

Panel Executive Brief: Justice Sector Reform & Stabilization

Injustice, in all of its forms, is a fundamental driver of conflict. Therefore, proper justice sector reform goes a long way in healing communities and strengthening society as a whole.

Speakers

Julie Werbel - *Senior Advisor, (USAID-CVE)*

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Moderator: Jenny Murphy - Senior Rule of Law Advisor, Creative Associates International

Key Issues/Problems discussed:

- Challenge learned from Kosovo: lack of self-sufficiency because local groups rely on donors.
- Challenge learned from Iraq: poor social contract between police and the community because of no moral authority on behalf of the police.
- Challenge learned from Afghanistan: inter-agency complications.
- Our technical responses are often supply driven, and often don't meet the needs or demands of the people, which typically stem from justice-related issues.

Key Recommendations:

- Funding for justice sector reform needs to go to more than just police funding; criminal justice is just one of the sector's assets.
- Employ a more balanced approach, focusing on both security and justice.
- Focus on making the mechanisms transparent and accountable.
- Community-based justice and engaging non-state actors is just as important as building and engaging formal institutions; however, national ownership and responsibility is still necessary.
- Need for coordinated and clearly delineated roles and responsibilities among all actors.
- Need to build trust with host nation leaders and actors.
- We have improved with transitional justice, but employing restorative justice is also necessary in order to reestablish trust and social cohesion.

Significance of SAR:

Stabilization is based on context, and though the SAR asserts that stabilization is a political endeavour, justice should not be politically aligned. The SAR does well to emphasize the need for engaging local actors and utilizing a balanced approach among USG and non-USG actors; such approaches would also greatly contribute to successful justice sector reform.