

# Strategy Research Project

## Assessing Security Cooperation: Improving Methods to Maximize Effects

by

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## **Abstract**

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Security cooperation professionals work towards the development of a standardized assessment framework that not only provides the most complete data for recommendation development, but also is compatible across geographic boundaries and interagency boundaries. Across the inter-agency a common language does not exist when referring to the planning and assessment process. In order to maximize the efficiency of US Government programs in security cooperation around the globe, there must be some efforts to not only improve assessment, but also to build some commonality among assessment frameworks and progress measures. This paper aims to highlight some considerations when planning and implementing security cooperation and should provide the reader with some critical-thinking tools to continue discussion with interagency partners involved in security cooperation. The paper discusses assessment based on current policy, considers strengths and weaknesses of three assessment or research methodologies, then current practices and opportunities. Finally it provides some recommendations for further academic study and discussion.



## **Assessing Security Cooperation: Improving Methods to Maximize Effects**

I have urged the Department to develop innovative approaches to meeting future security challenges, approaches that take better advantage of the opportunities for partnership and help us to more effectively advance a common security vision for the future. To that end, I've directed all of the geographic Combatant Commanders to think and plan strategically when it comes to security cooperation...

—The Honorable Leon Panetta, Secretary of Defense<sup>1</sup>

Assessment is a key aspect of military planning. This is especially true for ongoing operations, as the assessment mechanics typically indicate where changes and adjustments need to occur. The United States Military is perhaps one of the best planning organizations in the world, and throughout combat operations, military planners show an impressive tenacity for being able to adapt to changes in the operational environment. That tenacity comes from the timely and accurate assessments made on a regular basis underpinned by key measurements and critical thinking. When it comes to security cooperation, the level of quality in ongoing assessment may not be as rigorous. Perhaps it is because there are not as many established “metrics” to provide indications of success (or failure). Perhaps it is due to the fact that security cooperation can in many ways be very “relational.” Monitoring progress or success of many actions and programs in security cooperation can be difficult because measures such as “improved trust,” “capacity,” and “partnership” do not fit well into spreadsheets. Security cooperation professionals must work towards the development of a standardized assessment framework that not only provides the most complete data for recommendation development, but also is compatible across geographic boundaries as well as across inter agency boundaries.

With the future of fiscal challenges and increased importance of Building Partnership Capacity (BPC) and security cooperation, accurately assessing progress would provide input to decision-makers that may better ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, across the interagency, a common language does not exist when referring to the planning and assessment process. In order to maximize the efficiency of US Government security cooperation programs in countries around the globe, there must be some unified efforts to not only improve assessment, but also to build some commonality among agency assessment frameworks and progress measures. By developing some framework commonality, planners would ensure that military strategies are in line with diplomacy and development strategies – all nested under the national interest. If each country team in a geographic region uses different methods and processes, then combining data at the regional level could lack consistency and meaning, or worse provide erroneous data resulting in poor decisions and choices when updating our security cooperation portfolio.

This paper aims to highlight some considerations when planning and implementing security cooperation. The paper begins with a discussion on the rationale for such assessment considerations based on current policy documents. It then considers strengths and weaknesses of three assessment or research methodologies from academia: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method. From there the discussion moves to some current processes in place as well as some opportunities for developing assessments to inform decision-makers. The paper then combines these to provide some recommendations and a road ahead for further study and consideration. Ideally,

this should provide the reader with some critical-thinking tools to continue discussion with interagency partners involved in security cooperation.

### Why Improve Methods for Assessment?

In the security cooperation planning process, much thought is given to ensuring that a given country campaign plan (CCP) nests under the Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) Theater Campaign Plan (TCP). There is also consideration that it complies with the Embassy's Mission Strategic Resource Plan (MSRP).<sup>2</sup> There is much less documentation that discusses the requirements and methodology for assessing these plans to complete the assess-plan-execute loop. In periods where budgets may be limited and increased scrutiny given to how all funding is allocated, it will become increasingly important for security cooperation professionals to have effective assessment measures in place to quickly assess the most effective programs exist, and where risk may be greatest.

The Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF) and Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) documents direct that Combatant Commanders (CCMD) establish ongoing "living" campaign plans that "integrate security cooperation, Phase 0, and other steady-state activities."<sup>3</sup> Equally important in this guidance is that these campaign plans are to provide a method to conduct "comprehensive assessments" of how the plans (in execution) are contributing towards the accomplishment of the theater specific end states outlined in the GEF. As the Commander is required to report on this assessment, and incorporate it into his annual Comprehensive Joint Assessment (CJA)<sup>4</sup>, it follows that there must be some mechanism in place that provides this assessment, and some indicators built into the plan that provide progress information. The security cooperation team must consider this in the initial planning phase, must

monitor during execution, and must be prepared to recommend changes based on legitimate assessment.

If the TCP were a unilateral Department of Defense (DoD) document, then perhaps this would be a simpler task, however this plan must be closely coordinated with the Department of State (DoS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The challenge in coordinating different planning schedules, timelines, and languages is significant. From the draft 3D Planning guide:

Within the loop of assessing, planning, and implementing (variations on this exist within each of the organizations), the lack of common assessment frameworks presents a problem: as each agency uses a different set of tools and lenses to assess problems, there is a potential to plan based upon differing assumptions. This can result in unsynchronized activity and divergent goals at the country level. This lack of synchronization can seriously dilute the overall effectiveness of the U.S. Government effort.<sup>5</sup>

The planning guide goes on further to describe how the methodology for assessment, monitoring and evaluation differs between these key agencies. While no one disagrees that there is need to analyze throughout a plan's development and implementation, it is essential that all involved understand these organizational differences. As Carl Builder notes, "Institutional and personal interest are not intrinsically bad; but they may be made so if they are always cloaked in altruism and not acknowledged as legitimate interests."<sup>6</sup>

If the planning process results in mutually agreed upon metrics, then there is potential that collected assessment data is useful for multiple organizations. As a sort of "force multiplier," the assessment requirement becomes easier if the military security cooperation professional can utilize data that is collected by someone else – both the plans and the assessment benefit from interagency synchronization. The Office of the

Secretary of Defense (OSD) and Joint Staff provide one forum for coordination, known as Promote Cooperation (PC).<sup>7</sup> It could be argued that coordination at this high level (Washington, DC), while essential, is insufficient to truly bring these plans into synchronization. The inter-agency coordination begins at the country team level.

Continual assessment, with performance metrics/indicators incorporated into the initial plan provides an additional benefit: it ensures that coordinated actions across all agencies are obtaining the desired results. While this may currently occur, there are instances where it appears that results have been less than satisfactory. In his most recent book, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan*, Rajiv Chandrasekaran describes a facet of the Afghanistan development plan executed through USAID, the Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture (AVIPA). Modeled after a program in northern Afghanistan, AVIPA would provide farmer subsidies for melon and vegetable production – an effort to decrease the popularity of poppy farming. Focused in the Helmand and Kandahar provinces, USAID proposed spending \$150 in just one year, AMB Holbrooke went further: “double it.”<sup>8</sup>

Chandrasekaran goes on to describe how AVIPA morphed into a cash-for-work program, where the main goal was to get the \$300M spent. The effect in one district, Nawa, was a sudden influx of expendable cash in the population (\$400 for every man woman and child over the year)<sup>9</sup>. Now residents were getting day wages to clean out irrigation ditches, something they would have collectively done without pay. This achieved the goal of making it more lucrative for people to day-labor than to work for the Taliban, but in the end it did not meet the goal of strengthening local government. With massive projects required to maintain the “burn rate,” most cash went to American

development contractors, who hired expensive Americans or foreigners, who required security. In the end, security, management and overhead costs spent seventy percent of the contract values – only thirty cents of each dollar was making it to help Afghans.<sup>10</sup> I believe this case, while extreme, is an example of why the security cooperation professional must consider their assessment prior to execution, and be ready to make adjustments if stated goals are not being met.

### Assessment Methodologies

It is valuable to briefly look at several methodologies used in analytic research. While the focus of this paper is not to instruct how to develop a research plan based on any of these methodologies, it is necessary for the security cooperation professional to understand some of the basics of each, as well as give thought to the associated strengths and weaknesses. As mentioned above, when working within the inter-agency's Diplomacy, Development, and Defense planning process (or 3D) not all agencies view "assessment" in the same way. The 3D planning guide offers the following definitions:

Assessment (DoD): 1. A continuous process that measures the overall effectiveness of employing joint force capability during military operations. 2. Determination of the progress toward accomplishing a task, creating an effect, or achieving an objective. (JP 1-02)

Assessment (USAID): The analysis and critical evaluation of pre-existing environmental, political, sociological, cultural or other conditions or situations which would have an effect upon or influence the success of a program or achievement of a Development Objective.<sup>11</sup>

Clearly, there is a difference in perspective between the two definitions: one looks to "measure" effectiveness or accomplishment, while the other looks to "critically evaluate" conditions that may affect success. To be clear, there is utility in each, and potential exists for each to strengthen the other. A basic understanding of some

research and assessment methods from academic traditions may lead to improved communication and ultimately more thorough plan development.

### Quantitative Methodology

The quantitative assessment methodology seems to be the principal choice for assessment throughout the Department of Defense (DoD). Perhaps this is due to the fact that there are “hard numbers” traceable back to a particular source. The desire for these metrics (i.e., Measures of Effectiveness<sup>12</sup>, Performance<sup>13</sup>, and Suitability<sup>14</sup>) requires something that is countable – something tangible. Webster’s dictionary defines quantitative as, “of, relating to, or expressible in terms of quantity... involving the measurement of quantity or amount.” Research using quantitative assessment seeks to use mathematical or statistical modeling to better understand or describe the data, and often write about it in an impersonal, third person way.<sup>15</sup>

One argument for quantitative methods is repeatability. If the data is collected correctly and accurately, then any reviewer should be able to come to the same conclusion or result. Repeatability should also be possible if the data were collected by multiple independent sources. Due to the ability to mathematically or statistically model, there is little need for interpretation other than trend analysis, path, regression, etc.

Data quality is paramount to this process, and often is the downfall of untrained practitioners. There is an adage that, “you often can’t count what matters, and what you can count doesn’t matter.” Care must be taken by the planner that the data collected quantitatively actually means something in the end. Think back to the AVIP example discussed earlier – the dollars spent was not the right value to collect for a measure of effectiveness (MOE). While it may have value as a measure of performance (MOP) which could “contribute” to an MOE, misidentification led to poor decisions and choices.

Also critical to data quality is the need for purity and completeness. There must be no “guesstimation” or “fudge factor” that needs explanation. Care must be taken to collect and represent all data, not just that which contributes to the desired outcome. Ethical failures in data collection caused by political or performance motives may undermine resulting recommendations. The data must stand on its own – any evidence of data manipulation will question the validity and pedigree of the assessment. To this end, many larger educational bodies establish rules and guidelines for data quality – for example, the Environmental Protection Agency takes great care in data quality standards to ensure accurate, repeatable research.

Taking all these factors into account in regard to security cooperation planning, the quantitative method may provide some stumbling blocks. While there are some items that can be quantified (i.e. number of weapon systems, number of days of military exercise, number of engagements with senior leaders, completion= yes/no), there may be difficulty planning enough to accurately assess the effectiveness of a given action or plan. The Department of State uses Foreign Assistance Indicators<sup>16</sup> which the Security Cooperation Office should be able to access and incorporate in the planning process, however, these indicators may not provide data that is meaningful to military assessments. It should be noted that to collect this data, the collection plan needs to be in place prior to execution, as accurate data collection may be difficult to accomplish post fact. Reconstructing data to justify or disprove a specific effort risks bias in data collection – a “collect what you want” mentality. As mentioned above, data quality and completeness is paramount to the validity of the assessment.

Still, quantifiable data provides a valuable tool for determining if dollars or effort are wisely used in some cases. If properly planned and collected, it may be compared to similar data in other countries or regions. The security cooperation professional, however, is often left with a predominance of anecdotal, conversational, or interpreted data –most effectively utilized in a qualitative way.

### Qualitative Methodology

If the security cooperation planner does not have metrics that can be counted, they are driven towards qualitative assessment, where the data collected is often anecdotal and relational. In the academic world, the qualitative researcher may be described as journalistic, unscientific, exploratory, or “entirely personal and full of bias.”<sup>17</sup> This is in complete contrast to what was described above as quantitative method. Traditionally, in academia, this contrast creates conflict and both sides will argue that the other is missing essential points of analysis.

Lack of repeatability is a common critique of the qualitative method in that the process is interpretive and endlessly creative, relying on the understanding, experience, and relationships of the researcher.<sup>18</sup> In collecting and analyzing material, there are several basically accepted practices and methods: interview, observation, reading material culture and its records, visual, personal experience, and narrative/content analysis.<sup>19</sup> As one can see through these methods, there is reason for the critique of repeatability, however there is important assessment that can be accomplished. Interviews, news articles, memorandums, and personal observations provide often necessary context to assessment, particularly where “countable” metrics cannot be used. Consider the shortcomings of the metrics applied in the AVIPA example. While dollars were being spent, the qualitative data told another story.

One common concern in qualitative methodology is the influence of politics and ethics in data collection. In the academic disciplines, there has even been a push for “certification” before a researcher is allowed to do field research.<sup>20</sup> While this is certainly not necessary for the purposes of TCP or CCP assessment, it does bring to light the potential for serious problems with qualitative data. How easy would it be to merely report the observations that contribute to the outcome the organization desires, while “overlooking” those that do not? If the assessment plan developed relies on qualitative data – requiring some method of personal collection – then there is an ethical requirement to collect as complete a data field as possible...the good and the bad. Performance requirements may tempt assessors to “polish” a situation; however, those politics may in turn be indefensible. In regards to the political lens, it is also important to remember that (as mentioned earlier) in an interagency setting there will always be legitimate interests held by institutions. It is important to carefully consider qualitative data from another source and consider what prejudices may exist.

Qualitative methods may also have limitations on data quality. As already discussed, the process is interpretive and relies on understanding, experience, and relationships. It follows, then that quality of data will improve the longer the security cooperation professional is in a given position. Combined with the average posting length of 3 years, this raises concern. If data quality fluctuates and is non-repeatable, how accurate will the Combatant Commander expect it to be? If the assessment is ultimately a hunch anchored on personal experience, then any recommendations for change may not be considered worthwhile compared to others based on performance

numbers. This perhaps points to why the United States Government prefers to rely on quantitative methods.

In regards to security cooperation, I believe it is clear that there is utility for qualitative methods in assessment. The strength of information gained from interview or observation may lend a critical context to either success or failure of a given activity. Additionally, this interpretive data may point to a process improvement based on local cultural norms and history, or societal understanding. In the same way that the Constructivist theory seeks “thick description as a form of explanation,” and insists that historical and social constructs matter<sup>21</sup>, so may qualitative methods provide a social and historical context to improving Security Cooperation. Still, it is not worth shedding the data which can be counted, which brings us to a third option in methodology.

#### The “Via Media” - Mixed Methodology

In Social Science research, mixed methodology is the middle-road. It is the careful combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to enhance the available data. The emergence of mixed methodology in Social Sciences occurred in the 1980's.<sup>22</sup> In addition to the value added from qualitative data providing context to the quantitative, there are other benefits to this approach. Validity may be improved by allowing both types of data to corroborate one another. Not only may the data be more comprehensive, but it may increase credibility of findings, as well as potentially provide explanation for results. Previous sections discussed the strong points of both of these methods, and mixed methodology for assessment collection may pull out the best of both, filling in critical knowledge gaps.

In the process of mixing data, two processes stand out as particularly applicable to potential security cooperation assessment. First is converging data, taking qualitative

data (numbers, frequency, etc.) and combining with qualitative data (anecdote, news, observation) to arrive at a result. An example of this could be an increase in the number of weapon system “x” (quantitative) combined with an observed “improvement” in interoperability (qualitative). This could lead to the interpretation that foreign military sales (FMS) case for “x” successfully builds capacity and interoperability – a result that might not be achieved without converging data.

The second method is connecting data, where the results or interpretation are achieved either by using quantitative data and then following up with qualitative assessment, or using qualitative data to develop a quantitative metric for assessment. For one example, using an International Military Education and Training (IMET) case, a country is able to send “x” personnel to a training program (quantitative). Those personnel participate in a follow-up interview (qualitative) and it is determined that even though the course was provided, the capacity still is not there (based on interview and observation). In another example, through discussion it is revealed that the country’s targeting effectiveness has greatly improved (qualitative) building to develop a quantitative metric of “x” successes. In this instance an FMS case can be linked and attributed to the success.

Some of these quantitative or qualitative variables currently exist, but they perhaps are not being leveraged to provide the best assessment. In example, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) has deployed the Regional Centers Person and Activity Management System (RCPAMS) to provide support for tracking and reporting purposes related to the Regional Centers it operates.<sup>23</sup> While this is primarily a record keeping method that integrates data between Security Cooperation Offices

(SCOs) and Regional Centers<sup>24</sup> for reporting to entities such as congress, the quantitative data may be useful in guiding some additional qualitative follow-up to further refine effectiveness and application for the security cooperation planner. For example, based on qualitative collection, are objectives better met through “resident courses” or through mobile training-teams (MTTs)?

Clearly, there is utility to mixed methodology assessment. The problem is in combining into a useable and meaningful form. It can be argued that much of this simply cannot be planned ahead of execution, and that it results in a reactive collection plan. However, if the planning process evolves to include mechanisms for identifying indicators of both quantitative and qualitative sources, then the security cooperation professional may be able to lay the groundwork for validating or disqualifying actions based on both countable metrics and anecdotal observation.

#### Current Practices in Place

##### OSD/JCS Processes in Place

Currently the Joint Staff maintains oversight of the planning process directed through the JSCP and conducted using the Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) system, instituted in 2011. Thorough guidelines of the planning timelines and requirements can be found in the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3141.01E as well as *Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operation Planning*. For TCP In-progress Reviews (IPRs), the guidance requires, “a focus on how the CCMD will measure plan achievement of global/theater end states. In addition, key aspects of how the achievement is impacted by theater engagement concept, security cooperation, country engagement, interagency planning, and multinational planning.”<sup>25</sup>

Aside from establishing timelines leading to plan approval, CJCSI 3141.01E also discusses the use of IPR-R, which is for review of plans in execution (TCPs). At the highest level, this is the opportunity for the Commander to discuss the direction of future planning with the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). Also, based on assessments, the Commander also provides a RATE recommendation (refine, adapt, terminate, and execute).<sup>26</sup> As the TCP is already in execution and will not be terminated, the RATE recommendation should focus on refinements and adaptations – again based on assessment findings.<sup>27</sup> Through this, we can see that there is an avenue for input of assessment findings into the planning process. Still, to be a valid recommendation, that assessment must have some pedigree linked back to either quantitative or qualitative metrics (or both).

One facet of the current methodology described in *Joint Operational Planning* is the cognitive framework of operational design. Ultimately, operational design is a “process of iterative understanding and problem framing that supports commanders and staffs in their application of operational art with tools and a methodology to conceive of and construct viable approaches to operations and campaigns.”<sup>28</sup> Through operational design, the commander (and their staff) should develop a better understanding of the operational environment across the political, military, economic, social, informational, and infrastructure (PMESII) disciplines, which additionally requires a better understanding of how other agencies may influence particular areas. This process requires frequent revisiting to ensure that an understanding of the changing environment is reflected in both problem definition and operational approach. It would follow that this understanding would not only provide the critical inputs to the IPR-R and

the associated RATE recommendation, but also would improve the ability to communicate in the inter-agency on more than military specific goals. Through operational design, the application of operational art “promotes unified action by helping Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) and staffs understand how to facilitate the integration of other agencies and multinational partners toward achieving strategic and operational objectives.”<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, this process of defining the environment and recognition of trends and relationships will require incorporation of many qualitative factors – a cultural shift for the military desire for the quantifiable, but useful for security cooperation assessment.

Another opportunity for the Commander to provide campaign plan recommendations is through the Joint Staff J5 (JS/J5) run Comprehensive Joint Assessment (CJA). Produced by the Combatant Command staff, it includes an assessment of progress towards meeting GEF defined end states and Intermediate Military Objectives (IMOs). In this sense, campaign plan assessments can provide an indication of how security cooperation activities contribute towards achieving theater end states. Security cooperation activities are also discussed in their own section and recommendations could be included here as well. In the CJA, for consistency, all inputs must clearly identify the recommendation and define the responsible DoD or inter agency office (this is a recommendation, not tasking to other agencies). Then that recommendation must be categorized within the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF) framework, and “clearly identify key assessment findings that serve as evidence for the recommendation.”<sup>30</sup> This is an opportunity for adjustment recommendations, but

requires justification by assessment findings – gained through carefully developed assessment plans and implementation of the operational design cognitive framework.

#### Department of State and the Integrated Country Plan

Earlier, this paper discussed some of the observations of the “3D Planning Guide”. The 3D Planning Group (3DPG) was chartered with members of the DoS, USAID, and DoD – the 3 pillars of Diplomacy, Development and Defense (3D) in order to develop products and processes to improve collaboration in planning.<sup>31</sup> This paper has also shown that the 3DPG recognizes that differences exist in defining exactly what an assessment is. The DoS has teamed with USAID in development of the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) construct. Per the documentation, this ICS, “sets Mission Goals and Mission Objectives through a coordinated and collaborative planning effort among...US Government agencies operating overseas.”<sup>32</sup>

The structure of this ICS starts with Mission Goals, supported by Mission Objectives, each of which contains an action plan. The guidance document describes the Mission Objectives as “concrete, realistic statements of a result in the host country that the Mission can significantly influence.”<sup>33</sup> Perhaps most relevant to the topic of this paper is the significant thought given to “measuring success.” The ICS framework lays out guidelines for measuring success using already existing performance indicators, for example the standard Foreign Assistance Indicators that the Mission already reports on annually. In the case that there is no performance indicator already developed, the Mission is required to describe how progress will be monitored:

Proactively thinking about ways to monitor progress during the planning state allows Missions to build ongoing monitoring practices into their contracts or routines that can later be used to satisfy reporting requirements such as the Foreign Assistance Performance Plan and Report, Mission Resource Request, or other regular data calls.<sup>34</sup>

Similar to the DoD documents there is a requirement for assessment, but the ICS guidance takes it one step farther in requiring identification of monitoring methods. Inclusion of this rigor into the CCP planning process could provide the security cooperation professional with some ready assessment data for feedback to the TCP planning loop, or “other regular data calls.”

As part of the country team, the Security Cooperation Office (SCO) should already be involved in the development of the ICS, providing valuable input into the security section of the plan. It follows that these personnel will continue to become more familiar with the measurement tools such as the Foreign Assistance Indicators. If these provide sufficient measurement, and the CCP must reflect the goals of the ICS, then this methodology may become transparent once the ICS construct is fully integrated into all geographic regions.<sup>35</sup> The ICS plans will be aligned with the DoS Joint Regional Strategies, which are geographically aligned differently than the GCC boundaries. However, the ICS may provide a pathway to a more common lexicon regarding performance assessment – which could baseline interagency assumptions and expectations, better synchronize activities, and converge goals at the country level.

### Recommendations

Based on the methodology discussion earlier, there is benefit in quantitative analysis and benefit in qualitative analysis. Perhaps the best pathway to incorporate the best data collection into security cooperation assessment, then, is through mixed methods data collecting. Essential to this, however is inclusion of assessment planning during plan development. The planner should dedicate time to determining what quantifiable variables exist that can be counted or recorded. Likewise, the planner should recognize where those variables simply do not exist, and strive to identify

qualitative methods for monitoring progress. Identification of these variables ahead of time greatly simplifies the assessment process of “living” plans such as the TCP and CCP, and meets the rapid update ability desired through the APEX system. While it will take time to change organizational culture, implementation of operational design, and a regular, ongoing assessment of changes and trends in the operational environment – including some qualitative measures – will lend itself well towards identifying these variables.

As highlighted early in the paper, one key improvement to Security Cooperation assessment is better coordination and communication across the interagency. While there are provisions for this discussion at the CCDR level – by means of the PC – there needs to be improved synchronization at the individual country level. Perhaps the ICS construct will provide the groundwork for a common lexicon of progress measurement. If some agreements can be made regarding assessment, then perhaps planning can occur using a common set of assumptions (which all agencies strive to validate). The advantage to establishing a common construct would be the improvement of integration of country plans (currently the “maturity of integration is theater dependant and inconsistent”<sup>36</sup>). Additionally, if the assessment framework and method is developed and planned at the ICS and CCP level and transferrable between the two, then the workload on already heavily tasked SCOs would not particularly have to increase. There is merit for the DoD entities involved in security cooperation to continue involvement in the 3DPG, and become familiar with the ICS – looking for parallels and areas for cooperative opportunity.

## Future Research / Future Development

Establishing the “common language” of assessment and identification of performance measures and indicators should not be laid on the shoulders of those already busy maintaining timelines for plan development. If the construct is to be common across geographic boundaries – and it should since no agency maintains the same boundaries – then the coordination and development should be kept at a higher level. Perhaps this should be left to the 3DPG; however, there also exists room for academic pursuits for identifying common variables based on commonality of many security cooperation programs and actions. Future study could compare programs and actions in various countries and identify overlap (excess) or gaps in “known” performance measures. Additionally, effort should be given to further define better mixed-method indicators for IMET programs to ensure dollars are being spent with the best effect in mind, not simply the best efficiency.

## Conclusion

There is need for the development of a standardized Security Cooperation assessment framework compatible across both geographic boundaries and inter agency boundaries. This assessment framework should strive to include both qualitative and quantitative information to provide the most complete progress report, and should be useful to multiple agencies in report generation – unified effort preventing duplication of processes. Through these efforts, security cooperation professionals will gain the ability to not only provide more valuable advice to senior DoD leaders, but also to identify opportunities for cooperation and collaboration among the agencies working at the country team level. Developing a military culture of operational design begins to build the capacity to recognize and leverage qualitative assessment processes and builds a

more comprehensive understanding of parallel lines of effort and opportunities for cooperation within the inter-agency. Leveraging the new construct of the Integrated Country Strategy is a starting point in building better cooperation. Providing the overarching priorities identified by the Chief of Mission, it is the logical point to build from. As the US military continues to refocus their stable-state operations more and more on security cooperation missions, improvement in assessment methodology stands to provide it with the same efficiency in planning that it is known for in combat operations.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Leon Panetta, "Building Partnership in the 21st Century" (lecture, U.S. Institute for Peace, Washington, D.C., June 28, 2012).  
<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1691> (accessed Jan 29, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> As discussed later in this paper, the MSRP is being replaced with the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) as the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development continue to roll out their new planning construct.

<sup>3</sup> VADM William E. Gortney, Director, Joint Staff, *Management and Review of Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP)-Tasked Plans*, CJCSI 3141.01E (Washington, DC: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, September 15, 2011), E-1.

<sup>4</sup> Gortney, E-2.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State (DoS), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), *3D Planning Guide – Diplomacy, Development, Defense (Pre-decisional Working Draft)*, (Washington DC: Multi-Agency, July 31, 2012), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 11.

<sup>7</sup> Gortney, D-1.

<sup>8</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 109.

<sup>9</sup> Chandrasekaran, 191.

<sup>10</sup> Chandrasekaran, 198.

<sup>11</sup> DoS, USAID, and DoD, *3D Planning Guide*, 47.

<sup>12</sup> Measure of Effectiveness or MOE: Measure designed to correspond to accomplishment of mission objectives and achievement of desired results. MOEs may be further decomposed into Measures of Performance and Measures of Suitability. (from Defense Acquisition University Glossary, <https://dap.dau.mil/glossary/Pages/Default.aspx>)

<sup>13</sup> Measure of Performance or MOP: Measure of a system's performance expressed as speed, payload, range, time-on-station, frequency, or other distinctly quantifiable performance features. Several MOPs and/or Measures of Suitability may be related to the achievement of a particular Measure of Effectiveness (MOE). (from Defense Acquisition University Glossary, <https://dap.dau.mil/glossary/Pages/Default.aspx>)

<sup>14</sup> Measure of Suitability or MOS: Measure of an item's ability to be supported in its intended operational environment. MOSs typically relate to readiness or operational availability, and hence reliability, maintainability, and the items support structure. Several MOSs and/or Measures of Performance may be related to the achievement of a particular Measure of Effectiveness (MOE). (from Defense Acquisition University Glossary, <https://dap.dau.mil/glossary/Pages/Default.aspx>)

<sup>15</sup> Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *The Landscape of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998), 11.

<sup>16</sup> To access the list: <http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/index.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Denzin, 7.

<sup>18</sup> Denzin, 29.

<sup>19</sup> Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 353-359.

<sup>20</sup> Maurice Punch, "Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 83.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph S. Nye and David A. Welch, *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History* (Boston: Longman Publishing, 2011), 9, 57.

<sup>22</sup> Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2003), 697.

<sup>23</sup> "DSCA Deploys RCPAMS System to Manage Event and Participation Management," The DISAM Journal of International Security Cooperation Management Online: <http://www.disamjournal.org/articles/dsca-deploys-rcpams-system-to-manage-event-and-participant-information-294> (accessed January 15, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESAS), Washington, D.C.; Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), Washington, D.C.; Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS), Honolulu, Hawaii; Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS), Washington, D.C.; and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies (GCMC), Garmisch, Germany are known collectively as the Regional Centers

<sup>25</sup> Gortney, B-3.

<sup>26</sup> Gortney, B-9.

<sup>27</sup> Gortney, E-8.

<sup>28</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 26, 2006), III-1.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, III-1.

<sup>30</sup> Gortney, E-3.

<sup>31</sup> DoS, USAID, and DoD, *3D Planning Guide*, 4.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of State (DoS) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Integrated Country Strategy – Guidance and Instructions*, (Washington, DC: Department of State, May, 2012), 3.

<sup>33</sup> DoS and USAID., 4.

<sup>34</sup> DoS and USAID., 9-10.

<sup>35</sup> The ICS will be launched in three phases: Europe and the Western Hemisphere spring-fall 2012, Africa and East Asia Pacific spring-fall 2013, South Central Asia and Near East spring-fall 2014. (*Integrated Country Strategy – Guidance and Instructions*, Overview).

<sup>36</sup> DoS, USAID, and DoD, *3D Planning Guide*, 35.