

‘A policing partnership for post-war Africa? Lessons from Liberia and southern Sudan’

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The paper examines partnerships between the police and local groups engaged in policing in two fragile African states - southern Sudan and Liberia. There is a tendency in Africa for such partnerships to function as local policing activities assisted by the police. This is in contrast to the model more familiar in the West, where partnerships tend to function as the police assisted by local policing activities. The article evaluates two examples of the African alternative model.

First, a long-standing partnership in southern Sudan where policing is provided by customary chiefs. Second, one that is emerging in Liberia in the wake of the failure of a partnership based on community police forums. The relative success of the first model and the relative failure of the second model and its replacement by the first, raise the question of what constitutes a suitable and sustainable policing partnership in a fragile state.