

NO ONE IN CHARGE:
A NEW THEORY OF COORDINATION
AND AN ANALYSIS OF
US CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION IN AFGHANISTAN 2001–2009

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation challenges the argument common in the scholarly literature and policy discourse on peacebuilding that the way to achieve coordination in peacebuilding is to establish a strong, overarching coordination authority.¹

While some degree of centralization may be possible and desirable among organizations nested within an overarching bureaucratic system (e.g., within the United Nations or national bureaucratic systems), centralized coordination is not an option within the peacebuilding system *writ large*. The sovereign nations, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and other autonomous and semi-autonomous actors engaged in peacebuilding simply will not accept an overarching coordination authority.

The dissertation therefore argues that the question that has driven much of the literature and policy discourse – how to establish a stronger, more effective, overarching coordination authority – must be reframed.

¹ Peacebuilding is used here to refer to efforts undertaken to help a country transition from war to peace, including security sector reform, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, infrastructure reconstruction, protection of human rights, reconciliation, economic development, and the establishment of governance institutions and rule of law (Boutros-Ghali 1992; OECD 1997; Ball, *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn States*, 2001). As discussed in Chapter Two, the literature on peacebuilding is diverse and includes research and theory in the fields of international relations, humanitarian relief, development, security studies, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. The range of arguments and emphases within this literature is discussed in Chapter Two.

The more policy-relevant and theoretically interesting question is: How is coordination achieved when no one is in charge?

In posing and seeking to answer this question, the dissertation draws inspiration and insights from a small, interdisciplinary body of research that frames coordination in peacebuilding in terms of negotiation among autonomous actors, decentralized networks, and complex systems.² This includes work in the fields of international relations, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, humanitarian relief, and development.

Building on this prior research, the dissertation develops a new theory of coordination that emphasizes the explanatory power of both multi-stakeholder processes and organizational structures and systems. It does this in three steps. First, it defines coordination in terms of results and identifies the variables hypothesized to explain coordinated results. Second, it analyzes US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan in and across four distinct periods between 2001 and 2009. Third, it uses the empirical analysis to test the hypotheses and build a theoretical model of coordination.

The dissertation concludes by identifying implications for theory, as well as for policy and practice. While the dissertation is grounded empirically in peacebuilding, the findings are potentially relevant to other contexts in which coordination is necessary but no one is in charge.

² The dissertation also draws inspiration and insights from the author's experience working on civil-military, governmental-nongovernmental, and multinational coordination in the US government and civil society.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the memory of my friend and mentor Elise Boulding; to her 200-year present; to my husband, Tsering Ngodup, and our children, Dinah, Rinchen Dorje, and Yeshe Dorje; and to the courageous people around the world working for peace.

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GLOSSARY

ADT	Agribusiness Development Team
AID	Agency for International Development (US)
AIOG	Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AOR	Area of Operation
ARG	Afghanistan Reconstruction Group
CENTCOM	Central Command (US)
CERP	Commanders' Emergency Response Program
CFC-A	Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan
CFLCC	Coalition Forces Land Component Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIC	Coordination and Integration Chair
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CJCMOTF	Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
COIN	Counterinsurgency
COMCFC	Commander of CFC-A
COMISAF	Commander, International Security Assistance Force
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan
CTF-82	Combined Task Force 82
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DCG	Deputy Commanding General
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DEVAD	Development Advisor
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
EIPG	Embassy Interagency Planning Group
EWG	Executive Working Group
FPO	Field Program Officer
FRAGO	Fragmentary Order
GAO	General Accounting Office
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
ICMAG	Integrated Civil-Military Action Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
IRC	Interagency Resources Cell

ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JIATF	Joint Interagency Task Force
LGCD	Local Governance and Community Development
MPP	Mission Performance Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSC	National Security Council
NSPD	National Security Presidential Directive
ODA	Operational Detachment – Alpha
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHDACA	Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OMC-A	Office of Military Coordination – Afghanistan
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
PAG	Policy Action Group
PCC	Provincial Coordination Council
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
POLAD	Political Advisor
Pol-Mil	Political-Military
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSC	Private Service Contractor
QIP	Quick Impact Program
RC East	Regional Command East
RC South	Regional Command South
SAC	Senior Advisory Cell
S/CRS	Special Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization
SRSG	Special Representative of the (UN) Secretary General
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USFOR-A	US Forces – Afghanistan
VETCAP	Veterinary Civic Action Program
VTC	Video Teleconference

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation responds to the urgent policy need to increase coordination in peacebuilding. It seeks to explain how coordinated results emerge in the absence of an overarching coordination authority. Drawing on prior research on coordination in peacebuilding, negotiation theory, organizational theory, and original empirical research, it builds a new theory of coordination and identifies implications for research and practice.

Peacebuilding refers here to efforts undertaken to help a country transition from war to peace.³ It involves a wide range of activities – security sector reform, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, infrastructure reconstruction, protection of human rights, reconciliation, economic development, and the establishment of governance institutions and rule of law. These activities are conducted by an even wider array of actors – host-country and expatriate, governmental and non-governmental, civilian and military, and public and private (Boutros-Ghali 1992; OECD 1997; Ball, *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn States*, 2001).

³ There are many definitions of peacebuilding, some of which include prevention and others that focus on transitions from war to peace (Cockell 2000; Barnett et al 2007). The definition used here is based on the definition of “post-conflict peacebuilding” in the *Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992), although the qualifier “post-conflict” is dropped out of recognition that peacebuilding often takes place in the context of continued violence.

As the literature review in Chapter Two will demonstrate, coordination is necessary for effective peacebuilding. This does not mean that more coordination processes are needed. Policy makers and practitioners appropriately complain that too much time is invested in coordination processes that do not yield the necessary results. What is needed is a combination of better processes and organizational structures and systems that create conditions in which coordinated results emerge.⁴

Policy makers have long acknowledged the importance of coordination in peacebuilding (Boutros-Ghali 1992; Boutros-Ghali 1995; Brahimi 2000; Challenges Project 2005). Indeed, “calls for coordination are...almost as old as the UN system itself” (Chayes and Chayes 1999, 44). In recent years, concern with coordination has intensified, driven in large part by coordination failures in international efforts in Afghanistan.⁵

Civilian and military leaders in the US and beyond increasingly argue for enhanced coordination. US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pointed to the urgent need for coordination.

To be successful, the entirety of the NATO alliance, the European Union, NGOs and other groups – the full panoply of military and

⁴ The focus on coordinated results is consistent with the definition of coordination as “the harmonious functioning of parts...for most effective results” (Merriam-Webster 2002). Coordinated results are defined in terms of interactions among activities. Chapter Three identifies four types of coordinated results: avoidance of negative interactive effects, efficiency, complementarity, and synergy.

⁵ While the experience in Afghanistan catalyzed the increased attention to coordination, efforts to increase coordination have extended far beyond Afghanistan. Indeed, two US Congressional hearings in early 2010 were aptly entitled “An Urgent Need: Coordinating Reconstruction and Stabilization in Contingency Operations” (Commission on Wartime Contracting 2010 A; Commission on Wartime Contracting 2010 B).

civilian elements – must better integrate and coordinate with one another and also with the Afghan government. These efforts today – however well-intentioned and even heroic – add up to less than the sum of the parts (Gates 2008).

Kai Eide, then Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Afghanistan, said: “...We must commit ourselves to improved coordination. This is an essential part of the mandate of the UN mission” (Eide 2008). Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, likewise argued that enhanced coordination is necessary for success.

So, what does it take to succeed? We have Holbrooke. We have IRA. We have troops. We have money. We have the will of the Afghan people. What should happen so we succeed? Is something lacking? Yes, there is something lacking. Better coordination in the international community is lacking. In spite of all our efforts, it has not come about (Karzai 2009).

National governments, the UN, and regional organizations have poured resources into coordination mechanisms and processes. Even NGOs, appropriately cautious about their relationships with political and military actors, have focused increasing attention on the issue. While governmental and non-governmental, local and international, and civil and military actors differ in their perspectives about coordination, they share a concern with clarifying roles and responsibilities, avoiding harmful interactions, and maximizing effectiveness.

In spite of the large investment in coordination mechanisms and processes across the international system, peacebuilding remains fragmented. Agencies often pursue narrow organizational objectives

without attention to their effects on other efforts, let alone how to leverage comparative advantages or achieve strategic linkages. As the case study later in the dissertation makes clear, coordination failures are rampant. Indeed, the case study suggests that the coordinated results identified by interviewees emerged in a sea of coordination failures. The costs of these failures are measured not only in dollars wasted, but also in lives lost.

Why, in spite of the increased attention to and investment in coordination, have the results been so disappointing? Much of the prior research has emphasized coordination challenges in explaining why coordination efforts have not been more effective. Coordination is, indeed, very challenging. As discussed in Chapter Two and supported by the case study, challenges range from differing goals and priorities to perverse incentives and competition for resources.

This dissertation argues, however, that a major reason for coordination failures is a hierarchical mental model of coordination inconsistent with the realities of peacebuilding.⁶ Policy makers have repeatedly attempted to establish strong, overarching coordination authorities. When agencies have resisted being coordinated, as they naturally will, policy makers have reverted to bureaucratic approaches, creating new coordination mechanisms within existing organizational

⁶ For an analysis of the impact of mental models on organizational behavior and learning, see Senge (1990).

silos.⁷ The result has been a proliferation of coordination mechanisms that mirror and amplify the very problems they were intended to address: stove-piping, overlapping mandates, competition, and a profound lack of communication and learning. The coordination mechanisms themselves are uncoordinated.

This pattern has repeated itself at all levels of the peacebuilding system: within individual agencies, within national bureaucratic systems, within regional organizations and the UN, and among the broad array of actors attempting to coordinate on the ground.⁸ The proliferation of coordination mechanisms has, at a minimum, failed to deliver coordinated results and, in many cases, undermined effectiveness by taking time and other resources away from where they could be better used.

Much of the scholarly research on coordination, in particular that focused on humanitarian and whole-of-government coordination, has assumed that some degree of centralization is necessary. While partial centralization may be possible and even desirable among organizations nested within an overarching bureaucratic system (e.g., within the UN or national bureaucratic systems), there are limits to what agencies will accept in terms of coordination from above. When it comes to the sovereign nations, NGOs, and other autonomous and semi-autonomous actors involved in peacebuilding, centralization is impossible.

⁷ For analyses of institutional resistance to being coordinated, see Donini (2000) and Minear (2002).

⁸ For an analysis of the proliferation of coordination mechanisms within the UN system, see Jones (2002).

There is an innovative, interdisciplinary body of research, including work in the fields of international relations, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, humanitarian relief, and development, which frames peacebuilding in terms of negotiation among autonomous actors, decentralized networks, and complex systems. This research offers valuable insights about the limitations of centralization and how coordination can be achieved in the absence of an overarching authority. However, the emphasis in much of the literature on centralized approaches that constitute, at best, partial solutions has crowded out consideration of these more effective and durable solutions.

There is evidence that a window of opportunity is opening for policy innovation, driven by recognition of coordination failures in international efforts in Afghanistan and enhanced understanding of the complexities of interagency, multinational, and civil-military coordination. Policy makers increasingly acknowledge the limitations of centralized approaches to coordination. While calls for a strong, empowered coordination authority continue, there is growing recognition that “unity of effort” will have to be achieved without “unity of command and that unity of effort necessarily entails consensus building.”⁹ US Army Field Manual

⁹ US Army Field Manual 100-5 offers the following direction and definitions: “For every objective, seek unity of command and unity of effort...Unity of command means that all the forces are under one responsible commander. It requires a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces in pursuit of a unified purpose. Unity of effort, on the other hand, requires coordination and cooperation among all forces even though they may not necessarily be part of the same command structure toward a commonly

3-0 states: “To compensate for limited unity of command, commanders concentrate on achieving unity of effort. Consensus building, rather than direct command authority, is often the key element of successful...operations” (US Army 2001).

The emphasis on unity of effort is a step in the right direction. Beyond the general recognition that consensus building is involved, however, there is no clear picture of how unity of effort can be achieved among those interested in doing so. Nor has the policy community addressed the fact that not everyone buys into unity of effort and the shared goals and principles it implies (e.g., de Coning and Friis 2011). NGOs, in particular, are concerned with preserving autonomy, not joining forces with governmental actors. To many, unity of effort appears little more than a fig leaf for co-optation.

This dissertation poses and seeks to answer three questions. Theoretically, it asks how coordinated results in peacebuilding emerge in the absence of an overarching coordination authority. Empirically, it asks what evidence exists of coordinated results in the case studied and what variables explain those results. From a policy perspective, it then asks how coordinated results can be enhanced.

recognized objective” (US Army 1993, 2–5). More recent doctrine defines unity of effort explicitly to include both US interagency coordination and coordination with other actors (see, for example, US Army Joint Publication 1, 2007 and 2009; Quadrennial Defense Review 2010). The US Department of State and USAID, in the First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (modeled on the QDR), emphasize the need for unity of effort (QDDR 2010).

These questions clearly have resonance with the international relations literature, which has long grappled with the question of why cooperation emerges in an anarchic international system (Waltz 1979; Oye 1985, Fearon 1995; Keohane 1998). This dissertation draws several important insights from international relations theory. However, it differs from that broader body of literature in at least one important respect. Whereas the international relations literature focuses on why and how cooperation emerges among states, this project seeks to identify the systems and processes within the control of individual agencies that can be institutionalized to achieve coordinated results.¹⁰

To answer these questions, the dissertation draws on prior research and theory, as well as original research on US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2009. Chapter Two reviews the literature on coordination in peacebuilding, highlighting its many contributions and identifying several substantive and methodological limitations. Chapter Three identifies the hypotheses and research questions and details the methodology used for empirical analysis. Chapter Four introduces the case study, and Chapters Five through Eight analyze the data from each of the four time periods studied. Chapter Nine summarizes the findings from the case study, incorporating them into a theoretical model of coordination. The dissertation concludes by identifying implications for future research, including further empirical testing, and for policy and practice.

¹⁰ A definition of coordinated results is provided in Chapter Three.

Before turning to the literature review, it is important to note two caveats. First, coordination processes take time, effort, and often substantial financial resources. They also involve risks.¹¹ They thus should be undertaken only to the extent that they advance explicit, agreed goals, and they must be approached with careful attention to both opportunity costs and risks.

Second, while the international community has an important role to play, effective peacebuilding ultimately depends on the people living in the societies in which the peacebuilding is being undertaken. Coordination among expatriates is necessary, but not sufficient. To contribute to sustainable peace, international actors must complement and support the goals, priorities, and activities of local actors. For initial theory-building purposes, the dissertation focuses empirically on coordination among a subset of expatriate actors. However, the purpose of the dissertation is to develop theoretical and practical insights of relevance to coordination among broader sets of actors, including between international and local actors. As the conclusion will emphasize, further empirical testing will be necessary to determine the extent to which the findings from the case study apply to other actors and contexts.

¹¹ This is particularly true of coordination between humanitarian NGOs and military actors, in which visible interaction can blur the lines between combatants and civilians, undermining both security and effectiveness.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW: COORDINATION IN PEACEBUILDING

This chapter critically reviews prior research on coordination in peacebuilding, highlighting major contributions as well as several significant limitations.

There is no single literature on peacebuilding coordination. Rather, there are several bodies of research that approach coordination from various vantage points. They include research on coordination within the peacebuilding system *writ large*, much of which is located within the international relations literature and framed in terms of post-conflict peacebuilding, and research in the fields of conflict resolution, development, humanitarian relief, and security studies that addresses coordination among specific subsets of actors and activities.¹²

Collectively, prior research makes three important contributions upon which the dissertation builds. First, it supports the argument made in Chapter One that coordination is necessary for effectiveness, while addressing the issues and concerns involved. Second, it identifies challenges associated with efforts to achieve coordination. Finally, it

¹² The qualifier “post-conflict” is retained in this section, in contrast to the rest of the dissertation, to remain consistent with the literature being reviewed.

makes a deliberate attempt to link theory to practice, identifying a range of recommendations to enhance coordination.

THE NEED FOR COORDINATION: DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Most prior research argues that coordination is necessary for effective peacebuilding, although goals for and concerns about coordination vary across disciplines. Following is an overview of arguments for coordination, emphasizing work that addresses coordination within the peacebuilding system *writ large*. The analysis is not intended to capture the full range or depth of this research, but rather to highlight the most important arguments upon which the dissertation draws.

COORDINATION IN PEACEBUILDING *WRIT LARGE*

A substantial body of research on peacebuilding addresses coordination at the systems level. This includes international relations research explicitly framed in terms of “post-conflict” peacebuilding and related research grounded in the conflict resolution field. The reference points for the former include two United Nations reports issued after the end of the Cold War: the *Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1991) and the *Supplement to the Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1995). The *Agenda for Peace*, written at a time of great hope for the UN, introduced the term *post-conflict peacebuilding* onto the world stage. It defines post-conflict peacebuilding as “comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures

which will tend to consolidate peace” (Boutros-Ghali 1991, par. 55).¹³ It then argues: “Only sustained, cooperative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation” (Boutros-Ghali 1991, par. 57).

The *Supplement to the Agenda for Peace*, written in 1995, reflected attempts to learn from the failures in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda and was seen as a backing off of the ambitiousness of the *Agenda for Peace*. It dedicates an entire section to coordination, arguing for an integrated approach to human security: “If United Nations efforts are to succeed, the roles of the various players need to be carefully coordinated in an integrated approach to human security” (Boutros-Ghali 1995, par. 81). The *Supplement* emphasizes the need for enhanced coordination within the UN system and between the UN and other actors.¹⁴

Scholarly research on peacebuilding, both that which focused on “post-conflict” peacebuilding and that which was framed more broadly, supports the argument that coordination is necessary for effectiveness. Lederach (1997) adopts a systems view of peacebuilding, proposing an

¹³ *The Agenda for Peace* anticipates that peacebuilding “may include disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refugees, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental institutions and promoting formal and informal processes of political participation” (Boutros-Ghali 1991, par. 55).

¹⁴ The *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (“Brahimi Report”) also features coordination prominently: The term *coordinate* and its immediate derivatives appeared 35 times in the 58-page document (Brahimi 2000). Subsequent UN documents likewise emphasized the need for coordination.

integrated approach that includes coordination within and across levels of society as well as over time. Chayes and Chayes argue for an “integrated international strategy for preventing and managing the post-war conflicts and disasters that surround state breakdowns” (Chayes and Chayes 1999, 47). Cockell (2000) identifies coordination, or the lack thereof, as a critical element determining peacebuilding effectiveness. Jones (2002) argues that lack of strategic coordination across phases undermines the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to implement peace agreements and creates opportunities for spoilers to exploit differences.

Lack of coordination is by no means the only factor that undermines peacebuilding effectiveness. Prior research identifies many other factors, including complexity, unrealistic goals and limited resources, and faulty assumptions. Rather than undermining the argument for the importance of coordination, these analyses lend it additional support.

1. COMPLEXITY

Prior research makes clear that one of the reasons for the limited effectiveness of peacebuilding is its sheer complexity (Stedman et al 2002). The roots of conflict are deep and interwoven (Lederach 1997). The level of destruction to physical infrastructure, social relations, economic activity, and political systems and the associated needs for reconstruction and development are overwhelming (Ball, *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn States*, 2001). There are spoilers with vested

interests in continued conflict (Stedman 2002; Jones 2002). There are tensions between immediate needs and longer-term economic and political goals (Licklider 2001). There are hundreds and often thousands of actors involved (Chayes and Chayes 1999; Jones 2002).

While complexity is without question a defining characteristic of peacebuilding, it is this very complexity that makes coordination necessary. The diverse actors and activities that constitute peacebuilding must interact in ways that, at a minimum, do not undermine one another and ideally add up to more than the sum of their parts. They must avoid creating opportunities for spoilers to exploit differences and gaps (Jones 2002). Moreover, the dilemmas between short-term imperatives and longer-term needs must be resolved in ways that support both (Lederach 1997). These complementarities and synergies are at the heart of the definition of coordinated results provided in Chapter One.

2. UNREALISTIC GOALS, LIMITED RESOURCES

Research also argues that the resources made available for peacebuilding are not sufficient to achieve the international community's ambitious post-conflict agenda (Ottaway 2003). It highlights the fact that short time horizons, domestic politics, and "CNN effect" work against the long-term commitments necessary for sustained change. A growing body of research argues that international actors should rethink their goals for peacebuilding in light of available resources (e.g., Uvin 2001; Carothers 2002; Ottaway 2003; Tschirgi 2004).

The argument that resources must be commensurate with goals lends further support to the argument for coordination. Coordination at the policy level is necessary to establish realistic goals and strategies, including allocating resources. Once goals and strategies have been established, coordination is necessary to maximize the efficient and effective use of resources. Coordination thus offers the possibility of enhancing effectiveness by formulating realistic policy goals and increasing the efficient use of resources towards those goals.

3. FAULTY ASSUMPTIONS

Prior research also argues that faulty assumptions undermine peacebuilding. Increasingly, scholars challenge assumptions about the interrelationships among political, economic, and social change processes. Paris (2001) takes on the assumption that rapid liberalization following civil wars leads to peace, arguing that democratization and marketization often foster conflict. He emphasizes in particular tensions between short-term requirements and long-term goals. Burnell (2004) challenges the assumption that democratization necessarily advances peace, identifying tensions and dilemmas among various change processes. He also addresses the tension between short-term and long-term goals showing that institutions intended to build peace in the shorter term (e.g., reserved parliamentary seats for certain identity groups) may be ineffective for promoting democracy in the longer term. Tschirgi (2004) challenges the

assumption that the provision of physical security through military action advances other peacebuilding goals.

At the programmatic level, research challenges the related assumption that the disparate activities that together comprise peacebuilding necessarily add up to more than the sum, or even the sum, of their parts. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects' Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) project conducted a multiyear study on peace practice effectiveness. Anderson and Olson, in an argument deeply resonant with more recent policy statements about lack of coordination in Afghanistan, summarize the RPP findings as followed: "All of the good peace work being done should be adding up to more than it is. The potential of these multiple efforts is not fully realized" (Anderson and Olson 2004, 10). A subsequent article of CDA's Cumulative Impacts Project likewise emphasizes: "Although many people do, indeed, work at many levels, conducting good programs at each level, these initiatives do not automatically 'add up' to peace!"

A different but especially problematic assumption is that peace can be imposed from the outside. Research shows that meaningful local engagement, if not leadership, of peacebuilding processes is necessary for success (Lederach 1997; Ball *Rebuilding War-Torn States* 2001; Rubin 2002; Anderson and Olson 2004; Tschirgi 2004; Pouligny 2005;

Woodward 2006).¹⁵ Anderson and Olson, in an analysis focused on peace practice, argue: “It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of local ownership of both the analysis and the solutions offered by peace programs” (Anderson and Olson 2004, 85). Tschirgi, in a more theoretically oriented piece, likewise argues: “[The] basic premise of peacebuilding [is] that peace, security and stability cannot be imposed from the outside but need to be nurtured internally through patient, flexible, responsive strategies that are in tune with domestic political realities” (Tschirgi 2004, ii).

In spite of broad acknowledgment of the importance of local ownership among both scholars and practitioners, expatriate (“international”) actors continue to control almost all aspects of the peacebuilding processes. Of course, faulty assumptions are not the only reason this is so. International actors control the purse strings, and they bring their own interests, needs, and constraints to engagement in other countries. Moreover, they have legitimate concerns about lack of local capacity and accountability (Uvin 1999). Nevertheless, lack of local ownership undermines the ability to build that capacity and to tailor programs to local needs, thereby undermining effectiveness. It also raises ethical questions, as those who make the major decisions often do not

¹⁵ While the case study in this dissertation analyzes coordination among a subset of international actors, it develops a theory of coordination intended to explain coordination among broader sets of actors, including international-local coordination. As the conclusion emphasizes, however, further research will be necessary to test the relevance of the theory to other actors, activities, and contexts.

experience the life-and-death consequences of those decisions (Uvin 2001).

The research on faulty assumptions discussed above lends support to the argument that coordination is necessary. The definition of coordinated results used in this dissertation emphasizes exactly the issues raised in the literature – avoiding negative interactions among activities and associated change processes and maximizing efficiency, complementarity, and synergy. Moreover, the inclusion of complementarity in the definition of coordinated results implies leveraging differences to advance shared goals. This is relevant not only to coordination among international actors and activities, but also to coordination between international and local actors and activities. International and local actors have different and, in many ways, inherently complementary capacities (Anderson 1999). At a practical level, coordination thus involves leveraging comparative advantages and dealing constructively with differences, including tensions and dilemmas in relationships among actors and activities.

At a more profound level, coordination processes may create opportunities for the actors involved to make explicit and question their underlying assumptions. Coordination processes thus may become not only instrumental, but also generative, with the potential to enhance collective effectiveness. This is supported by Olson and Gregorian's work on coordination, in which they argue: "A first step in working to achieve

better coordination may lie in getting people to first recognize the ‘theories of change’ that guide their own work” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 20, drawing on Woodrow 2006). This learning function of coordination processes is incorporated into the hypotheses in Chapter Three.

COORDINATION AMONG SUBSETS OF ACTORS AND ACTIVITIES

Prior research on peacebuilding thus provides both direct and indirect support for the argument that coordination is necessary at the systems level. Additional research in the fields of conflict resolution, development, humanitarian relief, and security studies further supports this argument, focusing on coordination among specific subsets of actors.

Conflict resolution research, in addition to demonstrating the importance of coordination at the broader systems level, emphasizes the need for coordination between official and unofficial actors (“Track One–Track Two coordination”). The focus of this research is on leveraging the inherent complementarities among official and unofficial efforts while avoiding negative interactions.¹⁶

Fisher and Keashly (1991) argue that insufficient coordination undermines the effectiveness of third-party intervention. They propose a contingency model that matches the type of intervention to one of four stages of conflict escalation. After applying the model to an analysis of the

¹⁶ Davidson and Montville (1981) are credited with introducing the concept of “two-track” diplomacy.

numerous third-party interventions in the Cyprus conflict, they concluded: “Matching and sequencing of different third-party interventions may be necessary for positive influence, especially in highly escalated or protracted conflict” (Fisher and Keashly 1991, 29).

Kelman (1992), while not focusing explicitly on coordination, nevertheless emphasizes the importance of complementarity. He argues that Interactive Problem Solving, a Track Two process, should be understood as a complement to and not substitute for official diplomatic negotiations. Kriesberg identifies multiple ways in which the “multiplicity of peacebuilding efforts can hamper effectiveness” and proposes strategies to maximize complementarity (Kriesberg 1996, 343).

Chataway argues for coordination between Track One and Track Two efforts, while acknowledging tensions and dilemmas in the relationship and the associated need to “achieve the right distance and balance” (Chataway 1999, 145). Nan and Strimling (2004) likewise argue for the importance of coordination to leverage the complementarity between official and unofficial actors, situating their work within the broader conflict resolution literature.

Conflict resolution research also draws on the Track One–Track Two literature on complementarity to develop broader arguments of coordination. Nan (2000) provides a detailed review of conflict resolution research on coordination and analyzes complementarity and coordination among conflict resolution efforts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and

Transnistria, identifying challenges to coordination. She identifies types of coordination successfully employed by practitioners and argues for the importance of leveraging the complementarities.

In addition to the research on coordination among conflict resolution efforts discussed above, scholars grounded in conflict resolution increasingly address issues of coordination with other fields. Diamond and McDonald (1996), in a model that extends the Track One–Track Two concept to a “multi-track diplomacy” model, emphasize the importance of coordination among the tracks.¹⁷ Lutz, Babbitt, and Hannum (2003) and Babbitt and Lutz (2009) analyze the relationship between conflict resolution and human rights actors, with a focus on understanding differences and leveraging complementarities (see also Babbitt forthcoming).

Development research likewise emphasizes the need for coordination, focusing in particular on coordination among “donors.” The argument reflects increasing recognition of the complex interactions between aid and conflict. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee cites conflict prevention as a central development goal and emphasizes the need for donor coordination, including bridging the development–relief continuum (OECD 1997 and 2001).

¹⁷ The multi-track model identifies eight tracks of activities: government (diplomacy); NGO/professional; business; private citizen; research, training, and education; activism; religion; and funding. These are shown in a circle, with communications and media at the center.

Scholars affirm the importance of understanding the effects of aid on conflict. Uvin (1998) presents a scathing critique of the development aid in Rwanda, arguing that it inadvertently played into the processes that led to genocide there. Extrapolating beyond the Rwandan experience, he argues that all aid is political and thus affects conflict dynamics. Anderson (1999) identifies practical and ethical impacts of aid on conflict dynamics, proposing a “do no harm” analytic framework for aid design and delivery.

Subsequent development research builds on these foundations, arguing explicitly for enhanced cooperation and coordination. Uvin (1999) emphasizes the need for enhanced donor coordination at the operational, political, and strategic levels while also highlighting the need to work with and empower local actors. Patrick (2000) focuses on the design and implementation of recovery assistance, arguing that donor coordination is essential.

The OECD (2003) proposes a three-level framework that includes coordination between donors and “partners,” among donors, and within individual donor systems. Wood (2003) analyzes the relationship of aid to conflict and peacebuilding in a range of situations, identifying dilemmas and proposing principles, including coordination, to guide development efforts. The Challenges Project (2005) highlights the need for coordination among international actors to be combined with partnerships with local actors.

The humanitarian literature consistently emphasizes the need for coordination within the humanitarian system, both within the United Nations system and among the broader array of humanitarian actors. As Minear notes, “The absence of effective coordination structures remains the soft underbelly of the humanitarian enterprise... Everyone associated with the humanitarian enterprise touts the value of coordination” (Minear 2002, 19). Most analyses therefore focus on *how*, rather than *whether*, to enhance coordination among humanitarian actors (e.g., Minear 2002, Reindorp and Wiles 2001, Donini 2003, Stephenson 2005).

When it comes to coordination with political and military actors, by contrast, the humanitarian literature is more circumspect. It emphasizes the risks, rather than potential benefits, of coordination. At the heart of this research are concerns about compromising core humanitarian principles and the loss of humanitarian space. Schirch, citing the humanitarian principles of humanity, humanitarian imperative, independence, impartiality, and neutrality, finds that “ISAF’s status as one of the belligerents in Afghanistan precludes the humanitarian community from collaboration and constrains communication (Schirch September 2010, 2). Cornish et al argue: “The co-optation of aid for political and military purposes in Afghanistan has resulted in an ever expanding area of the country suffering from a politically aggravated, acute humanitarian emergency that largely goes unreported and unattended” (Cornish et al

2007, 38). Oxfam (2011) emphasizes the politicization and militarization of aid and the related deleterious effects of military activities on aid.¹⁸

There also are concerns about the opportunity costs of coordination. As Stockton notes, “The opportunity costs of wasted effort and resources [invested in coordination processes that do not yield the intended results] can be equated with human welfare benefits foregone” (Stockton 2002, 1). Stephenson (2005) emphasizes the direct and indirect costs of coordination. Olson and Gregorian note: “Coordination has costs in terms of political will, time, personnel, and resources” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 25).

In spite of heightened attunement to the risks and costs of coordination with political and military actors, there is increasing recognition of the need for engagement. According to Donini et al, “The humanitarian community now broadly acknowledges that its activities take place in contexts defined in relation to the work of political and military actors and that some form of engagement with such actors is necessary” (Donini et al 2008, 17). Given the increased engagement, humanitarian research emphasizes the need to minimize the negative effects of political and military activities on humanitarian efforts. This is consistent with the definition of coordinated results presented in Chapter Three, which includes avoiding negative interactions among activities. Thus, the

¹⁸ For a critique of the argument that humanitarian space is shrinking, see Hubert and Brassard-Boudreau (2010).

humanitarian literature supports the argument that at least some minimal coordination with political and military actors is necessary.

Outside the humanitarian field, especially in the security studies literature, there is strong and consistent support for civil-military coordination.¹⁹ Some of this research focuses on coordination between the military and NGOs (e.g., Bauman 2008), some on whole-of-government approaches that integrate civilian and military branches of government (e.g., Patrick and Brown 2007), and some on coordination among the broad array of civilian and military actors (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999; Schirch 2010 and 2011). An important recent development in this literature is increasing acknowledgment of concerns about military encroachment into humanitarian space (Roberts 2010; Fassin and Pandolfi 2010; Jones and Smith 2010).

One additional body of research that merits discussion here is that focused on human security. Human security research emphasizes the security of the individual, as contrasted with national security research that focuses on the security of the state (Thakur 2004).²⁰ Human security is increasingly recognized to be integral to peacebuilding (Kaldor 2011). The

¹⁹ One problem with this body of research is that the term *civil-military coordination* conflates different types of civilian actors – humanitarian and political, governmental and nongovernmental, and local and international. These actors have different concerns and interests relative to coordination with the military. For analyses of the different types of civil-military relations, see Schirch 2010 and 3D Security Initiative 2010).

²⁰ Human security is defined, at its narrowest, as “freedom from fear.” However, a broader, widely accepted definition also includes “freedom from want” (Human Security Report 2005).

Agenda for Peace argued for an integrated approach to human security (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Cockell defines peacebuilding explicitly in terms of human security, as a “sustainable process of preventing internal threats to human security from causing protracted, violent conflict” (Cockell 2000).

Human security research is interdisciplinary in both theoretical foundations and intent. It focuses on the relationships among security, development, relief, and human rights, arguing for the need for integrated solutions (e.g., Uvin 2004). Human security research also emphasizes the need to minimize harmful interactions, in particular echoing concerns in the humanitarian literature about the securitization of aid (Security Dialogue 2004). Human security research thus provides additional support for the argument that coordination is necessary.

CHALLENGES OF COORDINATION

In addition to demonstrating the need for coordination, prior research points to a number of challenges that must be addressed in efforts to achieve it. The challenges fall along a spectrum from the systems to organizational to individual levels. They include resource and incentive problems; differences in goals and priorities; differences in organizational cultures, lexicons, and principles; power disparities; bureaucratic dynamics; relational problems; and inadequate knowledge and skills.

1. NO ONE IN CHARGE

The most significant, systems-level challenge is that no one is in charge of the diverse actors and activities involved in peacebuilding. The peacebuilding system, like the international system from which it emanates, is anarchic (Waltz 1979; Oye 1985; Fearon 1995; Keohane 1998). Just as there is no world government or leader to direct state behavior within the international system, there is no organization or leader that can direct the activities of sovereign nations and autonomous organizations so as to ensure coordination in peacebuilding. Moreover, the large number of actors involved makes coordination particularly challenging (Olson 1965; Oye 1985).

Research on humanitarian coordination highlights these combined challenges in the context of UN coordination (Donini 1996; Minear 2002; de Coning 2010). Research on coordination in peacebuilding more broadly likewise emphasizes the fact that no one is in charge of the numerous, diverse actors involved (Chayes and Chayes 1999; Rubin 2002).

2. COMPETITION AND INCENTIVES

Competition and perverse incentives undermine coordination. The peacebuilding arena is rife with competition. As Olson and Gregorian note, “Organizations compete for financial resources, for status, power, recognition and influence” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 23). Perverse incentives motivate actors to pursue narrow organizational objectives at the expense of collective, positive impacts. Ostrom et al (2002) analyze

collective action problems in the development system, arguing that, in spite of good intentions, perverse incentives undermine effectiveness.

Cooley and Ron, in an analysis of the political economy of international non-governmental organizations (INGO), arrive at a similar conclusion: “There is no doubt that many of today’s INGOs are motivated by normative agendas. Insecurity and competition, however, often push them to behave in rational and rent-seeking ways” (Cooley and Ron 2002, 36). Thus, good intentions and enlightened self-interest lose ground to immediate organizational imperatives to claim resources, credit, and control.²¹

3. POWER DISPARITIES

One of the defining features of coordination in peacebuilding is power disparity. Power disparities make coordination particularly challenging. Actors are appropriately concerned about the risks of co-optation with more powerful actors (Najam 2000). This affects their willingness to engage in coordination processes. It also reduces their willingness to share information and engage in joint analysis, interfering with the development of mutual understanding, respect, and trust upon which coordination processes depend (Stephenson 2005). Additionally,

²¹ CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, in a handbook based on Anderson’s (1999) book *Do No Harm*, highlights another negative consequence of competition: “When agencies refuse to cooperate with one another, and even worse ‘bad-mouth’ each other, the message received by those in the area is that it is unnecessary to cooperate with anyone with whom one does not agree. Further, you don’t have to respect or work with people you don’t like” (CDA 2004, 12).

power disparities can contribute to “false coherence,” in which agreements on strategy mask deep differences and concerns on the part of lower-power actors.

There are many kinds of power, of course (Galtung 1981; Nye 1990). While much of the literature on civil-military relations focuses on military and economic power, civilians often wield greater political power than their military counterparts. Likewise, international NGOs often have greater local influence with local actors than their governmental counterparts, and local actors exert more influence over conflict dynamics – and the ultimate success of peacebuilding – than international actors. This suggests that differences in types of power constitute comparative advantages that can, at least in theory, be leveraged to achieve coordinated results.

4. DIFFERENT GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The diverse actors involved in peacebuilding also differ in goals and priorities. Relief organizations prioritize saving lives and alleviating immediate suffering, military actors prioritize physical security and shorter-term efforts to “win hearts and minds,” and development organizations emphasize longer-term institutional development. While there may be agreement on high-level goals such as “reconstruction” or “development,” interpretations of what these mean vary, and differences in focus and priority pose ongoing challenges. Olson and Gregorian

explain: “Different conceptions of peace lead to differing approaches to achieving it” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 8).

The problem of different priorities is particularly acute when they appear to conflict with one another – for example, when the military’s focus on short-term security needs conflicts with development agencies’ goal of long-term capacity building (e.g., BAAG and ENNA 2008, 3). As Olson and Gregorian, analyzing civil-military coordination in Afghanistan and Liberia, explain: “Experience with integrated efforts to date within and across donor governments and within the UN integrated missions consistently reveals fundamental conflicts between development, security, and political goals” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 25). This raises the questions of what degree of agreement is necessary for coordinated results and how different priorities can be achieved simultaneously, as when short-term crisis responses lay foundations for longer-term development.²²

5. DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES AND PRINCIPLES

Actors differ, often profoundly, in organizational cultures and underlying principles. These differences often fall along disciplinary fault lines. They are particularly acute at the civil-military interface, where problems associated with differing goals and priorities are exacerbated by deeper organizational and philosophical differences.

²² This draws on Lederach’s (1997) concept of “dilemma posing,” in which questions are posed regarding how multiple goals can be achieved, even when they may appear to conflict with one another.

The most significant organizational cultural differences involve values and principles. Humanitarian actors subscribe to the principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence (ICRC 1996; Dempsey and Kyazze 2010). This means that humanitarian assistance must be provided independent of any political agendas. When military actors provide food, water, medical treatment, or other aid, they are not impartial, neutral, or independent. While they may well be motivated by the wish to alleviate suffering, political and security interests also factor into decision making. Indeed, the military strategy of “winning hearts and minds” explicitly uses aid to secure political and security gains.²³ Thus, it is not only the actions of political and military organizations that are of concern to humanitarian actors, but also their motivations and principles.

An important aspect of organizational culture is lexicon. Organizations use the same terms to refer to different things, undermining the communication upon which coordination depends. Barry and Jeffreys emphasize the need to “agree on a common language.” This is not only a practical imperative: Language differences often reflect deeper differences of assumptions and values. Barry and Jeffreys explain: “Humanitarian language literally defines humanitarian space. Thus, the civil-military debate requires very clear parameters and definitions of core humanitarian concepts” (Barry and Jeffreys 2002, 16).

²³ For a critique of the assumption beneath the “winning hearts and minds” strategy that aid advances political and security interests, see Wilder (2009).

Even the term *coordination* means different things to different people, reflecting differences in deeper interests and concerns. Stockton notes: “For some it is a positive value-laden term; being ‘coordinated’ is seen as a desired state of affairs. For others, the word is pejorative, referring to a time-consuming process of pointless meetings and inconsequential discussions or as a mechanism for illegitimate control that serves to undermine much cherished agency independence” (Stockton 2009, 9).

Thus, organizational cultural differences, including differences in underlying principles and lexicon, frustrate efforts at coordination. Olson and Gregorian emphasize the combined impact of differences of goals and culture on coordination: “Military culture and civilian cultures do not generally mesh seamlessly in conflict settings. There are inherent stressors between them owing to differences in mandates, objectives, methods of operation, and vocabulary” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 12).

6. BUREAUCRATIC DYNAMICS

Many organizations involved in peacebuilding are large bureaucracies. They thus bring to coordination the problems of information sharing and decision making inherent in such systems. One of the most significant problems in terms of coordination is the tendency to centralize decision making (Chayes and Chayes 1999).

A related problem is the failure of bureaucracies to adapt to changing needs and opportunities. As Senge’s (1990) work on

organizational learning demonstrates, centralization undermines innovation and learning. Chayes and Chayes (1999) draw on this insight, highlighting the organizational “rigidities” within bureaucratic structures and the associated challenges they pose for coordination.

7. RELATIONAL PROBLEMS

Relational problems also pose challenges to coordination.

Organizational differences, power disparities, and competition cause tensions and conflicts at all levels in the system, including among agencies nested within the same overarching organization. Thus, relational problems are deeply interwoven with other challenges identified above.

The most significant relational obstacle to coordination is lack of trust. Research on coordination consistently argues that lack of trust is a major impediment to coordination. Nan (2000) identifies four main challenges to coordination, among which relational problems feature prominently: lack of knowledge of other actors and their activities, competition, lack of trust and associated concerns about confidentiality, and differences in approach and associated underlying assumptions.

Stephenson (2005) argues that trust is necessary for coordination and cites the lack of trust in the humanitarian system as an impediment. Without at least some basic level of trust, actors are reluctant to engage in the information sharing upon which coordination depends. Olson and Gregorian note: “There is little trust among actors that coordination efforts

...are not simply an attempt by powerful actors to exert control over the activities of smaller players” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 20).

8. INADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Inadequate knowledge and skills also undermine coordination. To achieve coordinated results, the actors involved must understand peacebuilding processes, the contexts in which they are working, the other actors in the system, and their own comparative advantages and limitations. They also need the skills necessary to engage effectively in coordination processes. As Chayes and Chayes (1999) emphasize, effective coordination requires skills in negotiation, consensus building, and lateral leadership.

Olson and Gregorian reach a similar conclusion based on their analysis of coordination in Afghanistan and Liberia: “There is not enough focus on the skills required for managing conflict and engaging in consensus building processes in the way that coordination efforts are currently conceived. This is the case with civil-military coordination but also among UN agencies and NGOs that are engaged in coordination exercises within their own community and with other actors” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 87). De Coning, in his analysis of the coordination roles of UN Special Representatives to the Secretary General, likewise concludes that negotiation and consensus building skills are essential (de Coning 2010).

PRIOR RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the strengths of prior research is its emphasis on practical solutions and associated efforts to link theory to practice. Following is a review of significant recommendations in the literature with an analysis of their strengths and limitations.

1. CREATE STRONG, EMPOWERED COORDINATION AUTHORITY

Many analyses of coordination, especially those focused on humanitarian and whole-of-government coordination, argue that coordination requires a strong, empowered coordination authority. In a frequently cited framework, Donini distinguishes between “coordination by command,” “coordination by consensus,” and “coordination by default.”²⁴ He acknowledges that coordination by command within the UN system is not possible due to bureaucratic resistance to centralization and argues: “The best that can be obtained probably lies halfway between command and consensus” (Donini 1996, 11).

Minear acknowledges “entrenched resistance to a greater command element” (Minear 2002, 23) and that coordination by command alone is insufficient. Nevertheless, he argues that it is an important part of

²⁴ Coordination by command is defined as “coordination in which strong leadership is accompanied by some sort of authority, whether carrot or stick.” Coordination by consensus is “coordination in which leadership is essentially a function of the capacity to orchestrate a coherent response and to mobilize key actors around common objectives and priorities. Consensus in this instance is normally achieved without any direct assertion of authority.” Coordination by default is “coordination that, in the absence of a formal coordination entity, involves only the most rudimentary exchange of information and division of labor among the actors” (Donini 1996, 14).

the solution: “A stronger case needs to be made for the value added element that coordination-by-command injects” (Minear 2002, 124). Sommers (2000) likewise finds that at least some degree of “command element” is necessary.

As explained in Chapter One, an enhanced “command element” may well be part of the solution to coordination within the UN and other overarching bureaucratic systems (e.g., “whole-of-government” coordination). When it comes to the broader peacebuilding system, however, even partial centralization is not plausible. The sovereign nations, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental actors involved, while cognizant of the importance of coordination, naturally resist efforts to impose it. As the maxim goes, everyone wants coordination, but no one wants to be coordinated.

It is important to acknowledge a small, interdisciplinary body of research that questions the assumption that centralization is necessary and offers alternative conceptualizations and recommendations. While this research remains the minority of the broader literature on peacebuilding coordination, it provides important foundations upon which the dissertation builds. It therefore is discussed in detail below.

The conflict resolution literature discussed earlier, both that focused on coordination in the peacebuilding system *writ large* (e.g., Diamond and McDonald 1996, Lederach 1997) and research on subsets of actors (e.g., Nan 2000), consistently emphasizes the importance of respect

for actors' autonomy and differences among them, emphasizing the need for dialogue, negotiation, and consensus building. In her analysis of civil-military relations in Afghanistan, Schirch argues for an "ongoing, high-level civil society-military policy dialogue" (Schirch September 2010, 4).

In research on US whole-of-government approaches, Orton and Lamb (2011) emphasize the limitations of centralization. They find that "lead agency and lead individual approaches are inadequate to deal with complex missions involving multiple departments and agencies" (Binnendijk and Cronin 2010, viii). They recommend, as an alternative, the establishment of "empowered, cross-functional teams" (Orton and Lamb 2011, 37).

Neumann, in his analysis of effective implementation, argues that centralized coordination is not an option: "Sovereign nations, particularly democratic ones, will not relinquish direction of their forces and funds to a single coordinator or commander" (Neumann 2009, 2).²⁵ He continues: "What is lacking from the discussion is a realistic appraisal of how implementation can be strengthened. Calls for a single coordinating point, new coordination bodies, or new strategies vastly exaggerate what such steps are likely to produce" (Neumann 2009, 8).

A related body of research argues for re-conceptualizing coordination in terms of decentralized networks and complex systems. Chayes and Chayes (1999) frame coordination in terms of networks and

²⁵ Neumann served as US Ambassador to Afghanistan from 2005 to 2007.

argue for decentralization within organizations to facilitate coordination across organizations. Ostrom et al (2002) challenge the linear delivery chain model of development coordination, arguing that the system is better understood as a network of “linked action situations” and emphasizing the importance of feedback loops. Ricigliano (2003) proposes “networks of effective action” as a means of promoting an integrated approach to peacebuilding. Stephenson (2005) responds directly to Minear’s (2002) emphasis on a “command element,” arguing that relief agencies in emergencies are better understood in terms of social networks and that trust therefore plays a key role in coordination.

Nan and Strimling (2006) frame coordination in terms of global networks of autonomous actors. Nan (2008) situates conflict resolution and coordination processes within a network society and highlights the roles of social capital in inclusive coordination networks. Her work with Garb (2006, 2009) presents a case study of coordination within a decentralized loose network of local and international actors focused on the conflict over Abkhazia.

Herrhausen (2007) adopts a networks approach in her analysis of UN coordination. She recommends: “In order to improve inter-organizational coordination and in lieu of trying to become one streamlined hierarchical organization, the United Nations should acknowledge its network character and cultivate those social and structural control mechanisms which facilitate coordination in networks”

(Herrhausen 2007, iv). Rubin (2002), in a related analysis of conflict prevention efforts, argues that prevention is global governance and proposes a decentralized, networked approach to transnational cooperation for prevention.

De Coning (2007, 2009) argues that the peacebuilding system is a complex system comprised of interdependent actors and thus that agreement on overall strategy, as well as information flows and feedback loops, are necessary to align efforts in support of shared goals (de Coning 2007). These analyses offer important insights upon which the dissertation draws.

2. BUILD AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

Prior research emphasizes the importance of building agreement on goals and strategies. As explained earlier, the humanitarian literature posits coordination by consensus as an alternative to coordination by command, although many maintain that a combination of the two is necessary (Donini 1996; Minear 2002). De Coning, by contrast, emphasizes the importance of establishing a “clearly articulated overall peacebuilding strategy” (de Coning 2007, 12). He explains: “Without a clear country strategy, and without feedback on the progress made in achieving that strategy, individual agents are unable to position, adjust, and monitor the degree to which they may be making a contribution to the achievement of the overall peacebuilding goal” (de Coning 2007, 15).

While there is broad recognition that some agreement on goals and strategy is necessary for coordination, there has been insufficient attention to *how* agreement can be reached and what should be done about remaining differences, other than introducing a “command element.” As de Coning notes in his discussion of joint planning, instead of assuming that there will always be room for a common approach, reality dictates that complex peacebuilding coordination models need to provide room for trade-offs, second-best solutions, compromises, and coexistence, as well as recognize that there are certain conditions under which a common approach is not attainable (de Coning 2008, 4).

Research in the conflict resolution literature suggests the importance of negotiation and consensus building processes for coordination. In her analysis of Track One–Track Two coordination, Chataway (1998) argues that official and unofficial actors should agree on their respective goals, roles, and responsibilities: “Over time, greater consensus may emerge regarding the respective goals, processes, and capabilities of diplomatic Tracks One and Two...Greater consensus would allow more effective use and evaluation of these roles based on what they are equipped, and therefore realistically expected, to perform” (Chataway 1998, 284). In a subsequent article, Chataway explicitly frames the process of reaching that agreement in terms of negotiation, proposing that the relationship between official and unofficial processes be “negotiated” (Chataway 1999).

Chayes and Chayes (1999) take this further, arguing for broad engagement of all relevant parties and the key role of process, including information sharing, problem solving, and consensus building, in coordination. In foundational research for this dissertation, Strimling (2006) argues that coordination between official and unofficial actors involves ongoing negotiation processes. Olson and Gregorian (2007) emphasize the importance of process in peacebuilding coordination more broadly. Drawing on their analysis of coordination in Afghanistan, they warn against “false coherence, a superficial commitment to common strategies on paper only” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 87). To achieve genuine agreement, they argue that processes must go beyond information sharing to include the analysis of underlying interests and theories of change. Schirch (2010) argues for the importance of assessment processes that both identify differences and explore common ground.

3. CREATE INCENTIVES FOR COORDINATION

Prior research emphasizes the importance of increasing incentives for coordination and minimizing perverse incentives. Some analyses focus on incentives at the systems level (e.g., Ostrom et al 2002, Cooley and Ron 2002). Others focus on incentives at the organizational level. Patrick and Brown, for example, argue that “whole of government professional incentives must be realigned to reward jointness” (Patrick and Brown 2007, 140).

There are several limitations to how this is approached, however. First, the majority of the recommendations tend to be framed in terms of what *should* be done, rather than *how* the necessary changes can be brought about. Many analyses argue that donors should change their decision-making and reporting systems to incentivize coordination, for example. However, those same analyses fail to address the reasons funders have not yet done so or the processes through which the recommended changes might come about (e.g., OECD 2003 and 2006).²⁶ In addition, the recommendations regarding incentives often neglect to address related collective action problems, including transaction costs.

Important exceptions are the analyses by Ostrom et al (2002) and Cooley and Ron (2002). Ostrom et al offer an in-depth, nuanced analysis of incentives and other collective action problems in development cooperation, as well as detailed recommendations for addressing them. Cooley and Ron (2002) also offer concrete recommendations to align incentives in support of coordination, including changes to funding and contracting mechanisms.

4. DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE FIELD

Most research on coordination acknowledges the constraints that headquarters/field relations place on coordination and calls upon organizations to delegate more authority to the field. However, there has

²⁶ While the 2006 document expanded upon the recommendations for incentives presented in 2004, it did not adequately address the institutional or systemic barriers to changing incentive structures.

been little attention to how such changes can be brought about. An exception is *Planning for Intervention*, by Chayes and Chayes (1999). They advocate for planned decentralization, in which headquarters retains control of broad policy development and operational planning but delegates all other functions and authorities to the field. They also argue that, in order to work, decentralization must be accompanied by the transparent flow of information and accountability for results.

5. STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS

Prior research recommends increasing mutual understanding, respect, and trust among actors. Stephenson (2005) argues that humanitarian coordination is better achieved by investing in humanitarian networks and relationships, especially building trust, than attempting to establish any centralized control. Dziedzic and Seidl (2005), in their analysis of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, emphasize the role of dialogue and understanding in improving civil-military relations. Schirch explores the “perceptions, tensions, and opportunities between civil society organizations and military actors” (Schirch 2011, 1).

Chataway (1998) and Nan (2000) analyze Track One–Track Two coordination through a relational lens, seeking to enhance understanding and respect between official and unofficial actors. Lutz, Babbitt, and Hannum (2003) likewise seek to enhance communication and cooperation between human rights and conflict resolution practitioners by contributing to increased understanding of common ground and differences. A Special

Report of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars focused on the need for the US government and civil society organizations to “develop practical and manageable relationships that are mutually beneficial” (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars 2010, 4).

While prior research emphasizes the importance of improving relationships and offers insights that can contribute to mutual understanding, it generally stops short of providing concrete guidance about how relationships can be strengthened. An exception is the book by Chayes and Chayes (1999), which stresses the contributions joint training can make to civil-military relationships.

6. ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Prior research consistently argues that enhanced training and education are necessary for coordination. In an analysis of whole-of-government coordination within the US government, Binnendijk and Cronin argue: “A robust development program that includes education, training, and professional opportunities can increase collaboration among agencies” (Binnendijk and Cronin 2008, 144). Orton and Lamb emphasize joint training in their analysis of interagency cross-functional teams (Orton and Lamb 2011). Markel et al (2011) analyze the knowledge, skills, and abilities US Army officers need to participate effectively in joint, interagency, and multinational efforts.

Most recommendations for education and training focus on the substantive knowledge and skills necessary to work across disciplinary

boundaries, including conflict sensitivity training for development professionals and training in the non-combat aspects of stabilization and reconstruction operations for the military.²⁷ Increasingly, however, research emphasizes the skills necessary to engage in and lead coordination *processes*.

Chayes and Chayes (1999) argue that joint training is necessary to build skills in negotiation, consensus building, and lateral leadership. Olson and Gregorian likewise propose “dedicated training in the necessary skills (negotiation, conflict management, consensus building), explaining: “It is imperative that properly vetted and trained personnel, who can exercise the kind of leadership that cross-organizational and cross-cultural collaboration requires, be placed in leaderships positions at all levels” (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 87).

In his analysis of UN Special Representatives to the Secretary General (SRSG), De Coning likewise emphasizes the importance of negotiation and consensus-building skills: “The power and influence of the SRSG does not reside in the resources that he or she can directly bring to bear on a specific situation, but in the ability to muster and align the resources of a large number of agencies, donors, and countries to support

²⁷ There is growing recognition of the need to strengthen education and training to better prepare organizations and individuals for the complexities of peacebuilding, including coordination across organizational and disciplinary boundaries. The US military, for example, increasingly emphasizes the need to educate and train officers for their expanded mandate in stabilization and reconstruction operations (U.S. Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 2005), and civilian agencies increasingly support joint civil-military pre-deployment training.

the peacebuilding effort in a given context. This type of leadership role implies that persons with skills, experience, and a personality suited to multi-stakeholder mediation and negotiations are more likely to be a successful SRSG than someone who is used to top-down, autocratic, military, private-sector, or direct-control type leadership styles” (de Coning 2010, 281).

WEAKNESSES AND GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

While the literature demonstrates the importance of coordination, identifies many challenges associated with it, and makes a deliberate effort to link research to policy and practice, there are a number of weaknesses and gaps. The following section highlights the most serious limitations, including several that have been discussed earlier. This critique is of the literature as a whole. As the preceding analysis demonstrates, there are important exceptions.

1. OVEREMPHASIS ON CENTRALIZED SOLUTIONS

A major limitation has been the failure, on the part of much of the literature, to examine critically the assumption that centralization is necessary for coordination. As discussed earlier, there is a small, interdisciplinary body of research that questions this assumption and offers insights regarding how coordination can be achieved in the absence of an overarching authority. However, the focus on centralized approaches within much of the literature has crowded out attention to analyses

grounded in different assumptions and thus constrained the development of more effective and durable solutions.

2. LACK OF DEFINITIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL CLARITY

A foundational problem in the literature is the lack of definitional and conceptual clarity about what is being studied. The range of terminology used to describe coordination both reflects and feeds into this problem. In addition to coordination, terms frequently found in both scholarly research and policy discourse include *coherence*, *harmonization*, *comprehensive approaches*, *policy integration*, *synergistic engagement*, *whole-of-government approaches*, *whole-of-community approaches*, *multi-sectoral strategies*, *unity of effort*, *3-D (development, diplomacy, and defense) approaches*, and *joined-up approaches*, among many others.

The language differences are more than semantic. They often reflect different assumptions, priorities, and concerns. *Unity of effort*, a term gaining currency in the US policy community, is a case in point. To policy makers, it reflects growing recognition of the limitations of unity of command and a wish to align efforts both among US agencies and with other governmental and non-governmental actors (e.g., for example, US Army 2009). To many non-governmental actors, the concept of joining forces with governmental actors is off-putting, implying agreement where it may not exist and raising concerns about co-optation (Olson and Gregorian 2007; de Coning and Friis 2001).

Most research fails to surface and address the different interests, concerns, and assumptions about coordination itself, let alone about the peacebuilding process. As Olson and Gregorian (2007) emphasize, failure to acknowledge and address these differences undermines coordination.

There is also a lack of clarity regarding exactly what is being analyzed. In particular, there is often ambiguity about which actors and activities are included in a given term. *3-D approaches*, for instance, sometimes is used to refer to only the military, diplomatic, and development branches of government and other times to non-governmental development organizations as well (Schirch 2010). “Multinational coordination” literally refers to coordination among sovereign nations, but it often is used within the US Department of Defense as shorthand for coordination with inter-governmental, governmental, and non-governmental organizations. The lack of clarity in the language regarding exactly which actors and activities are being addressed causes confusion.

Closely related to the above, most research fails to distinguish explicitly between process and results (Stockton 2002). *Coordination*, like many of the terms identified above, is often used to refer to both process and results, without distinguishing the two. In some cases, a single definition incorporates both. For example, a frequently cited definition of humanitarian coordination is “the systematic utilization of policy instruments to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective

manner” (Minear 1994, 6). In this definition, the “cohesive and effective” delivery of assistance is the result, and the “systematic utilization of policy instruments” is the assumed means to achieve that result. The frequent conflation of process and results in the literature compromises analytic clarity.

Moreover, even where research explicitly focuses on results, it has not provided clear criteria, indicators, or other assessment tools with which to identify or analyze those results. Nan (2000), for example, defined coordination as process and complementarity as results, but her exploratory research did not produce robust assessment tools or indicators for either. Without a clear definition of what coordination is or how to measure it, it is impossible to collect and analyze data in a consistent and rigorous way.

3. SUCCESS POORLY DOCUMENTED AND UNDERSTOOD

Prior research has attempted to balance analysis of coordination failures with that of successes (e.g., Sommers 2000, Jones 2002, Olson and Gregorian 2007, and Garb and Nan 2006 and 2009). Garb and Nan (2006, 2009), for example, document coordinated results that emerged from a decentralized coordination network of local and international actors focused on the conflict over Abkhazia. Nevertheless, failure remains over-determined in the literature, as is evident from the discussion of challenges earlier in this chapter, and success remains insufficiently documented and understood.

One reason for the dominant place of coordination failures in the literature may be that empirical experience of failures simply outnumbered that of successes.²⁸ However, the problem is also one of methodology. In addition to the lack of a clear definition of coordinated results referenced earlier, the literature has been dominated by mechanism-centric analyses that begin with the mechanisms, evaluate and explain their relative effectiveness, and make recommendations for how they can be improved. This focus on mechanisms is especially prevalent in research on UN and whole-of-government coordination, echoing the emphasis on coordination mechanisms within large bureaucratic systems (e.g., Patrick and Brown 2007, Perito 2007, de Coning 2010).

Analysis of the relative effectiveness of coordination mechanisms is essential. However, it must be paired with research that begins by identifying coordinated results and then explains how those results emerged. Such research opens up opportunities to identify factors outside the sphere of existing mechanisms that make success possible, even in the context of ongoing coordination challenges. For both theoretical and practical reasons, additional research that identifies and explains coordinated results is necessary.

²⁸ While research and anecdotal evidence support this assessment, it remains to be rigorously tested across case studies.

4. INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The literature identifies a number of organizational changes necessary to enhance coordination. However, most prior research fails to provide clear guidance regarding how those changes can be put into effect. With the notable exceptions referenced earlier (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999, Ostrom et al 2002), recommendations tend to be presented in list form, rather than embedded in analytic frameworks that make clear the interrelationships among them. They thus neglect to address either how changes can be sequenced to support and reinforce one another or how barriers to organizational change can be overcome.

Moreover, there has been little attention to the role learning plays in coordination or how individual learning can be incorporated into organizational change.²⁹ Since many organizations involved in peacebuilding are large bureaucracies and thus resistant to change, the failure to address the *how*, in addition to the *what*, of organizational change is a significant shortcoming.

This dissertation is designed to build on the substantial contributions of prior research, while addressing some of the limitations highlighted above. The next chapter presents the hypotheses and research questions and explains the methodology used for empirical analysis.

²⁹ For an analysis of the importance of organizational learning for peacebuilding effectiveness, see Campbell (2008).

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESES, AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter reviews the research questions motivating the research, identifies variables and hypotheses for empirical analysis, and describes the methodology used for empirical analysis and theory building.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This dissertation seeks to explain coordination in peacebuilding.³⁰ It is motivated by three questions. Theoretically, it asks how coordinated results emerge, in the absence of an overarching coordination authority. Empirically, it asks what evidence exists of coordinated results in the cases studied and what variables explain those results. From a policy perspective, it then asks how coordinated results can be enhanced.

The questions are based on two assumptions, both supported by the literature review in Chapter Two. First, coordination among the diverse actors and activities that together constitute peacebuilding is necessary for

³⁰ As indicated in Chapter One, peacebuilding refers here to efforts undertaken to help a country transition from war to peace, including security sector reform, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, infrastructure reconstruction, protection of human rights, reconciliation, economic development, and the establishment of governance institutions and rule of law.

effectiveness. Second, centralized approaches offer, at best, only a partial solution to coordination. Thus, it is necessary to understand how coordinated results emerge in the absence of centralized control.

The purpose of the project is not to identify the broad systemic conditions under which cooperation is more or less likely to emerge. Rather, it is to identify the concrete systems and processes organizations can put in place that enable them to achieve coordinated results. The high-level hypothesis is that the intra-organizational and inter-organizational factors identified below are individually necessary and collectively sufficient to explain coordinated results.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable to be explained is **coordinated results**. Coordinated results are defined in terms of interactions among activities: avoidance of negative interactive effects, efficiency, complementarity, and synergy.³¹ While any one type is defined to constitute “coordinated results,” each type represents an increasing degree of coordination, with avoidance of negative interactive effects (often referred to by practitioners as “de-confliction”) the minimal level of coordination and synergy the highest level.

³¹ Because coordinated results are defined in terms of interactions among activities, they affect but are distinct from the impacts of those activities.

1. AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE INTERACTIVE EFFECTS

Avoidance of negative interactive effects refers to avoidance of past or potential situations in which one activity or set of activities undermines others. Its inclusion is supported by the research reviewed in Chapter Two on the negative interactions among activities, including the impacts of aid on conflict (e.g., Uvin 1998 and 1999, Anderson 1999), the impacts of military activities on humanitarian relief efforts (e.g., Cornish et al 2007), and the impacts of efforts to address immediate needs on longer-term goals. An example of negative interactive effects would be if one actor, in providing free medical services to a local community, were to undermine others' efforts to develop local capacity to provide those services. Coordinated results have been achieved, at least to a minimal degree, if past or potential negative interactions are avoided.

2. EFFICIENCY (AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION)

Efficiency refers to avoidance of wasteful duplication of activities.³² Its inclusion is motivated by evidence of massive inefficiencies in peacebuilding, including documentation of wasteful duplication in international efforts in Afghanistan. In an April 2009 report, for example, then Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction Arnold Fields notes the duplication not only in US efforts but more broadly on the part of the international community: "Improved

³² As indicated earlier, some duplication may be necessary for innovation (Uvin 1999). The focus here is on duplication that absorbs resources without adding value, rendering other needs unmet.

cooperation and coordination are necessary to take full advantage of all the funds provided to Afghanistan and, at the same time, significantly reduce potential waste resulting from duplication of effort” (SIGAR April 2009, ii). Parkinson (2010) emphasizes avoidance of duplication as a key component of effective implementation of strategy. An example of duplication is if multiple agencies each construct a school in one community (more than are needed) while a neighboring community in desperate need of just one school goes without. Efficiency is achieved when such duplication is avoided, enabling resources to be used to meet other needs.

3. COMPLEMENTARITY

Complementarity is achieved when complementary inputs (e.g., resources, activities, and expertise) of two or more organizations make possible achievement of a single output. For example, one organization may construct the physical structure to house a medical clinic, while another trains local service providers and equips the clinic. Likewise, one organization may provide a security perimeter that enables another organization to construct a road. In both cases, the complementary inputs yield a single output.

Whereas the first two indicators are motivated by evidence of failure patterns (negative interactive effects and wasteful duplication), the complementarity and synergy are motivated by theoretical and empirical work on successful coordination. This includes research reviewed in

Chapter Two on complementarity and coordination (e.g., Fisher and Keashly 1991; Kriesberg 1996; Lederach 1997; Nan 2000; Jones 2002) as well as organizational theory, in particular Malone's (2004) work on activity dependencies.³³

4. SYNERGY

Synergy is defined in terms of multiple outputs adding up to achieve shared strategic goals. Drawing on the examples of complementary coordinated results above, synergy is achieved if school construction, road construction, and other infrastructure projects together yield higher-level strategic outcomes (i.e., development, security). Of the four types of coordinated results, synergy therefore has the strongest and most direct connection to the ultimate impacts of activities. For maximum effectiveness, tactical coordinated results (i.e., complementarity) must add up to strategic coordinated results (i.e., synergy within and across sectors).

The four types of coordinated results are summarized in Illustration 3.1.

³³ Malone identifies three basic types of dependencies: flow dependency, in which one activity generates a resource that is then used for another activity; sharing dependency, in which one resource is shared between two or more activities; and fit dependency, in which two activities together generate one resource. Flow dependencies can be understood as complementarity achieved through sequencing, and fit dependencies in terms of either complementarity or synergy.

ILLUSTRATION 3.1: TYPES OF COORDINATED RESULTS

COORDINATED RESULTS (DV)	
TYPE	DEFINITION
AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE INTERACTIVE EFFECTS	NEGATIVE INTERACTIVE EFFECTS AVOIDED OR CORRECTED
EFFICIENCY	WASTEFUL DUPLICATION AVOIDED OR ELIMINATED
COMPLEMENTARITY	COMPLEMENTARY INPUTS (E.G., RESOURCES, EXPERTISE, ACTIVITIES) MAKE POSSIBLE ACHIEVEMENT OF SHARED OUTPUT
SYNERGY	OUTPUTS INTERACT TO ACHIEVE SHARED STRATEGIC GOALS

VARIABLES HYPOTHESIZED TO EXPLAIN COORDINATED RESULTS

As the discussion above makes clear, coordinated results are defined in terms of the interactions among activities on the ground. This is often referred to in the literature as “horizontal” coordination, or coordination across actors and activities, as distinguished from “vertical” coordination, or coordination across levels of decision making (e.g., Lederach 1997, Chayes and Chayes 1999). The dissertation argues that horizontal coordinated results (across activities conducted by various actors) can be explained by a combination of horizontal (inter-organizational) and vertical (intra-organizational) factors.

Nine variables are hypothesized to together explain coordinated results. They are neither independent of one another nor intended as formal hypotheses to be rigorously tested at this stage. Rather, they should be understood as constituting the initial framework to guide empirical

analysis. As discussed in greater detail later in the chapter, the case study identifies concrete examples of coordinated results and identify the factors that explain them, comparing the findings to the initial hypotheses. The findings are then integrated into a theoretical model that can be rigorously tested (e.g., using the method of difference) in further research. This approach is supported by the qualitative methodology literature. Gerring explains: “Many works of social science...are seminal rather than definitive...the introduction of a new idea or a new perspective that is subsequently subjected to a more rigorous (and refutable) analysis. Indeed, it is difficult to devise a program of falsification the first time a new theory is proposed” (Gerring 2007, 39).

Following is a discussion of each of the nine variables, explaining the rationale for inclusion and identifying supporting literature.

1. AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

Agreement on goals and strategy among organizations is hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated results. Agreement may be formal – for example, that embodied in doctrine – or informal, such as that arrived at through tactical-level joint planning processes. The inclusion of agreement does not necessarily imply that full agreement is possible or even desirable. As the literature reviewed in Chapter Two makes clear, recognizing and dealing with differences is essential (e.g., Olson and Gregorian 2007). Nevertheless, research shows that agreement on at least some high-level goals and strategy is necessary for coordinated

results (e.g., Donini 1996, Chayes and Chayes 1999, Minear 2002, de Coning 2007, Olson and Gregorian 2007). This is supported by the argument in the international relations literature that shared goals are the key to cooperation (e.g., Daalder and Lindsay 2007).

2. EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment within organizational hierarchies is hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated implementation of agreed strategies. The people responsible for implementation must be empowered to act quickly and collectively in response to emerging challenges and opportunities, rather than having to seek approval from higher authorities.

The literature reviewed earlier supports the argument that empowerment is necessary for coordination. Chayes and Chayes (1999) provide the strongest argument for what they refer to as “planned decentralization,” which they define as the “extensive and systematic delegation of decision-making authority to operational personnel in the field” (Chayes and Chayes 1999, 47). In this approach, responsibility for coordinated action is shifted to the field, with the center maintaining responsibility for policy direction and planning. Other research likewise emphasizes the importance of decentralization (e.g., Uvin 1999, Rubin 2002, OECD 2003).

3. INCENTIVES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Organizational incentives and accountability are hypothesized to be necessary complements to empowerment. The people responsible for implementation must be empowered to act, but they also must be incentivized to use their empowerment in support of shared goals and held accountable for coordinated results.

International relations theory argues that incentives affect cooperation under anarchy (e.g., Oye 1986 and Keohane 1998). The research on peacebuilding reviewed in Chapter Two highlights the effects of perverse incentives on coordination. Ron and Cooley (2002) argue that the incentives in the humanitarian system foster competition for turf, credit, and resources, thus undermining coordination. Likewise, Ostrom et al (2002) show that incentives cause collective action problems. While the latter two analyses focus on incentives within the overarching system, they arguably exercise their effects through professional incentives at the agency level. Research on peacebuilding coordination likewise emphasizes the importance of accountability systems that hold organizations and individuals accountable for coordinated results. Chayes and Chayes (1999) argue that empowerment must be combined with systems that hold people accountable for their decisions.

4. INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing both across and within organizations is hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated results. To reach agreement

on goals and strategy, agencies must have a shared foundation of information.³⁴ To implement strategies in a coordinated way, agencies must have information about the evolving context, each other's activities, and both the immediate and longer-term interactive effects of those activities. Information sharing within organizations is equally essential. This is particularly true of the flow of information about "ground realities" to higher headquarters (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999). As the research reviewed earlier on coordination in decentralized networks and complex systems (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999, Ostrom et al 2002, Ricigliano 2003, de Coning 2007) makes clear, information flows provide essential feedback loops for coordinated results.

5. JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

Joint analysis and planning among organizations are hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated results. Joint planning is necessary to develop agreement on goals and strategy. Joint planning necessarily includes joint analysis of the context, agencies' goals and priorities, resources and capacities, and potential interactions (negative and positive) among activities. Joint planning is most effective when it surfaces and addresses underlying differences, in addition to common ground. Where formal joint planning is not undertaken, joint analysis may nevertheless

³⁴ For an analysis of the importance of combining information sharing with rigorous joint analysis, see Olson and Gregorian 2007.

make possible limited coordinated results, especially avoidance of negative interactive effects and duplication.

The literature reviewed earlier demonstrates the importance of joint planning (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999, de Coning 2007). It also shows that planning must include joint analysis of the context, resource availability and needs, and especially stakeholders' underlying interests and assumptions to avoid generating "false coherence" – superficial agreement on goals or strategy that masks unresolved differences (Olson and Gregorian 2007). This is supported, as well, by the multi-stakeholder negotiation literature, which argues that addressing underlying interests generates better agreements and enhances buy-in and compliance (e.g., Fisher and Ury 1991, Lax and Sebenius 1991, Sebenius 1993, Susskind and Cruikshank 1987, Susskind et al 1999).

6. CONVENING

Convening of agency representatives is hypothesized to be necessary for joint analysis and planning. The inclusion of convening as an explanatory variable is supported by the multi-stakeholder negotiation literature, which identifies convening as the first stage in the negotiation process (e.g., for example, Susskind et al 1999). While virtual convening is sometimes possible, convening is defined here as bringing together organizational representatives for in-person processes.

The emphasis on in-person interaction is supported by research reviewed earlier, including Olson and Gregorian, who note the importance of “informal ‘face-to-face’ time” for coordination (Olson and Gregorian 2007, 79) as well as research that emphasizes the importance of trust and social capital in coordination networks (e.g., Stephenson 2005; Nan and Garb 2006 and 2009).

7. FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

Facilitative leadership across organizations is hypothesized to be necessary for convening and joint analysis and planning. Since no one is in charge, facilitative – as contrasted with directive – leadership across organizations is necessary to convene the parties and design and lead joint analysis and planning processes.

The literature reviewed earlier emphasizes the skills necessary for effective leadership of coordination processes (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999, Olson and Gregorian 2007, de Coning 2010). Multi-stakeholder negotiation research lends further support to the argument that skilled facilitators are necessary to convene, design, and lead complex consensus-building processes (e.g., Najam 2001; Touval 1991). Likewise, organizational theory argues for a broader conceptualization of leadership that includes leading without formal authority (e.g., Senge 1990, Heifetz 1994, Cleveland 2002, Malone 2004, Heifetz et al 2009).

8. TRANSACTION COSTS

Transaction costs are hypothesized to affect actors' willingness to engage in convening, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning. International relations theory argues that lowering transaction costs increases cooperation (e.g., Oye 1986 and Keohane 1998). Research on peacebuilding coordination highlights the time, money, effort, and other costs of participation in coordination processes (e.g., Olson and Gregorian 2007).³⁵ In a context in which there are significant needs and limited resources, coordination processes have opportunity costs (Stockton 2002; Stephenson 2005). Higher transaction costs associated with information sharing, joint analysis, and planning are hypothesized to constrain coordinated results, and lower transaction costs are hypothesized to enhance them.

9. LEARNING

Learning is hypothesized to emerge from and feed back into other variables identified above. Learning is defined in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills. Increased knowledge and understanding relates to one's own and others' organizational goals, priorities, assumptions, values, strengths, and limitations; the broader systems within which one is operating; the interactions among activities and processes in those

³⁵ Consistent with the political economic definition of transaction costs, they are defined here to include time, effort, and other nonmonetary costs associated with exchanging information and engaging in joint analysis and decision making (Khemani and Shapiro 1993).

systems; the impact of coordinated results (or coordination failures) on the achievement of goals; and the factors that affect coordinated results (i.e., the importance of the variables identified above). Learning may also include enhanced skills. In addition to substantive and technical skills, research shows that process skills, including negotiation and consensus building, are necessary (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999 and Olson and Gregorian 2007).

Learning, in turn, is hypothesized to feed back into many of the other factors identified above. For example, learning about other organizations is hypothesized to strengthen relationships, contributing to joint analysis and planning. Learning about the importance of coordinated results and the factors that are necessary to achieve them is hypothesized to feed back into organizational changes. These feedback loops can be understood in terms of single-loop and double-loop learning (Argyris and Schön 1978). Single-loop learning involves changes in behavior within a system, whereas double-loop learning involves questioning fundamental assumptions and/or changes to the systems themselves.³⁶ The research reviewed in Chapter Two supports the importance of both single-loop and

³⁶ Argyris and Schön explain the distinction as follows: “When the error detected and corrected permits the organization to carry on its present policies or achieve its present objectives, then that error-and-correction process is *single-loop* learning. Single-loop learning is like a thermostat that learns when it is too hot or too cold and turns the heat on or off. The thermostat can perform this task because it can receive information (the temperature of the room) and take corrective action. *Double-loop* learning occurs when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organization’s underlying norms, policies and objectives” (Argyris and Schön 1978, 2–3).

double-loop learning relative to coordination (e.g. Chayes and Chayes 1999 and Ostrom et al 2002).

The factors hypothesized to explain coordinated results are summarized in Illustration 3.2.

OTHER FACTORS AND EXPLANATIONS

There is another set of factors and explanations that prior research and the conventional wisdom of practitioners make clear is important: individual attitudes, skills, and relationships. Prior research makes clear that individual and interpersonal factors play important roles in coordination. However, the dissertation hypothesizes that individual attitudes, skills, and relationships are both deeply affected by and exert their influence through the variables identified above. The practical intent of the dissertation is to go beyond individual and idiosyncratic explanations to identify the factors that can be institutionalized within and across organizations to yield consistent coordinated results.

ILLUSTRATION 3.2: FACTORS HYPOTHESIZED TO EXPLAIN COORDINATED RESULTS

FACTOR	DEFINITION
AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY	ORGANIZATIONS AGREE ON GOALS AND STRATEGY WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENCES.
EMPOWERMENT	THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION HAVE DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY NECESSARY TO RESPOND TO EMERGING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES.
INCENTIVES AND ACCOUNTABILITY	ORGANIZATIONS REWARD STAFF FOR COORDINATED RESULTS. ORGANIZATIONS HOLD STAFF ACCOUNTABLE FOR COORDINATED RESULTS.
INFORMATION SHARING	INFORMATION SHARED ACROSS ORGANIZATIONS INFORMATION SHARED ACROSS LEVELS WITHIN ORGANIZATION
JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING	ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGE IN JOINT ANALYSIS AND/OR JOINT PLANNING
CONVENING	ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES BROUGHT TOGETHER IN PERSON
FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP	LEADERS CONVENE ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES. LEADERS FACILITATE INFORMATION SHARING AND JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING PROCESSES,
TRANSACTION COSTS	TIME, EFFORT, AND OTHER NONMONETARY RESOURCES NEEDED FOR INFORMATION SHARING AND JOINT ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING
LEARNING	INCREASED UNDERSTANDING (OWN AND OTHERS' ORGANIZATIONS; SYSTEMS AND INTERACTIVE EFFECTS; IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATED RESULTS; FACTORS THAT AFFECT COORDINATED RESULTS) ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (SUBSTANTIVE, TECHNICAL, AND PROCESS)

QUESTIONS FOR EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The above discussion suggests several sets of questions for the case study and further research. First, to what extent and how do the

variables identified above explain coordinated results? Are they individually necessary? Are some more important than others? Are they collectively sufficient? If not, what is missing?

Second, do necessary and sufficient conditions depend on the type of coordinated results being explained? For example, are certain variables or combinations of variables necessary to explain higher-order coordinated results (e.g., complementarity and synergy) than lower ones (e.g., avoidance of negative interactive effects and efficiency)?

Third, how do the variables exercise their effects? What are the causal mechanisms? How do the variables relate to and interact with one another? As explained earlier, it is not possible at this stage of theory building to definitively answer these questions. However, the case study provides initial answers to many of these questions, generating a theoretical model for further empirical testing.

METHODOLOGY

CASE SELECTION AND DESIGN

There were several challenges that needed to be addressed in designing the empirical approach. The dependent variable occurs at multiple levels simultaneously; the system that produces it is complex, with many interactions among variables; and there is no way to hold each of the variables constant. Therefore, it was necessary to find a domain in

which there was variation in the variables of interest, hold the context and actors as constant as possible, and carry the analysis over time.

Afghanistan was selected as the context for the case study because it served as an incubator and testing ground for a wide range of coordination structures and processes.³⁷ It therefore exhibited substantial variation in the variables of interest. Within the context of Afghanistan, it was necessary to select a subset of the thousands of organizational actors on the ground for focused analysis. US civil-military coordination was selected because access to substantial primary and secondary data facilitated hypothesis testing.³⁸ While some may argue that coordination among US agencies is not a valid test of a theory intended to explain coordination in the absence of centralized control, US efforts in Afghanistan during the period studied were highly decentralized: No individual or agency was fully in charge.

The purpose of the case study was to develop a theoretical model of coordination, not to explain peacebuilding effectiveness. The US case study was selected because it facilitated initial theory development. As explained earlier, coordination among expatriate actors is necessary but not sufficient for effective peacebuilding. To contribute to sustainable

³⁷ The author appreciates Eileen Babbitt's early suggestion to focus on Afghanistan.

³⁸ The inclusion of practical considerations, including access to data, as design criteria is supported by the literature of qualitative methodology (Gerring 2007, 57).

peace, expatriate efforts must support and complement the goals, priorities, and efforts of local actors.

The case study analyzes coordination among the US Department of Defense (DoD), US Department of State (DoS), and US Agency for International Development (USAID), three agencies with sustained presence on the ground and consistent interaction at all levels.³⁹ It covers the eight years between fall 2001 and spring 2009, divided into four approximately two-year time periods. The four sub-cases are delineated by the tenures of the US ambassadors to Afghanistan, which, in turn, roughly correspond to the tenures of their senior military counterparts. The rationale for designating time periods in this way is that the changes in US civilian and military leadership in Afghanistan were associated with changes in the variables of interest, thereby providing opportunities for within case and cross-case comparison.

While four time periods were studied, the emphasis was on the second and third periods (2003–2005 and 2005–2007, respectively). The initial design called for analyzing coordination only during these periods. During the interview process, however, it became clear that the foundations for subsequent coordination failures and successes were laid between 2001 and 2003 and that there were process innovations after 2007

³⁹ The CIA also had a significant presence and influence, but data were not available. Interviewees with knowledge of CIA operations in Afghanistan during this period were asked whether the inability to analyze the role of the CIA relative to US coordination in Afghanistan would compromise the accuracy of the findings. The answer was consistently that it would not.

that reflected efforts to distill and incorporate lessons from the preceding six years. Therefore, the final design retains the emphasis on the 2003–2005 and 2005–2007 time periods while expanding the analysis to cover the years preceding and following.

ILLUSTRATION 3.3: PERIODS STUDIED⁴⁰

PERIOD	US AMBASSADOR	DATES
I	ROBERT FINN ⁴¹	FALL 2001–SUMMER 2003 ⁴²
II	ZALMAY KHALILZAD ⁴³	FALL 2003–SUMMER 2005
III	RONALD NEUMANN ⁴⁴	SUMMER 2005–SPRING 2007
IV	WILLIAM WOOD ⁴⁵	SPRING 2007–SPRING 2009

It is important to acknowledge the dependence among the sub-cases. The four periods studied were, by definition, not independent of one another. Coordination in each of the three latter time periods was affected by events in the preceding years. For purposes of this project, this offered several advantages. Holding the context (Afghanistan) and actors (DoS,

⁴⁰ There was often a gap between the departure of one ambassador and the arrival of his successor. The time periods are therefore designated by season and year, rather than by specific arrival and departure dates.

⁴¹ Finn was appointed US Ambassador to Afghanistan in March 2002. Ambassador Ryan Crocker served as Interim Envoy to Afghanistan prior to Finn’s arrival. Ambassador James Dobbins served as the representative of the Bush administration to the Afghan opposition and represented the US at the Bonn Conference. Ambassador William Taylor served as coordinator of international and US assistance to Afghanistan.

⁴² While Finn was not appointed ambassador until March 2002, the chapter opens with the launch of Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001.

⁴³ Khalilzad served from November 2003 to June 2005.

⁴⁴ Neumann served from August 2005 to April 2007.

⁴⁵ Wood served from April 2007 to April 2009.

DoD, and USAID) constant provided the strongest possible *ceteris paribus*, while the variation in the dependent and explanatory variables offered opportunities for cross-case comparison.⁴⁶ The historical progression of the sub-cases also made possible analysis of learning over time, including evolution. The use of dependent cases to study learning is supported by the qualitative methodology literature (George and Bennett 2004).⁴⁷

The case study analyzes coordination at and across three levels of decision making. Whereas most prior research has distinguished primarily between coordination in national capitals and “on the ground,” the three-level framework allows for a more expansive conceptualization of “headquarters-field” relations – for example, the coordination between an embassy or in-theater military headquarters and lower-level organizational units.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ It was not possible to hold the context completely constant, of course: The political and security context in Afghanistan, as well as political and organizational dynamics in Washington, DC, evolved over the course of the analysis.

⁴⁷ As George and Bennett, referencing King, Keohane, and Verba (1994), explain: “When learning or diffusion processes are anticipated or uncovered and taken into account, they need not undercut the value of studying partially dependent cases” (George and Bennett 2004, 33).

⁴⁸ Prior research highlights the importance of headquarters-field relations for peacebuilding coordination (e.g., Chayes and Chayes 1999). It is important to note that the meaning of “headquarters” and “field” varies with context. Headquarters of an expatriate government agency may refer to its official headquarters in the national capital of its home country or to its office in the national capital where peacebuilding is being undertaken. Field, likewise, may refer to the national capital of the country where peacebuilding is being undertaken or to more remote locations. To explain horizontal coordination, it is necessary to consider vertical coordination across all of these levels.

The boundaries between levels of decision making blur in practice.⁴⁹ Therefore, three hybrid levels were designated for purposes of categorizing interviewees and analyzing the findings: policy/strategic, strategic/operational, and operational/tactical. For the purposes of this research, the policy/strategic level is defined as the level at which decisions are made about high-level goals, strategies, and resource allocations. The strategic/operational level is defined as the level at which more focused goals, priorities, and strategies are identified and overarching implementation decisions made. The operational/tactical level is defined as the level at which the most detailed implementation decisions are made.

DATA COLLECTION

The primary source of data was semi-structured interviews. This was supplemented by primary and secondary documentation. Interviews were conducted with 132 people. Of these, 14 were early consultations to seek advice about the research and identify people to interview. One hundred eighteen were semi-structured interviews with senior and mid-level officials who worked in or on Afghanistan during one or more of the periods studied. The majority of interviews lasted over one hour, with some stretching over two or three long sessions.

⁴⁹ Decisions made at what are generally understood to be the strategic or operational levels increasingly have policy implications, and decisions by actors charged with tactical implementation increasingly have strategic significance, hence the concept of the “strategic corporal” (Krulak 1999).

To identify interviewees, a matrix was developed that identified the time periods and organizations to be studied. Each interview was used to identify additional positions and individuals to include on the matrix. This ensured the accuracy and completeness of the matrix and also served as a tool to understand the constantly evolving changes in military, civilian, and interagency structures on the ground.

The majority of interviews were with US officials who served in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2009. Civilian interviewees included all of the US ambassadors to Afghanistan during the four periods studied; the majority of deputy chiefs of mission; the majority of USAID mission directors; political advisors (POLAD); development advisors (DEVAD); civilians who served at Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT); and other civilian experts. Military interviewees included both US commanders of US Central Command (CENTCOM) and commanders at all levels of the military structure on the ground, including PRT commanders.

In addition to the people who served on the ground, interviews were conducted with many senior policy makers and mid-level experts in Washington, DC, including at DoD, DoS, USAID, and the National Security Council (NSC). Several officials outside of the US government who had first-hand knowledge of US interagency coordination also were interviewed. Interviews were conducted until saturation was reached in terms of both examples of coordinated results and explanations.

While the content of the interviews was confidential (no information or opinions are attributed to specific interviewees without their permission), most authorized inclusion of their names in a published list of people interviewed. The list of people interviewed who approved publication of their names is provided in Appendix A.

Following are breakdowns of the 118 coded interviews by organizational affiliation, level, and time period.⁵⁰ Classifying interviews was difficult because many interviewees served in different positions at different times, and several served in two or more agencies. To simplify, interviews were coded to only one agency and one level (based on the role most salient to the analysis), but to all relevant time periods. The numbers below should be interpreted as approximate distributions.

Interviewees were classified in one of five agency categories: DoS, USAID, DoD, NSC, and Other. Other included interviewees who served with the US Special Investigator for Afghan Reconstruction, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group (located at the US Embassy during the second and part of the third time periods), the United Nations, the European Union, the Canadian military, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the British military.

⁵⁰ The 118 semi-structured interviews were coded. The early consultations did not follow the interview protocol and therefore were not coded.

ILLUSTRATION 3.4: INTERVIEWS BY AGENCY

AGENCY	INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL
DoS	32	27.1%
USAID	26	22.0%
DoD	41	34.7%
NSC	7	6.0%
OTHER	12	10.2%
TOTAL	118	100.0%

Interviewees also were categorized by level of decision making. The three hybrid levels identified earlier were used, with classification determined by where interviewees were physically located, rather than the nature of their work. The policy/strategic level included the headquarters of DoD, DoS, and USAID in Washington, DC; the NSC; and CENTCOM. The strategic/operational level included the US embassy and Combined Joint Task Force headquarters in and near Kabul. The operational/tactical level included the regional commands, brigades, and PRTs.

ILLUSTRATION 3.5: INTERVIEWS BY LEVEL

LEVEL	INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL
POLICY/STRATEGIC	41	34.7%
STRATEGIC/ OPERATIONAL	53	45.0%
OPERATIONAL/ TACTICAL	24	20.3%
TOTAL	118	100.0%

Whereas interviewees were categorized in only one agency and one level, they were included in the counts for each time period for which they had direct experience. The total number below thus exceeds the total number of interviewees.

ILLUSTRATION 3.6: INTERVIEWS BY TIME PERIOD

TIME PERIOD	INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL
I	24	12.1%
II	55	27.6%
III	68	34.2%
IV	52	26.1%
TOTAL	199	100.0%

Interviews were conducted in person whenever possible. However, since most of the interviewees who served in Afghanistan had since deployed to other countries, there was no single location, other than Washington, DC, with a critical mass of people to be interviewed. The majority of interviews were therefore conducted by telephone.⁵¹

The interviews were semi-structured. The initial questions were designed to elicit stories and explanations of coordinated results. These were followed by more focused questions. Close-to-verbatim notes were taken during the interviews, with additional notes added following the

⁵¹ Requests for interviews were made via e-mail, often following introductions from people already interviewed. In advance of the interview, each interviewee was sent information about the project, with a confidentiality statement and biographical information. When interviewees requested it, the first few questions of the interview protocol were provided via e-mail in advance of the interview.

interviews.⁵² The confidentiality statement and interview protocol are provided in Appendix B.

CODING AND ANALYSIS

As indicated above, close-to-verbatim notes were taken during the interviews. The notes then were coded using nVivo qualitative coding software. To do this, an initial set of nested coding categories was created based on the variables identified above. For example, a “parent” code was created for coordinated results, with “child” codes beneath that for each of the four types of coordinated results. This meant that any data coded to complementarity were automatically coded to coordinated results.

After the initial coding categories were established, the interview data were coded to the appropriate categories.⁵³ When the data did not fit well within the existing categories, additional categories were created. For example, co-location was added as a coding category during data analysis. A number of “grandchild” codes beneath existing “child” codes also were added. Descriptive coding categories were also created; for example, a code “military structure” in which information about the constantly evolving military structure in Afghanistan was collected. While not part of

⁵² With permission, several of the early interviews were recorded. However, it soon became clear that it was easier and more efficient to take detailed notes.

⁵³ As indicated above, I took close-to-verbatim notes during my interviews, which I then imported into nVivo. Coding involved selecting with my cursor the text I wanted to code and then dragging and dropping that text to one or more coding categories. Any amount of text could be selected, and it could be coded to any number of coding categories.

the analytic framework, these data were nevertheless important to understand the context within which coordination occurred.

Data were coded to all of the relevant coding categories. For example, text that referred to specific coordinated results and also identified joint planning as a factor in achieving the coordinated results was coded to both categories: coordinated results and joint planning. By the time all of the data had gone through the initial coding process, the number of coding categories had expanded significantly. The coding system was then refined and simplified to facilitate analysis, ensuring that the data remained in the appropriate categories.

The iterative coding process not only ensured the robustness of the coding. It also contributed to the conceptualization of key variables and refinement of third-level indicators. It resulted in bins of coded data that were then used in combination with the original interview notes to complete the analysis.

While all of the data were coded, all were not treated as equally valid. In conducting the analysis, four sets of criteria were used to determine which interview data to include: frequency and consistency; supporting detail, evidence, and/or internal logic; indication of learning; and dissenting opinions.

Information and explanations that were most **frequently and consistently cited** across interview categories and that provided

supporting **detail, documentation, and/or internal logic** were treated as the strongest evidence. The written analysis also included data that met one of the following criteria, even if not frequently and consistently cited: They provided significant **detail, supporting evidence, and/or internal logic** to support or contradict arguments; they **indicated learning**; or they **indicated a dissenting opinion**, the inclusion of which was necessary for accurate portrayal of a range of perspectives on controversial issues. The written analysis indicates which data were frequently and consistently cited.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF EMPIRICAL APPROACH

The empirical approach had several strengths. The use of four sequential sub-cases within a broader case study provided as strong a *ceteris paribus* as possible, supporting both within-case and cross-case (cross-period) analysis.⁵⁴ The number, depth, and diversity of interviewees ensured opportunities both to triangulate information and to identify salient differences in the experiences and perspectives of interviewees in different categories. The inclusion of interviewees at multiple levels of decision making made possible analysis of the impacts of coordination at higher levels on coordination at lower levels. The focus on coordinated results and elicitive interview protocol allowed for detailed examination of

⁵⁴ While the geographic location and organizational actors were held constant, there were a number of contextual changes, including the security situation, which affected coordination. These are addressed in the case study.

the factors that explained coordinated results, including those that were not anticipated by or contradicted the hypotheses.

The design also had a number of limitations. The focus on documenting and explaining coordinated results, as opposed to failures, made it difficult to isolate causal variables. The use of an historical case study meant that direct observation of process was not possible. The reliance interviews, while providing a rich set of data for analysis, meant that it sometimes was difficult to determine what interview data rose to the level of “evidence.” Finally, the case study analyzes coordination among US agencies engaged in a very complex, and in many respects unique, peacebuilding context. Thus, additional research will be necessary both to rigorously test the model generated by this project and to determine its relevance to other actors and contexts.

The next chapter serves as preface to the case study. It highlights important trends in US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan, introduces the structure of the analysis, previews the most significant high-level findings, and identifies important caveats.

CHAPTER FOUR:

PREFACE TO CASE STUDY

US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2009 was characterized by significant variation in the variables of interest.⁵⁵ The case study therefore offers unique opportunities to identify the variables that explain coordinated results, develop a theoretical model for further testing, and identify implications for policy and practice.

As will be evident in the chapters that follow, the early US civil-military experience in Afghanistan was dominated by coordination failures, although there also were foundations laid that would increase coordination in subsequent periods. In many respects, the early failures reflected weaknesses in the structures and processes for civil-military contingency planning within the Bush administration.⁵⁶ Therefore, before presenting the analysis of the first period, it is necessary to summarize the state of civil-military relations at the time of the October 2001 US-led military intervention in Afghanistan.

When George W. Bush was elected President, he inherited a relatively robust interagency planning system – Presidential Decision

⁵⁵ The principal reasons for the variation were the lack of standard operating procedures for on-the-ground coordination and the associated tendency of incoming leaders to create their own systems and processes. The result was significant experimentation and innovation, but often at the expense of continuity and sustained organizational learning. This is highlighted in the analysis and addressed in the conclusion.

⁵⁶ This section draws heavily from Dobbins et al (2008).

Directive (PDD) 56.⁵⁷ PDD 56 had institutionalized structures and processes for joint civil-military contingency planning at the policy level and provided for the establishment of coordination mechanisms at the operational level, including interagency working groups, an integrated civil-military planning tool, and procedures for after-action reviews and training (Dobbins 2008, 72).

Early in its tenure, however, the Bush administration jettisoned PDD 56, driven, at least in part, by Bush's antipathy to nation building – a position that would frustrate attempts at coordination in Afghanistan for many years. The Bush administration did draft a National Security Presidential Directive to replace PDD 56.⁵⁸ However, the draft was never issued, and it was not until 2005 that a watered-down version of the document, National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44, was finally signed.

The dynamics on the Bush National Security Council (NSC) at the time of the US intervention in Afghanistan further impeded coordination.

⁵⁷ In May 1997, in an effort to distill and institutionalize lessons from complex operations in places such as Panama, Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia, the Clinton administration had issued PDD 56 *Managing Complex Contingency Operations*.

⁵⁸ The draft NSPD established a Contingency Planning Policy Coordinating Committee to develop “interagency contingency plans for emerging crises...” (Bush 2001) and provided a “comprehensive framework for organizing the interagency nation-building process” (Fukuyama 2006, 8).

While the NSC structure was similar in many respects to Clinton's, the dynamics were challenging.⁵⁹ Dobbins et al explained:

[The Bush NSC] proved to be difficult to orchestrate, as many participants would simply act unilaterally when so inclined. President Bush conceived of himself as a strong manager, but it would have required considerable effort and great familiarity with the details of policy and the ways of the federal bureaucracy to personally monitor and control the activity of his subordinates. The president failed to make that effort, and he did not empower his staff to do so on his behalf. As a result, according to one observer, his "National Security Council was a system that assumed senior officials would cooperate and share information with their counterparts and which rarely cracked down when they did not" (Dobbins et al 2008, 89–90).

One of the most serious consequences of the NSC dynamics as they related to the 2001 military intervention was the failure to surface and consider alternative analyses or courses of action – an essential component of policy-level coordination.

The often-contentious relations between NSC principals also carried over to their respective bureaucracies. A senior official who served in the Department of Defense (DoD) at this time described the relationship between DoD and the Department of State (DoS) as "toxic": "We wound up fighting with [DoS] over everything, since they had an allergic reaction to anything DoD" (Interview 34).

For all of the reasons highlighted above, the US began Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001 with a plan that was hastily prepared by US Central Command (CENTCOM) and did not incorporate any

⁵⁹ The structure of Bush' NSC was established by NSPD 1.

serious planning for what would follow a military victory.⁶⁰ Indeed, CENTCOM entitled its “plan” for the post-conflict, or Phase IV, operations “Establish Capacity of Coalition Partners to Prevent the Re-Emergence of Terrorism and Provide Support for Humanitarian Assistance Efforts” (Dobbins 2008, 91). There was virtually no attention paid to planning for reconstruction, let alone civil-military coordination.

By 2010, a decade after the 2001 intervention, this had changed considerably. Every serious analysis, policy document, and speech about Afghanistan within the US policy community emphasized the importance of civil-military coordination.⁶¹ General David Petraeus, Commander of US Central Command, in his March 2010 testimony to the Armed Services Committee, argued:

Instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan poses the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility and requires complementary and integrated civil-military, whole-of-government approaches (Petraeus 2010).

Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, in a January 2010 press briefing with the US Secretary of Treasury and Administrator of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), described the direction they had given to staff on the ground.

⁶⁰ The plan called for the US to overthrow the Taliban regime and then to turn over responsibility as quickly as possible to the international community.

⁶¹ Enhanced coordination with the US government was broadly recognized to be a necessary part of enhanced coordination amongst the many governmental and nongovernmental, expatriate and local actors involved in Afghanistan.

We have issued an edict – don't identify yourself as AID [US Agency for International Development] or USDA [US Department of Agriculture]. You are US Mission. The motto out there – I know it's corny, but the motto is “One team, one mission” (Holbrooke 2010).

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates repeatedly emphasized the shared commitment across the US government to so-called 3-D coordination, or coordination among Defense, Diplomacy, and Development. Even President Obama, in his public remarks about the US strategy in Afghanistan, “pledged to better coordinate our military and civilian efforts” (Obama 2009).

At the heart of the crescendo of calls for enhanced coordination was recognition that the failure to coordinate had seriously undermined stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Indeed, as early as 2007, Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, had publicly decried the lack of coordination and its impacts on Afghanistan.

There is no effective coordination among the international community. They just don't have the coordination that is required. One says one thing, and the other says the opposite. One says, “Destroy it.” The other says, “Don't.” One says, “They do it.” The other blames, “No, they do it.” For all of this, we are held responsible (Karzai 2007).

While the US was only one among many nations involved in Afghanistan, it was by far the largest and most powerful. The lack of coordination on the US side undermined the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts in US areas of operation (AOR) and more broadly.

Evidence of the coordination failures was ubiquitous. Schools had been built, furnished, even equipped with libraries – only to sit idle for lack of trained teachers. Roads had been constructed, at great cost of dollars and lives, but subsequently blown up due to lack of coordination between road construction and security efforts. Free veterinary vaccinations had been provided, directly undermining efforts to build local veterinary capacity and provide sustainable livelihoods to Afghan veterinarians. Short-term counterterrorism objectives had been achieved, but in the process countless civilians had been harmed and killed, deeply alienating the very people whose support was essential to achieve US counterinsurgency goals (Clinton 2009).⁶²

Coordination failures, however, were not the entire story: There also were numerous coordinated results in Afghanistan and significant learning and innovation on the part of civilians and the military regarding the factors that facilitate coordination. This is the focus of the case study: identifying and explaining coordinated results and, in so doing, developing a theoretical model of coordination.

ORGANIZATION OF ANALYSIS AND PREVIEW OF FINDINGS

The chapters that follow provide detailed content analyses of the interviews from each of the four time periods, with a focus on the second

⁶² Gates, Clinton, and the senior diplomats and military commanders on the ground expressed grave concern about the continuing high numbers of civilian casualties and the associated deleterious impacts in terms of US counterinsurgency goals.

and third periods. The chapters begin by highlighting important developments relevant to the analysis. They then identify the most frequently cited examples of coordinated results, assess the explanatory power of each of the variables identified in Chapter Three, and examine any other factors or explanations that emerged from the data. The analysis of learning – how it emerged and what effects it had in terms of coordinated results – is woven into the discussions of each of the other variables and summarized briefly at the end of each chapter. The conclusion to the dissertation summarizes the findings across periods and integrates them into a theoretical model.

To determine what interview data rose to the level of “evidence,” the four sets of criteria identified in Chapter Three were used: frequency and consistency; detail, documentation, and/or internal logic; indication of learning; and dissenting opinions. Data that met the first two criteria – that were frequently and consistently cited and provided supporting detail, documentation, and/or internal logic – were treated as the strongest evidence. The written analysis identifies the rationale for including various data.

Many direct quotations were included to substantiate the analysis and add color and context. Most quotations were included without attribution, using a confidential numbering system. Where quotations or other information were attributed to specific individuals, permission was granted to do so. All interviewees spoke in their personal capacities, and

their comments do not represent the official positions of any government, department, or agency.

In certain cases, it was possible to show a direct link between a given one or more explanatory variables and specific coordinated results. In most cases, however, the variables interacted to create a context more or less conducive to coordinated results.

The case study confirms the explanatory power of many, although not all, of the variables identified in Chapter Three. Among the most significant findings, it supports the hypothesis that agreement on goals and strategy is necessary, but not sufficient to explain coordinated results. Empowerment, incentives, accountability, and information are necessary for coordinated implementation of agreed strategies. However, it also shows that the definition of empowerment should be expanded to include authority to share information and access to resources, in addition to formal decision-making authority identified in Chapter Three.

The case study supports the hypothesized importance of joint processes, including convening and joint analysis and planning, in building consensus on goals and strategy. Consistent with the hypotheses, it shows that joint processes fostered learning and that learning fed back into many other explanatory variables. However, it provides inconsistent support for the hypothesized importance of facilitative leadership across organizations. It also indicates the potential importance of directive leadership within organizational hierarchies, a variable not included in the

hypotheses. This finding is not inconsistent with the “no one in charge” premise of the dissertation. While autonomous organizations will not accept centralized coordination *across* organizations, they generally have established lines of authority *within* their own organizations.

Nor does the finding about directive leadership necessarily invalidate the hypothesized importance of facilitative leadership. Rather, it may indicate that directive leadership within organizations is a necessary complement to facilitative leadership across organizations. Further empirical testing will be necessary to determine the extent to which this is true.

The case study highlights two additional factors not included in the hypotheses. First, it demonstrates the negative effects of power disparities on coordination, a factor supported by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Second, it shows the positive impact of co-location. Co-location of civilians and military at all levels of decision making contributed to information sharing, joint analysis and planning, and fostered learning. Co-location also can be understood as a structural alternative to periodic or *ad hoc* convening, and thus as one pole on a spectrum of convening. Co-location also was partially captured in the hypotheses by transaction costs, since it reduced the time, effort, and expense required for face-to-face interaction.

CAVEATS

Before turning to the case study, several caveats are in order. First, the case study analyzes coordinated results as defined in Chapter Three. Coordinated results affect but are distinct from impacts. The case study provides examples in which coordinated results contributed to positive impacts, as well as examples of coordination failures that contributed to negative impacts. However, this is neither the focus of the analysis nor conclusive.

Second, the coordinated results identified at the beginning of each chapter are those that were most frequently and consistently cited by interviewees and therefore those that had national visibility. The data indicate that they represent the majority of coordinated results at that level, but they are not necessarily comprehensive.⁶³ At the tactical level, the data indicate a wider array of coordinated results, examples of which are integrated into the analysis of explanatory variables. These should be understood as illustrative, not comprehensive. Overall, the data suggest that coordination failures far outweighed coordinated results, although further research will be necessary to determine whether this is so.

Third, many of the coordinated results cited span two or more time periods. Likewise, some of the most significant data about structure, process, and learning relate to multiple periods. In such cases, data are

⁶³ The interview protocol was designed to elicit concrete examples and explanations of coordinated results, not to identify all of the coordinated results achieved.

included in the period or periods where they make the most analytic sense. Thus, the inclusion of data about specific coordinated results or explanatory variables in the analysis of a given period does not necessarily imply that it was limited to that period.

Finally, as emphasized earlier, the case study focuses on US interagency coordination in Afghanistan as a means of generating a theoretical model for further empirical testing. It does not tell the broader story of peacebuilding in Afghanistan during this period, in which the US was one among many actors and in which Afghans themselves played the most important roles.

Nor does the case study assess the legitimacy or wisdom of the decision made by the US to intervene in Afghanistan in the first place. While these are vitally important questions, the analysis focuses on identifying and explaining coordinated implementation after the decision to intervene was made. Having said that, the conclusion to the dissertation argues that many of the findings about on-the-ground coordination are relevant to coordination at the policy level, where decisions about intervention in other countries are made.

CHAPTER FIVE:

FOUNDATIONS (FALL 2001–SUMMER 2003)

Successive administrations have treated each new mission as if it were the first and, more importantly, as if it were the last. Each time we have sent out new people to face old problems, and seen them make old mistakes. Each time we have dissipated accumulated expertise after an operation has been concluded, failing to study the lessons and integrate the results in our doctrine, training, and future planning, or to retain and make use of the experienced personnel in ways that ensure their availability for the next mission when it arrives.

Senator Richard G. Lugar, December 2009 (Lugar 2009, 4)

In October 2001, the US military launched Operation Enduring Freedom with the plan US Central Command (CENTCOM) had prepared in the weeks following the September 2001 terrorist attacks. The US was focused almost exclusively on combat. There were no serious, interagency plans in place for US civilian reconstruction activities that would follow a military victory against the Taliban.

The international community, however, was moving forward with plans for a post-Taliban Afghanistan. In early December 2001, the UN hosted the Bonn Conference in Germany. The Bonn Agreement established Hamid Karzai as the head of the new interim administration, laid out a process for developing a national constitution and holding elections, and requested that an international military force be deployed to Afghanistan. In late December, the UN Security Council formally

established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (UN Security Council Resolution 1386/2001). In March of the following year, the Security Council established the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (UN Security Council 1401/2002).

The ISAF was initially charged with securing Kabul and surrounding areas. Karzai and Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA, urgently argued for the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul, but the US blocked that request. The Department of Defense (DoD), under Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, was concerned that expanding ISAF would undermine the support of local militias for US counterterrorism activities.⁶⁴ The US continued to focus on counterterrorism operations following the collapse of the Taliban regime.⁶⁵

In May 2002, General Tommy Franks, the commander of USCENTCOM, established Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-180 at Bagram Airfield outside of Kabul and appointed General Dan McNeill to command it. CJTF-180 was intended to “oversee tactical operations while taking control of an increasingly complex military and political situation” (Koontz 2008, 2).⁶⁶ In June 2002, the 82nd Airborne Division began to

⁶⁴ It was not until October 2003, after NATO assumed command of ISAF that it began to extend operations beyond Kabul. This process took several years.

⁶⁵ The Northern Alliance entered Kabul on November 13, 2002.

⁶⁶ McNeill reorganized the structure under his command. The 10th Mountain Division continued operations as Combined Task Force Mountain, focusing on

arrive in Afghanistan, replacing the 10th Mountain Division. In September, Major General John Vines assumed command of Combined Task Force 82 (CTF-82); in May, the command of US forces, then CJTF-180, transitioned from McNeill to Vines.

By early 2002, the US had begun to lay the foundations for at least a nominal civilian involvement. Ryan Crocker was appointed Interim Envoy, with the mandate to open the US embassy and establish the basis for dealing with the new Afghan government. In March 2002, Robert Finn was appointed US Ambassador to Afghanistan, replacing Crocker.

Given the almost exclusive US focus on hunting terrorists and the lack of defined strategy for civilian involvement, DoD continued to garner the majority of resources. Relatively few resources were allocated to reconstruction and development.⁶⁷ Finn, therefore, had neither the human nor financial resources to establish a robust civilian effort in the country.⁶⁸

hunting for al Qaeda and Taliban leaders. McNeill brought the Special Operations Forces under a newly created Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force. Civil Affairs units worked under the auspices of the Combined Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF).

⁶⁷ At the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan that Japan hosted in January 2002, the US pledged only 10% of the total donor pledges of \$5.2 billion (Dobbins et al 2008, 96). The total US economic assistance to Afghanistan in 2002 totaled approximately \$500 million, far below subsequent appropriations.

⁶⁸ Bush's appointment in December 2001 of Zalmay Khalilzad as his personal envoy to Afghanistan further undermined the State Department's leadership, since Khalilzad operated quite independently of State. Khalilzad served as Personal Envoy to Afghanistan until his appointment as US Ambassador to Afghanistan in November 2003.

For all of the reasons discussed above, the US government was poorly prepared for the civil-military coordination challenges that lay ahead. The consequence was numerous coordination failures, although there were also important foundations laid for enhanced coordination in the future.

Following is a content analysis of the interview data about this period, organized according to the variables identified in Chapter Three.⁶⁹ The analysis will show that the absence of several factors hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated results was directly associated with coordination failures. Specifically, it will show that that the following undermined coordination: lack of agreement on goals and strategy; lack of accountability; incentive systems that emphasized agency-wide rather than government-wide goals; lack of empowerment at the operational/tactical level; constraints on information sharing; and limited opportunities for joint analysis and planning. It also will illuminate the importance of a factor not included in the hypotheses that undermined coordination: resources. It will show that lack of civilian resources and associated resource disparities undermined coordination.

On the positive side, it will show that the relatively high level of empowerment of the senior military and civilian leadership on the ground

⁶⁹ As emphasized earlier, the analysis focused on US interagency coordination in Afghanistan because that offered the best means to test and refine the theoretical model at this stage in its development. It does not tell the broader story of peacebuilding in Afghanistan, in which the US was one among many actors.

(as contrasted with the lack of empowerment at the operational/tactical level) made possible the achievement of some limited coordinated results. In addition, early efforts to convene stakeholders for information sharing and joint analysis, if not planning, enhanced coordinated results. Finally, it will show initial evidence of learning and feedback loops to other variables hypothesized to explain coordinated results.

COORDINATED RESULTS⁷⁰

The interviews from this period indicated an overarching failure of to achieve coordinated results. The most significant failure pattern involved the negative effects of Special Operations on concurrent stabilization and reconstruction efforts, although there also were many other coordination failures. Nevertheless, interviewees cited several examples of coordinated results, including “clear-hold-build” operations, efficiencies achieved by the CJCMOTF, and the reconstruction of a hospital wing. Moreover, foundations were laid for enhanced coordination in subsequent periods. These examples are woven into the analysis below.

⁷⁰ As explained earlier, the analysis identifies and explains coordinated results among the US DoD and Department of State (DoS) and US Agency for International Development (USAID), recognizing that US efforts took place within a broader multinational context. The coordinated results most frequently and consistently cited were those with national ramifications, but there also were many cases of coordinated results at the tactical level. Because coordinated results often spanned time periods, their inclusion in a given period does not necessarily imply completion.

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES (HYPOTHESIZED)

AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

The lack of agreement on goals and strategy for US reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan was a key factor undermining the achievement of coordinated results. Because the Bush administration had failed to put in place a robust contingency planning system, the US intervened in October 2001 with no agreed plan for what would follow a military victory against the Taliban.⁷¹

...in the absence of a PDD [Presidential Decision Directive] 56-like framework for planning, much of the resultant work was *ad hoc*; no working group was created, no integrated civil-military plan was developed, and no senior coordinator was named to head such an effort. In the absence of a grand strategy or integrated political-military plan, the way the war unfolded on the ground in Afghanistan drove the nature of the US involvement in post-war planning (Dobbins et al 2008, 92).

Without an interagency plan, there was no point of reference to use in resolving the differences that inevitably emerged. One DoD official argued that the fundamental problem in Afghanistan in this period was disagreement on goals and priorities.

The first substantive difference within interagency coordination was between [DoS] and DoD regarding how aggressively the US should put US forces outside of Kabul...[DoS] was pushing to have US forces outside Kabul in 2001. DoD was more cautious...was concerned about taking on too ambitious an agenda. The major difference within the interagency was primarily between Rumsfeld and Powell (Interview 38).

⁷¹ At the level of the Deputies Committee, there was some attention paid to a post-war phase of operations, but no integrated plan was developed.

The lack of agreed goals and strategy in Washington led people on the ground to define their missions largely along agency lines.⁷² This was evident in the guidance that senior military commanders and diplomats received before deploying to Afghanistan. When General Dan McNeill departed for Afghanistan in May 2002, his superiors made clear that his mandate did not include nation building.

When I first arrived in Afghanistan...the guidance given to me, mostly from Secretary Rumsfeld and General Franks...was that there were two lines of effort – capture or kill the extremists, and build the [Afghan National] Army [ANA]. Rumsfeld and Franks were explicit: We were not into nation building. When I arrived with Robert Finn, I wanted to portray myself as part of the country team. He corrected that. He said, “You’re here to fight a war.” He didn’t consider I was necessarily part of a country team. Nevertheless, we worked closely on many issues...but if we collaborated on anything that looked like US policy other than building the ANA, I can’t recall it (McNeill 2009).

Given the understanding at the highest levels of the military and civilian leadership in country that they were engaged in largely parallel efforts, their subordinates focused on achieving agency objectives rather than interagency coordinated results. One USAID official recalled an exchange in 2002, shortly after Karzai had insisted that all governors swear allegiance to the Government of Afghanistan and fly the national flag.

⁷² A parallel problem plagued international coordination efforts. At the 2002 Tokyo Conference, the international community agreed to a “lead nation” approach in which countries volunteered to lead specific sectors. Many interviewees from this and subsequent periods argued that this “lead nation” approach proved to be a disaster. According to one official from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, “The biggest mistake in the first three years was the lead nation idea. Everyone had their lane...did a lot of damage to integrated efforts” (Interview 19).

When I arrived [at the governor's compound], there was...no flag flying...A guy attached to the civil affairs unit was sitting under a tree reading Kipling...I said, "You guys are funding his [the governor's] militia, living in his compound, and supporting him." He replied, "Our objective is to fight and kill Al Qaida and the Taliban. Your objective is to build a democratic central government. Right now, our objective is number one, and the consequences of our actions will be your problems in six months." He knew exactly what I was talking about, but there was a hierarchy of priorities. They wouldn't mitigate their actions to serve this other higher – or lower – objective (Interview 118).

The problem was exacerbated by the lack of comprehensive planning with USAID in this period. USAID developed an "interim strategy and action plan" in 2002 but lacked "measurable goals, time frames, resources, responsibilities, objective measures, or means to evaluate progress of the wider mission" (Dobbins et al 2008).⁷³ This led to a focus on *ad hoc* projects rather than coordinated efforts in support of high-level goals. A senior USAID official explained:

The USAID mission was very small...We were designing projects, trying to get things going. We were not fully staffed...There was no strategic plan...We had a huge chunk of money, but the focus was on buying a phone for Karzai, the ministers...I had no idea what US policy was (Interview 8).

Thus, the lack of interagency agreement on goals and strategies, combined with lack of comprehensive planning within USAID, led to a project-by-project approach to reconstruction and development, undermining coordination.

⁷³ "The requirement for a full [USAID] strategy and action plan was waived [in 2002, 2003, and 2004]...undermining USAID's efforts in achieving long-term development goals and the provision of accountability for agency programs" (Dobbins et al 2008).

EMPOWERMENT

While the lack of agreed goals and interagency strategy at the policy/strategic level impeded coordination, the empowerment of the senior leadership on the ground enabled them to achieve some limited coordinated results. This suggests that empowerment of senior officials may enable them to overcome other obstacles to coordination on an *ad hoc*, if not consistent, basis.

The experience with Operation Anaconda illustrates the importance of empowerment of senior leaders on the ground. Operation Anaconda was an intense battle against Taliban and al Qaeda forces intended to clear them from the Shahikot Valley of Eastern Afghanistan (Kugler 2007). Although Operation Anaconda was primarily a military operation, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and DoS also had responsibility for some aspects of Operation Anaconda. According to Ambassador Ryan Crocker, the empowerment of senior military and civilian leaders on the ground facilitated coordination.

Anaconda was a mixed bag. We really didn't have enough resources...but in terms of the coordination, it worked well. The lack of guidance from higher headquarters, particularly on the civilian side, actually helped the coordination on the ground. We were pretty much free to do out there whatever we thought was best. No one was looking to DC or Langley for approval, so we felt empowered...really did help that little required coordination with headquarters (Crocker 2009).

Finn's description of his empowerment as US Ambassador corresponds with that of Crocker.

DC wasn't telling us to do this or do that. We didn't receive marching orders from DC. Rather, they were thinking about major issues. We were doing things on a daily basis. We were not being micromanaged (Finn 2009).

At the operational/tactical level, by contrast, empowerment was lacking. A USAID official explained:

Everything had to go through Kabul in terms of decision-making...no discretion was given to field program officers...It was crucial to have good relationships with key people in Kabul who could advocate for me and get the resources to the province, since there was no system or process to ensure that. It depended on relationships (Interview 14).

Long-time USAID officers were often able to work around the lack of formal decision-making authority. Most USAID officers, however, were Private Service Contractors, without the experience or relationships to navigate effectively within the bureaucracy. A senior USAID official described the negative impact on coordination.

Coordination suffered in some cases because organizations were looking for guidance from headquarters in Kabul or outside the country, which took time (Interview 100).

Military officers working at the operational/tactical level encountered similar problems in this period. In February 2002, the military established its CJCMOTF to "support civil affairs missions directed by US Central Command in an effort to help Afghanistan with rebuilding efforts" (GlobalSecurity.org 2009).⁷⁴

⁷⁴ The Civil Affairs Teams at the Forward Operating Bases reported to the CJCMOTF, which fell under CJTF-180. CJTF-180 was commanded by McNeill at Bagram, but was located at Camp Eggers (Interview 100).

The CJCMOTF controlled Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) funds to use in aid and development projects. To get access to this money, however, the small Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alpha (ODA) teams deployed to the field had to submit proposals to the CJCMOTF. A USAID official described the problems the lack of empowerment caused.

It was a laborious, long process...They never knew if a project would get funded...This jeopardized their relations on the ground, because they raised expectations without being sure they could deliver. The people in Kabul had no sense of the responsibilities or needs at the field level (Interview 118).

While the immediate problem discussed above was that lack of empowerment impeded decision making, it is reasonable to conclude that the constraints on decision making undermined coordination.

The experience of both USAID and the military at the operational/tactical level suggests that the definition of empowerment provided in Chapter Three should be expanded to include access to resources, in addition to formal decision-making authority.

The empowerment of the civilian and military leadership on the ground enabled them to achieve some limited results, even in the context of other impediments to coordination. Meanwhile, the lack of empowerment of civilians and military at the operational/tactical level impeded coordination.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

Accountability and incentives were not raised explicitly in the interviews from this period. Nevertheless, the focus on achieving agency-defined objectives meant that if military or civilians were held accountable, it was for delivering on their own agency objectives, not government-wide goals. The impacts on other agencies' work or the broader system generally did not factor into decision making.

This was particularly evident in the context of counterterrorism operations. Special Operations Forces often pursued their counterterrorism objectives in ways that undermined concurrent diplomatic and development activities. Civilian officials in this and subsequent periods emphasized the diplomatic fallout associated with Special Operations and the associated negative impacts on US diplomatic and development objectives (Interview 88).

There were few incentives to stretch one's own resources or capacities to help other agencies achieve their objectives. Finn highlighted USAID's reluctance in this period to build a road from Kabul to Kandahar (Finn 2009).⁷⁵ A senior DoS official in Washington explained:

Bob Finn said, "We need to build infrastructure, give people a sense that things are different." That's where the ring road effort

⁷⁵ According to Finn: "Karzai wanted it [the Kabul to Kandahar Road]. I started pushing for this as visiting professor at Princeton, before I went to Kabul. I said ...we should do something visible...[for the Afghans]. They [USAID] said, 'We don't do roads anymore.' I said, 'You should do the road, that's what the Afghans want'" (Finn 2009).

came from. We went to USAID. Their answer was “We do programs – health systems, educational systems, not infrastructure,” because annual programs capture congressional resources. In 2003, there was a lot of resistance to building the ring road. Ultimately, the ring road was built. [Deputy Secretary of State Richard] Armitage would call [USAID Administrator Andrew] Natsios and say, “Give me the \$%* road”...We had to push USAID to do something outside their existing mindset” (Interview 30).

USAID’s narrow interpretation of its role was not limited to road construction. Finn described early reluctance on the part of USAID to train Afghan civil servants.

I was trying to get USAID to train civil servants, but...USAID was focused on building schools, not training Afghans how to manage the system to build the school...They said they couldn’t do both...USAID said, “We don’t do physical construction, we do long-term projects like irrigation”...But long-term didn’t mean training bureaucrats. Over time this mindset evolved (Finn 2009).

The lack of agreed goals and strategy thus created a situation in which the accountability and incentive systems within agencies worked against coordinated results. This dynamic was by no means limited to USAID. As discussed in the next chapter, similar problems plagued DoS and DoD.⁷⁶

TRANSACTION COSTS (POINTS OF CONTACT; CO-LOCATION)

The high transaction costs associated with civil-military communication impeded coordination. An important aspect of this was physical separation. The military command was located at Bagram

⁷⁶ Concrete examples were cited in interviews from the next period and thus are discussed in the chapter that follows.

Airfield, while civilians were based at the embassy. The separation increased the transaction costs, especially travel time, necessary for face-to-face communication. A senior official explained:

[It required a] helicopter to get to and from Bagram. Under General Vines...General zooms into Kabul, makes a couple of announcements...ineffective coordination within fences at Bagram, never talking to any Afghans, coming up with a lot of plans that were not well-integrated with US civilians, internationals, UN, Afghans (Interview 56).

Finn, reflecting on the decision Lieutenant General David Barno would make in 2003 to co-locate with Ambassador Khalilzad at the embassy, offered a similar assessment: “When I was there, the military command was at Bagram, and there wasn’t that much coordination. They changed that afterwards, as they should” (Finn 2009).

The complexity of the military command structure on the ground also increased the transaction costs associated with communication. Civilians often had difficulty determining with whom they should interface. Crocker explained:

I arrived with the awareness that a close link to the US military would be essential. I have that as part of my own background...I arrived in Afghanistan with that mindset and found a very confusing picture. I couldn’t identify the military command structures on our side on the ground. Special Forces was split, with Northern Afghanistan being run from Special Forces Command in Uzbekistan by an Army Colonel, and Southern Afghanistan in the hands of a Navy Seal Rear Admiral [and being run] from Kandahar... so on my first day or so, I got on the phone to the lieutenant general in Kuwait commanding the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC)...who had been my OMC-A [Office of Military Coordination - Afghanistan] chief when I was ambassador in Kuwait and was my friend. I said: “How are you organized? I need a single point of contact.” He assigned an

0-7 [Army rank of brigadier general] to the Embassy, and coordination improved considerably after that (Crocker 2009).

Crocker was able to resolve the immediate problem by requesting designation of a single point of contact. However, this was a workaround rather than a long-term solution. The complex and ever-changing military structure on the ground would continue to complicate coordination efforts in subsequent periods.

In a relatively stable situation with abundant resources, the transaction costs described above could be absorbed relatively easily. In Afghanistan, however, people were operating under extremely trying conditions. Finn described the chaos at the embassy when he arrived in March 2002.

I arrive at the embassy, where several hundred people are sleeping in corridors, meeting in the same room where people are sleeping at the same time. There were lots of Marines at the embassy...bunker in the backyard...people cooked in pots on the staircase, ate on people's beds...the number of civilians...kept increasing...as many people as we could sleep. When we got more beds, people were waiting to come...so much was going on, so many people coming and going...(Finn 2009).

Given high transaction costs associated with communication and limited resources, both military and civilians often had to choose between moving forward with immediate organizational imperatives and taking the time to coordinate. A senior USAID official, discussing the broader multi-stakeholder coordination in Afghanistan, explained:

Early on, all the various organizations were arriving, setting up offices in Kabul, so always this flurry of activity regarding setting

up their own offices, doing assessments, getting programs up and running so they would not be there for years before they started showing results...so, there were tensions between these two efforts...coordination was always a challenge at that early start-up phase (Interview 100).

There were several steps taken to reduce transaction costs. While CJTF-180 was located at Bagram, Karl Eikenberry, then Chief of the Office of Military Coordination (OMC-A), was co-located at the embassy with Ambassador William (Bill) Taylor, the coordinator of international and US assistance to Afghanistan.⁷⁷ The decision to co-locate a senior military officer and senior diplomat at the embassy was deliberate. Taylor explained:

Karl and I were able to work well together. We came over as kind of a team, which was intended. I had to be interviewed by DoD, and he by [DoS] to get approved, which was unusual...[Secretary of State] Colin Powell and Armitage chose me, and Rumsfeld and [Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul] Wolfowitz chose Eikenberry, and then each had to be approved by the other. The idea was to go out as kind of a pair... Karl Eikenberry and I, and Kurt Amend under Ambassador Robert Finn...would get together daily to report, discuss, identify problems, figure out solutions, go off and do our things... (Taylor 2009).

According to Finn, Eikenberry's presence at the embassy enabled military and civilians to work closely in the development of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

General Eikenberry was...the head of the military group in the embassy...He was in charge of negotiations with the Ministry of Defense...We met and discussed a lot as he was doing it. We talked a lot about strategies, since he was in the embassy...In setting up the ANA, civilians and military worked closely (Finn 2009).

⁷⁷ Taylor served in this position from fall 2002 to summer 2003.

Another DoS official affirmed the importance of having Eikenberry and by extension OMC-A co-located at the embassy, arguing that it facilitated civil-military coordination relative to the Afghan National Police.

Thus, high transaction costs constrained information sharing and joint analysis and planning. The steps taken to reduce transaction costs, including co-location of a small number of civilians and military at the embassy and the designation of single points of contact within agencies, facilitated information sharing and joint analysis and planning. Co-location was partially captured in the hypotheses by transaction costs. It also can be understood as a structural alternative to periodic or *ad hoc* convening, and thus as one pole on a spectrum of convening.

CONVENING

Early efforts to convene military and civilians on a regular basis contributed to information sharing and joint analysis, if not planning. One of the principle convening mechanisms was the CJCMOTF.⁷⁸ A USAID officer highlighted the importance of the convening.

There were...a number of daily and weekly meetings that happened at both the Embassy and CJCMOTF...because we had a working relationship, we were included in the meetings...Because of the value to them [of role USAID played with respect to] coordination with the UN, other donors, and NGOs, the CJCMOTF made sure to include USAID in those meetings. So, there was a project effect, and also a meetings and network effect, and larger

⁷⁸ As with many convening processes, the CJCMOTF included both US and other stakeholders.

questions of donor and NGO and organizational coordination that happened because of the military and USAID forces (Interview 100).

Another USAID official affirmed the importance of convening while offering a different perspective on the CJCMOTF itself.⁷⁹

When Afghanistan was discovered, coordination became a nightmare. Before that, there was a sense that we were all working towards the same goal. The early CJCMOTFs had small pots of money. They had established relationships...We were able to ascertain the value of working together. It was a small, manageable...group. With the explosion of people, ...money...different goals, coordination became almost laughable...[As people rotated out and in] someone new...would get inserted, then coordination broke down. Many of us stopped going [to official coordination meetings] and started these small *sub rosa* coordination groups (Interview 73).

The above quote points to the importance of two aspects of convening that, while supported by the multi-stakeholder negotiation literature, were not addressed in Chapter Three: the size of the group convened and the consistency of organizational representation. This suggests the value of further research on how joint processes can be designed to maximize their contributions to coordinated results.

INFORMATION SHARING

Lack of information sharing contributed to coordination failures, especially negative interactive effects of counterterrorism operations on diplomatic and reconstruction activities. The military usually did not share

⁷⁹ Several other interviewees argued that coordination in the weeks immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001 was relatively strong, but that it broke down as more agencies and resources flowed into Afghanistan (Interviews 26, 73).

advance information about special operations, even with the most senior civilian leadership. Since the operations were taking place alongside reconstruction activities, the lack of information sharing caused coordination failures. A senior civilian official explained:

The one thing that continued to be a problem was Special Forces Operations. None of us knew in many cases what they were doing until an operation had already taken place. There was one really bad issue where Special Forces killed the wrong guys, and [the ambassador] had to explain that all to Karzai without even having known such an operation would take place (Interview 88).

Another senior civilian official confirmed this account:

We didn't know what they [US Special Forces] were doing...they bombed a wedding party, we heard about it way after the fact. If we had heard after the fact more quickly, we could have helped mitigate the effects... Things like that happen all the time... always better to hear sooner, so you can get out in front of it and minimize the negative effects (Interview 85).

Thus, lack of information caused negative interactive effects. This suggests that information sharing is necessary not only for higher-order coordinated results (i.e., complementarity and synergy), but also for the most basic coordinated results – avoidance of negative interactive effects.

JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

While there were regular meetings of civilians and military both at the embassy and in the field and some joint analysis, there was not rigorous joint planning. The CJCMOTF focused largely on collecting information and coordinating the allocation of the OHDACA funds. One interviewee explained: “They were attempting to get visibility on what

everyone was doing everywhere” (Interview 118). Another highlighted the lack of integrated planning.

Coordination at the CJCMOTF was of the simplest kind. It in no way approached synchronized or integrated; there was no integrated planning for a province (Interview 100).

Nevertheless, a decision was made in the CJCMOTF that OHDACA funds would not be allocated to Special Forces teams without USAID’s assent. This can be understood as a form of rudimentary joint analysis and decision making, if not joint planning.

According to one USAID official, this enabled the military and USAID to eliminate duplication and avoid negative interactions – two indicators of coordinated results.

In 2002 and 2003, we had coordinated results because the CJCMOTF made a decision that there would be no OHDACA-funded projects without USAID approval. So this was a real example of [coordinated results]...millions of dollars the military was spending on their reconstruction projects... the commander asked USAID to review those projects. We could weed out where there were problems, duplications, negative effects, where their projects would undermine our projects...a clear, defined effect of coordination between the CJCMOTF and USAID at that time (Interview 100).

This suggests that consultation and joint analysis about specific funding decisions and activities may make possible some limited coordinated results, including avoidance of negative interactive effects and increased efficiency, even in the absence of joint planning.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

There were no data in the interviews from this period about facilitative leadership. This does not necessarily indicate that it was unimportant. Facilitative leadership was included in the hypotheses primarily because of its importance for joint process, which was limited in this period. Further investigation will be necessary to determine the salience of facilitative leadership.

LEARNING

There was evidence of increased mutual understanding, especially between USAID and the military. This led to enhanced relationships. To capture these changes, it is necessary to describe the state of the relationship early in this period. At that time, many USAID staff expressed ambivalence about, if not outright opposition to, coordination with the military. A USAID official who worked to overcome early objections to coordination explained:

There was enormous disinterest and lack of support [within USAID] in working with military forces in Afghanistan...there was a lot of blowback about my wanting to coordinate USAID field projects with the military teams out there, mostly Special Forces and Civil Affairs, who were doing their small projects (Interview 100).

The military appear to have been more willing to engage with their civilian counterparts. According to a USAID official:

In the early days, 2002 and 2003, there was a military willingness to coordinate with USAID...I found with the Special Forces and active duty Civil Affairs, they welcomed me to their fire

bases...They were interested that there was another US government effort with money in the field, looking at reconstruction programs...so there was a willingness on their part to work together...But there were some other problems – fire bases sometimes not publicized with respect to location, and early in 2002 the reluctance of the military to be too noticed in some communities, so there was a challenge of having a USAID person living with the Special Forces, and sometimes with the CIA too, when other things were going on (Interview 100).

However, the military's interest in working with USAID was not necessarily based on understanding of or respect for USAID's development expertise. Rather, the military's initial motivation for coordinating was that USAID controlled substantial financial resources. A senior diplomat explained: "AID had the resources, the dollars, at that time. The military didn't have development dollars" (Interview 3).

As they engaged with USAID in the field, the military's understanding of and respect for USAID development expertise increased.⁸⁰ In 2002, for example, a representative of USAID went to Kandahar to work with the civil-military liaison team there on reconstruction of the local hospital. There had been a fire involving the US military, and the post-operative ward had been severely damaged. The military expected USAID to come in with the money and then to step aside. A USAID official explained:

The civil affairs unit had lined up a meeting for [USAID] with the governor. They wanted [USAID] to give the governor the money and have him do the repairs. [The USAID officer] said, "It can't

⁸⁰ While there were no specific examples of a parallel shift in USAID attitudes and understandings in the interviews from this period, it is clear from the interviews in subsequent periods that such a shift did occur.

work this way...I can't just give the cash." [USAID] wanted to do a tendering process to select a local contractor...the military was confused by this, didn't understand the necessity, saw it as a bureaucratic step, but they conceded because it was our money (Interview 118).

In the end, they achieved coordinated results. The military identified the problem; USAID used military resources, flew in military aircraft, and worked out of the military's office; and the military translated the tender and distributed it to contractors, brought the contractors in for interviews, and provided other logistical support. The experience also fostered learning. According to the USAID official:

The military said this had been an important learning process. Several of the contractors who bid said this was the first time they had competed on a level playing field and commented that this had been a fair and transparent process. This impressed the military civil affairs units. Their efforts were about building relationships and trust with the community, and all they had done thus far was interface with the governor. The military assumed that if they supported the leader, they would have support from the people. This was a way to get closer, have relationships with parts of the community (Interview 118).

This was one example of an ongoing process of mutual learning and strengthened relationships between USAID and the operational military that would continue in subsequent periods. The learning, in turn, fed back into other factors necessary for coordinated results. As indicated earlier, USAID was included in the meetings convened by the CJCMOTF because of the increased recognition of the value they brought to the table. Likewise, the decision by the CJCMOTF to require USAID approval before signing off on the use of OHDACA funds by their ODA teams reflected growing recognition of civilian expertise.

Beyond increased understanding on the part of the military of the importance of incorporating USAID expertise into decision making, there was learning about the benefits of co-location. In January 2002, Crocker, USAID Mission Director Jim Kunder, and a small team from the embassy visited Special Forces unit in Bamian. As Crocker explained, they quickly saw the value of USAID representation.

I visited a Special Forces unit in Bamian in January 2002 with a team from the Embassy, and we were hugely impressed with what this small A-Team was doing in terms of assistance...all sorts of small projects. There were no kinetic operations there, so all of the efforts went into reconstruction and social projects. Their one concern was that they didn't have the expertise to take full advantage of the opportunity. They were soldiers, not nation builders. USAID Mission Director Jim Kunder and I looked at each other and said simultaneously: "How would you like some USAID officers?" We sent them USAID officers...people already at the embassy...(Crocker 2009).

In parallel, McNeill and Taylor were discussing the prospect of co-located joint civil-military teams.

General McNeill and Ambassador Bill Taylor were both going in and out of Afghanistan...it became clear to them by the summer of 2002 that this was a different environment and that we had to create some kind of integrated civil-military teams...General McNeill had proposed the concept of Joint Regional Teams, involving both civilians and the military, floating a balloon to see how UNAMA, the NGOs, and the civilian agencies would respond...(Interview 100).

These and other discussions in Kabul and Washington led to the development of what one interviewee described as "proto PRTs

[Provincial Reconstruction Teams]” (Interview 88).⁸¹ These early co-located units generally did not achieve coordinated results. According to a DoD official:

PRTs were an example of poor coordination between 2001 and 2003...Very stovepiped. [DoS] and [US]AID [were] not integrated with DoD in the PRTs...They were still seen as guests of the PRT (Interview 19).

Nevertheless, the foundations were laid for what would become the principal structure for civil-military coordination at the operational/tactical level in Afghanistan. Thus, learning, including enhanced mutual understanding and increased awareness of the factors that affect coordination, fed into changes in other variables. Those changes, in turn, would enhance coordination in future periods.

OTHER FACTORS AND EXPLANATIONS

RESOURCES AND RESOURCE BALANCE

The data from this period show that at least one explanatory variable was missing from those identified in Chapter Three: resource balance. Lack of civilian resources and associated resource imbalances on

⁸¹ By early 2002, there were small Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells (CHLC) in the field, engaging in aid and reconstruction projects. However, they did not yet have civilians co-located with them. In fall 2002, the State Department started putting diplomats with the CHLCs, first in Herat, then in Mazar-e-Sharif (Interview 62). In early 2003, the first PRT was established. By fall 2003, when leadership for US civil and military efforts would transition to Ambassador Khalilzad and Lieutenant General David Barno, there were four PRTs in total – two US PRTs, one British PRT, and one PRT under the leadership of New Zealand.

the ground undermined coordination. As explained in the preface to the case study, resource balance is related to but distinct from the access to resources that is an important aspect of *de facto* empowerment. The former is about relative power and influence across organizations, whereas the latter is about access to available resources within organizations.

As indicated earlier, civilian resources were limited both in absolute terms and in comparison with military resources.⁸² Finn explained:

When I arrived, DC doubled the assistance dollars, but that was still much less than what we needed. From the time I asked for the money, there was a long delay in getting it. Ambassador Khalilzad, not I, got to spend the money I requested (Finn 2009).

The problem was not only one of funding, but also of human resources. At the embassy, there were very few civilians to cover all of the necessary substantive and administrative functions of the embassy. Civilians were also outranked by the military. A US diplomat who served at the embassy during this period explained how this undermined communication.

We were very small, considering the issues and challenges...The military is very conscious of rank. I was the equivalent of a full Colonel, but I was dealing with two-star generals...For the most part, their responses were good, but they didn't always return my calls (Interview 44).

⁸² The US military during this period was also stretched very thin, relative to the challenges faced. Nevertheless, there was a significant imbalance between military and civilian resources.

The imbalance was more acute at the PRTs, where civilians were outnumbered and outranked by their military counterparts. A senior military officer highlighted the disparity.

Our [brigade] had 4,000 soldiers, 9 PRTs, 3-4 battalions, and maybe six State Department reps. [The imbalance of personnel] really limits their [civilians'] influence...They were supposed to shape the political landscape, good governance, etc. (Interview 114).

The situation on the ground mirrored the profound power disparity in Washington, where DoD dominated decision making. A senior DoS official reflected:

In Afghanistan in the early years, Rumsfeld was running the show. I reported back to the State Department...but the fact was that all decisions were coming out of the NSC, and Rumsfeld was the one running the show (Interview 85).

A senior DoD official offered a parallel assessment.

We were not decision makers. We didn't make policy. There was no one in Rumsfeld's office who made policy except Rumsfeld. We thought of ourselves as advisors to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, rather than as policy makers (Interview 34).

Thus, resource imbalances and associated power disparities on the ground, a direct reflection of power disparities at the policy/strategic level, impeded coordination.

INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES OF LEADERS

One additional explanation for coordinated results emerged in the interviews: the impact of individual leaders' vision and commitment on coordination. This came up most pointedly in the interview with Crocker.

When asked what the most significant factors are that explain coordinated results, he replied:

For the senior civilian official and senior military commander in a given area of operations to have a common vision and to be committed to the closest possible coordination is critical. That doesn't go by any books. It's what the respective commander's intent is and how it is seen by their subordinates that makes all the difference...If you've got unity of effort, then you can get all the rest...Without that, it doesn't matter how carefully crafted the procedures and guidelines of the two commanders are (Crocker 2009).

However, Crocker did not limit his explanation to individual leadership. Rather, he emphasized the practical necessity of joint analysis and planning.

From a field perspective, it's all pretty basic: Assess the situation; figure out jointly what you want to do about it, what your intended outcomes are, and then figure out who's going to do what (Crocker 2009).

Thus, even in the interview that argued most strongly for the effects of individual attitudes on coordination, there was explicit recognition of the importance of joint process. This is consistent with the argument made in Chapter Three that, while individual attitudes and relationships matter, they are affected by and exercise their effects largely through organizational and process variables.

CONCLUSION

The analysis above shows that the absence of factors hypothesized to be necessary for coordinated results – especially agreement on goals and strategy, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning –

undermined coordination. They show that the presence of other factors hypothesized to be necessary, including empowerment and convening, played important roles in the coordinated results achieved. They lend support to the hypothesis that learning both emerges from and feeds back into other variables. Moreover, they suggest that resources, both in absolute and relative terms, should be added to the other variables hypothesized to explain coordinated results.

CHAPTER SIX:

CO-LOCATION (FALL 2003–SUMMER 2005)

The sea change was the shift from Bob Finn, who didn't have enough people or resources or a comprehensive pol-mil plan and was doing business as he had been trained to do in a conventional embassy. The sea change came with [Ambassador] Zal [Khalilzad] and [Lieutenant General] Dave Barno.

Confidential Interview 44

US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan entered a new phase in late 2003, under the leadership of Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and Lieutenant General David Barno. Barno arrived in Afghanistan in October 2003, followed approximately six weeks later by Khalilzad. Together, they instituted a number of changes intended to enhance coordination.

Before turning to an analysis of those changes and their impacts on coordination, it is necessary to summarize developments in Washington that set the stage for what was happening on the ground. By 2002, the Bush administration and Congress had become increasingly concerned about the lack of progress with respect to development in Afghanistan. In 2002, Congress passed the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, which urged the President to designate a DoS coordinator to develop a

government-wide strategy for US efforts in Afghanistan and ensure coordination in its implementation (US Congress 2002).⁸³

In May 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced the end of major combat operations and stated his intention for the military to begin reconstruction, in addition to maintaining stability – a significant departure from his prior stance. In late 2003, General John Abizaid, who had succeeded General Franks as commander of US Central Command (USCENTCOM), stood up a new command in Kabul, Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (CFC-A) and appointed Barno to lead it.⁸⁴ Its purpose was to facilitate coordination with other US agencies and international partners and serve as a higher headquarters for Combined Joint Task Force-180 (CJTF-180).

In September 2003, “Accelerating Success in Afghanistan” was formally announced as a joint interagency plan, with an additional \$1.76

⁸³ In 2003, the Office of Afghanistan Reconstruction was renamed the Office for Afghanistan, given responsibility for the coordination functions recommended in the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, and placed under the leadership of an ambassadorial-level Coordinator for Afghanistan (General Accounting Office [GAO] 2004).

⁸⁴ The new command was initially called Combined Forces Command – Central Asia. During a preliminary visit to Afghanistan in October 2003, however, Barno quickly realized the extent of the political challenges and the associated need for the command to focus intensively on Afghanistan. Abizaid agreed, and the command was renamed Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (CFC-A). Barno was promoted to Lieutenant General and formally assumed command of CFC-A in November.

billion allocated for reconstruction projects in fiscal year 2004.⁸⁵ This was more than twice the amount spent by all US departments and agencies on reconstruction in fiscal years 2002 and 2003 combined (GAO 2004). Thus, when Khalilzad and Barno began their joint efforts, they had an interagency plan, reflecting increasing recognition in Washington of the need for civil-military coordination. They also had significantly expanded resources with which to implement the plan.

Following is a content analysis of the interview data about this period.⁸⁶ Consistent with the hypotheses, it will show that increased agreement on goals and strategy, both at the policy/strategic level and on the part of the senior leadership on the ground, was a key factor explaining the coordinated results achieved. Empowerment also was important, with high levels of empowerment, especially on the part of the senior leadership on the ground, directly associated with enhanced coordinated results. Joint analysis and planning generated agreement and fostered learning.

Resource disparities again proved to have negative effects on coordination, as did broader power disparities. Finally, co-location emerged as an increasingly important factor, facilitating information

⁸⁵ In response to the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act, the President had issued a preliminary strategy in February 2003, but it was broad and lacked operational details, including timetables and measurable goals (GAO 2004).

⁸⁶ The same caveat made in prior chapters applies here: US efforts within Afghanistan took place within broader multinational efforts, and the analysis of US interagency coordination captures only part of a much more complex set of dynamics.

sharing and joint planning, fostering learning, and serving as a symbol of the growing commitment to civil-military coordination.

COORDINATED RESULTS⁸⁷

The data indicate that coordinated results increased in this period. However, the overall record in terms of coordinated results was mixed. Abizaid, who served as Commander of US Central Command from 2003 to 2007, acknowledged the significant efforts of Khalilzad and Barno but nevertheless described coordinated results as “intermittent.”

During my tenure as theater commander [2003–2007], interagency coordination, cooperation was poor, at best. Intermittent would be the way I would describe the interagency coordination that did take place, and infrequently it would result in concrete results on the ground...the Barno-Khalilzad relationship was the strongest ...Unity of effort even then wasn't achieved...(Abizaid 2009).

The most frequently and consistently cited example of coordinated results was the 2004 presidential elections. While the elections were run by the UN and involved many nations and organizations, the US played an important role.⁸⁸ According to a senior military officer directly involved with the elections:

⁸⁷ As explained earlier, the analysis identifies and explains coordinated results among the US Department of Defense (DoD) and DoS and US Agency for International Development (USAID), recognizing that US efforts took place within a broader multinational context. The coordinated results most frequently and consistently cited were those with national ramifications, but there also were many cases of coordinated results at the tactical level. Because coordinated results often spanned time periods, their inclusion in a given period does not necessarily imply completion.

⁸⁸ In June 2002, an emergency *loya jirga* confirmed Hamid Karzai as Interim President. In October 2002, the Constitutional Commission drafted a permanent

The biggest example [of coordinated results in this period] without a doubt was the 2004 presidential elections. The level of cooperation among military forces, the UN, leveraging PRTs [Provincial Reconstruction Teams], using the expertise of State Department representatives, pulling in all the training and recruiting of local security forces was just amazing (Interview 114).

The elections were an example of complementary coordinated results. In preparing for and executing the elections, the US military played a critical support role, complementing what civilians from the US and beyond brought to the table.⁸⁹ The military assisted with planning, including rehearsal exercises; transported ballot boxes and other equipment, as needed, to supplement civilian transportation systems; set up communications infrastructure; and provided a security perimeter on election day.⁹⁰ USAID contributed expertise and financing, serving as a “personnel shop” and hiring experts to fill key roles throughout the preparation and conducting of the elections (Interview 59). The complementary coordinated results on the US side contributed to broader multinational coordination.

A DoS official, speaking in 2009, called the elections “the best example I’ve ever seen of coordination” (Interview 16). The coordinated

constitution; selected delegates for a second, constitutional *loya jirga*; and approved the constitution with minor changes. Presidential elections were held on October 9, 2004. Karzai was declared President on December 7, 2004.

⁸⁹ As with many other efforts, US support for the elections took place within broader multinational efforts in which the Government of Afghanistan and United Nations played the most important roles.

⁹⁰ According to a senior military officer, “Our security role was very minimal, providing outer security and response forces in case needed... We [also] were doing low over-flight passes of aircraft to show force in advance, one or two weeks” (Interview 114).

results involving US agencies contributed to the effectiveness of the overall multinational effort to prepare for and conduct the elections. Eight-and-a-half million Afghans voted in a process that, while imperfect, was widely hailed as a success in terms of security, logistics, and legitimacy.

The elections also can also be understood as an example of synergistic coordinated results. Dr. Marin Strmecki, who served as a high-level advisor to DoD during this period, emphasized the ways in which multiple lines of effort added up synergistically to create a context conducive to successful elections.

The micro level [coordinated result] was the coordination of US activities, the Afghan government, and the UN and the international community...It resulted in an election that went off well. The macro level was the 18-month effort before the election that was designed to create the best possible political conditions for the elections – which would ensure that Afghans could make a free and fair choice and that they saw the choice of a modernizing/moderate Afghanistan as possible and probable through cooperation with the US and international community. The coordinated actions to create such conditions included, among others, the demobilization of formal militias, the build-up of national institutions, the completion of key milestones in the Bonn process...the bolstering of economic development...All of these efforts entailed coordinated action (Strmecki 2009).

Road construction was another frequently cited example of coordinated results, although the overall record on road construction was mixed. There were numerous examples of complementarity. In some cases civilian and military funding sources were combined to pay for roads. In other cases, civilian contractors engaged in construction, while the military supplemented the security provided by civilian contractors.

Military and civilians also assumed responsibility for different aspects of the same construction project. In building some roads, for example, the military put down a gravel road, and USAID then paved it. This division of labor was often motivated by the need to leverage different funding authorities (and deal with associated restrictions). A USAID official explained:

Their [the military's] restriction was that they could only grade roads. They were supposed to do quick and dirty projects, whereas USAID could do paving, culverts, all of that. Many times, they would start the road with grading in sensitive areas, and we would come after them after the security was a bit better...(Interview 1)

In Nangahar Province, the roles were reversed. The military helped pave a road where the USAID contractor, Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), had put down gravel, in an effort “to do low-tech, high-labor road work to give jobs, improve secondary roads” (Interview 105).

In spite of the complementarity achieved in many aspects of road construction, there were ongoing problems. One of the most significant was the lack of security on the roads, which undermined their usefulness and thus their strategic impact. A senior DoS official explained:

Once built, roads become targets...[for illegal] road blocks, tolls. Our focus...was get the roads built to achieve the economic benefits associated with roads. There were no thoughts about security for the roads, no security plan...This left protection of the roads and people on the roads up to local security forces. The result was rent seeking, which degraded the economic benefits for the population...Roads became an economic benefit for...the Taliban (Interview 56).

Security problems also plagued the Kabul-Kandahar Highway. Thus, while many cited it as an example of coordinated results, at least one interviewee called it a coordination failure.

The Kabul-Kandahar highway was 480 kilometers long. In 2002, it took 27 hours by car. After it was rebuilt in 2003 and 2004, [the driving time was reduced to] 5 hours. A very comfortable ride, but because of insecurity, many people can't use it (Interview 27).

Road construction also often came at the expense of longer-term capacity building. As one official noted: "The imperative was to build roads quickly, rather than getting the Government of Afghanistan, Afghan engineers, Afghan companies involved" (Interview 56). This can be understood as a broader coordination failure, in that road construction activities undermined parallel efforts to build local capacity.

Another frequently cited example of coordinated results involved what Barno referred to as "controlled confrontations" with warlords (Koontz 2008, 20). In these efforts, the military employed "sticks" (or the threat of "sticks"), complementing DoS' diplomatic efforts. One frequently cited example involved efforts to defuse a conflict in Herat and remove Ismail Khan, a powerful warlord, from power. In August 2004, fighting erupted in Herat between Khan's forces and those of Amanullah Khan, one of his main rivals. Khalilzad worked the diplomatic negotiations while Barno deployed military assets to Herat in a tightly synchronized civil-military operation. Colonel David Lamm, Barno's chief of staff, described the complementarity.

It was a wonderful interagency operation. The ambassador is talking to Khan: “Could you take a position in Kabul?” “No, I’m going to stay here and make trouble”...Then he [Khan] woke up one morning, and we had deployed, very, very smoothly, fifteen thousand Afghan National Army soldiers and Afghan National Police out to Herat (Koontz 2008, 138).

The coordinated results had immediate impacts on the ground. In the example above, for example, the conflict was defused, Khan was removed from power, and the heavy weapons and tanks were seized (Koontz 2008, 138–9). According to Khalilzad: “We managed to stop the burning of Herat...a potential huge catastrophe for Afghanistan” (Khalilzad 2009). Barno highlighted the broader accomplishment and its relevance to the 2004 presidential elections.

By the time I left in May of ’05...the heavy weapons had been removed from all warlords across the entire country and cantoned and put under the control of the Afghan National Army and Afghan government through a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process there. By then, also, some of the most prominent warlords in the country had been removed from power or had been morphed into being elected as members of the parliament...governors...ministers... (Koontz 2008, 21)

While technically outside the scope of the US interagency analysis, there was evidence of negative interactive effects (a coordination failure) between the “controlled confrontations” with warlords and the national disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) effort, which was led by Japan and the UN and in which the US military played no direct role. One interviewee described the “controlled confrontations” as political accommodations with potential spoilers that did nothing to advance, and in some ways undermined, the national program (Interview

118). In part, this reflected a lack of agreement and associated lack of coordination between those in the US government making high-level policy decisions and those working on DDR in the field.

Work on the policy level [referring to decisions about DDR and approaches to warlords made in Washington, DC, and by Khalilzad] undermined us in the field. We were trying to think carefully about unintended consequences. They said none of this matters, this is about balancing power politics. We...were concerned about mid-level commanders reorganizing, splinter groups...didn't want a Somalia process...DC was fixated on the macro power brokers, expected these guys to deliver the people beneath them (Interview 118).

Thus, as with road construction, coordinated results that made possible the achievement of specific outputs (in this case disarmament and demobilization of specific warlords) were nested within broader coordination failures. This supports the argument in Chapter Three that coordinated results in specific areas of activity must add up to coordinated results at the sectoral and broader systems levels to translate into effective peacebuilding.

Counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar Province also were frequently cited as an example of coordinated results. The Jalalabad PRT played a key role in US civil-military efforts in Nangahar, including counternarcotics efforts. While interviewees argued that Governor Agha Shirzai deserved much of the credit for the overall success of counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar, coordinated results on the US side were important contributing factors. Eric ("Rick") Olson, Commanding General of CJTF-76 from February 2004 to February 2005, cited the US

government's "coherent approach to Governor Shirzai" as a complementary coordinated result.

The best example [of coordinated results in this period] was...that we were able to make a very coherent approach to Governor Shirzai... (Olson 2009).

Olson emphasized, in particular, the expertise civilians brought to the table. Thus, the complementarity was not just about activities and resources, but also expertise.

Because we had good civilian input, it worked. The military guys didn't have a good understanding of the cultural dimensions, tribal dynamics, good governance, development programs, whereas the civilians did. We were able to put together a coherent program in Jalalabad that allowed us to do things that made sense from the standpoint of the Afghan people (Olson 2009).

The coordinated results, in turn, had important effects. According to one official: "We moved Nangahar from being one of the top producers of poppy to zero in a year with perfect rain for poppy crops" (Interview 6). Olson emphasized the fact that the US military and civilians were jointly able to deliver "good programs that made sense from a security and development perspective," and, as a result, "the locals were very cooperative when it came to operations against the Taliban" (Olson 2009).

The coordinated results discussed above were those most frequently and consistently cited by interviewees. Other examples of coordinated results, as well as coordination failures, are integrated into the analysis that follows.

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES (HYPOTHESIZED)

AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

The data from this period show that agreement on goals and strategy was necessary for coordinated results. Moreover, agreement was necessary at all levels of decision making. When there was disagreement at any level, coordination was undermined.

This period was characterized by higher levels of agreement at the policy/strategic level than had existed in the prior period, although significant differences remained. As indicated above, “Accelerating Success in Afghanistan” was formally announced as a government-wide plan in fall 2003. DoS subsequently published an associated Mission Performance Plan (MPP). For the first time since 2001, the US had a joint civil-military strategy that established government-wide goals, designated a division of labor among agencies, identified metrics with which to measure progress, and specified budgets for the various lines of effort (GAO 2004).⁹¹ Moreover, the plan reflected emerging agreement across the US government that DoD had a role to play in reconstruction in Afghanistan. Dobbins et al (2008) observed:

⁹¹ A US GAO study noted: “We found that most of the strategies that were published during fiscal years 2002–2003 lacked details on funding and other resources, measurable goals, timeframes, as well as a means to measure progress...we cite the State Department’s June 2003 Mission Performance Plan as meeting many of the requirements for a government-wide operational strategy” (GAO 2004).

This shift in strategy was nothing short of fundamental. The Pentagon accepted that it had to participate in achieving these political goals in addition to continuing its efforts to hunt terrorists. The interagency team in Kabul had a plan that was jointly developed, that would be jointly executed, and that finally called for measures to strengthen instead of undermine the Afghan central government (Dobbins et al 2008, 100).

The enhanced agreement in Washington was a critical factor in achieving all of the coordinated results cited above. In preparing for and supporting the 2004 presidential elections, agreement at the highest levels of policymaking was essential. A DoS official described the shared commitment to successful elections: “Unity of effort went all the way to the top. The President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the SecDef [Secretary of Defense] all agreed” (Interview 16).

Agreement also was necessary for coordinated results in road construction. While there was broad recognition of the importance of roads, there was significant disagreement early in this period about roles and responsibilities – a key aspect of strategy. When the decision was made to rebuild the Ring Road, for example, the two logical candidates to lead US construction efforts – USAID and the US Army Corps of Engineers – resisted taking this on. A senior official described their response:

There was strong resistance within the US government – the strongest from USAID...We had done, in the '80s and '90s, a makeover of USAID to be more community-based...develop small-scale projects, not highways and bridges. By '90s, small, community-based models won, and USAID lost its big infrastructure development capacity. When Karzai and Bush started talking about roads, USAID said it didn't have the capacity.

The idea was then raised that USACE [the US Army Corps of Engineers] could do the roads, but they said, “No, we don’t do that in war zones. That’s a development thing.” Then USAID replied, “We don’t do that. We do community-based development” (Interview 56).

A related disagreement emerged with respect to construction of the Kabul-Kandahar highway, a key segment of the Ring Road. To do the work effectively, USAID needed the military’s help with the aspects of security that USAID contractors were unable to provide. Rumsfeld, however, was unwilling to approve military support for road construction.

A senior military officer explained:

Because our initial orders were not to do nation building, we resisted providing security to road crews operating in no man’s land. When security didn’t exist, coordinated action didn’t take place. The ring road was an example where it worked relatively well...Rumsfeld had to be convinced...It was clear, as we built roads, security came behind it. So, the principle was if you want more security, build more roads (Interview 45).

The lack of a joint approach to road construction led to early coordination failures. As recognition of these coordination failures and their impact on overarching US goals increased mounted, however, a consensus began to emerge at the policy level on the need for an interagency approach to roads (Interview 40). A DoD official reflected on the importance of the growing consensus in Washington.

One year into the [Khalilzad-]Barno mission, there was a combined effort on road construction. It became a civil-military priority...There had been...lots of arguments about it...Then we saw USAID, [DoS], more at the embassy level than at Main State, and DoD...coming together, saying this was a priority, we don’t have the tools, let’s figure this out. What enabled this? It became a

priority of the senior-most leaders. It was on Hadley's, Rumsfeld's, and Bush's radar screens... (Interview 40)

There was parallel learning on the ground about the importance of a joint civil-military approach to road construction. A senior USAID official explained:

As road construction proceeded, we saw military guys beginning to stop at our places along the road [for rest, food]. Relationships started to form between our contractors...and the military. This started to positively reinforce the working relationship between the military and USAID...we each began to see the value of working with each other...we needed the military for security, and this road would benefit their work (Interview 95).

The growing commitment to road construction made possible a confidential agreement between the military and USAID that one official described as “unprecedented.” The military agreed to do “certain things that provided the [security] envelope, albeit imperfect, in which they [USAID] could function” (Interview 95). Thus, the increased understanding (learning) that emerged from recognition of coordination failures led to changes that, in turn, enhanced coordinated results.

The experience with counternarcotics also demonstrates the importance of agreement.⁹² As one official explained, counternarcotics policy was poorly coordinated: “Each agency had its own pot of money,

⁹² The UK was the designated lead for counternarcotics, per the division of labor agreed at the 2002 Tokyo Conference, but many US agencies were involved, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) at State, USAID, and the Department of Agriculture.

mandates were not well thought out...There was sparring in DC, turf battles, deep enmity” (Interview 102).

A major point of contention involved eradication of poppy crops, with some advocating for its importance and others strenuously objecting.⁹³ The lack of agreement regarding eradication caused serious coordination failures in which eradication activities undertaken by one part of the US government undermined concurrent US development efforts.

There also was disagreement about what role, if any, the military should play in counternarcotics. By late 2004, counternarcotics had become one of Bush’s priorities. However, Rumsfeld initially objected to any military role in those efforts.⁹⁴ A senior DoD official explained:

In 2004, DoD was not interested in the word “counternarcotics” being briefed in the building...[The attitude was]: “It’s not our responsibility, it’s [DoS]’s [responsibility]...Counternarcotics is not a military mission” (Interview 21).

As evidence of coordination failures in counternarcotics mounted, attitudes began to change. Officials in DoD, DoS, and USAID argued to

⁹³ A senior policy maker emphasized the significance of interagency conflict regarding aerial spraying: “The major fractures were not between agencies, but rather within agencies. At State, there were counternarcotics guys who wanted to spray, whereas diplomatic folks were saying that was a terrible idea...The counternarcotics group within OSD [the Office of the Secretary of Defense] was...supportive of aerial spraying. A number of folks within OSD...thought it was a terrible idea” (Interview 7).

⁹⁴ Interestingly, some at DoS agreed, arguing that counternarcotics were in essence, a DoS, not DoD, responsibility (Interview 21).

their superiors and to Hadley that an interagency approach was needed. A

DoD official explained:

In about the fall of 2005, arguments were being made to [National Security Advisor Steve] Hadley that if we ignore counternarcotics, it will undermine our efforts on what we have been treating as our more important problems, including warlordism. We were still dealing with competitors to the central government, and these warlords...were being funded by the narcotics trade. [DoS] also made the argument that we were trying to build central government institutions and being undermined by corruptive activity of people empowered by the narcotics business...[DoS] pushed hard for a comprehensive counternarcotics plan – eradication, alternative livelihoods, micro-financing for farmers, punitive measures, counternarcotics police, and laws...Some people were pushing this within DoD...trying to get Rumsfeld to see the importance of this (Interview 21).

Eventually, a consensus emerged among principals, including Rumsfeld, about the need for an interagency counternarcotics strategy, including a role for the military. This led to development of a five-pillar approach to counternarcotics involving enforcement, eradication, rule of law, strategic communications, and alternative livelihoods.⁹⁵ Thus, as with road construction, coordination failures led to learning which, in turn, led to joint analysis and planning, resulting in agreement on goals and strategy.

The counternarcotics strategy contributed to coordinated results in a way that was not anticipated in the hypotheses: It facilitated problem

⁹⁵ The five-pillar approach was developed and applied to counternarcotics efforts in this period. However, it was not until August 2007 that it was formally published as the “US Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan.” An interviewee explained, “It took until 2007 to get it out, approved, briefed to the deputies” (Interview 2).

solving with respect to funding. DoS' ability to implement the joint strategy was constrained by limited funding and restrictive funding authorities. DoD had greater resources and more flexible funding authorities. A DoD official explained how a senior official in OSD stepped in to help the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) at DoS:

The DAS [Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense] for counternarcotics...was results-driven...She said: "This isn't about who gets credit, but about getting results. We think at OSD Policy we can find a way within our resources to help out INL"...A big element of civil-military integration is the deep pockets of DoD, and the latitude...to move money around, as long as we are achieving the goals" (Interview 2).

The five-pillar approach, combined with joint problem solving with respect to resources, made possible coordinated implementation of US counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar Province. This, in turn, contributed to the dramatic reduction in poppy cultivation in that province.⁹⁶

The increasing agreement at the policy level was necessary, but not sufficient, for coordinated results. The high level of agreement between the senior leadership on the ground also played a significant role.

Early in their tenure, Khalilzad and Barno developed a shared understanding of the situation they faced in Afghanistan and agreed on

⁹⁶ Because of limited resources, the US targeted two provinces to focus on, one of which was Nangahar (Interview 6). While interviewees credited local Afghans, especially Governor Shirzai, with the dramatic reduction of poppy cultivation in Nangahar, they cited the coordination on the US side as a significant contributing factor.

goals and strategies for US efforts there. Khalilzad, who had served as Special Envoy before becoming US ambassador to Afghanistan, arrived in Kabul understanding that the US needed to approach its engagement in Afghanistan as a counterinsurgency campaign. Barno quickly came to the same conclusion. He explained: “We decided very early on that this wasn’t simply a counterterrorist environment. This was really a classic counterinsurgency campaign” (Koontz 2008, 18).⁹⁷ This was not solely a personal assessment; it also reflected the evolving agreement at the policy/strategic level.

Khalilzad and Barno also agreed on the need for enhanced civil-military coordination, a key tenet of counterinsurgency doctrine. This reflected learning from past experience. Barno recalled an exchange he witnessed during an early visit to Kabul before assuming command.

I remember going to a meeting between a senior US military official and a senior embassy official in which the military leader indicated he was going to brief the secretary of defense and President Karzai on our ground tactical plan, and the senior embassy official noted he’d be very interested in finding out what the heck our ground tactical plan was as well (Koontz 2008, 17).

Khalilzad raised the issue of civil-military coordination with Rumsfeld and got his commitment to support a higher level of integration (Khalilzad 2009).

⁹⁷ A State official described the attitude within the military in the prior period. “General Vines, in 2002, said, ‘There is no insurgency, and we won’t use the word *insurgency*’” (Interview 13).

Khalilzad and Barno also agreed on a high-level division for civilian and military efforts. In the words of several interviewees, Barno “subordinated” the military to civilian-led efforts” (Interviews 23, 31). Barno reflected on the supporting/supported relationship between the military and civilians respectively.

I never really thought about it this way when I was there, and I didn't ever articulate it this way when I was there – but the relationship between me, as the military commander, and the ambassador, as the chief of mission...probably is best described in military terms as a supporting-supported relationship. The ambassador as the chief of mission was the supported part of the relationship, and I was the supporting part of the relationship with the military. Now I'm sure some of the military guys would have seizures hearing that, but that is...how I understand what my role was...We had things, clearly, that we were doing that weren't directly related to what the ambassador was doing, but we were in many ways a supporting cast player to an overall, integrated embassy effort that we helped plan, enable, provide people to, and think through together with the ambassador (Koontz 2008, 83).

Barno explained that part of the rationale for this was the vast disparity of resources. He directed his staff to “put their arms around all elements of the effort – not to lead it, but to help enable all the various actors to be successful. We realized that the military had the lion's share of the available resources in people and dollars and that these resources needed to be employed across the full range of US government requirements to achieve policy success” (Barno 2011).

The supporting-supported division of labor contributed directly to coordinated results. The most striking example was the 2004 presidential elections. Barno took the significant step of designating the elections the

number one military priority and reoriented the campaign plan to support them. He explained:

The main effort I assigned in writing to our military organization, our military units, in 2004 was: “Set conditions for a successful Afghan presidential election.” That was the military main effort for 2004. All of our various undertakings were designed to serve that purpose for us” (Koontz 2008, 29).

The US military was deeply engaged in planning for and executing the security and logistics aspects of the elections outlined above. One of the civilians directly involved in the elections argued: “General Barno was instrumental. Once he took this on as [a] mission, the military stepped in and owned the security piece” (Interview 9). Another civilian official explained the impact of Barno’s decision at the operational/tactical level.

General Barno knew the difference between supporting and supported. He said, for the ramp-up to the elections, the military was in support of the civilian effort...he rewrote the campaign plan and said my main effort for the next six months will be supporting the elections. I printed this out and handed it to all of my elections guys. I said, “When you’re out in [the field] and the military guys say you can’t do something, refer them to this document”... (Interview 59).

Summing up the significance of Barno’s decision, the official continued:

The key driver of coordinated results in the elections was Barno’s decision to say in his command plan, “This is my main effort; we are supporting this.” The most highly sought, scarce resource the military had was air support, and we needed these assets... (Interview 59).

Khalilzad and Barno also agreed on other goals and strategies, as well, enabling them to work as a tightly integrated team. They jointly set a

goal of constructing one thousand kilometers of roads and decided where to focus road construction efforts. They also coordinated closely on the “controlled confrontations” with warlords that were cited as examples of coordinated results. A senior official described the complementarity: “They met every day on tactical execution issues, found ways to use military effects to solve political problems, and vice versa” (Interview 6).

The agreement between the senior leaders on the ground made possible integrated guidance to lower levels, cited by Olson as a key factor in achieving coordinated results.

We got coordinated pol-mil guidance. That coordinated guidance was a coordinated result...very clear guidance that made sense from both kinetic and non-kinetic vantage points...Barno’s staff and Zal’s staff were in sync... (Olson 2009).

The integrated guidance contributed to concrete coordinated results at the operational/tactical level. In response to diplomatic problems caused by US military pursuit of enemy targets across the Pakistani border, Khalilzad and Barno agreed on criteria for pursuit a short distance across the border. This contrasted with what Olson described as typical military guidance: “If those guys shoot at you, go get them...” Instead, he explained, they got integrated guidance that “made sense...certain conditions in which hot pursuit was okay” (Olson 2009).

In spite of the integrated guidance, there were stark differences in priorities and approaches at the operational/tactical level. A DoS official explained:

The real interagency process in Afghanistan was two levels – the embassy – CFC-A level...[and] in the field at the PRTs. Zal and Barno worked closely together. That was just the senior levels. As you went down from there, coordination between military and civilians faded quickly. There wasn't the strong commitment at the more junior levels. So, it broke down into agency stovepipes, with DoD reporting back to the Joint Staff and civilian agencies reporting back to the civilian side. The commitment to civil-military coordination faded as it went down...(Interview 17).

These differences were evident at the PRTs, where military and civilians often pursued different priorities. A USAID official explained: “The military thinks in terms of projects, thinks of assistance as charity. Civilians think about development, sustainability, local ownership” (Interview 188). A senior military officer echoed this view.

In almost every PRT, there is this friction that develops between the folks from USAID who want to go into the big projects, fix things for the long term, while the unit commanders are looking for things that can create conditions, that provide immediate results and show progress to the people immediately, so they can gain the confidence of the people (Interview 97).

The lack of agreement at the PRTs caused ongoing coordination failures, as documented later in the analysis.

Thus, agreement on goals and strategy was necessary at every level of decision making. When it was lacking at any level, coordination was undermined. While agreement at higher levels of decision making contributed to agreement at lower levels, there were limits to its trickle-down effects, especially at the operational/tactical level.

CO-LOCATION (TRANSACTION COSTS AND CONVENING)

The factor that was most frequently and consistently cited in interviews from this and other periods as contributing to coordinated results was co-location. Co-location occurred at multiple levels of decision making. At the strategic/operational level, the co-location of the senior military commander and ambassador at the US embassy in Kabul was a defining feature of US civil-military relations in this period. It was consistently cited in interviews from all four periods as having made a major contribution to coordinated results.

Shortly after arriving in Afghanistan, Barno moved his headquarters from Bagram Airfield, where his predecessors had been based, to the embassy.⁹⁸ He set up his office next to the Ambassador's and lived on the embassy compound. This virtually eliminated transaction costs associated with meeting in person. Barno explained:

I deliberately co-located myself at the US embassy compound. I lived on the compound in a half-trailer about fifty feet from the ambassador, who lived in a double-wide trailer. I had an office 20 feet from his office. I started my day there every day, and I finished my day there every night. I saw him in the morning at a country team meeting, which for a long time we did five days a week...So, I spent the first two hours or so of every day with the ambassador...I would not infrequently see him in the evenings, too (Koontz 2008, 23).

Khalilzad offered a parallel assessment.

⁹⁸ As discussed in the prior chapter, General McNeill, and subsequently General Vines, had been based at Bagram Airfield, just outside of Kabul. Given the security situation, in-person meetings between the ambassador and senior military commander took time and effort and were therefore limited.

With support from the President and SecDef [Secretary of Defense], we moved the Commander to our embassy, in the office next to mine...Barno was able to be part of the country team, to participate in the morning staff meeting. Being...so close facilitated more frequent interaction, not only by telephone. He lived on the embassy grounds. We saw each other on a regular basis, at meetings, at social events...at my residence...We made a commitment that what was important was the mission, that we were a single team (Khalilzad 2009).

The daily interaction between principals facilitated the development of an exceptionally strong working relationship. General Lloyd Austin (then Lieutenant General), who served as Commander of CJTF 180 from 2003 to 2004, reflected: “Barno and Khalilzad were...very close. They complemented each other. I’m not sure they could have worked better together” (Austin 2009). Co-location, of course, was not the only factor at work. The two men liked and respected each other from the beginning. Co-location, however, enabled them to build on that foundation to engage in joint analysis and problem solving on a daily basis. A senior military officer who served with them explained:

Co-location...was a physical manifestation of integrated machinery. It meant that they got on exceptionally well, were able to talk through issues. They didn’t always agree, but the bond was so strong that they could work through any [issues]...They had a common purpose. Co-location isn’t essential, but it bloody well helps (Interview 91).

Co-location at the embassy was not limited to the senior civilian and military leadership. Barno also detailed five planners to the embassy, and, as CFC-A grew, he detailed more officers.⁹⁹ According to Barno:

⁹⁹ The majority of CFC-A remained at Bagram.

By the time we left in May 2005, we had 12 to 15 officers in the embassy, beyond the standard complement...[This] gave a lot of capacity to the embassy and helped to integrate as a civ-mil effort...shared problems, helped solve them (Barno 2009).

The co-location of military planners at the embassy reduced transaction costs associated with information sharing and joint analysis and planning. It also facilitated the development of learning, especially mutual understanding, which translated into strong working relationships. A senior DoS official reflected: “Once they were co-located, that broke down intrinsic barriers” (Interview 56).

Beyond reducing transaction costs and facilitating learning, the co-location at the embassy had important symbolic effects. This was intentional. Barno explained:

[Co-location]...was a huge, powerful way to both ensure that our efforts were connected and mutually supporting but also that we sent the message that we had a single, unified US effort there between the chief of mission and the military operations (Koontz 2008, 23).

The interviews of people who served under Khalilzad and Barno support this assessment. A senior military officer observed:

Look at the principles of COIN [counterinsurgency doctrine]: integrated political machinery, clear political aim, and planning for the long term. The civil-military interconnectivity is a crucial part of it. The one thing I’m clear about is this: When you put together civilians and military with unity of purpose, the outcome is greater than the sum of the parts...An example is Barno moving into the embassy...We have to swallow our discomfort with different civilian and military cultures to achieve the common goal...(Interview 91).

Another military officer, observing the co-location at the embassy from Camp Eggers, explained:

In 2004–2005...it was really, really tightly integrated, almost like one headquarters – embassy – CFC-A. Barno’s office was in the embassy. We did a VTC [video teleconference] with Barno every morning from Camp Eggers. He lived there. He and Zal got along so well...everything that was done – that campaign plan was a joint effort between the embassy and CFC-A. When you look at the details, the metrics, they are civilian metrics, the ones the embassy will track. If the embassy wanted to send a cable, that cable was shared completely with us before it went out. DC was hearing a single voice. Afghans were hearing a single voice (Interview 68).

In addition to co-location at the embassy, civilians and military were co-located at various levels of the military structure in the field. At the brigade level, representatives from DoS and USAID served as Political Advisors (POLAD) and Development Advisors (DEVAD), respectively.

Co-location was a central design feature of the PRTs, a cornerstone of Khalilzad’s and Barno’s approach to civil-military coordination.¹⁰⁰ The initial vision for the PRTs, however, was only partially achieved.¹⁰¹ In an

¹⁰⁰ Khalilzad and Barno expanded the number of PRTs to 24 by 2006, half of which were staffed and run by the US. The PRTs were intended as a mechanism to leverage limited resources in the provinces and facilitate interagency coordination at the tactical level.

¹⁰¹ According to one official involved in the early stages of PRT development, the Office of the Secretary of Defense originally intended them to be civilian-led. An OSD official explained that the OSD “vision for the PRTs was never actualized. [We intended them to be] robust civilian teams, civilians would be leading...But civilian agencies did not have the right people or enough people...didn’t have a vision that they would resource this leadership role” (Interview 40). A senior civilian official lambasted the civilian agencies for not being willing to make directed assignments: “It is shameful that we can’t get people deployed...How serious can you be about civil-military coordination, when the US Foreign Service is chicken\$#@ about sending people where they don’t want to go. People get

effort to staff PRTs on the military side, Barro “disassembled the [CJCMOTF] headquarters and cut it down to bare bones and shipped all the CJCMOTF civil affairs out to the PRTs” (Koontz 2008, 60).

By contrast, DoS and USAID were unwilling or unable to take the steps necessary to resource robustly the civilian side. Instead of exercising their legal authority to make directed assignments, they relied on volunteers. The consequence was a profound imbalance between military and civilians at the PRTs. Some PRTs did not have even one civilian on site on a consistent basis.

Co-location at the operational/tactical level contributed to joint problem solving. A senior military officer, when asked what the most important factors were that enabled coordinated results, answered:

Proximity...working next to people...physically having access to their vision, their understanding of the area, sharing each other's understanding of the area. If you operated together, moved together, saw the problem set together, you could develop coordinated solutions... (Interview 104).

In addition to facilitating joint analysis and problem solving, co-location strengthened relationships and increased information flows. The officer explained:

You can't build relationships if all you do is meet once or twice a week. If you live next to the people you're trying to enable [Afghans] and have all your civilian agency folks living with you, you all have a vested interest in success...(Interview 104).

mad that the military is getting into civilian turf, but civilians can't get people deployed” (Interview 1).

Further evidence of the importance of co-location at the operational/tactical level came from the Jalalabad PRT, the PRT most frequently cited as having achieved coordinated results.¹⁰² The Jalalabad PRT was unlike many PRTs in its strong, consistent civilian representation.¹⁰³ Michelle Parker, who served as the USAID Field Program Officer (FPO) at the PRT, explained how co-location facilitated the coordinated response to the Jalalabad riots in May 2005.

Following publication of an article accusing US soldiers of flushing Korans down a toilet, riots had erupted in Jalalabad. Parker and her military colleagues quickly organized a response. As she received reports from USAID implementing partners (contractors), she fed them to her military colleagues, who in turn fed the information to the appropriate Afghan authorities. Their ability to organize and share information quickly was a key factor in bringing the situation under control. Parker explained that co-location made this possible: “I was living on the PRT. I knew the

¹⁰² There were several other PRTs credited with strong coordination in this and subsequent periods. The case study focuses on the Jalalabad PRT both because it was the one most consistently and frequently cited and because more data were available about it.

¹⁰³ Michelle Parker emphasized the importance of the strong civilian representation at the Jalalabad PRT in her 2007 testimony before the House Armed Services Committee: “...The USAID field office in the Jalalabad PRT was unique because it was a fully staffed office with two expatriates, two senior Afghan program officers, and an interpreter. All positions except the interpreter were funded by USAID. In all other PRTs, there is only one expatriate working for USAID and possibly one Afghan interpreter or senior program manager. USAID/Jalalabad was an exception due to its large portfolio and counternarcotics mission” (Parker 2007, 4).

guys. Day in, day out, we were living together, so there was no need to do relationship building when the crisis hit” (Parker 2009).

While co-location on the ground had the most immediate effects in terms of coordinated results, there was evidence that co-location also contributed to coordination at the policy/strategic level. Co-location was a central design feature of the Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group (AIOG), the organization established early in this period to replace the Policy Coordination Committee for Afghanistan. The AIOG was based at the DoS but was jointly chaired by the Senior Director for Afghanistan at the National Security Council (NSC) and the Afghanistan Coordinator at DoS. It included representatives of DoD, DoS, USAID, Treasury, the NSC, the Office of Management and Budget, and other US agencies with Afghanistan portfolios.

The original intention was for representatives of all of the relevant departments and agencies to be co-located on a full-time basis in an office on the first floor of the DoS. Co-location of the AIOG was never fully achieved.¹⁰⁴ However, approximately 10 to 20 agencies sat at the AIOG on a part-time basis. The co-location, albeit part time, contributed to the effectiveness of joint analysis and planning on the AIOG.

¹⁰⁴ A senior official involved with the AIOG explained: “The idea [of the AIOG] was to bring people from different agencies to the State Department and have them work in the same office...Over time...were drawn back by the pull of their own jobs. Every time you leave your office, it hurts with promotion...because you’re not so visible in your home office. So, people would keep their offices downstairs [at the AIOG office at State], but they gravitated to their home agencies” (Interview 17).

One senior DoS official cited the interagency budget during this period as “an example of a coordinated AIOG product...where all the accounts were worked out together with all the agencies involved” (Interview 29). According to that official, co-location was an important contributing factor: “We were able to coordinate all our assistance across all the accounts better than if we were not co-located” (Interview 29).

A senior official from OSD credited the AIOG with contributing to the development of the interagency counternarcotics strategy cited earlier, arguing that the regular, in-person interaction (due to both co-location and periodic convening) facilitated the joint analysis and planning. The official explained: “We all sat together under the auspices of the AIOG. We...came up with a pretty decent comprehensive plan, then actually got the resources within a couple of months”¹⁰⁵ (Interview 21).

Thus, co-location at all levels of decision making was an important factor explaining coordination. Co-location reduced the transaction costs associated with information sharing and joint analysis and planning. It contributed to increased understanding and strengthened relationships. It also had important symbolic effects, serving as the physical embodiment of the increasing commitment to civil-military coordination.

However, co-location alone was not sufficient to explain variation in coordinated results. Coordinated results also depended upon other

¹⁰⁵ According to the same official, implementation of the plan “fell off track” when Khalilzad and Barno left Afghanistan in 2005 (Interview 21). This is discussed in the next chapter.

factors identified in Chapter Three, including empowerment and joint analysis and planning.

EMPOWERMENT

The data support the hypothesis that empowerment is necessary, although not sufficient, for coordinated results. Consistent with the prior period, they also show that the definition of empowerment should be expanded to include not only formal decision-making authority, but also access to resources.

The high level of empowerment enjoyed by the senior civilian and military leadership on the ground contributed to coordinated results. Khalilzad was, by all accounts, a “super-empowered ambassador” (Barno 2009). He had personal relationships at the highest levels of decision making in Washington and Afghanistan. In addition, he had taken steps before assuming his post to build support for his intended approach and garner the resources necessary to implement it, further increasing his empowerment. Strmecki explained:

The most successful thing Zal does...before he goes out...he develops a kind of a conceptual campaign plan – tells people, “If you send me, this is what I will do.” Then he takes that plan through the levels of the interagency and gives it to all the key players in the interagency, asks for feedback, takes good ideas and incorporates them, then gets approval by principals and President. He has everyone’s buy-in and presidential authority to execute on the plan. Thus, he doesn’t need to look back to the interagency as long as he is working within the four corners of the plan, so he is free to implement it. He also has the money to implement it, because the plan came with a price tag (Strmecki 2009).

Thus, by building agreement at the policy/strategic level, Khalilzad increased his empowerment at the strategic/operational level. A senior DoD official noted: “Because the [Accelerating Success] plan was set, the interagency was more or less irrelevant in terms of day-to-day [decisions]” (Interview 6). A senior DoS official observed:

Some ambassadors are very skilled at helping DC define key strategic interests in a country, then deciding on courses of action to pursue those objectives, and then working with the host government to achieve those objectives...In some embassies, DC is driving that process. If you have an energetic, capable ambassador like Zal [Khalilzad], that’s what happens. He was driving it (Interview 44).

Khalilzad’s empowerment was further enhanced by the Afghanistan Reachback Office, established in OSD in 2003, after Khalilzad requested a single, high-level point of contact in Washington, DC.¹⁰⁶ A senior DoS official explained:

Khalilzad was extremely powerful. He had an entire organization back in DC called the “Reachback Group”...so, if you’re making decisions, even at the highest level [in Washington], and they are not endorsed by the Ambassador, they won’t go anywhere...Where it really counts is on the ground. Don’t underestimate...the ambassador and his [Reachback] organization. Nothing was done if the ambassador didn’t approve. There were a number of times where the NSC would reach a conclusion, and it would never happen because it didn’t have the support of Ambassador Khalilzad (Interview 32).

¹⁰⁶ After a number of false starts and a lot of moving around of the reachback capability, it eventually was established within OSD under the leadership of Marty Hoffman, former Secretary of the Army and a long-time friend of Rumsfeld. The OSD base reflected, at least in part, Khalilzad’s close ties with DoD. It provided him much of what he needed in terms of reachback to DoD, but at the expense of a unified, interagency reachback system.

Barno also enjoyed significant levels of empowerment. While Khalilzad's empowerment extended beyond his official role within DoS to DoD and the White House, Barno's empowerment was primarily within his own chain of command. Barno had a strong working relationship with his boss, General Abizaid. Abizaid was committed to civil-military coordination and trusted Barno to make the decisions on the ground necessary to implement that vision. A military officer who served with them explained:

One reason that General Abizaid created CFC-A and put Barno in charge was the two of them saw the situation the same. Abizaid wanted to be sure there was someone to work with Ambassador Khalilzad to effect that primacy of the embassy over the military (Interview 31).

The strong relationship ensured Abizaid's support securing the resources, especially human resources, which Barno needed to be effective. According to Barno:

I have a close personal relationship with General Abizaid, which was, I suspect, immensely helpful for his staff to see their way clear to help us out and to respond to our requirements [for additional personnel] (Koontz 2008, 47).

Olson supported this assessment: "Abizaid was tremendous, really empowered Barno. There was no daylight between them – a very good thing" (Olson 2009). This also meant that Abizaid was willing to intervene, when necessary, to protect Barno's room to maneuver on the ground. Early in this period, Rumsfeld was so focused on Iraq that he did not attempt to micro-manage military decisions on the ground in

Afghanistan, as was his usual management style.¹⁰⁷ A senior OSD official explained:

Barno and Khalilzad benefited from the benign neglect of Afghanistan due to the obsession with Iraq. They could just keep going forward. There were only a handful of VTCs [with OSD] for Afghanistan, but they were held weekly for Iraq (Interview 6).

When Rumsfeld's attention turned more fully to Afghanistan, this changed. Barno described how Abizaid's intervention made a challenging situation more manageable.

The most debilitating – I use that word intentionally... – aspect of this was the video teleconferences back to Washington from CFC-A headquarters...in the middle of June '04. Suddenly the Defense Department and the Secretary of Defense decided that he needed to get more involved in Afghanistan and initially directed that we would do a weekly video teleconference with the Secretary of Defense...So, we would have to spend a vast amount of time, energy and effort to prepare...with a very small staff, this was a backbreaking effort. This about brought us to our knees...we finally got General Abizaid to convince the Secretary to go to once every two weeks, which was barely sustainable” (Koontz 2008, 56)

The empowerment of the senior civilian and military leadership on the ground, combined with their high level of agreement, meant that they were able to make joint decisions quickly, without having to seek approval from headquarters. They could respond in a coordinated way to evolving needs and opportunities. This was a key factor in the coordinated results cited earlier, including the presidential elections, road construction, and “controlled confrontations” with warlords.

¹⁰⁷ According to a senior official who served with him, Rumsfeld ran a highly centralized department, personally controlling all major decisions (Interview 34).

Khalilzad and Barno also were able to present a unified voice to Washington. A military officer who served with them noted: “Under Zal, CFC-A was fully integrated throughout the Embassy, with military planners assisting in almost every function. No cable left the embassy that CFC-A had not reviewed and commented on” (Interview 68).

Their unified voice enhanced their ability to influence policy decisions, including those related to financial and human resources. The 2004 and 2005 supplemental budgets provided significantly more funding for on-the-ground implementation than was available in the prior period. They also took steps to maximize their control over the resources that were made available.

One way in which they did this was by establishing an Interagency Resources Cell (IRC) at the embassy. The IRC was led by the Chief Financial Officer at the embassy and was responsible for tracking and coordinating all budgetary and financial issues (US Mission to Afghanistan). An OSD official explained how this further empowered the senior leadership on the ground.

What Zal did well, and then was institutionalized between Zal and Barno in Afghanistan, was create a mechanism whereby the plan is funded, and once the money is there, ensured that the ambassador and commander had positive control over the money, rather than headquarters in DC. We created the Interagency Resources Cell. They had the budget, Mac [McLauchlin, the director of the IRC], had relationships with money people in DC, so anytime people were thinking about undermining what they were trying to do, he [McLauchlin] was on top of it...Once they had the IRC in place, it was impossible for an agency in DC to undermine [what Khalilzad and Barno were doing on the ground] (Interview 6).

Thus, agreement of the senior leadership on the ground and their ability to speak with a unified voice had feedback loops to other variables that affected coordination, including empowerment and resources.

Khalilzad and Barno were able to achieve coordinated results in the efforts in which they were directly involved because they had formal decision-making authority and the resources to back that up. The situation was more complex at the levels below them, both at the embassy and in the field.

At the embassy, the differences in empowerment between USAID and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group (ARG) undermined coordination. The ARG was a team of senior executives and other experts drawn largely from the private sector. It was created to prop up what Khalilzad and his colleagues at OSD regarded as seriously limited USAID capacity.¹⁰⁸ Members of the ARG were among the most empowered people at the embassy in terms of access to the ambassador and influence on decision making, but they did not control any resources. By contrast, USAID officers at the embassy had less access and influence but controlled substantial financial resources.

¹⁰⁸ A senior OSD official explained: “Immediately after 9/11, it was clear that we would go to Afghanistan, and if we went to Afghanistan and all we had in the US government to work on Afghanistan was USAID, we were doomed” (Interview 28)

This contributed to what many interviewees described as a strained, if not toxic, relationship between USAID and the ARG.¹⁰⁹

Because USAID staff felt under siege at the embassy, they were increasingly reluctant to share information with the ARG or fund ARG-initiated projects. According to at least one interviewee, this caused coordination failures on the ground. ARG members would initiate projects, generate expectations among Afghans, and then be unable to deliver due to lack of funding from USAID.

In spite of the difficulties USAID faced at the embassy, there was one major project on which USAID enjoyed a significant degree of empowerment and support: the Kabul-Kandahar highway.¹¹⁰ As soon as the highway became a priority for the President, other agencies lined up behind USAID to help. A senior official offered the following example.

In building the road, we needed to get some equipment for the road through a particular area...that was off-limits to us, and this had never been done before. Normally, it would take half a year to get this through our bureaucracy...We raised it in Deputies Committee meeting. Hadley turned, pointed to [person unidentified], and said, "I want an answer tomorrow." The next day, we got an answer and the answer was positive. Never in the history of USAID had we seen government work so fast to give us support we needed to get this done... (Interview 95).

¹⁰⁹The conflict was not limited to the embassy, but extended as well to OSD. The ARG was established by OSD, with Marty Hoffman, the director of the Afghanistan Reachback Office, leading the effort. Thus, while ARG members were officially State Department special employees and worked closely with the Khalilzad, their strongest institutional tie was to OSD via the Reachback Office.

¹¹⁰ This was a half-billion-dollar project involving 389 kilometers of road (USAID, *Audit of the Kabul to Kandahar Highway Reconstruction Activities*, 2004).

The agreement at the policy/strategic level to prioritize construction of the Kabul-Kandahar Highway led directly to USAID's empowerment to implement the project, in resources if not complete delegation of decision-making authority. Moreover, other agencies lined up behind USAID to provide the necessary support and complementary inputs. As a result, a large, important project was completed in eight months. However, serious concerns were raised during and after the project about accountability for resources, the accuracy of reporting, and the quality of construction.¹¹¹ This serves as further evidence that coordinated results, while necessary, are not sufficient for effectiveness.

At the PRT level, the lack of empowerment of USAID officers continued. USAID's focus was on national rather than local programs. USAID officers at the PRTs had neither formal decision-making authority nor direct access to resources.¹¹² Rather, they had to seek approval and

¹¹¹ It is important to note, however, that serious concerns were raised about the quality of construction, including by USAID's own Office of the Inspector General (USAID, *Audit of the Kabul to Kandahar Highway Reconstruction Activities*, 2004).

¹¹² An interesting counterpoint to USAID involved the experience of some State representatives at the PRTs. While State did not manage programs or allocate resources in the ways their USAID and military counterparts did, State officials often were empowered to make decisions without direct guidance or supervision. A State official explained: "The political section [at the embassy] never had time to look at reports, consider how [what was happening in the provinces] related to the national level, and give guidance. We never got any guidance... We were really just supposed to keep things from blowing up. We figured out what to do at our level" (Interview 16).

funding from Kabul. They therefore were not able to respond quickly to emerging needs and opportunities.¹¹³ A USAID official explained:

In Afghanistan, the problem was that it was difficult for USAID to get service out to the field, because the strategy was to build strong central government first, then build out to the provinces and districts. So USAID had all the programs...coordinated by Kabul...The USAID person at the PRT was more an advisor, facilitator, but had no control of any resources. The PRT USAID person would identify an activity, put it on a nomination form, and send it to Kabul. Kabul would say “yes,” “no,” or “maybe”...(Interview 11).

Congressional authorities and contracting requirements also undermined the *de facto* empowerment of USAID officers. A senior USAID official explained:

Contractors make their money by doing designs, drawings, costing... bringing their home office people out [to the field] or sending work back to the home office. That’s how they make their overhead, bread and butter. So, when you try to design a program that can do things flexibly and quickly at the local level, the contractors hate delegating to people on the ground to make decision quickly. They don’t make any money that way. They make money by getting their headquarters brass involved...We used to push them to delegate, and they resisted tooth and nail. This discourages more civil-military cooperation, because USAID contractors are never able to respond to a window of opportunity (Interview 1).

For all of the reasons just discussed, USAID officers at the PRTs often were not able to make decisions quickly enough to coordinate with their military counterparts.

¹¹³ In 2004, USAID launched the Quick Impact Program (QIP), an effort to supplement USAID’s longer-term reconstruction and development work and facilitate more rapid deployment of USAID funds.

The military components of the PRTs enjoyed significantly greater empowerment than did USAID officers, especially after the 2004 launch of the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) in Afghanistan.¹¹⁴ PRT Commanders were authorized to “approve the use of up to \$25,000 in CERP funds for the rapid implementation of small-scale projects, such as providing latrines for a school or a generator for a hospital” (GAO, July 2005, 18).

The high level of military empowerment combined with the lack of empowerment of USAID officers at the PRTs made coordinated results unlikely. It also caused tensions in the working relationship. The military often didn't understand the constraints under which USAID operated, leading to misunderstanding. A USAID official explained:

[The requirement to request approval from Kabul] made it easier for the military to complain that civilians were not stepping up...USAID was building hundreds of schools, kilometers of roads, but we weren't visible and responsive [at the PRT level] (Interview 11).

Even if USAID had been empowered to coordinate at the PRTs, the empowerment of the military was not backed up by accountability or incentive systems conducive to coordination. This is discussed in the analysis of accountability and incentives below.

¹¹⁴ The program was modeled on the CERP program used in Iraq and designed to complement DoD's Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) program. According to a 2005 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report: “Although CERP and OHDACA funds address humanitarian needs, the projects are determined by the tactical need to obtain the support of the populace and are primarily tools for achieving US security objectives” (GAO, July 2005, 18).

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

The data from this period provide further support for the hypothesized importance of accountability and incentive systems. Specifically, they show that empowerment must be combined with accountability and incentives to yield coordinated results.

The lack of accountability for coordinated results, both in Kabul and in the field, consistently undermined coordination. A DoS official described the lack of accountability as follows: “All responsibility is disbursed. Institutions are not punished for failure or rewarded for success” (Interview 13).

Incentives for coordinated results were equally lacking. A USAID official explained how incentives within individual agencies worked against coordination.

Incentives are not conducive [to coordination]. If you are really committed [to coordination], you have to work against the flow, since incentives go the other way around. You must take decisions that look to your boss at home as if you are ceding territory...When you are trying to find new ways to work together...others may see collaboration as weakness and try to take advantage...and your own organization may try to take advantage of other organizations...There are not well-developed institutional mechanisms or incentive structures...(Interview 102).

The effects of the lack accountability and perverse incentives were particularly evident at PRTs, in terms of both military and civilian decision making. The military were empowered to allocate funds, but they were generally not held accountable for coordinating with their civilian

counterparts, let alone the downstream impacts of their activities. One DEVAD explained that incentives at the field level emphasized tactical, rather than longer-term, strategic accomplishments.

The officers...had a set of tools designed for combat operations, plus they had CERP [funds] that they had to spend...There was no strategy, no mechanism to think about this...In the military...people get promoted based on tactical accomplishments (Interview 13).

For the military, the incentive was to spend money quickly. There were few incentives to take the time necessary to incorporate development expertise – expertise the military lacked – into decision making and even fewer incentives to engage in rigorous joint analysis and planning. A DoS official explained:

CERP allowed commanders on the ground to spend some money without red tape. The concept was sound...but military folks were spending money, without understanding the development implications...At the end of the day, the money was the military's...Back then, the military's idea was: "We are fighting a war. Everyone else, get out of our way" (Interview 22).

When USAID officers did provide advice to the military at the PRTs, they often were perceived of as slowing down the process. A USAID official reflected:

USAID's advice was often "don't drill that well here" or "don't build a school because there's no teacher yet. First, we must talk to the Education Minister...get a teacher sent here." The military perceived this as bureaucratic, slowing things down. They had deadlines to spend the money...They would say, "We'll talk to the Education Minister later" or "You do it" (Interview 102).

The empowerment of the military without accountability and incentive systems conducive to coordination led to serious errors at many PRTs. A military officer explained: “The new PRTs were made up mostly of military, who had little experience in counterinsurgency operations. They were naïve, and this could be dangerous and often deadly” (Interview 104). Even at the most basic level, there often was a lack of cooperation. In one example, a USAID officer arranged to meet with a provincial official at the PRT at 8 a.m. When the Afghan official arrived at the gate, in spite of the entreaties from their USAID colleague, the soldier at the gate refused to open it, saying, “We don’t open until 9 a.m.”

The accountability and incentive problems were not only on the military side. As documented in the prior chapter, civilian efforts suffered from lack of accountability and perverse incentives. USAID faced intense pressure to spend money quickly. A USAID official reflected:

One challenge we had was there was always a tendency to compare what the military was doing with CERP money to what USAID was doing with community development projects ...enormous pressure by the White House to spend money fast...Spending money quickly in unstable areas usually means unsustainable results (Interview 1).

In addition to the perverse incentives regarding resource allocation, there was pressure to implement projects quickly. That detracted from long-term capacity building. A senior official explained: “There was a rush for speed... [People] talked about building capacity, but time pressure [worked against that]” (Interview 56). To the extent that USAID

officials were held accountable, it continued to be for contributions to USAID programs rather than coordinated civil-military results.

Incentives also worked against organizational continuity, undermining coordination over time. Rotations were short, and people on the ground generally focused on what they could accomplish before their tours concluded, rather than actively building on what had been done previously or laying foundations for what would follow. According to one civilian official: “[US]AID people never saw themselves as getting ahead by implementing what their predecessors started...the traditional AID way to get ahead was to start your own project” (Interview 113). The same problems affected military efforts. This undermined opportunities to achieve coordinated results in efforts that spanned individual tours of duty.

The civilian and military leaders in Kabul were increasingly aware of the need to strengthen accountability. As discussed in detail later in the chapter, Khalilzad and Barno established a Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) to coordinate planning, assessment, and resources.¹¹⁵ The JIATF included an Embassy Interagency Planning Group (EIPG), to which Barno detailed several military planners, and the IRC. The EIPG and IRC were responsible for planning, analyzing, and coordinating reconstruction

¹¹⁵ At the top of the JIATF sat the Coordination and Integration Chairs (CIC) – the Ambassador and Commander of CFC-A (COMCFC). The CIC provided direction and final approval for any plans developed. A Senior Advisory Cell (SAC), made up of the deputy chief of mission, USAID mission director, chief financial officer, and other senior officials at the embassy, reported to the CIC.

activities and funding. They identified metrics, monitored resource use, and led a joint civil-military process to evaluate progress.

The leadership in Kabul also took steps to increase professional incentives and accountability for coordinated results. Barno and Patrick Fine, who served as USAID Mission Director from June 2004 to June 2005, agreed that the military planners Barno had detailed to the EIPG would be accountable not only up their military chain of command, but also to the USAID mission director, and that mission director would write their evaluations. This arrangement, combined with the regular joint analysis and planning discussed below, contributed to the development of strong working relationships with USAID and enhanced coordination.

The majority of interviewees involved with the EIPG and IRC argued that the system enhanced accountability and contributed to coordinated results. According to one official:

It was very effective. We had metrics, a strategic plan, got everyone to sign up for their assignments...then had basic checking on all of them to make sure they did what they had agreed (Interview 28).

Another explained:

USAID worked closely with them [the military planners Barno detailed to the EIPG] on budget and strategy formulation and metrics. Metrics were critically important, because they flowed into the NSC oversight of what we were trying to accomplish...[DoS], USAID, and the military contributed. It was a very productive partnership...(Interview 71).

There were limits, however, to what the EIPG could accomplish. Where questions about accountability remained, coordination was undermined. This was most evident in the concerns raised by the ARG about the quality of USAID-led development projects in Afghanistan and the accuracy of USAID's reporting.

USAID itself acknowledged accountability problems. The USAID Office of Inspector General published a report in August 2004 identifying numerous monitoring, reporting, and quality problems (USAID, *Audit of the Sustainable Economic Policy and Institutional Reform Support*, 2004).¹¹⁶ Senior members of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group, however, were convinced that USAID was deliberately misusing resources and filing false reports. Because they did not have confidence in the formal accountability systems, the ARG began to document what they considered to be breaches on the part of USAID, feeding the information to the Ambassador and senior officials in Washington.

Regardless of the accuracy of the ARG's accusations, the ongoing questions about accountability and the associated back-channel efforts of the ARG to address its concerns fueled the conflict between USAID and the ARG, further undermining coordination. USAID became convinced that the ARG was out to undermine them. A senior USAID official

¹¹⁶ USAID Mission Director Patrick Fine concurred with many, although not all, of the findings, although he emphasized the major human resource constraints under which USAID was operating in Afghanistan (USAID, *Audit of the Sustainable Economic Policy and Institutional Reform Support*, 2004).

described how embattled they felt: “We found ourselves in friendly fire bureaucratically...” (Interview 95). This fed into a vicious cycle. USAID became even less willing to share information, engage in candid joint assessment, or allocate funding for ARG-initiated project, contributing to the coordination failures highlighted earlier.

While the majority of interviewees argued that the metrics system at the embassy enhanced accountability, senior officials in Washington raised concerns about the time and effort it absorbed. A DoS official explained:

From our perspective in DC, this created a lot of work because we had to do this metrics exercise...a huge effort that wasn't worth it. It put a huge burden on us here in DC...Barno had his own set of metrics that were not the same as the metrics in this plan. We were dependent on data coming from field, [which] then [created a] huge process here...the PRTs also had a metrics system that didn't link up (Interview 17).

This suggests that, while accountability systems are necessary, they must be coordinated not only horizontally across agencies, but also vertically across levels of decision making to ensure efficiency and buy-in.

JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

The data support the hypothesized importance of joint analysis and planning. Joint analysis and planning contributed to coordinated results by enabling participants to build agreement on goals and strategy, enhancing accountability, increasing information flows, and fostering learning.

Interviewees emphasized the importance of the joint analysis and planning conducted under the auspices of the EIPG that Khalilzad and Barno had established at the embassy. The EIPG led the process to translate the higher-level goals and strategy embodied in “Accelerating Success in Afghanistan” into a MPP and associated campaign plan.

The process also included budgetary planning. The IRC worked in concert with the EIPG to ensure that different pots of money were leveraged in support of agreed goals and strategies – an important factor in achieving the complementary coordinated results cited earlier. This was particularly evident in road construction, where different sources of funding with different funding authorities were combined in complementary ways.

Joint analysis and planning enabled participants to build the agreement on goals and strategy that was necessary for the coordinated results cited earlier. In the 2004 presidential elections, for example, the US military played a leadership role in planning for security and logistics. The planning process made possible agreement on goals and strategy, including a division of labor. One senior official described how the agreement on goals and “effects” facilitated the agreement on roles and responsibilities that enabled them to achieve the complementary results cited earlier.

The division of labor reflected...recognition of the effects we needed to achieve...For each effect, we’d say, “Who can do that?”...That’s how you coordinate...You don’t just ask, “What is

the goal?” You ask, “What are the effects?”...The division of labor was not planned, but was an emergent division of labor based on recognition of what needed to happen and who could do what” (Interview 59).

In addition to building agreement on goals and strategy, joint analysis and planning fostered learning. Interviewees repeatedly argued that joint analysis and planning led to increased understanding and strengthened relationships. A senior USAID officer who served at the embassy offered a particularly compelling account.

Ambassador Khalilzad asked a bunch of military planners to come in and do planning. The idea among USAID...staff that we’d have five colonels working with us to do our planning... was uncomfortable. But the more we got to know them, the more we respected their talent, skill, hard work...We realized we were on the same team. They pushed us, challenged us, made us think. Most AID people never work with the military, so this whole experience was new (Interview 95).

Another USAID official reflected:

The military guys learned a lot about USAID...We learned about their corporate culture. Resistance to working with the military melted away...We saw mutual value. Team building emerged. It made the broader USAID – military relationship smoother in Kabul (Interview 102).

The learning at the individual level both reflected and fed into broader changes within USAID, especially in terms of attitudes and working relationships. A senior USAID official explained:

An attitude shift...had to take place at USAID. Right after 9/11 when we were gearing up to go into Afghanistan...the buzz was that, in this environment, we needed officers able to work with the military. There was real resistance among old timers, development theorists, to get involved with the military, and a bunch of people left...They couldn’t get used to the idea of supporting any effort

that involved the military, or quick, short-term things. We had to become comfortable talking to, cooperating with and understanding the value of what the military was trying to do. Many AID officers couldn't handle that. They're gone. They left (Interview 1).

Another senior official explained:

We developed a good relationship with the military, the uniforms on the ground. At one point, I...[told senior officials in Washington] that I thought we had a hell of a lot in common with the uniformed military, which was rebellious to say and stunned them. I said that they are operational, mission oriented, have command and control structure and chain of command, plan well and do strategies well, and we as USAID do all the same. This was shocking to [the senior leadership]...USAID didn't work traditionally with the military (Interview 95).

In contrast to the institutionalized system for joint analysis and planning at the embassy, there was no parallel system at the operational/tactical level. The degree of joint analysis and planning in the field thus varied considerably.

At the brigade level, when the military and their POLADs and DEVADs engaged in regular joint analysis and planning, this was cited as a key factor contributing to coordinated results. It also fostered learning, especially in terms of mutual understanding. A senior military officer described the importance of the different perspectives USAID brought to brigade-level decision making.

USAID...were very aggressive, very involved in every project we did. The DEVAD at our headquarters would go through everything, tell me we shouldn't do x, y, z for these reasons. Oddly enough, we shared a mission-oriented common culture with USAID – give me a mission, I'll get it done (Interview 114).

Similarly, at PRTs that engaged in joint analysis and/or planning, that was directly associated with the achievement of coordinated results. The Jalalabad PRT, for example, convened biweekly Operations Synchronization Meetings. The meetings focused on sharing information, identifying resource and support needs, and what interviewees referred to as “de-conflicting” activities, especially those involving security and transportation. Colonel Jim Ruf (then Lieutenant Colonel), the PRT commander from September 2004 to June 2005, described the process and how it contributed to coordinated results.

We brought in all the components of the military operating in our space. Then, we’d take input from the civilians we had... We’d talk about all operations ongoing in the next week or two, what were the tasks folks wanted to get achieved... If... SOF [Special Operations Forces] were going out, they would say, “It would be helpful if we could get a Civil Affairs capability”... Civilians could, at same time, put their requirements in. We could say on this day I need this capability to support them, primarily on security and transport end... We created shared awareness of what everyone else was doing, so we were able to de-conflict, reduce redundancy... We all knew what the operations were, who was going where and when to achieve what purpose. De-confliction happened during the meetings...(Ruf 2009).

The Jalalabad PRT also initiated a weekly project nomination process. Lieutenant Colonel Lynda Granfield, who assumed command of the PRT in June 2005, reflected:

Jim Ruf had created a weekly project nomination process at the PRT – a very good system... It gave everyone on the PRT a vote on the nomination of projects for CERP funds, so that they could vet them with the Provincial Coordination Council (PCC)... Then, USAID could nest those programs with national programs in Kabul, so connecting the central to the provincial government (Granfield 2009).

Joint analysis in this case did not mean joint decision making. Ruf emphasized: “USAID would make recommendations. There was only one decision maker – me – but my decisions were very much informed by others’ input” (Ruf 2009). Nevertheless, the joint analysis enabled the PRT to avoid duplication and fill gaps.

When Granfield assumed command of the PRT, she built on the system established by Ruf.

We built on the process that Jim created by vetting through the PCC and eventually the Provincial Council to ensure that the province could absorb the project for sustainability, and that allowed USAID to nest [its projects] with the national priorities and ministries (Granfield 2011).

Granfield, however, differed from her predecessor in how she thought about her role relative to the civilian components of the PRT.

I liked to think of my relationship with the interagency members as part of the “PRT Executive Team.” We worked towards “unity of effort and focus” versus command authority, which in the end I didn’t have over the interagency [referring to US civilian agencies]. Yes, I was responsible for their safety and security and could make “command” decisions for them based on my understanding of the threat environment. However, when it came to their lines of operation, i.e., governance, rule of law, reconstruction, or development, we worked towards common purpose. I didn’t veto their non-concurrence vote on projects that PRT military members proposed. I did make them help the PRT military members be more effective in developing project ideas, so that they could gain concurrence from the interagency if and when it made sense (Granfield 2011).

The Jalalabad PRT was among a small number of PRTs that emphasized that kind of joint process. At many PRTs, the military made decisions without consulting with their civilian counterparts, let alone

engaging in joint analysis or decision making.¹¹⁷ This led to ongoing coordination failures. A senior DoS official observed:

When PRTs were first deployed, even though there may have been civilian reps there, the military commanders ran the PRTs, acted on their own, often without much regard to good coordination with the Afghan government, and they also lacked knowledge of how to conduct good development...They did whatever the Afghans asked them to do – drilled lots of wells, but they dried up; built schools, but there were no teachers...(Interview 17).

As evidence mounted of the importance of joint analysis at the PRTs, the civilian and military leadership on the ground took steps to increase it. USAID Mission Director Patrick Fine negotiated an agreement with Olson, Commander of CJTF-76, that no CERP-funded projects would be approved by a PRT without the USAID officer signing off on them (Interview 102). General Olson then issued a Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) requiring military compliance with this system (Interview 102).

According to one official, the military initially complained that this was slowing them down, but subsequently came to appreciate the value of the process – further evidence of feedback loops between joint analysis and learning, in this case involving the value of joint analysis. A senior USAID official recollected: “One PRT commander...said ‘I was really angry. Now that I’m doing it this way, I really appreciate it’” (Interview 102).

¹¹⁷ In some cases, this was due lack of consistent or experienced civilian representation, but in other cases it reflected the personal leadership style of the PRT commander. A senior State official described, for example, “stories of a PRT commander who, just because they had women in the civilian positions, didn’t want to use them, bring them along” (Interview 17).

Over time, a number of PRTs instituted joint analysis and planning processes. The Jalalabad PRT established a planning cell, a system that was subsequently adopted by other PRTs (Interview 17). An official explained: “We started seeing the development of a board of directors’ approach to PRTs, where DoS, USAID, the [PRT] Commander would sit down, develop their own plans together...This got better over time” (Interview 17).

While the PRT-level planning contributed to tactical coordinated results, it was not well integrated into planning at higher levels of decision making, undermining strategic coordinated results. A senior DoS official highlighted the problem.

The civil-military plans that Barno and Khalilzad developed sought to cover the whole gamut of operations, at both the high level and the low level. But they were never, as far as I know, systematically translated for use at, for example, the PRTs or brigade headquarters (Interview 17).

The lack of integrated planning across levels (i.e., lack of vertical coordination in planning) would continue to be a problem in subsequent periods. Efforts to address this problem and their impacts on coordination are discussed in the chapters that follow.

INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing was integral to joint analysis and planning processes, as is evident in the analysis of those processes above.

Information sharing outside of joint analysis and planning processes,

however, was cited infrequently in interviews from this period as an explanation for coordinated results. Therefore, any conclusions about the importance of information sharing distinct from joint analysis and planning will depend on the data from other periods.

There was, however, evidence of the factors that affected information sharing. Co-location had the most direct effect. This was particularly evident at the embassy, where the co-location of the ambassador and senior military commander contributed to an unusual degree of information sharing. A military officer described the process by which the military, under Barno, shared intelligence with the Ambassador.

The relationship between those two was so close that, at a certain point, we were providing Ambassador Khalilzad with our intel assessment of Afghanistan, which is unusual because there are other entities in government [referring to the CIA] tasked with doing that...As a matter of course, the [CIA] Chief of Station is the intel advisor to the ambassador...it tends to be a very personal assessment, done through his contacts with his sources ...That's not really analysis, where you have a subject matter expert...who goes through a real analysis and builds an analytical piece – that tends to be missing from an embassy. We filled that gap for Ambassador Khalilzad, until Chief of Station got a real analyst, after which we worked with...the analyst...This was an indication of how comfortable we all felt working with each other while Barno was there (Interview 31).

There also was evidence of feedback loops from learning to information sharing. A DoS official described how increased understanding of the reasons behind coordination failures led to increased information sharing within USAID, specifically between Kabul and the field.

The problem was that USAID liked to have centralized control in Kabul and implement through implementing partners...USAID didn't really want people at the PRT making decisions. So, you would have CERP funds being used to build a school very near a USAID-funded school, because the USAID rep. at the PRT didn't know about the USAID school being built there. Alonzo [Fulgham, the USAID Mission Director] changed this...He required USAID staff at Kabul to share more information with USAID PRT reps (Interview 16).

Thus, while the data about information sharing outside of joint analysis and planning processes was limited, there was some evidence of the importance of vertical (intra-organizational) information sharing, as well as evidence that co-location and learning enhanced information sharing.

CONVENING

As suggested earlier, co-location can be understood as a structural alternative to periodic or *ad hoc* convening and thus as one pole of a spectrum of convening. Beyond the evidence for the importance of co-location at all levels of decision making, there was initial evidence that regular convening at the operational/tactical level facilitated information sharing and learning.

Several interviewees argued that the convening of regional PRT conferences contributed to information sharing and learning between the civilian and military components of the various PRTs. A senior military officer emphasized the value of the PRT conferences convened in Regional Command – East: “The PRTs would brief what they were doing, so we got to share good ideas. I remember a lot of advice from [the

USAID representative]...and others. I'd take the ideas and try to implement them..." (Interview 104).

There were few other examples of convening cited in this period, perhaps because co-location provided a structural alternative. This interpretation is supported by the fact that interviewees from this period consistently raised co-location as a key factor explaining coordinated results, whereas interviewees from the subsequent periods, during which the senior military commander was not co-located at the embassy, emphasized a combination of co-location at the operational/tactical level and regular convening. Given the paucity of data about intermittent convening in this period, further analysis will be necessary to determine its importance relative to coordination.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

There was limited data about facilitative leadership on the ground. There was, however, evidence that the facilitative, joint leadership style employed by the NSC and DoS co-chairs of the Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group in Washington contributed to strong working relationships (the second dimension of learning), which in turn made possible coordinated policy guidance and resourcing to the field.

The lack of data about facilitative leadership on the ground does not necessarily indicate that it was unimportant. Rather, it may reflect the fact that the interview protocol was better designed to identify high-level

process variables that explained coordinated results (i.e., convening, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning) than the subordinate variables (i.e., facilitative leadership) that made those processes more or less effective. Further analysis will be necessary to determine the importance of facilitative leadership.

LEARNING

The above analysis provides evidence of the importance of learning relative to coordinated results. It also shows numerous feedback loops between learning and other variables.

Co-location and joint planning and analysis, for example, led to the development of mutual understanding and strong working relationships between USAID and the operational military. Increased understanding of the impact of and reasons for coordination failures led to the changes in attitudes and behaviors, increased agreement on goals and strategy, and changes in organizational systems documented earlier. These changes, in turn, enhanced coordinated results.

A DoS official reflected on the significant learning within and across agencies, offering the following example.

Before I left, I saw more coordination on how the military ran operations. By trial and error, we ended up coordinating very closely with civilians. There was...a village... We had gone through the village several times with military operations, had scattered the enemy, but the enemy came back. So, we coordinated closely with the State Department and Government of Afghanistan, provincial governor and mayors. Instead of taking kinetic action and then leaving, we would go in, take kinetic action, leave behind Afghan

forces with coordination with US forces...immediately began reconstruction work – roads, schools, etc. – to have more enduring presence...began to germinate this during time I was there...We were just starting to figure this out in 2004 (Interview 89).

A senior military officer shared a parallel assessment of learning and its effects on coordinated results.

Over time, we became a lot better at complementing each other's goals and objectives. We could provide USAID security and access, and they could also help us figure out how to do some things that provided immediate results. In some cases, USAID helped not just with expertise, but also in finding resources. We really began to complement each other (Interview 97).

In Washington, there was evidence of increased recognition of the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary for effectiveness. The result was heightened attention to the need for joint civil-military pre-deployment training. This training, in turn, led to further learning. A DoS official recollected:

In 2004, 2005 I started hearing about training...Our PRT people were participating in training with the military, pre-deployment...It made a big difference, because the military started seeing the value that civilians could bring (Interview 17).

One additional aspect of learning merits attention: the role of prior experience. Some military officers who served in this period had experience with civil-military coordination in Iraq. Several civilians, in turn, had previously served in the military. According to one official who served, over his career, in both DoS and DoD:

We had some civilian folks working for [DoS] and USAID who were familiar with the military, comfortable with what the military was doing, wanted to coordinate, could speak the lingo. Others

didn't. The same was true of the military. Some understood kinetics alone wouldn't win the fight and the huge value provided by civilians. Others were less interested (Interview 89).

In addition, a USAID interviewee emphasized how prior training in collaborative and consensus-building processes contributed to coordinated results at the PRT level, explaining, "I'm trained to coordinate, to be inclusive" (Interview 106). Thus, it was not only learning from the immediate interactions that mattered, but also prior learning. This is supported by the research on the importance of education and training reviewed in Chapter Two.

OTHER FACTORS AND EXPLANATIONS

RESOURCE DISPARITIES (HUMAN RESOURCES)

The data from this period lend further support to the earlier finding that resource disparities undermine coordination, highlighting, in particular, differences in human resources.

At the PRTs, civilians continued to be outnumbered by military, often by a 100:1 ratio. At most PRTs, the civilians also were younger and less experienced than their military counterparts. This not only affected interactions and relationship within the PRTs, it also limited their ability to reach back into their own bureaucracy to get the information and support they required. A senior military officer explained:

We always respected the expertise that those civilians brought to the battlefield. But experience speaks for itself. You can't train for experience. You must get experience. The more experience people

have, the more adept they are at working the larger systems, and the more credibility they have in reaching back into their own stovepipes (Interview 97).¹¹⁸

There were, of course, exceptions. At the Jalalabad PRT, for example, there was consistent, experienced, and relatively senior civilian representation. Several other PRTs also had strong, consistent civilian representation. Where this was the case, it was repeatedly cited as a key factor contributing to coordinated results.

USAID redoubled efforts to co-locate more experienced, more consistent representation at the PRTs. A senior USAID official who served during this period reflected: “I remember taking the decision that we will stop moving so quickly to hire, and hire better people, tighten up our criteria. This was about 2006” (Interview 1).

However, USAID continued to face “recruiting challenges” associated with the focus on Iraq and the unwillingness to make directed assignments (Interview 96). The efforts to increase empowerment and change accountability and incentive systems cited above as examples of organizational learning were under way, but they often represented changes at the margins (especially with respect to the disparity in numbers of military and civilians) and involved significant time lags.

¹¹⁸ A senior USAID official confirmed this assessment: “I visited many PRTs...there would always be a briefing by the [PRT] commander, and somewhere in the room would be someone from State or USAID...[There were] many times when I was so embarrassed by their lack of experience or silly advice. But the PRT commanders always said they appreciated their advice. I was scared to death that we had kids in these positions giving advice to colonels leading combat operations. They were listening to kids” (Interview 1).

DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Directive leadership within organizations, rather than the facilitative leadership across organizations identified in the hypotheses, was raised several times in the interviews from this period. Interviewees argued that directive leadership within organizations enhanced coordination and that its absence undermined coordination.

One example of directive leadership involved the EIPG at the embassy. The EIPG was empowered to lead joint planning efforts. However, the Ambassador and COMCFC retained final decision-making authority. This ensured that any disagreements would be resolved. The fact that the directive leadership was exercised jointly and that Khalilzad and Barno worked as a closely integrated team further strengthened its impact. A senior OSD official explained:

The planning process was our attempt to create a process where the various stovepipes could play a part, but the two chieftains would choose what path...we went down, so there was not endless wrangling (Interview 6).

In Washington, by contrast, the lack of directive leadership undermined the processes intended to forge agreement. Disagreements about policy goals and high-level strategy were often not raised to the level of the Deputies Committee or Principals Committee for resolution. This caused ongoing coordination failures. A senior official explained the impact on road construction.

In DC, where the principals didn't necessarily get along with one another and coordination mechanisms were weak because of how the NSC was established to coordinate, as opposed to direct, there would be arguments... There should have been guidance that said, "We're going to build the road, and the military will provide the security..." (Interview 45).

This suggests that directive leadership within organizations may be necessary for coordinated results. This is not inconsistent with the hypothesis that facilitative leadership across organizations is necessary. Rather, directive leadership within organizations may be a necessary complement to facilitative leadership across organizations. Further analysis will be necessary to determine the salience of each and their relationship to one another.

INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Consistent with the analysis of the preceding period, individual attitudes and relationships emerged as important factors explaining coordinated results. Interviewees emphasized, in particular, the commitment to coordination and the strong working relationship on the part of the ambassador and senior military commander.

The above analysis supports the argument that Khalilzad's and Barno's commitment to coordination, combined with their strong working relationship, enhanced coordination. However, they did not operate in a vacuum. Rather, their attitudes and relationship were affected by other factors discussed above. For example, their agreement on goals and strategy reflected increasing agreement at the policy level, even though

important differences remained. While personal chemistry provided the foundation for a strong working relationship, co-location made possible the daily face-to-face interactions that enabled them to build on that foundation.

Moreover, their attitudes and relationship exerted their effects not only through their individual behaviors, but also through the processes and systems they instituted, including, for example, the EIPG. The same patterns repeated themselves at the levels below Khalilzad and Barno, with co-location and joint processes contributing to changes in attitudes and relationships that, in turn, fed back into other variables that affected coordinated results.

CONCLUSION

Agreement on goals and strategy at each level of decision making was the most significant and direct factor explaining coordinated results. Co-location facilitated information sharing and joint analysis planning. Co-location also fostered learning and strengthened relationships. Empowerment was necessary for coordinated results but was counterproductive in the absence of systems that incentivized people to achieve coordinated results or held them accountable for doing so. Joint analysis and planning contributed to agreement on goals and strategy and fostered learning.

There was less evidence of the importance of convening, most likely because co-location provided a structural alternative to intermittent or *ad hoc* convening. Directive leadership within organizations emerged as important, rather than the facilitative leadership across organizations identified in the hypotheses. In addition, there were significant feedback loops between learning and many of the other variables.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

NORMALIZATION (SUMMER 2005–SPRING 2007)

When I arrived in Afghanistan, I was focused on command and control [C2], ownership, directing activities. I quickly found that I owned very little, controlled very little, could direct very little... The new C2 was about cooperation and collaboration, not command and control, influence not direction. We had to create forums, bring key stakeholders to convene, so we could collaborate.

Confidential Interview 86

US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan changed again under the leadership of Ambassador Ronald Neumann and Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry. Eikenberry arrived in Kabul in May 2005 to assume command of Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (CFC-A). Neumann arrived in July.¹¹⁹

Neumann and Eikenberry faced a formidable set of challenges. The insurgency in Afghanistan was gaining momentum at the very moment the US was turning attention and resources towards Iraq. Moreover, the military structure on the ground was in flux. As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)/International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) assumed responsibility for each of the regional commands, US troops, with the exception of Special Forces, increasingly operated under the auspices of ISAF and in concert with other NATO and Afghan troops.

¹¹⁹ Zalmay Khalilzad had left several months earlier to serve as US Ambassador to Iraq. During the period between Khalilzad's departure and Neumann's arrival, the US mission was led by Charge d'Affaires Maureen Quinn.

Neumann and Eikenberry adopted a different approach to civil-military coordination than had their predecessors. The most visible and widely noted change was Eikenberry's decision to set up his office at Camp Eggers, rather than continue the co-location at the embassy that had been the hallmark of the previous period.

Neumann instituted important changes at the embassy, in a process many interviewees referred to as "normalization" (Interview 65). In place of the prior system, in which the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group (ARG) had held a privileged place, Neumann created a more typical embassy structure. He organized decision making around functional areas and increased the relative status and influence of other parts of the embassy, including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) (Interview 65). The ARG faded away. Likewise, the Embassy Interagency Planning Cell (EIPG), the center of joint analysis and planning in the prior period, disappeared and was replaced by other systems and processes.

Beyond the changes directly attributable to Neumann and Eikenberry, there were other changes in key variables identified in Chapter Three, some of which reflected efforts to learn from past successes and failures. Collectively, these changes had important effects on coordination.

Following is a content analysis of the interview data about this period. Consistent with the earlier findings, the analysis shows that

agreement on goals and strategy was necessary, but not sufficient, for coordinated results. People on the ground also needed to be empowered to implement agreed strategies, and they needed access to information to do so effectively. Joint analysis and planning was essential both to build consensus on goals and strategies and to leverage the information necessary to implement agreed strategies.

Co-location and, in particular, the decision not to continue the co-location of the senior military commander and ambassador at the embassy had both substantive and symbolic effects. Resource disparities continued to undermine coordination, while efforts to redress specific power imbalances enhanced coordination. Finally, directive leadership within organizations again emerged a factor contributing to information sharing, joint analysis, and planning.

COORDINATED RESULTS¹²⁰

As with the prior period, the coordinated results that were the most frequently cited involved road construction. There were many examples of complementarity. The military increasingly provided the security

¹²⁰ As explained earlier, the analysis focuses on coordinated results among the US Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS), and USAID. However, as US troops transitioned to NATO/ISAF command, it became increasingly difficult to analyze US military contributions separately from the broader ISAF efforts. The coordinated results most frequently and consistently cited were those with national ramifications, but there also were many cases of coordinated results at the tactical level. Because coordinated results often spanned time periods, their inclusion in a given period does not necessarily imply completion.

necessary for civilian contractors to do the actual construction. In building the road from Kandahar to Tirin Kot, for example, a USAID officer credited the military with providing essential support.

We couldn't have built the road without direct military support. We had military guys up and down the road patrolling it, flyovers. We were sharing intel [intelligence] offline. This couldn't have been built without that level of [military] involvement (Interview 24).

Road construction also benefited from complementary resources. Civilians and military leveraged different funding sources, with different authorities and restrictions, to build different segments of road. For example, USAID built roads in the lower end of the Panchir Valley, while the Panchir PRT used the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds to build roads in the upper end of the valley (Interview 55). In other cases, the military provided the funding, while USAID provided the in-house engineering expertise to direct and monitor construction (Interview 24). In all of these cases, complementary inputs resulted in a growing roads network.

Specific aspects of reconstruction of the Kajaki Dam in northern Helmand province were cited as examples of coordinated results. The dam had the potential to generate urgently needed power in the south but required extensive repairs and reconstruction. Insurgent activity made it difficult for civilians to do the necessary work. In one example of complementarity, the military provided the security perimeter that enabled civilian contractors to move forward with repairs. The military also

transported supplies and parts to the construction site, including, as one USAID official described it, "... the massive military coordinated exercise to move the turbine up to the dam site... over 5,000 soldiers, helicopter and jet aircraft...a very integrated, complex operation to escort a hundred trucks going up the road into the campsite" (Interview 57).

Clear-hold-build operations, including Operation Mountain Lion and Operation Medusa, were frequently cited as examples of coordinated results. Operation Mountain Lion, the first major operation in the East, was launched in April 2006 in the Pech River Valley, an area with substantial Taliban activity. The combat operation, involving approximately 2,500 Afghan and US forces, was followed by a major infusion of aid closely coordinated between the military and civilians.

We cleared the enemy out, then transitioned immediately, showing the face of the Afghan government, proving by our actions that we were there to stay and offering realistic, tangible alternatives and solutions to their problems (Interview 110).

Operation Medusa, conducted during the first two weeks of September 2006, involved troops from Canada, the US, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Afghanistan.¹²¹ Although Canadian-led, interviewees cited it as an example of US coordination nested within broader multinational coordination.

Civilians were deeply involved in planning and implementing efforts to mitigate the impacts of Operation Medusa on the population

¹²¹ The objective was to establish government control in a key part of Kandahar Province thought to be a Taliban stronghold.

(Interview 81). A senior USAID official highlighted the accomplishment: “Within two weeks of the end of hostilities, we were able to begin rehabilitation and reconstruction work within areas that had been damaged” (Interview 54). This contrasted with many prior military operations, in which there had been long delays between the end of hostilities and the infusion of aid.

There were several examples of synergistic coordinated results, all of which involved road construction. For example, the military built segments of a road, and USAID then established schools and clinics along the road (Interview 24). The roads thus advanced security, governance, and reconstruction goals. A military officer described the synergy.

We didn’t just do clear-hold-build. Sometimes, we did preemptive reconstruction to avoid having to clear and hold...In Paktika Province...a tribe was there, using a route back and forth...We moved in February–March 2006, put up a school, paved roads by the market, lighted poles with solar energy...I went with the provincial governor...boys and girls going to school for the first time in years, the market now lit at night...They swore to all of us, “We won’t support the enemy.” We never had to fight. It was preventive...governance, reconstruction, security – each begat the others, inextricably (Interview 83).

Road construction also was linked strategically to clear-hold-build operations. One interviewee cited the following example involving Operation Mountain Lion.

We had a tough patch of road in Kunar and Nuristan Province...enemy ambushes, etc. Two days after we launched Mountain Lion, we began a major road project – the Pesh Valley Road – to give jobs, change the environment. You should see the road now – unbelievable – mom-and-pop shops, rest stops, gas

stations... We built wells, schools... you name it, we built it to have an immediate impact (Interview 83).

As with the preceding period, counternarcotics efforts continued to be cited as examples of both coordinated results and coordination failures. On the one hand, the comprehensive five-pillar counternarcotics strategy, developed in the preceding period was finally published in August 2007. As indicated earlier, the plan had five pillars: enforcement, eradication, rule of law, strategic communications, and alternative livelihoods. Each of those pillars, in turn, had designated sub-pillars and supporting activities. The plan also established a timeline and division of labor, including a chart that assigned a lead agency for each pillar or major component of a pillar (Interview 21).¹²² There was a built-in monitoring system, based on periodic reports to the Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group (AIOG) and Deputies Committee on progress against identified goals.¹²³

A National Security Council (NSC) official explained that, while the plan was a significant step in forging agreement on goals and strategy at the policy/strategic level, coordination often floundered on the ground.¹²⁴

¹²² For example, DoS was the lead agency on enforcement, but DoD assumed responsibility for training counternarcotics policies (Interview 21).

¹²³ Following development of the plan, resources were allocated for its implementation.

¹²⁴ Counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar Province continued to be cited as coordinated results within was what described as a broader national failure of implementation during this period. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the distinguishing factors included the relative empowerment of civilians in the Jalalabad Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), combined with processes for

The good news was...coming to this very good strategy, achieved by bringing together both the civilian and military sides, multiple elements of each, to look at a common problem and figure out an integrated solution. The bad news – not a good job of executing, due to how it was resourced, how it was executed on the ground...If you look at how it was put together, written, it is a good model for an integrated approach. But, if you write the perfect document, but don't execute, then you have no integrated civil-military effect (Interview 2).

This further supports the argument that agreement on goals and strategy, while necessary, is not sufficient. Other factors are necessary for coordinated implementation, including, as indicated above, effective resourcing.

There were many other coordination failures. While some were at the tactical level, the most serious were at the strategic level. In the case of Operation Medusa, for example, the Afghan National Security Forces were not sufficiently developed to hold the area. A senior USAID official explained:

Operation Medusa didn't have the [intended] long-term impact because we had to do it twice. The failure was the inability to secure the area after it had been cleared of insurgents, to hold it, due to the fact that we don't have a reliable Afghan army or police force. That is the biggest problem...In that sense the tactical successes are overwhelmed by a broader strategic failure (Interview 57).

The most serious strategic coordination failure involved the negative effects of the counterterrorism operations on reconstruction and

joint analysis and planning. These enabled the US to engage in a coordinated way with the governor, who, in turn, played an important leadership role on counternarcotics.

counterinsurgency efforts. A civilian official who served on the ground explained:

Special Forces were operating independently of NATO. For example, the Helmand PRT worked hard to establish good relationships with the community. Then Special Forces would drop some bombs...ruin it (Interview 101).

A military officer also expressed frustration with the ongoing lack of coordination between combat operations and reconstruction.

There were always the wild cards, groups I can't talk about doing operations. For example, Marines shot in a market in the latter part of 2007 and killed a bunch of civilians...They were attacked, returned fire indiscriminately, killed numerous civilians...caused many problems for our battalion and the PRT (Interview 110).

Thus, complementary coordinated results at the tactical level often did not add up because of broader coordination failures at the policy and strategic levels. This lack of synergy across many efforts would continue to compromise effectiveness.

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES (HYPOTHESIZED)

AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

Consistent with the prior period, agreement on goals and strategy was the most important variable explaining coordinated results (and coordination failures), with roles and responsibilities the most significant aspect of agreed strategy. Agreement was necessary at all levels, but agreement of the senior leaders on the ground was particularly important because of its potential to influence decision making at higher and lower

levels. When there was agreement on goals and strategy, it was a key factor explaining coordinated results. When agreement was lacking, coordination failures ensued.

The experience with both road construction and repairs to the Kajaki Dam demonstrate the importance of agreement at the strategic/operational level. While there were reports of conflict and disagreement between the ambassador and senior military commander in this period, the data show that they agreed on a number of important priorities. This, in turn, was a key factor in the achievement of the coordinated results identified above.

Neumann and Eikenberry agreed early on to focus on two major infrastructure needs: roads and electric power. They also agreed that the military had a role to play in reconstruction of both, and thus on an overarching division of labor.

Their agreement on high-level goals and strategy made possible coordinated results. As one official put it, coordinated results in road construction and work on the Kajaki Dam “first required the high-level guidance [on the part of Neumann and Eikenberry] to say roads and power are where we’ll focus” (Interview 65).

The agreement of the senior civilian and military leadership on the ground contributed to agreement at the policy/strategic level and

associated support. A senior DoS official who observed the effects in Washington explained:

Eikenberry and Neumann started saying, “Where the road ends, the Taliban begins.” They said, “This is our strategic priority – building roads and power.” So we scrambled for resources for roads and power. It was a coordinated approach (Interview 30).

While civilians and military agreed on the importance of road construction, they had different interests and priorities. Civilians emphasized long-term development, and the military shorter-term security and stability. A USAID official explained:

There were differences in imperatives...The reason USAID builds a road is economic growth or employment. The reason the military builds a road is to penetrate enemy territory. Very different reasons, so there were lots of questions about why USAID won't go in and do this in “x” area. The military didn't understand the development pieces. You don't just build a road to build a road. There's a process of negotiation needed with local communities that you build the roads through about generating employment for those communities (Interview 66).

Nevertheless, the shared commitment to road construction made possible the coordinated results identified earlier. This shows that, while agreement on high-level goals is necessary for coordination, the interests, priorities, and emphasis placed on various aspects of those goals need not always be the same. This would be an important aspect of learning over time, as both military and civilians developed more nuanced understanding of both common ground and differences.

Agreement among the senior leadership on the ground also played an important role in coordinated results achieved in work on the Kajaki

Dam. USAID had a longstanding interest and investment in the dam, and it was one of the largest USAID-funded projects in Afghanistan. A senior USAID official explained that it was “the absolute centerpiece of work we’re attempting to do in the south in terms of economic recovery” (Interview 54).

There were major logistical and security challenges associated with transporting parts and equipment to the dam. Moreover, insurgent activity was interfering with the ability of USAID contractors to work at the dam site. A USAID official described the scene.

USAID-funded contractors working on the dam...had been suspended due to mortars falling on the construction site...our team had also cleared out the...Afghan team on other side of river, so the pool of people to work on dam was going to be very limited (Interview 54).

USAID therefore needed military assistance to implement the reconstruction efforts. As with road construction, the military was initially reluctant to support work on the dam. A DoS official explained:

The initial [military] response at the staff level was, “We don’t have time or staff to protect USAID projects, so USAID projects should have their own security or the contractor should just get out of there (Interview 55).

As civilians and military shared information and engaged in joint analysis, attitudes within DoD began to change. A DoS official described a discussion with General Benjamin Freakley, Commander of CJTF-76, that was part of this process.

In the spring of 2006, after General Freakley took command [of Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-76], I said, “General, this dam is a key element in the whole national development strategy. It will provide one third of the country’s electricity, which is the core of development. We can’t let the Taliban do this. Thus, instead of just saying “that’s just an [US]AID project,” we said, “this is a national project and we need to defend it” (Interview 55).

Eventually, a strong interagency agreement emerged about both the strategic importance of the dam and the importance of military assistance with security and logistics (Interview 24). A USAID official described the change in mindset.

The military are saying that building this dam is their most important strategic objective. When has the military ever said that a dam was their most important strategic objective? They were losing people to do this... This was an example of the military’s change in mindset (Interview 24).

Thus, information sharing and joint analysis led to learning, which, in turn, led to agreement on goals and strategy. Coordinated results flowed from the agreement. USAID and the military worked out an agreement in which the military would provide a security perimeter to ensure that construction could continue. A USAID official argued that the agreement on goals and priorities was the key factor in achieving the coordinated results discussed earlier.

The military and civilian leadership were agreed at all levels, and everyone was on board. There was no issue as to what the priorities were. That’s why that worked (Interview 54).

Beyond agreeing on priorities for reconstruction efforts, Neumann and Eikenberry had a shared assessment of the unfolding challenges the US faced in Afghanistan and the support needed to address them. They

presented a unified voice to Washington on a number of significant issues.

This often took the form of joint cables.¹²⁵ According to a DoS official:

The cables were jointly crafted, with intense coordination between Eikenberry and Neumann...I remember being impressed at their willingness to restrain themselves. Time is a factor...desire to get it out now, but both of the principals were often outside of Kabul, so there was a willingness to wait and do it jointly. I don't remember any instance where someone fired off a strategy cable without checking with the other one...(Interview 87).

One joint cable, for example, addressed the controversial issue of arming local militias to supplement the central government's fledgling security capacity. Another was "basically a heads-up, 'Here comes the insurgency' cable...early in 2006, before the fighting season started" (Interview 87).

While their unified voice on such issues affected decision making at the policy/strategic level, there were limits to that effect, especially when it came to resources. Neumann and Eikenberry submitted a jointly crafted budget request urgently arguing for more resources. A senior policy maker, one of the few interviewed who argued that Neumann and Eikenberry achieved a higher degree of coordination than their predecessors, reflected:

The best interagency coordination I saw out of Kabul was when Eikenberry and Neumann came in with a huge...budget request. They came together with a coordinated budget approach. They said, "Here's what we need to do to expand the police, road

¹²⁵ The joint cables were important in conveying a unified voice on important and issues, and hence helping to build agreement at the policy level. They were not new, however. As indicated earlier, cables sent in the prior period also reflected significant military input.

system, education, governance, court systems...” It was presented jointly...the initiative on that was Eikenberry’s and Neumann’s...I give them credit for pushing the envelope. They did have some disputes, but they got things done. That’s what mattered (Interview 42).

The response to the budget request, however, was disappointing.

According to Neumann, they requested close to \$600 million, but only received \$43 million of which \$11 million was earmarked for a debt relief offset (Neumann 2009). This constrained their ability to deliver coordinated results, as discussed in the analysis of resources later in the chapter.

In spite of the agreement highlighted above, the data indicate that there was not the same clarity about civil-military roles and responsibilities that characterized the Khalilzad-Barno era. Barno had deliberately “subordinated” the military to political goals, arguing that the military had a responsibility to support the full array of civilian efforts. That explicit, across-the-board, supporting-supported relationship did not come through as clearly in the interaction between principals in this period.

According to one senior official who served with them: “We used to joke that Ambassador Neumann wanted to run the war and General Eikenberry wanted to run the diplomacy” (Interview 58). In part, this flowed from their individual experiences and personalities.

Neumann had experience as an infantry officer in Vietnam, so he had a unique skill set in the Foreign Service, and he had just come from Iraq, so he knew the military side well. Eikenberry is a sharp

guy, speaks languages, also has diplomatic skills. He has a very strategic mind, as well. Both realized they had to go into each other's areas – Eikenberry into diplomacy, Neumann into military...(Interview 65).

Neumann described their working relationship in similar terms.

Eikenberry and I worked closely together. I accepted that he had every reason for interest in economics, justice, etc., because if they didn't work, he was not going home. And he accepted that I had every reason to be involved in operational matters. What happens in security matters to our progress in other areas. I was very involved in operations stuff...The story that relations were poor was fallacious (Neumann 2009).

Neumann's and Eikenberry's engagement in detailed discussions about the full spectrum of civilian and military issues facilitated information sharing and joint analysis. It also contributed to coordinated results. One official explained:

When there was a military operation about to begin, Eikenberry would brief Ambassador Neumann, who would interject questions. They'd go back and get answers or adjust as necessary. They basically agreed that they needed to go into each other's areas (Interview 65).

Nevertheless, the interaction between the principals reflected a deeper change in civil-military relations on the ground, in which the role of the military relative to civilians appeared less clearly defined than it had been in the prior period.

In counternarcotics, disagreement about roles and responsibilities – both on the ground and in Washington – continued to undermine coordination. While everyone agreed on the importance of reducing narcotics production and trafficking, resistance within the military

remained. A senior DoD official argued that Eikenberry's unwillingness to support counternarcotics efforts early in this period impeded implementation of the five-pillar plan.

The epilogue [to the counternarcotics plan] was that it fell apart, fell off track, for the same reason things like this always fall apart. It fell apart when people in positions of influence were no longer interested...Lieutenant General Eikenberry was not interested in this at all. At the beginning of his tenure, he was adamant that the command [CFC-A] didn't do counternarcotics, so it died (Interview 21).

A senior DoS official described the impact on the ground:

“General Freakley (Commander, CJTF-76) actually shut down counternarcotics operations, saying they were interfering with warfighting efforts” (Interview 12).

Any disagreement between Neumann and Eikenberry about counternarcotics reflected lingering conflict about counternarcotics strategy in Washington. A DoS official explained:

During the [former Secretary of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld era, [DoD] didn't want anything to do with counternarcotics. Eikenberry said, “That's not our job.” Others said, “Wait, the Taliban will use this [narcotics trafficking] to fund the insurgency.” Generals who disagreed with Rumsfeld often wouldn't speak up (Interview 12).

Once Rumsfeld left, a consensus began to emerge within DoD that the military had a role to play in counternarcotics efforts. This made possible coordinated results. As one official noted, there was “much better coordination...[The military] delivered a strong message that ‘we, the

military, are strongly supportive, ' sharing intelligence, and [conducting] coordinated operations'' (Interview 12).

Thus, agreement at the policy/strategic and strategic/operational levels was necessary for coordination. When agreement at either level was lacking, coordination was undermined.

The same was true at the operational/tactical level, where disagreement about goals and strategies continued to undermine coordination. As explained earlier, the military emphasized short-term security needs and civilians longer-term development. At many PRTs, civilians and military were unable to bridge this difference. The result was a go-it-alone attitude. A senior military official explained how the military relied increasingly on CERP funds to fund their own, rather than coordinated, initiatives.

We'd have a dialogue, led by a governor, regarding prioritizing their needs. For example, they would say, "We need schools, so kids won't go to *madrastas* in Pakistan..."When we'd go to USAID, they'd say, "That's not part of the national strategy for Afghanistan. We'll do that in two years." They were all about central government capacity. We'd say, "We're bleeding here. We need a school here now, not in two years." So, we'd do it with CERP money...It was very frustrating. It was at the provincial and district level where the insurgency was being fought. But the development agencies were focused on developing capacity at the central government. USAID wasn't reaching where we really needed the resources, so we had to do ourselves (Interview 107).

The problem was exacerbated by inconsistent understandings of military and civilian roles and responsibilities at the PRTs. A senior

USAID official, who visited a number of PRTs where there were conflicts between civilians and military, reflected:

PRT officers didn't know how to exploit the presence of USAID field officers...[However,] the problem...wasn't just the military not understanding USAID...I heard one USAID field officer say it [the PRT] was supposed to be a three-headed hydra, with the military in charge of military activities, [DoS] in charge of governance interaction, and USAID in charge of development...We told our officers, "You have contribution to make, but you're part of the staff and resources available to the commander to carry out the mission." Once that was clear, the relationship was dramatically improved (Interview 54).

Where PRTs did manage to achieve coordinated results, a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities was a key factor. However, it had to be combined with strong and experienced coordinated results. Otherwise, as explained later in the chapter, USAID became an "arrow in their [the military's] quiver, not a partner in development" (Interview 24).

Thus, agreement on goals and strategies, including roles and responsibilities, was necessary at all levels. Agreement was not, however, sufficient, as is evident in the analysis below.

EMPOWERMENT

The analysis supports the hypothesis that empowerment is necessary for coordinated results. Consistent with the prior period, it was not only formal decision-making authority that mattered. Equally important was access to resources. Where either aspect of empowerment was lacking, coordination was undermined.

At the strategic/operational level, the reduction in *de facto* empowerment from the previous period undermined coordinated implementation of agreed strategies. Neumann and Eikenberry did have decision-making authority regarding implementation. However, they did not enjoy the same influence in Washington or access to resources that their predecessors had.

Several interviewees argued that the poor response to the jointly crafted supplemental budget request reflected the reduced influence of the senior leadership in Kabul on decision making in Washington. As one official in Washington put it, “Khalilzad was very effective with respect to funding. Neumann was not as successful in pushing the urgency” (Interview 23). Another official argued that the disappointing response reflected a civil-military “leadership vacuum” in Kabul: “Barno and Khalilzad were players. Upon their departures, there was a leadership vacuum, both real and perceived, that took the air out of Afghanistan” (Interview 21).

While leadership may have played a role, resource allocation decisions were driven primarily by the intense focus on Iraq during this period. It was in many respects a zero-sum game, and Iraq won out. Moreover, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was trying to move away from supplemental budgets and to rely more on the regular budget cycle to fund US efforts in Afghanistan. This, too, contributed to the response to the supplemental budget request. Whatever the reasons

behind the lack of resources, it constrained Neumann's and Eikenberry's ability to deliver coordinated results in the areas they agreed to prioritize.

At the levels below Neumann and Eikenberry, lack of empowerment also undermined coordination. In one example, a military officer argued that Eikenberry did not empower the task force to engage directly with the embassy.

We at the task force had to be very careful dealing with the embassy, so word didn't get back to General Eikenberry ...Eikenberry's view was that he is the one who deals with the embassy (Interview 55).

According to the military officer, the lack of empowerment caused "at least one huge failure to coordinate."

In the spring of 2006, a major counternarcotics campaign was being planned for Helmand Province, just at the time that the Province was being turned over to the British. So [initiating that campaign at that time] was like kicking over a beehive...General Freakley didn't find out about this until he was making a trip to Helmand Province, and the governor told him (Interview 55).

The above example highlights another dimension of empowerment not identified in Chapter Three: the authority to share information across agencies. This can be understood as a minimal level of empowerment, which makes possible the information sharing necessary for coordination. The example suggests that the definition of empowerment should once again be expanded to include authority to share information, in addition to decision-making authority and access to resources.

The problem of lack of empowerment was particularly acute within USAID, where a combination of lack of access to resources and lack of decision-making authority undermined the agency's ability to coordinate both on national programs and in the field.

USAID funding decisions in Kabul were constrained by Congressional authorities, as well as USAID contracting mechanisms. When opportunities to coordinate national projects with the military emerged, USAID officers in Kabul were unable to move quickly enough to take advantage of those opportunities. A USAID official, referring to USAID's restricted funding authorities as a "fatal flaw," highlighted the contrast with the military's much more flexible funding authorities.

The military has different sets of rules under which they operate. We [USAID] have to notify Congress in some cases, if modification is significant. Other times, it requires modification of existing agreements [with contractors]. If you have an implementing partner, a contractor, and you call and say, "Go repair this bridge that was bombed," they'll say, "You need to modify our contract." We don't have the military's "notwithstanding" authorities [that provide] a lot of flexibility to move money rapidly where it may be needed (Interview 71).

USAID's difficulty responding quickly was exacerbated by the continued lack of empowerment of its Field Program Officers (FPO) at the PRTs. Because they did not control resources, they had to develop project proposals for approval in Kabul (Interview 96). Moreover, many were Private Service Contractors (PSC) who had neither experience navigating the USAID bureaucracy nor established relationships within it. This made it even more difficult for them to get projects approved (Interview 14).

Even USAID's Quick Impact Program (QIP), the funding mechanism established to increase USAID's ability to respond quickly, often proved ineffective (Interview 11). In 2006, USAID initiated the Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) Program, an effort to address some of the problems associated with QIP and make USAID "more flexible and responsive" (Interview 11). Like QIP, however, LGCD suffered from centralization and time delays and thus did little in this period to increase USAID empowerment at the PRTs (Interview 11).

The military at the PRTs, by contrast, enjoyed significant empowerment in terms of both formal decision-making authority and access to resources. Military officers at the PRTs were authorized to approve CERP funding of up to \$25,000 for projects they deemed important (Interview 109). However, they often proceeded without consulting with their civilian colleagues, let alone engaging in rigorous joint analysis and planning.

In part, the lack of consultation reflected frustration with USAID's inability to move quickly. A senior military officer explained:

The theory was that money in Kabul went down to districts. A great theory, but in reality it was all stuck, didn't get down to us. We created a bureaucracy in Kabul...that's why CERP funding was so important (Interview 82).

Thus, in a context in which USAID PRT officers were not empowered to make the decisions necessary to coordinate, the military

often adopted a go-it-alone attitude. This suggests that disparities in levels of empowerment may be as important as, if not more important than, absolute levels of empowerment.

The problem of empowerment was exacerbated by the lack of incentives to coordinate and lack of accountability for coordinated results. As a result, not only were opportunities to increase efficiency and leverage complementary capacities lost, but well-intended military initiatives often undermined civilian efforts.

There was evidence of learning about the negative effects of empowerment, when it was not combined with clear direction from above regarding the need to coordinate. When Major General Jason Kamiya assumed command of CJTF-76 in spring 2005, he temporarily withdrew the authority of PRT commanders to allocate CERP funds. Instead, he required them to coordinate funding proposals with civilians and send them to him for approval. He explained:

I asked the PRT commanders to coordinate funding proposals with their civilian developmental partners, to identify the systems that needed to be developed, and how individual projects contributed to a specific system or set of systems...Instead of funding piecemeal projects that represented only the military view, we began funding complete systems that were representative of the best collective judgment of the military and civilian leadership at the sponsoring PRT (Kamiya 2011).

A PRT commander described the significance of this change.

He changed the system so that you needed brigade-level approval for any CERP expenditure. The PRTs had to submit on a quarterly basis project nominations for approval by the brigade. This forced

coordination, because if...the AID rep hadn't had a vote, when it got to brigade, that AID rep at the brigade wouldn't [support the project] (Interview 109).

Several months later, confident that he had firmly established his expectations regarding coordination, Kamiya reinstated the prior system, authorizing PRT commanders to allocate CERP funds. Thus, a temporary reduction in empowerment was used to make clear to military officers that they were expected to coordinate with their civilian counterparts as well as establish patterns of behavior conducive to continued coordination.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

There were limited data about accountability and incentives. Some USAID officials interviewed perceived a change in professional incentives among the senior military leadership on the ground, arguing that it contributed to coordinated results. A USAID official pointed to the initial meeting between then Major General David Rodriguez, Commanding General of CJTF-82, and his DoS and USAID counterparts in early spring 2007 as evidence of change.

Rodriguez said: "We have new marching orders. We want to know how to make development work." At that point, with the arrival of the 82nd Airborne, the message had gotten through: Coordination...was a promotion precept for Major General. He saw that he didn't succeed unless development succeeded (Interview 11).

Major General Eric ("Rick") Olson, while acknowledging the importance of the increasing focus on civil-military coordination within the military, offered the following qualifications. To the extent that there

was a change in incentives, it was implicit, rather than incorporated into formal promotional precepts. Moreover, it emerged organically, over time, as the military adapted to new challenges, especially with respect to counterinsurgency operations. Olson explained:

The change in incentives, the change in how our general officers are picked and developed, was not a watershed event. There has been a gradual evolution, given the types of operations the military forces have been involved with since the end of the Cold War...The notion of winning the hearts and minds of the people, of gaining the allegiance of the people, is [at the core of] counterinsurgency doctrine...To fight a counterinsurgency, there are real advantages to bringing in civilians, to win the population away from the insurgents. As the success of senior officers has been tied more to their success in COIN [counterinsurgency] and other operations of that type, such as disaster relief, the guys that do well are the guys who will be promoted (Olson 2011).

At the PRTs, by contrast, the data available indicate that perverse incentives for the military to spend money quickly continued to undermine joint analysis and planning. The lack of accountability for coordinated results on the part of both civilians and the military also continued to undermine coordination. Given the limited data, however, further analysis is necessary to determine the explanatory power of incentives and accountability.

CO-LOCATION AND CONVENING

Co-location again emerged as a significant factor explaining coordination. As discussed earlier, co-location was partially captured in the hypotheses by transaction costs. Co-location also can be understood as one pole on a spectrum of convening and thus is included with the analysis

of convening below. However, the importance of co-location went beyond facilitating information sharing, joint analysis, and planning. Decisions about co-location also had significant symbolic effects.

The most striking data about co-location involved Eikenberry's decision to move his headquarters to Camp Eggers, rather than continue the co-location at the embassy that had been the hallmark of Barno's command. The move increased transaction costs for face-to-face communication between the ambassador and senior military commander, resulting in much less frequent interaction. Neumann and Eikenberry did meet at least weekly, often over dinner, but this was a far cry from the hours of daily, in-person interaction between principals in the prior period. A senior diplomat who served on the ground during this period emphasized the negative impact on communication.

There was an office in the embassy for General Eikenberry, but he didn't seem to use it much. Proximity is everything. With the best will in world, if it takes a half hour to load a convoy, go through all barriers, it's not the same as going down the hall for a meeting. Even though there was this office, General Eikenberry didn't seem to want to spend as much time at the embassy...Ambassador Neumann did go to Camp Eggers from time to time, but communication was hampered by distance (Interview 62).

Beyond the reduction in face-to-face communication, the change had significant symbolic effects. As one official who served on the ground in both this period and the preceding one put it, "When he moved out of the embassy, it sent a signal" (Interview 74). Another was more specific regarding the change in priorities it implied.

I was not there under General Barno, but when I arrived, I learned of his way of dealing with it [civil-military relations]. Be in the embassy. Live on the embassy compound. Big “P” [for political], little “m” [for military]. General Eikenberry decided, by example, big “M” and little “p” (Interview 93).

Some argued that Neumann’s “normalization” of the embassy was really an effort to push the military out (Interview 68). Other perceived the move as a deliberate attempt on Eikenberry’s part to distance himself and his command from the civilian leadership (Interview 69). Yet others argued that Eikenberry’s decision was less a move away from the embassy and more a move toward CFC-A.

A USAID official who praised Barno’s decision to co-locate at the embassy nevertheless acknowledged that co-location had come “at a cost,” in terms of distance from the majority of his command (Interview 118). By being at Camp Eggers on a daily basis, Eikenberry was able to exert much more direct control over military affairs, at a time when the insurgency was growing. A senior military officer who served under him explained:

Due to both his command perspective and his command style, General Eikenberry’s view was that, to be the commander of the CJTF (Combined Joint Task Force), he had to plant himself in that command at Camp Eggers...If General Eikenberry had lived there [at the embassy], it would have been just him and his aide. His staff of five to six hundred people could not set up shop on the embassy compound...he had a campaign to run, a staff to give direction to...so there’s an aspect of command with a capital “C” that has to be understood...(Interview 93).

Regardless of the motivation for or tradeoffs involved, the move reduced face-to-face communication between principals. It also gave

many, including senior policy makers in Washington, the impression that all was not well with civil-military relations on the ground.

It is not possible to disentangle the decreased in-person interaction or the symbolic effects of the move from the other factors that affected coordination in this period. Nor is it possible to know whether coordination would have been enhanced had Eikenberry stayed at the embassy. Nevertheless, most interviewees argued that coordination suffered as a result of the move. One official reflected:

After 2003–2005, everything in the US interagency became a relationship based on animosity and the rice bowl scenario...a bad relationship between Eikenberry and everybody who wasn't wearing a green uniform (Interview 69).

A senior DoD official in Washington offered a parallel assessment:

The coordination began to deteriorate after Khalilzad and Barno left...What I saw was when General Eikenberry came in and Ambassador Neumann came in...we could see that the embassy and command were not as linked up as earlier...When the command moved to Camp Eggers, it meant that persistent contact...was disrupted. When we had them on SVTC [secure video teleconference), we could see that they were not as linked up as we would like to see. There was one point, for example – [discussion about] an augmentation of US forces in Afghanistan. I remember thinking the two sides don't seem to be too coordinated...It wasn't personal tension between the two principals, both of whom would assert that the relationship was just fine...just the physical separation (Interview 36).

When asked whether the change affected concrete coordinated results, the official explained:

One principle of COIN [counterinsurgency operations] is unity of effort. It must have contributed to our inability to get on top of the situation. There were many other factors, including economy of

effort, the role of Pakistan, etc...but this certainly contributed...and may have contributed to some of the dysfunction in the counternarcotics effort...may have been an issue in things like the...hold placed in growing the size of the ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces) (Interview 36).

While most observers perceived a decline in coordination between the US ambassador and senior military commander from the prior period, many reported a strengthened working relationship and enhanced coordination between USAID and the operational military. This does not necessarily contradict the assessments of a decline in coordination at the principals' level. Rather, it shows the multifaceted nature of coordination and the fact that changes in one set of relationships did not necessarily correspond to changes in others.

There were several reasons for the continued strengthening of the relationship between USAID and the operational military. Neumann's normalization of the embassy and Eikenberry's direction to his subordinates to incorporate USAID expertise into decision making were deeply appreciated after the marginalization of USAID in the Khalilzad embassy. These changes and their impacts on coordination are discussed later in the chapter.

Convening also played an important role. Shortly after assuming command of Regional Command (RC) East, Rodriguez and several members of his command met with the senior civilian leadership at the embassy and agreed on the importance of enhanced coordination. From this emerged monthly, full-day meetings at Bagram Airfield. The

convening made possible the regular information sharing and joint analysis and planning that were consistently cited as making possible coordinated results.¹²⁶ Since the majority of the process took place in the subsequent period, it is discussed in the chapter that follows.

In this period, co-location at the embassy was not entirely eliminated. Rather, Eikenberry changed the model, appointing a Deputy Commanding General (DCG) for Political-Military Affairs to represent him at the embassy.¹²⁷ Major General William Chambers (then Brigadier General), who held this position under Eikenberry, explained that he played both an official liaison role and occasionally played an informal intermediary role, helping Eikenberry and Neumann resolve any disagreements that emerged between the Command and the Country Team.

There was a perception among some – those not close to the situation – that the two principals didn't always see eye to eye and that their personalities, styles, perhaps egos sometimes collided. When that happened, which was rare, it was worked out, with a lot of people helping...The two principals were true professionals...I was one of the people helping. Sometimes it was just a matter of hearing out the ambassador or the commander, then going to see

¹²⁶ Convening also played an important role in this period at the multinational level. The Policy Action Group (PAG), a multinational process established during this period, played an important role in facilitating information sharing and joint analysis, with direct benefits in terms of coordinated results. The PAG does not fall within the scope of this analysis of US civil-military coordination but merits focused analysis in future research.

¹²⁷ According to one senior military official, Eikenberry was aware that by moving out of the embassy, he “left a flank or a line of operation uncovered.” At Eikenberry’s request, General Abizaid, Commander of US Central Command, created a new DCG for Political-Military Affairs position at the one-star level (Interview 93).

the opposite number and helping them to understand...reach an agreement (Chambers 2009).

The co-location of the DCG at the embassy helped facilitate information sharing and, occasionally, agreement. However, it was not the same as daily, in-person interaction between decision makers. As one senior DoS official who served at the embassy during this period put it, “General Eikenberry designated a one-star to...serve as liaison, but this was not the same as the two top dogs consulting periodically” (Interview 62).

Further evidence of the importance of co-location involves the elimination of the co-located planning unit at the embassy. Barno had detailed several senior military planners to the embassy, and, as CFC-A grew, he had expanded their ranks. This had ensured close communication not only between the two principals, but also between military and civilians below them.

The EIPG, which had been established at the embassy under Khalilzad and Barno, continued to function early in the period but was subsequently shut down (Interview 71). Many people involved with the EIPG both under Khalilzad and early in the Neumann period considered this a significant loss. According to one USAID official:

From August 2005 to January or February 2006, there was virtually no coordination with the military, with the following exception: The majority of coordination was at the embassy itself. Khalilzad had left, but he had left in place the Planning Cell [EIPG]. So there were still a couple of military officers at the embassy...USAID worked closely with them on budget at strategy

formulation and metrics...It was a very productive partnership, [some of the USAID officers'] first opportunity to work that closely with the military...That cooperation went well...Then in the first part of 200 the planning cell was shut down, so there was very little regular day-to-day contact [between USAID and the military] at the embassy...very little interaction with Bagram or ISAF in 2005 and 2006 (Interview 71).

Eikenberry, rather than detailing a contingent of military officers to work at the embassy with civilian counterparts, relied primarily on the DCG, a senior military liaison. As a result, there was not the same daily interaction between military and civilians at the working levels. A USAID official who served at the embassy observed:

Chambers was at a level like the Ambassador or General Eikenberry. [USAID officers]...would interact with him at certain meetings, but there was little day-to-day meaningful contact. When you put very high-level military folks in contact with the diplomatic folks, unless they have infrastructure below them to follow up, then it's not very effective. There was the coordination at the principal's level, but not below.

Thus, the elimination of co-location at both the principal and working levels was widely understood to constrain opportunities for information sharing, joint analysis and planning, and, by extension, learning.

While the above analysis focused on co-location of military officers at the embassy, co-location of civilians at the various levels of the military structure also played an important role in coordination. As explained in the previous chapter, the principal mechanisms for co-locating civilians with the military above the PRT level were the positions of Development Advisor (DEVAD) and Political Advisor (POLAD).

USAID worked with their military counterparts to increase the presence of DEVADs at all levels of the military structure on the ground, from headquarters at Bagram to the regional commands and sub-regional commands (Interview 57).¹²⁸ The expansion of the DEVAD program was driven by growing recognition among both military and civilians of the value of co-location and growing appreciation within the military of the expertise civilians brought to the table. Thus, it was a direct outgrowth of learning. A military officer reflected:

We started to put senior advisors at Bagram and RC South, advising the commanders on a daily basis...[As a result] we had a sea change in the attitudes of the military. They were dying and needed advice. They were making mistakes, not because they didn't mean well, but because development is not as easy as it looks (Interview 84).

There were many examples in which co-location of DEVADs with the military contributed to coordinated results.¹²⁹ One official described how the military capability to deliver supplies to internally displaced persons (IDP) was complemented by USAID's expertise regarding *how* the delivery could be done without causing harm.

The military...wanted to do [supply] drops into the IDP camps...You can't do that. Humanitarian principles say you can't do that. How do you know you won't drop in a landmine field and some girl will get blown up? How do you know that guy who runs the village will not give the supplies only to his tribe, not the other 2/3 of village? ...We got that stopped. They put the supplies on

¹²⁸ This coincided with the placement of DEVADs at the combatant commands, following discussions at the policy level between US Joint Forces Command and USAID (Interview 84).

¹²⁹ There also were many examples of POLADs contributing to coordinated results, as documented in the prior chapter.

trucks later and did it right. So having that dialogue...We introduced the principles of needs-based equitable distribution ...This worked better for their hearts and minds (Interview 81).

In another case, the involvement of DEVADs in decisions about where to place bridges contributed to synergistic coordinated results.

A specific example [involved] building bridges in the south and east...there was more checking in with us on feeder roads – where to place them to create economic opportunities...The military were instrumental in helping with engineering...and intermittent security (Interview 84).

Co-location of DEVADs with the military not only reflected learning, but it also fostered learning. Many interviews emphasized how co-location contributed to enhanced appreciation of development principles on the part of the military, enhanced understanding of military culture and priorities on the part of civilians, and significantly enhanced mutual respect and trust.

In this process, daily in-person interaction was critical. One development expert, reflecting on the coordinated results achieved in Operation Medusa, argued that living together was a key factor.

We had been there, living together for a while, about four to five months. We'd built up relationships. We were living together at the Kandahar airfield. At the PRT, they were all embedded at a small base together. A lot hinges on personal relationships and credibility (Interview 81).

Rather than viewing learning as a side benefit, many DEVADs considered it part of their job to contribute to learning. According to one interviewee:

It was crazy, fast-paced. We were learning on the fly...The sign on my door said "DEVAD." The military folks would say, "DEVAD? Who the hell are you? Are you the Devil's advocate?" That's a bit of my job: to challenge assumptions, ask the other questions, bring another perspective to the table...(Interview 81).

Another reflected:

One of the biggest surprises [in my experience in Afghanistan] was how different the military and civilian languages were. When I was talking, how they interpreted and translated what I said was massively different from what I meant...Part of my job was to educate them about what USAID does and enlist their support helping AID do what it does. From the military perspective, they didn't see me as in that role, but rather as the person who had goodies [funding] (Interview 66).

The ability of the DEVAD program to foster learning, however, was constrained by the short rotations and frequent turnover of both civilians and military. A USAID official emphasized how long it took to build a common language, let alone develop mutual understanding of different goals and priorities.

It took about six months before we were using a common language... Development and military imperatives are so different. It took time for me to see how deeply different they are, and it took time for them to understand the same. When I left, we were getting there (Interview 66).

Another put this in the context of short tours of duty.

One of the problems that plagued us was the high and rapid turnover. It takes six months minimum for any military officer or USAID to get our bearings, unless they were there before on a prior tour. So [during a 12-month tour], you have six months of learning, three months of golden time to get things done, then three months getting ready to go out the door (Interview 71).

Nevertheless, there was broad consensus that the system of co-locating DEVADs at the various levels of the military structure on the ground promoted learning and enhanced coordinated results.

The experiences with the DEVAD program varied. While most examples given were positive, co-location sometimes generated more conflict than coordination. Many argued that personality was the distinguishing factor. However, beneath the stories of personality clashes there often were structural problems.

One of the most significant structural problems was the continued lack of empowerment of USAID relative to the military. Power disparities also created tensions, with civilians outnumbered and often (although not always) outranked by their military colleagues. Moreover, the lack of professional incentive and accountability systems conducive to coordinated results contributed to a context in which the individual attitudes of civilians and military, positive as well as negative, often drove information sharing and joint analysis and planning. Thus, in the absence of institutionalized systems and processes conducive to coordinated results, personality often played a significant role.

At the PRT level, the degree of co-location varied, with some PRTs still lacking consistent civilian representation. Where consistent co-location at the PRTs was achieved, its effects were often constrained by the factors identified above: lack of empowerment of civilians, power

disparities, and accountability and incentive systems that worked against coordination.

Thus, while co-location reduced transaction costs associated with in-person interaction, its contribution to coordinated results depended on other factors. These included empowerment, accountability and incentive systems, and joint analysis. When these were in place, co-location contributed to concrete coordinated results, as well as learning. When they were not, co-location was at best ineffective and at worst counterproductive, exacerbating tensions and conflict.

There is one additional aspect of co-location that merits attention: the numbers of civilians and military involved. Just as co-location at the embassy in the prior period involved a small number of military embedded with a much larger number of civilians, so co-location at the operational/tactical level involved a very small number of civilians embedded with much larger number of military.

A USAID official who strongly supported the DEVAD program nevertheless argued that more frequent face-to-face interaction among larger numbers of civilians and military was necessary.

Sending a...[Development Advisor] out to embed with the 82nd Airborne is a start, but it is difficult to support them. They're out on their own. We can't get there on a constant basis. So much is person-to-person face time... You must be able to sit across a table and really work with someone. So when you have a military base that's 45 kilometers north of Kabul, it's not ideal. You can do VTCs (video teleconferences) all you want, and copter rides up once a week, but [the distance] still makes [in-person

communication] difficult. It would be great to move the base of operations down from Bagram to Eggers, so people will be closer. When I was first there, they had the planning cell at the embassy, which did a lot of this, but then it vanished. The center of gravity for the military moved to Eggers for a while, then it moved to Bagram. Locations make a big difference (Interview 71).

This further supports the hypothesized importance of in-person convening and the transaction costs required. When co-location is not possible, reducing the transaction costs necessary for in-person interaction – especially those associated with physical distance – enhances coordination.

DESIGNATED LIAISONS (TRANSACTION COSTS)

Consistent with the prior period, the designation of points of contact and liaisons within individual agencies reduced the transaction costs involved in communication, facilitating information sharing, joint analysis, and in some cases joint decision making. In addition to reducing transaction costs, the use of liaisons promoted convening, as they had implicit convening authority. It also ensured that specific individuals would be held accountable for active engagement in coordination processes, if not always for coordinated results.

The use of designated liaisons positions that were not co-located expanded during this period. Echoing Interim Envoy Ryan Crocker's comments from the first period, a USAID official explained that, before the designation of official liaisons, "it was difficult for civilians to figure

out how to make the military chain of command work” (Interview 66).

Another official confirmed this account.

One problem was...that there were so many points of contact between the military and USAID that it is hard to determine who comprise the set of people with whom you should speak (Interview 54).

The most frequently cited examples of the successful use of liaisons involved positions established within USAID and the operational military, respectively. USAID created a new chief of staff position at the embassy charged with civil-military coordination. The new chief of staff, Jeff Goodson, liaised directly with his military counterparts, helped convene civilians and military, and coordinated with the growing number of DEVADs at headquarters and in the field, thus playing both a vertical and horizontal coordination role (Interview 57).

When the 82nd Airborne arrived in early 2007, Rodriguez likewise established a new liaison role, charging then Brigadier General Rodney Anderson with work on development and governance. A USAID official explained:

The 82nd Airborne came...with a positive attitude towards AID...From the beginning, they made an effort to reach out to us...General David Rodriguez...brought in General Rodney Anderson, said, “You’re in charge of development and governance within the 82nd Airborne. That meant he was in the lead – any engagement the 82nd Airborne has on non-kinetic operations, he would facilitate that, make sure they were reaching out to the UN...making sure they were communicating effectively to the interagency (Interview 96).

Anderson, in turn, would play a major role, in concert with his civilian counterparts, in convening civilians and military at Bagram Airfield for information sharing, joint analysis, and planning. However, since the majority of the convening and joint analysis and planning processes took place in the subsequent period, they are discussed in the chapter that follows.

As with co-location, the impact of liaisons depended on other factors, including empowerment. A USAID official described the importance of the title combined with prior experience in empowering the Chief of Staff to interface with the military.

USAID Mission Director Alonzo Fulgham realized he needed someone of stature to deal with the military. This was the first time there was ever a position with the “Chief of Staff” title or a senior position established to deal with military...[The Chief of Staff we hired] had a military background, which was significant (Interview 71).

Even empowered liaisons, however, could not overcome serious disagreement on goals and strategies at higher levels. The conflict between civilian and military liaisons regarding training of the Afghan National Police (ANP) is a case in point. Neumann charged the head of the newly established political-military (pol-mil) section at the embassy to coordinate with the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A) on development of the ANP.¹³⁰ The Commander

¹³⁰ The Office of Military Cooperation was renamed the Office of Security Cooperation in 2005, then the Combined Security Transition Command in 2006, reflecting an expansion in its mandate (Interview 86).

of CSTC-A likewise designated a one-star general to be the liaison to the embassy.

Both liaisons also were empowered to make decisions. However, coordination with respect to the ANP continued to founder. While some argued the problem was largely one of personality, and while personality may have affected the immediate interactions, their coordination took place against the backdrop of ongoing disagreement between DoD and DoS regarding goals, roles, and responsibilities for developing the ANP. The lack of agreement on goals and strategy at the policy/strategic level necessarily constrained the ability of liaisons to deliver coordinated results.

The above analysis shows that the impact of liaisons is magnified when parallel liaison positions are established within coordinating organizations. Leon (“Skip”) Waskin, who served as USAID Mission from July 2006 to July 2007, reflected on the importance of having coordination “champions” within both USAID and the military.

In my mind, Jeff Goodson [USAID Chief of Staff] and General Anderson and Carl Rahmaan [USAID Deputy Mission Director] were the real heroes of this and made it work. Anderson was the champion on the military side. Jeff and Carl were the champions on the USAID side (Waskin 2009).

Thus, the establishment of parallel liaison positions with coordination mandates provided an institutionalized mechanism for joint civil-military leadership. It not only reduced the transaction costs associated with information sharing and joint analysis and planning, but it

also ensured that specific individuals were charged with and empowered to lead coordination efforts. In many ways, this was analogous to the joint deployment of Ambassador Taylor and General Eikenberry discussed in the prior chapter.

JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

The data strongly support the hypothesis that joint analysis and planning is necessary for coordinated results. Where there was joint planning, it generated agreement on goals and strategy and fostered learning. Where joint planning was lacking, coordination failures ensued.

There were many examples of joint analysis and planning in this period. The Infrastructure Planning Group facilitated joint analysis and planning for infrastructure projects. USAID convened the initial meetings, after which the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) assumed responsibility for managing a database of infrastructure projects and leading the coordination meetings (Interview 57). A USAID official explained that the purpose was to identify and leverage opportunities to increase efficiency.

If the military was building sites to house the ANA, or USACE was building police stations to house the expanding ANP, or if INL [Illegal Narcotics and Law Enforcement] was building stations for counternarcotics teams, we needed to coordinate those in terms of the compounds being built, so that we could share utilities and support services, and possibly co-locate facilities to reduce security needs, increase the efficiencies of construction...road plans (Interview 57).

The joint planning with respect to roads and power, including the work of the Infrastructure Planning Group, was repeatedly cited as a key contributor to coordinated results. As one USAID officer directly involved in road construction put it, “Coordinated results start at the planning level” (Interview 24).

The joint planning for roads and power enabled an integrated response in terms of both on-the-ground construction efforts and resourcing decisions in Washington. A senior DoS official explained:

There was a more integrated response to roads, power. [Neumann] brought in USAID, the military, the political side within embassy, in agreement with General Eikenberry, also other countries...Ambassador Neumann made the planners sit down on both sides and come up with game plans. These were sent up to Eikenberry and Neumann, then sent to DC for resources. [Once Washington] agreed...implementation. It was coordinated (Interview 65).

Another DoS official highlighted increasing degrees of coordination in road construction.

Between 2002 and 2003, there was not strong coordination [on roads]. From 2003 to 2007, where we started to look at roads systematically, build long-term pictures, connect political and economic imperatives with military construction requirements, and how to build systematically...Barno started that, but we didn't yet look holistically at all security, development, governance [dimensions of road construction] (Interview 5).

The advance planning for humanitarian relief following kinetic operations also was widely credited with contributing to coordinated results. One interviewee highlighted the importance of the joint planning

in advance of Operation Medusa, in which the military and civilians worked out a division of labor and strategy for sequencing their efforts.

It was clear that if we didn't follow up immediately with relief, aid, efforts to get local livelihoods back on track, then the game would be short-lived. As soon as the forces pulled out, there would be no vested interest in the population to resist the Taliban...There was intense, concentrated advance planning with all interested parties to ensure that, on the heels of the military operation, we would have civilian humanitarian relief...Everyone agreed on pieces of the puzzle they would be responsible for and timing, so the civilian activities would immediately follow the military operations...This was a very coordinated effort with all of the key people...Because of the tremendous coordination and planning ahead of time, there was a feeling after the fact that it did unfold the way we hoped it would (Interview 62).

Advance civil-military planning at all levels was a key factor in achieving coordinated results in Operation Mountain Lion as well.

As part of Phase IV of that operation, we had a detailed plan with the PRT and others to come in with civilian assistance projects – medical, vet, etc...The planning for this went all the way up for approval to the Secretary of the Army...We started doing the planning a year out...All were involved – [DoS], USAID, PRT commanders, the ANA, the ambassador – in the higher-level planning. As far as the local execution on the ground...the battalion ops officer did detailed planning with the PRT...The Third Brigade, Tenth Mountain Division, Colonel Nicholson, his staff did the entire plan for our portion of the fight. The division – CJTF – had the larger plan that detailed the full operation with all the other agencies (Interview 110).

Joint planning also contributed to the success of counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar Province. In early 2007, then Colonel John (Mick) Nicholson, Commander of Task Force Spartan, convened a “counternarcotics *shura*” at the Jalalabad airfield to develop a joint plan in

the East.¹³¹ The *shura* itself, attended by high-level Afghans, in addition to US military and civilians, was part of a broader process that also included planning with various agencies engaged in counternarcotics and development efforts and follow-up sessions.

According to a senior military officer directly involved with the process, it contributed to “unity of effort” among the senior US leadership, the various agencies working on the ground, and the local Afghan leadership (Interview 107). Echoing assessments of the preceding period, Major General Nicholson (then Brigadier General) described the complementary coordinated results in the almost complete elimination of poppy cultivation.

Today, we are down to almost nothing, as a result of the focused interagency and multinational effort in Nangahar, working with the governor. Most of the credit goes to the governor, but the US used security and CERP money to enable that. Each brought a different thing to the table. The governor had social standing, cultural gravitas...to get entrée with the elders and get their buy-in; we in the military would help with security and overall planning; different development agencies came in with incentive packages; DEA [US Drug Enforcement Administration] took out key nodes in the [narcotics] networks...The result was poppy cultivation went down (Nicholson 2009).

Joint analysis and planning were equally important at the PRT level. While there was no requirement or system to ensure that PRTs engaged in joint analysis and planning, those that did so were able to achieve more consistent coordinated results. The Jalalabad PRT, for example, developed what one interviewee described as an “Interagency

¹³¹ *Shura* is an Arabic word for “consultation” (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Executive Team” approach (Interview 109). The commander convened regular meetings of military and civilians to share information and ideas and coordinate projects. An official familiar with the process explained:

The PRT commander held a senior team meeting...with two to three military folks, civil affairs, plus the commander, plus civilian representatives. Before, PRT meetings had...15 functional officers and two or three civilians. Thus, they were predominantly military...This [the senior team meeting] was an ideas meeting where we talked more programmatically. How can we work as an integrated whole?...The context was to feed good ideas to those who had discretion over military budgets (Interview 116).

The Jalalabad PRT also engaged in joint planning around specific programs and activities. A USAID representative argued that joint planning for road construction at the PRT made possible coordinated results.

They had their roads and contractors. We had ours. Road building was happening everywhere. So we established a roads working group. It was very productive...a mapping exercise largely. What are you doing here? What’s the status? Who is your contractor? We have some QIP or Alternative Livelihoods or CERP funds. What’s your thinking? Let’s go around the table on a daily basis (Interview 116).

The process at the Jalalabad PRT included not only information sharing, but also analysis of goals, interests, and underlying assumptions regarding road construction. A USAID officer explained:

We discussed not just the sections of roads, but also the utility of the roads. The Alternative Livelihoods program was investing in roads as cash-for-work programs...We needed to coordinate. Very few were paved...With CERP funds, probably more credence was given to district officials’ requests, as opposed to our decisions, which were primarily economic. So there were slightly different

criteria. Their objective was less putting people to work than opening an area or generating political good will (Interview 116).

The information sharing and joint analysis and planning at the Jalalabad PRT, combined with its strong civilian presence and the relatively permissive environment in which it operated, made possible coordinated results. Those coordinated results, in turn, enhanced the PRT's effectiveness. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the PRT did not work in a vacuum. The strong Afghan leadership in the province was repeatedly cited as a major factor in the overall effectiveness of development efforts there.

At most PRTs, there was no system for joint planning. This continued to cause coordination failures. The most frequently cited failures involved the CERP projects, which often were undertaken without incorporating civilian expertise. A senior military officer offered the following example of a school the military built without input of their civilian colleagues: "When we went to check on it, there were goats throughout the building. Why? They needed a goat barn! We never got buy-in from the people that they needed a school" (Interview 83).

The military leadership was increasingly aware of this problem and took steps to foster a more strategic and consultative approach to PRT programming. A senior military officer explained that Eikenberry directed the military to think in terms of systems, rather than projects, and to work to achieve synergy with regional and national efforts.

General Eikenberry had told us to come up with systems. He wanted things that would affect not just a province, but an entire region. He wanted something that achieved synergy, that tied into something bigger, that steered us towards leveraging...money being spent by others (Interview 111).

Major General Kamiya described the guidance he gave to PRT commanders regarding how to implement a systems approach.

I'd ask the PRT leadership, "What system are you building? How does the road you are proposing to build contribute to that system?"...We have to learn to work better with USAID and other partners to examine the totality of development needs, and whenever possible, to reach consensus on the systems requirements and the priority in which these systems should be developed...I asked the PRT commanders to brief me each quarter on the systems under development, the project-level components of each system, and what military or civilian organizations would be responsible for contributing what components and when. When possible, I encouraged PRT commanders to give their presentation with their development partner participating at their side as an added assurance that the plan being presented wasn't singularly the PRT commander's plan, but rather the military-civilian team's plan (Kamiya 2011).

This contributed to the coordinated results achieved at the Jalalabad PRT. Kamiya offered the following example, echoing comments by several people who served at the PRT.

Using the systems approach, they, in concert with the provincial governor and other local leaders, collaboratively developed a trade school system where the military provided the tools and infrastructure while the civil development partners provided the training and technical knowhow. The key...was that the military – civilian leadership started with a common view of the end, the system, in mind (Kamiya 2011).

Nevertheless, the degree to which PRT commanders coordinated with their civilian counterparts varied significantly. Several USAID officials argued that meaningful coordination remained limited. When

asked about the disconnect between their assessments and the military leadership's direction to PRT commanders to coordinate, a USAID official explained:

Coordination probably meant to him [Eikenberry] briefings and the exchange of basic information. In my opinion, this was part of the problem, because it was not very substantial and didn't represent very meaningful exchanges...wasn't taken into joint action (Interview 71).

Another USAID official reflected:

They [the military] think they need to check a box that they "coordinated" with local people. So they set up a meeting, drink three cups of tea, check the coordination box. The same with USAID: They consult with USAID, ask what we are doing, then say: "We can't say what we're doing," and check the coordination box with USAID (Interview 24).

Kamiya acknowledged that there was often a gap between the "commander's intent" and degree to which PRTs commanders coordinated with civilians (Kamiya 2011). One reason was that direction from above could only achieve so much absent an overarching system for joint civil-military planning.

Toward the latter part of this period, planning processes were initiated that would be broadly credited with enhancing coordination in the next period. The leadership of the 82nd Airborne and their civilian counterparts at the embassy initiated a regular process of convening, information sharing, and joint analysis, if not formal planning, and the Special Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) at DoS

initiated an integrated, facilitated, formal planning process. These efforts and their contributions to coordination are discussed in the next chapter.

INFORMATION SHARING

The data support the hypothesized importance of information sharing. Information sharing was necessary both within and across organizations.

One of the most significant failures of information sharing was within USAID. FPOs at the PRTs often did not have the information necessary to align their projects with the national programs controlled by USAID officers in Kabul. A senior USAID official explained that many FPOs “viewed their role as working with their PRT counterparts, but mainly to manage their [PRT-level] programs” (Interview 57). He encouraged them to take a broader, national perspective.

I tried to convey the sense that these officers were the eyes, ears, and representatives of the [USAID] mission as a whole, tried to de-projectize them. I said, “We have almost a billion-dollar program with inputs for your province across many sectors and areas. So if we want to ensure that the population of your province is informed about and involved in our planned assistance in that area, then you need to be that link” (Interview 57).

The problem, however, was that USAID lacked the internal systems to enable FPOs to play such a role. A USAID official, speaking in 2011, reflected:

USAID had primitive knowledge management capabilities. USAID has only recently been able to deliver a comprehensive picture of who is doing what and where in Afghanistan. So Field

Program Officers would seldom have the ability to be either the eyes or the ears of USAID at a national level or to work to socialize USAID projects and build Afghan ownership and leadership. They seldom had a complete picture (Interview 11).

Moreover, inadequate knowledge management systems combined with inflexible contracting mechanisms and restrictions on direct communication with contractors, further undermining the ability of FPOs to align their efforts with national programs. The USAID officer explained:

Since most national programs are executed according to national GIROA [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan] strategies and contractors are responsible for meeting performance-based work plans, once the work plan was established, they were seldom responsive to the individual provincial needs outside this plan and certainly not on the timeline driving PRT military civil affairs schedules. Finally, they were often unable to even talk to the contractors, who correctly saw their government oversight chain of command go straight to Kabul (Interview 11).

These problems not only undermined coordination within USAID. They had direct, negative impacts on civil-military coordination. Even where civilians and military at the PRTs agreed on goals and strategies, they often were unable to leverage or complement USAID's national efforts. The consequence was ongoing coordination failures, including negative interactive effects and wasteful duplication.

Information sharing across organizations was also necessary. In spite of the efforts on the part of the military leadership to promote enhanced consultation with civilians, different ways of organizing

information impeded broader information sharing. A USAID official explained:

One of the huge issues that impeded coordination was that USAID and the military think differently about our programs. For the military, being able to map projects, have a list of projects in a region was important. Freakley wanted a map of all projects in Paktika province. USAID had never tracked information that way. We had different sectors (Interview 66).

This assessment was reinforced in interviews about the fourth period, in which a senior DoS official emphasized, “The place this [information sharing] all breaks down is that USAID and the development world organize themselves by sectors, not geographically, the State Department by political units, and the military by [geographic] commands” (Interview 4).

As military and civilians increasingly recognized the need for enhanced information sharing, they took steps to bridge the gaps in how information was organized and shared. The most vivid example of this was the “Playbook,” a detailed list of what USAID was doing in each province, developed in the latter part of this period. The Playbook was designed both to offer visibility at the provincial level about USAID’s national programs and to organize the information in a way that was easily digestible by the military. A USAID official described the Playbook and the thinking behind it.

We communicated to then-Colonel Nicholson that USAID officers had more valuable resources than the couple of hundred thousand dollars in projects they could get approved. The military wasn’t as knowledgeable about the overall USAID programs – how they [the

military] could use them more broadly. From this emerged the idea of the Playbook. The idea was that we needed to be able to present the elements of the USAID program in such way that the military could see, in discussions with the provincial leadership, that if the needs were education or health support, for example, there were instruments through USAID to respond to those needs...That discussion further clarified...that we needed...coordination at all levels,...an exchange of information and joint planning (Interview 57).

The Playbook was not tied into to a formal joint planning process, however, and this undermined its effectiveness. In the absence of systematic, multilevel joint planning, it was often difficult for the military to interpret and use the information in the Playbook.¹³² It also was difficult for them to anticipate and deal effectively with USAID's limited capacity to respond quickly to emerging challenges and opportunities. A USAID official explained:

The Playbook was a big product. A lot of effort went into it. Not sure if it accomplished much...The military had a hard time understanding what development work was about, so they may not have really comprehended what was in there. The military is used to being able to turn on the funding spigot at will...We don't have that same flexibility. So if they were to say, "We're going to do an operation in this area and destroy a lot of infrastructure with bombs and bullets, and we want you to come in and do development work," the programming [requirements] USAID has to follow don't allow us to respond as easily or nimbly as the military would like. We gave them the Playbook, but it was not an accurate interpretation re how easily or quickly those programs could be turned on or off or modified to support military operations (Interview 71).

The experience following Operation Medusa illustrates the limitations of the Playbook as a stand-alone tool, when not directly tied to joint planning. In spite of the immediate infusion of aid following kinetic

¹³² There were parallel gaps in USAID officers' understanding of the military.

operations cited above as an example of coordinated results, USAID and the military were not able to tie the Playbook into PRT-level planning for longer-term development. One official explained:

We had a set of activities to deal with the immediate aftermath of the conflict and the medium term quick impact stuff. The plan was to identify a third phase, longer-term development support, that would have the field officers in the PRTS directly involved in programming resources under our national programs – education, rural roads, alternative livelihoods, etc. – in their areas of operation. The Playbook identified the national programs, the types of interventions they were able to mount, but we never got to the point of defining and operationalizing an approach or mechanism to access the Playbook and incorporate it into planning at the PRT level...The plan was to increase the synergy at the sub-national level of all development assistance, but we didn't get there during my time there...(Interview 57).

Thus, consistent with the hypotheses, information sharing was a necessary but not sufficient for coordinated results. For information sharing to be leveraged effectively, it must be integrated into joint analysis.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

There was limited data about facilitative leadership across organizations. As explained earlier, this does not necessarily invalidate the hypothesized importance of facilitative leadership. Rather, it may reflect an empirical approach that was better designed to test the explanatory power of joint processes in general than identify the factors that made those processes more or less effective.

There was one interesting example, however, of learning about the importance of facilitative leadership. A senior military officer explained that he quickly learned to focus on “cooperation and collaboration” rather than “command and control” in his interactions with his civilian counterparts.

[When I arrived in Afghanistan], I was focused on command and control, ownership, directing activities. I quickly found that I owned very little, controlled very little, could direct very little...The new C2 [Command and Control] was about cooperation and collaboration, not command and control. It was about influence, not direction. We had to create forums, bring key stakeholders to convene, so we could collaborate (Interview 86).

This provides initial support for the argument that facilitative leadership is necessary in situations in which no one is fully in charge. As indicated earlier, further analysis will be necessary to determine the importance of facilitative leadership for joint process.

LEARNING

The above analysis strongly supports the hypothesized importance of learning. It documents significant learning on the part of both military and civilians and illuminates the many feedback loops between learning and other variables that affected coordination.

Co-location and joint analysis and planning played the most significant roles in fostering learning, creating regular opportunities for regular face-to-face interaction, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning. Through their interactions, military and civilians developed a

greater appreciation of common ground and differences, comparative advantages, and the complex interrelationships among their and others' efforts. The results were increased trust and respect and enhanced motivation to coordinate.

There also was increased appreciation on the ground of the importance of coordination and the factors that affect it. This was driven both by coordinated results and coordination failures. Civilian and military leaders at both the strategic/operational and operational/tactical levels were increasingly attuned to the need for enhanced empowerment, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning. They took steps to incorporate this learning into concrete changes and processes, including, for example, the temporary reduction in empowerment discussed earlier and the initiation of convening and planning processes.

In spite of the impressive degree of individual learning and innovation on the ground, there was an overarching failure to translate that into sustained organizational change. Part of the problem was the frequent rotations of civilian and military leaders and the lack of systems to ensure that incoming leaders would build on the foundations already in place. Perhaps more fundamental, civilian and military leaders on the ground were able to change organizational systems primarily at the margins. More profound change depended on the senior leadership at headquarters, who often lacked understanding of on-the-ground realities and the urgent need for such change.

One additional aspect of learning emerged as important. It was not only learning from joint processes on the ground that mattered, but also prior learning. In some cases, this emerged organically from past experience, in particular working across civil-military lines. In other cases, it reflected deliberate efforts to prepare for the challenges that lay ahead, either individually or through pre-deployment education and training.

A senior military officer, echoing comments from prior periods, highlighted the importance of deliberate efforts to learn from history.

When we went to Afghanistan in January 2006, there was no COIN doctrine, much less a doctrine for development. So we studied. For example, we read a book called *The Better War* about Vietnam...the clear-hold-build methodology. We learned a lot...about how to do this. It was apparent that the war-winning strategy was not security, but development. This was a major learning point in my earlier experience (Interview 107).

This suggests that the definition of learning should be expanded to make clear the importance of prior experience and learning in building knowledge, understanding, and skills. While not included in the hypotheses, the importance of prior learning is supported by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

OTHER FACTORS AND EXPLANATIONS

Consistent with the preceding period, three other factors emerged as significant in explaining coordinated results and the lack thereof: resource and power balance, directive leadership, and the attitudes and relationships of senior leaders on the ground.

POWER BALANCE (RESOURCES AND ACCESS)

Power balance again emerged as an important factor affecting coordination. At the strategic/operational level, it was steps taken to redress power imbalances at the embassy that created a context more conducive to information sharing and joint analysis.

As discussed in the prior chapter, Ambassador Khalilzad had established the ARG and given it a privileged place in the embassy. This was a deliberate attempt to prop up what he and others around him considered inadequate USAID capacity for reconstruction in Afghanistan. While many argued that the ARG played an important role in reconstruction, its high level of access and influence came at the expense of other components of the embassy, in particular USAID. This caused conflict, which undermined information sharing and joint problem solving, contributing to coordination failures.

When Neumann arrived in Kabul, he concluded that USAID, as well as the other civilian components of the embassy, should be put on more equal footing with the ARG. A senior official who worked with Neumann reflected:

When we arrived, the ARG folks thought USAID was their pocketbook and the State Department reporting officers were their stenographers...that they [the ARG] were here to tell the Afghans how to rule the country. There was a sense when we arrived that they ruled the roost. They were very talented people, but this was an embassy, a diplomatic mission. Our job was primarily to relate to and help create an Afghan government...Many times, the private sector folks would charge off not understanding the

environment...The most dangerous effect of this was raising expectations. Often, those projects wouldn't happen, and the Afghans would blame us. We decided we needed to keep ARG, but tie it up more effectively with the USAID mission, the economic section, etc. (Interview 62).

Neumann quickly took steps to increase the access and influence USAID and other parts of the embassy relative to the ARG. A senior official explained:

We created a trilateral structure where USAID, the ARG, and the economic section would basically be equals. Instead of the ARG ruling the roost, they would be equal entities, each performing a role: AID providing money and development expertise; the economic section providing economic analysis, interface with the Government of Afghanistan with respect to economic issues; the ARG providing technical, private sector entrepreneurial expertise...(Interview 62).

Although the ARG was not formally abolished, it gradually faded away (Interview 62). Supporters of the ARG argued that Neumann had eliminated the main repository of reconstruction skills, expertise, and credibility within the US mission. Whether or not this assessment was accurate, the increased access and influence of USAID strengthened the relationship between USAID and DoS. One senior official contrasted the enhanced access and influence of USAID in the Neumann embassy with what had existed prior: "It was not USAID on the sidelines" (Interview 65).

While redressing the power imbalance at the embassy smoothed frayed relationships between DoS and USAID and created the context for expanded information sharing and joint analysis and planning, the

profound power disparities at the PRTs continued to undermine coordination. As documented earlier, civilians were outnumbered at the PRTs, often by a ratio of 100-to-one. They also were often outranked.

It was in this context that the clarification of roles and responsibilities highlighted earlier took place. As indicated, a senior USAID official visited the PRTs and told the FPOs, “‘You have contributions to make, but you’re part of the staff and resources available to the commander to carry out the mission.’ Once that was clear, the relationship was dramatically improved” (Interview 54).

Others, however, raised the question of whether this was coordination or cooptation. One USAID officer reflected: “They [the military] consider USAID an arrow in their quiver, not a partner in development” (Interview 24). Another went further.

The [USAID] people who did well at the PRTs embraced the military lock, stock, and barrel. They were outnumbered, out-resourced, alone. The ones who did well...became staff to the military...That was never the conception. They were supposed to be co-equal...One hundred US military and two civilians [at a PRT is]...not about coordination of equals (Interview 66).

At PRTs with relatively senior, consistent USAID representation, including the Jalalabad PRT, FPOs were able to gain a seat at the table, engaging in joint analysis and decision making with their military counterparts. At others, however, the profound power disparity undermined coordination.

Thus, power balance affected coordination in important ways. It was not determinative, but it created a context more or less conducive to the information sharing and joint analysis and planning upon which coordination depended.

DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Directive leadership within organizations again emerged as significant. Directive leadership was particularly effective when exercised jointly. Neumann and Eikenberry signed a Strategic Directive, a two-page document that directed civilians and military in their respective chains of command to coordinate. A USAID official emphasized the importance of Eikenberry's direction to the military to coordinate with USAID.

The Strategic Directive was the first written document that said, "We need to get our act together," that putting them [civilians and military] together in the same room with the PRT doesn't produce coordinated results and fails at de-confliction routinely...The message was that the military had to be more inclusive (Interview 11).

Directive leadership also sent signals about the importance of the development expertise USAID brought to the table. The official argued that this reflected a change in attitude on the part of the senior military leadership on the ground.

Barno was a mythical figure who torpedoed USAID all the time. Back in those days, the ethic was that no civilian agency can do this [reconstruction], so we [the military] must do it all. Eikenberry was the first who stepped up and said we need civilians (Interview 11).

Nevertheless, there were limitations to the effects of directive leadership, and coordination failures continued to undermine effectiveness. One example involved the military officers Eikenberry detailed to various Government of Afghanistan ministries. The officers brought CERP resources with them and thus immediately commanded the attention of the ministries, but they did not coordinate with the USAID officers who already had relationships and programs in place with the ministries. A USAID official reflected:

Eikenberry said to the military officers: “You’re my education guy, you’re my health guy...” and sent them to the respective ministries. You had captains, majors, lieutenant colonels pouring out, establishing relationships with the ministries, without coordinating with the [USAID] civilians who had ongoing programs and relationships. The US had two organizations operating in parallel with the ministries. The ministries were overwhelmed by all of these officers (Interview 11).

Thus, as in the example cited earlier in which Kamiya instituted measures to enhance coordination at the PRTs, there were gaps between “commander’s intent” and the implementation by their subordinates. This suggests that directive leadership may be of limited utility, when not combined with systems to socialize the direction, incentivize people to implement it, and hold them accountable for doing so.

ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIP OF SENIOR LEADERS

The attitudes of and relationship between Neumann and Eikenberry featured prominently in interviews, although interviewees differed in their assessments. Some interviewees argued that the decision

not to retain the co-location at the embassy reflected a lack of commitment to coordination on the part of one or both of them. According to this perspective, the two senior leaders on the ground had a dysfunctional working relationship, and coordination – at least between them – suffered as a result of it.

Others argued that the move to Camp Eggers was a pragmatic attempt on Eikenberry's part to stay close to his command at a time when the insurgency was gaining ground. They acknowledged some tensions in the working relationship but described both leaders as professionals who worked together to resolve any differences that emerged. They emphasized the contributions Neumann and Eikenberry made to coordination between USAID and the operational military.

It is impossible to establish an objective "truth" regarding their attitudes or relationships. Nor would it necessarily be helpful. To the extent that attitudes or relationships changed coordination on the ground, the above analysis shows that it was largely through the changes in systems and procedures they instituted. The physical distance created by Eikenberry's move out of the embassy, for example, increased the transaction costs associated with face-to-face communication, making it more difficult to work through any differences that emerged. The normalization of the embassy and the Strategic Directive jointly issued by Neumann and Eikenberry increased the relative status of USAID,

enhancing coordination between USAID and both State and the operational military.

Thus, the analysis supports the argument that, while individual attitudes and relationships affect coordination, they exert their influence largely through the organizational and process variables analyzed above.

CONCLUSION

Consistent with the prior periods, agreement on goals and strategy was necessary, but not sufficient, for coordinated results. People on the ground needed to be empowered to respond quickly and collectively to emerging opportunities and challenges, and they needed information with which to do so. Joint analysis and planning was necessary to build agreement on goals and strategies as well as leverage available information.

Co-location at the operational/tactical level facilitated information sharing, joint analysis, and planning and fostered learning. The decision to not retain the co-location of the senior military commander and ambassador at the embassy increased the transaction costs associated with communication. It also had significant symbolic effects. Convening enabled individuals who were not co-located to share information and engage in joint analysis and planning. The use of designated liaisons within individual agencies reduced transaction costs, facilitated convening, and enhanced accountability.

Learning emerged from co-location, joint analysis and planning processes, and coordination failures. That learning, in turn, was used to strengthen coordination processes and change organizational systems and procedures in ways more conducive to coordinated results. Power disparities continued to undermine relationships and joint analysis and planning, while learning from past experience led to efforts to redress specific disparities, enhancing coordination. There was indication of learning with respect to the need for facilitative leadership across organizations, but directive leadership within organizations again emerged more significantly in the data.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

JOINT ANALYSIS (SPRING 2007–SPRING 2009)

Civil-military integration is all about the process. It's the process that gets you to a result...Everyone has to surrender some sovereignty and autonomy of planning and come to the table and together come up with a common plan.

Ambassador Christopher Dell (2009)

Eventually, we had to move from a process to a results orientation, but initially we had to develop some process with a mutual coming together.

Major General Jeffrey Schloesser (2009)

US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan entered yet another phase in this period. Ambassador William Wood arrived in Kabul in April 2007. General Dan McNeill had assumed command of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in February.¹³³

In addition to the inherent challenges of a growing insurgency and a complex, constantly evolving political context, the US faced a new structural challenge associated with the transfer of responsibility from Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (CFC-A) to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)/ISAF. The US military on the ground, with the exception of US Special Forces, reported up the chain to McNeill in his capacity as ISAF commander. McNeill did not wear a US hat during this period, and there was no other commander on the ground to whom all

¹³³ McNeill had served as Commander, Coalition Forces, Afghanistan, in 2002–2003.

US troops reported. Ambassador Wood therefore did not have a direct counterpart at the top of the US military.¹³⁴

In part because of this change, and in part because of the leadership of Combined Joint Task Force-82 (CJTF-82) and their Department of State (DoS) and US Agency for International Development (USAID) counterparts at the embassy, the center of gravity for US civil-military coordination shifted to Bagram Airfield.¹³⁵ This process began towards the end of the prior period, gained momentum early in this period, and continued when responsibility for Regional Command (RC) East transferred from CJTF-82 to CJTF-101.¹³⁶

Following is a content analysis of the interview data about this period.¹³⁷ As explained earlier, this period was added to the original research design after interviewees highlighted several significant process innovations that reflected learning from prior periods. The primary purpose of the chapter is to highlight these process innovations. However,

¹³⁴ This changed in October 2008, when General David McKiernan was dual hatted as the commander of both the ISAF forces and the newly activated US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) (Institute for the Study of War 2010).

¹³⁵ CJTF-82 was the senior coalition military headquarters for RC East. Then Major General David Rodriguez served as Commander of CJTF-82 from February 2007 to April 2008.

¹³⁶ Major General Jeffrey Schloesser assumed command of CJTF-101 in April 2008.

¹³⁷ The same caveat emphasized earlier applies here: US efforts within Afghanistan took place within broader multinational efforts, and any analysis of US interagency coordination thus captures only part of a much more complex set of dynamics. Moreover, because US troops operated under ISAF command, it was often not possible to isolate US military contributions from the broader ISAF efforts.

the chapter also briefly addresses other variables for which there were relevant data. The analysis lends further support to the explanatory power of process, in particular joint analysis and planning, and reinforces several other findings and themes from prior chapters.

COORDINATED RESULTS¹³⁸

The most frequently coordinated results among the US Department of Defense (DoD), DoS, and USAID again involved road construction, suggesting that this may be an issue area particularly conducive to coordination.¹³⁹ Many civilian and military interviewees singled out the Khost-Gardez road as an example of coordinated results. Wood, for example, described it “as fully-integrated a civ-mil [civic-military] project as you can find” (Wood 2009). Major General James McConville, who served as Deputy Commanding General (Support) of CJTF-101 in RC East from April 2008 to May 2009, echoed this view, describing the

¹³⁸ As explained earlier, the analysis focuses on coordinated results among DoD, DoS, and USAID. However, as US troops transitioned to NATO/ISAF command, it became increasingly difficult to analyze US military contributions separately from the broader ISAF efforts. The coordinated results most frequently and consistently cited were those with national ramifications, but there also were many cases of coordinated results at the tactical level. Because coordinated results often spanned time periods, their inclusion in a given period does not necessarily imply completion.

¹³⁹ As discussed in Chapter Nine, the case study suggests that some issue areas are more conducive to coordination than others, most likely because it is easier to reach agreement on goals and strategy in them. This does not invalidate the other findings about the explanatory power of organizational and process variables. Rather, the variation in coordinated results within issue areas, especially over time, demonstrates the salience of those variables.

Khost-Gardez road as a “flagship program with interagency results” (McConville 2009).¹⁴⁰

The Khost-Gardez road, an approximately 100-kilometer stretch of road connecting the two provinces, was a USAID project. However, it involved substantial military contributions, especially with respect to security (Interview 92). A senior military officer highlighted the complementarity between USAID’s construction capability (exercised through their implementing partner, the Louis Berger Group) and the military’s security and intelligence capabilities.

Civilians need to be able to get to the place, to actually do the work, and have adequate security to work there. Us being military, we have military copters and folks who can get around the country. Once we get there, we need the capability to do the work. This is where the interagency [referring to the civilian agencies] brings a lot to the table. They have the capability to get the roads built... We didn’t provide direct security, but provided indirect security, intelligence, and the best ways of building a road from a security perspective... Teaming with them, we were able to get a lot done (Interview 67).

In addition to security, the military assisted with what one senior military officer described as “local coordination and strategic communication” in areas too insecure for civilians (Interview 60). A senior military officer explained:

USAID was the primary contractor for the physical construction, with the Afghan government at ministerial levels, but USAID could not coordinate at the local level with villages and tribes because of security issues... For example... the road had to displace a bazaar standing for countless years. There had been a one-lane

¹⁴⁰ McConville credited the 82nd Airborne with leadership early in this process (McConville 2009).

road going through the center of the bazaar, but by building a paved, two-lane road with culverts, we would displace the bazaar completely. To coordinate this at the local level took the military [because of security issues] (Interview 60).

The military also allocated Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) funding for some of the ancillary roads (Interview 4), as it did in other parts of the road network. A DoD official highlighted the complementarity between the major roads and ancillary road networks.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Transportation and other agencies, USAID would build major roads through the river valleys. We would use CERP funds to build ancillary roads from the USAID-built major roads to and through the towns and villages, establishing local road networks (Interview 108).

Road construction benefited from complementary civilian and military expertise. A USAID official highlighted the importance of military planning expertise and civilian implementation expertise.

They [the military] are awesome planners. I was blown away in planning sessions. But when it came to implementing the noncombat ops, they were not as good, because they were not set up to do it (Interview 24).

There also was continued evidence of synergistic coordinated results involving roads. While the Khost-Gardez road was still under construction at the end of this period, a senior military officer emphasized that it had "increased significantly market transit and also increased security" (Interview 60). A senior DoS official likewise reflected on the development that flowed from the road from Jalalabad to Asadabad.

As they built the road, security improved. Market forces brought in more economic activity – gas stations, kiosk selling stations...[The economic impacts] gradually moved up the valley (Interview 17).

Enhanced coordination on the US side, in turn, contributed to the overall road construction project. A USAID official cited the extent of the road network constructed as evidence of the impact of coordination: “The US has completed around 2,300 km of paved roads – the equivalent of a road from Washington, DC, to Kansas City, under bad conditions and in a short time, so it was effective” (Interview 24).

In addition to roads, counternarcotics efforts in Nangahar Province continued to be cited as an example of coordinated results, perhaps driven by clear evidence of impact – the dramatic reduction in poppy cultivation over the prior few years.¹⁴¹

Several interviewees, military as well as civilian, also cited an overarching development initiative in Nangahar, referred to as “Nangahar, Inc.,” as an example of coordinated results. A senior military officer described Nangahar, Inc. as “a comprehensive program to work across agriculture, power, water, education, health – almost a master plan to develop significantly the province” (Interview 67). A senior DoS official echoed this assessment, describing it as an ambitious joint civil-military program that included “everything from orange trees to road building to

¹⁴¹ While interviewees continued to credit Governor Agha Shirzai for having played an important leadership role in these efforts, they argued that US civil-military coordination was a necessary contributing factor to success in Nangahar.

better security to helping the private sector to installing infrastructure”
(Interview 4).

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES (HYPOTHESIZED)

AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGY

The data from this period reinforce the earlier finding that agreement on goals and strategy is the most significant and direct factor explaining coordination. The experience with the Khost-Gardez shows that agreement on goals is necessary for coordination. A USAID official reflected:

The Khost-Gardez road starts out with everyone recognizing that this is a very important road that will bring transformational change, open up economic development to important parts of the country and reduce transit time for export products. Everyone recognized this was important, and USAID and the military coordinated (Interview 53).

A senior DoS official described the substantial overlap in civilian and military interest in the road.

Civilians were interested in the road for the development and the humanitarian benefits of providing employment. Both military and civilians were interested in the effect the road would have on generating support for our presence and narrowing the space of the bad guys (Interview 4).

A senior military officer confirmed this account, expanding upon the multifaceted military interests in the road.¹⁴²

¹⁴² Schloesser acknowledged the role his predecessors in 82nd Airborne had played: “The 82nd, to their credit, had recognized this, put the plan in place. We

When we came in, we decided very rapidly, working with the maneuver commander, that this project was more than just a road. It had implications to open up economic development from the village to the provincial center, and between provincial centers, then between Kabul and parts of Pakistan...Also...[to enhance] security, because the Afghan security forces and coalition members could move more rapidly, wouldn't have to rely on copters, as they had in the past...It also would help open the area for governance. The villages surrounding the road were very isolated, many had not moved beyond the barter system. We envisioned a large inroad for local governors, being able to move about and integrate more, so it would have a governance benefit (Interview 60).

The recognition of the ways in which road construction advanced both security and development goals reflected learning from prior experience.

The first time I went to Afghanistan to visit, they had just built the road from Jalalabad...to Kabul. They had built a paved road along the Konar River to Asadabad. The road...dramatically enhanced security...Economic development boomed after that...The road helped Konar become more governable. This earlier experience had shown the promise of roads. By then, Eikenberry was saying, "Where the road begins, that's where the Taliban ends" (Interview 60).

Military commitment to the road gained momentum as the project proceeded and the security implications became more pronounced. A senior DoS official explained:

Everyone thought the Khost-Gardez road was a good idea from very early on. Khost is and has been a priority province for many reason...As construction was under way and came under attack, and as more attention was applied to Khost and Paktika by the military, for their own reasons, the road became more important...because it was under attack and because it could unify

agreed to continue that work and actually made the troop contributions. We took over a leadership role a bit larger than the security in the past" (Schloesser 2009).

the area and improve mobility in an area where we wanted to promote unity and mobility (Interview 4).

The agreement on the importance of road construction facilitated agreement on strategy, especially regarding the respective roles of civilians and the military. That agreement made it possible for the actors to leverage their complementary capabilities, resources, and knowledge to achieve shared goals.¹⁴³

The experience with reconstruction efforts in Nangahar, Inc. lends further support to the argument that agreement on strategy, in addition to goals, is necessary for coordination. While there was broad agreement on the value of working in Nangahar, there initially was not agreement with respect to the US strategy for the province. A DoS official explained that USAID did not buy into the military's initial vision for Nangahar, Inc.

Nangahar, Inc. was a project that had been pushed by the military. They wanted transformative capability and pushed almost \$6 billion into the project over several years. For the most part, the military could not implement that, so they tried to get USAID to the table. USAID said, "This is not our idea. It's too big, too long, not what we want to do." They didn't say it outright. They slow-rolled a lot (Interview 103).

The problem was not only of substance, but also of process.

USAID had not been part of forging the original vision and did not buy into it. As discussed later in the chapter, the military and USAID eventually engaged in rigorous joint planning for the province. This

¹⁴³ According to a USAID official, the overall US investment in roads reflected this shared commitment: "Everyone agreed that these roads were essential, urgent. The cost was enormous – a total cost of about \$1.5 billion, including everything the US has put in or committed [for roads]" (Interview 24).

enabled them to build on their shared interest in the province to forge agreement on specific goals and how they would work together to achieve them.

CONVENING, JOINT ANALYSIS, AND PLANNING

The most significant and consistent theme that emerged from interviews from this period was the importance of joint analysis and planning processes. Two processes were singled out. The first was the regular convening of civilians and military at Bagram Airfield for information sharing, joint analysis, and, to some extent, planning. The second was the formal, integrated planning conducted under the auspices of the Integrated Civil-Military Action Group (ICMAG).

Because the majority of military and civilians were not co-located, convening was necessary for face-to-face information sharing and joint analysis and planning. Shortly after Major General David Rodriguez assumed command of CJTF-82, he and several members of his command met with senior civilian leadership from the embassy and agreed on the importance of enhanced coordination. From this emerged monthly, full-day meetings, most often at Bagram Airfield, but sometimes at the embassy.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ McNeill convened quarterly ISAF conferences, which brought together representatives of all of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) and other actors for information sharing and, to some extent, joint analysis and problem solving (Interview 99). During the two months between ISAF conferences, the US

The meetings were “tri-led” by the deputy chief of mission, the USAID mission director, and the Deputy Commanding General (Support) of CJTF-82, with the Commander present at the beginning of some meetings (Interview 99). Participants included representatives of USAID’s technical offices, DoS, other civilian agencies, and the military.

The meetings typically began in plenary, providing opportunities for updates and information sharing (Interview 99). Participants then broke out into technical working groups (e.g., infrastructure, education, water, energy) for joint analysis and problem solving and, to some extent, planning. Senior civilian and military leaders met separately (Interview 99). At the end of the day, the full group reconvened in plenary.

The process initially focused on “de-conflicting” activities, a term often used to refer to avoiding negative interactions among activities, eliminating duplication, and filling gaps. As it evolved, participants became more ambitious, setting their sights on higher levels of coordination. A USAID official explained:

When I first arrived, the discussion tended to focus on making sure we were not stepping on each other’s toes, not doing the same project in the same area. Everyone recognized the need to go beyond that, to be more ambitious. The desire to coordinate increased (Interview 53).

The monthly convening also led to enhanced information sharing and joint analysis between meetings. The identification of technical

military, DoS, and USAID held their own monthly conferences, usually at Bagram, but sometimes at the embassy.

working groups, for example, “increased the amount of information exchanged,” as military leads for each technical area were able to be in direct contact with USAID technical officers (Interview 57).

The process enabled participants to reach consensus on goals and strategy. Among the most significant early outcomes was agreement that the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) would guide military, in addition to civilian, efforts. A DoS official explained that the 82nd Airborne was originally unaware of the ANDS but, once introduced to it, agreed to orient military activities in support of its goals and strategy.

I can remember the first meeting in which the AID mission director said to Rodney Anderson [Deputy Commanding General, CJTF-82], “You know, the Afghans have a development strategy.” He asked, “Is it written down?” “It’s a written document, and we can share it with you.” This was news to the military, but once they heard that this was the lay of the land, that there was a development strategy that had broad support from us and all donors, that represented a coordinated position, they were very happy to line up with it to the extent that they understood it. That was an iterative process. It took a few rounds to get all the way there (Interview 58).

Anderson confirmed this account.

The ANDS was the guiding document...It was what we all sought to support and follow. That really allowed us to synchronize with [non-governmental organizations] NGOs and other donors, because we all followed the ANDS priorities. We used ANDS to prioritize how we provided support and did business in RC East. We didn’t go to Afghanistan knowing anything about the ANDS, but we quickly went to school on it (Anderson 2009).

This not only demonstrates the significance of information sharing and joint analysis in building agreement on goals and strategy, but it also

highlights the importance of US interagency coordination in contributing to the broader multinational efforts. The learning and agreement that emerged from the US coordination process enabled the US military and, by extension, its civilian counterparts to coordinate more effectively with their multinational partners in support of a national strategy that reflected the goals and priorities of Afghans.

The Bagram process also resulted in concrete coordinated results. There were many examples of avoidance and mitigation of negative interactions between activities. In one case, participants discovered that USAID was building a road right through an airstrip that was being paved with CERP funding. They quickly made the changes necessary to correct the problem. According to one official: “We managed to get construction stopped and rerouted around the airstrip before it was built. Having those people sitting down, talking, vetting projects made this possible” (Interview 81). Likewise, USAID and the military “de-conflicted” their road building standards to reduce the susceptibility of newly constructed roads to improvised explosive devices (IED) (Interview 11).

In another case, USAID convinced the military to stop providing free veterinary services (VETCAP) in local communities, a practice that had been undercutting USAID’s capacity-building efforts. A DoS official explained:

USAID had embarked on a program to build up veterinary service capacity among Afghans. It had been training veterinarians and vet technicians in the country and region. There was a huge need for

this in Afghanistan since it is an agricultural economy. When the military comes in with VETCAPs, which provide the service for free, it completely undercuts the ability of these people who have been painstakingly trained by USAID to make a living because farmers are not willing to pay for local services if they can wait and get free services. The military were responsive. They don't want to waste precious resources in places where there are other options (Interview 58).

The process also resulted in complementary coordinated results.

For example, the military used CERP funding to build the physical structures for several construction trade centers, and USAID provided complementary funding to cover the operating costs. USAID took responsibility for curriculum development, while the military provided some of the training (Interview 11).¹⁴⁵

Beyond immediate problem solving, the joint analysis fostered learning. Indeed, there was an explicit learning function. The military asked USAID to educate them on the basic tenets of development (e.g., the “do no harm” framework) and the goals and assumptions underlying USAID’s programs and activities (Interview 11).¹⁴⁶ A DoS official described how information sharing was interwoven with dialogue about underlying goals and assumptions.

Rodriguez brought in all the commanders from the field, and they reviewed everything – operations, CERP assistance programs, strategic communications. They solicited our views on everything...They asked us to lay out various sectors, especially

¹⁴⁵ Trade schools were also cited as examples of coordinated results in prior periods, but not as frequently as the other examples highlighted in the analysis.

¹⁴⁶ The military also clarified their goals, interests, and concerns. For example, the military explained that building roads to gravel standards, rather than paving them, made them more susceptible to IEDs (Interview 11).

the ones of interest to their field commanders. Roads, for example. What roads are USAID working on or have planned for construction? What's the philosophy of the road construction program? They do some roads with CERP money as well, and some roads were important for operational reasons, but to the extent possible, they don't want to build roads that AID is planning to build, or roads that aren't part of the grand plan for the province. The same thing for agriculture: What's the philosophy of the agricultural development program? What do agricultural specialists think is the best way to get to more income generation, employment for farmers, and increased food security, so their own [military] efforts can be informed by the expertise AID had (Interview 58)?

This led to increased appreciation of common ground and differences, as well as enhanced knowledge on the part of the military of development principles. A USAID official explained: "This process was very effective at building capabilities to understand each other, for the military to understand the standards of development" (Interview 11).

One of the most important lessons related to local engagement and ownership and, by association, sustainability. A military officer reflected:

We learned that many projects, although well intended, could not be resourced or maintained in the long term by the GoA [Government of Afghanistan]. Schools needed teachers and maintenance. Hospitals and clinics needed healthcare professionals, supplies, power and maintenance...Through USAID, CJTF-82 began coordinating its larger projects with the GoA to ensure long-term resourcing was available. Additionally, we needed to ensure our projects were in line with GoA plans. It was pointless in executing projects that were not in compliance with GoA plans, programs, policies, and strategies. If the GoA Ministry of Education had a plan of building one Center of Excellence in Education per province and one school, at each level, per district, we did not want to exceed those plans (Interview 108).

In this way, the learning generated through joint analysis enhanced coordination with local actors.

The Bagram process also increased participants' understanding of organizational differences. A USAID official explained:

Anderson posed very interesting question to us. He asked, "What is your strategy for province X?" I said, "We don't have a strategy for each province. That's not how USAID works. USAID has a strategy for the whole country." What we were trying to do in those provinces was the strategy for the country as a whole. They – the military – need specific activities – geographic-specific plans that they can help facilitate or participate in...They would ask: "What is your goal for Afghanistan?" [USAID would reply]: "A healthy, stable Afghanistan that is no longer a threat."...The military would rub their eyes and say, "Great, but what do we do in the morning?" It required a big cultural bridge between the two organizations (Interview 54).

As they developed deeper appreciation of their differences, the participants became motivated and empowered to bridge them. In this process, face-to-face interaction was essential. According to a senior military officer:

The process worked very well because it put the embassy, USAID, [and the military] in same room, at the same lunch table, working the same things. The synergy from doing that, versus talking with someone you don't know on the other end of the phone paid huge dividends (Interview 99).

Another senior military officer argued that face-to-face interaction provided a necessary foundation for coordination.

Before you can collaborate, you must coordinate. Before that, you must know the names of people. Before that, you must break down some barriers so that you're not separate vessels (Interview 67).

A senior DoS official echoed these views.

By the time we went through the process a couple of times, the people knew each other. That whole process sparked the

development of closer working relationships between USAID and the military (Interview 58).

The learning that resulted, in turn, led to enhanced coordination. A military officer reflected:

The primary results were better synchronization of US government developmental efforts in Afghanistan that were more in line with the GoA developmental strategy and goals. Additionally, through the CJTF-82/USAID coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, USG development projects were better focused on GoA priorities, versus executing projects that local officials wanted that may or may not have been in line with ministerial priorities or supportable with GoA-provided resources. Other results were project collaboration, maximizing on the strengths of the different funding lines between DoD and USAID, and allowing for synergistic effects in both the short term and long term (Interview 108).

As evidence of the improvement, the officer pointed to changes in how schools were built and equipped.

At some point in time, USAID stopped building schools. There was news of too many schools being built that weren't coordinated with the GoA. USAID's legal folks told them they needed to stop. But they didn't withdraw from education. We teamed with them on education. After coordinating with the Ministry of Education, we would use CERP funds to build schools. USAID would use their education program money to train teachers and supply resources – teaching materials and school supplies (Interview 108).

A DoS official offered a strikingly parallel account of the learning and complementarity that emerged from the process.

It was a very worthwhile and successful effort...In the early years, the military's development activities were always well intentioned, [but often ineffective]. Afghans would say, "We need a school here," and the military would say, "OK. We'll build a school here." They would build a school, but then discover that the minister of education had no intention of ever sending a teacher, or that most of the kids couldn't get to the school. There were lots of

uncoordinated activities like that. I thought that had pretty much been fixed by the time I left (Interview 58).

Beyond specific projects and sectors, the Bagram process led to synergistic coordinated results, in which the military used CERP funds for quick-impact projects in RC East, and USAID focused on longer-term development. Wood explained:

When I was there and before I arrived, there was a very close personal planning relationship between senior members of the US military, especially RC East, and USAID. The CERP program is designed for quick disbursement of quick impact local projects...Most CERP was in the East. So there was something of a division of responsibility, in which CERP could do quick impact projects in RC East, and USAID could focus on infrastructure. In other parts of the country, AID had to do both longer-term infrastructure and quick impact projects, because of the lack of CERP (Wood 2009).¹⁴⁷

Finally, the Bagram process enabled the US military to correct initial mistakes and support, in coordination with USAID, Afghan-led planning at the provincial level. As part of the national planning process associated with the ANDS, each province was responsible for developing a Provincial Development Plan (PDP). However, as one USAID official put it, “virtually no one at the provincial level knew what the process should be.” The official explained:

Development planning is challenging. To introduce it at the provincial level in Afghanistan was a major undertaking...The government announced that every province must, by January 2007, come up with a PDP, but most governors didn’t know what to do (Interview 11).

¹⁴⁷ The reason there was lack of CERP funding outside of RC East was that CERP only functions where there is a US commander in charge of an area (or, in special circumstances, of an operation) to propose and approve projects (Interview 4).

The military sent the message to the PRTs that they should support the governors in developing the PDPs. However, the military at the PRTs did not have experience with participatory development planning, nor did they understand that, as the USAID officer put it, “the process was more important than the plan.” In many cases, rather than helping the governor lead a planning process, the military officers drafted the initial plans (Interview 11).

As the military leadership and their civilian counterparts at the embassy became aware of the problem, they were able to leverage their emerging relationships to correct it. The USAID official explained:

General Anderson sat with the Government of Afghanistan’s ANDS planning secretariat, DoS, and USAID, and asked, “How do we do this right? How do we put Afghans in the lead and provide the security, transport, training, and technical assistance necessary for this process?” (Interview 11)

This made possible coordinated support for Afghan-led provincial planning. USAID provided training and facilitators and helped establish a process of vetting and refining the plans, while the military helped with security and logistics. This serves as further evidence of the importance of coordination among a subset of actors, in this case the US, for broader, multinational coordination.

While the regular convening at Bagram built agreement, fostered learning, and generated concrete coordinated results, the joint analysis and planning tended to be sector-specific. It therefore did not rise to the level

of formal, integrated joint planning that a number of participants thought necessary.

The ICMAG, by contrast, did support formal integrated (interagency and multilevel) planning. The process that would eventually lead to the establishment of the ICMAG was initiated in mid-2007. The senior military leadership at Bagram was concerned about ongoing civil-military coordination problems in RC East and the associated lack of an integrated civil-military plan for the region (Interviews 16 and 80).¹⁴⁸ With the assent of their civilian counterparts from the embassy, they requested assistance from the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) at DoS (Interview 16).¹⁴⁹

In 2007, two S/CRS representatives led planning processes at each of the US PRTs (Interview 103). The S/CRS team facilitated the process, the PRT leadership provided input, and the S/CRS team then drafted the plan and gave it to the PRT for feedback and correction (Interview 16). For the first time, each of the PRTs had a joint civil-military plan reflecting agreed goals and strategy.

¹⁴⁸ A DoS official described the lack of coordination in RC East in early 2007: “RC East had a problem with civil-military integration. No one was talking to each other. Everyone was running down their own thing” (Interview 16).

¹⁴⁹ S/CRS was established in 2004. Its mission was to “lead, coordinate, and institutionalize US government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations” (Herbst 2010).

There was a problem, however. As John Mongan, one of the S/CRS facilitators, put it: “Twelve provincial plans do not add up to a national plan” (Mongan 2009). He explained:

When we finished this effort and came home in December, we got feedback that this was a great process. It helped the PRTs get their heads around issues...but without top-level agreement it is just a wish list, not an actual plan, not nested in anything (Mongan 2009).

The team was invited back in 2008, with the goal of developing an integrated plan for all of RC East. They began the planning process at RC East, went to each brigade combat team, and then went to the PRTs in an iterative “roll up and roll down” process (Interview 103). The result was an integrated plan for RC East completed in July 2008.

A DoS official explained how the process began in RC East and then was expanded to other areas.

2007 was to prove the concept. We did plans in approximately 12 provinces, since there were 12 US PRTs. RC East has 14 provinces, so we did plans at 10 US PRTs in RC East and two PRTs outside RC East. We went back in 2008 and did more of a recast of the plans. In 2009, we did an update for all of the provinces, even where there were no US PRTs. By 2009, we finally had full coverage in RC East and expanded coverage in RC South (Interview 103).

In November 2008, the ICMAG was formally “stood up” at the embassy. The intention was to turn an *ad hoc* process into an institutionalized structure. A DoS official explained:

In the fall of 2008, the S/CRS team briefed the plan to the embassy. The S/CRS team said: “[Either] you can institutionalize it here at the embassy and make it a full-time process, or we can

come back and do it again.” They agreed to institutionalize it...It became the ICMAG (Interview 103).

At the embassy, the ICMAG operated under the daily guidance of the USAID PRT director and the Brigadier General in charge of political-military affairs (Interview 92). By spring 2009 it had become a full-time group of people, working together on a daily basis (Interview 92). It included the two S/CRS staff facilitating the process, military planners from Bagram and USFOR-A, representatives of the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A), and USAID technical experts (Interview 92).

An Executive Working Group (EWG), chaired by the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), sat above the ICMAG and served as a type of deputies committee, identifying questions that arose in the planning process for resolution (Interview 92).¹⁵⁰ In addition to the DCM, it included the deputy commanding generals of RC East, RC South, and CSTC-A; the military advisor to the ambassador; the USAID mission director; and other senior civilian representatives, as appointed. Shortly after the EWG was stood up, a decision was made to include senior representation from ISAF, serving as further evidence that coordination among US agencies contributed to broader, multinational coordination.

Just as the ICMAG operated by consensus, with facilitation by S/CRS, the EWG operated by consensus. According to a senior DoS

¹⁵⁰ The EWG initially met every six weeks and subsequently every three weeks.

official, “The COMISAF [Commander, International Security Assistance Force] and Ambassador were the ultimate authorities to approve decisions, but none of the decisions really required them to decide” (Interview 92).

One of the most significant themes in interviews from this period was the learning that emerged from the ICMAG. As with the Bagram process, there were several dimensions to it. First, the process increased civilians’ appreciation of the benefits of formal, multilevel planning, which until then had been primarily the domain of the military. A DoS official reflected on the growing buy-in for the process at the embassy.

When it began, the word I got from the embassy was if the military really wants to do this multilevel planning – we don’t think it is very useful, but if military wants it badly – we’re okay with it...We did one full planning cycle, from Kabul/Bagram to the brigade level to the PRTs, then back to the brigade and back to Kabul/Bagram. Now the embassy doesn’t want to let go of this. Now we’re doing it in RC South (Interview 16).

USAID also became increasingly convinced of the importance of the ICMAG. A USAID official argued that the ICMAG was one of the most important developments in US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan. The official explained: “You need a unified strategy for each province, rolled up to the regional command. It must be driven nationally but responsive to the province” (Interview 11).

The military’s buy-in to the ICMAG also increased over time. While the US military had a long tradition of rigorous, multilevel planning, they did not have parallel experience with civilian-led, joint civil-military planning. As they saw concrete results, their investment in

the process grew. A senior military officer reflected: “S/CRS did it once, and it was OK. Now, we’re doing it for the third time... We’re starting to get some pretty good products [plans] that you could use long-term” (Interview 67).

As evidence of the growing military commitment to the ICMAG, a senior DoS representative pointed to the increased seniority of the military representation on the EWG: “We started with four stars [referring to the combined rank of the US generals involved] and ended with seven stars aggregate – a measure of success” (Interview 92).

The enhanced appreciation, on the part of both civilians and military, of the value of the civilian-facilitated joint civil-military planning was directly responsible for the decision made to institutionalize it at the embassy. Thus, learning from joint processes led to decisions to institutionalize and strengthen those processes.

The ICMAG process also fostered mutual understanding. Chris Dell, who chaired the EWG in his capacity as DCM, explained:¹⁵¹

The challenge is to speak a common language. To get to systemic or by-project coordination, you need to make the various civilian and military processes mutually intelligible. Our singular achievement over the last 18 months is the process moving us to that state – the ICMAG. The ICMAG is the heart of the way ahead (Dell 2009).

¹⁵¹ Dell was confirmed as US Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo in July 2009.

The enhanced ability to speak a common language, in turn, strengthened the joint analysis and planning process, again showing how learning emerges from and feeds back into joint processes.

The ICMAG contributed to other positive changes as well. Several DoS officials noted an increased commitment to joint decision making on the part of both civilians and the military. According to one senior official:

Preliminary evidence of the impact of the ICMAG...When CSTC-A created the Focused District Development Program, they decided in a vacuum, and on the basis of their own criteria, which districts to focus on. This was largely a security-driven decision, although they consulted with the Ministry of Interior. Now, we say, “We all get a vote about which districts to focus on” (Interview 92).

It is interesting to note the ways in which the ICMAG planning process, initially facilitated by a small, roving team of facilitators, led to institutionalized mechanisms for co-location and regular convening. As indicated earlier, the early, “proto-ICMAG” process led to a decision to co-locate a team of civilian and military planners and technical experts at the embassy. This reduced the transaction costs associated with information sharing and joint analysis and planning, both for the individuals involved and for their broader organizations. Ciara Knudsen, who served as one of the S/CRS facilitators of the ICMAG, explained:

We had, for the first time, a belly button for the military, a way for the military to work with the civilian side. Their planning process also opened up to us in a way that had never existed before (Knudsen 2009).

Once the ICMAG was formally stood up at the embassy, it evolved into an expanded team that sat together on a daily basis. The EWG, in turn, served as a mechanism to convene not only US civilian and military leaders, but also their counterparts from NATO/ISAF.

The ICMAG also led to spin-off co-located planning teams. Then Brigadier General John (“Mick”) Nicholson, who served as Deputy Commander (Stabilization) in RC South from October 2008 to June 2009, highlighted efforts in spring 2009 to stand up a “regional hub” in RC South with representatives of S/CRS, USAID, and the international community. Describing it as part of an “evolution, where we’re learning,” he explained:

We’re working closely with USAID on the creation of a regional hub – this is groundbreaking. For the first time, we will have a geographic focus, bring functional experts from Kabul. They will live here in Kandahar...and work on a development plan, an agricultural strategy for the South...(Nicholson 2009).

As the ICMAG planning process proceeded, it resulted in agreement on goals and strategy in a number of critical issue areas. The DoS official cited earlier in the chapter who highlighted the lack of early civilian input into Nangahar, Inc. argued that the ICMAG made possible the development of a joint implementation plan for Nangahar, Inc. and many other implementation plans.

From the problem-solving side, there were very visible results: The Nangahar, Inc. implementation plan, the border implementation plan, the Torkham Gate strategy, the Kyber Pass strategy...Civ-mil guidance given out for first time in an integrated way from Kabul...We set up a lot of structures to create feedback loops and

to make sure decisions made in Kabul were informed by field (Interview 103).

Many plans, however, were not fully implemented. A DoS official cited some of the factors that undermined implementation, including lack of continuity caused by turnover of key personnel; lack of systems to hold people accountable for implementation; and the continued, excessive time delays with respect to USAID funding. A DoS official reflected:

Unfortunately, at the programmatic level, where something has to be done to get a result, we haven't cracked the code yet...When it comes to the actual execution, the operationalizing of that [integrated] guidance into action, we're constrained by the military and civilian bureaucracy. We are also constrained by the cycle from idea to money...It generally takes a year. QIP [Quick Impact Program] my \$#%! Nothing is quick (Interview 16).

While the problems with implementation show that the ICMAG process was not sufficient for coordinated results, interviewees argued that it was necessary. Dell, reflecting on the ICMAG, explained: "Civil-military integration is all about the process. It's the process that gets you to a result" (Dell 2009). Schloesser offered a strikingly parallel explanation: "Eventually we had to move from a process to a results orientation, but initially we had to develop some process with a mutual coming together" (Schloesser 2009).

Thus, joint analysis and planning processes built agreement on goals and strategy. They also fostered learning, and that learning fed back into other key variables, including co-location, convening, and enhanced joint analysis and planning. They were, however, not sufficient for

coordinated results. For agreed plans to be implemented in a coordinated way, other factors were necessary.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

The data about the Bagram process and the ICMAG, more than the data in the prior periods, support the hypothesis that facilitative leadership across organizations is necessary for coordination. They highlight the importance of both aspects of facilitative leadership identified in the hypotheses: convening and facilitation of the actual processes. They also demonstrate the range of knowledge and skills necessary to exercise facilitative leadership.

Interviewees repeatedly emphasized the importance of the role Rodriguez and Anderson played in convening representatives of the operational military together with their civilian counterparts on a regular basis at Bagram. While civilian leaders also played key roles in this process, interviewees argued that it would not have taken place without Rodriguez' and Anderson's leadership and commitment.

Anderson, meanwhile, argued that the informal facilitation of breakout groups at Bagram by civilians contributed to the effectiveness of the process and fostered learning. He emphasized the importance of the civilians' technical knowledge and experience.

The leadership of the breakout groups emerged naturally, almost always civilian. You're talking about a military person who probably has just a few months' experience in this area, versus

civilians with years of experience. It worked very well, was educational” (Anderson 2009).

In discussing the ICMAG, by contrast, interviewees emphasized the importance of having full-time, trained facilitators who also understood the substantive issues and language involved. A senior DoS official also argued that the civilian facilitators’ familiarity with the military planning process and lexicon enhanced their effectiveness.

The ICMAG core is...the two S/CRS facilitators. S/CRS is like the secretariat and intellectual engine. The facilitators have been through military planning school...They can talk the talk...It’s a translation activity (Interview 92).

Interestingly, embassy buy-in to S/CRS’ facilitation role took time to develop. When S/CRS first arrived at the embassy, there was significant bureaucratic resistance. Both DoS and USAID were concerned that the S/CRS facilitators would use their position to advance certain institutional interests over others. A USAID official reflected:

At the start, no one wanted S/CRS poking around...We had grave doubts about allowing S/CRS to come in and facilitate the process. We thought we should do it within the mission, but no one at the mission then had time. There was no one to facilitate, except the S/CRS TDYs [people on temporary duty assignment to Afghanistan] (Interview 80).

As the process unfolded, resistance melted away. The official continued:

By the spring of ‘08, we started seeing results – actual PRT provincial support plans. Many people started to understand the value. Also, there had been turnover of people, so resistance was less. They assumed this is how it was supposed to be. So by the fall

of '08, opposition in [DoS] and USAID had waned. People started to send the right people to the interagency meetings (Interview 80).

Thus, in addition to supporting the hypothesized importance of facilitative leadership across organizations, the Bagram and ICMAG experiences suggest two practical considerations. The first involves the need for those exercising facilitative leadership to have legitimacy in the eyes of the organizations and individuals involved. The data show that organizational actors with a perceived stake in the process (in this case, S/CRS as part of DoS) may have difficulty gaining the acceptance necessary to serve as third-party facilitators. Nevertheless, the data also show that legitimacy can develop over time, as a result of effective process.

The second consideration involves the mix of skills necessary for effective facilitative leadership. The data highlight the importance of convening skills, experience facilitating joint processes, technical knowledge (with respect to both planning processes and the substantive issues involved), and ability to bridge organizational cultures and lexicons. Both considerations are strongly supported by the literature on multiparty negotiation referenced earlier in the dissertation and were implicit in the hypotheses but bear highlighting here.

INFORMATION SHARING

The majority of interviewees from this period focused on joint analysis and planning, of which information sharing was an integral

component, rather than information sharing in its own right. Nevertheless, there was evidence that enhanced information sharing in advance of military operations was essential for coordinated results. A USAID officer compared the information sharing before the 2008 military operation in Tagaab Valley with the situation a year or so earlier.

We had complained in '07 that it was not enough to tell USAID three to four days before an operation was going down. We needed preferably six weeks. In military parlance, we needed to be tied into the future ops guy who has a five- to six-week vision of what's coming down the pike. This allows us to provide some situational awareness to our guys on the ground and to marshal any flexible resources...We needed that five to six weeks, and we got it in Tagaab. Now it's the norm that our people know two to three months in advance where operations will go down, so we can tailor to a degree our own development resources and be more responsive before and after (Interview 80).

Thus, coordination failures led to increased recognition on the part of both military and civilians of the importance of civilians having sufficient notice in advance of combat operations to coordinate their development programming accordingly. That learning, in turn, led to expanded information sharing, enhancing coordinated results.

EMPOWERMENT

The data reinforce the earlier finding that the definition of empowerment should be expanded to include both formal decision-making authority and access to resources.

There was indication of increased awareness within USAID that Field Program Officers (FPO) at the PRTs needed to be empowered, both

in decision-making authority and access to resources, to coordinate with the military. A senior USAID official, reflecting on the learning within USAID, noted: “When we first had PRTs, we didn’t understand how much authority needed to be devolved” (Interview 84). As the USAID leadership became more attuned to the problem, they took steps to correct it.¹⁵² As of 2009, USAID field program officers at the PRTs were authorized to spend approximately \$25,000 without approval, and headquarters was working to increase that limit (Interview 84).

The increased empowerment enabled USAID FPOs at the PRTs to coordinate better with their military counterparts. Nicholson highlighted the importance of the learning and associated change over time.

The provincial and district level is where the insurgency is being fought among the people. But development agencies in 2006 focused on developing the capacity of the central government. Aid wasn’t reaching where we really needed the resources, so we had to do ourselves. We used CERP money. Development agencies have learned that this method they were using wasn’t good enough...Fast-forward to 2009...Now USAID’s OTI [Office of Transition Initiatives] sends people in who, immediately in a post-kinetic environment, can spend money quickly, faster than CERP, on projects of immediate impact (Nicholson 2009).

This provides further indication of the feedback loops between learning and other variables. Early coordination failures at the PRTs led to increased understanding of the need for both civilians and military to be empowered to allocate resources. This, in turn, led to concrete changes to correct the problem.

¹⁵² Given the time lags involved, it was not possible to determine the impacts of this learning on coordinated results.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

There were limited data in interviews from this period about accountability. There was, however, further indication of a continued evolution of incentives within the military. Echoing comments in the preceding period, a USAID official reflected the increasing focus on coordination at the highest levels of the military.

The high-water mark was when, last year, General [David] Petraeus stopped all promotions of one-stars and handpicked them with a small board...He wanted to make sure they had specific skills in conflict, reconstruction, and a couple of other things. He changed the paradigm...changed the mindset of everyone who wants to be a [major] general...A huge paradigm shift. They will be seeking out DEVADs [Development Advisors] because they won't get promoted if they don't do this well. This is a game changer (Interview 84).

The fact that USAID perceived a continued commitment to civil-military coordination on the part of the military was significant. As noted in the prior chapter, however, this observation must be qualified in two ways. First, to the extent that there was a change in incentives within the military, it was not formally incorporated into promotional precepts. Second, while individuals such as Petraeus deserve credit for their leadership, the changes in incentives were part of a broader organizational evolution that emerged organically, over time, as the military adapted to changing contexts and challenges.

POINTS OF CONTACT (TRANSACTION COSTS, ACCOUNTABILITY)

The data reinforce the finding that designated points of contact within both the military and civilian agencies reduce transaction costs and increase information sharing and joint analysis and planning. As discussed in the prior chapter, charging specific individuals with coordination portfolios also increased accountability and incentives for coordination and facilitated convening.

The importance of designated points of contact was particularly evident at the strategic level, where the loss of a direct US military counterpart to the ambassador increased transaction costs and made communication more challenging. A senior DoS official explained:

There was an easier time of collaboration when the two [Neumann and Eikenberry] were both in place. Once General Eikenberry left, and the US military command structure was fractured, there was no one overall in charge of the US military with whom Neumann could have the daily/weekly high-level strategic discussions about what was going on and how it was going. So it didn't work as well (Interview 58).

At the operational/tactical level, there was continued evidence of the importance of designated liaisons with coordination portfolios. Having designated positions charged with coordination not only reduced transaction costs, but it also increased accountability and incentives for coordination and facilitated convening.

Interviewees continued to emphasize the importance of the USAID chief of staff position in providing a single point of contact for the

military. They also highlighted the coordination mandates given to then Brigadier General Rodney Anderson, Deputy Commanding General (Support) of CJTF-82 and then Brigadier General McConville.¹⁵³ McConville, reflecting on his experience, argued that charging someone within the military with a development and, by association, coordination portfolio ensured that coordination would happen.¹⁵⁴

Major General Schloesser, the Commanding General of CJTF-101, wanted us focused on four basic lines of operations – security, governance, development, and strategic communications. My counterpart's, the Deputy Commanding General for Operations, primary responsibility was working the security line of operation, a major concern and undertaking. My primary focus was on the governance and development lines of operation. My role was to work with the Afghan government and development agencies and to work the interagency piece. So in order to collaborate on these areas of responsibilities, we had USAID, [DoS], other reps in our headquarters. General Schloesser was adamant about a balanced approach, recognizing we must have governance and development along with security. We learned that if you don't have someone doing it, it tends not to get done (McConville 2009).

There was evidence of increased awareness (learning) of the value of parallel liaison positions. In fall 2008, a decision was made at senior levels of the DoD to create a new position in RC South with a coordination portfolio. Nicholson explained that this was the “first time we had a US general in the headquarters down here in the South and the

¹⁵³ Anderson served as Deputy Commanding General (Support) of CJTF-82 from January 2007 to April 2008. McConville served as Deputy Commanding General (Support) of CJTF-101 from April 2008 to June 2009.

¹⁵⁴ Anderson likewise emphasized the coordination aspects of his mandate: “My mandate was to build partnerships with everyone associated with a particular project, understand the priorities of the ministry involved, follow the ANDS [Afghan National Development Strategy], and build partnerships” (Anderson 2009).

first time we had a portfolio of a general officer working on stabilization” (Nicholson 2009).¹⁵⁵

Nicholson emphasized the need for a senior civilian counterpart to his position, thus supporting the earlier finding about the value of parallel liaisons within coordinating agencies.

I also requested a senior US civilian...so I will have a senior US civilian counterpart...we will have the State Department doing political interaction with the senior civilians from other nations, instead of a military guy...We’re trying to have an integrated civ-mil team at the regional level...(Nicholson 2009).

Designated points of contact reduced transaction costs both between and within agencies. Echoing findings from earlier periods, a senior USAID official argued that the ability of the USAID mission director to reach back to a single, high-level point of contact within his own agency, the director of USAID’s Task Force for Afghanistan and Pakistan, reduced transaction costs and enhanced coordination (Interview 53).¹⁵⁶

LEARNING

One of the most striking themes that emerged from the data was the learning that emerged from and fed into joint processes. Consistent with prior chapters, prior learning was essential.

¹⁵⁵ Nicholson’s responsibilities included, among many others, setting the conditions for the introduction of US forces in RC South.

¹⁵⁶ Jim Bever, Director of USAID’s Task Force for Afghanistan and Pakistan during this period, served as USAID Mission Director in Kabul, from November 2003 to July 2004.

In the cases of the Bagram Process and ICMAG, both reflected deliberate attempts to learn from past experience. One civilian official with experience spanning several of the periods studied argued that the brigade-level coordination at Bagram was one of the most significant success stories in US coordination in Afghanistan and embodied learning from prior periods: “The brigade-level coordination can be seen as an effort to apply the lessons learned from successes over time” (Interview 8).

The learning that emerged from the early Bagram process, in turn, fed into the ICMAG. A DoS official highlighted the ways in which the ICMAG built on the Bagram process by providing experienced staff to lead ongoing planning efforts.

There had been...meetings at RC East, to bring the civilian agencies in Kabul and Bagram together. We regularized it, gave it substance, agendas...We created the ICMAG as support for this and the main planning and staff-level body (Interview 103).

Prior learning not only led to new processes and structures, but it also enhanced individuals’ motivation and capacity to coordinate across civil-military lines. Interviewees highlighted the importance of prior rotations in Afghanistan and similar contexts, individual efforts to prepare for deployment, and formal pre-deployment training.

For example, a USAID official who worked closely with the military remarked, “The military have served before. They are back for a second or third tour, so there has been some learning...The military is

sending people to USAID for training, and USAID also does PRT training, so there is more understanding of USAID” (Interview 77).

Nicholson emphasized how his prior rotation in Afghanistan, as well as individual preparation between rotations increased his ability to lead coordination efforts in this period.

I had the benefit of being here previously for 16 months. I got to learn a lot. Frankly, I learned as much from what we didn’t get accomplished as from what we did...When I was back in DC, I read Lockhart and Ghani [authors of *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for a Fractured World*] and met with Clare Lockhart and Ashraf Ghani for three hours to discuss Southern Afghanistan and what needed to be done there. Both were extremely helpful in educating me on my new portfolio of stabilization and economic development at a regional level, given my experience was primarily in COIN [counterinsurgency] (Nicholson 2009).

McConville focused on the importance of pre-deployment training of civilians at military academies in enhancing their credibility and their DEVAD as the “DEVAD of the future,” he explained:

They sent him to the Army’s School of Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth, where the Army develops its premiere planners. Having a civilian advisor with these types of credentials was extremely productive in increasing the collaboration between the military and the civilian development agency (McConville 2009).

The analysis also supports earlier findings regarding the challenges and limitations of sustained organizational change, especially in a context of almost constant turnover of personnel. While the military and civilian leadership on the ground continued to display an impressive degree of

individual learning and innovation, the changes they instituted often were not retained across leadership transitions.

For example, the Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) signed by Rodriguez and Anderson requiring the military to consult with civilians before allocating CERP funds, while valuable, to some extent can be understood as a reinvention of the wheel. According to one interviewee, the system that General Olson and USAID Mission Director Patrick Fine had put in place in the prior period requiring the military to get the USAID officer's approval before a CERP project would be approved "didn't stay in place. A few months after we left, it fell into disuse" (Interview 102). Rodriguez and Anderson had to put their own system in place to achieve the same goal.¹⁵⁷

There were efforts made in this period to increase continuity across rotations. When the First Airborne Division arrived in spring 2008, "They...spent a lot of time talking with Anderson about how to continue this [the expanded consultation with civilians] after the handoff, and how to build it into PRT [pre-deployment] training" (Interview 11). This can be understood as a kind of learning about learning – a deliberate effort to learn from prior failures and increase learning and continuity across

¹⁵⁷ The ICMAG, by contrast, would largely survive the leadership transitions associated with the incoming Obama Administration, although with some important changes (Interview 103).

rotations.¹⁵⁸ However, there were not systems in place to ensure continuity across rotations at all levels, and this would continue to hamper efforts to improve coordination.

OTHER FACTORS AND EXPLANATIONS

RESOURCES (ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE)

The data again demonstrate the significance of resources and resource balance relative to coordination. The impact of lack of civilian personnel, both in absolute terms and relative to military personnel, was particularly evident.

In the case of Nangahar, Inc., USAID's lack of human resources affected its willingness to embrace the military's ambitious agenda for the province. The DoS official cited earlier who argued that USAID "slow-rolled" the process, explained that USAID offers were acting "not necessarily out of belligerence. They couldn't make decisions on that amount of money. They were highly understaffed. USAID felt like a besieged organization" (Interview 103).

At the PRTs, the profound imbalance between military and civilian personnel continued to undermine coordination. A senior military officer highlighted the impact of the overreliance on military personnel for development activities.

¹⁵⁸ There was evidence of similar strategies employed by some military and civilian leaders in prior periods, including at the Nangahar PRT, but these were applied inconsistently.

The PRTs were a great concept. We brought in a lot of military guys with a lot of enthusiasm. But they did not have much development experience. So we got camel barns that were supposed to be schools. They didn't realize that schools also needed teachers and desks, or that education projects must flow through the Ministry of Education...We would have liked more civilian staff at the PRTs. At the end of the day, we'd have three civilians at a PRT, if we were lucky – DoS, USAID, and Agriculture. We need a lot more robust PRTs, with more civilians (Interview 67).

At the national level, as well, the lack of civilians meant a continued overreliance on military personnel for development work. One compelling example involved the Agribusiness Development Teams (ADT), small teams of Army National Guard soldiers with agribusiness experience that were deployed to help build Afghanistan's agricultural sector. Because the Department of Agriculture was unable to field sufficient numbers of civilian agricultural experts, National Guard soldiers were brought in. While several interviewees emphasized the advantages of the ADTs, especially their ability to operate in insecure areas, the reliance on the National Guard was a workaround. Instead of civil-military coordination, the military stepped in to fill the void caused by insufficient civilian capacity.¹⁵⁹

There was increasing recognition of the need for an expanded civilian presence on the ground. In early 2007, Wood sent "Cable 40" to Washington, requesting approximately 280 additional foreign service officers, about one-fifth of whom would be USAID (Interview 1). Due to a

¹⁵⁹ The military and civilians did, however, coordinate resources to ensure that the ADTs would have resources in place when they arrived in Nangahar in spring 2008 (Interview 99).

combination of resource constraints and the unwillingness to make directed assignments on the part of the senior civilian leadership in Washington, however, the civilian side of US efforts in Afghanistan continued to be severely underresourced.

Lieutenant General Doug Lute, appointed Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan in May 2007, argued that the lack of civilian resources was a key factor undermining coordination.

In Iraq, we had a super-empowered US embassy. When Ryan Crocker was in charge of the political surge in Iraq, Crocker had six lieutenants in the embassy who were ambassadorial rank and a total embassy staff of about 600. In the provinces in Iraq we had civilian-led PRTs with 750 civilian experts and very senior State Department leadership. In Afghanistan in 2008, we had one ambassador with no experience in the region. Only his Deputy Chief of Mission had ambassadorial rank. There was a very junior experience base below them... The embassy below them had about 300 people. We had 60 US civilians in the military-led PRTs, compared to 750 in Iraq. We didn't invest in civilian leadership in Afghanistan (Lute 2009).

Thus, the lack of civilian resources, especially personnel, in absolute terms and relative to the military, continued to undermine coordination.

DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The data reinforce the earlier finding that directive leadership within organizations may be necessary for coordination. While interviewees emphasized the importance of facilitative leadership across organizations, as discussed above, they also pointed to the need for

directive leadership within organizations to promote the information sharing and joint analysis and planning necessary for coordinated results.

One example of directive leadership involved a FRAGO signed by Rodriguez and Anderson in the spring of 2007. The FRAGO directed the military to both consult with USAID and learn from their development expertise (Interview 57). A USAID official explained:

General Rodriguez had sector people in his command and his planning guy. All were told: “You need to work with the [US]AID people to know how development works in your sector. Don’t use CERP to build schools [or do other projects] until you do that with AID experts” (Interview 11).

Distilling the lessons from this experience, the USAID officer emphasized the importance of “command requirements that these things happen” (Interview 11). He explained:

Anderson said: “We won’t spend a CERP dollar anywhere in the AOR [Area of Responsibility] unless it takes into account the PDPs [Provincial Development Plans developed in each province, with USAID involvement]” (Interview 11).

Directive leadership also was important on the civilian side. Dell explained that he initially needed to direct DoS representatives at the PRTs to participate in the ICMAG planning process: “The DoS folks would say, ‘We don’t do planning.’ I told them they had to do it” (Dell 2009).

Interestingly, Dell combined directive leadership with changes in accountability and incentives.

We've made the PRT DoS reps accountable for this. Each of their work requirements said they would participate. So their career prospects and evaluations depend on participating in this process (Dell 2009).

Moreover, the DoS representatives at the PRT were held accountable not only for participating in the ICMAG planning process, but also for implementing the plans they helped generate. A DoS official argued that these changes were critical.

Ambassador Dell, in a February 2009 meeting with State Department officers at the PRTs, told them, "Your evaluations will be directly related to your success in achieving the indicators you laid out for yourselves...[in the joint plan]" (Interview 16).

Thus, directive leadership was used in concert with accountability and incentive systems to promote participation in joint analysis and planning processes and coordinated implementation of the plans developed in those processes.

ATTITUDES OF LEADERS

Whereas the relationships between senior leaders featured prominently in the data about the preceding two periods, interviews from this period emphasized leaders' attitudes, especially their commitment to coordination. Many highlighted, in particular, the positive attitudes of the military leadership at Bagram with respect to coordination with civilians as having made possible the coordinated results achieved.

The analysis above supports the argument that the personal vision and commitment of the military leadership of CJTF-82 and CJTF-101, as

well as their counterparts at DoS and USAID, contributed to the coordinated results achieved. However, the analysis also shows that their commitment to coordination did not emerge in a vacuum. Rather, it reflected broader learning and changes within their respective organizations.

This relationship between individual leadership and broader changes is captured in the following example. Paralleling comments cited earlier about Rodriguez' and Anderson's leadership, Dell argued that McConville's commitment to supporting civilian efforts was a critical factor in the coordinated results achieved.

McConville and his team focused on identifying civilian projects that could transform not only the civilian environment, but also the economic and security environment. That was a leap forward in thinking. Previously, the military had worked out its campaign plans in isolation and regarded the civilian effort as an afterthought. Now they recognized that the civilian effort could lead and transform the security environment, and therefore that giving primacy to supporting the civilian efforts made sense from a security perspective, as well...Instead of going off and writing a campaign plan, they decided to build their campaign plan for the Khost-based task force around supporting AID's efforts to build the road (Dell 2009).

The increasing appreciation of the need for coordination and what it entailed, on the part of both military and civilian leaders, was intimately connected to broader changes in attitudes and understanding within their respective institutions. Moreover, individual leaders' vision and commitment exercised its effects largely through the processes and systems they put in place.

Even while crediting McConville for his personal leadership and vision, Dell repeatedly emphasized the importance of process, especially the joint planning conducted under the auspices of the ICMAG. Schloesser likewise affirmed the importance of process in achieving coordinated results. Thus, while individual attitudes – especially those of people in leadership positions – mattered, their attitudes were affected by and in turn exerted their effects through many of the other variables discussed above.

CONCLUSION

The analysis above strongly supports the hypothesized importance of convening, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning. Agreement on goals and strategy was necessary for coordinated results, and information sharing, joint analysis, and planning were necessary for agreement. Facilitative leadership across organizations made possible joint processes, while directive leadership within organizations sometimes was necessary to promote participation in them. Joint analysis of underlying interests and assumptions fostered learning, and that learning fed back into many of the other variables discussed above, enhancing coordination.

However, the analysis also shows the limitations of joint processes. Joint processes can build agreement on goals and strategies, but coordinated implementation of those strategies requires other factors discussed above and in prior chapters, including empowerment, accountability, and incentives.

CHAPTER NINE:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The preceding four chapters present the findings from each of the time periods studied. This chapter summarizes the findings of the case study as a whole and develops a theoretical model for further empirical testing. It concludes by identifying implications both for policy and practice and for further research.

The case study documents many coordinated results achieved in US efforts in Afghanistan as well as a number of failures. It identifies the factors that explain coordinated results and coordination failures, including several which were not anticipated in the hypotheses, and illuminates the relationships among them.

COORDINATED RESULTS

The case study validates the definition of coordinated results provided in Chapter Three, documenting examples of all four types of coordinated results: avoidance of negative interactive effects, efficiency (eliminating duplication), complementarity, and synergy. The majority of coordinated results achieved fall into the first three categories and therefore reflect lesser degrees of coordinated results. They tend to be at

the level of specific activities or sets of activities and often do not add up synergistically within or across sectors.

Two notable exceptions are the 2004 presidential elections and road construction. The elections are an example of coordinated results in their own right. Moreover, activities in a number of sectors interacted synergistically to create the conditions in which the elections became possible. Likewise, the various security and development activities associated with the expansion of the roads network often add up synergistically.

That synergy was achieved in the elections and road construction but not in many other areas is not a coincidence. Coordinated results were easier to achieve in some issue areas than others. The framework for preparing for and conducting national elections was well developed and broadly accepted, and the efforts were time-limited, rather than ongoing. Likewise, once agreement was reached that both the military and civilians had a role to play in road construction, the approach to building roads and fostering economic development along them generally was not contested. In counternarcotics, by contrast, there were dramatically different understandings about effective and legitimate means of reducing poppy cultivation.

Thus, some issue areas lent themselves more readily to coordination, and especially to higher degrees of coordinated results, specifically because it was easier to reach agreement on strategies in those

areas. This is consistent with the finding below that agreement on goals and strategies is the most significant and direct factor explaining coordinated results. It also is broadly supported by the international relations literature, which demonstrates that cooperation (if not coordination) is more likely to emerge in some issue areas than in others.

Three additional findings about coordinated results bear highlighting. First, while the case study is not designed to measure the number of coordinated results achieved relative to coordination failures, the latter appear to far exceed the former in the case study as a whole, especially when it comes to synergistic coordinated results at the national level.¹⁶⁰

The failure to achieve consistent, synergistic coordinated results is striking given the \$32.9 billion the US invested in reconstruction in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2009 (SIGAR, April 2009). It is not surprising, however, given the inadequate organizational systems and processes that were in place, especially early in the case study, and the continuing underresourcing of the civilian side of US efforts. Thus, while the case study documents impressive commitment to coordination and innovation on the part of many individuals who served, it often was impossible to overcome the institutional and systemic constraints on coordination.

¹⁶⁰ The data indicate that there were many more coordinated results at the tactical level than documented in the analysis, but, as indicated, these often were nested within broader strategic coordination failures.

In spite of the disappointing overall record, coordinated results increased over time. In the first period, there were very few coordinated results achieved. As time went on, both the number and degree of coordinated results increased. This is consistent with the findings summarized below, which show significant learning and increasing investment in the systems and processes necessary for enhanced coordination.

Finally, the analysis supports the assumption underlying this research that coordination among a subset of expatriate actors enhances their ability to coordinate effectively with other actors, in particular local actors. There are several examples in which joint analysis and planning between the US military and civilians enabled them to align their planning and implementation with Afghan goals and priorities. Further research, however, will be necessary to test rigorously this assumption.

FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN COORDINATED RESULTS

Four sets of factors emerged as significant in explaining coordinated results: **agreement** on goals and strategies; the **organizational systems and processes** necessary to reach and implement agreed strategies; the **leadership** necessary for those systems and processes to be effective; and **systemic and individual factors**.

AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The case study strongly supports the hypothesis that agreement on goals and strategy is necessary for coordinated results. When there was agreement on both goals and the strategy to achieve those goals, that was the most significant and direct factor explaining coordinated results. When agreement on either goals or strategy was lacking, coordination failures ensued.

Agreement was necessary at all levels of decision making, and agreement at one level affected agreement at other levels. Agreement on the part of the senior civilian and military leadership on the ground was particularly significant, as it influenced perceptions up and down the respective chains of command.

However, there were limits to that effect. Thus, even when agreement was reached on the ground with respect to counternarcotics strategy, implementation was sometimes held hostage to continuing disagreement in Washington. Likewise, when agreement of the senior leadership on the ground was at its strongest, as it arguably was in the second period, disagreement on goals and priorities at the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) continued to hamper coordination.

It is important to draw out several aspects of agreement that were not fully developed in the hypotheses. First, agreement on goals affects but is distinct from agreement on the strategy to achieve those goals.

Agreement on goals often motivates actors to build agreement on strategy. This was evident in the context of road construction, in which growing consensus about the importance of roads led to agreement on interagency strategy to construct roads, including a division of labor.

Second, agreement on high-level goals is possible even in the context of different interests and priorities. Thus, while the military and civilians increasingly agreed on the need for road construction, the military emphasized security effects, while the US Agency for International Development (USAID) focused on longer-term contributions to economic and political development.

However, their interests converged over time, with the military increasingly appreciating the importance of longer-term capacity building and economic development, not only with respect to roads, but more broadly, and USAID recognizing the need for projects that generated shorter-term stability. This suggests a virtuous cycle of agreement on high-level goals enhancing coordination, which in turn fosters learning, which contributes to deeper levels of agreement.¹⁶¹

Third, agreement can be understood as falling along a spectrum, from more formal, institutionalized agreements at the policy/strategic level (e.g., those codified in doctrine) to less formal, *ad hoc* agreements that

¹⁶¹ A virtuous cycle is “a condition in which a favorable circumstance or result gives rise to another that subsequently supports the first” (American Heritage Dictionary). For a systems-theory analysis of vicious and virtuous cycles, see Senge (1994).

emerge on the ground as actors engage with their environment and one another (e.g., agreements reached through joint analysis at a PRT).

The case study shows that informal agreements made possible coordinated results at the tactical level, even in the absence of agreement at higher levels. However, tactical coordinated results were often embedded in broader strategic coordination failures. This suggests that formal agreement on goals and strategy at the policy/strategic level is the most important factor determining whether tactical efficiencies and complementarities add up synergistically.

ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Five organizational systems and processes were significant in explaining coordinated results and the lack thereof: empowerment; accountability and incentives; information sharing; joint analysis and planning; and co-location, convening, and designated liaisons.

1. EMPOWERMENT

The case study supports the hypothesis that agreement on goals and strategy, while necessary, is not sufficient for coordinated results. The people on the ground also must be empowered to respond quickly and collectively to emerging challenges and opportunities.

While empowerment was defined in the hypotheses in terms of formal decision-making authority, the case study shows that access to resources is an essential aspect of *de facto* empowerment. This is

particularly true at the operational/tactical level, where the decisions that are made affect the achievement of higher-level strategic goals.

It also indicates that it is not only absolute levels of empowerment that matter. Equally, if not more, important are relative levels of empowerment across coordinating agencies. At the PRTs, military officers enjoyed a much higher level of empowerment than their USAID counterparts, who often had to seek approval for projects and funds from Kabul. This contributed to a go-it-alone attitude on the part of the military and associated coordination failures. As the military and civilian agencies increasingly recognized the importance of jointly empowering people at the operational/tactical and instituted the necessary changes, coordination increased.

Empowerment is not solely a function of formal organizational systems and procedures. The experience, skill, and connections of individual actors affect their ability to make decisions and garner resources and thus their *de facto* empowerment. At PRTs with relatively senior, experienced Field Program Officers who could navigate effectively within their bureaucracy, the institutional barriers to decision making were less of an issue. Similarly, at the strategic/operational level, the high level of access and influence Khalilzad enjoyed in Washington contributed to the high level of empowerment he and Barno enjoyed on the ground.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

The case study supports the hypothesis that empowerment must be combined with systems that incentivize actors to coordinate and hold them accountable for coordinated results. When such systems are in place, individuals use their decision-making authority and access to resources to advance agreed goals. When they do not, coordination becomes highly dependent on individual attitudes, motivations, and relationships, and thus coordinated results are achieved inconsistently at best.

The experience at many PRTs illustrates this point, where the problems associated with different levels of empowerment were exacerbated by perverse incentives to spend money quickly and lack of accountability for downstream interactive effects. Even when there was agreement on goals and strategy, these factors combined to undermine coordination.

While most evidence of the importance of incentives and accountability involved coordination failures, there were several examples of changes being made to increase professional incentives and accountability for coordination. The joint decision in the second period that the military planners detailed to the embassy would report not only up their military chain of command, but also to the USAID mission director, and that the mission director also would write their evaluations, strengthened their incentives to coordinate and made clear that they would be held accountable for doing so.

The change in the position requirements for civilians at the embassy in the fourth period likewise shifted incentives and accountability, promoting their active participation in the Integrated Civil-Military Action Group (ICMAG) planning process. While valuable, these changes in incentives and accountability were at the margins. They affected the individuals directly involved, but they did not rise to the level of the systems-wide changes in incentive and accountability systems that the case study suggests are necessary for broader, sustained coordinated results.

3. INFORMATION SHARING

The case study supports the hypothesis that information sharing is necessary for coordinated results. Coordination failures often were driven by the failure to share information. When coordinated results were achieved, information sharing was a key factor.

Lack of information sharing led to negative interactions among activities, wasteful duplication, and associated gaps. Insufficient notice about the military's clearing operations left USAID unprepared for the relief and development necessary to hold and build those areas. Lack of information about development activities led to negative interactive effects, as when the military's provision of free veterinary services inadvertently undercut USAID's parallel efforts to build local capacity.

Information sharing within organizations was equally important. Inadequate information flows between USAID in Kabul and the field undermined the ability of both civilians and military at the PRTs to leverage and align their activities with those programs, resulting in frequent disconnects between tactical activities and higher strategic goals.

As the military and civilians grew increasingly aware of the need for expanded information flows, they established systems and processes to do so. At Bagram, regular information sharing enabled participants to identify and mitigate negative interactive effects, as when the military agreed to stop providing the free veterinary services referenced earlier. The growing willingness of the military to notify civilians well in advance of clearing operations enabled USAID to plan for the relief and development necessary to hold and build those areas, leading to enhanced coordinated results.

The case study shows that information sharing is necessary but must be combined with joint analysis and planning to yield consistent, higher-order (i.e., synergistic) coordinated results. The experience with the Playbook, the inventory of USAID projects developed to support coordination with the military, illustrates this point. The Playbook was a laudable achievement, organizing information about USAID development activities by region and thus making it more accessible to and useful for the military. However, the Playbook was not directly tied into a joint

planning framework. As a result, the military was unable to interpret and leverage the information effectively in support of coordinated results.

4. JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

The case study strongly supports the hypothesis that joint analysis and planning are necessary for coordinated results. The Embassy Interagency Planning Group (EIPG) established in the second period, the process initiated at Bagram Airfield in the third period, the ICMAG process conducted in the fourth period, and the joint analysis and planning conducted at several PRTs before the ICMAG was established all demonstrated the importance of joint analysis and planning.

The case study suggests that joint analysis and planning should be understood as falling along a spectrum. At one end of the spectrum were the *ad hoc*, relatively informal processes instituted at a number of PRTs that emphasized joint analysis and decision making, rather than the development of formal, agreed plans. At the other end of the spectrum were rigorous planning processes, such as the ICMAG process, which generated formal plans. The Bagram process fell between the two poles, combining informal analysis and tactical problem solving with sector-specific planning.

While the less formal processes were directly associated with tactical coordinated results, the case study suggests that formal planning processes are necessary for strategic coordinated results. Moreover, formal

planning at one level must be integrated with those at other levels. Thus, the fact that the interagency plan developed in Washington in the second period, “Accelerating Success in Afghanistan,” was incorporated into the Mission Performance Plan that was developed jointly by civilians, and military at the embassy strengthened its contributions to coordinated results.

By contrast, disconnects between counternarcotics planning in Washington and that conducted on the ground undermined coordination. Likewise, when planning was conducted at individual PRTs but not systematically integrated into higher levels of planning, the effects of any tactical coordinated results were undermined by broader strategic failures. One of the significant contributions of the ICMAG process was that it integrated plans horizontally (across agencies) and vertically (between levels of decision making on the ground).

Nevertheless, not all of the plans generated were implemented, providing further evidence that joint analysis and planning, while necessary, is not sufficient for coordinated results. Other factors identified above – in particular empowerment, accountability and incentives, and information sharing – are essential for coordinated implementation of agreed plans.

The value of joint analysis and planning was not limited to immediate, tangible outputs. It played a critical role in fostering learning. Through these processes, participants developed greater appreciation of

both common ground and differences, became increasingly attuned to the effects of their decisions on the broader systems they were seeking to influence, and developed working relationships, networks, and skills that fed back into broader coordination efforts. This was particularly true of processes in which participants actively sought to surface and understand differences in interests, values, and assumptions. This brings to mind Dwight D. Eisenhower's famous quote: "In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable" (Eisenhower 1957).

5. CO-LOCATION, CONVENING, AND DESIGNATED LIAISONS

One of the most interesting and policy-relevant findings of the case study is the value of co-location. Co-location can be understood as a structural alternative to *ad hoc* or intermittent convening, and thus as one end of a spectrum of convening. When civilians and military were not co-located, regular convening and designated liaisons facilitated information sharing and joint analysis and planning.

Co-location is the factor most frequently and consistently cited across the eight years studied as having contributed to coordinated results. Co-location contributed to coordination at all levels of decision making. It reduced the transaction costs associated with information sharing and joint analysis and planning, fostered learning, and strengthened working relationships. It had powerful symbolic effects.

The most striking evidence of the value of co-location was the co-location of Lieutenant General Barno and Ambassador Khalilzad at the embassy in the second period. Living and working together at the embassy facilitated daily exchanges of information and joint problem solving and contributed to their strong working relationship. The associated co-location of the military planners Barno detailed to the embassy facilitated information sharing, joint analysis, and planning. Co-location in this period also served as a powerful symbol of the senior leaders' commitment to civil-military coordination, affecting perceptions up and down their respective chains of command.

In the subsequent period, Lieutenant General Eikenberry's decision to move his office to Camp Eggers, rather than remain at the embassy with Ambassador Neumann, reduced the opportunities for face-to-face interaction between principals. It had significant symbolic fallout, as it was interpreted – rightly or wrongly – as an indication of reduced commitment to coordination on the part of the senior leadership on the ground. This does not necessarily mean that it was the incorrect decision. As the analysis documents, there were benefits to Eikenberry of being closer to his command, especially at a time when the insurgency was gaining momentum. However, it does show that decisions about co-location affect coordination both substantively and symbolically.

At the operational/tactical level, co-location was equally significant. The co-location of civilians and military at the PRTs was one

of the most significant structural innovations during the eight years studied. Co-location at the PRTs made possible a degree of information sharing and joint analysis and planning between civilians and the military that could not have been achieved through regular convening, especially given the lack of security in which they operated. Co-location at the PRTs also contributed to learning and strengthened working relationships, which, in turn, fed back into the system, further contributing to coordination.

The co-location of increasing numbers of political advisors (POLAD) and development advisors (DEVAD) at the various levels of the military structure likewise facilitated information sharing, joint analysis, and planning and fostered learning. While the case study focused on coordination on the ground, co-location also emerged as significant at the policy/strategic level, in particular in the context of the Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group (AIOG), which combined part-time co-location with convening to facilitate joint analysis.

While co-location at the various levels of decision making facilitated information sharing, joint analysis, and planning, it could not overcome other structural impediments to coordination, including the lack of empowerment of civilians, incentives that emphasized spending money over results, and lack of accountability for coordinated results and associated downstream impacts.

Where military and civilians were not co-located, convening was necessary for joint analysis and planning. Convening was most effective when done regularly and over time. The monthly convening of civilians and military at Bagram Airfield that began at the end of the third period and continued in the fourth is a particularly strong example of the importance of convening. The PRT conferences convened in Regional Command (RC) East also are significant. While civilians and military were co-located at individual PRTs, coordination at the regional level required convening representatives of all of the PRTs for broader information sharing and joint analysis and planning.

The use of single points of contact and designated liaisons emerged as an important way of reducing the time and effort required for interagency communication. Examples include Ambassador Ryan Crocker's request in the first period for a single point of contact in the military and the establishment of new liaison positions within USAID and the military in the third and fourth periods.

While most of the data about designated liaisons involve interagency (horizontal) coordination, there also is evidence of the value of designated points of contact within organizational hierarchies. Examples include the establishment of the Afghanistan Reachback Office in the second period, as well as the reachback capacity established within USAID. These reduced the transaction costs associated with communication between headquarters and the field, facilitating

information sharing and decision making. In so doing, they strengthened the ability of people on the ground to coordinate across agencies.

As with co-location, designated liaison positions served as practical means of solving multiple problems identified in the hypotheses: reducing transaction costs, facilitating convening, increasing accountability for coordinated results, and expanding information flows both within and across organizations.

FACILITATIVE AND DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The case study provides significant, albeit inconsistent, support for the hypothesis that facilitative leadership across organizations is necessary to support the joint processes discussed above. It also indicates that some degree of directive leadership within organizations, a factor not anticipated in the hypotheses, may be necessary, especially in the absence of other organizational systems and processes.

Facilitative leadership was the only factor identified in the hypotheses that is not consistently supported by the case study as a whole. There was very little evidence of the importance of facilitative leadership before the end of the third period. The one noteworthy data point from the earlier periods was the argument made by a senior military officer that “the new C2 was about cooperation and collaboration, not command and control, influence not direction” (Interview 86).

At the end of the third period and throughout the fourth, facilitative leadership emerged as a powerful contributor to the process at Bagram and that conducted under the auspices of the ICMAG. The analysis highlighted the importance of both aspects of facilitative leadership identified in the hypotheses: convening of organizational representatives and facilitation of the actual analysis and planning processes. Moreover, it was not only people in official leadership positions who exercised facilitative leadership. People at lower levels in the military and civilian hierarchies also played important formal and informal facilitation roles.

The senior leadership at Bagram and their civilian counterparts at the embassy played a key leadership role in convening representatives from their respective agencies at Bagram. They initiated the process and made clear to those below them that it was important to participate. The facilitation of people at lower levels in the respective chains of command, especially the civilian leadership of technical breakout sessions, also was cited as a key factor in the effectiveness of that process. In that case, it was their technical expertise rather than formal leadership positions that enabled them to exercise facilitative leadership.

The ICMAG planning process was initiated with support of the senior military and civilian leadership on the ground. However, it was a small team of facilitators from the Office of the Special Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) at the Department of State who led the planning process. Other agencies initially resisted having S/CRS

because it was perceived as having “organizational equities” at stake. As the process unfolded and participants saw the value of having full-time facilitation of the process, however, resistance faded away. In this case, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the facilitation team was enhanced by the fact that they had both substantive knowledge of the issues and process training, including planning and consensus building.

The findings about the multiple ways in which facilitative leadership is exercised are supported by the literature reviewed in Chapter Three. Research on multi-stakeholder negotiation shows the importance of facilitators having both substantive knowledge and process expertise. It also highlights the unique challenges and opportunities associated with having “insider partials” play third-party roles (e.g., Wehr and Lederach 1996). Organizational theory likewise shows that leadership without authority is exercised in multiple ways and at all levels of organizational hierarchies (e.g., Senge 1990, Cleveland 2002, Malone 2004).

The strong support for the importance of facilitative leadership at the end of the third period and throughout the fourth raises the question of why there are so little data about it earlier in the case study. The answer may be that the increasing investment in joint analysis and planning over time generated a greater need for facilitative leadership. In the first period, civilians and military operated in parallel, with virtually no effort made to develop or implement joint strategies. As the need for coordination became increasingly evident and civilians and military invested in joint

analysis and planning processes, facilitative leadership became more important.

One of the most interesting findings from the case study is the significance of directive leadership within organizational hierarchies. This is not inconsistent with the no-one-in-charge premise of the dissertation, which assumes that no one can be fully in charge of multiple, autonomous organizations but acknowledges the role hierarchy plays within organizations.

There were several ways in which directive leadership was used to enhance coordination. A temporary reduction in PRT commanders' authority to allocate Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds was used to make clear expectations regarding coordination with civilians and establish patterns of behavior. Civilians were directed by the deputy chief of mission to participate actively in the ICMAG process in response to initial resistance. Directive leadership also was exercised jointly, as when Eikenberry and Neumann jointly issued a formal Strategic Directive to their subordinates to coordinate.

Thus, directive leadership operated in concert with incentive and accountability systems to promote the information sharing and joint analysis and planning necessary for coordination. Once joint processes were under way and participants recognized their value, the need for directive leadership often receded. This was evident particularly in the case of the ICMAG.

This suggests that at least some degree of directive leadership within organizations may be a necessary complement to facilitative leadership across organizations. However, the need for directive leadership may recede when the systems and processes identified above are institutionalized. This is consistent with organizational and systems theory identified in Chapter Three, which emphasize the importance of facilitative leadership within organizations.

Given the inconsistent and limited data, further research will be necessary to determine the salience of facilitative and directive leadership and how they interact with the systems and processes identified above.

SYSTEMIC AND INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

The case study highlights two additional factors that affect coordination: resources and power and individual attitudes and relationships. These can be understood as two ends of a spectrum, from the broader systems within which organizations operate to the individuals who make up those organizations.

1. RESOURCES AND POWER

One of the striking findings from the analysis is the impact of resources and power disparities on coordination. The continued underresourcing of the civilian side of US efforts in Afghanistan in relative and absolute terms undermined coordination at every level of decision making.

The financial resources imbalance was profound. Of the \$32.9 billion the US invested in reconstruction in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2009, \$18.5 billion went to the Defense Department, \$4.6 billion to DoS, and \$9.2 billion to USAID, with the remainder divided among other agencies (SIGAR April 2009). These figures do not include the massive investment in war fighting during this period.¹⁶² The imbalance in human resources was equally striking. As of November 2009, there were approximately 67,000 US military personnel in Afghanistan (GAO November, 2009) as compared with several hundred civilians (Green 2010).¹⁶³ While efforts were under way to create a “civilian surge,” the target number for 2010 was 1,000 civilians – still a small fraction of the military personnel (Green 2010). In this context, the perception cited earlier that civilians were merely “arrows in the military’s quiver” was not surprising.

The inadequate civilian financial and human resources undermined coordination in several ways. First, civilians had more difficulty than their military counterparts absorbing the opportunity costs associated with coordination, as well as supporting military initiatives that often assumed substantial resources. In explaining USAID’s initial response to the military’s ambitious vision for Nangahar, Inc., for example, a DoS official emphasized USAID’s human resource constraints.

¹⁶² Of the \$223.2 billion the US spent in Afghanistan, only \$32.9 billion was dedicated to reconstruction (Cordesman 2009).

¹⁶³ There were approximately 360 civilian personnel in Afghanistan in January 2009. The aim was to increase the number to 1,000 by 2010 (Green 2010).

Even more significant were the effects of power disparities on coordination processes. The most visible manifestation of this was at the PRTs, where civilians were vastly outnumbered and often outranked by the military. This affected their ability to gain a seat at the table and thus to influence interagency decision making. PRTs with relatively senior civilian representation were often able to overcome these hurdles. At most PRTs, however, the military dominated decision making.

Power disparities at the strategic/operational level also undermined coordination. In the Khalilzad embassy, the access and influence enjoyed by the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group (ARG) came at the expense of their civilian government counterparts, especially USAID. At the same time, USAID controlled financial resources, whereas the ARG did not. This mismatch in types of power not only caused tensions and conflict, undermining communication and contributing to coordination failures.

The power disparities on the ground were a direct reflection of those in Washington. Despite increasingly urgent calls to invest in the civilian side of US foreign policy, including on the part of Secretary of Defense Gates, the Defense Department continued to garner the lion's share of resources. The Congressional budgeting process therefore played a critical role in civil-military coordination, undermining it at every level.

This shows that there are systemic constraints on the degree to which the concrete organizational systems and processes identified above can affect coordination. In the context of profound power disparities at all

levels of decision making, consistent, sustained coordinated results may not be possible. This finding is supported by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, but was not sufficiently anticipated in the hypotheses.

2. INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS

At the other end of the spectrum, the case study demonstrates the impact of individual attitudes and relationships on coordination. While the most dramatic evidence of this was on the part of people in official leadership positions, attitudes and relationships affected coordination at all levels of decision making.

The fact that individual attitudes and relationships affected coordination is not surprising, especially in a situation as complex and rapidly changing as Afghanistan was during the period studied. What the analysis shows, however, is that attitudes and relationships are deeply influenced by the other variables discussed above. Beneath individuals' commitment to coordination, there often were changes in incentives. Beneath strong working relationships, there were often ongoing opportunities for regular, face-to-face interaction. Indeed, it was the absence of the very factors hypothesized to be necessary for coordination, including incentives and accountability, which made coordination overly dependent on individual attitudes and relationships.

Moreover, individual attitudes and relationships exerted their effects largely through many of the same variables. This was especially

true of people in leadership positions. It was not their attitudes and relationships *per se* that affected coordination, as much as the decisions they made and actions they took. When they empowered the people below them, incentivized them to coordinate, and held them accountable for doing so, coordination became less dependent on the luck of the draw, so to speak, with regard to individual attitudes. Indeed, those actions directly affected attitudes at the levels below them. When they invested in the co-location and convening necessary for regular, face-to-face interaction, relationships likewise improved.

Thus, the case study confirms the hypothesis that, while individual attitudes and relationships matter, they largely are conditioned by and exert their effects through the organizational systems and processes discussed above.

THE ROLE OF LEARNING

Learning emerged as a powerful explanation of coordinated results. Learning was woven into the analysis of all the other variables, and it was impossible to explain coordinated results without taking account of learning. The case study confirms the hypotheses that learning both emerges from and contributes to the other factors discussed above.

The analysis shows that joint processes foster learning. Indeed, learning was one of the most important outcomes of joint processes. As participants engaged in joint analysis and planning at all levels of decision

making, they learned about each other's interests, perspectives, and assumptions; gained awareness of the effects of their decisions on other actors and activities; and grew in their mutual understanding and respect.

Moreover, the enhanced understanding and interpersonal relationships among individuals often carried over to the organizational level. This was evident in the transformation of the relationship between USAID and the operational military, the increased awareness on the part of the military of development principles, and the enhanced appreciation within USAID of the need to address short-term security imperatives, while also remaining focused on longer-term development goals.

While joint processes stood out for their contributions to learning, there were several factors that affected learning. Co-location was among the most significant. By living and working together on a daily basis, civilians and military were able to learn about and from one another in ways that were beyond what was possible in joint analysis and planning processes.

Coordinated results also were a source of learning. When people saw evidence of coordinated results and their impact on the achievement of specific goals, their commitment to coordination grew. Even more significant, as people became attuned to the impact of coordination failures, the failures themselves became powerful catalysts for reflection and learning.

In addition to the learning that developed through ongoing interactions on the ground, prior learning was significant. Past experience working across civil and military lines enhanced individuals' commitment to and capacity for information sharing, joint analysis, and planning. The efforts individuals made to prepare for deployment to Afghanistan, including reading historical accounts of counterinsurgency operations, enhanced their appreciation of the complexities of civil-military coordination. As the military and civilian agencies became increasingly concerned with the need to enhance coordination, they invested in joint pre-deployment training. They also instituted systems to enhance continuity across rotations, including creating a cadre of personnel who would rotate in and out of Afghanistan, remaining focused on the region even while at headquarters.

The learning that resulted from all of the above experiences fed back into the system, enhancing coordination. In some cases, this effect was direct. As awareness of negative interactive effects and duplication increased, both military and civilians alike took steps to correct them. As they became more attuned to complementary resources, expertise, and capacities, they took steps to leverage them in support of shared goals. As military and civilians returned to Afghanistan for second and third rotations, they brought with them a shared experience base and professional relationships and networks upon which to draw in sharing information and engaging in joint analysis and planning.

In many cases, learning exerted its effects less directly, through feedback loops to the other factors discussed above. Increased mutual understanding, including the ability to bridge differences of organizational culture and lexicon, contributed to more effective joint processes. Increased recognition of the value of those processes led to decisions to institutionalize them. Increased attunement to the institutional causes of coordination failures led to efforts to correct them, including changes in empowerment and incentive and accountability systems.

Nevertheless, the impressive degree of learning and innovation on the ground often did not translate into the sustained institutional change necessary for longer-term coordination. One reason was the constant turnover of personnel and inadequate systems to ensure that incoming rotations would learn from and build upon what had come before. This led to frequent reinventions of the wheel.

While civilian and military leaders could and did make valuable changes on the ground, including instituting procedures to strengthen incentives and enhance accountability, these were often at the margins of vast bureaucratic systems within which they operated. More profound organizational change required decisions of senior policy makers in Washington who were often far removed from the reality on the ground and faced their own set of institutional and political constraints.

THEORETICAL MODEL

The case study reveals five sets of factors that together explain coordinated results: **Agreement on goals and strategy**; the **organizational systems and processes** necessary to reach and implement agreements; **leadership** of those systems and processes; **learning**; and **power balance**.¹⁶⁴

Consistent with the research questions identified in Chapter Three, the analysis focuses on the salience and causal mechanisms of organizational systems and processes. These can be categorized as inter-organizational and intra-organizational, with information sharing falling in both categories.

ILLUSTRATION 9.1: SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

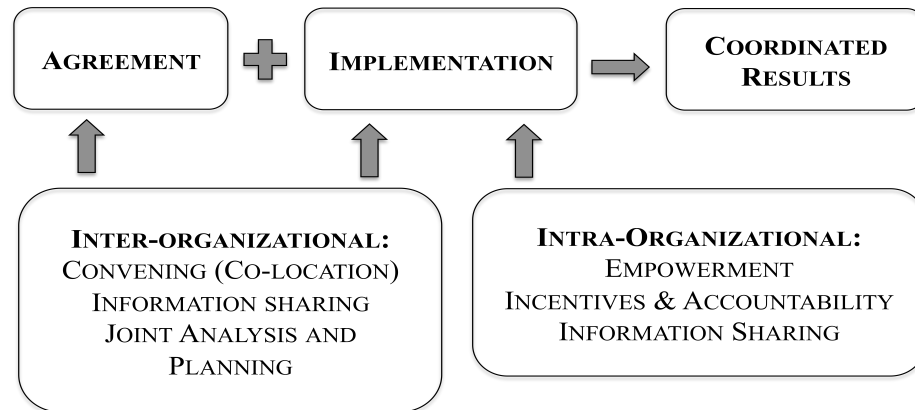
INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL	INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL
CONVENING (AND CO-LOCATION)	EMPOWERMENT
JOINT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING	INCENTIVES AND ACCOUNTABILITY
INFORMATION SHARING	INFORMATION SHARING

The inter-organizational factors – convening (or co-location), information sharing, and joint analysis and planning – are necessary to reach agreement on goals and strategies. Once those agreements are in place, intra-organizational factors – empowerment, incentive and

¹⁶⁴ Individual attitudes and relationships are not included here because they largely were conditioned by and exerted their influence through the organizational and process variables.

accountability systems, and information sharing – become paramount, in addition to continued information sharing and joint analysis among organizations. This is illustrated below.

ILLUSTRATION 9.2: AGREEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION



The above discussion raises the question of necessary and sufficient conditions. Are all of the systems and processes identified above necessary for coordinated results? Are they collectively sufficient? To answer these questions, one must distinguish two dimensions of coordinated results: consistency and degree.

The case study shows that it was possible to achieve coordinated results without all the systems and processes identified above in place. In such cases, three factors were essential. First, there needed to be agreement on one or more concrete goals. Second, the people responsible for implementing activities related to those goals had to be empowered to align their efforts. Finally, they required information about one another's current and planned activities, resources, and needs. Thus, the case study

reveals a minimum set of conditions necessary for coordinated results: agreement, empowerment, and information sharing.

However, the case study also shows that coordinated results were achieved infrequently when only these minimal conditions were met. There were two reasons for this. First, in the absence of rigorous joint analysis and planning, agreement on goals depended on issue areas and current circumstances. Second, absent incentive and accountability systems conducive to coordination, implementation depended almost entirely on the willingness of highly motivated individuals to take professional risks to put shared goals above narrow agency imperatives.

The case study indicates that all of the organizational systems and processes identified above must be in place for consistent coordinated results. Moreover, they must be institutionalized systems and processes, rather than dependent on the initiative of constantly changing leadership. Since there was no point in the eight years studied when this was true, further research will be necessary to confirm the validity of this finding.

The second dimension of coordinated results that must be considered when evaluating necessary and sufficient conditions is the degree of coordinated results achieved. The first three types of coordinated results rarely added up synergistically. Indeed, their impact was often undermined by broader coordination failures within and across sectors. The findings indicate that synergistic coordinated results require a high degree of vertical and horizontal coordination.

Agreement on goals and strategy must be firmly in place at the policy/strategic level and aligned with more detailed planning at the various levels of decision making at the strategic/operational and operational/tactical levels. While the case study focuses on organizational systems and processes on the ground, the same factors may affect coordination at higher levels of decision making. For example, preliminary data about the AIOG indicate that part-time co-location enhanced joint analysis, but that limited empowerment may have limited its contributions. Further research will be necessary to determine whether this is so.

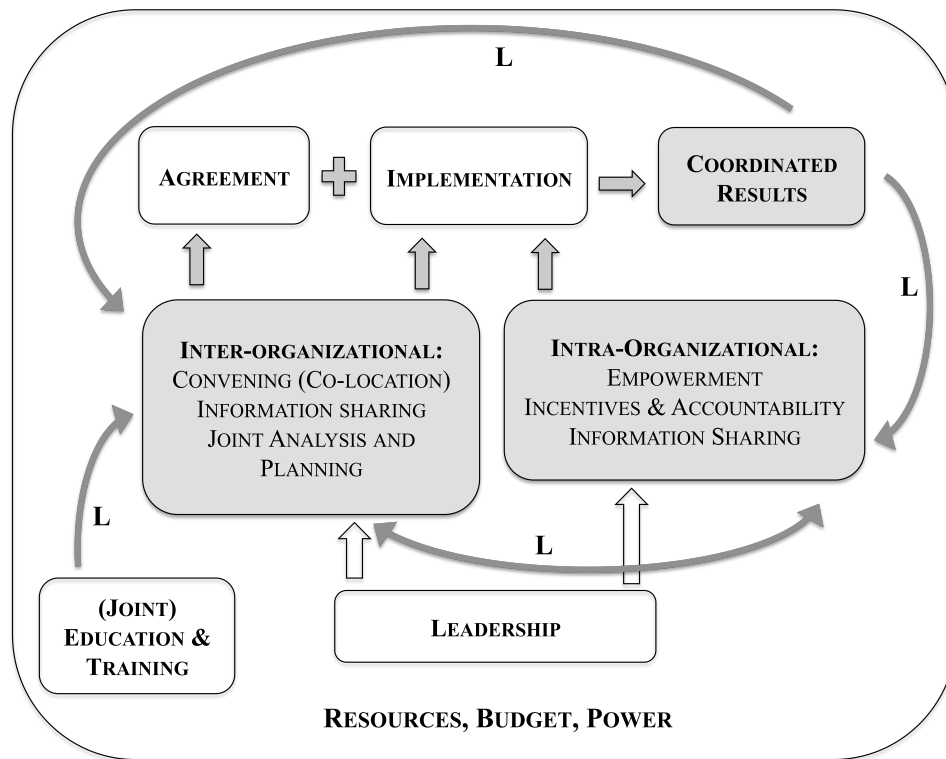
Thus, to achieve consistent, synergistic coordinated results, the case study indicates that (1) all of the organizational systems and processes identified above must be in place and institutionalized and (2) planning and decision making at each level on the ground must be directly aligned with planning and decision making at the policy/strategic level.

This raises the question of whether these would be collectively sufficient to achieve coordinated results. While answering this question is beyond the scope of the case study, the analysis suggests that profound power disparity would constrain coordination even if all of the other conditions were met.

The following illustration shows the organizational systems and processes that are the focus of the analysis in the context of the other factors that affect coordinated results. The grey block arrows indicate

hypothesized relationships that are well supported by the case study. The white block arrows indicate relationships that require further analysis. The curved arrows with “L” next to them indicate feedback loops between learning and other variables. Finally, all of the above factors and relationships are shown in the context of the resources, budgets, and associated power balance among coordinating agencies.

ILLUSTRATION 9.3: THEORETICAL MODEL



IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The findings have implications for policy and practice. While a comprehensive list of recommendations is beyond the scope of this

dissertation, the most significant policy-relevant findings are summarized below.

First, the organizational systems and processes necessary for coordinated results should be institutionalized. In some cases, they may be established on a permanent basis, ready to be used when needed. In most cases, however, they should take the form of doctrine or Standard Operating Procedures. This will make the systems and processes on the ground less dependent on the decisions of individual leaders, enhancing consistency and increasing coordinated results.

Second, joint planning is essential. Agreed plans can serve as stand-ins for a centralized coordination authority, guiding organizational decision making. However, joint planning is easier said than done. Agencies differ not only in their planning frameworks and tools, but also in their understanding of what planning entails and the resources they have to support it. Joint planning requires agreement on planning objectives, frameworks, and tools, as well as sufficient resources to enable agencies to participate equally.

Third, the process is as important as, if not more important than, the plan. While plans have limited shelf life, the learning that emerges from the planning process has lasting benefits. In addition to identifying and leveraging common ground, joint planning must surface and address differences in interests, concerns, priorities, assumptions, and values. This requires skilled facilitation.

Fourth, some systems and processes solve multiple problems. Co-location not only reduces transaction costs; it also fosters learning, strengthens relationships, and has important symbolic impact. The establishment of parallel liaison positions within coordinating agencies reduces transaction costs, increases incentives and accountability for coordinated results, and strengthens facilitative leadership. Agencies should invest in systems that offer the highest leverage in terms of coordinated results.

Fifth, learning plays a key role in coordination. Learning at the individual level is important, but it must be translated into sustained organizational change to have maximum impact. Systems and processes should be designed not only to increase short-term coordinated results, but also to support ongoing learning. Particular attention should be paid to pre-deployment training, reducing turnover, and maximizing continuity across rotations.

Sixth, power disparities undermine coordination. The resource disparity between military and civilians is a particularly urgent problem. For peacebuilding to benefit from the complementary expertise and capacities of military and civilian actors, civilian financial and human resources must be increased.

Finally, it is necessary to return to the “no one in charge” assumption underlying this research. Several interviewees argued that the US should establish of a unified chain of command over all US agencies

in Afghanistan, modeled on the CORDS (Civil Operations and Rural Development Support) system used by the US in Vietnam. This is not inconsistent with the arguments presented here. As explained in Chapter One, a centralized coordination authority may be part of the solution to coordination among agencies nested within an overarching national or bureaucratic system.

However, there are limits to what centralization can achieve. Even agencies that represent the same national government push back against coordination from above. When it comes to the sovereign nations, independent non-governmental organizations (NGO), and other autonomous actors engaged in peacebuilding, centralized coordination is not possible. Therefore, while centralization has its place, an overemphasis on centralized solutions detracts attention from developing the systems and processes necessary for coordinated results when no one is in charge.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The dissertation has developed a theoretical model of coordination, informed by prior research and theory as well as original empirical work. Further research will be necessary to validate the findings and establish scope conditions. Following are several questions for future research.

First, to what extent is variation in coordinated results within the same issue area explained by the organizational systems and processes identified in the model? The case study not only shows that coordinated

results were more likely to emerge in some areas; it also reveals significant variation within issue areas. However, it is not designed to support controlled comparisons between coordinated results and coordination failures within the same issue areas. Future research should test the model by applying the method of difference to specific issue areas.

Second, to what extent and how do facilitative leadership and directive leadership affect coordination? What do leaders do that makes joint processes more or less effective? What are the costs and benefits of directive leadership, and does the need for it recede when the other systems and processes identified in the model are in place? Future research, including direct observation of joint processes, is necessary to determine what distinguishes more and less effective processes and what role leadership plays.

Third, to what extent does the model apply to coordination among actors not nested within a national bureaucratic system? US interagency coordination during the period studied was highly decentralized and thus met the “no one in charge” criterion for case selection. However, the agencies studied benefited from a sense of shared destiny and interdependence. There also was an inherent legitimacy to convening, information sharing, and joint analysis and planning among US agencies. This is not necessarily the case with actors that are not part of the same national government, especially NGOs. Further research is necessary to

determine whether and how the theory must be adapted to explain coordination among other sets of actors.

There are a number of additional questions about scope conditions that merit investigation. To what extent does the theory explain coordination at the policy level, which, as the case study makes clear, is a necessary condition for coordination on the ground? To what extent does it apply to coordination among much larger numbers of actors? Can it explain coordination in natural disasters? Can it extend, as well, to coordination in other arenas far removed from international affairs?

Finally, does the theory apply to coordination when someone *is* in charge? It may well be that the factors that make coordination possible when no one is in charge also facilitate coordination when someone is in charge. By addressing these questions about scope conditions in a systematic and rigorous way, further research can build upon this dissertation to create broader theory of inter-organizational coordination.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

INTERVIEW LIST

INTERVIEWEES WHO APPROVED RELEASE OF NAMES

All interviewees spoke in their personal capacities, and their comments do not represent the official positions of any government, department, or agency. Except where indicated in the analysis, interviews were conducted in 2009 and 2010. A confidential numbering system was used in the analysis to distinguish interviewees. Numbers used in the analysis do not correspond to the interview dates or the order in which the names are presented below.

Gen. John Abizaid (Ret.)
Col. John Agoglia
Dr. Deborah Alexander
Mr. Steve Allen
Mr. Kurt Amend
Maj. Gen. Rodney Anderson
Mr. Jason Aplon
Gen. Lloyd Austin
Mr. Brian Bacon
Lt. Gen. David Barno (Ret.)
Mr. Jack Bell
Mr. James A. Bever
Mr. Richard Boucher
Mr. Patrick Brady
Mr. Stanley Byers
Col. Joseph Catan
Lt. Col. Robert Chamberlain
Maj. Gen. William Chambers
Brig. Gen. Gary Cheek
Mr. Larry Cohen
Ms. Beth Ellen Cole
Lt. Gen. Robert Cone
Brig. Gen. John Cooper
Ms. Laura Cooper
Mr. Michael Coulter
Ms. Alexa Courtney
Dr. Stacy Crevello
Amb. Ryan Crocker
Ms. Anne Cummings
Col. Edward Daly

Amb. Christopher Dell
Mr. Richard deVillafranca
Amb. James Dobbins
Brig. Gen. Patrick Donahue
Maj. Gen. Robert Durbin
Amb. Eric Edelman
Adm. William J. Fallon
Mr. Douglas Feith
Col. Michael Fenzel
Maj. Gen. Arnold Fields (Ret.)
Mr. Patrick Fine
Amb. Robert Finn
Capt. Kevin Frank
Maj. Gen. David Fraser
Lt. Gen. Benjamin Freakley
Mr. Alonzo Fulgham
Mr. Steven Gale
Lt. Col. Paul Garcia
Mr. John Gastright
Mr. Ron Glass
Mr. Jeff Goodson
Lt. Col. Ken Gordon (Ret.)
Lt. Col. Lynda Granfield
Ms. Rachel Grant
Ms. Christina Green
Mr. Zulfiquar Haider
Mr. Fazel Rabi Haqbeen
Mr. Karl Harbo
Col. Tony Harriman (Ret.)
Amb. Patricia Haslach
Mr. Marty Hoffman
Ms. Suzanne Inzerillo
Minister Ali Jalali
Amb. Said Jawad
Mr. Thomas Johnson
Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya (Ret.)
Amb. Zalmay Khalilzad
Ms. Ciara Knudsen
Mr. Terrence Kramer
Mr. Neil Kromash
Dr. Elizabeth Kvitashvili
Col. David Lamm (Ret.)
Ms. Dawn Liberi
Dr. Clare Lockhart
Ms. Mary Beth Long
LTG Doug Lute (Ret.)

Maj. Gen. James McConville
Col. Donald McGraw (Ret.)
Mr. Matthew (“Mac”) McLaughlin
Brig. Gen. Joseph McMenamin (Ret.)
Gen. Dan McNeill (Ret.)
Capt. Michael McNerney (Ret.)
Mr. Frank Miller
Mr. John Mongan
Amb. Patrick Moon
Dr. Sharon Morris
Dr. Vali Nasr
Amb. Ronald Neumann
Maj. Gen. John (“Mick”) Nicholson
Col. Robert Nisbet
Amb. Richard Norland
Maj. Gen. Eric (“Rick”) Olson (Ret.)
Mr. Diego Osario
Mr. William Paton
Ms. Michelle Parker
Col. Walter E. Piatt
Amb. Maureen Quinn
Ms. Jen Ragland
Mr. Carl Abdou Rahmaan
Gen. David Richards (UK)
Amb. Carol Rodley
Amb. Sardar Roshan
Col. Jim Ruf
Mr. Larry Sampler
Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser (Ret.)
Mr. Tom Schweich
Mr. John Schweiger
Mr. David Sedney
Dr. James Shinn
Ms. Christa Skerry
Ms. Barbara Smith
Ms. Eileen Wickstrom Smith
Mr. Lane Smith
Mr. Richard Smyth
Ms. Anne Exline Starr
MP Rory Stewart
Dr. Marin Strmecki
Ms. Nomi Taslitt
Amb. William Taylor
Mr. Matt van Etten
Mr. Francesc Vendrell
Dr. Karin von Hippel

Mr. Mark Ward
Mr. Leon (“Skip”) Waskin
Lt. Col. Dan Wilson
Mr. Tod Wilson
Col. John Wood (Ret.)
Amb. William Wood
Dr. Michael Yates

INTERVIEWEES WHO DID NOT APPROVE RELEASE OF NAMES

Anonymous Interview 1, US Agency for International Development
Anonymous Interview 1, US Department of Defense
Anonymous Interview 2, US Department of Defense

APPENDIX B:
CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT AND INTERVIEW
PROTOCOL

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT PROVIDED IN ADVANCE

All interviews are confidential. No information or opinions shared in interviews will be attributed to interviewees without their permission. The published materials will include a list of people interviewed, with the exception of anyone requesting their name not be included.

PROTOCOL FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

Before beginning, I am required to confirm your willingness to be interviewed. As explained in the overview I sent you, this interview is confidential. I will include a list of people interviewed, but will not attribute anything to you without your permission. I may follow up with you later to request your permission to quote you. May I interview you? May I include your name in the list of people interviewed?

2. POSITION AND EXPERIENCE

Would you please briefly summarize your current position and your experience relative to US civil-military coordination in Afghanistan?

3. STORIES OF COORDINATED RESULTS

This research defines coordination in terms of coordinated results, rather than coordination processes. Would you please share one or more examples of coordinated results in Afghanistan involving US civilians and the US military? What were the results, and how do you explain their emergence?

4. ADDITIONAL STORIES (WITH DEFINITION OF COORDINATED RESULTS)

I define coordinated results using four dimensions and associated sets of indicators: avoidance of negative interactions between activities; efficiency; complementarity; and synergy. Are the definition and indicators valid? Can you think of any additional examples of coordinated results as defined by these indicators?

5. DISTILLATION OF FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN COORDINATED RESULTS

As you reflect on the examples we discussed, as well as your broader experience, what are the key factors that explain the emergence of coordinated results?

6. LEVELS OF COORDINATION

To what extent and how did coordination at higher levels of decision making affect the coordinated results you cited? To what extent

and how did the coordinated results you cited affect what was happening at lower levels of decision making?

7. ADDITIONAL PEOPLE TO INTERVIEW

Whom else would you recommend I interview?

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