

Preparing for a Security Sector Review: Lessons From Kosovo



UNPUBLISHED DRAFT VERSION

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List of Acronyms

AUS	Advisory Unit on Security (UNMIK)
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP)
CivPol	Civilian Police (UN)
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPI	Division of Public Information (UNMIK)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
EU	European Union
ISSR	Internal Security Sector Review
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
KIPRED	Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KPCC	Kosovo Protection Corps Coordinator (UNMIK)
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OPS	Office for Public Safety (PISG)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (Kosovo)
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (UNDP)
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN)
SSDAT	Security Sector Development Advisory Team (UK)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

This document reports on the author's involvement in the preparation of the Kosovo Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) while working as a Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Kosovo. This involvement spans a roughly twelve-month period, from 25 February 2005 to 8 February 2006. Consequently, this report does not cover the subsequent ISSR implementation phase, expected to last until 31 December 2006.

This post-assignment report, drafted shortly after the end of the author's eighteen-month tenure in Kosovo, is also intended to provide UNDP staff, as well as their United Nations (UN) colleagues and the public in general, with a description of the preparatory work undertaken before the implementation of the ISSR but, more importantly, with lessons learned from such preparatory work.

These lessons learned, drawn directly from the author's field experience, are not provided as instructions or directives but as a practitioner's suggestions and reflections. It is hoped that this report can contribute to the development of good practices and more specifically to the establishment of more proactive and holistic mechanisms in the preparation of security sector reform projects such as the Kosovo ISSR. This report might also prove useful to governments, UN agencies and other nongovernmental organisations in designing security sector reform strategies or programmes. Given the importance of security sector reform projects, especially in post-conflict environments, the preparatory work undertaken before these projects should receive more attention and care, and this report intends on providing actionable suggestions to assist the decision-makers and practitioners alike.

The core of the report lists and describes the tasks, objectives and outputs undertaken as part of the ISSR preparatory phase. Each of these items is then analysed and lessons learned are drawn from them, based on the specific Kosovo ISSR experience but with the objective of being relevant and useful for future similar projects.

Context

Kosovo Context

Kosovo is an autonomous province within Serbia administered by the UN in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 adopted on 10 June 1999. The definition of the legal status of Kosovo as a UN protectorate came after a military campaign led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and aimed at ending the Kosovo War. The conflict originated after the province of Kosovo was stripped from its autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and after the majority Albanian community launched a guerrilla war against Yugoslav forces in Kosovo. The guerrilla war, the violent crackdown against Albanians fighters and civilians ordered by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and the 78-day NATO campaign became known as the Kosovo War and is still fresh in the collective memory of today's Kosovo.

While the ultimate executive authority over the administration of the province rests with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG), heading the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), an indigenous government called the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) was established and competencies were gradually transferred to its various ministries and institutions to build capacity and develop local ownership. Headed by a Prime Minister and a President, and composed of a parliamentary Kosovo Assembly and fifteen ministries, the PISG has recently entered into negotiations with counterparts from Serbia in order to define a new legal status for the province, to be implemented after the end of the UN interim administration mission. These talks on Kosovo's future status started on 20 February 2006 and are mediated by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari.

Although these negotiations are seen as a major step in resolving the legal status of Kosovo, pervasive pessimism and frustration among the population have grown over the years in the face of low growth, high unemployment, and political and security instability. In fact, most Kosovans and international officials believe that the poor economic situation is mainly due to the unresolved status of the province, which detracts investors from doing business and investing in Kosovo. The often-volatile security situation, the poor state of its infrastructures, the high levels of pollution, as well as the unreliable production and delivery of electricity, render Kosovo unfriendly to foreign investors in addition to fuelling the impatience and frustration of the local population.



KPS, KFOR and CivPol officers respond to a bomb alert in downtown Pristina on 17 December 2004.

However, great improvements have been achieved in many fields and one of the success stories seems to be the development of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). Although security is still the ultimate responsibility of the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) and of the UNMIK Civilian Police (CivPol), most operational policing and management roles are now the remit of the KPS Kosovan leadership. Along with the PISG Office for Public Safety (OPS) and the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), the KPS is at the core of Kosovo's developing security sector.

Unfortunately, the peculiarity of Kosovo's political status and its relatively weak political leadership threaten the apparent stability and efficiency of its security sector. While UNMIK still maintains the ultimate authority over the security sector despite the recent establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, it is feared that following the resolution of Kosovo's status, political rivalries and corruption will quickly sabotage the efforts invested in the past seven years to develop a functioning KPS and nascent security sector.

A sound and holistic security sector reform programme, initiated early after the end of the open conflict in 1999, could have led to the development of a more stable, predictable and sustainable security sector in Kosovo. Instead, and in part due to the unresolved issue of Kosovo's final status, a hotchpotch of projects and initiatives came and went, filling some gaps within the security sector but without an all-encompassing and long-term approach. The ISSR was designed to adopt such an approach and to assess the short- and long-term needs of Kosovo's security sector in an inclusive, participatory and holistic manner.

Internal Security Sector Review

In late 2004, the Kosovo SRSG and Head of UNMIK held discussions with British officials regarding Kosovo's security sector and concluded that it would greatly benefit from a strategy on how to further develop an efficient, transparent and accountable security sector in the short- and long-term. Hence, at the request of the SRSG, the British Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT) was tasked with designing a review process which would identify the needs of Kosovo's security sector and prepare a development plan aimed at fulfilling these needs.

The SSDAT visited Kosovo at numerous occasions and drafted a report, dated 6 May 2005, recommending the implementation of the ISSR. Based on its extensive experiences in other parts of the world, the SSDAT recommended a twelve-month, eight-Stage approach to this review process:

- During Stage One, a strategic environment review will be conducted to determine what will be the features of the environment in which security will need to be delivered in the future;
- During Stage Two, a threat analysis will be performed to identify and build a consensus on the specific and generic threats to the future security of Kosovo and its citizens, including internal, transnational, social and economic threats;
- During Stage Three, an internal security policy framework will be developed to identify which institution or agency will be responsible for delivering the capability to counter the threats identified in Stage Two;
- During Stage Four, the policy framework of the individual institutions or agencies identified during Stage Three will be drafted to identify the role and capabilities they need to develop so that they can effectively respond to the threats which they are responsible for countering;
- During Stage Five, a gap analysis will be conducted to form a valid assessment of the current role and capabilities of the institutions and agencies within the security sector in Kosovo;
- During Stage Six, development strategies will be established to bridge the gaps identified in Stage Five;
- During Stage Seven, the cost and affordability of the ISSR conclusions will be confirmed to ensure that the recommendations for the transformation and development of the security sector are affordable over the long term;
- During Stage Eight, a comprehensive Security Sector Development Programme will be put together and the strategy for its implementation will be developed.

This approach was fully endorsed by the SRSG, the Kosovo President and the Kosovo Prime Minister, and it was decided that the ISSR would indeed go ahead. However, implementing a project such as the ISSR required a tremendous amount of preparatory work, which had in fact started several months before the release of the SSDAT final report. The involvement of UNDP in this preparatory work started on 25 February 2005 when the SSDAT met with the UNDP Kosovo Resident Representative and the Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio.



The Kosovo ISSR logo developed in early 2006.

ISSR Preparatory Work

At the 25 February 2005 meeting and at subsequent meetings with the SSDAT, UNMIK and the PISG, UNDP Kosovo confirmed its willingness to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the ISSR. The overall responsibility of UNDP Kosovo would be to provide the logistical and administrative structure for the implementation of the ISSR. The role of UNDP would be two-fold:

- Recruit the short- and long-term local and international staff needed to conduct the ISSR;
- Manage the implementation and subcontracting of the various activities required to undertake the eight ISSR Stages, such as community consultations, public opinion surveys, media campaigns, functional reviews and working groups.

It was also agreed that the SSDAT would provide advice and recommendations when needed and when possible, that UNMIK would provide political and strategic support, and that the PISG would provide the institutional home for the ISSR team. In addition, UNMIK and UNDP Kosovo jointly initiated contacts with potential donors to raise funding for the functioning budget of the ISSR process, estimated in July 2005 at US \$2.5 million.

An unofficial, *ad hoc* ISSR preparatory working group was thereby formed, composed of the Head and Deputy Head of the UNMIK Advisory Unit on Security (AUS), joined in September 2005 by a Political Affairs Officer, a representative of the UNMIK Office of the Kosovo Protection Corps Coordinator (KPCC), two advisors from the OPS, and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio.

The main goals to achieve during the preparatory work period and, concordantly, the objectives of this working group, could be summarised as follows, in no particular order:

- Secure the support and participation of the relevant international and local stakeholders;¹
- Draft a detailed ISSR project budget;
- Mobilise the necessary funds from interested donors;
- Recruit the best people to lead and manage the implementation of the ISSR process;
- Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Steering Committee;
- Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group;
- Design a working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and its local counterpart agency;
- Draft a provisional communications strategy and liaise with the media on ISSR-related matters;
- Organise an official and public launch of the ISSR process;
- Complete the preparatory work within the tentative timeframe.

While these ten objectives or outputs describe what should have ideally happened ahead of the implementation of the ISSR, the circumstances prevented some of them to be either fully achieved, fully successful, or completed on time.

The next ten sections, corresponding to the ten objectives listed above, describe what happened when trying to achieve them, explain why differences – if any – appeared between intentions and results, and present lessons learned for a future similar project.

¹ In the context of this report, such form of endorsement by an organisation or an entity characterised by its overt support or active participation in the idea or project it endorses, is referred to as “buy-in”.

1. Political Buy-In

Objective. Ahead of the ISSR implementation phase, secure the political support and the active participation of the UN, UNMIK and NATO, of some foreign governments, and of the PISG.

The UN, UNMIK and NATO were asked to provide political support, to lobby and promote the ISSR in various fora, and to share information relevant to the ISSR; foreign governments were asked to provide diplomatic support and public endorsement to enhance the credibility and visibility of the process; and the PISG was asked to endorse the process and to commit to the full cooperation of its officials. The full involvement of local authorities was crucial since the ISSR could only be successful if the PISG believed in the benefits of the process and its end-result. Moreover, in addition to identifying the development needs of the Kosovo's security sector, the ISSR was designed to build the capacity of local institutions in the field of public safety and national security, hence the importance of securing the PISG political buy-in.

Actual Results. Thankfully, the SSDAT had already met with a wide range of local and international stakeholders when members of the preparatory working group started meeting with the various potential partners. The political buy-in of UNMIK and the SRSG was of prime importance, given their executive authority over the administration of the province. Unfortunately, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), responsible for overseeing all UN peacekeeping missions, took several weeks to review and approve the ISSR process and approach. Without such approval, the SRSG could hardly endorse the process, despite being unofficially supportive of the idea. Such delay affected the other preparatory tasks and delayed further public discussions on the ISSR.

The working group met with representatives of foreign governments in Kosovo and the initial reaction of most of them was fairly positive. The British, Dutch and Swiss governments were the most receptive in committing support to the ISSR process, while most other governments expressed initial support without confirming an actual, concrete commitment.

The Kosovo Prime Minister and President were briefed by the SRSG about the ISSR process and expressed their interest and support for the endeavour. Unfortunately, such endorsement seems not to have been stressed strongly enough upon the PISG officials and staff, as the working group kept witnessing lukewarm commitment, slow initiative and reluctant participation of PISG representatives in the ISSR preparatory work.

Explanation. The delay in securing DPKO's approval of the ISSR was apparently caused by the lack of background information DPKO possessed about the principles, approaches and benefits of security sector reform initiatives in a context such as that of Kosovo. Without such crucial awareness, DPKO officials probably did not want to commit to the security sector review as presented to them, which led to a series of long-distance exchanges between New York and Pristina, and to the removal of any reference to the KPC or to external defence, turning the review process into a strictly inward-looking initiatives. By the time the project document had been satisfactorily revised, the preparatory work had been greatly delayed.

The absence of stronger and more numerous commitments coming from foreign government officials in Kosovo was apparently caused by the fact that, during meetings with foreign representatives, much of the emphasis was put on the funding aspect of their potential contribution rather than on their political support. It is therefore possible that many of them were reluctant to commit to a political or diplomatic support, thinking that such support would also be interpreted as a binding commitment to finance the ISSR. In addition, they mentioned that their commitment would be conditional to other governments committing as well so that it would be seen as a multinational support effort rather than

as a single-country contribution, thus avoiding the potentially controversial ISSR being branded as the initiative of a sole government.

The lukewarm support received from PISG representatives was apparently caused by their failure to recognise the tremendous benefits and opportunities that the ISSR could bring to the PISG in terms of visibility, credibility and capacity building. In fact, despite the continuous and repetitive briefings by the working group, it seems that PISG officials still could not satisfactorily answer the sempiternal question of “what’s in it for me” and that they did not grasp the high return on investment that the ISSR could offer, rendering their political buy-in rather theoretical.

Lessons Learned. In the context of a UN peacekeeping mission, the relevant DPKO officials should be briefed, ideally in person and in New York, to discuss the situation in the field, the particulars of the project, its work plan and its political implications, and to answer questions on the spot rather than by fax or e-mail.

To secure the political buy-in of foreign governments, the working group should brief, ideally in person and in the relevant capitals, the diplomatic representatives – to discuss political support – separately from the international aid officials – to discuss financial support. These visits should not replace meetings with in-country representatives but rather complement them, while at the same time respecting the chain-of-command between the headquarters and the liaison offices.

In order to secure local political buy-in, it might be relevant to first secure the endorsement of a foreign government enjoying friendly and close links with the local authorities, such as the American government in the case of Kosovo. Then, meetings and briefings with local government officials should emphasise the benefits that the local government and population would gain from the project. Members of the working group should put themselves in the shoes of the local government officials and find out what is the right combination of benefits and investment that could secure their political buy-in. Otherwise, the project is bound to be shelved among other foreign-borne ideas and initiatives that were not rooted in the needs and desiderata of the local government and population.

2. Project Budget

Objective. Draft a detailed ISSR project budget in order to plan for resource mobilisation, procurement, staff recruitment, and logistics.

Actual Results. The working group could count on the skills and dedication of the KPCC representative to undertake most of the budget-drafting task, in close collaboration with the other working group members, other UNMIK officials, and the SSDAT members, who provided inputs based on their previous experiences. One of the earliest drafts of the budget was discussed on 17 June 2005, roughly a month after the submission of the SSDAT report, and forecasted a need of approximately US \$1.1 million. That figure was soon afterwards revised upwards to US \$2.5 million before several budget revisions brought it back down to a total of US \$1.767 million, which is still the figure used as of today. Despite all the efforts deployed into drafting a solid and detailed ISSR budget, it is only towards the end of the year 2005 that a clear and more definitive version of the budget could be drafted.

The most recent ISSR budget dated 19 January 2006, which resulted from these successive revisions, lists a total of 40 budget lines (see Annex 3) in ten general categories:

- ISSR Secretariat Staff (44%);
- Temporary Experts (8%);
- Local Research and Analysis Company (3%);
- Vehicles Rental and Maintenance (6%);
- Administration and Office Expenses (6%);
- Events Management and Expenses (7%);
- Public Communications (15%);
- Travel Expenses (5%);
- Miscellaneous (1%);
- UNDP General Management Services (5%).

Explanation. The difficulty in rapidly drafting a definitive detailed budget was apparently caused by the challenge of identifying the day-to-day needs of this twelve-month project, based on continuously-changing data and unconfirmed commitments. For example, in mid-2005, a brand-new government building was being erected in Pristina, and discussions with the PISG had led to an informal agreement about the ISSR team being housed in these new premises. However, as time passed, the uncertainty surrounding the government's commitment and the contractor's delivery date led the working group to include a budget line for office rental, office furniture and utilities. This budget line was removed when the date of the move into the new building could be confirmed and the total budget figure was consequently adjusted downwards. In addition, the definitive size of the ISSR Secretariat had political implications and could not be precisely determined until late 2005, which also led to budget revisions.



The new Kosovo Government Building, completed in early 2006, now houses the ISSR Secretariat alongside the OPS.

Lessons Learned. Drafting a detailed budget is a very important task and the preparatory working group should initiate it as soon as possible, even if it means to revise it later on. Ideally, all the needs should be precisely identified and realistic figures inputted, based on relevant experience and expertise with a similar project. If any data or information related to the funding needed to implement the project is missing, the budget should be drafted using a worst-case scenario approach, like in the example above where a budget line for office rental was added even though it was possible that the new government building would provide for the necessary office space.

3. Funding

Objective. In accordance with the draft ISSR budget, mobilise the necessary funds from interested donors. Since the initial objective was to raise US \$2.5 million, most donors were approached with this draft figure, while only a small number of donors were approached later, after the total project budget had been almost halved.

As a result of early discussions between UNMIK, the SSDAT and UNDP Kosovo, it was agreed that UNDP Kosovo would be responsible for providing the necessary mechanism for the adequate implementation of the ISSR.² As mentioned above, such responsibility involved staff recruitment, contract management and, consequently, budget management. In theory, no financial resource would be required before the beginning of the ISSR implementation since the members of the working group were involved in their respective UNMIK, PISG or UNDP capacity, and that the operating and travelling expenses for the SSDAT were covered by the British government.

Actual Results. For resource mobilisation purposes, the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst took the lead in preparing the documentation for and the meetings with the Kosovo donor community. In addition, the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), headquartered in New York, was also approached as a potential ISSR donor. As mentioned above, the issue of funding the ISSR was the main focus of most meetings held with representatives of foreign governments. UNMIK and UNDP representatives played the main role in meeting with these officials, detailing the project, presenting the figures, and explaining the work plan. Again, the British, Dutch and Swiss governments were the most receptive in committing financial support to the ISSR process, while most other governments expressed initial support without confirming an actual, concrete commitment.

As to BCPR, although informal discussions took place in New York as early as in June 2005, and although the formal request for funding was submitted on 27 July 2005, it is only on 17 October 2005 that UNDP Kosovo was informed of BCPR's positive decision. By that time, the preparatory work had suffered serious delays, the credibility of the process had been questioned, and some donors and partners had manifested understandable concerns regarding the long-term viability of the ISSR project.

Nevertheless, contributions were finally confirmed, either in the form of money handed over to UNDP, or in the form of the donor committing to provide the project with products or services, such as equipment or the recruitment of temporary staff or research companies. The total value of these contributions was estimated at US \$1,403,160.00, representing close to 80% of the total forecasted ISSR budgetary needs, and comprised the following:

- US \$672,840.00 in monetary contribution from BCPR, confirmed on 17 October 2005;
- US \$100,000.00 in monetary contribution from UNDP Kosovo office budget;
- GB £200,000.00 in monetary contribution from the British Department for International Development (DFID), confirmed on 11 October 2005;
- Approximately EU €70,000 worth of budget item funding from the government of The Netherlands, confirmed on 11 November 2005;
- Approximately US \$196,320.00 worth of budget item funding from the government of Switzerland, confirmed on 2 December 2005.

² UNDP Kosovo benefited from an already existing project entitled the Support Project to the Security and Rule of Law in Kosovo, which served as the mechanism through which the ISSR would be managed.

Explanation. The damaging delays in securing funding suffered by the ISSR preparatory phase was apparently caused by the fact that many government officials were reluctant to commit first or alone to any kind of financial support because of the sensitive nature of a high-profile, security-related project such as the ISSR. In other words, and as mentioned above, their commitment would be conditional to other governments committing as well so that it would be seen as a multinational support effort rather than as a single-country contribution, thus avoiding the potentially controversial ISSR being branded as the initiative of a sole government. UNDP Kosovo expected an early confirmation of some financial contribution from BCPR, which would have led other donors to pledge their support to what would have then become a multinational effort. However, the delay in securing funding commitment from BCPR probably discouraged some donors while delaying the contribution of others. The British Department for International Development (DFID), took a risk in confirming its contribution and becoming the first and potentially sole ISSR donor, followed six days later by BCPR.

Lessons Learned. As discussed above, to secure funding from foreign governments and other organisations, the working group should brief the diplomatic representatives – to discuss political support – separately from the international aid officials – to discuss financial support. Again, this should be done by travelling to the various capitals and meeting face-to-face with the relevant officials. These visits should not replace meetings with in-country representatives but rather complement them, while at the same time respecting the chain-of-command between the headquarters and the liaison offices. In addition, the resource mobilisation effort should begin as soon as possible after the approval of the project and the drafting of its budget. The importance of securing financial resources early and sufficiently is often overlooked but late or insufficient funding can jeopardise the success of the initiative and render all the preparatory work worthless.

4. Staff Recruitment

Objective. Recruit the best people to lead and manage the implementation of the ISSR process. This process was not significantly different from the recruitment process of other UNDP projects but had the particularity of being highly political, since the individuals hired to form the ISSR Secretariat would ultimately be drafting recommendations on the development of Kosovo's future security sector. The recruitment process involved drafting terms of reference for the various positions, publishing vacancy announcements, short-listing and interviewing the selected candidates, and deciding on the best candidates to be hired.

Actual Results. The draft terms of reference were provided by the SSDAT, based on its previous experiences and its opinion on the expertise needed, while the working group members contributed to their final version. The short-listing of candidates, the interviews, and the final recruitment decisions necessarily had to involve representatives from the three main organisations: UNMIK (AUS), the PISG (OPS) and UNDP. Therefore, one representative from each of these organisations was mandated to take part in each step of the recruitment process. The participation of PISG representatives was one of the few signs of their political buy-in and willingness to be involved in the ISSR project. Unfortunately, some of them failed to grasp certain ISSR overarching principles and focused on the immediate political gains that their participation could offer, going as far as taking candidates' filial or political affiliations into consideration.

During the process, 482 applications were received to fill nine positions, while the position of ISSR Driver was filled through an existing UNDP roster of local candidates. The UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst and his colleagues were responsible for preparing and publishing the vacancy announcements in printed and electronic media, which usually included the local newspapers and relevant websites, as well as wide distribution by e-mail. Then, as agreed with all the parties involved, the SSDAT provided advice and recommendations on the applicants in order to identify those who were clearly non-qualified, did not meet the minimum requirements, and therefore did not warrant further analysis. Unfortunately, many applicants did not meet these minimum requirements and it was agreed, for the integrity of the ISSR process, to discard them from the onset.

Meetings were organised for representatives of AUS, OPS and UNDP Kosovo to look at the potential candidates and establish short lists containing the best three to five applicants, in order of preference. This process was extremely tedious and required a lot of time and energy from the three representatives, since each application had to be analysed and discussed before being rated according to a set of criteria agreed upon in advance. The short-listed candidates were offered a telephone or face-to-face interview and, as agreed upon in advance, tripartite panels were set up and convened for each interview session.³ Without considering the time required to draft and finalise the terms of reference, the recruitment process lasted close to five months, from October 2005 to February 2006.

Explanation. The long delay in undertaking and completing the recruitment process was apparently caused, in the first place, by the fact that UNDP considered it too risky to advertise positions for which no funding had yet been secured. Therefore, the beginning of the selection process was closely tied to the resource mobilisation effort, discussed above, which was itself delayed. However, all the documentation and processes had been prepared in advance so that when funding was confirmed in October 2005, the publication of the vacancy announcements could start immediately. Secondly, the

³ It is worth mentioning that, in the case of the ISSR Coordinator, the interview panel was composed of the Deputy SRSR, the Kosovo Prime Minister, and the UNDP Resident Representative, providing a clear sign of the project's importance and sensitivity.

ISSR being a highly-sensitive initiative, the PISG showed strong reluctance to the main positions being filled by non-Kosovans. This position, although understandable, proved unrealistic given the need for a level of experience and expertise which could not be reasonably found among Kosovo's population. A compromise was reached when the parties agreed to open only four of the ten positions to both foreigners and Kosovans. Thirdly, the involvement of three organisations in all steps of the recruitment process necessarily tripled the time required to complete the process, especially given the need to continuously coordinate the schedule of three representatives otherwise extremely busy and sometimes absent.

In addition, the somehow low quantity of high-quality applications received was apparently caused by the overly limited dissemination of the vacancy announcements. The announcements for the four positions open to both Kosovans and non-Kosovans were published, in English, in a local Albanian-language newspaper and in a local Serbian-language newspaper, as well as on the websites of UNDP Kosovo and UNDP global, of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and on various e-mail distribution networks. The other announcements were published in Albanian and Serbian in the local press, and in English on UNDP Kosovo website.

Lessons Learned. The recruitment process for such a sensitive project needs to involve the relevant parties, even if this complicates or lengthen the process. However, to avoid damaging delays, the three representatives mandated by their respective organisations should be able to dedicate as much of their time as possible to this process. Consequently, it would be wise for these organisations to delegate representatives who have a more flexible or less burdened schedule. In addition, the whole recruitment process – including the various steps, the criteria for short-listing, the form and content of the interviews, the consensus-based decision-making process – should be agreed in advance by all parties. If need be, a written document containing these details could be drafted and signed by the parties.

As to the quality level of the applications received, the media used to disseminate the vacancy announcements should be as numerous and wide as possible. Although they were in fact published through the channels commonly used by UNDP Kosovo, it would have been useful to greatly broaden these channels and invest the necessary funds to reach a greater number of skilled applicants.

5. Steering Committee

Objective. Prepare terms of reference and a membership list for the ISSR Steering Committee, and present them to the SRSG for approval. While the ISSR Secretariat would be tasked with implementing the review process, the ISSR Steering Committee would be responsible for directing and monitoring the process. The membership list was probably the most directly political aspect of the ISSR process and had to be drafted with careful consideration for local sensitivities, the political context, the main and most influential actors, and for the international community.

Actual Results. While the AUS took the lead in pursuing this task, it received inputs from the other working group members and from the SSDAT. The task was highly sensitive and the composition of the ISSR Steering Committee had to find an adequate balance between the need to involve all major, most relevant and most influential actors, and the need to maintain a membership small enough to ensure efficiency and possibility of consensus. The AUS drafted the terms of reference with the valuable input of the SSDAT and prepared three options for the SRSG regarding the membership list. The option selected by the SRSG led to the establishment of a 16-member ISSR Steering Committee, which met on 10 October 2005, on 18 November 2005, and on 11 April 2006, composed of:

- The SRSG as the chairperson;
- The KFOR Commander;
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar I (Police and Justice);
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar III (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE));
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar IV (European Union (EU));
- Six representatives of the Kosovo political establishment, including the opposition;
- Five representatives of Kosovo minority communities.

Explanation. The difficulty in finalising this objective, and more specifically the membership list, was apparently caused by the complexity of the Kosovo political scene and the conflicting interests at play. Kosovo being a UN protectorate with a SRSG holding executive power, an indigenous government with increasing responsibilities, and a known history of bitter political rivalry, drafting a membership list for a committee tasked with overseeing the review of the security sector was a daring challenge.

Lessons Learned. In a post-conflict environment such as in Kosovo, where political factions thirst for power and influence and where the security sector still bears an aura of all-powerfulness, the establishment of an ISSR Steering Committee should strike a balance between respecting political sensitivities and ensuring effectiveness. In drafting the three options for the membership list presented to the SRSG, the AUS considered the need for the ISSR Steering Committee to:

- Ensure that the process is conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, consensus, openness, inclusiveness;
- Ensure that there is political ownership of the project and its outcomes, including the security sector development programme, by all political parties;
- Ensure that the process meets the expectations of the local population while being affordable and sustainable in the long-term;
- Direct the responsible ministers, agencies, officials or individuals to implement recommendations and changes;
- Support the ISSR Secretariat in its work by providing technical advice and know-how as it discharges its responsibilities;
- Encourage all elements of the local and international communities to participate constructively in the process.

Such principles, although difficult to implement in practice, should ideally guide any decision involving the establishment of an ISSR Steering Committee.

6. Consultative Group

Objective. Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group, a network of individuals and organisations which would inform, review and validate each Stage of the ISSR. The ISSR Consultative Group would provide people of Kosovo with an opportunity to voice their hopes and fears related to security and to Kosovo's security sector.

Actual Results. Here again, the AUS took the lead in preparing the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group, in close collaboration with the OPS, and with frequent input from UNDP Kosovo and other partners such as the OSCE. After numerous discussions, it seemed that the idea of formal terms of reference would not allow for the necessary flexibility and should therefore be replaced by a simpler mission statement, formulated as follows:

"The role of the ISSR Consultative Group is to provide a network of individuals and organisations to inform, review and validate each Stage of the ISSR. The structure and work of the ISSR Consultative Group is intended to ensure that experiences, views and opinions from outreach consultations with the PISG, the international community, political parties, communities, civil society and other interest groups at the local level are included in the process."⁴

Since it was never intended for all the individuals and organisations of the ISSR Consultative Group to meet all together at regular intervals, the number of members was not limited by physical, logistical or geographical constraints. Therefore, the list of individuals and organisations invited to join the ISSR Consultative Group grew to approximately 140 entries, and was arbitrarily divided into three sub-groups:

- UNMIK, the PISG, political parties, and the security providers (42%);
- Ethnic and religious communities (15%);
- Civil society, the media, and the business community (43%).

On 10 November 2005, the preparatory working group, led by the AUS, held a large one-day conference in Pristina to draw together representatives from the ISSR Consultative Group. Opened by the SRSB and the Prime Minister, the conference was a clear success as more than 100 representatives attended the event, taking that opportunity to voice their opinion, hopes and concerns during working group sessions. It was the beginning of the ISSR outreach programme, intended at feeding the process with the expectations and inputs of Kosovans from all segments of society.⁵ The conference could become a reality thanks to the dedication of a team of individuals who believed in the participatory nature of the ISSR process, and benefited from the participation of motivated and knowledgeable speakers and moderators.



The 10 November 2005 conference was a success, bringing together more than 100 ISSR Consultative Group representatives for a full day in Pristina.

⁴ Excerpt from the Briefing Notes for ISSR Consultative Group Facilitators prepared by AUS ahead of the first ISSR Consultative Group conference on 10 November 2005.

⁵ In February 2006, a series of consultations with representatives of all ethnic and religious groups, civil society organisations, municipal administration, and of the police took place throughout Kosovo. The opinions and concerns expressed during these meetings have provided the basis for identifying key ISSR issues and priorities.

Explanation. The urgency in securing local ownership and participation led to the organisation of an ISSR Consultative Group conference before the actual start of the ISSR process. The ISSR preparatory working group could not have waited for the recruitment and arrival of the ISSR Secretariat to organise such a conference because other important preparatory steps depended on the ISSR process being formally introduced to the individuals and organisations called upon to participate.

Lessons Learned. The ISSR is a review process aimed at identifying priorities in the development of an accountable, efficient and transparent security sector. In order for such priorities to be rooted in the reality, expectations and practical needs of the local population, a consultative process should be put in place. The hopes and fears of the local population need to feed into the analytical and recommendation process of the ISSR; after all, the main beneficiary of these recommendations is the local population and its opinion cannot be ignored. Consequently, the establishment of a consultative group should be as open and inclusive as possible, and ideally decentralised, to prevent the ISSR process from being focused solely on the needs and concerns of a small region or of a small category of people.

An all-inclusive, introductory conference should be organised to draw together as many members as possible, before initiating a series of numerous targeted and focused consultations with much smaller groups. Although the preparation of the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group should begin during the ISSR preparatory phase, their finalisation and the following outreach campaign should be the responsibility of the ISSR Secretariat during the implementation phase.

7. Local Counterpart Agency

Objective. Design the most appropriate working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and its local counterpart agency, the OPS.

Actual Results. The first attempt at defining this working relationship can be found in an internal UNDP document drafted on 3 May 2005 suggesting that the OPS take upon the “ISSR secretarial role” as another one of its many roles and responsibilities, and that the ISSR budget simply cover for the recruitment of the temporary OPS staff required to undertake the review process. The OPS suggested its own arrangement on 13 July 2005, followed by counter-suggestions from the working group on 1 August 2005 and from the OPS again on 9 August 2005, before the matter was finalised and agreed upon through a memorandum of understanding dated 9 January 2006 and differing only slightly from the working group’s previous one. This memorandum of understanding stated that:

- The ISSR Coordinator is responsible to the ISSR Steering Committee for the delivery of the ISSR and will report functionally to its chairperson on the management of the ISSR Secretariat, the substance of the review, and the recommendations, briefings and reports arising therefrom;
- The ISSR Coordinator will have a line reporting relationship with the OPS Director and with UNDP Kosovo, for issues of personal conduct, management, and day-to-day administration;
- The ISSR Coordinator will make monthly verbal reports to the OPS Director on the work of the ISSR Secretariat and will brief the Director on all significant events pertaining to the review;
- The ISSR Coordinator will regularly brief the UNDP Resident Representative on ISSR Secretariat management and personnel matters, and will be accountable to him for ISSR budget matters;
- The ISSR Coordinator will be responsible for the release of any ISSR-related information to the public after having consulted with the OPS Director;
- The OPS existing staff will work closely with the ISSR Secretariat advisers and local experts but will maintain their line reporting relationship with the OPS Director;
- As part of the wider capacity-building project within the Office of the Prime Minister, the ISSR Secretariat advisers and local experts will agree on capacity-building, development and work programmes for endorsement by the OPS Director and ISSR Coordinator.

Explanation. The long delay and difficulties in agreeing on a definitive working relationship between the OPS and the ISSR Secretariat was apparently caused by the PISG’s approach to the ISSR. The PISG was quick at identifying the capacity-building opportunity for some of its staff in working alongside international experts on issues such as national security, policy drafting and analysis, information gathering, public consultation, organisational development, change management, and security sector reform. However, PISG officials also seemed to have seen in the ISSR Secretariat an opportunity to increase its political influence in the sensitive and still UNMIK-controlled field of security, as well as an opportunity to benefit from the funding that would be poured into the process. This approach driven mainly by PISG’s own interests probably caused the delays in agreeing on a satisfactory arrangement and the difficulties in defining the lines of reporting, hierarchy, titles and status.

Lessons Learned. When presenting the ISSR process to the local authorities, a particular emphasis should be put on the unique and invaluable opportunity that such a process represent for them. Indeed, the return on investment is significantly high, especially if the project management, budget management, resource mobilisation and logistics issues are not their responsibility. The ISSR preparatory working group should always keep in mind that people, including government officials, often tend to look into such projects with an intention to personally profit from them, and should therefore present how the ISSR can help their society, government and fellow citizens, while at the same time building their capacity, increasing their skills and developing their career. The design of a working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and the local counterpart should be based on this dual approach and avoid, at all costs, a self-centred, personal interest-driven approach.

8. Public Communications

Objective. In absence of the ISSR Secretariat and its public communications adviser, draft a provisional communications strategy and liaise with the media on ISSR-related matters. The main objectives in doing so were to manage expectations and avoid misconceptions and misinterpretations about the true nature and purpose of the ISSR process. Based on their experience, the working group members and the SSDAT staff knew that they could expect speculations, rumours and misinterpretations to abound after the public and media would learn of the ISSR preparatory work. Such provisional communications strategy and liaison work were therefore solely about providing the people of Kosovo with the most accurate information related to the ISSR.

Actual Results. With the assistance of the UNMIK Division of Public Information (DPI), the working group was able to release ISSR-related information to the public and to the media ahead of specific events, such as the visits of SSDAT experts to Kosovo. However, no formal communications strategy was designed and liaison with Kosovo's public and media was established on a rather *ad hoc*, as-needed basis. On most occasions, the AUS took the lead in liaising with the media and preparing press releases.

The first notable ISSR public communications event was the 15 June 2005 press conference organised by UNMIK, chaired by the UNMIK Spokesperson, and featuring the Head of AUS, an SSDAT advisor, and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio. This press conference provided an excellent opportunity for the media to ask the panellists about the purpose and objectives of the ISSR. While many questions tended to focus on the post-ISSR phase – the implementation of the Security Sector Development Programme – several media representatives focused more on the review process, the participatory approach, the involvement of minority communities, the technical aspects, and the ISSR Secretariat composition. The press conference received wide, fairly-positive and satisfactorily-accurate coverage in the printed and televised news media.

The other significant initiative undertaken during the preparatory phase was the publication of the first ISSR Newsletter in mid-December 2005. Designed mainly by the AUS Political Affairs Officer and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst, the two-page newsletter, published in English, Albanian and Serbian, covered the ISSR Consultative Group conference, and briefly introduced the ISSR process, the ISSR Steering Committee, the ISSR Secretariat, and the ISSR Consultative Group.

Explanation. The absence of a formal communications strategy or plan, and the long delay in publishing a first newsletter, was apparently caused by the simple fact that the working group members could not find the time to engage in these endeavours earlier or in greater depth. In addition, none of the working group members was a communications specialist and despite the invaluable support of the DPI, it would have not been reasonable to expect all the ISSR communications-related work to be added to DPI already heavy workload. In such circumstances, the positive public response and media coverage confirm the quality of the otherwise modest communications work undertaken by the ISSR preparatory working group.



Representatives from KIPRED, AUS, and the OPS at a press conference on 10 November 2005.

Lessons Learned. Managing expectations and preventing misinterpretations, misunderstandings and rumours should be a constant priority for the working group when dealing with the public and the media. The ISSR requires the buy-in of the local government but of the population as well and without public support, the ISSR cannot be fully successful in assessing its needs, hopes and concerns. Thus, it is extremely important that the working group presents the purpose, objectives and mechanism of the ISSR process through a communications strategy or, at least, through regular press releases or media events. It is also important to adequately brief journalists and media representatives, ideally through media conferences, in order to prevent, as much as possible, inaccurate or flawed reporting.

9. Official Launch

Objective. Organise an official and public launch of the ISSR process, immediately before or immediately after the arrival of the ISSR Secretariat and the activation of the ISSR Stage One, to provide information but also to receive opinions, inputs and comments on the ISSR process and Kosovo's security sector as a whole. The launch would serve the dual purpose of informing and being informed, in addition to preparing the ground for the first outreach activities of the ISSR Secretariat.

Actual Results. In May 2005, the Deputy Head of AUS and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio took the lead in drafting a strategy for what they called the "ISSR launch." They started by identifying important background information about the strategy:

- ISSR background;
- Objectives of the ISSR launch (including ascertaining and responding to the hopes and fears of all audiences, pre-empting misperceptions or misunderstandings within all audiences, promoting local ownership and involvement, stimulating donor interest, developing and maintaining momentum for the process);
- Audiences (including Kosovans, the Serbian Government, the donor community, the international community);
- Key messages (including ISSR concepts, benefits of the ISSR);
- Suggested mediums;
- Launching options (audiences met one after the other, audiences met all together, or a combination of these two approaches);
- Issues and risks;
- Next steps.

The vision was first to organise a large ISSR launch conference, inviting all audiences to be thoroughly briefed about the ISSR and, ideally, to share their comments, hopes and fears with respect to the ISSR process and to Kosovo's security sector as a whole. Then, a multitude of small-scale meetings would be organised to brief each audience separately but, most importantly, to gather their input in a perhaps more private, comfortable setting.

The next task therefore involved identifying the audiences that should be invited at the initial, all-inclusive, large-scale conference and, later on, at the small-scale, individual meetings. The Deputy Head of AUS and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst identified close to 40 groups as distinct audiences for the purpose of the ISSR launch (see Annex 4). Each audience group on that list was intended to receive the key ISSR messages in addition to more specific, more relevant and more targeted messages. For example, messages about the role of religious communities in the ISSR process could have been included for dissemination among some selected audiences (such as the "religious communities" audience) and not others (such as the "NATO and KFOR" audience).



The violent riots of March 2004 renewed the concerns many had regarding the security stability in Kosovo.

This whole strategy for the official and public launch of the ISSR process was never implemented. Instead, it was incorporated in the organisation of the 10 November 2005 ISSR Consultative Group conference and of the February 2006 series of individual consultations with representatives of all ethnic and religious groups, civil society organisations, municipal administration, and of the police.

Explanation. The decision not to go ahead with an official and public launch of the ISSR was apparently caused by the desire to save time and energy, and to avoid a duplication of effort. Although an ISSR launch was indeed a good and viable idea, the ISSR timetable had slipped and it rapidly appeared that the ISSR Consultative Group conference and series of consultations would have to take place almost immediately after the beginning of the ISSR process itself. Therefore, the same audiences would have been invited to two sets of very similar events inside a short period of time. This was neither reasonable nor practical, and the decision was therefore taken to turn the ISSR Consultative Group conference into the official and public ISSR launch, based – among other things – on the strategy’s list of audiences and key messages.

Lessons Learned. Organising an official and public launch of the ISSR is an important step and provides for a good opportunity to reassert the purpose, objectives and key messages of the ISSR. It should be organised immediately before or immediately after the arrival of the ISSR Secretariat and the activation of the ISSR Stage One, and should involve as much media coverage as possible. In addition to providing for another opportunity to manage expectations and prevent misinterpretations, misunderstandings and rumours, an ISSR launch can serve as an initial fact-finding or consultation initiative.

If the launch consists of a single, large-scale conference, a special session could be organised in the second half of the event, during which the audience could be broken into small working groups for smaller-scale discussions and debates. If the launch consists also of a series of individual meetings with the various audiences, then the key messages stated during the main launching conference should be repeated, in addition to messages which would be more specific, more relevant and more targeted for each audience met. Finally, if the first ISSR Consultative Group conference is expected to take place shortly after the ISSR launch, the two events should be merged into an ISSR Consultative Group conference officially launching the ISSR process.

10. Timeframe

Objective. Complete the preparatory, pre-Stage One work before the third week of September 2005, i.e. approximately four months after the 6 May 2005 SSDAT report which set out such timeframe.

Actual Results. The ISSR preparatory work concluded on 8 February 2006 with the end of the ISSR Secretariat recruitment process, close to five months later than the target date. The delay in finalising the ISSR preparatory work had many unforeseen consequences, including the Dutch Government urgently deciding to fund Stages One and Two, and subcontracting them to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED), to allow for these two Stages to be completed more rapidly. The actual ISSR implementation officially started on 1 January 2006 and is expected to last until 31 December 2006.

Explanation. The long delay in undertaking and completing the ISSR preparatory work was apparently caused, in the first place, by external events and processes affecting the ISSR timetable. The implementation of Kosovo's standards was under review, the comprehensive assessment of Kosovo's situation by UN Special Envoy Kai Eide was underway,⁶ UNMIK was in a reorganisation and downsizing phase, and talks on Kosovo's future status were expected to start in early 2006. All these factors put pressure on the ISSR to be delivered within an unrealistic timetable, given the context and given the resources (or absence thereof) allocated to the project. These external processes also deflected the attention of politicians, media and citizens from the ISSR, which could not remain at the top of their priorities for very long. The dedicated and persistent work of the working group ensured that the ISSR remained in the news and preserved its place among Kosovo's top priorities. Members of the working group repeatedly explained how these other processes, development projects and political plans could not be successfully implemented or become sustainable without the establishment of a stable, viable, efficient and accountable security sector – something that the ISSR was designed to provide. The working group also explained that the ISSR was actually an integral part of most of these other processes, and notably within the upcoming talks on Kosovo's future status, during which the progress and promising results of the ISSR could be shown as an example of Kosovo's path towards a safe, stable and democratic society.

Secondly, all the members of the ISSR preparatory working group were taking part in this group in addition to performing all their other regular duties. Even the KPCC representative and the AUS Political Affairs Officer, who had been assigned more specifically to the ISSR preparatory work by their respective unit, had several other roles and responsibilities. The members of the working group were already putting extra evening and weekend hours into preparing the field for the implementation phase, and it simply did not seem to be enough.

Thirdly, the ISSR preparatory working group had no financial resource to do its important work. Up until funding was confirmed in October 2005, all the working group's activities and initiatives had to depend on the availability of existing resources within UNMIK, UNDP or the PISG, including printing, transport, communications, etc. While this proved sufficient most of the time, an even minimal budget could have allowed the working group to hire a full-time ISSR preparatory work officer instead of relying solely on the overburdened working group members, subcontract translation work to private agencies instead of depending on benevolent colleagues, etc. Such financial resources could have increased the speed, quality and timeliness of the preparatory work, ahead of the ISSR implementation phase.

⁶ His full report entitled *A Comprehensive Review of the Situation in Kosovo* is available in Annex A of United Nations Security Council, *Letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council*, UN S/2005/635, 7 October 2005.

Fourthly, despite all the best intentions, it was difficult to predict the Kosovo donors' response, the Kosovo politicians' attitude, the international community's commitment, etc. Thankfully, the SSDAT could share its expertise and experience, and provide an assessment of the risks and delays that the working group might encounter, but the multiplicity of factors affecting the ISSR preparatory phase caused greater delays than expected.

Lessons Learned. When setting its objectives and timetable for the ISSR preparatory phase, the working group should not only be as realistic as possible but also consider the worst-case scenario. Ideally, the decision to undertake an ISSR should be taken when there is enough time for a proper preparatory phase. In reality, circumstances often dictate such decision, and it might well be that the ISSR would be prepared and implemented in the midst of a wide array of different, parallel processes and projects. In such case, the working group should be as quick as possible in establishing its priorities and in listing them in the proper sequential order. It is not an easy task but individuals such as the SSDAT members and other officers with ISSR experience can make a difference in the preparation of such an important project.

In addition, the appointment or recruitment of a full-time ISSR officer should be considered as a prerequisite for a more easily manageable preparatory phase. As a member of the ISSR preparatory working group, this officer could bring stability and continuity in the tasks at hand. Ideally, this officer would also be allocated a budget for preparatory initiatives and activities, in order to ease and speed up the steps required before the ISSR implementation.

Cooperation

The ISSR preparatory work could not have been undertaken without the working group establishing strong and efficient links with partners inside and outside of Kosovo. Many of these individuals and organisations have been mentioned above but it is worth analysing the relationships developed during the ISSR preparatory phase to give examples for a future similar project and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of these partnerships.

The cooperation with the British **SSDAT** was without a doubt the most logical, the most helpful and the most valuable. In addition to providing the ISSR preparatory working group with strong foundations on which to build the frame, the SSDAT always responded swiftly to requests for assistance and visited Kosovo several times to provide direct assistance in the field, be it for public events, recruitment processes, or important meetings. Its experience in undertaking similar processes around the world was extremely valuable and allowed for some mistakes to be prevented while maximising the efficiency of the preparatory working group. The SSDAT could also self-finance its activities and trips, effectively contributing in-kind to the ISSR process. Although the SSDAT was at the origin of the ISSR process and strategy, it was understood from the onset that its team members would not be the ones tasked with implementing the review process. Nevertheless, they kept providing their support well beyond the preparation of their final ISSR report, during all the preparatory work and even still today, as the ISSR implementation is undergoing.

The Geneva-based **DCAF** centre also proved an excellent partner, investing time and resources in sharing its expertise with the working group but also with the local counterparts, inviting PISG officials for a customised training seminar in Geneva, and visiting Kosovo on numerous occasions to provide or participate in briefings, roundtables and conferences. The expertise of DCAF members was impressive and most valuable, and its ability to self-finance its activities and trips allowed the ISSR process to benefit from their assistance at no cost.

The Government of the **United Kingdom**, in addition to providing indirectly for the services of the SSDAT, showed genuine interest from the very onset of the ISSR preparatory work, becoming a valuable ally to the working group. The British officials in London and in Pristina welcomed the initiative and were the first among foreign government representatives to commit financial support to the ISSR through DFID.

Other valuable partners included the **OSCE**, which provided political support as well as logistical assistance in organising Kosovo-wide meetings and conferences, the Government of **The Netherlands**, which provided quick and substantial in-kind contribution as well as diplomatic support locally and abroad, while also showing strong and continuous interest for the process and its benefits, and the Government of **Switzerland**, which also provided a valuable in-kind contribution to the ISSR process and proved to be a very receptive interlocutor.



The foreign liaison offices and the headquarters of most international organisations are located in Pristina, home of approximately 500,000 people.

The cooperation of **UNDP Kosovo** staff was also excellent and made a significant difference in the progression of the ISSR preparatory work. However, the bureaucratic hurdles affected this progression and brought also a fair amount of frustration. The number and complexity of the procurement, logistics and human resources rules, as well as the unfamiliarity of the working group members with these rules, frequently hindered the ISSR preparatory work.

The cooperation with the Bratislava-based UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (**RBEC**) was practically inexistent since the working group failed to make contact with that organisation, probably out of an assumption that the ISSR was too new or unique of an initiative to find relevant expertise or advice within RBEC. However, such assumption should have been discarded and contact should have been established with RBEC, if only to circulate terms of reference for inputs or vacancy announcements for the ISSR Secretariat. The RBEC colleagues could have also provided useful assistance and established links, if relevant, with other regional initiatives, such as the UNDP Albania's Support to Security Sector Reform project.

The cooperation with the New York-based **UNDP headquarters** was also nearly inexistent, save for the discussions on the potential ISSR funding by **BCPR**. Although these discussions ended with the generous decision of BCPR to provide substantial funding for the Kosovo ISSR, they lasted for nearly three months. Since several donors had expressed their interest to contribute to the ISSR conditional to another, ideally multinational donor committing first, the delay in receiving funding confirmation from BCPR unfortunately hindered the ISSR preparatory work and the relationship with some donors. As discussed above, the lines of communication could have probably been clearer, and visits of some working group members to New York shortly after the submission of the request for funding could have probably made a difference.

The attempts by the working group to establish a collaborative partnership with the Government of the **United States** proved unfortunately less successful than expected. The American officials in Washington and in Pristina welcomed the idea of an ISSR but could not politically or financially commit to its process, for various administrative and political reasons. For example, the Head of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) explained that the mandate of his organisation would not allow for the support of a security sector-related project in Kosovo, such as the ISSR, outside its already-existing support to the KPS. In addition, the working group learned of the implementation, in late 2005, of an assessment project launched by the American Department of Defence and focusing on Kosovo's security sector. This parallel process might have influenced the American officials in their decision not to fully commit to the Kosovo ISSR. This was particularly unfortunate since the American Government entertained a close and friendly relationship with the PISG, which could have been beneficial to the ISSR to secure local political buy-in, among other things. It also increased the public perception that the Kosovo ISSR was a United Kingdom-driven process, a perception that contradicted the all-inclusive and multinational nature of the ISSR project.

The working group was similarly unsuccessful in establishing a helpful collaborative partnership with the **EU** and with the Government of **Russia**. With respect to the Government of Russia, the problem was perhaps strictly political and although more efforts could have been invested in establishing that link, the result might have been the same. That situation was also particularly unfortunate because Russia was a member of the Kosovo Contact Group⁷ and perhaps prevented the group of nations to stand united in support of the ISSR. The missed opportunity with the EU was apparently caused by an

⁷ The Contact Group is the principal group of nations that monitors and supervises international policy in Kosovo. This informal grouping of countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia, first came together in response to the crisis in Bosnia. With the addition of the European Union, it now regularly consults on the situation in Kosovo. Including four of the five Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, as well as the major contributing nations to KFOR and assistance donors to Kosovo, the Contact Group coordinates Kosovo policy with UNMIK.

inadequate or lack of communications between the Kosovo-based actors and the Brussels officials and institutions. Again, visits of working group members to the EU headquarters might have provided them with an opportunity to answer questions of and enter into discussions with EU representatives directly.

At the local level, close and fruitful collaboration with the **PISG** and its various agencies was obviously a *sine qua non* condition for succeeding in developing and implementing the ISSR. Conscious that the PISG, along with the population of Kosovo at large, would be the main beneficiary of the ISSR and its Security Sector Development Programme, the members of the working group ensure that local actors and local authorities were fully briefed and fully involved. The most important partnership to establish was with the higher echelons – the President and Prime Minister – after which the interactions with the rest of the local government were made easier.

As discussed above, the President and Prime Minister expressed their support for the ISSR early on but might have failed to embrace it as wholeheartedly as expected. This led the working group to encounter some reluctance or resistance but in general, the collaboration was fairly good. The representatives of the various security agencies, such as the **KPS** and the **KPC**, saw perhaps more directly how such a well-thought and sustainable development plan could benefit their organisation and Kosovo's security sector. Consequently, the response and participation of these agencies was positive and constructive, contributing to the preparatory work.



On 26 January 2006, members of the KPC took part in the funeral procession of President Ibrahim Rugova, five days after he died of lung cancer.

Follow-Up

The ISSR preparatory phase ended on 8 February 2006, giving way to the already-initiated implementation phase led by the ISSR Coordinator. The immediate follow-up of the work described and analysed in this report was therefore the implementation of the review process, hopefully benefiting from the twelve months of work achieved by the ISSR preparatory working group.

However, this report was also drafted with the intention of serving future similar projects. Hopefully, should the decision of initiating a similar process be taken, in the Balkans or anywhere else, this report will help the people tasked with preparing the ground for the project's implementation. Obviously, the examples, lessons learned and analyses presented here are based on the specific Kosovo ISSR experience but general lessons, ideas and recommendations can surely be applied elsewhere, in a different context, in order to save time and energy, prevent repeating some mistakes, and increase the effectiveness or successfulness of that other similar project.

Consequently, this report should ideally be shared with those analysts, officers, project coordinators and project managers in the field, tasked with preparing the ground for the implementation of an ISSR or ISSR-like project. It should also be distributed to the staff in headquarters and regional bureaus dealing with security sector reform portfolios or projects because while this report was drafted from a country office analyst's point of view, sharing it with regional or headquarters colleagues might increase their awareness of difficulties and challenges encountered in the field.

Finally, as a logical follow-up to this report describing the ISSR preparatory phase and identifying some lessons learned drawn from it, it would probably be highly relevant for another report to be drafted describing the ISSR implementation phase and identifying some lessons drawn from it. Combined, these two reports could provide a fairly comprehensive and very useful set of examples and suggestions on how to best prepare for and implement such an initiative.

Conclusion

The ISSR is an analytical process aimed at identifying the development needs of a particular security sector. While it does not implement actual reforms but merely recommends them in the form of a Security Sector Development Programme, the ISSR remains a fundamental initiative for a country interested in reforming its security sector to increase its efficiency, transparency and accountability. The ISSR has been tried and tested around the world and provides for a process rooted in the hopes and concerns of the local population, aiming at long-term stability and sustainability, conscious of the limitations and challenges specific to each country, and encouraging the involvement of the local population while focusing on building the capacity of local authorities.

Such a sensitive and high-profile project requires a fair amount of preparatory work to be undertaken ahead of its implementation. This report intended on describing this preparatory work and drawing conclusions and lessons learned from it, which could be useful to similar initiatives undertaken in the future. While this report makes recommendations regarding the various tasks required by the preparation of an ISSR, four overarching suggestions could stem from all of them:

- Envision the worst-case scenario: with such a complex initiative, involving various international, regional and local organisations, as well as foreign and domestic political entities, all with their own specific priorities, interests and agendas, it is safer to plan the ISSR preparatory work based on a worst-case scenario, whether it be related to political buy-in, resource mobilisation, recruitment, or timeframe;
- Start early: all this preparatory work takes a lot of time, and bureaucratic rules and procedures can unexpectedly delay an otherwise simple task, hence the importance to allow for enough time to complete all the necessary preparatory work and to organise the various tasks according to their level of priority;
- Assemble a motivated and multidisciplinary team: the key to achieving this preparatory work on time and with success is the composition of a dedicated and talented multidisciplinary working group, functioning well as a team and fully supportive of the ISSR principles of inclusiveness, participation, sustainability and local ownership;
- Secure the required funding early: the implementation of the ISSR cannot rely solely on the existing staff of local and international organisations and therefore requires that financial resources be committed as early as possible to fund the process and, ideally, to provide some seed money for the preparatory working group to undertake activities ahead of the ISSR implementation phase.

Mistakes cannot always be avoided, and unforeseen obstacles often come up at critical times, but investing time, effort and resources in preparing a project such as the ISSR is the best way to ensure a successful implementation. As rightly stated by Confucius, “success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure.”

Additional Resources

The shorter, final version of this report is available at <http://cv.jmellon.com/issr.pdf>

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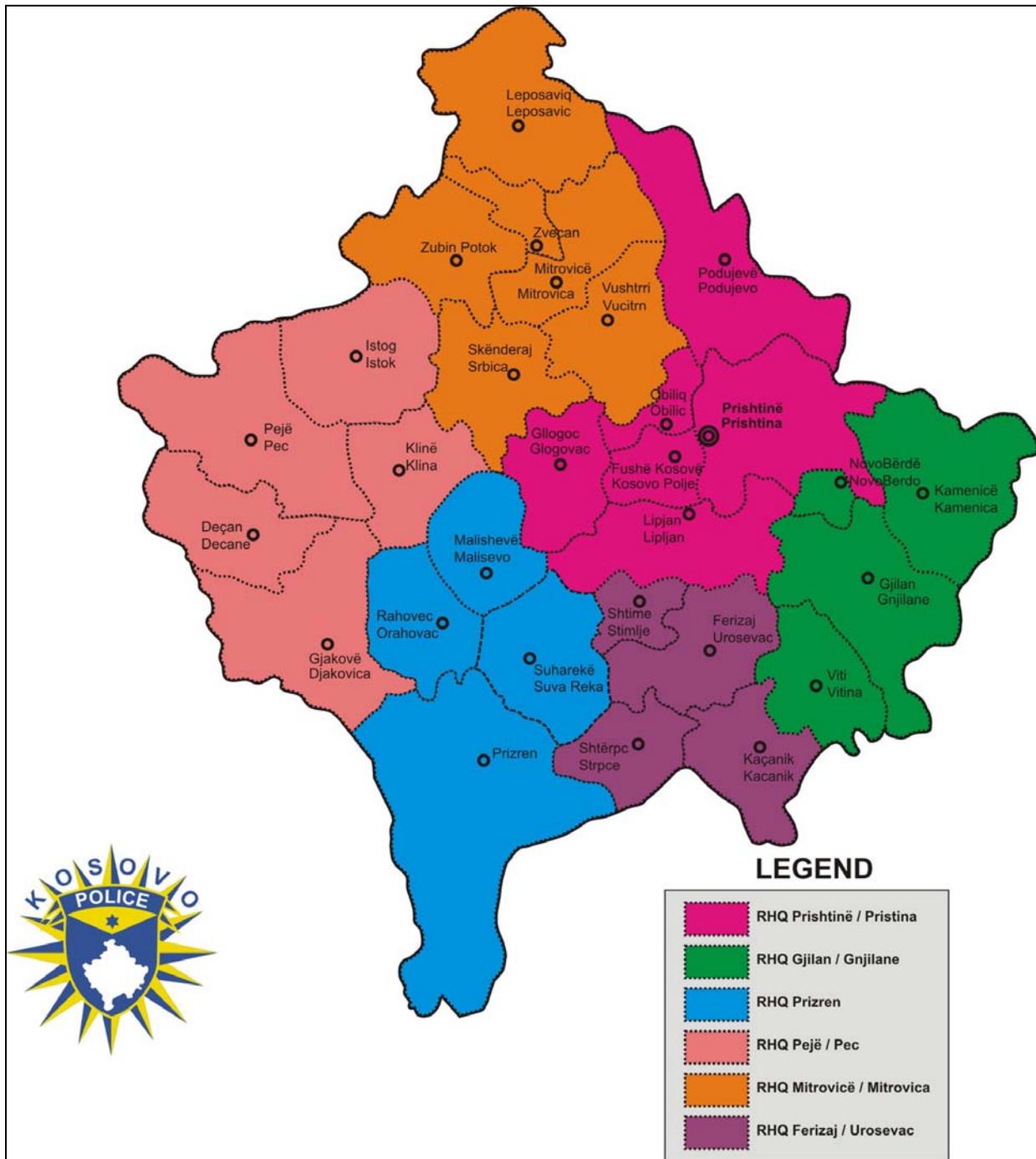
Annexes

Annex 1: Map of the Balkans



An International Relations Center map of the Balkans highlighting the province of Kosovo and its capital Pristina.

Annex 2: Map of Kosovo



A KPS map showing the thirty Kosovo municipalities divided into six areas for decentralised policing management purposes: Mitrovica (north), Pristina (north-east), Gjilan (east), Ferizaj (south-east), Prizren (south), and Peja (west).

Annex 3: ISSR Budget Lines

- ISSR Coordinator
- ISSR Public Communications Adviser
- ISSR Governance Adviser
- ISSR Security Sector Development Adviser
- ISSR Office and Language Assistant
- ISSR Office and Language Assistant
- ISSR Public Communications Consultant
- ISSR Governance Consultant
- ISSR Security Sector Consultant
- ISSR Driver
- Analysis and Drafting Expert Consultant
- Analysis and Drafting Expert Consultant
- Legal Expert Consultant
- Police Expert Consultant
- Local Research and Analysis Company
- Vehicles Rental
- Vehicles Maintenance and Related Costs
- Mobile telephones
- Telephone Calls and Fax Transmissions
- Cabling
- Fax Machine
- Laptop Computers
- Desktop Computers
- Printer
- Consumables
- Translation and Printing
- Venue Rental for Special Events
- Refreshments for Special Events
- Consumables for Special Events
- Transport for Special Events
- Venue Rental for Outreach Events
- Refreshments for Outreach Events
- Consumables for Outreach Events
- Transport for Outreach Events
- Public Communications Campaigns Design
- Public Communications Advertisements
- Public Outreach Initiatives and Campaigns
- Travel Expenses
- Miscellaneous
- UNDP General Management Services

Annex 4: ISSR Launch Audiences

- Kosovo Albanians
- Kosovo Serbs
- Other Kosovo minority communities
- Groups met and consulted by the SSDAT during its initial fact-finding visit
- PISG Office of the Prime Minister
- PISG Government Coordination Secretariat
- PISG ministries
- PISG rural municipalities
- PISG urban municipalities
- Opposition parties' leaders
- Opposition parties' members
- Municipal media
- National television media
- National radio media
- International media
- Civil society: Albanian nongovernmental organisations
- Civil society: war veterans
- Civil society: trade unions
- Civil society: religious communities
- Civil society: educational institutions and think tanks
- Civil society: Kosovan diaspora
- Civil society: Chamber of Commerce
- Serbian Government's Office of the President
- Serbian Government's Office of the Prime Minister
- Serbian Government's Assembly
- DFID
- European Agency for Reconstruction and European Commission
- USAID
- Other donors
- Unilateral regional bodies
- Bilateral and multilateral regional bodies
- EU
- NATO and KFOR
- Kosovo Contact Group
- UNMIK
- DPKO
- Liaison offices in Kosovo