Tampere University

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شانه به شانه
Military, Tribes and Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

Jani Kylä-Harakka: شانه به شانه – Military, Tribes and Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan
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Over the years, several studies have focused on the state-centric Security Sector Reform (SSR) of Afghanistan and the so-called 2nd generation of SSR, engaging traditional security and justice providers and tribes, has had only little attention. This study looks at the interdependencies of different security models present in conflict-affected environments and assesses their relation to SSR through the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program as a study on 2nd generation of SSR.

Due to the nature of the conflict of Afghanistan several military related models and concepts need to be discussed. Five models are presented, of which only SSR is clearly a non-military, state- or nation-building model, whereas war by proxy, Counterinsurgency (COIN), Special Operations (SOF) and Unconventional Warfare (UW) are derived from military sciences. However, all of them are vital to understanding the dynamics of the Afghan conflict, the SSR that has been attempted, and the ALP program.

The study can be positioned within the conflict transformation perspective. To enhance peace, stability and human security, the conditions that influence it need to be altered. All the models discussed in this study share that aim, though with different means and motivations.

The main question the research aims to answer is, *how have the security models taken the tribal nature of the Afghan society into consideration as an enabler of security, justice and enhancing human security?* The question is approached by assessing the relevant models, the societal surroundings of the tribes and eventually comparing the models with the programs to see how local actors have been included in the reforms.

The main findings of the study were that on the concept level all models appear to be comprehensive, but on the practical level they appear to focus narrowly on their own theme and there appears to be a lack of coordination and cooperation between different actors, hampering the overall results. The study also highlighted the need for inclusive local ownership and enhanced coordination for a comprehensive approach.

The study showed that although academic articles and debate exists on how SSR models should be developed, there is no comprehensive understanding on 2nd generation of SSR and how tribal actors should be included. Although officially not an SSR program, the ALP is one of few programs that has utilized traditional security providers in this extent. Analyzing the successes and shortcomings of the ALP from an SSR perspective, provided takeaways to developing 2nd generation SSR.

Keywords: Afghanistan, counterinsurgency, security sector reform, special operations, traditional security, tribe, war by proxy,

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAN	Afghanistan Analysts Network
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AQI	al Qaida Iraq
ARIS	Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DA	Direct Action
DCAF ISSAT	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces International Security Sector Advisory Team
EUPOL Afghanistan	European Union Police Advisory Mission in Afghanistan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MA	Military Assistance
NDS	National Department of Security
NPS	US Naval Postgraduate School
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
POS	Political Opportunity Structures
SAS	Special Air Service
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SORO	Special Operations Research Office
SSR	Security Sector Reform
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VSO	Village Stability Operations
VSP	Village Stability Platform

1 INTRODUCTION

"Conflicts often arise from the failure of State's legal system to protect rights and punish perpetrators of human rights violations. Discrimination, corruption, and abuse of power by law enforcement officials, and the military in many cases, fuel and exacerbate conflicts and make it even harder to achieve reconciliation after the conflict. Injustice, literally drives people to take up arms."[1]

Of all the different conflicts in the world, Afghanistan has probably been the most followed and studied one ever since 9/11 in 2001. When the US initiated their operation in Afghanistan, the country had already been in a civil war for years. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) targeted Al-Qaida (AQ), that was held responsible for the attacks, and the Taliban that refused to turn them over to the international community. The rapidly initiated operation was not designed to engage in nation building, so when the Taliban were defeated, the US and its allies faced a dilemma. Almost all governance structures of Afghanistan were in ruins after the decades of fighting and the disordered Taliban regime that had built its governance on a harsh Deobandist version of the Islamic Law. Afghanistan needed support in rebuilding and restructuring its entire governance, or risk falling back to civil war and remaining a haven for Violent Extremist Organisations (VEO's).[2]

The US and the international community saw that a safe and secure environment and a functioning security sector were necessities for sustainable peace and development projects in the country. Different programs on rebuilding the security forces of Afghanistan were initiated.[3] Despite the good intentions and huge investments, the ongoing conflict with insurgents, conflicting interests among donors, Afghans and third parties, changing strategies and lack of coordination between different actors have plagued the efforts. As the international community is withdrawing in 2021, studies about the programs and their results are timely.

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[1] OHCHR (2006)

[2] Tomsen, P (2011), pp. 587-591

[3] Ibid.

1.1 Research topic, research focus and research questions

Afghan Local Police (ALP) was chosen as the subject of this study, as it is one of the most debated components of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) of Afghanistan in its attempt to include traditional security providers. As the conflict is one of the most studied ones in the 21st century, relevant research material is easy to access. This study aims at utilizing the results of earlier research and combining the findings in a new way to discuss the current models of SSR and how they could be developed to the so-called 2nd generation SSR that also utilizes traditional justice and security.

This study presents and compares selected models that have been developed from practical needs for international participation in conflict areas. The models and their interaction are relevant for SSR and nation building in a conflict-affected environment, although some of their principles could be applied independently. The models are assessed both in the individual contexts they have had in Afghanistan, as well as their applicability to SSR and the ALP – a program that did not follow any model, but instead combined different traits and principles and could even be referred to as hybrid or 2nd generation SSR.

The focus of this study is both on the applicability of the different models for nation building in conflict-affected states and on the informal security and justice structures of Afghanistan. The first objective of the study is to present the models that are most essential to SSR in a conflict-affected nation and compare their principles and objectives. The second objective is to analyse how the models have been applied in Afghanistan, how the international community has approached rebuilding the security structures of Afghanistan and how have informal structures been included. Through the first two objectives the third, and main one, can be assessed - *how could the different models and SSR better involve the informal justice and security providers and tribal structures.*

The primary research question can be framed as *how have the security models taken the tribal nature of the Afghan society into consideration as an enabler of security, justice and enhancing human security?* The question is deliberately broad, as the topic is very context related and already discussed in academic articles – with very little outcomes or suggestions how to resolve it. The question focuses on the overall development of human security, how the local population could be involved in the reform by different actors and how SSR models should be evolved to support that.

1.2 Earlier studies, research material and framework

This study aims at analysing the models and the rebuilding efforts of the security sector mechanisms with an integrated approach that combines results from earlier studies. Over the years, Afghanistan has been a nation of interest to most researchers of war, peace and SSR and relevant research material is easily available. Although the focus for the research on SSR has been in African nations, most of the findings can be applied to Afghanistan and relevant research material is available. What earlier studies have not focused on, is the interconnected nature of other programs. Due to the vast amount of available data, the choices for used literature and material are explained where necessary in the subchapters instead of a thorough literature review.

The research material consists mainly of articles and studies that were screened by the author and then assessed using different methods of content analysis. As classified material was not available for this study, author's work history and own experiences in Afghanistan were used in assessing the relevance and content of the different studies and articles found in open sources.

The different tribal studies regarding Afghanistan have mainly focused on the tribal dynamics as political influencers or looked for ways for using tribes as a military force multiplier. Most of the military studies on the ALP program have assessed it as a part of the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy.[4] Afghanistan Analyst Network (AAN) and Kate Clark have studied the ALP with a more comprehensive approach, conducting an over three-year case study on certain Provinces of Afghanistan.[5]

The conflict in Afghanistan and international involvement can be hard to categorize, the conflict can be referred to as an occupation, peace enforcement, counterinsurgency, nation building, SSR, etc. pending on the point of view. Analyzing and assessing complex programs that were conducted in a conflict environment requires an inclusive approach, and therefore five separate relevant models were selected for the study. The research was initiated with just the model of traditional SSR and expanded to other ones as their relevance emerged. All the other used models are normally associated with military sciences, although some of their principles are universal. The selected models have risen from practical needs and can be found on different public manuals and handbooks. There are academic articles related to most of them, but most of the models have rarely been a subject of research outside military universities nor studied together. Of the presented models, only SSR is clearly a peace research or state- or nation-building model, whereas War by Proxy, Counterinsurgency (COIN), Special Operations (SOF) and Unconventional Warfare (UW) are derived from military sciences. However, they are all vital to understanding the dynamics of the Afghan conflict and the ALP.

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[4] ICG (2015)

[5] Clark, K. (2017b), Clark, K. (2018), Clark, K. and Osman, B. (2018), Clark, K. (2019), Clark, K. (2020)

The framework of the study is formed from the five different models and their interconnection with each other. The local customs surrounding them affect them all and the arrows represent the models influence to each other. All of them intersect and can be triangulated in the main interest point of this study – the Afghan Local Police.

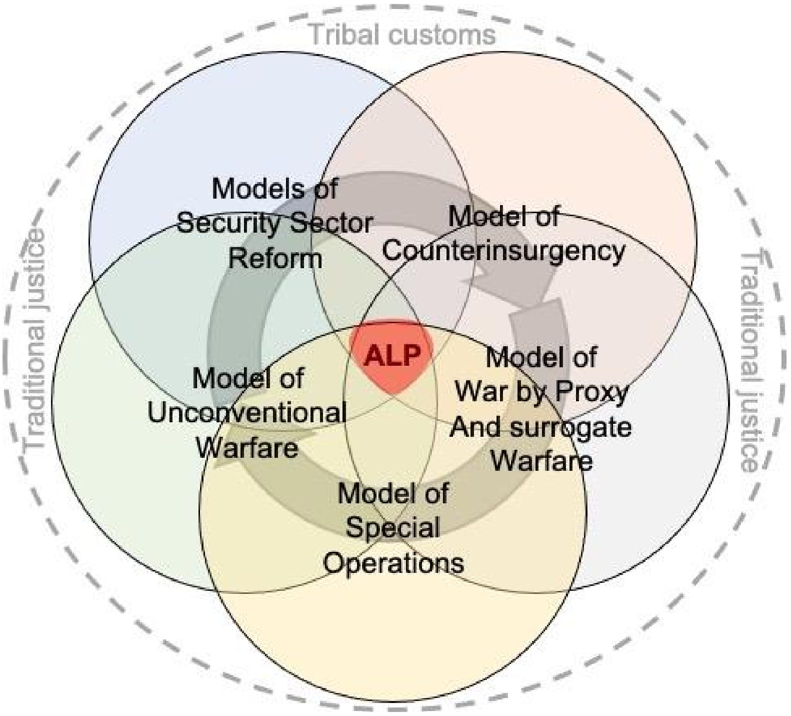
Tribal customs
Traditional justice
Traditional justice
Models of Security Sector Reform
Model of Counterinsurgency
ALP
Model of Unconventional Warfare
Model of War by Proxy And surrogate Warfare
Model of Special Operations

Figure 1. Framework of the thesis

1.3 Positioning and structure of the study

This study has a conflict transformation perspective. To achieve peace and stability, the likelihood of conflict needs to be diminished by altering the conditions. Paul Collier has written articles about how finance and development could be used to convert the conditions so that the likelihood of a conflict or conflict renewal is decreased. In the context of this study, the desired transformation is the increase of security, provided by actors that are accepted by the community. Building on Collier 's theory about transformation, I will adapt it to a security perspective and try to identify factors that could be altered and ways for altering them for improvement in Afghanistan.[6] The applications of all of the models are assessed with this perspective.

Due to the nature of the research topic, the study combines different research methods and approaches with the available data to extend the comprehensive understanding on SSR and tribal involvement. Military sciences study different doctrines or theories of warfare, although they cannot be scientifically proven, and often should be referred to as models. The same approach is used with the models presented in this study.[7] The comparisons use methods associated with theory comparison and can be referred to as theory triangulation.[8] The review and assessment of practical measures that were taken in Afghanistan has features of other research methods such as case studies. As there is no single, clear method that could be applied to the whole study, it can be referred to as a mixed method research.[9]

The first chapter of the study introduces the topic briefly, explains the research focus and research questions and how the topic was approached. The chapter also positions the study in the field of peace research, explains how the study was conducted and presents the structure of the report. The final subchapter explains the author's own positioning for the topic, which is necessary for understanding the made choices and some interpretations of the research data.

The second chapter presents the different relevant models present in the conflict of Afghanistan. Other models developed for different functions could be applicable to

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[6] Collier, P. et al. (2003)

[7] Ångström, J. and Widén, J. (2015), pp. 7-9

[8] Flick, U. (2002), p. 277.

[9] Denzin, K. (2012), p. 82

SSR as well, but the selected five represent the most relevant ones. The models are presented in their individual subchapters, but some of them are referred to throughout the report to discuss their relationships, similarities, and differences.

The subchapter on war by proxy is mainly based on military theories and articles written by Andrew Mumford and Amos Fox. Fox's articles were used as he is one of the few researchers who has attempted to conceptualize war by proxy and has done so with a similar approach as in this study. The second subchapter on COIN explains the basic theories of insurgencies and presents some of the relevant theorists, such as Mao Zedong whose writings have also influenced COIN. COIN is presented through military theories and articles that are mainly based on the studies of David Galula and David Kilcullen. The third subchapter on Special Operations (SOF) presents the general model and principles of William H. McRaven and complements it with presenting models of Unconventional Warfare (UW). As UW has an intimate relationship with insurgency and its theories, some of the theorists and principles are discussed also in this chapter. UW is explained through military theories and doctrines and some relevant US Naval Post Graduate School (NPS) studies. NPS is one of the few military universities that has a SOF curriculum. The fourth subchapter on SSR explains the general principles, how they need to adapt in conflict-affected environments and how the model is thought to evolve to 2nd generation or hybrid SSR. The subchapter is mainly based on articles by different academics such as Mark Sedra and Bruce Baker. Most of the documents on the topic open with general depictions, so the same information is available on several peer reviewed sources.

The third chapter along with its subchapters present the Afghan tribal culture, the characteristics of the Afghan insurgency and the reforms and programs that have been attempted. The chapter uses Peter Tomsen's book "*The Wars of Afghanistan*" as general reference and supplements it with academic articles by researchers such as Ahmed Rashid, Seth Jones and Christine Noelle-Karimi and Kate Clark. The same academics were used as a reference in Afghanistan in official military reporting.

The fourth and final chapter assesses and compares the presented models to the SSR model in the context of Afghanistan and analyses the ALP program as a 2nd generation SSR program. The chapter also presents the discussion and critique as well as the findings of the study.

1.4 Own positioning

The primary topic of this thesis, SSR, was decided already in 2017, but the study was directed more towards 2nd generation SSR and expanded to cover other models as the understanding on the topic increased. SSR's need to be examined at as a part of the overall situation, taking into count other processes influencing it. Although the principles and models of using proxies, SFA, MA, UW, COIN and SSR all seem clear as individual models, the reality in conflict areas differs from theories.

I have worked with the military for more than 20 years and been involved with all the mentioned programs for more than three years in conflict areas such as Afghanistan and Iraq. ALP was selected as the "case study" as I am familiar with Afghanistan, the dynamics of the conflict, its tribal structure and have spent two years in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The first year I was a team leader whose primary task was to liaise and mentor the local security officials and tribes. The second year I was as a deputy director of a multinational analyst cell (All-Source Intelligence Cell, ASIC) in a regional multinational military headquarters. During those deployments I also came to know experts from EUPOL Afghanistan and the SOF community, all of whom have been very helpful in their insights for this thesis.

To have a more thorough insight on the mentioned topics I attended DCAF ISSAT's SSR Core Course and NATO School in Oberammergau's Introduction to NATO Special Forces Course. The course materials were used to find new relevant sources and compare, verify, and discuss findings from other sources.

On one hand, although my background and firsthand experience offers different insight than academic studies and research provide, it may also cause biases towards different sets of events, principles, and models.

On the other hand, I claim that the firsthand experience is relevant in screening the research material and analyzing or discussing for instance SOF or certain SSR functions and procedures. As some articles on SOF note, there are two types of studies on certain topics – the insiders and the outsiders' views.[10]

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[10] Finlan, A. (2019)

2 MODELS, CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

This thesis examines the so-called “tribal engagement” and how local security structures were implemented to the Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Afghanistan. To understand and position the SSR programs and how the non-state justice providers were involved in this context, it is important to understand what other models were in simultaneous use, and how they affected the SSR effort. The purpose is to present and examine the exchange between the models and how their various social categories might construct or influence human security. This study attempts to incorporate as much of the empirical evidence that was available in the academic works regarding the models. Due to the nature and scope of this thesis, the comprehensive theoretical discussions that could be had about the value assumptions and a more global epistemological positioning were intentionally left out.

2.1 War by proxy

Throughout history, states have used third parties to fight their wars and pursue their objectives, in other words, used proxies.[11] Traditionally proxies are thought to be excluded from theories of conventional war, but that is not entirely accurate. Use of proxies is not clearly emphasized in significant theories by authors such as Carl von Clausewitz or Henri Jomini as they are more focused on the nature of war, but they don’t exclude them either and their principles on war apply to proxy warfare as well.[12]

The term, and its use in this context, requires some clarification. The common understanding for Proxy War is the Cold War era definition of it as an indirect conflict between the two superpowers through surrogate forces that were used to avoid a direct confrontation that could lead to an all-out nuclear war.[13]

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[11] Dandan, S. (2012)

[12] von Clausewitz, C. (1976) and Jomini H. (1996), Mumford, A. (2013b) pp.11-30,

[13] Bar-Siman-Tov, Y. (1984) pp. 263-273, Mumford, A. (2013b) and Groh, T. (2019), pp. 26-41

Nowadays the use of proxies is, however, applicable to a variety of other forms of conflicts for other reasons. In the scope of this study, proxies are used in an intention to avoid large scale and/or permanent commitments by the international community. In modern conflicts the international actors are often working with the states authorities to strengthen the security forces by equipping, training, mentoring, and partnering them.[14] Andrew Mumford's definition of *"conflicts in which a third party intervenes indirectly in order to influence the strategic outcome in favour of its preferred faction"*[15] is applicable to this study – including SFA, MA and SSR.

As Proxy War per definition is incorrect in this context, I will use war by proxy to depict the actions of the international community where they interact with local counterparts for their own ends. In the absence of a better term, "war" is used knowingly, although it may also be misleading when the models are applied to SSR.

2.1.1 Models for proxy relationships

The issue of control and relationship between the participants of a surrogate relationship has been a subject of debate among the academics.[16] Fox is one of the few researchers that has attempted to conceptualize the topic. He has defined the proxy relationship as two, or multiple actors, working towards the same objectives in a hierarchical relationship. The actor in the leading or supporting role is the principal, whereas the one that is supported is the proxy or agent. Ideally, they would genuinely share the objectives they wish to achieve with the relationship, but often the agent follows the principal for its own ends, if it serves its purpose.[17]

Based on his findings, Fox has defined five generic models for proxy relationships and their development. According to him, the relationships are of exploitative, transactional, coercive, cultural, or contractual nature. From Fox's models, only the exploitative and transactional models were chosen for this study, as they are the closest to SSR. In the context of Afghanistan, the cultural model could be included, but most of the programs implemented in Afghanistan are included in the two selected models.[18]

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[14] Innes, M (2012), pp. 89-109, Biddle S., Macdonald J. and Baker R. (2018) and Hammes, T. (2004)

[15] Mumford, A. (2013a)

[16] Rauta, V., Ayton, M., Chinchilla, A., Krieg, A., Rickard, C and Rickli, J-M (2019)

[17] Groh, T. (2019), pp. 83-86, Fox, A. (2019c) and Metz S. and Cuccia P. (2010)

The models can be used to assess the relationship development and define principles that should be taken into consideration already in the programming phase. The relationships require clear decision-making points and criteria for decisive actions. Although at first the two basic models appear to be very similar, their inner relationships differ in a way that needs to be understood for the third model depicting the transformational nature of the relationship. Fox's point of view on the phenomenon is from a US warfighting perspective but the general findings and principles of his models are applicable to SSR programming as well.[19]

In the first used model, the exploitative one, the agent is completely dependent on the principal. The dynamic gives the principal almost unlimited influence over the agent. Although the situation is suitable for the principal, its objectives automatically dictate the relationship which can be unwanted from the agent's perspective. In the SSR context this may also lead to decrease in legitimacy felt by the population.[20]

This model is applicable to all the programs that started in Afghanistan post 2001 – as there was no government or agent, all the processes were initiated by the international community and its various principals.[21]

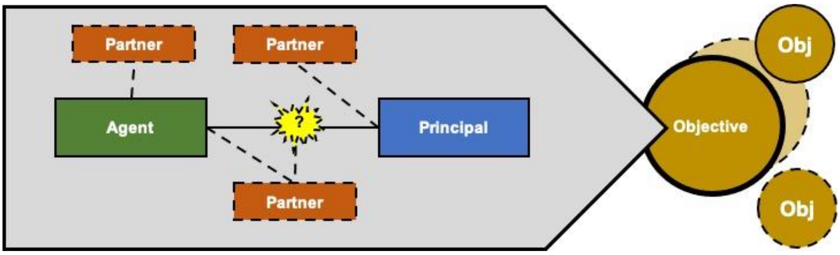

Figure 2. The model of exploitative principal-agent relationships[22]

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[18] Fox, A. (2020)

[19] Kaldor, M. and Luckham, R. (2001) and Fox, A. (2019a)

[20] Rauta, V., Ayton, M., Chinchilla, A., Krieg, A., Rickard, C and Rickli, J-M (2019) and Brzoska, M (2006), pp.1 – 13.

[21] Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 170-171 and Howk, J. (2009)

[22] Fox, A. (2019b)

In the second used model, the transactional one, the agent is not completely dependent but works in cooperation with the supporting principal. This model leaves more leverage to the agent than the exploitative one. It is basically an agreement that is set on basis of mutual benefits in reaching their objectives. The parties' objectives likely differ more than in the exploitative model, and it is up to the actors to decide how much of unwanted side results will they accept.[23] In Afghanistan 2010 President Karzai was reluctant to allow the ALP program to be initiated, but eventually agreed after thorough persuasion by Gen Petraeus who likely used other programs with US funding as a leverage.

In this model, the agent is depicted to be in the lead while the principal "pushes" it to the direction it wants the relationship to go. As the agent has more leverage and chances of negotiation, it is likely that third parties will be more active in both building their own relationships with the agent and trying to hamper the primary principal-agent relationship. All relationships are driven by political interests and the status of the relationship is therefore always subjective and likely to change over time. Success in cooperation increases coherence, whereas failure decreases it. Interaction with other possible partners and principals is the agent's way of negotiating.[24]

The second model is also applicable to Afghanistan. As the local government has gained power, it has started to take a more active role in the reforms and processes. This has also inflicted dilemmas, as the goals of the Afghans are diverting more and more from the goals of the international community and donors.

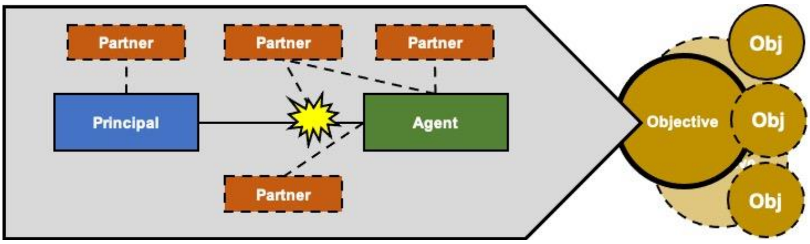

Figure 3. The model of transactional principal-agent relationships[25]

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[23] Mumford, A (2013a)

[24] Rauta, V., Ayton, M., Chinchilla, A., Krieg, A., Rickard, C and Rickli, J-M (2019) and Fox, A. (2019c)

[25] Fox, A. (2019b)

2.1.2 Transformational Model

Most principal-agent relationships evolve over time, and therefore change is inevitable. Even if the co-operation starts with the exploitative model, it should gradually shift towards the transactional model and eventually end. The balance of power will shift as the agent becomes more independent. Opponents and third parties may try to influence well-functioning relationships in different ways, if the power relation allows it. Proxy relationships are fragile, temperamental and they will expire. Therefore, it is important to define decision making points, termination criteria and transition plan in the programming phase and constantly monitor changes in the relationship. Although Fox does not include the transformational nature in his models, his depiction is used here as it also explains very well how the relationship in SSR should develop.[26]

This is also how the model was thought to evolve in Afghanistan – starting with a dependent agent or exploitative model, the agent was expected to evolve and gradually start changing the relation to the transactional model. The final phase of the change would be the full transfer of authority to the Afghans.

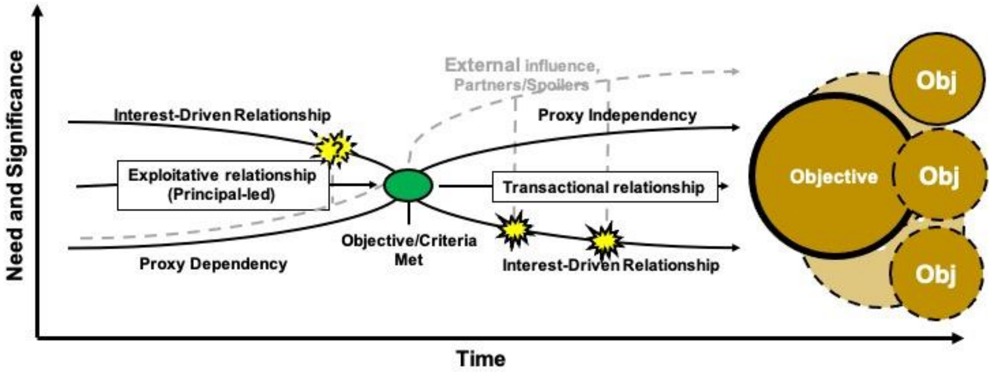
Need and Significance
External influence, Partners/Spoilers
Interest-Driven Relationship
Proxy Independency
Exploitative relationship (Principal-led)
Transactional relationship
Objective
Obj
Obj
Obj
Proxy Dependency
Objective/Criteria Met
Interest-Driven Relationship
Time

Figure 4. The model of transformation in a principal-agent relationship[27]

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[26] Mumford, A (2013a), Fox, A. (2019c) and Krieg, A., Rickli, J-M. (2019), pp. 120-122

[27] Fox, A. (2019c)

2.2 Counterinsurgency

"Counterinsurgency may be defined as 'comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes."[28]

COIN is an elaborated military strategy that attempts to integrate military and civilian actors' actions to alter the conditions so that it both undermines the insurgency and supports the government. COIN is, and has always been, a debated strategy and it is interesting that even some of the most recognized researchers have altered their opinions on it. David Kilcullen, on whose work many of the models and principles are based on, has criticized that COIN theories are based on around 20 insurgencies from the 20th century, an era that has had more than 150 wars and other conflicts. Several existing examples of insurgencies and irregular warfare have not been included in the analysis. Kilcullen has even argued that the current models are not appropriate for conflicts such as Afghanistan.[29]

From the military point of view, COIN is not so much focused on defeating the enemy (so-called enemy-centric approach) but rather on building a safe and secure enviroment and securing the population (so-called population-centric approach). This does not however mean that military operations would not be important, although they are not the focus of COIN. Military operations are viewed as an enabling tool to gain access to insurgent controlled areas, where support for the government needs to be built to marginalize the support for the insurgents. COIN can therefore be defined as an armed political competition with the insurgents - or a competition over control.[30]

What distinguishes COIN from peace operations or humanitarian interventions, is that COIN aims to control the environment, the level of security and the population. To understand the concept of COIN better, it is also necessary to present some features of what it tries to counter – an insurgency.

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[28] Counterinsurgency Guide (2009)

[29] Kilcullen, D. (2010), pp. 1-17, Gorka, S. and Kilcullen, D. (2011) and Metz S. and Cuccia P. (2010)

[30] Kilcullen, D. (2013), pp. 125-136

2.2.1 Insurgency

"Insurgency can be defined as 'the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region."[31]

Insurgencies are so-called small wars, or new wars, in comparison to the traditional model of nation-states opposing each other in an open conflict. The nature of war is different, but the reality for the people involved in it is very similar, and common military theories still apply. Several theorists have contributed to theories of insurgencies, or their ideas can be applied to theories on insurgencies.[32]

Although usually seen as a traditional theorist of war, even von Clausewitz's thinking is applicable. As he wanted to simplify the way war was defined, he saw that it could be done by having superior numbers and fighting war of exhaustion, which is what an insurgency attempts to do with gaining the support and acceptance of the population. The ideas of von Clausewitz can be found in Mao's theories as well.[33]

A second theorist on insurgency who needs to be mentioned, is T.E. Lawrence who influenced the indirect theory of warfare both directly with his own articles and book "Seven pillars of wisdom" as well as through his friend, sir Basil Liddell-Hart, another known military theorist of indirect approach. They both stated, that engaging in direct warfare openly against an enemy, is a waste of resources, whereas the indirect way also exhausts the enemy physically and psychologically.[34] Lawrence also worked with tribes, instead of politically motivated groups, so his observations are relevant for studying tribal engagement in insurgencies.

Probably the most influential theorist of insurgency is still Mao Zedong whose theories and models on how insurgencies develop and evolve have influenced most of the later theories. His most known book, "On Guerrilla Warfare" is often seen as an individual work, when in fact it is a part of the full theory of "People's War".

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[31] Counterinsurgency Guide (2009)

[32] Paronen, A. (2016), pp. 41-46, Kaldor, M. (2007), pp 116-118 and Bunker, R. (1999)

[33] von Clausewitz, C (1976), p.75 and Miyata, F. and Nicholson, J. (2020)

[34] Lawrence, T. E., Wilson, J., and Wilson, N. (2004), Liddell-Hart B. (1954) and Gibson, M. (2016)

The core idea of the full theory is that all insurgencies are always political on the strategic level and use multiple approaches of which only one is military action.[35]

Mao's theory of insurgencies developing in the society in multiple forms through different stages can also be seen in the Unconventional Warfare (UW) models of the SOF presented later in the study. Even though insurgencies are defined as developing processes, every insurgency is unique, and will develop differently. Most insurgencies however follow some general patterns, characteristics, and stages such as subversion, radicalization, and open conflict. The different stages may occur simultaneously, in a slightly different manner or with different timings in different areas and therefore measures that are effective somewhere may not be applicable elsewhere. The motivation of the people to join an insurgency may vary from ideological reasons up to almost anything, as explained in Kilcullen's theory about accidental guerillas.[36] Thus, COIN programmers must understand the nature and the stage the insurgency, to develop timely and appropriate responses.

Insurgencies are usually mixtures of ideologies, political goals, grievances, and personal interests; therefore, it is also important to understand the variety of different theories on insurgencies. It is likely that the leadership is motivated by the ideology the insurgency thrives to, but other actors and groups supporting the insurgency may have other motivations and the ideology does not extend to the entire movement. U.S. counterinsurgency guide from 2009 lists characteristics of an insurgency, most of which are also mentioned in Carter Malkasian's book *"War comes to Garmser"* which presents a chronological narrative of one Afghan district, from the 70's and the Soviet-Afghan war to present day.[37]

The conflicts in Afghanistan have followed most of these common characteristics. The decisions of elders or leaders can be decisive for the entire community and in tribal societies the support to an insurgency may be decided on the personal or tribal dynamics.[38] The personal status or charisma of the leaders will dictate whether people will support or follow the movement. This has always been the case in Afghanistan, going back to the Anglo-Afghan wars in which the Britons came up with the term "*Mad Mullah*" as local clergymen were ones to encourage the people to fight.[39] Financial motivation may be an important factor. Afghanistan has always been a poor country by any standards. The basic wants, needs, grievances and old disputes between communities may be exploited by the insurgent leadership, although the people would have very little to do with the insurgency otherwise. In Afghanistan, there are cases in which the local communities have fought for the Taliban if it has served their interest, but only locally.[40] During an armed conflict, hatred is likely to emerge through atrocities and dispossession, which works as a motivator to drive individuals into the insurgency. This is also the case in Afghanistan, although due to cultural reasons the hatred could be centuries old and the insurgency just a mean to get retaliation. This has also affected the Taliban in general, as will be explained in chapter 3.2.1.[41]

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[35] Paronen, A. (2016), pp. 55-64, Mao, Z., and Griffith, S. (2007) and Marks, T. (2009)

[36] Mao, Z., and Griffith, S. (2007), Mao, Z. (1938) and Kilcullen, D. (2009)

[37] Nasution, A. (1965), pp. 23-24 and Malkasian, C. (2013)

[38] Kilcullen, D. (2009), p.39

Using all the mentioned motivators, the insurgency attempts to gain support, or at least the acceptance, of the population, by using a mixture of persuasion, subversion, and coercion. Persuasion can include any means, although in general it is promoting the ideology of the movement. Persuasion can include providing funds, basic services, or positions of authority to individuals. The Taliban used this, as they were appealing to the population as true representatives of the religion and promised to provide services the government could not. Persuasion will likely use propaganda to influence the opinions of supporters, potential supporters, and opponents alike. Subversion is used to undermine the existing governance by "out administering" the local authorities. Coercion can be used instead of persuasion, or augmenting it, depending on how much influence and legitimacy the government has and whether it can provide security for the population. The Taliban's usually started with persuasion and negotiations with the elders, followed by intimidation and propaganda and finally, if needed, the use of force, although they started to administer their own governance structures later, as the insurgency evolved.[42] Another example of how Taliban adapted was their approach to the Afghan Local Police – understanding the local nature, they used different methods than with the governmental forces. This has been referred to as counter-counterinsurgency.[43]

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[39] Johnson, T. and Mason, M. (2007), p. 79

[40] Author's experiences in 2013-14.

[41] Johnson, T. and Mason, M. (2007), Kilcullen, D. (2013), p.39 and Counterinsurgency Guide (2009)

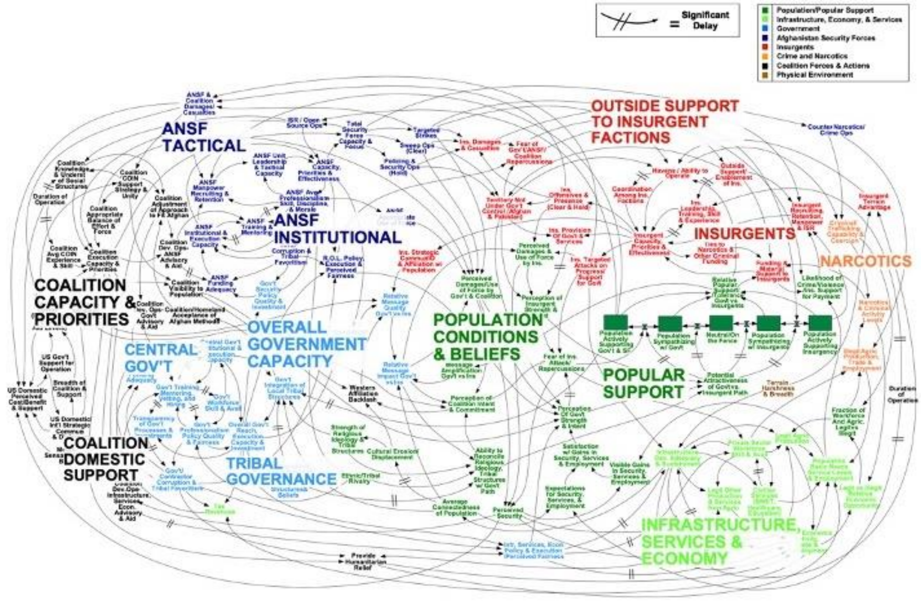
[42] Jackson A. (2018), Saleh, A. (2006), p. 4 and Counterinsurgency Guide (2009)

[43] Clark, K and Osman, B (2018)

2.2.2 Countering an insurgency

COIN strategies attempt to integrate and synchronize the military efforts with the actions of all civilian components of the region to enforce governmental legitimacy and thus reduce the influence of the insurgency. COIN should protect the population while simultaneously strengthening the government's legitimacy, which is thought to marginalize the insurgents political, social, and economical influence.[44]

Insurgencies arise in context-specific environments and countering them requires understanding the reasons causing them, the society, its history, and culture. Without understanding the environment and the causes of the insurgency, it is impossible to define an achievable outcome, yet the actions that are needed to achieve it. Without defining the previous, it is virtually impossible to determine what is needed for legitimacy and unity of effort.[45] The following graphic is presented in this chapter to present a depiction of how entangled the environment for COIN can be.



= Significant Delay
🟩 Population/Popular Support
🟩 Infrastructure, Economy, & Services
🟦 Government
🟦 Afghanistan Security Forces
🟥 Insurgents
🟧 Crime and Narcotics
⬛ Coalition Forces & Actions
🟫 Physical Environment
ANSF TACTICAL
ANSF INSTITUTIONAL
OUTSIDE SUPPORT TO INSURGENT FACTIONS
INSURGENTS
NARCOTICS
COALITION CAPACITY & PRIORITIES
CENTRAL GOV'T
OVERALL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY
POPULATION CONDITIONS & BELIEFS
POPULAR SUPPORT
COALITION DOMESTIC SUPPORT
TRIBAL GOVERNANCE
INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES & ECONOMY

Figure 5. The model of COIN Dynamics in Afghanistan[46]

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[44] Kilcullen, D. (2010), pp. 1-11

[45] Tomes, R. (2004)

[46] PA Consulting Group (2009), figure in common use in the military operation in Afghanistan in 2013-14 and presented here only to highlight the complex nature of COIN analysis.

Programming a functioning COIN strategy thus requires understanding the social, cultural, economic, political and security environment. In understanding the insurgency, it is vital to perceive, what are its aims, motivations, goals, organization, methods and most importantly – center of gravity.[47] Due to this, COIN does not have a simple solutions or templates, only a set of principles that should be followed. The principles provide a starting point, and although following them does not guarantee success, dismissing them will likely guarantee failure.

Effective COIN requires a careful balancing of destructive and constructive methods. Pending on the situation, COIN can use either the enemy-centric approach that focuses on defeating the enemy as a mean to allow the governance to work for gaining the support of the population, or the population-centric approach that focuses on the population as a priority and uses military force as a last mean. The support of the population is the desired end state in both approaches and can only be achieved by increasing government legitimacy.[48] From US and NATO point of view, the objective in Afghanistan is the legitimacy of the government and all military action will support that. Unless the governance achieves commonly perceived legitimacy, COIN efforts cannot succeed. Political objectives and consequences must therefore remain a priority while conducting COIN, and the unity of effort must penetrate every level from the international community to the local villages. Otherwise, there is a risk that the military action will either be ineffective or even worse, support the insurgent's agenda. Uncoordinated actions and efforts will likely be duplicated or at worst, cancel each other. Every action and effort that fails reduces the confidence of the population and therefore provides the insurgents a vulnerability to exploit.[49]

Establishing a safe and secure enviroment is the most important task of COIN, as it is a prerequisite for the other functions. While security is a necessity, it is also a supporting function, that will not defeat the insurgency on its own. Security is required to enable development and establish permanent changes the governance. To remain legitimate, COIN must pertain military operations to the minimum and transform into security provision as soon as it is possible. Insurgents need to be presented as criminals that are dealt with by a legit judicial system.[50] Civilian and military measures must support each other in both undermining the insurgency and increasing popular trust towards the government. By establishing security and rule of law, insurgents can be isolated from their center of gravity, the population. Once the population feels that the government can protect them, they will likely support it. Simultaneously addressing the grievances of the population will even further diminish the insurgent's possibilities to influence and recruit in the communities. The insurgency will be defeated when it is isolated by the population.[51]

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[47] Counterinsurgency Guide (2009)

[48] Cohen E. et al (2006), pp. 49-53

[49] Kilcullen, D. (2009)

A part of COIN programming is assessing the necessary force structure to achieve the goals. In the assessments, emphasis has been put both on the quantity and quality of troops. According to James Quinlivan, there are no fixed ratios that would ensure success in COIN, but he claims that there are general principles that can be applied. Quinlivan analyzed different insurgencies and concluded to use the ratio of security forces required in comparison to inhabitants, instead of the insurgents. His conclusion of 20 to 25 security officials per 1000 people is based on his observations from Bosnia and Kosovo, but he notes that local dynamics need to be included. Quinlivan´s work suggests that the force ratio changes when the structure and composition of the force changes, in other words., the more local the security forces are, the less manpower is needed.[52] This is one of the reasons military planners are also keen on communal policing and SSR, and one of the reasons why ALP was successful in some areas.[53]

Insurgencies tend to be lengthy conflicts, as the only thing an insurgent has to do is wait, the insurgent wins if he does not lose.[54] In a contested area, people will need to be assured that the government can protect them before they will openly support it.[55] An analysis of insurgencies after the Second World War shows, that in average COIN campaigns last more than a decade, and more than one third of them last more than 20 years.[56]

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[50] Cohen E. et al (2006), pp. 49-53

[51] Nasution, A. (1965), pp. 23-24 and Tomes, R. (2004)

[52] Quinlivan, J. (2003), pp. 28–29.

[53] Clark, K and Osman, B (2018)

[54] Kiras, J. (2008), pp. 229-232.

[55] Cohen E. et al (2006), pp. 49-53

[56] Galula, D. (1964), p.10

2.3 Special Operations Forces

"Special operations (SO) differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, modes of employment, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets. SO are conducted in all environments but are particularly well suited for denied and politically sensitive environments. SO can be tailored to achieve not only military objectives through application of special operations forces (SOF) capabilities for which there are no broad conventional force requirements, but also to support the application of the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power."[57]

SOF can contribute to SSR in several ways, but they are mostly useful through Security Force Assistance (SFA) and Military Assistance (MA). In the scope of this study, looking at tribal forces and militias as security providers, SOF are in many cases the only possible actor that can provide the necessary training or support.[58]

The concepts of special operations and forces that perform them have evolved significantly in recent history. Ever since the events of 2001, the western SOF have continuously been engaged in foreign operations, mainly in Afghanistan and Iraq, although they have also had presence in Africa. SOF units have successfully performed a wide variety of missions, under circumstances they were not originally designed to, although most of them were originally organized, trained, and equipped to be national strategic assets.[59]

In the sense of SFA or SSR, SOF are not specialized in the meaning that they would have specific training and equipment for the task. In this framework, SOF are special, because they can do things that other actors cannot do, or at least cannot do without high costs and risks of failure. The generality of the SOF, rather than their speciality, is what makes them unique in their usefulness. In his proposal to a general theory on Special Operations, Tom Searle suggests that they should be defined "outside the box", covering more than the military in general.[60]

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[57] JP 3-05 (2011)

[58] AJP 3.16 (2016), AJP 3.22 (2016), and AJP 3.4.5 (2015)

[59] Kiras J. (2006), p.117

[60] Searle, T. (2017)

2.3.1 Military Assistance

SOF are designed to be national strategic assets to be used to achieve objectives that are of high value and cannot be achieved in any other way. The tasks designed to the SOF are divided into three main categories and several sub-categories which will not be discussed in this thesis. The first main category, direct action (DA), refers to SOF conducting an offensive operation that cannot be conducted by any other force to achieve a high value result. *Operation Neptune Spear* that was launched to kill or capture Osama Bin Laden can be used as an example of a DA mission. The second category, special reconnaissance (SR), refers to SOF conducting an intelligence, reconnaissance or surveillance operation that cannot be conducted by any other asset and information they obtain has high value.[61]

The third role or task of SOF is military assistance (MA) or, in other words, *"operations by specialized forces to train, advise, assist and accompany local partners conducting resistance warfare against a hostile state or force."*[62] This role became fixed during the Second World War by the British SAS in occupied France, further developed by the US Green Berets in Vietnam and evolved again in Afghanistan and Iraq.[63] In the framework of SSR, MA is the most important of SOF tasks. MA can include military engagement, development projects, direct support to the local security forces and interaction with different non-military actors at any necessary level. Unlike DA and SR, MA seldomly has fixed timelines as they can be significantly affected by local cultural and/or governmental interests.[64]

Training is designated to individuals and units in any desired skills. SOF train and mentor other than military skills as well, even topics not normally associated with the military.[65] Advising is to improve the performance by providing expertise to different levels of command and can include anything that improves trust in a professional relationship. Mentoring is to provide direction and guidance by teams who work closely with their local partners. Mentoring builds heavily on leadership skills and capability to build personal relationships. Partnering includes participation in the local counterparts' operations, which often means providing support or additional capabilities during their military or security operations.[66] Interagency support means establishing critical relationships to support host nations agencies and facilitate comprehensive relations between different actors.

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[61] JP 3-05 (2019) and NSHQ 80-010 (2016)

[62] Kilcullen, D. (2019)

[63] Finlan, A. (2019)

[64] NATO MC 437/2 (2011) and NSHQ 80-010 (2016)

[65] Paterson P. (2016)

MA can be a form of the indirect approach that works casually using irregular means in a methodical and deliberate manner. In the context of working with tribes, MA or similar indirect approach aims at changing the opinions and positioning of the community and at the same time decreasing the opponent's influence. The approach is very similar to the one the insurgents or UW uses. According to Military theorist Basil Liddell-Hart, effects are achieved more by the mental and moral dislocation of the command, than by the physical dislocation of forces. Liddell-Hart's theories were mainly focused on the strategic level outcomes of warfare, but in a sense, they are applicable to SOF models as well. SOF are strategic assets that thrive towards changing the operational environment in strategic level way, when working with indigenous forces.[67]

The British SAS' involvement in Oman in the 70's in *Operation Storm* can be used as an example of a successful MA operation. Although the SAS were set in a different manner and to different surroundings and situation, it had same elements as the VSO/ALP program in Afghanistan. Teams were deployed to train and advise local forces with support teams, that worked with the indirect approach, to gain acceptance and change the positioning and opinions on all levels. The distinguishing difference between Operation Storm and VSO/ALP is that the SOF support was cut off from the ALP soon after its initiation. If the SOF would have stayed with their counterparts in the similar manner as the Brits did in Oman, VSO/ALP would have likely succeeded better.[68]

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[66] Howard R., Hanson G., and Laywell C. (2010), p.7

[67] NSHQ 80-010 (2016) and Liddell-Hart B. (1954), p. 72 and 107

[68] Cole, R. and Belfield, R. (2011)

2.3.2 Special Operations

Due to the nature of Special Operations, availability of theories, doctrines and guidelines is limited. The majority of public SOF doctrines present only general principles, based on general war theorists and practical experience. The general theories of warfare apply to SOF as well as any operations. One of the most influential models for SOF was presented in admiral McRaven's NPS thesis *"Theory of special operations"* that was later expanded to the book *"Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare: Theory and Practice"*. McRaven's theory is based on a concept he calls *Relative Superiority* which in special operations can be achieved through the models' three phases and six principles.[69] Despite the fact that the model is focused on a single mission type and not in any sense universal, it has become highly influential within the genre.

The model is depicted as a triangle that stands on its apex and builds bottom-up. The first phase of his model is planning, that consists of only one of the six principles, simplicity. Simplicity is achieved by employing as much innovation as possible and reducing the complicating factors and elements to the minimum. Plans are made as simple as possible, to achieve the minimum objectives that are required for success. The second phase of the model is preparation, that consists of two of the six principles. Security is achieved by limiting the personnel involved in the planning and concealing preparations, used methods and timing. Keeping the details of the mission as secret as possible, increases the likelihood that it will achieve surprise, another of the six principles. Repetition is achieved by using standard, well-practiced methods that are familiar to the personnel, to ensure that they know by heart what they are supposed to do. The third phase of the model, execution, consists of three principles: surprise, speed, and purpose. Surprise will be achieved through the other principles, especially security. Speed is achieved by the simplicity of the plans and the repetition of the used procedures. Speed is imperative in the model, as the relative superiority will turn over time, if the enemy has time to react to the SOF. Purpose is achieved by indoctrinating personnel to the primary objective of the mission, everyone needs to understand what needs to be done, regardless of obstructions.[70]

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[69] McRaven, W. (1993), pp. 3-16

[70] Ibid.

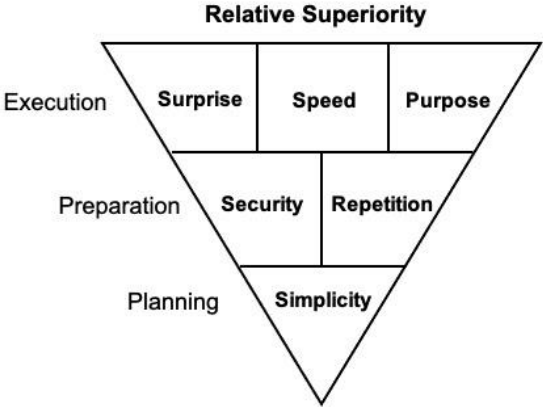

Figure 6. The Model of Special Operations[71]

2.3.3 Unconventional Warfare

In his study, McRaven attempted to develop a general theory, that would apply to all special operations. He however drew his conclusions from eight combat operations, that can all be defined as DA missions. As a result, even though generally accepted as a baseline, McRaven's theory is applicable to DA, to some extent SR and excludes MA and Unconventional Warfare (UW) almost entirely. Although some of the principles are applicable to all mission types and relative superiority can be seen as the objective of any SOF task, in the context of this study UW requires a more thorough analysis. Historically UW has been considered a special operation, because it is thought to require specialized training.[72] This is partially because in the US, UW was originally tasked to the US Army Special Forces, the Green Berets, who were training indigenous forces in Vietnam. US manuals even today define UW as *"operations conducted by, with, or through irregular forces in support of a resistance movement, an insurgency, or conventional military operations"* and *"all UW operations are special operations.'*[73] Interestingly, the concept of by, with and through has also been adapted by regular forces in conducting SFA[74] and, as Fox points out, war by proxy.[75]

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[71] McRaven, W. (1993), p. 16

[72] Spulak, R. jr (2007)

[73] FM 3-05.201 (2007), FM 3-05.130. (2008)

[74] Votel J. and Keravuori E. (2018), pp. 40-47,

[75] Fox, A. (2019c)

In the 60's the Special Operations Research Office (SORO) defined the pyramid model of irregular warfare or the so-called SORO-pyramid that lasted time rather well, as it was updated as late as in 2013 as part of Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) studies, conducted by the US Army Special Operations Command. Both models present the development of an insurgency as a bottom-up process, with multiple phases that have clearly defined elements. Both models have clearly been influenced by Mao's idea of insurgencies developing slowly through stages with a bottom-to-top approach[76]

Both models are useful in presenting the development of an insurgency, but neither of them identifies clear principles, through which the insurgency develops. Both models are however influential and important in understanding the development of UW theories, so they are presented below.

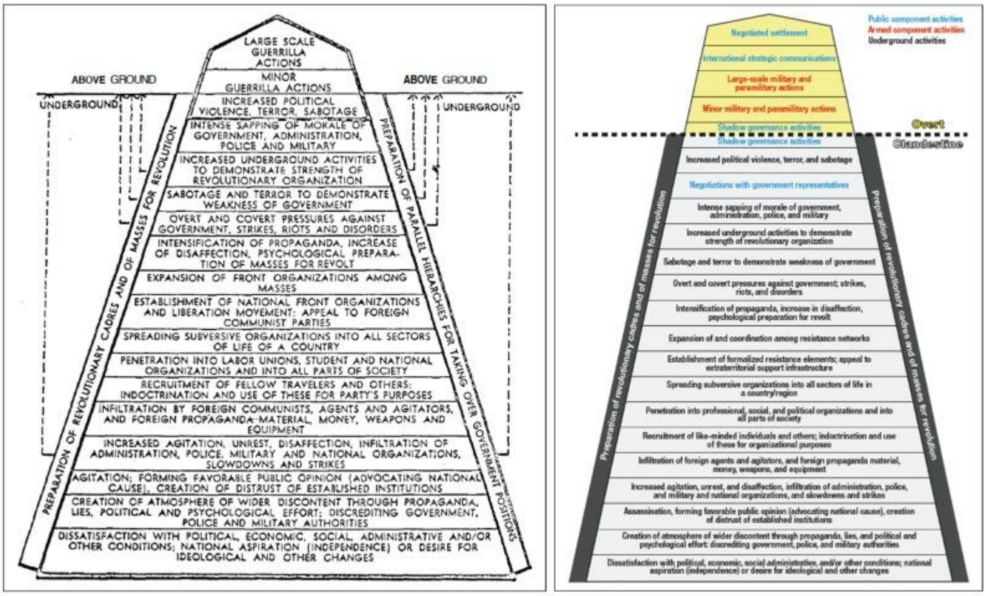
LARGE SCALE GUERRILLA ACTIONS
MINOR GUERRILLA ACTIONS
ABOVE GROUND
ABOVE GROUND
UNDERGROUND
UNDERGROUND
INCREASED POLITICAL VIOLENCE, TERROR, SABOTAGE
INTENSE SAPPING OF MORALE OF GOVERNMENT, ADMINISTRATION, POLICE AND MILITARY
INCREASED UNDERGROUND ACTIVITIES TO DEMONSTRATE STRENGTH OF REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION
SABOTAGE AND TERROR TO DEMONSTRATE WEAKNESS OF GOVERNMENT
OVERT AND COVERT PRESSURES AGAINST GOVERNMENT, STRIKES, RIOTS AND DISORDERS
INTENSIFICATION OF PROPAGANDA, INCREASE OF DISAFFECTION, PSYCHOLOGICAL PREPARATION OF MASSES FOR REVOLT
EXPANSION OF FRONT ORGANIZATIONS AMONG MASSES
ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL FRONT ORGANIZATIONS AND LIBERATION MOVEMENT; APPEAL TO FOREIGN COMMUNIST PARTIES
SPREADING SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS INTO ALL SECTORS OF LIFE OF A COUNTRY
PENETRATION INTO LABOR UNIONS, STUDENT AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INTO ALL PARTS OF SOCIETY
RECRUITMENT OF FELLOW TRAVELERS AND OTHERS; INDOCTRINATION AND USE OF THESE FOR PARTY'S PURPOSES
INFILTRATION BY FOREIGN COMMUNISTS, AGENTS AND AGITATORS, AND FOREIGN PROPAGANDA MATERIAL, MONEY, WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT
INCREASED AGITATION, UNREST, DISAFFECTION, INFILTRATION OF ADMINISTRATION, POLICE, MILITARY AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SLOWDOWNS AND STRIKES
AGITATION; FORMING FAVORABLE PUBLIC OPINION (ADVOCATING NATIONAL CAUSE), CREATION OF DISTRUST OF ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS
CREATION OF ATMOSPHERE OF WIDER DISCONTENT THROUGH PROPAGANDA, LIES, POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFORT; DISCREDITING GOVERNMENT, POLICE AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES
DISSATISFACTION WITH POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND/OR OTHER CONDITIONS; NATIONAL ASPIRATION (INDEPENDENCE) OR DESIRE FOR IDEOLOGICAL AND OTHER CHANGES
PREPARATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CADRES AND OF MASSES FOR REVOLUTION
PREPARATION OF PARALLEL HIERARCHIES FOR TAKING OVER GOVERNMENT POSITIONS
Public component activities
Armed component activities
Underground activities
Negotiated settlement
International strategic communications
Large-scale military and paramilitary actions
Minor military and paramilitary actions
Shadow governance activities
Overt
Shadow governance activities
Clandestine
Increased political violence, terror, and sabotage
Negotiations with government representatives
Intense sapping of morale of government, administration, police, and military
Increased underground activities to demonstrate strength of revolutionary organization
Sabotage and terror to demonstrate weakness of government
Overt and covert pressures against government; strikes, riots, and disorders
Intensification of propaganda, increase in disaffection, psychological preparation for revolt
Expansion of and coordination among resistance networks
Establishment of formalized resistance elements; appeal to extraterritorial support infrastructure
Spreading subversive organizations into all sectors of life in a country/region
Penetration into professional, social, and political organizations and into all parts of society
Recruitment of like-minded individuals and others; indoctrination and use of these for organizational purposes
Infiltration of foreign agents and agitators, and foreign propaganda material, money, weapons, and equipment
Increased agitation, unrest, and disaffection, infiltration of administration, police, and military and national organizations, and slowdowns and strikes
Assassination, forming favorable public opinion (advocating national cause), creation of distrust of established institutions
Creation of atmosphere of wider discontent through propaganda, lies, and political and psychological effort: discrediting government, police, and military authorities
Dissatisfaction with political, economic, social administrative, and/or other conditions; national aspiration (independence) or desire for ideological and other changes
Preparation of revolutionary cadres and of masses for revolution
Preparation of revolutionary cadres and of masses for revolution

Figure 7. Models of SORO and ARIS pyramids[77]

In their NPS thesis, William Driver and Bruce DeFeyter propose their own model of UW, simplifying the SORO and ARIS pyramids and complementing McRaven's model. Driver and DeFeyter apply the practical understanding they have on the topic, combine two models in a new way and propose an interesting new approach. In their study they use the traditional approach of UW as *"working by, with, or through irregular surrogates in a clandestine and/or covert manner against opposing actors"*[78], with the idea that SOF are special because they are general.[79] They suggest an indirect theory of relative superiority that combines SORO and ARIS pyramids with McRaven's model and its six principles. Their theory is built in the lines of the earlier pyramids but simplified to better match McRaven's theory.[80]

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[76] Molnar, A., Tinker, J. and Lenoir, J. (1966), Tompkins, P. (2013) and Mao, Z., and Griffith, S. (2007)

[77] Ibid.

In UW, relative superiority is achieved, when a neutral condition that exists between the two competing parties is won over. Simplifying the idea – when two parties are competing over the influence of the same group of people, whoever wins the neutral opinion to his favor, has relative superiority. In this context, relative superiority can be calculated as a relation of intelligence, resources, and Political Opportunity Structures (POS).[81] In their model, Driver and DeFeyter present the relation of the three as an equation, in which all three mentioned conditions are necessary to achieve relative superiority or winning over a certain community.

In the equation of the model, intelligence and resources are considered something of a commodity for the developing UW group or insurgency, and for the purposes of this study they will not be analyzed further – in the context of the VSO/ALP programs the SOF had superiority over them, the only thing they were competing for, was the third condition, POS. Although originally defined to a state vs. insurgency situations, the model of POS is applicable to smaller, regional conflicts as well. POS can be defined as *"political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded"*. This "political space" is the neutral area of which both sides compete to receive the required support from the populace. The model is also in line with Kilcullen's idea of competitive control.[82] Simplified, POS is competed over by the insurgents in their own methods and SOF conducting UW or MA. COIN refers to POS with the military term "winning hearts and minds".

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[78] FM 3-05.130. (2008)

[79] Searle, T (2017)

[80] Kilcullen, D. (2013), pp. 125-136 and Driver, W. and DeFeyter, B. (2008)

[81] Shawki, N (2010), pp. 381-411

[82] McAdam D., McCarthy J., Zald M. (2008), p. 3

To match McRaven's model, Driver and DeFeyter have drawn their model as similar as possible. Like McRaven's, the model is built on three stages and six principles. Because UW has a different dynamic and is developed over time, the pyramid is on a stable base to highlight the need for planning and thorough preparations.

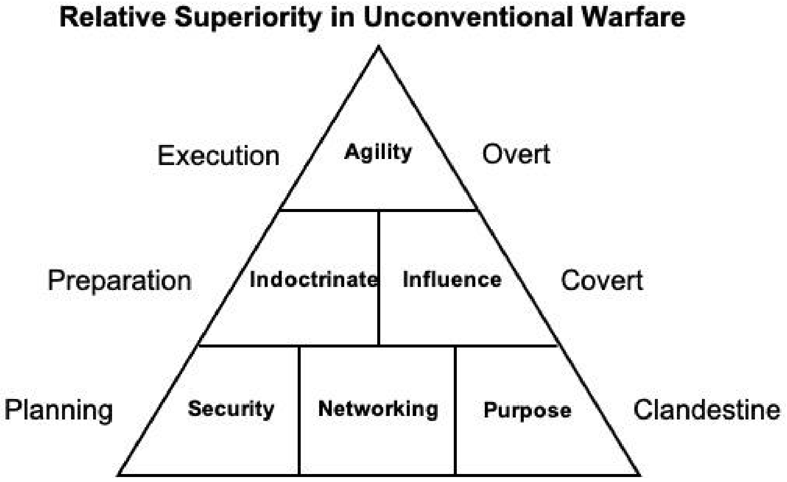
Relative Superiority in Unconventional Warfare
Execution
Agility
Overt
Preparation
Indoctrinate
Influence
Covert
Planning
Security
Networking
Purpose
Clandestine

Figure 8. The model of Unconventional Warfare[83]

The first phase of the model, planning, consists of three UW principles. This phase lays the foundation for everything else and can be executed clandestinely if necessary.[84] Security is the first principle, that supports all others. Like in McRaven's model, security is built on the idea of limiting the personnel who are involved in the planning or informed of the activities. Eventually the organization exposes itself, as it becomes more active and moves to the next stages, but basically this is just a planning consideration.[85] The second principle is networking, which is the most important resource the organization has. Networking needs to be done over time by building trust and exploiting all possible connections. Networks are vital for the organization in many ways, especially the necessary intelligence and logistics chains.[86] The third principle is purpose. McRaven used clearly defined objectives as a principle, whereas UW uses the cause of the organization as purpose. Although the motivations for individuals may vary, the organization needs a purpose of relentless will towards its objective for a successful campaign.[87]

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[83] Driver, W. and DeFeyter, B. (2008), p. 12

[84] Galula, D. (1964), pp. 2-9

[85] Driver, W. and DeFeyter, B. (2008)

[86] Galula, D. (1964), pp. 11-25

The second phase of the model, preparation, consists of two UW principles. The phase aims to expand the organization towards the center of gravity, the population. The first principle is indoctrination, that aims to transfer the core ideologies and purpose to the members. The second principle, influence, focuses on the communities and population to compete for support and acceptance. Influencing the population requires well-accepted messaging and providing the wanted perception of the organization to the communities. The insurgency can accomplish victory just by unifying the communities to support the insurgency and isolating the opposition through indoctrination and influence.[88]

The final phase of the model, execution, consists of only one UW principle, agility. In the context of the UW model, agility means being proactive instead of reactive. It is about gaining strength, balance, coordination, and speed. The phase builds on the accomplishments of the two previous phases and utilizes all their principles. The goal for this phase is to establish a force powerful enough to defeat the opposition.[89]

All UW models are usually presented as a pyramid to highlight the fact that the foundation needs to be solidly based for the insurgency to develop. This depiction does not accurately present the growing influence of the insurgency, as developing movements gain strength and support over time and achieve relative superiority only in the final phase, at the tip of the pyramid.

The models for UW, with its phases and principles, can be applied for both insurgencies as well as the VSO/ALP that the SOF were setting up in Afghanistan. The villagers were presented with a problem, the Taliban insurgents, and their response was to create a force to counter it, the Arbakai.

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[87] McRaven, W. (1995), p.21

[88] Galula, D. (1964), pp. 11-16

[89] Driver, W. and DeFeyter, B. (2008)

2.4 Security Sector Reform

"Security Sector Reform is a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law."[90]

Achieving sustainable peace to a conflict-affected country is the main objective of all nation building and peace building. The prerequisite for the other programs and tools that peace building can use, is achieving a safe and secure enviroment. For this reason, providing security has emerged as a priority in recovering from conflict.[91]

When the concept of how SSR could provide external support was first introduced, its aim was to present a new holistic approach on all reforms of security governance to support peacebuilding. The envisioned approach was reasoned. Single and isolated security or justice programs were inefficient if the entire sector was not set to function in a unity of effort. SSR sought to close the gaps between individual programs, so they would be better coordinated and controlled. From that point on, much that was envisaged has been altered at the practical level, as experiences on SSR have transformed and evolved the concept. From a holistic and inclusive model, SSR has become a model of Security Force Assistance (SFA) that provides training and/or mentoring to individual local institutions. SSR is an important pillar in state-building policy and practice in conflict affected countries, but perhaps not in the way it was thought to be. It has rarely, if ever, had the inclusive approach that was envisioned when it was first introduced. The differences between other programs that provide SFA and what is referred to as SSR is often a thin red line. In Afghanistan in 2002, there was no security sector to reform, so the program needed to completely build all the state security institutions. The process was called SSR, although SFA might have been a more accurate description. In comparison to SSR, traditionally SFA openly emphasizes professionalization and effectiveness, whereas SSR claims to look at the providers and procedures as an entire system that needs to function.[92]

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[90] UNSG (2008)

[91] Gordon E. (2014), pp. 126-148, Abrahamsen, R. and Williams, M. (2006) and DCAF (2016)

[92] Sedra, M. (2010), p. 69, Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 15-27 and Chappuis, F. and Haenggi, H. (2009), pp.31–52 and Schroeder, U and Chappuis, F. (2014)

2.4.1 Human Security

Traditionally the concept of security is viewed through a Weberian state-centric model that focuses on protecting the state. After the Cold War era, the basic idea of how security is perceived has widened and altered, and the term defined more broadly. The main change in the concept of security has however been the transitioning from the state-centric thinking more towards the population – the people and their personal security.[93]

The current model focuses on both states´ traditional threats as well as need to ensure the security of the population, a concept recognized as human security. Two different approaches to it exist, the first one can be summarized as "freedom from want", ensuring basic human needs in different fields and the second one, which is more precise and more in lines with the topic of this research, can be summarized as "freedom from fear", ensuring that different threats will not dominate people's lives. For the purposes of this study the focus is kept on traditional provision of security and not expanded to the other elements, of human security, such as environmental security.[94]

From a human security perspective, SSR needs to focus on supporting the legitimate security and justice services provided to the population. Professionalism and effectiveness of the security providers are not adequate when assessing the impact on human security. Security and justice institutions need to follow the existing legislation that is seen as just, they need to be well governed, and transparent oversight mechanisms need to be in place. Security providers cannot function efficiently, if the legislation or judicial institutions do not function.[95]

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[93] Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 15-27

[94] Sedra, M. (2017), Krause, K. (2005) and Krause, K. (2006)

[95] Gordon, E. (2014), p.16, Krause, K. (2006) and Kaldor, M and Luckham, R. (2001)

2.4.2 Principles of Security Sector Reform

The SSR model used in this thesis is based on one approach (local ownership), two objectives (accountability and effectiveness) and three dimensions (political, holistic, and technical). Sedra defines the dimensions of SSR to be political, institutional, economic, and societal, but this study uses the definition of DCAF ISSAT.[96] Although the main approach, local ownership, includes traits that should make the program sustainable, it has also been argued that sustainability should be a third separate objective, as many of the SSR programs rely heavily on donor support.[97]

Although not usually depicted as a pyramid, the principles are presented here in a similar format than the models of SOF and UW to highlight the similarities and differences and ease the comparison. The pyramid is drawn on its apex to stress the fact that the success of SSR depends on local acceptance and local ownership. Unlike in the previously presented pyramids, the dimensions are seen as cross-cutting themes that need to be considered, while ensuring local ownership and achieving effectiveness and accountability.

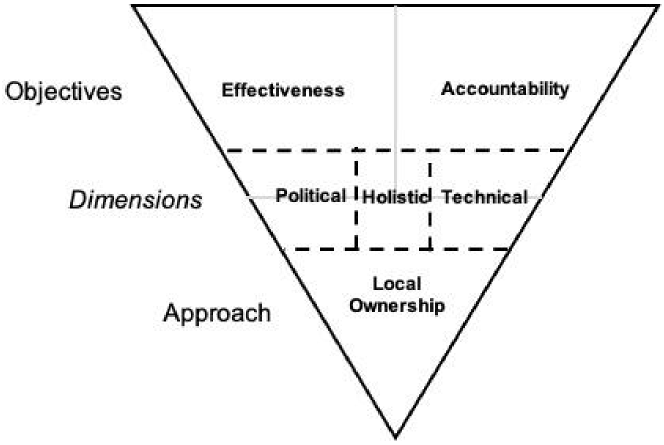

Figure 9. The model of SSR[98]

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[96] Sedra, M. (2017), p. 61 and DCAF (2016)

[97] Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 15-24 and Schroeder, U and Chappuis, F. (2014) and DCAF (2016)

[98] Author, modified from DCAF, (2016)

Local ownership is the cornerstone of any successful SSR program, although they are often initiated by outside donors. Sustainable results can be achieved only through inclusive local ownership and commitment of the local authorities and the population. Local ownership also presents a dilemma, as if the local ownership is defined by a government that is seen illegit, the whole process can be perceived illegit by the population. A comprehensive involvement of different actors is required in the programming phase to achieve effective governance, oversight, and accountability for the entire reform. Although mainstream SSR programs are state-centric, it has also been acknowledged that communal security structures can also be promoted in SSR, if they build up public morale.[99]

SSR programs often take place in nations that require external assistance as they do not have the resources or capacity to conduct them on their own. For a variety of reasons, donors often end up pushing their own agendas and leading the SSR processes, thus enforcing their own governance models to environments where they are not applicable. Donors may either believe that their models of governance are universal, or they feel the need to achieve something within their funding cycles. Donors may also become dissatisfied by the delays in the schedules. Achieving and maintaining local ownership has proven to be a complex balancing act for donors and external supporters. Past SSR programs show that they can be resented, or even opposed, by the local actors if they are driven too externally. While respecting local customs and traditions, donors also feel the need to ensure that the parties they are involved with, respect international human rights.[100]

Local ownership can also be something that changes its balance during SSR. Donors may have higher influence in the beginning, but the power should gradually shift. In his article, Karina Asbjørnsen presents very similar ideas to local ownership in SSR, as Fox did in his articles about war by proxy. In cases where it is not possible to reach extensive local ownership immediately, external actors should gradually transfer responsibilities to the locals, when it becomes possible without endangering the desired ends. Public confidence can be achieved only through local ownership and if it is not achieved, SSR can at worst decrease trust in state institutions.[101]

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[99] Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 15-24, DCAF (2016) and Gordon, E., (2014)

[100] Brzoska, M (2006), pp.1-13, Kaldor, M and Luckham, R. (2001) and Schroeder, U. (2010), pp. 82–101

[101] Asbjørnsen, K. (2017), Schroeder, U. (2010), pp. 82–101 and Fox, A. (2019c)

The first objective of SSR, effectiveness, refers to how security and justice services function and are provided. Externally the effectiveness can be improved with a variety of activities, including training, mentoring, providing and improving equipment and infrastructure, reforming the organizational structure and improving and increasing cooperation among different relevant actors. This dimension of donor support for SSR does not differ from military means of providing SFA or MA to the local counterparts.[102]

The second objective, accountability, refers to whether security and justice actors act transparently and follow the laws and codes of conduct. The purpose is to ensure the transparency of judicial procedures and that monitoring mechanisms and sanctions for misconducts are in place. Deficits in accountability are in many cases the reason why security or justice sector is seen illegit or it does not function. Even if the effectiveness of the security apparatus is improved, as according to the first objective, the success will not likely be sustainable if accountability and oversight are disregarded. Accountability mechanisms can be internal or external as well as formal or informal, ranging from official reporting mechanisms to human rights organizations.[103]

The three dimensions of SSR are cross-cutting and connect the core principle to the objectives. They need to be included in programming phase and evaluated and assessed throughout the reform. Firstly, programs are always political; secondly, they are highly technical; and thirdly, they require a comprehensive approach and understanding of the host nation and the interconnections of different actors.

SSR programs are sensitive and political processes on many levels, as they interfere with the state's sovereignty over the use of force. SSR can end up altering the state architecture, existing power relations and have an impact on peoples' income and privileges. Failures to account for local power relations and political relationships has in the past programs led to focusing on security forces effectiveness while disregarding the framework that would improve the entire security system.[104]

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[102] Sedra (2010), DCAF (2016) and Fox, A. (2019)

[103] Kaldor, M and Luckham, R. (2001) and Brzoska, M (2006), pp.1 – 13.

[104] Jackson, P. (2018), Brzoska, M (2006), pp.1 – 13 and Sedra, M. (2010), p.16

SSR programs include interaction with a variety of actors, institutions and agencies and their interconnected nature needs to be understood. Improving the functions of the police will likely require working with other sectors like the military (defining and deconflicting roles and duties), the parliament (improving oversight mechanisms and adjusting legislation), the ministry of finance (ensure resources), the ministry of interior (improve governance and leadership structures) as well as the civil society (increase trust in the security officials, gain information on deficiencies). A detailed depiction of the process and its dilemmas can be found in captains Jason Howk's study on the SSR process in Afghanistan in 2002-2003.[105]

The third dimension is technical complexity, which means that a thorough understanding is required, not only in specific areas that are to be reformed, but also in cross-cutting themes that influence the entire reform, such as human rights, gender issues, program management, logistics and communication.[106]

A depiction of the holistic nature of SSR presents the cross-cutting themes penetrating state functions and the how oversight mechanisms should be in place.

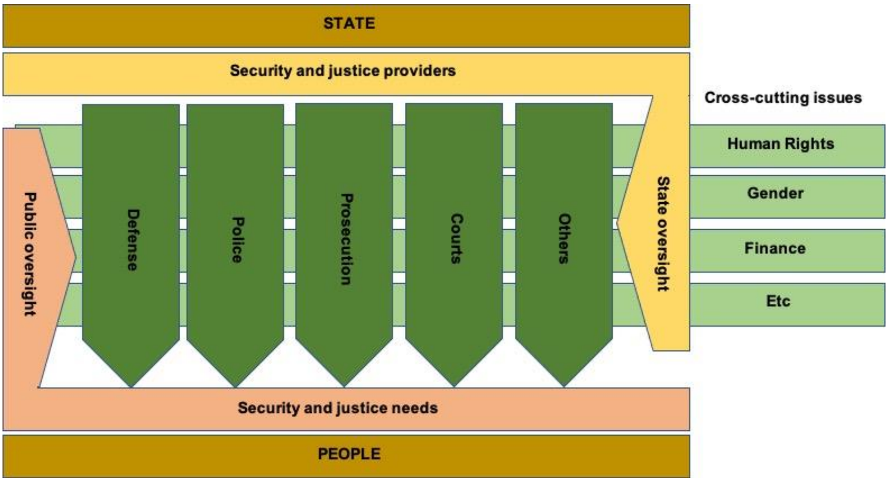
STATE
Security and justice providers
Cross-cutting issues
Human Rights
Gender
Finance
Etc
Public oversight
Defense
Police
Prosecution
Courts
Others
State oversight
Security and justice needs
PEOPLE

Figure 10. Visualization of traditional SSR[107]

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[105] Howk, J. (2009), pp. 14-15

[106] Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 15-24 and Schroeder, U and Chappuis, F. (2014)

[107] Author, modified from DCAF (2016) as the original had inaccuracies as traditional and commercial actors were depicted as state sponsored.

2.4.3 Security Sector Reform in a conflict-affected environment

Understanding the broad context of the host nation is essential in designing and implementing a successful SSR. Special consideration is needed, if the host nation is still in a conflict or severely affected by it, which is the case in many SSR programs. While the key principles of SSR remain the same in all settings, there are no template solutions that would suit all possible scenarios and geographical areas. Each program always has a different context and therefore needs to be programmed to the specific requirements of the situation. In a conflict-affected environment, the different factors that may influence the nature and outcome of SSR need an even more thorough assessment.[108]

It is possible, that there is nothing to reform. The security providers may have been divided between different parties of the conflict, and there is no functioning security sector. Judicial systems and framework may have been abolished in the conflict and been nonexistent in the first place. This will likely increase the international actors desire to take the leading role for rapid results, even though this role should be left to the national actors. In the absence of state-controlled security and justice providers, it is possible that the role of customary procedures has become a norm that is not easily replaced any more. Local ownership is the imperative, but the population may see the state's role differently after the conflict and the reform process illegit if it interferes with their livelihoods.[109]

Intervening in a complex situation that involves multiple national and international actors poses additional challenges to SSR. The political factors are often more complicated as they involve international politics of donors in addition to the official and unofficial power relations of the host nation. It is likely that multiple international, regional, and national organizations and actors are present causing the efforts to be either duplicated or competed over. Coordination between the different actors is a necessity, but may prove difficult, as different actors have their own objectives and agendas. Even if the different actors are working with separate programs that have their own objectives, they may interfere with each other's goals, like it is in the case with reconciliation programs and DDR.[110]

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[108] Sedra, M. (2017) pp. 103-143 and Kaldor, M. and Luckham, R. (2001)

[109] Hanlon, Q. and Shultz, R. (eds.) (2016), pp. 35-97

[110] Sedra, M. (2017) pp. 103-143, Brzoska, M (2006), pp.1-13 and Schroeder, U. (2010), pp. 82–101

2.4.4 2nd generation Security Sector Reform

The practical experiences from past SSR programs have led to a debate among the actors and academics on how the concept SSR should be evolved. The core objective of SSR is to support the host nation in creating an effective security and justice system. In situations where SSR has been implemented, the state has often had limited legitimacy among the entire population or even resources to do so. Conflict-affected states often have divided populations and privatized and personalized structures as well as traditional structures that are based communities or religions. Pursuing centralization while addressing the needs of the population can have contradicting aims, especially if those needs are already met by traditional systems.[111]

Different kinds of context specific models and principles of a functioning security sector exist, but they may not be applicable to any other conditions. Based on the results of past programs and experts' experiences from them, has led to proposing an alternative model to the state centric SSR, ignoring the states' monopoly for security provision. The competing model does not alter the main objectives of SSR, but questions who should, or could, be providing security and justice. The question arises from the dilemma of whether SSR needs to be building states security forces effectiveness, or a security system that provides services effectively. This thinking can be followed by questioning how and what could be done with the existing actors and structures, instead of attempting to implement new structures and procedures somewhere, where they have not existed before.[112]

The existing SSR model recognizes the shortcomings of governments in conflict-affected states and the effects on services it can provide, but still tries to implement changes through the nation-state model. Although local ownership is the core principle of SSR, the programs focus mainly on building and enhancing state institutions which may lead to alienating the program from the population. Without ensuring inclusive local ownership and building the relationship between the communities and the state, interaction in SSR processes will also be limited and gaining public trust for the programs becomes more difficult.[113] SSR model claims to prioritize human security in the programs, but often the approach is strictly state-centric and local ownership is dictated by the local political elites.

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[111] Cooper, N and Pugh, M. (2002), Baker, B. and Scheye, E. (2007), pp. 503 – 528

[112] Baker, B. and Scheye, E. (2007), pp. 503 – 528 and Baker, B (2010b)

[113] Gordon E. (2014), pp. 126-148 and DFID (2004)

In his book *"Security sector reform in conflict-affected countries: the evolution of a model"*, Mark Sedra analyzes the SSR model to 11 principles and assesses how they have been implemented in past programs. Sedra's findings indicate that some of the theoretical principles have been found too difficult in practice and thus neglected. He presents several examples of which I will use local ownership as it is supposed to be the cornerstone of SSR. Local ownership should mean that the local authorities are in control and external donors in a supporting role, but donors' program and lead SSR, and local ownership means that the local elite accepts the plans of the donors. Sedra and donors identify several reasons for such conduct. Incomprehension of the local culture and enviroment and the unwillingness to adapt to the local contexts appear to be the most significant ones. Based on his findings, Sedra questions the principle of seeing the state as the sole provider of security and instead suggests expanding the model to supporting effective and locally supported security structures. Sedra argues that SSR programs should be *"problem-driven, people-focused, politically sensitive, long- term, contextually attuned, sensitive to issues of sustainability and comfortable with hybridity"*.[114]

Adapting to the needs that have risen from practical experiences requires looking past the traditional models of what is the state's role and what SSR should do. This poses opportunities as well as new challenges. On one hand, there might be uncharted resources and capacities in the traditional structures, but on the other hand, as SSR programs are often dependent on donors who are likely unwilling to commit to new and riskier local partners. From the donor's perspective, it can be argued that the first challenge is to identify the potential security providers and secondly to decide on whether they could participate or be of use in another way. The questions donors need to assess are what kind of security is provided, by whom and how can they contribute to building a stable and inclusive public security? Can they accept the risks of deficiencies in oversight and possible violations of international human rights? Whatever the donor's outcome will be, SSR programs need to recognize that a strict public/private distinction is inadequate and that there are non-state security providers that the people rely on in their security needs.[115]

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[114] Sedra M. (2017) and Baker, B. (2010b)

[115] Andersen, L. (2006) and DFID (2004)

Even though organizing the security structures in a parallel way seems unorthodox to the western way of thinking, it is not completely uncommon in all western societies either. If we simplify the division, the United States' security and justice structures are built on layers, where the Federal Government holds certain responsibilities, and the states complement them with their own legislation and security organizations. Applying the same thinking to the relation of the nation state and traditional security and justice providers, is not that far-fetched. It would just require that the central governance makes the traditional system official and has oversight over it – as was the case in Afghanistan during the Musahiban dynasty which will be discussed in chapter 3.[116]

Below is a depiction of what parallel structures could look like, when adapted to the model presented earlier in figure 9. These structures are not necessarily occupying each other's spaces.

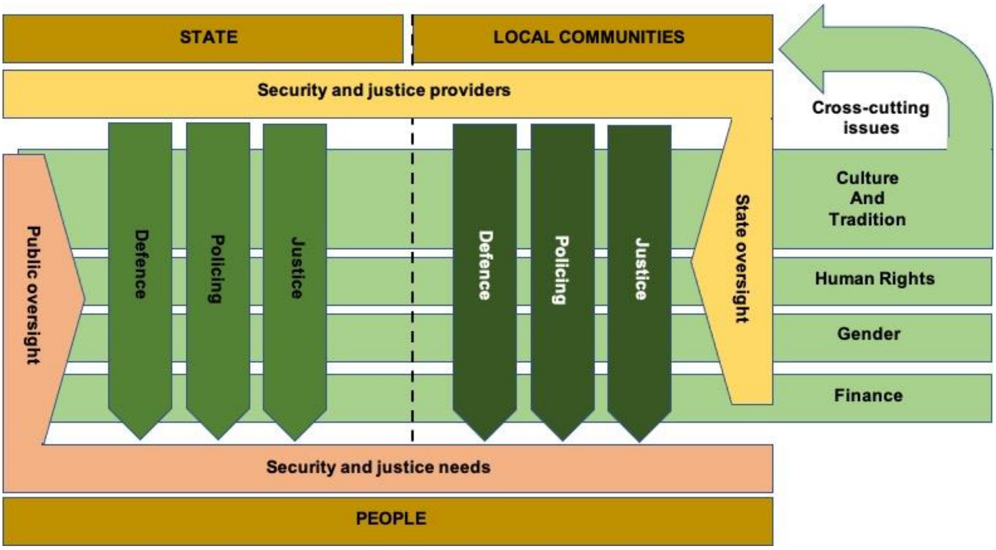
STATE
LOCAL COMMUNITIES
Security and justice providers
Cross-cutting issues
Public oversight
Defence
Policing
Justice
Defence
Policing
Justice
State oversight
Culture And Tradition
Human Rights
Gender
Finance
Security and justice needs
PEOPLE

Figure 11. Visualization of 2nd generation SSR [117]

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[116] Jones, S. (2009) and Jones, S. (2012), pp. 21-24

[117] Author, modified from DCAF (2016)

Supporting traditional security and justice systems may be the only way to achieve short-term successes that are important in the first phases of SSR interventions, as they build the populations trust over the program and the changes it brings. Traditional security may also be the most effective way for achieving the requisite of security, thus supporting reconstruction and development.[118] In addition to these, traditional systems also provide a valid entry point to the society, as they likely have been functioning throughout the conflict. Integrating and officializing traditional security and justice structures would require careful mediation through the local government and likely new legislation would need to be implemented. The task would not be straightforward or easy, but there would likely be more positive gains to be achieved than potential problems to confront.[119]

2.5 Conclusion

The core principles of the presented models are in essence very similar. All claim that a thorough understanding of the environment and local culture is essential in programming and executing the required effort. All recognize the importance of deconfliction, coordination and cooperation. All build on local ownership, commitment and enhancement of local players legitimacy and power. All aim for a self-sustaining safe and secure environment.

The models of war by proxy, COIN, SOF or UW are not conflicting with each other nor the models and principles of SSR, although they look at the same phenomenon from a different perspective. If coordinated properly, all functions can co-exist and function in the same theatre and support each other's efforts.

The principles of war by proxy can be applied to any model, where an outside actor, or principal, tries to influence the action of the proxy, or agent. What the proxy model presented here suggests that other theories and models don't, is closing criteria. The principal-agent relationship needs to be continuously assessed, and the relationship terminated when needed – whether in success or failure.

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[118] Baker, B. and Scheye, E. (2007), pp. 503 - 528

[119] Ansorg, N. and Gordon, E. (2018) and DFID (2004)

COIN in its core is a military version of the traditional SSR. Both aim to support and strengthen an existing central governance and its security forces, with the difference that COIN can, and will, use military force to alter the conditions for its goals. In a conflict-affected nation that has an ongoing insurgency, cooperation with the two is a necessity that supports both models´ aims. COIN lacks the expertise and personnel in establishing a rule of law on its own, whereas SSR likely needs COIN for access. COIN can provide the necessary military presence to establish safe and secure environment to enable development, policing and rule of law that will further stabilize the area.

The model of SOF does not support SSR directly, but the forces operating according to its principles may do. The theory of UW and its principles however can support SSR in an area where it has rarely been attempted before, engaging unofficial and traditional security and justice providers. This will be discussed in more detail later.

Academics have written about the 2nd generation SSR emphasizing the need to engage and interact with traditional security and justice providers, but have also acknowledged the dilemma of resources, personnel, and security concerns that it puts on the SSR effort. The concept of 2nd generation SSR is built on the idea of not implementing new structures, ways and means but using what is already in existence. This could be expanded to using military, particularly the SOF, more in training indigenous forces to other tasks than warfighting. The cooperation would have significant potential yet to be exploited. Even within this kind of an approach the SOF would not be a silver bullet that solves the issues related to 2nd generation SSR, but rather a complement that can perform tasks other stakeholders cannot. SOF can improve the effects of other operations and increase their likelihood to succeed, but they are rarely, if ever, decisive on their own. SOF are to be used more as catalysts rather than complete solutions that would replace other actors.

In Afghanistan all the models presented here have been in use throughout the post 2001 conflict and will be discussed in more detail in the correct context in the following chapters.

3 AFGHANISTAN AS A CONFLICT AREA

"The creation of a sense of national unity among the diverse population of Afghanistan has long been a challenging problem to its rulers. Afghanistan is a tribal society, composed of some 20 ethnic groups of widely varying backgrounds and cultures. About the only cohesive elements among these groups are their observance of Islamic Law, martial tradition, and a distrust of government."[120]

The population of Afghanistan is roughly 37 million people mainly consisting of four major ethnicities, Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek.[121] Pashtuns are the largest minority with 40% of the population and as ethnicities are not bound by state boundaries, another 15 million Pashtuns live in the tribal areas of Pakistan.

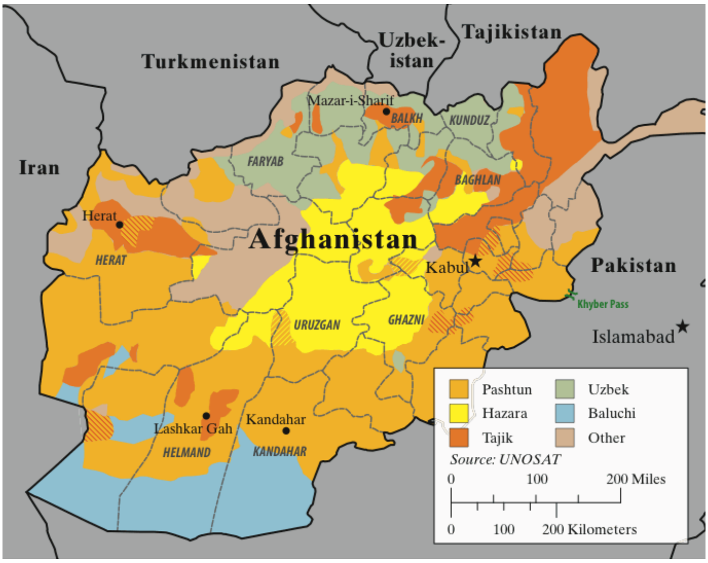
Turkmenistan
Uzbek-istan
Tajikistan
Iran
Pakistan
Afghanistan
Mazar-i-Sharif
BALKH
KUNDUZ
FARYAB
BAGHLAN
Herat
HERAT
Kabul
Khyber Pass
Islamabad
URUZGAN
GHAZNI
Lashkar Gah
Kandahar
HELMAND
KANDAHAR
Pashtun
Hazara
Tajik
Uzbek
Baluchi
Other
Source: UNOSAT
0
100
200 Miles
0
100
200 Kilometers

Figure 12. Ethnic Diversity in Afghanistan[122]

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[120] CIA (2005)

[121] CIA World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/afghanistan/

[122] https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2010/10/07/should-afghanistan-exist/

Afghanistan is a tribal society with a complex and violent history, and it has never been functioning nation-state in a Weberian sense. Central governance has had limited power over the rural areas throughout the country's history and the entire population consists of different ethnicities with their own family, clan, and tribal structures. The absence of central governance rule does not however mean anarchy or complete lawlessness – the tribes follow their own customs and codes. All communities and societies work because they are organized in a sense of abiding by a certain set of standards for who interacts with whom, why, and how.[123]

The Afghan state was originally founded by Pashtun tribal confederacies in 1747 when a group of Pashtun and Baloch tribal leaders chose Ahmad Shah Durrani as the first king of Afghanistan. The king had the support of the tribal confederacies that provided the necessary military and political power and in exchange were granted a specialized position in the society, namely privileges regarding self-governance. Although most parts of Afghanistan were organised in the traditional states' manner, the tribal regions remained semi-autonomous, and the tribal leaders were given control over matters normally controlled by the state.[124]

3.1 Tribalism

Tribes are probably the oldest way for a community or a society to organize itself. There are several explanations and definitions available from a variety of experts for how "tribe" should be understood. This study uses a definition from Richard Tapper, who defines tribes loosely as *"localized groups in which kinship is the dominant reason of organization, and whose members consider themselves culturally distinct from others."*[125]

Tribes are usually unified through a shared identity. They can be a part of a larger confederates of tribes that usually rely on their own, old, and complicated, tribal structures instead of state governance. The term confederacy or confederation refers to multiple tribes that share the same culture and identity and are in some way unified under an authority that is not questioned.[126]

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[123] Ronfeldt, D. (2006), p. 1

[124] Fergusson, J. (2011), pp. 13-23

[125] Tapper, R. (ed.) (1983), p. 9

[126] Ibid.

The tribal identity dictates much in the lives of its members and tribal systems are not confined to remote or rural areas. In countries where tribalism exists, it penetrates all levels of the society from rural areas and the mountain villages to the central governance, the universities and to the leadership of the security forces. Tribal structure is one of the things that effect people's identities and how they conduct in everyday life. How defining it may be, the tribal identity is not fixed but instead depends on the situation and circumstances. Due to this, understanding how one tribal system functions, does not mean it applies to anywhere else.[127]

Because of the prolonged wars and state of chaos that Afghanistan has been in for decades, the traditional structures and balances of power have evolved and altered more than they would have normally. As young men from the communities participated in the conflict, they created new communities, alliances, and structures of power outside the traditional ones. The formation of new groups that lived outside the traditional norms had a decreasing effect on the significance of some tribal confederations while boosting others. Despite the changes, the tribal system remains a part of a large and complex social and political structure.[128]

Although tribes represent something that is not an everyday thing in western thinking anymore, the importance of understanding them and their dynamics has been recognized by several instances. Academics on 2nd generation SSR have written about traditional justice systems. The tribes in conflict areas and cooperation with them has been recognized in several military studies, particularly regarding SOF. In his article for the Strategic Studies Institute, Richard Taylor made three recommendations on tribal engagements. Firstly, he suggested enhancing the role of tribal partnerships in the US national security policy. Secondly, he suggested exploiting tribal partnerships in all military operations, not just the way UW theories propose. Thirdly, he recommended using tribes through all different military campaign phases, suggesting that tribes should also be utilized when transitioning the authority and therefore recognizing non-state actors as security providers.[129]

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[127] Glatzer, B. (2002): pp 265-282.

[128] Glatzer, B. (2002): pp 265-282 and Tomsen, P. (2011), pp. 48-53

[129] Taylor, R. (2005)

3.1.1 Tribes in Afghanistan

Tribalism in Afghanistan is an important factor in the society, but not easy to define nor explain in general. The tribal system and its inner relations are constantly changing and, in many cases, depend on the situation at hand. Some depiction is however necessary for the scope of this research. Tribes are formed from ethno-linguistic groups who define their identity based on ethnicity and kinship. Afghan tribes support each other on different, loosely defined, ways if it is seen to benefit the individual or the tribe – especially if the matters involve the honor or shame of the tribe.[130]

The Afghan confederations and tribes have several levels of organization, regardless of the ethnicity. All ethnicities have their own cultural nuances, but in general the structures and customs are very similar. The distinguishing difference between them is *Pashtunwali*[131] – the Pashtun code of conduct only the Pashtun follow. Similar codes exist in other ethnicities as well, but not as definite as among the Pashtun. As presenting all tribal structures of Afghanistan would be beyond the study, only the Pashtun are explained in some detail, also noting that differences and nuances do exist, and that they also effect the interaction between ethnicities and tribes. Another reason to discuss the Pashtun tribal system in more detail, is its linkage to the Taliban.

Pashtun are divided into greater tribal confederations that all are believed to descend from one person, *Qais Abdur Rashid*, the common ancestor to all Pashtun. According to the folklore his sons, *Sarbuni, Baittani, Ghurghusti*, and *Karlani* are the forefathers of the current tribal confederations. As tribal structures are far from stable and constantly changing, nowadays there are five large confederations of Pashtun that are *Durrani* (one branch descending from *Sarbuni*), *Ghilzai* (descending from *Baittani*), *Ghurghusti, Karlani*, and *Sarbuni*. Each of these five major tribal confederations include several *Qawms,* or major Pashtun tribes.[132]

Major tribes or *Qawms* are divided into smaller tribes called *Qabila* or *Tabar*. Each tribe is further divided into two or more subtribes consisting of different levels of kinship groups or clans (higher ranking clans are called *khel* or *zai* and the lower ranking *pillarina* or *plarganey*). Each of these clans consists of several *kahols,* that can be explained as something between a clan and an extended family. *Kahols* are defined by a common ancestor and consist of extended families or even entire villages.[133] The Pashtun tribal structure is so complex and wide that is it practically impossible to simplify to a single flow-chart. The relations, allegiances and other connections are usually depicted and analyzed at the clan of *kahol* level.

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[130] Taylor, R. (2005) and Tomsen P. (2011) pp. 48-53

[131] All terms and names are phonetic translations from Pashtu or Dari and other versions do exist. For this thesis, the translations are the ones used by ISAF.

[132] Rzehak, L. (2011) and Tomsen P. (2011), pp. 53-58

The way of how the tribal system evolves, is easiest to explain through the *kahols*. The families and extended families in a *kahol* expand with every new generation and form new linkages through marriages, eventually developing into clans that restructure themselves into new groups of *kahols*. As the clan develops from *kahols,* they share the same patrilineal descent that connects them to the larger tribe. The family background is a source of identity for the Pashtun and dictates their behavior as allegiances are related to individuals' position in the tribal structure. Ideally, a Pashtun knows all his linking ancestors up to *Qais Abdur Rashid*. In reality, a Pashtun usually knows all the forefathers of his *kahol*. As in many other tribal cultures, it is customary to go through the family background when two people meet for the first time and ancestors define how the relationship will develop.[134]

The most influential tribal confederations of today are *Durrani* and *Ghilzai*. *Durrani*s have been the ruling confederation of Afghanistan with their *Sadoza* and *Barakzai* dynasties, although they have never been the largest confederation.[135] This history and tribal connection is one of the main reasons why Hamid Karzai was selected by the international community to run Afghanistan's Interim Government in 2002. After his father, *Abdul Ahad Karzai* had been assassinated in Quetta in 1999, Karzai had risen to be the leader of the *Popolzai,* a major Durrani *Qawm*.

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has balanced and struggled between different tribal and state systems. During the rule of *Amanullah Khan* (1919–1929), the Afghan state attempted to extend central governance into rural areas and declare certain tribal customs contradictory to Islamic law. Social and political revolts rose, and local rebellions eventually forced the king to renounce his throne. The so-called

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[133] Rzehak, L. (2011)

[134] Inid.

[135] Haider, G. (1988) pp. 11-13

Musahiban dynasty, which ruled from 1929 to 1978, during one of Afghanistan's most stable periods, understood the significance of the tribes and local power and balanced the relation with diplomacy. While strong central governance and an army were built, the king dealt with the rural areas very carefully. The government maintained the capability to temporarily occupy rural areas if there was a need to counter a rebellion, but certain Pashtun tribes were exempted from military service and could form their own village-level self-defense forces, called *Arbakai*. In general, this meant that the communities were responsible for establishing rule of law in their own areas.[136]

It is important to note, that originally the Arbakai were sanctioned by the central government to act under tribal supervision and had wide support from their own communities, which were the only entities they answered to. The members of Arbakai were approved by the local councils. Being paid for the task that was done for the good of the community would have been considered shameful. The very existence of the Arbakai was based on the decisions of the community's councils, *shuras* and j*irgas* and being a member was based on honor. Although the roles and responsibilities of the Arbakai varied from one area to the other, in general they were a roster of trusted men who would be called upon to maintain law and order, defend the community or enforce decisions of the councils.[137]

3.1.2 Tribal Law and traditional justice

Although the central government may not have great influence over the tribal areas of any country where tribalism exists, those areas are not lawless. Tribes have always worked their ways of settling disputes and correcting individuals who do not adhere to the customs and laws of the community. Although the system may vary from area to the other, similarities exist, and same principles can be found in most of the traditional justice systems.[138]

Pashtunwali is the traditional code of conduct for the Pashtun, following the core principles of honor and shame. Interestingly, matters are not assessed as whether they feel honorable or shameful to the person in question, but instead how they are perceived by others. All individual actions are either honorable or shameful for the entire tribe, not just the individual. Besides honor and shame the most important features of Pashtunwali are hospitality, *melmestia*, providing asylum and protection when needed, *nanawatai* and vengeance, *badal.* There is a Pashtun saying that" *A person who is born a Pashto, speaks Pashto but has no Pashtunwali is not a Pashtun*".[139] A person who is considered to possess all the positive and honorable values of Pashtunwali, is called a *ghairatman*, a desired title that brings honor to the family and more influence in the community.[140]

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[136] Jones, S.G (2009), Tomsen, P. (2011) pp. 76-81 and De Lauri, A. and Suhrke, A. (2020)

[137] Schmeidl, S. and Masood K. (2009) pp. 318–342.

[138] Noelle-Karimi, C. (2006), Bailey, C. (2009) and DFID (2004)

Although most Pashtun assume Pashtunwali and Islamic law are one and the same, their relationship is rather complicated. Pashtunwali and Islamic law are built on different traditions, mainly dictate different areas of people's livelihoods, and contradict in some of the areas where they cross. Pashtunwali dictates individual's behavior based on honor, which is connected to the community. Islamic law mainly dictates individual's personal relationship with Allah, although it also gives guidance to morals, ethical rules and conduct which connects it to the community. In Islamic law the obedience comes from faith, in Pashtunwali it comes from honor.[141]

Besides the Islamic and customary laws, a third legislation exists as well. The statutory law that the Afghan government has attempted to enforce since the first constitution was written in 1923. In his article on how the three legal systems interact, Esther Meininghaus uses the term "legal pluralism" to explain the situation.[142] The situation in Afghanistan is not unique, as similar structures exist in many middle eastern nations. It can also be assessed that the different legal systems may complement each other. The state judicial system may be better equipped to handle certain criminal proceedings, whereas the Islamic or traditional system may be better in handling civil matters. To differentiate which legal system should be used, the Islamic legal doctrines of the rights of God, *huquq Allah*, and the rights of man, *huquq al-'ibad*, are used to decide on the legal authority.[143]

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[139] All ethnicities in Afghanistan use proverbs to differentiate their culture. Tomsen, P. (2011)

[140] Rzehak, L. (2011), Tomsen, P. (2011) pp. 46-47 and Kfir, I. (2009)

[141] Ibid, Noelle-Karimi, C. (2013) and DFID (2004)

[142] Meininghaus, E. (2007)

[143] Emon, A. (2006)

The single greatest source of disputes between individuals and tribes in Afghanistan is land ownership. During the decades of conflict, individuals, families, and even entire villages have had to go on exile, leaving their lands for someone else to inhabit. As written documents are scarce, disputes over ownerships are common. Another common type of disputes arises out of marriages, divorces, and a woman's rights. The latter is perhaps the clearest difference between customary traditions and the Islamic law.[144]

Traditional justice in the communities is served through the tribal councils, the jirgas and shuras. A dispute between two individuals is a matter for the entire community as the individuals honor is connected to the honor of the entire community. If the matter effects the entire community, thorough consultations are needed. In smaller cases or disputes, advice from elders may be adequate, but in complex matters, a larger gathering is required. Gatherings that take place to discuss something of common interest or to solve an issue are called *jirga*.[145]

The tribal traditions are strong and have caused disputes and mixed reactions even among the Pashtun. On one hand the Taliban, promoting their Deoband interpretation of Islam, concluded that certain customary practices of Pashtunwali violated Islamic law. They, for instance, banned *ba'ad*, an old tradition of giving away young girls in marriage as a means of compensation or resolving disputes.[146] On the other hand they followed the code of *nanawatai,* or giving asylum, when they refused to turn over Osama bin Laden and AQ in 2001.

3.2 Insurgency in Afghanistan

According to Seth Jones, existing theories about the causes of insurgencies are not adequate for explaining the insurgency in Afghanistan. He states that the theories of insurgencies suggest they begin either due to grievances among the population or greed. Jones states that neither grievance nor greed can alone explain the Taliban or the insurgency in Afghanistan. Instead, he offers two other possible explanations. In Afghanistan the absence of state structures and lack of security and services provided a void for other actors to occupy. That void was exploited by the Taliban, motivated by an ideology more than greed or grievance.[147] In a sense Jones's explanation is a matter of interpretation – the Taliban did also exploit the grievances of the population where the state was failing although the movement itself was not motivated by grievance or greed.

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[144] Noelle-Karimi, C. (2013), Barfield T. (2003) and author's experiences in 2007-2008 and 2013-2014

[145] Noelle-Karimi, C. (2013) and LANDINFO (2011)

[146] Khan, H. (2015)

How insurgencies evolve in general was explained in chapters 2.2.1. and 2.3.3. This chapter will try to complement them by presenting the origins and tribal connections of the Taliban and the reasons for the insurgency in Afghanistan.

3.2.1 Taliban pre-2001

The Taliban likely would not have gained such an influence in Afghanistan, if not for the right circumstances. During the Soviet-Afghan war, several tribal groups rose to arms to oppose the occupation. Foreign nations were using the conflict for their own ends, used afghans as proxies and channeled their support to seven larger groups of resistance, the *mujahideen*[148]. As only selected factions were receiving support, Afghans felt compelled to form alliances with tribes and parties that would not normally have interacted. Missing out on much needed funds or weapons while a rivaling tribe was receiving them, left some tribes and groups in a situation where they had to form completely new alliances. Throughout the conflict there was fighting within the mujahideen groups as well as between them.[149] As the Soviet troops withdrew in 1989, the mujahideen groups turned their full focus on each other breaking Afghanistan into a civil war. The civil war destroyed as much, if not more, of the country's infrastructure than the Soviet-Afghan war. In the rural areas, different powerbrokers were creating a state of anarchy and helped to deteriorate the traditional tribal leadership system even further.[150]

During the war millions of Afghans sought refuge in Pakistan. The tribal areas bordering Afghanistan were inhabited by members of the same tribes as in

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[147] Nasution, A. (1965), pp. 23-24 and Jones, S. (2008), pp. 7-40

[148] "*Those engaged in jihad*", Muslims who fight on behalf of the faith or the Muslim community (ummah). https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mujahedin

[149] Rashid, A. (2008) and Noelle-Karimi, C. (2006)

[150] Tomsen, P. (2011) and De Lauri, A. and Suhrke, A. (2020)

Afghanistan. As the conflict continued, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan started building and funding *madrassas,* religious boarding schools, for the region. Both countries saw an opportunity to spread their own interpretation of Islam to fellow Sunni Muslims. Saudi Arabia's *Wahhabi* interpretation of Islam gained some support, but Pakistan's *Deobandi* School of Islamic thought was elemental in the emergence of the Taliban.[151] Besides the networks built in the tribal areas and refugee camps, the members of the movement also had tribal and kinship relations to Afghanistan and the movement started to expand.[152]

In Afghanistan, the movement rose from the madrassas in tribal areas of Ghazni and Kandahar Provinces. In 1994 it claimed its aim was to end the lawlessness of the rural areas, fighting between the mujahedin factions and to form an Islamic state. The declaration was welcomed by the Afghans, especially the Pashtun, and Taliban were seen as bringers of peace.[153]

While the Taliban's rise did not follow any traditional tribal customs or institutions, the original leaders were almost solely from the Ghilzai confederation. Ghilzai are in general concentrated in the southeast areas of the country, but they have communities all over the country because of the attempt to "*Pashtunise*" the entire country with resettlements in the early twentieth century[154] This also meant that the movement could expand easily in the country – even if the Pashtun were not following the ideology of the movement, they may have felt obliged to join if the tribal seniority did so. Despite the Taliban not being a tribal movement, in the 90's the senior leadership was mainly from the Hotaki tribe of the Ghilzai confederation.[155]

The tribal relations also influenced Taliban's actions especially in the beginning. Afghans have a close relationship with their past and Pashtunwali obliges them to seek revenge. The Durranis have been in power for most of Afghanistan's existence and on only three occasions the ruler of Afghanistan has been a Ghilzai. The hatred between the confederation's dates to 1721 and the events that made *Mir Wais*, a Ghilzai, give up power to the Durranis. A Pashtun proverb, following the principle of *badal*, revenge, states, *"I took my vengeance after a hundred years, and I only regret that I acted in haste."*[156] In the 90's Taliban's priority was to expand to the Durrani inhabited areas of Kandahar and Helmand Provinces, not seizing Kabul. Even nowadays when the movement has become more heterogenous, the priority is still establishing political dominance over Durranis.[157]

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[151] "Students", was taken into use as most were students in the madrassas of the tribal areas. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taliban

[152] Johnson, T.H. and Mason, M.C (2007) and Crews, R. and Tarzi, A. (eds) (2008), pp. 63-69

[153] Zaeef, A (2011) and Crews, R. and Tarzi, A. (eds) (2008), pp. 59-90

[154] Tomsen, P. (2011), pp. 69-75 and Kfir, I. (2009)

[155] Johnson, T.H. and Mason, M.C (2007) and Kfir, I. (2009)

3.2.2 Taliban post-2001

Although the governance did not function well during the Taliban regime, removing it left a void that needed to be filled. The international community faced a difficult situation, as it needed to unify the people and develop a national identity to a fragmented society. The interim government attempted to establish an ethnic balance in the government to avoid new ethnic grievances.[158] However, with the society in ruins, the Afghan government was not able to provide neither security nor services in a manner that would have satisfied the population. Weak governance in general is seen as one of the prerequisites of insurgencies and after regrouping, Taliban started to exploit that.[159]

After establishing their leadership in Pakistan, Taliban was able to recruit members from the madrassas in the tribal areas, develop strategies, raise funds and support, cooperate with other jihadist groups, and most importantly, do it all in a sanctuary from military operations that were ongoing in Afghanistan.[160]

In their resurgence the Taliban showed how well they can adapt and change their approaches when necessary. They started building shadow governance organizations to government-controlled areas and attempted to provide services to the population. Whether it was a lesson learned on their own, or influence from other jihadist groups has little significance to the outcome, but the significance of establishing governance is also noted in many texts and theories of jihadist influencers, such as Abu Bakr Naji's "*Management of Savagery*" that gives guidelines to establishing an Islamic Caliphate.[161] The Taliban have actively attempted to correct many of the failings that undermined their rule in the 1990s. For instance, the Taliban have publicly stated that all women should have access to education, and they have allowed international aid organizations to conduct their programs in areas they control. The Taliban leadership has also signed agreements with several international aid organizations and established a policy for negotiating with different non-governmental organizations, allowing them to work amongst the population.[162] In regard to the local security forces the Taliban adapted their approach accordingly while competing for control of areas with them.[163]

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[156] https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/pashtunwali.htm

[157] Johnson, T. and Mason, M.C (2007) and Kfir, I. (2009)

[158] Johnson T. (2006) pp. 1–26

[159] Noelle-Karimi, C. (2006) and Jones S. (2008): pp. 7–40

[160] Crews, R. and Tarzi, A. (eds) (2008), pp. 274-310

Although the Taliban have had little resources to use for governance purposes, they have been able to address some of the most important grievances of the local population in their competition for control. The Afghan National Directorate for Security (NDS) studied the matter as early as 2006 and according to their findings, the main concerns of the local population were the ineffectiveness and corruption of the justice system.[164] This is in line with the study I conducted in Afghanistan in 2013 and 2014 for a larger intelligence assessment on how the Taliban were consolidating power in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. They had established so-called mobile courts that could be easily summoned with a mere phone call. In case of a felony or a dispute, the Taliban were called, they arrived on the next day with motorcycles, examined the case and gave a sentence that was executed immediately. Whatever the local resources are, the Taliban seeks to establish its shadow governance in the same, well organized manner, with local focal points covering all areas of interest. The structures alter slightly per area and the military council is intentionally left out from the figure.[165]

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[161] Paronen, A. (2016), pp. 219-229, Naji, A.B. (2006)

[162] Jackson, A. (2018) and Sediqi, B (2021):

[163] Clark, K and Osman, B (2018)

[164] Kilcullen, D. (2013), pp. 125-136 and Saleh, A. (2006), p. 4

[165] Sediqi, B (2021) and author's experiences in 2013-2014

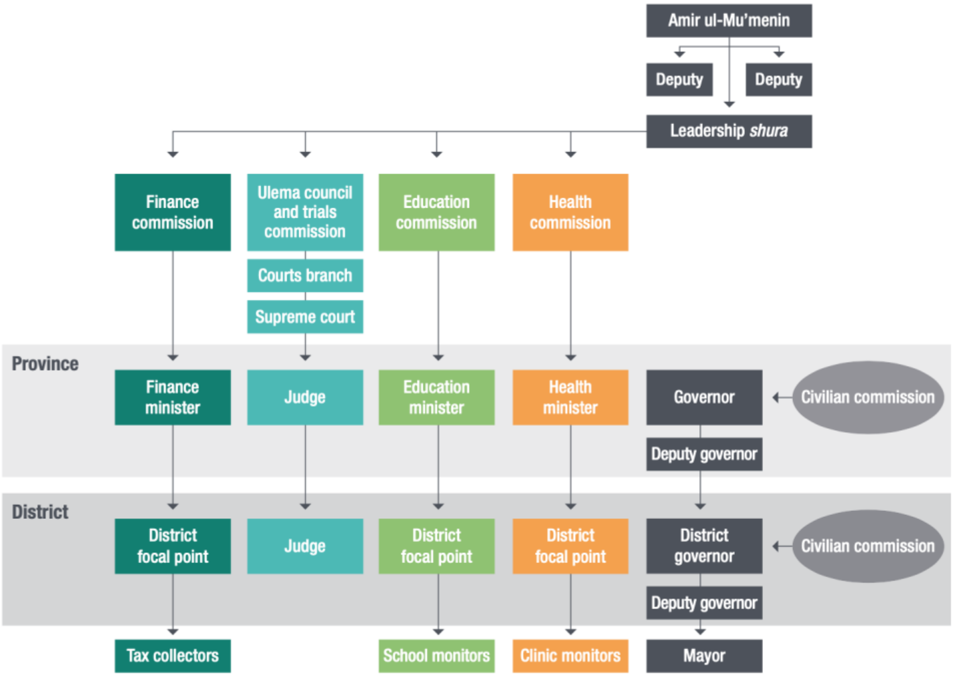
Amir ul-Mu'menin
Deputy
Deputy
Leadership shura
Finance commission
Ulema council and trials commission
Courts branch
Supreme court
Education commission
Health commission
Province
Finance minister
Judge
Education minister
Health minister
Governor
Civilian commission
Deputy governor
District
District focal point
Judge
District focal point
District focal point
District governor
Civilian commission
Deputy governor
Tax collectors
School monitors
Clinic monitors
Mayor

Figure 13. The model of Taliban Shadow governance[166]

Militarily the Taliban's posture gradually changed from 2002 to 2006 as they first included all willing armed groups into their franchise and later needed to purge them, as attacks on aid workers, schools and clinics made the Taliban appear disorganized and volatile. An attempt to make Taliban more organized was the issuing of the *layha*, a code of conduct that all members of the movement were to follow. The first edition included 30 rules that were designated to improve discipline and military unity. As Taliban learned from the reception the first edition of Layha received, improved editions were published in 2009 and again in 2010. They were more comprehensive in general and included more detailed instructions on codes of conduct and guidelines to governance. Issuing of the code of conduct was also a propaganda and communication tool that expressed the values and aspirations of the movement to show that the taliban would be accountable for its actions and would form a government that the population could accept.[167]

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[166] Jackson, A. (2018)

[167] Clark K. (2011) and Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 240-265

3.3 Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan

Ever since 2001 multiple international actors have had an interest in Afghanistan, which has led to parallel structures with conflicting interests. On one hand, intelligence agencies and the military have been fighting a war against an insurgency through militias and other non-state actors and on the other hand different actors have attempted to disarm militias and build national security forces. Although it would be interesting to conduct a more thorough analysis of the motivations of these different actors, for the purposes of this study, only a short overview is provided to highlight the entangled nature of the Afghan SSR.[168]

The international G8 meeting in the spring of 2002 acted as the donor conference that initiated and set the guidelines for the SSR in Afghanistan. The participating nations programmed the reform to be divided into five different pillars in fields that were felt to be the most urgent ones, each to be led by one nation. The first pillar was to be the US-led military reform that was to build the Afghan National Army (ANA). The second pillar was to be the German-led police reform was to build the Afghan National Police (ANP). The third pillar was the UK-led counter narcotics program, that was to eradicate the poppy cultivation from the country. The third pillar was the Italian led judicial reform, that was recreate a functioning judicial system to the country. The fifth and the final pillar was to be the Japanese led Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program that would disarm the different militias and attempt to integrate the members either to the newly founded security forces or back to the society. In a sense local ownership was taken into consideration as well as it could under the circumstances, as members of the future Interim Government of Afghanistan were present in the meeting. It was their request that Germany would lead the police reform, as they had trained the Afghan police in the 1960s.[169]

The German plan was to prioritize the effort into five separate areas. The main priority for the program was rebuilding the Kabul Police Academy (KPA) and train higher ranking police officials on lengthy courses, as they thought that only a professional leadership would make the rest of the reforming efforts effective. Three other priorities were mainly administrative, as they were to advise the ministry of interior on the structure and organization of police, reconstruct police infrastructure in different areas of the country and provide necessary equipment for the police. The fifth priority that could have also been the focus, was to coordinate all other donor activities related to police. The German Police Project Team (GPPT) continued its tasks along the set priorities, even after the establishment of the EU police assistance mission to Afghanistan.[170]

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[168] Sedra, M. (2017), pp. 157-164, Caldwell, W., and Finney, N. (2010) and Clark, K (2018)

[169] Sedra, M. (2006) and Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 195-218

In his study of the first year of Afghan SSR, Jason Howk[171] assessed that in 2002 the German approach was too training centric and not holistic enough. The assessment in his study reflects how differently the United States understood the SSR process and the role of the new ANP that was to be formed.[172] As the US were not satisfied with the progress Germans were making with the ANP, they initiated their own parallel program to complement it. The US-led Constabulary Training Program set up eight training centres established in Kabul and seven Regional Training Centres (RTC) to train rank-and-file police to rapidly increase their numbers. The US engagement in the police pillar in 2004 provided new resources, but also contradicting aims when compared to other programs. The US vision was that the police would be critical in defeating the rising insurgency and maintaining order in Afghanistan as per their COIN strategy. For those purposes the German program was progressing and training personnel too slowly.[173]

The established United States parallel program was outsourced to DynCorp Aerospace Technology, a private contractor, that provided instruction programs. While DynCorp did have experience in running training programs such as this, the contract they made with the US only included training and not post-training mentoring. The quality of the training the afghans received in the training centres did not matter when they were working alone in difficult conditions after they graduated. It should not come as a surprise to anyone that extortion, corruption, and other abuses started to emerge among the ranks of the police.[174]

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[170] Sedra, M. (2017) pp. 164-167 and Suroush, Q (2018)

[171] Captain Jason Howk served as the aid for general Karl Eikenberry, who led the US SSR program

[172] Howk, J. (2009) pp. 14-15

[173] Oliker, O., Kelly, T. and Bensahel, N (2011)

[174] USGAO (2005) and Hammes, T. (2015)

After the 2001 Bonn meeting, the UN also established their own programs to support Afghan nation building and SSR. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to assist in leading and coordinating international efforts to rebuild the country, including the police, was launched in 2002.[175] In addition to UNAMA, the UN Development Program (UNDP) created the Law-and-Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) to channel assistance to the police. LOTFA was given objectives that were in many cases parallel to those of the United States and other donor states.[176]

In 2007, the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL) was launched. In its mandates, EUPOL was set as a non-executive mission and its tasks would only include monitoring, mentoring, advising, and training. EUPOL was to mainly work with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Office of Attorney General. The mandate of the mission was adjusted four times during the time it was functioning. The original mandate of 2007 had no references to some of the projects, such as promotion of women in law enforcement, that later became the mission's priorities. In the beginning EUPOL was intended to be an umbrella organization for all police assistance to Afghanistan with a comprehensive civilian approach, the same role the coalition and UN had already claimed to take. In this framework, The EUPOL would have needed more realistic, measurable, and achievable objectives, but instead had ambiguous and inconsistent mandates that it tried to fulfil while struggling with lack of resources and other difficulties in the country. As the mission faced challenges in fulfilling its original task, the mandates started to evolve and the focus shifted towards assisting the Afghans in donor initiated anti-corruption programs, capacity building and training strategies.[177]

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[175] UN Security Council Resolution 1401, 2002, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1401

[176] Howk, J. (2009) pp. 14-15

[177] Suroush, Q (2018) and Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 195-218

3.4 Involvement of tribes and militias

Afghanistan has always had local self-defence groups and militias that are common even nowadays. After the Taliban regime fell in 2001, almost all the larger mujahedin militias (or "Corps") were dismantled or embedded in the newly founded ANSF, but some remained, as they were supported by intelligence agencies and SOF in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The support of the intelligence agencies was not a new phenomenon, as it had continued in different forms for decades. New local militia structures also started to emerge and take the place of the old ones, even though still not officially recognized by the state.

The cooperation with the tribes began during the Soviet-Afghan conflict and the relationships built in those days made it possible for the US to initiate OEF in Afghanistan so rapidly after the 9/11.[178] The relations and cooperation have, to some extent, continued to the present day. Instead of systematically and openly engaging tribes, sub-tribes' clans, and other local institutions, it has been conducted by individual actors such as security and intelligence agencies and in many cases clandestinely. Some of the militias backed by foreign actors are detested by Afghans because they operate outside of the tribal system.[179]

3.4.1 SOF, Tribes and Militias

"We demonstrated month in and month out that a small effective fighting force could unite with an Afghan tribe, become trusted and respected brothers-in-arms with their leaders and families, and make a difference in the US effort in Afghanistan. In doing so, we discovered what I believe to be the seed of enduring success in that country."[180]

SOF have had a continuous presence in Afghanistan since the military campaign was initiated. In 2001, CIA prepared the conditions for the arrival of the first US SOF teams to partner with the Afghan militias, providing the needed air support against the Taliban. When the disarmament of militias began in 2002, CIA and US SOF continued their cooperation with certain militias for their own ends as part of OEF.

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[178] Coll, S. (2004) and Schroen, G. (2005)

[179] De Lauri, A. and Suhrke, A. (2020), Jones, S. (2009) and Clark, K (2018)

[180] Gant, J (2009)

Of the groups that were left outside the DDR process, the most well-known are the Khost Protection Force (KPF) in Khost Province, the Kandahar Strike Force (KSF) in Kandahar Province and “Afghan Security Guards,” (ASG) in Paktika Province.[181] What these militias have in common, is that they received advanced training from the SOF community and conducted high profile operations with western support in the most challenging areas of Afghanistan.

The success achieved with this co-operation was also followed in the coming years by several programs in communal militias or local policing. As the ANSF was not able to provide security in the rural areas, several attempts were made to empower the local population to take responsibility over their own security. Prior to 2011, at least 50 of different programs like this were initiated both locally and nationwide.[182] The most significant bottom-up initiatives in improving the security situation by forming local self-defense groups or militias included the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) that was initiated in 2006, Afghan Public Protection Program (APPP or AP3) in 2007, Community Defense Forces (CDF) in 2009, Community Defense Initiative and Local Defense Initiative (CDI and LDI) in 2009, Interim Security for Critical Infrastructure (also known as Critical Infrastructure Program (CIP)) in 2010, Village Stability Operations (VSO) in 2010 and finally, the Afghan Local Police (ALP) Program in 2010. Very few of the programs were nationwide, coordinated with other actors and most of them lacked the support of the Afghan government.[183]

The rationale for the different programs varied, some were meant to fight the Taliban, some to offer a chance for reconciliation, some to ensure election campaigns, some to strengthen local power bases, some to pursue local vendettas, some to strengthen the central government and others to address other local security problems. Motivations varied but the common nominator was that most of the programs were not successful and therefore either shut down or transformed to another program. In the Afghan government, the management of these different programs was scattered in different ministries and departments of the government.

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[181] De Lauri, A. and Suhrke, A. (2020) and Clark, K. (2017a)

[182] Dennys, C. (2011), p.14.

[183] Rothstein, H. and Arquilla, J. (ed) (2012) and De Lauri, A. and Suhrke, A. (2020)

3.4.2 Village Stability Operations and Village Stability Platforms

"VSO are specifically oriented toward insurgent-controlled or -contested rural areas where there exist limited or no military or police elements of the Afghan National Security Forces, or ANSF. VSO enable local security and re-establish or re-empower traditional local governance mechanisms that represent the populations, such as shuras and jirgas (decision-making councils), and that promote critical local development to improve the quality of life within village communities and districts. In theory and practice, SOF efforts at the village level expand to connect village clusters upward to local district centers, while national-level governance efforts connect downward to provincial centers and then to district-level."[184]

The VSO/ALP programs were an attempt to connect and balance the centralized and traditional authorities by providing a mechanism for them to interact and support the traditional security. Through the processes initiated by the VSO/ALP, the Afghan government could improve its relationship with the local communities while simultaneously decreasing the influence of the Taliban and other VEO's.[185] The program was designed to be temporary way of providing time for the ANSF to improve its capacity and capabilities. The responsibilities of the ALP were designed to be passed on to the ANSF as soon they would be capable for them. The approach has important distinctions from past programs, that concentrated only on achieving short-term security gains, as the VSO attempted to work through the villagers for permanent changes in the necessary security issues.

The VSO program consisted of different teams and so-called enablers positioned on different levels of the Afghan governance who supported SOF that were positioned to work in the Afghan villages in districts throughout the country. The SOF teams engaged with the community, liaised with the population and elders, and passed on recommendations on what the supporting element, called a Village Support Platform (VSP), could or should do. The VSP had personnel positioned to liaise with other international actors and local district and provincial leadership. This expanded pool of enablers allowed teams to cooperate with personnel on different levels in a straightforward manner and provide additional resources to development projects that improved the villages economy. The VSP also helped increase the capability of the SOF teams in mentoring and supporting the local community and ALP. In general, the idea was to empower the local communities in resisting the insurgents and providing security for themselves by enabling with necessary resources and mediating with the central government.[186]

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[184] Connett, T. and Cassidy, B. (2011)

[185] Huisiander R. and Spivey J. (2012) and Altman, H. (2020)

Although seen as separate programs, VSO and ALP went together as parallel projects. The SOF teams and VSPs promoted governance and development, but also participated in the process of selecting which villages and districts were taken into the program and once accepted, provided training, mentoring and oversight to the ALP. The VSO/ALP had both a bottom-up and a top-down approach that connected the villages and districts to the state governance. Possible districts for the ALP program were to be self-nominated to the Ministry of Interior which nominated the participants of the program. After the districts were officially approved, the government officials met with locals to formally negotiate and agree that the need for participating existed. The process usually required VSP involvement and negotiations and mediations on different levels.[187] Considering the fact that the ALP Program was organized almost simultaneously in several Provinces and almost 100 (of the 400) districts of Afghanistan, it is likely that a lot of the functions were also outsourced. Use of subcontractors and Private Military & Security Companies (PMSC's), which is also not a new phenomenon in the SOF functions.[188]

3.4.3 Afghan Local Police

"The Afghan Local Police is, in essence, a community watch with AK-47s, under the local District Chief of Police, with members nominated by a representative Shura Council, vetted by the Afghan intel service, and trained by and partnered with Afghan Police and U.S. Special Forces elements"[189]

The origins of the concept to train *"local Afghans in rural areas to defend their communities against threats from insurgents and other illegally-armed groups"*[190] are within the counterinsurgency strategy that sought ways to maintain control over areas that the international forces or ANSF could not secure. In the rural areas, as other solutions had failed over the years, this meant raising village-level defense forces from the communities. The ALP deviated from the common concept of COIN, as the core idea of the program was to exploit the influence and acceptance of local customs, decision-making and provision of security.[191] In the international community the main architect for the ALP is seen to be the US General David Petraeus, who had a few years earlier started the so-called Sons of Iraq program that legalized militias and empowered Sunni tribes in their fight against Al Qaida Iraq (AQI). In Iraq, General Petraeus supported the initiative of the local population in the so-called Anbar Awakening and expanded the local movement to a nationwide US sponsored Sons of Iraq program, where Sunni militias were resourced and financed by the Americans to fight AQI.[192]

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[186] Saum-Manning, L (2012) and Altman, H. (2020)

[187] Ibid.

[188] Erbel, M. (2017) and Stanley, B. (2015.) p. 114

[189] Petraeus, (2011)

[190] USDoD: Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan, October 2011

In Afghanistan, President Karzai was reluctant to authorize such a program that would empower forces that were not directly controlled by the central government, likely because he associated them with the militias of the factionalized civil war of the mid-1990s. Karzai wanted to keep centralized control over the security forces, but eventually permitted the program as Petraeus was persistent on initiating it.

Even though the program was a US initiative, that was sanctioned by the government, the original idea arose from villages in eastern Afghanistan that requested support from the international troops (SOF) located there, to resist the Taliban. The US identified the similarity of the situation to the 2006 Anbar Awakening and sought to exploit the situation as a part of the "Surge", an attempt to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan so that they could start redeploying troops from an overextended war.[193]

Of all the different programs ran in Afghanistan, ALP likely had the most local approach that appealed to the communities. The designed village-level self-defense forces were presented as "Arbakai", traditional and legitimate tribal forces.[194] As already stated in the chapter about Afghanistan's history, the Musahiban dynasty did not force their state into rural areas but instead engaged customary, tribal, and other forms of governance under the legitimate tribal institutions. The Taliban had been doing the same – using a skillful bottom-up strategy, appealing to traditional customs and persuading, co-opting, or coercing local leaders.[195]

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[191] FM 3-24, (2006) and Wehrey, F. (2018)

[192] Al-Jabouri N. and Jensen S. (2010) and Jones. S. (2012), pp. 28-33

[193] Catanzano, B and Windmueller, K (2011), Jones. S. (2012), pp. 28-33 and Altman, H. (2020)

[194] Other names for the self-defense forces exist, pending on the tribal area. Arbakai is however the most common name, so therefore it is used in this study where appropriate

The ALP were designed to be an organization under the District Chief of Police, but despite this positioning and their title, they were not actual police. The ALP were authorized to take part in policing only on request by the District Chief of Police, and otherwise they were to work as small-scale, community-watch type self-defense forces for their own village. Although the use of the term was officially prohibited, the ALP are small militias that are under loose governmental control that are not permitted to conduct offensive operations nor grow beyond their authorized size. Special Forces Command in Afghanistan designed a three-week training course to include basic policing skills, appropriate use of force, judicial studies, human rights and morals and values. There were significant concerns about adequacy of the training, considering the short duration, the complexity of it and the high illiteracy rate of the recruits. ALP members were supplied with the basic equipment they needed, as well as pay from the US via the Ministry of Interior.[196]

ALP recruits were supposed to be proposed by local village councils, reviewed by the local authorities, and biometrically enrolled by the international forces once accepted to the program. The formed units were supposed to be trained and mentored entirely by SOF teams.[197] In reality, recruits approached the district and provincial police officers directly, hampering the official process and filling the positions by young, unemployed people who often had background either in criminal activity or with the local insurgents, and whose main motivation was financial.[198]

At highest the number of the ALP was more than 30 000 men which was downsized to roughly 18 000 in 2020 when the decision to dismantle the program was made. The remaining ALP are to be embedded in the army, the police or integrated back to the society.[199]

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[195] Noelle-Karimi, C. (2013) and Vincent, S et al (2015), pp. 1–26

[196] Jones, S. (2012) pp. 28-33 and Saum-Manning, L (2012)

[197] USDoD (2011), Wehrey, F. (2018) and Altman, H. (2020)

[198] Jones, S. (2012) pp. 28-33 and AIHRC (2012), p. 28.

[199] Clark, K (2020a), Clark, K (2020b), Clark, K (2020c), Clark, K (2020d),

3.5 Conclusion

One of the main reasons why Petraeus was pushing for ALP when it was inaugurated in 2010, was that it was part of the US-led "surge", an attempt to achieve success by increasing the volume of troops and allow a justifiable exit to the US. US and ISAF deployed additional troops for a limited period, but even with the ANSF it was assessed that their presence would be insufficient to extend security to the rural areas. The ALP program was presented as a critical factor for the success of the international military strategy. In Petraeus' own words, the ALP was "*arguably the most critical element in our effort to help Afghanistan develop the capacity to secure itself*" Although the program was relatively small when compared to the total numbers of the ANSF, the ALP was evenly distributed across important locations in the rural areas, which increased its significance.[200]

The ALP was designed based on the initiative of villages located in eastern Afghanistan. Although the situation in Afghanistan is always local, the program was universally same in all locations where it was implemented. In areas with mixed ethnicities or old tribal disputes, the risk was that the ALP would be used in forming militias. Even though SOF teams that knew the villages were involved in the assessment and selection process, there were difficulties in understanding the local conditions well enough to ensure that the ALP would be a neutral security force. Significant problems existed, especially in assuring the adherence to the government and the role as neutral security providers rather than a militia in local disputes.

Several military studies, human rights organizations and Afghanistan Analyst Network have analyzed the ALP in their reports. The findings highlight the complexity of conditions into which the ALP were implemented and present an impression of highly uneven outcomes. The program has appeared to be successful in both providing security as well as reducing Taliban influence, whereas several reports also state that the ALP has committed serious abuses against the local population themselves, thereby decreasing the security instead of increasing it. In some of the mentioned cases, abuses of ALP deteriorated so much that the villagers reached out to the Taliban for protection from the ALP.[201]

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[200] Caldwell, W., and Finney, N. (2010) and Norris, J. (2013).

[201] Goodhand, J and Hakimi, A (2014), HRW (2011) and ICG (2015)

4 ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The war in Afghanistan is, and always has been, a complex conflict with multiple actors, varying interests, and different motivations. The simultaneously ongoing operations, programs and other functions create interdependencies and overlapping that would require comprehensive coordination and cooperation between different actors to function in a unity of effort. On most occasions different actors have been functioning based on their own agendas and models and disregarded each other. The models appear to bring at least partial solutions and structure to the individual programs, but they also create the false assumption that everything is proceeding accordingly, if the easier tasks are managed. The models are also used as general guidelines without adapting them to the situation, thus downsizing their effectiveness. This supports the findings of Sedra, who analyzed why comprehensive SSR programs turn into support for increasing efficiency. Coordination and cooperation are mentioned in all models but as there are no guidelines on what, how and with who needs to be coordinated it is often bypassed. Another deficiency of all the models is that they provide a partial solution on how matters need to be done – not what needs to be achieved.

The ALP was one part of this complex setting – a product of the COIN strategy that was implemented by the SOF, using principles of war by proxy and UW but, although likely not intended, had also traits of the principles of SSR and in some cases achieved its goals better than the actual SSR programs. What distincts the ALP from other programs, is that it was a hybrid to begin with. It did not take any of the existing models as given but instead attempted to combine the necessary principles and traits from a variety of models.

This chapter aims to briefly highlight the main similarities and differences of the different presented models that were applicable to the ALP, analyze the tribal dimension of security providers and ALP a bit further and present some key findings of the study.

4.1 Interaction of the models and concepts

War by proxy

The models for war by proxy were present in all donor activities in Afghanistan. In the beginning of 2002 basically, all relations were principal-led, and as time elapsed, most of the relationships changed into agent-led and were eventually terminated, whether successful or not.

For cooperating with tribes or traditional security providers, the transactional model is more applicable to SSR than the exploitative one. Although all proxy relationships are in a sense exploitative, the principal does not have the same leverage, as it does with state level actors. The tribes will work along the principals needs if they see an advantage to the tribe, but the relationships need to be built very carefully and with a cultural understanding, along with the lines of the models for insurgency or UW.

In accordance with the principal-agent model, the relationships change in SSR as well, and will likely be influenced by spoilers. The model can also be used in deciding on the turning point from principal-led relationship to an agent-led relationship and defining termination criteria. Pre-determined termination criteria would also enforce the programs to constantly monitor the progress it is making thus supporting the execution in other ways. SSR programs need to consider the changing nature of the interdependencies and adjust accordingly.[202]

The models give guidelines to how functions should be planned and organized, not what it can or could achieve. The presented models for war by proxy are universal enough to be applied to all programs where local forces and security officials are trained by international principals, whether it is warfighting, community policing or justice systems. If the term "warfare" is cast aside, it is basically a theory about dependencies and relations in a setting that aims for a common goal. The model of war by proxy does not exclude anything from the other models or SSR, nor does it provide any straightforward solutions to the dilemmas that exist in SSR, but it can be used to complement the other models and as a programming tool for any other function in a conflict-affected enviroment.

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[202] Fox, A. (2019c)

Counterinsurgency

Of the models discussed in this thesis, COIN is the only one that has not been visualized as a simplified model. COIN is more of an overarching military strategy, that can include any or all the other models.

According to basic COIN models, military is used only in the amount that is required to secure and take control of areas, after which the situation is to be stabilized by enhancing governance, development, and law enforcement. Conditions are altered in a way, that the support or possibilities to leverage the population are diminished for the insurgency. In other words, after the military has occupied an area, it sets the conditions for the local governance and security actors to take over.[203]

The stabilization phase of COIN offers similar approaches to a safe and secure environment and human security as the SSR, only with a more robust approach and for different reasons. COIN will likely accept misconducts by the local forces if they fulfil their task of denying insurgent presence whereas SSR will likely emphasize codes of conduct and human rights. Simplifying the basic ideas behind the approaches, an SSR program could be the part of a COIN strategy that is set to hold and stabilize an area after the military redeploys. Vice versa, an SSR program could use COIN to get access to areas it cannot reach on its own.

According to RAND studies on COIN, the number of forces needed to maintain an area, the number decreased rapidly if the "hold force" was locally accepted.[204] This has proven to be the case in Afghanistan as well, international forces are not commonly accepted and neither is the ANP, as they are considered corrupt and are usually positioned from other areas of the country. Training local or traditional self-defence forces to maintain security in the rural areas might be a better accepted and a more reliable solution to the community.[205]

The results of COIN and SSR programs of Afghanistan were in many cases the result of the chosen approach. They did not always take into consideration the culture, history or circumstances and were very donor-centric, emphasizing the aims of the international actors more than the locals. Both COIN and SSR would've benefitted from including principles from other models, mainly the networking of UW and aiming for transactional relationships rather than an exploitive one.

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[203] Counterinsurgency guide (2009)

[204] Quinlivan, J. (2003)

[205] Etzioni, A. (2011) and Clark, K. and Osman, B. (2018)

Although COIN is a military strategy, it should not be seen contradicting anything SSR stands for, but instead as an enabler or a complementing tool for SSR programs that can assist in delivering programs to non-permissive environments. This would require more coordination and cooperation between different international actors, and likely an adjustment of perceived goals and accepted end states.

Special Operations and Unconventional warfare

McRaven's model of SOF does not compare well to SSR or the ALP, but one must keep in mind that it was built for a completely different type of purpose. Some of its principles and core ideas, however, are useful in most contexts. The core principle of pursuing relative superiority can be used in complementing almost any other model. When supplemented with the model of relative superiority of UW the principle is even more applicable. The aim for all different programs in conflict-affected enviroment is to alter the situation, so that it is self-sustaining, even after the international presence leaves. In other words, winning over the POS to whatever is needed. In the VSO/ALP programs there was without a doubt the attempt over POS to achieve relative superiority.

The SORO and ARIS pyramids of UW and the modified version presented in this study fit the VSO/ALP programs, although it was not a textbook example. The task for the SOF in this case was not to clandestinely raise an insurgency, but the same principles of gaining local support, networking, and competing for POS against an opposition existed. The same principles are applicable to all other models presented in this study and should be included in SSR programming as well. Networking and building relationships are crucial when working with locals in a conflict-affected tribal society, yet the SOF are the only ones who put effort in training advanced cultural awareness to their personnel prior to deployments.[206]

The VSO/VSP/ALP programs have several traits of the UW theories. There are several practical reasons why this became a task for the SOF. Although training local security forces is a set priority, training non-governmental or local forces outside secured training centres is practically impossible for most conventional forces. Political reasons dictate the mission mandates, that are written so that the designated instructors are only allowed to provide training in set locations and only to formally selected groups. As UW is a part of the principal tasks of the SOF, this does not limit them in the same way.

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[206] Howard R., Hanson G., and Laywell C. (2010) and Howard, R. (2011)

SOF may be the only actors, who have access to the required communities. They spend time with limited support in a non-permissive environment with the local communities, building the necessary rapports and networks and gaining the acceptance for the required purposes as depicted in Jim Gant's paper[207]. Maintaining a similar presence with international police officers or regular armed forces would likely not be possible.

As SOF perform a variety of tasks, the operations are evaluated on individual bases using their own criteria. An operation must be *permissible*, i.e., in its objectives must be achievable within the legal framework and mandate given. The task needs to *appropriate*, it must have a unique aspect that requires the capabilities of SOF, and which makes it unsuitable for other units or assets. The task must be *feasible* i.e., it must be executable by available personnel, other assets, and cultural understanding to meet the requirements of the operation. The task must be *sustainable*, i.e., properly supported throughout its all phases. The final one is *justifiability*; the expected outcome must justify the potential risks.[208] Evaluating the VSO/ALP programs through these principles, it was clearly a suitable SOF task.

The presented models can provide different principles for SSR programming and execution. All donor support is in its essence a competition for POS to achieve relative superiority. This can be achieved by carefully building the necessary rapports and networking. SOF working methods provide useful elements as well, SSR should be conducted with an open mind, thinking outside the box.[209]

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[207] Gant, J (2009)

[208] AJP 3.5 (2019)

[209] Searle, T (2017)

Security Sector Reform

When assessing the SSR process Afghanistan has had since 2001, it is important to recognize that the country had no security forces to reform in the beginning, and nation building in the existing conditions was new to all participants and donors. In 2002 the state centric SSR model was the one in use, and no one could predict what the situation would evolve into in the coming years. Taking all this into account, it is still easy to claim that certain things could've been done differently, and that the programs ended up breaking the very principles they are supposed to be based on.[210] SSR is supposed to be a strategic level approach to alter the security situation permanently, whereas it turned out to be a series of smaller programs that aimed at enhancing the capability of the trained force.

Although the program was seemingly running coordinated with local ownership, different donors acted on their own motivations and continuously initiated new and independent parallel programs. By 2010, the different main donors for police related issues were Germany, that was officially still in lead of the development pillar, US, with their outsourced parallel program for training constables and Police Operational Mentoring and Liaising Teams (POMLT) officially under ISAF but under US control, UN, with their different programs to support the police, EU with EUPOL Afghanistan, ISAF, as the military in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's) were also locally trying to fill the voids left by the poor coordination, and last but not least, numerous nations that had a bilateral agreement either with the Afghan government, or just the necessary provincial leadership. In short, there were dozens of actors on all levels with varying motivations and very little coordination.[211]

Some of the decisions that were made in good intent, negated the gains SSR was making. As an example, the decision to position the newly trained police outside their own areas to other provinces was thought to reduce corruption, but instead it made the police outsiders that were treated hostile by the population and were eventually more easily involved in illicit dealings.[212] As the newly found ANP was not trusted by the population, it hampered the entire reform. Decisions like this could have likely been avoided with inclusive local ownership and involving the locals in the programming. In the areas where the ALP was successful, it was mainly due to their locality and tribal affiliations.

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[210] Howk, J. (2009) and Caldwell, W., and Finney, N. (2010)

[211] Sedra, M. (2017)

[212] Etzioni, A. (2011) and Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 195-218

In most cases where SSR programs have been implemented, the imperative to professionalize the security providers has outweighed the simultaneous need to strengthen and improve the legal system. In some cases, this has negated the gains made, as the population perceives the SSR process as one function. If the police will arrest criminals that the justice system releases immediately, the shadow is cast on all international efforts. The question in an enviroment such as Afghanistan is, whether it is more useful to try and build something completely from the beginning or try to formalize the existing structures and guide them to the desired direction. If the governmental security and justice systems are not functioning in a manner that satisfies the population, it opens a window of opportunity to the opposition, such as the Taliban are exploiting with their Mobile Courts. Traditional law and tribal customs, enforced by the communities themselves, remain the norm in most of Afghanistan, whether the international community likes it or not. A decision just needs to be made on how much they can contradict international norms and standards. Informal justice does not respect fundamental rights in a same manner as in the western societies, but they possess local legitimacy. In Afghanistan the need to focus on security forces had a significant effect, as it also unintentionally hampered the effectiveness and accountability of the entire system.[213]

From a peacebuilding perspective, the aim is to alter the conditions and increase human security among the population.[214] This aim can be pursued by simultaneously increasing state legitimacy and decreasing insurgent influence, which can be done with either a conventional or unconventional approach. The conventional approach includes the models of COIN and traditional SSR whereas the unconventional approach includes the models of UW and 2nd generation SSR. The models of war by proxy and COIN appear to be cross-cutting, they both have principles that effect both the conventional and unconventional approach and all actors involved.

It is important to notice that the conventional and unconventional approaches do not exclude each other, rather the opposite. The security situation would likely be improved best, if the SSR could take a hybrid approach and work through all available actors. In Afghanistan this would have meant a similar model that the Musahiban dynasty had.

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[213] Sedra, M. (2017) and Rashid, A. (2008), pp. 195-218

[214] Collier, P. et al. (2003)

Depicted below is the simplified relationship model of the two possible approaches that can be taken to actively increase human security in a conflict-affected society. As depicted, other objectives may coincide with human security and pursuing other objectives will influence human security. In a conflict-affected enviroment this will likely include state legitimacy and insurgent influence. The actors can choose to either take a conventional approach that was used with the governmental forces in Afghanistan, or an unconventional one that was used with the tribal militias and ALP. The models of COIN and war by proxy are included and influence both approaches. COIN as an overarching strategy that should encompass all activities and war by proxy as a general model to be implemented with everything conducted with the local counterparts.

Based on the theories and models what SSR was thought to be, it should be an overarching model influencing all other actors as well but based on earlier findings it has not yet reached that.

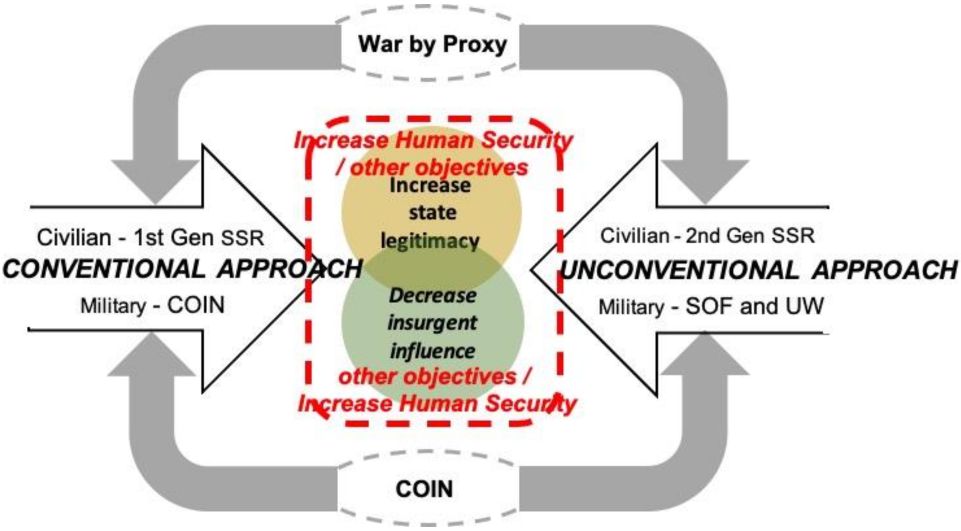
War by Proxy
Increase Human Security / other objectives
Increase state legitimacy
Decrease insurgent influence
other objectives / Increase Human Security
Civilian - 1st Gen SSR
CONVENTIONAL APPROACH
Military - COIN
Civilian - 2nd Gen SSR
UNCONVENTIONAL APPROACH
Military - SOF and UW
COIN

Figure 14. Relationship of the different models in SSR[215]

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[215] Author

4.2 Tribes as security providers

Tribes and local communities are a resource, that has not been systematically included or taken thoroughly into consideration in any SSR program, although it could possess great potential if designed in the correct way.

The existing models on SSR or the suggestions for 2nd generation or hybrid SSR would likely require further development for efficient implementation. Some benchmarking can be done from past military experiences with tribes and how their approaches have worked. Working with local counterparts needs to be viewed as a transactional proxy relationship that will expire at some point, and the different traits of proxy relationships need to be taken into consideration. The relationship needs to be built and developed over time, following the local customs to achieve legitimacy from the local population. This needs to be done in accordance with the models on how insurgencies or UW develop and by personnel who can perform it with their counterparts, or "go local". Mutual trust is required for the acceptance of both the locals and the possible donors for programs like this.

Adjusting the models also presents the need to adjust the existing aims and approaches. Adapting the so-called 2nd Generation model to use in a conflict-affected environment requires that the entire security apparatus is developed from a new perspective, towards formalizing unofficial structures in a sustainable way. An attempt to use temporary structures that would be taken over by the state will likely fail, as communities are unlikely to willingly give up the autonomy they have once achieved. Examples of this can be found in Afghanistan's history as well.[216]

Formalizing traditional customs or religious or tribal laws must be done carefully and in full cooperation with the national governance, under the principle of local ownership. This possesses a challenge to the international community as it must decide to what extent can it disregard its own values. For instance, western human rights or gender considerations have little place in the traditional society structures of Afghanistan, and if forced upon the locals too powerfully, they may damage the entire effort. In those cases, it is necessary to decide whether to achieve something with unwanted side results or hold on to the principles - and achieve nothing.

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[216] Jones, S. (2009), Rashid, A. (2008) and Wehrey, F. (2018)

Efforts to engage non-state actors in SSR have been limited for many reasons. The most significant ones are concerns about donor resources and capacity of personnel, legitimacy of their actions and violations of international human rights. All these concerns are resented by external donors of the SSR programs.[217] All of the mentioned concerns could, however, be solved with coordination and reasoning. Regarding resources and funding, it would be more cost efficient to train and equip traditional actors with the necessary equipment, than it is to build an entire state organisation. Looking at how much just the infrastructure projects and vehicles for the ANP have cost over the years, one could claim that the same funds would have trained and equipped the ALP twice its current size. The capacity of personnel training and mentoring the traditional security providers is an issue but could likely be solved with civil-military cooperation and using PSMC's. This would mean expanding the tasks of the existing military personnel and maybe including civilian experts that would work with them, but that was the way it was already done in the VSP/VSO model. In Afghanistan the VSO/ALP program was launched in around 100 districts simultaneously, which proves that it can be done. The backgrounds of the different actors, the legitimacy of the traditional security providers, and their adherence to the international human rights are a matter of consideration and political will. Most international actors have stated that people that have committed war crimes need to be excluded from all programs, as well as required insurances that all trained personnel will act according to international human rights. Although the requirements are understandable, they are also hypocritical, hinder the possible outcomes and disregard the local contexts. In Afghanistan disregarding militia commanders means disregarding the local culture and local power brokers, the people that can influence the population if made an ally. If disregarded they will likely turn into an adversary, if for nothing else, the insult of their treatment. Human rights and western values are also a promotable issue, but some judgement is perhaps needed. Implementing completely new values that contradict the traditional culture and, in some instances, the Islamic law, can have a devastating effect on the entire program, whereas promoting the changes slowly and accepting some deficiencies could lead to some improvements.[218]

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[217] Sedra, M. (2010)

[218] Gordon E. (2014), pp. 126-148

The major issue with the presented concerns is the political one – donors are not willing to accept the risk that an actor they support does something that damages their reputation.

2nd Generation SSR has been studied and conceptualized in several academic studies, but challenges on the practical side remain unsolved. Financing, resourcing, and the political acceptance on the strategic level are the main stumbling blocks on the way. Donors are likely afraid that the program could turn into training or even financing one side of a conflict or even terrorism. Without general acceptance and justification for the programs, it is very hard to find willing donors to resource them.

Access to the relevant local actors is another one of the main challenges on the low levels. Although SSR programs are usually run by civilian experts, working with indigenous people in the rural areas of a country still recovering from conflict is beyond their reach. As already mentioned in this chapter, a more comprehensive involvement of the different stakeholders might provide some solutions. Including SOF or carefully selected PMSC's might provide the additional resources needed for implementing a 2nd Generation SSR program with both a top-down and bottom-up approaches.

Another dilemma that has not been under a thorough discussion yet, is the sustainability of traditional security. Most academic articles discuss how traditional justice could be supported or institutionalised, but sustainability has been seen as a given. Experiences from Sons of Iraq and ALP, however, suggest otherwise. In both programs the issue has been what to do with the personnel after they have outlived their usefulness to the international community and their COIN strategy. In this, must keep in mind that both programs were not SSR in the traditional sense, but projects of a COIN strategy, yet it is likely that the challenges would exist even if they had been 2nd generation SSR programs. Both programs were dependent on donor support and the contingency planning for them was not done in a way that would have been accepted by the members.

If the self-sustainability of the traditional security forces is not thought through already in the planning phase, it is likely that the trained individuals will be targeted by the opposition or government or included in criminal activities and more violence after the support of the international community is withdrawn.

Afghan Local Police

Analysing the Afghan Local Police through the SSR principles first raises the question of local ownership. The program was US initiated for their own strategic level needs and President Karzai was reluctant to approve it, but at the same time it was based on the need of the local population from the sub-district level. In its attempt to be as local as possible, the ALP sought to exploit an old Afghan custom of militias or community policing but executed only a part of the tradition. The ALP were paid, which was not according to the tradition of Arbakai and disrespected honour, and the local councils that were to provide oversight mechanism were not in the same role as in the tribal culture.

Looking at the principles and desired effects of SSR, in the districts where it succeeded in its purposes, ALP seemed to have a larger impact on human security than investments in the government organized ANP and other ANSF. This finding would support expanding the SSR design from the state-centric approach towards working with traditional security and justice entities. The ALP succeeded in some villages and districts and failed in others. Some of the failings can be blamed on planning and implementation, as the program was put to a general structure that did not account the different contexts and tribal settings in different parts of the country. Some of the failings can be blamed for the lack of mentoring and support, as the SOF teams were pulled out from several districts very soon after the training program was finished.[219] With more thorough tailoring and continuing oversight the results would likely have been better in the districts where the program was assessed to have failed.

Effectiveness and accountability of the ALP were largely dependent on where and for what motivations was the program initiated. In some areas and villages where the model of a local self-defence force was initiated and welcomed by the community and there was an actual desire to stand up against the Taliban the results were good. In some areas and villages, the program was used to raise an armed militia for solving local grievances or to be used as leverage in local disputes. The uniformly designed and executed program functioned in areas where the was an actual need and the setting was right but fell short of its goals everywhere.

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[219] Catanzano, B. and Windmueller, K. (2011)

The dimensions of SSR were in place, but in a slightly unorthodox way. The program was sensitive and political on the upper level as Karzai was reluctant to approve it, but very accepted on the village level. On the district level, the program had both successes and failures when accounting the local power relations. The program was holistic as it penetrated all levels of governance and worked with all necessary actors, but failed to include other organisations, such as EUPOL Afghanistan. For the technical complexity, the program had a thorough understanding of the required areas but was not able to provide everything that would have been needed and disregarded some issues for achieving results.

The Afghan Local Police was executed in a manner that is according to 2nd Generation or Hybrid SSR models – it had both bottom-up and a top-down approach. The initiatives came from the sub-district level and were processed along the national channels while simultaneously the international actors were encouraging the ministry of interior to act upon the initiatives.

Despite its inadequacies, the ALP was one of the most comprehensive programs that took place in Afghanistan and it had all the elements to become a successful 2nd Generation SSR program. If the international community would have been more widely involved and the program coordinated with the SSR actors, it could have achieved better results on law enforcement as well.

The aftermath of the ALP leads us to the same conclusion already discussed in this chapter – the contingency planning was done inadequately, and the ALP were dependant on outside support. Now that generated force has been downsized to 18 000 men who will be disbanded to the army´s newly founded territorial forces (Afghan National Army Territorial Force, ANA TF) and the police, most of the members are unwilling to leave their villages. This leaves them both vulnerable for insurgent retaliation, and out of a job. It is good to keep in mind, that after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the civil war that broke was between different militia factions that had been fighting together for the past decade.

4.3 Discussion

The study had an ambitious aim, using a mixture of multiple approaches and methods from different sciences to assess and analyse a debated phenomenon, the ALP, and based on the findings discuss possible improvements for SSR models.

The choice for adapting an approach from military studies is justified, as the studied phenomenon is like theories of warfare and all the models depicted in this report either are or are very similar to military doctrines. The choice of referring to the used models as models instead of theories was a deliberate one, although it may also give the appearance that the thesis had no theory. Despite the term, the models were discussed in a similar manner as theories or doctrines are in military sciences – although not academic theories, they were treated as such.

As presented in figure 1, the framework for the thesis, there are multiple models through which the ALP can and needs to be assessed, and therefore the choice of using theory triangulation for that part of the study is justified. Triangulation, or in this case, use of multiple models, offers the possibility of discovering a holistic view of the phenomenon and confirm trends and identifying inconsistencies.[220] ALP is a phenomenon that had multiple dimensions and interpreting it requires the assumptions and concepts of multiple models.

The research material regarding Afghanistan is constricted, as I have tried to select the best possible and most objective sources from a vast number of articles and literature. The screening and the content analysis I have conducted has been influenced by my background in Afghanistan. Whether the interpretations from the material are correct or not can be debated but it is likely that someone else would have come to the same conclusions.

Overall, all the choices for approaches and methods can be justified by the nature of the studied phenomenon and its surroundings. Another question that can be debated is the objectivity of the assessment and analysis and the conclusions made on the research material.

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[220] Denzin, N (1989) and Denzin, N and Lincoln, Y. (1994)

4.4 Conclusions

Looking at the different programs and projects in Afghanistan, *coordination* and *unity of effort* appear to be the critical factors that benefited either in their success or failure. US General Karl Eikenberry, the first person to lead the overall SSR process in Afghanistan, assessed already in 2001 that what his program needs to achieve is *"Develop consensus-based strategic plans that identify and fix problems by leveraging the resources from all actors' nations or the international community."*[221]

Coordination and cooperation are highlighted in each and every one of the models' descriptions and still most of the studies and articles used in this study underline the lack of coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders. It seems that the different programmers assume that coordination and cooperation just happen when they follow the rest of the model in their planning. Regarding different actors, especially the military and civilian components, they often waste their resources in duplicating each other's work and, in worst cases, hinder the efforts of each other. The bipolar setting of the military and civilian components has also led to unnecessary bureaucracy and protocols that prevent the personnel from doing what is necessary to achieve the set mandates and goals. Although not officially an SSR program, the ALP's successes were achieved through unity of effort and cooperation with all necessary components – the whole program was designed and implemented through US SOF and had a unified command.

Based on the findings of this study, the different models and their principles would support each other if applied accordingly in the assessment and planning phase. Individually, most of the models have been designed to function on their own, which also means that they have deficiencies that stand out when they are compared to other models - designed for different purposes. All models are designed for execution of the programs and offer little or no guidelines for programming. Cooperation with other programs needs to be clear already in the programming phase to avoid duplicated efforts and wasting resources, the models in themselves do not necessarily need to be updated much, as SSR and other functions should always be tailored to the context but using different models in support when programming or including the programming phase would be recommendable.

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[221] Howk, J. (2009)

Academics have studied the traditional justice and non-state actors and their possible role in SSR. Several articles point out the need to include local, non-state actors in SSR and present possible solutions for hybrid or integrative security models.[222] However, the topic remains to be very complicated in many ways. Even though examples of how non-state actors can be included in SSR exist, many externally funded programs continue to focus on the state institutions, disregarding or neglecting the traditional systems and their possibilities. Critical research has pointed out that the traditional state centric SSR fails to include the traditional structures that exist in many nations where SSR is implemented.[223] The discussion on whether to engage in 2nd generation SSR is decisive on the question whether the traditional systems are acceptable or not. Even if that would be solved, it then again raises the question of resources and who could do it.

The academic debate on 2nd generation SSR is missing the discussion on contingency planning and sustainability for the programs. Although tribes and local actors are accepted by the local community, they may be seen as a threat by either the government or competing tribes causing additional violence after the western donors exit. For further 2nd generation SSR studies, Sons of Iraq and ALP should be used for benchmarking how and what can be achieved with traditional structures and what are the disadvantages. Both programs were meant to be embedded into the national security forces after they matured enough, but this was not successful. There is yet unharnessed potential in the traditional structures that could provide some solutions to the security issues of conflict-affected countries such as Afghanistan or Iraq, but it will need a more thorough examination of the past programs, how the local legislation could support that and, especially what could be done better for sustainability. What failed contingency planning means, is leaving thousands of armed militia men behind. Some of them will follow the tribal tradition and continue as security providers, some will become criminals, some will likely join the insurgency, and some will likely suffer from the retaliation of the insurgents. This leads us to the same conclusion presented earlier in this study – no temporary solutions should be made but instead the traditional security and justice system needs to be officialised in a simultaneous justice reform.[224]

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[222] For instance, Gordon E. (2014) Furuzawa, Y. (2018) Schroeder, U., Chappuis, F. and Kocak, D. (2014): and Donais, T. (2018)

[223] Baker, B. (2010a) and Donais, T. (2017)

[224] Bruno, G. (2008) and Lousade, L. (2016)

Cooperation with tribes or other traditional actors remains a challenge both for practical and political reasons. Utilizing the practical experience and findings SOF have on the matter could prove useful in solving at least the practical challenges. The political challenges eventually need the decision, is the international community willing to accept some deficiencies in achieving something - or persist on keeping its values intact and achieving nothing. Jules Cavendish interviewed a SOF officer in 2011 who explained their work with the militias. *"There are no good guys by our standards. There is no standard to begin with. There is no justice system or rule of law to hold people accountable,"* he stated, *"The Taliban are not horribly bad, and the Afghan farmer is not an innocent victim."* In his opinion, refusing to work with militias accomplishes nothing, whereas cooperation offers the possibility to alter their behaviour.[225]

The primary research question for the study was framed as *how have the security models taken the tribal nature of the Afghan society into consideration as an enabler of security, justice and enhancing human security?* Most of the models in this study approached the question by creating security forces of mixed ethnicities and tribes and positioned outside of their own areas. Instead of using the traditional structures, the purpose was to diminish the tribal influence. The assumption proved to be a mistake, as the security officials were treated as hostiles by the local population and were less committed to their areas. The only programs that sought to use the existing tribal structures in achieving their goals, were the ones SOF were conducting – such as the ALP.

The complexity of the Afghan society, including the various regional tribal systems, make it enormously difficult to achieve a lasting state of peace and increased human security by using standardized models that have been created for a different environment. The models do not exclude tribal connections but are not designed for them either. The contemporary situation has had shifting geopolitical positions over the years that have affected the ways external and internal political forces have interacted with this issue. The models analysed in this thesis appear to deliver partial solutions, and each has its merits and demerits.

Based on the findings of this study, further discussions and research on the different actors, the applicability of their models and ways of implementing the models would be useful in improving the existing ones and defining the next models and practical applications for SSR, 2nd generation SSR and hybrid SSR.

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[225] Clark, K. (2017a)

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