

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Toolkit for Drafting
and Consultation

January 2021



AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

National Security Strategy Development in Africa: A Toolkit for Consultation and Drafting

January 2021

Africa Center for Strategic Studies
Washington, D.C.

National Security Strategy Toolkit Working Group

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Acknowledgements

The toolkit benefitted from the thoughtful review, revisions, and expertise of Dr. Fairlie Chappuis. Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Ms. Amanda Dory, Col. (Ret.) Tim Mitchell, Dr. Miguel Ferreira da Silva, Col. J. B. Matton, Dr. Adedeji Ebo, Hon. Brownie Samukai, Col. (Ret.) Edwouard Mbengue, and Col. Ali Mahamadou Issa provided valuable feedback on an early draft of the toolkit during a review meeting in Gaborone, Botswana. Mr. Jerome Mellon and Dr. Philipp H. Fluri provided thoughtful reviews of subsequent drafts of the toolkit. Dr. Anouar Boukhars, Dr. Catherine Kelly, and Dr. Nathaniel Allen provided additional candid in-house reviews of the toolkit. Thanks also to Mr. Joel Amegboh, Mr. Carl Pilgram, and Ms. Marian Okpali for their editing and considerable research support.

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SECTION 1: KEY ASPECTS OF NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

One of the core functions of any government is to provide for the security and safety of its citizens. Security, moreover, is a precondition for sustainable investment, jobs creation, and development, which are the preeminent priorities of many African governments. Security, thus, is central to the confidence and trust that citizens have in their government.

Yet, most African countries do not have an overarching national security strategy. The lack of a grand strategy inhibits prioritization of security threats, effective coordination, and alignment of resources. Without a national security strategy, there is no shared understanding of national security vision and objectives, and no national basis for leveraging partnership assistance. As a result, in too many African countries, security provision does not serve the public good.

National Security Strategy Development (NSSD) is a process of policymaking about how to deliver better state and citizen security. As such, it provides an opportunity to forge a new social contract between a government and its people.¹ Although the African Union has provided general guidelines for its member states to develop national security strategies, there are limited tools available to help African governments with the process.

The main objective of this toolkit is to describe a consultative process and serve as a resource to aid national and regional stakeholders in African countries to craft or review their national security strategies. While this toolkit provides guidance to the process, it is not a blueprint. Each country will have to adapt the process to the unique national context and develop homegrown approaches in crafting strategy.

This toolkit was developed and informed by the Africa Center's experience advising various African countries in their NSSD processes, as well as additional case studies,² inputs from African security sector professionals, and other relevant resources on this topic.³

REASONS TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

A National Security Strategy (NSS) provides a unified national strategy for democratically legitimate defense and public security provision. A NSS explains how a nation defines security and safety and how it intends to achieve it. It is a document that describes the fundamental values a society prioritizes in providing for national security and public safety. It is also a practical document that allows all elements of the security sector to align their own sector-specific strategies and internal policies to achieving these objectives in respect of these values.

An NSS is a product of national discussion and dialogue about what is important according to the immediate security context and shared priorities of a society. Because national security and public safety are sensitive subjects about which people can disagree, the process of discussing alternatives and arriving at consensus for a shared national vision is fundamentally important. Such discussions will usually involve multiple consultations, an effort on all sides to understand the views of others, and a readiness to find compromise when opinions or priorities conflict. Achieving consensus through discussion and dialogue makes the outcome document a more stable basis for security provision than if a small circle of decision-makers or experts impose a vision that is not widely shared or does not reflect the values of the society it is intended to protect.

Box 1. Reasons to develop an NSS

Rationales for developing national security strategies include the following:

- To enhance service delivery in the area of national security – including people’s right to security – through informed dialogue
- To increase confidence of the local population in the State and its institutions through dialogue and active, free, and meaningful participation of all stakeholders in security sector
- To provide strategic national guidance to the establishment of effective, human rights-compliant and accountable security institutions that deliver appropriate services to both the people and the State
- To ensure security resource management that is driven by inclusive national priorities and is cost-effective, sustainable, and part of transparent national budgeting processes

To increase aid and partnership effectiveness through ensuring that external partners

and donors have a national strategy to which aid and partnership can be aligned and harmonized

- To create conducive investment environment that will enhance foreign confidence and investment in other sectors by linking security policy to national development priorities such as the Sustainable Development Goals
- To enhance regional confidence building by reaching out to neighboring countries based on a national security strategy
- To ensure sustainable growth through environmentally friendly utilization of natural resources for job creation and sustainable economic development

Source: United Nations (UN, 2012:119-120)

NSS Process Matters

Because the process of creating an NSS is an important determinant of its success, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders have access to the process and meaningful opportunities to influence decision-making. The process of drafting and reviewing an NSS is most effective when it includes all relevant political stakeholders as well as the public at large. While discussions of some aspects of national security or public safety require discretion and should be conducted behind closed doors, the fundamental values and priorities at stake in an NSS should be openly discussed.

Given the ever-evolving security environment, an NSS often has to be updated and remade as national, regional, and international conditions change. An NSS responds to the current and predicted security conditions that will affect the nation and its people. It provides a mid- to long-term vision that can guide structures and policies in support of national priorities. Because conditions of safety and security can change and often quickly, there is a need to continually review national provisions for security and public safety. At the same time, the need to update an NSS should be balanced against the investment of time and resources required. While each context varies, the process of developing an NSS typically requires 6-18 months.

Values at the Core of NSS

An NSS is a **values-based** discussion about what is important to the nation. It expresses a shared national vision of security developed through consultative public discussion of core national values and priorities, such as:

- ◆ Providing for state and human security (not the security of a particular political administration or only a part of the population)
- ◆ Describing a peaceful yet defensive stance on national security, which signals to regional and international partners a commitment to peace and stability (instead of a potentially offensive national posture which signals aggressive intentions towards other states)
- ◆ Aligning national security with priorities for national development so the security sector can provide safety that enhances the well-being of the population (instead of absorbing a disproportionate amount of national resources that could have been spent on other national priorities, such as health and education).

NSS is a Practical Tool

An NSS is also a **practical tool** that defines what the security sector should be working to achieve. The values and priorities set out in an NSS define the missions and tasking for security sector institutions responsible for the provision, management and oversight of security. Ideally, an NSS defines roles and objectives for each security sector actor based on an approach that makes sense for the sector as a whole. Effective strategy and policy designate roles and missions across the security sector, which can then be translated into guidance for planning and budgeting for each security sector institution. Tangible outcomes that depend on NSS include sector-specific structures, policies for engagement and service provision, and capability requirements. An NSS typically aims to provide a mid- to long-term vision of security objectives that can guide security sector incentives, structures, and needs over the next 5-10 years. Longer term considerations must also be taken into account because they influence short- to mid-term decisions—for example, decisions about procurement and investments in defense infrastructure.

An NSS is also linked directly to budget decisions about security provision because the NSS provides a basis for rational allocation of public resources for security. Budgets should provide the minimum amount necessary to reasonably achieve the objectives defined in an NSS. Budgets should be guided by a rationale maximum efficiency in the use of public resources as well as accountability and transparency in the use of those funds. Because objectives always outstrip the resources available, one of the most important practical functions of an NSS is setting clear priorities among various objectives so that parliaments and security sector institutions can make values-driven choices about resource allocation.

The practical goal of an NSS is that the security sector is able to conduct security operations appropriate to legitimate and shared national objectives, within available resources, and with acceptable levels of risk. With this goal in mind, an NSS can also serve to:

- ◆ Adapt national security responses to changes in the security environment
- ◆ Encourage a break with the past and signal a new direction in foreign and security policy
- ◆ Provide a coherent basis for force planning and guidance for major reforms
- ◆ Align security provision to major domestic goals such as economic development

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

National Security in a Stable or Transitioning Democracy

An NSS sends a message to neighboring states, the regional neighborhood, and the world, about how a country perceives its security situation. It provides an opportunity for a country to signal that the security of its people is its highest priority, and that national defense and public safety are important for this reason.

In transition contexts, where borders may be in dispute or armed actors may challenge the authority of the state, the NSS can signal to all actors that threats to national integrity will be met with measured and appropriate respect for human rights and international law. An NSS can also help to deescalate international or regional tensions by signaling a defensive posture and outlining key alliances and shared interests. Transparency in intentions and a defensive military posture are hallmarks of responsible security policy in a democracy and help contribute to peace.

Conflict-Affected Contexts

A new NSS can be especially helpful in contexts affected by conflict because the drafting process provides an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss the terms of future security provision. Such discussion helps make peace more sustainable and can supplement transitional arrangements or peace agreements. A formal peace agreement or a transitional arrangement may have brought an end to conflict, but these documents and agreements rarely go into sufficient detail about future security governance. A comprehensive and thorough discussion of national and public security as part of the drafting of an NSS allows for all stakeholders to build on the terms and principles already agreed to under a peace agreement or a transitional governing arrangement. Achieving a clear and

transparent agreement about the priorities and values for future security provision can build confidence between the state and the population, as well as former combatants, and help to make peace more sustainable.

Reform Contexts

A new NSS is often crucial in contexts where the security sector is undergoing reform. A national conversation about the values and priorities for security provision brings clarity to the objectives of reform. Sectoral plans for reform can then be aligned to reflect these objectives, which helps ensure reforms are enhancing the ability of security institutions to achieve their respective missions effectively. An NSS is also a useful tool for national governments to manage and coordinate international support for security sector reform because it provides a blueprint for external actors on how to support national priorities. Without such guidance for coordination, there is a real danger that external support will work at cross purposes with national priorities and ultimately undermine the ability of the security sector to perform effectively. Ensuring that national reform priorities are well-anchored in a comprehensive and inclusive NSS strengthens the prospects of effective reform.

Varied Security Contexts Within a Country

An NSS should be a comprehensive description of a state's security priorities. If the security of every part of the population is not provided for, then the strategy will be incomplete. An inclusive NSS therefore considers how different elements of the population may face different security threats and ensures that the security sector can respond appropriately. Location, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, and poverty are factors that shape how different sectors of the population experience safety, so an inclusive NSS must take these factors into account. Making sure that an NSS is drafted by a diverse range of experts and representatives helps ensure a more inclusive approach to security and can result in a more comprehensive strategy for public security. Public consultation is also an important factor in making sure the security needs of all parts of the population are met, as well as raising awareness about what the public can expect from security providers no matter their identity or social status.

ENHANCING SECURITY THROUGH INCLUSIVE NSSD

All citizens have a role in NSSD. This may entail a civilian policymaker representing the interests of the nation and the public, a security professional providing expertise, or the public, whose interests and taxes are at stake, and in whose name the NSS is being created.

An NSS covers a broad range of security actors responsible for all aspects of both internal and external security, as well as civilian agencies involved in dimensions of security governance, and the input of all will likely be required at some stage of the process.

An NSS is strengthened by ensuring that a wide range of actors are involved in the process of discussing, drafting, reviewing, and approving plans for national security and public safety. In non-democracies, an NSS may be created by the office of the executive (president or prime minister) or sometimes the Ministry or Department of Defense. Such strategies often focus too narrowly on strategic military considerations and represent the interests of the ruling party of the time. Narrowly framed NSS provide a weak basis for security provision.

At a fundamental level, an inclusive NSS process reinforces the understanding that national security is about protecting citizens and not threatening them. An inclusive NSS process can also help allay fears about addressing sensitive security topics, or issues which it might have been dangerous to discuss in the past. A variety of perspectives and skill sets can also encourage candor in discussion, and lead to useful critique and higher quality outcomes. For all these reasons, an inclusive process can produce a higher quality NSS.

Range of Stakeholders in Inclusive NSSD

Representatives of the following governance stakeholders can be involved in NSS development at various stages of the process and in different roles:

- ◆ Security providers, such as military, police, intelligence, border authorities, and wildlife protection or fire services
- ◆ Security sector management institutions, such as ministries or departments of defense, international affairs, justice, internal security, interior, home affairs, or similar
- ◆ Independent oversight bodies whose mandates for oversight relate to security, public safety, and the performance of the security sector, such as anti-corruption commissions, national human rights institutions, or ombuds institutions for security institutions
- ◆ Government authorities who are not directly responsible for security provision but whose role affects the ability of the security sector to perform its missions effectively, such as ministries or departments of foreign affairs or state, education, public health, prisons or corrections, veterans' affairs, finance, commerce, and trade
- ◆ Parliaments, especially committee members with governance and oversight roles related to security
- ◆ Community leaders and local or regional representatives, both formal officeholders and traditional authorities
- ◆ Civil society actors and organizations, such as researchers and academic experts or

community representatives who can address specific aspects of security

- ◆ Media professionals committed to accurate and objective public service journalism

In conflict-affected contexts, the NSSD process will benefit from the input of independent statutory institutions or agencies of government with mandates specifically related to a peace process or post-conflict issues. For example, in Liberia the Governance Reform Commission served this purpose. In Ethiopia, it was the Ministry of Peace. There may also be independent oversight and management bodies whose mandates relate to aspects of security and the implementation of peace agreements or transitional arrangements, such as national commissions for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), small arms and light weapons (SALW) control, or electoral security and reform. There may also be representatives of armed non-state groups whose involvement in some stages of the process can ensure that an NSS is a true reflection of the actual security situation and responds to the threats that all sectors of the population may feel. Ultimately, a more inclusive process makes for a stronger, more realistic, and more robust dialogue about security and leads to more effective outcomes.

Stakeholder Roles in NSSD

Ensuring that an NSS process includes a broad range of actors does not mean that all actors should be involved at every stage or that they all play the same roles. Below are some examples of the roles that various actors typically play:

- ◆ **Executive:** The executive has political authority to initiate an NSS process and provides political support to its development, typically the President or Prime Minister's Office.
- ◆ **Process lead:** Appointed by the executive or parliament depending on how the NSS is initiated, the process lead is responsible for planning the NSS process from start to finish. This role is often the responsibility of a central coordinating body for security policy, such as the Office of a National Security Advisor, a National Security Council, or a Department/Ministry of Defense.
- ◆ **Security institutions:** The security providers are responsible for implementing an NSS by developing their own sectoral strategies to align each institution with overarching NSS objectives. In order to ensure that an NSS is practical, security institutions need to contribute information about the threat environment, their current capacity levels, and the feasibility of possible responses to a new NSS.
- ◆ **Security management institutions:** Government ministries and departments responsible for management and oversight of security institutions will need to contribute expertise, data, and analysis to ensure an NSS addresses security concerns related to the exercise of their specific mandates.

- ◆ **Related government ministries and departments:** National security policy has to serve the larger priorities of a state's relationship with the outside world and its own ambitions for national development, so ministries responsible for foreign affairs, trade, finance, and economic planning should all be involved in the NSS process. Aspects of security sector planning and management such as recruitment, service conditions, infrastructure development, and deployments also intersect with national policies for health, education, gender or women's affairs, and environment (among others), so relevant ministries should also be consulted on aspects of NSSD.
- ◆ **Parliament:** Parliaments may be involved in initiating an NSS through new or existing legislative initiatives. For example, some parliaments have created the obligation for a government to review or update an NSS on a regular basis. Parliaments can also enhance the democratic legitimacy on a new NSS by voting to approve it once it has been drafted. Parliaments can vote to approve a draft NSS either at the invitation of the executive or at their own initiative. In some rare cases, parliamentary approval of an NSS may be necessary before it can enter into force. Whether parliament explicitly initiates or approves an NSS, they are always the authority responsible for allocating public resources to the security sector so involving parliamentarians in NSSD is more likely to lead to a strategy that can be implemented with full parliamentary support.
- ◆ **Civil society:** Civil society can be a source of information about the current security situation and public priorities for security, as well as expertise on viable solutions. It may act as a sounding board for new approaches to security provision, a source of technical expertise on a large range of topics, and a means of communicating with communities and the public at large. It may be asked to provide input as experts in the planning and drafting stages, to take part in public consultations that add democratic legitimacy to the review and validation process, and become partners in the dissemination of an NSS so that it reaches the public at large.
- ◆ **Media professionals:** The most important source of public information on security policy and provision is the media. Critical journalism, which has a high level of understanding about security issues, help the public understand and interpret the stakes of security issues under discussion in an NSS. Media are also a key channel for security institutions to communicate more effectively with the public they are supposed to serve.

Ensuring that an NSS is drafted in an inclusive way does not threaten the integrity of national security decision-making or exposes sensitive information to public scrutiny. While some aspects of an NSS may entail discussion of classified or secret information, these discussions can be limited to a smaller circle of participants among those who have been vetted and approved to handle sensitive information according to the requirements of the law. However, the majority of discussions of the content of an NSS should not require such a degree of sensitivity. Moreover, they need to reflect a broad public consensus about appropriate priorities and a shared vision for national security and public safety. For this purpose, an inclusive NSS process is essential to arrive at a viable consensus of what is important.

SECTION 2: DEVELOPING AN NSS

An NSS is a unified national vision for democratically legitimate national defense and public security provision. Yet every country is different and a NSS must reflect the unique situation and priorities of the society that produces it. The United Nations proposes a generic framework of seven phases for NSSD, but case studies of African experiences clearly show that each process is context specific. There is no universal blueprint, no one-size-fits-all approach for NSSD, although there is common logic to the process that many governments have passed through in their own NSSD processes. The following steps draw on these experiences as well as core African principles for SSR developed by the AU⁴ and a set of SSR norms and principles developed by the United Nations.⁵

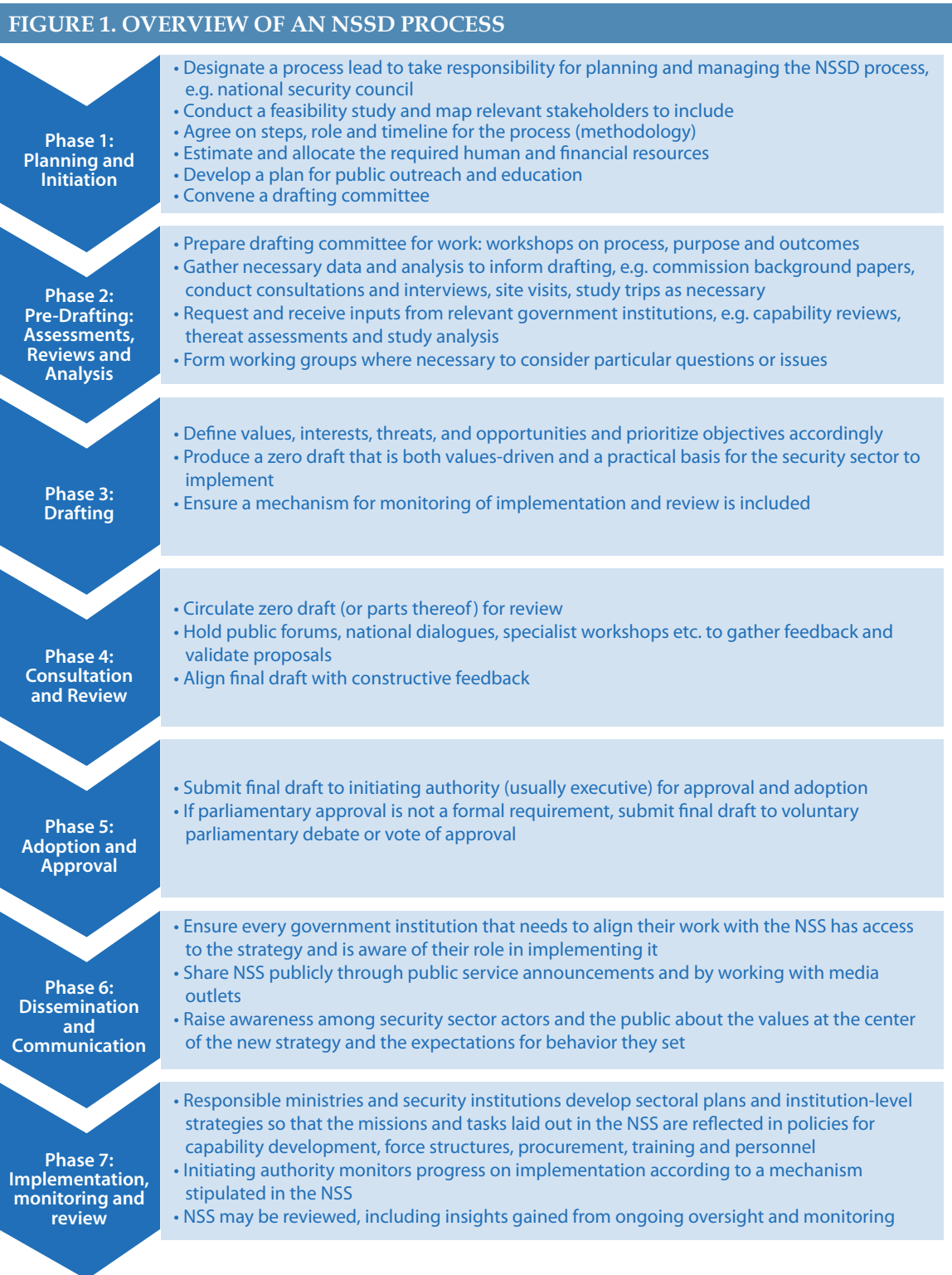
PHASE 1: INITIATION AND PLANNING

The goal of this first phase is to assess the need for NSSD and arrive at a comprehensive and detailed plan by which it can be undertaken. A sound plan includes all necessary activities from background research to drafting and consultation through revision and adoptions of the final draft. Expected outputs resulting from each activity at each phase need to be defined together with the resources that will be required. Dissemination and public communication of the final product should also be part of the plan. Once a feasible plan is drawn up, it is best subjected to wider consultations with the relevant institutions and stakeholders before it is presented for the approval of the relevant authorities.

Initiating the Process

Once the practice of NSSD becomes a regular part of how the security sector works, the need to create or update an NSS may be triggered by regular political or governance processes, such as budgeting processes that require presentation of sectoral policies and strategies for the security sector, the development and implementation of a National Development Plan, or a change of government following elections.

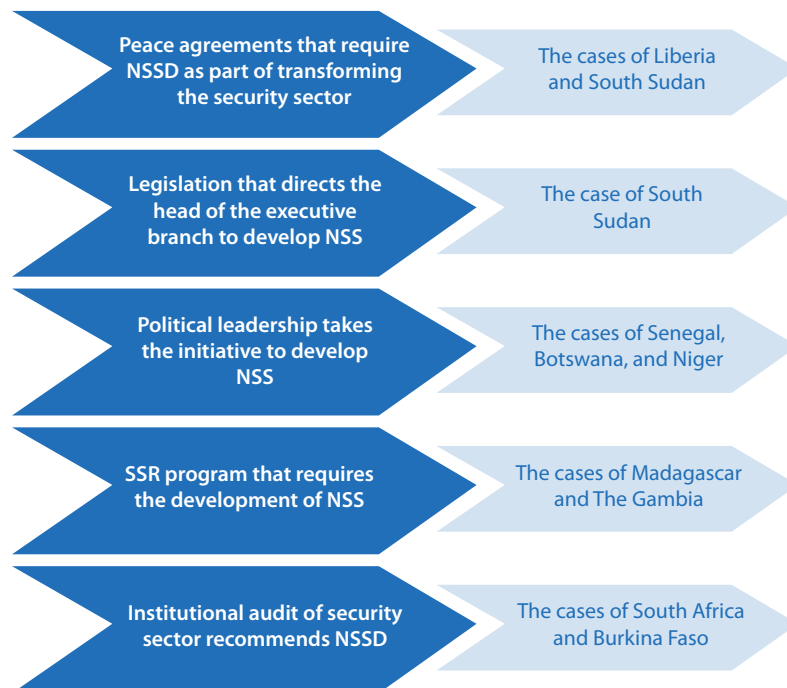
Typically, the primary responsibility for initiating NSSD lies with the executive, which will delegate management of the process to an appointed authority, which then needs to ensure that consultations are inclusive. But different national contexts have different legal and political mechanisms for initiating NSSD, such as the following:



- ◆ An NSS may originate in the Office of the President or the Prime Minister as a political project of the executive
- ◆ Parliament may pass new legislation requesting or requiring the executive to draft a new NSS or to review an existing one
- ◆ The requirement to develop and review an NSS on a regular basis may be a standing requirement of the law, for example, on a 5-yearly calendar or whenever a new administration takes office
- ◆ International support to national security and development projects may create new incentives for NSSD to serve as a basis for coordinating and aligning support around national priorities
- ◆ A national authority may decide to develop NSS based on the AU Policy Framework for SSR, which identifies an NSS as a core element of an SSR program

Having a widely accepted legal or political basis for drafting an NSS can help bolster the legitimacy of the process itself and bring in a wide range of potential stakeholders. Having input in the process from representatives of all parts of the political spectrum, as well as society, is especially important in places where politics are contentious, and peace is fragile. It is only on the basis of a broad-based and inclusive national consensus about national security priorities that an NSS can contribute to security and peace.

FIGURE 2. AFRICAN EXPERIENCES INITIATING NSSD



Assigning a Process Lead

Whichever national authority is responsible for initiating the process, the first step is to delegate the responsibility for managing the NSSD process to a capable individual or institutional body. Different NSSD processes have led the process in different ways but common variations include:

- ◆ A National Security Advisor
- ◆ The Chair of a National Security Council
- ◆ A high-level political appointee in the Office of the Prime Minister
- ◆ A minister appointed at cabinet level (defense or, less often, intelligence)
- ◆ A standing parliamentary committee
- ◆ An independent statutory institution
- ◆ A specialist steering committee created on an ad hoc basis, especially for the purpose of NSSD

Whether an institution or an individual is tasked with leading the NSSD process, they will need to be supported with secretariat functions and technical advice. Sometimes the capacity to provide this kind of support is more important in the decision about which institution will lead NSSD than the legal or statutory role of the delegated authority. For example, in The Gambia, where a national security council was provided for in the constitution but nonfunctional at the time of the NSSD, an ad hoc steering committee was appointed to the task instead. In the cases of Senegal and Niger, the National Center for Strategic and Security Studies (CHEDS) and the Center for Advanced Defense and Security Studies (CNESS)—think tank institutions affiliated to the government—have been respectively entrusted to facilitate the process of NSSD in the two countries. In particular, CNESS was established by the President and mandated to oversee the NSSD process besides other functions related to defense and security. Each context may require its own creative solutions as long as the responsibility for leading the NSSD process falls to an actor with the capability and political will to see the task through.

Whichever option is chosen, the most important element is that the delegated lead authority is a credible figure and/or body, with the full political support of the executive, and ideally the entire government. In contexts where security is contentious because of histories of conflict or low levels of trust in government and the security sector, it may be especially helpful to have an independent committee appointed to lead the process or to nominate an independent state institution to lead the NSSD process. This was the choice Liberia made when the Governance Reform Commission was appointed to lead the development of Liberia's first NSS following the long and catastrophic war that ended in 2003.

Effective Process Planning

The most important role of the process in NSSD is to plan for an effective and affordable process and ensure that each phase moves forward in a way that is credible, participative, and legitimate. Necessary to this first task is developing a sense of what the process will entail and the human and financial resources that will be required to get it done.

To get to this point, the planning phase may involve the following tasks:

- ◆ Conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the need for the process and what its scope should be
- ◆ Mapping out the range of stakeholders whose participation will be necessary to develop a participatory and broadly inclusive NSS
- ◆ Seeking to build trust and confidence between national stakeholders, who may be skeptical of the political intent or consequences of the process
- ◆ Reaching an agreement among key stakeholders on how the process will unfold, how long it will take, and the roles and responsibilities of those involved
- ◆ Estimating the required human and financial resources and ensuring they are available to see the process through to completion
- ◆ Gauging public awareness of the need for NSSD through proactive outreach to civil society and the public, including via critical media

On this basis the initiating authority and the process lead can issue clear terms of reference for the process in terms of the rationale, purpose, scope, and methodology for producing the NSS.

Allocating Resources

Successful NSSD requires adequate financial and human resources. It is essential at the outset to plan a process that can be realistically costed and to ensure financial and human resources are available in full for each stage of the process. Where financial or human resources cannot be secured for any stage of the process, the process should be adapted to align with the resources available. While this may result in a less than perfect outcome, a less than perfect NSS can be reviewed and improved on in future and is usually more useful than nothing at all.

Human resources: Credible and well-trained experts are essential to every step of NSSD. Better outcomes result when a diversity of expertise are involved in NSSD, including personnel from the security sector (both military and non-military); civilian policy and security experts drawn from government, parliamentarians, and staff; academic

and professional policy specialists who are independent of government; civil society representatives; and people of diverse ethnic, religious, and gender identities who can address multiple dimensions of security that concern the population directly.

Financial resources: Adequate funds to cover the administrative and logistical costs of the full NSSD process should be forecast and assigned before the process begins. Costing a plan for NSSD should begin with mapping all the actors and stakeholders who will have a role to play in the NSSD process. Their role, the timing, and the responsibilities asked of them will provide a guide for the investment of time and therewith the cost of participation. In some cases, the funding of the NSSD may require a supplementary budget if the required resources are beyond the contingency budget. A credible estimate also provides a realistic basis for international support where national resources are not available or insufficient. It is a principle of good practice and a matter of national ownership that national governments participate in the funding of NSSD even when substantial international financial and human resources are made available to support the process, as has been the case in many African states.

Ensuring that adequate human and financial resources are available for the entire NSSD process before it begins is important so that delays in funding or available expertise do not stall the process at a later date, undermine political momentum, or themselves become politicized.

Setting Realistic Timelines

An important part of the planning for NSSD is to assign realistic timeframes for each stage of the process. On the one hand, it's important to make sure this is enough time to consider appropriately all the necessary information, provide for inclusive consultation, and incorporate input from consultations into the final product. A high-quality process cannot be conducted in a rush. Discussion and dialogue that leads to consensus over difficult issues takes time. On the other hand, long delays and hold-ups can drain momentum from the process and undermine its credibility. Delays also increase the financial cost of the process itself. A long NSSD process can also mean that political opportunities for change might be missed. It can also make a NSS more difficult to implement since important decisions about policy, strategy, and resource allocation will have to be made at the institutional level without the benefit of a coherent national strategy: Sometimes the consequences are costly or time-consuming to correct. An NSS also provides a coherent rationale for budget decisions, which means that it may be difficult for parliaments to oversee the financial probity of the security sector and assign resources within an NSS. Also, the longer an NSS takes to develop, the more likely it will be that changes in the security situation or the political context will overtake the process.

For all these reasons, it is prudent to plan the entire process in advance according to a detailed timeline. The steering committee should be committed to respecting the deadlines within the process it creates and to holding other stakeholders to the same standard. Having a timetable can also create useful pressure to resolve differences of opinion in a timely way and keep the process moving forward when it may otherwise have stalled.

While each context is different and the lead authority will need to assess the specific national situation carefully, there are examples of NSSD in African states that have taken a few months to a number of years. In general, more inclusive processes allowing for wider public consultation take longer, but many inclusive NSSD processes have been able to complete their work within 6-18 months. The clock begins on implementation and monitoring of progress once the NSS is approved and adopted, so timeliness for realistic implementation should be part of the analysis that feeds into strategy development.

Convening A Drafting Committee

Drafting committees are the individuals who will be tasked with producing the text of the NSS. They come in various configurations and roles:

- ◆ Drafting committee members may be appointed by the executive or parliament, or a mixture of both
- ◆ The drafting committee may be a standing body responsible for NSSD on a periodic basis or appointed ad hoc for a single cycle
- ◆ The drafting committee may be assigned specific tasks to complete as part of the process or asked to define the content of the NSS from scratch
- ◆ The drafting committee may be assigned interim deadlines or asked to set its own
- ◆ The drafting committee may be a small or large group, but around 12 members is typical
- ◆ The drafting committee may be divided into functional or issue-specific workgroups and subcommittees to facilitate the work
- ◆ The process lead may be involved directly in drafting or may review or simply approve the draft the committee produces

Whichever configuration the drafting committee takes, it will be important to clarify from the outset the terms of reference under which they will work. This includes defining their relationship and division of labor with the authority that has initiated the process and the process lead. In some cases, the initiating authority is closely involved in the drafting process, sometimes as a chair of a drafting committee. This arrangement can lead to the perception that the political authority is dominating the process and may stifle

open discussion. To avoid this situation, drafting committees are often tasked to complete their work independently of an initiating political authority and with only organizational support from the process lead. Drafting committees may also be established in such a way that they can act with more autonomy, for example, when a parliament nominates the members or drafting responsibility is assigned to an independent statutory body. When an initiating authority maintains close control over the drafting process, its credibility can still be enhanced, for example, by appointing a diverse panel of external experts and representatives to review the NSSD and the draft strategy at various stages. In this case, provisions need to be made to assure that panel has access to all the information they need and that their recommendations will be taken seriously.

While consultation and inclusion are important at each phase of NSSD, making sure that the drafting committee is diverse and inclusive is especially important because it gives formal weight to a diversity of opinions, which can create dialogue and lead to more robust consensus that is more likely to reflect a broader range of views. African NSSD processes have used a variety of configurations for their drafting committees. In some countries, as in the case of Senegal, the drafting committee is divided into specialized subcommittees, a coordination committee, and a national commission, which includes prominent elders and resource persons. In the case Burkina Faso, a high-level scientific committee was formed to act as a sounding board for the entire process of NSSD.

Box 2. A diversity of opinions for NSSD in Burkina Faso

The Scientific Committee for NSSD in Burkina Faso was formed to provide:

- (i) strategic and scientific guidance and orientation of the NSSD process
- (ii) conciliation of various competing interests and final resolution of the contested issues during the process
- (iii) guidance and briefing of the President, his cabinet and key actors in security sector

It consisted of independent experts including six highly respected retired service personnel from defense (army, air force, gendarmerie); two retired Inspectors General of Police; one parliamentarian; and six seasoned professional lecturers from the national university representing a broad variety of disciplines (anthropology, political science, history, constitutional law, linguistics, and development economics).

PHASE 2: PRE-DRAFTING: ASSESSMENTS, REVIEWS AND ANALYSIS

The pre-drafting phase is the moment in the NSSD process when the drafting committee gathers all the information, evidence, and inputs it needs to analyze in order to be able to produce a first, or “zero,” draft of the NSS. Typically, this stage involves inputs from state institutions, which the drafting committee will need to take into account, such as national threat assessments or capability reviews. But drafters should also be prepared to ask their own questions and take a proactive role in gathering the necessary information and views to create a draft.

The drafting committee sometimes begins work by drafting or commissioning background papers on various aspects of national security that can then support the development of a consolidated draft. Sometimes specific tasks are assigned to subcommittees or working groups that may turn to wider expertise. However, this kind of drafting process can be more expensive and time-consuming than when the main drafting committee handles drafting itself.

Understanding the Starting Point: Security Sector Assessments

An NSS has to reflect both the way things are and a shared vision for how they should be. In order to formulate a strategy that can credibly lead towards a new situation it is critical to first assess the current state of affairs, existing capabilities and likely developments. For this purpose, NSSD begins with a series of background assessments or studies by relevant government agencies tasked with providing a snapshot of how things are and how they could be. An objective and realistic summary of the current situation is the best basis for stakeholders to clarify their own priorities and vision for national security, and to agree on a strategy for achieving it.

A typical starting point for NSSD is an assessment of the current state of security sector management, oversight, and the roles and capabilities of the security sector. It might be called a mapping, an assessment, a review, an audit, a technical paper, or something else, but the purpose of such an assessment is to provide a factual summary of the current legal basis, responsibilities, and capabilities at the state’s disposal for security provision. Such an assessment can answer the key questions laid out below (see Figure 3).

On the basis of such an assessment of existing security institutions, drafters can identify gaps, inconsistencies, duplications, or inadequacies in terms of institutions, sectors,

Figure 3. Key questions for a security sector assessment

What are the key legal frameworks and policies that currently address security? Are they up to date and publicly available?
Is there a commonly agreed upon definition of national security, public safety, and the security sector?
What dimensions of security does the current legal and policy framework address? Are there gaps, duplications, inconsistencies, or inadequacies that the NSS could address?
Are the security concerns of all members of the population accurately reflected in current legal and policy frameworks for security provision, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, or other identity factor?
How are national security threats and opportunities identified, assessed, analyzed, and reviewed?
How are threats and opportunities relevant to public safety identified, assessed, analyzed, and reviewed?
How have security policies and strategies been formulated in the past, and were citizens involved? Have they been successfully implemented and monitored?
What is the perception of citizens about their security and safety? Who sees the security sector as trustworthy actors they could turn to if they experienced different types of problems, and who does not?
What international and/or regional commitments to security has the country already made? Have they been incorporated into domestic law?
What government agencies or institutions have responsibilities under the law for the provision, management, or oversight of security?
How are security sector responsibilities mandated under the law and distributed among security sector actors? Do responsibilities overlap or intersect?
What mechanisms or processes for cooperation or coordination among security actors exist?
Are security sector agencies and institutions sufficiently prepared to meet their responsibilities for security provision? What is their current level of capacity and are there gaps in personnel, equipment, or training?
What resources has the state invested previously in security, and what resources are available in the short, medium, and long term?

various legislation defines roles and responsibilities of various security institutions and agencies, the nature of current threats usually blurs the division of labor and necessitates collective, cooperative, and coordinated responses. In assigning roles and responsibilities and identifying overlaps and gaps, some countries—such as Liberia—used a matrix of institutions (current and new ones if needed) and prioritized security threats under the main security objectives. Such an exercise may help the drafting committee not only in determining the division of labor between security providers, but also in assigning leading and supporting roles to various institutions in responding to specific security threats. Coming up with viable proposals for how to assign lead and support roles among security institutions is likely to require consultation with the institutions concerned as well as a wider circle of experts.

Assessments of this kind may be produced by the executive body responsible for managing the NSSD process or experts appointed by the drafting committee, but such reports will still require cooperative and expert input from a broad range of government sources, including the ministries responsible for management of security institutions (such as defense, interior, justice, intelligence, etc.), as well as ministries of finance and foreign affairs, among others.

Such an assessment of institutions and agencies in the security sector may already exist, but if it does not (or if its accuracy and relevance is questionable), then the drafting committee may commission a technical paper to assess what the roles of the main security institutions and agencies should or might be in addressing national security and public safety.

Understanding the Context: Developing a Threat Assessment

Developing a threat assessment that identifies threats and opportunities in the NSSD process is the first step in applying a strategic logic and should be based on a thorough assessment and analysis of the security environment and context. In assessing and mapping national security threats and opportunities, countries use different classifications, such as:

- ◆ External and internal
- ◆ Global, regional, and national
- ◆ Short term and long term
- ◆ Security interests (vital and strategic)
- ◆ Dimensions of security (state, societal, and human security)

In general, national intelligence agencies are best placed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the security environment and the threats and opportunities it presents. Preparing such assessments on a regular basis may already be part of the existing mandate of a national intelligence agency or a centralized agency may be tasked to gather and analyze intelligence related to threats to security specifically for the purpose of NSSD. However the mandate originates, it is important that such an assessment not only include state security, but is also expanded to include dimensions of national security and public safety that reflect the priorities of the population.

With a thorough assessment of the security environment, the drafting committee will be in a position to provide a clear and concise national security problem statement. A problem statement summarizes the most important characteristics of the security environment—both challenging and promising—as well as likely impacts on the future of national security and public safety if no immediate action is taken.⁶

Given the dearth of comprehensive and quality information related to security threats and uncertainties in Africa, the drafting committee will need to adopt certain assumptions to fill this information and knowledge gap. Assumptions are necessary in NSSD because it is impossible to have perfect intelligence or knowledge of the current situation or the future, yet such assumptions must be made with caution because they can also undermine

the NSSD process if they are not made explicit or widely accepted as credible among experts.⁷ Assumptions that shape NSSD can be based on threat assessments, but it is important they are clearly stated and supported so that drafting committees can assess their relevance. Drafting committees must carefully reflect on the critical constraints that may interfere with key assumptions or inhibit the effective implementation of NSS, such as, weak institutions, time, limited resources, or challenging policy and legal environments.

Assessing threats and opportunities for national security will often reflect differences in fundamental knowledge and access to information. This can lead to differences in interpretation and analysis that can be usefully discussed and evaluated within a diverse drafting committee and in consultation with relevant security institutions and stakeholders. Differences in assumptions and interpretations can also be put to public consultation in the consultation phase.

Where a single national intelligence agency holds the centralized mandate for producing a threat assessment, differences or possibilities for interpretation based on competing assumptions should be resolved at the working level as part of the analysis process. Where several agencies share a mandate to produce threat assessments relevant to different aspects of national security, these various reports can be consolidated into a single assessment for the use of the drafters. This task may fall to a National Security Council or similar body with delegated executive authority. Sometimes agreement cannot be achieved on the analysis among different institutions, or doing so may be considered too political. In this case, differences can be overcome by making conflicting assessments available to a wider circle of experts and stakeholder so that a consensus evaluation can emerge or constructive disagreements about possible threats and opportunities can also be considered.

On the basis of a credible assessment, threats and opportunities need to be prioritized and ranked in order to provide an effective division of labor, allocation of resources, and response to each security threat. Some countries use different criteria for ranking and prioritizing security threats and opportunities such as the likelihood of various threats and opportunities, the severity of the consequences if they do occur, and whether they will require immediate and urgent attention and response.

Understanding Different Points of View: Consultation to Support Drafting

In preparing their draft, committee members draw on these background papers and assessments, but they can also conduct public consultations, interviews with experts or stakeholders, as well as study trips and visits to nourish their analysis. Consulting a

variety of stakeholders on an inclusive basis about all aspects of the security sector and the security environment is an important part of the pre-drafting phase that enhances NSSD in several ways:

- ◆ Completes the information supporting drafting
- ◆ Gaps in technical knowledge may be bridged
- ◆ Weak arguments, errors, and omissions may be identified
- ◆ Points of confusion can be clarified
- ◆ Potential political pitfalls can be identified and addressed
- ◆ Builds support for the NSS and helps to allay fear of change among a wide array of stakeholders within and beyond government
- ◆ Raises awareness about the process and its outcomes among the public at large

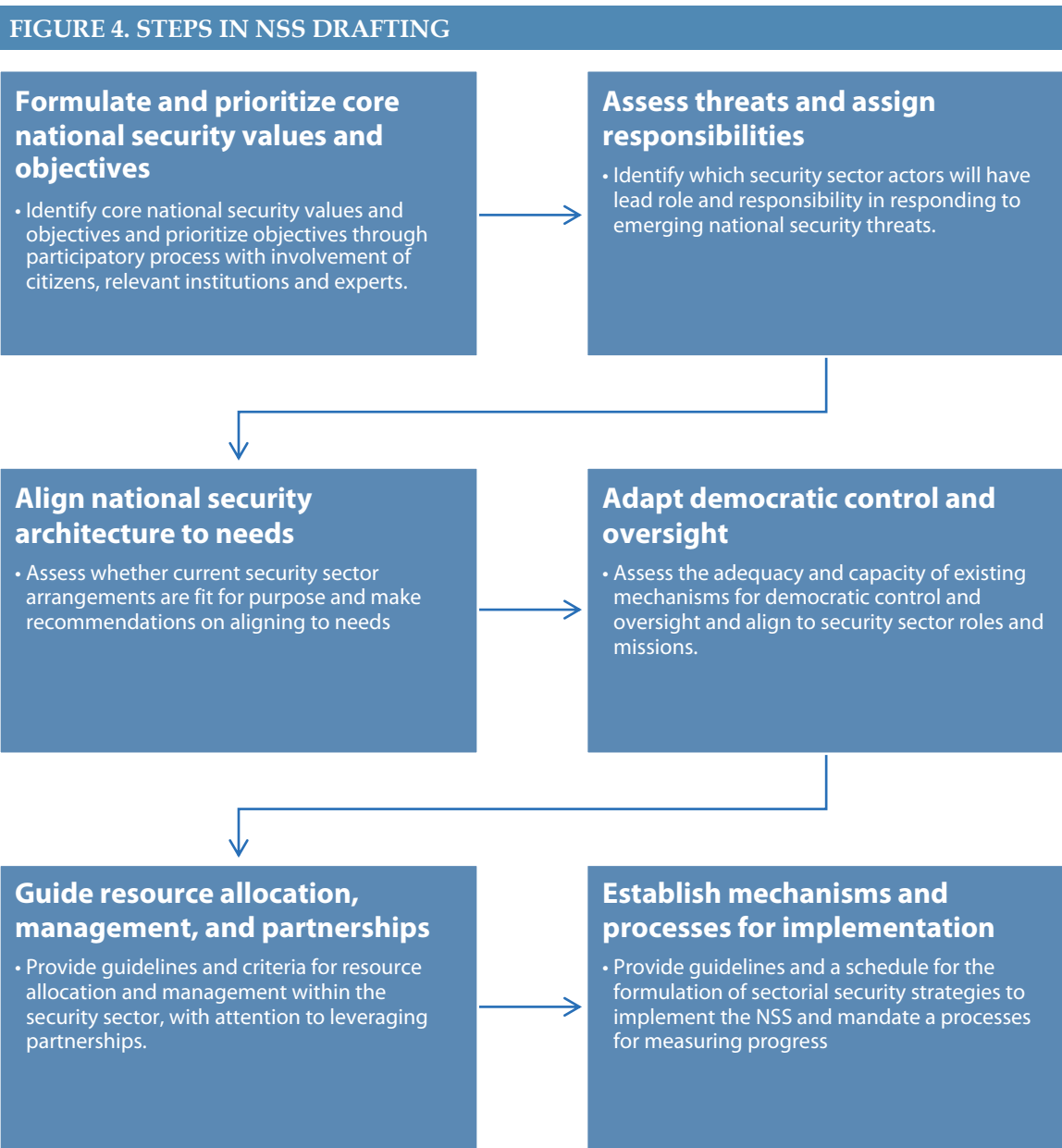
A “stakeholder mapping/analysis” is a beneficial tool that will help the relevant players to make sound decisions and identify the “right” people. A stakeholder mapping also gives drafters a sense of how actors perceive the current situation, which may add a level of preparedness and informed material for the negotiations of the NSSD. Drafting committees may consider several formats for inclusive consultations:

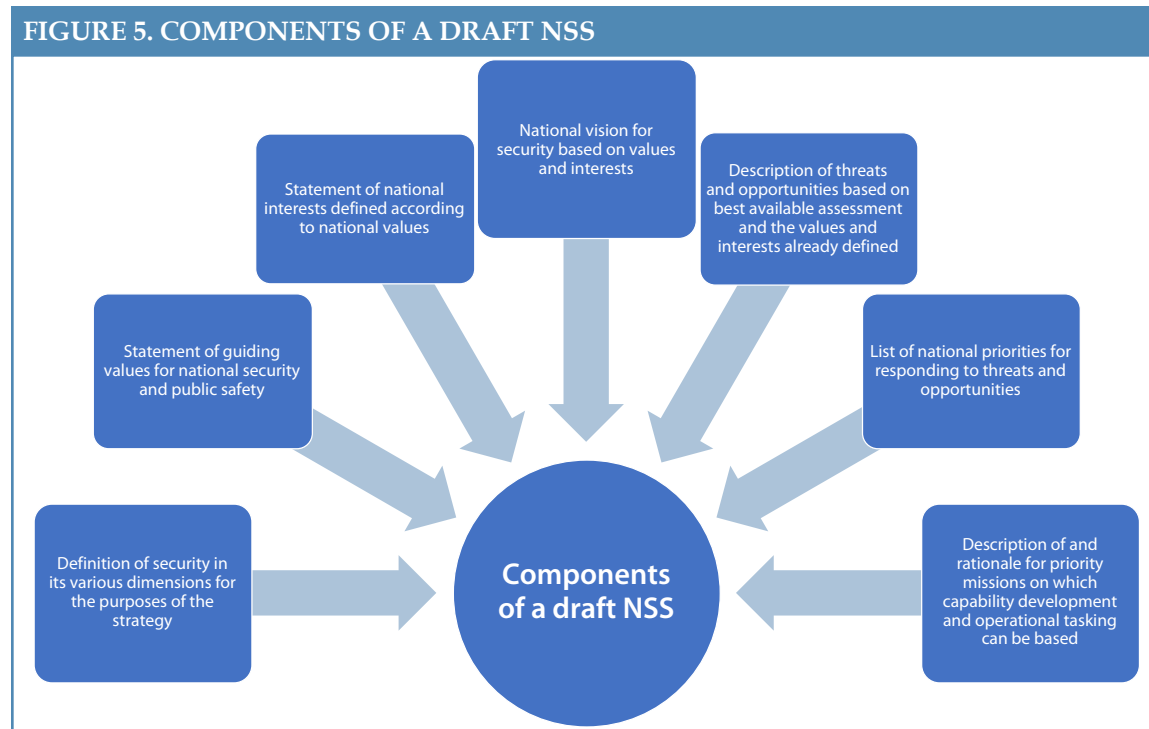
- ◆ **Formal consultations** through a series of meetings, initially at sectoral level and then at national level with representation from all relevant stakeholders
- ◆ **Informal discussions** with key stakeholders that may have concerns about the process, or whose interests may be affected through the process of NSSD
- ◆ **Public outreach** through sensitization campaigns and national dialogue to share information with the public and solicit public opinion about the NSSD process

Technical briefings may also be followed by NSSD exposure workshops for representatives of relevant institutions and wider stakeholders.

PHASE 3: DRAFTING

With the necessary background information, assessments and preparatory consultations complete, the drafting committee will be ready to begin creating a first version of the NSS. On the basis of African NSSD as well as practices from other countries in the world, the typical elements of NSS drafting are described in Figure 4 on the next page.





Sometimes legislation dictates certain mandatory elements that have to be covered in an NSS. However, it is more common for the drafters to decide what to include or exclude according to their analysis, supporting evidence, and the outcomes of inclusive public consultation. Typically, an NSS includes the elements outlined in Figure 5.

Defining Security

The drafting committee will need to establish a definition what it means by “security” as a basis for all its work. This definition should be commonly agreed to and accepted by a wide range of stakeholders so it may also be a subject of early consultation with public stakeholders, especially civil society. Sometimes a definition of security is already available in the constitution or other relevant laws. However, such available definitions may not reflect the contemporary or popular understanding of security. In lieu of such definitions, the drafting committee may provide a definition that reflects public concerns and the most prevalent security threats and challenges facing the country. It is important that the drafting committee agree on a common understanding of “security” and all its dimensions related to national defense, domestic security, and public safety concerns, as this will affect the formulation of other elements of the NSS. The AU’s definition of “security” adopted by its member state may guide the definition process. The views of citizens will be necessary in the process of defining national security as well.

BOX 3. LIBERIA'S DEFINITION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

The 2008 National Security Strategy of Liberia defines “national security” as the process of “ensuring the protection of all of Liberia’s citizens, its sovereignty, its culture, its territorial integrity, and its economic wellbeing.”

An NSS must reflect the specific and unique security context of the state that is producing it, as well as the priorities of the public it is intended to protect. Security has many dimensions, and the drafting committee must weigh carefully which should be considered national priorities. Some aspects of security to consider include:

- ◆ **Security governance:** Considerations of the effectiveness and accountability of the government systems in place to manage security, including institutional mechanisms for efficient and professional management, budgeting, financial probity, transparency, and oversight.
- ◆ **Economic dimensions of security:** The relationship between security and national development priorities; security as a precondition for healthy economies, e.g., ensuring freedom of movement and the rule of law, limiting crime, protecting trade routes and access to borders, etc; appropriate, efficient, and reliable funding mechanisms that also guard against misuse of national resources.
- ◆ **Environmental security:** The mandate to protect natural resources as a matter of national security (e.g., defense of maritime rights; protection from illegal poaching or exploitation of land, forestry, or mineral resources; and protection of water reserves and natural resources/habitats necessary for food production) and the mandate to avoid or minimize potential environmental damage in carrying out their core security functions (e.g., protection of natural habitats or food production areas used in training or operations).
- ◆ **National defense:** Considering the protection of the state and its sovereign and territorial rights, principally focused on core military roles and responsibilities with provision for related internal security sector support roles, for example, in border management, domestic law enforcement, and intelligence gathering.
- ◆ **Public security:** Focusing on creating and maintaining conditions of public safety based on rule of law and respect for human rights, principally through law enforcement roles divided among police, gendarmerie, border authorities, and specialized law enforcements agencies (for example, wildlife protection and specialized units in non-security agencies, such as financial investigators)
- ◆ **International legal frameworks for security:** Signaling the nation’s stance toward its neighbors near and far, including through commitments to international frameworks for security (such as the UN Charter) or regional security arrangements or strategies (such as the AU Common Security and Defense Policy), and ensuring security policy is aligned to honor such commitments, including participation in

international or regional treaties, agreements, and their coordination bodies

- ◆ **Transparency and access to information:** Making provisions for effective communications among security providers through effective coordination of national security policy, and ensuring a high standard of public education and transparency about non-operationally sensitive aspects of security policy, for example through reference to access to information laws and classification schedules.

Establishing Shared Values and Vision for Security

Fundamentally, NSSD is about balancing competing interests in a society, which entails difficult and important decisions. In order to reach decisions that are as credible and as legitimate as possible, it is helpful for the drafting committee to establish a set of principles and values to guide the process. These key principles are usually provided in the national constitution, as well as commitments of member states in the covenants and agreements of regional, continental, and international organizations. The African Union provides a comprehensive list of core principles and values that underly the Common African Defense and Security Policy and AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform.⁸ Public consultations are also an important way of validating the values that guide NSSD and ensuring they reflect as much of a national consensus as possible.

Values are important in formulating a shared vision for security: This is the desired future security state for the nation, and it is closely linked to cultural, political values. As a vision for the nation, it must be realistic, credible, inspiring, and future-oriented.⁹

BOX 4. LIBERIA'S NATIONAL VISION FOR SECURITY

The 2008 National Security Strategy of Liberia articulates the national security vision as “a country in which all the population can live without fear of repression and suppression, poverty, crime, hunger and unemployment; a society in which Liberians can freely express themselves and make decisions about the way in which their country is governed.” National security was also the first pillar of Liberia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the national vision for security was part of achieving these larger national goals.

Some countries adopted genuine and nationwide consultation in articulating their national vision that is anchored to their traditional values such as Botswana. The 2016 Botswana Vision and its revised 2036 Vision has since incorporated the spirit of *Botho*, which is derived from its cultural heritage, into the principles of democracy, development, self-reliance, and unity, which have guided the country’s socioeconomic development and provision of security (see Box 5). In the case of Botswana Vision 2016, a “safe and

secure nation” was one of its seven pillars, and it may provide in the future the basis for formulating its national security vision.

Formulating a “national security vision” is a good starting point for the drafting committee to envision together the desired future security situation of the country. The discussion and agreement on a national security vision will inform the discussions and articulation of other elements. If such a national security vision exists in other legal or policy documents, the drafting committee may revisit it in the light of changes in understanding. Formulating a national security vision is one of the elements that may require guidance from the political leadership and a nationwide consultation. An inclusive process that builds on shared values to establish a vision for security is more likely to reflect the real security concerns of the population and to enhance the legitimacy of the government and the security sector through its implementation.

BOX 5. AFRICAN VALUES FOR A NATIONAL SECURITY VISION

The 2016 Botswana Vision defines Botho as a process for earning respect by first giving it, and to gain empowerment by empowering others. It encourages people to applaud rather than resent those who succeed. It disapproves of anti social, disgraceful, inhuman, and criminal behavior. There are similar salient values like Botho across different cultures of Africa, such as Mbuntu/Ubuntu in southern and central Africa and Kurukan Fuga (UNESCO, 2006). Ubuntu is derived from a Nguni (isiZulu) aphorism which can be translated as “a person is a person because of or through others” (Moloketi, 2009). In West Africa, there is the African embodiment of a human-oriented conception of social peace in diversity, inviolability of the human being, coexistence, and dignity. These values are the ones that define and preserve Africa. In formulating a national security vision, the drafting committee may consider anchoring such a vision to some traditional values similar to Botho or Ubuntu.

Identifying and Prioritizing National Security Interests and Objectives

The drafting committee is expected to identify national security interests, as well as the threats against them and opportunities for action to protect them. This process will be directly informed by the definition of national security, the guiding values and national security vision, and the assessments and data gathering conducted in the pre-drafting stage.

Many countries only list national security interests without prioritization but it is best practice to categorize them either into most important and secondary concerns¹⁰ or value

them on a scale of “vital,” “important/major,” and “peripheral.”¹¹ Instead of listing all national security interests, the drafting committee may consider only the core interests. Nationwide consultation on values, and interests can help set national security priorities by discussing trade-offs in public fora. This also helps ensure the NSS is focusing on what matters most to citizens and is aligned with public expectations.

After developing a priority list of national security threats and opportunities and providing a clear problem statement of national security, the drafting committee will be in a position to formulate the **core objectives** to address national security threats and opportunities. As national security interests can be broad, core objectives are sometimes informed by the political agenda of the incumbent leadership. Some countries prefer to define a limited and precise number of national security objectives, which is also a way of prioritizing.

Prioritization of interests helps in articulating other elements of NSS and in its implementation by providing a basis against which to choose among options and make decisions about resource allocation. Prioritizing a number of core objectives thus guides the formulation of more specific and subordinate objectives in sectoral security strategies. The AU provides key objectives and goals for its common defense and security policy that may be relevant in formulating national security objectives.¹² Broad and inclusive public consultation is key in ensuring core national security objectives reflect the views of citizens.

Assigning Responsibilities and Adapting the Security Sector to Meet National Security Objectives

Once the objectives for national security are clear, drafters will need to assign lead and supporting responsibility for meeting each objective. This division of labor will depend on the existing mandates, missions, and capacity of security institutions. It will also be informed by the priority list of national security threats that have been established.

There is often a need to clarify roles and coordination mechanisms, either because objectives may require responses from multiple security actors, or because legislation does not create a clear division of labor to begin with. Avoiding confusion and competition in mission definition is paramount. Moreover, security threats are likely to cause overlapping of responsibilities that may necessitate coordinated responses. If coordination and decision-making mechanisms already exist and are functional—such as a National Security Council or its equivalent—the drafting committee may need to review the efficacy of such mechanisms and institutions. Discussing and agreeing on the relevant and appropriate vertical and horizontal coordination models will also be necessary and may require expert opinion and advice.

Once the division of labor among security institutions is clear, it remains to assess whether the security sector in its current configuration actually has the capacity to achieve the objectives it has been tasked with meeting. This can entail changes to the national security architecture as well as the way that it is managed and overseen. Drawing on the assessments prepared in the pre-drafting phase and wider consultations with relevant institutions, drafters will be able to identify any gaps in legislation, mandate, or capacity that will need to be addressed, although the drafting committee may commission another paper or assign a specialized subcommittee to assess certain issues. At a sectoral level, issues of institutional harmonization, cooperation, coordination, and leadership may arise. At institutional levels, the number of security forces, their respective status, force structures, records, and force strength might need to be adapted.

Adapting the national security sector to meet its objectives also means ensuring the various institutions responsible for democratic control and oversight have the authority and competency to fulfil their roles. The drafting committee will need to assess the effectiveness and possible gaps in the current oversight mechanisms and institutions. The drafting committee may also consider the mechanisms and institutions the AU suggests to its member states to strengthen democratic control and civilian oversight of security sector.¹³ Below are some key oversight questions drafters can ask when mandates, missions, and security objectives change:

- ◆ Are processes and regulations within security institutions adequate to the task of identifying and sanctioning violations of rules?
- ◆ Are adequate safeguards in place to ensure that security personnel and the public at large do not face undue risk in the course of security actors fulfilling their missions?
- ◆ Are the ministries responsible for managing security institutions able and willing to provide internal oversight of the institutions they oversee?
- ◆ Is parliament sufficiently knowledgeable about security affairs to provide active oversight of the quality of performance of each of the security sector institutions?
- ◆ Is the judicial system able and willing to prosecute suspected violations by security personnel? Are codes of justice adapted to ensure that security personnel are accountable before the law?
- ◆ Do independent statutory oversight institutions (such as ombuds institutions, national human rights institutions, anti-corruption commissions, audit offices, inspector generals, etc.) exist and do they have the necessary mandate and resources to examine cases involving the security sector?
- ◆ Does the legal framework define the responsibility of the security sector to uphold the law and protect the public? Are laws and regulations sufficient to provide a clear and consistent basis for democratic oversight?

- ◆ Are effective mechanisms in place for allocating budgets in a transparent way and verifying that resources are used and accounted for as foreseen by policy and law? (This concerns both the parliament and the ministries responsible for administering budgets.)
- ◆ Is access to information necessary for effective oversight and media coverage guaranteed for all relevant oversight institutions?

Ensuring a Practical Basis for Implementation

Once the vision, interests, threats, and opportunities for security have been identified against a values-driven definition of security, the NSS will need to connect the broad priorities for security into missions and tasks that the security sector can perform. This last aspect is crucial to ensure that a national vision for security will become an actionable policy that has real impact on security provision. Guidance for implementation should reflect the resources each state has available for security and how their use will need to change to meet the security objectives laid out in the NSS. Drafters will need to consult with the relevant security institutions and experts to consider aspects of implementation. This should cover the following:

- ◆ **Human resources:** Number of personnel, level of training, attribution, and potential redistribution
- ◆ **Physical infrastructure:** An assessment of what infrastructure and equipment is already in use, whether it is up to the job it will be asked to do, and what will be necessary and feasible to ensure it is sustainable
- ◆ **Management:** Quality of administration and management at the level of security institutions and their line ministries and their ability to implement change
- ◆ **Financial:** An estimate of national resources available to finance security, which should be made available at the outset of the process so that drafters can ensure the strategy they develop fits within the budget envelope that is likely to be available

Once the NSS vision and objectives are translated into realistic missions and tasks for the security sector, drafters will need to address resource allocation to the security sector and the prudent management of such resources. An NSS may not be worth the paper it is written on without resources allocated for implementation (e.g., financial, human, institutional, specialist competencies, legislation, and equipment). The practice of African countries with national security strategies, such as Liberia and Nigeria, is that resources for the implementation of the NSS may be allocated directly to the development of sectorial security strategies. The exception is resources needed for the establishment of new institutions recommended as part of the implementation of the NSS. The expected role of the drafting committee is to provide general guidelines for the allocation and

management of resources in the security sector and the expected outcomes of such investments. In order to have an informed process for providing guidelines for allocation and management of security resources, the drafting committee may seek opinions from experts by considering the following options:¹⁴

- ◆ Conduct, with support from development partners, a Public Expenditure Review (PER) to transparently examine resource allocations to the security sector, assess the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of those allocations and to identify the necessary reforms needed in budget processes, with the aim of improving the efficiency of public spending in the security sector
- ◆ Review Public Financial Management (PFM), with support from development partners, to assess the quality of budget execution with the aim of identifying necessary reforms

The approval of an NSS may mean that the security sector budgeting process itself will need to change in the light of new national security objectives and vision. In particular, the institutions and agencies of the security sector will have to be fully integrated into the national budgeting process and be subject to the same budgetary regulations as other non-security line ministries and institutions. Some countries have established a security sector budget working group that consists of government spending agencies and development partners and meets annually to produce annual budget sector plans that set priorities and resource allocation to the security sector. If such changes are necessary, then this should be integrated into the NSS.

Crafting a First Draft

Based on the above components, the drafting committee can create a “zero” draft text for circulation and review. Box 6 describe the key elements that a NSS usually includes.

PHASE 4: CONSULTATION AND REVISIONS

Consultation is a necessary element of each phase of NSSD, from the early phases of planning the process and gathering the necessary information to inform the drafting, through to finalization and dissemination. Making consultation as inclusive as possible at each phase of the process helps to solicit a variety of views and produce a final product based on a sound operational and political consensus. With a “zero draft” complete, launching a process of inclusive and broad public consultation as part of NSSD both draws public attention to the process and gives more weight to the recommendations and inputs that result. The consultation phase of NSSD is crucially important in order to strengthen the final version.

BOX 6. KEY ELEMENTS OF A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY DOCUMENT	
Executive Summary	The summary of the content of the document in terms of vision, interests, security threats and objectives and course of action to address threats and realize the vision.
Introduction	A brief background of security environment that necessitates the formulation of national security strategy, the process that was followed in formulating the strategy and how such strategy fits into the national vision.
Purpose and Scope	A brief statement of the purpose of the strategy and how it is different from other sectoral security strategies or the current national security strategy. Also, to state the scope of its coverage in terms of security threats it intends to address and how it helps in providing overarching strategy for the review of current sectoral security strategies and crafting of new ones.
Definition of National Security Strategy	A brief account of the evolution of the concept of security in the country and how such evolution was informed by regional and international understanding of security. The commonly agreed definition of national security to be presented and, if possible, with its key pillars (state, societal and human).
National Security Vision	A brief articulation of national security vision (the desired future security situation). This must be linked to statements by head of state, constitutional provisions, national vision and values and regional and international obligations and commitments. Such vision must be within the time bound of the national vision, regional vision, or international vision 2030 of Sustainable Development Goals.
Guiding Principles and Values	A brief statement of the core principles and values that will guide the development and implementation of national security strategy.
National Security Interests	As in national security vision, the listing and prioritization of national interests will be informed by national values, speeches of head of state, preamble of constitution, national anthem and regional and international obligations and commitments.
National Security Threats, Opportunities	Thorough and strategic mapping of national security environment and geopolitical issues within the concept of strategic logic resulting in a concise statement of threats and opportunities, including the national security problem
National Security Objectives	Statement of what the strategy is aiming to achieve and the mission that various security agencies and institutions must accomplish to build foundation for the realization of national security vision and interests.
Roles and Responsibilities of Security Sector Agencies and Institutions	The division of labor between the various agencies and institutions in security sector on the basis of the priority list of national security threats (current and anticipated). This will include assigning the lead and supporting roles to various security agencies and institutions in responding to each national security threat.
National Security Architecture	The construction and/or redesigning of new national security architecture and coordination mechanisms and institutions in light of national security vision, objectives and threats (actual and anticipated), including mechanisms and institutions to ensure democratic control during the implementation of national security strategy.
Resources Generation for National Security Strategy	Statement of guidelines for the allocation and management of resources in various institutions and agencies in security sector as well as leveraging partnerships and security assistance in security sector.
Implementation Plan	Statement of guidelines for the formulation of sectoral security strategies for the implementation of the national security strategy as well as presenting implementation schedule matrix for NSS and mechanisms and processes for measuring progress in the implementation of NSS such as coordination, monitoring and evaluation and periodic review.

As security is one of the most important public goods that a government provides to its citizens, it is therefore critical that citizens are engaged in determining not only how their governments determine national security objectives and vision but also how they intend to achieve them. Ensuring inclusion and building consensus in a sector with a history of not involving citizens in formulating its policies and strategies may pose a real challenge. Political leadership from the initiators of the NSSD process will often be required to take the lead in launching, guiding, and driving public debate to ensure inclusion and building national consensus during the NSSD process.

FIGURE 6. FORMATS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION



Timing and Formats for Public Consultation

Timing is an important aspect of consultation because it needs to happen late enough in the process that substantive issues of real use to the drafters can be discussed, but also early enough in the process that feedback from consultations can materially shape the outcome document. For this reason, it is pragmatic to make consultation a distinct step between first and final versions. There are multiple options for public consultation, and these can be combined to broaden and deepen the quality of the feedback drafters receive (see Figure 6).

Participatory approaches such as focus group discussions may be the best way to solicit input from citizens on core issues of the initial draft rather than the entire draft. In some countries, the drafting committee conducts nationwide consultations with key stakeholders at subnational levels.

All aspects of NSS might be put to public consultation but public consultation is especially helpful for building the legitimacy of the process and producing a consensus document when it considers the following:

- ◆ The definitions of security, core values for the NSS, and the nature of national security interests adopted by the drafters
- ◆ Choice of national priorities: The process of NSSD is more likely to legitimate the government in the eyes of its people if people are involved in determining the prioritization of interests and in articulating key elements of a national security vision
- ◆ The nature of the security environment as described in the NSS problem statement and likely impacts on the future of national security if no actions are taken now

Given that such nationwide consultations are likely to produce variant views on national security, the drafting committee can reconcile these views into one coherent draft, the “reconciled draft.” In some countries the reconciled draft is subjected to further review and consultation with key stakeholders and some selected national experts. On the basis of the reconciled draft, the drafting committee may identify key elements of NSSD that will need further or more targeted consultation with different stakeholders.

PHASE 5: APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

Once the drafting committee has reconciled all the input from consultation into a final draft of the NSS, the drafting committee may consider risk testing the final draft. Risk testing is a process whereby the drafting committee together with selected competent national experts assess risks to the strategy or its implementation.¹⁵ In testing the risks

associated with the draft strategy, the drafters may be guided by the following questions:

- ◆ Will the NSS achieve its goals?
- ◆ Does the NSS position the country to respond to current security trends?
- ◆ Does the NSS embrace uncertainty and surprises?
- ◆ Does the NSS provide for flexibility?
- ◆ Is the NSS biased in any way or too optimistic on any points?
- ◆ Are financial resources available and adequate to implement the NSS?
- ◆ Is political will to implement the NSS sufficient?
- ◆ Is the NSS acceptable to citizens and regional and international partners?

Developing answers to these questions will assist the drafting committee in briefing the approving authority about the viability of the draft strategy.

Once finalized, the NSS is usually presented to the initiating authority for approval and adoption. The format for approval depends on how the process was initiated to begin with and varies in different countries. For example, where the executive has initiated the NSSD, the final version may then be presented to the entire executive for deliberations and approval. In some countries, both the National Security Council and the Cabinet approve the final draft strategy document to ensure political commitment.

Parliamentary Approval for Enhanced Legitimacy

Democratic governments need to explain and justify their policies, both to the parliament and to the public, and a key function of an NSS is to assist governments in meeting this obligation. For this reason, parliamentary approval of an NSS—even if it is not formally required—can enhance its legitimacy. Parliaments are not usually the initiator of the NSSD, but an NSS can still be submitted for parliamentary acknowledgement or approval at the request of the executive. In some countries, the executive presents the approved draft to the parliament to be deliberated, acknowledged, or endorsed. This can entail a debate and/or vote in the main chamber or may involve only the parliamentary committees responsible for security affairs or specific elements.

While this step is often not a requirement of law, it bolsters transparency of decision-making and helps build consensus for implementation. The legal approval of the strategy by the parliament or parliamentary acknowledgement of the strategy document can also help in ensuring national ownership and raising public awareness about the strategy. In some countries, the legislature’s legal approval of the strategy is not required so as to allow flexibility in the implementation of the strategy, but the parliament may be kept

regularly informed about the strategy. Whether parliament's approval of the strategy is required or not, parliamentary support for NSS will still be required for implementation through the power of political oversight and budget appropriations.

The role of parliament in NSSD in general is to ensure the views and interests of their constituents are represented in the national vision for security and its implementation. Where NSSD has involved inclusive and extensive consultation in its preparation and drafting phases, the views and concerns of parliament should already be reflected in the reconciled version of the draft and parliamentarians will already be familiar with the process and the rationale for the policy. In this case, open parliamentary debates or committee reviews are likely to be constructive and supportive of the policy. This also enhances the credibility of the document and the process that produced it, rather than generating critique or political opposition to its implementation.

PHASE 6: DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Approval of the NSSD should also extend to the development of a plan for dissemination and communication, both of which help gain political commitment and ensure national ownership of the NSSD process. The institution designated to oversee the NSSD or the drafting committee can design a coherent communication and dissemination strategy for the entire process of NSSD, but especially focusing on how the final document will be presented and shared.

Dissemination and communication of an approved NSS is the first step toward effective implementation. It is the part of the process when the content of the NSS is to be shared across all government departments and the strategy conveyed to the broader public. Broad and transparent dissemination and communication raises awareness among security sector actors and the public about the values at the center of the new strategy and the expectations for behavior the NSS sets.

Dissemination Among Security Sector Stakeholders

The goal of NSS dissemination among security sector stakeholders is to ensure that every government institution that needs to align their work with the NSS has access to the strategy and is aware of the need to implement it. This applies as much to the institutions responsible for security management and oversight as it does to those responsible for direct security provision.

Security sector institutions need to plan the implementation of NSS within their own administrative and management hierarchies. This process is more likely to reflect the true intent of the strategy when those asked to implement it have direct access to the content.

Disseminating an NSS within government and across all the institutions that will be charged with its implementation also raises awareness of the need to fulfill this obligation among security professionals, both military and civilian. This is particularly important when a state is making a transition toward a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable national strategy for managing its security. Dissemination within government of what was previously secret can send a clear signal of change within the security sector itself and may be especially important in contexts where security policy has traditionally been handled by a small number of security and executive stakeholders, and discussed only at the highest levels.

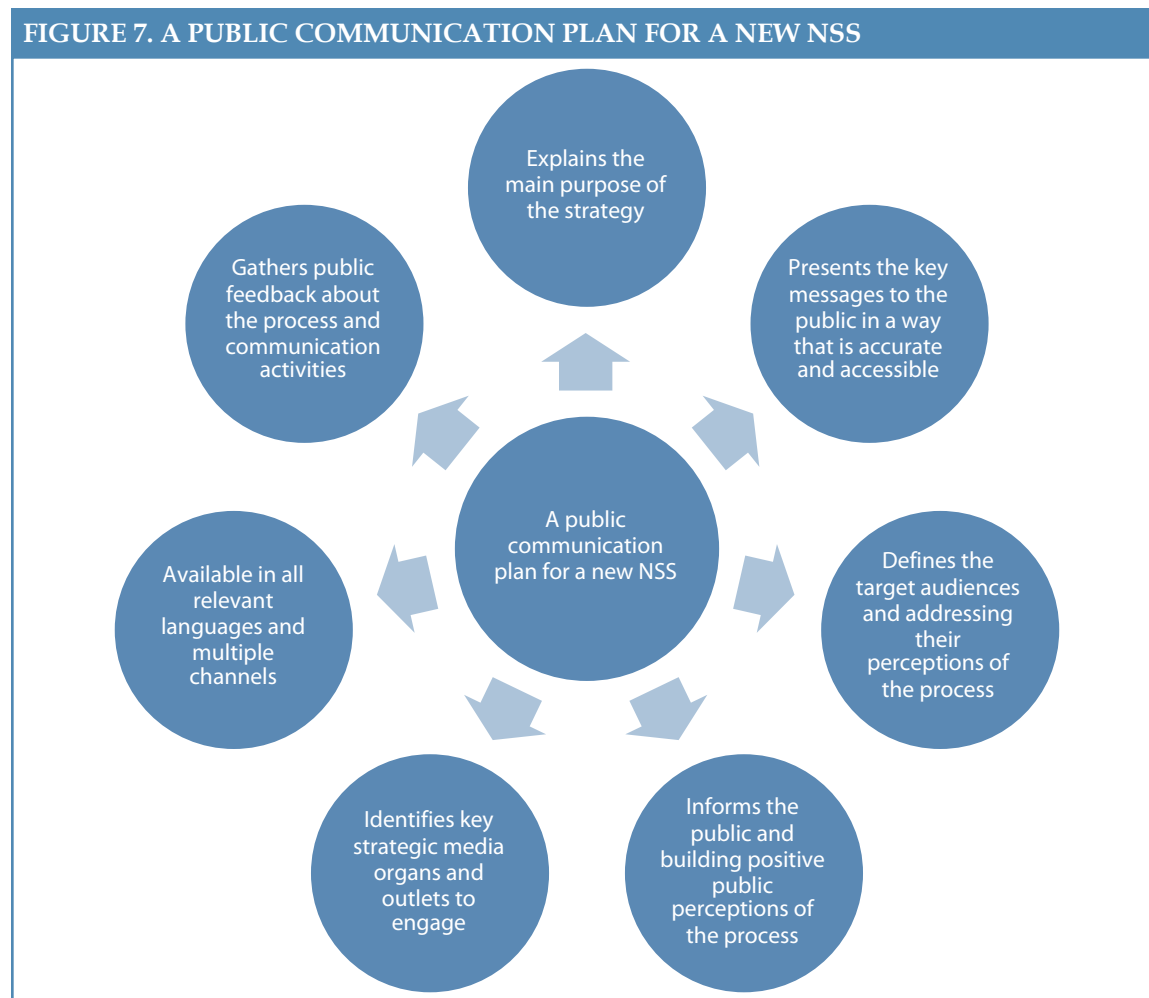
Wide dissemination of the NSS both across government branches and within their respective institutional hierarchies is also a critical matter for democratic oversight. Every aspect of a NSS that requires action on the part of the security sector should also require supervision and oversight, so providing credible accountability requires that all the actors and institutions responsible for supervision and oversight of security matters have access to the NSS.

An effective plan for dissemination will also help in addressing unintended or unexpected negative impacts of the process, building consensus and trust, and securing the buy-in of relevant stakeholders. It will also help in the successful implementation of the NSS, as all stakeholders will be aware about the process, as well as the content of NSS. Communications among security providers, in particular, helps ensure they understand their respective roles and the changes needed.

Communicating the National Strategy for Security to the Public

The people are the ultimate beneficiaries of a national strategy for security. For this reason, the NSS should both reflect their values, interests and priorities, and also be made known to them. Active communication and public engagement throughout the NSSD process enhances the credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the security sector, but it is especially important to raise public awareness of the final result of the process and its implementation.

Civil society and the media will play a critical role in raising awareness of commitments of the government to security and helping to communicate this to citizens. Elements of an effective public communication strategy will cover the following points:¹⁶



A further reason that an NSS should be public is that it serves as a message of good and peaceful intentions for neighboring states and the international community. Signaling peaceful and defensive national security policy can help defuse tension, deescalate conflict, and support regional and international security cooperation.

Balancing the Need for Secrecy with the Need for Dissemination and Public Communication

The culture of secrecy in the security sector is one of the key obstacles to an inclusive and transparent NSSD process. One of the key challenges for a successful dissemination and communication strategy is how much information will be made public through the NSSD process in a sector that is dominated by cultures of secrecy and confidentiality. The NSSD process will certainly trigger a national debate of “whose security?” and this

is one of the most important ways that a NSS can enhance the legitimacy of state security provision while aligning national strategy with public interest. Ensuring information about security is available to nourish an informed public discussion of security issues requires both the engagement of political leadership and the necessary legislation about freedom of information, classification, and declassification of information, as well as guarantees of access to information and freedom of expression. If such laws are not available, the drafting committee may seek guidance from political leadership on how to share information related to security with the public and media during the NSSD process.

Effective communication and dissemination may mean addressing restrictive approaches to classified information or the lack of clear regulations for handling sensitive information, both of which can exacerbate a tendency to unnecessary secrecy and hamper the effective implementation of an NSS. An effective communication strategy should take into account the public's right to information and the need to regulate the manner in which security information is protected in the national interest or disclosed to the public in accordance with the procedures for the classification and declassification of national security information as well as relevant protections for journalists.¹⁷ Where sensitive or classified information is an integral part of an NSS, in particular relating to elements of implementation, then a second non-classified version can be created for the purposes of wider dissemination. Ideally, a drafting committee will consider how the use of classified information in a final draft will impact its potential dissemination and communication and instead err on the side of transparency and open-source information.

The process of NSSD may identify legislation gaps in relation to freedom of information and recommend new legislation or amendments to existing legislation to ensure transparency and public access to information related to security. Some countries allow information related to security to be shared with the public during the formulation of grand security strategy. Such sharing becomes increasingly more restrictive at strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The sharing of security information with the public not only helps to ensure the public is informed, but it is also helpful in gaining public support for national responses to any security threats. Winning the confidence of the public facilitates the work of all a country's security providers. This is especially important in times of crisis.

PHASE 7: IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

A successful NSSD process results in a document that will guide the security sector to achieve the objectives defined in the strategy. Implementation, therefore, means that all elements of the security sector, including those with management and oversight roles, will need to align their own processes of planning, administration, resource allocation, and operations to the missions and tasks outlined in the strategy. This happens through the formulation of sector- and institution-specific strategies that describe in detail how the NSS objectives will be achieved. The implementation phase is the moment in the NSSD process when security sector actors embark on this process.

Supporting the Security Sector in Developing Sectoral Strategies for NSS Implementation

Implementation will require responsible ministries and security institutions to develop their own sectoral plans and institution-level strategies so that the missions and tasks laid out in the NSS are reflected in policies for capability development, force structures, procurement, training, and personnel. Ideally, drafters of the NSS will have worked in coordination and consultation with the relevant security sector institutions during the early stages of NSS drafting to ensure that the NSS sets feasible objectives for each security actor. In some cases, the drafting committee, the process lead, or the designated agency responsible for supporting the implementation of the NSS, may draw up a statement of guidelines for the formulation of sectoral security strategies that will be necessary to operationalize the NSS. The drafting committee will not only list the sectoral strategies to be developed or reviewed but will also provide guidelines and common blueprints for formulating sectoral strategies. These sectoral security strategy documents will be part of the NSS document but are usually kept separately and may often be classified or restricted because of the operationally sensitive information they include. Creating a set of coherent sectoral strategies for implementation may mean revising existing policy documents or developing new ones depending on the context.

The drafting committee may provide an implementation schedule matrix of actions identified in the process of formulating NSS, such as amendments of some legislation, drafting of new legislation, establishment of new institutions or agencies, formulation or review of sectoral security strategies, establishment of coordination mechanisms, and institutional mechanisms for conflict resolution. This implementation schedule matrix is to be annexed to the NSS document. The implementation guidelines and matrix are

also a basis that the drafting committee uses to provide guidelines for allocation and management of resources in security and leveraging partnerships and security assistance.

Monitoring Progress

In order to generate accountability for implementing the NSS and measure progress, a drafting committee also needs to define mechanisms and processes for monitoring implementation of the NSS.

The responsibility for coordinating implementation and monitoring progress should be allocated explicitly within the NSS to an institution or agency with the political authority, resources, and technical capacity to oversee the process. In many cases, this responsibility belongs to an executive agency, such as the National Security Council, though progress monitoring is also an element of the oversight that parliaments can provide. The ability to actively mitigate and manage disputes that might arise in implementation should be a factor considered in assigning responsibility for implementation and progress monitoring. Monitoring mechanisms can take different forms, such as a dedicated monitoring committee, a multi-stakeholder network, an existing statutory institution, or a continuation of the mandate for the drafting committee, among others.

While monitoring responsibilities usually falls to an executive agency because of the nature of the sensitive and technical information involved, parliaments, civil society, and media can all play roles in providing wider societal accountability for NSS implementation.

Parliaments can use their powers to summon security sector officials to brief relevant committees and account for their progress and performance. They can also use the power they hold over budget allocation to oversee whether security sectors are using public resources for the purposes intended and in a way that is responsible and efficient. This kind of proactive parliamentary oversight relies on a constructive and mutually respectful relationship between parliaments, the executive, and security sector professionals. A legislative framework that provides parliamentarians with the necessary powers and authority for active oversight is necessary, as well as a willingness among parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to acquire the necessary technical knowledge of security affairs to provide competent oversight. While few systems manage to meet all of these conditions in full, supporting capacity-building for parliamentary oversight of security in connection with NSS implementation can trigger improvements.

Civil society and media can also provide a useful layer of accountability for NSS implementation by actively monitoring security issues. Access to information laws and a culture of public engagement and outreach within the security sector are necessary

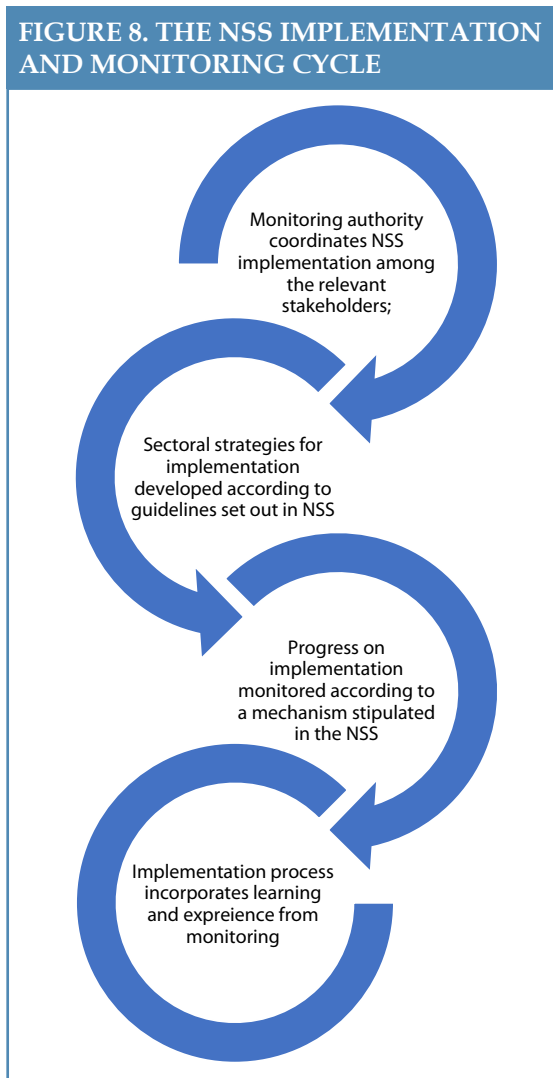
prerequisites for this type of oversight to function well. Civil society and media also need to invest time and effort in becoming knowledgeable about security affairs so they can share this learning with the public. Where monitoring mechanisms use of multi-stakeholder expert networks, civil society can be a useful source of expertise and data.

Making NSSD an Iterative Learning Process

An important function of monitoring is to gather insights from ongoing oversight and monitoring to inform both implementation of the current strategy and a new NSSD process once initiated. Ensuring implementation is monitored and evaluated throughout the life of the strategy and feeds into an iterative process for new policy development at all levels. The implementation phase is thus open-ended and cyclical as monitoring and review of the NSS provides guidance on how to improve implementation (see Figure 8).

Weak capacity to implement policies is a stumbling block to improving human development and security in most African countries. The process of NSSD is expected to provide mechanisms for effective monitoring, evaluation, and periodic review that will make NSS a living document that is adaptable to changes. Toward this end, the drafting committee may consider asking the questions as provided by Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA):¹⁸

- ◆ Will institutions and agencies in the security sector be allowed and encouraged during the implementation of NSS to identify the specific problems that they will be able to address?
- ◆ Will these mechanisms create a conducive environment during the implementation



of NSS that would encourage experimentation and positive deviance?

- ◆ Will these mechanisms promote active experiential (and experimental) learning with evidence-driven feedback built into regular management that allows for real-time adaptation?
- ◆ Will these mechanisms involve key agents of change across agencies and institutions in security sector as an effective way of ensuring that the implementation of NSS is yielding changes that are viable, legitimate, and relevant?

These basic questions may help the drafting committee provide guidelines for developing periodic iterative monitoring, evaluation, and review processes with built-in, evidence-driven, feedback loops that encourage positive deviation, allow real-time adaptation, and engage and promote champions in the security sector. This can only be achieved if key performance indicators and verification methods for all agencies and institutions in security sector are developed. Insights that arise from the implementation process should also be a trigger to initiate a new NSSD process when needed.

SECTION 3. OVERCOMING COMMON CHALLENGES IN NSSD

NSSD is a fundamentally collaborative process that requires constantly weighing competing priorities. As such, it is always shaped by the context in which it is produced. This section outlines some of the most common challenges to NSSD faced in Africa, as well as some outlines for overcoming them.

Legacies of Abuse and Mistrust

Security in many African countries has traditionally been handled by a narrow constituency of high-level politicians and security sector officials. Legacies of abuse, mistrust, and fear persist as a result. The perception that security is a taboo subject that only security professionals are qualified to address hampers public discussion and marginalizes the views of those whose security is at stake in the use of public resources for security provision. The fear that discussing security publicly poses a personal risk of harm is particularly corrosive to public confidence in the government and its security sector.

Changing this pattern of thinking is crucial for democratic security governance and entails a cultural shift within the security sector as well as the public. Resistance to such changes is common from actors within government and the security sector, either because they have a vested interest in the status quo, or because they fail to see the benefits of moving to a new way of doing things. Yet, changes of mindset and attitude among security sector professionals, government representatives, and the public at large can be achieved over time through public outreach, education, and higher levels of transparency in policymaking. An inclusive, consultative, public process of NSSD presents an opportunity to meaningfully address the relationships between civilians, security institutions, and the public. Increased public confidence in the security sector facilitates their work and enhances the credibility of the government and the state.

Cultures of Secrecy

The security sector in most countries remains over-classified and susceptible to cultures of exceptionalism with the notion that national security is a no-go zone for civil authorities. Security inevitably involves some sensitive and secret information, and for this reason some aspects of NSSD can and should be classified. However, an inclusive and transparent NSSD process can balance the need to protect sensitive information with the need for public scrutiny. In general, the values, interests, and objectives of the NSS can be made

public, and it is useful to do so. It is the operationalization of these aspects of security in sectoral and institutional strategies that should usually remain classified.

The fact that some information is classified is not a reason for neglecting an inclusive NSSD process. Where classified information may be necessary to some aspect of the NSSD, inclusive consultations can be held among a circle of state actors with appropriate permissions to handle such information, such as parliamentarians and government experts from related ministries. Classification schedules that do not allow for scrutiny of essential analysis across all branches of government threaten the credibility of state security provision and are in need of reform. Sectoral and institutional strategies that translate the policies outlined in the NSS into detailed programs and resource allocations may be classified, but in this case, there should also exist unclassified versions that explain priorities, decisions, and use of resources to the public.

Overcoming Differences in Technical Background and Knowledge

It is important to include a diversity of expertise and backgrounds in the NSSD process, including in the drafting committee. Relevant experts could come from a range of specializations, for example:

- ◆ Career professionals representing security institutions (both civilian officials and members of security forces)
- ◆ Civilian security experts from academia or civil society
- ◆ Members of parliament
- ◆ Representatives of independent statutory oversight bodies, such as national human rights institutions
- ◆ Civil society representatives

A diversity of representation that reflects the population in terms of ethnicity, age, religion, and gender is desirable. Bringing together such a diverse group improves the NSSD process by gathering a wide range of expertise and views. It also demonstrates a healthy culture of mutual respect and cooperation between civilian actors and representatives of the security forces. A diverse participative process also enhances the public credibility of the process itself as well as its outcome. When a range of institutions are involved in NSSD, it can also facilitate implementation because each institution understands and supports the policy. NSSD also benefits from the input of experts and civil society actors who do not have a direct stake or a vested personal or career interest in the outcome of security strategy beyond the public interest. A broad and inclusive process and diverse drafting committee can also protect NSSD from becoming politicized.

Diversity in NSSD does tend to create a need to ensure all those involved, especially the drafting committee members, share the same understanding of the process, even though they bring different expertise to the table. Convening preparation seminars for drafters and later for wider stakeholders helps identify and remediate differences in technical knowledge, clarifies expectations and roles for the process ahead, and builds a sense of collegiality and shared purpose among professionals who will need to work closely together despite their differences. Conducting workshops or seminars can also be a useful format for overcoming difference in technical background and knowledge in the context of wider consultation. All members of the drafting committee need to be in a position to understand clearly the issues and options that will be discussed, the value of the analysis that supports the process, and the political dimensions of their role and decisions.

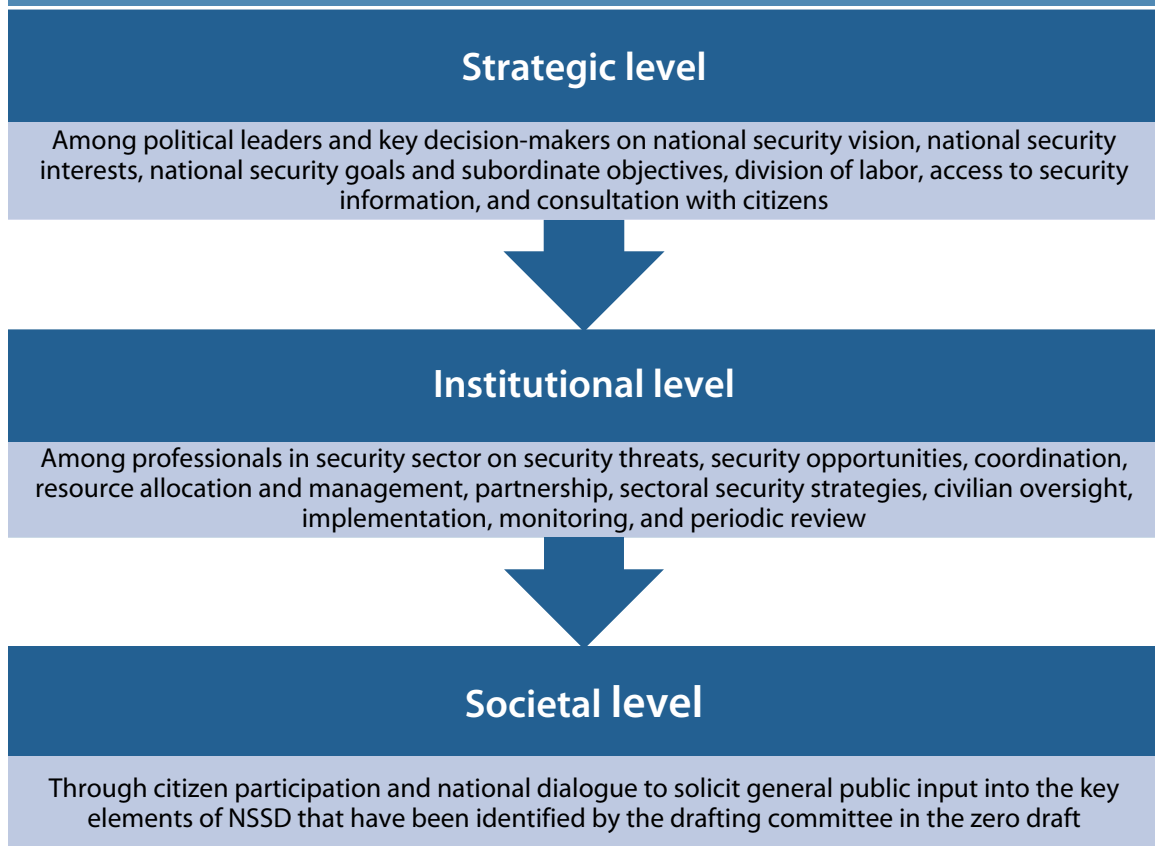
BOX 7. BRIDGING NSSD KNOWLEDGE GAPS IN SENEGAL AND NIGER

In some countries, such as Senegal and Niger, CHEDS and CNESS initially organized technical workshops on the NSSD process with facilitation by one of their strategic partners. This initial workshop provided the technical context for developing an NSS, the design and technical preparation including, for example, agreement of stages or phases with their expected products, steps to be followed, the organizational structure, division of labor, the principles to guide the process, the outline and elements of the document, and the communication and dissemination plan.

Agreeing on a National Vision

When an NSS is drafted, there will be diverging priorities and a level of resistance from various groups, especially in relation to changes in how the security sector is run, as this normally imbues a fear of losing power or privilege. In some contexts, especially where a history of conflict lingers, it can be difficult to define a shared vision on an aggregated level when discussing the security architecture. It may thus be important to highlight that NSS creation should not be rushed, in order to preserve time to thoroughly consult with the relevant actors on why the majority would benefit from NSSD. There might be a need to build trust and demonstrate “quick wins” that are perceived as positive for those who might be losing influence and power under proposed changes. As much as it is important to build political momentum and find the right windows of opportunity to instill a sense of urgency about crafting an NSS, it is also important to build a coalition that is willing to consolidate change through implementation (including international donors) and to remove possible institutional barriers. Consensus on these questions can be achieved at different levels, each of which involves different stakeholders and processes (see Figure 9).¹⁹

FIGURE 9. BUILDING COALITIONS FOR CHANGE



The process of airing variant views and publicly weighing options is an important aspect of the entire NSSD process, but in particular within the consultation phase because it raises public awareness about the tradeoffs involved in NSSD and sensitizes stakeholders to alternative points of view and perhaps the need to compromise in the interests of national unity.

Forward-Thinking NSS in Times of National Change

Security sector reform (SSR) is an effort to make security provision, management, and oversight more accountable and more effective within a democratic system that respects rule of law and human rights. In Africa, some of the SSR processes and security assistance have been informed by externally generated policy frameworks and assumptions that often do not necessarily align with the realities of African societies. Many of the challenges with externally driven SSR programs could be alleviated by the creation of a nationally owned vision for NSS that could better orientate and leverage external support. In reality, the

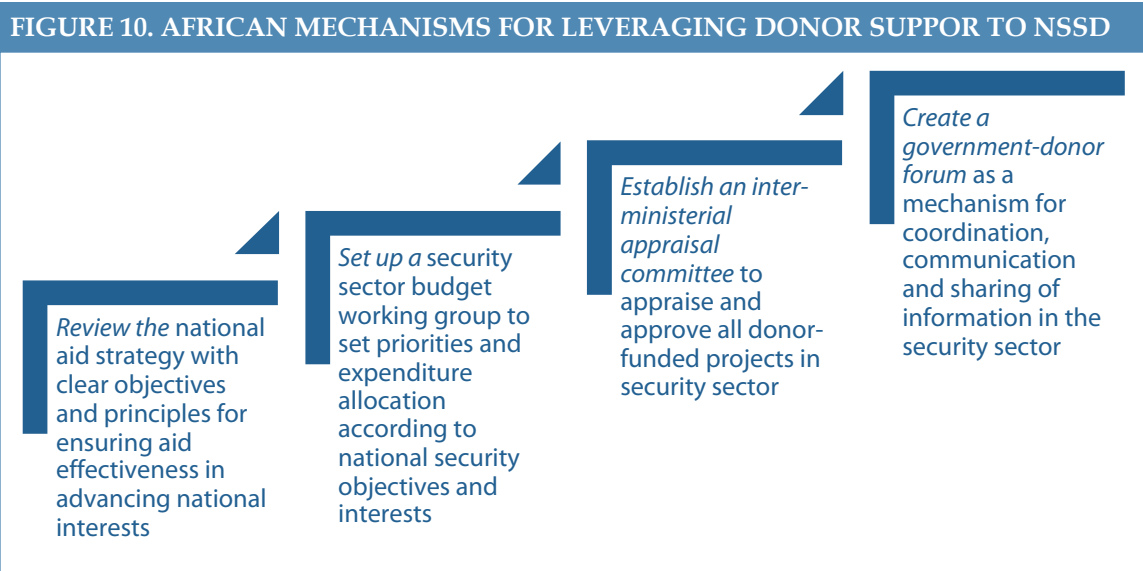
absence of an NSS is often a symptom of the kind of security sector disfunction that makes SSR necessary. For this reason, SSR programs have preceded NSSD in many African cases. In recognition of the continuing gap between existing approaches to SSR and deficits in the delivery, management, and oversight of security in many of its member states, the African Union has acknowledged the need for the development of national security strategies to provide a framework for SSR. Moreover, the AU has also requested its member states to produce such strategies through a fully consultative and participatory process.²⁰

BOX 8. NSSD IN AFRICAN SSR

The AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (2013) states: “The national authority of a Member State implementing SSR will produce through a fully consultative and participatory process, a well defined national security strategy based on democratic principles, human security needs, respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.”

Leveraging External Support for a National Vision

Local/national ownership is a condition of successful NSSD. Only a nation whose security is at stake can successfully define its own vision and action plan for security. Yet external advice and support can often have an overbearing influence on the process or its outcome. Although African countries invest their own resources in NSSD, many also need some level of external support to help in implementing NSS. External security assistance in the form of grants, equipment transfers, soft loans, or technical assistance, while undoubtedly helpful for implementation, can be counterproductive without a credible NSS process that ensures national ownership based on clear national security objectives and vision. Indeed, several country case studies indicate that the development of national security strategy or security sector reforms are externally financed in a way that gravely undermines national ownership and sustainability. Equally, external funding is erratic. That makes necessary national funding of NSSD in order to create a framework for greater leverage over external partnerships and assistance in the context of greater national ownership of SSR processes. To address these issues, the drafting committee may provide general guidelines in light of security threats and national security objectives for leveraging partnership and external security assistance to advance national security interests. To do so, the drafting committee may consider the opinion of experts, as well as examples from other countries that have undergone these processes (see Figure 10).



In providing guidelines for leveraging partnerships and security assistance, the drafting committee may consider the following coordination forms adopted by some countries in dealing with their external partners:²¹

- ◆ Strategic coordination to ensure division of labor and assigning sectoral leaders among external partners in the security sector
- ◆ Financial coordination to map flow of funds, ensure cost-efficiency, and allocate resources in a rational and results-oriented manner
- ◆ Operational coordination to ensure harmonization and division of labor at the technical level

Key benchmarks for external support may include the guiding principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and other best practices such as aligning aid with overall national agenda, national policies, and budget cycles and ensuring that assistance is demand-driven and promotes mutual accountability.

CONCLUSION

A well-designed process for formulating NSS enables decision-makers to better address national security threats while managing the security sector in a more effective and more accountable way. The process of NSS development is about creating a realistic vision for transforming the security sector. The key assumption is that by developing and implementing NSS, the security sector will be better managed to achieve national

security objectives and realize the national security vision by managing security resources transparently, efficiently, and effectively. The process of NSSD is more important than the NSS product.

On the basis of the wealth of information gathered from case studies of NSSD processes in Africa, this toolkit seeks to support African countries that are in the process of crafting or reviewing their national security strategies. Yet, this toolkit is only guidance and not a blueprint. Each country's context is unique, and each context necessitates different, home-grown approaches for consulting stakeholders in the security sector and crafting or reviewing an NSS.

Although this toolkit has been developed to assist the African countries that are in the process of drafting an NSS, it will also be relevant for the countries that are reviewing their current strategies. As each country has its own unique context and will thus follow different process for review, some of the process elements discussed in this toolkit will provide contours for adaptation and domestication.

This toolkit may also be a resource for the AU in the periodical review of its Common African Defense and Security Policy, particularly its encouragement of member states to develop and implement their national security strategies through consultative and participatory processes. It may also be a useful resource to UN, partner governments, multilateral organizations, regional, and international organizations that are supporting security sector reform in Africa.

NOTES

- ¹ United Nations, 2012. United Nations Support to National Security Policy- and Strategy-Making Processes in Security Sector Reform Integrated Technical Guidance Notes. New York: United Nations.
- ² Case studies informing this Toolkit examined NSSD in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and South Sudan.
- ³ Relevant sources include 2013 AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform; 2004 AU Solemn Declaration on A Common African Defense and Security Policy; United Nations Support to National Security Policy- and Strategy-Making Processes; The Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Toolkit for Security Sector Reform and Governance in West Africa; A National Security Primer by the United States National War College.
- ⁴ African Union, 2013. *Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform*. Addis Ababa: The African Union.
- ⁵ United Nations, 2012. United Nations Support to National Security Policy- and Strategy-Making Processes in Security Sector Reform Integrated Technical Guidance Notes. New York: United Nations.
- ⁶ National War College. *A National Security Primer*. Washington, DC: National War College.
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