Stabilisation and Stability Operations: A Literature Review

Stephanie Blair, PhD
Ann Fitz-Gerald, PhD
Centre for Security Sector Management, Cranfield University

I. INTRODUCTION

'Stabilisation', 'stability operations' and 'instability' are relatively new terms in the conflict transformation lexicon and the literature on these areas has grown significantly over a fairly short time period. For better or for worse, knowledge in this area has been shaped predominantly by the formative experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq. These operations are based on a view that weak and failing states pose a direct threat to wider international and national security. This article provides a literature survey which takes this sentiment and these two significant operations as its points of departure, particularly in light of the significance of 9/11 as a defining moment in thinking about international security and the nature of the international system. One trend has been to situate analyses of stability operations in the broader context of instability and fragile states, with early warning and statebuilding as core concepts, and in part formed by the experiences of counter-insurgency and its attendant military doctrine. Notwithstanding these experiences, the literature on stabilisation operations has not yet matured sufficiently to join with related areas of research in a more systematic and explicitly theoretical way. Nor has a systematic, academic and referenced literature based on these cases yet emerged. National and regional perspectives which have shaped case studies are reliant upon Afghanistan and Iraq and finding any references to stabilisation operations beyond these two theatres is not forthcoming.[1] Thus, the gap in the analytical literature is particularly acute at the level of evidence and analysis, which limits the deeper examination of the inter-linkages and interdependencies across actors and activities involved, particularly in understanding the challenges for achieving a more coherent 'whole-of-government' approach to future stabilisation interventions.

We have identified four broad areas which have influenced the assumptions and which form the foundation for the emerging stabilisation operations literature. Each is predicated on the overarching concept of the 'security-development' - and emerging awareness of the 'security-governance' – nexus. However, the

[1] Whilst the authors acknowledge the earlier works of the counter-insurgency concept and efforts in Europe's post-colonial experiences, the only other article which offers a 'fresh' view on stabilisation challenges outside the Afghanistan and Iraq experience is Dr Jeremy Brickhill's account of Darfur, which was published by the Pretoria-based Institute for Security Studies, Paper No. 138, 2006?

lines between the categories are blurred and many of the works belong in more than one:

- Failed and Fragile States, Fragility and Instability
- Counter-Insurgency Operations (COIN)
- Early Recovery
- Statebuilding and Peacebuilding

These areas will be explored in the context of stabilisation operations, with initial analyses focusing on situating stabilisation operations within the broader literature on state fragility, Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC), and Counterinsurgency (COIN). The paper will then explore key challenges to 'whole-of-government stabilisation', underscoring the importance of addressing inter-linkages and interdependencies to inform future analysis in this area.

II. SOURCES

This literature survey focuses on material in the public domain including recent US and UK doctrine and government and inter-governmental policy, books, book chapters and scholarly articles, think-tank and NGO reports and conference papers. Important conceptual development has emerged from the leading countries of UK, US, and Canada based primarily on experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, but with broader applicability to countries at risk of instability. The selection criterion has been rigorous. However, the authors acknowledge that, due to the currency of stabilisation interventions, the bibliography remains a work-in-progress.

This article reviews the current literature on stabilisation and summarises the main messages, key trends, and knowledge gaps. It then challenges assumptions underlying the debate and present a series of innovative thoughts supporting policy development and capacity-building in this area.

III. SITUATING STABILISATION OPERATIONS

The events of 11 September 2001 ushered in a new development and security paradigm with far-reaching and global implications. This new paradigm included a shift in thinking which identified fragile and failed states as national security threats. Fragile states are viewed as both a major development challenge and a leading source of transnational threats to global security. The prevailing view is that it is no longer acceptable or appropriate to avoid engaging with failed states, that fragile states constitute a threat to wider regional and global security, and that the costs of late response to crises are high. This has forced increased, and often contentious and difficult collaboration between the development and

military communities. The emergence of this shift has been demonstrated in Afghanistan and Iraq with not completely satisfactory results.

Stabilisation operations sit at the 'intersection' of overlapping definitions, concepts and activities. "The notion of 'stabilisation' or stabilisation operations has emerged precisely because of the difficulty to categorize activities that fall into a grey zone in between military and civilian responsibilities."[2] This section will set out and compare the UK and US definitions of stabilisation. It will then discuss these in the wider context of the four broad areas identified by the research which have influenced the assumptions and formed the foundation for the emerging stabilisation operations literature: Failed and Fragile States, Fragility and Instability; COIN, Early recovery; and Statebuilding and Peacebuilding.

- **WHAT IS STABILISATION?**

Considerable energy has been spent grappling with stabilisation terminologies and definitions, particularly by the UK and US militaries, but also increasingly by the inter-agency units created by those governments. The UK has established the Stabilisation Unit, the US has its Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilisation (O/CRS) and Canada has created the Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (START). Each national entity is dedicated to operationalising 'whole-of-government' or '3-D' (defence, diplomacy and development) approaches. Such approaches have been applauded for providing better-informed diagnosis and ongoing analysis of security-related interventions[3] and therefore provide a critical foundation for an evolving stabilisation debate which relies on effective civil-military integration.

Whilst the Canadian Government has focused on the structural and resource development of its START concept, the UK and the US have both prioritized the conceptual development of stabilization operations. While the terminology and the fundamentals underpinning stabilisation are complementary between the two countries, the focus of each is slightly different. Each national approach makes the link between the requirement for stabilisation interventions in places where host governments are weak or have lost the capacity to govern effectively, thus stressing the threat posed by instability and fragility. As a result, some analysts have observed that those conducting such operations must often assume, at least temporarily, many roles of the state while simultaneously trying to rebuild that capacity.[4]

[2] Baumann, Andrea Barbara, "Clash of Organisational Cultures? The Challenge of integrating civilian and military efforts in stabilisation operations" RUSI Journal December 2008, Vol 153, No 6, pp 70-73. p 71.
[3] Ann M Fitz-Gerald, 2008
[4] Bensahel, Nora, Olga Oliker and Heather Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilisation and Reconstruction Operations,* Washington, DC: Rand, 2009, p.13

The UK Government's Stabilisation Unit defines stabilisation as

> […]the process by which underlying tensions that might lead to resurgence in violence and a break-down in law and order are managed and reduced, whilst efforts are made to support preconditions for successful longer-term development'.[5][…] it is a summary term for the complex processes that have to be undertaken in countries experiencing, or emerging from, violent conflict to achieve peace and security and a political settlement that leads to legitimate government. [6]

The new and much anticipated British doctrine JDP 3-40, *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* sets out an approach which emphasises the role of prevention or reduction of violence and stresses the desired outcomes of political settlement leading to a legitimate state with longer-term social and economic development. Clearly the UK and the US are intellectual partners in driving the stabilisation agenda forward, with the primary difference being one of nuance, with the UK approach leaning more towards principles and the US approach being slightly more prescriptive and dogmatic. The UK's JDP-3-40 defines stabilization as:

> […]the process that supports states which are entering, enduring or emerging from conflict, in order to prevent or reduce violence; protect the population and key infrastructure; promote political processes and governance structures which lead to a political settlement that institutionalises non-violent contests for power; and prepares for sustainable social and economic development.[7]

The much heralded US doctrine, FM 3-07 'Stability Operations' focuses on the comprehensive approach to stabilisation efforts through the coordination of national instruments of power that can be brought to bear on situations of instability or fragility in order to stabilise ungoverned areas. "Stability Operations constitute the Army's approach to the conduct of full spectrum operations in any environment across the spectrum of conflict. This doctrine focuses on achieving unity of effort through a comprehensive approach to stability operations, but

[5] The Stabilisation Unit, previously named the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU), is jointly owned by the Department for International Development (DFID), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defense (MOD) the three "parent Departments". It provides specialist, targeted assistance in countries emerging from violent conflict where the UK is helping to achieve a stable environment that will enable longer term development to take place. See www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk for more details

[6] Stabilisation Unit *Guidance Note* p. 2

[7] UK JDP 340 SECURITY AND STABILISATION: THE MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AH LEVEL WORKING DRAFT 31 Jan 2009

remains consistent with, and supports the execution of, a broader "'whole-of-government'" approach as defined by the United States Government (USG)."[8]

> An overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief."[9]

In addition, the American think-tank RAND has added to the definitional arena by setting stabilisation operations in the context of other activities as one component of a wide range of possible operations including reconstruction, intervention, and COIN, as part of wider post-conflict operation that underpins statebuilding.

> The family of efforts grouped together under stabilisation and reconstruction encompasses a range of overlapping missions that are themselves components of a broad range of different engagements and approaches. Stabilisation… generally refers to the effort to end conflict and social, economic, and political upheaval. …Stabilisation, thus defined, is one component of a wide range of possible operations…. stabilisation can be carried out as part of an intervention. Indeed, it can be the express purpose of an intervention to end violence. It is also crucial in the aftermath of combat operations, which may have intentionally or unintentionally helped spur additional conflict. Stabilisation 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. Counterterrorism operations may also include a stabilisation component.[10]

- **Stabilisation and Fragile States**

While the new security paradigm sets out fragile states as both a development and security challenge, there is little coherence amongst governments or within governments about what constitutes a fragile state or conditions of instability, and no single donor has formulated a government-wide fragile states strategy. The US Department of Defense's FM 3-07 states that "the term fragile state refers to the broad spectrum of failed, failing, and recovering states. The distinction among them is rarely clear, as fragile states do not travel a predictable path to failure or recovery."[11] There are also numerous policy documents which outline

[8] US HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, FM 3-07 (FM 100-20): Stability Operations, October 2008
[9] The US Army' Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) uses concepts from FM 3-07 and Joint Publication (JP) 3-0
[10] Bensahel, Nora, Olga Oliker and Heather Peterson, Improving Capacity for Stabilisation and Reconstruction Operations, Washington, DC: Rand, 2009, p. 3
[11] US Army FM 3 07, 1-46

both frameworks for instability and suggested responses. The concept appears to be most popular among the development community ministries, although in some donor governments, this remit becomes elevated to a more executive-led role. The UK concept of 'horizon-scanning', led initially through the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PMSU), serves as a good example. The new UK doctrine JDP 3-40 makes the explicit link between fragility and threats to UK national security and sets out a framework for fragility and failed states. Importantly, both the UK[12] and US[13] military situate their stabilisation doctrines within the context of fragile states and each sets out the conditions of fragility in which the military will find itself, including insecurity, declining economic environment, weak governance and rule of law. However, the lack of a unified strategic vision on the concept of instability results in a welter of competing white papers and policy statements from different agencies, bilateral and multilateral actors.

The threat posed by failed and fragile states formed a core part of the first draft of the UK's National Security Strategy (NSS)[14] - which was released in March 2008 - and its approach to international security. The May 2009 publication of what became known in London as the 'NSS 2'[15] reiterated the importance of failed and fragile states. With such a flurry of activities surrounding security-related strategy documents at both Cabinet and line ministry levels, the July 2009 announcement of an impending new 'Strategic Defence Review'[16] came as not surprise.. Based on the current UK MOD priority countries (including Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal), there is no doubt that the issue of failed and fragile states will feature throughout.

The UK 'NSS 2' has built on efforts to grapple with the issues of, and threats posed by, instability and the linkages to the UK's crisis response. Integration is a key component of the UK approach[17] as evidenced by the statement in the 2008 NSS publication which reads: "The UK strategy for dealing with countries at risk of instability requires a joined-up Diplomatic, Development, Military and Justice responses."[18] The most recent document underlines the importance of stabilisation, civilian stabilisation advisers and the stabilisation fund.[19] A linkage is also made between stabilisation and conflict prevention, which highlights the

[12] UK JDP 340, chapter 2, section 2.
[13] US Army FM 3 07, 1-45 -1-47
[14] UK *National Security Strategy* 2008. It was designed to build on a revised version of the earlier Strategic Defence Review, the cross-government counter-terrorism strategy of 2006 and the new strategic framework for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). http://interactive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/documents/security/national_security_strategy.pdfhttp://interactive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/documents/security/national_security_strategy.pdf
[15] See The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Security in an Interdependent World, Cabinet Office publication, June 2009, p.13.
[16] On ? July 2009, the UK Ministry of Defence announced that a 'root and branch' Strategic Defence Review would be undertaken.
[17] UK *National Security Strategy* 2008, 2.6 p. 8
[18] UK *National Security Strategy* 2008.
[19] Ibid, p.27

need to link wider stabilisation efforts to pre-conflict vulnerabilities and situations of fragility and to guard against the use of stabilisation as a post-conflict instrument only. Arguably, the global economic recession has forced leading donor countries to focus most of their resources on priority countries – most of which are conflict or post-conflict countries. Much work is still required in linking a more strategic approach to conflict prevention with stabilisation response priorities (and thereby becoming more strategic about stabilisation).

The challenge of forging better coherency between instability/fragility and stabilisation applies to both the bilateral and multilateral communities. While there is no agreed global list of fragile states and there is disagreement about what constitutes fragility, each national fragile states policy is informed by organisational perspectives and national politics. Some countries have produced cross-departmental policies on fragility, however, these policies distinctly avoid the production of lists given political and diplomatic implications.[20] The UK's definition of fragile states covers those states where "the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor. The most important functions of the state for poverty reduction are territorial control, safety and security, capacity to manage public resources, delivery of basic services, and the ability to support the ways in which the poorest people sustain themselves."[21] The World Bank and the UN have spent considerable time in developing other criteria which have similar threads of analysis including the WB lists of countries under the Low Income Countries Under Stress, (LICUS), and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiatives. [22]

Amongst the development community the most predominant and authoritative literature has been developed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). The research suggests that "states in fragile and post-conflict situations are an impediment to development, growth, investment and international security."[23] The OECD Fragile States Group paper, *From Fragility to Resilience* argues that fragility emerges when the political process that reconciles citizens' expectations of the state and state expectations of citizens with the states' capacity to delivery services fails.[24] The OECD-DAC recommendations place statebuilding squarely at the centre of efforts to help countries move out of fragility which – the Paris-

[20] For example the French development cooperation department has developed a fragile states policy, Interministerial Committee on International Cooperation and Development, FRAGILE STATES AND SITUATIONS OF FRAGILITY: FRANCE'S POLICY PAPER, 27 September 2007. Yet France has not produced a list of countries against their fragility criteria, based on an interview with senior French official, Paris, March 2008.
[21] See also DFID *Why we need to work more effectively in Fragile States,* January 2005
[22] See World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/ieg/licus/, See Also, World Bank, http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0,,contentMDK:20260411~menuPK:64166739~pagePK:64166689~piPK:64166646~theSitePK:469043,00.html
[23] OECD DAC, Organisation for Economic Coopertion and Development, Development Assistance Committee, *Statebuilding in Situations of Fragility,* August 2008
[24] OECD DAC *From Fragility to Resilience* 2008 (Jones)

based organization contends - will require donors to make a shift in current aid policies by focusing on statebuilding as the central objective and secondarily through adopting "'whole-of-government'" approaches.[25] "This vision reflects a growing consensus that legitimate, representative and service-delivery focused statebuilding has to become a central objective for donor engagement if one of the major causes for fragility is to be addressed. Support to statebuilding is thus increasingly seen as a means to assist in *preventing* fragility and conflict and not only as an objective in post-conflict missions."[26]

- **Stabilisation and Counter-Insurgency Operations (COIN)**

There is considerable overlap and indeed often confusion between stabilisation operations and COIN. The UK Stabilisation Unit *Guidance Note* states that COIN "is often at the heart of stabilisation and is often an integral part of providing stability in fragile states."[27] In addition, it suggests that "stabilisation may be broader than counter insurgency." This statement reinforces the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding stabilization and is indicative of the overwhelming influence of and current focus on the Afghanistan experience.

Given the provenance of COIN as a military activity it is not surprising that the military interprets stabilisation through a COIN 'lens'. Being entirely comfortable with this conceptual overlap, the military has used it to shape, and sometimes serve as, their understanding and approaches to stabilisation. "The military contribution to security and stabilisation encompasses COIN as well as elements of nation building."[28] Unfortunately, the implied relationship between the two activities has only served to make stabilisation and stabilisation operations somewhat unpalatable across elements of the wider cross-Government community. Julian Lindley French suggests that this dual usage of terms also occurs between military approaches as well and states that:

> […]hitherto the contrast between S&R (stabilisation and reconstruction) and counterinsurgency has had more to do with contrasting political and military methods than dealing with different threats. There needs to be a search for common ground between the often overly–militarized approach of US forces and the overly–political approach of many European forces.[29]

Other authors like Colin Gray have further reinforced this dual usage of terms by stating that "stability operations need to be understood as integral to

[25] OECD DAC *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations*, 2007
[26] Ibid
[27] UK Stabilisation Unit, *Guidance Note*, p. 14.
[28] Draft JDP 340 para 231, p 2-12
[29] Lindley–French, Julian and Robert Hunter, Enhancing Stabilisation and Reconstruction Operations, CSIS, December 2, 2008

counterinsurgency strategy and doctrine. "[30] In a recent article in Parameters, he firmly locates stabilisation in the context of COIN and argues that "stability operations should be conducted as a part of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategy, and not as a separate matter."[31] Such linkages only serve to drive a wedge between the military actors and their much needed diplomatic, development and humanitarian partners.

- **Stability Operations and Civil-Military integration**

Andrew Natsios suggested that there is significant overlap between development and military doctrinal principles. In describing what he popularized as the 'nine principles of reconstruction and development' he observed that "the continued development of the military's stabilisation operations platform and the increasing frequency of civil-military collaborations mean this convergence is here to stay."[32] Given the dominance of the military interpretation suggested above, government attempts to achieve civil-military integration is evidenced by the creation of the Stabilisation Unit in UK, O/CRS in the US, and START in Canada. A main feature of pursuing a 'whole-of-government stabilisation' is the commitment to retaining and deploying more skilled civilians to the field. However, this approach also recognizes the need for the military to be more aware of political, governance and development dynamics in these theatres of operation.

Civil military integration has been pursued under a plethora of banners and headings including ''whole-of-government' approaches', the 'comprehensive approach', 'unity of effort', and 'coherence'. Both the UK and US military stability operations doctrine refer to the requirement for unity of effort. JDP 340 suggests that

> focus must be maintained on achieving unity of effort […] it should be recognised that for some actors, for example non-governmental organisations, it may be inappropriate, or they may be unable or unwilling, to participate in such formal mechanisms. In some cases, therefore, de-confliction may be the preferred goal.[33]

The publication further recognizes these inherent tensions and suggests that at best the development of good working relationships is extremely important, while other "groups will inevitably view any coalition force with open suspicion and therefore the focus should be on cooperation rather than coordination. The wider application of a comprehensive way of working will go a long way to reducing the friction between friendly groups."[34] The conclusion acknowledges that

[30] Gray, Colin S. "Stability Operations in Strategic Perspective: A Skeptical View." *Parameters*, Summer 2006. pp 4 -14
[31] Ibid
[32] Natsios, Andrew S. "The Nine Principles of Reconstruction and Development," *Parameters* , Autumn 2005. v35, #3, pp4-20
[33] Draft JDP 340 para 240, p 2-15
[34] Draft JDP 240 (2) 9-6

establishing and maintaining unity of effort amongst those involved is a perennially difficult process.[35]

Numerous obstacles continue to plague the civil-military relationship. Andrea Barbara Baumann suggests that unity of effort is set out as a panacea to integration. However, she indicates that cultural differences should be regarded as one of the main obstacles and that 'effective civil-military co-operation is unlikely to be achieved on the basis of a matrix dividing tasks and allocating resources between individual agencies."[36] Baumann also discusses the imbalance across the defence, diplomacy and development contributions, throughout the lifespan of an operation. She describes one particular imbalance as being the limited ability of the military to contribute to the political arena, despite this being such an essential component. Finally, the argument questions whether the structures backing such operations are robust enough to support the fluid nature of the operating environments particularly when delivering effect demands a tri-departmental approach.

- **Early recovery**

Notwithstanding the lack of conceptual clarity between actors who have traditionally intervened under very different operational environmental conditions, there remains a lack of understanding and agreement between the various individuals and communities which operate in the same 'space' during hot operations in terms of what is required to bring about stability. The humanitarian and development communities concentrate on early recovery and peacebuilding while the military and political communities engage in stabilisation operations in order to facilitate statebuilding. There is also a recognition between these disciplines that "the activity that most overlaps with stabilisation is 'early recovery', which has political and security dimensions as well as development objectives."[37] Interestingly, both sides of the definitional divide appear to rely on similar sets of principles, in particular the importance of 'local ownership'; with a focus on the need to secure stability and to establish the peace, to resuscitate markets, livelihoods, and services, and the state capacities necessary to foster them; and to build core state capacity to manage political, security and development processes.

The early recovery agenda is quickly gaining ground in bilateral and multilateral policy circles,[38] is a popular term amongst humanitarians and development

[35] Draft JDP 340 para 107, p 1-4
[36] Baumann, Andrea Barbara, "Clash of Organisational Cultures? The Challenge of integrating civilian and military efforts in stabilisation operations" RUSI Journal December 2008, Vol 153, No 6, pp 70-73. p 71
[37] UK Stabilisation Unit, *Guidance Note*, p. 14.
[38] In April 2009 the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) co-sponsored the Practitioners' and Policy Forum on 'Early Recovery - Addressing Gaps and Dilemmas Together' in Copenhagen. The aim was to develop a shared understanding of early recovery for countries in the wake of natural or man-made disasters, and

practitioners, and is used across the OECD-DAC and the Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) communities. Like stabilisation, early recovery is a relatively new concept. With similarities to stabilisation operations, UNDP suggests that "it addresses a critical gap in coverage between humanitarian relief and long-term recovery - between reliance and self-sufficiency."[39] Whilst various attempts have been made to develop a shared understanding of the term, the concept remains elusive. Early recovery is most frequently described as a 'shared space between humanitarian and development actors' to provide the foundation for full recovery and for the quick reduction of humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of a crisis. Like stabilisation, early recovery emphasizes the need to work with and support national and local authorities through the restoration of government legitimacy. In this context, local ownership is stressed repeatedly. UNDP frames early recovery as something which "aims to generate self-sustaining, nationally-owned, and resilient processes for post crisis recovery [and] encompasses the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security and rule of law, environment and social dimensions, including the reintegration of displaced populations."[40] As such, in the absence of a general consensus on what is meant by early recovery, both in policy and programmatic terms, the concept remains open to different interpretations.

The international community has long been concerned with the need to strengthen the synergies between humanitarian and development assistance and improve the transition from relief to recovery and, ultimately, to longer-term development. Over the past decade, efforts to address the humanitarian and development 'gap', such as the 'relief-development continuum' and 'linking relief, rehabilitation and development', have resulted in significant discussion and conceptual development[41] but little substantive impact through practice. The early recovery approach is the latest expression of the 'linking' debates and there is widespread agreement that it involves "a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in a humanitarian setting. The concept is guided by development principles that seek to build on humanitarian programmes and catalyze sustainable development opportunities. "[42]

---

outline a set of commitments and action points to strengthen the international response and help countries recover from crises as early as possible. The Practitioners' Forum, brought together over 200 representatives from the UN, donor organisations, developing countries governments, NGOs, international financial institutions, and research institutes, to discuss the current international approach to early recovery. The discussion contributed to the key output of this event: a draft statement on 'Joint Action for Strengthening International Support to Early Recovery'.

[39] UNDP, BCPR, Guidance Note on Early Recovery, p. 9

[40] UNDP *op cit,* p 7.

[41] in particular see the work of Buchanan-Smith, M. & Maxwell, S., "Linking Relief and Development: an Introduction and an Overview.: IDS Bulletin, Vol 24., 1994, Buchanan-Smith, M. & Maxwell, S., "Linking Relief and Development." IDS Report on a workshop, IDS: Sussex, 1994., Buchanan-Smith, M.& Maxwell, S. "Linking Relief and development: A case Study of Botswana." Brighton: IDS, 1995.

[42] UNDP *Guidance Note on Early Recovery*, see also UN OCHA work on early recovery

Community of practice affiliation shapes stakeholder perceptions. For humanitarian actors, it seems to be linked to sectoral efforts to promote livelihoods activities at community-level.[43] For development actors, it appears to be linked to efforts to strengthen national recovery capacity, ensure ownership of the process, and identify opportunities to initiate development activities at the earliest stage of a crisis.[44] The UNDP Guidance Note on recovery suggests that early recovery occurs in parallel with humanitarian activities, but its objectives, mechanisms and expertise are different. Early recovery aims to 'augment on-going humanitarian assistance operations; support spontaneous recovery initiatives by affected communities; and establish the foundations for longer-term recovery.'[45] Finally, for some donors and developing country representatives, early recovery is related to peacebuilding initiatives and efforts to restore security.

- **Statebuilding and Peacebuilding**

The above section sets out the implications of state fragility and centrality of statebuilding to stabilisation operations in helping to foster legitimate and effective states in the wake of armed conflict. Statebuilding has been placed at the core of stability operations.[46] The UK Stabilisation Unit *Guidance Note* indicates that:

> Effective statebuilding is perhaps the central priority in stabilisation and needs to be understood in three dimensions: achieving a political settlement hat incorporates the interests of the main power and interest groups; putting into place the state's 'survival functions' – security, the rule of law and taxation; and being able in some measure to meet citizens' expectations on the availability of basic services.[47]

Statebuilding is about strengthening state-society relations and working with all three branches of government (executive, judiciary, legislative) and civil society. Statebuilding takes place at all levels of government - from local to national.

One of the common threads to emerge from this literature review is the complex and contingent nature of peacebuilding and statebuilding processes and the inherent tensions between them. There is also a conceptual discord between those who favour statebuilding (amongst them militaries and foreign ministries) and those who prefer a peacebuilding approach (amongst them the development and humanitarian communities). However, there is also recognition across the

[43] UN OCHA website, http://ocha.unog.ch/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=80, see also Humanitarian Policy Group at Overseas Development Institute
[44] UNDP, BCPR, *Guidance Note on Early Recovery*
[45] Ibid
[46] UK Stabilisation Unit, Speech by Richard Teuten, Director to RUSI, 31st January 2007: Stabilisation and "Post-Conflict" Reconstruction. See also UK and US doctrine
[47] UK Stabilisation Unit, *Guidance Note*, p. 9

community of practitioners that the military will often find itself supporting both peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts, without necessarily developing the appropriate linkages between the two areas. There are numerous attempts underway to grapple with the discord between these two mutually reinforcing concepts.[48] The July 2009 publication of the DFID White Paper "Building A Common Future" reinforced this conceptual divide and placed it at the centre of DFID's future strategic direction. For practitioners and policymakers supporting stabilsation interventions, the juxtaposition of these concepts must be addressed in a thoughtful way. Past stabilisation operations in countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haiti, Liberia and many others have prioritized short-term stabilisation imperatives (with the priority of ending conflict and securing stability) often at the cost of undermining prospects for securing a sustainable, long-term peace. Reconciling approaches to end violent conflict and gross human rights violations, with approaches and processes to bring about a longer-term peace in a mutually reinforcing way may require a more in-depth look at how peacebuilding imperatives during stabilisation operations should inform the statebuilding efforts which follow a formal peace agreement.[49] At the moment, there still appears to be an alarming disconnect between these two concepts. The OECD-DAC suggests that statebuilding is distinct from peacebuilding, and states that:

> Peacebuilding, understood as activities by international or national actors to prevent violent conflict and institutionalise peace, is often an important part of the statebuilding dynamic, helping to consolidate security and political stability and establish the foundations for trust and social reconciliation among societal groups. However, it is important not to confuse the immediate challenges of peacebuilding with the long-term challenges of statebuilding, which will evolve over generations. While peacebuilding offers modalities for overcoming some of the greatest challenges to statebuilding, the need to build ever deeper state-society relations is likely to remain.[50]

Whilst the difference between the concepts is not in dispute, the way in which policymakers and practitioners across the various constituencies interpret the roles and activities associated with each concept has yet to be clarified.

---

[48] Both DFID and the WB have recently held conferences to set out the complementarity of approach and to come to a conceptual agreement. DATES WB Transition from Conflict to Peace: Dynamic Tensions Between Statebuilding and Peace-building, Oct 1-3 2008. See also the many white paper processes currently underway as described above.

[49] Ann Fitz-Gerald, "Security Sector Reform and Stabilsiation Operations: Close Allies or Strange Bedfellows?" in Mark Sedra (ed) *The Future of SSR* , University of Waterloo Press: Canada, 2009, pp.

[50] OECD DAC *Statebuilding in Situations of Fragility,* p. 4

IV. CHALLENGES TO ''WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT'[51] STABILISATION'

Having made the case that fragile states pose a security and development challenge, it is now widely accepted that the ''whole-of-government approach' is central to the success of stabilisation operations in order to stabilise and reconstruct fragile states. These are ambitious and complex undertakings which require that donors draw upon and integrate the entire range of policy instruments at their disposal spanning the traditionally independent spheres of diplomacy, development and defense—as well as trade, intelligence and law enforcement. This 'whole-of-government approach' has been widely accepted across the spectrum of actors involved in stabilisation operations, including both bilateral and multilateral organizations. It has been captured in UK and US doctrine and has been developed by the OECD-DAC.[52] Indeed, in the UK the Cabinet Office has stated that ''the major security challenges require an integrated response that cuts across departmental lines and traditional policy boundaries."[53] Mindful of the bureaucratic, legal and cultural constraints to whole-of-government activities more generally, Andrea Barbara Baumann observes that, "despite widespread consensus over the need for an holistic approach in theory, the implementation of comprehensive or whole-of-government strategies has given rise to debate, controversy and concern in practice."[54]

Where the primary challenge appears to be in promoting coherence[55] amongst and within governments, integration across departments and organization has so far proven to be variable. Whilst the most significant contribution made by whole-of-government approaches rests with the levels of shared analysis[56] – and the ability to diagnose issues, risks and challenges from multiple perspectives – there is little doubt that the challenges in building coherency supporting joined-up operations has been grossly underestimated. Julian Lindley-French suggests that this will require overcoming intra–government rivalries and contrasting cultures and doctrines, and fostering unity of effort. He suggests that host countries must be able to deal with a relatively limited number of points of contact and that the Comprehensive Approach needs to include a new cadre of elite civilian and military planners and commanders able to plan, direct, and manage

[51] This section includes the plethora of terms that are generally grouped together with 'whole-of-government' approaches, including: the comprehensive approach; joined-up government; and 3D, defence, diplomacy and development.
[52] April 2007 DAC High Level Meeting, see also SU *Guidance Note*
[53] Cabinet Office National Security Strategy - March 2008 see also UK stability operations doctrine, JDP 340.
[54] Baumann, Andrea Barbara, "Clash of Organisational Cultures? The Challenge of integrating civilian and military efforts in stabilisation operations" RUSI Journal December 2008, Vol 153, No 6, pp 70-73. p 70.
[55] OECD DAC *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States*, sets out the requirement for coherence.
[56] Fitz-Gerald, "Security Sector Reform and National Security Frameworks: Towards a Value-based approach to strategic planning" in Jack Caravelli and Peter Trim (eds) *Strategising for Resilience*, Nova Science Publishing, Washington, 2009.

operations as a single team.[57] These thoughts were echoed by Andrea Barbara Baumann who advocates that recognizing organizational culture as an obstacle to co-operation between military and civilian organizations deserves greater consideration.[58]

Thus, evidence suggests the existence of a 'strategic gap'[59] at the planning and prioritization stage, while the 'civilian gap' continues to expose inadequate capabilities and capacities at the implementation stage. Finally a 'cultural gap' appears to impede on the integration necessary to achieve a whole-of-government approach to stabilisation and deliver a unity of purpose towards a shared goal. While a driving principle has been achieving 'local ownership' the whole-of-government literature focuses on integration across international actors. These disparities become further exacerbated by a 'generational gap' across government departments. For example, due to the military's historical (and post-colonial) experience in longer-term post-conflict reconstruction, military aid to the civil authorities (MACA), and UN peacekeeping, today's military unit commanders and operational commanders alike are equally comfortable with the relationship between security and development. In contrast, the same generational congruence cannot be said for development and diplomatic departments whose senior management may still be deeply routed in more traditional paradigms.[60]

One could argue that the priorities set out in the 2009 DFID White Paper indicates a shift in the 'generational gap', certainly within the UK. The White Paper emphasizes the link between impoverished countries and countries emerging from conflict and commits 50% of its future international aid funds to supporting conflict-affected countries.[61] This is a significant development at the highest levels of the organization. The Paper also commits DFID to tripling its spending on security and justice-related programmes. Lastly, the new policy document introduces the brand 'UKAID' which suggests that, in the future, DFID will seek a more balanced approach to supporting both national interests and the interests of its wider multilateral community.

Both the new UK military doctrine JDP 3-40 and the US army doctrine FM 3-07 set out definitions for whole-of-government and comprehensive approaches, both of which focus on the need to "achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal." The US document suggests that a 'whole-of-government' approach is one that

[57] Lindley–French, Julian and Robert Hunter, Enhancing Stabilisation and Reconstruction Operations, CSIS, December 2, 2008

[58] Baumann, Andrea Barbara, "Clash of Organisational Cultures? The Challenge of integrating civilian and military efforts in stabilisation operations" RUSI Journal December 2008, Vol 153, No 6, pp 70-73. p 70.

[59] This was also a key finding of the DFID sponsored report *Recovering from War*. In particular, the report suggests that there is a "strategic gap" in the recovery from crisis, and describes the absence of planning and prioritisation frameworks that integrate political, security and development strategies towards the common goal of statebuilding.

[60] Ibid, Fitz-Gerald, p.

[61] See DFID White Paper *Securing a Common Future*, July 2009.

integrates the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the US Government to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal.[62] This compares with the stated US definition for the comprehensive approach which is described as one which integrates the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the US Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal."[63] Therefore, from a definitional perspective, there appears to be little difference between the two concepts with the exception of looking outside of government in terms of the relationships required to achieve a 'comprehensive approach'.

Patrick Stewart argues that the "rhetorical commitment to 'whole-of-government' approaches conceals fundamental dilemmas and difficult choices in the quest for policy coherence.[64] His research found that

> Individual donor governments are still struggling to develop a strategic approach to state fragility; to define the goals of their national policies; to agree on departmental divisions of labor and coordination mechanisms; to mobilize adequate resources to meet the challenge of fragile states; to harmonize their approaches with other donors; to align their efforts with host governments; and to monitor and evaluate the impact of their policy interventions.[65]

Aside from the 'stove-piping' criticisms, one could also argue that 'operationalising' whole-of-government approaches has incurred difficulties due to the divisions developed over the years between the evolution of principles and practice in both communities. Whilst efforts made by the OECD-DAC and the wider Security Sector Reform community to develop principles which better support an improved 'mantra' for the security-development nexus, merging the 'tools' and 'instruments' supporting each area has become more challenging. For example, over the years the development community has observed the creation and further evolution of instruments such as Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs), Public Sector Reform (PSR), Public Expenditure Management (PEM), Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). This stands in contrast to the very different range of 'tools' available to the traditional security community including, for example, use of force, coercive diplomacy, crisis response initiatives, and Chapter 6 and 7 peacekeeping operations under the UN Charter. One could argue that recent efforts have drawn on the PRSP as a framework which recognizes both strategic level security and development imperatives. This combined agenda is captured

[62] FM 3-07, 1-17
[63] FM 3-07 1-20
[64] Patrick, Stewart and Kaysie Brown, Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts? Assessing "'whole-of-government'" Approaches to Fragile States Centre for Global Development, June 2007, p. 8
[65] Patrick Stewart *op cit*, p. vii

in the more recent PRSPs of countries like Sierra Leone (2004), Uganda (2004) and Afghanistan (2007), and reflects progress in this area.[66] However, only time will tell if the PRSP process has been successful in providing the necessary in-country and locally owned planning process for addressing security and development challenges simultaneously.

Recovering from War also identified evidence of a capacity gap which indicates that stabilisation operations are "not properly supported with adequate capabilities and capacities and tend to remain too focused on institutional shape, structure, decision–making and reporting procedures."[67] This civilian gap is particularly acute and bilateral and multilateral actors are currently seized with overcoming this deficit of deployable civilian capacity. US army doctrine FM 3-07 acknowledges this challenge and suggests the imbalance of military and civilian capacity further indicates a 'cultural gap'. "A primary challenge for integrating civilian and military efforts into a 'whole-of-government' approach is the differing capacities and cultures in civilian agencies compared to those of military forces."[68] The challenge brought by the paucity of civilian actors has also been highlighted by Rod Matthews and Jay Lucas's RUSI article on "Stabilisation and Reconstruction: Lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan"[69], and in the media by analysts such as Sir Hilary Synott, who states that "the lack of civilian engagement has been a serious setback for the Army's courageous efforts to stabilise areas of conflict."[70] This shortage has been brought into sharp focus in the non-benign operating environments of Iraq and Afghanistan where a defining feature of both engagements has been the relative lack of civilian actors (for example, compared with the approximate 60,000-plus operating in the small confines of Kosovo between 1999 and 2000).

Recognition of the civilian capacity gap has led to growing efforts to further develop and improve civilian capacity. Regional organizations and some national governments are making significant contributions in this field by way of developing or refining their civilian policies, structures and doctrine. For example the governments of Switzerland, Canada and Norway have created rosters of readily deployable trained experts. Other governments have created inter-agency departments, which will enjoy the support of both an internal civil service 'cadre' of stabilisation advisers and an external roster of experts. The development of the UK's Stabilisation Unit, Canada's START, and the US S/CRS serve as examples of this inter-agency approach. The development of the internal and external extended staff complement will be supported by ongoing

[66] Ann Fitz-Gerald, "Towards a Value-based Approach to Strategic Planning for National Security" in (ed) Peter Trim and Jack Caravelli *Strategising for Resilience….*
[67] *Recovering from War*
[68] FM 3-07, 1-19
[69] Matthews, Rod and Jay Lucas, "Stabilisation and Reconstruction: Lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan" RUSI DEFENCE SYSTEMS , October 2007, pp 88 – 90
[70] Synott, Hilary, "Afghanistan and Iraq cry out for brave civilians", *Telegraph*, 30 Dec 2008,

training targeting both the policymaker initiating stabilisation planning from the national capital and the practitioners on the ground responsible for implementation. The Nordic countries, Germany and Japan have all created separate civilian crisis management centres which combine research, training and recruitment. The EU has identified areas of civilian crisis management mechanisms within its competencies, and has developed Crisis Response Teams for rapid deployment.

The UK has made rapid progress in the area of developing civilian capacity for stabilisation deployments. In his 19 June 2009 national security statement, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown emphasized the Government's commitment to developing a 1000-strong standby civilian cadre of stabilisation experts.[71] As part of this effort, the UK Stabilisation Unit provides a two-tiered approach to training for both initial planning initiation supporting stabilisation and the 'on-the ground' planning which follows these initial policy-led planning activities. A similar approach to training for initial stabilisation planning is being pursued by the US Government and led by the S/CRS.[72]

Such regional and national initiatives complement a renewed concern at the UN concerning the availability of suitable rapidly deployable civilians capable of overseeing the political aspects of missions or contributing to key statebuilding functions. Efforts to share lessons and good practice across wider bilateral and multilateral communities will be key to the success of each national training programme. Moreover, ongoing monitoring of stabilisation experiences will also be required to inform training content. As the concept of stabilisation gains greater strategic clarity, training curricula should also expand to address planning and operational response requirements for a range of different theatres of instability.

- **Challenges to Integration and Interoperability**

The main challenge to whole-of-government stabilisation at the strategic level is coordinating interagency policies, cultures and capacities. Overcoming these challenges will demand a strong understanding of the inter-linkages across stabilisation activities. However, this remains an under-researched area with little to no evidence-based literature. Whilst different methodologies are now being experimented with (such as 'triangulation') to better expose these inter-linkages, more practical measures must be taken to provide resources dedicated to monitoring inter-linkages across different 'lines of activities' – and their medium-to-longer term impact - on an ongoing basis.[73] This knowledge should

[71] See PM Gordon Brown's June 2009 national security statement, found at: http://www4.labour.org.uk/gordon_brown_national_security_statement
[72] The S/CRS launched its first pilot course for training for stabilisation planning in June 2009.
[73] See Ann Fitz-Gerald, *A Diagnostic Tool for Supporting Stabilisation and Sustainable Development* in the Centre for Security Sector Management (CSSM) Keynote Series, Cranfield University, February 2008.

then to used to better inform prioritization and sequencing strategies for the interventionist forces.

The UK doctrine is set in the context of the inherent challenge of the requirement to operationalise 'whole-of-government' through interoperability. Rather than prescriptive end-state conditions outlined in FM 3-07, JDP 3-40 sets out the principles guiding the military contribution to stabilisation operations as: primacy of political purpose; foster host nation governance, authority and indigenous capacity; understand the context; unity of effort; neutralise and counteract irregular actors; meet the security and basic needs of the population; credibility; perseverance, and adaptation.

In contrast, the overarching framework for the US army 'stability operations' doctrine is the following five endstate conditions: a safe and secure environment; established rule of law; social well-being; stable governance; a sustainable economy. This framework provides both 'the underpinning for strategic whole-of-government planning, as well as a 'focal point' for integrating specific tasks. The preference towards the use of 'endstate conditions', rather than the principle-based focus which the UK Government presents, is also reflected in the 2005 US Government's "Essential Tasks Toolkit"; the 2006 "Metrics for Interagency Planning for Conflict Transformation" and the more recent United States Institute of Peace (USIP) project setting out 'Measures of Effectiveness in Peace and Conflict Environments, (MPICE).

In describing the humanitarian and development concerns with the integration of military activities into areas traditionally the domain of these civilian actors, Matthews and Lucas[74] suggest that, broadly speaking, the following two concerns can be identified:

> […]Firstly, from a technical perspective, the military is viewed as not having the requisite skills to implement a development or aid programme. Secondly, from a political perspective, military engagement represents a worrying erosion of humanitarian space and the neutrality this confers. Whilst the second of these two issues is important to wider policy debate, the security context in which these joint missions are unfolding necessitates assessment of the former as a priority: where the military is required to work alongside civilians in delivering reconstruction and construction efforts then we must maximise our joint effectiveness.[75]

Further challenges include issues related to leadership, a lack of senior management well-versed and comfortable in operations which span the security-development nexus, and the encroachment of humanitarian 'space'. Whilst there is little evidence-based literature to support these statements, they are backed up

[74] Matthews and Lucas, op cit, p.90
[75] ibid

by interviews with a high number of personnel returning from Afghanistan and Iraq.

The lack of leadership and 'buy-in' by one particular department or agency has been cited as problematic at the field level. Lindley-French states that "key to S&R success is helping local states enhance the performance of state functions, whether at a national, regional/provincial, or local level…key actors will need to "buy in" to the goal of statebuilding from the outset of an intervention."[76] In a Special Report published by USIP in 2005, Bob Perito suggests that the US experience – and multinational PRT program in particular - would benefit from an agreed concept of operations, an effective central coordinating authority, the delimitation of civilian and military roles, and improved civilian agency staffing, funding, and administrative support."[77] In his May 2009 paper analyzing the US Administration's approach in Afghanistan, Dane Smith states that critics in the US State Department have charged that "Afghanistan did not receive serious and sustained direction from the Secretary of State during the Bush Administration [and that] there was no unified civilian command structure on Afghanistan.[78]

Encroachment of 'space' and how to reconcile with humanitarians in non-benign environments has brought into sharp focus the entrenchment of communities of practice and their principles into distinct and separate camps limiting the achievement of shared goals and objectives. "Reconstruction projects suffered from a lack of coordination and oversight. Military involvement in development brought criticism from relief agencies that claimed it put them at risk by blurring the distinction between combatants and humanitarian workers."[79] This observation resonates with the discovery that NGO's have not been willing to work with the military/PRT in Afghanistan. Despite 15 yrs….

- **Interoperability through the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) experience**

With lingering questions over issues surrounding structure, interoperability and leadership in stabilisation operations, one is provoked to inquire into the stated successes of PRTs to date. The published literature which discusses problems related to the conduct of PRTs can be reduced to the challenges of operationalising interoperability and the doubt that gets cast over the viability of the comprehensive approach.

[76] Julian Lindley French, *op cit*
[77] Perito, Robert M., "The U.S. Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: Lessons Identified", USIP Special Report No. 152, October 2005, p.1
[78] Op cit, Smith, p.7
[79] Ibid, p.1

PRTs are small, joint civilian-military organizations whose mission is to promote governance, security, and reconstruction throughout Afghanistan[80]. As such they illustrate dramatically the challenges of operationalising both the whole-of-government approach and more widely NATO's comprehensive approach. Perito argues that the primary purpose of creating these outposts was political, but PRTs were also seen as a means for dealing with the causes of Afghanistan's instability: terrorism, warlords, unemployment, and grinding poverty.[81] The PRT has also been described as a concept which occupies "the intersection of military-led stability operations and civilian-led reconstruction activities, focused on coordination between security forces, development aid providers, and those working on capacity-building."[82] Dane Smith describes PRTs as groups of up to 80 persons, basically made up of military personnel with a small army of civil affairs section and a handful of State and USAID officials. Based on an interview with former US diplomat James Dobbins (who, in 2001, was appointed by former Secretary of State Powell as "envoy to the Afghan opposition"), Smith recites Dobbins comments as stating that "the military dominated PRTs were an admission of failure to achieve post-conflict security and a second-best approach to stabilisation and reconstruction."[83]

Despite this criticism, Bob Perito reminds us that originally,

> At the end of the day PRTs are military, not development, organizations. As primarily military organizations, PRTs are better suited to security-related tasks than to delivering development assistance. As military organizations, PRTs had an inherent difficulty coordinating on development projects, if they were ordered by higher military authorities to undertake operations. Not concentrating fully on creating a secure environment also risked failing to establish the level of stability required by other international actors with greater development expertise."[84]

Given the military provenance of PRTs and the institutionalization of military engagement in traditionally civilian activities, RUSI suggests that "PRTs, as they currently operate, remain a major obstacle to present and future engagement between the military and NGO communities. If the PRT concept continues to define the roles and operational environment in conflict areas (i.e., if the military continues to engage directly in development work) – as discussed primarily in the Afghan context – this will impede engagement. [85]

[80] There are currently two provinces which lack PRT: Nimroz and (SB to find)
[81] Ibid, p 2.
[82] Michael J. McNerney, "Stabilisation and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: are PRTs a Model or a Muddle?" Parameters 35, no. 4 (Winter 2005-2006): 33.
[83] Taken from Dane Smith, Jr, "An Expanded Mandate for Peacebuilding: The state Department Role in Peace Diplomacy, Reconstruction and Stabilisation", CSIS: Washington, DC, 2009, p.6.
[84] Bob Perito, *op cit, p. 12*
[85] RUSI website, PRT project

Whilst there is good practice in some individual PRTs, there is general agreement across donors that the outstanding challenges are rooted to the difficulties in operationalising a whole of government and comprehensive stabilisation concept. A seminal piece of work on the PRT concept was undertaken by Colonel M.P. Jorgensen in his paper entitled *"A Strategy for Effective Peace-Building: Canada's Whole-of-Government Approach in Afghanistan."* Jorgensen's paper summarises the British, American and Canadian PRT experiences[86] and suggests that the key challenges to an improved PRT concept include issues relating to leadership and ownership, planning, commitment, and measures of effectiveness and guidelines. Finally, it is worth remembering that PRT's were never conceived as becoming mini-consulates, and have a definite life span.

V. UNINTENDED OUTCOMES IN STABILISATION ENVIRONMENTS

Emerging from the list of PRT-related challenges, recent experience from returning PRT members have brought to attention the unintended outcomes of not understanding the linkages across activities and lines of activity or development[87] Based on a high level of interviews conducted with diplomatic, development and military personnel – all of whom had been involved in stabilisation operations during different intervention periods in Iraq and/or Afghanistan understanding these inter-linkages and both the negative and positive unintended outcomes is critical. This was particularly important during times when decisions were being taken regarding priorities for military-led projects to enhance local confidence-building measures. Such projects often fell under the label of 'Quick Impact Projects'.

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) are usually characterised as short-term, small-scale initiatives that are designed to deliver an immediate *impact*. Experience in both Iraq and Afghanistan has suggested that QIPs' role in stabilisation programmes is twofold; they provide 'direct support' to stabilisation through the protection of people and critical institutions and facilities and provide 'indirect support' to stabilisation through building confidence the legitimacy of local political authorities and processes.[88] RUSI argues that

> While there was broad agreement that the military is not best placed or equipped to engage in long-term development projects, the effects of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)/Commanders' Emergency Response

[86] FM 3-07 JLF, Perito, USIP and Colonel M.P. Jorgensen, A STRATEGY FOR EFFECTIVE PEACE-BUILDING: CANADA'S WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH IN AFGHANISTAN. Paper for Canadian Defence College, May 2008

[87] See *Security Sector Reform in Hot Stabilisation,* a paper produced by the Centre for Security Sector Management (CSSM) in support of the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU)'s 2007 'Issue Notes' – a summary of the paper is available at www.ssronline.org\library\keynotes.

[88] See www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk.

> Program (CERP) – aimed at short-term "hearts and minds" gains within a counterinsurgency context to build consent with a local community – served as a lightning rod for criticism of misguided military involvement in development work. QIPs can enable necessary, quick reconstruction/stabilisation projects (e.g. rebuild a bridge that was bombed) and serve as a mechanism to engage the local community and develop trust. However, a common theme in the discussions was that without in-depth local knowledge, commanders may work at cross purposes in ways that damage overall development goals.[89]

For illustrative purposes, one example can be drawn from the British Army's experience during 2003 in Basra, Iraq. Based on a range of possible options on which to spend QIP funding, priority was given to the distribution of gas canisters to households in order to prevent the spread of disease due to a lack of potable drinking water. After distributing gas canisters to most households which enabled the boiling of water, a number of positive consequences emerged. The first observation was that the degree of basic service provisions had increased significantly, thus developing greater perceived credibility for the interventionist force. This served to 'disincentivise' those exploiting black market opportunities to cater to the lack of access to basic services.

Secondly, following the development of a 'water board' as a governing body monitoring and overseeing this local activity, the project served to strengthen an emerging civil society voice, as well as an embryonic political process, albeit at the municipal level. However, over time this governance process strengthened and joined forces with the appropriate federal governance structures for infrastructure in Baghdad. Overall levels of community safety were also enhanced as a result of this activity.

A range of other examples could also be shared, some of which would support the example above and illuminate the range of positive unintended outcomes; some of which would expose a significant negative 'net effect'. However, for the purposes of this literature review, suffice it to say that the interview-based data collected in support of this research concluded that there is a critical need for monitoring and advisory capacity which supports interdependency analysis during stabilisation operations. Whether or not this process is captured or embedded in the PRT concept remains questionable.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

[89] The RUSI Project on Civil-Military Relations. Workshop I: Increasing Understanding of Differing Defence, Development and Diplomatic Priorities
http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/24-25_May_Civ-Mil_Summary.pdf Accessed May 2009

The nascent writing on stabilisation operations is predominantly case specific and has been shaped by the UK, US and NATO experiences. This literature review has set out the range of stabilisation contexts, including failed and fragile states, and a number of concepts, including early warning, statebuilding, peacebuilding, whole-of-government approaches, COIN and the underlying principles supporting the various approaches. The research has demonstrated that there remains lack of conceptual clarity and agreement across these areas with an urgent requirement to mainstream work on stabilisation more broadly across work on fragility and instability. This would be particularly helpful given that current way in which stabilisation as a term has become situated across a number of different epistemic communities, and at a time when significant and human technical and resources have been poured into this area. These efforts must take stabilisation beyond the case of Afghanistan if the agenda it is to have longevity. This will require more strategic thought to be applied to the whole notion of 'instability' and the various shapes and guises in which instability may well manifest. Based on a range of emerging UK and US Government White Papers, military doctrinal publications and national security papers, there is a unique opportunity to offer the concept of stabilisation greater strategic clarity.

Leadership supporting stabilisation interventions has also been discussed as an area which requires particular attention. Earlier sections have highlighted the difficulties in operationalising whole-of-government approaches; indeed, one could argue that the same problems with this concept and more have been experienced with 'whole-of-government stabilisation'. Based on their experience in Afghanistan, recently returned policymakers and practitioners from a wide range of donor governments who supported this research have commented on the lack of clarity on leadership, and the specific entity, agency or government department serves as lead agent. Other feedback suggested that the question surrounding 'lead agent' is in constant flux and often very spatially (geographic) and temporally dependent.

Perhaps it is more realistic to better manage the expectations of stabilisation capacities of leading donor countries such as the UK, the US and Canada by retaining national stabilisation efforts as 'operational enablers' as opposed to policy leads. It should also be the case that these operational entities be afforded the resources they require to become key players in Government and a 'port of first call' for thematic and geographic policy leaders dealing with a wide range of issues surrounding 'instability'. The current focus by each of the above-mentioned donor countries in prioritization the development of a 'civil service cadre'[90] (augmented by rosters of external experts) is one step towards achieving the human resources required to provide the operational lead on 'whole-of-government stabilisation'. However, also critical in supporting this objective will

[90] The US Government refers to this combination of civil service and external expert contributions as a 'civilian surge capacity'. This capacity is premised on a 3-tiered structure:An Active Component of the Civilian Response Corps (CRC-A), a Standby Response Component (CRC-S) and a Reserve component (CRC-R), the latter requiring congressional authorisation.

be the political commitment and 'buy in' from across each donor government to identify the appropriate models of leadership which will best facilitate the role of the stabilisation effort.

Developing such political clarity and sustainable and structural resource systems supporting national stabilisation capacity will require ongoing commitment and leadership. Earlier sections of this paper raised the issue of developing better strategic clarity on the concept of stabilisation. The June 2009 UK Government's 'NSS 2' places stabilisation at the core of the Government's response to fragile and failed states.[91] This will send a very powerful and positive message across the UK Government regarding the critical role played by the departments' stabilisation partner. It is also expected to help maintain prominence of the mandate and core competencies of the UK Stabilisation Unit in the regular discussions of the Cabinet Office Committee on National Security, International Relations and Development (NSID). Similar efforts to prioritise and make prominent US stabilisation capacity were captured in a 2006 speech delivered by former US Secretary of State Condolezza Rice to Georgetown University which included a paragraph on the S/CRS and stated that "we have an expansive vision for this new office, and let there be no doubt, we are committed to realizing it."[92]

The literature review has provided clear evidence of a paucity in evidence based literature in the areas of interlinkages across actors and activities in operationalising whole of government approaches. This is acutely evidenced at the policy level in the UK across the departmental white papers where stabilisation is mentioned as a tool of national power, yet it does not receive headlines in any of the policies individually or in the National Security Strategy, Furthermore there is a lack of solid empirical evidence highlighting the impact of unintended consequences and the implications for the military contribution to stabilization operations. Such evidence demonstrating outcomes, and positive or negative impacts is required to inform priorities and sequencing.

A number of questions emerge for further study:

- the need for more **knowledge on unexpected outcomes** in areas of activity where short-term requirements do not necessarily consider med-longer term effects;
- How to **develop common objectives for diplomatic, defence, security, finance and development actions**? It is stated that joint analysis and the more systematic use of joint planning tools such as transitional results frameworks (including a set of stabilisation, state building and peace building goals) are likely to facilitate this process.

[91] UK's new NSS…
[92] Taken from Smith, op cit, p.22.

- How to **provide incentives** for officials from different policy communities to work together in capitals and at the field level?
- How to maximise development **commitment**, contribution and impact in operations that are controversial?
- How to overcome the more obvious obstacles to **support a *whole of system* approach**, governments and international organisations across the concepts of both whole of government and the comprehensive approach



https://dspace.org/

Stabilisation and stability operations : a Literature Review

Fitz-Gerald, Ann; Blair, Stephanie

2010-02-17T00:00:00Z
http://dspace.lib.cranfield.ac.uk/handle/1826/4247
Publisher website: http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17502977.asp

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/