

Local Ownership and Democratic Governance in Security Sector Reform

[Anye-Nkwenti Nyamnjuh / NYMANY001]

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Executive Summary

Local ownership is a major component of what is considered best practice in contemporary peacebuilding. It seeks to reallocate authority between local and international actors in peacebuilding contexts. In its purest form, it requires that the design, implementation and evaluation of reform should be led by local actors. Therefore, under local ownership, external actors are circumscribed to a supporting role in post-conflict reconstruction. Local ownership is thus a critique of the tendency towards top-down internationally led peacebuilding reform.

The primacy of local ownership is evident in its endorsement in both academic literature and policy documents. Underpinning the importance of local ownership is a set of normative claims. It is argued that local ownership produces reform that is more legitimate and sustainable, in addition to developing democratic governance as the foundation to a post-war regime. Subsequently, what scholarship on local ownership has sought to clarify is conceptual content, including the complex question of who is local. Furthermore, there have been different suggestions on how to operationalise local ownership, and more broadly how to bridge the prevailing gap between rhetoric and practice.

What has not been sufficiently done is an empirical defence of these normative claims. For example, does the process of ownership actually result in the development of democratic governance? More importantly, are the outcomes of local ownership consistent with the broader liberal peacebuilding paradigm, especially the latter's democratic disposition?

This gap in the literature, is the research problem driving this dissertation. This dissertation seeks to understand whether there is evidence of a positive relationship between local ownership and democratic governance within the broader liberal peacebuilding project. My guiding research question involves determining how essential local ownership is to the development of democratic governance. This relationship is explored through the lens of SSR as one of the pillars of peacebuilding. This is because the literature on local ownership has been developed most in this area. The relationship between democratic governance and SSR, specifically within the military, can be understood in terms of democratic control of the military. Democratic control is operationalised in this thesis as civilian control and oversight (executive, legislative and broader civil society). Taking this into consideration, there are two paths of investigation. Does the absence of ownership undermine democratic control of the military and does its presence develop it?

Liberia and Sierra Leone are the case studies through which this question is explored. Comparatively, Liberia is meant to represent the absence of ownership while Sierra Leone demonstrates more substantive attempts at local ownership. Focusing on the reform of the military, I argue that the absence of local ownership undermined democratic governance in terms of civilian control and oversight in Liberia. The opposite is true in Sierra Leone. However, there is evidence that outcomes which develop democratic control and oversight of the military can result from activities where ownership is both present and absent. As such, local ownership of SSR is sufficient, but not necessary for the development of democratic governance within the military. That notwithstanding, local ownership is still of immense importance. Its importance resides in the production of reform that is more context specific and thus contextually relevant. Local

ownership produces reform which the host country can understand and sustain, a claim that the existing literature attests to. In this way, local ownership is important in bridging the gap between the beneficiaries of security and the broader security architecture. While gains in democratic control of the military can be achieved where ownership is present or absent, the sustainability of these gains is intricately linked to local ownership. Local ownership may not be necessary for democratic governance in the military, but it is necessary for sustainable democratic governance, as well as reform rooted in contextual realities and the needs of the country undergoing reform.

List of Abbreviations

ADP	Active Duty Personnel
AET	Advanced Entry Training
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AU	African Union
BMATT	British Military Advisory and Training Team
BNOC	Basic Non-commissioned Officers Course
CDF	Civil Defence Forces
CEDSA	Centre for Development and Security Analysis
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DAC	Development Assistance Countries
DDR	Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration
DfID	Department for International Development
DISEC	District Security Committee
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Military Observer Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Executive Outcomes
GC	Governance Commission
GoL	Government of Liberia
GRC	Governance Reform Commission
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICGL	International Contact Group for Liberia
IET	Initial Entry Training
IMATT	International Military Advisory and Training Team
JFC	Joint Force Command
JPB	Joint Personnel Board
JSC	Joint Support Command
LFF	Liberian Frontier Force
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MACP	Military Aid to Civilian Power
MODAT	Ministry of Defence Advisory Team
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MRP	Military Reintegration Program
NCDDR	National Committee on Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NSA	National Security Adviser
NSC	National Security Council
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONS	Office of National Security
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PAE	Pacific Architects and Engineers
PMC	Private Military Company
PROSEC	Provincial Security Committee
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SILSEP	Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Program
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SSRP	Security Sector Reform Program
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
US	United States of America

1.1. Research Problem

The principle of local ownership challenges the top-down nature of contemporary peacebuilding where international actors play a dominant role. A lack of local ownership has thus been one of the central criticisms of the liberal peace paradigm. The method of institutionalizing liberal norms such as democracy as part of the reconstruction formula has often proceeded with limited local involvement and the marginalization of local input in the character of the post-conflict reform. In response to this top-down disposition, ownership is based on the fundamental premise that “...peacebuilding cannot be solely an outside-in activity, with international actors as its primary agents; successful peacebuilding requires the active involvement and engagement of local actors at all levels of society.” (Machold & Donais, 2011: 1).

The literature on local ownership often posits three major benefits that can be accrued from locally owned peacebuilding reform. It is anticipated that local ownership enhances legitimacy, sustainability and democratic governance (von Billerbeck, 2011). Peacebuilding efforts are likely to be more legitimate if they are designed and implemented by local actors in a way that reflects local dynamics, values, interests and needs. In addition, given that external intervention cannot last forever, local ownership promotes sustainability in the awareness that local owners are the ones who are going to have to sustain/live with any peacebuilding gains (Nathan, 2007; 2008). Local ownership is thus the logical conclusion to the realization that international peacebuilding mandates are fixed in time and inevitably come to an end. As a result, it seeks to produce the minimum conditions necessary to enable the sustenance of peace by formal local authorities and the wider public (Berge, 2012: 54). The inclusivity and emphasis on participatory processes inherent in the notion of ownership allows one to also intuit that it develops democratic governance (von Billerbeck, 2011).

However, the problem is that there has not been a systematic attempt to demonstrate the validity of these claims by illustrating the causal mechanisms through which these benefits are realized. As such, one may conclude that the concept of local ownership has not been critically thought through. Because these causal mechanisms have not been fleshed out, we cannot rule out the possibility that local ownership negatively affects legitimacy, sustainability and democratic governance. We are exalted to consider whether ownership **actually** results in increased legitimacy, sustainability and democratic governance? (von Billerbeck, 2011). This dissertation therefore seeks to fill this gap in the literature, by understanding and clarifying the relationship between local ownership and democratic governance in security sector reform (SSR).

Furthermore, one must also consider the normative context within which contemporary peacebuilding occurs. Contemporary peacebuilding subscribes to the liberal peace paradigm. Within this paradigm, the conflictual identity of post-conflict states is transformed through the development and consolidation of democracy and democratic norms through the institutions that

underpin the state (Paris, 2010). Justifying this belief is the thesis known as democratic peace theory. Contemporary peacebuilding therefore has a democratic disposition. A key virtue of democracy is inclusivity. This is a virtue the process of local ownership shares. Therefore, it may be seen as hypocritical if inclusionary processes such as local ownership are not fostered in peacebuilding activities. Therefore, a commitment to democracy means that local ownership should be advocated, if anything for consistency with the liberal paradigm (Nathan, 2008). However, there has not been an examination of whether what seems an expression of democratic ideals (local ownership) furthers the development of democratic governance. A paradox might therefore be at play: local ownership might undermine the normative liberal democratic paradigm within which it operates and can be justified. For example, local ownership can sometimes contradict human rights norms in justice reform (e.g. cultures with the death penalty) (Hansen, 2008: 46). Thus, whether local ownership is consistent with the liberal peacebuilding framework is the second research problem that warrants this investigation.

1.2. Research Question

The aforementioned problem statements necessitate an investigation into the actual relationship between local ownership and democratic governance. Focusing on security sector reform (SSR) in general and military reform in particular, the following research question guides this dissertation: *How essential is local ownership of security sector reform to the development of democratic governance (understood as civilian control and oversight) in the military?* Does the absence of ownership undermine democratic control of the military and does its presence develop it? The focus on SSR results from the fact that the literature is most developed in this area. One reason for this could be the fact that security reform is often the priority for post-conflict reconstruction efforts. It can be argued that the success of other peacebuilding activities, such as justice reform and economic reconstruction are predicated on both short and long-term security reform gains.

1.3. Relevance of the study

Local ownership is already considered by some to be rhetoric of a doctrinal nature- an article of faith with limited operational reality (Nathan, 2007; Donais, 2008). At the same time, the idea is a genuine one inasmuch as it purports to address what is clearly a power imbalance in peacebuilding negotiations between international and local actors. The reallocation authority between insiders and outsiders is a democratic necessity, with its absence bearing the risk of contradicting the liberal democratic paradigm on which contemporary peacebuilding is being consolidated. At the same time, it would be worrying if the peacebuilding community is promoting peacebuilding norms which have not been critically thought through and thus at odds with the broader goals of peacebuilding. In a nutshell, this dissertation seeks to critically think through what is presented as an important concept in the peacebuilding space. It is important to discern whether it local ownership is operationally effective or simply normatively appropriate (von Billerbeck, 2011). This dissertation contributes to this determination by exploring the operational effectiveness of local ownership in SSR by evaluating whether it ‘walks the walk’.

1.4. Argument

From an analysis of military reforms in Liberia and Sierra Leone, a number of claims are defended in this dissertation. Firstly, the absence of local ownership undermines the development of democratic control and oversight through the creation of accountability and transparency deficits. The opposite is also true in Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone, positive outcomes involving civilian control and oversight of the military were as a result of local ownership. Often the involvement of local actors in the reform process institutionalises them as key stakeholders in security deliberation. This enhanced both accountability and transparency, which developed the prospects for control and oversight of the military. Furthermore, local ownership can be a rich epistemic process that enlightens civilians on the workings, roles, and responsibilities of security agencies within the security architecture. This provides a foundational security literacy pivotal for oversight of military. Finally, local ownership builds capacity of oversight mechanisms such as parliamentary committees and civil society organizations.

At the same time, the truth of the above claim is also a nuanced one. There is evidence to suggest that reform efforts developed with and without local ownership resulted in the development of democratic control of the military, especially in Sierra Leone. This leads to the conclusion that local ownership sufficient but not necessary for democratic control of the military. However, this does not undermine the importance of ownership. Rather, local ownership is crucial in producing reform that is more context specific which the host country can understand, a claim that the existing literature attests to. It can make reform more contextually relevant and comprehensible. In this way, local ownership is important in bridging the gap between the beneficiaries of security and the broader security architecture. This process of demystification and contextualisation can make gains in the democratic control of the military more sustainable. While gains in democratic control of the military can be achieved where ownership is present or absent, the sustainability of these gains is thus intricately linked to local ownership. Local ownership may therefore not be necessary for democratic governance in the military, but it is necessary for *sustainable* democratic governance.

1.5. Chapter outlines

While this chapter has introduced the research problem, question and its relevance, the argument above is developed in the subsequent three chapters. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on local ownership in the context of SSR and peacebuilding. The main debates discussed regard its conceptual ambiguity, presumed benefits and methods of operationalisation and obstacles.

Chapter 3 defines and operationalizes key concepts such as local ownership, security sector reform, democratic governance, and civilian control and oversight. In addition, it establishes a methodology that further clarifies the research question and scope of the dissertation. The focus will be on the reform of the military and democratic governance understood will be understood in terms of democratic control of the military. This variable will be operationalised as civilian control and oversight.

Chapter 4 discusses the absence of local ownership of SSR in Liberia. The argument is made that local ownership was undermined because the executive, legislature, and civil society were

marginalized in Liberia's military reform. Of particular significance is the US decision to outsource its SSR responsibilities to DynCorp International, an American private military and security company. This created transparency and accountability deficits as evident in the lack of access to information regarding DynCorp's contract, as well as DynCorp's reluctance toward parliamentary hearings. These accountability and transparency deficits were stumbling blocks to civilian oversight. Furthermore, DynCorp compromised civilian control of the military given its inability to transmit norms of civilian control and democratic civil military relations. These themes were cut from its training programs for fiscal considerations. In addition, it also had a questionable human rights record. Finally, DynCorp focused on reform as a technical project, neglecting governance capacities, like the development of oversight mechanisms.

In Chapter 5, Sierra Leone represents a case of more substantive ownership in relation to Liberia. Democratic governance within the military was developed both in the presence and absence of local ownership. It is this nuance in Sierra Leone that underpins the argument on the essentiality of ownership made in this dissertation. A number of gains involving democratic control and oversight of the military are discussed in this chapter. Some include: (a) the establishment of objective control of the military in the form of the civilianisation of the Ministry of Defence (MoD); (b) transmission of norms of democratic control as well as democratic civil-military relations through military training; (c) decentralisation of security architecture which enhanced transparency and accountability; (d) democratic control of the military through a redefinition of the identity of the armed forces and a regulation of its use within the country.

Chapter 5 is followed by a conclusion that briefly summarises the argument while comparing Sierra Leone and Liberia. It goes on to identify possibilities for further research on the subject matter.

Local Ownership of Security Sector Reform: A Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Local Ownership has emerged as an article of faith in contemporary peacebuilding, operating as a 'best practice' for post-conflict reconstruction reform. It is not uncommon to see the academic and policy literature underscoring its importance. However, many scholars make the observation that local ownership has prominence more in rhetoric than practice. As Donais (2012: 1) states, recent peacebuilding operations “have tended to more closely resemble externally driven exercises in statebuilding and social engineering than patient, elicitive processes of peace nurturing”. It is worth stating early on that literature on local ownership in security sector reform is limited. This subject matter has not been written on extensively.

The idea of local ownership has its origins in international economic development discourse in the arguments for a ‘partnership approach’ towards development (Heilleiner, 2000; Saxby, 2002, Stiglitz, 1998), and it is only a recent staple in contemporary peacebuilding discourse. Von Billerbeck (2013) argues its pervasiveness is necessitated by a movement away from ‘quick and dirty’ approaches towards post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, which often focused almost exclusively on elections. Local ownership is a consequence and reaction to ever increasing peacebuilding mandates that aim at ensuring durable peace. These extensive mandates show the salience of local ownership because of their intrusiveness, to the effect of stirring up issues of sovereignty. Local ownership can be understood as anchored in the international norm of sovereignty, and is an attempt to reconcile the tensions between sovereignty and international security, as the latter often justifies the often intrusive external interventions (von Billerbeck, 2015). Extensive mandates often translate into peacebuilders appropriating political authority from local actors and so there is a danger that institutions built by international actors are subsequently considered illegitimate, undemocratic and unsustainable. Furthermore, if these extensive mandates unfold in the absence of local ownership, there is the risk that post-conflict societies will become dependent on international actors for security reform (von Billerbeck, 2011: 333). As such, peacebuilding and its ever increasing mandates necessitate engagement with the idea of local ownership as a way of rehabilitating the legitimacy and sustainability of prospective peacebuilding reform. Local ownership is thus seen as a solution to the difficulties of peacebuilding associated with illegitimacy, dependency and autocracy (von Billerbeck, 2011: 334). There is at least a formal agreement among scholars and practitioners that local ownership is critical to the successful implementation of peacebuilding reform and to the realization of reconstruction gains. It is frequently argued that the promotion of local ownership underpins the sustainability and legitimacy of reform.

2.2. Local Ownership and Security Sector Reform

Considering that there are different activities in peacebuilding, it is worth noting that it appears local ownership has been given more scholarly attention in the set of activities described as security sector reform. One possible reason for this could be the imperative of security provision as a

foundation for any subsequent long term peacebuilding reform. It can be argued that the success of other peacebuilding activities, such as justice reform and economic reconstruction are predicated on both short and long-term security reform gains.

The literature on local ownership of security sector reform is engaged in a number of tasks. There is the issue of rendering conceptual clarity to the notion as well as considering what it means to operationalize and anchor it in the real world. In addition, because there is an acknowledged gap between rhetoric and practice, scholars have found it worthwhile to consider the obstacles to this operationalization. Finally, there are a series of claims which provide a rationale for local ownership. As such, current scholarly engagement with local ownership is an ongoing task to define and operationalize the notion, as well as account for its obstacles and benefits. This review considers the main arguments in these regards.

In discussing the engagement with local ownership at these levels, I make the case that this dissertation especially contributes to discussions around the operationalization of local ownership and the validity of its presumed benefits- in particular democratic governance.

2.3. The conceptual ambiguity of local ownership

The varying definitions of local ownership illustrate its conceptual ambiguity. This bears testament to the fact that like most political concepts, its meaning is perceived as analytically vague. At the core of these definitions are questions of agency, since local ownership is inevitably a reallocation of authority between local agents and external peacebuilders (Donais, 2008; von Billberbeck, 2011). This authority concerns prerogatives of decision making and encompasses power dynamics in terms of who decides, controls, implements and evaluates security sector reform (Nathan, 2008: 21).

The common thread in the range of definitions for local ownership is that of inclusivity or participation. For reasons that will be discussed later in this review, it is considered important that peacebuilding reform be developed through meaningful inclusion/participation of local actors. This is not to say that inclusion or participation of local actors necessarily translates into reform that is locally owned. Inclusivity of participation is necessary, but not sufficient for local ownership (Ismail, 2008: 130). We might for example make the extra requirement that locally owned reform is not simply a product of local participation, but that in reality, it should actually reflect local values, needs and interests. Noting this, we recognize that the fact of inclusion does not automatically guarantee the aforementioned requirement. This could be because the local actors included are not themselves sensitive to local values needs, and interests.

While the common thread in the varying accounts of ownership is the idea of inclusion or participation, what differs in these definitions is what amounts to a meaningful or sufficient inclusion or participation. In other words, in light of casting local ownership as a reallocation of authority, the varying definitions dissolve into differences on how much authority should be granted to local actors.

Laurie Nathan argues for what can be described as full ownership. Herein, “the principle of local ownership of SSR means that the reform of security policies, institutions and activities in a given

country must be designed, managed and implemented by domestic actors rather than external actors.” (Nathan, 2008: 21). Under full ownership, full authority is granted to local actors such that external peacebuilders are limited to a support role (similar ideas in Reich, 2006: 6; Narten, 2009: 254; Donais, 2009: 3). In fact, we can contrast different usages of ownership as described by von Billerbeck (2011: 335-41) in order of increasing passivity:

1. **Full Ownership**- where local actors take on full leadership as described above.
2. **Active participation**: Local actors are involved in planning and implementation, although they do not necessarily do so in a leadership capacity.
3. Local ownership as an **on-going consultation** between insiders and outsiders aimed at producing consensus. This presupposes otherwise divergent interests.
4. **Buy-in**: Popular support for externally generated models of reform (Donais, 2008: 7). More broadly then, local ownership involves buying into a particular vision of security reform. This buy-in can be tacit or explicit consent (von Billerbeck, 2011: 335) to the values espoused by the liberal peace paradigm. This idea of local ownership is likened to ‘an exercise in social engineering’, with the aim of transforming local owners into actors capable of constructing and managing a western-style security sector (Donais, 2008: 7).

Within the literature on local ownership, there is discernible normative bias, despite these possible definitions listed above. This bias revolves around the fact the full ownership, as described above is considered genuine ownership. In other words, it is the ideal type. If local ownership is taken seriously in this normative sense, the implications are monumental in terms of the relations of power between external and local actors.

Taken seriously as a guiding principle for action, local ownership would mean far more than a consulting or participatory role given to the local actors on behalf of the donors or external parties. Rather it means that local actors have the final decisive power over a project’s process and outcome. Local ownership then means a power shift, which goes far beyond existing practices. Local actors would not only be involved in the information gathering process or strategy development, but should have the means to decide about the agenda, strategy and budget management themselves, even decide who the beneficiaries of the project should be (Reich 2006: 15).

But if it is true that only full ownership is genuine ownership, what is the value of alternative conceptions of the term? One explanation for this is that the complexity of post-conflict environments does not always make full local ownership possible. That is, from a pragmatic point of view, certain forms of ownership are only (im)possible in certain contexts (Donais, 2008: 8). Therefore, there is reason to see local ownership as a spectrum of possibilities. Subsequently, acknowledging this complex post-conflict environment entails that the real focus should be an inquiry into ‘when, where and how ownership is possible’ (Ismail, 2008: 127)

2.3.1. Which Locals?

Another issue that needs unpacking in terms of the conceptual content of local ownership is the question of ‘who is local?’ (Martin & Wilson, 2008: 83; Donais, 2008: 9, Panarelli, 2010). This aspect of local ownership is as much conceptual as it is operational. This question necessitates unpacking the concept in order to ‘expose the multiplicity of local actors, interests and levels of

capacity, authority and autonomy.’ (Ebo, 2007: 83 cited in Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 96). There is a tendency towards a vertical and minimalist understanding of who is local. That is, the focus tends to be on national governments, with the focus of local ownership dissolving into elite capture (Donais, 2008; Hansen, 2008: 45; Zaum, 2013: 54). Although this level of ownership may have the necessary capacity, this minimalist approach is considered problematic, especially where the representative legitimacy of such governments is in question (Hansen, 2008: 48). Eric Scheye (2009) laments that the minimalist focus is also state-centric, and tends to marginalize non-state security providers. In contrast to this minimalist approach, maximalist arguments are underpinned by consideration for a broader local constituency. A maximalist approach therefore accommodates central and local government, government ministries and agencies, security forces, traditional and religious leaders, civil society and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), business and professional groups (Donais, 2009: 9). It is equally more democratic, given its more intensified inclusivity. Furthermore, one can argue that a maximalist approach is essential to the prospects of sustainable peace. It recognizes that

... people continue to rely on the resilient informal structures and coping mechanisms which determined politics and facilitated survival and conflict resolution both before and during the war. Ignoring these institutions is done at the peril of the chances for lasting peace. Some of them – even when based on divisive categories such as ethnicity, clan, or religion – could be important building blocks for a peaceful post-conflict order. (Andersen, 2006)

One issue to which insufficient attention has been paid is the extent to which diasporas can be agents of local ownership (Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 96). Although the simultaneity of their insider and outsider status is the site of complexity, their uniqueness warrants a consideration of their role as agents and promoters of ownership. In an unpublished co-authored essay, Nyamnjoh and Lamb (2016), consider the extent to which diasporas can actualize the anticipated benefits of local ownership (legitimacy, sustainability, and democracy). The paper argues that while diasporas may not necessarily translate local bonds into a legitimating formula, they nonetheless contribute to democratizing processes that could actually enhance local ownership. For example, diasporas can contribute toward building mechanisms of inclusivity and participation (e.g. radio stations) that not only create avenues for local ownership but help consolidate democratic participation as well.

In deciding who is local, a group of arguments can be described as advocating for a practice akin to affirmative action in the operationalization of local ownership. That is, local ownership must be especially sensitive to vulnerable groups in society. In any given post-conflict society, there will be individuals and/or social classes who have been/are likely to be marginalized from the conversation about how security is understood and how the positive potential of security sector reform can be realized. Local ownership involves recognizing and addressing the differential vulnerability to exclusion internal to the local. That is, within what constitutes the local, different groups, classes and individuals, because of power relations in society, face the possibility of marginalization from the discussion at different levels. More efforts should thus be geared toward their inclusion. Such groups include the poor, women, racial and ethnic minorities, urban/rural poor, etc. Failure to do this means local ownership loses an otherwise authentic capacity to empower local agents. If local ownership is to truly espouse the democratic virtue of inclusivity (considering the normative liberal paradigm of contemporary peacebuilding), then in its

implementation, it must be sensitive to the marginal social positions of certain members within the pool of 'local'. In operationalizing local ownership, it is necessary to ensure that marginalized groups are able to influence the reform of security structures (Farr, 2004; Nathan, 2009, 31-33; Hansen, 2009: 47). This requirement shows that conceptually, local ownership is about a reallocation of authority at two levels- the international and the local. Internationally, it is between insiders and outsiders. From a local perspective, it is between those who occupy positions of power and those otherwise marginalized members of society.

2.4. Operationalising Local Ownership

How one chooses to translate local ownership into practice will of course depend on what it means for the user seeking to operationalise ownership. If ownership is seen as extensive consultations, then actualizing ownership is simply a matter of mechanisms like consultative workshops that allow for local participation in the reform process. Thus it is important to be aware of the different ways in which local ownership can be operationalised as evidenced below.

Ownership as Capacity building

Security sector reform has normative assumptions built into it. It is often recognized not simply as a technical project but a normative one as well. More specifically, contemporary SSR can be described as a democratizing project (Nathan, 2007; 2008). Security institutions undergo necessary reform that sees them espouse the virtues of democratic governance- accountability, transparency, rule of law, and human rights among other values. Encouraging local ownership according to these norms therefore involves building the capacity of different local actors to espouse these norms in their varying capacities and responsibilities. For example, local ownership could mean building research capacity of parliamentary security committees in order to ensure democratic accountability of the security sector (Nathan, 2008: 27)

Ownership as capacity upscaling

Ismail (2008) contrasts capacity building with capacity upscaling as a response to a blank slate assumption that is characteristic of how external actors interact with post-conflict environment. The blank state assumption is characteristic of capacity building efforts. It is problematic because it ignores the reality that often,

“...there are pre-existing formal and non-formal mechanisms for providing security, as well as a parallel set of norms for regulating security affairs, and these extant mechanisms may be more transparent and accountable than outsiders typically assume.” (Ismail, 2008: 128)

Capacity upscaling therefore involves sifting through these already existing mechanisms for “best practices that align with SSR’s strategic vision and goals of democratization, good governance, and improved security.” (Ismail, 2008: 127)

2.5. Obstacles to Local Ownership. Why is it difficult to translate rhetoric into practice?

One of the main obstacles to local ownership is its definitional ambiguity as we have already seen. This is compounded with difficulties in identifying local actors with whom to establish partnerships or support. One often finds that to ensure legitimacy, one is forced to make pacts with spoilers whose interests often run counter to the development of democracy (Hansen, 2008: 43-45). In addition, some criticisms of local ownership are often presented as insurmountable obstacles that prevent the actualization of the principle. As such, they account in part for the gaps between rhetoric and practice. While the idea and importance of local ownership may be formally acknowledged, some argue it is a high risk strategy. This can be because local actors lack requisite capacity or that the reality of disparate domestic actors with varying interests of local actors render ownership of SSR impractical (Nathan, 2008: 22; Ismail, 2008: 130).

We can explain the first reason as working according to the conventional ‘ought implies can’ principle. If peacebuilding reform ought to be locally owned, it must be possible that local actors *can in fact own reform*. In light of this standard, critics then proceed to make the descriptive claim that local actors do not have the requisite political and technical governance capacity for full ownership of SSR (Hansne & Wiharta, 2007). In so doing, they conclude that the strains of commitment are too high and so local ownership is *too demanding*. This can sometimes lead to the worry that local ownership lends itself to instrumentalisation to justify more intrusiveness on the part of external actors. Herein, it would be claim that local ownership will be established as soon as the situation allows (Hellmuller, 2014: 5)

Advocates of local ownership proceed to respond by arguing that while local ownership does indeed face the aforementioned problems, the costs of a lack of local ownership are far greater (Nathan, 2007: 8). Furthermore, in revisiting historical experience in peacebuilding, we have a better sense of the costs of a lack of ownership:

The emphasis on national ownership does not assume that internal actors will necessarily develop better policies than external actors. Experience shows however that external domination generates resentment, inertia and resistance, and that externally driven development is unsustainable. Internal actors grasp the complexities and needs of their society better than outsiders, a fact that makes national ownership of peacebuilding processes and imperative. (WSP International & International Peace Academy [WSP & IPA], 2004: 2)

The response to the problem of disparate actors questions whether it is indeed a problem. A context of heterogeneous actors and interests is unproblematic given that reasonable pluralism is often a presupposition of liberal democracies. Given the normative underpinnings of contemporary SSR, it is important to realize that the contestation of politics and interests is entailed in the notion of democracy (Nathan, 2008: 22; Ismail, 2008: 131). In addition, inasmuch as SSR involves capacity building for security institutions, the absence of capacity is not a sufficient reason to bypass ownership because those are precisely the problems SSR is meant to address. Capacity building is precisely an opportunity to promote ownership, to the extent that it improves the ability and possibility for local actors to own and sustain reforms (Nathan, 2008: 21).

The absence of political will on the part of donors is also identified as an obstacle to local ownership. The absence of political will could be a function of either negative donor attitudes, or

the administrative environment within which they operate. For example, donors might suffer from a superiority complex that disposes them toward presuming the superiority and universality of western governance models. Furthermore, they may lack respect for local agents or consider them incapable of reform. Short term funding cycles also tend to create time constraints, contributing to a general impatience on the part of donors (Nathan, 2008: 20).

Another reason why the principle of ownership is not fully embraced is because of an anticipated conflict between local traditions on the one hand and law and human rights norms on the other (Oosterveld & Galand, 2012: 198). More broadly, this can be situated within the fear that the authority conferred on local actors through local ownership can result in outcomes that undermine the development of democratic norms. For example, certain forms of punishment (like the death penalty) or norms like gender equality before the law, might be violated by local customs (Hansen, 2008: 46). As such, the critical point herein is that if the aim of local ownership is to reflect local needs, values and interests, these values and interests should themselves be subject to critical engagement.

It can also be argued that the attitude of external peacebuilders is not often one that is conducive to local ownership. External actors often display an arrogance that manifests as a belief in the superiority and universality of western models of governance (Nathan, 2008: 20). This arrogance and naivety is often undergirded by two assumptions:

The first assumption is that knowledge about universal features and mechanisms of the liberal peacebuilding is more important than geographically specific knowledge of the post conflict country in question. The second assumption is that the international legitimacy of peacebuilding efforts automatically translates into domestic legitimacy of peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries (Sending 2009: 2).

Such attitudes potentially explain why it is difficult for external actors to relinquish control in the way that ownership demands.

Finally, a commitment to local ownership has to be balanced against competing priorities given the complexity of post-conflict environments. It is unsurprising therefore, that one might argue that local ownership distracts from the imperative of consolidating security. One fear is that local ownership can be exploited by spoilers who have an interest in instability. Any recovery gains get captured by specific individuals or interest groups, thus reinforcing division and antagonism (von Brabant, 2010: 2)

2.6. Benefits of local ownership

In describing the United Nations (UN) adoption of the principle of local ownership, von Billerbeck (2011), notes that advocates of local ownership argue towards three distinct benefits of local ownership- legitimacy, sustainability and democratic governance.

Local ownership as participation in decision making and implementation of peacebuilding reform, or even buy-in, is seen a key source of legitimacy for SSR. This is especially for the case for UN led reform and the UN's legitimacy as an intervening force, given the extent to which norms of sovereignty are anchored in the UN Charter (von Billberbeck, 2011: 324). Legitimacy of reform is intricately linked to its sustainability. That is, it is reasonable to expect that illegitimate reforms will not last very long, especially in unstable post-conflict societies. As such, SSR is unsustainable if it fails to reflect or be responsive to local interests, needs and values (Scheye & Peake, 2005; Nathan, 2007). The relationship between legitimacy and sustainability is acutely summed up in the Nathan's assertion "no ownership, no commitment" (2009: 24-5). Local ownership is a logical consequence of the inevitable finitude of external intervention. Considering a risk of perpetuating dependency, as well as resource constraints, external interventions necessarily have expiry dates. As such local ownership ensures that local actors have the requisite capacity to consolidate the gains of reform once external presence has been withdrawn. This defence of local ownership is evident in UN rhetoric. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) asserts:

National and local ownership is critical to the successful implementation of a peace process... Effective approaches to national and local ownership not only reinforce the perceived legitimacy of the operation and support mandate implementation, they also help to ensure the sustainability of any national capacity once the peacekeeping operation has been withdrawn. (United Nations, 2008: 36)

In fact, it is possible to argue that legitimacy and sustainability are the most often cited benefits of local ownership within the literature (Hansen, 2008: 39; Gordon, 2014: 2). The view can be summed up as follows:

No one can make anyone else's peace. People and societies must create the conditions and develop the processes for achieving and sustaining their own peace... If the solutions do not come from the communities affected, they can amount to manipulation or attempted social engineering. (Anderson & Olson, 2003: 32)

Legitimacy and sustainability are also intimately linked. Illegitimate reform is likely to be unsustainable because it lacks buy-in. Top-down approaches to peacebuilding can lead to a political order in which some groups feel marginalized. As such they may challenge this political regime, sometimes through violence. Linking legitimacy and sustainability therefore is the need for stability (Zaum, 2013: 55)

There is also the optimistic expectation that the participation internal to the notion of local ownership will translate into a culture of future participation in political institutions that triggers democratic reform (von Billberbeck, 2011: 325). The causal mechanisms herein are often unclear, but from an intuitive level, it is unsurprising that this relationship should emerge. SSR and the broader set of peacebuilding activities operate within a particular normative framework that stresses the promotion of democracy, among other processes as necessary for transforming the conflictual identities of actors in post-conflict contexts. As such, SSR is itself a democratizing project, inasmuch as it seeks to cultivate a democratic values of accountability of state institutions to civic society (Nathan, 2008: 25). SSR, lest it be captured by the vestiges of hypocrisy, must

espouse the democratic norms it seeks to consolidate in post-conflict societies. Theoretical intuition thus reveals local ownership, on account of its disposition toward inclusivity and self-determination, as democratic and democratising. The absence of local ownership is considered undemocratic in that any process that bypasses local dialogue, debate and consensus building is democratically deficient (Nathan, 2008: 25). Some examples of operationalising local ownership help demystify the mechanisms by which local ownership translates into democratic governance. Local ownership could entail enhancing the research capacities of parliamentary oversight committees so they can effectively contribute to making executive power accountable (Nathan, 2008: 27).

Already in articulating these benefits, one grows suspicious of the validity of the aforementioned claims. Von Billerbeck (2011: 325) raises an important research problem, from which emerges the research question that this project is preoccupied with. She notes that these benefits have been accepted uncritically, as there have been no systematic illustrations of the causal mechanisms through which they are realized. This makes the empirical validity of the aforementioned relationships dubious as we cannot rule out the possibility that local ownership may in fact compromise the ability to deliver on reconstruction goals like embedding a culture of democratic governance. These problems are exacerbated by the definitional ambiguity in peacebuilding (von Billerbeck, 2011: 335). That is, understandings of ownership produce the benefits described so far?

In raising these questions regarding the normative claims inherent to ownership, she rightly asks whether the current commitment to local ownership is because it is normatively appropriate or operationally effective. Without the research to illustrate these relationships and specify the conditions under which they hold, one is disposed toward the conclusion that commitment to local ownership is predicated more on a 'logic of appropriateness', in contrast to a 'logic of effectiveness' (von Billerbeck, 2011: 326). Nathan (2008: 19) is equally wary of local ownership as more of a 'rhetorical device' in its current conception. This deficiency in grounding local ownership in theoretical and empirical analysis is sometimes presented as a way of explaining the gap between rhetoric and practice. That is, one reason for the absence of ownership is because of the insincere attitudes external peacebuilders have towards it. Ismail (2008: 131), notes critics of local ownership who argue that the notion operates more as a buzzword or catchphrase meant to obscure the power asymmetries and patron-client relationships between donors and recipients. As such, local ownership has a mechanical existence as a box that simply has to be ticked, often to "...fulfil domestic 'political correctness' imperatives in donor countries." (Ismail, 2008: 131) This is illustrative of its functioning under the logic of appropriateness described above.

The benefits discussed are attractive to different actors within a reform context. In considering who needs local ownership and why, Bendix and Stanley (2008) posit that local ownership is attractive to donors as a way of legitimizing policy prescriptions in order to guarantee commitment, effectiveness and sustainability. State apparatuses see local ownership as a means to enhance their own sovereignty through influence over policy making and implementation. For non-state actors, local ownership is imperative in an environment where their voice is often overlooked and marginalized.

2.7. Conclusion

It is against this backdrop of claims and counter-claims involving local ownership that this dissertation is written. In particular, it takes up von Billerbeck's (2011) call on examining the relationship between local ownership and its anticipated benefits like democratic governance. This dissertation can thus be located at the intersections involving the operationalization of local ownership, its benefits, and obstacles. It addresses a gap in the literature regarding the empirical validity of the normative assertions inherent to the notion of local ownership. By looking at countries where local ownership of security sector reform is absent or has been consciously promoted, one can hope to ascertain how essential local ownership of SSR is to the consolidation of democratic governance. In this regard, the empirical validity of the claim that local ownership engenders democratic governance can be better clarified. More importantly, if it is the case that local ownership is positively related to democratic governance, by what causal mechanisms is this relationship consolidated?

3.1. Methodology

The overarching research focus involves inquiring into the relationship between local ownership of SSR and democratic governance. This has been distilled into the question: how essential is local ownership of SSR in the development of democratic governance within the military? This question can be discussed in positive and negative terms. That is, in critically engaging with the essentiality of local ownership in consolidating democratic governance, the following two questions emerge:

1. Does the presence of local ownership promote democratic governance in the military?
2. Does the absence of local ownership undermine democratic governance in the military?

The choice of case studies reflects this breakdown. While Sierra Leone is taken to be a case study that demonstrates the existence of local ownership, Liberia is seen as largely devoid of ownership within military reform and peacebuilding more broadly (Boas & Stig, 2010). This is largely due to two key instances of outsourced reform. Firstly, the government passed on reform responsibility to the US. Secondly, the US passed on this responsibility to private military companies.

This dissertation is based on a qualitative survey of the literature of SSR in the chosen case studies. It is based on secondary sources such as journal articles, book publications, and country reports evaluating SSR. A quantitative approach is particularly difficult since there is no designated dataset for the purposes assessing security sector governance (Schroeder, 2009). While it is possible to borrow from existing data in the development literature, it is not always clear that they fully capture the security dimension. In this sense, some indicators are very general, and can contaminate an evaluation of SSR with the infusions from other contexts. One consequence of not using a quantitative approach is that this dissertation is restrained to a shorter term assessment of SSR. That is, the impact of the presence and absence of ownership will be assessed parallel to the development of SSR. The availability of dedicated quantitative dataset would have permitted a long term assessment of SSR.

3.1.1. Challenges

The most noteworthy challenge experienced in writing this dissertation was working with limited resources. Firstly, the literature on local ownership is not extensive. In particular, perhaps because of the gap between rhetoric and practice, there has been no systematic evaluation of ownership outcomes in post-conflict environments.

In addition, it was difficult to find certain important documents. Two documents were especially important. Firstly, there was the implementation plan of Sierra Leone's 2003 Defence White Paper, called 'Plan 2010'. Of the scholars who discussed it, it is listed in their bibliography as unpublished (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009; 2015). Also difficult to find was the 2005 security sector review published by Sierra Leone's Office of National Security (ONS). It was not shared on their website.

I got in contact with a lead scholar on SSR in Sierra Leone, but unfortunately he did not have a copy of these documents either.

The inability to get these documents is a caveat on my findings in Sierra Leone. They were necessary in order to give a more informed analysis of the implementation of recommendations suggested in these reviews. As instances of ownership, these documents would have allowed for a more detailed assessment of the impact of local ownership in relation to democratic control and oversight of the military. My evaluation is thus limited to the sparse analysis these reviews have received in the literature.

3.2. Scope

This assessment of the essentiality of local ownership to the development of democratic governance will be limited to an analysis of reform of the military. Although I interchange between using the term military and armed forces, stating clearly that the focus is on the military is meant to avoid confusion that comes with using the armed forces. Armed forces can also bring to mind paramilitaries. Stating from the onset a focus on military reform is meant to avoid this confusion. Furthermore, in terms of democratic control of the armed forces, this dissertation will focus on *civilian oversight, be it with regards to the executive, legislature, or broader civil society*. In so doing, the research question has been narrowed into an analysis of *whether or local ownership is essential to the development of civilian control oversight of the military*.

3.3. Key Concepts and Operationalisation

3.3.1. Local Ownership

In the literature review, we saw different understandings of local ownership. These included full ownership, participation and extensive consultation, and buy-in. These capture two different understandings of local ownership: ‘ownership as leadership’ and ‘ownership as participation’. Regarding the range of SSR activities, we can distinguish between decision-making, implementation and evaluation responsibilities in reform (Nathan, 2007). Judging the commitment to local ownership would involve ascertaining whether local actors are involved in these processes, whether through direct leadership or via consultation. In describing the presence or absence of local ownership therefore, examples of relevant questions: Did local actors lead key SSR activities like the drafting of security legislation, the conducting of a security review, training and recruitment of the military? Even if local actors did not lead these activities, were they nonetheless involved through extensive consultation? Did ownership subscribe to a minimalist or maximalist logic in the determination of which locals? That is was ownership elite captured or all inclusive? (Donais, 2008: 9)

Local ownership can subsequently manifest in two ways: (1) Was the process, despite the presence of external intervention, inclusive, within which local actors led reform or were consulted with regard to the design and implementation of reform? In the absence of direct involvement, did external actors support capacity building/upscaling with a view towards empowering local actors to undertake key SSR activities over time? (Nathan, 2008: 26-32)

3.3.2. Democratic governance of the Security Sector

The prominence of democratic governance emerged within a new orthodoxy on development assistance. Within this discourse, the main thesis involved the claim that democracy and good governance were essential for development. The democratic good governance paradigm is therefore a synthesis of liberal democratic norms and good governance norms. Crudely speaking, it combines the insistence on competitive democratic politics with managerial elements of good governance such as accountability, transparency and anti-corruption. Aid conditionalities are a key medium through which these norms have been diffused. Leftwich (1993) distinguishes three senses in which democratic governance is employed: systemic, political and administrative.

At a systemic level, democratic governance refers to a particular regime. That is, it refers to the way in which political and socio-economic relations govern the interactions between (a) state institutions, (b) individuals and (c) individuals and state. In this sense, the democratic governance paradigm refers to a democratic capitalist regime that stresses a minimalist state. Politically, democratic governance refers to a normative order in which the state derives authority and legitimacy from a democratic mandate. This mandate is characterised by institutional norms such as the separation of powers, and popular sovereignty mediated through a respect for popular participation, human rights, as well as free and fair elections being the means to political office. Finally, democratic governance can be more narrowly seen from an administrative level that stresses the efficiency and public accountability of state institutions.

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) defines democratic governance along the political and administrative uses described above. It is seen as a relation between processes and actors within institutions, as well as between institutions. Herein "...institutions function according to democratic processes and norms, both internally and in their interaction with other institutions." (OSCE, 2016) These norms include "...political pluralism, institutional accountability and responsiveness, an active civil society, human rights, the rule of law, and democratic election." (OSCE, 2016). Similarly, the UN can be said to subscribe to the same understanding of the concept. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the lead UN agency on democratic governance. It emphasizes: the rule of law, popular participation in decision-making processes, democratic accountability of state institutions, anti-corruption, human rights and the delivery of basic services (UNDP, 2016).

In relation to this dissertation, the appropriate question involves determining the link between democratic governance and security sector reform. In other words, what does democratic governance of the security sector look like? The contemporary discourse on SSR, despite some contestation, also stresses the political and administrative usages of democratic governance. These are typically in the aspiration of 'democratic control of the security sector'.

Democratic control of the security sector refers to a state of affairs wherein the security sector is governed according to democratic arrangements. This involves:

- (1) developing and implementing a legal framework consistent with international law and democratic practice;
- (2) developing effective, well-functioning civil management and oversight bodies;
- (3) developing viable, accountable and affordable security forces;
- (4) ensuring that the institutional culture of the security forces supports the legal framework,

international law, good democratic practice and civil management and oversight bodies (Ball, 2005: 25).

Similar to Ball (2005) above, Nathan (2007: 14) outlines the following components of democratic control of the security sector: security sector is under executive control, bound by the rule of law and respect for human rights and is also kept in check through civilian oversight by the parliament, judiciary, civil society and the media.

Democratic control of the military

This dissertation focuses on the reform of the military. Effectively, the democratic control of armed forces is best seen as a relation between the armed forces and the societies they serve. It therefore describes a desirable state of civil-military relations, capturing the readiness with which the military complies with civilian direction:

The expression ‘democratic control of armed forces’ is generally understood as the subordination of the armed forces to those democratically elected to take charge of the country’s affairs. In its fullest sense it means that all decisions regarding the defence of the country—the organisation, deployment and use of armed forces, the setting of military priorities and requirements and the allocation of the necessary resources—are taken by democratic leadership and scrutinised by the legislature in order to ensure popular support and legitimacy (Lunn, 2003 :63)

3.3.3. Civilian control and oversight

Democratic governance within the military thesis will be understood in terms of civilian control and oversight in this dissertation. Oversight functions within a democracy to ensure accountability. It is thus based on the virtues of transparency, responsibility, participation and responsiveness to citizens. Oversight mechanisms provide checks and balance against arbitrary exercise of power, thus ensuring that agents of security institutions are liable for their actions and can be called to account for malpractice (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2007: 112). Civilian oversight can come from the executive, legislature, judiciary and broader civil society. Oversight can be assessed through some of the following considerations (OECD, 2007): Do oversight committees (or bodies) exist that are mandated to oversee all security and justice providers? Is there fair political representation within these bodies? Do oversight committees have statutory oversight powers to hold security institutions to account, for example through hearings and investigations? Do the layers of oversight (executive, legislature, civil society) have access to classified information?

Civilian control is an aspect of civil-military relations that describes a desirable relationship between civil and military authorities within a democracy. Civilian control is thus in part a normative concept, inasmuch as it reflects the assumption that civilian control of the military is preferable to military control of the state (Burk, 2002). This is because civilian control has more potential for consolidating accountability, given the fact that elected officials exercise this control. Empirically, civilian control may be achieved through the civilianisation of the ministry of defence. In addition, oversight mechanisms are themselves often a source of civilian control. Civilian officials are a conduit for accountability, since their office is predicated on the will of the people. Assessing civilian control therefore requires gauging the extent to which the military complies with

civilian direction. For example, whether policy is civilian driven or military driven is of fundamental importance.

3.3.4. Security Sector Reform (SSR)

SSR can be defined as “...the transformation of the security system which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions, so that it is managed and operated in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.” (Wulf, 2004: 3). Therefore, it aims at and can be evaluated through the provision of effective and efficient security delivery, as well as quality civilian oversight of the security sector. According to the UN, assisting states with SSR aims to “support states and societies in developing effective, inclusive and accountable security institutions so as to contribute to international peace and security, sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights by all” (United Nations Secretary General [UNSG], 2008: 13). Usually, SSR address political, economic, social and institutional dimensions of security. Politically, reform is seen as a way to consolidate norms of democratic governance. Economically, it entails the efficient allocation and use of scarce resources. Socially, it involves the actual provision of security to the beneficiaries of SSR. Institutionally, reform requires clearly separated and defined roles of different security actors to prevent overlap that could otherwise compromise civil-military relations (Wulf, 2004: 3).

From the above definitions, it is clear that the reform in SSR carries with it normative implications. This means that entailed within SSR are norms of appropriateness regarding the nature of the security architecture. SSR is undertaken within a normative peacebuilding paradigm often described as the liberal peace theory. Herein, the path to peace lies in the transformation of the conflictual identities of states through democratization, the establishment of the rule of law, good governance, and the respect for human rights. Without doubt, this is motivated by an increasingly contested democratic peace theory, that makes two assertions regarding the prospects of international and national peace respectively:

- (a) Firstly, democracies do not go to war with one another and
- (b) Democracies are less prone to violent intra-state conflict, because they are more likely to resolve conflict through political means, rather than armed struggle (Luckam, 2009).

Security sector reform therefore is not simply a technical project. It is true that reform processes usually engage in capacity-building in terms of creating functional institutions and training so as to guarantee security provision within a given polity. At the same time, this reform has an observable normative bias toward the notion of democratic governance described above (Wulf, 2004). In stressing norms such as civilian control of the military, SSR necessarily reorders power relations in societies where it is undertaken, thereby supplementing its technical dimensions with a political one. In this sense, it is not uncommon to hear SSR being described as a democratising project (Nathan, 2007; 2008). In fact, the descriptions of ‘comprehensive’ SSR go beyond merely supporting holistic approaches to SSR that encompass the different internal and external components of the security sector in an integrated fashion. Comprehensive SSR involves consolidating security sector governance; wherein the security sector conforms to standards of democratic governance, and appreciates a people centred view of security (Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 10)

It is unsurprising that contemporary SSR is forged within the normative paradigm of democratic good governance, especially considering the relationship between security and democratic good governance. On the one hand, it is true that the broader normative adoption of liberal democracy conceals human insecurity in the form of global economic inequality. And yes security is often an excuse to curtail civil and political liberties, especially in response to global terrorism (Luckham, 2009). At the same time, there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between democratic governance and security. The absence of democratic governance is often a key explanatory variable in accounting for the emergence of conflict. Furthermore, contexts of insecurity are fertile ground for the exacerbation of governance deficits. In the absence of democratic control of the security apparatus, standards of democratic governance like human rights and the rule of law are routinely compromised (Ball, 2005: 26). Thus while the democratic peace paradigm might be contested, there are empirical linkages between democratic governance and security which explain the normative context within which contemporary SSR is formulated.

Given that the entirety of peacebuilding activities are forged within this normative framework that champions democracy, the relevance of this dissertation can once again be reiterated. From an intuitive level, local ownership seems consistent with the democratic norms that underpin the contemporary peacebuilding modus operandi. This is especially the case as it appeals to norms of inclusivity and popular participation. The question then becomes to what extent does local ownership operationally embody the norms of democratic good governance? In other words, can the absence of local ownership negatively impact the potential for democratic governance in post-conflict societies?

What concept of security underlies SSR?

Like most political concepts, security means different things to different people. There have been different emphases on who/what should be protected when discussing security. This question is of fundamental importance inasmuch it determines the nature of the security policy that is adopted. Traditional thinking on security has been characterised by the centrality of the state. This means that (in)security and security policies are understood and formulated in state-centric ways, with the state as the recipient of security. Therefore, state centrism has ensured that security was framed in highly militaristic terms. It is fair to say there has been a shift from this exclusive focus on the state. Testament to this is the complementary adoption of a people-centred understanding of (in)security.. It entails broadening the spectrum of threats to security, to include non-military considerations like human rights, environmental degradation and economic inequality (Schroder, 2009). Bendix and Stanley (2008: 10) describe a people-centred understanding of security as a key tenet of comprehensive SSR.

What is the Security sector?

A broad understanding of the security sector is important for a holistic approach toward SSR. A narrow understanding of the security sector like an exclusive military focus can lead to an incomplete reform (Wulf, 2004: 3). The security sector is therefore frequently seen as all “state institutions and agencies that have the legitimate authority to use force, to order force or to threaten the use of force.” (Born et al, 2003: 16) It also includes the “...the core executive security actors of a state as well as the civil authorities responsible for their management and democratic oversight.” (Schroder, 2009: 9). For example, this would include the armed forces, police,

paramilitaries, ministry of defence, parliament and parliamentary committees, and civil society organisations. However, there is an increasing awareness that the security sector goes beyond the state in post conflict environments. This is because of the proliferation of non-state actors providing security services is the presence of a weak institutional environment, as well as the absence of any real ability by the state to meet these obligations. Therefore, it is unsurprising that part of the challenge of SSR processes involves the engagement with, and/or of integration of informal security providers within the state architecture (Scheye, 2008).

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has served to define key concepts as well as clarify the research question. In addition to this, the methodology section narrowed the scope of this dissertation. Though I have acknowledged the existence of multiple security sector actors, this essay focuses on the reform of the military/armed forces. Furthermore, while there are different elements to democratic governance of the security sector, the focus shall be on the relationship between local ownership and civilian control and oversight. In a nutshell, local ownership of SSR is the independent variable while democratic governance (democratic control of the armed forces) is the dependent variable, operationalised through civilian control and oversight. Therefore, the proceeding chapters will consider whether local ownership essential is essential to the development of civilian control and oversight of the military.

4.1. Introduction

The Liberian case study symbolises the absence of local ownership. Illustrating this claim is a double tragedy of outsourcing. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) shows that SSR was initially outsourced to the US, who in turn outsourced this obligation to private military companies due to fiscal considerations. This decision, as is shown in this chapter created accountability and transparency deficits. This undermines democratic control of the military understood in terms of civilian oversight. Therefore, Liberia confirms the claims made in the literature. In the absence of local ownership, democratic governance is undermined.

4.2. The Liberian civil war and the security sector: A self-evident case for SSR

Liberia has had 14 years of civil wars spread across two spells- 1989-1996 and 1999-2003. The civil war has been analysed through different perspectives such as elite manipulation and the politics of belonging and entitlement (Boas & Stig, 2010). It is not necessary to give a formal summary of the causes of the civil war in Liberia. What is important is merely an account of the security sector in the civil war. This allows one to illustrate a self-evident need for SSR, and map out the priorities for SSR, by considering the factors characteristic of a deficient security sector. A cause and feature of the civil war in Liberia is the absence of democratic governance of the security sector. Before and during conflict, the armed forces were personalised instruments of regime interests and never carried out their activities in the interests of the Liberian population (Ebo, 2005: 14)

Historically, the armed forces of Liberia have been characterised by poor civil-military relations in that they were instruments of domination, and routinely intervened in civilian affairs. The institution began as militias called 'home guards' which were tasked with protecting the settler ex-US slave population from the indigenous population in a pattern of rule that has been called 'black colonialism' (Ebo, 2005). In 1908, the Home Guard was transformed into the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) which was tasked with warding off colonial claims to Liberia. The settler population dominated its officer corps., with clan and paramount chiefs supporting recruitment for the LFF. The LFF in turn assisted these traditional authorities in taxation and recruitment for forced labour projects (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2009: 2). The Liberian Frontier Force became the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) in 1962. Hinterland chiefs subsequently lost the privilege of handpicking prospective soldiers and eligibility became predicated on formal schooling. In addition, induction and training were based on the U.S. army model. Samuel Doe's coup of April 1980 among other things, inverted the settler-indigene hierarchy that had characterised Liberian society. In other words, bad governance continued with Doe, who politicised the armed forces through ethnicisation. This saw the emergence of a Krahn (Doe's tribe) hegemonic control of armed forces. A failed coup attempt against Doe saw the massacre of 2,000 to 3,000 Mano and Dan people in Nimba (ICG, 2009). Such gross human rights violations were typical of Doe's reign.

The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led an armed rebellion in December 1989, initiating Liberia's first civil war. The ethnic privileging of Krahn's meant that Charles Taylor was able to garner support from the Nimba county, the people of which were victims of Doe's majority Krahn AFL. They subsequently swelled his ranks in support of his anti-Doe message (ICG, 2009). The civil war ended in 1997 with the holding of elections, which saw Charles Taylor become Liberia's president. Taylor's rule was even more erratic and ruthless than Doe and he replicated and exacerbated the same patterns of poor governance. Taylor's forces routinely raped and looted communities, and there was a proliferation of security agencies that were themselves personalized to maintain Taylor's rule. The ranks of the now demoralised AFL were swelled with those loyal to Taylor. Civil society and parliamentary control and oversight were hampered as the costs of challenging Taylor were undoubtedly very high. Taylor's rule inevitably engendered resistance as was evident in the rise of factions that challenged his tyranny and corruption. Among these were the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). Following the near military defeat of the government after three years of civil war (1999-2003), the Government of Liberia (GoL) and the two rebel groups LURD and MODEL – signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 18 August 2003 in Accra, Ghana.

The case for SSR in Liberia is therefore self-evident, given the complicity of various elements of the security architecture in gross human rights violations and general insecurity. Security agencies like the police and armed forces were routinely in violation of the rule of law, looting, and their repressive posture underpinned the poor security crisis that plagued Liberia. In sum:

The AFL and other security bodies with and before it suffered major lapses in terms of poor wage structures, overlapping duties, lack of respect for the rule of law and impunity, poor facilities for accommodation and care, and inadequate logistics. Security institutions also reflected the stratification of the society. Officer ranks in security institutions were predominantly occupied by those affiliated with the regime, while enlisted ranks were drawn from the lower economic and social strata of society. Appointments of institutional leaderships, training, ethos and the acquisition of equipment were also tainted by nepotism, which manifested itself in these organisations as a lack of professionalism (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 27)

Liberia's post war security architecture was characterised by "...a proliferation of agencies performing overlapping functions." (Malan, 2008: 10). These included: Ministry of Defence (MoD); Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN); Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA); Ministry of National Security (MNS); National Security Agency (NSA); Liberia National Police (LNP); National Bureau of Investigation (NBI); Special Security Service (SSS); Customs—Financial Security Monitoring Division (FSD); Forest Development Authority Police (FP); Liberia Petroleum Refining Company Security Force (LPRC); Liberia Seaport Police (LSP); Liberia Telecommunications Corporation Plant Protection Force; Monrovia City Police (MCP)—also known as Department of Traffic and Public Safety; and Roberts International Airport Base Safety (RIA) (RAND report, 20006 quoted in Malan, 2008: 10).

4.3. Military Reform in Liberia

For the most part, Liberia's SSR process involves a strong emphasis on the reform of the armed forces and the police. This is despite the fact that the CPA calls for the restructuring of other elements of the security architecture like the Immigration Forces and intelligence agencies. The over-emphasis on the training of the police and the army, has led to the neglect of other key security institutions like the judiciary and prison services; border security, customs and immigration; drug enforcement; intelligence. Concerning police reform and the reform of the AFL, there is an observable division of labour emerging from the CPA and the UN Security Council Resolution 1509 (September 2003) which established the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). From these documents respectively, the US was responsible for a lead role in the reform of the armed forces, while UNMIL was charged with police reform. The CPA and aforementioned UN resolution form the legal framework for SSR in Liberia, together with the Liberian constitution.

Reform of the AFL

The CPA (Part IV; articles VII and VIII) mandated the SSR activities that Liberia underwent post-civil war. Article VII (1b) asserts that "The Parties also request that the United States of America play a lead role in organizing this restructuring program." In complementing this lead role, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the UN, the African Union (AU) and the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) were requested for assistance in a supporting role. This included the provision of advisory staff, equipment, logistics and trainers. The CPA makes clear that "the Mission of the Armed Forces of Liberia shall be to defend the national sovereignty and, in extremis, respond to natural disasters." This was expected to be a clear statement of the intention to prevent the armed forces from becoming personalised instruments of internal repression as before (Malan, 2008: 27). The National Defence Act of 2008 passed by the Liberian parliament also reaffirmed this mission

The role of the US was formalized with the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the interim transitional Liberian government. Through the SSR program, the US would assist in demobilizing the military, vetting and recruitment for the new AFL, as well as training and equipment. The reconstruction of the AFL was contracted to two US based private military companies (PMCs) in 2004. These were DynCorp International and Pacific Architects and Engineers Inc. (PAE). The US State Department in consultation with DynCorp decided that the new AFL would comprise of 2000 soldiers. DynCorp was contracted to provide basic facilities and training, while PAE was responsible for building some bases, structuring the AFL, specialized and advanced training, as well as the mentoring of fledgling and non-commissioned officers. As such, DynCorp was contracted to recruit and make soldiers while PAE was charged with mentoring and developing them. Three military bases were established under the SSR program. They were the Barclay Training Camp, Sandee S. Ware Military Barracks and Edward B. Kessey Military Barracks. DynCorp managed the first two while the last was managed by PAE (Malan, 2008: 28-9).

In contrast to Sierra Leone that favoured a more integrated approach to reform of the armed forces, it can be argued that the reform of the AFL was done from scratch. Thus, SSR in Liberia, in terms of the armed forces, involved more of a radical reconstitution than reform. Some members of the AFL and some sections of civil society contested this and regarded it as a

misreading of the CPA (Loden, 2007). Restructuring operations by DynCorp were made conditional upon the documentation and disengagement of those serving in the old AFL (Ebo, 2005: 18). This process included a disengagement package which differentiated between those who were recruited into the army before and after the civil war in 1989. While the latter got US\$540, the former were promised US\$2025 depending on their rank and length of office. This process was delayed, which caused officers to loot their barracks in protest of the delay in the disengagement package (IRIN News, 2005).

This approach has proven fairly controversial and has been judged by some as impractical. One implication of this reconstruction, coupled with the intensely rigorous vetting process by DynCorp is the fact that it created a leadership vacuum within the AFL. The low level of expertise within the army made it unlikely that any of the new recruits would be able to assume leadership positions. As such, the ambitious enterprise of reconstituting the armed forces meant Liberia was dependent on external actors to lead security apparatus. This leadership vacuum meant that the government had little choice but to seek such expertise outside of Liberia. A Nigerian General was appointed Chief of Defence Staff to head the army (Ebo, 2008: 157). This was undoubtedly a double blow to the prospects of local ownership in the reform process. Not did external actors drive reconstruction, but also such a key position within the AFL did not reflect local ownership. In fact, it is only as recent as 2014 that President Johnson Sirleaf was able to appoint a Liberian as Chief of Defence Staff.

Recruitment and Training

The eligibility criterion for the new AFL included the following requirements: Liberian citizenship, 18-45 years of age, Free of HIV, TB and drug use, literacy, physical fitness and a good human rights record. In addition, commissioned officers required a recognized university Bachelor's degree. Regional and ethnic balance was equally a guiding principle in the recruitment phase. A vetting council known as the Joint Personnel Board (JPD) determined acceptance and rejection. Some of the challenges this board faced included the absence of reliable documents regarding the education, medical condition and criminal records of applicants (Malan, 2008: 31). Background investigations were conducted to confirm information about the applicants and gauge their suitability. Delegations would travel to the communities of applicants to conduct these investigations. Pictures of applicants were disseminated publicly and citizens were encouraged to anonymously bring forth any information regarding the applicants' human rights records. Upon acceptance after the vetting process, a 5-year service contract with a probation period of 1 year was offered. Despite being long and expensive, the vetting process was praised both at home and abroad for its transparency, respect for human rights, and geographic and ethnic inclusivity (ICG, 2009)

Basic training of the AFL only began in 2006 (ICG, 2009: 9), due to the long and expensive vetting process. The training of the AFL is based on US-army doctrine. By of September 2008, 2,113 soldiers had been trained (ICG, 2009). Malan (2008) describes the following features of training:

Every soldier, irrespective of ultimate branch, is first trained as an infantry rifleman during basic training, i.e., the Initial Entry Training (IET) course, which was 11 weeks long for the initial intake. The period has subsequently been reduced to 8 weeks by cutting 3 weeks of training time initially devoted to human rights training and education in civics and civil-

military relations in a democracy. These subjects have been dropped from the curriculum because of the high cost of basic training (p.33).

... recruits who graduated from basic training ... entered shortly thereafter into more advanced phases of training: Infantry Advanced Individual Training Course (AIT) of 4 weeks, Basic Non-commissioned Officers Course (BNOC) of 4 weeks, or, 6-week Officer Candidate School (OCS) (p.34).

The end state for the AFL is a professional army “modelled on U.S. Army doctrine that will support the national objectives of the Government of Liberia.” The SSR Program is due to deliver by September 2010 an AFL that will essentially be composed of the 23rd Infantry Brigade. The total planned strength of this brigade is 2,000 men and women consisting of 146 officers and 1,854 enlisted personnel. The Brigade, to be commanded by a colonel, will have a headquarters element manned by 113 personnel. The constituent units, subunits, and sub-subunits of the brigade are planned as follows:

- 1st and 2nd Battalions—light infantry battalions, each composed of 680 soldiers and organized into a battalion headquarters, three rifle companies, and a combat support company (the latter composed of an 81mm mortar platoon, signals platoon, and transport unit. The rifle companies will each comprise a company headquarters (including a 60mm mortar section) and three rifle platoons.
- Engineering company with a strength of 220:
- Military police company with a strength of 105:
- Brigade Training Unit (BTU) with a strength of 162:
- Band platoon with 40 members (pp.36-7).

4.4. The absence of ownership in military reform

A conspicuous feature of Liberia’s reform process is the absence of local ownership. The relationship between Liberians and external actors within SSR has been described as an unequal partnership (Boas & Stig, 2010). SSR is subsequently detached from the beneficiaries of reform. Reform activities involving the military have largely occurred without genuine leadership by or consultation with the government of Liberia or the broader civil society. This is not meant to be an absolute description. There is some evidence of ownership, as will soon be demonstrated. Furthermore, some actors enjoyed more ownership than others. For example, the executive had more influence relative to the legislature and civil society in that it received more consultation. Nonetheless, the absence of local ownership was a major undercurrent in the reform of the armed forces.

The absence of ownership is observable in the sense the Liberians did not exercise genuine leadership in the reform process. They did not design or implement reform. Furthermore, on a less intense definition of local ownership, there was very little consultation with local actors in the reconstruction of the armed forces. For this section, local ownership is operationalised as the absence of extensive consultation with local actors. This is because the US was requested to lead the reform of the AFL by the signatories to the CPA.

It is true that the CPA of 2003 reveals that the US was specifically requested by the signatories to lead the restructuring of the AFL (Hutchful, 2013: 72).

This is unsurprising once seen in a historical context within which Liberia has had strong ties with the US. Furthermore, some saw this request as a way of boosting US-Liberia relations.

However, this need not necessarily have restricted the possibility of local ownership. In fact, the decision (February 2005) of the US to outsource this mandate to DynCorp International hampered the prospects for local ownership in Liberia's SSR process because it increased the distance between the providers and beneficiaries of SSR (Ebo, 2008: 150). Throughout history, it has rarely ever been the case that one sovereign nation hired a private company to restructure a military for another sovereign nation (McFate, 2008: 646). It is unsurprising therefore that the decision to outsource to reform of the AFL to DynCorp remains the most controversial aspect of SSR in Liberia. It was motivated by resource restraints, owing to US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan (McFate, 2008: 646). Nonetheless, the privatisation of SSR herein is relevant to the issue of local ownership, because it complicates questions like who controls reform and the means through which reform is carried out (Boas & Stig, 2010: 289).

First of all, the decision to outsource was not the result of extensive consultation with the Liberian people. The unilateral nature of the decision therefore undermined local ownership. It should be noted that local actors did contest this decision, although these contestations were invariably ignored:

Local actors objected to DynCorp participation in the reform of the army based on its alleged human rights record in Bosnia and Colombia, its lack of suitability in imparting democratic governance principles to the AFL, its short-term engagement with Liberia and its lack of accountability to the people of Liberia. (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 39)

Members of the executive can be said to be marginalized in the SSR process. The then Liberian minister of Defence Brownie Samukai lamented that contractors were not accountable to him (Ebo, 2008). Testament to this lack of political accountability was the fact that key decisions were deliberated without consultation. For example, the decision to disband the armed forces and rebuild it from scratch did not result from extensive consultation with Liberian stakeholders (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 40). Some considered this a violation of the CPA, arguing that the CPA mandated for restructuring and not its disbandment and reconstitution (Loden, 2007).

Furthermore, there was also the determination of the size of the AFL. The target of a 2000-man army was "... based on fiscal and cost considerations by the US embassy with little public consultation." (Hutchful, 2013: 75). The US, through the Pentagon, also unilaterally decided on the size of the AFL, ignoring recommendations by the Ministry of Defence for an army size of 6500. In defence of this decision, the US maintained that this estimation was the outcome of a technical review of what Liberia could sustain. However, it has been argued that this review "... did not involve the participation or consultation of Liberians, nor did it consider the views of Liberians regarding the security risks and challenges in the country." (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 39)

Liberia's national security review was also outsourced, further alienating local actors from the SSR process. This task was contracted to the RAND Corporation, "...allegedly without the knowledge and participation of much of the Liberian Security Sector." (Hutchful, 2013: 75) In 2006, it produced a report titled 'Making Liberia Safe: Transformation of the National Security Sector.' There was significant outcry over the fact that the security review articulated by the RAND report was not an outcome of local ownership since it emerged without any national consultation process. In response to this frustration with marginalization, the government tasked the Governance Commission (GC) with reviewing the RAND report, in addition to providing policy advice on a new security strategy for the country. It is noteworthy that the GC subsequently proceeded with the resulting National Security Strategy through a more consultative security review process (Ebo, 2008: 161).

Outsourcing proves antithetical to local ownership, inasmuch it leads to objectives that fail to reflect the needs or interests of recovering societies. Ironically, the RAND report aptly illustrates this. The report

... directly questioned the logic that underlay the SSR initiatives, including the basis for deciding force levels in both the military and police, concluding that these were completely inadequate for the national security needs of Liberia (Hutchful, 2013: 75)

Given the context at the time, a 2000-man army seemed insufficient, especially considering volatile regional security given political instability in Guinea and Ivory Coast (Ebo, 2005: 19). Another way the RAND report shows that the absence of local ownership produces locally insensitive reform is its recommendation of the creation of an elite force within the police. The GC contested this on the grounds that it evoked memories of the country's brutal past in which personalized elite forces perpetuated grave atrocities (Ebo, 2008: 158).

Another site of the absence of local ownership is the legislature. Legislators have been marginalized in the reform process which increased the difficulty of performing their oversight functions. They often complained about the fact that they were not able to access the contract documents which mandated the security contractors to carry out their operations (Ebo, 2008; Hutchful, 2013). This lack of access meant that they were unable to oversee the contract. In this sense, the reform process cannot be said to be locally owned, since key local actors were neither consulted nor able to influence the process or agenda that guides the process. It is also not clear whether the security contractors recognized the authority of Liberian legislators. Queries to DynCorp were advised to be directed to the US Embassy or State Department, making a battle to have contractors appear before parliament (Ebo, 2008: 161).

Finally, civil society organisations have also been marginalized in the SSR process (Ebo, 2008; Loden, 2007). According to Ebo (2008: 163), the perception of marginalisation within civil society resulted from a lack of access to (a) documents and information, (b) hierarchy of defence contractors and (c) suspicion of DynCorp's record in Colombia and Bosnia (i.e. marginalisation in SSR process resulted from this distrust).

Instances and Possibilities for ownership

The description that SSR reform was not owned is not an absolute one, but a matter of degree. That is, one can still account for the participation and representation of local actors in the process. The main claim is that the marginalization of local actors in the design and implementation of reform, coupled with a reluctance to consult local actors, is far more common than efforts to encourage local leadership of the reform process. Therefore, though one might for example point to the fact that of the 76 seats of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly, 6 were filled by civil society representatives (Ebo, 2005: 27), this is if anything, cosmetic.

In August, 2005, the Ministry of Defence together with UNMIL did convene a national dialogue on SSR aimed at cultivating local ownership by broadening the constituency of actors involved in SSR. It furthermore aimed to nationally discuss a democratic security vision for Liberia. The dialogue raised points concerning the bloated nature of the security architecture, evidenced by the overlapping, redundant, and unclear mandates of its elements. Other concerns raised involved the cultural legacy of gross human rights abuse, the lack of effective oversight mechanisms and respect for the rule of law, and a scepticism toward the operational capacity of security bodies to perform functions such as border control. These conclusions influenced the National Security Strategy produced by Governance Commission in 2008. It is important to note that the GC was itself tasked with producing this report due to the lack of ownership that went into the security review produced by the 2006 RAND report. Even when this was proposed, DynCorp and other external actors complained that it would interfere with their timelines. This shows the general absence of an inclination toward public consultation in Liberia (Hutchful, 2013: 75).

Another instance of ownership was the passing of a new National Defence act in 2008, which now superseded the 1956 Defence Act. This exemplified ownership because of "...a public policy dialogue that was unprecedented in Liberia for its inclusiveness and openness." (Sayndee, 2015: 77) In clearly defining and limiting the AFL's role to defending Liberia's territorial integrity from external threats, it succeeded "...in providing a new legislative basis for the separation of law enforcement and national defence within a framework of democratic civilian control." (Sayndee, 2015: 69).

Although the operations of security contractors like DynCorp undermined local ownership, there are two important qualifications to this. First of all, it can be said that some local actors did not fully take up the opportunity to involve themselves in the SSR process. Boas & Stig (2010: 289) maintain that

During the process of recruitment, DynCorp met with civil society groups at the different locations of recruitment, and the government, the legislature and civil society had the opportunity to follow the recruitment process more closely than they did ... For example, even though the Liberian Ministry of Defence had opportunities to join DynCorp on their recruitment tours, it was not until the last recruitment tour that took place in May 2008 that this happened. This is noteworthy since the recruitment process started in January 2006

Secondly, central to local ownership is the issue of who undertakes key SSR activities such as recruitment, training, drafting security legislature, etc. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge

efforts at ownership, despite the overall lack of ownership that characterised reform in Liberia. Local ownership in terms of representation is observable in the Joint Personnel Board (JPB), which oversaw the vetting of recruits for the AFL. Representatives from the ministry of defence, Liberian civil society, UNMIL and the US embassy all held seats on this board. Furthermore, the implementation of the vetting process did have avenues for local participation. Board representatives consulted with the communities of applicants to further gauge their suitability and assess public trust in the candidates. In addition, pictures of candidates were distributed throughout the country and citizens were exhorted to come forth with any reason regarding the potential unsuitability of a candidate, such as human rights violations (Malan, 2008: 32)

Linked to the first point are questions about whether or not there was a sufficient demand for local ownership. Underlying this point are two illustrations. Firstly, it is argued the role of DynCorp is unproblematic, and compliance with this decision is a way of boosting relations with the US, which is seen as strategically desirable. This is salient given close historical ties between Liberia and the US. Secondly, it is argued (crudely speaking) that public discourse on SSR is unnecessary. As Malan (2008: 45) notes:

While international SSR guidelines (as promulgated by the OECD DAC, for example) call for a consultative process of SSR, there is strong resistance to public discourse on security from the Liberian authorities, particularly MOD, MOJ, the Presidency, and the IGP—as well as the SSR Program team. Liberians in general assume, because of past practice, that security issues are secret in nature, and that they should not be discussed openly.

Despite these sets of qualifications, there is generally consensus in the academic literature (Stig, 2009; Boas & Stig, 2010; Ebo, 2005 & 2008; Hutchful, 2013) that the absence of local ownership is characteristic of the SSR process in Liberia. This is also unsurprising, given that there is equally consensus on the fact that there exists a gap between rhetoric and practice regarding local ownership. Given illustration of this in Liberia, we are set to consider the impact the absence of ownership has on democratic governance in the form of parliamentary oversight. Despite a general illustration of the absence of ownership, what is causally relevant here is the failure to involve the legislature.

4.5. The absence of ownership and its impact on democratic control and oversight of the military

One way of achieving subjective control of the military is through military training. That is, the military can be trained to see civilian control as valid, at the very least within a normative sense. Statutory armies can also be subject to objective control by the executive, legislature, judiciary and civil society, through oversight in order to ensure accountability, rule of law, and respect for human rights. These agents of political society therefore present themselves as clear transmissions mechanisms for civilian control and oversight.

In inculcating norms of civilian control, DynCorp's role in training the military would have been an entry point. However, the extent to which private military companies like DynCorp can inculcate democratic norms like transparency and accountability that are necessary for a stable and lasting peace is unclear (Aboagye & Rupiya, 2005: 265). Such ability might for example be

compromised by the profit motive, or by other priorities which local actors are always aware of. Consider for example the Initial Entry Training Course (IET) as part of defence restructuring. The course was shortened from 11 to 8 weeks, scaling down on time initially reserved for education in human rights, civics and democratic civil-military relations due to cost considerations (Ebo, 2008: 157; Malan, 2008). Such a decision intuitively appears ominous for the prospects of democratic governance. Furthermore, whether DynCorp espouses democratic norms such as respect for human rights is itself a topic of controversy. According to Aboagye and Rupiya (2005: 267), it was unacceptable:

...to outsource the reform of Liberia's security forces to quasi para-statal with questionable track records in human rights and rule of law, and principled commitment to international norms and conventions.

In fact, some segments of civil society believed their marginalisation in the reform process was because they were critical of DynCorp's human rights record in countries like Bosnia and Colombia. In Bosnia for example (1999, 2000), the company was plagued by allegations of sexual violence and human trafficking (Ebo, 2008). It can thus be concluded that the absence of local ownership in Liberia undermined the prospects for civilian control of the military. This is because those responsible for military training did not make use of that opportunity.

In the above paragraph, scepticism is expressed at whether private military companies like DynCorp can be relied upon to inculcate norms of democratic governance, especially in lieu of the profit motive. Although DynCorp represents the absence of ownership in that it did not cultivate genuine ownership or an extensive consultative methodology, there were elements of its operations that could reasonably be seen as espousing the virtues of democratic governance. Based on the mandate provided by the CPA, the recruitment process satisfied some of the broader considerations of democratic governance of the security sector such as equitably representation of different groups in society, as well as respect for human rights. On the issue of representation for example, no ethnic group accounts for more than 15% of the AFL forces (Sayndee, 2010). Furthermore, the human rights record of applicants was also considered in a rigorous vetting process. On the whole, the rejection was about 75% (Malan, 2008: 32). These contributions to security governance can be said to have enhanced the credibility of armed forces in view of its political debasement before and during the civil war.

However, outsourcing, and by extension the absence of local ownership, in failing to involve critical elements of the executive, legislature, and broader civil society has undermined the democratic credibility of the reform of the AFL. This can be situated within the broader challenge of regulating private military companies or bringing non-state actors under state coordination, given the lack of transparency that often characterizes their operations (Aboagye & Rupiya, 2005: 265; Isima, 2010: 333). The argument made herein is that the absence of local ownership negative impacts civilian oversight due to a lack of transparency. The absence of local ownership is linked to deficits in transparency, which hampers the ability of civilians, be it in the executive or legislature to perform oversight duties. In so doing, the absence of ownership can be said to negatively impact the prospect of democratic governance. The failure to involve local actors is evident in three areas: (a) decision-making about the direction of SSR, (b) contract negotiations with DynCorp and (c) contract monitoring and evaluation.

Consider for example the possibilities for parliamentary oversight. Two questions are particularly relevant here. One is the issue of whether parliament has access to (classified) information. The other concerns whether parliament has statutory oversight powers over the security sector to initiate investigations and organise hearings. The argument can be made that the absence of ownership, symbolised in the activities of DynCorp negatively impacted oversight in these terms. Regarding the access to information, it is notable that parliamentary oversight committees did not have access to the contractual documents that formed the basis upon which DynCorp's activities were carried out. Parliament was therefore denied information relating to military and police reform programs (Hutchful, 2013: 77). This makes the evaluation and oversight of SSR considerably difficult. Parliamentary oversight was also hampered in the sense that for some time, it was difficult to get security contractors to appear before parliament. This changed as time went on, as DynCorp representatives did attend consultative meetings with the legislature on the Defence Act (Ebo, 2008: 162). Prior to this, it was typical of DynCorp to insist that its contractual obligations lay with the US State Department and not with government of Liberia. Therefore, any query should be directed to the US Embassy or US State Department (Ebo, 2008: 161). This created accountability and transparency deficits that made it acutely difficult for local actors to exercise ownership or influence the reform process through oversight (Hutchful, 2013: 74). These deficits potentially widened the gap between the providers and beneficiaries of security.

Taking these two illustrations into consideration, it can be further argued that the National Defence Act of August 2008 passed by parliament reflects lessons learned from the experience of a lack of ownership. Consider for example that for some (e.g. Malan (2008)), the lack of transparency is a non-issue because the US "... is providing gratis assistance in the restructuring of its armed forces through an assistance package that the Liberian government has approved and accepted." (Ebo, 2008: 162). The National Defence Act gives the Liberian parliament powers to exercise oversight over external funding to the country on defence and security issues. In other words, such funding becomes part of the state budget and therefore subject to oversight. The financial position of donors grants them leverage on the reform process. This act should provide a legal framework to deal with the subsequent difficulty of negotiating authority that comes with donor assistance (Ebo, 2008: 162, 168).

While it is true that the governance capacity of the legislature was not good to begin with, the argument is that the decision to outsource the reform of the armed forces did not make matters any better. The democratic responsibilities of Parliament involve determining what constitutes a security threat, overseeing the use of force by security institutions and determining the affordability of security forces. This oversight mandate sources from its role as representatives of the people. Contrary to this aspiration, SSR is characterized by very limited parliamentary engagement in Liberia. An illustration of this would be the fact that not only is oversight undermined as described above, but also the only identifiable role of the parliamentary committee on National Security was limited to an inspection visit to military sites, facilitated by the Ministry of National Defence. Such limited participation in the reform process "...threaten[ed] the control and management of the security sector in Liberia in consonance with the principles of democratic governance." (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 46-7)

Members of the executive at the time of DynCorp's mandate also lamented the accountability and transparency deficits introduced by outsourcing. The then Minister of Defence suggested that he would have preferred if the military was trained by active duty personnel (ADPs) who were more accountable and transparent. In praising the ADPs, the Minister was simultaneously being critical of security contracts:

They [ADPs] did not look into their bank accounts every day to find out if funds had been made available or not to undertake the next level of activities. They consulted within local institutions and worked closely with the Ministry of Defence at every step. They reported to an entity that was visible and to whom they were accountable. They were transparent in their dealings with the Liberian government and they showed respect for local authorities, customs and laws (Ebo, 2008: 161, quoting Minister of Defence Brownie Samukai)

Therefore, we also see that the lack of transparency and accountability characteristic of the operations of the security contractors undermined both executive control and oversight of the military.

While the absence of local ownership undermined democratic governance in the form of civilian oversight, it more generally led to reform that did not reflect the needs of Liberia. This confirms the assertions made within the literature on ownership regarding the importance of ownership in producing contextually relevant reform. This bridges the gap between security providers and beneficiaries. Since local ownership was lacking, we observe that this gap was widened. For example, military training did not reflect the needs of Liberia. This is due to the observation that training and restructuring was not rooted in the regional security realities. For example, the Governance Reform Commission (GRC) observed that US-led reform (through DynCorp) was implemented in isolation from the ECOWAS security architecture such as the 1999 ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security. A threat-independent approach characterised defence planning and restructuring (Malan, 2008: 23). Therefore, while DynCorp maybe credited with the creation of an operationally astute army, it is not clear that this operational achievement is rooted in the local realities and needs of the Liberian security context. Thus potentially, the gap between the providers and beneficiaries of security is widened by reform that is not rooted in local needs and realities.

A second and more indirect relationship between ownership and democratic governance is as follows: in the absence of ownership, the direction of reform remains externally driven. This is problematic as external actors in this case study focused more on the technical aspects of SSR, ultimately paying little attention to the political aspects of SSR. In the absence of ownership therefore, local capacity remains underdeveloped. While from a technical point of view, security institutions are built to be operationally effective, little attention is paid to the governance institutions and mechanisms charged with regulating these operationally effective security bodies (Boas & Stig, 2010: 287). Political issues of governance are seemingly left in the hands of government. As observed by Loden (2007: 300),

Since the signing of the CPA the reform of the security institutions in Liberia have been led by internationals with little reference to national preferences or consultation. Furthermore, the reform and restructuring has not been coordinated or holistic and has

largely focused on operational efficiency rather than addressing the deeper questions of governance and oversight”

This relationship is only indirect because local ownership is an entry point for the consolidation of a democratically governed security sector. This is especially the case with local ownership in the form of capacity building and upscaling. Herein, local ownership involves building or enhancing the ability of local actors to lead and undertake key SSR activities. Local ownership in this sense is an opportunity for enhancing governance capacities. For example, this could involve the funding of civil society organisations engaged in SSR or research support for parliamentary committees on defence and security in order to mitigate epistemic deficiencies (Nathan, 2008). The absence of local ownership becomes an opportunity missed to build institutions of democratic governance. It is unsurprising therefore to observe the following assertion:

The implementation of SSR in Liberia remains uncertain due to its preference of operational efficiency over local ownership and democratic governance. External actors involved in the implementation of SSR in Liberia have focused primarily on enhancing the capacity and efficiency of security forces while ignoring issues of governance. This gap in the process is being blamed on the lack of a locally owned framework for the SSR process (Jallah-Scott, 2008: 37)

It is still surprising that parliamentary oversight was not treated as a priority in Liberia. At the same time, a possible reason for this lies in the fact the constitution was suspended when the CPA established the National Transitional Legislative Authority. This implied that articles in the constitution related to parliamentary oversight were also suspended.

4.6. Conclusion

Ebo (2008) rightly observes that the quality of governance and oversight in countries benefitting from security reform is affected by the relationship between the beneficiary of reform and the country supporting reform. By looking at the outsourcing and subsequent privatisation of SSR in Liberia, this chapter has argued that the absence of local ownership characterised the relationship between the US and Liberia in SSR. More importantly, the absence of ownership undermined the democratic control of the military. The state of affairs in Liberia was one in which the reform process lacked transparency and accountability because DynCorp was not accountable to the state whose military they were reforming. Furthermore, its contract was not subject to local oversight. More broadly, it was not clear that they were subject to the laws of Liberia, making oversight by local institutions such as parliamentary committees difficult.

Apart from these governance deficits, it can be expected that in the absence of ownership, reform will ultimately fail to reflect local needs and dynamics, thus widening the gap between security providers and beneficiaries. Exemplifying this was the fact that the reform of the AFL was not rooted in regional security dynamics such as the ECOWAS security architecture.

Local Ownership and SSR in Sierra Leone

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, Sierra Leone is treated as a case study demonstrating more substantive evidence of local ownership of SSR in comparison to Liberia. The task therefore is to determine the extent to which this trend of ownership was essential to the development of democratic governance. In this regard, the argument is made that local ownership did enhance democratic governance in the sense of institutionalising civilian oversight and promoting democratic civil-military relations through policy. At the same time, reform initiatives that were devoid of ownership both promoted and undermined democratic governance. This leads to the conclusion that democratic governance can be developed both in the presence and absence of local ownership. That notwithstanding, local ownership is crucial in producing reform that is more context specific which the host country can understand and work with, a claim that the existing literature attests to. Evidence of this lies in the simplification of reforms led by external actors through the process of the locally owned Defence White Paper. Concerning the role of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) and Ministry of Defence Assistance Team (MODAT) in the restructuring of the military and Ministry of Defence (MoD), the implementation of the white paper simplified IMATT and MODAT reforms. This made the resulting structures more contextually relevant and comprehensible, although not much was substantively changed.

5.2. The Sierra Leonean civil war and the case for SSR

The necessity of SSR in Sierra Leone sources from the complicity of the security architecture in the outbreak of the civil war. The security sector suffered from deficits in both its operational and governance capacities before and during the war. The conflict no doubt exacerbated these deficiencies in post-conflict Sierra Leone. A brief account of the causes and events of the civil war can show the operational and governance deficits that occasioned security reform.

The crisis of security that led to the outbreak of civil war in 1991 was a consequence of a colonial legacy, as well as economic and political mismanagement. The Sierra Leone Army has its origins in the colonial Royal West African Frontier Force, which was predominantly used to maintain British colonial hegemony (Ebo, 2006: 284). As such, it functioned mainly as an instrument of internal repression, a state of affairs that would characterise the post-colonial era. Considering this limited yet important function, it is unsurprising that after independence, a security sector incapable of meeting the security needs of a plural and multi-ethnic society was inherited. As a result, deficits in democratic governance were exacerbated as the government maintained its grip on power by appropriating the security architecture for authoritarian ends. The politicization of security institutions like the police and armed forces were instrumental in the authoritarian and predatory politics that characterised Sierra Leone. This saw meritocracy sacrificed at the altar of ethnic politics. Security forces became personalized, serving to defend the interests of the president, rather than the interests of the people of Sierra Leone. This was especially the case with the proliferation of paramilitary forces. This state of affairs meant that democratic control and

oversight of the security sector was altogether non-existent as civilian opposition, whether from parliament or broader civil society was routinely persecuted (Gbla, 2006).

The politicized security institutions were equally instruments of broader economic decline in the sense that they protected the political elite from popular dissatisfaction with economic decline. One of the causes of the civil war was economic decline brought about by the mismanagement of the economy and natural resources of Sierra Leone. Structural adjustment programs meant to resuscitate the economy only compounded these destabilizing effects. (Gbla, 2006).

This state of affairs meant that Sierra Leone was characterised by a state of insecurity. Its internal sovereignty was routinely questioned, and human rights violations were routine in a bid to maintain power. The army was unsurprisingly a major human rights violator, ill-equipped and unmotivated to provide state and human security. It is within this context that the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh instigated civil war in Sierra Leone. The war saw the perpetuation of gross human rights violations through the loss of countless lives, internal displacement and the creation of refugees. The Sierra Leone army proved inefficient with dealing with this threat and many eventually became 'sobels' (i.e. soldiers by day and rebels by night) (Gbla, 2006). Increasingly, Sierra Leoneans relied on non-state forces like the Komajors for protection (Abdullah, 2004: 4).

The inadequacies of the army among other things saw the conflict take on a regional dimension. ECOWAS played a military and mediating role during the conflict. There was also the involvement of private military companies like Executive Outcomes (EO), which was mandated to return diamond and mineral mines to the government, destroy RUF headquarters, and encourage local support for the Sierra Leonean government (Abdullah, 2004: 90). In November 1996, the Abidjan Peace Accord was signed as a resolution to the conflict. The peace accord ordered the departure of mercenaries like EO after the establishment of a Neutral Monitoring Group. It also called for RUF soldiers to undergo Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). However, EO was expelled from Sierra Leone in 1997 without the establishment of a monitoring group. This was due to pressure by the IMF, which was a primary source of funding for EO (Gberie, 2005: 95). When RUF leader Foday Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria (March 1997), RUF members reacted violently. In the absence of EO, the government was significantly weaker, which meant the war resumed, signalling the collapse of the Abidjan accord.

Morale continued to decline within the army. The civil war climate culminated in a coup on 25 May 1997 led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma's Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), with support from the RUF. Through the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG), Nigeria had played a significant role in aiding the government's attempts to re-establish security in Sierra Leone. ECOMOG's intervention brought RUF and AFRC rebels to the negotiating table. Despite arriving at the tentative, Conakry Peace Plan, fighting still continued, with ECOMOG suffering substantial losses (Abdullah, 2004: 161).

Taking this into consideration, one of the factors that contributed to the willingness government to again negotiate with the RUF rebels was the fact that the Nigerian government cast doubt on their ability to continue their military role in the war. The international community was also reluctant to fill the emerging military vacuum and so increased pressure on the government to negotiate and make peace with the RUF. This culminated in the signing of the Lomé Peace

Agreement of July 1999 (Thomson, 2007). The accord was the subject of major protests since it gave Foday Sankoh control over Sierra Leone's diamond mines as well as the position of vice president (Abdullah, 2004: 213).

The signing of the accord was followed by the deployment of 6,000 peacekeepers under the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Their strength was increased progressively and peaked at 17,500 in 2001 (Gbla, 2006: 81). The Lomé accord however did not necessarily end the conflict as the RUF reneged on its obligations. In May 2000, there was an RUF insurgency that resulted in 500 UN troops being taken hostage, a major humiliation for the UN. The RUF was eventually defeated in early 2001 through a combination of interventions by the UK military, UNAMSIL and the Guinean army that, notably, saw the arrest of Foday Sankoh. By 2002, the civil war could be said to have been officially over (Thomson, 2007).

In conclusion, the necessity of SSR in Sierra Leone is a response to the operational and governance deficits that characterised political life before and during the civil war (Ebo, 2006: 482). The war not only highlighted deficits in democratic control and oversight of security institutions, but their operational incapacity to defend Sierra Leone both in terms of state and human security (Gbla, 2006: 80). The task of SSR was thus to build a professional and effective security sector anchored within a democratic governance framework.

5.3. Military reform in Sierra Leone

SSR amidst on-going conflict

The beginnings of reform in Sierra Leone can be traced back to the civil war period, when there were indications of an acknowledged need for SSR by the government. At the time (1996), the main priorities were the support for the Civil Defence Force (CDF), downsizing the army in cost and personnel terms and negotiations with the RUF. Thoughts on reform at this time also acknowledged the need for good governance of the security sector in particular and government institutions in general. Subsequently, the government launched a National Strategy for Good Governance in 1997 (Thomson, 2007: 5). This early disposition toward SSR was interrupted by a military coup in May 1997, as the army felt threatened by prospective reform in the form of downsizing. They subsequently established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and even invited the RUF to join in their regime. ECOMOG and Komajors eventually ousted this regime in February 1998 (Thomson, 2007: 5)

Though in exile, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) regime continued to develop its thinking on reform, which occurred in cooperation with the Department for International Development (DfID) UK. More concrete reform objectives took shape from 1998. For example, the army would be downsized to 5000, a more than 50% reduction from the current AFRC size. A rigorous screening process would also be coupled with this downsizing. Police reform was also to be undertaken with the help of the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force, which was mainly funded by DfID. The RUF and AFRC invasion of Freetown in January 1999 (Operation No Living Thing) meant that the implementation of reform was delayed. ECOMOG and Komajor forces eventually repelled this invasion (Thomson, 2007).

The Lomé accord did not deal with SSR in the same depth that the CPA ending the Liberian civil war did. That notwithstanding, one of its key specifications was military integration as part of the reform of the military. Sections 2 and 3 respectively of Article XVII state:

2. Those ex-combatants of the RUF/SL, CDF and SLA who wish to be integrated into the new restructured national armed forces may do so provided they meet established criteria.
3. Recruitment into the armed forces shall reflect the geo-political structure of Sierra Leone within the established strength.

One noticeable feature of this stipulation is that it is not a conventional military merger like in other peace agreements involving Mozambique (1993) and Burundi (2003). This is because "...it did not specify quotas for each group, but only provided the possibility for ex-combatants from all camps to seek entry into the new armed forces." (Nilsson & Kovacs, 2013: 5)

5.4. Local Ownership and Military Reform in Sierra Leone

The UK has been the dominant donor in Sierra Leone. Broader post-conflict reconstruction has been conducted through DfID via the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Program (SILSEP) introduced in June 1999 (Ebo, 2006: 284). More specifically, the reconstruction of the military has been conducted through the British-led IMATT. It has been involved in training and equipping the armed forces through the military reintegration program (MRP) as well as reconstructing the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and broader military apparatus. Summarily, IMATT's mission was to:

assist with the transformation of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) into a self-sustaining, democratically accountable and affordable force in order that it can meet Sierra Leone's defence missions and tasks and to facilitate the phased disengagement and withdrawal of IMATT (Ebo, 2006: 487).

The reform of the RSLAF, assisted by the International Monitoring and Training Team (IMATT), had core objectives of: reducing the army's size; making it more militarily proficient and better trained; overhauling its command structures and staffing; introducing new training; making it democratically accountable both to the government and improving its civil relations; and delineating its roles and responsibilities in a post-conflict situation (Ginifer, 2006: 799).

Article XVIII of the Lomé Accord (1999) requires the government to undertake the reconstruction and training of the armed forces of Sierra Leone. Section 1 asserts: "The restructuring, composition and training of the new Sierra Leone armed forces will be carried out by the Government with a view to creating truly national armed forces, bearing loyalty solely to the State of Sierra Leone, and able and willing to perform their constitutional role." The constitutional function of the Armed Forces is spelled out in Section 165 (2): "to guard and secure the Republic of Sierra Leone and to preserve the safety and territorial integrity of the state, to participate in its development, to safeguard the peoples' achievement and protect this constitution."

In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, there was a strong external presence in the reconstruction process, with the US and UK (respectively), playing a major part in the reform of the security architecture. In such circumstances with strong external influence, one should be reasonably suspicious about the commitment to local ownership. In the previous chapter, we saw that local ownership was marginalised in the reform process, a consensus observably within academic literature. Comparatively, even though Sierra Leone cannot be said to demonstrate full ownership, there is also a sense within the literature that local ownership was more a reality in Sierra Leone than Liberia. Sierra Leone demonstrates some moments of local ownership in terms of leadership of the reform process. In addition, there is evidence of extensive consultation with local actors (in a maximalist sense) regarding the design of reform, as well as ownership understood as buy-in.

In fact, despite the strong international influence on SSR in Sierra Leone, it can be argued that local ownership of SSR was evident in a number of ways. There was buy-in from the government of Sierra Leone as well as leadership in carrying out key SSR activities. Regarding buy-in, the presidency usually endorsed reform proposals from UK representatives like IMATT and MODAT, especially given the fact that the government of Sierra Leone formally requested their assistance. This level of buy-in follows the minimalist understanding of who is local. Examples of leadership by Sierra Leoneans in SSR to be examined include the 2003 Defence White Paper and the 2005 Security sector review (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009). These review processes accommodated an extensive consultation with wide ranging local actors in key SSR activities. This mode of ownership illustrates the maximalist understanding of who is local. Therefore, although there is the absence of a high degree of genuine ownership in the normative sense defended by Nathan (2008), local ownership in Sierra Leone illustrates the different understandings of ownership we examined in the literature review (leadership, participation/consultation, buy-in).

The presence or absence of local ownership is determinable by an analysis of the role of local actors in the design, implementation and evaluation of reform. SSR in Sierra Leone was coordinated through the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Program (SILSEP) established by DfID. In June 1999, DfID's SILSEP sent a three-man team to evaluate the security needs of Sierra Leone. Two advisers (one military and the other civilian) were tasked with designing and implementing plans to restructure the MoD. They designated themselves the Ministry of Defence Advisory Team (MODAT). The third advisor offered advice on the restructuring of the office of the National Security Advisor (NSA). MODAT argued that the reconstruction of the MoD needed to be coupled with an in-depth review of the roles, and structure of the armed forces. The government of Sierra Leone accepted the proposal. Subsequently, MODAT was authorised to conduct a mini-strategic Defence Review (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 46). Despite the clear indication that the UK would play a lead role in the design and implementation of SSR, it can nonetheless be argued that this role had the buy-in of the national elite in that the government of Sierra Leone endorsed proposed reforms. In this minimalist sense, one can defend the existence of local ownership in Sierra Leone.

MODAT's defence review was completed in October 1999 and published in November of the same year titled "Future UK Military Commitment in support of DfID's security sector reform program (SILSEP)." It contained an outline defence policy, as well as new defence structures and a detailed organisation for the armed forces (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009). It also recommended the establishment of a British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT), and suggested that it should

fill key staff and command positions for the sake of effective implementation. The British commander of BMATT would be designated 'Military Advisor to the Government of Sierra Leone.' BMATT support was projected to last no more than three years in order to avoid a dependency culture. As of April 200, MODAT also designed the military reintegration program (MRP) which the Lomé Agreement prescribed in order to reintegrate ex-combatants who had undergone the DDR process into the new armed forces. They were requested to do this by the Government of Sierra Leone and the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) in keeping with this agreement. Regarding the implementation of these programs (i.e. restructuring of MoD, armed forces, MRP) constraints regarding personnel and a moral weariness about her ex-colonial status vis-à-vis Sierra Leone meant that the UK sought to internationalise the reform implementation. It sought support from other nations and subsequently established the International Military Assistance Team (IMATT) (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009).

Military Reintegration Program (MRP)

The MRP was designed by MODAT and implemented by IMATT. IMATT has been involved with training, recruiting and equipping the armed forces under the MRP. By August 2002, when the program was brought to a close, the program had trained 2600 soldiers (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 126). Nonetheless, there are instances of local ownership in terms involvement in the implementation of the program. These will be illustrated by considering the different stages of the MRP (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 65).

Stage 1 involved disarmament and demobilisation where ex-combatants were informed of the MRP. This was followed by a potential recruit decision where prospective soldiers were grouped in syndicates of 30 and underwent basic training drills and formal screening. In addition to this, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the RSLAF intelligence agencies conducted background checks. Recruitment was performed in consultation with the local communities to enhance the legitimacy of the armed forces in the eyes of local communities. This provides an example of local involvement in the implementation of SSR. Stage 3 comprised of an individual assessment where potential recruits attended a selection tribunal. Individuals had to undergo a full medical screening as well as military experience, educational and physical evaluations. Representation within the selection tribunal can be considered another instance of local ownership. It comprised of a UNAMSIL colonel, RUF and CDF liaison officers employed by the NCDDR and IMATT personnel in a secretariat capacity. Stage 4 was a basic training group where recruits underwent basic training and were placed in platoons. Stage 5 involved integrated bridging training. Herein, uniforms, weapons and equipment were given to recruits for the first time. They also underwent 9 weeks of basic infantry training. The final stage of the MRP involved the posting of recruits in RSLAF units (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009). It can be concluded that although reform of the armed forces through the MRP was led by IMATT, there was some ownership in terms of local participation in the vetting process. Local actors were consulted in the background checks to ensure legitimacy. In addition, they were represented in decision-making bodies like the selection tribunal. Local actors were thus involved in the implementation of military reform.

In addition to training, equipping and structuring the military, IMATT was also involved in the reconstruction of the Ministry of Defence. The MoD was restructured on the UK model of joint civilian-military management (Nilsson & Kovacs, 2013: 6). This civilian-military structure was

further consolidated through the development of a workable grading system. This was in order to prevent disproportionate salary discrepancies despite rank equivalencies (Boucher, 2009: 15). There was also the restructuring of the Defence Headquarters, which was split into two organization- the Joint Support Command (JSC) and Joint Force Command (JFC). Both were subordinated to the MoD and placed under IMATT leadership for nascent development and capacity building. Regarding the distinction between JFC and JSC:

The JFC brings the land, maritime and air components of the RSLAF together under the operational command of the Joint Force Commander who is responsible for the planning and conduct of all RSLAF operations (MoD, 2003: 17)

The JSC plays a crucial role in all military operations by delivering wide-ranging logistical, administrative and training support to the RSLAF... Its key task is to sustain the operability and capability of troops on operations or training. The material support it provides includes the acquisition, storage, movement, distribution and disposition of stocks or goods so that units can be issued with the quantities they require in the correct condition and at the right time and place. JSC is also responsible for the movement, evacuation and medical support of all personnel, including the recovery and repair of equipment, maintenance of infrastructure, training and the personnel management and administration of all officers and soldiers serving in the RSLAF. (MoD, 2003: 17)

This new organizational structure was established in 2002 and was seen as a way of pre-empting the likelihood of a coup by dividing command responsibility (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 100). In this sense, one can see MODAT/IMATT reforms as contributing to democratic control of the military.

2003 Defence White Paper

The formulation of the 2003 Defence White Paper is an example of local ownership in the articulation of the strategic direction of Sierra Leone's defence policy. It was led by the Director of Defence Policy and sought to evolve and improve the armed forces as well as develop the democratic control of the military through accountability and transparency. This paper exemplifies ownership because it was the outcome of extensive consultation with security agencies, government ministries and departments, as well as civil society. The UK, through the DfID merely played a support role. In this sense, the UK provided mentoring as well as facilitated the comparative exchange studies and the editing of the final version for publication (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009)

Although the production the white paper was locally owned, the same cannot be said of its implementation. An implementation plan- Plan 2010- was established by then IMATT Commander Brigadier Simon Porter in 2004. The plan was not so much owned as consented to by the MoD (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 104). Literature references to this plan identify it as unpublished. Although the MoD may have had access to it, it is unclear that civil society did. Thus although the white paper is a product of ownership, its implementation did not particularly further ownership.

Kondeh (2008: 4-5) discusses four main outcomes of the Defence White Paper. First of all, it streamlined the armed forces by merging the Joint Support and Force commands into a single RSLAF structure. In addition to this was the establishment of an Assistant Chief of Defence Staff responsible for personnel and training. Furthermore, to improve accountability, it made the Director of Organisation Management and Audit report to the Deputy Minister of Defence instead of the Director General, who was the MoD's vote controller. More generally, a notable achievement of the Defence White Paper was the improved clarity of roles within the armed forces as well as between the MoD and Joint Force Command. It thus simplified the command structure of the armed forces and organizational structure of the MoD. This has positive implications for civilian oversight as will soon be discussed.

2005 Security Sector Review

One of the most recognizable instances of local ownership is the participatory methodology of the security sector review initiated in August 2003 and published in March 2005 (Ebo, 2006: 388). It sought to identify the main threat's to Sierra Leone's socio-economic and political development, as well as the institutions relevant to mitigating these threats and developing affordable and appropriate strategies to deal with them (Conteh, 2007; Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 24). This process, like the Defence White Paper that preceded it, demonstrated local ownership in two ways. Firstly, the government of Sierra Leone, coordinated through its Office of National Security (ONS) led the process. The ONS created a working group comprised of key stakeholders from government ministries and departments and from civil society such as the NGO Campaign for Good Governance and Fourah Bay College (Conteh, 2007). Secondly, it was a broad consultative process, adopting a maximalist approach to the issue of who is local. According to Bendix & Stanley (2008: 24), a nation-wide consultation was sought with:

... parliamentary committees, executive bodies and government departments, as well as with the central institutions of the state security apparatus. The latter included the police, the military, prisons, customs and immigration authorities, the judicial system, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and civil society organisations. Such organisations included traditional rulers, religious groups, academics, professional societies and ex-combatants.

Fig. 5.1. Steps of the Security Sector Review

- STEP 1: *Conduct a Strategic Environment Review*** – determine ‘drivers’ that will shape the future of the country.
- STEP 2: *Determine National Threats*** – identify and build consensus on specific and generic threats, internal and external, to the future security of Sierra Leone and its citizens.
- STEP 3: *Develop Security Policy Framework*** – when consensus on national threats has been reached, establish which institution will counter these threats. This will include identifying areas where effective coordination is required between security system agencies and how such coordination can be delivered.
- STEP 4: *Develop Individual Institutions/Agencies Policy Framework*** – each relevant agency will identify the roles and capabilities it will need to effectively counter identified threats.
- STEP 5: *Conduct a Gap Analysis*** – in order to establish the nature and level of the transformation required, produce a valid assessment of the current capabilities of the institutions within the security system.
- STEP 6: *Develop Transformation Strategies*** – Identify where the organization is now and where it should be. Develop a strategy on how to bridge that gap.
- STEP 7: *Address Cost and Affordability*** – Produce recommendations for the transformation and development of the security system calibrated against affordability.
- STEP 8: *Implement Transformation Strategies.***

Source: Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 122

If one observes steps 3 and 4 above, it is evident that the implementation of the security review would be carried out by appropriate security agencies. These agencies would identify what they would need to effectively counter the threat relevant to their mandate. One of the outcomes from the findings and recommendations of the review was the establishment of the Security Sector Reform Program (SSRP). It was created to ensure that security agencies were capable of responding to internal and external threats. It was designed and formulated by security sector agencies with support from the UNDP, DfID, UNAMSIL and the Governance Reform Secretariat (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 115).

The implementation of the security review recommendations has been very slow. A key reason for this has been the expectation that the ONS would coordinate implementation, thus overburdening the agency. It has been argued that these expectations come from the operational successes of the ONS, as it is considered the most efficient government agency relative to others. As such, it would appear that the implementation plan has been the responsibility of the ONS as opposed to the different government departments offering specific expertise (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 161)

Doubts on ownership

While the aforementioned considerations assert instances of ownership, one can still question whether SSR in Sierra Leone reflected genuine ownership. Although the security review was conducted through extensive consultation, there is an argument to be made that the locus of decision-making authority nonetheless lay with the UK. For example, the Security Sector Working Group that conducted the security review estimated that the affordable and appropriate size strength of the RSLAF was around 10,500 personnel. Recall that after the MRP was completed in

August 2002, the RSLAF size stood at just over 12,000. (Nilson & Kovacs, 2013: 7). However, it has been argued that the donor community put pressure on the Sierra Leone government to accept a smaller projection. IMATT is noted to have proposed downsizing to an 8500-man army (army's current size is 9500 [Gbla, 2012]). Ebo (2006: 496) suggested that "Given Sierra Leone's dire economic situation, its security sector reform programme is highly externally dependent, with an ever-increasing possibility and temptation for 'he who pays the piper to dictate the tune.'" Furthermore, although the 2003 white paper on defence was the product of extensive consultation, the implementation of policies was not locally owned. Implementation was carried out by IMATT, through its "Plan 2010". At the same time, it could be said there was government buy-in, as this implementation plan was consented to by the MoD (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009).

5.5. Democratic governance outcomes in the presence and absence of local ownership

How have British-led security reform efforts developed in the presence and absence of local ownership led to the creation of a democratically accountable military in Sierra Leone? This section will discuss the following outcomes in the development of democratic control and oversight:

1. Firstly, SSR has succeeded in establishing objective control of the military in the form of the civilianisation of the MoD.
2. Secondly, the training program of the armed forces has been an effective conduit for the transmission of norms of democratic control as well as democratic civil-military relations. International humanitarian law, human rights, and civil-military relations in a democracy have been core components of IMATT's 12-week training program. This stands in contrast to the Liberian case study where 3 weeks of training in these themes were cut from the program for fiscal considerations. This casts a doubt on the ability of PMCs as reliable transmitters of norms of democratic governance.
3. Decentralisation of the security architecture has allowed for the participation of a much broader civilian constituency in security deliberation. This enhances local ownership as well as accountability and transparency.
4. Existing yet limited efforts towards the strengthening of parliamentary capacity to guarantee objective control of the military through oversight.
5. Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of security agencies within the security architecture. Furthermore, the security architecture has been simplified to the people of Sierra Leone, to provide the foundational understanding of the security architecture necessary for effective oversight.
6. Democratic civil-military relations have been developed through the regulation of the use of armed forces within the country, through the 2006 Military Aid to Civilian Power (MACP).

5.5.1. Local ownership as capacity-building: civilian and parliamentary oversight

One of the criticisms of SSR in Sierra Leone is that little attention has been paid to governance reform (Gbla, 2012). Testament to this for example is the fact the Parliament's legislative and oversight capacities remained weak when external involvement was high in the reform process and still do. The executive remains the core oversight body of the security sector in Sierra Leone. Parliamentary and broader civilian oversight potentials have been marginalised in the reform process. Some reasons for this include a lack of funding and appetite on the part of local and international actors involved in SSR. Furthermore, there is a lack of local/international oversight on SSR programs led by external actors. Finally, this omission is often the result of insufficient or non-existent institutionalisation of governance reform in the mission mandates of SSR programs (Hutchful, 2009: 40).

Nonetheless, DfID did fund the Parliamentary Committees Strengthening project between 2004 and 2006. During this period, £285,039 was spent to enhance the ability of parliamentary committees to play effective oversight and leadership in law making, as well as budget and legislative scrutiny (Hudson et al, 2007: 64). It targeted the performance improvement of 12 committees, a decision that was regarded as over ambitious (Poate et al, 2008: 33). Of these committees, the relevant security oversight bodies were the Committee on Defence, Internal and Presidential Affairs, the Committee on Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development and the Committee on Human Rights. The project was eventually cancelled, because of insufficient support from key stakeholders within parliament.

DfID's support to parliamentary capacity can be considered as fostering local ownership, inasmuch as it does not take a lead role in parliamentary reform. Capacity building herein provides the necessary and sufficient conditions for local actors to initiate and realise reform through local leadership. As such, assistance has focused on providing parliament and civil society with the necessary resources and opportunities to rehabilitate their oversight functions in relation to the armed forces and the broader security architecture. Support in this regard has involved the provision of basic equipment, given the logistical deficiencies faced by overburdened parliamentary committees. Furthermore, British funding has also sought to enhance synergies between civil society and parliamentary committees. For example, the British High Commission in Sierra Leone funds the publication of parliamentary updates meant to inform the public on the work of parliament. Such access to information reinforces the goal of accountability which civilian control and oversight revolves around. Furthermore, within this program, interns from the Centre for Development and Security Analysis (CEDSA) are also placed in parliamentary defence committees (Gbla, 2012: 136). This provides essential research capacity for parliamentary committees, thus bridging the epistemic gaps that otherwise make oversight difficult.

5.5.2. 2003 Defence White Paper

The Defence White Paper of 2003 had the democratic control of the military through transparency and accountability as an objective, as well as the improvement of the armed forces. But what were its contributions to civilian control and oversight? Recall that the MoD had already undergone restructuring by MODAT (UK) prior to the publication of the white paper. One of its achievements was the establishment of joint civil-military organization, which contributed to civilian control of the military. The white paper thus merely appraises this development, and doesn't particularly contribute to civilian control in that regard.

One could argue that the white Paper offers little in the way of consolidating democratic control in the form of civilian control and oversight. The paper claims to share the government's defence priorities and strategies with the people of Sierra Leone. However, it offers little in the sense of the development of oversight mechanisms and capacities necessary for civilian oversight. It suggests the creation of an independent Security Sector Committee (SSC) of equitable representation across the political spectrum and public institutions. It would function as a watchdog, monitoring decisions of government officials and publishing findings that would be open to public scrutiny and critique. In so doing, it would facilitate a national conversation on national security (MoD, 2003).

However, this was never implemented. In fact, the implementation plan (Plan 2010) was drawn up by IMATT and was focused largely on enhancing the operational structures and capacity of the RSLAF. The plan revolved around four key pillars. Firstly, an objective was the improvement of RSLAF structures through creation of a smaller and more effective RSLAF with capable maritime and air wings. Self-sufficiency was also an aspiration. The aim was to eventually hand over responsibility for training to the RSLAF with the exception of specialist training. The plan also sought to provide logistical support and the material and policy framework upon which a disciplined and professional armed forces could be consolidated (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009; 104-5; 2015: 32). A notable development in this regard is 'Operation Pebu' which was jointly funded by the UK and Government of Sierra Leone. It refurbished and constructed battalion barracks and brigade headquarters to remedy the accommodation crisis that plagued the military (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 106).

Despite offering little on the furtherance of civilian oversight of the military, the white paper makes some contribution to civilian oversight. One can make an argument that for civilians to effectively perform oversight over the security sector, they need information. Specifically, this regards information on the security architecture and the roles and responsibilities of the different security agencies. The white paper, which was themed 'informing the people' provides such information. Therefore, it provides foundational information necessary for civilian oversight of the military through a clarification of the roles and responsibilities internal to the broader security architecture.

5.5.3. 2005 security sector review

An important outcome of the locally owned security review process was the fact that it institutionally strengthened civilian oversight of the security sector in general and armed forces in particular. This was evident through the resulting creation of district and provincial security committees as avenues for local participation on security issues. Provincial and District Security Committees (the PROSECs and DISECs respectively) can be seen as an attempt to decentralise the security architecture and ensures that community involvement in threat assessment and security deliberation more broadly is institutionalised (Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 24). These forums bring together "...primary security players, local government and civil society representatives as well as traditional leaders to encourage the participation of the local community in dealing with security as it affects their areas." (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 121) The ONS provides coordination and secretarial assistance. The reports of district security committees are channelled to the ONS headquarters through their respective provincial committees (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 121). These committees were expected to play a key role in early warning on conflict triggers. As such, through

these committees, it is possible for civilians at local government level to be a part of both security deliberation and provision. In espousing the virtues of accountability and transparency, this outcome therefore contributes positively to the prospects of civilian oversight in post-conflict Sierra Leone (Bendix & Stanley, 2008: 24).

Conteh (2007: 97) also notes that one of the outcomes of the locally led security review was the recommendation of expanding the statutory members of the National Security Council (NSC). This expansion was to result in the inclusion of state actors which were not traditionally involved in security decision-making, implementation and evaluation. This was meant to ensure oversight and governance of the security sector.

5.5.4. Redefining the identity of the RSLAF

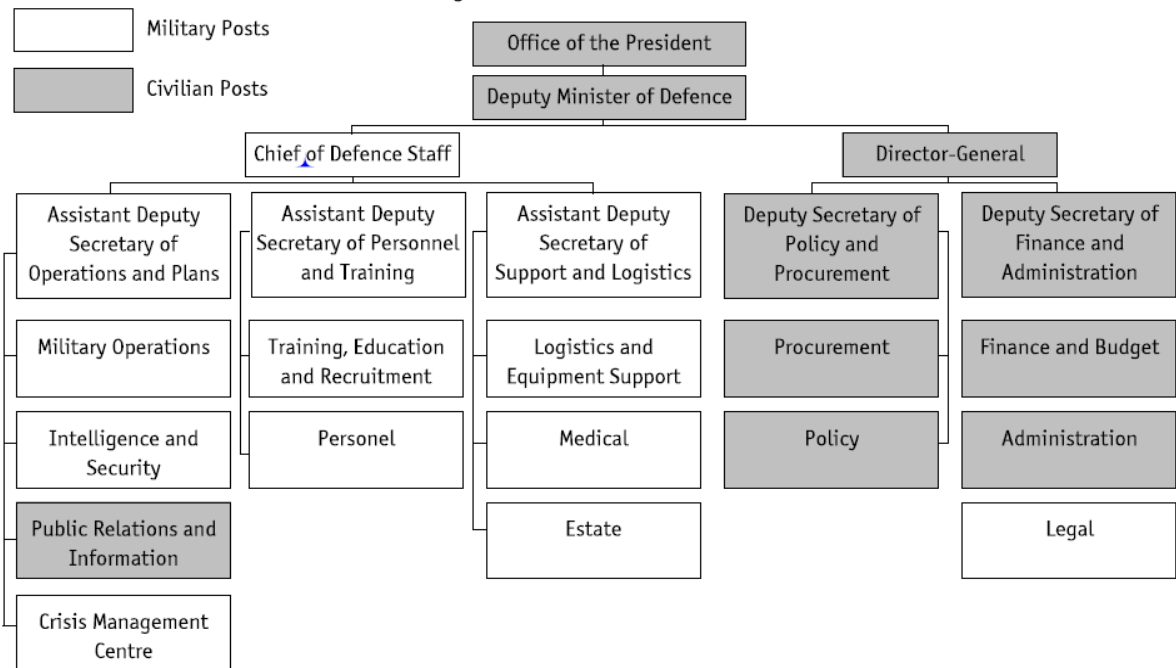
A key indicator of democratic control of the armed forces is the extent to which civil-military relations can be described as democratic. One feature of such democratic relations is that the military rarely involves itself in civilian affairs, except if constitutionally required to. This reluctance is indicative of civilian control, in the sense that the military respects the primacy of civilian authority. The point I wish to make here is that local ownership, in the consultative security review process, contributed to democratic civil-military relations, in its reconfiguration of the RSLAF identity. This was essential, given Sierra Leone's history of deplorable civil military relations, in which the armed forces routinely intervened in civilian affairs. The security review resulted in the Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP) (Ebo, 2006: 486). The central tenet of this policy is a description of democratic civil-military relations in the emphasis that the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) retains the overriding responsibility for the maintenance of the rule of law within the state. "Accordingly, the basic mantra is that the SLP look in and the RSLAF look out, adopting a tactical posture close to the border only." (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 127). Support to civilian powers under conditions of relative peace and stability in the absence of threat to the country's territorial integrity are accommodated under two types of tasks- a *standing MACP task* and an *emergency MACP task*. In both cases, authority for such support needs to be granted by the National Security Council, which is the highest forum on national security matters (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 127) In conclusion, local ownership in Sierra Leone can be said to have contributed to democratic governance in the sense of outlining, through policy democratic civil-military relations via a redefinition of the RSLAF's identity.

5.5.5. IMATT and the essentiality of ownership

While local ownership did result in democratic outcomes as exemplified by the outcomes of the 2005 security sector review, it can also be said the external leadership of SSR by IMATT both achieved and undermined democratic governance in the form of civilian oversight of the military. What Sierra Leone illustrates is a complex picture on the supposed essentiality of local ownership in consolidating democratic statebuilding.

On the one hand, one of the successes of IMATT regards the civilianisation of the Ministry of Defence (Ebo, 2006: 487). IMATT implemented reform designed by MODAT and contributed to the institutionalisation of executive oversight. The restructuring of the MoD was modelled on the UK MoD organisational structure, a key characteristic of which was joint military-civilian command (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 123; Nilsson & Kovacs, 2013: 6). The figure below shows the structure of the MoD after 2002, through which civilian control was enhanced.

The structure of Sierra Leone's Ministry of Defence after 2002



Source: (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 125)

The new MoD can be considered a break with an undemocratic past, wherein ministry posts were dominated by the military. Therefore, the new civil-military structure was a departure from a past characterised by the absence of civilian control of the military (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 124). This new organisational structure promotes accountability in the sense that democratically elected civilian leaders determine the direction of security policy in Sierra Leone. For example, the Defence White Paper published by the Directorate of Defence Policy comments on the IMATT MoD structure:

The Director General is accountable to Parliament for expenditure of all public money voted for defence purposes. This means that whilst ministers make policy decisions on the allocation of resources, the DG is responsible for ensuring that rigorous standards of propriety, regularity, affordability and value for money are applied to the expenditure giving effect to those ministerial decisions (Albrecht & Malan, 2006: 124).

Furthermore, the structuring of Defence Headquarters through the JFC and JSC was meant to pre-empt the likelihood of a coup through the division of command responsibility. Therefore, in the restructuring of the MoD and RSLAF, IMATT/MODAT can be said to contribute to the democratic control of the military. In structuring the MoD to reduce the likelihood of coups, it reduces the likelihood of military interference in civilian affairs. Taking this into consideration, the restructuring of the RSLAF command structure within the SSR context develops the notion of democratic control.

On the other hand, an observable feature of the reconstruction of the MoD was the fact that it was military driven. This was achieved through the placement of IMATT officers in key staff appointments and command positions within the armed forces. The most notable of this was the

fact that the Commander of IMATT was designated the military advisor to the government of Sierra Leone. One important consequence of this was the creation of an informal command structure for IMATT officers, mediated through the Commander of IMATT, directly to the President. While the benefit of this was speedy decision-making in critical moments, it undermined prospects for a culture of civilian oversight. This is because it undermined the broader military reconstruction project by bypassing chain of command as well as MoD civilian staff (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 59).

5.6. A Place for Ownership

From the preceding paragraphs, we begin to notice that efforts taking in the presence and absence of ownership were both able to consolidate democratic governance in the military. Regarding the essentiality of ownership therefore, this entertains the conclusion that while ownership may be sufficient for developing democratic control of the military, it may not be necessary. This should not be read as an attempt to diminish the importance of promoting ownership. As evident in the literature, ownership is fundamental to producing reform that connects the security architecture with the beneficiaries of security reform. To illustrate this point, one needs to revisit the rationale and impact of the locally owned 2003 Defence White Paper discussed earlier.

In 2003, the Deputy Minister of Defence (J.C. Bell) noted that the new MoD transformed by MODAT was too complex for Sierra Leoneans in both military and civilian domains to understand. Subsequently, the locally led Defence White paper previously discussed established a Command Structure Review Committee to review the MoD and RSLAF structures which had been reformed by MODAT and IMATT respectively. This review process was itself locally led. Even though the process did not substantially change the internal MoD structures, it is noted to have simplified the organization. One of such changes involved the complete overhaul of the British modelled staff grading system. Another was the dissolution of the Joint Support Command (JSC) and the restructuring of Defence Headquarters into the MoD and Joint Force Command (JFC) headquarters (Albrecht & Jackson, 2009: 99, 101). In other words, the Defence White Paper streamlined the RSLAF by merging the Joint Support and Force Commands into a single RSLAF command structure (Kondeh, 2008: 4)

Therefore, local ownership is essentially to producing locally specific and contextually relevant reform. This reflects strongly the pro-ownership claims made in the literature. This particular case study as illustrated contextual relevance in the sense of reform that locals can understand, as they are the ones to live with the reform and drive it forward.

5.7. Conclusion

Military reform in Sierra Leone has produced a number of outcomes that underpin the development of democratic control and oversight of the military (see page 46). What this chapter has shown is that these outcomes were developed in the presence and absence of local ownership. This case study therefore shows that regarding the essentiality of local ownership, one can reasonably conclude that it is sufficient but not necessary for the development of democratic control of the military. However, this does not diminish its importance, especially if we consider the rationale for simplifying MODAT and IMATT reforms evident in the 2003 Defence White Paper. Rather, local ownership is crucial in producing reform that is more context specific which the host country can understand, a claim that the existing literature attests to. It can make reform more contextually relevant and comprehensible. In this way, local ownership is important in bridging the gap between the beneficiaries of security and the broader security architecture. In so doing, it produces reform and by extension gains in democratic control and oversight that local actors can sustain. Thus while ownership may not be necessary for democratic governance in the military, it is essential for *sustainable* democratic governance.

This dissertation addresses a gap in the literature on local ownership. Focusing on SSR, this gap regards claims about the normative expectations internal to ownership and the empirical validity of these claims. It is argued that local ownership produces reform that is more legitimate and sustainable, in addition to developing democratic governance as the foundation to a post-war regime. My focus has been on the last claim. Regarding this gap in the literature, this thesis has subsequently engaged with the question: *how essential is local ownership in the consolidation of democratic control of the military?* To operationalise local ownership, I entertained the multiple understandings of ownership. That is, I looked for evidence of buy-in, full ownership, or extensive consultation with local actors, and considered the impact the presence or absence of ownership had on the development of democratic control of the military. This latter concept was operationalised in terms of civilian control and oversight (executive, legislative, civil society).

Comparing Sierra Leone and Liberia

The conflicts in both Liberia and Sierra Leone had similar causes, and even overlapped with one another. Regarding SSR, both witnessed a high involvement of external actors, with the US and UK playing leading roles. However, regarding military reform, Sierra Leone and Liberia adopted two fundamentally different approaches to reconstructing the armed forces. In Liberia, the military was disbanded and rebuilt from scratch, a decision made in the absence of extensive consultation with local actors. In Sierra Leone on the other hand, ex-combatants from the different warring factions were integrated into the existing Sierra Leone army, which was itself reconstructed. At the same time, it was not a conventional military merger as in the cases of Burundi and Mozambique as quota objectives were absent. A possible opportunity for further research would be to consider whether any of these strategies fundamentally impact the possibilities for local ownership.

Liberia was treated as a case study demonstrating the absence of local ownership, while comparatively, there was more substantive ownership in Sierra Leone. The assessment of the impact of ownership (or its absence) was done in the short term, that is, parallel to the reform process. This absence of ownership in Liberia was on two levels. In the first instance, military reform was outsourced to the US through the CPA. In the second instance, the US itself outsourced this responsibility to the private military companies. The reform process was subsequently devoid of local leadership, and extensive consultation with local actors did not happen as could otherwise have been hoped. This compounded accountability and transparency deficits characteristic of engagement with private military and security companies. Testament to this was the lack of access to contractual information on the part of the executive, legislature and civil society. Furthermore, members of the executive did not particularly feel they had control over the armed forces according to Brownie Samukai, the Minister of Defence. It can also be argued that the profit motive impeded the transmission of norms of democratic control through military training. The Liberian case study therefore confirms claims made in the literature on ownership. In the absence of local ownership, democratic governance in the military, understood as civilian control and oversight is undermined.

On the other hand, the Sierra Leone case study provided an opportunity to assess the essentiality of local ownership in a positive sense. What did the processes of local ownership do for the development of democratic governance? The security review process redefined the identity of the armed forces and made policy strides toward the establishment of civilian control, as seen with the 2006 Military Aid to Civilian Power (MACP), which defined the role of the armed forces and regulated its use within the country. Furthermore, it saw the decentralisation of security architecture through the establishment of the district and provincial security committees. These committees allow for more civilian participation and oversight in security deliberation at local government level. They in turn foster more long term ownership, given that they are avenues for local participation and leadership in the design, implementation and evaluation of security policies.

Nonetheless, there was evidence that efforts devoid of ownership nonetheless contributed to the democratic control of the military. A key example is the civilianisation of the MoD, as well as remedying capacity deficits internal to the institution. This develops democratic control as it signals a break with the past in which the institution was military personnel dominated, consequently limiting the possibilities for civilian control and oversight. Military training was also an effective conduit for the transmission of democratic norms.

This leads to the conclusion that local ownership is sufficient, but not necessary for the development and consolidation of democratic control of the military, as part of the broader liberal statebuilding project.

But if local ownership is only sufficient, the question remains what is it necessary for? I was able to answer this question by revisiting the 2003 Sierra Leone Defence White Paper, as well as criticisms of the DynCorp's military training in Liberia. Both illustrate the importance of ownership in producing reform that is more context specific and reflective of the needs of the recipient of security reform. In Sierra Leone, the White Paper streamlined and simplified the RSLAF and MoD structures reformed by IMATT and MODAT respectively. This meant that the paper demystified an otherwise complex security architecture. This therefore bridges the gap between the beneficiaries of security and the broader security architecture. A criticism of DynCorp's training was that it adopted a threat-independent approach and was not rooted in regional security dynamics. For example, it was neither rooted in an awareness of the volatile Mano River Union or the ECOWAS security architecture. Thus although a capable military was created, it was not clear that it was properly integrated into Liberia's regional needs. The assumption made is that local ownership would have produced such contextualised reform.

Further research

It is fair to say that the literature on local ownership is most developed on security sector reform. Although I have focused on military reform, local ownership is also evident in debates on transitional justice, especially with regards to rehabilitation local justice and reconciliation mechanisms. One example that has received a lot of attention in the literature is the *gacaca* in Rwanda. Therefore, further research is required in terms of extending the debate on local ownership to other peacebuilding domains.

More specifically, I have focused on the normative claims regarding the relationship between local ownership and democratic governance, and considered the empirical validity of this claim. There

are still other claims being made that require further research through case study analysis. Similar research questions to that of this dissertation include:

- (a) How essential is local ownership to the legitimacy of peacebuilding reform?
- (b) How essential is local ownership to the sustainability of peacebuilding reform?

Lessons learnt

Besides the conclusion of this project, it is observable that claims made regarding full (genuine) ownership in the literature are *highly* normative. The normativity of ownership is often backed up with the South African case study (Nathan, 2007; Africa, 2008). However, it is important to remember that South Africa is different from most post-conflict countries undergoing reconstruction. Ownership is subsequently neither demanded nor possible as was otherwise observable in the case of South Africa, often for structural considerations.

Evidence that full ownership is highly normative can be found in the way in which complaints about the absence of local ownership by local actors are often articulated. In both Sierra Leone and Liberia, the lack of ownership is often denoted as the *absence of extensive consultation with local actors*. This says something about the expectations of local actors regarding their involvement in the reconstruction process, in the sense that they may be willing to cede more leadership and control than is otherwise believed.

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