ was articulated for the support of post-conflict policing. For the end user, policing is an issue of choice/diversity (hence ‘multi-choice’); for development strategy, it is an issue of supporting multiple layers of policing providers (state; commercial; community-based; informal). Current SSR is state-centric. It makes two errors: that the post-conflict state is capable of delivering justice/security; that it is the main actor in justice/security. Multi-layered SSR addresses who is actually providing justice/security. It is based on the service quality received by the end user, regardless of who delivers that service.

2. The importance of linkages between non-state and state policing became apparent in Rwanda. The government admits its inability to provide a police service to meet all needs. Theirs is a hybrid approach; combining professional police with the informal social control mechanisms of local justice. The latter is a dense network of local voluntary, safety/justice provision. It undertakes the everyday needs, from patrols to local courts. Though officially non-state, it has strong links with the state and has its support. The model has provided an effective, popular and universally accessible policing that is not resource intensive.
3. The Liberian government ignores linkages and is pursuing a state monopoly in policing. Though government capacity can be a severe constraint, faulty government policies exacerbate the problem. It is a mystery to see Liberia relying for all policing on its own a small state police force. Rwanda uses volunteers for everyday policing; yet Liberia has a SSR that ignores chiefs (who do almost all the rural policing/justice); and commercial security (that defends the important economic assets).

4. The serious policy errors being made by international policing experts as they reform the police in Liberia. UN-led policing reform has been too narrow in focus, ignoring commercial and customary structures. There is no consideration of how rural areas will be policed, by 3,500 urban-based police. Further, the vetting process of internal security agencies passed only 33%. It not only (inadequately) sought to remove those who had abused their office or were political appointees, but also those over 55 or with more than 25 years service. Thus the most experienced were removed when most needed and before new officers could gain the experience necessary to replace them. Again, the consultation with police and public was inadequate.

5. In Liberia ‘community policing’ has been introduced without the support of the police themselves to encourage and sustain it. The new initiatives already look threatened because of the minimal role given to the public.

6. Both countries show evidence of the politicisation of their policing agencies. In Rwanda the police still act as regime police. They detain opposition politicians, journalists and local election candidates. In Liberia senior security positions continue to be Presidential appointments. Such policies may provide regimes support and loyalty, but do not address one of the causes of the civil wars: governments and police that are partial.

7. The importance of political will in determining the quality of state policing. The Liberian administration affirms its anti-corruption credentials whilst tolerating corruption within the policing agencies. What makes the Rwandan police relatively free of corruption is political will - presidential determination that no such behaviour will tarnish the nation’s image and that discipline will be enforced. Liberia awaits an anti-corruption policy that is driven from the top.

Outputs

Publications on post-conflict policing drawing on Rwandan and Liberian studies:


Publications on Rwandan Policing: