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Abstract

**Budgeting without planning: military budgeting processes in
Africa**

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Since the beginning of the 1990s military spending in Africa has been the lowest in the world. Yet, allegations of excessive spending on defence have been leveled against the countries by donors of economic aid and sometimes by their own citizens. The countries on the other hand argue that they have to provide adequately for their defence. This raises the question of finding an appropriate level of military spending. One possible solution to the problem is to examine the processes by which these countries arrive at their levels of military spending rather than just concentrate on the final figure. This paper presents some of the findings of a SIPRI study that examined the formal and informal processes of budgeting for the military sector in eight African states. The study finds that a major problem common to most African countries is the lack of a defence policy to guide the process of budgeting for defence making allocation to defence arbitrary and devoid of any serious planning. There is also lack of capacity to properly manage the process of budgeting for the sector implying that the problem of unreliable data from the region may not be entirely deliberate.