Insights from Eastern Africa and Sahel

PROTECTION AND (IN)SECURITY BEYOND THE STATE

Contents

Abbreviations

AQIM:	Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
EUCAP:	European Union Capacity Building Mission
FARDC:	Forces Armées de la République du Congo
FDLR:	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)
DRC:	Danish Refugee Council
MINUSMA:	Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation au Mali (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali)
MNLA:	Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad (National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad)
MONUSCO:	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en République Démocratique du Congo (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo)
MOJWA:	Mouvement pour l'Unicité du Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa)
RRU:	Rapid Response Unit
RCD-ML:	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Mouvement de Libération (Congolese Rally for Democracy-Movement for Liberation)
SNM:	Somali National Movement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is produced under the aegis of the Defence and Security Studies research area at DIIS and contributes to the Danish and international debate about fragile and conflict-affected states. It examines key security dynamics and challenges in four conflict-affected states in Sub-Saharan Africa: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somaliland, Niger and Mali.

It provides contextual analysis of local security dynamics with particular attention to the significance and role of local non-state actors in security provision as well as in conflict dynamics. The report analyses decisive factors behind the emergence of local security arrangements and offers insights into the interconnections between security provision, and multi-scalar conflict.

The report provides knowledge of the roles played by non-state actors in dynamics of security and insecurity; it demonstrates the interconnections between politics, power struggles, and security provision, and argues that in order to support the security of these countries there is a need to address the underlying social, political and economic causes of the conflicts. To achieve that there is a need to move beyond standardised blueprints for statebuilding and security sector reform.

RESUMÉ

Denne rapport er en del af DIIS' forsvars- og sikkerhedspolitiske studier og deltager i den danske og internationale debat om skrøbelige - og konfliktpåvirkede stater. Den undersøger vigtige sikkerhedstendenser og − udfordringer i fire konfliktpåvirkede stater i Afrika syd for Sahara: Den Demokratiske Republik Congo, Somaliland, Niger og Mali.

Rapporten bidrager med kontekstuelle analyser af sikkerhedsdynamikker på lokalt niveau, og stiller skarpt på ikke-statslige aktørers rolle i konflikt-dynamikker og på deres sikkerhedsydelser. Rapporten analyserer de bagvedliggende faktorer for fremkomsten af lokale sikkerhedsanordninger og biddrager med viden om sammen-hængene mellem sikkerhedsydelser og flerdimensionelle konflikter. Rapporten viser, at ikke-statslige aktører spiller vigtige roller i lokale sikkerheds-dynamikker, og argumenterer for, at stabiliseringen af disse lande vil kræve løsninger på de bagvedliggende årsager til deres sociale, økonomiske og politiske konflikter. For at opnå dette er det nødvendigt at gå udover standardløsninger for stats-opbygning og sikkerhedssektorreform.

INTRODUCTION

Kasper Hoffmann & Louise Wiuff Moe

This report studies the kinds of security provision that emerge when the state cannot or will not provide basic security services. In such conditions people are left with no other choice than to search for it where it can be found, the result is a proliferation of non-state armed groups that protect as well as prey upon local populations.

This introduction provides a short historical and conceptual contextualisation of the topic of local and non-state security provision; it outlines the key themes to be examined, and it provides a brief introduction to East Africa and the Sahel, which are the areas under study. This is followed by case-based analyses.

> So-called "non-state actors" are taking care of as much as an estimated 80–90% of all disputes and local conflicts in Africa and the Global South.

The ideal of the strong central state with a legitimate monopoly on violence remains powerful in the international understanding of security and political order, but it has become evermore difficult to ignore the challenges posed to it by the actual practices of security and political order on the ground in many settings in Africa, where local actors and governance arrangements, rather than the state, are the main providers of security. So-called "non-state actors" are taking care of as much as an estimated 80–90% of all disputes and local conflicts in Africa and the Global South (Baker

2010; Albrecht & Kyed 2010). Meanwhile, the same actors are often simultaneously driving forces behind insecurity and conflict. These dynamics are shaping both conflict settings such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and Mali, and so-called fragile situations such as Sierra Leone and Niger. Here a legitimate state monopoly over coercion tends to be the exception rather than the rule. National forms of citizenship associated with the nation-state and the accompanying rights and obligations, coexist with a plethora of local sub-national forms of citizenship, security practices and rules, which often enjoy substantial popular support (Boege et al. 2009). These relationships between state and so-called non-state actors and institutions are shaped both by competition and by deep entwinement.

This pluralism also reflects the historical colonial processes through which the territorial sovereign model of statehood was introduced to many African countries. These processes involved the merging of governance and security practice, where control over territory and populations was pursued through establishing alliances with native elites who, in return, were allowed to maintain control over their populations and apply their own customary laws (Mamdani 1996). This means that a plethora of particular sociopolitical identities and systems of rule were maintained.

This pluralism has profoundly shaped the political orders evolving in African states. In many so-called fragile settings "we are essentially dealing with the contested limits of state control over territory and populations" (Andersen et al. 2007, p. 5). On the one hand, the fragmentation of state authority is often accompanied by fierce competition – amongst state elites and various non-state security and armed actors – over the right to rule and govern territory. These conflicts over resources and power make life precarious for local people, since the very same actors who claim to provide security are also often the drivers of insecurity, and since protection is often provided along the lines of particular group, or ethnic identity. On the other hand, these pluralised arrangements of security provision and conflict management present "real life alternatives" (ibid.) available for ordinary citizens to acquire protection of their property and their lives, in settings where conventional state provisions are limited or absent.

Such security and governance arrangements functioning as alternatives to the dominant state-centric framework can be seen as an opportunity or a problem, or sometimes both, for governance and security in conflict-affected areas. This ambiguity, and double-sidedness, is also reflected in the analyses and conceptualisations of security and governance in conflict-affected and fragile settings.

Conceptualising security provision – beyond state-centric frameworks

Until recently local non-state security actors and arrangements have been represented as a problem for democratic and institutional consolidation of states, citizenship, and the provision of public services. In more recent analysis, however, the understanding of the multiple local security and governance providers and arrangements operating in areas of limited statehood have become more nuanced. Scholars and policymakers alike increasingly recognise that a variety of actors such as traditional chiefs, neighbourhood watches, militias and vigilante groups etc. are part of the security provision, and are political actors in their own right, rather than just spoilers.

> **Official state security actors as a rule have both formal and informal links with vigilantes, militias, foreign rebel groups, private security actors and others.**

This increasing acknowledgement of and interest in the "real governance" underpinning political orders in many conflict and post-conflict settings has unsettled some of the basic categories of conventional political theory – in particular the opposition between public and private. Also the category of the "failed state" has been criticised for being normative (advocating for the spread of Western-style governance institutions) and lacking analytical utility. In recent years a growing number of scholars have attempted to go beyond these state-centric understandings of security provision, and have developed alternative conceptual lenses. These include "negotiated statehood" (Hagmann & Péclard 2009), "twilight institutions" (Lund 2006), "mediated state" (Menkhaus 2006), "real governance" (Olivier de Sardan 2008), "hybrid political orders" (Boege et al. 2009), and "simultaneity of authority" (Albrecht & Moe 2014). These concepts challenge the notion of "failed states" and the binaries of private vs. public and state vs. non-state, and make the blending of these spheres the explicit focus. The notion of "non-state" actors and orders is imprecise as it often functions as a catch-all concept, and as it does not account for the fact that the actors labelled "non-state" are in fact often deeply entwined with state power. Official state security actors as a rule have both formal and informal links with vigilantes, militias, foreign rebel groups, private security actors and others. In DR Congo, for instance, army units and individual commanders collaborate extensively with local militias in the exploitation of resources and in the taxation of economic activities, but also in military operations against rebels (Stearns et al.

2013). In Nigeria's Niger Delta state security actors collaborate extensively with the highly trained guards of private security companies – to the point of being embedded in them – in the protection of oil installations (Abrahamsen & Williams 2009).

In this report we do, however, use the term in some instances for analytical purposes. Firstly, the concept of non-state actors, notwithstanding conceptual limits, is still more inclusive than donor notions of "civil society", and it allows for analysis reckoning with a wider set of actors than local NGOs and civic leaders. Secondly, and following from this, in the four case studies we discuss a wide range of different actors operating outside or in loose connection with the purview of state authority. The concept of non-state is therefore heuristically adopted in some sections, but is balanced by in-depth analysis in each case study.

Local security provision: why, who, how?
It is one thing to recognise the importance of the multiplicity of local and non-state security providers and arrangements that operate in fragile situations. It is quite another to understand how they operate; the ways in which they attempt to establish order, assert their authority, and resolve conflicts. Empirically grounded analysis of these dynamics and actors, and the wider political context within which they operate, is still limited. To take such analysis further, this report provides four case studies from four different countries in Africa which to varying degrees are going through periods of conflict and where political authority is fragmented. There are two case studies from eastern Africa: the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somaliland, and two from western Africa: Niger and Mali.

> **A recurrent theme is how the erosion of central state institutions, government, and service delivery is a key factor behind the emergence of decentred forms of security provision and political order.**

The case studies examine the reasons behind the emergence and proliferation of local security actors and arrangements (i.e. the why), look into the variety and nature of actors driving security and insecurity (i.e. the who), and provide insights into the ways in which security is established in conflict and fragile settings; ways which variously challenge, support or reconfigure state authority (i.e. the how).

Why?

Exploring key reasons and driving factors behind the emergence and proliferation of security provision beyond the state is a central focus in the report, and is given consideration in all the case studies. The case studies provide different angles on the "why". A recurrent theme is how the erosion of central state institutions, government, and service delivery is a key factor behind the emergence of decentred forms of security provision and political order. Yet, the different case studies will also illustrate the great variations that exist in terms of the different motivating factors behind localised claims to authority and security provision, and the different ways in which historical processes create incentive structures for local security actors. In some settings the developments with regard to state collapse/ fragmentation and the specific conflict patterns and sociopolitical dynamics, have generated incentives and opportunities for security actors who primarily seek to assert and consolidate their own influence and power. In other settings the reconstruction of security and order after state collapse has been linked to aspirations and attempts at creating new frameworks for governance and representation in ways that redress conflict and insecurity triggers. A common factor, illustrated across the case studies, is, however, that politics and pursuit of power are two key driving forces behind local security dynamics and provision.

Who?

As a collection the case studies illustrate the great variety of actors and arrangements involved with providing security in areas where the central state is weak or absent. These actors include vigilante groups, militias, faith-based organisations, separatist ethno-regional movements and traditional authorities. In spite of this heterogeneity of security providers it is also important to keep in mind that they have in common that they tend to be linked to political struggles over power and resources, and to be linked to various power networks. Following from the above, the broad spectrum of local actors and providers analysed in the different case studies are neither approached as simply benevolent providers of security services, nor as spoilers creating chaos and insecurity. Rather, we conceive of them as political actors engaged in local order-making where power, authority and resources are at stake. In this regard we also examine the relationships between the different categories of providers, including between local security actors and state actors, and examine points of cooperation as well as points of competition between them.

How?

A third recurrent focus in the case studies is on uncovering how local security provision actually works in settings where state authority is fragmented. The case studies offer insights into some of the mechanisms and processes through which security is provided in the different settings where the central state is weak or absent. We provide different examples of both how specific means and practices of security can break with cycles of violence and of how other practices reproduce such cycles. Examining how local security works also touches upon the abovementioned issue of the overlapping, competition and cooperation between different providers, who variously challenge, support, or reconfigure state authority. It is through examining the actual practices and processes of security provision that the multilayered nature of security governance and local ordering becomes apparent.

Case studies

In the empirical explorations of local security tendencies we focus on Eastern Africa and the Sahel, which are regions that have increasingly attracted the attention of international actors aiming to contribute to stabilisation and peace in Sub-Saharan conflict-ridden regions. The research and analysis of each of the case studies has been conducted and authored separately by each of the researchers. The studies are based on brief fieldtrips to the countries, but the authors of each of the different country studies have long-term experience researching the areas under study, including fieldwork.

> The purpose of the case studies is to shed light on different key aspects of why, by whom and how security is provided and challenged in settings where central state institutions are weak or absent.

The purpose of the case studies is to shed light on different key aspects of why, by whom and how security is provided and challenged in settings where central state institutions are weak or absent. Hence, rather than providing an exhaustive analysis of each of the countries under study, the cases are illustrating particular patterns, aspects and tendencies, so as to nuance and deepen the overall understanding of security and insecurity in conflict-affected regions. Each study is rounded off with key insights derived from the case.

East Africa

DR Congo and Somalia are both known as paradigmatic cases of state failure and long-standing armed conflict. And in both cases approaches of conventional top-down stabilisation and statebuilding have proven profoundly unfit for re-establishing basic security (Bøås 2010). The two case studies – one on the northern part of South Kivu in Congo and one on Somaliland in the north of Somalia – illustrate two key patterns in terms of local responses to such situations of insecurity and state erosion.

The case study of Congo illustrates how the erosion of the state's capacity to provide basic security and the continuation of unaddressed local conflicts has led to a self-reinforcing spiral of militarisation where more and more people seek security services from armed groups and army units. This rising demand has strengthened the authority of armed groups leading to a general militarisation of social relations. Following from this, the case study argues that attempts to address the situation would need to combine short-term political negotiations and agreements with longer-term social and institutional reforms addressing the underlying sociopolitical cause of conflict.

In the context of Somalia, people have also suffered the dire consequences of state failure, insecurity and militarisation, but the case study of Somaliland illustrates a different pattern: a pattern of decentred reconstruction and peacebuilding. In the case of Somaliland this has led to impressive levels of security and stability, as well as the establishment of new institutions and security/governance arrangements. The study argues that this example of local stabilisation as a gradual development combined with domestic processes addressing representational and civic issues provides important insights into an alternative to more conventional, internationally-led and centralised security approaches. The study moves on to examine a few examples of international engagements in the Somaliland context, and rounds off by highlighting the potential contradictions between international counterterrorism support and agendas of democratisation support.

Sahel

Whereas the cases of Congo and Somaliland illustrate different local responses to situations of long-term protracted state collapse and civil war, in the cases of Niger and Mali conflict and state fragility have only recently received attention, and as such the cases illustrate earlier stages of conflict and insecurity. The country case studies, in particular, provide insights into underlying causes and triggers behind the emerging and contemporary security crises.

Niger is a setting of low-intensity conflict which could escalate. The Niger study zooms in on state abandonment and on the connection between people's unmet expectations of the state and the proliferation of competing security actors. The study adds a perspective on how wider regional conflict dynamics profoundly impact on both local and national dynamics of security and insecurity.

Mali, in turn, has until recently been considered a relative success story with regard to stability and governance, yet the recent turn of events transformed the country into a war zone.

The Mali case study seeks to nuance the understanding of the contemporary security crisis by drawing attention both to longstanding causes of conflict, and to the long-term sociopolitical exclusion they evolve around. On the flipside, the case study demonstrates how the crisis also offers opportunities for local actors pursuing power positions. In these processes inter- and intra-ethnic identity, religion and affiliation with central state institutions are mobilising factors in power struggles. These perspectives are illustrated through a case from the Douentza region in Central Mali.

EASTERN DR CONGO
Security Provision in the Context of Continuous Conflict and Militarisation

By Kasper Hoffmann

This case study looks into the provision of security by armed groups in eastern DR Congo and more specifically in the Bunyakiri area situated in the northern part of South Kivu province. It argues that a combination of the long-term erosion of the state's capacity to provide basic public services to its citizens and continuous multi-scalar conflict has paved the way for a multitude of competing actors to emerge as contending security providers. This has produced a self-reinforcing spiral where more and more people seek security services from armed groups and army units. This rising demand for security services has strengthened the authority of armed groups leading to a general militarisation of social relations. So far neither the Congolese government nor the considerable peacebuilding efforts of the international community have been able to reverse this cycle of conflict and militarisation.

> **The long-term erosion of the state's capacity to provide basic public services to its citizens and continuous multi-scalar conflict has paved the way for a multitude of competing actors to emerge as contending security providers.**

Since the early 1990s eastern Congo has gone through a highly complex, multi-scalar series of conflicts, including two regional wars (1996-1997; 1998-2003) that involved the armies of up to seven African countries and numerous foreign and domestic armed groups, with catastrophic human consequences. Officially the regional wars in the Congo ended in 2002 with the signing of a power-sharing

agreement brokered by the international community. But many of the fundamental sources of the conflicts, such as access to land, inter- and intra-ethnic tensions, the explosive issue of the citizenship status of the so-called Rwandophone populations,[1] rising poverty levels, the mismanagement of resources, and parasitic state services, have not been adequately addressed and continue to fuel conflicts and the social logics of militarisation.

The end of the wars was followed by parliamentary and presidential elections in 2006, which were won by Joseph Kabila and his coalition. But the new political order did not put an end to the conflicts or reverse the social logic of militarisation as various Congolese and foreign armed groups continued their struggles in eastern Congo, often in ever-changing alliances with either the Congolese government or foreign governments, especially the Rwandan and Ugandan governments (Raeymaekers, Menkhaus & Vlassenroot 2008). In effect by focusing so strongly on brokering power-sharing deals among national and regional politico-military elites,

Map of DR Congo and the South Kivu Province

PROTECTION AND (IN)SECURITY BEYOND THE STATE
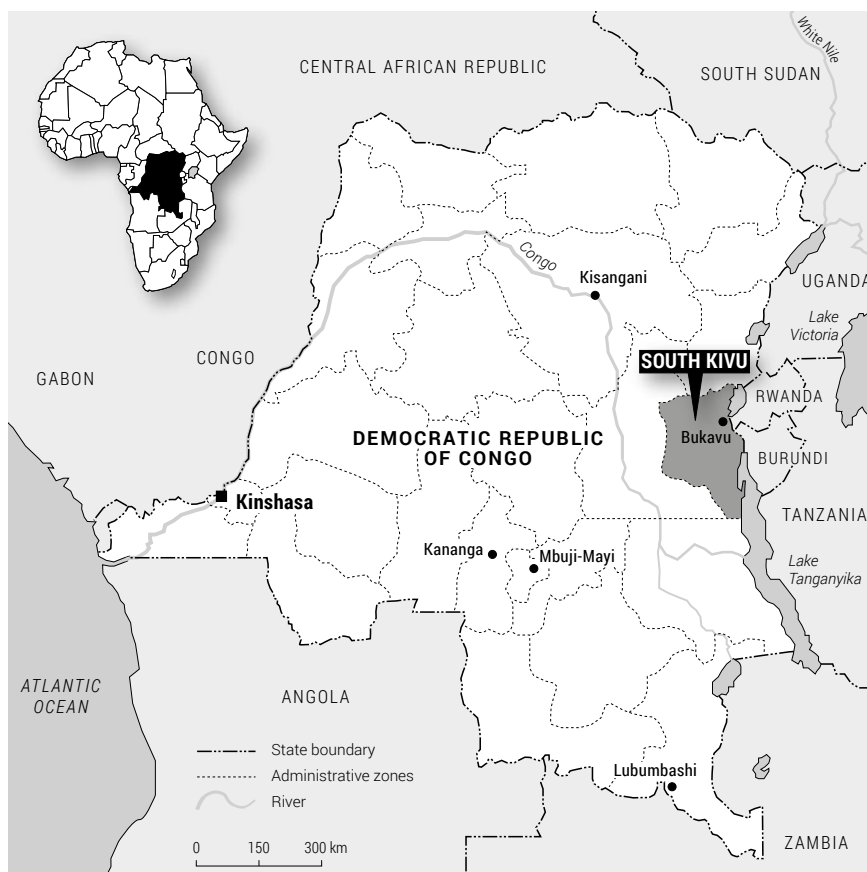
and reinforcing the authority of the Congolese state while overlooking many of the underlying causes of the war, the international community has contributed to the perpetuation of a compromised clientilistic political order, and a deeply divided political polity (Autesserre 2010).

To make matters worse, badly designed strategies to tackle non-state armed groups have fed into the dynamics of the conflicts and arguably entrenched the logic of militarisation. One of the important points of the 2002 Sun City peace agreement was the creation of a new unified national army, the Forces Armées de la République du Congo (FARDC), which was supposed to integrate the various fighting forces. However, rather than create a unified army, former adversaries maintained their command structures and continued their struggles. This process ushered in a vicious cycle of army integration and disintegration, which in itself has become a major factor in entrenching community violence and militarisation (Eriksson Baaz & Verweijen 2013).

However, in spite of the collapse of state institutions and ongoing conflict, people have continued to seek and find practical solutions to their daily security problems. For instance, in Beni-Lubero (North Kivu) on the Congo–Ugandan border a protection agreement was reached between the rebel group Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Mouvement de Libération and cross-border regional traders, which included the regulation of border trade, the provision of social services (such as roads, hospitals and schools) and the governance of security (Raeymaekers 2010).

In spite of the collapse of state institutions and ongoing conflict, people have continued to seek and find practical solutions to their daily security problems.

Indeed, military protection arrangements are so widespread that they have become part and parcel of the working of the entire sociopolitical order in North and South Kivu, creating a self-reinforcing spiral, as those who do not enjoy military protection believe that they are at a comparative disadvantage (Eriksson Baaz & Verweijen 2014). Even at the micro-level this dynamics of protection is at work. In the town of Misisi, a gold mining site in Fizi territory, the FARDC, enables and protects market stalls in the residential areas, which allows vendors to evade the official market taxes of the chiefdom. All over eastern Congo these self-reinforcing dynamics have made armed actors attractive business partners (Verweijen 2013, pp. 75–6).

Armed groups and the provision of security in Bunyakiri

The Bunyakiri area is a prime example of how state collapse and continuous conflict affect the provision of security. Since the early 1990s Bunyakiri has witnessed a proliferation of armed groups. Historically these were local self-defence militias, which were strongly connected to local customary authorities and mobilised to defend against rival ethnic militias. During the Congolese wars, however, the phenomenon diversified. Today, armed groups come in many different forms. They can be simple groups of bandits, local self-defence militias, or large-scale rebel groups exercising authority over significant territories. They are often in conflict with each other over the benefits derived from ruling over territory and populations, and tend to claim to defend the interests of their ethnic group, or sub-group, against other ethnic groups, or sub-groups, or predatory state institutions. In many parts of Bunyakiri people feel abandoned by the government and they are accusing it of failing to live up to its responsibilities to protect the population. As a leading figure from Bunyakiri explained:

> You get the sense that there is an absence of, or perhaps an abdication by the state in Bunyakiri. In several sub-chiefdoms you do not feel the state! It is absent. And this absence of the state means that the populations live like orphans. And when you are an orphan no holds are barred in the struggle to survive; that is why you see the emergence of armed groups.[2]

Some even accuse it of being in collusion with foreigners – typically labelled "Rwandophones" – which they see evidenced by their presence in the national army:

> The way we see the political game there is a slippery slope, and you can see it in our army, those who are the commanders, it is the Rwandophones. For the population this will not work, that is why you have these militias here and there.[3]

Armed groups feed off people's perceptions and fears, and justify their right to rule with the argument that since the Congolese state is not able or willing to secure the Congolese citizens from the elements threatening them, they are obliged to do it. In other words they claim to assume the neglected responsibilities of the state.

In Bunyakiri today armed groups are crucial players in the daily governance of security. The most important among them is the Raia Mutomboki (translating to "the population is angry"), which is active in the zones of Kalonge, Kalima, Mubugu

and Buloho, the Mai-Mai Kifuafua and the Mai-Mai Kirikicho, which are active in Ziralo. These three groups are mainly recruited among the majority ethnic group in the area, the Batembo: a political community which has been marginalised since colonisation. Batembo leaders have used their historical marginalisation to justify the creation of such self-defence militias. In addition there is a mainly Hutu group called the Nyatura, which is also active in the Ziralo zone. The ability of these armed groups to exercise authority varies strongly from case-to-case; the most powerful have ties to larger political-economic networks and are deeply involved with the governance of daily life across a large spectrum of domains at the heart of statehood, including security, justice and taxation. Such groups present an attractive option to businessmen, politicians, foreign armies, under-resourced army units, traditional authorities, and state officials looking for protection or means of enforcement.

In fact the proliferation of armed groups in Bunyakiri is directly linked to the army reintegration process. Many of the leaders of today's armed groups in Bunyakiri are ex-members of one of the biggest armed groups in South Kivu during the second Congolese war; the Mai-Mai group of general Padiri Bulenda, which was dominated by the Batembo.

> **The Congolese army and other state security actors, such as the intelligence services and the police, are irregularly and derisorily paid. This not only pushes them into competition with each other and with the armed groups, but also pushes them to demand unofficial fees and taxes for their security services.**

Army reintegration was intended to break down old wartime loyalties and replace them with a unified chain of command. But in many cases different factions remained in control of their former units and competed over the distribution of lucrative posts and deployment in resourceful areas. Lacking support, Padiri's officers were not accorded lucrative positions in the army. Further, many of them were only given ranks, but no troops to command. Combatants were demobilised without any support for their reintegration and found themselves in a marginalised position. Thus, the failed army integration produced a large number of jobless and disaffected former combatants, which could be drawn upon for renewed mobilisation in Bunyakiri. Furthermore, when Padiri's group left the area the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) (a Rwandan Hutu rebel group created in exile in the Congo by remnants of the Rwandan regime, which was responsible for the Rwandan genocide in 1994) moved into the void created by their departure. After decades of

geopolitical conflict, the Congolese and Rwandan governments signed an agreement in 2009 which revolved around rooting out the FDLR. Under pressure from Rwandan and Congolese forces many FDLR units regrouped in the dense equatorial forest of Bunyakiri. The forces became increasingly abusive against the local populations, which not only reinforced strong anti-foreigner attitudes among the local populations, but also delegitimised the government, and the UN peacekeeping mission (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en République Démocratique du Congo, MONUSCO), the largest of its kind in the world, which had bases in the area due to their inability to protect the civilian population.

> **Many preferred the justice of the armed groups, which were viewed as more accessible, effective, and cheap.**

Another aspect, which facilitates the spread of security provision by armed groups, is that the Congolese army and other state security actors, such as the intelligence services and the police, are irregularly and derisorily paid. This not only pushes them into competition with each other and with the armed groups, but also pushes them to demand unofficial fees and taxes for their security services. As a result they too become part of the logic of privatised and partisan security provision, which further decreases the legitimacy of the state.

The security governance of the Raia Mutomboki in Bunyakiri
The Raia Mutomboki rebel movement is an interesting illustration of the dynamics of security provision and militarisation. It represents a grassroots response to a generalised context of insecurity. In areas where this armed group operates, it increasingly rejects the legitimacy of the state and claims political authority. The current Raia Mutomboki started operating in 2011 in a neighbouring territory of Bunyakiri (Shabunda territory) as a response to a series of attacks perpetuated by the FDLR. Initial success against the FDLR endowed the group with considerable popularity and led to massive mobilisation (Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014, Vogel 2014). The movement arrived in Bunyakiri at the end of 2011, where a similar development took place. Bolstered by its success in Shabunda, the group pushed the FDLR out, which made it highly popular among many local citizens who had suffered through FDLR domination and extortion schemes. Once the group had settled in Bunyakiri, its local branch was increasingly taken over by local Batembo ex-Mayi-Mayi commanders associated with Padiri's group, and increasingly started challenging local state authorities, both military and civilian. It began interfering in

the governance of both security and justice. Individuals or groups began soliciting the help of the Raia Mutomboki as a way to have disputes settled to their advantage (e.g. land conflicts, inheritance disputes, debts, and disputes related to marriages) or simply to settle scores. Many preferred the justice of the armed groups, which were viewed as more accessible, effective, and cheap, yet which in most cases was administered without due process. This development in turn increasingly pushes families to send youths to the Raia Mutomboki, or other armed groups for self-protection. Soldiers of the Congolese army also offer their "services" in this way. Armed actors' methods may entail intimidation, the harming of its clients' opponents or the use of force to appropriate goods or land plots. This dynamics is increasingly leading to violent clashes at various levels. The militarisation of the sociopolitical order, therefore, cannot simply be attributed to the activities of armed groups. Instead militarisation and the production of violence are much more ambiguous processes involving both civilians and military actors. This corroborates the findings of researchers like Verweijen (2013, p. 74) and Kalyvas (2006, p. 14), which show that civilians instrumentalise political and military actors as a means to settle their own private disputes, and thereby are part of the reproduction of violence and militarisation.

> **Civilians instrumentalise political and military actors as a means to settle their own private disputes, and are thereby part of the reproduction of violence and militarisation.**

Various local leaders also became involved with the Raia Mutomboki. A member of the national parliament, elected in Kalehe territory, reached out to the group to increase his leverage locally and nationally. At gatherings in his home region he praised the actions of the group and encouraged them to fight against foreign rebel groups. Customary chiefs were in constant and direct contact with its commanders and acted as the Raia Mutomboki leadership's main liaison with local communities. As such they played a crucial role in mobilisation efforts and in increasing the movement's legitimacy. For some chiefs the new rebel movement presented an attractive instrument to strengthen their claims to customary authority, and their power in border conflicts.

The Raia Mutomboki claim that since the Congolese army is not able to protect the population, it is them that should be recognised as the legitimate security force. This leads them to demand an "effort de guerre" (war contribution) from each family.

Thus Raia Mutomboki members pass by each household to claim taxes on a weekly basis. But, even though the movement is marred by internal infighting and loosely structured, and even if its provision of security and justice is highly partisan and erratic, it currently stands as a lesser evil to many local citizens than other security actors (Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014), showing that the line between the provision of security and a protection racket is sometimes razor thin.

KEY INSIGHTS

■ The eastern Congo case shows that the long-term inability of the state to provide basic public services to its citizens and continuous multi-scalar conflict have made room for a multitude of actors to emerge as contending security providers. This dynamics has aggravated intra- and inter-ethnic conflict, strengthened armed groups, and led to a general militarisation of social relations.

■ Badly designed strategies to tackle non-state armed groups have fed into the dynamics of conflicts and arguably entrenched the logic of militarisation.

■ The UN's association with the Congolese regime delegitimises it in Bunyakiri.

■ The Raia Mutomboki displays a similar behaviour to previous security actors: collecting unofficial taxes and fees and interfering in justice provision, whereby they contribute to the militarisation of social relations.

■ Insecurity is jointly produced by civilian and security actors, as the former instrumentalise the latter to settle private conflicts.

■ Security arrangements often cross the boundary between public and private, highlighting the difficulty of determining the boundary between them.

SOMALILAND
Between Decentred Stabilisation and
External Intervention

**By Louise Wiuff Moe, with special thanks to the Social Research
and Development Institute, Hargeisa.**

While the case study of Congo illustrates the correlation between state collapse, unaddressed underlying conflict and increasing militarisation, this case study of Somaliland examines a different trajectory of localised responses to state collapse. Like Congo, Somalia is also profoundly marked by decades of state collapse and war, yet the case study on Somaliland demonstrates how the Somali context is not simply one of fragility and insecurity, but also features decentred reconstruction processes that have produced impressive levels of stability. In the case of Somaliland, it will be shown, reconstruction and peacebuilding have led to the establishment of new institutions and frameworks for security and political order that are not simply "non-state alternatives" to statehood, but rather represent a redefinition of the very pillars of the state and of security.

Through a brief historical perspective the case study firstly demonstrates how reconstruction in Somaliland was marked by synergies between localised reconciliation processes, wider political reconstruction and the establishment of security. A key point is that security was pursued not as a separate and discrete task but as something embedded with domestic political processes of local reconciliation and reconstruction.

Secondly, the study examines examples of international support to security in Somaliland. One example focuses on support to enhancing cooperation between centrally governed institutions and localised customary institutions. This example is illustrative of a form of engagement that builds on already ongoing processes of

security provision and relationships between existing security providers. Another example focuses on the impact of recent international agendas of counterterrorism, which have created entirely new security actors. It is argued that the way in which counterterrorism has been promoted risks undermining the type of political negotiation and gradual democratisation processes that have historically been central for Somaliland's stability (and which remain pivotal for longer-term sustainable security). The following section provides a brief background introduction to the wider key developments in Somalia, to contextualise the case study of Somaliland that then follows.

Background: state collapse and the rise of decentred security arrangements
Without a functional state since 1991, Somalia became known as the longest-running example of state collapse in post-colonial Africa. The gradual disintegration and eventual collapse of the state was accompanied by high levels of violence, warlordism, famine, mass displacement, refugee flows and also, for the last decade, the influence of the extremist movement al Shabaab. The inauguration of a post-transitional government in 2012, and the parliament's subsequent election of the civil society leader Hassan Sheik Mohamoud in September of the same year, generated hope that Somalia could emerge from its protracted crisis.

However today, a few years on, the government has lost much of its support due to ongoing corruption, and power struggles with self-declared sub-state administrations in southern Somalia. Moreover, while al Shabaab has been ousted from major cities the group is still capable of regular attacks against public places and the government.

> Somalis have shown a remarkable capacity to craft alternative arrangements of security and governance.

Notwithstanding the history of profound state collapse, Somalis have shown a remarkable capacity to craft alternative arrangements of security and governance. Everyday life has continued although it is in many regions significantly disrupted by violence, and localised security and governance arrangements have developed and expanded over time in the context of statelessness. These arrangements involve complex and continuously renegotiated alliances between a range of actors, including local elites, clan leaders and elders, religious leaders, civic figures, militias, local government officials, business elites and others (Menkhaus 2009).

The various local authorities and polities that have emerged show discontinuity with conventional state-based security provision and sovereignty, but in some areas localised processes of reconstruction and stabilisation have added up to much more than ad hoc arrangements, "filling the void" left by lack of state provision. In the case of Somaliland, the reconstruction processes following state collapse in 1991 led to new institutional arrangements that came to function as a new de facto state, which has increasingly been acknowledged for its achievements in terms of maintaining a high level of stability and security.

The following section demonstrate that the security and stability gains of Somaliland lie in the processes through which this order emerged and became socially validated by negotiations across a plurality of existing social forces that represented domestic interests and clashes of interest. This example of local stabilisation as a gradual development, coupled with domestic and customary processes addressing representational and civic issues provides important insights into an alternative to more conventional, internationally driven and centralised stabilisation and security approaches.

**Historical perspective on Somaliland: local reconciliation
and the re-establishment of security**

The sociopolitical environment characterising the Somaliland context just before the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, and in the aftermath of this state collapse, was an environment that necessitated and facilitated heterogeneous processes of bargaining, accommodation and cooperation among a range of different actors within Somaliland (Bradbury 2008).

During the struggle against Siad Barre in the late 1980s a close cooperation developed between the northern customary leadership of the largest clan family in Somaliland, the Isaaq, and the regionally based resistance movement against Siad Barre, the Somali National Movement (SNM). The SNM did not operate as a distinct guerrilla front, but rather as "an armed expression of the Isaaq people" (Prunier 1994, p. 62). This embeddedness of the SNM within the Isaaq communities and the lack of any substantial external funding led SNM to rely upon customary authorities. The customary authorities, who are, in Somaliland, the key clan representatives, became driving forces behind the mobilisation of resistance among the Isaaq communities. These "resistance alliances" and the coordinating role of the customary authorities gave them substantial control over the SNM's politics (Bradbury 2008; Prunier 1994).

After the defeat of Barre and the declaration of independence, the SNM formed the first Somaliland administration and was faced with the task of constructing security and a government from scratch, with minimal external support. It soon became clear that local grievances, if left unaddressed, would have spillover effects strong enough to undermine the longer-term project of re-establishing peace and political order. Security and reconciliation thus became the main objectives, and application of customary conflict resolution mechanisms became the means to reach this objective. Against this backdrop the customary authorities and their councils remained highly influential. They went from being mobilising forces behind the resistance against Siad Barre to becoming the driving actors behind the peace, reconciliation and reconstruction processes.

Numerous localised and regional negotiations between customary authorities from different clans dealt with civil, security and justice issues such as restoring cooperative relations to facilitate commerce, negotiating access to grazing, reopening of roads, returning stolen property and reducing livestock raids. These negotiations were critical for containing violence on the local level and for paving the way for large-scale peace conferences bringing all the northern clans together to negotiate the pillars and institutional framework for a new political order. As explained by a Somaliland analyst:

> Every clan had to accept the rebirth of Somaliland, and to accept Somaliland they had to deal with the "next door" clan, to address all the grievances and to exchange xeer.[4] Only then could we start to agree on how to build a state. The local and regional conferences were handling conflicts of certain areas, and these conflicts would otherwise have destabilised the whole situation.[5]

A big clan conference in the city of Boroma in 1993, attended by an estimated 2000 people and running over a period of four months, was key in laying the foundation for the further process of reconstruction and security in Somaliland. It set out the framework for a hybrid system of governance based on bicameral legislature, securing clan representation and carving out an explicit role in the upper house for customary authorities.[6] It also established a peace and security charter which drew directly on the consensus achieved through the series of clan conferences. The charter set out the procedures for demobilising militias and forming security institutions; it recognised and defined the roles of customary authorities in settling

Map of Somalia and Somaliland

outstanding disputes, and it spelled out a cross-clan Xeer – i.e. customary contract – for inter clan peace (Bradbury 2008).

Somaliland has gone through significant political changes, developments and also crises, since the early years of reconstruction in the 1990s. During this period the de facto state institutions have continuously consolidated. Tensions concerning territorial control cause ebbs and flows of conflict, yet Somaliland remains by far the most stable and secure territory in the Somali context.

**KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE HISTORICAL PROCESSES OF
RECONSTRUCTION IN SOMALILAND:**

■ Security was pursued as something embedded in political processes of local reconciliation and reconstruction, rather than as a separate and discrete task. These processes were marked by the synergies between micro-negotiations, wider domestic political process and the reestablishment of security.

■ The security actors and arrangements that were established in Somaliland generally reflected the settlements and accommodations achieved through the reconciliation processes.

■ Somaliland analysts maintain that the flexibility underpinning these processes was maintained due to the absence of international interference in terms of agendas and timeframes (see for example Bradbury 2008).

While a low level of external engagement is characteristic of Somaliland, also due to its unrecognised status, external engagements have not been absent altogether. The remainder of this study reviews examples of international support to security.

Examples of international support

International support has, on some occasions, indirectly assisted in the maintaining of security by offering basic support to wider political processes. Examples include the low-key facilitative and logistical roles played by a number of external actors (foreign governments, NGOs, embassies, UNDP) assisting the four month-long negotiation and reconciliation at the 1993 national clan conference in Borama. A more recent example is the 2009 period of pre-election developments, during which political tensions rose to levels threatening to destabilise Somaliland. In this context the donor group played a diplomatic role in breaking the deadlock and reaching agreements on a memorandum among Somali stakeholders (Walls & Elmi 2011). Somaliland analysts who have reviewed international support in the Somali context suggest that the common features of the "successful cases" are that "external funding did not disproportionally dominate", that "outsiders did not establish frameworks and deadlines beyond the immediate release of funds", and that the form of engagement was "smaller in scale and (built) actively on local initiatives" (Walls & Elmi 2011, p. 83).

One example that specifically illustrates international support aiming to engage local security provision is the Danish Refugee Council's (DRC) support to enhancing cooperation between localised customary institutions and centrally governed institutions.

INGO support to multilayered security.

In 2003 the DRC was approached by a group of Somaliland customary authorities who wanted support to begin dialogues and experience-sharing among prominent clan leaders, and to facilitate better cooperation between them, the Somaliland state providers and religious actors. There had been an increase in revenge killings during the early 2000s, particularly in the Toghdeer region of Somaliland. Revenge killings typically happen when a clan or sub-clan involved in a conflict is unable or unwilling to pay compensation as per the Somali customary law, the Xeer, and the aggrieved clan responds by killing the perpetrator or other members of his clan. This may set off a spiral of revenge killings.

The customary authorities who approached the DRC considered that stronger joint efforts among the customary authorities from different clans and sub-clans in Somaliland, and among them and other security providers, the police and religious leaders, would be necessary to deal with this growing insecurity. Recognising the importance of the traditional system as the primary source of conflict resolution DRC decided to support the initiative. DRC was one of the first INGOs to systematically engage with this type of authority (despite the fact that customary authorities take care of about 80−85% of everyday disputes and crime [Gundel 2006]).

The first dialogue took place in the Toghdeer region in Somaliland, and brought together policing actors, religious leaders and over 100 customary authorities from five clans in this region. Interest in the initiative spread, and the Toghdeer dialogue was followed by a series of regional dialogue meetings in Sahel, Awdal, Maroodi Jeex, Sool and Sanag regions. Later, in the mid 2000s, the initiative spread to Puntland. The role of the DRC was one of facilitating the dialogues, mainly by providing support and funding for the logistics, such as transportation, food and planning (lack of such basic logistics, and resources for hosting dialogues, can be a key barrier to local peace meetings).

During focus group discussions in Ceel Afweyn and Hargeisa districts, customary authorities that had been involved in the initiative expressed that relationships and networks between the leaders of different clans and sub-clans had been strengthened through the dialogues. Some noted that this was the first time they had had an opportunity to come together and take the time to share insights and concerns over peace and security issues, and to attend to longstanding unresolved clan conflicts. Following the dialogues, a number of regional conflicts (in particular, cases of revenge killing, and conflicts over water, grazing and land) had been addressed in both Somaliland and Puntland.

Also, with regard to the aim of strengthening the cooperation between the customary authorities and the Somaliland state providers (and aligning Xeer with Somaliland state law and Sharia), there were indications of positive developments, with particularly positive effects regarding the problem of revenge killings. Reports and field data indicate that there was a significant decrease in revenge killings and in cases of perpetrators of killing being given clan protection, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of murder cases being handed over to, and processed by, the courts after the dialogues took place (Simojoki 2010).

New security trends: counterterrorism agendas vs. democratisation agendas
In recent years security in Somaliland has become gradually more shaped by new and emerging international and transnational security definitions and interests. A specific agenda increasingly shaping international support to Somaliland (and Somalia more widely) is the agenda of counterterrorism. International actors have in this regard come to conceive of Somaliland as one of the decentred entry points, below the central Mogadishu-based government, for building up local capacities for defeating al Shabaab. This has brought entirely new security structures and actors into the context. One paradigmatic example is the Rapid Response Unit (RRU) which was established in 2012. The unit officially operates under the police, but the forces of the unit are trained and supported externally, primarily by the British government. They were envisioned as counterterrorism forces, to be sent out to capture terrorists and al Shabaab members.

> The security actors created by counterterrorism support are understood as not locally embedded, and also not locally restrained or accountable.

Several Somalilanders, including local researchers, human rights activists and parliamentarians, however, contend that the forces have instead been used against the public, and as a political tool against people and institutions that are critical of the government. Its actions include a number of nighttime arrests with no legal process, arrests of government critics, the closing down of a critical media house and the use of lethal force during civic demonstrations. The Somaliland Human Rights Centre has compiled a report documenting these abuses.

These developments illustrate a wider tension between counterterrorism agendas and democratisation agendas. The key risks highlighted in interviews in Somaliland include: first, the security actors created by counterterrorism support are understood

as not locally embedded, and also not locally restrained or accountable. Whereas the established Somaliland security structures have evolved through domestic processes (as illustrated above) the counterterrorism units are entirely new appointees, who receive substantially more training and funding than the established forces.[7] There is also the concern that access to positions within new, internationally-supported forces could become a bone of contention among clans and among established providers. Several interviewees saw the RRUs as but one example of a broader trend towards the development of internationally established and supported special forces. Second, while international support to Somaliland at times is framed as decentred support, there are risks that counterterrorism feeds into centralising logics. The manner in which the RRUs have been deployed as a political tool is seen as a sign of centralised and authoritarian security command, which risks de-legitimising both Somaliland government institutions and international actors.

> **Insights from Somaliland suggest that constructive support to security must adopt an approach that works with and through democratic and representative processes and structures that are in their making.**

Third, Somaliland does not have a legal framework in place to define "terrorism" or spell out the scope and procedures for counterterrorism. There has been an international push for adopting new counterterrorism laws, which have been prepared and advised by international actors, but there are concerns that the laws, according to the judgement of the Somaliland Human Rights Centre and other civic organisations, would further centralise security and bypass oversight in the name of counterterrorism.

This illustrates some of the key tensions between counterterrorism and democratic consultations. In contexts where attempts at crafting sustainable and representative institutions are ongoing and under significant pressures from wider internal and external conflict dynamics and limited resources, the stakes are particularly high. Insights from Somaliland suggest that constructive support to security must adopt an approach that works with and through democratic and representative processes and structures that are in their making.

INSIGHTS:

■ The Somali context is not simply one of failure and insecurity but also showcases impressive examples of decentred stabilisation and reconstruction of order and security. These processes have been marked by synergies between localised reconciliation processes, wider inclusive political reconstruction and the establishment of security.

■ Somaliland thereby challenges approaches that have prioritised top-down statebuilding as a means for stabilisation and also serves as a reminder that " 'what works' sometimes works because of lack of international engagement" (Albrecht & Kyed 2010).

■ Examples of successful international support in Somaliland have avoided external funding or frameworks disproportionally determining processes, taken on facilitative and logistical roles (rather than agenda setting), and maintained transparency.

■ Narrow pursuit of security, including narrow prioritisation of building up security institutions, can be counterproductive. This is evident in the way the international counterterrorism efforts have been implicated in creating actors and approaches that run counter to the political negotiation and gradual democratisation processes that have historically been key for Somaliland's stability.

■ When intervention takes place, there is a need for working with and through the democratic structures that are in their making. The principle of "do no harm" is particularly pivotal in the domain of security intervention.

NIGER
Regional Conflict, State Abandonment, and the Rise of Non-State Security Providers

By Eric Hahonou

By contrast to the other case studies presented in this report, the case of Niger illustrates a different kind of insecurity, as it is not, as yet, a zone of open armed conflict or war, but is marked by deep underlying tensions and regional instabilities that may well escalate. For a Western audience the deteriorating security situation and growing political instability in the Sahel region may appear as the result of weak states and fragile democracies folding under the pressure of radical Islamist organisations and rebel movements, but on closer scrutiny the security problems of Niger are vastly more complex. The case provides an analysis of the link between cross-border conflict dynamics and the rise of non-state armed actors in Diffa region and analysis of the provision of security by the Forces Armées Nigériennes (FAN) and Islamic organisations. Based on these analyses the report argues that spillover effects from conflicts in the region, combined with the inability of the state to provide basic social services – including security – have allowed a plethora of actors to emerge as contending security providers, including various reformist, jihadist and other movements.

In Niger, conflict and state fragility have only recently received international attention. It is important to trace the underlying causes and triggers behind the emergence of security issues as a major concern in Niger. The existing literature has already shed light on the importance of the regional Sahel context. In addition to that, we will here insist on a historical perspective on the erosion of central state institutions in public service delivery. Moreover, we pay attention to the frustrations expressed by citizens and non-state actors regarding "state abandonment", i.e. the lack of services provided by the Nigerien state to its citizens in specific remote areas of the territory.

It is in this particular context that a number of non-state security providers (re-) emerged recently. The study shows how everyday local security provision works in settings where state authority is fragmented. More specifically, it shows how faith-based reformist movements are increasingly challenging the state in many of its core functions (education, social security, justice, health, etc.).

Background

Niger is a landlocked Sahelian country situated between countries undergoing major crises (Libya, Nigeria and Mali). These crises have strong destabilising consequences in Niger, especially in border regions (Agadez, Diffa, Tahoua, Tillaberi), where jihadist movements, militias and armed returnees from Libya are gaining ground. The collapse of Mu'ammar Gaddafi's authoritarian regime in Libya in late 2011 had important consequences for the security dynamics in Mali and in the Sahel region as a whole. Since 2012 Niger has undergone a series of limited attacks (especially in the north and the east) as well as organised raids and occasional terror attacks (linked to incursions from Jihadist or rebel movements from Mali and Nigeria). However, Niger, unlike Mali, avoided the development of a major crisis.

> **Spillover effects from conflicts in the region, combined with the inability of the state to provide basic social services – including security – have allowed a plethora of actors to emerge as contending security providers, including various reformist, jihadist and other movements.**

Fearing that the Malian conflict could flow into Niger and that the Nigerien army would not be able to contain such a conflict on its own, Western actors decided to reinforce military cooperation with Niger and to send in their own troops (France and USA). Since 2013 France, which gets roughly three-quarters of its energy from uranium mined in northern Niger, has taken steps to protect the uranium mines. Similarly for the US, Niger serves as a friendly base where American military presence and operations can be hosted.

Both the US and France conduct aerial surveillance and military operations in Niger (especially in the desert area where trafficking of weapons is taking place) and beyond. Yet, the presence of external military actors does not block sporadic terrorist attacks. In 2013 Islamist groups coming from Mali and Algeria attacked a military base and a uranium mine, and Boko Haram activists carried out an attack against the central prison of Niamey. In 2014 a number of incidents also occurred in

northern and eastern Niger. In sum, Niger is relatively safe from external threats (despite sporadic attacks) but the government of Niger enjoys a very limited sovereignty over its own territory.

Yet, the security problems faced by the government of Niger and its citizens cannot be reduced to the threat of jihadist expansion from abroad. For its part, the government of Niger is mainly concerned with potential internal sources of insecurity and fear of a military coup is growing among government officials as tensions have been rising between military leaders and political elites, which could lead the government not to take decisions on appropriate security measures.

Niger's currently fragile security situation has been developing for some time. Since the early 1970s the state of Niger has encountered difficulties in providing basic services to its citizens in a variety of public sectors such as healthcare and education, and more recently in security (Masquelier 2001). This has had two main consequences in the domain of security. Firstly, it has eroded the state's legitimacy. Secondly, it has meant that people have started to organise themselves, either individually or collectively, to secure themselves and their property. Today, a multitude of actors are engaged in the provision of security services. These include non-state actors such as militias, faith-based organisations, youth organisations, private companies, but also foreign partners (French and American troops as well as European Union non-military intervention). This contributes to a fragmentation of public authority that is not limited to security issues.
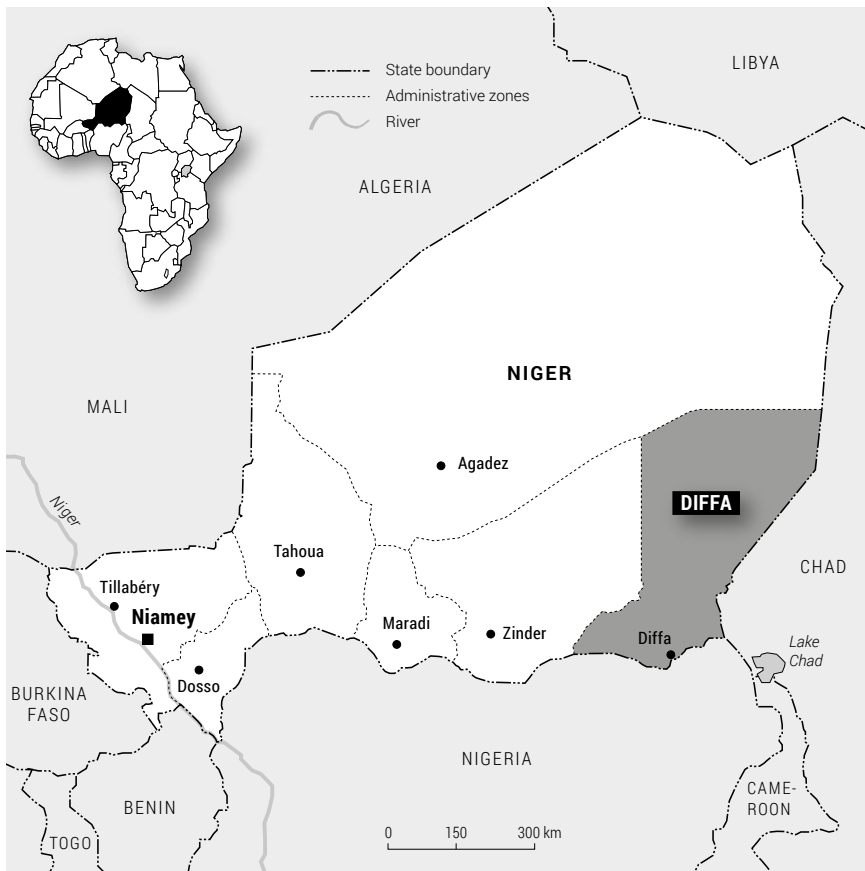
> **The Nigerien state is quasi-absent, and state justice is generally not recognised by people who prefer customary justice.**

Since the 1980s Niger has been one of the poorest countries in the world, despite the exploitation of uranium mines. Two of the regions, which are most exposed to the regional conflict dynamics – Agadez in the north and Diffa in the east – have already seen several rebellions (the Touareg rebellions 1991–1994 and 2007–2009) and are marked by inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts as well as by economic and political marginalisation. Whereas a process of formal integration of so-called "ex-combatants" into Nigerien armed forces and paramilitary units has begun, there is a growing concern today that those left behind might launch a new rebellion (possibly with the support of Islamist allies) in the near future due to the lack of response of successive Nigerien governments to rebel movements' claims (better distribution of wealth,

creation of jobs, more political representation and regional autonomy) and frustrations related to the way in which "ex-combatants" were recruited by the administration.[8] In many respects the management of the north by the Nigerien government resembles that of the Malian government. Northern Niger has become a key node in the trafficking of drugs (cocaine) and weapons with the complicity of local and national elites, as well as former rebels who have not been integrated. The same conditions that generated the last Touareg rebellion are present today in Niger.

In addition to this, concerns related to political instability and fears of a military coup against the current government are growing. This prompted the government to increase its defence budget by 65% in 2012, and a further 10% in 2013, to the detriment of expenditure on health and education. But despite the rise in defence expenditure, new security measures (the army's deployment in the border regions) and substantial military aid from foreign partners, Niger remains highly vulnerable.

Map of Niger and the Diffa region

Cross-border conflict dynamics, state abandonment and the rise of contending security actors in Diffa

The current situation in the Diffa area bordering northern Nigeria illustrates how the state's inability to provide basic public services to the population facilitates the rise of Islamist movements as an alternative to an increasingly unpopular state. Diffa is a remote and poor territorial unit of Niger. Despite the recent discovery and exploitation of oil in Diffa region, local unemployment is high and there is widespread poverty. The Nigerien state is quasi-absent, state justice is generally not recognised by people who prefer customary justice, and service provision is generally poor. In addition the inhabitants of Diffa have endured several floods during the past three years.

The floods have destroyed most of their food production, which has gravely undermined not only their livelihoods, but also their ability to produce the basic necessities for their survival and hope for the future. Some inhabitants of Diffa and external observers already predict that there will be a severe food crisis there very soon. Despite the intervention of NGOs and humanitarian organisations, frustrations with the government of Niger are growing by the day. A commonly heard phrase in Diffa is: "Niger has abandoned us!"

> **The combination of poverty, ecological crisis, state negligence and regional conflict opens up possibilities for non-state (in)security providers to claim authority over people, resources and territory.**

This already severe crisis was further aggravated due to violence caused by the Nigerian army and the Jihadist movement Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. When Boko Haram attempted to institute Sharia law and started committing atrocities in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states,[9] the government of Nigeria responded by declaring a state of emergency (Luengo 2014). But the behaviour of the Nigerian army was also extremely violent. In villages occupied by Boko Haram, Nigerian soldiers indiscriminately destroyed property, and arbitrarily arrested and killed people. As a result, scores of people fled to Diffa. According to the Ministry of Interior, it was estimated that in September 2014 more than 120,000 people had arrived in Diffa from Northern Nigeria since the civil war started there. Thus, the Nigerian army acts as an active agent of insecurity and terror in northern Nigeria, which destabilises the Diffa region in Niger already undergoing a severe crisis.

Following the violence in Nigeria and the influx of refugees, the Diffa area has become increasingly insecure and vulnerable to violent conflicts. Conflicts are already appearing between older generations and youths who want to join Boko Haram, which to them might represent an alternative to the failed political order of the state; between various groups of pastoralists competing for pastoral lands and water (inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts); between groups of various Muslim traditions (reformists vs. conservatives [Hassane et al. 2006]); between some groups and the army (which is seen as a symbol of a repressive state); and between unemployed youth, the government and the oil companies which recently started operating in Diffa.[10]

> **Corruption is rampant in all units and competition over the rents of authority in the security sector has led to fighting between different branches.**

Further fragmenting the political order is the return of Tubu fighters from Libya, who have formed militias and Awlad Sulayman Arab militias (McGregor 2013). These groups are not only trying to protect their members from other militias, but also struggle for the control of local smuggling routes and pastoral areas (camel herding). The situation is highly volatile. Fear and mistrust is spreading among the inhabitants of Diffa. Furthermore, several Boko Haram combatants have been arrested in Diffa while they were travelling to Mali with a view to join the Mouvement pour l'Unité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO) fighters. These developments in Diffa show how the combination of poverty, ecological crisis, state negligence and regional conflict opens up possibilities for non-state (in)security providers to claim authority over people, resources and territory.

**Forces Armées Nigériennes and Islamic organisations:
security providers or threats?**

FAN
Frustrations are growing within the Nigerien army (the Forces Armées Nigériennes or FAN), which is unhappy with the bad working conditions and the lack of funding and equipment to implement their new tasks. To make matters worse there are rumours that inter-ethnic rivalries are spreading within the armed forces. Old tensions between different branches of the security services remain in place (Police, Gendarmérie, Garde Nationale, and various paramilitary branches). Furthermore, corruption is rampant in all units and competition over the rents of authority in the security sector has led to fighting between different branches.[11]

The sense of abandonment by the state is not limited to the border areas. All over the country, especially among the poor, people are increasingly discouraged by the lack of provision of public services (security, justice, education, and health).[12] For instance, people are frustrated by the lack of action of the police or gendarmerie when a crime is reported by victims. Frequently the victims are disregarded by the security services, which often do not have the resources to carry out their duties. As a result, citizens resort to informal payments as means to acquire justice. In a pattern which is worryingly similar to eastern DR Congo, protection rackets are becoming more common as state security actors look for ways of generating income. The lack of security provision has even prompted many among the rural populations to purchase bayonets or firearms to secure themselves and their property (often with the tacit or proactive support of political elites).

The general behaviour of the Nigerien security services undermines the legitimacy of the state. As a senior FAN officer put it: "due to the behaviour of the military, the Nigeriens are antagonistic towards it."[13] Even during periods of relative peace, daily interactions between service providers (in security as well as health, justice, etc.) and ordinary citizens are marked by the use of violence, threats and humiliation. The behaviour of the security services combined with the inability of the Nigerien state to provide security and other basic public services to the citizens have gravely eroded the legitimacy of the state's institutions. This has produced discontent, and made space for the emergence of new, contending, security actors including faith-based organisations upon which the following section will shed light.

Islamic organisations
Niger's population is overwhelmingly Islamic and faith-based security organisations are becoming increasingly visible service providers in Niger. Not all Islamist groups are advocating for a violent overthrow of the political order, as Boko Haram or MUJAO do. Some Islamist groups advocate a transformation of society. This includes the Izala movement, which was created in 1993 under the name Adin Islam. It challenges not only the state, but also traditional Islamic brotherhoods, such as Tijanîya and Qadrîya. It performs public services in sectors where the state has been rather inefficient or weak. The Izala movement questions the way Islam has been practiced in Niger until today. Adin Islam was dissolved in 2000 after it encouraged people to violently oppose a women's fashion festival in northern Niger. Inspired by Wahhabi theology and Salafist reformism, the Izala movement is led by Nigerien imams who studied in Saudi Arabia (Sounaye 2011). The movement is radically opposed to Tijanîya and Qadrîya (Sufi Islam) brotherhoods, criticised for being too hierarchical and syncretistic (i.e. mixing African animist beliefs and traditional religions with Islam [Hassane et al. 2014]). Until the transition to

democracy in the early 1990s each village had only a single mosque, but today the Izala movement is constructing mosques across the country and its adepts, sometimes violently, oppose conservatives (Masquelier 2009). At the same time Izala provides services in the fields of education (primary schools, college, and universities), health (local clinics), social services (food distribution and cash transfers to the poorest), dispute resolution and justice institutions, microfinance, markets, NGOs, and even security services, such as the police (called Yan Agaji).

> **Izala provides services in the fields of education (primary schools, college, and universities), health (local clinics), social services (food distribution and cash transfers to the poorest), dispute resolution and justice institutions, microfinance, markets, NGOs, and even security services.**

While some Nigeriens see the reformist movements as one of the most serious threats to security in Niger, others see them as a possible path towards a reform of Nigerien society and politics. It does appear, though, that they are increasingly viewed as legitimate security providers, especially in the eyes of the poorest, but also those of some middle-class civil servants who actively engage in them. They offer a cohesive and integrated vision of society that proposes a return to a moral life and the rule of Islamic law, and as such they open a path to Islamic citizenship. By joining them, poor people are able to obtain rights and resources, which they are denied elsewhere. Well organised, the Nigerien Izalists have become financially autonomous from their erstwhile Arab donors by engaging in trade activities. Rich Nigerien Salafist merchants finance proselytising activities and fund politicians advocating the Salafist cause. As a result they are gaining ground politically at the national level.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Niger is the only state in this report, which is not affected by an open armed conflict, but its security situation is nevertheless highly volatile. While a direct conflict between the army and Islamist movements has been avoided, the potential is there for an escalation. Moreover, old conflicts may flare up and the political elites fear a military coup, which may lead them to initiate pre-emptive security measures.

- An important reason for Niger's current vulnerability is the long-term decline of the provision of services by the state. This has created a growing disconnection between the ruling elites and ordinary citizens. Corruption and impunity are wide spread in the public administration, while poverty and unemployment among the youth is rising. This growing gap is undermining the legitimacy of the government and the political order of the Nigerien state in general. This is compounded by the behaviour of state security providers including FAN, which increasingly is engaging in protection rackets. Thus, a perspective on state—society relations is of key importance to understand the crisis.

- Another crucial reason for Niger's current vulnerability is the regional conflict dynamics. The conflicts in Libya, Nigeria and Mali seriously affect the security situation in Niger. The situation is further aggravated by inter- and intra-ethnic tensions.

- These developments have paved the way for the rise of alternative security providers, both in the broad socioeconomic sense and in the narrow sense of the term, such as Islamic reformist movements. Jihadist movements are seemingly also gaining support in border regions in places like the Diffa region.

MALI
Intra-ethnic fragmentation and the emergence of new (in-)security actors

By Lotte Pelckmans, with special thanks to Boukary Sangare

Mali represents a particularly perplexing case of conflict and state fragility. It stands out from the other cases (above) due to the apparently sudden deterioration from functioning statehood to open war. Before 2012 the Malian state was seen as a success story. Today, however, Mali is ravaged by conflict, insecurity, and the state has only limited control over the northern part of the country, which for a while was under the rule of Jihadist and ethno-regional separatists. What happened?

> The existing explanations of the emergence of new security actors draw on simplistic and imprecise concepts such as radicalisation, terrorism and rebellion, which often hide more than they reveal about the underlying causes of insecurity.

International and media discourses tend to attribute existing insecurity problems in Mali to the rise of Jihadist movements, ethnic divisions and lack of good governance. While these factors are indeed present, popular explanations may, however, conflate causes and effects, as they do not take account of the underlying and historical developments behind the contemporary crisis. This study on Mali shows that the current security situation in Mali is not linked to a sudden failure of state service provision, nor to "terrorism" alone. The existing explanations of the emergence of new security actors draw on simplistic and imprecise concepts such as radicalisation, terrorism and rebellion, which often hide more than they reveal about the underlying causes of insecurity. The study provides insights into the causes

behind the current crisis and the fragmentation of security provision. Specifically, it demonstrates that a history of instrumentalisation of inter- and intra-ethnic tension in the security sector, the lack of basic service and security provision, combined with longstanding resource-based conflicts contributed to the increasing fragmentation within ethnic groups and the militarisation of local security providers. It moreover highlights that it is not religious or profane ideologies (jihadism, democracy), but rather the lived experience of extreme insecurity that motivates the complex alliances of civilians with non-state security providers in the northern regions.

The Malian state has struggled with legitimacy problems since long before the arrival of political Islam on the global scene. At least three earlier rebellions in Kidal existed during which the Malian government outsourced civil protection to ethnic self-defence militias (Lecocq 2010).[14]

This undermined the army's accountability and contributed to inflaming inter- and intra-ethnic tensions and the mushrooming of non-state security providers. The history of conflict exacerbated several existing lines of division and hierarchies not only between, but also within, ethnic groups in Mali. Some lower-ranking status groups (former slaves, nomads) have experienced a long history of exclusion, not only from their government in a national context, but also from local sociopolitical and economic influence within their communities. Marginalised and without strong representatives to protect their interests in the state apparatus, some created self-defence militias and others opted for joining the ranks of the Jihadi movements. This might in some cases have led to religious conversion and radicalisation, but it was not preceded by it. Islam offers a common (transnational) identity to several marginalised groups and is able to cut across inter- and intra-ethnic divides. One case from the Mopti region will demonstrate this. The case suggests that this is not an ideological war between secular democracy and radical Islam, or a struggle between ethnic groups. Rather it is the struggle of marginalised subgroups to secure their livelihoods and access to resources. The case demonstrates how factionalism and militarisation of social groups is increasing and contributing to the rise and fragmentation of alternative security providers along socio-ethnic divides with a longstanding history.

This suggests that road towards peace and reconciliation will take much more than the current policy bias towards security sector reforms and peace negotiations involving only the leaders of the most visible belligerent parties. Redistribution and representation, especially of those with a longstanding history of marginalisation and social exclusion in (national) public affairs (nomads, women, youth, former slave groups), is key for any stabilisation effort to succeed. Taking these marginalised

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majorities seriously and providing them with inclusive citizenship also entails looking for a tailor-made rather than a one-size-fits-all policy.

Background

This section provides a short overview of the major events that escalated Mali's security crisis from 2012 onwards. Mali is a poverty-stricken and landlocked country in the Sahelian belt of West Africa. It has a population of 15 million, of which more than 10% live in and around the capital city Bamako. In 2011-2012, a large number of heavily armed Tuareg, former mercenaries for Gadhafi in Libya, returned home (Bøås 2012; Lecocq et al. 2013). As opposed to the Nigerien government, the Malian government did not disarm these fighters. The Malian government hoped that they would chase Al Qaeda from its northern regions. Instead, these fighters attacked the government and revived old ambitions to create an independent territory, which they call Azawad.[15]

On 22 March 2012 there was a coup by dissatisfied lower-ranking army officials, which plunged Mali into a profound political crisis. This created a power vacuum in Bamako, which allowed the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the Jihadist movements Ansar Eddine, MUJAO and AQIM to take control of Mali's northern territories.[16] With roughly two thirds of Malian territory under the control of these groups, the French government and the international community decided to intervene in Mali on 11 January 2013. Most leaders of the main armed movements escaped and there were few actual battles.

Although the Malian state has officially regained much of the territorial control in 2014, divisive forces promoting the instigation of Sharia and/or holding claims to independence, continue recruiting new fighters among civilians who hold long-standing frustrations concerning human insecurity, poverty and/or exclusion from local and national politics.

Historical insecurities

The security crisis in Mali did not start with the 2012 coup. Long before the 2012 crisis, security provision by both public and private actors was shallow or even non-existent. The weakness of national security providers in terms of logistics and training is a longstanding trend. For at least a decade they have been incapable of guaranteeing even minimal security in most parts of the four northern regions, Kidal and Gao in particular. Hostage taking, the influx of small arms, and the power of several trafficking criminal networks (drugs, arms, humans) have been prevalent, especially in zones bordering Algeria and Niger.

With food security, grazing land and water as major challenges in the Sahel, the conflict exacerbated the usual conflicts over access to these resources for both pastoralists and cultivators. Moreover, increased climate variability is having its effect on traditional livelihoods. This cocktail of changed political priorities and economic disadvantage fuelled existing frustrations and forced people to search for alternatives. It made many turn away from the state, either by accepting lucrative proposals from criminal networks, or by starting their own armed self-defence militias.

So there are more continuities than ruptures in the current security threats. What is new since the 2012 crisis, is an intensification of latent divisions and a change of political priorities and budget allocations. The Malian government prioritises the sectors of defence, security and reconciliation, to the detriment of social security sectors (education, health). Most NGO's have left the Northern regions and have been replaced by armed actors delegated by the UN or France. In combination with the massive influx of small arms and local tensions, this has intensified petty crime and banditry.

Tensions based on old hierarchical social relations, distrust among and within ethnic groups and youth frustration with the patriarchal order are important reasons why marginalised groups (youths, nomads, ex-slaves) join the ranks of Jihadi groups. Many of them allied with such groups in an effort to protect and eventually reposition themselves in the longstanding local power struggles they continue to lose.

Processes of marginalisation, erosion of social cohesion and intra-ethnic divisions resulted in a deep fragmentation of security provision.

The following case study of Douentza illustrates this development, and analyses the relationship between long-term marginalisation, the erosion of social cohesion and the fragmentation of security provision.

Douentza case study: intra-ethnic fragmentation
This case study focuses on the Douentza area and town, located in the Mopti region. This area received hardly any (international) media attention, despite its strategic position on the periphery of the northern regions (Lecocq et al. 2013). The Fulani are

the dominant ethnic group of the Douentza area. The Douentza case study shows how processes of marginalisation, erosion of social cohesion and intra-ethnic divisions resulted in a deep fragmentation of security provision.

During the 2012 crisis national and international security actors had left the area and Douentza turned into a largely ungoverned space: schools, prisons, hospitals and courtrooms were abandoned. This void increasingly became filled first by an ethno-separatist group (MNLA) and later on by an Islamist group (MOJWA).

The resulting increase in insecurity exacerbated existing intra-ethnic tensions among the Fulani, more precisely between nomads and former slaves, and the political elites (mainly sedentary communities of the Fulani). Some of these tensions have historical roots in the history of slavery (see text box).

Map of Mali and the Douentza area

SLAVERY IN THE SAHEL

- In the Sahel, the internal African slave trade of the 18th and 19th centuries was a flourishing business. In Mali, most ethnic groups enslaved high numbers of people. This resulted in hierarchies of some groups over others, based on explicitly differentiated rights for slaves versus free citizens.

- Although slave trade and slavery were officially abolished by colonial powers (1898 and 1905), the indirect rule policy impeded strict regulation. The colonial administrators cooperated with the traditional elites of various ethnic groups and ceded special privileges to them, among which the use of domestic slaves.

- Therefore the colonial abolition of slavery had a limited impact on everyday hierarchies in rural areas, and particularly among nomadic groups living in the northern part of the country. Moreover, Islamic Malikite legislation was and continues to be, most commonly resorted to for conflict resolution. This type of legislation, that reproduces the distinction between people of free versus slave status, is still applied.

- As a result, the social and political relations based on the slavery of the past are reproduced and reconfigured in the current conflict. With the instauration of reformist Islam – which is very explicit about the rights of free versus slave populations – we see a return to the ideology and even the practices of slavery in Mali.

The history of slavery created internal hierarchies that remain significant today within most ethnic groups. Such divisions have deepened in the context of increasing insecurity as group identities become mobilising factors in the struggles over protection of and access to resources. This is illustrative of a broader pattern of intra-ethnic factionalism in the region.

A closer look at the Fulani factions that have emerged in response to increased insecurity conveys the complex interconnections between longstanding political struggles, erosion of social cohesion and practices of security provision. The different factions also illustrate people's different strategies to secure themselves, and to gain access to resources and influence.

Broadly speaking, three main subgroups can be discerned. First, sub-groups of sedentary Fulani elites, with a monopoly on local and sometimes national positions of political authority, who were part of initiating the Ganda Izo militia in 2008. The militia started as an ethnic militia to protect the Fulani populations against separatist Tuareg fighters during former rebellions. The Ganda Izo militia has expanded and diversified over time and currently includes non-Fulani fighters as well. In 2012–

2013 it was co-opted by the Malian army in order to defend the Central Mali region against jihadi (MOJWA) and ethno-separatist (MNLA) fighters. Second, Fulani groups with ex-slave status that are divided among themselves: some explicitly choose alliances against the interests of the elites who used to rule them, while others follow the same strategies as the elites (their former masters who were either nomads or sedentary elites). Examples of the latter include ex-slave groups of the sedentary elites who joined the Ganda Izo ranks and ex-slave groups of the nomads who joined MOJWA. Third, there are Nomadic Fulani who followed two main paths of alliance making. One path is explicitly against the national government, and in favour of more autonomy for Mali's northern regions, since most nomadic Fulani experienced successive national governments as unsupportive of their lifestyle. The nomadic Fulani therefore did not align with pro-government forces of Ganda Izo (described above). Their alternative was to sympathise with other nomad groups, such as MNLA Tuareg claiming an independent Azawad territory. However MNLA's violent invasion of Douentza in 2012 deterred many from wanting to join the ranks. Feeling betwixt and between, some of the nomadic Fulani from the Douentza area now try to organise themselves by teaming up with other Fulani nomads from the wider Mopti region. Residual insecurity, new threats and their political marginalisation motivated them to organise themselves more proactively and with arms in some cases.

A second path for nomadic Fulani was to join the jihadist movement of MOJWA, since MOJWA fighters had money and managed to successfully mitigate tensions in Douentza in 2012. They did so by handing out phone numbers for facilitating access to protection, and successfully organised vigilante groups that managed to curb petty crime in the area. MOJWA improved the confidence of nomads in particular because they implemented Sharia law in favour of the Fulani's cattle's grazing routes. In view of the proximity and flexibility of the MOJWA fighters, the nomadic Fulani could easily connect to these militias, which thus emerged as security providers par excellence for them.

The different alliances of the various intra-ethnic groups in turn exacerbated tensions among them. The alliance between nomadic Fulani and MOJWA increased already existing tensions between these nomads and the pro-government Fulani elite. While Fulani elites had made money by selling weapons to the nomads, once the state's administrators returned to the area in 2014, they accused the Fulani nomads of "radicalisation" and denounced their illegal use of arms. Several nomadic Fulani have been imprisoned or fined for the possession of firearms. This in turn led to violent confrontations and the severing of communication between the groups. In some places, fear is so high, that any form of interaction and mobility between the groups is refused.

These dynamics are illustrative of wider developments in several other regions, and demonstrate how different groups who for long have been politically and religiously excluded, do what everyone else does: attempt to seize the opportunities presented by the crisis to improve their precarious position.

KEY INSIGHTS

- In Mali, underlying tensions produced by longstanding marginalisation of certain groups erupted as full-blown conflicts when the political landscape changed radically in 2012. The 2012 crisis allowed non-state armed actors to take control over a large swath of territory in northern Mali, which in turn provided an opportunity for different groups and socio-ethnic subgroups to ally and attempt to improve their position locally and nationally.

- The case study of the Fulani illustrates the underlying dynamics and intra-ethnic tensions, that are also prevalent among other ethnic groups in Mali's northern regions. It also points to how power differentials among socio-ethnic subgroups are key mobilising factors behind conflict dynamics. The case problematises the idea that alliances are straightforward, and highlights the complexity and mobility of loyalties, groups and partnerships.

- The Mali case suggests that complex shifts in political positions are the outcome of struggles over power and representation by a multitude of actors. This complexity should be acknowledged as an integral part of security provision. This implies moving beyond simple explanations of ethnicity and terrorism and paying attention to internal (intra-ethnic) hierarchies and historical processes of social inclusion and exclusion.

- Strategies for supporting security must remain attentive to securing basic service delivery, both by national government and by international donors who need to pay more explicit attention to service delivery to those citizens who have experienced a long history of marginalisation.

CONCLUSION

This report has covered key aspects of security dynamics and security provision in four countries in Africa, which to varying degrees are marked by conflict, state fragility and political instability: the DR Congo, Somaliland, Niger and Mali.

Through the case studies we have nuanced the understanding of the reasons behind the proliferation of local security actors and arrangements, the variety of actors driving security and insecurity and, the means by which security is established in conflict-affected settings. The cases represent different security and conflict scenarios, and each case study has illustrated a particular pattern or tendency with regard to security trends. The case-specific insights have been included in each study.

> **Focusing on the existing orders and dynamics, rather than on what, from state-centric perspectives, is seen as failed or absent (namely a strong central state), is key for realistically assessing possibilities and challenges for international support.**

There are also a number of central themes that recur across the studies: all four cases illustrate the increasing impacts of security actors and arrangements that do not conform to prevailing understandings of state-based security and order. In all the cases dynamics of security and insecurity are decisively shaped by multiple local and non-state actors. All cases, moreover, demonstrate the interconnections between, on the one hand, the erosion of the capacity or willingness of the central

state to provide basic public services and security in an equitable manner, and, on the other hand, the emergence of a plethora of non-state security actors, which both compete and collaborate with each other and the state. The studies also demonstrate, however, that the security consequences resulting from such developments are highly diverse; from patterns of militarisation of civil relations, to patterns of localised reconstruction. International interveners are, in brief, confronted with complex environments where security challenges, and possibilities for support, cannot be adequately understood through the prism of "state failure". Focusing on the existing orders and dynamics, rather than on what, from state-centric perspectives, is seen as failed or absent (namely a strong central state), is key for realistically assessing possibilities and challenges for international support.

Based on our case analyses we suggest that the following points should be considered, when international actors wish to provide support to unstable or conflict-affected countries:

Multilayered security – a reality to be reckoned with
The acknowledgement of the complex nature of security provision as well as dynamics of insecurity must be the starting point for efforts to support stability in conflict-affected settings. This entails reckoning with the reality of diverse and competing sets of logics, norms and claims to power; what has usefully been understood as multilayered security (Baker & Scheye 2007).

> **Multilayered security governance does not signify a new or better approach, rather it is, in simple terms, a basic condition of security provision and by extension a reality that must be understood and engaged with.**

The findings of this report also show, however, that multilayered security governance does not signify a new or better approach, rather it is, in simple terms, a basic condition of security provision and by extension a reality that must be understood and engaged with. There can be negative dimensions of multilayered security, as illustrated by, for example, the spiral of militarisation of social relations in eastern Congo and Mali. Yet, in other instances multilayered security reflects processes of negotiation and deliberation, constituting potentially more inclusive frameworks for security and political order, as was demonstrated in the Somaliland case study.

■ Multilayered security is a reality to be reckoned with by international donors. Thinking in terms of multilayered security rather than state fragility or "state" vs. "non-state" actors, provides a better basis for understanding processes of security provision, identifying key challenges and entry points for support, and thereby developing realistic approaches to engagement.

Politics, power and (in)security

All the case studies highlight the interconnections between politics, power struggles and security provision. A key insight in this regard, illustrated in the Niger and Congo studies, is that non-state security providers, often simultaneously contribute to insecurity. This double role of local security actors as both security providers and sources of insecurity was also highlighted in the study of Mali, which showed how ethnicity, religion and political affiliations became mobilising factors. Thus, security whether provided by state or non–state actors, is not simply a "public good" just as insecurity is not necessarily a "public bad". It is per definition security or insecurity for someone. Both security and insecurity are practices actively enacted by actors with certain values and politico-economic interests.

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External intervention with the ambition to improve the security in fragile or conflict-affected areas should be based on a solid understanding of its political dynamics and the underlying causes of its conflicts or it will run the risk of aggravating or further militarising existing power struggles.

■ It should be explicitly recognised that security provision is part and parcel of the political processes and power struggles taking place in various contexts. This highlights the need for understanding the context before acting. Efforts should focus on identifying constructive possibilities for linking security goals with domestic political processes of local reconciliation, inclusion and reconstruction.

Beyond blueprints and "one-size-fits-all"

Our findings suggest that conventional approaches to stabilisation based on statebuilding templates will at best be futile, and at worst spark further insecurity, if the underlying factors of insecurity such as political and social marginalisation, lack of representative politics, and absence of social and public services are not attended to. The case study findings also suggest that a narrow policy prioritisation of building security institutions without taking account of wider political processes can run counter to agendas of democratisation and political consultation.

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International interventions need to remain cognisant of, and seek to address, the underlying political, economic and social causes of the conflicts and seek to link short-term politically inclusive negotiations with longer-term institutional reforms, including reforms of the security services.

As the case of Somaliland shows, it is sometimes better to limit external intervention to facilitation and allow internal processes of reconciliation, political negotiations and institutional reform to evolve on their own.

- "Bottom up" engagements require that the specific conditions, challenges and capacities of each context are understood before new governance frameworks are proposed by external actors.

- Efforts to develop "bottom up" approaches that are fine-tuned to local conditions need to prioritise a "do no harm" principle consistently and rigorously (Anderson 1999). This is particularly important as external interventions into fragile states are increasingly combining security, development and political instruments (Barakat & Waldeman 2013, p. 269).

1   Caution must be taken when employing this term. The name is commonly used in eastern Congo to designate anyone who uses the Kinyarwanda language spoken in Rwanda, some of whom have lived in the present-day Congolese territory for centuries. This generic term, in effect, covers a number of different groups, but is used as a catchall term to deny people political rights.

2   Interview, director of local NGO, 9 July 2010, Bukavu.

3   Interview, village chief, 15 July 2010, Bulambika.

4   Somali customary law.

5   Interview, Hargeisa, 17 April 2008.

6   This is an interesting example of "hybrid governance" in terms of the innovative use of colonial legacy as the Upper House is modelled on the set-up of the United Kingdom's House of Lords.

7   This is not to say that the established providers like the Somaliland police are accountable. There are concerns regarding abuse and unaccountability regarding the police as well. This speaks to the importance of not further complicating accountability by introducing specialised forces with no clear mandate and command.

8   In practice, a number of people who were recruited in the Nigerien administration were not ex-rebels but rather friends and relatives of the leaders of various rebel factions.

9   Almada Maria Luengo, 2014, I had to leave North Nigeria, UNHCR: Niamey.

10 The China National Petroleum Company holds 60% of the Société de Raffinage de Zinder and the State of Niger holds 40%.

11 Interview, officer FAN, 2 October 2014. This partly explains why the recent joint patrols, promoted by the European Union capacity building mission (EUCAP), encounter difficulties in working together.

12 See LASDEL Etudes et Travaux online accessible at: www.lasdel.ne.

13 Interview, senior officer, FAN, 4 October 2014.

14 For decades, the Malian government subcontracted the duties of its national army to ethnic self-defence militias, such as Ganda Koy (1990s onwards) and Ganda Iso (2012 onwards).

15 Azawad is an area that certain Tuareg groups wish to transform into an independent nation-state. This has created tensions with other groups living in the same area, such as Songhay and Fulani populations.

16 In April 2012 the MNLA proclaimed the independence of their new territory in Northern Mali, which they called AZAWAD. In June 2012, however, the MNLA came into conflict with radical Islamist groups (Ansar Eddine, MOJWA and AQIM) who wanted to impose Sharia law on Azawad territory. By 17 July MUJAO and Ansar Eddine had managed to push the MNLA out of all the major cities they had occupied.

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