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**STABILIZATION IN THE AFGHANISTAN COUNTER-INSURGENCY:
ASSESSING THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH IN KANDAHAR PROVINCE**

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ABSTRACT

In 2005, the Government of Canada mobilized instruments of state power in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. Field representatives from across federal departments deployed to Afghanistan in August 2005, forming the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team. In order to harmonize intervention strategies, the Comprehensive Approach was adopted as the collaborative operating framework. This research paper examines the effectiveness of the Canadian Comprehensive Approach for stabilization within the Afghanistan counter-insurgency.

Two conceptual models were derived as assessment tools, encapsulating the theoretical and doctrinal imperatives for success in blended environments. Using both qualitative and quantitative diagnostic techniques, the models were subsequently applied to evalute the efficiency of the Comprehensive Approach in Kandahar province.

Results indicated that while the Comprehensive Approach is a viable instrument for stabilization, the Canadian implementation strategy requires modification to improve effectiveness in the Afghanistan counter-insurgency. According to the analysis, hybrid performance is currently impaired by tenuous commitment, disparate culture, incongruent policy, and inadequate focus on rural areas where the balance of the indigenous population resides. A series of recommendations are provided to optimize the Canadian Comprehensive Approach, including the creation of District Stabilization Teams to complement existing architecture at the provincial level.

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ATF – Afghanistan Task Force

ANA – Afghan National Army

ANP – Afghan National Police

ANSF – Afghan National Security Forces

AU – African Union

BG – Battle Group

CA – Comprehensive Approach

CDC – Community Development Council

CDP – Community Development Plan

CF – Canadian Forces

CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency

CIMIC – Civil-Military Cooperation

CoG – Centre of Gravity

CMCO – Civil-Military Coordination

CSC – Corrections Services Canada

CSCE – Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

DCoP – District Chief of Police

DDA – District Development Assembly

DDP – District Development Plan

DDR – Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

DFAIT – Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

DL – District Leader

DND – Department of National Defence

DST – District Stabilization Team

EU – European Union

ESDP – European Security and Defense Policy

FA – Fragmented Approach

FATA – Federally Administered Tribal Area

FOB – Forward Operating Base

GIRoA – Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

GoC – Government of Canada

IED – Improvised Explosive Device

IOs – International Organizations

IP – Implementing Partner

IPB – Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield

IPTF – Integrated Planning Task Force

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force

JRT – Joint Reconstruction Team

JUG – Joined-Up Government

KAF – Kandahar Air Field

KVA – Key Village Approach

KPRT – Kandahar PRT

LOO – Line of Operation

MP – Military Police

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

NPM – New Public Management

NSP – National Solidarity Program

OEF – Operation Enduring Freedom

OMLT – Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team

OSCE – Operation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PCO – Privy Council Office

POMLT – Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team

PDC – Provincial Development Council

PDP – Provincial Development Plan

PRT – Provincial Reconstruction Team

QIP – Quick Impact Project

RC – Regional Command

RCMP – Royal Canadian Mounted Police

RoCK – Representative of Canada in Kandahar

ROE – Rules of Engagement

SSR – Security Sector Reform

START – Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force

TAI – Targeted Area of Interest

TFK – Task Force Kandahar

UN – United Nations

WoG – Whole of Government

INTRODUCTION

Situating The Problem

The emergence of 'wicked' problems in the 21st century has challenged traditional approaches to governance and management. Intricate and obstinate issues with no simple solutions, 'wicked' problems define many persistent social challenges.[1] Beyond their sheer complexity, these issues straddle narrow organizational mandates and departmental boundaries.[2] Single purpose organizations and 'vertical silos' have proven inadequate and dysfunctional in complex environments, as no single department has the mandate, expertise, capacity or resources to resolve these cross-cutting dilemmas.

In order to limit fragmentation, many nations have embraced reform initiatives which place increased emphasis on inter-departmental coordination and integration. Although respective approaches are uniquely shaped by national vision and strategy, these collaborative concepts are founded on common principles. Whole of Government (WoG), Joined-Up Government (JUG), inter-agency and horizontal management are all recognized nomenclature. While the terminology varies across the international community, reforms can be broadly categorized as the Comprehensive Approach (CA).

Recognizing the success of hybrid strategies in resolving complex domestic problems, collaborative approaches were adapted for use on the international stage. To meet expeditionary demands, CA structures were expanded to incorporate a security dimension, thereby complementing the political, economic, social and technological

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[1] Vernon Bogdanor, "Introduction," in *Joined-Up Government*, 1-18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6.

[2] Tom Christensen and Per Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach to Public Sector Reform," *Public Administration Review* 67, no. 6 (November/December 2007): 1060.

instruments of power. A viable platform for nation-building endeavours, the CA optimizes inter-departmental cooperation and integration in the pursuit of shared goals. This hybrid tool is ideally suited for application in counter-insurgency environments, where insecurity precludes the autonomous engagement of participating departments.

In 2005, the Government of Canada (GoC) implemented the CA methodology in Afghanistan, mobilizing representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Department of National Defence (DND), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Field representatives converged in August 2005, forming the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT). Initial departmental commitments were deliberately modest while the nascent Canadian CA took root. As the concept matured, there was an insatiable demand for increased military and civilian commitment to confront mounting expectations. The civilian component of the KPRT grew exponentially over subsequent years, complemented by military expansion within the Battle Group (BG) and the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT).

As an infantry officer within the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, I had the privilege to deploy to Kandahar on two separate occasions. While serving as the KPRT Information Operations Officer in 2005-2006, I was responsible to synchronize the non-kinetic effects of CA partners at provincial level. I re-deployed with the OMLT in 2008, charged with harmonizing CA efforts at the tactical level within rural villages across Zharey district. It is these practical CA experiences that serve as the genesis for this research endeavour.

During my time in Kandahar, I had a rare opportunity to witness the implementation and evolution of the expeditionary CA. Despite irrefutable evidence of Canadian progress in Kandahar over the last five years, my two deployments have left me with a profound sense of frustration. My observations, albeit now dated, suggest that the Canadian CA struggles to yield enduring stability in Kandahar province, particularly in the rural areas where 75 percent of the population resides. Many districts across the province remain unserviced, constrained by the limited reach of the KPRT and the absence of district stabilization architecture.

These challenges are not unique to the Canadian plight in Kandahar. In 2009, academic Michael Daxner offered a blunt assessment of the situation in Afghanistan: "Today, eight years after allied forces 'liberated' the nation from the vicious, tyrannical rule of the Taliban, this is the land of failed dreams".[3] Within military and academic circles, many postulate that rising instability within Afghanistan can be attributed to inadequate stabilization at the provincial, district and village levels.[4]

Hypothesis

This paper will address a central dilemma which continues to bewilder the GoC: How effective is the Canadian CA for stabilization within the Afghanistan counter-insurgency?

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[3] Michael Daxner, "Afghanistan: Graveyard of Good Intent," *World Policy Journal* 26, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 13.

[4] See C. Christine Fair and Seth G. Jones, *Securing Afghanistan: Getting on Track* ([Washington]: United States Institute of Peace, 2009), 24; Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "All Counterinsurgency is Local," *The Atlantic* 302, no. 3 (October 2008), http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200810/afghan; Internet; accessed 20 December 2009.

It is prudent to derive a hypothesis at this early juncture, charting the course for this academic endeavor: While the CA is a viable instrument for stabilization, the Canadian implementation strategy requires modification to improve effectiveness in the Afghanistan counter-insurgency.

Outline

This paper initially examines the origins of the CA, tracing the emergence of inter-agency strategies to resolve cross-cutting problems within the civilian sector. A comprehensive study of blended structures follows, exposing the theoretical considerations for applying the CA as a domestic stabilization tool. Strengths and limitations of collaborative philosophies are reviewed, highlighting the salient risks and rewards associated with hybrid approaches.

The CA is subsequently examined as an instrument for conflict intervention on the international stage, harmonizing political, military, economic, social, and technological dimensions of state power. The utility of the CA as an expeditionary tool is the focus of further analysis, examining the blended strategies currently employed by International Organizations (IOs) around the globe. Study then delves into the role of CA strategies in servicing the indigenous centre of gravity (CoG) through the projection of 'population-centric' non-kinetic effects.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the CA as a stabilization tool, the contemporary conflict in Afghanistan is examined in detail. Preliminary comments outline the sources of regional insecurity and state instability. Focus subsequently shifts to determining the doctrinal foundation for inter-agency counter-insurgency strategies.

Universal stabilization concepts, tasks and techniques are the subject of extensive review, exploring hybrid approaches in non-permissive environments. Finally, Afghanistan stabilization architecture is considered in detail, highlighting the vital role of PRTs as the conduit to collaborative CA campaign planning and implementation.

With the theoretical context established, the paper initiates a detailed review of the GoC policy governing the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mandate within Afghanistan. A study of operational counter-insurgency strategy follows, examining Canadian inter-agency contributions on the security, governance, and reconstruction and development Lines of Operation (LOOs). Framing commentary concludes with a tactical synopsis, outlining the 'Clear-Hold-Build' stabilization doctrine.

Theoretical information is subsequently harnessed, culminating in the creation of conceptual stabilization models. Two complementary frameworks are presented, encapsulating the theoretical and doctrinal imperatives for success in the blended environment. The models are applied to evaluating the effectiveness of the Kandahar PRT, leveraging a careful blend of qualitative and quantitative analytical tools. Key deductions follow, capturing CA deficiencies in the areas of strategy, integration, synchronization, and culture.

Armed with a clear appreciation of standing CA inhibitors, focus shifts to exploring consequence management and mitigation. District stabilization is ultimately endorsed as the recommended approach, highlighting force generation and employment considerations for the proposed fielding of District Stabilization Teams (DSTs).

CHAPTER 1 – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STABILIZATION

This chapter examines the origins of the CA as an inter-agency tool to resolve cross-cutting social challenges on the domestic front. Focus then shifts to tracing CA evolution as an instrument for conflict intervention on the international stage.

This component of the paper provides the historical and theoretical footing for the academic pursuit. Future chapters will build on this foundation, examining the relative effectiveness of the CA for stabilization within the Afghanistan counter-insurgency.

SECTION 1 – THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

This section initially documents the emergence of CA and its conceptual premise. Strengths and limitations are subsequently explored, assessing the risks and rewards of applying the CA as a domestic problem solving tool.

Sub-Section 1 – Background

Current management practices in the public sector were fundamentally shaped by the emergence of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm. Developed in the 1980s, NPM was initially characterized by private administrative reforms in the arenas of governance and management.[5] NPM initiatives were launched in order to optimize organizational structures, performance, and efficiency.

Private ways of running organizations flourished under the NPM philosophy, commanding the attention of public communities. Public sector reform was subsequently

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[5] Patrick Dunleavy, Helen Margetts, Simon Bastow, and Jane Tinkler, "New Public Management is Dead - Long Live Digital-Era Governance," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16, no. 3 (July 2006): 468.

shaped by the infusion of private values and techniques, constituting a progressive shift from management to performance orientation.[6] Restructuring initiatives stimulated improvements in service delivery while reducing cost expenditures.[7]

Single purpose organizations emerged from early NPM reforms.[8] Purpose-built, these organizations were inherently efficient, operating with narrow mandates and specialized functions. Single purpose organizations had the behavioural properties of isolated 'silos', responsive singularly to parent institutions.[9] Departmental processes were rationalized, streamlined and decentralized in the interest of agility and efficiency.[10]

There were significant deficiencies in adopting such a surgical approach. In an article entitled *The Whole of Government Approach to Public Sector Reform*, professors of administration Tom Christensen and Per Lægreid assert that:

> The principle of 'single-purpose organizations', with many specialized and non-overlapping roles and functions may have produced too much fragmentation, and a lack of cooperation and coordination, hampering effectiveness and efficiency.[11]

Simplified and isolated departmental approaches suffered from tunnel vision, failing to

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[6] Stephen Page, "What's New about the New Public Management? Administrative Change in the Human Services," *Public Administration Review* 65, no. 6 (November/December 2005): 713.

[7] David Richards and Martin Smith, "The Tensions of Political Control and Administrative Autonomy: From NPM to a Reconstituted Westminster Model," in *Autonomy and Regulation: Coping with Agencies in the Modern State*, eds. Tom Christensen and Per Lægreid (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2006), 185.

[8] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach…," 1059.

[9] Christopher Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey," *Political Studies Review* 1, no. 1 (2003), 38.

[10] Page, "What's New about the New Public Management?...," 550.

[11] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach…," 1060.

achieve synergy through vertical and horizontal coordination.[12]

Sub-Section 2 – Concept

Recognizing the disparaging impacts of fragmentation, organizations embraced the CA as a conduit to improved inter-departmental coordination and integration. An integrated philosophy for management, the CA represents a more holistic strategy to resolving complex issues which do not fit neatly into departmental 'silos'.[13] The CA hinges on improved inter-organizational activity within existing department and sector boundaries.[14] It is ideally suited for addressing domestic social challenges in the areas of education, housing, crime, addictions, and environment. Public departments are mobilized and integrated, featuring a careful blend of vertical and horizontal influences, in order to pursue shared objectives.[15] In a 2004 report entitled *Connecting Government*, the Australian Management Advisory Committee offered the following comments on the CA:

> Whole of government denotes public service agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. Approaches can be formal and informal. They can focus on policy development, program management and service delivery.[16]

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[12] *Ibid*.

[13] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach…," 1059.

[14] Tom Ling, "Delivering Joined–up Government in the UK: Dimensions, Issues and Problems," *Public Administration* 80, no. 4 (2002): 616.

[15] John Halligan, "Public Management and Departments: Contemporary Themes – Future Agendas," *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 64, no. 1 (March 2005): 27.

[16] Management Advisory Committee, *Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges* ([Canberra]: Commonwealth of Australia, 2004), 1.

Blended structures can include a wide array of participants.[17] Public ministries, departments, and independent task forces are possible federal government players. Provincial and municipal agents may also participate as public representatives. Private members can include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), contractors, associations, volunteer bodies and businesses. In the case of hybrid groups, composition is shaped by the nature and complexity of the particular mandate.

The CA is a philosophy that binds organizations in the pursuit of shared goals. An operating concept, it promotes cooperation and integration along horizontal networks to improve efficiency in the areas of policy, programming and service delivery.[18]

Sub-Section 3 – Strengths

Applying the CA yields functional benefits to government and the people they serve. The key advantages are increased capability, unity of purpose, integration and situational awareness. By adopting a collaborative philosophy, public organizations are able to deliver services in a more coherent and efficient fashion.

The CA increases the range and capability of public organizations. Blended structures have broad and diverse competencies and experience that does not exist in core departments or single purpose organizations. Consequently, hybrid groups are better prepared to deal with complex social issues.

In addition to expanding capability, this approach encourages unity of purpose. Joint strategy aligns departmental efforts, ensuring all actors work collaboratively to

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[17] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 46.

[18] Management Advisory Committee, *Connecting Government…*, 4.

achieve shared objectives. Active coordination reduces contradictions, tension and competition between agencies, thereby improving effectiveness.[19] Redundancy and duplication are frequently reduced in blended organizations, owing to a unified strategy with clear departmental boundaries.[20]

Beyond unifying mandates, the CA provides a framework for improved integration and coordination. Unilateral solutions to social problems rarely exist, as agency goals are co-dependent.[21] Through increased cooperation, partnered solutions can be found for issues which span core departmental boundaries. A converging focus produces synergy, harnessing the unique expertise of all stakeholders.[22]

This philosophy invariably improves situational awareness within the central hub and participating departments.[23] Horizontal messaging complements traditional vertical communication, encouraging awareness, agility and initiative within the workplace.

Another strength of the CA is that it optimizes and simplifies user accessibility to services. When a collaborative model is applied, citizens have access to integrated solutions rather than fragmented services which are both inconvenient and inefficient.[24]

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[19] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 35.

[20] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication on Comprehensive Approach: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities for Cooperation in Crisis Prevention and Management*, eds. Kristiina Rintakosi and Mikko Autti (Helsinki: Ministry of Defence, 2008), 11.

[21] *Ibid*.

[22] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 35.

[23] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 11.

[24] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 35.

Sub-Section 4 – Limitations

While there are many recognized benefits to applying the CA, there are also several disadvantages. Implementation of blended public structures can be highly problematic, owing to divergent culture and incongruent time horizons. Productivity, accountability, reporting and resource management often suffer under a hybrid approach.

Hybrid structures are not easily fielded as they represent a departure from traditional government practices.[25] Successful implementation hinges on a unified strategy and clear agency expectations, ambitious prerequisites which are difficult to achieve.[26] Cultural inconsistencies present a significant challenge, as foundational values and beliefs are not easily reconciled. Mutual trust and patience are vital to implementation, attributes which are difficult to cultivate in a public environment.[27]

Beyond obvious implementation challenges, incongruent departmental time horizons further undermines the CA. Responsiveness varies by agency, as they have been uniquely conditioned according to parent operating rhythm. While certain departments work diligently and aggressively, others behave as though there are unlimited time horizons.

Productivity levels can be adversely affected by public mergers. Blended organizations are susceptible to paralysis resulting from incessant meetings and high volumes

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[25] Christine Ryan and Peter Walsh, "Collaboration of Public Sector Agencies: Reporting and Accountability Challenges," *The International Journal of Public Sector Management* 17, no. 6/7 (2004): 628.

[26] *Ibid.*, 623.

[27] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach…," 1063.

of paperwork.[28] It is often challenging to balance vertical and horizontal demands when

working in a collaborative environment, frequently compromising productivity.[29] In addition

to being prone to reduced efficiency, hybrid teams tend to be more brittle than individual

departments or single purpose organizations.[30]

The CA presents significant accountability challenges. In traditional hierarchical

structures, departments are responsive through ministers to central government.[31] These

clear lines of vertical accountability are often blurred in integrated organizations, as multiple

agencies share partial responsibility for shared goals.[32] While lateral interaction is essential

for hybrid groups, horizontal accountability is difficult to track, measure and enforce.

Reporting presents another dilemma for joint bodies. Like accountability

architecture, reporting mechanisms are optimized for vertical tracking within departmental

'silos'. Independent exchanges preclude a clear picture of shared accomplishments.[33]

Integrated groups frequently lack a sophisticated messaging framework, delineating reporting

responsibilities for shared programs.[34] Performance measurement represents another major

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[28] Herman Bakvis and Luc Juillet, *The Horizontal Challenge: Line Departments, Central Agencies and Leadership* (Ottawa: Canada School of Public Service, 2004), 2.

[29] Ryan and Walsh, "Collaboration of Public Sector Agencies…," 629.

[30] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 38.

[31] Ryan and Walsh, "Collaboration of Public Sector Agencies…," 621.

[32] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach…," 1063.

[33] Ryan and Walsh, "Collaboration of Public Sector Agencies…," 625.

[34] *Ibid.*, 624.

limitation, as policy and service delivery effectiveness are difficult to assess in inter-agency organizations.[35]

Like reporting, resource management is more complex when the CA is applied. Theoretically, hybrid structures should be more efficient and cost-effective than independent ones. This is rarely the case, as redundancy and over-programming are documented trends. Central and dispersed resource control present unique challenges that must be reconciled if blended structures are to realize their true potential.[36]

Sub-Section 5 – Conclusions

The CA is a collaborative management philosophy with considerable potential. Capability, unity of purpose, integration and coordination all stand to benefit in blended environments. Situational awareness and service delivery are commonly optimized when using a joint apparatus. But there are significant risks with a hybrid approach.[37] Implementation, productivity and accountability are documented challenges. Reporting and resource management represent other distinct areas of concern.

In the public report *Wiring It Up*, the British Government offered the following commentary on the CA in 2000:

> Cross-cutting approaches are no panacea. They have costs as well as benefits. So, in any particular case, it is necessary to weigh up the costs and benefits of a cross-cutting approach with the costs and benefits of more traditional vertical structures.[38]

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[35] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 42.
[36] Ryan and Walsh, "Collaboration of Public Sector Agencies…," 623.

[37] Pollitt, "Joined–up Government: A Survey…," 38.

[38] United Kingdom, *Wiring it Up: Whitehall's Management of Cross-Cutting Policies and Services* ([London]: Performance and Innovation Unit, 2000), 16.

It is clear that while the CA has tremendous merit in certain situations, it does not replace compartmentalized strategies traditionally practised within the public sector. Rather, the two models should be seen as complementary, providing a broad range of strategies for resolution of complex issues.

SECTION 2 – THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH IN CONFLICT INTERVENTION

This section showcases the adaptation of the CA for use as a stabilization instrument on the international stage. A study of IOs follows, assessing the merits and limitations of adopting the CA as an expeditionary tool. Final commentary focuses on defining the centre of gravity for complex nation-building endeavours.

Sub-Section 1 – Adapting the Framework

Global interventions in regional and state conflicts over the last decade have yielded mixed results, facing increasing instability and threat. One of the principal inhibitors to success was an archaic civil-military integration platform that failed to fully exploit political, military, economic, social and technological dimensions of power.[39] Based on these experiences, the international community reached consensus that collaboration is imperative when engaging in complex peace building efforts.[40]

In the absence of a specialized philosophy and framework, the CA was adapted for use on the international stage. However, preliminary versions lacked an apparatus to

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[39] Cedric de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach," *DIIS Report 2008:14* (October 2008): 3.

[40] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 5.

address insecurity. Hostile threats constrained actor independence, as compartmentalized

action was vulnerable to insurgent targeting and corruption. Contemporary NPM

structures were expanded to incorporate robust security actors, complementing traditional

departmental players.

A Finnish seminar publication entitled *Comprehensive Approach* offered the

following interpretation for international interventions:

> Whilst there is no commonly accepted definition for the 'Comprehensive
> Approach', there is broad agreement that it implies the pursuit of an approach
> aimed at integrating political, security, development, rule of law, human rights
> and humanitarian dimensions of international missions.[41]

Although expanded to meet security imperatives, the aim of hybrid structures

remains to promote vertical and horizontal coordination among public and private

actors.[42] Beyond aggregating military and civilian instruments, the CA demands internal

and external capability blending.[43] Firstly, the CA stimulates internal cooperation

between states, departments, and private sector partners.[44] Secondly, the CA provides a

structured external framework for cohesive coordination with the host government, IOs

and NGOs.[45] Shared objectives and priorities emerge as the foundation for the CA,

bridging departmental silos in favour of integrated and multi-dimensional strategy.[46]

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[41] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 9.

[42] *Ibid*.

[43] Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations: A Work in Slow Progress," *DIIS Report 2008:15* (October 2008): 9.

[44] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 12.

[45] *Ibid*.

[46] *Ibid*.

Within a counter-insurgency environment, governance, security and development

spheres are inextricably linked, exposing a complex inter-dependency for participating

actors.[47] No single agency has the capacity, expertise or resources to operate

independently, necessitating an integrated strategy that sequences departmental

activities.[48] This intricate counter-insurgency dilemma was succinctly summarized by

academic Peter Jakobsen in his report on *NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis*

Response Operations:

> Success in operations aimed at building a lasting peace requires a CA across
> security, governance and development efforts, as well as between all local and
> international partners, in support of the local government. There can be no lasting
> security without development and no development without security.[49]

Beyond fostering improved inter-departmental coordination, the CA serves as a

unifying strategy for improved coordination across regional, national, provincial and

district spheres.[50] A multi-national tool with application at strategic, operational, and

tactical levels, and it can be specifically adapted for use in counter-insurgency, peace

support or post-conflict operations.[51]

Sub-Section 2 – Application By International Organizations

Over the last decade, there has been a notable shift in stabilization practices.

Fragmented Approaches (FAs) have been replaced by variations of the CA, which has

gained traction within the international community. The North Atlantic Treaty

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[47] *Ibid*., 11.

[48] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 3.

[49] Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations…," 11.

[50] *Ibid*., 12.

Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU) have all embraced collaborative strategies to foster inter-agency cooperation and exploit policy instruments.

NATO and the CA

Since its inception in 1949, NATO has been a driving force for international security and stability. In 1999, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary, NATO published a comprehensive strategy for achieving security objectives in the Euro-Atlantic area.[52] A blended approach, the 'Strategic Concept' promotes coordination and integration in the political and military dimensions, harnessing two core instruments of security.[53]

The strategy hinges on the active participation of states and alliances, mobilizing the tools of hard and soft power.[54] NATO members have resisted civilian expansion, most recently in 2006, in favour of a narrow security mandate.[55] NATO remains dependent on the broader international community to address economic and social dimensions through focused reconstruction and development.[56] Originally fielded for the collective defence of allied partners, the 'Strategic Concept' is currently being applied as a preventative and reactive crisis management tool in failing states and regions.[57]

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[51] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 9.

[52] NATO, *NATO Handbook 2006* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2006), 18.

[53] NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(C)* ([Brussels]: [NATO Office of Information and Press], 2007), 1-8.

[54] NATO, *NATO Handbook 2001* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), 45.

[55] Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations…," 11.

[56] NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(C)…*, 1-8.

[57] NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept: Press Release NAC-S(99)65* (Washington: [NATO Office of Information and Press], 1999), 3.

The UN and the CA

Within recent years, the UN has also embraced the CA when implementing

regional and theatre peace support mandates. In 2000, the UN released initial policy on

internal mission integration, stimulating cooperation amongst UN stabilization actors.[58]

The UN subsequently pioneered the 'Integrated Approach' in 2008, designed for use in

conflict and post-conflict environments.[59] The framework harmonizes the actions of UN

partners by establishing a shared vision of campaign strategy and objectives. The UN

model coordinates political, security, development, and humanitarian theatre initiatives.[60]

However, rather than focusing on structural integration, the collaborative model aligns

operational planning and effects.[61] More sophisticated than other CA mechanisms, the

UN approach enjoys the direct integration of private and public donors. It deliberately

avoids overt blending with NATO, EU and AU actors, thereby preserving neutrality and

independence.[62] A flexible apparatus, the 'Integrated Approach' can be adapted to

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[58] United Nations, *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions Dated 17 January 2006: Released Under a Note from the Secretary-General on 9 February 2006* (New York: United Nations, 2006), 1.

[59] United Nations, *Decisions of the Secretary-General, 25 June 2008 Policy Committee: Decision Number 2008/24 - Integration* (New York: United Nations, 2008), 1.

[60] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication*…, 13.

[61] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 10.

[62] Cedric de Coning, *Implications of a Comprehensive Or Integrated Approach for Training in United Nations and African Union Peace Operations: NUPI Working Paper 766, Security Practice 6* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2009), 7.

incorporate peace-keeping or peace-building interventions in the areas of governance, security, and development.[63]

The EU and the CA

Historically, EU crisis-management operations were launched exclusively by the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) arm.[64] This compartmentalization had impairing effects, as the ESDP lacked accessibility to political and economic instruments from the European community.[65] Following the inaugural interventions in the Balkans, there was intense debate over the EU crisis-management approach, particularly regarding the integration of military and civilian tools.[66] In recent years, the EU has embraced the global shift towards CA, fielding the Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO) model.[67] A crisis-response and post-conflict strategy, the CMCO is tailored to absorb multi-national and inter-agency actors.[68] Although still under refinement, the EU approach is a bottom-up process that promotes actor integration and cooperation.[69]

The AU and the CA

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[63] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 13.

[64] Catriona Gourlay, "European Union Procedures and Resources for Crisis Management," *International Peacekeeping* 11, no. 3 (Autumn 2004), 404.

[65] *Ibid.*, 404.

[66] Eva Gross, "EU and the Comprehensive Approach," *DIIS Report 2008:13* (October 2008): 7.

[67] *Ibid.*, 7.

[68] *Ibid.*, 11.

[69] *Ibid.*

The international community has recognized that there is no panacea for the insecurity, violence and corruption that has plagued Africa for centuries.[70] In response to the trans-national instability, the AU incorporated integration protocols into the African Standby Force doctrine in 2003, encouraging multi-lateral and multi-dimensional partnerships.[71] AU inter-agency cooperation deepened through 2006, culminating in the recent development of the 'Integrated Planning Task Force' (IPTF) model.[72]

Conclusion

A rudimentary study of IOs has exposed a trend towards increasing military and civilian collaboration in the international arena. Although there are ideological and structural variances in the application of the CA, each model aims to harness all hard and soft elements of power. Additionally, the CA strategies inherently recognize the complex inter-dependency which governs stabilization, reconciling the deficiencies encountered with the civilian NPM approach.

Sub-Section 3 – Challenges

While the CA serves as a brilliant philosophical and doctrinal model, practical implementation on the international stage has been exigent. When fielded in complex

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[70] The African Union and Peace and Security, "Issues Paper for the African Union Symposium," http://www.uneca.org/adfiii/auissuepn3.htm; Internet; accessed 15 November 2009.

[71] de Coning, *Implications of a Comprehensive Or Integrated Approach…*, 7.

[72] *Ibid*.

expeditionary environments, integrated strategies have suffered from organizational, administrative, and financial inefficiencies.[73]

From a departmental perspective, integration of the CA presents two distinct challenges. First, agencies must adapt internal strategies for expeditionary application.[74] Most departments are optimized for employment in stable conditions, lacking the experience and tools to operate in contested environments. Insurgent threats compromise weak strategies. For the CA to be successful, agencies must further operationalize their internal philosophy, doctrine and procedures.[75]

Secondly, departments must adapt externally. IOs and NGOs have distinct policies, goals and objectives. Counter-insurgency strategies are frequently incongruent, with some actors pursuing short-term initiatives which yield acute and immediate results, while others focus on long-term capacity development.[76] Competing and divergent approaches ultimately threaten effectiveness and efficiency.[77]

Shared understanding constitutes another chief impediment.[78] Actors naturally view cross-cutting problems through organizational filters, deriving unique perspectives. These fragmented perceptions inhibit shared understanding, a pre-requisite for hybrid

[73] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 3.

[74] Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations…," 10.

[75] *Ibid*.

[76] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 24.

[77] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 25.

[78] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 24.

action. Inter-agency consensus must be reached on the security dilemma, and perhaps more importantly, the relative role of power dimensions in the collaborative strategy.

Beyond political and strategic inhibitors, there are obvious operational challenges to practically implementing the CA. Expeditionary operating concepts, command and control mechanisms, and planning tools vary significantly amongst actors. CA effectiveness hinges on hybrid planning and blended operations, integrating all instruments of power.[79] Although departments have made significant strides in improving inter-operability, information technology, mobility, and funding remain core cross-cutting challenges.[80]

Another significant challenge of the CA is to reconcile cultural differences which exist between constituent actors. Although a recognized flaw of the civilian NPM model, cultural disparities are more pronounced in the global arena. Actors have unique values, principles, lexicon, accountability protocols and time horizons. As such, compromise and trust are central tenets for integrated models. Cultural divides must be bridged, yielding a collaborative culture which binds all theatre elements.

Doctrinally, NGOs operate independently to preserve neutrality. Agency blending intensifies under the CA, which may have unintended effect of either compromising NGO impartiality or further isolating NGOs.[81] However, according to the

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[79] Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations…," 12.

[80] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 27.

[81] *Ibid*., 26.

UN, NGOs can thrive under an integrated approach, provided they are afforded adequate humanitarian space.[82]

According to counter-insurgency doctrine, rewards are frequently extended to local communities who cooperate with indigenous and coalition forces.[83] Stimulus typically features targeted development to improve local services, serving as a compelling motivator for cooperative behaviour. This incentive-based approach has the potential to polarize security and development actors, as the former place pressure on the latter to vector stabilization to acute locations at particular times.[84]

While IOs have independently embraced the CA, practical inter-alliance cooperation has been limited.[85] Integration of NATO, UN and EU efforts has faced resistance at the political level, particularly regarding matters of strategy and resources.[86] The extent of NGO blending is theatre dependent, and directly contingent on the degree of security established by NATO, the UN or the EU.[87] NGOs oppose cooperation with multi-national actors in areas of ripe insurgency, paralyzing the reconstruction and development capacities of the CA.

Over the last decade, states and IOs have invested in the CA as a stabilization mechanism in counter-insurgency, peace support or post-conflict operations. Although

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[82] United Nations, *Decisions of the Secretary-General…*, 1.

[83] de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach…," 25.

[84] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 25.

[85] Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations…," 4.

[86] *Ibid.*

[87] *Ibid.*

results have been favourable, ideological, structural, operational, and cultural challenges have surfaced during implementation. Hybrid planning, blended expeditionary protocols and synchronized action have been key hurdles. These limitations are significant, and must be reconciled if the CA is to be an effective apparatus for conflict intervention.

Sub-Section 4 – An Illustration of the Fragmented Approach

Recognizing the inherent challenges of the CA, not all IOs have embraced collaborative strategies with the same enthusiasm. In particular, the Operation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has avoided the CA in favour of a more FA.

Initially founded in 1975 under the banner of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the OSCE is the largest regional security organization in the world, with membership consisting of 56 nations from across Europe, Central Asia and North America.[88] It is an apparatus for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.[89]

The OSCE applies the FA, serving purely an administrative, sponsorship and facilitator role. It recognizes that unity of command is neither possible nor practical for expeditionary operations. Although it engages in Security Sector Reform (SSR)

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[88] OSCE, "Facts and Figures," http://www.osce.org/about/19298.html; Internet, accessed 22 November 2009.

[89] *Ibid.*

initiatives within the politico-military, economic, and human security dimensions, the

OSCE lacks an integrated and unifying concept.[90] Alternatively, it acts through a series

of independent and piecemeal stabilization interventions, which are aggregated over time

to improve stability.[91] It focuses principally on police capacity development and state

building, deliberately avoiding overt military interventions of increasing complexity.

      The FA enjoys certain advantages over the CA. It avoids bureaucracy and inertia,

translating into organizational agility. It is an ideal model for sponsoring and facilitating

action, although it lacks the architecture to assume participative and directive functions.

Optimized for repairing strained societies, the FA is an effective apparatus for realizing

rapid effects along departmental 'silos'. It is ideally suited for short-term interventions,

providing an alternative to costly CA processes.

      The FA has limitations. Academic Victor-Yves Ghebali offers the following

assessment of the FA in his article *The OSCE's SSR Operational Activities: A Piecemeal*

Approach With Limited Results:

> Conducted on a case-by-case basis with no overall design, the OSCE's assistance
> projects do not target the security sector as a whole. As a consequence, their
> effectiveness can be considered limited in both scope and impact.[92]

The FA is impotent in cases of active insurgency where civil society is completely

broken. Independent and piecemeal interventions falter in such cases, failing to

adequately integrate security and stabilization actions. The decentralized modus operandi

also impairs connectivity with indigenous institutions, marginalizing the role of central

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[90] Victor-Yves Ghebali, "The OSCE's SSR Operational Activities: A Piecemeal Approach with Limited Results," in *Intergovernmental Organizations and Security Sector Reform*, ed. David M. Law, 123-136 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007), 123.

[91] *Ibid*., 132.

government. Finally, the disjointed approach complicates integration with other IOs,

NGOs and non-state actors during crisis management interventions, inhibiting

reconstruction and development.[93]

Sub-Section 5 – Understanding the Centre of Gravity

Theoretical Background

Recent analysis has focused on evaluating the relative merits of comprehensive

and fragmented stabilization approaches. While each has unique advantages and

limitations, their utility is measured according to their span of influence on the CoG.

In his book *On War*, the Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz defined the CoG

as the "…hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the

point against which all our energy should be directed."[94] More recently, a *United States

Joint Operation Planning* publication offered the following definition for the CoG:

> A source of moral or physical strength, power or resistance… [It] can be viewed
> as the set of characteristics, capabilities, and sources of power from which a
> system derives its moral or physical strength, freedom of action, and will to act.[95]

In conventional warfare, featuring state on state conflict between peer enemies,

the political and strategic CoGs are typically nested in either military or economic

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[92] Ghebali, "The OSCE's SSR Operational Activities…," 133.

[93] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 15.

[94] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 595.

[95] United States, *Joint Publication 5-0: Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), IV-8.

dimensions of power.[96] Accordingly, conventional campaigns are 'enemy centric',

applying manoeuvre warfare to destroy the enemy's ability or will to fight.[97]

In an insurgency, between state actors and a guerrilla force, the CoG is rarely

determined as a function of military or economic power. Alternatively, it is invariably

linked to the indigenous population. David Galula, one of the pioneers of counter-

insurgency doctrine, initially introduced the concept that the population is the prize.[98]

Today, unconventional guerrilla campaigns are commonly 'population centric',

focused on either mobilizing local support or building local confidence in government.[99]

If public support is secured, insurgents are denied sanctuary and mobility, facilitating

surgical targeting by indigenous and coalition security forces.

Failure to secure the support of the indigenous population in an insurgency can

have catastrophic results. In his book *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*,

David Galula succinctly summarizes the importance of local support:

> If the insurgent manages to dissociate the population from the counter-insurgent,
> to control it physically, to get its active support, he will win the war because, in
> the final analysis, the exercise of political power depends on the tacit or explicit
> agreement of the population or, at worst, on its submissiveness.[100]

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[96] Dale C. Eikmeier, "Center of Gravity Analysis," *Military Review* (July/August, 2004): 4.

[97] David Kilcullen, *Small Wars Centre of Excellence: Counterinsurgency Seminar 07* (Quantico: USMC Warfighting Laboratory, [2007]).

[98] David Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964), 8.

[99] Kilcullen, *Small Wars Centre of Excellence: Counterinsurgency Seminar 07…*, 10.

[100] Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice…*, 7-8.

Applying an 'enemy centric' approach in an unconventional campaign can have devastating effects. Singular emphasis on enemy attrition is an expedient path to failure, given that as each insurgent is eliminated, several more will surface.[101]

Practical Implications

In 1943, in an article entitled *A Theory of Human Motivation*, psychologist Abraham Maslow postulated that humans pursue basic needs: psychological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization.[102] Further, he concluded that these basic needs were arrayed in a hierarchy, and that elementary needs would dominate consciousness until they were satisfied, at which point focus would shift to more sophisticated needs.[103]

The model proposed by Maslow prioritized basic needs in a peaceful society. Applied conceptually to counter-insurgency, the framework provides insight on the relative prioritization of basic needs from the perspective of the indigenous people. Stabilization effects must be carefully sequenced, fielding basic necessities first.

In a counter-insurgency seminar, academic Thomas Mockaitis, offered the following interpretation of relative sequencing: security, water, food, electricity, jobs, health and education, local government, national government.[104] Predictably, the selection and sequencing of the basic needs will vary according to the socio-culture of the

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[101] Chris Mason, "The Afghan Insurgency" (lecture, 1 CMBG COIN Seminar, Edmonton, AB, 5 Feburary 2009), with permission.

[102] Abraham Maslow H, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July, 1943): 394.

[103] Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation…," 394.

[104] Thomas Mockaitis, "Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency" (lecture, 1 CMBG COIN Seminar, Edmonton, AB, 6 February 2009), with permission.

indigenous people. Irrespective of the specific needs, it is clear that priorities can be represented by a series of concentric circles, illustrating the tiered nature of demands.

When designing a 'population centric' counter-insurgency strategy, stabilization effects must adhere to certain characteristics. Effects must be timely, given that perceived inactivity can be interpreted as indifference, jeopardizing the credibility and legitimacy of indigenous and coalition institutions in the eyes of the local people. Stabilization programs must also be tangible, aligned with indigenous priorities. According to the *Kandahar Interim Provincial Action Plan* released in 2008, the indigenous people should be able to "touch, taste and feel"[105] the reconstruction and development effects.

Beyond being timely and tangible, stabilization effects must also be durable. They must be fielded once security prerequisites are achieved, creating immunity to targeting from insurgents. Reconstruction and development programs need to be launched with all necessary operations and maintenance architecture, preventing premature collapse. Sustainability is achieved through implementation of a regular visit programme, providing a mechanism to identify and reconcile emerging flaws.

Perception is everything. Indigenous and coalition institutions can do all the right things, but if they are poorly communicated to the local people, they will fall short of their intended effect. A comprehensive media strategy should accentuate stabilization processes, exploiting indigenous and media outlets across the range of mediums.

Fielding of stabilization effects must be inextricably tied to the indigenous government. While a project may be an exclusive intervention by the international

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[105] Canada, *Kandahar Interim Provincial Action Plan* (Kandahar: Task Force Kandahar, 2008), D2.

community, delivery should occur under the banner of the central government, thereby promoting the utility, credibility and legitimacy of state institutions.

The delivery of the 'population-centric' strategy is of critical importance. Public support is inherently fragile and intensely contested in counter-insurgency. To avoid jeopardizing local confidence, stabilization actors need to skilfully manage indigenous expectations. Hollow promises constitute a breach of trust, permanently damaging relationships and increasing local indifference.

CHAPTER 2 – FRAMING THE CONFLICT IN AFGHANISTAN

Building on the established historical and theoretical foundation, this chapter crafts a framework for evaluating the expeditionary effectiveness of the Canadian CA. Given the central importance of the Afghanistan platform to current Canadian foreign policy, it has been selected as the medium for assessing CA performance. Consequently, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive review of the Afghanistan conflict at this time, providing the requisite structure for future analysis.

This chapter commences with priming commentary on the theatre operating environment and the premise for the counter-insurgency campaign. A doctrinal interpretation of stabilization is subsequently provided, followed by a tiered explanation of Canadian counter-insurgency strategy at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.

SECTION 1 – THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

This section provides a synopsis of the operating environment, focusing on the social issues defining modern Afghan society. Regional insecurity and state instability are initially addressed, educating an informed study of the Afghanistan insurgency.

Sub-Section 1 – Regional Insecurity

Central Asia is an inherently complex region. For centuries, crusaders and states have battled over territory and trade rights. Insecurity in Central Asia remains a dominant theme today, and a key inhibitor to current stabilization initiatives in Afghanistan. Although sources of instability are not state centric, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq present serious challenges to Afghan prosperity.
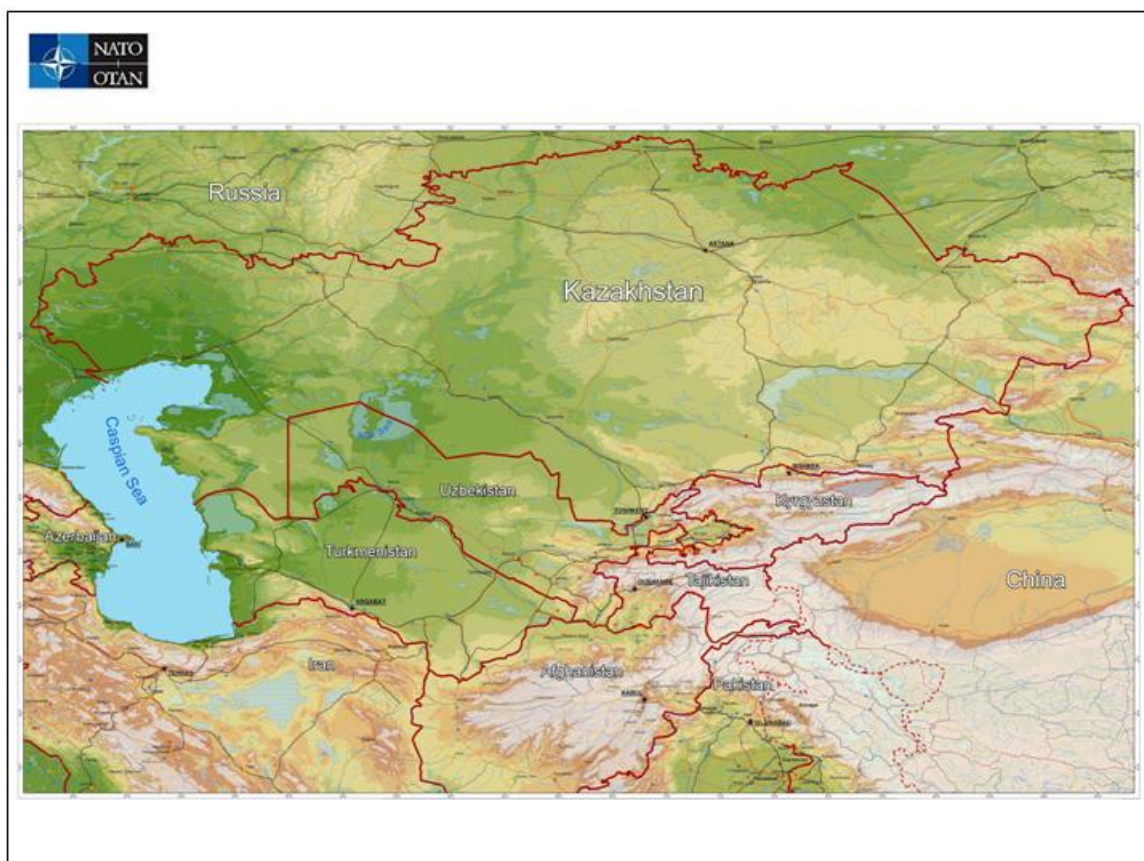
Figure 1 – Map of Central Asia[106]

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Pakistan is flirting with internal rupture. Political crises, including military dictatorships and the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in 2008, have caused civil unrest. The lawless Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) serves as an extremist incubation ground, and a sanctuary for terrorist activities.[107] Porous borders empower a trans-national insurgency, constituting a boundless dilemma for Afghanistan.[108] Strained relations between Pakistan and India create further regional instability, while limiting the capacity of Pakistan to apply hard power to eradicate domestic terrorism.

For the last three decades, Iran has been a hub for regional instability. An intricately complex state defined by endless paradoxes, Iran has a reputation for behaving erratically on the international stage.[109] Veiled Iranian diplomacy promotes regional confusion and mistrust, which has destabilizing effects. Unsanctioned nuclear proliferation, under the watchful eye of the international community, is a source of unrest in the region. Unbridled Iranian ambition, coupled with a protracted conflict with Israel, creates further regional insecurity. As the leader of the Muslim community, Iran wields broad religious influence, serving as a decisive instrument of soft power.

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[106] Map sourced from *NATO*. All maps provided by *NATO* in this paper are subject to the following disclaimer: "*NATO* maps are the exclusive property of *NATO* and may not be reproduced or distributed without written consent from *NATO*."

[107] Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008), 93.

[108] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2008), 5.

[109] Pierre Pahlavi, "Iran: A Country in Search of Power" (lecture, Canadian Forces College, Toronto, ON, November 16, 2009), with permission.

The United States-led invasion of Iraq was an indisputable source of regional instability. Although recent trends show positive indicators of progress, Iraq remains a nascent and unstable democracy which will be vulnerable following the withdrawal of international forces.

Sub-Section 2 – State Instability

Positioned on a geo-strategic crossroads, Afghanistan has been a gateway for crusaders for centuries.[110] It has a long history of strife, characterized by regional conflict and foreign invasion.[111] Plagued by this violence, Afghanistan has been on the cusp of rupture for over three decades. Criminal activity, poverty, tribal disputes, and opium have been chronic inhibitors to stability and prosperity.

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[110] Rashid, *Descent into Chaos…*, 6.

[111] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 5.
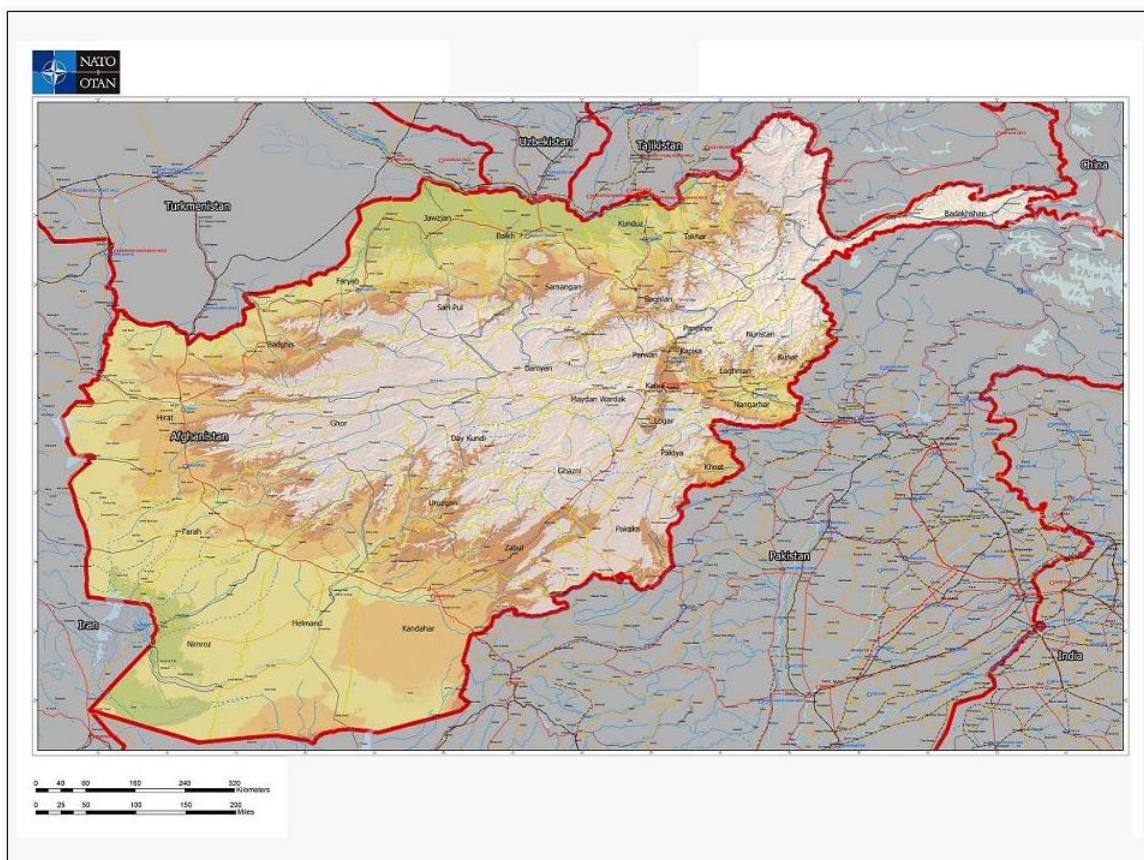
Figure 2 – Map of Afghanistan[112]

      Warlords have been prevalent actors in Afghanistan for centuries, thriving in the

chaotic environment. Recently, they prospered following the expulsion of the Taliban in

2001, expanding their influence through an intricate network of regional and provincial

operations.[113] Corruption and bribery have been rampant, founded on a system of illicit

tariffs.[114] The involvement of government officials in unlawful activities has a

paralyzing effect on Afghan institutions, jeopardizing legitimacy and credibility.

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[112] Map sourced from *NATO*.

[113] Rashid, *Descent into Chaos…*, 128.

[114] Rashid, *Descent into Chaos…*, 131.

Intense poverty is another source of instability. One of the poorest countries in the world, Afghanistan remains highly under-developed, particularly in rural areas. Deplorable conditions are punctuated by inaccessibility to basic services, namely water, food, shelter, and power. These deficiencies profoundly constrain quality of life, translating to local desperation. Primal instincts dominate, with locals exploiting any options that fulfill their basic needs.

Tribes form the foundation of Afghan social-culture. Exceptionally complex, tribal dynamics are of profound consequence in Afghanistan, serving as a key component of the delicate state power structure. Inevitably, tribes clash over the pursuit of control, polarizing segments of Afghan society.[115] Deeply entrenched, this tribal friction serves as a core destabilizing agent in Afghanistan.

During the wake of the Soviet withdrawal, the Afghan civil war was fuelled by an expanding drug trade.[116] Opium production has increased exponentially since 2005, and currently represents the key driver of the Afghan economy.[117] The exceptional agricultural and economic yields, coupled with weak alternative livelihood programs, suggest this is a trend that is likely to continue.[118] Reflecting back over the last three years, a correlation exists between increasing opium production and an intensifying insurgency. The insurgent movement reaps the principal benefits, leveraging the illicit opium profits to fund recruitment, procurement and sustainment efforts.

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[115] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 3.

[116] Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2007), 29.

[117] Rashid, *Descent into Chaos…*, 194.

[118] *Ibid.*, 318.

Sub-Section 3 – Insurgency

According to NATO, an insurgency is "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict".[119] The current insurrection in Afghanistan exhibits the classic symptoms of an insurgency, paralyzing the state for over two decades.

The years following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 were marked by a bitter civil war. Amidst deteriorating conditions, a Taliban movement originated in southern Afghanistan, eventually claiming Kandahar City in 1994.[120] Consisting principally of militant Islamists, the Taliban had political aspirations to achieve radical state reform.[121] Fuelled by covert support from Pakistan, insurgent influence swelled, culminating with the capture of Kabul in September 1996.[122]

By the turn of the century, the insurgency had intensified with the blending of religious fundamentalist groups. Criminal activity, under the watchful eye of powerful warlords, had an aggregating effect. Although Taliban rule was uncontested in the south, it was embroiled in a fierce civil war with the Northern Alliance for supremacy throughout Afghanistan.

The 2001 United States led invasion in Afghanistan enjoyed immediate and decisive success, leveraging unconventional military operatives. By December 2001, the

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[119] NATO, *AAP-6 (2006) NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions* (Brussels: NATO, 2006), 2-I-4.

[120] Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 29.

[121] Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar…*, 29.

[122] Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia…*, 41.

Taliban forces were in disarray, fleeting south and east to sanctuaries in Pakistan and the FATA. Initial indicators were promising, and conditions had been primed for stability.

Success was short lived. The United States led invasion of Iraq in 2003 would fundamentally compromise the containment of the Taliban, as precious resources were diverted from Afghanistan to Iraq.[123] Insufficient political engagement, military force density, and funding gave rise to a resurgent Taliban. The insurgency flourished over the next few years, leveraging support from religious, tribal, and criminal actors. Today, the insurgency has unprecedented momentum.

The Taliban is a guerrilla enemy which presents an asymmetric threat, marginalizing the brute conventional and technological power of coalition forces. Beyond avoiding decisive engagement, they are opportunists who apply irregular tactics to exploit coalition vulnerabilities. Through a sophisticated and spirited Improvised Explosive Device (IED) campaign, insurgents inflict damage and constrain coalition mobility. Predictably, this triggers force protection enhancements, which creates further physical and separation from the Afghan people.

Intimidation is another effective instrument of Taliban influence. Insurgents compel civilian compliance through the threat of violence, purposefully targeting those who cooperate with indigenous and coalition actors. Brutal terrorist tactics, including explosions, kidnappings and torture, create widespread paranoia within local and international circles.[124] These prolific attacks can have paralyzing effects on civilian stabilization actors, recognizing that they have a lower threshold for violence.

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[123] Rashid, *Descent into Chaos…*, XLI.
[124] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 11.

The Taliban have impressive resilience, endurance, and regenerative capacity. They have forged durable trans-national and domestic lines of communication, providing continuous access to new recruits and equipment. More importantly, the insurgent modus operandi is constantly adapting, exploiting new means of creating imbalance.

Sub-Section 4 – Conclusion

The Afghanistan operating environment is characterized by regional insecurity, state instability, and an unrelenting insurgency. Amidst the chaos, the country is engaged in a bitter struggle for autonomy and peace, with its very identity at stake.

Without external assistance, the Afghan people will inevitably succumb to the destabilizing forces. Recognizing the domestic and global implications of a failed state, the international community has engaged in Afghanistan. Initially under a United States led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and more recently under a NATO mandate, international and indigenous partners have joined forces in a unified counter-insurgency effort to restore security and prosperity in Afghanistan.

SECTION 2 – COUNTER-INSURGENCY

Having explored the origins of the Afghan insurgency, this section addresses counter-insurgency doctrine, with specific emphasis on the concepts and strategies applied to quell state insurrections.

Sub-Section 1 – Concept

In confronting insurgent threats, state militaries have adapted conventional doctrine governing the use of force in major combat and peace support operations. By blending offensive, defensive and stability functions, counter-insurgency has emerged as an independent strategy along the continuum of operations.[125]

NATO defines counter-insurgency as "those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions to defeat insurgency."[126] This interpretation encapsulates the hybrid nature of the strategy, highlighting the role of power instruments within a collective approach. Under a unified methodology, military and civilian influence is applied concurrently to defeat the insurgency and resolve its root causes.[127]

Sub-Section 2 – Strategy

While conventional offensive and defensive military operations are vital to quelling insurgent violence, they represent a small component of the broader strategy. By contrast, the introduction of a stability focus is transformative, incorporating civil security and control, essential services, governance, economic and infrastructure development.[128]

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[125] Canada, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003: Counter-Insurgency Operations* ([Kingston]: [Canadian Defence Academy], 1998), 1-5.

[126] NATO, *AAP-6 (2006) NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions…*, 2-C-13.

[127] United States, *U.S. Government Counter-Insurgency Guide* ([Washington]: Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2009), 2.

[128] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency* (Fort Leavenworth: Combined Arms Center, 2006), 1-19.

The relative mix of offensive, defensive and stability operations is contingent on the state of the insurgency. Military operations will dominate initially, focused on finding, isolating, and disabling insurgent networks. As security conditions improve, stability operations will intensify under the guidance of public and private actors.

Although there is considerable variance in counter-insurgent objectives, most campaigns aim to eradicate insurgent threats, promote stability, and build capacity of the host nation institutions. The indigenous people represent the common thread, as they have potent influence in each objective sphere. Counter-insurgency strategies are consequently 'population-centric', given that durable stabilization requires the consent and active support of the people.

SECTION 3 – STABILIZATION

Armed with an understanding of insurgency and counter-insurgency doctrine, this section explores the role of stabilization in conflict intervention. Concepts are initially reviewed, defining stability operations and identifying core constituent tasks. Generic stabilization techniques are subsequently discussed, outlining strategies for intervention in permissive and non-permissive environments. This section culminates with an Afghan study, identifying stabilization architecture at provincial, district and village levels.

Sub-Section 1 – Concept

Definition

Over the last half century, Canada has engaged extensively in stability operations in both the domestic and international arenas. Although all dimensions of power have been mobilized for the cause, the Canadian Forces (CF) remains the dominant instrument.

Formerly in the pursuit of peacekeeping objectives, and more recently in the interest of

counter-insurgency goals, stabilization missions have emerged as the cornerstone of CF

operations. A RAND Publication entitled *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and*

Reconstruction Operations, offers the following interpretation of stabilization:

> Effort to end conflict and social, economic, and political upheaval... Stabilization
> is also an accepted component of counterinsurgency operations because efforts to
> gain local support, which are so central to counterinsurgency, generally require
> ending violence and upheaval.[129]

While motivations and circumstances vary considerably, stabilization is typically

fielded to compensate for weak or absent indigenous institutions in failed or failing states.

Operations are designed to restore a climate of order, prime reconstruction initiatives, and

optimize conditions for effective host nation governance.[130]

Stability operations can be initiated to pre-empt conflict in the midst of

intensifying hostilities. Alternatively, they can be launched to terminate violence or

promote recovery in post-conflict environments. Irrespective of the context, stabilization

initiatives are designed and implemented along a continuum, servicing needs in the short,

medium, and long terms.

Tasks

Stability operations were traditionally regarded as low-intensity engagements,

lacking the complexity of contemporary combat missions.[131] The counter-terrorist and

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[129] Nora Bensahel, Olga Oliker and Heather Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2009), 3.

[130] Canada, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003: Counter-Insurgency Operations…*, 1-5.
[131] Bensahel, Oliker and Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilization…*, 6.

counter-insurgency campaigns of the 21ˢᵗ century have provoked a paradigm shift, raising

the profile and importance of stability actions.

Stabilization is an inter-agency endeavour, recognizing that few of the constituent

tasks are pure military activities.[132] *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and*

Reconstruction Operations offers the following interpretation of stabilization tasks:

> Stabilization tasks, which are the highest priority, include such efforts as restoring
> law and order; providing humanitarian relief; supporting the disarmament,
> demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants; and building or
> rebuilding local security capacity.[133]

While the task set is loosely defined, the scope, volume, and tone of stabilization

initiatives transforms over time, adapting to the fluid operating environment.

Sub-Section 2 – Techniques

Stabilization operations are activated across the spectrum of conflict. The

following sub-section, which is attributed to Lara Romaniuc from CIDA, will explore

technical stabilization strategies for use in counter-insurgency operations.[134]

In a permissive or semi-permissive environment, stabilization practice follows a

proven conventional approach. The first step is to establish a point of entry, and then

subsequently mobilize an Implementing Partner (IP). Stabilization programming is

designed to stimulate the interface between the IP and the local people, thereby bolstering

confidence and awareness. The IP is then levered to provide access to the local people,

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[132] *Ibid*.

[133] *Ibid*., Summary X.

[134] Lara Romaniuc, (conversation, Kandahar, Afghanistan, September 17, 2008), with permission.

serving as a conduit for the flow of technical assistance and donor funds. As indigenous confidence and awareness grow, stabilization initiatives are progressively intensified.

An active insurgency inhibits the application of the conventional stabilization approach. Chiefly, insecurity severs the interface between the IP and the local people. Given the predominance of insurgency warfare over recent decades, viable mitigation strategies have been created for stabilization in non-permissive areas. The first option is to have intervening militaries fulfill the IP function. Assigning an interlocutor to serve as the IP promotes simplicity, accessibility, and agility as they have direct access to donor funds. Limited reach and capacity are the sole factors which impair this approach. Secondly, an NGO may be activated as the IP, drawing from the international or local community. Many NGOs refuse offers to directly partner with coalition force elements, as they want to preserve neutrality and objectivity. A third option exists to mobilize private entities as the IP. Private contractors and consultants frequently have integral security which facilitates program implementation, however they are often insistent on discrete fielding to preserve impartiality and minimize targeting.

Sub-Section 3 – Architecture

Within Afghanistan, stabilization is predominantly derived by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), and funnelled through established ministries to provincial and district institutions. Consequently, indigenous government has been re-structured at each level in order to optimize conditions for stabilization.

In 2005, the inaugural Provincial Development Councils (PDCs) were formed within each of the 34 provinces, charged with coordinating, prioritizing, and fielding

provincial stabilization. Convened under the authority of a provincial governor, the PDC is an administrative body which translates national priorities and resources into tangible action at the operational level.[135] In order to regulate their actions, PDCs develop Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) to guide stabilization activities.[136]

At the district level, District Development Assemblies (DDAs) were established in each of the 394 districts country-wide, providing a tactical interface for the PDC. Chaired by the district governor, the DDA is the local stabilization apparatus, aggregating injects from village shuras. While some districts have produced District Development Plans (DDPs), most have not, showcasing the fragility of sub-provincial governance.

In 2003, the National Solidarity Program (NSP) was created to stimulate development in neglected areas of rural Afghanistan.[137] Local governance structures, classified as Community Development Councils (CDCs), were elected in 20,000 of the 32,769 villages across Afghanistan.[138] Through extensive consultation, the CDCs nominate and prioritize rural stabilization projects in the form of Community Development Plans (CDPs).[139] In turn, the NSP provides block grants to elected CDCs for implementation of stated projects.

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[135] Hamish Nixon, *Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan* (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, 2008), 15.

[136] Hamish Nixon, *The Changing Face of Local Governance? Community Development Councils in Afghanistan* (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, 2008), 14.

[137] The World Bank, "Afghanistan: National Solidarity Program," http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21166 174~pagePK:146736~piPK:146830~theSitePK:223547,00.html; Internet; accessed 14 December 2009.

[138] The World Bank, "Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program: Overview and Challenges," http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21166 159~pagePK:146736~piPK:146830~theSitePK:223547,00.html; Internet; accessed 14 December 2009.

[139] Nixon, *Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan…,* 36.
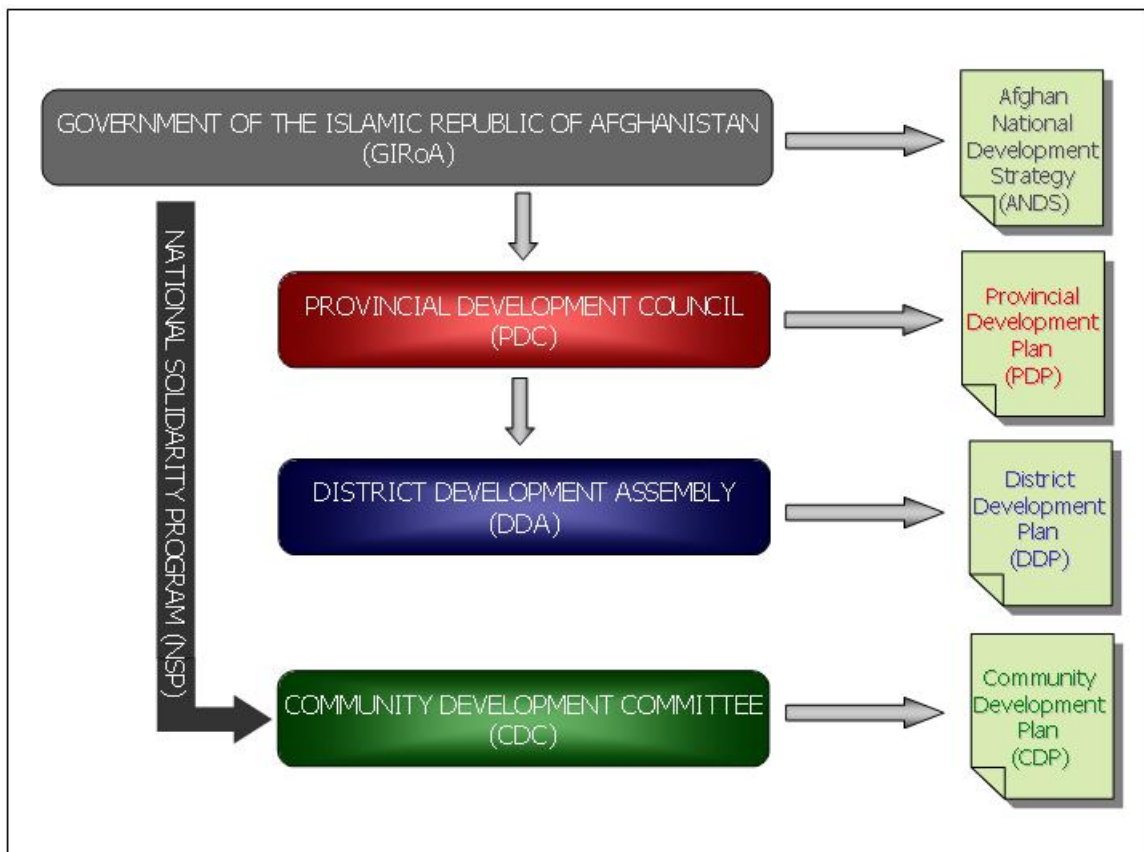
Figure 3 – Afghanistan Stabilization Architecture

By March 2008, only half of all approved CDC projects had been completed.[140]

A disturbing trend emerged, as CDCs became dormant due to declining security within

Kandahar province. In certain cases poor security immobilized motivated CDCs, while

in other areas, CDCs were unwilling to proceed with local stabilization initiatives until an

enduring peace could be achieved.

Beyond suffering from increasing violence, CDC functionality has been impaired

by poor awareness. According to public opinion, the majority of Afghans polled by

The Asia Foundation in Kandahar province from 2006 to 2009 were unaware of CDCs.[141]

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[140] *Ibid*.

[141] A non-profit NGO, *The Asia Foundation* has completed annual surveys in Afghanistan from 2006 to 2009, tracking indigenous perspectives by Regional Command (RC) and province. For the
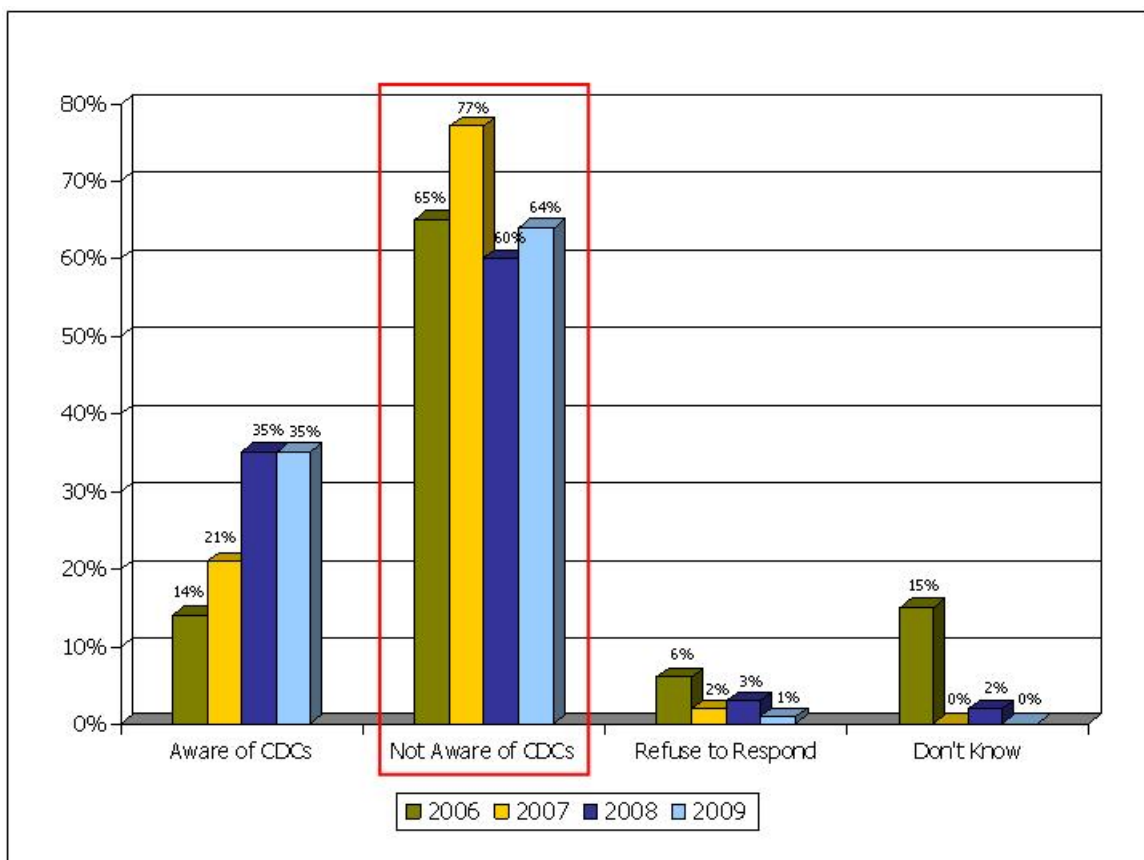
Figure 4 – Indigenous Awareness of Community Development Councils[141]

SECTION 4 – A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

Stabilization concepts are harnessed in this section to frame the ISAF intervention in Afghanistan. A review of GoC strategic policy follows, examining the role of the Afghanistan Task Force (ATF) and the components of the current Canadian contribution.

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purposes of this paper, analysis has been restricted to the Kandahar province data set, predicated on approximately 300 participants annually. Respondents were indicative of national demographics, incorporating representative proportions of men and women. Roughly 67% of participants from Kandahar province were rural villagers, while the remaining 33% resided in urban centres. All data provided by *The Asia Foundation* in this paper is subject to the following disclaimer:

> "The *Survey of the Afghan People* data sets are the exclusive property of *The Asia Foundation* and may not be reproduced or distributed without written consent from *The Asia Foundation*. The data sets are intended for use by policy makers, researchers, and other relevant interested parties and not for commercial gain or financial profit."

Sub-Section 1 – International Security Assistance Force

Presently, Canadian inter-agency partners serving in Afghanistan are engaged in a

NATO mission under the banner of ISAF. Sanctioned by the UN, the ISAF mandate is

portioned along five RCs.
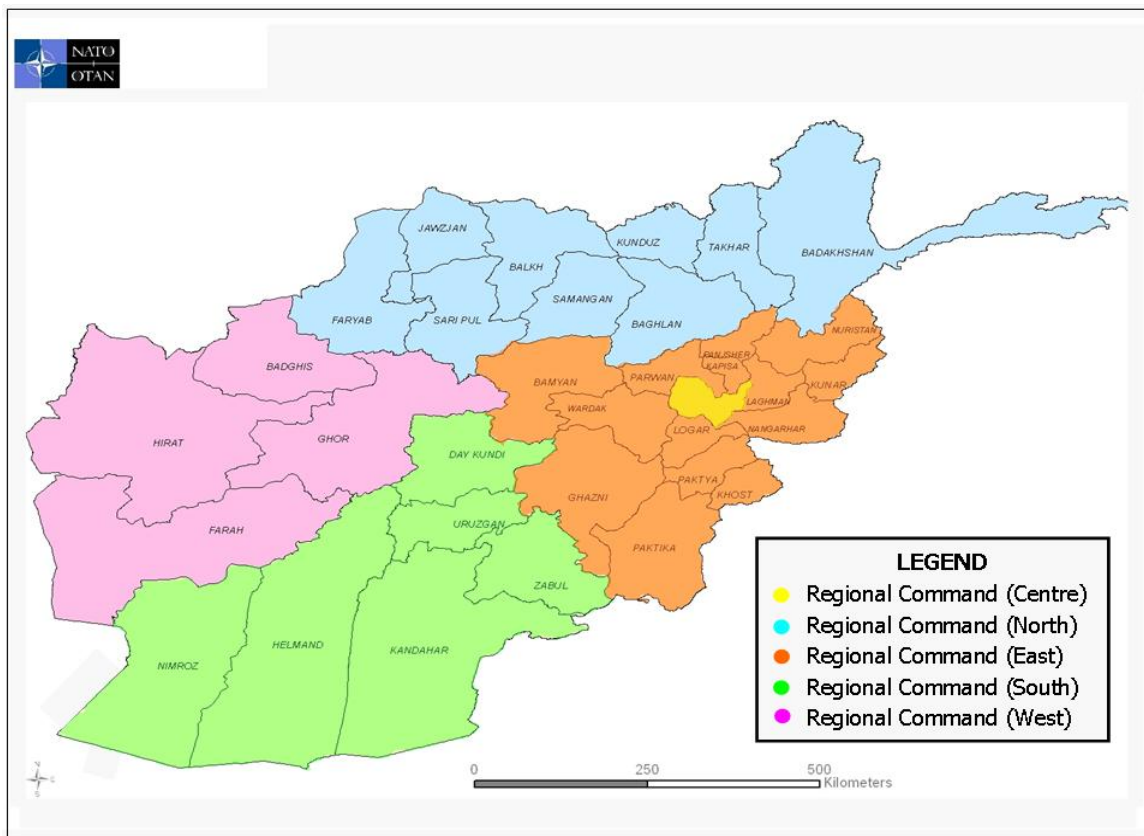
Figure 5 – Map of Regional Commands in Afghanistan[142]

Task Force Kandahar (TFK) is the Canadian commitment to ISAF. Assigned to

RC South, Canadian departments operate within Kandahar province.

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[142] Map sourced from *NATO*.
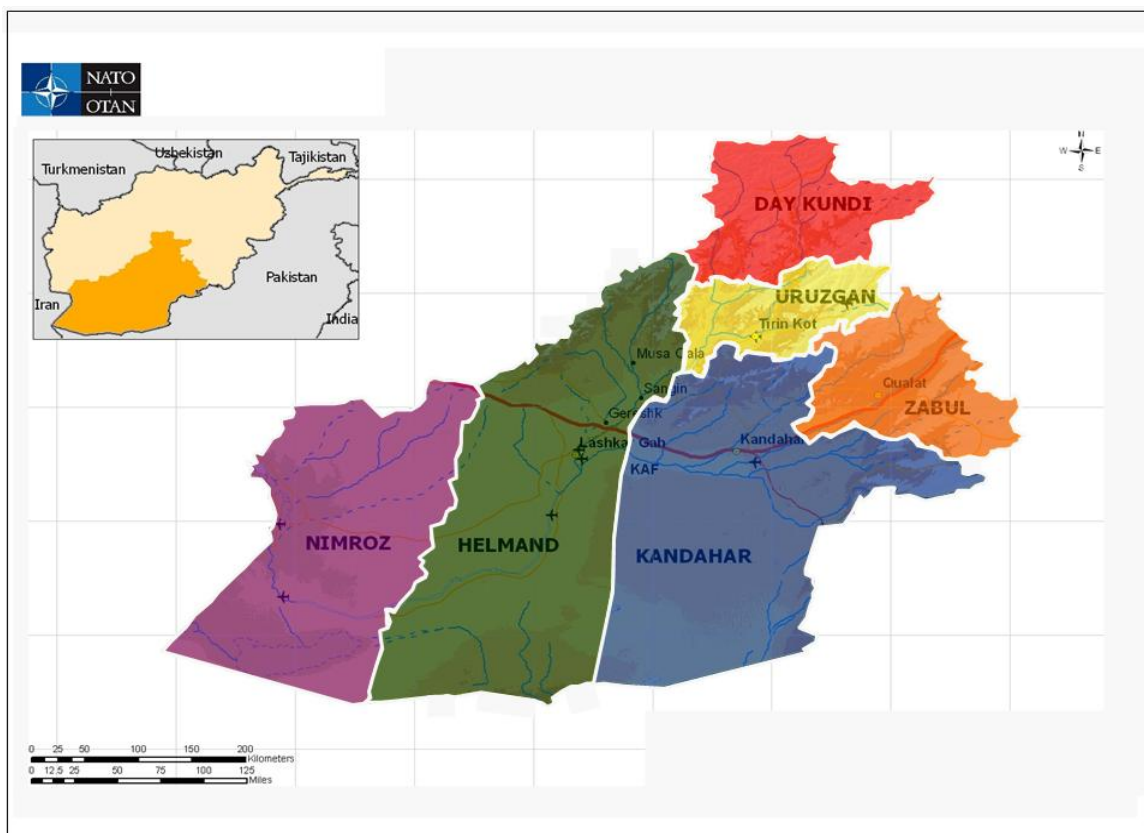
Figure 6 – Map of Regional Command (South)[143]

Sub-Section 2 – Government of Canada Policy on Afghanistan

In 2008, amidst growing public debate, the Prime Minister of Canada solicited an impartial audit on the Afghanistan campaign. A multi-partisan panel was assembled and charged with conducting an autonomous assessment of the Canadian inter-agency commitment in Afghanistan. The panel commissioned the *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* in 2008, also known as the *Manley Report*.[144]

In response to the panel's recommendations, the GoC made several organizational changes to optimize campaign management. A Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan was

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[143] Map sourced from *NATO*.

[144] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*.

created, and assigned the mandate of considering security, governance and development issues.[145]   An ATF was also established within the Privy Council Office (PCO), tasked with centrally coordinating the inter-departmental activities within the Afghanistan portfolio.[146] Structural changes were also implemented in theatre. In 2008, the Canadian Ambassador in Kabul was supplemented by a regional diplomat assigned to the post of the Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK). The senior Canadian interlocutor, the RoCK directs civilian governance and development activities. Additionally, the RoCK works in partnership with the military commander of TFK to implement a cohesive and integrated counter-insurgency strategy.[147]

Following the release of the independent panel report, the Canadian priorities for Afghanistan were also revised to improve coherency and reflect the objectives of the GIRoA. Currently, the GoC is pursuing simultaneous engagement at the national and provincial level commensurate with the following priorities: security, basic services, humanitarian aid, border, national institutions, and reconciliation.[148]

Sub-Section 3 – The Canadian Contribution

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[145] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/approach-approche/ccoa-ccsa.aspx?menu_id=72&menu=L; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[146] *Ibid*.

[147] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Representative of Canada in Kandahar," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/kandahar/represent.aspx?menu_id=40&menu=L; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[148] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Canada's Priorities," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/priorities-priorites/index.aspx?menu_id=15&menu=L; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

Centrally staged from the Kandahar Air Field (KAF), TFK consists of approximately 2,830 soldiers grouped in four manoeuvre elements: a combat-oriented BG; an OMLT; a stabilization-focused PRT, including personnel from the DFAIT, the CIDA, the RCMP, the DND, and Corrections Services Canada (CSC); and a tactical aviation unit.[149]

Figure 7 – The Canadian Contribution to ISAF

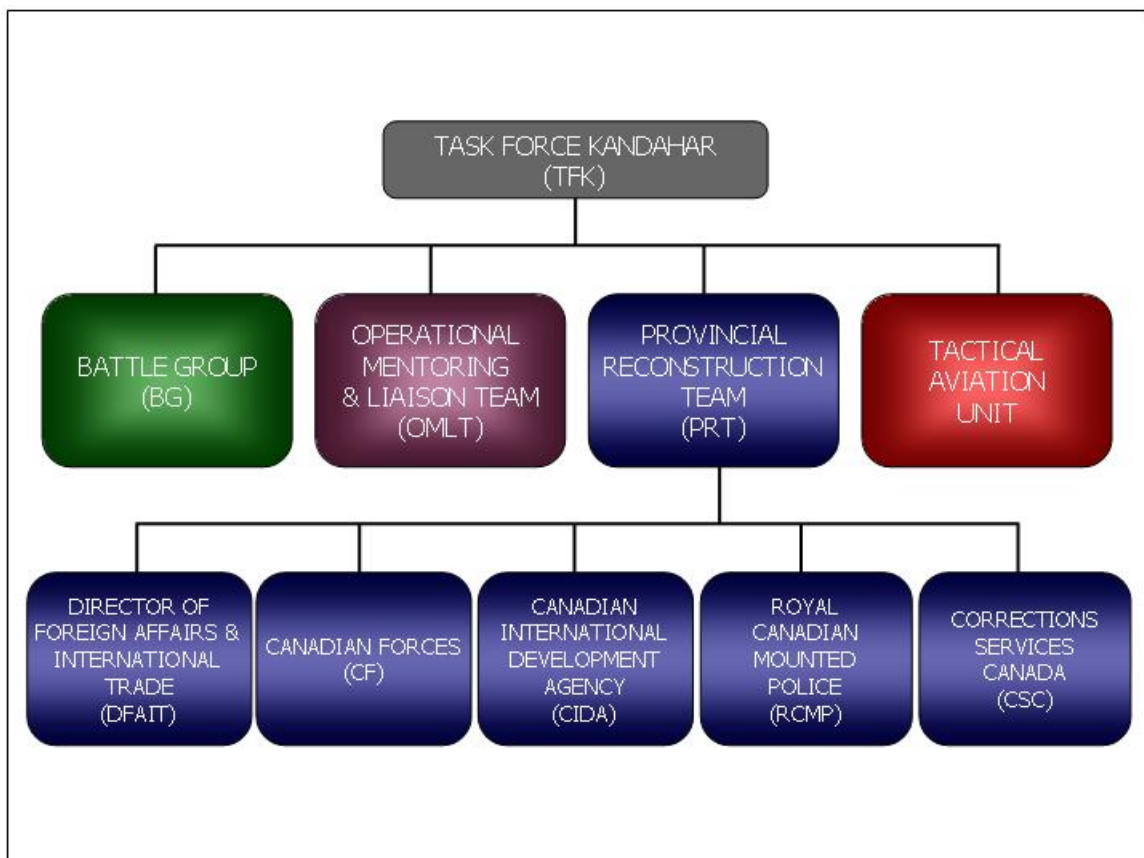**SECTION 5 – OPERATIONAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY STRATEGY**

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[149] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Canadian Forces Operations," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/approach-approche/cfo-ofc.aspx?menu_id=66&menu=L; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

The strategic landscape provides a context for an inclusive review of operational counter-insurgency strategy. Campaign design is initially examined, followed by an independent review of each LOO. Operational analysis concludes this section, exploring the role of power instruments in stabilization interventions.

Sub-Section 1 – Operational Campaign Design

The operational strategy in Afghanistan is derived by nesting the GoC priorities within the NATO strategy for ISAF. GoC objectives have been aggregated in three complementary pillars: security, governance, and reconstruction and development. Each pillar constitutes a LOO, incorporating targeted objectives at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. A separate assessment of each operational LOO will follow, culminating with a collective assessment of the operational architecture.

Sub-Section 2 – Security LOO

From a security perspective, ISAF is a multi-national military effort, with over 71,000 troops currently deployed from over 43 contributing nations.[150] This international military coalition is working in close cooperation with the Afghan National Army (ANA), which has over 93,000 soldiers fielded throughout the country.[151]

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[150] NATO, "International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army Strength & Laydown," http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.pdf; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[151] *Ibid*.

Under a

Security forces have a host of broad operational objectives: secure the population, separate the insurgent from the population, counter crime, and secure borders.[153] Security and stability operations are launched to deny insurgent freedom of movement and interdict lines of communication, thereby inhibiting the movement of fighters, weapons, IEDs, drugs, casualties, and supplies. The cumulative effect is to isolate the insurgency, both physically and morally.

ISAF military forces simultaneously pursue ANA capacity development as an independent operational objective. Mentorship has been a core component of the security strategy, led by OMLTs. As of October 2009, 90 percent of operations were partnered and over 60 percent were lead by the ANA.[154]

Sub-Section 3 – Governance LOO

The governance LOO is pursued by DFAIT in partnership with the GIRoA. Diplomats focus on a series of operational objectives: design and implement governance structures, identify and recruit political leaders, conceive and enact policy, optimize public administration, establish and enforce the rule of law, re-establish judicial system

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[152] NATO, "NATO's Role in Afghanistan," http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_8189htm#mandate; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[153] Canada, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003: Counter-Insurgency Operations…*, 5-5.

[154] NATO, *International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army Strength & Laydown*.

including legal courts and prisons, and support secure elections.[155] Borders and reconciliation represent two additional objectives of particular significance, given their direct correlation on insurgent recruitment. Counter-narcotics rounds out the governance issues, although standing policy enacted by the GoC precludes intervention in this critically sensitive area.

The RCMP is also an integral component of the governance LOO. The Canadian civilian police contingent numbered 35 in spring 2009, with a plan for further expansion. The lead agency for all law enforcement initiatives, RCMP objectives include monitoring, advising, mentoring, and training the Afghan National Police (ANP).[156] The RCMP acts predominantly at the provincial level with a focus on Kandahar City. Concurrently, the RCMP is supported by hybrid Police Operational Mentorship and Liaison Teams (POMLTs) at the tactical level, consisting of CF soldiers and military police (MPs).

Sub-Section 4 – Reconstruction and Development LOO

In executing the Reconstruction and Development LOO, CIDA engages in both social and economic spheres, focused broadly on basic needs, capacity building, and infrastructure support.[157]

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[155] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-5.

[156] RCMP, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Canadian Civilian Policing Efforts in Afghanistan," http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/po-mp/afghanistan-eng.htm; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[157] CIDA, *Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team* (Arlington: [CIDA], 2008).

In the social category, CIDA pursues a broad set of operational objectives in the following areas: water, food, non-food items, education, health, electricity, transportation, and sanitation.[158] Simultaneously, CIDA also focuses on mobilizing the economy, with particular emphasis on the following objectives: create jobs, stimulate local business, support a free market economy, and facilitate trans-national trade.[159]

Beyond social and economic interventions, CIDA is investing in road, irrigation, and agriculture infrastructure.[160] Each of the operational objectives will be implemented to optimize the creation of jobs for Afghans, drawing contractors, labour and employees from the local region. CIDA is currently fielding three signature projects: Dahla Dam and tributary irrigation systems to promote power accessibility in southern Afghanistan, education programs to repair, build, staff, and supply schools; and a comprehensive polio eradication campaign.[161]

Sub-Section 5 – Operational Analysis

Recent sub-sections have outlined the operational campaign plan, and constituent LOOs, governing GoC engagement in Afghanistan. This sub-section will conduct some preliminary analysis, introducing isolation and strike functions at the operational level.

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[158] CIDA, *Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team*.

[159] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-5.

[160] CIDA, *Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team*.

[161] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Signature and Development Projects," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/projects-projets/index.aspx?menu_id=64&menu=L; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

In conventional combat, there are two dynamic forces which are applied to concurrently or sequentially destroy the enemy's will to fight.[162] Fixing and striking are the two central actions, which can be initiated on either the physical or moral planes. In conventional terms, to fix implies removing freedom of movement or creating paralysis.[163] Similarly, the conventional strike may feature the application of firepower and manoeuvre or an attack on the enemy's morale and decision-making.[164]

In irregular warfare, the two dominant actions are isolating and striking, which remain valid on both the physical and moral planes. According to the Canadian *Staff Duties for Land Operations* publication, to isolate implies "to seal off, both physically and psychologically, an enemy force from its sources of power".[165] The strike, in an irregular context, takes the form of enduring stabilization in the areas of governance, reconstruction and development.

Failure to adequately link the isolation and strike functions has damaging effects. Fielded autonomously, neither is decisive, yielding only transient results. In his work *Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counter-Insurgency*, strategist David Kilcullen provided the following comments on the complex inter-dependency:

> Almost everything in counter-insurgency is inter-agency… Most importantly, know that your [security] operations will create temporary breathing space, but long-term development and stabilization by civilian agencies ultimately win the war.[166]

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[162] Canada, *B-GL-300-000/FP-000: Canada's Army: We Stand on Guard for Thee* ([Kingston]: [Canadian Defence Academy], 1998), 100.

[163] Canada, *B-GL-300-000/FP-000: Canada's Army: We Stand on Guard for Thee…*, 100.

[164] *Ibid*.

[165] Canada, *B-GL-331-002/FP-001: Staff Duties for Land Operations* (Kingston: [Canadian Defence Academy], 2008), 6C-14.

[166] David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles," *Marine Corps Gazette* 91, no. 10 (October, 2007): 54-55.

The risks are high, and there are many pitfalls. Beyond immediate tactical outcomes, pure military actions may have the unintended operational effect of conjuring local expectations, which if unsatisfied, may disenfranchise the local population.

Sequencing of departmental actions is vital, necessitating the activation of supported and supporting relationships. Military forces are the lead agency for the isolation task, while civilian partners deliver the operational strike. This was summarized by the United States Government in the *U.S. Government Counter-Insurgency Guide*:

> In counter-insurgency, military forces are, in a sense, an enabling system for civil administration; their role is to afford sufficient protection and stability to allow the government to work safely with the population, for economic revival, political reconciliation and external non-government assistance to be effective.[167]

While there is no mathematical formula governing the roles of counter-insurgent actors, David Galula asserts in *Counter-Insurgency Warfare* that "A revolutionary war is 20 percent military action and 80 percent political."[168] Although this metric is subjective, it highlights that the political instrument has primacy in counter-insurgency.[169]

SECTION 6 – TACTICAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY STRATEGY

This chapter examines tactical counter-insurgency strategy within the ISAF operational construct. Contemporary doctrine is addressed, exploring the intricacies of the 'Clear-Hold-Build' approach. Tactical analysis follows, proposing discrete changes to optimize tactical stabilization strategy.

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[167] United States, *U.S. Government Counter-Insurgency Guide…*, 15.

[168] Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice…*, 89.

[169] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 1-22.

Sub-Section 1 – Doctrine

Tactical actions are vital to success in counter-insurgency interventions. It is at this level where interaction with the indigenous people occurs; where the campaign is won or lost. The genesis for modern counter-insurgency doctrine can be traced back to Sir Robert Thompson. In 1966, in his book *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, he described the philosophy for his 'Clear and Hold' model:

> For 'clear' operations… the first essential is to saturate it with joint military and police forces… 'clear' operations will, however, be a waste of time unless the government is ready to follow them up immediately with 'hold' operations… The objects of a 'hold' operation are to restore government authority in the area and to establish a firm security framework… This 'hold' period of operations inevitably takes a considerable time and requires a methodical approach and a great attention to detail. It never really ends and overlaps into the following stage of 'winning' the population over to the positive support of the government. "Winning the population', can tritely be summed up as good government in all its aspects."[170]

The *United States Counter-Insurgency* manual endorses the 'Clear-Hold-Build' approach as the premier tactical tool. The concept hinges on executing the tactical actions in succession within a targeted city or village. Once conditions are favourable, the area is progressively expanded, and the model is iteratively re-applied.[171]

According to the Canadian *Staff Duties for Land Operations* publication, to 'Clear' is a tactical task to "remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area".[172] Launched by military forces in the form of offensive action, this stage features the capture, destruction or withdrawal of insurgents.[173] Should an area

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[170] Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966), 111-112.

[171] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-18.

[172] Canada, *B-GL-331-002/FP-001: Staff Duties for Land* Operations…, 6C-4.

[173] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-19.

be void of combatants, the area may be taken without decisive engagement. Beyond physically expunging insurgent fighters, there is a requirement to 'Clear' the insurgent network architecture, infrastructure, and line of communication.[174] Although these activities may take a kinetic form, they must be conducted meticulously to minimize the impact on the local population.[175] The 'Clear' task culminates with the commencement of stability operations, including active patrolling and surveillance, to exert dominance in the area.[176] Throughout this stage, civilian stabilization actors are conceiving, designing and resourcing stabilization initiatives. Public and private donors are identified, preparing 'turn-key' stabilization that can be activated on order.

The 'Hold' is an extension of the 'Clear', exerting permanent and continuous influence over the area. This task features the continued disruption and elimination of the insurgent network, shielding key indigenous infrastructure.[177] Residual kinetic 'Clear' operations may be required, but they should be constrained to the periphery of the area to minimize local impact. Although the 'Hold' seeks to intensify the 'Clear', the primary focus of the 'Hold' is to secure the local population through non-kinetic activities.[178] Living within the population, civilian and military actors develop relationships with the locals based upon trust and mutual respect. Information operations are a vital tool in this

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[174] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-19.

[175] *Ibid.*

[176] *Ibid.*

[177] *Ibid.*

[178] *Ibid.*

endeavour.[179] The 'Hold' provides a measure of stability, facilitating preliminary interventions by stabilization actors. Focus at this stage is on fielding vital services, conducting a confirmatory needs assessment and soliciting development priorities from local leaders.[180]

The 'Clear' and the 'Hold' are inextricably linked. There is a danger in executing 'Clear' operations when there is insufficient will or resources to 'Hold', as any success will be transitory. Insurgent response to independent 'Clear' operations is analogous to placing a finger in a glass of water; the water displaces when it is there, but floods back after it is removed. The *United States Counter-Insurgency* manual highlights this pitfall:

> When patrolling in or occupying an area, 'clear' only what the unit intends to 'hold'. Otherwise, the effort will be wasted as the insurgents reoccupy the area. An exception to this policy is when commanders deem disruption of enemy strongholds necessary.[181]

The third stage is the 'Build'. The first requirement is to satisfy 'Hold' imperatives, ensuring that the population is free from insurgent intimidation, coercion, and retaliation.[182] Security patrols are intensified to saturate the area, particularly in zones for targeted reconstruction and development. Military forces establish a 'security bubble' around project sites, empowering intervention by stabilization actors. 'Build' effects are fielded by civilian partners commensurate with operational objectives in the areas of governance, basic services, and economy. Fostering indigenous capacity is an

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[179] United States, *FM 3-24: Counter-Insurgency…*, 5-20.

[180] *Ibid*.

[181] *Ibid*., 5-12.

[182] *Ibid*., 5-20.

enduring tenet of the 'Build' stage, with particular emphasis on stimulating local government and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Sub-Section 2 – Tactical Analysis

The 'Clear-Hold-Build' strategy endorsed by the United States Army and Marine Corps is a sound apparatus. It adheres to proven historical principles while adapting to contemporary challenges. However, as with any theoretical tool, there are areas for interpretation and optimization. In a journal article entitled *Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer*, military officers Julian Alford and Scott Cuomo provide analysis on the operational design framework. Accordingly, the following section will expose issues with the current doctrinal model and suggest areas for improvement.

The 'Clear-Hold-Build' strategy includes implicit prerequisites, including the extensive process to select the targeted zone. In their article, Alford and Cuomo contest that the initial step should actually be 'Understand'.[183] This step features 'Identify' and 'Define' actions, designed to expose the complex human and environmental dynamics within the particular area.[184] History, culture, traditions, languages, tribal, and religious dimensions must be the focus of specific study.[185] Mapping exercises will expose critical trends and facilitate the selection of the initial city or village, including areas for potential expansion.

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[183] J. Alford and S. Cuomo, "Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer," *Joint Force Quarterly* 53 (Second Quarter, 2009): 94.

[184] *Ibid.*

[185] *Ibid.*

Alford and Cuomo propose the subsequent step should be 'Shape'.[186] This stage features preparatory actions to prime for the 'Clear' stage. Information operations enablers are the focal shaping tools, with particular emphasis on psychological operatives. The intent for the 'Shape' stage is to shape attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions, promoting compliance or reconciliation.[187]

Although a doctrinal nuance, the 'Clear' should be replaced with a 'Secure' function.[188] 'Clear' implies the removal of insurgent forces, while 'Secure' focuses on the seizure of terrain.[189] Tone is everything in counter-insurgency, and it is important to condition soldiers that use of force is situation-based, and that less is better.

The doctrinal model features a 'Hold' to sustain dominance over the area and prime stabilization effects. 'Control' is a more appropriate descriptor: a tactical task to maintain physical and psychological influence over the people, terrain and information within a specified area, thereby marginalizing insurgent visibility, utility and credibility. Additionally, 'Control' has a more suitable connotation than 'Hold', implying the maintenance of the initiative.

Based on the analysis, there is compelling evidence that the 'Clear-Hold-Build' strategy could be improved through a series of discrete changes. An alternative strategy of 'Understand-Shape-Secure-Control-Build-Mentor-Transition' is proposed to explicitly capture doctrinal nuances.

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[186] Alford and Cuomo, "Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer…," 94.

[187] *Ibid.*

[188] *Ibid.*

[189] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 3 – A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH MODEL FOR STABILIZATION

Preliminary chapters investigated the origins of CA, and its influence on Afghan counter-insurgency strategy at the operational and tactical levels. This component of the paper derives theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models, providing an evaluation tool to assess Canadian CA effectiveness in the final chapter.

SECTION 1 – THEORETICAL MODEL

This section examines the foundational tenets for the theoretical CA model, discriminating between internal process and external effects.

Sub-Section 1 – Overview
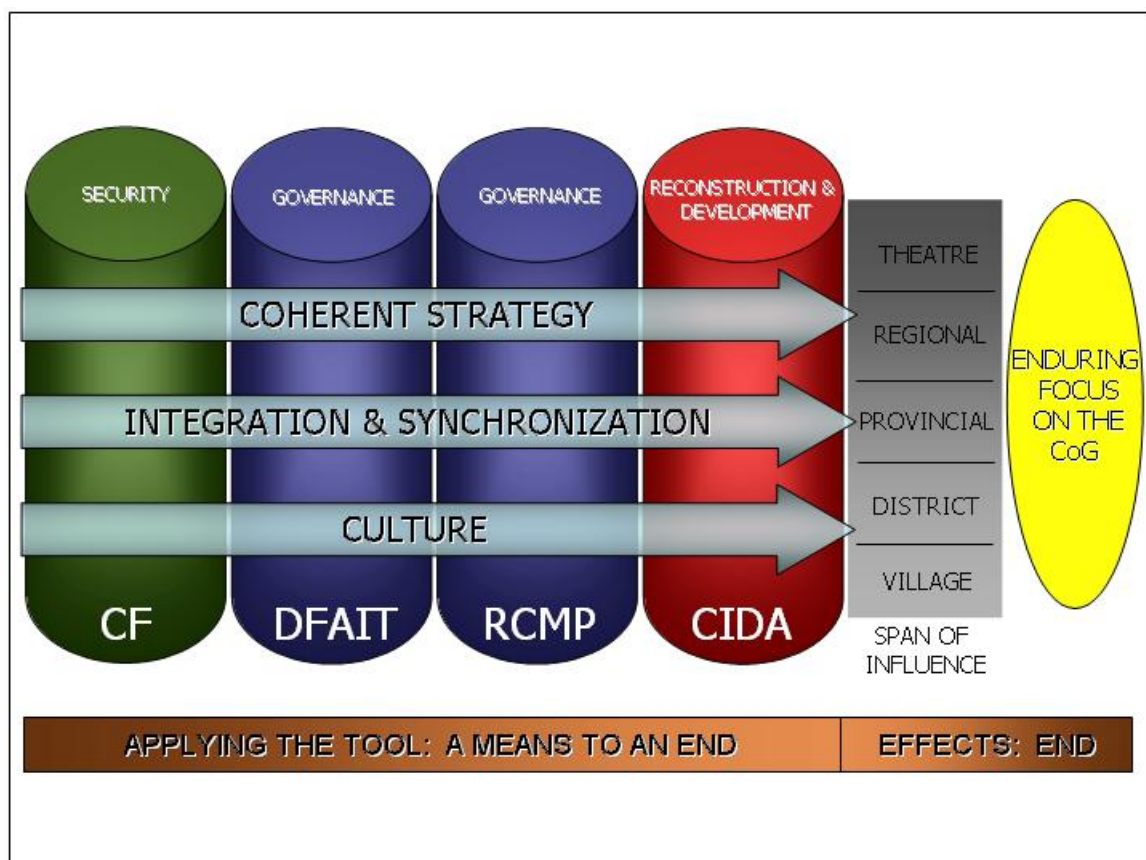
Figure 8 – The Theoretical Model

Sub-Section 2 – Theoretical Tenets

The following sub-section will summarize the characteristics of a successful expeditionary CA apparatus, serving as a theoretical model for assessing the Canadian strategy in Afghanistan.

Applying the Tool

When harnessing analytical and decision-making tools, there is a compelling temptation to become fixated on a reflexive process, losing sight of the intended goal. This is a very dangerous proposition, as the flawless application of a tool does not in itself guarantee success.

Expeditionary instruments are prone to dislocation when translating theoretical strategies into practical action. There is broad agreement across GoC departments that the desired effect is unquestionably more important than the procedural apparatus. However in practice, emphasis is commonly placed on the mechanical process at the expense of the stated goal. A Finnish seminar publication entitled *Comprehensive Approach* effectively summarized the intended purpose of the tool:

> The Comprehensive Approach is not an end in itself but a means to an end. The aim is not to build new structures and hierarchies, but to achieve better outcomes and to resolve a crisis in a sustainable way.[190]

Although the CA has tremendous potential as a stabilization tool in counter-insurgency, there is no direct correlation between the use of the CA and the probability of success.

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[190] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 9.

Coherent Strategy

Irrespective of the degree of partner integration, success in a counter-insurgency campaign is contingent on a unified strategy which enjoys the endorsement of all participating actors. There must be consensus on the shared vision, objectives and goals, reconciling divergent departmental action in the short, medium, and long terms.

Harmonizing inter-agency approaches necessitates subordinating departmental strategies to the collective one. It may also imply relaxing standards of vertical accountability to parent 'silo' institutions, making key concessions at the political and strategic levels.

Ambiguous or conflicting expectations can have fatal consequences. Accordingly, there is a requirement for partners to reach agreement on the relative role of each power instrument, articulating supported and supporting relationships. The strategy should overtly prescribe horizontal accountability protocols, regulating individual and collective action.

Incongruent departmental time horizons can impair tangible progress. Responsiveness and operating rhythm must be reconciled so that organizations plan and act along uniform timelines.

Integration and Synchronization

In a stable environment, there is no pressing requirement to integrate and synchronize security, governance, and development initiatives. Actors can operate with autonomy, prosecuting departmental objectives within respective 'silos'.

Stabilization in an insurgency is a complex endeavour. Interaction of security, governance and development actors is defined by a complex inter-dependency, as no single partner can operate in isolation. Inter-agency effects need to be collaboratively planned and carefully synchronized, achieving priming prerequisites.

The *Comprehensive Approach* publication provided the following analysis on the relationship between actors in counter-insurgency:

> … the goals of military and civilian organizations are co-dependent: without security, development cannot happen, and without development, lasting security cannot be sustained.[191]

A key consideration is to recognize the implicit requirement for coordination between the various power instruments. Consequently, an explicit synchronization mechanism must be derived and implemented in order to achieve cross-cutting synergy.

Culture

Departments have distinct cultures, founded on unique organizational values and beliefs. Creation of an inter-agency culture is neither practical nor achievable. Conversely, participating actors must bridge cultural divides, adopting new lexicon and protocols to promote inter-operability and foster trust.

Span of Influence

Stabilization in counter-insurgency demands simultaneous engagement at all levels: theatre, regional, provincial, district, and village. As such, the selected tool requires sufficient reach to stimulate each of these targeted levels.

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[191] Comprehensive Approach Research Team, *Seminar Publication…*, 11-12.

At each level, there must be sufficient indigenous and coalition capacity to concurrently address security, governance, and development initiatives. In practical terms, actor density by LOO should be sufficient to address issues to positive resolution.

Beyond these conventional resources, the stabilization team needs access to local expertise and skills to facilitate reconstruction and development projects. While indigenous faculties may be absent or limited, partnerships should be formed at the earliest opportunity. In such cases, mentorship programs can be invaluable, stimulating host nation capacity development.

Enduring Focus on the CoG

In a 2009 journal article entitled *Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer*, military officers Julian Alford and Scott Cuomo confirm the vital importance of the Afghan people: "They are the centre of gravity in this campaign; thus, the prize on the Afghanistan battlefield is the mind of the population."[192]

When designing cross-cutting objectives and goals, each activity should patently protect or improve conditions for the indigenous people, consistent with a 'population centric' strategy. Ideally, effects are fielded sequentially based on an accepted hierarchal structure, satisfying basic needs before less vital ones are addressed. Equally important, initiatives must adhere to the following core stabilization characteristics: progressive, timely, tangible, durable, and sustainable.

Beyond focusing on the local population, the tool should promote indigenous accessibility to services. Failure to adequately integrate fielding mechanisms results in

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[192] Alford and Cuomo, "Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer…," 93.

the fragmented delivery of services, imposing unnecessary inconvenience and inefficiencies.

SECTION 2 – DOCTRINAL IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

Building on the theoretical assessment architecture, this section outlines a complementary doctrinal implementation model which translates CA theory into practice. The 'Understand-Shape-Secure-Control-Build-Enable-Transition' strategy is packaged into four progressive steps: orientation, targeting, security, and stabilization.
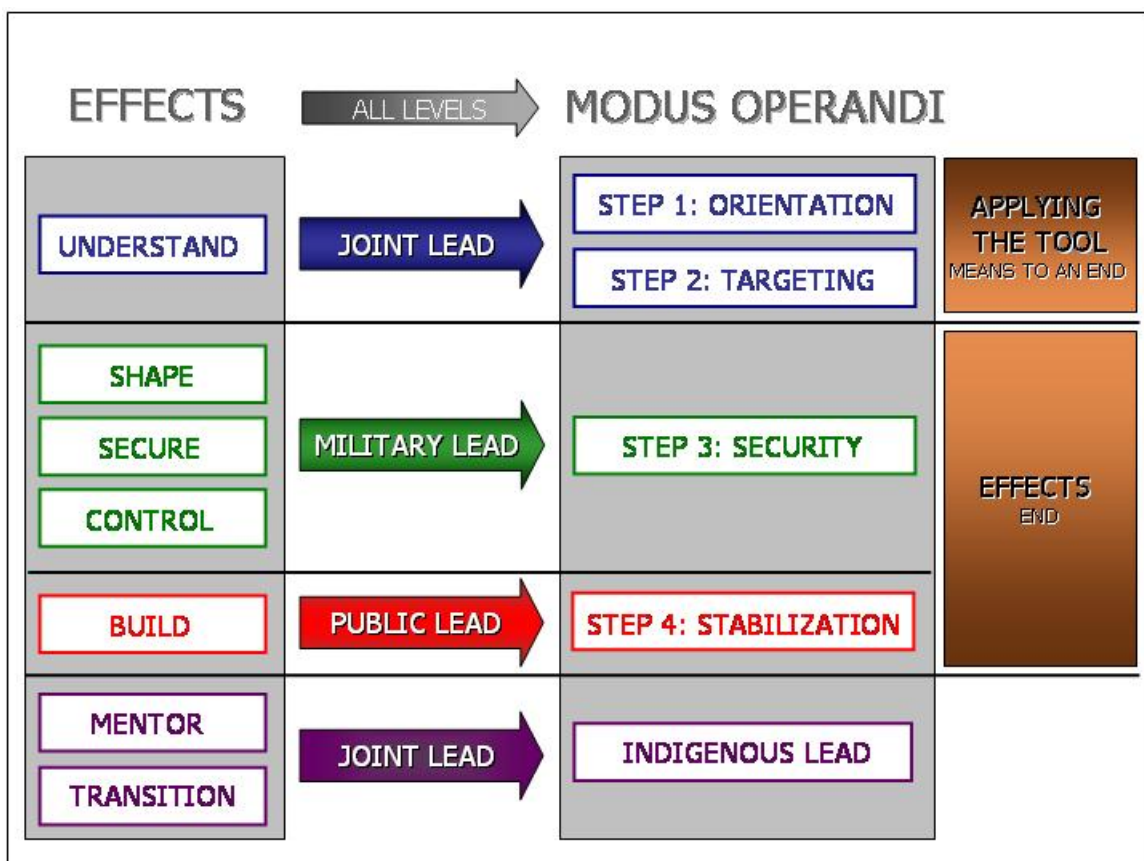
Sub-Section 1 – Overview

Figure 9 – The Doctrinal Implementation Model

The following sub-section will examine the doctrinal implementation model, which has application at the provincial, district, and village levels. It is important to recognize shifting departmental responsibilities for the respective implementation steps. It is also prudent to note that the first two steps constitute internal process, while the last two steps feature the projection of external effects.

Step 1 – Orientation

The initial step is to conduct a comprehensive orientation to 'Understand' the operating environment. Orientation is an inter-agency endeavour requiring active integration of all instruments of power. Effort should be applied to incorporate indigenous political and ANSF actors in order to capitalize on their intimate knowledge and profound insight of the area. While any analytical tool can be applied, the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) may serve as a viable instrument to provide a degree of procedural structure.

Without a genuine appreciation of the local dynamics, intervention is prone to dislocation or failure. In *Twenty-Eight Articles*, counter-insurgency expert David Kilcullen captures the requirement for orientation:

> Know your turf. Know the people, the topography, economy, history, religion and culture. Know every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader and ancient grievance. Your task is to become the world expert on your district.[193]

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[193] Kilcullen, *Twenty-Eight Articles…*, 54.
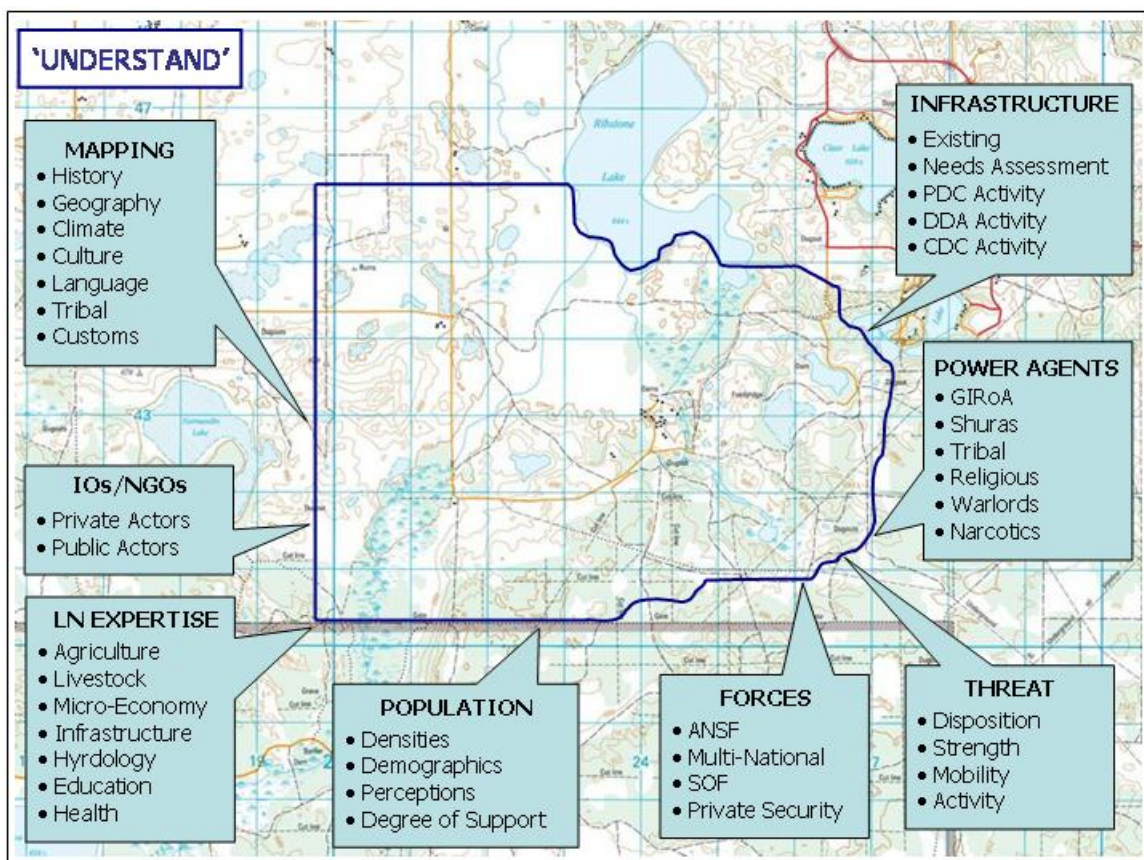
Figure 10 – The Doctrinal Implementation Model Step 1: Orientation

Step 2 – Targeting

The second step is to initiate a collaborative targeting cycle to 'Understand' the

fielding of effects. Applying the unified analysis from step one, the inter-agency team

can deduce complex linkages, agents of insecurity, and areas ripe for stabilization.

By design, targeting is effects driven. Consequently, targeting should originate

with a study of how and where to deliver timely, tangible, and durable stabilization

effects. At this juncture, detailed integration with IPs must be conducted, finalizing an

actionable plan with IOs and NGOs for delivering sustainable progress in the areas of

basic services, education, health, and infrastructure. Coordination with the PDC, DDA

and the CDCs is imperative, aligning projects commensurate with indigenous priorities.

Local engagement achieves a concomitant benefit of stimulating ownership, an essential

element in immunizing projects from neglect or focused insurgent targeting.

Once stabilization targets are finalized and tentatively resourced, security

operations can be designed. Target sets may be aggregated into Targeted Areas of

Interest (TAIs) or Stability Boxes, thereby establishing boundaries for the collaborative

intervention. In the case of multiple target sets, sequencing should be predicated on the

results of the comprehensive orientation. Targets should be programmed in the short,

medium, and long terms, deliberately avoiding discernible gaps that jeopardize

momentum.
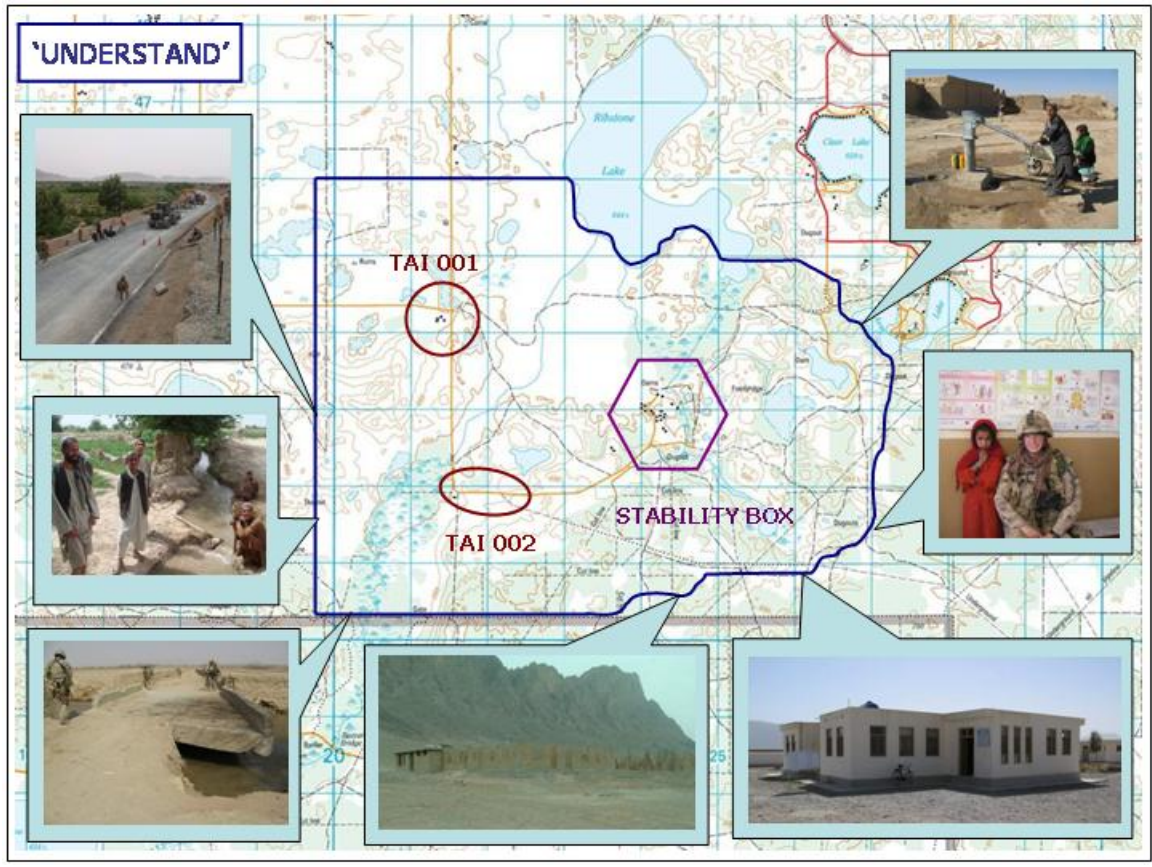
Figure 11 – The Doctrinal Implementation Model Step 2: Targeting

Step 3 – Security

In the spirit of synchronization, security operations are not launched until all inter-agency stabilization actors are adequately staged, thereby facilitating a seamless transition from 'Shape-Secure-Control' to 'Build' initiatives.

Once the trigger has been satisfied, graduated military operations are launched. Shaping operations initially prime the area, exploiting the power of manoeuvre and information operations. Operations are subsequently intensified, culminating with actions to 'Secure' the area. Beyond dominating the physical terrain, efforts are applied to securing the population on the moral plan through a 'population-centric' approach.
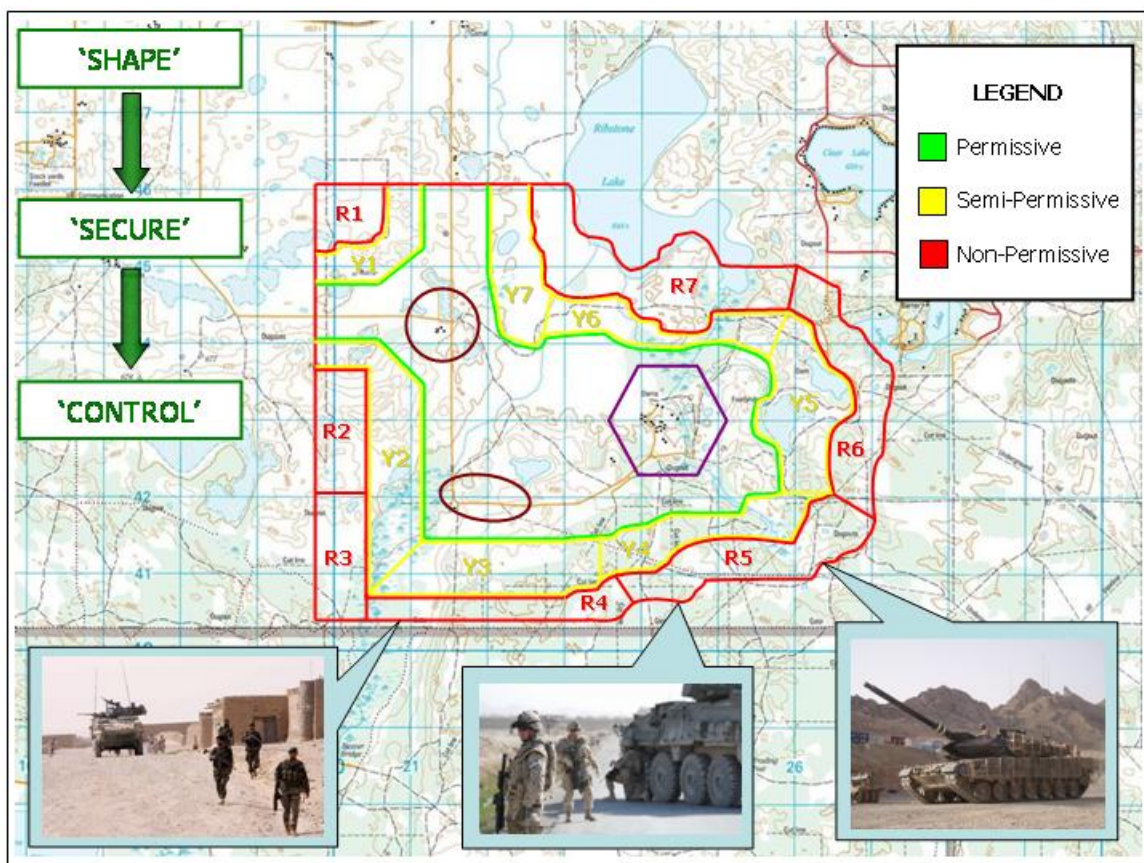
Figure 12 – The Doctrinal Implementation Model Step 3: Security

Once a degree of security has been achieved, gains are deepened through progressive military intervention. 'Control' operations are initiated to maintain physical and psychological influence over the people, terrain and information within the specified area, thereby marginalizing insurgent visibility, utility, and credibility.

In the interest of clarity, control measures may be adopted to characterize sectors as permissive, semi-permissive, and non-permissive. Although subject to change over time, security force packages and stabilization efforts can be tailored according to a universal understanding of the security threat.

While standing and acute operations are conducted throughout all sectors, the permissive zone is shielded against physical or psychological insurgent influence, optimizing conditions for stabilization by IPs.

Step 4 – Field Tiered Stabilization

Stabilization effects should be launched as soon as the area is controlled, mobilizing local support and denying insurgent opportunities. Severed implementation of 'Build' effects fixes indigenous and coalition security forces and strains the fragile confidence of locals. Given the requirement to simultaneously initiate stabilization effects in the short, medium and long terms, a layered approach is most suitable. In the conceptual model, the stabilization continuum spans three complementary tiers: Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), bridging effects, and signature reconstruction and development.
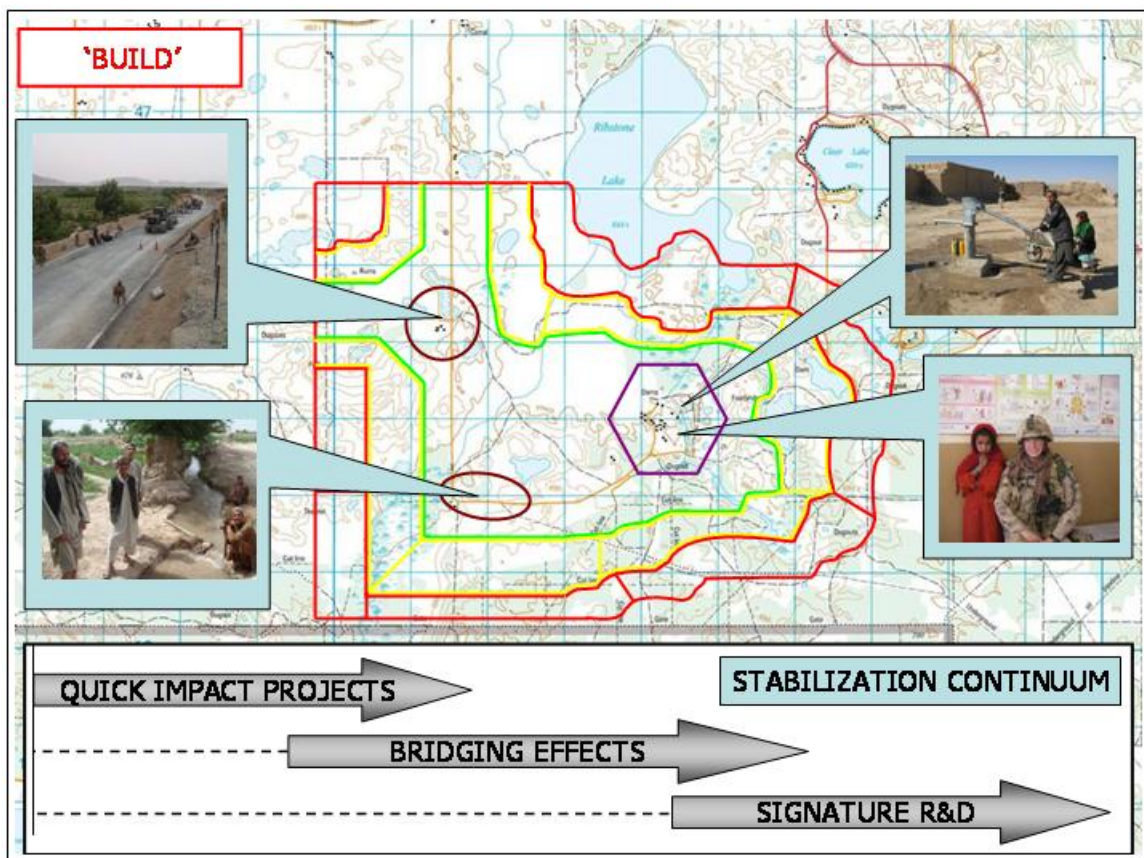
Figure 13 – The Doctrinal Implementation Model Step 4: Stabilization

QIPs are designed to create local awareness, invoke interest and export rudimentary services to rural Afghans, markedly improving local quality of life. Conceived by any member of the inter-agency team, QIPs can be implemented by either a tactical Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) team from the PRT or by an IP. Projects include distribution of food, water, heating and cooking fuel, non-food items, waste disposal, and agricultural tractors, implements, tools and seed. Other initiatives include repair of damaged housing and mosques, irrigation and well projects, and limited repair of roads and bridges. Emergency assistance also constitutes a QIP.

Bridging effects are fielded to further improve local quality of life while generating capacity in Afghan institutions, thereby priming signature reconstruction and

development. Projects are designed to field comprehensive basic services and essential infrastructure in the areas of agriculture, irrigation, health, education, housing, and waste disposal. Microfinance should be explored to reinforce the local economy, potentially focusing on revitalizing existing bazaars. Roads and bridges may be developed, particularly those which improve access to indigenous institutions.

Signature reconstruction and development projects are focused on rule of law, economic activity, and signature infrastructure. Civilian inter-agency partners have the lead, working in partnership with GIRoA, provincial actors, IPs and donors. Rule of law initiatives address deficiencies in the areas of criminal justice and detention facilities.[194] Economic efforts aim to promote employment, micro-finance, market accessibility, and trade.[195] Signature infrastructure is pursued in the areas of electrical power, communications, health, education, hydrology, sanitation, permanent housing, roads, and bridges.

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[194] United Kingdom, *Integrated Stabilization Planning* (Helmand: Task Force Helmand, [2008]).

[195] *Ibid*.

CHAPTER 4 – ASSESSING STABILIZATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The first two chapters of this paper served to define the CA to conflict intervention within the Afghan campaign. Applying the theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models derived in the previous chapter, focus now shifts to assessing the central research question underlining this academic endeavour: How effective is the Canadian CA for stabilization within the Afghanistan counter-insurgency?

This chapter initially examines the PRT as the key instrument for stabilization. Assessment methodology is subsequently discussed, priming a deliberate analysis of the Canadian CA in Afghanistan using the theoretical and doctrinal models. This review yields cogent deductions, which in turn form the basis for future recommendations.

SECTION 1 – STABILIZATION FRAMEWORK

This section provides a synopsis of PRTs, outlining the origins and operating concept of this expeditionary stabilization tool. A comprehensive study of the KPRT follows, priming assessment in subsequent sections.

Sub-Section 1 – Situating Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Reluctant to deploy large troop contingents to Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the United States launched a Joint Regional Team (JRT) pilot project under OEF.[196] The inaugural JRT was deployed to Gardez in December 2002.[197] At the request of President Karzai, the concept was repackaged as the PRT in 2003.[198]

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[196] Peter Dahl Thruelsen, "NATO in Afghanistan - What Lessons are We Learning, and are We Willing to Adjust?" *DIIS Report 2007:14* (2007): 29.

Initial PRTs enjoyed immediate success, promoting security, priming stabilization and strengthening ties with the central Afghan Government. Other nations recognized the utility of the model and subsequently launched PRTs. NATO and ISAF unanimously embraced the concept, working diligently to field PRTs throughout Afghanistan.[199] As of March 2009, PRTs had been established in 26 of the 34 Afghan provinces.
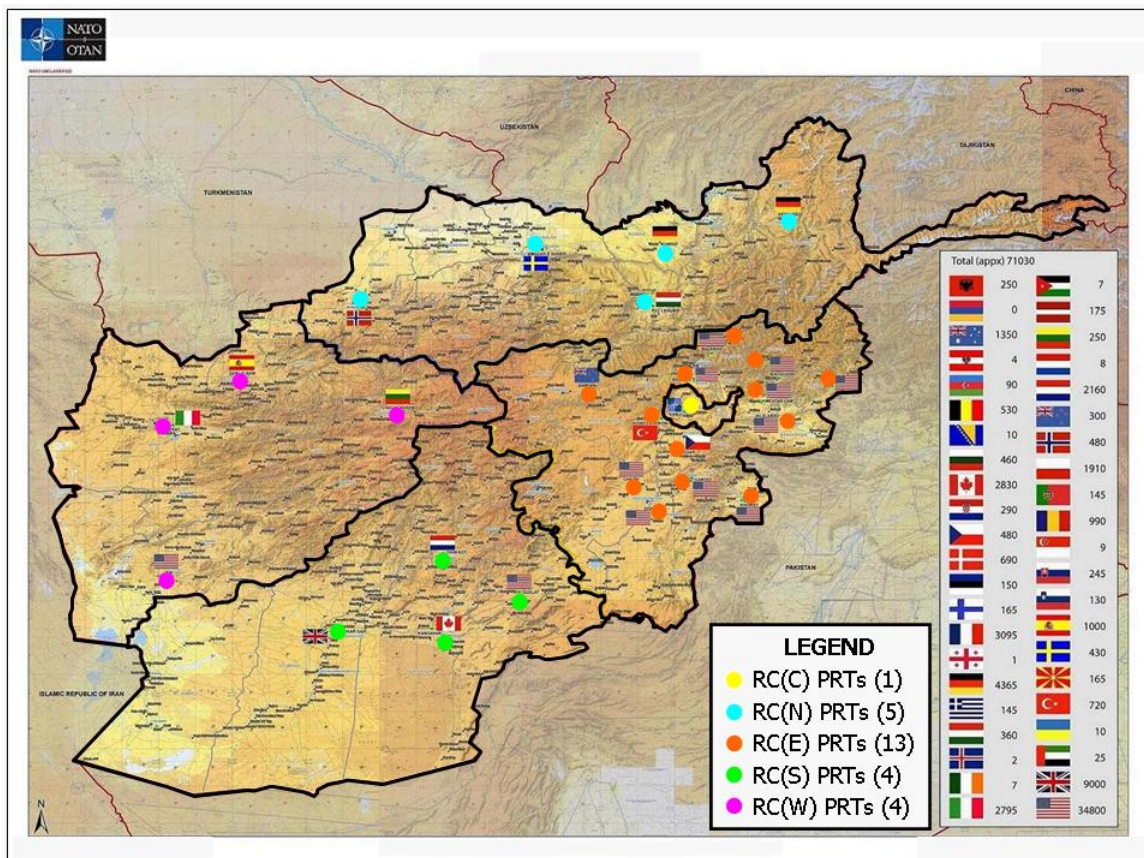
Figure 14 – Map of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan[200]

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[197] USDoD, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* ([Washington]: USDoD, 2009), 56-57.

[198] Matthew Jackson and Stuart Gordon, "Rewiring Interventions? UK Provincial Reconstruction Teams and 'Stabilization'," *International Peacekeeping* 14, no. 5 (November 2007): 648.

[199] Ali A. Jalali, "The Legacy of War and the Challenge of Peace Building," in *Building a New Afghanistan*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge: World Peace Foundation, 2007), 36.

[200] Map sourced from *NATO*.

PRTs are inter-agency organizations, typically force generated by the lead nation of a province. Although each country has its own interpretation of the raison d'etre, PRT missions are broadly focused on extending the reach of the GIRoA within the designated province by fielding security, governance, and reconstruction effects.[201]

A CA stabilization tool, a PRT exploits all instruments of state power to reduce violence and stimulate prosperity, with particular emphasis on remote regions of Afghanistan.[202] The military arm of the PRT focuses on promoting security and stability, including the development of ANSF institutions.[203] Simultaneously, civilian actors pursue political, economic, humanitarian, and social development goals.[204] PRT strategy and organizations typically transform over time, adapting to the environment, threat, domestic politics, capacity, funding, and changes in indigenous capacity or approach.

Sub-Section 2 – Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team

Background

In 2005, the GoC took action to improve national response to expeditionary challenges. The Stabilization Reconstruction Task Force (START) was formed, serving as a strategic mechanism to regulate intervention in failed and failing states.[205]

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[201] USDoD, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan…*, 57.

[202] USAID, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment* ([Washington]: USAID, 2006), 10.

[203] NATO, *Afghanistan Report 2009* (Brussels: NATO, 2009).

[204] *Ibid*.

[205] DFAIT, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START): About Us," http://www.international.gc.ca/START-GTSR/start-definition-gtsr.aspx?menu_id=91&menu=R; Internet; accessed 18 December 2009.

Under the leadership of DFAIT, a blended team was assembled in the National Capital Region with permanent representation from CIDA, DND, RCMP, IOs and NGOs.[206] The START adopted the CA, working collaboratively to realize foreign policy objectives in the following domains: conflict prevention; conflict management; post-conflict stabilization; and humanitarian response.[207]

In anticipation of ISAF Phase Three expansion to the southern Afghanistan, Canada assumed command of the KPRT from the United States in August 2005. The KPRT, comprised of 250 military and civilian actors, served as the operational arm of the START. The civilian component consisted of five agents from across DFAIT, CIDA and the RCMP. The CF component consisted of an infantry company, an engineer mobility element, an information operations detachment, and a combat service support package.

Current Overview

The KPRT is the cornerstone of Canada's engagement in Afghanistan, extending the capacity of GIRoA to deliver services to the people of Kandahar province.[208] Canada's signature CA instrument in Afghanistan, the KPRT is the focal point for the integration of the security, governance, and reconstruction and development LOOs.

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[206] DFAIT, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START): About Us."

[207] DFAIT, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START): Organizational Structure," http://www.international.gc.ca/START-GTSR/start-structure-gtsr.aspx?menu_id=92&menu=R; Internet; accessed 18 December 2009.

[208] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 21.

Figure 15 – Map of Kandahar Province[209]

Staged from Camp Nathan Smith in Kandahar City, the KPRT has an area

of responsibility which spans 17 districts over 54,000 kms^2. The provincial

population totals approximately one million, with approximately 250,000 Afghans

living in Kandahar City.[210] The remaining 750,000 people live in rural areas

across the districts.

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[209] Map sourced from *NATO*.

[210] Institute for the Study of War, "Regions: Regional Command South," http://www.understandingwar.org/region/regional-command-south-0#Kandahar; Internet; accessed 20 December 2009.

SECTION 2 – METHODOLOGY

Theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models have been derived to evaluate the KPRT. Applied together, the two models adequately capture the requirements for stabilization in a counter-insurgency environment.

Each model consists of two distinct components. The first element can be described as the internal enabling tools that facilitate external action. While this part is crucial, it is simply a means to an end. These internal actions can empower or constrain progress, but there is no direct correlation between the use of these internal tools and the probability of success. The second element features the tangible projection of external effects, constituting the decisive component of the stabilization strategy.

Internal tools, consisting of both structural and procedural components, are inherently difficult to validate. Measures of effectiveness are hard to define and apply, and consequently, assessments are invariably subjective and inconclusive. Information security constraints preclude access to SECRET field observations from Afghanistan, further constraining the study.

Conversely, external effects can be objectively examined through rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis, yielding a balanced and informed evaluation. In addition to assessing actual results, unclassified surveys expose indigenous perceptions, a key consideration in a successful 'population-centric' counter-insurgency approach.

Applying the theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models, the next two sections will assess the effectiveness of the Canadian CA in projecting external effects.
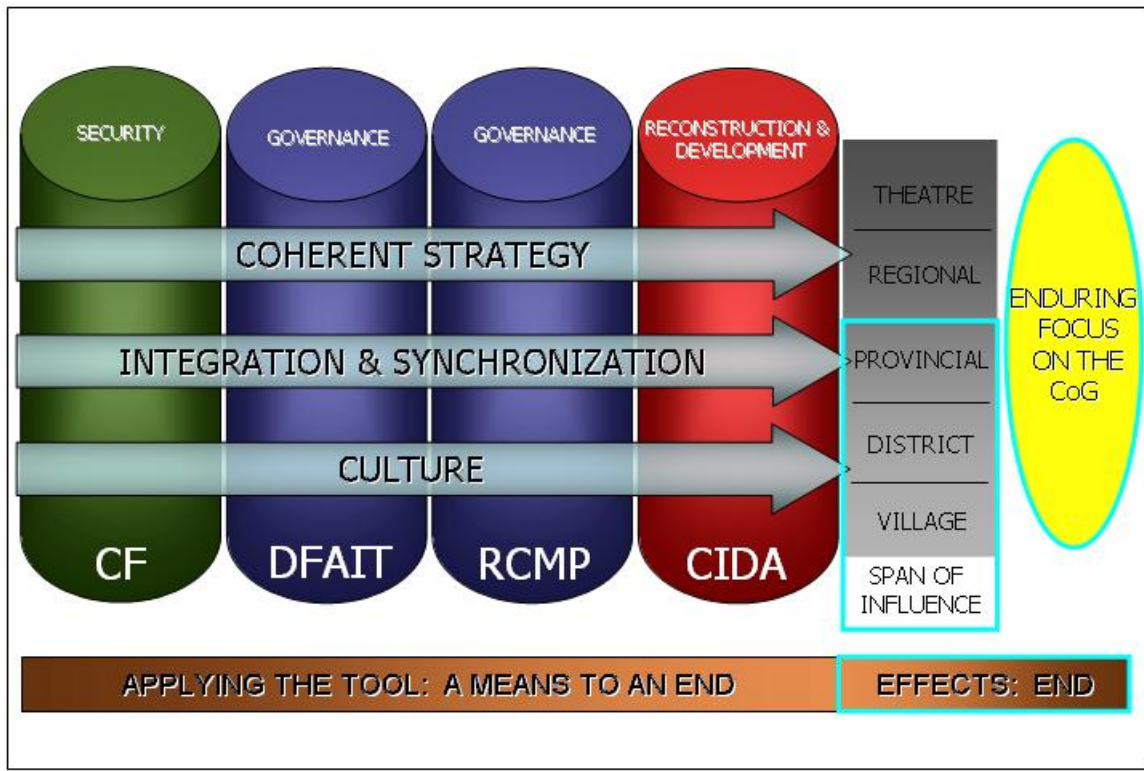
Figure 16 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: The Theoretical Model
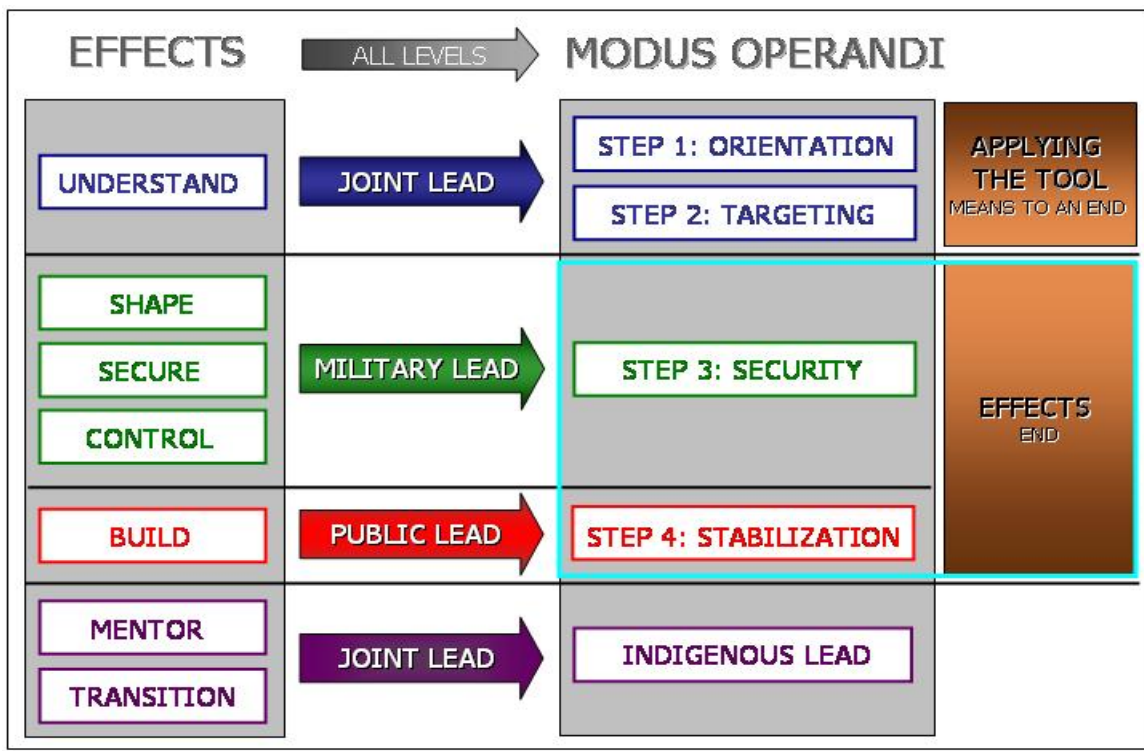
Figure 17 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: Doctrinal Implementation Model

SECTION 3 – THE THEORETICAL MODEL

Applying the theoretical model, this section assesses the effectiveness of the Canadian CA in Afghanistan. Evaluation criteria focus exclusively on external effects, examining span of influence and influence on the CoG.

Sub-Section 1 – Span of Influence

Since its inception, the KPRT has been of immeasurable benefit. It has stimulated indigenous government and security institutions, aptly targeted at the provincial level. Extensive aid has flowed through the PRT, with investments rising annually. Despite its recognized success at the provincial level, the KPRT has encountered difficulty in fielding tangible stabilization to constituent districts and villages.
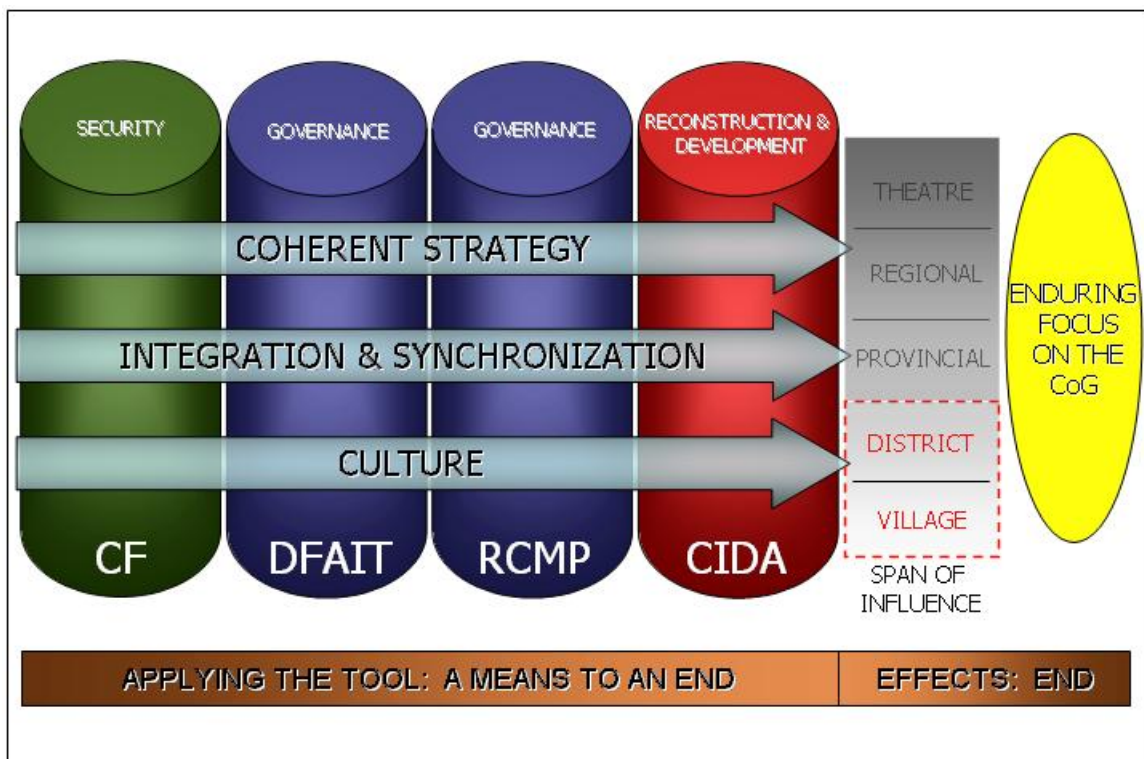
Figure 18 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: Span of Influence

The span of influence of the KPRT will be examined in the following sub-section, with specific emphasis on the area of operations, capacity, reach, and focus of the KPRT.

Area of Operations

From a stabilization perspective, the KPRT is responsible for servicing all of Kandahar province. It is a daunting task, given that the area spans 17 districts over 54,000 kms^2. The population is dispersed, introducing further complexity. Kandahar City is home to roughly 250,000 urban dwellers, while approximately 750,000 Afghans are scattered through rural villages and hamlets across the province.

Comparative analysis at the regional level exposes some alarming trends. RC South and East have been compared, given that they face analogous challenges: insurgent insurrection, porous borders with Pakistan, and challenging conditions for stabilization.

SECTOR	PRTs	POPULATION[211]	AREA[212] (km^2)	DENSITY (Ratio PRT to Area)	HUMAN COVERAGE (Ratio PRT to Population)
Kandahar Province	1	1,000,000	54,022	1 : 54,022	1 : 1,000,000
RC (South)	4	3,270,000	125,000	1 : 20,833	1 : 817,500
RC (East)	13	7,000,000	120,000	1 : 9,230	1 : 538,461

Figure 19 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: PRT Comparative Analysis

When assessed regionally, it is evident that Kandahar province suffers from disproportionately low PRT density and human coverage. This asymmetry can be

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[211] Institute for the Study of War, "Regions," http://understandingwar.org/afghanistan-project/regions; Internet; accessed 21 December 2009.

[212] *Ibid*.

attributed to the reflexive allocation of one PRT to each province, without any detailed provincial analysis of geography, size, population, threat, or tribal power dynamics. Given the ideological significance of Kandahar City to the insurgent cause, there is compelling justification for additional fielding of PRTs within Kandahar province.

Low density, coupled with mobility constraints due to intensifying violence, significantly curtail the KPRT's span of influence. As a result, the KPRT has focused predominantly at the provincial level, incurring risk in constituent districts and villages.

Capacity

Insufficient capacity was a core issue which initially impaired the KPRT. Inaugural civilian deployments in 2005 were exceedingly modest, featuring two DFAIT operatives, one CIDA representative, and two RCMP members. Although DFAIT and CIDA hired indigenous assistants with expert knowledge of local dynamics, the departments lacked the depth to address the infinite demands. DFAIT and CIDA focused exclusively on provincial stabilization initiatives, realizing discernable benefits in the spheres of governance and development. Consequently, districts and villages were neglected, victim of insufficient inter-agency capacity.

In subsequent years, DFAIT and CIDA proactively deployed additional agents to compensate for mounting portfolios. In 2008, the *Manley Report* recommended further civilian augmentation.[213] By June 2009, 98 civilians were deployed to Afghanistan, with plans for additional growth. This trend is promising, strengthening the capacity of the inter-agency team to project stabilization throughout Kandahar province.

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[213] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 26.

Reach

The principal function of a PRT is to stimulate indigenous capacity at the provincial level. The KPRT adheres to this methodology, focusing attention on the development of the governor, the provincial government, and the provincial line ministries. Manning constraints and demanding tempo have precluded the simultaneous mentorship of each of the 23 line ministries. Consequently, many provincial ministries are dysfunctional and impotent, impairing indigenous assistance to subordinate District Leaders (DLs).

Staged centrally from Kandahar City, the KPRT lacks the reach, architecture and connectivity to simultaneously stabilize each of the 17 districts. KPRT presence across the districts has been varied and uneven, with remote areas visited infrequently. While certain areas have been specifically targeted for particular outcomes, most districts fail to reap tangible and enduring benefits from the KPRT.

In early 2008, the RCMP partnered with the CF to pursue district stabilization, permanently staging field representatives in two Forward Operating Bases (FOBs). This initiative translated into immediate gains, professionalizing district ANP forces. RCMP constables expertly shaped the employment of POMLTs and directly mentored the affiliated District Chief of Police (DCoP).

Despite the forward deployment of RCMP personnel, DFAIT and CIDA elected not to permanently assign operators at the district level. Civilian visits to the FOBs were short, irregular, and infrequent. Although both departments offered dedicated reach-back capability through the KPRT, the expert advice, professional experience and vast resources of civilian actors was sorely absent at the district level.

The outcome was predictable. Partnered security operations, without any affiliated governance or development efforts targeted at district level, failed to yield enduring results. Although CF and RCMP field representatives launched compensatory stabilization efforts, they were transient and superficial. Consequences were equally damaging at the institutional level, as CF leaders lacked the expertise to mentor the DL. The DDA and CDCs were victims of fledging district governance, further impediments to village stabilization.

Focus

The final factor affecting span of influence is the imbalanced focus of KPRT programming. The strategic and ideological vital ground in southern Afghanistan, Kandahar City has been the recipient of significant stabilization dating back to 2005. Given the relatively permissive environment, reconstruction and development can be launched unhindered, frequently without affiliated security to shield 'Build' initiatives.

Outlying district nodes are predominantly insecure, necessitating robust security packages and IPs with high threat tolerance. Predictably, focused stabilization in remote areas has been rare, straining the trust and confidence of villagers. This unrest has been further aggravated by high volume of urban programming, leaving rural Afghans envious and indignant.[214] The impact is significant, understanding that 750,000 Afghans live in rural communities throughout Kandahar province.

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[214] Seth G. Jones, "The Rise of Afghanistan's Insurgency," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 20.

The perception of urban elitism, coupled with infrequent district programming, has increased rural acceptance for the Taliban. In *The Rise of Afghanistan's Insurgency*, political scientist Seth Jones offers the following perspective on rural sentiment:

> By 2005, there was growing Taliban penetration of rural areas in eastern and southern Afghanistan. Given sustained security and assistance, villages across this swath might have sided with the government. But without that help, they moved toward the insurgents… The logic is straightforward… inability to provide essential services and security to rural areas increasingly marginalized the population, and provided a target of opportunity for insurgents.[215]

The Canadian approach is to prosecute the counter-insurgency campaign from the provincial capital.[216] Without complementary actions at district and village levels, this is a dangerous proposition, given that every foreign intervention in Afghanistan has been eventually driven out, despite holding all the major cities.[217]

Sub-Section 2 – Enduring Focus on the CoG

Programming Strategy

The Canadian CA has suffered from incongruent departmental strategies, epitomized by divergent views on programming. This dislocation has impaired the collaborative fielding of progressive, timely, tangible, and durable stabilization effects within Kandahar province. Failure to consistently implement a 'population centric' approach has jeopardized CA effectiveness. The following section will provide an

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[215] Jones, "The Rise of Afghanistan's Insurgency…," 34.

[216] Chris Mason, "Lessons Unlearned," *The Culture & Conflict Review* 1, no. 2 (December 2007), http://www.nps.edu/programs/ccs/WebJournal/Article.aspx?ArticleID=13&IssueID=2; Internet; accessed 18 December 2009.

[217] Mason, "The Afghan Insurgency."

historical account of CIDA programming in Afghanistan, exposing a deficiency in fielding tiered stabilization to the Afghan people.

One of the chief bilateral donors to Afghanistan, CIDA leads development initiatives on behalf of the GoC. From 2001 to 2005, Canada's funding to Afghanistan remained relatively steady, averaging $100 million annually.[218] Contributions increased dramatically from 2006 to 2008, totalling approximately $250 million per year.[219] However, aid funds have been overshadowed by military spending, with 2007 expenditures of $139 million and $1,416 million respectively.[220] While security remains a vital requirement, resource imbalances have curtailed the CA to stabilization.

Despite extensive aid spending, there have been critical inhibitors to achieving enduring stabilization within Kandahar province. Most critically, only 28 percent of CIDA's 2007 funding envelope was vectored to Kandahar province.[221] This commitment proved insufficient in reconciling abhorrent poverty and quality of life, both underlying causes for insecurity.[222]

By 2007, Kandahar province was in urgent need of short-term programming to realize immediate and tangible progress.[223] Conditions were particularly bleak in rural

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[218] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 23.

[219] CIDA, "Funding: Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan," http://acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/JUD-12514411-QD6; Internet; accessed 20 December 2009.

[220] The Senlis Council, *Canada in Afghanistan: Charting a New Course to Complete the Mission* (Ottawa: Senlis Council, 2007), 4.

[221] Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar…*, 271.

[222] The Senlis Council, *Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan: Canada's Leadership to Break the Cycle of Violence in Southern Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Senlis Council, 2006), 4.

[223] The Senlis Council, *Canada in Afghanistan…*, 3.

areas, where Afghans faced severe hardship on account of deficient food, water, shelter, and basic services.[224] The 2008 *Manley Report* provided the following assessment of Canadian stabilization funding:

> More than half of CIDA funding in Afghanistan flows through multilateral agencies, and another 35 per cent is channeled through national programs administered by the central government in Kabul. This leaves little for locally managed quick-action projects that bring immediate improvements to everyday life for Afghans.[225]

According to *The Asia Foundation*, insufficient programming of basic services was a key concern for Afghans within Kandahar province:
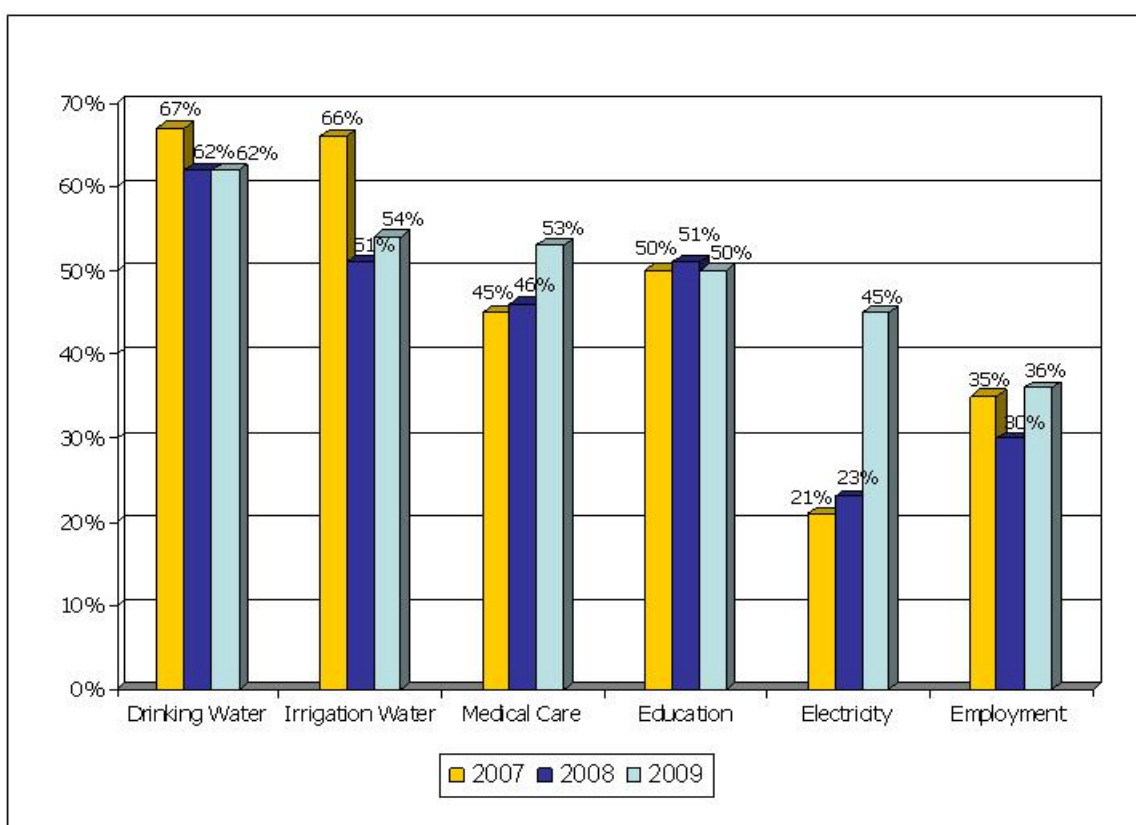
Figure 20 – Indigenous Accessibility to Basic Services in Kandahar Province[226]

[224] OXFAM, *Overview of Priorities for Canada in Afghanistan* (Quebec: OXFAM, 2007), 2.

[225] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 23-24.

[226] Data set sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

Programming Deficiencies

A few flaws emerged from CIDA's dominant focus on long-term centralized investment through GIRoA. The first defect was that this funding strategy empowered Afghan institutions and multi-lateral IPs to distribute aid commensurate with their respective priorities. By conceding discretionary power for the dispersal of programming, there was no guarantee that Canadian funding was actually targeting Kandahar province.

Secondly, by injecting funds nationally, Canadian aid was vulnerable to the rampant corruption which plagues GIRoA. Indigenous control measures were unsatisfactory, punctuated by poor tracking mechanisms. As a result, the correlation between aid expenditures and tangible stabilization efforts is ultimately inconclusive.

Most critically, it exposed a deficiency in the Canadian integrated strategy, compromising a 'population-centric' strategy. CIDA focused predominantly on stimulating national capacity in social, economic and legal institutions, avoiding short-term stabilization that failed to meet departmental criteria for traditional development. While progress was inevitably achieved, actual results will not be visible for years.[227] Recognizing a lack of immediate programming, the CF intensified QIP fielding to capitalize on improving security and sustain local confidence. While these initiatives offered immediate benefit to locals, results were predictably superficial and fleeting. The CF was impotent without the capacity, expertise and funding to field basic services that improved indigenous quality of life. Consequently, a fatal gap was exposed

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[227] Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar…*, 270-271.

in the KPRT CA, lacking a robust and responsive strategy to project tangible effects

across the stabilization continuum.
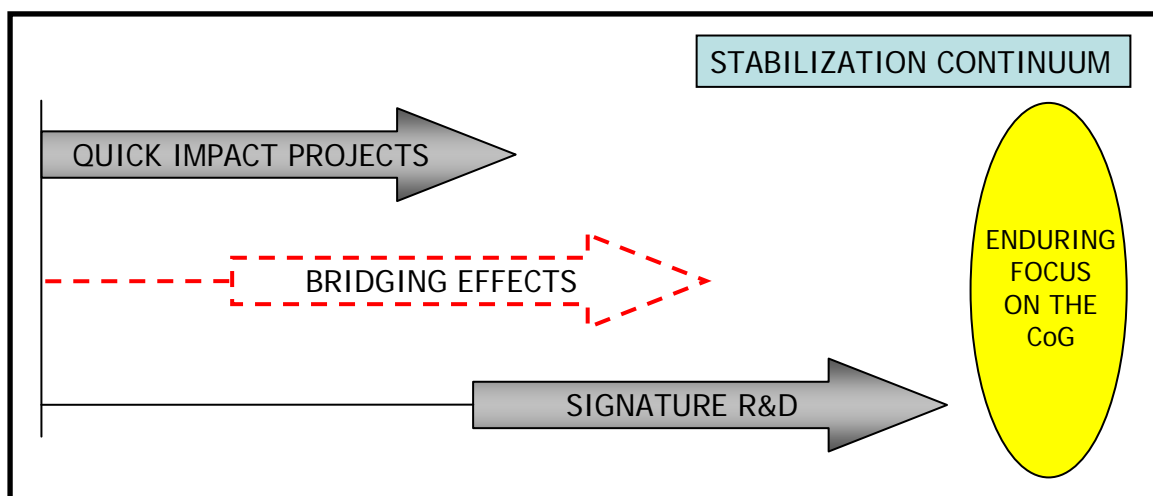
Figure 21 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: Stabilization Continuum

The *Manley Report* was critical of CIDA programming, encouraging re-alignment

to address the gap in the stabilization continuum:

> The Panel holds strongly that it is urgent to complete practical, significant
> development projects of immediate value to Afghans, while at the same time
> contributing to the capacity and legitimacy of Afghan government institutions.
> Further, Panel members believe that Canada's civilian programs have not
> achieved the scale or depth of engagement necessary to make a significant
> impact.[228]

In order to renew its 'population-centric' strategy, the GoC insisted in 2008 that

50 percent of Canadian aid between 2008 and 2011 would be funnelled directly to

Kandahar province.[229]

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[228] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 26.

[229] Gordon Smith, *Canada in Afghanistan: Is it Working?* (Calgary: Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, 2007), 9.

This yielded immediate benefit, as indigenous perceptions of Canadian programming steadily increased from 2006 to 2009, based on the findings of successive surveys conducted by *The Asia Foundation*.
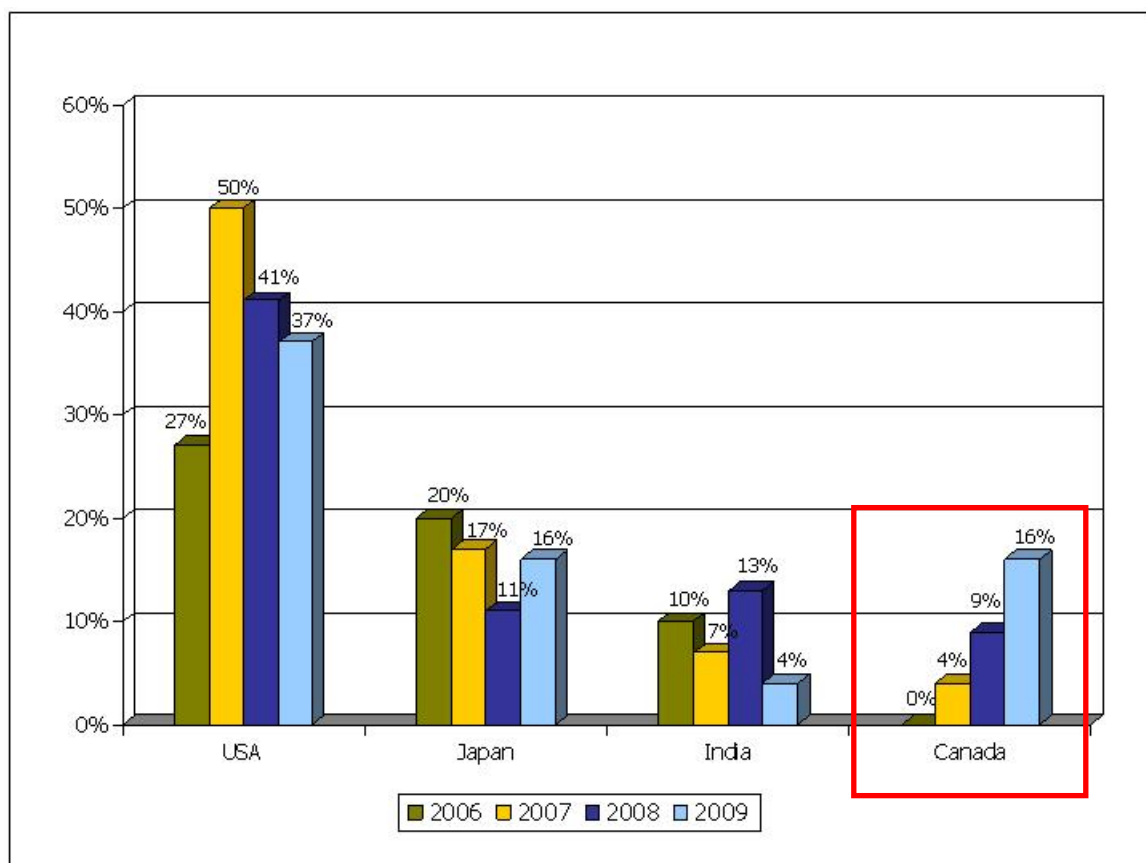
Figure 22 – Indigenous Perception of State Contributions to Kandahar Province[230]

Re-alignment of CIDA programming is an important procedural step in achieving stabilization in urban and rural areas. However, departmental actions must be synchronized at the district and village levels, translating organizational potential into timely, tangible, and durable effects. An enduring focus on the Afghan people will optimize Canada's chances of success in the bitter insurgency within Kandahar province.

[230] Data set sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

SECTION 4 – THE DOCTRINAL IMPLEMENTING MODEL

Expanding on the evaluation by the theoretical model, this section will further assess the Canadian CA using the doctrinal implementing model. Assessment remains focused on external effects, specifically in the areas of security and stabilization.

Sub-Section 1 – Security

Approach

The doctrinal implementation strategy features four progressive steps: orientation, targeting, security, and stabilization. Within the security dimension, there are three successive military actions that set conditions for stabilization activities. These security actions are predicated on a continuous transition from 'Shape-Secure-Control', intensifying dominance within a targeted area.

The intent for the 'Shape' stage is to influence indigenous attitudes, behaviours and perceptions, promoting compliance or reconciliation.[231] The 'Secure' function implies the seizure of a targeted area, expelling threat forces.[232] 'Control' achieves physical and psychological influence over the people, terrain and information within a specified area, thereby marginalizing insurgent visibility, utility, and credibility.

The application of doctrinal strategy within Kandahar province has been flawed, suffering dislocation between the 'Secure' and 'Control' actions. Upon seizing the targeted area, coalition and ANSF elements normally remain in location for hours, and under rare circumstances, a few short days. In an article entitled *All Counterinsurgency*

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[231] Alford and Cuomo, *Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer…*, 94.

[232] *Ibid*.

is Local, academics Thomas Johnson and Chris Mason provide the following assessment
on ISAF operations:

> The military's contact with villagers in remote areas where the Taliban operate is
> rare, typically brief, and almost always limited to daylight hours. The Taliban are
> well aware that the center of gravity in Afghanistan is the rural Pashtun district and
> village, and that the Afghan army and coalition forces are seldom seen there.[233]

Rural Afghans have recognized the transient pattern of ISAF operations.
Anticipating an immediate withdrawal of coalition and ANSF, villagers are habitually
distant and aloof when interacting with ISAF elements, avoiding meaningful engagement.
This indigenous reaction is ingrained, given that neutrality immunizes them against
Taliban intimidation or retaliation.

Following the 'Secure' operation, military forces typically return to the FOB and
prepare for future operations.[234] Following the departure of ISAF forces, insurgents
invariably flood back into the targeted area. Coercive, they extract information and
deliberately punish those villagers who were perceived to cooperate with GIRoA or
occupation forces. Credible threat of insurgent violence is a compelling 'Shape'
instrument, influencing indigenous attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions.[235]

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[233] Johnson and Mason, "All Counterinsurgency is Local."

[234] Gordon Campbell, "SOS Afghanistan - are the SAS on a Doomed Mission? An Interview with US Afghanistan Expert Thomas Johnson," *Werewolf*, no. 4 (August 2009), http://werewolf.co.nz/2009/08/sos-afghanistan-are-the-sas-on-a-doomed-mission/; Internet; accessed 18 December 2009.

[235] Johnson and Mason, "All Counterinsurgency is Local."
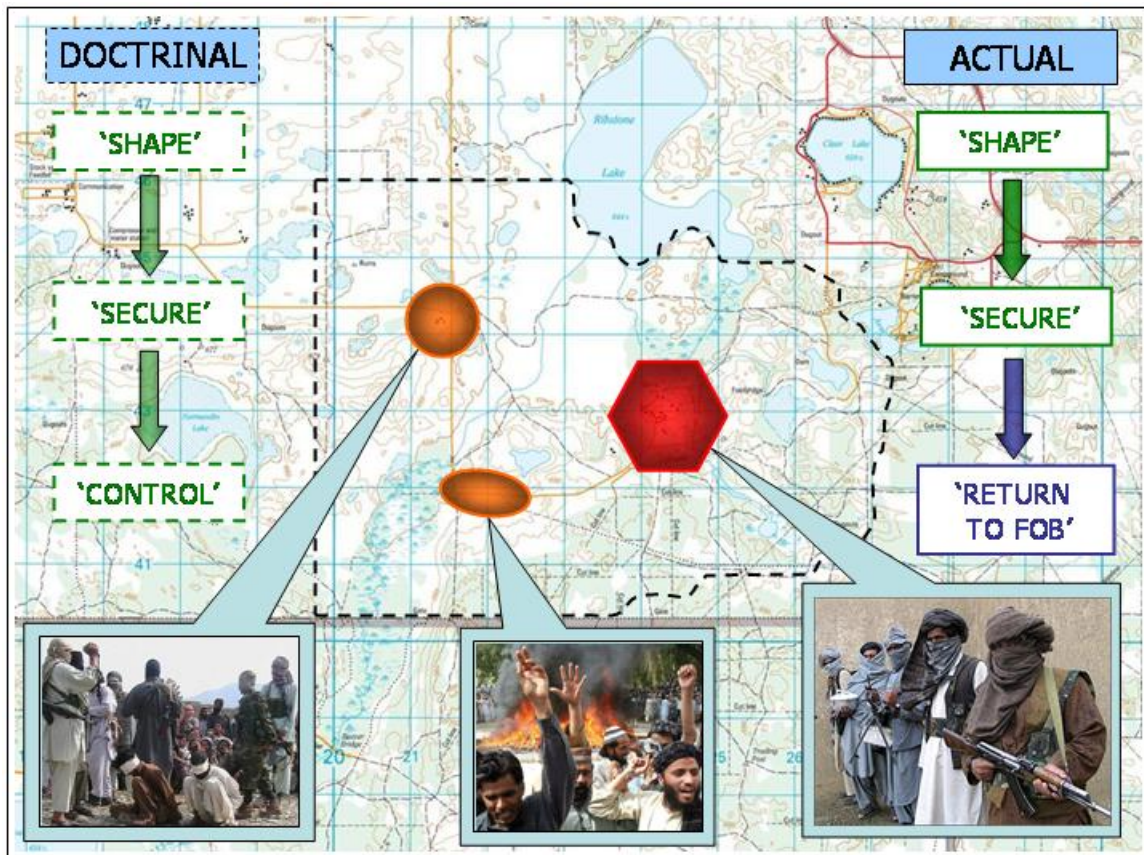
Figure 23 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: Security

By iteratively withdrawing after operations, ISAF forces seldom make the transition from the 'Secure (Clear)' to the elusive 'Control (Hold)'. This dislocation is paralyzing, given that fleeting 'Secure (Clear)' operations yield no enduring stabilization. This challenge is captured by academics Christine Fair and Seth Jones in *Securing Afghanistan: Getting on Track*:

> One of the most serious problems in Afghanistan's violent south and east is the inability of Afghan and international forces to "hold" territory once it has been cleared as part of a "clear, hold, build" strategy.[236]

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[236] Fair and Jones, *Securing Afghanistan: Getting on Track…*, 24.

Posture

One of the chief inhibitors to achieving the 'Control' is a growing fixation with FOBs. Over recent years, CF elements have been spoiled with expanding welfare networks. Personnel have been conditioned for high levels of service and comfort, and as a result, units are reluctant to embrace sustained deployments in remote villages.

Within Kandahar province, the Canadian contingent has relied heavily on the use of KAF and tactical infrastructure. Dating back to 2006, high proportions of CF elements have been clustered in heavily fortified installations.[237] These forces become self-fixing. And while FOBs serve as an ideological symbol, they offer marginal security value as influence is constrained to line of sight, which is impaired by the mountainous terrain.

Most critically, reliance on FOBs places a physical barrier between ISAF elements and the CoG, reducing coveted interaction with Afghan locals. From the perspective of the indigenous people, security forces jeopardize accessibility and approachability if they remain permanently anchored to infrastructure.

As security conditions deteriorate within Kandahar province, there is a natural tendency to place increasing emphasis on force protection. While use of tactical aviation and sophisticated vehicles effectively reduce the IED risk to ISAF personnel, they can also serve to isolate counter-insurgent forces from the Afghan population. Prior to reflexively increasing force protect measures, the CF should pause to reflect on the unintended consequence on the human plane. While Canadian and ANSF lives should never be exposed to undue risk, a delicate balance must be achieved between force protection and a 'population-centric' interface.

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[237] Mason, "The Afghan Insurgency."

Tone

In a conventional campaign against a peer enemy, military units are trained to apply overwhelming force in the pursuit of assigned objectives. The counter-insurgent campaign is inherently complex, necessitating the judicious application of measured force. Threat forces are imperceptive and elusive, blending into the local population.

In the summer of 2006, CF elements fought a spirited battle in the Zharey and Panjwayi districts of Kandahar province. Operation Medusa was highly successful, repelling insurgent attacks and retaining military key terrain. In the process of achieving core military goals, CF caused extensive damage to indigenous land and infrastructure. More critically, the lives of innocent rural Afghans were accidentally threatened, resulting in documented civilian casualties.

Over the next few years, the use of force was regulated by prescriptive Rules of Engagement (ROE). In August 2008, following an incident in which United States and ANSF allegedly killed 33 civilians, Commander ISAF released a directive constraining the use of force by coalition forces.[238] Discrimination and proportionality were emphasized, and protocols were introduced to minimize the risk of collateral damage.

Counter-insurgency demands a careful blend of force and discretion, given that excessive or insufficient levels will undermine success. A measured tone, coupled with judicious application of force, is a key ingredient to future success in Kandahar province.

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[238] USDoD, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan…*, 33.

Dilemma

Although the Taliban movement enjoys international support, it is rooted in southern Afghanistan.[239] Insurgents have exposure to mainstream Afghan society within Kandahar province, sustaining dialogue with rural villagers.

Predictably, coalition forces must apply force to eliminate the Taliban threat. However, the use of force in the Afghan counter-insurgency is governed by a paradox. Given the domestic origin of the Taliban movement, there is potential that when ISAF forces neutralize an insurgent, it may have the unintended consequence of proliferating more threat.
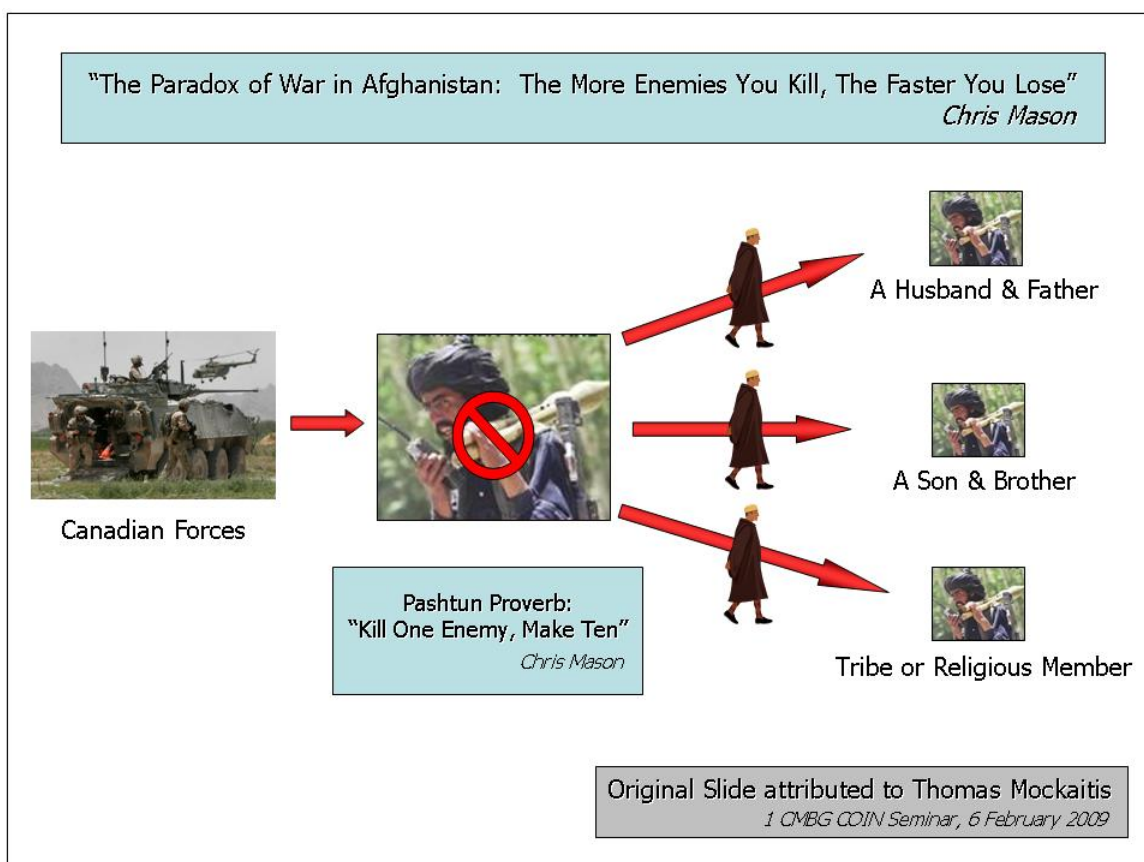
Figure 24 – Stabilization in Afghanistan: The Security Dilemma

[239] Rashid, *Taliban: Militarn Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia…*, 29.

Sub-Section 2 – Stabilization

In a battle for human will, local perception serves as a barometer of stabilization success. Annual surveys commissioned by *The Asia Foundation* from 2006 to 2009 offer invaluable insight into local perceptions within Kandahar province. When asked to assess if things were improving or regressing, Afghan public opinion varied extensively over this period. General optimism in 2006-2007 was replaced by a dominant theme of pessimism in 2008. Indigenous perceptions improved mildly in 2009, although a majority believe that the country is moving in the wrong direction.
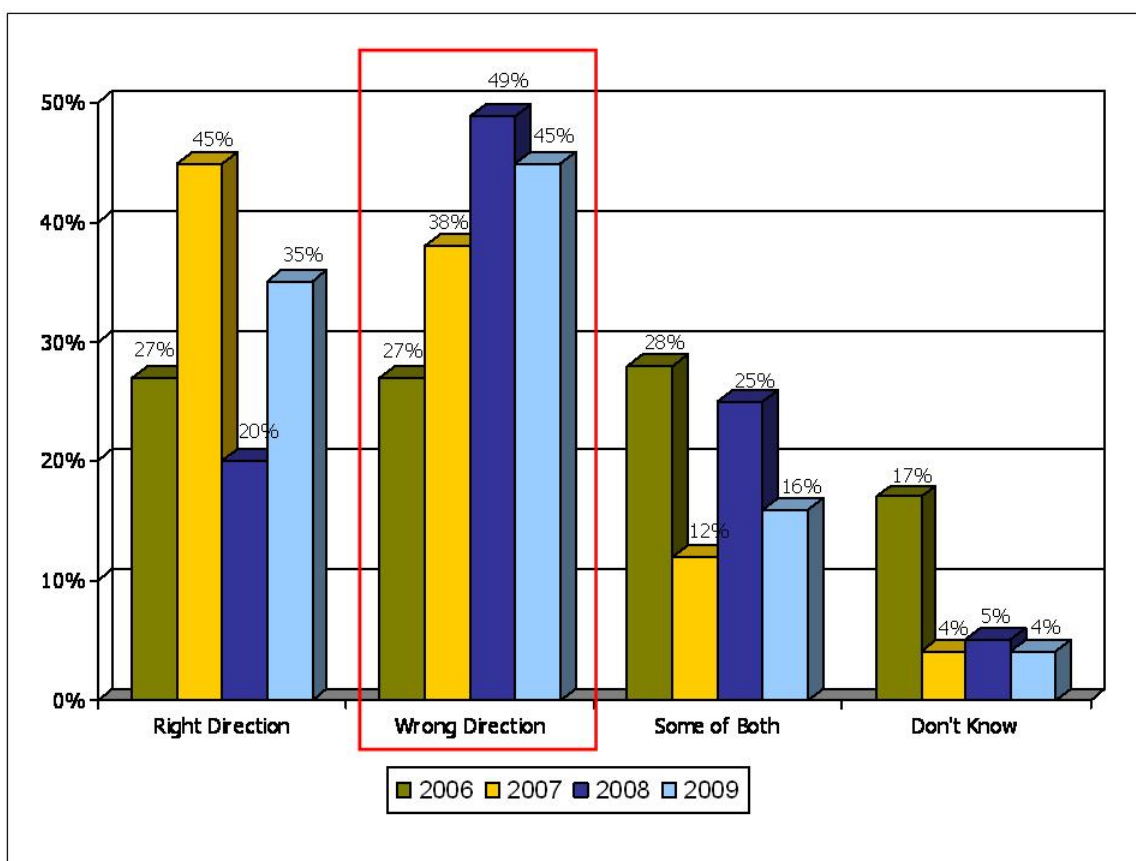
Figure 25 – Indigenous Assessment of the Situation in Kandahar Province[240]

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[240] Data set sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

Of the citizens polled in 2009, an overwhelming 56 percent cite insecurity as the chief cause for their declining perception of the situation in Afghanistan.[241] Having endured decades of violence, the indigenous people yearn for peace and stability. According to academic Chris Mason, "the Afghan people want 24/7/365 security… And they will take it from the Taliban if they can't get it anywhere else".[242]

Survey results reveal that the majority of those polled assess that Kandahar province is less prosperous today than it was under Taliban rule.
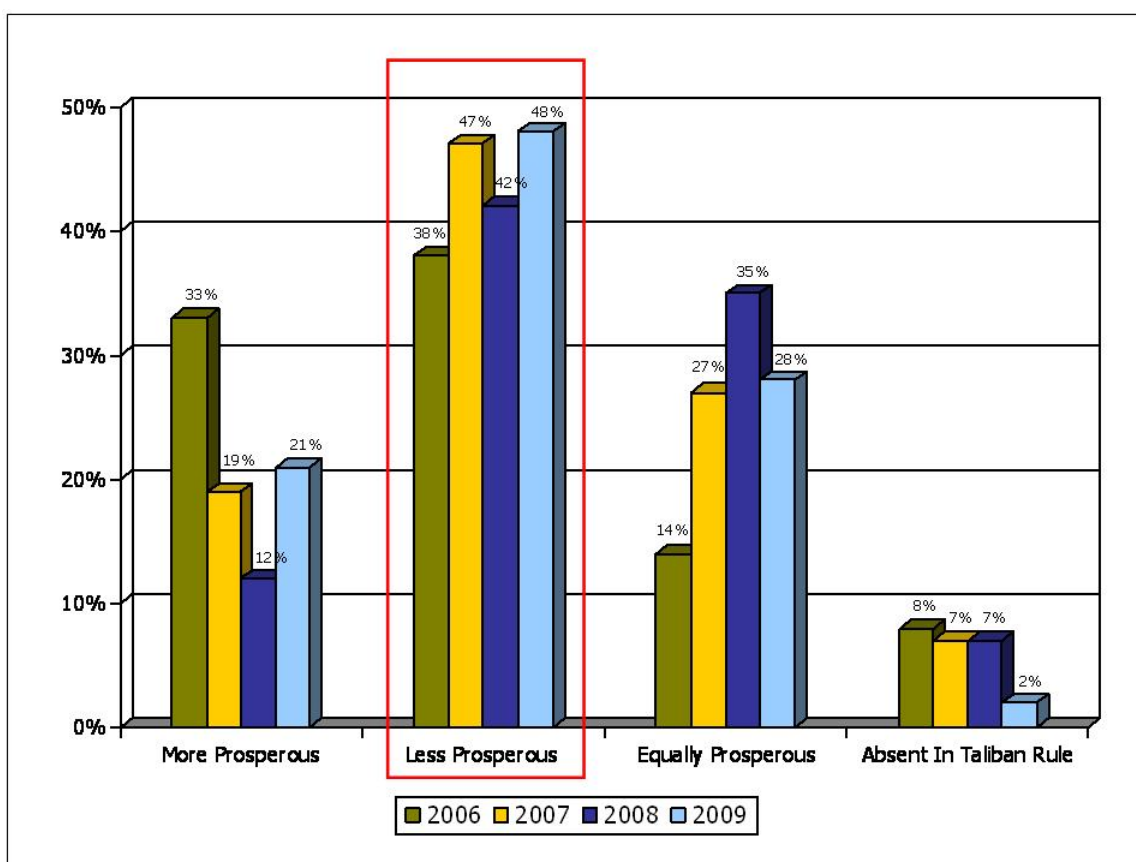
Figure 26 – Indigenous Assessment of Prosperity: GIRoA Today vs Taliban Rule[243]

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[241] Data sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

[242] Mason, "The Afghan Insurgency."

[243] Data set sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

According to 2009 survey results, residents of Kandahar province attribute poor prosperity to insufficient tangible stabilization satisfying basic needs.
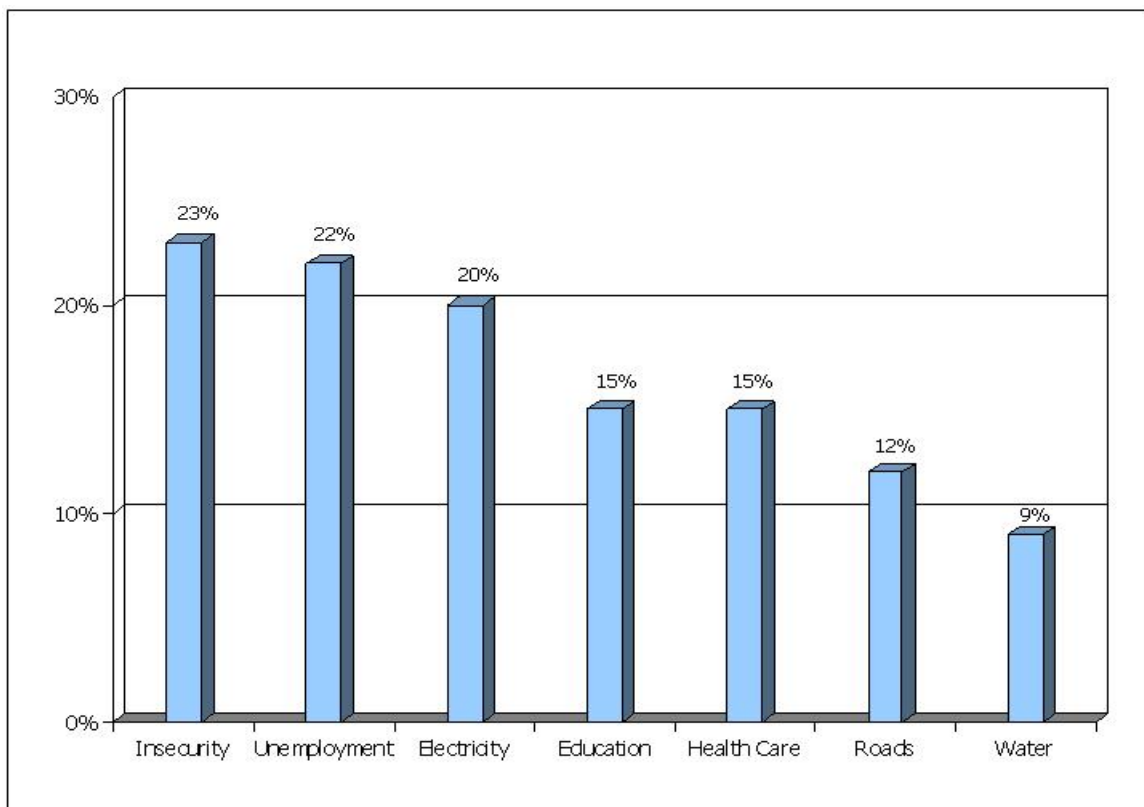
Figure 27 – 2009 Indigenous Perception of the Biggest Issue in Kandahar Province[244]

Failure to properly apply the doctrinal implementation strategy can have devastating consequences. In his book *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, Sir Robert Thompson provides compelling argument for investing in key cities and villages:

> Much can be learnt merely from the faces of the population in villages that are subject to clear-and-hold operations, if these are visited at regular intervals. Faces which at first are resigned and apathetic, or even sullen, six months or a year later are full of cheerful welcoming smiles. The people know who is winning.[245]

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[244] Data set sourced from *The Asia Foundation*.

[245] Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency…*, 170.

SECTION 5 – DEDUCTIONS

Based the assessment of the Canadian CA using both the theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models, this section consolidates the salient deductions from the analysis.

Sub-Section 1 – Overview

Counter-ins urgency is inherently complex, necessitating the blending of hard and soft power instruments to achieve state objectives. While the CA is no panacea, it provides a functional apparatus to integrate the cross-cutting effects which are central to campaign success. The FA is equally viable, although there are no proven mechanisms to lash up compartmentalized action.

The PRT is an effective platform for fielding stabilization in Afghanistan. The KPRT has served as an invaluable CA architecture, stimulating the coordination and integration of constituent Canadian departments. By embracing synchronization efforts, the GoC team has accentuated departmental strengths and marginalized vulnerabilities.

Beyond organizational improvements, the CA serves as a precious lever for fielding timely, tangible, and durable effects at the provincial level and within the central hub of Kandahar City. CA effectiveness has improved steadily since 2005, optimizing results in the spheres of security, governance, and development.

Despite its documented successes, application of the CA in Kandahar province has not been without challenges: limited span of influence at the district and village levels, blurred focus on the CoG, and implementation challenges in the areas of security and stabilization.

Sub-Section 2 – The Theoretical Model

To this point, assessment of the Canadian CA has focused exclusively on the

projection of external effects. Consideration is now given to the internal mechanics of

the theoretical model, assessing strategy, integration and synchronization, and culture.

Coherent Strategy

When the CA was launched in August 2005 under the auspices of the KPRT,

GoC political direction was conspicuously absent. Although token Memorandums of

Understanding (MoUs) were enacted between participating departments, the GoC failed

to produce a coherent national strategy to explicitly guide inter-agency efforts in

Kandahar province. This had devastating consequences, as the strategic leaders of the

constituent departments lacked the authority to introduce cross-cutting campaign strategy.

Weak national policy was exacerbated by ambiguous ISAF CA doctrine.[246]

In the absence of prescriptive political direction, tactical KPRT field officers from

DFAIT, CIDA, DND and RCMP embraced the opportunity to collaboratively design and

implement Canadian foreign policy. Despite some progress in crafting a tactical CA

strategy, it was hindered by bureaucracy and resistance at the strategic level.[247]

Departments shared incongruent views on the conduct and sequencing of security,

governance and development activities, exposing critical flaws in the CA strategy.[248]

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[246] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 11.

[247] Andy Tamas, *Warriors and Nation Builders: Development and the Military in Afghanistan* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2009), 33.

[248] Canada, *Broadsword Or Rapier? The Canadian Forces Involvement in 21st Century Coalition Operations* ([Kingston]: Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, [2008]).

Many argued that the Canadian CA strategy was suffering from imbalance, with disproportionate effort applied to security at the expense of development initiatives.[249]

Beyond alignment challenges, there was significant divergence in programming philosophy, failing to reconcile the short-term focus of the CF with the long-term view of CIDA and DFAIT. Polarized views on program delivery was a cause of further fracturing, as the departments failed to reach consensus on the relative importance of targeting at provincial, district, and village levels.

 The   *Manley Report* offered criticism of the departmental fragmentation. According to the Panel: "Stronger strategy, and more cohesive strategic direction, are essential".[250] The recent creation of the GoC Cabinet Committee and the ATF had an immediate effect, improving the calibre of political leadership over the campaign in Afghanistan. The appointment of the RoCK had complementary benefit, aligning departmental effort to produce a cohesive CA strategy at the operational level.

Integration and Synchronization

Institutionally, many GoC partners remain skeptical of the practical merits of the CA. There has been a general reluctance to concede organizational autonomy in favour of hybrid methodologies. Departments give precedence to vertical coordination and accountability, frequently at the expense of cross-cutting imperatives.[251]

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[249] The Senlis Council, *Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan…*, 8.

[250] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 11.

[251] Tamas, *Warriors and Nation Builders…*, 193.

This approach produces fragmentation, impairing integration and synchronization of the political, military, economic, social and informational instruments of Canadian power. The *Manley Report* exposed the consequences of compartmentalization:

> … The Canadian-led PRT in Kandahar also displays signs of the fragmentation and uncoordinated effort that prevail throughout the programming of international development aid in Afghanistan. Effectiveness would be enhanced by aligning national and departmental priorities and operations more closely – and more collaboratively.[252]

Security and development efforts have been particularly vulnerable to dislocation, exposing divergent departmental agendas that have crippled stabilization efforts.[253] Independent military actions have failed to yield enduring stabilization, while isolated development efforts have been impotent and vulnerable to insurgent exploitation. Consequently, the inter-agency team has struggled to project blended stabilization packages, particularly in rural areas of Kandahar province.[254]

In light of declining security conditions in Afghanistan, there is an urgent requirement to reconcile inefficiencies hindering the Canadian CA. Genuine efforts are required to harmonize departmental efforts, empowering collaborative action in the spheres of security, governance, reconstruction and development.

Culture

Disparate culture remains a key inhibitor to CA implementation within Kandahar province. Although significant progress has been made over recent years, cultural gaps

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[252] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 24.

[253] Smith, *Canada in Afghanistan: Is it Working?...*, 6.

[254] Canada, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan…*, 11.

between participating departments remain significant, characterized by distinct lexicon, philosophy, policy, procedures, planning tools, and time horizons.[255]

Fostering inter-agency culture is a delicate endeavour. Following four years of hybrid employment in Afghanistan, certain cultural tendencies have been exposed. CF components have a reputation for acting aggressively and impulsively, maintaining an unwavering focus on mission accomplishment. Through the lens of a civilian department, these behaviours can be interpreted as despotic, unilateral, and inflexible. Conversely, civilian departments are governed by centralized national policy, constraining institutional agility and responsiveness.[256] Consequently, civilian actors are perceived by uniformed partners to be indolent and indifferent.

While neither account is accurate, adverse perceptions severely undermine CA effectiveness. Inter-agency animosity erodes the fragile trust which binds military and civilian partners. Rather than fixating on departmental invariants, the hybrid team should work collaboratively to derive a shared culture which optimizes constituent strengths and marginalizes vulnerabilities. Caution should be applied when adopting homogeneous cultures in CA environments, particularly the military approach which does not resonate with civilian experiences.

Another source of cultural friction emerges from the debate over command and control. Departments have been unduly fixated on the delineation of formal authorities, aspiring to simplified 'silo' structures which promote unity of command. Understanding the complex inter-dependence which governs cross-cutting counter-insurgent dilemmas,

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[255] Canada, *Broadsword Or Rapier?...*, 27.

[256] *Ibid*.

departments must be prepared to iteratively transition lead status to the dominant instrument of Canadian power.

Sub-Section 3 – Impact Assessment

Although significant progress has been made in Kandahar province, the Canadian CA has suffered from a narrow span of influence. Limited KPRT capacity and reach have constrained simultaneous engagement at the provincial, district, and village levels. Consequently, finite resources were vectored at the provincial level to extend the reach of the central government. Acting independently, the CF component lacked the governance and development instruments to achieve enduring tactical stabilization.

The consequence of an imbalanced CA has been significant. Failure to harness a cohesive strategy at the tactical level has paralyzed Canadian stabilization efforts. As a result, the 'population centric' approach has faltered, particularly in rural areas where GIRoA and ISAF presence is irregular and infrequent. The Taliban has capitalized on these vulnerabilities, applying a careful blend of coercion and favour to sustain the support of the indigenous population.

SECTION 6 – RECOMMENDATION

Assessment of the Canadian CA using the theoretical and doctrinal stabilization models has yielded conclusive deductions. While analysis has proven the utility of the CA as a stabilization instrument, there are documented areas for optimization. This section outlines a mitigation strategy, recommending the fielding of DSTs to complement existing PRT architecture.

Sub-Section 1 – District Stabilization

Success in the Afghanistan counter-insurgency demands a 'population-centric' strategy that can invoke the trust and confidence of rural Afghans. This is a complex endeavour, one that will not be resolved by remotely administering a campaign from the confines of Kandahar City.[257] To be decisive, TFK provincial engagement must be complemented by stabilization at the district level, insulating rural villages throughout Kandahar province.[258]

In their article *All Counterinsurgency Is Local*, American academics Thomas Johnson and Chris Mason assert that district engagement is crucial to stabilization in southern Afghanistan:

> The U.S. engagement in Afghanistan is foundering because of the endemic failure to engage and protect rural villages, and to immunize them against insurgency… To reverse its fortunes in Afghanistan, the U.S. needs to fundamentally reconfigure its operations, creating small development and security teams posted at new compounds in every district in the south and east of the country.[259]

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[257] Dan Ephron, "Winning in Afghanistan: A Military Analyst on what's Wrong with U.S. Strategy," Newsweek, 23 September 2008.

[258] *Ibid*.

[259] Johnson and Mason, "All Counterinsurgency is Local."

To amplify the efforts of the KPRT at the provincial level, TFK launched the Key Village Approach (KVA) in 2009 to stabilize constituent districts. The concept synchronizes CA effects in the areas of security, governance, and reconstruction and development.[260] Through creating model villages under Afghan leadership, the KVA aims to stimulate peace, economic prosperity, and social stability.[261]

In the following sub-section, the KVA pilot project will be examined in detail. A conceptual model will be subsequently proposed for a DST, a CA instrument optimized for rural stabilization in the counter-insurgency fight.

Sub-Section 2 – Emerging Doctrine: Operation Kantolo

Launched in 2009 under the banner of Operation Kantolo, the KVA serves as a practical CA apparatus.[262] Originally conceived as a revised military strategy, the KVA concept was finalized in close collaboration with the Provincial Governor, DLs, ANSF leaders and the international community.[263] Although the KPRT is the primary sponsor for the KVA, it incorporates a broad range of inter-agency actors. The comprehensive stabilization teams are comprised of Canadian inter-agency partners, with permanent affiliations to the affiliated DL and tribal and religious leaders within the selected area.

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[260] Erich F. Braun, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Key Village Approach - Stabilization Teams," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/stores-reportages/2009_06_30.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[261] Colin Perkel, "Afghan Strategy Architect Slaims Failure to Grasp Locals," *CTV Edmonton*, 7 June 2009.

[262] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Op Kantolo," http://afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/tbrief-seancedit/2009_06_23.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[263] *Ibid*.

Operation Kantolo applies the 'Clear-Hold-Build' counter-insurgency strategy, featuring continuous and successive actions to dominate the targeted village.[264] Initial ISAF and ANSF partnered operations are executed to 'Clear' the designated rural village.[265] Once complete, the hybrid military force establishes a permanent presence within the area. Human operations are initiated to gain the trust and confidence of the indigenous people and dominate the information spectrum.[266] Once a permissive zone has been established, emphasis shifts to 'Build' initiatives, fielding tangible stabilization that improves the lives of rural Afghans.[267] Afghans play a vital role in the development process, with CDCs prioritizing programming.

Operation Kantolo has been successfully implemented in a series of targeted villages. The villages are selected based on population density and permissiveness, with priority to areas along the key approaches to Kandahar City.[268] This denies insurgent sanctuary, interdicting lines of communication.[269] Village selection is a joint endeavour, incorporating extensive consultations with the Provincial Governor and targeted DL.

The inaugural village was Deh-e-Bagh within the Dand district of Kandahar province, located approximately ten kilometres south of Kandahar City. The initiative

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[264] Matthew Fisher, "NATO Chief Urges Canada to Stay in Afghanistan Beyond 2011," *National* Post, 6 August 2009.

[265] J.P. Seguin, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Key Village Approach - Introducing Collegiality in Dand District," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/stories-reportages/2009_06_30b.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 23 November 2009.

[266] Perkel, "Afghan Strategy Architect Slaims Failure to Grasp Locals."

[267] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Op Kantolo."

[268] *Ibid*.

[269] Braun, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan."

was an unfettered success, stabilizing the village through the careful application of

diplomatic, military, economic, social, and informational instruments of power.[270]

The KVA rapidly gained the support of the international community, including

academic and United States military advisor Thomas Johnson:

> From my couple of weeks in the village, talking to the people, they had accepted the Canadians, and in fact they were referring to the Taliban as being irrelevant. And ultimately that is how you win a counter-insurgency, you do not necessarily kill the insurgent, you make them irrelevant in the eyes of the population.[271]

Beyond international favour, the KVA has been unequivocally accepted as a NATO

best practice. Comments from Secretary General Anders Rasmussen, after touring the

Deh-E-Bagh bazaar on August 6, 2009 were equally flattering: "I have got the very best

impression... This is exactly the approach we will pursue in the coming years".[272]

Sub-Section 3 – Conceptual Model: District Stabilization Team

DST Concept

A DST is a robust, purpose-built, inter-agency organization designed to stabilize a

failed or contested district. The core functions of a DST are to establish resolute security,

stimulate local governance, field tiered stabilization, and prime intervention by IPs

accustomed to working under more sterile or permissive conditions. DSTs maintain an

enduring focus on exporting timely and tangible benefits to the rural Afghan people,

thereby improving indigenous quality of life and promoting trust and confidence.

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[270] Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Op Kantolo."

[271] Thomas Johnson, Interview with KCBS News, August 2009.

[272] Fisher, "NATO Chief Urges Canada to Stay in Afghanistan Beyond 2011."

Anchored on the CA paradigm, DSTs seamlessly integrate the diverse effects of all stabilization agencies, organizations, and actors within a particular district. While IOs and NGOs may elect to remain loosely affiliated with the DST to preserve impartiality and neutrality, their effects are integrated to achieve full-spectrum synchronization.

DSTs maintain an unwavering focus on creating indigenous capacity in the arenas of governance, security, and development. During infancy, as Afghan institutions take shape, DSTs will actively assist indigenous leaders through direct and continuous mentorship. As local leaders and institutions mature, DSTs transform, adopting an advisory function, until such time that indigenous functions are capable of autonomy.

Under ideal force generation conditions, one DST should be allocated to each district. Predictably, this may not be achievable. In the case of constrained CA resources, DSTs can be fielded initially in permissive districts where real stabilization can occur, and where long-term security can be plausibly addressed by ANSF. If a conscious decision is made not to deploy a DST to a particular district, our expectations should be tailored accordingly, understanding that our achievements will be superficial and fleeting.

DST Role

A CA instrument, DSTs provide a platform for the alignment, integration, and synchronization of inter-agency actors and indigenous partners within the extended stabilization team. The following sub-section will outline the role of the DST in the areas of mentorship, governance, and stabilization.

Firstly, DST inter-agency members forge meaningful, predicable and sustainable relationships with affiliated district stakeholders. Trust and respect are deeply rooted in

Afghan culture, and strong personal bonds will yield significant dividends over time. Partnerships with the DL, the district shura members, active district CDCs, and ANSF leadership should be a priority. Secondary efforts can be aimed at establishing links with IPs operating within the province, including IOs, NGOs and contractors. Refreshing dormant district CDCs should remain a standing priority.

Secondly, the DST governance team invigorates connectivity between provincial and district institutions. At the center of Afghan local governance, the DL must strengthen ties to the Provincial Governor and his supporting bodies. Dialogue with Afghan provincial line ministries should be intensified with a view to enticing them to engage in the district, activating provincial reach-back to GIRoA ministries.

Thirdly, DST development partners work intimately with the DL, the district shura and active CDCs to rejuvenate the fledging DDP, resulting in a current and viable stabilization strategy congruent with Afghan priorities. A demanding endeavour, this process needs to consolidate local needs, prioritize initiatives, and nominate actionable projects.

Serving as a dedicated conduit for PRT programming at the district level, the DST can produce a comprehensive district stabilization package that is sequenced and sustainable, carefully balancing the competing need for short-term improvement and long-term capacity building. In the case of resource deficiencies, DST departmental representatives can explore alternate fielding strategies with IPs or multi-national agencies. Armed with a unified approach, the DST can implement projects, thereby exporting timely, tangible and durable stabilization to targeted villages.

Concurrent to the civilian engagements, military actors focus on securing and controlling the targeted stabilization areas within the district, expunging threat sources and building relationships with local Afghans. All military actions have a unifying purpose of priming stabilization initiatives. Partnered security operations, led by ANSF, are favoured over unilateral CF actions. This creates vital indigenous capacity, optimizes accessibility, builds local confidence in Afghan institutions, and actively promotes sustainability.

Once all CA conditions are set, the inter-agency team can collaboratively launch the doctrinal implementation strategy to 'Understand-Shape-Secure-Control-Build-Enable-Transition'. By deliberately applying the doctrinal modus operandi, the successive goals of orientation, targeting, security, and stabilization can be achieved.

DST Architecture

The DST must have dedicated and permanent actors engaged in the areas of security, governance, development and reconstruction. Based on a deliberate and iterative assessment of district security and stabilization potential, numbers will invariably fluctuate. When determining relative levels of civilian and military participation, it is essential that the DST does not succumb to imbalance, ensuring there is substantial and proportional commitment to pursue all LOOs.

To be truly effective, the DST must incorporate a much broader range of players. Indigenous experts with technical expertise in specialist areas should be actively recruited and permanently integrated, particularly those with local experience.[273] This will expand

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[273] Ephron, "Winning in Afghanistan: A Military Analyst on what's Wrong with U.S. Strategy."

the stabilization reach and capacity of civilian departments. Incorporating indigenous partners leverages local wisdom, promotes local solutions, and sterilizes unintended second and third order effects. This is a significant departure from current strategy, extending far beyond the activation of a token cultural advisor.
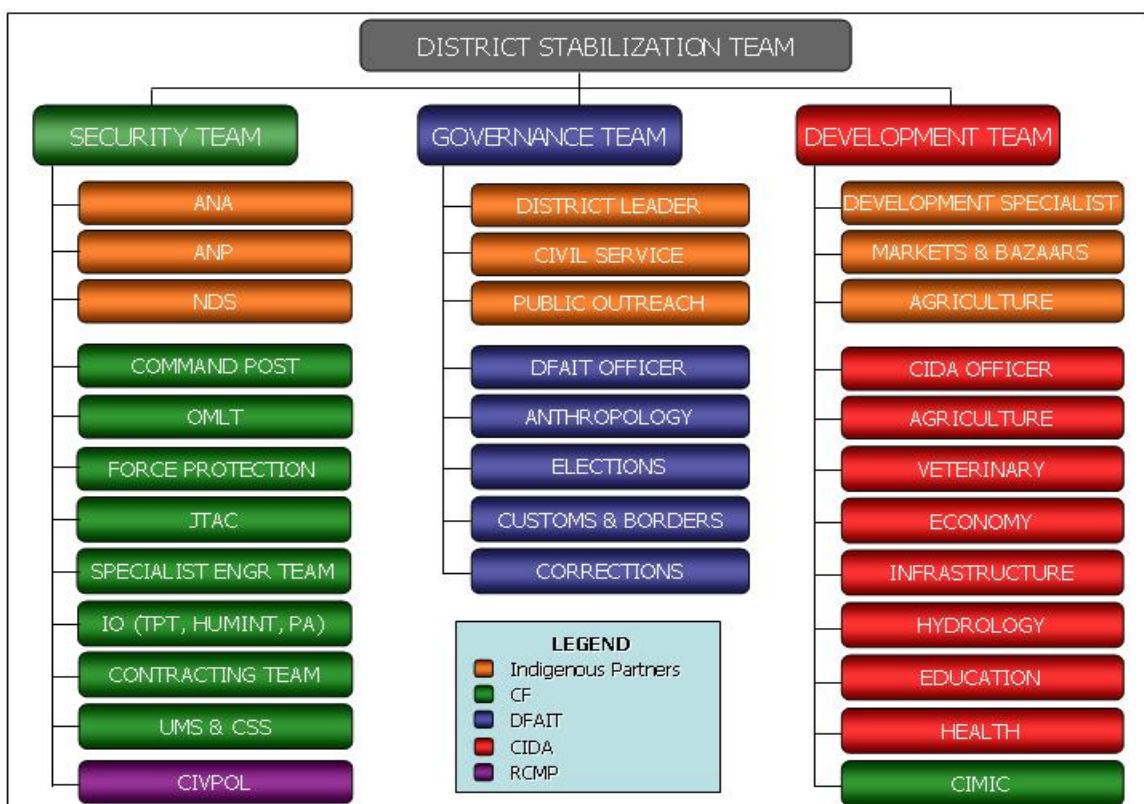
Figure 28 – District Stabilization Team Structure

Inexperienced indigenous actors should be continuously partnered with international specialists to accelerate learning. A focused mentorship plan must be produced for each Afghan participant, clearly defining their existing skills, the requisite proficiencies, and a progressive mentorship strategy to bridge the gap. As indigenous capacity builds, it is imperative to transition increased participation, and ultimately lead status, to Afghans. Transition can occur asymmetrically, by LOO, stabilization sector or function, and should be triggered as soon as sufficient indigenous capacity exists to lead.
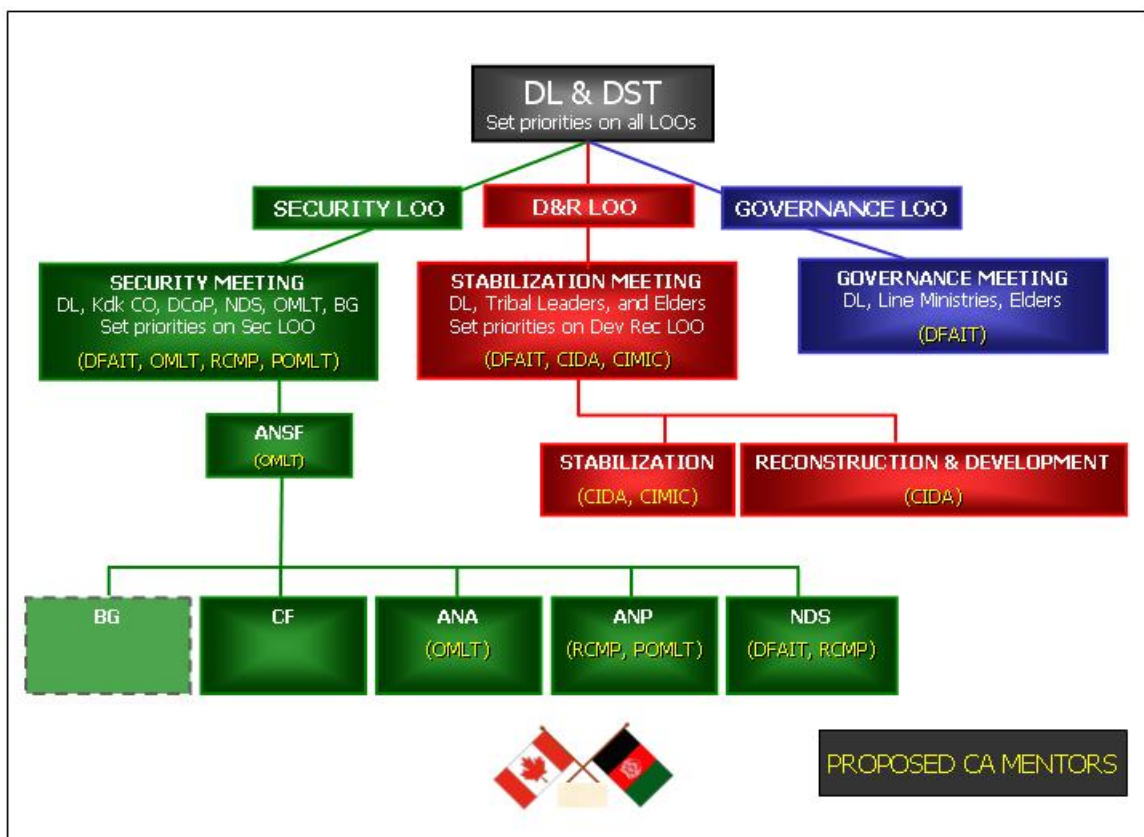
Figure 29 – District Stabilization Team Operating Concept

As Afghans assume responsibility for district stabilization, the DST should incrementally transform into a Stabilization Mentoring and Liaison Team (SMLT) akin to a conventional OMLT. At this juncture, redundant resources can be redirected and mentorship plans can be refocused. SMLTs are ultimately withdrawn once Afghan district autonomy is achieved.

Conclusion

The PRT is the central instrument for stabilization in counter-insurgency. Given the limited capacity and reach of the KPRT, stabilization could be accelerated and deepened by the complementary fielding of DSTs in targeted districts. A platform for

CA, DSTs optimize the alignment, integration and synchronization of inter-agency and indigenous stabilization partners at the district and village level.

DSTs are an investment in a 'population-centric' strategy. Through an unwavering focus on district stabilization, GIRoA and ISAF can legitimately compete for the trust and confidence of Afghans, thereby rending the insurgent cause progressively irrelevant.

CONCLUSION

Hypothesis Review

This paper aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Canadian CA for stabilization within the Afghanistan counter-insurgency. In the interest of an inclusive study, qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to assess the theoretical and doctrinal origins of the CA, and its subsequent application as a stabilization tool for nation-building. Although the analysis was conclusive, there were several constraints and inhibitors which precluded definitive assessment of CA effectiveness.

Limitations on Data Collection

Despite rigorous analysis, there were limitations on data collection. Information addressing the implementation of internal CA tools is sparse and inconclusive, particularly in the case of civilian government departments. When data was successfully captured, access was invariably restricted due to information security constraints governing SECRET products. However, reflecting back over my two operational deployments in Afghanistan, it is highly unlikely that any such material would alter the conclusions of this paper.

Indigenous perceptions represent a core component of the assessment strategy, evaluating the effectiveness of a 'population-centric' approach. Although urban and rural perceptions within Kandahar province were studied over four successive years, survey sample sizes were restricted to roughly 300 participants. And while surveys were administered impartially by contracted agents, there is potential that local participants

tailored their responses to conform to expected trends. Consequently, further research is warranted to gain a deeper appreciation for local sentiment.

Census polling is predicated on the assumption that individual opinion has the propensity to shape individual behaviour. This certainly holds true in western societies, where individual actions are congruent with personal attitudes, behaviour and perceptions. The same may not hold true for traditional societies driven by religious and cultural influences, understanding that individual motivations may be subordinated to the collective interests of the clan, tribe or religious faction.

While individual sentiment is not a flawless predictor of individual or collective behaviour, a judicious balance of quantitative and qualitative research compensated for this potential deficiency.

Limitations on Data Analysis

In light of the constraints on data collection, analysis of the CA was principally focused on the external projection of CA effects. Given the tangible nature of results, conclusive deductions were made in this area. Conversely, it was exceptionally difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of internal CA mechanics, strategy, and culture. These concepts are innately abstract, thereby inhibiting an intuitive performance assessment.

At present, there are no clear measures of effectiveness to accurately assess the performance of the Canadian CA in Afghanistan. The absence of performance indicators, trend analysis, and objectives impairs iterative and objective assessment of organizational efficiency. Without functional measures of effectiveness, no authoritative judgements can be made regarding the suitability of the CA as an expeditionary conflict tool.

Assessment of Hypothesis

Following extensive analysis, it is clear that while the CA is a viable instrument for stabilization, the Canadian implementation strategy requires modification to improve effectiveness in the Afghanistan counter-insurgency.

Conclusions

The CA has been validated as a suitable tool for nation-building. Despite its inherent strengths and recognized potential, the CA is not a panacea for stabilization in counter-insurgency. A detailed study of the Canadian intervention within Kandahar province suggests that CA inefficiencies are due to a lack of commitment, poor cooperation, restricted focus, and chronic inactivity.

Commitment

Although much has been accomplished by participating departments over the last five years, the CA has been plagued by a lack of commitment, resolve and initiative. Still today, there are CA actors who behave as though the symbolic presence of a deployed WoG team is the culminating activity in the journey of nation-building.

Cooperation

The Canadian CA approach continues to suffer from incongruent departmental policy, strategy, and programming. Deployed contingents remain principally responsive to parent institutions, subordinating cross-cutting CA obligations to core departmental agendas. Synchronization remains a critical flaw, exposing coalition vulnerabilities for

incremental insurgent targeting. Internal inefficiencies continue to plague Canadian CA

efficiency, impairing the unified pursuit of shared national goals.

Focus

The focal CA instrument for stabilization within Afghanistan is the PRT. In its

current configuration, the PRT lacks the capacity and reach to operate simultaneously at

the operational and tactical levels within Kandahar province. The current CA strategy,

which focuses predominantly on stimulating provincial institutions in urban centres,

has had damaging consequences in the 17 constituent districts. Stabilization efforts are

failing in rural areas where 75 percent of the provincial population resides.

Influencing Afghans

Despite the sustained intervention of TFK within Kandahar province, many

Afghans fail to reap timely, tangible, and durable stabilization effects. Investments in

signature development and reconstruction will fail unless they are complemented by

tiered initiatives which discernibly improve indigenous quality of life. Chronic neglect

and inactivity, coupled with an enemy-centric philosophy, has severely strained the trust

and confidence of the local population.

Recommendations

In order to reconcile stated deficiencies, the Canadian CA strategy requires

modification at the executive and operational level. From a leadership perspective,

CA adjustments are proposed in the areas of political engagement, accountability, and

military strategic focus. In order to optimize CA effectiveness, functional changes should also be pursued in the spheres of strategy, cooperation, force employment, and patience.

Political Engagement

The Canadian CA approach in Afghanistan is plagued by competing and incongruent departmental strategies which are principally responsive to parent organizations. In order to reconcile this fatal flaw, strong political leadership is essential. The RoCK should actively steer the tactical campaign for TFK, synchronizing all instruments of power. At the regional level, the Ambassador should set favourable operational conditions for the implementation of the Canadian CA. The ATF must implement a unifying vision and campaign plan at the strategic level, harmonizing the fractured approaches currently in use. Parallel efforts by the PCO are imperative at the political level, marshalling departmental efforts in pursuit of shared goals.

Accountability

Deployed departmental contingents must be principally responsive to the RoCK and the Ambassador for mission execution in Afghanistan. At the national level, all departments need to be accountable to the ATF and the PCO. Organizational agendas will take precedence until accountability is practiced.

Military Strategic Focus

Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command (CEFCOM) must take a more active role in directing the military campaign in Afghanistan, constraining TFK commanders

from iteratively and fundamentally changing the military campaign plan. An enduring

strategy will provide a stable CA platform for integrated planning and projection of

blended effects.

Adopt A Multi-Level Strategy

Success of the Canadian CA hinges on simultaneous engagement at the strategic,

operational, and tactical levels. A comprehensive strategy, harnessing all instruments of

state power, must be equitably applied to stabilize urban and rural areas of Kandahar

province. CA programming should be 'population-centric', maintaining an enduring

focus on discernibly improving indigenous quality of life. This necessitates the

continuous commitment of CA resources at the district and village levels, fielding

tangible effects across the stabilization continuum. Although several options exist, the

DST model offers a structural conduit for extending the reach of GIRoA and servicing

the recognized CoG.

Cooperation

Persistent departmental struggles for power and influence need to be abandoned in

favour of genuine collaboration. Partnerships are vital to CA effectiveness, applying

supported and supporting departmental relationships. Military shaping operations should take

precedence during the preliminary stages of intervention, focused on achieving favourable

conditions for the projection of governance, development and reconstruction effects.

Following successful military influence activities, lead status should shift to civilian power

instruments to deliver decisive stabilization programming.

Force Employment

Given limited Canadian capacity and span of control, it is imperative to concentrate force and accept risks. Futile attempts to do everything will accomplish nothing. CA efforts and resources must be focused narrowly on stated objectives and geography, achieving decisive results in targeted areas while conceding others.

Patience

Nation-building is a complex endeavour, particularly when facing a determined insurgent foe. In order to prevail in a prolonged campaign for the will of indigenous people, stabilization forces must exhibit resolute commitment, patience, and resolve.

Final Reflections

This paper has revealed salient conclusions and offered acute recommendations to optimize the effectiveness of the Canadian CA within Kandahar province. Predictably, certain elements of the hypothesis remain unconfirmed, warranting further examination.

Although there are unique organizational approaches to stabilization, Canadian departments have reached broad consensus on the central importance of the indigenous population. Considering the extensive national resources applied to this endeavour, it is perplexing how the inter-agency contingent can be so impotent in servicing the recognized CoG.

Counter-insurgency interventions are inherently complex, necessitating the careful integration of all instruments of state power. Beyond physical assimilation, genuine CA requires integrated campaign planning at the operational level to derive

decisive points and objectives along diplomatic, economic, informational, and military LOOs. All actions must be carefully sequenced, contributing to a unified CoG and achievement of a shared end state.

Education is a principal inhibitor for collaborative CA campaign planning. The Operational Planning Process (OPP), which serves as the CF tool, concentrates principally on the development and prosecution of the military LOO. In turn, the CF assumes that partnered civilian departments will conduct analogous campaign design for the diplomatic, economic, and informational dimensions of conflict. Regrettably, civilian agencies lack the robust professional development programs required to educate stakeholders in the conduct of hybrid campaign planning at the operational level.

If the GoC is to be successful in Afghanistan, or any CA engagement for that matter, it is imperative that departments invest individually and collectively in professional education initiatives. Departmental secondments and shared learning must be intensified in order to generate enduring CA capacity at the institutional level. By investing in the leaders of tomorrow, the GoC will be well postured to confront the complex cross-cutting challenges of the 21st century.

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