



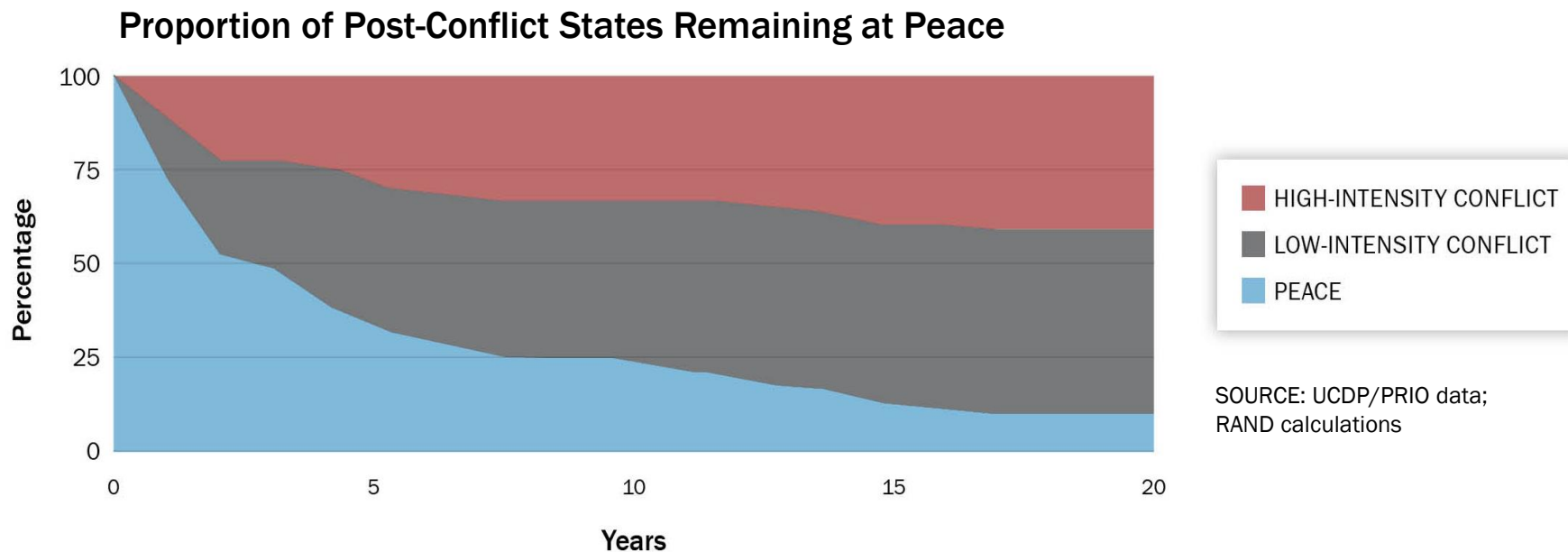
Uses and Limits of U.S. Leverage in Fragile States

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How Can the United States Consolidate Gains to Achieve Acceptable, Durable Political Outcomes?

- U.S. military doctrine emphasizes the need to “consolidate gains” by turning military victories into durable political gains
- Many or most insurgencies that end recur within a few years – although often at reduced levels of violence



How Much Leverage Does the U.S. Have?

Two Sides of the Debate

	PROPONENTS OF LEVERAGE	SKEPTICS OF LEVERAGE
ASYMMETRY OF INTERESTS BETWEEN U.S. AND PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners prefer to govern through narrow coalitions Partners undermine institutionalized capacity-building to solidify own rule 	
STRENGTH OF U.S. INCENTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External incentives will generally be strong since local partner needs outside support to survive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External incentives are weak in comparison to internal threats that are existential and enduring
SUFFICIENCY OF INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The U.S. can adequately observe the extent to which partners comply with U.S. demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local partners can hide the extent of their compliance with U.S. demands
U.S. ABILITY TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. can craft ex ante conditions U.S. can credibly threaten to withhold aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wherever U.S. has major interests or a large footprint, threats to withdraw aid lack credibility

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: Iraq and Afghanistan Case Studies



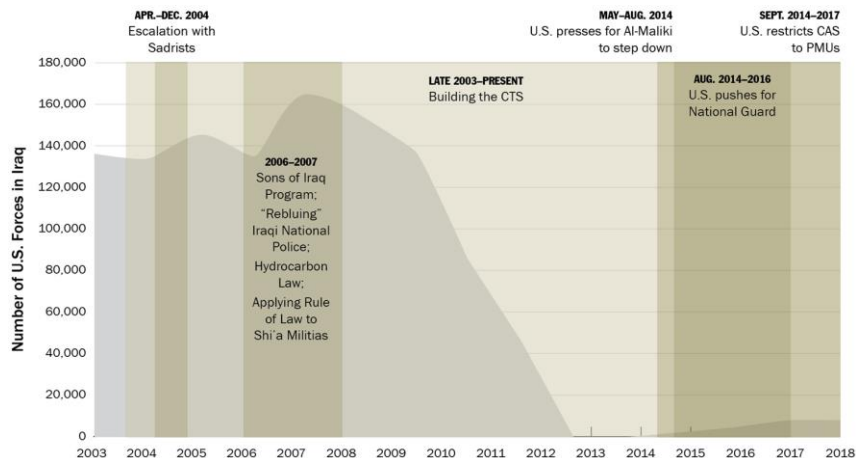
Overview of Qualitative Research Approach

GOAL: Determine whether, how, and why U.S. efforts are associated with improvements in partner performance

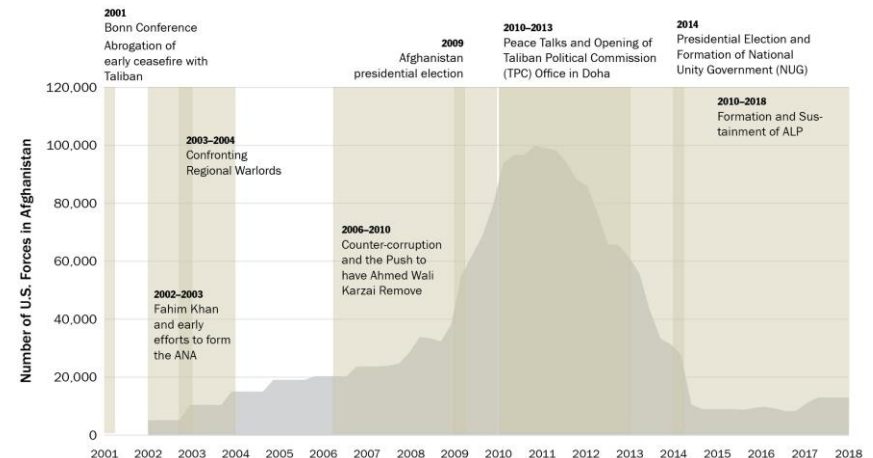
APPROACH: In-depth analysis of 18 critical episodes in Afghanistan and Iraq

DATA: Extensive document review and key stakeholder interviews

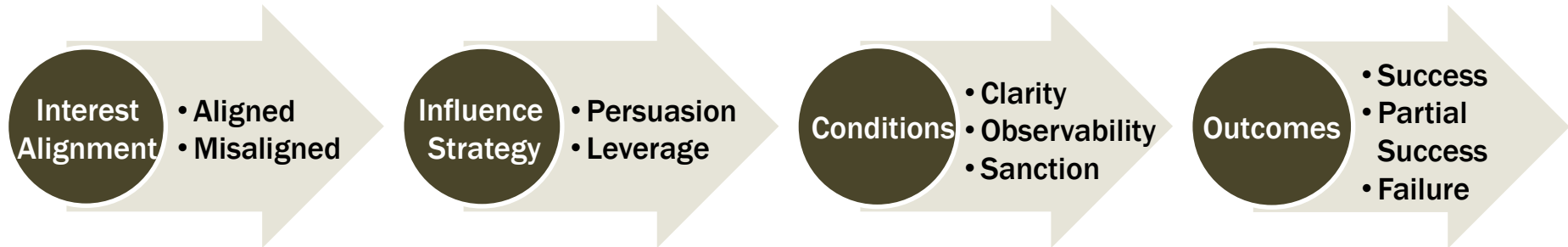
Timeline of Critical Episodes in Iraq



Timeline of Critical Episodes in Afghanistan



Leverage Process



U.S. and partner might prefer inclusion, institutionalized capacity-building—or the opposite

When interests misalign, odds of success are likely lower

U.S. can persuade partners or put conditions on aid

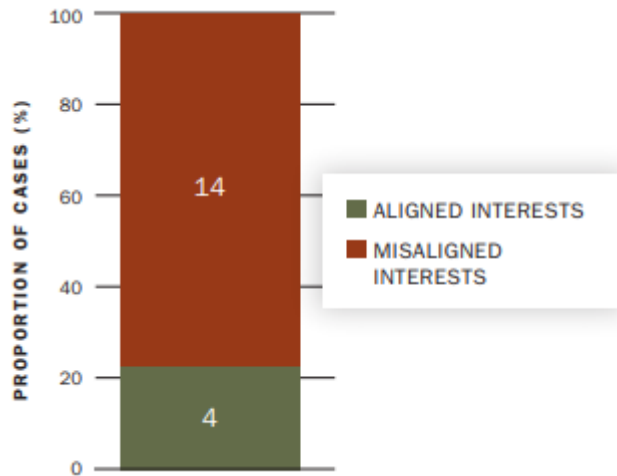
When interests are misaligned, leverage is likely needed for success

For leverage to succeed, the U.S. must make clear demands, the desired outcome must be observable, and the U.S. must threaten strong sanctions

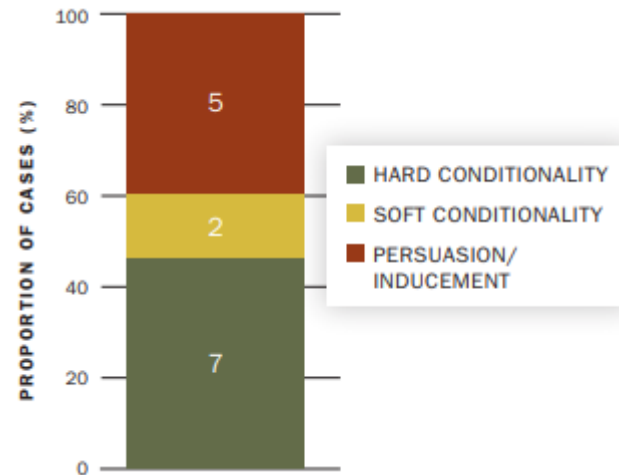
Success or failure is a function of interest alignment, correct choice of influence strategy, and presence of prerequisites for effective leverage

When Interests Diverged, U.S. Appears to Have Under-Utilized Conditionality

Extent of Interest Alignment

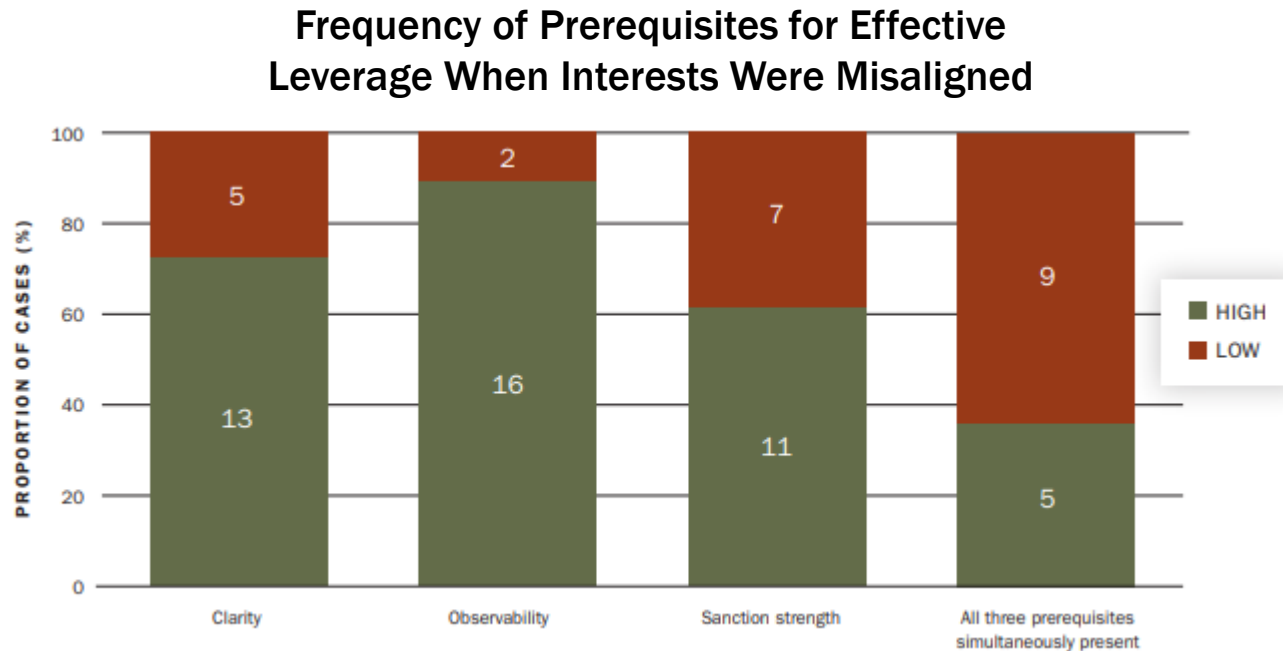


Uses of Leverage When Interests Misaligned



- U.S. and partner interests rarely aligned – although in some cases, partners sought *more* inclusive outcomes than the U.S. did
- The frequency with which the U.S. opted not to use leverage when interests diverged suggests there are more opportunities

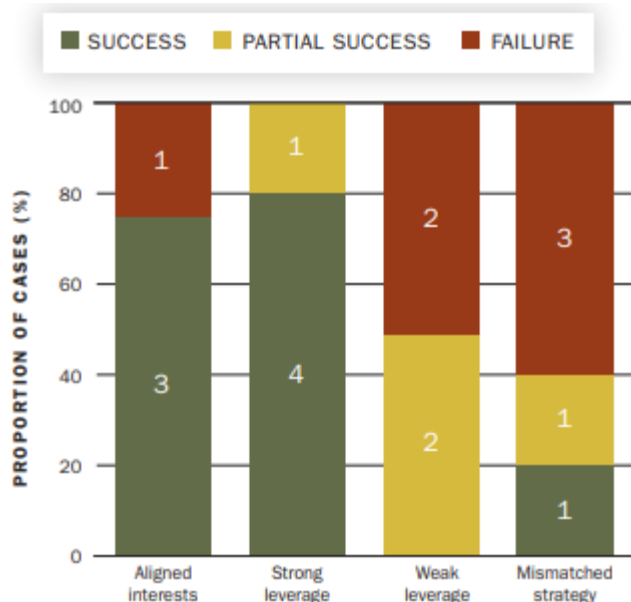
Prerequisites for Effective Leverage Were Often Present



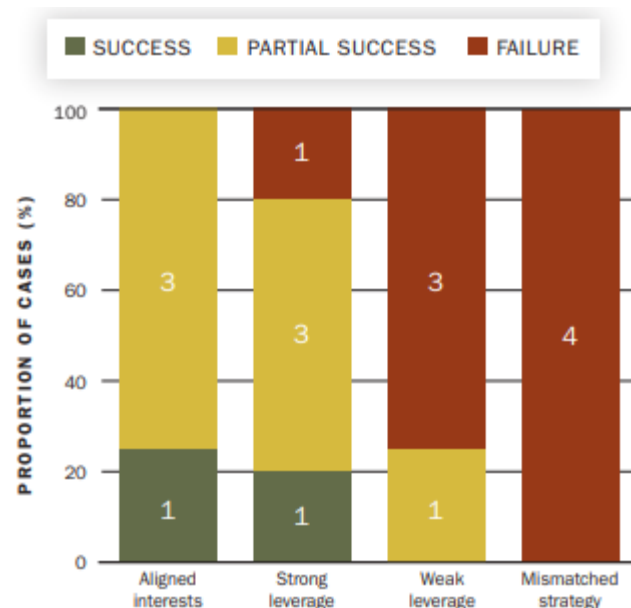
- To exercise leverage effectively, the United States must
 - Make clear, prioritized demands
 - Be able to observe whether the partner meets the demand
 - Threaten punishments (or offer rewards) greater than costs of fulfilling the demand
- Skeptics of the effectiveness of leverage claim these conditions often do not apply, but they were usually present in Iraq and Afghanistan

U.S. Leverage Was Partially Successful When Prerequisites Were In Place

Short-Term Success of Influence Attempts



Long-Term Success of Influence Attempts



- When interests aligned or all prerequisites for effective leverage were in place, U.S. use of leverage was generally successful in the short term
- Success rates were substantially lower in the long term, but even then, the U.S. was usually partially successful in cases of aligned interests or “strong” leverage
- When interests misaligned and the U.S. did not use leverage, or where a prerequisite for leverage was absent, the result was almost always failure

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: Cross-National Analysis, 1975-2009



Overview of Quantitative Research Approach










GOAL: Determine *how often* interventions are associated with more inclusive governance and more durable peace

APPROACH: Cross-national statistical (regression) analysis of all conflict-affected ethnic groups from 1975-2009

DATA: Existing social-science data sets (e.g., UCDP/PRIO, EPR)

VARIABLE	DEFINITION	DATA SOURCE
POLITICAL INCLUSION	Political inclusion of ethnic groups that previously fought the government	EPR
DURABILITY OF PEACE	Years following a conflict without return to high- or low-intensity violence	UCDP/PRIO
CONFLICT-ERA INTERVENTION	Indicator when the previous conflict experienced pro-government intervention in its last 5 years	UCDP/PRIO
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE	Official development assistance (ODA) from OECD member states in constant 2015 USD, logged	OECD
ARMS TRANSFERS	Trend-indicator value (TIV): a measurement used by SIPRI to measure volume of weapons transfers, logged	SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Intervention Effects on Political Inclusion

	COLD WAR	POST-COLD WAR
CONFLICT-ERA INTERVENTION (ALL)		
CONFLICT-ERA INTERVENTION (OECD STATES)		
CONFLICT-ERA INTERVENTION (NON-OECD)		
POST-CONFLICT CIVIL AID (OECD)		
POST-CONFLICT ARMS TRANSFERS (OECD)		
POST-CONFLICT ARMS TRANSFERS (NON-OECD)		



More likely to be inclusive

Less likely to be inclusive

- During the Cold War, both conflict-period intervention and post-conflict aid are associated with *lower* political inclusion
- In the post-Cold War era, both conflict-period intervention and post-conflict aid are associated with *greater* political inclusion – with the exception of arms transfers
- These results suggest outside support may influence the political character of post-conflict governments, contrary to the arguments of skeptics

Intervention Effects on Peace Duration

COLD WAR POST-COLD WAR

CONFLICT-ERA
INTERVENTION
(ALL)

CONFLICT-ERA
INTERVENTION
(OECD STATES)



CONFLICT-ERA
INTERVENTION
(NON-OECD)

POST-CONFLICT
CIVIL AID (OECD)



POST-CONFLICT
ARMS TRANSFERS
(OECD)



POST-CONFLICT
ARMS TRANSFERS
(NON-OECD)



More likely to endure



Less likely to endure

- We see a similar pattern regarding peace duration
- Cold War-era support is generally associated with worse outcomes and post-Cold War-era support with better outcomes
- These effects are limited, though, to conflict-period interventions by and aid from OECD states and the relationships are somewhat weaker

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Summary of Key Findings



Long-term stabilization is frequently achievable but challenging

- Although conflict recurrence is high after the end of an insurgency, often it is short-lived or low-intensity
- Roughly half of post-conflict states do not return to high-intensity war for long periods of time



External aid appears to be associated with improved odds of stabilization

- External assistance in the post-Cold War period is associated with substantially higher levels of political inclusion and lower risk of conflict recurrence



Leverage appears to be an important aspect of foreign assistance

- U.S. leverage was often responsible for positive outcomes in our qualitative analysis
- The pattern of outcomes in our quantitative analysis is consistent with the hypothesis that aid as an instrument of leverage, not just as a technical mechanism for capacity-building, is often critical to positive results



The U.S. appears to have insufficiently exploited its potential leverage

- There were many instances in Iraq and Afghanistan when the U.S. did not use its leverage despite the prerequisites for effective leverage being in place
- Effective leverage was possible in periods of small-footprint operations

Policy Recommendations

PRINCIPLES	IMPLEMENTATION
CALIBRATE EXPECTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize that about one-half of post-conflict countries quickly return to at least low levels of violence• Recognize stabilization is a long-term commitment
PRIORITIZE INCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Err on side of inclusion• Develop clear “redlines” and “offramps”
FOCUS LEVERAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose “hard conditionality” priorities carefully• Ensure consistency of crisis management, long-term goals
COMMUNICATE CLEARLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate priority demands at Cabinet Secretary level• Voice simple, easily understood demands• Ensure consistent messaging
MONITOR PERFORMANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop appropriate I&W and PIRs• Focus resources for information collection accordingly
DEVELOP CARROTS, STICKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct “wants” analysis to understand available levers• Offer small “side payments” as face-saving measures• Ensure consistency in the field



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Securing Gains in Fragile States

Using U.S. Leverage in Iraq, Afghanistan,
and Beyond



Using U.S. Leverage to Limit Instability in Fragile States

Executive Summary

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