



The Stabilization Lab

A RESEARCH AND EDUCATION INITIATIVE FOR
AMERICAN ENGAGEMENT DURING TIMES OF
CONFLICT AND DISASTER

OVERVIEW

Texas A&M University is creating a new research laboratory to examine how governmental interventions during times of conflict and disaster can put our partners on the road to recovery as quickly and efficiently as possible. Currently, massive amounts of data collected by members of the military and their interagency partners is sitting unanalyzed. Leaving this information unstudied leaves valuable lessons learned on the table that could be actively applied to current conflicts, humanitarian, and post-disaster programs, and incorporated into strategic planning for future US military interventions.

Through **The Stabilization Lab** at the Center for Conflict and Development, Texas A&M will bring its longstanding research acumen in the fields of military studies, development and agricultural economics, engineering, health sciences, law & political science to analyzing military records that can provide data to support future operations. The Stabilization Lab will examine which governmental interventions yield the greatest return on investment, and produce dividends of peace, security, and prosperity.

From the Philippines in 1898, to Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, the US military has undertaken non-combat missions in the midst of conflict and disaster to strengthen our ties with local populations, stimulate their economies, provide critical infrastructure, and encourage good governance. Research demonstrates that wartime development initiatives help to end wars more quickly and post-war reconstruction helps to prevent the renewal of conflict. Development before, during and after conflict is essential to American national security, to war-torn and post-disaster nations and to our allies.

THE PROBLEM

Throughout its history, the United States military has engaged in humanitarian interventions in the midst of conflict and disaster. While the role of military in reconstruction and development activities has been hotly debated, there is now a growing consensus in the Defense community that stabilization, post-disaster and conflict reconstruction, and humanitarian missions are a vital component protecting our national security. As former Secretary of Defense and Texas A&M Chancellor Emeritus Robert M. Gates has said:

“Until our government decides to plus up civilian agencies like the Agency for International Development (USAID), soldiers can expect to be tasked with reviving public services, rebuilding infrastructure, and promoting good governance. All of these ‘non traditional’ capabilities have moved into the mainstream of military thinking, planning, and strategy – where they must stay.”

While missions requiring these “non-traditional” capabilities have grown dramatically in recent years, instruction and research studying them have not kept pace. Massive amounts of records of these missions are sitting unexamined and risk never being discovered. Despite our wartime history, there continues to be little expertise in our military and government agencies on the most effective non-combat weapons that can be waged for the benefit of the United States.

Every few years, a new journalistic or academic study emerges that explores an element of the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP), or waste on the part of development contractors and agencies. These studies and databases, while useful, fail to show the whole picture of governmental interventions in development during conflict and have been limited to discrete periods of time. The Stabilization Lab’s aim is to be a central repository and archive for all military, development, and local records that relentlessly pursues better scientific learning on development during times of conflict.

THE LAB

The Stabilization Lab at Texas A&M University will:

- 1) serve as a central repository and archive,
- 2) create a searchable database of non-traditional missions,
- 3) produce research and analysis for future use, and
- 4) deliver findings to practitioners from several sectors.

By assembling and cataloging the records of non-traditional governmental intervention missions formal and informal personal records from military Civil Affairs (CA) and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) participants, interagency and international partners, and the respective units of the U.S. military. From this comprehensive archive, The Lab will conduct technical and policy analyses to determine the most effective interventions and techniques to help win hearts and minds, jump start broken economies, and rebuild communities. While applying rigorous academic research standards, the Lab will produce reports, studies, and workshops that can be readily utilized and incorporated into training for governmental practitioners. All research will be delivered through seminars to leaders in defense, diplomacy, and development to strengthen interagency cooperation before, during and after conflict.

Development initiatives during and after conflict and humanitarian emergencies require tools, personnel, and approaches that are different from those employed in peacetime. Working with the Department of Defense, Department of State and USAID, The Stabilization Lab seeks to identify and disseminate the successful strategies learned from the record of Americans in conflict zones. Through Texas A&M

University, The Lab will offer executive education and degree and non-degree training, and provide guidance on stability operations and reconstruction activities.

Potential courses include:

- The Economics of Conflict, Development and Foreign Assistance
- Starting and Managing Local Businesses during Conflict
- Women, International Development and Natural Resources Conflict
- Guide to the Stabilization of Rural Communities in Conflict Zones
- Comparative Analysis of Investment in Infrastructure and Human Capital during Conflict
- Armed Conflict, Climate and Food Security

THE ARCHIVE AND DATABASE

The Lab's integrated archive and online database will be a major resource for scholars and practitioners to learn from the record of CA and PRT contributions to community and economic development during war and humanitarian crises, and will serve as a repository for executive education participants seeking to grow their knowledge base. The records will be declassified, digitized, and made accessible for research and training centers throughout the United States. The principles, policies and practices derived from this record will be an important guide not only to the U.S. military, but also to our allied development practitioners.

Elements of the comprehensive database will include:

- Bilateral and Multilateral Investments
- Historical and current US Military Spending
- District-Level Data
- Conflict and Violence Levels
- Food Security
- Natural Resource Security
- Value of Investments
- Date
- Geolocation

And metrics available for analysis will be:

- Physical Capital (buildings, roads, equipment, vehicles, etc.)
- Institutional Capital (governance, property rights, civil society building)
- Human Capital (training, education, medical services)
- Financial Capital (monetary loans, job creation initiatives)
- Improved Technology (communications, productivity)
- Natural Resources (water, access, environmental restoration)
- Cultural Capital (arts, religion, nationalism, ethnicity, family/community values)

Data for the research will be generated and collected through: synthesis and coding of existing information, through a real time data streaming procedure, and household level surveys. Through interviews with officials involved in prior efforts to aggregate data, the provision of datasets from the US government, and previously accessed information obtained through FOIA, The Stabilization Lab will build a comprehensive database that can be accessed by scholars and practitioners everywhere.

THE TEXAS A&M NETWORK

Texas A&M has the nation’s strongest roster of academics and practitioners involved in multiple facets of our most recent wars. Schools within A&M that will be contributing partners to The Stabilization Lab include the Department of Agricultural Economics/Center for Conflict and Development, Bush School of Government and Public Service, School of Public Health, College of Engineering, School of Law, College of Liberal Arts, College of Business, the School of Military Science, and the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension agencies. Former leaders from the US government, who served on the ground, on battlefields, in Embassies, and government agencies in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other post-disaster and conflict areas serve throughout the Texas A&M System.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

To support this work and to attract the day-to-day talent needed to continue it, the following budget is required over the next five years (with greater detail in Appendix A):

Asset	Cost
Personnel and Benefits	\$8,782,802
Database Equipment and Contracting	\$525,196
Travel	\$380,000
Seminar Costs and Supplies	\$1,775,000
Indirect Costs	\$995,000
TOTAL	\$12,500,000

BENEFITS OF THE STABILIZATION LAB

As Texas A&M's researchers locate, catalogue, and analyze the data for non-traditional military missions, and put invaluable lessons learned into the hands of practitioners through seminars and executive education programs, America's national security will be strengthened. By examining inputs and determining their most likely outputs during non-traditional missions, our military will be equipped to better deliver needed humanitarian resources in times of disaster or conflict.

APPENDIX A – DETAILED BUDGET

		DESCRIPTION	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$
A. PERSONNEL			1,140,000	1,327,000	1,459,700	1,459,771	1,528,759.55	6,915,230.55
Director		100% FTE	160,000	168,000	176,400	185,220	194,481	884,101
Associate Director		100% FTE	120,000	126,000	132,300	70,001	73,501.05	521,802.05
Digital Archivist / Network Developer		100% FTE	105,000	110,250	115,762.5	121,550.625	127,628.156	580,191.281
Post Military Research Fellows 3 (1 for CDF)		100% FTE	165,000	173,250	181,912.5	191,008.125	200,558.531	911,729.156
Accounting / Business support (1 TAMU, 1 CDF)		150% FTE	75,000	78,750	82,687.5	86,821.875	91,162.969	414,422.344
IT support		100% FTE	65,000	68,250	71,662.5	75,245.625	79,007.906	359,166.031
Graduate Research Fellowships (1 TAMU LAW, 1 CDF)		5 at 50% FTE	120,000	126,000	132,300	138,915	145,860.75	663,075.75
Student Workers Pooled		Avg. 4 per year	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	400,000
Director of Research (1 at TAMU LAW)		2 at 100% FTE	250,000	262,500	275,625	289,406.25	303,876.562	1,381,407.812
Research Network Co-ordinator (year 3-5)		100% FTE			70,350	73,867.5	77,560.875	221,778.375
Director of Training and Education (YR 2-5)		100% FTE		86,000	90,300	94,815	99,555.75	370,670.75
Advisory Board (year 2-5)		3 at 15% FTE		48,000	50,400	52,920	55,566	206,886
B. FRINGE BENEFITS			306,000	356,700	395,640	394,747.8	414,485.19	1,867,572.99
Archive Director		rough estimate 30% of salary	48,000	50,400	52,920	55,566	58,344.3	265,230.3
Coordinator		rough estimate 30% of salary	36,000	37,800	39,690	21,000.3	22,050.315	156,540.615
Digital Archivist / Network Support Manager		rough estimate 30% of salary	31,500	33,075	34,728.75	36,465.188	38,288.447	174,057.384
Post Doctotal Fellow		rough estimate 30% of salary	49,500	51,975	54,573.75	57,302.438	60,167.559	273,518.747
Accounting / Business support		rough estimate 30% of salary	22,500	23,625	24,806.25	26,046.562	27,348.891	124,326.703
Graduate Research Fellowships		rough estimate 20% salary	24,000	25,200	26,460	27,783	29,172.15	132,615.15
IT / System Developer		rough estimate 30% of salary	19,500	20,475	21,498.75	22,573.688	23,702.372	107,749.809
Director of Research		rough estimate 30% of salary	75,000	78,750	82,687.5	86,821.875	91,162.969	414,422.344
Research Network Co-ordinator (year 2.5-5)			0	0	21,105	22,160.25	23,268.262	66,533.512
Director of Training and Education (YR 2-5)		rough estimate 30% of salary	0	25,800	27,090	28,444.5	29,866.725	111,201.225
Advisory Board (year 2-5)		rough estimate 20% of salary	0	9,600	10,080	10,584	11,113.2	41,377.2
C. TRAVEL			100,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	380,000
International								
Research/site visits, partnership building, etc. (TAMU and CDF)			50,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	210,000
Domestic within U.S.								
Research/site visits, partnerships building, etc. (TAMU and CDF)		5 trips for 3 people each year	50,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	170,000
D. EQUIPMENT			125,000	57,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	266,000
Computers, File/Record Storage Equipment, Web Management Fees, Vaults, Displays, etc.		estimate of total	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
Hardware		estimate of total	65,000	25,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	120,000
Software		estimate of total	35,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	63,000
E. SUPPLIES			15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	75,000
Office, and research consumables		estimate total	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	75,000
F. CONTRACTUAL			69,196.8	55,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	259,196.8
Subcontract for research, web development, digitization, etc (CDF)		estimate total	49,196.8	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	189,196.8
Subcontract for disseminating successful strategies learned in Conflict Zones (CDF)		estimate total	20,000	20,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	70,000
G. CONSTRUCTION								
H. OTHER			335,000	410,000	410,000	410,000	135,000	1,700,000
Seminars for Leaders in Defense, Dipolomacy and Development			65,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	65,000	250,000
Data access / delivery / transport/facility rental fees			70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	350,000
Competitive Research Grants for Peace and Defense Studies			200,000	300,000	300,000	300,000		1,100,000
I. TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES			2,090,196.8	2,290,700	2,437,340	2,436,518.8	2,250,244.74	11,463,000.34
J. INDIRECT CHARGES			209,019.68	182,570	198,234	198,151.88	207,024.474	995,000.034
On campus	10.00%	MTDC (estimate)	168,600	182,570	198,234	198,151.88	207,024.474	950,380.354
Off Campus	10.00%	MTDC (estimate)	40,419.68	46,500	45,500	45,500	18,000	195,919.68
K. TOTALS			2,299,216.48	2,473,270	2,635,574	2,634,670.68	2,457,269.214	12,500,000.374