

Measuring Defense Reform: A Proposed Methodology to Measure Efforts to Achieve the Objectives of PAP-DIB

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The development and continuous utilization of objective metrics to demonstrate the effectiveness of reforms instituted by countries to achieve the objectives established through the Partnership for Peace–Defense Institution Building (PAP-DIB) process should be seen as both essential and obvious. However, to date there have been only modest efforts by defense experts, as well as nations, to develop systematic and disciplined methods that ministries of defense and national defense headquarters can employ to ascertain whether the PAP-DIB reforms they are instituting are meeting their intended objectives. To be sure, PfP nations participate in the Planning and Review Process on an agreed time-table with the NATO International Staff. However, notwithstanding the usefulness of these review processes (both formal reviews and the accompanying informal dialogue with NATO officials and nations), these are essentially reviews to determine the degree to which a Partner has met the Partnership Goals it has agreed to with NATO (via the Membership Action Plan, PARP, or individual Partnership Action Plan processes). As such, these useful reviews and analyses can be more accurately assessed as constituting an important element of what should be a more comprehensive and inclusive analytical methodology.

Despite the seemingly problematic nature of any attempt to measure the reform of public institutions, given their numerous subjective characteristics, there are analytical techniques that can be employed that can provide objective results to senior civilian and military officials that would enable them to measure the effectiveness of defense reforms. Indeed, such analyses should be viewed as being critical to enabling senior leadership to exercise requisite oversight through conducting informed cost-benefit analyses, based upon objective data.

When developing metrics to measure effectiveness in the delivery of national defense reform efforts, a hierarchy should be employed that gives greater weight to those factors that are clearly objective in character. Other factors (e.g., those that might be more subjective) also need review, but their usefulness in determining the merit of specific reform projects and/or their envisaged methodological approach needs to be assessed in the light of the results of the first level of hierarchical analysis. The proposed categories of analysis suggested in this essay are: increases in defense capability/defense efficiency; improvements in the means to support/facilitate defense efforts; a review of the methodological approach of defense reform (e.g., review of assumptions and techniques); and analyses of other technical assistance options that might be employed to effect reform.

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Increase in Defense Capability

Although there are many objectives behind the initiation of an effort to evaluate a defense reform project, the most critical goal of any such effort is to ascertain whether during the period of analysis there has been an objective improvement in the defense force's ability to field and support its armed forces. Or, conversely, if national objectives have been to reduce capacity, as a concerted effort to limit spending, then the goal might be to determine if these reductions have succeeded in balancing effectiveness and efficiency. Within the context of PfP, Partner nations are fortunate in that there are existing and effective reporting requirements and assessment tools that they can utilize in this analysis. Said criteria should include:

- The degree to which a country has met its NATO Force/Partnership Goals during the period of assessment.
- The degree to which a country has met its NATO Bi-Strategic Commands' Military Tasks for Interoperability (MTI) during the period under review.
- The degree to which a country has been able to increase the readiness of its standing and reserve forces as determined by NATO reporting criteria.
- Review of after-action reports of performance improvements or degradations of a nation's armed forces while on national and multinational command post exercises (CPXs) or field-training exercises (FTXs). Particularly for nations with limited defense capabilities and levels of institutional development, the post-exercise reports from NATO-sponsored exercises and pre-exercise assessments should prove to be particularly useful to senior defense officials.

Improvement in the Means to Support or Facilitate Defense Efforts

A critical objective of a country undertaking defense reform should be to discern improvements in its ability to "raise, train, and equip" its armed forces. Here, the metrics for analysis could well be less objective; however, improvements or failures can still be detected through a review of the following criteria:

- The degree to which reforms have been implemented into a country's organic law, national-level policies, inter-ministerial policy documents, and ministerial regulations. A comprehensive analysis should address both the objective number of such occurrences as well as provide an assessment of the value of such instances of implementation. Such an analysis, conducted on a regular basis, would be beneficial for most countries in that it would provide invaluable assessments of the existing constitutional, legal, and policy foundations for national defense—i.e., expose existing gaps and overlaps.
- The degree to which defense resources are being more efficiently employed as a result of implemented defense reforms. Defense reforms, *qua* reforms, should result in the more efficient utilization of financial resources, which could be dis-

cerned by the demonstration of a linkage of plans, outputs, and resources in budget justification materials.¹

- The degree to which reforms are integrated into a nation's professional military educational (PME) system's curricula. A critically important metric is to ascertain whether reformed policies, processes, and procedures are essential elements of the formal curricula of defense educational establishments. Should officials learn that new procedures, structures, and processes are not being integrated into PME curricula, then this is an indicator that either these reforms are not being perceived as "serious" enough by MoD or military leadership to be taught, or that national PME structures are not responsive to guidance from the MoD or national defense headquarters.
- The degree to which the recommended reforms are represented in a nation's formal military training regime and organization. Analytical studies of individual and unit training, similar to that suggested immediately above, is also likely to demonstrate the degree to which reforms are being recognized and implemented within the armed forces. A critical methodological indicator of particular significance in the context of PfP nations is whether a defense force has successfully transitioned from "training to time" to "training to standard," since the latter is a key element in the "tasks-conditions-standards" training methodology employed by Western armed forces.

Review of the General approach to a Defense Reform Effort

Any assessment of a national defense reform program should include a general review and analysis of the approach being employed by the MoD or external advisory team to ascertain if it is best suited to the requirements of the country in question, and whether it is accurately calibrated to the "absorption" capacity of the country's institutions and individuals. Some essential areas for vetting include:

- Metrics for regular and formal assessments should be built into the initiating concept, which should be aggregated to provide assessments of short-, mid-, and long-term progress.
- The degree to which reforms are integrated and mutually reinforcing. Disaggregated reforms should be fully assessed in accordance with regular annual reporting processes to ascertain the degree that they have inhibited reform implementation.
- An objective judgment as to the simplicity of recommended reforms. Needlessly complicated and complex reforms are likely to inhibit their diffusion throughout the defense establishment, and also within a nation's governing structure, thereby

¹ These performance metrics are selected from Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2003), 141.

encouraging the creation or endurance of guarded pockets of expertise among officials, which will lead to the continuation of bureaucratic silos. Any reform effort should endeavor to achieve the goal of creating reforms that can be generally understood by all elements in the defense structure, thereby enabling all departments and bureaus to participate in the new planning, execution, and review processes.

- Are the planning and review methodologies relevant to the nation's requirements and its international security environment? That is, is threat-based or capabilities-based planning being recommended for adoption and implementation?
- An assessment of the capacity-building component of defense reform projects. Clearly, an external advisory project that does not place overriding importance on the development of indigenous defense management capacity will not produce a cadre of civilian and military defense planners who understand the new/ transformed systems and processes. Such collective knowledge is essential to enable officials to operate these new systems and processes and, most importantly, facilitate their adaptation to meet changing requirements and conditions.
- Is the current reform program fully integrated and coordinated with other external assistance projects? Such an analysis is crucial, both at the initiation of the reform process and throughout the span of its execution in order to guard against duplication and redundancy.

Analysis of Other Technical Assistance Options

Finally, decisions concerning the continuation of a reform effort should include a cost/benefit analysis comparing the various elements of the transformation effort to other assistance delivery options, such as the use of non-resident Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and the employment of different assistance models and methodologies. While perhaps effective in their initial phases, there could be cases in which assistance might be more effectively and efficiently delivered through employing different means and models. As such, an objective cost/benefit analysis should be developed to provide regular reviews to senior national and defense officials of methods of their costs.

These suggested metrics are, admittedly, imperfect. However, they provide a baseline from which a country can begin to develop and review, over time, a methodology to use when attempting to achieve national defense reform.