Assessing Attitudes of the Next Generation of African Security Sector Professionals

by Kwesi Aning and Joseph Siegle

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Executive Summary

The nature of the African security environment has evolved considerably since the end of the Cold War. Rather than cross-border conflicts between standing armies, many of today's security threats are both internal and transnational. They involve nonstate actors that are at times supported by global criminal or terrorist networks. Transformative advancements in access to and dissemination of information along with fitful shifts toward more transparent and democratic governance norms have also reshaped the African security environment.

In light of these changes, this research project seeks to assess the motivations and attitudes of the emerging generation of African security sector professionals and how, if at all, these motivations and attitudes have changed from previous generations. Drawing on a survey of 742 African security sector professionals from 37 countries and qualitative interviews with 35 African students in professional military education programs, this report provides a contextualized snapshot of some of the variations in perspectives across age, services, regions, regime type, and gender. Some of the highlights include:

- African security sector professionals seem satisfied with their professions due to:
  - opportunities for educational advancement
  - a perception that their expectations are being met
  - a perception that the security sector generally has good relations with the public

- There is, by and large, a strong sense of pride in embracing the values of the profession such as duty, responsibility, professionalism, respect, and honesty.

- While younger cohorts have an especially strong commitment to serve, they are less invested in the institutional values and legacies of their services.

◆ Younger cohorts are beginning service with significantly higher levels of education than previous generations. This change is especially noteworthy for the military whose youngest recruits now largely match the education levels of the gendarmerie, which has not been the case historically.

◆ Higher education corresponds with a trend of African security sector professionals joining their services at an older age than was previously the norm.

◆ One of the strongest findings of this study was a near universal positive attitude toward international training.

  ○ international training was seen as a valuable opportunity to gain access to more and updated knowledge, newer trends in security analysis, deeper personal and professional relationships, and knowledge about new technology.

  ○ international training was perceived to widen the exposure and perspectives of security sector professionals.

◆ Peacekeeping was generally perceived as an increasingly important mechanism for capacity building for African security personnel, especially in countries that face resource constraints.

◆ The growing exposure to peacekeeping deployments was found to:

  ○ create identity-shaping, formative experiences

  ○ broaden exposure for participating forces

  ○ create more sophisticated approaches to operational challenges

  ○ foster a greater appreciation of regional perspectives

  ○ improve interoperability in multinational operations

  ○ create a better understanding and appreciation for field challenges

Purpose

The African security environment has changed greatly in the past 20 years. The rise of nonstate actors such as violent extremist organizations, pirates, illicit traffickers, and transnational organized criminal syndicates, not to mention an array of locally based armed militant groups, has altered the nature of threats that African security sector actors must confront. The African security environment has been simultaneously shaped by rapidly growing access to information by citizens, exposure to technology, globalization, the youth bulge, and urbanization, among other factors. The strong state-society dimensions of this evolving security environment have required African security sector institutions to adapt to be more effective.

While there has been considerable scholarship aimed at understanding the evolution of African security institutions, there has been relatively less interest in African security sector professionals themselves. What are their views, values, and motivations toward their service, and how have they evolved over time? This report attempts to deepen understanding of this question by assessing the motivations and attitudes of what it terms the "next generation" of African security sector professionals. Specifically, these are members of the military, police, and gendarmeries in their twenties and early thirties who will be called on to confront Africa's emerging security challenges.

Attitudes and values can be expected to vary across the continent's diversity of countries and actors. Moreover, these issues are constantly evolving in line with changing internal and external environments. This research, therefore, aims to provide a snapshot that can serve as a benchmark against other measures and future research.

FRAMING THE LITERATURE

After an initial flurry of scholarly interest in African militaries in the 1960s to 1980s—largely focused on their colonial roots, transitions, and propensity for coups—there has been a dramatic reduction in literature on African security sector institutions beyond their domestic and international peacekeeping engagements. As a result, there is a dearth of up-to-date analysis about how these bodies function, how they have changed over time, and how they have been affected by both internal and external developments.

Africa's armed forces are presently in transition from an independence-era model to one more suited to today's conflicts and security threats. Yet, few studies have discussed such transitions and the impact on the character and worldview of African militaries. African armed forces represent and embody, among all public sector institutions, the dreams and notions of what the modern state ought to and can be.

At the same time, African militaries in particular have too often engaged in politics in a close and intrusive manner. As a result, African politicians have often had a fraught relationship with their uniformed forces. In other contexts, the armed forces have been a central factor to regime survival and the consolidation of autocracy. In such cases, security forces are used by political leaders as a tool of repression—and are seen by their populations as part of the security problem. Public perceptions of the military are complex, however. When it comes to corruption, survey data consistently show higher levels of popular trust for African militaries (responsible for external security) compared to African police forces (responsible for internal security).

Since the end of the Cold War, African militaries are increasingly called upon to undertake preventive engagements, contribute to resolving security crises on the African continent and elsewhere around the globe, and protect and assist in bolstering progression

toward more democratic forms of governance. African militaries are also at the forefront of international efforts to combat transnational threats such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and sometimes health pandemics. Given the multiple layers of transition underway, it can be expected that African security sector actors' self-perceptions are also shifting. Deeper understanding of these evolving attitudes will better enable engaging these individuals and institutions so as to enhance their effectiveness.

This research builds on a number of noteworthy scholarly contributions that have been made since the end of the Cold War. Jeffrey Herbst's "African Militaries and Rebellion: the Political Economy of Threat and Combat Effectiveness" (2004) analyzes the nexus between African militaries and their capabilities in responding to rebellions. A Eurasia Group study "A Day in the Life of an African Soldier" (2010)—drawing on experiences from Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa—provides a picture of life inside these armies. It also reviews the rationales for pursuing a career in the military, top frustrations and worries, supplemental income opportunities, the bureaucracy and culture of the military, social conditions, and civil-military relations. Habiba Ben Barka and Mthuli Ncube's "Political Fragility in Africa: Are Military Coups d'Etat a Never-Ending Phenomenon?"(2012) focuses on the nexus between state fragility and coups. Mathurin Houngnikpo's "African Militaries: A Missing Link in Democratic Transitions" (2012) discusses how African militaries are adapting to and at times resisting civilian control and oversight. Zoltan Barany's *The Soldier and the Changing State* (2013) similarly underscores the importance of military leaders' attitudes and values toward democratic principles as a barometer for military relations with civilian leaders and the public. David Chuter and Florence Gaub's "Understanding African Armies" (2016) recognizes the diversity and complexity of the contemporary African military,

noting that African armies have often evolved by trial and error, and encompass a wide range of approaches and missions. These works (see Reference section for a more complete list of titles) have framed the approach to this research, the construction of the survey questions, and the report's broader assessment of norms and values of African security sector professionals.

METHODOLOGY

This study relied on both quantitative and qualitative approaches to its design, data gathering, and analysis with an aim to deepen understanding of the motivations, expectations, and experiences of individual African security sector professionals as well as glean broader trends. The process was further informed by numerous oral histories gathered by the authors and their respective institutions. Both the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) and the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (the Africa Center) regularly conduct trainings and other academic programs. Accordingly, they engage junior, mid-level, and senior African security sector professionals, both civilian and uniformed, on an ongoing basis. Given their longevity and established presence, both centers were also able to draw on their networks of relationships within the African security community to inform this research.

This study took shape in three parts. First was a literature review of past studies, reports, and analyses examining the evolving attitudes, motivations, and norms of African security professionals. Given the underlying temporal dimension to this study, examining differences between the youngest generation of security sector professionals and their predecessors, this review involved both historical as well as contemporary and comparative assessments.

Second, a large-scale anonymous survey of African security sector professionals was conducted, providing a statistical basis

for generalization and comparative analysis of key elements of the research topic. Through a series of 23 multiple choice questions (with both single answer and "all that apply" options), the self-reported survey was structured to glean insights into four primary areas: motivations for joining the service, perceived values and identity of respondents' respective branches of service, formative experiences, and views regarding international training partnerships.

These topical areas of interest were complemented with basic demographic information to provide a basis for comparative analysis of the responses. In particular, the research aimed to assess differences across five main analytic categories (i.e., independent variables). This included the type of service (e.g., military, police, and gendarmerie), geographic region, age quartile, gender, and regime type of the respondents (see Table 1).

Table 1. Analytic Categories for African Security Sector Professionals				
CATEGORY	**COHORTS**			
Sector	Military	Police	Civilian	Gendarmerie
Region	West	Central	East	Southern
Age	Oldest Quartile	2nd Quartile	Youngest Quartile	3rd Quartile
Regime*	Democratic	Democratizer	Autocratic	Semi-Autocratic

*See Annex 1 for criteria and categorization of regime type used for this analysis.

After piloting and testing the tool, a link to the survey was disseminated electronically to over 4,500 African security sector professionals in the Africa Center and KAIPTC databases. This was supplemented by dissemination to the network of professional military education institutions participating in the Africa Military Education Program (AMEP), as well as via word-of-mouth. In total, the survey period was open for 3 weeks—from April 1 to April 21, 2017. The survey was available in English, French, and Portuguese

Map of Regional Categorizations

North Africa
West Africa
Central Africa
East Africa
Southern Africa
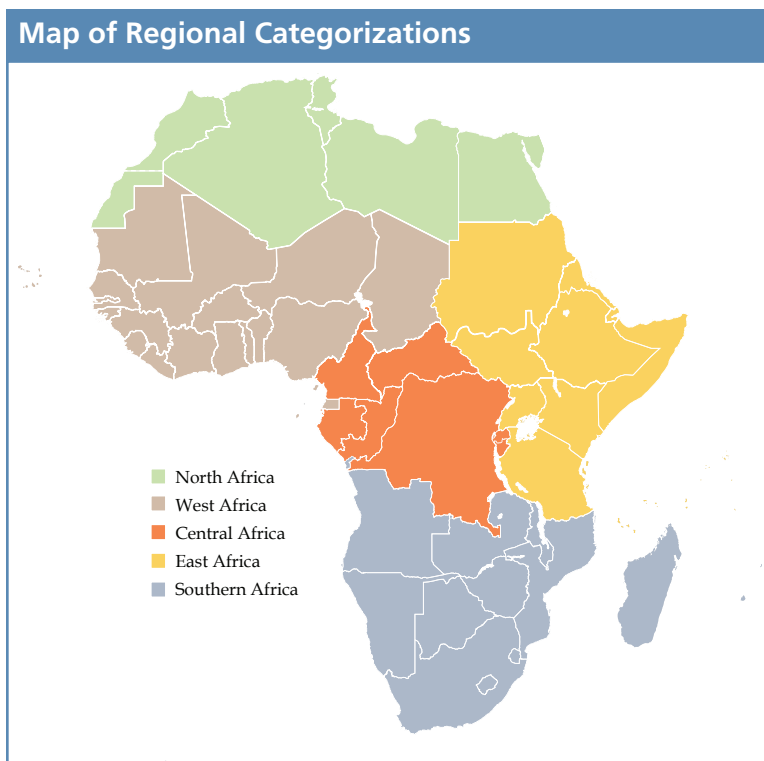
to increase its accessibility across the continent and improve the accuracy of responses.

The SurveyMonkey platform was used to administer the questionnaire and to ensure the anonymity of individual respondents. Responses were checked for plausibility, integrity, and completeness to ensure validity. Statistical software was then used to screen, code, and analyze the data.

Third, a series of one-on-one interviews and small focus group discussions were conducted with 35 active duty military and police officers to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying rationale for the respective values and perceptions of African security sector professionals. Focus groups comprised three to five participants. The interviews were undertaken in various

West African professional military education venues as well as in Washington, D.C., and were conducted on a not-for-attribution basis. While providing space for open-ended questions and responses, the interviews were semi-structured so as to build on themes identified in the questionnaires.

This qualitative approach was intended to complement the survey data by unpacking some of the professional experiences and circumstances within which the cited values, attitudes, and motivations emerged. Likewise, the interviews were more suitable for describing the contextual factors affecting the professionals' perspectives and to gain a better understanding of why and how such perspectives have changed.

These qualitative insights were especially relevant given the relatively unexplored terrain of assessing attitudes of the next generation of African security sector professionals. The interviews thus provided the opportunity to uncover previously unconsidered insights and motivations as well as sometimes sensitive information based on personal experiences.

Methodological Limitations

To better weigh any findings or conclusions from this research, it is important to spell out some of the limitations of the survey methods. First, the quantitative results were extrapolated from a pool of 742 survey respondents. This sample size was sufficiently large and diverse to draw statistically significant inferences for many of the assessed co-factors of the analysis. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that this pool was not a random sample. Many of the respondents were linked, at least indirectly, to KAIPTC or Africa Center networks. This increases the representation of young, capable, and career-oriented officers whose backgrounds in terms of professional accomplishment, education, age, as well as their

exposure to international actors, were likely more advanced vis-à-vis a more representative sample of all service members.

While disproportionately large numbers of respondents were police and gendarmerie from West Africa (reflecting the base of KAIPTC's networks), there were sufficient numbers of military personnel and respondents from other parts of the continent to generate robust comparative results. Similarly, given the strong participation from West Africa, the number of democratizing countries were somewhat overrepresented in the survey results. However, again, this was balanced by enough respondents operating under other regime types to draw statistically meaningful comparative observations.
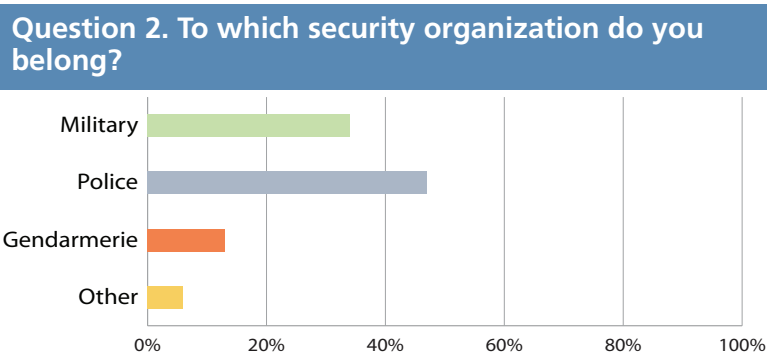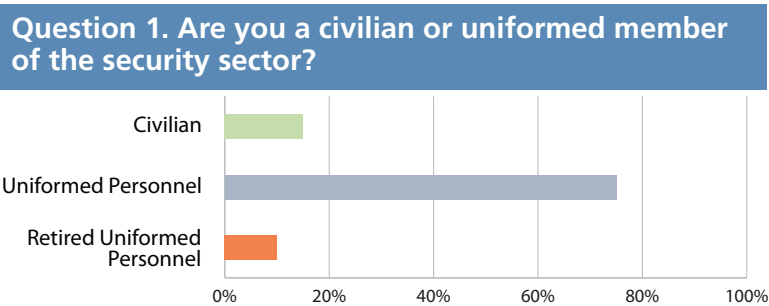
Second, while efforts were made to reach all regions of the continent, the number of survey respondents from North and Lusophone Africa were insufficient to draw out comparisons for these regions. Consequently, while the responses from the individuals in these regions are considered as part of the overall pool, regional comparisons, especially with North Africa, could not be made. Similarly, while civilian respondents were part of the survey, their numbers were too small to enable statistically meaningful comparative generalizations.

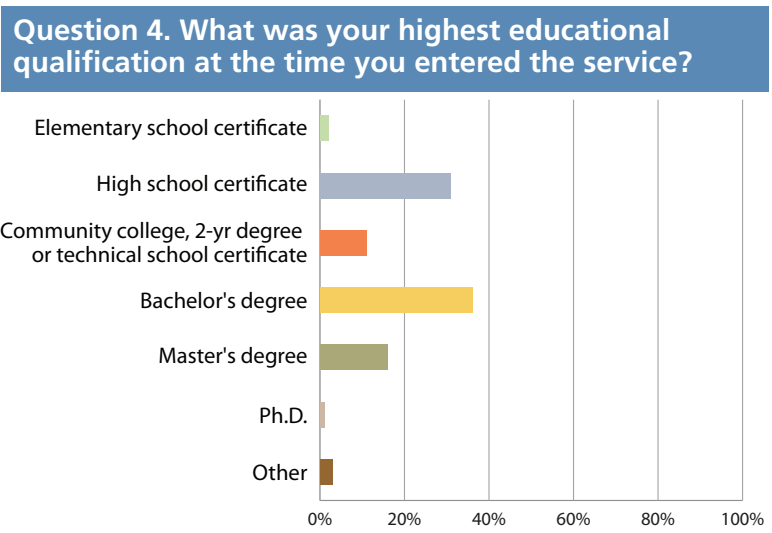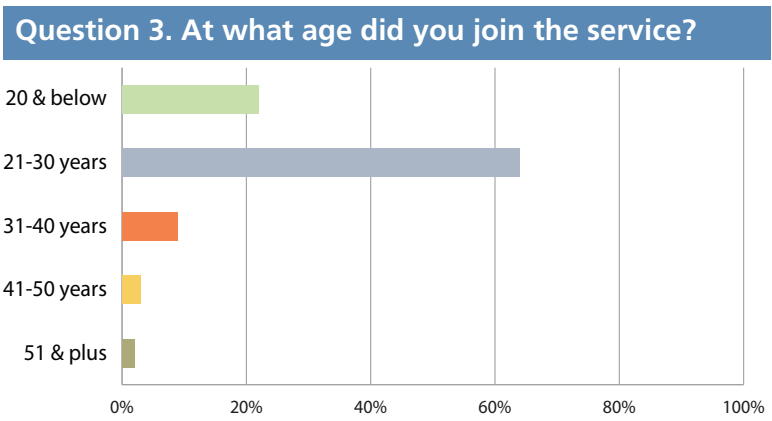Finally, as this research is drawn from a single survey period, comparisons between age cohorts are based on responses from the respective cohorts at the time the survey was conducted. Responses to questions such as motivations for joining the service or formative experiences for those in the older cohorts, accordingly, are drawn from a wider base of experience than younger cohorts who are just starting their careers.

SURVEY RESULTS
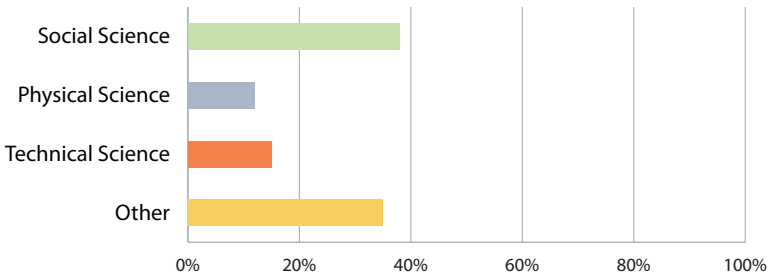
A total of 742 African security sector professionals from 37 countries responded to the quantitative survey. The results for each question are included below. A more detailed examination of the results follows in the Analysis section of this report.

Question 1. Are you a civilian or uniformed member of the security sector?

Question 2. To which security organization do you belong?

Question 3. At what age did you join the service?

20 & below	
21-30 years	
31-40 years	
41-50 years	
51 & plus	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Question 4. What was your highest educational qualification at the time you entered the service?

Elementary school certificate	
High school certificate	
Community college, 2-yr degree or technical school certificate	
Bachelor's degree	
Master's degree	
Ph.D.	
Other	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Question 5. What educational background did you enter the service with?

Social Science	▇▇▇ ~35%
Physical Science	▇ ~12%
Technical Science	▇ ~14%
Other	▇▇ ~33%

(0% – 100% scale, gridlines at 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%)

Question 6. Have you had any opportunities to further upgrade your educational qualifications since you joined the service?

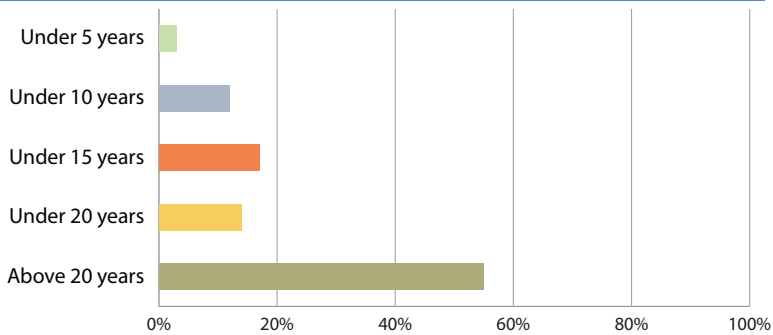|	
Yes	~85%
No	~15%

(0% – 100% scale, gridlines at 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%)
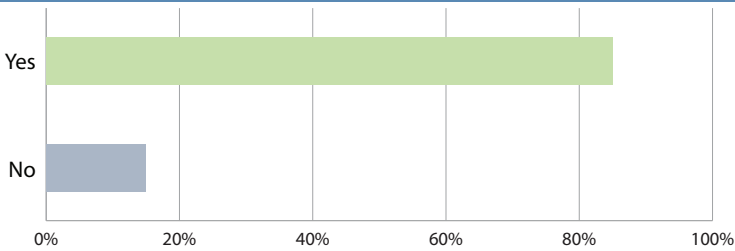
Question 7. If yes, what further qualifications have you obtained?

Vocational or technical certificate	~21%
Bachelor's degree	~19%
Master's degree	~44%
Ph.D.	~5%
Other	~15%

(0% – 100% scale, gridlines at 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%)
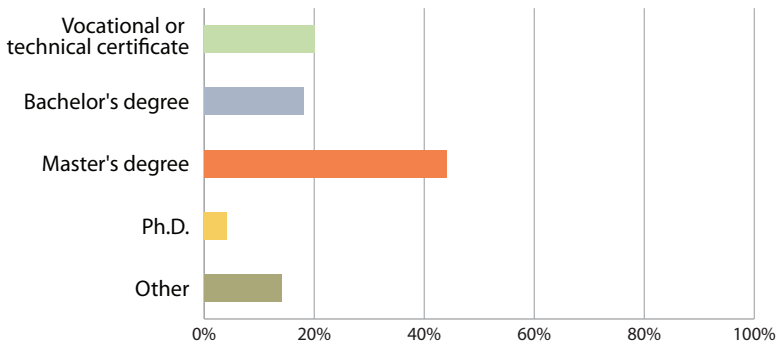
Question 8. How long have you served in the security service?

Under 5 years	
Under 10 years	
Under 15 years	
Under 20 years	
Above 20 years	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Question 9. What is your current rank?

Cadet Officer or equivalent	
Corporal or equivalent	
Sergeant or equivalent	
Captain or equivalent	
Major or equivalent	
Colonel or equivalent	
General or equivalent	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
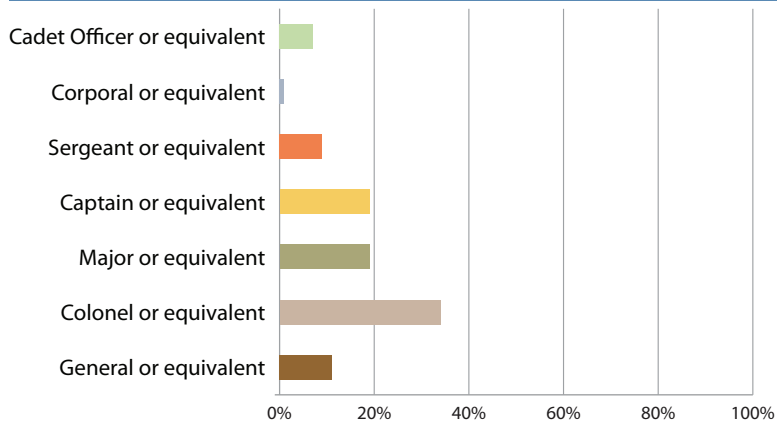
Question 10. Select the answer below that best explains your reason for joining the security service:

I needed a job	
I wanted to serve my country	
I wanted an opportunity to serve in peacekeeping missions	
I wanted to gain prestige or power	
I was inspired by serving/retired family member(s) or friend(s)	
Other	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
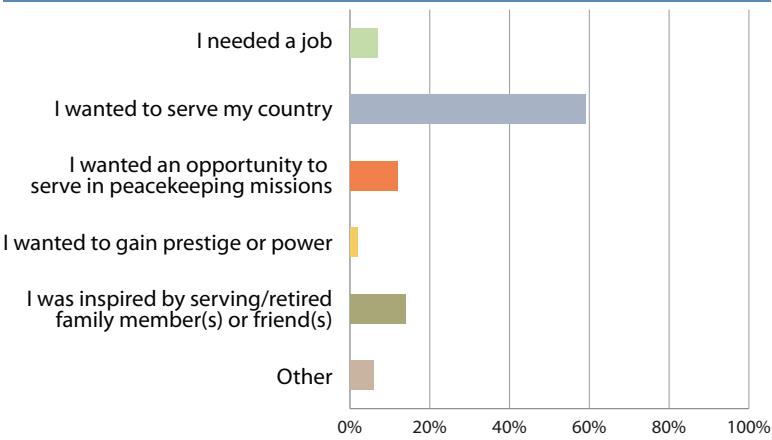
Question 11. My expectations for joining the service are being (were) met.

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
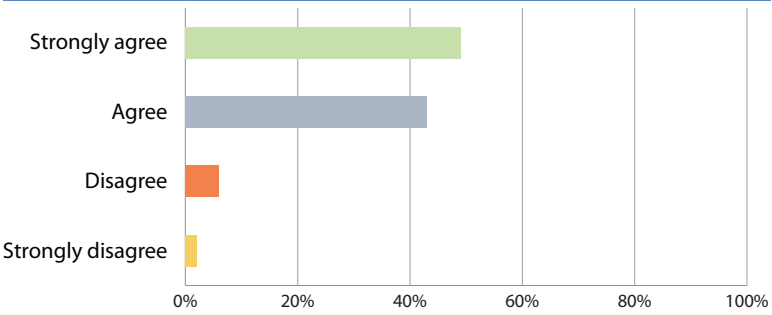
Question 12. How did you join the security service?

Through regular enlistment
Integrated from a militia or after demobilization
Selected as a professional (such as medical doctor)
Other

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
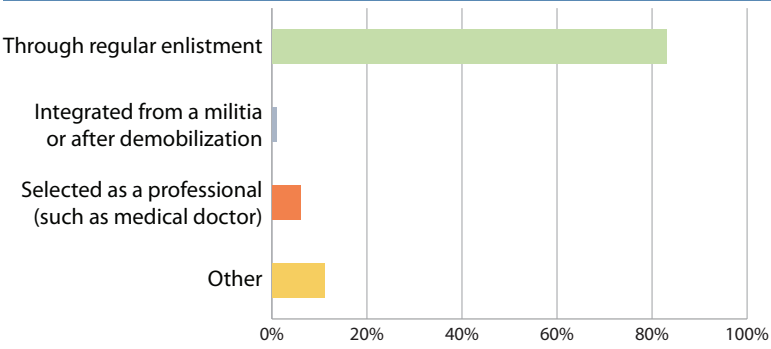
Question 13. What element of the recruitment process did you find the most compelling?

Dynamic recruiters
Opportunity to be associated with the honored legacy of the security service
Stable salary
Prestige of joining the security service
Family member or friend previously served in the service
Other

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
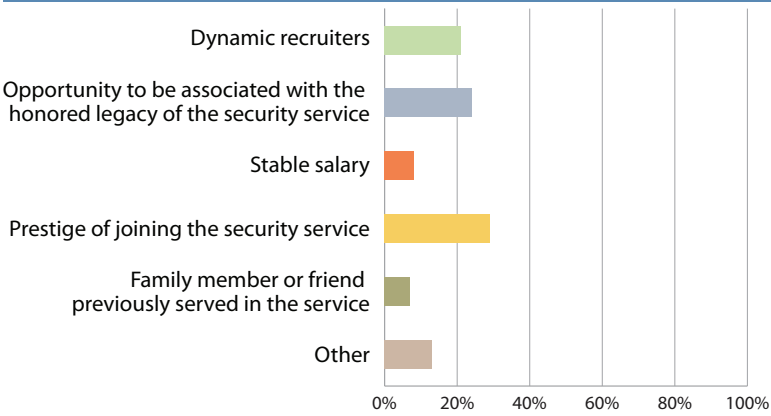
Question 14. What do you think is the public's perception of your service?

Highly positive
Positive
Negative
Highly negative

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
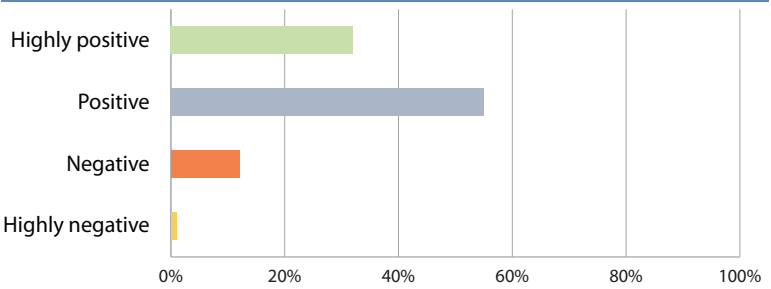
Question 15. What are some common values that describe the attitudes of your service?

Duty
Responsibility
Service
Honesty
Respect for citizens
Merit-based
Professional
No common values
None of the above

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
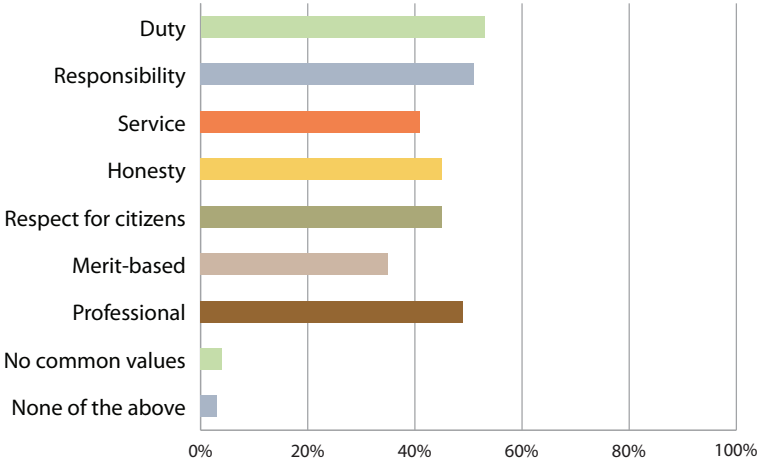
Question 16. What experiences have been most influential in shaping the identity of your service?

Training inside the country
Training outside the country
Combat
Peacekeeping deployment
Examples set by leaders
Historical legacy passed down
by previous generations
Other

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

17
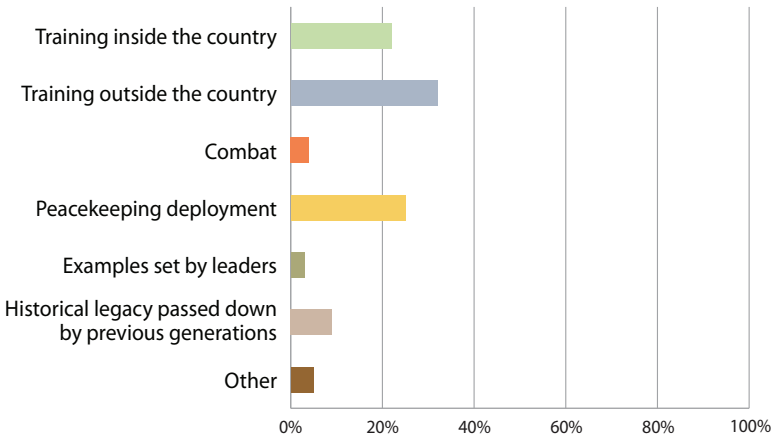
Question 17. How would you describe the relationship between the security professionals and civilians in your country?

Very cordial					
Cordial					
Hostile					
Very hostile					

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
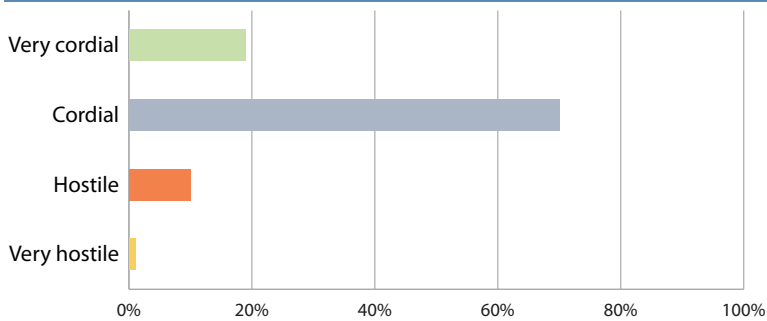
Question 18. What are the security challenges you are likely to face?

	High	Medium	Low
Civil unrest	25%	41%	35%
Corruption	46%	41%	13%
Election-related violence	27%	38%	34%
Ethnic violence	19%	28%	53%
Illicit trafficking	28%	43%	29%
Natural resource competition	16%	42%	42%
Neighboring or rival army	6%	18%	75%
Organized crime	29%	45%	26%
Peacekeeping	36%	36%	28%
Piracy or banditry at sea	15%	27%	58%
Political crisis	24%	39%	37%
Violent extremism & radicalization	27%	28%	45%
Other	10%	31%	59%

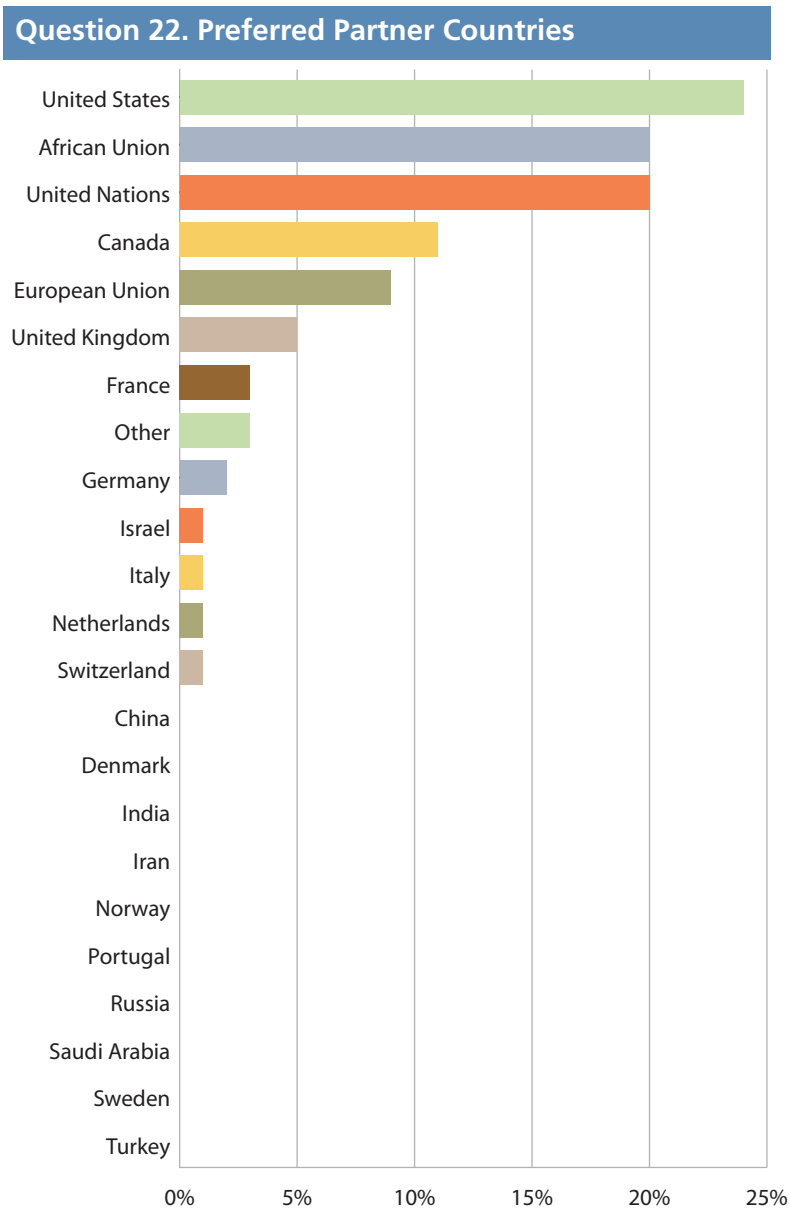## Question 19. How prepared are you to meet these security challenges?

	High	Medium	Low
Civil unrest	46%	39%	14%
Corruption	38%	39%	23%
Election-related violence	39%	45%	16%
Ethnic violence	32%	42%	26%
Illicit trafficking	39%	45%	16%
Natural resource competition	23%	46%	31%
Neighboring or rival army	33%	35%	31%
Organized crime	39%	45%	16%
Peacekeeping	56%	31%	14%
Piracy or banditry at sea	28%	34%	38%
Political crisis	34%	46%	20%
Violent extremism & radicalization	39%	35%	26%
Other	28%	47%	26%

Question 20. What is your view of international training?
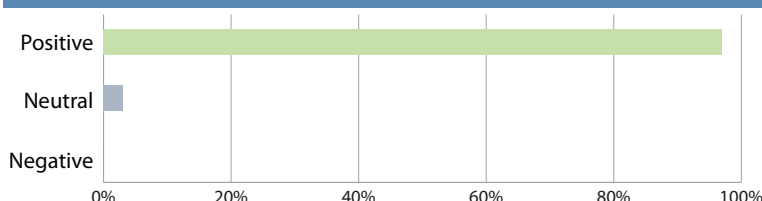
Question 21. Do you prefer training partnerships with one or two primary countries or a wide diversity of partners?

Question 22. Preferred Partner Countries

Country	Percentage
United States	24%
African Union	20%
United Nations	20%
Canada	11%
European Union	9%
United Kingdom	5%
France	3%
Other	3%
Germany	2%
Israel	1%
Italy	1%
Netherlands	1%
Switzerland	1%
China	
Denmark	
India	
Iran	
Norway	
Portugal	
Russia	
Saudi Arabia	
Sweden	
Turkey	

Chart x-axis: 0%, 5%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%
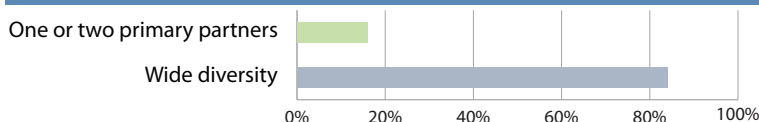
Question 23. Nationalities of Respondents

The survey recorded a high response rate from the West African region. Of the total survey respondents, 71 percent were from West Africa, 15 percent were from Southern African countries, 8 percent were from Eastern Africa, and 6 percent were from Central Africa. Senegal had the highest number of respondents with 14 percent of the total, followed by Mali (with 13 percent) and Nigeria (with 10 percent).

Respondents were born between 1947 and 1992 with a median of 1974. This result represents considerable age diversity among the respondents, providing a solid base from which to draw out comparative observations between generations. For purposes of analysis, the respondents were grouped into four evenly-sized age quartiles:

◆ Age Cohort #1: ages 54–70

◆ Age Cohort #2: ages 46–53

◆ Age Cohort #3: ages 39–45

◆ Age Cohort #4: ages 25–38

Analysis

The results from the survey reveal a number of notable findings that provide insights into the current attitudes, challenges, and perceptions of African security sector professionals and how these are evolving.

Age and Education

An initial striking observation from the survey data is that younger recruits are joining the security services with more advanced education levels. Just 26 percent of respondents in the youngest cohort, for example, entered service with a high school diploma as

their highest level of educational attainment. This compares to 47 percent among those in the oldest cohort, reflecting a major shift in academic capabilities within the services in recent decades.[1] Among young recruits, 41 percent entered service with a bachelor's degree. By contrast, only 30 percent of the oldest cohort had attained a bachelor's degree when they began their careers.

Differences in education level also emerged between services. Recruits from the youngest cohort who joined the gendarmerie and military started their service with considerably higher education levels than the police (see Figure 1). Specifically, 56 percent of recruits from the gendarmerie and military had a bachelor's degree versus 35 percent for the police.

Figure 1. Education Levels of Youngest Age Cohort


Pearson chi2 = 16.8732 Pr = 0.077
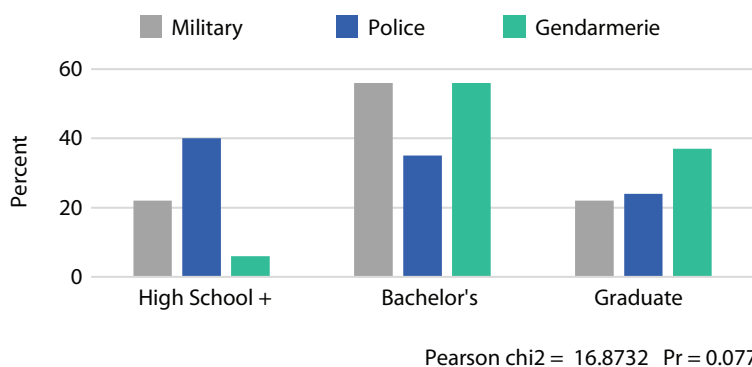
This divergence is particularly noteworthy for the military, as it shows a dramatic improvement in the education levels from earlier age cohorts. There were just 26 percent of bachelor's degree holders among military recruits in the oldest age cohort. Consequently, over

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[1]*All of the comparative results highlighted in this Analysis section are statistically significant in Pearson chi-squared tests of the categorical variables, typically at or above a 90 percent confidence interval. Specific significance results are reported with each figure.*

a several-decade period, the percentage of military recruits with bachelor's degrees increased by 30 percentage points. Likewise, the percentage of those in the youngest cohort joining the military with a high school diploma (22 percent) is roughly a third of the 59-percent figure for the oldest age cohort (see Figure 2). By contrast, starting education levels for the police have not shown such improvement. Rather, the percentage of those starting service with a bachelor's degree remained consistent at 32–35 percent across the cohorts.

Figure 2. Comparison of Starting Education Levels for Military Over Time
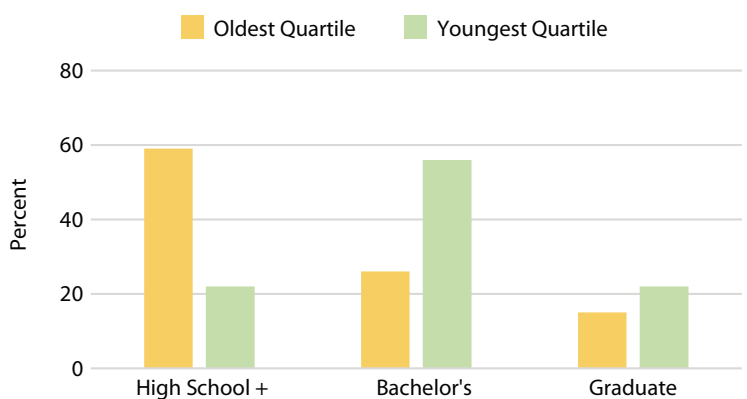
Pearson chi2 = 17.1139   Pr = 0.145

The emerging generation of African security sector professionals also tend to join the security services at an older age. While nearly 28 percent of the older cohorts of respondents had joined the service by the time they were 20 years old, that rate has dropped to 20 percent among the youngest cohort (see Figure 3). Inversely, 65 percent of the youngest cohort of security sector professionals joined their respective service during their twenties. This is an increase of 10 percentage points from the oldest cohort.

Figure 3. Comparison of Joining Age of Youngest and Oldest Cohort

Oldest Quartile   Youngest Quartile

Pearson chi2 = 40.1977 Pr = 0.000
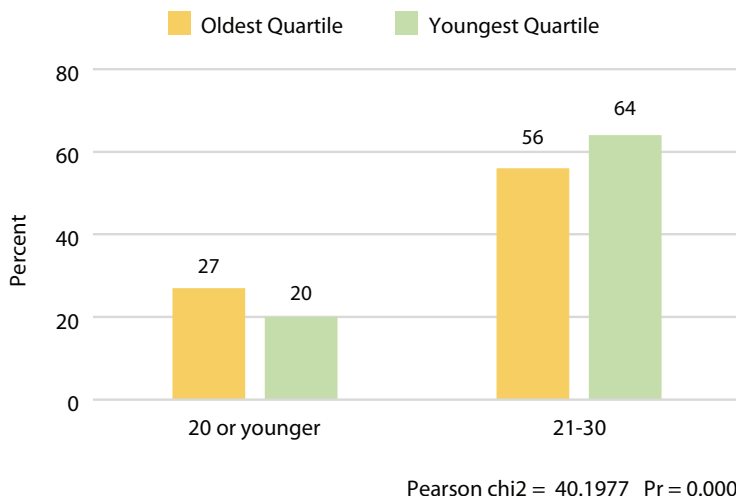
Those in the gendarmerie and police have tended to join at an older age than the military. Approximately 78 percent of the gendarmerie and 53 percent of police joined while in the 21–30 age range. This compares to 35 percent of those in the military.

Motivations

Motivation can be defined as an individual's degree of willingness to exert and maintain an effort toward organizational goals. Motivation is closely linked to job satisfaction, which leads to higher retention rates over time. Motivation is influenced by a complex set of professional, social, and economic factors. These include strong career development, adequate compensation, and satisfactory working and living conditions. Having strong human resource mechanisms within a security institution can help to ensure that the right motivational factors are in place to keep service members satisfied.

Inversely, problems with career development, salary, and working conditions are reasons security sector professionals become unmotivated. Any of these issues or a combination of them can lead to dissatisfaction. Career development is generally defined as the possibility to specialize in a particular field or be promoted through the ranks. A lack of promotion opportunities can be seen as demotivational.

As indicated in the Survey Results section, the vast majority (92 percent) of service members surveyed indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that their expectations for joining the service were being met. The strength of this sentiment varies by age, however. At a 69-percent rate, the oldest age cohort reported being most strongly in agreement that their expectations were being met (see Figure 4). This contrasts with a 38-percent level for the youngest age group.

Figure 4. Percentage Who Strongly Agree that Expectations Are Being Met


Pearson chi2 = 44.6279 Pr = 0.000
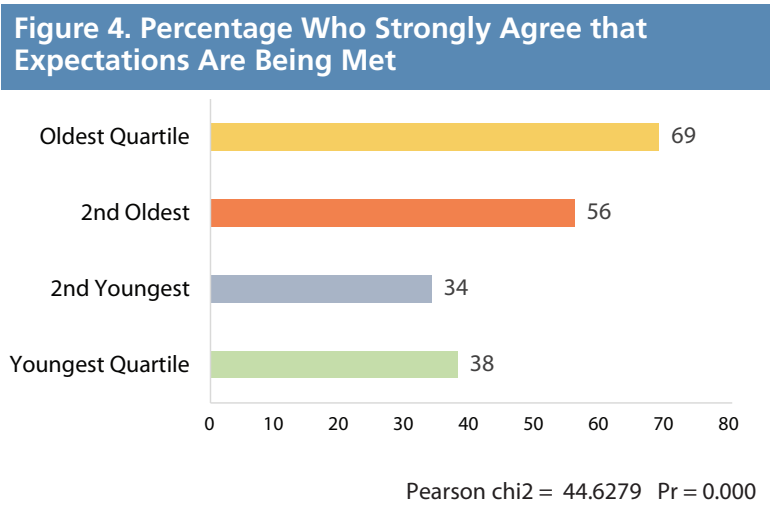
The strongest motivation for joining the service given by respondents was a desire to serve their country. Sixty-one percent of respondents cited this motivation (out of six choices). The preference for this motivation holds for all the services, with the motivations to

serve the country being highest among the gendarmerie (70 percent), followed by the police and the military.

Notably, the motivation to serve one's country was strongest among the youngest age cohort, of which a total of 65 percent of respondents indicated it as their primary motive for joining (see Figure 5). Such a result contrasts with the oldest quartile where 57 percent cited serving their country as the motivation for joining. This observation is noteworthy as it suggests a stronger sense of loyalty to the nation among younger age cohorts. By extension, this may reflect a greater willingness to respect civil authority and not threaten constitutional rule.

Figure 5. Percentage Motivated to Join to Serve Country

Pearson chi2 = 22.9616 Pr = 0.085
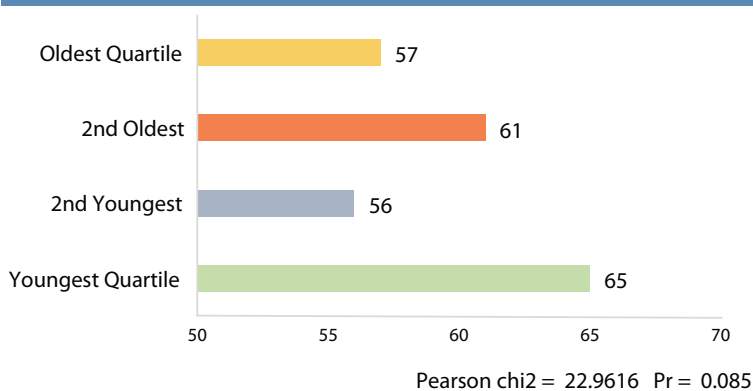
While older cohorts agreed that service to country was important, they also indicated that the issues of legacy, family, and friends played a strong motivational role. Among the six response options, 19 percent of survey respondents in the oldest age cohort indicated that family ties to the security services was a key motivation for them to join (see Figure 6). This influence was strongest within the military with 25 percent of respondents in the oldest cohort citing inspiration from examples of other family members.

Figure 6. Percentage Inspired to Join Service Because of Family Member(s)
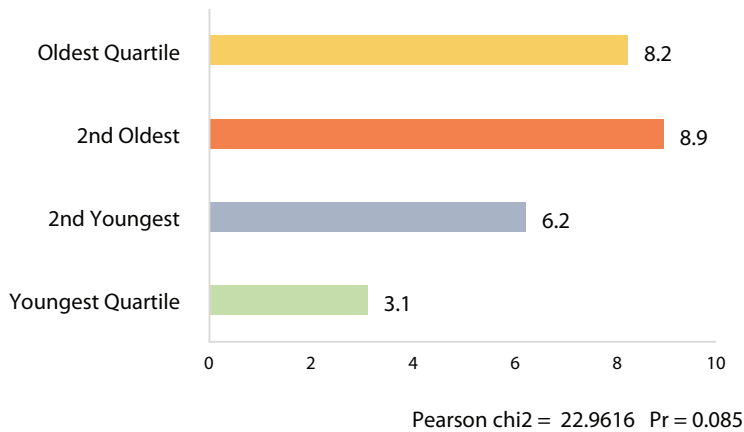

Pearson chi2 = 22.9616   Pr=0.085
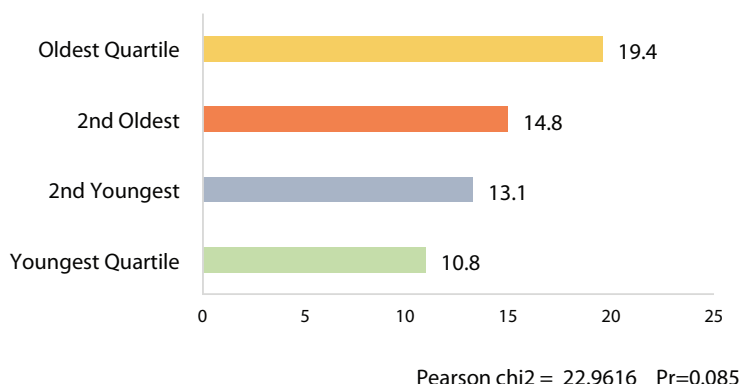
By contrast, only 11 percent of the youngest cohort among all services (including the military) indicated that such legacy issues were a factor in their commitment to service. This trend may have significance for the historical development of African armies in particular. These results may show that the close-knit familial relations that characterized the military in the immediate independence period are giving way to a more diversified force that is more motivated to serve the public among the youngest age quartile.

A common assumption is that African security sector professionals are primarily motivated by the need for employment. Indeed, several interview participants indicated that this was a key consideration for them and their peers. However, employment was cited by only 6.6 percent of the respondents as their primary reason for joining the service (see Figure 7). This rate ranged from a high of 8.2 percent for the oldest age cohort to just 3 percent for the youngest.
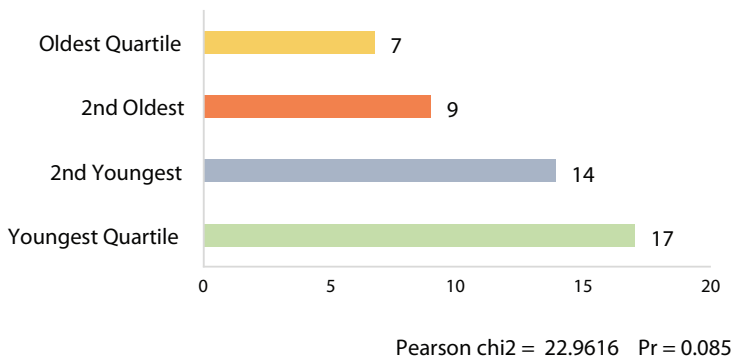
Coupled with the inverse pattern of responses for "service to the public" as a motivating factor (with the youngest cohort citing this as the strongest motivation relative to the oldest cohort) and the significantly higher starting education levels for young recruits, these

Figure 7. Percentage Who Report Employment as Primary Motivation for Joining

Oldest Quartile — 8.2
2nd Oldest — 8.9
2nd Youngest — 6.2
Youngest Quartile — 3.1

Pearson chi2 = 22.9616 Pr = 0.085

results suggest that there has been a shift in reasons for joining the security sector over time. Young recruits today appear to have more skills and employment options, yet are willingly choosing to join the security sector as a means of service and a career.

Figure 8. Percentage Motivated by Opportunity to Serve in Peacekeeping Mission

Oldest Quartile — 7
2nd Oldest — 9
2nd Youngest — 14
Youngest Quartile — 17

Pearson chi2 = 22.9616 Pr = 0.085

Another notable motivating factor that emerges from the survey is peacekeeping. With 15 international and regional peace missions deployed in Africa, peacekeeping represents an increasingly significant component of many African militaries' mission. To that end, the youngest quartile seems to be increasingly motivated by the opportunity to serve in peacekeeping missions, with 17 percent being motivated by peacekeeping opportunities as compared to 7 percent for the oldest quartile (see Figure 8). This result suggests young service members see peacekeeping as an opportunity for gaining experience, professional advancement, and exposure to other countries.

Figure 9. Comparison of Factors Motivating Recruitment by Age
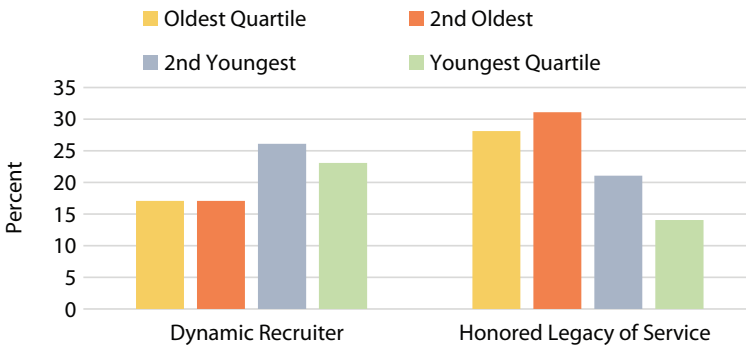
Pearson chi2 = 23.2298 Pr = 0.079

Differences between the age cohorts also emerge with regard to factors influencing recruitment (see Figure 9). Younger generations are more influenced by dynamic recruiters than older cohorts. Specifically, 25 percent of the youngest two quartiles indicated they were compelled by dynamic recruiters. This compares to 17 percent for the oldest two quartiles. Conversely, the younger cohorts were significantly less motivated by the legacy of service (14 percent) than

were the older cohorts (28 percent). Notably, the legacy of service remains significantly more compelling for the military (34 percent) relative to the police and gendarmerie (18 percent, on average). Nonetheless, even within the military there is a significant decline in the importance placed on the legacy of service by the youngest cohort (12 percent). The finding of a decline in regard for the legacy of service among younger generations has potential long-term institutional implications for all of the security services.

Values and Identity Formation

The survey results reveal a strong affinity among military respondents with their institution's positive values. Specifically, respondents from the military reported at rates of 55–75 percent that the values of duty, responsibility, honesty, respect for citizens, and professionalism described their institutions.

Figure 10. Value of "Professionalism" Characterizing Service (%)


Pearson chi2 = 22.6018 Pr = 0.000
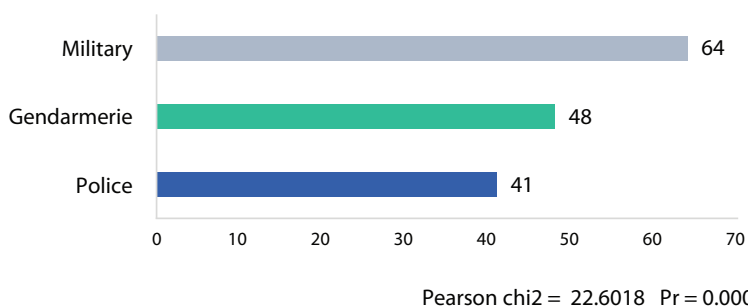
Notably, these values were only validated by the military respondents. For example, Figure 10 summarizes the disparity of responses from the respective services for one of these values, professionalism. It shows that 64 percent of military respondents

felt that this value characterized their service. By contrast, only a minority of respondents (typically around 38–44 percent) from the gendarmerie or police indicated these values applied to their services.

An important deviation within this value identification assessment was that values of "merit-based" and "service" do not seem to resonate strongly across any of the services. Just 48 percent of military respondents and only 25 and 38 percent of police and gendarmerie, respectively, indicated that merit-based values characterized their branches. Similarly, a minority of respondents for the police and gendarmerie (38 percent each) and military (47 percent) ascribed the value of "service to the public" as embodied in their institutions.

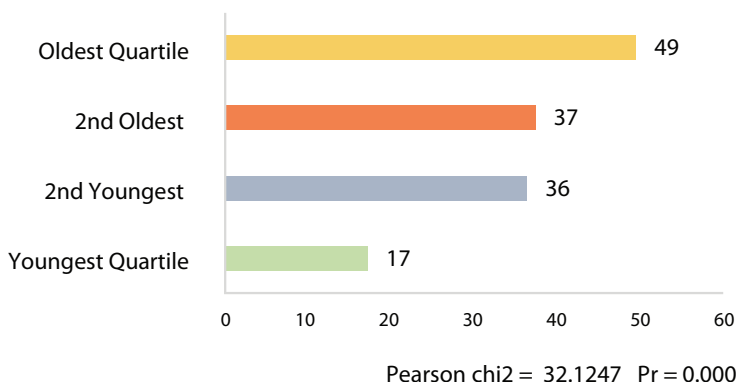### Figure 11. Value of "Duty" Characterizing Service (%)
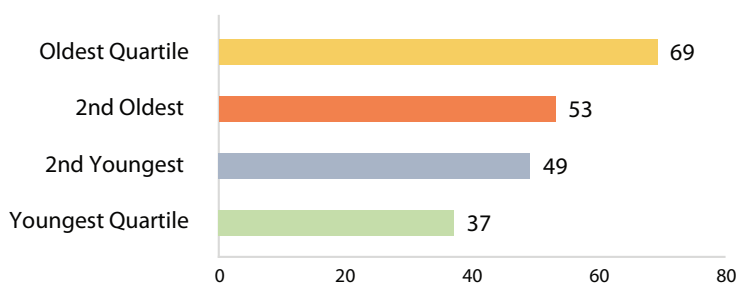
Pearson chi2 = 28.1463   Pr = 0.000

Interestingly, there is a strong age component to the value identification responses (see Figure 11). Specifically, the strongest associations across all of the values come from the older age quartiles (typically in the range of 55–70 percent). However, identification with such institutional values declines steadily for younger cohorts. For example, just 37 percent of the youngest cohort responded that the value of "duty" was representative of their service in Figure 11. This compares with 69 percent for the oldest cohort.

For the two values ("service to the public" and "merit-based") that registered the least support, the youngest cohort scored lowest. Just 17 percent of respondents in the youngest age group indicated that the value of "merit-based" embodied their services (see Figure 12). In other words, by a 3:1 ratio, the youngest cohort rejected the characterization of "merit-based" and "service to the public" (not shown) for their organizations.

Figure 12. Value of "Merit-Based" Characterizing Service (%)

Quartile	Value
Oldest Quartile	49
2nd Oldest	37
2nd Youngest	36
Youngest Quartile	17

Pearson chi2 = 32.1247 Pr = 0.000

This pattern of declining adherence to institutional values by age—a pattern that held across all values surveyed—is potentially highly relevant in terms of the levels of embeddedness of these values. It may also suggest an erosion of support for such positive institutional assessments. If service personnel do not believe their institutions uphold positive values, this portends poorly for morale. Alternatively, it may reflect a more nuanced and constructively critical determination of the state of these institutions relative to their societies. This is particularly noteworthy since the youngest cohort had indicated that "service to the public" was their strongest motivation for joining the security sector. This suggests a significant disconnect between

Figure 13. Gender Differences in Value of "Duty" Characterizing Security Institutions (%)

Pearson chi2 = 13.8583   Pr = 0.000
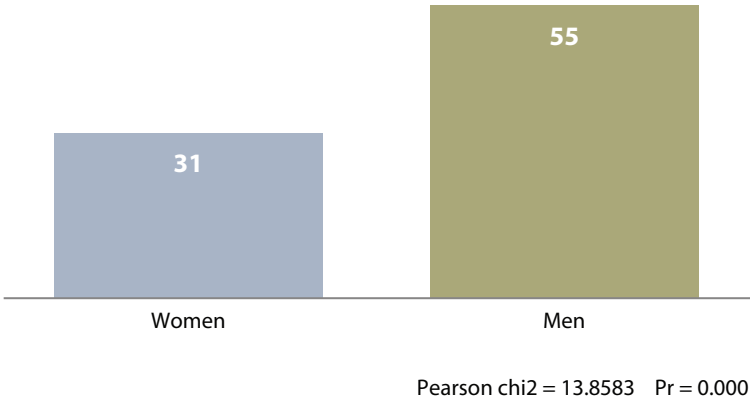
expectations and perceptions by this youngest cohort.

A marked divergence in identification of institutional values also emerges along gender lines. Specifically, women respondents, at a rate of 55–75 percent, do not identify with any of the values as representative of their respective institutions. For example, as Figure 13 shows, only 31 percent of female respondents indicate that "duty" is a common value that described their branch of service. This contrasts with a 51-percent response rate for men. Women in the military, however, generally identify more positively with all of the institutional values surveyed relative to women in the other services. While positive response rates among females in the military are usually not as strong as male military respondents, they are, typically, above 50 percent.

These gender differences are noteworthy for their consistency across all of the values. As with the younger cohort of respondents, these divergent perceptions from women may reflect a healthy reluctance to endorse values they feel are not well embodied in their institutions. It may also reflect a greater sense that women and

younger cohorts are disadvantaged under the current state of their institutions. They are, therefore, less willing to endorse the suggestion that these institutional values have been realized.

The survey also revealed some notable differences based on regime type. Specifically, respondents from democracies tended to indicate a stronger identification with all of the institutional values (e.g., duty, responsibility, honesty, respect for citizens, serving the public) than respondents from any of the other regime types. For instance, 63 percent of respondents from democracies identified the value of "honesty" as characterizing their service, though only 46 percent of the respondents from the other regime types combined felt this way (see Figure 14). The one notable exception was with regard to "merit-based." Here, the responses from democracies (37 percent)

Figure 14. Value of "Honesty" Characterizing Service
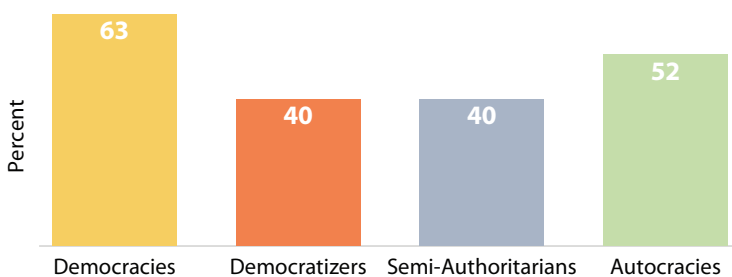

Pearson chi2(3) = 9.9060 Pr = 0.019

were in the same range as the other regime types.

Interestingly, respondents from autocracies were the group that showed the next most robust identification with values, especially for values of professionalism, duty, responsibility, respect for citizens, and honesty. This suggests that strong institutional legacies can be created within such regimes (presumably the most stable).

Equally relevant, respondents from mixed regimes (democratizers

Figure 15. Perceived Risk of Political Crisis by Regime Type
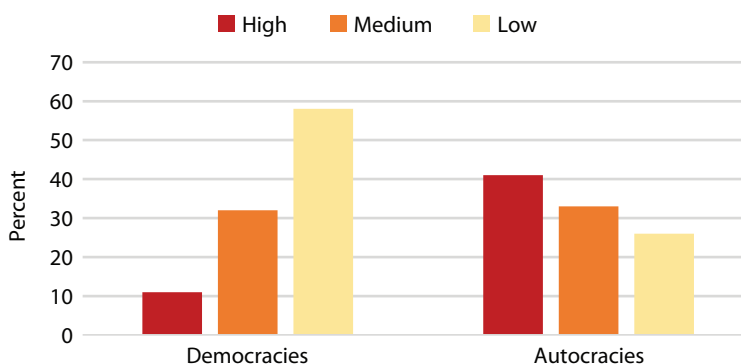
Pearson chi2 = 15.2831 Pr = 0.018

and semi-authoritarians) had a discernible paucity of positive responses to the identification with the values of professionalism, service to the public, and honesty. Only a minority of respondents indicated that these values characterized the ethos of their organizations. This has important policy relevance for defense institution strengthening efforts in transitioning societies. Deepening the shared values and identification of what a service stands for vis-à-vis citizens is an area requiring attention. This, in turn, may help sustain and advance democratization processes within these societies.

There were also divergences between regime types with regard to potential threats faced. For example, only 11 percent of respondents from democracies perceived risk of political crisis to be a serious concern (see Figure 15). This compared to 58 percent of respondents from democracies who classified risk of political crisis as low. The perceptions were reversed for respondents from autocracies. Among this group, 41 percent of respondents perceived risk of political crisis as a serious concern. Only 27 percent characterized this risk as low.

Figure 16. Perceptions of Public Support by Age

Legend:
- Oldest Quartile
- 2nd Oldest
- 2nd Youngest
- Youngest Quartile
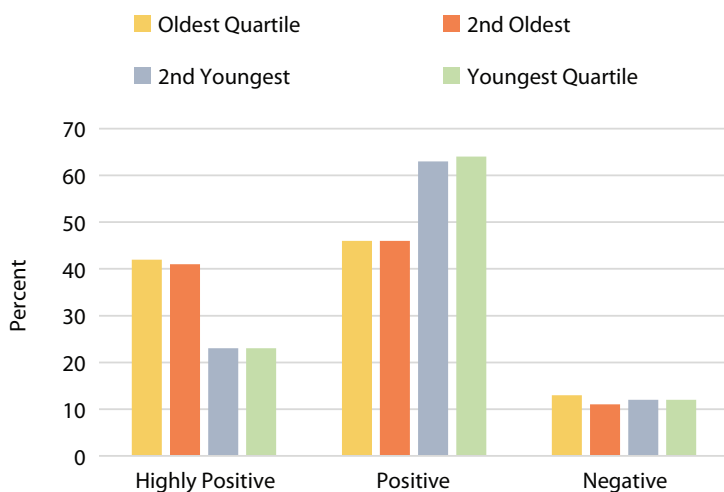
Pearson chi2 = 24.1502 Pr = 0.004

The survey responses also revealed that African security sector professionals, by and large, feel that there is a solid level of public support for their service. Overall, 88 percent of respondents indicated that there is a positive or highly positive level of support. This sentiment was significantly stronger within the military with 94 percent reporting favorable support, 47 percent of which was deemed highly positive. For the services more directly engaged with the public, the police and gendarmerie, the perceptions of highly positive support was significantly more modest, 22 and 33 percent, respectively. Among police, 17 percent responded that the public held negative perceptions of their service. Older age cohorts reported stronger levels of public support than the younger service members (see Figure 16). Specifically, 41 percent of the oldest two cohorts felt there was highly positive support compared to just 23 percent among the two youngest age cohorts.

International Training and Partners

One of the strongest findings from the survey was the high regard for international training. Some 97 percent of respondents viewed international training as a positive option. The value of international training as a formative experience was strongly validated in the qualitative interviews, where interviewees extolled such benefits as the:

- ◆ broadening of intellectual experiences and networks, including access to the latest knowledge and trends

- ◆ building of lasting relationships from their professional military education, including exposure to new ideas, values, critical thinking and evolving trends, while concurrently broadening contact with other cultures

- ◆ close exposure to senior leaders who demonstrate strong moral leadership and vision, which was identified as highly influential in the formative experiences of younger officers

- ◆ deeper understanding of members of the officer corps from different backgrounds

- ◆ creation of shared standards, vision, norms, and values with international partners

- ◆ building regional and global perspectives on security challenges and alternative means for addressing these challenges

- ◆ exposure to new technologies

Most respondents saw the importance of international training as a value in and of itself more so than the participation of any specific international partner. In fact, 83 percent of respondents indicated that there was value in having a diversity of international training partners rather than just one or two. For respondents expressing an interest in preferred training partners, the United States (24 percent), the African Union (20 percent), the United Nations (20

Figure 17. Comparison of Identity-Shaping Experiences by Age
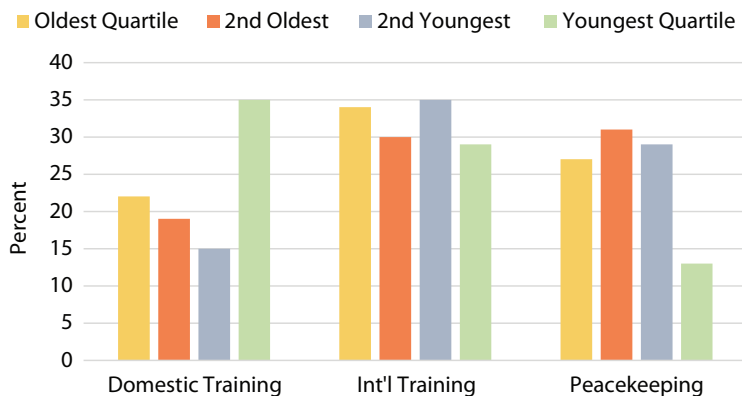
Pearson chi2 = 40.2891 Pr = 0.002

percent), Canada (11 percent), and the European Union (9 percent) were seen as most favored. The strong showing of multilateral institutions is noteworthy in this regard.

While there was a general consensus on the importance of international training, variations in age and service did emerge. International training was indicated as decidedly more formative than domestic training among the three oldest age cohorts (see Figure 17). Notably, the inverse was the case for the youngest age cohort, which stands out as an outlier. This cohort rated the influence of domestic training as the most influential formative experience. This was followed by international training and then peacekeeping. (Recall that the youngest cohort had indicated that the opportunity for peacekeeping deployments was a key motivation for them to join the service.) This divergence among the youngest age cohort may simply reflect their limited opportunities, thus far, for peacekeeping deployments or international training experiences.

Figure 18. Comparison of Identity-Shaping Experiences by Service
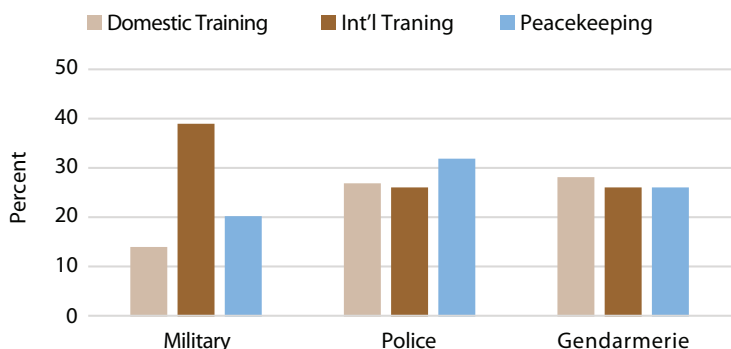
Pearson chi2 - 51.1627   Pr - 0.000

In terms of services, military respondents stood out in citing international training as the single most important formative experience in shaping the identity of their service. By a 2:1 margin, international training experiences were seen as more influential than domestic training (see Figure 18). This pattern does not hold for the police and gendarmerie, which cited training inside the country as of equal value to international training.

Somewhat counterintuitively, given their domestic orientation, peacekeeping was reported to be the single greatest influence for the police. This may highlight the growing role of police deployments in African peace operations, particularly in West Africa. For the military respondents, peacekeeping deployments ranked after international trainings as the most influential in shaping the identity of a member's service, followed by domestic training. The growing prominence of peacekeeping experiences in the identity formation of African security services is a noteworthy trend to track as they increasingly take on these roles.

Interviews underscored the premium placed on the ability to speak English in creating opportunities for international training and

advancing the careers of African security personnel. The unintended downside to this is the large number of outstanding young leaders whose careers are limited because they do not have opportunities to develop their English language skills.

Regional Variations

There are strong regional variations that emerge in attitudes and perceptions among African security sectors owing to their historical roots, traditions, and threats. Table 2 captures a number of the most noteworthy regional variations. These include:

Education. Education levels for recruits in West Africa are notably higher than in other regions on the continent. Some 68 percent of young security sector professionals surveyed in West Africa had at least a bachelor's degree when they started their service. Only 15 percent began service with a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment. In contrast, 40 percent of new service members in Central Africa and East Africa started with a high school diploma as their highest educational degree.

Peacekeeping. West Africans were also the most influenced by peacekeeping experiences as a factor in service identity. Twenty-nine percent of West Africans saw peacekeeping as the most influential experience, compared to an average of just 16 percent for the other regions.

Corruption. Southern and East African respondents stand out for their concern over corruption. Ninety-five percent felt it a "medium" or "high" security problem. This response does not indicate that there are higher levels of corruption in these regions. Rather, it indicates that service members are particularly troubled by and perceive the security implications from high levels of corruption. While also high, concerns over corruption are relatively lower in Central and West Africa, at 75 and 85 percent, respectively. Taken as a whole, the results underscore the widespread recognition of the threat to security posed by corruption.

Table 2. Key Regional Variations in Security Sector Perceptions

ISSUE/TOPIC	WEST	CENTRAL	SOUTHERN	EAST
Education	• Starting education levels of service personnel in West Africa are higher than in other regions. Overall, 68% start with a bachelor's degree or higher.	• 41% of service members start with just a high school education.	• Overall, 52% of service members start with just a high school diploma. This has dropped to 40% for youngest cohort.	• 23% of East African service members start with a 2-year college degree.
Motivations	• Gendarmeries indicate the highest commitment to serve among services. • West African professionals have the strongest level of satisfaction that their expectations are being met.	• Central African respondents have the highest rate of unmet expectations (21%).	• Service members are most influenced by a family member who served.	• Service to country is cited as the highest motivator relative to all regions.
Formative experiences	• Peacekeeping experiences are highly influential.			• Strong association with service legacy.
International Training	• Training outside the country is a highly influential experience for service members.	• Training outside the country is an influential experience for service members.	• There is equal emphasis on both domestic and international training.	• Training outside country is the most influential experience for service members.

ISSUE/TOPIC	WEST	CENTRAL	SOUTHERN	EAST
Perceptions	• 41% see peacekeeping as a likely security activity. • 61% feel prepared for peacekeeping challenges. • 44% feel prepared for VEO threats.	• Civil unrest seen as a serious threat among 48% of respondents. • Ethnic violence seen as serious threat among 40% of respondents. • 56% see political crises as a serious security challenge.	• Service members have a low rate of concern over civil unrest. • Service members have a high level of concern over corruption. • Only 9% see illicit trafficking as a serious challenge.	• Civil-military relations are perceived by 30% as very cordial. • Service members have a low rate of concern over civil unrest or ethnic violence. • Service members have a high level of concern over corruption.

Violent Extremist Organizations. East and Central African service members see violent extremist organizations (VEOs) as a concern, with 73 percent of respondents reporting this as a "medium" or "high" threat. In contrast, Southern Africa stands out as having a very low perception of VEOs as a threat with just 2 percent identifying this a "high" threat and 16 percent viewed this as a moderate concern. Perceptions in West Africa fall in between with 60 percent seeing VEOs as a moderate or high threat.

Illicit Trafficking. Central African respondents indicated the highest level of concern over illicit trafficking with nearly 80 percent rating this as a "high" or "medium" threat. Reflecting a modest degree of concern, 65 percent of service members in West and Southern Africa rated illicit trafficking as a "low" threat. East Africa was distinctive in that it was much less likely to see illicit trafficking as a "high" threat (9 percent), compared to a 29-percent rate for all respondents.

Public Support. East Africans have a particularly positive perception of public support, with 49 percent of respondents rating this as "very high," compared to 32 percent over all. More generally, roughly 90 percent of service members from Central, East, and West Africa believed there were "high" to "very high" levels of public support for their services. Southern Africans, by contrast, reported the most cautious level of public support for their services, with 29 percent indicating negative perceptions and only 21 percent finding this support to be "very high."

International Training. East Africans were the region attributing the highest importance to international training with 46 percent citing this as the most influential factor in shaping their service's identity. (This is three times the level recorded for domestic training). Respondents from West and Central Africa also indicated a clear affirmation of the impact from international training on identity formation above and beyond domestic training. Support in Southern Africa was more modest with 33 percent of service members identifying international training as a key formative experience. This is roughly comparable to the value placed on domestic training.

Civil Unrest. Central African respondents expressed much more concern about civil unrest than those from other regions. Forty-eight percent reported civil unrest as a serious concern, double the rate found elsewhere on the continent. By contrast, 50 percent of East and Southern African service members considered civil unrest a "low" threat. Central African respondents were also more likely to see the risk of political crisis as a challenge. Fifty-six percent of service members from this region saw political crises as a "high" threat (compared to 24 percent overall). Central Africa, similarly, stands out for seeing ethnic violence as a "high" threat (40 percent). By contrast, only 7 percent of Southern Africans felt this way and 19 percent over all.

Conclusion

This study set out to assess differences in the attitudes, motivations, and values of the emerging generation of African security sector professionals. It found an array of perspectives on which younger service members diverge from their older counterparts. Many of these differences are likely linked to the fact that the youngest cohort of security sector professionals is markedly better educated and starts service at an older age than previous generations. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the entry education levels of police appear to be lagging behind the other services, highlighting an important area of potential improvement.

The youngest cohort of African security sector professionals surveyed also distinguishes itself by having a very strong motivation to serve their country. This cohort and female service members, similarly, appear to be more skeptical that espoused institutional values such as "merit-based," "service to the public," "honesty," and "professionalism" are reflected by their institutions in practice.

These sentiments suggest a willingness to set a higher standard of professional values for their services. They also imply a greater inclination toward institutional reform among younger security sector professionals so as to better match institutional ideals with reality. This openness for reform combined with the receptivity to international capacity building efforts suggests a potential focal point for further international partnerships.

These findings also offer a cautionary note, however. The divergence from older generations with regard to institutional values raises questions over whether the cohesive bond that institutional pride provides will be sustained within the younger generation. This has potential implications for professionalism and the appeal of a career in the security sector. This concern was highlighted in qualitative interviews. Young service members were praised for their

ability to absorb new information and adapt to technology. Yet, at the same time, they were also seen as showing less camaraderie and cohesion as older cohorts, "preferring to withdraw by themselves with their hand-held devices" in the words of one of the interviewees.

The preponderance of support for international training opportunities was another strong finding of this study. International training opportunities were found to be invaluable as:

◆ Formative experiences

◆ A basis for institutional identity formation

◆ Exposure to new approaches and technology

◆ Broadening perspectives

◆ Stimulating critical thinking

◆ Strengthening affinity with regional partners

While this study did not explicitly set out to explore the relevance of professional military education, the feedback from the study would seem to provide a ringing endorsement for its effectiveness in the eyes of participants. Interviewees who had been part of longer term training postings were most enthusiastic about the benefits of the experience. Since the study did not attempt to distinguish between various types of international training, it is not possible to unpack the relative perceived benefits in this report. Delineating this and calibrating how future international training engagements are undertaken to optimize these benefits is a logical follow-on inquiry from these findings.

While not an intended focus of this study, the survey results revealed that a noteworthy 84 percent of participants have had the opportunity to upgrade their educational qualifications while in the service. Nearly two-thirds of these earned another educational degree, while the remainder obtained vocational or technical

certificates. This finding suggests that African security services are a valuable source of human capital development for their societies, and their service personnel in particular. This observation is not necessarily widely recognized and raises another consideration for institutional development as well as recruitment and retention of younger service personnel.

The survey results also showed a high level of satisfaction among service personnel that their expectations were being met. Ninety-two percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this sentiment, including 89 percent of the youngest cohort. This is an encouraging sign that the vast majority of security sector professionals have found rewarding career paths through their service. Better understanding of the factors that contribute to this result holds insights for further staff development and institutional strengthening.

The survey also revealed high levels of perceived public support of the security sector from service members. On average, 87 percent of service members indicated that the public had a positive view of their service. This positive perception held for all services, though most strongly for the military and most weakly for the police. These findings contrast somewhat from public opinion polls in Africa showing more modest levels of support for the security sector. For example, an Afrobarometer survey of 36 countries shows that just 51 percent of the public trusts the police "somewhat" or "a lot." The military typically scores higher, earning comparable trust scores of 66 percent.

Such variances in citizen and service member perceptions present a potential learning opportunity. Sensitizing service personnel of reasons for areas of divergence may raise awareness and create an impetus for reforming aspects of the citizen-security actor relationship. Such an initiative may also facilitate increased dialogue with citizens to narrow the gap in perceptions.

ANNEX 1. CATEGORIES OF AFRICAN POLITICAL REGIMES

CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACIES	DEMOCRATIZERS	SEMI-AUTHORITARIANS	AUTOCRACIES
Botswana	Benin	Algeria	Angola
Cape Verde	Burkina Faso	D.R. Congo	Burundi
Ghana	Comoros	Djibouti	Cameroon
Mauritius	Côte d'Ivoire	Gabon	CAR
São Tomé & Princípe	Gambia	Morocco	Chad
Seychelles	Guinea	Togo	Rep. of Congo
South Africa	Guinea-Bissau	Uganda	Egypt
	Kenya		Ethiopia
	Lesotho		Equatorial Guinea
	Liberia		Eritrea
	Madagascar		Libya
	Malawi		Mauritania
	Mali		Rwanda
	Mozambique		South Sudan
	Namibia		Sudan
	Niger		Swaziland
	Nigeria		
	Senegal		
	Sierra Leone		
	Somalia		
	Tanzania		
	Tunisia		
	Zambia		
	Zimbabwe		

Source: Joseph Siegle, Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Based on trichotimized categorization of data of Polity IV's democracy score and Freedom House's political rights and civil liberties ratings in March 2017.

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