



POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

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Training and Education for Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Improving Our Ability to Assist and Building Indigenous Capacity¹

Training and education are critical to the success of a post-conflict reconstruction operation in two very different ways: they can significantly enhance the performance of the outsiders providing assistance, and they can help develop indigenous human resources and capacity in areas central to enabling the society's transition to durable peace and stability. The purpose of this paper is to identify actionable steps the United States can take in both of these areas to increase the chances of success in post-conflict operations, keeping in mind the broader international context in which U.S. efforts will undoubtedly occur. Specifically, it will identify ways in which the preparation of USG participants for post-conflict reconstruction operations can be improved and the types of training and education programs the United States should be prepared to offer to indigenous actors in post-conflict societies.

Training U.S. Personnel for Post-Conflict Reconstruction

To date, the training of U.S. government personnel to assist in post-conflict operations has been uneven, at best. Some organizations – like AID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and elements of the U.S. military – have developed excellent training programs for the personnel they send into the field. Others, however, routinely deploy people to reconstruction operations with little or no specialized training for the post-conflict environment. Even when U.S. personnel receive solid training in their particular task or skill area, they rarely have an opportunity to train with the representatives of the other U.S. agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the international actors with whom they will have to work in the field. The same is true at the strategic or headquarters level.

There are several reasons why this is the case. First, many U.S. agencies do not have a "training culture" – that is, training is not generally valued as a means of either improving performance or gaining advancement. Indeed, few agencies outside DoD and State offer any routine opportunities for training and education beyond initial, entry-level indoctrination and job-specific skills training. The training culture that exists in the U.S. military is truly an exception; most civilian U.S. government agencies expect their personnel to acquire the skills they need on the job rather than giving priority to training them for anticipated requirements. This raises the question of how to create the necessary incentives and accountability to ensure that the right people get the training they need to be successful in their assigned responsibilities in managing or executing post-conflict reconstruction operations.

Second, there is a lack of consensus on what the substance of training for post-conflict reconstruction operations should be. For example, whereas the Clinton Administration's PDD-56 on Managing Complex Contingency Operations defined an interagency process that could be used as the basis for an interagency training program aimed at policymakers and their staffs in Washington, the Bush Administration's reluctance to sign and issue NSPD XX and a follow-on NSPD on post-conflict reconstruction has left existing interagency training programs without a clear foundation upon which to build a curriculum.

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Finally, there is little agreement on the question of who should receive training when. One approach is to train as many people as possible as part of routine professional development. For example, the State Department could include a course on post-conflict reconstruction issues and lessons learned in the curriculum for Foreign Service Officers at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, and the Defense Department could incorporate post-conflict reconstruction issues into Professional Military Education programs. While integrating post-conflict reconstruction into the professional development courses of all the relevant agencies is necessary to build an appreciation for its complexities, this foundation is unlikely to be sufficient to ensure that the right people get trained in the right skills at the right time.

Another approach is to provide targeted, in-depth training for smaller cadres of key personnel at both headquarters and field levels. Indeed, this concept animated the PDD-56 effort to train a cadre of interagency pol-mil planners who could be drawn upon in the earliest stages of preparing for a complex contingency in which the United States might intervene. It has also been used by, among others, OFDA to develop a pool of qualified people prepared to serve as DART team leaders, by the U.S. military to develop Joint Task Force (JTF) staffs, and by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop a cadre of crisis managers prepared to serve as interagency coordinators for response to domestic disasters. Such an approach could conceivably be used to develop a cadre of professionals qualified to serve as “Directors of Reconstruction” and on their staffs, as previously recommended.²

A third axis is required to complement general “professional development courses” and the more in-depth training for those who are likely leaders and participants in PCR efforts. Pre-deployment training for those who are tapped to take part in a specific operation is an absolute necessity. Competent execution on the ground will maximize the effects of good planning and strategy (and can at times salvage a poor plan) while incompetent execution can cause even the best plans and international programs to fail.³ While some perceive that once a crisis arises, the people involved in orchestrating and executing the U.S. response simply do not have time for training, the U.S. military and USAID have routinely provided intensive, scenario-specific training to their personnel prior to deploying them to an actual operation, with substantial positive impact on their performance. In truth, some combination of all three of these approaches is warranted.

Priority Shortfalls to be Addressed

Given the complexity of post-conflict operations – and the fact that the United States should focus on its areas of comparative advantage – efforts to improve training for U.S. personnel participating in these operations should be targeted at the areas: 1) that are most critical to the success of an operation, 2) in which U.S. personnel are likely to play lead or important roles, and 3) in which current training programs are inadequate or nonexistent. These criteria suggest that efforts to improve training and education for U.S. personnel involved in post-conflict reconstruction should focus on the following areas:

- *Interagency assessment of post-conflict reconstruction needs for a given operation:* Understanding the situation on the ground, the history of the conflict, the indigenous and international actors on the ground and their respective objectives and capacities, the particular challenges likely to be encountered, and numerous other factors are critical to developing effective strategies for reconstruction. Yet, too often, the personnel conducting the assessments on which key policy decisions and operational plans will be made have not been given the

² See PCR project discussion papers: Dr. Robert Orr, “Meeting the Challenges of Governance and Participation In Post-Conflict Settings” and the corresponding article “Governing When Chaos Rules: Enhancing Governance and Participation,” to be published in the Fall 2002 issue of the *Washington Quarterly*.

³ See PCR project discussion paper: Dr. Robert Orr, “Constructing a Cohesive and Strategic International Response.”

training they need to even ask the right questions in a post-conflict environment, let alone answer them. Training personnel for this critical task should be given a high priority.

- *Interagency strategy development and planning at the headquarters level:* As the last decade of experience has demonstrated, an interagency process for developing an integrated strategy and plan for U.S. assistance in a post-conflict operation is critical to unity of effort and, ultimately, achieving successful outcomes. Yet there is no guarantee that such a process will take place (as we have seen in Afghanistan) unless it is led by the National Security Council staff and there is a common approach (such as that identified in PDD-56 or NSPD XX) that the key participants are prepared to undertake.⁴
- *Interagency coordination in the field:* Nearly every lessons learned report from nearly every post-conflict operation of the last decade has flagged interagency coordination in the field as either a profound problem or an area in need of some improvement. And, too often, the interagency coordination wheel has been reinvented with each new operation. Building on best practices from past operations, training in this area could substantially enhance unity of effort and overall performance on the ground .
- *Integrated approaches to justice and reconciliation:* To be successful, meeting emergency justice needs and helping to rebuild indigenous justice and reconciliation mechanisms in countries emerging from conflict requires a comprehensive approach that integrates legal, judicial, police, penal, human rights and reconciliation elements. At present, no training exists to help U.S. personnel involved in this aspect of post-conflict reconstruction to design or implement such an approach.⁵
- *Anti-corruption measures:* In operation after operation, U.S. and international efforts to help jump start economic activity, rebuild indigenous institutions and capacity, and reestablish the rule of law have been undermined by the corruption that is often rampant in post-conflict societies. Training U.S. personnel in the design, implementation, and monitoring of anti-corruption measures could have a meaningful impact on the degree of success in future operations and the time required to achieve it.

Actionable Recommendations for the U.S. Government

Providing better training and education to the U.S. personnel who participate in the planning and execution of post-conflict operations – both at the headquarters level and in the field – is critical to improving performance in future operations. Based on the analysis above, the United States should implement the following package of recommendations:

1. *The administration, working with Congress, should establish a U.S. Training Center for Post-Conflict Reconstruction Operations* with five key missions: 1) training key interagency personnel in assessment, strategy development, planning and coordination for PCR; 2) developing and certifying a cadre of PCR experts who could be called to participate in future operations at both the headquarters and field levels; 3) providing pre-deployment training to interagency personnel tapped for specific operations; 4) developing a cadre of rapidly deployable training packages for use in the field, and 5) conducting after action reviews of real-world operations to capture lessons

⁴ The recommendation that such a common approach and template be established is made in a companion PCR project discussion paper: Michèle Flournoy, "Interagency Strategy and Planning for Post-Conflict Reconstruction."

⁵ For more on the requirements of an integrated approach to justice and reconciliation in post-conflict operations, see Michèle Flournoy and Michael Pan, "Supporting Post-Conflict Justice and Reconciliation" and the corresponding article "Dealing with Demons: Justice and Reconciliation," to be published in the Fall 2002 issue of the *Washington Quarterly*.

learned, best practices and tools and designing mechanisms to feed them back into training and education programs. This Center should work closely with existing training entities in DoD and other USG agencies to promote maximum “jointness.”

2. *Make interagency training for strategy development and planning a de facto requirement for all key participants in the process.* The National Security Advisor, working with her counterparts in the Cabinet, should emphasize the importance of such training by articulating an expectation that everyone involved U.S. PCR operations, from the Deputies on down, will receive the appropriate training, and then work with her counterparts in the Cabinet to ensure that such training actually takes place. Specifically, National Defense University should be tasked with creating, under NSC-sponsorship, a short (half-day) exercise for Deputies, a slightly longer (one-day) exercise for Assistant Secretaries and others serving on relevant PCCs, and a more in-depth exercise (2-3 days) for the Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Office Directors and staff who support them. Whenever possible, such training should also include key U.S. representatives from the field (such as the relevant CINC or JTF commander, Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission, Head of AID Mission, etc.). This training should be offered frequently enough to accommodate personnel changes and to keep the participants current.
3. *Develop new simulation tools for use in interagency training programs.* The more realistic a training experience, the more powerful it tends to be. Simulations offer a way of replicating real-world conditions and experiences outside an operational environment. They can also enable policymakers to explore the impacts of alternative courses of action before making real-world decisions. Yet the U.S. Government currently lacks simulation tools that accurately portray the full range of post-conflict reconstruction challenges with which U.S. decision makers must grapple.⁶ Developing such tools should be explored on a priority basis. These simulation tools should be capable of serving not only as generic training devices, but also as mission rehearsal tools that can be rapidly tailored to reflect specific situations.
4. *Better integration of post-conflict reconstruction issues into regularly scheduled U.S. training and education courses.* This should include but not be limited to courses offered at the National Defense University, service War Colleges, the Naval Post-Graduate School and other institutions offering Professional Military Education, as well as the National Foreign Affairs Training Center and other relevant U.S. training and education centers. The USG should also seek ways of promoting teaching on post-conflict reconstruction in graduate programs in American universities.
5. *Expand the participation of NGO, IO and other international personnel in U.S. training programs for post-conflict reconstruction at all levels.* U.S. efforts to assist PCR always take place in an environment that requires working with a wide range of non-USG actors. U.S. personnel are greatly disadvantaged if they do not understand how organizations such as the United Nations, NGOs, regional organizations and others operate. Including representatives of these organizations in training programs is essential. The U.S. Government should also look for

⁶ Perhaps the most well developed simulation tool to date is S.E.N.S.E. (Synthetic Environments for National Security Estimates), an interactive computer-based program that provides a virtual decision-making environment for some aspects of post-conflict reconstruction training. At this point in its development, however, SENSE is primarily an economics-based program, teaching responsible financial management and basic free-market economics as means to rebuilding a collapsed economy. The current version of SENSE does not adequately treat the crucial security, justice, and governance aspects of post-conflict reconstruction. To be made more effective for PCR training, the simulated environment would need to be refined to introduce realistic variables such as re-emerging conflict, security threats, public health issues, arrests and trials, elections, civic unrest, infrastructure and institutional capacity weakness, warlords, donor fatigue and other unpredictable forces that complicate reconstruction. If these indicators could be linked to one another — e.g. a rise in unemployment causes civic unrest and requires increased security -- then participants would better appreciate the need for interagency and cross-sector collaboration. Further investment in and refinement of SENSE should be explored to make this simulation tool a more useful component of post-conflict reconstruction training.

opportunities to send its personnel to UN and other international training programs that include the full range of actors likely to be involved in post-conflict operations.

6. *Make interagency training in post-conflict reconstruction a de facto requirement for U.S. personnel assigned to key field positions.* Given the importance of interagency unity of effort in achieving success in PCR operations, advanced training in interagency operations should be treated as a required qualification for any U.S. official assigned to a key operational position, such as U.S. Special Envoy (or “Director of Reconstruction”), U.S. Ambassador, Joint Task Force Commander, or Head of AID Mission. Making appropriate interagency training a *de facto* requirement for such positions would almost certainly provide a very real incentive for more mid-level and senior officials to get such training over the course of their careers.
7. *Train a cadre of personnel who are qualified to serve as “Directors of Reconstruction” as well as members of their staff.* Building on the demonstrated successes of the OFDA and FEMA models, this would involve developing a roster of senior and mid-level civilians who would be qualified and trained to serve in such positions in future operations as well as a clear career path in post-conflict reconstruction.
8. *Enhance specialized training programs in the key areas of justice and reconciliation and anti-corruption measures.* Assign responsibility for development and implementation to the following: Justice and Reconciliation – DoJ with DoD and DoS support; Anti-corruption – Treasury with DoJ support. Specifically, increase funding for and access to those programs that address the shortfalls described above.

Training Indigenous Personnel to Build Local Capacity

Training and education programs for indigenous organizations and individuals can be a vital form of assistance in helping a post-conflict society transition to sustainable peace. The primary objectives of such programs are to develop the human resources and build the institutional capacities of the host country. Such efforts are essential in all four pillars of post-conflict reconstruction: security, justice and reconciliation, governance and participation, and social and economic well-being. While the United States and the international community have developed particularly strong programs in areas such as training indigenous military and police forces, there are a number of critical areas in which effective training and education programs are sorely lacking (see shortfalls discussed below).

In developing and implementing such training and education programs, the United States and the international community face a number of challenges. The first is determining what should be taught – the content of the training. In many PCR task areas there is little consensus on what is necessary to support the successful development of a society. The second challenge is ensuring that whatever knowledge is imported from the outside is adequately adapted or tailored to specific, local conditions. The substance of the training needs to be rooted in local norms and culture if it is to be sustainable over time.

Another challenge is ensuring that programs have the scope and duration necessary to have lasting impact. Programs must reach not only the right people (vetted, in key positions, etc.) but also adequate numbers in a given area if they are to create the critical mass of capacity necessary to create lasting change. In this regard, “training the trainers” and establishing indigenous training institutions (such as police, military and civil service academies) can be very effective “force multipliers” for the international community. Doing so can significantly magnify the impact of the initial program and create a capacity for continuing the development of the society’s human capital long after the period of extraordinary

international intervention ends. Programs must also look at the “life-cycle” of those who receive training, and how continuous engagement will progress with them.⁷

Finally, there is the perennial challenge of translating theory into practice – of helping new ways of doing business to take root and grow in often inhospitable environments. This challenge highlights the importance of treating training and education as a process, not a one-time experience, and of supplementing such programs with ongoing opportunities for mentoring and “on the job” training to sustain progress.⁸

Priority Shortfalls to be Addressed

The list of areas in which the United States could conceivably provide training and education assistance to post-conflict societies is virtually endless – and prohibitively costly. Priorities for U.S. training and education assistance should be identified via on the following criteria:

- Building indigenous capacity in a given task area is critical to success of the society’s transition from conflict to sustainable peace
- Existing programs offered by the United States or others in the international community are inadequate
- The United States has a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other international actors in terms of expertise, access, resources or training programs in the task area.

Based on these criteria, several post-conflict reconstruction areas stand out as possible areas of focus for the United States:

- *Development of indigenous militaries and civilian mechanisms of democratic control:* Establishing civilian control of the military is one of the key metrics of success in the development of a post-conflict society. As demonstrated in several recent post-conflict reconstruction operations (and a number of developing countries), the U.S. military has substantial expertise in assisting the development of indigenous military forces under civilian control. Equally important, but less well established, are civilian-run programs to develop a cadre of host country civilians capable of providing appropriate oversight of and direction to military forces. Given its history, expertise, resources and cadre of experienced civilian defense officials, the United States is uniquely positioned to address this shortfall.
- *Development of indigenous police forces and civilian mechanisms of democratic control:* Similarly, establishing competent police forces that are responsive to civilian authorities and respectful of human rights is another key measure of successful reconstruction. And here again, the United States has well-established expertise and an impressive track record: ICITAP, for example, is currently managing programs in 18 countries as well as a regional program in the Newly Independent States (NIS). Yet these programs have been both consistently under funded and somewhat constrained by the nature of the mechanisms used to fund them.
- *Training of legal, judicial, penal and human rights personnel:* Too often in the past, international assistance efforts have focused on training indigenous police forces without adequate regard for developing the broader justice system in which they must operate. Establishing (or

⁷ It has been estimated that the USG has trained over 700,000 foreign personnel in government programs over the last 10-12 years, but the USG has no comprehensive system for tracking “alumni,” ensuring that their skills are put to good use, and developing their potential through further training. (Info Operations in Peacekeeping, CJCS Conference at the US Army War College, May 2002.)

⁸ See <http://www.careerclusters.org> for one example of a USG-sponsored effort to provide curriculum guidance and organization that may be applicable as a framework for PCR indigenous training efforts.

reestablishing) a fair, impartial and transparent system of justice is one of the most critical tasks of reconstruction. This requires a comprehensive approach that touches all aspects of the justice system, from lawyers to judges to corrections officials to human right monitors. As yet, however, no integrated approach to training indigenous personnel for this broad range of tasks has been developed.

- *Training and mentoring of local entrepreneurs:* Creating economic vitality and growth in post-conflict economies is one of the greatest and most important reconstruction challenges. And in most cases, local entrepreneurs are the real engines of economic change. While many governments and NGOs have launched successful programs in this area, few have the capacity to create lasting change on a national scale. Given the size, experience and diversity of the U.S. entrepreneurial base, the United States has a great deal to offer in providing technical assistance to local businesses.
- *Training of civil servants and administrators:* Creating the capacity for good governance in a post-conflict society requires developing a cadre of people with the skills, experience, and incentives to administer a broad array of government programs – from education to health programs to public works – with integrity, effectiveness and efficiency. Yet progress in many cases has foundered on precisely this issue. The international community could do much more to strengthen its assistance in this area, and the United States is well positioned to contribute.
- *Design and implementation of anti-corruption programs:* Corruption often runs rampant in post-conflict societies, and rooting it out must be a top priority of any reconstruction effort. To date, however, international assistance efforts in this arena have been *ad hoc* in nature, and often too little too late. As a country with a strong anti-corruption culture and well-established anti-corruption measures in every sector of society and every level of government, the United States is uniquely positioned to help design and implement anti-corruption programs as part of its post-conflict assistance efforts.

Actionable Recommendations for the U.S. Government

1. *Design and develop rapidly deployable training assistance programs for post-conflict societies in each of the following key areas:* civilian control of the military (DoD civilian lead); training of legal, judicial, penal and human rights personnel (DoJ lead); training of local entrepreneurs (Commerce lead); training of civil servants and administrators (OPM lead); and anti-corruption measures (Treasury lead).
2. *Identify and train cadres of on-call U.S. experts in each of the above areas.* Develop databases of U.S. experts who are qualified and potentially available to deploy within weeks to post-conflict operations.
3. *Increase funding available for training of police forces in post-conflict societies.* Specifically, increase ICITAP funding for this purpose.
4. *Increase funding available for longer-term educational assistance in post-conflict societies.* This is imperative for sustainable development and the transition to sustainable peace.

Conclusion

Targeted training and education programs are critical to success in post-conflict reconstruction – both to enhance the performance of those who assist and to build indigenous capacity to foster and sustain a

society's transition to peace and stability. Taking the concrete steps recommended in this paper could meaningfully improve both the United States' ability to be effective in reconstruction operations, when it chooses to intervene, and the chances of the operation's long-term success. This important area of assistance deserves priority attention and action.