Improving security and justice programming is in many ways central to people’s lives in fragile and conflict-affected environments. Security and justice programmes are crucial for making inclusive political settlements work, consolidating peaceful transitions, establishing the rule of law and bringing forward development. The importance of the security and justice sectors is now also captured in Sustainable Development Goal 16, which emphasises the role of just, peaceful and inclusive societies in bringing about sustainable development. Yet, there is significant scope for improving the design and implementation of security and justice programmes. While there are some examples of innovation and success, too often these seem to be the result of specific sets of circumstances that are hard to replicate.

Answering the need for generally sound approaches to security and justice programming, the OECD commissioned a case study analysis of nine security and justice development programmes supported by seven external actors in four countries: Burundi, Guatemala, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. The study uses evidence from these programmes to highlight what has worked and what has not worked in the design and implementation of security and justice programmes in fragile and conflict-affected states.

FOUR CRITICAL ENABLERS

The report found that to strengthen programmatic results and improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding and statebuilding strategies, international support for security and justice development programming needs to be designed, organised and delivered in ways that adhere much more closely to the political and operational realities of fragile environments. Even when international support for such programmes is brought more in line with context, there may be limited scope for external actors to drive reforms that fundamentally alter domestic power dynamics. Yet, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that externally supported programmes can contribute to incremental change and lay the groundwork for a sustainable change process. To deliver better on this potential, senior decision makers need to consider implementing four critical enablers that can improve the quality of international support for security and justice programming.

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1. Enable programmes to engage politically on a daily basis
   Creating the ability to act quickly in response to political developments (in the broader sense and at the programme level)

2. Increase the duration of security and justice programmes to 6-10 years
   Making a political commitment to a longer term engagement on the basis of partnerships with flexible financing

3. Develop detailed longer term results as part of the programme
   Define only intermediate results at the start of a programme and put a process in place to develop longer term results that is guided by agreed principles

4. Ensure programme implementation is adjustable
   Being able to operationally respond to developments and learn from implementation experiences

THREE CONCRETE ACTIONS
Implementing these enablers does not require new policies, new competencies for development organisations or radically different procedures. Instead, it requires an improved corporate understanding in donor organisations of what a good programme looks like, altering the incentives that influence staff behaviour, and fostering a culture of organisational learning. Senior decision makers can champion implementation by taking three concrete actions:

1. Authorising a more permissive programming environment so that staff can innovate, design and implement programmes that have more of the above features

2. Creating higher standards of accountability for programme design and implementation as well as better monitoring functions so that pressure and incentives are created for better programmes

3. Creating a corporate openness to learning so that these improvements are only the starting point of a longer term process of maturing and ameliorating the quality of international support for security and justice development programming.

To read the full publication, see: http://bit.ly/1X3DmVg