

Combat resupply mission in northern Kunar Valley supports Afghan National Police



ISAF

# Lessons from MoDA

## Continuing the Conversation on How to Advise Institution-building

BY NADIA GERSPACHER AND ADRIAN SHTUNI

Established in 2009, the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense Advisors (MoDA) program was based on a thorough needs assessment and extensive consultations with U.S., coalition, and Afghan stakeholders as well as possible support and service providers. The program initially recruited, trained, and deployed 17 senior advisors to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission–Afghanistan/Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (NTM-A/CSTC-A) mission. Most advisors were assigned to the Ministry of Defense (MoD), with a few assigned to the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The goal of the program is to help transform the key security ministries into more efficient, effective, and professional institutions, capable of inheriting

Dr. Nadia Gerspacher is Senior Program Officer in the Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute of Peace. Adrian Shtuni is a Research Assistant at the United States Institute of Peace.

and executing the overall national security mission by 2014. By all accounts, the advisors, guided by many other similar capacity-building joint projects, have thus far effectively engaged their counterparts at MoD and MoI, developing rapport and productive professional relationships at a relatively early stage in their tours.

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In June 2010, the first MoDA team deployed on a 1-year assignment, renewable for an additional 12 months. About half the advisors opted to renew for the option year. Since 2010, MoDA has trained and deployed four additional cohorts of senior advisors for assignment in Afghanistan—nearly 100 all told—and all are experts in the proper functioning of institutions. Recently, Congress granted MoDA global authority for fiscal year 2013, so the program will soon begin deploying ministerial advisors to other requesting countries around the globe.

Now that MoDA has deployed almost 100 civilian advisors (most of whom are still in Afghanistan), it is time to begin formally assessing the program and incorporating lessons learned into the preparation and training program, recruitment, and other support for the advisors. This article offers initial lessons learned from the first phases of this historic and unique initiative in which civilians are building institutional capacity and helping demilitarize security institutions. The lessons presented in this article are the result of in-depth, individual, semistructured interviews by the authors with nine advisors who returned

and three who opted to remain in Afghanistan for another year.

The presentation of the lessons in the concluding section follows a categorization process that the authors believe would be useful to a wide variety of deploying agencies and mission commands. The categories include lessons on how the mission should be formulated, how it should be branded, and how advising efforts should be structured and integrated in the larger international intervention; lessons on the recruitment and selection of advisors; lessons on working with foreign counterparts in a reform environment; and lessons on preparing advisors for effective institution-building missions.

### **Integration in a Mission**

Selected senior civil advisors in the MoDA program are U.S. Federal employees with established careers in many components of the Department of Defense and extensive expertise in logistics, finance, personnel, communications, public works, public affairs, and intelligence. In the field, they report to NTM-A/CSTC-A.

In general, a ministerial advisory effort might be based either within an Embassy or within an international military mission. In Afghanistan, the choice was between an Embassy Country Team or NTM-A itself as an integral part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Advisors interviewed for this article singled out the issue of institutional placement as an important strategic decision to be made by the deploying agency. Thus, an initial question that program managers must answer is where to house the advising mission within the host country. The Country Team option makes obvious sense in a country with limited or no foreign military presence. Even in most countries with established

military-to-military structures, a ministerial advising program should most likely still be located within the Embassy while the working relationship between the United States and the partner country is established through the Embassy. The Embassy serves as a hub for information-sharing, and the use of established diplomatic channels can help the U.S. training and assistance mission succeed.

In a country such as Afghanistan, however, where the legitimacy of the mission and personal safety of the advisors are at stake, the military structure is the most sensible home for the mission. The chaos that reigned in post-2003 Afghanistan dictated that all advising efforts needed to support the military assistance mission. A good rule of thumb is that when the military stands up a tactical headquarters of 12 or more people, then the military structure is a good home for the training mission. According to the advisors interviewed, 12 begins to be a critical mass—or a mission team. In Afghanistan, an added benefit to locating the training mission under the military structure was that it facilitated access to the Afghan Ministry of Defense. This access was important because the advisors found that in order to be taken seriously by MoD officials, they needed to be formally introduced by U.S. military personnel.

Once in the field, advisors need to cooperate and coordinate with other mission participants to be effective at supporting reform activities. Advisors who have returned from Afghanistan have suggested that with the impending termination of the ISAF mission, assigning MoDA to the Country Team would allow the advisory project to continue beyond the planned military departure in 2014. If it remains under the auspices of NTM-A, it may not receive the attention it deserves. It could

even be subsumed by other military projects. MoDA veterans recommend utilizing NATO capacity for ministerial advising that lies in the French, German, and Italian missions because they understand how to operate in a parliamentary system. Thus, leveraging European support, especially regarding the MoI, tends to get significant support throughout the mission because of European familiarity with the government structure of Afghanistan.

Another salient point is to arm the advisors with what reforms are in place and which coalition partner is responsible for them. The biggest obstacle was the mismatch of reform efforts. For example, the Italians implemented an inquisitorial system of justice. The United States and Canada implemented an evidentiary-based system of policing. The corrections system itself was Islamic. These systems did not fit well together and ended up causing a great deal of confusion for the police-development mission.

### **Working with Afghan Counterparts**

A better understanding of existing dynamics and the context of operations would enable advisors to work more effectively with their local counterparts and help them manage expectations. When the Soviets left Afghanistan in 1989, they left behind a functioning if short-lived government, the institutional culture of which has survived in some ways.<sup>1</sup> That culture was based on the highly bureaucratic and centralized Soviet model in which decisionmaking, even for daily tasks, is concentrated at the highest levels of the hierarchy. According to returning advisors, so much is centralized in Afghanistan because of the prevalence of the Soviet mindset that leaders, even at the ministerial level, cannot make a decision until they are instructed to or authorized by higher political authorities. Otherwise they face reprimand.



U.S. Navy (Ernesto Hernandez Fonte)

Expectation management means remaining patient and understanding the limitations imposed by history, politics, and current realities. A solid understanding of the challenges and limitations facing advisors must inform an action plan that reflects the fact that neither they nor their counterparts operate in a vacuum. The plan must be simple, executable, and have genuine Afghan buy-in.

The first MoDA cohort was prepared to manage expectations as a result of extensive and effective predeployment training on that topic. Advisors must live by the rule that they should never promise anything. Rather, they must understand the existing power dynamics and incrementally introduce new ways of doing business. It is crucial for advisors to have first established sound professional relationships with their counterparts and to have shown that they have the interests of their principals in mind and seek to identify better processes and positive effects. The best medium for accomplishing this goal is direct, open, and candid brainstorming with counterparts. If this step is not taken, advisors run the risk of getting a “quasi” buy-in and even pushback. Advisors should refrain from overtly criticizing how counterparts currently do business. Such criticism creates walls that are slow in coming down and hinders future brainstorming, problem resolution, and learning.

MoDA veterans describe the benefit of employing “feasible” instead of “complex” methods to achieve realistic goals. Afghan counterparts will follow the advice they receive most of the time. For example, upon receiving suggestions for changes to the supply chain, most counterparts went with the advice and were willing to figure out the modalities on their own, succeeding in most cases. Afghans can get things done surprisingly quickly. In this sense, the right solution—keeping in mind the context,

situation, and capacities/capabilities technology—is the feasible solution. It is a mistake for a Western advisor to insist that an Afghan do things “the smart, quick, and right way” without consulting the local stakeholders on what they think is right for them, taking into account their capacities and preferences and overall feasibility. As duly emphasized in predeployment training, promoting local ownership is pivotal not only to successful advisory efforts but also to developing sustainable solutions. Despite the consistent difficulties that advisors have had in implementing this approach (due to operational pressures), in the long run the benefits of local ownership indisputably outweigh the benefits of achieving goals in record time but leaving the Afghans unengaged and passive.

The relationship between advisors and counterparts also benefits immensely from an advisor’s ability to instill a sense of vision. For example, when an Afghan two-star general is signing supply requests for the entire country, the advisor might delicately reassure him that although this job is important, the general could delegate some authority to a lower level in order for him to focus on more strategic matters and improve the overall service the ministry is able to provide to the population.

### **Trust-building**

Afghans and other host nation actors often think that foreign advisors have ulterior motives, so it takes much longer to build relationships than most Western advisors anticipate. The trust-building process requires persistence and patience. Some advisors theorize that the hospitality they are shown doubles as a way for their Afghan counterparts to keep an eye on them. Advisors should also be mindful that they may inherit a negative reputation based simply on their identity (for example, American,

Western, United Nations, NATO, or female) and should explicitly address this early with their counterparts. Advisors who take these assumptions seriously and acknowledge the negative connotations and dangers of foreign interventions are the ones the Afghans trust and will confide in when security deteriorates. Advisors who have a strong rapport with their counterparts are more likely to be told when something is afoot.

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The patronage system also represents moral, ethical, and practical challenges to advisors. Many aspects of it make advisors uncomfortable and discouraged. Advisors need to understand that patronage systems exist in many developing countries, and the patronage system in Afghanistan is pervasive. This can be a stumbling block to trust-building. While it is important not to indulge and support the system, it is crucial to understand the personal connections of counterparts and stakeholders. Certainly, advisors should refrain from embracing this patronage system. A returned advisor remarked, “It’s not how we make decisions, and that should be made clear to the counterpart.” For example, advisors should refrain from doing what their counterparts ask if the requests only serve to reinforce the patronage system. Advisors should take the time to delicately explain why they cannot execute the requests. They should be specific about the adverse effects the requests would have on the decision-making process. Advisors should emphasize that their recommendations are not personal, but

deliberate and based on principle and that “no” does not mean “I don’t like you or who you are connected to.” “No” means they do not believe such action would benefit the Afghan people. It is important to immediately refute any suspicion that counterparts are receiving assistance or advice because of their family connections or other patronage-based considerations. The intent of the MoDA mission is in part to showcase the power of open and honest communication and meritocratic systems.

**civilians tend to be associated with their Embassies rather than with the ISAF training mission**

In many interviews, MoDA advisors mentioned the lasting influence of the Soviet mindset in Afghanistan. Senior officials at the Ministries of Defense and Interior have a Soviet bureaucratic mentality because they came of age during that period. That can make it difficult for advisors to convince Afghan leaders to delegate decisionmaking authority. This type of system offers many opportunities for corrupt practices. It is common, for example, that when a district receives supplies in excess of its needs, and does not have a storage warehouse, local officials will sell the material to the highest bidder and capture the revenue themselves. Advisors and senior officials should work together to introduce more efficient systems and to develop procedures in which there are controls over what is needed, requested, and delivered. It is important to remain optimistic and to believe that new systems *can* be created.

Finally, advisors should keep in mind that the success of their missions often hinges on building rapport, being good listeners, and demonstrating humility and empathy. Until

counterparts believe advisors have their best interests in mind, they are not going to fully cooperate. Once a relationship reaches the stage of mutual esteem and trust, the impact of an advisor’s effort is likely to be much more tangible and positive. According to some MoDA veterans, building these relations took effort and skill, but it was achievable because Afghans respect authority and power. Senior leaders enjoy more trust. However, regardless of how senior the foreign advisor is, trust takes a long time to build.

### **Tour Length**

Since MoDA is designed to forge long-term relationships that strengthen government institutions, the duration of the service period is critical. Truncated service periods hinder relationship-building. Though the current year-long deployments represent a significant improvement over earlier tours, which were typically 6 months or less, the general opinion among returnees is that longer tours would be more productive and conducive to achieving long-term, sustainable reform. As one advisor explained, the shorter tour duration means that every time a new advisor comes on board, the project goes backward. He compared it to running a relay race: one runner’s gains can be undermined by the next runner dropping the baton.

### **Civil-Military Cooperation**

In complex missions such as in Afghanistan, which is comprised of many agencies from the United States and NATO Allies, coordination and communication are difficult. Civilians tend to be associated with their Embassies rather than with the ISAF training mission, which is conducted mostly by military officers. According to some MoDA veterans, the advantage of having civilian personnel

deployed to advise Afghan officials in the Ministries of Defense and Interior rests in the fundamental differences between military and civilian engagement practices. Military officers manage violence and are less trained to advise civilian leadership. Successful institution-building requires advanced bureaucratic skills—for example, developing policy, logistics, and transport. While military officers are good at training troops, building institutions is a more suitable task for career civilians or military personnel with extensive experience in civilian-led institutions. Moreover, most U.S. military personnel are significantly younger than defense civilian personnel, as well as their Afghan counterparts, which has been known to cause resentment and slow progress.

Once deployed, advisors naturally gravitate toward the type of work they know best. However, sometimes the skill sets they offer are not the skills their Afghan counterparts need. When this occurs, the advisor must quickly alert the head advisor, command, or Country Team so the mismatch can be remedied. In the past, U.S. Navy pilots have been assigned as supply advisors and warehouse operators. This is not their area of expertise. When such a mismatch is identified, everyone involved should be willing to make a change for the sake of the mission. A returned MoDA advisor recounted the experience of a senior advisor—a U.S. Air Force colonel—who was assigned to logistics at the MoD. She was an expert in transportation. Because logistics was not her expertise, she spent a great deal of time sitting in the general's office watching him sign forms. A similar mismatch occurred when a two-star general who did not specialize in human resources was assigned to the chief of personnel. He was profoundly disengaged from the work and did not do any

advising. These examples serve as reminders of the time and talent that are squandered when advanced planning or timely fixes do not occur.

Sometimes there are conflicts between the military structure in the host nation and the cultural norms of the advising country. In Afghanistan, for example, some MoD officials balk at the idea of working with a woman. It is especially difficult for them to accept strategic advice from one. Several advisors recounted that officials told them they viewed working with a woman as subquality assistance. The religiousness of the host nation person and his position within the institution affect his willingness to take advice from female experts. In some cases, advisors have observed that female advisors benefit from a relative gender “blindness” in contrast to local women.

In some cases, the coalition military does not know how to incorporate civilians into the mission, so they take them along without defining their roles and responsibilities. Getting civilian experts into a country involves recruitment, training, and deployment, all of which take time. If a position is especially important, a military advisor will often fill the slot. Thus, when the MoDA arrives, he will be placed elsewhere so as not to disrupt the progress that the military advisor is making with his counterpart. This has resulted in civilian advisors working as note-takers and staff assistants. This is inappropriate and a misuse of talents and skills. Equally unsatisfactorily, sometimes civilians are regarded as contractors by the U.S. military; hence they are not respected as strategic advisors. Advisors must speak up and demonstrate that they are a resource that serves the project well. Finally, military personnel occasionally overrely on the advisor's contacts and professional network in Washington, but the civilian

advisor is not a liaison officer and should refrain from acting like one.

Despite the potential for problems and misunderstandings, it is worthwhile for military personnel and civilians to work together on advisory teams. Military personnel provide instant credibility to the host nation's military and police forces, and civilians are visible reminders of the importance of civilian control over the armed forces. American civilians must remember that this may be a challenging concept and perhaps even a paradigm shift for the host nation.

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### **Profile of an Effective Advisor**

Effective advisors share basic characteristics. They are resourceful. They are good communicators. They are able to persuade, educate, inspire, and guide their counterparts toward change. They are open to alternate approaches and creative solutions. Generally, though not always, they are comfortable engaging all types of people, and their focus and commitment to the work at hand is contagious. People skills—the ability to work closely with counterparts—are crucial. One returned advisor mentioned that he came from an American Southern storytelling tradition, which helped him relate to his Afghan counterpart, who also grew up in a storytelling culture. This advisor was personable and always happy to participate in non-professional gatherings such as leisurely meals with local officials. Storytelling was a mutually enjoyable pastime that fostered rapport, built trust, and laid a foundation for the specific work

the advisor was deployed to do. Advisors who fear the environment, their principals, or their colleagues typically do poorly in an advisory capacity. One advisor, for example, upon learning that his counterpart carried a knife, refused to walk in front of him. This fear and obvious lack of trust prevented a solid working relationship from materializing.

Another important attribute for an advisor is the ability to engage staff members who are either a few levels below or above their counterparts. This is not an easy skill to master when one is communicating through an interpreter, especially in a highly hierarchical system. The most competent advisors are the ones who can work with many local actors at multiple levels, not just with assigned counterparts. Advisors with this skill are sought out, and being sought out increases one's influence and impact on ministerial reform.

Advisors must exhibit flexibility and adaptability to sudden and drastic changes in tasks, priorities, and the security environment. These attributes often follow from an extensive and diverse professional background. Indeed, an advisor who has held a variety of posts back home is generally more comfortable navigating opaque bureaucracies and keeping various stakeholders happy and informed. Flexible and adaptable advisors have strong problem-solving skills and a greater degree of maturity than their less experienced peers. As a result, the ideas put forth by an advisor are less likely to have unintended consequences on other parts of the system. In addition, an effective advisor must be tactful and able to turn a hostile situation into one in which all parties come out with a degree of satisfaction. While it may not be a win-win outcome, it should allow everyone to move forward without acrimony or losing face. Again, those professionals who have made a



career in only one department may have a more difficult time adapting to vastly different systems and institutions and generally be less attuned to the subtle needs of the many local people with whom they come in contact.

Effective advisors constantly strive to put themselves in the shoes of their counterparts—that is, they practice empathy. Advisors are effective when they make their counterparts' lives easier, make processes more effective, and make corruption and patronage less prevalent. But advisors must always remember that the desire to succeed needs to come from the counterparts. Advisors cannot will success. What they can do is coach counterparts on what questions they should be asking and what results they should be expecting from changes introduced into particular systems. Indeed, advisors and counterparts can work together to develop metrics that measure whether the systems are working and improving. Subsequently, counterparts can lead evaluations of the programs or systems and compare them to baseline assessments.

In addition to technical expertise, advisors must have soft skills such as patience, compassion, and the ability to be team players, catalyze innovative thinking, and encourage counterparts to communicate effectively both vertically and horizontally within the bureaucracies. These attributes are crucial. If advisors enter partnerships and immediately discount the existing procedures, or suggest that the officials and staff lack significant competencies, the counterparts will likely respond by closing channels and invoking “*Inshallah*” (the will of God) dismissively. Advisors should refrain from patronizing counterparts. The parent-child relationship is not an appropriate basis for this relationship; the model is rather a peer-to-peer relationship between experienced professionals.

The complex and delicate nature of the tasks and the diverse and challenging operational environments in which they work require advisors to demonstrate patience, respect, humility, and empathy in their daily interactions with local partners and the host community. That is why the selection process is critical and should include screening mechanisms that identify candidates with demonstrated core competencies such as flexibility, integrity, relationship-building, strategic alignment, organizational know-how, and communication skills. Additionally, because cultural curiosity is desirable, it is important to identify advisors who appreciate immersion into host cultures and are eager to interact with local populations. Finally, because of the hardship associated with being deployed in a dangerous and challenging environment such as Afghanistan, finding people with cultural and physical adaptation skills (who often are more comfortable in such environments) is essential.

Predeployment training is critical because it provides even experienced professionals with the necessary tools, approaches, and skills to become effective mentors specifically in Afghanistan (in the case of MoDA thus far). It teaches them about the traditions, history, and political dynamics of the country. It also prepares them to be adaptable, responsible, and informed decisionmakers. In the case of the MoDA program, the 7-week training program includes professional advisor training, cultural awareness instruction, country familiarization, language instruction, senior-level consultations and briefings, and an evaluated Capstone Exercise.<sup>2</sup> Predeployment training involves both small group work and larger plenary sessions where the results of the small group discussions are shared.

All MoDA program advisors are given in-depth instruction on both the Ministry of

Defense and Ministry of Interior. This training is included because advisors may find themselves moving between the two ministries during their tours, or perhaps advising the same departments in each ministry. For example, one advisor may split his time working on gender mainstreaming issues at both the MoD and MoI. This is a challenging assignment for the advisor but helps standardize programming and encourages interaction between MoD and MoI on mutually relevant issues.

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Working with interpreters is surprisingly difficult—it is a skill in and of itself. Thus, how to work effectively with interpreters is an important element in predeployment training and preparation. It is not possible for an MoDA program advisor to become proficient in the host nation's local language in 7 weeks of predeployment training. Reliance on a skilled interpreter is necessary. In addition to their role as language facilitators, interpreters are cultural brokers critical to the success of the mission. In Afghanistan, working with interpreters is especially arduous for two reasons. First, the inherent tensions and elevated security risks associated with a postconflict environment make this work difficult. Second, in a country with an estimated literacy rate of less than 30 percent, it is difficult to find qualified and reliable interpreters. Based on accounts by most returned MoDAs, the majority of the interpreters who support the ministerial advising effort lack the educational background or breadth of knowledge to provide interpretation services at

a highly expert or professional standard. Many interpreters have limited knowledge of English and provide literal translation that is far from accurate because of their poor understanding of the context, the professional content, or the nuances of the technical vernacular.

One way to mitigate communication problems is for advisors to meet with their interpreters in advance to set the agenda and review goals for upcoming meetings. Afghanistan has a complex, highly context-driven and personalized culture in which personality and opinions are never far from the surface. Several MoDAs have noted that Afghan interpreters sometimes appear conflicted during meetings, wanting to please both their U.S. employers and their Afghan compatriots. This ambivalence can result in inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise redacted translations. To increase accuracy, advisors must trust their interpreters and continually share information and ideas with them. Advisors must see their interpreters as their closest partners. Without a trust-based relationship with interpreters, it is almost impossible to create a trust-based relationship with ministerial counterparts.

### Recommendations

Structure and Integration into the Larger International Intervention:

- ❖ The advising mission must be strategically placed to maximize access to local officials, in some cases in the Embassy and in others within the international mission.
- ❖ Advisors must coordinate with various foreign governments, international organizations, and development organizations. It is a complex web of agencies and programs, but failure to coordinate limits effectiveness.

- ❖ Civilian advisors need to find ways to become expert resources even in large advisor teams, especially if their skills and talents are being underutilized.

Recruitment and Selection of Advisors:

- ❖ Selected advisors must be optimistic and believe that change is possible. Ideally, they should be able to articulate a vision for the ministry to which they are assigned.
- ❖ Effective advisors communicate, persuade, and educate. Ultimately, effective advisors inspire their counterparts to consider new and different solutions to existing problems.

Working with Foreign Counterparts:

- ❖ Advisors need to get buy-in from Afghan officials during every step of the advising process, or their proposals will not be undertaken and maintained.
- ❖ Advisors should look for the simplest feasible solutions to problems.
- ❖ Working effectively with interpreters is the first step toward working well with counterparts.

Preparing Advisors for the Mission:

- ❖ Deploying agencies must think about the best way to teach the local language. It is important to master commonly used key phrases and administrative terms. Language should be considered a rapport-building tool. Therefore, the focus should be on teaching language and cultural norms together instead of focusing on fluency, which is an unattainable goal in most instances. Advisors should continue language training during deployment as a way to increase effectiveness.
- ❖ Advisors find themselves interacting and coordinating with many international actors and agencies every day. Civilian advisors should learn about the military structure and how to work inside an operational command. Predeployment training should help advisors learn more about the resources that each component of the coalition brings to the table, thus increasing unity of effort through better coordination.
- ❖ Ministerial/strategic advisors should be taught how to interact with high-level officials. Top officials are quite sophisticated and adept at working with foreigners, unlike local tribesmen, who have generally had less exposure to other cultures. Rather than learning how to engage local mullahs and village elders, it would be more helpful to understand how to interact with skeptical ministry officials.

## Conclusion

Advising is a vehicle for capacity-building, and capacity-building is the key to reforming government institutions—that is, to making them capable of effectively providing useful and expected services equitably and systematically to the population. All government agencies and international organizations involved in foreign assistance are deploying advisors to strengthen national and local institutions. Some invest heavily in selection and recruitment only; others combine selection and

recruitment with a robust preparation/training program before deployment, as does the MoDA program. Still others pull advisors from mission participants already in-country when a specific need is identified, thus cannibalizing other operations in an ad hoc manner. Some outsource the training of foreign officials to private companies. The approaches to deploying advisors vary according to the circumstances faced by each deploying agency or organization.

All in all, the advising mission is a key asset in the foreign assistance toolbox, but it must be configured so it fosters capacity-building activities, enabling advisors to share ideas and help implement jointly developed plans with their foreign counterparts. First and foremost, advisory missions must be formulated around the mantra “Be part of the process—don’t try to be the solution.” This is a key rule of engagement in capacity-building, and no reform project will be sustainable without it. The expertise that advisors bring to the capacity-building mission is vital, but it is the sharing and transference of knowledge that are the most precious roles the international community can play in supporting sustainable development. The mission should be undertaken carefully and build on lessons learned as they become available.

This article highlights the lessons learned of MoDA, an extremely ambitious program. Nevertheless, the lessons are applicable to any advising mission in any country. Indeed, any advising mission requires an adequate mission structure, whether embedded in an Embassy Country Team or in an international military mission. The civilian-military coordination and collaboration that were discovered to be so crucial to the overall advising effort apply to any mission. The training of advisors must focus on preparing these professionals with substantial experience and substantive expertise, ultimately transforming them into capacity-builders. **PRISM**

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Lester W. Grau, “Breaking Contact Without Leaving Chaos: The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan,” *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 20, no. 2 (June 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Additional information about the MoDA program, including the Capstone Exercise held in Indiana, is available at <[www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0211\\_moda/](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0211_moda/)>.