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Local researchers, international practitioners, and security sector reform in Kosovo

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Local Researchers, International Practitioners, and Security Sector Reform in Kosovo

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Operationalising local ownership in Security Sector Reform: the influence of local knowledge and local knowledge intermediaries on internationally led policy-making

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the principal question: what role is played by the local security epistemic community in Kosovo's security sector reform (SSR)? The background and context is the legacy of Kosovo's brutal war. Following violent conflict, international intervention sought to restore stability and peace through extensive reform, including a new security architecture. Subsequently, Kosovo has endured long-term SSR driven by executive international actors. The central problem of the study is the effectiveness of internationally-driven SSR. The thesis argues that Kosovo's SSR has been heavily driven by international knowledge rather than the context-sensitive evidence of the local epistemic community, with negative implications for the legitimacy and sustainability of reform. Academic research has followed suit, prioritising the study of international SSR actors, rather than the local. This PhD research addresses this gap in the SSR literature and knowledge by studying the role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR. The analytical approach applied concepts that stress hybridity in post-conflict contexts and research use in policy-making to explore researcher-practitioner interaction. Centred on an analysis of new evidence based on an extensive interview survey of international SSR practitioners and local researchers in Kosovo, public perception data, and local research papers, this thesis investigates how local research has engaged with, challenged and contributed to international SSR. The findings provide an original contribution to the study of local and international agency in post-conflict SSR and raises important questions regarding the practices of international organisations that do not value local expertise. The main findings are that a local security research community is an established part of Kosovo's SSR; local researchers challenge international SSR and provide alternative approaches; researchers and practitioners have built enduring relationships; the nature of individual practitioner and researcher personality is a critical factor determining practitioner-researcher engagement; local research has contributed to practitioner knowledge and decision-making.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Boxes

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAB	College in Pristina
ACDC	Advocacy Centre for Democratic Culture
ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
ACSM	Association/Community of Serbian Municipalities
AJC	Advisory Judicial Commission
ARC	Analysis and Reporting Cell
AUK	American University of Kosovo
BCSP	Belgrade Centre for Security
BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
BPRG	Balkans Policy Research Group
CDA	Collaborative Learning Projects
CDS	Centre for Defence Studies
CP	Civilian Protection
CPT	Centre for Peace and Tolerance
CSAT	Community Safety Action Teams
CSDG	Conflict Security and Development Research Group
CSDP	(EU) Common Security and Defence Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DAC	(OECD) Development Assistance Committee
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DIKWE	Data – Information – Knowledge – Wisdom - Enlightenment
DPKO	Department for Peacekeeping Operations
DoJ	Department of Justice
EIF	Entry into Force Day
ERA	European Reform Agenda
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
EULEX	European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FIQ	Forum for Civic Initiatives
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
GAP	Institute for Advanced Studies
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GFN SSR	Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform
GLPS	Group for Legal and Political Studies
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICITAP	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme
ICO	International Civilian Office
ICR	International Civilian Representative
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia
IDM	Institute for Democracy and Mediation
IICK	Independent International Commission on Kosovo
IJPP	International Judges and Prosecution Programme
IKS	Kosovo Stability Initiative

INDEP	Institute for Development Studies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPA	(EU) Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPOL	Balkan Policy Institute
ISPE	College in Pristina
ISSR	Internal Security Sector Review
JAC-LM	Joint Advisory Committee for Legislative Matters
JAC-PJA	Joint Advisory Council on Provisional Judicial Appointments
JARU	Joint Analysis and Reporting Unit
JIAS	Joint Interim Administrative Structure
JIU	Judicial Inspection Unit
KCS	Kosovo Correctional Service
KCSS	Kosovar Centre for Security Studies
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KIA	Kosovo Intelligence Agency
KIPRED	Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development
KJC	Kosovo Judicial Council
KJPC	Kosovo Judicial and Prosecutorial Council
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KLC	Kosovo Law Centre
KLI	Kosovo Law Institute
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
KSB	Kosovo Security Barometer
KSC	Kosovo Security Council
KSF	Kosovo Security Force
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo
LPSC	Local Public Safety Committee
LRCK	Local Research Contribution in Kosovo
LRCF	Local Research Contribution Framework
MCSC	Municipal Community Safety Council
MKSF	Ministry for Kosovo Security Force
MMA	Monitoring, Mentoring and Advisory
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MUP	Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs
NALT	NATO Advisory and Liaison Team
NAT	NATO Advisory Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCSC	National Centre for State Courts
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs
NSI	New Social Initiative
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPLAN	Operational Plan
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDK	Democratic Party of Kosovo
PIK	Police Inspectorate of Kosovo
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self Government
PRDU	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Unit
PSC	Private Security Company

RAPID	Research and Policy in Development
RCF	Research Contribution Framework
RIT	Rochester Institute of Technology
RQ	Research Question
SALW	Small Arms Light Weapons
SIAMPI	Social Impact Assessment Methods through Productive Interactions
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPRC	Security Policy Research Centre
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
SSDAT	Security Sector Development Advisory Team
SSM	Snowball Sampling Method
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UBT	University for Business and Technology
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction[1]

The aim of this study is to provide new knowledge of the factors contributing to the construction of Kosovo's Security Sector Reform (SSR). The need for this new knowledge is driven by a fundamental problem at the heart of Kosovo's SSR, namely the marginalisation and exclusion of local researchers in internationally-led SSR that has left the process weakened and unbalanced. The study seeks to develop this deeper understanding by identifying and explaining the neglected role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR. The horrors and atrocities of Kosovo's conflict captured international headlines with thousands of lives lost amidst claims that hopes of a post-Cold War peace had vanished (BBC World 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; CNN 1999). International intervention eventually followed the conflict, seeking to restore stability and promote peace through root and branch reforms, including a new security architecture. Kosovo has been subject to a large international presence, including effective international control over SSR. SSR was primarily led by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) from 1999-2008, before the European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) launched its mission to monitor, mentor and advise SSR following Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence. International SSR took the shape of successive overarching programmes, targeting the reform of justice institutions, police, civil emergency, customs services and the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants (DDR). Though international actors assumed a less direct role in Kosovo's SSR after independence, they maintain an important role in SSR today. International authority has been guaranteed by United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1244 and justified on the basis of security concerns and the partial international recognition of Kosovo's independence. As a result, international actors have held significant authority in building Kosovo's security sector from scratch (Qehaja 2017). This thesis demonstrates that as a consequence of this heavy international control over Kosovo's SSR, a growing local epistemic community of SSR researchers has been largely ignored and their potential to strengthen international SSR knowledge, policy and practice thereby limited.

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[1] Some of the findings, data and analysis presented in this thesis have been used in: Phillipps, J. (2018) 'The Role of Epistemic Communities: Local Think Tanks, International Practitioners and Security Sector Reform in Kosovo'. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 18 (2), 281-299. Where this is the case, a footnote is made at the start of the section. Like Phillipps (2018), examining local research in Kosovo's international SSR includes an analysis of the challenges local research poses to international SSR, and the contribution of local researchers to international practitioners' decision-making. There are key differences between Phillipps (2018) and this thesis. The research questions of this thesis conduct a deeper inquiry into the role, challenges and contribution of local research throughout Kosovo's SSR, using additional methods and a larger base of empirical evidence.

Kosovo's SSR has been largely determined by international and technical expertise, rather than local knowledge or conflict sensitive evidence (Lemay-Hebert 2009a, 2011, 2012; Cleland Welch 2006; Qehaja and Prezelj 2017). Given the scale and longevity of international intervention, the case has been subject to significant analysis, and remains at the forefront of state-building research. In particular, existing research has highlighted the problems facing the design and implementation of 'liberal' and international state-building frameworks in Kosovo (Bain 2006; Bernabeu 2007; Chesterman 2002; Franks and Richmond 2008; Hehir 2006, 2018; Lemay-Hebert 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2013; Visoka 2012a). Central to the SSR problem being examined in this thesis is evidence that, unfortunately for Kosovo's prosperity and security, international reforms not grounded in the local context have proved unsustainable and lacking in legitimacy. Under UNMIK, policy-making and institutional construction was largely determined by the head of UNMIK and a close circle of international administrators holding executive and legislative powers (Elbasani 2018). The Kosovo-wide riots of March 2004 have been described as the consequence of top-down policy-making and the UNMIK failure to effectively build local policing capacity and implement crisis management (Qehaja 2016: 105-106). Furthermore, UNMIK has been described as avoiding accountability for decision-making, helping to establish exclusionary policy practices 'out of sync' with the local population (Visoka 2012b). Subsequently, the top-down policy-making logic of UNMIK, and later EULEX, has meant the side-lining of local actors in decision-making, stimulating local distrust, resentment and dissatisfaction with the ongoing international presence (Lemay-Hebert 2009, 2011). Consequently, top-down policy–making has produced a negative peace and 'hybridised' institutions defined by shallow forms of local ownership (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond 2009, 2010; Richmond and Mitchell 2012). This context of marginalisation sets the central problem for this thesis. This is the questionable effectiveness of internationally-driven SSR that lacks grounding in local security knowledge, and, in particular, the context-sensitive expertise of the local epistemic community, and the negative implications facing the legitimacy and sustainability of reform.

Ongoing international contestation over Kosovo's statehood has sustained the extensive international presence. While the US and the majority of European states support Kosovo's campaign for international recognition, neighbouring Serbia and the powers of Russia and China do not (Newman and Visoka 2018). As five EU member states do not recognise Kosovo's independence status, EULEX operates with difficulty, as a powerful international actor that supports Kosovo's SSR while avoiding opinion on independent statehood (Radin 2014). The absence of political settlement has prolonged uncertainty and undermined peace- and

statebuilding (Visoka 2018), while incomplete statehood makes it difficult for Kosovo to join the UN, EU and NATO, who maintain a 'status neutral' stance (Ernst 2011: 124). This context undermines the political space for Kosovo to participate in internationally-led statebuilding. This incomplete statehood also demonstrates the persistence of regional tension between Kosovo and Serbia. While the EU-led normalisation of Kosovo-Serbia relations has worked to settle ongoing conflict and integration in North Kosovo, the normalisation process experiences persistent blockages (Elbasani 2018). This context of instability adds justification to the ongoing international presence in Kosovo.

Operating inside Kosovo's complex political context, international actors have emphasised the short-term goal of political 'stability' ahead of long-term, sustainable and locally grounded reform. Persistent international perceptions of Kosovo's political instability (Qehaja and Prezelj 2017) and fear of renewed ethnic conflict feeds the internationally-held belief that further international assistance is the key to building Kosovo's institutions (Bargues-Pedreny 2016). This reinforces an international logic that marginalises Kosovars from the process of policy-making (Bargues-Pedreny 2016). The emphasis on stability, moreover, has hampered the quality of Kosovo's development. To ensure stability, international actors have prioritised a strong executive ahead of effective governance and accountability in legislative and judicial institutions: making state capture an attractive opportunity for political elites while undermining civil society and institutional oversight (Zaum 2009: 13). Consistently inefficient reform, moreover, has produced and reproduced the international confidence in the need for further international intervention (Visoka 2018). Kosovo's SSR has endured extensive international authority under UNMIK (1999-2008), the International Civilian Office (ICO) (2008-2012), and the ongoing OSCE, NATO and EULEX missions. The ongoing tension of this institutional arrangement poses immediate danger to Kosovo's stability: international reform lacking grounding in the local context does not provide sustainable solutions, instead stimulating local frustration and contestation.

While academic attention has emphasised the dominance of international involvement in Kosovo, focusing on the primarily negative implications of top-down policy (Bain 2006; Hehir 2006; Lemay Hebert 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2013; Marshall and Inglis 2003), and providing a series of recommendations and policy-prescriptions for local ownership which might enhance the quality of international reform (Cleland-Welch 2006; Lemay-Hebert 2012), recent years have seen a shift towards how local actors receive, resist and reshape international policy-prescriptions (Elbasani 2018). This critical research deconstructs the ongoing negotiation, competition and

engagement between local and international actors following international intervention (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Local individuals and groups, and international interveners, are not bystanders who simply accept and implement international frameworks but have the power to challenge and distort state-building (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011, 2015; Richmond 2009, 2010; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Richmond and Pogodda 2016).

The legacy of extensive international authority maintains substantial tension in Kosovo, where local communities, civil society organisations (CSOs) and international practitioners shape and distort international outputs and ongoing policy-making (Bernabeu 2007; Beysoylu 2018; Elbasani 2018; Jackson 2018; Phillipps 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018; Visoka 2012a). This literature has begun to deconstruct the interactive processes of knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR, indicating how various factors, including the individual experiences of international SSR staff (Eckhard 2016; Scheye 2008), informal interactions between international SSR colleagues (Brosig 2011; Graeger 2016), and private discussions between international staff and local citizens (Distler 2016; Holohan 2016), come to shape SSR. Yet, an understanding of how international SSR practitioners generate knowledge of SSR and design policy-decisions is incomplete. Existing research has not investigated in-depth how Kosovo's local security research[2] community challenges international policy and contributes to Kosovo's SSR.

The central problem of local epistemic community omission, weakened statebuilding and hollowed-out SSR has become increasingly important as the local security-related research community has grown in number and a critical mass has been achieved. Beneath Kosovo's extensive international SSR architecture there has been an emergence and evolution of local security research organisations, consisting of think tanks, investigative organisations, and CSOs who produce research. Commissioned by international and local agencies, organisations such as the Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ), Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), and Aktiv produce perception surveys that reflect the security concerns of local communities and advocate for the reform of national institutions established through international SSR (KCSS 2018a; FIQ 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Nesovic and Celeghini 2015; Qehaja and Vrajolli 2012). At the same time,

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[2] Local think tanks and CSOs who produce research on Kosovo's SSR includes: the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED); Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS); Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS); Kosovo Law Institute (KLI); Kosovo Law Centre (KLC); Kosovo Stability Initiative (IKS); Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ); Institute for Advanced Studies (GAP); NGO Aktiv; Centre for Peace and Tolerance (CPT); Advocacy Centre for Democratic Culture (ACDC); Institute for Development Studies (INDEP); Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG); and Balkan Policy Institute (IPOL). Investigative organisations carry out monitoring and reporting on the performance and ongoing process of SSR and include the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN). The KLI and GLPS also carry out monitoring and reporting activities alongside the production of research publications.

investigative research organisations such as the KLI, GLPS and BIRN monitor the performance of national rule of law institutions borne from international SSR (Elshani and Pula 2017; Miftaraj and Musliu 2017; Rexha 2018). The local researchers of these organisations, including advisors, consultants, journalists, and academics, exhibit an in-depth knowledge of the security context. While local actors have been largely marginalised throughout the process of internationally-led SSR, Kosovo's substantial local security research community has a part to play. Scholarly literature is yet to explore in-depth the interactions and relationships between international SSR practitioners and local researchers. This thesis deconstructs the interaction between international SSR practitioners and local researchers and explains the role of local researchers throughout Kosovo's SSR. The study tests the proposition that international intervention has left local researchers and their security knowledge marginalised and subordinate to the epistemic domain of international agencies. The thesis puts forward and develops established SSR theory and method, while providing original insights into the construction of Kosovo's SSR.

This central problem of local exclusion in policy formation is reinforced by its replication in the research on statebuilding and SSR. While existing research outside of Kosovo has investigated the function of research-policy communities in United Kingdom (UK) state-building and SSR (Sugden 2006; Varisco 2014, 2018; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014), there is little knowledge of the challenges and contribution that local researchers afford to international state-building. Existing studies have explored how UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded state-building research has shaped British state-building and SSR in Afghanistan, Nepal and Sierra Leone (Varisco 2014, 2018; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). While providing excellent insight into the dynamics of research use in British policy, the focus is on international research. Limited insights are generated into the agency and interaction of local research with policy-making, and the contribution local research affords to SSR practitioners. In a study stemming from this thesis, Phillipps (2018) explores the presence of an epistemic community in Kosovo in the post-independence period, indicating that local actors challenge international approaches to SSR and afford positive benefits for international decision-making. Nonetheless, an in-depth empirical analysis of Kosovo's security research community provides an opportunity to contribute new evidence into the construction of internationally-led post-conflict SSR.

Figure 1: Map of Kosovo (UN Cartographic Section 2011)

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1.2 Aim and Objectives

Local actors have expressed significant resistance, challenge and contestation towards Kosovo's internationally-led state-building (Bernabeu 2007; Visoka 2012a). International norms have not translated easily, with local actors showing agency to adapt, shape and challenge international intentions (Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Phillipps 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). As noted above, the central aim of this research is to provide new knowledge of the construction of Kosovo's SSR by generating an

understanding of the role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR. This aim is supported by the following objectives:

1: To identify, collate and evaluate the key issues, debates, strengths and weaknesses of the existing generic and Kosovo-specific literature on peace-building, SSR and local research. Building on this initial mapping and evaluative exercise, to then develop a new conceptual approach and analytical framework that can work more effectively to elaborate and explain in close detail the role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR.

2: To develop, refine and apply the new methodological framework to identify new evidence on key factors influencing the formulation of SSR policy in Kosovo. This specifically centres on the interaction between local researchers and international SSR policy practitioners. The methodology includes the preparation and conduct of an interview survey of local and international researchers and policy practitioners to establish original empirical evidence from which a series of core findings can be drawn.

3: Evaluate the empirical evidential data collected by applying an analytical approach grounded in the concept of hybridity. The focus of this objective is to establish a robust evidential foundation that provides a stronger explanation of the challenges that local researchers pose to established international thinking and evaluate the extent to which local researchers contribute to SSR.

4. To identify a set of core findings from the evidence attained that can help to answer the primary and secondary research questions, offer original insight and understanding into the central problem of the study and contribute to the wider debates and conversations about peace- and statebuilding and SSR generally and specifically in Kosovo.

1.3 Methodological Overview

In its deconstruction of Kosovo's SSR the thesis has relied primarily on qualitative methods. The methodology has a number of elements: (a) key concepts drawn together in a coherent analytical narrative and consequential formulation of research questions and central argument; (b) the construction of an analytical framework specifying, explaining and justifying the primary tools to be applied; (c) an interview survey of local researchers and international practitioners based

within Kosovo and internationally; (d) evaluation of data collected, identification of key findings and assessment of central argument against new evidence.

This methodology is driven by four elements. *Firstly*, by the need to develop and apply an analytical approach that can work effectively to explain the problem being investigated cogently and with original insight. *Secondly*, by the research questions raised against this problem to provide closer understanding of it. *Thirdly*, by the argument tested against the evidence garnered through the use of the methodology. *Fourthly*, by embracing the idea that, to maximise effectiveness, the methodology adopted here needs to evolve through the course of its application, responding and refining to the experience of conducting the interview survey.

With respect to the first of these drivers, the methodology responds to the analytical need to provide a new and empirically-grounded explanation of the central problem of the thesis; namely that Kosovo's SSR has been heavily driven by international actors and knowledge rather than local evidence, with negative implications for the legitimacy and sustainability of reform. Specifically, the methodology adapts and integrates a 'hybrid' framework of analysis with the concepts of 'epistemic community' and 'research contribution'. A hybrid framework of analysis provides an approach to exploring the everyday decision-making agency of local and international actors, and the dynamics of local-international negotiation, contestation and cooperation (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Integration with the concepts of epistemic community and research contribution focuses the analytical attention of the study on the interaction between international policy-makers and local researchers (Haas 1992; Faleg 2012; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Morton 2015; Shaxson et al. 2012; Stojanovic-Gajic and Ejdus 2018; Sugden 2006).

Alongside the formation of the analytical framework, a specific sampling strategy supported the organisation of interviews. The completion of an extensive interview survey supported by an analysis of local research papers have provided the primary means of data collection. In total, 45 interviews were completed with international SSR practitioners and local researchers from June-September 2017, with fieldwork conducted in Kosovo. These interviews have collected fresh policy-making testimonies and generated new evidence, forward-tracking local research into policy and backward-tracking the extent to which local research has contributed to practitioner decision-making. The original empirical analysis is supported by new insights generated from quantitative data, through a public perception survey enquiring into citizen perceptions over the role of CSOs in Kosovo's SSR. The analytical approach and methodological tools have provided

effective strategies for researching the central problem of the thesis. As demonstrated by the empirical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5, the data collected through the author's survey provides a strong basis for an in-depth explanation of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR.

The principal research question (RQ) addressed by the study is: 'What role is played by the local security epistemic community in Kosovo's SSR?' This overarching question involves four subsidiary RQs:

RQ 1: *To what extent has a security and justice oriented epistemic community developed in Kosovo?*

RQ 2: *To what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?*

RQ3: *How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo?*

RQ 4: *What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?*

To answer these questions the methodology also sets out a central line of argument. To recap, this thesis explores a central problem at the heart of Kosovo's SSR and established ways of thinking about SSR. It argues that Kosovo's SSR has been heavily driven by international actors and knowledge rather than local expertise, with negative implications for the legitimacy and sustainability of reform. While local actors have been largely side-lined throughout an internationally-led SSR process, there has been little analytical attention dedicated to the research-based expertise of local researchers in the construction of Kosovo's SSR. It is argued that processes of SSR are significantly weakened by the marginalisation of the local epistemic community. It also argues that the potential benefit of including 'the local' in the policy mix is recognised by individual international practitioners. Nonetheless, the argument is that the general unwillingness of international SSR practitioners to embrace the local security epistemic community represents a lost opportunity that limits the ultimate goal of durable stability in Kosovo.

Experiencing a long-term, highly political and complex process of international SSR, and providing a burgeoning local security epistemic community, Kosovo provides a highly relevant case to explore the researcher-practitioner nexus. The study seeks to contribute new evidence to critical studies of international state-building by shedding light on this aspect of Kosovo's SSR. Building on the concepts of epistemic community and research contribution as well as fresh evidence based on the author's interview survey of local researchers and international SSR practitioners, the thesis argument refined: despite the general experience of local marginalisation, local researchers have an important role to play in contesting international SSR and have contributed to Kosovo's SSR. The evidence presented in Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrates that local researchers and international practitioners have built positive working relationships. It also explains how local research on security, justice and rule of law challenges international approaches to SSR, and that these challenges afford positive benefits to the decision-making of individual practitioners.

1.4 Theoretical Foundations and Analytical Approach

This thesis integrates concepts from the critical peace-building and policy-making literature. A hybrid framework of analysis which focuses on local-international interaction, agency and everyday patterns of contestation and compliance is utilised by this thesis (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). The analytical tool of hybridity provides an effective means through which to understand the interactive realities of state-building, shedding light on various forms of local-international engagement. Taking a hybrid framework of analysis as the first component of the analytical approach, this thesis studies the everyday decision making of local and international actors and their interaction in the construction of Kosovo's SSR.

Nuanced models of policy-making conceptualise its dynamic nature and correlate to contexts of hybridity. Policy-making is commonly viewed as a complex, dialectical process, where a multitude of internal and external actors interact, forge relationships, and influence one another throughout the process of policy-making (Evans 2001; Haas 1992, 2016; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018; Jones. H. et al. 2012; Marsh and Smith 2000; Shaxson et al. 2012; Weible 2018b; Young and Court 2004). These models can reflect the local-international interaction that follows international intervention. In order to investigate a particular element of local-international engagement, hybridity is integrated with two principal concepts. 'Epistemic community' is defined as 'a network of professionals with recognised expertise and competence in a particular

domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area' (Haas 1992: 3; Sugden 2006). Researchers hold this 'recognised expertise' and can challenge and contribute to the policy-making process by directly identifying interests to policy-makers or by illuminating important issues (Haas 1992: 4). In a similar way, local researchers are able to challenge the SSR decision-making process and highlight critical issues to international SSR practitioners. Through engagement with international SSR practitioners, local researchers also challenge international 'epistemic practices', understood as the ways in which international policy-makers form knowledge on topics of SSR (Bueger 2015: 6-7). Evidence from existing studies of epistemic communities demonstrates that local researchers can contribute new ideas which help to formulate international SSR (Faleg 2012; Sugden 2006: 14-15).

'Research contribution' entails a closer look at researcher agency. 'Intermediary functions' indicate that researchers can push ideas onto policy-maker agendas and contribute to the shaping of policy (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Shaxson et al. 2012). Research has an 'informing function' and 'relational function', which refers to the creation and communication of ideas and the ability to build relationships with policy-makers (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12). This indicates that researchers can better influence policy agendas should they adopt particular interaction strategies and build researcher-practitioner relationships. At the same time, policy-makers act with 'discretion' in their everyday activities (Evans 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000; Tummers and Bekkers 2014). These practitioners may take it upon themselves to seek out and engage with local researchers outside of the mandate of their organisation. In turn, practitioners can learn from their engagement with researchers, leading to an increased awareness, enhancing of skills and changes in behaviour, each of which contribute to decision-making (Morton 2015: 411).

The analysis of research contribution, however, has to be considered in perspective. Importantly, the literature on evidence-based policy-making theorises the complexity of research contribution (Haas 1992, 2016; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009; Stone 2002; Sugden 2006; Weiss 1979; Young and Court 2004). Research contribution is not assumed to be a straightforward process, but is complicated by a range of contextual, structural and personal factors. In a sensitive and complex post-conflict policy-process, such as SSR, research is often utilised for personal, selective and political reasons (Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). Different international organisations and practitioners therefore ignore or engage with local researchers for different reasons. Section 3 of Chapter 2 integrates the core analytical concepts described above to form a 'Local Research Contribution Framework', depicting researcher-practitioner interaction and the processes through which local researchers contribute to

international SSR. The framework has directed an empirical investigation into the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The thesis comprises seven chapters. **Chapter 1** has provided an introduction to the thesis, defining the central problematic, setting the context and justifying the relevance of the study. **Chapter 2** indicates how research into the interaction between local research and Kosovo's SSR contributes an original study. It develops an analytical approach and provides the key concepts that drive the research: 1) using hybridity as a lens to understand international intervention; 2) the role of researchers in policy-making. Section 1 of Chapter 2 explores the debate on liberal peace- and state-building to highlight the analytical utility of hybridity as a tool to explain the process of knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR. Section 2 of Chapter 2 correlates interactive models of policy-making and their emphasis on multi-actor contact to contexts of hybridity. This includes the agency of researchers in policy-making, the autonomy that practitioners hold throughout the policy-making process, and researcher-practitioner interaction. Section 3 then integrates the concepts explored throughout Sections 1 and 2 to display an analytical framework. **Chapter 3** outlines the methodological approach. It describes and justifies the use of primarily qualitative methods with a supportive quantitative element. **Chapters 4 and 5** move the thesis from a conceptual discussion towards the analysis of empirical findings, explaining the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR by deconstructing the interaction between local researchers and international practitioners. They explore the agency of local researchers, the importance of the nature of the personality of individual international practitioners, identify the challenges that local researchers pose to international approaches to SSR, and explain the positive benefits these challenges sometimes afford to international practitioners. The analysis also considers the barriers facing local researcher engagement with international SSR, and the variables which complicate researcher-practitioner engagement. **Chapter 6** discusses the empirical findings and links them back to the literature on hybridity, epistemic community and research contribution. Finally, **Chapter 7** concludes the thesis. It revisits the findings of the thesis, considers the key contribution to knowledge, identifies practical successes and limitations, and identifies avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Analytical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This research developed a fresh, original analytical approach by building and adapting approaches that stress the 'hybridity' of post-conflict SSR. The analytical approach integrates a 'hybrid framework of analysis' with the concepts of 'epistemic community' and 'research contribution' (Haas 1992, 2016; Mac Ginty 2011; Morton 2015). Following a critical literature review in section 2.2, Section 1 of the analytical approach starts with an analysis of the liberal peace-building framework and the assumptions that drive the international understanding of post-conflict contexts. This approach is critiqued from an epistemological standpoint, suggesting that an institutional focus obscures understanding of the complex realities of post-conflict state-building. The concept of 'hybridity' is identified as a stronger means through which to analyse and understand post-conflict SSR: it can identify the various forms of local-international interaction, the everyday agency of local and international actors, and the ability of international interveners and local actors to challenge and adapt international frameworks. The benefit of observing post-conflict contexts through a hybrid framework of analysis is illustrated by exploring studies that contribute to a detailed deconstruction of Kosovo's SSR.

Section 2 incorporates concepts that relate to the principal enquiry of the thesis: the role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR. The section explores the correlation between the epistemological assumptions of liberal peace- and state-building and linear models of policy-making. Building on this, more dynamic and open models of policy-making are explored. These consider policy interactions that involve various actors, and therefore correlate to a hybrid context. These models also expose the role of different sources of knowledge in policy-making, with the concept of 'epistemic community' granting specific attention to the role of researchers. The analysis then considers the everyday agency of international practitioners by exploring the concept of 'discretion', which posits that policy-makers work with an autonomy that can lead to researcher engagement. Despite this, research utilisation is a complex process, which must take into account the personal and political pathways of research uptake. Following this, the everyday agency of researchers is considered by exploring concepts of knowledge interaction, conceptualising how researchers push ideas onto policy-making agendas. Finally, the section considers research impact assessment, considering how variables of interaction, utilisation and discretion impact on research use, and what can be considered as a 'contribution' to policy-making. Section 3 integrates the

analysis of Sections 1 and 2 to present and explain the 'Local Research Contribution Framework'. This analytical approach supports the methodological approach outlined in Chapter 3 and directs the empirical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.2 Critical Literature Review

2.2.1 The Role of Research in State-Building and SSR

This thesis contributes to an empirical gap in the SSR literature through an analysis of the interaction between local researchers and international practitioners in Kosovo. The argument that post-conflict states require internationally-led institutional reform as a means to ensure peace, development and stability has been subject to significant criticisms (Carothers 2002; Chandler 2006a, 2006b; Fukuyama 2004; Krasner 2004; Lemay-Hebert 2009b; Paris and Sisk 2008; Rotberg 2004). The critical peace-building literature has highlighted the flawed attempts of international intervention and the limits of its epistemological assumptions which uphold state institutions as the primary unit of analysis (Eriksen 2011; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2005, 2009). Fulfilling part of the critical literature, an 'emancipatory' turn takes a different epistemological standpoint by focusing on alternative drivers of post-conflict peace (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). These studies suggest that peace can only be created through local agency, relying on local peace formation and the grounding of peace initiatives in the local context (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016; Visoka and Richmond 2017). As this thesis argues and seeks to explain, local researchers contribute a vital form of local agency which challenges international SSR and contributes to the grounding of decision-making in the local context.

Critical studies encourage an observation of international intervention in terms of 'hybridity' (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). This 'hybridity' is defined as 'a constant process of negotiation as multiple sources of power in a society compete, coalesce, seep into each other and engage in mimicry, domination or accommodation' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 220). Hybridity has brought important attention to the challenges that local and international actors pose to international intervention, through an observation that local individuals and communities, and international interveners, are not bystanders who simply accept international frameworks but have significant agency that shapes and alters the process (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011, 2015; Richmond 2009, 2010; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). Despite the

proliferation of studies that take hybridity as their analytical starting point, an in-depth understanding of interaction between local research and international interveners is limited.

Epistemological developments in SSR research have mirrored that of the broader peace-building literature. Research has criticised SSR as a top-down and externally driven enterprise, while also attempting to provide recommendations to improve international practice (Donais 2008; Nathan 2007; Paris and Sisk 2008; Sedra 2010). These studies have explored police, military and judicial reform across Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, Cambodia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Nepal. In a quest to improve SSR legitimacy and sustainability, various forms of 'local ownership' are recommended (Ebo and Powell 2010: 49; Jackson 2010; Nathan 2007). While in theory the deeper the operationalisation of local ownership the stronger the SSR programme, its implementation has often taken a minimalist approach (Mobekk 2010: 231). With limited local management and ownership throughout SSR design and implementation, it has become a common observation to indicate that a gap exists between SSR theory and practice (Schnabel and Born 2011; Sedra 2010). As Andersen (2011: 10) notes, 'the greatest successes of SSR are to be found in policy formulation, rather than actual implementation'. While criticism of top-down SSR provides an important epistemological step by moving towards the complex realities of SSR, these studies explore SSR in terms of international failure rather than an identification of local agency and alternatives.

Moving beyond a state-centric analytical lens, studies of hybridity generate a deeper understanding of SSR. Top-down security programmes cannot provide for the entire society, and alternative non-state forms of security provision often operate in this vacuum to provide security through non-traditional means (Ansorg 2017; Baker 2010). Similarly, Denney (2014) has indicated that externally-assisted SSR in Sierra Leone must account for non-state security providers to achieve its policy objectives. Moving towards a post-liberal conceptualisation of SSR, analysis of hybrid security provision has suggested that local capacities should replace international approaches to SSR (Bagayoko, Hutchful and Luckham 2016; Podder 2013: 373). It is understood that different intervention contexts bring different hybrid security orders, revealing the diverse ways in which local actors selectively adopt internationally-designed programmes (Schroeder, Chappuis and Kocak 2013). These studies indicate the fruitfulness of adopting analytical frameworks which shed light on local alternatives and local adaptation of international frameworks. Nonetheless, these studies focus on non-state security provision, rather than the challenges that local actors pose throughout the SSR policy-making process.

Closer to this thesis focus, SSR research has started to map 'different ways to analyse the external domestic interaction dynamics that structure the often contentious and asymmetric encounters between international and local interests and demands in SSR' (Schroeder and Chappuis 2014: 133). This includes an increasing focus on interaction and knowledge formation (Abrahamsen 2016; Bevir 2016; Mannitz 2014). Bevir (2016), notes that by 'decentering' security governance and the way in which security is produced, it is possible to identify individual agency in decision-making. This deconstruction of SSR 'can better explore the diversity of present-day practices of security governance by observing ministers, civil servants, street-level bureaucrats and citizens in action' (Bevir 2016: 236). Abrahamsen (2016: 291) agrees, commenting on the inability of SSR to sufficiently grasp 'the manner in which governance, security and states are produced and assembled in interaction and competition between multiple actors and institutions', while highlighting the importance of doing so. Furthermore, focusing on interaction can shed light on the role of local knowledge in SSR design and implementation. Mannitz (2014: 279), considers what type of interaction empowers local populations in SSR, identifying that 'a precondition for effective interaction and partnership with local actors is the recognition of existing local knowledge, capacities and skills' in security provision. Gordon (2014: 143), moreover, suggests that actively engaging local civil society in SSR 'can result in more context specific, people centred, inclusive and substantively locally owned SSR processes and outcomes'. These studies indicate that a deconstruction of SSR processes can yield a detailed understanding of the role of local knowledge.

Previous research has explored research utilisation in SSR policy (Phillipps 2018; Sugden 2006; Varisco 2014, 2018; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). Sugden (2006: 1) has followed an epistemic community framework to illustrate that experts have advanced the UK SSR agenda. More recently, a DFID commissioned study finds that state-building research is used at all levels of DFID policy-making in Afghanistan, Nepal and Sierra Leone, through formal and informal means, and is also complicated by political context, research characteristics and the nature of personnel (Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014: 211). The study predominantly engages with DFID funded state-building research, with categorisations such as 'grey literature' and 'action-oriented research', rather than local research (Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014: 88-89). Similarly, but with reference to SSR in Sierra Leone, Varisco (2014) identifies the political and personal variables that impact on the influence of local and international research on British policy-makers. Nonetheless, the study states that 'local researchers hardly entered into this well-established network of researchers' (Varisco 2014: 110). Elsewhere, an article stemming from this thesis introduced the challenges and contributions that local researchers have made to

Kosovo's SSR post-independence (Phillipps 2018), while Stojanovic and Ejdus (2018: 10) conclude a study on security communities in the Western Balkans by describing the researchers who contributed articles to the edition as 'active members of a nascent community of think-tanks, NGOs and academic institutions', which 'could be an exciting research subject in its own right'. The comprehensive analysis of researcher-practitioner interaction offered by this thesis provides a more in-depth analysis of the role of local researchers.

The majority of studies of research interaction and contribution to policy-making are found outside of the international intervention literature. The health sciences have pioneered this research by developing approaches to assess research impact (Hanney et al. 2003; Meagher, Lyall and Nutley 2008; Molas-Gallart and Tang 2011; Morton 2015; Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011). Various models also conceptualise the complex, messy and dynamic realities of policy-making and how external sources of knowledge, such as researchers, can influence decision-making (Evans 2001; Haas 1992, 2016; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018; Marsh and Smith 2000; Sabatier and Jenkins Smith 1993; Stone 2002). Closer to this thesis, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and its Research and Policy in Development team (RAPID) has developed frameworks for researching research-policy connections in international development contexts (Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009; Jones, H. et al. 2013; Young and Court 2004). These frameworks have identified the agency of research and how it influences policy through intermediary functions (Fisher 2012a; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009; Shaxson et al. 2012). The application of these concepts has not yet been integrated with a hybrid framework of analysis to explore researcher-practitioner interaction in SSR.

Despite an increasing focus on local knowledge in international policy, a gap remains in existing understandings. While existing studies of research use in state-building show that policy models are useful for deepening an understanding of research use by policy-makers in post-conflict contexts (Sugden 2006; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014), there is further scope to integrate concepts from the critical peace-building and policy-making literature. Linear, rational models of policy-making are, much like liberal peace-building frameworks, assumption-based, indicating how a set of inputs and norms translates into an output (Carothers 2002; Chandler 2006a, 2006b; Easton 1957; Fukuyama 2004; Krasner 2004; Lasswell 1956; Lemay-Hebert 2009b; Paris and Sisk 2008; Ripley and Franklin 1991; Rotberg 2004;). Alternatively, dynamic models that consider researcher-policy interaction and the role of external knowledge are more reflective of hybrid contexts (Evans 2001; Haas 1992, 2016; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Marsh and Smith 2000; Richmond and Mitchell

2012; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Shaxson et al. 2012; Tadjbakhsh 2011; Weible 2018b; Young and Court 2004). Similar concepts can be integrated to explore the hybridity of Kosovo's SSR and the role of local research.

2.2.2 Critical Studies of SSR in Kosovo

Research into Kosovo's SSR has highlighted the contradictions of international intervention (Bain 2006; Hehir 2006; Lemay Hebert 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2013; Marshall and Inglis 2003). The UNMIK intervention has been described as extensive, with direct governance creating a 'legitimacy paradox' where the international presence is illegitimate in the eyes of local citizens (Lemay-Hebert 2009a: 78-79). Taking an 'empty shell' approach, by considering local capacity as minimal and as justification for executive UNMIK authority, has proved antithetical to local ownership, creating a situation where 'legitimacy quickly withered away' (Lemay Hebert 2011: 207). In judicial reform, UNMIK authority ensured only a superficial participation for local actors in judicial process (Marshall and Inglis 2003). International 'liberal' peace-building has also proved contradictory by temporarily violating the human rights it sought to promote (Bain 2006: 534). Further negative consequences stem from international intervention being out of touch with local security concerns. In building ethnicity into new institutions, UNMIK is described as failing 'to realise the nature of ethnic identity as transitory and situational', which has inadvertently 'decreased the chances that a multi-ethnic, democratic society can be created' (Hehir 2006: 210). While these studies uncover the flaws of international state-building, the preoccupation with the international domain ensures little insight into local alternatives to international frameworks.

Studies highlighting international failure in Kosovo have recommended practical solutions (Paris 2010). Prior to Kosovar independence, Cleland-Welch (2006: 234) suggested that the EU might learn from the problems facing UNMIK: 'UNMIK kept the lid on Kosovo throughout their mandate; the EU needs to allow the new Kosovo, whatever its final status, to find its own way, make its own mistakes and grow as a society and political entity'. Similarly, Lemay-Hebert (2012: 476-478) indicated that for international intervention to move beyond its flaws, the international community should take an approach of 'participatory intervention', through the genuine participation of locals in state-building. While these studies do highlight the importance of local involvement for SSR legitimacy, the analysis focuses on the legitimacy of international institution building ahead of a deep analysis of local capacity.

Studies of Kosovo have explored the contribution of CSOs to peace-building. In a deconstruction of Kosovo's processes of hybridisation, Visoka (2012a: 26) explores CSO agency through 'public' and 'hidden' practices. These practices refer to the vocal resistance of the Movement for Self Determination (known as *Levizja Vetevendosje*) and their opposition to entrenched international governance, while also highlighting the practices of local CSOs (Visoka 2012a: 28-29). This analysis suggests that there are functional local actors in Kosovo, encompassing a 'dynamic, often growing and fragmented local civil society, public sphere and social movements', who question the credibility and legitimacy of the international presence (Yabanci 2016: 364). Through processes of 'peace formation', local civil society has been able 'to facilitate their locally rooted peace and reconciliation initiatives' (Visoka 2016b: 79). Nonetheless, examples of peace formation in Kosovo focus on the input of civil society to peace-building more broadly, rather than to SSR. Given the presence of local research organisations working on topics of security, there is scope to uncover the capability of local researchers to challenge international SSR, provide alternatives, and to contribute to decision-making.

Research on the complex realities of Kosovo's SSR highlights: that judicial reform was unable to prevent the re-emergence of conflict, violence and organised crime (Bernabeu 2007: 88); the contradiction between the aims and actions of UNMIK (Chesterman 2002: 6); and the inability of EULEX to adopt a reduced presence that would differentiate from the illegitimacy of UNMIK (Dijkstra 2011). This literature also emphasises the ability of local elites to distort and co-opt international intentions (Narten 2008; Visoka 2012a). Franks and Richmond (2008) note that the liberal and institutional peace framework in Kosovo has at best created a 'virtual peace'. By focusing on institutions, the liberal project has not been able to deal with community concerns, and in being co-opted by local elites has made 'an illiberal or mono-ethnic state (partition even) more plausible' (Franks and Richmond 2008: 98). Further research has uncovered the differences between international ambitions and the independence aspirations of local elites (Narten 2008; Ernst 2011); while local political elites have also distorted the intentions of international reform (Jackson 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). This distorting potential, moreover, has surfaced across various arms of international state-building, including education reform (Selenica 2018), and throughout the EU-led normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia (Beysoylu 2018; Troncota 2018). While these studies raise critical attention to the role of local agency in challenging the translation of international state-building norms into Kosovo's context, limited insights are offered into the realities of SSR.

A deeper understanding of Kosovo's SSR is achieved by placing attention on the interactive process of knowledge formation in decision-making (Brosig 2011; Distler 2016; Dursun-Ozkanka and Crossley-Frolick 2012; Eckhard 2016; Graeger 2016; Holohan 2016; Sahin 2017; Scheye 2008). There is a complex interaction that takes place across the various organisations that make up Kosovo's international security architecture, with studies finding that SSR design and implementation requires an ongoing division of labour between UNMIK, NATO KFOR, the OSCE, EU and ICO (Brosig 2011; Dursun-Ozkanka and Crossley-Frolick 2012). Placing a deeper focus on the 'everyday' of international decision-making, Scheye (2008), and later Eckhard (2016), have indicated that UNMIK and EULEX SSR implementation differs according to the personal experience and preferences of different practitioners. Informal sources of knowledge play a role in practitioner decision-making. For example, Graeger (2016) has identified the presence of an informal EU-NATO 'community of practice'. Alternatively, research by Holohan (2016) and Sahin (2017) points towards the impact of local-international interaction on SSR, identifying the local as a site of local challenge and international learning. Collectively, these studies indicate that significant insights into SSR can be generated by observing the everyday and informal practices of SSR professionals. While Phillipps (2018) introduced the challenges that local researchers pose to international SSR and their contribution to SSR, a gap remains with regards to a comprehensive understanding of the role of local researchers.

While existing studies deconstruct SSR to focus on concepts of research utilisation, local-international interaction, knowledge formation, local agency and international learning, gaps remain in the study of SSR, in particular, the role of local research in the construction of Kosovo's SSR. This gap is emblematic of critical issues in international SSR interventions: the need to better understand the complex process of post-conflict SSR in order to shed light on the construction and functioning of security and judicial institutions. The empirical findings of this thesis address this gap by contributing to the deconstruction of Kosovo's SSR and providing a detailed understanding of the ways in which local researchers challenge international approaches to SSR and contribute to international decision-making.

2.3 Section 1 - Understanding International Intervention in Terms of Hybridity

There are benefits in understanding international intervention in terms of 'hybridity': 'a condition that occurs, in large part, contextually; it is a constant process of negotiation as multiple sources of power in a society compete, coalesce, seep into each other and engage in mimicry, domination

or accommodation' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 220). Hybridity offers a contemporary way of observing post-conflict intervention that is markedly different from the liberal assumptions of liberal frameworks. Emerging in the literature between 2000-2010, liberal approaches look at state fragility as a source of instability and look to institutional recovery in line with international norms as a solution capable of bringing peaceful development (Eriksen 2011; Fukuyama 2004; Krasner 2004; Paris 2010; Rotberg 2004). The epistemological standpoint, however, does not analyse post-conflict contexts with respect for local-international interaction, and the ability of these actors to shape and distort international frameworks (Eriksen 2011; Mac Ginty 2011). A shift in the literature has seen a move towards analysis that stresses hybridity and the 'everyday' of international intervention. Hybridity provides a critical extension of the liberal peacebuilding literature and has increasingly discredited the liberal framework. The epistemological assumptions of hybridity provide a useful analytical approach through which to explore the various local-international interactions in post-conflict contexts. Hybridity encourages an exploration of the everyday agency of local actors and international interveners working on the frontlines of state-building design and implementation (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009, 2010; Richmond and Mitchell 2012). As such, stressing hybridity in analysis can help to shed light on the construction of Kosovo's SSR.

The sections that follow stress the importance of hybridity as an analytical tool and provide key aspects for the theoretical approach, including:

- The interaction between local and international actors;

- Local and international contestation of international approaches to SSR;

- The everyday agency of local actors, CSOs, and citizens;

- The everyday agency of international practitioners.

2.3.1 Limits of the Liberal Peace Framework

A first step towards understanding the interaction between local researchers and international SSR practitioners is to consider how analytical approaches to post-conflict state-building have evolved. This section considers the limitations of the state-centric liberal peace framework, and

its subsequent criticism by scholars such as Richmond (2005, 2009). State-centric approaches emerged after the Cold War and in the context of increasing United Nations (UN) responsibility in conflict-resolution. UN policy documents including the *Agenda for Peace* and *Agenda for Development* (Boutros Boutros-Ghali 1992, 1994) expanded a definition of peacekeeping to include state reconstruction activities, with linkages between development, peace and democracy providing the long-term basis for minimising the risk of violent internal conflict (Boutros Boutros-Ghali 1994: Paragraph 120). In this context, 'state-building is a particular approach to peace-building, premised on the recognition that achieving security and development in societies emerging from civil war partly depends on the existence of capable, autonomous and legitimate governmental institutions' (Paris and Sisk 2008: 1-2). Following limited success in UN peacekeeping between 1989 and 1993 in Cambodia, Mozambique, Namibia, Liberia and Rwanda, UN missions increased focus on state reconstruction in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and East Timor, incorporating extensive security, judicial, and police reform (UNSC 1999a, 1999b, 2002).

Following suit, academic attention focused on international intervention in 'fragile' or 'failing' contexts and international attempts to build peace through state-building in line with Western norms (Duffield 2001; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2005, 2006; Richmond and Franks 2009). This academic debate is divided into 'institutional approaches', concerned with the efficiency of state institutions, and 'legitimacy approaches', concerned with socio-political cohesion and the institutional legitimacy (Lemay-Hebert 2009b: 22). Institutionalist approaches focus on the 'state' and its flaws and potential, with the level of functioning of a state considered as the primary explanation for the emergence of conflict (Fukuyama 2004; Krasner 2004; Rotberg 2004). Rotberg (2004: 1) defines a failed state as one that suffers from conditions of internal violence, where they 'cease delivering positive political goods to their inhabitants'. These 'political goods' focus on typical state functions, including the ability to provide rule of law, an effective judicial system, education, infrastructure and employment (Rotberg 2004). These functions provide a framework through which to assess state strengths by providing indicators which determine success or failure.

Institutionalist theory highlights a security-development connection. This 'securitisation' presents development 'in security terms' (Buzan and Hansen 2009: 214) and considers underdevelopment as dangerous (Duffield 2001, 2012). Here, institutional theory draws parallels to democratic peace theory and the assumption that democratic states are more secure than authoritarian states (Owen 1994). This type of peace suggests that certain kinds of liberal society will be more peaceful in their domestic affairs than 'illiberal' states (Lemay-Hebert 2013: 242).

This democratic institutional transition, however, is based on assumptions which ignore the complexity of post-conflict recovery, including: the belief that political movement away from dictatorship represents a democratic movement; that democratisation can be achieved through neat stages; that elections bring security; that an elite few are representative of wider society; and that a liberal polity is universally applicable (Carothers 2002: 6-9). The prevalence of assumption-based theory is echoed by contemporary analysis of the securitisation of international aid agencies, which, in recent years has seen US, French, UK, Japanese, Canadian and EU foreign development goals sacrificed 'at the altar of security, often without concomitant benefits in the latter areas' (Brown, Gravingholt and Raddatz 2016: 237). For example, Wild and Elhawary (2012: 10) find that DFID poverty reduction efforts are 'based on the assumption that these interventions would help tackle conflict and improve the prospects for peace', although, 'the relationship between conflict and development is more complex'.

For Richmond (2005), conservative, orthodox and emancipatory models help to explain the type of peace achieved following international intervention, whilst exposing the problems facing the liberal framework in pursuit of a lasting peace.

> **1:** The conservative liberal peace is a top-down, elite-level approach to development where international actors define the peace process and engage in development activities that promote stability and security; but does not constitute an approach that considers the concerns and alternatives of local citizens (such as Kosovo and Sierra Leone) (Richmond 2005: 214-218).

> **2:** The orthodox graduation maintains a top-down nature yet includes context sensitive concepts such as local ownership; but it maintains the privileged power and norms of the liberal framework (such as in East Timor, Cambodia) (Richmond 2005: 214-218).

> **3:** The emancipatory peace is more critical, and while it considers how non-state actors shape peace following liberal intervention, is largely ignored by the liberal peace framework (Richmond 2005: 215-218).

An analysis of liberal peace transitions reveals that 'no examples of liberal peace-building have so far achieved an emancipatory graduation of the liberal peace, and indeed, a serious deficiency with respect to social justice, socio-economic well-being and development mars all such international efforts' (Richmond and Franks 2009: 11). Instead, the models of liberal peace

indicate that international intervention leads to a predominantly liberal, conservative, and orthodox peace (Richmond 2005). The prevalence of assumptions and limited attention dedicated to local customs and needs, moreover, highlights a lack of explanatory power and limited interest in understanding the presence of non-liberal, local alternatives. By observing a 'failed state' as a state that is unable to provide services through institutions largely defined in liberal terms, a 'failed state' is observed only as an incomplete Western state (Eriksen 2011: 230-234). In terms of analytical utility, 'focusing on what a given state lacks, rather than on what it actually is like, can at best yield explanations of why it lacks certain properties' (Eriksen 2011: 235). As such, assumption-based approaches to analysing state-building cannot generate a detailed understanding of complexity.

'Legitimacy' approaches dedicate more attention to post-conflict complexity (Lemay-Hebert 2009b: 22). The focus is on the degree to which externally led state-building can achieve socio-political cohesion, understood as 'the process whereby outsiders shape the conditions under which citizens come to share common values' (Lemay-Hebert 2009b: 23). The legitimacy approach analyses how far local populations accept external state-building and helps to uncover some notions of local agency and resistance. Nonetheless, despite acknowledging local ownership as a 'vital constitutive element of the process', the building of social cohesion supports international legitimacy, rather than understanding and supporting local alternatives (Lemay-Hebert 2009b: 41). Its analytical capacity therefore remains limited with regards to uncovering the ability of local actors to challenge international intervention.

Critical scholars have launched damning assessments of the liberal institution building (Bendana 2005; Chandler 2006a, 2006b; Mac Ginty 2010). International state-building interventions have been described as imperialistic, as empire in denial, and liberal interventionism, playing on contradictions and summarising how institutional frameworks are removed from local politics (Bendana 2005, Chandler 2006a, 2006b, Mac Ginty 2010: 393). Alternatively, Paris (2010: 338) considers highly critical assessments as exaggerated and indicates that critical studies calling for the abandonment of internationally-led state-building would be tantamount to leaving people to lawlessness and fear. Instead, Paris (2010) argues in favour of 'saving' liberal peace-building. For Paris (2010: 362): 'the challenge today is not to replace or move 'beyond' liberal peace-building, but to reform existing approaches within a broadly liberal framework'. Paris (2010: 365) argues that in order to save liberal peace-building, scholars must understand that liberal peace-building is in fact problematic and contradictory as a basis from which to improve assistance.

The liberal peace-building debate has responded to criticisms by adding analytical nuance to the

liberal framework**.** As proven by international state-building in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, intentions and objectives are mired by complexity (Brinkerhoff 2014; Menkhaus 2010; Paris and Sisk 2008). International state-building has endured 'wicked problems' that liberal frameworks have failed to overcome (Brinkerhoff 2014; Menkhaus 2010). These problems are 'those whose definition is contested and whose contours are ill-formulated and inherently complex; no matter how they are defined, the problem at hand can be viewed as a nested symptom of another problem' (Brinkerhoff 2014: 333). Taking these problems into account, Paris and Sisk (2008: 305-309) outline five 'dilemmas' facing international state-building:

1: The 'footprint dilemma': intervention size, breadth and assertiveness in terms of politics, economics and military.

2: The 'duration dilemma': the requirement of long-termism, timely reform, and associated consequences.

3: The 'participation dilemma': questions of inclusion relative to institutional legitimacy.

4: The 'dependency dilemma': the danger of fostering dependency among local elites and the general population on the international presence.

5: The 'coherence dilemma': practical and cultural differences between a multitude of international and local actors.

Paris and Sisk (2008: 310-311) call for an alternative analysis of post-conflict contexts based on the principles of 'dilemma analysis'. On the one hand, this approach dedicates analytical attention to the complexity of state-building by understanding that dilemmas 'can only be managed, not solved' (Paris and Sisk 2008: 309-311). On the other, dilemma analysis aims to support the implementation of a liberal peace framework, rather than generate an awareness of alternative local approaches to development. Local agency is therefore considered as an 'other', 'whose needs and aspirations do not conform to liberal standards' (Richmond 2009: 325). An alternative framework of analysis is required to take seriously the complex and interactive process of state-building.

2.3.2 Stressing 'Hybridity' in Analysis

In more recent years, 'hybridity' has been stressed as a tool through which to understand the complexity of post-conflict intervention (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011, 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond 2009, 2010; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Richmond and Pogodda 2016; Tadjbakhsh 2011). Hybridity provides a core component of the analytical approach deployed by this thesis. Institutionalist liberal theory does not sufficiently look beyond the state, and when it does, local actors are depicted as spoilers, rather than actors who exert an agency alternative to the liberal framework (Richmond 2009). This section argues that analysing post-conflict environments in the context of a 'local' and 'hybrid' turn provides for more fruitful insights into the state-building process. This literature is 'interested in looking at how interaction of local and international forces, culture, identity, needs and interests produces hybrid forms of peace' (Tadjbakhsh 2011: 6). Richmond has pioneered this development, seeking ways to conceptualise a peace that is 'post-liberal' (Richmond 2009, 2010, 2011). These studies build on an identification of the problems facing liberal peace transition, where they are only able to construct 'empty shells' of states that produce unstable compromises (Richmond and Mitchell 2012: 5). Instead, a post-liberal conceptualisation of international intervention examines local responses and the role of local actors in state-building.

Continuous local-international interaction is an important component of post-liberal peace and has been conceptualised as a 'liberal-local hybridity' Richmond (2009). This concept 'opens up the liberal peace to its so-called non-liberal others and their agencies, giving rise to an essential negotiation between them' (Richmond 2009: 333). It therefore places an emphasis on the ability of local actors to drive negotiation with international actors (Richmond 2010). Practically speaking, these concepts encourage a move beyond the illiberalism inadvertently practiced by international interventions through its expectation that local actors meet liberal parameters (Richmond 2009: 334). As an alternative, it requires a recognition of local custom; 'for welfare, public services and jobs; to understand identity; calling for hybridity; and the need to move away from blueprints and one-size-fits-all solutions' (Richmond 2009: 335). Analytically, 'liberal-local' hybridity seeks to investigate international-local relations, communication and negotiation. Such analysis can lead to a clearer understanding of the 'communicative and normative connection between affected peoples and international peacebuilders and state builders' (Richmond 2009: 333). In other words, emphasising hybridity encourages an understanding of local-international contact and the interactive realities of a post-liberal peace.

Hybridity investigates the tensions throughout local-international interaction (Heathershaw and Lambach 2008; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2010). For Richmond (2010: 669), this tension is a defining feature of post-liberal peace: 'local agencies, whether resisting aspects of state-building or co-opting it, have begun to find ways of claiming ownership of a politics that responds to needs and identity issues, appropriating liberal peace-building, ignoring it or modifying it'. Likewise, Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 221) define hybridity as a long-term process involving patterns of resistance. In this sense, hybridity considers the various challenges, contestations and resistance that international interventions produce, and therefore how local actors might alter and adapt the state-building process. Rather than simply adopting international institutions and norms, hybridity indicates that international intervention faces local opposition, contestation and apathy.

Local actors not only exert various forms of resistance but have diverse motivations for resistance (Lee 2015: 1448). Understanding post-conflict contexts requires a deeper look at the specific reactions of different local actors to international intervention. Indeed, Richmond (2010: 686) indicates that resistance 'may prioritise self-determination, community, agency, autonomy, sometimes democracy and a sense of nation, and sometimes the materiality of liberal states'. This deconstruction of agency refers not only to opposition to liberal peace-building, but also to compliance (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond 2010). This observation paints a complex picture of local agency. In an attempt to conceptualise this complexity, Selim (2018: 42) has developed an 'action spectrum', identifying how local actors engage in compliance, negotiation, contestation and resistance. This spectrum identifies the various ways local actors have engaged with and shaped transitional justice processes in Nepal (Selim 2018). The hybridity of post-conflict intervention illustrates a complex picture where local-international interaction is defined by various tensions.

Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 233) indicate that hybridity uncovers the movement towards positive or negative peace, 'in which either emancipation in progressive, everyday and empathetic form is offered, or in which existing unequal power structures are maintained'. Positive forms of hybrid peace 'entail the gradual resolution of the dilemmas that the circulation of power within existing power relations produce from the perspective of those caught up in them from a marginal position' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 230). This might refer to the resolution of tensions between local identity, culture and history and imposed international norms (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 230). In other words, local actors might challenge international reform and contribute to the formation of policy approaches that better suit the local context. Alternatively, more negative forms of peace may lean 'too far towards the preferences of international, state

elites or global capital', or 'too far into exclusive, localised power structures' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 230).

The hybridity concept has been subject to criticism in recent years (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Nadarajah and Rampton 2015). Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 224) have criticised attempts to 'instrumentalise' hybridity, understood as international endeavours to graft together different political systems to produce a 'third type'. For example, international actors may include local elites in the construction of institutions in an attempt to enhance policy legitimacy. Rather than conducting a deep analysis of the context of intervention, this 'mostly rejects the viability, legitimacy and indeed existence of local agency, or sees it as so constrained it is not actually agential' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 225). As such, the argument is that hybridity is most effective as an analytical device (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 223). Nevertheless, Nadarajah and Rampton (2015) critique hybridity as an analytical tool, accusing it of romanticising local agency. They suggest the concept 'denies the penetrative potency of interwoven international – national – local configurations of power and identity formation' (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015: 69). This highlights hybridity 'as a problem-solving tool for a liberal order in crisis', and as such it is no different to attempts to advance the liberal peace (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015: 69). Nonetheless, rather than offering an alternative analytical lens, Nadarajah and Rampton (2015: 71) indicate that a better understanding of the construction of state-building requires a deeper focus on agency, identity, the state and violence. While this critique raises awareness to the limitations of hybridity, it also reinforces the concept to continually question and deepen its analytical focus. As such, the utility of observing hybridity in 'explaining the dynamic nature of peace and conflict', remains (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 223).

Stressing hybridity to capture the complexity, unintended consequences, and local-international interaction is conceptualised well by a four-part model (Mac Ginty 2011: 8-11). Hybridisation includes:

1: the compliance powers of liberal actors and structures;

2: the incentivising powers of liberal actors and structures;

3: the ability of local actors to resist, ignore, or adapt the liberal peace;

4: the ability of local actors and structures to present alternative approaches to peace-building.

This model acknowledges the interplay of various actors and interests, and local-international interaction, conflict, cooperation and co-constitution throughout the state-building process. As Mac Ginty (2011: 9) notes, the four factors help to uncover 'a place in which social processes come together to form fusions and composites'. The interaction depicted by these four factors of hybridisation contributes to 'distortion', illustrating the process by which 'the strategies and worldviews of actors are refracted by their contact with others' (Mac Ginty 2011: 9). In other words, local-international interaction complicates state-building and indicates how different actors impact on each other. While the four interrelated factors depict a highly complex image of post-conflict intervention, the application of this analytical approach sheds a deeper light on the construction of post-conflict institutions with special attention to the local-international relationship.

2.3.3 Hybrid Governance

Observing hybridity sheds light on some of the overlooked complexities of state-building. A large portion of hybridity literature has focused on 'hybrid political orders' (Albrecht and Moe 2015; Boege et al. 2009; Cleaver et al. 2013; Kraushaar and Lambach 2009; Willems and Van der Borgh 2016). Following the inception of the term between 2007-2009, Krashaar and Lambach (2009:14) indicated that the concept offers an analytical advance in comparison to related concepts of informal institutions, clientelism, neopatrimonialism, para-statehood and legal pluralism. Similarly, Boege et al. (2009: 599) indicate that it is 'theoretically and practically more fruitful to think in terms of hybrid political orders, drawing on resilience embedded in the communal life of societies within so called fragile regions'. These hybrid political orders reflect 'the combination of elements that stem from genuinely different societal sources that follow different logics; and it affirms that these spheres permeate each other and, consequently, give rise to a different and genuine political order' (Boege et al. 2009: 606). In this sense, hybrid political orders look beyond liberal frameworks of analysis by explaining how states are shaped by the practices of various actors and their interrelationships (Eriksen 2011: 238). The analytical dynamism of the concept is tested, with recent studies using the concept to explain how security governance is organised in various contexts (Albrecht and Moe 2015; Cleaver et al. 2013; Willems and Van der Borgh 2016).

For example, a hybrid security order in the form of a non-state local defence force in South Sudan, the 'Arrow Boys', emerged to counter the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army where the capacity of state security is deemed inadequate by local communities (Willems and Van der Borgh 2016). The study emphasises how security provision emerges through the contested negotiation of norms and responsibilities between state and non-state actors (Willems and Van der Borgh 2016: 358). Such negotiation deals with 'the interconnected questions of whether there is a security threat and what its magnitude is, who is able and allowed to take action against it, and according to which norms and rules' (Willems and Van der Borgh 2016: 359). In addition, the concept has proved adaptable, with innovative theoretical frameworks developed to explore different elements of hybrid political order. For instance, exploring the case of non-state, hybrid security institutions in the Usangu Plains of Tanzania, Cleaver et al. (2013: 5) draw on critical institutionalist theory to identify the presence of 'institutional bricolage': 'the processes in which people (consciously and non-consciously) draw on existing social formulae and arrangements (rules, traditions, norms, roles and relationships) to patch together institutions in response to changing situations'. The approach has uncovered how, 'the institutions so produced are dynamic hybrids of the modern and traditional, the formal and informal' (Cleaver et al. 2013: 5).

Elsewhere, Albrecht and Moe (2015: 2) suggest that the 'hybrid political order' concept lacks analytical rigour if it simply 'points out that different cultural institutions and actors interact and shape one another'. Targeting a more 'processual' analysis, they integrate the post-colonial concept of 'the simultaneity of discourse and practice' in an 'attempt to conceptualise processes of hybridisation and to grasp more succinctly what the hybrid quality of authority implies' (Albrecht and Moe 2015: 9). For example, where international actors have sought to bring local actors into security programmes to act as interlocutors between international and local actors, the local interlocutors have drawn on various sources of authority which simultaneously affirm and challenge international expectations (Albrecht and Moe 2015: 15). The concept of simultaneity of discourse and practice therefore helps to explain how different actors are involved in an 'ever-evolving process of subjective inclusion and transformation', defining order-making as a complex process where actors rely on multiple forms of authority and identity (Albrecht and Moe 2015: 9).

2.3.4 'Everyday' Local Agency

For Richmond (2010: 670), the 'everyday' is defined as a space 'in which local individuals and communities live and develop political strategies in their environment, towards the state and towards international models of order'. Exploring intervention through an 'everyday' lens of analysis helps to uncover in-depth the 'agency and diversity' of local actors in the state-building process (Mac Ginty 2011: 10). Practically speaking, Richmond (2009: 326) indicates that critiquing international intervention from an 'everyday' perspective can help to move the liberal peace towards a more 'emancipatory' peace. Analytically, an everyday analytical lens generates awareness of specific processes through which local actors come to challenge, shape and distort international intervention.

Through the study of local 'peace formation' in Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, and Kosovo, Richmond and Pogodda (2016: 4) identify a resilient and resistant everyday agency that correlates to previous studies (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009, 2010; Tadjbakhsh 2011). Peace formation is 'the mobilisation – formal or informal, public or hidden, indigenous – of local agents of peace-building, conflict resolution, development, or peace actors in customary, religious, cultural, social, or local governance settings' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 9). Peace formation 'may seek to realise aspects of the international liberal peace architecture or strongly oppose the liberal peace for its failing to incorporate local needs and aspirations into its peace- and state-building strategies' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). Holding deep contextual knowledge, local actors challenge the outputs of liberal peace through local alternatives: aiming to 'negate local violence and preserve and recondition local identity and political institutions' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 4). For example, the case studies explored in Richmond and Pogodda's (2016) study indicate that peace formation has created localised spaces for reconciliation, provided community-oriented conflict resolution, and developed 'quick fixes' to security issues. These functions challenge international perceptions that local actors are apathetic, lack innovation, and express peaceful agency only because of the opportunities offered by internationals (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 13). Similar to the analytical framework of Mac Ginty (2011), peace formation accounts for 'co-optation and compliance' alongside critical agency (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 10). Furthermore, the challenges of peace formation may increase in consistency and relevance as the post-conflict period progresses, 'as social organisations emerge, critique the varied sources of conflict and tension, innovate, network, institutionalise, and seek to build peace from inside and bottom up' (Richmond and Pogodda

2016: 20). The concept provides a useful means through which to explore the agency of local CSOs, including think tanks, and their various interactions with international actors.

Contributing to international peace- and state-building, local actors are able 'to ''educate'' interveners' political reforms necessary for a more emancipatory transition' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). Thus, local actors are a source of learning for internationals, offering 'local knowledge about the conditions of peace in situ and, from their positionality, a view of what problems they face' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). Possessing a detailed understanding of the local context, local peace formers can engage in an informed interaction, debate and negotiation with international actors. For Richmond and Pogodda (2016: 11), this stimulates a local-international conversation about the impact of international intervention, its 'hegemony, colonial praxis, global economic governance, and the reconstitution of rights, needs and identity'. The challenges of local actors exercising peace formation can also shape international behaviours. For example, actors such as the UN 'tend to react by adjusting their strategies and policies to reflect the intent of those peace networks to do more for those who need assistance' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 11). As indicated by Mac Ginty (2011: 11) 'the strength and extent of the blowback in some circumstances is not only capable of changing the nature of the peace that is being implemented; it also has the capacity to change the identity of liberal peace actors'. At the same time, peace formation appreciates the power dynamics of the local-international relationship. Although peace formation holds strong local legitimacy, its power is limited (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 4). Local CSOs also engage in a balancing act where they need to respect donor red lines despite this harming the legitimacy of local solutions (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 20-21). Overall, peace formation provides a detailed conceptual account of everyday local agency which does not romanticise local actors power and motivations.

2.3.5 'Everyday' International Agency

As Mac Ginty (2011: 11) notes, 'it is not always the case of the liberal peace setting the agenda and local actors reacting to that agenda'. An everyday analysis is applicable to the staff of international organisations (Autesserre 2014; Henry 2015; McWha 2011; Sending 2010). Placing focus on the behaviour of individual staff, McWha (2011) deconstructs international aid workers into groups according to divergent processes of relationship building with local colleagues. While permanent and consultant expatriates have the most esteemed status within an international organisation, it is the less esteemed volunteers who are closest to local workers (McWha 2011:

38). In a similar sense, Henry (2015: 387) explores UN peacekeeping implementation, indicating that the staff of Eastern European and Scandinavian countries have defined their role within a peacekeeping mission on distinct criteria. These studies indicate that any analysis of the realities of international intervention requires dedicating methodological attention to the ordinary, mundane and micro-details of peacekeeping life (Henry 2015: 387).

Liberal peace interventions do not reflect a neat transmission of instruction from international elites to national governments and downwards to individuals (Mac Ginty 2011: 10). Sending (2010: 1) describes understandings of the everyday level of peace-building implementation as an analytical 'black box', and consequently, 'we know little about how peacebuilders at the country level are actually operating'. Rectifying this, Sending (2010: 2-3), explores how UN field staff adopt new practices, react on the ground, and act flexibly beneath headquarter instructions. While international staff do build sustainable local contacts, and adapt goals to the local context, these actions are undermined by the limited local expertise of international staff and staff turnover (Sending 2010: 38). Building on this, Autesserre's (2014: 8) focus on the practices, habits and narratives of interveners sheds deeper light on 'the banal, everyday activities that actually make up the bulk of the work'. While international interveners typically exhibit behaviours which shape international intervention to encourage the persistence of boundaries between interveners and host populations, there are 'exceptions' to this norm, where 'a number of interveners – most notably people with particularly strong ties to their host countries due to personal or family histories and, to a lesser extent, newcomers to Peaceland – resist and challenge the dominant modes of thinking and acting' (Autesserre 2014: 251). By building local input into programme design, 'their peace-building efforts are usually more effective than those of their peers who follow the prevailing modes of operation' (Autesserre 2014: 251). These studies indicate that international practitioners do seek out local interaction to develop local contextual knowledge, which can contribute to intervention quality by sensitising policy to the local context.

2.3.6 Stressing Hybridity in Kosovo

Hybridity problematises the policy-making intentions of UNMIK and EULEX and unpacks the realities, contradictions and complications that international intervention faces in Kosovo. For example, Qehaja and Prezelj (2017) argue that local actors have been excluded throughout key processes of Kosovo's SSR. They describe the development of the National Security Strategy (NSS) as top-down, where ICO officials challenged the locally-driven nature of the process and

opted for a strategy not tailored to the local context (Qehaja and Prezelj 2017: 411). Consequently, international SSR has often led to distrust amongst local actors towards the international security architecture. As this section shows, the rules and intentions of international intervention have not translated easily into Kosovo's complex political context (Bernabeu 2007; Chesterman 2002; Dijkstra 2011), and have often been met by local challenge and adaptation (Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Kursani 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018; Troncota 2018).

'Peace figuration' captures the uncontrollable consequences facing international intervention in Kosovo, indicating that 'non-actions created a new chain of consequences, which multiplied, became more complicated and reduced the prospects for considering international peace-building a success' (Visoka 2016a: 125). For example, the emergence and development of Serbian parallel structures is considered an 'unprevented' consequence of international peace-building, reflecting a lack of local consensus on peace-building in Kosovo and how international focus on short-term stability caused them to miss the opportunity to dismantle Serb structures, leading to multiple consequences for peace-building (Visoka 2016a). This includes: a prolonged international presence; hindered ethnic reconciliation; and delayed establishment of functioning institutions (Visoka 2016a: 103-105). While the analytical intention is to focus on 'unprevented' consequences of international inaction, peace figuration indicates that state and non-state local actors can resist, interact with and influence peace-building.

Kosovo's state-building has failed to anticipate the co-option of institutions by local elites. Instead, 'facilitating the emergence of an executive-dominated and largely unaccountable state has made Kosovo an attractive prize for capture and has created opportunities for rent-seeking and patronage' (Zaum 2009: 13). In this context, state-building has followed a political rather than a technical logic and has not undertaken a controlled transfer of knowledge where internationals empower locals to develop institutions (Ernst 2011: 127). Evidence shows that local elites and patronage networks are subverting international state-building to create institutions which function according to local rules. Far from matching the intentions of international state-building assistance, the leadership traits of local actors, such as the mayor of the Kamenica municipality, have shaped the course of governance reform towards a patronage-based system (Jackson 2018: 166). Similarly, international legislation regarding civil service recruitment has been inconsistent, and as an unintended consequence, local governing elites have asserted strategies of political control (Tadic and Elbasani 2018: 186). This has created a civil service where practices of recruitment function according to the informal strategies of domestic political actors rather than international actors (Tadic and Elbasani 2018: 198).

Hybridity in Kosovo has endured a 'domino' effect, as when negative hybridity takes root in one peace- and state-building component, other components become susceptible (Simangan 2018: 122). For example, internationally-led education reform has led to a series of unintended consequences (Selenica 2018). While international intentions were to create a multi-ethnic educational system based on collective rights and the autonomy of separate communities, this has not followed suit. Instead, education has been hybridised through the segregation of education into ethnically exclusive systems (Selenica 2018). Furthermore, hybridisation is present in EU-led agreements on the normalisation of Kosovar-Serbian relations. Troncota (2018), explores the diversity of local resistance towards the status of Association/Community of Serb Municipalities (ACSM) within EU brokered agreements. Troncota (2018) outlines the heterogeneity of Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serb actors and the diversity of political opinion within and between these communities towards the ACSM, and the various patterns of opposition towards the EU.

Studies of Kosovo uncover a variety of 'everyday' practices through which local actors and individuals direct political strategies towards international intervention (Bargues-Pedreny 2016; Gippert 2016; Visoka 2016; Visoka and Richmond 2017). Visoka and Richmond (2017: 112) note that 'to make the case for an emancipatory peace, it is important to explore social conditions shaping peace in Kosovo and critically engage with the potential for emancipatory transformation'. For example, Gippert (2016) explores the everyday compliance behaviour of the Kosovo Police during cooperation with EULEX, and the impact of coercion, reward seeking and legitimacy on local behaviour. The study finds that local police officer compliance with EULEX differs according to the rank of the officer (Gippert 2016: 70). This highlights the individual reasons behind local compliance and contestation with international operational formats. By focusing on the micro-level security experience of local actors it is possible to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of internationally-led SSR.

Visoka (2012a: 34-35) uncovers both public and hidden practices of hybridity in Kosovo. With hybridisation considered as 'the agential capacities and positioning, as well as the ratios of power among the local and international actors in post-conflict contexts', public and hidden practices contribute to a nuanced and 'everyday' understanding of local CSO agency in Kosovo (Visoka 2012a: 26). An example of a public practice of hybridisation refers to the emergence of the Movement for Self-Determination (*Levizja Vetevendosje*) and their opposition to entrenched international governance, and the practices of local CSOs (Narten 2008: 385; Visoka 2012a: 28-29), while hidden practices refer to informal and individual forms of local agency that are

reflective of local needs and cultures, such as the formation of community level dispute resolution mechanisms which signify local distrust in the justice system of UNMIK (Visoka 2012a, 30-32). Moreover, through 'peace formation' it is possible to highlight local civil society as an actor capable of challenging and contributing to international peace-building (Visoka 2012a: 2016). Emblematic of a process of 'peace formation' in Kosovo, community-based CSOs have put forward alternative peace-building practices that are representative of local communities (Visoka and Richmond 2017: 122). Collectively, the studies explored in this section confirm a hybrid lens of analysis to be an effective means through which to deconstruct the interactive nature of Kosovo's SSR.

2.3.7 Knowledge Formation in Kosovo's SSR

Studies of post-conflict SSR and stressing hybridity have shown increasing interest in the complex design and delivery of SSR policy (Brosig 2011; Distler 2016; Dursun-Ozkanka and Crossley-Frolick 2012; Eckhard 2016; Graeger 2016; Holohan 2016; Sahin 2017; Scheye 2008). Several studies begin to explain how security governance is produced through knowledge formation based on social interaction between multiple actors (Bevir 2016; Mannitz 2014; Schroeder and Chappuis 2014). This literature suggests that 'a precondition for effective interaction and partnership with local actors is the recognition of existing local knowledge' in security provision (Mannitz 2014: 279).

Dursun-Ozkanca and Crossley-Frolick (2012) elaborate on the division of labour between UNMIK, KFOR, OSCE and the EU and how this impacts on police reform. While police reform responsibilities were largely divided according to the comparative advantages that each organisation had developed across experiences in neighbouring contexts, the interaction between international actors paints a complex picture of the police reform process (Dursun-Ozkanca and Crossley-Frolick 2012). Knowledge of how to conduct police reform is confused and complicated by the input of various international actors. Similarly, Brosig (2011) explores the interaction between the UN, OSCE, EU, NATO and ICO and their attempts to overcome policy complexity. These international actors have interacted to develop an approach to avoid the duplication of tasks, while also developing diverging competences within the broader international regime (Brosig 2011: 186). Interaction between international actors has therefore contributed to a knowledge of which actor should be performing specific tasks.

Deconstructing knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR is also achieved by analysing the everyday activities of practitioners on the frontlines of policy design and implementation (Eckhard 2016; Scheye 2008; von Carlowitz 2011). Scheye (2008: 205-206) has explored the performance of UNMIK security programme management, arguing for the inclusion of 'SSR experts' in UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) field and headquarter offices to address a knowledge gap. This conclusion follows an assessment of UNMIK police reform, indicating that 'each UNMIK officer arrived with her/his traditions and procedures', creating a confused reform process (Scheye 2008: 184-185). This highlights the diversity of knowledge that individual international practitioners rely on throughout police reform. Eckhard (2016) explores EULEX policy-making in Kosovo, placing attention on the everyday experience of EULEX practitioners. While Eckhard (2016: 380) finds that the centralised nature of EULEX has a negative impact on performance by leading to protracted decision-making, coordination issues and decontextualised policy, the variance in mission leadership can make a difference. This shows an awareness of how individuals within EULEX management make decisions based on personal preferences, challenging the structured instructions of the EULEX mandate.

Analyses of knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR also focus on how international practitioners' ground decision-making in informal knowledge outside of formal procedure (Distler 2016; Graeger 2016). In the absence of frequent formal EU-NATO cooperation, headquarters and field mission staff have engaged with each other on an informal basis to form an unofficial 'community of practice' that provides an alternative to formal forms of EU-NATO cooperation (Graeger 2016: 495). Consequently, the shared practical knowledge on which informal engagement is based has been pivotal for the development of field cooperation between EULEX and KFOR staff, and more important than formal 'Berlin Plus' arrangements which outline EU-NATO meeting formats (Graeger 2016: 495). In addition, international practitioners generate knowledge of SSR by engaging informally with local actors (Distler 2016). For German UNMIK police officers, the most important mode of knowledge formation behind negative attitudes of the UNMIK police mission stems from their informal engagements with local actors and experienced internationals, rather than official procedure, trainings and information (Distler 2016: 340).

Local knowledge has also played a role in the knowledge formation of international practitioners (Holohan 2016; Sahin 2017). Sahin (2017) demonstrates how different outcomes of 'ownership' in Kosovo's SSR have resulted from different patterns of local-international interaction and power relationships. During the internationally-supervised SSR of the post-independence period and in the development of the NSS, the Kosovo government was seemingly pressured to approve

the international document, only to resist its implementation and initiate a new internal review process (Sahin 2017: 23-24). Furthermore, a study on international engagement with local populations in the Serbian enclaves of Kosovo's Thezren and Banshik municipalities shows that limited forms of engagement and cooperation do not result in trust, which impacts on the success of security governance (Holohan 2016: 347). These studies demonstrate that focusing on local-international engagements helps to reveal how local-international interaction impacts on SSR, while identifying patterns of local challenges and international learning.

2.3.8 Summary

This section explained the epistemological assumptions of the liberal peace framework and its limited analytical utility for a study that explores a complex local-international interaction. Alternatively, by stressing hybridity, analysis can identify and analyse local-international interaction, local and international agency, and the processes through which international intervention is distorted on the ground. The section demonstrated the utility of a hybrid framework of analysis by exploring studies of international intervention in Kosovo, and in particular, the utility of a hybrid lens of analysis to deconstruct knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR. The thesis follows on from these studies by enquiring into the role of local research in Kosovo's internationally-led SSR. In order to deconstruct Kosovo's SSR and explore the interaction between local researchers and international SSR practitioners, this thesis emphasises hybridity as the first component of its analytical approach. A hybrid framework of analysis helps to indicate that local and international actors are engaged in an ongoing interaction, and that both international practitioners and local actors exert agency which can challenge and alter SSR. The following section adapts a hybrid framework of analysis by integrating it with the concepts of epistemic community and research contribution. This focuses the study on the interaction between local researchers and international practitioners and the ability of these actors to challenge and contribute to SSR.

2.4 Section 2: The Contribution of Researchers to Policy-Making

2.4.1 Introduction

This section explores the applicability of concepts from the research contribution literature to theorise how local researchers challenge international SSR and contribute to the decision-making of practitioners. A critical step in understanding how Kosovo's local researchers interact, challenge and contribute to international SSR is to test the pertinence of models of policy-making to the context of Kosovo's SSR. This field of enquiry involves policy-analysis, which is 'a process of multidisciplinary inquiry designed to create, critically assess, and communicate information that is useful in understanding and improving policies' (Dunn 2004: 1-2). This section starts by correlating linear and assumption-based models of policy-making with the liberal peace framework, before considering a hybridised policy-process in terms of a convoluted and dialectical policy-process. In doing so, it centres on the concepts of epistemic community and research contribution, which help to explain how, in an interactive policy-making process, researchers challenge and contribute to SSR. The section also considers the complexity of research utilisation and explores how policy makers seek out or ignore researchers as sources of information. The final part of this section explores frameworks that analyse the impact of research and interaction on policy-making. The applicability of these models and their ability to explain the role of local research in SSR is considered in the specific context of this study.

The sections that follow highlight a number of key aspects that are included in the theoretical approach:

- The role of and function of researchers in policy-making;

- The decision-making discretion of international practitioners;

- The complexity of research utilisation;

- The contribution of research to decision-making.

2.4.2 Connecting Policy-Making to Hybridity

While hybridity depicts a complex and interactive policy-process, policy-making has often been conceptualised simply. Various linear models outline a straightforward, step-by-step policy-process, involving only elite decision-makers (Easton 1957; Lasswell 1956; Ripley and Franklin 1991). These models are of little analytical utility for the study of complex local-international interaction. Describing UK Governmental policy-making, Easton (1957: 384) depicts 'inputs' as social 'demands', which enter a political system consisting of executive government actors, before conversion into outputs following feedback. This process is assumption-based, failing to capture participant interaction beyond the executive level and ignoring the contestation of non-state actors. This macro-level analysis is emulated by further conceptual developments. For example, 'sub-governments', understood as the policy-network 'most involved in policy-making' (Birkland 2016: 187), consider interaction between elite decision-makers in the US, focusing on the Senate, Congress, bureaucrats and private groups (Ripley and Franklin 1991: 6-7). Similar models, such as 'iron triangles' and 'policy whirlpools', have maintained this institutional emphasis (McCool 1990: 269). As such, linear models correlate to the state-centrism and epistemological assumptions of liberal institutional state-building (Carothers 2002; Chandler 2006a, 2006b; Krasner 2004; Lemay-Hebert 2009b, Paris and Sisk 2008; Rotberg 2004). These models only support analysis of how Kosovo's international architecture has incorporated local elites into decision-making, rather than a deep analysis of non-state actors as critical agents of change.

Correlating the applicability of past and present models of policy-making to hybridity helps to assess the utility of policy concepts to an exploration of local-international interaction in Kosovo. While the analysis of linear models provides a useful starting point, pluralist models which emphasise the open-ended, competitive and cooperative environment of policy-making offer more relevant conceptualisations. For example, the 'issue network' (Heclo 1978: 274) provides the conceptual foundation of more complex models which stress policy-contexts that emulate conditions of hybridity (Haas 1992, 2016; Evans 2001; Kingdon 2014; Marsh and Rhodes 1992; Marsh and Smith 2000; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018). Issue networks are webs of influence that comprise many participants and who guide the exercise of power (Heclo 1978: 275). Despite being an early conceptualisation, 'issue networks' provide a significant a break from linear models by considering the diversity of actors involved in policy-making (Heclo 1978). By including actors beyond the elite level and incorporating the micro-level, issue networks provide an early conceptualisation that local non-state actors can engage with an internationally-led policy-process.

The interactive focus of the 'Advocacy Coalition Framework' (ACF) complicates a conceptualisation of policy-making (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018). Emphasising coalition, the ACF depicts interaction between executive and non-executive actors, including: 'officials from any level of government, representatives from the private sector, members from non-profit organisations, members of the news media, academic scientists and researchers' (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018: 141). As such, advocacy coalitions begin to conceptualise the engagement of local actors, such as researchers and journalists, with international practitioners. It touches on themes of local agency, and how local non-state actors challenge, resist and contest the decision-making of international and local elites (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Studies of interest and pressure groups heighten emphasis on contestation in policy-making (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2008; Castells 2015; De Bruycker 2017; Grant 2000; Klüver, Mahoney and Opper 2015; Lei 2011). These groups 'strategically communicate and promote arguments and issue definitions in order to influence policy-decisions in the desired direction' (De Bruycker 2017: 775). Indeed, different interest groups and individuals have deployed tactics to transfer their interests into EU policy-making. Interested individuals have framed issues and arguments pragmatically 'to expand their supporting coalition by linking the dimensions at stake to the interest of their target' (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2008: 458). For example, Klüver, Mahoney and Opper (2015) indicate that interest groups deploy specific framing tactics which are tailored to the Directorates General in charge of drafting particular EU legislation. They 'strategically highlight some aspects of a proposal while neglecting others' to shape the European Commission legislative debate (Klüver, Mahoney and Opper 2015: 495).

Policy-making is far from immune to the pressures of the Internet. Modern communication technology 'extends the reach of communication media to all forms of social life in a network that is at the same time global and local, generic and customised in an ever-changing pattern' (Castells 2015: 6). Online tools such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube provide easy access to disseminate and receive new knowledge and opinion, and platforms to exert pressure on policy-making institutions. As Castells finds (2015: 21), the 2011 protests in Tunisia, Barcelona and New York were 'made possible by overcoming fear through togetherness built in the network of cyberspace and in communities of urban space'. Similarly, the concept of the 'netizen' has followed the political-technological advance. The 'netizen' describes a politically opinionated citizen who actively uses the Internet to engage with political process (Lei 2011). The November-December 2018 Paris 'Yellow Vest' protest movement provides a contemporary example of the 'netizen' function. Commentary suggests that the protests have no central point of organisation

but have been 'organised' on social media to challenge political process, and with limited focal point for political figures to negotiate with (BBC 2018; the Guardian 2018). Interest groups and individuals, and pressure tactics, online and offline, support a modern understanding of hybridity (Lee 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Selim 2018).

Further depicting the multifarious actors and interaction that influences policy-making, the 'policy-community' concept describes a policy-making venue, involving different organisations, departments and groups, who interact and engage in adherence to a particular conception of a problem (Jordan 2005: 320). Additionally, Kingdon (2014: 180-182) has written about the negotiation, creativity and personal touch of 'policy entrepreneurs', who use policy-making to pursue individual agendas. These concepts add further complexity to the policy-making process and correlate to an 'everyday' lens of analysis (Autesserre 2014; Richmond and Mitchell 2012). Thus far, the concepts explored throughout this section describe the interaction, collaboration and competition between executive and non-executive actors in policy-making and begin to build a picture that stresses hybridity. To recap, hybridity is a constant process of negotiation between various international and local actors who are involved in discussions of how conflict can be resolved or transformed (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 299), consisting of four factors (Mac Ginty 2011):

1: the compliance powers of liberal actors and structures;

2: the incentivising powers of liberal actors and structures;

3: the ability of local actors to resist, ignore, or adapt the liberal peace;

4: the ability of local actors to present alternative approaches to peace-building.

As Weible (2018b: 351) notes: 'the policy process is best imagined as a complex phenomenon of continuous interactions involving public policy and its context, events, actors, and outcomes'. This complex phenomenon is best portrayed by the 'dialectical' understanding of policy-making (Evans 2001; Marsh and Smith 2000). The dialectical model provides a pertinent conceptualisation of local-international interaction in Kosovo's SSR. The term 'dialectical' refers to the 'interactive relationship between two variables in which each affects the other in a continuing iterative process' (Marsh and Smith 2000: 5). A dialectical policy-network is defined by three interlinking relationships; structure and agency; network and context; and network and

outcome (Marsh and Smith 2000: 5). This process of policy-making, moreover, is constantly evolving (Evans 2001). In other words, it considers the ongoing interaction and relationships between various actors, how the policy-context impacts on these relationships, and how interaction impacts on policy. Likewise, this helps to depict local-international interaction, how the post-conflict context impacts on interaction, and how local-international relationships impact on SSR. In this regard, the dialectical model correlates to the ways in which local and international actors interact, contest, adapt and influence international intervention (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). This understanding provides a starting point for conceptualising the interaction between researcher-practitioner interaction, which is developed in the sections that follow.

2.4.3 The Role of Researchers in Policy-Making

Rather than simply stressing the participation of non-executive actors in policy-making, such as researchers, policy-making interactions can stimulate learning. Revisiting the context of the inclusive 'issue network', Heclo (1978: 274-275) asserts the difficulty of confirming who the principal policy-making actors are. Similarly, amid the interplay of different actors, it is difficult to indicate what knowledge influences policy-making. Inside issue networks, it is through 'people who regard each other as knowledgeable, or at least needing to be answered, that public policy issues tend to be refined, evidence debated, and alternative options worked out' (Heclo 1978: 276). Again, the issue network provides an important foundation before an analysis of models which conceptualise the contribution of non-executive knowledge to policy-making. While not focusing explicitly on the contribution of knowledge to policy-making, the inclusion of non-executive actors in the issue networks leaves their role open to analysis.

The aforementioned ACF identifies researchers as part of the coalitions that influence policy-making (Kingiri 2014; Marfo and Mckeown 2013; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Weible and Sabatier 2018). The ACF uncovers 'ongoing patterns of conflict and concord as reflections of different beliefs, situations fostering belief change and learning, and rationales for major and minor policy change' (Weible 2018a: 16), indicating that various actors impact on policy change through learning, belief change and negotiated agreement (Henry et al. 2014: 300). The ACF remains salient to contemporary studies of policy learning, proving 'malleable' to different contexts (Henry et al. 2014: 301). Contemporary ACF applications have uncovered the role of a government agency as a policy broker in Kenya's biosafety regulatory policy (Kingiri 2014); the presence of 'conservative' and 'reform' coalitions advocating for policy change in Ghanaian

timber markets (Marfo and Mckeown 2013); and environmental policy competition between coalitions for development and conservation in South Korea (Kim 2012). Thus, the ACF provides a useful tool for explaining how non-executive knowledge influences policy-making in developing contexts and may help to identify local researchers as an ingredient in Kosovo's SSR. Nonetheless, applications of the ACF tend not to focus in-depth on specific actors (Henry et al. 2014: 303-304), such as researchers. While the ACF identifies producers of research, including researchers and journalists, as key members of a coalition (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018), the ACF does not centre specifically on how local researchers translate their knowledge into learning.

The 'epistemic community' concept attributes attention to the role of researchers in policy-making (Haas 1992; 2016; Sugden 2006). An 'epistemic community' is defined as 'a network of professionals with recognised expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area' (Haas 1992: 3; Sugden 2006). The concept carries important analytical utility, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, elucidating interlinkages among problems, helping define organisational interests, and helping to formulate policy (Haas 2016: 9). Importantly, epistemic communities comprise of experts, including researchers, who hold 'recognised expertise' and inform policy-making processes by 'illuminating' issues to policy-makers (Haas 1992: 4). The concept also deals with the interactive nature of policy-making, indicating that through communicative action, experts supply ideas that help to frame policy (Haas 1992: 15). Furthermore, the concept highlights the importance of these experts to policy-makers, by supporting understandings of the complex and uncertain policy environment (Haas 2016: 1). Working in 'uncertain' conditions, where policy-makers do not fully understand the context, policy-makers take it upon themselves to engage with epistemic communities (Haas 1992: 3). In other words, information external to the policy-making process and unknown to policy-makers is required to make informed decisions, leading to 'distinctive patterns of social change that involve persuasion and learning' (Haas 2016: 6).

The epistemic community concept has been adapted to support the study of 'security communities'. Following concepts of 'security community' (Adler 2005; Adler and Barnett 1998), studies have explored how security cooperation contributes to peaceful transformation in the Western Balkans (Stojanovic-Gajic and Ejdus 2018). For example, as Western Balkan countries have increasingly engaged in diplomacy, diplomatic engagement has provided a platform for the social learning of diplomats (Dyrmishi and Qesaraku 2018: 13). Security communities have also been identified amongst non-state actors. For example, Schneiker (2015) uses the epistemic community concept to explain patterns of security governance between

humanitarian NGOs who often compete for funding and hold different interests. Different humanitarian NGOs may: engage in joint security training to reduce costs; lobby together to create a common position when advocating for donor funds; and share security-relevant information that another NGO does not have (Schneiker 2015: 6). Emulating these studies, the concept of epistemic community can help to identify and explain the presence of Kosovo's local security research community.

The epistemic community concept supports an understanding of the role of expert knowledge in SSR. For example, while international organisations may prioritise international knowledge ahead of local knowledge in decision making, evidence shows that an epistemic community has contributed new ideas and helped to formulate UK SSR policy (Sugden 2006: 14-15). Researcher expertise has also supported the integration of SSR norms in the EU security architecture. Faleg (2012: 179) describes EU SSR policy innovation as a case of epistemic learning. Here, the concept of SSR was channelled through various national and international epistemic communities, including the experts and researchers of DFID, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), to 'trickle down into the EU' (Faleg 2012: 179). The epistemic community concept, moreover, can be supplemented by studies of epistemic practices, understood as the ways in which international policy-makers form knowledge on a particular subject (Bueger 2015: 6-7). These normative epistemic practices are continuously unfolding, with the construction of knowledge requiring ongoing maintenance (Bueger 2015: 7). This malleability indicates that researchers not only contribute new ideas but can alter and shape the knowledge that drives SSR.

2.4.4 The 'Discretion' of International Practitioners

The concept of 'discretion' encapsulates 'practitioner initiative and creativity in policy implementation' (Evans 2010: 1) and provides a key aspect of the theoretical approach of this study. 'Discretion' encourages an exploration of international intervention at an everyday and individual level, observing the extent to which practitioners comply with or subvert organisational procedures.

Lipsky is the seminal scholar of 'discretion' and provides a foundation through the concept of the 'street-level bureaucrat', defined as 'public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their job, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work' (1980:

3). This definition highlights the autonomy policy-makers hold beneath organisational mandates, often characterised by 'regular interaction with citizens' (Lipsky 1980: 13). The concept indicates how policy-makers develop relationships with citizens and learn from these engagements, which may comprise groups including researchers. Lipsky (1980: 12) also depicts a two-way bureaucrat-citizen exchange, as from the citizens perspective 'the roles of street-level bureaucrats are as extensive as the functions of governments'. In this sense, a citizen-bureaucrat relationship provides an opportunity for an actor external to decision-making to permeate the policy-process. Critically, the concept remains salient to the contemporary studies of post-conflict intervention. This relevance was introduced in section 2.3.5, which explored the everyday agency of international interveners, whose personal attitudes, actions and behaviour shape international intervention (Autesserre 2014; Henry 2015; Sending 2010). As indicated by Autesserre (2014: 25), concepts such as street-level bureaucracy and discretion provide a useful theoretical tool to understand international intervention: 'as regularly occurs when one party acts on behalf of another in any kind of organisation or social situation, peace interveners regularly adapt, transform, and alter top down instructions'.

Contemporary conceptualisations of discretion place heightened attention on the engagement between policy-makers and citizens (Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015: 324). Rather than street-level bureaucrats, these policy-makers are 'citizen-agents', who are dedicated to interacting with individuals outside of centralised decision-making and do so for personal reasons. For example, Tummers and Bekkers (2014: 540-541) explore the policy-implementation of healthcare professionals, noting that 'discretion influences client meaningfulness because street-level bureaucrats are more able to tailor their decision and the procedures they have to follow to the specific situations and needs of their clients'. Similarly, in a study of public administration, Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000: 347) find that 'rather than describing themselves as state agent, street-level workers describe themselves as citizen-agents'. Several behaviours define the 'citizen-agent' (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000: 348-354):

1: Acting on policy-issues in response to individual citizen concerns;

2: Exercising moral reasoning ahead of rule following or breaking;

3: Building social relationships with citizens;

4: Acting pragmatically to do the right thing.

The citizen-agent concept supports an exploration of SSR practitioner relationships with local actors and is readily transferable to Kosovo's context. The concept draws parallels with findings from an ethnographic study of international interveners behaviour and practice across various contexts of international intervention, including Kosovo (Autesserre 2014). In particular, citizen-agent discretion correlates to the observation that international interveners take it upon themselves to build local concerns into programme design after building relationships with locals (Autesserre 2015: 251). As such, discretion can support an examination of the extent to which international SSR practitioners build relationships with local researchers and act on local expertise. Furthermore, the willingness of citizen-agents to engage with non-state individuals provides an avenue for local researchers to influence decision-making. As indicated by Lehmann Nielsen (2015:130), the relationship between the street-level bureaucrat and their clients is 'a power relation in which the street-level bureaucrat is not necessarily the most powerful actor, and in which the clients by no means have equal preconditions to handle the interaction'.

Discretion is also found at the managerial level. Building on Lipsky (1980), the 'discursive managerial' viewpoint highlights the ability of managers to alter the discretionary environment of street-level workers (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015). For example, managers not only operate with discretion, but consider practitioner subordinates as discretionary actors, have collegiate and hierarchical relationships with subordinates, understand the limits of control strategies and accommodate practitioner resistance (Evans 2010: 66). Managerial discretion has been identified amongst senior level SSR practitioners in Kosovo. For example, Eckhard (2016) has shown that EULEX management makes decisions based on personal preferences, which challenges the structured and rigid instructions of the EULEX mandate. The managerial discretion concept can shed further light on the everyday activities of high-ranking international practitioners, such as programme managers, and how preferences and personality impacts on engagement researchers.

Depending on managerial level, discretion is exercised in distinct ways. Freire, Viara and Palotti (2015: 94) use the term 'middle-level bureaucrat' to describe those who coordinate, supervise and direct teams of street-level workers. These middle-level bureaucrats are geographically distinct, and, may either be located on the front line of service provision, or away from it (Lotta and Cavalcante 2015: 297). In the context of international intervention, some middle-level bureaucrats may be located 'in-country', while some may have a more distant role at an international headquarters. It is expected that 'the bureaucrats closest to the top tend to be more exposed to

political issues' and are further removed from the operational side (Lotta and Cavalcante 2015: 298). This observation has been made in Kosovo, where EULEX executives working from Brussels operate with a rigid and 'exaggerated' focus on political stability (Qehaja and Prezelj 2017). Evans (2010: 167), moreover, notes that it is the lower level manager, rather than the senior, who promotes street-level discretion and acts in alliance with street-level workers. While this suggests that Kosovo's local researchers might find it most useful to engage with international practitioners beneath management level, managers 'are actors that operate the articulations among different agencies, organisations, federative entities and civil society and so, accordingly, any attempt to understand them must be based on the relations they establish and in which they are the primary actors' (Lotta and Cavalcante 2015: 297). While middle-level workers may have less exposure to civil society than street-level workers, they still interact with these organisations.

Overall, the analysis of discretion indicates that practitioners vary from rule follower to an actor working with relative autonomy (Hupe 2013: 430). While some policy-makers are receptive to engaging with external actors, others are resistant. As such, rather than a one size fits all approach to understanding discretion, the discretion literature should be approached as a form of analytical framework (Evans and Harris 2004; 2006: 445). Here, discretion 'should be regarded as a series of gradations of freedom to make decisions and, therefore, the degree of freedom professionals have, and specific conjunctures should be evaluated on a situation-by-situation basis' (Evans and Harris 2004: 871-872). In this thesis, discretion provides a useful concept through which to identify how the values, attitudes and beliefs of international practitioners drive or obstruct researcher engagement.

2.4.5 The Complexity of Research Utilisation

Policy-makers discretion may not value research in policy and may ignore the communication of researchers. Adding an additional layer of complexity to practitioner-researcher engagement, this section explores different models of research utilisation to explain which variables impact on research uptake into policy-making in contexts of international development (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Stone 2002; Weiss 1979; Young and Court 2004). As Weiss (1979: 426) notes, before research use can be assessed 'it is essential to understand what ''using research'' actually means'.

Research can be used in a 'political' or tactical way, while research may 'take so long to come into currency that they are out-of-date by the time they arrive, their conclusion having been

modified, or even contradicted, by later and more comprehensive analysis' (Weiss 1979, 430).
Recent studies have considered this complex research utilisation process in the context of
international development (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Stone 2002; Young and Court 2004). Stone
(2002: 286) notes that it is not feasible to generalise the research utilisation process, or why some
research is favoured over other sources. A number of factors are outlined which explain the
complicated process of research utilisation and indicate why utilisation of NGO, think tanks and
consultancy research might be limited (Stone 2002: 290-292), including:

1: The ignorance of policy-makers to policy-relevant research;

2: The preference of policy-makers for 'internal' or easily accessible sources of
information;

3: Policy-makers having limited time and resources to engage with research;

4: The 'anti-intellectualism' of policy-makers who define the policy process;

5: Circumstances where official information is outside of researcher hands;

6: The means for policy-makers to collate and analyse research are limited;

7: Policy-makers use research to reinforce policy preferences;

8: Researcher and policy-maker disconnect;

9: Negative policy-maker perceptions of research relevance and validity.

Researchers from the ODI RAPID team put forward several useful frameworks which depict a
complex, political and power-driven interaction between researchers and policy-makers. For
example, the RAPID framework identifies three overlapping factors that influence research
evidence utilisation in policy: the political context; the quality of evidence and its interaction; and
researcher-practitioner links; with analytical attention also dedicated to 'external influences'
(Young and Court 2004: 2-4):

- The 'political context' refers to international and local contestation, international institutional pressures, the vested interests of researchers and policy makers, and power relationships between the two;

- 'Evidence' highlights the importance of research quality, its topical relevance, its orientation to solutions, and how evidence interacts with policy;

- 'Links' stress that the researcher connections to policy-makers are important, as are the perceptions of trust and legitimacy in policy-making relationships;

- The 'external influences' that impact on researcher-practitioner interaction include the stage of post-conflict recovery, the policy culture and organisational structures of international organisations, the funding conditions of donors and the capacity of civil society.

ODI have also identified the core dynamics of the 'interface' between knowledge and policy in developing contexts. Included here are 'six dimensions' of the interface, observing how the type of knowledge (including research), political context, sectoral dynamics, knowledge translation, innovation and a multitude of actors all operate to influence the use of research in policy (Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009). Attributing further emphasis to knowledge intermediaries at the interface between knowledge and policy, ODI have established a 'four-fold' framework, focusing analysis on political context that shapes knowledge-policy interactions; the strengths, values, beliefs and credibility of actors involved; the different types of knowledge produced and sought; and the role and processes of knowledge intermediaries (Jones, H. et al. 2013: 2).

2.4.6 Enhancing Research Influence Through Interaction

Models and theories of 'knowledge interaction' refer to: 'the process of intervening between the producer and user of knowledge to improve the supply and demand of knowledge and smooth the path between the two' (Jones, H. et al. 2012: x). This considers concepts which explain researcher agency in the policy-process and how ideas are pushed onto decision-making agendas. The analysis starts by exploring linear conceptualisations before highlighting the utility of more interactive models.

Early models of participation offer insight into the ways in which researchers may contribute knowledge to policy-making. Exploring the role of 'citizen' knowledge in decision-making, Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation, shown below in Figure 2, outlines a series of interactive steps through which ideas, opinions and knowledge, can enter decision-making (Arnstein 1969: 217). Running alongside these steps Arnstein (1969: 217) includes categorisations, where manipulation is considered a form of non-participation; informing, therapy and consultation represent degrees of tokenism; and partnership, where delegated power and citizen control represent citizen agency. While this model does deal with 'citizen' knowledge and participation, and therefore the ability of non-state actors to enhance the uptake of their ideas, any form of citizen participation is controlled by an executive power. It is only at step 5, 'placation', that citizens exert a degree of influence (Arnstein 1969: 220). This influence, however, is at best 'tokenistic', and determined by policy-makers. In Kosovo, for example, the Steering Committee which managed the 2005-2006 Internal Security Review 'hand-picked' Kosovar agencies, while executive responsibility remained with international actors (Sahin 2017: 16). At step 6, citizen agency is only considered as 'participation', where decisions are shared with policy-makers through formal structures (Arnstein 1969: 222). This underestimates the ability of local actors to shape and distort international policy-making from the bottom-up (Jackson 2018; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Tadic and Elbasani 2018; Visoka and Richmond 2017). It also ignores the presence of international practitioners who act with discretion on behalf of citizen clients (Autesserre 2014; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000).

Figure 2: Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969)

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Social learning models heighten the importance of interaction and focus on the contribution of knowledge transfer and exchange (Collins and Ison, 2006; Fisher 2012a, 2012b; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Michaels, 2009). Collins and Ison (2006) offer a conceptual framing of social learning in which consultation and participation, as forms of knowledge interaction, encourage the progression of ideas into policy-making (2006: 12). In Figure 3, stakeholder interaction is diverse, and involves 'sharing problem definitions and monitoring, negotiation, conflict resolution, learning, agreement, confronting power asymmetries, creating and maintaining public goods, concertation of action' (Collins and Ison 2006: 11). The model begins to conceptualise how local actors use consultation to stimulate policy-maker learning and contribute to policy-making.

Figure 3: A Conceptual Framing of Social Learning (Collins et al, 2006)

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Knowledge functions in international development have been granted significant attention in recent years (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Shaxson et al. 2012; Young and Court 2004). Studies have uncovered the push and pull dynamics of knowledge (Feldman, Nadash and Gursen 2001; Tetroe 2007), encouraging two-way exchanges between the supply of and demand for knowledge (Nutley, Walter and Davies 2007: 63). Others have attached more specific focus to processes of knowledge translation (Estabrooks et al. 2008; Jacobson, Butterill and Goering 2003; Lavis et al. 2003), and knowledge brokering (Lavis et al. 2003; Lomas 2007; Urqhart, Porter and Grunfeld 2011). Placing more specific attention on interaction is the concept of the 'knowledge intermediary' (Cash et al. 2003; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Meagher and Lyall 2013; Michaels 2009; Shaxson et al. 2012). These are defined as 'an organisation or individual who act at the interface between knowledge and policy' (Jones, H. et al. 2012: xi). With the emergence of this concept, Jones, H. et al. (2012: x) collectivise the different knowledge processes as 'knowledge

interaction', defined as the 'process of intervening between the producer and user of knowledge to improve the supply and demand of knowledge and smooth the path between the two'. In a similar sense, researchers can deploy strategies of research interaction to improve the supply of insights into policy-making.

The umbrella term 'K*' compiles these different frameworks and describes 'the set of functions and processes at the various interfaces between knowledge, practice and policy – K* improves the ways in which knowledge is shared and applied' (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12). While the 'K' refers to knowledge, the 'star' provides a summary term to indicate the various functions of knowledge transfer, translation, brokering, exchange and management. The nested, functional model, shown in Figure 4, includes the different, but overlapping forms of influence that knowledge interaction may exert on the utilisation of knowledge in policy. Knowledge interaction has several useful functions (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12):

> **1:** An 'informing function', creating, codifying and communicating ideas to make them more accessible for research users. Through an 'informing function', researchers may publish research outputs online or communicate complex ideas in an easy to read style;

> **2:** A 'relational function', improving research-policy relationships and enabling dialogue. Through a 'relational function', researchers can build relationships with practitioners to promote their ideas;

> **3:** A 'systems function', using the broader institutional environment for sustainable change and innovation.

Figure 4: The K* Spectrum (Shaxson et al. 2012)

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Similarly, and dedicating attention to the specific activities through which interaction enables research influence, Jones. H. et al. (2012: 132) has deconstructed knowledge intermediaries across six functions in contexts of international development, including; informing; linking; matchmaking; engaging; collaborating and building adaptive capacity (shown below in Figure 5). The different concepts offer an understanding of the role of power in the interaction between research and policy, including the diverse interests and values of actors, their various perceptions of credibility, and different types of utilisation pathways. As such, it shows a broad and deep awareness of the impacts of research interaction in a complex and hybridised context. It provides a structure that helps to identify the different forms of research interaction with international practitioners, and how local researchers might enhance the influence of research on international learning and SSR.

Figure 5: Six Functions of Knowledge Intermediaries (Jones, H. et al. 2012)

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2.4.7 Determining Research Contribution

An analysis of research impact assessment helps 'to understand the method and routes by which research leads to impacts' (Penfield et al. 2014: 22). Publications such as the Evidence and Policy Journal have encouraged studies into research impact assessment, while the ODI has analysed research impact in post-conflict contexts. Following previous sections, an assessment of local research contribution to international SSR practitioners must take into account the practitioner discretion, local-international interaction and researcher agency that comprise the hybridity of SSR. This section explores various models of research impact assessment to consider what factors, such as policy-maker learning or changes in behaviour, indicate the positive contribution of research to policy-making. An analysis of different models of research impact evaluation acts as an awareness raising activity to support the selection of a model capable of examining the role of research in Kosovo's internationally-led SSR.

Process oriented methods of impact evaluation illuminate the role of knowledge intermediaries in research impact (Meagher and Lyall 2013). An early approach to gauging the impact of research and policy is offered by a 'networks and flows' model (Molas-Gallart, Tang and Morrow 2000). While an older model, it provides a useful starting point as it includes many principles utilised by more contemporary models of research assessment explored in this section. The key elements of impact processes include (Molas-Gallart, Tang and Morrow 2000: 174):

1: The types of outputs that can be expected from research;

2: Channels through which diffusion to non-academic actors takes place;

3: The forms through which the latter can make use of research outputs.

The concept of 'linkage and exchange', efforts with which to connect researchers and practitioners through strategies to enhance research relevance, has been utilised to uncover 'networks and flows' in different context of health research and policy (Canadian Health Service Research Foundation 2000; Lomas 2000).

With further development, Meagher, Lyall and Nutley (2008) have worked to enhance the assessment of the contribution of an interactive research process. They note how 'proxy indicators' can be established, which identify connectivity between researcher and research user, and, 'understanding these connections can lead to a deeper appreciation of the factors that shape the processes leading to research uptake' (Meagher, Lyall and Nutley 2008: 163). These indicators may help to overcome issues of attribution in impact assessment, as they, where output indicators cannot, indicate how knowledge is taken up in more conceptual ways. Such indicators can be taken from a literature review, with the use of a conceptual framework recommended as a means through which to elaborate on knowledge flows and network interaction (Meagher, Lyall and Nutley 2008: 166). For example, a process approach to local research impact assessment can rely on some of the concepts, dynamics and variables explored in previous sections on hybridity, everyday agency, and practitioner discretion to establish indicators for data collection and analysis. Despite these insightful developments, the networks and flows model remains an early method of impact assessment and should be considered a starting point for more contemporary models.

The 'logic' model was initially formulated by the Health Economics Research Group at Brunel University (Buxton and Hanney 1996; Hanney et al. 2003). The model has been successfully altered and adapted to measure the 'payback' of research in a variety of social science contexts, including contemporary analysis of welfare and international statebuilding research (Klautzer et al. 2011; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). Shown in Figure 6, Stage 0 refers to the identification of the research topic and need for research. Stages 1 and 2 then reflect the conduction of research, with research outputs at Stage 3. Stage 3 alludes to 'influence', with outputs associated with research communication, and contributing to existing stocks of

knowledge. The research processes of Stage 2, moreover, occur in conjunction with Stage 3 outputs, which, supported by the communication interface, influences policy outputs in Stages 4 and 5. In the context of this thesis, Stage 4 outputs may reflect the use of local research in international policy design, with Stage 5 outputs reflecting changes in international practitioner attitudes. Stage 4 and 5 are distinct in that Stage 4 concerns impact on policy-making agendas, while Stage 5 confirms impact as the adoption of research findings in the public realm. A final factor is the presence of 'feedback loops', which, recognises the types, levels and processes through which influence can occur. The contextual flexibility of the payback categorisations is proven in contexts of international intervention. Waldman, Barakat and Varisco (2014: 18) revised the payback model to investigate the influence of state-building research on British policy in Nepal, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. Despite this utility, the model is not entirely suitable for study of local research influence. A primary critique of the payback framework is that is does not explore processes of interaction in sufficient detail (Morton, 2015: 408). With this thesis considering post-conflict SSR as a hybrid process, further attention to local-international interaction is required.

Figure 6: The 'Logic' Model for Assessing Research 'Payback' (Hanney et al, 2004)

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The 'Social Impact Assessment Methods for research and funding instruments through the study of ''Productive Interactions'' between science and society', or SIAMPI approach, assesses research interaction with greater rigour (Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011: 212). It traces 'productive interactions', defined as 'exchanges between researchers and stakeholders in which knowledge is produced and valued that is both scientifically robust and socially relevant' (Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011: 212). The model correlates to the concepts of discretion and knowledge interaction explored in sections 2.4.4 and 2.4.6. The SIAMPI approach provides three innovative methodological developments: it is process oriented and values interaction; it values the supply and demand for knowledge; it is geared towards learning and improvement (Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011: 216). Molas-Gallert and Tang (2011) have traced productive interactions to identify the social impacts of an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) initiative, the 'Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society'. Several traits of contributory interaction are identified between policy-maker and researcher, including; the variety and decentralisation of interaction; adaptation to stakeholder demands; evolution of interaction between formal and informal forms; and fuzzy boundaries between stakeholders (Molas-Gallart and Tang 2011: 224). Research is therefore considered as a process, and not simply the paper on which information is written. Applied to the context of this thesis, tracing productive interactions between local actors and international policy makers can help to draw out the myriad of factors that support or obstruct the contribution of local research to international policy-making.

The 'Research Contribution Framework' (RCF), shown below in Figure 7, is an empirically grounded approach to help explain the ways research is taken up and used to influence policy through research interaction (Morton 2015: 411). The RCF emphasises the key drivers of research uptake and use, including research outputs and activities, engagement and involvement, followed by influence on policy-makers in terms of 'contribution', through their various reactions to research, and changes in awareness, knowledge and skills following engagement with researchers (Morton 2015: 411). It incorporates the interactive focus of other models explored in this section that consider the role of productive interactions, researcher agency, and policy-maker learning across various stages of the research process (Hanney et al. 2004; Meagher, Lyall and Nutley 2008; Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011). An assessment of research contribution considers the role and actions of the researcher, as well as the knowledge they produce, generate and hold. It requires a mapping of different interactive processes and policy-maker learning and how these lead to contribution (Morton 2015: 411).

Figure 7: Research Contribution Framework (Morton 2015)

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There is utility in framing influence in terms of 'contribution'. As Morton (2015: 407) notes, it is questionable to attribute change to research influence inside of an interactive policy-process where other variables are at play. Instead, 'contribution' acknowledges the role of contextual, structural and personal factors, and does not suggest that research is the sole cause of a policy decision (Morton 2015). The RCF also proposes the forward and backward tracking of research use in policy, seeking to gain an understanding of research contribution from the perspective of both researchers and research users (Morton 2015: 407). This is a useful approach for exploring research use in a hybrid context, as it attaches importance to evidence collected from both policy-makers and researchers. Critically, this model is 'adaptable for a wide range of contexts, types of impact assessment, and purposes', including an assessment of the contribution of local research to international SSR practitioners decision making (Morton 2015: 405). The RCF is carried forward as a critical element of the analytical framework elaborated in Section 3 of Chapter 2, and in support of the empirical investigation in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.4.8 Summary

This section correlated linear and systemic models of policy-making to the liberal state-building framework, and identified more interactive frameworks as a means to stress the messy and political hybridity of Kosovo's SSR. In doing so, the section adapted an analytical lens of hybridity to focus on the role of local research in international SSR. The analysis indicates that researchers have an important role to play in policy-making, and can challenge established knowledge of SSR and contribute to policy-making by informing decisions. Moreover, policy-makers operate with 'discretion' in their everyday activities. This autonomy may encourage or obstruct an engagement with local research. The role of research in policy-making is also complicated by the various ways in which policy-makers utilise research. Researchers, moreover, have significant agency throughout the policy-process, and through strategies of interaction and building policy-maker relationships they can push ideas onto policy-making agendas. The section then explored frameworks designed to assess the role of research in policy-making through a focus on the dynamics of researcher interaction and agency. Concluding with an analysis of the RCF (Morton 2015), this reiterates how local research shapes international SSR by contributing to international decision-making. In Section 3, a diagram presents a 'Local Research Contribution Framework' (LRCF), which integrates the range of concepts explored throughout Sections 1 and 2 and applies them to the case study of the thesis.

2.5 Section 3: A Framework of Local Research Contribution

This section selects and integrates concepts from the analysis in Sections 1 and 2 to establish an analytical framework of 'Local Research Contribution' in the context of Kosovo's SSR. The analytical framework, shown below in Figure 8, integrates hybridity as a lens of analysis with the RCF (Mac Ginty 2011; Morton 2015), the concept of epistemic community and policy-maker discretion. The analytical approach aims to identify the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR by exploring the complex, multifarious and political interactions between international SSR practitioners and local researchers.

Figure 8: The Local Research Contribution Framework Adapted from Mac Ginty (2011) and Morton (2015)
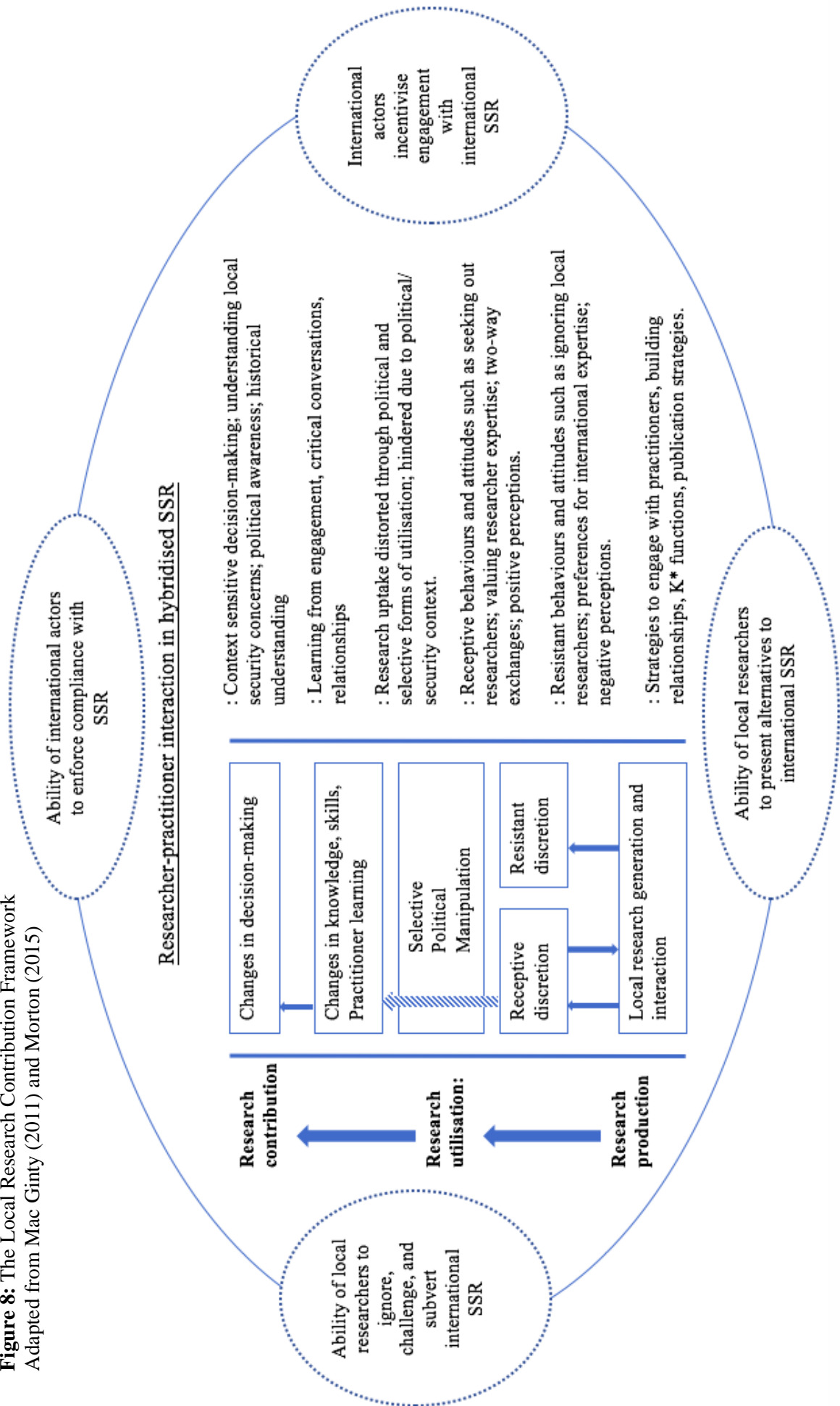
The LRCF situates the study within the central problem of the thesis: Kosovo's SSR has been heavily driven by international actors and knowledge rather than local expertise, with negative implications for the sustainability of reform. While local actors have been side-lined throughout an internationally-led SSR process, little analytical attention is dedicated to the research-based expertise of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR. The LRCF directs an empirical investigation into the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR, and supports the analysis conducted in Chapters 4 and 5. It adds an empirical case study to the critical peace- and state-building literature and expands on the existing understanding of hybridity following international intervention. It addresses a gap in the study of internationally-led SSR in Kosovo, encouraging a deep understanding of the challenges local research poses to international SSR and the positive benefits these challenges afford to international practitioners. Overall, it takes seriously the role of the security epistemic community in Kosovo and explores in-depth the relative contribution of local research to Kosovo's SSR.

The outer ring and 4 ovals of the framework are influenced by Mac Ginty's (2011) model which identifies four factors which conceptualise contexts of hybridity. These have been adapted following the analysis of concepts explored in Section 2 of this chapter, to focus on: the ability of international actors to enforce local researcher compliance with SSR frameworks; the ways in which international actors incentivise local researcher engagement with SSR; the ability of local researchers to present alternatives to international SSR; and the ability of local researchers to challenge international SSR. These four factors encourage an in-depth investigation of local-international, local-local, and international-international relationships, and the various forms of competition, cooperation and negotiation this interaction entails.

The centre of the framework attributes a deeper attention to the interaction that occurs between local researchers and international SSR practitioners. The three sections, left to right, detail the process through which local researchers contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners. At the start of this process, 'research production' refers to the generation of local research and the interaction of local researchers with international SSR practitioners. It highlights the importance of interaction strategies and the building of policy-maker relationships. Through this process local researchers have a better chance of encouraging the uptake of ideas. The blue arrows indicate the movement from research production towards research utilisation.

Two boxes, 'receptive discretion' and 'resistant discretion', refer to the extent to which international practitioners are likely to seek out and engage local researchers as valuable sources

of knowledge, or conversely, ignore them. While resistant discretion may listen to local researchers, the absence of a blue arrow leaving the resistant discretion box indicates that local research is not utilised by these practitioners. Alternatively, receptive practitioners are inclined to engage with local researchers in a two-way exchange, as indicated by the two blue arrows going back and forth. Nonetheless, the process of research utilisation is complex. A shaded arrow represents patterns of selective and political utilisation, through which the research may be used to suit particular policy-making aims or political agendas. The diagram also highlights instances where local research utilisation can lead to local research contribution. Two boxes indicate that local research can contribute to practitioners by leading to a change of skills and knowledge. In this sense, practitioners learn from their engagement with local researchers on topics of SSR to develop a greater understanding of the political and security context. Finally, and stemming from this learning, local research may contribute by leading to changes in outputs. The framework is supported by a series of analytical foundations drawn from the theories, models and concepts explored in Sections 1 and 2:

1: The epistemological assumptions of the liberal intervention framework are unable to generate a deep understanding of the unintended consequences of international intervention, and the ability of international and local actors to shape and distort the intentions of international frameworks.

2: Analysis stressing hybridity fulfils many of the analytical shortcomings of the liberal peace framework.

3: Considering international state-building processes in terms of hybridity, analysis is able to uncover the interactions between international and local actors, the everyday agency of international and local actors, and their ability to challenge, shape, and influence intervention.

4: Interaction between local researchers and international practitioners makes up an important element of this broader interactive process.

5: Local researchers contribute new knowledge to the policy-process and can push their ideas onto practitioner decision-making agendas through strategies of interaction and by building policy-maker relationships.

6: International practitioners exert discretion in the policy-making process, through which they may seek out the expertise of local researchers, resist and ignore local sources, and utilise local research in various ways.

Combined, this framework supports the formation of the methodology in Chapter 3, and directs the empirical analysis undertaken in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This thesis seeks to explain the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. Building on the LRCF of Chapter 2, Chapter 3 explains the methodological tools used to explore the research questions. It starts by restating the core research questions, before introducing the primary use of qualitative methods. While detailing interviewee sampling, participant selection, and the importance of semi-structured interviews, the use of a quantitative public perception survey is also justified. These methods are combined to develop a new, original methodology. The chapter describes the data analysis and interpretation process, focusing on the creation of a 'codebook' and the utility of analytical coding. The chapter also discusses some of the practical limitations and ethical issues facing this thesis.

3.2 Research Questions

Building on the analytical approach of Chapter 2, this thesis has devised core research questions that have helped to address the central problematic outlined in Chapter 1 and explain the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR.

The primary RQ addressed by this thesis is: *What role is played by the local security epistemic community in Kosovo's SSR?* To provide a structured focus for understanding the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR, this central question is supported by four secondary RQ's:

RQ 1: To what extent has a security and justice oriented epistemic community developed in Kosovo?

RQ 2: To what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?

RQ3: How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo?

RQ 4: What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?

3.3 Defining the Key Terms

The research questions rely on specific definitions of key terms that have been formulated following a review of the policy-making and SSR literature, as well policy-documents pertaining to Kosovo's SSR.

3.3.1 Local Researchers and Local Research

This thesis adopts a broad interpretation of local research. The empirical analysis explores in-depth the research process, considering local researcher expertise and their ability to engage in critical conversations with international SSR practitioners. Researchers develop knowledge, which can be descriptive, explanatory, normative or subjective, and refers to the process of how meaning is developed (Jones, H. et al. 2012: x). This includes 'research-based knowledge', or technical knowledge produced by academic and professional groups; 'practice informed knowledge', gained by individuals or organisations with experience on an issue; and 'citizen or participatory knowledge', that of a place, a culture, a people or their challenges (Jones, H. et al. 2013: 6-8). Local researchers therefore generate SSR oriented expertise, knowledge and skills throughout the research process.

In the present study, 'local' refers to Kosovar research organisations, their researchers, and the expertise they hold. It is defined in geographic, cultural and institutional terms to identify Kosovar researchers and the research they produce. In Kosovo, local security research is produced by local think tanks, investigative organisations and CSOs. Based on the survey conducted for the present study, local research organisations conducting research into SSR issues in Kosovo include: the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED); Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS); Kosovo Law Centre (KLC); Kosovo Stability Initiative (IKS); Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ); Institute for Advanced Studies (GAP); NGO Aktiv; Centre for Peace and Tolerance (CPT); Advocacy Centre for Democratic Culture (ACDC); Institute for Development Studies (INDEP); Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG); Security and Policy Research Centre (SPRC); and Balkan Policy Institute (IPOL). Investigative organisations monitor and report on the performance of SSR and include the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), Kosovo Law Institute (KLI) and Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS). Local research

organisations include local researchers, consisting of a range of advisors, consultants, journalists, and academics, who hold an in-depth knowledge of the security context. This includes individuals who have a loose affiliation to particular local research organisations, or those who operate on freelance or individual terms. These local researchers produce wide-ranging analysis of Kosovo's SSR and produce reports which are stored and disseminated online and in hard copy. As shown in Chapters 4 and 5, the production, analysis and recommendations of these local researchers challenges international SSR frameworks, prescribing alternatives attempting to adapt and localise international approaches (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016).

An important note must be made concerning local research funding. As international funding, through embassies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or European Union (EU) sources, is often the primary source of support for local think tanks in Kosovo, some reservation can be held over the extent to which local research can be considered as truly 'local' or indigenous. Previous studies have indicated that, generally, politics, values and ideology are factors that are reflected in the commissioning of research and in the application of research results (Stone 2002: 295; Weiss 1979; Young and Court 2004). Similarly, in Kosovo, local researchers and international practitioners explained that funding influences the research of local think tanks, which can also foster negative perceptions of local research among international practitioners (section 4.6.3).[3] This funding has come in the form of short-term (6-month) individual project grants, longer-term grants (1-3 years) which focus on capacity building and sustained support for a range of projects on a particular topic, and methodology training.

Nonetheless, this thesis continues to use the term 'local' as it makes an analytical distinction between Kosovar researchers and international SSR practitioners. While this thesis does recognise that international funding can influence the ways in which local research is conducted and how research papers are framed, the evidence analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 also indicates that donor funding does not determine the argument, standpoints and knowledge of local researchers, and how these are expressed during their various informal engagements with international practitioners. In Chapters 4 and 5, informal relationships, conversations and critical discussions between local researchers and international practitioners have been highlighted as a key form of researcher-practitioner interaction, rather than the extent to which international practitioners read the tangible research papers produced by local researchers. Furthermore, local researchers have rejected and avoided sources of funding that may reduce the critical voice of a local research

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[3] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.

organisation. This does not reflect a context of complete donor dominance and local researcher compliance but highlights the agency of local researchers.

3.3.2 International Practitioners and Policy-Making

'International practitioners' are the international staff of international organisations, including advisors, programme managers and policy officers, who are responsible for the design and implementation of internationally-led SSR. These international practitioners have worked for various organisations offering long-term support to Kosovo's security and judicial institutions. This has included: the UNMIK administration; EU; Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); EULEX; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Kosovo Force (NATO KFOR); International Civilian Office (ICO); international embassies; the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme (ICITAP); international advisors; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and various NGOs.

Broadly defined, policy is 'a set of related decisions that give rise to specific proposals for action or negotiated agreements' (Jones, H. et al. 2012: xi). There are a series of decisions involved, and while one decision may be of high importance, all decisions contribute to planning and implementation (Shaxson 2009: 2142). Thus, international SSR policy stems from a series of decisions and the involvement of a wide range of international and local actors. International practitioners working across SSR design and implementation possess 'discretion' in the policy-making process, and, consequently, may seek to engage with non-state actors, including researchers, beneath the mandates and official instruction of their organisation (Evans 2010; Lipsky 1980; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000).

3.3.3 Research Contribution

Exploring the role of local research in Kosovo's internationally-led SSR requires an investigation into a complex and contested researcher-practitioner relationship and an assessment of the contribution local research affords to international SSR. While research impact has been defined as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia' (Research Excellence Framework 2011: 26), assessing local research influence on international SSR requires a careful

understanding of 'research impact'. As shown in Section 2 of Chapter 2, this thesis understands research impact in terms of 'contribution', which explains the uptake of local research by international practitioners in terms of practitioner reactions, changes in awareness, knowledge and skills (Morton 2015: 411). This provides a concept that helps to explore the interaction between local researchers and international practitioners in a hybridised SSR policy-process. Furthermore, concepts of 'knowledge interaction' and 'discretion' help to explain the various ways local researchers and practitioners interact and build relationships, subsequently challenging international SSR and contributing to learning and decision-making (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000; Shaxson et al. 2012).

3.4 Primary Use of Qualitative Methods

This thesis has developed a new and original methodology which relies primarily on qualitative methods. The first stage of the research was to conduct a review of the existing critical peace-building literature, the literature on Kosovo's SSR, and the literature on research contribution. Theories and concepts across the principal fields of enquiry were integrated, leading to the innovative formation of the LRCF in Chapter 2. The LRCF has supported an exploration of the role of local research in Kosovo, and has been updated throughout the empirical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. The analytical framework has driven the use of insightful qualitative methods of data collection. This includes an extensive semi-structured interview schedule and the analysis of the testimonies of international SSR practitioners and local researchers. These inductive qualitative methods of data collection and interpretation have proved useful in exploring the complexity of Kosovo's SSR and the engagements between international practitioners and local researchers. The primarily qualitative nature of the thesis is also supported by a quantitative element. This includes the results of a survey that has collected public perception data in Kosovo and offers insights into citizen perceptions of the role of CSOs in SSR. Figure 9, below, presents a diagramatic overview of the methodological tools.

Figure 9: Methodological Components

Literature Review
- Formation of research questions
- Policy-mapping
- Stakeholder mapping
- Analytical framework development
- Building interview sample
- Generating interview questions

Primary Data Collection
- Semi structured interviews
- Forward tracking local researcher testimonies
- Backward tracking international practitioner testimonies
- Public perception survey
- Local research analysis

Triangulation

Data Coding and Analysis
- Transcription
- First Cycle open/ process coding
- Codebook production and maintenance
- Second Cycle/ Axial coding
- Ongoing coding process
- Empirical analysis

Analytical Reflection

3.5 Sampling Strategy

3.5.1 Building an Interview Survey

Post-conflict research is complicated by problems of access, sampling, generalisation, bias, and ethical complexity (Barakat et al. 2002: 992). A sampling strategy was considered an integral method through which to overcome the potential issue of limited access to interviewees (Brouneus 2011; Cohen and Arieli 2011). The first step in this process was a desk-based review, with the identification of interviewees an ongoing process carried out alongside the literature review. This included mapping and analysis of the policy documents, speeches, activities, workshops and publications of Kosovo's international SSR organisations. This process generated a deep understanding of the make-up of the international SSR architecture in Kosovo, and the various local think tanks and organisations who produce SSR oriented research. This brought to the attention of the researcher the profiles of international programme managers, project officers, and advisors, and local researchers, who might have shaped SSR in Kosovo. The mapping exercise was also supported by the authors ability to draw upon networks of contacts working in

Kosovo and from prior experience in Kosovo. These sources increased the size and relevance of the sample to cover the entire period of Kosovo's post-conflict SSR.

Despite the careful formulation of an interview sample, there was a continuing concern regarding the ability of the research to attract sufficient international practitioners and local researchers to offer testimonies to support in-depth analysis. A primary concern was the turnover of staff in international missions who have completed short to medium term placements in post-conflict Kosovo. A high rate of staff turnover has proved a notable concern facing international state-building missions throughout the early 2000's (Loquercio, Hammersley and Emmens 2006). Given the scale, multifaceted nature, and evolution of the international mission in Kosovo, the location, availability and memory of international and local actors could have impacted on the quality of data. Despite this, potential problems were countered through a second step of the sampling strategy:

Step 1: As outlined above, a desk-based mapping of policy, policy-makers and local actors for interview.

Step 2: Building on the mapping exercise with a 'Snowball Sampling Method' (SSM) (Cohen et al. 2011: 423).

Cohen and Arieli (2011: 427) note how the 'SSM' strategy has been used to target 'hard to reach' populations. This thesis can confirm three benefits offered by the SSM strategy:

1: Helping to locate interviewees by encouraging participants to consult their network and advise on further individuals to contact.

2: Encouraging access, with ties to a previous participant fostering trust, and encouraging involvement through participant referral (Cohen and Arieli 2011). International practitioners and local researchers interviewed following the initial desk-based mapping recommended further participants to expand the sample.

3: With international practitioners and local researchers recommending each other as sources for interview, the sample has also uncovered researcher-practitioner relationships and networks. The uncovering of these relationships has led to interview testimonies which shed deeper light on the contribution of local research to international SSR.

The final sample of interviewees covered the organisations that make up the international architecture, and the majority of local research organisations working on topics in security, justice and rule of law in Kosovo.

3.5.2 Participant Selection

In post-conflict research, Brouneus (2011: 134) recommends the formation of a sampling plan guided by the principle of 'credibility', understood as using sources who 'will maximise the reliability and validity of results'. Emulating Brouneus (2011), the thesis chose sample units because of 'particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes' (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam 2003: 78). Firstly, the research ensured 'that the key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter are covered' (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam 2003: 79). During the desk-based mapping of international SSR and Kosovo's local research organisations, two categories of actor were identified for interview: international SSR practitioners and local security researchers. Secondly, it was ensured that these populations were as diverse as possible to enable a deep exploration of the topic (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam 2003: 83). The sample grew to include SSR practitioners from across the international SSR architecture and covering the entire post-conflict period, while local researchers covered the various organisations that make up Kosovo's local security research community.

A purposive approach determined the criteria on which to select participants for interview (Broneus 2011: 134; Ritchie, Lewis and Elam 2003: 97). This prioritised and contacted individuals from the sample that were considered to have the most relevant knowledge and experience. Specific decisions about the criteria for selection were informed by the aim and objectives of the study, literature review and mapping exercises, and are detailed in Figures 10 and 11. The key rationale behind identifying and selecting interviewees was to:

1: Gain access to specific international SSR policy-makers and local researchers.

2: Obtain a sample to represent the duration and breadth of Kosovo's SSR.

3: Obtain a sample to represent the breadth of Kosovo's local security research community.

4: Target individuals with extensive experience and occupying positions of responsibility as those best placed to provide the most informed responses and relevant data.

Criteria for international practitioners

With an extensive sample of international practitioners, the study sought to conduct interviews with participants that would cover the scope and duration of internationally-led SSR in Kosovo. This included participants from UNMIK, EULEX, the EU, NATO, UNDP, OSCE, ICITAP, international embassies and international NGOs such as Saferworld, who have had a key role in Kosovo's SSR. Priority was given to participants with long-term policy-making experience in Kosovo within and across these organisations to generate testimonial evidence in support of the thesis. This includes international practitioners with 2-15 years of experience in Kosovo's SSR.

Figure 10: International Practitioner Criteria

Criteria	Importance
Practitioner experience	Practitioners with several years of experience in Kosovo's SSR were more likely to provide; detailed insights into the nature Kosovo's SSR; comprehensive experience of a particular SSR component; experience across different international organisations.
Organisational diversity	The sample sought to cover the range of organisations that have worked towards Kosovo's SSR. It was important to pick a sample of participants that covered the activities of UNMIK, EULEX, the OSCE and NATO to ensure sufficient diversity of experience.
Location	With fieldwork conducted in primarily the urban areas of Pristina and Mitrovica, and without resources to engage with organisations beyond these cities, the location of the interviewee was important to consider. International organisations and their staff are also primarily based in Kosovo's urban centres. Outside of Kosovo participants were interviewed via Skype, phone or email.
SSR relevance	This refers to the nature of the experience of the practitioner in Kosovo, and the extent to which they have worked on security issues.

Involvement in policy design and implementation	Priority was given to international practitioners involved in the design and implementation of SSR policy, projects, programmes and activities, rather than those who have a more political or technical role.
Policy-making responsibility	This refers to the recruitment of practitioners who have held responsibility in the policy-making process. This includes programme managers, policy officers and advisors who have authority in policy and decision-making, who have been in a position to exercise discretion that impacts on the nature of policy-making.

Criteria for local researchers

Local research organisations were identified during a desk-based mapping of Kosovo's local security research community. While organisations such as the KCSS and KIPRED have functioned as think tanks, FIQ and Aktiv are CSO and advocacy organisations who place significant emphasis on their research outputs. In addition, organisations such as the KLI, GLPS and BIRN produce more investigative and journalistic types of research. There are also organisations who have engaged sporadically with SSR research, such as IPOL and GAP, where the greater corpus of research outputs has been dedicated to other areas of public sector reform. The aim was to recruit local researchers from across the range of Kosovo's local research organisations. At the same time, emphasis was placed on local researchers who have had a long-term engagement with international SSR, hold a publication record and have a history of SSR advocacy. As such, experienced executive directors and senior researchers were considered as most capable of providing informed testimonies that would contribute to an understanding of the role of local researchers in Kosovo's SSR:

Figure 11: Local Researcher Criteria

Criteria	Importance
Researcher experience	Local researchers with long term experience in Kosovo, such as executive directors and senior researchers, are more likely to provide long-term opinion on the nature of internationally-led SSR and reflections of interaction, engagement and relationships with international SSR practitioners.

Organisational diversity	The sample sought to cover the range of Kosovo's local security research organisations. Selection worked to include the diversity of experience across interviewees.
Location	Local SSR research organisations and their local researchers are primarily based in Pristina and Mitrovica. Outside of Kosovo participants could only be interviewed via Skype, phone or email.
Community links	It was important to include the testimonies of local researchers who operate in Kosovo's predominantly Albanian (Pristina) communities and predominantly Serbian communities (Gracanica, North Mitrovica). While mapping has identified more local research organisations working towards SSR in Pristina, the study also identified Serbian organisations to ensure the incorporation of different opinions on Kosovo's SSR and motivations for engaging with SSR.
SSR expertise	Priority was given to local researchers with significant SSR expertise. For example, those who hold a publication record, have a senior position, and have engaged in public discussion about Kosovo's SSR. Nonetheless, mapping identified the broad range of organisations involved in Kosovo's SSR, some of whom have only engaged with SSR sporadically, or who were new to the study of SSR. Interviews were also sought with less experienced local research organisations to provide a more detailed understanding of Kosovo's local research community.
Publication record	Selection evaluated the publication record and advocacy work of the local researcher. It was considered that individuals with a strong publication record will have developed SSR expertise, have engaged in significant outreach and advocacy activities, and subsequently be able to shed light on engagements with international SSR.

Additional interviewees

An additional benefit of the snowball sampling approach taken during data collection was the identification of individuals who did not fit the categories of international practitioner and local researcher, but who could provide an informed testimony in support of the study. In addition to its corpus of interviews with international SSR practitioners and local researchers, this thesis conducted interviews with two senior Kosovo Government officials, an activist with a wide

variety of local and international NGO experience, and a local university academic. These interviews provided further insights into the deeply complex and political nature of Kosovo's SSR and research sector.

3.5.3 Interview Sample Size

This research completed 45 interviews. Indicative guidelines for the optimum number of interviews have been given in existing qualitative studies. Mason (2010: 1) analysed a sample of 560 Ph.D. theses which use qualitative interviews, identifying 31 interviews as a mean number. In addition, Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003: 84) state that 'as a very general rule of thumb, qualitative samples for a single study involving individual interviews only often lie under 50', whereas, 'if they become much larger than 50 they start to become difficult to manage in terms of the quality of data collection and analysis that can be achieved'. In the context of peace research, Brouneus (2011: 133) suggests that an in-depth interview study will include somewhere between 10 and 40 interviewees. Nonetheless, sample size becomes irrelevant as the quality of interview and data is the real value (Mason 2010: 14).

Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006, 61) note the utility of establishing 'a general yardstick' in terms of the number of quality interviews that may ensure detailed investigation. The researcher estimated the number of interviews with international SSR practitioners and local researchers required to provide a sample representative of Kosovo's internationally-led SSR and local research organisations. During the desk-based mapping exercise a number of 30-40 quality interviews was considered a flexible target, including a strong corpus of Kosovo's local researchers and a broad sample of international SSR practitioners. Several factors combined to determine the completion of 45 interviews and explain why 45 interviews proved sufficient. As the following sections show, the aim was to construct and recruit a sample of interviewees that would bring the study close to saturation in the available timeframe and with the available resources. Given the quality of interviews held with experienced interviewees in the design of Kosovo's SSR and in local research organisations, the data collected provided a deep understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR.

Working Towards Saturation

Participation selection and sample size were driven by the principle of saturation. As all studies are different, there is no-one-size-fits-all method for reaching saturation (Fusch and Ness 2015: 1409). Saturation is widely considered as the point when data collection no longer adds new insights to an established set of findings (Bowen 2008; Guest, Bunce and Johnson 2006; Strauss and Corbin 1998). Nonetheless, Bowen (2008: 137) indicates that saturation has often been mentioned in qualitative research without explanation, while Green and Thorogood (2018: 78-79) describe saturation as 'potentially limitless'. It refers to the point where all categories are fully accounted for, the variation in them explained, and all relationships between them established, tested and validated in a range of settings, and given this level of detail, is contentious to determine (Green and Thorogood 2018: 79). Considering these difficulties, the point of saturation can be considered 'a rather difficult point to identify and of course a rather elastic notion' (Mason 2010: 16), and 'without explicit guidelines' (Bowen 2008: 138). In qualitative research that explores individual experiences it is likely that new data 'will always add something new' (Mason 2010: 16). This problematic was considered in the context of this thesis. Investigating individual practitioner and researcher experiences, it was anticipated that new interviews would always contribute new data. When planning and preparing an interview sample therefore, this thesis used saturation as a 'guiding principle' and a target to work towards (Mason 2010: 1). Working towards saturation has supported the design of an effective sample and the collection of detailed evidence.

The estimated target of 30-40 interviews was considered a sample size that could reach saturation (Fusch and Ness 2015: 1409). The sample sought to conduct interviews to cover the breadth of international SSR throughout the post-conflict period. This aim was achieved by interviewing experienced and relevant international SSR practitioners, including legal advisors and officers of the UNMIK DoJ; EULEX programme managers and policy officers; UNMIK, NATO and OSCE advisors; officers of international embassies; and international NGO personnel. Furthermore, the sample sought to conduct interviews with a diverse range of local researchers and organisations in Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian communities. This was achieved by interviewing experienced and informed local researchers from Kosovo's key local research organisations, including the KCSS, KIPRED, AKTIV, KLI, GLPS, BIRN and FIQ. Thus, the final number of 45 interviews is significant, and has worked towards saturation and a representative sample by including testimonies that cover Kosovo's entire period of internationally-led SSR and a strong corpus of local research organisations.

Quality over Quantity

An important trade off was considered between interview quality and quantity (Mason 2010: 14). 45 interviews, each of which were 45-90 minutes in length, and supplemented by an analysis of local research papers and the secondary literature, provided sufficient breadth to explore the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR in depth. In addition to using saturation as a guiding principle, the concept of saturation guided the analysis of data and coding transcripts. As noted by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006: 65), this refers to 'the point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook'. In their study involving 60 interviews, Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006: 66) reached 'the full range of thematic discovery', that is a completed codebook, within an analysis of 12 interviews. In the analysis of remaining interview transcripts new codes were added sporadically, with most changes to the codebook coming through the refinement of code, category and theme descriptions. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006: 67) produced 114 codes, including: 80 new codes in interviews 1-6; 20 new codes in interviews 7-12; 5 new codes in interviews 13-18; 2 new codes in interview 19-24; 2 new codes in interviews 25-30; and 5 new codes in interviews 31-60. The latter codes were 'not new in substance but rather variations of the original codes', tailored to specific interviewees (Guest, Bunce and Johnson 2006: 66), while code definitions had largely stabilised by interview 12 (Guest, Bunch and Johnson 2006: 74).

Coding for this thesis reached a point where analysis brought limited changes to the codebook and contributed to the decision to stop collecting new data. The majority of codes, categories and themes were strongly established after 24 interviews (including a similar proportion of local researchers and international practitioners), while new codes stopped emerging and code definitions stabilised after 30 interviews. As Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003: 83) note: 'if the data are properly analysed, there will come a point where very little new evidence is obtained from each additional fieldwork unit', representing 'a point of diminishing return'. Additional interviews, however, remained crucial to the study as they added to the body of empirical examples to support an understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. While interviews beyond 30 did not bring new codes, categories and themes, new interviews did bring subtle changes to code definitions to strengthen established themes. The final codebook includes 6 analytical themes, including 19 categories containing 116 codes. As saturation has 'no boundaries', with 'an infinite number of ways' to interpret qualitative data sets (Guest, Bunce and Johnson 2006: 77), it is likely that interviews with further international practitioners and local researchers would have provided some new evidence. Nonetheless, this research is confident that

it has conducted sufficient and relevant interviews to provide a solid understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. The final themes are considered as firmly established following the exhaustive formation, refinement and categorisation of codes and deep analysis of 45 interview transcripts.

Limited Time and Resources

Finite resources, coupled with a growing sense of data saturation, were an additional factor that limited primary research to 45 interviews. Arranging, conducting and analysing interviews is a long process (Mason 2010: 1; Ritchie, Lewis and Elam 2003: 84), where 'a large number of data transcripts require a great deal of time for coding and analysis' (Bowen 2008: 149). This research made maximum and efficient use of its resources and budget to conduct fieldwork across Kosovo, using the time available to complete, transcribe, code and analyse 45 interviews. An awareness of time and financial constraints were kept in mind throughout research design and sampling, where the selection of experienced practitioners and researchers for interview delivered rich testimonies to provide valuable data. Likewise, the decision to conduct a first round of interviews over Skype and snowball the sample prior to fieldwork in Kosovo provided a useful planning tool to organise interviews in Kosovo and maximise the time available.

3.6 Primary Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews and Observation

Semi-structured interviews have provided the main instrument of data collection. Defined as 'an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 3), semi-structured interviews have allowed for a dynamic interaction with international practitioners and local researchers. The method is especially useful in post-conflict research, providing a 'unique method for studying the micro-processes of armed conflict and peace', and depth, detail and individual perspectives on complex events (Brouneus 2011: 130). Semi-structured interviews have proved an effective method to capture in-depth the challenges and contribution of local research to international SSR. Semi-stuctured interviews have made use of open-ended questions to delve deeply into the topic (Harrell and Bradley 2009: 27). Participants were free to respond to

interview questions by focusing on aspects of their experience, opinion and reflection that they deemed most important.

Semi-structured interviews are advantageous compared to structured interviews as they leave space for follow up on important themes with targeted and specific questions (Harvey 2011: 434). The fluid nature of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to base interview questions around the research questions, and adapt question templates to the specific profile, expertise and experience of the interviewee. This has ensured that the data collected provided testimonies relevant to the primary research question and focus of the thesis. The data from interview testimonies has been linked to secondary sources, including an analysis of local research papers and the theoretical literature, in order to present an accurate picture of the engagement between local researchers and international practitioners in Kosovo. Furthermore, observation and understanding through more general conversations has informed the research project (Mazurana, Andrews Gale and Jacobsen 2013: 12-13). Through presence on the ground, socialising, travel and exploring, the thesis is informed by a wider reflection on the reality of post-conflict recovery in Kosovo.

3.6.2 Forward and Backward Tracking Local Research Contribution

The study followed both backward and forward tracking approaches to form an effective means through which to collect testimonies on the engagement between local research with international policy-making and the contribution that local research makes to practitioner awareness, knowledge and decision-making (Morton 2015: 411). Forward tracking considers how local researchers impact on policy and practice settings (Morton 2015: 407). In interviews with local researchers, tracking forward has collected detailed testimonies of local researcher engagement with international practitioners, detailed insights into the research process and reflections on research challenges and contribution. Alternatively, in backward tracking, policy-making behaviour can be examined and tracked back to the research (Morton 2015: 407). In interviews with international practitioners, backward tracking started at the policy-decision, before asking the extent to which local researchers have contributed to their policy-agenda. Backward tracking the role of research in policy has been tested in international development research. For example, the ODI RAPID team recommends 'episode studies' as an excellent way of investigating research influence, where tracking back from a policy-decision assesses what factors, including research, have influenced a decision (Start and Hovland 2004: 12). Backward tracking has the additional

benefit of being able to explore the function of local research in Kosovo's SSR throughout the majority of Kosovo's post-conflict period. Clark and Simmonds (2010: 5), for example, indicate that backward tracking can yield valuable insights into policy-making up to 15 years back. In this research, backward tracking has also encouraged international practitioners to reflect on the various personal and contextual factors that impact on their engagement with local research.

3.6.3 Conducting Interviews

Interview guides, which revolve around the research sub-questions outlined in section 3.2 of this chapter, were adjusted to match the specific profile of each interviewee. Interview template design was influenced by the analytical framework and research questions, with the aim of collecting information that could fill a gap in the study of Kosovo's SSR (Brouneus 2011: 139). The flexible question templates for semi-structured interviews with local researchers and international practitioners are presented in Appendix 1. Each interview lasted for 45-90 minutes. The length of interview and discussion was largely dependent on the length and depth of practitioner and researcher experience in Kosovo's SSR. The researcher emphasised the fresh and original nature of the research topic when contacting potential interviewees. This served to challenge interviewee fatigue and lack of interest (Harvey 2011), where participants may have engaged with previous research into Kosovo's SSR. Throughout, interviewees commented on their interest in the research subject, which many considered an original study which influenced their decision to participate. For example, a former UNMIK Official commented:

> 'I think what has interested me about your research is that you have been asking questions that nobody has ever asked me before'.[4]

Likewise, participants indicated that taking a reflective and critical look at the policy-making process was an important part of understanding the messy realities of Kosovo's SSR and a means to challenge international frameworks.[5] The empirical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 confirms that the interviews yielded significant data to explain the complex role of local research in the construction of Kosovo's SSR.

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[4] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[5] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

Initial semi-structured interviews were conducted over Skype from June-August 2017. Interviews over Skype had the additional benefit of capturing the insights of international practitioners who, despite having had a career in the SSR of Kosovo, have since left Kosovo to work in new roles and contexts. The SSM strategy was applied throughout these interviews in order to identify further international practitioners and local researchers working towards SSR in Kosovo prior to the fieldwork in Kosovo. This strategy also allowed for further in field interviews to emerge in Kosovo, with fieldwork conducted in August and September of 2017. The majority of in-field interviews conducted in Kosovo took place in the capital of Pristina and the Northern city of Mitrovica. The reason for staying in the capital city of Pristina and for visiting Mitrovica is twofold: firstly, the country and head offices of the key international organisations are located in the capital Pristina, with Northern offices located in Mitrovica. Secondly, local think tanks, investigative organisations and CSOs who produce research are primarily located in urban areas.

Figure 12: Small Map of Kosovo (University of Texas Library 2016)

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Interviewees were initially contacted by email, where an attached participation and consent form briefed participants on the intentions of the research, the researcher's profile, while explaining the interviewees importance to the study (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3). A sample of questions was provided for further information, allowing the participant to collect their thoughts prior to

interview. This process reduced the chance that unexpected subjects were raised. In the organisation of interviews, all efforts were made to ensure that the timing of an interview was convenient for the interviewee. In addition, it was anticipated that interviews with decision-makers closely linked to the rule of law may be less inclined to share sensitive or detailed policy-making narratives. To alleviate any concerns, it was made clear that the purpose of the research was to strengthen an understanding of the post-conflict policy-making process. While questions were semi structured, interviews were structured in a particular way, and loosely around four stages identified by Brouneus (2011: 139-141):

1: an introduction: the research aims were re-elaborated. Consent was sought, as was permission to record the interviews and take notes. Anonymity was offered to all interviewees, as was the opportunity to withdraw from the interview at any time.

2: initial questions: asking simple questions to discuss the participant background and set the tone for more detailed questions

3: mid-interview: the use of more demanding questions that get to the heart of the subject matter and which are tailored to the profile of the interviewee. The researcher listened reflectively to participant answers, before asking follow-up questions.

4: closing the interview: using final questions to round off the interview, revisiting key themes discussed, considering gaps to fill and snowballing the sample.

3.6.4 Public Perception Survey

Public perception data supports an understanding of Kosovo's security and judicial epistemic community established in Chapters 4 and 5. This survey data was collected by KCSS researchers October 2017 as part of data collection for the annual publication: the *Kosovo Security Barometer* (KSB) (KCSS 2018a). The author has received written permission from the executive director and research leadership of the KCSS and KSB team to incorporate three questions into the data collection process. The data collected by the questions inserted by the author has only been used in this thesis.

The national sample from which survey data was drawn includes 1125 households, following a representative sample of the adult population in Kosovo. The ethnic composition of the respondents was 90% Kosovo-Albanian; 7% Kosovo-Serbian; 3% other, including Turks, Bosnians, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Gorani, Croats and Montenegrins. Geographically, the sample was based on telephone code areas including the regions of Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Mitrovica South, Mitrovica North, Peja, Pristina and Prizen. Sampling was also based on the Kosovo Census Report of 2012, with random sampling ensuring that there was an equal probability of citizens in Kosovo being chosen for interview, though, the given margin for error is 3% (KCSS 2018a). The data has been managed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The questions included were as follows:

1: To what extent do you trust civil society?

2: Do you think that civil society organisations contribute to the security needs of Kosovo and its citizens?

3: Do you think civil society organisations should have more of a role in Kosovo's security policy and security related issues?

The data generated from these questions has supported an investigation into the sub-questions of thesis. In particular, the data supports an understanding of the development of a local epistemic community in Kosovo. The data generated also offers insights into the extent to which local research organisations working towards SSR have the support of the constituencies they represent, and the extent to which local researchers are seen as legitimate and credible. This data also reflects some of the issues raised across the semi-structured interviews conducted for this thesis, concerning levels of trust in local research and the performance of CSOs as a credible SSR actor.

3.6.5 Triangulation

When conducting post-conflict research, it is important to amalgamate the strengths of different methodological approaches in a 'composite' research design (Barakat et al. 2002). Triangulation

refers to 'the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of a social phenomenon', which ensures that findings are cross-checked (Bryman 2008: 700). The study has followed three complementary strategies:

1: Combining qualitative methods, including literature and theoretical analysis, semi-structured interviews, and an analysis of local research papers.

2: Using quantitative survey data to support qualitative data.

3: Both forward and backward tracking the contribution of local research to international SSR.

In the analysis of a complex SSR policy-process it was integral to assess local research contribution to international SSR from the perspectives of local researchers and international practitioners, whilst also considering researcher-practitioner interaction and relationships. This reflects a 'mixed methods' approach to research, relying on the combination of different forms of qualitative methods, and the support of qualitative methods with a quantitative element (Bryman 2008: 695). By combining the strategies listed above the research was able to conduct a valid empirical analysis in support of the research questions.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.7.1 Creating a ''Codebook''

The key component of the innovative methodological framework for analysis in this research is the establishment and application of an analytical "Codebook". Codes collect data across transcripts that pertain to a particular category within a theme. The codebook has been created through a series of cycles and a theory and data driven process, guided by the Research Questions. As Bryman notes, 'in research, we often start out with some key concepts that help us to orient our subject matter but, as a result of collecting and interpreting data, we possibly revise those concepts, or new ones emerge throughout reflections' (2016: 7). As indicated in section 3.5.3, coding continued until new information stopped emerging, including new processes, interactions, attitudes, values and beliefs (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 136). During this process, the codebook continually evolved as it was applied across interview transcripts. The initial codebook built on

concepts identified in the hybridity and research contribution literature. Codes were updated during an analysis of interview transcripts, with interview data stored within a relevant code (see Appendix 4 for a final summary list of codes, categories and themes). Driven by the research questions, the reapplication of the analytical constructs in the codebook across interview transcripts led to the analysis of data that builds on a gap identified in the existing literature. As such, coding has supported the development of original findings.

Coding is 'an exploratory problem-solving technique without specific formulas or algorithms to follow' (Saldana 2016: 9). This flexible understanding of coding has been useful in the exploration of a complex, power-driven, and nuanced policy-making process affected by a number of variables and international and local actors. With 45 interviews completed, coding has supported the analysis of extensive data by providing a data management technique: 'maintaining this list provides the analytic opportunity to organise and reorganise the codes into major categories and subcategories' (Saldana 2016: 27). The codebook has established one theme which helps to organise data according to their attributes, and six analytical themes. Each theme includes sub-categories containing a series of codes, offering analytical attention to the different research questions of the thesis. For example, the codebook helps to deconstruct the different avenues through which local researchers challenge international approaches to SSR.

3.7.2 Data Coding and Analysis

Interviews were transcribed following recording by the researcher. This formed an interview document, which was broken down and coded into its different concepts using the qualitative analysis software NVIVO. This helped to efficiently manage and reconfigure data to enable analytical reflection (Saldana 2016: 30). The first cycle of coding took an 'open coding' approach. The intention was to reflect deeply on the contents of the data and to begin to take ownership of them (Saldana 2016: 115). This first cycle and early construction of codes was initially influenced by concepts pertaining to the research questions and across the literature on hybridity and research contribution. As coding cycles progressed, increasing attention was placed on testimonial interview data. Coding considered processes central to the research topic, such as the actions of local researchers and international practitioners (Saldana 2016: 111). This was complemented by a coding of values, which identified the attitudes, values and beliefs of international practitioners and local researchers (Saldana 2016: 131). Overall, these first cycles of open coding broke data down to provide categorisations and initial deconstruction of researcher-practitioner engagement.

The refinement of constructs and development of deeper analytical coding cycles has been driven by an analytical memo writing process, providing a 'question-raising, puzzle piecing, connection making, strategy building, problem solving, answer generating, rising above the data heuristic' (Saldana, 2016: 44). Through second cycle 'axial coding', the codes and categories generated during first cycles of open coding have been subject to analysis (Saldana 2016: 244). This process has reassembled codes and categories, identified interrelations, and moved towards increasingly conceptual constructs linked to the research questions. A final step in the analytical process was to reapply the codes to interview transcripts. With data organised into analytical constructs, the coding exercise allowed for a deeper analysis and reflection on coded evidence across transcripts and provided critical support to the writing up of the thesis in line with the analytical approach.

3.8 Practical Constraints Facing the Methodology

The methodological approach has addressed a number of practical challenges and limited their impact on data collection. Firstly, the sensitivity of SSR, as a topic for research and as a policy-process, creates a complex context for local research contribution (section 4.6.4). In this context international SSR practitioners often do not consider local research as important, or as a source that can support SSR. As indicated by an UNMIK practitioner (section 4.4), 'there's nothing that any research can tell me that I don't already know'.[6] Secondly, while many international practitioners indicated that they are open to engaging with local research and actively seek out local researchers, this is likely an exception to the norm (section 5.2). As a EULEX practitioner explained:

> 'I don't always talk to researchers with the approval of my mission, partly because it can be too long winded, and personally I think unnecessary'.[7]

Many international practitioners working towards SSR consider local researchers as lacking credibility, as overly partisan, or as a security risk (section 4.5). Some practitioners, as explained by a former ISSR practitioner and UNMIK advisor, also operate with a mindset whereby they do not consider interaction with civil society, even in an informal sense, as part of their role.[8] Thirdly, Kosovo's research organisations are not immune to the dynamics of conflict and politics

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[6] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[7] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[8] Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.

(section 5.4). As put by a local academic, the local research community in Kosovo is by no means a 'uniform actor'.9 Think tanks have various political affiliations, sources of funding and community representation, each providing factors that serve the politicisation of research and generate different understandings of security and safety. Nonetheless, while these factors have complicated the empirical analysis, they have also enriched the study.

A fourth challenge concerns the assessment of local research influence. As indicated in Chapters 1 and 2, this includes framing research influence in terms of its contribution rather than attribution (Morton 2015: 407). Contribution focuses on the key drivers of research uptake and use, the interaction that occurs between researchers and policy, research activities and engagement, and the impact of these factors on practitioners through raising awareness, improving skills or changing decision-making. Furthermore, the author was familiar with the problems associated with post-conflict research in Kosovo. The author's prior research experience in Kosovo, undertaken during an MA with the University of York Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), supported preparation and provided background knowledge of Kosovo's epistemic community. An existing network of contacts supported the development of a sampling strategy, an awareness of political sensitivity and what to expect, and how to anticipate and act upon events such as protests or small-scale violence.

The researcher was required to build trust with participants who hold sensitive SSR experience. The researcher was clear about the goals of the research from initial contact and throughout the interview. While at least half of the interviewees did not see it necessary to sign the consent form, steps were taken to receive verbal and email consent. Additionally, interviewees were asked if they were willing to be recorded, quoted, and referenced. The majority of international interviewees also requested that their names remain anonymous. Following requests for anonymity, a codename, such as 'UNDP Practitioner', was agreed. While local researchers made no requests for anonymity, the author has decided to not include the names of interviewees, who have also been codenamed. In addition, there were two occasions where interviewees indicated that they did not want to be recorded. Here the researcher took detailed notes with the permission of the interviewee.

While the sampling strategy ensured a sufficient sample of interviewees, the author was aware of occasional gaps in interviewee recollection. In addition, there were occasions where interviews with international decision-makers working in SSR were cancelled. International practitioners

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9 Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.

often did not respond to requests for interview as they considered the topic to be too sensitive. For example, a senior international official indicated that their organisation did not permit them to participate in research interviews.[10] Another senior international official indicated that they did not feel comfortable discussing the intricacies of security sector policy-making, including a discussion of their informal network of contacts on the ground.[11] There were also occasions where an agreement for an interview was delayed and required rescheduling. Overall, however, given the effectiveness of the sampling strategy, the author was able to organise interviews with alternative international contacts. The research has also dealt with issues of bias throughout interview testimonies. While international actors may also hold a bias in favour of international knowledge, ahead of local forms of knowledge, local researchers sometimes exaggerated the impact of their research and the effectiveness of advocacy strategies. These issues have been overcome by triangulating interview testimonies.

There was one occasion where a local interviewee utilised a translator as they lacked confidence in their English speaking ability. In this situation the researcher remained aware of a number of issues when collecting and analysing translated interview data (Welch 2015: 21). In practical terms, the process of interpretation or translation may not accurately portray the message given by the interviewee. It was important to remain aware that interpreters may also guide the researcher in a particular direction (Gordon 2015: 58). Despite this, the translator was a trusted and experienced colleague of the interviewee. There were also two instances where arranged interviews were cancelled without the possibility of rescheduling. As a solution, these cancellations were followed up by an email interview. While email exchanges are not as extensive as semi-structured interviews, this solution was able to focus on specific topics for discussion.

3.9 Ethical Concerns

To account for ethical issues the research is informed by the post-conflict research experience of the author, and the literature on post-conflict research design (Barakat et al. 2002). The author took every step necessary to remain sensitive to the security, safety and wellbeing of its interviewees, upholding principles of 'do no harm' (Welch 2015: 14). While all interviewees have given consent for the publication of evidence from interview testimonies, ethical concerns over the use and presentation of this data were taken seriously.

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[10] Communication with a senior international official, 07/2017.
[11] Communication with a senior international official, 07/2017.

All of the participants in this study were either experienced international SSR practitioners or local researchers, journalists or civil society activists with extensive experience in the design, production and advocacy of local research. As such, this study did not deal with vulnerable populations. Nonetheless, the researcher maintained an understanding of the conflict context to avoid contributing harm to any participant. In addition, this research has collected testimonies which do touch on sensitive subjects. This includes international practitioners who have willingly opposed organisational instruction or have openly criticised colleagues. It also includes local researchers who have offered conflicting political opinions in favour of a particular community, or regarding the conflict. To protect the professional and personal reputation of interviewees all names have been anonymised throughout the thesis. Extra care has been taken when using direct quotations, with only evidence linked to the research topic referenced throughout.

The research project has been approved by the Coventry University Ethics Committee, and has upheld Coventry University ethics regulations. A participation information document and consent form were provided to participants prior to interview, with written or verbal consent gained for each interview. These forms offer anonymity, and allow the participant to withdraw from the research via email at any given time. A series of measures were also taken to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of data. A coding system was developed for the names of participants, with transcripts typed up to secure locations. This ensured respect for the confidentiality of participant testimonies. In addition, various personal, reputational and security risks associated with conducting research in Kosovo were also minimised. A comprehensive security analysis including; conflict history, political trends, economic and infrastructural awareness, crime profiles, the nature of violence, and contemporary hostilities, was completed (Gordon 2015: 50). Additional country risk information and the advice of contacts was also sought throughout the fieldwork. A risk assessment was approved by Coventry University prior to the fieldwork, where the researcher was covered by University travel insurance policy.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological tools that have been used to investigate and answer the thesis research questions. The chapter detailed the principal use of qualitative methods and the reliance on data generated through semi-structured interviews, supported by quantitative public perception survey data. The sampling strategy has been justified and explained, providing

a detailed explanation of the interview approach. This included insights into the selection of participants, sample size, while outlining saturation as a principle that has determined the collection and analysis of relevant and sufficient data. The interview process and fieldwork undertaken in Kosovo were explained, while the chapter also highlighted the importance of adhering to the principles of triangulation. Coding and the establishment of an analytical codebook has been outlined and considered as a core component of the innovative analytical methodological approach that has supported the collection of original data and production of original findings. Finally, the chapter made detailed reference to the practical challenges facing the research project and measures taken to overcome these, and the ethical dilemmas encountered in a sensitive post-conflict environment. Overall, the chapter has presented a methodological approach that has succeeded in assisting the empirical analysis conducted in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4: The Role of Local Research in Kosovo's SSR[12]

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 4 and 5 follow on from and apply the analytical approach of the LRCF outlined in Chapter 2. This Chapter explores the complex relationship between Kosovo's local researchers and international policy-makers working on the frontline of SSR design and implementation. It starts by providing an overview of the policy contributions of key international SSR actors, before profiling the various local research organisations working on security, justice and rule of law issues. Using evidence from interviews, local research papers and the secondary literature, the analysis shows that international structures, cultures, and perceptions create various barriers that undermine the engagement between local research and SSR, and subsequently the challenges and contribution that local research offers. Furthermore, the chapter explains how local research organisations have emerged and evolved in a complex post-conflict context, negotiating their development through a range of constraints that this complex environment has presented. As Chapter 4 progresses, the LRCF presented in Chapter 2 is updated and contextualised in the case of Kosovo, and in Figure 28 provides a depiction of the empirical evidence explored in this Chapter.

4.2 International SSR and Local Research

4.2.1 International Involvement in Kosovo's SSR

On March 24th, 1999, NATO launched air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Stemming from years of contestation over the territory, fighting had broken out between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Yugoslav military, para military and police forces. This conflict resulted in the death of civilians, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and major human rights violations (Bekaj 2010: 21-23; Independent International Commission on Kosovo 2000). Searching for a peaceful solution, the international community brought together representatives from both sides of the conflict to a negotiation held in Rambouillet, France, in 1999. Nonetheless,

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[12] Some of the findings, data and analysis in this chapter have been used in Phillipps, J. (2018) 'The Role of Epistemic Communities: Local Think Tanks, International Practitioners and Security Sector Reform in Kosovo'. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 18, no. 2: 281-299.

while this agreement was signed by Kosovar-Albanian representatives, Serbian representatives did not agree (Bekaj 2010: 25).

With violence ongoing, the international community opted for military power after diplomatic failure. Such action has stimulated analysis and debate over the legality and humanitarian nature of the use of force in the context of extreme violence (Hehir 2009, 2018; International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001; Roberts 1999). As the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK) concluded:

> 'The NATO military intervention was illegal but legitimate. It was illegal because it did not receive prior approval from the United Nations Security Council. However, the Commission considers that the intervention was justified because all diplomatic avenues had been exhausted and because the intervention had the effect of liberating the majority population of Kosovo' (IICK 2000: 4)

In response to military force, the surrender of Yugoslav forces led to the signing of the Kumanovo Agreement, which signalled the withdrawal of Yugoslav military bodies from Kosovo:

> 'FRY Forces will clear all lines of communication by removing all mines, demolitions, booby traps, obstacles and charges. They will also mark all sides of all minefields. International security forces entry and deployment into Kosovo will be synchronised' (NATO 1999).

Figure 13 shows the planned withdrawal route of FRY forces from Kosovo, according to 'Entry into Force Day' (EIF), defined as the day the agreement was signed:

Figure 13: FRY Phased Withdrawal (NATO 1999)

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International intervention in Kosovo was maintained through United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (UNSC 1999a). UNSC Resolution 1244 provided a framework for establishing the UNMIK administration, with support from an international military presence in the form of NATO KFOR (UNSC 1999a). International actors had the mountainous task of maintaining security and installing rule of law. As Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) in June 1999 indicated:

> Kosovo 'is probably the greatest challenge the UN has faced since the launching in the late 1940s of the concept of peacekeeping. This is truly a big challenge. Never elsewhere, even in Cambodia where I have worked, has the UN assumed such a broad, such far-reaching, such important executive tasks' (UNMIK Situation Report 1999).

In support of its extensive tasks, UNSC 1244 guaranteed the executive authority of the international administration. With authority over SSR held by the SRSG, security and justice institutions in Kosovo would be constructed and reformed through international decision-making. The SRSG held the primary policy-making power, deciding on: 'the deployment in Kosovo, under UN auspices, of international civil and security presences, with appropriate equipment and personnel as required' (UNSC 1999a). Within the UNMIK framework, 'four pillars' of

international governance were established to carry out an extensive recovery plan (Kallaba and Ferati 2012: 11):

1: Humanitarian Assistance: headed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

2: Civil Administration: headed by UNMIK.

3: Democratisation and Institution Building: led by the OSCE.

4: Economic Reconstruction: headed by the EU.

Figure 14 displays the international actors involved in SSR and their key policy-decisions. It shows the integrated and multifaceted nature of SSR, where the responsibilities of different international organisations have collaborated, competed and overlapped.

Figure 14: Internationally-led SSR		
SSR Period	International actors	Policy developments
1999 - 2005: Immediate Post-Conflict Period	**UNMIK:** DDR; judicial reform; police reform. **NATO KFOR**: Maintain security; DDR. **OSCE:** Police training. **UNDP**: Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR); Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW). **ICITAP:** Police Training.	Kosovo Police Service Kosovo Protection Corps Kosovo Customs Kosovo Correctional Service SALW ISSR planning Judicial Institutions International Judges and Prosecutors Programme
2005 - 2008: Institutional Development	**ICITAP:** Police Training; advisory. **UNDP**: ISSR; SALW; rule of law. **UNMIK**: Judicial reform; police reform, **Saferworld**: SALW. **OSCE**: Police training; oversight. **NATO KFOR**: Maintain security.	Ministry of Justice Ministry of Interior Police Inspectorate (PIK) Kosovo Judicial Council Oversight Committees SALW
2008 - 2012: Supervised Independence	**ICO**: Judicial reform; security reform. **EULEX**: Monitoring, mentoring and advisory (MMA) of police, judiciary and customs. **EU Office**: rule of law portfolio; EU accession. **ICITAP:** advisory. **UNDP**: SALW; Countering Violent Extremism (CVE); Rule of Law reform; anti-corruption; KPC reintegration. **UNMIK:** mandate reconfiguration; dialogue; engagement; monitoring. **NATO KFOR**: KSF support; advisory. **Embassies:** Capacity support. **OSCE:** Rule of law.	Kosovo Security Force (KSF) Advisory of institutions Legal amendments Legislative Drafting Kosovo Security Council (KSC) Kosovo Intelligence Agency (KIA) Developing oversight Supporting sensitive cases Developing national security strategies

2012 - 2018:	**EULEX**: Ongoing MMA; handling sensitive cases.	KSF advisory
Post-Independence Period	**EU Office**: rule of law portfolio; EU accession.	Legal amendments
	ICITAP: Advisory.	Legislative Drafting
	UNDP: SALW; CVE; Rule of Law reform; anti-corruption.	Developing national security strategies
	UNMIK: dialogue; engagement; monitoring.	Pristina-Belgrade dialogue
	NATO KFOR/ NATO Advisory: KSF support; advisory.	Integration of parallel Serbian structures
	Embassies: Advisory and capacity support.	
	OSCE: Rule of law.	

UNMIK

From 1999, UNMIK had constructed and developed Kosovo's earliest security institutions, such as the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). The formation of the Kosovo Protection Corps fulfilled part of a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration strategy by recruiting former KLA members (Rufer 2005: 57). While the UNMIK administration initiated a gradual transfer of responsibility to Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) from 2004-2005, existing studies have criticised UNMIK for producing reforms driven exclusively by international knowledge (Lemay Hebert 2011; Welch 2006). An international interviewee indicated that UNMIK had limited belief in local knowledge:

> 'There was very little optimism about the ability of Kosovars to set up new institutions and manage internal affairs… and that came from the culture of UNMIK… If you were an international expert working out of UNMIK, the only Albanians… or Serbs… that you dealt with on a regular basis were your driver, your cleaner and your translator… so there were no senior level local staff'.[13]

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[13] Interview 1, Skype, 07/2017.

Figure 15: UNMIK Site Map (UN Geospatial Information Section 2018)

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In judicial reform, UNMIKs first step was to start an 'emergency judicial system' in 1999, opening courts, appointing judges and prosecutors, and handling appeals. A UNSC report from 12th July 1999, highlights the urgency of the matter (UNSC 1999c: 13-14):

> 'Politically motivated and ethnically one-sided appointments, removals and training led to a judiciary in which, out of 756 judges and prosecutors in Kosovo, only 30 were Kosovo-Albanians. The exodus of Kosovo Serbs has accelerated the collapse of the judicial system. The daily arrests of criminals by KFOR and the need to bring to justice those who are suspected of having committed the most serious crimes, including war crimes, amplifies the urgency of these issues. This is a fundamental challenge for UNMIK. Only a fully functioning independent and multi-ethnic judicial system will address the existing security concerns in Kosovo and build public confidence'.

With minimal local research capacity, these reforms were largely beyond the reach of Kosovo's intellectual capacity. Several offices were created, including a Joint Advisory Council on

Provisional Judicial Appointments; Judicial Affairs Office, Court of Final Appeal, Public Prosecutors Office, collectively responsible for judicial and prosecutorial procedures (KCSS 2011: 8).

In May 2001, the Kosovo PISG was formally established, consisting of the Assembly of Kosovo, Government, and courts. While UNMIK judicial responsibilities were increasingly transferred to Kosovo's institutions, international control over police and justice activities was maintained, while the influx of international judicial participation was considered the means to ensure unbiased judicial process (KCSS 2011: 14). These reforms were influenced by a difficult context:

> 'The biggest problem was convincing the Serbian judges to take up positions, that was very controversial because if any of them were refusing, were taking the appointment but then they wouldn't show up, there were serious security issues, they also continue to receive a compensation package from Serbia proper, and therefore you know you can imagine the friction and controversy that their appointment would raise'.[14]

From 2002, judicial reform occurred in line with the policy of 'standards before status': where determination over Kosovo's status cannot be agreed until the PISG hit certain governance standards (United Nations 2003). This period was characterised by UNMIK attempts to increase the judicial representation of minority communities and the number of international and local judges and prosecutors appointed (KCSS 2011: 15). An interviewee with UNMIK and OSCE experience recalled how the March 2004 riots hastened the transfer of judicial responsibilities to the PISG.[15] Approximately 33 violent riots involving 51,000 participants were reported, stimulated by stories that Serbian citizens had drowned three Albanian children (Human Rights Watch 2004). This resulted in significant death and damage that characterised ongoing instability:

> 'Due to discordant police techniques imposed by the preferences of individual international actors, and the lack of willingness to sufficiently strengthen the local police force, the March 2004 riots marked a twofold failure of the international community: it did not consider the need for local capacity building in a coherent and context-based manner, and signalled the failure of crisis management despite a large presence of international led police forces' (Qehaja 2016: 105-106).

Following 2008 and Kosovo's declaration of independence, the UNMIK mission has reconfigured its mandate and largely disengaged, while retaining the legal basis granted by UNSC 1244. UNMIK has moved from a leading reform actor towards a supportive engagement with

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[14] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[15] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

Pristina, Belgrade and Kosovo's communities, while reporting to the UNSC on security developments. Interviews with UN practitioners highlighted a perception that the mission is seen negatively by Kosovo's Albanian population, who consider UNMIK an authority that impedes full independence and membership within international institutions.[16]

OSCE

Alongside UNMIK, the OSCE contributed to the capacity building of security and justice institutions. Responsible for forming the KPS, OSCE staff recruited, vetted and trained the KPS through the Kosovo Police Service School.[17] Continued OSCE commitments came through the formation of the Police Inspectorate of Kosovo (PIK), established in 2006. This formed an independent oversight institution within the MoIA to investigate KPS misconduct and to support its accountability (Republic of Kosovo Law No.03/L-231). Entering independence, the OSCE has supported national law enforcement agencies on strategies for the countering of organised crime, terrorism, violent extremism, and supported community policing and safety (OSCE 2017a). While the OSCE policy-making culture was described as centralised by former OSCE advisors, it was indicated that there was more room within the OSCE for discretionary policy-making than UNMIK.[18] OSCE advisors have proved receptive to local research, regularly taking it upon themselves to engage with local researchers (sections 5.2 and 5.3).

UNDP

The UNDP has supported the countering of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in an attempt to contribute to post-conflict stability, while supporting the ability of Kosovo's provisional institutions to develop security strategies.[19] The UNDP security sector portfolio also supported the Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) from 2005-2006, including inputs into data collection design, stakeholders selection, and recruitment of the ISSR team.[20] Reflecting on this period, a UNDP practitioner explained:

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[16] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[17] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[18] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[19] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[20] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017.

'UNDP does not have the best reputation in Kosovo… I mean especially today UNDP is very much viewed as being quite… mercenary, and really focuses on money, on its financial survival and sustainability. But, I think one of the great advantages of UNDP when compared to the key international stakeholders in Kosovo around the time of independence… so particularly the DPKO mission… UNMIK, one of advantages of UNDP, is that UNDP hires local expertise to run projects'.[21]

Nonetheless, informal working relationships based on trust and respect have developed, and local researcher knowledge has been utilised in different UNDP projects, such as support for Kosovo's CVE strategies (sections 5.2 and 5.3).[22]

NATO KFOR

NATO KFOR has supported the deterrence of hostilities, contributed to public safety, demilitarised the KLA, and supported the international civilian administration (NATO 2017a). NATO experiences a high level of trust from Kosovo's citizens in comparison to other international actors. For example, the 2014 KSB found that 63.8% of respondent's trust NATO (KCSS 2014: 11). Despite citizens having limited contact with NATO at that time, 'the perceptions of citizens towards KFOR could be said to be mainly a reflection of the past contribution' (KCSS 2014: 11). NATO KFOR has maintained an important role as Kosovo has stabilised. In 2008, the NATO Advisory Team (NAT) was created to supervise civilian oversight of the KSF, while from 2017, the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT) has reached full capacity. The stated mission of NALT is 'to support further developments of the security organisations in Kosovo and to include the provision of advice and support with a focus on capacity-building, education and training coordination' (NATO 2017b). This broadens the commitment of NATO beyond a remit to the KSF, and towards 'enhanced interactions' with Kosovo's security community, including local researchers.[23]

International Civilian Office and the Ahtisaari Plan

Following Kosovar independence, the ICO entered Kosovo, headed by an International Civilian Representative (ICR). Working closely with UNMIK, NATO, OSCE, EU and EULEX, the ICO

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[21] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[22] Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[23] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.

contributed to the creation of the Constitutional Court, and the recruitment of its international and local legal staff (ICO 2012: 28-29). The ICO was also involved in drafting the law on courts and prosecution offices, and laws on the Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC) and Prosecutorial Council (ICO 2012: 30). In terms of Kosovo's nascent security institutions, the ICO supported the establishment of the KSF, Kosovo Security Council (KSC), Kosovo Intelligence Agency (KIA), intelligence oversight and Kosovo Assembly (ICO 2012: 46). The ICO has received significant critique from local actors. The executive director of the KCSS makes this argument regarding the intervention of ICO officials in the National Security Strategy:

> 'It was the process of NSS which marked unprecedented interference of ICO officials by completely challenging the locally driven process and, finally, bringing a new product which was not tailored to the process, neither to the security environment in Kosovo. This interference was in contradiction with the mandate ICO held.' (Qehaja 2016: 165).

As shown in Chapter 4, the emphasis international security organisations have placed on stability and secrecy have undermined the extent to which local research can challenge and contribute to international SSR (section 4.4), while local think tanks, such as the GLPS and KLI, have routinely used research to direct challenges to the sustainability and context specificity of internationally-led reform (section 5.2).

EULEX

Since 2008 EULEX has monitored, mentored and advised Kosovo's rule of law (Council Joint Action (EU) 2008/124/CFSP). Over its ten-year period, the EULEX mission has had two primary operational objectives: an 'Executive Division' focuses on Kosovo's judicial process, and has embedded EULEX judges and prosecutors within Kosovo's institutions and taken a leading role in selected sensitive criminal cases (EULEX n.d.); while a 'Strengthening Division' focuses on the technical work of monitoring, mentoring and advising rule of law institutions, such as the MoIA, Kosovo Police and Kosovo Customs, and rule of law aspects of the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue (EULEX n.d.).

Figure 16: EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini visits EULEX Headquarters in Pristina on March 25th, 2015 (European External Action Service 2015)

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Operating in a difficult context, EULEX manages internal disagreement between EU member states over Kosovo's status, meaning that EULEX has to be careful in undertaking activities that might be perceived as recognition of Kosovo (Derks and Price 2010: 10). This restricted context provides fertile ground for contestation between local researchers and EULEX. According to the KCSS KSB, 53% of respondents reported that they did not trust EULEX in 2016 (KCSS 2016b: 14). Local research has self-consciously adopted a challenging stance, which in large part is motivated by dissatisfaction in EULEX (section 5.2). Furthermore, EULEX has put up various barriers that discourage staff from engaging with sources of critique (section 4.4). As put by one EULEX practitioner:

> 'If there is no stability, Brussels will be on the phone with me asking why not. If there is, everything is as it should be'.[24]

Nonetheless, EULEX faces internal contestation, where individual EULEX practitioners do seek out and engage with local researchers, actively challenging EULEX security procedures and

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[24] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

instructions in the pursuit of local knowledge (sections 5.2 and 5.3).

The Wider International Security Architecture

The complexity and competition in Kosovo's SSR is magnified by the presence of additional actors. This includes ICITAP, the EU Office, international embassies, and NGOs. This has implications for researcher-practitioner engagement. Section 4.4 highlights overlapping UNMIK, OSCE, ICITAP and Kosovar approaches to community safety mechanisms; competition between international organisations and conflicting international agendas during the ISSR process; and limited coordination on rule of law issues between international embassies, the EU Office, EULEX and Council of Europe.[25] Nonetheless, the presence of a large number of international organisations provides a diverse roster of international practitioners, some of whom are more open to engaging with local researchers. Local researchers have engaged extensively with individual EULEX practitioners, embassy staff, and Saferworld practitioners, in turn contributing to policy-making through practitioner learning (sections 5.2 and 5.3).

ICITAP, situated within the US Department of Justice's Criminal Division, has had a long-term role in Kosovo. In 1999 ICITAP seconded police managers as part of the team involved in training the Kosovo Police, while an ICITAP official directed the KPS school for eight years (ICITAP n.d.). ICITAP has designed programmes in partnership with Kosovar institutions, whilst also training security sector personnel and providing an advisory role (ICITAP n.d.). Today, ICITAP is supporting Kosovo's MoIA in the coordination of the national CVE strategy and helping to establish a CVE referral mechanism.[26] In addition, the EU Office aims to promote Kosovo's movement towards the European Union (EULEX n.d.). The EU Office has a security-oriented portfolio, focusing mainly on anti-corruption and CVE.[27] At the same time, international embassies, such as Sweden, Germany and the UK, maintain an important role in SSR. These countries advise security institutions, monitor Kosovo's security context, and engage with the debate over the development of Kosovo's security sector.

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[25] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[26] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[27] Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.

4.2.2 Local Research in Kosovo

This section outlines local research organisations who challenge and contribute to Kosovo's SSR. It highlights the emergence of local research into SSR issues in North Kosovo, which has become increasingly prevalent following the onset of the 2013 EU mediated Brussels Agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. The section also considers the legitimacy of local research organisations in the eyes of the communities they represent.

4.2.2.1 Local Security Research

FIQ was established in 2000 as a grassroots initiative run by young, informed Kosovars to engage in local-level decision-making, targeting participation in the new municipal governance structures to promote transparency.[28] In 2005, Saferworld entered Kosovo, supporting the transformation of FIQ by initiating a 'partnership' approach, and subsequently, FIQ engaged in high quality community security research. As indicated by a description of this relationship, 'partnership' reflected local-international equality:

> 'Saferworld could learn from and gain credibility through those with local knowledge of the problems people faced, while also building the capacity of local CSOs to tackle those problems and become influential agents of change in their communities' (Saferworld 2005).

Interviews with FIQ and Saferworld staff confirm a positive working relationship based on trust and respect, and the benefits of engraining local knowledge within international programming (sections 5.2 and 5.3).[29] Section 5.2 identifies incidences of where FIQ-Saferworld research has provided critical challenges to internationally-led SALW control, and, as explained in section 5.3, has contributed to conflict sensitive decision-making:

- From 2005-2006, FIQ was involved in SALW work and supported by Saferworld experience. Research included the publication of public perception surveys, raising awareness of the impact of SALW at the community level, and assessing the impact of international SALW programmes (FIQ 2007a, 2007b; Istrefi et al. 2007; Saferworld 2005).

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[28] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017
[29] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 3, Email, 07/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.

- FIQ research also broadened its focus on community safety issues, with public perception surveys exploring citizen awareness and understanding of threats (FIQ 2007a, 2007b).

Providing Saferworld practitioners with access to community data, a former Saferworld practitioner commented on the utility of the FIQ relationship:

> 'In terms of understanding what the real problems were… and then coming up with creative solutions, that was both sides as it were… it was a collaborative effort that we both put in and we both got out more than each of us had put in'.[30]

Pioneering local security research in the early post-conflict years, FIQ emerged as an important source for collaboration with local research organisations in Pristina and North Kosovo. FIQ has taken a lead role in the 'Forum for Security'. Established in June 2010 by FIQ, in partnership with the KCSS and supported by Saferworld, the Forum for Security has functioned as a discussion platform and aims to bring together key security stakeholders to advocate for policy development. Several organisations have been involved in the Forum for Security, including FIQ, the KCSS, GAP, the KLI and INDEP. While the inclusion and collaboration of think tanks, of varying standpoints, political affiliations and interests, exhibits the potential for collaboration within Kosovo's security research community, these relationships are complex (section 5.4). Kosovo's residual drivers of conflict, political division and identity politics undermine relationships between Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian organisations, while rivalry and competition are persistent (section 5.4).

FIQ has contributed to several outputs in the Forum for Security which emphasise the importance of building community concerns into the policy-process:

- An assessment of citizens views on peace and security issues (Forum for Security 2013);

- The role of homelessness and begging as a security issue across Kosovo (Conflict Prevention Forum 2014);

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[30] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.

- An analysis of the budget of the Kosovo Police (FIQ and GAP 2012).

From its research, community activism and advocacy, FIQ expertise has also had a formal input into the National Strategy and Action Plan for Community Safety from 2011-2016 (Republic of Kosovo 2011, 2014). From 2013, FIQ has moved away from its historical focus on community security, increasingly working towards the socio-economic issues facing communities.[31] Nonetheless, FIQ is still involved in security oriented research, and in September 2017 was awarded a grant from a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund to finance a project which emphasises social enterprise to prevent extremism.

The Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED) was established in 2002. A KIPRED researcher described an increasing attention to security issues:

> 'Since 2004 we have established our profile, so we knew what we are supposed to do. We are focussed on security, on foreign security policies… studying them, the rule of law, inter-ethnic relations and political parties… this was our focus since then'.[32]

KIPRED has critiqued what it considers to be the largely unsustainable legacy of internationally-led SSR for Kosovo's judicial sector. KIPRED research has explored Kosovo's legal framework in the area of emergency response (Collaku 2007); Kosovo's response capacity to organised crime and corruption (Qosaj-Mustafa 2010); and highlighted the judicial failures of UNMIK through an assessment of cooperation between the Kosovo Police, public prosecutors and courts (Gashi 2010). In more recent years, KIPRED *Kosovo Security Observer* publications have monitored the performance of national security institutions (KIPRED 2016a, 2016b, 2017a).

Established in 2008, the Pristina-based Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) is an established SSR think tank. As indicated by a national MoIA official:

> 'They are among leaders in the region, not only among Kosovo, because they have got professional people there, they are very serious in their job… and security, by itself, is understood more here as a priority'.[33]

KCSS interest includes critical analysis of good governance principles, within which the KCSS has developed a number of research programmes.

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[31] Interview 25, Pristina, 08/2017.
[32] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017.
[33] Interview 27, 08/2017, Pristina.

1: Published since 2012, the KCSS *Kosovo Security Barometer* (KSB) provides annual public opinion measurements (KCSS 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2016a, 2016b, 2017a, 2018a, 2018b 2018c). The KSB provides an important source of research that challenges the approach and sustainability of SSR (section 5.2). The KSB quantifies citizen trust in the national institutions established through international SSR, and the ongoing international presence. In contrast to security challenges as defined by policy institutions, the KSB assesses the perceptions of the critical security challenges facing Kosovo from the community perspective. Figure 17, shown below, samples a KSB data set stemming from a survey of 1093 households and following a representative sample of Kosovo's adult population. It highlights corruption and unemployment as primary concerns.

Figure 17: Citizens' perceptions towards internal security threats (KCSS 2016b: 19)
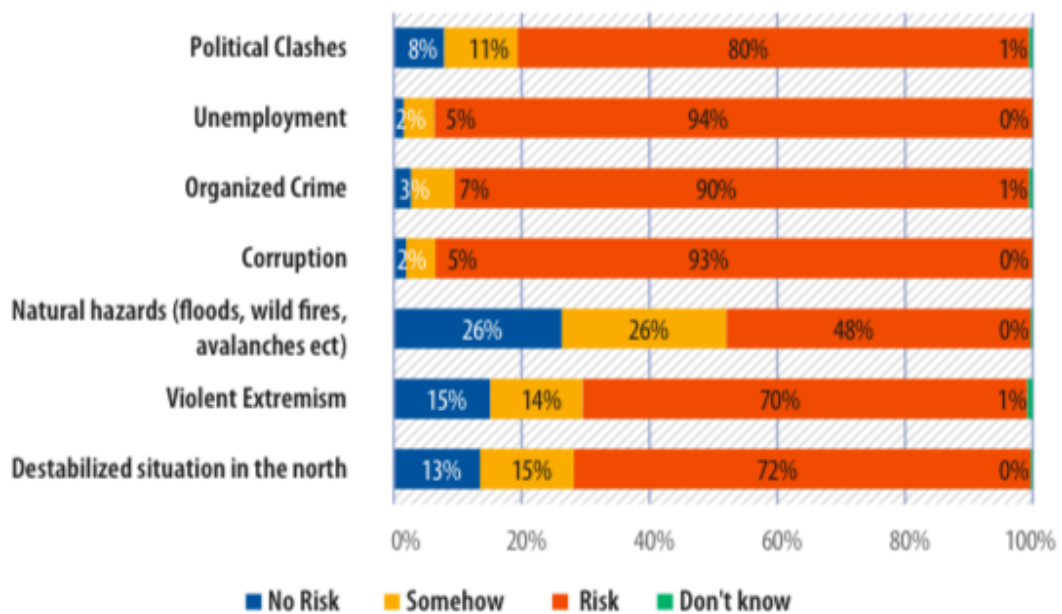
2: Building on the KSB, the KCSS has published a range of reports. These have covered police integrity (Avdiu and Perteshi 2015), oversight within the KSF and Kosovo Police (Avdiu and Perteshi 2016), and Kosovo's NATO relationship (Vrajolli and Kallaba 2012). These reports home in on specific aspects of security performance.

3: Since 2014 the KCSS has provided leading expertise on radicalisation in the Western Balkans (Kursani 2015; Perteshi 2018; Qehaja and Perteshi 2018; Kelmendi and Balaj 2017). Recognition for CVE research is highlighted by KCSS involvement in national strategies, while the KCSS also implements grassroots community awareness programmes. Furthermore, KCSS research on CVE has provided new knowledge of radicalisation for international SSR practitioners, challenging international preconceptions and contributing to international understanding of a deeply contextual phenomenon (section 5.2 and 5.3).

Figure 18: KCSS Conference (Pristina): *Report inquiring into the causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens' involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq*, April 2015. The conference was attended by representatives of the international security architecture, national security institutions, and CSOs (Author's photograph April 2015).

With limited post-conflict research capacity in Kosovo, international support has provided critical backing to local organisations. The EU 'Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance' (IPA) fund, which provides a form of core support for CSO capacity in Kosovo through short-term small project grants (Fagan 2011: 724), and which has been considered an effective mechanism for

those working towards the rule of law.[34] The KCSS, furthermore, has benefited from a three-year project funded by the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (NMFA) through the 'civil society consortium to map and monitor SSR in the Western Balkans', providing important training for staff to assess security institutions. A senior KCSS researcher commented on the success of this support:

> 'Whenever we have seen, especially bilateral actors, investing into SSR beyond classical SSR, so they invest in terms of democratisation of security institutions, in terms of changing the elites, in terms of parliament… then, you could see that civil society is growing, you know, in the sense that… in this case Norway gave a substantial contribution because they were the ones that saw security sector reform beyond this narrow view'.[35]

With NMFA support, the KCSS, alongside the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP) and Tirana-based Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), have collaborated through the 'Security Research Forum'. This aims to enhance Serbian-Albanian security dialogue and provide research-based solutions to ongoing challenges of security cooperation. This KCSS-BCSP collaboration has fostered trust between researchers, an ability to overcome political disagreements, and shared values to challenge understandings of security integration in North Kosovo (section 5.3). Furthermore, there are substantial benefits in conducting joint research (sections 5.2 and 5.3). With researchers combining different pieces of the security puzzle, regional research has contributed to the contextual knowledge of practitioners.

Organisations with alternative public-sector reform expertise have sporadically engaged with security issues. Formed in 2004, the Kosovar Stability Initiative (IKS) has primarily conducted research on the socio-economic aspects of Kosovo's development. Nonetheless the IKS has also covered security issues. For example, a paper explored the inefficiencies facing Kosovo's legal framework, highlighting corruption in public procurement, judicial fragility, and identifying the absence of an effective framework for fighting corruption in Kosovo due to delays in the passing of crucial anti-corruption laws (IKS 2010).

Think tanks focusing on SSR have consistently emerged as the post-independence years have progressed. These organisations supplement the challenges local research poses to international SSR and to the ability of national institutions to tackle evolving security issues:

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[34] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[35] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

2007: The GAP Institute for Advanced Studies has participated in the Forum for Security and contributed to a publication on Kosovo' Security Strategy (Rushiti 2013). Of their vast publications, a small number are dedicated to challenging the performance of security and judicial institutions. For example, an analysis of oversight in the law-making processes (GAP 2014), and monitoring of the professionalism of national security institutions and compliance with Kosovo's legal framework (GAP 2009).

2009: The Balkan Policy Institute (IPOL) has produced analysis and opinion on issues related to the judicial sector, the role of EULEX, and the functioning of the court system in Kosovo.[36]

2011: INDEP, who focus primarily on issues of sustainable development and democratic governance, has participated as a member of the Forum for Security.

2016: The Security Policy Research Centre (SPRC) has conducted research on the factors that influence radicalisation across Kosovo (Ramadani and Marmullaku 2017), produced a policy brief on Russian influence in Kosovo (Ramadani 2017), and contributed to roundtables on the transformation of the KSF.[37]

4.2.2.2 Local Judicial Reform Research

Local research has focused on the performance of Kosovo's judicial system and the impact of international actors on judicial reform. Established in 2000 and developed by the OSCE, the Kosovo Law Centre (KLC) is an NGO made up of local legal academics and lawyers (OSCE 2002: 1). Through the KLC, local legal professionals have analysed the applicability of prior and post-1989 laws produced the Kosovo Legal Studies journal (OSCE 2002: 1). Members of the KLC have participated in working groups as local experts in support of UNMIK law-making, while a leading figure within the KLC, Blerim Reka, also acted as Co-Chairman of the Joint Advisory Committee for Legislative Matters (JAC-LM). As demonstrated across Chapters 4 and 5, practitioner perceptions and interpretations of the local academics within the JAC-LM and KLC reflect dynamics of contestation and compliance between international authority and local judicial knowledge. While the KLC provided an early form of technical scrutiny over the

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[36] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017.
[37] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.

applicability of Western legal concepts to the context of Kosovo, a senior UNMIK practitioner with extensive experience in the JAC-LM indicated that the body was largely 'a bone thrown to Kosovo public opinion simply to show that UNMIK was interested in what Kosovo public opinion was, without actually being interested'.[38]

Additional local think tanks have committed steadfast energy to challenging the vestige of international judicial policy. Providing a strong voice on sensitive issues of corruption in Kosovo, organisations such as the KLI, GLPS and Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) show resilience in their pursuit of judicial reform, and often come into conflict with state institutions. As put by a BIRN journalist:

> 'Our pressures are big because we try to change things, and sometimes this is not convenient for powerful people. The pressures have been in the form of public shaming of our executive director, attacks on colleagues, damaging our organisations property, financial pressures from institutions who should be trying to finance us'.[39]

The KLI was established in 2009 and deploys monitors to assess and produce reports on the performance of the prosecution offices, courts and police. Through these activities the KLI has assessed the performance of national judicial institutions and EULEX (Miftaraj and Musliu 2017). Similar to the KLI and established in 2006, the GLPS has less of a monitoring role and places larger emphasis on policy-oriented research. This includes the publication of perception surveys on the satisfaction of Kosovar citizens with national and international actors involved in the legal system (Schulte-Cloos and Elshani 2016). Research also includes legal analysis of particular laws, such as anti-money laundering and countering of terrorism financing legislation (Lekvall 2016), assessments of the implementation of national rule of law strategies (Elshani and Pula 2017), and EU conditionality in Kosovo's legal reform (Doyle, Enache and Merja 2016). Combined, the KLI and GLPS play a critical role in questioning institutional legitimacy and challenging the corruption in Kosovo's judicial system (section 5.2).

Emulating this challenging stance, BIRN, formed in 2005, is a journalistic research organisation. BIRN Kosovo aims to develop journalism capacity and investigate sensitive political issues and utilises a combination of outreach strategies. A first example is provided by *Pristina Insight*, a digital and print magazine, which is also published in English to enhance accessibility for an international audience. Secondly, in 2005 the television show 'Life in Kosovo' started, which

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[38] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[39] Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017.

broadcasts about corruption across the judicial sector and attempts to encourage accountability from practitioners. These outreach methods are supported by a team of in-field monitors who scrutinise the performance of the entirety of the judicial system. Since 2012, 'KALLXO', meaning 'tell', has provided an online system through which local citizens can report on corruption issues anonymously, while BIRN has also increased its capacity by placing approximately 30 monitors in the field.[40]

4.2.2.3 Research in Serbian Municipalities

Kosovar Serb organisations, including NGO Aktiv (established 2009), the Advocacy Centre for Democratic Culture (ACDC) (established 2011), and New Social Initiative (NSI) (established 2017), operating in North Mitrovica, and CPT (established 2002), operating in Gracanica, advocate for Serbian community security concerns.[41]

Figure 19: Serbian Community Population Data (ECMI 2013: 18)

Municipality	%	Number of community members
Mitrovica North	76.48%	22,530
Gracanica	82.15%	21,534

The development of local research organisations in majority Serbian municipalities differs significantly from majority Kosovar-Albanian territories such as Pristina. While organisations such as ACDC and Aktiv provide a long-term critical capacity, Kosovo's Northern municipalities had largely remained part of Serbia until the 2013 onset of the Brussels Agreement and subsequent discussion over the integration of North Kosovo's Serbian security structures into Kosovo's legal framework. Consequently, prior to 2013 there was less political space to communicate Serbian community concerns and tackle issues pertaining to Kosovo's SSR, as an Aktiv researcher explained:

> 'We could have been given funds to do this policy analysis, but then we would have only done it from the aspect of the Serbian laws and Serbian government, because, we only had Serbian institutions run by Serbian laws. We used dinars, we paid taxes to Serbia, so, we were not part of Kosovo in a formal sense before

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[40] Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017.
[41] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 22, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

2013. In 2013 is when the funds started, so, they couldn't have done it in the case of North Kosovo sooner'.[42]

At the same time, Serbia has not consistently engaged in a constructive communication with the international community and Kosovo Government, complicating the role of Serbian CSOs, including critically minded research organisations.[43]

Figure 20: A mural in Mitrovica North, reading: 'Kosovo is Serbia, Crimea is Russia'. Kosovo has increasingly sought EU and NATO integration, while Serbia has historical, political and cultural ties with Russia, despite current movements towards the EU. The mural highlights ongoing political complexity in Kosovo (Author's photograph September 2017).

Although Aktiv has produced an extensive portfolio of research, interviewees suggested that Aktiv is not yet considered to be a think tank, but a CSO with a developing research capacity.[44] Nonetheless, research has become an important tool through which to assess the relationship between the Brussels Agreement and North Kosovo's communities. Increasing EU and international funds have been directed into North Kosovo, giving support to local CSOs and

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[42] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[43] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[44] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

leading to developing capacity in policy research.[45] Particular attention has been placed on community responses to the integration of North Kosovo's security institutions into Kosovo's broader legal framework.[46] For example:

> **1:** Aktiv has produced perception surveys regarding citizens views on the security situation in Kosovo's four Serb-majority municipalities (Jovic and Nesovic 2015; Jovic, Andric and Marinkovic 2017). These reports highlight security concerns at the community level, which challenges the extent to which national institutions consider the fears of the Serbian population. Figure 21 highlights levels of Serbian community satisfaction in Kosovo's security architecture, with Serbian Community Civil Protection (CP) units ranking highest. Operating outside of Kosovo's legal framework, CP units were mandated to provide assistance to the population of North Kosovo in emergency situations (Stakic and Bjelos 2015). Furthermore, Figure 22 identifies inter-ethnic confrontations as the greatest security risk facing a sample of 799 people. Though, it is important to highlight that this data was collected during a period of increased inter-ethnic tension (Jovic and Nesovic 2015: 30). Economic concerns and corruption, through unemployment and organised crime, also provide significant concerns across the sample. These perceptions challenge international understandings of integration in North Kosovo and contribute to knowledge of the community security context (sections 5.2 and 5.3).

Figure 21: Serbian Community Satisfaction with Security Architecture (Jovic and Nesovic 2015: 28)

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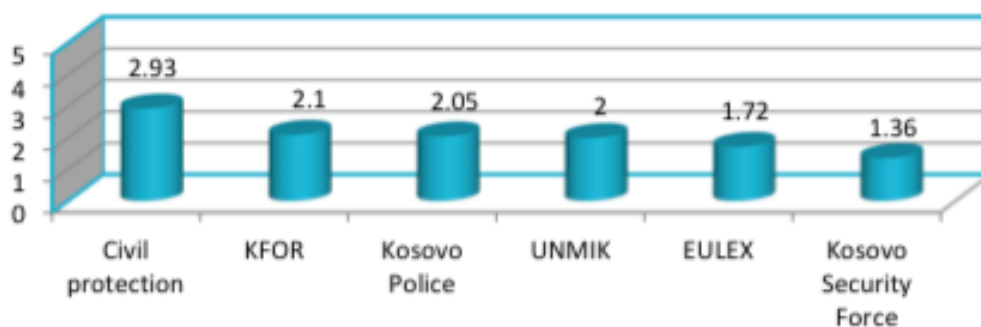
[45] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[46] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

Figure 22: Perceptions of risks facing the Serbian community in North Kosovo (Jovic and Nesovic 2015: 30)
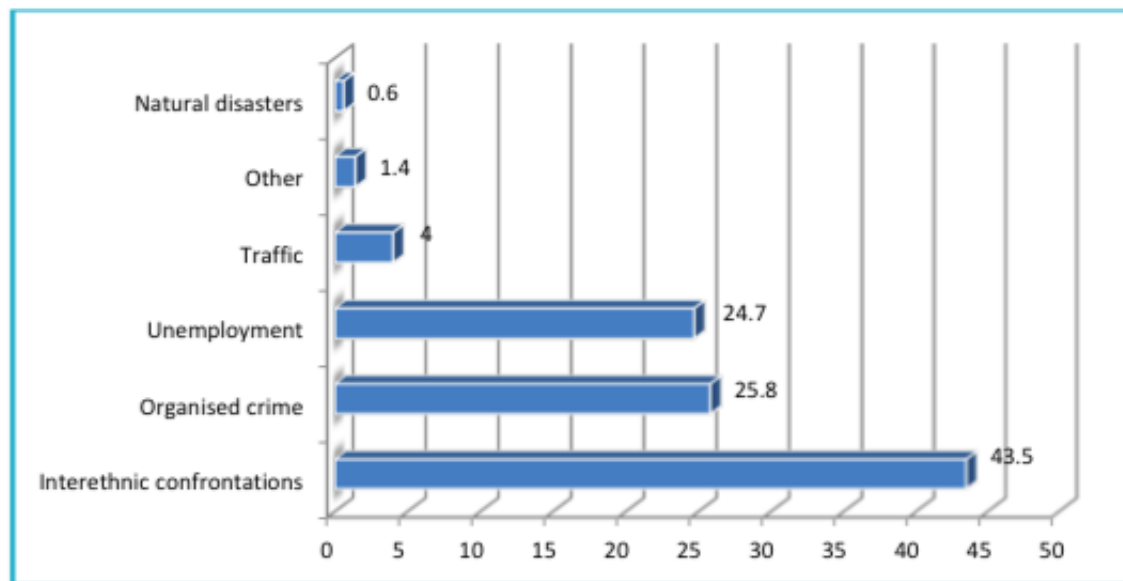
2: Another report, *the Sum of All Fears*, analysed the fears of Serbian communities in response to the security institution integration element of the EU mediated Brussels agreement between Kosovo and Serbia (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015). The main findings highlight the conflicting interpretations of the role of the Community of Serb-majority Municipalities (CSM) in North Kosovo between Pristina and Belgrade; that the technocratic nature of the CSM process creates a sense of insecurity amongst Kosovo's Serbian community; and that a careful consideration of community concerns can support successful integration (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015: 1-2). The report therefore challenges international handling of the Brussels agreement and offers new knowledge of local concerns.

Similarly, ACDC have produced a number of research reports pertaining to the performance and reform of judicial institutions in Northern Kosovo. For example, assessing the expectations and concerns of citizens following the judicial aspects of the Brussels Agreement (Dogandzic and Kabasic 2015); identifying challenges facing judicial reform and institutions in Northern Kosovo (ACDC 2016); and highlighting difficulties facing the functioning of courts in Mitrovica (ACDC 2014). Additionally, CPT have explored topics affecting Serb communities which are considered not to have been fully addressed by the Brussels Agreement, and how institutions such as the

ombudsperson office perform with regard to Kosovo's minority populations (Aktiv and CPT 2016; CPT 2014).

Demonstrating successful collaboration, Aktiv and ACDC are part of a 'Conflict Prevention Forum', a coalition of CSOs that work to address the security issues facing North Kosovo's communities. The Conflict Prevention Forum has cooperated with Saferworld, FIQ and the Forum for Security to work towards security research. For example, an investigation of the security and safety concerns associated with homelessness and begging, and an analysis of four threats facing Kosovo's communities, including: traffic accidents; drugs proliferation; concerns over police performance; and the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue (Conflict Prevention Forum 2014; Forum for Security 2013, 4-6). Such collaborations are a sign that cross-community and Albanian-Serbian research activities can generate positive relationships and contribute to a mutual understanding of security concerns (section 5.3). As put by an Aktiv researcher:

> 'For NGO's, we are all practical people, the majority of us are really expunged of this ethnic identity'.[47]

Figure 23: The Ibar Bridge in Mitrovica. The Ibar Bridge stems North Mitrovica and its majority Serb community, and South Mitrovica, which has a majority Albanian community. The bridge has been a flash point for numerous incidents of community division in Kosovo (Authors photograph September 2017)

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[47] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

4.2.2.4 Research and Community Representation

Local researchers display an ability to access local populations and champion their concerns. For example, the KLI, who through monitoring activities, listens to the voices of local citizens and supports individuals with legal advice,[48] and Aktiv, who have produced research outputs as a means to 'present community views'.[49] An awareness of this community representation was shared by a EULEX practitioner:

> 'Slowly the accountability needs to be handed over to the Kosovars and one of the first steps is taking more seriously what the NGOs are saying, because it's based on qualitative research, it's based on what people say and what people want'.[50]

Testimonial evidence supporting the community representation capacity of local researchers is furthered by public perception data collected in support of this thesis. This data, shown in Figures 24, 25 and 26, and analysed below, finds that local research organisations are largely perceived to be legitimate in the eyes of local communities.[51]

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[48] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017.
[49] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.
[50] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[51] The national sample from which survey data was drawn includes 1125 households, following a representative sample of the adult population in Kosovo. The ethnic composition of the respondents was 90% Kosovo-Albanian; 7% Kosovo-Serbian; 3% other, including Turks, Bosnians, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Gorani, Croats and Montenegrins. See Chapter 3, section 3.6.4 for further detail.

Figure 24: Public trust in civil society

To what extent do you trust civil society?

Legend: No Opinion · No Trust · Little Trust · To some extent · Trust · High trust
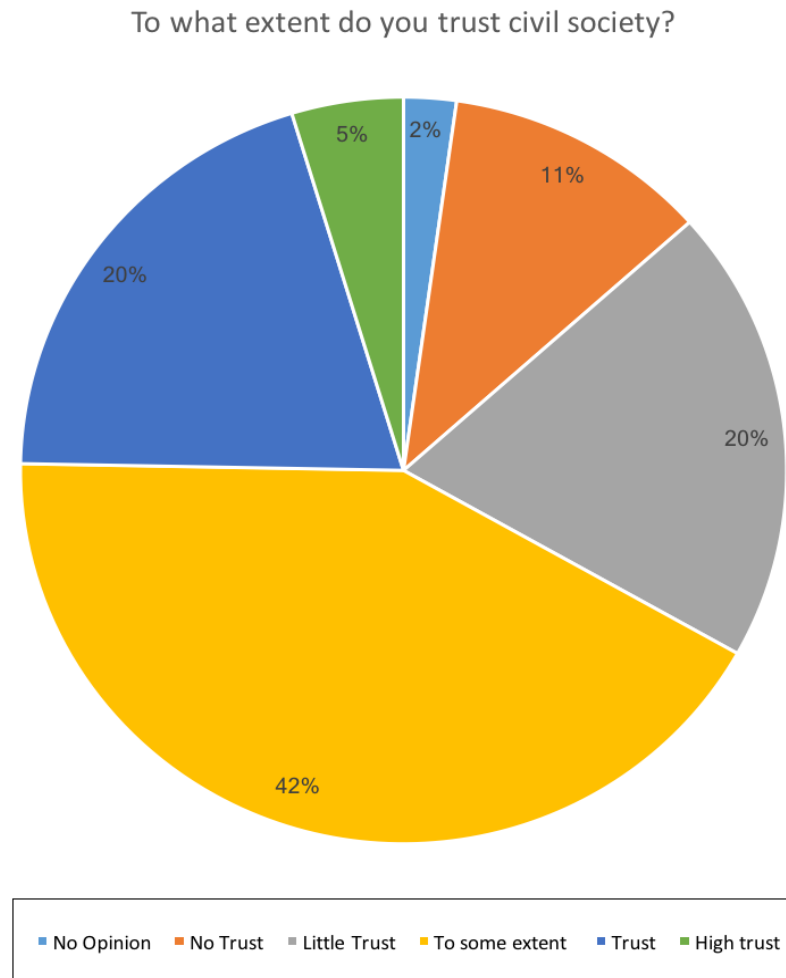
The public perception data sample collected for this thesis suggests that the range of local research organisations operating in Kosovo are well trusted by local communities. This is depicted by an analysis of Figure 24. First of all, a low percentage of respondents, 11%, indicated that they did not trust civil society organisations in Kosovo, while 20% expressed low levels of trust. Alternatively, 42% indicated that they trust civil society organisations 'to some extent'. Given that Kosovo's ethnic and community make-up is diverse and provides a context where post-conflict reconciliation between communities is an ongoing process, this figure suggests that the majority of respondents perceived organisations affiliated with their community as more credible than unfamiliar organisations. Finally, 25% of respondents indicated that they do trust, or have a high level of trust, in the intentions and functioning of local civil society organisations. While the Kosovo Police, KSF, and KFOR do receive a high level of trust among Kosovar citizens, CSOs receive a higher level of trust than a number of national and international security institutions (KCSS 2016b, 2018a). For example, when compared to: EULEX (24% trust; 26% some trust);

the government (14% trust; 20% some trust); Kosovo Assembly (12% trust; 21% some trust); Kosovo Prosecution (29% trust; 29% some trust) (KCSS 2018a).

While levels of public trust in civil society organisations indicate that CSOs are generally perceived positively by local populations, this data means little without considering it in the context of SSR and community security concerns. The public perception data recorded in Figure 25 suggests that the majority of local citizens perceive security oriented CSOs to provide an institution capable of contributing to the security needs of Kosovo and its citizens and advocating on their behalf. Similar to the extent to which local citizens do not trust civil society (11%), 13% of respondents indicated that they do not consider civil society organisations to contribute in any form to the security needs of Kosovo and its communities. Likewise, 21% (as opposed to 20% in Figure 24), believe civil society has only contributed to the security needs of Kosovo and its citizens to a very limited extent. Although a slightly lower percentage than those who trust civil society 'to some extent', 35% of respondents believe CSOs make some form of contribution to the security of Kosovo's citizens. 21% suggested that CSOs do contribute to their security needs, while 5% believed they had contributed a significant amount. The latter scores correlate closely to citizens levels of trust in civil society. Again, it is likely that local citizens considered security oriented CSOs within their community as the organisations they identified with as contributing to the security needs of citizens.

Figure 25: Public perceptions of the extent to which CSOs contribute to Kosovo's security

Do you think that civil society organisations contribute to the security needs of Kosovo and its citizens?

- No Opinion
- Not at all
- Low contribution
- To some extent
- They have contributed
- They have contributed greatly
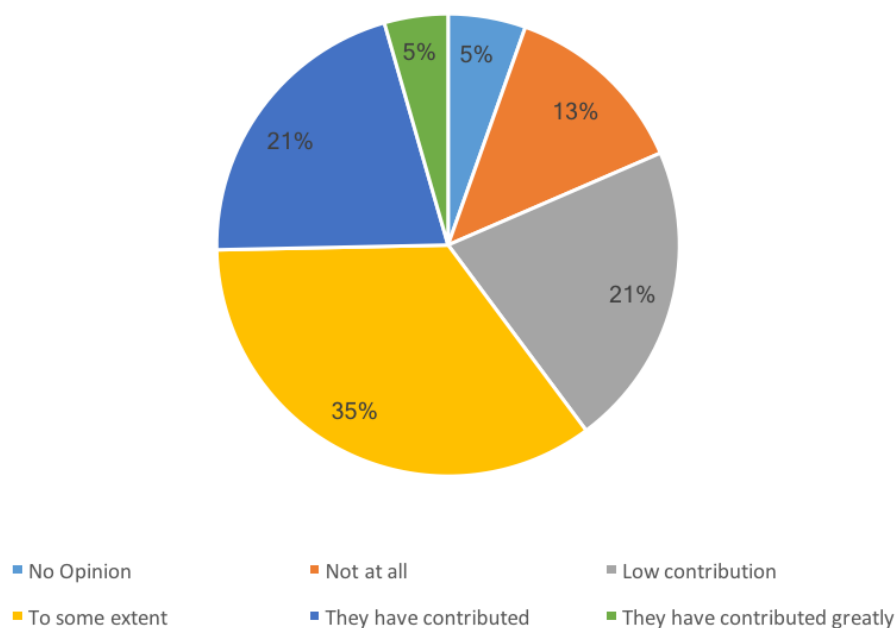
The survey evidence demonstrates that local think tanks challenging international SSR and the performance of national institutions, while providing local policy alternatives and knowledge of the political and community security context, do so with a broad base of support from Kosovo's communities. The data indicates that local think tanks hold a positive degree of legitimacy in the eyes of local citizens and are perceived as institutions that are representative of the security needs of local communities and can contribute to security in Kosovo. This interpretation is strengthened by Figure 26. 80% of respondents indicated that they believe local CSOs should have a heightened role in the formation of Kosovo's security policy and a say in security related issues. Only 12% of respondents were either content with the present role of Kosovo's CSO in SSR or desired a reduced presence.

Figure 26: Public perceptions of the role of CSOs in Kosovo's SSR

Do you think civil society organisations should have more of a role in Kosovo's security policy and security related issues?
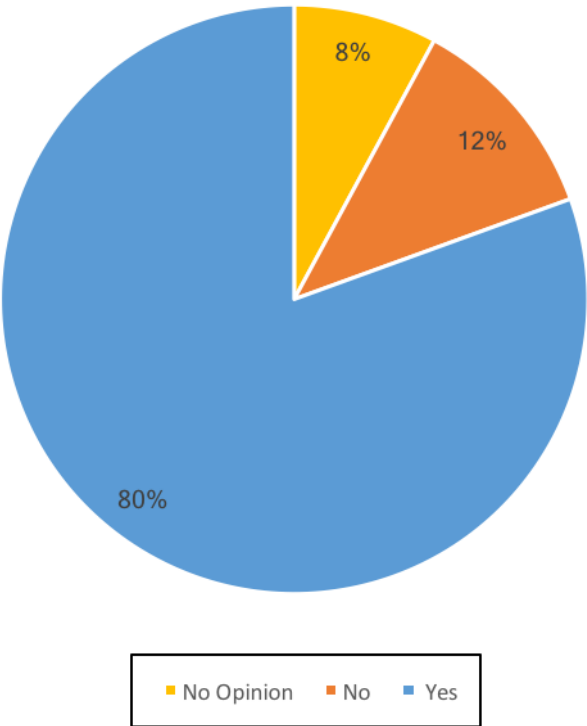
4.3 The Relative Role of Local Research in Kosovo's SSR

Any understanding of the contribution of local research to Kosovo's SSR must consider its relative role. As indicated by the ACF (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018) and 'dialectical networks' (Evans 2001; Marsh and Smith 2000) concepts, various sources filter into policy-making. This is emulated in Kosovo's SSR. Other than the KLC, FIQ and KIPRED, there were limited local research organisations engaging with SSR in the immediate post-conflict (1999-2005) and institutional development (2005-2008) periods, meaning a minimal contribution to early decision-making. Often in international intervention, international expertise, training and experience of peace-building in various contexts is more valuable for programme design than local expertise (Autesserre 2014). As international interviewee testimonies throughout this section show, international research and experience had an important role to play in practitioner decision-making.

4.3.1 Reliance on Experience

International SSR practitioners recalled their extensive reliance on professional experience. An SSR advisor who worked during the immediate post-conflict period explained: 'what I was using as research was my experience of SSR, not of Kosovo'.[52] The multinational international practitioners who made up the international security architecture of UNMIK and the OSCE had a diverse range of domestic and international experience which provided a variable foundation of SSR knowledge. For UNMIK legal staff arriving into Kosovo between 1999 and 2000 and tasked with the reform of a Yugoslav legal framework, there was little relevant research available. Several UNMIK officers explained that their first instinct was to reflect on the legal reform of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH).[53] As an UNMIK adviser explained:

> 'I actually regarded the knowledge I gained from my time in Bosnia, of the law
> in the former Yugoslavia, as local knowledge when I was in Kosovo, because it
> was very much relevant'.

Experience in the reform of the former Yugoslav legal codes in Bosnia-Herzegovina proved useful when drafting Kosovo's provisional criminal code. Furthermore, experience in the UN

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[52] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[53] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.

ensured a familiarity with the UN legal framework and an understanding of how to align Kosovo with international human rights standards.

With Kosovo's legal reform combining the adaptation of the applicable Yugoslav system with Western European concepts, domestic experience also provided relevant support to UNMIK practitioners. An early objective of the UNMIK Department of Justice (DoJ) was to establish the equivalent of a self-governing High Judicial Council: an independent judicial oversight body, largely based on Western European models, responsible for the appointment of judges and prosecutors. This came through the development of the AJC in September 1999 and its transition into the KJPC in April 2001 (as of December 2005, the Kosovo Judicial Council). UNMIK legal officials explained that their experience of working with High Judicial Councils in Europe was an integral factor in the formation of the KJPC.[54] A reliance on experience in Western European contexts also suggests that specific local knowledge was not a requirement in judicial reform.

Interview testimonies indicate that regional experience proved more relevant and useful than general experience of international intervention. Following experience in Bosnia-Herzegovina, an UNMIK legal adviser generated context specific skills: 'I was able to read Serbian; therefore, I could get beyond the mistakes in the translation…that I think was also a benefit'.[55] While language skills proved useful in the translation of the Yugoslav legal code, the same interviewee explained that the majority of international practitioners had limited relevant experience and did not possess local language skills. In fact, irrelevant experience was considered counterproductive for international objectives. For example, the OSCE training of the Kosovo Police was led by a multinational team of British, Canadian and American staff. While this team was able to form a common approach, the relevance of experience was questioned by an international practitioner:

> 'A lot of the lesson materials the Americans brought with them were ICITAP Haiti materials… and it was immediately obvious that this stuff wasn't going to fit with the context here, the Yugoslav legislation, the Yugoslav approach to policing'.[56]

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[54] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[55] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[56] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

4.3.2 Monitoring and Reporting of International NGOs

International practitioners came into contact with international NGO reports in the early years of UNMIK administration. Human Rights Watch (HRW), the International Crisis Group (ICG), and Amnesty International deployed some of the first field research teams to Kosovo to analyse international SSR. These NGOs emulate the functions of an 'advocacy coalition', which, through researchers and journalists, seeks to translate knowledge and beliefs into policy (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018). NGO monitoring and reporting emerged in response to the ongoing context of insecurity facing Kosovo between 1999 and 2004, directing challenges at the sustainability of international SSR and helping to inform practitioners of the complex context.

Amnesty International, HRW and the ICG published research reports in response to violence in 2000 and 2004 (Amnesty International 2000, 2004; HRW 2004; ICG 2004). In February 2000, Mitrovica experienced violence that saw 13 deaths, 50 injuries and 1500 people flee from their homes (Amnesty International 2000: 1). Field researchers indicated that this violence 'underscores the failure of the international community to halt human rights abuses and find lasting solutions to the problems in Kosovo' (Amnesty International 2000: 1). The report also challenged the practice of international security forces and the international response to insecurity. A report criticised the decision of French KFOR soldiers to detain 49 suspected rioters in a gymnasium in 2000 and encouraged UNMIK 'to ensure that all arrests and detentions of people in Kosovo be effected for reasons and in a manner consistent with international human rights norms' (Amnesty International 2000: 2). Furthermore, following riots in March 2004, 19 people were killed, 954 injured, with damage to property and infrastructure (United Nations 2004: 1-2). The ICG stated that these riots 'exposed the UN mission in Kosovo and the NATO-led peacekeeping force as very weak' (ICG 2004: i). In addition, these reports called for a thorough review of the actions and capacity of international and national security forces (Amnesty International 2004; HRW 2004).

Facing insecurity between 1999 and 2004, international SSR practitioners came into contact with the critical research of international NGOs. A practitioner explained that: 'obviously the riots triggered research, so there you saw a lot of groups then coming in, Human Rights Watch, DCAF... there were loads'.[57] Working for UNMIK and the OSCE during the riots, this interviewee explained that international NGO reporting provided an important source of information and a means of 'documenting all of the errors that were made during the riots by

[57] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

UNMIK and by KFOR'. This was critical in a context where they had 'never met any Kosovar-Albanians or Serbs who were conducting anything like research into what was going on, or what had been going on from in that period running up to the riots'. In addition, an UNMIK legal advisor explained that insights into the causes of the riots and the human rights standards of the international response were important to their understanding of UNMIKs rule of law performance.[58]

4.3.3 International Sources

International researchers have also supported SSR practitioners. In addition to local KLC experts, a former Co-Chair of the Joint Advisory Committee for Legislative Matters (JAC-LM) indicated that Council of Europe experts were sought out to review legislative drafting against applicable human rights standards and to provide comment on criminal code drafting (Reka 2003: 190). They indicated that they 'benefited greatly' from these Council of Europe experts, and in particular from their 'very broad comparative perspective'.[59] This included insights into the relationship, similarities and differences between the Yugoslav system and other European and Western Balkan jurisdictions. Council of Europe expertise also provided relevant knowledge for UNMIK legal officers, and 'seemed to be more pertinent given the geographical location of Kosovo and the ultimate aspiration to be part of Europe'.[60] This also follows the pattern that sees international expertise preferred to local knowledge: Slovenian staff within the Council of Europe were considered to provide a deeper knowledge of the Yugoslav legislation than Kosovar legal experts within the JAC-LM and KLC.[61]

International research was considered a credible source of evidence that supported UNMIK practitioner objectives. One of the critical policy approaches between 1999 and 2006 was the International Judges and Prosecutors Programme (IJPP), where international judges and prosecutors were inserted into the judicial system to overcome issues of ethnic bias and ensure that international judges constituted the majority in designated cases (Hartmann 2003). Staff within the UNMIK DoJ commissioned international think tanks, such as the New York-based International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), to conduct research in support of the IJPP:

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[58] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[59] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[60] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[61] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.

> 'Very often I would ask for help. I would ask the reputed international organisations to take a look at certain things because their studies and recommendations would help me advocate within the UN on making certain changes… and one particular issue was the appointment and discipline of judges and prosecutors'.[62]

In line with the epistemic community concept, ICTJ researchers provided recognised international expertise for UNMIK staff operating in uncertain conditions (Haas 1992: 4). For example, ICTJ researchers highlighted that inadequate international resources and a lack of suitably qualified international staff provided obstacles to the successful handling of caseloads (Perriello and Wierda 2006: 2-3). These critical observations could be used by UNMIK DoJ staff to advocate for additional resources or changes in direction in support of their objectives. Furthermore, UNMIK DoJ staff established collaborative relationships with individual researchers. An UNMIK practitioner explained that researchers advanced draft reports to UNMIK staff for comments, which allowed them to explain their actions, counter criticisms, offer recommendations, and subsequently, they would 'use recommendations to orient reforms in one way or another, for example, by prioritising certain pieces of legislation over others'.[63]

Best practice manuals, such as those published by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC), provided guidance for international SSR practitioners who were new to Kosovo and required support to comply with up-to-date SSR approaches. For example, in 2001 the OECD published *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict: the DAC Guidelines*, which identified an important relationship between security and successful development (OECD DAC 2001). Later, through the 2005 publication of the OECD DAC *Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance*, SSR was prioritised as an international policy approach. This document highlighted the importance of local ownership; provided a framework to structure thinking; identified the need to base activities on an assessment of security needs; prioritised transparency and accountability; and focused on institutional and human capacity (OECD DAC 2005: 12). Furthermore, the document outlined ten recommendations, including the need to work through local actors and to take a context specific and a whole of government approach to reform (OECD DAC 2005: 12-14). An early SSR advisor described these resources as 'a nice little bible at that time to use as a reference', to support their decision-making and explain the process of SSR to local

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[62] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[63] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.

counterparts.[64] UNMIK and UNDP practitioners also indicated that they were encouraged to structure their SSR activities around the recommended procedures of best practice.[65]

International practitioners also reflected on SSR models used in other countries to design Kosovo's security institutions. This is the case with the OSCE formation of the PIK in 2006. The PIK programme manager explained that oversight reform was a new area for the OSCE, and as such the organisation could not draw on familiar experience:

> 'The PIK was introduced at the exactly the same time that the ministry (MoIA) was being set up, so it was being populated with staff who had no experience of running a ministry or doing what ministries of the interior do, that was very important I think. In terms of research I did try to draw as far as possible on models from other countries… Australia, I couldn't have any models that I was aware of in a post-conflict situation because I don't think at that time to my knowledge there were other situations where you had independent oversight'.[66]

Kosovo has provided a prevalent case study for the post-conflict research of international think tanks and academic institutions across Europe and North America, conducting extensive critiques and identifying recommendations for improved practice (Bain 2006; Bernabeu 2007; Chesterman 2002; Hehir 2006; Lemay-Hebert 2009a, 2011, 2012). Nonetheless, no international practitioner reflected on the utility of university research into Kosovo's SSR. Alternatively, interviewees from across the international security architecture regularly described the researchers of Chatham House, DCAF, and the Kosovo UNDP office as important sources of SSR analysis.[67] International research was also often a preferential source ahead of local research in the early post-conflict years. While the reasons behind this preference are explained in more detail in the later sections of Chapters 4 and 5, UNMIK practitioners indicated that if they were to read or seek out any research, it was 'usually international', while considering international research to be of a higher quality.[68]

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[64] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[65] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017.
[66] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[67] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[68] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

4.3.4 Internal Research and Outsourcing

International practitioners often follow 'epistemic practices', which provide practical devices to understand complex phenomena (Bueger 2015). A key epistemic practice concerns the use of information produced internally by international organisations. Operating in 'uncertain' conditions (Haas 1992), and looking to make sense of Kosovo's post-conflict context, UNMIK and OSCE practitioners indicated that their missions were largely self-sufficient, and reliant on internal research mechanisms, international consultants, or local staff. The analytical and political reporting offices of UNMIK, the OSCE and EULEX provided international practitioners with easily accessible information about Kosovo's security developments.[69] This epistemic practice clashes with local knowledge by placing the convenient, accessible, and as identified in section 5.2, empirically limited international sources, at the forefront of decision-making.

A practitioner described UNMIK political reporting as having a 'basic function', producing and distributing throughout the mission 'normal situation reports' as well as topical 'thematic' reports on emerging issues on a weekly basis.[70] In more recent years, a Joint Analysis and Reporting Unit (JARU) has emerged within UNMIK, which analyses security information, provides staff with situation analysis, and forecasts critical issues.[71] While an interviewee described JARU outputs as useful, JARU remains a work in progress:

> 'The JARU team, which is a small unit… I don't know how many people they have, it's still a bit of a work in progress that was just established about a year ago, precisely because the mission leadership felt that the analytic and research efforts of the mission should be strengthened'.[72]

Internal reporting activities are also completed by the Political, and Press and Public Information Office within EULEX, and the OSCE Analysis and Reporting Cell (ARC). Political reporting within EULEX is 'reflective', and covers security related events and EULEX activities, while ARC staff provide analytical reports and strategy suggestions to its OSCE department.[73] EULEX also produces annual *Programme Reports* to 'provide an analytical overview of progress achieved since the very beginning of the mission', with analysis based on the observations of EULEX staff (EULEX 2011: 5). Similarly, the OSCE produces annual reports on organisation activities and

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[69] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[70] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[71] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[72] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[73] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

cooperation with partner states, which includes updates on Kosovo (OSCE 2017b: 66-68). Furthermore, since 2009, the OSCE has produced four *Community Rights Assessment Reports*. These assess the progress made by Kosovo institutions with respect to the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the protection of minorities, which includes a focus on security and justice (OSCE 2015). In addition, the OSCE has launched three *Justice Monitor* publications, which report on the performance of local judicial institutions and aim to support the compliance of Kosovo's justice sector with international standards (OSCE 2016).

At the same time, international interviewees engage with local staff to learn about Kosovo's context. For example, a EULEX practitioner described local staff as a convenient point of contact:

> 'There were a lot of local staff that were employed within the mission, so if you needed local expertise that would obviously be the first place that you would go, because you will be sitting in the office with your colleague and yeah, you would just ask them'.[74]

Emphasising this point, a UNDP practitioner indicated that there was a significant advantage of hiring local expertise to run projects, who provided important insights for international UNDP staff.[75] For example, the UNDP 'Public Pulse' research reports are led by local staff and research consultants. Public Pulse produces surveys that collect citizen perceptions of key security and judicial questions facing Kosovo, as well as assessing public trust in international and domestic security institutions. There are also action papers that stem from this perception data. For example, the *Public Pulse Analysis on Prevention of Violent Extremism in Kosovo* (Qirezi 2017), and *Violence and Security in Public Schools of the Municipality of Pristina* (Salihu 2015). UNDP practitioners explained that this research provides staff with contextual information and baselines for security-oriented projects.[76] According to an evaluation of the Public Pulse: 'there are clear indicators that the Public Pulse reports and their findings have equipped different institutions and reports with credible and systematic data on the pertinent issues over the last decade' (Ceku 2013: 13). With UNDP research largely completed by local staff and consultants, international practitioners subsequently classified the research outputs of the UNDP as high quality 'local' research outputs.[77]

Nonetheless, the Public Pulse project raises similar questions to those asked by models of

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[74] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017.
[75] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[76] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 28, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[77] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.

hybridity (Mac Ginty 2011): to what extent do international actors enforce local compliance? Or in this case: to what extent does employment within the UNDP limit the extent to which the Public Pulse can be considered 'local'? An international interviewee described engagement with UNDP local staff as an 'easy' option which should be supplemented with a wider variety of local think tanks.[78] A KCSS researcher made a similar suggestion when describing the 2012 initiation of the KSB:

> 'The importance of the barometer in our case was until that period most of the public opinion polls, with respect to the security institutions, were conducted by international organisations'.[79]

Thus, Public Pulse research might become a form of local research with time. Basing its analysis on interviews with local researchers and civil society activists, the Public Pulse evaluation recommended that the UNDP should consider spinning off the project to a credible and professional local organisation (Ceku 2013: 3).

Prior to entry into Kosovo and without access to internal research on the ground, international practitioners sought out information on Kosovo's context. While such reading was not formally encouraged by international organisations, individuals did recognise the need to expand on their local knowledge in the initial months of deployment. UNMIK legal practitioners without experience in the reform of Yugoslav legal codes sought studies of the Yugoslav legal system to hit the ground running.[80] Another UNMIK practitioner indicated that background reading was 'natural good practice and instinct' to inform themselves of what to expect, although they explained that they read 'less and less' after entering Kosovo.[81] Historical books on Kosovo, such as Noel Malcolm's *Kosovo: a Short History* (Malcolm 1998), also provided a brief introduction into Kosovo's politics, history and culture.[82]

SSR advisors outside of the UN, EU and OSCE umbrella were supported by academic partnerships. For example, the research connections of the UK Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT) provided important analysis to SSR advisors. Firstly, policy briefs, recommendations and analysis from UK DFID, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) sources provided the SSDAT with guidelines on how to approach

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[78] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017.
[79] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[80] Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.
[81] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[82] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017.

SSR in post-conflict contexts. A 2004 strategy document outlined advisory responsibilities to provide the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) and Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) strategies with expertise, in order to develop and implement SSR programmes and contribute to effective institutional reform in priority countries (MOD, FCO, DFID 2004). Secondly, SSR advisors were supported by 'an academic following for the concept of SSR' and 'solid relationships between DAT (Development Advisory Team) and academics'.[83] A critical source came through a DFID, FCO and MOD initiative: The Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN SSR). The GFN SSR included a team of practitioners at Cranfield University who provided assessments, scoping studies, country analysis, and concept and briefing papers on SSR (OECD 2005). Academic researchers such as Trevor Taylor, former Head of Defence Management and Security Analysis at Cranfield University, and Anne Fitzgerald, were considered as informed connections. As an 'intellectual engine', the GFN SSR also provided an online hub for up-to-date analysis on SSR and a network for SSR practitioners (MOD, FCO, DFID 2004). A working relationship was also in place between the DAT and researchers at the Centre for Defence Studies (CDS) and Conflict Security and Development Research Group (CSDG) of Kings College.[84]

International organisations working towards SSR have regularly commissioned external consultants to support policy decisions. For example, UNDP Public Pulse documents rely on the recruitment of local researchers and academics as consultants, while data collection is outsourced to local surveying companies and NGOs. Predominantly, however, international interviewees stressed that international organisations tend to outsource research to international, rather than local consultants.[85] A senior OSCE advisor indicated that on occasions where police training initiatives required the support of external consultants, they would 'always' use international consultants.[86] This was also the case throughout UNMIK judicial reform. As UNMIK increasingly dedicated resources to the executive handling of sensitive cases and the use of international judges and prosecutors, UNMIK increasingly outsourced judicial capacity building (Scheye 2008: 188-191). In fact, coordination with international bodies including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Council of Europe was required in 'almost every aspect' of UNMIK legal reform.[87] UNMIK initiated analysis into the needs of legal reform and court administration, and, lacking resources, relied on the support of USAID,

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[83] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[84] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[85] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 19, Pristina, 08/2017.
[86] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[87] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.

the US DoJ and the Council of Europe to identify the issues causing case backlogs and possible solutions (Scheye 2008, 189-190). Through USAID, UNMIK has also outsourced to the National Centre for State Courts (NCSC) to support the development of the Judicial Inspection Unit (JIU) auditing functions within the Administrative Department of Justice (NCSC n.d.; Scheye 2008: 189-190). Reflecting on the formation of these institutions, an UNMIK legal officer confirmed that a dedicated embedded consultant designed the unit before being approved by senior UNMIK staff.[88]

4.4 International Barriers to Local Research

'Liberal' theories of international intervention take a political assumption that international actors know best and can operate successfully without consideration for the expertise of local CSOs (Richmond 2005). This section helps to identify a host of additional international 'epistemic practices', preferred ways of working and political preferences which impact on the ways in which international practitioners form their SSR knowledge (Bueger 2015: 6-7). As summarised by a UNDP practitioner in Kosovo:

> 'UNDP is essentially structured to keep unsolicited enquires away from people like me…. So, it was very seldom that I met civil society people that I had not sought out myself, because I saw some value in talking to them'.[89]

Various practices explored here actively subvert practitioner engagement with the local context, yet, as shown in section 5.2, are challenged by both local researchers and international practitioners. With international practitioners relying extensively on their experiences of international intervention and international knowledge, local research and expertise has often been side-lined in decision-making.

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[88] Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.
[89] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.

Box 1: Summary of barriers facing EULEX cooperation with local researchers

Organisational Barriers	• EULEX prioritises stability objectives ahead of engagement with local researchers • Local knowledge is not a requirement for employment throughout recruitment • International turnover limits the development of productive researcher-practitioner engagement • Practitioners are not incentivised to engage with local researchers, or are actively deterred by security procedures • Practitioners afford little time to engage with local researchers • SSR is a highly sensitive process, which limits researcher access of local researchers to operational information
Negative Perceptions	• Practitioners hold negative perceptions over the potential political affiliation, funding and bias of local researchers • Practitioners do not consider local research capable of conducting a sufficiently detailed analysis • Practitioners do not trust the research methodology and the analysis of findings • Practitioners perceive local criticism as confrontation • Practitioners do not perceive local research to focus on issues relevant to Kosovo's security or the EULEX mandate

4.4.1 The Recruitment of International Practitioners

Autesserre (2014: 13) indicates that international practitioners 'frequent disregard of local knowledge legitimises their rapid turnover from country to country, as acquiring thematic experience in a variety of conflict settings takes precedence over developing an in-depth understanding of a specific situation'. Similarly, interviews with international practitioners in Kosovo indicated that international thematic knowledge was prioritised ahead of contextual knowledge during recruitment. This practice sparked local-international resistance from the outset, and international-international friction through the substantive critique of policy procedure by international practitioners.

Experience and proficiency with European legal institutions were the primary requirements for UNMIK DoJ recruitment.[90] While this is understandable given that Kosovo's legal reform largely followed adapted European models, some international practitioners were critical of the absence of local knowledge as a skills requirement. As explained by an UNMIK penal official: 'you are

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[90] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.

just picked on your background, you are not picked because of your knowledge of the place'.[91] Furthermore, while knowledge of the local context was seen as 'desirable' for employers, this came with the caveat of being 'just desirable', rather than essential. Critical of the UNMIK recruitment process, the practitioner demonstrated an internal political conflict:

> 'We act like if we are in a bubble, so we have our best practice, we have our book, we have our guidance, but then there is not any provision that would somehow oblige us or make mandatory for the mission, for the leadership, to properly introduce the staff member to the local system, culture, local knowledge, none whatsoever'.

Recruitment within UNMIK and EULEX has often followed a political logic, where again, knowledge of the local context is not a key requirement for employment. This process has sparked significant criticism from international practitioners. Highlighting the political priorities of the international community, a former UNMIK and OSCE official complained that many international staff, especially those taking up senior decision-making positions, were in fact 'political appointees', where member states 'wanted key people in key decision procedures'.[92] An example of this is offered by the selection of international staff to the ISSR: 'for the countries that were funding the project… with the UN there is always that balance of… political interest and funding interest versus expertise'.[93]

4.4.2 International Coordination and Practitioner Turnover

Ravaged by internal politics, Kosovo's SSR is a complex, multifarious environment of multiple and overlapping international agencies. International organisations working towards Kosovo's SSR have developed strategies to overcome this complexity: UNMIK, KFOR, the OSCE and EU have divided police reform responsibilities according to the comparative advantages each organisation has developed in other contexts of intervention (Dursun-Ozkanca and Crossley-Frolick 2012), while the UN, EU, NATO and ICO have worked to avoid the duplication of tasks (Brosig 2011). Nonetheless, existing research has highlighted competition, rivalry and coordination issues within and between UNMIK, the UNDP, EU and OSCE (Welch 2011). These coordination issues add a further layer of complexity to researcher-SSR engagement.

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[91] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017.
[92] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[93] Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017.

Interviewees[94] shared their experiences of this issue, describing:

- Overlapping UNMIK, OSCE, ICITAP and Kosovar approaches to community safety mechanisms, in the form of Community Safety Action Teams (CSAT), Municipal Community Safety Councils (MCSC), and Local Public Safety Committees (LPSC).

- Competition between international organisations and conflicting international agendas during the ISSR process.

- Limited coordination on rule of law issues between international embassies, the EU Office, EULEX and Council of Europe.

This context impacts on the ability of local researchers to effectively engage with and contribute to practitioner decision-making processes. According to local researchers, it adds confusion over what international SSR practitioners and policies are best to engage with, as well as undermining the contribution of this interaction.[95]

The degree of freedom an SSR practitioner uses to make decisions must be considered on a 'situation-by-situation' basis (Evans 2010; Evans and Harris 2004: 871-872). Serving to complicate policy-making coordination further, engagement with research is messy, and down to individual preferences. For example, within judicial reform working groups, a KLI researcher described conditions where individual EULEX staff from different European countries were pushing for legislative amendments from their own countries.[96] Similarly, UNMIK staff involved in police reform brought different agendas to their role. An international practitioner explained that Canadian, American, and European staff had different approaches in terms of their understanding of the police reform process, and the experiences, knowledge and research to draw upon:

> 'What you had is not one UNMIK police but at least 5 UNMIK police, you had in Prizren the Germans and the Austrians doing it their way, you had the Americans doing it their way, in Podujevo you had the Brits, Northern Ireland doing their way, up in North Mitrovica it was the French that was doing it their way'.[97]

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[94] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[95] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[96] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017.
[97] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

In this difficult context, local researchers are required to develop relationships with a range of SSR cultures, which complicates the process of establishing informal relationships.

Chapter 2 identified staff turnover as a factor which undermines the ability of international staff to sustain local contacts (Sending 2010). Likewise, interviews with practitioners who had spent the longest time in Kosovo and had established working relationships with local researchers were better placed to reflect on a productive engagement with local research.[98] The frequent turnover of international SSR practitioners within UNMIK, the OSCE and EULEX undermines the potential for consistent practitioner-researcher engagement and limits the time available to develop a detailed understanding of the local context.[99] International practitioners may also lack an interest in making contact with local researchers knowing that they are only in their role for a short period. As demonstrated by a EULEX practitioner:

> 'You get people who come in for a year and they are not really interested in the bigger picture, they come in to do a very specific job. If your job is to advise the director of investigations you do that, you don't really care about the bigger picture of other issues.'[100]

The turnover of staff is a significant issue within EULEX and disrupts researcher engagement. While a former EULEX practitioner indicated that local staff have held longer term contracts than international staff, and provided significant institutional memory in terms of relationships with local researchers, they also explained that the renewal of EULEX mandates in recent years has seen a large proportion of local staff contracts expire.[101] A shifting mandate prevented mission staff from responding to local research enquiries:

> 'The last mandate expired in the middle of June 2016 and then we had 4 months of technical mandate which is where the restructuring went on, and then there is 20 months of mandate. So now (September 2017) we are 14 months into the new mandate, and already, but in March we need to be getting out of certain areas, so it is a very short window in which we can actually move certain areas forward. So that reality means prioritisation, meaning we cannot be responsive to all the sorts of criticisms that are raised'.[102]

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[98] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[99] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[100] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[101] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[102] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

Local researchers from across Kosovo's research community confirmed that international turnover significantly undermines their access to the SSR policy-process.[103] For example, a KIPRED researcher indicated that productive relationships with international practitioners are very hard to replace:

> 'Officials here, they don't stay, usually they don't stay longer than one year, and this is very much a problematic issue because once you build a personal relationship, then people are changed… when people are changed, they usually try to do something different than their predecessors'.

4.4.3 Exaggerated Stability

An exaggerated international reference to stability and politics in SSR places geo-political concerns ahead of the priorities of local actors (Qehaja 2016; Qehaja and Prezelj 2017). This contributes to dynamics of local-international and international-international contestation. In this context, international decisions follow a political logic, with security and stability often the objectives of decision-making. The prevailing focus on stability evidences characteristics of the 'hollow norms' (Hehir 2018) of international intervention, particularly in the attempts of international actors to support local security and safety. Firstly, it highlights the 'inaction' (Hehir 2018: 8) of international actors, who put stability arguments ahead of long-term capacity building. Secondly, it reflects that international support for security and capacity development is 'used instrumentally to support pre-existing dispositions and interests' (Hehir 2018: 10). Five EU members still do not recognise Kosovo's independence: Greece, Slovakia, Cyprus, Romania and Spain, and subsequently, decision-making is influenced by a divided international stance on Kosovo. Interviews conducted shed further light on how these dilemmas foster a muddled policy-process that hinders practitioner-researcher engagement.

UNMIK and EULEX were criticised by local researchers for allowing the political imperative of stability to undermine attempts to deal with high level corruption and indictments, while also describing UNMIK and EULEX as 'political statements' that complicate SSR.[104] In this context, the majority of UNMIK and EULEX SSR staff in Kosovo were perceived as following the directives of high ranking officials, or would use the 'line' of sensitive information to shut the

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[103] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[104] Interview 3, Email, 07/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

doors to local actors.[105] Another local interviewee indicated that while there were occasions where EULEX or UNMIK practitioners agreed with them in private, the larger political objectives always take direction.[106] Consequently, while international practitioners might listen to local researchers and engage with them, local perspectives highlight the limited room for local research to contribute to decision-making.

International practitioners confirmed local concerns. Describing Kosovo's judicial reform, an UNMIK legal official indicated that a critical objective was to carefully ensure that Kosovo's legislation didn't define it as an independent state.[107] Similarly, an SSR advisor defined their approach in the post-conflict years as 'transparent but not provocative', and were aware that any engagement with local expertise might be considered as bias.[108] ISSR practitioners also indicated that they had to be very sensitive to the 'political charge' surrounding independence throughout the ISSR report.[109] These trends, moreover, have continued in the EULEX era. A EULEX practitioner recalled a conversation with their superiors:

> 'If there is no stability, Brussels will be on the phone with me asking why not. If there is, everything is as it should be'.[110]

Operating within a 'duration dilemma' (Paris and Sisk 2008), international SSR in Kosovo is caught between the long-term objective of capacity building and the short-term objectives of stability. UNMIK and EULEX staff explained that they were often put under pressure by their organisations to toe the line of stability and to follow headquarter agendas, rather than local expertise.[111] For example, a former EULEX practitioner described that were occasions where they wanted to share information with local EULEX staff, however, with certain international staff members interpreting security regulations very rigidly, local staff and researchers were unable to view certain documentation.[112]

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105 Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
106 Interview 22, Pristina, 08/2017.
107 Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
108 Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
109 Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017.
110 Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
111 Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
112 Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017.

4.4.4 Limited Time and Impracticality

In the fast-paced process of post-conflict recovery policy-makers have limited time and resources to engage with research (Young and Court 2004: 3). In attempting to build Kosovo's security sector from scratch in insecure and chaotic conditions, international practitioners often had little time to seek out research, build enduring relationships, or comprehend research findings. While UNMIK legal officers have previously indicated that they made use of international research to support their work, they also indicated that executive decision-making was often taken quickly and without the time to consult locals.[113] In fact, the priority for UNMIK legal officers on arrival was to 'get something up and running quickly', leaving no time to generate an informed grounding of the local context.[114] Any engagement with local legal experts, moreover, only occurred as part of an immense workload:

> 'There were incredible efforts to keep up with all the legal developments, international legal developments. Just to emphasise how difficult that was, can you only just imagine just keeping up with ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia) proceedings, was one person's fulltime job… and we didn't have the resources to allocate one person only to look at the ICTY proceedings even if you know they were so relevant to us'.[115]

An extensive workload hindered an engagement with local researchers throughout the ISSR process, and in the day-to-day practice of UNMIK, OSCE and EULEX practitioners, and international SSR advisors.[116] An ICITAP official indicated that while they did see value in reading local research, it was difficult to motivate staff to carry out additional tasks.[117] Similarly, an UNMIK official explained that they did not have sufficient time to conduct due diligence assessments to validate the quality, methodology and authenticity of local research, and as such, they would not engage with local research.[118] Other practitioners followed a 'top-down' logic, explaining that a lack of time to engage with local research stems from the limited prioritisation they afford to local research. For example, an UNMIK practitioner did not consider an engagement with local research as part of their job:

> 'You know you get caught up in the day to day work, which tends to take up most of people's time and so to be honest we simply don't have a lot of time to look

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[113] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[114] Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.
[115] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[116] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 19, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[117] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[118] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.

at research. I don't actively seek out research, what happens though is it comes across my emails because colleagues will forward me something that they think is interesting'.[119]

4.4.5 Management Discretion

The preferences and approaches of managers can impact on how discretion is exercised by subordinates throughout policy design and implementation (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015). Furthermore, those bureaucrats closest to the top tend to be most exposed to political issues (Lotta and Cavalcante 2015: 298). In Kosovo, the extent to which international SSR practitioners engage with local researchers is in part influenced by the personality of management.

UNMIK and EULEX practitioners indicated that the preferences of mission leaders impacted on organisational culture. Within UNMIK, an increasing engagement with local researchers was considered as a natural implication of a new mission leader who placed greater emphasis on 'evidence-based' intervention.[120] EULEX practitioners commented that heads of mission with military backgrounds opted for a centralised approach that disregarded engagement with civil society, while later diplomatic appointments were considered to have a more open approach.[121] While there was formal and informal engagement between EULEX and CSOs, there was a belief that messages were never carried up to the senior management level. As such, a former EULEX practitioner considered this variable to undermine the consistency of CSO engagement:

> 'If they (mission leaders) were a more civil society-oriented person or knew the importance of the CSOs then you would see a strong cooperation between that department and ultimately the entire mission with the CSO. Otherwise… I changed three or four, five heads of departments and you could notice depending on the person… one mandate, zero contact, next mandate when a new person came, a lot of contact which was also very confusing and a problem for transparency and cooperation within CSOs'.[122]

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[119] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[120] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[121] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017.
[122] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017

4.4.6 Lack of Awareness

Post-conflict destruction, displacement, and the long-term Yugoslav political suppression of independent Kosovar thought have all served to limit local research capacity. This context impacted on international awareness of Kosovar CSOs. International practitioners explained that 'there were very few (local research outputs), and if there were any, there were very, very few'[123], and 'among the people in Kosovo there was really very little… I wasn't aware of anything'.[124] In terms of the feeding of locally sourced information into UNMIK planning, 'the short answer is not very much'.[125] Subsequently, a former FIQ activist recalled little role for local research in the early post-conflict years:

> 'There were a number of strategies and laws that were developed during that time… a law on weapons and community-based policing strategies, Kosovo security strategy, a law on Kosovo intelligence agencies, establishment of police, establishment of Kosovo intelligence agency, establishment of Kosovo security force, transformation of Kosovo protection corps - Kosovo liberation army to Kosovo protection corps… so much has happened, but there was minimum input'.[126]

An insight into the limited practitioner awareness of local research was supplemented by the often-frank responses to interview questions. Interviewees indicated that they could recall 'nothing' in terms of local input, utilised only international research, and did not consider local research as relevant to their professional experience.[127] Even with the increasing visibility of local research organisations in the post-independence period, international interviewees maintained their limited awareness of the presence of local research in SSR, and could not recall any engagement with local researchers.[128] Furthermore, while many international practitioners were aware of local researchers in Pristina, they indicated that they had very limited awareness of Serbian organisations in North Kosovo.[129]

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[123] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017.
[124] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[125] Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.
[126] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[127] Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[128] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[129] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017.

4.4.7 Anti-Intellectualism

Highlighting a cynical aspect of research utilisation, practitioners show instances of anti-intellectualism that obstructs the use of local research (Stone 2002: 290). Evidence emulating this theme in Kosovo stemmed from an observation of international-international contestation, where the international practitioners have criticised other practitioners. UNMIK and EULEX practitioners revealed a perception that there were practitioners in Kosovo simply there for their contracts. A situation was described where practitioners had shown disappointment at capacity improvements in the Kosovo Police, as this reduced the need for international staff, while practitioners were considered to take steps to safeguard their job security.[130] Another international interviewee explained that the reason to leave post-conflict environments is because you have become 'structurally redundant, and that is success', though for many, this is hard to admit.[131] Furthermore, a former EULEX practitioner criticised those practitioners who considered their role as a travel opportunity, rather than taking opportunities to learn about Kosovo:

> 'They were planning on Monday where to go for the weekend basically, they have their cars, free fuel, Greece is couple of hours away, few hours away, Montenegro a few hours away, Albania a few hours away'.[132]

Furthermore, international SSR practitioners often do not engage with local research because they consider it to be of little empirical value. An UNMIK legal officer criticised that there were international staff who were unaware that they held preconceptions about the local context, who didn't consider informal engagement as part of their role, and who were simply not interested in a deep understanding of the situation.[133] For example, recognising that many of their colleagues have no interaction with local researchers, a EULEX practitioner explained that they regularly circulated local research outputs in their office, though 'they have never been touched'.[134] Likewise, an ICITAP official explained that engagement was a personal decision that many colleagues did not share, while highlighting that colleagues with a security background lacked experience in working with civilian SSR experts.[135] An engagement with research was also considered to be increasingly irrelevant with growing experience:

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[130] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[131] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[132] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[133] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[134] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[135] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.

'After you've been here a while you feel like rightly or wrongly, oh I understand this place I have a handle on it there's nothing that any research can tell me that I don't already know'.[136]

Existing studies have highlighted the political capture local elites hold over various arms of Kosovo's state-building process (Jackson 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). In this context, it is difficult for local researchers to engage with national security institutions where there is a limited legacy of decentralised decision-making. For example, researchers from the KLI, GLPS and BIRN explained that political elites had often denied them access to requests for public documents on judicial performance.[137] Furthermore, while civil society engagement has improved, a KCSS researcher explained that an individualistic approach to policy-making persists in the security sector:

'We have reached a level that there is a general understanding that we need to listen to civil society, and that their opinions are valued. The exception has to do with individuals, because some of the individuals may have an issue with you personally, or they may opt to push themselves a policy that would make that process a one man show'.[138]

4.5 Negative International Perceptions of Local Research

In Chapter 2, 'discretion' outlined a useful analytical tool through which to explore the decision-making preferences and personalities of practitioners (Evans 2010; Maynard Moody and Musheno 2000). In addition, the RAPID framework considered research credibility, quality, relevance, and interaction as factors which affect research use (Young and Court 2004: 3-4). An awareness of the contrasting political preferences and attitudes of practitioners complicates the researcher-practitioner relationship. Highlighting a key aspect of local-international contestation, practitioner discretion is often 'resistant' to local research and considers local research to lack credibility. While later sections of this thesis analyse receptive international practitioners as those who are open to local researcher expertise and actively challenge the barriers put up by their organisations, this section portrays receptive practitioners as 'exceptions' (Autesserre 2014).

The limited engagement of international practitioners with local research often results from a deliberate decision driven by negative perceptions. In Kosovo, international practitioners utilise

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[136] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[137] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.
[138] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

their personal due diligence to assess the quality of local research. An international practitioner explained:

> 'How do you judge… that a civil society organisation… organised themselves or setting themselves up to be a voice on security and justice… then they needed to know quite a lot about security and justice before they could do it'.[139]

International practitioners look up the existing work of local think tanks, enquire widely about their staff, and access previous publications to generate assessments of credibility.[140] As this section demonstrates, perceptions of bias, political affiliation, methodological malpractice, communication style and topical relevance provide a series of concerns for international practitioners.

4.5.1 Perceptions of Bias

An engagement with biased CSOs is politically unacceptable for international practitioners who are required to maintain impartiality. In this context, perceptions of the bias of local research deters international practitioners from taking local research seriously. For example, UNDP and OSCE practitioners expressed concern over the community representation of research, such as the different perceptions of security and community safety between the Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian communities.[141] Similarly, Pristina-based international practitioners indicated that they were aware that they were receiving a 'particular' perspective, often from well-educated urban sources:

> 'They all communicated with me in English, so my ability to access civil society at the grass roots level was constrained by the fact that I don't speak Albanian or Serbian. I was always listening to the voices of people that had been able to learn English and had that opportunity'.[142]

While Western education, research training, and English communication skills provided critical capacity for local researchers to communicate with international practitioners and advocate on security issues, this is not a Kosovo-wide capacity. Consequently, there was a concern that local

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[139] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017.
[140] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[141] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
[142] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.

research could not provide a voice representative of Kosovo's varied ethnic fabric. Here, international practitioners explained that local research rarely made reference to the security concerns of additional minority groups, such as the Gorani or Roma.[143] These practitioners considered it important to assess how local researchers fit into Kosovo's ethnic and social fabric prior to any interaction to prevent accusations of international favouritism.[144] Subsequently, negative perceptions of bias ensure that there are occasions where local research has been considered as too 'partisan' to engage with.[145]

4.5.2 Perceptions of Political Affiliation

With international actors required to appear impartial, international practitioners indicated that they were 'put off' using local advice, and with more cynicism, another explained that they did not consider there to be a neutral think tank in Kosovo, and that they would rather describe local think tanks as 'externally funded research institutes'.[146] Perceptions of the political affiliations of local think tanks and the extent to which they are influenced by funding contribute to credibility concerns. A NATO source considered international standing as an important indicator of credibility:

> **'**What is their international experience… what you don't want is someone who is completely submerged in local politics without seeing the bigger picture. So, someone who has worked abroad, a local who has been involved in international organisations has a much broader scope and won't be restricted'.[147]

While international practitioners frequently commented on credible organisations in Kosovo, such as the KCSS, KIPRED, GLPS and KLI, accusation of potential political affiliation is problematic. In the view of a UNDP practitioner:

> 'There were very few truly independent civil society actors in Kosovo who were not affiliated either with the state through funding or relationships, or with particular political actors in Kosovo'.[148]

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[143] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[144] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017.
[145] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[146] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[147] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[148] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.

There are also concerns over the commitment of CSO staff. A local UNDP researcher suggested that there are individuals who use civil society as a launch pad to move into a political career, and subsequently, if they lose an election they return to civil society.[149] Similarly, international practitioners expressed concern that researchers taking up senior positions in think tanks had been 'co-opted' into government positions or Kosovo's diplomatic service.[150] These concerns, even if unwarranted, undermine credible local think tanks, with the negative perceptions of a few individuals undermining CSO reputations more broadly. A former UNMIK and EULEX practitioner described an environment where local think tanks are often seen by practitioners as a 'nuisance', rendering attempts to advocate on security issues 'nigh on impossible'.[151]

4.5.3 Research Quality and Methodology Concerns

International practitioners expressed concern over the quality of local research. For example, interviewees considered the presentation and language quality of local research papers as a first indicator of quality. In a context where English is often a second or third language for local researchers, the exceptional skill and effort put into producing security analysis may not be fully appreciated by international practitioners. A EULEX practitioner explained how these concerns complicate local research uptake:

> 'You open them up and read them, do they make any sense? there is quite a big difference in quality of some of the outputs… from my perspective also being an English speaker, if I open up a research report that they have done and they do an introduction and a conclusion that isn't really clear to me, and the English is bad, and there's grammar mistakes all over the place, then obviously that would be a very initial thing to think, are these people credible?'.[152]

With Serbian CSOs in North Kosovo developing later than those in Pristina, organisations such as Aktiv aspire to be think tanks, but are not quite 'at that level'.[153] It was explained that there are only a small number of qualified political science researchers in North Kosovo, which limits the depth of analysis produced. Furthermore, while there are strong qualitative research skills across Kosovo's research sector, local researchers offered a perception that there are limited quantitative skills due to lack of training. Although later sections of this thesis identify quantitative public

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[149] Interview 28, Pristina, 08/2017.
[150] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[151] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[152] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017.
[153] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

opinion surveys as an effective means to challenge SSR, the analytical utility of perception surveys was questioned by practitioners. A EULEX practitioner indicated that new local research organisations 'don't do a great deal of getting behind the statistics that they 'eke' out, and they don't do much in the way of policy recommendations'.[154] An UNMIK practitioner followed up on this by suggesting they 'don't have full confidence in local surveys', and without an in-depth analysis, statistics rarely offer new information.[155]

There are concerns over methodological validity. An ICITAP advisor explained that they had regularly checked the annex of local research papers to find that interview samples were unbalanced; that data of a particular view had been excluded; while also indicating that some think tanks 'create problems to solve' in order to attract funding.[156] This perception was even expressed by a local researcher, who knew of incidents where 'the findings don't necessarily show you the entire situation… if you design the research in a way that ignores problems'.[157] These perceptions suggest that local researchers face an uphill struggle against negative perceptions.

4.5.4 Research Outreach and Focus

Researcher-practitioner disconnect and practitioner preconceptions about the 'relevance' of research provide two factors which undermine research uptake (Jones, H. et al. 2013; Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009). Here, the communication style of local researchers impacts on practitioner interest. International SSR staff identified an overly academic analysis as off putting, showing preference for policy-oriented work that can provide immediate answers.[158] At the same time, practitioners criticised the advocacy strategies of local organisations. For example, EULEX practitioners indicated that they did not engage with local CSOs because they considered them to be 'confrontational'.[159] Indeed, a KCSS researcher explained that local CSOs were not always adept at building policy relationships and had elevated expectations of their role in a transitional context:

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[154] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[155] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[156] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[157] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017.
[158] Interview 9, Skype, 07/2017.
[159] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

'I think there was a certain degree of arrogance that may have been created by some civil society activists, because they took for granted, they took automatically this idea that civil society should have a role, and that the state and the international leadership should consider them.'[160]

The topical focus of local research also stimulates apprehension. Firstly, this concerns a local fixation on particular research trends, such as Kosovo's extensive research into violent extremism from 2015. While noting that excellent work on CVE has been produced by organisations such as the KCSS, there were concerns about the broader trend. Practitioners were aware that local researchers have offered different interpretations of the causes of radicalisation, different options for the prevention of radicalisation and the reintegration of foreign fighters who had travelled to Syria and Iraq.[161] Constructive local research was described as that which attempts to deal with psychological trauma, considers context sensitive reintegration, and focuses on prevention by considering the drivers of extremism, while more aggressive measures and arguments critical of religious practice were considered to be damaging for Kosovo's CVE discourse.[162] There was also a suggestion by an international interviewee that CVE research had become an easy option, and that continued research might lose utility:

'There is a lot of money coming into the CVE area. My personal advice is that it has become a little over saturated in terms of the number of conferences and papers, and it would nice to see some of that money invested in specific projects that actually create things'.[163]

Secondly, practitioners expressed concern at topical irrelevance, indicating that local research would only be taken seriously if they worked on a topic relevant to NATO, UNMIK or EULEX mission aims.[164] On the one hand, this emulates notions identified by critical studies of international intervention, highlighting the immovability of international missions and the lack of flexibility in policy-making (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Other explanations are more practical, such as that of a EULEX practitioner, who indicated that local researchers could do more to focus on pressing security issues:

'One of the most pressing security issues in the North is illegal wood cutting. It's huge business, huge organised crime. A lot of the forest fires in the region are started by people chopping down wood illegally and want to cover their tracks. It happens every summer, and you saw the danger in Croatia and Montenegro

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[160] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[161] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[162] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[163] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017.
[164] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.

this year, huge forest fires. But yet, I haven't read one piece of research about how to combat the problem, the legal dimensions, economic dimensions, status related dimensions. These are the tangible day to day security issues… they are not popular'.[165]

Nonetheless, it is important to note that EULEX does not go to donors and explain what research should be commissioned, meaning there is no guidance as to what might be of interest to EULEX for local researchers.

Following on from the analysis conducted in sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5, Figure 27, shown below, updates the LRCF in the context of Kosovo. Firstly, it incorporates local research into a broader 'Pool of Knowledge', where local research must compete with international experience, research and outsourcing. In this sense, the updated LRCF portrays the relative role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. Secondly, it includes the multitude of political barriers put up by international organisations which hinder the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. These barriers complicate the engagement of practitioners with research and are represented by a series of red, dotted arrows. Thirdly, it adds detail to the description of resistant practitioners, highlighting the behaviours and attitudes that limit an engagement with local research.

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[165] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

Figure 27: Updating the LRCF in the case of Kosovo
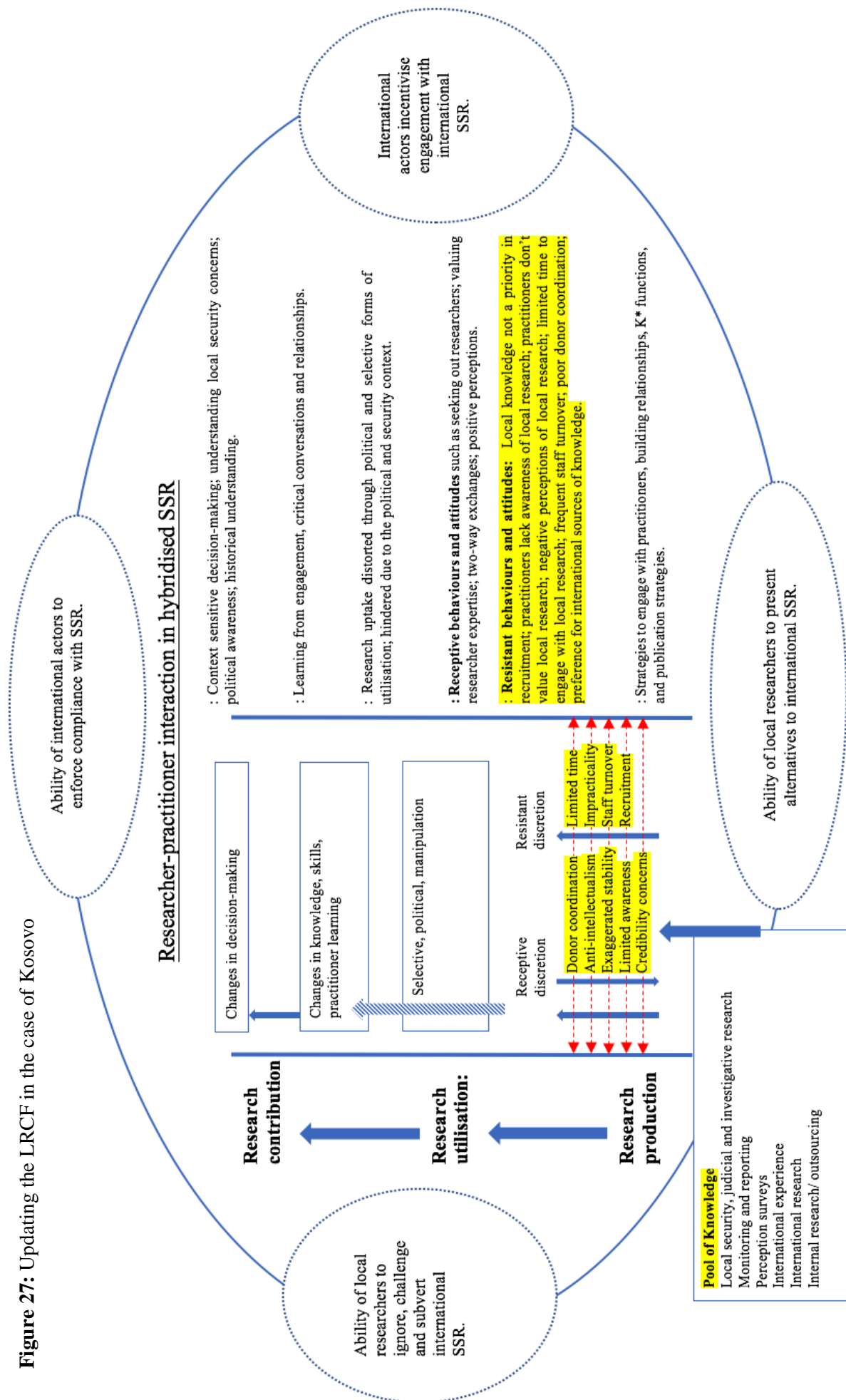
4.6 Local Research in a Complex Context

In cases of post-conflict intervention, the security, stability and political context impacts on researcher-practitioner interaction, including the stage of post-conflict recovery, the funding conditions of donors and the capacity of civil society (Jones, H. et al. 2013; Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009; Young and Court 2004: 3). A national MoIA official reflected on the disconnect between local expertise and international missions in this context:

> 'I am sure that on… most… almost 80% of issues, they (locals) are more aware of what is going on than somebody who is coming from United States: ''I used to be here…'', yes, I understand that you used to be everywhere but, particularly in Kosovo, by two hours driving you can get around Kosovo, and you know everybody. Those people know exactly, because international missions sometimes make mistakes because they are looking for a yes-man, wherever they go they are looking for someone to say yes, but those people are not going to bring you real information. In this case, you should find out locals who are credible and who have some knowledge and support them'.[166]

As this section explains, Kosovo's post-conflict context has complicated the establishment of a local research sector. A local dependency on international funding has fostered a complicated local-international political relationship, while local security research is required to engage with a highly sensitive SSR process.

4.6.1 Post-Conflict Research Capacity

As a consequence of decades of political and educational marginalisation and conflict, the foundations of Kosovo's research sector have taken time to take root. Repression from Belgrade in the 1980's encouraged educational segregation, including the expulsion of Albanian teachers and closing of secondary schools. Subsequently, in the 1990's education was provided to Albanians through a parallel educational system, largely delivered underground (Selenica 2016: 140). Further displacement and relocation following conflict stimulated an involuntary brain drain of local expertise, and, subsequently, a context where informed Kosovars had minimal access to international policy-makers.[167] This ensured limited means for a political engagement between researchers and policy-making.

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[166] Interview 27, 08/2017, Pristina.
[167] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.

This context has had a lasting impact on the capacity of Kosovo's university sector. Following conflict, a number of public universities reopened, while new private educational institutions emerged. There are public universities in Pristina, Prizren, Gjilan, Peja and Mitrovica, with private universities established as the post-conflict years progressed. This includes: the Pristina-based Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), which is linked to the RIT in New York; the Pristina-based University for Business and Technology (UBT), and the 'AAB' and 'ISPE' Colleges. These institutions have provided an important source of education, development and training for Kosovo's young population. While universities were praised for their teaching ability, university academics and think tank researchers noted their view that they are not research institutions.[168] Private universities, such as the American University in Kosovo (AUK), AAB and UBT, are exclusively teaching institutions without a research capacity, and are limited as 'they teach more or less the same stuff'. For example, AUK offers teaching and modules in international relations, public policy and governance. While UBT offers teaching and modules in political science and law at BA and MA level, it does not offer doctoral research courses. In this context, higher education does not necessarily prepare students to conduct policy-oriented SSR research.

Limitations can be placed on the consultations between UNMIK legal officers and local academics throughout UNMIK legal reform. While local legal academics and KLC experts participated within the JAC-LM and interacted with UNMIK legal officials, interviewees reserved criticisms of local expertise. While a former UNMIK legal official indicated that local academics provided useful technical clarification when drafting the criminal procedure code, they were also critical:

> 'In all honesty… their knowledge of the law was not what one would expect from a Professor specialising in that area'.[169]

Likewise, another UNMIK legal official described the involvement of local university staff and students in legal reform as formalistic and lacking in critical engagement with the legislative process.[170]

A difficult political context has also led to questionable security expertise in university institutions. A practitioner with UNMIK, OSCE and EULEX experience suggested that 'all they do is read out text books, and most of the text books aren't based on any evidence-based research

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[168] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[169] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[170] Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.

it's all recycled foreign materials'.[171] At the same time, a government official described university linkages with national security and judicial institutions as 'one of the weakest' in comparison to other governance sectors.[172] In this context, a local university academic noted that even where there are some research outputs on topics of security, 'these outputs are perhaps not worth the paper it is written on'.[173] They also explained that the lack of English language skills in the teaching of political sciences further limits the ability of higher education institutions to engage with international policy-making:

> 'If you look at the literature in Albanian language, for example, it's poor. It's poor. How many do have access to English literature? How many do really use English literature? I guess a few, but not the majority'.

Subsequently, for the large part local universities have been unable to produce policy-oriented analysis and challenge internationally-led SSR.

Several practitioners receptive to an engagement with local research as a means to fulfil an international 'knowledge gap' described their frustration at this context when entering Kosovo. For a practitioner with UNMIK, OSCE and EULEX experience: 'I would have liked to have seen the university more involved in all sections of the formal justice system… its development, public expectation of how it should operate and how it should behave'[174]. Despite their frequent searches for local academic research, it was suggested that there was 'no active research into how things are working and where the gaps are and where things need to improve, nothing'. An early SSR advisor also indicated that 'it would have been really useful if there had been a research background, looking into what to do after the war'.[175]

In a context where the university sector produces minimal SSR research, local researchers provided a common consensus that alternative local research organisations have taken on the political responsibility to challenge Kosovo's SSR and fill an academic gap.[176] As sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the thesis show, local think tanks and investigative organisations monitor and report on the performance of judicial institutions, investigate malpractice and provide local alternatives

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[171] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[172] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[173] Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[174] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[175] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[176] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 27, 08/2017, Pristina; Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 41, Pristina, 09/17; Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.

to international SSR where the university sector does not. At the same time, local think tanks supplement the lack of research training in universities, with the KCSS, Aktiv, KIPRED and GLPS regularly recruiting interns and junior researchers out of university. Offering experience in research methods, report writing and data collection, these positions support the development of staff and the institutional longevity of local think tanks. Similarly, BIRN trains staff in monitoring capabilities in-house as the analytical skills are not generated elsewhere. Local think tanks also provide resources that contribute to the education and training of students and aspiring researchers. A KCSS researcher noted: 'I see lots of people in the master's studies, and even PhD, not only BA level, they rely on our products, because there is no such product from academia'; while the KCSS also offer publications in both English and Albanian. In addition, media channels such as 'Life in Kosovo', public conferences and discussions provide further channels to publicly disseminate critical analysis of SSR.

4.6.2 Brain Drain

''Brain drain'', understood as the loss of researchers to other forms of employment, provides 'one of the biggest problems for think tanks'.[177] It depletes the political activation of local knowledge on the ground, and limits capacity to challenge international policy-making. While it is already difficult to become an established think tank in post-conflict conditions, it is also challenging to maintain a roster of qualified research staff. Although recruitment of students provides think tanks with an important foundation of junior researchers, experienced researchers are harder to retain. Senior researchers provide priceless independent experience, extensive networks of policy contacts, publication and presentation experience, and subsequently a credible profile.

The institutional memory of think tanks is threatened by staff who move into public sector roles. For example, KIPRED has not been able to prevent the turnover of senior staff. A senior KIPRED researcher explained how three senior staff members were lost to ambassadorial appointments and senior public-sector roles, meaning that KIPRED has had to re-establish itself.[178] This turnover can have a negative impact on the capacity of a local think tank. Another local interviewee explained: 'it (KIPRED) exists, but on the other side it does not exist, because those people who run KIPRED do not work for KIPRED anymore'.[179]

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[177] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017.
[178] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017.
[179] Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017.

This ongoing brain drain is emblematic of local-local and local-international contestation. Here, local researchers trained in critical policy analysis might seek better paid and non-critical opportunities in politics, business, and the senior civil service. In addition, the critical potential of the local research sector might be stifled by the recruitment of educated Kosovars to international organisations where wages are higher. Indeed, Kosovar students educated in North American and Western European universities do not always use their research skills, training and higher education within Kosovo's research sector. From 2005 and 2006, UK Chevening scholarships provided Kosovar citizens with a high-quality education and training in social science research.[180] A number of the local researchers interviewed for this thesis have benefited from international scholarships before returning to Kosovo to contribute to the growth of the local epistemic community. Despite this, with greater education comes more opportunity, and educated Kosovars do not necessarily commit to the civil society sector.

4.6.3 Funding Dependency

This section indicates how international support can create a dependency which can impact negatively on international perceptions of research credibility. In line with the 'dependency dilemma' of international intervention (Paris and Sisk 2008), some measure of dependency is often unavoidable, but without balance there is a risk that international support will foster local dependency on international funds to the detriment of a long-term, independent and self-sustaining research sector. Local researchers have engaged in a difficult political balancing act where they need to respect donor red lines despite this harming the legitimacy of local solutions (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 20-21).

In the immediate post-conflict years, the UK DFID met with prospective CSOs and considered the extent to which they could be supported. The former head of the DFID mission explained that funding was complicated from the outset:

> 'There were others who came along who, quite frankly, didn't get past the first interview… really what they were saying was I need to make some money…this sounds like good way of doing it. I'll become an NGO… and you see they get a little bit of funding and then they die… it happened in Kosovo'.[181]

[180] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.
[181] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017.

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The issue of funding remained contentious as the early post-conflict years progressed. A former UNDP practitioner held the perception that the influx of international funds created an atmosphere of survival for CSOs:

> 'The flood of international donor money into civil society organisations meant a rapid professionalisation of those organisations and a lot of… what we would now call social entrepreneurship, but really what looked like business-oriented NGO's that existed just to attract grants'.[182]

Other international practitioners shared this perception, suggesting that CSOs held a 'short term' and 'donation driven' approach, with 'very little room for independent research'.[183]

Confirming the pressures of funding, a local interviewee indicated that 'with the think tank sector you always seek for funding, and for funding you need to deliver'.[184] This depicts an imbalance in the local-international relationship, with international actors funding local compliance (Mac Ginty 2011). Local researchers explained that funding can influence the way problems are framed, who publications target or support, how policy options are presented, while also minimising critical voices.[185] For example, a KLI researcher indicated that the reward of international funds had, on occasion, come with the caveat that judicial research was not allowed to criticise EULEX, while they also suggested that less critical organisations are more likely to attract international funds.

A secondary effect of the complicated funding-research relationship is the heightened credibility concerns of international practitioners. An ICITAP adviser indicated an awareness that there was a risk that research findings had to be altered ahead of publication to meet the needs and expectations of funders.[186] In addition, interviewees suggested that the international misunderstanding of the local context means that funding can undermine the extent to which the research process and outputs are truly 'local' and representative societal concerns. For example, a local researcher explained that donor parameters were often out of touch with the security and safety needs and fears of communities in the North of Kosovo.[187] At the same time, an

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[182] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[183] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[184] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[185] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 22, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[186] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[187] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.

international interviewee indicated that funding encouraged local research to focus on central security issues, leading to limited debate on regional security issues and municipal security administration.[188] This discrepancy between the focus of research outputs and what is actually needed in a post-conflict society undermines the extent to which local research is taken seriously.

Adding to the dynamic of local compliance, international funding has determined the topic of local research. This was described by a local researcher:

> 'Donors like to focus on big issues and these change… there are trends and waves and so you have to follow the trend… so there is basically very little room for independent research… and so whatever funding there is, it has to be focussed on the donor's priorities'.[189]

Furthermore, in the immediate post-conflict years, international practitioners described a 'grab the money type environment', where they were put off considering the recommendations and analysis of think tanks which they considered had spread themselves 'too thin'.[190] These perceptions have continued into the post-independence years and around the recent trend of CVE research. While interviewees indicated that there are local organisations who were producing innovative and high-quality research into CVE, they also suggested that there are organisations who were attracted to the topic for financial reasons.[191] Subsequently, an EU office official described a perception that some think tanks have diluted their expertise:

> 'If an organisation has started, in mainly agriculture or rural development, and has then moved into public administration, and then anti-corruption, and come back to gender issues… this for us is not a good reliable source of information'.

Nonetheless, international practitioners are firmly divided on the funding dilemma. Practitioners also portrayed negative perceptions of the funding-research relationship as overly cynical in a context where local think tanks need funding to function. For example, EULEX and OSCE practitioners understood the difficult position facing local research, blaming donors for the occasions where local research focused on the directives of funders rather than the needs on the ground.[192] In circumstances where funding is required for organisational development and

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[188] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[189] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017
[190] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017.
[191] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.
[192] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

survival, it is especially difficult for new or emerging local think tanks to establish a credible reputation on a particular SSR topic.

From the local perspective, the 'short term approach' of donors means that some CSOs have little choice but to survive project to project, limiting the prospects of a long-term plan for self-sufficiency.[193] For example, a KIPRED researcher explained that there have been occasions where grants awarded were too small to cover the administrative expenses of a research project. Subsequently, they indicated that staff have been required to donate a portion of their salary to ensure project continuation.[194] With the difficult dependency dilemma facing local think tanks, it is unrealistic to expect all organisations to be willing to risk financial security. Additionally, the donor emphasis on 'small grants and very fast, tangible deliverables', can cut local research projects short.[195] This has proved to be the case with the KIPRED 'Kosovo Security Observer' (KIPRED 2016a, 2016b, 2017a). Starting in 2016, the intention was to run these publications for several years. Nonetheless, they were stopped due to a lack of long-term funding commitment.

4.6.4 The Sensitivity of SSR

Researchers often face circumstances where 'official' information is outside of their hands (Stone 2002). Likewise, the local SSR research process in Kosovo is often characterised by secrecy and a lack of trust by international actors and difficult access where local politics closes ranks to CSOs. In a context of constrained political space, sections 5.2 and 5.3 show that local research has primarily contributed to the 'softer' and community focused areas of SSR, including the development of CVE prevention strategies, SALW control and collection, and working towards the accountability, and transparency of the security architecture.[196] Alternatively, SSR in 'high stakes' areas is considered a process closed to the inputs of local research.[197] Reflecting on their engagements with UNMIK and EULEX a local interviewee indicated that international actors often took the opportunity to 'close doors' by citing the sensitivity of information.[198] This context also ensures that some topics of research are difficult to explore. While the KCSS and KIPRED

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[193] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[194] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017.
[195] Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.
[196] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017.
[197] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.
[198] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.

have conducted research into the KIA, a local researcher considered research into secretive, intelligence-based aspects of SSR as complicated.[199]

SSR sensitivity also thwarts researcher access. EU and EULEX practitioners explained that EULEX is closed to engagement with civil society due to the sensitivity and secrecy of its operations.[200] A EULEX practitioner described the difficulty facing local research into EULEX performance:

> 'If I wanted to show you the OPLAN (Operational Plan) you would have to come to the office, on my PC, and view it on my secured access. Local members of staff aren't allowed to read the OPLAN… you're a researcher wanting to research the work of EULEX, your starting point should be the OPLAN, but it's not accessible to you. So, unless you have someone in EULEX who's willing to take the risk… but even then, it's a substantial document that you would have literally 20 minutes access to. I mean you could argue that there are good reasons in certain areas why that is so, partly because of references to concerns of member states etcetera, and wanting to maintain some secrecy. But it's a pretty vital document, otherwise your understanding of what EULEX does and how it does it is dependent on having conversations with people who are told internally that they shouldn't really go and talk to researchers even if the researchers can guarantee their anonymity'.[201]

With local elites, patronage networks and political capture holding power across Kosovo's national institutions (Jackson 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018), including the security sector, SSR research challenging the performance of national institutions emulates a local-local contestation. The investigation of a deeply sensitive political process yields a number of challenges, threats and pressures from local elites who are closed to criticism, requiring local researchers to show significant resilience (Richmond and Pogodda 2016). For example, FIQ and Aktiv researchers explained that activities in North Kosovo have faced political pressures from Serbian sources who are opposed to the international presence or cooperation with Kosovar institutions.[202] Alternatively, the monitoring of judicial performance by organisations such as BIRN, the KLI and GLPS, have been responded to with various threats.[203] A BIRN journalist explained how the organisation had been on the receiving end of personal attacks on staff and property. In addition, a KLI researcher indicated that the KLI has faced problems after exposing malpractice within the judicial sector:

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[199] Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017.
[200] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.
[201] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[202] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[203] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.

> 'The main problem that we had was prosecutors when we expose their corruption, in some cases they initiated criminal proceedings against us, we had visits from police, from financial units, you know, so they misused the power of the state to threaten or interfere in our work.'

Following on from the analysis conducted in section 4.6, Figure 28, shown below, updates an understanding of local research in the play of politics in Kosovo's SSR. It provides additional information on the complex context facing local researchers. Two red dotted boxes have been added to the ovals that highlight the ability of local researchers to challenge and provide alternatives to international SSR. These incorporate the factors which complicate the ability of local researchers to put forward challenges to international SSR and suggest alternatives. The boxes highlight a difficult context consisting of post-conflict disruption, academic weakness, brain drain, funding dependency, SSR sensitivity and threats facing researchers. Furthermore, additional information in the ovals complicates the international-local relationship. These depict the ability of international actors to enforce local compliance with international frameworks through funding, while highlighting role of funding as an incentive for local researchers.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has begun to analyse the role of local research in Kosovo's international-led SSR. It demonstrated the ways in which a complex post-conflict and political context has hampered the development of Kosovo's local security research sector. In this context, international research, knowledge and experience have played an important role in the decision-making of international SSR practitioners and are considered as more important than local knowledge of the security context. Furthermore, the chapter illustrates the ways in which the organisations making up Kosovo's international SSR architecture adopt practices and uphold political preferences that act as barriers to exchanges between international practitioners and local researchers. The testimonial evidence leads to the finding that there is little incentive for practitioners to build and sustain relationships with local researchers when knowledge of the local context is not a requirement for recruitment, where there is significant international practitioner turnover, and when there is limited time to engage with research. At the same time, multifarious coordination issues between international organisations and the international emphasis on stability complicate researcher-SSR engagement. The limited engagement of international practitioners with local research also stems from negative perceptions of local research credibility. In the evidence brought forward in this chapter, international practitioners have reported a limited awareness, interest and value in the

activities of local researchers, and hold negative perceptions of the bias, political affiliation, methodological malpractice and relevance of local research outputs.

Figure 28: Updating the LRCF in the case of Kosovo

Researcher-practitioner interaction in hybridised SSR

International actors incentivise engagement with international SSR. Local research supported by international funding.

Ability of international actors to enforce compliance with SSR. Local research dependency on international funding.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats

Ability of local researchers to present alternatives to international SSR.

Ability of local researchers to ignore, challenge and subvert international SSR.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats

Pool of Knowledge
Local security, judicial and investigative research
Monitoring and reporting
Perception surveys
International experience
International research
Internal research/ outsourcing

Research contribution

Research utilisation:

Research production

Changes in decision-making

Changes in knowledge, skills, practitioner learning

Selective, political, manipulation

Receptive discretion

Resistant discretion

Donor coordination
Anti-intellectualism
Exaggerated stability
Limited awareness
Credibility concerns

Limited time
Impracticality
Staff turnover
Recruitment

: Context sensitive decision-making; understanding local security concerns; political awareness; historical understanding.

: Learning from engagement, critical conversations and relationships.

: Research uptake distorted through political and selective forms of utilisation; hindered due to the political and security context.

: **Receptive behaviours and attitudes** such as seeking out researchers; valuing researcher expertise; two-way exchanges; positive perceptions.

: **Resistant behaviours and attitudes:** Local knowledge not a priority in recruitment; practitioners lack awareness of local research; practitioners don't value local research; negative perceptions of local research; limited time to engage with local research; frequent staff turnover; poor donor coordination; preference for international sources of knowledge.

: Strategies to engage with practitioners, building relationships, K* functions, and publication strategies.

Chapter 5: The Contribution of Local Research to Kosovo's SSR[204]

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 demonstrated how international 'barriers' undermine the engagement between local research and SSR. A complex post-conflict context has hindered the development of Kosovo's local research sector, undermining the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR and limiting researcher-practitioner engagement. Nonetheless, through the analysis of interview testimonies and local research papers, Chapter 5 demonstrates that local research organisations have an established capacity and have formed collaborative relationships with international practitioners. The analysis of three case studies on the engagement between individual SSR practitioners and local research highlights the nature of individual practitioner and researcher personalities and research quality as key variables driving engagement. The case studies demonstrate that this interaction can lead to practitioner learning through a greater consideration for the local context in decision-making. In a context of local-local, local-international and international-international contestation, Chapter 5 argues that local researchers consistently challenge international SSR and contribute to changes in international practitioner knowledge and decision-making. Chapter 5 continues to update the visual representation of the LRCF in Kosovo, and in Figure 33 (Chapter 6), provides a depiction of the empirical evidence in this Chapter.

5.2 Local Research: Challenging International SSR in Kosovo

For some commentators, local CSOs have been largely excluded throughout SSR (Qehaja and Prezelj 2017). For example, the development of the National Security Strategy (NSS) is considered the result of top-down policy-making where ICO officials challenged the locally driven nature of the process and opted for a strategy with limited local input (Qehaja and Prezelj 2017: 411). Hybridity provides a useful tool to explore this local-international relationship. As Richmond indicates (2010: 699), there is a tension within internationally-led state-building, where the everyday activities of local actors claim ownership of politics that responds to their needs, even attempting to modify international approaches. Similarly, evidence from interview

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[204] Some of the findings, data and analysis in this chapter have been used in Phillipps, J. (2018) 'The Role of Epistemic Communities: Local Think Tanks, International Practitioners and Security Sector Reform in Kosovo'. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 18, no. 2: 281-299.

testimonies demonstrates that local researchers direct various challenges to international SSR and national security institutions. Following independence in 2008, there has been new space for local research organisations to emerge and form a policy-oriented 'epistemic community' (Haas 1992, 2016). By monitoring and evaluating institutional performance, questioning legitimacy, investigating corruption, providing local approaches, and challenging international SSR knowledge, local researchers have contested SSR and brought input to a centralised process. At the same time, international practitioners challenge the epistemic practices of their organisations. In line with concepts of 'discretion' (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015), this section identifies practitioners who, critical of the reliance of their organisation on international knowledge, actively seek out local research as an alternative information source.

Box 2: Summary of KCSS research challenging international SSR

Kosovo Security Barometer	• Measures public trust in international security actors and the internationally-designed domestic security architecture to assess SSR legitimacy • Provides a locally designed, rather than institutionally or internationally designed, source of public perception data. This offers an assessment of security concerns from the community perspective • Uses perception data to establish baselines for research projects, and directs research papers based on community concerns • Reflects extensive access to local communities, languages and culture which internationals cannot reach
Countering Violent Extremism	• Advocates for adaptation of international approaches to CVE • Provides new knowledge on different areas of radicalisation, such as the role of women and the Internet • The KCSS has access to local communities affected by radicalisation, and conducts interviews with former foreign fighters, which international security organisations cannot reach • 'Localises' the findings of international CVE research in Kosovo's context • Fills knowledge gaps where international CVE research has missed vital information

5.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluating Institutional Performance

Local actors do not simply accept the translation of international norms into Kosovo's context (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Local researchers identified public opinion surveys as a political tool to claim SSR ownership, monitoring the performance of national institutions

established through international SSR, as well as the ongoing presence of international actors.[205] Evidence supporting interview data is found in the publications of FIQ, Aktiv, GLPS, KCSS and KIPRED, who have all collected perception data and produced reports that assess the functioning of national and international actors. Remembering local CSOs are well trusted among Kosovar citizens, as shown in Figure 24 (42% to some extent; 20% trust; 5% high trust), it is logical to suggest that think tanks are an institution that can legitimately raise public concerns to Kosovo's security architecture.

One of few local CSOs working towards the transparency of SSR in the early post-conflict years was FIQ. A former FIQ employee explained how public perception surveys were used to bring to the attention of security institutions the concerns of wider society and to identify any technical issues where emerging institutions might improve.[206] Evidence of this is found within two FIQ publications, firstly: *Human Security in Kosovo: A Survey of Perceptions* (FIQ 2007a). This report investigated the perceptions of security, community safety and SALW prevalence across 1153 respondents. At the time of data collection (December 2006), 24.1% of respondents indicated that they had limited trust in the UNMIK police, with 18% having no trust (FIQ 2007a: 33-34). A second report, *Kosovo at the Crossroads: Perceptions of Conflict, access to justice and opportunities for peace in Kosovo*, conducted a conflict analysis identifying community drivers of conflict, summarising that communities take security into their own hands due to their limited confidence in international judicial procedure, and that individuals keep hold of weapons due to persistent insecurity (FIQ 2007b: 6). These reports provide a challenge to international SSR by communicating the limited local support for international decision-making.

The post-independence years added weight to the political challenge of public opinion surveys, which interviewees stressed were a means to act as 'watchdog' over security institutions.[207] Here, local research challenges the legacy of international decision-making. A good example is provided by the KCSS KSB and its annual measurements of public levels of trust. In 2012, levels of satisfaction in EULEX were reported as 22%, while in 2015, levels of trust in EULEX were reported as 16% (KCSS 2012; 2015c). The KSB is also able to adapt to the changing security context and threats facing Kosovo. For example, a 2018 KSB edition focused on Kosovo's foreign policy and dialogue with Serbia (KCSS 2018b), with an additional version exploring citizens

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[205] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 28, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[206] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[207] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 28, Pristina, 08/2017; 09/2017; Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

perceptions and community responses to the return of foreign fighters (KCSS 2018c). According to a KCSS researcher, the measurement of trust in institutions, threats and policy outputs contributes to an assessment of the legitimacy of SSR in the eyes of the local population. In this sense, the KCSS helps to extend levels of satisfaction from local citizens towards national and international institutions.

The importance of the monitoring function of public opinion research is best explained by referring to evidence regarding the weaknesses of Kosovo's SSR throughout the post-conflict period. A local interviewee described the performance of national institutions:

> 'The capacity of parliamentary committees on security and the judiciary were very weak, they don't have research capacity of their own, the MPs do not necessarily understand the areas of work where they are both supposed to provide legal framework and inputs but also observe as a controlling mechanism for these institutions and agencies.'[208]

Interviewees with EULEX, UNMIK, OSCE and ICITAP experience who worked alongside emerging national institutions indicated their opinion that they lacked a sense of accountability and visionary thinking about their role as a security provider.[209] In a context where patronage networks have flourished under internationally-designed state-building to capture the governance of national institutions, local research has proved important (Jackson 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). For example, a KCSS study highlighted the weaknesses of accountability in the security sector, contesting the effective performance of internal oversight and research mechanisms (Qehaja and Vrajolli 2012). This study highlights the absence of effective oversight in key areas of security administration. Regarding the rule of law, the study highlights 'a collision between the pre-independence and post-independence legislation' (Qehaja and Vrajolli 2012: 24). In terms of the transparency of the security sector, 'the KSF remain largely non-transparent institutions', while there is also an absence of discussion over security policies within the parliamentary committees designed to ensure oversight (Qehaja and Vrajolli 2012: 24-25).

In this context, interviews with local researchers were very quick to highlight a shared perception that there is an 'oversight void' across the security and judicial sectors.[210] Describing the inception of the KCSS, a senior KCSS researcher explained:

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[208] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[209] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[210] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

'The idea was while you don't expect at the beginning to have a strong parliament, to have a strong independent oversight mechanism, like ombudsperson and audit office, civil society can fill the void. So, what the unintended consequences was, in our perception, not only to fill the void in terms of the classical oversight, but also in terms of filling a gap in the research'.

In this void, local think tank research provides a critical challenge to local and international security institutions. Local researchers frequently explained how they have self-consciously adopted a challenging stance. Through various research outputs, conferences, seminars and conversations with policy-makers, local researchers have questioned the functioning and oversight of intelligence agencies, the amendment procedures of judicial bodies, the performance of security and justice parliamentary committees, and the ongoing presence of international actors in Kosovo, such as UNMIK and EULEX.[211]

5.2.2 Questioning Institutional Legitimacy

Stressing hybridity helps to uncover various patterns of local-international contestation (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Another modality of local-local and local-international challenge is in how local researchers use their expertise to dispute SSR legitimacy. The roots of the active research community in Kosovo today are identified by the presence of informed, critical and concerned citizens in the immediate post-conflict years. An early SSR advisor recalled their engagement with these critical individuals:

'There was a community type, individual type… reticence, a sort of tentative engagement, agreeing to see me and then sharing concerns, feeling that they could be actually rather blunt and critical'.[212]

This critical local mass developed throughout the post-conflict period, greatly enhanced by the emergence of CSOs and their use of policy-oriented research. Without effective security sector oversight, and where security priorities are subject to the vested interests of a small selection of decision-makers, the critique of think tanks has challenged the extent to which SSR is representative of public security concerns.[213] In doing so, local research emulates dynamics of

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[211] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

[212] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.

[213] Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.

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[211] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

[212] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.

[213] Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.

'peace formation', where, local actors 'strongly oppose the liberal peace for its failing to incorporate local needs and aspirations' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). For example, FIQ has used public opinion survey data to raise critical questions towards national security institutions. Building on questioning levels of trust, perception surveys provide information on how and to what extent citizens engage with different security institutions, and identify policy improvements which reflect broad public security concerns.[214] As well as surveying perceptions of insecurity across Kosovo's Albanian and Serbian communities, *Human Security in Kosovo: a Survey of Perceptions* identifies non-traditional security threats, such as socio-economic issues, as priority public security concerns (FIQ 2007a). Such research builds on survey findings to challenge the national and international definition of security and highlight public concerns (Haas 1992: 2).

SSR legitimacy has faced heightened political challenge in the post-independence period. In recent years, EULEX has provided technical support to the 2011 EU-facilitated dialogue and 2013 Brussels agreement between Pristina and Belgrade. In North Kosovo, this has included support for the integration of Serbian Civil Protection units (CP) across four Serbian majority municipalities into Kosovo's broader institutional framework. The integration process highlights a stark contrast in international-local political standpoints. While the Serbian community in North Kosovo sees CP as a civilian structure that assists in disaster and emergency situations, the Kosovo Government and international institutions have considered CP to be illegal and a paramilitary structure and have prioritised CP dissolution (Stakic and Bjelos 2015: 6). In this context, BCSP and KCSS researchers have anticipated challenges facing CP integration, and advanced these to an international and domestic audience, including: the inability of Kosovo institutions to absorb CP units; limited willingness of CP personnel to integrate; and the need to provide alternative income for former CP personnel (Stakic and Bjelos 2015: 6). These challenges are evidenced by data indicating that 'less than 25% of the total number of Civil Protection staff' were integrated by May 2016 (Emini and Stakic 2018: 5).

Aktiv researchers have challenged how international actors frame integration in North Kosovo. Research has explored community responses to the Brussels agreement that considers an understanding of the 'fears and anxieties of the Serbian community' as critical for the success of the integration of the Serbian community (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015: 1). The report explains that fear and distrust among the Serbian population is stimulated by the lack of information coming out of the EU-led negotiation and Brussels agreement (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015: 14-15). The report highlights community concerns over what integration means for the future

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[214] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.

financing of northern municipalities, their ongoing relations with Belgrade, support for redundant CP staff, and the impact this might have on security in North Kosovo (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015: 15-16). A EULEX practitioner explained how this research questioned their awareness of community security:

> 'Civil Protection was rated as the most trustworthy in the North, rated as the most trustworthy security provider, which was ironic because that is the same time international actors were dismantling them. There were questions raised by the researchers as to how is that vacuum going to be filled'.[215]

This context correlates to a description of international attempts to enhance security and safety as being driven by a 'hollow' norm (Hehir 2018). Despite the stated EULEX commitment to security and safety, the empirical evidence suggests that local security interests do not necessarily drive decision-making and are often side-lined.

The findings of local research organisations have also proved important for national institutions. It was suggested that a primary impact of local research has been the contribution to a changing policy-making culture, and that local researchers today could rarely be ignored by government institutions.[216] A KCSS researcher explained how, 'some of the institutions, namely the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) and police, were desperately waiting for the results every year', and that KSF and Kosovo Police practitioners are consistently invited to attend KCSS conferences. An MoIA official cited KIPRED and BIRN as credible organisations who have promoted the accountability of police to public citizens:

> 'It's a good pressure… as a citizen I will listen to the reports, which for example might have found out we have corruption or something like that, and if the media speak a lot about that report, we have to react'.[217]

5.2.3 Investigating Judicial Corruption

Local contestation of Kosovo's judicial reform process is largely orchestrated by legally minded think tanks and investigative organisations: the KLI, GLPS and BIRN. The overlapping monitoring and reporting of these organisations combine to function as a form of coalition, highlighting the agency of journalists and researchers in the evaluation and dissemination of ideas

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[215] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[216] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[217] Interview 27, 08/2017, Pristina.

(Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018). Researchers and journalists noted the importance of investigative research skills and how they have informed 'tactical' collaborations between investigative organisations, think tanks and media platforms, in turn enhancing their message to security providers.[218] This reflects how, entering the independence years, researchers and experts from different backgrounds adopt common practices to direct their professional competence (Haas 1992: 3).

Local think tanks are important actors in a context where executive international authority lacks internal accountability measures, and where local politicians might use SSR to consolidate power in developing institutions.[219] BIRN has consistently challenged the accountability of security and justice institutions in a context of limited public information. The former editor for BIRN Kosovo explained how investigative journalism was used to challenge the functioning of Kosovo's emerging security architecture: it was about 'using the culture of the Balkans to make a change and that is public shaming', which was 'in order to kind of be indirectly threatening with public embarrassment'.[220] Through 'Pristina Insight', 'Life in Kosovo', and in field monitors, BIRN combines the monitoring and reporting of judicial performance with outreach activities to advance the challenges posed to the judicial system. The early impact of these challenges was described by a local interviewee:

> 'The culture was not to have court cases being conducted in the main room… but we did, each judge would have it in their own room. We insisted that this is against the rules and procedures and the main room should be used, usage of mobile phones during the case or… obstructing the process by using police not to bring people on time. Just the fact that somebody was monitoring, writing, reporting, it made courts function differently'.[221]

According to the Transparency International Corruptions Perceptions Index of 2017, Kosovo is ranked 85th of 180, wedged between Benin and Kuwait (Transparency International 2017). Kosovo scored 39 in 2017, and while this shows an improvement on a score of 33 in 2015, Kosovo scores below the average of 46 (Transparency International 2017). Indeed, corruption continually features at the top of citizens concerns. In 2012 corruption was the second highest political risk identified by Kosovar citizens (KCSS 2012), which was repeated in 2015 (KCSS 2015c: 23). BIRN has followed this context by expanding to pose challenges to the functioning of the judicial sector. An increase in the deployment of in-field monitors to assess prosecution and judicial

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[218] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017; Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.
[219] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[220] Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.
[221] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.

proceedings has seen the challenges of BIRN move from the observation of professionalism during trials to ensuring that judicial proceedings uphold principles that counter favouritism and discrimination.[222] The formation of KALLXO.com in 2012 also earmarks this increasing capacity:

> 'KALLXO is a really interesting one because they started off as a sort of anti-establishment… report corruption to us because the policy doesn't function and if you report corruption to the police it won't go anywhere, but they worked with police on it… and eventually the police now see it a resource, so now they have policy reports, and you know… requests for assistance and witnesses and so on, as well as having an anti-establishment reporting corruption online. So, it is quite a good example of a media organisation that has made a transition of facing the establishment to supporting it'.[223]

Think tanks, including the KLI and GLPS, also contribute to the broader local-local challenges directed towards the delivery of security and justice by reporting on issues of judicial corruption, monitoring legal implementation, and by participating in government working groups.[224] A KLI researcher explained that the organisation challenges corruption through two primary means:

> 'We have monitors in the field, which means, on a daily basis they monitor the one case, corruption and organised crime are different cases, and based on that they draft a written report. What happens then is that we publish from these reports. Secondly, we receive on a daily basis a lot of requests from different sources, mainly from people who have cases in court. Sometimes they are not looked at for ages, sometimes for decades. Their rights are violated, for example if they have a defence lawyer, they submit a lot of requests to the court, and they do not receive a response, they ask us to monitor such cases and to access public documents to see what is going on with that case'.

Local researchers also challenged the policy outputs of UNMIK prior to independence, and the ongoing role of EULEX in Kosovo's judicial sector. These accusations contribute to a wider trend of persistent allegations towards the inefficiency of the EULEX mission (Elbasani 2018). For example, in 2010, KIPRED criticised international judicial intervention through a research publication: *The Fragile Triangle* (Gashi 2010). According to a former KIPRED researcher the purpose of the research was to highlight the failures of UNMIK, provide an initial assessment of the context that EULEX was working in, and show dissatisfaction that EULEX appeared to be following on from UNMIKs approach.[225] The KLI and BIRN Kosovo have also monitored

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[222] Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017
[223] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[224] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.
[225] Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.

EULEX cases, highlighting underperformance in anti-corruption activities. For example, the KLI produced a corruption report which underscored violations in the investigation, prosecution and trial of corruption cases handled by EULEX (Miftaraj and Musliu 2017). This was reiterated in an interview with a KLI researcher:

> 'Until 2014, it was EULEX as the key actor in rule of law in Kosovo. A lot of judges, prosecutors, police, they were competent to fight corruption, but only in those parts which are not so serious. EULEX has full exclusive competency in high level corruption, organised crime and money laundering. So, if a local judge or prosecutor goes for such cases, EULEX until 2014, would take the case over. So, if for example Kosovo failed in fighting organised crime and corruption before 2014, you cannot blame local judges and prosecutors, but you should blame EULEX. So, when we provide reports, we provide those sorts of recommendations for EULEX'.[226]

Local researchers also question the suitability of international judicial practice for Kosovo. GLPS researchers have proposed that EU conditionality in Kosovo's law-making undermines the sustainability of legislative outputs. While understanding that EU influence over the reform of aspiring member states is a key tool to ensure Kosovo's compliance with European practice, the GLPS suggests that socio-economic context has been largely ignored in Kosovo's adherence to EU suggested justice reform (Rexha 2018: 20). This context heightens the importance of local research in support of the ongoing amendment of legislation in Kosovo. A GLPS researcher explained:

> 'One of the biggest problems in Kosovo is that we draft laws and after one year we need to amend those laws because they have been mostly drafted by international community, like experts from different projects and there is this big problem that there are some laws that are more oriented or more kind of similar to Britain, for example'.[227]

While there is general support for the European standards put forward by EU actors as part of the European integration process, researchers consider whether international approaches should be adapted to better fit Kosovo's context. The KLI has challenged the ways in which EULEX has handled corruption cases, deeming them to lack context sensitivity:

> 'When EULEX starts a case, they start arresting people… they send 200 police officers and you think you are back in the war. So, they start cases like in the

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[226] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017.
[227] Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.

movies, and in the end, all of them end either they are released, or when they…
destroy the case, what they do is they just delegate the case to local prosecutor'.[228]

International practitioners recognise the judicial oversight role of local research and consider it an important challenge against national institutional performance. CSOs are not simply a 'bystander' to EU policy-making but are an example of local stakeholder participation and transparency: 'the EU continuously encourages the government to take the civil society feedback more seriously and implement the relevant legislation to improve cooperation with CSOs' (Yabanci 2016: 354). An interviewee from the Kosovo EU office explained that they draw on the findings of local researchers to inform the EU monitoring of national institutions, while EU progress reports utilise the inputs of researchers.[229] Commenting on the monitoring reports of the KLI, this interviewee indicated that they are 'almost the only source of information of what is happening on the ground, because the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council will not report the different misconducts', while describing them as valuable due to the 'shift in national institutions' during monitoring by CSOs.

5.2.4 Providing Local Alternatives

The understandings developed during local monitoring and reporting activities often convert into policy-recommendations that advocate for the adaptation of international SSR to the local context. Providing a core component of local-international contestation, these local alternatives provide a stark contradiction to international SSR and challenge international assumptions about what is required for Kosovo's security. Local recommendations espouse the need to move away from international 'blueprints and one-size-fits-all solutions' (Richmond 2009: 335), are suggestive of resistance through the modification of international rules (Richmond 2010), while challenging international perceptions that local actors are apathetic (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 13).

Post-independence, Kosovars educated in North American and Western European universities have provided a wealth of expertise for Kosovo's research sector. While many of these researchers appreciate the values of 'international approaches', they advocate for adapting these approaches to the local context.[230] Public perception data collected in support of this thesis suggests that the production of local policy alternatives has broad support from Kosovo's

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[228] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017.
[229] Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.
[230] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

communities. According to Figure 25, 35% of respondents believe CSOs contribute to some extent to the security of Kosovo's citizens. 21% suggested that CSOs do contribute to their security needs, while 5% believed they had contributed to significant amount. Moreover, as shown in Figure 26, 80% believed that local CSOs should have a greater role in SSR.

An early example of the provision of local alternatives is found through the participation of local legal academics within UNMIK legal reform. The JAC-LM included local experts who provided legal expertise and technical advice on the drafting of criminal law regulations and human rights implications in support of UNMIK led law-making (Reka 2003: 189-192). An UNMIK practitioner explained that they were able to reflect on local research and analysis through the 'Kosovo Law Centre' (KLC), and the technical scrutiny offered by KLC members on criminal codes.[231] Other UNMIK legal practitioners indicated that local legal experts offered clarifications on legal issues and codes, and that consultations with these experts supported the establishment of the Kosovo Judicial Council and Kosovo Judicial Institution.[232] In this sense, local expertise within the JAC-LM and KLC provided early technical scrutiny over Kosovo's legal reform.

Local involvement in judicial reform extended into the post-independence period. Researchers from BIRN, KLI and GLPS have engaged extensively in the judicial reform process through involvement in government working groups.[233] For example, the KLI has been involved in working groups to amend the criminal procedure code, and in the monitoring of the implementation of criminal justice legislation, while the GLPS has been involved in working groups and monitoring on the law of courts, the Kosovo Judicial Council, and in countering nepotism. Similarly, BIRN has pushed for the addition of a law pertaining to witness and whistle-blower protection on corruption issues after recognising the absence of legal protection. Through working groups, local researchers suggested the adaptation of government rule of law strategies, such as the provision of recommendations on specific legal amendments to the anti-corruption strategy. For example, following an understanding that the disciplinary offices within the KJC and Kosovo Prosecutorial Council were not effectively reporting malpractice, a KLI researcher explained that their organisation had urged for the review of this mechanism. There are also active attempts made by GLPS and KLI researchers to instil critical thinking throughout the legislative drafting process. A GLPS researcher indicated that they approach the 'elephant in the room' topics to encourage debate on sensitive topics, while a KLI researcher explained how they would

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[231] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[232] Interview 7, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 8, Skype, 07/2017.
[233] Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.

encourage the Kosovo Assembly to not implement any new legislation without a thorough evaluation of current legislation.

The KCSS and KIPRED have challenged the international and national programmes that seek to prevent radicalisation. A KCSS publication that relies on interviews with radicalised individuals has produced recommendations on how to adapt existing CVE to also consider the reintegration and rehabilitation of radicalised individuals (Kursani 2015). Showing appreciation for the alternative CVE pathways put forward by KCSS research, a UNDP practitioner noted that while international research helps to inform the broad design of CVE strategies, it is local research that helps to adapt and 'localise' broader CVE strategies and the findings of international CVE research to the Kosovo context. [234] Here, local research has:

1: Supplemented an understanding of local narratives and who the vulnerable groups or individuals are.

2: Identified the need for welfare and legal aid.

3: Outlined the potential support of community activities and provided education and referral mechanisms.

4: Explained the motivations behind extremism.

5: Considered public reactions to reintegration and the impact of imprisonment or isolation.

The KCSS has also produced research on the social media activities of extremists in Kosovo, deconstructing narratives, sources of propaganda, and also establishing a database of websites that promote violence (Kelmendi and Balaj 2017). This has again provided new analysis on the specific dynamics of Kosovo's online radicalisation. Stemming from this research, the KCSS is now innovating in the realm of CVE by putting some of its research recommendations into action. The KCSS is actively implementing key provisions of a national CVE strategy, such as conducting research to challenge counter narratives, raising awareness at the community level, tracking radicalisation in social media, educating young populations in critical thinking about

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[234] Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.

radicalisation, and supporting Kosovar journalists in how they report on radicalisation and violent extremism.

Local CSO alternatives evidence locally legitimate modes of peace-building that differ from international policy-makers (Visoka and Richmond 2017: 111). Describing the dominant international approach to SALW control in the early post-conflict years, a local interviewee explained:

> 'The way UNDP was basically conducting the work and the approach… it was mostly trying to do it top-down… ''here's an amnesty day bring all your guns in'', and we were saying we need to actually address the issues of concern'.[235]

Through access to communities, local researchers can provide innovative ideas for SSR that international policy-making mechanisms cannot create.[236] Throughout the Saferworld partnership with FIQ, local researchers were integral to the joint design of local security initiatives, including SALW control. A former Saferworld practitioner explained that local researchers understanding of the local context enabled them to challenge international preconceptions and provide creative solutions regarding the countering and collection of SALW.[237] Critical of the approach of international organisations who operate without deep local contextual knowledge, this practitioner also indicated that: 'previous campaigns that the OSCE and the like had done, had basically not managed to collect any weapons, or had created a market for weapons by doing buy back schemes and so on'. As indicated in the FIQ research publication *Through the cross-hairs: A survey of changing attitudes towards small arms in Kosovo*, SALW control provided a highly sensitive subject, where people keep hold of weapons as they are motivated to protect their community in an insecure context (FIQ 2008: 9-10). FIQ insights attempted to bridge the gap between local community concerns and central-level SALW policy-making to facilitate the adaptation of international security policy to the specific needs and concerns of local communities (FIQ 2007a: 41).

Local research challenges assumptions of what security means to communities. This confrontation is particularly glaring within Kosovo's Serbian communities, where internationals are often out of touch. The research of Aktiv and CPT explores 'under-rated topics' that are not considered by the Brussels Agreement while highlighting the concerns of Serbian citizens.[238] For

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[235] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[236] Interview 25, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[237] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[238] Interview 22, Pristina, 08/2017.

example, recognising the increasing participation of Serbs in Kosovo's political life following the Brussels Agreement, Aktiv have researched community views on the integration of security structures into Kosovo's legal framework (Nesovic and Celeghini 2015), while a joint Aktiv-CPT study also explores the implications of integration (Aktiv and CPT 2016). As such, this research helps to fill an international knowledge gap:

> 'Generally, the internationals cannot really produce an original topic, or a topic that is really hot or a burning issue for the community because they are not living in it'.[239]

International interviewees indicated that the critical perspectives of local researchers provided a stronger source of information than contacts within national institutions. A senior KCSS researcher indicated that local research provides internationals with 'alternative expertise', and while national institutions might suggest whether 'everything is going well or not', local think tanks 'offer a more critical approach'.[240] Both an EU Official and UNDP practitioner agreed with this, considering local CSOs as a more accurate information source.[241] International practitioners also explained that local researcher recommendations provided insights that could not be generated internally. A former OSCE advisor indicated that to get good insights it was much more effective for them to deal with individuals outside of the OSCE mission, and to contact CSOs directly for information on the security context.[242] In this regard, evidence exhibits that local researchers can provide information where international actors face blind spots in Kosovo's security context. An EULEX practitioner considered local researchers as a resource that can provide this alternative analysis:

> 'I want academic research into how people are mobilised. There was a bank raid a couple of summers ago and within 20 minutes 100 people were mobilised. They want to build roadblocks, it's a huge security issue for us, and it can only be understood properly by having security focused academic research. Going around and doing anonymous interviews and building trust, but it's not an issue you can lobby about, but in terms of understanding the context in which we are working it is quite important. So, there are a lot of interesting issues that are not immediate… illegal woodcutting, surveillance, mobilisation, they can destabilise the security situation'.[243]

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[239] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[240] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[241] Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[242] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
[243] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

Innovative local analysis also challenges the highly sensitive aspects of SSR. For example, a KCSS report has highlighted the presence of private security companies (PSC) operating in Kosovo post-independence, the lack of oversight and regulation of PSCs, and a disconnect with public security and oversight bodies (Qehaja, Vrajoli and Perteshi 2009). Furthermore, KIPRED was one of the first organisations to open a debate on the presence of shadow intelligence agencies in Kosovo.[244] This refers to intelligence agencies attached to political parties such as the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and a close affiliation to local political elites. The report argues that the presence of unregulated intelligence services undermines confidence in security in Kosovo, and the presence of these agencies demonstrates a failure of international actors to establish legitimate rule of law (Dugolli and Peci 2006: 3-4).

5.2.5 Receptive Attitudes and Action

An everyday lens of analysis uncovers the actions and behaviours of the staff of international organisations (Autesserre 2014; Henry 2015; Sending 2010). In Kosovo, the personal interest of international practitioners in local research is often in antithesis to the 'barriers' of international organisations (sections 4.4 and 4.5) and proves critical for researcher-practitioner engagement. These practitioners fit the mould of a 'citizen-agent' and consider researcher engagement a crucial part of their role (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000).

A former international Saferworld practitioner framed an attitude more open to local researcher engagement as follows: 'if you go in with an attitude of "I'm here to help"', immediately there is a hierarchy attached to that, if you go in with an attitude of 'I'm here to learn', there isn't.[245] A former FIQ activist confirmed this attitude, indicating that Saferworld never considered a project designed in London of higher quality that those of FIQ.[246] Several other practitioners subscribed to this point of view. A former EULEX practitioner explained that they took research very seriously, partly because they had an academic background, while holding the impression that generally local staff, rather than international staff, were in closer contact with local researchers.[247] Other UN practitioners expressed how their personal fascination for the local

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[244] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017
[245] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[246] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[247] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.

context stimulated their engagement with local contacts.[248] Local researchers confirmed the presence of 'exceptions' (Autesserre 2014) within UNMIK, EULEX, the OSCE and UNDP, singling out individuals for having a heightened level of knowledge about Kosovo's security context, as well as being willing to speak to local researchers on a personal level.[249]

International practitioners often conflict with organisational preferences for international expertise and a closed policy-process. This includes challenging the emphasis that headquarters has placed on political arguments and stability. A former EULEX practitioner commented: 'my impression was that Brussels agenda came first and it didn't really take into consideration things which were not its own agenda'; and subsequently they took it upon themselves to speak to local researchers.[250] International practitioners also criticised the lack of trust in local CSOs. An early SSR advisor considered it helpful to talk with academically qualified individuals, including those that were not the military actors that internationals typically engage with.[251] EULEX confidentiality concerns were also described as 'often unfounded', while an OSCE practitioner indicated that they invited criticism from KCSS researchers through informal conversations despite the OSCE considering itself 'self-sufficient'.[252]

International practitioners have also ignored established procedures to engage with local CSOs. Firstly, this was described by an UNMIK practitioner:

> 'The security environment doesn't allow you to interact with locals freely. I went through many, many warning… because I was… especially at the beginning, in my opinion I had to go around to understand the place'.[253]

Individual EULEX practitioners have also been very open to communicating and taking up the ideas of local researchers. A EULEX practitioner indicated that they have acted against internal instructions to participate in research interviews and maintain ongoing communication with local researchers:

> 'I don't always talk to researchers with the approval of my mission, partly because it can be too long winded, and personally I think unnecessary. As I said we should have a shared interest here, and I believe that all of the researchers

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[248] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[249] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017; Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[250] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[251] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017.
[252] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
[253] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017.

coming to me do so in good faith, and many come trying to understand how CSDP missions can be enhanced in the future'.[254]

5.2.6 Challenging International Knowledge

Evidence from Kosovo highlights a critical form of contestation at the heart of the international-international relationship that challenges orthodox SSR thinking. Resulting from the innovative interview survey undertaken for this study, this is the significant discrepancy between the attitudes and practices of practitioners and the expectations of international organisations. Building on Autesserre (2014) and Henry (2015), it found that international practitioners often directly challenge the international epistemic practices identified in Chapter 2: that post-conflict states require a liberal and 'assumption-based' approach to reconstruction (Carothers 2002; Lemay-Hebert 2009b, Paris and Sisk 2008). As this section demonstrates, international practitioners have instead utilised their discretion (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015) to extensively criticise SSR and engage with local research.

Basing policy solely on international knowledge was described as 'theoretical policy-making', and as 'making policy in a vacuum'.[255] An UNMIK legal officer explained that they did not arrive into Kosovo carrying any assumptions that they knew better than local counterparts: 'I feel I benefited from having tried to immerse myself in the society to varying degrees… I think you have to be interested and you have to want to understand, and I really would stress that'.[256] Similarly, a NATO source criticised where international recruitment ignores an applicant's local contextual knowledge:

> 'In any organisation which is dealing with another country, that is essential. You have got to select the right people with the right background and experience to do that, you can't just pick another'.[257]

Criticisms were frequently levelled at the relevance of international SSR research. International practitioners from across the international security architecture criticised international research as lacking the time required to develop a valid and detailed appreciation of the local context.[258] For example, a former OSCE practitioner described the limitations of an OSCE report which

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[254] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[255] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[256] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[257] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[258] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.

attempted to draw out lessons for police reform:

> 'I found it very superficial. You often found with these external researchers that they weren't given enough time or budget, and all they do is interview a few internationals and come up with what I thought was a really distorted view of what was going on'.

This criticism was echoed by an UNMIK legal practitioner who reflected on the outputs of international human rights NGOs:

> 'One would get a report every now and again from a very respected human rights NGO, and I always felt that because it was written by someone who had just flown in for a few weeks or a few months, it didn't really get to the bottom of things'.[259]

Criticisms were also levelled at internal research mechanisms. An UNMIK practitioner indicated that 'there is very little research capacity within DPKO', and that 'information from one mission to another is lost'.[260] Furthermore, and reflecting on the absence of an internal research mechanism within EULEX, an official recalled how staff had a limited understanding of the security perceptions of the community they aim to support.[261] Similarly, a local researcher considered EU progress reports to lack 'true criticism'.[262] Compounding this criticism, EULEX was described as poor at reflecting on experience and acting on it: a EULEX practitioner condemned the utility of an annual report:

> 'The original report was about 400 pages and they cut it down to about 100 pages and I thought a lot of useful information was being cut out because they said the people in Brussels don't read long reports'.[263]

While international consultancy proved a vital source of support to international SSR, interviewees did criticise the reliance on international consultants.[264] This perception was shared by a local academic, who described international research as 'half products' which have limited understanding of the context and subtleties of the environment.[265] Likewise, criticisms were directed towards the reliance on international best practice, in particular the assumption that policy can replicate standardised templates in different contexts. This refers to the reliance on

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[259] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[260] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[261] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[262] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[263] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017
[264] Interview 19, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 27, 08/2017, Pristina; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[265] Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.

international assumptions rather than local knowledge:

> 'There is no parachuting people in to kind of come up with potentially best practice solutions or implement what they just implemented in East Timor or Ivory Coast in a country which is completely different'.[266]

Practitioners were often critical of colleagues who they considered to rely extensively on professional experience outside of Kosovo. This criticism challenges those practitioners who follow an assumption that their domestic experience and deployment to distinct contexts of intervention provided sufficient knowledge. This is applicable to the early reforms of the UNMIK DoJ. An UNMIK legal officer indicated that colleagues who were willing to seek out information to help them understand the local context were generally held in positive regard.[267] Alternatively, while noting that experience of legal systems in another country is always useful, an UNMIK penal official indicated that the decision-making of colleagues that relied solely on their domestic and international experience was not always appropriate for Kosovo's legal identity and culture:

> 'This place has the criminal and civil law, it doesn't apply the common law. I saw many police and especially prosecutors were struggling to adapt themselves in a different system. They were still acting like they were working in Europe or the USA. We undermined many trials for this reason, because the way of gathering evidence had a certain requirement and rules to be applied'. [268]

This testimony demonstrates that practitioners with relevant or regional expertise were more effective than their colleagues. This criticism has been echoed into the post-independence years. An UNMIK adviser was critical of practitioners who considered experience in different contexts of international intervention, such as East Timor, as providing the knowledge to make effective decisions in Kosovo's context as a sign of 'professional arrogance'.[269] Similarly, another UNMIK official warned that over reliance on experience entails a risk where decision-making becomes 'anecdotal'.[270] These criticisms provide instances where practitioners perceive SSR to lack an empirical basis, and underscore a practitioner's aspirations for alternative, and local sources of knowledge. Therefore, practitioners deliberately interact with various sources of information, including local expertise, in order to manage the uncertainty of policy-making (Haas 1992, 2016).

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[266] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[267] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[268] Interview 10, Skype, 07/2017.
[269] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[270] Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

Following on from the analysis conducted in section 5.2, Figure 29, shown below, adds to the understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. It advances understandings of local-local and local-international contestation through the ability of local researchers to challenge SSR. It incorporates the ability of local researchers to monitor and evaluate institutional performance, question institutional legitimacy, and investigate judicial corruption. It details how local researchers, through the provision of policy recommendations and access to local languages and communities, offer local alternatives to international SSR. Additional information includes the importance of international-international contestation, where receptive practitioners provide an important avenue for local researcher engagement. These practitioners seek out local researchers, value local research as a source of expertise, are critical of the reliance on international research, consultants and expertise, and actively subvert organisational instruction.

Figure 29: Updating the LRCF in the case of Kosovo
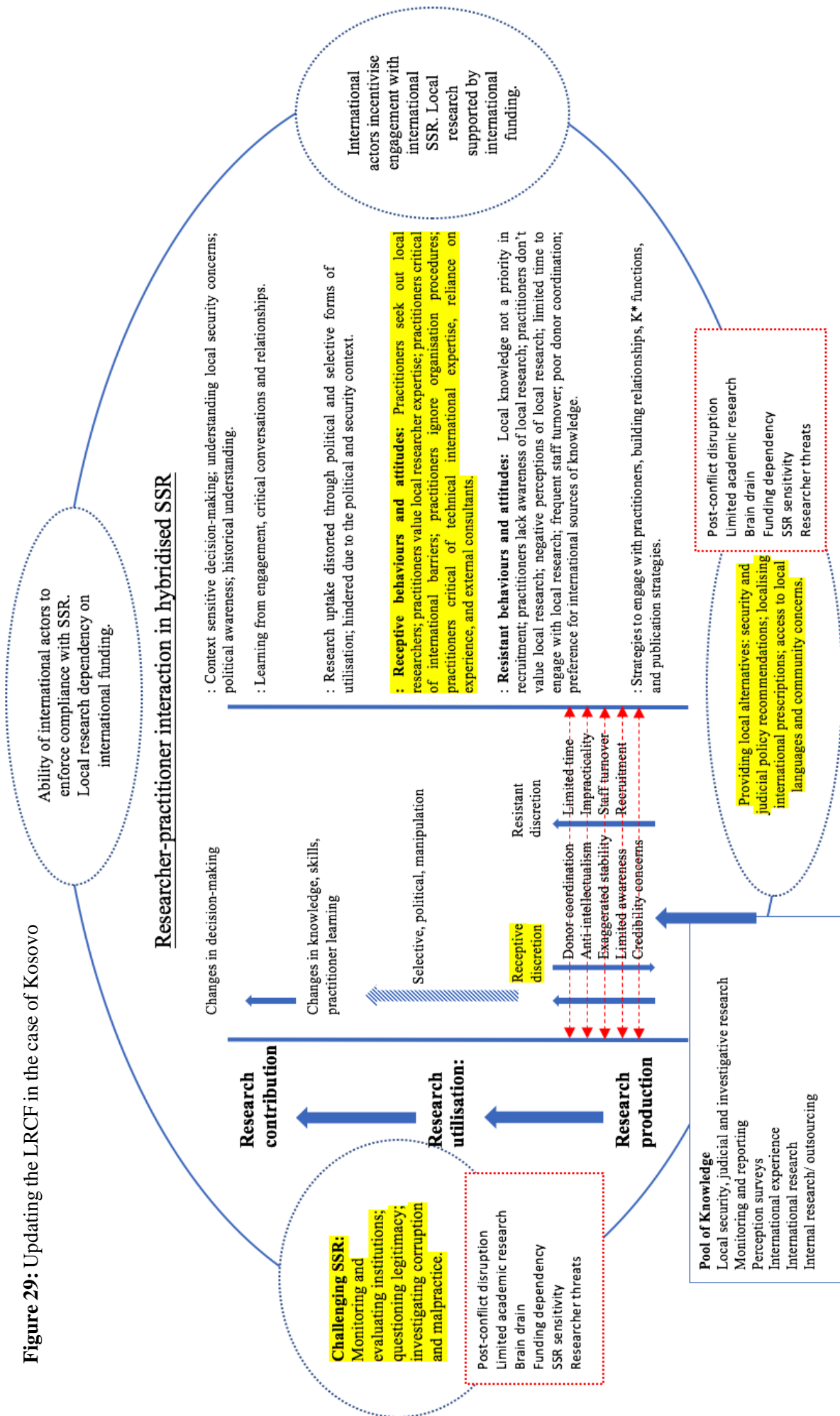
5.3 Local Research: Contributing to International SSR

This section builds on the previous by considering the contribution that local researchers make to internationally-led SSR and the decision-making of international practitioners. Concepts explored in Chapter 2 stressed the 'relational' function of research communication that improves connections between researchers and practitioners (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12). With the knowledge of international practitioners working towards SSR 'never complete', this interaction can contribute to changes in international SSR knowledge (Bueger 2015: 7). Following the four-part model of Mac Ginty (2011: 9), local-international interaction leads to 'distortion', where 'the strategies and worldviews of actors are refracted by their contact with others' (Mac Ginty 2011: 9). In Kosovo, this knowledge-based interaction takes the form of collaborative researcher-practitioner relationships, an increase in the political awareness and conflict sensitivity of international practitioners, and an identification of local actors and concerns. Following the concept of 'research contribution', this reflects a process where the contestation of research stimulates changes in the knowledge, awareness and skills of international practitioners (Morton 2015). In addition, this section highlights the benefits of joint research between researchers of Kosovo's Albanian and Serbian communities.

Box 3: Summary of productive FIQ-UNDP interaction on SALW control

Shared perceptions	- FIQ researchers show appreciation for UNDP practitioners who operate beneath UNDP barriers that deter practitioner engagement with local researchers - Individual UNDP practitioners consider relationships with FIQ researchers as critical sources of information on the local security context - FIQ researchers and individual UNDP practitioners shared a common perception that they are part of the same community
Successful Cooperation	- Receptive UNDP practitioners provided opportunities for FIQ researchers to advance concerns and community perceptions of security to international SSR, which challenged UNDP approaches to SALW control - UNDP practitioners show transparency when communicating with FIQ researchers by seeking informal FIQ comment on UNDP reports and proposals. - UNDP practitioners carry forward the implications of FIQ analysis on community security and safety perceptions into conflict prevention initiatives

5.3.1 Contributing through Communication

Policy-making is dialectical, defined by the dynamic and interactive relationship between actors (Marsh and Smith 2000: 5) and engaging in a 'constant process of negotiation' (Mac Ginty 2016: 220). Likewise, research is an engaging process and not simply a paper output that presents recommendations for policy-change. This stimulates a local-international conversation about the impact of liberal intervention, its 'hegemony, colonial praxis, global economic governance, and the reconstitution of rights, needs and identity' (Richmond and Pogodda (2016: 11). In the broader context of local-international contestation in Kosovo, researchers and practitioners communicate extensively and have built enduring positive relationships which advances the challenges directed towards SSR. Practitioners and researchers meet at various venues in the centres of Pristina and Mitrovica. Meeting points include the 'Sirius' and 'Swiss Diamond' hotel, and a variety of busy coffee houses and bars that populate city centres.

All the think tanks contacted for this research make use a combination of workshops and public conferences to communicate findings to international and domestic security actors. Adopting the characteristics of the 'netizen' (Lei 2011), local think tanks maintain websites where they offer opinion, electronic access to publications and report on research activities. Alongside this, research outputs are disseminated to international contacts, local officials and partner organisations through email, Twitter, online conferences and hard copy. These factors have supported the vibrancy of Kosovo's research sector in the post-independence period. Furthermore, media platforms help think tanks to mobilise public awareness and opinion on security and justice issues. Interviewees frequently described Kosovo's 'lively media', where research findings are disseminated through television, newspaper and radio outlets to increase public awareness and to stimulate debate. As explained by a local academic: 'the best thing is to go out in the public', to 'put something very high on the public opinion's agenda'.

Local research organisations also attempt to challenge SSR through more direct communication. For example, BIRN build on their monitoring and reporting activities to send letters from their legal office to prosecution offices and the Kosovo Police: 'telling them exactly what crime has been committed and how they can handle the situation'.[271] Individual researchers have also developed strategies to ensure that messages stimulate debate. A local university academic noted how some of his work was 'intentionally written in a provocative manner' in an attempt to

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[271] Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.

stimulate discussion.[272] This interviewee described research which criticised the Specialist Chambers in Kosovo, arguing that 'in matters of legal form, the Specialist Chamber is a domestic court; in terms of its composition and personnel, however, it is an international tribunal' (Muharremi 2016a). The aim here was not to have any policy impact, but to encourage discussion about Kosovo's hybrid court system.

Personal relationships were widely considered critical to the communication of policy recommendations, and more important than rudimentary forms of outreach, such as conferences and roundtables.[273] For these researchers, practitioner relationships are the key method through which to challenge and contribute to international SSR. This follows notions theorised in the discretion literature, where from the citizen's viewpoint (in this case the researcher's viewpoint), the roles of 'street-level bureaucrats' (or, international practitioners) can be as extensive as the functions of governments (the policy-making process) (Lipsky 1980: 12). A former OSCE international practitioner confirmed the importance of productive relationships with local researchers as a means to understand the local security context: 'this internal functioning you can only get by having lengthy discussions with people who trust you and who are trustworthy as well'.[274]

Box 4: Example of DCAF-KCSS meetings

> Informal meetings were held between a DCAF advisor and a KCSS researcher at various coffee houses in Pristina and in the margins of Pristina-based conferences. These meetings provided time for both the DCAF advisor and KCSS researcher to provide mutual updates on the situation on the ground, and to engage in discussion on next steps in the parliamentary oversight and crisis response reform process.

International practitioners have established collaborative relationships with local researchers. While considering relationships with local researchers to be generally 'undervalued' in the context of post-conflict SSR, a NATO source reflected on their experiences in various contexts of intervention to describe an engagement with local security stakeholders as the 'magic touch'

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[272] Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[273] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[274] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017

for navigating local security contexts.[275] The benefits of such an engagement is evidenced by a former international DCAF advisor who commented on relationships with KCSS researchers. Making reference to constructive conversations about oversight in Kosovo's security sector and Kosovo's capacity for crisis management, the DCAF advisor described KCSS ideas as 'very professional' and 'helping things move forward'.[276] In particular, the interviewee reflected on a critical discussion about Kosovo's crisis management capacity, where local researchers offered insights into what Kosovo might do in the event of natural disaster, what the repercussions might be, and what institutions could be mobilised for effective crisis response.

Researchers show significant creativity when constructing collaborative practitioner relationships. As demonstrated by Jones, H. et al. (2012: 60), an awareness of the values and beliefs of an audience are integral for knowledge interaction, where 'arguments are often 'framed' to resonate with key constituencies or to move them to action'. A FIQ interviewee recalled mapping out UNDP, OSCE, UNMIK and national practitioners working on SSR by considering how open they might be to research recommendations, as opposed to those practitioners who comply with the barriers that international organisations put up to limit engagement.[277] A 'diplomatic' approach was also reported, where researchers agree to not criticise institutions or raise sensitive questions in public in order to maintain private discussions where practitioners are deemed more likely to admit to problems. A KCSS researcher described the individual leverage that comes with interaction as very important:

> 'Some of us were good in terms of creating contacts and networks, it's a small community, and the leverage that you have serves the interests of having your think tank or organisation being respected. This is maybe one of the strongest arms you will have because by default you are a small entity'.[278]

Researcher agency is magnified at the level of executive director. Executive directors often act as the critical contact points for international practitioners and national institutions. A NATO source, ICITAP adviser and former OSCE adviser identified executive directors at the KCSS and KIPRED as key contacts within each organisation.[279] Furthermore, local interviewees indicated that executive directors have to work proactively to uphold the critical analysis of their research, while also softening practitioner reactions to criticism to maintain ongoing communication.[280] A

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[275] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[276] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
[277] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[278] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[279] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[280] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.

researcher described this relationship as especially difficult when engaging with national security institutions:

> 'You are a partner if you don't criticise, but you have to find a way through which they will listen you. So, you're not able to criticise them in public, the moment you are doing that they are not working with you anymore, which creates a big problem because you are not able to tell the truth. So, you have to be quite… in some sense, hypocritical for the greater good if you want to want to really think towards decision-making.'[281]

In this regard, executive directors are required to utilise personal skill and political awareness to protect the organisation objectives and remain influential while making compromises. This reflects an awareness that policy recommendations critical of decision-makers are more likely to be received if they are communicated constructively. The importance of this skillset was indicated by UN and EULEX practitioners, who suggested that they were more likely to develop a professional relationship with local researchers that presented measured arguments and showed consideration for a range of perspectives, whereas confrontational interaction could prove counterproductive.[282]

The consistent interaction within researcher–practitioner relationships represents an established form of cooperation in the 'issue area' of SSR (Haas 1992). Following researcher-practitioner engagement the 'relational' function of research consolidates, with local researchers and international practitioners gathering around security issues and co-producing knowledge (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12). A local interviewee described the significance of these relationships: 'more than anything you have these networks that have been built between individual organisations, but also individuals in general with international networks as ways to basically get input to a process, it's a great achievement'.[283] For example, with a positive relationship in place with a local researcher, a UNDP practitioner would 'carefully read everything' produced.[284]

Local researchers are an accepted actor in Kosovo's SSR. This has already been indicated by the presence of the KLI, BIRN and GLPS in government working groups for judicial reform. In security reform today, international embassy staff are encouraged to engage with the researchers that make up Kosovo's local research sector.[285] Furthermore, the contemporary mission of NALT

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[281] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.
[282] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[283] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[284] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[285] Interview 19, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017.

broadens the commitment of NATO beyond a remit to the KSF, and towards 'enhanced interactions' with wider security organisations, including local researchers.[286] For example, NATO has supported, under the auspices of Kosovo's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and coordinated by KCSS researchers, a regional security conference: 'NATO and the Western Balkans: Regional Dynamics in the Era of Global Security Challenges', in November 2017. As put by a senior KCSS researcher: 'I think here we have reached a level that there is a general understanding that we need to listen to civil society, and that their opinions are valued'.[287]

Box 5: Example of Aktiv-UNMIK meetings in North Kosovo

> There is both formal and informal engagement between UNMIK and Aktiv in North Kosovo. UNMIK hosts monthly rule of law meetings, where CSO representatives in Mitrovica are invited to attend. There is also an ongoing informal and 'needs-based' engagement between UNMIK staff and local CSOs, including AKTIV researchers. Simply by frequenting bars and coffee houses, UNMIK staff and local researchers engage in chance encounters, leading to questions or discussions about the findings of recent reports, an expansion of personal networks, or the organisation of a further meeting.

As Mac Ginty (2011: 11) notes, 'it is not always the case of the liberal peace setting the agenda and local actors reacting to that agenda'. Following the development of a strong working relationship, international practitioners have also taken steps to 'streamline' decision-making. Firstly, ICITAP and UNDP practitioners indicated that they contact local researchers to 'confirm or deny a personal theory' about particular aspects of SSR.[288] In other words, reaching out to local researchers helps to proof international thinking. Secondly, international practitioners highlighted the benefits of the specialist access of local researchers. A former OSCE adviser explained that engagement with local researchers could 'provide direct access to sources, people and organisations where you normally would have very difficult access', in turn, providing useful insight into the local context.[289] Thirdly, and contrary to the common feeling that practitioners do not have time to engage with local research, researcher relationships save time. For example, an UNMIK practitioner indicated that the knowledge of local researchers provides a useful substitute where practitioners have not had time to participate in trainings led by their international

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[286] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[287] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[288] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[289] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.

organisation.[290] Fourthly, following the fostering of trust and respect, decision-makers may turn to specialists 'to ameliorate uncertainties and help them understand current issues and anticipate future trends' (Haas 1992: 13). An interviewee explained that the access and understanding of local researchers provides up-to-date information and may lead practitioners to recognise the evolving threats of radicalisation and violent extremism, as well as the emerging cyber security threat in the Balkans.[291]

5.3.2 Contribution to Political Awareness

The concept of epistemic community indicates that local research can shed light on complex issues and inform practitioners about the context of SSR (Haas 1992; Sugden 2006). Interview evidence reveals that following the formation of practitioner-researcher relationships, international practitioners generate new understandings of the political context in which SSR is carried out. A NATO source described the local think tank community as a knowledge base for a wider understanding:

> 'It is really getting your head around the political situation, the political background. What are the mood swings, what the stances of the political parties, the leaders? because that is the arena in which we are operating'.[292]

In order to strengthen their 'political compass', international practitioners indicated the utility of engaging with a wide range of local researchers. An ICITAP advisor explained that they 'do not operate on single sources', as combined, various research reports from different organisations on the same issue contribute to their awareness of security issues.[293] For various UNMIK and EULEX practitioners, getting 'a sense of the political reactions of Kosovars' and 'as broad a view as possible' were key reasons for engaging with local expertise.[294]

Motivated to learn about the political context, international practitioners indicated that there is utility in engaging with local research regardless of concerns over research credibility, bias and quality, as the findings and arguments would offer an important insight into the political

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[290] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[291] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.
[292] Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017.
[293] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[294] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.

positioning of different local actors in society.₂₉₅ This includes an understanding of the local political and conflict history, and how local security actors and communities understand security, safety and threat in comparison with international actors. For example, for an UNMIK practitioner looking at various sources was all part of a perception gathering exercise:

> 'It's good to understand the bias, understand the rationales for the bias… and all research is probably biased to a certain extent, so… I would still read it because it's still informative just in different ways perhaps'.₂₉₆

The ongoing and divisive dialogue in Kosovo over the transformation of the KSF into a Kosovo Army provides a good example of a research topic that has advanced the political awareness of international practitioners. In Kosovo, there is a willingness amongst the Albanian population for the transformation of the KSF into an armed force, scepticism amongst the Serbian population, and a watchful interest amongst international SSR practitioners. In May 2017, a conference was held in Gracanica, in the form of a debate between Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian research organisations, including the KCSS and CPT. The KCSS opinion is that NATO KFOR will not be in Kosovo forever, and that Kosovo will need to gradually move towards the creation of a multi-ethnic and defensive (not offensive) army through bilateral support, which can help with Kosovo's aim to join the EU and NATO (KCSS 2017b). Alternatively, the CPT representative expressed that Kosovar Serbs would not benefit from the creation of a Kosovo Army, and the Serb community would be difficult to convince of its benefits ahead of more pressing social and economic issues (KCSS 2017b).

In this sensitive context, a local report on the topic of KSF transformation has gained significant attention from international SSR practitioners: *Kosovo Security Force is an Army – Legal Arguments*, produced in March 2016. The report indicates that legal restrictions imposed on KSF transformation mean that it is not considered an army in the public eye, and that the transformation into an army would require a constitutional amendment with a two thirds majority in parliament (Muharremi 2016b: 10). The report argues, however, that there is no legal constitutional barrier to transformation, and that legislative amendments provide another avenue for transformation to occur (Muharremi 2016b: 10). For example:

₂₉₅ Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 29, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017.
₂₉₆ Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

'It's a political issue. So, separate things. Don't tell me there are legal barriers to creating the army by law. There are no legal barriers to doing so. It's a political issue. So, frame it as a political issue'.[297]

Rather than attempting to influence policy change, the purpose of this report and conference was to raise the issue for debate and to encourage conversation between communities, within the Kosovo government, and amongst international actors. An international interviewee explained that this debate and report was useful in that they were able to learn about the different political positions of Kosovar-Albanian and Serbs on a critical security issue, and by 'keeping a pulse of the situation', they were able to explain the security context to colleagues.[298]

5.3.3 Contribution to Anthropological Knowledge

Through locally-led peace formation, local actors are able to 'educate' international interveners and shape political reforms (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). While the political compass of a practitioner refers to practitioner awareness of the political positioning of local actors, anthropological knowledge refers to understandings of local communities, language and culture. This learning stems from the access of local researchers to information that internationals cannot reach, which supports SSR by creating a 'massive insight that goes way beyond your ability to ever understand what is going on'.[299]

As previously shown, the KCSS, FIQ, KIPRED and Aktiv have collected extensive public perception data to gauge citizen trust in national institutions and the ongoing international presence. These organisations use this data to drive research agendas and interpret findings in line with the security perceptions and fears of local citizens. Close access to the local community also means that local researchers can collect data that generates an in-depth and context specific understanding of community level security. For example, KCSS research on radicalisation and violent extremism has been able to interview former violent extremists and individuals directly involved in conflict to explore the nuances of the phenomenon in Kosovo. This access has proved crucial to understanding the root causes of radicalisation, individual motivations for violent extremism, involvement in Iraq and Syria as foreign fighters, and the process of de-radicalisation (Kursani 2015: 21-22). This access and insight was held in high regard by national, EU, UNMIK,

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[297] Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[298] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017.
[299] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.

OSCE and UNDP practitioners.[300]

The development of anthropological knowledge reflects the 'redefinitions of preconceived interests' and the 'identification of new interests' (Haas 1992: 15). A UNDP practitioner explained that through conversations with FIQ, KIPRED and KCSS researchers they generated an understanding of different Albanian and Serbian perceptions of community safety.[301] Furthermore, international SSR advisors explained that they have gained insights into the difference between local and international understandings of community safety, security, and defence, leading to their questioning of what international SSR means for local populations.[302] For instance, a former OSCE adviser described a lesson gained from an engagement with a local researcher, where they learned that in Albanian the same notion is used to describe both 'defence' and 'protection'.[303]

Local access to difficult-to-reach populations has enabled qualitative analysis of sensitive policy-making. Here, local research contributes to the awareness of international practitioners whose organisations do not collect similar analysis. Local research on North Kosovo's SSR primarily covers the integration of parallel Serbian security institutions into the Kosovo legal framework, as indicated by the joint KCSS-BCSP report: *Police Integration in North Kosovo: Progress and Remaining Challenges in the Implementation of the Brussels Agreement* (Bjelos, Elek and Raifi 2014). This report identifies a number of challenges facing the integration of Serbian Ministry of Interior (MUP) structures, highlighting: that 52 of 337 Serbs did not complete integration training; limited willingness to join the Kosovo Police; Serbian Government and Kosovar Assembly opposition to the appointment of a regional commander; that Serbian officers were unhappy at forced redundancy and lacked information about the process (Bjelos, Elek and Raifi 2014, 11-13). After indicating that EULEX did not assess the implications of MUP integration with Kosovo's institutions, a EULEX practitioner commented that the joint research of the BCSP and KCSS encouraged their thinking about the problems facing MUP integration:

> 'For instance, problems in terms of the organigram structure, building capacity in certain areas like crowd and riot control, weaknesses in terms of coordination, how integrated they are on paper, how intelligence is shared in the North'.[304]

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300 Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 41, Pristina, 09/17; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
301 Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017
302 Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
303 Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.
304 Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

In this regard, local research on MUP integration has helped to fill gaps in international understanding of the implications of police integration for individual officers and North Kosovo's communities. As explained by a civil society activist: 'civil society can do a great job in explaining what the issues are with the implementation of the Brussels Agreement'.[305]

5.3.4 Cross-Community and Regional Research

Displaying a peace-building function, local security research organisations participate in a community that can make positive contributions to Kosovo's inter-community relations. Joint research between the CSOs of contrasting communities has access to additional data and collective analysis, and therefore empirical benefits. In addition, international practitioners often consider joint research as more credible than individual outputs. Across interviews both international practitioners and local researchers shared an enthusiasm for the joint SSR research activities of Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian organisations. Although comprehensive focus on this aspect of local research contribution would yield more targeted data, this thesis is able to introduce some of the key dynamics of this phenomenon. This section demonstrates that local research into SSR has provided space for cooperation between Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian communities on highly sensitive issues which are often contentious at the political level. This highlights the resilience of local research, which has an ability to navigate contentious issues in a difficult environment and often subject to the pressures of conflict and politics (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 13). Joint research also points towards a peace formation, where civil society has been able 'to facilitate their locally rooted peace and reconciliation initiatives', but in the context of SSR (Visoka 2016: 79).

Interview testimonies suggest that joint research provides neutral political space between conflicting communities. Local research organisations have established cooperative ground to collaborate in the completion of research projects. A former FIQ activist explained that cooperation between FIQ and Aktiv was crucial for ensuring the successful completion of SALW projects in North Kosovo, as well as projects on school safety and policing.[306] In 2013, Aktiv and FIQ, with support from CSOs based in North Mitrovica, such as ACDC, have also conducted joint research on community security. Respecting the dynamics of different communities, homelessness, forced labour and begging are identified as common threats across Kosovo,

[305] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.
[306] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.

followed up with jointly formulated recommendations for government institutions and the Kosovo Police (Conflict Prevention Forum 2014). FIQ and Aktiv have also collaborated to organise community dialogue meetings to bring diverse communities together to discuss security issues. This research led to an analysis of four threats facing Kosovo's communities, including: traffic accidents; drugs proliferation; concerns over police performance; and the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue (Forum for Security 2013: 4-6). While these reports generally focus on less contentious and low priority aspects of security, joint research was considered a means to foster cooperation on sensitive security topics. The former FIQ activist provided an explanation of a successful, but complex relationship:

> 'The relationship that I have had with Aktiv… in the past was quite an open, quite frank, quite an honest engagement… so I have had conversations on so many delicate, sensitive issues and you know we managed to have a good conversation on them, including how our relationship, how our partnership was working. Now for FIQ coming from a… well you know an NGO primarily employing Albanians and Aktiv primarily employing Serbs and focussing only on security, on issues that have to do with and affect Serbian community or promoting that… and of course it was not easy, it was challenging at times, even though the relationship was working well'.

Cooperation between researchers of different communities suggests that joint research activities can overcome some issues facing cooperation at the political level. Sharing a perception found across interviews with local researchers, a civil society activist explained that while they 'do not particularly agree with some things', this does not prevent cooperation on particular issues.[307] This was well described by an Aktiv researcher:

> 'For NGO's, we are all practical people, the majority of us are really expunged of this ethnic identity. To me ethnic identity is important because it is important to the other person as well. If I speak to a Kosovo-Albanian, 80% of the time they will judge me by my ethnic identity, so this is why my ethnic identity matters, because I am going to be judged by it, not because I feel it like… I'm a Serb… and CSO's represent civil society. The only real relationships that I forged with people from the Kosovo-Albanian community are actually with people from NGO's, who went above these identities'.[308]

KCSS and Aktiv staff have also cooperated through joint activities. Interview participants explained that this relationship largely stems from a mutual understanding of the importance of critical thinking about security issues, as well as the development of positive working

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[307] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017.
[308] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

relationships between Aktiv and KCSS researchers.[309] These organisations have been able to participate in constructive discussions over sensitive security issues, such as regional dialogue and the balance of military power, and the prevention of religious extremism across Kosovo.

Successful joint SSR research has also occurred at the regional level between the KCSS, the Belgrade-based BCSP and Tirana-based IDM. Firstly, this includes regional research into the progress of SSR across the region through contributions to the 2012 'Almanac of Security Sector Oversight in the Western Balkans' (Klopfer et al. 2012). Secondly, a project exploring the positive and negative factors affecting the transition of the Western Balkans from a conflict zone towards a security community. Thirdly, there has been cooperation on territorial and border demarcation issues. The KCSS-BCSP partnership has combined different perspectives and community access to enrich empirical research into complex security topics in North Kosovo, such as the integration of CP units with the Kosovo Police (Bjelos, Elek and Raifi 2014; Stakic and Bjelos 2015). These partnerships suggest that joint research has empirical benefits that lead to outputs that present a more complete picture of the security context, which enhances the contribution that research poses to Kosovo's SSR. A senior researcher from the KCSS praised the professionalism of BCSP collaboration, and despite there being occasional challenges, these have been overcome by positive working relationships and a cooperation that has strengthened over time.[310] Likewise, at the 2017 Geneva Peace Talks, the BCSP executive director commented that the KCSS research partnership has:

> 'made possible for us to get the pieces of the puzzle, to get the data that is usually not presented in capitals, and to combine a picture that is not shown to the home population. This wouldn't be possible if we haven't first built trust among each other through collaborative research, and realised, that despite, possibly disagreements on some of the political issues, we do share values of rigour in research, and also courage to challenge our home security institutions' (Stojanovic-Gajic 2017b).

Joint research can also dispel rumours on sensitive security matters between Kosovo's communities. An international practitioner indicated that high quality empirical research has the potential to prevent fears and insecurities between Albanians and Serbs by raising awareness between both communities.[311] This point was furthered by an Aktiv researcher who identified language differences as a barrier that heightens the residual conflict feeling between Serbian and

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[309] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[310] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[311] Interview 21, Pristina, 08/2017.

Albanian communities.312 Nonetheless, they explained that research on perceptions of security, community safety and integration of security structures across Mitrovica provides an opportunity for people to move beyond stereotypes towards discussion of shared concerns.

5.3.5 Changes in Decision-Making

Following learning, researchers contribute to policy by helping policy-makers identify interests and frame issues (Morton 2015: 411). In the context of international intervention, practitioner behaviours are shaped by local engagement, and 'tend to react by adjusting their strategies and policies to reflect the intent of those peace networks to do more for those who need assistance' (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 11). This section presents three case studies of UNDP practitioner engagement with local research. Each case study focuses on key variables that determine international-local interaction. They emphasise the importance of the nature of the individual, including practitioner and researcher personality, and research characteristics, in determining practitioner-researcher engagement. Following engagement with local research, interviews reveal that international SSR practitioners consider local context in greater depth and think more critically about SSR implications.

Case Study 1: UNDP interest and trust in a Care Kosovo report

This case study deconstructs the engagement between a UNDP practitioner and a report produced by Care Kosovo, *Has Peace-building Made a Difference in Kosovo? A Study of the Effectiveness of Peace-building in Preventing Violence,* who in 2006 co-led with Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) a Reflecting on Peace Practice Project. The justification for including this case study is that the case highlights practitioner approach and report credibility as factors driving practitioner interest and trust, leading to engagement and practitioner learning. The case study is primarily based on the testimonial interview evidence of the UNDP practitioner.313

The UNDP practitioner demonstrates key receptive characteristics highlighted in sections 5.2.5 and 5.2.6: open criticism towards a reliance on international expertise, and openness to

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312 Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017

313 Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.

engagement with locals. Criticising UNMIK and questioning policy sensitivity to local politics, the UNDP practitioner indicated that it was not useful to:

> 'take an international expert who doesn't speak Albanian or Serbian, doesn't know the lay of the land, doesn't have any political connections, doesn't have any sensitivity to the nuances of how things work on the political scene, and try to stake them into the situation where they have to deliver political outcomes'

This perception highlights the risk identified by practitioners in section 5.2.6, that policy-making without local knowledge provides a distorted view of reality and is devoid of self-reflection. While the UNDP practitioner spoke positively about UNDP internal research, their reasoning implies a belief in the importance of local expertise:

> 'UNDP does not have the best reputation in Kosovo… I mean especially today UNDP is very much viewed as being quite… mercenary, and really focuses on money, on its financial survival and sustainability. But, I think one of the great advantages of UNDP when compared to the key international stakeholders in Kosovo around the time of independence… so particularly the DPKO mission… UNMIK, one of advantages of UNDP, is that UNDP hires local expertise to run projects'.

Furthermore, and as explained in section 4.6.3, Kosovo's security epistemic community is built on precarious foundations. Consequently, a large number of international practitioners consider local research to be biased, lack credibility and be of limited quality (sections 4.4 and 4.5). Sharing this perception, the UNDP practitioner indicated that there were 'very few truly independent' CSOs in the years surrounding independence. Nonetheless, rather than letting credibility concerns deter engagement with local researchers, the UNDP practitioner demonstrated patience, and maintained interest by constructively seeking local knowledge from a balanced pool of local sources. The UNDP practitioner exhibited their deep awareness of Kosovo's epistemic community, including organisations from Albanian and Serbian territories. They were able to reflect on conversations with the senior researchers of FIQ, the KCSS, AKTIV, and CPT, indicating that the sum of these interactions provided a means to gather different insights into Kosovo's context.

The Care Kosovo report met the practitioner's credibility criteria: a balanced report including various perspectives. Care Kosovo in the post-conflict years was described by the UNDP practitioner as 'a local organisation in the sense that by 2006-2007 it was largely staffed by Kosovars', with local staff providing logistical, research and review support throughout the project. As well as incorporating the insights of various local CSOs, the case studies, research and

interviews for the project were conducted by two researchers, one Kosovo-Albanian and one Serb, alongside international researchers (CDA 2006: 7). For this practitioner, this mixed approach to qualitative design, data collection and interpretation was 'really important', and provided the research with a balanced foundation and important checks on ethnic and community bias in the analysis of the sensitive topic of inter-community violence. The UNDP practitioner described the balanced research design as a 'solid analysis' that offered 'hugely valuable insights'. This implies that research quality encouraged the practitioners trust and interest in engaging with research outside of the UNDP.

The 'solid analysis' was based on semi-structured interviews that captured the reactions of local communities to internationally-led SSR (CDA 2006: 64-67). Such findings correlate to the practitioners indicated interest in community reactions to international security projects. Further evidencing research transparency, an appendix provides a detailed methodological breakdown (CDA 2006: 59-67). These pre-handle practitioner concerns by outlining how research bias is challenged at each of three stages, while emphasising collaboration between international, Kosovar-Serbian and Kosovar-Albanian researchers throughout. For example, phase one mapped outbreaks of inter-ethnic violence between 2002-2005 as a means to select seven case studies. These cases were designed to ensure generalisability, covering both urban areas and rural villages, and including cases of mixed ethnicity communities and of predominantly Serbian or Albanian areas. Consultative workshops were also conducted with people drawn from local and international NGOs, UNMIK and the OSCE, while an international team member consulted with Serbian and Kosovar-Albanian researchers to provide an external perspective and ask critical questions (CDA 2006: 63). Phase two included interviews and focus groups with 20-40 people from both Kosovar-Albanian and Kosovar-Serb communities, and across a wide range of sectors. Finally, phase three concerned analysis, where local and international researchers worked together to identify common themes and questions, before developing findings through discussion with policy makers, donors and CSOs.

As an appraisal study the report correlates to the critical mind of the UNDP practitioner, challenging orthodox international knowledge of the impact of conflict prevention initiatives prior to the March 2004 riots. It criticises international programmes for targeting easy-to-reach populations and focusing on individual communities, and subsequently missing the 'important factors of conflict' and contributing to the persistence of conflict despite massive international efforts (CDA 2006: 56). The report also provides timely advice on how to approach Kosovo's volatile context in the years surrounding independence. The title, *What Difference has*

Peacebuilding Made? asks a policy-oriented question and immediately appealed to the practitioner's interest in SSR effectiveness. Put together with final status talks ongoing and with post-independence institution building in progress, the recommendations anticipate community tension as the process of Kosovo's independence progressed. In summary, the recommendations encourage international actors to gain a deeper understanding of local security concerns, engage with local politics, address the drivers of conflict directly and incorporate conflict sensitivity into programming (CDA 2006: 53-58). These lessons were relevant for a UNDP practitioner involved in the construction of Kosovo's emerging security institutions and working towards community security programmes in the years surrounding independence.

For the UNDP practitioner, the comparative analysis of communities was structured and offered a professional and practical report. The introduction provides a coherent summary for the background, findings, analysis and methodological approach. Proceeding in three sections: Part one outlines Kosovo's context of inter-ethnic violence; Part two contrasts this with examples of an absence of inter-ethnic violence; Part three explores the role of peacebuilding in preventing violence. The body of the report breaks down the text with clear subsections to simplify the various factors of a complex issue. The final conclusion briefly revisits the key messages in the report, before orienting the analysis to policy through detailed recommendations for ongoing conflict prevention initiatives in Kosovo. Furthermore, while the report is a critical study, it is not confrontational.

Practitioner interest and trust stimulated an engagement with research and supported practitioner learning. The report challenged international approaches to project design and implementation: while the report recognised that 'both NGOs and inter-governmental agencies – essentially have to this day provided the only safe space for inter-ethnic interaction and communication' (CDA 2006: 31), it challenges the targeting of international projects at the community level. The report states that 'the majority of programmes pursued peace-building through promotion of practical cooperation on common interests, positive social interaction, general attitudes of tolerance, explicitly avoiding dealing with the issues mentioned by people in communities as obstacles to co-existence' (CDA 2006: 46). Furthermore, 'programmes were biased toward working with people who are, comparatively speaking, easier to reach, either because they were more moderate, apolitical or willing to cooperate', such as women or children (CDA 2006: 50). Showing an understanding of this analysis, the UNDP practitioner commented that the report demonstrated:

> 'that most peace-building activity in Kosovo was focused on the low hanging
> fruit… so those constituencies that were willing to work on peace-building

projects, rather than those constituencies that really needed to be involved in peace-building projects'.

Furthermore, the practitioner reflected on recommendations that encouraged the incorporation of conflict sensitivity into programming (CDA 2006: 53-58). The UNDP practitioner indicated that they carried the implications of the report into conflict prevention activities:

> 'the lessons on targeting and the specificity of the kinds of constituencies that are being engaged in peace-building and conflict prevention… that report was hugely valuable for that insight'.

Case Study 2: A positive UNDP-FIQ relationship

Case Study 2 details the engagement between the UNDP practitioner explored in Case Study 1 and a local FIQ researcher, exploring the practitioner-researcher relationship in detail. The significance and utility of this study lies in the nature of the case insofar as the case highlights individual personality as factors driving the formation of a positive relationship, and a critical precursor to practitioner learning. The case study is based on testimonial evidence from the UNDP practitioner,[314] a Saferworld practitioner[315] and FIQ researcher.[316]

As shown in Case Study 1, the UNDP practitioner demonstrates a strong belief in building local knowledge into international programming. This attitude encouraged a mind-set that local knowledge provides a valuable means to overcome the limits to organisational learning and knowledge within the UNDP. While recounting a particular, and 'outstanding' international expert deployed through the UNDP, they recalled that the consultant:

> 'lacked the political compass to navigate through what is still a very complex political environment for policy-making in Kosovo'.

Furthermore, describing the nature of UNDP interaction with external local researchers, the practitioner explained that the UNDP was:

> 'essentially structured to keep unsolicited enquiries away from people like me. So, it was very seldom that I met civil society people that I had not sought myself, because I saw some value in talking to them'.

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[314] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017.
[315] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017
[316] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.

Putting this receptive attitude into action after deployment to Kosovo the UNDP practitioner quickly established a series of strong relationships with the staff of SSR oriented NGOs including Saferworld. As indicated in section 4.2.2, Saferworld had an important role to play in SALW in Kosovo's communities, and had a strong partnership with FIQ in the design and implementation of its activities. A Saferworld interviewee criticised the UNDP for designing programmes that excluded community perceptions, describing UNDP programming as occasionally 'ridiculous' and taking a 'top-down approach', whereas Saferworld and FIQ worked directly with communities on security:

> 'on the research side, you would then compile these experiences into reports and share, so you find something in one community and help another community learn from that community'.

Nonetheless, the Saferworld practitioner acknowledged that this particular UNDP practitioner 'agrees with this approach'. The UNDP practitioner implied their support for this locally grounded approach to SSR, and, through Saferworld contacts, was able to foster positive relationships with FIQ researchers. The UNDP practitioner elaborated on this informal relationship with Saferworld and FIQ:

> 'For me to inform my work it was important to try and maintain relationships with those people, and to make sure that… when we issued reports that we circulated to civil society in advance to have their comments, and to take on board the criticisms that we received from them… I mean they weren't necessarily operational partners, but we saw each other as partners of the same community'.

With such a relationship in place, the UNDP practitioner explained that they would 'carefully read everything' a local researcher produced. This was a personal decision, conducted alongside formal methods of policy design and implementation, and not encouraged within the UNDP. Thus, while many UNDP practitioners may follow the 'exaggerated stability' of the UN (section 4.4.3) or emphasise UNDP political or financial objectives, this practitioner valued learning about the local context. Furthermore, the FIQ researcher implied that the receptive personality of the UNDP practitioner encouraged their trust in the practitioner. Although the FIQ researcher described the majority of international (UN, OSCE and EULEX) practitioners as those who simply followed the statements of higher-ranking officials, the UNDP practitioner was considered unique, and described as having a 'transformational mind'.

The FIQ researcher also adopted a constructive, rather than confrontational, communication style. Taking a constructive approach to engaging with international practitioners, the FIQ researcher

described a strategy of mapping out UNDP, OSCE and UNMIK SSR practitioners by considering how open they might be to the recommendations of local research, as opposed to those practitioners who comply with the barriers that international organisations put up to limit engagement with local researchers:

> 'Where there was more willingness to try and find a softer approach, to have a conversation, to try to convince people that you have to consult with others… there is nothing wrong with consultations, on the contrary there are benefits that you can gain'.

Subsequently, the UNDP practitioner and FIQ researcher demonstrated a mutual compatibility that supported productive interaction. The FIQ researcher indicated that informal discussions provide opportunity for the constructive communication of critical messages. The identification of the UNDP practitioner, who was willing to engage seriously with FIQ expertise, implies the success of this communication style. For the FIQ researcher, the UNDP practitioner fits the description of an 'exception' (Autesserre 2014), as an individual with a heightened level of knowledge about Kosovo's security context and a willingness to speak personally to local researchers. Expressing their appreciation for the knowledge and credibility of the FIQ researcher, the UNDP practitioner confirmed the two-way nature of this positive perception:

> 'That is a person who I cannot even begin to tell you how much I admire their expertise and integrity and commitment… from a UNDP perspective I tried on 3 separate occasions to lure them away with UN salaries, and they just weren't interested'.

While the UNDP practitioner implied that their personal relationship with the FIQ researcher as the driving force behind their engagement, they also described the written outputs of FIQ as 'always outstanding'. In particular, the UNDP practitioner emphasised the relevance of the FIQ report: *Kosovo at the Crossroads: Perceptions of conflict, access to justice and opportunities for peace in Kosovo* (FIQ 2007b). As a largely qualitative study, drawing off interviews and focus groups with a wide range of local security stakeholders, the empirical analysis and recommendations are based on first-hand experience, and link to the UNDP practitioner's deep interest in community safety and security. The UNDP practitioner described their interaction with FIQ researchers as a means to:

> 'access local political knowledge, detailed insight into the social and economic environment in Kosovo, in-depth understanding understandings of institutions'.

The FIQ study was also relevant to the UNDP SSR agenda, providing lessons that, in the words

of the practitioner: 'could be applied more broadly to other projects in security and conflict prevention'. In the context of Kosovo's final status talks, SALW, DDR, CVE and the construction of new security institutions provide a sensitive line of work that correlates to the safety and security of Kosovo's communities. According to the report, 'the weak rule of law and related feelings of insecurity are key drivers of conflict in Kosovo' (FIQ 2007b: 6), emphasising international SSR interventions as having the potential to ease or exacerbate drivers of conflict in Kosovo's communities.

Interview evidence implies that through a positive relationship and extensive interaction, FIQ research informed the UNDP practitioner's appreciation of the local conditions that shape and distort the intended outcomes of international policy-making. As Autesserre (2014: 251) notes, the international practitioners who operate with a deeper understanding of the local context can make peace interventions more effective. This applies to the aforementioned FIQ report, *Kosovo at the Crossroads*, and its analysis of the drivers of conflict in Kosovo communities which summarised that communities take security into their own hands due to a lack of confidence in international judicial procedure, and that individuals keep hold of weapons due to feelings of insecurity (FIQ 2007b: 6). Reflecting on this publication, the UNDP practitioner indicated that they carried forward the implications of the FIQ analysis into UNDP conflict prevention initiatives, emphasising that international engagement with local communities is a requirement for successful programme design.

Case Study 3: UNDP practitioner interest in new findings

Following increased awareness of the local security context, local research can lead to changes in practitioner decision-making (Morton 2015: 411). Case study 3 details the engagement between a different UNDP practitioner and local CVE and SALW research. The nature of this particular case demonstrates how a receptive practitioner open to engaging with local research saw value in the ability of FIQ and KCSS researchers to conduct innovative research and produce new security knowledge, and subsequently, how this shaped decision-making in the development of CVE and SALW control strategies. The case study is based on empirical evidence from an interview with a UNDP practitioner.[317]

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[317] Interview 45, Skype 09/2017.

This UNDP practitioner demonstrated a receptive attitude towards Kosovo's local security researchers. While stressing the quality of UNDP internal research and the consistent analysis of the 'Public Pulse' team, they emphasised the need for external local security knowledge. Revealing their critical eye, the UNDP practitioner indicated that the perception surveys conducted by FIQ and the KCSS provided data that could supplement Public Pulse findings. They indicated that without local knowledge international programmes may prove superficial:

> 'We can also make mistakes, and learn from what we see in their... or see what comes out of their research, you know it's interesting to see how they can think of the implementation of an action plan, and do an intermediate kind of an evaluation of an action plan'.

The interview testimony of the UNDP practitioner reveals three key reasons why they considered the ability of local researchers to produce innovative research of interest and importance. Firstly, they valued the ability of local researchers to conduct community surveys in the local language, based on an understanding of community culture, and with respect for individual experiences of conflict, whereas international researchers find this depth difficult:

> 'They have the capacity but also, they have more contact with the population, direct contact also... don't have the cultural and the language issue'.

Secondly, this access was considered to provide local researchers with the ability to collect high-quality data from difficult to reach populations. Thirdly, local capacity to produce new analysis was considered a means through which the UNDP practitioner could quickly 'catch up' on their security knowledge where internationally-led research lags behind, saving time and discovering useful insights that would take longer for the UNDP to generate internally:

> 'You can identify certain specific experts in certain very specific fields, like for example referral mechanism, family consultation, dealing with religious communities... etc. I think with this research if you really... go through that, it identifies certain specialists in the field which you can then contact and have more direct input... to not lose time'.

Identifying local research as a means to overcome the limitations of international knowledge, the UNDP practitioner described a process where they applied European research on radicalisation to the Kosovar context. It was considered important to 'try to localise' the conclusions that are generated by internal research, and that local research, such as KCSS CVE research, can help to overcome cases where international research might miss information:

'If you see everything what has been written on radicalisation, well it's not all applicable to the region where you are, and you cannot just copy and paste one approach into another location, so we have very carefully to look and localise certain issues'.

The innovative CVE research produced by the KCSS was highlighted by the UNDP practitioner as credible research of great interest. Not only did the topical focus of the research imply important relevance to the CVE portfolio of the UNDP practitioner, but the findings provided new insights into a complex topic that were not generated internationally. The methodology of the 2015 *Report inquiring into the causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens' involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq* saw KCSS researchers conduct interviews with former foreign fighters. With no available contact information for these individuals, KCSS researchers investigated towns, villages and addresses in order to establish contact with former foreign fighters and their families. Subsequently, KCSS researchers met directly with 6 foreign fighters, and the family members of 12 foreign fighters, including those still involved in conflict, those who were killed in conflict, or were under arrest (Kursani 2015: 21). This process demonstrates the capacity of local KCSS researchers to use local language, understanding of culture, and access to community networks to conduct interviews with difficult to reach populations in support of research into a highly sensitive topic.

The UNDP testimony suggests that the observation of fresh findings encouraged their interest and subsequent learning through the development of anthropological knowledge, before the building of these lessons into policy design. The new findings produced by the KCSS argue for a context sensitive approach to the deradicalisation and reintegration of Kosovo's returning foreign fighters, based on a nuanced deconstruction of the 'extremist' label (Kursani 2015: 101). The report identifies three categories of foreign fighters who have returned to Kosovo: firstly, those that regret going to Syria and Iraq and want to give up their ideology; secondly, those that regret joining the conflict but maintain their extreme ideology, but want to give up violence; thirdly, those with no regret, who uphold their extremist ideology, and want to facilitate further recruitment to an extreme ideology (Kursani 2015: 101). Following on from this study, the KCSS has produced reports exploring social media activities of extremists in Kosovo and a context sensitive guide for journalists reporting on violent extremism in Kosovo (Kelmendi and Balaj 2017; Perteshi 2018). The UNDP practitioner indicated that they developed CVE strategies using the knowledge of KCSS researchers, including knowledge of the role of gender and women in radicalisation and responses to foreign fighters who were returning to Kosovo.

The UNDP practitioner indicated that FIQ researchers highlighted community security concerns

that provided important knowledge for SALW programmes. This capacity is emphasised by the FIQ publication: *Through the cross-hairs: A survey of changing attitudes towards small arms in Kosovo, and its analysis of the persistent presence of weapons Kosovo's communities.* With an ability to access local communities, FIQ researchers collected perception data, conducted interviews and hosted focus groups to shed important light on the presence of weapons in Kosovo's communities. The report stresses the significant sensitivity of SALW control in Kosovo, where people keep hold of weapons as they are motivated to protect their community in an insecure context (FIQ 2008: 9-10). Although the UNDP had extensive in-house expertise in the field of SALW control, based on this report, the UNDP practitioner explained that they generated an understanding of the different perceptions of community safety and security between Serbian and Albanian communities, considering this an important factor that pertains directly to internationally-led attempts to control and reduce the presence of weapons in Kosovo's communities.

The KCSS also produced original research into the state of SALW control in Kosovo and shed light on an under considered aspect of the security situation: the impact of private security companies on the possession of weapons (KCSS 2009: 17-18). Again, the UNDP practitioner indicated their interest in this report. KCSS researchers completed an in-depth qualitative investigation into a highly sensitive issue, including 6 focus groups and 60 interviews with key informants in Government, private security companies, and the local community. The report highlights the large number of private security companies that emerged as Kosovo's post-conflict years progressed. Providing relevant insights for the UNDP practitioners interest in SALW, the report identifies the weak oversight in place in Kosovo over PSC purchase, handling and use of weapons (KCSS 2009: 20-21), as well as indicating that PSCs had approached KPC members for recruitment, while also considering it as likely that ex-KLA members would seek employment in PSCs (KCSS 2009: 17-18). The UNDP practitioner suggested that specific information, like that produced by the FIQ and KCSS reports, provided important insights for the development of an evidence-based approach to SALW control. The UNDP practitioner indicated that the recommendations of FIQ and KCSS researchers and reports (FIQ 2008; KCSS 2009) were important for the development of an approach to weapons collection and an understanding of community safety, by remaining sensitive to public fears over the ceding of weapons.

Case studies 1, 2, and 3 highlight the variables which determine the nature of practitioner-researcher engagement. These include practitioner and researcher personality and approach, research report quality, and practitioner-researcher relationships as factors which facilitate

practitioner-researcher interaction. In particular, the case studies identify individual practitioner personality as a key variable, where receptive attitudes and characteristics encourage practitioner openness to local research, as well as interest and trust in local research, across each case. Following on from the analysis conducted in section 5.3, Figure 30 adds to the understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. It indicates that the challenges of local research bring positive benefits to international SSR practitioners. The building of personal, collaborative relationships is highlighted as the key method of research interaction, through which researchers are able to advance their challenges and contribute to practitioner learning. Receptive practitioners seek to build these collaborative relationships, and access local expertise as a means to streamline decision-making. Stemming from these interactions, practitioners develop their political compass and anthropological knowledge of the Kosovo security context. As depicted by a blue arrow, learning can lead to changes in the decision-making of international practitioners, which becomes more conflict and context sensitive. Finally, Figure 30 adds joint and cross-community research to the 'pool of knowledge'.

Figure 30: Updating the LRCF in the case of Kosovo

Researcher-practitioner interaction in hybridised SSR

International actors incentivise engagement with international SSR. Local research supported by international funding.

Ability of international actors to enforce compliance with SSR. Local research dependency on international funding.

: Practitioners change decision-making, which becomes more conflict and context sensitive and aware of the implications of international approaches.

: Learning from engagement, critical conversations and relationships, with local researchers, international practitioners develop their 'political compass' and anthropological understanding of security context.

: Research uptake distorted through political and selective forms of utilisation; hindered due to the political and security context.

: **Receptive behaviours and attitudes:** Practitioners seek out local researchers; practitioners value local researcher expertise; practitioners critical of international barriers; practitioners ignore organisation procedures; practitioners critical of technical international expertise, reliance on experience, and external consultants; practitioners build collaborative relationships to access local expertise and streamline decision-making.

: **Resistant behaviours and attitudes:** Local knowledge not a priority in recruitment; practitioners lack awareness of local research; practitioners don't value local research; negative perceptions of local research; limited time to engage with local research; frequent staff turnover; poor donor coordination; preference for international sources of knowledge.

Research interaction: Conferences, workshops, seminars, use of the media, publication and communication strategies. Targeting specific practitioners and **building personal, collaborative relationships.**

Providing local alternatives: security and judicial policy recommendations; localising international prescriptions; access to local languages and community concerns.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats

Changes in the decision-making of international practitioners

Practitioner learning, leading to changes in international practitioner knowledge of SSR and skills

Selective, political, manipulation

Resistant discretion

Receptive discretion

Limited time
Impracticality
Staff turnover
Recruitment

Donor coordination
Anti-intellectualism
Exaggerated stability
Limited awareness
Credibility concerns

Research contribution

Research utilisation:

Research production

Challenging SSR:
Monitoring and evaluating institutions; questioning legitimacy; investigating corruption and malpractice.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats

Pool of Knowledge
Local security, judicial and investigative research
Monitoring and reporting
Perception surveys
Joint research and cross-community research
International experience
International research
Internal research/ outsourcing

5.4 Complicating the Utilisation of Local Research

Several international practitioners indicated that they deemed the ability of local researchers and think tanks to work through coalitions as a sign of credibility. As Jones, H. et al. (2012: 64) suggests, 'being a member of such a community grants a certain level of credibility, greater than that of an actor who is perceived to be a lone voice'. Nonetheless, there are several forms of inter-think tank competition in Kosovo which undermine credibility perceptions. The ongoing competition stressed by hybridity (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016) includes local-local contestation across different researchers, where different local actors have different motivations for the challenges they pose to SSR.

The potential of researcher-practitioner interaction to shape SSR is often hampered by the marginality that practitioners afford to local knowledge (sections 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5). Furthermore, the patterns through which research is used in policy-making are often complex (Stone 2002; Waldman, Barakat, and Varisco 2014; Weiss 1979). As such, international practitioners open to incorporating local ideas into programme design are likely to be exceptions to the norm (Autesserre 2014: 251). A number of measures complicate research utilisation in Kosovo and undermine any challenges and contribution that local researchers pose to international SSR. As an international practitioner explained:

> 'I think more now there's a lot more confidence in Kosovo's civil society, but there is still an attitude amongst some internationals that they are either there for the ride... a safe environment and they get good pay... or they know a little bit more'.[318]

5.4.1 Competition in the Local Research Community

International practitioners held the opinion that joint research, involving researchers from a range of organisations, were more likely to present balanced and credible findings.[319] For example, an international interviewee indicated that joint research outputs displayed a more multidimensional perspective, which was beneficial to international organisations who were incorporating issues of gender, human and community rights into security reform.[320] It was also felt that joint activities

[318] Interview 2, Skype, 06/2017.
[319] Interview 27, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 32, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 41, Pristina, 09/17; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[320] Interview 4, Skype, 06/2017.

between Albanian and Serbian organisations provided a more accurate picture of the problems facing SSR.

Local researchers of different organisations have regularly cooperated throughout SSR research. These researchers explained that combining expertise can help to strengthen the analytical process and research outputs, as different organisations areas of expertise combine.[321] In particular, KLI and GLPS researchers explained that their cooperation has supported investigations into judicial corruption and the design of recommendations for an anti-corruption strategy, while they are also regularly participating in each other's conferences. Here, interviewees indicated that collaboration had led to permanent friendships and informal cooperation, including positive relationships between Albanian and Serbian researchers on contentious topics of community security.[322] Furthermore, and resembling a form of coalition (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018), cooperation between the research activities of think tanks and the journalistic approach of investigative organisations was considered as complementary, with investigative organisations able to use media outlets to push local think tank research into the public domain.[323]

The 'Forum for Security' has provided local analysis of security in a field of policy-making that local researchers considered to be controlled by internationals.[324] In 2010, FIQ and the KCSS collaborated to produce a Forum for Security publication that explored national and international coordination through integrated border management and border security (Forum for Security 2010). In addition, in 2013, a joint research publication included input from FIQ, GAP, the KLI and INDEP, and attempted to add weight to challenges directed at a Kosovo Security Strategy development process considered to lack local inclusivity (Rushiti 2013). Furthermore, in 2013 a Conflict Prevention Forum was established in the North of Kosovo, made up of five CSOs from Mitrovica North, which aspired to address safety issues in North Kosovo by advocating for a more people centred provision of security. This was again supported by Saferworld and has worked towards the completion of security-oriented research in collaboration with FIQ (Conflict Prevention Forum 2014).

Nonetheless, the local think tanks that make up Kosovo's epistemic community do not constitute

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[321] Interview 3, Email, 07/2017; Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[322] Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[323] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017
[324] Interview 3, Email, 07/2017; Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.

a uniform actor.[325] There are several forms of inter-think tank competition in Kosovo which undermine the credibility perceptions of international practitioners. In this sense, local-local contestation harms local-international engagement. Firstly, suspicion towards the political affiliations and funding sources of other think tanks serves to undermine a willingness to partner and collaborate.[326] Secondly, rivalry is found in the realm of ideas. Naturally, dynamics of peace formation see the coexistence of competing local peace projects which pursue different means and ends (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 2). When discussing the recent trend of CVE research, international and local interviewees remarked that local researchers offered different and competing interpretations of the causes of religious radicalisation, options for the prevention of radicalisation, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign fighters who had travelled to Syria and Iraq.[327] There are, in addition, variable levels of trust felt by Kosovo's citizens towards CSOs. Figures 24 and 25 show that 11% of respondents had no trust in civil society, while 13% believe CSOs make no contribution to the security needs of citizens. International practitioners also expressed concern over the community representation of research, showing awareness to the different perceptions of security between researchers of Serbian and Albanian communities respectively, and also observing that local sources rarely make reference to additional minority groups, such as the Gorani and Roma.[328]

Thirdly, evidence highlights a competition between local research organisations for the funding that is required to conduct research. A local interviewee explained that FIQ had secured funding from a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund to finance youth employment, education, and social enterprises in support of CVE, which required FIQ to compete against local think tanks working towards the same issue.[329] International practitioners commented on this local-local rivalry and how it stimulates further division, which can undermine international practitioner perceptions of the professionalism of local research. For example, international interviewees explained that they had been involved in private exchanges with local CSOs who have attempted to undermine their competition in conversations with donors.[330]

The stability of coalitions such as the 'Forum for Security' are challenged by competition and rivalry, which further undermines practitioner perceptions of research credibility. While organisations within the Forum for Security have worked together to produce SSR research,

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[325] Interview 42, Pristina, 09/2017.
[326] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017; Interview 20, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 25, Pristina, 08/2017.
[327] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017.
[328] Interview 1, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 45, Skype, 09/2017.
[329] Interview 25, Pristina, 08/2017.
[330] Interview 11, Skype, 07/2017; Interview 17, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.

interviewees explained that the Forum has had a fluctuating membership and inconsistent levels of commitment. Individual think tanks also did not necessarily prioritise working within a coalition that had no statute binding members to joint research. Here, an interviewee noted that there was no formal requirement to share research ideas within the coalition, and consequently, organisations did not regularly prioritise work.[331] Previous Forum members also reported subjective differences between researchers, and suggested that some individuals made a significant contribution while others took more of a back seat.[332] In this context, interviewees indicated that the KCSS did not necessarily need to work through the Forum to display a heightened level of expertise. Likewise, a KCSS researcher described the Forum as a good attempt, 'but there was a discrepancy in terms of capacities between the actors that were a part of it', and subsequently showed a preference to seek individual partnerships on specific security issues rather than working as a broader coalition.

In other instances of research partnership, it has proved difficult to create a common discourse on security issues. A former FIQ activist explained that there are challenges in reaching an agreement over the methodological approach research should take, what security issues to focus on, and how to analyse data.[333] They also explained that it can take time for a coalition to collaborate effectively, with researchers finding it difficult to establish common advocacy strategies:

> 'People had to learn that the position of an organisation does not mean that it is a position of an individual and also the position of a coalition is not the position of an NGO or individual, so you have to make that distinction'.

Such division was also evident during the participation of researchers in government working groups for rule of law and anti-corruption strategies. For example, a GLPS researcher noted how the overall message was sometimes undermined as organisations participating within working groups offered different interpretations.[334] Shared discourses are also difficult to establish in SSR research that involves researchers from both Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian communities. An EU official indicated that where they had come into contact with joint research, it was important to be modest about cooperation in the highly sensitive context of security.[335] A researcher from North Mitrovica also offered a perception that Kosovo-Albanian organisations had not sufficiently held to account the performance of national security institutions, and that Kosovo-

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[331] Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017.
[332] Interview 25, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[333] Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
[334] Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.
[335] Interview 38, Pristina, 09/2017

Albanian organisations have tended to not dedicate attention to North Kosovo's security issues.[336] Furthermore, despite productive cooperation between Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian researchers, an Aktiv researcher noted that there can be differences over understandings of community safety and security, and even the spelling of names throughout publications:

> 'We do have issues related to very stupid things, for example, how will you call Mitrovica… is it North Mitrovica, is it Kosovska Mitrovica, or is it Mitrovica North. But people from NGO's understand this… or for example the university, whether it is University of Mitrovica, University of North Mitrovica, or … as it is as its official name… so that is when you have clashes, when you decide how to name things in a report'.

Furthermore, with donors focused on results and fast grants, local interviewees suggested that it was difficult to get funding for joint research projects. Joint research tends to be a slower process, requiring the balancing of conflicting opinions and a more careful analysis that does not always result in an output.[337]

5.4.2 Managing Researcher Expectations

It is important to consider the true meaning of research use (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Stone 2002; Weiss 1979). In Kosovo, local research engagement often highlights the political logic of practitioners, who engage local researchers only to appease local challenges. This manipulation of research findings and deliberate limited use of research further complicates the role of local research in international SSR. A civil society activist who was involved in local research capacity support described formal meetings with UN agencies as superficial:

> 'I think there were times when the international community, but that's also a very broad term, was interested in the input and building that channel of communication… but there were also times when they were ticking the box basically… and not listening, donor driven approaches… quick fixes'.[338]

International practitioners confirmed the widespread limited utilisation of local research and expertise. Commenting on the performance of the JAC-LM within the UNMIK legal reform process, an UNMIK legal officer stated: 'there was an element of it being a bone thrown to Kosovo public opinion simply to show that UNMIK was interested in what Kosovo public opinion

[336] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[337] Interview 35, Pristina, 09/2017; Interview 43, Pristina, 09/2017.
[338] Interview 15, Skype, 08/2017.

was, without actually being interested'.[339] In other words, the JAC-LM reflects an attempt by UNMIK to 'instrumentalise' hybridity (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Furthermore, a former OSCE advisor explained that while consultations did take place with informed locals in the early post-conflict years, they indicated that any information found went through a 'watering down process'.[340]

International SSR practitioners holding negative perceptions of local research have developed creative ways of handling researcher challenges. A local researcher explained that as local think tanks have increased their research outputs, public outreach and visibility, they have seen international actors become more 'proactive' at managing civil society expectations.[341] For example, an UNMIK practitioner described their approach when faced with high numbers of requests to attend conferences: while they would respond positively to invitations from think tanks to what they considered to be 'meaningful' conferences, they would not attend in person and would delegate the task to another staff member.[342]

The managing of the challenges put forward by CSOs was highlighted as common practice within EULEX. Conferences and meetings have been held between EULEX and local CSOs to discuss EU progress reports, while a EULEX media monitoring department also reports on the analysis and research produced by local media platforms and think tanks, including information critical of the EULEX mission.[343] Nonetheless, international practitioners and local researchers were critical about the motivations behind this interaction. EULEX practitioners indicated that they were 'not sure whether it was because EULEX was really interested or to give off an image of being 'democratic and transparent', while 'keeping an arm's length'.[344] Another EULEX practitioner suggested that this consultation was more often about 'clarifying the mandate of EULEX', or 'managing expectations and saying that it is beyond the scope of our interests'.[345] Subsequently, a further former EULEX practitioner questioned the utility of this engagement:

> 'I couldn't see that there was any real linkage between the evidence that we were finding about levels of competence or otherwise in the criminal justice system here and where these NGOs and other groups could profitably be engaged to take

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[339] Interview 12, Skype, 07/2017.
[340] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[341] Interview 14, Skype, 07/2017
[342] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[343] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017; Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[344] Interview 5, Skype, 06/2017; Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.
[345] Interview 31, Mitrovica, 09/2017.

more responsibility so that EULEX could pull back and allow civil society in the country to find its feet and grow in responsibility'.[346]

Interviews with the local researchers who had been involved in EULEX mandate reconfiguration meetings shed light on their frustrations. A KCSS researcher explained that civil society actors were expected to synchronise with EULEX opinion to 'tick the box', stating that 'they (EULEX) talk to you, whether they consider your opinions… that is another story', while considering that channels of communication were there simply to 'justify their presence'.[347] Similarly, an Aktiv researcher indicated that: 'it is not that they don't speak to us, it is just that they keep to their own policies, they don't change them'.[348]

Box 6: Example of a contested local-EULEX interaction

In 2012, and ahead of the reconfiguration of the EULEX mandate, Kosovar CSOs, including the KCSS, were personally invited to meet a delegation to discuss the reconfiguration of the EULEX mandate in terms of police and customs reform. Local CSO representatives were invited to attend early and were briefed by EULEX staff in an attempt to generate support for reconfiguration plans and the extension of the EULEX mandate. This meeting reflects an example of local-international contestation, where international actors attempt to manage the challenges of local CSOs, looking to generate compliance rather than taking seriously the critical questions and ideas of local representatives.

An engagement with local researchers throughout the decision-making process also allows international practitioners to 'cover' their decision-making process against accusations of bias or international exclusivity.[349] For example, during the ISSR process both international and local researchers made up the ISSR research team and the design of recommendations which outlined the future of Kosovo's security architecture (ISSR 2006). ISSR staff put significant effort into interacting with many security stakeholders, including local citizens and CSOs, in order to understand the context and direction of SSR. In a highly sensitive context, however, a former

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[346] Interview 39, Pristina, 09/2017.
[347] Interview 40, Pristina, 09/2017.
[348] Interview 33, Mitrovica, 09/2017.
[349] Interview 23, Pristina, 08/2017.

ISSR official also indicated that the inclusion of a wide variety of sources of information enabled them to counter criticisms and accusations of exclusion.[350]

5.4.3 Selective Utilisation

In post-conflict contexts, research is often used by policy-makers to reinforce policy preferences (Stone 2002; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). In this section, interviewees indicate that international practitioners and local politicians working towards SSR use local research selectively in order to fulfil political objectives. This form of utilisation detracts from the original intentions of local research and undermines its role in policy.

Reflecting on their experience in Kosovo, a senior ICITAP advisor explained that international and local practitioners would often select convenient findings to support their point of view, and that critical or negative information would be ignored to prevent disruption and difficulty in the policy-process. For example, public perception data produced by local research organisations was identified as evidence that could be used to justify political positions and to advance policy agendas.[351] In another instance, the UNDP Public Pulse project leader explained that individuals within national security institutions have used positive perception data for political point scoring, while they have also criticised the findings if they provide negative results.[352] Likewise, a government official also inferred that local research was occasionally only referenced to fulfil the criteria of a policy being 'evidence-based'.[353] These trends are emulated in the context of international policy-making. Here, an UNMIK adviser indicated that local research has been used to justify international policy briefs, rather than making reference to critical findings which might express dissatisfaction with the UNMIK role in SSR.[354]

Local researchers are aware of the issue of selective utilisation. A KIPRED researcher described research as 'an open menu for policy-makers' to pick out whatever information they want.[355] Furthermore, a GLPS researcher indicated that there was a tendency for policy-makers to only talk to amenable think tanks, rather than those who are more critical.[356] In an attempt to overcome

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[350] Interview 6, Skype, 07/2017.
[351] Interview 30, Pristina, 08/2017.
[352] Interview 28, Pristina, 08/2017.
[353] Interview 41, Pristina, 09/2017.
[354] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
[355] Interview 16, Pristina, 08/2017
[356] Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.

these issues, an interviewee explained that when communicating findings to international practitioners they put extra emphasis on their message as an attempt to prevent the alteration of the analysis.357 Collectively, the selective utilisation of research is a method used by international SSR practitioners to navigate the challenges posed by local researchers.

5.4.4 Relationship Breakdowns

The 'ongoing negotiation' of hybridity posits that tension in local-international relationships can fluctuate (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Indeed, while positive practitioner-researcher relationships have been established, interaction can eventually lead to a breakdown in relationships. An UNMIK advisor indicated that they were comfortable with the prevalent tension between local actors and the ongoing UNMIK mission, but suggested that in a meeting with local researchers they had been treated as 'state enemy number two after the SRSG'.358 They described an occasion where they considered local analysis of the role of UNMIK to be deliberately politicised, also reporting what they considered to be an arrogance in a follow up meeting with local researchers, to which they were 'professionally offended'. Subsequently, they indicated that they no longer had a connection to particular researchers and would turn down requests for collaboration.

Breakdowns in communication with international actors was also reported by local researchers. Again, difficulties in communication stem from the tension that results from local criticisms towards the performance of international SSR. For example, a KLI researcher indicated that EULEX has often been unhappy with critical research, and that to continue to make these criticisms they try to stay independent from EU funds.359 Similarly, a CPT researcher explained that they have had EU funding withdrawn after disagreements over research findings.360 There was also a perception that criticisms of national institutions are often equated to opposition. For example, a GLPS researcher indicated that policy-makers often start off receptive to interaction but begin to make excuses or refuse engagement after the publication of critical findings.361

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357 Interview 36, Pristina, 09/2017.
358 Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017.
359 Interview 18, Pristina, 08/2017.
360 Interview 22, Pristina, 08/2017.
361 Interview 24, Pristina, 08/2017.

Following on from the analysis conducted in section 5.4, Figure 31, shown below, adds to the understanding of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. It incorporates factors which complicate the challenges that local research poses to international SSR and the extent to which local research contributes to international practitioners. Firstly, it acknowledges that Kosovo's local security and judicial research community is not a uniform actor, adding to the red dotted boxes, and indicating that this context stimulates negative perceptions amongst international practitioners. Secondly, and depicted by a shaded arrow, selective and political utilisation and the managing of researcher expectations provide forms of utilisation which complicate research contribution. Thirdly, a blue curved arrow is inserted to depict the consequences of relationship breakdowns, emulating the movement of a practitioner open to local research engagement towards a more resistant attitude.

Figure 31: Updating the LRCF in the case of Kosovo

International actors incentivise engagement with international SSR. Local research supported by international funding.

Ability of international actors to enforce compliance with SSR. Local research dependency on international funding.

Researcher-practitioner interaction in hybridised SSR

: Practitioners change decision-making, which becomes more conflict and context sensitive and aware of the implications of international approaches.

: Learning from engagement, critical conversations and relationships, with local researchers, international practitioners develop their 'political compass' and anthropological understanding of security context.

: Selective and political utilisation of local research undermines intentions of local researchers. The managing of expectations limits the challenges and contribution of local research.

: **Receptive behaviours and attitudes:** Practitioners seek out local researchers; practitioners value local researcher expertise; practitioners critical of international barriers; practitioners ignore organisation procedures; practitioners critical of technical international expertise, reliance on experience, and external consultants; practitioners build collaborative relationships to access local expertise and streamline decision-making.

: **Resistant behaviours and attitudes:** Local knowledge not a priority in recruitment; practitioners lack awareness of local research; practitioners don't value local research; negative perceptions of local research; limited time to engage with local research; frequent staff turnover; poor donor coordination; preference for international sources of knowledge.

Research interaction: Conferences, workshops, seminars, use of the media, publication and communication strategies. Targeting specific practitioners and **building personal, collaborative relationships.**

Providing local alternatives: security and judicial policy recommendations; localising international prescriptions; access to local languages and community concerns.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats
Inter think tank competition

Changes in the decision-making of international practitioners

Practitioner learning, leading to changes in international practitioner knowledge of SSR and skills

Selective utilisation
Political utilisation
Managing researcher expectations

Relationship breakdowns

Resistant discretion

Limited time
Impracticality
Staff turnover
Recruitment

Receptive discretion

Donor coordination
Anti-intellectualism
Exaggerated stability
Limited awareness
Credibility concerns

Research contribution

Research utilisation:

Research production

Challenging SSR:
Monitoring and evaluating institutions; questioning legitimacy; investigating corruption and malpractice.

Post-conflict disruption
Limited academic research
Brain drain
Funding dependency
SSR sensitivity
Researcher threats
Inter think tank competition

Pool of Knowledge
Local security, judicial and investigative research
Monitoring and reporting
Perception surveys
Joint research and cross-community research
International experience
International research
Internal research/ outsourcing

5.5 Conclusion

Stressing hybridity, the analysis in Chapter 5 portrays a highly political, messy and interactive process of SSR, where local researchers and international practitioners interact in various ways, and where local research has a role to play in policy formation. It has reflected on empirical evidence to form an updated version of the LRCF that reflects the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR. It depicted researcher-practitioner engagement and shed light on the challenges local research directs towards international SSR and the various ways local research contributes to the decision-making of international practitioners. In sum, local researchers:

- monitor and evaluate international SSR and national security institutions;
- question the legitimacy of security institutions and decision-making;
- investigate corruption in the judicial sector;
- provide alternatives to international approaches to SSR;
- challenge the international reliance on international and technical expertise.

In addition, local research:

- contributes to the local and political knowledge of international practitioners;
- contributes to the conflict sensitivity of international decision-making;
- provides an avenue for constructive community relations on contentious issues.

The initial conditions for local research organisations in post-conflict Kosovo were not good. The legacies of communism and educational segregation, coupled with destruction and displacement following conflict, have hampered the development Kosovo's research culture, as evidenced by Kosovo's university sector. At the same time, international SSR practitioners adopted a series of practices that emulated the generally centralised policy-making processes of their organisations. Subsequently, international models, technical expertise and internal research mechanisms are sources of information seen as more important than local security knowledge. There were only limited examples of local research in the immediate post-conflict years that were capable of challenging international SSR, with minimal contribution to decision-making.

With the increasing sophistication of local think tanks in the years surrounding independence, local researchers have advanced the challenges they pose to international SSR. Local researchers and their outputs have a critical role to play in the local-local, local-international and

international-international contestation that has followed international intervention. The chapter has demonstrated that local research, through monitoring and reporting on national security institutions and the ongoing international presence, challenges international approaches to SSR and the knowledge formation of international practitioners. With greater access to local and community dynamics of security, local researchers are able to explore and analyse topics that international organisations cannot reach. In this context, it has also been shown that international practitioners have criticised the epistemic practices of their organisations and identified local research as a useful alternative. Following these challenges, local research has an important role to play in the construction of SSR by contributing to international practitioners working towards SSR. Local researchers and international practitioners have developed enduring relationships, which encourages an increasing practitioner awareness of the political and anthropological security context. The individual nature and agency of international SSR practitioners has been identified as a critical variable in determining the engagement between practitioners and local researchers. Examples have shown that this engagement can encourage a more conflict sensitive decision-making process. Nonetheless, since practitioners often use local research selectively, or engage only to manage researcher expectations, the increasing visibility of local research and the challenges posed to international practitioners does not always equate with successful challenge and contribution to policy-making.

# Chapter 6: Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The research project set out to extend and deepen existing knowledge of the role played by local research in Kosovo's SSR. This chapter draws together the range of key findings developed throughout the substantive chapters. In doing so, a useful point of departure is to recap on the aim and central RQs that were set out for this research and what the study did to provide robust, evidence-based answers. At the heart of the research is the overarching question: *"What role is played by the local security epistemic community in Kosovo's SSR?"* To help answer this primary question, the study proposed four secondary RQs: *(RQ1)"To what extent has a security and justice oriented epistemic community developed in Kosovo?"; (RQ2) "To what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?"; (RQ3) "How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo?"; and (RQ4) "What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?".* To support the investigation and provide rigorous analysis producing original, high-quality evidence, the study developed a fresh analytical approach in Chapter 2 largely grounded in the concept of 'hybridity'. This took existing conceptual work and integrated it with the concept of 'research contribution' to create a sharper and more incisive analytical instrument capable of generating new data and deeper insights. This conceptual approach was linked in Chapter 3 to an innovative development of a methodological framework for analysis; a Local Research Contribution Framework (LRCF). The application of this conceptual-methodological approach in Chapters 4 and 5 involved the analysis of new evidence to deconstruct the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR, highlighting the challenges that local research poses to international SSR and the contribution it affords to international practitioners. This chapter provides a depiction of Local Research Contribution in Kosovo (LRCK) in Figure 33, in the light of the research experience, evidence and analysis. It provides a structural breakdown of the key components of Figure 33, visualising local research production, utilisation and contribution in a complex post-conflict context. The ensuing discussion considers the linkages between the key findings of the thesis and the literature explored in Chapter 2. It discusses how the LRCK has been informed by the empirical evidence in Chapters 4 and 5, and how this adds to the existing state-building and policy-making literature.

The analytical-methodological approach worked highly effectively to facilitate strong data collection, data evaluation through the use of 'coding', and in generating a range of new findings that challenge orthodox academic knowledge and policy practice. In all, the research identified *seven key findings* that provide fresh and cogent answers to the research questions and challenge the conventional wisdom. These findings are summarised here and are explained in detail below. The initial finding confirmed the working premise of the study, namely, that a security research community is an established part of Kosovo's SSR. This finding provided a basis for the further findings based on the empirical research undertaken. The study also found that international funding can incentivise local researchers and enforce compliance with internationally-driven policies. However, the interview data collected and assessed pointed to the highly significant finding that local researchers challenge international approaches to SSR and provide coherent alternatives for policy formulation and practice. Following on from this, the research demonstrated that local researchers and international practitioners have sometimes built positive and enduring relationships and that there are individual SSR practitioners who are receptive to local researchers and critical of international expertise. The nature of the individuals involved in practitioner-researcher engagement was identified as a key variable. In particular, the experience of individual practitioners, and their personalities and characteristics, determine trust and interest in local researchers and define the nature of interaction. The testimonial evidence also indicated that both receptive and resistant practitioners operate within the broader pool of international decision-makers. International practitioners provided evidence that explained how practitioners resist the knowledge of local researchers as they deem it to lack relevance and credibility, while holding international expertise and experience in higher regard. This underlines the importance of the influence upon practitioners of different organisational cultures and the impact upon them of the structure-agency problem. Despite this, evidence supports the proposition that local researchers can contribute to practitioner knowledge and decision-making in a constructive way. Yet, evidence also indicates that research utilisation is a complicated process. A further finding highlights how resistant practitioners engage with local researchers only to manage the challenges they pose to international SSR, while using local research selectively and politically.

Figure 32: Key findings and RQ-relevance

Findings	RQ-relevance
1: A security research community is an established part of Kosovo's SSR.	1
2: International funding can incentivise local researchers and enforce compliance.	2, 4
3: Local researchers challenge international approaches to SSR and provide alternatives.	2
4: Researchers and practitioners have built positive and enduring relationships.	4
5: Practitioner personality is a critical factor behind the engagement with local researchers	3, 4
6: Practitioners engage with local researchers politically and to manage expectations	2, 3
7: Local research contributes to practitioner awareness, knowledge and decision-making.	3

Figure 33: Local Research Contribution in Kosovo
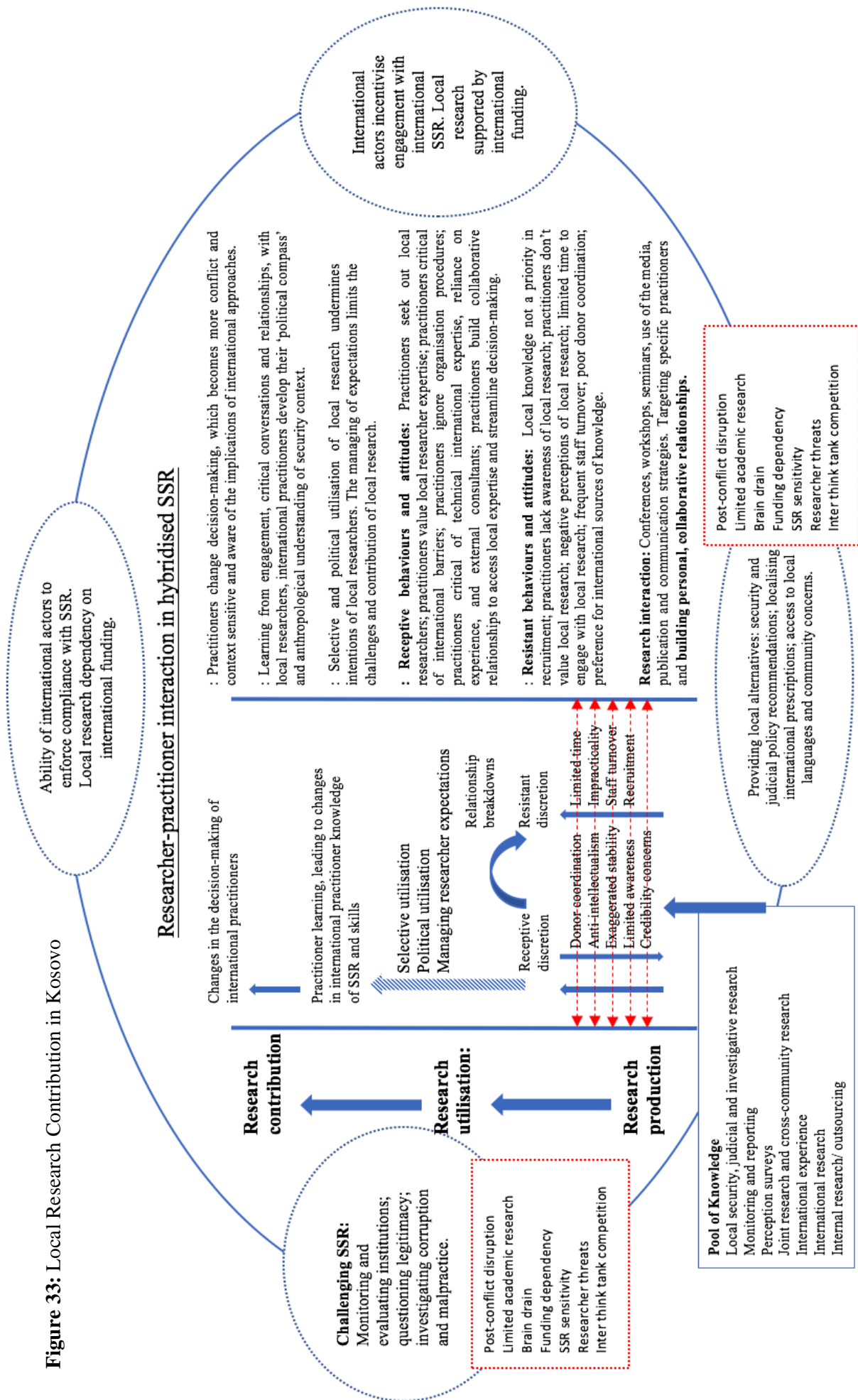
6.2 Structural Breakdown of Figure 33: Local Research Contribution in Kosovo

Providing a diagrammatic representation of the empirical evidence explored and analysed in Chapters 4 and 5, Figure 33 captures the complex nature of local research production, utilisation and contribution in Kosovo's SSR. The first column inside the outer ring deconstructs the policy impact pathway of local research. This progresses from research production to research utilisation and concludes with research contribution. The second column considers in more depth the research uptake process across each pathway. Overall, local research progresses from a pool of knowledge before facing international barriers and a complex utilisation process, eventually leading to practitioner learning and changes in decision-making. The third column adds further detail by reflecting on empirical evidence.

This section offers a structural breakdown of the four key components that make up Figure 33. The first component (Figure 34) is adapted from Mac Ginty's (2011:9) four-part model that stresses hybridity and reflects the interactive and political context of Kosovo's SSR. Within this context, three further components outline the pathway of local research to policy impact. Reading left to right and across each column, the three rows are deconstructed to include research production (Figure 35), research utilisation (Figure 36) and research contribution (Figure 37).

Figure 34: The Context of Local Research Contribution in Kosovo
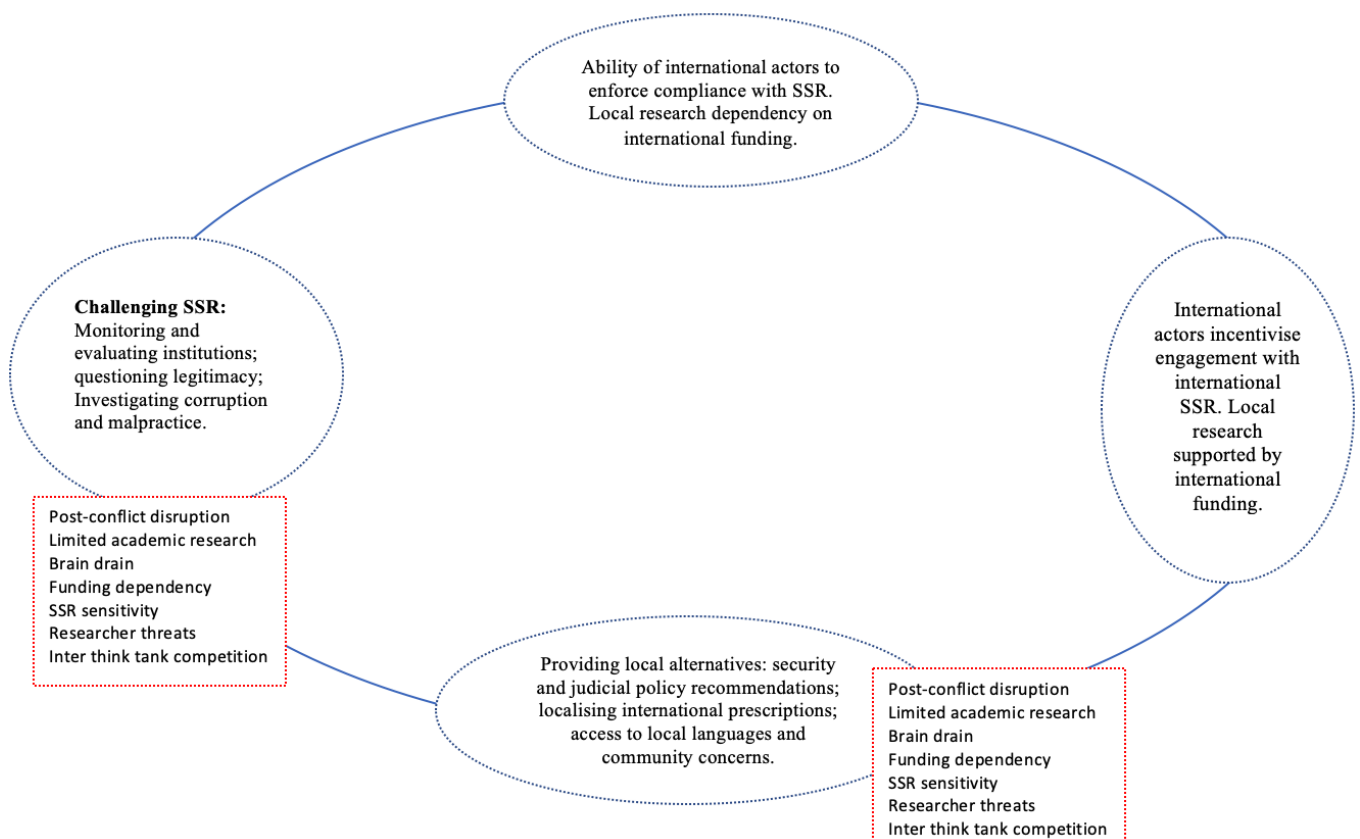
The outer ring symbolises the complexity of internationally-led SSR and its intersection with Kosovo's local security research community. Emulating Chapters 4 and 5, it depicts the constant interaction, cooperation and contestation between international SSR and local researchers throughout the process of research production, utilisation and contribution. Each of the processes occurring in Figures 35, 36 and 37 takes place inside of this broader context. The top oval identifies the ability of international actors to enforce local compliance with international SSR. As indicated in section 4.6.3, local researchers have been required to chase international funding or have produced research outputs in line with donor expectations. At the same time, the oval on the right denotes local researcher reliance on international funding for capacity building support. These two ovals provide important contextual factors to consider during the production of local security research.

The oval on the left indicates that local research challenges internationally-dominated SSR. As demonstrated in section 5.2, local researchers challenge SSR by extensively monitoring and evaluating security institutions and investigating instances of poor performance and judicial corruption. Posing a challenge to SSR is a motivating factor during research production and is important to consider throughout practitioner-researcher engagement and in the utilisation or rejection of local research. The bottom oval demonstrates the ability of local researchers to provide local alternatives to international policy prescriptions through the provision of recommendations. As shown in Figure 37 (research contribution), these alternatives can contribute to practitioner knowledge and decision-making. Two boxes with red dotted lines have also been inserted and refer to the contextual analysis in section 4.6. They consider key factors which have impacted on the development of Kosovo's local security research community.

Figure 35: Step 1 of Local Research Impact: Research Production
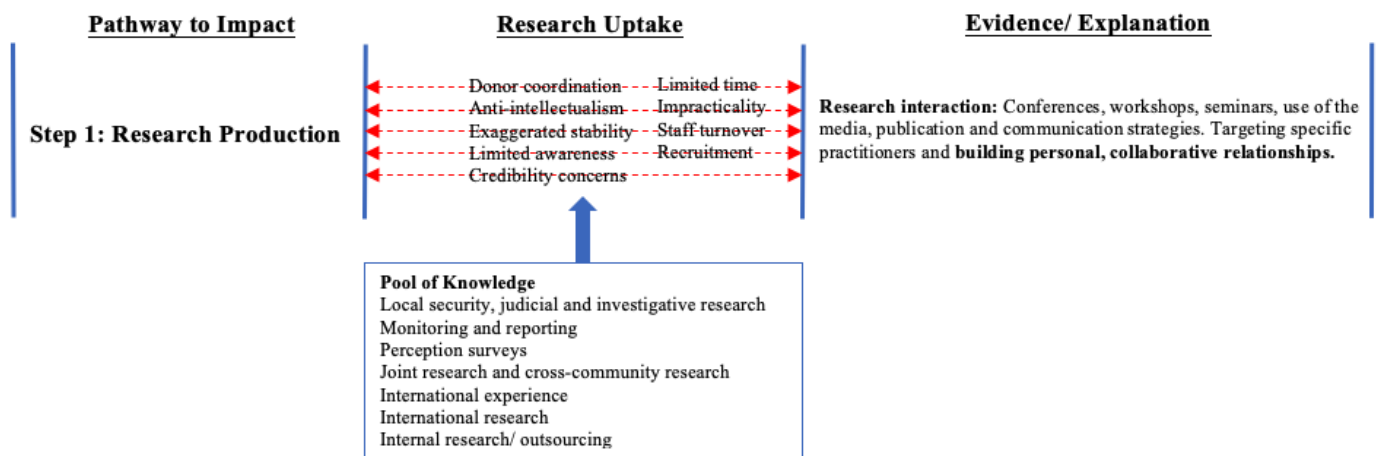
The first step in the pathway to local research impact is research production. While section 4.2 identified a variety of local security research organisations in Kosovo, section 4.3 demonstrated that international research, technical expertise and experience also factor in the knowledge formation of international SSR practitioners. To reflect this context, a box titled 'Pool of Knowledge' has been inserted as the starting point for research uptake. This symbolises that, from the outset, local security research must compete with various forms of international security knowledge when attempting to contribute to international SSR.

A blue arrow directs the pool of knowledge towards international 'barriers' to research uptake (section 4.4). These barriers include poor donor coordination, exaggerated stability and recruitment procedures which hinder researcher-SSR engagement and are symbolised by five red dotted arrows that act as an obstruction to the ideas of local researchers. At the same time, this thesis has stressed that local research is an interactive process. Reflecting on the empirical analysis in section 5.3.1, the evidence column highlights research interaction as means through which local researchers can challenge these barriers and compete with preferences for international knowledge by engaging with international practitioners. The targeting of specific practitioners and the building of personal relationships has granted local researchers access to receptive practitioners.

**Figure 36:** Step 2 of Local Research Impact: Research Utilisation
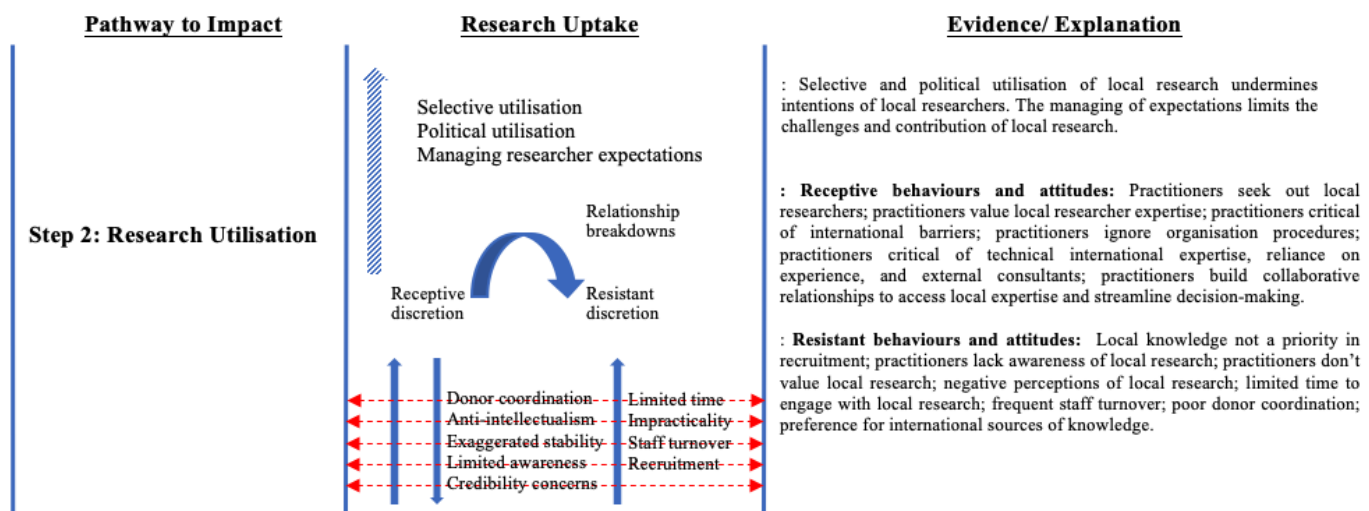
The second step in the pathway to impact is research utilisation. Figure 36 identifies the individual personalities of practitioners as a critical. Building on Figure 35, three blue arrows have been added and channel through the international 'barriers' to local research. On the left-hand side of the research uptake column two blue arrows point to and from practitioners who hold a 'receptive discretion', and local researchers in the pool of knowledge. As indicated in sections 5.2.5 and 5.2.6, receptive practitioners include those who value the knowledge of local researchers, criticise internationally dominant policy-making, and take it upon themselves to seek out local researchers outside of organisational procedures. The two blue arrows symbolise a two-way exchange between local researchers and receptive practitioners. At the same time, one blue arrow points from local researchers towards practitioners holding resistant discretion. As shown in sections 4.4 and 4.5, these practitioners do not value local researcher expertise, have a negative perception of research credibility, and uphold organisational barriers. The absence of a blue arrow stemming from resistant practitioners towards local researchers symbolises a one-way exchange and little room for meaningful discussion.

'Relationship breakdowns' (section 5.4.4) are also included in the research uptake column. A blue, curved arrow, stems from receptive discretion to resistant discretion to signify the movement of a practitioner open to local research engagement towards more resistant attitudes. The adjacent evidence column summarises analysis from Chapters 4 and 5 to highlight the divergent behaviours and attitudes of receptive and resistant practitioners. Moving up through the research uptake column, a longer faded blue arrow depicts the complex process of research utilisation

(section 5.4). As elaborated in the evidence column, practitioners may engage with local research for selective or political reasons, or to manage the expectations of local researchers, providing a subtle form of resistant discretion. These forms of utilisation complicate the research uptake process and undermine the extent to which local research contribute to policy-making.

Figure 37: Step 3 of Local Research Impact: Research Contribution
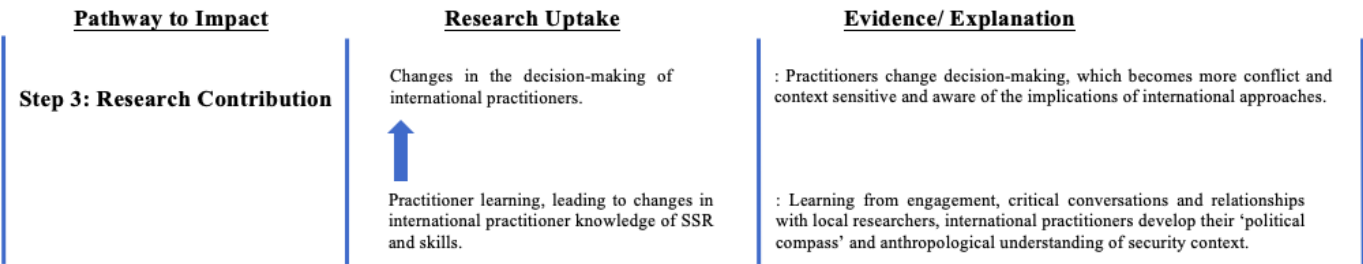
Step 3 refers to research contribution. Evidence from Chapter 5 indicates that there are individual SSR practitioners who seek out and engage with local research and develop new knowledge that supports changes in decision-making. Following on from the faded research utilisation arrow in Figure 36, the research uptake column indicates that receptive practitioners may utilise local research by learning about the local security context. Subsequently, the adjacent evidence column indicates that international practitioners may develop their political compass and anthropological knowledge of Kosovo's security context (sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3). A blue arrow then stems from practitioner learning towards 'changes in decision making'. Referring to the case studies of practitioner-researcher relationships in section 5.3.5, the evidence column indicates that individual practitioners have learned from local research to generate more conflict sensitive outputs.

6.3 A security research community is an established part of Kosovo's SSR

This finding provides an answer to RQ1: *To what extent has a security and justice oriented epistemic community developed in Kosovo?* The first, and most salient finding identified in Chapters 4 and 5 is that local research has played a role in Kosovo's multifaceted SSR.

Enduring post-conflict disruption, brain drain and post-communist transition, local SSR research was limited pre-independence. While FIQ, KIPRED and BIRN emerged and produced SSR

research, there was limited policy input. Following independence, local researchers developed a capacity to challenge international SSR and provide alternative security knowledge. As the majority of national security institutions were constructed prior to the establishment of Kosovo's research community, local researchers have primarily focused on amending national and international security reforms. Throughout Chapter 5, evidence indicated how local researchers have contributed to various aspects of internationally-led SSR and ongoing institutional reform. While mostly engaging with 'softer' aspects of SSR, local researchers have contributed to the design of SALW and CVE strategies, and legal amendments. Perception data also highlighted the legitimacy of local CSOs as security actors, and by extension, local researchers, who the public largely perceive to be credible contributors to the security needs of Kosovo's citizens (section 4.2).

The study of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR contributes to existing analyses of local-international engagement following intervention, and the challenges that local and international actors pose to international norms (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). It advances existing studies of the role of research in international SSR (Faleg 2012; Phillipps 2018; Sugden 2006; Varisco 2014, 2018; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014) by focusing in detail on local researchers. The evidence presented in sections 5.2 and 5.3 adds new focus to understandings of how the rules of international intervention in Kosovo have been met by local challenges (Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Kursani 2018; Phillipps 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). Similarly, in uncovering the presence of Kosovo's local security epistemic community, it adds to studies of 'security community' in the Western Balkans (Stojanovic-Gajic and Ejdus 2018).

The analysis of local and international interview testimonies has enabled an understanding of the complex construction of Kosovo's institutions. The fact that local researchers play a role in SSR refutes the analytical utility of linear policy-making, and assumption-based understandings of state-building, to explain Kosovo's SSR (Carothers 2002; Easton 1957; Krasner 2004; Rotberg 2004). Alternatively, the uncovering of the role of researchers shows the utility of dynamic and multifaceted policy-making concepts, highlighting the role of external sources of knowledge (Haas 2016; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Marsh and Smith 2000; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2018; Shaxson et al. 2012; Young and Court 2004). The researcher-practitioner engagement uncovered in Chapter 5 correlates to the highly dynamic definition of policy-making offered by Rhodes (2006: 426): as a mix of formal and informal links between policy and external actors who share negotiated

beliefs and policy interests. As depicted by the LRCK, informal researcher-practitioner relationships and interaction reflect the negotiation of interests and beliefs in SSR.

In focusing on the breadth of actors involved, dialectical policy-making models conceptualise a messy decision-making process including various sources of knowledge (Evans 2001; Haas 1992, 2016; Young and Court 2004). Likewise, section 4.3 has shown that local research is one of many factors influencing the decision-making and knowledge formation of international SSR practitioners. Depicted within the 'Pool of Knowledge' in the LRCK, international practitioners commented on their reliance on experience, technical expertise and international research. An engagement with local research ahead of alternative international sources is dependent on the individual preferences of international practitioners (sections 5.2 and 5.3). International practitioners in the LRCK are divided into resistant or receptive practitioners, with engagement with local researchers largely dependent on personal attitudes and beliefs.

Kosovo's local researchers provide 'a network of professionals with recognised expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge' (Haas 1992: 3; Sugden 2006). Post-independence, Kosovo's researchers have proved a legitimate contributor to SSR. Local researchers provide consistent analysis of the performance of national institutions whose development was heavily influenced by international SSR and the ongoing international presence. In this context, international practitioners from across the international SSR architecture commented frequently on the 'recognised expertise' (Haas 1992: 3) of local researchers, who they often contacted to streamline access to expert local security advice. Likewise, local researchers displayed an ability to identify interests to policy-makers and challenge preconceptions (Haas 1992, 2016). Furthermore, Kosovo's SSR researchers have formed various coalitions and partnerships.

Chapters 4 and 5 portray a deeply political, messy and interactive process, where local researchers collaborate and compete with other local researchers of different political standpoints, and contest, comply with, or productively engage with receptive or resistant international practitioners. In this regard, researcher-practitioner interaction fits the definition of hybridity outlined by Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 220). As depicted by the LRCK, this refers to an ongoing interaction, where local researchers from various CSOs and international practitioners of different organisations compete, coalesce, engage in mimicry, domination or accommodation (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016: 220). The LRCK also compares to Selim's (2018) action spectrum, with local researchers engaged in compliance, negotiation, and contestation in different

ways and for different reasons to challenge and shape international decision-making. As shown by evidence in Chapter 5, local researchers and international practitioners have negotiated the meaning of SSR by discussing the importance of SSR for Kosovo's communities, and have collaborated to form positive informal relationships. Alternatively, local researchers have challenged international SSR, while resistant practitioners ignore the challenges of local researchers.

Researchers and practitioners engage inside a complex post-conflict context. Chapters 4 and 5 have identified post-conflict disruption, brain drain, funding dependency, SSR sensitivity and inter-think tank competition as key factors which undermine local research. While there is collaboration between local think tanks, CSOs and investigative organisations in the form of joint research, partnerships and cross-community cooperation on contentious issues, there is significant heterogeneity. Local researchers of different organisations and communities possess different motivations for challenging international SSR (Lee 2015). Likewise, the heterogeneity of international actors is reflected by the presence of both resistant and receptive international practitioners, who engage with local research for different reasons. By evidencing the competition and rivalry that can occur between local research organisations, the thesis has explored the complexity of Kosovo's epistemic community and its engagement with SSR in-depth.

In line with existing peace-building scholars, Chapters 4 and 5 have not 'romanticised' the local (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015; Richmond 2009, 2011). Chapter 5 considers how local research affords positive benefits to peace-building and SSR and how local research reflects the continuation of conflict or political arguments. This evidence correlates to the existing literature that highlights the presence of the negative forms of peace in contexts of hybridity (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). Section 4.5 included the interview testimonies of international practitioners and local researchers who identified instances where research outputs have proved overly partisan or affiliated to controversial political lines. While such research can inform the political knowledge of international practitioners (section 5.3), it does not necessarily resolve political tensions. At the same time, section 5.3 considers the positive contribution of local research to SSR and peace-building. The activities of joint Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian research are an example of cooperation on sensitive security issues which are often disputed at the political level. This is a form of local resilience, where, despite ongoing conflict and political pressure, local researchers engage productively with controversial issues (Richmond and Pogodda 2016: 13).

6.4 International funding can incentivise local researchers and enforce compliance

This finding addresses RQ 2: *To what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?* and RQ 4: *What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?* The finding identifies international funding as a factor which both supports and undermines the role of local research in international SSR.

Chapters 4 and 5 consider the ability of international actors to enforce local compliance, as well as incentivise local actors to accept internationally-led policy (Mac Ginty 2011). While Kosovo's local researchers have self-consciously adopted a challenging stance (section 5.2), international actors have incentivised local researcher engagement with SSR (section 4.6). Donor funding is a source of support which has enabled local think tanks to function post-conflict and engage with SSR. This is critical in a context of post-conflict disruption, brain drain, post-communist transition, an absence of national funds, and limited university capacity. Calls for papers, project grants, capacity building programmes and start-up funding have provided a financial incentive for local CSOs.

Evidence presented in section 4.6 indicates that international funding has enforced local compliance with international SSR. Funding is a requirement for the formation and survival of CSOs where financial resources are scarce. Local CSOs have chased funding, competed for funding, and have adapted their focus in order to win international grants. Interviewees indicated that in the early post-conflict years this context led to the dilution of local expertise, which undermined the critical nature of research and the extent to which it challenged SSR. Chapter 4 has also identified the complicated relationship between donors and local think tanks. Local researchers indicated that with international funding comes an expectation that local research outputs must deliver on what is expected in project proposals. As such, the interview testimonies of local researchers showed that funding has influenced the ways in which research has framed problems and presented policy recommendations. Likewise, international practitioners noted that funding can obscure the room available for independent local research. Aspects of the donor-researcher relationship have therefore minimised critical voices and undermined local challenges to SSR.

Evidence, however, indicates that it is too simplistic to suggest that international funding equates to complete local compliance with international SSR. Sections 4.6 and 5.4 highlighted cases where local researchers have deliberately rejected particular funds, refused to comply with

international expectations, and have proceeded with projects despite the withdrawal of funding. Likewise, informal relationships and conversations between local researchers and international practitioners have been highlighted as the key form of researcher-practitioner interaction, rather than the extent to which international practitioners read the tangible research papers produced by local researchers (section 5.3). These informal conversations provide avenues for local researchers to challenge international SSR privately, while analysis presented in research publications publicly conforms to donor standards.

6.5 Local researchers challenge international approaches to SSR and provide alternatives

This finding highlights the consistent and various challenges that local researchers have posed to international SSR, addressing RQ 2: *to what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?*

As section 5.2 demonstrated, the production of local research on security, justice and rule of law is often motivated by a challenging stance, where it seeks to critique international SSR and offer alternatives. The Kosovo case study sheds light on the agency of local researchers through this ability to challenge established SSR procedures. In this regard, the case study of the role of local research in Kosovo provides an original contribution to the existing body of literature that explores the challenges, contestation, and tension that local and international actors direct at international intervention (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011, 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). The identification of the challenges local research poses to international intervention fits into the study of hybridity, where exploring local-international interaction following intervention yields a stronger understanding of the complexity of state-building (Mac Ginty 2011; Tadjbakhsh 2011). The evidence presented in Chapters 4 and 5 adds detail to recent studies of how the assumptions of international intervention in Kosovo have been met by local contestation (Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Kursani 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018). As depicted in the LRCK, there are various means through which local research challenges internationally-led SSR through previously under-studied forms of local agency (section 5.2).

Firstly, local researchers hold to account the national institutions constructed through international SSR in the early post-conflict years (section 5.2). This research correlates to an important epistemic function, where research highlights the salient dimensions of public concerns

to international policy-makers (Faleg 2012; Haas 1992, 2016; Sugden 2006). In response to what are considered to be incomplete institutions due to the presence of an oversight void, local researchers have attempted to adapt international reform. For example, Aktiv, FIQ, the GLPS, KCSS and KIPRED produce perception surveys to assess the legitimacy of national institutions established by UNMIK, and the ongoing support of EULEX. This includes criticisms of the functioning and oversight of intelligence agencies, the capacity of parliamentary committees and the amendment of legislation by judicial bodies. In other words, local monitoring and evaluation fills gaps where international SSR has fallen short, and where national security institutions lack functional maturity. Secondly, research reports that follow an analysis of public perception data have questioned the legitimacy of international SSR and its institutional outputs. FIQ research has challenged international definitions of security, while KCSS and Aktiv research has contemplated the implications of EU facilitated security integration in North Kosovo (section 5.2).

Thirdly, organisations including BIRN, the GLPS and KLI direct challenges at judicial reform by consistently monitoring judicial corruption. Again, this assesses the performance of national institutions established by the UNMIK administration, which are monitored, mentored and advised by EULEX. For example, internationally-led legislative amendments and policing tactics were considered to lack applicability to the Kosovo context, which reinforces the importance of local research in support of ongoing reform. These challenges have become an 'everyday' occurrence, evidencing the strategies that local researchers pose towards international models of the state (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2010). Local research has a strong public presence, with the challenges directed by research frequently reported through online and media platforms.

Fourthly, hybridity stresses how local researchers advocate for alternatives (Mac Ginty 2011). Local research provides alternatives to international SSR through the provision of policy recommendations that push for policy amendments following the research and analysis process. This challenge reflects an attempt by local actors to modify and improve international reform agendas (Richmond and Pogodda 2016). In fact, uncovering the alternative ideas of local researchers contributes to the existing evidence that has described how local CSOs pursue peace-building approaches that differ from international policy-makers, and which are considered as legitimate by local communities (Visoka and Richmond 2017: 111). These alternatives stem from the ability of local researchers to access communities and understand languages and culture that international organisations, practitioners and researchers cannot reach. For example, in the early post-conflict years, local legal experts contributed technical scrutiny over the applicability of

UNMIK led legal reform, while, entering independence, the KLI and GLPS have participated in government working groups. The KCSS has provided detailed recommendations and knowledge in support of national and international CVE policy, such as an understanding of Kosovo's extremism and public reactions to reintegration and rehabilitation, while FIQ have put forward alternative approaches to SALW control.

6.6 Researchers and practitioners have built positive and enduring relationships

This finding considers researcher-practitioner relationships to be a precursor to local research contribution. It addresses RQ 4: *What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?*

The RCF explored in Chapter 2 and adopted as a key element of the conceptual framework deployed by this study considers research communication as a critical precursor to research contribution (Morton 2015). Likewise, analysis stressing hybridity helps to explore various under-studied forms of local-international interaction that follows international intervention, and the impact of these interactions on state-building (Mac Ginty 2011). Building on these frameworks and adding to existing studies of local-international interaction, this thesis highlights the importance of researcher-practitioner interaction throughout Kosovo's SSR. The empirical analysis in sections 5.2 and 5.3 highlighted informal connections and working relationships as a critical form of local-international and researcher-practitioner interaction. While more rudimentary forms of outreach outline the vibrancy of Kosovo's research sector, such as conferences, seminars and workshops, researcher-practitioner interaction is the most important avenue through which to understand the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR.

Research interaction provides a critical means through which local researchers can challenge international SSR. Local researchers and international practitioners indicated that the formation of personal relationships is the most important means through which to advance challenges to international SSR and contribute to practitioner decision-making. In the LRCK, this is depicted by the placement of 'research interaction' at the start of the research production process, providing strategies through which local research challenges can progress beyond the barriers of international organisations and resistant practitioners. The formation of collaborative researcher-practitioner relationships stems from the interaction strategies of local researchers and the receptive discretion of international practitioners. Often occurring beneath the official procedures

and instructions of international organisations, collaborative researcher-practitioner interaction is the key ingredient which encourages the engagement of local research with international SSR.

Local researchers are creative in their ability to build collaborative relationships with international practitioners to advance messages into the SSR process (sections 5.2 and 5.3). In this regard, local researchers do not simply produce research and expect uptake; but follow up on findings by proactively adopting an intermediary role that pushes findings onto practitioner agendas. Following concepts of discretion (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015), the role of international practitioners is considered by local researchers to have an extensive policy-making function. In Kosovo, local researchers have deliberately sought out practitioners more open to engagement and adopted constructive communication styles. As such, local researchers deliberately intervene between the production of research and the user of research to improve chances of uptake (Cash et al. 2003; Jones, H. et al. 2012; Meagher and Lyall 2013; Shaxson et al. 2012). This is a deliberate 'pressure' strategy (Castells 2015; De Bruycker 2017; Klüver, Mahoney and Opper 2015), and resembles a process where local actors take measures to permeate the policy-process from the bottom-up to shape and distort policy (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Visoka and Richmond 2017).

Practitioners from the OSCE, UNMIK, EULEX and NATO all highlighted the importance of interaction and pointed to particular local researchers as integral avenues through which to develop local contextual knowledge (sections 5.2 and 5.3). These exchanges are reflective of 'productive interactions' and provide exchanges that lead to the production of knowledge that is both valued and relevant (Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011: 212). With relationships with local researchers in place, international practitioners streamline their knowledge of the local context by reaching out to informed local contacts. Local research provides a check on practitioner theories, provides specialist advice, and quick sources of up-to-date knowledge. In this regard, decision-makers turn to specialists 'to ameliorate uncertainties and help them understand current issues and anticipate future trends' (Haas 1992: 13).

The consistent interaction within researcher–practitioner relationships is an established form of cooperation in SSR (Faleg 2012; Haas 1992, 2016; Sugden 2006). Furthermore, following the everyday engagement between local researchers and international practitioners, they increasingly engage in a dialogue around security issues and a co-production of knowledge (section 5.3) (Shaxson et al. 2012: 12). Today, Kosovo's local researchers are widely accepted as important SSR actors. Advisors from embassies and key international organisations are encouraged to

engage with local researchers on security issues, while organisations such as FIQ, the KCSS, GLPS and KLI, are formally involved in the development of government rule of law strategies.

6.7 Practitioner personality is a critical factor behind the engagement with local researchers

This finding addresses RQ 3: *How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo?* and RQ 4: *What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?* It provides a detailed understanding of positive researcher-practitioner relationships, highlighting these productive relationships as a critical factor that enables the contribution of local research to practitioner decision-making. While interview testimonies and their analysis in Chapter 5 have revealed that many international practitioners are 'receptive' to engaging with local researchers, this thesis agrees with Autesserre's (2014) description of such practitioners as 'exceptions' and highlights the presence of 'resistant' practitioners. This finding connects the thesis to the agency/structure debate and adds to an understanding of the importance of agency and structure in the context of SSR decision-making. This debate considers the degree of influence to accord, respectively, to structure and human agency when analysing decision-making processes (Alden and Aran 2016: 4; Kaarbo 2015). In the context of Kosovo's SSR existing studies have identified the important role of human agency, including the personal procedures, characteristics and preferences of individual SSR practitioners in the implementation of SSR (Gippert 2016; Graeger 2016; Scheye 2008). Existing studies also focus on structure, and have considered the different cultures and approaches of organisations making up Kosovo's SSR architecture (Brosig 2011; Dursun-Ozkanca and Crossley-Frolick 2012; Eckhard 2016). Adding to these studies, in this thesis, structural factors include the 'barriers', bureaucracy, cultures and procedures of international organisations, while human agency emphasises individual practitioner personality and their exercising of discretion. These factors determine the extent to which practitioners are resistant or receptive to an engagement with local researchers during the decision-making process. As indicated in a narrative on the nature and discretion of international practitioners, human agency and individual personality provides the key variable driving the extent to which practitioners are receptive or resistant to local researchers.

6.7.1 There are individual SSR practitioners who are receptive to local researchers

This research highlights several structural barriers which hinder the engagement between international practitioners and Kosovo's local researchers. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 include the limited emphasis on local knowledge as a recruitment requirement for international employment, the frequency of staff turnover, issues of donor coordination and overlap, exaggerated stability, the limited time and practicality to engage with research, and limited awareness of local research. Nonetheless, sections 5.2 and 5.3 show that through international practitioners who are receptive to engaging with local research, local research not only provides new SSR knowledge, but challenges the normative 'epistemic practices' of international organisations and practitioners (Bueger 2015).

International practitioners possess an everyday agency where they take it upon themselves to seek out local researchers (sections 5.2 and 5.3). Emphasising the importance of human agency as a determinant of decision-making, Chapter 2 identified that international practitioners have 'discretion' in the performance of their everyday role, where they might interact with citizens or work with creativity and initiative, rather than operating under the complete constraint of organisational instructions (Evans 2010; Hupe, Hill and Buffat 2015). A number of international practitioners from UNMIK, the OSCE, EULEX and international NGOs follow a receptive form of discretion in Kosovo. As shown in the LRCK, two arrows stemming to and from the existing 'pool of knowledge' and 'receptive discretion' depict researcher-practitioner engagement. These receptive practitioners provide a key avenue for local research to overcome the barriers put up by international organisations, and to contribute to international SSR. In line with the existing discretion literature, these receptive practitioners correlate to descriptions of 'citizen-agents', or those international practitioners whose behaviour and actions are motivated by personal interests and who tailor decision-making to the needs of 'clients' (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000; Tummers and Bekkers 2014). Several examples of the international practitioners interviewed for this study fit the mould of the citizen-agent (sections 5.2 and 5.3). For example, UN practitioners who expressed how their personal fascination and respect for the local context were key to their engagement with local sources. As highlighted in the case studies on the nature of UNDP practitioners in section 5.3.5, a deep personal interest in local security concerns has led practitioners to seek out local research and, following engagement, adopt decision-making processes that incorporate sensitivity to community concerns.

An emphasis on human agency as a key determinant of decision-making places analytical spotlight on the decision-maker, emphasising the psychology, beliefs and biases, and subjectivity

of decision-makers process (Alden and Aran 2016: 7). The evidence in Chapters 4 and 5 emphasises the importance of this human agency as an explanatory factor for practitioner engagement with local researchers. The identification of structural deficiencies within international SSR organisations provides a form of international-international (and agency-structure) contestation that encourages engagement with local research. Firstly, receptive practitioners criticised the lack of reflexivity within international organisations. Receptive international practitioners frequently levelled criticisms at the internal research mechanisms of UNMIK and EULEX, which were often described as lacking in self-criticism (section 5.2). Secondly, receptive practitioners criticised the international reliance on international knowledge and its limited grounding in the local context. The sources of international research identified in section 4.3, such as best practice manuals, international NGOs or international consultants, are not considered by receptive practitioners as capable of getting to the heart of the issues facing Kosovo's SSR. As emphasised by case study 3 in section 5.3.5, local researchers are better equipped to conduct research in the local language, get closer to local communities, and provide detailed and innovative findings. Thirdly, challenges were posed to the recruitment process taken by international organisations, which, as indicated in section 4.4.1, does not prioritise knowledge of the local context. Receptive practitioners indicated that it was important to employ the right person with relevant local knowledge. These testimonies challenge the empirical basis of the epistemic practices (and structures) of international organisations, and how these international organisations and practitioners form their knowledge of SSR (Bueger 2015).

Subsequently, deeming organisational structures and procedures an inadequate means to generate in-depth contextual knowledge of Kosovo's security context in support of SSR, receptive practitioners seek out local research as a means to fill a knowledge gap and overcome limited organisational learning. Rather than letting organisational structures determine their engagement with local researchers, receptive practitioners utilise their agency and discretion. As the discussion of the security and stability objectives of international SSR in section 4.4.3 demonstrated, exaggerated stability provides a structural barrier, both procedural and cultural, to practitioner-researcher engagement. With a focus on short term stability, rather than longer term development, there is limited room to take seriously the alternative ideas of local researcher expertise. Similarly, the sensitivity of SSR often manifests in a secretive policy-process closed to external scrutiny, and which discourages practitioner engagement with local researchers and thwarts researcher access (section 4.6.4). Nonetheless, these structures do not always determine international practitioners' engagement with local research. Receptive practitioners have demonstrated their agency by acting with a freedom where they take it upon themselves to seek

out, engage, and build working relationships with local researchers without sanction from their organisation (section 5.2). For example, UNMIK and EULEX practitioner testimonies in Chapters 4 and 5 indicated practitioner interest and fascination with the local context, and a subjective bias that saw local research as an important and credible source for learning. These practitioners have acted against security procedures to interact with local researchers, developing a deep interest in the local context and building personal relationships with local researchers. This indicates that receptive practitioners have demonstrated human agency to step outside of organisational structures to generate local knowledge in an attempt to increase the effectiveness of their contextual understanding and decision-making

This finding confirms the presence of 'exceptions' in the context of Kosovo's SSR, understood as those practitioners who challenge the dominant modes of thinking and acting, and who incorporate local knowledge to increase the effectiveness of their decision-making (Autesserre 2014: 251). It confirms the importance of analysing the everyday details of the peacekeeping life of practitioners in order to understand the realities of international intervention (Henry 2015: 387). The identification of receptive SSR practitioners correlates to the discretion and epistemic community literature, where policy-makers engage with external actors and information in order to cope with policy-making uncertainty (Haas 1992, 2016). The thesis therefore adds an original study to the existing literature which emphasises the human agency of practitioners in decision-making, applying an everyday lens of analysis to the actions, values and behaviours of international practitioners working in conflict affected states (Autesserre 2014; Henry 2015; Mac Ginty 2011; McWha 2011; Sending 2010).

6.7.2 Many international practitioners resist the knowledge of local researchers

As with receptive practitioners, consideration of the nature of the individual helps to understand why practitioners resist engagement with local researchers throughout decision-making. Again, this focuses on the individual nature of practitioners, and in particular on resistant psychological traits, beliefs, biases and subjectivities (Alden and Aran 2016: 7). Section 4.4 explored this 'resistant discretion' and the personal reasons why international practitioners do not engage with local research. As indicated in previous studies of research utilisation, limited time and practicality is commonly cited by international practitioners as a key reason for a lack of engagement with local research (Stone 2002; Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014). Post-conflict SSR in the early post-conflict years was a frantic process, where the priority was to get institutions up and running, rather than seeking out and engaging with local researchers. Managers,

supervisors, and senior staff can also impact on the extent to which SSR practitioners who make up international organisations and missions engage with local research. For example, similar to Eckhard (2016), interview testimonies noted that leading figures within EULEX have varied personal decision-making processes, and, following Evans (2010, 2015), that these managers can alter the discretionary environment of subordinates, and subsequently the extent to which practitioners engage with local researchers.

Some practitioners are simply unaware of the presence of local research organisations across Kosovo and the outputs they produce. Other practitioners are more cynical, and fit Stone's (2002: 290) notion that 'anti-intellectualism' undermines practitioner interest in research. For example, practitioners revealed a perception that many practitioners use their work in Kosovo as a social or travel opportunity, rather than dedicating time to learn about the context in support of their role. Furthermore, section 4.5 suggests that a significant proportion of international practitioners are concerned with the credibility of local research as a source of useful information on SSR and the security context. These concerns are a primary reason why local research is often not taken seriously by international practitioners. Practitioners held a common perception that local research includes a political bias that undermines its community representation, limits its critical capacity, or makes it too partisan to engage with. At the same time, perceptions of political affiliations, either influenced by funding or local elites, put international practitioners off engaging with local research. Similarly, practitioners held concerns over the language quality of research, and held reservations over the quality and authenticity of methodologies. Finally, practitioners identified occasions where they considered research communication as overly critical, topically irrelevant, or too academic for policy use. From these concerns, it is plausible to suggest that local research is more likely to be taken seriously if it is considered to take into account a broad range of opinions, balance community views, prove impartiality, be written to a high standard of English, prove its methodological quality and accuracy, be topically relevant, and communicated in a constructive style.

This finding also places emphasis on the structure aspect of the agency-structure debate. As Alden and Aran (2016: 8) note, it is important to also recognise that 'any decisions made took place within the context of institutions specifically charged with interpreting and implementing' policy. Alongside resistant personality, attitudes and perceptions, the 'barriers', bureaucracy, cultures and procedures of international organisations are important to account for when explaining why practitioners do not engage with local researchers and adopt a resistant orientation. International barriers hinder the potential engagement between international practitioners and local research

and heighten local-international contestation (sections 4.4 and 4.5). In the LRCK, these are depicted by red dotted arrows which correlate to poor donor coordination, anti-intellectualism, exaggerated stability, limited awareness, credibility concerns, limited time, impracticality, staff turnover and recruitment as factors which obstruct the ability of local research to engage with SSR. In this context, there are a large number of 'resistant' practitioners, who ignore or subvert the challenges posed by local researchers to international SSR and adhere to the barriers put up by their organisations. While there are two blue arrows stemming to and from the existing 'pool of knowledge' and 'receptive discretion', only one blue arrow stems from the 'pool of knowledge' to 'resistant discretion' in the LRCK. The absence of blue arrow in return depicts the lack of interest of resistant practitioners in tapping into local research. As noted by Weiss (1979: 429), 'for reasons of interest, ideology or intellect, they have taken a stand that research is not likely to shake'. These practitioners cannot be described as 'citizen-agents' (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000) and while they might act with discretion in the design and implementation of SSR, they do not value engagement with local researchers.

The international barriers depicted in the LRCK correspond with Autesserre (2014) that international expertise, training and experiences of peace-building in various contexts are considered forms of knowledge more valuable for programme design than local expertise. Firstly, this is evident from interview testimonies with international practitioners describing the nature of the recruitment process for international organisations across Kosovo's SSR architecture. There was a common assertion that local knowledge, access to local networks, or an ability to engage on a personal level with local expertise, is not a requirement for employment in organisations such as UNMIK. Subsequently, there has been little incentive for practitioners to seek out and engage with Kosovo's burgeoning local research sector. Likewise, researcher-practitioner exchanges are undermined by the problem of poor donor coordination and staff turnover, which adds additional complexity to Kosovo's SSR process and continuity. Donor overlap adds confusion over which SSR practitioners and policies are best to engage with and undermines the process of establishing practitioner-researcher relationships.

Section 4.4 highlighted staff turnover as critical issue within EULEX, where short term contracts undermine the will to engage with local researchers, and where changes in mandate lead to fluctuating priorities and limited need to listen to local researchers. Subsequently, despite the presence of informal engagement between local researchers and individual EULEX practitioners, these practitioners considered themselves to be in a minority. Another issue concerns the 'exaggerated stability' (section 4.4) of international actors, where, through an overwhelming

emphasis on security, the involvement of local actors in SSR is compromised (Qehaja 2017). Like Stone (2002), who has indicated that important information is often out of reach for researchers undertaking policy-analysis, this thesis has found that exaggerated stability distorts the ability of local researchers to engage with SSR. Evidence indicates that security concerns obstruct local researcher access to international practitioners and policy relevant information, while sensitive political agendas stemming from the incomplete recognition of Kosovo's status hinder the ability of local researchers to challenge international actors in any formal sense (section 4.4).

Interview evidence throughout Chapters 4 and 5 has highlighted key differences and similarities between the organisational cultures of the agencies making up Kosovo's international security architecture. Existing studies have largely criticised UNMIK for producing reforms driven exclusively by international knowledge (Lemay Hebert 2011; Marshall and Inglis 2003; Welch 2006), rather than capacity building in a 'coherent and context-based' manner (Qehaja 2016: 105-106). As noted in section 4.2.1, prior to independence UNMIK staff had 'very little optimism about the ability of Kosovars to set up new institutions and manage internal affairs… and that came from the institutional culture of UNMIK': encouraging limited belief in and access to local knowledge, the recruitment of minimal senior level local staff, and an environment where practitioners rarely came into contact with Kosovars.[362] Furthermore, a practitioner described the 'dictatorial' nature of UNMIK policy-making, where prescriptions developed in the DPKO in New York instruct staff on what to work on and how (section 6.7.3).

The closed nature of UNMIK has been emulated by EULEX. In Kosovo, local research has self-consciously adopted a challenging stance, largely motivated by frustration and dissatisfaction at the EULEX mission. Local researchers have perceived EULEX staff as following political objectives and was largely considered an organisation that closes doors to local actors (section 4.4.4). Following a culture of 'exaggerated stability', EULEX decision-making has prioritised security and stability as a policy objective (section 4.4.3). This pressures EULEX practitioners to place the agenda of decision-making in Brussels ahead of engagement with local CSOs. Thus, EULEX has put up various barriers that discourage staff from engaging with sources of critique external to stability objectives (section 4.4). While EULEX has held regular meetings with local CSOs to discuss reconfigurations of the EULEX mandate, EULEX practitioners and local researchers indicated that these meetings were a means to manage local researcher expectations rather than take seriously critical questions. Consequently, local researchers have only been able to engage sporadically with individual UNMIK and EULEX practitioners of a receptive

[362] Interview 1, Skype, 07/2017.

orientation (sections 5.2 and 5.3). Moreover, while these individual practitioners may have learned from local researchers about Kosovo's security context, a centralised and pre-determined policy-process ensures it is highly unlikely that practitioner learning manifests in any decision-making changes in UNMIK and EULEX.

There are also similarities between the UNDP with UNMIK and EULEX. As demonstrated by a UNDP practitioner in section 4.4 and case study 2 (section 5.3.5), the UNDP was essentially structured to keep 'unsolicited enquiries' away from its staff, namely the advances of local researchers. Nonetheless, the UNDP has had a different SSR portfolio to UNMIK and EULEX. Rather than focusing on institutional reform, UNDP focuses on smaller scale projects and programmes that work towards security at the community level. This focus on 'softer' aspects of SSR, such as CVE and SALW, provides more space for practitioners to engage with local researchers. Like UNMIK and EULEX practitioners, receptive UNDP staff have learned from local research to develop their political compass and anthropological compass. Taking this a step further, however, receptive UNDP practitioners have built this knowledge of the local context into decision-making (section 5.3.5). While the UNDP and EULEX have both recruited an extensive pool of local staff, local UNDP staff have taken senior roles in project design and implementation, and in running projects such as Public Pulse (section 4.2.1). On the contrary, recent EULEX mandate renewals have seen significant turnover and a large proportion of local staff contracts expire (section 4.4.2).

While the policy-making culture of the OSCE was described as centralised by former OSCE advisors, it was also indicated that there was more room within the OSCE for discretionary policy-making than within UNMIK. An OSCE advisor receptive to local research regularly took it upon themselves to engage with local researchers in the pursuit of local knowledge (sections 5.2 and 5.3). This, however, was not encouraged by the OSCE nor widely practiced by OSCE advisers. Rather, the OSCE was described as holding a belief where the OSCE could conduct research, analysis and knowledge formation internally, and without local CSO engagement. However, and as indicated in section 5.3.1, Kosovo's research community can today be considered an established part of SSR. This is demonstrated by the organisational cultures of NATO and international embassies. As indicated in section 5.3.1, NALT is committed to interaction with Kosovo's local researchers. Similarly, international embassy staff are encouraged to engage with the researchers that make up Kosovo's security research sector.

6.7.3 Narratives of a Receptive and Resistant Practitioner

The Receptive Nature of an OSCE and DCAF Adviser[363]

An OSCE and DCAF adviser engaged with local security researchers when working towards Kosovo's security sector oversight. Several systemic factors, including the experience and profile of the practitioner, contributed to their openness to local research. Firstly, the practitioner had experience working towards the external security sector oversight of institutions in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The practitioner also worked on 'Track-II' diplomacy, understood as the avenues through which the unofficial and external activities of CSOs and researchers work to contribute towards reform. Secondly, these experiences involved engagement with CSOs and academics as a means to generate an understanding of SSR. Thirdly, the practitioner was involved in the design and delivery of SSR oversight training to members of parliament and staff from defence sectors. Designed to build confidence between different political parties in the discussion of sensitive security issues, this training involved engagement with non-traditional security actors. Collectively, this experience equipped the practitioner with two key beliefs: that traditional security actors could benefit from the ideas of non-traditional actors such as CSOs; and that local CSO expertise could supplement advisory work and the knowledge of traditional security actors.

The flexibility of the advisory role ensured the practitioner could act on personal interests. The role involved liaison between conflicting members of the Kosovo Assembly and engagement between international and local security actors. Across these activities the practitioner had the freedom to engage with organisations such as the KCSS on critical security issues. Likewise, mediating between Kosovo Serb political parties and communities, and between Kosovar-Serb and Albanian opinion on security policies, there was freedom to engage with CSOs in Serbia and North Kosovo. However, the engagement with CSOs was not a practice encouraged by the OSCE:

> 'They had everything on their own, they were self-sufficient they didn't need to
> rely on civil society or any outside organisations to run the business'.

While the OSCE was generally closed to engaging with local researchers, advisory positions came with a level of freedom where a receptive practitioner could seek out and engage with local researchers. Nonetheless, this official could only record 'a few' fellow advisors who emulated

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[363] Interview 13, Skype, 07/2017.

their approach to engaging with local CSOs in the design of SSR solutions and development of SSR oversight.

Idiosyncratic factors, namely the individual character and personality of the practitioner, carry more weighting than systemic factors in determining a receptive orientation. The practitioner demonstrated a personal fascination with political conflict in post-conflict states and considered democratic processes at the local and parliamentary level as a solution to fragility. It was this interest that stimulated engagement with non-traditional security actors in their work prior to Kosovo and encouraged openness to CSOs once in Kosovo. Furthermore, this experience encouraged a belief in the value of local researcher expertise, which, in Kosovo, developed into trust following interaction with local researchers. Informal meetings with KCSS researchers on the topic of crisis management reform were considered as 'very professional' and 'helping things move forward' and led to further conversation and mutual updates.

Encouraged by belief in the value of local researchers, trust in established connections, and interest in local security knowledge, this practitioner acted pragmatically to generate local expertise. Acting without encouragement from the OSCE, the practitioner described their engagement with local researchers as the result of an 'individual discretion':

> 'The concept that you need something like civil society to get things on track was not so much alive in the OSCE'.

Subsequently, they were motivated to engage with the KCSS to supplement their engagements with government security bodies and within the OSCE:

> 'If there were certain problems and you could ask them, can you please have a look for this, or this can you maybe get in touch with this or that person discretely. Very, very helpful I would say, this kind of opening, providing direct access to sources and to people and organisations where you normally would have very difficult access'.

The Resistant Nature of an OSCE and UNMIK Adviser[364]

A former OSCE and UNMIK adviser was predominantly resistant to local research. Again, systemic factors determined this resistant attitude. This practitioner arrived into Kosovo with a technical military and police background and having completed postgraduate qualifications in political and social science alongside operational training. Holding the capacity to conduct, appraise and appreciate security research, they stressed their belief in the need for civilians to take up senior decision-making roles in the design and implementation of SSR. The interest of the practitioner, however, was primarily in conducting policy-oriented research internally, while also indicating a preference for international consultants and technical expertise. Commenting on the use of external consultants, they indicated they were 'always international'.

This practitioner considered the organisational structure at UNMIK and the OSCE as barriers to their engagement with local research. While having more 'freedom' to engage with research at the OSCE, they indicated that they had 'always' valued internal research ahead of external research. They conceded that they had 'very little' discretion at UNMIK, where:

> 'the function is more technical… I mean, you are given something and you are
> expected to execute it'.

UNMIK was considered as highly centralised and 'dictatorial', creating an environment that encouraged resistance to local research. Subsequently, there was little room to deviate from the chain of command:

> 'Specialised divisions, departments and unit in New York are instructing us how
> to deal with certain things, how to see certain things, and telling us the areas
> where they would like to see more activities, less activity and stuff'.

Furthermore, they explained that utilisation of any research, whether international, internal or local, was likely to endure a 'watering down process'. This is where project drafts are sent to the Office of Chief of Staff and Political Affairs and Legal Offices, before being returned with comments and changes that distort the original submission.

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[364] Interview 26, Pristina, 08/2017

Openness to local research was not practical at a senior level. The practitioner described a schedule where they were too busy to engage with local research, describing it as low priority and of little relevance:

> 'We are running… I don't know 85, 92 projects per year. Some of them I think lasting for four weeks, capacity-building projects or you have to do the opening and do some classroom minutes, you do the closing ceremony. You have to make sure that the head of mission is there, the minister, and whatnot. So, you are running all day long. The good portion of the year is dedicated to budget preparations. Then you would just prepare the next budget. Then you have to do the review of the current budget. The admin part of the work is amazingly high.'

In a hectic environment, a reliance on internal research was considered as more practical than an engagement with local research. Although the practitioner indicated that they do instruct UNMIK researchers to include local security research in their analysis, they explained that they only read summaries of local research papers and lacked the time to go through them in detail. At the same time, they indicated that they were unable to trust the rigour and findings of local research without dedicating time to validating the credibility of the methodological approach. The emphasis placed on time constraints suggests a low level of priority afforded to local research.

Furthermore, the practitioner suggested that senior international staff are required to maintain impartiality, which makes engagement with local researchers difficult. This was considered an obstruction to local researcher engagement:

> 'Here, when you side with B, you are automatically against the other or you are…how to say… and especially if it comes to this Albanian Serbian thing. You go with a more Albanian research institute, you have a problem with the Serbs immediately and vice versa.'

While this practitioner demonstrated a willingness to engage with researchers, they were resistant to the utilisation of local research data. For example, they explained that they held KIPRED in high regard and appreciated the presence of 'very educated persons' and 'sharp intelligent young people' across Kosovo's research sector. Despite this, they emphasised concern for the quality and credibility of local research. Here, past experiences of engagement with local research

discouraged their openness to local research findings. They described occasions where they found local researchers to lack methodological skills, where they had distorted findings, and as being heavily influenced by funding and politics. They doubted the presence of an impartial local think tank in Kosovo and demonstrated preference for UNMIK internal reporting and analysis. While high quality research on CVE in Kosovo has been produced in recent years, the practitioner emphasised the presence of research of lesser quality:

> '…you'll see easily that some of them are copying and pasting what others did write already. Sometimes, they've been faking the annex, the table of content of the sources.'

Several key points made during interview heighten the low level of prioritisation given to local research engagement. While the practitioner would respond positively to invitations from think tanks to what they considered to be 'meaningful' conferences, they would not attend in person and would delegate the task to another staff member. Moreover, utilisation of local research was described in a very limited sense, and only as a means to generate 'as broad a view as possible'. Furthermore, they indicated that the utilisation of local research findings might only be used to support analysis to 'justify' the next budget, rather than making reference to critical findings which might express dissatisfaction with the UNMIK role in SSR. In addition, when it came to the seeking of local knowledge and opinions, they highlighted their preferred reliance on personal networks of local contacts within Kosovar security bodies.

6.8 Practitioners engage with local researchers politically and to manage expectations

This finding adds further detail to the analysis that addresses RQ 2, concerning the ability of local researchers to challenge international SSR, and RQ 3: *How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo*? An understanding of the utilisation of local research adds complexity to local research contribution.

Frequent engagement between local researchers and international practitioners does not ensure that the challenges of local researchers are taken seriously, or that local research is able to make a contribution to international SSR. While practitioners might be open to engaging with local research, this does not mean that local research will lead to practitioner learning and factor into decision-making. In fact, local research undergoes a complicated, politicised and variable utilisation process (section 5.4), indicating the importance of understanding the true meaning of

research utilisation (Weiss 1979: 426). Similar to observations made by Weiss (1979), Stone (2002), and ODI researchers (Jones, H. et al. 2013; Jones, N. Datta and Jones, H. 2009; Young and Court 2004: 3-4), the LRCK indicates that international SSR practitioners in Kosovo often use research in a 'political' or 'tactical' way. This finding resonates with a study of the research utilisation of British policy-makers working towards post-conflict state-building in Afghanistan, Nepal and Sierra Leone, where research has often been used retrospectively or selectively to fit predetermined programmes (Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014: 134). Differing to existing studies of research utilisation, this thesis attributes its attention to local sources of research and local researchers, rather than international research use. Interviewees have revealed that staff within national security and justice institutions have used perception surveys for political point scoring or to fulfil the requirements of evidence-based policy. Furthermore, the findings of local research are not always used by international practitioners as researchers intended, since practitioners have used research findings to justify policy briefs and budgets. These processes undermine the extent to which local research can challenge international SSR and the ability of local research to truly contribute to policy-making.

The empirical analysis in section 5.4 and depiction in the LRCK also indicates that international practitioners frequently engage with local researchers in order to 'manage' local expectations. In this sense, research can be used as a shield to 'deflect criticism' (Weiss 1979: 429). This utilisation pathway stems from the ongoing tensions between local and international actors in post-conflict Kosovo, where local researchers have consistently challenged and contested the policy prescriptions of international intervention in various aspects of state-building (Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018; Triantafyllou 2018; Troncota 2018; Visoka 2012a). The managing of expectations reflects how international practitioners have developed more proactive ways of handling the challenges of local actors, and in this case, researchers. For example, interview testimonies describe engagement between EULEX and CSOs as a means to manage local expectations (section 5.4). Even if research can contribute to the political awareness and anthropological knowledge of an individual EULEX practitioner, this rarely leads to any impact within the functioning of EULEX. Furthermore, in a context where local researchers are challenging international SSR and holding practitioners to account, positive relationships are not always enduring. A further finding concerns the breakdown of practitioner-researcher relationships (section 5.4). As shown in the LRCK, practitioners previously open to engaging with local research might change their opinion or fall out with local researchers. A blue curved arrow depicts the movement of practitioners open to engagement towards an attitude that resists local research.

6.9 Local research contributes to practitioner awareness, knowledge and decision-making

This finding addresses RQ 3: *How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo*? It explains how local researchers have contributed to the awareness, knowledge and decision-making of international SSR practitioners.

The existing literature on research contribution has considered the various ways in which the findings of research contribute to the policy-process and inform decision-makers (Haas 1992, 2016; Sugden 2006; Morton 2015). Following the conceptual framework of the LRCF, this research has sought to understand how local research has contributed to international SSR in Kosovo. The LRCK has subsequently shown the various ways in which local research has contributed to international SSR in Kosovo (section 5.3). This has followed observations made by Morton (2015), which consider how the engagement between researchers and policy-makers and the formation of strong, positive, informal working relationships can lead to an increase in policy-maker knowledge, and changes in their practices, skills and decision-making. Stemming from the formation of strong relationships and frequent interaction between local researchers and international practitioners, evidence presented in section 5.3 has analysed a number of indicators which show how local research has made a similar contribution in the context of Kosovo's SSR. As indicated in the LRCK, researcher-practitioner engagement contributes to a political awareness and anthropological knowledge of SSR, and, following this learning, assists changes in practitioner decision-making.

A first form of practitioner learning from local research is through the strengthening of a 'political compass' (section 5.3.2). Through collaborative relationships and frequent interaction, international practitioners generate a stronger knowledge of the local context of security, justice and SSR in Kosovo. International practitioners indicated that they have generated political knowledge by engaging with local researchers, attending conferences and events, and reading different sources regardless of their quality, as it helped to inform an understanding of the various political views in society. An example of the strengthening of the 'political compass' of international practitioners was offered by local research on the divided issue of KSF transformation. Various international practitioners agreed that it was important to contemplate the arguments of researchers from different communities as they provided an insight into the political positioning of local security actors, society and national institutions. This is part of the

'informing' role of local research, where knowledge is created and shared by local researchers, and received by policy-makers how they see fit (Jones, H. et al. 2012: 134).

Secondly, practitioners learn from local research through the development of 'anthropological knowledge' (section 5.3.3). Anthropological knowledge is more functional than broader political knowledge and refers to an understanding of community and cultural security concerns and the local context of SSR implementation. Chapters 4 and 5 have shown that local researchers are better placed than international actors to access community concerns, and therefore can conduct a more accurate analysis of the local context. The KCSS, FIQ, KIPRED and Aktiv have all produced research on behalf of community concerns and analysed qualitative data with respect for the local language and culture. For example, KCSS access to interviews with former foreign fighters, and the ability of Aktiv to explain the key issues facing Serbian communities over the implementation of the Brussels Agreement. As well as holding the access of local researchers to local communities in high regard, EULEX and OSCE practitioners and an SSR advisor all explained that this access and knowledge led to a questioning of the meaning of SSR for Kosovo's communities, as well as the implications of SSR projects for Kosovo's communities (section 5.3). This process reflects how the recognised expertise of researchers informs the policy-making process by directly identifying interests to SSR policy-makers (Faleg 2012; Sugden 2006). At the same time, this form of learning highlights the everyday agency of local actors. It correlates to an observation made by Richmond and Pogodda (2016: 2) which indicates that local actors are able to educate interveners by providing local knowledge of the local context and the problems communities continue to face following international reform.

Following learning, the RCF indicates that researchers contribute to policy-making by helping policy-makers identify interests and frame issues (Morton 2015: 411). As depicted by the LRCK, this process is emulated in Kosovo. By educating practitioners and their development of knowledge and skills, local research informs and contributes to decision-making. Evidence has provided empirical examples of practitioners who, following an increased awareness of the local security context, have altered their decision-making process (section 5.3.5). For example, a UNDP practitioner described how they learned to consider an understanding of local communities as a requirement for successful programme design, while the context specific knowledge of FIQ and KCSS research contributed to the development of SALW and CVE strategies. In the LRCK, this is shown through an increase in the conflict sensitivity of decision-making, which becomes aware of the implications of international prescriptions. This finding also suggests that by engaging with local researchers and learning from their findings, international practitioners can

enhance the design and implementation of SSR activities. In line with Autesserre (2014: 251), those practitioners working with a greater knowledge of the local security context can add value to their intervention.

Without further interpretation, there appears to be a clash between key finding 7 and findings 5 and 6. Finding 5 (parts 6.7.1 and 6.7.2) identified the presence of SSR practitioners who are resistant to engaging with local researchers, while finding 6 indicated that practitioners who engage with local researchers may only do so politically and to manage local expectations. Combined, these findings appear to clash with finding 7: local research can contribute to practitioner knowledge and decision-making. This asks the question:

> How can local research contribute to practitioner knowledge and decision-making (Key finding 7) if practitioners resist the knowledge of local researchers (Key finding 5) or only engage with local researchers politically and to manage expectations (key finding 6)?

Finding 5 indicated that practitioner personality is a critical factor behind the engagement of practitioners with local researchers, and practitioner learning and local research utilisation. It indicated that while many practitioners resist the knowledge of local researchers, there are individual SSR practitioners who are receptive to local researchers. The international practitioners who make up Kosovo's international architecture demonstrate a variety of traits that determine a practitioner's openness or resistance to local research. While these resistant practitioners are unlikely to possess an interest in local research, receptive practitioners hold a deeper interest in local security knowledge that may lead to productive interaction with a local researcher and subsequent learning and utilisation. The extent to which local research contributes to practitioner knowledge or decision-making largely depends on the receptive or resistant orientation of the practitioner.

Individual personality is a key factor in determining the resistance of a practitioner to local research. Practitioners will be resistant in different ways, to various extents, and for a variety of personal reasons. As demonstrated by the analysis of interview testimonies in sections 4.4 and 4.5 there are various traits and behaviours adopted by resistant practitioners. Practitioners may outright refuse to engage with local research or lack any awareness of the activity of Kosovo's local security epistemic community. Others may hold negative perceptions of local research, ignore the advances of local researchers or obstruct the development of practitioner-researcher

relationships. This includes practitioners who have some form of engagement with local security researchers, and who may generate some knowledge from these engagements. This was demonstrated by the narrative of the resistant former OSCE and UNMIK advisor explored in section 6.7.3. They indicated that, while they do engage with local researchers, they remain resistant to a deeper engagement and utilisation of local research findings. While they consider local research a source of knowledge that can contribute to the political compass and understanding of political standpoints in Kosovo's security sector and society, this learning, does not reflect a deep engagement with local research and a contribution to an in-depth understanding of Kosovo's conflict, politics and community that comes through a more personal and long-term conversation with local researchers. The overriding scepticism over the quality and credibility of findings instilled a limited trust and interest of the practitioner in local research, deterring a deeper engagement with research findings. Furthermore, as shown in section 5.4, local research can be utilised in a 'resistant' way. While resistant practitioners may only use research politically, selectively, to justify policy briefs or manage expectations, receptive practitioners may build a deeper understanding of the local security context into policy design (section 5.3).

As shown in key finding 5 (section 6.7), local research contributes to the knowledge and decision-making of more receptive practitioners. The receptive nature and agency of a practitioner is a key variable in determining the extent to which local research can contribute to practitioner learning and decision-making. As noted in sections 5.2.5 and 5.2.6, receptive practitioners are critical of the international reliance on international research, technical expertise or internal knowledge. These practitioners may demonstrate an interest in local security knowledge and the local context, trust the quality and credibility of local research, hold an interest in building relationships with local researchers, value the work of local researchers, and show a willingness to engage with local researchers when this is both not actively encouraged or discouraged by their organisation. These receptive traits were demonstrated by UNDP practitioners in the case study analysis in section 5.3.5. These practitioners were critical of the top-down, closed policy processes of UNMIK and the UNDP and the international reliance on internal and technical expertise. They demonstrated an interest and trust in the relevance and quality of local research, were willing to construct productive and personal relationships with local researchers and tapped into these networks in order to access detailed knowledge of the security context that could support the design of CVE and SALW strategies.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter reflected on the central empirical findings of the thesis and linked them to the key theoretical models discussed in Chapter 2. In doing so, the chapter provided an assessment of the role of local research in the construction of Kosovo's internationally-led SSR. In particular, it has explained how and why local research has challenged international approaches to SSR and contributed to the decision-making of practitioners. In doing so, the empirical analysis in this thesis has made an original contribution to the study of local-international interaction and agency in contexts of international intervention, and to the study of the complexity and construction of Kosovo's SSR.

The chapter started by outlining the applicability of existing policy-making models to the context of Kosovo. It explained that local research is one of a number of sources of knowledge that factor in the policy-making process of international SSR practitioners, but one that has had increasing importance as the post-conflict years have progressed and as a local security epistemic community has developed. The chapter has also shown that it is important to consider the ongoing interaction, negotiation and contestation between local researchers and international practitioners with international SSR. International funding has had an important role in the formation and ongoing presence of Kosovo's local research organisations. The chapter indicated that the donor-researcher relationship is complicated, underpinned by a mixture of incentivising, compliance, and ongoing contestation. Nonetheless, local researchers were described as an actor that exhibits an everyday agency, with research production motivated by the need to challenge the performance of national institutions borne from international SSR, as well as the ongoing international presence in Kosovo. Moreover, the nature of the individuals involved in practitioner-researcher engagement, in particular the experience of individual practitioners, and their personalities and characteristics, determine practitioner trust and interest in local researchers and define the nature of interaction. Organisational cultures also have a role to play and underline the impact of the structure-agency problem on international practitioners. The analysis demonstrated that various receptive international practitioners provide exceptions to international organisations and practitioners that resist the challenges of local research, and actively seek out and engage with local research to support decision-making. Furthermore, Chapters 4 and 5 highlighted the importance of studying researcher-practitioner engagement as the critical means through which to understand the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR, the challenges it poses, and the contribution these challenges afford to a practitioner's knowledge, skills and decision-making. In addition, emphasis was placed on the complexity of local research contribution. International

practitioners often engage with local researchers as a means to manage local challenges, while tension in the local-international relationship can undermine collaborative exchange.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 The Findings of the Thesis

This study addressed a central issue, a gap in existing knowledge of Kosovo's SSR and local-international engagement in post-conflict contexts. It asked: *What role is played by the local security epistemic community in Kosovo's SSR?* To investigate this research question, Chapter 2 integrated a hybrid framework of analysis with concepts of research contribution to support an original examination of the interaction and contestation that follows international intervention. This formed a fresh analytical approach through the Local Research Contribution Framework, which supported the incisive deconstruction of the role of local research in a complex and political SSR process. Based on the fresh evidence the research has brought forward, this thesis finds that local research has been under-appreciated across the international SSR architecture. Nonetheless, local research has an important role to play in Kosovo's SSR. The original empirical research undertaken for this study found that local research faces several barriers put up by international organisations to deter practitioner engagement, significant credibility concerns amongst its target audience, and is largely reliant on external funding. However, the new evidence brought forward in this thesis indicates that local research has challenged the performance of Kosovo's security institutions which have been established through international SSR. Local researchers have also forged productive relationships with international practitioners, have supplemented practitioner knowledge of Kosovo's security context and contributed to conflict sensitive decision-making. An answer to the primary research question was supported by four supportive sub-questions:

1. **To what extent has a security and justice oriented epistemic community developed in Kosovo?**

   This research question explored Kosovo's local research organisations and their post-conflict development. It took into account the multifarious environment of multiple local and international agencies, including researchers and practitioners, who continually compete and negotiate. Today, there is a vibrant local security research epistemic community in Kosovo which challenges and contributes to internationally-led SSR. In a context of post-conflict disruption and transition, Kosovo's epistemic community took time to root. Prior to independence, few organisations explored SSR: FIQ, BIRN, the KLC and KIPRED

challenged international SSR and the performance of national institutions. Post-independence, Kosovo's security epistemic community has engaged with international SSR with consistency. An analysis of perception data highlights local CSOs as trusted representatives of community security concerns. The growing relevance of North Kosovo's SSR has seen heightened research into security integration and the Brussels Agreement. Although international missions such as EULEX remain closed to local research, recent years have seen international embassies, NATO, the UNDP, and national institutions observe local researchers as credible SSR actors.

Coalitions, partnerships and cross-community research, through the Forum for Security, Conflict Prevention Forum and informal friendships, are an important element of Kosovo's research community. This is evidenced by KCSS, BCSP, FIQ and Aktiv research on North Kosovo's SSR. While Kosovo and Serbia maintain a complicated political relationship, there is extensive collaboration between researchers on contentious issues. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that Kosovo's research sector is not a uniform actor. Funding competition and diverse ideas undermine homogeneity. Overall, an understanding of the diverse expertise, competition and collaboration of the local research sector has provided a detailed answer to this question.

2. To what extent does local research constitute a challenge to the international approach to SSR in Kosovo?

This research question considers the extent to which local research challenges international SSR. This thesis identified various challenges, and, by association, how international practitioners engage with local research to challenge dominant international procedures. Empirical evidence from interviews with local researchers and international practitioners confirms that local research self-consciously adopts a challenging stance. Local research monitors and evaluates institutional performance, questions institutional legitimacy, investigates judicial corruption, and provides local alternatives. In doing so, local research challenges the performance of national institutions established through international SSR, as well as the ongoing international presence in Kosovo's SSR. At the same time, international practitioners challenge the barriers put up by their organisations that hinder an engagement with local researchers by taking it upon themselves to seek out local research. These

practitioners are often critical of their organisation's reliance on international technical knowledge and consider local researchers as a valuable alternative.

3. How does local research contribute to the decision-making of international practitioners working towards SSR in Kosovo?

This question considers how local research challenges afford positive benefits to international practitioners. Empirical interview evidence has identified productive researcher-practitioner relationships as the critical gateway for research contribution. Through interaction with receptive practitioners, local researchers push their ideas onto practitioner agendas, and contribute to a reframing of political and anthropological knowledge about Kosovo's security context. This has led international practitioners to question international preconceptions and redefine interests. After generating an increased awareness of the security context and implications of SSR, international practitioners have conducted more conflict sensitive decision-making. Nonetheless, an identification of various channels of research utilisation complicates the contribution of local research to international SSR. Evidence shows that practitioners have used research selectively and often engage with local research to manage local challenges. An additional finding of this thesis is that joint-research between Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian researchers has explored security issues which are highly contentious at the political level. Evidence indicates that these collaborative research activities show signs of contributing positively to inter-community relations in Kosovo.

4. What factors impact on the contribution that local research makes to policy-making?

This question considers the various factors which impact on local research contribution. Post-conflict disruption and political transition has impacted negatively on the capacity of Kosovo's research sector. Kosovo's universities do not conduct extensive SSR research, leaving local think tanks to take responsibility. Furthermore, while donor support for CSO capacity development has encouraged local think tanks, funding dependency complicates the functioning and image of local think tanks. Subsequently, the significant credibility concerns of international practitioners have discredited the post-conflict emergence of CSOs. Additionally, the sensitivity of SSR thwarts the access of researchers to vital evidence and has also manifested in threats against researchers.

Collaborative researcher-practitioner relationships are the critical means through which local research challenges international SSR and contributes to decision-making. With limited formal opportunities to effectively engage with international SSR, local researchers rely extensively on their ability to forge informal relationships. Likewise, international practitioners interested in the local context, or critical of the international reliance on international knowledge and experience, seek out local researchers to generate an understanding of the local context. In this context, the research interaction strategies of local researchers are a critical precursor to the building and maintenance of productive relationships with international practitioners. Equally vital is the personal receptivity and interest of international practitioners in local research.

Lacking effective interaction strategies and connections to receptive practitioners, local research struggles to engage with, challenge, and contribute to international SSR. Further complicating researcher-practitioner engagement, local research is unlikely to be taken seriously by resistant practitioners who prioritise international technical expertise, consider local research of little relevance, and have little interest in the local context. The structural and cultural barriers of international organisations, including the absence of local knowledge as a recruitment requirement, poor donor coordination, and a high rate of practitioner turnover, also undermine the formation of researcher-practitioner relationships. Practitioners also often consider local research to lack credibility due to prevailing negative perceptions of political affiliation, funding dependency, and limited research quality.

7.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis has filled a gap identified in the critical peace- and state-building literature, the literature on Kosovo's SSR, and the role of research in policy-making, identified at the start of the thesis. It adds new knowledge where previous studies have not taken seriously the role of local research in post-conflict recovery. Local research has been successfully identified as an institution that challenges international SSR and contributes to the policy-process. By exploring testimonies covering the majority of Kosovo's local research organisations, and triangulating these with the testimonies of international practitioners, the study has brought forward comprehensive new empirical evidence that develops a deeper understanding of the complexity

of Kosovo's SSR. By analysing extensive and fresh empirical data, this thesis has made a series of original contributions to existing knowledge.

Firstly, the focus on local research and its interaction with international SSR provides a new case study and fresh empirical insights for the SSR and hybridity literature**.** The study adds original understanding of the complex local-international engagement, contestation, collaboration and interaction that follows international intervention (Autesserre 2014; Mac Ginty 2011, 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). Its deconstruction of researcher-practitioner interaction sheds new light on the complexity of post-conflict SSR, the dynamism of policy-making, and the various ways through which international intervention is shaped by local and international actors. **Secondly**, the study adds new knowledge of local agency in contexts of international intervention (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009, 2010; Tadjbakhsh 2011). By highlighting the various ways in which local researchers challenge international policy-making, Kosovo's local research community is highlighted as a vibrant component of Kosovo's contentious state-building process that has not previously been considered in-depth Beysoylu 2018; Jackson 2018; Kursani 2018; Selenica 2018; Tadic and Elbasani 2018; Triantafyllou 2018; Troncota 2018; Visoka 2012a). Furthermore, the findings expand on existing awareness of knowledge formation in Kosovo's SSR by detailing the contribution of local security research to practitioner knowledge formation (Brosig 2011; Distler 2016; Dursun-Ozkanka and Crossley-Frolick 2012; Eckhard 2016; Graeger 2016; Holohan 2016; Phillipps 2018; Sahin 2017; Scheye 2008).

Thirdly, a contribution is made to the SSR epistemic community literature (Faleg 2012; Sugden 2006) and recent study on security communities in the Western Balkans (Stojanovic-Gajic and Ejdus 2018). While previous studies focus on the role of international epistemic communities and their engagement with policy, the case study of this thesis provides new focus on the value of Kosovo's local research community. **Fourthly**, the thesis provides a fresh case study for research contribution literature by testing the applicability of concepts of knowledge interaction to Kosovo's post-conflict SSR (Jones, H. et al. 2012; Morton 2015; Shaxson et al. 2012). Where previous studies have focused on the role and contribution of international research (Varisco 2014Waldman, Barakat and Varisco 2014), this thesis contributes new knowledge of the intermediary functions of local researchers. **Fifth,** an in-depth understanding of Kosovo's local research community contributes to existing knowledge of post-conflict peace formation and CSO led peace-building (Visoka 2016b; Visoka and Richmond 2017; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). Local SSR research has provided space for cooperation between Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian

communities on highly sensitive issues which are often contentious at the political level. **Sixth,** the findings contribute to existing understandings of the everyday agency of international practitioners working on the frontlines of international policy design and implementation (Autesserre 2014; Henry 2015; McWha 2011; Scheye 2008; Sending 2010) and how individual practitioners form knowledge in the design and implementation of policy (Bueger 2015). The thesis highlights the importance of the individual personality and nature of practitioners, where receptive or resistant characteristics are critical variables that determine the extent of practitioner-researcher engagement.

7.3 Contribution to Methodology

The collection of new evidence and its rigorous analysis has relied on the development and deployment of a fresh and original analytical approach grounded in concepts of hybridity and research contribution. The formation of the LRCF and LRCK has ensured a sharp and insightful analysis of the use of local research in Kosovo's SSR and the ongoing and concurrent negotiation, contestation and interaction between local researchers and international practitioners. The findings show the benefit of combining hybridity as a lens of analysis, epistemic community and research contribution to explore previously under-valued engagements in post-conflict SSR, in this case highlighting the challenges and contribution of local researchers. As shown in sections 7.5 and 7.6, there is significant potential to further develop and apply the LRCF to other contexts of international intervention.

This is the first time that an interview survey has given extensive attention to both the testimonies of local researchers and international practitioners in an analysis of Kosovo's SSR. While previous studies of Kosovo's SSR have conducted interviews with local researchers and international SSR practitioners, the challenges and contribution of the local research community has not proved the focus of analysis. The qualitative approach of this thesis has taken seriously the agency of Kosovo's local research community, researcher-practitioner interaction, and the individual nature, agency and approaches of practitioners and researchers. The thesis findings demonstrate the importance of building an interview sample that includes practitioners and researchers and the value of designing interview templates to backward and forward track research-policy interactions. Furthermore, and as explained in Chapter 3, a key component of the innovative methodological framework for analysis developed for this research project is the creation and application of data 'coding' and the establishment of an analytical "codebook". In this regard, the research has developed an innovative approach to exploring a complex topic,

which further complements the collection and analysis of new data and production of original findings. The support provided by data coding throughout this thesis demonstrates the potential utility of the formation and application of analytical ''codebooks'' for future novel studies of research contribution in complex post-conflict contexts.

7.4 Contribution to Policy and Practice

The original empirical findings of the thesis speak to policy-makers and provide fresh insights that have the potential to contribute to policy and practice. As indicated by Barakat and Zyck (2009: 1080), empirically-based academic research in post-conflict contexts can support the policy-making and programming of internationally-led post-conflict recovery. Firstly, the findings pose critical questions to the SSR cultures and practices of international organisations and practitioners. Practitioners from the UN, EULEX, NATO, OSCE indicated that they seek out and engage with local research, considering critical conversations with local researchers as a valuable means through which to generate a deeper understanding of the local context. International practitioners also critique international sources of evidence and consider local knowledge a resource that can offer deeper insights into the security context than international research, experience and technical expertise.

Secondly, the thesis questions instances where international organisations obstruct practitioner engagement with local research or prioritise international sources of expertise ahead of the valuable insights of local knowledge. Despite practitioner concerns over the credibility of local research, local research can provide a more useful source of knowledge than international research, experience, and technical expertise. From these critical findings, the thesis has discerned a set of four policy recommendations for international and local actors to support through different avenues the productive engagement between international organisations and local research in post-conflict contexts. These recommendations target the engagement between international practitioners and local researchers and may enrich the international policy-process and lead to increasingly context sensitive international outputs.

A first recommendation for international organisations, such as international embassies, the UN, EULEX and the OSCE, is to **increase international practitioner access to local researchers**. This thesis has shown that individual EULEX, UN and OSCE practitioners derive useful lessons from positive researcher-practitioner relationships. This recommendation aims to heighten the

276

extent to which practitioners hold productive engagements with local research and enhance their understanding of the security context, making this a systemic component of organisational ethos through concomitant budgeting, training and outreach, and therefore going beyond the individual element of practitioner personality. This recommendation also challenges international practitioners who are unaware of local research, and who possess an anti-intellectualism and negative perception of local research. Firstly, international organisations could place a greater emphasis on the presence, profile and expertise of local researchers throughout the pre-deployment training and induction of SSR practitioners. At the same time, practitioners could also be encouraged to self-develop their understanding of local security contexts by engaging with local research, or through regular attendance of local research conferences. International organisations could establish online portals to ensure that practitioners stay up to date with new local research outputs and events, while local researchers could be afforded access to this portal to provide a space to communicate their work to practitioners. Furthermore, local researchers could be hired by international organisations to deliver lectures and workshops to international practitioners. Secondly, international organisations should be more receptive to the expertise of local researchers and place more trust in local expertise. Here, it would be useful for international SSR organisations to mainstream the recruitment of local consultants, rather than international consultants, in the design of SSR initiatives. In addition, international organisations such as EULEX who over-emphasise security and stability, might lapse conditions which discourage staff engagement with local research. Combined, enhancing practitioner-researcher exchange might increase the extent to which practitioners derive useful lessons from local researchers and enhance the conflict sensitivity of decision-making.

A second recommendation is for international donors, including government agencies, international missions and embassies, to **adopt constructive approaches to funding the capacity building of local research organisations in post-conflict contexts**. Local researcher and international practitioner testimonies have challenged the international provision of short-term and 'quick-fix' grants, which have required Kosovo's local organisations to compete with each other and conform to funding parameters. Alternatively, this research has shown that decentralised 'partnership' approaches, such as those offered by the NMFA and Saferworld to the KCSS and FIQ, or through EU IPA funding, adopt a non-traditional view of security and focus on supporting the capacity of independent local research, critical thought, and enable a long-term capacity to monitor, evaluate and challenge security sector development and institutional performance. Strides in this direction entail a change in attitude, where donors would afford young, inexperienced and developing organisations long-term funding alongside the room to

make mistakes and learn. Emulating the NMFA and Saferworld, training platforms in research methods and monitoring and evaluation could be offered, followed up with research grants with limited conditions attached that utilise recently learned methods. In order to reduce the competition between local think tanks and their dependency on international funds, it would also be useful to support the establishment of a local research funding pool and make longer term commitments. Here, funding could be offered on a case-by-case basis and tailored to local needs and concerns. International donors should also increase their focus on funding for joint research activities, media platforms, and research skills development, each of which have had positive benefits for Kosovo's research sector.

A third recommendation mainly targets the practices of local researchers and the credibility concerns of international practitioners and is for local researchers to **ensure that joint research activities are a frequent part of research portfolios.** This research has highlighted the positive perception international practitioners hold of joint, cross-community research. At the same time, joint research, such as that conducted by the BCSP and KCSS, has been described as having a stronger empirical basis to understand the puzzle of SSR. Nonetheless, and as shown by the Forum for Security, joint research requires different organisations and researchers to establish an often difficult-to-reach compromise throughout research design, publication and advocacy. Local researchers should persist with joint-research despite difficulties. Cooperation can be supported by taking measures to consolidate collaboration and a mutual understanding of responsibilities. Here research partners or coalition members should work to establish a statute that details agreed aims, scope and responsibilities.

A fourth recommendation is for local researchers to **dedicate time to developing personal contacts with receptive and influential international practitioners and to consider this a vital element of the policy uptake strategy**. This research has highlighted informal researcher-practitioner relations as the critical avenue through which local research can engage with international SSR and contribute to conflict sensitive decision-making. In particular, executive directors play a critical role in tapping into international practitioner networks and building a range of contacts through which to communicate policy recommendations. This research shows that local researchers can mainstream several strategies in support of developing personal policy contacts. This includes targeting international practitioners who have a reputation for being more receptive to local research, following up on conversations with individual practitioners at conferences, directly sharing research findings with individual practitioners, and communicating findings in a constructive and non-confrontational manner. It is also critical for local researchers

to pre-handle the objections of international practitioners who might be resistant to local research. It is important for local researchers to be empathetic to the often-negative perceptions of international practitioners of organisations such as the UN, EULEX and OSCE, who, rightly or wrongly, are regularly put off by research deemed as overly political or consider local research to lack methodological and evidential credibility. To do this, local researchers could incorporate sections into their publications that clearly outline the rigour of their methodological approach, the policy relevance of their research for their target audience, and the importance and originality of research findings.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

While this research has explored an under-studied problematic, and addressed the under-appreciated value of local researchers, it is important to reflect on potential limitations to provide a fair assessment of the contribution of this thesis to the wider literature. Furthermore, highlighting potential problems can support future research and advance the analysis in this thesis.

This study has shown the benefits of combining qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews and research paper analysis, to forward and backward track local research contribution. A quantitative element has also supported an understanding of the legitimacy of Kosovo's civil society sector. Nonetheless, quantitative surveys disseminated to interviewees could have deepened the analysis of researcher-practitioner interaction and enriched the qualitative analysis. These surveys could have enquired about the frequency of researcher-practitioner engagement; positive or negative perceptions of this engagement; and assessed interaction quality.

This thesis explores local research in one context and one branch of state-building: Kosovo's SSR. Local researchers and international practitioners frequently commented that it would be interesting to compare Kosovo's epistemic community with another country in the region, such as Macedonia or Albania. While various security-oriented think tanks operate in Macedonia, they may have different motivations to those in Kosovo. Likewise, the case of Albania would provide a comparison with a country experiencing a post-communist, rather than post-conflict transition. Further afield, it would also be interesting to contrast the emergence of local and security-oriented think tanks in contexts such as Nepal and Sierra Leone. Given the context specificity of post-conflict recovery, the results of this study cannot be easily applied to other contexts. Studies in other contexts could utilise, adapt and update the LRCF to examine these different dynamics of

local research challenge and contribution. Despite an awareness of these limitations, this thesis has collected extensive original primary evidence from across Kosovo's security research sector and international security architecture. As such, the study of the role of local research in Kosovo's SSR has proved comprehensive.

7.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Avenues for future research follow on from this study which can help to overcome the limitations facing this research. Addressing one of the limitations identified in the previous section, **future research could deploy adaptations of the LRCF in alternative contexts to draw a comparison with Kosovo**. Such a study would test and enhance the findings of this study, generating additional new empirical evidence from the Balkans region or further afield to supplement an understanding of the contribution that local research affords SSR. Alternatively, the analytical tool of hybridity could be integrated with alternative models of research impact assessment that provide variation to the LRCF emphasis on 'research contribution' (Morton 2015). Adapting the 'SIAMPI approach' may add emphasis to the productive interactions between researchers and practitioners (Spaapen and Van Drooge 2011) and focus on different aspects of researcher-practitioner engagement.

A key issue highlighted in this thesis is the dependency of local research on international funding. Nonetheless, the thesis has identified constructive donor-researcher partnerships (such as NMFA and Saferworld with the KCSS and FIQ), where funding has few conditions attached and where the focus is on research capacity and skills development. A second avenue for future research could further **explore the diversity of funding relationships, partnerships and capacity development approaches of international donors**. Such research could generate a deeper understanding of approaches of most benefit to the skillsets of local researchers and sustainability think tanks. It could trace the impact of donor capacity building on the performance of local research organisations. This research would be of high importance to international embassies and agencies, such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), DFID and USAID, who in Kosovo's case have consistently engaged with non-traditional security actors.

Thirdly, **future research could explore the dynamics of compliance and contestation in the donor-researcher relationship**, uncovering how local researchers contest funding parameters and terms of reference. While this thesis has indicated that local researchers have contested the

conditionality attached to projects by international donors, deeper insights into this complex relationship are possible. It would be interesting to explore the differences between the information, evidence and arguments researchers publish in paper research outputs, and the messages that local researchers convey in private conversations.

A key finding of this research is that, where it has taken place, practitioner-researcher engagement has helped to ground the decision-making of UNDP and OSCE practitioners in the local context. As this finding challenges those organisations and practitioners who do not engage with local research, a fourth direction for future research could **explore how local researcher expertise could be better incorporated into the everyday activities of international practitioners**. It could investigate the opportunities available and the potential impacts of formalising researcher-practitioner interaction. It would be of interest to assess the possible impact of a formal connection, and whether this would hamper the critical nature of local research and lead to more tokenistic practitioner-researcher exchanges.

While not the primary focus of this research, the thesis has touched on the successful collaboration between Kosovo-Albanian and Serbian researchers, and Kosovar, Serbian and Albanian research organisations. A fifth recommendation could develop these findings further: **exploring in-depth the productive relationships between researchers of different communities and countries, where cooperation at the political level has often proved difficult on sensitive issues.** It could explore the foundation of these relationships and consider the advantages of joint research in comparison with research conducted by individual organisations. This could connect the study of local research contribution to the study of peace-building and Track II Diplomacy and consider the potential peacebuilding contribution of joint research. In doing so, it could identify the potential of a regional security research community, and how such a community can help to strengthen constructive approaches to the continuing security tensions that face the Balkans today.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Question Templates for Semi-Structured Interviews

The following question templates will help to guide semi-structured interviews. A shorter version of these templates will accompany the participation information and consent form in the initial email sent to potential interviewees.

Questions for international actors intend to collect the testimonies of international practitioners who have worked or are currently working on security and justice issues. Starting from research use, these questions backward track the interaction and influence of local research on international practitioner decision-making and policy, and its various pathways into policy. They start at a policy-decision, working backwards to find out what has influenced decision-making and policy change.

Questions for local actors intend to collect the testimonies of local experts, researchers, and civil society actors who have worked or are working on security and justice issues. By starting from the local researcher, they forward track the interaction and influence of local research and expertise on international practitioner decision-making and policy, and its various pathways into policy.

Question template for International Practitioners

Thank you for agreeing to assist in this research. Your knowledge and understanding will contribute substantially to this study. This interview forms part of a broad assessment of opinions about the policy-making process of Security Sector Reform in post-conflict Kosovo. The purpose of the interview is to obtain your narrative of the factors that have influenced your decision-making and policy role. The questions encourage you to reflect on different factors, including interaction with local knowledge and research. The overall intention is to use your testimony to add to an understanding of the contribution that local researchers have made to the decision-making of international practitioners. The questions below provide details of the kind of information I am seeking, and the topics I am interested in discussing with you.

1) Can you please describe your background?

2) Can you describe your role, and main contribution to SSR in post-conflict Kosovo?
(to get an understanding on key policy areas/ examples to elaborate on through questions below)

3) What knowledge and research have you relied on to inform and make decisions, and to assist with policy design and implementation?

4) How 'local' and how 'international' is the information and analysis that you draw upon and do you think there is any significant difference in quality of understanding and insight between local and international knowledge?

5) What factors (political, economic, security or socio-cultural) have helped or hindered your engagement with local researchers and, in your view, are any factors more significant than others?

6) Can you reflect on any exchanges with research papers, reports or organisations which have helped to inform or advise your work?

7) Can you recall where you have used local research or where local knowledge has had impacts on your practice?

8) Are there any factors that might encourage you to seek out and use local knowledge and research?

9) What factors might deter you from engaging with local civil society actors and utilising their local knowledge or research?

10) Throughout your experience, can you describe organisational and personal understandings of local ownership?

11) Do you believe that the policy-making processes you have been involved in are sensitive to local knowledge and needs, and how?

12) Do you think that local research is a valuable peace-building resource, and why?

13. What more needs to be done by international organisations to utilise local knowledge and research more effectively?

14. Based on your experience, what more can local agencies do to better influence the SSR process?

Question template for Local Researchers

Thank you for agreeing to assist in this research. Your knowledge and understanding will contribute substantially to this study. This interview forms part of a broad assessment of opinions about the policy-making process of Security Sector Reform in post-conflict Kosovo. The purpose of the interview is to obtain your narrative of the contribution that local research and researchers have made to international policy-making. The overall intention is to use your narrative to add to an understanding of the contribution that local knowledge can make to the decision-making of international practitioners. The questions below provide details of the kind of information I am seeking, and the topics I am interested in discussing with you.

1) Can you please describe your background?

2) Can you describe your role, and main contribution to SSR in post-conflict Kosovo?

3) What topics, or areas does your research focus on, and how does it reflect local priorities?

4) How does/has your research provide locally grounded alternatives to international policy approaches?

5) Who are your main research users?

6) What factors have helped or hindered the international utilisation of local knowledge in policy-making? What are these and, in your experience, are any more obvious than others?

7) Do you think your local knowledge and research has had an impact on international SSR, or not? If so, why? if not, why not?

8) Can you give me examples of specific reports or research papers that you believe have influenced a policy-maker?

9) What strategies of knowledge transfer and exchange, outreach and advocacy do you or your organisation deploy to enhance the influence of local research on the policy-making process?

10) Can you reflect on any formal relationships with international practitioners through which your organisation has enhanced the policy impact of its knowledge?

11) Can you reflect on any personal, informal relationships with international practitioners through which you have been able to enhance your policy impact?

12) In the post-conflict period, how has the community of local actors producing local knowledge evolved to display a peace-building agency and potential?

13) Do you think that local knowledge is a valuable resource for local ownership and peace-building, and why?

14) What more needs to be done by international and local actors to increase the interaction and influence of local knowledge?

Appendix 2. Participation Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

1.   What is the purpose of the study?

My research explores the relationships and networks between local researchers and international policy-making in the design, development and implementation of security reform in post-conflict Kosovo. This local knowledge refers to the knowledge of local experts and the research and outputs of civil society organisations, think tanks and academia. I am collecting the testimonies of domestic researchers, experts and civil society representatives, and of international practitioners who have worked or are currently working on security and justice issues. The project will assess what variables, including local research, interact with and influence the international decision and policy-making process.

2.   Why have I been approached?

To ensure objective research, the project needs to involve local and international security stakeholders, researchers, expertise and interest groups in the post-conflict recovery of the Kosovar security sector. You have been approached as you may be able to provide a local, international or expert narrative of the policy-making process and reflect on the role of local research.

3.   Do I have to take part?

No - Participation is voluntary, though should you wish to comply we can arrange to meet for an interview after a further email exchange. There is no payment for participation in the research, and you can stop your participation at any time. If you wish to withdraw following an interview you may do so at any time following the session. You can withdraw by contacting me by email and providing your participation number. I will then destroy any collected data, which will not be used throughout the study.

4.   What do I have to do?

We will arrange a one-to-one interview which will last for approximately 60-90 minutes. During this time, I will ask a series of open questions that will require you to reflect on your experiences. Throughout your testimony, I do not require personal information about yourself or others you may have had contact with. The purpose of the questions is to unpack the dynamics of policy-making. To help me understand your answers as clearly as possible I will record your answers on a digital voice recorder.

5.   What are the disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The interview does not raise any immediate risk as it does not attempt to collect sensitive information, nor does the project seek to criticise any individuals or organisations. Some of the questions may seem challenging and require complex answers.

6.   What are the benefits of taking part?

Your participation will ensure an insight into the way in which a PhD is conducted, as well as

contributing to a novel investigation with academic and practical benefits.

7.   Withdrawal options

At any time, you may ask for any data you have supplied not to be used in this research. To do this, please email me with the words "I no longer want my data used in the research study", and your participant number, name or initials.

8.   Will my participation be kept confidential?

Yes – I am the only person with access to the data. You will be given a choice to remain anonymous, with no information stored or published able to identify you. You will only be identified through a participant number. Any paper notes taken will be uploaded to a secure encrypted and password-protected file within 24 hours. Audio recordings will not be made/stored/used without your consent. Any recordings will also be uploaded to a secure (encrypted and password-protected) file. These will be destroyed following transcription, and all data will be destroyed after I receive a final mark for my PhD thesis.

9.   What if something goes wrong?

If we must cancel an interview, I will attempt to get in contact with you as soon as possible by email. If you change your mind about taking part in the study, you can withdraw at any time.

10.   What will happen with the results of the study?

Recordings will be written up into transcripts, before being analysed. The data will be written up and presented in my PhD thesis. The thesis will be disseminated to all of those that took part in and contributed to the research. Data may also be used in the writing and presentation of conference papers, or within publications for academic journals.

11.   Who has reviewed this study?

I have organised the research. I am a PhD student with the Faculty for Arts and Humanities at Coventry University. The project is funded by a Coventry University studentship. The study has undergone a review by the Coventry University ethics committee and received approval.

12.   Contact for further information

Contact my email address.

13.   Who to complain to.

If you are not happy with any part of this research, please contact:
Professor Neil Renwick (Supervisor)
School of Humanities
Coventry University
Priory Street
UK
CV1 5FB

Appendix 3. Consent Form

Consent Statement

	Please tick
1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.	☐
3. I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in confidence and I consent to its use in this research study	☐
4. I understand that I have the right to change my mind about participating in the study by contacting the researcher following the details on the participation sheet and quoting my participation number.	☐
5. I agree to be recorded as part of the research project	☐
6. I agree to take part in the research project	☐

Name of participant: ....

Signature of participant: ....

Date: ....

Witnessed by (if appropriate): ....

Name of witness: ....

Signature of witness: ....

Name of Researcher:

Signature of researcher: ....

Date:...

Appendix 4. Codebook Summary: themes, categories and codes generated from coding and applied to data

Themes	RQ-relevance
1	1, 2, 3
2	2, 4
3	1, 4
4	1, 4
5	2, 3, 4
6	1, 2, 3, 4

Theme 1: Deconstructing Local Research Contribution: Deconstructing the various ways in which local research contributes to SSR in Kosovo.

Category: Contribution to SSR
- **Acting as a 'watchdog':** Local research, monitoring and evaluation provides a form of oversight that scrutinises SSR and acts as a check on judicial performance.
- **Paving the road:** Local researchers show innovation in thinking about SSR, exploring understudied topics, accessing new data and creating new findings.
- **Enhancing policy sustainability:** Local research considered to test and contribute to the sustainability of international SSR.
- **Enhancing policy legitimacy:** Local research considered to test and contribute to the legitimacy of international SSR.
- **Localising solutions:** Local research 'localises' international policy prescriptions, by adapting or altering solutions to the local context.

Category: Contribution to the Research Sector
- **Expanding research community:** how local research contributes to public awareness of SSR issues. It also concerns relationships within and across the local research community, and the formation of coalitions and partnerships. Finally, it considers the cumulative influence of local research, and how local research organisations support the capacity of other organisations.
- **Filling academic/university gaps:** the weakness of the university sector in Kosovo, the lack of SSR research in Kosovo's universities, and the extent to which non-university research organisations fill this gap.
- **Representing community concerns:** the ability of local research organisations to represent community security concerns. For example, by conducting perception surveys and basing research reports on community understandings of security and safety.

Category: Contribution to Practitioners
- **Expanding policy networks:** practitioner-researcher engagement leads to expansion of the personal network of practitioners. This network is tapped into to generate further understandings of the local security context.
- **Strengthening political compass:** practitioners engage with local research, which contributes to understandings of the political complexity of SSR. There may be benefits to looking at the broad range of research, regardless of quality, to generate an understanding of political positioning in Kosovo's society.
- **Deepening anthropological understanding:** International practitioners learn about Kosovo's culture and community perceptions of security and safety
- **Changes in decision-making:** following learning, practitioners indicate how learning has led to changes in decision-making or contributed to decisions made.
- **Changes in the framing of issues:** how practitioners show more critical thinking after engagements with local researchers. For example, contemplating the impact and conflict sensitivity of SSR activities.
- **Confirming a theory:** Practitioners have frameworks for thinking about SSR and rely on various sources of knowledge. Practitioners may form a new 'theory' about SSR, such as a policy solution, which might be run past a local researcher to confirm or deny it.
- **Streamlining policy-making:** instances where international practitioners engage with researchers to save time. Local researchers may have access to readily available information which provides a practitioner with expertise when they do not have time to become fully acquainted with the issue.

Category: Contribution to Peacebuilding (Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian research)
- **Myth busting:** Joint research providing 'true information', debunking myths and de-politicising security issues at the community level.
- **Creation of neutral political space**: The ability of think tanks and researchers, or civil society level representatives, to move beyond ethnic problems that persist at the political level. Research activities create a constructive space.
- **Non-state diplomacy:** Constructive dialogue through research, friendships, relationships, respect and trust.
- **Peace capacity building:** Researchers contribute to the capacity of other organisations, often through trainings, hosting, exchanges, partnerships and joint outputs.
- **Providing regional solutions**: Collaboration between Kosovar, Albanian and Serbian organisations that attempt to tackle cross-border security issues.

Theme 2: A Complex and Competitive Policy-Process: This theme indicates that, aside from local research, practitioners rely on a number of sources of evidence in policy-making.

Category: Limited research capacity and quality
- **Chasing the funding**: Evidence of think tanks chasing funding to survive, showing a business mind set, spreading expertise too thin.
- **Research malpractice:** Plagiarism, poor use of sources, research, lacking originality, manipulation of findings.
- **Weak methodology:** Limited methodological capacity and ability to interpret findings, limited or inappropriate qualitative and quantitative methods.
- **Research isolation**: Researchers or think tanks acting alone, taking a one-dimensional approach, being confrontational.
- **Lacking critical mass:** comments/ examples of a lack of critical thought from the research sector.

- **Brain drain:** loss of expertise due to population movements, casualties, and the historic denial of university education to many citizens. Also, the dilution of expertise within think tanks and turnover of senior researchers.
- **Poor language quality:** where a lack of English and Albanian/ Serbian limits quality.
- **Research subjectivity:** references to the partisan, political and ethnic affiliations that research might have.
- **Limited public representation**: the limited breadth of CSOs, which tend to be concentrated in Pristina, and populated by middle-class Western educated Kosovar researchers.
- **Think tank rivalry:** evidence of rivalry or competition between research organisations.
- **Conflicting research process:** conflict and disagreement during the research process (spelling, advocacy, methods, presentation)
- **Topical fixation:** when research focuses on a popular topic, or the presence of understudied topics.
- **Topical disconnect:** contrary to the researcher, international and domestic practitioners do not view topics as useful.

Category: Alternative (international) sources of knowledge
- **International research:** International practitioners reflect on the use of international sources of research (academic, think tanks INGOs)
- **Experiential knowledge:** International practitioners rely on experience in alternative contexts of international intervention and apply this to their activities in Kosovo.
- **Internal research:** International organisations and practitioners rely on the easily accessible 'internal' research (political reporting offices, etc.) of their organisation.
- **Outsourcing:** International organisations and practitioners outsource research to other organisations (often not local)
- **International consultancy:** International SSR relies on the findings and direction of international consultants.

Category: Local sources of knowledge
- **Local academic research:** SSR research from Kosovo's universities, reflections on this research.
- **Think tanks:** examples of research from Kosovo's SSR oriented think tanks.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: local research which assesses of the functioning of a sector or department, or of a particular policy, undertaken by civil society.
- **Historical knowledge:** international practitioners reading of older, more historical, anthropological or geographical books about Kosovo. This type of knowledge is not as useful in terms of policy contribution, but remains a source tapped into prior to entrance into the field.
- **Investigative research:** journalistic research (oversight, transparency, accountability)
- **Local/ international research:** Where international organisations recruit local expertise to produce research. For example, local staff might be employed through an international organisation, therefore creating an international product but produced by locals.
- **Joint/coalition research:** examples and utilisation of research produced by CSO coalitions
- **Local consultants:** local consultants employed internationally and domestically

Theme 3: A Changing post-conflict context: This theme considers the post-conflict context as variable which helps or hinders practitioner-researcher interaction and the role of local research in SSR.

Category: Complex context obstruction

- **Difficult political context:** How political deadlocks have undermined the development and contribution of a local security epistemic community. For example, Serbian exclusion, self-exclusion and enforced by politicians denying development and investment in local research. References to the longer-term obstructions to think tanks and NGO's and how this has hindered the development of a local security epistemic community. In addition, evidence of how the post-conflict context, including physical, infrastructural, political and security factors, have hindered and disrupted local security epistemic community development.
- **Threats against researchers:** researchers facing physical threats, political threats, financial threats, and reputational risks which might deter a vibrant research sector.
- **SSR sensitivity:** evidence of the difficulty facing research into a sensitive topic, such as a lack of access and a policy-process closed for reasons of security.
- **Key context quotes:** Key quotes on context can be used to illustrate the policy-making and research environment throughout the post-conflict period.

Category: Growing enabling environment

- **Increasing context stability:** Improvements in security and stability lead to emergence of more local research organisations, a de-politicisation of security issues, and offer room for deeper involvement.
- **Developing security epistemic community**: The initial development and later consolidation of a local security epistemic community in terms of physical, human and institutional capacity.
- **Developing SSR concepts:** developments in the conceptualisation of SSR, and what this means for international engagement with local, non-state actors in SSR.

Theme 4: Research Resistant Policy-Processes: Categories deconstructing the structures and cultures, or 'barriers', put up by international organisations that deter practitioner engagement with local research. This theme also considers the resistant discretion of individual international practitioners.

Category: Obstructive policy-making structures

- **Top-down policy process:** Evidence of the dominance of international policy-making, often to the exclusion of local research.
- **Closed international mandate:** Closed, bureaucratic international mandates, not structured to encourage local research engagement, or actively discourage it. Evidence that local expertise is not a requirement for recruitment to an international organisation.
- **Political policy-making:** The 'exaggerated stability' international SSR, and patterns of political policy making, rather than evidence-based approaches. How this obscures engagement with local researchers.
- **International staff turnover:** How the turnover of international staff limits the ability of researchers and practitioners to develop policy relationships.
- **Poor donor coordination:** The poor coordination/ policy-making confusion across the international security architecture and how this impacts negatively on local research contribution.

Category: Obstructive policy-making culture

- **Policy-making self-sufficiency:** Indications that international and domestic practitioners would rather rely on inside information.
- **Local elites focus:** Indications that internationals focus more on inclusion of local elites rather than the inclusion of civil society experts.

- **Obstructive political culture:** Evidence of the domestic policy-making process being closed, traditionalist, and negative about the role of CSOs.
- **Cultural parallelism:** Disconnect between international practitioners and the local population. For example, different wages, comforts and experiences that put international practitioners out of touch with local realities.
- **Re-inventing the wheel**: Examples of international policy that tries to create solutions from scratch, without reflecting locally sourced evidence.

Category: Resistant discretion
- **Resistant action:** international practitioners uphold the barriers of their organisation and ignore local researchers.
- **Resistant attitudes**: International practitioners possess values, attitudes and beliefs which discourage their engagement with local research.
- **Lack of awareness**: International practitioners are unaware of Kosovo's local research community.
- **Lacking time and impracticality:** Perceptions/evidence of there being little time/ practicality for practitioners to engage with local research.
- **Management level resistant discretion:** Resistant discretion at senior management levels.
- **Relationship breakdowns:** breakdowns in relationship between practitioners and researchers after discussion on sensitive topics.

Category: Complexity of research utilisation
- **Limited utilisation:** International practitioners engage with research, but do not uptake the full extent of findings and recommendations.
- **Manipulating utilisation**: Instances where research uptake does not survive the various stages of the policy process. There may be an editing process which leads to the watering down of recommendations.
- **Selective utilisation**: the 'cherry picking' of evidence to suit the programme. This also includes deliberately ignoring evidence that might not fit a programme.
- **Political utilisation**: where practitioners pick out evidence to suit a political argument. This also includes deliberately ignoring evidence that might weaken a political position.
- **Funding dynamics:** The negative dynamics of donor funding. This includes comments on selective and strategic funding, which might support particular organisations so as to get a positive research output, or they might selectively fund a study to justify policy rather than to explore policy options. This code also includes references to complexity in the donor-researcher relationship.
- **Managing expectations:** Rather than a meaningful interaction, this codes comments on how a practitioner may only superficially engage with researchers to tick a box and deter criticism.

Theme 5: Research Receptive Policy-Processes: Categories deconstructing the structures and cultures that are receptive to local research. This theme also reflects on the receptive discretion of individual practitioners and the more personal and positive ways in which they interact with and utilise research.

Category: Receptive practitioners
- **Receptive discretionary action**: Practitioners seek out, utilise and interact with local research to improve their knowledge and inform the policy process and day-to-day activities. Practitioners may take action beneath the instruction of their organisation and actively challenge their organisation.

- **Receptive discretionary attitudes:** Positive attitudes that value local research and believe in the utility of interaction and utilisation. This includes criticism of international practices, cultures and structures which undermine practitioner-researcher engagements (a further challenge)
- **Productive relationships:** Practitioners look to build relationships, seeing it as part of the job, and provide evidence of strong relationships with particular researchers or organisations.
- **Productive interactions:** Informal interactions that are beneficial (make a contribution to the learning of) to the practitioner.
- **Management level receptive discretion:** receptive discretion at the senior management level and how this impacts on the practice of subordinate practitioners.

Category: Receptive policy approaches
- **Capacity building platforms**: evidence of effective donor-led capacity building/ training in Kosovo's research community.
- **Partnership approaches:** evidence of effective partnerships between international organisations and local research organisations. Rather than dictating the agenda or influencing research, a partnership approach offers support and funding without conditions.
- **Recruiting external expertise**: Evidence of attempts by international organisations and individuals to recruit local expertise into the policy-process.

Category: Productive interaction
- **Formal involvement in policy:** examples of the formal involvement of local researchers in policy-making and implementation.
- **Formal meetings:** examples of local researchers participating in meetings with members of the international security architecture.
- **Participating/ attending conferences**: Evidence of organisation and/or participation by international or local actors in conferences or workshops.
- **Organising or participating in electronic communications:** evidence, organisation or instigation by local or international actors in electronic communications.
- **Researching profiles:** International actors make an effort to look up the profile of local research organisations.
- **Organisational partnerships**: references to partnership between organisations, rather than individuals.
- **Working relationships**: In areas of mixed international/local employment, references to working relationships between international and local personnel.
- **Networking:** Local researchers and international practitioners reflect on building of personal networks.
- **Friendships:** Evidence of local-local, local-international relationships described in terms of friendship, and how these developed (leading to productive researcher-practitioner exchange)
- **Trust and respect:** local researchers and international practitioners make references to the presence of trust and respect and the importance of this in researcher-practitioner engagement.

Theme 6: Enabling the Utilisation of Research: Measures taken by researchers to enhance the contribution of research to policy. This category also identifies the credibility qualifiers of international practitioners, recommendations for deepening researcher-practitioner interaction.

Category: Knowledge interaction strategies

- **Utilising the media:** Identifying think tank and researcher relationships with the media, the benefits of having the media as a partner. Media organisations can publicise outputs and contribute to the proliferation of think tank ideas, applying public pressure on practitioners.
- **Researcher leverage:** through personal relationships researchers can hold some leverage over practitioners (leading to learning/ contribution)
- **Publication strategies:** adopting a presentation style, hiding authors, using external authors to help hide from criticism and encourage idea acceptance, de-politicising outputs. Also following a publication methodology, using conferences, social media, seminars, workshops, roundtables.
- **Proactive leadership:** the importance of an executive director as the focal point of a local research organisation and point of contact for international SSR practitioners.
- **Tailoring communication:** understanding and evidence of the importance of matching communication to the audience.
- **Building practitioner relationships:** building trust, developing friendships with practitioners.
- **Research coalitions:** evidence of coalitions, positive opinions of coalitions from the researcher and international perspective (research coalitions create a stronger voice)

Category: Knowledge credibility (what makes local research credible in the eyes of international practitioners?)

- **Perceptions of policy relevance:** practitioner reflections on the relevance of local research.
- **Perceptions of language quality**: Readability. International perceptions of English language quality of local research reports, and the impact of this on credibility assessments.
- **Perceptions of bias:** practitioner perceptions of ethnic, political or community bias (or influenced by funding) throughout local research publications.
- **Perceptions of political affiliation:** practitioner perceptions of the possible political affiliations of local think tanks.
- **Perceptions of research interaction:** international practitioners describe the outreach, advocacy and communication strategy of local researchers, which might be constructive and approachable, or confrontational.
- **Methodology concerns:** practitioner reflections on the methodological quality of local research and the validity, or otherwise, of data.
- **Reputational factors:** practitioner perceptions of the reputation of a local researcher or think tank and their outputs.
- **Praising level of experience**: practitioner perceptions of the level of experience of a local think tank or researcher.
- **Local expert policy orientation:** practitioners concerns over how far local researchers understand the SSR policy-process.
- **Praising researcher interpersonal skills**: practitioner perceptions of the interpersonal skills of the local expert – a factor which tends to encourage and enhance interactions.
- **Welcome partnerships**: perceptions on partnerships, such as affiliations with international partners or embassies, or participation in local coalitions.

Category: Opportunities to deepen strategic engagement (codes drawn from interview testimonies. They provide recommendations that might facilitate a deeper interaction between international practitioners and local researchers).

- **Cultural recommendations**: where respect between international and local actors is seen as critical to encouraging different forms of productive interaction.

- **Structural recommendations**: structural recommendations to enhance utilisation of local research in international SSR.
- **Relational recommendations**: recommendations made by actors as to why and how international practitioners should prioritise engagement with local research.
- **Eye opening observations:** comments that indicate that practitioner eyes have been opened to the importance/ potential utility of research following the Kosovo experience.
- **Barriers to recommendations:** international practitioners have indicated where they believe recommendations might prove unrealistic.

Theme 7: Organisation of evidence: A data management, rather than a data analysis theme.

Category: Descriptive codes: These codes support the organisation of data in NVIVO, so that information can be compared across transcripts according to key attribute criteria.
- **Years of service –** when did the participant work in Kosovo?
- **SSR remit -** what SSR policy has the participant been involved in?
- **Organisations worked with-** what organisations, international and local, are discussed?
- **International/local? –** is the participant an international practitioner or local researcher?

Category: Research Reflection:
- **PhD Feedback:** How do participants relate to the research topic? Is there any feedback, initial reaction, or recommendations for further study?

Appendix 5. Interviewee List

Interviewee Number	Date	Position	Organisation(s)
1	06/2017	International SSR practitioner	UNDP
2	06/2017	International practitioner	Saferworld
3	06-07/2017	Local practitioner	Saferworld
4	06/2017	International SSR practitioner	UNDP, Anonymous International NGO
5	06/2017	International practitioner	EULEX
6	07/2017	International SSR practitioner	ISSR, DFID
7	07/2017	International UNMIK legal official	UNMIK DoJ
8	07/2017	International UNMIK legal official	UNMIK DoJ
9	07/2017	International SSR practitioner	ISSR
10	07/2017	International penal official	UNMIK
11	07/2017	International SSR advisor	Anonymous
12	07/2017	International UNMIK legal advisor	UNMIK
13	07/2017	International SSR advisor	OSCE, DCAF
14	07/2017	Local researcher	IPOL, KIPRED
15	08/2017	Local researcher and activist	Various local and international NGOs
16	08/2017	Local researcher	KIPRED
17	08/2017	Former civil society activist	Anonymous
18	08/2017	Local researcher	KLI
19	08/2017	International official	International Embassy
20	08/2017	Local journalist	BIRN
21	08/2017	International official	International Embassy
22	08/2017	Local researcher	CPT
23	08/2017	SSR practitioner	EULEX, EU
24	08/2017	Local researcher	GLPS
25	08/2017	Local researcher/ activist	FIQ
26	08/2017	International SSR advisor	UNMIK, OSCE
27	08/2017	Government official	Kosovo MoIA
28	08/2017	SSR practitioner	UNDP

29	08/2017	International SSR practitioner	NATO
30	08/2017	International SSR practitioner	ICITAP
31	09/2017	International practitioner	EULEX
32	09/2017	International practitioner	UNMIK
33	09/2017	Local researcher	Aktiv
34	09/2017	Local researcher	NSI
35	09/2017	Local researcher	GAP
36	09/2017	Local researcher / activist	FIQ
37	09/2017	Local practitioner	EULEX
38	09/2017	EU official	EU Office
39	09/2017	International SSR practitioner	EULEX, UNMIK, OSCE
40	09/2017	Local researcher	KCSS
41	09/2017	Government official	Kosovo Government
42	09/2017	Local academic	A Kosovar University
43	09/2017	Local researcher	KIPRED, INDEP, BIRN
44	09/2017	Local researcher	KCSS
45	09/2017	International SSR practitioner	UNDP