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Harnessing Post-Conflict "Transitions": A Conceptual Primer

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Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 122 Forbes Ave, Carlisle, PA 17013-5244.

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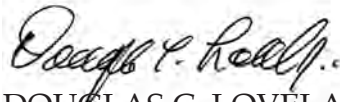
FOREWORD

Today's security environment undoubtedly tests the boundaries of conventional international and military responses to persistent interstate conflict. New challenges are continuously emerging that pose vexing dilemmas and question the assumptions of actors engaged in post-conflict stability operations. Furthermore, recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that the often-indistinct concept of transition urgently requires a greater collective understanding by all actors participating in stability operations. As operations move toward a "clear, hold, build, transition" strategy, a widely accepted and understood definition is necessary to unite U.S. military, interagency, and multinational planners to foster greater collaboration and unity of effort. To evaluate transition strategies and make recommendations for future stability operations, researchers and policymakers require both a common understanding and way ahead for advancing the concept as a critical doctrinal and operational objective.

This monograph offers an unparalleled analysis on current research and available tools for transition in post-conflict situations. The authors make a significant contribution to the field by providing a broadly applicable definition of transition and a comprehensive assessment of the existing approaches and literature on the topic. Most importantly, their analysis lays the groundwork for future conceptual development and improved implementation of post-conflict transitions.

The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute and the Strategic Studies Institute are pleased to offer this analysis as a leading article in helping to

clarify, define, and advance transition as one of the most critical, but least understood, aspects of stability operations.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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JACQUELINE CHURA-BEAVER joined the U.S. Army's Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) in 2009 and supports the Stabilization, Reconstruction, and Transition (STR) branch. She has undertaken significant research projects on topics including leadership in provincial reconstruction

teams (PRTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan, governance issues in fragile states, and successes and failures of the Vietnam-era Civil Organization and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program. Ms. Chura-Beaver is currently exploring issues of transition in stability operations. She previously served as an intern and later a Foreign Affairs Officer (FAO) at the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Political-Military Affairs in support of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). Ms. Chura-Beaver holds a B.A. in political science and Spanish from the University of Dayton and a master's degree in public and international affairs, with a concentration in security and intelligence studies, from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

SUMMARY

Since the end of the Cold War, members of the international community have undertaken more than 20 major operations to stabilize post-conflict societies, yielding mixed results. Stability operations are tremendously complex and demand successful direction of multiple, simultaneous transitions that range from transforming violent conflict to a sustainable, peaceful environment, to the process of forging sustainable governing institutions from fragile or nonexistent infrastructure. Yet, the very notion of transition eludes policymakers, professionals, and scholars because the concept lacks precise meaning, and its application varies according to context and conditions. At no other time has understanding transition been more critical, especially as "clear, hold, build, transition" becomes the dominant theme for ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Together, professionals and academics share the challenge and opportunity to improve how the international community conducts stability operations—through the comprehensive understanding and implementation of transition.

This monograph addresses the challenging topic of transition in post-conflict stability operations and is intended for a wide audience that includes military and civilian policymakers, international development experts, and scholars in academe. It is a primer, systematic review, and comprehensive assessment of the fields of research and practice. From a sample of more than 170 sources, the monograph presents and appraises the major lenses (process, authority transfer, phasing, and end state), categories (war-to-peace, power, societal, political-democratic, security, and

economic), approaches, and tools under which post-conflict transitions are conceived. Considering these wide and often diverse perspectives, the authors present a holistic definition of transition in the context of complex stability operations:

> Transition is a multi-faceted concept involving the application of tactical, operational, strategic, and international level resources (means) over time in a sovereign territory to influence institutional and environmental conditions for achieving and sustaining clear societal goals (ends), guided by local rights to self-determination and international norms. Transition is inherently complex, and may include multiple, smaller-scale transitions that occur simultaneously or sequentially. These small-scale activities focus on building specific institutional capacities and creating intermediate conditions that contribute to the realization of long-term goals.

This monograph lays the groundwork for both future research and greater collaboration among diverse international and local actors who operate in post-conflict environments—specifically to develop a comprehensive definition of transition and adequate tools to address all facets of the concept. Recommendations for future research and improved transition policy include a more focused emphasis on areas that include:

- Cross-institutional (political, security, economic) and multi-level (local, regional, national) studies that explore the interdependencies between simultaneous transitions;
- Underlying assumptions of current transition tools and indicators;
- Relationships between transition and institutional resilience; and,

- Thresholds and tipping points between transition phases.

The exploration of the foundations and actual workings of transition detailed in this monograph hope to encourage the interagency and multinational community to provide greater attention to the importance of transition in current operating environments. This piece is intended to provide the baseline for more in-depth and relevant analysis.

HARNESSING POST-CONFLICT TRANSITIONS: A CONCEPTUAL PRIMER

INTRODUCTION

Today, the United States and members of the international community find themselves wrestling with the grim dangers—security, economic, and humanitarian—posed by fragile states. Almost 60 fragile states are unable to meet the basic standards for statehood (Brookings Institute, 2008; Foreign Policy, 2010). Not only do these nations experience difficulties providing their citizens basic civil protections and services, many suffer from repeating cycles of intrastate conflict. Without question, these problems are complex, multifaceted, and pervade all aspects of social life. Yet, state fragility is invariably linked to weak or ineffective political, economic, and societal institutions (Fukuyama, 2004; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008; Paris, 2004; Paris & Sisk, 2009, p. 3; Rotberg, 2004a, 2004b; van de Walle, 2004).

Given the mixed record of accomplishment of interventions in recent history, how can the international community improve its efforts to assist in transforming the domestic institutions of fragile states? Certainly, institution building is a slow, evolutionary, and transitional process. Accordingly, international organizations, government agencies, and militaries have recognized this reality. Yet, one missing, critical piece is a clearer understanding of transitions in the context of stability operations. This paper is a modest attempt toward developing clarity of an often-indistinct concept.

In the last 2 decades, interstate conflict and state fragility have led to a groundswell of United Nations

(UN) and U.S.-led interventions (e.g., humanitarian, peacekeeping, stabilization, and reconstruction operations). Since the end of the Cold War, scholars and practitioners have drawn together to explore and better understand the nature of these operations and the challenges facing those tasked to design and implement them. Although contingent on many factors that range from history and culture to root causes, one common theme has emerged in these operations: a fundamental, normative goal of transforming a state and society in ways that promote sustainable peace, good governance, and economic prosperity. An expanding body of literature addresses distinct, but related, research in peace-building and conflict transformation (Berdal, 2009; Dayton & Kriesberg, 2009; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Paris, 2004), state-building (C. Call, Wyeth, & International Peace Institute, 2008; Fukuyama, 2004; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008; Paris & Sisk, 2009; Rotberg, 2004b), and stabilization and reconstruction operations (Brinkerhoff, Johnson, & Hill, 2009; Christoff & St. Laurent, 2007; Durch, 2008b; Englebert & Tull, 2008; Kramer, Megahan, & Gaffney, 2008; Looney, 2008; Szayna *et al.*, 2009; U.S. Department of Defense, 2003; U.S. Department of the Army, 2009a). While many studies and field reports among these research programs address transition elements, no attempt has been made to systematically review the transitional dimensions of stabilization, reconstruction, and peace-building operations as a defined, holistic concept.

Additionally, practitioners have struggled with creating a conceptual framework and adequately operationalizing activities inherent to transition. Several attempts have been made to codify the term by assigning concrete attributes and qualities to transition

mechanisms, but this has caused much consternation in the actual application of the term to stability operations. In 2009, the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), based at the U.S. Army War College, attempted to bridge the gap between policy and practice by creating a transition definition based on the insights of domestic and multinational collaborators involved in these operations. The result was a working definition of the term:

> Transition is defined as both a multi-disciplinary process and points of change, in time, when conditions for stability are achieved in security, justice and reconciliation, infrastructure and economic development, humanitarian and social well-being, and governance and reconciliation, through the enabling and empowering of Host Nation Institutions, in order to facilitate enduring positive effects and improved quality of life for citizens (Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute, 2009).

While there have been substantial efforts to define transition, its implementation provides an equally troubling set of problems to practitioners. The fundamental challenge in providing guidance, creating doctrine, and planning operations is the term's application to diverse and adapting stability situations. Each level of interaction in transition—tactical, operational, and strategic—maintains its own vantage point in regards to the goals, desired outputs/outcomes, and significance in achieving transition. While the diversity in responses and understanding of the causes and consequences of transition is appreciated for dealing with the term's complexity, this differentiation can cause significant problems in planning and implementing transition policy at the national level,

and even significantly complicate collaboration with interagency and multinational partners. The ambiguity in many of the terms, as well as the differing ways to interpret and activate them, may cause significant confusion and setbacks if not defined for all actors involved in the transition process. A better definition of transition is needed to create a more comprehensive meaning and better understanding of the term for all actors engaged in stability operations.

This monograph is a primer on the concept of transition, a systematic review of literature found in both academic and practitioner circles, and an assessment on the state of these fields in terms of understanding transition in stability operations. The authors have reviewed numerous books, edited volumes, journal articles, think-tank reports, field experts' commentary, conference, and workshop proceedings, and government documents to map the current intellectual landscape on transitions. While this piece draws upon many foundational texts from peacebuilding, state-building, and stabilization operations, it is not a comprehensive review of these subfields, but rather a focused, targeted appraisal of how research and practice currently address the concept of transition and transitional aspects of rebuilding fragile states and societies directly. As a result, it provides a useful contribution to transitional studies to further inform and guide research and policymaking.

The monograph begins with an attempt to reconcile the definitional challenges mentioned above and posits a more useful definition of transition in the context of stability operations. It follows with a detailed literature review and typology of transitions, organized by the six different forms (or levels) in which transitions are most typically explored. This is followed by a sur-

vey of the various approaches and tools that governments (civilian and military agencies) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) currently use in practice to identify, measure, and assess transition in stability operations. The authors conclude with an assessment of the current state of transition literature and provide recommendations to guide future research and policy development.

DEFINING "TRANSITION" IN CONTEXT

One of the major challenges of confronting the notion of transition is forming a satisfactory definition. In common usage, "transition" is defined broadly as "a passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another" or "a movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another" (Merriam Webster, 2010). This indicates that transition is an evolutionary concept. However, without sufficient context, this definition is too abstract. A useful definition should strike a balance between both abstraction and reality and complexity and parsimony. Especially in the field of stability operations, transition can be defined and operationalized to fit more accurately the complex issues and problems facing practitioners creating policies and implementing transition initiatives. To better appreciate the multifaceted nature of transition, the definition is best explored by honing in on different qualities of the concept and how these characteristics interact in the context of stabilization operations. This section concludes with a working definition of transition.

Transition as Process.

For many organizations working in stability operations, transition is defined as a procedural process that shapes the dynamic environment characterizing leadership and operational mechanisms (Dubik, 2009; Hadaway, 2009; Kardos, 2008; Koops & Varwick, 2008; Leika, 2007; Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, 2008a; Schnaubelt, 2009; Serafino, 2009; U.S. Department of Defense, 2003; U.S. Department of State - S/CRS, 2005b; U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2008a, 2008b; Walter, 1999). Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and personnel task assignments that characterize transition are often the signature traits of this process, which ultimately define leadership authorization, tasks, and necessary outputs for the program and project streams according to the goals of individual organizations. The interactions between staff participating in transition initiatives shape the process by creating defined channels and lines of authority for implementing and overseeing projects. In many respects, transition processes directly relate to a "chain of command" structure since defined authority and responsibilities are outlined throughout program implementation. Transition actors operate according to defined steps to meet certain goals, benchmarks, and outputs that feed into more specific tactical and operational activities.

The process approach to transition is a mechanism that provides clear steps to measure progress and address issues of complexity in stability operations. Because of their explicitly defined characteristics, the military is particularly fond of using processes to guide practitioners through specific applications to achieve transition. Clear and concise procedures outline the

activities needed to achieve operational success, and lead to more long-term outcomes when sequenced correctly. This systematic approach to transition directly attributes certain inputs with desired outputs in both the short and long term. By viewing transition as a process, practitioners can shape the responsibilities and resources needed to accomplish cyclical procedures to complete transitional processes within defined tactical and operational goals, specifically through the allocation of responsibilities and oversight. The process approach provides specific guidelines to organize entities to deal with transitional activities.

Transition as Authority Transfer.

Stability operations professionals also view transition as a legitimization of authority when power sharing or transfer takes place (Agüero, 1998; Bellamy & Williams, 2005; Bertram, 1995; Byman, 2003; Chesterman, 2002; Cliffe, Guggenheim, & Kostner, 2003; Englebert & Tull, 2008; Gow, 2009; Hadaway, 2009; Kotze & Toit, 1995; Krasner, 2004; Nagl, 2008; Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, 2006; Swaminathan, 1999; Szayna *et al.*, 2009; U.S. Department of Defense, 2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2009b; U.S. Department of State - S/CRS, 2005a, 2005b; U.S. Department of State, 2009; U.S. Department of the Army, 2009a; U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) & U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), 2009; U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2008b). In this particular model, transition is achieved when a host nation's administrative agencies or security forces assume responsibility for specific governmental functions in a post-conflict environment. The transfer of authority from state building institutions to the host

nation signals a change in the power relationship between the entities, and thus constitutes a shift in how authority will be wielded over key actors in stabilization activities. The U.S. Marine Corps espouses this authority-based approach to transition in many of its operational manuals, specifically its 2008 Joint Urban Warrior exercise: transition is "the process of shifting the lead responsibility and authority" in order to achieve larger operational objectives for the organization (U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2008b, p. 1). The assumption of responsibilities by the host nation is a key component of measuring success in transition in several types of stability operations. However, transition success assumes that the host nation is both fully capable and willing to carry out responsibilities previously overseen by intervening forces. Authority transfer is one of the most prominent strategic indicators for transition in stabilization operations literature, specifically that related to counterinsurgency operations (a subset within the broader scope of stability operations).

Transition as Phasing.

Transition can also be thought of as phasing, specifically highlighting the concept's important relationship with strategic benchmarks and goals (Adekanye, 1997; Avni-Segre, 1969; Barnett, 2006; Bell & Keenan, 2004; Bernabeu, 2007; Byman, 2003; Carothers, 2002a, 2002b; Durch, 2008b; Feng & Zak, 1999; Huth, 1998; B. Jones, Gowan, & Sherman, 2009; Nixon & Ponzio, 2007; Papagianni, 2009; Ratner, 2009; Riekhoff, 2003; U.S. Department of Defense, 2009b; U.S. Department of State - S/CRS, 2005b; U.S. Department of State & U.S. Department of Defense, 2009; U.S. Department

of the Army, 2009a, 2009b; USIP & PKSOI, 2009; U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2008b; Walter, 1999; Wittkopf, 1994; Zinecker, 2009). Transition phasing is best described as a continuum of activities that span the political, economic, social, and military realms of state building over a period, often overlapping and transforming in tandem. Unlike transition processes, phasing lacks the defined regulations and procedures that are required to achieve defined tactical and operational objectives.

Phasing, in contrast, highly depends on its environment and responds directly to environmental factors. Stability operations become defensive in nature when host nation forces are able to create and maintain stable structures and functions to ensure the integrity of the newly developed state. As stability operations shift from offensive to defensive planning and execution, certain intermediate "transition points" exist along the phasing continuum that mark an incremental transfer of resources, authority, and responsibility to host nation authorities. Often, these "transition points" are not acknowledged or understood until well after they have occurred, but they provide benchmarks of progress to guide future initiatives. Transition, in this respect, is dynamic in its evolutionary nature and direct response to environmental factors in stabilizing environments, and can thus be overlooked by both practitioners and policy planners who become caught in responding to emerging issues.

Transition phasing greatly informs the many complex changes that occur during stability operations, specifically at the strategic level. The use of transition points aids practitioners in pinpointing causal effects of operational and tactical initiatives, and allows them to gauge success over the transition continuum (or

strategic timeline). Current U.S. Army doctrine grapples with the transition spectrum and codifies key attributes of the definition for use in operations: "A transition is not a single event where all activity happens at once. It is a rolling process of little handoffs between different actors along several streams of activities. There are usually multiple transitions for any one stream of activity over time" (U.S. Department of the Army, 2009b, p. 52). By noting that transition is an ongoing and insular process, transition must be viewed as a phased initiative, rather than as a particular tipping point during stability operations. Furthermore, the input of several streams of activity (better known as processes) informs the phasing of strategic activities—creating concrete benchmarks at both operational and strategic levels for overall transition success.

Transition as End State.

Transition is also characterized as an end state in stability operations. Transition as an end state indicates that certain ground conditions are measurably different than preceding conditions and usually conform with more acceptable standards of governance, economic stability, and security (Brinkerhoff *et al.*, 2009; Bush, 2005; Cliffe *et al.*, 2003; Dempsey & Nichols, 2009; Durch, 2008a; Gow, 2009; Kotze & Toit, 1995; Kramer *et al.*, 2008; Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, 2006, 2008a, 2008b; U.S. Department of Defense, 2009b; U.S. Department of State - S/CRS, 2005b; U.S. Department of State, 2009; Zielinski, 1999). In many respects, host nations transitioning to more legitimized and internationally acceptable norms are the ultimate goal for intervention actors. Transition that strengthens legitimate governing capacity and

societal institutions is the target goal for stability operations, especially since it ensures the establishment of viable and credible governed states. End state structures add to the strategic value of stability outcomes, most notably by fostering host nation compliance with international norms and standards.

Transition as end state is increasingly used by agencies and organizations searching for success benchmarks in operational activities. By defining a particular event or tangible result—usually related to authority and responsibility transfer—as a benchmark, stability operations actors are able to better gauge mission effectiveness and accomplishment of tactical and operational goals. As such, end states subsume process, authority transfer, and phasing aspects of transition.

Using Context to "Define" Transition.

The various ways of viewing transition outlined above should be considered in reaching an appropriate definition of the concept. Yet, despite the current discussion about transition, no single definition exists that encompasses its complexity. Even the most proactive institutions in transition activities have been unable to produce a conceptual framework to guide practitioners in grappling with the complex and multidimensional dilemmas inherent to transition. Several different working documents on transition exist to guide practitioners in the field, but few have similar concepts that cross organizational and functional lines to provide a holistic and multidisciplinary meaning.

The most encompassing transition definition is found in the U.S. Army *Field Manual (FM) 3-07,*

Stability Operations. In this manual, the military pulls together all the concepts outlined in this paper:

> Transitions mark a change of focus between phases or between the ongoing operation and execution of a branch or sequel. The shift in relative priority between the elements of full spectrum operations—such as from offense to stability—also involves a transition . . . transition between phases. . . . Stability operations include transitions of authority and control among military forces, civilian agencies and organizations, and the host nation. Each transition involves inherent risk. That risk is amplified when multiple transitions must be managed simultaneously or when the force must conduct a series of transitions quickly. . . . Transitions are identified as decisive points on lines of effort; they typically make a significant shift in effort and signify the gradual return to civilian oversight and control of the host nation (U.S. Department of the Army, 2009a, p. 80).

The definition found in FM 3-07 is a good starting point for defining transition, but does not fully encompass all of the caveats discussed in this monograph. In many respects, the U.S. Army transition definition is purely kinetic, focusing exclusively on transition process and phasing in lieu of its occasionally static properties. End states and authority transfers are missing in the field manual, but these concepts must be included to fully understand transition's complexity. A more comprehensive approach to transition must be addressed and embraced by academics and practitioners for a more comprehensive understanding of the term.

In light of the concepts and activities defining transition, a single definition is needed to further explore the conceptual frameworks of the term, more fully

comprehend its complexity, and apply it to different transition situations. For the purpose of this paper, transition will be defined as follows:

> Transition is the multi-faceted application of tactical, operational, strategic, and international level resources (means) over time in a sovereign territory to influence institutional and environmental conditions for achieving and sustaining clear societal goals and legitimate statehood (ends), guided by local rights to self-determination and international norms. Transition is inherently complex, and may include multiple, smaller-scale transitions that occur simultaneously or sequentially. These small-scale activities focus on building specific institutional capacities and creating intermediate conditions that contribute to the realization of long-term goals.

The definition remains broad in order to provide wide application and analytical flexibility for both scholars and practitioners addressing transitional issues. It is neutral to all actors (i.e., military, civilian, local, and international) involved in transition, and it incorporates local and international norms as part of transitional activities. By using the definition above, several types, or combinations, of transition can be better understood and addressed.

TYPES OF TRANSITION

The extant literature on transition is significantly broad in scope and reflective of the difficulties surrounding its definition, described above. What exactly is to be transitioned? From what pre-condition to what post-condition? Conceptual ambiguity can

potentially lead to miscommunication and complicate analysis, particularly for comparative analysis. Part of this challenge lies in specifying the object of transition, be it a major conflict, political system, institution, or society. While authors do not always explicitly state the "type" of transition in their work, the context and level(s) of institutional analysis do provide an indication of the type(s) of transition under examination. This section lays out the various objects, or types, of transition found in the literature.

It is worth noting, however, that the act of categorizing transitions into ideal types reveals layers of complexity. In the context of stabilization and reconstruction operations, transitions actually proceed on multiple levels simultaneously. For instance, post-conflict societal transitions aimed at reconciliation and conflict resolution typically occur alongside major political transitions (i.e., institutional reforms, elections). Further complicating matters are the interdependencies between types of transitions. For example, the transition from a tightly-controlled economy to a free-market system requires the protection of property rights—made possible only through an effective security sector and judicial system. If these sectors are transitioning as well, but inadequate to provide the conditions necessary for economic growth, the economic transition may stall. Transitional interdependencies naturally lead to questions over timing and sequence.

Altogether, six types of transition emerge from the literature: war-to-peace, power, societal, political-democratic, security, and economic. Some scholars collapse these categories. Charles-Phillipe David (1999) describes stability and peacebuilding activities as the combination of three overarching transitions: security,

democratic, and socio-economic. Parsimony is a sensible objective, yet due to the extent of literature falling across these institutional categories and that this is a review of existing studies, it is important, for this paper at least, to outline the extent to which authors characterize and examine the concept of transition.

We also recognize that these classifications overlap—particularly political and democratic transitions. A democratic transition is surely a political transition, but not necessarily the other way around. Yet, Roland Paris' (1997) influential argument for "institutionalization before liberalization" directly challenges the idea that, from the very outset, interventions must be designed with democratic goals in mind. Such a distinction from non- and/or quasi-democratic transitions is essential to understanding which forms of government are most likely to succeed in different environments. The diagram below provides a basic, but useful, visualization of how the various types of transitions explored in the literature relate to each other. Each transition type is described in further detail in the following section.

War-to-Peace Transitions.

War-to-peace transitions are the broadest form of transition because they encompass both interstate and intrastate conflict and range in scope across global, regional, and domestic levels of analysis. In addition to traditional nation-states, international organizations like the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the World Bank are noted as critical actors in war-to-peace transitions (Bellamy & Williams, 2005; Campbell, 2008; Cliffe *et al.*, 2003; Durch, 2008a, 2008b; Dzinesa, 2004; B. Jones *et al.*, 2009; Ripsman, 2005).

On a global, interstate level, war-to-peace transitions describe changes in the international system, mainly with respect to the relations between nation-states and international organizations. Wittkopf (1994) characterizes the changes in the international system in the wake of the Cold War, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, as an element of a war-to-peace transition, while noting that contrasting foreign policy beliefs (cooperative versus militant internationalism) tend to lag behind systemic changes.

Regional war-to-peace transitions center on the stability of specific regions around the globe, such as Europe after World War II, post-colonial Africa, and the Middle East. These studies range from exploring war-to-peace transitions in stable and unstable regions of the world and the influence of cooperation and competition between major state powers on peaceful outcomes (Miller, 2001) to investigating international organizations and the connection between the recent regionalization of UN peacekeeping interventions and its impact on both global and regional security (Bellamy & Williams, 2005). Ripsman (2005) uses a combined approach, concluding that regions stabilize over time due to a mix of both realist mechanisms (e.g., great international powers, common threats) and liberal mechanisms (e.g., democratic political regimes and cooperative international institutions).

Intrastate war-to-peace transitions are predominantly considered in terms of both domestic conflict resolution and peace processes, and reconstruction and development efforts. While part of a much larger body of literature on peacebuilding, designing peaceful transitions begins with the development and implementation of credible commitments to peace between belligerent factions (Walter, 1999). Both state and

nonstate intermediaries play a role in the constructive management of intrastate conflicts and peace processes, but the extent of their influence remains unknown due to a research deficiency in actor relationships and stability outcomes (Dayton, 2009). Moreover, human rights NGOs typically face many challenges, which change in form over time from overt violence to tactics of intimidation and marginalization as nations transition away from conflict (Bell & Keenan, 2004).

Peacebuilding and conflict transformation are undoubtedly difficult in practice. Maney *et al.* (2006) provide a valuable examination of the breakdowns of the Oslo, Norway, and Belfast, Ireland, Good Friday peace talks and the importance of participant empowerment, grass-roots legitimacy, and coping with "spoilers" (see also Menkhaus, 2006; Stedman, 1997) in achieving an agreement and, ultimately, a peaceful transition. Corruption is also a major challenge to peacebuilding and one factor that requires greater depth of research (Le Billon, 2008). Political and economic motives of belligerents (Muggah & Krause, 2009) and organizational characteristics, such as structural features, ideologies, relationships with other organizations, and attachments to violence (Kriesberg & Millar, 2009), influence whether or not competing groups choose strategies that foster peace consolidation. Leadership styles also play a role in the collective decisions of groups to engage in violence or peaceful political processes (Hermann & Gerard, 2009). Both Cliffe *et al.* (2003) and Atashi (2009) note the importance of combining bottom-up and top-down approaches to ensure the sustainability of peace processes and development.

In addition to formal peace processes, demilitarization of military-dominated regimes and the disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating (DDR) of

combatants into society are critical aspects of war-to-peace transitions (David, 1999; Lyons, 2009). The prevention of criminal violence and a "climate of impunity" is critical in the time immediately following a peace agreement (Berdal, 2009). Lyons claims that "for a successful, sustainable transition from war to peace, the warring parties need to demobilize and create new, accountable security forces" (2009, p. 100). These key tasks thus serve as an important link to, and overlap with, security transitions, particularly security sector reform (below).

Power Transitions.

While war-to-peace transitions are defined broadly and vary based on the level of analysis (global, regional, and domestic), power transitions pertain to the relative change of power among states in the international system. This is not to be confused with the concept of power relations in domestic politics, which is subsumed within the institutional-specific transitions below. Classic balance of power theory and neo-realism (Waltz, 1979) are two closely related preconceptions in the field of international relations that rest on a substantial body of literature, well beyond the scope of this review. However, the few studies that address power transitions center on power relations as predictors of interstate war (Chan, 2004; De Soysa, Oneal, & Park, 1997) and the likelihood of stability and order during peaceful power transitions from declining to rising global powers (Kupchan, Davidson, & Sucharov, 2001). Scholars have also used the terms "security transition" and "security transformation" in the context of geopolitics, explaining changes in the foreign and security policies of states relative to

domestic political and social change and power shifts in the international system (Riekhoff, 2003).

It is important to note here that, to an extent, power transitions are tangential to the study of intrastate transitions due to their exclusion of domestic political and societal issues. However, for the sake of this review and for clarity, a power transition is a type of transition found in the peace and security studies literature and one that researchers should be mindful of in relation to other forms of transition.

Societal Transitions.

Generally stated, societal transitions are the transformations of relationships and rules of interaction among people and groups in a given society. Implicit in this type of transition is the normative goal of peace; thus, it shares significant overlap with war-to-peace transitions on the intrastate level mentioned above. As a distinct category, societal transition diverges from the broader war-to-peace transitions by focusing heavily on humanitarian action and the development of civil society, or community-oriented groups and institutions that provide additional public goods outside the control of the state.

Reconstruction and development of a post-conflict civil society entails the strengthening of organizations and institutions that foster social cooperation and improve quality of life (David, 1999; Posner, 2004). In post-conflict societies, civil society groups perform a substitution role by providing critical services in place of a weakened, transitional state (Posner, 2004). "During transitions, they tend to be especially prominent, either because of their ability to control or mobilize masses of people, or because they are able to fill

policy voids through expertise" (Cawthra & Luckham, 2003a, p. 313). More important to societal transition is the very creation of social groups, regardless of their function, as trust and norms of reciprocity (e.g., social capital) are the byproduct of successful cooperation over time (Posner, 2004).

This can be extremely difficult, particularly in societies that lack a cohesive identity (Byman, 2003). Yet, as previously mentioned, challenges also emerge when development projects are not inclusive of local input or designed to ensure long-term local engagement and ownership (Cliffe *et al.*, 2003; Kramer *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, and despite these efforts and good intentions, relief programs have an historical propensity to inadvertently create local dependencies on foreign assistance (David, 1999), or undermine the legitimacy of reconstructed government institutions (Narten, 2009).

For development practitioners, cultural competence is a critical element for effectively building social capital and conditions of local empowerment and ownership, all of which facilitate societal transition. Rubinstein *et al.* (2008) provides seven principles of action for peacekeepers to better understand and use culture to increase success: (1) an awareness to interpret meaning and interact in a culturally positive manner; (2) attentiveness to cultural symbols (i.e., colors, birds, plants); (3) avoiding assumptions that locals share the similar motives; (4) awareness of any differences in local conflict management practices from international norms; (5) strong emphasis on ensuring mutual expectations are explicitly understood by locals and peacekeepers; (6) avoiding displays of partiality towards different social groups; and (7) an informed understanding of the hierarchies of power, influence, and expertise in a given community.

Political and Democratic Transitions.

Quite possibly the largest body of work on transitions, political and democratic transitions pertain to the process of transformation and/or (re)construction of formal institutions of the state from one regime type to another. In fact, the study of democratic transitions that occurred during the second half of the 20th century is commonly referred to as the "transition paradigm" (Carothers, 2002a) and remains an established topic in the field of comparative politics.

Political and democratic transitions take place in a variety of forms. They can occur internally through violent uprisings, coups d'état, and revolutions or peaceful negotiations, or, as seen in recent years, through intervention by the international community. Transitional arenas of reform in political and democratic transitions include decisions on new constitutions, electoral systems, structures of governance (e.g., unitary versus federalist), new political elites and the reallocation of power, security sector, justice and rule of law, reconciliation and restitution of past injustices, and the media sector (Agüero, 1998; Bernabeu, 2007; Brinkerhoff *et al.*, 2009; Byman, 2003; Welsh, 1994). NGOs providing democracy assistance on local levels play an important role in supporting democratic transitions (Mendelson, 2001). Admitting that there are variations in speeds of transition at different levels (national down to the individual), Welsh (p. 381) describes five characteristics that pertain to all political and democratic transitions: (1) an urgent need to address issues of major concern, (2) a great deal of uncertainty in both process and outcome, (3) conflict over the methods and procedures for changing authoritarian

structures, (4) elite-centered decisionmaking over transitional processes, and (5) negotiation.

We point out that there is a distinction between a political transition and a democratic transition. A political transition is more general, pertaining to changes in regime type, institutional structure, and/or policies (usually, but not always, away from authoritarianism), whereas a democratic transition is a specific process of political and institutional liberalization with a more definitive end-state. Studies on political transitions tend to examine transformations of political institutions and processes in relation to other institutions such as the military, civil society, and economy, but not necessarily democratization or liberal reforms. Welsh (1994, p. 381) makes this clear, stating "whereas liberalization is a controlled opening of the political space, democratization—that is, extrication from the authoritarian regime and constitution of a democratic one—is a process that subjects different interests to competition."

Part of the difficulty of parsing out distinctions between political and democratic transformations is that earlier scholars make the assumption that any country moving away from authoritarianism is transitioning toward democracy (Huntington, 1991; G. A. O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986; G. A. O'Donnell, Schmitter, & Whitehead, 1986; Schmitter, 1995). Much of the research focused on explaining why and how roughly 30 countries initiated a "third wave of democratization" from approximately 1974 to 1990 (Huntington, 1991). Schmitter (1995, pp. 541, 562) provides a very useful representation of regime change from authoritarian rule to democracy noting four necessary processes with variable timing to achieve democratic consolidation:

(1) the formation of a party system;
(2) the formation of an interest association system;
(3) drafting and approval of a constitution; and,
(4) submission of the military to civilian control.

He also notes six key events whose occurrences (sequence) are unpredictable during democratic transition:

(1) "the formation of a provisional government;
(2) the negotiation of a pact of military extraction from power;
(3) the imposition of changes in the structure of property;
(4) the negotiation of a pact among political parties;
(5) the negotiation of a social pact with the participation of interest associations; and,
(6) the revision of the territorial distribution of power." (p. 563)

Schmitter's theoretical work on democratic transitions is perhaps the most relevant literature toward a more sophisticated understanding of transitions in stability operations.

However, the incompleteness of some of these transitions and weak performance of these new democracies have led some scholars to challenge this core assumption and debate the very utility of the "transition paradigm" (Carothers, 2002a, 2002b; Hyman, 2002; Nodia, 2002; G. O'Donnell, 2002; Wollack, 2002).

Casting further doubt, it is noted more recently that "the average time required to transit the path from

extreme autocracy to coherent, albeit precarious, democracy has been 50 years, and only two have managed this transition in fewer than 25 years" (Moon, 2009, p. 115). There is also a strong correlation between democratic transitions and conflict and instability, due in part by societal mistrust and fear of exercising democratic freedoms in the absence of adequate security and strong democratic institutions (Byman, 2003).

Domestic Political Transitions. As mentioned above, political transitions occur both internally through peaceful or coercive means and externally through interstate warfare and internationally led interventions. Many of the earlier studies (1945-90) on political and democratic transitions fall into the former category, focusing on internal transitions in Europe, Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East. The "third wave" has been attributed to a lag in development of political institutions rather than social and economic institutions (Huntington, 1968, p. 5).

Several scholars have provided theoretical accounts on phases, processes, and modes of democratization. Dankwart Rustow (1970) describes democratic transitions evolving along three phases: a preparatory phase that entails deep divisions between political actors, a decision phase that formally institutionalizes specific democratic procedures, and a final habituation phase in which political actors and the public adjust to new rules. Carothers (2002a, p. 7) highlights three processes central to democratization: "opening," a period of democratic tumult and divisions within the authoritarian political regime; "breakthrough," the collapse of the authoritarian regime and the emergence of democratic institutions, elections, and constitutional reforms; and "consolidation," a slow period

of institutionalization and accumulation of democratic substance as society and politics adjust to new democratic rules. Huntington offers three different modes of democratization:

> Transformation . . . occurred when the elites in power took the lead in bringing about democracy. Replacement . . . occurred when opposition groups took the lead in bringing about democracy, and the authoritarian regime collapsed or was overthrown . . . transplacement . . . occurred when democratization resulted largely from joint action by government and opposition groups (1991, p. 114).

While these theories are helpful in describing the phases, processes, and mode of transition to democracy, it is important to note that some, if not many, of these democratic transitions have been half-measures. Indeed, semi-transitioned states have come to be known as "hybrid regimes" (Diamond, 2002; Zinecker, 2009) and, as such, researchers should be mindful to make careful distinctions between the political elite who maintain the locus of power and formal state institutions (Fishman, 1990). Schedler (2002) argues that free elections are hardly a sufficient qualifier for inclusion, pointing out how elites can manipulate elections to display a veneer of democratic governance. Similarly, Cook (2007) highlights how the military-dominated regimes in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey use "pseudo-democratic" institutions to present a public façade of democratic norms and outlet for societal disputation while disguising and protecting their own elite interests and control over the existing political order.

Worse yet, some seemingly democratic transitions lapse back into periods of instability. The reasons

why some democratic transitions end in violence are largely subjective. Zielinski (1999) cites that violence in these circumstances is triggered by miscommunication within the government rather than the resistance of the opposition. However, Huntington makes a strong proposition that "the stability of any given polity depends upon the relationship between the level of political participation and the level of political institutionalization" (Huntington, 1968, p. 79). In other words, as a society becomes more politically active (less oligarchic or elite-centric), the more a state's political institutions must be effective at channeling public participation to maintain a stable political order. The importance here is Huntington's emphasis on linking institutionalization with stability.

Externally Assisted/Imposed Political Transitions. Externally assisted or imposed political transitions typically occur in the midst of extreme conflict and/or a state's failure to provide basic governance to its citizens. Structural conditions of ineffective, illegitimate governance and poor security not only provide fuel for conflict, but also serve as breeding grounds for illicit activities that can potentially threaten the international order, thus increasing the likelihood of outside intervention (S. G. Jones, 2008). Depending on the scope of the operation, actors involved, and stated goals, these interventions are often given labels like nation-building, state-building, post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations, conflict transformation, peace operations, peacekeeping, and liberal peacebuilding (C. T. Call & Cousens, 2007). These operations are typically large, complex, and are conducted in concert with other simultaneous transitions (i.e., security transitions, war-to-peace transitions).

They also typically involve a transitional administration which provides a temporary governing mechanism before a host nation government is put in place to authorize state activities. Large, UN-led operations (i.e., Timor Leste) often carry mandates to temporarily exercise sovereign powers until the host nation builds the requisite security and administrative conditions needed for sustainable development (Chesterman, 2002). Operational phases for transitional administrations overlap and include restoring peace and security, establishing conditions for self-rule, providing development assistance, and transferring the day-to-day operations of governance over to local authority. "These are not necessarily sequential phases, nor are they mutually exclusive, but they do represent discrete aspects of a transitional administration" (Chesterman, 2002, p. 72). Chesterman also makes an important point that not enough serious research has been conducted on when and how sovereign power should be transferred to local hands.

Given recent experience, both scholars and experts are acutely aware of the complexities associated with externally-driven political transitions. Imperatives for operations include a clear political end-state and time-frame established by all parties; sufficient time to plan, resource, train personnel, and establish local credibility; and a flexible mandate to adjust to changing local conditions (Chesterman, 2002). However, these operations are fraught with flawed assumptions, dilemmas, and challenges such as the notion that Western political institutions can be transplanted in non-Western states (such as post-World War II Germany; see Sa'adah, 2006), that locals and political elites share their benign understanding and desires for reconstruction, and that reconstruction is actually within their

means, and have often led to failure, particularly in Africa (Englebert & Tull, 2008). David (1999, pp. 33-34) cites more pitfalls of externally led political interventions noting that introducing democratic competition can be destabilizing in societies without a long tradition of civic-participation; redistributions of power between groups in conflict can create tensions where democracy's shortcomings become fuel for groups to advance political blame games (see also Byman, 2003); and that the implementation of a democratic election does not automatically create democracy (e.g., Fareed Zakaria's "illiberal democracy").

Other Considerations. Some evidence suggests that liberal peacebuilding actually contributes to conflict rather than promoting peace and democratic governance. An argument based in recent experience, but closely related to that put forth in Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968), is Roland Paris' "institutionalization before liberalization" thesis that democratic reforms will not succeed in a state without strong institutions preceding this process (Paris, 1997, 2004; Paris & Sisk, 2009). An alternative is "republican peacebuilding" which centers on principles of deliberation, constitutionalism, and representation that helps lay the institutional foundations for follow-on liberal political reforms (Barnett, 2006). A more recent study highlights tensions between building strong democratic institutions at national and local levels in Afghanistan and reiterates the need for an integrated state-building approach (Nixon & Ponzio, 2007). Papagianni (2009) heeds Roland Paris' argument that strong institutions are necessary before political liberalization, but insists, nevertheless, that political participation and inclusion of belligerents in transitional outcomes is still possible and warranted.

Questions over sovereignty become major obstacles to political transitions (Bertram, 1995). Krasner (2004) challenges the conventional wisdom that governance assistance and transitional administrations are the best models for failing states, stating that they are often ineffective. Instead, he calls for power sharing arrangements such as trusteeships or shared sovereignty agreements with international organizations or more stable states to ensure that state stability is overseen. However, Kosovo, as an exception, is an ongoing case of a transition in flux because the UN-mandated transitional administration assumed responsibility for exercising sovereign rule that created a problem of local ownership (Gow, 2009). Others simply call for scholars and the international community to accept the fact that the great majority of transitional countries are somewhere in between authoritarianism and democracy, asserting that teleological, ideal-type democracy is no longer realistic (Carothers, 2002a).

Methods. The literature on political and democratic transitions contains a diverse panoply of research methods (quantitative and qualitative) beyond the standard case study approach. Przeworski (1991) classifies studies on political and democratic transitions into two groups: macro-studies that center on over-arching, objective, and structural conditions of political transition, and studies on political strategy and choice. A significant majority of this research consists of inductive case studies. However, scholars have also applied empirical and formal modeling techniques to explore both elements of structure and agency. These studies tend to align along one of two theses: the modernization thesis that posits democratic transitions result from economic development and modernization,

and the political agent thesis that makes the claim that democratic transitions are the result of strategic interactions among political actors (Kugler & Feng, 1999).

Focusing largely on structural conditions, a small handful of studies apply econometric models to democratic transitions (Feng & Zak, 1999; Ratner, 2009; Ulfelder & Lustik, 2005; Zak & Feng, 2003). These explore the socio-economic determinants of transition, citing that factors such as low education, income inequality, and a weak democratic heritage are statistically linked to failed or stalled transitions (Feng & Zak, 1999). Zak and Feng (2003) integrate the dynamics between political transition and economic development, citing that additional factors such as the growth and distribution of economic development, authoritarian policies, and legitimacy determine if and when transitions occur. Ulfelder and Lustik (2005) implement a model of transition that shows significant results on factors such as civil liberties and resource rents, or extra economic profits from natural resources. Other tools applied include factor analysis (Kotze & Toit, 1995) and spatial analysis (Lin, Chu, & Hinich, 1996). Taking a more international approach, Ratner (2009) uses regression analysis to explore the connection between democratic transition and foreign policy alignment along U.S. goals. Starr and Lindborg (2003) study the impact of diffusion on the rise in democratic transitions across the international system from 1974 to 1996.

Scholars in the latter category tend to turn to rational choice and game-theoretical models to better understand why some democratic transitions end in violence and others are pursued peacefully. Rational choice and game theory examine the strategic nature of the decision of an authoritarian regime to pursue a transition toward liberalization. Przeworski (1991)

was one of the first to use basic game-theoretical models to explain transition processes as signaling behavior between the regime and opposition groups. Subsequent models integrate the element of uncertainty in the transition outcome (Crescenzi, 1999; Gates & Humes, 1997). Swaminathan (1999) specifies a timing game to highlight the significance of relative power distributions as indicators that can predict when opposition groups mobilize and when negotiations will take place. Wantchekon (1999) explores the strategic choices of voters and the likelihood of violence in the wake of a transitional state's first democratic election.

Security Transitions.

In the outset of a conflict intervention, the first priority is security. Initially provided by a stabilization force, the establishment of a safe and secure environment is central to sustainable peace and development (Brzoska, 2003, 2007; Jean, 2005; McFate, 2008; Meharg, Arnush, & Merrill, 2010; Schnabel & Ehrhart, 2005; U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], U.S. Department of Defense, & U.S. Department of State, 2009). Yet, in time, the responsibility for maintaining security must be transferred back to the host nation—ideally under democratic civilian control—at a time when it holds the sovereign capacity to preserve security through a legitimate monopoly on the use of force (Bruneau & Tollefson, 2006; Cawthra & Luckham, 2003a, 2003b; Huntington, 1957; Luckham, 2003; U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] *et al.*, 2009). The security sector "plays an important and indispensible role in helping post-conflict societies secure a transition to a more productive and peaceful life" (Ehrhart & Schnabel, 2005, p. 320).

Accordingly, a security transition is the turbulent process from a condition of insecurity to one of stability with legitimate host nation control over an effective security sector. This can occur internally, as a state's political and coercive institutions (e.g., armed forces and police) build sufficient capacity to provide a safe and secure environment, or with external support through international peacekeeping forces, security sector reform, and security force assistance programs.

Security transitions are broad in scope, complex, lengthy, and require a vast array of resources (human, institutional, and financial). Brzoska notes that the overarching post-conflict security transition agenda consists of a focus on the "prevention of renewed conflict, establishment of rule of law, democratization, and sustainable development . . . all [of which fall] eventually under full domestic 'ownership'" (2007, p. i). Citing South Africa as an ideal type of a successful security transition, Cawthra and Luckham note the actual sequence of reforms as (2003a, p. 308):

1. The lifting of repressive security legislation;
2. The reform of the police service to ensure that the political process can be freed up; and,
3. Reform of the defense forces.

It is important to observe that despite the literature's contemporary emphasis on security transitions as internationally led security reform, many of the prescriptive concepts, such as civilian control of the armed forces and professionalization of the officer corps, are grounded in the subfield of comparative civil-military relations (Bruneau & Tollefson, 2006; Cook, 2007; Feaver, 2003; Huntington, 1957, 1968; Janowitz, 1960; Taylor, 2003). Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) is a

particularly relevant text to the study of multilevel transitions. He makes a strong case that a nation's stability is determined by the balance between the capacity of political institutions and the degree of a society's demand for participation in the political activities of the state. As societies move from oligarchic political systems toward democratic systems and demand more political participation, political institutions must adapt in order to channel participation in a way that stymies instability, or worse, military intervention in politics (e.g., a coup d'état).

Security transitions are critically linked to other domestic-level transitions (war-to-peace, political-democratic, societal, and economic) as security, on a basic level, provides a necessary, but insufficient, condition through which other transitions occur. "It is argued that the policy choices made about the management and control of military and security forces at moments of crisis or transition . . . are decisive for the consolidation of democracy, the prevention of conflict and the building of a sustainable peace" (Luckham, 2003, p. 3). Moreover, its connection to democratic transition is particularly strong due to the close proximity between security institutions and political power as well as the capacity of security institutions to manage any negative consequences of democratization (Cawthra & Luckham, 2003a, p. 305).

This claim has its limits, however. While security sector reconstruction and reform can enhance domestic administrative capacity and legitimacy, it does not necessarily mean it alone will impel regime change or democratic consolidation (Brzoska, 2007, p. vi). Nor do democratic transitions necessarily drive security reform. While much of the literature on democratic transitions suggests that free elections, transparency,

and accountability should lead to greater civilian control, justice, and human rights protections, the emergence of hybrid regimes and illiberal democracies show that this is not necessarily the case (Cook, 2007; Diamond, 2002; Zinecker, 2009). A great deal of the literature on security sector reform centers on objective goals and recommendations for implementation; much less thought has been given to the impacts of the economic and political circumstances of Security Sector Reform (SSR) outcomes (Luckham, 2003, p. 17). We cannot overstate the fact that the strengths and directions of interdependence among these different forms of transition are underexplored and ripe for future research.

In light of the broad security transition agenda, the literature tends to focus specifically on two dominant subthemes: the (re)construction of security institutions (i.e., military, police, intelligence, courts) to achieve a legitimate monopoly of force, and the reform of these institutions to achieve normative goals of civilian oversight and the protection of basic human rights (Luckham, 2003). These distinct, but closely related, aspects are typically conflated by the oft-used terms "security sector reform," "security sector reform and reconstruction," and "security sector transformation." Military and law enforcement experts who help train and equip security forces distinguish their functional role as different from the broader security sector reform mission, labeling it "security force assistance" (Dubik, 2009). Vagueness aside, security sector reform "is essential in the transition from war to peace in conflict-afflicted countries" (McFate, 2008, p. 1). Definitions of security sector reform include the following:

the complex task of transforming the institutions and organizations that deal directly with security threats to the state and its citizens (McFate, 2008, p. 2).

the set of policies, plans, programs, and activities that a government undertakes to improve the way it provides safety, security, and justice . . . [with] the overall objective is to provide these services in a way that promotes an effective and legitimate public service that is transparent, accountable to civilian authority, and responsive to the needs of the public (U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) *et al.*, 2009, p. 2).

U.S. Army Lieutenant General James Dubik makes a point to emphasize that security transitions should not be viewed as the simple authority transfer to the host nation government to train and equip security forces. Rather, it is the dual process of creating a security enterprise that combines both security force assistance (training and equipping military and police forces) with SSR, or the institutional development of the administrative agencies that provide oversight of the security sector (Dubik, 2009).

Challenges and Strategies. Experts in the field have provided critical insight into implementation challenges and strategies for transition unknowingly. There are many factors for consideration in evaluating the potential for transition success. First, the relative balance between belligerent forces is a structural consideration for security transition. David (1999, p. 30) notes that the closer an interstate conflict resembles a civil war the "more resistant it is to a peaceful settlement." "A realistic strategy for peacebuilding must take into account the fact that the balance of forces may have a greater bearing on the chances for a peaceful

security transition than does a negotiated agreement" (p. 31). Second, effects of the security dilemma on ex-combatants, particularly lack of trust, introduces uncertainty. Third, control and final resolution over territory is also a contentious issue for security transitions, especially after civil war; evidence suggests that arbitrary separation of belligerents and division of territory does not often work to sustain peace (p. 32). Fourth, corruption, often pervasive in post-conflict societies, gives cause for great concern in the process of rebuilding security forces. For example, substandard conditions and weak accountability procedures aid criminal and insurgent groups in obtaining arms (Dickey, 2007). Fifth, the resilience and competing legitimacy of informal institutions creates confusion and difficulty for institution building. Locals in fragile states view the parallel or informal institutions as legitimate proxies for security and governance, making it difficult to build legitimacy for newly created stated institutions (David, 1999). Finally, old "institutional and ideational legacies of military power" can also be either a hindrance to or facilitate security reforms and transition (Golts & Putnam, 2004). Long-lasting societal attitudes (positive or negative) toward military forces, the degree to which people view their military as a symbol of national pride and prestige, and the degree of operational autonomy that old security establishments use to help can be seen as factors influencing the ultimate success of a security transition (Golts & Putnam, 2004).

In terms of security force assistance, the reality of the security situation places a heavy demand on the rapid development of security forces. Dubik (2009) notes that the quantity versus quality argument over security force development is a futile debate as neither

are individually sufficient strategies. Quantity alone will not result in security; likewise, a focus on quality will take too long to develop adequate security forces and result in a strategic defeat for external actors in the short term. Instead, he argues, in the case of Iraq a focus on "sufficiency" is the appropriate guideline and a first order task for security force trainers to define at the outset of such a mission. It has also been observed that rebuilding effective police forces is as important (if not more important) than building military forces to maintain security (S. G. Jones, 2008).

Strengthening linkages between national, regional, and local institutions is critical to building capacity and resilience. Experts highlight a multilevel "circuit-rider approach" (the deployment of advisor teams that rotate to different locations to provide on-site technical assistance) to advising courts and justices as an effective tool for strengthening judicial systems (Dempsey & Nichols, 2009). A circuit-rider approach refers to assistance and training. However, some have called for permanently institutionalizing security force training and assistance functions within the U.S. Army in the form of an "Advisor Command," which would create a specialized cadre of military personnel to oversee the training of host nation officials (Nagl, 2008).

Finally, timelines and expectations are also important considerations in determining time horizons for building sufficient security forces and sufficient ministerial administrative capacity (Dubik, 2009). It takes much longer to build administrative and institutional norms and operational capacity for a ministry than it does to create a battle-ready infantry battalion. There are four main purposes for a ministry of defense: to structure the power relationships between politically elected and appointed leadership and an

armed force's senior leadership; define, and establish the responsibilities between civilian and uniformed military service personnel; to maximize the effectiveness of the armed forces; and to ensure the efficient use of resources across the security sector (Bruneau & Tollefson, 2006, pp. 78-82). It is reasonable to infer that institutionalizing relationships between the executive and legislative branches of government and key procedures (i.e., grand strategy and doctrinal review, budgeting, and oversight) will take longer than training tactical level units.

Economic Transitions.

The literature on economic transitions includes a rich body of theoretical and empirical studies, but is well beyond the scope of this paper. Transitional economics is actually considered by some economists as a distinct topic that overlaps between broader subfields of institutional economics and development economics (Roland, 2000; Todaro & Smith, 2009). Much of the work on economic transitions centers on nations that have experienced, or are simultaneously experiencing, internal conflict and the social, political, and security transitions described above.

In the more general, macro-economic sense, economic transitions have to do with the change and dynamics a nation experiences as its economic system transforms, typically from a more centrally controlled system toward a more liberal, open, market-based economy. From this perspective, the most contested aspect of transition is the speed at which the economy liberalizes, which has generated debate among experts who either advocate shock therapy, in the form of rapid and radical economic institutional reforms, or

those who argue for a gradual approach to economic liberalization (Popov, 2000).

However, in a post-conflict economic transition the goals are more short-term and are typically focused on "a revival of economic growth and restoring the quality of life and per capita consumption to pre-conflict levels as soon as possible" (Snodgrass, 2004, p. 260). Theory suggests that economic reforms in post-conflict stabilization operations ought to follow a path toward market liberalization, but should be implemented in three phases (pp. 260-262):

1. a financial stabilization phase that focuses on drastically reducing inflation and increasing international trade through currency boards and assistance with deficits;

2. a rehabilitation and reconstruction phase centered on restoring and reopening infrastructure to facilitate trade and training people in key development skills including economic and financial policy management; and,

3. a more long-term, comprehensive development phase that increases capital, both human and natural resources, but maintains adequate regulatory mechanisms for sustained growth.

Despite this pragmatic approach, externally planned economic transitions can be equally problematic. David (1999, pp. 35-36) notes three major dilemmas:

1. the forced economic liberalization and introduction of competition typical of capitalist markets can have an adverse effect on social inequalities and fuel tensions;

2. humanitarian and other forms of external assistance are essential to economic development, but

also hold great potential for creating local dependencies and become counterproductive to goals of local sustainability, legitimacy, and ownership; and,

      3. well-intended international organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund have a tendency to implement economic and security programs with objectives that run counter to each other by taking different approaches (e.g., top-down versus bottom up).

Nevertheless, economists have argued that economic transitions hinge more upon effective institutions and the rule of law, than the type of regime (e.g. democratic versus authoritarian). Economic "liberalization alone, when it is not complemented with strong institutions, cannot ensure good performance . . . institutional capacities in turn, depend to a large extent on the combination of the rule of law and democracy: the data seem to suggest that both—authoritarian and democratic regimes with the strong rule of law can deliver efficient institutions" (Popov, 2000, p. 44). China, the world's second largest economy, is the clearest example of an authoritarian regime with a strong economy, strong institutions, and the rule of law, providing much of the same support for economic transitions as its democratic counterparts. At the very least, this provides support to the claim that political, security, and economic transitions are strongly interdependent.

Crosscutting Studies.

The authors note that there are several studies that purposefully tackle transitional aspects of stability operations, but this area is still in need of greater

scholarly focus and research. Mentioned several times above, Charles-Philippe David (1999) explicitly notes the simultaneity of security, political, and socio-economic transitions. *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*, authored by USIP and PKSOI (2009), is perhaps the most useful guide in gaining an appreciation for the multiinstitutional and transitional aspects of stability operations. It indirectly, if not directly, covers each of the domestic level transitions (political, societal, security, and economic) and recognizes the complexities and dilemmas between them. Haggard and Kaufman (1997) look at how economic performance influences democratic transitional outcomes, specifically constitutional rules, political alignments, and institutions. Kotze and Toit (1995) explore the linkage between a robust civil society and democratic transitions in South Africa, demonstrating that the calming of societal tensions in deeply divided societies tends to lag behind constitutional and institutional reforms during transition. Using Taiwan as a case study, Lin *et al*. (1996) shows that displacement of power and the realignment among the political elites can be a positive development for political transitions in countries with strong national identities and socio-economic justice.

There are several monographs and edited volumes that recognize the interdisciplinary and multi-institutional nature of stability operations and state-building (Berdal, 2009; C. Call *et al*., 2008; Fukuyama, 2004; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008; Paris, 2004; Paris & Sisk, 2009; Rotberg, 2004b). However, these works do not directly focus on the transitional aspects of building institutions and do not provide additional information to this study.

Transitions do not occur in isolation within institutional boundaries. In other words, a war-to-peace transition does not occur without changes in security and politics. Rather, transitions occur simultaneously and are inherently interdependent. Future research on transitions should strive for a greater understanding of the complexities between multiple transitions.

APPROACHES TO TRANSITION

Stability operations are inherently about transitions, encompassing the contextual and functional roles in stabilization activities. While doctrine and best practices/lessons learned are provided to guide practitioners in the field, little exists to help individuals foster transition in these complex environments. As the need for concrete strategies to address issues of transition persists, government agencies and independent think tanks have created their own sets of procedures, guidelines, and assessment tools to grapple with issues that inform the many meanings of transition. Yet, similar to the different definitions presented in this literature review, the mechanisms used to stimulate and measure transition correspond to the level of response—whether tactical, operational, or strategic.

Whole of Government Approach.

As one of the most popular strategic approaches to transition, the whole of government (WOG) approach encompasses the multiple stream method to measure the concept (Bush, 2005; Nixon & Ponzio, 2007; PK-SOI, 2007; Serafino, 2009; Szayna *et al*., 2009; U.S. Department of Defense, 2005a; U.S. Department of State

- S/CRS, 2005b; U.S. Department of State, 2009; U.S. Department of State & U.S. Department of Defense, 2009; U.S. Department of the Army, 2009a). The WOG approach relies on the collaborative efforts of agencies dealing with defense, diplomacy, and development specifically related to stability operations in order to address the mechanisms of governance, all affected by transition. Brokered by the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), the WOG approach is meant to provide both military and civilian support to issues dealing with the transition of fragile states to more stable forms of governance.

The WOG approach tries to combine the functions of multiple government agencies supporting transition initiatives to provide common definitions, frameworks, and procedures at the strategic level. This common framework assists U.S. Government (USG) agencies in planning operational and tactical activities that complement overall strategic goals. The WOG approach is run through interagency working groups and civil-military operations centers (CMOCs) to decipher and address transitional issues that span civil and military realms of authority. This multidisciplinary approach provides a more encompassing mechanism to deal with complexity in transitional issues. While the WOG process is still being developed, the hope is that a greater spectrum of capabilities will be able to inform doctrine and strategy related to transition. The top-down approach of WOG provides the backbone for streamlining processes in stabilization initiatives to better achieve strategic goals through the use of specific operational tools that vary by agency.

Mentoring and Advising.

At tactical and operational levels, mentoring and advising is used to create the leadership and capabilities needed to support transition activities. Several government agencies, most prominently the U.S. military, have used mentoring and advising as a staple to ensure that host nation authorities are both able and willing to support transition, most specifically in security and governance functions (Brinkerhoff *et al.*, 2009; Dubik, 2009; Durch, 2008a; Hadaway, 2009; Lauria; Leika, 2007; Miklaucic, 2009; Nagl, 2008; Netherlands Ministry of Defence, 2008; PKSOI, 2009b; Rubinstein *et al.*, 2008; U.S. Department of the Army, 2009a). Provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) and military transition teams (MiTTs) are most notable in this endeavor, as groups work to stabilize environments through quick impact projects and one-on-one interaction with host nation entities to teach them how to sustain long-term benefits of stabilization aid. By integrating all the tools of the USG—now referred to as "smart power"—PRTs, MiTTs, and similar groups are able to more aptly address the complex dynamics of transition.

The military plays a prominent role in the mentoring/advising strategy in transition missions. Civil Affairs (CA) components of the military can greatly add to sector expertise and provide mentor support to host nation nationals by matching military forces with particular skill sets and capabilities to their respective host nation counterparts. This greatly adds to the capability for stabilization components to create credible and capable leaders for transition while building the potential to sustain institutions. CA plays a very

important role in bolstering this aspect of stability operations, since it provides expertise to stability situations that lack adequate civilian input or capabilities to mentor the host nation. Despite the WOG approach discussed earlier in the paper, CA and other military personnel often address discrepancies when WOG approaches do not work or exist to deal with transition. Lack of holistic effort is less prevalent among multilateral partners, who can sometimes provide just as much or better civilian expertise to stability operations than military forces to deal with integrated civilian and military matters.

Comprehensive Approach.

Similar to the WOG approach, the comprehensive approach focuses on the capabilities of partners and allies to augment whole of government support in operations dealing with transition (Bellamy & Williams, 2005; Bobrow & Boyer, 1997; Campbell, 2008; Durch, 2008a; Fishman, 1990; Gow, 2009; B. Jones *et al.*, 2009; Krasner, 2004; Leika, 2007; Netherlands Ministry of Defence, 2008; Nixon & Ponzio, 2007; Rubinstein *et al.*, 2008; Schnaubelt, 2009; U.S. Department of Defense, 2003; U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2008a; Wittkopf, 1994). The comprehensive approach spans all three levels of collaboration (tactical, operational, and strategic), but is most concentrated at operational and tactical levels; this results from a common inability to form consensus on multinational strategic goals. Past stability operations prove that partner and ally support are crucial in providing unique skill sets to transitional mechanisms. By promoting an approach that focuses not only on USG capabilities, but also the unique skill sets of other international actors,

coalitions can better address the complexities of transition at some of the most critical operating levels.

The comprehensive approach to transition is exemplified through NATO-led PRTs in Afghanistan. Although PRTs were originally an American concept, other NATO allies quickly latched on to this structure to capitalize on particular civil strengths for reconstruction and stabilization activities, with the benefit of having the military provide security. Independently run PRTs have become staples in some regions by ensuring security while providing key services and training promoting transition to more stable and effective phases. Each PRT runs different stability programs, reflective of the strategic goals of the implementing country. Countries that actively participate in PRTs often provide expertise based on their capabilities; for some, civilian expertise is far more advanced to provide support to stabilization activities as compared to military components. Despite the personnel differences, comprehensive approaches provide a single guide to all elements of stabilization initiatives, creating operational support that draws on the best characteristics of each actor.

The comprehensive approach to transition is meant to further expand on the WOG approach presented above, but on an international level. While both approaches are optimistic in the ability to combine civilian and military forces to achieve a state of transition, the difficulties in pursuing this approach are substantial. Unity of command and combined efforts are often obstacles in achieving a comprehensive approach to transition initiatives, especially since different bureaucratic structures compete for influence of missions and overall strategy; this is further compounded by governing forces that sometimes

advocate differing approaches to transition activities. Competition over resources and command authority can greatly inhibit the effectiveness of these types of operations, especially if no strategic plan for transition is adequately created for planners. In effect, the comprehensive approach is the most apt to encounter problems in planning for and executing transitional activities, and is most often effective only at the operational and tactical levels.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) Approach.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy uses transition as a key component of its three-prong approach to attaining stability in insurgencies (S. G. Jones, 2008; U.S. Department of Defense, 2009a, 2009b; U.S. Department of State, 2009; U.S. Department of State & U.S. Department of Defense, 2009; U.S. Department of the Army, 2009b; U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2009). As part of the "clear-hold-build" strategy outlined in U.S. Army *Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, transition is both an end-state and a process that is achieved through carefully crafted strategy and tactics to defeat insurgent groups who threaten the establishment of a viable and legitimate national government (U.S. Department of the Army, 2009b). Maintaining unity of effort is a key part of successful transition, as COIN initiatives gain support and legitimacy from the population, thus creating a baseline for effective, and preferred, host nation institutions to grow.

The COIN approach to transition assumes that all components of the strategy are integrated and calibrated at the national level to provide, and eventually transfer, essential services to the host nation. All

USG agencies play important roles in the execution of COIN, providing expertise in both civilian and military functions to the host nation. However, unlike the strategy outlined in the WOG and comprehensive approaches, transition is the key goal or end state in any stabilization activity since COIN seeks to build host nation capacities for long-term sustainability—especially in policies that parallel USG goals. Host nation institutions and leaders are the critical nodes ensuring that transition initiatives are capable of succeeding in post-conflict environments. Transition is, in effect, the desired end goal for any COIN operation, making it inherently strategic in its outlook and execution.

Developmental Transition.

Despite the emphasis on military transitions, the foreign aid community uses transition as a key indicator of success for development and aid programs (Cliffe *et al*., 2003; Crane *et al*., 2009; Crichton, 2009; Feng & Zak, 1999; Frumin, 2009; Moon, 2009; PKSOI, 2009a; U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], 2009). Foreign aid success is highly dependent on its ability to change or alter conditions on the ground, especially in conjunction with agency goals and desired outcomes in stabilizing environments. Transitions establish a benchmark for the aid community as to when to begin projects that bolster stabilizing societies, as well as the appropriate time to alter programs to meet changing societal needs. In many respects, development approaches depend heavily on phased transition in order to gauge the success and usefulness of programs by assessing results at different stabilization levels and times.

Developmental transitions are focused more on the process and phasing of transitioning communities to more sustainable livelihoods than on transition as a viable end-state. Often, the aid community likes to ensure that the transition process is successfully completed before discontinuing aid or implementing more advanced programs for economic development. USAID frequently refers to transition as the main period of concern for aid communities, especially since transitional periods are considered highly destabilizing in post-conflict environments. Transition is viewed more as an obstacle or window of opportunity to achieve development goals rather than a pure process of change. Transitional periods are a starting point for aid communities as they gauge how to handle complex issues endemic to stabilization initiatives. The Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) at USAID deals exclusively with this concept, pinpointing transitional periods that need assistance for development. The organization's flexible and adaptive planning helps USAID tailor U.S. assistance in support of transitional initiatives primarily to accelerate the timeline to achieve stability.

AVAILABLE TOOLS FOR TRANSITION

Both academics and practitioners have tried to cope with transition issues by creating standards for stability activities. The efforts to create viable tools—in the form of metrics, indicators, guidebooks, and field manuals—have contributed to available tools, but often lack a solid base definition to substantiate these projects. The measurements currently available to stability operation practitioners individually span the extent of transitional issues, but no single toolkit

adequately encompasses all of the challenges inherent to grappling with the concept's complexity.

Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments.

The Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments (MPICE) framework provides an outcome-based metric system that measures operational and strategic advancements in stabilization environments (Dziedzic, Sotirin, & Agoglia, 2008). This framework is meant to directly support the stated goals and initiatives of policy, specifically as outlined by individual policymakers in the planning process. MPICE is a guidebook that is used to tailor stability measures to specific strategic goals, using a top-down approach to reach local level actors in stabilizing environments.

MPICE uses both quantitative and qualitative measures to indicate trends in stability indicators throughout three key levels of stability building: imposed stability, assisted stability, and self-sustaining peace. Each of these phases is marked by indicators or concepts that address elements of the stability building process, mainly governance, cessation of violence, and economic and social well-being. All of these indicators are considered transferrable to stability environments by being broad enough to adjust for cultural and social uniqueness. General categories of MPICE indicators facilitate individual application on the operational level, specifically to measure stability directly related to community indicators. For example, delivery of public goods and services may be measured by quality of life perception and public satisfaction to indicate the strength of this category (Dziedzic *et al.*, 2008). The change in these specific indicators, marked by a "+" (indicating a positive trend), a "-" (indicating

a negative trend), or a "d" (indicating condition de-pendent trends) is meant to measure the impact of stabilization policies on diminishing short- and long-term threats.

MPICE provides insights in measuring transition during stability operations. In one sense, it provides strategic and operational guidance in the types of characteristics to consider when assessing transition policy effectiveness. This assumes that transition is a phased process that can be achieved by changing environmental trends, specifically those directly im-pacting the population. However, MPICE fails to look beyond transition as something other than a phased process of factors over a long time horizon. The tran-sitional element of MPICE is barely measured by the indicators because of their lack of proven causality. Transition must first be understood before attempting to measure it in variables which may exclude more causal mechanisms of stability.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction Essential Task Matrix.

The U.S. Department of State (DoS) created the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Essential Task Matrix as a living document to capture some of the recurring tasks in post-conflict operations. DoS implemented this matrix, which was created in 2005, as a way to better conceptualize the tactical missions feeding into operational requirements for three key phases of post-conflict transition: initial response, transformation, and sustainability. The matrix is divided into particu-lar operational areas (including security, governance and participation, humanitarian assistance and social well-being, economic stabilization and infrastructure, and justice and reconciliation) that help divide tasks according to goals at each of the three stages. The

matrix is a check list for practitioners to match tactical and operational goals with specific and defined activities.

The Essential Task Matrix is an extensive document embracing the dynamic complexity of transition, mostly by covering a broad range of "transitional areas." The Matrix covers topics ranging from elections and establishing a judiciary to creating electrical grids to hiring and training teachers for education. Many of the tasks assume a direct relation to achieving a higher level of stability—for example, elections will lead to the new task of creating public offices. However, while the indicators are helpful to practitioners, many are open to interpretation in both meaning and operationalization depending on implementer experiences. Practitioners undertaking stability tasks act as the arbiters during transitional planning, truly providing authority at the tactical level. This oversight mechanism can result in either very complex planning (if coordination and partnerships take place) or isolated planning (if the planner is focused on one or two activities) that can affect how transition is handled in these environments.

Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework.

The Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) was created in 2004 in response to the United Nations (UN) Working Group on Transition. The group, which analyzed the activities needed to secure stability, provided several recommendations for coordinated planning and implementation. As follow-on action to several of these recommendations, the USG determined that a common, planned interagency mechanism was needed to address issues affecting

fragile states. The working group specifically high-
lighted the necessity to create a common framework to
assess contextual factors of conflict mitigation. ICAF
provides this standardized analytical framework to
guide operational mechanisms and address the causes
of transition.

The ICAF uses a number of key assumptions in
guiding policymakers in the planning of stability op-
erations. Specifically, the framework addresses the im-
portance of transition in creating viable foundations
for authority transfer to host nation governments.
ICAF assumes:

     1. Each transition is unique, so that the analysis
needs to be context-specific;

     2. Conflicts are not mono-causal phenomena
and arise from a set of interconnected conflict factors
and dynamics;

     3. Transition programming of the UN system
should aim at "doing no harm" and minimizing unin-
tended negative impacts;

     4. Transition programming of the UN system
should aim at maximizing its peace building impact in
the aftermath of the crisis, as well as over the longer-
term;

     5. Efforts should be made to ensure national
ownership and seek the participation of all conflict
parties in the process of the analysis (United Nations,
2004; 2).

In many respects, transition is used as an indicator
in this framework to measure conflict abatement strat-
egy effectiveness. The use of transition as a bench-
mark in planning indicates its importance in stability
operation strategic goals—most notably by serving
as a concrete end-state. However, ICAF does not

exclusively focus on the process of transition, but instead the mechanisms of collaboration and their effectiveness in addressing stabilization factors. The ICAF critiques organizational mechanisms through three key stages of the stabilization process: conflict, ongoing responses, and strategic and programmatic conclusions for transition planning. The ICAF intends to unify not only agencies, but stages of the transition process by feeding mechanisms into each other. Assessment of coordination is not rigidly separated by the three stages, but instead impacts subsequent stages of the process.

The Sphere Project.

The Sphere Project evolved in 1997 from a group of humanitarian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Society as a way to standardize humanitarian responses to natural disasters and conflict, explicitly drawing on the principles of the Humanitarian Charter. The first rendition of the Sphere Project, launched in 2000, outlined five key areas of humanitarian response: water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter, and health services. A second Sphere Project manual was released in 2004 upon suggestions from the international community; the second edition includes a sixth sector—food security.

The Sphere Project's significance is based on the NGO assertion that stability is progressed through certain minimum standards. The six indication areas provide benchmarks for achieving a stability baseline; this baseline demarcates the tipping point to transition societies from danger to viability through

the use of humanitarian aid. The Sphere handbook places tremendous emphasis on host nation participation in planning and implementing disaster response programs. The handbook uses tactical techniques to achieve these transitional phases during periods of instability. The hands-on approach championed by the literature is particularly informative, especially since feedback from the host nation is essential to program success. The Sphere Project provides insights into how to achieve transition by incorporating the help of the host nation in every aspect of the response process, making responses truly organic and directly responsive to the situation.

Tactical Conflict Assessment Framework.

USAID and DoD created the Tactical Conflict Assessment Framework (TCAF) for use in stability environments, specifically on the tactical level. The TCAF is a response to USAID observations that civilian and military response team members had little guidance for actions in stability operations. The TCAF provides a basic framework of preliminary response mechanisms for these teams.

The TCAF is unique because of its tactical focus in addressing causes of conflict and combines military and civilian efforts into a single, standardized tool. "The TCAF is a simple and standardized diagnostic tool used to gather information from local inhabitants to identify the causes of instability or conflict in a unit's area of operation. This information can help identify, prioritize, monitor, evaluate, and adjust civil-military programming targeted at diminishing the causes of instability or conflict" in an area (USAID, 2010, p. 1). To accomplish this, the tool focuses on four

key areas: (1) identifying the cause of instability, (2) addressing the local context, (3) gathering information, and (4) designing programs that effectively address the situation. Each of these stages is reliant on the direct interactions between local inhabitants and tactical commanders to collect appropriate information for stability activities. Specifically, TCAF highlights the importance of informed tactical activities in gauging and ensuring transition progress. It depends highly on environmental factors and responses to provide accurate assessments of transition.

United Nations Transition Strategy.

The UN has been very proactive in writing best practices and planning guidelines on transitional issues. Founded under the UN Development Group (UNDG), the "UN Transition Strategy" refers to the organization's contingency response plans to conflict situations. The UN is careful to make the distinction that the transition strategy is not a long-term solution to managing conflict and instability; instead, it is meant to bridge the gap between failing and sufficient responses to disaster by employing specific stabilization tools. The transition strategy makes use of extensive response networks to draw on the most applicable services and activities to stabilize fragile environments.

The UN developed the Working Group on Transitions to analyze and change UN responses to crises, specifically by creating tools that more directly address stabilization. The Working Group pinpoints specific transition indicators that help to better measure stability in conjunction with broader national reconstruction goals. The Working Group depends

highly on host nation capabilities to implement transition, using authority transfer as the primary goal of stability plans to foster longer-term collaboration with international actors. "The aim of the UN System in transition should be to assist national authorities to initiate immediate, priority crisis resolution and recovery actions, and to lay the ground work, including the capacity, systems and relationships needed to embark on a longer term development path" (UN, 2007, p. 1). In effect, the organization assists the host nation in establishing the foundations to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN's most prominent international standards and goals.

The UNDG Toolkit is one of the most referenced metrics for assessing and responding to conflict. The Toolkit provides both step-by-step and work stream prescriptions to guide practitioners in planning stability responses. While the indicators are specific in which conditions UN actions address, the Toolkit is meant to strategically guide the organization vis-à-vis the host nation's mandate and responsibilities. The majority of work streams outlined in the Toolkit focus on joint capabilities that work hand-in-hand with the host nation, including the provision of common services, communication, budgetary framework, and leadership. The implications for this type of collaboration are substantial: by relying on the host nation as part of the planning and implementation process, the host nation is held responsible for sustaining transitional conditions created by stability operations.

Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational Tools.

Recently, coordination for stability operations across joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational lines has been a primary goal for policy planners. As fragile states and governments become a prominent concern for the international community, states, government agencies, and partners must interact at the strategic level to determine the causes of, and solutions to, instability using a multinational and comprehensive approach. The U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) has taken the lead on exploring and collaborating on ways to increase the effectiveness of stability and reconstruction planning, specifically by ameliorating some of the inhibitions of actors to work in a multilateral environment.

The most prominent initiative launched by JFCOM is the Multinational Experiment, which analyzes the difficulties in collaborating across joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational boundaries. This initiative, which brings together NATO officials and representatives from more than 18 different countries, seeks to bridge the gap between individual country capabilities and collaborative styles to respond to complex operating environments as a holistic community. As of 2009, six different experiments had been conducted to review various warfighting capabilities in response to many different threat environments. JFCOM is prepared to continue these experiments to cull more lessons from joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations, and address strategic guidance for future stability operations. The experiments are intended to create guidelines and metrics for actors from all sectors of this collaborative community.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the whole, the academic research on transitions is broad and varies in depth along the lines of the six types of transitions. By far, the democratic transitions literature provides the most depth of analysis and employs the widest range of methodologies. The academic research on transitions also tends to be compartmentalized within the six types of transitions. This compartmentalization is a natural reflection of the disciplinary nature of social science research and existing research programs—international relations and security studies, comparative politics, anthropology and peace studies, and economics, for example. More scholarly attention should be given specifically to the topic of security transitions as much of the present research focuses on broad lessons learned and prescriptive aspects of security sector reform. Little is understood about sequencing aspects of security transition beyond macro, institutional-level analyses. Even less is known about thresholds and tipping points between critical phases of stability operations or the degree of resilience necessary to sustain institutional reforms in the long term. Also, due to the often-noted complexity and indeterminacy of transitions in general, more research exploring interactions across social, political, military, and economic institutions in transition is needed as well. Certainly, all of these future areas of research would be best addressed through an interdisciplinary approach.

We find that there is much to be gained from all forms and methods of future inquiry (inductive generalizing vs. deductive particularizing and qualitative vs. quantitative) on transitions. For those interested in

pursuing more generalized knowledge, the literature is full of case studies and edited volumes on countries, conflicts, and specific aspects of transition, but no attempt has been made to squarely and systematically address transition itself in stability operations across a range of cases. Alexander George's (2005) method of "structured, focused comparison" which demands researchers clearly define their research objective and ask the same specific questions to standardize data collection and analysis would be an ideal approach. Once a baseline program is established, more researchers would be able to contribute and conduct cross-case comparisons.

Likewise, more particularized, subjective-oriented methods of research (i.e., content and document analysis, ethnography, interviews, and focus groups) will add depth and richer understanding of the complex nature of transitions, particularly with regard to the gaps noted above. Practitioners often characterize transition according to their own subjective experience. These experiences are shaped by their particularized location, role, and influence on stabilization activities as well as the broader context of the stability operation they operate within. Their experiences are essential to capturing lessons learned and individualized explanations of transitions. However, because these actors are often from other countries, their views retain a degree of objectivity as they are outsiders and thus have no ethnocentric bias. As such, researchers must also seek out local actors in these operations. While more difficult to access, members of critical institutions would provide important information that will act as an important hedge against hidden assumptions and bias. Both sources of information (practitioner and indigenous) on transitions should be captured in a systematic manner.

Of the numerous tools available to policymakers to measure and assess transition, no single tool fully captures the dynamic nature of the concept. Many of the measures are based on very narrow and concrete definitions of transition that are often not applicable to other actors undertaking similar or parallel activities. Often times, these tools intend to serve particular goals of an agency rather than solve transitional issues on a strategic and interagency level. More research must be undertaken to test underlying assumptions of presently popular transition indicators and explore other potentially influential factors affecting transition. In addition, transition community actors should collaborate on this pertinent topic to develop a more comprehensive tool for stability actors.

CONCLUSION

Transition continues to be one of the most pervasive and elusive aspects of stability operations. There is little question that the international community will remain charged and challenged with the responsibility of stabilizing fragile states now and for the near future. This will be true as long as post-conflict stability operations involve myriad actors and are each unique in their specific and circumstantial complexity, and, most important, while they each share one desired outcome: long-term stability. As academics and practitioners alike wrestle with figuring out how to achieve stability, the inherent transitional nature of these operations will continue to be a burning question.

This monograph has provided an exhaustive catalog and assessment of the state of research and practice on transition as it relates to stability operations. It

offers a rudimentary system of classification through mapping characteristics (process, phasing, authority transfer, and end-state) and types of transitions (war-to-peace, power, societal, political-democratic, security, and economic) in the current literature. The conceptual clarity and systematized focus areas that such an endeavor provides will allow scholars and decisionmakers to think more concretely and critically about all aspects of transition. Moreover, our definition of transition makes a significant and innovative contribution to this field of research and ongoing policy debates between joint, interagency, and multinational actors conducting stability operations and evaluating roles and responsibilities abroad. While this monograph has not evaluated specific hypotheses, explanations, or predictions on transitions in stabilization operations, it sufficiently carves out a line of scholarly and professional inquiry and provides a solid foundation for future research.

Academics and professionals have both the challenge and opportunity to improve how stability operations are conducted in the future. Transition is one among many issue areas requiring more attention to adequately confront this larger task. This work sheds light on an often-imprecise subject matter. As the international community continues to rebuild fragile states, it is our hope that the concepts outlined herein contribute to an improved understanding and implementation of stability operations.

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