The Scottish Institute for Policing Research

IDENTIFYING THE CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE POLICING WITH COMMUNITIES IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED STATES

Dr Georgina Sinclair
SIPR Associate
SEI Co-Director
Georgina.Sinclair@stratexint.com

Maureen Brown
SIPR Associate
SEI Co-Director
Maureen.Brown@stratexint.com

Superintendent Alan Gibson
Head of Training Delivery
Police Scotland
Alan.Gibson@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Summary: This briefing paper summarises discussions and syndicate exercise presentation material developed by police practitioners during a five-day course entitled 'Policing with Communities in Fragile and Conflict Affected States' (FCAS), delivered by Strategic Expertise International (SEI) in association with SIPR, Police Scotland and the Stabilisation Unit in January 2016. This course formed part of a European Union Police Services Training (EUPST II) programme designed to support police officers working in EU and other international operations. The overall objective of the exercise was to increase practitioner knowledge of the connected issues, build their capabilities, understanding and skills as well as the development of key guiding principles for policing communities within FCAS as observed within this briefing paper. The outcomes were limited due to time constraints but provide initial considerations from which a framework of guiding principles could be envisaged.

BACKGROUND

The European Union currently supports nineteen missions across Europe and Africa (http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/) most of which are engaged in some form of advisory or capacity building activities within FCAS. Providing international policing assistance is an integral part of such capacity-building programmes where the increasingly complex environment requires integrated diplomatic, development, military and security approaches. (SU, 2014). Increasingly it has been recognised that the responsibility for domestic security should rest with the police during and after periods of stabilisation, though the former may require a military security umbrella. Within these broad capacity-building parameters, the implementation of 'community policing' practices are recognised today as a globally dominant policing paradigm (Grabosky, 2009: 101).[1] Whilst there is no single 'universal formula' for the development of community policing programmes with FCAS (OSCE, 2002: 3) there is growing consensus that community policing is a *philosophy* whereby citizen safety is promoted by the police through problem-solving approaches in partnership with the community, and, a *strategy* that involves the community cooperating with the police (and vice versa) on issues of public safety, crime and disorder (Denny & Jenkins, 2013). The implementation of community policing programmes within FCAS has largely had mixed results and have not been as 'transformative as had been hoped' in view of the challenges presented by existing police cultures and police-community relations (Rao, 2013).

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[1] Within the context of FCAS we use the term 'policing with communities' which we suggest reflects greater community inclusion with policing issues and police-community engagement.

Within the framework of EUPST, one key aim is to build the capacity of police and gendarmerie services from the EU and contributing countries to participate in international missions and projects funded by the EU, the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) and other international organisations. Ensuring effective policing and greater overall police collaboration across all police providers and stakeholders as well the promotion of 'peace, human security and full respect for human rights' remains the principal EU objective (EUPST II, 2015).

In order to develop a shared understanding of the current challenges and diversity of approaches specifically around policing within FCAS and to focus on elements of 'best practice', the participants were encouraged to research, reflect on their experience and the importance of 'lessons learned' within their syndicates and to present their considerations to an expert panel.[2] It is recognised that if adequately framed and contextualised, earlier FCAS mission experiences can be shared, transferred and adapted to other environments to better inform the direction of policy and practice. Whilst the application of lessons learned may not always be applicable, an analysis of the positive and negative aspects provides an important [but often neglected] learning platform across all mission areas (SU, 2010).

The course participants were divided into five syndicates, each with a specific topic and asked to prepare a short presentation to identify the challenges, lessons learned and guiding principles for effective policing with communities in FCAS. Following each presentation a short question and answer session provided an opportunity for the participants to put forward their experiences and guiding principles. A summary of the key presentation points and the guiding principles are included below.

POLICING WITH VULNERABLE AND MINORITY COMMUNITIES – SYNDICATE 1

Policing with vulnerable and minority communities is a key element of international rule of law missions and forms part of that mission experience. Identification of key stakeholders who would assist with building trust is paramount. Individual officer's experience of a range of missions suggested that increased cultural awareness should be developed prior to deployment. Police should research the political and cultural context where they were being deployed, engage with similar communities in their own countries to build awareness and share experiences with other colleagues. Pre-deployment and induction training courses should also have a strong focus on culture and local laws and procedures. Whilst rarely achievable short 'reconnaissance' missions prior to handover provided an opportunity to develop key networks and see the conditions at first hand, as noted by a participant who had found this to be a positive experience prior to deployment to Afghanistan (EUPOL). In addition, extending the handover period on arrival in-country provided an opportunity to establish the extent to which the local policing issues had been understood and projects implemented.

International mission deployments require a lengthier period of time than was typically viable currently (circa six months to one year). Demonstrating success within a mission could be described simply as having built trust within the community through key stakeholders. It is held that engagement with community leaders is key to facilitating a long-term relationship with local communities, and, by extension with other non-policing actors/contributors. However this often necessitates an input from local police who may *or* may not engage with their communities. This could stem from a different policing model or culture or as a result of poor police training and a lack of access to equipment. Building confidence amongst local police by making their environment more 'attractive', and providing adequate training, uniforms and equipment provides an incentive to engage with local communities. In addition, overcoming language barriers through accurate interpretation would build further trust with between mission members and vulnerable and minority communities. The presence of 'donor' police within local communities and attempts to build trust could help to develop respect between the local police and communities in the longer term.

Some Guiding Principles

On creating trust between the community, local and donor police:

- Understand the local culture: research the culture and context at home and connect with similar cultures/communities – do not wait until the mission
- Accept that creating trust takes time and the need for proactivity
- Be prepared to compromise on initial aims/objectives
- Be realistic but think 'outside the box'
- Look for the positives and use every opportunity to network
- Get involved with local issues/charity work (e.g. Rwanda and the 'Umuganda' experience which involves the public sector including the police being involved in community service - see below)
- Accept that in order to develop police legitimacy there needs to be trust between the police and the community

ACCOUNTABILITY IN POLICING/POLITICS AND POLICING - SYNDICATE 2

Accountability in policing is recognised as a complex concept with wide meaning, which needs to be understood at an institutional level ('the police'), in senior ranks as well as at an individual level ('the police officer'). Police should be held to account for their actions, which includes not only what they do, but their behaviour and how they perform their duties and how this can impact on building trust with local police and communities.

Accountability is not merely a two-way process involving the individual and the organisation. The police have to report on what they are doing within their 'organisation' but there are many others who want to know what the police are doing; accountability is far wider then is often imagined. Indeed police accountability is governed by 'the State' and three key 'branches' of government: the executive and the government department responsible for the police (e.g. financial accountability); the judiciary e.g. (legal accountability) and the legislature (e.g. democratic or political accountability). In many non-democratic States accountability to the public is non-existent but increasingly is key to successfully conducting policing and public safely.

Within an international mission environment creating the conditions for effective police accountability is complicated by the variance of police experience and understanding within the mission, the range of actors in –theatre and the 'local' police leadership and culture. In addition the volume of local police information to be processed on a day-to-day basis, the Mandate framework to be adhered to and the unintended consequences of both may be overwhelming – leaving a lack of focus on accountability related issues. Within an FCAS it is often the case that accountability measures and indeed 'control of the police' may be non-existent – or at the most limited and may necessitate the early development of effective and impartial procedures for complaints against the police, accountability mechanisms and the development of codes of ethics (Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, 2001). Bringing police accountability to this environment will in the longer term create a climate of trust within local communities, which in turn can engender police legitimacy.

Some Guiding Principles

On creating effective police accountability within FCAS:

- Consider the wider picture: police accountability is multi-layered; police actions may have multiple consequences: outcome versus outputs
- Take the moral high ground (self-accountability), take a step back and reflect on what you have done
- 'Do no harm' (See Anderson, 1999) – Consider the unintended consequences of an action
- Establish standardised police accountability mechanisms
- Develop evaluation tools for accountability mechanisms
- Consider that there will be competing demands in relation to police accountability mechanisms – be aware that the state can use the police for its own means so consider local stakeholders and drivers and where they fit into the overall picture

NON STATE ACTORS - SYNDICATE 3

Working with non state actors (NSA) is an important element of police work within an international mission environment and drives a focus on local communities. Whilst NSA are not part of established state institutions typically they will have an influence that impacts upon the social and political environments and in many cases community justice processes. This stems from their relationship with the community: NSA may be part of that community, may work within that community, will be known by that community and other NSA; will use the same language, and, will as a consequence have built relationships based on *trust*. With the breadth of security issues presenting within FCAS and a paucity of resources, seeking out and developing partnerships with NSA is a necessary and logical step, which should bring benefits.

Within a mission it is necessary to map out the diversity of NSA, establishing that they are 'actors' with a role to play within the community: for example in relation to specific community projects. The challenge may lie in the realisation that there can be mistrust between NSA and state actors; a tension between the activities of each party, their responsibilities and limitations. Yet despite any perceived challenges, the local and donor police must *trust* the NSA to be independent in their actions. This enhances dialogue across all stakeholders and in the process of allowing NSA co-ownership of projects creating respect within the community, which includes the NSA. The donor police should see a role as facilitating dialogue across the NSA-community-local police spectrum and which may assist iron out mistrust and consider means of ensuring linkages with the more formal justice processes – thereby increasing access to justice for all.

Building effective policing partnerships with NSA within an international mission environment requires the deployment of police officers with the right 'mindset'. Key is the selection process to ensure that a police officer or civilian staff member has the right professional experience and personal profile and will respond to training prior to an international mission. Moreover the role of police from a broader mission perspective is that there needs to be far greater integration of their role from a social and political perspective. Police officers should be looking to make an impact with a focus on the needs of local people whilst being aware of the mandate framework. Working with NSA as part of a partnership approach to find solutions to local issues can only be 'win win' situation.

Some Guiding Principles

On developing partnerships with NSA:

- Understand policing is only one aspect of a broader mission environment
- Be aware of the interest-based positions of NSA -some may have political objectives or even corrupt elements
- Realise that there will never be one best approach
- Map the diversity of actors involved (local police, community, state actors, NSA, private sector, international institutions and governments) and understand that each presents complex challenges – create an 'organic' partnership network based on the interests of each partner with the aim of developing long term relationships
- Be prepared before a mission and look for the right opportunities for engagement in-theatre

POLICING WITH COMMUNITIES IN A CHANGING POLICING ENVIRONMENT - SYNDICATE 4

Policing with communities can be described as enabling the community to identify their priorities, promoting information that will empower that community to identify local solutions to local issues and to identify strategic priorities and decisions. It should be recognised that the communities are often the first to identify threats and changes to their environment. If it is assumed that the traditional Peelian concept: 'the police are the public and the public are the police' is a truism then police may be able to engage with their communities. Yet that policing environment is constantly changing. As the Head Constable of the Liverpool Police noted in 1862 in a speech delivered to new recruits; *the activities of police within their communities will have an impact, and, the opinion of the public can be formed by the activities of an individual officer let alone a group of officers.* Importantly *trust* can be broken through the outcome of one single policing activity.

The challenge for policing an ever-changing policing environment within international missions is to identify and engage with the 'right' people within that community who can disseminate the 'right' message across the community. Moreover to identify the 'right' place to undertake policing activities: building a new police station, for example, in an area that will attract the community rather than detract. The objective is to build confidence and trust through joint community and police involvement: the S.A.R.A. approach can be useful: scan, analyse, respond and assess the needs of the community and in implementing projects that reflect cultural awareness, community partnership and in alignment with EU values that include human rights.

UMUGANDA PROGRAMME – AN EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE

An example of where policing communities has demonstrated real value has been in Rwanda through the Umuganda programme. Translated as 'coming together in common purpose to achieve an outcome' this community-based approach to delivering a service and building community cohesion has been introduced by Rwandan peacekeepers in Darfur (2009); Haiti (2013) and the Central African Republic (2014). In response to Rwanda's post-conflict situation and the (re)building of national identify, Umuganda draws on local culture and traditional practices to build development programmes, which includes a mandatory community service on the last Saturday of every month . All members of the community (including government officials, police and army officers) are involved in a wide range of community-based projects, which is intended to build partnerships across the community between people of different social and political backgrounds. Umuganda has shown to be a successful platform for dialogue between the community and local police; working together encourages dialogue. Successful projects have included the building of schools, medical centres and hydroelectric plants within national development programmes which, according to Rwandapedia a website dedicated to Rwanda's development, has been estimated at more than US $60 million since 2007. Umuganda has had success within other FCAS and could be delivered as a strategy within further international missions in the future particularly in situations where there has been a breakdown of trust between the community and local police.

Some Guiding Principles

On policing communities in a changing environment within FCAS:

- All citizens are potentially a local policing partner – policing is too important to police alone
- Do not underestimate the ability of the community to impact crime prevention and reduction through reporting crime
- Donor police should establish relationships with communities even if only a 'personal' relationship in the first instance to build trust with one partner
- Be aware that community policing is not always 'soft' in its approach as there are victims of crime within a community who will need support
- Police should establish with a community that there are soft and hard approaches; crime must be investigated and the necessary action taken

'FROM NATIONAL TO GLOBAL TO LOCAL', TRANSFERRING SKILLS AND EXPERTISE & ADVISING OTHERS - SYNDICATE 5

One key challenge recognised within international missions has been the perceived transfer of Western style models of policing which has included the delivery of community policing concepts. Currently in missions there are many different ideas on policing and there is a lack of identified models and developed EU doctrine.[3] In

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[3] The CPCC is in the early stages of developing a serious of guidance papers to support EU Missions. These will be aligned to the recently developed UN Strategic Guidance Framework aimed at supporting international policing operations.

order to create the necessary environment that would bring the national to the global to the local, a standardised approach constructed within a CSDP European framework is advised.

In the first instance, when considering 'the national to global' community policing would need to be adequately defined from which European guidelines could be prepared including core values (e.g. police ethics and human rights). In addition there needs to be a drive to collect 'best practice' across Europe which would be embedded as key tenets within future CSDP training programmes. Community policing would become the central thread within training alongside core issues including negotiating and influencing, problem-solving and stakeholder dialogue.

In taking community policing from the global to the local, tensions between community policing as a *concept* as well as a mission *strategy* would have to be addressed. It is clear that the concept, in addition to meeting local needs, would have to match the mission mandate's overarching strategy and that every opportunity should be taken to influence mission leaders of the need to embed community policing within mission projects and training programmes. Key was a mapping of local communities and stakeholders who could facilitate the implementation of such programmes and would bring value to core elements including gender and diversity issues, vulnerable minorities and child protection. It was identified that policing with communities was a vehicle to deliver real outcomes in relation to sensitive issues and in benchmarking these activities, the impact of a mission better realised and community trust and confidence enhanced.

Some Guiding Principles

On implementing Community Policing on the 'Global' Mission Stage:

- Community policing must be given a higher priority with European missions and the national to global to local thread recognised.
- European 'best practice' should be harnessed and embedded within European training programmes and taken forward into missions then developed in accordance with local needs
- Prepare general guidelines and concepts to facilitate training
- Always take the strategic objectives of the mission Mandate into consideration when developing community policing projects
- Recognise that when resources are limited community policing can be a useful tool to bring about real impact on the ground

CONCLUSION

The Course discussions and syndicate exercises identified that aspects of policing *with* communities brings additional elements to the much debated topic of community policing, a regular activity in international policing operations, but one which suffers from a lack of consistency in delivery and mixed results. As ever there is no 'quick-fix'. Indeed a recurring theme in discussion was the need for stronger, more developed and trusted relationships between the international 'donors', local police and also civil society. Policing *with* communities is not only about engaging with local communities but i*nvolving* members in problem-solving and decision-making, and, in believing that ownership can lead to greater sustainability. Pro-actively reaching out to civil society groups and leaders can bridge the gap between local police and their communities. Notwithstanding that the levels and policing approaches will be dependent on the security situation.

The lack of international doctrine and standards continues to challenge mission operations tasked with devising host country policy and procedures. The development of doctrine including the UN Strategic Guidance Framework and EU Mission Guidelines should bring much needed consistency to international operations. However, these are generally strategic documents and generally it is the implementation that matters within fragile and conflict affected communities. Operational level guidance must be introduced to inform mission policy, selection processes and training, ensuring those working in mission have the personal attributes and capabilities and support to develop trusted and flexible relationships within local communities. Mandates and resources are constrained yet experience repeatedly demonstrates that "time matters" when building relationships of trust. There are few successful 'short-cuts'.

Course discussions afforded the opportunity to share learning and experiences and work towards identifying guiding principles for improved policing *with* communities. The intention of the exercise was not to provide an exhaustive list but to use the opportunity for experienced mission personnel to share lessons, experience and good practice from the field. Time was limited but this was to a degree reached and it is hoped their considerations can provide the catalyst for future doctrine and guideline development.

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