

CECILIA HULL, JENNY LINDOFF, HELENÉ LACKENBAUER



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Cecilia Hull, Jenny Lindoff, Helené Lackenbauer

# Stakeholders and Interdependencies in Multifunctional Environments

A Case Study of Afghanistan

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Titel	Intressenter och beroenden i multifunktionella Miljöer: en fallstudie av Afghanistan
Title	Stakeholders and Interdependencies in Multifunctional Environments: A case study of Afghanistan
Rapportnr/Report no	FOI-R--2818--SE
Rapporttyp Report Type	Användarrapport
Månad/Month	Augusti/August
Utgivningsår/Year	2009
Antal sidor/Pages	69 p
ISSN	
Kund/Customer	Försvarsmakten/Swedish Armed Forces
Kompetenskloss	3 Metod och utredningsstöd
Extra kompetenskloss	
Projektnr/Project no	E11109
Godkänd av/Approved by	Birgitta Lewerentz
FOI, Totalförsvarets Forskningsinstitut Avdelningen för Försvarsanalys	FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency Department of Defence Analysis
164 90 Stockholm	SE-164 90 Stockholm

## Sammanfattning

Denna rapport är del av en studieserie vilken utforskar faktorer som påverkar ledning i multifunktionella miljöer. Denna individuella studie fokuserar på förutsättningarna för samverkan och koordinering i dessa miljöer och utforskar de ömsesidiga beroenden som finns mellan intressenter på plats, samt deras förmåga eller vilja att koordinera.

Rapporten presenterar ett teoretiskt förhållningssätt för hur intressentanalys kan användas för att identifiera beroendenivån mellan aktiviteter och således avgöra behovet av att koordinera dessa. Den presenterar och utforskar också potentiella strategier för hur beroenden kan hanteras.

I rapporten används Afghanistan, och speciellt det svenska bidraget till ISAF, som en fallstudie för att identifiera viktiga intressenter och det spektrum av beroenden som existerar mellan dessa. Genom en rad intervjuer har fallstudien identifierat en mängd olika beroenden som existerar mellan olika aktörer, men få strategier för att hantera dessa har utpekats. Rapporten hävdar att intressentanalys kan användas för att avväga huruvida koordinering och samverkan faktiskt är kostnadseffektivt, men försöker inte påstå att koordinering alltid är befogat i detta avseende. Utöver detta föreslår rapporten också att en förståelse för koordinering som ett sätt att hantera beroenden mellan aktiviteter och inte mellan aktörer är viktigt för att främja harmonisering i stabiliseringsinsatser.

Nyckelord: Intressenter och aktörer i fredsfrämjande insatser, multifunktionella miljöer, multidimensionella operationer, beroenden, beroendetyper, Afghanistan, ISAF, PRT

## Summary

This report is part of a series of studies aiming to explore how command and control should be executed in multifunctional environments. This particular study focuses on the preconditions for coordination amongst stakeholders in these environments and explores interdependencies between the stakeholders, affecting their ability/willingness to coordinate.

The report presents a theoretical approach on possible ways of using stakeholder analysis to determine the level of dependency between stakeholder activities and thus assess the need to coordinate these. It also introduces and explores potential strategies for managing dependencies.

Using Afghanistan, and specifically the Swedish contribution to the ISAF operation, as a case study, the report explores and identifies important stakeholders in the operational environment and the spectrum of interdependencies amongst these stakeholders. During interviews conducted as part of the case study, a broad range of dependencies were identified, but few strategies for seeking to manage these were articulated. The report argues that stakeholder analysis can be used to determine whether coordination is in fact cost-effective but does not hold that all coordination is worthwhile. In addition, the report suggests that to facilitate the harmonisation of efforts in stabilisation operations, coordination should be seen not as managing relations between actors, but as managing interdependencies between activities.

Keywords: Actors and stakeholders in peace support operations, multifunctional environments, multidimensional missions, dependencies, interdependencies, dependency types, Afghanistan, ISAF, PRT

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*“Coordination, or the management of dependencies between activities, occurs all around us at any time; nonetheless, we rarely see it. It seems that coordination is most notable when it is lacking or when it is flawed, whilst good coordination appears almost invisible.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. *ACM Computing Surveys* 26:1, p 90



# 1 Introduction

Contemporary conflicts are often complex containing elements of irregular threats, corruption, poor governance, failing economy, famine and increasing numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees<sup>2</sup>. These complex conflicts cannot solely be met by military means which is why concepts for coordination in peace operations, such as the Comprehensive Approach and Integrated Missions have emerged over the last years.

The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) has for several years conducted research on different issues related to these concepts with the aim of providing the Swedish Armed Forces (SwAF) with a greater understanding of how such concepts are understood and applied within UN, EU and NATO operations, and how they affect Sweden's contributions to such missions. Concepts like the Comprehensive Approach prescribes that the coordinated effort of the different actors in the mission area is needed to conduct effective operations. The implementation of combined strategies is nonetheless difficult. Whilst common planning and chain of command strategies for facilitating combined efforts such as the UNs Integrated Missions concept might work to enhance coordination amongst some actors, others find such close affiliation challenging and often also undesirable. Experience shows that even though most actors see the benefit of coordination and wants to coordinate, no one wants to be coordinated.

## 1.1 Rationale

FOI has been commissioned by the SwAF to lead a three year research project, commenced in January 2009, aiming to improve the preconditions for command and control in multifunctional environments. As part of the *Command and control in multifunctional operations* project, FOI has been tasked to conduct a study in support of the SwAF Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Centre (JCDEC) in its longer-term development of a concept aiming at improving the ability to harmonise efforts among actors in a conflict area. The work conducted by the JCDEC is undertaken within the framework of the Multinational Experimentation series 6 (MNE6), specifically MNE6 objective 1.3 – *Harmonization Capabilities*, for which Sweden is lead nation. The aim of objective 1.3 is to develop capabilities to better harmonize implementation efforts among coalition partners and with non-coalition stakeholders, in the context of a non-permissive environment (irregular threats). To support JCDEC's strive to develop harmonization capabilities, this case study of Afghanistan,

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<sup>2</sup> Nilsson, Hull, Derblom and Egnell (2008). *Contextualising the Comprehensive Approach: Elements of a comprehensive Intervention*. Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI,

focusing on dependencies between stakeholders in the mission area, has been conducted.

## 1.2 Aim and purpose

The overarching aim of this study is to form a basis for future research that can help develop capabilities to improve the harmonisation of implementation efforts in multifunctional environments. The purpose of the report is two folded:

The primary purpose of the study is to generate a better understanding of the preconditions for cooperation and coordination in a complex environment. Using Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as a case study the report seeks to illustrate some of the problems hampering cooperation and coordination in the field, and also, aims to describe what strategies, if any, have been used to facilitate coordination.

The second purpose of the report is to support JCDEC's development of harmonization capabilities by using a theory on conflict ecosystems (Kilcullen<sup>3</sup>) as a starting point and applying a theoretical framework for stakeholder analysis (Eden & Ackerman<sup>4</sup>) to determine the level of dependency between stakeholders in the operational environment (Afghanistan). The aim is to show to what extent the method can be used as a tool to create a better understanding of key actors in the mission area and help identify needs for coordination.

## 1.3 Scope and delimitations

This study is part of a series of studies aiming to explore how command and control should be executed in multifunctional environments. This report focuses on cooperation, coordination and interdependencies between actors and seeks to identify the major factors affecting the ability and/or willingness to coordinate, as well as determining the extent of their effect. One of the most important of these factors is the environmental context of the operation, particularly the degree of hostility and threat to operations. The study series therefore aims to explore strategies for harmonisation in both permissive and non-permissive environments so that some comparisons can be made between the two, and recommendations of when what strategies are most appropriate in what environments can be made. Afghanistan is generally considered a non-permissive environment, yet the northern parts of the country where the Swedish PRT – from which most observations provided in this report are made – is located, is relatively stable and

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<sup>3</sup> Kilcullen (2006). *Three Pillars of Counter-Insurgency*. Remarks delivered at the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington D.C., 28 September 2006

<sup>4</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. Sage Publications: London

can therefore be considered more permissive. The level of permissiveness nonetheless also varies according to season. As a result of this, as well as the fact that this is the first case study in the study series and comparisons with other types of environments therefore are difficult to make, this study will not yet draw any conclusions regarding the particular affect the level of permissiveness has on the possible coordination strategies. The observations made throughout the study will nonetheless function as a foundation and data-basis for future studies of both more permissive and non-permissive environments; comparisons will thus instead be made in these forthcoming studies.

The study suffers from one major limitation in its study of dependencies and coordination strategies in that it mainly reflects the view of the military on this issue area. The reason for this is the very fact that the authors were unable to travel to Afghanistan during the course of the study. However, in an effort to obtain some of the views and opinions of the civilian community in Afghanistan the authors interviewed some stakeholders via phone calls to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, only a limited number of Afghan nationals and civilian actors were interviewed for the purpose of the study. Since the authors were not able to go to Afghanistan they were also unable to interview local Afghan actors and the local population.

## 1.4 Report Structure

Since the report has two purposes, of which one is quite theoretical that may not be of interest to some of the practitioners within the SwAF, the chapters in this report are written so they can either be read in sequence or independently.

- **Chapter 1:** gives a brief introduction to the study and presents aim, purpose, scope, delimitations and the report structure.
- **Chapter 2:** describes the method used.
- **Chapter 3:** gives a brief description of the multifunctional environment.
- **Chapter 4:** outlines the theoretical framework of stakeholder analysis and how it can be used to categorise the various stakeholders and actors present in a multifunctional environment. It also explains how stakeholder analysis can be used to determine the level of dependency between stakeholder activities and thus assess the need to coordinate these.
- **Chapter 5:** discusses coordination theory, identification of dependencies in multifunctional environments and introduces potential strategies for managing these dependencies.

- **Chapter 6:** briefly describes the background of the conflict in Afghanistan, the international military operation, ISAF and the Swedish engagement in the country.
- **Chapter 7:** presents the results from the case study. A stakeholder analysis is conducted based on the interviews and the results is then applied to the theoretical framework presented in chapter four and five.
- **Chapter 8:** presents the results from the interviews in more detail, i.e. the interviewees thoughts about their coordination experiences from the field is described and potential strategies for enhancing coordination are discussed.
- **Chapter 9:** concludes the study, summarises the most important points and recommendations.

## 2 Method

The study is based on both current literature about Afghanistan and interviews with different actors and stakeholders currently or previously engaged in the mission area.

In total, 31 persons, of whom about 80% were military personnel, were interviewed. The interviewees included Swedish and international military staff at the PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif; civilian personnel from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Swedish Afghanistan Committee; and Swedish and international political, police and development advisors within the PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif.

Key positions from the last three Swedish rotations from the PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif (FS 14, FS 15 and FS 16) were selected, e.g. chief of contingent, chief of staff, and chief of MOT (military observation team). To ensure that all interviewees would feel comfortable speaking freely about their views and experiences from Afghanistan the interviewees have been kept anonymous throughout the report. Even though not all information can be considered sensitive the decision to keep the interviews anonymous was made to protect those individuals that did provide sensitive information. In the report we refer to either, *military interviewees* or *civilian interviewees*. When the report reflects the opinions of both categories they are referred to as interviewees only. When expressions like *the interviewees stated...* are used in the report it does not necessarily express the opinions of all interviewees but rather that of a sufficient majority. When opinions have been contradictory this is specifically expressed in the report.

The interviews were semi-structured. One or two of the authors interviewed one person at the time for a duration of 1-2 hours. The interviewees were asked to identify stakeholders of ISAFs operations in Afghanistan and state what influence this stakeholder had on ISAFs operations; how ISAFs operations affected the stakeholder; depict any perceived dependencies; and state if any strategies existed and were practiced to manage the relationship between these actors.

The interviews were conducted between March and June 2009.

### 3 The Multifunctional Environment

The complex environment in which multifunctional PSOs operate can be regarded as a sort of ‘conflict ecosystem’. The portrayed conflict ecosystem, based on Kilcullen<sup>5</sup>, includes a range of independent actors that are nonetheless interlinked in their effort of surviving (at least) in a competitive and chaotic environment, see Figure 1. The conflict ecosystem includes actors and stakeholders present in the conflict area before the conflict: e.g. government; economic and political institutions; ethnic, clan or other community groups; urban and local populations; and social classes. There is also the presence of new types of actors drawn into the conflict, existing as both consequences of and sometimes reinforcing the conflict; these include local or foreign armed groups; intervening counterinsurgency forces; foreign terrorists; refugees; internally displaced persons; narcotics traffickers; smugglers; black marketers; bandits and others. These actors are constantly evolving and adapting to changes in the environment. The interventionist forces associated with the PSO are also part of this conflict ecosystem. The conflict environment is not merely the area in which the PSO operates but the PSO becomes a dynamic part of the environment, affecting the ecosystem by means of its actions and pursuits.<sup>6</sup>

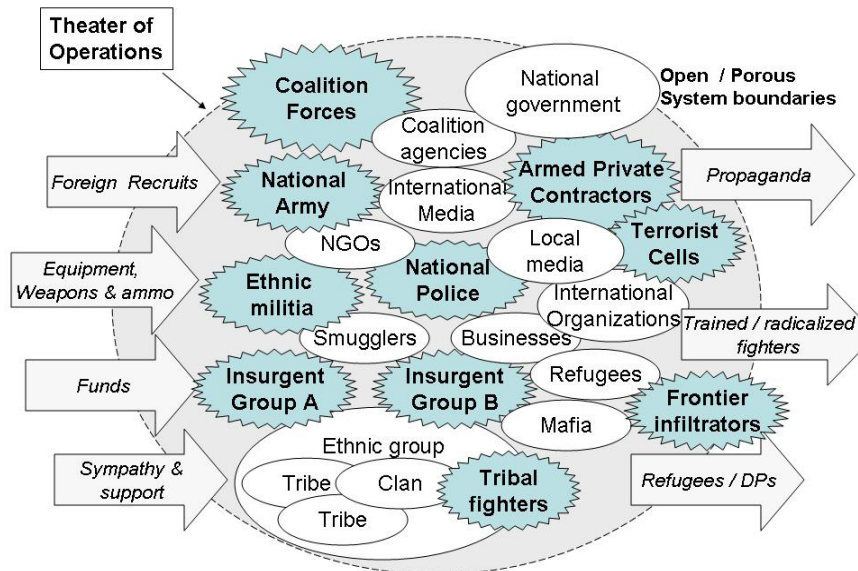


Figure 1: ‘The Conflict Ecosystem’, Kilcullen (2006). Three pillars of counter insurgency.

<sup>5</sup> Kilcullen (2006). *Three Pillars of Counter-Insurgency*, 28 September 2006, pp 2-3

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

Almost all contemporary PSOs take place in so-called 'complex' conflict environments. These are characterised as conflict environments less straight forward than situations of 'traditional' wars between national armies which usually include a clear distinction between civilians and combatants, in addition to a clear understanding of when the conflict is in fact over, i.e. upon 'victory'. Complex conflicts usually entail intrastate conflict (civil wars) rather than interstate war. They often take place in failed or fragile states and involve irregular forces such as predatory and criminal groups with links to smuggling and trafficking. In addition, they tend to hit harder on civilian populations, who are often directly targeted by warring fractions.<sup>7</sup> Complex conflicts also often draw on complex historical patterns of violence and inequalities, and are often fought along ethnic or religious lines. They tend to be defined by low-intensity, insurgency type, warfare between several differing fractions pursuing own interests whilst outright war is unusual.<sup>8</sup> As a consequence of this, many older and previously successful military doctrines are now rendered insufficient. Even though the definition of complex conflicts can vary from one situation to another, their most common denominator is that they cannot be addressed solely by military means, and need to be dealt with through a Comprehensive Approach.<sup>9</sup>

Conflict ecosystems are multi-actor environments and each actor affects the nature of the system. The identification of dependencies and relationships between these actors is important because such analysis can facilitate the management of these dependencies and contribute to mission effectiveness as well as unity of effort when these actors are working towards similar goals. Complex conflicts are difficult to address by one type of actor because they arise for more than one reason. A vast array of actors providing 'solutions' corresponding to the vast array of 'causes' is needed to approach such situations. The more activities and actors involved in a process, the more dependencies will arise between them, and the more coordination mechanisms will have to be developed to manage these dependencies. If we can manage to handle these dependencies the end result is likely more efficient and effective operations. The realisation of this has led to an increased push towards multifunctional and integrated types of PSOs, in which harmonisation and coordination between the different instruments of power is described as essential.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Nilsson, Hull, Derblom and Egnell (2008). *Contextualising the Comprehensive Approach: Elements of a comprehensive Intervention*. Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI, p 21-22

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Nilsson et al. (2008). *Contextualising the Comprehensive Approach: Elements of a comprehensive Intervention*, p 28

## 4 Stakeholders

In the conflict ecosystem there is a range of individuals, groups and other agents. These all differ in their approaches towards each other and can thus affect the conflict environment in different ways. In a multidimensional PSO each organisation needs to learn how to relate to the other actors in the operational environment in order to better achieve its own goals. One important step is to generate general awareness of the environment, i.e. to broadly identify the various components of the conflict ecosystem, but also to conduct a stakeholder analysis to better identify each actor's characteristics and role in relation to the activities of ones own organisation. Such analysis will help highlighting the actors that are of most importance to the own organisation and will thus emphasise the need of devising strategies for dealing with these, as well as suggesting what general inclinations these strategies will have to address.

Stakeholder analysis conceptualises the relationship between different types of agents in an environment. The type of stakeholder analysis used in this report is based on Eden and Ackerman<sup>11</sup> who have come up with a quite simple and clear way of categorising the agents according to two dimensions: interest (in the strategic activities of ones own organisation) and power (to influence the realisation of the own organisation's strategies and activities). It begins by focusing on the large number of stakeholders who have an interest (stake) in the activities and future of the organisation in question and then narrows in on those actors who can in some way influence the strategic intent of the organisation. A differentiation is made between *stakeholders*, who merely have an interest in influencing the organisation, and *actors*, who actually have the power to do so. In later parts of this report, the organisation is represented by ISAF.

The influence of an actor might either be positive (support) or negative (sabotage), and all actors will therefore be of interest when devising strategy. Actors can be divided into *players* and *strategy context setters*, see Figure 2. *Context setters* have the ability to significantly influence the context in which the strategic activities take place, but do not do so with intent. Whilst context setters have significant influence on the strategy making organisation, they are not themselves affected by the strategic activities and therefore have no stake in them themselves. Because they have no interest or stake in the activities of the organisation, the organisation has no means to bargain with and the context setter's influence cannot be manipulated to be supportive of the strategic activities. There is thus no point in formulating strategy to influence or manage the context setter, but strategy must nonetheless include contingencies for managing various scenarios that might result from actions taken by context setters.

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<sup>11</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 120-124



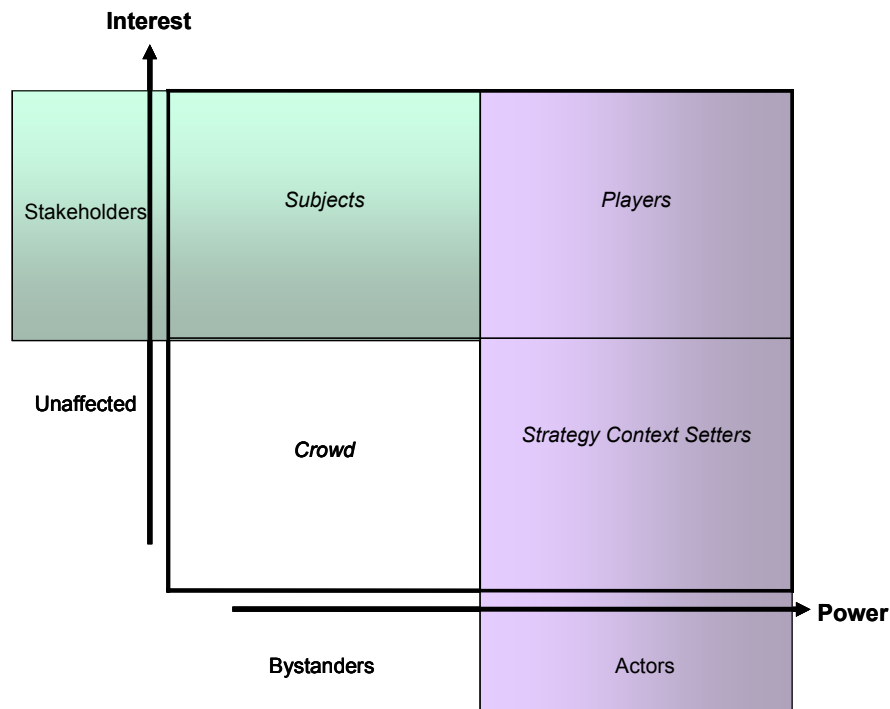


Figure 2: Stakeholder analysis grid. Adapted from Eden and Ackerman (1998).

*Players* is the most important category for the strategy making organisation because they exist in the overlap between interest and power, encompassing both. *Players* can affect strategy but also have a stake in the strategy so might be able to be convinced by the strategy making organisation to use their power in favour of the realisation of its strategies. *Players*, unlike context setters, are thus susceptible to stakeholder management. A *subject* has a stake in strategic activities but lacks means of influencing the course or intent of the activities. *Subjects* can be either favourable or antagonistic in its approach, but because they lack the power to affect the strategic direction of the organisation they will only be taken into account when devising strategy based on 'goodwill'. Unaffected bystanders with no interest or power are considered 'crowd' and are unimportant to stakeholder analysis, unless they can be convinced to become either interested or powerful. In a similar way, subjects may also obtain power and become players by means of forming coalitions with other actors and stakeholders, including the strategy making organisation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*, p 122

The basis of a stakeholder's interest is its interpretation of the concerned strategy and strategy making organisation. The level of interest can be assessed by studying how the stakeholder see and interpret the behaviour of the strategy making organisation. This includes asking which role the stakeholder considers the organisation to have in relation to the fulfilment of the stakeholders own aspirations and activities. The interest is not merely based on fact but interpretation and stakeholder analysis thus includes an assessment of what information the stakeholders collect, what activities they notice and how they make sense of the information. The extent of an actor's power is assessed studying the means available to the actor: what mechanisms it could apply in support of a given activity or what sanctions it could apply to block or reject an activity (e.g. supply of funds, withholding of funds, or 'lobbying' ability – networks and social connections).<sup>13</sup>

Using this type of analysis, stakeholders and actors can be positioned on a stakeholder analysis grid. The position of the agents on the grid can of course vary depending on which strategic activity is being addressed. Whilst a stakeholder can be considered to be both interested and powerful in relation to one particular activity conducted by the own organisation, it may be neither in relation to another. However, it can still be useful to conduct an analysis of the general dependency of a stakeholder to determine on an overall basis if the stakeholder in question needs to be taken into account when devising stakeholder management strategies, which may include various forms of coordination. In assessing the general dependency of, and need to coordinate with, a particular actor, the position on the grid will be based on a perceived average position.

To help decide not only if a coordination strategy should be adopted towards other stakeholders, the grid can assist in outlining which kind of strategy should be devised. This can be done by colouring the entries on the grid in accordance with the inclination of the agent: potentially hostile agents are coloured red, potentially collaborative green and those whose attitude is entirely dependent on the particular strategic activity being addressed coloured blue.<sup>14</sup> A grid dominated by green players suggests that stakeholder management will be primarily committed to maintaining such relations: a grid dominated by red players suggests a non-permissive environment dominated by actors who are in different ways negative towards the mission. Managing these actors is of great strategic importance.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, when the grid represents a PSO environment and most players represent 'internal' actors, i.e. those who in some way form part of a coalition, the grid indicates that inclusive approaches need to be adopted to strategy making processes and joint efforts might be required to ensure

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<sup>13</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. pp 126-27, 346, 350

<sup>14</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 124

<sup>15</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 125

collaboration instead of hindrance. A grid where many players are such 'coalition actors' suggests a true need for a so-called 'Comprehensive Approach' (CA), whilst a grid where most such actors are residing in the subject category indicates that the interdependencies on which CA is based do not exist in this particular context (at least not for the fulfilment of the strategy making organisations goals and aims), or that the strategy making organisation has mistakenly interpreted such dependencies as non-existing.

The grid is thus not a tool to help map out the conflict environment but an instrument focusing on stakeholder relations. It functions as a guide for stakeholder management by outlining interest and power bases and provides a foundation for considerations of how these can be changed and shifted. In a PSO for example, one type of stakeholder management can be to shift international media from being a context setter to a player.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 130

## 5 Interdependencies and coordination strategies

### 5.1.1 Why are dependencies important?

Coordination can be described as *the managing of dependencies between activities*.<sup>17</sup> This definition, formulated by Malone and Crowstone, is based on the assumption that *if there is no dependency*<sup>18</sup>, *there is nothing to coordinate*. Dependencies have to be dealt with through coordination strategies but there is a range of types of dependencies and correlating coordination processes that seek to handle these. A particular dependency can often be managed by more than one coordinating mechanisms, and in much the same way, a specific type of coordination can be applied to address several dependencies.<sup>19</sup>

This definition has been criticised for omitting dependencies among objects that are not activities; for example, between actors themselves and the structures of their relationships. Since activities must naturally, “in some sense”, be performed by ‘actors’, Malone and Crowstone state that their definition implies that “all instances of coordination include *actors* performing activities that are inter-dependent”<sup>20</sup>. They argue that dependencies might arise between objects, actors and components but to analyse a coordinated situation and find strategies for managing dependencies we must look at coordination processes that deal with activities. Dependency arises when one actor affects the outcomes of the actions of another due to control of access to resources.<sup>21</sup> The relationship between the ‘objects’ is thus important but it is the pattern of use of common resources that creates dependency; not the types of relationships between actors, per se.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. *ACM Computing Surveys* 26:1, p 90

<sup>18</sup> Malone and Crowston use the term [where] there is no interdependence, there is nothing to coordinate. This is not quite accurate. There can be a dependency experienced by one actor (A) but that isn’t of any interest to the other actor (B) with which coordination is required. Coordination might not occur, regardless of how much A is dependent on it, since coordination may not be cost-effective for B, but there is nonetheless something to coordinate; Malone, T and K. Crowston. 1994. ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. *ACM Computing Surveys* 26:1, p 90

<sup>19</sup> Englert, Soenke, Sönke, Hummel (1996). *Beyond Automation: a framework for supporting coordination*. Institut für Informatik und Gesellschaft der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg; Malone, T. Crowston, K. Jintae, L. Pentland, B. 1999. ‘Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational Processes’. *Management Science* 45:3, p 429

<sup>20</sup> Malone and Crowston.(1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. p 101

<sup>21</sup> Crowstone and Osborne (1998). *A coordination theory approach to process design*. MIT Sloan school of management, Centre for Coordination Science, p 8

<sup>22</sup> Malone et al. (1999). ‘Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational Processes’. p 432

Actors themselves are not inherently dependent on each other but dependencies arise when they perform interrelated or interdependent tasks. Coordination can thus handle dependencies, but only dependencies between activities. In the opinion of Malone and Crowstone, the study of interdependence and coordination has focused too much on describing the relationship between organisational sub units, as all dependencies that require and can be addressed through coordination can be identified and traced by studying activities.<sup>23</sup>

As stated above, several coordination strategies might be applied to solve a single dependency; each of these might generate a different result and an important task of such studies is to generate tools to help to predict what effects might be produced when applying each strategy to a given situation.

Since coordination mechanisms are in themselves also activities, they carry their own dependencies and replacing one mechanism with another might eliminate some problems as well as generate new ones.<sup>24</sup> Investigating dependencies are therefore of most importance to ensure that the most appropriate forms of coordination is applied in managing these.

The steps towards improving coordination and facilitating harmonization in the field are thus as follows:

1. Identify dependencies;
2. Identify needs for coordination that might result from these dependencies;
3. Identify available coordination mechanisms that can manage the dependencies;
4. Choose the coordination mechanism that best achieves the desired goals in each particular circumstance.<sup>25</sup>

## 5.2 Dependency analysis

### 5.2.1 How do we identify dependencies?

Dependencies can be identified starting from the activity in which the dependency arises or the activity that manages it. In the first 'dependency-focused' type of analysis we can examine a chosen activity and investigate the use of resources by this activity. Questions asked include: what are the required

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<sup>23</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 97

<sup>24</sup> Crowstone and Osborne (1998). *A coordination theory approach to process design*.

<sup>25</sup> Crowstone (1997). 'A coordination Theory Approach to Organizational Process Design', *Organization Science* 8 (2), pp 157-175

inputs and resources used by the activity; are they used by anyone else in any way; how are the resources assigned to this activity; what is the output of the activity; and is the output used by any other activity?<sup>26</sup> The answers to these questions will help us identify dependencies. We can then ask which, if any, activities manage these dependencies; the eventual failure to find any such activities would suggest the existence of a complex, problematic and unmanaged dependency.<sup>27</sup>

### 5.2.2 Examples of dependencies

The most common cause of dependency is the frequent need to share or divide resources. Because resources are limited they must often be shared between a range of actors and activities. These resources include both physical and abstract things such as vehicles, water, storage space and money. It can also include sharing the time of the people who undertake the activities/tasks<sup>28</sup>

Another common kind of dependency amongst activities is timing. Timing dependencies include the need for activities to occur at the same time (e.g. voting), as well as requirement that they do not (e.g. important meetings); along with the requirement that one activity finishes before another can begin.<sup>29</sup>

Other, sometimes related, dependencies are the result of producer/consumer relationships between activities that arises when one activity produces something that is used by another activity: electricity, networks or information, for example. Producer/consumer dependencies can include the requirement that:

- a producer activity finishes before the consumer activity can begin (e.g. that the teacher is employed before school commences);
- the ability of the consumer activity to utilise the outcome of the producer activity (e.g. that the school teacher speaks the same language as the students);
- the producer activity is transferred to the consumer activity, often in terms of physical transportation (e.g. the school teacher being able to get to the school) but also in terms of communication (e.g. the children

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<sup>26</sup> This approach focuses on input-activity-output which is a useful approach to identify dependencies and coordination strategies on the field level. Concepts like the Comprehensive Approach and Integrated Missions have a broader perspective and focus on effects, impacts and outcomes but that will not be discussed in this report (see for example Nilsson et al (2008) and Hull (2008)).

<sup>27</sup> Crowstone and Osborne (1998). *A coordination theory approach to process design*. p 24

<sup>28</sup> Malone and Crowston. (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. *ACM Computing Surveys* 26:1, p 92

<sup>29</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 95; Englert et al. (1996) *Beyond Automation: a framework for supporting coordination*.

being informed that the teacher has arrived) when the producer activity being transferred is information.<sup>30</sup>

The most common dependencies can all be grouped into three different categories; **flow**, **sharing** and **fit** dependencies.<sup>31</sup> Figure 3 describes the dependency between the resources and activities in each of these categories. Flow dependencies are the same as producer/consumer dependencies and arise as one activity produces a resource used by one or more subsequent activities. Share dependencies occur when multiple activities use the same resource (e.g. money from the same budget, the only doctor available or the same piece of equipment). Fit dependencies arise when multiple activities collectively produce a single resource. In this type of dependency a group of activities might all be sub-tasks for achieving one overarching goal.<sup>32</sup>

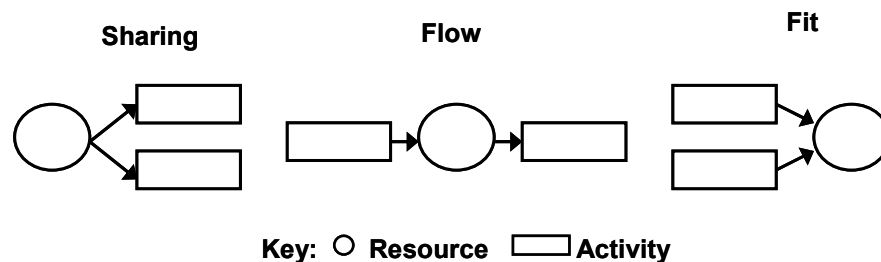


Figure 3: Three basic types of dependencies among activities.<sup>33</sup>

### 5.3 Coordination strategies - managing dependencies

For each type of dependency there is a range of possible coordination strategies that could be applied to manage the dependency. This section seeks to exemplify what some of the coordination mechanisms could look like. Just like the previous section exemplifying the dependencies, the proposed coordination strategies

<sup>30</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 94- 95

<sup>31</sup> Crowstone and Osborne (1998). *A coordination theory approach to process design*. MIT Sloan School of Management, Centre for Coordination Science, p 8;

Scharmer (2001). 'The Power of Decentralization: Discovering the New Physics of Organizing', Interview with Professor Thomas Malone, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 31<sup>st</sup>, <http://www.dialogonleadership.org/interviews/Malone2001.shtml#eight>

<sup>32</sup> Malone et al. (1999). 'Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational processes'. *Management Science* 45:3, p 429

<sup>33</sup> Adapted from Malone et al. (1999). 'Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational Processes'. p 430

listed are not exhaustive, but rather serves to outline the most common processes used to manage dependencies amongst activities.

**Sharing dependencies** occur when multiple activities use the same resource. Share dependencies can be addressed through a range of coordination processes, all functioning as allocating mechanisms. Where, for example, the interdependency is the need to use the same kind of equipment the *allocation strategy* can include:

- ‘first come, first served’<sup>34</sup>;
- priority orders (the activity with the highest priority gets to utilize the equipment for as long as needed, or until an activity with even higher priority needs it)<sup>35</sup>;
- budgeting (pre-assigned time slots)<sup>36</sup>;
- managerial decision (managers at each level decide how the resources they control will be allocated among the people who report to them)<sup>37</sup>;
- and
- market-like bidding (each activity get to bid on the use of the equipment and the one willing to pay the most gets it).<sup>38</sup>

Another example of a sharing dependency is the need to share time. This can be managed by *sequencing* and *synchronisation strategies* – the drawing up of joint meeting schedules for example.<sup>39</sup>

**Flow dependencies** arise as one activity produces a resource used by one or more subsequent activities. Flow dependencies can be addressed through a range of coordination strategies:

- ensuring that the product is completed at the ‘*right time*’. Such mechanisms all comprise some form of advanced planning and can be exemplified by notification processes indicating to the consumer activity that it can begin; and sequencing and tracking processes to ensure producer activities will have completed before their results are needed (e.g. computer-based tracking systems where everyone can look up

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<sup>34</sup> Scharmer (2001). ‘The Power of Decentralization: Discovering the New Physics of Organizing’,

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. p 92

<sup>37</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. p 92-93

<sup>38</sup> Malone et al. (1999). ‘Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational Processes’. pp 430-431

<sup>39</sup> Malone and Crowston.(1994). ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination’. p 95



status information about all other activities, PET- charts and critical-path methods);<sup>40</sup>

- ensuring the product ends up in the '*right place*' (e.g. delivery by various transportation modes, or ensuring the activities take place in the same area so that the outcome is produced at the point of use);<sup>41</sup>
- ensuring that the product is in fact the '*right thing*'. This can be done by applying standards (e.g. everyone using English as a working language, all documents being written in Microsoft Word) or participatory design (asking the individual users what requirements they have on the finished product before it is produced).<sup>42</sup>

**Fit dependencies** arise when some components have to be created with other components in mind.<sup>43</sup> Usually the fit dependencies occur because each activity is part of a group of activities in which all activities are sub-tasks for achieving some overall goal.<sup>44</sup> However, when several actors and activities are involved in the same activities it may be difficult to agree upon a common overall goal. The goal may be vague and ambiguous and differ between the actors. Strategies for managing fit dependencies thus need to address how to manage deciding on the overall goal – which can be done for example by decomposing the goal into sub-tasks and deciding on which activities should be undertaken and by whom.<sup>45</sup> Such goal/sub-task dependencies require *decision-making strategies*, each of which will result in an alternative coordination process. Examples of decision-making strategies include:

- voting;
- consensus (after negotiations and planning sessions for example);
- authority (allowing one manager to decide).<sup>46</sup>

Another major dependency is the need to ensure that 'the whole' actually benefits from the sum of the parts throughout the process. Fit dependent efforts are complex processes reliant on mutual adjustment and trade-offs throughout their activities to ensure the activities not only work separately but also fit together. The perhaps most important strategy for managing these dependencies is the use of a *predefined-plan* outlining what is to be achieved in each component as well as on the whole. Other, often complementary, strategies

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<sup>40</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. pp 93-94

<sup>41</sup> Malone et al. (1999). 'Tools for inventing organizations: Towards a handbook of organizational Processes'. p 431

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Dorf (ed). (1998). *The technology management handbook*. CRC Press, p 56

<sup>44</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 96

<sup>45</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 99

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

include *standardisation, case by case negotiations, slotted synchronisation*; and strategies for resolving potential conflicts (by e.g. *authority* or *consensus*).<sup>47</sup>

### 5.3.1 Needs, principles and pragmatism in PSO coordination

In multifunctional PSOs some form of coordination between involved actors and stakeholders is often needed in order to avoid duplication, increase effectiveness and ease some of the burdens. As a result, a range of dependencies exist between the actors in a PSO.

Whilst various forms of coordination can address these dependencies, coordination can also have negative consequences. In addition, because there are many alternative ways of managing dependencies, the challenge of how to coordinate is often time consuming and complex, even when we have decided to coordinate: coordination itself is an activity that costs.

The choice of which coordination strategy to use, or if coordination should be undertaken at all, is thus a matter of cost-effectiveness. We should not take for granted that the cost of coordination will always be worthwhile, even though there is a need to coordinate.<sup>48</sup> In essence, not all interdependencies can be (cost-effectively) managed. This is particularly due to political reasons. On the other hand, some coordination may not *seem* cost-effective but can still be worthwhile because it will *lead* to a desired outcome (thus making it cost-effective in the long run).

Some organisations and agents are bound by principles that might render coordination impossible; this applies particularly to humanitarian actors coordinating with militaries or political agents.<sup>49</sup> In this case the unwillingness to coordinate is not an attempt to prevent effectiveness or efficiency but rather to protect and preserve the provision of humanitarian aid. While coordination could theoretically solve certain dependencies and ease operations, association with organisations and actors that are considered to have a political agenda could result in the humanitarian agents not being able to operate at all: the worst of all possible scenarios.<sup>50</sup> Development actors often have their own political agenda and do not have the same restrictions regarding coordination as do humanitarian actors.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Denning and Martell (2007). 'Coordination: One out of many'. *Category Overview* 8 December, p 9, [http://cs.gmu.edu/cne/pjd/GP/overviews/ov\\_coordination.pdf](http://cs.gmu.edu/cne/pjd/GP/overviews/ov_coordination.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Malone and Crowston (1994). 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination'. p 101

<sup>49</sup> Slim (2007). 'Relations with the military: a three way challenge'. *New Routes* 12:4, p 44

<sup>50</sup> Nilsson et al. 2008. *Contextualising the Comprehensive Approach: Elements of a comprehensive Intervention*. pp 36-38

<sup>51</sup> Nilsson et al. 2008. *Contextualising the Comprehensive Approach: Elements of a comprehensive Intervention*, p 36

Even where coordination is possible and desirable, it might still be challenging. Coordination and command and control works best where there is a sufficient degree of homogeneity among the actors to be coordinated in terms of common points of reference or orientation. Yet, in modern PSOs diversity among actors is a requirement to be able to handle the varied irregular environment.<sup>52</sup> Coordination in these environments must thus not mean standardisation, but harmonisation to lower friction between actors and stakeholders, whilst at the same time preserve diversity.<sup>53</sup> Militaries have traditionally relied on clear hierarchical structures to promote coordination and command and control. NGOs, on the other hand, often have flat network-centric organisations that might be difficult to relate to by their military counterparts. Nonetheless, such flat structures where autonomous agents co-operate through voluntary coordination bodies are in many cases the only appropriate forms for civil-military coordination to command and control sensitive organisations.

## 5.4 Summary of stakeholder and dependency theories

Even though most actors in a PSO see the benefit of coordination, few want to be coordinated. The aim of the study is to explore the dependencies and inter-dependencies that necessitate coordination between the various stakeholders in an operational environment to generate a better understanding of the pre-conditions for coordination and the harmonisation of efforts in multifunctional peace operations. The report proposes the use of a multi-stage model that identifies interdependent stakeholders, as well as the level and type of dependency, and allows us to explore whether the dependencies can be coordinated. The suggested steps towards improving coordination and facilitating harmonization in the field are as follows:

1. identify dependencies;
2. identify the needs for coordination that might result from these dependencies; and,
3. identify the available coordination mechanism that can manage these dependencies.

The first step of the model – the identification of dependencies – includes conducting a stakeholder analysis to identify actors of interests to a relevant activity and to highlight the level of dependency/interdependency between the stakeholder in question and our ‘own’ organisation. As a tool to help establish

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<sup>52</sup> Bjurström. (2009). *Objective 1.3 Food for thoughts: Theory –What harmonization and C2 do within a Comprehensive Approach.*

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

the level of interdependence, a spectrum of common dependencies arising between activities conducted by stakeholders has been presented in the report.

The second step entails studying the nature of the dependency to enable pinpointing what coordination would need to be achieved: set a realistic aim of what any coordination mechanism would be expected to achieve. Describing the dependencies thoroughly will help define what in essence it is that needs to be coordinated. Only when we have a clear understanding of what needs to be coordinated can we choose the most appropriate coordination strategy.

The third and final step entails identifying possible ways of managing these dependencies by exploring what, if any, the available and viable means of coordination are. This includes reaching an understanding of what particular coordination mechanism could sufficiently manage the dependency, as well as assessing whether it would be worthwhile to apply such coordination strategies.

## 6 Afghanistan and ISAF

This chapter describes the context of the study: the background and the conflict area, including how the ISAF mission came to be deployed and the events leading up to the deployment. It also includes a description of the structure and undertakings of the ISAF operation, explaining the PRT system and in particular the Swedish PRT, which is the focal area of this study. Figure 4 shows a map of Afghanistan.



Figure 4: United Nations Cartographic Section, Afghanistan, Map No. 3958 Rev. 5, October 2006

### 6.1 Background and Conflict Area

Afghanistan is a country which has experienced a long history of conflict over power. Throughout the past century coups and counter-coups, along with attempts at nearly every form of governance (monarchy, republic, democracy,

theocracy and communism), have sought to stabilise the country and build a strong Afghan state.<sup>54</sup>

Initially founded in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century as a Pashtun empire, Afghanistan came to serve as a buffer between the British and Russian empires in their contest of supremacy in Central Asia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The British held political power in Afghanistan until 1919 when the country became an independent monarchy. Despite some unstable successions, Afghanistan enjoyed relative stability which ended in 1973 with a coup turning Afghanistan into an autocratic republic. In 1978 a counter-coup by an opposing political grouping led to a new, more secular, Communist government, supported by the Soviet Union. In an effort to fight Communism, the United States began covertly funding the Islamic resistance fighters, Mujahedeen, opposing the pro-Soviet government. The Soviets, in their turn, invaded Afghanistan in 1979, setting of a war with the Mujahedeens.

When the Soviets withdrew ten years later, Afghanistan fell into a long and destructive civil war.<sup>55</sup> The Afghan resistance to the Soviets had been decentralised, provincial and religiously inspired. Once the Soviet Union withdrew, these factions instead began fighting each other, leading to a rise in warlordism.<sup>56</sup> The Communist regime, which had managed to survive the civil war, eventually collapsed in 1992. At this time the Mujahedeen factions, by now divided along ethnic lines, fought bitterly for control of Kabul, the capital, committing atrocious crimes against its inhabitants.<sup>57</sup> The civil war had left Afghanistan in a state of destruction; state institutions had collapsed, drug trade was commonplace, the economy was experiencing hyperinflation and lawlessness was widespread. The situation led to rapid growth of the Taliban as a political and military movement. Supported by Pakistan and the US, the Taliban managed to obtain control of Kabul in 1996, ending the civil-war and anarchy.<sup>58</sup> The Taliban, nonetheless, did not pacify the whole country, nor did it seek to rehabilitate state institutions, seeking instead to rule by religious decree. Sharing a fundamentalist view of Islam, the Taliban state was financed by Al-Qaida, which in return was granted safe harbour within the country.<sup>59</sup>

Following the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, a US-led military alliance, Operation Enduring Freedom, invaded Afghanistan and

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<sup>54</sup> OCHA. 2008. 'Country Profile: Afghanistan'. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <http://ochaonline.un.org/>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid

<sup>56</sup> Courtney et al. (2005). *In the balance: measuring progress in Afghanistan*. CSIS report. Centre for Strategic and International Studies. p, 9

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> OCHA 2008. 'Country Profile: Afghanistan'. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <http://ochaonline.un.org/>

<sup>59</sup> Courtney et al. (2005). *In the balance: measuring progress in Afghanistan*. p, 9-10

toppled the brutal Taliban regime. The alliance achieved its military goals in 78 days.<sup>60</sup> Subsequently, the most recent attempt at stabilising Afghanistan and finding a sustainable and strong form of government was commenced. The Bonn Agreement of 2001 established a process of reconstruction of Afghanistan, setting guidelines for adoption of a new constitution and a presidential election in 2004 and called for an international force mandated by the UN, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to provide security in the capital.<sup>61</sup>

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established in 2002 by the UN Security Council to support the implementation of the Bonn Agreement and mandated to manage all humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction activities.<sup>62</sup> UNAMA is a political Mission directed and supported by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. UNAMA's key role is to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan by leading the efforts of the international community. Together with the Government of Afghanistan the Mission supports the rebuilding of the country and the strengthening of the foundations of peace and a constitutional democracy. A three way partnership between the interim government established by the Bonn Agreement (the Afghan Transitional Authority), UNAMA and ISAF was created.<sup>63</sup> After the 2005 elections, UNAMA's mandate was expanded to provide political and strategic advice to the peace process, to promote international engagement in Afghanistan, to assist the new government with implementing a five year plan for rebuilding the country and to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights.<sup>64</sup>

Whilst ISAF had been tasked by the Bonn agreement to provide security in Kabul, the agreement had not suggested who would provide security throughout the rest of the country, and most of Afghanistan was overrun by militia groups.<sup>65</sup> In 2003 ISAF came under the control of NATO and began expanding its reach into the country.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, the ISAF troop numbers grew from 5,000 to today's 58,390 troops from 42 countries.<sup>67</sup> ISAF's main mission is to assist the Afghan authorities in providing security and stability and creating the conditions for reconstruction and development.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Courtney et al. (2005). *In the balance: measuring progress in Afghanistan*. p 11

<sup>61</sup> OCHA. 2008. 'Country Profile: Afghanistan'. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <http://ochaonline.un.org/>

<sup>62</sup> UNAMA. 'Background: the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan', <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1743>

<sup>63</sup> Scott (2006). *Assessing ISAF: A baseline study of NATO's role in Afghanistan*

<sup>64</sup> UNAMA. 'Background: the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan', <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1743>

<sup>65</sup> Courtney et al. (2005). *In the balance: measuring progress in Afghanistan*. p 10

<sup>66</sup> Scott, C. 2006. *Assessing ISAF: A baseline study of NATO's role in Afghanistan*.

<sup>67</sup> NATO. 2009. 'International Security Assistance Force and Afghanistan National Army Strength and Laydown', [http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf\\_placemat.pdf](http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> NATO. 'NATO's role in Afghanistan', <http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html>

## 6.2 ISAF

The security situation in Afghanistan is mixed. The prevalence of violence is increasing in the Southern parts of the country whilst the security situation in large parts of the northern, central and northwest parts of the country has traditionally been relatively stable even though the situation also deteriorated in these areas at the time of the 2009 elections.<sup>69</sup> ISAF is supporting the ever stronger Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in providing security throughout the country and are conducting joint security and stability operations with the ANSF.<sup>70</sup> ANSF has recently assumed responsibility for providing security in the Kabul area for the first time.<sup>71</sup> ISAF is also mentoring and supporting *the Afghan National Army* (ANA) to bring them up to operating capability. This is done by ISAF leading a number of Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) supporting training of ANA and taking on advisory role. The OMLTs also have a liaison role between ANA units and nearby ISAF forces to coordinate the planning of operations.<sup>72</sup> Another of ISAFs key tasks is to provide support to the Afghan National Police (ANP). ISAF assists the ANP with military support to operations, advice, shared information and informal mentoring and guidance. This is done in coordination with and in support of the United States as well as the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). The goal is to build up a police force of 82, 000 professional police officers.<sup>73</sup> In addition to such capacity building tasks ISAF is also responsible for disarming illegally armed groups. ISAF is collecting illegal weapons and ammunitions from armed groups and individual persons. They catalogue and destroy the weapons so they no longer represent a threat in Afghanistan. ISAF also conducts a project aimed at enhancing security at the ANAs ammunition depots.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, ISAF is supporting Afghan capabilities to fight narcotics by sharing information and conducting public information campaigns. ISAF also assists the training of ANSF in counter-narcotics related activities and provides logistic support for the delivery of alternative livelihood programmes.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> NATO. 2009. 'Afghanistan Report 2009', [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2009\\_03/20090331\\_090331\\_afghanistan\\_report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2009_03/20090331_090331_afghanistan_report_2009.pdf). p 5

<sup>70</sup> NATO 2009. 'NATO's role in Afghanistan', <http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html>

<sup>71</sup> NATO. 2009. 'Afghanistan Report 2009', [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2009\\_03/20090331\\_090331\\_afghanistan\\_report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2009_03/20090331_090331_afghanistan_report_2009.pdf). p 5

<sup>72</sup> NATO. 'NATO's role in Afghanistan', <http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html>

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> Ibid



### 6.3 Provincial Reconstruction Teams

ISAF is supporting reconstruction and development in Afghanistan through its *Provincial Reconstruction Teams* (PRTs) who are responsible for securing areas in which reconstruction work is conducted by other national and international actors. This also includes, when appropriate, practical support for reconstruction and development efforts, as well as support for humanitarian assistance efforts conducted by Afghan government organizations, international organizations, and NGOs.<sup>76</sup> The PRTs were invented in 2003.<sup>77</sup> Currently, there are 26 PRTs operating in Afghanistan. The PRTs consists of military and civilian personnel, from one or more countries, who work together to support the government with security and reconstruction and development efforts. They also have an important diplomatic role to support security sector reform (SSR) and encourage good governance. The civilian part of the PRT handles political, economic, humanitarian and social aspects of development and the military components are in charge of increasing security and stability in the area and also to provide assistance to the civilian components, for example secure transportation. Upon request, ISAF PRTs assist the Afghan government and international actors with humanitarian relief.<sup>78</sup>

The PRTs were established with the intended function of working like a coordination mechanism to facilitate better unity of efforts of military and development actors and to help consolidate national authorities outside of the capital.<sup>79</sup> Essentially working as smaller civil-military groupings engaging directly in insecure parts of the theatre to fill power and governance vacuums on behalf of the young central government, the PRTs took on the task of state building where the Alliance's strictly military operations were coming to an end.<sup>80</sup>

The PRTs provided for the exit of many of the Allied forces and their multidimensional and multinational composition gave them a lot of legitimacy in their task.<sup>81</sup> Nonetheless, it was not completely straightforward what the PRTs spheres of responsibilities were and only in 2005 did the PRT steering committee outline a widely accepted description of the PRTs' tasks. In their view the PRTs existed to "assist the government of Afghanistan to extend its authority, in order

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<sup>76</sup> NATO. 'NATOs role in Afghanistan', <http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html>

<sup>77</sup> Kilcullen (2006). 'Three Pillars of Counter-Insurgency'. pp 6-7

<sup>78</sup> NATO. 'NATOs role in Afghanistan', <http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html>

<sup>79</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008; NATO. 2009. 'Afghanistan Report 2009', [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2009\\_03/20090331\\_090331\\_afghanistan\\_report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2009_03/20090331_090331_afghanistan_report_2009.pdf), p 5

<sup>80</sup> Ibid

<sup>81</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008

to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment in the identified area of operations, and through military presence, enable security sector reform and reconstruction efforts".<sup>82</sup> The PRTs would exist until local security forces had matured enough to assume the full responsibility for security and stability in the provinces and the conditions had improved to allow for transition to provincial administrations.<sup>83</sup>

On average the PRTs include up to 150 military personnel, providing force protection to a range of civilian representatives; such as government and politicians, diplomats, police advisors and development agency staff.<sup>84</sup> The size and structure of the 26 PRTs greatly varies. The particular security environment in the concerned province, in combination with national caveats, has led to a range of approaches and interpretations of the PRT concept. The volatile situations of the south and east, for example, requires far more security oriented strategies than those necessitated in the northern provinces.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the national policies of each PRT lead nation govern what specific operations are conducted by each PRT.<sup>86</sup> In short, three distinct PRT models have been observed: the German, British and American models.

The German modelled PRT operates in a relatively benevolent environment; allowing for a focus on development strategies and employing a high proportion of civilians (10-25 %). Harmonisation and coordination within the PRT and with central and regional governments is the biggest challenge and a lot of emphasis is placed on civil-military cooperation.<sup>87</sup> In contrast, the American model is heavily militarised. Operating in the most hostile areas and located at military bases only some 5 % of the PRT staff is civilian. Dealing with virulent insurgency, these PRTs are more focused on military operations than development and the American modelled PRTs are more difficult to distinguish from the remaining forces of Operation Enduring Freedom operating in the country.<sup>88</sup> The British model is intended to keep a lower profile than the American PRTs but retain higher military capacity than the German model, some 25 % of the PRTs are civilians. It is argued that the British model is the most co-

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<sup>82</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008

<sup>83</sup> Ibid

<sup>84</sup> Olson and Gregorian (2007) Side by side or together. A Report on the March 30 & 31, 2007 Workshop 'Coordinated Approaches to Security, Development and Peacemaking: Lessons Learned from Afghanistan and Liberia' held by the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies (CMSS), University of Calgary and the Institute of World Affairs (IWA), Washington, D.C., p 52

<sup>85</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008

<sup>86</sup> Olson and Gregorian (2007). Side by side or together, p 52

<sup>87</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008

<sup>88</sup> Ibid

ordinated between UK departments and agencies, and works in closest relationship to regional and provincial governments.<sup>89</sup>

The PRT model, despite having a great deal of advantages, has often been criticised of blurring the lines between civilians and the military. Being lightly armed deployments, the PRTs are vulnerable to insurgent attacks but also posing a threat to NGOs in their operational environment as these were increasingly identified as appendages to the military.<sup>90</sup>

### 6.3.1 The Swedish PRT

Since 2006 Sweden has been in command of the Mazar-e-sharif (MeS) PRT in northern Afghanistan. Sweden has contributed to ISAF since 2001, initially with an intelligence unit and subsequently (until 2004) with a CIMIC unit. In addition Sweden has provided personnel to ISAFs HQ in Kabul.<sup>91</sup>

When the PRTs were originally established in 2003, MeS was under the control of British forces but responsibility for the PRT was subsequently transferred to Sweden who had contributed personnel to the British PRT. The MeS PRT covers four provinces and an area about one fifth the size of Sweden and includes personnel from both Sweden and Finland.<sup>92</sup> The northern parts of Afghanistan, where the Swedish PRT is located, is generally calmer and more secure than the southern parts.

The MeS PRT has been primarily tasked with security sector reform (SSR) and the disarming and demobilizing of local militias. The PRT is based at Camp Northern Lights. Most Swedish troops – expected to number 500 during 2009<sup>93</sup> – are based at Camp Northern Light or at the two Provincials Offices (POs).

Other Swedish officers and soldiers serving the Regional Command North are based at Camp Marmal, close to the airport at MeS, and a group of Swedish personnel who are part of Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT), working as mentors to the Afghan National Army (ANA) are based at Camp Mike Spann, 12 kilometres west of MeS. Several Swedes also serve at the ISAF HQ in Kabul.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Burton (2008). 'Developing disorder - Divergent PRT models in Afghanistan'. *Jane's intelligence Review*. 19 September 2008

<sup>90</sup> Ibid

<sup>91</sup> Swedish Armed Forces. 2007. 'Forces Abroad- Afghanistan', <http://www.mil.se/en/Forces-abroad/Afghanistan/>

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2008. 'Sweden Increases Support to Afghanistan', Press Release 13 November, <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/11116/a/115629>

<sup>94</sup> Swedish Armed Forces. 2007. 'Forces Abroad- Afghanistan', <http://www.mil.se/en/Forces-abroad/Afghanistan/>

## 7 Results: Stakeholders and Interdependencies

Other than ISAF a range of stakeholders are involved in the stabilisation and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, or otherwise have some form of relationship to ISAF and its efforts of doing so. Some of these are crucial to the successful implementation of ISAFs mandate: others are of little importance. This part of the report explores the subject of stakeholder relationships, interdependencies and strategies for managing interdependencies, using ISAF as an example. It begins by introducing a stakeholder analysis based on interviews with military and civilian personnel that currently are, or recently have been, active in Afghanistan. The report then goes on to exemplify a few different dependencies that exist within ISAF operations to generate an understanding of the types of issues around which some form of coordination is needed. The report also gives examples of how these particular dependencies could be managed.

### 7.1 Stakeholders identified during interviews

This section briefly presents the main stakeholders that were identified by the interviewees and summarises the stakeholders' interests, influence on, and relation to ISAF and the strategies used for managing the relations. It is worth mentioning that this is not a complete list of all stakeholders in the area with their actual interests and dependencies, rather it is a summary of the main stakeholders and their interests as perceived by the interviewees.

One of the most important stakeholders, that were identified by most interviewees and perceived to have a lot of influence on ISAF, was the *Afghan National Army (ANA)*. ANA's general interests were perceived to include means of livelihood, stability in the area and organisational independence, i.e. becoming a well-functioning army that is not dependent on international forces for support. ANA's interests in ISAF were deemed to revolve around ISAF providing ANA with mentoring, education and training; opportunities to conduct joint operations with ISAF; and ISAF providing support in terms of resources and information. ANA was perceived to have a lot of influence on ISAF because a well-functioning national army is an essential element to achieve Afghan sovereignty. Furthermore, ANA and ISAF work closely together and ISAF is in many ways affected by ANA's actions: when ANA behaves well and responsibly ISAF also receives goodwill from the general population, but when ANA engages in corruption and illegal activities, for example, the result is increased distrust of the security forces amongst the population, which also has negative consequences for ISAF. In addition, ANA influences the conduct of operations since ANA has a lot of troops which were needed for some joint operations with ISAF. The

interviewees believed that ANA and ISAF are interdependent but that ANAs dependence on ISAF is stronger than ISAF's on ANA. The organisations, reportedly, used both formal and informal strategies to manage their relation. These included joint weekly meetings and sharing of information. ISAF's strategy included supporting ANA and making sure ANA was in charge of their joint operations so as to increase their own confidence and show the local population that ANA was competent to do so.

Another major stakeholder identified was *criminal actors*. The criminal leaders' interests were identified as money, influence and power. However, some criminals are just average people who are in need of money to get food on the table, thereby making them easy targets for corruption and criminal activities. The criminal actors have both indirect and direct influence on ISAF: the criminals bring drugs, weapons and corruption to the country which has an effect on the stability in the region, but they can also attack ISAF directly when ISAF activities inhibit their businesses. ISAF is dependent on the criminal actors, or at least they are dependent on decreasing criminality and corruption to make Afghanistan more stable and safe with well-functioning rule of law. The criminal actors were perceived as non-dependent on ISAF but yet largely affected by them since ISAF's activities include efforts to stop corruption, fight criminality and improve rule of law. ISAF's strategies for managing criminal actors include: trying to create job opportunities so people can obtain sustenance through other measures than criminal activities; trying to dissolve criminal networks; support the Afghan police; and support rule of law. ISAF tries to create job opportunities by getting the Afghans engaged in different projects and employing local contractors.

One stakeholder or groups of stakeholders that were identified as not very dependent on ISAF were the different *ethnic groups*. Their main interest was regarded as improved livelihood and improved conditions for their own clan. It was perceived that ISAF was seen by some ethnic groups as a link to the political administration and a way of disseminating information, but other than that the ethnic groups' interest in ISAF was considered to be small. ISAF was not regarded as dependent on the ethnic groups but still applied a strategy of seeking to win the hearts and minds of the people. This was done by spending time amongst the population, talking and listening to them, and through implementing quick impact projects (QIPs).

A group of stakeholders that were considered dependent on ISAF were *contractors*. The different types of contractors (i.e. private, local, international, or security contractors) were considered dependent on ISAF to various extent but most of them were thought to benefit from ISAF's presence in Afghanistan, thereby making them, in one way or another, dependent on ISAF. In general, the contractors were perceived to have an interest in earning money and making profit. ISAF plays an important role in this by helping improve essential

infrastructure; create job opportunities; and create security and stability in the area, which enables contractors to carry out their activities. ISAF in its turn was regarded as dependent on the local contractors for different jobs (interpretation, construction work, cleaning etc). ISAF was thought to be particularly dependent on good, trustworthy interpreters since correct interpretation is essential in interacting with the Afghan population. The interviewees stated that ISAF did not have any particular strategies for managing its relations with the contractors other than doing background checks before hiring anyone and encouraging contractors being treated with respect.

The Afghani *police* and ISAF were also considered interdependent. The police need help from ISAF with education, training, resources, information, and joint patrols to improve safety and stability in the area. It was stated that the police had both a positive and negative effects on ISAF – cooperation with the police gives ISAF legitimacy but corruption is a problem within the police force and misbehaviour has a negative spill-over effect on ISAF. The police have little direct influence on specific ISAF tasks - ISAF can do most things (except arrest people) without them. Nonetheless, a functioning police is very important to the overall goals of the mission and affects the achievements of these. The strategies used for managing the relation between the police and ISAF were: regular meetings; working to create good relationship and trust (give credit, support them and give them some equipment); joint patrols; and; information exchange.

A major stakeholder that almost every interviewee identified was the *local population* in Afghanistan. They are not directly dependent on ISAF but they have an interest in improved livelihood, safety, security, job opportunities, rule of law and a positive development in Afghanistan – most of which ISAF in one way or another has an affect on. ISAF was not considered dependent on the local population per se, but does acknowledge them to be important stakeholders. Support from the local population is important for force protection and essential to achieve positive change in Afghanistan. ISAF can also get valuable information from the local population, for example about insurgents and activities in the area. The interviewees pointed out several formal and informal ISAF strategies to manage relation to the Afghans; these included showing presence (visit the locals and dialogue with local leaders, religious leaders, village elders etc.), carrying as little armor as possible, displaying trust in the locals and trying to learn their culture so as to ensure that locals are treated in a respectful way. ISAF personnel stated that an important strategy was to listen to the populations' needs and forward the information to development organisations but remain conscious about not promising things they could not keep to avoid generating a sentiment of distrust and disappointment amongst the local population. ISAF also distributes information about what it is doing and what tasks it is undertaking to show the local population that ISAF is proactive and there to help improve the situation in Afghanistan.

*Religious leaders* were identified as stakeholders on whom ISAF is dependent to a large extent because of their great influence on the local population. Religious leaders give guidance to the population on all aspect of every day life and they have the ability to spread good or bad information about ISAF. The religious leaders were not considered dependent on ISAF in other than that they want to uphold their religious practices and avoid interference from ISAF. However, the specific interests of the religious leaders vary, as does their individual dependency on ISAF. Some religious leaders were stated to seek increased development in Afghanistan because they believe it is good for the country, whereas others seemed to shun development initiatives because of fear it may decrease their own relative power and status in the community. Some religious leaders also seek money and aid from ISAF to build mosques. The strategies used in the interaction with the religious leaders were similar to previously mentioned strategies. They were mainly centered on building good relationships with the religious leaders, amongst other things by having regular joint meetings and arranging information campaigns to inform them of ISAF activities and emphasising that ISAF is there to help the Afghans – not to change or interfere with their religion or way of life.

*Province governors* and ISAF were considered interdependent but the level of dependency was perceived to be largely affected by the level of power that a specific governor possessed, i.e. strong governors were less dependent on ISAF than governors with less power and vice versa. The governors were said to have an interest in power (both social and economical), social status and political influence to improve their chances of getting re-elected. Some governors were perceived to have a pure interest in improving the situation for the Afghan people whereas others were perceived to be more interested in personal profit and gain. Consequently, some of the governors were considered genuinely interested in improving security and stability in Afghanistan whereas others were thought to actively seek to avoid such an improved situation as it could endanger their personal power. Almost all interviewees stated that regardless of motive (personal gain and/or concerns for the well-being of Afghans) all governors wanted money from ISAF to complete development projects within their province. The governors were considered dependent on ISAF since ISAF has the ability to influence development efforts in the provinces and affect the security situation – which can increase or decrease the governors' power and status in the province. Similarly, ISAF's presence is dependent on government approval, and a good relation with the governors is important for ISAF to be able to carry out its tasks. The governors were perceived to have a lot of power over ISAF since they can influence the population, i.e. communities, clans and networks in their province. Most governors were believed to be able to affect the populations' attitudes towards ISAF, facilitate contacts with communities and influence the political processes (which could be both favourable and non-favourable to ISAF). Some governors were even believed to be able to influence organised

crime, control criminal activities and networks, and influence the security situation in the province. ISAF had both formal and informal strategies for handling the dependency with the governors. They had regular visits, consultations and meetings with all governors to build a good relation and to exchange information with them. They also arranged meetings on demand when something happened in the province. ISAF tried to empower the good and honest governors by visiting and supporting them when possible and they tried not to empower the less honest ones.

ISAF was furthermore perceived to be dependent on the *provincial administration* and *provincial council* since they are representatives of the people in Afghanistan and a well-functioning provincial administration and provincial council is essential to ensure Afghan ownership. The provincial administration and provincial council were considered to be interested in helping the Afghan population and to have the support of the population and were therefore thought to have a great interest in having a number of development projects implemented to improve the situation in the province. They were also perceived to be interested in improving security and stability, diminish criminality and corruption and improving rule of law. ISAF had regular meetings with both representatives from the provincial administration and provincial council.

Another major stakeholder in Afghanistan was *UNAMA*. The interviewees were of different opinions regarding the dependencies between UNAMA and ISAF. Some interviewees believed that there is little dependence between the two but synergies can be achieved through cooperation and coordination. Others believed that ISAF and UNAMA are fully interdependent: ISAF was considered dependent on UNAMA for coordination of efforts between different NGOs, and UNAMA was thought to be dependent on ISAF for improving security and stability in the country so that the NGOs and aid organisations can work in the area. UNAMA was also considered dependent on ISAF providing information about the security situation. There were also differences in opinions regarding to what extent UNAMA has influence over ISAF – some interviewees believe that UNAMA has a weak role in Afghanistan and that ISAF therefore is barely, if at all, dependent on UNAMA. Other interviewees, however, seemed to think that the link between UNAMA and NGOs operating in Afghanistan necessitates a strong dependency of ISAF upon UNAMA. ISAF and UNAMA meet every week to share information and to discuss future projects. ISAF also writes weekly reports about the situation in the four provinces which are distributed to UNAMA.

*NGOs* (both local and international) were recognised as stakeholders. The interviewees stated that the NGOs had little influence on ISAF and ISAF had little direct contact with the NGOs (unless the NGOs contacted ISAF). For most of the time, ISAF interacted with UNAMA, not with the NGOs. The interviewees stated that most NGOs do not want to be associated with ISAF and only depend on ISAF when the security situation deteriorates so that they need



help to ensure their safety and security. Since there is little interaction between ISAF and the NGOs, no formal strategies were mentioned during the interviews except that NGOs had a standing invitation to come to the provincial offices if they wanted help or support from ISAF.

When it comes to *village elders* the interviewees did not consider there to be a strong interdependence-link between the village elders and ISAF. The village elders were considered interested in improved livelihood, development of the local community, support from aid projects, provision of job opportunities for the people in the village, and security and stability. The village elders were perceived as dependent on ISAF only when the Afghan government could not provide this. ISAF, in its turn, was thought to be dependent on the village elders because they provide ISAF with valuable information about actors and activities in their own area and because the village elders can influence the populations' attitude towards ISAF. ISAF interacts with the village elders through Military Observation Teams (MOT) who meet the elders and inform them of ISAF activities and make inquiries about development needs.

*Warlords* were also identified as important stakeholders by many of the interviewees. ISAF was perceived to be dependent on the warlords to some extent since they are powerful and can influence the local population, criminal activities and stability in an area, and initiate or thwart conflicts. The warlords are affected by ISAF activities since ISAF want to fight criminality and corruption and improve security and stability. The interviewees did not know if ISAF had a strategy for managing interaction with warlords but some stated that they had occasional meetings with warlords if the warlords were willing to share relevant information with ISAF.

Many of the interviewees identified *women*, or *Women's Affairs*, as important stakeholders in Afghanistan. The women and Women's Affairs were perceived to have little direct influence but were recognised as important information providers and a way of reaching the local population. By helping women in need ISAF was thought to gain goodwill from the people. According to the interviewees ISAF had regular meetings with Women's Affairs. ISAF has also tried to include Afghan women in their work by the use of a Gender Field Advisor.

## 7.2 Stakeholder Analysis

Based on our chosen method of stakeholder analysis, Figure 5 broadly describes the various stakeholder groups (for more detail see chapter 4). Depending on the level of interest in ISAF as a strategy making organisation and the power of the stakeholder to influence the realisation of ISAF strategies, each stakeholder is categorised into one of the four boxes in the figure. Each category represents a need for ISAF to adopt a particular approach towards the stakeholders included

in the group. *Players* are the most important group since they have the power to influence ISAF, but also care about and are affected by what ISAF does; meaning that they might be able to be convinced to support ISAF (collaboration), or that leverage can be used to prevent any hostile attitude of theirs from affecting failure of ISAF strategies (deterrence).

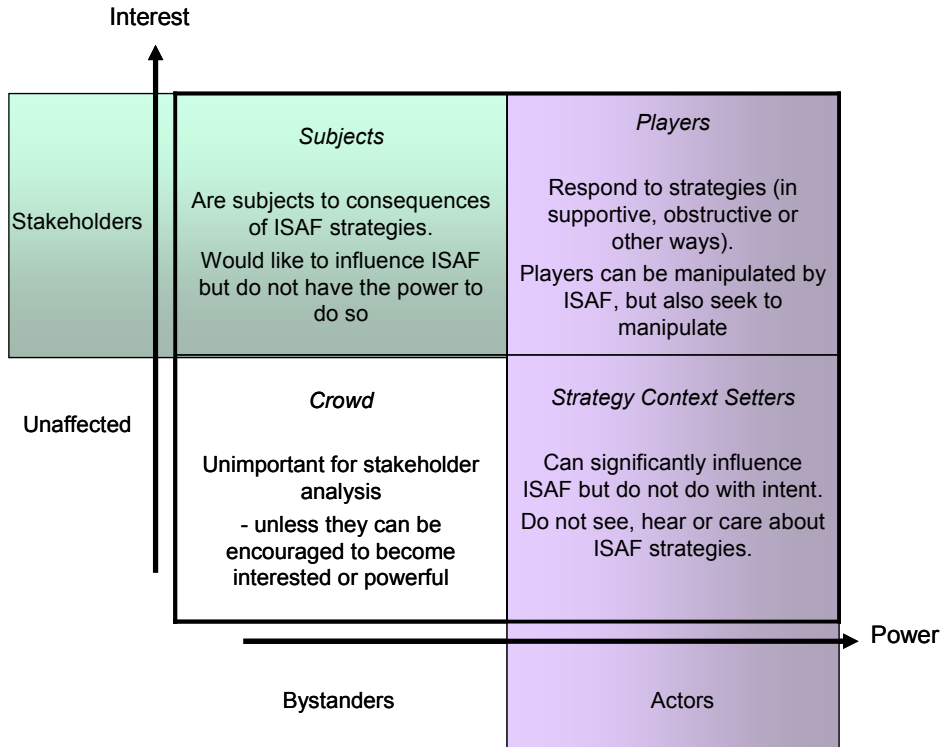


Figure 5: Stakeholder analysis grid.<sup>95</sup>

*Strategy Context Setters* have the power to influence ISAF but do not care about and are not affected by ISAF activities. They can therefore not be negotiated or bargained with and ISAF must rather just plan for contingencies resulting actions taken by strategy context setters. *Subjects* are affected by ISAF operations and therefore care about what ISAF does but have no means to affect ISAF strategies on their own. They will therefore likely seek to influence or cooperate with ISAF but such relationships are not necessitated on the part of ISAF. The *Crowd*

<sup>95</sup> Adapted from Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. pp 122-123.

consists of bystanders that are unaffected by ISAFs activities and neither want to or can influence the strategic direction of the activities.

Figure 6 below outlines a stakeholder analysis based on the data gathered during the interviews with persons who have recently been active in Afghanistan (within and outside ISAF). The grid is thus based on information and opinions provided by the interviewees but also on the authors' analysis of the interviews. It is important to note that the number of stakeholders used in the grid is not the exclusive list of important stakeholders in relation to ISAF. Rather the stakeholder analysis grid is solely based on stakeholders that have been mentioned in the conducted interviews. Similarly, the stakeholders' positions on the grid may not reflect their true nature but are based on average interpretations of their interest and power by the interviewees. As a result, this particular analysis is insufficient to form basis for operational strategy devising but fulfils its purpose within this report to set the context for studying dependencies and coordination strategies between ISAF and other stakeholders in Afghanistan. The actor in the dashed box was not mentioned during the interviews but has been used to exemplify what an actor within the Context Setter box might be.

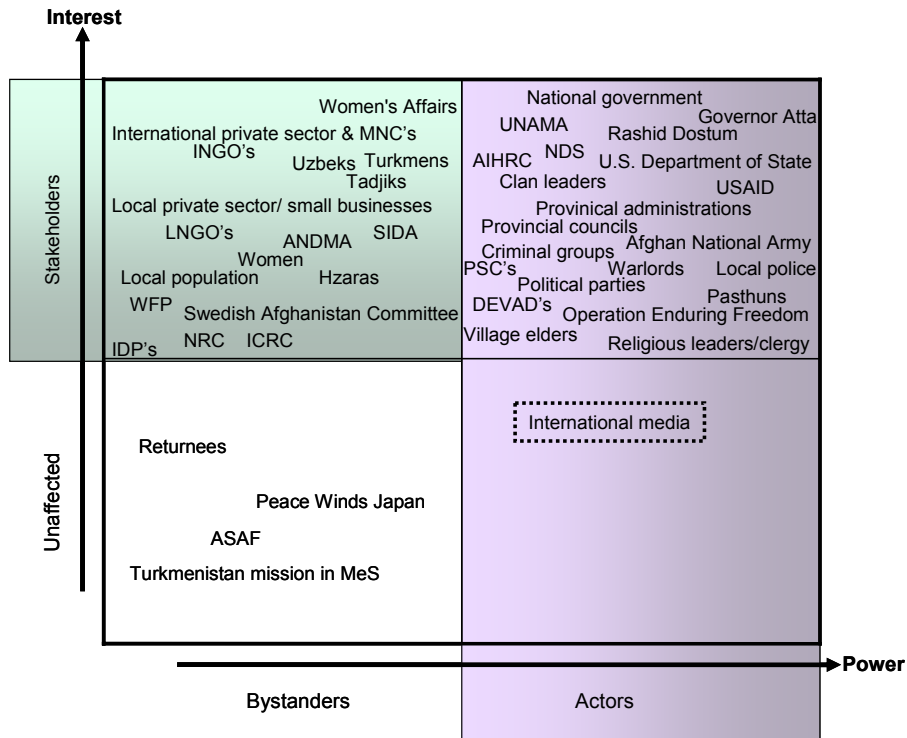


Figure 6: ISAF Operations Stakeholder analysis grid

The grid suggests what stakeholders might be susceptible to stakeholder management (subjects and players) and which need to be treated as a part of thinking about the possible futures in which any strategies need to work.<sup>96</sup> The individuals and groups listed as players influence the effectiveness of ISAF operations through being either a help or hindrance. The stakeholder analysis could therefore include colouring hostile players red, potentially collaborative green and neutral or undetermined (depending on particular strategic issue) blue.<sup>97</sup> Interdependencies might arise in relation to all of these players but strategies for managing them will differ. Collaborative and cooperative efforts are most likely to succeed in relation to green players but may be entirely impossible when dealing with red or blue players. In such situations, bargaining or enforcing mechanisms for handling dependencies lie closer at hand. It is also important to notice the difference between dependencies and interdependencies. While interdependencies – mutual dependencies – by their very nature often suggest a willingness of the actors dependent on the interdependent activities to jointly manage their dependencies, one-sided dependencies of one actor's activities on the activities of another actor may not generate enough willingness to coordinate. Interdependencies suggest an incentive for both actors to coordinate, whilst in a dependency at least one actor may not consider it cost-effective to do so. This is also the case when there is a dependency upon the activities of a Strategy Context Setter. Such dependencies can, however, be managed through bargaining with the Context Setter (or Actor) offering 'goods' supplied by a third party (for example a Subject), on which the Context Setter is in its turn dependent. In such a case, both the Subject and Context Setter would thus have been convinced to become Players.

The specific grid above is not based on the stakeholder's actual interest and power relative to ISAF so any deeper analysis of what coordination and bargaining/negotiation strategies needs to be adopted can not be drawn from it. The current state of the grid may nonetheless be useful to generate a general understanding of the interviewees' (primarily but not exclusively consisting of Swedish military officers who have been active within the MeS PRT) perception of the mentioned stakeholder's importance in relation to their own mission. It also, similarly, indicates what actors these interviewees would have found most important to develop coordination or other strategies in relation to. It is important to note that none of the interviewees have been asked to verify the stakeholder's position on the grid as their individual outlook might have slightly differed from the others. The grid is therefore based solely on the authors' analysis of the interviewees' collective perceptions.

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<sup>96</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 123

<sup>97</sup> Eden and Ackerman (1998). *Making Strategy: The Journey of Strategic Management*. p 124

### 7.3 Exemplifying ISAF dependencies

Due to the large amount of actors and activities involved in ISAFs operations a vast amount of dependencies arise on a daily basis. The dependencies vary in their magnitude and seriousness, as well as their difficulty to handle. Most of them are easily resolved and the strategies used to manage them so commonplace that we barely recognise them as dependencies anymore. They are still, nonetheless, important to pay attention to when studying dependencies and strategies since they can be used as good examples and models for how to manage less ordinary dependencies.

One straightforward example of an activity that may seem ordinary but creates a range of dependencies is the joint operations of the Afghan National Police (ANP) and ISAF troops. As part of ISAFs mandate to establish a safe and secure environment in Afghanistan, ISAF has pledged to help the Afghan authorities establish and train new Afghan security and armed forces. As part of this security sector reform, ISAF works to help develop professionalism and autonomy of the ANP. ISAF assists the ANP primarily at the tactical level by providing training, military support to operations, information, and informal mentoring services and expert advice to increase ANP capacities.<sup>98</sup> ISAF and ANP regularly conduct joint operations to enhance ANP capacities; both as force-multipliers and as an ANP training tool.

Figure 7 below outlines some of the dependencies that arise when such joint operations are undertaken. The circles represents the resources required to conduct such joint operations and the boxes the activities which either produce the resources required or that are already engaging the resources needed – making them unavailable for the joint operations activity. The diagram does not depict every needed resource or dependency but gives examples of some general dependencies. These can be separated and managed according to the three basic dependency types described in chapter five: Fit, Sharing and Flow. Each of these types is described below along with possible strategies for handling them, including the strategies practiced by ISAF.

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<sup>98</sup> Canadian National Defence. 2009. 'Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams', Forces <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/fs-fr/omlt-eng.asp>

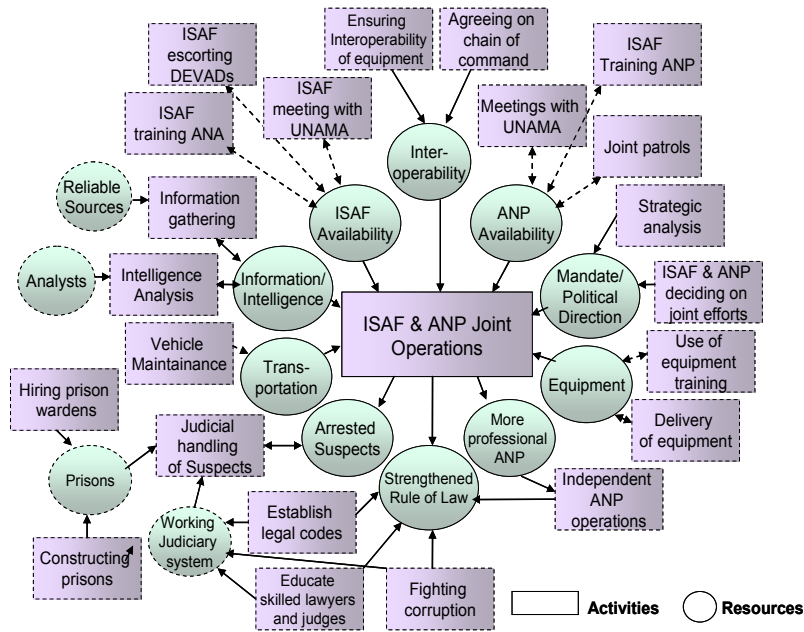


Figure 7: The chart shows examples of resource and activity dependencies that need to be managed to enable ISAF and ANA to conduct joint operations, as well as output activities and dependencies arising as a result of the joint operations.

**7.3.1 A Fit dependency**

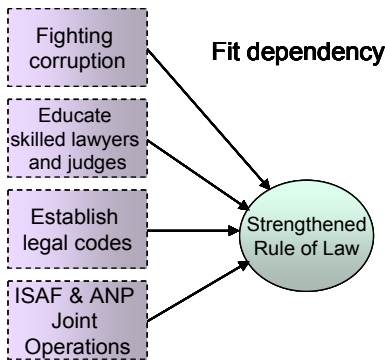


Figure 8: Example of a fit dependency

Fit dependencies arise when a number of activities together create one resource. Establishing rule of law is one such ‘fit’ dependency that exists within every PSO, see Figure 8. Assisting in strengthening rule of law is usually a task included in the mandate of the PSO but also requires efforts by a range of non-military actors. Local authorities, government and civil society are important actors in such endeavours, along with international inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations and bilateral partners. Ensuring professionalism of the

local police forces through training and education are important activities that can strengthen rule of law. In Afghanistan, the ANP is the face of public security in most villages and enhancing the professionalism of the force not only generates trust amongst local populations that ISAF is doing its job but helps

legitimate the Afghan government, contributing to state-building tasks. Rule of law is also dependent upon a range of other factors: e.g. an independent judiciary, consolidated legal system and corrections system.

One problem reported from Afghanistan by several interviewees was the ill-functioning legal system: arrested criminals often walked free due to their personal wealth and connections and the same people could be arrested over and over again but each time released because of lack of a functioning penal system able to incarcerate them and put them on trial. A common phenomenon in war-zones is also brain-drain of educated people who would be needed domestically to, for example, perform important state-functions. Lawyers, prosecutors and judges are professions commonly suffering from the flight of university-educated citizens to other countries where salaries are higher and life is safer. The filling of these professions might therefore be challenging, but is essential to the establishment of rule of law. There is thus a range of activities that together produce the strengthening of rule of law. Each of them might by itself be able to contribute to rule of law, although arresting criminals that can in fact be prosecuted is much more effective in doing so than releasing them back onto the streets. Each of the activities can therefore be seen as sub-tasks in achieving an overall goal, and each activity must be conducted with the other activities in mind. A fit dependency that arises when seeking to establish rule of law is that all the actors conducting the activities needed to establish rule of law may have different perceptions of what actually constitutes 'rule of law'. Solving such a dependency thus includes harmonising a definition of the term to guide every actors work to ensure coherence in strategy. Another dependency that needs to be managed (even when the definition of what needs to be achieved has been determined) is deciding on who does what and when, i.e. what tasks actually need to be undertaken to fulfil this goal, who should undertake them, and in what order they should be carried out? To harmonise such goal/sub-task dependencies the entire group of actors need to reach some form of group agreement regarding these questions. In a so-called 'Comprehensive Approach' to PSOs, this is ideally done by *consensus*. This means that the range of actors involved in working towards this common goal is also somehow involved in a planning and implementation process where all these questions are discussed and negotiated and some form of joint strategy is devised. In most cases, however, such joint agreements are complex and difficult. Gathering every actor consumes time and resources, and due to varied organisational structures and cultures, reaching a common agreement may even be impossible. As a result, even though some form of general consensus is desired, most such fit dependencies in PSOs are resolved by *authority*, meaning that a manager is allowed to decide. Authority may not mean that decisions are cast by one single person, even though such decision-making does take place in PSOs (then often taken by the head of a military or political mission, e.g. force commander or civilian SRSG). Nonetheless, such decision-making is usually made by a smaller group of actors with relative power

– for example the main actors within the UN family if the PSO in question is a UN Integrated Mission – and the less powerful, such as NGOs, only have the choice to align with their decision, or not.

One way of handling fit dependencies is the Who does What Where (3W) database managed by OCHA. The database is a mapping system with contact details and information about humanitarian projects in specific countries (sectors, geographical distribution and partners etc).<sup>99</sup> The 3W database is supposed to mainly function as a promoter of coordination through providing information about who to coordinate with etc, but is in itself also a coordination tool and an example of how to make harmonisation possible where more rigid coordination structures are undesirable or impossible.

### 7.3.2 A sharing dependency

Sharing dependencies arise when one resource needed to perform an activity is also used by other activities. The simplest sharing dependency arising in having

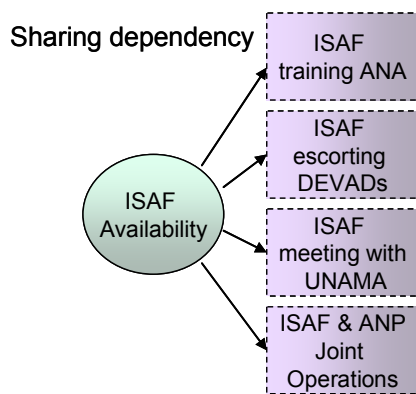


Figure 9: Example of a sharing dependency

ISAF and the ANP perform joint operations is that ISAF and the ANP need to be available to do so at the same time, see Figure 9. ISAF and the ANP both have a range of other tasks and obligations that need to be fulfilled, most forms of coordination to solve this task-management dependency addresses how to allocate each organisation to the various tasks. Strategies for managing such an availability dependency could include a first/come first serve strategy, where whoever states their need for ISAF presence first is the one to obtain it.

Another strategy is simply deciding on a range of actors that will all have ISAF available for so-and-so many hours each week and then only need to decide when they want such access. More likely is that formal or informal priority lists exist, i.e. where ANP always have priority over UNAMA, but ANA has priority over ANP etc. The force commander could also decide on a case by case basis. Such priority lists could be determined by the mission's mandate, where tasks included in the mandate all have priority over others, or could be made by the force commander, for example. It is also likely that such dependencies are resolved on a case by case basis by managerial decision (force commander or other) according to the perceived greatest need.

<sup>99</sup> <http://ochaonline.un.org/chad/WhoWhatWhere/tabid/3633/language/en-US/Default.aspx>



Other than allocating strategies, sequencing and synchronisation strategies also help relieve sharing dependencies. ISAF can for example draw up joint meeting schedules and release information about where they will be at a particular time to increase effectiveness.

### 7.3.3 A Flow dependency

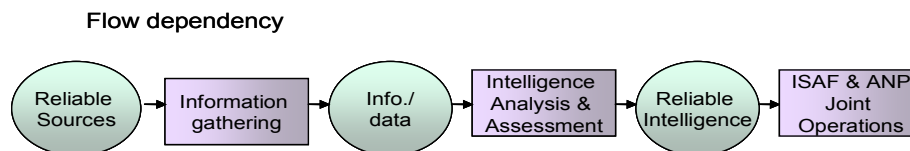


Figure 10: Example of a flow dependency

Flow dependencies arise when one activity produces a resource that is subsequently required for one or more other activities to be undertaken, see Figure 10 above. When ISAF and the ANP for example undertake joint arrests, such operations are dependent on information about who should be arrested and where they are located. This information resource can be produced by a number of activities, ranging from patrolling and communication with local populations to qualified intelligence analysis but in any case also requires assessment and evaluation of the correctness of the information available. Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) processes are other examples of flow dependencies that often arise in PSOs where one task is dependent on a previous one having been performed, and each activity is undertaken by a different actor making coordination and sequencing between the activities even more difficult.

In PSOs, flow dependencies are most favourably managed by some form of advance planning. Planning needs to be undertaken to decide when the results of an activity need to be available, what the resource actually needs to be (information about what, so that the information is in fact usable) and how, when and to whom the resource should be delivered (e.g. how is information given to ANP, how will reintegration activities have access to demobilised soldiers). Advance planning within ISAF is easier than planning with external actors but planning with external actors is also always required in some form. Planning around DDRR processes (which are also in some forms fit dependencies) require advanced agreement of who does what where and approximately when, but also need to be accompanied by tracking and notification mechanisms to determine changes in plans, delays and unforeseen events that might impact on all other activities, but also indicating to other activities that they can or need to begin. Such mechanisms can include coordination meetings between the various actors,

common databases and maps, lead by one coordinating organisation or more informal interpersonal communication.

## 7.4 Applicability of theory

The stakeholder analysis and coordination theory concepts introduced in this report are complex and their direct impact on command and control issues can be difficult to comprehend. Particularly the study of dependencies as described here might seem to have little resonance in the real world of PSOs, where thinking about whether the problem you are facing is a share, fit or flow dependency might appear to be a waste of time that should be spent merely addressing the difficulties straight on. During the interviews, the coordination and dependency theories seemed difficult to comprehend by the interviewees, who had experience from the field but little scholarly familiarity of coordination theory. As such, the interviewees found the concepts difficult to apply to their own experience and the study of dependencies thus seemed inapplicable, at least at the operational level.

The applicability of the dependency analysis presented here is not as evident as the stakeholder analysis but studying dependencies is still important. Many of the dependencies exemplified may seem obvious and simple, e.g. resource dependencies, and the strategies (coordination activities) for managing them equally apparent, e.g. prioritising between activities. Dependencies exist everywhere and coordination activities to manage these dependencies occur frequently all around us without us noticing them or thinking much about them. In many instances, the studying of these dependencies might seem trivial but is nonetheless very important. Coordination is most notable when it is lacking or when it is flawed. Where coordination works well both the dependency and the coordination activity appear almost invisible: we may not even realise that they exist. It is therefore of much value to study dependencies and their management to find important strategies and lessons learnt regarding what it is that makes these work, so that these can be applied to the 'tougher' cases where practical solutions have not yet been found. The application of coordination theory may not be particularly suitable to the tactical and operational levels of military missions and PSOs, but can be useful to strategic planning and particularly longer term concept development, in addition to the devising of policies regarding civil-military cooperation as well as military-military and civil-civil relations.

The previous examples of dependencies in PSOs in this report are just a few meagre illustrations of the many thousands of dependencies that could have been mentioned. It is of course almost impossible to map-out or track every dependency that exists in a PSO but starting from any chosen activity to study the dependencies that affects this activity can either help to improve the conditions for undertaking that particular activity, where coordination does not

seem to work well, or help apply the coordination mechanisms also to other activities in those instances where the dependencies seem to have been sufficiently managed. The exploration of coordination theory and the categorisation of dependencies can be an important tool in this, helping to increase awareness not only of the evident coordination problems and difficulties, but also to help identify the coordination activities that in fact works well and without this awareness might have been difficult to identify just because they have been sufficiently managed.

Unlike the dependency analysis, the stakeholder analysis is far more pertinent and directly applicable to in-theatre operations. Similar analyses are already being conducted by military intelligence and information cells and are already being applied in various ways at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Regarding the stakeholder analysis the question is not so much whether this type of analysis is applicable, but how it differs from other types of social and environmental analysis. These types of analyses are always important to guide planning and implementation of PSOs. Stakeholder analysis can be conducted for a variety of reasons before entering a mission area to identify important players, and can also, such as in our analysis, assist in describing these players in a way as to find appropriate strategies for managing these. Furthermore, it can be a useful tool throughout the mission e.g. in aiding the development of key leader engagement plans.

Despite the existence of similar types of analysis it is important to stress that this particular one is meant to define which actors need to be managed through some type of coordination strategy. This applies both to whether the coordination activity is meant to help a joint effort or mitigate the negative consequences of someone else's activities. The stakeholder analysis thus needs to be undertaken with this specific purpose in mind. In addition, analysis, using the interest and power axes, can be applied not just to actors and stakeholders but to actor and stakeholder *activities* to explore the interdependencies between different activities and find which are the most important to coordinate. In this type of analysis, the stakeholder analysis grid is combined with the dependency theory, outlining an analysis of dependencies between activities, identifying high and low-level dependencies and mapping which activities need to be/can be addressed through coordination mechanisms. The stakeholder grid can, as outlined in Figure 11, express the level of dependency between various actors and will thus also be a tool for assessing for which activities coordination is required.

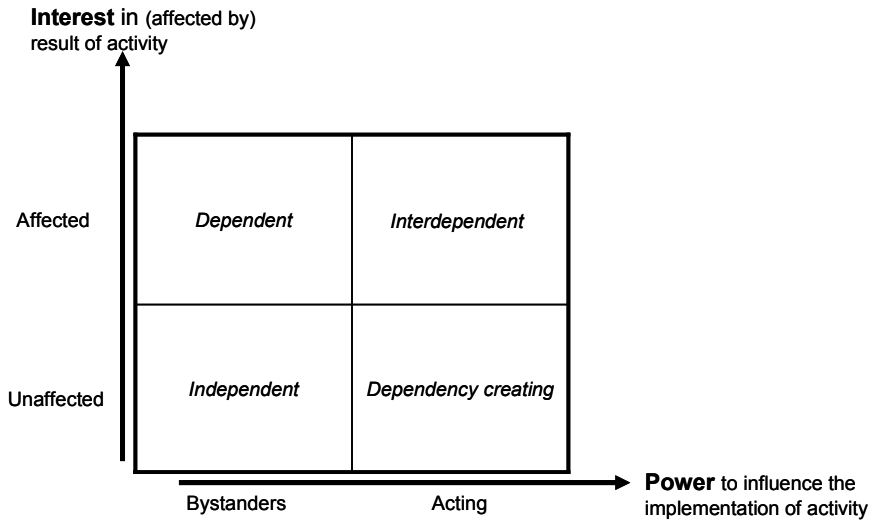


Figure 11. Levels and types of dependencies identified in a stakeholder analysis

In sum, stakeholder analysis is important to determine with which actors' coordination and harmonisations strategies need to be prioritised and can also guide what type of strategies would be appropriate. Dependency analysis can help pin-point what such strategies should be/could be but might be most applicable to longer-term policy planning and strategic concept development.

## 8 Coordination experiences from the field

This chapter presents the results from the interviews, focusing on the interviewees' appreciation of how cooperation and coordination works in Afghanistan. The chapter also discusses the strategies, formal or informal, that was used or could have been used to facilitate cooperation and coordination.

### 8.1 Results from the interviews

The results from the interviews show that cooperation and coordination works well in some cases and not so well in other cases. The need for, and the quality of, cooperation and coordination vary depending on level and organisation, but it also depend on specific individuals. According to the interviewees coordination between military and civilian components in Afghanistan has too much focus on the tactical level, i.e. some of the military interviewees emphasised that coordination has to start at the strategic level, or even at the ministerial level, before the troops are sent to a country for peacekeeping efforts. If there is no agreed policy at the ministerial level it will be difficult for the staff, both military and civilian, at the tactical level to define common objectives, mandates and working strategies.

Most of the interviewees stated that cooperation is often person-specific and based on the individual officer's ability to communicate and establish good relations to individuals holding central positions. In general it takes a long time to establish and build good relations; especially in countries like Afghanistan where trust is an important part of the culture; and the culture is distinctively different from the Scandinavian post-modern society. Many of the interviewed officers described their modus operandi as straight forward, simple and direct; they prided themselves of being able to understand the Afghan way of relating and communicating. However, interviews with civilians – who had a long term and extensive working experience in Afghanistan – showed that they did not have the same perception of the Afghan culture and communication style as the military. This does not necessary mean that the military staff's perception is incorrect; nevertheless it is relevant to reflect on the fact that the Swedish military come from a homogenous background. The majority of Swedish officers are ethnic Swedes which generally means that their exposure to cultural diversity has been limited. Subsequently their training in cultural awareness may be incomplete, which in turn may affect their understanding of cooperation and coordination with Afghans or fellow expatriate actors.

The interviewees described the Swedish military approach in Afghanistan as friendlier and less belligerent than other coalition partners. The level of force

protection is lower among the Swedish troops which is believed to contribute to less aggression and attacks from the Afghan community. It was stressed that military protection gear and weapons should be kept to a necessary minimum in order not to provoke or frighten the local population, but rather enable them to meet people on equal terms. The military interviewees defined themselves as guests of the Afghan government and acknowledged the importance of respecting the host society. This approach was considered an important strategy in promoting cooperation with the Afghan community, as well as a tool for force protection. However, some of the civilian interviewees reported that the Afghans not always understood the “soft” Swedish armed forces and questioned whether they really had the capabilities of a real “warrior”. One representative from the ICRC – with an extensive experience from and long standing involvement with Afghanistan – stressed his experience of the Afghan culture as a culture of negotiation. According to him “the Afghans would show strength but not necessarily use it” since they preferred to solve conflicts through negotiation. This would speak in favour of the “soft” Swedish military approach where emphasis is put on building relations and communicating.

The interviewed military staff had a much unified view on how coordination and cooperation with other actors should be organised. The majority stated that operations and efforts should always have an Afghan ‘face’, be done the Afghan way and at the Afghan pace. Their understanding of ISAFs role was as complementary to the Afghan authorities; they themselves should therefore not take sole credit for a successful mission. This method was part of strengthening the official governmental structures and boosting the government’s authority.

Another major factor influencing cooperation and coordination, stated by the interviewees, was the lack of a common language. Communication with the Afghans requires interpreters which mean a risk of losing vital information and nuances in the interpretation. The interviewees emphasised the importance of having good interpreters that you can trust (i.e. so you know that they translate the things you say exactly the way you want them to say it). It is also important to note that communication and interpretation can also be negatively affected by the fact that the Swedish military officers do not communicate with the interpreters in their own mother tongue. English is the lingua franca in ISAF and some (not all) of the interviewed officers declared that their English language skills were not always sufficient. However, others – in their willingness to communicate and understand the Afghans – claimed that although they did not understand and had not studied the local tongue they could still grasp the content when Afghans spoke. This suggests a willingness of the Swedish officers to communicate with and understand the Afghans but is also worrying since such types of communication carries great potential for both confusion and misunderstandings, the avoidance of which is imperative.

The interviews seem to suggest that there is no easy solution on how to manage cooperation based on the individuals' capacity to build personal relations and communicate with people from a culture distinctively different than their own. The short rotation times, with little overlap, contributes to a discontinuation in the relations to the Afghan society and makes it difficult to hand over to the succeeding personnel. It can, for example, be difficult to keep track on what has been agreed on with different actors in the area. Several of the interviewees stated that they had come in contact with persons (e.g. village elders) who repeatedly had been visited by ISAF personnel discussing problems and needs, but more often than not this did not lead to any action. In these situations it is important to know what previous personnel has done and promised. Often it is not within the mandate of the ISAF personnel to find solutions to problems stated by the locals – they just pass on the information to different aid or development organisations; however, it is always important not to promise things that can not be kept and to know what promises have been previously made by own personnel to avoid false expectations and generating disappointment and distrust amongst local populations.

The interviews suggest that cooperation and coordination between military and civilian personnel within the PRT worked fairly well; although some of the civilian advisor positions were vacant for long periods of time (which had negative effect on the PRT). The interviewees stated that they had both formal and informal meetings on a regular basis to enable good information exchange and coordination of efforts with the other actors. The problems that were raised were mainly related to limited resources and unclear priorities. The vacant advisor positions (political and/or development advisors) meant that important aspects of the PRTs work was not appropriately dealt with.

Some of the interviewees also stated that the advisors' roles and relations to the military was unclear, which created some problems: the military staff and the advisors sometimes have conflicting goals or work methods, since there is no clear chain of command, prioritising between these becomes difficult. For example, in order for the advisors to be able to give advise to the PRT they need to work closely with the Afghan population and different organisations outside of the PRT; however, the advisors need military escort when going outside of the camp which strains military resources, including vehicles and personnel. The situation arising when these resources are occupied elsewhere is a shared resource dependency, and solving this dependency is made even more difficult due to the separate chains of command. To address this dependency Sida has decided to set up an office for the development advisors outside of the camp and to give them their own vehicles. This will give them more freedom to move around on their own but at the same time doing so risks losing the benefits of the civilian advisors being close-knit with the military.

The results from the interviews also showed that it is not necessarily the coordination between civilian and military actors that is most challenging. Civil-civil and military-military coordination can be just as difficult (or even more so). The possibilities of military coordination are for example affected by different national agendas and national caveats. The military-military cooperation within the PRT experienced some difficulties due to the dual lead (Finnish – Swedish). Most positions were manned with both Swedish and Finnish personnel resulting in complex chains of command and large staff meetings. Differences in routines and policies also affected the work and in stressful situations language difficulties posed a problem. The military-military cooperation/coordination with neighbouring PRTs is also experiencing difficulties due to different military approaches, different levels of force protection and different attitudes towards the local community.

When it comes to cooperation and coordination outside of the PRT most interviewees seemed to be of the same opinion – coordination between military and civilian actors is vital for the development of Afghanistan. However, the authors would like to note that coordinating efforts with other actors is not synonymous with everyone doing the same thing. In the aspiration of helping the Afghans, the boundaries between different organisations sometimes get blurred. Each actor must focus on the things they are supposed to focus on according to their own mandate. These are naturally also the things they have a comparative advantage at doing, i.e. what they are equipped and trained for and what they are best at. If all actors focus on the tasks most appropriate for their own organisation, they can achieve a better effect and will also pave the way for other actors and organisations in conducting their activities – for which they are better suited. However, even though this sounds easy in theory it may be difficult in practice. The military and the civilians have different working styles and they operate based on different strategies. An exemplifying frustration stated during the interviews was the different perceptions of time. The civilians involved in development had long term goals and it was perceived by the military as if “nothing was really done”. At the same time, the military now and again got involved in small quick impact projects which – according to the civilian actors – did not really contribute to needed sustainable development for vulnerable populations. Furthermore, the military works with short time frames due to the six-month rotations and want to see some results during period.

Many of the military interviewees mentioned that it is difficult *not* to help persons in need even if they know it is not their task nor within their area of responsibility to do so (i.e. it is the responsibility of humanitarian aid organisations to help persons in need). To make effective task assignment possible information sharing is essential. By sharing information, i.e. by informing other actors of what you do, and what you do not do, the work you conduct can be more purposeful and efficient as it enables task assignment: other



actors can walk away from the things they are not supposed to handle and hand it over to experts.

One important part of information sharing is regular meetings (which are already in place for some actors). According to the interviewees, weekly security meetings were held with military and civilian personnel as well as several Afghan representatives (i.e. provincial office, province governor, province council, police, NDS, ANA and UNAMA). These meetings were considered important forums to share information and build relations which are vital to achieve better coordination of efforts. Not all actors and organisations can be present at all meetings so there is always a need to manage information sharing to a larger number of actors. For example, the military interviewees stated that the PRT had little contact with NGOs in the area. They mainly related to UNAMA, who in its turn had contact with the NGO community. The NGOs had an open invitation to contact ISAF when needed but in general, the military interviewees stated, the NGOs had little need to interact with the military as long as the security situation in the area was good enough. The militaries' emphasis on using aid to "win hearts and minds" and promote security as part of their stabilisation strategy was considered by some interviewees from the NGO community as counter-productive, fearing that such strategies would blur the line between civilians and military actors and create security risks for the NGOs. Short term "hearts and minds" projects are not, according to interviewed civilians, compatible with the over-all Afghan development plans because they have other goals than the agencies/NGOs working with development issues. The general perception of the civilians interviewed was that the military wanted to strengthen their force protection while the civilians aimed for sustainable development.

Some high-ranking officers interviewed expressed disappointment regarding the difficulty to identify development projects supported by the Swedish government. Some civilian organizations were reluctant to carry national signs or flags since they want to promote Afghan capacity building rather than being perceived as a charity handing out goods to a weak and needing country. The NGOs were also hesitant to use the Swedish flag since it could associate them with the Swedish troops, making them potential targets for insurgency attacks. This request by the military for more Swedish visibility is somewhat contradictory to their approach that efforts always should have an "*Afghan face*". An additional aspect is that the military personnel seemed to not always understand that being associated with military forces could be a security issue for some civilian organisations.

In sum, there are many factors that influence the ability and/or willingness to cooperate and coordinate. There are valuable lessons learned that need to be considered for current and future engagements in multifunctional operations. The

next section presents some possible strategies for managing dependencies and coordination.

## 8.2 Coordination strategies

Throughout this study a few strategies for managing dependencies and increasing coordination have been identified. This section describes these strategies and suggests how coordination might be facilitated in the future.

To seek to address some of these coordination problems, UNAMA has, for example, developed civil-military guidelines to support coordination in Afghanistan but the opinion of some of the military interviewees was that there is a need for additional documents to supplement the guidelines. In order for a guideline to be helpful it must: A) state what mandates different organisations have; B) point out where these mandates overlap; and; C) draw up guidelines for formal coordination structures related to these overlaps (i.e. make it less dependent on individuals) and support appropriate forms of coordination.

Even though guidelines may be valuable, they do not solve all the problems. Different nations and organisations still have different goals, agendas and priorities sometimes making them unwilling or unable to coordinate. In such situations coordination can only be motivated by identifying greater gains for coordination. This could mean enhancing the dependency of one actor upon another, or merely displaying to each actor the actual advantages of coordination that already exist but which the actor were unaware of, or in any other way lower the cost of coordination. One suggestion given by an interviewee that could both increase the dependency between actors and thus (in many cases) lower the cost of coordination vis-à-vis leaving the dependency unmanaged, was that all efforts in Afghanistan (both civilian and military) should operate under one 'command', perhaps similar as is the case in UN Integrated Missions where the UN civilian and military efforts are integrated under one (civilian) mission lead: the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG).<sup>100</sup> Such a suggestion would not only lower the cost of coordination but could also increase the dependency of one actor upon another (making subjects and strategy context setters players and so on). Once you have an integrated command, each component becomes increasingly dependent on the others since they are suddenly one part of a whole. Integrated command often entails an increasing amount of shared resources (time, money, attention etc) but also means that one component might be affected by policy applied to the other. Integrating a chain of command could thus mean strengthening existing dependencies and increasing the number of dependencies whilst at the same time making many dependencies easier to manage through facilitating cost-effective coordination. On the other hand, mission integration

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<sup>100</sup> See Hull (2008). *Integrated Missions: A Liberia Case Study*. Swedish Defence Research Agency

could generate entirely new sets of dependencies that are even more difficult to manage than others and increase the cost of coordination: an example of this is the UN Integrated Mission in Liberia where the UN body coordinating between humanitarian agents became so closely integrated with the military and political components of the UN mission that several NGOs chose not to coordinate with the body at all from fear that doing so would jeopardise their neutrality and safety.<sup>101</sup>

Coordination is not harmonisation of actors or everyone taking the 'same approach'. To coordinate is to manage dependencies and only in some cases does the particular dependency in fact require the adoption of joint strategic approaches (usually this is only the case in some so-called 'fit dependencies'). Rather, coordination is ensuring that interdependencies are handled in a way as to make as many *activities* as possible proceed properly instead of having unmanaged dependencies hamper them all. If we take this view of coordination and harmonisation (of activities) we can generate an understanding of coordination as vital but not necessarily a threat to the mandates and purposes of the various organisations seeking to coordinate since coordination is aimed at harmonising activities and not actors.

To be able to harmonise efforts, one must consider what the different actors and nations want and need and to what extent (and how) things are effected by one's own agendas. An important aspect of facilitating harmonisation is to keep track of the own organisations agenda and approach. It is very difficult to harmonise the management of dependencies if one is uncertain about the aims and needs of one's own activities and strategies. During interviews, a need for an information strategy was expressed. Many of the military interviewees stated a need for a Swedish national agenda and strategies that could be communicated within the entire organisation so that all levels of the Swedish operation in Afghanistan could strive towards the same goal and give the same message to the Afghans regarding what they are doing there, what they want to achieve and how they can help Afghanistan. A well-working command group is vital in enabling such strategies in the field to ensure that all interactions with different actors strive in the same direction and making sure that all the Swedish personnel have a common understanding of what they can say and what they can commit to doing. By ensuring such internal coherence, communication and coordination with external actors will also be facilitated. Coordination as well as harmonisation is at least dependent on awareness of what each activity is trying to achieve; without which harmonisation is almost impossible. A lack of awareness also means a lack of understanding of the dependencies between the activities and what actually *needs to be* coordinated/harmonised, as well as what *can be* coordinated /harmonised. This is the case both as regards one's own aspirations

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<sup>101</sup> Hull (2008). *Integrated Missions: A Liberia Case Study*. pp 51, 30

and capabilities and those of the organisation with which harmonisation is needed.

As stated above, stricter forms of coordination than mere harmonisation might nonetheless be needed in relation to certain types of fit dependences (where the activities carried out are part of a group of activities and sub-tasks for achieving some overall goal, and need to be carried out with the other activities in mind). In such activities, dependency on other activities is inherent and close coordination, also in terms of joint strategy and purpose, is required. Such fit dependencies in Afghanistan are usually connected to the broad mandates of the organisations operating there: e.g. enhancing national development and establishing a safe and secure environment. There are many factors affecting the development projects in Afghanistan; corruption, instability and lack of coordination between different organisations are just a few examples. Many of the interviewees emphasised the importance of having a clear development strategy, to cooperate and coordinate when possible and, as previously mentioned, to ensure that all actors focus on the most appropriate things relevant to themselves. There are a few coordinating bodies in Afghanistan seeking to coordinate development and particularly humanitarian projects<sup>102</sup>; yet, only a small number of the military interviewees had any awareness of these. There is a need for further coordination of development efforts to ensure the effective catering to the needs of vulnerable populations. Even though the military should not conduct development projects per se, they still have an important role to fill in this endeavour by helping to create a stable and safe environment so the different development organisations can carry out their work. The unawareness of the coordination bodies existing to harmonise in this area is troublesome and an important strategy for facilitating coordination should be to generate awareness of the potentials for coordination, including disseminating information about the existence of such bodies.

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<sup>102</sup> Examples include UNOCHA, a UN body coordinating through the UN humanitarian reform cluster approach; and ACBAR (the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief), and umbrella organisation representing a hundred NGO members from the national and international humanitarian, reconstruction and development community.

## 9 Conclusions

Based on the theories on dependencies and the interviews conducted within this study a number of conclusions can be drawn – some are more theoretical and some are based on the experiences from Afghanistan. This chapter summarises the main conclusions from the study and ties theory and the field experiences together.

### 9.1 General conclusions

This report has explored theories about stakeholders and dependencies in operational environments. Their direct impact on operations in the field may be difficult to comprehend but the theory is highly applicable when developing methods and concepts for improving coordination. We can conclude that **conducting a stakeholder analysis is part of generating an understanding about what dependencies exist, or might arise in the field.** Such understanding is crucial not only for direct application in the field, but to further our understanding of field dynamics that can help to, at the conceptual level, develop better strategies to enhance cooperation.

A common way of thinking about coordination is in terms of which *actors* one should coordinate with. The aim of coordination thus, falsely, becomes to manage relations between actors. **Coordination should rather be considered managing dependencies between activities, not actors.** Dependencies do not arise between actors as such, but between the activities and tasks they undertake. Thinking about coordination in this way can help finding coordination strategies that have greater actual effect.

**In many instances, coordination activities seem to be conducted for the purpose of coordination itself rather than managing actual dependencies.** Amongst many interviewees coordination was considered ‘good’, but it seemed like the purpose of coordination was not always clear, making it difficult to determine the cause and effects of coordination. Some coordination activities, for example inter-organisational coordination meetings, have vague purposes and are mainly constituted to create or uphold interpersonal relationships, or to look good ‘on paper’. Even though upholding relationships to facilitate information exchange etc can be very valuable, one must actively assess whether the coordination activity actually manages a dependency or merely constitutes a meeting without greater purpose. Such ‘coordination’ activities merely eat into resources and takes energy from what actually needs to be coordinated.

Coordination always comes at a cost: e.g. in terms of resources, time or energy. Where the effect is low, the cost of coordination sometimes outweighs the benefit of managing the dependency. **Managing dependencies is finding cost-**

**effective ways to coordinate.** We should not take for granted that the cost of coordination will always be worthwhile, even though there is a need to coordinate. As such, all interdependencies can not be managed, due to a range of reasons including e.g. political will. An important strategy to making coordination cost-effective is to generate or create new dependencies. Where one activity is dependent on another but not vice versa, strategies can be undertaken to change this relationship and make the actors and activities interdependent. This will lower the cost of coordination vis-à-vis leaving the dependency unmanaged and thus facilitate coordination. The stakeholder analysis presented in this report can be an important tool in understanding the potentials for affecting such relationships.

Most dependencies can be categorised into ‘Fit’, ‘Flow’ or ‘Sharing’ dependencies. Depending on their categorisation, different types of coordination mechanisms are appropriate to manage the dependencies. **Clarifying the dependencies will generate a better understanding of what actually needs to be coordinated** in a given case, and in its turn, improve our understanding of the options for how it may be coordinated.

## 9.2 Conclusions from Afghanistan

Cooperation and coordination in Afghanistan seems to have worked well in some cases and not so well in others. It is difficult to determine whether successful coordination has been due to the characteristics of specific individuals, the existence of appropriate organisational structures facilitating coordination and/or the application of specific coordination strategies in the field. Nonetheless, it can be said that **any lack of good coordination is due to a combination of many factors.**

Throughout the study, the importance of inter-personal relations was emphasised as an important facilitator of coordination. Individual characteristics, such as communication skills, cultural awareness and ability to maintain good relations with individuals holding central positions are highly important for successful coordination. That the characteristics of specific individuals are important is not surprising and is a conclusion that applies also to other missions and domains. Even though it may seem like a simple conclusion the implications of the conclusion are not as simple: questions such as how we make sure that the right personnel are recruited for missions, for example, instantly arises. There is a need to identify the specific qualities and characteristics that are desirable for these missions; to improve recruitment and training routines; and also; to increase the incentives for the personnel going on international missions (i.e. to increase the likelihood of getting the right people to apply for, and accept, positions in international missions) .

Short rotation times with little overlap with the succeeding personnel make it difficult to develop and sustain good interpersonal relations. Concerns about not knowing what promises previous rotations have made towards local populations were expressed as a problem during several of the interviews. Consequently, there is a need to review the rotation routines and rotation times to create more overlap and processes that better support long-term relations with key actors in the area.

From the interviews we can conclude that **access to reliable interpreters is of uttermost importance** for the mission. Interpreters are vital for communication with the Afghans –to translate messages but also to help generate cultural awareness. Consequently, access to reliable interpreters must be ensured. Furthermore, since the communication with the interpreter, as well as most communication with civilian and military personnel from other countries, is conducted in English adequate language skills are very important. English is not a native language for most Swedes and several of the interviewees stated that insufficient English skills hampered cooperation and coordination possibilities. Thus, there is a need to **ensure that all personnel that go on international missions are given the opportunity to improve their English skills** to ensure that they reach an adequate level and feel comfortable in their abilities to communicate with others.

One coordination strategy that seemed to be working very well in Afghanistan was the information sharing meetings that were held with UNAMA on a regular basis. The coordination with UNAMA was also aided by **civil-military guidelines, developed by UNAMA, to support coordination in Afghanistan**. Several of the interviewees thought that the guidelines were very helpful but could benefit from further development. Civil-military guidelines, like the ones developed by UNAMA, are important tools that can aid coordination and improve harmonization efforts in multifunctional environments.

In the efforts of helping the Afghans different actors sometimes get involved in projects and activities that are not within their area of expertise or responsibility. For example, quick impact projects may have a positive short-term effect but they can also have a negative effect if they are not in line with the long term development plan. To facilitate better coordination and harmonisation of efforts there is a need for a clear development strategy. It is also important to realise that **greater effect can be achieved if all actors focus on carrying out the most appropriate things relevant to their own objectives and skills**. All actors may, from time to time, be required to undertake tasks that are not within their primary focus area e.g. if the actors that are normally responsible is not present in the mission area or temporarily unable to fulfil their tasks. However, when all actors are present in the mission area the tasks should be carried out but the one who is most appropriate and skilled. There are a few coordinating bodies in Afghanistan seeking to coordinate development and particularly humanitarian projects; yet,

only a small number of the military interviewees were aware of these. The unawareness of the coordination bodies existing to harmonise in this area is worrying and an important strategy for facilitating coordination should be to **generate awareness of the potentials for coordination**, including disseminating information about the existence of such bodies.

When it comes to cooperation and coordination within the PRT the interviews suggests that it worked fairly well but a few issues created problems. For example, the dual Finnish-Swedish lead resulted in complex chains of command and large staff meetings since most positions were manned with both Swedish and Finnish personnel. Differences in routines and policies also affected the work negatively and it was noted that in stressful situations the need to speak English within the PRT posed a problem. These problems would probably not appear in a national PRT. Consequently, **there is a need to evaluate the pros and cons of having an international PRT**. Furthermore, the roles of the advisors were perceived to be unclear making it difficult to prioritise competing activities. It is **vital to have a clear chain of command and clarify the roles and mandates for all the personnel within the PRT**. It is also important to realise that many activities within the PRT requires the use of common resources and appropriately managing the resource-dependencies between these activities is essential to obtaining the overarching goals of the PRT.

Even though opinions sometimes differed between interviewees there was one aspect that most interviewees agreed upon – almost all of the military interviewees emphasised **the importance of local ownership**. They stated that all activities and operations involving Afghan personnel should always have an Afghan face to strengthen the Afghans' ability to govern their own country and create sustainability in Afghanistan. Even though local ownership is only one way of working towards a long-term solution in Afghanistan, this awareness amongst the military personnel indicates the existence of common understanding of one of the goals of the mission.

### 9.3 Final remarks

We often talk about what coordination *is*, but it is also important to discuss what coordination *is not*. Coordination is not harmonisation of actors or everyone taking the 'same approach'. To coordinate is to manage dependencies and only in some cases does the particular dependency in fact require the adoption of joint strategic approaches (usually this is only the case in some so-called 'fit dependencies'). Rather, **coordination is ensuring that interdependencies are handled in a way as to make as many activities as possible proceed properly instead of having unmanaged dependencies hamper them all**. If we take this view of coordination and harmonisation (of activities) we can generate an understanding of coordination as vital but not necessarily a threat to the mandates



and purposes of the various organisations seeking to coordinate since coordination is aimed at harmonising activities and not actors.

One dependency problem reported during the research for this study was the lack of an information strategy and coherent national agenda. Several of the interviewees stated that they did not know the purpose of the mission, or rather; they did not know what to say to the Afghan people. Generating awareness of the overall purpose amongst personnel is essential for coordination since troops cannot be sure of the most appropriate way of managing dependencies if one's own aims and needs are not known. **Coordination has to start at the strategic level**, or at the ministerial level, before the troops are sent to a country for peacekeeping efforts. Without a strategy or policy guidelines it will be difficult to establish common objectives, mandates and working strategies in the field. **By ensuring such internal coherence, communication and coordination with external actors will also be facilitated.**

The expressed need for coordination to be better addressed at the strategic level suggests that there is still a strategic and conceptual deficit when it comes to coordination. There is **a need for handling in-field dependencies at early stages and through coordination mechanisms at strategic levels**, or through early planning for how coordination shall be facilitated in the field. In such early planning it is vital that an understanding exists of what dependencies might arise in the field since only then the need for establishing appropriate coordination mechanisms can be appropriately addressed. This study has found that thinking about coordination and dependencies is important but that the value of doing so is often overlooked due to the difficulty of understanding how coordination theory has resonance in the field and a lack of tradition to think in these terms when planning and conducting PSOs. The idea is not new, dependencies and coordination is regularly addressed, but is rarely depicted within these types of frameworks and terms.

**The study of dependencies and the management of these can improve cooperation and coordination in the field.** The conclusions highlighted here are of a general type. We have found that the study of dependencies and stakeholders are of importance, but also that additional research on the topic is needed to be able to draw any further-reaching conclusions and fully understand the implications this has on command and control issues.

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## Abbreviations

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
AIHCR	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Committee
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDMA	Afghan National Disaster Management Agency
ANF	Afghan National Force
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
ASNF	Afghan Special Narcotics Force
CA	Comprehensive Approach
DEVAD	Development Advisor
DFID	Department For International Development
EUPOL	European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan
FOI	Swedish Defence Research Agency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCDEC	Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Centre
KLEP	Key Leader Engagement Plan
MNE	Multinational Experimentation Series
NGO	Non Government Organization
NSD	National Directorate of Security
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMLT	Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team
PMT	Police Mentoring Teams
PO	Provincial Office

POLAD	Political Advisor
POLICEAD	Police Advisor
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSO	Peace Support Operations
QIP	Quick Impact Projects
SAK	Swedish Afghanistan Committee
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SwAF	Swedish Armed Forces
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOS	United States Department of State
WFP	World Food Programme