Semi-Annual Lesson Report:

Defense Support to Stabilization (DSS)

Volume I

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Introduction

The Global Fragility Act of 2019[1] outlined a US strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability in countries identified by the Department of State in partnership with other federal agencies. Among those agencies is the Department of Defense (DOD) with its relatively new interagency support authority, the *Defense Support to Stabilization*, or DSS.[2] As Stephanie Hammond, then Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs, indicated

> This new authority allows DOD to provide logistical support, supplies and services to other federal agencies conducting stabilization activities… [so that] … critical civilian expertise can get into hard-to-reach areas more quickly and efficiently and with more effective resources, creating a unity of effort that the agencies have lacked in the past.[3]

The intent of this lesson collection is to offer some insight into topics and concepts DOD should recognize or consider as it plans and programs itself to partner with other federal agencies across the stabilization spectrum. Therefore, it is appropriate that the lessons here reflect the "integrated policy responses that advance multiple Administration priorities," as described in the *2022 Prologue* of the *US Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability,* to wit:

- Elevate Democracy, Human Rights and Governance
- Mitigate Climate Change and Strengthen Environmental Security
- Pursue equity and equality based on gender and other factors
- Promote security sector governance
- Manage rival powers[4]

As outlined, there is at least one lesson in this two-volume collection for each Administration priority listed. This first volume provides lessons associated with the first three priorities: *Elevate Democracy, Human Rights and Governance*; *Mitigate Climate Change and Strengthen Environmental Security*; and *Pursue equity and equality based on gender and other factors*. In addition, the first section of this volume shares a lesson collection focused on interagency history, from the Clinton Administration's Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56 to US and NATO lessons from the Afghanistan decades, and a concern of future interagency resource balance. In other words, *what's past is prologue*.[5]

The second volume of this lesson collection focuses on the remaining two Administration priorities: *Promote security sector governance* and *Manage rival powers*, with a concluding lesson that reminds stabilization practitioners about the usefulness of academic research and publications when in plan and/or program development or implementation. Please note that in no way are these lesson collections comprehensive. Instead, they are a beginning DSS external discourse—and, perhaps, internally as well. Also note that while the first section of this volume and the last lesson of the second volume do

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[1] The Global Fragility Act (GFA) of 2019, H.R. 2116/ S.727, 116th Congress (2019), https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2116 (accessed June 15, 2022).

[2] David Vergun, "Government Officials Announce U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict, Promote Stability," *DOD News*, December 18, 2020, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2452604/government-officials-announce-us-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-promote-stability/source/government-officials-announce-us-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-promote-stability/ (accessed March 20, 2021).

[3] Ibid.

[4] US Department of State, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, *2022 Prologue to the United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability* (April 1, 2022), https://www.state.gov/2022-prologue-to-the-united-states-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability/ (accessed May 15, 2022).

[5] William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, as seen at https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/what-s-past-is-prologue/m04n3q2f?hl=en.

not reflect an Administration priority, they may be relevant to greater understanding of stabilization complexities.

PKSOI's Lessons Learned Analyst, Colonel Lorelei Coplen (US Army, Retired), prepared and authored the lessons in both volumes between November 2021 and June 2022, unless otherwise indicated. Each of these lessons are also found in the Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) database, identified by the JLLIS number adjacent to each lesson title. Footnotes in these documents indicate any edits, changes, or updates to the JLLIS-based lessons. JLLIS access is at https://www.jllis.mil and requires a Department of Defense Common Access Card (CAC) for registration.

What's Past is Prologue

Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56's
Lessons Learned, Best Practices and Recommendations (JLLIS 231580)

Observation

Earlier in 2021, an author observed "The deadly global COVID-19 pandemic, [and] Great power competition will only make foreign crises more dangerous. To meet this challenge, the Biden-Harris administration's earliest and highest priority should be to establish a renewed PDD-56 process" that will use "all elements of national power: diplomacy, intelligence, law enforcement, border control, financial controls, cybersecurity, economic development, public diplomacy, and homeland defense."[6]

Discussion

A summarized history of Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56 notes the Clinton Administration developed it after several crises of the 1990s. Therefore "its practicality and utility are best understood as a by-product of the lessons its crafters and implementers learned from these crises."[7]

Negligible interagency coordination contributed to the failure of the 1992–93 intervention in Somalia. In contrast, "organized interagency management and political-military planning" characterized the Haiti intervention two years later.[8] The author attributes this difference to then NSC Senior Director Richard Clarke's interagency political-military plan developed by an assistant secretary-level executive committee with officials from the "Pentagon, the Justice and State Departments, the US Agency for International Development, the US Information Agency, and the CIA."[9]

In 1995, Michèle Flournoy, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, drafted a presidential directive to codify the Haitian intervention's

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[6] National Security Council (NSC), *Managing Complex Contingency Operations, Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56* (Washington, DC: NSC, 1997). https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-56.pdf (accessed November 28, 2021).
[7] Leonard R. Hawley, *Crisis Management Lessons from the Clinton Administration's Implementation of Presidential Decision Directive 56*, Parameters 51, no. 3 (2021), https://press.armywarcollege.edu/ parameters/vol51/iss3/4 (accessed November 20, 2021).
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid. The author shares this vignette: Before the intervention, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili briefed President Clinton on the campaign plan to seize Haiti. Afterward, the president asked, "How long will this take?" The chairman replied, "Sir, we will secure Haiti in about a week." Then the president turned to several of his policy advisers and asked, "What happens in the second week?" No one had an answer. (Author recollection of conversation following briefing by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili, 1994.)

interagency management mechanisms and planning activities. It included a "flexible crisis management framework…and strengthened the unity of effort…[and] also included two important initiatives—an after-action review to capture lessons learned and annual training."[10] The USG used this draft of what would become PDD-56 for planning for the United Nations (UN) peace implementation mission in Eastern Slavonia.

President Clinton signed PDD-56 in May 1997, however USG departments and agencies had already made significant institutional policy and procedural changes to enhance collaboration and coordination.[11] As example, the Joint Staff added an "Annex V (Interagency Coordination)" to operational plans "to address critical civilian agency efforts necessary for military operations" and the US State Department established its Office of Contingency Planning and Peacekeeping.

In 2001, President Bush's National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 1: *Organization of the National Security System*, changed the interagency planning from PDD-56's NSC-centric approach to a broader agency-centric approach. The 2005 NSPD 44: *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization*, amplified the agency over the NSC. Perhaps unanticipated—perhaps expected—was "the consequence of this action was that [then] under Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld…held the dominant role in crisis management in the Bush administration." The primacy of the Defense Department tilted "planning toward military priorities, without a corresponding civilian contribution by other US departments and agencies or from international organizations."[12]

Recommendations

The author asserts "the directive [PDD 56] remains the most successful template for balancing military and civilian planning in a world where the need for effective crisis management is only growing larger and more prevalent"[13] and he suggests several *best practices* and observations to address the recurring problems of Interagency Planning and Coalition Operations. Summarized here:

- Interagency planning is best directed and coordinated by the NSC staff.
- Senior officials need to be collaborative leaders.
- Processes help manage the overwhelming complexity of crisis situations.
- Effective interagency planning improves the quality and timeliness of policy decisions.
- Expertise in policy planning for crisis response must be assiduously developed.
- The intelligence community needs to be advised of the issues being confronted by policymakers.
- Build trust within interagency planning groups by encouraging sensible information sharing.
- Informal dialogue among agency officials is crucial.
- An intervention requires many different coalitions.
- Coalitions are always ad hoc and inherently fragile.
- Consolidated budgets for foreign interventions.[14]

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[10] Hawley, *Crisis Management Lessons*.
[11] Between 1995 to 2001, the Clinton Administration planned over 40 interventions in Eastern Slavonia, Guatemala, Sierra Leone, Burundi (potential genocide), the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea-Ethiopia, North Korea (potential collapse), Iraq, Serbia, Kosovo, East Timor, Kashmir, and Lebanon.
[12] Hawley, *Crisis Management Lessons*.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.

Beyond these common observations and *best practices*, the author also notes

> What makes the NSC-centric approach laid out in PDD-56 so successful is its responsiveness to individual situations. Thus, each new crisis will create new and unique problems and while these best practices can be applied broadly, no two crises are the same.[15]

Given these observations and *best practices*, the author outlines the following recommendations (summarized here):

- Develop a PDD-56-like document to codify the NSC-centric approach to complex contingencies with the NSC senior director for strategic planning empowered with authority across the US government.
- Conduct gaming and exercises to develop contingencies and options.
- Direct intelligence assessments towards early warning, comprehensive situation assessments, historical analyses, political forecasts, and personality assessments.
- Use a political-military implementation plan for integrating US government actions and managing complex contingency operations with coalition partners.
- Conduct an after-action/ lessons-learned review at the end of each major stage of the complex contingency operation to capture lessons learned.
- Develop an interagency training and exercise program for a cadre of professionals familiar with the political-military planning process.[16]

As the author emphasizes, "The salient lesson for future administrations is that an NSC-centric approach will not always guarantee success, but an agency-centric approach will surely lead to failure."[17]

US Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction[18] (JLLIS 233135)

Observation

In August 2021, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) published its report, "What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction."[19] It notes, among its many observations and recommendations about and for US government entities, that *Preparation Needed for Reconstruction to Succeed*.[20] As it emphasizes

> declining to prepare after Vietnam did not prevent the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; instead, it ensured they would become quagmires. Rather than motivating the U.S. government to improve, the difficulty of these missions may instead encourage U.S. officials to move on and prepare for something new.…The post-Afghanistan experience

[15] Hawley, *Crisis Management Lessons*.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] The JLLIS lesson is titled "Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction."
[19] Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, August 2021, https://www.sigar.mil/ (accessed November 20, 2021).
[20] Ibid, 95.

may be no different. As this report shows, there are multiple reasons to develop these capabilities and prepare for reconstruction missions in conflict-affected countries:

> 1. They are very expensive. For example, all war-related costs for U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan over the last two decades are estimated to be $6.4 trillion.
> 2. They usually go poorly.
> 3. Widespread recognition that they go poorly has not prevented U.S. officials from pursuing them.
> 4. Rebuilding countries mired in conflict is actually a continuous U.S. government endeavor, reflected by efforts in the Balkans and Haiti and smaller efforts currently underway in Mali, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Yemen, Ukraine, and elsewhere.
> 5. Large reconstruction campaigns usually start small, so it would not be hard for the U.S. government to slip down this slope again somewhere else and for the outcome to be similar to that of Afghanistan.[21]

In his testimony for Congress in late 2021, Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker[22] more succinctly observed

> all of the lessons that I learned during my professional engagement in the broader Middle East spanning almost 40 years. Actually, there are only two, plus one overarching principle: strategic patience, or in our case, the lack thereof…. The first is to *be careful about what you get into*…. This brings me to my second lesson: Be at least as *careful in deciding what you get out of*.[23] [emphasis added]

Both the report and the testimony reviews actions and policies throughout the US government regarding Afghanistan of the past twenty years. Yet the same *preparation needed* observation may be most relevant to the US Army. As its history[24] indicates, it may be the institution most keen to forsake activities not applicable to its core purpose of "deploy, fight and win" the nation's wars without full acceptance of stabilization and its various manifestations within "the full spectrum of conflict."[25]

This lesson summarizes the military-specific observations from the August 2021 SIGAR report.

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[21] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," XII.

[22] Biography at https://www.americanambassadors.org/members/ryan-c-crocker.

[23] Ryan Crocker, "Afghanistan 2001-2021: U.S. Policy Lessons Learned," testimony to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, at *Carnegie Endowment for Peace*, November 17, 2021, transcript, https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/11/17/afghanistan-2001-2021-u.s.-policy-lessons-learned-pub-85814 (accessed December 15, 2021).

[24] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," XII. The report summarizes US Army modern history regarding stabilization:

> As former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley told SIGAR, "We just don't have a postconflict stabilization model that works. Every time we have one of these things, it is a pick-up game. I don't have confidence that if we did it again, we would do any better." This was equally apparent after the Vietnam War, when a war-weary and divided country had little appetite to engage in another similar conflict. After Vietnam, for example, the U.S. Army disbanded most active duty civil affairs units and reduced the number of foreign area officers, the Army's "regionally focused experts in political-military operations." Special Forces moved away from counterinsurgency and instead focused on conducting small-scale operations in support of conventional forces. And USAID's global staff was gradually cut by 83 percent. In other words, according to former Vice Chief of Staff of the Army General Jack Keane, "After the Vietnam War, we purged ourselves of everything that had to do with irregular warfare or insurgency, because it had to do with how we lost that war. In hindsight, that was a bad decision."

[25] "The Army's Vision and Strategy," U.S. Army, https://www.army.mil/about/ (accessed March 29, 2022).

Discussion

The SIGAR report outlines seven key lessons over the twenty years in Afghanistan: *Strategy; Timelines; Sustainability; Personnel; Insecurity; Context;* and *Monitoring and Evaluation*. While DOD and/or the US military actions—or inactions—are included in all seven lesson topics, they are most discussed in the *Personnel* and *Insecurity* categories. SIGAR notes "U.S. personnel in Afghanistan were often unqualified and poorly trained, and those who were qualified were difficult to retain," in general, then shares as examples: "DOD police advisors watched American TV shows to learn about policing, civil affairs teams were mass-produced via PowerPoint presentations…"[26] In the *Insecurity* lesson section, the report makes the obvious statement "the absence of violence was a critical precondition for everything U.S. officials tried to do in Afghanistan—yet the U.S. effort to rebuild the country took place while it was being torn apart," then points out the "harmful compromises" made in Afghanistan's security forces development.[27]

A tag- or word-cloud[28] of the SIGAR report reveals the mention of *military/security/police* for a total of 452 times.[29] In comparison, *civilian/civil* and various forms of *govern* (-ing/-ance/-ment) are used just under 500 times in the report.[30] This near-parity of word usage between *security* (and its associated words) and *governance* (and its associated words) reflects the ubiquitous and symbiotic relationship of the concepts.[31] This relationship, coupled with the historic, contemporary, and, likely, future resource imbalance in favor of the US Department of Defense (DOD) as compared to the US government civilian agencies, leads to the conclusion that the US military will remain key to any ongoing or future US-led or -partnered reconstruction or stabilization effort.[32] As the SIGAR report encapsulates:

> The responsibilities for developing different components of the reconstruction strategy were divided in problematic ways. The National Security Council (NSC) is in charge of developing national security policy, but the process is not designed for overseeing largescale reconstruction efforts…. As a result, the NSC's primary contribution to reconstruction strategy was in the evaluation of the "ends," as these are closest to high-level policy. …The ends receive far more scrutiny than the ways and means, which are mostly left to the agencies to determine—particularly the Departments of State and Defense and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)…. Of the three, State was usually charged with articulating the ways and means—in other words, leading the interagency reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. Yet at no point during the 20-year campaign did any of SIGAR's interviewees believe that State had the ability to lead the effort in any meaningful way[33]…. *With State unable to craft a vision for the ways and means*

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[26] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," X.
[27] Ibid.
[28] A tag- or word-cloud visually indicates keywords used in a data set with the larger or bolder text to share the most used words.
[29] Of which *military* is 25% and *police* less than 8%.
[30] Of which the various forms of *govern* comprise almost 80%.
[31] There are numerous studies describing this relationship. A recent one includes Rachel Kleinfled, "Why Supporters of Democracy and Security Both Need to Care about Security Sector Governance," *Just Security*, June 4, 2021. https://www.justsecurity.org/76768/why-supporters-of-democracy-and-security-both-need-to-care-about-security-sector-governance/ (accessed March 29, 2022).
[32] Of interest, in the SIGAR report, the words *stability/stabilization* are used 209 times (*peace* is mentioned only 26 times); *economic* or *commerce* used 132 times (with some of those incidents referring to *socioeconomic* descriptors); *infrastructure* has only 28 references; *education*, only 13. *Politica*l is used 68 times, but *democracy* only seven times.
[33] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," 10. The report further notes:

> The deficiency is not new. The Clinton and Bush administrations both issued presidential directives to improve interagency planning and staffing related to stabilization and reconstruction missions (see Chapter

> *of the mission, the only organization left to fill the void was DOD, which has extensive practice.*[34] [emphasis added]

SIGAR summaries the historic—and contemporary—organizational culture challenges of other-than-DOD agencies regarding planning, but stresses "much of the problem comes back to resources" and outlines the extreme disparity between the various US government departments in personnel money, equipment, and so on.[35] They also point out other distinctions between DOD and non-DOD agencies, such as the "luxury" to have personnel overages and to "invest in themselves" through training and education.[36] Yet another difference expressed is "the culture of accountability across the U.S. government," with DOD given explicit deference or an assumption of proficiency that other agencies may not own.[37]

Yet, while SIGAR acknowledges "U.S. policymakers had no other viable option" but to reinforce DOD efforts in Afghanistan "and simply pretend State" was the US government lead agency, it also claims "the pretense continues today."[38] It points out the three most recent US government documents suggest Department of State or USAID leads the planning and execution of stabilization or other efforts to prevent or reduce conflict and fragility.[39] Yet, despite the official US government policy, there is no corresponding effort to resource those two agencies to do as directed.[40] The report suggests this may be a deliberate choice, as "after the last two decades in Afghanistan and Iraq, State, USAID, and DOD have all signaled they do not see large-scale missions as likely in the future."[41] SIGAR cautions:

> Just as after Vietnam, today U.S. policymakers and the public they serve may have sound reasons for avoiding another prolonged conflict and reconstruction mission. However, that does not mean such an endeavor is avoidable in the future…If the U.S. government does not prepare for that likelihood, it may once again try to build the necessary knowledge and capacity on the fly.[42]

Recommendations

This report shares the many recommendations from earlier SIGAR Lessons Learned Reports. The ones specific to or inclusive of DOD/Joint/or US military are as follows (grouped according to overall topic):

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5). State established a Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (CRS) in 2004, but the Congress did not fund it for several years; in the meantime, it lacked the resources to meaningfully contribute to strategy and planning for the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Like any organization with significant authority but minimal resources, CRS was marginalized by other offices across the interagency that viewed it as a bureaucratic threat. The office's failures only reinforced the impression that State could not plan. So in 2011, CRS became a conflict focused bureau at State with no mandate for leading interagency planning.

[34] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," 10.
[35] Ibid, 11.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid. The report refers to the Stabilization Assistance Review (2018), the Global Fragility Act (2019), and the Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (2020).
[40] Ibid, 11. The report provides as example: The Global Fragility Act authorizes $200 million per year for five years for State and USAID, but as is the custom with development funds, the legislation dictates that no more than 5 percent may be spent on "administrative expenses" to ensure the remainder goes to beneficiaries in conflict-affected countries.
[41] Ibid, XIII.
[42] Ibid.

General

- In order to maximize the effectiveness of future reconstruction programming, State, USAID, and DOD should determine the 10 most successful, and 10 least successful, reconstruction programs or projects of their respective department or agency. The determination should be based on the extent to which the programs or projects contributed to the accomplishment of U.S. strategic goals and should include a detailed explanation of how the programs and projects were evaluated and selected. Its findings should be incorporated into future planning, including planning for reconstruction-like programs or projects in other countries, if applicable.[43]
- State, USAID, and DOD should each designate an existing office to lead and advise on reintegration matters. These offices should develop in-house expertise on international best practices on the socioeconomic, political, and military aspects of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes.[44]

Doctrine

- DOD should lead the creation of new interagency doctrine for security sector assistance that includes best practices from Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Vietnam.[45]
- The Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should update U.S. doctrine to clarify how the U.S. military provides security sector assistance as part of a multinational coalition. The doctrine should provide clear guidance for establishing and maintaining coordination between U.S. departments and agencies operating at the embassy in the host country.[46]
- DOD and USAID should update counterinsurgency and stabilization doctrine and best practices to stagger stabilization's various phases, with the provision of reliable and continuous physical security serving as the critical foundation.[47]

Personnel[48]

- The U.S. military should create a clear career path for combat advisors and continue to provide incentives to improve recruitment. Part of this career path should include post-deployment assignments at security sector assistance commands and U.S. military training centers.
- DOD should ensure it has a sufficient number and mix of civil affairs personnel with the right training and aptitude for the next stabilization mission.
- DOD should diversify the leadership assigned to develop foreign military forces to include civilian defense officials with expertise in the governing and accountability systems required in a military institution.
- DOD and USAID should prioritize developing and retaining human terrain analytical expertise that would allow a more nuanced understanding of local communities.

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[43] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," 93.
[44] Ibid, 57.
[45] Ibid, 21.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid, 69.
[48] Ibid, 57.

- DOD, State, and other key security assistance stakeholders should enhance civilian and military career fields in security sector assistance, and create personnel systems capable of tracking employee security sector assistance experience and skills to expedite the deployment of these experts.

Intelligence

- To prevent the empowerment of one political faction or ethnic group, DOD, in coordination with State and the intelligence community, should monitor and evaluate all formal and informal security forces operating within a host nation. DOD should also identify and monitor both formal and informal chains of command and map social networks of the host nation's security forces. DOD's intelligence agencies should track and analyze political associations, biographical data, and patronage networks of senior security force and political leadership.[49]
- DOD should conduct a human capital, threat, and material needs assessment of the host nation and design a force accordingly, with the appropriate systems and equipment.[50]

Evaluations and Measurement[51]

- DOD should design new monitoring and evaluation tools capable of analyzing both tangible and intangible factors affecting force readiness.
- DOD and State should develop new metrics of effectiveness for foreign military training.
- State, USAID, and DOD should more regularly conduct impact evaluations to assess the effects of contracted reconstruction and other foreign assistance programs, including security sector assistance.
- The Congress may wish to consider appropriating funds to DOD, State, and USAID specifically for impact evaluation…for U.S. foreign assistance, including security sector assistance. An alternative would be to mandate that a certain proportion of funds appropriated to these agencies be used for impact evaluation.

Counternarcotics and Anticorruption

- State, DOD, and Justice should consider supporting small, specialized counternarcotics units as a means to build host-nation counterdrug capacity. However, this assistance should be proportional to the willingness and capacity of host-nation leaders to support such units, and should be coordinated with broader U.S. efforts to strengthen political, security, and judicial institutions.[52]
- DOD, State, USAID, Treasury, Justice, and the intelligence community should increase anticorruption expertise to enable more effective strategies, practices, and programs in contingency operations.[53]

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[49] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," 81.
[50] Ibid, 47.
[51] Ibid, 93.
[52] Ibid, 47.
[53] Ibid, 57.

- DOD, State, USAID, and the intelligence community should each designate a senior anticorruption official to assist with strategic, operational, and tactical planning at headquarters at the onset of and throughout a contingency operation.[54]

While these recommendations remain, the report notes of itself

> this report points to conceptual, administrative, and logistical work that should be done between large-scale reconstruction efforts to increase the U.S. government's chances of success in future campaigns. *The nature and range of the investment necessary to properly prepare for these campaigns is an open question*.[55] [emphasis added]

NATO's Bruising Afghanistan Years (JLLIS 234141)

Observation

In May 2022, two authors writing for the LSE Public Policy Review[56] published their assessment of the of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) November 2021 comprehensive review, *Afghanistan Lessons Learned Process*. In their highlights of several lessons learned—or not learned—by NATO during the two decades of Afghanistan engagement, they refer to Carl von Clausewitz's assertion that war is 'not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse.'[57] Given the reminder that "war is the means and the 'political object' the goal," they postulate

> Herein lies the greatest lesson of Afghanistan for NATO: that to master war, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, it must first and foremost invest in the coordinated and coherent political purpose that any war is supposed to serve.[58]

More to the point, the authors assert that NATO in Afghanistan was "operationally agile but strategically lacking."[59] Similar to lessons-not-learned from Vietnam, the Afghanistan years "highlights the marked need for frank and honest (NATO) discussions of political purpose," given that a "multinational campaign will always be pregnant with multiple purposes…so it is incumbent upon those in charge of it to prioritize among these purposes and align resources accordingly."[60]

The authors also note that NATO—or at least some of the alliance's individual members— "seem tempted to draw a mainly unarticulated lesson from the stabilization operations in Afghanistan (and in Iraq): *just don't do it*." [emphasis added] Yet they also note in NATO's *Afghanistan Lessons Learned Process* factsheet is a caution against that assumption for future engagements. The factsheet highlights that given "a more dangerous and complex global security environment […c]risis management should […] remain a core Alliance task" and *continued crisis management engagement* will be in the June 2022 adoption of NATO's Strategic Concept.[61]

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[54] SIGAR, "Twenty Years," 81.
[55] Ibid, 97.
[56] An online journal from the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom.
[57] From the notes: Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1989.
[58] Sten Rynning and Paal Sigurd Hilde, *Operationally Agile but Strategically Lacking: NATO's Bruising Years in Afghanistan*, LSE Public Policy Review, 2(3), p.8. DOI: http://doi.org/10.31389/lseppr.55 (accessed May 15, 2022).
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

Discussion

In the article's abstract, the authors provide a summary of the essential dichotomies of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan:

> The engagement represented a colossal politico-military investment in regime renewal. The return of the Taliban to power in 2021 defines a defeat for NATO…Defeat followed in part from NATO's strategy deficit: the alliance did not adequately focus on Afghanistan's political fundamentals; it committed to a 'comprehensive approach' campaign blueprint that defied reality; and its decision-making process was too cumbersome and too loaded with political interests to correct course…part of the reason for failure resides outside of NATO and with the multiple other actors involved in the conflict. Faced with such complexity, NATO in fact proved operationally agile and resilient…NATO is aware of this challenge of 'operational agility but strategic deficit' but that there is no quick fix to what is, essentially, a leadership issue. NATO will improve only if key allies do more to lead *in* NATO and not *for* NATO.[62] [original emphasis]

Alluding to "part of the reason for failure resides outside of NATO," they also argue the NATO reconstruction mission in Afghanistan

> defies easy categorization and interpretation, and thus that one should be careful not to place NATO at the front and center of every dimension of the mission. To a large extent, the mission has been American…. [and] the United States maintained an enemy-centric counter-terrorist mission in parallel to NATO's mission to stabilize the government and enable economic and social development. The United States dominated the military effort, but it has also been the biggest donor in the reconstruction and governance effort.[63]

They do not focus only on US alleged subordination of NATO purpose in Afghanistan. They also highlight the apparent disinclination of the United Nations (UN), the national development and humanitarian agencies, and the Afghan agencies and offices to coordinate with NATO forces. They remind the reader of Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer prophetic words that 'NATO is not a nation-builder' but should support the UN's efforts. However, the UN could not "build a nation" in a combat zone. They suggest this was the greatest discrepancy between strategic purpose and operational missions.

The authors ask, "why NATO did not react more forcefully?" once the discrepancy between mission and purpose was apparent.[64] They suggest three points to consider, summarized here:

- "First, it is important to note that by the time NATO expanded its presence in Afghanistan, institution-building was the common answer to how to cure the ills of so-called failed states." Therefore, NATO was encouraged to bolster the wide-ranged stabilization effort.

- "Second, NATO allies were aware of the need to infuse clear leadership into such a broad-based campaign."

- "Third…The involvement of other nations, including in UN votes, meant that NATO had to compete with antagonistic players, like Russia, who could both shape UN mandates for ISAF and resist wider cooperation agreements between NATO and the UN."[65]

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[62] Rynning and Hilde, *NATO's Bruising Years in Afghanistan.*
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

Yet, in the end

> NATO forces fought valiantly, but NATO governments did not come to grips with Afghanistan's domestic and regional balance of power problem on which the country's institutional development depended. NATO renounced taking on political ownership of the war effort: *thus, as a collective whole, NATO did not adequately wrestle with the 'political object' that war serves*.[66] [emphasis added]

Recommendation

The authors offer several recommendations, both implicit and explicit. The *Afghanistan Lessons Learned Process* factsheet recommends

> Allies should continuously assess strategic interests… [and] seek to avoid taking on commitments that go well beyond assigned tasks. NATO should establish realistic and achievable goals and seek increased participation by other international actors who are better suited to deliver those non-military effects.[67]

While this recommendation, or caution, appears obvious, the authors tease out a nuanced perspective. They note "NATO must anchor its engagement in *collectively agreed* campaign design from the very outset." [emphasis added] They acknowledge collective agreement is complicated, but claim the effort is important because the resulting decisions are cooperatively determined and therefore more likely to be long-term. Further, a collective decision-making approach will address a common frustration between NATO and the US—the perceived diffidence of alliance partners towards the US:

> Sitting and former US decision-makers regularly argue in lessons-learned discussions that their allies are too timid; they should not only put forward their own ideas more forcefully, but also challenge those of the United States. However, to expect allies to be able to change a determined United States is to exaggerate their potential influence on US decision-making. *Even when determined to work through NATO, the United States can be resistant to allied input on critical issues.* There is plenty of evidence for this, with allies vainly protesting…all to no effect. *The United States, once it has settled on a strategy, does not usually let a multinational committee working in Brussels change it.* But allies can have influence in other areas. Once a campaign gets off to a bad start, NATO's multinational character offers ample opportunity for allies to resist grand new leadership initiatives. The Obama surge is a case in point: it changed the overall campaign strategy, but allies (and partners) caveated their interpretation and implementation of the changes.[68] [emphasis added]

In conclusion, the authors exhort "the overriding lesson of Afghanistan: that it is [NATO leaders] responsibility to offer a NATO strategy worth its name" in any future NATO engagement.[69]

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[66] Rynning and Hilde, *NATO's Bruising Years in Afghanistan.* In a subsequent paragraph, the authors also emphasize positive lessons for NATO from the twenty years in Afghanistan, to include improved military interoperability and relationship building among partners.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

US Government Funding to Rebalance Interagency Stabilization Efforts (JLLIS 231521)

Observation

In June 2021, Georgetown Public Policy Review published an online article "Rebalancing the Interagency: Stability Operations with Department of State and Department of Defense." In that article, the author shared this ubiquitous observation:

> The simultaneous expectation that DoD execute stabilization activities to the same standard as combat operations while DoS remains underfunded has resulted in an increased role for the U.S. military in stabilization efforts that it is not equipped to carry out.[70] [71]

The author notes the US Government (USG) devised its 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) to reconcile the Departments' roles while engaged in stabilization activities overseas.[72] However, the USG must better resource the State Department so it can acquit itself adequately—a rebalance between the Departments of Defense and State. She looks to the USG's Executive branch as the primary element to direct funding level changes as "presidential leadership plays a key role in strengthening (or undermining) each agency's approach to and capacity for conducting stability operations."[73]

Discussion

According to the author—and other researchers in this topic area[74]—there are risks inherent in the existing resource disparity between the two Departments, State and Defense. The first and most obvious is that the Defense Department is often the USG's default Department to exercise stabilization efforts due to its size, funding level, and propinquity to the post-conflict region. Yet, at the same time, and despite the recent two decades of engagement in these tasks at various levels in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the Defense Department remains inexpert in stabilization activities compared to the State Department.

A less obvious risk is the degrading of the State Department's own stabilization expertise. As the author states, "DoS has simultaneously fallen behind on its own stabilization duties as it continues to face funding challenges."[75] Perhaps the most important risk, however, is that the continued use

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[70] Lia Lumauig, *Rebalancing the Interagency: Stability Operations with Department of State and Department of Defense*, Georgetown Public Policy Review (June 1, 2021). http://gppreview.com/2021/06/01/rebalancing-interagency-stability-operations-department-state-department-defense/ (accessed August 3, 2021).

[71] DoD Directive 3000.05 outlines guidance on stabilization responsibilities and requires the military to lead stability-related efforts with "proficiency equivalent to combat operations."

[72] U.S. Government, *Stabilization Assistance Review: A Framework for Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S. Government Efforts To Stabilize Conflict-Affected Areas* (2018). https://www.state.gov/reports/stabilization-assistance-review-a-framework-for-maximizing-the-effectiveness-of-u-s-government-efforts-to-stabilize-conflict-affected-areas-2018/ (accessed November 24, 2021). The SAR framework defines stabilization as "a political endeavor involving an integrated civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence." Essential activities categorized as stabilization include security, public order, provision of immediate human needs, governance, and economic stability.

[73] Lumauig, *Rebalancing the Interagency*.

[74] Among those research studies: Linda Robinson, Sean Mann, Jeffrey Martini, and Stephanie Pezard, *Finding the Right Balance: Department of Defense Roles in Stabilization* (RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, California, 2018). https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2441.html (accessed December 15, 2020).

[75] Lumauig, *Rebalancing the Interagency*.

of the US military to "fill the gaps left by an under-resourced DoS undermines American foreign policy goals and does not build stable partner states."[76]

The inadequate resourcing of the State Department is, unfortunately, not a new phenomenon. As example, a 2008 capability gap assessment determined "for every DoS official, nearly 30 DoD military and civilian personnel were deployed overseas."[77] In addition, interagency coordination efforts vary from presidential administration to administration. The author highlights recent history with this summary:

> The Clinton administration addressed problems of coordination in the early 1990s by providing a civilian-military framework in Presidential Decision Directive 56 (PDD-56), but this was done away with when Bush assumed the presidency in 2001…The Obama administration tried to unite the efforts of the two departments, however this did not translate to strengthened coordination…The Trump administration decreased DoS funding by at least 20% in the years following its inauguration.[78]

In June 2021, the article's publication month, it was not yet clear how the Biden Administration would impact State Department resources—and the necessary rebalance of the interagency funding—but the decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan was a definite shift in U.S. foreign policy.

Recommendations

The author concludes with this summary:

> The deployment of military resources to conflict areas is necessary: without security, stabilization efforts stand on shaky ground and civilian agencies cannot reproduce the same security outcomes. However, to achieve lasting and desired political outcomes, the core competencies of the State Department are required. The President is uniquely positioned to set the tone for interagency collaboration, and their leadership is key to ensuring the State and DoD adhere to their intended roles. The Biden Administration must consider options to engage the interagency in a thorough review of stability missions abroad, with a focus on how to better support diplomatic and political efforts housed (and ready to be funded) in the State Department.[79]

Elevate Democracy, Human Rights and Governance

Human Rights versus National Security—A False Choice (JLLIS 232886)

Observation

In January 2022, author Sarah Leah Whitson[80] countered the pervasive dispute that suggests *human rights* will always be second to a nation's *security* interests. She encapsulates the dispute in this manner: "Either the United States must secure its interests by protecting the rights and

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[76] As shared in Lumauig, *Rebalancing the Interagency*. Jahara Matisek, *The crisis of American military assistance: strategic dithering and Fabergé Egg armies*, Defense & Security Analysis, 34:3, 267-290 (August 1, 2018). https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14751798.2018.1500757?journalCode=cdan20 (accessed November 24, 2021).
[77] Lumauig*, Rebalancing the Interagency*.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Sarah Leah Whitson is the executive director of Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), a nonprofit organization that promotes democracy, the rule of law, and human rights for all of the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

security of U.S. citizens—so the argument goes—or choose to respect the rights of citizens of other countries."[81] She describes this espoused dilemma—the choice between human rights or national security—as a false one. Certainly, governments' must protect their people and interests, but she asserts

> A better strategy would recognize, and argue, that promoting rights-respecting policies and national security interests are not separate buckets of competing priorities, but fundamentally interlinked.[82]

Discussion

The author shares a paper from The Carnegie Endowment which highlights the US government support of other national governments with poor human rights records. That paper sets up the contrast between the US's espoused human rights policies and the support of these alleged abusive governments as a "democracy-security dilemma," where confrontation over "partner governments…political shortcomings risks triggering hostility that would jeopardize the security benefits that such governments provide to Washington."[83] While she acknowledges the presumed dilemma, she disagrees with the premise

> Of course, the U.S. government is perfectly capable of ensuring the security of its own citizens without befriending tyrants, selling arms to autocrats, and trampling on the human rights of others—but advocates rarely make this argument.[84]

She does not excuse the human rights community for its apparent weakness in the dilemma discourse. According to her, human rights advocates accept the false assumption of needed choice between *rights* and *interests* as evidenced in contemporary writing and demands of governments to "prioritize human rights." You cannot prioritize what is equal in value, she argues. Further, advocates are "reluctant to challenge…the political questions that underlie national security calculations" as beyond their mandates or purposes.[85]

> But the human rights community looks away from these systemic issues, inexplicably deeming them outside its mandate, keeping its attention focused narrowly on where the bombs drop and how many civilians are killed and injured, year in, year out, with no discernible impact beyond the passing headlines and no questioning of why the planes and bombs were there to begin with and whether they should have been.[86]

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[81] Sarah Leah Whitson, *The Human Rights vs. National Security Dilemma is a Fallacy*, Foreign Policy (January 10, 2022). https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/01/10/human-rights-national-security-tradeoff-dilemma-defense-lobbyists-corruption-fallacy/ (accessed February 13, 2022).
[82] Whitson, *Dilemma is a Fallacy*.
[83] Thomas Carothers and Benjamin Press, *Navigating the Democracy-Security Dilemma in U.S. Foreign Policy: Lessons from Egypt, India, and Turkey*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (November 4, 2021). https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/11/04/navigating-democracy-security-dilemma-in-u.s.-foreign-policy-lessons-from-egypt-india-and-turkey-pub-85701 (accessed February 13, 2022).
[84] Whitson, *Dilemma is a Fallacy*.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

(She also suggests that an over-reliance on military and security expertise—or lack of confidence in one's own expertise—may contribute to the "reluctance to challenge."[87])

Unfortunately, according to the author, "dodging the discussion means [human rights advocates are] perpetually absent at the decision-making table with no systemic strategy to address the country's broader policy flaws…"[88] Instead, she encourages rights advocates to remember

> human rights and humanitarian law deliberately grant plenty of room for flexible, politically motivated interpretations. … There's also no paucity of laws that purport to restrict the transfers of weapons to abusive governments or limit the U.S. government's ability to wage war, which rights groups rarely invoke.[89]

Recommendations

The author notes

> The human rights community can continue to opt out of these so-called political discussions—but they should then be prepared to see continued failure when it comes to their pleas to "prioritize" human rights. The costs of this failure…are borne primarily by millions of people abroad who have little say at all in the debate, but they are also borne by millions of Americans…[90]

Instead, she recommends that the human rights community works on the systemic issues such as legal reform for lobbying, conflict of interest, and "revolving door." As she concluded, these "laws are more essential to U.S. national security and the human rights of billions of people abroad than advocating for any new human rights treaty."[91]

The "Statebuilding" Ghost—Lessons from Afghanistan (JLLIS 231520)

Observation

In mid-September 2021, after the US withdrew its remaining military forces from Afghanistan, authors from the Center for Global Development consider the Afghanistan legacy on other current policies and programs as well as future US foreign policy paradigms. They particularly focus on "the notion that foreign assistance can build a state."[92]

The authors argue that a "central dichotomy remains"[93] in the US and global community post-Afghanistan foreign policy environment, which is

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[87] Whitson, *Dilemma is a Fallacy*. The author provides an impassioned diatribe against the military-industrial complex, using data from Open Secrets (Capitalizing on conflict: How defense contractors and foreign nations lobby for arms sales - OpenSecrets) and a New York Times investigative report (C.I.A. Warns Former Officers About Working for Foreign Governments - The New York Times).
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Clemence Lander and Rakan Aboneaaj, "Giving up the 'Statebuilding' Ghost: Lessons From Afghanistan for Foreign Assistance in Fragile States," Center for Global Development (September 16, 2021). https://www.cgdev.org/blog/giving-statebuilding-ghost-lessons-afghanistan-foreign-assistance-fragile-states (accessed October 30, 2021).
[93] Ibid.

> durable development requires strong institutions to steer economic, social, and political progress over the long haul; but *no amount of foreign assistance can build those institutions without a willing government* in the driver's seat.[94] [emphasis added]

Or, more simply, "how do you stay engaged with the people of nations where the political landscape is fundamentally broken?"[95] They suggest:

> There are no ready answers for this seemingly intractable challenge, but a more cleared-eyed understanding of the political economy dynamics and willingness to tackle corruption should surely be part of the equation.[96]

Discussion

The authors remind the reader that the US military operations in Afghanistan in 2001 was to defeat Al Qaeda and the Taliban. They suggest those operations were essentially complete within two years of the initial military engagements. However, the US and global community policies and programs shifts to *reconstruction* activities (in this context, *statebuilding*) introduced "a central paradox…using foreign assistance to establish core government institutions—such as judicial systems, security and police, and executive agencies—while purposefully ignoring the political dynamics undermining the very institutions it seeks to establish."[97]

The authors acknowledge this paradox is not unique to the Afghanistan engagements. In addition, the underlying *statebuilding* premise—to reinforce fragile states for the betterment of their own people and their neighboring nations—may be sound. They highlight several development successes in Afghanistan, such as the 20-year increase in life expectancy and the school enrollments for both boys and girls. However, Afghanistan development programs were expensive at the onset, and rife with corruption, poor accountability, and distrust.[98] As the authors share

> over half of Afghan citizens believed corruption levels to be lower in Taliban-controlled areas. As a 2011 congressional report described, "despite the considerable work that [was] done…negative perceptions persist that little has been done, the wrong things have been done, what was done is poor quality, the benefits of aid are spreading inequitably, and that much money is lost through corruption and waste."[99]

The authors assert Afghanistan political economy shortcomings were not due to any operational failure, but to policy failure. They remind the reader of the specific warnings provided from within the US government agencies regarding corruption of which those same "US agencies were aware of the problem as early as 2005."[100] Consequently, the authors

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[94] Lander and Aboneaaj, "Giving up the "Statebuilding" Ghost."
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid. The authors also note: Brown University's Cost of War project estimates that from FY2001 to FY2022, the US devoted $2.3 trillion to military expenditures alone. Of the $143 billion in reconstruction funding since 2002, $93 billion was directed to Afghan police and armed forces, and around $50 billion for government and civil society programs—a huge amount compared to development spending in the rest of the world.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

suggest the absence of effective US-directed anti-corruption efforts was, in fact, "a policy *choice*."[101][102] [emphasis added]

Recommendations

The authors do not provide concrete recommendations for future policy and programs, other than note "we must take stock of the hard lessons of Afghanistan and recalibrate expectations around what assistance can achieve in fragile states" given the growth of regional- or international-funded development assistance of the past decade.[103] They do highlight recent US or international organizations' strategies which appear to address the shortcomings found in Afghanistan development policies and programs, such as the US' 2019 Global Fragility Act (GFA) and related implementation plan and the World Bank's new Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025.[104] However, they further note "while these strategies rightly emphasize the need for flexible, country-specific approaches, they often *take a cooperative national government as a given*"[105][emphasis added]—which may not be the case in a particular fragile country.

Why Did the International Support to Afghan Governance Fail? (JLLIS 232518)

Observation

In November 2021, Frances Z. Brown[106], a senior fellow and codirector of Carnegie's Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program, published an analysis of the Afghanistan government failure in concert with its military's collapse in August 2021, "After twenty years of an ambitious, costly international state-building effort…".[107] She notes much of the international aid towards Afghan governance was directed at the local—or, subnational—level and she points out the amount of support remained significant, even as other international engagement changed over the years.

She suggests the international aid community's "multiple generations…failed to incorporate some essential lessons" in Afghanistan.[108] Yet, those lessons must be considered as Afghanistan was—and is—not unique. As she asserts

> The experience of local government assistance in Afghanistan has added one more painful chapter to a familiar story. But the case of Afghanistan also reflects the immense

[101] Lander and Aboneaaj, "Giving up the "Statebuilding" Ghost."
[102] For more on this topic, see: Sarah Chayes, "Afghanistan's Corruption Was Made in America: How Self-Dealing Elites Failed in Both Countries," Foreign Affairs (September 3, 2021). https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-09-03/afghanistans-corruption-was-made-in-america?utm_medium=newsletters&utm_source=fatoday&utm_campaign=Afghanistan%E2%80%99s%20Corruption%20Was%20Made%20in%20America&utm_content=20210903&utm_term=FA%20Today%20-%20112017 (accessed November 1, 2021).
[103] Lander and Aboneaaj, "Giving up the "Statebuilding" Ghost."
[104] The World Bank, The World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence, 2020-2025 (February 27, 2020). https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/844591582815510521/world-bank-group-strategy-for-fragility-conflict-and-violence-2020-2025 (accessed April 30, 2021).
[105] Lander and Aboneaaj, "Giving up the "Statebuilding Ghost."
[106] The author also served at the White House, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and in nongovernmental organizations, in and on Afghanistan topics since 2004.
[107] Frances Z. Brown, *Aiding Afghan Local Governance: What Went Wrong?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (November 8, 2021). https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/11/08/aiding-afghan-local-governance-what-went-wrong-pub-85719 (accessed November 13, 2021).
[108] Ibid, 2.

challenge of working in an environment that is often beyond Western interveners' control: for nearly twenty years, Afghan local governance structures were "caught in confusion," and for many Afghan players, this ambiguity was useful. Looking back at the long international statebuilding project in Afghanistan, subnational governance aid was only one part of a vast undertaking. But these programs were nevertheless important in their own right—and also for the broader problematic patterns in Western intervention that they reveal. Looking ahead to future engagements, the time is ripe for the international community to incorporate lessons from Afghanistan.[109]

Discussion

The author provides a succinct, yet comprehensive, review of the twenty-years of international policies and programs focused on local governance institution building. She indicates the local-level focus was "commonsensical"—since that was the governing level most Afghan citizens had interaction. However, she identifies three shortcomings to that approach "that remained remarkably consistent"[110] over the decades:

> First, assistance programs often aimed to "build trust," "foster dialogue," and strengthen linkages between the state and citizenry…but they failed to acknowledge that the primary barriers to communication between the governed and governors were often political, not technical. Second, they aimed to build the capacity of district- and provincial-level councils, but these training efforts were perennially stymied by these bodies' lack of clear authorities or roles. Third, donor programs often emphasized the cultivation of skills that were more relevant to being a good aid recipient than they were to navigating the real politics of the local Afghan order—an order in which citizens had long viewed the state's village level penetration as predatory or unwelcome.[111]

She further describes the three shortcomings in this manner (summarized here):

- *False Assumptions About Communication and Linkages*. According to the author, too many international aid policies and programs assumed the challenges of Afghan government-to-citizen, and the reverse, was due to Afghan inability to talk to each other. As she points out, "foreign interveners labored to teach various shuras how to consult with one another about collective problems, as if Afghans had not been exercising negotiation and conflict management skills from time immemorial."[112] Instead, she suggests, some of the perceived inability to communicate may have been deliberate on the part of one party or the other. In addition, local citizens did not want improved connection to governance "they viewed as extortionate and corrupt."[113] At the same time, the government was not eager to have further demands on it.

- *Building Capacity Without Defined Roles or Authorities*. Another recurring shortcoming, according to the author, was the programs to "build capacity" without defined authorities. Or, as she states, international aid personnel advised their Afghan counterparts on "aspirational rather than actual jobs."[114] Further, the existence of several parallel provincial

[109] Brown, *Aiding Afghan Local Governance*, 2-3.
[110] Ibid, 4.
[111] Ibid, 1-2.
[112] Ibid, 4-5.
[113] Ibid, 5.
[114] Ibid, 6.

level bodies apparently confounded citizens, “many of whom concluded they now had to contend with twice the number of local councilors seeking graft.”[115]

- *Misplaced Goals of Making Afghans “Good” Donor Beneficiaries*. Perhaps most troubling is the author’s assertion:

> Western efforts seemed to principally concentrate on enhancing skills that would make Afghans ideal recipients of donor aid rather than on strengthening capabilities more relevant to local Afghan political life. For example, one USAID program’s final list of accomplishments included local government officials’ learning “how to file, keep records, keep time, and manage meetings during their daily office operations.” Other programs aimed to teach Afghans to apply for grants.[116]

She criticizes the projects that tried to model Western governance constructs, “thus potentially compounding and perpetuating dependency,” with the underlying tension of “building an Afghan-owned state via intrusive, maximalist external aid.”[117] She asserts these programs assumed that Western governance models are superior to any other— “a clear neoimperialist tone.”[118]

Recommendations

While the author acknowledges there is still much to resolve in, and for, Afghanistan

> the international community must also take stock of the decades-long transformational agenda it pursued in Afghanistan. It should reap some lessons learned as well—and to this end, the story of subnational governance aid is one part of a broader tale… looking beyond Afghanistan, the international community will likely continue to turn to local governance initiatives as part of stabilization efforts in conflict-affected and fragile states...Many current local governance programs elsewhere bear striking resemblance to the program templates used in Afghanistan. Yet the Afghanistan experience suggests that modesty is in order—now more than ever.[119]

As she concludes, “Donors would do well to recognize the limited hand they have and focus on shaping incentives for all involved—rather than hope that one more training module might finally do the trick.”[120]

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[115] Brown, *Aiding Afghan Local Governance*, 6.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid, 7.
[118] Ibid, 7. The author further describes: “The logic was that if Afghan officials could understand the factors driving local conflict—by working their way through an immensely complex contractor designed Stability Assessment Methodology or District Stability Framework—they would set about fixing them. And accordingly, as project documents claimed, the program would help build up citizens’ confidence in their state. For many Afghan interviewees, this logic was laughable: if the source of local conflict was government corruption, how could such a matrix help?”
[119] Ibid, 7.
[120] Ibid, 8.

Mitigate Climate Change and Strengthen Environmental Security

Climate Change Concerns for Peace and Stability Policy Makers (JLLIS 232973)

Observation

The 2022 released report from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)[121] informed several other papers or articles focused on all aspects of climate change impacts on contemporary and future human livelihoods. Much of the findings from the IPCC report—or from other reports published near-simultaneously–are not new to long-term observers of the fragility and climate change nexus (or perpetual cycles).

Climate change—in the form of drought, geography changes, and so on—exacerbate human competition over scarce resources. At the same time, government resources focus on population survival and/or economic impacts and cannot, therefore, properly address climate change. The 2022 IPCC report reemphasizes this nexus/cycle, while asserting there is "a rapidly narrowing window of opportunity" to effect programs that will mitigate climate change impact on populations.[122] While this may be true, a recent article from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) cautions "to stay ahead of climate curve, a transition to green energy must be coupled with informed peacebuilding," as such transition may have its own inequities to address.[123]

Discussion

There are innumerable studies that indicate a relationship between climate change and fragility.[124] Michelle Gavin, of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), summarized them recently while describing the food crisis in East Africa:

> There are multiple factors contributing in a cascading manner that has exhausted many communities' coping mechanisms and contingency plans. Climate change is contributing to more extreme weather, and three years of drought in the worst-affected countries have led to multiple failed harvests and loss of pastureland for livestock. These effects, in turn, have worsened economic hardship, as agricultural laborers have been out of work and unable to earn money to buy food. In 2020 and 2021, conditions deteriorated further due to widespread locust swarms that decimated cropland. The global economic and supply-chain disruptions resulting from COVID-19 also pushed more communities to the margins by driving up prices, eating away at savings, and limiting economic opportunities.[125]

She further addresses local/national/or regional *political instability*, which can create famine-like crises and/or population displacement, with a corresponding effect on agriculture and food services. Conversely, she notes, "The politics of food security…are so loaded that a government's

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[121] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (March 2022). https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/?msclkid=6faceed4ab9d11eca8facdcb339f9a8a (accessed March 24, 2022).

[122] IPCC, *Climate Change 2022*, 30.

[123] Tegan Blaine, "The Peacebuilding Implications of the Latest U.N. Climate Report," United States Institute of Peace (March 3, 2022). https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/03/peacebuilding-implications-latest-un-climate-report (accessed March 14, 2022).

[124] As example only: Anthony Navone, "The Intertwined Futures of Climate Action, Fragility and Peacebuilding," United States Institute of Peace (April 15, 2021). https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/04/intertwined-futures-climate-action-fragility-and-peacebuilding (accessed March 24, 2022).

[125] Michelle Gavin, "East Africa's Growing Food Crisis: What to Know," Council on Foreign Relations (March 16, 2022). https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/east-africas-growing-food-crisis-what-know (accessed March 18, 2022).

ability to prevent famine is a major marker of political legitimacy."[126] The most recent driver of food insecurity is the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as many nations world-wide depend on wheat from either Russia, the Ukraine, or both, through direct purchase and from the World Food Program and similar organizations.

Given the fragility and conflict relationship, as described through the lens of economic and food security, it appears obvious that governments must mitigate climate change effects—or enact climate resilience development.[127] Blaine of USIP agrees, yet she cautions

> the rapid transitions now required are likely to lay bare existing grievances and result in new ones. Generally, peacebuilding requires time to build trust and collaboration to tackle these challenging issues — but time is now in short supply. The concern now is that we are likely to see climate change outpace the amount of time it takes to build such responses.[128]

She asserts "climate change is just as much a local issue as it is a global one"[129] and the resolutions—green technologies—may aggravate conflict if not implemented with prudence. She briefly describes local conflicts regarding mining for green technology materials to land- and benefit-sharing challenges.[130] Gavin asserts the underlying inequities in climate change programs are because some countries may have "the effects of a global problem that they had virtually no hand in creating, and major emitters have not met their responsibility to assist them in coping with these consequences."[131]

Recommendations

To implement climate change mitigation or resilience development programs with prudence requires inclusive discussion. Blaine likens "inclusive climate change responses" to those seen in peacebuilding efforts:

> An inclusive process can mobilize communities around a shared issue and shared solution, address the needs of vulnerable populations more effectively and address areas of conflict before they become grievances.[132]

She further suggests the "peacebuilding community" can support country efforts to develop their climate resilience plans in the following ways:

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[126] Gavin, "Food Crisis."
[127] Climate-resilient development means ensuring that people, communities, businesses, and other organizations can cope with current climate variability as well as adapt to future climate change, preserving development gains, and minimizing damages. United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Climate-Resilient Development: A Framework for Understanding and Addressing Climate Change* (March 2014). https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PBAAA245.pdf#:~:text=Climate-resilient%20development%20means%20ensuring%20that%20people%2C%20communities%2C%20businesses%2C,climate%20change%2C%20preserving%20development%20gains%2C%20and%20minimizing%20damages.?msclkid=371ddabdabac11ecbd162ad1b9c5bcdd (accessed March 24, 2022).
[128] Blaine, "The Peacebuilding Implications."
[129] Ibid.
[130] See: Tegan Blaine, "Navigating Land Rights in the Transition to Green Energy," United States Institute for Peace, (October 7, 2021). https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/10/navigating-land-rights-transition-green-energy (accessed March 24, 2022).
[131] Gavin, "Food Crisis."
[132] Blaine, "The Peacebuilding Implications."

- Helping them understand how their existing plans could exacerbate or contribute to conflict and how to begin working to reduce those risks.
- Supporting them to work more closely with communities from the get-go in designing their own future in ways that meet the needs of marginalized as well as privileged communities and engage everyone in more inclusive, equitable processes.
- Examining how they can start building community resiliency and government capacities to tackle long-term challenges of both the climate change and conflict varieties.[133]

Pursue equity and equality based on gender and other factors

A Reassessment of Women's Role in Peace and Security (JLLIS 234568)

Observation

In January 2022, authors from the Middle East Institute (MEI) observed

> Department of Defense (DOD) counter-terrorism approaches, specifically those in the Middle East, often overlook the role women play in violent extremist organizations (VEOs), reducing them to *victims* and rarely highlighting their role across the spectrum of conflict. Women in these organizations play roles from caretaker to combatant, fundraiser to fighter — checking almost every block within supporting, enabling, and operational ... Although women play a critical role in the success or failure of these extremist organizations, their comprehensive roles are often overlooked [by the DOD] when combatting these groups…[134] [original emphasis]

The authors stress that the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) approach—in concept and in programming—is, and are, tools found "in emerging national security, defense and military strategy, and Joint Warfighting Concept documents."[135] However, the DOD and the US government writ large remain focused on "antiquated notions of 'gender'" and should, instead, "be clear-eyed about women's role in the peace and security problem set — and the degree to which they contribute to stability and instability."[136]

Discussion

The MEI authors[137] note the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 intended to both improve women's participation and their role acknowledgement in "processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict."[138] However, while the Act itself appears to recognize women as part and party to "all facets of conflict, the subsequent actions associated with enforcing the act have

[133] Blaine, "The Peacebuilding Implications."
[134] Katie Crombe and Erin Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role in peace and security in the Middle East," Middle East Institute (January 31, 2022). https://www.mei.edu/publications/reassessing-womens-role-peace-and-security-middle-east (accessed May 13, 2022).
[135] Ibid.
[136] Crombe and Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role."
[137] From the website: Lt. Col. Katie Crombe has served in a variety of strategy and planning roles across the Middle East and currently serves at U.S. Special Operations Command Central as the Director of Strategy and Plans. She is also a Non-Resident Scholar with MEI's Defense and Security Program; Erin Moffitt is a career national security professional with experience in defense policy and advocacy. She is currently a senior analyst at the Center for Counterterrorism Studies within Joint Special Operations Command. She is also a Non-Resident Scholar with MEI's Defense and Security Program.
[138] See: https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1141/text.

fallen short…"[139] Instead of engagement in the *sharper* proceedings *of defense and diplomacy*, women's participation is left to the *softer* works of *conflict prevention or resolution.* This blinkered approach completely ignores some women's active role in conflict violence.

A March 2021 Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) study on gender and violent extremism supports the MEI authors' assertion. The study's abstract concludes:

> Despite the passage of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) legislation in the US, we found that internal DOD activities that are *truly gender considered are severely limited, lack nuance, and are not institutionalized*. External US CT/CVE [Counter-Terrorism/Countering Violent Extremism] efforts do not consider the roles men or women play from a nuanced perspective, and they are *disproportionately influenced by a set of gender stereotypes* that shape expectations of men and women's roles. Much of the current DOD approach *can be traced to misunderstanding gender as a concept.*[140] [emphasis added]

The CNA study authors share several examples of the use of women in Violent Extremist Organization(s) (VEOs), noting "that women play diverse supporting, enabling, and operational roles in a range of ideologically diverse and regionally disparate VEOs, both past and present."[141] The MEI authors provide this list of such diverse roles: "domestic caretakers, recruiters, strategic communicators, intelligence collectors, weapons smugglers, combatants, and suicide bombers."[142] Other authors include sex worker and/or spies to the roles women have inside or adjacent to VEOs.[143]

Given the diverse roles of women in the stability/instability spectrum, the MEI authors suggest "DOD's interaction with these women must be just as diverse and varied…[and] beyond stereotypical non-combatant engagements."[144]They provide as example the situation at the al-Hol Camp in Hasahah, Syria. Apparently, most of the encamped persons are women and children and is a cross-section of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) families mixed with its victims and/or refugees from ISIS violence. Despite the "feed, educate, and secure" efforts of nonprofit workers in the camp, violence actions regularly occur because, in part, extreme ideology thrives there—and women are the perpetrators of both the violence as well as the promulgators of the

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[139] Crombe and Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role."

[140] Pamela G. Faber, Megan K. McBride, Julia McQuaid, Emily Mushen, Alexander Powell, William G. Rosenau, and Elizabeth Yang, "Understanding Gender and Violent Extremism," *The Center for Naval Analyses* (March 2021), https://www.cna.org/reports/2021/04/understanding-gender-and-violent (accessed June 15, 2022).

[141] Faber, et al, "Understanding Gender and Violent Extremism," 68.

[142] Crombe and Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role."

[143] See: Laura Sjoberg and Caron E. Gentry, *Mothers, monsters, whores: women's violence in global politics*. (London: Zed Books, 2007), https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/7377743 (accessed June 23, 2022) and a more recent update by the same authors, *Beyond Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Thinking about Women's Violence in Global Politics* (London: Zed Books, 2015), https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25102558-beyond-mothers-monsters-whores (accessed June 23, 2022). See also: Katharine Petrich, "Al-Shabaab's Mata Hari Network," War on the Rocks, August 14, 2014, commentary, https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/al-shabaabs-mata-hari-network/ (accessed June 3, 2022), and Katharine Petrich and Phoebe Donnelly, "Worth many sins: Al-Shabaab's shifting relationship with Kenyan women," Small Wars and Insurgencies 30 (6-7) (November 2019): 1169-1192, DOI:10.1080/09592318.2019.1649814 (accessed June 3, 2022). The abstract for this journal article notes: "What happens when the world's 'oldest profession' interacts with history's oldest form of war? …This article suggests the next phase of scholarship on gender and terrorism, encouraging scholars not only to pay attention to the relationship between women and terrorist groups, but to also examine the nuanced relationships between different categories of women and terrorist groups."

[144] Crombe and Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role."

ISIS dogma.[145] As the authors argue, it is apparent that significant de-radicalization efforts are needed on a par with any program offered for men.

Recommendation

Specific to the al-Hol Camp, the MEI authors suggest WPS legislation and program funding should leverage

> the cultural expertise and insight of women inside of Arab militaries to begin developing disengagement from violence efforts within al-Hol now, breaking down the barriers of entry that Western or male teams would face.[146]

More generally, they indicate

> To improve future engagement strategies and preserve a competitive advantage, the United States must continue to work with and encourage partner nations to allow for the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of security and defense.[147]

The CNA study authors outlines four major conclusions:

1) the dominant stereotypes about women's roles in VEOs miss most female activity in these groups and fundamentally fail to capture women's lived experiences;
2) internal DOD activities that are truly gender considered are severely limited, lack nuance, and are not institutionalized;
3) external DOD CT/CVE efforts do not consider the roles men or women play from a nuanced perspective, and they are disproportionately influenced by a set of gender stereotypes that shape expectations of men and women's roles; and
4) current DOD approach can be traced to misunderstanding gender as a concept.

Within these conclusions, the CNA study authors provide specific recommendations that range from improved education and training among military professionals and programs installation and/or enforcement.[148] In summary, the study notes:

> Understanding the roles and experiences of women in VEOs is an important but insufficient step in understanding the full effect of gender on VEOs and CT/CVE. Similarly, identifying gaps in CT/CVE strategy, policy, activities, and understanding without addressing those gaps risks the long-term effectiveness of DOD efforts to counter VEOs.[149]

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[145] Crombe and Moffitt, "Reassessing women's role."
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Faber, et al, "Understanding Gender and Violent Extremism," 68 - 71.
[149] Ibid, 71.

PKSOI Lesson Reports and SOLLIMS Samplers (2010-2021)

2021

- PKSOI Semiannual Lesson Report Multinational Interoperability Command and Control and Transitions (November 2021)
- PKSOI Semiannual Lesson Report Setting the Stage (May 2021)

2020

- PKSOI Semiannual Lesson Report Multinational Interoperability (November 2020)
- PKSOI Lesson Report Consolidating Gains (March 2020)

2019

- PKSOI Lesson Report Partnering (December 2019)
- PKSOI Lesson Report Strategic Planning (September 2019)
- PKSOI Lesson Report Conflict Prevention (June 2019)
- PKSOI Lesson Report SSR and DDR (January 2019)

2018

- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 10 Issue 1 Transitional Public Security (December 2018)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 9 Issue 4 Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (September 2018)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 9 Issue 3 PKSO Complexities and Challenges (July 2018)
- PKSOI Lesson Report Right-Sizing and Stage-Setting (July 2018)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 9 Issue 2 Inclusive Peacebuilding (May 2018)
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2010-17

- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 8 Issue 2 Operationalizing WPS (November 2017)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Sp Ed Leadership in Crisis and Complex Operations (May 2017)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 8 Issue 1 Civil Affairs in Stability Operations (March 2017)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Sp Ed Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) (January 2017)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 7 Issue 4 Strategic Communication in PSO (November 2016)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 7 Issue 3 Stabilization and Transition (August 2016) http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/2020/06/15/stability-operations-in-somalia-1992-1993-a-case-study/
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 1 Issue 2 Investing in Training (June 2016)
- SOLLIMS Sampler Vol 7 Issue 1 Building Stable Governance (March 2016)
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