National Defense University
Institute for National Strategic Studies

Workshop Proceedings

Planning for Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Learning from Iraq*
Sponsored by the Institute for National Strategic Studies
National Defense University

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29 July 2004

Key Points

- As the Iraq experience demonstrates, the rapid and continuous tempo of modern warfare requires that both the combat phase and post-conflict phase be simultaneously planned and executed within overlapping timeframes. Some key post-conflict activities will be performed during the combat phase, and must be prepared for in advance of actual hostilities. Military and civilian planning must be closely coordinated to ensure that longer-term stabilization, reconstruction and developmental priorities receive proper attention during all phases of field operations.

- A more structured U.S. interagency planning process for post-conflict situations should be revived. A widely accepted planning template would provide a vehicle for achieving high-level consensus on an operational concept and subsequent planning at the operational level in advance of an intervention.

- Enforcing laws, martial or civilian, in the aftermath of conflict requires special training, if not special troops, such as constabulary forces or military police units. Military commanders must accept the mission to initially provide post-conflict security until indigenous forces can relieve them.

- There is a need for a government-wide human resources system that can adequately recruit, train, exercise, equip and deploy experts, either as individuals or in task-ready organizations, to support post-conflict reconstruction.

- Further emphasis must be placed upon improving capabilities to plan and manage the informational dimensions of post-conflict reconstruction. In particular, strategic communications must be improved. Strategic communications goals for

* These proceedings report on opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed during the workshop discussions and as such they do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or any other agency of the Federal Government.

an overall post-conflict effort must be defined clearly. Once goals are articulated, all field elements need to ensure that consistent message themes are coordinated both vertically and horizontally through the international coalition's structures as well as with the indigenous security organizations.

Background on the Workshop

The INSS workshop *"Planning for Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Learning from Iraq*" brought together more than seventy Iraq operations veterans, government officials, regional experts and practitioners to discuss their experiences in the planning and conduct of post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations. Presentations focused on the capacity of U.S. government elements to coordinate and collaborate in their respective planning and implementation efforts; on assessing the challenges faced by the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA); on recommended ways to improve future post-conflict operations; and on the training and preparation of planners and practitioners. "Breakout" discussion groups focused particular attention on: policy formulation, joint planning and budgeting; security, public diplomacy and strategic communications; governance, capacity building and essential services; and economic policy reform.

Managing post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq after Saddam posed huge challenges for the United States, far surpassing anything attempted since WWII. The sheer scale and complexity of the undertaking strained to the limit the U.S. Government's capability to effectively manage and resource all the activities necessary to rebuild governance, reform the economy and deliver security. Although the Iraqis have assumed responsibility for their own security and for reconstruction, the U.S. Government and international partners will retain central roles for some time to come. As the United States considers its role in other post-conflict situations and prosecutes the war on terrorism, it will likely face analogous challenges in other countries in the years to come. There was, therefore, an abiding sense among workshop participants that it is critical both for the success of our efforts in Iraq and for other operations to learn lessons from Iraq and determine how the U.S. Government can do a better job of planning and managing complex reconstruction programs.

The U.S. government faces a major challenge in coordinating and synchronizing its various components, principally the National Security Council, the Departments of Defense and State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development, to focus on a common goal that is attainable, feasible and adequately resourced. The development of effective and integrated plans is a vital capacity currently lacking at all levels in the government. As our effort in Iraq demonstrated, much of what has been achieved to date resulted from *ad hoc* collaboration between military and civilian counterparts on the ground, usually relying on personal relationships built during the stress of combat and post-combat phases.

Workshop participants discussed post-conflict reconstruction challenges, especially related to cooperative planning, and how various US entities efforts should relate to their

overall post-conflict reconstruction efforts to each other and to international/non-governmental organizations. The workshop elicited informal, informed, and focused discussions with the breakout groups' discussions will be the center of gravity. Thematic discussions, findings and recommendations from the presentations and breakout groups are discussed below.

Workshop Discussions: A Topical Review

Improving Interagency Coordination & Cooperation

During the opening session of the workshop, the presentations and discussions focused on the status of ongoing efforts to strengthen USG overall post-conflict planning and execution capabilities.

On 30 July 2004, the Secretary of State directed that the new Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) be established. This office is expected to be staffed with approximately 20 people from a number of agencies by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 with plans to increase its strength to approximately 40 people by the end of FY 05. Additional personnel may be added after FY 05 contingent upon the Office's ability to demonstrate its value to planning and coordinating interagency activities in response to a post-conflict scenario. Currently, resources for the Office are coming "out of hide," and the Department of State (DoS) has notified Congress of its intent to reprogram funds. However, DoS will request funding for this office in the department's FY 06 budget request. A variety of federal departments and agencies, such as State, DoD, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Department of the Treasury (DoTr), Department of Justice (DoJ), and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), will provide personnel to staff the office. The draft mission statement for the Office states that it will "Lead and coordinate the USG efforts toward stabilization and reconstruction of countries or regions entrenched in conflict and civil strife, help them establish a path toward democratic and market oriented states." Additionally, the office has five specified functions:

- Operationalize lessons-learned from past and ongoing operations
- Focus interagency efforts to undertake deliberate[*] political-military planning with two areas of emphasis:
  - Avert and mitigate potential crises
  - Achieve objectives when a crisis occurs
- Create a basic foundation of skills and resources within the non-military agencies of the USG by identifying qualified individuals available for short and long-term deployments
- Coordinate interagency responses in post-conflict situations

[*] "Deliberate" in the sense of an established process of advanced planning undertaken prior to the onset of a particular crisis, analogous to the war planning process routinely conducted by U.S. regional combatant commands.

- Improve the USG's ability to coordinate effectively with international actors

As with previous planning mechanisms, S/CRS will wrestle with the overriding problem of framing for the President and his leadership team the national interests at stake in any likely post-conflict environment. It will explore a range of tough questions: Has the USG clearly defined the depth and breadth of its interests that would drive the decision to intervene? Are these interests supported by goals and operational objectives that are realistic in terms of the resources that will need to be mobilized? Is there a convergence of interests between the USG, the leaders of the affected nation and the broader international community? Above all, how should we define success? Planners must ensure that their efforts meet the expectations set by senior policy makers and are structured in such a fashion as to ensure fully effective coordination between multinational, multilateral and affected nation partners. Issues and questions such as these should be resolved in high-level strategic policy decision-making forums and documented in a strategic-level political-military plan endorsed by principals as the authoritative vision for achieving maximum unity of effort.

Along with these improvements, significant emphasis should be placed on reevaluating existing authorities and devising new procedures to facilitate the timely transfer of resources required for post-conflict reconstruction and stability operations, to include the re-programming of funds from one agency/department to another to meet operational requirements. Although OMB possesses reprogramming authority, the actual process is too cumbersome and slow to meet the needs of post-conflict stabilization operations. Additionally, the use of "indefinite quantity contracts" with agencies and organizations outside the government to access experts and organizations with essential capabilities should be examined. The Office will move carefully in this area to avoid duplication of efforts with other agencies that already have these authorities and may have such individuals or organizations under contract. The Office will also study innovative methods to contract for such support without replicating currently existing contract systems. Contingency funding procedures need to be refined and adapted for both short and long term funding requirements. Additionally, the establishment of reserve corps of skilled professionals will be examined from a resource standpoint and evaluated against other existing methods of accessing civilian skills.

S/CRS will actively seek within the USG to institutionalize the roles, responsibilities, and procedures with which the USG will plan and coordinate post-conflict activities. In terms of narrowing the focus to initiate planning, the Office looks to the National Intelligence Council to provide an overall assessment from open and classified sources to develop a list of approximately 25 at-risk countries, and then recommend to policy bodies a prioritized list of those countries for which contingency plans could be developed. However, it was pointed out that instituting a process for policy formulation and adjustment requires a flexible mindset supported by equally flexible leaders and processes.

A major challenge for the USG will be to ensure that its high-level decision-making bodies are able to generate effective responses to post-conflict challenges within rapidly

compressed timeframes. When high-level decision-makers are unable to act rapidly, the resulting delays simply adds to the burdens and risks already faced by those on the ground and creates a new set of complications that will likely have an adverse impact on future activities of the U.S., its partners and the host nation.

Overcoming Planning Obstacles

Several important procedural questions surfaced during the workshop discussion of building policy plans in the Iraqi case. Of major concern, when does "close hold" sensitive policy formulation end and open collaborative planning begin? Many participants expressed that the "close hold" nature of the information should be lifted as soon as possible so that maximum collaborative information sharing could be accomplished.

Some workshop participants suggested that the military's competent and timely planning process should be matched by comparable capabilities by civilian staffs. Both State and USAID were credited with having developed responsive plans for reconstruction in Iraq, but the consensus was they were not heard in the DoD-controlled interagency planning process. In their view, a dedicated planning team with representation from all participating federal agencies must be formed to establish habitual relationships with the concomitant trust and confidence. Furthermore, all members of this team must attend all planning sessions to ensure their agencies equities are factored into the process.

As the Iraq experience illustrates, planning for post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization activities is critical and must be initiated as soon as the President decides that U.S. intervention may be required and that planning for such an event be initiated. Decisions as to lead agency responsibilities must be resolved as part of that initial judgment, and subsequent decisions on how to coordinate the work among the leading and supporting agencies must take into account the comparative strengths and weaknesses of various federal departments and agencies. Additionally, to facilitate smooth coordination and communications, a glossary of interagency terms should be developed and employed by all interagency officials.

Policy guidance and objectives, critical assumptions, and funding arrangements are required in order for the planning process to proceed. Under the terms of PDD-56, promulgated in 1997, a strategic planning template and an Executive Committee (ExCom) oversight process were developed to capture lessons learned from Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia. These procedures were used only inconsistently during 1997-2000 and were formally rescinded in January 2001, without replacement. The resulting absence of broadly accepted procedures proved to be a major obstacle to effective cross-agency planning in the Iraq case. Shortly after ORHA was created and prior to its deployment into theater of operation, its planning staff sought approval to build a strategic-level interagency Pol-Mil Plan for the post-conflict phase in Iraq, but higher level authorities in DoD did not support this course of action.

Policy pitfalls abound in certain post-conflict environments, especially those in which resources will need to draw from multiple USG agencies within tightly compressed timeframes and the bureaucracy is unable to adapt itself to the requirements of the situation. This calls for a cultural mind-set transformation within the USG, especially the NSC, OSD, and OMB. As the Iraq case shows, the government's consistent inability to provide timely policy guidance created situations where events on the ground outside the control of the Coalition dictated policy. Additionally, confusion existed over whether policies would be a top-down effort or the results of a *fait accompli.* Many times, the lack of policy guidance or decisions led to reversals and the inability to manage Iraqi expectations. For example:

- Several coalition military units scheduled local elections prior to determination of national policies or in ignorance of the vetting procedures or qualifications of candidates or organizations, threatening to empower less than satisfactory individuals and organizations.
- Policy decisions often were disconnected from the planning effort in Iraq. The start/stop nature of the effort confused planners and complicated execution.
- Policy makers often were unaware of the necessary preliminary work that is essential to the foundations of good governance.
  - Just as building a manufacturing plant takes design, contracting, and other resource and time consuming preliminary steps, there are some activities, like voter education and voter and party registration that take time and must precede milestone events like elections.
  - However, these requirements are often not articulated to the policy and decision makers. They are much more amenable to physical, tangible constraints on activities than they are to political institution-building constraints.
- The November announcement about the transfer of sovereignty fundamentally changed the nature of the relationship between the IGC and the CPA, and between those two entities and the Iraqi ministries and people. This change was manifested by the growing expectations among Iraqis that the IGC had more decision-making power than the CPA and this led to IGC announcements that were not cleared with the CPA.

Recognizing that not all interventions will require combat operations, the interagency planning process must be flexible enough to respond to the full range of contingencies and place non-military USG agencies in charge. Currently, military doctrine calls for the unified commander to include discussion of interagency operations within one of the annexes to the command's Operations Plan (OPLAN). In the views of some, this conveys the mistaken impression that the military commander controls the interagency resources as he does fire support, communications, or logistics. To remedy this problem, one participant offered that a more appropriate interagency approach would be to have two annexes to a strategic pol-mil plan: a civilian OPLAN prepared by the lead civilian agency and the Military OPLAN prepared by the unified commander.

Promoting Bureaucratic Agility

The Office of the Administrator, USAID, conducted a review of its actions and plans for improving its capacity to both plan and work in post-conflict settings. This has resulted in a major organizational change with the establishment of the USAID Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation. With this change, USAID now recognizes that oftentimes conflict is an environmental condition that has not been adequately addressed by development programs sponsored by USAID.

Even so, the relationship between USAID and DoS is often characterized by a tension that impedes the planning and conduct of development assistance programs. This tension, in turn, has a direct impact on post-conflict reconstruction activities. While USAID's mandate and focus are operationally, not policy, oriented, too much distance between policy and operations can cause serious problems. A team within USAID has studied foreign assistance overall and recommended that USG operational efforts be focused in five areas:

- Humanitarian assistance
- Fragile and failing states
- Transnational issues (HIV/AIDS, etc)
- "Transformational" development (putting a country on the path to a market economy and democratic governance)
- Economic Support Funding

It is too soon to say whether this five-fold categorization will attract widespread interagency support or even if accepted, how it would guide the reorganization of key functions within existing agencies and departments.

At the operational level (i.e., in field settings), the overriding objective of the interagency process must be to ensure that programs on the ground are fully synchronized with national goals. As a case in point, the planning and implementation of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs are necessarily interagency (and often international) in their nature because of the security, societal, economic, and employment implications. The host nation has a vested interest in the rehabilitation of a former soldier/combatant/security service person so that he rejoins society as a productive member. U.S. agencies supporting this process therefore need to do their part to ensure that the host nation has the wherewithal to run the DDR program through the entire "life cycle" of activities that span the transition of these former combatants back into the civilian sector.

Several lessons related to interagency planning and execution were identified over the course of the workshop:

- Faulty assumptions and poor integration that bedeviled Iraq's pre-conflict planning were never fully overcome through the duration of CPA's existence.
- The Coalition was reluctant to report bad news or plan for the worst case. Two examples:
  - The growth of the insurgency's intensity and size;

- Recognition that the plan for building Iraqi security forces was overly ambitious and created unsupportable expectations within both the Coalition and Iraqi society.

- Don't create new institutions/organizations "on-the-fly."
- Have a personnel policy that delivers the "A-Team" which possesses the appropriate skills, regional expertise, and language skills to the effort on time and in the correct quantity.
- Ensure unity of command/effort/purpose. (CPA, USAID, CJTF-7, CENTCOM all had different conceptions about who reported to whom.)
- Because the tempo of modern war is rapid and continuous without clear pauses and breaks in action, plans for both the combat phase and post-conflict phase must be simultaneously planned and executed. In fact, some post-conflict activities will be performed during the combat phase.
- The achievement of unity of effort is non-negotiable. Military and civilian planning must be conducted in close coordination and collaboration with one another to ensure that long-term governance, economic, justice and societal goals are clearly understood and both support and are supported by the military campaign.
- Discerning the unique from the common requirements – what is situation dependent and what is generally required – will challenge all planners and influence resource allocations.
- Balancing short and long term planning efforts will help avoid both the "tyranny of the in-box" and the crisis of the moment.
- Establishing requirements, priorities, and resources remain challenges for planners in post-conflict settings as much as they do for campaign planners.
- The advantages and disadvantages of large centralized projects (electricity generating plants and oil revenue trickle down) versus decentralized, locally owned capacity (community and neighborhood generators) was discussed, and observations on unity of effort, funds and human resource management, and metrics were reinforced.
- Reconstruction planning must be an all-inclusive process that includes the USG interagency community, the UN, other multinational and multilateral partners, and, if possible, the affected nation.

The Need for Accurate Information and Intelligence

Using the CPA experience as a case study, a workshop presenter made the point that information about the true nature of the Ba'athist regime and its control over Iraqi society did not inform decision makers about the potential consequences of removing the regime and its real sources of power. The bureaucracy, including the police and the regular army, was hollow and weak; the true centers of power were Saddam's immediate family, the special security services and the Ba'ath party. As ORHA and CPA later learned, family, clan, tribe, and religious leaders provided societal cohesion, forged in hidden opposition to Saddam as means of survival. Prior to commencing the war, several of the assumptions contained in the coalition's plan about the resiliency of Iraqi institutions, especially its various ministries, were incorrect and had disastrous consequences.

Information about indigenous security organizations and their capabilities will be in high demand. Typically, countries that are the most likely venues for post-conflict operations are also home to large, poorly disciplined militaries, militias and police forces awash in excessive amounts of conventional arms and munitions.

Establishing Security in a Post-Conflict Environment

Substantively, the Coalition's inability to plan for and establish an adequate level of post-conflict security for the Iraqi people was its greatest failure and should have received a higher priority than it did. Three activities should have been addressed in some form of collaborative planning between the military and the civilian authorities:

- How coalition forces perform stability operations;
- Filling the security gap that occurs between the commencement of security operations and the resumption by indigenous forces of domestic security operations; and
- Rebuilding security capacity.

Thoroughly linked to this effort was the USG's failure to resource the DDR effort, for which a conceptual plan had been developed but discarded as a result of the decision to abolish the Iraqi military. Any attempt to rebuild the security force structure requires thorough study and planning as to the disposition of all security organizations, the re-establishment of secure borders, the security of arms depots and weapons, the control and vetting of old personnel, training new personnel, and providing strategic communication to support the DDR effort to the general population to garner their support.

Security in a volatile post-conflict environment requires the utilization of many diverse capabilities that, taken together, act to fill the void until a sovereign state is able to exercise control over its own homeland. While no two situations are precisely alike, one can discern certain core security tasks and requirements that tend to span diverse cases (e.g., border security, securing weapons, population centers, forces, infrastructure, etc.).

Anticipating the post-conflict security requirements prior to the start of combat and accurately estimating the requisite resources is absolutely essential in driving the planning effort for the entire operation. An adequate level of security is a fundamental requirement for operating effectively in a post-conflict zone. It becomes the bedrock for all other activities. A major part of this planning must be the DDR effort (described above). Additionally, planners must also take into account the efforts necessary to rebuild the nation's security forces (e.g., the military, the police, border security, etc.). They must also examine the requisites for re-establishing (or creating, if none existed before) a functioning justice system with courts, police, corrections, etc. and appropriate roles and missions for the intervention force to temporarily assume law enforcement missions until indigenous police assume the missions.

The following security lessons were identified:

- Enforcing laws, martial or civilian, requires special training, if not special troops, such as constabulary forces or military police units.
- Military commanders must accept the mission to initially provide post-conflict security until indigenous forces can relieve them.
- Establishing security in a post-conflict environment requires a significant number of troops who must engage in a variety of activities ranging from combat to humanitarian assistance.
- Security operations in a post-conflict setting are information intensive, but intelligence requirements are qualitatively and quantitatively different.

The Need for Strategic Communications

Closely linked to the successful establishment of a secure environment is the effective use of strategic communications, which groups together public affairs, information operations, media affairs, etc. In this age of increasing urbanization, the effects of mis-information and rumors have immediate impact on security interests in the uncertain settings of post-conflict environments.

If the Iraq experience is any guide, as a number of workshop participants observed, USG needs to substantially overhaul its approach to strategic communications. There is, first of all, an urgent need to clearly articulate the strategic goal of any particular strategic communications effort. In Iraq, it was never clear what strategic communications meant: information operations, extension of the battlefield, a press operation, an adjunct to the political campaign in US, etc. It followed that there was confusion over the audience. Was it the U.S. or Iraqi populations, the White House, Coalition Partners, or the world community? Or all of them? Without a clear articulation of goals and audience there was no way to target any message. Therefore, no one received any consistent message. Additionally, there was confusion over what was desired of the Iraqi media. Was it supposed to support the coalition's themes, or to operate as a fledgling independent TV, radio and newspaper operation?

Overall, the lack of knowledge about the strategic communications capabilities resident in the U.S. military and civilian sectors led to confusion and missed opportunities in the early days of ORHA and carried through to the CPA's tenure. That lack of knowledge, coupled with the lack of strategic guidance, discouraged innovation, reduced the effectiveness of psychological operations, and impeded the development of more sophisticated, longer term themes and goals.

The USG should develop and use an "information source" rapid response capability similar to the former U.S. Information Agency, which constantly monitored major press themes in diverse regions of the world and actively refuted misinformation and disinformation. This lack of in-depth appreciation (despite the long-term efforts of Radio Sawa and other VOA initiatives) created an uncertain information environment. As a consequence, key opportunities were missed: For example, USAID placed significant emphasis and obtained positive results in assisting the "Marsh Arabs" re-claim marsh

areas, and in conducting the comprehensive Mass Graves project, but the information that was distributed to the public failed to highlight these successes or credit USAID/CPA.

The USG really lacked an appreciation of the information challenge when it entered Baghdad. This, overlayed with propaganda efforts from neighboring states and transnational terrorist organizations – whose themes were often parroted by regional media – made it extremely challenging to clearly convey US intent in Iraq. The willingness of the Iraqi people to believe and spread unsubstantiated rumors exceeded everything the CPA strategic communications experts had seen. Requirements existed for both anticipating and publicizing the Coalition's good works – seizing the initiative, as it were. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

For example, when the rumor went out that the Coalition was there to control Iraqi oil, it couldn't be countered or suppressed through official statements – in part because Iraqis had long ago learned to discount official government statements. Rumors remained the method by which most Iraqis filled the information gap. Yet, the Coalition was not attentive enough to the need for transparency of oil transactions, contracts and other endeavors that would show that the Coalition was not manipulating the outcome of the occupation to foreign advantage. Consequently, it could do little to counter rumors and or dampen incitement.

Beyond this problem, an effective strategic communications campaign requires easy access to useable information regarding U.S. and host nation activities. In Iraq, this was a particularly critical need during the early and middle stages of CPA's existence, when there were conflicting numbers on such basic issues as the number of Iraqis trained for the military and civil defense forces.

The following strategic communications lessons were identified:

- Satellite television was initially not the best source of information for most Iraqis because of the lack of electricity with which to power the television sets. Battery-powered radio was much more accessible.
- All coalition elements needed to have consistent message themes that had been coordinated both vertically and horizontally through both the coalition's structures and the indigenous security organizations.
- Capabilities like those in the Broadcasting Board of Governors need to be significantly enhanced and sustained
- Strategic communications is so close to the political goal that it may indicate a reversal of planning priorities. Perhaps it becomes the driver, rather than the annex, to the post-conflict plan.
- Some information campaigns worked well – the currency exchange is an example.

Organizing the Post-Conflict Response in the Field

As several workshop participants noted, the CPA faced three central challenges regarding its processes and identity as an institution:

- The authority for stabilizing and reconstructing Iraq was vested entirely in DoD, thereby leading to its *de facto* isolation from the rest of the interagency process at critical moments.
- A lack of consensus within the USG on the plan for stabilizing and rebuilding Iraq constrained both ORHA's and CPA's abilities to obtain timely policy decisions and to muster adequate resources.
- The CPA was constantly building, rebuilding, and transforming itself.

The problem of having insufficiently clear lines of authority in an interagency environment was also pointed out as a critical failure in the establishment of ORHA and the CPA. Simple visualization aids that show the plan and its "lines of operation" over time can help the organization and the interagency anticipate problems where program objectives or milestones conflict.

Additionally, greater effort should have been made to couple project management expertise with substantive functional expertise, so as to maximize opportunities for synergy. For example, program management oversight was organized in one office within the CPA with a staff that was too small to interface effectively with CPA's functional experts scattered throughout the many other offices of the CPA. Just as important, too little effort was made to segregate long-term planners from daily operational supervisory staff; as a consequence, not enough attention was paid to anticipating, rather than just reacting to daily events.

The Importance of Personnel and Organizations

With regards to personnel issues, several points were raised. First and foremost, most civilian agencies lack the requisite structure and processes to rapidly prepare, train and deploy large numbers of employees overseas to zones of conflict. Along side our fighting forces, those civilians who deployed and served in the initial phases of post-war operations in Iraq did so out of an abiding sense of dedication to the cause of freedom through the liberation of the Iraqi people from a brutal regime. U.S. and coalition personnel worked in a very complex, fast-paced, and uncertain environment, but their organizations were critically under-staffed and under-equipped to deal with the challenges they confronted. In retrospect, the USG could have done much better in providing its field personnel with the very best in guidance and support.

Lacking an established procedure for rapidly deploying a civilian-based authority structure following an intervention, the USG assembled its civilian field organizations (both ORHA and the CPA) in an *ad hoc* manner and deployed it in piece-meal fashion. Our field presence relied on volunteers from across the federal government and on civilian contractors with varying skill sets and experiences who committed to serve in Iraq for different lengths of time. Consequently, establishing a continuity of effort was weak, extensive on-the-job learning was required, and databases developed by one staff member were often "lost" when that individual departed. Specific shortfalls were noted in the availability of skilled program managers, budget managers and budget analysts.

As noted at the workshop, dealing with these organizational problems on the ground overwhelmed the limited number of civilian CPA staff in the field (outside of Baghdad), and thrust a significant burden upon the already over-committed U.S. Army Civil Affairs troops in the various districts and governorates. Quite simply, CPA in Baghdad left its field offices and Civil Affairs officers largely on their own to strike the best deals that would provide some semblance of security, improving local ownership for Iraqi affairs, and some measurable improvement in the quality of life. CPA never had more than 70% of its authorized manning, did not have the right skills in the right places, and could not provide a presence, with a coherent plan in hand, out in the countryside.

The reconstruction plan for Iraq relied heavily upon the assumption that ORHA could take advantage of Iraq's existing ministries and their capacities to continue providing services and functions. This assumption shaped ORHA's organizational structure, and subsequently, that of the CPA. The CPA's lack of an effective organization and the reliance on Iraq's ministries caused embarrassment and led to missteps during the occupation. A solution to this issue must not be determined solely by our Iraqi experience but through wider analysis of various types of interventions so that we understand better the conditions that require different approaches to this problem.

As seen in Panama, Afghanistan and other cases, especially in international disaster responses, the USG typically develops its reconstruction responses from a blank sheet of paper, thus resulting in an *ad hoc* set of policies and organizations. Many of our coalition partners, however, recognize and link their processes and resources to the agreed international framework, oftentimes established by the UN or a regional organization. Whenever possible, the USG structure also should recognize the importance of using a widely accepted transparent process and link its system into the internationally agreed structures rather than force a coalition-of-the-willing led by the US that requires a unique solution for each contingency.

Looking back at their experiences in Iraq, most workshop participants thought the mandate that placed DoD in charge of all reconstruction activities was not wise for a variety of reasons. Although presidential directives on Iraq provided for a civilian authority to manage post-conflict reconstruction, the use of DoD as the lead agency made it responsible for accomplishing a mission for which it was ill suited and resourced. In the future, the definition and coordination of civil and military responsibilities, directive authorities, and unity of effort arrangements must be clarified and improved before any further post-conflict reconstruction operations are conducted.

As one participant suggested, a possible solution might be based upon a standby plan, similar to FEMA's Federal Response Plan, being developed and the creation of a supervisory team similar to the current Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) structure but with enhanced tasking authority. Moreover, the USG must go beyond merely identifying lessons and instead lead the effort to create the necessary cultural changes within the interagency community and its members.

Establishing Goals, Measures of Effectiveness, and Data Requirements

The impact of USG-led reconstruction efforts depends heavily upon the utilization of appropriate metrics and the availability of accurate data upon which to base assessments. Both were lacking in Iraq. At the outset, the job of establishing project requirements requires judgments about the country's absorptive capacity, and these judgments are critical to the decision to make funding available. Frequently, there are cycles of funding that are not synchronous with local capacity to articulate requirements and handle the resources. Quick initial funding is often inefficiently or ineffectively applied, but plentiful because of the immediate emergency conditions. Over time, as the local capacity to articulate requirements and handle infusions of resources improves, this improved absorptive capacity often coincides with a reduction in emergency funding and the initiation of lengthy processes of applying for long term development funds. Therefore, a gap appears in funding at precisely the point where the local authorities are looking for inclusion and trying to demonstrate legitimacy to both the assisting agency, and more importantly, to their citizens.

All reconstruction planning must include Measures of Effectiveness (MoE) that employ metrics to track progress, or the lack thereof, in achieving key objectives. Wherever possible, these metrics should be based on agreed international standards so that the international community and affected nation can assist with data collection and processing. Planning and executing the data collection scheme, including the identification of data sources and the requisite processing steps, must be determined before the intervention begins to ensure the timely acquisition and effective use of feedback.

As the Iraq experience indicates, close coordination and collaboration must be established between the USG and the host nation's government in order to reach mutually acceptable objectives and goals. Each interagency participant involved with the reconstruction operation may operate on a different timeline, which complicates the operation's planning & attainment of objectives and goals. The USG may be focused on budget cycles or upcoming elections and seek immediate returns on its actions. However, the affected nation's people will have to plan and conduct reconstruction efforts based on their long-term goals and indefinite timeline (indefinite because they will remain in place after the operation terminates and US experts depart). Other international partners will also have to participate in these discussions.

Governance Building

Several issues are involved in building effective governance structures. The President's guidance that Iraq become a free, federal, unitary democratic state served to guide the overall effort, but differing interpretations over how to define and achieve that goal in the face of harsh on-the-ground-realities led to confusion.

Related to building governance structures is the concept of local ownership. The term "local ownership" has become a mantra but, as noted at the workshop, contains its own set of challenges. Conferring ownership of a political process connotes that the recipient is capable of shouldering the responsibility. However, given the paucity of our general knowledge about Iraq's internal dynamics prior to the war, the Coalition had little reliable information on who were capable Iraqi partners that could participate in building a Federal democratic state. Therefore, the preliminary work of minimal institution-building and identification of reliable partners had to take place but without the benefit of readily available plans and metrics to support this effort.

Even with a dearth of information, initial decisions nonetheless had to be made with respect to the selection of "legitimate" representatives of the Iraqi people during the country's transition. Yet, definitions of legitimacy varied widely, consequentially causing religious, tribal, and family leaders to compete amongst themselves for CPA acceptance as the "legitimate" interim leaders of Iraq. The fluidity and depth of the de-Ba'athification effort further complicated the situation. Frequently "acceptability" rather than confirmable legitimacy became the more expedient criterion for selecting partners in the political processes.

The chaotic quality of the governance formation process created significantly different expectations among Iraqis as compared to the intent of the coalition. Each faction, whether regionally or culturally based, possessed expectations with regards to their ideas about the nature of Federalism that will be implemented. As several workshop participants noted, the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), ministries, and local authorities all have different concepts and expectations about how they will relate to each other and what their authorities are with respect to a host of issues.

Economic Policy Reform

Any attempt to reform Iraq's economic policies must be considered in two distinct, yet related aspects, those of reconstruction and macroeconomic policy. As the Iraq case illustrates, the two aspects are closely connected and, in many respects, reconstruction can only be successfully pursued within the context of a sound macroeconomic policy framework.

Workshop discussion highlighted many problems that existed in the planning for stabilizing and reconstructing Iraq's essential services. Information used for pre-conflict planning on the extent and condition of Iraq's electric power and water systems was fragmentary and wrong. However, better information was readily available, both from government sources such as the CIA, individuals who visited Iraq, and scholars of Iraq and the Middle East in the United States had these individuals been brought into the planning process. Unfortunately, the planning process consciously excluded these individuals and relied on faulty information, primarily provided by Iraqi expatriates.

The planning process used overly optimistic assumptions concerning the willingness and ability of Iraqis to bring systems back on line. Little thought was given to the potential

for looting or its impact on the delivery of services; the Coalition's poor preparation to deal with this form of civil unrest was further aggravated by the actions of Saddam's secret police to destabilize Iraq through the destruction of ministry buildings, assassinations, and other violent acts. Furthermore, there was no contingency planning in the event that the initial assumptions did not hold.

After the end of the initial conflict phase, the U.S. was forced to reconsider its reconstruction goals. Initially, planners had assumed that the United States would only repair damage caused by this conflict, or potentially unrepaired damage from the first Gulf War. However, as CPA attempted to restore power and water, engineers concluded that the system was operating on patchwork fixes and would need massive investments and rehabilitation just to maintain previous levels of service.

With regard to Iraq's economic policies, the planning by the CPA took place under false premises because economic information was lacking, incorrect or false. As described earlier, the USG interagency delayed a number of key economic policy decisions, thus forcing new realities to develop on the ground in Iraq that were outside the control of the CPA or Washington. Additionally, the capacity of the emerging Iraqi authorities to implement economic decisions was lacking for a variety of reasons but was not appreciated during the planning stage or the implementation stage in Iraq. For example, the CPA was reluctant to take action to abolish the "Arab capital investment"[*] laws created by Saddam because they wanted the Iraqis to do that. But the Iraqis were not capable of taking this major step to break with their past; hence, valuable time was lost in opening up Iraq's economy. Another major issue revolved around the CPA decision to fund the reconstruction of Iraq through the use of major corporations rather than through a system of micro-credits that would have invigorated the Iraqi middle-class.

The following lessons learned for economic policy were identified:

- Prioritize policy decisions on the basis of what actions and investments are most important for economic recovery.
- Select policy decisions taking into account of the capacity of the local government to implement these decisions.
- Incorporate local input into decisions. Policies have to be "owned" by the citizens of the country.
- Focus on creating detailed, implementable plans for introducing those policies that are chosen.
- At an early stage, start a public policy dialog about prospective economic policies. Plan for communicating with the populace before, during and after policy planning and implementation.
- Make a concerted effort to seek information from a wide range of sources. Critically evaluate and verify provided information.

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[*] Arab capital investment laws were passed by the Ba'ath Party and required that all foreign capital investments in Iraq come from Arab countries. Consequently, Western investment in Iraq's economy was greatly reduced.

- Involve U.S. Army Civil Affairs officers in the planning process, especially if they are likely to take the lead in supervising and making decisions on local reconstruction projects.
- Planning for reconstruction should be targeted at the community level. Each community has different needs. Planning should be designed to incorporate local input and suggestions once reconstruction begins. The participants felt that funding more community-based and community-directed projects would have had a significant impact on public opinion. Make use of micro-credit systems so that the middle classes can be re-invigorated.
- USAID in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should establish an engineering capability that can be used to plan the comprehensive restoration of electric power and water in countries emerging from conflicts. Although capacity building is important, both agencies could usefully recreate expertise in these two areas.
- Ideally, funding for reconstruction should be in place before the intervention begins. In all likelihood, the conflict phase of the intervention will end sooner than planners think and if the funds are not in place and readily available for use, then a window for chaos can open.

Lessons-learned and Training Issues

In government, as in other spheres of activity, it is far easier to identify than to implement lessons-learned (i.e., making changes in procedures, capabilities, and organizations). All too often, the USG identifies lessons that should be learned but rarely takes the necessary action to ensure these lessons are absorbed within its large and diverse personnel ranks. This point is equally applicable to the USG's civilian and military institutions, including each community's education and training institutions.

The Joint Force Command (JFCOM) is studying and experimenting with interagency coordination models in an attempt to examine and resolve many of the issues raised in the draft USAID paper provided to workshop attendees prior to the workshop (attached). The USG's performance in post-conflict settings has been, at best, uneven. Information sharing, multi-agency civil-military planning, strategic-operational coordination, adaptive planning, coordinated outreach to international partners, and the ability to exercise and rehearse have all been repetitive weak points in operations spanning the 1990's and the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. JFCOM presented their experimentation schedule and pointed out that OSD (Policy), JFCOM and the DoS would host a National Security Workshop in the 1st quarter of FY 05 where collaborative software tools would be used to design a revised Pol—Mil plan template. This re-design effort would provide an excellent opportunity to resolve many of the challenges that exist at the national strategic planning level.

A senior staff member of the U.S. Institute for Peace presented a demonstration of a DVD the USIP has made to educate and inform personnel about the history of Iraq, its culture, and explanations of current conditions within Iraq. Follow on efforts will consist

of a series of detailed interviews with a broader range of returnees conducted by the Association for Diplomatic Standards and Training.

On the military side, consideration must also be given to the requirements of training units and soldiers for different missions and tasks necessary to accomplish the stabilization missions (e.g., the difficulty of retraining artillery soldiers for security duties usually performed by military police units).

Conclusions

The workshop discussion ranged widely -- identifying the challenges and shortfalls of planning in the Iraq case and narrowing the field of issues to those most important processes and organizations that must be changed in order to enhance USG capacity to conduct post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization operations.

During the meeting it became apparent that the USG is still wrestling internally with how best to define and organize itself for the post-conflict mission. Even given that problem, there are several steps that can be taken at the national level to redress the problems experienced over the past decade and brought painfully to stark relief in Iraq.

Recommendations

The general sense of the workshop was to support continuing work to refine the problems and provide pragmatic recommendations to make change in the way the U.S. conducts post-conflict operations. In this regard, a core group of attendees will continue to address the salient issues below through a program of additional meetings, working sessions, and policy recommendations. It will focus most intensively upon:

- Ways and means to reinvigorate the interagency planning process with adoption of a viable approach to strategic planning that addresses post-conflict situations.
  - A widely accepted planning template would provide a vehicle for achieving high-level consensus on a strategic concept and subsequent planning at the operational level in advance of the intervention.
- The requirements for the collection and evaluation of intelligence.
- The development of an optimal information management/metrics capability, so that the U.S. leaders can direct the application of all the elements of national power to a given situation.
- The establishment of a training and exercise program to keep USG institutional capabilities trained and ready.
- The development of a government-wide human resources system that can adequately recruit, train, exercise, equip and deploy, either as individuals or as task ready organizations, experts to support substantive and functional efforts in post-conflict reconstruction.
- The continued development of the Department of State and its civilian agency partners, with active Congressional support, of new modes for organizing and resourcing strategic and operational level institutions, processes, and civil-military

coordination to ensure that the many diverse requirements for post-conflict operations are met in a timely, effective, efficient, and accountable manner.

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A Workshop:

"Planning for Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Learning from Iraq"

29 July 2004 (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
National Defense University
Building 62, Room 155B

Agenda

7:15 – 8:00 a.m. **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

8:00 – 8:15 a.m. **Introduction & Administrative Information –** Colonel Paul Hughes, USA, Senior Military Fellow, INSS

8:15 – 8:45 a.m. **Fixing Post-Conflict Management: The Need for a Holistic Approach** – Mr. Phil Kearley, Interagency Program Manager, Concepts Development, J9 JFCOM

8:45 -- 9:10 a.m. **A Vision for Reconstruction & Stabilization – The Role of The Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization –** Ambassador Carlos Pascual, Coordinator for Reconstruction & Stabilization, Department of State

9:10 – 9:30 a.m. **USIP: The Iraq Experience Project** – Robert Perito, Coordinator, Iraq Experience Project, USIP

9:30 – 9:45 a.m. **Break**

9:45 – 10:30 a.m. **Planning for Reconstruction Implementation** – John Tsagronis, Senior Policy Advisor to the Administrator, USAID and Dayton Maxwell, Special Advisor to the Administrator, USAID

10:30 – 11:15 a.m. **"Assessing Reconstruction in Iraq" --** Dr. Andrew Rathmell, RAND

11:15 – 11:30 **Break**

11:30 – 12:45 p.m. **Buffet Lunch with Panel Presentation**
Topic: "Deliberate Post-Conflict Planning in Iraq"
- ✯ Presenter: Dayton Maxwell (USAID)
- ✯ Discussants: Rick Barton (CSIS) and LTC Bob Polk (ITPT)

12:45 – 1:00 p.m. **Break**

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions** (Please see "Instructions to Breakout Groups") ✯ Policy Formulation, Joint Planning & Budgeting ✯ Security, Public Diplomacy & Strategic Communications ✯ Governance, Capacity Building & Essential Services ✯ Economic Policy Reform
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	**Breakout Group Feedback –** Plenary Session
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.	**Charting the Way Ahead --** Colonel Paul Hughes, INSS
4:30 p.m.	**Conclusion**