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Reference Paper
“Security Management Network”

Security Sector Reform in Albania
A gender approach

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Understanding the meaning of Security Sector Reform

Security itself is a relative freedom from war, coupled with a relatively expectation that defeat will not be a consequence of any war that should occur¹. In this perspectives, security implies both coercive means to check an aggressor and all manner of persuasion, bolstered by the prospect of mutually shared benefits, to transform hostility into cooperation. So security, in any objective sense, measures the absence of threat to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.

Security sector reform means transforming the security sector/system, which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions working together to ménage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.

Security sector reform is a system-wide approach that emphasizes the interconnected stature of security sector institutions and has two main objectives. First, to ensure democratic and civilian control of the security sector, for example by strengthening the management and oversight capacity of government ministries, parliament and civil society organizations. Second, to develop an affective, affordable and efficient security sector, for example by restructuring or building human and material capacity.

The security system/sector can be understood as comprising all state institution and other entities with a role in ensuring the security of the state and its people. This includes:

Core security actors: armed forces (including international and regional forces), police, guards, intelligence and security services, coast guards, intelligence and security services, coast guards, border guards, customs authorities, and reserve and local security units.

¹ B Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Harvester-Wheatsheaf, New York, 1991, p. 16.

Security management and oversight bodies: parliament and its relevant legislative committees; government/the executive, including ministries of defense, internal affairs and foreign affairs; national security advisory bodies; customary and traditional authorities; financial management bodies; and civil society actors, including media, academia and non-governmental organizations.

Justice and rule of law institutions: justice ministries, prisons, criminal investigation and persecution services, the judiciary (courts and tribunals), implementation justices' services (bailiffs and ushers), other customary and traditional justices systems, human rights commissions and ombudsmen.

Non-statutory security forces: liberation armies, guerilla armies, private body-guards units, private security companies, private military companies and political party militias.

Non-statutory civil society groups: professional groups, the media, research organizations, advocacy organizations, religious organizations, non-governmental organizations and community groups.

In operational terms, Security sector reform covers a wide range of activities, which can be grouped into four broad categories:

1. Strengthening civilian control and oversight of the security sector including: reforming ministries of defense and internal affairs; enhancing the oversight capacity of legislations through training; establishing independent ombudspersons offices; initiating public sector reviews of military expenditures; and building the capacity of civil organizations to oversee the security sector.
2. Professionalism of the security forces including: programs designed to train soldiers, police and other security sector personnel on democratic accountability, gender issues, human rights, international humanitarian law and ethnic sensitivity; technical skills training; promoting community policing; upgrading of military or police equipment and drawing up professional codes of conduct.
3. De-militarization of peace-building including: programs to reduce the availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants; and strengthening regional security measures.

4. Strengthening the rule of law including: establishing a strong, independent legal framework that provides critical civil-democratic oversight and a better functioning penal system; capacity building for the judiciary; and establishing an independent judiciary.

Understanding gender

As simple as it may seem as much we might get confused in trying to understand gender and the way it shapes our lives. Not more than a decade ago we started to discuss gender in a way different from what we were used to in the past. All of those who lived and studies in Albania before 90's can easily remember language classes where the teacher would ask to define the 'gender' of a noun. However, so we might remember that trying to distinguish between the biological and social aspects was not an issue at all.

Looking at the differences among women and men across time and space has questioned many aspects of this concept. In order for us to be able to distinguish how the differences in our lives as women and men are defined by our biology or/and society we need first to define and clarify the concept of gender.

Usually² we are born with a sexual trade, defining our biological differences as males and females. That is '**sex**'. The biological characteristics that relate to it such as hormones, reproductive organs and genetic differences, are commonly used to differentiate humans in two large groups: female or male. Very often we are asked about our sex in application forms or while taking a service like a medical check-up. These data are often used in reporting about various areas of our life through the so-called sex-disaggregated data.

Nevertheless, just by stating in an application form that you are male or female is not of much use to someone who would like to picture on

² The vast majority of people are from birth males ore females, only in rare cases people might be born with organs of both sexes. Nevertheless, these are exceptional cases and usually only one sex organ can be fully functional.

how feminine or masculine you look, think and act. The degree to which we develop from female/male into being girls/boys and women/men, unlike sex that is universal, varies dramatically across time and space (Hoogensen, 2006; Nakamura, 2005; Basow, 1992). Just try to think of how similar are you to your grand-parents of the same gender, or how similar are you to someone of the same gender living in another corner of the globe. These differences are represented by the term 'gender'.

While sex is biological and universal, 'Gender' is social and relative. **Gender** refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships between men and women (Basow, 1992). Rather than being determined by biology, gender is learned through the process of socialization. In other words, men and women are taught certain roles and appropriate behaviours according to their sex (Valasek, 2007). Whilst we all are born with a biological sex, our societies and cultures teach and socialise us based on their conceptions of male and female (GTZ, 2005). For example women are not biologically designed to cook. However, in most cultures cooking at home is primarily a woman's task. On the contrary, when one moves to restaurants would not find it hard to notice that men chiefs outnumber women. Gender roles, such as these, are not static and can change over time and vary widely within and across cultures.

Why is gender important to security?

Gender is a crucial component of our identity. However, gender interacts with and is influenced by many other factors such as class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, age etc. Men learn to be "masculine" and women learn to be "feminine" according to their age, social class, ethnic origins, country, culture, and even sub-cultures, such as urban and rural (GTZ, 2005). These lead to many types and forms of masculinities and femininities. In some societies the border between them is very sharp, in others more blurry.

These sharp (to various degrees) gender differences are present in all areas of life, including security. Women, men, girls and boys have different security experiences, needs, priorities and actions defined by both their gender and sex (Valasek, 2007; GTZ 2005). For instance,

women and men, boys and girls become part of different forms of violence. While boys and men are often victims of fights among them and gun violence, women and girls are often victims of domestic violence or human trafficking or even wider of '**gender-based violence**' (GBV) (Valasek, 2007; GTZ, 2005). However, GBV is not only violence against women; men and boys can also be victims. For instance, men, boys, women and girls can all be victims of rape or human trafficking. As rape is linked to issues of power and gender identity, it is a crime that is classified as GBV. Violence against gay, lesbian and bisexual people on the basis of their sexual orientation, and against transgender people on the basis of their gender identity, is also understood to be a form of GBV, as it is based on perceived nonconformity with gender roles.

Hence, gender is important to our security and this makes gender central to the security debate. The integration of gender issues into the security reform processes is becoming a must in order to address the issues mentioned above. So far the security sector has followed a gender-blind approach where men are usually pictured as soldiers, perpetrators and close to the war, while women as victims and close to peace (Nakamura, 2005). However, the gender researchers have recognized the gender dynamics in the area of security as well. The dominance of traditional, state-based security thinking is a manifestation of masculinist, patriarchal structures, demanding that security only be defined from this position of privilege (Hoogensen, 2006).

Nevertheless, we need to be careful in how we understand gender. Gender understood as "women" generally means that one tries to include women in processes, get women's 'input', meet particularly women's needs, and protect women (Hoodgensen, 2006). Gender security perspectives understood as both 'women and men' have a great deal in common with human security. They speak to a broader notion of security, from the position of the individual or group, voicing the need for a wider security agenda. Gender also speaks to 'societal security' (both included in human security as well as a security perspective in its own right).

Gender security studies have evolved significantly over the past decade, recognizing that security for one, is not necessarily security

for another. Context and the recognition of power relations (dominance/non-dominance) make visible the in/securities that usually go unheard in a state-security based context. Context and power relations inform human security, allowing previously unheard voices to be heard. Gender security research is only now starting to permeate the mainstream security discussions, but it is still the exception and much needs yet to be done.

In the efforts to be done it is of crucial importance to involve women. Women's civil society organisations, and organisations working on gender issues, are key local security actors whose participation can help ensure women participation and even local ownership of reforms (Valasek, 2005). There are countless women's organizations worldwide, working at the grassroots, national and international level. Women's organizations may be security providers, for example, providing shelter and support to female and male victims of torture, or domestic or sexual violence. Working directly with local communities means that women's organizations often have access to detailed information regarding the security needs of individuals and communities, especially of marginalised groups. As such, women's organisations can serve as crucial bridges between local communities and security policymakers, strengthening local ownership. They also often have expertise in designing and implementing community-level security-related programming, for instance on the prevention of gang violence or human trafficking, and skills in delivering training on gender and human rights issues (Valasek, 2005).

How can gender issues be integrated into security sector reform?

Intro

When the cold war ended, the geo-political and geo-economic developments have put forth new risks and menaces about the interests and security of the Republic of Albania. The today's risks and menaces are characterized by different natures and difficulty in prediction. Despite the difficulties of the definition of a clear-cut division, they could be classified into risks and menaces of an internal transnational and global nature.

The regional and worldwide situation at the beginning of the new Millennium has brought about new elements in the international strategic environment of security. These outcomes have tangibly influenced in the change of policy and the background of the security concept in the Albanian perception.

Trafficking of human beings, weapons and drugs, criminal organizations, organized crime, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are emerging as transnational phenomena and challenges that could considerably affect the security, peace and stability of all countries. These illegal activities have extended furthermore their area of activity, by surpassing the dimensions of national borders.

The existence of the increasing risk from these phenomena has made indispensable a comprehensive approach of all security and stability policies, taking into consideration all kind of aspects, political, military, economic, human, social, environmental and gender.

The complexity and interstate character of these phenomena emphasize the importance of a collective action and indispensability of establishing the reciprocal confidence building measures. In this part of the paper, the focus will be given to an approach how the gender and security are interlinked in the complex reality of the Albanian reality and some suggestive tools how this could function in an effective scenario

The security development of a country has in its importance basis the national interests. Such interest are determinant in shaping the responsibility, legitimacy and credit to political power. Only this way it can be ensured the functioning of a democratic state. Hence it is the sublime duty of the political power to define, protect and develop national interests. This duty should be associated by the request and insurance of a wide consensus among the public debate. Not all national interests can be mutual interests or interests in service of all. Thus, unanimity for the definition and realization of national interests is not a necessity, but acceptance and consensus are rules to be applied consequently in a democratic system. Women voice and gender balance in decision-making and decision taking are of a crucial nature in this framework

Vital national interests guaranteeing, such as: exercise of sovereignty, protection of independence and territorial integrity of the country, protection of constitutional order; protection of citizens' life and of fundamental human rights and duties, economic development, protection of properties and values in deed in the years 2000, form the essence of Albanian Republic security.

National interests and deadlines of their realization are organically linked with security.

Concrete steps how can gender issues be merged in the security sector and its reform.

National Security Policy and other pieces of legislation on security

Efforts and actions in involving and encouraging women participation, through their intervention in the compiling endorsement and implementation of National Security Strategy(ies) of the Republic of Albania; Law on gender equality and the presence of 30% and other legal and sub legal acts related to the security could be the first shed of light in integrating gender, in a policy level on security matters.

Gender impact assessments of security policies can be conducted by oversight bodies, such as parliamentarians and civil society organizations, to determine how security policies will specifically affect men, women, girls and boys. Assessments can be carried out on existing or proposed policies. However, they are more successful when carried out at an early stage so that the policy can be changed or redirected. In addition they would be better perceived when gender issues are being sufficiently prioritized in recruitment, logistics and training.

The transformation of Albania from a security consumer into a country that contributes to the security. Albania is a NATO partner country, included in the negotiations of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with EU, as well as into a considerable number of regional initiatives. The level of security of the country is inevitably fostered by successfully accomplished programs and standards of Partnership for Peace and also the Agreement of Stabilization and Association. Another approach to foster the level of security is the

active participation and contribution in the initiatives for the enhancement of political and military confidence in the region.

Dialogue, cooperation and peaceful means to solve disputes.

Some of the priorities of our foreign and internal affairs policy are the respect of human rights in the Albanian territory, despite political, religious, regional, racial, ethnic, cultural, or social origin pertaining and also the protection by institutional means of the rights of the Albanian living out of the borders of the Republic of Albania, also including Albanian citizens who are temporally or permanently living out of the country. The strategy supports the sensitive changes in the balance of security in favor of political means, of the institutions of security and diplomacy, and the dimension and human dignity in a democratic system. In such, a very comprehensive view should be given also to the gender dynamics, taking into account the perspectives that such dynamics are giving in the modernized societies.

Factors of SECURITY objectives

Peace and security in the country. The inner stability of the country is a product of the state of law to protect its citizens, civil society and the state form anti-legal action. It is important to be perceived that citizens have their right also seen on a gender perspective.

Consolidation of a democratic society and human rights observation. The strengthening of institutions of the state is the guarantee for the development of democratic society. A society that has high standards of respecting the human rights makes up a guarantee for a safe environment and harmonious relation between the society and the individual. Women take their advantage on bringing forward this standard of respect of human rights and equality principles. As such the security concept gets not only broader but also multidimensional. The individual, the society and the state have common obligations about the security of the country. Seen from an equality perspective all the actors are to be invited and expected to input equally for the common benefit of national security. The violation of these obligations even on one side, heavily damages its security. The active role of Non governmental organizations, contributes to the

consolidation of democratic standards of society, hence those non-governmental organizations that protect the gender principles, being keen in the respect of human rights in general are of vital importance to involve gender perspectives in security agenda.

Consolidation of institutions and instruments of security. These should be seen as the ability to protect the national interests and as a responsibility to act in every situation. Institutions are considered as decisive factors in the success of democracy and free trade economy in a developed Albania. They should be build and function upon principles of equity and in which human rights are not only seen as a priority but also endorsed at a flexible manner. In addition measures should be taken and/or increased in establishing human resources policies and practices that are gender responsive and family friendly.

Civil Defense

Civil protection issues require a realistic evaluation, based on dangers that threaten the population, property, environment and cultural inheritance of the country. Currently, Albania has a complete institutional and legal structure for the treatment of issues dealing with civil emergencies, which may be caused by natural or human factors. An increase of operational reaction capacities in different levels is nowadays a necessity. The phenomena, that the country has been faced with in the last years, such as: massive floods, winter disasters, earth slides, massive fires, etc, raise the need of increase of responsibility for a more completed organization and a better functioning of these structures raised in the central and local authority, to increase the prevention, decrease and rehabilitation of damages that may touch the population, the animals, the property, the cultural inheritance and the environment. Maintaining a proper legal and institutional framework flexible enough also in gender and balanced in equity of perceptions could help in reaching easier the efficiency of state policies also on civil defense.

‘Searching for weapons was a regular task in Kosovo... This is almost impossible without women in the team. If you suspect that weapons have been hidden in a village, going into houses is much easier in teams of both women and men. The female

soldiers can talk to the women in the house because they often have more trust in other women, and this reduces the risk for escalation.'³

Coordination of the activity of state structures with NGO-s and cooperating in the international level enable a higher and more qualitative organizational level and preparation in the realization of duties.

Taking into consideration all the above-mentioned circumstances superficially touched upon in this part of the paper here in below there are listed instead of conclusions some recommendations that could be of relevance in the framework of Integrating Gender in Security Reform Issues.

Build local ownership through the **full involvement of civil society organizations**, including national and local women's organizations, in assessing, designing, implementing and monitoring/evaluating Security Sector Reform policies and programmes.

Review and **revise existing security-related legislation, policies and protocols** to ensure that they are not discriminatory, and take into account the specific security needs of women, men, boys and girls.

Implement **specific policies, mechanisms and programming to prevent, address and sanction gender-based violence** against women, girls, men and boys as part of Security Sector Reform.

Establish **codes of conduct** and other internal policies and mechanisms that enforce zero-tolerance of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, by security sector personnel.

Establish strategic targets and specific initiatives to increase the **recruitment, retention and advancement of women** and other underrepresented groups in security sector institutions.

Include specific **gender training** as part of the core training curriculum of security sector personnel at all levels. Mainstream gender issues into training for security sector personnel.

³ Lars Wetterskog, 'Too much "moralizing" before deployment,' Good and Bad Examples: lessons learned from working with United Nations Resolution 1325 in international missions (Uppsala: Genderforce) 2007, p.40

Strengthen oversight of Security Sector Reform processes and ensure that **security sector oversight bodies** are gender-responsive and collaborate with women's civil society organisations.

Build the **gender awareness and capacity** of personnel involved in Security Sector Reform through gender training, working with gender experts and including gender-responsiveness in the terms of reference for positions as well as personnel assessments⁴

⁴ Valasek, K., 'Security Sector Reform and Gender' – Gender and SSR Toolkit, DCAF