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# Chapter 8: Polycentric Security Governance and Sustainable Development in the Global South

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## Abstract

Policing in much of the developing world has always been, in many respects, both dominated by the non-state and pluralised. Yet, plurality and the non-state are predominantly conceptualised, by scholars and practitioners alike, as problematic, non-inclusive, and/or undemocratic. Yet the reality is far more complex than this. In this paper, we turn the tables on conventional wisdom by looking to the positive features of plural or polycentric forms of security governance by asking how these features might be utilised to provide for more inclusive forms of security governance in the Global South. Drawing on empirical research in South Africa on plural policing arrangements, this paper considers how Sustainable Development Goal 16 which seeks to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies” might be realised within plural governance systems. This paper seeks to demonstrate that certain conditions need to be in place for plural or polycentric systems of security governance to co-provide effective and inclusive security for the collective good, and furthermore, that the positive features of the non-state can be harnessed to give effect to the SDGs.

## Key words

Plural policing, non-state, private security, polycentric, security governance, Global South

## Introduction

*‘Electricity remains a public good and therefore, if you totally privatize it, it will have problems.’* Gwede Mantashe, Secretary General of the African National Congress, South Africa, November 2014 (SAPA 2014)

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*'...the acknowledgement of broadband being vital to economic, social, democratic and cultural success of individuals and collectivities is a given. However, this only brings us so far. Three other questions must be asked. First, where are the gaps to access to connectivity? ... The second question is, given those gaps, what are the best strategies in order to close or eliminate them? And finally, who is in the best position to implement those strategies?'* Jean-Pierre Blais, Chairman of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, April 2016 (CRTC, 2016)

*'...there is much to be said for exploring the historical and spatial fluidity of different forms of provision of goods. The critical fact, however, is that the location of goods in the public or private domain is a product of political decision, not of some allegedly essential quality of the goods themselves.'* (Johnston, 1992, p. 43)

In this chapter, we use the lens of safety to consider how Sustainable Development Goal 16 – a goal that seeks to '*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*' – is being, and might be, realized within the pluralised settings that characterize 21<sup>st</sup> Century security governance in Global South contexts. Contexts where state organizations are often at best weak, and at worst have been captured by partisan interests (Börzel & Risse, 2010) and where repeated attempts, over decades, to promote effective and legitimate forms of state governance have not fared well. We do so by turning the tables on conventional wisdom (that has traditionally sought to find ways of replacing polycentric with monocentric forms of governance) by looking to the positive features of plural or polycentric forms of security governance and asking how these features might be utilized to provide for more inclusive forms of security governance in the Global South.

Despite extensive critiques of plural or polycentric forms of governance (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012), including those from within the security governance literature, there has been a shadow literature that has celebrated the advantages of multi-layered forms of governance associated with scholars who have argued for the advantages of 'quasi-market and pseudo-market arrangements' (Ostrom, Tiebout & Warren, 1961; Ostrom & Ostrom, 1965, p. 146). Elinor Ostrom (2009), for example, has identified three such benefits of polycentric governance systems:

- First, they provide opportunities for citizens to select services appropriate to their needs;
- Secondly, they encourage innovation in service provision; and

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- Thirdly, they encourage, and enable, circular forms of accountability and oversight.

With these posited benefits as a guide, we interrogate an African safety initiative to explore conditions that facilitate the production of safety as a collective good within polycentric governance environments. In doing so we draw upon the results of research on policing initiatives undertaken by the City of Cape Town within six Special Rating Areas (SRAs) within Cape Town, South Africa. In doing so, we aim to explore the conditions by which pluralised security governance (involving both state and non-state entities) can provide security which is inclusive and aligns to a collective or public good. Although the SDGs acknowledge the need for a pluralised response to sustainable development, there are a number of governance challenges which will impact on achieving this in practice (Bowen et al, 2017). For instance, a particular governance challenge is the difficulty in promoting and sustaining a polycentric arrangement with the even and equitable participation of both weak and strong nodes, whilst simultaneously also ensuring that accountability mechanisms keep pace with pluralised developments (Braithwaite, 2006; Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004). While recognizing the importance of local context, we interrogate an example of plurality from a Global South site in order to identify the principles or conditions underpinning the successes of plurality so as to address some of these governance challenges in other contexts. In this way we hope to contribute to the realization of SDG 16 as something which can be effectively, and democratically, operationalized in highly-pluralised and/or non-state dominated contexts.

## Public and private goods provision

Within the governance of safety, as with Goal 16, and the SDGs more generally, an enormously influential position – and one that continues to be accepted as the correct answer by many 'critical' scholars and practitioners – is that nation states are the most appropriate mechanism for delivering public goods. In other words, there has been a tendency to favour a state-centric approach to governing safety. This normative framing often does not accommodate the (historical and contemporary) empirical reality of security governance in the Global South, in terms of the plurality of safety providers, nor the fact that public goods may be provided by the non-state sector, as can private goods be provided by the public sector.

While this state-centric answer, with its strong resonances to the ideals of the welfare state (Garland, 2016), has been challenged by both liberal market-based positions (for example, as articulated by Adam Smith) and by hybrid 'neo-liberal' conceptions (advocated by, for example, Friedrich Hayek) it has long been the taken for granted

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position with respect to safety and other public goods as the quote by Mantasha at the outset of this paper illustrates. This understanding has been, and continues to be, supported by a robust alliance of left leaning politicians and academics as well as state-based practitioners. This alliance has been very active in their support of this established framing and has been highly critical of alternative stances that promote either simple market solutions (liberal) or stances that see markets as sources of provision ('rowing') while states are conceived as sources of direction ('steering') (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). This framing and the alliance of interests that has supported it has been a crucial source of support for the Hobbesian dream of the establishment of a monopoly of policing by state agencies – a dream nicely articulated by Maitland (1885) as a 'swallowing up' of multiple 'private peaces' by a single public peace. Central to this Hobbesian dream has been the premise that the private provision of safety should be resisted rather than supported as the liberal, and neo-liberal, positions would argue. The assumption is that private provision will inevitably enhance the inequality of provision and in so doing undermine the objective of inclusive safety (see Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012 for a discussion of inclusive verses exclusive institutions). This framing, that sees police as the only legitimate and effective provider of safety, has promoted reform initiatives within policing that have focused on both enhancing the ability of the public police to provide inclusive safety and resisting the provision of safety by private sector providers of policing (see Loader and Walker, 2007 for an excellent review of contemporary proposals to realise these ends).

Empirical evidence has emerged that has convincingly demonstrated that public sector policing has not, to use Maitland's metaphor, 'swallowed up' private sector safety provision. On the contrary private sector provision of safety has become an ubiquitous feature of contemporary policing. In light of this, questions have inevitably been raised about the dream of a state monopoly of policing and the somewhat watered down version of this 'civilizing' dream (Elias, 2000) that seek to promote 'state-anchored' policing (Loader and Walker, 2007) – a proposal that has strong resonances to neo-liberal thinking. These empirical developments have led to an increasing acceptance that the 'boundary' between public and private (and community) sector policing is 'messy and complex' (Sparrow, 2014) and that the dream of uni- or mono-centric policing arrangements, as the only way of promoting inclusive safety governance, must be revised in light of a now well-established polycentric governance reality that includes, but is not limited to, the governance of safety. At the centre of this acceptance is an increasingly widespread recognition that polycentric sources of authority and provision of policing – 'club goods' (Hope, 2000) – need to be accepted as contributing to the safety of the many. This has led scholars who have sought to recognize the polycentric nature of safety governance – via concepts such as 'nodal governance' (for a review

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see Holley and Shearing, 2017) – to explore how nodal sources of authority and provision are being mobilized, and might be better mobilized (and integrated), to provide for inclusive safety provision. Within this conception states are conceived as one node among many (Johnston and Shearing, 2003) that can, and sometimes do, provide safety. Further, within this framing, regulation – both by state and non-state auspices – is seen as a tool that has been used, and can be used more effectively, to promote safety governance for the many rather than the few within the polycentric settings that characterise contemporary governance. As we pursue these arguments we follow Blais's advice, quoted at the outset of this paper, by asking i) where are the gaps, ii) what has been, and might be, done to close these gaps and iii) who has been developing these strategies, and how they might be developed further.

Accordingly, in this chapter, to reiterate, we explore nodal governance developments in policing, with a particular focus on the Global South, to consider how safety (and other public goods) are being conceived and practiced in polycentric settings and the regulatory developments that have accompanied, and might accompany, these developments in the future. We do not adopt a strictly economic definition of 'public goods' as meaning non-rivalrous and non-excludable as this would suggest that public and private goods are somehow at opposite ends of a spectrum whereas the reality is that these goods are often provided simultaneously or co-produced (Berg and Shearing, 2018). Borrowing from higher education studies, we rather conceive of public and private goods as being heterogenous, interdependent, and not a fixed feature of either the public or private sectors (Marginson, 2007).

## Polycentric security governance in the Global South

Plural forms of security governance have long been an accepted state of affairs in Global South contexts, particularly in contexts of weak, limited, and/or contested statehood (Börzel & Risse, 2010). This plurality has been composed of, for instance, a range of community groupings and organisations, state-based systems of policing, market-based security and various measures adopted by the international community seeking out its own protective methods in, for instance, conflict and post-conflict settings (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011; Baker, 2008). As mentioned, given the empirical reality of this pluralisation or polycentricity, the main object of enquiry within scholarly and practitioner debates is how to enhance the value of polycentric systems and mitigate the challenges.

There are many benefits to having polycentric governance systems, as mentioned – especially where there is a mix of multi-layered and multi-scalar nodes. These types of

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systems may be best placed to resolve complex governance challenges as very often these complex problems “can only be handled in the context of many different levels of organization” (Ostrom, Tiebout & Warren, 1961, p. 838). The inclusion of the non-state in polycentric systems is also seen as a benefit rather than a risk, since the provision of public goods could, as mentioned above, be aligned to principles of the market in that the “development of quasi-market and pseudo-market arrangements to regulate the conduct of public agencies” could in turn promote “[m]ore efficient and more responsible performance in the public sector” (Ostrom, Tiebout & Warren, 1961; Ostrom & Ostrom, 1965, p. 146). Furthermore, the co-production of public goods, in which citizens can co-produce public goods alongside the state is a way to achieve welfare in poorer countries, where governments may not have the capacity to produce public goods on their own. The systems of circular oversight which become embedded in the polycentric arrangement, and the addition of a competitive element, are thus features of polycentricity, which are said to result in a better system of governance when compared to a monocentric system (Ostrom, 1991). In terms of the latter point in particular, Ostrom (2009) has identified multiple benefits of polycentric systems in this regard. For instance, the multiplicity of authorities and jurisdictions allow for more democratic choice for citizens to select the services most appropriate for their needs or may allow them to move to another jurisdiction if these needs are not fulfilled. This resonates with the concept of ‘multi-choice policing’ developed by Bruce Baker where African citizens have a choice from a “striking variety of policing alternatives available” to them when faced with a security need or challenge (Baker, 2008, p. 6). These choices are both legitimate and illegitimate – a point we will reflect on at a later point. Furthermore, in terms of the benefits of polycentric systems, public officials have more choices if there are a large number of producers of public goods and services in a jurisdiction and the producers who in turn have to compete for contracts will be more innovative in order to win contracts and better their performance. Polycentric governance systems are also less likely to undermine democracy, more likely to allow for embedded and circular accountability and oversight, and to be more innovative with respect to resolving ‘collective action problems’ (Ostrom, 1987; Shackelford, 2013, p. 1352).

However, there are counter-arguments against polycentric systems – particularly where there is a mix of state and non-state entities (see Berg, Nakueira and Shearing, 2014 for an overview). They can be very complex, especially where there are a range of competing authorities vying for control over the ways in which security is governed. Powerful and/or illegitimate actors may dominate and may end up undermining the public interest while disempowering and marginalising weaker actors, such as displaced communities – ironically leading to further security challenges (Ostrom, Tiebout, & Warren, 1961; Shearing, 1992). The mix of nodes within these systems may mean that

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they compete with each other, particularly if these nodes are locked within competing mentalities or “distinctive systemic logics”, leading to conflicts and undermining effectiveness (Yar, 2011, p. 10). In short, polycentric systems have been accused of being undemocratic, ineffective, uncoordinated, un/under-regulated, and unaccountable (Crawford, Lister, Blackburn & Burnett, 2005; Fleming, 2006; Shearing, 1996). A prevailing concern expressed by scholars exploring polycentric systems, and that which underpins many of the challenges expressed above, is the question of legitimacy. There has been much focus, from wide-ranging scholarship, on the ways in which polycentric governance systems gain legitimacy (whether they have the right to govern) particularly where the sources of legitimacy are not necessarily from or influenced by the state (in non-state global networks, cyber-spaces, or in spaces of weak statehood, for instance) (Backer, 2011; Cole, 2011; Shackelford 2013; Sovacool, 2011). Similarly, scholars have been interested in how the non-state gains legitimacy particularly where these sources of legitimacy may be tenuous or questionable (Thumala, Goold & Loader, 2011). There has been some interest too on whether legitimacy comes from the interactive relationships between nodes in a polycentric system or from the polycentric system itself (Black, 2008).

Given the general concerns about polycentric governance systems, it is not surprising that polycentric policing arrangements have created considerable consternation with those (for example, ‘critical’ policing scholars) who supported the move towards state-centred policing, and the broader developments of state-centred governance more generally (the welfare state). In many respects, the shift towards polycentric forms of policing has been viewed as a retrogressive step in the history of policing. Yet the empirical reality of new (and established) developments in policing is undeniable. Polycentric forms of safety governance have become increasingly entrenched globally as a permanent feature of policing. Land use changes continue to produce pseudo public space located on privately owned land (mass private property) explicitly policed to produce constituency-specific collective goods (club goods) policed by private sector policing agents. Furthermore, scepticism about state delivery of public goods has gained momentum and the idea that polycentric safety governance with multiple auspices and providers cannot, by definition, produce public goods has lost ground. As this has happened polycentric forms of governance (both auspices and providers) has come to be accepted not simply as an unfortunate reality but as the cloth out of which public safety goods must now be made.

Research on developments in polycentric policing in the Global South has been central to this realisation. This includes developments in Africa and India, where centralised state policing has long been regarded less favourably than it has been in the Global

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North, such as the UK and those colonies that have remained settler societies (for example, Australia, Canada and the US). This research, albeit shaped by established state-centred framings, has begun to provide evidence of polycentric forms of policing (both private and civil sector) that documents the use of non-state, “whole-of-society”, resources to deliver safety as a public good (Berg & Shearing, 2011). This challenge to the established framing that only state-centred forms of policing (including neo-liberal) can deliver public safety goods is also being challenged within North America and the UK as policing thinkers recognise that state centred forms of policing, for economic reasons alone, cannot be relied upon exclusively to provide public goods. Scholarship is generally pragmatic about the task of providing security equitably and acknowledges the fact that forms of policing are necessarily going to be “adversarial and conflictual” and that security needs are contingent on scale, space and time (Crawford, 1999, p. 244). Further to this, there is a general acknowledgement in the security governance literature (especially that focusing on security in places of weak state governance) that governments may be motivated by partisan or self-interests, and may do nothing to promote security for the public interest. The challenge is a broad one – to ensure that clientelism does not predominate – that the interests of individuals (even in government), the market or elite groups do not trump the public interest. In essence, one’s ability to consume should not determine the basis for inclusion into or exclusion from effective security provision. Being too client-focused or favouring some clients over others negatively impacts on legitimacy. Again, this applies to both state and non-state institutions. This has led to thinkers beginning to take on the task of identifying conditions under which non-state policing can deliver collective goods (cf Loader and White, 2015); the conditions that need to be in place for nodes (either state or non-state) to provide goods for the public interest (Krasner and Risse, 2014); and thereby a move away from an either/or understanding of public and private goods to a goods continuum that accepts the delivery of goods across the continuum as legitimate but that seeks to ensure that goods across the full continuum are produced.

The question then is: in light of the benefits and despite the numerous challenges identified with polycentric systems, what is possible within the context of a polycentric policing reality? Is the quest for peaceful and inclusive societies as outlined by SDG 16, achievable in light of the reality of polycentricity within Global South contexts? Drawing again on Osborne and Gaebler’s (1992) analogy of ‘steering’ and ‘rowing’ above, the SDGs (and the United Nations more generally) have been viewed as higher order steering mechanisms or “guideposts” for the attainment of sustainable development, however, they “do not, simply by virtue of their articulation, provide the authority, tools, or means required” to give effect to sustainable development (Bernstein, 2017). In other words, although this steering occurs at an international level, the SDGs still need to be

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adapted to local context and made actionable – they need to be locally institutionalised and made governable, and they need to ensure that the interests of the international community do not undermine the local public good interest. In other words, the SDGs as international policy need to be 'translated' into local contexts rather than simply transferred (Blaustein, 2015).

However, before one can begin to consider the types of governance arrangements or institutions that need to give effect to the SDGs in highly pluralised contexts, we first need to consider the conditions we want to create to promote inclusivity, equitability, and effective safety governance. In that way we can then consider the types of institutions and/or institutional characteristics which can promote these conditions. The following section explores a case study of polycentricity to identify some of these conditions.

## A South African case of polycentricity

Drawing on a case study from South Africa, what the following will demonstrate is that certain conditions need to be in place for plural or polycentric systems of security governance to co-provide effective security for the public good. The examples we draw from are based on research on polycentric security governance systems involving a number of state and non-state nodes within six City Improvement Districts or Special Rating Areas (SRAs) in and around Cape Town, South Africa. We use SRAs in South Africa not specifically to highlight the empirical realities of polycentricity – we know this already – but rather to use SRAs as an exemplar of a mixed sector, well-functioning polycentric arrangement so as to draw out the conditions which underpin polycentric public goods provision. However, before we do this, it is worth reflecting on the South African context, with respect to plurality and the specific importance of the non-state.

As with most other African countries, South African security governance arrangements are highly pluralised. The racial segregation institutionalised by Apartheid for nearly 50 years, has left its mark in terms of the high degree of inequality that exists in the country – particularly with regards to access to security. The South African Police during Apartheid were geared towards brutally maintaining the Apartheid infrastructure in the townships while providing a much higher level of policing in the white and more affluent areas (Glaser, 2005). The shift to a democracy in 1994 led to a number of democratisation efforts – to reform the South African Police Service, increase their legitimacy and accountability and to address previous imbalances. While an impressive architecture of oversight and reform were developed the public police suffer from a lack of legitimacy in those high crime spaces where they are most needed, with communities

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often favouring an array of local methods to deal with crime (street patrols and vigilantism for instance) as they had done during Apartheid, while more affluent areas opt for private security (Schärf & Nina, 2001; Steinberg, 2008). This need for security, and the shift to neo-liberal crime preventions strategies (including the development of SRAs) in the mid to late 1990s has opened up the way for private security to flourish. The industry has been growing exponentially since the 1980s in particular, with current estimates by the Small Arms Survey (2011) placing South Africa in the top 5 countries (out of 70 reviewed) with the highest per capita rate of private security to its population. It outnumbers the public police and the armed forces combined by approximately 3 to 1 (Berg & Howell, 2017). It is an ever-present and firm fixture of South Africa's security landscape performing public police functions and much more (see Berg, 2010). In light of this, South Africa is a useful case study because of its high degree of plurality and specifically the involvement of the private sector in polycentric arrangements. It therefore represents an interesting case study of polycentric systems which incorporate the private sector without market interests necessarily trumping the public interest. It must be noted that the high levels of plurality in the country do not always translate to effective partnerships or well-functioning polycentric arrangements – in fact quite the opposite (see Diphorn and Berg, 2014 for an overview of the various typologies of partnership policing which have developed in South Africa). However, there have been instances where, over time, and under the right conditions, partnerships and polycentricity have evolved and become well-functioning. If the SDGs are to be successful, the private sector cannot be ignored, it has to be harnessed, polycentricity needs to be accepted and the conditions for success need to be explored – the South African case provides a useful account, as follows.

## SRAs in South Africa

Like 'business improvement districts' elsewhere SRAs are legal entities constituted when a majority of businesses in an area agree to an SRA's establishment. In Cape Town SRAs are enabled by a by-law that provided for the establishment of non-profit companies to legally govern security within a defined geographical area. These company are funded by fees, that constitute an additional municipal tax, that businesses in the area pay. Depending on the size and budget, SRAs managing bodies, may be very small (one or two people) or comprise a number of personnel, such as a general manager (or CEO); a security manager; a cleansing manager; a marketing consultant, someone in charge of landscaping and gardening and possibly a social worker or person in charge of social development. A primary concern of South African SRAs is physical security. The vast majority of South African SRAs contract private security companies to address this concern. Agents of these companies typically patrol the

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'public' spaces of the SRA, alongside public sector bodies such as the South African Police Service (SAPS) and various City-level law enforcement organisations and community organisations (such as Neighbourhood Watch groups). Given that SRAs by definition manage security within designated areas in places where businesses have agreed to pay an additional 'tax' to enhance security within the neighbourhoods in which they operate there are thus close parallels between SRA areas and areas like shopping malls where the security services are paid for as part of rents.

It is a reality of the SRAs that only those areas which can afford them are able to establish them – they are designed to cater only for the club good of those paying top-up rates within the SRA defined space. However, as they have become more networked and polycentric in form and function, many of the SRAs have simultaneously adapted their behaviours (and the private security companies they contract) and arguably aligned themselves more and more to public goods values as opposed to private or club good values. Some of these adaptations include, for instance, shifting from gating and exclusionary practices to practices that can be described as forms of social development in light of the awareness that SRA effectiveness is hinged on engaging with deeper societal conditions rather than simply moving security problems outside of their boundaries. In other words styles of security have 'softened' and broadened from a focus on narrow crime prevention to a focus on public safety issues (which includes much more than 'crime', but also various 'harms', see Berg and Shearing, 2018). Private security within SRAs therefore reflects a different trend to the much 'harder' (i.e. confrontational, armed and reactive) styles of policing and private security found outside the SRAs (see Berg, 2010; Clarno & Murray, 2013; Diphooorn, 2013; Marks & Wood, 2007; Singh & Kempa, 2007). This has meant too that SRAs have increasingly moved outside of their boundaries to address these issues and in fact engaged with others at multiple scales of governance rather than only remaining within local day-to-day challenges. These adaptations can in part be explained by the fact that both state and non-state entities within SRAs, or working with SRAs, desire to gain (public) legitimacy. Unlike perhaps in established democracies, state legitimacy is not a given and not a default source of legitimacy for other nodes in these polycentric networks. For instance, the public police in South Africa are also under pressure to demonstrate effectiveness in order to gain public legitimacy (Bradford, Huq, Jackson and Roberts, 2014).

What follows is a description of the findings of the research with a particular focus on the *conditions* identified which, it is argued, contributed to the non-state and state (and the polycentric system as a whole) adapting, and aligning itself to public goods values in the pursuit of public legitimacy.

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## Polycentricity and coordination

Much of what leads to the temporal adaptations within SRAs – from club to public goods provision – are directly related to the nature of the polycentricity of that SRA. As SRAs become more established, the nature of co-ordination between the various policing nodes changes, so that each node increasingly positions itself and its activities in line with others. In other words, as trust relations and co-ordination improves, so nodes are able to position their activities in line with the activities of others instead of simply taking over those activities. In other words, SRAs (and the private security companies they contract) have adapted their activities because of their peer relationships with others in a networked system of polycentricity. Outside of the SRAs these relationships may be ad hoc, confrontational (see Diphorn, 2013 for instance) or nodes may not take account of each other at all. This would explain the duplication of function in terms of private security outside of SRAs favouring 'hard' policing styles – in terms of their uniforms, tactics and mentalities of crime control. As they have become more co-ordinated, private security have less need to seek out the use of force, or threat thereof. In other words, they no longer need to demonstrate their force capital (Martin, 2013) as they can enrol the state to fulfill this function. In turn, the cessation of their competition for force capital with the state has opened up innovative ways of ordering space. For instance, one of the forms of ordering SRA spaces is through their creation of space that is more inclusive rather than gated or exclusive to certain desired groups. By avoiding the dependence on force capital, private security companies contracted in the SRAs also avoid the possibility of losing their own legitimacy (and that of the SRA) since there is a fine line between what is considered legitimate use of force and what is considered illegitimate use of force. In other words, the difference between legitimate and illegitimate policing (for public and private policing) revolves around "the readiness to have recourse to violence" (Brodeur, 2010, p. 334). The use of force capital (especially in relation to private security) aligns with strategies that may counter inclusiveness and go against the public good – thereby undermining legitimacy. The polycentric nature of the SRA prevents this from happening by creating the conditions by which nodes can take account of each other in relationships of trust and coordination.

## Polycentricity and peer legitimacy

Further to this, the degree of coordination with others creates a situation where nodes, in peer-to-peer relationships, desire legitimacy in the eyes of their peers. For instance, the SRA Managing Bodies (and private security) conceived of themselves as having a power/legitimacy deficit and initiated the long process of trust-building with state

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agencies (such as SAPS) in order to be able to tap into states sources of power (force capital). The state agencies have, in turn, reciprocated (although it initially took time for this to happen) in light of the non-state resources they could tap into for support. In other words, the prospect for mutual gain is intimately tied to issues of power. It stands to reason that the effort of the non-state nodes in retaining legitimacy in the eyes of the state (i.e. SAPS) requires sustained effort. In other words, desires for peer legitimacy within systems of networked polycentricity will shape the activities and mentalities of the nodes within the system. This would explain why SRAs started operating outside of their borders. In sustaining peer relationships with those whose power they need to enrol (SAPS), they will often participate in activities outside the ambit of their mandate and/or space and essentially provide policing for a public good by supporting those who provide this. As mentioned earlier, this was one of the reasons why polycentricity is considered to be a benefit – that the nodes with a broader purpose that operate in the higher levels or scales of governance (SAPS) will offset the narrow or parochial interests of the nodes in the lower levels or scales of governance (SRAs).

In essence, the nature of coordination, accountability relations and desires for peer legitimacy within a polycentric system of governance motivates non-state nodes to align their efforts to a public good or interest rather than to exclusive, client-focused, hard forms of policing in their attempts to be effective. Furthermore, polycentric systems may change the way effectiveness is perceived and acted upon (Yar, 2011).

## Public legitimacy and political pressure

Given the fact that SRAs generally want to attract public patronage, the perceptions of the public are vital in their claims to authority. SRA spaces are usually publicly accessed and accessible spaces. The way in which legitimacy claims are made around effectiveness therefore have to cater to the interests of the broader public for the SRAs to succeed. A soft approach to policing is far more likely to achieve this than a hard approach. In other words, certain types of activities that may be perceived as effective (that is, hard policing) may result in nodes actually losing their legitimacy (Brodeur, 2005). "If acts are patrolled too hard, they may rebound on the police force itself." (Bjork, 2006, p. 84). The SRAs and the private security they contract are acutely aware of the need to keep up appearances. With respect to the symbolic status of the police, Innes (2005, p. 160) referring to the work of Peter Manning (2003) and others, points out that much of policing is about its "symbolic and dramaturgic properties", and that "the police are as important for what they symbolize and stand for as they are for what they actually do". SRAs have chosen not to exercise their force capital, as this symbolises a style of policing that is counterproductive to their aims of being perceived

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as a provider of 'public safety' for the public good. Effectiveness is thus perceived differently in the SRAs (as compared to outside of the SRAs) because of the desire to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the public and, so too, to conform to the requirements of political authorities.

## Discussion

In light of the above case study, there are a number of factors or conditions that need to be in place to motivate these systems (especially the non-state entities within them) to evolve their mentalities and activities so as to align with demands of public goods security provision. The increasing polycentric nature of SRAs has meant that they have become more attuned to the needs of peers, the public, and to political institutions and, over the years, began to develop strategies that are more orientated towards development than exclusion. The conditions that lead polycentric systems to align their activities towards the public good are contingent on the types of legitimacy they desire (from their peers, from the public, from their political connections), which is largely facilitated by the nature of the polycentricity of the system in which they operate. In other words, the factors that impact on the delivery of public goods security are very much linked to how polycentricity of a system plays itself out, the desires for legitimacy (public and peer) and a degree of political pressure. Furthermore, the more co-ordinated they are, and the more trust there is in the system, the more they can align their activities with each other and the more they will attempt to retain these peer relationships (because of mutual gain).

There were multiple incentives for the state and non-state to co-produce public goods in the SRAs. In particular, the non-state, in this case private security, was motivated to "internalize the logic of public good" and defer force capital to the state, because of client preferences (White, 2011, p. 97). In the SRA, the clients (SRA Managing Bodies) in turn, were very motivated by desires for public, peer and political legitimacy. These findings thus contribute to understanding the legitimation practices of the non-state in terms of both economic and political motivations (White, 2010, 2011) and to an understanding of the conditions that give effect to "security's democratic promise" (Loader, Goold & Thumala, 2014, p. 478) within polycentric arrangements.

Further to this last point, an interesting finding is that non-state actors may derive their legitimacy in their choices *not* to display their powers (such as force capital). They may choose to garner symbolic capital through professionalism, association with the state, and attempting to provide common good security, rather than through being effective or being good for their clientele. In other words, being too effective may ironically

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undermine their legitimacy. This complements what Abrahamsen and Williams (2011) have found; that private security may lose its legitimacy if seen to be undermining security for the public good. Furthermore, it is not an easy, causal relationship, that is, that state-constituted (legal) power given to private security, for instance, will make them more legitimate. In fact, this is the very form of power they may choose not to enact so as to be seen to be more legitimate. This is similar to what Abrahamsen and Williams (2011) have found; that the authority or power of the non-state is boosted because of their incorporation into hybrid networks or 'assemblages' of security governance, but that there are new configurations of power that have been evolving within these systems. Furthermore, it has been argued that private security derives its authority from within state structures and relations with the state (and not outside of them in competition with them) (Berndtsson & Stern, 2011; Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011). This too is true, but the SRA research also shows that the polycentric nature of governance systems and the degree of co-ordination is in itself an important factor that facilitates the alignment and boosting of authority of security nodes in that system. The state may be one node amongst many in these polycentric systems and non-state legitimacy is derived from a variety of sources – not just through association with the state; but the polycentric system itself creates the conditions by which legitimacy is gained.

This is important given the fact that plurality in developing contexts may involve both legitimate and illegitimate, licit and illicit nodes. Although the case study we describe mostly involves what are considered legitimate nodes, the important role of security nodes conceived of as problematic or undesirable (vigilante groups or local militias for instance) cannot be discounted (see Baker, 2008). Furthermore, as mentioned, legitimate entities may engage in unwanted or illicit behaviour and illegitimate entities may provide security for a public good. How does one harness the capacity of these security actors? This is a particular dilemma for international development agencies and donors in terms of implementing the SDGs. Plurality is acknowledged as a fundamental feature of much of the developing (and developed) world, yet there is a certain messiness with regards to this plurality. At the core of SDG 16 is the target of "promoting the rule of law". What if the primary nodes responsible for providing legitimate security to the public good (whether state or non-state) also engage in undesirable and illicit activities – actively undermining the rule of law? As Börzel & Risse (2010, p. 120) aptly state "even warlords sometimes provide security as a public rather than a private good under specific circumstances". On the one hand, by excluding them, there is the risk of undermining the legitimacy of the international donor system and the implementation of the SDGs altogether as these nodes may be viewed as legitimate by the public (or publics). On the other hand, by involving them there is a real risk of

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perpetuating a 'dark network' which undermines the goal of SDG 16 (Raab and Milward, 2003). Yet, what this case study has shown is that the bad practices of nodes can be discouraged and mitigated through the evolution of polycentric systems where peer legitimacy, desires for effectiveness aligned to the public good, and mutual accountabilities are present.

In other words, if these conditions are present, any node can provide public goods provision – it need not be normatively coupled to any single node. The question scholars and practitioners should therefore be asking – as alluded to in the Johnston quote at the outset of this chapter – is whether the outcome of security governance activities is for the public good, not whether particular institutions or processes fulfill it or not. In other words, state and non-state nodes operating in polycentric systems may co-produce public goods provision or undermine public good security or perpetuate existing inequalities with respect to security provision. It is not the nature of the node providing the public good, it is the conditions that need to be in place (as outlined above) to motivate that goods be in line with the public interest. Therefore, rather than simply focusing on who is or is not providing policing for the public good, the task is to rather focus on the conditions by which public good security can be produced. Polycentric systems may create the conditions or 'process' necessary to provide security for the public good, regardless of which nodes are involved in this process.

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to show the conditions that need to be in place for security nodes to align to the public good. In short, there are a number of factors or conditions that shape whether polycentric systems of governance (and the non-state entities within them) align to the public good. These are contextual factors (timing, scale, purpose of the system, for instance) and there are systemic factors – the very nature of polycentricity may undermine or boost legitimacy. Generally speaking, there need to be clear motivations for polycentric systems to align to democratic values – much of this stems from the desires to be able to function properly. To function properly means to be aligned with others, given the complexity of the issue at hand (creating safe spaces) and aspiring to a whole-of-society system of safety. Aligning with others gives rise to other forms of motivations, such as to be seen as legitimate. In other words, incentives to cater for the public good do not always emanate from a central authority. How can it when authority is always shifting, or when public/private hybridity is the norm – particularly in Global South contexts. For a polycentric system to be aligned to the public good, it needs to be motivated by public, peer and political expectations. Furthermore, to be part of a polycentric system is a motivation in itself, as nodes can

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align themselves with others, focus on their core skills and can avoid having to duplicate the activity and authority of nodes with whom they do not have a good relationship.

However, there is a more difficult issue at hand, an issue with which the SDGs and developmental agendas need to grapple if the vision of peaceful and inclusive societies in the Global South is to be achieved. Can one normatively or deliberately create polycentricity, or at least the conditions by which democratic governance for the public good is willingly undertaken by security nodes (regardless of their status)? Furthermore:

*Can we deal with the facts of rule-ordered relationships and contemplate how a system of such relationships might be constituted without reference to 'the state' or 'the government' at the center of our thinking? (Ostrom, 1991, p. 4)*

Given the hybrid nature of polycentricity, and the mix of entities involved in security governance, does it make sense to attempt to extract a normative role for one node or sets of nodes (the state), when the reality is that nodes are intertwined or should be intertwined? Given that democracy is, in reality, co-produced by a variety of nodes, surely the pursuit of democracy should also be a pragmatic affair, especially in contexts of weak or failed statehood. Likewise, given the evolutionary character of polycentricity, is it feasible to analyse these systems with normative definitions of democracy, security, accountability, legitimacy, and so forth, and then look for the normative conditions or criteria that fulfil them?

Instead of focusing on practices on the ground, there is a tendency to start off with a normative descriptor (e.g. 'the rule of law') by which we attempt to define what is happening on the ground. This normative descriptor may work in some contexts, but it may be inadequate in others. For instance, we tend to forget that 'democracy' is itself an ongoing experiment; it has to be enacted, implemented or accomplished for it to work. We do wish to attain values that are generally agreed upon by all, but we tend to assume that attaining these values through certain ways are preferable to other ways. What is apparent is that democracy is a co-produced accomplishment. We should rather be focusing on the conditions by which democratic legitimacy is enhanced. To emphasise an earlier point, polycentric systems may create the conditions that are necessary to motivate nodal alignment to public good security provision, regardless of who is involved in this process. Polycentricity itself may be that condition.

Considering that polycentric systems seem to be a norm, whether deliberately or spontaneously created, the challenge lies in finding out what makes these systems virtuous or 'bright' (Wood, 2006) as opposed to 'dark networks' (Raab & Milward, 2003) and then to attempt to develop design principles that can inspire democratic outcomes.

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Given the complexity of polycentric systems this would be the most appropriate means by which to duplicate the positive outcomes of polycentric systems and mitigate the negative outcomes, rather than trying to duplicate or build models of polycentric systems themselves. Developing and refining design principles is a useful undertaking, as we can consider what conditions need to be present for polycentric security governance systems to successfully align with the interests of the public and conform to the democratic values which we hold dear. It also factors into account the vagaries of context, instead of ascribing to a normative order that will work in some places but not necessarily in others. In other words, what our South African case study has sought to demonstrate is that we can identify the conditions by which polycentric systems can be aligned to a public good. Although not necessarily a blueprint for operationalising SDG 16, what we have aimed to do is to uncover the foundational principles which could be replicated in other (developing) contexts while still engaging with the vagaries of context (Berg & Shearing, 2011).

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