[718] Working Paper

Civil-Military Cooperation in Multinational and Interagency Operations

Discussion Paper on Operational Terminologies and Assessment for Multinational Experiment 5 [MNE5]

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[Summary and Main Suggestions] This paper discusses obstacles to civil-military cooperation in the context of multinational and interagency operations, with a special focus on assessment functions and processes. As such, the paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing process of developing a framework for assessment of operations within the context of MNE5. The rationale behind this study is to strengthen the basis for and the effectiveness of Effects-Based Assessment (EBA) of performances, effects, and end-states in multinational and interagency operations. The first section starts by identifying a set of key overall challenges to such cooperation, namely civilian and military actors' often lack of knowledge of one another's organizational identities, security concerns, and working procedures. The paper then discusses one of these categories, namely working procedures, in more detail, identifying in the second section the challenge of divergent operational terminologies, and in the third section the challenge of overcoming the information sharing gap when in the presence of similar assessment practices. The main suggestion of this paper is that knowledge about civilian and military operational terminologies and assessment practices is an imperative for successful civil-military cooperation in multinational and interagency operations. Such knowledge, we argue, is best obtained if both military and civilian actors respectively open their communication channels with the purpose of sharing information and operational experiences. Furthermore, based on the discussion, the paper raises a number of points which the authors believe would be valuable topics for further developing civil-military cooperation within the context of multinational and interagency operations.

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Preface

The nature of international crisis management operations has changed in the last decade. Not only have such operations increased in frequency and size, but they have also become more complex and involve more and different actors in the political planning process and in the field – at the strategic level as well as the operational and tactical levels. Indeed, between 2005 and 2006, the total number of international peacekeeping deployments carried out by the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), NATO, the African Union (AU), and other regional organizations increased from approximately 116,500 to 149,000.[1] In addition, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were increasingly contributing with non-military personnel in the field, often alongside the same operation.

Taking the above into consideration, a key stated aim of the Multinational Experiment 5 (MNE5)[2] is to increase the harmonization between military and civilian activities; between international organizations, single states, and NGOs involved in multinational and interagency operations. Such efforts would, it is argued, be beneficial to both the military and the civilian side.[3] The main objective of the comprehensive approach is to achieve multi-dimensional and system-wide effects in multinational and interagency operations. Furthermore, a more comprehensive approach to multinational and interagency operations would also address the problem of overstretched capacities for actors such as the UN, NATO, and the United States, as well as contributing to improve the overall cost-efficiency and successfulness of such operations.

The main aim of this paper is to identify the key challenges to civil-military cooperation in the context of multinational and interagency operations. More specifically, the paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing process of developing a framework for assessment of operations within the context of MNE5. The rationale behind such a study is to strengthen the basis for and the effectiveness of Effects-Based Assessment (EBA) of performances, effects, and end-states in multinational operations. Such improvement, we argue, can only be achieved by increasing involved actors' knowledge about one another's organizational identities, objectives, and standard working

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[1] Center on International Cooperation, 'Annual Review of Global Peace Operations', (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), v.

[2] The purpose of the MNE5 is to investigate the uses of concepts and supporting tools for conducting operations in a coalition environment. The experiment is led by the United States, with U.S. Joint Forces Command's (USJFCOM) Joint Experimentation Directorate as the executive agent

[3] United States Joint Forces Command, 'Effects-Based Approach to Multinational Operations. Concept of Operations (Conops) with Implementing Procedures', (Suffolk: United States Joint Forces Command, 2006) at 1.

procedures. This is particularly true when it comes to operational terminologies and assessment practices.

The first part of this paper outlines some general challenges to civil-military cooperation in multinational and interagency operations. The second part focuses on the conceptual level of such cooperation, demonstrating how divergent terminologies can create critical obstacles for communication and coordination. The third and final part looks at evaluation practices within the UN, similar to those outlined as part of EBAO. Based on an overview of Real-Time Evaluations (RTEs), it suggests that knowledge about other actors' standard working procedures in this area is a key premise for successful civil-military cooperation, not only in terms of performing assessments, but also in terms of developing assessment methodology and procedures.

1. Civil-military Cooperation in Multinational and interagency Operations

While many attempts have been made to improve civil-military cooperation in multinational and interagency operations in the past, field studies show that *de facto* cooperation remains inadequate and too ad-hoc. Former studies seem to agree on at least three overall challenges to such cooperation, which can all be prescribed as resulting from lack of knowledge.

The first challenge has to do with civilian and military actors' lacking knowledge about one another's *organizational identities* in the meaning the traditions, cultures, images, and fundamental goals that constitute and constrain their activities in multinational operations. Indeed, stereotyping and prejudices due to lack of knowledge and information about one another's work sometimes represent root obstacles to civil-military cooperation. A fundamental point of principle for many humanitarian organisations is, for instance, to protect their identities as independent, impartial actors when working in the field.[4] From such a viewpoint, the military can never be seen as either independent or impartial, as they will always be constrained by political interests as well as by mission mandates. Furthermore, civilian actors have at times argued that the military lacks knowledge about and experience on delivering aid, and that they are too concerned with mission mandates and logistical questions.[5] Another frustration that has been expressed by civilian actors is that while the military frequently turn to them to get information, they are often reluctant to return the favour.

On the military side, the fact that civilian actors are not a homogenous group is sometimes neglected. As pointed out by Michael Pugh, a key obstacle to closer cooperation in multinational and interagency cooperation is precisely "the sheer scale and fragmentation of actors, activities, and perceptions in the civilian sector."[6] Indeed, the "jungle" of civilian organisations can sometimes make it hard for military actors in the field to keep the various organisations and their activities apart. On the overall political level, however, military actors acknowledge that the tag "civilian organisations" encompasses many different types of actors. In the document "NATO Civil-Military Co-operation Doctrine", for instance, NATO distinguishes between three principal types of civilian organisations: International organisations (IOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and international and

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[4] The concepts of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence are for instance among the fundamental principles for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. See International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'Annual Report 2005', (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2006).

[5] Thomas Mockhaitis, 'Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations: The Case of Kosovo ', (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College, 2004).

[6] Michael Pugh, 'Civil-Military Relations in International Peace Operations', in Jürg M. Gabriel Thomas Bernauer, Kurt R. Spillmann, Andreas Wenger (ed.), *Peace Support Operations. Lessons Learned and Future Perspectives* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2001).

national government donor agencies. The group of IOs first and foremost includes intergovernmentally founded organisations such as the various UN-agencies, the civilian branches of the EU, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).[7] Furthermore, the group of NGOs, which are usually non-profit based and independent from political control, comprises both internationally based NGOs such as Médicins sans Frontières (MSF), The Red Cross, Save the Children, and Amnesty International, and nationally based NGOs such as Freedom House (US), and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA).[8] Finally, the group of international and national government donor agencies includes for example European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).[9]

A second overall challenge to civil-military cooperation is lack of knowledge about one another's *security concerns*. For civilian actors, the always imminent threat of becoming a target in the conflict, sometimes make cooperation with the military necessary. In its 2006 annual report, for instance, MSF points out how "targeted attacks against aid workers including MSF staff, mak[e] land travel and logistical assistance close to impossible."[10] At the same time, however, it is often crucial for humanitarian actors like the MSF to uphold their impartiality and independence in a conflict.[11] Too close cooperation with the military may – in the worst case – create doubt in the local community regarding the organization's impartiality and neutrality.

For the military, in contrast, the central dilemma is rather the security risk connected with sharing operational information with civilian actors. At times, civilian personnel have been accused by the military of being too naïve about the security risks in conflict areas, and for refusing to fall into line with military structures.[12] Furthermore, trust and loyalty are key issues in this context. If, for instance, the military is to inform civilian actors about impending attacks in areas where they are based – for the safety of their field workers – it is crucial that they keep this information to themselves. Should the civilian actors in question decide to remain loyal to the principle of impartiality and therefore inform locals about the attack, they might

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[7] Nato, 'Nato Civil-Military Cooperation (Cimic) Doctrine', (Brussels: NATO, 2003).

[8] It should be noted that the World Bank deliberately has sought to replace the term "NGOs" with the broader, more comprehensive term "Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)". CSOs are defined as non-governmental, non-profit organisations "that have a presence in public life and express the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations". See World Bank Civil Society Team, 'Consultations with Civil Society', (Washington D.C: World Bank, 2007).

[9] Nato, 'Nato Civil-Military Cooperation (Cimic) Doctrine'.

[10] The issue of security concerns is for instance discussed in Médicins Sans Frontières, 'International Activity Report 2006', (Médicins sans Frontières, 2006).

[11] For a discussion of dilemmas connected to humanitarian space, see Espen Barth Eide et al., 'Report on Integrated Missions. Practical Perspectives and Recommendations.' (Oslo: NUPI, 2005).

[12] Mockhaitis, 'Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations: The Case of Kosovo '.

jeopardize the entire military operation, and put the lives of military personnel in danger.

The third and final challenge to civil-military cooperation concerns civilian and military actors' lack of knowledge about one another's *diverging working procedures* in the planning, action, and assessment-phases of an operation. Above all, there are large civil-military as well as intra-civilian variations when it comes to defining operational end-goals and establishing a working plan for achieving these. As one humanitarian organisation points out: "there are more and more aid organisations and agencies involved in the business of aid. Many have different values, goals and strategies."[13] In this context, two particular aspects should be emphasised: On the planning and action level, the lack of convergence between operational terminologies used by civilian and military actors represents a major barrier to civil-military cooperation. On the assessment level, the great differences between how operational processes and outcomes are evaluated and reviewed by civilian and military organisations, cause equally tough headaches. These two challenges are discussed more thoroughly in the following two sections.

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[13] Médicins Sans Frontières, 'International Activity Report 2006'.

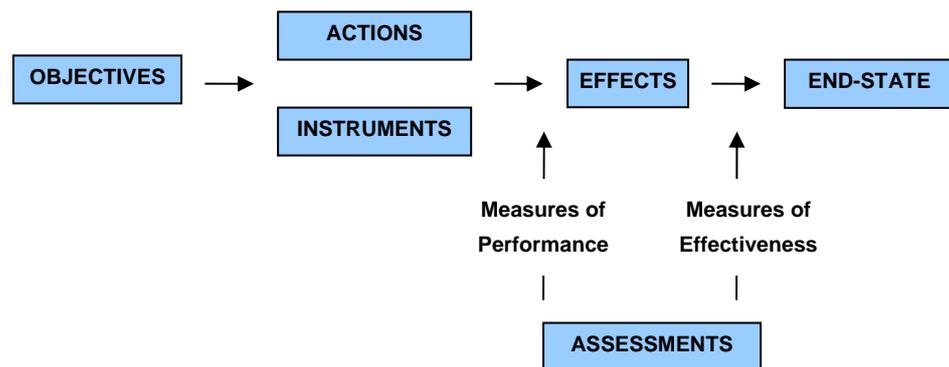# 2. The challenge of divergent operational terminologies

It has been argued that the use of divergent language and terminology constitute "potential communication obstacles between agencies, set[ting] the stage for considerable misunderstanding and miscommunication."[14] As Susanna P. Campbell and Michael Hartnett point out, there are large variations not only between the operational terminologies that are used by military and civilian actors, but also within the large and complex group of civilian actors.

Yet, despite these realizations, a standardisation of operational terminologies is most likely not a realistic solution to this challenge. Indeed, it is hard to imagine military personnel making use of conceptual frameworks developed by civilian actors or vice versa. In addition, and due to the large military-civilian as well as intra-civilian differences when it comes to planning, working procedures, and end-goals, it is doubtful that such overall concepts would even be meaningful or adequate in the field. A more useful step in this context, therefore, is to increase the various actors' knowledge about each other's use of operational terminologies. Yet, such a mapping presumes a basic starting point as regards the various phases of a multinational and interagency operation. The following sections are thus based on the categorization of operational phases as described in the MNE5 CONOPS.[15]

Operational Phases as Defined in MNE5 CONOPS

Figure 1 below illustrates the abovementioned phases.

Figure 1

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[14] Susanna P. Campbell and Michael Hartnett, 'A Framework for Improved Coordination: Lessons Learned from the International Development, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Humanitarian and Conflict Resolution Communities', (Washington D.C.: Interagency Transformation, Education, & Analysis Program, 2005).

[15] United States Joint Forces Command, 'Effects-Based Approach to Multinational Operations. Concept of Operations (Conops) with Implementing Procedures'.

As illustrated in the figure, objectives – in the meaning desired effects or end-state to be achieved by the actions taken – are formulated in the initial phase. On the basis of these objectives, actions – the general "doings" and practices that are required to achieve these effects or end-state – are carried out. Furthermore, instruments refer to the practical and specific methods through which these actions are in fact being accomplished. The actions taken by way of these instruments will in turn lead to effects – defined as the short-term direct and indirect consequences that are caused by one or more actions or, alternatively, by other preceding effects. In a long-term perspective, the actions and effects conclude into an end-state, which refers to the final result when the implementation of actions is seen as completed, and/or one or more of the initial objectives have been achieved. At the same time as the various phases of the operations is being carried out, assessment is taking place. Assessment can here be defined as evaluating the degree to which the actions taken are being successful or not (Measures of Performance) and/or the degree to which the desired effects are being achieved or not (Measures of Effects).[16]

Operational Terms used by Civilian and Military Actors
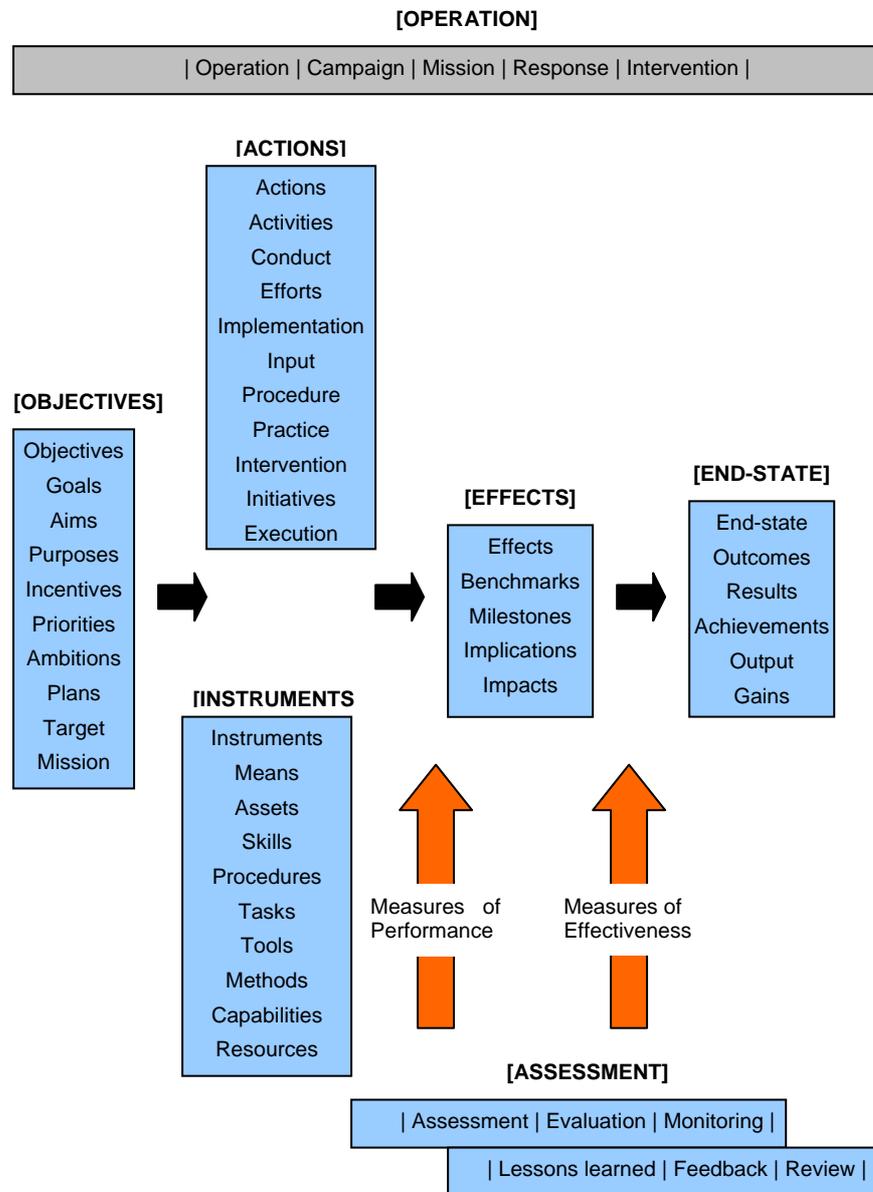
Figure 2 (above) gives a general overview of some variations in these operational terminologies (the proposed CONOPS-terms in brackets). Making an all- embracing a detailed overview over the operational terminologies used by specific actors involved in multinational operations is a more challenging task. Not only would the process of data collection be time-consuming due to the large number of actors and information which exists, but the large internal variations even within one and the same organisation would also challenge the reliability of the findings.[17]

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Reliability refers her to the stability, accuracy, and reproducibility of empirical findings.

Figure 2:

[OPERATION]

| Operation | Campaign | Mission | Response | Intervention |

[ACTIONS]

Actions
Activities
Conduct
Efforts
Implementation
Input
Procedure
Practice
Intervention
Initiatives
Execution

[OBJECTIVES]

Objectives
Goals
Aims
Purposes
Incentives
Priorities
Ambitions
Plans
Target
Mission

[EFFECTS]

Effects
Benchmarks
Milestones
Implications
Impacts

[END-STATE]

End-state
Outcomes
Results
Achievements
Output
Gains

[INSTRUMENTS

Instruments
Means
Assets
Skills
Procedures
Tasks
Tools
Methods
Capabilities
Resources

Measures of
Performance

Measures of
Effectiveness

[ASSESSMENT]

| Assessment | Evaluation | Monitoring |

| Lessons learned | Feedback | Review |

Operational Terms used by Selected Civilian and Military Actors

The overview presented in figure 3 is therefore not intended to be exhaustive either in terms of the actors or the concepts and terms included. [18] Rather, it offers a basic illustration of the complex universe of operational terms used by a sample of military and civilian actors. For the purpose of demonstrating diversity and range, we have chosen one exclusively military actor (NATO); one actor with both civilian and military capabilities (the EU); three coordinators of humanitarian assistance (the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank), and two international non-governmental organisations (the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and MSF).

For each organisation, key formal documents have been selected based on relevance, and significance. Nevertheless, as all sources are not made public, especially military sources, the analysis relies exclusively on those sources available in the public domain. The data collection is based on electronic searches on a large selection of keywords in key official documents, in combination with close reading of a selection of these documents.

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[18] The analysis has been based on the following documents: Nato, *Nato's Strategic Concept* (Brussels, 1999), Nato, *Nato Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), Nato, 'Nato Civil-Military Cooperation (Cimic) Doctrine'. European Council, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World, European Security Strategy', (Brussels, 2003), European Council, 'Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of Esdp', (Brussels, 2004), Europan Commission, 'A Concept for European Community Support for Security Sector Reform', (Brussels, 2006), European Council, 'Council Joint Action 2003/92/Cfsp on the European Union Military Operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', (Brussels, 2003), European Council, 'Council Joint Action 2004/570/Cfsp on the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina ', (Brussels, 2004), Europan Council, 'Council Joint Action 2003/423/Cfsp on the European Union Military Operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo', (Brussels, 2003). Inter Agency Standing Committee (Iasc), 'Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters. Iasc Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and International Disasters', (Washington D.C.: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 2006). Inter Agency Standing Committee (Iasc), 'Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters. Iasc Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and International Disasters'. Inter Agency Standing Committee (Iasc), 'Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters. Iasc Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and International Disasters' International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'Annual Report 2005', International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluation', (1st edition edn.; Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2002) Médicins Sans Frontières, 'International Activity Report 2006'. World Bank, 'World Bank Annual Report 2006', (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2006). United Nations Development Programme (Undp) Development Office, 'Handbook on Monitoring. Evaluating for Results', (New York: UNDP, 2002)

Figure 3:

ACTOR	Variations vis-à-vis MNE5 CONOPS							
	[Operation]	[Objectives]	[Actions]	[Instruments]	[Effects]	[End-state]	[Assessment]	
NATO	Campaign Operation	Objective Aim Goal Target	Activities Effort Implementation Conduct	Capabilities Instrument Tools Means	Implications Impact	Achievements Results Output	Assessment Evaluation Monitoring	Review Lessons learned
EU	Operation Mission Response	Objective Goal Target Aim Purpose	Activities Action Conduct	Instruments Tools Capabilities Means Assets	Initial results	-------	Evaluation Assessment Monitoring	Review Lessons learned
IASC	Response	Objective Mission Goal	Activities Efforts Action Conduct Implementation	Field capacities Response tools Instruments	Benchmarks	Results Output	(Real-time) evaluation Monitoring & evaluation Assessment	Review Lessons learned
UNDP	Intervention	Objective	Inputs Implementation Activities Interventions	-------	Impact	Results Output Outcomes	Monitoring & evaluation Assessment Feedback	Lessons learned
WB	Response Operation	Objective	Activities Input Action Implementation Procedures Practices Interventions Initiatives Execution	Resources Capacities	Impacts	Result Output Outcome	Monitoring Evaluation	Lessons learned
IFRC	Response Operation Mission	Objectives Inputs Priorities	Activities	Instruments	Impact Benchmark	Outcomes Outputs	Monitoring & evaluation Assessment	Lessons learned
MSF	Response Operation	Mission	Activities Medical intervention Actions	Tools Capacities	-------	Outcomes	Monitoring	-------

As we can see, there are large variations in operational terminologies not only between the various organisations, but also within them. For instance, while "operation" and "mission" generally seems to be accepted terms in most organisations, "response" is primarily used in a civilian context. Similarly, NATO is alone in utilising the term "campaign", most likely due to its military connotations. Still, the largest variations in terminologies are to be found in the table's right half, in relation to the categories labelled "effects", "end-states", and "assessment". When it comes to effects, these are by many organisations described as "impact". Other variations include "implications", "benchmarks", and "initial results". Interestingly, however, none of the documents examined contain a reference to the term "effect" itself. Furthermore, it should be noted that neither of these terms appear frequently. This suggests that the concept of "effects-based-operations" so far exists primarily at the discussion-level, and that the mapping of short-term direct and indirect consequences remain limited in many organisations.

Similarly, the ways and extent to which actions and effects are evaluated also vary greatly between organizations. While practically all the organizations examined have terminologies for both in-process-evaluation ("assessment", "evaluation", "monitoring") and retrospective evaluation ("review", "lessons learned"), there are clear differences in terms of how these were interpreted and referred to. A general trend is that the civilian actors examined (with the notable exception of the EU) are more detailed in their descriptions of how such evaluation, assessment, and monitoring processes are to take place. Suggestively, many of these have even developed handbooks designed specifically for evaluating their own actions and obtained effects when taking part in such operations. This is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Discussion Points

- Is a standardization of terminology between civilian and military actors necessary, or even possible?

- Does the MNE 5 CONOPS terminology adequately cover all phases of an operation, or should another terminology, for instance that of OECD DAC be used as a starting point?

- Is it necessary to distinguish between process assessment and end-state assessment?

3. Learning from Similar Practices: Effects-Based Assessment and Real-Time Evaluations

One of the key conclusions from earlier MNEs, especially MNE 4, was that assessment of the ongoing campaign (Effects-Based Assessment, or EBA) was a crucial element of EBAO, it was suggested that developing a coherent approach to EBA be a major part of MNE 5. Thus, MNE5 CONOPS places great emphasis on the importance of assessing the effects (EBA) of ongoing operations.

More specifically, the EBA is meant to couple the question 'are things being done right?' with the question 'are the right things being done?' in a *continuous* process of assessment designed to determine whether (1) progress towards the end-state, (2) the creation of effects, and (3) whether actions are being undertaken. The process employs a variety of measures, quantitative as well as qualitative, in order to measure progress through measurement of so-called Measures of Effectiveness (MOE), Measures of Performance (MOP), Measures of Effectiveness-Measures of Performance Analysis, and Qualitative Campaign Evaluation. These characteristics make the method of measurement of progress unique, in the sense that it is not modelled directly on any single archetype of existing assessment practices. Developing a novel mode of assessment is a challenge, especially when there are few similar existing military practices to lean on.

However, the continuous assessment of ongoing operations with a view to redefine the operation according to whether benchmarks (or "effects")are met, is an established practice in the civilian sector, especially in the area of disaster relief and complex humanitarian emergencies. Three practices are especially relevant to the process of developing EBA, namely those of *monitoring*, *performance monitoring*, and *Reat-Time Evaluation* (RTE).

Monitoring, Performance Monitoring, and Real-Time Evaluation

Monitoring is generally defined as

> A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.[19] The function of monitoring is generally undertaken by members of the organization itself, and while the operation is ongoing.

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[19] See OECD DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) "Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management." Paris: OECD Publications, p. 28

However, monitoring does not to the same extent as EBA have a clear focus on *feedback* in order to readjust the course of actions taken. This, however, is more clearly the case with *performance monitoring*, which is generally defined as "A continuous process of collecting and analyzing data to compare how well a project, program, or policy is being implemented against expected results."[20]

However, the practice which most resembles the EBA, and as such also the one one could draw most insights from, is the practice of *Real-Time Evaluation.* Unlike EBA, RTE has no specified methodology. However, the practices are similar to EBA in that they both take place during an operation, are reiterative, and that their results are being fed back into the planning of the operation in order to readjust the course towards the achievement of the desired impacts ("effects").

RTEs are defined in the UN system as "an evaluation carried out whilst an emergency response program is in full implementation"[21] or

> A timely, rapid and interactive peer-review of fast evolving humanitarian operation (usually an emergency) undertaken at an early phase. Its broad objective is to cause the effectiveness and impact of a given […] response, and to ensure that its findings are used as an immediate catalyst for organizational and operational change.[22]

While the practice is similar to that of monitoring, it nevertheless defies "conventional categorization of activities as monitoring or evaluation" by combining the two in the ongoing operation. [23] While monitoring has traditionally concentrated on tracking progress, and evaluations on making judgments ex-post, the RTE attempts to bridge the two, and incorporate lessons learned and their evaluations into the operation itself, through ongoing monitoring and feedback. As such, conceptually, the practice is very similar, and therefore also relevant to, to the assessment outlined with respect to EBAO. As such, an RTE is a dynamic tool allowing to "assess and adjust" the response by providing immediate inputs into an ongoing operation. The RTE is thus intended to "reinforce the link between operations, evaluation and policy formulation."[24]

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[20] See OECD DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) "Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management." Paris: OECD Publications, p. 28

[21] UNICEF, OCHA, WFP (2006) "Real Time Evaluation Draft Concept Paper", 05 June 2006

[22] UNICEF, OCHA, WFP (2006) "Real Time Evaluation Draft Concept Paper", 05 June 2006

[23] Maurice Herson and John Mitchell (2005), "Real-Time Evaluation: where does its value like?" in *Humanitarian Exchange* no. 32 (December).

[24] Arafat Jamal and Jeff Crisp, (2002) *Real-Time Humanitarian Evaluations: Some Frequently Asked Questions.* (EPAU/2002/05) Geneva, UNHCR Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU), May 2002

Real-Time Evaluation in the UN system: A Brief Overview

While evaluations of humanitarian emergency assistance programs where rare only 15 years ago, it is today widely used by a number of civilian organisation involved in the provision of disaster relief. Simultaneously, there has been an evolution in the ways in which these agencies have evaluated their programs and the impact of these programs. Thus, rather than seeing only ex-post evaluations, so-called real-time evaluations (RTE) have become more and more common.

While the first references to real-time evaluation in the humanitarian aid literature did not appear until 1998, the need for such a practice was already in 1992 emphasized by the UNHCR after a conventional evaluation of the Persian Gulf crisis.[25] In 1999, as the UNHCR's performance in the Kosovo operation received considerable criticism, the issue of real-time validation once again became salient. Thus, the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU) of the UNHCR issued a provisional framework for real-time emergency validations. This practice has since been undertaken in a number of operations the UNHCR has been involved in. It has also become common practice with a number of actors involved in the humanitarian sector.[26]

RTE Methodology and Challenges

Although the practices of RTE varies across agencies, there are nevertheless a number of common characteristics defining the method. Firstly, the RTE takes place during the course of the operation. Secondly, it is an iterative process rather than a once off operation. Thirdly, it focuses on short term, rather than long-term results, and as such it's time frame is short. Fourthly, it is heavily focused on field visits combined with headquarter meetings, rather than relying on secondary literature. Finally, RTEs have a greater emphasis on the immediate lesson learning rather than full accountability, thus enabling the rapid results obtained to change the program or operation and mid-course rather than waiting for an ex-post evaluation.[27]

One of the key challenges to be met in multinational and interagency operations today is that many of these assessment practices, and indeed the theorizing around them, exist side by side, without the actors involved being cognisant of one another's working methods. This lack of knowledge may

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[25] J. Crisp et. al, reviewed UNHCR emergency preparedness and response in the Persian Gulf crisis (GULD/EVAL/12, Rev. 1), UNHCR Geneva, March 1992.

[26] The UNHCR has been involved in RTEs in Southern Africa, Eritrea and Sudan; The World Food Program (WFP) in Southern Africa (2002-2003), and with the Indian Ocean tsunami; The UNICEF in Liberia (2003), and Niger (2005); The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Southern Africa 2002; OCHA in Darfur (2004), and Pakistan (2006); (2000) DFID and IFRC have also been involved in a common RTE in India. [26] See Peta Sandison (2003) *Desk Review of Real-Time Evaluation Experience* [*Evaluation Working Paper*]. New York: UNICEF

[27] See the discussion by Herson and Mitchell in Maurice Herson and John Mitchell (2005), "Real-Time Evaluation: where does its value like?" in *Humanitarian Exchange* no. 32 (December).

cause two problems. First, that lessons learned from similar practices are not taken into account when developing new methods for assessment. Secondly, that assessments undertaken by different actors in parallel do not address the same issues, and as such may not be used by other actors involved. Indeed, in order for assessments to be useful and successful, it is essential that they are undertaken in close cooperation with all parties involved in an operation. Knowledge of similar practices can help facilitate the coordination of monitoring, evaluation, and assessment exercises between civilian and military actors involved in the same operation.

EBA and RTE: Lessons to be Learned?

RTEs may therefore be seen as very useful in further developing and testing the EBA framework, as they can provide not only lessons learned input, but also suggestions as to avenues along which an "interface" enabling more compatible assessments between civilian and military actors can be developed. The need for such cooperation and compatibility is also increased because of the emphasis placed by the EBAO on the social system as whole.[28] Hence, it is important that the many actors involved in the operations have, if not common and standardized methods for accessing ongoing operations, then at least a common understanding of the different ways in which these assessments are undertaken by the different actors.

Given the similarity of the approaches to assessing an ongoing operation, there are a few avenues along which the practice of RTE may help develop a more effective EBA.[29] Similar to EBA, RTEs are undertaken in order to remedy to three things in an ongoing operation, namely effectiveness, efficiency, and the impact of the operation. In order to do this, the UNHCR emphasizes, RTEs must analyze the response both on the basis of a number of general benchmarks, ranging from general mandates, policy statements, and on the basis of the specific objectives of the operation in question. Furthermore, flexibility in the design of the format of the evaluation rather than a "one format fits all" concept has the advantage of making RTEs malleable for different operations.[30]

As the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD emphasize that the greater fluidity of the context and the complexity and interrelatedness of the respondents system to complex emergencies "reduce[d] […] the value and effectiveness of project evaluation techniques which require the separation of cause and effect. Explanation based on the

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[28] A "system-of-systems" approach, used in Knowledge Development, which considers groups of organized resources, methods, and procedures that are regulated by interaction or interdependence to accomplish specific goals (see MNE 5 CONOPS Glossary).

[29] On a cautionary note, it must be emphasized that the two methods diverge somewhat, especially as assessment of ongoing operation in EBO is an intrinsic part of the operation itself and as such undertaken on a continuous basis, whereas RTEs, although evaluating an ongoing operation, are nevertheless limited in time.

[30] UNICEF, OCHA, WFP (2006) "Real Time Evaluation Draft Concept Paper", 05 June 2006

separation of cause from effect is often not possible in complex systems composed of numerous interdependent relationships where the direction of influence may well be circular rather than linear." As such, OECD DAC emphasize that methods "more common in historical or philosophical research are often more productive than those traditionally employed in the social sciences." These methods, they argue, capture "the complexity and interdependent nature of events in the real world and ask not, 'did x cause y?' But rather, 'what happened?' And 'why?'" OECD DAC thus conclude that "in order to understand and to be able to do with institutions and structures," one ought "to build narratives about specific events and processes, rather than theorizing grandly and establishing causal relationships."[31]

While the methodology employed in an RTE will have to depend on the operation assessed, there is nevertheless a sense in which, as emphasized by the UNHCR "whereas conventional evaluations tend to look at specific situations and look for general conclusions, RTEs will reverse this process somewhat: the RTE team will be aware of such general lessons, and will seek to assess their relevance to specific situations." Furthermore, one needs to be a ware of the fact that the narrow focus upon the ongoing operations often may result in an absence of a system wide perspective. As Peta Sandison argues in a report for the UNICEF, the main drawbacks of RTEs is that RTEs "may overemphasize what is essentially a snapshot of a fast-moving situation; the picture lending too much weight to ephemera and becoming hard to subsequently shake off."[32]

With respect to the selection of the evaluation personnel, the UN experience indicates that as the aim of the evaluation may not be clear from the onset, the participants in the RTE may often experience some degree of confusion in the initial phase of an evaluation. As such, it is emphasized that "good interpersonal skills, a sound understanding of operational systems and culture, and an ability to carry a participatory methods" where important in an evaluation team, and that the most highly valued contribution in these ongoing evaluations was "experience from other contexts" which the paper argues brought "creative thinking" to the evaluation. [33] Unlike that which is the case, evaluators in RTEs are often from outside of the organization. As to the composition of RTE team is a draft paper suggests that the variation would ideally be undertaken by small teams composed of two or three evaluators, one team leader with extensive experience in the necessary evaluation expertise, and the other is having the necessary technical specialization. [34]

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[31] OECD/DAC (1999) Guidance for evaluating humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies.

[32] See Peta Sandison (2003) Desk Review of Real-Time Evaluation Experience [Evaluation Working Paper]. New York: UNICEF

[33] UNICEF, OCHA, WFP (2006) "Real Time Evaluation Draft Concept Paper", 05 June 2006

[34] UNICEF, OCHA, WFP (2006) "Real Time Evaluation Draft Concept Paper", 05 June 2006

Discussion Points

- To what extent should assessment methodology lean towards being quantitative or qualitative?

- Should assessment teams be internal (military), mixed (military and civilian), external (civilian), or a combination?

- To what extent can EBA be improved through learning lessons from civilian evaluation practices such as Performance Monitoring or Real-Time Evaluation?

- How can EBA be made compatible with existing civilian assessment practices in such a way as to be able to include data and analysis from other actors in the MOE-MOP Analysis?

Concluding Remarks

The present paper is meant as a contribution to an ongoing discussion about civil-military cooperation in multinational and interagency operations. Due to its limited scope, the paper does not seek to be definitive in the field, but rather to be a starting point to a more general discussion about civilian and military cooperation, and also a more specific commentary on the ongoing discussion about Effects-Based Approach to Operations (EBAO) in the context of MNE.

While the challenges ahead are many in terms of achieving full cooperation at all levels and phases of any operation, we nevertheless suggest that information sharing and knowledge of other actors' terminology and working practices is a precondition for successful cooperation between military and civilian actors.

Military actors must know how the different civilian parties work, their perceptions of the situation, their principles, and vice-versa. Cooperation also requires that involved parties be aware of the terminology used by other actors. Furthermore, where practices are similar, civilian and military parties must share knowledge about their experiences, such as between Effects-Based Assessment (EBA) and Real-Time Evaluation (RTE). Such information sharing can greatly reduce the risk of repeating the same mistakes, as well as improve the design of future working methods and procedures.

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Appendix: Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CIMIC	Civil-military Cooperation
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
DFID	Department for International Development
EBA	Effects-Based Assessment
EBAO	Effects-Based Approach to Operations
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
EU	European Union
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IO	International organisation
MNE5	Multinational Experiment 5
MSF	Médicins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders
MOE	Measures of Effectiveness
MOP	Measures of Performance
IASC	Inter Agency Standing Committee
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD/DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RTE	Real-Time Evaluation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program

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