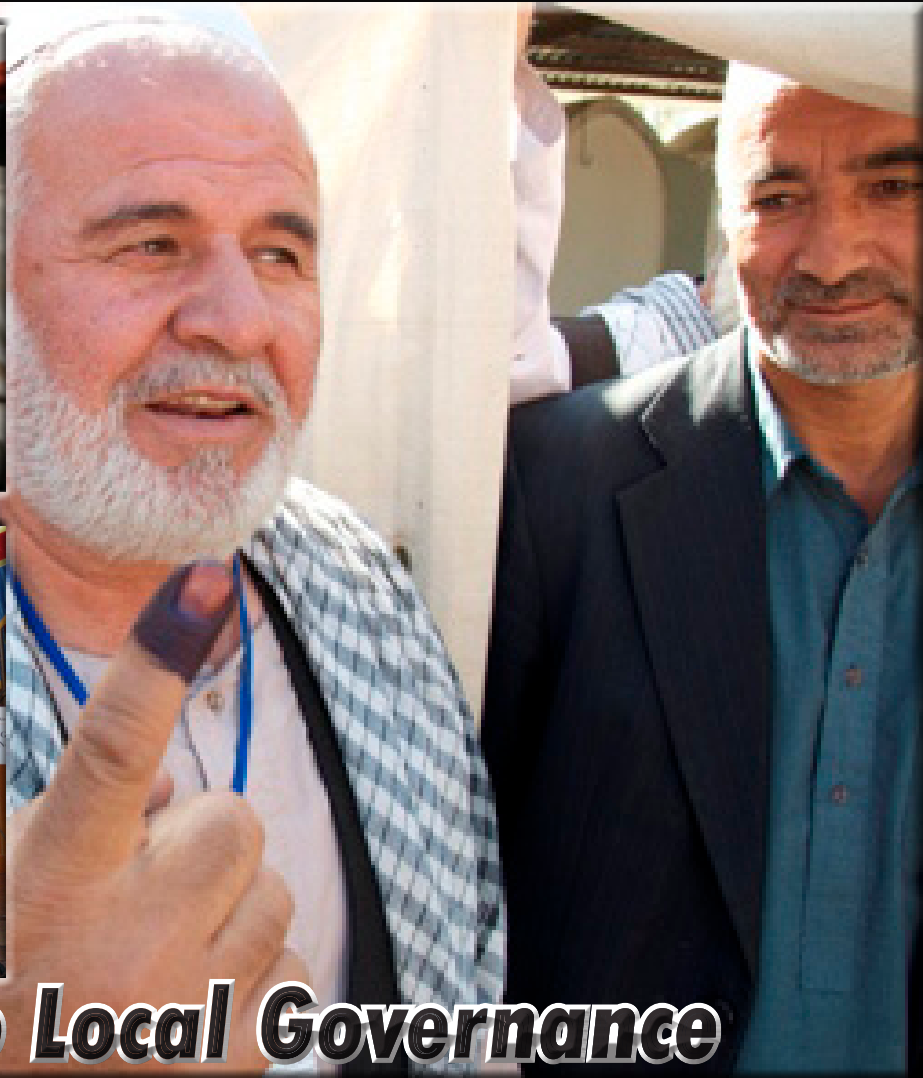


# SOLLIMS SAMPLER

Targeting Peace & Stability Operations Lessons & Best Practices

Volume 2

Issue 1



## Transition to Local Governance



U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute

Approved for Public Release,  
Distribution Unlimited



## FOREWORD

This is the third edition of the Stability Operations Lessons Learned and Information Management System (SOLLIMS) Lessons Learned “Sampler”. The general structure of the “Sampler” includes (1) an **Introduction** that provides an operational or doctrinal perspective for the content, (2) the Sampler “**Quick Look**” that provides a short description of the topics included within the Sampler and a link to the full text, (3) the primary, topic/issue-focused Stability Operations (SO)-related **Lessons Learned report\***, and (4) links to **additional reports or other references** that are either related to the “focus” topic or that address current, real-world, SO-related challenges.

This lessons-learned compendium contains just a sample – thus the title of “sampler” – of the observations, insights, and lessons related **Transition/Transformation** available in the SOLLIMS data repository. These observations are worth sharing with military commanders and their staffs, as well as civilian practitioners with a Stability Operations-related mission / function – those currently deployed into conflict environments, those planning to deploy, the institutional Army, policy makers and other international civilian and military leaders at the national and theater level.

Lessons Format. Each lesson is provided in the form of an Observation and Recommendation (O&R). The “O & R” follows a standard format:

- Title (Topic)
- Observation
- Discussion
- Recommendation
- Implications
- Event Description

Occasionally you may see a “Comments” section. This is used by the author of the “O&R” to provide additional personal perspective on the Observation. The “Event Description” section provides context for the Observation in that it identifies the source or event from which the content was developed.

You will also note that a number is displayed in parentheses next to the title of each lesson / observation. This number is hyper-linked to the actual O&R within the SOLLIMS database; click on the highlighted O&R number to display the O&R entry and access any attachments (references, images, files) that are included within SOLLIMS for this O&R. You must have an account and be logged into SOLLIMS in order to display the SOLLIMS data entry and access / download attachments.

If you have not registered on SOLLIMS, the links in the reports will take you to the login or the registration page. Take a few short minutes to register for an

account in order to take advantage of the many features of SOLLIMS and to access the stability operations related products referenced in the report. We encourage you to take the time now to provide us with your perspective as related to a single observation / lesson in this report, or to the overall value of this “Sampler” as a reference or guide for you and your unit/organization and staff. **By using the “Perspectives” text entry box that is found at the end of each O&R – seen when you open the O&R in your browser – you can enter your own personal comments and observations on this O&R.** We welcome your input. We encourage you to become an regular contributor to the SOLLIMS Community of Interest !!!

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At PKSOI we continually strive to improve the services and products we provide the global stability operations community. We invite you to use our web site at [ <http://pksoi.army.mil> ] and the many functions of the SOLLIMS online environment [ <http://www.pksoi.org> ] to help us identify issues and resolve problems – we welcome your comments and insights.

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***\*All reports in the “Sampler” are generated by the SOLLIMS Lessons Report Builder tool.***



Iraqi soldiers from the 5th Iraqi Army Division salute the Iraqi flag during a change of command ceremony at Combat Outpost Mullalah, Diyala province, Iraq, June 25th. During the ceremony, the commander of Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, signed documents giving command to the Iraqi government.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the third edition of the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) Lessons Learned “Sampler”. The focus for this edition is on **Transition/Transformation**.

*"The United States has a significant stake in enhancing the capacity to assist in stabilizing and reconstructing countries or regions, especially those at risk of, in, or in **transition** from conflict or civil strife, and to help them establish a sustainable path toward peaceful societies, democracies, and market economies." (National Security Presidential Directive / NSPD-44, 7 Dec 2005)*

*"**Transition** is the multi-faceted application of tactical, operational, strategic, and international level resources (means) over time in a sovereign territory to influence institutional and environmental conditions for achieving and sustaining clear societal goals and legitimate statehood (ends), guided by local rights to self-determination and international norms. **Transition** is inherently complex, and may include multiple, smaller-scale transitions that occur simultaneously or sequentially. These small-scale activities focus on building specific institutional capacities and creating intermediate conditions that contribute to the realization of long-term goals." (Harnessing Post Conflict Transitions: A Conceptual Primer, PKSOI Papers, Sep 2010)*

Transition/Transformation relates to the process of reducing the means and motivations for violent conflict while shifting the lead responsibility and authority for providing Security, Essential Services, Humanitarian Assistance, Economic Development, and Political Governance from the intervening military and civilian agencies to the Host Nation (HN).

Moving the HN/government out of a conflict period and into a state of self-sufficiency poses difficult issues – involving sovereignty, legitimacy, dependency, and social reforms. Not only do our military services and our civilian agencies work to manage the issues and the process of transition, but also the HN government, its society, and regional and international actors play important roles – all impacting how transition is brought to fruition.

The complexities of the transition process – encompassing means and motivations for conflict, social reforms, efforts to build HN governmental legitimacy and capacity to deliver services to citizens, and involvement of numerous actors in and around the environment – mandate that planners, operators, and other SO practitioners (from the tactical through the strategic level) work closely together – in planning, executing, and assessing.



## Focus on Transition/Transformation

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## **Sampler “Quick Look”**

Click on [\[Read More ...\]](#) to go to Sampler topic.

- Establishing a truth commission can greatly facilitate peace and stability and the transition process in a post-conflict society . . . [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- In stability operations, the establishment of an effective police force is critical to the successful transition from the United States' (and/or allied nations') provision of security services to the Host Nation (HN) taking responsibility and authority for its own security. However, the U.S. Government currently lacks the institutional capacity to deliver the resources needed . . . [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- Efforts to extend the authority of the state, to identify the root causes of conflict/instability, and to provide developmental assistance - present significant challenges in an unstable state such as Afghanistan, where governments are weak, tribal actors strong, local groups set in their ways and potential for violence ever-present. Transformation focused on extending the authority and reach of the central government in this type environment . . . [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- Decentralized government is an effective instrument for building and sustaining peace in post-conflict countries. Decentralization creates a situation in which citizens are more engaged in governance and have a forum to air their views on the development and reconstruction process. [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- The success of government in post-conflict society depends on the performance of the public service in providing critical services to the population and restoring trust and confidence in governance. [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- The type of governance structure, strategy, and policies in a (failed/failing or emerging state) country should strike a balance between a strong central government authority focused on national, strategic issues and a more distributed configuration built on local governance which can successfully address the needs and grievances of people. [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- The objective for outside interveners in failed states is that indigenous persons and groups gradually can assume the responsibility for national processes and institutions. [\[Read More ...\]](#)
- Strengthening horizontal accountability in a post-war context typically involves interventions and external support in the following areas: constitution-making, watchdog institutions, transitional justice, local governance, and security sector reform. [\[Read More ...\]](#)

**Subject: SOLLIMS REPORT - TRANSITION/TRANSFORMATION**

**1. GENERAL**

Transition/Transformation relates to the process of reducing the means and motivations for violent conflict while shifting the lead responsibility and authority for providing Security, Essential Services, Humanitarian Assistance, Economic Development, and Political Governance from the intervening military and civilian agencies to the Host Nation. Transition/Transformation is a vital sector of Stability Operations: it targets both the society and the government - to reduce the potential for conflict in the society, and to develop the HN government's ability to provide necessary services to its citizens. Our military services and our civilian agencies play key parts, along with the HN government, HN society, and other actors, in attaining successful transition/transformation in any post-conflict environment.

This report contains related observations, insights, and lessons currently available within the SOLLIMS knowledge base.

**2. OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

**a. Topic. Sierra Leone - Transition through Truth and Reconciliation Commission ( [683](#) )**

**Observation.**

Establishing a truth commission can greatly facilitate peace and stability and the transition process in a post-conflict society - since this commission helps to identify the causes of recent conflict, what actually transpired during recent conflict, what can be done to aid victims of recent conflict, and what needs to change for overall stability. A truth commission can also aid the government (which may be a new government) in establishing a foundation on which to build legitimacy - by promoting democratic ideals, accountability, the rule of law, equality, and social justice. In post-conflict Sierra Leone (2002 and beyond), the activities of the truth commission demonstrate the value of this entity to the transition process.

## **Discussion.**

The Lome Peace Agreement, signed on 7 July 1999, between the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) Government, resulted in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was sanctioned by an act of parliament in Sierra Leone - the TRC Act of 2000. The TRC Act of 2000 called for the establishment of the TRC to "create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone from the beginning of the conflict in 1991 to the signing of the Lome Peace Agreement [1999], to address impunity, to respond to the needs of the victims, to promote healing and reconciliation, and to prevent a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered."

The Commission was principally funded by the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada, and the European Union. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) served as the project coordinator and controller of funds for the TRC. The overall budget for the TRC was set at \$4.6 million, and it covered an 18-month period of work.

The TRC was actually one component of a dual approach to transitional justice, with the other component being the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The purpose of the Special Court for Sierra Leone was to try persons who bore the greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The role of the TRC, on the other hand, was to examine the causes of the war, human rights violations, and the role played by foreign actors, as well as to provide a forum for victims, to provide assistance to victims, and to enable communities to reconcile. The TRC was tasked to produce an impartial record of the conflict and atrocities committed against the civilian population.

The TRC completed its work in 2004. It documented its findings and recommendations in its TRC Report. This report captured the stories/ experiences recounted by both victims and perpetrators. This report also acknowledged the many atrocities committed against the civilian population. In this report, the TRC provided a list of recommendations calling for: the "protection of human rights," establishment of the rule of law, improved security services, promotion of good governance, anti-corruption efforts, actions to address women's and children's issues, promotion of regional integration and unity, accountability of the proceeds from mineral resources, building of a national justice system, reparations, reconciliation activities, and a national vision for going forward. Each recommendation identified imperative actions (to be done immediately), goals to work towards (near term), and ideas for serious consideration (over time). For example, in the "protection of human rights" category, the imperative action was "Enshrine human dignity as a fundamental right in the Constitution," the goal to work towards was "Compulsory human



rights education in schools, army, police, and judicial services," and the idea for serious consideration was "Creation of a new constitution for Sierra Leone."

The TRC also recommended that its report be widely disseminated among the people.

The work of the TRC contributed to reconciliation, but not to the degree anticipated. Polls and interviews were conducted in 2006 with regard to the work of the TRC. There was general consensus among those interviewed in 2006 that the TRC had been an effective platform for reconciliation, although some believed that the TRC's scope had been somewhat limited by the parallel existence of the Special Court of Sierra Leone. Most of those interviewed were very appreciative that a neutral body - the TRC - had been appointed to conduct the examination of the conflict and the atrocities committed, and to provide society with a means for reconciliation and reparation. However, most also believed that victims still had not been compensated and that the TRC's recommendations still needed to be implemented.

In fact, the TRC's impact had been diminished by a number of factors. First, although the TRC Report was supposed to be widely disseminated, the printed version of the report was not made available to the average citizen - six years after publication. No government institution had been formally charged to do the dissemination. Second, reparations were not paid to victims. Individuals victimized were not provided reparations, and affected communities were not adequately compensated. Some community work was done - roads damaged during the conflict were repaired, local government bodies were reinstated, and some clinics and schools were reconstructed - however, there were significant shortfalls with regard to basic amenities, employment, and infrastructure needs in 2010. Third, the international community did not provide immediate support for follow-up programs once the TRC produced its report in 2004. It was not until 11 December 2006 that a Human Rights Commission (HRCSL) was "inaugurated." This was a statutory body funded partly by the United Nations Peace Building Fund and partly by the Government of Sierra Leone - charged with the responsibility to maintain human rights and to serve as a follow-up to the TRC. However, the HRCSL did not become fully operational until 2008. Hence, most of the TRC's recommendations have not yet been implemented, and many of the discrepancies and causes of conflict remain to be addressed. That said, the work of the truth commission has been widely recognized and appreciated by the general population, allowing reconciliation to occur and providing the government with a foundation to build legitimacy, as well as a path ahead.

### **Recommendation.**

- Establish a truth commission in post-conflict societies to help identify the causes of recent conflict, to provide recommendations for aiding the victims, and to provide a foundation for governance and justice.

- Ensure that the report of the truth commission is widely disseminated. Charge a government institution with the task of disseminating this report, countrywide. Ensure adequate information infrastructure is in place to accommodate dissemination of the report. Consider including the report in school curricula.
- Ensure that reparations are paid to the victims, or, where individual compensation is not possible, compensate their affected communities through reconstruction of facilities for essential services - such as basic health care, education, and security.
- Provide sufficient financial assistance to allow for timely execution of the truth commission's recommendations. Establish a follow-up institution or committee to ensure that the major recommendations are carried out.

### **Implication.**

Failure to establish a truth commission and to provide reparations to victims of conflict, or at least to their communities, can cause dissatisfaction among victimized populations, which may in turn be harmful to a fragile peace and to governmental legitimacy.

### **Event Description.**

This observation is based on the article "The International Community and Post-War Reconciliation in Africa: A Case Study of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission," by Proscovia Svard, [African Journal on Conflict Resolution](#), Volume 10, Number 1, 2010. The article can be found at <http://www.accord.org.za/publications/ajcr.html>



### **b. Topic. Transition to Host Nation Security - Building Effective Local Police Forces ( [682](#) )**

### **Observation.**

In stability operations, the establishment of an effective police force is critical to the successful transition from the United States' (and/or allied nations') provision of security services to the Host Nation (HN) taking responsibility and authority for its own security. However, the U.S. Government currently lacks the institutional capacity to deliver the resources needed to establish, train, and advise HN civilian police forces in stability operations in a timely manner. This capacity gap has been filled by contractors and by the U.S. military in recent operations, such as Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF);

however, for such operations, the strategy/vision, resources available/employed, techniques utilized, and focus have all been inadequate.

### **Discussion.**

Currently, the USG lacks an on-hand capacity to make an immediate and coordinated civilian police training effort, when needed, during the initial phase of a stability operation. This capacity gap has not always existed. During the 1954-1974 timeframe, the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) and its successor, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), had comprehensive programs in place and provided the technical advice, training, and equipment for foreign civil police organizations as needed. However, in 1974, congressional legislation (Section 660 of the Foreign Assistance Act) put an end to USAID's involvement in foreign police training. Today, there is no one agency fully in charge of building a standing capacity in the U.S. for police trainers/advisors for potential deployment for stability contingencies. Instead, what happens is a multiplicity of agencies get involved in the development, bidding, and awarding of contracts for police trainers, when the requirement arises. It takes considerable time to put those contracts into place, and additional time for the contracted trainers to be identified, prepared, and deployed to the area of operation - leaving the U.S. military as virtually the only viable option to work with HN police forces.

U.S. military doctrine recognizes the importance of police forces in counterinsurgency (COIN) and stability operations. Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency, states that the primary frontline COIN force is often the police - not the military. FM 3-07, Stability Operations, cites the importance of civilian police forces, stating that community-oriented police services, under civilian control that clearly separates the roles of the police and the military, are essential to success. It further states that the military needs to include the tasks of "train and advise host-nation police forces" and "establish police academies" among its essential stability tasks. The U.S. military has fulfilled such tasks and roles during both OIF and OEF, as did large numbers of contracted personnel.

In fact, OIF became the largest law enforcement and police training effort overseas since the U.S. intervention in Vietnam. During OIF, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) established the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) to reconstruct Iraq's security sector. CENTCOM created the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) to train and equip Iraqi police and other civilian security forces. DynCorp International was contracted to provide 690 International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) for police assessment, training, and mentoring functions. Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI) was contracted to provide 192 International Police Trainers (IPTs).

However, contracted police trainers were often not willing or able to operate in non-permissive areas in OIF, because of restrictions or clauses in their

contracts. Training of HN police personnel was usually confined to the capital city or to secure areas - leaving unsecured, more remote areas of the country without desperately needed police trainers and mentors. Additionally, there was no mechanism in place to keep select/top trainers on station for a longer timeframe, which would have served to maintain institutional knowledge and some semblance of longer-term capacity.

Because there is no one USG agency with a definitive lead role for foreign police assistance, and because the resultant convoluted approach equates to contracting police training teams for short periods of time (usually year-to-year), there has been no coherent USG or strategic vision for developing police trainers or executing policing missions. In the absence of such a vision, in OIF and OEF, the contracted training teams did not distinguish between "stability policing" and "community-based policing" needs. By definition, "stability policing" takes place immediately/upfront in stability operations - to deal with high-end threats such as organized criminal groups, insurgent/terrorist cells, organized looting, and large riots. A normative practice is that the military force, complemented by "stability police," reestablishes local security in those instances. In OIF and OEF, that complement of HN local police forces was not always present, or when it did exist, it was either incompetent, corrupt, or ethnically motivated.

"Community-based policing," on the other hand, is the police work of finding out what law enforcement problems exist within the local communities and helping the communities solve them. The focus of "community-based policing", when conducted, was the cultivation of a close relationship with the local community and a proactive approach to crime prevention and security needs. In Afghanistan, this has been largely absent during the past several years. A surge in local criminal activity in 2005, combined with the Afghan government's and police force's inability to address the problem, became a major contributor to local discontent with the government.

In OIF and OEF, U.S. police assistance efforts have primarily focused on establishing a centralized police academy, where new or recycled police officers received training on the basic skills of police work. Although these academies included instruction on respect for human rights, acceptable and humane interrogation techniques, the rights of individuals under HN laws, and proper police behavior, some police officers relapsed into their former organizational culture, values, or attitudes after a few months on the job. A sustained effort to shape the local police's organizational culture often did not occur. However, in the 2009-2010 timeframe of OEF, when the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) made a concerted effort to embed advisors with Afghan police and security forces, where they physically worked together over an extended timeframe, the shaping of police organizational culture actually was effected. The embedded advisor, who went beyond short periods of teaching and coaching and instead gained the understanding, respect, and trust of host unit

counterparts through daily interaction/cooperation, could better shape the unit's organizational culture.

Additionally, U.S. police assistance efforts have sometimes focused the local police on supplementing HN military forces - as opposed to keeping the local police oriented on protecting their communities from crime and criminal group violence. In some cases, that failure to keep local police forces oriented on public safety and routine law enforcement for their villages and surrounding areas left a security vacuum - which was then filled by insurgent or criminal groups.

### **Recommendation.**

The author of the referenced article (in Event Description below) recommends:

1. Because the USG lacks capacity to deliver/deploy civilian police trainers in the early phase of stability operations, the U.S. military must be prepared to assess, advise, and train HN police forces until such time as civilian police trainers/mentors do arrive.
2. The U.S. military - upon assuming the roles of assessing/advising/training HN police forces - should distinguish between "stability policing" and "community-based policing," and should transition from the former to the latter at the appropriate point. U.S. military trainers/advisors, whether part of an Advise and Assist Brigade or deploying independently, should be provided instruction on both "stability policing" and "community-based policing," as well as how and when to transition to the latter. U.S. military trainers/advisors should be trained, in advance, on "community-based policing" tasks – such as arrest procedures, criminal investigations, working within local legal frameworks, crime prevention, and community relations.
3. The U.S. military - when conducting "community-based policing" efforts - should not fail to recognize the importance of "shaping the police organizational culture." Shaping a culture into one that is legal, ethical, responsible, and responsive will help preclude attitudes from falling back on bad habits or corruption. Many variables beyond U.S. military control - ethnic/tribal tensions and influences, fractured political leadership, incongruent societal values - will undoubtedly present major challenges. In spite of those factors, when training local police personnel, emphasis should be placed on normative standards of behavior. Standards should include responsiveness to the local community, accountability to the rule of law, and defense of human rights.
4. The U.S. military should embed advisors with local police units. Embedded advisors can gain the requisite cultural knowledge, access, and rapport to mold police organizational culture into a desirable end-state.



## **Implication.**

- If the U.S. military does not assume the role of developing effective host nation police forces - through training, advising, and shaping - then a security vacuum may emerge, which insurgents/terrorists/criminal groups can take advantage of, adversely affecting stability and governance efforts. Similarly, if incompetent/corrupt/abusive local police personnel are present and continue their practices without intervention/training, that can also cause local populations to turn against government. Successful transition to HN responsibility/authority for security and other essential services will not be realized.

- If the U.S. military were to assume the role of developing effective host nation police forces - which is the far better option than doing nothing or relying on late arriving, restriction-bound, non-long-term contract personnel - it can be implied that this role will take time, patience, perseverance to carry out.

## **Event Description.**

This observation is based on the article "U.S. Military Forces and Police Assistance in Stability Operations: The Least-Worst Option to Fill the U.S. Capacity Gap," by Colonel (Ret) Dennis E. Keller, PKSOI Papers, August 2010.



### **c. Topic. Afghanistan: Transformation Challenges, Root Causes, and Developmental Assistance ( [678](#) )**

## **Observation.**

Efforts to extend the authority of the state, to identify the root causes of conflict/instability, and to provide developmental assistance - present significant challenges in an unstable state such as Afghanistan, where the central government is weak, tribal actors strong, local groups set in their ways, and potential for violence ever-present. Transformation focused on extending the authority and reach of the central government in this type environment can have unintended consequences. "Root causes" that drive conflict probably cannot be confidently identified, much less mitigated. Providing developmental assistance, in this type of environment, may not contribute to short-term stabilization objectives.

## **Discussion.**

An unstable state such as Afghanistan - where the central government is weak, tribal actors strong, local groups set in their ways, and violence pervasive - presents significant challenges to stabilization efforts. Should transformation attempt to build greater capacity at the national government level to rule, protect, and service its citizens? Should "root causes" of conflict be identified and stabilization objectives set accordingly? Should developmental assistance align with stabilization objectives and run concurrently with military stability operations? Perhaps, in an unstable/tribal state such as this (lagging in central governance, economic development, and infrastructure), transformation should recognize, and allow, some continuance of regional and tribal "governance." Perhaps, in an unstable/tribal environment such as this, determining the "root causes" of the unstable environment may not be possible. Perhaps also, providing developmental assistance should not be emphasized as a means to attain stabilization objectives or overall stability.

First and foremost, Afghanistan is arguably not the right place to promote a central government's authority over the width and breadth of the country. Many regional, local, tribal, and/or religious leaders have traditionally been the power-brokers with regard to law and order. Since 2003, extending central governance over their spheres of influence has often been met with stiff opposition. Attempts to extend state authority into Pech districts have been resisted and have resulted in violence and instability. Attempts to insert state authority into the valleys of Krenjal, Watapor, and Wagal have been violently contested. Laws made in Kabul running counter to local tribal and religious laws and interests have had negative repercussions. As an example, the national government's law to regulate logging went against the interests of major leaders in Korengal, Nari, and Nuristan, and it was vehemently opposed. The new law was viewed as foreign, unnecessary, and corrupt. In many cases, the unintended consequence of extending the reach of the state has been resistance to the state - which then provided opportunities for insurgents to establish/promote themselves. In southern Afghanistan, coalition forces siding with a weak central government - in opposition to the established legitimacy of local leaders - created an opening for the Taliban to establish shadow governments that championed traditional local legitimacy. Local actors, who were resisting state authority, found common cause with outright antigovernment (Taliban) elements.

Secondly, an unstable/tribal state such as Afghanistan has so many causes of underdevelopment, conflict, and strife - which people have lived with for centuries, and which are interwoven with each other - that the menu is too large and too complex to narrow down to "root causes" - if they even exist. Some theorists have postulated that the "causes" of Afghan instability include poverty, ignorance, repressive traditional governance, tribal allegiances and rivalries, backwardness, crime, corruption, narcotics production and trafficking, religious influences, lack of both women's rights and human rights, terrorism, terrain

considerations, and many others. These "causes", even if they can be categorized and agreed upon - have been influenced by so many internal and external factors over time that one cannot really get to the "root." It is perhaps impossible to identify the "root causes." Correspondingly, it has been difficult to align objectives to mitigate the effects of the root causes, and equally difficult to gain unity of effort on stability operations. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has consistently reported incidents of frustration and operational delays due to misunderstandings over the objectives of short-term stability programs and projects. Military units and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have also had variance, at times, over whether the goals of certain civil-military assistance programs should be to win population support through patronage, or to generate long-term developmental assistance. For example, a given PRT leader recently reversed course on assistance for a certain local community by declining to improve/deepen a canal, citing new guidance that he should avoid "aid dependency" and instead let the community develop the means for long-term sustainability, after the PRT had earlier cleared the canal. Another example that leaders have wrestled with is how and when to get Afghans involved in their own long-term security - and how to simultaneously ensure that training, information, and resources are not aiding the insurgents, short- or long-term. The Afghan people themselves have been confused about the objectives of developmental assistance - with many Afghans generally perceiving that assistance has been geared toward helping Afghans loyal to the government, yet some also noting that assistance has gone to those who are not loyal, and even to those who actually conduct/support insurgency.

Although it may be futile to address "root causes" of conflict/instability, as an alternative to this, a certain brigade commander working with a PRT in three provinces (Khost, Paktia, Patikta) in the 2009-2010 timeframe, commented that identifying sources of instability did contribute to stability operations. In his experience, it was worthwhile to identify what he called "local irritants" among the people. He cited examples such as a washed-out bridge, a failed crop, and even the Taliban. In his opinion, it is prudent to not enter an area with a pre-conceived agenda of what needs to be done. Instead, find out from the people what their "local irritants" are, then work to get rid of those irritants. This course of action contributed to stability successes in his area of operation.

Thirdly, developmental assistance - with the intent of addressing "root causes" (solving poverty, repressive traditional regimes, etc.) and achieving enduring stability in Afghanistan - has not worked very well overall. In fact, stability has steadily decreased since 2005. According to several studies, developmental assistance has not provided positive effects on stability. A study by Andrew Wilder on assistance and stability, published in Foreign Policy (December 2009), stated that the Afghans' perceptions of U.S. and international aid have grown overwhelmingly negative, and that their main overriding criticism was a strong belief that aid has been fueling massive corruption. A second study, by USAID

(March 2009) of the Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) program in Afghanistan, concluded that this developmental assistance program did not improve governance, nor bring government closer to the people, nor foster stability. A third study, by the Center for Naval Analyses in early 2009, concluded that there has been no evidence that PRT civil developmental assistance quelled violence or increased stability. Finally, a 2008 International Security Assistance Force study reported no statistically significant relationship between PRT projects and the frequency of antigovernment attacks. Anti-government attacks, as well as attacks on humanitarian assistance teams, have steadily risen over the past five years.

### **Recommendation.**

- It is recommended that the following three questions be addressed for future stability operations in an unstable/tribal state: (1) Does the mitigation of "root causes" of conflict need to be an objective? Does stabilization really need to address all the "root causes" of instability, or does stabilization need to only ensure that governmental institutions can effectively function? Rather than address "root causes," should stabilization more simply focus on "local irritants" - and work to address those? (2) Should Transformation efforts (in this type of state) be more narrowly pursued, focusing primarily on the government's ability to provide (greater) Security? Or, if not the focus, should (greater) Security at least be the first building block of the Transformation effort? (3) Should developmental assistance, particularly civil-led assistance, be delayed until after military-led efforts have largely established a stable environment (i.e., should it be sequential)?

- It is recommended that centralized governance may not be the correct model for Transformation in an unstable/tribal state. This type of governance is too foreign/radical/invasive to local populations and their leaders. This type of governance breaks too many traditionally accepted ways of law, order, control, influence, and lifestyle. Options such as decentralized democracy or mixed sovereignty may be (more) viable options - as discussed in "Defining Success in Afghanistan" in the July/August 2010 edition of Foreign Affairs. Decentralized democracy could include delegating certain centralized powers out to provincial or district levels, such as budget development, justice, enforcement of regulations, revenue collection, and approval of governmental officials. Mixed sovereignty could go a step further in allowing local levels to have certain powers to govern/rule their areas - so long as certain activities are not conducted/ tolerated, like harboring terrorist camps, sponsoring narcotics trafficking, and infringing on neighboring territory.

- If the identification and mitigation of "root causes" is extremely complex and not imperative in this type of environment - but if "local irritants" could be more readily identified and mitigated - and if developmental assistance is not helpful to stability in the short term, then: It is recommended that special planning &

analysis tools (new doctrinal tools) be developed for Stability Operations for the unstable/tribal state. Just like Mass Atrocity Response Operations (MARO) is a "special case" where unique Mission Analysis tools have been developed, the same approach/product could be taken for "Stability Operations in the Unstable/Tribal State."

### **Implication.**

If the unstable/tribal state is not treated as a special case (demanding special planning & analysis tools, and more narrowly focused objectives & efforts), and if Stability Operations are not planned and executed accordingly, then those operations are not likely to succeed, and instability is likely to continue.

### **Event Description.**

This observation is based on the article "Analytics and Action in Afghanistan" by Thomas Blau and Daryl Liskey in PRISM, volume 1, number 4, September 2010. This article can be found at <http://www.ndu.edu/press/prism1-4.html>

### **Comments.**

A related article - which highlights problems/failures with building centralized democracy in Afghanistan, as well as offers alternative models such as decentralized democracy and mixed sovereignty - is "Defining Success in Afghanistan," by Stephen Biddle, Fotini Christia, and F. Alexander Thier in Foreign Affairs, July/August 2010, volume 89, number 4. This article is available at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66450/stephen-biddle-fotini-christia-and-j-alexander-thier/defining-success-in-afghanistan>

A second related article - which cites the importance of identifying and addressing "local irritants" in Stability Operations - is "Nation-building in Afghanistan," COL Michael Howard, in AUSA News, October 2010, volume 33, number 12. This article is available at <http://www.ausa.org/publications/ausanews/Pages/default.aspx>



### **d. Topic. Decentralization for Participatory Governance ( [604](#) )**

### **Observation.**

Decentralized government is an effective instrument for building and sustaining peace in post-conflict countries. Decentralization creates a situation in which



citizens are more engaged in governance and have a forum to air their views on the development and reconstruction process.

### **Discussion.**

Over-centralization and monopolization of power by the central government are a source of conflict in many countries. To counteract the tensions caused by elitism and authoritarian rule, many post-conflict governments have implemented decentralization strategies as a means to ensure that services reach communities and that the voices of local people are heard in the development and reconstruction process. When local governance structures exist, citizens and groups can articulate their interests, mediate differences, receive services and exercise legal rights and obligations.

All the same, there is a case for designing decentralized systems in post-conflict countries. Decentralization provides a structural arrangement for the orderly negotiation and shared exercise of power, and it facilitates the involvement of the local people in policy decisions about their country's development. Moreover, it offers a means of allocating resources effectively, improving service delivery and enhancing the prospects for peace.

Decentralization can take two forms. Under *vertical decentralization*, the central government hands down certain powers, functions and resources to local governments. Under *horizontal decentralization*, governance responsibilities are spread more broadly across the society, and civil society organizations (non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, community groups, etc.) are empowered to plan and manage affairs themselves. There is a concerted effort to involve all citizens in public administration, including women, people with disabilities, youth and other groups that were marginalized before the outbreak of conflict.

Elements of successful decentralization include: legal frameworks and structural arrangements; strengthened local government; local government responsiveness and accountability; civil society organizations and the private sector working in partnership with local and national governments; and, evidence of government intent to improve the quality of life in local communities. One of the biggest challenges to decentralization is the political will of central government leaders to share power and authority.

The following are some cited examples of successful decentralization:

1. South Africa. A highlight was the structural arrangement that facilitated the formulation of the Integrated Development Plan Representative Forum. Forum participants included council members, traditional community leaders, senior officials from municipal government departments, and representatives from organized stakeholder groups.

2. Rwanda. The push for decentralization came from the central government as part of the peace-building process. Participatory decision-making, based on local leadership, was encouraged through the establishment of Community Development Committees (CDC) attended by all community members of voting age.

3. El Salvador. The El Salvador government, supported by the national association of municipalities, promoted decentralization and community participation immediately after signing the Peace Accords in 1992. Programs were established to foster community participation in identifying priorities, developing local plans, and setting local service requirements.

### **Recommendation.**

The following Lessons Learned should be incorporated in post-conflict transition:

1. Participatory governance at the local level facilitates the involvement of local communities in policy decisions about their own development, thereby creating a shared commitment to peaceful progress that reduces the likelihood of violent conflict.

2. Successful decentralization depends on political will, civic will and capacity development at the local level and careful implementation to ensure appropriate power-sharing arrangements and allocation of resources.

3. Peace cannot be lasting unless both men and women participate in shaping post-conflict reconstruction and are able to equally enjoy its benefits. Barriers to women's participation include traditional notions about gender roles, women's care-giving burdens and their inexperience in leadership positions. Nonetheless, women's participation can be increased by enacting reforms to end gender discrimination, setting quotas for female representation in government and undertaking capacity development efforts to strengthen women's leadership skills.

4. Peace cannot be lasting unless minority groups are engaged in post-conflict governance, especially when ethnic or religious divisions were a root cause of the conflict or a contributing factor. It is important to foster dialogue and reconciliation among antagonistic groups, build a shared national identity that trumps ethnic or religious ties, and take concrete steps (such as constitutional reforms or the creation of special mechanisms) to protect minority rights and engage minority groups in participatory decision-making.

### **Implication.**

If recommendations are not adopted:

1. Central governments are viewed as exclusionary and not fully supporting a peace-building process by including all conflict parties, factions, and stakeholders. This exclusion builds distrust and lack of confidence in the central government. Stakeholders will view the central government as self-serving if local governments, local groups, and municipalities are left out of the process.
2. Ethnic, religious, and minority groups will be the main source of conflict as long as they do not share in power and governance. They are at the highest risk of being marginalized during post-conflict reconstruction and development.
3. Not including gender-specific issues neglects one of the biggest challenges in many post-conflict areas. The challenges to women's participation is daunting in those countries where women, historically, have not had representation in central governments. Gender perspectives must be included in the formal post-conflict decision-making process to affect policy and development issues, especially when women are head of household or have the burden of care in many situations.

If recommendations are adopted:

1. Conflict parties can have a venue to provide input and share in a common purpose so that they view a "public good" instead of "group interests." Minorities and women become invested in development and fostering reconciliation.
2. Central governments will have to be committed to training and education if local governments and groups become more involved in the decision-making process and development planning.
3. Laws and regulations will have to be created or strengthened to protect minorities and women. That is one step central governments can take to show their commitment to decentralize governance. This can also help social cohesion between different groups.

### **Event Description.**

This observation is based on Chapter V "Engaging Citizens in Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Decentralization for Participatory Governance," of the UN report *Reconstructing Public Administration after Conflict: Challenges, Practices and Lessons Learned*, by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, published February 2010.



## **e. Topic. Strengthening Public Services in Post-conflict ( [603](#) )**

### **Observation.**

Strengthening public servants' knowledge, skills, networks and attitudes is key to any improvement in government performance, because it is through public servants that services are planned and delivered.

### **Discussion.**

The success of government in post-conflict society depends on the performance of the public service in providing critical services to the population and restoring trust and confidence in governance. This is because the public service constitutes the heartbeat of any government. Public servants pervade the entire sphere of government action. They are schoolteachers, medical practitioners, judges, court workers, police officers, military men and women, agricultural extension workers, road constructors, forestry officers, administrative officials, parliamentarians, finance officers, planners, etc. They are engaged in every facet of government activity, but most of them work directly with citizens, to whom they represent the face of government. Therefore, the quality of public servants in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and networks can make or break public trust in a post-conflict government.

Post-conflict public administration situations are not always similar. The public services break down in different ways, depending on the nature of the conflict and the conditions present afterwards. Consequently, countries will face different challenges in rebuilding their human resources capabilities, and experience gained in one situation may not be relevant in another. For example, in South Africa after the fall of the apartheid regime, the institutions, systems, structures and even personnel of the public service were in place and intact. But they did not reflect South African demographics, as the white minority was vastly overrepresented.

The South African situation was different from the one in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, when most public servants were killed. Most of the rest, particularly those implicated in genocidal acts, escaped into Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), carrying files, records and other movable public service assets. When these exiles returned to Rwanda, they took over public offices in an unauthorized, uncoordinated manner. These new self-declared officials had to be removed and the vacancies filled in an orderly fashion. By the time the new regime settled in, knowledgeable and skilled personnel were unavailable, and the public service's systems and institutions, along with equipment, office space and logistics, were severely lacking.

A somewhat similar situation existed in Timor-Leste after 1999. An estimated 7,000 Indonesian civil servants had fled the Territory after Indonesian rule

collapsed, and institutions and public records were destroyed or removed. This left a void throughout government because Indonesian officials had formerly occupied most of the technical and management positions. There had been limited development of Timorese skills in administration and governance. Also, whereas some of the Rwandans who returned after the genocide were eager to work and reconstruct their country, the Indonesians who fled Timor-Leste had little interest in returning. When the United Nations took over the administration of the Territory, there was no such thing as the Timor-Leste public service. Initially the United Nations had to rely on Member State volunteers, as new Timorese civil servants were being trained.

Uganda had a very different problem after the civil war that ended in 1986. Uganda's post-conflict public service was overstaffed; bloated by redundant positions with overlapping functions. The system was also plagued by poor remuneration, moonlighting, extensive corruption and uncommitted personnel. These examples illustrate the wide variation in human resource capacity in post-conflict countries. Not surprisingly, then, approaches to strengthening human resources within the public service will vary from country to country. Where a substantial number of personnel have been inherited from the outgoing regime, the task may be simply to change employees' attitudes towards the new government and towards serving the public. Such was the case in Uganda after 1986. In situations such as Rwanda, where the public service has been flooded by returning exiles without the necessary education, skills or experience, then massive immediate retraining is required, not only to transmit knowledge and skills but also to cultivate a sense of togetherness and a shared work ethic. In a situation like Timor-Leste or Kosovo, where United Nations personnel from different countries and cultures constituted an interim public service, the initial concern is to help everyone work together harmoniously in a new environment that is often insecure.

### **Recommendation.**

The following Lessons Learned should be incorporated in post-conflict transition:

1. The quality of public servants is crucial to the recovery of a post-conflict government and the trust that people have in it. This makes capacity-building in the public service essential for post-conflict recovery. Strengthening public servants' knowledge, ethics, skills, networks and attitudes is key, because it is through public servants that government services are planned and delivered, critical innovations conceived and realized, needed reforms carried out, and trust in government restored.
2. The nature of the conflict, the levels of violence and destruction, and the conditions that emerge after the conflict determine the state of human resources in the public service. Reconstruction efforts must be tailored to the specific situation.



3. Reconstruction efforts should proceed from an accurate count of a country's public servants and an accurate picture of their knowledge and skills. Because employee censuses are expensive, they should be planned to fit within the overall strategy for developing human resources in the public service. In addition, censuses should be designed for congruence with the local context to ensure that the government has the capacity to effectively use the data collected.

4. It is highly desirable for oversight of the recruitment process to be managed by independent bodies such as civil service commissions to avoid cronyism, nepotism, and other forms of favoritism. But because it takes time to create and develop such institutions, interim measures need to be devised to address the immediate challenge of recruiting competent personnel. If merit-based recruitment is introduced early, there is a greater chance of limiting patronage and other harmful practices and instead ensuring a well-functioning public service.

5. Violence takes a toll on civil servants not only in terms of their numbers, but also in terms of their behavior and motivation. To rebuild the ranks of qualified personnel, it is not enough to remedy skills deficits and knowledge gaps. Efforts must also be made to restore integrity, ethics and professional conduct in the public service.

6. Diversity within the population should be reflected within the public service. If both men and women, as well as members of all ethnic, religious and other groups, are actively included in the government, then conflict is less likely to erupt. A representative, merit-based, service-oriented public service can provide a model for participation, inclusive decision-making, reconciliation, social cohesion, and proactive peace-building.

7. Most post-conflict countries lack the financial resources to pay public servants adequately, and reliance on foreign aid and technical assistance is unsustainable in the long term. Donors thus need to work strategically with post-conflict governments to help them develop pay management and incentive systems that will attract the requisite personnel without overtaxing the budget.

### **Implication.**

- The security situation will have to improve or be at a level so that public servants can conduct their work in relative safety in order to be effective. This will be important if public servants have been killed or driven off from their homeland.

- Heavy external support will be needed for countries that have undergone devastating violence and upheaval. Host nation governments will likely not have the means and resources to organize, train, and mentor public service personnel following a conflict.

- Foreign nations will take on many functions of government the longer it takes for host-nation public servants to fill positions in government and become proficient. People's attitudes, confidence, and support in their government will be partially affected by who is actually serving their needs. The tipping point is that stage when the consensus is that their own people are serving their needs instead of foreigners.

- Foreign nations will have to recognize and accept that the resulting public service may not be the one they desire because of ethnic, cultural, or social factors. The key will be to train people to professional and ethical standards.

### **Event Description.**

This observation is based on Chapter IV "Strengthening Human Resources in the Public Service" of the report *Reconstructing Public Administration after Conflict: Challenges, Practices and Lessons Learned*, United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs, World Public Sector Report 2010, March 2010.



### **f. Topic. Federal System with Autonomous Regions ( [528](#) )**

#### **Observation.**

The type of governance structure, strategy, and policies in a (failed/failing or emerging state) country should strike a balance between a strong central government authority focused on national, strategic issues and a more distributed configuration built on local governance which can successfully address the needs and grievances of people.

#### **Discussion.**

The article "*Afghanistan Governed by a Federal System with Autonomous Regions: A Path to Success?*," brings up the subject of grievances as a part of developing a type of government/governance infrastructure. The author posits that Afghanistan could be best served with a federal form of governance serving multiple autonomous areas. "Federalism" can create opportunities for conflict resolution through its various power-sharing techniques amongst the different levels of governance. According to the article, federalism has received much study in recent years due to its potential to alleviate ethnic, minority and sub-nation-state conflict before it becomes outright bloody warfare. Federalism within this capacity can protect the cultural distinction of one people and the right of the nation-state to have its own internal sovereignty. This provides for the protection of minority groups' human rights while giving an outlet for their grievances. The

article describes three country case studies (Belgium, Spain, and Kurdistan) that reveal the positive and negative aspects of federal government structures with autonomous areas.

The author examines how grievances and minimization of insurgent/separatist tendencies were accomplished in each case study. In the Belgium study, grievances and separatist tendencies were shown to have existed amongst the Walloons and the Flemish prior to many of the changes made to the political structure of the government. Grievances were centered along perceived discrimination resulting from differing economic systems, lifestyles, and language. The federal system of governance adopted by Belgium addressed these problems directly. As a result, popular opinion began to move away from separatist rhetoric toward a belief that grievances could be adequately addressed by government. Local government actions of each autonomous area were also being seen as much more responsive to the needs of the people. Concurrently, negative newspaper articles and non-violent protests decreased significantly.

In Spain, there was a positive outcome to federalism. Both the Basque and the Catalonians displayed a high degree of separatist tendencies along with numerous grievances before the changes made to Spanish governance. The grant of autonomous status and continued reforms to this autonomous arrangement contributed directly to the dramatic decline in separatist tendencies. Insurgent activity in these regions also declined greatly. The insurgent groups were delegitimized in the eyes of the local populace by the reforms made to the Spanish system of governance. In essence, insurgents became separated from the local populace, and thus, were denied their support base. For the country as a whole, province-to-province grievances were also significantly reduced. The court system that was established as part of the autonomous pacts was able to initiate local reforms and reduce conflict at the provincial level through peaceful means.

A study of the autonomous region of Kurdistan existing within Iraq shows additional positive outcomes. The Kurdish people had a very high level of grievance against the Iraqi national government to include harsh treatment and denial of their bid for status as an independent nation. When autonomous status was granted, the Kurds gained control over their region which alleviated many of these grievances, including many of the separatist movements. Individuals from the local populace and insurgent groups were brought together to establish a local government structure, with national links. With this in place, they were able to work for the people instead of against the central government. As with Spain, insurgent activity dropped dramatically in Kurdistan after Iraq addressed Kurdish identity issues. Even more significant, insurgent groups within Kurdistan were relegated to obscure areas within the Kurdish region due to the loss of their support base. The change to an autonomous region significantly reduced the number of Kurdish grievances and minimized the power of insurgent groups within the province.

Issues in Afghanistan share many similarities with those within the three country case studies. First among the similarities are the grievances held by the people. To this day, Afghans resent a controlling central government. The ethnic groups throughout Afghanistan desire to choose their own way of life without direct national level government intrusion into their personal, family, or tribal affairs. Many nations and national Afghan leaders have tried to force change upon the Afghan people and Afghan tribal culture. This approach, coupled with a general Afghan belief that no central Afghan government has ever provided for the needs of all Afghans, has typically led to an outright revolt against the central government. For the local tribal communities, a basic level of stability in the form of local policing, fair justice, and education for their children are routine demands not being met. None of these services have been effectively provided by any form of Afghan central or national level government. Evidence of these enduring grievances has led to the acceptance of local Taliban "shadow-governments," which appear to recognize and then provide resources to the local populous, thus gaining their loyalty and support.

### **Recommendation.**

The following Lessons Learned should be incorporated in post-conflict transition:

1. Dedicate sufficient time to the process. Time is a key commodity. The cited case studies show that adopting a federalist-type government is a long-term proposition. It took Belgium over a century to stabilize into its current state, and it may need more governmental solidification / stabilization in the future. Governmental stability is not easily achieved; rather it takes time to accomplish, particularly with nations that have internal regional challenges like Belgium.

2. Consider using Spain's transformation as an example, as there are several benefits of note:

- The federal government has been able to successfully address many ethnic grievances in a legitimate and peaceful manner.

- It has successfully and peacefully transformed a central system of government into a decentralized form of governance that appears to be more responsive to the needs of the people. Along with this, it has also helped to develop local community governance that had been previously neglected.

- It has inspired a culture of autonomy through progressive reforms that have become ingrained into the Spanish psyche. Spain has finally stabilized (if only for the time being) the separatist and nationalistic tendencies of the Basque and Catalanian people.

## **Implication.**

- Afghanistan adopting a central / national government structure will require a very long-term commitment by the U.S., its allies, and international organizations. It will require education, advice/mentorship, and technical assistance. One of the most significant areas of concern associated with increased central power coupled with autonomous or local governance is corruption. Most often it degrades both the quality and quantity of services provided to the people and increases grievances from people and suspicion towards local and central government officials and the government itself.

- Agreement to the balance of power between the central government and autonomous areas or local governments will have to be developed or negotiated, which in itself can be a long-term process.

- A federal form of government in Afghanistan may help the central government "penetrate" throughout the country. The central government can affect local areas by assisting with or providing essential services, police, military, road infrastructure, government offices or government sponsored economic activity. Autonomous/local area governments and agencies can help the central government "penetrate" remote and local areas by executing the national policies instead of the central government agencies. In this way, central government agencies do not physically have offices or officials residing in local/autonomous areas but instead are represented by those local governments. Note that the Taliban have been successful when they have addressed local grievances through "shadow" governments and provided essential services.

## **Event Description.**

This observation is based from the article *"Afghanistan Governed by a Federal System with Autonomous Regions: A Path to Success?"*, by Bryan Carroll and David A. Anderson, Small Wars Journal, December 2009.



### **g. Topic. Improving Local Ownership of Development Process ( [506](#) )**

#### **Observation.**

The concept of local ownership is important in the rebuilding process in failing/failed states. The objective for outside interveners in failed states is that indigenous persons and groups gradually can assume the responsibility for national processes and institutions. The gradual transfer of power helps to legitimize the successive representatives.



## **Discussion.**

This ZIF publication (in Event Description below) is a prelude to the research project on *Local Ownership in Peacebuilding Processes. Approaches, Experiences, and Prerequisites for Success. An Empirical Study of Peace Operations in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Liberia (UNMIL)*. It addresses issues such as: clarifying and operationalizing the meaning of the concept; providing an improved, empirically based understanding of how local ownership is managed in the field and of systematic problems of its implementation; and, developing recommendations for improving its implementation.

The concept of local ownership has been around since the 1980s. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan first endorsed the concept for peace operations in 2001. He believed the role of the United Nations was to facilitate the process that sought to dismantle the structures of violence and create the conditions conducive to durable peace and sustainable development. Others drew the same conclusion such as the Joint Utstein Study, which stressed: "It is important that partner countries be in the driver's seat as far as peace building efforts are concerned, especially in post-conflict situations."

Despite endorsement and acceptance of the concept, there is skepticism and controversy about what the concept implies in practice and how a local population can actually "own" processes that are driven from the outside. One controversy concerns the timing and extent of the inclusion of local actors in peace-building processes. Some advocates want a strong involvement at the earliest possible point of time: Host nation people must actively be involved in setting the agenda and leading the process, which is a highly political process complicated by the divisions in a conflict. The concept of the "light footprint" was formed by the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi; it promoted an early take-over of responsibilities by local actors.

Other experts advocate against an early transfer of control of reform processes to local actors. This could mean that the perpetrators of a conflict could again control governmental and development process. Many of the former leaders could return to power and reinstitute failed policies.

A difficulty with "local ownership" is identifying available, relevant and qualified local actors, especially when a political class of people have been eliminated or degraded. Another way to look at local actors is as a collection of actors with varying motivations, interests, and skills.

Regardless of the amount of research done on "local ownership," this concept should be retained for further research and study. Some of the listed reasons include:

- The term is used many times in official mandates and documents by the UN and other international organizations.

- The local ownership concept refers to the legal right of self-determination and principle of national sovereignty.

- Many peace-building efforts fail because there is insufficient local input.

### **Recommendation.**

Although this publication was a prelude to a research project, there were some preliminary recommendations:

- Local ownership is both a *process* and an *outcome*. Outside actors have to engage local actors in peace-building efforts from the very beginning up to the final goal of exercising full responsibility.

- Intrusiveness dilemma: Overly intrusive policy- and decision-making by external actors tends to alienate local stakeholders. Less intrusive measures may not suffice to stabilize a post-conflict situation.

- Dependency dilemma: Establishing sustainable local structures and capacities requires long-term external commitment. Yet, long-term international involvement and assistance tends to create local dependencies on external support.

- Transition dilemma: International peace-building activities should occur in cooperation with local actors and should be based on existing structures and traditions from the very beginning. However, traditional power structures and mentalities often caused or contributed to the outbreak of a given conflict. External peace-builders thus face a dilemma in selecting local partners. They should be cautious in relying on traditional elites and should try to transform their attitudes and behavior.

### **Implication.**

- Outside interveners will not provide local actors a chance to learn and develop so they can assume responsibility for governance if there is no plan that includes phasing and timing.

- Intervening groups/organizations risk alienating or disenfranchising local groups by favoring one group over another if not careful to strike a balance between those competing groups/people.

- Local groups will fail or falter if not mentored, guided, and checked by outside groups.

- Outside groups will properly monitor progress if people are assigned on a short-term basis. A year assignment should be the minimum for personnel to properly carry out duties and transition to follow-on personnel.

### **Event Description.**

This observation is based on the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) paper, *Peacebuilding Processes in Failed States - How to Improve Local Ownership?*, prepared for the 49th Annual International Studies Association Convention (San Francisco, 29 March 2008) and the Panel on "Multidimensional Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding and the United Nations." The paper was coauthored by Winrich Kuehne, Tobias Pietz, Leo von Carlowitz, and Tobia von Gienanth.



### **h. Topic. Governance Interventions in Post-War Situations ( [504](#) )**

#### **Observation.**

Strengthening horizontal accountability in a post-war context typically involves interventions and external support in the following areas: constitution-making, watchdog institutions, transitional justice, local governance, and security sector reform.

In this report, the author uses the term 'post-war' instead of 'post-conflict.' He explains that 'post-conflict' is a misleading term, not only because conflict is an inherent element in all societies, but because violence often continues in societies after a peace settlement has been accepted.

#### **Discussion.**

Democratic accountability is a prerequisite for good governance and a functioning democratic system. To secure that political leaders 'play by the rules' - act in accordance with their mandate and do not violate citizens' rights - is a concern in all societies aiming to secure a democratic form of government. Accountability is divided into two categories:

(i) Horizontal accountability refers to the classical tripartite division of state power between the three branches of government as well as the range of other public entities (often called special agencies of restraint or 'watchdogs') created to check for abuse by or inefficiencies of the state. Strengthening horizontal accountability in a post-war context typically involves interventions and external

support in the following areas: constitution-making, watchdog institutions, transitional justice, local governance, and security sector reform.

- The report uses South Africa as a model for *constitution-making* for divided societies. The process took almost seven years and faced threats of renewed violence. However, the slow and cumbersome process associated with constitution-making was at the heart of its success. Divergent examples of constitution-making which involved a rapid process include Rwanda, Afghanistan, and East Timor. Other research suggests that parliamentary democracy is preferable to presidentialism because the latter tends to foster zero-sum competition, deadlock, and personalistic, state-level leadership.

- The concept of '*watchdog institutions*' appeared with the emergence of the 'new democracies' in former socialist states and one-party states in the South. The watchdogs were intended to complement other institutions of restraint on the 'state.' Some of the types of watchdogs include 'Rights watchdogs,' 'Reform watchdogs,' and 'Audit watchdogs.' Corruption is typically prevalent in societies where there is limited accountability of public institutions. The potential for corruption is considerable in states where control of the state is contested or accountability institutions are weak.

- A common view is that a decentralized approach is important in post-war situations where central government structures are weak or remain contested. In that situation, local structures are important in providing goods and services and to promote local democratic processes. However, some experts warn that local governance cannot succeed in the long-term without a national state structure. Examples given were Somalia and Bosnia. Somalia's local and regional governance did not succeed because power continued to be wielded by warlords and other non-state leaders. Bosnia's new government approach was overly decentralized and had the same weaknesses as the former government system.

- The concept of security sector reform (SSR) emerged in the late 1990s. The sector was broadly defined and included institutions of police and justice, defense (private and public military organizations), and civilian control and oversight. Examples of externally assisted SSR include Central and South Eastern European countries – including the Balkans. The most successful SSR cases are South Africa and some Latin America countries. In these cases, the SSR process was more internally driven which underlines the importance of participation to create legitimacy in the process.

(ii) Vertical accountability denotes the chain of institutions and processes that link the elected ruler to its electorate and the citizenry. It includes citizens acting through the electoral process or indirectly via civic organizations and the media. Vertical accountability is influenced by a variety of factors, many of which are not directly governance-related. However, vital interventions in post-war contexts

focus on the election system, building a civil society and supporting grassroots initiatives.

- The objectives of post-war elections are typically to: 1) move the conflict from the military battleground to the political arena; 2) transfer power or legitimize the power of a government that can start rebuilding the country; and, 3) initiate and consolidate the democratization process. There is increasing awareness that ill-timed, badly designed or poorly run elections can undermine both peace and democratization in post-war situations. Considerations for elections include the degree of continuing conflict in society, security conditions, and freedom of movement. Political contests require some minimal prerequisites such as freedom of expression, freedom of movement, and organization and existence of political parties that can field candidates and mount election campaigns. The electoral system has a big impact on representation and governance. The critical factor is the electoral formula which determines how votes are translated into seats. In post-war situations, as in emerging democracies generally, political parties are critical insofar as they structure the competition between societal groups and interests. Some observers argue that in situations where one party is dominant, 'democracy promoters' must encourage the development of alternative political parties, financing included. Helping civil society and financing proliferation of NGOs is not enough; 'political party development must be a top agenda item.'

- Many donors support human rights organizations that build rights awareness on grassroots levels (e.g. the Honduran-based CeSHRA program in Central America). These are often anchored in a national human rights commission, or human rights monitoring is linked to larger peace commissions (as in Nicaragua). Support for development of human rights organizations in Cambodia on both local and national levels has, for instance, been considered a major success and achievement. National, institutional support is necessary to establish the principle of no impunity through firm prosecution of violations. In the case of refugees returning to conflictual post-war situations, both national and international support are required to establish a reasonable absence of fear. Fear of reprisals was a main reason why Hutu refugees were reluctant to return to Rwanda after the genocide. In Bosnia, it took concerted efforts by the international community - including provision of incentives to both refugees and local authorities - to encourage returns to areas that had been 'cleansed.'

- Several projects in war-torn societies have been designed to empower victimized and traumatized communities. For example, projects of this kind have been established to assist the indigenous people in Guatemala, who suffered enormously from systematic violence perpetrated by the 'security' forces during the war. One project, for instance, sought to strengthen the Mayan people's capacity to articulate their interests in policy discussions. The theory that personal contact reduces hostility has informed numerous projects. The assumption is that participation in common projects and structured interaction

among previously divided communities will help restore positive social relations. Cooperative projects of this kind have been particularly common in the post-war Balkans. Evaluations of cross-ethnic contact groups of youth and NGOs suggest they have been effective but - as in the case of grass-roots human rights initiatives - vulnerable to renewed conflict on the national level. South Africa pioneered the use of grass-roots peace committees. These committees were designed to foster tolerance and prevent violence at the local level.

(iii) External Agents. Although not part of this discussion, a third form of accountability can be added, namely the accountability imposed by external agents such as donors, financial institutions, etc.

### **Recommendation.**

According to the report, people must recognize that governance is a process, not a product. This calls for a long-term perspective and a recognition that social engineering has distinct limits. External actors in particular need to be conscious of the dilemmas of ownership and assistance that operate in post-war situations. While working in a policy framework that emphasizes the principles of democracy, which entails local self-determination and ownership, aid actors have their own interests and procedures that may well conflict with local needs and interests. The imbalance in capacity and resources nevertheless gives the aid actors a dominant voice in the formulation of goals and policies, often leaving conflicts to be 'solved' on the ground through local non-compliance or resistance, or producing dysfunctional social consequences. The dilemma is inherent in all aid activities, but is accentuated by the sharp imbalance in resources and administrative capacity that typically exists in a post-war situation.

The other main conclusions/recommendations of this report are:

- Aid actors need to adjust policies to local types of post-war situations. A one-size policy does not fit all cases.
- Promoting human rights is a confidence-building measure, and, as such, is essential to establishing a foundation for post-war, democratic governance.
- Accountability measures are necessary to secure democratic governance, but there are many forms and structures of accountability.
- Decentralization has obvious advantages in post-war situations where the central state is weak or remains contested, but must be balanced by a national structure. Aid coordination based in host government institutions can be an effective and sustainable approach.
- Approaching security issues through non-conventional entry points can encourage critical reforms in a difficult sector.



## **Implication.**

The recommendations lay out a slow methodical process towards achieving good, effective governance. However, affected countries, aid donors, and international groups should not hold tight to a plan, but recognize that events and situations usually change, which will cause unplanned reactions or changes. All parties must be flexible but hold true to the long-term goal(s). External actors must, at some point, cede or slowly transition responsibilities to the host nation; otherwise, they risk the issue of ownership of the process. All affected parties should use those practices and traits from successful governance interventions, but need to be ready to modify or perhaps terminate those things that are not working or become obstacles to peace-building.

## **Event Description.**

This observation is based on the report 'Governance Interventions in Post-War Situations: Lessons Learned,' May 2005, by Vibeke Wang, Astri Suhrke, and Elling N. Tjonneland, of the Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway. The report addresses governance issues in post-war situations.



## **3. CONCLUSION**

The complex nature of transition/transformation - which encompasses the difficult work of reducing the means and motivations for violent conflict, as well as incrementally improving the HN government to where it is independent, fully functional, and able to deliver essential services to its citizens - requires that planners, operators, and other SO practitioners (from the tactical through the strategic level) work in close cooperation with one another - from initial planning through all phases of execution.

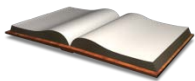
Because of the societal reforms and governmental capacity-building involved, transition/transformation is undoubtedly one of the most critical sectors - perhaps the most critical sector - of Stabilization Operations. When done right, it moves the HN government to the desired point of standing on its own in a stable environment.

#### 4. COMMAND POC

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#### **Related Documents, References, and Links**

- [Harnessing Post-Conflict Transitions: A Conceptual Primer](#)
- [Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments \(MPICE\)](#)

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