

Synchronization of security cooperation activities across multiple agencies maximizes resource utilization and creates a greater impact on the security situation. To improve the current degree of synchronization, all agencies, including the Department of Defense, must redefine their roles in security cooperation and develop a “whole-of-government” approach. This article will address how U.S. military engineers should best implement Interagency Planning for Security Cooperation activities, and how engineers should redefine their role in security cooperation to better encompass 21st century challenges. Specifically, what role can military engineers play in Phase 0, Security Cooperation activities that involve the whole-of-government approach?


The President’s National Security Strategy identifies the U.S. government’s requirement to meet security challenges through international engagement. The world is becoming more interdependent and requires nations to work together in meeting these challenges. There are clear gains for all states that are willing to deepen relationships in security cooperation. Therefore, meeting and overcoming these challenges not only requires the U.S. to develop a whole-of-government approach, but also requires sound international planning for security cooperation to gain a more synergistic approach on a global scale.

We must focus American engagement on strengthening international institutions and galvanizing the collective action that can serve common interests such as combating violent extremism; stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and securing nuclear materials; achieving balance and sustainable economic growth; and forging cooperative solutions to the threat of climate change, armed conflict, and pandemic disease.¹

The starting point for this collective action will be our engagement with other countries. The cornerstone of this engagement is the relationship between the United States and our close friends and allies in Europe, Asia, the Americas, and the Middle East—ties rooted in shared interests and shared values, and which serve our mutual security and the broader security and prosperity of the world.²

The past decade of international and intrastate conflict and several prominent natural disasters demonstrated that military engineers bring key capacities to combatant commanders during combat operations, stability and reconstruction operations, and to other government agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The lessons learned from these operations highlight critical capabilities military engineers could bring to the U.S. “whole-of-government approach” to broader international security engagements. The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan emphasize that military engineers may be the best force to provide the necessary linkage between the multiple govern-

Throughout the construction process, U.S. Army engineers QA/QC the IA engineer construction of their new sewer system.



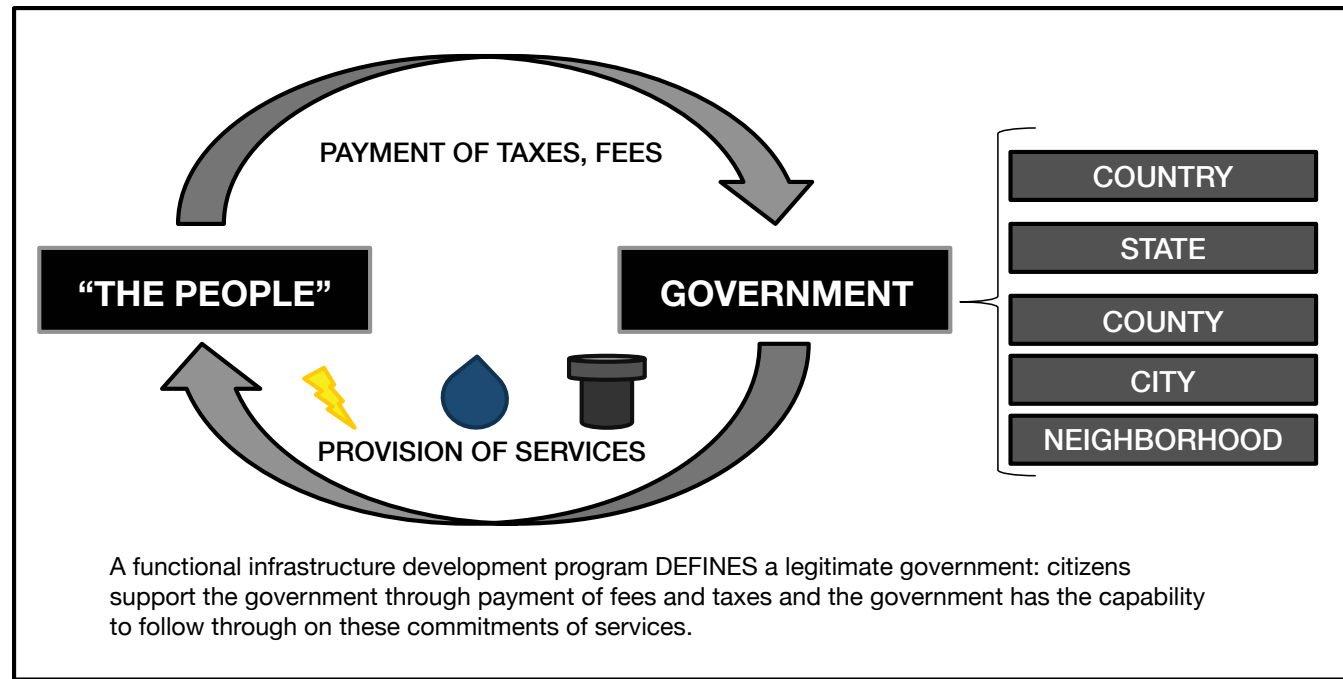
MILITARY ENGINEER SUPPORT TO SECURITY COOPERATION OPERATIONS

by
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FIGURE 1. Infrastructure Development and Government Legitimacy



mental agencies needed to meet potential security challenges. Military engineers are always ready to respond as a force prepared to deal with a full range of potential operations. Engineer forces can be tailored to support operations in austere environments with little or no infrastructure, providing mobility and enhancing force protection as required.

Military Engineers' Role in Security Cooperation

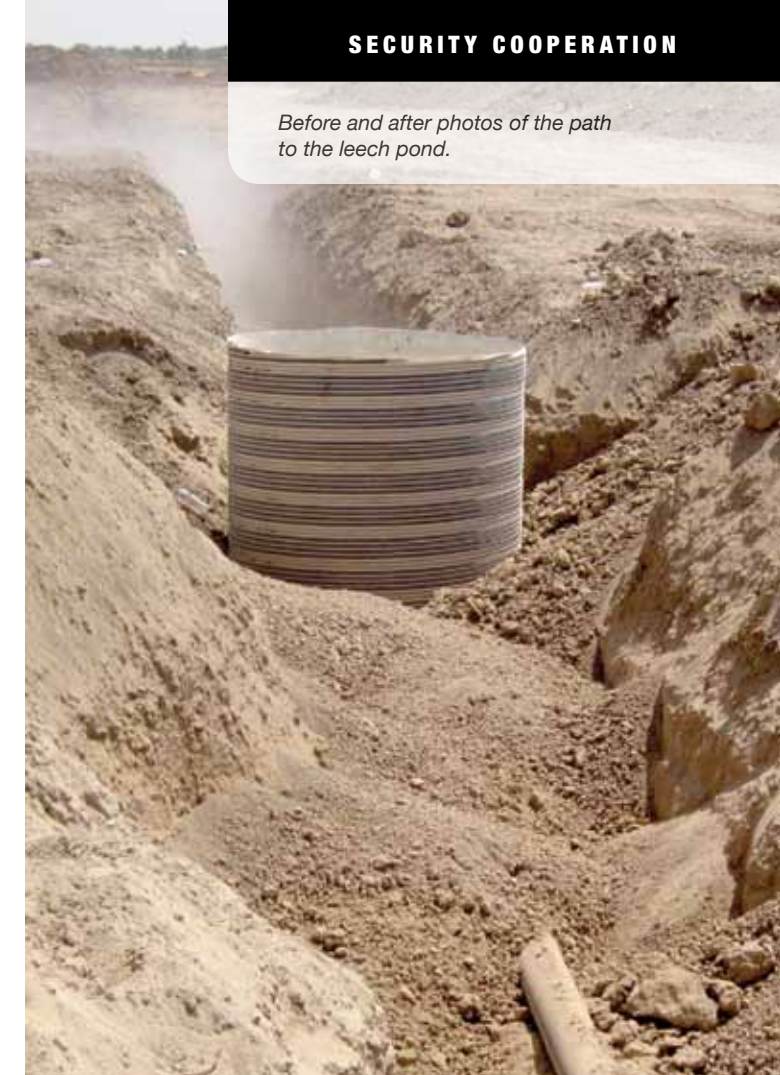
Security cooperation activities may become some of the most important operations of the United States in the near future. With limited budgets across the government, all agencies will have to develop comprehensive conflict prevention solutions that integrate the "whole of government." Security cooperation is defined in Joint Publication 3-0 as "Interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific U.S. interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation."³ This definition narrowly focuses security cooperation activities as just military-to-military relationships. Experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other operations have taught that military engineers must be prepared to work with other organizations to include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private businesses, and the multiple levels of government in the host nation itself. Therefore, security practitioners must broadly define security cooperation in a way that incorporates all agencies and institutions to work together to meet 21st century security challenges.

The role of military engineers in security cooperation activities could be very similar to the roles identified for engineers in stability operations. Engineer forces will be a critical

enabler to not only work with host nations' militaries in training a myriad of engineer tasks, but also to work with NGOs and indigenous governments to provide essential services. At their foundation, these operations would build the capacity and capability of a specific host nation. As examples, the following is a list of possible security cooperation engineer missions:

- Constructing and repairing rudimentary surface transportation systems, basic sanitation facilities, and rudimentary public facilities and utilities.
- Detecting and assessing water sources and drilling water wells.
- Constructing feeding centers.
- Providing environmental assessment and technical advice.
- Disposing of human and hazardous wastes.
- Providing camp construction and power generation.
- Conducting infrastructure reconnaissance, technical assistance, and damage assessment.
- Conducting emergency demolition.
- Conducting debris- or route-clearing operations.⁴

It is important to emphasize that these security cooperation activities will require military engineers to liaison with other nations' forces, NGOs, the United Nations, the U.S. Department of State, and other U.S. governmental agencies. These various agencies may have differing ideas on specific projects and how they should be executed. Although challenging, negotiating a common vision from these different viewpoints results in a more successful mission than if the individual agencies had continued their work independently. The potential tasks noted above may be organized into two





U.S. Army engineers train IA engineers in reading plans and coach them through the design process for their new sewer.

broad categories: disaster response and management and infrastructure development.

Disaster Management

Recent cooperation on disaster management demonstrates engineers employing a whole-of-government approach as they negotiate across multiple agencies while building host nation capacity to respond to future disasters. Disaster management is one area that most nations agree is a common area in which increased security cooperation can occur. Military engineers can contribute in all areas of the disaster management cycle, but most importantly in mitigation and preparedness. We can see firsthand examples of this in the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Pacific Ocean Division (POD), and the various programs conducted in theater security cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and water resource programs. In Vietnam, POD worked to build a flood management operations center that is instrumental in developing national and regional flood management plans for Vietnam. They also coordinated efforts with the Pacific Disaster Center to help provide training and decision tools. Another significant POD project was the construction of 23 shelters/schools in Bangladesh. These shelters/schools serve as multipurpose cyclone shelters in their communities and were built to support the USAID. POD also participated

in seven other disaster response and exchange programs in FY11 in various countries to include Mongolia, Nepal, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and, most notably, the Lower Mekong Countries Disaster Management Workshop in Vietnam sponsored by U.S. Army Pacific Command. While these are only a few examples of the great work USACE and POD are doing in the area of security cooperation, these examples also illustrate interagency cooperation.

Infrastructure Development

Another example of engineer potential to execute a whole-of-government approach is infrastructure development. Many military engineers are familiar with the infrastructure development as focused on the technical and physical infrastructure, but the whole-of-government approach to theater security cooperation agreements and the inclusion of multiple government agencies reflects the necessity of building governance infrastructure and legitimacy in support of the physical infrastructure.

Many potential military engineer contributions to the whole-of-government approach noted above fall into the larger category of infrastructure development. Infrastructure development is unique in that it can mirror and define the current condition of government legitimacy within a jurisdiction. The people physically demonstrate their acceptance of government control through the payment of taxes and fees for essential services. The government must then fulfill its commitment and provide these services. Therefore, a functional infrastructure development plan plays a vital role in improving or restoring this contract of legitimacy between the people and their government and therefore in improving stability. Infrastructure development and the ability to govern that infrastructure and ensure its functionality are therefore intimately connected. Interventions aimed at stabilizing conflict-prone regions that attempt infrastructure development ignore this relationship at their peril.

This proven necessity of pursuing the whole-of-government approach through the inclusion of engineer tasks under the more comprehensive “improve government legitimacy” umbrella grows out of many lessons learned from the COIN, stability, and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over the past decade of conflict, military engineers have demonstrated their capacity to navigate the complex relationships between other U.S. government agencies, host-nation engineers, both civilian and military, and NGOs in building governance capacity. In one prominent example, the 37th EN BN (Combat) (Airborne), as the nucleus of Joint Task Force (JTF) Eagle, deployed to Iraq in 2009–2010 and partnered extensively with the Iraqi Army engineers responsible for Diyala Province, the 5th Field Engineer Regiment (FER). Additionally, JTF Eagle also intimately connected itself to the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and, through them, the provincial government of Diyala.

This partnership began with the construction of a small sewer project that benefited both the 5th FER compound

and a nearby village. The construction of this project partnered U.S. Army engineers with Iraqi Army engineers in providing necessary expertise and training in construction of the sewer system. The project became a joint project with the inclusion of U.S. Air Force engineers and a team of bi-lingual and bi-cultural advisors who translated the plans into Arabic and certified the technical specifications.

These relationships continued to grow and extended to the PRT as JTF Eagle took on additional projects. This extensive partnership culminated with the survey of the canal system in Diyala Province. At the height of this partnership, JTF Eagle, the 5th FER, the PRT, and the Diyala government held weekly meetings to plan reconnaissance of this extensive canal system. Each reconnaissance team consisted of an Iraqi civil engineer from the Diyala government, a team of Iraqi Army engineers, and a team of U.S. Army engineers. These teams completed reconnaissance, took pictures, and compiled information. They presented this information at the weekly meetings and turned this information over to the Diyala government for them to prioritize repairs. This allowed the Diyala government to exercise its infrastructure development capacity toward providing water, a key citizen concern, for the people of Diyala.

This extensive effort demonstrates the potential of the Joint Engineer Task Force to organize the whole of government approach. Here, Army and Air Force engineers sat regularly and successfully in council with the Department of State PRT, host-nation engineers, and the host-nation government—each representative brought their unique skill set to the effort to increase stability in Diyala by building governance capacity to manage its infrastructure. As the nation looks forward from Iraq, the JTF Eagle approach exemplifies the leadership that military engineers bring to stability and reconstruction and hint at what might be accomplished as a part of a theater security cooperation agreement.

Engineers must be included in, and even lead, this process. While improved governance and government legitimacy is the goal of the infrastructure development program, if that infrastructure fails, so does the legitimacy of that project. For example, USAID implemented its Community Action Program in partnership with the Community Housing Foundation International (CHF), an NGO. CHF organized community groups capable of voicing citizens’ concerns and supported local governments’ ability to address those concerns. These often took the form of school repairs and service provision, and in one instance involved the build-

ing of a bridge. The communities completed these projects in a way that encouraged the development of intergovernmental cooperation and built government legitimacy. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) found that these projects accomplished their goals and did build intergovernmental capacity and improve government legitimacy. Although these programs were very successful in meeting their governance objectives, in at least one instance a completed school renovation did not have running water or electricity.⁵ Perhaps, as JTF Eagle provided technical engineer expertise to the Diyala Canal Campaign (and other PRT projects throughout the province), military engineers working with Iraqi Army engineers could have provided similar oversight to these smaller projects. This approach would ensure that these local government efforts had the technical engineering capacity to deliver projects that would fulfill citizens’ expectations, thus facilitating the improvement in government legitimacy.

This approach—which partners U.S. Army engineers with host-nation engineers, host-nation local government, the Department of State (USAID), and NGOs—represents a comprehensive model of infrastructure development in the whole-of-government approach. Each partner is necessary and contributes its own expertise. If the Department of State or the NGO expressed a desire to maintain a civilian face, these mutually supporting relationships could occur at a distance, with the civilian agencies conducting the bulk of the interaction with the community. This approach could form the foundation for improved governance and enhanced stability in future theater security cooperation agreements.

Conclusion

Recent efforts at disaster response and mitigation and an application of infrastructure development lessons from Iraq demonstrate that military engineers provide support to Phase 0 operations by supporting the State Department and NGOs with general engineering expertise. This expertise is vital to ensure that these developments in infrastructure function from an engineering perspective—without this aspect, eventually, the governance aspect will fail as well. When citizens witness infrastructure that quickly fails, or never works, often their perception of governance legitimacy fails as well. Engineer efforts to improve disaster management also will improve host-nation legitimacy; an organized response to disaster demonstrates competency to the citizenry at a time when they need it most. **AE**

Endnotes

- ¹ Barack Obama. 2010. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Joint Publication. 2011. JP 3-0, Joint Operations. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- ⁴ U.S. Army. 2011. FM3-34, Engineer Operations. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- ⁵ Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. “The Iraq Community Action Program: USAID’s Agreement With CHF Met, but Greater Oversight Needed.” SIGIR 11-014. April 28, 2011.