



Support to  
Policy Development

## AFRICAN SECURITY SECTOR NETWORK (ASSN)

27 Kofi Annan Avenue, North Legon,  
**P. O. Box** AF 2457, Adenta, Accra, Ghana  
**Tel:** +233 (0) 263 011 499/500/501/503  
**website:** africansecuritynetwork.org  
**email:** info@africansecurity.org

Research



Expert Roster and  
Advisory Work

Advocacy



Security Literacy and  
Practitioners Course



## BACKGROUND

The African Security Sector Network (ASSN) was created at Elmina, Ghana, in November 2003 out of a recognition of the need to harmonise and facilitate the activities of the various African organisations working in the area of Security Sector Reform and Governance (SSR/G).

The principal objective of the network is to promote democratically governed and effective security for the peoples of Africa, and to enhance the capacity of African governments, security institutions, legislatures and civil society organizations to undertake and own Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes and projects.

The ASSN has developed as a multidisciplinary network spanning academics, think-tanks, CSOs, security practitioners (active and retired), legislators in defence and security committees, etc, with a pan-African character. This inclusive structure enables sharing of experiences and lessons from different traditions of security organisation and practice (Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone).

The network derives its core strength from its diverse competencies and locations (which enables it to work for change from both within and without); from a capacity for internal debate; and an ability to engage a broad range of security actors (national, regional and international), as well as policy-and decision-makers.

While the original mandate of the ASSN was that of facilitating the activities of its member organisations (and this remains an important part of its assignment), increasingly over time the priority has shifted to constituting the ASSN as a pan-African network, providing **Support to Policy Development and SSR/G Implementation**, available to the AU, RECs, national governments and external partners who share the values of the network. This has necessitated the creation of an independent Secretariat for the network (replacing the earlier skeletal administrative structure) and a personality separate and distinct from that of its member organisations<sup>1</sup>. The Secretariat was established in 2010 with the generous contribution of the UK government through DFID. It is based in Accra, Ghana, and coordinates the activities of the network.

## VISION

The driving vision of ASSN is that of an African security sector that is democratically governed, people-centred, well managed, accountable and effective in supporting and sustaining human security. The central feature of the ASSN vision is to promote an African-centred approach, which involves drawing primarily from indigenous knowledge, expertise and resources to support democratic security sector governance (SSG) and design Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes both pragmatic and sustainable.

## MISSION

The ASSN's corporate mission is the transformation of security governance and promotion of peace and justice in Africa through:

- Supporting policy and institutional development at the continental, regional and national level, by working to strengthen the capacities of inter-governmental organisations (African Union and RECs), African governments, national security actors, Parliaments and oversight institutions, and civil society groups to undertake and implement SSR/G programmes ;
- Enhancing security governance in Africa by promoting an African-centred focus, disseminating African practices in the areas of SSR/G and by serving as a continental information repository;
- Promoting and facilitating the emergence of African SSR/G networks and expertise;
- Enhancing security literacy among African decision-makers and the general public;
- Advocacy and promotion of inclusive dialogue and informed debate around issues of security and justice, designed to influence decision-makers and policy processes;
- Identifying, listing and making easily accessible the literature and resource material related to SSR/G in Africa.

<sup>1</sup> The network was previously governed by a Steering Committee of 6 elected and 10 co-opted members, with a Chair and Vice-Chair, but is now directed by an Executive Committee of 13 members, which sets policy and provides oversight of the central Secretariat.



## CORE VALUES

The core values of the ASSN are an Africa-centred agenda, Accountability and Transparency, Inclusivity, Integrity and Objectivity, Diversity, Responsiveness, Sustainability and Partnership.

## ACTIVITIES

The ASSN carries out a wide range of activities, both at the corporate level and through its member organisations. Over time, however, six core roles have evolved:

### ■ **Support to Policy development and SSR/G implementation** via:

- Working with the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to promote African approaches to SSR ;
- Working with national governments and security actors to build policy and institutional capacity to address security issues within a democratic and accountable framework;
- Working with African parliaments and rule of law institutions to improve their security oversight capabilities and with civil society organizations (CSOs) to equip them with the skills (political as much as technical) to engage (and transform) the security sector;
- Working with civil society and the media to support the implementation of the African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (AU-PFSSR);

### ■ **Research:** Mapping African security governance via policy-oriented research;

### ■ **Expertise:** Development of the ASSN Roster and provision of advisory and consultancy services;

### ■ **Security Literacy:** Enhancing security literacy among African decision makers and the public at large through training, education, and dissemination of resource materials;

### ■ **Advocacy:** Engaging with African governments, external partners and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) interested in supporting SSR in Africa;

### ■ **Resource materials:** The on-line Document Library gives access to a rich collection of literature and other documents on the security sector in Africa and related themes.

## MEMBERSHIP

ASSN membership is on both institutional and individual basis, and is open to all who have an active interest in African security sector issues and also subscribe to the core principles of the organisation. Key institutional members include African Security Dialogue and Research/ASDR (Ghana), the Centre for Democracy and Development/CDD (Nigeria), the Southern African Defence and Security Management Network /SADSEM (Southern Africa), the Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue/CPRD (South Sudan), and the Security Research and Information Centre/SRIC (Kenya), which serve as respective regional headquarters of the network. Other member organisations are the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum/APCOF (South Africa), Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA) and CLEEN Foundation both based in Nigeria.



## SOUTH-SOUTH AND NORTH-SOUTH PARTNERSHIPS

The ASSN was a founding member of the erstwhile Global Consortium on Security Transformation (GCST), formerly based at FLACSO-Chile and including the Arab Reform Initiative (ARI), the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS) in the Philippines, the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) in Sri Lanka, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the UK, and the Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible (IEPADES) in Guatemala.

In addition to South-South linkages, the ASSN has also developed robust formal and informal South-North networking (at both institutional and personal levels) as well as engagement with external partners. Northern partners include the Conflict, Security and Development Group (Kings College London), the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT), the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), and the (former) Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR). ASSN members have also been extensively involved (both formally and informally) in the work of the OECD/DAC (the SSR Guidelines and Handbook respectively). And as noted below, the ASSN is a technical partner to the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union in the programme 'Building African Union Capacities for Security Sector Reform (SSR): a Joint United Nations/European Union Support Action'.

## PAST AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Our work includes:

### 1. Support to Policy development and SSR/G implementation

#### 1.1 Support to the African Union and RECs:

The ASSN provided technical support to **African Union Commission (AUC)** in the drafting of the African Union Security Sector Reform Policy Framework (AU-SSRPF) which was adopted by the Assembly of the Union in January 2013. As part of the background to the above project, the ASSN:

- established an independently funded advisory office at the African Union headed by a Senior SSR Advisor and consisting of a Gender and SSR Officer and two research assistants;
- held a major workshop on an 'African SSR Strategy' at the AU in Addis Ababa in October 2007, resulting in extensive recommendations to the AU on SSR;
- provided background facilitation to the UN-AU Regional SSR Consultations in Addis (22-25 March 2009), by sourcing for Canadian funding (DFAIT) for the event and providing experts for the workshop;
- delivered a number of Policy Briefs to support the AU SSR Policy process under contract to the AU; anchored an SSR Validation Workshop at the AU on 9-11 December 2009;
- conducted a review (collaboratively with the UN SSR Team of the Zero Draft of the AU SSR Policy Framework in Addis Ababa in May 2010; and funded a workshop in Ghana in October 2010 to finalise the policy draft;
- anchored the 'Civil Society Consultations' on the AU SSR Policy draft in Abuja in November 2010 and supported the 'AU Member States Experts Meeting' on the same draft in Addis Ababa in May 2011;
- Several ASSN experts were subsequently deployed to harmonise the main AU language versions (English, French, Portuguese and Arabic) of the final draft of the AU SSR Policy Framework (AU SSR-PF) in Addis Ababa (February – March 2012), prior to its adoption by the Assembly on the Union in January 2013;

The adoption of the AU-SSRPF was followed by the launching in May 2013 of the multiyear programme 'Building African Union Capacities for Security Sector Reform (SSR): a Joint United Nations/European Union Support Action', under which ASSN is a technical partner. Under a funding agreement with the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS),



ASSN was tasked with developing the seven (7) Operational Guidance Notes (OGNs) for the implementation of the AU SSR-PF, viz:

- **AU Guidance on Developing National Codes of Conduct for African Security Institutions;**
- **Handbook on SSR Lessons Learned and Good Practices;**
- **Operational Guidance Notes on Harmonization of National Security Legislation;**
- **Operational Guidance Notes on SSR Needs Assessments Missions;**
- **Operational Guidance Notes on Gender and SSR;**
- **Manual on SSR Training;**
- **SSR Monitoring and Evaluation Template.**

The network currently participates in Joint Assessment Missions with the programme partners: four such missions have been conducted so far (Central African Republic, Madagascar, Guinea Bissau and Mali).

The ASSN also worked with **ECOWAS** (in November 2009) on the first phase of the Security Sector Governance (SSG) component of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Strategy (ECPS), with funding from the GIZ, and with DCAF in the development of the ECOWAS-DCAF Guide to Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector, and more recently, a 'Toolkit for Security Sector Reform and Governance' for use by ECOWAS.

## 1.2 Support to National Governments and Security Institutions

### ■ Liberia

The ASSN worked with the Governance Commission in Liberia through our Security Sector Transformation Advisory Group to design a National Security Policy Framework and SSR Strategy for the Government of Liberia. The ASSN also funded or otherwise facilitated the Liberia Security Sector Review by the Governance Commission (this covered a review of the National Bureau of Immigration; development of an Integrated Border Management Strategy; and a workshop on Integration of Veterans).

### ■ The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

In partnership with Development Associates International (DAI), the ASSN was responsible for designing and implementing the 'External Accountability' component in the DFID-funded 'Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform Programme (SSAPR)' in the DRC. The ASSN also had a role in the 'Internal Accountability' component managed by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

### ■ South Sudan

In February 2012, the ASSN signed an MOU with the Ministry of National Security in the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) to provide support for Security and Justice Reform. ASSN helped to forge a strategic partnership between the Government of South Sudan and the African Union in the area of SSR, and facilitated the state-level consultations for the new National Security Policy. ASSN (together with its regional hub the CPRD) was a member of the consortium implementing the UK-funded Security and Defence Transformation Programme (SDTP).

### ■ Guyana

The ASSN conducted three missions in 2006-8 to advise the Government of Guyana, South America, on an SSR Implementation Action Plan and the Strategic Defence Review of the Guyana Defence Force.

### ■ Other

In July and September 2012 ASSN assisted **Burundi** to develop Strategic Force Options as part of its Defence Review. ASSN affiliates have supported the Defence White Paper process and the drafting of the National Security Policy framework in **South Sudan** (CPRD); Police Reforms in **Kenya** (SRIC), **Ghana** (ASDR), and **Nigeria** (CLEEN); Prison Reform in **Nigeria** (PRAWA); the Performance Improvement Programme (PIP) of the Ministry of Defence in **Ghana** (ASDR); and the documentation of the Defence Review process in **Uganda** (led by Kings College London).



As part of our work with Francophone states and parliaments, the ASSN held a Francophone SSR Experts workshop in Lomé, **Togo**, on 28-29 May 2009 with funding from the OIF. The workshop addressed the peculiarities of the Francophone security system and the particular challenges posed by SSR. The workshop also inaugurated a Francophone component within the ASSN network.

### 1.3 Work with National Legislatures

- From April 2006 to March 2010, ASDR (the Ghana affiliate and West African regional hub of the ASSN) conducted capacity-building training for the Select Committee on Defence and Interior of the **Parliament of Ghana**, with funding from the UK Government;
- The ASSN commenced similar capacity-building programmes from 2009 with Parliamentary Defence and Security Commissions in several West African Francophone Parliaments (**Mali** in July 2009, **Benin** and **Togo** in August 2009). These were followed by regional parliamentary workshops in Ouagadougou (June 16-18, 2010: hosted by the National Assembly of Burkina Faso and funded by the OIF), as well as workshops in **Mali** in November 2011, **Niger** in February 2012, and **Burkina Faso** in 2012, 2013 and 2014 in collaboration with DCAF. More recently, ASSN again worked with DCAF and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to strengthen the capacity of the Malian Parliament;
- In collaboration with Kings College London and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the ASSN provided capacity-building for the Defence and Security Committees in the **Liberian Legislature** (House and Senate) from March 2006 to July 2009;
- **Southern Africa:** The Southern African Defence and Security Management Network (SADSEM) – which is the ASSN's Southern Africa affiliate - has mounted a series of Executive Courses in 'Parliamentary Oversight of Defence and Security' in cooperation with national parliaments in several Southern African countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe;
- In 2007-2008, ASDR and SADSEM respectively conducted a 'Feasibility and Needs Assessment Study' of nine ECOWAS and ten SADSEM Parliamentary Defence and Security Committees under contract to DCAF;
- The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and DCAF, with the assistance of ASSN scholars and experts, developed and published the ECOWAS-DCAF Guide to Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector, launched at a regional ECOWAS Parliamentary Workshop in Bamako, **Mali**, on 28-29 November 2011.

## 2. Research and Publication

Hybrid Security Governance Project: Under a grant (2014 -2017) from the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) the ASSN is currently implementing a research project titled Hybrid Security Governance in Africa: Implications for State-building. The project covers six African countries: Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Somaliland, South Africa, Liberia and Nigeria.

The ASSN, its members and affiliates are involved in extensive research and publication on the Security Sector in Africa and elsewhere. The ASSN network's publications include Security Sector Reform Provisions in Peace Agreements (University of Birmingham Press, 2009), Changing Intelligence Dynamics in Africa (University of Birmingham Press, 2009) and La Reforme des Systèmes de Sécurité et de Justice en Afrique Francophone (OIF, 2009). ASSN members have also contributed to a series of DCAF publications relating to SSR in Africa: Les Défis de la Gouvernance du Secteur de la Sécurité en Afrique de l'Ouest; Gouvernance du Secteur de la Sécurité en Afrique de l'Ouest : Les Défis à Relever; Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector in West Africa: Opportunities and Challenges; Security Sector Transformation in Africa (Lit. Verlag 2010); Security Sector Governance in Francophone West Africa: Realities and Opportunities (Lit. Verlag 2011); and the ECOWAS-DCAF Guide to Parliamentary Oversight mentioned above.

In addition, network affiliates and individual members of the ASSN are involved in professional research and publication not captured in this account.



### 3. Expert Roster and Advisory Work

The ASSN maintains and functions through a multidisciplinary Roster of Experts drawn from defence, intelligence, policing, gender, private and non-state security, justice and rule of law, security sector budgeting and public expenditure management, and security analysis and research. Although much of the work of the Roster (like that of the ASSN itself) is in the public interest arena, it is also deployed on missions and consultancy and contract work. Main languages are English and French. A large number of ASSN members have also been inducted into the UN SSR Expert Roster.

### 4. Security Literacy and Practitioner Courses

These include delivery of high-level courses and seminars on Security Sector Governance and Management in Southern Africa (SADSEM) and Ghana (ASDR). Each of the 12 SADSEM national affiliates runs its own security-related courses, and the Centre for Defence and Security Management (CDSM) at Wits University has initiated a highly successful Masters course in Defence and Security Management.

In Nigeria, PRAWA currently runs a Human Rights Training Programme for the Nigeria Police Force. It also has trainings for Prison Officers on International Human Rights and Good Prison Practice as well as a National TOT and Guidance Note Review Session on International Human Rights and Treatment of Vulnerable Prisoners. Under its Security and Justice Training Information and Coordination (SJ-TIC) Project, PRAWA also delivers quarterly trainings for the Security and Justice Sector Institutions in Nigeria including the Immigration Service, Department of State Security, Civil Defence and Customs among others.

The African Policing and Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF) based in South Africa is another affiliate of the ASSN working to promote democratic policing through strengthening civilian oversight over the police in Africa. APCOF's current projects include the East African Community Police Human Rights Training Manual, Use of Force (strengthening current legal provisions on the use of force by police officials by focusing on compliance with the rule of law, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and International Law) and Dialogues on Crimes and Violence Prevention among others.

### 5. Advocacy

Through advocacy, the ASSN promotes Security Sector Reform/Governance (SSR/G) awareness and policy development within Africa and beyond. Much of the advocacy work is in the area of facilitation of training, engaging relevant stakeholders in policy dialogues, presentations at conferences and seminars, lobbying governments and donors to buy into the SSR/G agenda, availing critical SSR/G resources on the website, and publications for use by both academics and practitioners, among others. Some of the ASSN's recent advocacy works include the joint hosting of the Inaugural Africa Forum on SSR in November, 2014 at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. During this event, ASSN experts chaired panels and presented papers on a wide range of security issues including Hybrid Political Orders (HPOs).

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