Strategy Research Project

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND STABILITY OPERATIONS

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USAWC CLASS OF 2009

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)*	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED *(From - To)*
26-03-2009	Strategy Research Project	

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Social Capital and Stability Operations

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER

5b. GRANT NUMBER

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)

M. Annette Evans

5d. PROJECT NUMBER

5e. TASK NUMBER

5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

Colonel Michael Moon
Department of National Security and Strategy

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

U.S. Army War College
122 Forbes Avenue
Carlisle, PA 17013

10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)

11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Distribution A: Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

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15. SUBJECT TERMS

Culture, Stabilization, Security, Transition, Reconstruction, Development

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFED	**b. ABSTRACT** UNCLASSIFED	**c. THIS PAGE** UNCLASSIFED	UNLIMITED	40	**19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER** *(include area code)*

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

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AUTHOR: M. Annette Evans

TITLE: Social Capital and Stability Operations

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 26 March 2008   WORD COUNT: 7691   PAGES: 40

KEY TERMS: Culture, Stabilization, Security, Transition, Reconstruction, Development

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Values and interests of the United States are advanced through stability operations in foreign states, regions, or nations. Stability operations, facilitated through efforts by the United States Government (USG), assist local populations with establishing peace, democracy, and market economies in a secure, well-governed environment. Social capital -- defined as an instantiated set of informal values or norms that permit cooperation between two or more individuals -- refers to community trust, norms, and networks that link justice, security and public safety, economic prosperity, governance, and social well-being to each other. A state's levels of trust and reciprocity, the nature, extent, and types of its social networks, and the relationship and strength of those networks and institutions affect the ability of the USG to implement stability operations doctrine. The main conclusion of this research effort is that social capital is the bridge between stability operations policy and implementation, a concept which – if considered – could prevent the failure of stability operations in weak, failed, or fragile states.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND STABILITY OPERATIONS

Rampant corruption, bribe-taking, Taliban-led militant courts, and public mistrust characterize the current Afghanistan judicial system – this after the United States and its international partners have worked for seven years to establish rule of law.[1][2] The official Afghan judicial system has been described as a "complicated maze fraught with graft", slow and untrustworthy compared to traditional *jirgas*, re-emerged Afghan legal councils which for centuries have settled criminal cases, land disputes, and family matters.[3] In Kalakan, a village thirty minutes north of Kabul, for instance, the tribal council mediates residents' legal problems. "The tribal elders are the ones with the land and the power," tribal leader Abdul Hakim Khan explains. "And it's them that the people listen to."[4] This is occurring while the United States and international partners continue to promote justice and reconciliation in war-torn countries like Afghanistan,[5] implementing many of the thirty tasks outlined in *The United States Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation Practitioner's Guide.*[6]

The establishment of a new Afghan legal training center, of mobile legal clinics teaching farmers and laborers about their legal rights, and of anti-corruption seminars, is indicative of these efforts.[7] The former corrupt heads of major justice sector institutions – the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, and the Office of the Attorney General - have all been replaced with competent reformers.[8] Other positive developments include approval of the National Justice Program, the development of strategy to build Afghanistan's Judicial System, and the renovation and construction of 40 provincial courthouses. In addition, the U.S. has trained 744 judges, and published all of the laws passed in Afghanistan since 1964 in both Dari and Pashto. U.S.

assistance to the justice sector has increased from an FY2007 budget of $67.35 million to an FY2008 budget of $92 million. The U.S. is the largest justice assistance donor to Afghanistan.[9]

The question, then, is why -- despite the concentrated efforts of the U.S. and international partners to rebuild the legal infrastructure -- is the official Afghan judicial system being usurped by an alternative traditional legal structure? How is it possible for the Taliban and Afghan fundamentalists to weaken a critical keystone of the Afghan state's stability? John Dempsey, Kabul office of the U.S. Institute of Peace, provides insight:

> To me, it seems the international community needs to focus more attention on how access to justice for Afghans actually operates and try to work with the non-state system of justice so that we can try to improve how disputes are resolved there, and perhaps build trust between the community elders and the actual state system of justice."[10]

Trust and social networks in a community, like those mentioned by Dempsey, are manifestations of "social capital." Social capital, defined as an instantiated set of informal values or norms that permit cooperation between two or more individuals, is the *sine qua non* of stable societies.[11] It refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. These features may also prevent societal change based upon outside influences.[12]

A component of culture, social capital is the link between coordinated community actions like judicial systems, security and public safety, economic prosperity, governance, and social well-being. It is the composition of relationships that define how communities operate, a societal resource that links citizens to each other,[13] and should

be incorporated into post-conflict developmental efforts. But despite its significance and pervasiveness, social capital is largely unheard of, ignored, or misunderstood.

This research paper identifies social capital as a missing element in the U.S. government's (USG) stability operations strategy, as evidenced by its lackluster references within USG stability operations doctrine and plans. It argues that efforts to assist local populations in establishing peace, good governance, and open market economies – like those being pursued in Afghanistan – will be limited in effectiveness when social capital is ignored. A state's levels of trust and reciprocity, the nature, extent, and types of its social networks, and the relationship and strength of those networks and state institutions affect the ability of the USG to implement stability operations doctrine.

The paper begins with an examination of stability operations, and considers the importance of social capital to stability operations strategy. It then reviews arguments regarding the use of social capital, and ends with recommendations for the integration of social capital in such operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The main conclusion of this research effort is that social capital is the bridge between stability operations policy and implementation, a concept which – if considered – could prevent the failure of stability operations in states which are "at risk, of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife."[14]

Background

"It's not the risk of great power competition that threatens international peace and security today," say Dziedizic and Hawly in *The Quest for Viable Peace*, "but rather the pathological weakness of states."[15] Weak, collapsed, and failed states affect American

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security, values, and economic growth.[16] Unstable or deficient government institutions in these states contribute to global instability and security threats such as terrorism, organized crime, narco-trafficking, refugee migration, epidemics, humanitarian crises, and poverty.[17] Many such states exist in what has been called "the Gap",[18] a global domain rife with power struggles, inequality, lawlessness, and internal and external conflict.[19] These issues root themselves and grow in countries where governments lack the capacity, and sometimes the will, to respond to the instability they generate,[20] creating cycles of unrest, and inter- and intra-state conflict. Local and regional instability ensues, all of which threaten "U.S. interests in building an effective international system, providing the foundation for continued prosperity, and, not least, in protecting Americans from external threats to our security."[21]

Without a countervailing force to break this cycle, the intertwined political, economic and social systems that make up the fabric of the globe are endangered.[22] To address this, USG stability operations policy is designed to become one of the primary forces dedicated to arresting crises and problems like those just listed. Stability operations aim to help severely stressed governments to avoid failure, to recover from a devastating natural disaster, or to assist emerging governments to build new domestic order following internal collapse or defeat in war.[23] This section describes USG stability operations policy, the ends (objectives), means (resources), and ways which comprise a stability operations strategy, and stability operations relationship to nation-building.

Stability Operations Strategy

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has been increasingly involved in stabilization and reconstruction operations throughout the world.[24] The U.S. military has

been involved in over 17 post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization operations since 1990 including Bosnia, Cambodia, East Timor, Haiti, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan.[25] However, the success rate of the U.S. experience in nation building is disputed. According to one source, only 25% of nation building efforts over the past 100 years resulted in democratic governments ten years after the departure of the U.S. military. Obvious successes include the total defeat and reconstruction of Japan and Germany after WWII, and two more recent small-scale operations in Grenada and Panama.[26] Another source cites that roughly half of USG nation-building operations have produced both sustained peace and continued democratic governance.[27] Despite its difficulty and limitations of expected results, the USG and its international partners still consider nation-building an important responsibility and – within the last seven years – a necessity.

After the attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) on the U.S., stability operations – both reconstruction and development – have become even more important, especially in the "Gap" neighborhood. Political and social instability, governmental incapacity and misdirection, poverty, and radical movements have riveted U.S. and partner attentions and demanded from them comprehensive and holistic approaches to stability operations. Such operations are very complex, usually involving the participation of several United Nations (U.N.) departments and agencies, international financial institutions, a plethora of non-governmental humanitarian organizations, and multiple U.S. agencies. The term "*stability operations"* is sometimes referred to by Department of State as "reconstruction, stabilization, and conflict transformation",[28] and by the Department of Defense as "stabilization, security, transition, and reconstruction

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(SSTR)".[29] The sanctioned definition, however, is: "the military and civilian activities conducted across the entire spectrum of operations from peace to conflict, to establish and maintain order in States and regions."[30] This paper will use the term *stability operations* to refer to all activities and tasks conducted by the USG to restore or build domestic order in weak or failed states.

The USG recognized the need to improve stability operations and the importance of coordinating diplomatic, information, military, and economic instruments of national power with international partners during the Iraq and Afghanistan experiences. In June 2004, then Secretary of State Colin Powell created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to coordinate USG efforts to plan and oversee stability operations. Led by DOS, S/CRS consists of representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), DOD, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Homeland Security, Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of the Treasury.[31]

Shortly thereafter, a series of catalyst documents regarding stability operations were released by the White House, Department of State (DOS), Department of Defense (DOD), Joint Operations Command (JOC), and the U.S. Army. Two founding documents, both signed in late 2005, cemented the national vision for stability operations. National Security Presidential Directive 44, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization*, provided general guidelines for the leadership and coordination of the interagency process regarding stability operations. Secondly, DOD Directive 3000.5 officially established DOD's new stability operations policy and provided strategic level guidance to change the way the military plans for and

executes stability operations.[3233] Joint Publication 3-0 and Joint Forces Command *Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations* outline the military's role in stability operations. Within the military, stability operations are now given the same emphasis as offensive and defensive combat operations and are considered a critical part of U.S. military capability.[34] Sanctioned doctrine sees immediate goals in stability operations as providing to local populaces security, the restoration of essential services, and the meeting of humanitarian needs. The long-term goals are seen as the development of indigenous capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and robust civil society.[35]

In describing the ways of stability operations strategy it is important to draw attention to three commonalities existing in all of the USGs foremost stability operations doctrinal publications and in academic literature. First, stability operations must leverage both civilian and military efforts, interagency relationships, government and non-governmental organizations, comprehensive planning, and meticulous oversight to accomplish stability operations objectives. All stability operations literature acknowledges the importance of USG and international partners' contributions to stability operations.

Second, stability operations efforts may be conducted across the entire spectrum of conflict, from stable peace to general war. They may be conducted with or without military assistance, as part of a larger Geographic Combatant Command theater campaign plan, or independently by U.S. Department of State Country Teams. Stability operations may be preventive, conducted as part of crisis response, or within long-term

contingency planning. In Joint Publication 3-0, the Department of Defense expanded

the military phasing model from four phases to six phases; stability operations may be

conducted in Phase 0 (Shaping Operations) to build host nation capacity, and

throughout other phases to Phase V, where the USG becomes a supporter to the host

state's positive trajectory toward viable peace.[36]

Third, stability operations tasks are categorized into broad technical areas. While

these areas differ slightly from publication to publication, the stability sectors generally

include:

- Security- a safe, secure environment;

- Justice and reconciliation- the rule of law;

- Humanitarian assistance and social well-being- refugee assistance, food, shelter, health, and education;

- Governance and participation-representative, effective governance; a stable democracy; and

- Economic stabilization and infrastructure - economic development and reconstitute critical infrastructure and essential services.

Often these areas are referred to as the end-states of stability operations. This

paper contends, however, that these tasks are the ways to reach viable peace: "the

decisive turning point in the transformation of conflict from imposed stability to self-

sustaining peace."[37] Seen as end-states, these sectors make stability operations merely

a task-driven exercise -- lines of operations are executed or accomplished in their own

right but without integration. Seen as the ways of strategy, one can see their inter-

related nature.

Much of USG policy guidance, subsequent new multi-dimensional research, and editorial opinions, relate to the *means* (resources) by which to accomplish stability operations: unified action, whole of government approach, command and control in the area of responsibility, international coordination, civil-military coordination, and staffing levels in USG agencies who implement stability operations. The objectives of stability operations efforts cannot be attained without the policies in place to facilitate resourcing. However, equally important are the ways by which stability operations are accomplished.

The major ways of stability operations strategy, requiring work on enhancing governance and participation, security, justice and reconciliation, and social and economic well-being - demand an integration of efforts that is fundamental to conflict resolution and reconstruction and development. Yet, all of the well-crafted USG policy and doctrine fails to articulate how such integration will occur, exposing gaps in thinking about how to bridge current stability operations policy with implementation.

While this doctrine and policy lay down excellent foundations for the pursuit of viable peace, they stand to be improved by recognition of the importance of social capital – levels of trust, social networks, composition of community relationships, and reciprocity within the host nation – as the integrating mechanism between stability operations doctrine and implementation. Before discussing in detail how an understanding of social capital would improve stability operations strategy-making, it is worth highlighting a fundamental problem of the current policy and doctrine that only social capital awareness can correct.

Francis Fukuyama provides us an interesting perspective to assess stability operations policy. He advocates that third parties conducting nation-building operations are involved in two separate processes[38] - reconstruction and development. Reconstruction is achievable when the underpinnings of the political and social infrastructures have survived conflict or crisis. Reconstruction refers to the restitution of a state to its pre-conflict situation, and is associated with Phase IV of the U.S. military standard operational template, where stability operations follow combat operations. Development, however, is transformational, more difficult, long-term, and costly. It involves the creation of new institutions and infrastructure for improved governance, justice, security, social well-being, and economic stabilization or growth. Fukuyama contends that the development function is critical to nation building because "it is only in the ability to create, maintain, and transition to self-sustaining indigenous institutions that permits third parties to formulate an exit strategy."[39] In current U.S. military doctrine, Fukuyama's development concept is essential to Phase V operations - the transition to local authorities once reconstruction is ensured and military operations rescind.[40]

The development phase requires weaning indigenous institutions from reliance on external assistance. Fukuyama asserts that this is hard for three reasons: local institutions are initially fragile in this phase; nation building agencies make decisions for the local populace based on false assumptions or anecdotal and/or incomplete data; and nation builders are ignorant about their own dependency-reinforcing influence of their nation building efforts.[41] This paper argues that USG stability operations efforts should maintain broad focus comprising *both* reconstruction and development efforts. This is not always a popular viewpoint. It also maintains that stability operations

strategies will only be successful if they address the three recurring problems listed above by understanding and institutionalizing processes that identify and use to advantage social capital in all nation-building efforts. While social capital awareness is required in reconstruction efforts of USG stability operations, it is absolutely essential to mission success in developmental efforts, and without its inclusion in the overall strategy, all USG efforts are in jeopardy of reversal.

The Importance of Social Capital to Stability Operations Strategy

Economic scholars, development practitioners, sociologists, and anthropologists have conducted research on the factors leading to progressive societies, democracies, and market economies. Max Weber, Durkheim, Tocqueville, Hanifan, Sachs, Coleman, Fukuyama, Doyle, Grondona, Jacobs, Huntington, Putnam, Friedman and dozens of writers, journalists, and intellectuals have studied the relationship between cultural values and human progress, defined as democratic governance, end to poverty, and social justice.[42] Harrison (2006) disaggregates culture in a 25-factor typology to identify progressive-prone and progressive-resistant cultures.[43] Religion, wealth, education, risk propensity, and family are some of the factors. Factor #19 is labeled "association" – social capital – and is identified in this research paper as the bridge between stability operations policy and its implementation. This section explores the concept, definition and characteristics of social capital, its components, and six influences of social capital on the implementation of stability operations doctrine and policy.

Physical, human, and social capital must be present for a nation to thrive democratically, economically, and socially.[44] A leading social capital theorist, James Coleman (1988), presented the foundation for contemporary social capital theory. "Just

as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity," he argued, "social capital does as well."[45] In addition to skills and knowledge, human capital also includes people's ability to associate with each other. He defined social capital as the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations and contended that social capital is critical "not only to economic life but to every aspect of social existence."[46] A community's ability to network and create positive value for its larger society depends on the degree to which communities share norms and values, and are able to subordinate individual interests to the community. Coleman postulated that societal trust results from shared norms and values, and that trust has a measurable economic value.[47]

Trust, norms, and networks -- features of social organization -- improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions in a community.[48] Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit social fabric. A sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks (and the relationships of trust that can be involved) benefit a society and state. Research has shown that the existence and maintenance of social trust and networks in communities lowers drug use, criminality, and teenage pregnancies, while increasing youth academic success, economic development, and government effectiveness.[49]

The definition of social capital recognizes that community is the primary unit of analysis (versus individuals, households, or the state), and that the way communities themselves are structured turns in large part on their relationship with the state.[50] The World Bank, a leading organization in social capital research and nation building, defines the term from a community perspective:

Social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions that underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together.[51]

Coleman provided one of the best examples of social capital. He describes the New York wholesale diamond market, where diamond merchants frequently exchange bags of diamonds, often worth thousands of dollars, to other merchants to examine at their leisure. The exchanges are done without insurance or formal agreement. This can only work because of the high degree of trust among the community of diamond merchants. A new diamond merchant will soon recognize that having access to this network means a shared understanding of how to behave honorably and facilitates their ability to trade efficiently and profitably. If the new merchant acts dishonorably within this network, the merchant then be deprived of the economic and social benefits that belong to the network.[52]

Perhaps the most influential study on social capital was conducted by Robert Putnam. In *Making Democracy Work* (1993), Putnam concluded that the quality of governance in different regions of Italy is correlated with social capital.[53] In the early 1970s, Putnam's research focused on the Italian experience of moving to regional governments. By investigating civic traditions in modern Italy for almost 20 years, Putnam discovered a strong link between the performance of political institutions and the character of civic life – what he called the "civic community." Civic communities were characterized by civic engagement, political equality, solidarity, trust, and tolerance, and a strong associational life. Empirically, Putnam concluded that democracies and economies work better when an independent and long-standing tradition of civic

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engagement is present.[54] Putnam argued that horizontal ties of social trust create an environment where individuals are able to influence the community life. These ties cultivate high levels of trust, which facilitate social coordination, a strong social fabric, and decrease opportunities for corruption. On the other hand, the antithesis of a strong horizontal network of trust would allow an alternative government or rogue power to step into the gap. Thus, northern Italy has fostered a thriving economy and civil society due to its high levels of social capital, while southern Italy has lagged behind because it relies on vertical networks, turning inward toward the family for sole support and trust.[55] Putnam's conclusion was that a critical factor in the effectiveness of the regional governments was the vibrancy of community life and the level of trust between strangers in their regions – the concept of social capital.

A 2007 Washington Post article captured the essence of social capital's importance in the conduct of stability operations in Iraq, and draws the conclusion that USG stability operations strategy is "fundamentally flawed."[56] The problem with stability operations, the article says, is that its strategy runs counter to everything known about how social capital grows. Parallel to Fukuyama's characterization of reconstruction as the enemy of development in over time,[57] third party assistance during reconstruction circumvents local institutions and social networks, the very elements that must band together to create social capital to ensure peace. The author cites Putnam, who describes social capital as "a measure of how closely people in the community are interconnected" and "how much people in a community feel responsible for each other."[58] Third parties in nation-building cannot build connections between people, acknowledges the author. The level of social capital achieved is a forecast for the

quality of schools and local government, or an indicator of the residual risk of a country becoming a failed state. "Without social capital," he says, "societies fall apart, even if the roads are smooth and the trains run on time."[59] Social capital, by its nature, can only be built, strengthened, or erased by the indigenous people involved: people support what they help create.

Understanding social capital is essential to stability operations. There are six aspects of social capital that – if considered by USG stability operations executors – will make the difference between reconstruction and development, successful transition from Phase IV to Phase V, conflict termination versus conflict transformation, and ultimately stabilizing weak or fragile states at Phase 0. A state's levels of trust and reciprocity, the nature, extent, and types of its social networks, and the relationship and strength of those networks and state institutions (government, justice, security, social and economic) affect the ability of the USG to implement stability operations doctrine. Each aspect will be described below, followed by a review of how this relates to current USG stability operations doctrine.

The first aspect of social capital that is fundamental to the success of stability operations is the understanding of the level of trust in the state's social networks. Trust is an essential form of social capital.[60] Social trust, arising from norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement, is a key ingredient in sustained economic and government performance. Putnam's study illuminated social capital as trust between all agents in civil society, maintaining that cooperation is required for a successful state – between legislative, judicial and executive branches, between employees and managers, among political parties, between the government and private groups, among

small firms, and among communities and institutions of governance, security, justice, and the economy. A nation's well-being is conditioned by the level of trust inherent in the society.[61]

Almost all forms of traditional social groups - tribes, clans, village associations, and religious sects – interact based on long-established shared norms and use these norms to achieve cooperation and facilitate coordination, for good or bad. The literature on development has not, as a general rule, found this form of social capital to be a catalyst for change; but rather a millstone to progress. In nations where stability operations strategy is needed most, these groups preside en masse. Economic modernization is often seen as antithetical to traditional culture and historical social organization, because these groups have a narrow radius of trust. In-group solidarity reduces the ability of group members to cooperate with outsiders.[62] During reconstruction, gauging the trust that exists within a state's networks is essential to the long-term success of development. By default, the USG and its international partners also become part of the social capital in a stability operations environment. The level of trust – and thus cooperative effort -- that is shared between all networks will foretell, for example, whether USG-built power plants are resourced and utilized, whether student attendance remains high in internationally-funded renovated community schools for decades, whether Western-modeled courts of law are utilized versus marginalized, or whether voting polls are crowded during democratic elections.

The second aspect of social capital to consider during stability operation is the level of reciprocity that exists in the state's networks. Networks involve mutual obligation and encourage attention to others' well-being.[63] Reciprocity may be described

as a sentiment that "I will do this for you now – perhaps without even knowing you, confident that somewhere down the line you'll do something for me," or, as stated on a fund-raising t-shirt slogan produced by a Volunteer Fire Department in Oregon: "Come to our breakfast, we'll come to your fire."[64] This norm of reciprocity, even if a community member does not participate in the fundraiser, generates high social capital and underpins community collaboration. In American terms, lending a quarter to a stranger for a parking meter, buying a round of drinks for colleagues, watching a friend's pet, taking turns bringing doughnuts to the office, and mowing a neighbor's lawn are examples of reciprocity. When community members can relax, knowing they transact in trusting communities, the costs of everyday business of life and commercial transactions are reduced.[65] In a stability operations environment, especially where internal conflict is prevailing in a weak or failed state, reciprocity is generally nonexistent. However, the potential for reciprocity and a corresponding plan must be identified by third party assistance. Outside aid provided by the USG or its partners can strip reciprocity from a state, or fail to sow its seeds. When a persistent stream of physical and financial capital from external nations engulfs a weak or failed state – without host nation or donor accountability, audits, and measurements of reciprocity to the extended community – a culture of non-reciprocity ensues.[66] The very objectives to which the means (resources) aspire are rendered worthless.

The third aspect of social capital to consider during stability operation is the nature and extent of a state's social networks. Networks have value.[67] Formal and informal networks of interpersonal communication exist in all societies. Networks may be horizontal, where citizens of equivalent status and power interact. Vertical networks

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are characterized as "linking unequal agents in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence."[68] Citizens are more likely to cooperate for mutual benefit when horizontal networks are dense (neighborhood associations, cooperatives, or sports clubs for instance). A vertical network, no matter how dense or how powerful its participants, cannot sustain social trust and cooperation.[69] Horizontal and vertical networks impact stability operations in two ways. First, the breadth of horizontal networks breeds trust and reciprocity, thus creating a bottom-up approach to community-building. Second, if the USG or its partners are viewed as participants in a vertical network, the host nation state will knowingly or unknowingly reject assistance. A social system simply cannot develop in the presence of vertical networks without the foundation and strength of horizontal interaction among community members.

Communitarian, network, and institutional viewpoints of social capital stem from extensive research on economic development and social capital.[70] Each of these perspectives includes one vital aspect of social capital's importance to stability operations.

The communitarian view is society-centered, and equates social capital with local clubs, associations, and civic groups. This approach says that social capital is linked to and influenced by social interactions, or the day-to-day formal and informal interactions between citizens. The most common form of social capital, manifestations of this type include the Parent-Teacher Association concept, membership in service organizations like Rotary Clubs, Boy Scouts, fraternal organizations, and bowling league participation, for which Putnam became known.[71] Contending that more social capital is better, this view often fails to acknowledge perverse social capital, or social capital that hinders

community development. When community groups and networks are isolated or

working against a state's progression -- in ghettos, gangs, or drug cartels for instance –

social capital is harmful.[72] With its century-old traditions of bigotry and racially motivated

violence, the Klu Klux Klan (KKK), for example, represented a form of social capital that

undermined the rules and traditions of democracy. Although the KKK held internal

norms of trust and reciprocity, it demonstrated the idea that not all social capital is

good.[73] Organizations which exclude individuals based on race, ethnicity, economics,

politics, or gender are other examples of negative social capital.

Social capital is not the sole property of a single individual. It is a public

interaction which benefits a specific group. Single individuals benefit from collective

norms of cooperation, even if an individual does not contribute directly to the norms. An

example of this is the litter-free American military installation which may be monitored

by Soldier units, but enjoyed by civilians and retirees. Conversely, social capital is not

always accessible to everyone. The society-based view is important for stability

operations experts to understand for two reasons, and is the fourth learning point from

social capital. First, perverse social capital and its effects must be recognized by third

party assistance. During reconstruction efforts, for instance, apparently helpful host

nation groups may in fact be excluding the remainder of community members which the

reconstruction is intended. Perverse social capital must be evaluated, however, by the

host nation participants; external assessment is not likely to uncover perverse social

capital. Along those same lines, social capital as a public good often decries the

historical and cultural components of a host nation society. Women's education is one

example of a controversial initiative which undercuts reconstruction and development

efforts. Recognizing the limits of social capital's public commodity should influence the implementation of the stability operations sectors employed by the USG and its partners.

The networks perspective highlights the firth application of social capital to stability operations strategy: identifying bridging and bonding, the two types of social capital.[74] Some forms of social capital are inward looking and reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups. Bonding occurs when people socialize with others who are like them: same age, same race, same religion, and so on. Examples of bonding social capital include ethnic fraternal organizations, church-based women's reading groups, and country clubs. Other networks are outward looking and bring together people who are unlike one another. Examples of bridging social capital include the civil rights movement, political organizations, and youth service groups. Bonding social capital provides a kind of superglue where bridging social capital provide a sociological WD-40.[75] In order to create viable peace in a diverse, multi-ethnic country, bridging is essential. Although bonding and bridging can strengthen each other, the external effects of bridging networks are likely to be positive, while bonding networks create a greater risk of producing negative consequences.[76] Social capital allows the different groups within a complex society to band together to defend their interests, which might otherwise be disregarded by a powerful state.[77] The USG stability operations doctrine must address bridging in more detail, creating a new stability sector which focuses solely on the community dimension of reconstruction and development.

The institutional view argues that the vitality of community networks and civil society is largely the product of the political, legal, and institutional environment in a

society. This view is aligns with current stability operations doctrine. The institutional view sees social capital as embedded in and shaped by governments, national public policies, and political institutions.[78] The institutional perspective views social capital as a dependent variable, where capacity of social groups depends on the quality of the formal institutions under which they reside. The institutional view equates a high level of social capital with the quality of a society's political, legal, and economic institutions. Quantitative, cross-national studies of the effects of government performance show that trust, rule of law, civil liberties, and bureaucratic quality are positively associated with economic growth. This paper acknowledges that current stability operations doctrine appropriately focuses on this type of social capital in positive, aggressive ways, but also highlights that this occurs to the detriment of the communitarian and networks social capital. This is the sixth application of social capital to stability operations strategy.

Both society and institution-centered approaches to social capital must be considered in stability operations. Stability operations strategies must recognize that the generation of social capital is dependent upon a persistent and synergistic interaction between civil society, its members, and its institutions. The presence and the amount of social capital are dependent upon the interplay between these two factors. When representatives of government, economic, security and social institutions, the corporate sector, and community members establish common networks through which they can pursue common goals, development can proceed – not just reconstruction – toward viable peace. Social capital has a role as a mediating variable,[79] and is the bridge between stability operations doctrine and implementation.

Social capital matters to stability operations. A state's levels of trust and reciprocity, the nature, extent, and types of its social networks, and the relationship and strength of those networks and state institutions (government, justice, security, social and economic) affect the ability of the USG to implement stability operations doctrine through stability sectors. Host nation social cohesion and fragmentation sway stability operations. In implementing stability operations sectors, questions related to social capital are critical: Who benefits and who does not? What kind of society are we encouraging? Are we asking the host nation to contribute to its own social capital? Have we made unfounded assumptions about their communities? Is more reconstruction necessarily better?

Given the importance of social capital to the strategy and implementation of stability operations, the term *social capital* is mentioned only briefly in USG publications – once each in Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations,*[80] and in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency.*[81] In the first, social capital is not defined or explained. The references are made within the stability sectors of governance and economic stabilization, but the relevance of social capital is not practically applied in either sector. In FM 3-24, social capital is listed as a form of societal power, and alludes primarily to the perverse aspect of social capital as it pertains to host nation leadership. Neither Army publication accurately defines social capital or captures the essence of social capital's importance to stability operations. Likewise, no other USG stability operations publications directly address social capital. The term *social capital* does not appear in any policy, strategy, or operational documents produced by Department of State, USAID, Joint Forces Command, or U.S. Army. Most significantly, the term does not

appear in *The United States Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation Practitioner's Guide*, issued by the U.S. Joint Forces Command and S/CRS.[82] This document represents the nexus of USG stability operations policy and implementation. Social capital is a missing element.

<u>Arguments</u>

This section explores two recurring arguments against the inclusion of social capital concepts in stability operations doctrine: first, that Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) inherently understand and use social capital, and thus provide an adequate bridge between stability operations doctrine and implementation; and second, that social capital is the exclusive business of USAID and classic development organizations and have little relevance to the military.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are part of USG stability operations strategy. Initiated in Afghanistan in 2002, their mission is to "help provincial governments with developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern, promote increased security and rule of law, promote political and economic development and provide provincial administration necessary to meet the basic needs of the population."[83] These civil-military teams of approximately 20 to 100 individuals include members of military special forces units, civil affairs officers and engineers, and representatives from the State Department, USAID, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Afghan Ministry of Interior, and host nation interpreters.[84] Initial sites were chosen to provide a U.S. military and Afghan central government presence in four primary ethnic areas, the former Taliban headquarters, and the base of the country's most difficult warlord. The presence of PRTs was both political and operational: the PRTs could address terrorism, warlords,

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unemployment and poverty in the communities from whence these problems originated or are manifested.[85]

PRT tasks include mediating between state actors and institutional leaders, facilitating meetings with host nation officials and constituents, conducting public information campaigns regarding the importance of voting, providing security for meetings to select constitutional convention delegates, guarding polling stations, and providing transportation for election workers. PRTs also support Afghan government efforts to disarm illegally armed groups. PRTs provide training, technical assistance, and equipment to the Afghan police. They also used quickly-built village improvement projects to demonstrate goodwill and encourage a favorable reaction to their presence. These projects have been financed by funds from the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP), disbursed on the PRT commander's authority. PRTs provoke criticism from non-governmental and humanitarian organizations, who hold that many PRT initiatives are harmful to long-term development.[86]

PRTs do, indeed, implement many of the stabilization and reconstruction tasks outlined in Department of State and Defense doctrinal manuals. They create ties with the host nation communities in which they reside and the USG and its international partners. In that respect, PRTs become part of the social capital of the host nation. They facilitate coordinated action, between community members and the new or reformed institutions created during stability operations. PRTs can accelerate a community's social capital stock, assisting in bridging a community's horizontal networks as well as identifying perverse social capital actors. However, PRTs are not equivalent to social capital, nor should they be the sole social capital arbiter. PRTs can assist states in

building social capital, but they must be trained in its theory. They can intercede between host nation groups, but they cannot replace or take the place of trust between those indigenous groups. They can provide resources to communities, but they cannot conceive reciprocity among its citizens. They can identify the sources of social capital, but unknowingly side with and develop the perverse nature of it. PRTs can assist in building institutions of justice, governance, economics, social well-being and public security, but the PRT will always be part of a vertical network which may be counterproductive to stability operations strategy. PRTs are critical to the development of social capital, but PRTs are *not* social capital themselves. If social capital is not understood at the strategic level, the operations and tactics of PRTs will be amiss.

Training for the military and civilians within PRTs regarding cultural aspects of the host nation in which stability operations will be implemented is generally very good. PRT members learn about host nation attitudes toward education, gender, economics, agriculture, food, child-rearing, physical appearance, and language. These subjects are integral to the success of stability operations. Both military and civilians operating in the host nation must be sensitive to and participate in these cultural manifestations. Understanding social capital, however, is not cultural awareness training. How to shake hands, conduct a meeting with tribal elders, create a parent-teacher association, transact agricultural investments, or visit a village home are expressions of social capital and can be learned by foreign nation-builders. However, social capital is an indigenous commodity. Trust, social networks, inter- and intra-network communication, and the strength of community-government cohesion are owned by the host nation populace.

The USG, contributing to host nation growth through stability operations strategy, must inevitably and patiently rely on the host nation's level of social capital to claim victory.

Like PRTs, USAID plays an extremely critical role in stability operations. Concentrating on development, USAID works with State and Defense Departments in forming and implementing stability operations strategy. USAID promotes peace and stability by fostering economic growth, protecting human health, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, and enhancing democracy in developing countries. USAID works in 100 developing countries and in close partnership with non-governmental organizations, host nation groups, universities, American businesses, international organizations, other governments, trade and professional associations, and faith-based organizations.[87]

Social capital theory is part of the foundation for the nine USAID principles which guide U.S. development and reconstruction assistance. Described as characteristics of successful assistance to achieve economic growth, democracy and governance, and social transition, the principles include[88] :

Ownership: Build on the leadership, participation, and commitment of a country and its people.

Capacity-Building: Strengthen local institutions, transfer technical skills, and promote appropriate policies.

Sustainability: Design programs to ensure their impact endures.

Selectivity: Allocate resources based on need, local commitment, and foreign policy interests.

Assessment: Conduct careful research, adapt best practices, and design for local conditions.

Results: Focus resources to achieve clearly defined, measurable and strategically-focused objectives.

Partnership: Collaborate closely with governments, communities, donors, NGOs, the private sector, international organizations, and universities.

Flexibility: Adjust to changing conditions, take advantage of opportunities, and maximize efficiency.

Accountability: Design accountability and transparency into systems and build effective checks and balances to guard against corruption.

USAID explicitly and implicitly utilizes the concepts of social capital in its agency strategy and operations, although *social capital* as a term does not appear once in a USAID doctrinal publications search. However, social capital cannot be contracted out or parsed to USAID by the USG. Social capital – and the development work conducted by USAID – must be considered within the "ends-ways-means" discussion of stability operations strategy at the outset. The USG mindset that social capital can be left forgotten until Phase IV, until development officially starts, until conflict transformation officially commences, or ignored all together, is erroneous. Considering social capital must span Phases 0 through 5 and is not the exclusive patent of USAID.

Social capital must be the business of the USG, including Departments of State and Defense, other U.S. agencies, and international partners in bridging stability operations strategy and implementation. USAID can assist in strategy development, through its representation on the Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), Interagency Planning Cell, Joint Interagency Coordinating Groups (JIACG), and other policy coordinating committees (PCCs). In the field, USAID representatives can be the first to lead using their vast experience in development work. However, social capital must be considered broadly, taken into account at the headquarters levels well before "boots on ground," during conflict, and certainly into the formal stability operations phase and beyond. Along those lines, the myriad of non-governmental

organizations (NGOs), international relief agencies, and international organizations (IOs) working in the host nation should not answer the call for social capital. While IOs and NGOs bring both intellectual and material resources to stability operations – and also become part of the social capital in a state – social capital cannot be left to them for the same reasons PRTs and USAID cannot be equated with social capital.

Additional research on social capital and its influence on stability operations doctrine and implementation will ultimately lead to viable peace in weak, fragile, or failed states.;[89] Future USG social capital research and integration into stability operations doctrine will mitigate the inefficient, expensive, and frustrating detours exemplified in some of the Afghanistan and Iraq stability operations experiences.

Recommendations

At the strategic level, the USG should institutionalize the concept of social capital and revolutionize doctrine in the National Security Council Policy Coordinating Committee, the Departments of State and Defense, the Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group, and in the Interagency Management System. Joint Forces Command, U.S. Army War College and other senior service colleges, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, the Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies, the Combined Arms Center, the U.S. Institute for Peace, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and other USG agencies should partner with the United Nations, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, NGOs, and university research centers to integrate social capital research with stability operations doctrine.

Social capital doctrine should be included in the Joint Publication/Department of State *United States Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation Practitioner's Guide and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Essential Tasks* and the U.S. Government *Counterinsurgency Guide*. Social capital doctrine should be included in Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, JP 3-07, JP 3-07.3 , JP 3-08, JP 3-57, the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC)*, the *Commander's Handbook for the Joint Interagency Coordination Group*, the Joint Publication *Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating* Concept. In addition, the USAID *Failed States Strategy* and *Democracy and Governance Strategic Framework* should expand on social capital concepts and practical application.

At the operational level and tactical levels, the U.S. Army should include social capital concepts in FM 3-0, FM 3-07, FM 3-24, FM 3-05.40, and across theater campaign planning and shaping operations. Training exercises in stability operations with other services would enhance practicality of social capital concepts, and lead to bottom-up social capital applications to stability operations.

Conclusion

Values and interests of the United States are advanced through stability operations in foreign states, regions, or nations. Stability operations, facilitated through efforts by the USG, assist local populations with establishing peace, democracy, and market economies in a secure, well-governed environment. Social capital -- defined as an instantiated set of informal values or norms that permit cooperation between two or more individuals -- refers to community trust, norms, and networks that link justice,

security and public safety, economic prosperity, governance, and social well-being to

each other. Without attention to the level of social capital in a state, USG stability

operations strategy and implementation are ineffectual. USG stability operations

doctrine must be bridged to ultimate success using social capital.

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