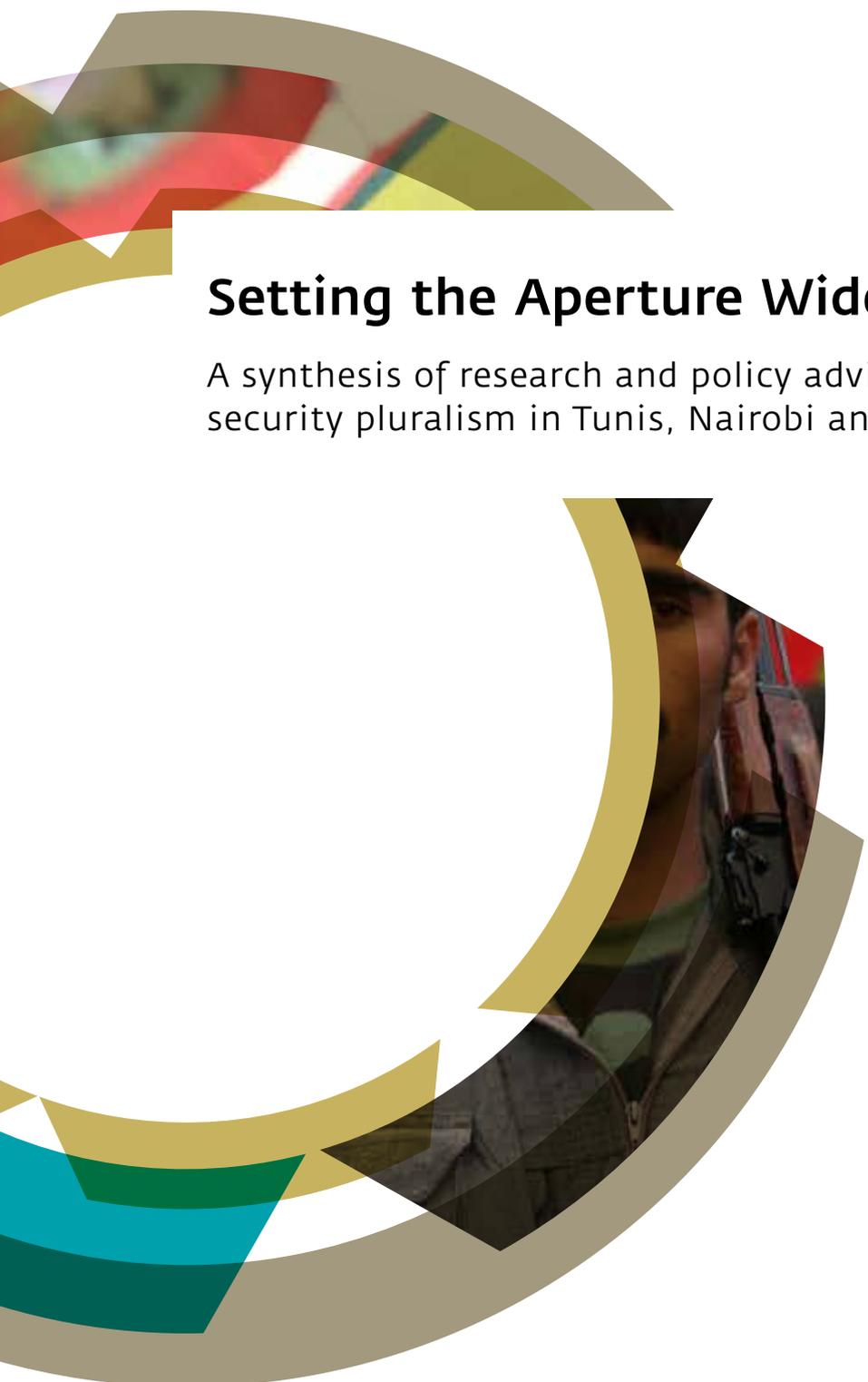




Plural
Security
Insights

Setting the Aperture Wider

A synthesis of research and policy advice on
security pluralism in Tunis, Nairobi and Beirut



SECURITY PLURALISM IN THE CITY

This project, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), seeks to foster effective security and rule of law policy and practice by producing empirically-based insights into how structures of local governance might interact with plural security providers in ways that deliver improved security outcomes for urban residents. This approach privileges a bottom-up perspective, challenging both conventional state-centric international security and rule of law assistance and local policymakers to better engage with modes of security provision that people view as legitimate, effective, or at least the best available. More can be found at www.pluralsecurityinsights.org.

Comparative research was conducted in three urban contexts: Beirut, Lebanon; Nairobi, Kenya; and Tunis, Tunisia. These cities are characterised by differing degrees of security pluralism, unequal levels of human development, distinct historical trajectories of state formation, and diverse patterns of social cleavages. As such, they reflect a range of contextual factors, and a microcosm of a larger global set. Insights drawn from individual case studies will inform preliminary research agenda-setting and recommendations for policymakers to respond more effectively to security challenges in urban settings.

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A synthesis of research and policy advice on security pluralism in Tunis, Nairobi and Beirut

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Summary

In contexts of security pluralism, an array of actors assert claims on the use of force, operating simultaneously and with varying relationships to the state. In such contexts, security providers may acquire legitimacy by proving more effective and efficient, proximate and relevant to local populations, and are often cheaper than state alternatives. Yet, plural security actors are frequently associated with human rights violations, perverse interface with the state, difficulty in providing security equitably in contexts of diversity, and an almost ineluctable tendency toward net production of insecurity over time.

Donors have few policy or practical tools with which to engage meaningfully in contexts of plural security provision. Since directly engaging plural security providers would mean upsetting relationships with state partners, conferring legitimacy on groups with unpalatable goals or tactics, or tacitly endorsing violence as a path to political privilege, donors prefer to focus on official security agencies and state oversight.

Plural Security Insights and its partners have developed the research project outlined here to address that dearth of relevant policy and programming advice. Comparative research was conducted in three urban contexts: Beirut, Nairobi, and Tunis. Key findings include:

- Where security is highly fragmented, powerful actors are able to organise security arrangements that benefit them, and public oversight is difficult to assert. Security as a 'public good' cannot be assumed as an operational starting point.
- Security assistance interventions in contexts of security pluralism should promote public oversight, standards of practice and divisions of labour for all providers. Supporting one type of provider inevitably privileges some groups and interests over others.
- Intermediate steps between relational and rules-based arrangements for security provision may be preferable to conventional approaches that focus exclusively on building the capacity of state institutions.
- Efforts to foster stronger, safer communities should pay equal attention to the social determinants of security that maintain order and foster resilience, by encouraging social cohesion, addressing exclusion and ensuring adequate public service provision.

The transition from a relational to a rules-based system will require a new repertoire of security assistance strategies and methods. Actions might include:



- Tackle the most pernicious aspects of security pluralism, especially exclusion and the lack of accountability, through means such as increasing civic space and strengthening mechanisms for asserting public oversight of all security providers.
- Identify and invest in intermediate steps to move from relational to rules-based security systems, including SSR interventions that address the panorama of security providers, and the development of popular oversight mechanisms and functional divisions of labour amongst security providers.
- Address the social determinants of security through efforts to strengthen inclusive notions of the public good, and design policies to expand access to public services that reduce citizens' reliance on fickle, exploitive or divisive private actors.

Acknowledgements

This project has been an exceedingly successful experiment in collaboration. The findings here reflect the analytical rigor of the authors of the three case studies, who generously gave their time, intellect and energy to this project. The analysis was duly sharpened by the constructive and stimulating feedback received from the Plural Security Insights advisory group. And the project would never have gotten off the ground were it not for the enthusiasm and efforts of our consortium partners. To all these actors, many thanks for exemplifying the strengths and benefits of "plurality".

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Introduction¹

The provision of security involves practices, discourses, and modes of governance that affect how power is exercised, by whom and for whose benefit. In contexts characterised by security pluralism, an array of actors assert claims on the use of force, operating simultaneously and with varying relationships to the state.

These actors ostensibly offer local populations security, especially (but not exclusively) where state security providers are absent or harmful to citizens. In such contexts, security providers directly authorised by the state (e.g. the police, the army) and a multitude of other coercive actors are engaged in producing order, and enjoy mutable degrees of public authority and legitimacy. Building on the definitional work of Baker² and others, plural security providers are defined here as:

actors characterised by the ability and willingness to deploy coercive force, lack of integration into formal state institutions, and organisational structure that persists over time, that seek to ensure the maintenance of communal order, security and peace through elements of prevention, deterrence, investigation of breaches, and punishment.³

The panorama of plural security providers embraces, inter alia: religious police; militias and warlords; customary or political authorities with armed retinues; organised criminal groups; neighbourhood gangs; improvised community watch patrols; and the security arms of occupational communities. These actors may acquire legitimacy by proving more effective and efficient, proximate and relevant to local populations, and are often cheaper than state alternatives.⁴ Yet, plural security actors are frequently associated with human rights violations, perverse interface with the state, difficulty in providing security equitably in contexts of diversity, and an almost ineluctable tendency toward net production of insecurity over time.⁵

Notwithstanding these hazards, donors are challenged to grapple with the dilemma that improving citizens' security in fragile contexts often obliges them to work within the reality of plural security provision.⁶ This implies the risks of upsetting relationships with state partners, conferring legitimacy on groups with unpalatable goals or tactics, or tacitly endorsing violence as a path to political privilege.⁷ Scant evidence-based advice is available to support and guide local government or international engagement in plural security contexts.

This emerging field of study is thus highly relevant to the policies and programmes associated with international security assistance (including security sector reform, stabilisation efforts, police reform and community policing, peacebuilding etc.), as well as to the public safety and

1 Parts of this introduction and literature review iterate points from an unpublished discussion paper, which helped lay the groundwork for this research project: Warren (2015), see PluralSecurityInsights.org

2 Baker (2008)

3 This definition first appears in Belhadj et al. (2015), which serves as a precursor for this research.

4 See Albrecht & Kyed (2015); Derks (2012); Ahram (2011); Kantor & Persson (2010); Scheye (2009)

5 See Baker (2012); Meagher (2012); Kirsch & Grätz (2010); Rodgers (2009); Arias (2006)

6 World Bank (2011); DfID (2004)

7 Denney (2013); Derks (2012)

security policies of local governments in diverse contexts. The research presented here seeks to offer useful insights on security pluralism derived from empirical investigations in three urban settings: Beirut (Lebanon), Nairobi (Kenya), and Tunis (Tunisia).⁸

At the inception of the research, the city was identified to be an appropriate level of analysis for tackling the topic. This was based on a number of assumptions drawn from urban policy-practitioner debates: the proximity of local government to its citizens can potentially foster responsiveness and accountability; coordination of citizen interests and the benefits of mutual cooperation are more discernible; and it is cheaper to effectively deliver services to densely concentrated urban populations. Moreover, with limited control over state security institutions, local governments are often compelled to use other policy levers to impact citizen safety. The case studies were successful in interrogating and nuancing these preliminary assumptions, and – as this synthesis will demonstrate – have helped to articulate a more ingenuous portrayal of security pluralism, its complex relationship with urban governance structures, and the particular risks and responses it arouses within the cityscape.

This study begins with a brief summary of the topical literature on security pluralism (often denoted as 'non-state security')⁹ and a concise overview of the three case studies. Main findings are then distilled from across the three cases and discussed in more depth, with the aim to extend or nuance current understanding. The discussion then moves to applying this new understanding to policy, offering innovative and empirically attuned considerations for security assistance and reform.

8 Respectively: Boustani et al. (2016), Price et al. (2016), and Kahloun et al.(2016).

9 The binary between 'state' and 'non-state' entities has proven conceptually problematic and empirically flawed: see Schomerus & Rigterink (2016). This research applies the term 'plural security' to underscore that the variety of actors is more significant than those actors' particular relations to the state.

1 Literature Review

The normative aspiration for a state monopoly on violence is widespread, yet in historical terms, few states have been able to control the use of legitimate coercion, and some never aspired to obtain it.¹⁰ This helps put conventional security assistance into perspective, and challenges the statebuilding assumptions that underpin it. Growing consensus has risen to critique both the notion that robust state institutions are the sure and singular path to stable societies as well as the technical, costly and 'top-down' approach this strategy drives.¹¹ This research aligns with the call for greater emphasis on civilian-oriented approaches to security assistance policy, privileging the perspectives of those seeking daily security.

This analysis of security pluralism starts from the assumption that security actors – regardless of their association with the state – often exercise the option to produce security or insecurity. Categorising security actors as menacing or redemptive places artificial limits on their fluid relationships with the public. Shifts in competition between security actors can encourage groups to either violently coerce the population into submission, or invest in the protection of local communities in order to garner their support.¹² It thus may be more reasonable to understand these actors as occupying an unfixed position on a spectrum, with the potential to drift either towards more predatory or protective behaviours.

Recent literature has also engaged with the ways in which security provision interacts with processes of order-making and political formation.¹³ This has helped propel the discussion on plural security provision into the discipline of political science, exploring the ways in which security pluralism shapes particular trajectories of political contestation and consolidation.¹⁴ While significant evidence suggests that plural security providers are prone to what might be termed "competitive statebuilding",¹⁵ there is also emerging research that demonstrates such actors exert both constitutive and corrosive effects on political order.¹⁶ Increasingly, analysis of plural security provision recognises that, in order to meaningfully engage with the innumerable ways in which people access protection, reformers must develop a more nuanced appreciation of security provision that stretches beyond state/non-state binaries.¹⁷

The literature review ultimately underscored three specific dimensions of plural security provision that warrant deeper reflection. The first dimension acknowledges that, given their capacity for coercion, security providers do not always gain their position by successfully brokering a 'social

¹⁰ Giustozzi (2011)

¹¹ Scheye (2009); Isser (2011); Derks (2012); Lawrence (2012); Luckman & Kirk (2012)

¹² Brancović & Chojnacki (2011); Kalyvas (2006)

¹³ See Centre for Security Governance case study series on Non-state Security Providers and Political Formation: Derksen (2016); Schomerus & Rigterink (2016); and Menkhaus (2016)

¹⁴ Acemoglu et al. (2013); Arias (2010)

¹⁵ Felbab-Brown (2013)

¹⁶ Meagher (2012) p.1074; Podder (2013); Menkhaus (2016)

¹⁷ Schomerus & Rigterink (2016)

contract'.¹⁸ Unfettered by a sense of public reciprocity, actors may be less incentivised to respond to citizens' genuine security needs or to meet local expectations for performance. This poses the risk that typical safeguards against predation, such as reliance upon local support and vulnerability to public sanctioning, are not sufficiently compelling. The challenge is to discern how security providers beyond the official purview of the state (and some providers within it) could be reliably motivated to work in the interest of public security.

The second dimension poses the dilemma from the perspective of local governance actors, whose approach to plural security providers can be swayed by political considerations. An 'iron fist' response to high rates of (violent) crime and gang activity, often encouraged by national policy and popular outcry, can antagonise actors who play a security and enforcement role in their local communities.¹⁹ Where the relationship between state security forces and other security actors becomes characterised by competition and domination, this is liable to significantly increase violence and insecurity for local populations.²⁰ Here the challenge is to identify effective strategies for responding to plural security providers that are both conciliatory and politically plausible.

Thirdly, security arrangements are typically organised by and according to the interests of powerful actors.²¹ The resultant risk is that marginalised groups are excluded from or oppressed by security systems that reflect and reproduce particular power dynamics.²² The historical development of a collectively governed and minimally biased 'meta-authority' (commonly, the state) appears to offer the best platform for non-privileged groups to lay claim to public goods, such as security.²³ While plural security providers can and do increase the security of some, there is little evidence to suggest they will spontaneously gravitate toward more inclusive or equitable arrangements.²⁴ The challenge is to understand what is necessary to provoke and sustain the notion of security as a public good in contexts of plural provision.

This project sets about to address the dearth of advice for engaging in plural security contexts, prioritising these three attendant challenges. The research poses a primary question: What conditions enable local governance actors and non-state security providers to forge constructive relations in order to effectively promote positive security outcomes for citizens in urban contexts of plural security provision?

Three sub-questions guided the case study research:

- 1 What incentives effectively compel security actors to prioritise positive security outcomes for local citizens? Alternatively, what motivations are likely to dissuade them from working toward such positive outcomes for citizens?
- 2 What factors effectively encourage local public officials to engage plural actors in constructive dialogue? Alternatively, what considerations appear to encourage antagonistic local governance responses to such security providers?
- 3 How can public resources be leveraged to enable marginalised communities to advocate for and realise their collective security interests within contexts of security pluralism?

18 The 'social contract' refers to the fundamental relationship between a governing authority, obliged to deliver public services, and its citizenry, which reciprocally recognises its legitimacy to govern.

19 Rodgers (2009); Van der Borgh (2015); Jütersonke, Muggah & Rodgers (2009)

20 Peeters et al. (2013); Van der Borgh et al. (2015)

21 Price & Van Veen (2016); Tilly (1990); Scambary (2012); Kirsch & Grätz (2010)

22 Baker (2012) p.285-289; Plyler (2007)

23 Loader & Walker (2004)

24 Meagher (2012) p.1081; Schuberth (2013)



2 Case Study Summaries

The research project was pursued through three related case studies. The multiple case study method was selected to accommodate the deliberate focus on examining contextual conditions presumed relevant to understanding how and under what conditions²⁵ plural security might forge positive outcomes for citizens. Each case study, guided by the initial research questions, adopted a qualitative approach collecting context-specific data that could then be analysed and extrapolated for the purpose of modest generalisation.²⁶

In this way, each case study was undertaken as a self-contained experiment, whereby the empirical findings of the individual sites could be tested against one another to identify patterns of divergence or convergence that might contribute to basic theory building.²⁷ This section provides concise overviews of each case and its main messages. The subsequent section draws particular observations together, assembling more comprehensive and generalised findings.

Beirut

The Beirut case study focuses on how Syrian refugees, an acutely vulnerable urban population, realise their security interests within plural provision arrangements. Over the past century, cosmopolitan Beirut grew rapidly as a result of overlapping waves of migration. Newcomers have transformed the city, sometimes through violent political contestation. The current political dispensation locks in place a confessional (i.e. sectarian) power-sharing framework that emerged in the aftermath of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war. The resulting status quo is characterised by a weak state and a profusion of actors involved in the provision of security, with confessional-based political parties mediating access for citizens. A high level of social cohesion maintains order and mitigates the deleterious effects of an otherwise complex, unstable security system.

Since the beginning of the Syrian civil war, as many as 1.5-million Syrians have fled into Lebanon. Fieldwork in the Beirut neighbourhoods of Naba'a and Sabra revealed that refugees experience a precarious urban security environment, typified by constant fear of harassment and detention, lack of protection, and limited mobility. Research identified a diverse repertoire of strategies that Syrians draw upon to access security, from avoidance to reliance on in-group problem-solving to affiliation with sympathetic local security providers.

The case study concludes that Lebanon's current policy framework exacerbates the vulnerability of Syrian refugees, and that the very nature of security pluralism in Beirut is unlikely to promote equitable distribution of security as a public good, especially to newcomers. It proposes changes to the punitive regulatory and security regime applied to control Syrian communities, and advises the Lebanese state to address the security gap for refugees within the parameters of the existing consociational framework, rather than risk the emergence of a Syrian actor able and motivated to disrupt it.

25 Yin (1984), p.13

26 Ragin (2000)

27 Yin (1984) p.31

Nairobi

The case study in Nairobi portrays plural security in light of the survival strategies developed by inhabitants of Mathare, Kangemi and Korogocho, three of Nairobi's largest poor urban settlements. It examines the interplay between citizens' need for security, the state's inability to fully meet that demand, and the opportunities this creates for private actors. Unable to call upon the state as the sponsor of public welfare, citizens must 'hustle for security', using their wits and their personal networks to gain access to protective communities.

While physical violence is foregrounded due to its salience among interviewees, linkages to structural violence are also recognised and discussed. The failure of the state to provide security for settlement residents is seen within a broader context, in which the state often fails to perform as the convening arbiter, provider or guarantor of the collective good. What develops is a context in which people are consistently incentivised and enabled to assert private and in-group interests. The research thus demonstrates how plural security provision may perpetuate and normalise systems wherein one's security is contingent on individual traits and personal history. Similarly, from the research it would appear that collectivised security is provided only when it incidentally converges with powerful private interests.

Plural security thus arises "not to fill a homogenous void, but in sporadic response to a myriad of interests."²⁸ In this way, it is important to note that, while plural providers emerge as an alternative to state public services, they may also actively undermine broader notions of the 'public good'. The report concludes by proposing strategies to address these more malign aspects of security pluralism. It suggests a focus on curtailing the power of providers and their patrons and introducing stronger democratic control measures to stimulate evolution toward more publically responsive protection mechanisms.

Tunis

The Tunisian state's capacity to ensure security has been deeply affected by the popular uprisings, sparked by mass protests in December 2010. The disorder stemming from the revolution briefly led citizens to organise themselves through protection committees to ensure their own safety. These citizen collectives took it upon themselves to patrol the streets and regulate traffic, eventually handing the task back to the army. Composed of neighbours, friends and relatives, they had a relatively provisional existence and quickly dissolved, imploring state actors to resume their role in protecting the streets. This signals the widespread desire of many in Tunis to see the state take responsibility of the provision of security despite a searing recognition of the state's limitations and failure to deliver.

While there have been no overt attempts by informal groups to infringe on the state's monopoly, it has not yet convincingly reclaimed its purported (though contested) pre-revolution efficacy.²⁹ The police and National Guard have gradually recovered their (damaged) offices and started to once again exercise their prerogatives in a discrete and 'wait-and-see' manner. The revolution's impact spread to governance actors, in particular those who previously provided for community interface. Before the revolution, the role of the local delegate was to represent the President at the territorial level, ensuring coordination of state services and channelling the security demands of the population up to higher spheres. Having been branded informants of Ben Ali, these

28 Price et al. (2016) p.21

29 Kartas (2014)

lynchpin actors have since lost the trust of the population, crippling the scaffold of the social contract between the state and its citizens.

The case concludes by highlighting the unclaimed and unfulfilled nature of security provision in Tunis, which can be viewed as a crisis of trust between Tunisian society and its state institutions. For security, the population paradoxically turns to a state it no longer trusts, while the government has shown few signals that security is a priority.

3 Key Findings

The people-focused nature of this research underscores that security is most immediately felt at the personal and local level. However, security is often organised at the political and societal level.³⁰ This message resonated through the three case studies, each of which demonstrate the value of looking closely at the contextual and social particularities of security pluralism to determine potential risks and strategies.

In this section, comparable points from each case are assembled into three generalised findings, helping to usher empirical observations toward broader policymaking implications:

- 1 the significance of social determinants of security;
- 2 the implications of social fragmentation in plural security contexts; and
- 3 the imperative to move from 'relational' to 'rules based' security provision.

Social determinants of security

Strategies to increase citizens' security often focus on institutions and actors that play a mandated role in enforcing order and deterring delinquency, frequently the police. Yet, each case provided striking examples of how often individuals relate their safety to factors outside the conventional security domain, such as public utilities, group solidarity and other subtle patterns of social control. This should encourage deeper consideration of how daily security is underpinned by mechanisms other than 'policing' or 'patrolling' and what this means for expanding security programmes beyond the obvious providers.

One facet of this relates specifically to the urban dimension of this study. Each case site is beset by rapid urbanisation, with the three cities' infrastructure struggling under the demand of burgeoning populations. In each case, people regularly linked their personal insecurity to the more structural deficit of public services. In Tunis, parts of the city are reportedly unreachable after dark, when public transport and even private taxies demur from driving people home to 'dangerous' neighbourhoods. Walking home on unlit streets is a perilous but perhaps lone option for those whose jobs demand late hours. In Nairobi's poor urban settlements, which receive the majority of the city's newcomers, without planned sewage disposal or street lighting women are regularly exposed to assaults when having to use outdoor sanitary facilities.

In Beirut, the city's utilities and services have also been stretched (and corrupted) to the breaking point, as have public frustrations.³¹ Simultaneously, the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees over the past five years continues a fraught history of foreign migration to the city, periodically aggravating political and social tensions.³² This partially explains the public anxiety

30 Price & Van Veen (2016)

31 The #YouStink movement of 2015 was notably sparked by a prolonged garbage collection crisis.

32 Fawaz (2009)

piqued by the recent influx. Interestingly, this sense of instability stands in stark contrast to the reality that Beirut is and has remained a relatively 'safe' city.

While occasional spasms of violence (i.e. targeted assassinations and car bomb attacks) aim to send shockwaves through the tenuous Lebanese political settlement, street-level crime remains relatively uncommon. Though 'other' boroughs are typically perceived to be dangerous, most Beirut citizens report feeling safe in their own neighbourhood. The case study describes social cohesion within Beirut's micro-level communities as key to maintaining this order in a time of social and political volatility. In the study, 'social cohesion' is described as:

[The] confluence of factors including territorial and sectarian community norms and solidarity, strong family ties, compact multi-generational neighbourhoods characterised by rootedness and connectedness, and cultural values of friendliness and hospitality that maintain order at micro-level.

Such community solidarity is seen to apply an effective social brake on crime and violent conflict. Communities' collective and spontaneous response to local petty crime often pre-empts the involvement of state security forces. Deploying "care and control in equal measure," neighbourhood families keep a close eye on one another, "contributing to resilience and militating against disorder."³³

The density of these social networks, however, can make them impenetrable. Newcomers to Beirut, especially those who do not match the local confessional colour, are rarely able to access the protection these communities offer, and may be met with distrust and persecution. This is particularly the case for Syrian refugees, who are regularly subjected to informal and selectively enforced curfews. Even among Lebanese groups, the social cohesion within specific neighbourhoods does not bridge the various sectarian communities that call Beirut home (and may contribute to their segregation).³⁴ Nor does the state, itself a mosaic of confessional-political blocs, provide an impartial platform to facilitate inter-sectarian relations.

Similar patterns of social cohesion, identity and 'protecting one's own' were observed in Nairobi. In the city's urban settlements, residents describe assembling personal protective communities, sometimes called 'youth associations' or, more perniciously, 'gangs'. The groups likened themselves to 'families', noting that the bonds within their ranks are forged by a combination of discipline and mutual defence. While perhaps slightly more open than Beirut's confessional-based micro-orders, these associations frequently restrict membership to within a particular ward, drawing identity boundaries between themselves and those from other settlement areas.³⁵ In this way, Nairobi's urban residents similarly rely on social-spatial determinants of security rather than designated security providers. According to one Nairobi resident, "The area where I come from, we depend on one another. If we go to the police [...] they come when everything is finished."³⁶

Tunis offered similar examples, where the old guard of security and governance, for example municipal police and local delegates, have seen their status and position effectively voided in the eyes of the public. In order to continue performing their official function in resolving local conflicts, these actors now rely on business elites and union leaders, whose legitimacy and

33 Boustani et al. (2016) p.12. For more on this topic see Sampson et al. (1997); Barolsky (2016).

34 Belhadj et al. (2015)

35 Van Staple (2015); Price et al. (2016)

36 Price et al. (2016) p.11

authority survived the revolution. Social ties among neighbours are also cited as particularly important in areas where rising crime and violence demands vigilance and social sanctioning. "The police don't have a place here," one Tunis interviewee declared of her neighbourhood, "The inhabitants should have the right to defend themselves with their own hands."³⁷

Residents from each case drew critical conclusions about how poor public services reflect the ability or willingness of the state to ensure their safety. The feeling of neglect and even aggression that this reportedly provokes undermines the notion of a social contract between the state and citizens (and, by extension, amongst citizens).³⁸ The consequent reliance upon in-group bonds helps to solder strong networks either within neighbourhoods, in the case of Beirut, occupational communities in Tunis, or 'families' as described in Nairobi.

These strong networks are nonetheless vulnerable in rapidly changing environments. Chaotic urbanisation can displace communities, accelerate social change and disrupt structures that previously exerted social control over people's behaviour.³⁹ Moreover, in both Beirut and Nairobi the tendency for such systems to reinforce identity-based protection is at odds with the aim to provide security as a universal public good. Local patterns of social control might constitute vital stability mechanisms, warranting a certain measure of tolerance and non-interference. However, their long-term potential to both maintain stability and uphold equitable public security is unconvincing. For these reasons, engagement with such networks should be considered prudently.

The case studies demonstrate how people tend to experience security as a corollary of social and economic predictability and reliable infrastructure. Yet, security and rule of law assistance tend to focus almost exclusively on robust, professional law enforcement. This research suggests setting the aperture wider. For example, attention could be invested in promoting the benefits of strong community bonds, while working in chorus to reduce exclusion and bridge identity groups. Strategies that seek to address people's vulnerability by improving basic public services may also effectively offset people's reliance on divisive or variable social control mechanisms.

Pluralism and fragmentation

A woman from Nairobi crisply captured one innate dilemma of security provision, "To provide security, you must be able to provide insecurity."⁴⁰ A community patrolman in Beirut may seem a reassuring guardian or a hostile thug depending upon whether a person 'belongs' in a particular neighbourhood. The same may be said of a policeman in Paris. The implication is that security arrangements often maintain social order by reinforcing the interest of the resident dominant group, thus ensuring a certain level of predictability in social conduct.⁴¹ However, social fragmentation and competition can lead to a profusion of security formations, each working in the interest of a particular identity group or powerful cohort.

Analysis of local security contexts could therefore usefully focus on assessing whose interests particular security arrangements appear to serve, and gauging the potential for that group to expand, and become more inclusive and broadly accountable. This project of expansion is, in

37 Kahloun et al. (2016) authors' notes (unpublished)

38 For brief articulation of the 'social contract', see footnote 18.

39 Belhadj et al. (2015); Boustani et al. (2016); Derksen (2016) p.35

40 Price et al.(2016) p.13

41 Price & Van Veen (2016); Luckman & Kirk (2013); Albrecht & Kyed (2014)



essence, the pursuit of the rule of law. It is the perpetual campaign to extend protections to people who were not previously afforded 'public' entitlements.

The three case studies allow for some rudimentary comparison between two cities with more pronounced social cleavages (Nairobi, Beirut) and one urban setting where divisions are more moderate (Tunis). Unsurprisingly, social fragmentation appears to bear a negative relation to the potential for pluralistic providers to foster or defer to more inclusive mechanisms.

Both Nairobi and Beirut provide examples of how, in highly fragmented contexts, plural security takes shape in response to a panoply of interests. If left unchecked by a prevailing authority, various powerful actors are able to establish coercive mechanisms and enforce public compliance with arrangements that benefit them. These actors are not necessarily abusive or malicious; many people are, in fact, grateful for the security they provide. Yet, that security is often an upshot of schemes engineered to protect particular interests and thus remains contingent upon and subordinate to those interests.

The Nairobi case describes self-organised security groups in Mathare (an urban settlement) that conduct night patrols, collecting payments from the relatively better-off tenants of the stone apartment buildings. While the groups are credited for reducing local crime, their protection-for-pay model stokes concerns. Many voice unease that the social endeavour of securing the local community is being subverted into a lucrative enterprise for landlords, who can increase occupancy and rents in nominally 'safe' areas. A patrol member stated, "Our priority is the community, not the money. But if people don't pay the 50KES [fee], we tell the building caretaker to give them a note that they should move away." The private interests that drive and organise local security do not offer an incentive to include 'freeloaders'. Those unable to pay are subject to the security group's caprices, and lack avenues for recourse against misconduct.

Similarly in Beirut, neighbourhood security is organised by actors affiliated to particular confessional constituencies. This broad cast of security players embody the territorial, political and social divisions within the city.⁴² Lebanese political parties in particular, "play a crucial role in brokering access to security for most people [...] by mediating relations with state security agencies, or directly, through the operation of armed militias and other partisan security structures."⁴³ Arrangements can be subtle and diffuse, taking the shape of neighbourhood watch groups and community leaders with 'wasta',⁴⁴ who coordinate surveillance and enforce street-level order. The party structure also acts as a conduit for national political settlements to be implemented through neighbourhood security arrangements. The role of these actors appears primarily fixed on deterring threats to the sectarian-political status quo, which can extend to reinforcing social divisions. Security is thus governed and provided according to the interests of the locally preponderant party rather than to offer assistance to average citizens.

These fragmented security arrangements complicate and resist the assertion of public oversight. Both in Nairobi and Beirut, citizens have limited opportunities to provide corrective input when actors overstep their prerogative. In Beirut, political parties that wish to appear responsive to their local constituents are incentivised to make their security apparatus somewhat answerable to these groups (though not necessarily the broader public). In Nairobi's settlements, security

42 Belhadj et al. (2015)

43 Boustani et al. (2016) p.11; El-Hokayem & McGovern (2008)

44 Boustani et al. (2016) p.12 define 'wasta' as the "quantification of influence via family or other interpersonal connections, and a fixture of everyday life in Lebanon."

actors are often underwritten by remote clients, for example landowners or politicians. These patrons do not live in the settlements nor are they personally reliant on the performance of those they sponsor. This situation, combined with the motive to extract payments, can reduce the providers' inclination to offer security as a public good. Under such circumstances, coercive actors' dependence on community approval and support is diverted, weakening crucial checks on their power.⁴⁵

In Tunisia, identity groups are less competitive, and the lack of inter-group conflict is credited to a strong sense of national solidarity. So while plural security provision has arisen in Tunisia, it has taken on a dramatically different form. The disorder left in the wake of the 2010-2011 revolution prompted neighbours to organise themselves into local protection committees, who also took it upon themselves to maintain other public services, such as regulating traffic. After the deposition of Ben Ali, the eagerness of the committees to relinquish their security role reflects an overriding preference for the state to claim its supremacy in this domain. As yet, however, this is an aspiration deferred. The perceived limits (and seeming disinterest) of the state to effectively execute its public security function frustrates many, though not yet to the point of re-forming the protection committees. It is not clear how long residents of Tunisia are willing or able to wait for the formal purveyor. For the time being, solidarity among compatriots and aspirations for the state appear to militate against security pluralism.

Upon reviewing the cases, social fragmentation emerges as a potential explanatory factor for when and how plural security provision may fail to generate accountable and equitable protection systems. Where society is highly fragmented and the state unable to act as the primary coercive authority, powerful private interests may be more forcefully asserted over the public good, with fewer repercussions. This bodes ill for the formation of inclusive and broadly accountable security provision. Secondly, the fragmentation produces a plethora of security actors, with variable motives and loyalties. This increases the opportunities for external actors to prise away a particular security provider from its local constituency, disrupting subtle yet crucial arrangements of accountability and restraints on power.

These risks, however, appear to be somewhat defused in a more cohesive context where plural security provision is less likely to become a vehicle for group assertion. Additionally, prevalent aspirations for a public security apparatus can sustain citizens' deference to the state, at least provisionally, despite evident (and presumed transitory) shortcomings. The state is thus in a better position to maintain its dominant role, with plural providers arising to assist or extend public institutions rather than compete for private interests.

A caveat remains. International actors often laud the notion of 'working with what's there' as an effective way to support indigenous security mechanisms.⁴⁶ The observations above should instil a due sense of caution when assisting customary and informal actors. External actors risk doing great harm if their support supplants or distorts the social mechanisms that sustain security providers' allegiance to local communities. Those arrangements which appear to most genuinely respond to local security needs should, perhaps, be given the widest berth, to avoid inadvertently dismantling 'what's there'.

45 Similar observations are made of US forces' conscription of local Afghan militias, Derksen (2016) p.29

46 Andrews (2010); Grindle (2010); Ubink (2008); Harper (2011)



Relational rather than rules-based security

Many studies of plural security provision depict actors as 'filling-in' for impersonal public institutions. This characterisation is misleading. It omits the crucial point that such actors seldom perform in an impersonal or public-oriented way. The case studies converge around the idea that contexts of security pluralism are often effective in organising protection for specific constituencies, accessed through personal relations. For a civilian in such an arena, seeking security is tantamount to building and maintaining relationships, sometimes under precarious or exploitive circumstances. The studies also showcase the different strategies people deploy to develop these networks, which vary according to the type of identities and relationships one must activate to gain protection.

In Nairobi a strategy of diversification, hedging one's bets by aligning with multiple groups, reflects the volatility of both the environment and social relations. In the study this is described as 'hustling', an energetic and skilful manoeuvring to gain access to as many groups as possible. "The youth association you join, the political party you rally behind, who you grew up with, your base, your gender – each influence the networks people build to ensure their protection."⁴⁷ Settlement residents seeking police protection do so by carefully building and managing relations with specific officers. Despite this near constant tending to multiple security networks, settlement residents remain highly vulnerable.

In Beirut, Syrian refugees displaced and scattered throughout the city adopt similar strategies, though to lesser effect. "Syrians tend to tap different providers to maximise advantage depending on the specific situation, though the space for choice is often limited and contingent."⁴⁸ Other Syrians are the first and preferred option, particularly those with established networks within Lebanese society. For the most part, however, Syrians lack the interpersonal contacts required to navigate the social and sectarian networks that distribute Lebanon's public services, including security. The case study reports upwards of 70% of survey respondents indicated that their response to insecurity would be to "do nothing."⁴⁹

Lebanese citizens, by contrast, can more reliably look to the protection offered by their neighbours and local political-security assemblages, though they too must strive to accumulate sufficient 'wasta'. In Lebanon's highly relational society, wasta is the influence one accumulates through familial ties, political and business relationships, and is essential for summoning protection or soliciting reparation. The case study describes how wasta is necessary "to solve problems, organise protection, and mobilise state or other resources to [one's] advantage."⁵⁰ Individuals are only able to directly access security providers by leveraging sufficient wasta, for example calling upon friends or family with significant confessional, political or business clout. Those without such potent connections are at an extreme disadvantage, vulnerable to injustice and marginalisation.

The centrality of personal relations in Lebanese society even shapes state security institutions' access to various precincts of Beirut. For example, the Lebanese state police, the Internal Security Forces (ISF), are reportedly obliged to confer with local party leadership when sending officers into 'their' neighbourhoods. Likewise, municipal police gain their positions through appointment by the district mayor. In this way, state security forces must also build and rely upon personal

47 Price et al. (2016) p.21

48 Boustani et al. (2016) p.19

49 Boustani et al. (2016) citing Alsharabati & Nammour (2015), p. 12

50 Boustani et al. (2016) p.12

relationships with powerful confessional and political representatives who are at liberty to rouse, authorise or manage local interventions.

Similar observations were made in Tunisia, where citizens' trust in the state has appreciably waned, and conflicts requiring mediation are more readily taken to trusted associates, neighbours, colleagues and friends. As state officials and residual affiliates of the Ben Ali regime are increasingly perceived as informants, interpersonal contacts have become the primary medium for building trust, regulating social relations, and maintaining security. The previously robust organisation, status and role of governors, delegates and municipal police have all been upturned. Officials must now rely on social authorities, for instance, unions and business leaders, rather than their own state-endorsed license to arbitrate conflicts. As trust has devolved away from the state, personal relations grow increasingly salient for the mediation of conflict and the control of public order within the neighbourhoods.

Each of the case studies demonstrates, to diverse degrees, how individuals' security is based upon personal relationships rather than a (unrealised) public entitlement to protection. The fact that security can be assured only through ties with strategic contacts is reported as a profound source of frustration and anxiety among people across the case studies. Surprisingly, and perhaps spurred by desperation, this has also generated a strong normative preference for a dominant and professional state security monopole. In each case, regardless of domestic precedent, a clear desire was enunciated for a universal and impersonal state security apparatus to relieve citizens' of their present reliance upon an arbitrary and incomplete security patchwork.

This aspiration appears somewhat confounding and difficult to reconcile with the actual strategies and modalities that citizens report using to access security. However, on a more empathetic level, it is not difficult to distinguish daily pragmatism from deeper principles. For some, the desire to see, for example, the police perform in a public-oriented and efficient manner appeared to spring from a sense of genuine indignation; "because it is their job!" according to a woman in Nairobi. Others, however, were simply dissatisfied with, or exhausted by, the irregularity and deficiency of the status quo. Where one is at pains to constantly 'hustle', negotiate, and build 'wasta' to secure the basic need of security, the notion of a codified and regularised system solely dedicated to ensuring general security seems unimaginably appealing.

This aspiration for an objective and professional security provider (in each case, predominantly imagined as the state) should encourage policymakers and practitioners to invest in helping to build and preserve impersonal, rules-based security and rule of law systems. The case studies also demonstrate how the unique intricacies of each society shape local security provision. As such, the development of rules-based arrangements must be contextually calibrated, anchored not only in technical proficiency but also in cultural and social consensus. This counsels against the installation of external security models, in favour of a gradual transition to rules-based systems that both uphold and are upheld by domestic national values.

4 Conclusion

The provision of security is uniquely attuned to the social history of each local context. Even where governments have largely monopolised and codified the use of force, regional and local particularities arise in how - and for whom - security is provided. State policing laws in Tucson Arizona differ from those in New York City, which deviate from ordinances in Fairway Kansas. This is to say nothing of the law and order idiosyncrasies that distinguish Berlin from Barcelona. The rule of law accommodates such variations by demanding clarity, predictability and universal compliance rather than operational uniformity. For security assistance policy, this implies that supporting the indigenous development of equitable and reliable systems is more pertinent than seeking to instil particular practices or institutions.

From three empirical case studies, each rich in contextual detail, this research has sought to distil advice and pertinent considerations for engaging in urban contexts of plural security. The first set of conclusions must be to subject some initial assumptions about urban governance to reassessment. It is safe to say that the characterisation of the city as a place where state propinquity can nurture more responsive and accountable public servants was not upheld in any of the three case studies. Likewise, the presumed comparative ease of coordinating citizens' interests in densely populated urban spaces must be adjusted to provide for contexts of social fragmentation, where competition appears the more likely outcome of citizens' interface. That public services can be more efficiently and directly delivered in cities could perhaps remain a central ambition, but in reality proved entirely contingent on the state's willingness or ability to manage such projects. Finally, the point that local governments are unable to wield control over state security institutions could, ultimately, not be properly checked, given that each locality represented a state capital. However, the idea that local level governance actors are compelled to deploy non-coercive methods of social control was apparent in each case.

Moving on to the aim of developing relevant advice, the research has been largely successful in drawing out pertinent considerations that challenge and could enhance current security assistance policy and praxis. At the core of modern security assistance programmes, such as security sector reform (SSR), community policing, and human security initiatives, security is promoted firstly as a public good. The case studies underscore just how elusive this notion is in contexts where universal citizenship⁵¹ and parity cannot be assumed.

Plural providers described in the case studies appear ill suited and disinclined to serve the security needs of those outside their own constituencies, thereby confirming much of the literature.⁵² Rather, social mechanisms and interpersonal relationships tend to supplant any reliance upon a

51 Young (1989)

52 For example, Meagher (2012); Hills (2011); Kirsch & Grätz (2010)

state provider. Therefore, initiatives that focus exclusively on these actors are not likely to improve the felt security of wide swaths of the local population.

Similarly, the case studies also demonstrate that access to security providers is often distributed unevenly across societies, and more so in socially fragmented contexts. Support channelled solely toward strengthening a particular provider, even those endowed with 'formal' or 'state' pedigree, is therefore likely to benefit only certain sections of the populace, and may even elevate the privilege of dominant groups. In Nairobi, for example, the police and courts are perceived to act as servants, not to the public, but to the middle and upper classes. Building the capacities of these institutions, without broadening their client base, is not likely to have a positive impact on the security of the most marginalised.

Policy recommendations and agenda for future research and innovation

The implications of the research for policymakers seeking to promote more effective security assistance in contexts of plural provision are profound, with potential resonance in fields of policy and practice as diverse as conflict prevention and peacebuilding, democratisation and good governance, and post-conflict stabilisation. Policy recommendations in this synthesis report will focus on the implications in three areas of policy and practice: (1) security sector reform, (2) community policing, and (3) efforts to foster stronger, safer communities.

Security Sector Reform

While strengthening police's tactical and technical capacity is often the objective of security sector reform programming, this research endorses a focus on strengthening their public accountability and extending their commitment to serve the wider populace. What is more, nurturing civilian oversight should be a priority within the state security institutions, but developing oversight mechanisms for actors outside of the state's purview provides scope for worthy innovation. Similarly, standards of practice meant to increase the responsiveness and curtail the power of state security providers could be inventively adapted and shared with neighbourhoods and communities to help civilians benchmark and evaluate the performance of various local security providers.

SSR programmes and practitioners should avoid and remain vigilant against activities or strategies that may divert the accountability and loyalty of local providers away from their constituent base. A core principle should be that those who are most directly impacted by the actions of security providers (of any stripe) should possess the quickest and surest instruments of recourse against misconduct. This is of particular salience when external actors feel tempted or obliged to engage local security providers, and thereby may risk manipulating those actors' locally derived priorities and commitments.

Community Policing

In communities affected by high levels of violence and disorder, community policing programmes (though variable in form and function) are well placed to help develop modalities that appropriately circumscribe the power of local security providers. Developing popular control measures at the level of the individual community member is one central step in stimulating evolution toward more publically responsive protection mechanisms. While community policing initiatives often focus on community engagement with the police, this research indicates this approach may be too exclusive. Due consideration should be given to how the benefits and strategies of community-oriented policing could be similarly applied to increasing the public responsiveness of other providers. Advocating for universal standards of practice or developing divisions of labour (for

example between enforcement and arbitration) could help regulate and distribute power more evenly among diverse actors.

What is more, working at the level of communities, and seeking to build relations between people and their designated guardians, can facilitate interactions between various parallel providers that may help to reduce competition and expand inclusivity. It should be acknowledged that the political, financial or social-identity drivers of competition between different security actors are not likely to be easily or quickly subdued. Initiatives will require local savvy, innovation and long-term durable dedication. However, much the same could be said of relations between police and community members, which has always been the focus of community policing initiatives and should therefore not present an insurmountable barrier.

Greater awareness should be built around the proclivity for community policing mechanisms, whether state-run or informally organised, to become predatory or surveillance devices. Distinguishing between arrangements built to collect information (or other resources) and systems built to respond to security needs lies, indeed, in verifying the associated response mechanisms. Arrangements that are primarily one-directional, with information (or other resources) travelling up and out, and/or are highly selective in terms of what merits a reaction are likely to be designed in the interest of actors wishing to keep tabs on local constituencies.

Fostering stronger, safer communities

A key insight of the research is that security entails more than designated security providers. Rather, feeling secure also requires social predictability, public accountability and set social parameters that constrain the actions of the protected and protectors alike. In this way, human security programmes are well placed to help address the wider social determinants of security. Attention could be invested in encouraging social cohesion within communities alongside building social capital across identity groups. In the case studies, both objectives have been directly linked to increasing inclusion and felt security.

The research also points toward the importance of reliable public utilities and services not only for the convenience and safety they provide, but also for enlivening and confirming the social contract. With this in mind, supporting and enabling citizens to make effective demands on wider public services can increase their experience of and claim on basic entitlements, including – but not limited to – security. In a city context, this could include supporting participatory urban planning projects, or helping to organise peaceful activism to improve or install necessary public works and infrastructure. It could also involve, regardless of the context, supporting public debate and oration classes and competitions to activate and energise populations who may have grown cynical or passive after years of state neglect.

Based on the preceding policy recommendations, an agenda for future research and innovation is outlined below.

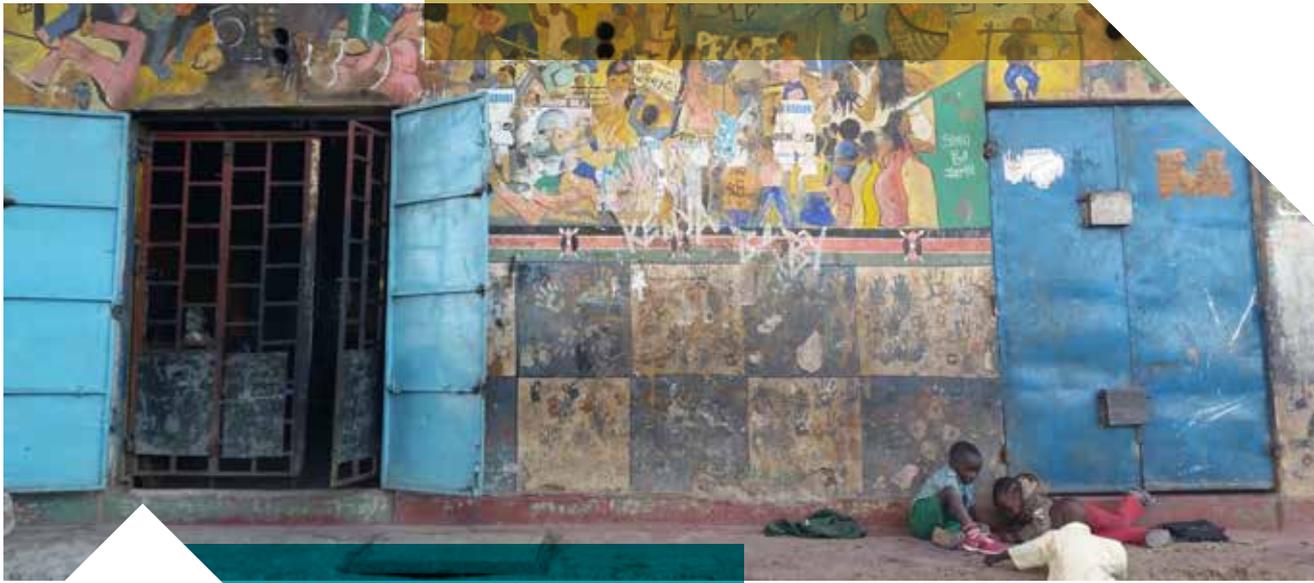
I. Enlarge the scope of the evidence base and deepen the research optic, in order to ensure that international and national policymakers and practitioners are able to draw upon empirical, nuanced, contextualised evidence in developing responses to citizen insecurity. Specific actions might include:

- Expand the number of cities involved in comparative study, especially to poor and highly fragile or conflict-affected states, and to middle-income, high-violence countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Explore the potential of geo-spatial mapping and new modes of data collection to visualise and increase understanding of how different security providers occupy territory and overlap or interface with each other.
- Add a historical and sociological perspective on the dynamics of security provision, beyond contemporary 'snapshots'.
- Work with counterfactuals and scenarios to identify good practice in incentivising security providers to respond to citizens' needs and leveraging public resources to improve outcomes for marginalised groups.
- Analyse how patterns of security pluralism in contexts of social fragmentation diverge from those in contexts of pervasive social cohesion.

II. Experiment with new strategies and tools for strengthening citizen security in contexts of pluralism. The transformation from a relational to rules-based system must be expected to proceed at a generational (rather than political) pace. However, intermediate steps can provide important signs of progress along a circuitous course of evolution. The transition will require changes in the way people and groups relate to one another, and how power is attained, asserted, contested and curtailed. These amount to social transformations, not typically found in the security assistance playbook. For those committed, engagement will demand not only longer-term horizons and objectives, but also a new repertoire of security assistance strategies and methods, including:

- Tackle the more pernicious aspects of security pluralism, especially the lack of accountability and systemic exclusion, through means such as increasing civic space and institutionalised mechanisms for asserting public oversight of all security providers.
- Identify and invest in intermediate steps to move from relational to rules-based security systems, including SSR interventions that address the panorama of security actors, and the development of popular oversight mechanisms and functional divisions of labour amongst security providers.
- Address the social determinants of security through efforts to strengthen social cohesion, collective efficacy, inclusive notions of the public good, and policies designed to expand access to public services to reduce citizens' experience of insecurity and reliance on divisive or variable actors.



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