

# **OPERATING IN THE HUMAN DOMAIN**



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**The Ends:** (Objective of this concept)

SOF who are skilled at understanding *the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements influencing actors in the operating environment* and capable of shaping human decision-making and behavior to create desired effects. SOF and its partners:

- Shape the environment to anticipate challenges and generate options, while continuously increasing awareness
- Prevent, mitigate, contain, and win conflicts
- Strengthen the resolve, commitment, and capability of partners to support shared interests
- Combat extremism, corruption, and crime

**The Ways:**

Develop a comprehensive discipline to identify, understand, and influence relevant individuals, groups, and populations across the range of military operations (ROMO). This discipline will:

- Enhance comprehension of the elements shaping human decision-making and behavior
- Improve how the force visualizes the environment
- Establish a common conceptual framework
- Refine the SOF operational framework to improve campaign planning and execution

The need to influence the decision-making and behavior of relevant actors must be inherent in every military activity. SOF and its partners need to:

- Focus on creating desired effects among relevant actors
- Build trust with key actors, while navigating the hierarchy of allegiances that is often shaped by perceptions of identity
- Increase legitimacy and generate friendly potential (regular and irregular)
- Address popular grievances and counter adversary messaging with words, deeds, and images
- Restrict the adversary's organizing efforts
- Protect or target key physical assets
- Strengthen cross-domain synergy
- Apply force or the threat of force judiciously and for maximum psychological effect

**The Means:**

The ability to apply the fundamentals of understanding and operating among people in the environment into each type of SOF operation and activity. SOF must:

- Implement DOTMLPF-P<sup>1</sup> solutions to identify all actors that are relevant to an operation; understand their past and current decision-making and associated behavior; comprehend the historical context; anticipate and influence future decision-making and associated behavior in a manner consistent with mission objectives and the desired state; account for the elements influencing behavior
- Sustain enduring engagement and collaboration with allies, partners, and potential supporters; develop long-term understanding of relevant actors in sensitive, denied, and geographically and technologically isolated areas

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<sup>1</sup> (U) DOTMLPF-P: Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities and Policy.

## Commander's Foreword

SOF will face a dynamic future operating environment. Globalization, social media, increased computing power, and proliferation of low-cost advance technologies are creating a level of complexity, interconnectedness, and rapid change never before seen. The traditional rules of conflict are also changing—our ability to influence outcomes is not solely based on our aggregate military capability. The diffusion of power is decreasing the ability of any state acting alone to control outcomes unilaterally, and globalization has created networked challenges on a massive scale. Our success will be determined by our ability to adequately navigate conflicts that fall outside the traditional peace-or-war construct, while becoming more attuned to the intricacies of an evolving landscape of relationships.

To remain competitive in this environment, Special Operations Forces (SOF) will conduct simultaneous operations across a conflict continuum from peace to war. This conflict continuum exists within a dynamic strategic and operational landscape characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Conflict, in all its forms, remains a fundamental human endeavor requiring SOF to adapt and learn. Specifically, SOF must adapt and learn higher levels of nuanced human skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence grounded in humility and empathy.

This concept describes the tenets and capabilities required to fundamentally transform the SOF Enterprise into a learning institution; an institution that reliably produces savvy and operationally adept individuals across all domains, promoting a culture of organizational learning, and expanding the breadth, depth, and agility of SOF to successfully operate in the Human Domain. Success in this domain is an art and requires a state-of-the-art understanding of, and competency in, the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that influence human behavior.

If SOF works together towards a shared vision to account for the elements that influence human behavior, we can achieve strategic and operational success with more surety and efficiency. This means designing and executing operations and campaigns with the strategic outcome in mind and optimizing these outcomes by considering the human elements throughout the design and execution process.

The timing is right to unleash the full potential of operating in the Human Domain. SOF must continue to lead and pioneer this endeavor into the future.



Joseph L. Votel  
General, U.S. Army  
Commander

## Preface

Building on the vision of USSOCOM strategic guidance documents, the Operating in the Human Domain (OHD) Concept describes the mindset and approaches that are necessary to achieve strategic ends and create enduring effects in the current and future environment. The Human Domain consists of the people (individuals, groups, and populations) in the environment, including their perceptions, decision-making, and behavior. Success in the Human Domain depends on an understanding of, and competency in, the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that influence human behavior.<sup>2</sup> Operations in the Human Domain strengthen the resolve, commitment, and capability of partners; earn the support of neutral actors in the environment; and take away backing and assistance from adversaries. If successful in these efforts, Special Operations Forces (SOF) will gain military, political, and psychological advantages over their opponents. The OHD Concept integrates existing capabilities and disciplines into an updated and comprehensive approach that is applicable to all SOF core activities.

SOF personnel continuously think about human interactions, building trust, and winning support among individuals, groups, and populations. Drawing on the approach and required capabilities identified in this concept, SOF and its partners use persuasion and compulsion to shape the calculations, decision-making, and behavior of relevant actors<sup>3</sup> in a manner consistent with mission objectives and the desired state.<sup>4</sup> SOF must win support and build strength, before confronting adversaries in battle. Working in collaboration with capable partners and as part of a whole-of-government approach, SOF enables preemptive actions to avert conflicts or keep them from escalating. When necessary, SOF and its partners confront and defeat adversaries, always mindful that the end goal is an eventual cessation of hostilities and a more sustainable peace.

*SOF develops capable partners, builds friendly forces strength, and weakens adversaries before engaging in combat.*

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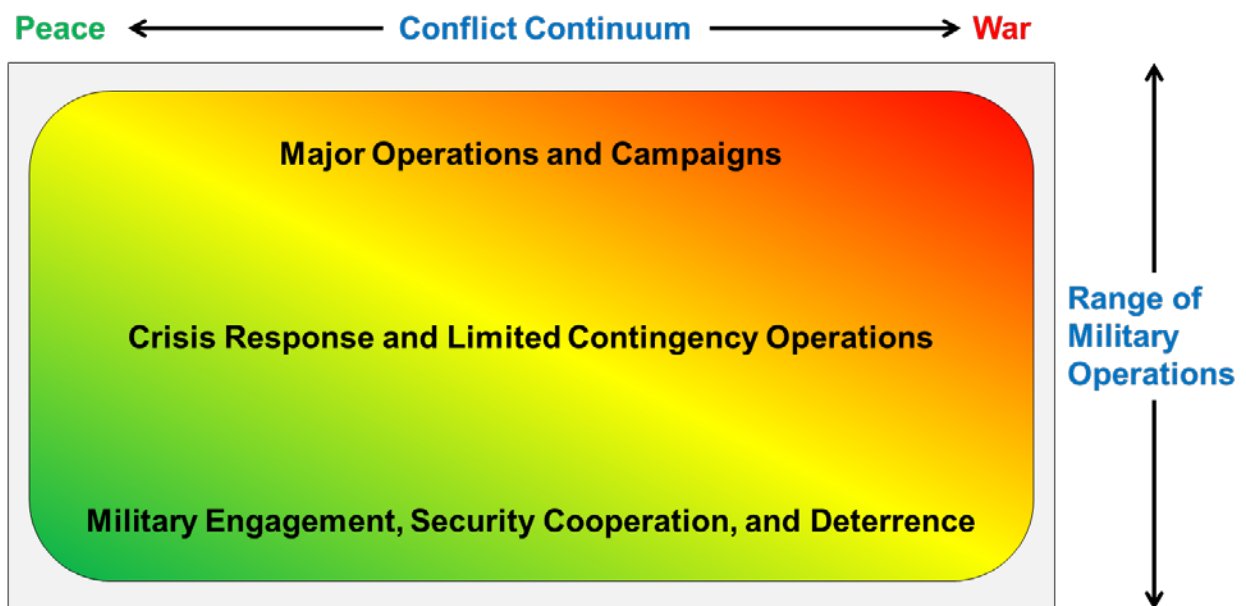
<sup>2</sup> (U) Section 3.1 provides a description of the elements that shape human behavior.

<sup>3</sup> (U) Relevant actors are individuals, groups, and populations in the environment that impact the military mission or the attainment of United States and partner nation policy objectives.

<sup>4</sup> (U) The Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) commander articulates a *desired state* instead of the *end state* normally associated with an operation, reflecting the enduring nature of theater operations. The traditional articulation of an *end state* and *termination* criteria for military operations is often not relevant within the context of a TSOC subordinate campaign. Once the TSOC identifies the *desired state*, the TSOC commander and his staff will outline *objectives* and *desired effects* to attain and maintain the *desired state*.

SOF conduct enduring engagement in a variety of strategically important locations with a small-footprint approach that integrates a network of partners. This engagement allows SOF personnel to nurture relationships prior to conflict. Language and cultural expertise are important, but SOF’s ability to shape broader campaigns with allies and partners to promote stability and counter malign influence is vital. SOF leaders plan and execute operations that support national objectives, while providing continuous analysis and advice to ensure effective strategy. SOF must identify and assess relevant actors, understand their past and current decisions and behavior, and anticipate and influence their future choices and actions across the ROMO as shown in Figure 1.

## Range of Military Operations



**Figure 1: Our national leaders can use the military instrument of national power across the conflict continuum in a wide variety of operations.**

SOF contribute to the accomplishment of U.S. policy objectives during peaceful competition, non-state and hybrid conflicts, and wars among states. The ideas in the OHD Concept are key to confronting state and non-state actors that combine conventional and irregular military force as part of a hybrid approach. Adversary states are increasingly adapting their methods to negate current and future U.S. strengths, relying on non-traditional strategies, including the use of subversion, proxies, and anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. These adversary strategies require a refined U.S. approach for effective counteraction. A critical goal will be to create conditions that shape adversary decisions and behavior in a manner that favors U.S. objectives or develops opportunities friendly forces can exploit to achieve the desired state.

# 1. Introduction

The OHD Concept is a SOF future concept. It describes how the force, using military art and science, may conduct operations and activities in response to a range of military challenges. Future concepts are not intended to be directive documents. They are meant to stimulate thought and discussion, while examining potential capability requirements to enhance SOF effectiveness. The OHD Concept supports Commander, USSOCOM priorities and helps realize the vision in the *SOF Operating Concept*.<sup>5</sup> The OHD Concept provides input, from the USSOCOM perspective, for the *Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations (HAMO)*, which is currently in development in collaboration with the Joint Staff, the Military Services, and other stakeholders, both internal and external to the Department of Defense.

**1.1 Purpose and Scope.** The OHD Concept describes the necessary approach and capabilities for SOF to understand, anticipate, and influence<sup>6</sup> the decisions and associated behavior of relevant individuals, groups, and populations. The goal is to enhance stability, prevent and mitigate conflict, and, when necessary, fight and defeat adversaries. This document identifies required capabilities (outlined in section 5) to enhance SOF effectiveness. SOF must evaluate the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that affect human behavior. The result of this analysis is critical to the success of a given policy, strategy, campaign, operation, or tactical action. Operations will frequently depend on the application of unique capabilities to identify relevant actors and influence their decision-making and behavior in a manner consistent with U.S. national objectives and the desired state. In most cases, SOF and the broader Joint Force will be part of a whole-of-government and multinational effort. In these situations, SOF must ensure operations and activities align with and support shared campaign objectives.

*To accomplish its military mission, SOF must understand and influence friendly, neutral, and adversary actors in the environment.*

The goal of the OHD Concept is to: 1) encourage commanders to think continuously about building their strength and support in the environment, 2) equip SOF with the necessary tools and approaches to influence relevant actor decision-making and behavior, and 3) focus campaign design on creating desired effects among individuals

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<sup>5</sup> (U) The OHD Concept supports Commander, USSOCOM priorities to help win our Nation's fight and prepare for the future. See: *The Special Operations Forces Narrative*, USSOCOM document, dated: 5 November 2014. The OHD Concept also enables four of five elements in the central idea of the *SOF Operating Concept*. See: *SOF Operating Concept*, USSOCOM, dated: May 2013.

<sup>6</sup> (U) Influence: The act or power to produce a desired outcome or end on a Target Audience. See JP 3-13, *Information Operations*, dated: 27 November 2012.

in the environment to achieve success across all domains. The OHD Concept synthesizes time-tested practices and recent lessons learned with the aim of institutionalizing a common approach to plan, direct, monitor, and assess operations from 2015 to 2025 and beyond. The approach described in this document applies to all SOF and is relevant across the ROMO, beginning with military engagement—and preparation of the environment—and progressing across the conflict continuum and the spectrum of U.S. Government (USG) activities. The ideas put forward in this document provide a framework for a capabilities based assessment (CBA) to further identify capability requirements, determine shortfalls, and outline potential SOF DOTMLPF-P changes.

*The OHD Concept is a first step toward capability identification and eventual development, implementation, and resourcing of solutions.*

The OHD Concept follows a step-by-step sequence that is customary for documents of its type. The concept first describes the evolving operational environment and then explains how SOF must operate to be successful. The OHD Concept outlines the required capabilities, implications, and risks from adopting a new approach.

**1.2 Background.** War has long been a test, not only of the skill and determination of the *armed forces*, but of the resolve of the *people* and the leadership of *government*.<sup>7</sup> Today, military leaders must also consider an expanding range of actors and trends impacting the environment. The growing power of non-state groups, the mounting importance of multi-national organizations, a shifting cast of allies and partners,<sup>8</sup> and the increasing pervasiveness of global media are adding complexity to the environment.

Human Domain considerations are important across the conflict continuum and the ROMO: from military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence—to crisis response—to major operations and campaigns. The Human Domain plays a key part in both traditional and irregular warfare. However, it has a disproportionate role during population-centric conflicts, which are confrontations in which the perceptions and behavior of the relevant populations affect the conduct and outcome of hostilities. To prevent or succeed in these types of conflicts, SOF and its partners must build influence and legitimacy with an increasing number of entities, each with their own perspective and interests. At the same time, SOF must degrade the power of its adversaries. During

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<sup>7</sup> (U) Carl von Clausewitz describes a “wonderful trinity” that helps define the character of war, consisting of violence (and emotion), probability and chance, and reason. *“The first of these three phases concerns more the people; the second, more the General and his Army; the third, more the Government.”* See *On War* by Carl von Clausewitz, Chapter 1, Section 28.

<sup>8</sup> (U) The term “partners” when used in the document includes allies and representatives from other partner nations, even if they do not have formal defense treaty obligations with the United States. “SOF partners” also refers to representatives on non-Defense U.S. Government departments and agencies.



Unconventional Warfare (UW), for example, SOF will seek to undermine the sources of authority and legitimacy of an adversary regime or governing authority, weaken the credibility and control of the enemy's leaders and decision-makers, destabilize the power relationships and patronage system that keeps key officials in power, and incite the population in collective action.

How should SOF think about the range of individuals, groups, and populations that are part of the uncertain and complex environment? This question deserves consideration if SOF is going to work with partners in

detering aggression, enhancing stability, preventing conflict, advancing regional security, responding to crises, and defeating state and non-state adversaries.

Military history and experience have repeatedly shown that unfamiliarity with the local culture and society can result in a failure to anticipate challenges and an inability to accomplish national objectives. Without a common understanding of the elements affecting human decision-making and behavior, SOF and its partners may inadvertently antagonize key actors and groups or fail to secure essential partnerships. These elements are vital to understanding the root causes of a conflict, developing effective strategies, and conducting operations across the ROMO. *Consequently, SOF must enhance its ability to consistently work with partners to understand the elements affecting human decision-making and behavior.*

*Operations in the Human Domain are critical across the ROMO and the conflict continuum, but are especially challenging in population-centric conflicts.*

## **2. Operating Environment and the Military Challenge**

**2.1 *Characteristics of the Future Operating Environment.*** The 2012 Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO) envisions a future operating environment “that is more unpredictable, complex, and potentially dangerous than today.” Key dynamics of the future environment include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the rising power of modern competitor states, and the growing capability of non-state actors. Violent extremism, regional instability, transnational crime, and competition for resources will continue to be key aspects of the environment. Within this context, adversaries will persist in exploring asymmetric ways to employ basic and advanced technologies to exploit U.S. vulnerabilities. The U.S. military can expect adversaries to change their approach quickly and adapt rapidly to U.S. technologies and tactics. Furthermore, the conventions by which wars are fought are no longer as settled as they once were. Notions of who is a combatant and what constitutes a battlefield in the information age are rapidly shifting beyond previous norms.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> (U) Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020, dated: 10 September 2012.

**2.2 The Growing Importance of Population Dynamics.** Population growth, economic development, migration, urbanization, and technological advancements are increasingly affecting the conduct of war and highlight the growing importance of Human Domain considerations. Conflict will frequently revolve around the security of key populations in militarily-significant urban areas. Modern communications will often magnify the effects of instability in large cities, as residents quickly voice their dissatisfaction with local, regional, and even global conditions and developments. Key trends and population dynamics transforming the operational environment include the following:

- Increased competition as a result of globalization, resulting in dislocation and strain for some individuals and groups
- Growing urbanization due to high rates of natural population increase in cities and the influx of rural migrants, often overwhelming fragile infrastructure
- Movement of populations often driven by economic and environmental factors, which may lead to “brain drain” and class/sectarian tensions
- Youth bulge in some countries and negative fertility rates in others, potentially jeopardizing sustainable development
- Accelerating technological advancements that enable a rapid redistribution and diffusion of information and power among actors in the environment—while simultaneously weakening central authority in many countries and institutions

The pervasiveness and global reach of modern communications and media (including cell phones, television, internet, social media, etc.) increases the speed, scale, and consequences of human interaction. Cunning and sophisticated adversaries will exploit trends in the environment to maximize their influence during conflicts that often center on issues of legitimacy and resolve.

These adversaries will quickly attempt to exploit any friendly forces’ missteps within a ubiquitous information environment. Key trends and population dynamics, combined with a growing access to lethal capabilities, will increase the power of non-state actors, provide new options to adversary states, and contribute to persistent instability in many parts of the world. Alternatively, modern communications and media present the U.S. and its partners with opportunities to shape the perceptions of friendly, neutral, and adversary actors.

*A growing access to sophisticated technology will enable some adversaries—including rising regional powers and groups like Hezbollah—to fight across multiple domains simultaneously.*

Within this environment, non-state violence will continue to increase. Many non-state actors will persist in using extortion, drug trafficking, cyber activities, kidnapping, and other criminal activities to influence populations and governments—and generate

resources. Many of these adversary efforts depend on the collaboration of at least a portion of the population to maintain secrecy, develop intelligence, and provide needed manpower and logistics. Moreover, violent extremists and criminal organizations will compete with the United States and its partners for influence over relevant populations around the globe.<sup>10</sup> Violent non-state actors will seek to subvert local security officials and host nation government representatives, with the intent to supplant local authorities and create an operating space for group activities. In some instances, non-state actors will seek to exercise governmental functions and provide services to the population as a means of building legitimacy and influence. Subversive efforts are frequently hard to detect and, as a consequence, often impervious to traditional military force. Persistent instability in the global environment has increased the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the Human Domain. This complex environment is producing new operational demands, requiring SOF to consider an expanding range of relevant actors that may impact operations.

**2.3 *Evolving Operational Demands.*** SOF cannot prevent, mitigate, contain, and win conflicts solely through offensive military operations. Some adversary tactics—such as subversion or the use of civilians as a shield—will degrade the effectiveness of some forms of combat power, while entirely precluding the use of others. As a result, SOF must use its understanding of the Human Domain to better recognize levers, both positive and negative, with which to persuade or compel relevant actors and achieve desired ends. SOF needs to encourage partners to address gaps in security and the underlying social and political causes of instability and conflict. Likewise, SOF must develop capabilities to limit adversary influence on relevant populations. SOF and its partners must adopt a specialized approach to deal with an adversary’s surreptitious activities. This approach must be part of a broader whole-of-government effort that encompasses all instruments of national power. A key priority is to persevere in the battle of ideas, while challenging extremist ideologies. A deeper understanding of the Human Domain and the ability to influence relevant populations in an ideological struggle are necessary to generate support and deny assistance to adversaries. By understanding the complex and difficult-to-predict environment, as well as the underlying conditions that can lead to or escalate hostilities, SOF and its partners can take proactive measures to prevent, mitigate, or contain conflicts. This preventive action is especially necessary in environments that may face an outbreak of violence and in which U.S. and partner interests are at stake. Alternatively, in some instances when precautionary efforts fail, SOF may initiate or intensify hostilities against an adversary to achieve U.S. policy objectives. For example, this might be the case during the conduct of a UW campaign.

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<sup>10</sup> (U) USSOCOM Commander’s Appreciation: The Strategic Environment, undated.

Military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence shape the environment to enable the success of crisis response and major operations and campaigns. When a crisis or the need to conduct an operation arises, the nature of the mission and an adversary's actions may compel the U.S. military to operate in a particular warfighting domain or across the domains. Adversaries will take action in the Human Domain, and SOF must be prepared to face this challenge. U.S. military forces must be capable of conducting population-centric operations in multiple and diverse locations now and for the foreseeable future. Operations must be wide-ranging, targeted, and continuous. Commanders need to prioritize the multiple tools at their disposal, while directing efforts where and when they are needed most. Understanding of the Human Domain must include a comprehension of the human geography, human terrain, and the various elements shaping relevant actor decision-making and behavior.

*Military leaders must build and sustain a variety of partnerships to maintain awareness and respond quickly in time of need.*

Strategic guidance directs the U.S. military to “develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives.”<sup>11</sup> By understanding the environment, military leaders can focus engagements and do more with limited resources. To accomplish this, the U.S. military must sustain enduring relationships and a forward presence. Likewise, support from relevant actors is necessary to maximize the effectiveness of distributed SOF operations, while depriving support to adversaries.

Evolving operational demands require a force that: 1) can evaluate and understand the *social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements influencing actors in the environment*, and 2) is capable of impacting human decision-making and associated behavior to create desired effects. SOF will support the following U.S. “ends”:

- Shape the environment to anticipate challenges and generate options, while continuously increasing situational awareness
- Prevent, mitigate, contain, and win conflicts
- Strengthen the resolve, commitment, and capability of partners to support shared interests
- Combat extremism, corruption, and crime

**2.4 Military Challenge.** *SOF must strengthen its ability to understand and operate in the Human Domain, working with U.S. and international partners to assess and*

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<sup>11</sup> (U) *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, guidance from the President of the United States, The White House, pg. 3, dated: January 2012, available at: [www.defense.gov/news/defense\\_strategic\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/defense_strategic_guidance.pdf).

*influence relevant actors, enhance stability, prevent and mitigate conflict, and, when necessary, defeat adversaries.* SOF needs to:

- Identify the most critical actors in the environment that are relevant to a policy, strategy, campaign, operation, or tactical action
- Account for the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements affecting relevant actor behavior
- Understand the past and current decision-making and associated behavior of relevant actors—including their assessments of costs and benefits
- Anticipate future decision-making and associated behavior of relevant actors
- Integrate operations and activities to influence future decision-making and create desired changes in human behavior in a manner consistent with mission objectives and the U.S. desired state
- Develop the required capabilities to conduct enduring engagement and achieve necessary understanding and influence

The United States must build support for its policies among relevant individuals, groups, and populations. In an environment characterized by the mounting importance of population dynamics and in which offensive military action, by itself, is inadequate to achieve U.S. ends, SOF must collaborate and build support with a variety of relevant actors. SOF needs to work with partners to deprive adversaries of the *means, motives, and opportunity* to mount violent campaigns—while strengthening the capability and capacity of friendly forces.<sup>12</sup>

### **3. Central and Supporting Ideas**

The central idea of the OHD Concept is that SOF needs to develop and implement a comprehensive Human Domain discipline to identify, understand, and influence—through words, deeds, and images—relevant individuals, groups, and populations. This discipline is necessary to guide military personnel and units from day-to-day engagement activities to crisis and war and back to steady state. The goal is to elevate Human Domain considerations to the point that they consistently inform the development of SOF objectives, actions, and activities. A formal discipline will:

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<sup>12</sup> (U) By building partner institutional capability/capacity and generating friendly potential, including partner security forces, the United States can reduce the window of “opportunity” that allows an adversary campaign to take place. By addressing genuine grievances, the United States and its partners can focus on the “motives” frequently used to justify violence. By restricting the adversary cadre and mobilization forums, the United States and its partners can counteract the “means” used by violent actors. This perspective draws from resource mobilization theory. See *Power in Movement*, by Sidney Tarrow, Cambridge University Press, dated 1998.

- Enhance comprehension of the elements shaping human decision-making and associated behavior
- Improve how the force visualizes the environment
- Establish a common conceptual framework
- Refine the SOF operational framework to improve campaign planning and execution

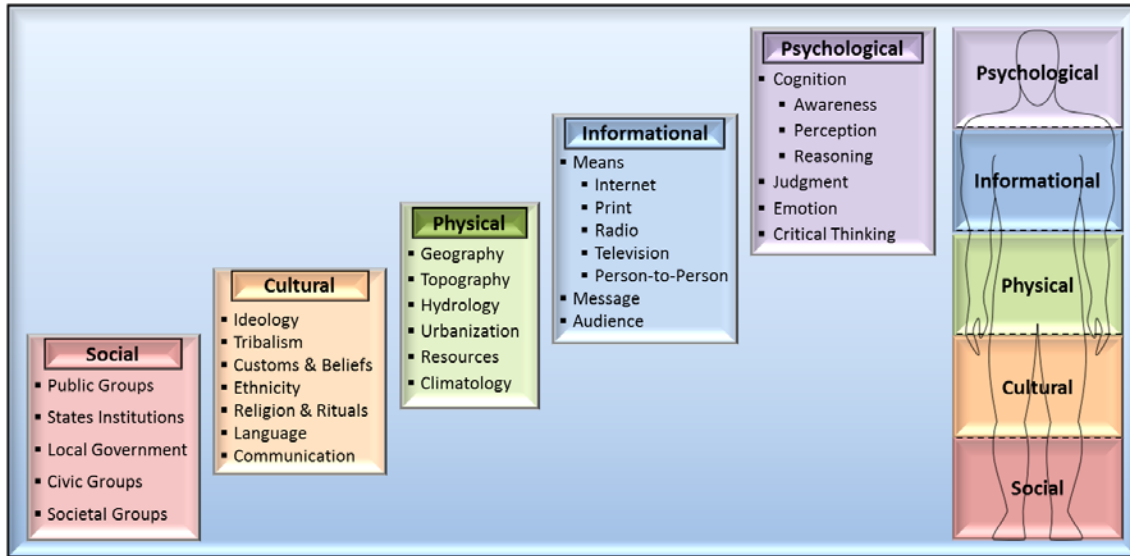
The Human Domain discipline will enable SOF to build trust with key actors, while navigating the “hierarchy of allegiances” that often underpins human perception and behavior. This discipline will assist SOF personnel to understand the Human Domain and plan operations, while using culturally-relevant and credible sources of legitimacy to win support and develop partners to their full potential. Developing capable partners is essential to keeping problems from turning into crises, preserving gains from military operations, and achieving results that endure even after the U.S. military scales back its presence and operations.

Sections 3.1 through 3.4 describe supporting ideas that will enable the proposed Human Domain discipline:

**3.1 *Enhance Comprehension of the Elements Shaping Human Decision-making and Associated Behavior.*** The first contribution of a Human Domain discipline will be to delineate and describe the key elements shaping the behavior of actors in the environment. SOF and its partners must understand the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that shape human behavior. *The key is to comprehend how these elements shape the unique perspective of individual actors.* Personnel with proficiency in the local language are crucial to developing this understanding. SOF gains better understanding of relevant actors by examining:

- The current environment in which relevant actors exist
- The sociocultural lenses and other elements through which relevant actors interpret their environment
- The decisions that actors make based on their perceptions
- The actions and behavior that are the products of decision-making

Figure 2 provides a graphical representation of the elements shaping human decision-making and behavior. While these are not *all* the elements that influence actors in the environment, they collectively provide a foundation to develop understanding.



**Figure 2: SOF must understand the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements affecting and influencing human behavior**

The social element focuses on how a society, its institutions, and key relationships influence people. The social element is often distinguished by the competing influence of groups and institutions, each seeking to impose its own interest and perspective. A traditional contest among soldiers and diplomats within an adversary regime, for example, may result in dissimilar policies, depending on which side imposes its views. Social network theory (SNT) provides methods of understanding the relative power of some actors over others and the comparative cohesion of one group over another. SNT provides a means to evaluate overall network qualities. Social power comes in many forms, but it is often related to the volume and quality of information an actor can access—and the strength and reach of his or her connections.

The cultural element considers the way a society’s beliefs, customs, and way of life affect the manner in which people behave. The cultural element can contribute to markedly different perceptions of fear, honor, and interest. While there are commonalities in human nature (e.g., all humans want to safeguard their lives and property, etc.), differences among cultures (e.g., concepts of guilt, shame, honor, family, tribe, etc.) affect human perceptions.

The physical element can also shape the priorities, outlook, values, and behavior of individuals. For example, a desert people will prioritize access to water differently than those who live in a rain forest. Each box in Figure 2 includes a number of subareas that SOF needs to consider and assess.

The informational element centers on the sources and availability of data—as well as the pathways and modes of its transmission. While modern communications and media accessibility have transformed many societies, others rely on more primitive and

traditional sources of information or are characterized by strong central government censorship. Technology can play a key role in shaping the informational element.

The psychological element influences how people perceive, process, and act upon information. An individual actor, for example, can have a distinct pattern of how he or she analyses a situation, exercises judgment, and applies reasoning skills in response to available facts. Theories of behavior can help explain how—in general—attitudes, perceptions, and cultural norms influence intentions and guide decision-making.

Figure 3 below depicts the relative ease or difficulty of measuring dynamics that are part of each element influencing human decision-making and behavior. The figure also shows the relative effort an external actor must apply to change dynamics with regard to each element. One conclusion is that the informational element has some susceptibility to change, possibly as a result of military information support operations (MISO), public affairs, strategic communications, and defense support to public diplomacy. However, SOF must often operate within the existing and often immutable context and worldview imposed by the other elements shaping human behavior.

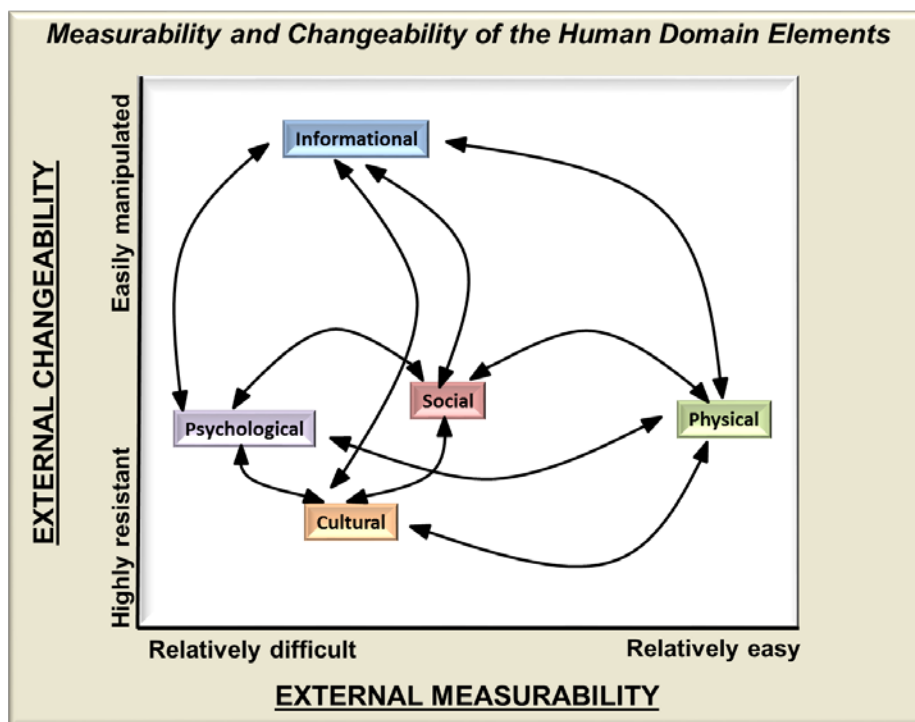


Figure 3: The elements influencing human behavior affect and shape each other—and dynamics in each cannot be uniformly measured or changed

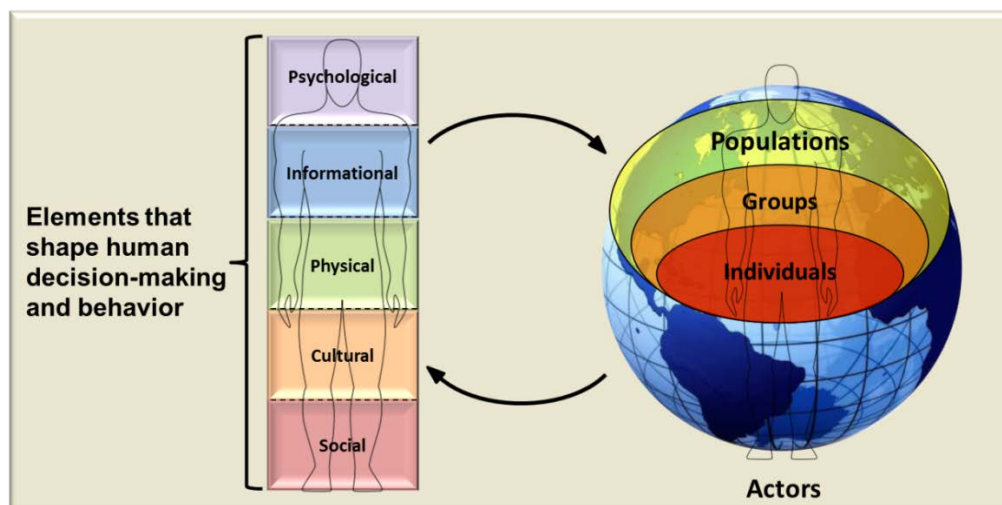
**3.2 Improve How the Force Visualizes the Environment.** SOF must develop a comprehensive and sophisticated view of the environment. This requires SOF personnel to visualize in detail, each of the domains that collectively make up the environment. Domains have two meanings, both of which relate to the conduct of



military operations: 1) a territory, expanse, or medium over which an actor can exercise influence, power, and dominion, and 2) a sphere of knowledge and activity. The addition of the Human Domain to the current construct of domains is an important part of developing a formal discipline. The Human Domain consists of the people (individuals, groups, and populations) in the environment, including their perceptions, decision-making, and behavior. Military operations require the application of capabilities, with knowledge of the five Human Domain elements, to identify and influence relevant actors. The goal is to enhance stability, prevent conflict, and, when necessary, fight and defeat adversaries. The success of any policy, strategy, campaign, operation, or tactical action depends on effective operations in the Human Domain. The addition of a Human Domain to the existing construct of domains:

- Strengthens the application of operational art—aligning military “ways and means” more effectively with desired policy “ends”
- Elevates human factors, interactions, and influences to a central consideration during planning, execution, and assessment (not an afterthought, but a focus of operations)
- Emphasizes comprehension of the elements influencing human decision-making and behavior, which is essential in the current and future operating environment
- Stresses the need to not only socialize and coordinate, but to understand and synchronize efforts over time and space among a spectrum of actors—key to managing relationships and expectations
- Provides a new primacy and context for influence activities, stressing the need to prevail in a contest with adversaries for legitimacy, dominance, and control

SOF must engage a range of individuals, groups, and populations (friendly, neutral, and adversary), while taking into account the affiliations and connections among them. SOF requires strong relationships with local partners to develop a more thorough understanding of the civilian population and local dynamics. The values and beliefs of people—their grievances, perceptions of inequity, economic circumstances, and political aspirations—shape conditions in the environment. Insight into the elements shaping human decision-making and behavior shown in Figure 4 is necessary to understand and influence individuals, groups, and populations. The impact of each element depicted in the figure will vary from one actor and particular situation to another.



**Figure 4: Insight into the elements shaping human decision-making and behavior is essential to understand and influence individuals, groups, and populations**

Due to the fast-paced nature of operations over the last decade, commanders have become accustomed to planning operations in the physical domains and thinking later about implications in the *information environment*. The current *information environment* construct considers the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information.<sup>13</sup> Alternatively, the Human Domain approach focuses planning and execution on the perceptions and behavior of key individuals, groups, and populations in the environment that impact—or would be impacted by—a given policy, strategy, campaign, operation, or tactical action.

As with the physical domains, commanders can delineate portions of the Human Domain to align with a unit's areas of operations and interest. This will drive a more exacting analysis of human factors and dynamics than what is enabled by the current, unbounded *information environment*. By examining the range of individuals, groups, and populations in relation to the physical domains, commanders and their staffs can more effectively visualize and characterize the operational environment. SOF leaders must systematically consider how actions in the land, maritime, air, and space domains—as well as cyberspace—impact (and are impacted by) people in the environment. Efforts to achieve cross-domain synergy become more successful and effective when leaders take into account the humans in the environment.

The environment is a composite of the domains, with dynamics in the Human Domain playing a critical role. The environment will increasingly require the sustained employment of SOF capabilities in collaboration with Joint, Interagency,

<sup>13</sup> (U) Source: JP 3-13.

Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) partners to create the desired state and advance U.S. national interests. The complex environment—with its varying degrees of stability, security, governance, intractability of challenges, and problem clarity—will demand purposeful collaboration with multi-disciplinary experts and the synchronization of stakeholder plans to affect conditions.

**3.3 Establish a Common Conceptual Framework.** The adoption and use of a common conceptual framework can strengthen unity of effort among SOF and its partners. SOF can maximize its understanding and influence by evaluating the elements that shape human behavior and by employing unique capabilities to create desired effects among actors in the environment. Military forces have the power to affect developments in their “spheres of influence”, even in the absence of formal authority or control over relevant actors. SOF seeks to influence the range of friendly, neutral, and adversary actors that can impact a given policy, strategy, campaign, or tactical action. Figure 5 provides a graphical depiction of SOF spheres of influence, showing SOF partners in the upper half of the circle and indigenous actors in the lower half. Commanders must identify their spheres of influence and assess the range of relevant actors in their area of operations or interest to understand the environment. Spheres of influence are often related to the quality and coverage of an actor’s network, otherwise known as “network reach.” The mere presence of friendly forces in an area of operations is insufficient for having influence. Rather, an established network of dependable contacts is often necessary.

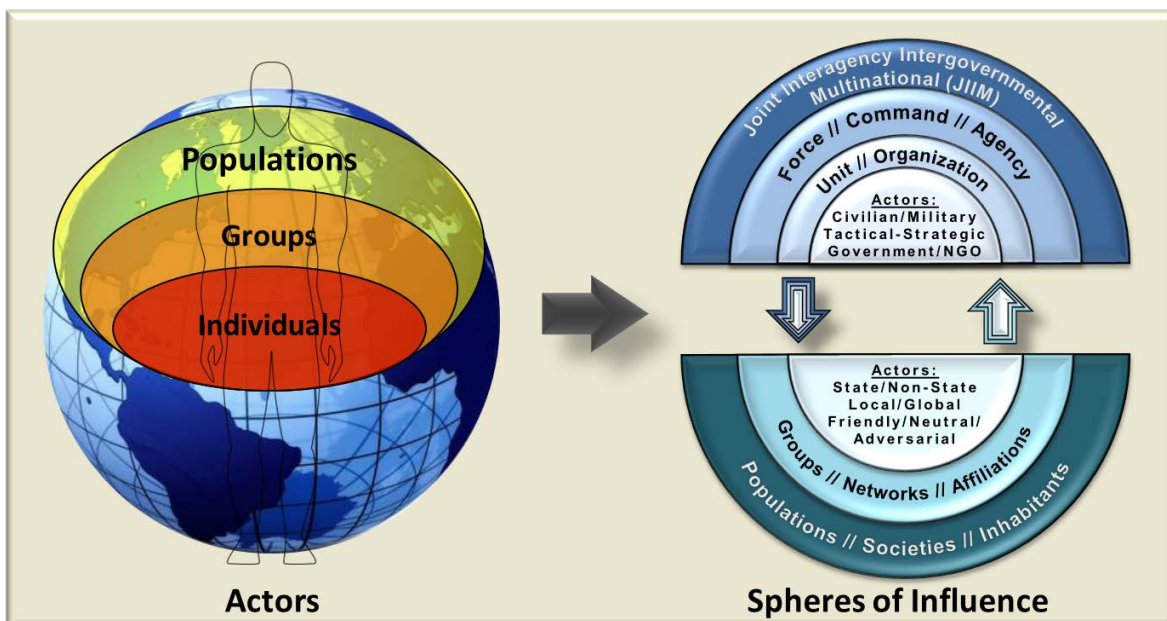


Figure 5: SOF must understand individuals, groups, and populations in the environment to maximize its impact on the sphere of influence

Drawing on the elements that shape human decision-making and behavior (depicted in Figures 2, 3, and 4) and considering the spheres of influence that SOF must affect (shown in Figure 5), it is possible to construct the conceptual framework depicted in Figure 6. The logic trail for this figure begins at the top of the graphic. SOF must first assess various factors that impact the situation: location, issues, actors, timeframe, information sources, etc. This assessment allows SOF, as a member of the Joint Force, to assess policy requirements and determine the type of action U.S. forces will undertake from the range of possible military operations. SOF personnel then evaluate the context for operations by means of the “analytical framework for understanding.” They apply a number of analytical tools<sup>14</sup> to improve understanding of the environment, while considering the elements that shape human decision-making and behavior. SOF and its partners draw on a range of required capabilities to continually improve understanding and conduct actions that will impact the behavior of actors in the environment. Section 5, Required Capabilities, considers these capabilities in detail.

*All lines of effort must drive towards creating desired effects and effectively influencing actors at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.*

The Human Domain Conceptual Framework emphasizes the need for continual analysis and assessment—depicted in the graphic by means of the vertical arrows—to refine understanding and refocus efforts as the situation changes. Figure 6 provides a holistic depiction of the Human Domain Conceptual Framework to understand and influence actors in the Human Domain.

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<sup>14</sup> (U) Analytical processes and tools include: Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE); Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Physical Environment, and Time (PMESII-PT); Counterterrorism Assessment Framework (CTAF); Area, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, and Events (ASCOPE); and Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF).

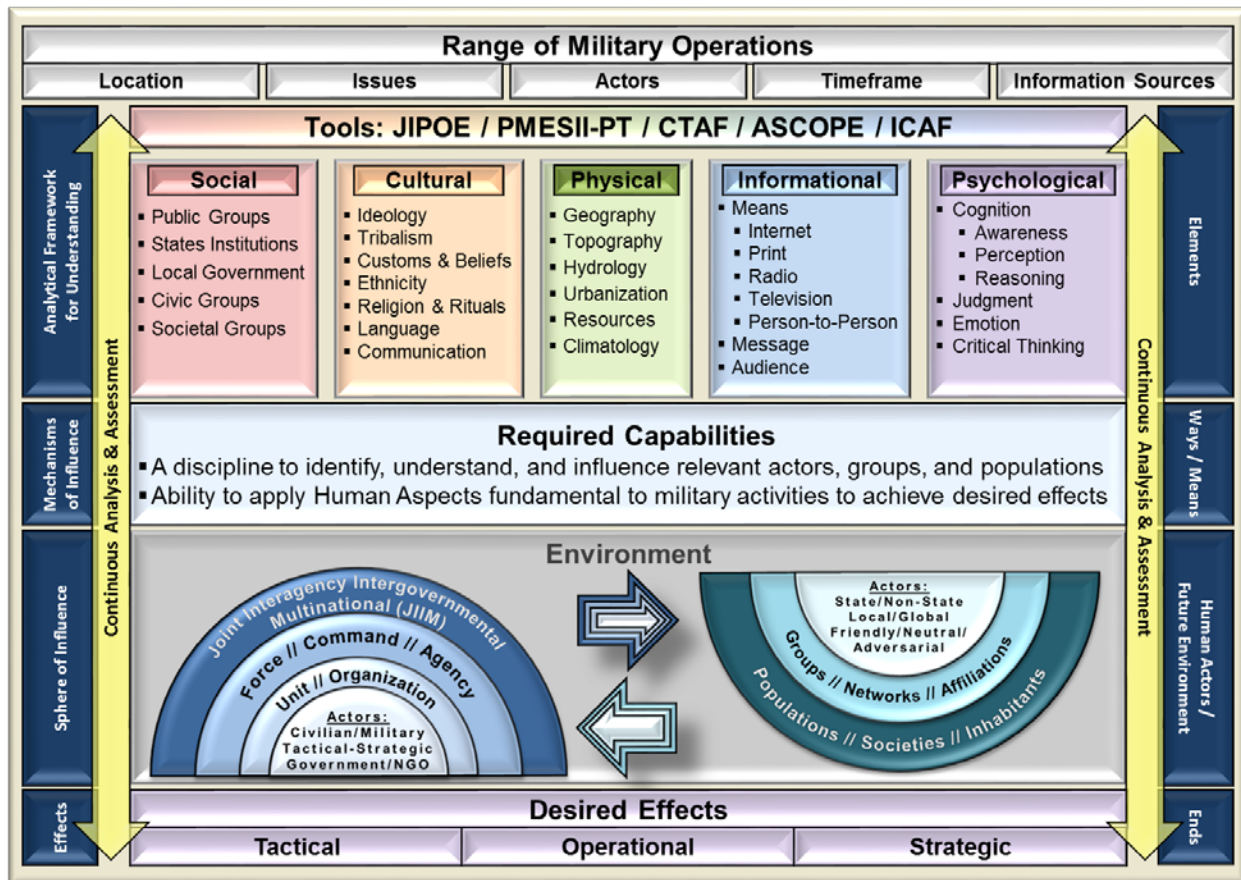


Figure 6: The Human Domain Conceptual Framework describes an approach from developing understanding to achieving influence

**3.4 Refine the SOF Operational Framework to Improve Campaigning.** The development of a formal Human Domain discipline within SOF will enable commanders and their staffs to effectively plan, direct, monitor, and assess operations, while taking into account the key elements that shape human decision-making and behavior. This military discipline, focused on understanding and influencing relevant actors in the environment, can guide leaders to build legitimacy and achieve objectives. SOF relies on the Human Domain discipline during the planning, execution, and assessment of operations. Figure 7 depicts how SOF personnel plan, direct, monitor, and assess operations to continuously enhance their campaign, while strengthening U.S. and partner effectiveness in the Human Domain. To enable success in the current and future environment, SOF and its partners must operate according to the tenets described in Section 4, Fundamentals of the Human Domain Discipline, and apply the capabilities outlined in Section 5, Required Capabilities.



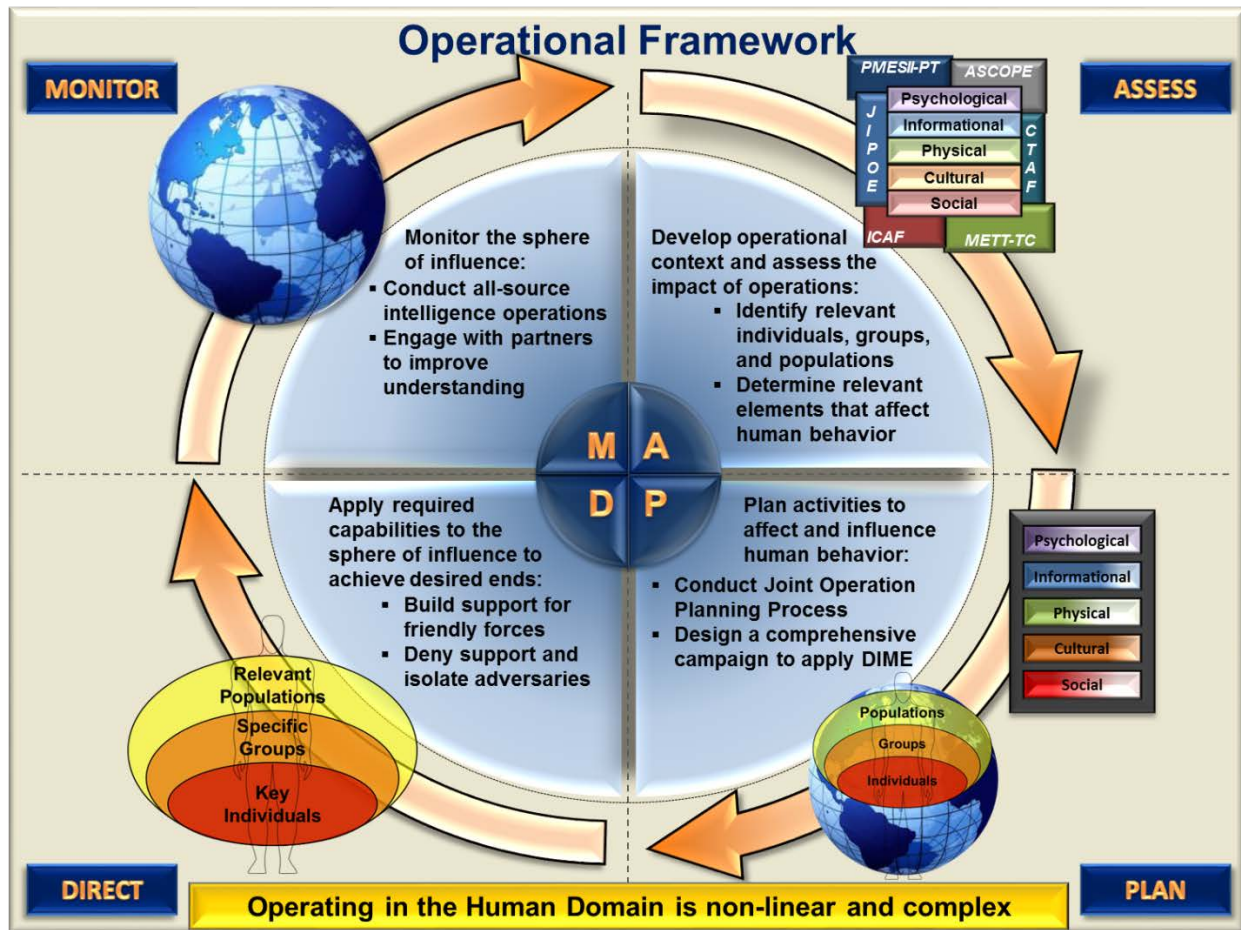


Figure 7: The Operational Framework for the Human Domain applies the “ways and means” to operate and achieve desired “ends” in the Human Domain

#### 4. Fundamentals of the Human Domain Discipline

Sections 4.1 through 4.8 describe key fundamentals that can guide SOF and its partners to identify, understand, and influence relevant actors, groups, and populations. In a population-centric operating environment, SOF needs to be aware of and appreciate human perceptions and motivations to protect and advance national security interests. The way SOF makes use of its insights and awareness will vary from one situation to another. SOF and its partners must:

- Focus on creating desired effects among relevant actors
- Build trust with key actors, while navigating the hierarchy of allegiances that is often shaped by perceptions of identity
- Increase legitimacy and generate friendly potential (regular/irregular)
- Address popular grievances and counter adversary messaging through words, deeds, and images

- Restrict the adversary’s organizing efforts
- Protect or target key physical assets
- Strengthen cross-domain synergy
- Apply force or the threat of force judiciously and for maximum psychological effect

**4.1 Focus on Creating Desired Effects Among Relevant Actors.** SOF personnel use their understanding of the Human Domain to outline the desired effects they are trying to create with friendly, neutral, and adversary actors in the environment. Clearly articulated desired effects will provide necessary direction to all efforts, ensuring deliberate and unified action. During military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence operations, SOF focuses on creating effects that help prevent, mitigate and/or contain conflict. To produce these effects, SOF must develop insights into real or potential sources of conflict. During crisis response and major operations, adversaries may often avoid decisive engagements when confronted with superior U.S. conventional combat power. A skillful enemy may seek to protract conflicts, waiting until U.S. resolve falters before undertaking decisive action. As a result, SOF must pursue long-term security arrangements that strengthen local partners and apply U.S. military capabilities in a measured and strategic manner. Lethal and non-lethal operations must ultimately contribute to producing key desired effects. The United States will ultimately judge the success of a campaign in terms of how effectively it attains national objectives. However, commanders and their staffs must often conceive and evaluate individual actions in terms of how they strengthen the resolve, capability, and capacity of partners; convince adversaries of the futility of their efforts and/or armed struggle; and persuade neutral parties to side with friendly forces and support U.S. interests. A key consideration is to drive the belligerent parties towards an eventual cessation of hostilities and reconciliation. At the conclusion of a crisis or major operation, the SOF focus returns to conflict prevention.

*SOF must first consider policy goals and then identify desired effects among individuals, groups, and populations in the environment.*

**4.2 Build Trust with Key Actors, while Navigating the Hierarchy of Allegiances that is often Shaped by Perceptions of Identity.** By working with local partners<sup>15</sup>,

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<sup>15</sup> (U) Local partners may include a variety of stakeholders and will differ from one situation to another. Local partners may include: partner nation security forces and civilian government entities; non-Defense USG departments and agencies on the ground or otherwise in the area of operations or host country that may or may not be part of the US Country Team; and non-governmental, international and multinational organizations on the ground or otherwise present in the area of operations or host country.

SOF personnel develop understanding of dynamics among actors in the environment. SOF continuously seeks to understand the pattern of relations among individuals, groups, and populations. Enduring presence, language skills, and understanding of the local culture and traditions are essential to build trust with indigenous actors. Knowledge of a region's history—which may span millennia—is fundamental to understanding a population's behavior and worldview. An actor's decision-making will assess: 1) the *benefits* of a course of action; 2) the *costs* of a course of action; and 3) the consequences of inaction (i.e., costs and benefits of not taking the course of action). An actor must continuously assess how his or her actions or inaction will impact upon key relationships. Perceptions of power are often shaped by the five elements that influence human decision-making and behavior.

SOF personnel consider the five “bases of power” (or types of power) both to understand the relation among actors and increase friendly influence on people and events. Coercive power and reward power refer to the influence an actor may have by virtue of being able to punish or reward others.

Legitimate power is also known as position power and official power. It is bestowed by a higher authority. In an organization, an individual gets legitimate power because of his or her position or post, which may include control of information and resources—and the ability to reward and punish others. Expert power comes from possessing knowledge and skills. The expert has knowledge and skill that others need, but do not possess. Referent power is also called personal power, charismatic power, and the power of personality. This power comes from within each leader, and it focuses on the ability of a person to attract followers. People follow because they are influenced by the magnetic personality of the leader. The followers learn to admire their leader and may even try to copy his or her behavior.<sup>16</sup>

*SOF personnel maximize their influence on actors—reminding individuals of their hopes when encouraging action, their fears when urging caution, and their interests when advising on strategy.*

An actor can either reward or punish another by addressing or failing to satisfy an essential need. Abraham Maslow identified a hierarchy of needs that progresses from basic to more complex desires and necessities. This hierarchy includes the following needs in ascending order: physiological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualizing. Physiological needs are those that an actor must satisfy for survival and includes things like food, water, air, and sleep. Security needs are important for survival, but not as demanding or immediate as physiological needs. Security needs may include things like

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<sup>16</sup> (U) See French and Raven's Five Bases of Power: Coercive Power, Reward Power, Legitimate Power, Expert Power, and Referent Power (or the power of charisma and personality). See: <http://kalyan-city.blogspot.com/2011/08/five-bases-of-power-by-john-french-and.html>.



employment, health care, and protection from the environment. Social needs center on an individual's desire for belonging, love, and affection. After an actor has the first three needs satisfied, esteem needs become increasingly important and include things that reflect on self-esteem, personal worth, social recognition, and accomplishment. The highest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs focuses on self-actualization. Individuals at this level are less concerned with the opinions of others and are instead interested in personal growth and fulfilling their potential.<sup>17</sup>

*Human Domain understanding enables SOF to focus on a relevant actor's needs when seeking to develop influence.*

SOF personnel must understand the social, political, economic, and religious affiliations and allegiances among individuals, groups, and populations. SOF can understand an actor's loyalties by considering the hierarchy of allegiances that explains his or her perspective and behavior. This hierarchy is often shaped by perceptions of identity. An individual's religion, ethnicity, language, tribe, social class, caste, occupation, or geographic area of birth can play an important part in shaping identity.

SOF skillfully navigated the tribal hierarchy of allegiances in Iraq and Afghanistan, which followed a distinct pattern that relates to degrees of actual or perceived kinship among groups and individuals. Loyalty to family comes before one's duty to the clan (or extended group of families). Fidelity to the clan carries more weight than commitment to the tribe. Families, clans, and tribes are in perpetual competition with each other for territory, commerce, honor, and power. Within the tribal system, leaders exercise power to bestow patronage and favor on their kinfolk.

Even in societies that have become urbanized, the power of tribal affiliation cannot be discounted. Alternatively, in non-tribal societies, the hierarchy of allegiances may be the product of a variety of local circumstances. People and groups with different values and perspectives may often coexist in close proximity with each other.

**4.3 Increase Legitimacy and Generate Friendly Potential.** SOF personnel must understand the societal context that will shape perceptions of SOF actions. The key is to ensure relevant individuals, groups, and populations see SOF activities as legitimate. SOF accomplishes this by ensuring that its efforts contribute to shared objectives and interests. SOF personnel make certain they continually align their actions and words. Similarly, SOF collaborates with respected individuals and institutions to increase legitimacy, while enabling partners to develop their military and non-military potential. During operations across the ROMO, host-nation lead with U.S. support is the best way

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<sup>17</sup> (U) See Cherry, Kendra, "Hierarchy of Needs" regarding Maslow's hierarchy of needs, available at: <http://psychology.about.com/od/theoriesofpersonality/a/hierarchyneeds.htm>.

to boost friendly forces' legitimacy in the eyes of the indigenous population. Recent successes in Colombia and the Philippines illustrate the importance of host-nation lead and the value of understanding the Human Domain. A low-signature or small-footprint approach helps preserve the legitimacy of host nation governments and partners. It is harder for an adversary to portray a small U.S. military presence as an occupation, rather than a helping hand. The discriminate and measured use of force will also limit unintended effects, while preserving the acceptability of a friendly military presence.

*A small-footprint approach is more likely to be acceptable to indigenous partners and preserves the legitimacy of a campaign in the eyes of the local population.*

By enhancing their legitimacy, SOF and its partners can more effectively generate friendly potential in the environment. "Potential" refers to the capability and capacity that relevant actors possess to support U.S. objectives and the friendly forces campaign. SOF focuses not only on generating the combat and support potential of regular forces, but also of irregulars who can fulfill a variety of functions across the ROMO.

For example, in 1982, the United States persuaded the military junta in El Salvador to allow free elections. At the same time, SOF and other advisors convinced the Salvadoran military to adhere to the laws of war and undertake community development projects. The effect of these actions was to strengthen the legitimacy of the counterinsurgency campaign. In the future, notwithstanding possible international recognition and support, SOF will have to work toward building partner legitimacy from within a country or society to ensure enduring effects.

Likewise, during the ongoing war in Afghanistan, U.S. military forces have often explained their intentions and solicited suggestions from village elders, tribal councils, and religious leaders. Support from these respected individuals and groups boosted the perceived legitimacy of U.S. operations. With increased legitimacy, friendly forces gained information, recruits, and other forms of support from the population—while seeking to deny resources and backing to the enemy.

**4.4 Address Popular Grievances and Counter Adversary Messaging with Words, Deeds, and Images.** SOF encourages host nation partners to address the genuine grievances of the relevant population as a way of building trust and earning collaboration. During military engagement and security cooperation, Human Domain understanding enables SOF to determine areas where host nation capabilities to address population grievances need to improve. By addressing these grievances that are often causes of instability, the host nation helps to reduce the probability of internal conflict. SOF uses combined training to build partner capacity and leadership, while stressing the need to support the rule of law. By facilitating local security and services, friendly forces can shape the rational calculations of individuals in the environment—

encouraging cooperation with SOF and its partners. An adversary may use coercion and terror to shape and control the behavior of relevant individuals, groups, and populations. A central government's lack of effective presence and overall underperformance is often a contributing cause of instability and may provide an opportunity for adversaries to mobilize the population against the state.

SOF must enable indigenous solutions to local challenges to ensure long-term sustainment. Wasteful spending on development projects, no matter how well intentioned, can often cause as many problems as it solves. By addressing genuine grievances, SOF and its partners can counteract adversary messaging and portray friendly efforts in a favorable light. A key objective is to strengthen the resilience of the population and host nation institutions to withstand adversary subversion. Conversely, when SOF is enabling a resistance or an insurgent movement against an adversary regime or governing authority, SOF brings attention to popular grievances as a way to incite the local population into action.

*SOF and its partners align “words, deeds, and images” to maintain their credibility, ensuring actions reinforce the friendly forces’ narrative.*

MISO training, which enables a partner's strategic communications, is another way to build support for shared objectives. SOF and its partners must use respected interlocutors and adopt locally-appropriate and culturally-relevant messaging themes. MISO and public affairs seek to persuade friendly, neutral, and antagonistic actors to discontinue malign or unbeneficial activities—and potentially to cooperate with efforts in pursuit of U.S. objectives. SOF will work with local leaders to craft their narrative and disseminate and/or broadcast their message. The partner's perspective must be as consistent as possible with U.S. objectives. It is important for local groups to establish and maintain ownership of their narrative.

**4.5 Restrict the Adversary's Organizing Efforts.** An understanding of the Human Domain—combined with an ability to build partner capacity and influence populations—enable SOF to restrict an adversary's organizing efforts. Adversary operatives will exploit a lack of effective presence and any missteps by friendly forces to draw the population to the adversary's cause. During military engagement and security cooperation activities, SOF must train and advise partner nation forces on how to restrict an adversary's organizing efforts. Operations to counteract the adversary underground and control of mobilization forums, for example, are particularly challenging.<sup>18</sup> Irregular threats often draw on the bases of power (see Section 4.2

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<sup>18</sup> (U) The underground is that element of the insurgent organization that conducts operations in areas normally denied to the auxiliary and the guerrilla Joint Force. The underground is a cellular organization

above) to encourage or compel collaboration from the population. During crisis response and major operations, SOF and its Joint Force partners may become directly involved in efforts to identify and neutralize the adversary cadre/underground and counteract its themes and influence activities.

The adversary will deliberately seek at-risk populations and attempt to co-opt friendly security forces and organizations—requiring SOF and its partners to adopt necessary countermeasures. While the adversary cadre will use physical and virtual mobilization forums to communicate with and radicalize the population, SOF and its partners will conduct MISO, cyberspace operations, intelligence activities, civil affairs operations, specialized partner training, and security operations to counter such efforts.

*SOF's understanding of the Human Domain elements will facilitate actions to influence and counter the adversary narrative, while communicating a more positive message.*

The United Kingdom (UK) developed sophisticated counter-radicalization programs to combat extremists' efforts in Northern Ireland. The UK military helped to export the UK approach to Pakistan and elsewhere in the post-9-11 era. The UK strategy combined intelligence, security, MISO, civil assistance, and specialized training for local authorities. UK counter-radicalization efforts *target specific at-risk populations and mobilization forums*, such as houses of worship, refugee and displaced-persons camps, labor union assemblies, schools, professional associations, and prisons. SOF and its partners must develop similar programs to succeed in achieving shared objectives.

The dynamics are different during UW, when SOF and its partners will be the ones exploiting mobilization forums and engaging disgruntled individuals, groups, and populations in collective action. Yet, even during UW, SOF will have to counter the adversary's organizing efforts. SOF will oppose the attempts of an adversary regime or governing authority to develop state security networks, community defense groups, neighborhood watch committees, pro-regime political organizations, and government

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within the insurgency that conducts covert or clandestine activities that are compartmentalized. This secrecy may be by necessity, by design, or both depending on the situation. Most underground operations are required to take place in and around population centers that are held by counterinsurgent forces. Underground members often fill leadership positions, overseeing specific functions that are carried out by the auxiliary. The underground and auxiliary—although technically separate elements—are, in reality, loosely connected elements that provide coordinated capabilities for the insurgent movement. The key distinction between them is that the underground is the element of the insurgent organization that operates in areas denied to the guerrilla Joint Force. Members of the underground often control cells used to neutralize informants and collaborators from within the insurgency and the population. See JP 3-24, page II-17.

institutions. Discouraging and preventing adversary recruitment into the security forces is a priority for SOF and its partners during UW.

Within the context of traditional state-on-state warfare, the United States and its partners want to degrade an adversary's alliances and partnerships, with a goal of disrupting support at the international, national, and subnational level. SOF operations need to support these key strategic objectives. Knowledge of the Human Domain enables SOF and its partners to clarify and shape the cost-benefit calculations of relevant actors. In this manner, SOF builds support for friendly forces, while denying backing to adversaries.

**4.6 *Protect or Target Key Physical Assets.*** A key tenet of the Human Domain discipline is to recognize the importance non-military assets may have in shaping actor behavior. Road-building, construction projects, security operations, and other positive activities improve infrastructure and address popular grievances, thus increasing legitimacy, trust, and respect for SOF personnel and their partners. Conversely, adversary road interdiction, disruption of the electricity grid, and attacks against water and waste management facilities, for example, affect the everyday lives of people and can send a powerful message about who is in charge. In some instances, possibly during military engagement and security cooperation activities, SOF will have to advise and assist a host nation to control and protect key physical assets, *as a way of*

*A secure and functioning infrastructure enables the economy and promotes the credibility and influence of a regime or governing authority.*

*demonstrating credibility and influence.* In other cases, such as during UW, SOF may have to target the key physical assets of an adversary state, not only to deny their use, but to *degrade the credibility and influence of the adversary regime or governing authority.* Planning for major operations and campaigns must take into account the need to secure—preferably intact—key physical infrastructure. A country's physical assets, in particular those systems that are essential to foster commercial activity and shape the perceptions of the population, are of critical importance. Therefore, SOF must frequently assist the host nation to establish local presence and protect physical assets, often by relying on small, distributed outposts and quick-response forces.

**4.7 *Strengthen Cross-Domain Synergy.*** As part of a new discipline, SOF considers a Human Domain, alongside the existing construct of domains, to help visualize and characterize the operational environment. With increased SOF integration with Joint Force, international, and interagency partners, SOF leaders will face an intensified need to coordinate and synchronize operations across the physical and human domains as well as cyberspace. Achieving cross-domain synergy is a cornerstone of Mission Command and an imperative when operating in a complex environment. The Joint

Force, non-Defense USG departments/agencies, and partner nations need complementary rather than merely additive capabilities.

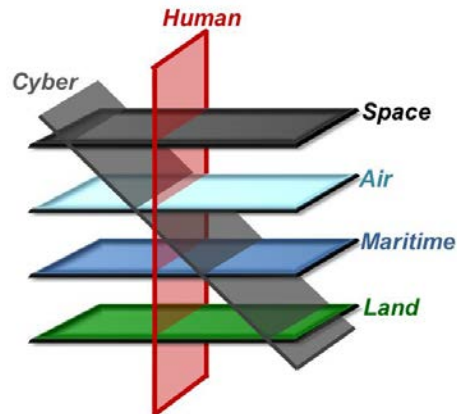
Under the existing approach to cross-domain synergy, a commander, for example, can task naval gun fire (from the maritime domain) in lieu of field artillery (from the land domain) to disrupt an enemy force. The mobilization of actors in the Human Domain creates a range of new possibilities. A commander could:

- Encourage a tribal chieftain and his warriors to disrupt an enemy's lines of communication (to complement the action of SOF or attack aviation)
- Prevail upon an indigenous leader to gain knowledge of an enemy's location (to complement information from reconnaissance assets)
- Earn the trust of a village and win new recruits for a provincial militia (to complement the employment of infantry)
- Persuade a partner nation commander to secure an ammunition depot or a key road (complementing operations by the military police)
- Convince trusted interlocutors to communicate the friendly forces' narrative via social media (to complement U.S. MISO and cyber activities)

While nothing in current doctrine *prevents* the above activities from taking place today, the goal of the OHD Concept is to: 1) encourage commanders to think continuously about building their strength in the environment, 2) equip SOF with the necessary tools and approaches to influence relevant actor decision-making and behavior, and 3) focus campaign design on creating desired effects among individuals in the environment to achieve success across all domains.

By considering each of the domains depicted in Figure 8, SOF can visualize and characterize the environment in detail. Figure 8 emphasizes the imperative for military leaders to be multidimensional thinkers. Commanders and their staffs need a more expansive view of operations, beyond the confines of the physical domains. The Human Domain provides a new perspective and dimension on the environment and the conduct of operations. It emphasizes the need to continuously think about how operations in the physical domains impact and are impacted by people (individuals, groups, and populations), their perceptions, decision-making, and behavior. In the real world, the domains are part of a continuum, interconnected and interacting with each other.

Adversaries, according to their particular strengths and interests, will compete for power and superiority within each domain. Figure 8 is a conceptual model that depicts the various domains contributing to form a comprehensive view of the environment, with the Human Domain touching and shaping conditions in the other domains.



**Figure 8: SOF leaders can understand the complex environment by considering each domain, never overlooking how actions in one domain affect conditions in the others.**

A key consideration in the current and future environment will be the need to arrange SOF and JIIM operations and activities in time, space, and purpose to maximize combat power and overall effectiveness. SOF must enhance its understanding and influence in the Human Domain, continuously assessing the elements that shape human decision-making and behavior. SOF operations and activities are always part of broader efforts to apply U.S. instruments of national power.

#### **4.8 *Apply Force or the Threat of Force Judiciously and for Maximum***

***Psychological Effect.*** The Human Domain discipline focuses and prioritizes the use of force, or the threat of force, to create desired psychological effects and influence actor behavior. By understanding the Human Domain, SOF can identify which military actions will have a beneficial impact and which ones will be counterproductive. During military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence operations, SOF trains and advises partner nation personnel on using force judiciously and for maximum psychological effect. The extrajudicial killing of non-combatants and the infliction of collateral damage, for example, can fracture alliances, alienate the local population, strengthen the resolve of the adversary, degrade the morale of friendly forces, and erode public support.

*SOF and its partners need to maintain a reputation for strength and military prowess, but also for self-restraint and order.*

During crisis response and major operations, SOF and its partners must defeat the enemy, but also make peace attractive. They must strive for military supremacy, but also demonstrate the benefits of their cause. SOF and its partners need to apply force decisively, for a discrete purpose, and over a defined period of time, even if individual

operations are part of a protracted campaign.<sup>19</sup> This will keep the adversary from being desensitized to the use of force.

The principle of “surprise” suggests a military force should attack at a time and place—and in a manner—for which an adversary is unprepared. Alternatively, a commander, who is knowledgeable of the Human Domain, may deliberately decide to strike where and when the adversary is strongest, most alert, and best prepared. The purpose would be to create a psychological effect that is more devastating to an enemy than a single and perhaps excusable defeat. By demonstrating the futility of resistance where the enemy is strongest, what hope can weaker and less prepared opponents hold on to? The skillful defeat of one adversary can inflict fear and discourage many others.

The dynamics during UW are again distinct, but the principle of applying force or the threat of force judiciously and for maximum psychological effect still applies. The elimination of an adversary’s entire military capacity is almost never feasible. Instead, SOF will seek to erode an adversary regime’s resolve and legitimacy over time. The choice of what to target and when to strike must consider the desired psychological effect. SOF and its partners must take into account if their intent is to disrupt, coerce, or overthrow an adversary regime or governing authority.

## 5. Required Capabilities

To operate in accordance with Section 3, Central and Supporting Ideas, and Section 4, Fundamentals of the Human Domain Discipline, SOF will require the capability to:

### 5.1 **Analyze the Elements Shaping Human Decision-making and Associated Behavior.** (Supports Battlespace Awareness Joint Capability Area (JCA)) SOF must

have the ability to identify, understand, and evaluate *the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements* that shape human decision-making and associated behavior. Military personnel need to develop area-specific knowledge on how these elements shape the perspective of actors in the environment and draw on experts to obtain advanced insights and predictive analysis. Following a detailed examination of the elements shaping human decision-making and behavior, commanders must identify desired effects on relevant actors in the environment. SOF and its partners then plan, direct, monitor, and assess operations that produce desired effects on individuals, groups, and populations in the area of operations.

*Insight into the elements shaping human decision-making is necessary to persuade or compel relevant actors and achieve desired ends.*

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<sup>19</sup> (U) Derived from “Tacitus’ Agricola and Lessons for Today,” by Jakub Grygiel, Foreign Policy Research Institute, dated: December 2013, available at: [www.fpri.org](http://www.fpri.org).



**5.2 Identify and Track Friendly, Neutral, and Adversary Individuals, Groups, and Populations to Enable Campaign Design and Execution.** (Supports Battlespace Awareness JCA)

The Human Domain discipline must equip SOF with the approaches and techniques—enabled by technology—to identify and characterize all relevant individuals, groups, and populations, while determining if they are friendly, neutral or adversary/hostile. In some instances, this may require SOF to develop information on actors in underdeveloped and geographically isolated areas. SOF may have to contend with an adversary’s access denial methods and technologies. It is especially important that SOF recognize populations that are vulnerable to adversary influence as well as those that might be receptive to collaboration with friendly forces. SOF personnel also require the ability to identify critical contacts within partner nation security forces and government institutions to ensure the early sharing of information and the synchronization of efforts. A

*The capability to identify and track individuals, groups, and populations is essential to counteract adversary influence.*

particularly difficult aspect of identifying relevant actor centers on the need to ascertain: 1) the composition and disposition of an adversary underground and cadre; 2) the existence of clandestine intelligence, logistical, and political extremist/adversary networks; and 3) the location of mobilization forums used to radicalize the population and engage inhabitants in collective action against friendly forces. The identification of state-security and intelligence networks during UW is also a difficult challenge. By identify and tracking relevant actors, SOF can then align operations and activities to create desired effects.

**5.3 Build and Sustain Local Partnerships to Maximize Awareness of Population Dynamics and Enable Timely Integrated Action.** (Supports Building Partnerships JCA)

To gain a better understanding of the Human Domain, SOF requires the ability to conduct frequent and ongoing exercises, operations, and engagement activities to build trust, sustain relationships, and promote interoperability and familiarity with partner nation leaders, security forces, and institutions. Building relationships with the members of a potential resistance organization, for possible future UW operations, is particularly difficult—and may require special authorities, contacts and access via partner nations or the intelligence community, and dealing with expatriates and diasporas. Enduring engagement enables SOF to understand the elements influencing actor decision-making and behavior. While working with local partners enables SOF to develop awareness of key population dynamics (described in Section 2.2), SOF also requires the ability to collaborate at the local/tactical level (at and below the country-team level) with representatives from non-Defense USG departments and agencies to enable a comprehensive approach with the goal of understanding and shaping dynamics in the environment. Furthermore, the Human Domain discipline requires SOF to develop

integrated campaign plans with partners, which consider the elements shaping human decision-making and associated behavior. By building and sustaining local partnerships before a crisis, SOF can enable timely integrated action when emergencies arise. SOF must work via the Global SOF Network (GSN) to explore the feasibility of coalition operations and activities.

**5.4 Mobilize the Population to Support Friendly Efforts and Deny Support to the Adversary to Build Strength and Gain Advantage in the Human Domain.** (Supports Battle Space Awareness, Building Partnerships, Protection, and Logistics JCAs) The Human Domain discipline places a premium on building alliances and partnerships to gain advantage over adversaries. With this goal in mind, SOF and its partners require the ability to establish local presence, communicate effectively in a social-cultural context, provide necessary incentives and safeguards in exchange for cooperation, and help organize the population to provide volunteers, intelligence, and resources to friendly elements and deny them to the adversary. During security cooperation and military engagement, SOF requires the ability to train and advise partner nations to secure the population and protect inhabitants from retaliation that may occur as a result of their collaboration with friendly forces. SOF and its partners require the methods and techniques to detect and restrict low-signature efforts by citizens to provide intelligence, food, and recruits to the adversary. SOF personnel must inculcate in their foreign partners the necessary mindset and approach to gain advantage and support in the Human Domain.

*The post-conflict transition to peace will require the cooperation of a variety of actors.*

The short duration of some crisis response operations may not allow SOF the time to engage and mobilize the population. To partially address this challenge, SOF should work to establish relationships and presence in or near priority countries to draw upon partner nation contacts with local citizens when needed. Longer-term major operations and campaigns may require that SOF become directly involved in efforts to win support from the population. This support is critical in counterinsurgency, foreign internal defense, and UW—and may play an important role in some traditional state-on-state warfare situations. SOF requires techniques and approaches to mobilize the population that are appropriate to each mission and situation. The population can impact operations during any phase of a joint campaign, requiring SOF to understand population dynamics and enable formal and informal governance structures. SOF achieves this by working with indigenous leaders at the local, provincial, and national levels. The transition back to steady state is particularly difficult following sectarian and ethnic conflict and requires Human Domain understanding to enable conflict termination and a cessation of hostilities.

SOF also requires the capability to conduct and/or enable community assistance, reconstruction, and development projects to offer conditional benefits for collaboration with friendly forces. This allows SOF to shape the rational calculations of relevant actors in the environment.

SOF demonstrated its ability to mobilize the population during the conduct of Village Stability Operations (VSO) in Afghanistan. SOF and its partners enabled village self-defense using a four-phase methodology to: shape, hold, build, and expand and transition. This approach included the vetting of recruits with the local *shura* (or tribal council). Afghan personnel also underwent biometric registration before joining the Afghan Local Police and undergoing training with SOF.<sup>20</sup> VSO demonstrated that SOF needs the ability to continuously develop the knowledge and influence networks necessary to mobilize the population in support of shared objectives.

**5.5 Build Partner Capacity and Implement Population Security Measures to Enhance Friendly Legitimacy and Influence Across the ROMO.** (Supports Building Partnerships and Protection JCAs) The Human Domain discipline recognizes that capable partners are a force multiplier. They can build local support, encouraging individuals, groups, and populations to cooperate with friendly forces. To develop local backing, partners must be seen as professional, beyond corruption, and capable of promoting order and security. In order to achieve this level of performance, SOF and its partners require the ability to conduct long-term efforts to build partner nation institutions that can support shared interests as well as enable the rule of law, security, commerce, and economic development. SOF and its partners will often need to develop military, police, and paramilitary/constabulary/auxiliary-police forces that can implement population security measures. Furthermore, SOF requires the ability to advise the host nation on the full spectrum of Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) activities, to include the monitoring and implementing of population self-defense initiatives. These efforts will necessitate working in close cooperation with, and in support of, the country team—as part of broader security cooperation efforts—and in partnership with non-Defense USG departments and agencies.

*Through training and mentoring initiatives, SOF strengthens the resolve, commitment, and capability of its partners—enabling the long-term sustainment of the friendly forces campaign.*

When employing an IDAD approach, SOF and its partners should not discount seemingly unimportant or ineffective grassroots organizations, since they may prove to

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<sup>20</sup> (U) “VSO: More Than Village Defense,” by Colonel Ty Connett and Colonel Bob Cassidy, *Special Warfare Magazine*, dated: Jul-Sep 2011.

be valuable partners in the future. SOF and its partners must be capable of monitoring and implementing population self-defense initiatives (of the type described in Section 5.4) and community watch programs as part of a broader IDAD campaign.

In addition to training partners on population security methods, SOF requires the ability to enhance a partner's influence capabilities. Partners need to securely exploit traditional and evolving methods and technologies to communicate their narrative to diverse audiences both within and outside the area of operations. These new methods may include the use of social media and web-based applications. SOF also requires the capability to train local partners on how to enable or prevent sabotage and subversion, depending on the focus of operations. This training may include some of the specialized programs—such as anti-corruption and counterintelligence programs—discussed in detail in Section 5.6 below.

Shaping activities and engagement with partners play a key role in how the United States mitigates risk and achieves the “ends” outlined in Section 2.3. Military leaders, including force providers and those in deployable units, should possess the knowledge and understanding to help inform the location and approach for operations. Dialogue among the force providers, unit leaders, the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) and their component commanders, members of the U.S. country teams, and partner nation officials is necessary to determine where and how limited military resources will have the most beneficial impact. The Theater Campaign Plan and associated development conferences play a central part in guiding military engagement in each GCC area of responsibility.

**5.6 *Develop Reconciliation, Counter-Radicalization, Anti-Corruption, and Counter-Intelligence Programs to Weaken the Adversary and Preserve/Bolster Friendly Resiliency as part of an Overall Influence Strategy.***

(Supports Building Partnerships and Protection JCAs)

The growing use of surrogates and proxies as well as the employment of subversive tactics by adversary states suggests the above listed specialized programs have a role even within the context of state-on-state warfare. SOF personnel train and educate partner nation forces regarding special programs during military engagement and security cooperation. In some instances, partner nation personnel will implement special programs with or without U.S. support, while the Joint Force is still in Phase 0. SOF and other parts of the Joint Force may become more directly involved in the conduct of specialized programs during crisis response and limited contingency operations as well as major

*The following specialized programs can play a critical role across the ROMO and must be adapted to particular circumstances:*

- *Reconciliation*
- *Counter-Radicalization*
- *Anti-Corruption*
- *Counter-Intelligence*

operations and campaigns. Special programs may play a key role during any phase of a joint campaign, but their impact is especially important during Phase 4 (stabilize) and Phase 5 (enable civil authority), making sure that partners can sustain gains even after the U.S. military scales back its presence.

To operate effectively in the Human Domain, SOF and its partners require the ability to establish, manage, sustain, and support reconciliation, counter-radicalization, anti-corruption, and counter-intelligence programs that play a critical role during population-centric operations. The purpose of these programs is to exercise *influence*: persuading adversary combatants to defect, local populations to reject extremism and cooperate with friendly forces, and partner nation officials to discharge their duties in a legal and impartial manner. Anti-corruption and counter-intelligence programs protect friendly grass-roots organizations, institutions, and security forces from infiltration and subversion by adversary operatives—key objectives across the ROMO and the conflict continuum. If properly executed, specialized programs will enable SOF and its partners to grow stronger and adversaries to become weaker. These programs may occur under the leadership of the host nation and non-Defense USG departments and agencies, but enabled by SOF.

During the counterinsurgency campaign in Colombia in 2003, the government in Bogota adopted a groundbreaking “bottom-up” reconciliation program, while still at the height of hostilities. Reconciliation was a key line-of-effort of the Colombian campaign. This program sought to divide insurgent leaders from followers, while allowing for the compassionate treatment of individuals who may have been forced to take up arms or who otherwise wanted to abandon the military struggle. The Colombian reconciliation program included specific tracks for different individuals, offering lenient treatment for low-level operatives, stricter provisions for mid and senior level figures, and deprogramming counseling for child combatants. Reintegration of combatants into society and accountability for possible war crimes were key concerns. The Colombian reconciliation program provided medical care, psychological counselling, education, land grants, small business loans, and job training inducements to persuade enemy combatants to abandon the armed struggle.<sup>21</sup>

*The Colombian reconciliation program demobilized over forty thousand illegal combatants from 2003 to 2006, while enabling the prosecution of many individuals for war crimes.*

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<sup>21</sup> (U) Morgenstein, Jonathan, “Consolidating Disarmament: Lessons from Colombia’s Reintegration Program for Demobilized Paramilitaries”, Special Report 217, United States Institute of Peace, dated:

**5.7 Conduct Continuous Environmental Analysis and Assessment (EA&A) that Tracks Changes in Human Perceptions and Behavior to Ensure Campaigns are Creating Desired Effects.** (Supports Battlespace Awareness JCA) The application of the Human Domain discipline requires that SOF and its partners possess the ability to conduct continuous EA&As that can measure the friendly campaign's progress in shaping the perceptions and behaviors of key individuals, groups, and populations. Measuring changes in the *behavior* of relevant actors is essential to gauge overall success. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) has developed a sophisticated EA&A approach that could be a model for other commands.

Assessment and learning enable incremental improvements to the commander's operational approach. Once SOF personnel understand the problem and what they must accomplish to succeed, they identify the means to assess effectiveness and the related information requirements. This feedback becomes the basis for learning, adaptation, and subsequent adjustment of the friendly forces' campaign. Effective assessment requires criteria for evaluating the degree of success in accomplishing the mission. These criteria may include measures of effectiveness (MOEs) and measures of performance (MOPs).<sup>22</sup> MOEs that describe and connect with relevant actor behavior are an essential part of EA&A.

*SOF leaders must grasp the ends-ways-and-means of theater campaigning to be effective in the Human Domain.*

**5.8 Recommend Actionable Policy Options to Senior Decision-Makers.** (Supports Corporate Management JCA) SOF leaders must be capable of drawing on their understanding of the Human Domain to develop actionable policy and strategic options and outline military courses of action for senior decision-makers. SOF leaders need to capitalize on their knowledge of the elements affecting human decision-making and behavior when providing policy advice. SOF leaders must grasp policy and strategy development processes, understand the strategic context, and present insightful recommendations in a logical, unbiased, and courageous manner. SOF must be capable of functioning as strategic-level advisors to U.S. and partner nation decision-makers. SOF leaders should:

- Help inform the development of appropriate and achievable policy goals

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November 2008, available at: <http://www.usip.org/publications/consolidating-disarmament-lessons-colombia-s-reintegration-program-demobilized>.

<sup>22</sup> (U) A MOE is a criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, an objective, or the creation of an effect. It measures the relevance of actions being performed. A MOP is a criterion used to assess friendly actions that is tied to measuring task accomplishment. See JP 5-0, Joint Operation Planning, pg. xxiv, dated: 11 August 2011, available at: [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\\_pubs/jointpub\\_planning.htm](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jointpub_planning.htm).

- Constantly assess efforts towards achieving policy goals and brief policymakers frequently on progress
- Evaluate how efforts to achieve goals affect relevant actors in the environment

By understanding the Human Domain, SOF leaders will be able to balance the need for decisiveness with prudence and the desire for idealistic outcomes with a practical assessment of what is attainable on the ground and with limited resources. An estimation of the post-conflict desired state must take into account all the elements shaping human decision-making and associated behavior. This process will be especially challenging when SOF conducts operations in the midst of sectarian and ethnic tensions and conflict. Protection of minority rights, development of state institutions, encouragement of pragmatic local leaders, and power-sharing agreements in the post-conflict environment will be important considerations.

## 6. Implications

To develop the capabilities described in Section 5, Required Capabilities, SOF will necessitate DOTMLPF-P changes to:

**6.1 *Generate Teams and Elements with Cross-Cultural Skills that can Perform Independently during Small Footprint Operations.*** SOF preparation must address the need to deploy small liaison, training, and advisory teams with personnel that possess necessary cross-cultural communication skills. SOF personnel require the ability to interpret, analyze, and decode situations to identify the best way to collaborate in multicultural settings. This requires attributes such as language skills, adaptability, environmental awareness, and an affinity for cultural exploration. Not only do SOF personnel need the means to conduct PMESII-PT<sup>23</sup> or similar analysis themselves, but they must also have the ability to access more advanced expertise. This allows SOF to continuously evaluate friendly, neutral, and adversary individuals, groups, and populations. Building on an existing foundation of capabilities, SOF must enable operations and activities across the ROMO and the conflict continuum.

**6.2 *Develop and Select Leaders with Strong Pol-Mil, Negotiation, and Conflict-Resolution Competencies.*** SOF preparation must emphasize the development of tactical through strategic leaders who can address challenges and pursue opportunities in a way that benefits all partners. SOF personnel must possess the ability to navigate the hierarchy of allegiances to obtain support from individuals, groups, and populations in the environment. SOF needs to work in collaboration with partners to gain sustainable contributions, ensure unity of effort toward shared objectives, and draw on

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<sup>23</sup> (U) Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Physical Environment, and Time.

complementary strengths. SOF leaders must also understand the perspective of their partners to resolve disagreements and exhibit a sense of fairness in their dealings with others.<sup>24</sup> SOF personnel need to understand how people in different cultures approach negotiation in distinct ways.

**6.3 Cultivate Individuals with the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities to Understand and Influence Human Actions and Activities.** The body of knowledge that future SOF leaders must possess—even at relatively junior levels— should include aspects of psychology, anthropology, history, geography, economics, and international relations. A Human Domain discipline requires military leaders who can use both compulsion and persuasion to shape the rational calculations of individuals, groups, and populations, while considering the elements that shape human behavior. SOF must educate and train small-unit leaders to engage and interact effectively at the local level with actors in the environment. Preparation is particularly important for junior leaders who often function as friendly forces representatives.

**6.4 Expand Opportunities for Tactical, Operational, and Strategic-Level Collaboration with Foreign and Interagency Partners.** SOF preparation and employment must include exercises, operations, and engagement activities on a frequent and ongoing basis to sustain local partnerships and enhance interoperability. These enduring engagement activities will allow SOF personnel to gain first-hand experience regarding the elements that shape human behavior. SOF leaders have to structure opportunities for local/tactical-level collaboration (at and below the country-team level) with representatives from non-Defense USG departments and agencies to enable a comprehensive approach.

*SOF leaders need to create value from collaboration with a goal of solving problems; this will encourage partners to sustain engagement over the long-term.*

SOF must also cultivate an environment where partners focus on mutual success and where outcomes are in line with shared national interests. This requires skills such as creativity, teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, and cultural understanding.

**6.5 Strengthen Ability to Understand What is Happening in the Environment.** SOF preparation must include the development of a full complement of skills and tools to understand what is happening in the environment and why. SOF begins to develop insight by having strong partnerships with local actors and robust information sharing. The development of information regarding the population and the range of actors in the

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<sup>24</sup> (U) Adapted and derived from “Being Global: How to Think, Act, and Lead in a Transformed World,” Angela Cabrera and Gregory Unruh, Harvard Business Review Press, 2012, cited in the Human Domain White Paper.



environment is essential. All-source intelligence tools and competencies—especially in human intelligence, open source information, and social network analysis—also play a critical role in helping to identify and understand all relevant individuals, groups, and populations, particularly those that might be initially sympathetic with an adversary. SOF requires access to regional experts who can explain the social, political, religious, ethnic, and historical relationships among actors in the environment. SOF personnel should also be able to discern the identity and activities of clandestine operatives that may be part of an adversary underground, state security apparatus, or other hostile networks. The identification of mobilization forums is similarly a uniquely important and difficult challenge. To address these types of problems, small units should possess the ability to manage and safeguard confidential human intelligence sources for unit self-defense, design and implement influence strategies consistent with higher headquarters guidance, and counteract adversary actors and activities. Furthermore, military training and education must prepare SOF leaders to conduct operations and activities that will detect and restrict low-signature adversary efforts to target friendly forces and exert control over the population. Commanders and staffs must understand how to coordinate and synchronize intelligence, military information support, civil-military, and combat operations for maximum benefit—and promote this knowledge among partners across the ROMO.

**6.6 Implement Planning Processes Focusing on Creating Human Domain Desired Effects.** SOF preparation must stress the use of Mission Command and planning processes that strengthen synergy between efforts in the physical and human domains as well as cyberspace. Commanders need to explain what desired effects they are trying to have on various relevant actors in the environment—in line with U.S. policy objectives. Operations and campaigns integrate lethal and non-lethal actions to produce these desired effects. SOF leaders must continuously think about winning support from actors in the environment, while gaining advantage over adversaries. Operations and activities seek to establish trust with key individuals, groups, and populations. The need to influence perceptions and behavior is inherent in every military operation and activity.

**6.7 Develop Specialized Knowledge to Conduct Reconciliation, Counter-Radicalization, Anti-Corruption, and Environmental Analysis and Assessment (EA&A) Programs.** SOF and Joint Force doctrine must include the tactics, techniques, and procedures to plan and implement specialized programs to reconcile low-level operatives and foot-soldiers, counter the efforts of the adversary cadre to radicalize the population, and safeguard friendly grassroots organizations and institutions from infiltration and

*While specialized programs will require close cooperation with partners, SOF must preserve the necessary knowledge for execution as part of a comprehensive discipline.*

subversion. SOF must develop approaches to adapt relevant specialized programs during UW. For example, a program to reconcile former regime members and supporters could be a powerful line-of-effort during a UW campaign. SOF education should examine the conduct of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) as part of a broader reconciliation program. EA&A activities cover all phases of a joint campaign and are applicable across the conflict continuum. Education needs to include an examination of historical case studies where military forces implemented these types of programs and consideration of lessons learned during these efforts. SOF training must emphasize EA&As that track and explain how friendly campaign activities result in changes in human behavior.

## **7. Risks**

The following are risks associated with developing the Human Domain discipline to identify, understand, and influence relevant individuals, groups, and populations—as described in Section 3, Central and Supporting Ideas, and Section 4, Fundamentals of the Human Domain Discipline.

7.1 SOF and its partners may overemphasize Human Domain considerations during situations when their impact is not of immediate concern or cannot be fully determined, resulting in a missed opportunity for swift and effective action. The response to a strategic, conventional, or unconventional attack on the U.S. homeland or interests, for example, would require a rapid defense before there is time to fully evaluate the elements impacting human decision-making and associated behavior.

7.2 The OHD Concept's emphasis on winning support from actors in the environment, while gaining advantage over adversaries, could be misread by some SOF leaders as suggesting there is little need for aggressive action when the opportunity presents itself.

7.3 The OHD Concept's focus on operational mindset and non-materiel implications could be misread by appropriators and resource allocators to suggest there is little need for a well-equipped and technologically-advanced force capable of traditional power projection and decisive action. In fact, a robust and powerful force that can rapidly deploy around the globe to fight and win wars is necessary to optimize U.S. influence in conflict areas.

7.4 The emphasis the Human Domain discipline places on regional orientation and skills could lead to the establishment of unrealistic goals and wasteful programs that expend limited resources without attaining the desired levels of personnel knowledge and overall competency.

7.5 The OHD Concept's focus on using exercises, operations, and engagement activities on a frequent and ongoing basis to sustain local partnerships and enhance

interoperability may result in SOF developing familiarity with regions where it is welcome in peace and not necessarily where it will be needed in war.

7.6 The OHD Concept's focus on building influence and legitimacy with individuals, groups, and populations could be misapplied by military leaders who do not adequately understand the responsibilities and pre-existing relationships of non-Defense USG departments and agencies. Alternatively, some partners may erroneously perceive that SOF is encroaching on their areas of responsibility and local relationships.

7.7 The OHD Concept's emphasis on preventing, mitigating, and/or containing conflict may not receive the necessary approval for timely and anticipatory actions from the Nation's civilian leaders. Without early and preemptive efforts, SOF and its partners would be incapable of forestalling and lessening conflict.

7.8 Even if SOF is successful in developing strong partnerships, there is no guarantee that these associations will result in support for U.S. objectives. The strongest of partners have interests that diverge from each other from time to time.

## Appendix A – Strategic Context

1. **General.** The revised approach described in the OHD Concept supports the Secretary of Defense guidance to develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint efforts to achieve security objectives.<sup>25</sup> USG policy requires the Joint Force to use exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities to sustain an enduring presence. The following paragraphs describe how the OHD Concept builds on current doctrine and concepts.

2. **Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO).** The OHD Concept is critical to the CCJO vision of future joint operations that are increasingly discriminate to minimize unintended consequences.<sup>26</sup> The OHD Concept enables the CCJO imperative of developing a Joint Force that uses better integration to achieve cross-domain synergy. The OHD Concept promotes:

- Analysis of the complex environment by considering dynamics in each domain of operations
- Application of complementary vice additive capabilities across domains in time and space
- Exploitation of advantages in one domain to gain and increase opportunity in another

3. **JP 2-0 Joint Intelligence.** The OHD Concept builds on JP 2-0 *Joint Intelligence* regarding the use of social-cultural analysis, which includes the “systematic mapping of human factors affecting a leader’s or key actor’s decision-making influences.”<sup>27</sup> Social-cultural analysis informs the commander’s understanding of adversaries and other relevant actors by examining populations, social networks, and groups, including their activities, relationships, and perspectives across time and space.

4. **JP 2-01.3 Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE).** The OHD Concept stresses holistic, systemic analysis that considers a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of the force and bear on military decision-making. As prescribed in JP 2-01.3, the OHD Concept recognizes that commanders and their staffs tailor the JIPOE analysis to the situation, while employing a variety of tools: PMESII-PT, CTAF, ASCOPE, and ICAF.

5. **JP 3-0 Joint Operations.** The OHD concept reinforces a key theme from JP 3-0 *Joint Operations* regarding the art of joint command: successful commanders can strike

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<sup>25</sup> (U) *Sustaining US Global Leadership*.

<sup>26</sup> (U) *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020*, pg. 7, dated: 10 September 2012, available at: [www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020\\_Capstone.pdf](http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020_Capstone.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> (U) JP 2-0, *Joint Intelligence*, pg. I-17, dated 22 October 2013

a balance between the “art of war” (human interaction) and the “science of war” (technological solutions) by emphasizing the inherently human aspects of warfare. Employing the “art of war” remains critical in the contemporary environment regardless of technological and informational improvements in control—the “science of war.”<sup>28</sup> The OHD Concept includes a description of the Human Domain discipline that enables the “art of war.”

6. ***JP 5-0 Joint Operation Planning***. The OHD Concept stresses an imperative from JP 5-0 regarding the importance of understanding the environment throughout the planning process. “As planners assess complex human behaviors...they draw on multiple sources across the operational environment, including both analytical and subjective measures that support a more informed assessment.”<sup>29</sup>

7. ***Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (IW JOC) 2.0***. The OHD Concept complements the 2010 IW JOC 2.0, while remaining relevant across the ROMO. The OHD Concept builds on the IW JOC 2.0 by explaining how the Joint Force can enhance a local partner’s legitimacy and influence with the population.<sup>30</sup> The Joint Force must address the causes of conflict and build partner abilities to provide security, good governance, and economic development. The OHD Concept emphasizes the need to engage with foreign partners to better understand the environment and develop relationships necessary to enhance stability, prevent or mitigate conflicts, and respond promptly to crises. Enduring engagement is necessary to assess and sway the ideas, beliefs, and perspectives that shape the conflict narrative. Preventing conflict requires insight into its root causes. Legitimacy and credibility are essential to build support.

8. ***Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)***. The OHD Concept further develops the thesis from the JOAC regarding cross-domain synergy. The JOAC defines cross-domain synergy as the: “complementary vice merely additive employment of capabilities in different domains such that each enhances the effectiveness and compensates for the vulnerabilities of the others—to establish superiority in some combination of domains that will provide the freedom of action required by the mission.” The Joint Force will shape the operational area in advance of conflict through a variety of engagement activities.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> (U) JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, pg. II-1, dated 11 August 2011

<sup>29</sup> (U) JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, pg. III-45, dated: 11 August 2011.

<sup>30</sup> (U) *Capstone Concept for Joint Operation: Joint Force 2020*, dated: 10 September 2012, available at: [www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020\\_Capstone.pdf](http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020_Capstone.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> (U) *Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)*, Version 1.0, dated: 17 January 2012, available at: [www.defense.gov/.../joac\\_jan%202012\\_signe...](http://www.defense.gov/.../joac_jan%202012_signe...)

9. **Military Contribution to Cooperative Security (CS) Joint Operating Concept (JOC).** The OHD Concept coincides in many areas with the 2008 *Military Contribution to CS JOC*, which stresses the importance of “CS activities undertaken well in advance of any crisis-precipitating event.” The OHD Concept describes interaction that in many instances will go beyond a partner nation’s military forces and provide a framework for lethal and non-lethal activities across the ROMO.

10. **Strategic Communication Joint Integrating Concept (JIC).** The OHD Concept reinforces many points from the 2009 *Strategic Communication JIC*, in particular regarding the “...challenge of influence—convincing others to think and act in ways compatible with our objectives, whether this means causing others to adopt a specific course of action or simply understand us better and accept us more.” A key dimension of this challenge is integrating all the various Joint Force actions to maximize their combined effect. The OHD Concept emphasizes the role of interpersonal relationships, individual leadership, social-cultural understanding, and the importance of synchronizing “words, deeds, and images” as part of an integrated campaign. The OHD Concept addresses specialized approaches to generate military potential in the environment, using strategic communication and influence activities as important tools.

11. **Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations (SSTRO) JOC.** The 2006 *Military Support SSTRO JOC* describes military activities focusing on helping a “severely stressed government” avoid failure or recover from a devastating natural disaster, or on assisting an emerging host nation government in building a “new domestic order” following internal collapse or defeat in war. While the OHD Concept does not specifically address SSTRO challenges, the capabilities derived and developed from the OHD Concept will have benefits for the conduct of SSTRO—particularly in terms of “establishing and maintaining a safe, secure environment.”

12. **Deterrence Operations (DO) JOC, Version 2.** The OHD Concept builds on the 2006 *DO JOC Version 2.0*, which identifies the need to influence an adversary’s decision-making calculus to prevent hostile actions against U.S. vital interests. An adversary’s decision-making will assess: 1) the *benefits* of a course of action, 2) the *costs* of a course of action, and 3) the consequences of restraint (i.e., costs and benefits of not taking the course of action the United States seeks to deter). Joint military operations deter an adversary by denying benefits, imposing costs, and encouraging adversary restraint. The OHD Concept describes approaches to both deter and encourage a variety of actions by individuals, groups, and populations.

## Appendix B – Historical Vignette – The Viet Minh in Rural Vietnam

### 1.0 General

This vignette describes the efforts of the Viet Minh Communists to gain and maintain power in the villages and rural areas of Vietnam, during and immediately following World War II (WWII) and through the First Indochina War. The following narrative relies heavily on Samuel Popkin’s book “The Rational Peasant,” which provides a detailed analysis of the political economy in Vietnamese villages from the pre-colonial period to the end of the First Indochina War. The period culminated with Ho Chi Minh becoming the prime minister and president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and Ngo Dinh Diem assuming office as the first president of South Vietnam. This vignette is not a re-telling of the First Indochina War, but highlights efforts in the Human Domain and the need for detailed understanding of all elements shaping human decision-making and associated behavior. As described in the *Operating in the Human Domain* core document, the need to influence the perception and behavior of relevant individuals, groups, and populations must be inherent in every military activity. This vignette provides an example of a campaign to influence three regional populations that not only resulted in control over most of the respective communities, but gained their willing support for long-term insurgent activities.

### 2.0 Background

The Vietnamese had lived in villages for thousands of years. Prior to colonization by the French, the rural Vietnamese mainly lived in “corporate” villages: relatively closed social systems with strong village identities, clear boundaries between villages, and a well-developed public sector. Individuals placed a high value on village membership.<sup>32</sup> Feudal landlords frequently ruled the villages, controlling and dispensing many of the key components of farming. They controlled access to seeds, credit, housing, and draft animals. The landlord readily seized any surplus produced by the peasant.<sup>33</sup> Authorities levied taxes on entire communities, rather than on individuals. Village councils periodically redistributed land among the peasantry.

A major shift in community dynamics occurred during the French colonial era, when the village economy moved from a “corporate” to an “open” structure. Individuals became

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<sup>32</sup> (U) This does not mean village life was a communal paradise. Villagers usually acted in their own interests, and the feudal property owners had a financial interest in keeping the villages closed off from exterior markets the landlords did not control. Any village autonomy (communal taxes, land redistribution, disaster insurance, and subsistence assurance) directly served to increase the landlord’s profits from that village. Landlords resisted other attempts at autonomy or increased peasant ownership of resources. See Popkin, Samuel, *The Rational Peasant*, 1979, pg. 132.

<sup>33</sup> (U) Popkin pg. 2

responsible for payment of taxes, boundaries between villages became more indistinct, people placed a reduced value on village membership, and more of the land came under private ownership.<sup>34</sup> French-approved patrons and large landholders assumed control over major aspects of village life and made every effort to keep the peasants from bargaining collectively for better terms.<sup>35</sup> The French introduced their colonial bureaucracy, courts<sup>36</sup>, and tax systems.<sup>37</sup> They replaced traditional village leaders with persons considered less legitimate by the population.<sup>38</sup>

While many Vietnamese disliked the lack of financial security in the “corporate” model, most resented the increased taxes, corruption, loss of independence, and the lack of opportunity and innovation under the French “open” structure. Under both models, peasants frequently sought village office to achieve personal gain; dynamics often favored the wealthier peasants. Once the villages lost their “corporate” character under colonial rule, control by wealthy landowners increased and village officials gained more sway over aspects of daily life.<sup>39</sup> It is against this background of widening inequality, French domination, and corruption that the Communists and a variety of religious parties (including Catholics, Hoa Hao, and Cau Dai) competed for dominance.<sup>40</sup>

The struggle for influence peaked during WWII. Early collaboration with Japan enabled French colonial authorities to retain some power over Vietnamese affairs during Japan’s occupation of Indochina. This partnership angered many Vietnamese and served as a rallying point for the indigenous opposition.

The competition for influence among indigenous groups centered on three popular motives: a desire to expel the Japanese, gain independence from the French, and improve the lives of the citizenry. The religious groups (Catholics, Hoa Hao, and Cau Dai) and the Communists adopted different approaches in their drive for power and

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<sup>34</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 3

<sup>35</sup> (U) Keeping relationships between the landlord and the peasant on an individual basis allowed the landlord to prevent any single person or small group from reducing the landlord’s influence or profits. Unlike the more multi-faceted relationships between patron and peasant in the “corporate” village, “open” village relationships were more contractual and individualized. (See Popkin, pg. 27)

<sup>36</sup> (U) French courts prevailed in cases involving French citizens, while pre-colonial Vietnamese law and courts held sway for Vietnamese. (See Popkin, pg. 134).

<sup>37</sup> (U) Taxes were heavy under colonial rule (See Popkin, pg. 143), and the French made no effort at progressive taxation or establishing a minimum taxable income, much to the resentment of the villages (See Popkin, pg. 136). Some villagers were forced into debt slavery (See Popkin, pg. 183).

<sup>38</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 137

<sup>39</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 149

<sup>40</sup> (U) In 1936, French social scientist Pierre Gourou published “*Les Paysans du Delta Tonkinois*” (The Peasants of the Tonkin Delta), the result of several years studying the villagers of the Tonkin region. One of his research assistants was Vo Nguyen Giap (See Popkin, pg. 183).



influence. The Viet Minh concentrated on the countryside first, while the religious groups focused on the urban centers. The religious groups centered their efforts on reaching out to urban elites and rarely bothered to connect with workers or peasants. The religious groups failed to recognize that the urban elite had minimal influence on the mostly rural population. As a result of their organizing efforts, the Viet Minh developed a large following in rural areas that were essentially inaccessible to the French and Japanese, but which had strategic importance to the economic life of the country. One example of this was in the Tonkin Delta, which served as a key communications hub. Over time, the Viet Minh developed a small army and a network of bases in north and central Vietnam, allowing them to march into Hanoi in 1945.<sup>41</sup>

Following WWII, the French, Catholics, Hoa Hao, Cau Dai, and Viet Minh continued to vie for control. Only the Viet Minh had the sophisticated understanding of regional, national, and international politics that allowed them to forge a coalition of diverse groups within Vietnam to resist the French and form a nation.<sup>42</sup> Eventually the Viet Minh's superior numbers, support from the Chinese, and control of much of the countryside allowed them to co-opt many of the other groups' members and ultimately defeat the French at Dien Bien Phu. The Geneva Agreement partitioned Vietnam into North and South in 1954, with the promise of nationwide elections in 1956.

### 3.0 Viet Minh Strategy

The Viet Minh understood Clausewitz' trinity and the political nature of war. Truong Chinh, a Viet Minh cadre member and later secretary general of the Vietnamese Communist Party and president of the North Vietnamese legislature, observed:

*"[There are] those who have a tendency only to rely on military action...They tend to believe that everything can be settled by armed force; they do not apply political mobilization, are unwilling to give explanations and to convince people...fighting spiritedly, they neglect political work; they do not...act in such a way that the army and the people can wholeheartedly help one another."<sup>43</sup>*

Given the intense competition in urban areas, the presence of security forces in cities, and the relatively low influence of the urban elite on the mass of peasantry, the Viet Minh decided to concentrate on the countryside. They exploited public sentiment against the French and drew on nationalist themes and a desire for independence, rather than Communist dogma, to mobilize the rural population. The Viet Minh had

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<sup>41</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 219

<sup>42</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 185

<sup>43</sup> (U) Mileen, Raymond, "The Political Context Behind Successful Revolutionary Movements, Three Case Studies: Vietnam (1955-63), Algeria (1945-62), and Nicaragua (1967-79), Strategic Studies Institute, March, 2008, pg. 7

failed with an ideological approach prior to WWII, but learned from their mistakes and modified their message. The Viet Minh understood that control of the countryside and its economy could provide a steady stream of taxes and support for revolutionary activities. Viet Minh strategy drew heavily from Mao's theory of "people's war," which relied on winning the support of the rural population.<sup>44</sup>

#### 4.0 The Rural Campaign in Vietnam

*"The Viet Minh came through on their promises. They actually took the land from the landlords and distributed it among their followers. Their propaganda struck a responsive chord in me because I hated the French...who were in league with the landlords and had oppressed and beaten me...I thought in following them that I would have a brighter future...that I would have land to till, and my family could break out of poverty..."* Vietnamese man who spent his youth as a "buffalo boy" in the home of a landlord.<sup>45</sup>

Samuel Popkin asserts that peasants make rational decisions; they evaluate the outcomes associated with their choices, framed by their values and preferences. Villagers tend to make the choice that maximizes individual utility.<sup>46</sup> In many cases, this choice betters the village as a whole, but motivations are rarely altruistic. Peasants are well aware of the potential consequences of failing to contribute or participate in a successful movement and will evaluate the possible consequences of inaction.<sup>47</sup> By appealing to that rationality and operating astutely in the Human Domain, the Viet Minh were able to control a substantial portion of the population by 1954. The Viet Minh experience provides several examples of Human Domain activities that reinforce the descriptions in the core document of this concept:

*4.1 Build Trust with Key Actors, While Navigating the Hierarchy of Allegiances that is Often Shaped by Perceptions of Identity.* By working with the locals, the Viet Minh developed knowledge of human dynamics and conditions. The Viet Minh exhibited detailed understanding of the Human Domain and possessed the ability to adapt to regional, provincial, and village situations. The Viet Minh exploited village protests, organized against the French, and convinced other groups to ally with them against the Japanese during WWII. Viet Minh successes against the Japanese built credibility among the population, and by the time WWII ended, the population in many areas considered the Viet Minh national liberators.

Building trust in a village started with a visit by trained political operatives who explained

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<sup>44</sup> (U) Woods, Jeff, "The Other Warriors," Arkansas Tech University, Sep 2010, pp. 5-6

<sup>45</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 241

<sup>46</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 31

<sup>47</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 258

to the villagers precisely what the Viet Minh wanted to do and what was expected of the local inhabitants. The Viet Minh cadres who followed had strict orders to be “scrupulous in their behavior,” never entering a house without permission, cleaning the places where they stayed, and not sharing the villagers food if that would cause any sort of a shortage. The Viet Minh cadre understood that their goal was not to win over everyone, just a majority.<sup>48</sup>

Enabling land reform was a key aspect of how the Viet Minh gained credibility and influence among the peasants. The ability to bring about land reform demonstrated the strength of the Viet Minh in the villages. The Viet Minh dismantled the seniority and patronage system that allocated land, usually to the advantage of the colonially-appointed village notables. “Equalization committees” restructured parcels of land to make them as equal in value as possible. This had the added benefit of drawing villagers and the heads of families into close working relationships with the inter-village committees organized by the Viet Minh.<sup>49</sup> The Viet Minh confiscated and redistributed the land and livestock of the notables and landlords who fled the villages ahead of the Communist takeover. The committees used these resources as a form of patronage to influence village behavior.<sup>50</sup> The Viet Minh returned to the villagers most of the communal land that had been previously taken for the private use of the notables and landlords.<sup>51</sup> After the Viet Minh instituted land reform in Cochinchina, for example, peasants often went out of their way to warn Viet Minh cadres of the approaching French forces or agents.<sup>52</sup>

Vietnamese villagers had a particular hierarchy that helped explain their perspective and behavior. The “notables,” who were wealthy members of the village appointed by landlords or who had hereditary claims to power, tended to administer the Vietnamese villages. The Viet Minh broke the influence of the landlords and notables, once the Communists established a large enough infrastructure.<sup>53</sup> The peasants benefitted economically as long as the Viet Minh kept the landlords, notables, and their agents out of power.<sup>54</sup>

The Viet Minh realized that seizing power in the provincial capitals did not result in a flood of volunteers from the countryside.<sup>55</sup> As result, they did not focus their recruiting

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<sup>48</sup> (U) Curry, Cecil B, *Victory at Any Cost*, Potomac Books, 1997, pg. 65

<sup>49</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 226

<sup>50</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 226

<sup>51</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 225

<sup>52</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 257

<sup>53</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 224

<sup>54</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 237

<sup>55</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 223

and influence efforts on members of the urban elite. Instead, the Viet Minh placed an emphasis on recruiting military enlisted men, weavers, fishermen, machinists, skilled laborers, and railroad workers—many of whom lived in rural areas.<sup>56</sup>

*4.2 Increase Legitimacy and Generate Friendly Potential.* The Viet Minh cadre understood the peasant and village societal context and drew on appropriate sources of legitimacy. The Viet Minh adopted a platform based nationalism, tax reform, and land redistribution to win legitimacy, abandoning their earlier focus on bringing about global communism. The Japanese invasion during WWII, Vichy collaboration with the axis occupation,<sup>57</sup> and the later re-establishment of French colonial rule created favorable conditions for a nationalist campaign. The Viet Minh message resonated with rural and urban Vietnamese, young intellectuals, and the middle class. The Viet Minh later added Vietnamese legends and cultural touchstones to their nationalist message.<sup>58</sup>

The Viet Minh took several steps that required few resources, but had a substantial positive effect. They established two large high schools to improve literacy and provide new cadre members.<sup>59</sup> They founded a “people’s art and culture” movement to recruit entertainers and draw large crowds to Viet Minh rallies.<sup>60</sup> They instituted popular tax reform and appointed loyal followers to the village tax committees. The tax reforms were so popular that many considered it a privilege to serve on an assessment committee.<sup>61</sup> The Viet Minh established local courts based on Vietnamese law and tradition. These gave thousands of peasants who had ongoing disputes with landowners the opportunity to have their say in the local language and without witness intimidation.<sup>62</sup>

Viet Minh troops participated in what Edward Lansdale<sup>63</sup> called “civic action” when not engaged in military operations. Troops often repaired rice paddy dykes, replanted bamboo hedges that delineated property lines, dug irrigation ditches, planted or fertilized crops, and treated injured civilians. Because of these actions, the villagers

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<sup>56</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 224

<sup>57</sup> (U) The Vichy French administered Vietnam under the Japanese during the latter half of WWII. Despite this arrangement, the Japanese encouraged anti-French and non-Communist groups during this period. The French responded by dramatically increasing the number of Vietnamese in the occupation government. The Viet Minh placed sympathizers in some of these strategic positions. See Popkin, pp. 218-219.

<sup>58</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 218

<sup>59</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 239

<sup>60</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 239

<sup>61</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 227

<sup>62</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 239

<sup>63</sup> (U) Lt Col Edward Lansdale (USAF) was the primary architect of successful US/Filipino efforts against the Hukbalahap Rebellion, 1946-1954. He emphasized government reform, address of grievances, and actions to protect the population from the insurgents over direct military action.

became uncooperative with anti-Viet Minh forces. Some peasants are known to have resisted interrogation, even at the cost of their lives, to protect the Viet Minh.<sup>64</sup>

*4.3 Address Popular Grievances and Counter Adversary Messaging with Words, Deeds, and Images.* The Viet Minh took full advantage of a proven method of obtaining allegiance and legitimacy by addressing the needs and grievances of the target population. Literacy drives, village improvement efforts, and direct aid to the peasantry paid huge dividends to the Viet Minh.

The Viet Minh instituted popular redistributionist policies that required little outside support.<sup>65</sup> Addressing the desires of the peasantry was a comparatively simple way of developing a bond with the population and demonstrating that the Viet Minh kept their promises. Immediately after a village takeover, the Viet Minh pressed schoolteachers and educated youth into literacy campaigns across the countryside. In some cases, villagers had to learn a new word of the day to enter the marketplace. This identified the Viet Minh with progress and anti-feudalism—educating the masses, where the landlords and notables, seeing peasant literacy as a threat to their power, had deliberately kept the peasants uneducated.<sup>66</sup>

The Viet Minh developed a technical cadre who built and maintained sea walls, dams, bridges, and irrigation projects, upon which many villages depended for their survival.<sup>67</sup> The Viet Minh subsidized water storage and irrigation projects, allowing poor farmers who could not afford improvements to become more efficient.<sup>68</sup> The Viet Minh stopped the practice of evicting debtors before the harvest, so landowners could not seize both the land and the crops for nonpayment of debts. The Viet Minh ended the practice of eviction for small debts.<sup>69</sup>

Giap's village administrators replaced the colonial system of body and land taxes with a single, progressive income tax based on total family productivity. The new tax system provided a standard exemption for each adult and child—and ensured taxes would not place a family below the subsistence level. These reforms allowed the Viet Minh to extract more tax revenue than the colonial powers without starving anyone.<sup>70</sup>

In some instances, large expenditures of resources resulted in large payoffs. In 1944 there was a mass starvation that killed between 500,000 and 1 million peasants in the

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<sup>64</sup> (U) Curry, pg. 151

<sup>65</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 225

<sup>66</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 225

<sup>67</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 224

<sup>68</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 229

<sup>69</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 228

<sup>70</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 227

Tonkin region. The Viet Minh were the only group willing to aid the Tonkin peasantry and used the crisis to build a robust organization in the region.<sup>71</sup>

*4.4 Restrict the Adversary's Organizing Efforts.* The Viet Minh took advantage of inefficient and corrupt central governments and eagerly exploited missteps by the French and Japanese to draw the population to the Communist cause. By addressing the needs of the peasantry in culturally appropriate ways, the Viet Minh were able to turn the village itself into a mobilization forum. Loyalty to one's village and family translated into devotion for the Viet Minh. The peasantry saw both the benefits as well as the consequences of their choices. Viet Minh mobilization tactics successfully generated individual contributions, even if the peasants did not have a guarantee of a future payoff. The Viet Minh increased contributions to the Communist cause, *while impeding the organizational and resource generating efforts of other actors.*<sup>72</sup>

The struggle for independence was perhaps the largest single motivator for the Vietnamese people. The Viet Minh used their many successes in the fight against the Japanese to bolster their reputation. By July 1945, the Viet Minh were so popular that their flags were flown across the country and children sang Viet Minh songs in school.<sup>73</sup>

*4.5 Protect or Target Key Physical Assets.* The Viet Minh made an effort to control the physical terrain, the lines of communication between urban centers, and those systems that were essential to foster commercial activity. Because of their efforts before and during WWII to develop cadres and organizations in rural areas, the Viet Minh were able to retain control of large areas of the countryside. They held these areas against the non-Communist Vietnamese and the French all the way through the end of the First Indochina War.<sup>74</sup> The Viet Minh were able to maintain their lines of communication and supply throughout the war. Some of these supply lines formed the beginnings of what would become the Ho Chi Minh trail.

The Viet Minh controlled access to markets outside the villages, something the landlords restricted to keep revenues to themselves. Once markets opened beyond the local area, many villagers were able to create a surplus of cash or crops with which they upgraded their farms or made other investments to increase their personal wealth.

*4.6 Strengthen Cross-Domain Synergy.* The Viet Minh used efforts to both reward and punish, increasing their influence and gaining advantage in the Human Domain. This approach enabled them to gain control over a significant portion of the land domain. Viet Minh capabilities at the time of this vignette had not yet extended to the maritime and air

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<sup>71</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 220

<sup>72</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 223

<sup>73</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 221

<sup>74</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 222

domains. Their focus on political considerations, suggests that had they enjoyed the ability to fight across multiple domains, they would have ensured that all operations contributed towards the desired effects they were trying to create among relevant actors in the environment.

*4.7 Apply Force or the Threat of Force Judiciously and for Maximum Psychological Effect.* The Viet Minh did not always use positive incentives to earn support. Shortly after the Viet Minh marched into Hanoi (with the aid of Chinese troops) in 1945, an opposition media outlet criticized the Viet Minh as “reactionary saboteur” forces. The leader of the Viet Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, ordered hundreds of opposition supporters murdered in response. He also recruited approximately 1500 former Japanese military personnel who did not wish to return to an occupied homeland. These troops served as a strike force to attack opponents of the Viet Minh.<sup>75</sup> The ruthless and targeted use of violence produced a powerful psychological effect.

## **5.0 Key Insights for the Human Domain Concept.**

5.1 SOF needs to understand the background, motivations, and dynamics of relevant actors in the environment and adapt operations to take advantage of that knowledge. After his time studying the villages under French social scientist Pierre Gourou, Giap had a detailed understanding of actor motivations at the village level. Some of Giap’s observations were at odds with Communist doctrine.<sup>76</sup> This did not stop Giap from using his understanding to build support in the Human Domain.

5.2 SOF must adopt locally-appropriate and culturally-relevant messaging themes, which it must deliver via respected interlocutors. SOF units should have the ability to develop local themes that are consistent with higher guidance, mission objectives, and the desired state. As long as the Viet Minh articulated their views in terms Communist philosophy and doctrine, they failed to present a credible and appealing vision of the future to the populations.<sup>77</sup> Once the Viet Minh integrated Vietnamese nationalism and cultural references into their messaging, their strategic communication became more persuasive and was better received.

5.3 The Viet Minh focused on local goals and providing immediate payoffs to the villagers, depending on their particular needs.<sup>78</sup> The Viet Minh understood that their view of a future Communist society was not motivating the peasantry, so they shifted their message to emphasize nationalism, a better life, and individual advancement in the short-term.

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<sup>75</sup> (U) Curry, pp. 125-126

<sup>76</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 252

<sup>77</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 261

<sup>78</sup> (U) Popkin, pg. 262

5.4 SOF and other military planners should understand the implications of the Viet Minh being able to get extensive resources from a rather primitive “rice economy.” By contrast, an adversary would generate far greater resources from a coca or poppy-based economy.

5.5 SOF should not discount seemingly unimportant or ineffective grassroots organizations. These organizations might have utility later. SOF should treat every contact with individuals, groups, and populations in the environment as an opportunity to build a friendly network. After the failure to agree on a single nation in 1954 and the cancellation of elections in 1955, the Viet Minh cadres still in South Vietnam began to resist the government in Saigon. These Viet Minh cadres became the core of what would become the Viet Cong.

5.6 SOF must use compulsion and persuasion to generate support in the Human Domain. Individuals, groups, and populations need to see consequences for their actions. SOF and its partners must exercise restraint, but should be willing to use force when necessary. The Viet Minh did not hesitate to use force.

5.7 Establishing local presence is critically important. An absence by friendly forces creates a void that adversaries can exploit. The absence of Japanese and later French forces from broad areas of the Vietnamese countryside created an opportunity for the Viet Minh. They developed a shadow government, which provided services and governance outside of urban areas. Military forces should not isolate themselves from actors in the environment. Instead, they should be willing to live among relevant actors to understand and influence their decision-making and associated behavior. The Viet Minh understood that efforts to win support would take time to succeed. This approach required enduring presence at the local level, building trust, and sustaining partnerships for the long-term.

5.8 SOF requires personnel who are trained and educated to engage at the local level. It is often the task of junior leaders to function as friendly forces representatives and interact with individuals, groups, and populations first hand. This challenge requires thoughtful preparation. The Viet Minh were careful to instruct their cadre to avoid taking food from the populace as well cleaning up after they left a village. Showing genuine concern for the villagers’ well-being went along away towards gaining support and differentiating the Viet Minh from other actors in the environment.



## Appendix C – Contemporary Vignette – The Huthis in Yemen

1.0 **General.** This vignette analyzes the conflict between the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) and the Huthi family and its allies. As of the writing of the OHD Concept, the violent confrontation in Yemen continues to rage and its outcome is uncertain. As a result, this essay is an imperfect snapshot of the struggle at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. The following account seeks to provide insights into the type of dynamic environment SOF can expect to confront now and in the future. The conflict in Yemen pits the ROYG, which is primarily Sunni Muslim, against the Huthi family and its affiliates, whose members practice the Zaydi variant of Shi'a Islam. For over a decade, the ROYG, operating primarily from the capital city of San'a, has fought the Huthis, who are concentrated in the Sa'da region of northern Yemen.<sup>79</sup>

The ROYG has never been able to develop legitimacy among the Zaydi and has failed to provide them with any meaningful incentives to earn their support. The Huthis, by contrast, have drawn upon a detailed understanding of the Human Domain to build a following in an area that spans from the Saudi border to San'a itself. They have evolved from an extended family, little-known outside of Zaydi scholarly circles, into a broad coalition that dominates the Huthi home region and exerts influence along Yemen's western littoral and in the national capital itself.<sup>80</sup> As of this writing, the Huthis have seized power in San'a, and warplanes from Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies have mounted strikes against Huthi fighters and rebel army units on the outskirts of the southern port city of Aden.<sup>81</sup> While the Human Domain approach and perspective are well-suited to analyzing the Huthi conflict and those like it, this vignette also shows that proactive analysis, planning, and mission execution according to the OHD Concept is exceedingly difficult for forces operating in unfamiliar areas.

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<sup>79</sup> (U) This essay was prepared by Dr. Barak Salmoni for the USSOCOM Force Management and Development (FMD) Directorate for inclusion in the OHD Concept.

<sup>80</sup> (U) Shuaib Almosawa and Kareem Fahim, "Coup Fears Rise in Yemen as Rebels Storm Palace," *The New York Times*, dated: 20 Jan 2015, available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/21/world/middleeast/presidential-residence-in-yemen-is-attacked.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/21/world/middleeast/presidential-residence-in-yemen-is-attacked.html?_r=0); "Houthis Take Control of Central Bank of Yemen: Sources," *Asharq al-Awsat*, dated: 18 Dec 2014, available at: <http://www.aawsat.net/2014/12/article55339595>. For the pre-2011 Huthi conflict, this vignette relies on Barak A. Salmoni et al, *Regime and Periphery in Northern Yemen: The Huthi Phenomenon* (Washington, DC & Santa Monica, CA: 2010); also see Ali Ibrahim al-Moshki, "The Houthis: From a Local Group to a National Power," *Yemen Times*, dated: 4 September 2014, available at: <http://www.yementimes.com/en/1813/report/4294/The-Houthis-From-a-local-group-to-a-national-power.htm>.

<sup>81</sup> (U) Khaled Abdallah and Sami Aboudi, "Yemeni leader Hadi leaves country as Saudi Arabia keeps up air strikes," *Reuters*, dated: 26 March 2015, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/26/us-yemen-security-idUSKBN0ML0YC20150326>.

**2.0 Background.** In June 2004, the ROYG ignited the current conflict with the Huthi family and its supporters by killing Husayn al-Huthi, the son of a noted Zaydi religious scholar from the sacred Hashimi lineage, which traces its ancestry to the Prophet Muhammad. Husayn al-Huthi was a prominent family leader and former parliament member. He vocally opposed ROYG's close relations with the United States and was particularly concerned with government efforts to extend Salafi Sunni influence into northern Yemen—the heartland of Zaydi Islam for a millennium. However, the ROYG-Huthi conflict did not arise solely from the death of Husayn. The root causes of the clash began to emerge in the 1970s and were firmly in place by the early 1990s, a decade before the shooting started.

Yemen's central government has traditionally exercised only nominal sovereignty and little actual control over its territorial periphery. The President Saleh regime (1978-2012) did little to reverse the relative autonomy of northern Yemen. The region experiences harsh seasonal variations in weather conditions and possesses scarce resources. The difficult topography presents a variety of natural obstacles that separate communities from each other. The harsh conditions have hampered economic development, and survival requires people to have a great deal of self-sufficiency.

The inhospitable physical environment in Northern Yemen has contributed to strong notions of identity, which individuals derive from their place of origin and family relations. *Qabyala*, a form of tribal code, demands solidarity with kinsmen, protection of women and allies, and the defense of territory and material possessions. These tenets are the foundation of honor (*sharaf*) and security. Individual autonomy (or freedom) and sense of collective honor take precedence over external laws and notions of legitimacy.

*Qabyala* has sway over a broad social structure of nested tribes, which encompasses diverse groups from confederations with thousands of members to small bands of ten or so individuals. At each level, leaders, or *shaykhs*, possess legitimacy and influence—as opposed to power and control—which they derive from their access to material goods, ability to provide for collective defense, and credibility to mediate quarrels. While tribalism often predisposes communities to conflict, *qabyala*'s mediating mechanisms have usually limited the actual violence among groups. Individuals, while affirming of their Yemeni national identity, tend to value local or regional relations above any allegiance to the distant Yemeni government.

In addition to the influence of *qabyala* in northern Yemen, the region is also the historical heartland of Zaydi Islam. Distinct from Sunnism, Zaydism venerates Ali and the House of the Prophet as the legitimate heirs of political rule (the *imamate*) in the Islamic world. Zaydism differs from more widely practiced forms of Shi'ism, due to a dispute regarding *imamate* succession. The Zaydis are a minority within Yemen and have historically dominated the north. The current governorate of Sa'da is their sacred

historical center and the geographical basis of the Zaydi imamate, which ruled most of Yemen until the 1960s. With an elite who are descendants from the Prophet's family (called *sayyids* or Hashimis), the Zaydis coexisted with Yemeni Sunnis for centuries.

The post-1962 Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) perceived that Zaydi communalism and tribalism was a challenge to the legitimacy of the central government. Authorities branded the Zaydis as atavistic and primitive. This approach intensified after the 1990 unification between northern and southern Yemen. Sa'da thus remained a problematic region for decades.

*2.1 Root Causes of the Conflict.* As early as the 1970s, well before the Saleh regime came to power, the government in San'a had neglected the northwest and contributed little to the region's infrastructure, social welfare, education, and security. In the 1980s, young Zaydi males from Sa'da became increasingly aware of the relative deprivation of their homeland, as they travelled to San'a or abroad for school or work.

Over time, northern Yemenis increasingly shared in sentiments sweeping across the Middle East. Many of them had rising material expectations, disappointment with secular rulers, and hopes for what could be accomplished via a revitalized Islam. After the 1990 Yemeni unification, Sunni Islamists sought to spread Salafism in Sa'da and convert the local Zaydis. At times, the ROYG funded these activities as a means of increasing its influence in the region and to appease Sunni Islamists in San'a. The revival of Zaydism in Sa'da from the late 1980s originated in large measure in response to the promotion of Wahhabi-influenced Salafism. Hashimi leaders established the al-Haqq party in 1990 to advocate for Zaydi interests. Young Zaydis also formed a network of "Believing Youth" associations, sports clubs, and summer camps to help preserve their ancestral identity.

*2.2 The Road to Confrontation.* Regional and local trends in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 drew the Huthi family into increased confrontation with the ROYG. The Huthi message was increasingly critical of President Saleh after he allied with the United States in the Global War on Terror. Husayn al-Huthi began to criticize Saleh on nationalistic, constitutional, and religious grounds. His message resonated among many Zaydis opposed to U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. ROYG actions seemed to validate the Huthi narrative that Saleh was colluding with an anti-Muslim crusade in return for increased military aid.

Intense rhetorical skirmishes have long characterized tribe-regime relations in Yemen, but Yemenis generally viewed these exchanges as an outlet for heated tempers and a substitute for actual violence. After 2001, however, it appears that the ROYG calculus shifted. U.S. security assistance increased Saleh's confidence to the point that he felt he could subdue the north's recalcitrant elements.

Saleh viewed the Huthi criticism as a challenge to ROYG legitimacy among the Zaydis. The Huthi family, empowered by local tradition and its prestigious *sayyid* lineage, exercised moral leadership among the Zaydis. Political and social welfare work in the 1990s earned the Huthis credibility among the local people. By late 2003, Husayn al-Huthi's lectures were drawing large crowds outside of Zaydi mosques from Sa'da to San'a—and, in some instances, in front of the American embassy. Fiery multitudes blasted the perceived ROYG alliance with the "United States, Israel, and the Jews."<sup>82</sup>

Buoyed by his expanded military arsenal and friendship with the United States, Saleh felt he could take on the Huthis. In June 2004, he sent government forces to arrest Husayn al-Huthi. Given earlier de-escalatory approaches to the north, the large deployment of regular military forces was seen as exceedingly aggressive and a violation of the local cultural preference for mediation over violent action.

**2.3 The "Wars of Sa'da."** The government's punitive expedition in the north and the killing of Husayn al-Huthi sparked a widening military conflict. By the start of the Arab Spring in 2011, six named "Wars of Sa'da" had engulfed northwestern Yemen. The bulk of Yemen's military became bogged down in the north, while facing severe logistical challenges and the attrition of its forces. The indiscriminate use of force by ROYG troops imperiled the Zaydi population, influencing many to seek the protection of Huthi-affiliated groups. As the conflict escalated, ROYG actions appeared to purposefully violate core ideas of *qabyala*, such as *sharaf* and the protection of women, children, and religious leaders. San'a's use of tribal auxiliary forces reignited latent inter- and intra-tribal conflicts, further enabling the Huthis to win the support of area tribes.

By 2007, the conflict had taken on a logic and momentum of its own, transcending initial regime or Huthi family motives. Though government forces killed prominent Huthi family members, remaining brothers and associates quickly filled any leadership gaps. The fighting spurred a humanitarian crisis among internally-displaced persons, with chronic food, fuel, and medicine shortages. By 2009, the conflict had become internationalized, with an unsuccessful Saudi military intervention, sustained Iranian rhetorical support to the Huthis, and international efforts to address the humanitarian crisis and prevent Yemen from becoming a base for al-Qaeda affiliates.

**3.0 Post-2011 State of Play.** The Huthis took advantage of the confusion surrounding the 2011 Arab Spring—and the continuing ROYG disorganization—to firmly cement their control of Sa'da, outmaneuvering political rivals and establishing a proto-state.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> (U) The Huthi slogan/flag of "Death to America, Death to Israel, a Curse Upon the Jews, Victory to Islam" became popular during the 2003-4 period.

<sup>83</sup> (U) [For the 2011-2014 of the Huthi-regime conflict, see International Crisis Group, "The Huthis: From Saada to Sanaa," Middle East Report 154, dated: 10 June 2014, available at:](#)

Expanding eastward into Jawf and southward into the ‘Amran, San‘a, and Ma‘rib governorates, the Huthis—or Ansar Allah, as they refer to themselves—occupied parts of the Red Sea port of Hudayda and a series of oil terminal installations. The Huthis also moved into Ibb and, in areas that fell under their control, frequently replaced ROYG-appointed governors.

Early on in Yemen’s Arab Spring, the Huthis asserted their autonomy from umbrella movements, but also established relations with groups seeking regime change in the capital itself.<sup>84</sup> Forcing the post-Saleh Yemeni government to recognize their group as a national-level power-broker, the Huthis demonstrated their clout by occupying parts of San‘a during the autumn of 2014. They justified their actions under the guise that they were curtailing government corruption.<sup>85</sup>

By the second half of 2014, Huthi leaders had gained the upper hand over the ROYG. Rather than assuming control of ministries, the Huthis sought influence over intact government institutions through presence and threats. After securing the appointment of officials tolerable both to themselves and the ROYG, the Huthis deployed “minders” to monitor ministerial decisions and activities, intervening and influencing actions when necessary. This approach exempted the Huthis from responsibility for government functions, while dissuading the ROYG from seeking to roll back Huthi influence.

Despite their successes, the Huthis have not sought to impose Zaydi Islam. Their tolerant approach has stood in marked contrast with the one used by the Sunni Islamists of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), whose members have imposed harsh Islamic moral strictures in areas that fall under their control. By adopting a lenient approach, the Huthis and their allies were able to project influence in areas far beyond their traditional power center. The Huthis did not push for complete domination—at least not until early 2015. Instead, they opted for a strategy that relied on influence,

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<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iran%20Gulf/Yemen/154-the-huthis-from-saada-to-sanaa.pdf>; Lucas Winter, “Riyadh Enters the Yemen-Huthi Fray,” *Middle East Quarterly*, 19:1 (Winter 2012); Nasser Arrabyee, “National Dimensions of the Saada Conflict,” *Sada – Carnegie Endowment for international Peace*, dated: 26 November 2013, available at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2013/11/26/national-dimensions-of-saada-conflict/quo/>.

<sup>84</sup> (U) Farea al-Muslimi, “Amid Yemeni Unification Efforts, Houthis Remain Delicate Issue,” *Al-Monitor*, dated: 19 July 2013, available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/07/yemen-houthi-movement-politics-national-dialogue.html#>.

<sup>85</sup> (U) April Longley Alley, “Yemen’s Houthi Takeover,” *Middle East Institute*, dated: 22 December 2014, available at: <http://www.mei.edu/content/article/yemens-houthi-takeover>; Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, “How Yemen’s Houthis Control Sanaa and Alarm the West,” *Reuters*, dated: 9 December 2014, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/09/us-yemen-houthis-insight-idUSKBN0JN1OU20141209>.

intimidation, and temporary accommodation with the ROYG, while seeking to coopt elements of the government's administration and security forces.

As the Huthi areas of activity expanded, the group increasingly clashed with AQAP. By the end of 2014, AQAP had directly targeted Huthi positions in and around San'a. This met with swift Huthi reprisals. Huthi attacks within Sunni tribal areas have steadily increased the prospects of a full-blown sectarian conflict.<sup>86</sup>

**4.0 The Huthi Strategy.** Huthi activities have continued to demonstrate an intimate and intuitive grasp of the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that influence human behavior. The group has employed operational methods that are suitable to its objectives, including effective communications with key audiences. However, there is also little doubt that ROYG incompetence has contributed to the Huthi success. The ROYG military campaign, spearheaded by its conscript army, was from the beginning characterized by indiscriminate brutality, inadequate combat performance, command and control breakdowns, civil-military tensions, and a deep misunderstanding of the Human Domain and its associated dynamics. Since 2011, ROYG forces have largely abandoned the field, further enabling Huthi territorial expansion. The following paragraphs seek to explain some of the key aspects of the effective Huthi strategy.

**4.1 *Creating Desired Effects among Relevant Actors.*** The Huthis have been successful in identifying, understanding, and influencing relevant individuals, groups and populations. In the 1990s and early 2000s, Huthi family leaders established strong alliances in Sa'da and other Zaydi regions, using social work and lecture circles to indoctrinate followers, build their network, and mobilize segments of the population. They demonstrated strategic patience in cultivating multiple long-term relationships, marrying into prominent families for at least the last sixty years. These efforts paid off during subsequent years of violent conflict. The Huthi network of networks has furnished moral, materiel, and manpower support. As the regime in San'a targeted these networks, the Huthis were quick to exploit the resulting enmity towards the ROYG.

Huthi groups have capitalized on their control of territory for both tactical and symbolic reasons. For example, as the historical epicenter of Zaydism, the Sa'da governorate is replete with Zaydi tombs and pilgrimage sites. Huthi and related family tombs are among these, and the Huthi perseverance in Dahyan has associated them with this sacred area, while discrediting the ROYG for targeting the "Najaf of the Zaydis." Huthi fighters effectively controlled the Sa'da-to-San'a road, limiting ROYG movement through

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<sup>86</sup> (U) "[Blast Hits Houthi Rebel Base in Yemen Capital,](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/01/blast-houthis-yemen-sanaa-20151543542150432.html)" *al-Jazeera*, dated: 05 January 2015, available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/01/blast-houthis-yemen-sanaa-20151543542150432.html>.

the governorate. The Huthis also established a presence along the frontier with Saudi Arabia. When Huthi elements strayed across the porous border into Saudi Arabia, both Riyadh and San'a mounted a military response. The Huthis bested the forces of both governments during the ensuing skirmishes.

When the ROYG imposed road blockades to deny Huthi supporters access to critical resources—including water, propane, diesel fuel, and food—the Huthis responded by interdicting the supplies of tribes loyal to the government. The Huthis earned additional support by distributing these and other resources to people in ROYG-targeted areas and to friendly populations. The Huthis also interfered with the provision international aid, aggravating northern Yemen's humanitarian crisis, but also preventing this assistance from enhancing ROYG legitimacy.

*4.2 Building Trust with Key Actors, while Navigating the Hierarchy of Allegiances that is Often Shaped by Perceptions of Identity.* The Huthis demonstrated skill in building friendships, convincing neutrals to join their cause, and coercing adversaries—fragmenting ROYG alliances and delegitimizing the government's cause. From 2004 onwards, Huthi groups used family connections, bribes and material inducements, and an appeal based on shared suffering to successfully develop partnerships in strategically significant regions. The Huthis used marriage alliances to strengthen potentially weak affiliations, while providing broad autonomy to local leaders. These actions encouraged loyalty and persuaded undecided groups to support the Huthi campaign. Huthi groups exploited their access to resources to build support for their movement, while drawing attention to the diminishing ROYG means. These efforts played a central role in denying the ROYG support from key tribes and dividing the government's coalition. The Huthis successfully used *qabyala* norms and the Zaydi perspective to build trust and expand their partnerships.

The Huthis adeptly navigated the tribal hierarchies of allegiance. They preserved their legitimacy with core followers, while increasing their credibility and appeal among a broader base—gaining supporters and dissuading others from supporting the ROYG. Critically important, the Huthis avoided any actions that might confirm ROYG messaging (at least until 2014). They denied ROYG forces freedom of movement in key areas, achieved predominant influence and control over broad portions of Yemeni territory, and synchronized lethal and non-lethal efforts far more effective than the ROYG.

*4.3 Increasing Legitimacy and Generating Friendly Potential.* The Huthis skillfully portrayed their cause as a defensive struggle against ROYG brutality and aggression. They effectively employed locally appropriate themes to build legitimacy. The Huthis also outlined broad and often ambiguous goals to bring together an expansive coalition. During 2004-2010, they deliberately avoided articulating detailed goals that might alienate elements of their core support base or the larger Zaydi community. During the



2011-2013 period, the Huthi narrative, beyond its home base in Sa'da, espoused the same ambiguous language of the broader Yemeni Arab Spring. The Huthis focused their efforts on building friendships, coercing and discrediting—but not shaming—adversaries, and employing force in appropriate ways.

Huthi leaders integrated traditional Zaydi themes and idioms into their influence efforts. They staged major rallies to coincide with Zaydi and broader Islamic commemorations. By publically memorializing Huthi martyrs in ways and locations reminiscent of the Zaydi saints, the Huthis propagated a legitimate narrative that connected them with the sacred Zaydi past. In 2013, for example, when Husayn al-Huthi was finally buried in Sa'da, the funeral featured a Huthi honor guard in modern military uniforms, which accompanied Husayn's casket along a broad red carpet lined with more than 10,000 attendees. Husayn's body was then interred in a mausoleum, associating him with the Zaydi notables and scholars, whose tombs dot the Sa'da landscape.<sup>87</sup>

*4.4 Addressing Popular Grievances and Countering Adversary Messaging Through Words, Deeds, and Images.* The Huthis developed a narrative that connected with popular Yemeni political, economic, and ideological grievances. The Huthis maximized the effectiveness of their information campaign by developing a credible message, which they conveyed through a number of legitimate interlocutors. Inform and influence activities played a central part in the Huthi movement. Huthi communicators ensured their themes *and* the means by which they were transmitted were appropriate for both their core support base as well as broader audiences.

The Huthi narrative consistently emphasized themes that sought to promote the group's appeal to a broadening circle of Zaydis, northern Yemenis, and Yemeni nationalists across the country. From 2002 onwards, the Huthis stressed a series of strategic messages, drawing attention to the ROYG's violations of the Yemeni constitution and legal due process, corruption and inattention to regional needs, track record of "selling out" to the United States and Saudi Arabia, and promotion of Wahhabism and efforts to destroy Zaydi culture. Huthi communicators also highlighted the cruelty and incompetence of San'a's forces. Beginning in 2011, Huthi pronouncements pressured the ROYG to fulfill its Arab Spring commitments to rewrite the constitution, root out corruption, and permit the Yemeni regions a greater say in governance.

The Huthis learned to diversify their means of communication, enabling them to expand their access to key audiences. Dedicated websites featured lectures, media interviews, standardized chants and videos, learned Zaydi texts, and biographies of notable clerics.

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<sup>87</sup> (U) [Adel al-Khader, "Yemenis Bury Remains of Founder of Houthi Rebel Group," Reuters, dated: 5 June 2013, available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/05/us-yemen-burial-houthis-idUSBRE9540WP20130605.](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/05/us-yemen-burial-houthis-idUSBRE9540WP20130605)



By 2008, these websites also contained a running log of successful Huthi combat operations. ROYG efforts failed to shut down Huthi online activities. At the height of the 2011 Arab Spring, the Huthi media bureau had established radio and television stations. By 2015, the Huthis succeeded in taking over the Yemeni state media.

*4.5 Applying Force or the Threat of Force Judiciously and for Maximum Psychological Effect.* Huthi military efforts reinforced a sense of resolve, legitimacy, and martial prowess, while ROYG operations did not create a similar impact. The Huthis sought to maximize psychological effects, while exploiting the innate strengths of the Huthi fighters—including their mobility and intimate knowledge of the terrain. The geographically distributed Huthi groups largely operated as nimble squads and platoon-sized elements. By contrast, ROYG mechanized and armored forces were generally slow-moving, environmentally destructive, and incapable of precision. ROYG military units experienced frequent logistical shortages and consisted primarily of conscripts who possessed little local knowledge and understanding.

The Huthis often attacked isolated and weakly defended ROYG outposts and convoys, resulting in the destruction or capture of weapons, equipment, and vehicles. On some occasions, government troops abandoned their positions, following negotiations with Huthi leaders. Defections to the Huthi ranks occurred from time to time. The Huthis sought to conduct asymmetric operations, while avoiding pitched battles. They shunned large-scale assaults against fortified positions or efforts to hold terrain against superior ROYG forces. The Huthis generally avoided overly ambitious military operations that were beyond their capabilities. Their approach prevented any major defeats, while still inflicting several setbacks on the ROYG military.

The government forces failed to conduct effective population-centric and distributed operations. Even when ROYG units conducted military actions in strategically significant regions—Dahyan, Marran districts, and Bani Mu'adh—Huthi leaders could count on ROYG offensives faltering due to attrition and sustainment shortfalls.

**5.0 Key Insights for the Human Domain Concept.** From 2004-2010, the ROYG sought to eliminate the Huthi family and its network, while imposing control over Sa'da province. However, the instrument for accomplishing these ROYG goals was the poorly trained, equipped, and sustained Yemeni Army. Many Yemenis viewed ROYG methods and strategy as illegitimate according to local social and cultural norms. In the end, the ROYG's aims proved unrealistic. The Huthis easily characterized ROYG operations in northern Yemen as repression and portrayed the Salafi-influenced regime in Sa'na as morally compromised, due to its corruption and foreign alliances. While the ROYG sought to influence relevant actors through armed action and the patronage of local proxies, the government's military operations often resulted in increased Huthi legitimacy. This allowed the Huthis to recruit fighters and mobilize supporters. ROYG

aid to proxies had the unanticipated effect of awakening long-dormant tensions among competing individuals and groups. For their part, the Huthis successfully mounted their own patronage campaign, made possible thanks to their growing control over territory and resources, particularly during 2011-2014.

The Huthis intuitive grasp of the Human Domain in central and northern Yemen contributed to their stunningly rapid advance into San'a during 2014. They effectively exploited familial and tribal networks, while demonstrating a deep understanding of the elements influencing relevant actors in Yemen. Through January 2015, the Huthi-ROYG conflict suggests several key insights for the Human Domain Concept.

*5.1 Human Domain Primacy.* In developing strategic goals and operational objectives, leaders must grasp the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that influence human behavior. A comprehension of these elements should form the foundation for efforts to identify, understand, and influence relevant individuals, groups, and populations. The particular Human Domain characteristics in an area of operations must inform the development of the operational approach. Military leaders must continuously ensure operations and activities are appropriate for local conditions.<sup>88</sup>

*5.2 The Difficulty of Grasping and Exploiting Human Domain Characteristics.* The appropriate unit of analysis to effectively understand the Human Domain may prove exquisitely small. To enable enduring and credible influence over decisions and behavior, military leaders may have to examine dynamics at a "hyper-local" level. Only this hyper-local perspective permits insights into alliances, feuds, interests, and resources within a multi-layered environment with evolving networks based on kinship, affinity, or shared interests. Hyper-local dynamics will occur within the context of broader narratives and relationships at the provincial, national, and transnational levels. To operate in a manner that is appropriate given the Human Domain characteristics in the local environment, military forces may have to develop a level of understanding that may exceed the comprehension of some indigenous partners. This daunting challenge will require a persistent, disciplined, and self-critical effort and approach.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> (U) The ROYG failed to account for the mismatch between its aims and the Human Domain characteristics of the operating environment. It did not listen to local commanders who had an adequate visualization of the environment. The ROYG often neglected to build trust with influential actors, did not understand the local hierarchy of allegiances, and frequently delegitimized its own proxies.

<sup>89</sup> (U) Yemen's national security leadership and military forces spoke the same language, contained elements who were Zaydi, northern Yemeni, or from the dominant tribal confederations north of San'a, and were thus relatively local and seemed culturally aware to non-Yemeni observers. Nevertheless, ROYG personnel were rarely from the local governorate. Officials from western districts had only a partial grasp of the situation in eastern areas. The ROYG never fully exploited transnational partnerships the

5.3 *The Human Domain is Contestable*. A protagonist's ability to develop and use Human Domain understanding to influence decisions and behavior is to a large degree contingent on an adversary's relative incompetence.<sup>90</sup> Some measure of adversary Human Domain ineffectiveness is necessary to create a window of opportunity that military leaders can exploit. Furthermore, an indigenous actor is not necessarily knowledgeable of local dynamics, simply by virtue of his or her place of origin or residence. Rather, the critical activities appear to be an active—as opposed to passive or implicit—attention to Human Domain dynamics. The effective actor will intentionally and continually recalibrate operations that must form part of a broader, legitimate, and credible approach to achieve overarching strategic goals.

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way the Huthis did—especially with Iran, Gulf Shiite state and non-state actors, or Western media outlets. See Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, ["Iranian Support Seen Crucial for Yemen's Huthis," Reuters](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215), dated: 15 December 2015, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>; Iona Craig, ["What the Houthi Takeover of Sanaa Reveals about Yemen's Politics," Al-Jazeera America](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/25/houthi-yemen-takeover.html), dated: 25 September 2014, available at: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/25/houthi-yemen-takeover.html>; Robert Worth, ["A Living-room Crusade via Blogging," The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/20/world/middleeast/20blogger.html?pagewanted=all), dated: 20 May 2008, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/20/world/middleeast/20blogger.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>90</sup> (U) While simplistic to assert that "the enemy is only as good at this as we are bad at it," it is true that Huthi Human Domain successes were overwhelmingly facilitated by ROYG failures in every respect.

## Appendix D – Environmental Analysis and Assessment

### 1.0 General Description

This appendix examines how SOF analyzes and assesses the effectiveness of its operations, activities, and actions (OAA)—with the goal of adjusting the commander’s operational approach. A variety of methods can provide insights regarding the efficacy of special operations (SO), including social network analysis of threats, population sentiment analysis, and examination of open source indicators. The Environmental Analysis and Assessment (EA&A) process draws on each of these methods as part of a comprehensive approach.

As the name suggests, EA&A combines *analysis* and *assessment* functions to examine political, social, cultural, economic, and security trends within the environment. The Environmental Analysis function describes socio-cultural trends, forecasts the trajectory of these trends, and describes impacts on the operational environment and on SOF efforts and capabilities. The Strategic Assessment function provides feedback on SOF operations, gaging progress towards accomplishing command objectives and informing strategic and resource planning.

SOF conducts EA&A to measure the impact of OAA on the perceptions, decision-making, and behavior of relevant actors, while continuously examining second and third-order effects in the operating environment. EA&A evaluates operational impact, provides context to assessment results, and subsequently prioritizes limited resources.

EA&A enables a methodical and informed approach to planning and evaluating operations through clearly defined, quantifiable, and effects-based benchmarks of success that include measures of effectiveness (MOEs) and measures of performance (MOPs). SOF continually informs the EA&A process with data from multiple sources, including information from SOF units in theater, other Joint Force assets, interagency partners, and partner nations. *Via carefully developed metrics, the process describes changes in relevant actor behavior resulting from SO.* This information, in turn, enables learning, adaptation, and adjustment of the commander’s operational approach.

Environmental Analysis expands beyond traditional threat-based intelligence analysis by examining a variety of relevant factors related to the operational environment. This examination may include an analysis of Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, and Infrastructure (PMESII) dynamics and conditions. A key objective is to understand how threat networks exploit host nation vulnerabilities to gain influence over relevant individuals, groups, and populations. The combination of assessment and environmental analysis enhances SOF’s ability to collaborate with non-Defense U.S. Government (USG) departments and agencies. With improved insights, SOF and its

partners can develop comprehensive engagement options that address a wide range of issues—beyond what is possible via traditional, threat-based analysis.

## 2.0 Methodology

EA&A synthesizes quantitative and qualitative data through the modeling and analysis of environmental conditions. EA&A analysts may examine the level of security in an area or country, the availability and impact of technology, the economic and political situation, the use of energy resources, aspects of the physical environment, and social circumstances. EA&A combines the use of Environmental Analysis and Strategic Assessment to understand the second and third-order effects of SOF OAA in the environment, including the impact of SOF engagement with partner nation forces. The EA&A process generates a specific set of outputs for SOF.

2.1 *Environmental Analysis (EA)*. EA focuses on providing commanders with a greater appreciation of the dynamics affecting the operating environment. EA affords SOF the ability to quantify and qualify the impact of command OAA (including engagement) toward achieving strategic and operational objectives. Through the analysis of influence activities, EA enables SOF planners to understand the relevant actors that SOF must influence to achieve campaign objectives. Examples of what EA is able to describe in quantitative and qualitative terms are:

- Impact of SOF commanders engaging with host nation government officials.
- Effect of Civil Affairs activities on the perceptions of a host nation populace.

EA informs Strategic Assessment with data and analysis that enables a greater understanding of specific MOEs. Analysts can use, but are not limited to, the following techniques to gather data:

- Social Network Analysis (SNA). SNA quantifies the relationship between various relevant actors (including members of violent extremist organizations or VEOs), defines and measures sources of power, and determines the overall clout of individuals and groups within their respective spheres of influence and network.
- Sentiment Analysis (SA). SA involves the understanding of a population's perceptions of a host nation government's intentions and capabilities. It describes the level of influence of VEOs and the government in a particular country or area. SA seeks to understand the reasons a population may gravitate toward supporting VEOs rather than a legitimate government.
- Advanced Target Audience Analysis (TAA). TAA consists of international polling through the use of host nation nationals, trained as researchers and interviewers.
- Open Source Reporting (OSR). OSR relies on DOD and civilian open source data, OAA analysis, deep dives, operational planning team and country team reporting, after action reviews (AARs), and subject matter expert (SME)

interviews and analysis. OSR combines multiple data sources to understand socioeconomic trends.

**2.2 Strategic Assessment.** Strategic Assessment measures the contribution of OAA toward achieving campaign objectives and creating a desired state. Strategic Assessment provides an analytical framework for appraising the results of operations. This type of assessment, for example, may examine the impact of engagement on developing partner nation forces' capability and capacity. Strategic Assessment can consider, but is not limited to, data from the following activities:

- Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET)
- Civil Affairs (CA)/Civil Military Support Element (CMSE) missions
- Military Information Support Operations (MISO)
- Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE)
- Counter Narcotics Training (CNT)
- Key Leader Engagements (KLE)
- Staff Assistance Visits (SAV)
- Mobile Training Teams (MTT)

Deployment and exercise AARs, Special Operations Debrief and Retrieval System (SODARS) reports, Joint Training Information Management System (JTIMS) reports, Commanding General trip reports, Regional Working Groups summary reports, and country team engagement reports are also important sources of information. Analysts look for trends across a variety of reports and time periods. They can assign a quantitative value to an activity based on its overall importance toward achieving an objective or creating a desired effect (e.g., "who was trained" weighted more heavily than "how many were trained").

**2.3 Assessment Process.** The assessment process combines quantitative and qualitative evaluations to provide a comprehensive impact assessment. Peer analysts and SMEs review assessments to verify completeness. The assessment process will vary based on particular requirements and the availability of assessment capabilities. As a foundation, the assessment process should track the progress of the friendly forces' campaign. EA&A analysts work with planners to inform the commander's decision cycle. The analysts and planners can align OAA by type and country to the campaign's MOEs, then develop a MOE "score" that reflects the relative impact on creating a desired effect. Analysts aggregate MOE scores to generate effects scores. These effects are tied to campaign Intermediate Military Objectives (IMO) and Lines of Effort (LOE). As a result, analysts can measure the combined OAA results for each IMO or LOE.

**2.4 Outputs.** EA&A provides commanders with analytically sound data. Output and results may include the following:

- Rigorous justification for resource allocation decisions.
- OAA that align with campaign objectives.
- Operationally effective OAA within the context of the environment.
- Prioritized and focused future engagements.
- Integrated processes with improved staff collaboration and visibility.
- Focused, well-informed, and prioritized initiatives within the Program Objective Memorandum (POM)/Integrated Priority List (IPL).

### 3.0 The EA&A Role within the Commander's Decision Cycle

EA&A is an integral part of campaign planning and provides SOF planners and leaders with the ability to evaluate the impact of OAA, using unique evaluation methods and criteria. Each Combatant Commander's reporting and assessment requirement necessitates mission-specific measures. These measures seek to analyze the impact and effectiveness of operations and engagement activities, with the goal of refining the commander's approach to achieve objectives and create desired effects.

EA&A contributes to all four phases of the Commander's Decision Cycle. The assessment framework operates within—and provides input for—each phase:

3.1 *Assess*. The Assess Phase determines progress towards achieving IMOs, the desired state, and the commander's vision. The Assess Phase also updates information on the operating environment. Output may include an updated visualization of the operating environment, the Commander's Campaign Assessment, and Recommended Commander's Guidance. EA&A activities during the Assess Phase provide:

- An understanding of the environment to enable operational design and “deep dives” using internal and external SMEs, including individuals from academia and representatives from non-Defense USG departments and agencies.
- The Commander's Campaign Assessment that identifies progress toward creating intended effects and achieving IMOs and the desired state.

3.2 *Plan*. The Plan Phase considers the nature of influences, network connections, and AOR and LOE perspectives. Output may include data to inform the development of additional collection plans, the identification of new research areas, and the production of a revised strategy and campaign plan with updated LOEs/IMOs/effects. EA&A analysts during the Plan Phase will:

- Refine data on near, mid, and far-term trends that have implications for SOF.
- Identify sources of input for assessments.
- Develop and update IMOs, effects, and MOEs.

3.3 *Direct*. The Direct Phase will commit resources to create desired effects, determine key targets and audit trails, and develop AOR and LOE perspectives. Output may

include data to prioritize OAA and targets, KLEs, and partner nation activities—as well as to inform the IPL and POM. EA&A analysts during the Direct Phase will:

- Develop a value model (incorporating quantitative and qualitative techniques) to produce a prioritization framework for OAA.
- Use the prioritization framework to develop inputs for the IPL and POM, while providing justification for resource allocation decisions.

*3.4 Monitor.* Activities during the Monitor Phase will draw upon a variety of staff processes within a command. Staff sections monitor their individual staff functions to maintain current staff estimates. A key goal is to minimize staff overlap. Leaders work together to develop an integrated approach. EA&A analysts must interact with the staff during all phases of planning and execution. Output may include a variety of reports, including situation reports, AARs, OAA reports, and KLE reports; updated authoritative data; and information on the current operating environment. EA&A analysts during the Monitor Phase will:

- Develop standardized reporting formats that are directly tied to measuring effects and achieving IMOs.
- Use standardized reporting to develop “quick turn” analysis.

#### **4.0 Benefits of EA&A**

EA&A driven by Combatant Command planning requirements and campaign plan objectives allows for:

- Enhanced understanding of the operational context.
- Rigorous and defensible metrics on achieving objectives.
- Appropriate allocation of limited resources, including funding and personnel.
- Engagement types aligned to mission objectives.
- Focused and prioritized resources for operations.
- Ranking of OAA according to operational and strategic objectives.
- Qualitative analysis of OAA and relationship-building efforts.
- Greater impact for senior military leader engagements.
- Improved correlation between OAA and changes in the AOR.
- Supportable arguments to demonstrate the impact of OAA.
- Country-level analysis on the effectiveness of partner nation engagements.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

EA&A is an integral part of the “means” of the OHD Concept. Through the continual analysis and assessment of OAA, EA&A can help SOF identify and influence relevant actors. EA&A assists SOF to confirm priority engagement requirements with allies, partners, and potential supporters. EA&A also provides SOF leaders a tool to modify



and adjust operations to achieve desired effects. Analysts must tailor the EA&A methodology and the composition of the analytical team as circumstances change. EA&A capabilities contribute to all phases of the operation and the Commander's Decision Cycle.

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## Appendix F – Glossary and Acronyms

**Human Dimension.** The moral, cognitive, and physical components of individual and organizational development and performance essential to raise, prepare, and employ Joint Forces in full spectrum operations (derived from Joint Staff J7, Information Memorandum, subject: Commonly Used “Human Terms,” dated: 21 June 2012). The inward capabilities and attributes of military personnel and their leaders. Includes required human capabilities for accomplishing Joint Force missions. The Human Dimension does not address the people present in the operational environment. Derived from ARCIC memorandum, Subject: Relationship between Human Dimension and Human Domain, dated: 11 May 2012.

**Human Domain.** The people (individuals, groups, and populations) in the environment, including their perceptions, decision-making, and behavior. Description: Operations in the Human Domain depend on an understanding of, and competency in, the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that affect and influence the domain. These operations require the application of capabilities through the five elements to identify and influence relevant populations to enhance stability, prevent conflict, and, when necessary, fight and defeat adversaries. The success of any strategy, operation, or tactical action depends on effective operations in the Human Domain. In some respects the Human Domain is a medium of people in the environment over which SOF must exercise influence and compete for advantage with adversary forces. The Human Domain is also a sphere of knowledge and activity.

**Human Dynamics.** The actions and interactions of personal, interpersonal, and social/contextual factors and their effects on behavioral outcomes. Human Dynamics are influenced by factors such as economics, religion, politics, and culture. See: *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Joint Force on Understanding Human Dynamics* dated: March 2009.

**Human Environment.** The physical, cultural, and social elements that influence unique capabilities in human behavior vital to the success of military operations (Joint Staff J7, Information Memorandum, subject: Commonly Used “Human Terms,” dated: 21 June 2012). The 2011-2015 Defense Intelligence Guidance, published in September 2010 by the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)), introduced the term "Human Environment" to characterize, and increase focus on, the role of the "individual" in the operational environment; whether that individual is characterized as an enemy, or part of the population the U.S. is attempting to persuade and/or protect. .

**Human Factors.** The psychological, cultural, behavioral, and other human attributes that influence decision-making, the flow of information, and the interpretation of information by individuals or groups. Source: JP 2-0.

**Human Geography.** A field of study focusing on the relationships between people and places, emphasizing spatial-temporal patterns of geo-referenced human traits and activities in the context of their environment. Source: NDU.

**Human Terrain.** The social ethnographic, cultural and economic, and political elements of the people with whom the Joint Force is operating (Joint Staff J7, Information Memorandum, subject: Commonly Used “Human Terms,” dated: 21 June 2012). The Human Terrain System supports operational decision-making, enhances operational effectiveness, and preserves and shares socio-cultural institutional knowledge. While important to the overall mission, Human Terrain is not as holistic and comprehensive as Human Domain. Source: ARCIC memorandum, Subject: Relationship between Human Dimension and Human Domain, dated: 11 May 2012.

**Human Terrain Mapping.** A discipline that integrates geo-referenced social, cultural, political, economic, infrastructure data and elements of the information environment into all-source and multi-INT analyses concerning areas of operations. Source: NDU.

**Information Environment.** The aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. Source: JP 3-13.

**Population-centric conflict.** A confrontation between parties in which the perceptions and behavior of the relevant populations affects the conduct and outcome of hostilities.

**Sociocultural Dynamics Analysis.** Analysis of the social, cultural and behavioral factors characterizing the relationships of the population and individuals of interest in a specific region or operational environment. Includes: population support and stability; population and environmental characteristics; populations supporting active insurgencies; human factors; cultural factors within foreign military and security forces; foreign media analysis; population support to covert military operations. Source: NDU.

**Underground.** The underground is that element of the insurgent organization that conducts operations in areas normally denied to the auxiliary and the guerrilla Joint Force. The underground is a cellular organization within the insurgency that conducts covert or clandestine activities that are compartmentalized. This secrecy may be by necessity, by design, or both depending on the situation. Most underground operations are required to take place in and around population centers that are held by counterinsurgent forces. Underground members often fill leadership positions, overseeing specific functions that are carried out by the auxiliary. The underground and auxiliary—although technically separate elements—are, in reality, loosely connected elements that provide coordinated capabilities for the insurgent movement. The key distinction between them is that the underground is the element of the insurgent organization that operates in areas denied to the guerrilla Joint Force. Members of the underground often control cells used to neutralize informants and collaborators from

within the insurgency and the population. See JP 3-24, page II-17.

**Acronym List:**

<b>A2/AD</b>	Anti-Access/Area Denial
<b>ARCIC</b>	Army Capabilities Integration Center
<b>ASCOPE</b>	Area, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, and Events
<b>CBA</b>	Capabilities Based Assessment
<b>CCJO</b>	Capstone Concept for Joint Operations
<b>CS</b>	Cooperative Security
<b>CTAF</b>	Counterterrorism Assessment Framework
<b>DO</b>	Deterrence Operations
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
<b>DOTMLPF-P</b>	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy.
<b>EA&amp;A</b>	Environmental Analysis and Assessment
<b>GSN</b>	Global SOF Network
<b>ICAF</b>	Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework
<b>IDAD</b>	Internal Defense and Development
<b>IW</b>	Irregular Warfare
<b>JCA</b>	Joint Capability Area
<b>JCOA</b>	Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis
<b>JIC</b>	Joint Integrating Concept
<b>JIPOE</b>	Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment
<b>JOAC</b>	Joint Operational Access Concept
<b>JOC</b>	Joint Operating Concept
<b>JP</b>	Joint Publication
<b>JPME</b>	Joint Professional Military Education
<b>MISO</b>	Military Information Support Operations
<b>MOE</b>	Measure of Effectiveness



<b>MOP</b>	Measure of Performance
<b>NDU</b>	National Defense University
<b>OHD</b>	Operating in the Human Domain
<b>PMESII-PT</b>	Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Physical Environment, and Time
<b>ROMO</b>	Range of Military Operations
<b>SAE</b>	Special Area of Emphasis
<b>SNT</b>	Social Network Theory
<b>SOCCENT</b>	Special Operations Command Central
<b>SOF</b>	Special Operations Forces
<b>SSTRO</b>	Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USAF</b>	United States Air Force
<b>USD(I)</b>	Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence
<b>USG</b>	U.S. Government
<b>UW</b>	Unconventional Warfare
<b>VSO</b>	Village Stability Operations
<b>WWII</b>	World War II