

Comprehensive Planning in Complex Endeavours

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Abstract— *Present-day military missions which focus on bringing security and stability to a region are often referred to as Complex Endeavours. The complexity in these missions is twofold: the complexity of the mission environment, and the complexity within the collective of actors that cooperate in order to achieve their (mission) objectives. In order to succeed in such complex contexts, a comprehensive approach is needed in which different actors achieve the diverse objectives in a combined effort. During the Dutch ISAF mission in Afghanistan, a comprehensive planning process was implemented, involving a large number of relevant actors from the start of the planning process. This has proven to contribute to a better understanding of the mission environment and unity of effort, acceptance and trust among the different actors involved.*

Index Terms— *comprehensive approach, planning, collaboration*

1. INTRODUCTION

Present-day missions often take place in complex environments, in which a large number of military and civilian actors participate to bring security and stability to a region. These operations are often referred to as Complex Endeavours. Examples are peace operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and relief operations such as after the 2006 tsunami or the ongoing relief efforts after the Pakistan flooding.

Traditional military operations often pursued military victory. Military leaders and their subordinates did not have to worry about reconstruction and development processes. In Complex Endeavours, however, objectives do not only pertain to military victory, but also to the social, economic and political domain [1]. In these endeavours, military intervention supports the development processes. Rather than sequential, military intervention and development have become parallel processes. This requires unity of effort of a variety of military and civilian actors. They need to accomplish progress in the various domains towards complex long term objectives, which cannot be defined univocally. The cooperation of civilian and military actors in order to cope with the complexity of the mission environment is often referred to as the Comprehensive Approach. Related concepts are the Whole-of-Government Approach, the 3D-approach (Defense, Diplomacy, Development), an Integrated Approach, and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC).

Because conflicts have changed from a one-dimensional problem space to a multidimensional one, the encountered complexity has increased. The complexity in Complex Endeavours is twofold: the complexity of the mission environment, and the complexity within the collective of actors that cooperate in order to achieve their (mission) objectives.

Where a purely military plan would suffice to reach a military end-state, the complexity in a Comprehensive Approach requires a comprehensive plan, designed by the various civilian and military actors within a Complex Endeavour. To provide this plan, the Dutch Task Force Uruzgan (TFU), which contributed to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan from 2006 until 2010, implemented a comprehensive planning process in order to work in a comprehensive manner and to create unity of effort.

This implementation formed the basis for the development of a generic planning process. This article describes the generic comprehensive planning process itself, as well as lessons identified from the implementation of the process. To conclude, a possible way ahead for future development and application of the process is described.

2. THE COMPLEXITY OF CURRENT MISSIONS

Traditional military planning processes typically took place in a one-dimensional military environment. A desired end-state was taken as a starting point to design plans to reach this end-state. Through backward reasoning, short-term plans could be deduced from longer-term plans and control mechanisms could be thought out to push deviations from the plan back onto the right track. After a military intervention, the military involvement decreased and further development was left to other actors in the aftermath of military conflict. An example is the Marshall plan after World War II, and the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The ECSC was founded in 1951 to bring stability to Europe by creating a common market for coal and steel. It is perceived as a precursor of the European Union, and an example of a successful economic intervention to bring stability to a region.

Complex Endeavours need a comprehensive approach, in which progress is desired on several dimensions in a concerted way. End-states are not sharply defined, because it is often

impossible considering the complexity and the continuous changes in the mission environment. In [2], four dimensions are identified: the social, economic, security and political dimension (see figure 1). The different factors and actors within these dimensions are intertwined: they all influence each other directly and indirectly, and causal relations between interventions and effects are hard to define and to predict.

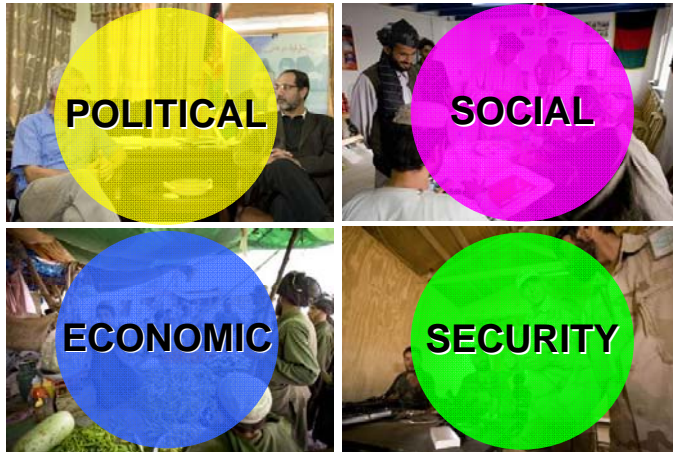


Figure 1: Four dimensions on which progress must be made in order to reach objectives in a Complex Endeavour, [2]

The diversity of different kinds of actors in a Complex Endeavour is shown in figure 2. From a civil-military perspective, the civil-military taskforce leading the planning process is at the *Center* of the endeavour. The taskforce cooperates with *Cooperating Entities*, such as the local government and United Nations. The next category of actors in the field are *Friends of Convenience*, with which cooperation may only be possible if the actors depend on each other to reach their objectives, such as some NGOs that need military protection in order to develop their activities which might contribute to military objectives as well. The next category is formed by *Neutral Actors*, such as (part of) the local population of an area. All these actors are situated in an environment of *Problems or Adversaries* that have to be dealt with, and in which all actors affect each other directly or indirectly.

Complex Endeavours induce the need for cooperation between all categories of actors, without any one actor taking the lead responsibility for the outcome of the collective effort. It needs to be taken into account that all actors have different backgrounds, language, responsibilities and interests.

The collective of actors will not only influence factors in the environment, but also each other and factors in other dimensions. This makes the environment highly unpredictable and requires the ability to adapt to unpredicted changes.

A traditional end-state driven plan with specific long-term objectives will not provide the necessary agility to cope with the wide range of influences and continuous changes.

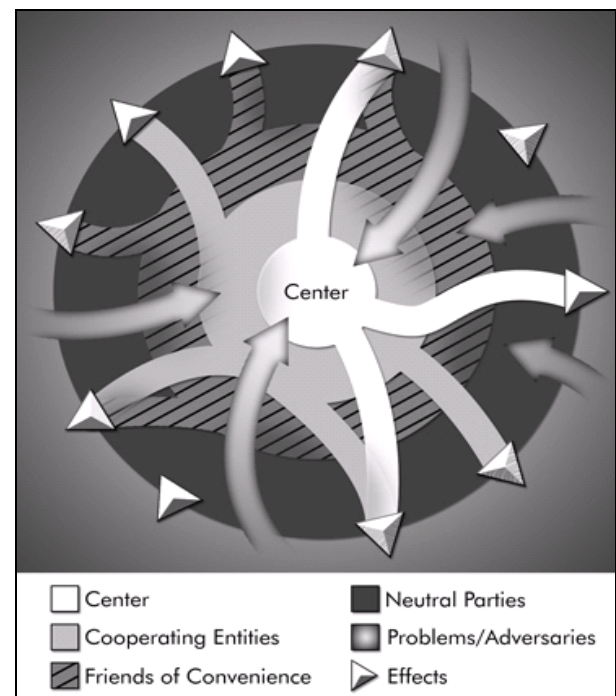


Figure 2: Visualisation of different actors in a Complex Endeavour, [3]

TFU was not only confronted with a complex environment, but also with the increasing complexity of the collective of actors. The civilian role within the mission and the Afghan involvement had increased. For example, the military commander of TFU and a civil representative (CIVREP) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated at the same level, and the CIVREP became the director of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), a company sized unit of TFU responsible for CIMIC and sustainable development projects. Outside TFU, the number of NGOs had increased from 6 in 2006 to 30 in 2009. The Afghan involvement had increased through the cooperation with the local and national Afghan governments, local NGOs and local contractors. Furthermore, the capability of the Afghan security forces had improved, enabling them to involve in partnered operations with ISAF troops. Besides the growing civilian role and the increased Afghan involvement, the internationalization of the mission had increased with military and civilian personnel from seven nations and with the expansion of American units in the south of Afghanistan.

To cope with the increasing complexity of the collective of actors, a comprehensive planning process was needed to develop a comprehensive plan and to create unity of effort amongst the collective of actors. The comprehensive planning process of TFU was based on the best practices of military and civilian decision making processes and resulted in a comprehensive plan called the Uruzgan Campaign Plan (UCP). The UCP is an internal, long term, comprehensive planning document that

translates the conceptual comprehensive approach into a specific approach to be implemented by the subordinate units of TFU.

As the end-state of a Complex Endeavour cannot be defined univocally, the UCP was not time based but condition based. It offered rough objectives for the long term (decades), desired situations for the mid term (years) and realistic and specific effects for the short term (months). This increased the agility of the plan and subsequent activities and operations to (un)expected changes in the mission environment.

The planning process was executed by a comprehensive planning group, in which the most important military and civilian stakeholders were represented and provided input from their perspectives. To ensure that the UCP could continue to provide a base for synchronizing political, social, economic and security activities and operations, the UCP was updated in regular iterations, at least with each new TFU rotation. Since its initial design, the plan went through three updates until the last Dutch TFU rotation (until August 2010).

After the deployment of TFU6 (the rotation of the first 6 months of 2009), a generic comprehensive planning process was developed, based on the UCP process and experiences. This generic process offers enough specific guidelines to plan activities and operations for the short term and enough flexibility to develop and adjust (iterative) strategies for the long term, as the plan must be continuously revised and adapted to changing circumstances. The next section provides a detailed description of this generic comprehensive planning process for all missions, illustrated with experiences and lessons identified from the TFU implementation.

3. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The generic comprehensive planning process is based on best practices of military and civilian decision making processes and on experiences of the development of the UCP. The process was intensive and challenging, as the complexities of the environment and the participating actors all merged.

The comprehensive planning process and its phases are visualized in figure 4. The phases in the process are not strictly separated; often a planning group will go back and forth between these phases, and each phase influences its preceding and succeeding phases. The comprehensive planning process consists of seven phases, starting with the formation of a comprehensive planning group and concluding with writing the comprehensive plan itself. After the formation (phase 1), the comprehensive planning group starts with a thorough orientation (phase 2) that continues throughout the development of the comprehensive plan and even during execution of the plan. After the initial orientation, the comprehensive planning group formulates its mission (phase 3). Then a conceptual framework is developed based on the relevant factors of influence identified in the initial orientation (phase 4). The factors in the conceptual framework form the base for developing short, mid and long

term objectives (phase 5) and the political, social, economic and military approaches to realize those objectives (phase 6). When the comprehensive plan is developed and agreed upon by the comprehensive planning group, the final plan is written (phase 7).

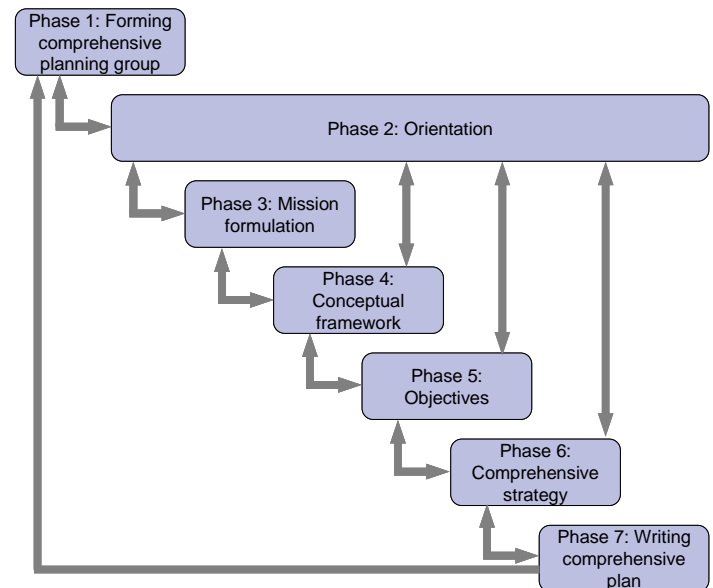


Figure 3: Comprehensive planning process

Phase 1: Formation of a comprehensive planning group

In this first phase, a comprehensive planning group is formed, which will be responsible for the whole planning process. The focus lies with the composition and the teambuilding processes of the planning group itself.

The most important members of the group are the actors leading, or contributing to the mission. Based on a preliminary stakeholder analysis and depending on the type of mission, the comprehensive planning group may contain military and civilian leaders, representatives of the local government or various (international) ministries, military coalition partners and NGOs.

When the composition of the comprehensive planning group is clear, the objectives and tasks of the comprehensive planning group are discussed. All actors make their expectations explicit, divide roles, set up a working plan and exchange their views on how the environment may change in reaction to their investments (theories of change, [4]). These discussions contribute to teambuilding, and increase trust among the participating actors as they gain insight into each other's motives and interests. The comprehensive planning group also determines with what other actors (which do not participate in the planning group) to cooperate, to coordinate or merely to deconflict (see figure 2). The result is a multidisciplinary comprehensive planning group, with shared awareness on the

interests and goals of the participating actors in the planning group.

The comprehensive planning group within the TFU was led by the commander TFU and CIVREP. This shared responsibility between a military leader and a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a good starting point to invite other actors, such as key players from the military staff, as well as international development advisors. Via these advisors, TFU and PRT could contact local NGOs indirectly, as direct contact was not yet possible in the given circumstances.

Phase 2: Orientation

The aim of phase 2 is to obtain an orientation on the environment, with shared awareness and understanding of the current situation, relevant factors of influence, opportunities, challenges and expected changes in the mission environment. The orientation phase results in an integrated analysis of the environment, the formulation, analysis and structuring of the problem, and a stakeholder analysis.

There are several methods and tools that can support the construction of a common view on the mission environment, such as workshops, an individual and collective orientation and several IT tools such as MARVEL (see section 4) to structure and visualize qualitative data.

The orientation phase is a continuous process. It starts during the formation of a comprehensive planning group with an initial orientation and continues throughout the development and even during the execution of the comprehensive plan, as it will be necessary to adapt the plan to changing circumstances.

During the implementation in TFU, several orientation sessions were held. In these sessions, the Intelligence section of the staff played a very important role, as it collected and updated most of the needed information and analyses of this information.

Phase 3: Formulation of mission

After the initial orientation, the overall mission of the comprehensive planning group is specified. The formulation of the mission is founded on policies, directives and orders of all actors in the comprehensive planning group. Agreement and acceptance of the final mission description is necessary before proceeding with the planning process. Individual objectives may differ between actors, but should not be inconsistent with or contradictory to the overall mission of the comprehensive planning group. After all, this would create a possibility of countering the efforts of other actors in the Comprehensive Approach. The formulation of the mission forms the starting point for phase 4.

Phase 4: Development of conceptual framework

In this phase, a conceptual framework is developed based on the factors of influence identified in the orientation phase. The conceptual framework visualizes and offers insight in the relevant factors in the mission environment. The framework is

developed in several sessions of the comprehensive planning group. It combines insights from the orientation phase and the mission formulation, and provides a line of thought and a frame of reference for all actors in the comprehensive planning group.

The conceptual framework that was developed during TFU6 is shown in figure 5. In general, the framework consists of several Reconstruction & Development (R&D) themes (horizontal arrows), on which long term progress is desired. Enabling and contributing to progress on the R&D themes was the main effort of TFU. As is shown in figure 5, TFU identified nine R&D themes, based on the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS). This is a policy document of the Afghan government and contains an interim strategy for security, governance, economic growth and poverty reduction, which is recognized by the Afghan government, (local) NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

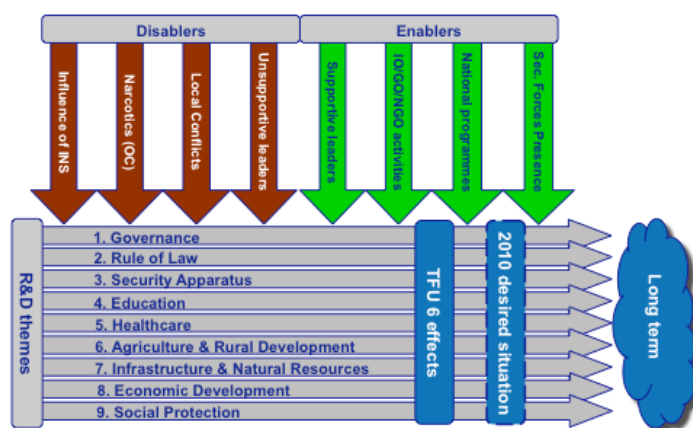


Figure 4: Example of a conceptual framework

The progress on one or more R&D themes is potentially hampered by several disablers, and enhanced by several enablers throughout the mission. Examples of disablers in figure 5 are insurgents or local conflicts (red arrows). For example, influence of insurgents may seriously hamper progress on the R&D theme 'education' (including building schools and setting the conditions to recruit teachers), when insurgents burn down school buildings and threaten (new) teachers. An example of an enabler is the presence of NGOs, for example an NGO in the field of healthcare that provides or improves vaccination programs. There are many more disablers and enablers, but TFU chose to include only those enablers in the conceptual framework that can actually be influenced by TFU and PRT and their partners. The structure of the conceptual framework might suggest an orderly influence between the enablers, disablers and R&D themes. In reality however, they are all intertwined and interconnected.

Progress on the R&D themes (and thus the decrease of the influence of disablers and the increase of the influence of

enablers) means the realization of short term effects and a contribution to the mid term and long term desired situations. These cannot be specified in much detail and therefore TFU depicted then as a rectangle with a dotted line (mid term) and as a cloud (long term).

Besides the disablers and enablers, there are several ethical principles like human rights, gender equality, tribal balance and Afghan (local) ownership that were important to the international community. These ethical principles should be taken into account as much as possible when performing activities and realizing progress on the R&D themes, when decreasing the influence of disablers and increasing the influence of enablers. The ethical principles are not visualized in the TFU conceptual framework.

It should be noted that the conceptual framework is only an abstraction of the environment. In reality, enablers and disablers as well as R&D themes are often interconnected, which makes the environment much more rigid. The conceptual framework is useful in creating a common frame of reference for the collective of actors, and to create insight before influencing the complex mission environment.

The conceptual framework of TFU can easily be adapted for missions in other fragile states. Future missions in fragile states will have a similar complex mission environment with interconnected R&D themes, and several disablers and enablers. A general conceptual framework is depicted in figure 6. This generic framework can be used as a starting point for the development of a conceptual framework in other missions.

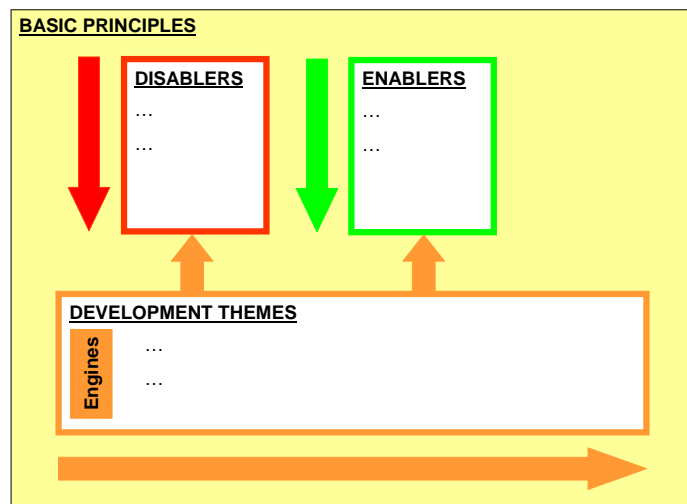


Figure 5 : Generic conceptual framework

The development of the conceptual framework is a time consuming group process, but it ensures that all actors in the comprehensive planning group agree with the R&D themes and their interrelations with the enablers and disablers, and accept the conceptual framework. In the next phase of the comprehensive planning process, the conceptual framework is

used to develop realistic objectives and a comprehensive strategy to realize those objectives.

Phase 5: Development of objectives

The aim of phase 5 is to specify the overall objectives for the long term (decades), mid term (years) and short term (months).

The formulation of objectives often is a politically sensitive process, even more so considering the dependence on other actors in realizing those objectives. It is almost impossible to formulate overarching measurable and specific objectives for the mid and long term. Therefore, the comprehensive planning group formulates the objectives in terms of general objectives for the long term and in terms of desired situations for the mid term. However, it is possible to formulate measurable and specific objectives for the short term in terms of specific effects for all factors in the conceptual framework. Although political sensitivity and the dependence on other actors is not less in the short term, there is more insight in what other actors can or will (not) do in the near future and what preconditions need to be set to realize short term objectives. Dependent on the mission, the objectives and intended effects need to be revised and adapted every 3 to 9 months by the comprehensive planning group.

To illustrate this, during TFU, objectives for the long term were formulated as general objectives such as 'progress on healthcare' or 'improvement of the security apparatus'. The mid term objectives were formulated as desired situations for 2010, as that would be the year in which the lead nation period of The Netherlands in Uruzgan would end. Both the objectives for the long term and mid term could be regarded as overarching for TFU rotations, but for the short term, each rotation of TFU needed own objectives, as it was important for the deployment of units for specific operations and activities. Because of the dependency on contributions of other actors, a distinction was made between *effects to achieve* and *effects to contribute*.

Effects to achieve are effects that TFU and PRT can realize through own operations and activities, such as 'sustainable form of entrepreneurship course provided', through which entrepreneurship in the province of Uruzgan could be stimulated. Effects to achieve are easy to translate in specific activities that contribute to the long and mid term objectives. *Effects to contribute* are effects that TFU and PRT can only realize by supporting other actors or through small contributions. An example is 'Branch office of the Kabul Bank opened in Tarin Kowt', to develop the finance sector.

The effects to achieve and the effects to contribute for all factors in the conceptual framework were revised and updated every 6 months by a new rotation of staff TFU, taking into account developments in the context of TFU, such as overarching ISAF plans and developments in the mission environment. It was expected that the effects to achieve could be realized within 6 months. During TFU, the effects were translated into operational plans with specific tasks to units and civilian advisors.

Phase 6: Development of comprehensive strategy

In phase 6, the objectives that were developed in phase 5 are made operational in a comprehensive strategy. The comprehensive strategy describes how and where the short term objectives (effects) can be realized, and by which actor(s). As some effects may be specific for certain geographical areas only, the comprehensive strategy consists of approaches for both mission area (overarching) effects and area specific effects.

Due to limitations in means and time, the comprehensive strategy also takes into account the order in which activities are performed, in time and geographical area. Situations in nearby geographical areas can influence each other gravely, and the effects of activities in one area may already induce a change in another. During TFU, this could be seen in the situation on the east and west bank of a river flowing through the mission area. On the east bank, the population was more positive towards a TFU-supported Afghan government than on the west bank. Due to a limitation in means, TFU and PRT could only employ activities in one area at a time. This resulted in the dilemma of which area to invest in first. It was decided to support the Afghan government and population on the positive east bank first, so that the population on the more hostile west bank could see the positive influence of their government, and change their attitude after seeing what it (eventually becoming independent from TFU and PRT) could do for them. In summary, the influence of one area on another was taken into account before engaging in activities in those areas.

Phase 7: Writing of comprehensive plan

In the last phase in the comprehensive planning process, the comprehensive planning group is responsible for writing the comprehensive plan which includes the mission formulation, the conceptual framework, the objectives and the comprehensive strategy. After several revisions and iterations, the final plan is communicated to the subordinate units, which then also synchronize their activities in the political, social, economic and security domains in the operation.

As the comprehensive plan is updated and adapted regularly. The UCP was updated for every rotation of staff TFU. With every update, TFU again used input from the entire mission community, involving as many relevant actors as possible.

4. TOOLS AND METHODS

Throughout the development of the comprehensive plan, the comprehensive planning group may use several methods, tools and techniques to elicitate information and views of the cooperating actors.

First of all, workshop methods (individual discussions, group discussions, brainstorm sessions) can be used in most of the phases of the planning process to exchange views and to come to a common shared understanding.

Apart from group facilitation, there are several IT tools that can support discussions by structuring and visualising of data.

One of the tools used by TFU was MARVEL (Method to Analyse Relations between Variables using Enriched Loops). The strength of this tool is that it provides a common picture of the interrelations between interventions and effects in a complex environment. Furthermore, it calculates changes in a situation or scenario for the short, medium and long term without the need of much quantitative data. A MARVEL diagram can be best described by a 'smart mind map'. A simplified, hypothetical example of a MARVEL diagram is shown in figure 7.

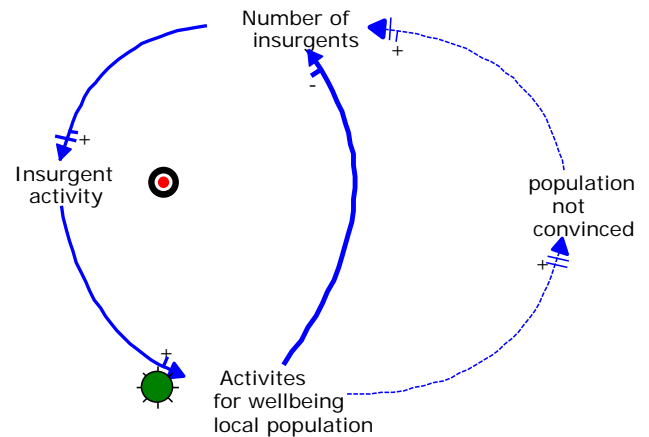


Figure 6: Example of a simple MARVEL diagram.

The goal of the scenario depicted in figure 7 is the decrease in insurgent activity (goal variable, indicated by a bull's eye) by employing activities for the wellbeing of the local population (control variable, indicated by a dial). Even though an increase in the wellbeing of the local population leads to a strong decrease in the number of insurgents (thick blue arrow), the employment of activities for wellbeing may in the longer run also have a negative effect – when the activities do not lead to sustainable change in living conditions, the local population will not be convinced of the good intentions to change their living standards, and might as a result support the insurgents again. This scenario is only an example of how assumptions can be made explicit and can support discussions on theories of change [4].

5. EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS IDENTIFIED

From the experiences of several iterations of the UCP process, some general lessons identified can be extracted that will be of use during future planning processes.

In this section we offer some general lessons identified that a comprehensive planning group should take into account when developing a comprehensive plan.

Role of civilian and military leaders is crucial

The steering role of the civilian and/or military leader(s) was crucial for the development of the comprehensive plan in

Uruzgan. The leaders of the comprehensive planning group offered guidance for the comprehensive planning process and the content of the comprehensive plan itself. Furthermore, they actively promoted (the development of) the comprehensive plan. Their commitment contributed to the active participation of all relevant actors, including the higher, adjacent and subordinate levels. In turn this is likely to contribute to the acceptance of and support for the comprehensive plan, and subsequently to unity of effort.

Teambuilding is important for comprehensive planning

Forming a tight comprehensive planning group is important. Teambuilding processes are common in the military world in the form of exercises and in the civilian world in the form of teambuilding games or workshops. It is important that members of the comprehensive planning group gain insight into each others motives, intentions and interests, and exchange views on how the environment may change in reaction to their investments (theories of change). Teambuilding may also increase and contribute to trust among actors that are not used to working together, which is why teambuilding is even more important when not only military and civilian personnel from the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs are part of the comprehensive planning group, as well as IOs/GOs/NGOs and local partners.

Cooperation leads to acceptance and support

In planning processes preceding the comprehensive planning process that led to the UCP, a much-heard criticism of plans was that they were too military, and that the political level was not properly represented. At the beginning of the TFU deployment, this resulted in a military and a civil plan co-existing. However, for TFU6, the political level cooperated with the military level in the preparations for the comprehensive plan already, so that the plan would be written and accepted by all actors.

By cooperating from the very start of the planning process, all civilian and military actors involved were able to include their views in the development of the plan. This led to a thorough insight into influences of the local, national and international context of the mission, and a shared understanding of the broader scope of the mission. From there, a widely supported plan was developed, which in turn enabled unity of effort.

Unity of effort does not necessarily mean unity of goals

The comprehensive plan enabled military and civilian actors with different backgrounds and objectives to cooperate in unity of effort, to support their mutual interests or intentions. However, this did not mean that they needed to have a shared vision on future goals; the goals of one actor may be a step in the right direction for another. It was acceptable to disagree as long as political, social, economic and/or military activities did not contradict to such extent that activities opposed instead of enhanced each other. In short, there can be a unity of effort,

without having unity of goals. In the case of common goals, the identification and sharing of information about these goals supports cooperation. Because the comprehensive planning group of TFU consisted mostly of already cooperating actors, and only dealt indirectly with independent actors such as NGOs, the situation in which several actors disagreed and counteracted each other's plans did not occur. However, this should be addressed explicitly in future.

Respect and learn to use differences between actors

Cultural differences and differences in background among cooperating military and civilian actors influenced the cooperation in many ways. The military culture is very different from the culture of many civilian organisations, and even within these categories, differences can be great. In a complex environment, this has led to a broader view on the mission environment, and a more thorough insight into the challenges on all four dimensions. But because of the differences in culture, implicit agreements on methods of working and language could bring about misunderstandings or false expectations. During the TFU mission, we experienced this in the following way: in the military culture it is common to describe outcomes of activities in terms of tangible results, while the culture of the political advisors dictates a description in terms of investments and effort. This needed clarification from both sides, in order to define objectives. This demonstrated that communication is vital in a complex environment, in order to reach explicit understanding of viewpoints, methods of working and cultures.

The role of Information Management

When the comprehensive planning process is executed, a lot of information is shared, stored and processed. In fact, the collection, processing and production of information is one of the core processes of staffs and other actors that support the comprehensive planning process. If insufficient attention is paid to the handling of these amounts of information, this may lead to several problems.

One problem area encountered during TFU, is the need to share information with all cooperating actors and at the same time complying with security regulations (classification of information, access rights of the different actors). On the one hand there is the risk of releasing information to unauthorised people. On the other hand, being too restrictive (e.g. over-classification of information) hampers the availability of information and may lead to duplication of efforts and a decrease of unity of effort [1]. The latter problem also occurs if actors use different formats, standards and supporting systems for their information handling and exchange. Finally, when information can be made available, it needs to be stored and updated in such a way that the value of the information (e.g. actuality, consistency, timeliness, integrity) is maintained as long as it is needed.

To prevent or minimize the potential problems mentioned above, explicit attention has to be paid to Information Management. Information Management is an approach in which a set of measures and activities are carried out to maximise the value and the exploitation of all the information involved. During TFU, this needed a lot of improvement.

6. CONCLUSION AND WAY AHEAD

In this article, a comprehensive planning process was described, leading to a comprehensive plan that can provide a base for civil and military actors to synchronize political, social, economic and security activities. The comprehensive planning process is based on the development of the UCP by TFU and the best practices of civilian and military planning processes preceding the comprehensive planning process that led to the UCP.

Current and future missions will often be complex endeavours that require a comprehensive approach in which civilian and military actors from different backgrounds and cultures and with different interests and objectives need to cooperate. In these complex endeavours, unity of effort among all relevant actors forms a major challenge. The development of a comprehensive plan contributes to unity of effort among all relevant actors involved and offers the flexibility to adjust to (un)expected changes in the mission environment.

The process of developing comprehensive plans in complex endeavours is still being refined. The next step in the development of the comprehensive planning process is to mature the process by taking into account the lessons identified from the

implementation of the UCP. This further development will be conducted in workshops with subject matter experts from the Dutch Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs, TNO and other (international) actors when possible. The final step will be to integrate the process in (exercises or experiments with) civil-military staffs.

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