



USAID
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Rapid Expeditionary Development (RED) Teams Demand and Feasibility Assessment

February 28, 2018



Clockwise from top left: Former USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios (right) meets with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines; Former USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah (left) walks with U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry (center) and Lieutenant Colonel William Johnson (right) in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan; General Votel (left) with USAID Administrator Mark Green (right) during a media tour in Raqqa, Syria; U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS Brett McGurk (center) visits the Raqqa City Council with USAID/OFDA Senior Regional Advisor Al Dwyer (right).

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Executive Summary

From the Vietnam War to today's crisis in Syria, the United States Government (USG) has experimented with various expeditionary models for mobilizing its development personnel alongside their military and interagency colleagues to unleash their unique capabilities for stabilization, reconstruction, and counterinsurgency (COIN) missions. As the lead implementer of development and humanitarian assistance for the USG since 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is a key interlocutor for mobilizing civilian personnel in non-permissive environments (NPEs).

In a risk-adverse post-Benghazi world, designing and building right-sized capabilities to effectively anticipate, plan for, and respond to crises unfolding across a wide spectrum of contexts is an enormous challenge and one that has frequently bedeviled the USG. It is especially complex to do so within an interagency ecosystem where varied cultures collide and personnel speak different organizational languages. Today, the number of USG civilian personnel focused on COIN and countering violent extremism (CVE) in high-threat environments is extremely limited.

It is a profound institutional challenge to get USG civilian personnel with mission-critical skillsets to the contexts and the communities they seek to serve. Ironically, the net effect of limiting access in insecure environments may be making civilian personnel less secure and their critical missions less effective.

In response to the devastating absence of COIN and CVE-focused USG civilian personnel in critical NPEs, USAID's Global Development Lab (Lab) has proposed a new Rapid Expeditionary Development (RED) Team concept. Unlike existing USAID officers working in permissive and semi-permissive environments, RED Team members would be specifically recruited and trained to deliver novel techniques, practices, and tools optimized to secure communities vulnerable to violent extremist radicalization and exploitation. It is envisioned that the priority competency of proposed RED Team development officers would be social movement theory (SMT), followed by counter-network analysis and community engagement in support of hyper-localized programming. Importantly, RED Team members would be able to design, fund, and implement activities immediately in response to urgent and pressing requirements as opposed to working by, with, and through implementing partners via contracting or grant mechanisms.

RED Team development officers would be deployed as two-person teams and placed with "non-traditional" USAID partners executing a mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations in extremis conditions. As proposed, RED Team members would be catalytic actors, performing development activities alongside local communities while

coordinating with interagency partners. Members would also reach back to USAID to determine how Missions or Bureaus could best leverage the knowledge, insights, relationships and small gains they generate. RED Team personnel would be able to live and work in austere environments for extended periods of time and actively contribute to their own security and welfare. They would be deployed farther forward than USAID personnel traditionally deploy and would routinely operate under the authority of the host agency with whom they deploy, acting in accordance with their security posture.

Frontier Design Group (Frontier) was commissioned by the Lab to conduct research gauging the demand, desirability, and feasibility of the proposed RED Team concept. This report explores whether and to what extent a demand exists among non-traditional USG partners for a new expeditionary development capability to counter violent extremist organizations (VEOs) in NPEs. The report also examines the feasibility of the notional capability to include priority enablers and inhibitors for USAID's future consideration.

This report is not intended to serve as a roadmap for the robust operationalization or implementation of the proposed RED Team concept. Rather, it documents critical opinions about the demand for and feasibility of the proposed capability from Special Operations Forces, Intelligence Community, and USAID perspectives. Throughout, Frontier offers recommendations for USAID's consideration that might strengthen the feasibility or viability of the concept.

Virtually everyone consulted to gauge interagency demand for the proposed RED Team concept shared a widespread sentiment that the USG is woefully underperforming in non-permissive and denied environments. Frontier is humbled by the numerous senior leaders from across the USG who spent hours of their time sharing their stories. These included former heads of Agencies, former Chiefs of Station, former Mission Directors, and those still serving as Lieutenant Generals, Colonels, Assistant Administrators, Special Advisors, Program Advisors, and Technical Specialists. These individuals have hard-earned experience in leadership roles in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Libya, Syria, Philippines, Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin, Venezuela, and Colombia. Several have battle scars from the White House Situation Room and interagency fora in Washington, DC. Their commitment in time and dedicated reflection revealed their sense of dissatisfaction with the status quo of expeditionary civil-security/military platforms and their belief in the possibility of a better way. Personnel from across the military, intelligence, diplomatic, and development communities were excited by USAID's renewed interest in working with the interagency in austere locales, and actively worked to identify how RED Teams could support the USG's national security interests.

This report provides recommendations on key champions and influencers USAID might approach to advance the RED Team concept and field an initial pilot. The decision makers identified in this document have access to theaters/countries/commands, and

discretionary funds that could support a pilot, and the power to operationalize RED Teams if they believe in the concept and in USAID's ability to deliver. Frontier also suggests several funding and prototype pathways for USAID to consider in specific geographies.

There are many potential benefits RED Teams might offer interagency partners but more importantly is the benefit RED Teams can provide USAID. Two advantages worth underscoring and seriously considering include:

- 1) Red Teams could provide USAID with a direct, government-to-government reporting channel from denied environments to inform national security dialogue in Washington. USAID should consider how best to design the reporting function from RED Teams to Washington and leverage it strategically. This could also be messaged as a differentiator when seeking an interagency partner to help fund the RED Team pilot as several entities may be seeking direct/strategic connectivity between field operations and the situation room; and
- 2) RED Team members could become "super enablers" by re-creating USAID's long-lost "doing capacity." This would require them to reach-back into USAID and leverage its talent and many assets – data, maps, leaders, knowledge networks, lessons, and thought-leadership – and contribute to these in a reciprocal relationship after returning from deployment. This model offers another tool in USAID's toolkit and further diversifies the distinct yet complementary approaches that can be leveraged in NPEs by its officers.



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Introduction

For decades, the United States Government (USG) has experimented with various expeditionary models for mobilizing its development personnel alongside their military and interagency colleagues to unleash their unique capabilities for stabilization, reconstruction, and counterinsurgency (COIN) missions. However, designing and building right-sized capabilities to effectively anticipate, plan for, and respond to crises unfolding across a wide spectrum of contexts is an enormous challenge and one that has frequently bedeviled the USG. It is especially complex to do so within an interagency ecosystem where varied departmental cultures collide and personnel speak different organizational languages.

As the lead implementer of development and humanitarian assistance for the USG since 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been a key interlocutor in past efforts to mobilize civilian personnel in non-permissive environments (NPEs).¹ These models include the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program in Vietnam (1967-1973),² Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan and Iraq (2002 – 2014),³ and the Civilian Response Corps (CRC)

¹ Non-permissive environments are regions characterized by armed conflict, natural or man-made disasters, political repression, instability, or widespread corruption and that create significant barriers to the provision of foreign assistance, including accessibility for USG hires, finding qualified contractors and grantees, and monitoring programs and projects.

https://oig.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/other-reports/fy17_statement_management_challenges_usaid_mcc.pdf

² Schoux, William. "The Vietnam Experience: A Model of Successful Civil-Military Partnership?" 2005. Washington, DC. This paper can be found on USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) and describes the purpose of the document as, "Funded by USAID, this report aims to provide an overview of the CORDS effort for those working to contribute to ongoing development activities in post-conflict situations...It is anticipated that this study of the US experience with CORDS will provide useful lessons for USAID's efforts in the Afghanistan PRTs, as well as for pre-conflict planning efforts in the future."

Leepson, Marc, The Heart and Mind of USAID's Vietnam Mission, American Foreign Service Association. Washington, DC.

Scham, Sandra. "Counter-Insurgency Programming: A Meta-Evaluation." 2010. U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington, DC.

³ Sharon Morris and James (Spyke) Stephenson, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment" (2006), U.S. Agency for International Development, Joint Center for Operational Analysis, USJFCOM, and Department of State

"Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq." 2008. U.S. Government Accountability Office.

"PRT Field Operations Guide." 2009. U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense

"Provincial Reconstruction Teams." 2006. USAID/Afghanistan. Kabul, Afghanistan

"Audit of USAID/Iraq's Participation in Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq." Audit Report Number E-267-07-008-P. 2007. Office of Inspector General. Baghdad, Iraq.

(2008-2014)⁴. USAID has a rich history of working by, with, and through trusted implementing partners globally, which has taken on new importance in NPEs where partners have become the eyes and ears for Agency staff who cannot physically access many environments given restrictions to USG civilian personnel movements. For example, USAID and the U.S. Department of State (State) work closely with implementing partners via the Syria Transition Assistance and Response Team (START) platform based in Turkey.⁵

Official⁶ civilian personnel remain largely absent outside capital cities in key countries given the USG's risk-aversion to civilian deployments to critical remote areas beyond the wire, especially following the 2012 Benghazi attack. Chiefs of Mission (CoMs) are increasingly cautious to authorize civilian movements against State's Diplomatic Security (DS) warnings, noting that Accountability Review Boards (ARBs) assembled in the wake of security incidents can end the careers of even the most senior and accomplished Foreign Service Officers (FSOs). Special Operations Forces (SOF)⁷ waging foreign internal defense (FID) encountered civilian development professionals in far greater numbers working to pacify villages during the height of the Vietnam War. Today, the number of civilian personnel focused on COIN and countering violent extremism (CVE) in high-threat environments is extremely limited. It is a profound institutional challenge to get civilian personnel with mission-critical skillsets to the contexts and the communities they seek to serve.

Barber, Ben, Justin Pressfield, Mohit Dayal and Akemi Tinder, "Iraq: Provincial Reconstruction Teams." 2007.

⁴ Courtney, Alexa and Justin Loustau, "USAID Civilian Response Corps – Active Component: After Action Review." 2018. U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington, DC.

⁵ The Department of State's consular website for Ankara, Turkey describes the Syria Transition Assistance Response Team (START) as "the interagency team in Turkey responsible for providing U.S. Government assistance to Syrians in Syria and Turkey. START and its partners save lives, alleviate suffering, promote moderate voices to combat extremism, and support Syrians as they build with dignity a peaceful democratic Syria. START is composed of representatives from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The diverse team is responsible for coordinating and implementing U.S. assistance efforts to Syria and is an integral part of the U.S. government's campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Located in Turkey, START works with international organizations, Syrian NGOs, the Government of Turkey, and other donor nations to implement, and oversee humanitarian assistance and stabilization programs that address the needs of Syrians both inside Syria and in Turkey." Accessed on February 19, 2018 at <https://tr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/ankara/sections-offices/>

⁶ Unless otherwise specified, when this document refers to civilian personnel it is referring to official Americans who fall under Chief of Mission authority.

⁷ Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Special Forces (SF) are not necessarily interchangeable. SOF refers to any special operations units that fall under the purview of U.S. Special Operations Command including the component commands – Army Special Operations Command, Marine Special Operations, Naval Special Warfare Command, and Air Force Special Operations Command. SF applies to only those green berets who serve under Army Special Operations Command in one of the seven Special Forces Groups: 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 19th, or 20th.

In response to the enduring absence of COIN and CVE-focused civilian personnel in critical NPEs, USAID's Global Development Lab (Lab) has proposed a new Rapid Expeditionary Development (RED) Team concept. Unlike existing USAID officers working in permissive and semi-permissive environments, RED Team members would be specifically recruited and trained to deliver novel techniques, practices, and tools optimized to secure communities vulnerable to violent extremist radicalization and exploitation. It is envisioned that the priority competency of proposed RED Team Development Officers would be social movement theory (SMT), followed by counter-network analysis and community engagement in support of hyper-localized programming. Importantly, RED Team members would be able to design, fund, and implement activities immediately in response to urgent and pressing requirements as opposed to working by, with, and through implementing partners via contracting or grant mechanisms.

As proposed, the RED Team concept is one way to re-create the long-lost "doing capacity" of USAID. A RED Team member would have a modest but potentially catalytic ability to action activities in real time in response to a rapidly changing, complex, and dangerous environment. RED Team members would be catalytic actors, performing development activities alongside local communities while coordinating with other non-traditional partners. Members would also reach back to USAID to determine how Missions or Bureaus could best leverage the knowledge, insights, relationships and small gains they generate.

RED Teams would be deployed farther forward than USAID personnel traditionally deploy. Rather than fall under CoM authority and Regional Security Officer (RSO) purview typical of USAID officers, RED Team members would routinely operate under the authority of the host agency, including Combatant Command (COCOM) authority, and in accordance with their security posture. There is precedent for USAID deployment in Afghanistan under joint CoM-COCOM authority, which could also be an option. RED team members would be trained and authorized to conduct themselves as a force-multiplier able to contribute a full suite of security skills as needed. RED Teams personnel would be able to live and work in austere environments for extended periods of time and actively contribute to their own security and welfare.

The proposed RED Teams would work in austere environments where the USG has a priority national security interest, and where conventional military, law enforcement, or other security operations and traditional socio-economic development programs may be ill suited or ineffective.⁸ RED Team Development Officers would be deployed as two-

⁸ While this report focuses on the demand for and feasibility of RED Team collaboration with SOF and the IC, it should be noted that specialized general purpose force (GPF) units such as the U.S. Army's Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) are beginning to assume roles historically performed by SOF given the growing number of FID and COIN missions worldwide. If the proposed concept were to be implemented, RED Teams placements with these specialized GPF teams should be considered.

person teams and placed⁹ with small teams from “non-traditional” USAID partners executing a mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations in extremis conditions. RED Teams could be increased, decreased or echeloned to effectively engage key problem sets. While the original concept focuses on augmenting USG capabilities in NPEs such as counter-violent extremist organization (VEO) operations, it could be broadened to include placements with other civilian-security missions including pandemic responses in fragile states.

The proposed concept is inspired and informed by the experiences of individuals who served in USAID’s Civilian Response Corps—Active (CRC-A) component or worked closely with the CRC-A while deployed. These individuals, leveraging their unique COIN experience in various theaters, civil-military collaboration with SOF, and joint CoM-COCOM operating authorities, successfully designed, funded, and implemented activities that interrupted VEO recruitment and financing. The success and lessons of interagency COIN efforts including the CORDS program in Vietnam and the Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell (NRCC)¹⁰ in eastern Afghanistan offer important precedents for the bold ideas framed in the RED Team concept proposed by the Lab and examined in this report.

⁹ Per Lab guidance, Frontier uses the legally agnostic terms “place” or “placement” throughout this document to describe the process of assigning USAID RED Team officers to forward operating elements from other USG entities. While the legal ramifications of terms including “embed,” “detail,” and “secondment” were not explored in this report, a thorough review would need to be conducted prior to negotiating memoranda of understanding with partner entities for implementation.

¹⁰ Harry Bader, Clint Douglas, Clint Hanna, and J.D. Fox, “Operations of Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell: Theory and Practice Implementing Non-lethal Unconventional Warfare Approaches in Eastern Afghanistan.” December 2014. Stability Institute Journal. State Department Cable Addressing Activities of the Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Team (Joint Civilian Military Operation in Eastern Afghanistan Task Force Bastogne). Kleinfeld, Rachel and Harry Bader, “Extreme Violence and the Rule of Law: Lessons from Eastern Afghanistan, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.” April 2014.

Purpose and Scope

Frontier Design Group (Frontier) was commissioned by the Lab to conduct research gauging the demand, desirability, and feasibility of the proposed RED Team concept. First, this report explores whether and to what extent a demand exists among non-traditional USG partners for a new expeditionary development capability to counter VEOs in NPEs. Then, it discusses the initial feasibility of the notional capability to include priority enablers and inhibitors for USAID's future consideration.

This report is not intended to serve as a roadmap for the robust operationalization or implementation of the proposed RED Team concept. Rather, it documents critical opinions about the demand for and feasibility of the proposed capability from the SOF, IC, and USAID perspective. Throughout, Frontier offers recommendations for USAID's consideration that might strengthen the feasibility or viability of the concept.

The final section of this report provides recommendations on key champions and influencers USAID might approach to advance RED Teams. These decision makers have access to theaters/countries/commands, discretionary funds that could support a pilot, and the power to operationalize RED Teams if they believe in the concept and in USAID's ability to deliver. In this section, Frontier also suggests several funding and prototype pathways for USAID to consider in specific geographies.

Methodology

This study was conducted through 60 and 90-minute key informant interviews and a 150-minute Senior Leader Salon. An initial literature review of USAID and SOF-provided documents as well as open source materials informed empathy-based interviews¹¹. Frontier developed an extensive interview protocol that was routinely iterated throughout the research process. An initial list of interviewees was provided to Frontier by the Lab, which was expanded upon using Frontier's network and a referral sampling technique¹².

Frontier contacted a total of 53 people for interviews. While Frontier reached out to a variety of USG agencies to assess the demand for and feasibility of the proposed capability, the SOF and intelligence communities expressed the strongest interest in

¹¹ The empathy interview, as defined by the University of British Columbia's d.studio, is "an approach to finding out as much as possible about a person's experience as a "user" of a space, a process, an objective or an environment." Unlike a traditional interview, it focuses on user stories and experiences with the interviewer remaining as neutral as possible, allowing the subject to point the discussion in whatever direction he or she cares most deeply about. University of British Columbia, "Empathy Interview," <http://dstudio.ubc.ca/research/toolkit/temporary-techniques/new-6-toolkit-techniques-3-empathy-interview/>.

¹² Referral sampling is a process wherein those interviewed are asked to recommend additional points of contact with important insights pertaining to the task at hand.

participating in a dialogue about the concept. In the end, Frontier successfully connected with 34 of these individuals, for a total of 36 interviews (follow-up interviews were conducted with two subjects).

The table below depicts the organizations and fields represented by the 53 individuals Frontier contacted throughout the research process. Several people Frontier interviewed represented multiple organizations and fields. As such, the total number of interviews relating to the fields and organizations listed below exceeds the total number of actual interviews Frontier conducted.

| Organization/Field | Related Interviews |
|--|---------------------------|
| Special Operations Forces (SOF) | 19 |
| Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) | 1 |
| Civil Affairs (CA) | 3 |
| Green Berets/Special Forces Groups | 5 |
| Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) | 1 |
| Marine Corps Intelligence | 0 |
| Military Information Support Operations (MISO) | 1 |
| Seal Team Six (DEVGRU) / NAVSPECWARCOM | 2 |
| Special Operations Command South (SOC SOUTH) | 1 |
| General Special Operations Forces (SOF) | 3 |
| USASOC Commander's Initiative Group (CIG) | 2 |
| Intelligence Community (IC) | 11 |
| Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) | 5 |
| Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) | 1 |
| National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) | 2 |
| Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) | 3 |
| Development Community | 10 |
| The Peace Corps | 1 |
| U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) | 9 |
| Law Enforcement | 0 |
| Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) | 0 |
| Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) | 0 |
| U.S. Department of State (State) | 3 |
| Academics/Think Tanks | 2 |
| Industry | 4 |
| U.S. Public Health Service (USPHSO) | 0 |

Figure 1: Organization/field representation of interviewees.

Frontier conducted interviews on a non-attributable basis,¹³ taking anonymized notes that were assigned case numbers and stored separately from a password-protected master interview list. Interviews were semi-structured, following the aforementioned interview protocol while providing enough space for interviewees to focus on their respective interests, at times surfacing new and unforeseen themes. These conversations unearthed key insights about the demand for and feasibility of the Lab's proposed RED Team concept, and informed broader analysis, clustering, and synthesis that contributed to the findings and recommendations discussed throughout this report. Interview subjects were contacted when necessary to clarify specific points and request additional contacts or resources for analysis.

Frontier also facilitated a 150-minute Senior Leader Salon held under the Chatham House Rule¹⁴ on Monday, January 29 in Arlington, VA to further assess the demand for and feasibility of the proposed capability. The Salon gathered participants from a narrow community of interest: a subset of SOF and the IC comprised of green berets and seasoned paramilitary operators and case officers from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). These groups were prioritized because they expressed a strong interest in participating in a dialogue, are highly expeditionary, engage in the counter-VEO mission set, respect USAID's work and reputation, and share a complementary operational culture and ethos with USAID.

Frontier invited 17 individuals to the event, 11 of whom attended in person and 3 of whom joined via teleconference. Participants were current or former members of 1st Special Forces Group, the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, the CIA, Navy Sea Air and Land (SEAL) Teams, National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), Think Tanks, and US Army Special Operations Command's Commanders Initiative Group (USASOC, CIG). USAID attendees included leaders from USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Executive Secretariat, General Counsel (GC), and the Lab, as well as a former Mission Director. Participants discussed USAID's most compelling differentiators in the fight against VEOs and explored the key enablers and inhibitors of the proposed concept. The numerous insights generated at the event are captured throughout this document.

The Senior Leader Salon's complete agenda can be found in Appendix C, and a full rapporteur's report of the event is available in Appendix D.

¹³ At the start of each interview, participants were reminded that while their comments would not be attributed, insights, themes, and quotes that surfaced during conversations would be used to create this report.

¹⁴ Per the Royal Institute of International Affairs, "when a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any participant, may be disclosed." <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about/chatham-house-rule>

Demand and Desirability

Virtually everyone consulted to gauge interagency demand for the proposed RED Team concept shared a widespread sentiment that the USG is woefully underperforming in non-permissive and denied environments. Frontier was humbled by the numerous senior leaders from across the USG who spent hours of their time sharing their stories. These included former heads of Agencies, former Chiefs of Station, former Mission Directors, and those still serving as Lieutenant Generals, Colonels, Assistant Administrators, Special Advisors, Program Advisors, and Technical Specialists. These individuals have hard-earned experience in leadership roles in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Libya, Syria, Philippines, Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin, Venezuela, and Colombia. Several have battle scars from the White House Situation Room and interagency fora in Washington, DC. Their commitment in time and dedicated reflection revealed their sense of dissatisfaction with the status quo of expeditionary civil-security/military platforms and their belief in the possibility of a better way. Personnel from across the military, intelligence, State, and USAID communities were excited by USAID's renewed interest in working with the interagency in austere locales, and actively worked to identify how RED Teams could support the USG's national security interests.

What follows is a discussion of the interests of members from each group Frontier consulted, along with an analysis of how RED Teams might be able to support those interests in the future. These are framed as group interests but should not be interpreted as definitive, institutional perspectives given the limited sample size for this study. The suggested RED team value-add was proposed by interviewees directly and synthesized by Frontier. By articulating these group interests and the relative value add of RED Teams, these short summaries of demand become powerful headlines for USAID's proposals to these partners for pilot funding and co-implementation. The illustrative pathways and champions highlighted in the final section of this report inform how USAID can make a persuasive case to those non-traditional partners most likely to be interested in fielding RED Teams.

Military

Group-Level Army Green Berets

Interest: Achieve FID, COIN, and Unconventional Warfare (UW) missions in specific geographic areas of responsibility (AORs) by mobilizing the right resources to the “tip of the spear” to fill the “vacuums of space” in denied environments.

Value Add of RED Teams: Rapidly mobilize to work side-by-side with deployed SF ODA teams securing and holding areas formerly occupied by VEOs to promote stability through community-oriented restorative justice, rule of law, low-tech agriculture,

infrastructure, and industry-developed innovation interventions, allowing teams to focus on maintaining and ensuring the security of local communities.

Former and Current 95th Civil Affairs (CA) Brigade Leaders and Members

Interest: Improve the durability of human domain solutions while becoming more effective at executing new governance and counter-governance essential tasks.

Value Add of RED Teams: CA officers and NCOs deploy via “broadening assignments” with RED Teams to help map the human terrain and shift community dynamics and social systems. USAID RED Team members would augment CA’s emerging governance and counter-governance capabilities with unique civilian funding and authorities to ensure that short and medium-term gains are realized and sustained.

U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) / U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) Commander’s Initiative Group (CIG)

Interest: Reduce redundancy and strengthen command and control in rapid iteration cycles to improve the economy of SOF’s activity and force given the community’s shrinking talent pool. Support SOF’s efforts to achieve “persistent presence” in critical geographies.

Value Add of RED Teams: Provide “connective tissue” with USAID’s experienced personnel, information flows, and “programmatically rocket fuel,” allowing SF operators to focus on their comparative advantage of clearing and holding historically denied communities. The specific technical capacities of USAID personnel can be tailored to different environments and amended as needed.

Military Information Support Operations Command (MISOC)

Interest: Improve stability operations and COIN planning at the company command level, strengthening SOF’s broader strategy and operations across an entire AOR.

Value Add of RED Teams: Place RED Team members at the ODB level to coordinate with the command and control element and rotating ODAs, broadening the team’s COIN “field of vision” without “stressing an individual ODA’s span of control.”

Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU)

Interest: Continually improve the sophistication of analysis, targeting, and lethality of counter-network capabilities, adding “levers” that can be pulled to achieve favorable outcomes.

Value Add of Red Teams: Facilitate a paradigm shift wherein RED Teams 1) support local leaders allowing SOF operators to target networks, money flows, and community structures and knowledge; 2) provide data sets, not just text-heavy reports, to feed into SOF databases and augment modeling in exchange for info that can be mined by USAID using novel social science methods to aid strategic planning processes; and 3) utilize unique civilian authorities to leverage cutting edge technologies (listening devices, drones, etc.) in ways SOF cannot to change the dynamic of security and terrorism in a society and advance the USG’s toolkit in NPEs.

Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC)* and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)

A JSOC interviewee strongly suggested that his entity was not the right partner for RED Teams and that “tier one” operators in general should not be USAID’s audience given their overwhelming kinetic focus. He offered the guidance below from the perspective of his other role as JSOC’s current liaison officer to DIA.

Interest: DoD’s recently published National Military Strategy shifts focus to state-on-state conflict with Russia, China, and North Korea. General Purpose Forces (GPF) Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) may take over many traditional COIN/FID SOF missions in Iraq and Afghanistan to enable SOF elements to push into other missions and geographies.

Value Add of RED Teams: Bolster the COIN and FID missions of GPF and SFABs by considering RED Team placements with these communities. Also consider prioritizing Afghanistan as the priority location for future prototypes/pilots for RED Teams.

Intelligence Community

Directorate of Strategic and Operational Planning (DSOP), National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)

Interest: Improve the USG’s approach to confronting complex and cross-cutting national missions such as counterterrorism, developing effective whole of government strategies and plans.

Value Add of RED Teams: Provide an effective proof of concept of an interoperable small-team development unit with intellectual firepower, diverse skillsets, unique authorities, and development funding worthy of SOF support to advance the CT mission and reverse a “development war” the USG is currently losing.

National Intelligence Managers (NIMs) at the National Intelligence Management Council (NIMC), Director of National Intelligence DNI)

Interest: Effectively manage “global coverage” of intelligence collection priorities and assets via National Intelligence Managers (NIMs), who provide “strategic warning” to policymakers about risk and potential crises.

Value Add of RED Teams: Help DNI “buy down the risk as a low cost, low tech investment” by providing meaningful context and insight about what is happening in denied areas where the USAID Mission and/or Embassy may not have information or reporting. The DNI NIMC and NIMs seem interested in having a strategic conversation with USAID about better integrating USAID into the national security architecture at every level. This goes well beyond the operational focus of RED Teams but if USAID is interested in pursuing a conversation, the NIMs for the Near East and for Africa relayed an open invitation to USAID to attend their weekly geographic meetings.¹⁵

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

Directorate of Operations (DO) Interest: Focus on covert action to thwart threats to the homeland.

Value Add of Red Teams to the DO: Facilitate the handoff/transition from covert action to overt community engagement activities such as agriculture and micro-enterprise support, ensuring a continued USG presence in areas of interest while allowing CIA case officers to remain focused on collection and covert action. With the appropriate clearances and skill sets, RED Teams could also conduct ethnographic and grounded theory research of imprisoned radicalized / insurgent populations to better understand their beliefs and motivations and ultimately inform ceasefires and/or reconciliation deals with community/tribal elders to achieve political stability in key contexts.

Identifying opportunities for CIA-USAID RED Team cooperation would be facilitated, in part, by strong working relationships between Mission Directors and Chief of Stations. These relationships were described by both a former Mission Director and a former

¹⁵ The National Intelligence Manager for Near East is David M. Cattler and can be reached at davidmc2@dni.gov. He has worked closely with USAID DAA Rob Jenkins on the Syria response and holds USAID in high regard. The National Intelligence Manager for Africa is Magdalena A. Bajll and can be reached at magdaleb@nctc.gov.

Chief of Station during Frontier's interviews for this assessment in several Middle Eastern countries.

Analysis Interest: Bolster the CIA's ability to combat resilient VEO networks and recruitment cycles that have endured despite the CIA's successful leadership decapitation campaign.

Value Add of RED Teams to Analysis: Place USAID personnel at the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC), Global Jihad division, in Langley to analyze information and offer unique RED Team technical competencies and insight. RED Teams could also utilize the Center's unique integration of collection and analysis functions to gauge the appropriateness of future USAID deployments with forward CTC operators.

Department of State

Interest: Extend the reach of diplomatic and development USG personnel who are highly trained and self-sufficient in NPEs.

Value Add of Red Teams: Experienced and well-trained expeditionary personnel bring unique development skillsets and funding forward that augments capabilities of elite interagency operators. Because civilians would be placed with qualified military operators, risk to RED Team personnel is minimized. Thus, they can provide valuable information back to USAID and the State Department to guide strategic planning and inform future civilian deployments without having to rely on other intermediaries for reporting.

USAID

In addition to gauging demand for the proposed RED Teams across the interagency, Frontier discussed the appetite for such teams within USAID. Many USAID personnel expressed their support for the RED Team concept. Field operators highlighted the importance of mobilizing "soft skills," including the ability to identify allies and mobilize small amounts of cash to establish community buy-in and relationships, to effectively prosecute COIN campaigns in NPEs. Indeed, a former USAID officer in Afghanistan now working in Somalia recalled, "I could do more with \$5,000 than what the military was doing with \$50 million. Just equip me with the right resources, give me a bag of cash, and send me off into the wilderness." A former USAID officer with significant Afghanistan experience who went on to manage over 90 implementing partner staff in southern Syria expressed a similar sentiment about small amounts of money having an outsized impact and large amounts of money in conflict systems becoming weaponized. As such, RED Teams may be more cost effective than many existing USAID capabilities working in NPEs through expensive contracting mechanisms. One former USAID Mission Director

stated, “it’s amazing what one individual can do... Micro efforts can result in macro results.”

Rather than continue to deliver remotely-managed infrastructure and service provision contracts in NPEs, the RED Team concept also pushes USAID to directly improve community resilience by mobilizing specialized employees able to operate with and complement the efforts of elite SOF and IC forward operators. While USAID has contracted “Field Representatives” to operate alongside forward SF elements in the past, they coordinated with implementing partners and reported back to regional and Washington, DC based teams, lacking the ability to direct programming or perform inherently governmental functions in real time on the ground. In the words of one former USAID official, the RED Team concept would “restore the long-lost doing capacity of USAID.” Another USAID official who has led over 18 Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) and participated in more than 100 responses globally, many of which required close cooperation with the military, added that even OFDA “does not have the capability to do things in under 24 hours,” and that RED Teams would provide a unique and differentiated capability to USAID’s toolkit.

Other USAID officials were excited by the prospect of better understanding “bottom-up realities” and RED Team members’ ability to “reach up and pull down USAID’s programmatic operations.” A former USAID Mission Director with experience throughout the Middle East likened RED Teams to Forward Air Controllers (FACs), responsible for directing air strikes in remote areas. Rather than call through layers of bureaucracy in the heat of battle, FACs radio directly to those responsible for scrambling air assets and deliver a range of capabilities perfectly suited to firefights in real time. In the Mission Director’s analogy, RED Team members would be “super enablers,” observing situations on the ground and responding immediately by designing, funding, and implementing small-scale activities. They would also have “reach back” to USAID to link up efforts with additional development programming streams that could amplify or build on their immediate efforts.

While there are numerous potential contributions of RED Team Development Officers to USAID’s mission, one USAID officer with over 15 years’ experience working in extremely denied environments summed up the need for the proposed capability, stating:

“We have to be involved in national security or USAID will not be relevant. Anybody who doesn’t think we need to be working in combat elements or working with SF groups is just naïve. We are either going to be up front or irrelevant... USAID is going through a lot right now, but this is an area where we can be of utility. It must happen.”

Concerns Raised by Prospective External Partners and USAID

While interviewees and Senior Leader Salon participants identified a number of ways the proposed RED Teams could contribute to their interests, they also shared their concerns about the proposed concept.

Perception Management

Individuals from both the SOF and intelligence communities occasionally shared negative perceptions of USAID. For example, several SF operators recalled working with ill-experienced, equipped, and trained civilians and a senior military officer stated, “[RED Team officers] need to be self-sufficient and carry their weight.”

Similarly, several IC members were skeptical of USAID’s ability to execute essential tasks. For example, USAID would not drill an urgently-needed series of wells for an IC member in Kandahar, Afghanistan until a 6-month water table study was conducted and a contractor was identified. IC members were also underwhelmed by the number of USAID direct hire agricultural advisors mobilized at the community level on PRTs in both Afghanistan and Iraq. These experiences led to the general sense that USAID was fundamentally a contracting agency “without any doing power.”

Despite these concerns, the proposed RED Team concept was widely perceived as a “silver bullet” and “an important move in the right direction.” A senior SOF Officer even exclaimed that the military should be doing everything in its power to support USAID’s development objectives. IC and SOF officials’ respect and admiration for specific USAID officers whom they served alongside in the Middle East, Central America, and South Asia greatly contributed to these positive sentiments. The concerns raised by these operators about USAID writ large demonstrate the importance of rigorous recruitment, assessment, and selection criterion that ensure RED Team officers are of the same caliber of the USAID colleagues they hold in such high regard. Frontier provides recommendations on these processes in detail in the feasibility section that follows.

IC and USAID personnel also shared a desire to limit collaboration to “preserve USAID’s development mission and reputation.” One IC member plainly stated, “If I were the USAID Administrator, I wouldn’t get into this. You put an X on the back of every USAID officer... If I were CIA Director, I would say, ‘is it worth it?’” The individual recommended that USAID engage in detailed risk planning to define worst-case outcomes if a pilot is entertained. A former Chief of Station advised, “...define your failures... know your human risks, your operational risks, your program risks, and your political risks” when considering working with a community that can cross political boundaries clandestinely without political fallout.

Several USAID personnel suggested that information firewalls be established and honored if pilots, particularly with the IC, were pursued. USAID, like the CA community, is responsible for sharing information it collects during routine operations with the USG. However, USAID personnel cannot be asked to collect information on behalf of the IC. One senior intelligence official added, “this is why we stay back,” and noted that open source information including social media is an alternative mechanism for the IC to cull measures and effectiveness and sentiment data that could be leveraged creatively.

Integration and Accountability

Another concern expressed by several USAID interviewees relates to how the proposed RED Team capability would be integrated within the Agency during and after the redesign effort, should a pilot or prototype be launched. Frontier was unable to explore this concern in detail because redesign planning and assumptions are closely guarded. Sometimes, this concern was expressed as the need for better alignment between tactical or operational level experiments (i.e. RED Team pilots) and strategic and policy-level plans that would direct and appropriately align capabilities, mission requirements, and interagency partners.

In a candid moment, one interviewee expressed his “ultimate fear,” confiding “who is [a RED Team member] accountable to? What if they went rogue?” Creating the organizational tether between the RED Team and USAID writ large is briefly explored in the feasibility section on core functional competencies and should be fully optimized if USAID decides to launch a pilot. The purpose of a prototype is to test assumptions and questions in order to learn what works, what does not, and to surface new insights and better questions to refine an initial model. Ideally, a well-designed prototype would take into account these valid concerns about integration and accountability, much the way the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) likely had to accommodate similar critiques in the early days as they were innovating their unique and novel model.

Competition Surrounding Roles and Responsibilities

While the following feasibility section discusses RED Teams’ potential technical overlaps with prospective partners and distinct but complementary differences, it was unclear to at least one USAID officer who attended the Senior Leader Salon how the skillset of the proposed RED Team members would differ from existing specialized USAID teams. For example, the official argued that the governance gaps identified by their SOF and IC colleagues could be filled by existing OTI personnel, assuming access to non-permissive or denied environments could be negotiated. In response, the Lab reaffirmed the concept’s unique focus on social movement and community mobilization theory as the core RED Team skillset, as well as the training requirements that would ensure “operational empathy,” interoperability, and trust with elite forward operators working in some of the

most denied environments in the world. They also clarified the original intention that the proposed RED Team members be direct hires and not utilize implementing partners via contracting or grant mechanisms. Nevertheless, if RED Teams were to be piloted, the Lab must socialize the concept with existing expeditionary capacities across USAID and communicate the non-duplicative niche these teams and their members would fulfill for interagency partners.

External Inhibitors to Demand

As previously mentioned, DS has grown extremely risk averse in the wake of the 2012 Benghazi attack, rarely allowing civilian deployments alongside forward operators from other government agencies. For example, one USAID officer who has been deployed alongside SF teams in the most contested, dangerous NPEs recalled that even after gaining the trust of ODAs and high-level support from Army Generals, DS still restricted his movements outside his base camp on the front lines of an active warzone. To implement the RED Team concept, USAID must broach the subject of civilian deployments to NPEs in serious negotiations with DS and make a compelling argument about how the deployment of civilian personnel would benefit the USG's diplomatic and development efforts (i.e. improved presence, information flows, etc.).

It should be noted that the underutilization of existing USAID direct hire personnel in non-permissive or denied environments led some USAID officials to argue that negotiating a higher risk tolerance for USAID's existing teams with new political leadership at DS would be a better use of USAID capital than developing a new small scale and risk-prone capability. Other USAID officials argued that it would be more tenable to negotiate access to denied areas for elite development operators on RED Teams on a country-by-country basis based on pilots. Assuming the proposed officers were repeatedly successful, these smaller one-off arrangements could slowly shift perceptions of civilian deployments to NPEs at USAID, State, and across the broader interagency.

Recommended Partners

Given the interests and concerns of USG agencies outlined above, it is recommended that the Lab approach the following potential partners to explore a RED Team pilot in greater detail:

- Army Green Berets: Incoming Commander of 1st SFG, COL Owen Ray.
- Army Civil Affairs: Incoming Commander of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, COL Chuck Burnett, and Incoming CSM of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade Garric Banfield (via introductions from former 95th Commander and USAID Senior Military LNO Col Jay Wolff (retired), former 95th Commander and USAID Senior Military LNO

- Brigadier General (retired) Mike Warmack, and LTC Jon Bleakley at the USASOC CIG).
- USSOCOM: General Raymond Anthony (Tony) Thomas III or after his change of command if/when Lieutenant General Austin (Scott) Miller takes command.
 - NCTC, Directorate of Strategic Operational Plans (DSOP): Lieutenant General Michael K. Nagata.
 - The CIA, depending on whether the Lab can identify a country team where the Mission Director and Chief of Station relationship is strong and the Lab is willing to entertain a broader range of RED Team capabilities (discussed in depth in the following feasibility section).
 - Other partners specified in the concluding section of this report who were not interviewed directly but who SOF interviewees suggested would be interested because of their high regard for USAID and because they “get it” and value civil-military integration include:
 - Afghanistan:
 - Major General James B. Linder, Commander of the Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan (SOJTF-A) and his likely successor, Major General Kurt L. Sonntag at the Special Operations Center of Excellence at Ft. Bragg, NC; and
 - Commander of the U.S. Forces in Afghanistan and NATO Resolute Support Mission, General John (Mick) Nicholson.
 - Central Command (CENTCOM):
 - General Joseph L. Votel

Feasibility

As the hub for research and development, risk taking, and innovation for USAID, the Lab proposed the RED Team concept as a prototype to disrupt a limiting status quo. The Lab's mandate for experimentation embraces President Kennedy's optimism and commitment to disruption, which ultimately led to the creation of USAID:

"The problems of the world cannot possibly be solved by skeptics or cynics, whose horizons are limited by the obvious realities. We need men who can dream of things that never were, and ask why not." – John F. Kennedy

Feasibility studies are conducted to assess the practicality of a proposed idea to determine if it will work and whether it should be implemented. While robust feasibility assessments are conducted in response to proposed plans, this assessment was conducted on the specific dimensions of USAID's notional RED Team concept informed by qualitative interviews, the Senior Leader Salon, and associated research conducted by Frontier.

Frontier's discussion of feasibility is structured according to the following categories:

- **Technical** (*core functional competencies*).
- **Operational** (*operating authorities: access and funding, recruitment, assessment and selection, hiring, deployment mechanisms and theaters of interest*).
- **Financial** (*money*).

For each sub-category, Frontier excerpts the applicable language from the Lab's original RED Team concept note (available in full in Appendix A) under the subsection, "Concept Summary," discusses key patterns and themes highlighted in interviews and the Senior Leader Salon under "Feasibility Considerations," and offers additional considerations or refinements for the Lab to consider in a final "Recommendations" section.

Technical

Core Functional Competencies

Without exception, every member of the intelligence community interviewed for this study was laser focused on exactly *what* RED Teams would be doing in their proposed operational roles. They probed for specific task-oriented examples that painted a picture of "a day in the life of" a RED Team member placed with an IC and/or SOF team in an insecure context like Mosul, Kandahar, eastern Libya, southern Yemen, or northeast Nigeria. In stark contrast, members of the SOF community and current and former USAID officers were not as focused on core competencies in interviews and often explored a wider variety of skills at a higher level of abstraction.

Concept Summary

RED Team members would possess unique competencies, not the traditional USAID development toolkit for permissive or semi-permissive environments. RED Team members would be highly knowledgeable about and skilled in novel techniques, practices, and tools optimized for unique non-permissive and/or denied environments and their specific missions in these environments would be to deliver the social change necessary to help secure communities vulnerable to violent extremist radicalization. According to the Lab's concept, RED Team members' priority competency would be SMT, followed by counter network analysis and community engagement in support of hyper-localized programming.

RED Team members would be distinct from existing USAID employees because they would be able to design, fund, and implement an activity immediately in response to an urgent and pressing requirement as opposed to working by, with, and through implementing partners via contracting mechanisms.

Feasibility Considerations

Those consulted identified issues of mission competition and skill variety in response to the proposed RED Team competencies.

Competition

Seasoned SOF and CIA officers are proud of their hard-earned battle scars gleaned from years of exposure to the front lines of America's wars. Development professionals have served alongside them, at great risk and under extreme pressure, but often in a more limited capacity or under a different security posture dictated by DS. Partially as a result of these different risk appetites and deployment paradigms, the technical competencies proposed in the RED Team concept have traditionally been fulfilled by those within the IC or SOF. When asked whether it would be of value for USAID to be the SMT experts on a team, some officers embraced the idea but others expressed caution.

One former Chief of Station who served in several Middle Eastern countries framed the opportunity this way, "How do you harness the goodness that is USAID, distill it, and not compete with [other government agencies]?" To facilitate this, he underscored the importance of fostering "operational empathy" between RED Teams officers and their interagency team members regarding their unique missions. A rare quality, "operational empathy" requires a deep understanding of each team members' complementary missions.

Another former Chief of Station said that USAID would be hard pressed to find exceptional individuals who could meet the great physical and academic requirements to

be placed with IC or SOF teams. They argued that individuals with the appropriate language skills, doctorate-level academic backgrounds, prior engagement with tribal and community engagement experts, and willingness to remain deployed for 12-18 months were extremely difficult to identify, and were likely already employed by elite military and intelligence units. However, the official supported the RED Team concept and was enthusiastic about future deployments of such high caliber prospective candidates if they were successfully recruited and available.

The same former Chief of Station offered several provocative examples of where and how he would have collaborated with RED Teams in the Middle East had they been available under his tenure. In one example, his officers had a detailed plan to transition from covert activities to overt community engagement activities that required mobilizing volunteers from the U.S. Embassy and military to leverage their diverse personal backgrounds and skills in agriculture and micro-enterprise to support CIA officers on missions. If RED teams had existed, the CIA official would have worked with the USAID Mission Director to build a more systematic plan to leverage members for a direct hand off to overt USAID development activity management instead of begging volunteers on an ad hoc basis or using covert officers to conduct such activities. This would have allowed the official to protect his resources and employ them more efficiently and effectively.

In another example, the former Chief of Station suggested that RED Team members could have been given access to young terrorist recruits who had recently been incarcerated in local prisons. CIA case officers had debriefed recruits and written a book about their motivations in one Middle Eastern country. He suggested that a RED Team with the appropriate clearances and skill sets could have instead conducted such ethnographic and grounded theory research to better understand the details of recruits' lives and the patterns of their beliefs and motivations. Findings could be leveraged to inform reconciliation deals with community elders who are critical to ceasefires and/or to pushing violent extremist groups out of their tribal territories.

The CA community is currently grappling with their future capabilities and capacities to conduct governance and counter-governance related tasks. These have been translated and codified into specific tasks via a Mission Essential Task List (METL), which is currently only available to those in the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade. To the extent RED Team members' competencies effectively interrupt VEO recruitment processes, deny VEO's influence, support/complement CA's articulation of governance and counter-governance approaches, and ensure durable outcomes, it appears the community welcomes the concept. It should be noted that some within the CA community initially perceived RED Teams' proposed competencies as a threat given their potential overlap with the CA community's existing mission sets.

As discussed in the previous demand section, the Lab's RED Team concept is cautiously and deliberately framed as a niche capability, whose members would have novel competencies that are additive to USAID and not currently represented by any other USAID officer or technical office. In addition to these unique technical backgrounds, members' proposed core differentiators are their direct hire status and corresponding decision rights that would allow for the rapid and direct implementation of cost-effective projects without the use of implementing partners via USAID's onerous contract and grant mechanisms.

Another important consideration raised in interviews was the reporting responsibility that should be assumed by RED Team members. Though the original concept note does not explore this function, several leaders from across the SOF, intelligence, and USAID communities emphasized the important strategic function that RED Teams could play in elevating hyper-local field reporting if designed and managed systematically. It was noted that this is especially important because USAID does not rely on reporting via cables with the same frequency that State does and ODA team reports do not get pushed up through the SOF bureaucracy. Reporting from a RED Team offers a new and novel channel of information that, if harnessed appropriately, could become a source of influence for USAID within the interagency in Washington and an attractive sales pitch to other tactical teams who may also be seeking a strategic narrative.

In addition to reporting, the ability for RED Team members to reach-back into USAID and leverage USAID's talent and many assets – its data, maps, leaders, knowledge networks, lessons, and thought-leadership – and contribute to it in a reciprocal relationship after returning from deployment should also be designed into this concept. During the Senior Leader Salon, a USAID leader expressed the sentiment of wanting to help the USAID “up its game.” The RED Team concept is one way to do that by re-creating the long-lost “doing capacity” of USAID. A RED Team member would have a modest but potentially catalytic ability to action activities in real time in response to a rapidly changing, complex and dangerous environment. A former Chief of Station recounting his early days in Afghanistan said he described the role the CIA played as having “the mostest with the leastest.” Meaning, they supported key actors with critical money and supplies until the rest of the USG arrived to plan and program a wider spectrum of assistance. Working with very different forms of assistance, USAID RED Team members would be catalytic actors of their own kind, actually doing development alongside local communities while coordinating with other non-traditional partners and reaching back and into USAID to determine how the Mission or Washington-based Bureaus could best leverage the knowledge, insights, relationships and small gains made by these teams.

However, there are a number of critical civil-military collaborative activities currently being negotiated between USAID and the Pentagon to extend the reach of civilian USAID personnel beyond the wire. While it is critical to solve this longstanding problem

and immerse official civilians in the communities they seek to serve, the RED Team concept may be interpreted by some within USAID as a competing effort.

Variety of Desired RED Teams Skillsets

Frontier's interviews and Senior Leader Salon surfaced a wide variety of desired RED Team skillsets aside from SMT, counter-network analysis, and community mobilization. SOF expressed the greatest diversity of perspective on exactly what they hoped RED Team members might contribute "to the fight." Frontier interviewed Green Berets serving at various levels of command. This included a Lieutenant General who has worked closely with USAID in the field and in the White House Situation Room. It also included Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels who have served in a variety of command positions including Deputy Commander of a Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC), former Group Commander, incoming Group Commander, Detachment Commander of an ODA, Team leaders, and several others who have encountered USAID colleagues in the field.

USAID has more frequent engagement with SOF (both SF and Civil Affairs) in NPEs than with members of the IC. In these contexts, the diversity of USAID-SOF missions has varied greatly across theaters between COIN, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and reconstruction and stabilization. Members of the SF community interviewed spoke with great respect about their USAID colleagues who "fix village problems with village solutions." Community-focused restorative justice, rule of law, low-tech agriculture, infrastructure, and industry-developed innovation interventions were all suggested as interventions that would contribute to durable solutions and allow SOF operators to focus on maintaining and ensuring the security of local communities.

While SOF officials voiced a strong demand for forward-deployed USAID personnel, the technical areas of expertise requested varied and in some cases were outside the purview of the Lab's envisioned RED Team Development Officer capability. Only one SOF officer argued that the proposed capability would attempt to "fill vacuums of space" and promote stability, allowing ODA teams to focus on ensuring the security of local communities. Another SOF officer stated that RED Teams with rule of law experience could have strengthened the community policing and governance efforts of Village Stability Operations (VSO) teams in Afghanistan. Other SOF personnel argued that Development Officers on RED Teams could leverage governance expertise, provide basic services, or arrange temporary employment to "win local populations over."

One SOF officer highlighted that the proposed capability would provide much-needed "connective tissue" between forward operators and USAID, stating, "we need a card-carrying member from other agencies that can provide connections back to their operational headquarters, ensuring they have skin in the game."

SOF's suggested roles and capabilities are more diverse than the niche capabilities proposed in the Lab's original RED Team concept, as are the aforementioned illustrative ideas pitched by the former Chief of Station. USAID's potential partners will likely have emergent needs that differ from the narrow capability proposed in the original concept note.

Regardless of the final suite of capabilities decided upon, many interviewees recommended that the name, "RED Team" be changed. This would avoid any confusion with longstanding military and intelligence practices of referring to threats as "red" or emulating adversaries to improve effectiveness, a practice known as "red teaming." The CIA also has a "Red Cell," dedicated to alternative analysis and asking hard, *what if?* future oriented questions. USAID officers in favor of the concept argued for a name change for different reasons. They noted that the term "development" often signifies slower-moving activities with a longer term or institutional focus and that removing it from the capability's title would improve perceptions of the capability overall, the distinct skillsets of the USAID officers, and the bias for rapid action they will need to have to be successful.

Recommendations for USAID's Reflection

RED Teams' competencies and their differentiators were defined vis-a-vis USAID's other development and transition comparative advantages. While this may be necessary to facilitate USAID's buy-in, it may not be sufficient to secure an external partner's material support to launch a future prototype or pilot.

At a minimum, the proposed competency of SMT needs to be unpacked and/or translated into a specific set of activities (i.e. Mission Essential Task List (METL) or an equivalent conceptualization) so prospective partners can better understand RED Teams' illustrative core tasks. SMT may also need to be complemented by additional capabilities that help paying partners close a knowledge or skill gap they believe is mission critical.

It is recommended that the Lab continue to draw important distinctions between the RED Team concept and other civil-security/military expeditionary deployment models within USAID. If an interagency partner decides to fund a RED Team pilot in whole or in part, they will likely do so to close a specific or unique knowledge, skill, or authority gap that exists in their mission, such as the variety expressed in this section. SMT, counter-network analysis, and community development mobilization may be attractive to prospective partners, but these competencies will have to be pitched operationally as a core set of tasks that complement and augment their mission interests. They may also have to be augmented by other capacities to secure partner funding for a pilot.

RED Teams could provide USAID with a direct reporting channel from denied environments to inform national security dialogue in Washington. USAID should

consider how best to design the reporting function from RED Teams to Washington and leverage it strategically. This could also be messaged as a differentiator when seeking an interagency partner to help fund the RED Team pilot as several agencies and departments may be seeking strategic outlets.

USAID RED Team members could become “super enablers” for USAID by re-creating its long-lost “doing capacity.” This would require them to reach-back into USAID and leverage the its talent and many assets – data, maps, leaders, knowledge networks, lessons, and thought-leadership – and contribute to these in a reciprocal relationship after returning from deployment.

Operational

Operating Authorities: Access and Funding

Concept Summary

RED Teams would be staffed by USAID direct hire employees, which would be deployed farther forward than USAID personnel traditionally deploy. RED Teams would not routinely fall under CoM authority and RSO purview typical of USAID officers, but rather under the authority of the host agency (such as COCOM authority) and would operate in accordance with their security posture. RED team members would be trained and authorized to conduct themselves as a force-multiplier, able to contribute the full suite of security skills as needed. Personnel must be able to live/work in austere environments for extended periods of time and actively contribute to their own security and welfare as necessary.

RED Teams would be placed with a broad spectrum of non-traditional USG partners who share a similar mission and are working in extreme conditions. While the original concept focuses on augmenting USG capabilities in NPEs such as counter-VEO operations, it could be broadened to include placements with other civilian-security missions including pandemic responses in fragile states.

Feasibility Considerations

Access

Without exception, every USAID, IC, SOF, and former State Department official interviewed for this study expressed deep frustration that USAID civilians could not get closer to the problems they were trying to solve and the communities they seek to serve. For example, one senior SOF officer calling in from Syria stated, “We can’t get civilians to the problem!” In response, a USAID official recently returned from the field noted the challenges of scale, “In Raqqa, the entire USAID team could fit in a Toyota Hilux. It is a

massive problem.” It may not be feasible to significantly increase USAID’s footprint in NPEs in the near term relative to the daunting scope of the demand. However, a couple of USAID interviewees suggested that the proposed RED Team concept offers an important experiment to test new ways of working in NPEs that emphasizes placement of high-quality advisors and officers with new partners over quantity, contributing unique talent to the Agency’s existing human resources pool.

Many interviews for this study began under the shadow of post-Benghazi skepticism that DS would never approve the Red Team concept and that the current structure and approach of State’s ARBs would prevent a pilot from getting off the ground. However, in the course of conversations with senior leaders who had managed the START platform for Syria or been deployed in Afghanistan on the NRCC, powerful examples emerged about how to candidly discuss risks with Congressional Delegations (CODELs) or set precedents for joint deployments under joint CoM and COCOM authority. These offered precedents that emboldened colleagues to consider how to persuasively engage DS in a dialogue about RED Team prototypes.¹⁶

In several interviews with USAID and State leaders, colleagues’ initial skepticism became more solution-oriented. For example, at the beginning of one interview, an individual stated, “it would take DS 30 years to get comfortable with the RED Team concept.” By the close of conversation, however, the same person said, “[the RED Team concept] might work if we could demonstrate a precedent, pick the right place like the Philippines or the Caribbean, and get the Ambassador on board.”

Interviewees proposed a range of possibilities to support extensive RED Team movements in NPEs while deployed. These included:

- In the near term, consider the process of CoM/RSO delegation of authorities to ODA/CAT-A teams for coverage of USAID RED team civilians.
 - Pilot RED Teams in a Defined Theater of Active Conflict (DTAC) where it may be easier to secure joint COM-COCOM authority and/or have RSO delegate authorities to an ODA/CAT-A team.
- Pilot RED Teams under COM authority with new DS leadership buy-in. Select country pilots with a favorable political vice career Ambassador who might be less risk adverse, beholden, or fearful of an Accountability Review Board (ARB).
- In the long term, engage Congress in a candid, transparent discussion about personnel safety and risk. This might have implications for future ARB reforms.
- Consider whether and how RED Team members could sign individual waivers accepting personal risk and absolving State and USAID of institutional liabilities.

¹⁶ Specific recommendations with regards to engaging DS in a dialogue about RED Team prototypes are more fully explored in the final section of this report, *Moving Forward: Recommendations for Campaign Planning and Prototyping*.

Irrespective of the actual authority invoked, the risks faced by RED Team expeditionary civilians should be communicated early and often to CoMs, State, and Congress to ensure that all relevant parties are prepared for potential injury or loss of life so that in the event of a worst-case scenario, this critical capability and other similar expeditionary platforms are not immediately shut down. As a former senior leader who had served at both State and USAID in extremely denied environments said, “Someday, somewhere a Mission Director is going to be killed. If the U.S. wants to be a leader in assistance, then we have to take more risks... We will have to say, ‘got it, let’s keep going.’”

Funding

The RED Team concept originally proposed that USAID officers be placed with interagency partners for “legal, logistical, and financial” reasons. It remains unclear exactly what the consequences of such an arrangement would be given that specific details governing the placement would need to be negotiated in memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between USAID and partner Agencies/Departments. Participants in the Senior Leader Salon held on January 29th raised the following potential benefits or drawbacks of placing USAID personnel with SOF or the IC:

Potential benefits include:

- Joint personnel sourcing and readiness preparation processes.
- Navigating CoM authority constraints.
- Leveraging the funds of other government agencies to support personnel deployment costs.

Potential drawbacks include:

- Loss of adequate USAID oversight.
- Loss of unique civilian Title 22 authorities ensuring status as an independent USAID officer.
- Inability to leverage USAID program funds or information while on assignment.

Following the Salon, USAID GC referred Frontier facilitators to ADS Chapter 306 and stated that the aforementioned variables would “depend on the circumstances and how USAID and another agency set up a detailment. USAID enjoys broad authority under Section 632(a) and 632(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act to enter into arrangements with other U.S. agencies as long as the transferred funds are obligated for development purposes.” Carefully negotiated and crafted MOUs with partner agencies would ensure RED Team’s officers preserve their Title 22 status, reach-back to USAID headquarters and decision rights while placed with another entity.

While interagency placements may have implications for the USAID authorities that RED Teams would be able to preserve and leverage when placed with non-traditional partners, interagency transfers could potentially cover the cost of RED Team

deployment even if personnel are not formally placed with USG partner agencies. As such, the development of cost sharing models does not hinge on the institution of formal interagency placement agreements.

Alternative funding pools utilized by the interagency to support research, development, testing and experimentation could be leveraged to fund a pilot of the proposed RED Team capability. Additional funding suggestions can be found in the final feasibility section below focused on finance.

Recommendations for USAID's Reflection

Ensure a partnership model for RED Teams that retains valuable civilian authorities and leverages the best of USAID's assets such as reach back to USAID's data, maps, program information, and human networks while enabling freedom of movement in NPEs that have historically only been accessible to military and intelligence communities.

Recruitment

Concept Summary

Uniquely qualified candidates will have demonstrated the highest levels of professionalism, team integration, knowledge, skills, and abilities in austere, kinetic, and insecure environments conducting analogous missions.

Candidates must possess a Top Secret – SCI Clearance, a worldwide-available medical clearance (Class 1), and be language qualified (specific level TBD) in Arabic, French, and Spanish (other languages TBD).

Feasibility Considerations

All interviewees and Senior Leader Salon attendees agreed that recruiting development officers for the RED Teams with interagency experience and the ability to problem solve despite ambiguity would be critical to the successful execution of the proposed concept. A senior SOF official emphasized that, "you can make mistakes anywhere along the pipeline except for recruiting." Several USAID senior leaders noted that few current USAID employees have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform in the proposed role, raising concerns that USAID's top performers would be poached from existing teams. A senior leader at USAID said, "we can't change development until we change the talent pool." To execute a concept that depends on personnel with unique, curated expertise and attitudes, USAID must shift the incentives of its traditional hiring mechanisms, targeting individuals that do not seek to accrue service years or need the security of lifetime employment.

There are a handful of exceptional USAID officers who have served and will continue to serve with distinction alongside SOF and other interagency partners in the most difficult and dangerous environments in the world. However, there will never be enough of them relative to the demand and they may never be able to act as swiftly or be as agile as their SOF or IC colleagues. Unfortunately, because the same few exceptional officers are deployed over and over again it is not a sustainable pattern to redeploy them as RED Team members.

A senior SOF official described four characteristics that defined his community and that he believed applied to the proposed USAID RED Team development officers as well. If possible, USAID should seek to hire RED Team personnel that share the following mindsets and attitudes:

- Put a premium on problem solving at the small group or individual level.
- Resist over centralization; see it as an inhibitor to problem solving.
- Auftragstaktik, or “mission-type tactics” wherein subordinate leaders enjoy planning initiative and freedom of execution, enabling operational and tactical flexibility.
- Value tailored or bespoke solutions for specific contexts.

Those consulted across the military, intelligence, and development communities stated that recruitment for RED Teams should be gender blind, and that the eventual assessment and selection of personnel should be entirely merit based. Many argued that women members of RED Teams would provide vital access to traditionally inaccessible populations in conservative patriarchal societies.

Finally, while the current concept indicates recruits would need to have language capabilities in each of the languages specified, interviewees suggested that recruits be language qualified in at least one of the languages, rather than all of them.

Recommendations for USAID's Reflection

Consider waiting to develop more specific requirements for recruitment until USAID has selected a pilot partner, geography, and mission. This will inform a greater level of detail about what the teams are going to do vis-à-vis their USG partners (i.e. “operational empathy” and combined METLs), where they are going to do it, in what language, with whom, and what the physical/psychological requirements are to perform those tasks. From there, develop recruitment standards.

Alternatively, develop a recruitment profile and associated screening algorithm that meets the majority of the known criteria for ideal RED Team recruits. Engage trusted colleagues with robust networks of savvy field practitioners to solicit interest among potential recruits while simultaneously testing beta version of a screening algorithm.

Assessment and Selection

Concept Summary

RED Team members must demonstrate mastery of training curriculum, performance of essential skills, and minimum level of fitness. In addition to identifying personnel with relevant interagency experience, recruits would undergo a highly selective screening and training regimen with an attrition rate of up to 75 percent.

The end goal is personnel able to live and work in austere environments for extended periods of time while actively contributing to a core interagency mission and ensuring their own security and welfare as necessary.

The broad training requirements enumerated in the concept are as follows:

Curriculum Content

- USAID Organization and Function (ADS Series 100, 200, 300, and 600)
- USAID History (CORDS, NRCC, OTI, OFDA, and PRTs)
- Social Movement Theory and Community Mobilization Techniques
- Development Theory of Change - Comparison of International

Development Approaches

- USAID CVE Toolkit
- Interagency History, Organization, and Function
- Special Operations Command History, Organization, and Function
- USAID Contracting Officer Representative (COR) Training

Essential Skills Completion

- Emergency First Aid (more than FACT)
- Weapons Handling and Use (more than FACT)
- Small Team Organization and Tactics
- SERE (or some functionally appropriate version)
- Personnel Recovery
- Communication
- Off-road / Unimproved Road Drivers Training (more than FACT)

Physical Fitness Requirements

- Walk 3 miles with a 50 lb. pack in 45 minutes or less
- Drag a 180 lb. dummy 20 yards in 20 seconds or less
- Lift a 60 lb. dead weight bag from the floor and place on a wall at a height of 5 feet repeating 4 times in 1 minute or less
- Complete all of the above tasks within a 1.5-hour test period

Feasibility Considerations

The development of a sound assessment and selection (A&S) criteria was widely perceived to be the primary contributor or inhibitor to the success of the proposed RED Team concept. While a targeted recruitment criteria would likely generate a pool of talented professionals, the A&S process for RED Team members would 1) train and evaluate individuals in the core functional or regional expertise required by partner agencies and 2) ensure a minimum level of interoperability with forward operators from partner agencies.

It was repeatedly suggested that a highly selective A&S criteria be developed in consultation with identified partner agencies, using retired SOF or IC personnel to design and implement qualifications courses whenever possible. These trainers would serve as a key linkage between USAID and partner agencies, bolstering the credibility of selected RED Team officers. They would also likely be able to leverage their networks to make training courses, such as those offered by the Special Warfare Center and School (SWCS) or an Armed Forces Experimental Training Activity (AFETA), available to USAID civilians. Rather than develop costly SOF and IC-equivalent courses for a small pool of personnel, this would allow RED Team candidates to enroll in core trainings such as Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE), negotiations, cultural communications, EMT-wilderness, austere care, civil reconnaissance, and weapons qualification courses, earning elite status alongside SOF and IC operators and reassuring prospective partners that they will not have to “babysit the USAID team.”

It should be noted that one individual from private industry argued that SOF’s training budget is shrinking and their capacity to support such trainings for civilians would be limited. Others voiced their reservations about enrolling civilians in high-stress, high-attrition courses, noting that they are designed to weed out experienced military personnel.

There were divergent perspectives surrounding the need to weapons qualify the proposed RED Teams. Some USAID personnel balked at the idea, arguing that such a move would negatively impact USAID’s optic and perceived impartiality in the field, especially when operating in close range to humanitarian assistance operators and NGOs. According to one former State and USAID official, “the last thing we need is to be seen as an embed with the military.” Other USAID personnel argued that while RED Teams may need to be weapons qualified and carry a firearm during movements, they should avoid carrying weapons in their communities of operation to ensure an appropriate dynamic with local populations. Meanwhile, a SOF official stated that weapons qualification would be essential to ensure interoperability and team trust. They argued that SOF or IC team leads should first qualify RED Teams upon arrival in the field and then decide if they should carry weapons depending on the security context within their AOR. A USAID officer with experience working alongside SF ODAs echoed this same point, stating “you’re either part of the problem or you’re part of the solution

[when working with ODAs]. Be part of the solution.” Lastly, a former IC official made the important distinction between qualifications for offensive rifles and defensive handguns/sidearms, arguing that RED Teams should be trained to use both and assigned one or another in the field depending on the local security context.

Regardless of the final training regimen identified, it was suggested that USAID open its training pipelines for disaster operations and transition initiatives, offered by the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) respectively, to SOF and the IC in return for admission into their training courses. It is more feasible for SOF to participate in OFDA and OTI courses than for members of the IC to do so. Though selected OTI training modules could spark a beneficial discussion between intelligence analysts and transition specialists, highlighting appropriate areas for potential cooperation. One CA representative noted that past efforts to incorporate USAID into SOF trainings were well received but never actioned, stating, “I worked hard on getting USAID into the CA training pipeline and successive SWCS Commanders were supportive, but USAID never pulled the trigger.”

Others suggested that USAID look beyond the SOF and intelligence communities for potential trainings offered by the broader USG. For example, one person interviewed noted that the USDA’s rural and low-tech agriculture trainings offered in California would be particularly useful for those deploying alongside ODAs in NPEs and were leveraged effectively during pre-deployment for VSO in Afghanistan. Other trainings interviewees identified as missing from the original concept included basic team building, negotiation, assessing yourself and others, understanding personal conflict styles, high-stakes negotiation, approaches to interagency assessment, and various organizations 101 courses with whom RED Teams would embed in order to cultivate operational empathy.

A USAID official flagged new trainings that focus on USAID’s unique authorities, noting these would better serve RED Team officers than the traditional Contracting Officer Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) training given its focus on compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Finally, SOF and IC officials resoundingly agreed that operators from their respective communities should not be given the right to jointly select candidates who complete a RED Team qualifications regimen or the right of first refusal. USAID’s A&S criteria must be perceived as confident and dependable, and designed to identify personnel that will add value to teams that might not be familiar with USAID’s broader mission set or work. One SOF official interviewed stated that the “best way to sell” the final assessment and selection criteria to partners is by stating that it was designed to “assure these officers are motivated, have the cross-cultural abilities to be successful, are intelligent and well read, bring a very limited resource to the fight, and are suitable to operate in any environment.” However, there was consensus across the military, intelligence, and

USAID communities that each selected RED Team development officer would have to rapidly prove themselves and earn the respect of forward operators upon being placed. In the words of one USAID officer, “if you’re going to be on the team, you need to fall in line with their objectives and contribute to the mission set immediately” in order to gain acceptance.

Recommendations for USAID’s Reflection

Once the appropriate functional and/or regional RED Team skillsets are identified in greater detail and assignments are developed, liaise with partner agencies and specially-hired former SOF/IC trainers to create an appropriate A&S regimen. Determine the appropriate level of weapons qualification required by prospective partners and socialize this within USAID.

Utilize pre-existing training and qualification courses whenever possible. While rigorous and effective, the training pipeline and Civilian Deployment Center (CDC) developed for USAID’s CRC-A should not be viewed as a model for the proposed RED Team capability, given its exorbitant cost and the small cohort of individuals who would benefit from such a resource.

Hiring

Concept Summary

Recruits would engage in training as U.S. Personal Services Contractors (PSCs), contingent on remaining successfully engaged in the training. Upon successful completion of the training and selection, USPSCs would convert to U.S. Direct Hire employees with USAID RED teams. These new officers would be distinct from existing USAID employees because they would be able to design, fund, and implement unique activities outside of USAID’s traditional program streams immediately in response to an urgent and pressing requirement as opposed to working by, with, and through an implementing partner via a contracting or grant mechanism.

Feasibility Considerations

Personal Services Contractors (PSCs), Direct Hires (DH), institutional contractors, and alternative host agencies will most likely fill RED Team billets if the capability is implemented.

Personal Services Contractors

There was widespread agreement that prospective RED Team officers be hired as PSCs for the duration of the A&S process. It is far easier to petition USAID leadership for PSC positions than for DH billets, and the contracts are extremely flexible, allowing for term-

limited assignments, conditional employment based on the successful completion of a training regimen, and a variety of supervisory structures. According to one PSC interviewed, the PSC Travel Authorization (TA) process is far less involved than that for USDHs. Additionally, PSCs can travel on program funds, whereas the deployment costs of their USDH counterparts are only covered by Operational Expense (OE) funds.

However, USAID PSCs are unable to singlehandedly direct or advise USAID IPs and design, fund, and/or implement activities, each of which are core elements of the proposed RED Team concept. Per ADS 309.3.2.2 a(2)¹⁷ and USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR) Appendix D, sec. 4(b),¹⁸ PSCs “may be delegated any authority, duty, or responsibility delegable to U.S. citizen direct-hire employees (USDH employees) except that:

- a. They may not supervise U.S. direct-hire employees of USAID or other U.S. Government agencies. They may supervise USPSCs and non-U.S. citizen employees.
- b. They may not be designated as Contracting Officers or delegated authority to sign obligating or sub-obligating documents.
- c. They may represent the agency, except that communications that reflect a final policy, planning or budget decision of the agency must be cleared by a USDH employee.
- d. They may participate in personnel selection matters, but may not be delegated authority to make a final decision on personnel selection.
- e. Exceptions to the limitations in this paragraph (b)(3) must be approved by the Assistant Administrator for Management (AA/M).”

These restrictions on PSCs’ ability to perform inherently governmental functions make the hiring mechanism less desirable in the long-term for prospective RED Team officers. PSC positions’ time-limited nature, lack of DH benefits, and limited opportunities for career advancement also make them less desirable for selected personnel than DH positions. In addition, it is likely more complicated to place PSCs with partner agencies than DH personnel given that PSC hiring authority is not universal across all USG agencies.

As with all USG personnel, PSCs are subject to the strict DS and CoM movement restrictions that have historically prevented official civilians from operating in NPEs. The security clearance process, even if facilitated by RED Team-dedicated and Lab-paid for

¹⁷ ADS Chapter 309: Personal Services Contracts with Individuals. USAID. August 17, 2017. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/309.pdf>

¹⁸ USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR): A Mandatory Reference to ADS 300 Series Acquisition Chapters. USAID. January 1, 2018. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf

USAID Office of Security (SEC) Staff, would also likely take 3-12 months on average following a candidate's selection.

Direct Hires

USAID's DH Civil Service (CS) and Foreign Service (FS) positions take much longer to secure but are preferred by most prospective employees given their permanence, suite of benefits, and opportunities for career advancement. Unlike PSCs, these personnel are also able to perform inherently governmental functions. They can also be placed with other agencies and departments with relative ease and are more often perceived by their interagency peers to have equivalent decision rights on integrated teams. This results in substantial empowerment at the field level, allowing DHs to more easily provide critical reach back to Washington with regard to funding, information, intelligence, and decision-making.

In addition to the challenges associated with securing DH billets, deploying USG personnel to NPEs, and obtaining security clearances, CS and FS positions are notoriously difficult to fill for non-supervisory technically-oriented positions. For example, even after negotiating unique Human Resources (HR) privileges with USAID,¹⁹ it took the Office of Civilian Response (OCR) on average 9-12 months to onboard DH CRC-A personnel. Making matters worse, USAID HR required that only 4-year CS-Limited positions be offered to candidates due to concerns that corps members would not be able to complete the annual evaluation process given their frequent and diverse non-USAID deployment schedule. Current rules that govern DH bidding, competition, selection, and hiring/firing could also negatively impact the agility of RED Teams.

Institutional Contractors

Hiring institutional contractors to staff the proposed RED Teams would introduce several efficiencies. USAID HR would not need to be involved in any hiring processes, and preexisting USAID contractors could potentially be leveraged to facilitate a rapid low-risk prototype of the RED Team concept at minimal additional expense to USAID. Perhaps most importantly, such personnel would not operate under any USG authorities, allowing them access to virtually any AOR deemed necessary.

¹⁹ Immediately following OCR's establishment, the office coordinated closely with USAID's HR team to fast track recruitment and develop customized Position Descriptions (PDs), Knowledge, Skills, and Aptitude (KSA) requirements, and interview questions for each solicitation given their highly specified nature. Later, OCR staff negotiated the ability to facilitate preliminary reviews of each application received, and have OCR and host office/bureau representatives on the Technical Evaluation Committees (TEC) established to select final candidates. OCR staff noted that it was enormously difficult to establish and maintain these special provisions given USAID HR's concern that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) would grow suspicious of the number of exceptions being made to hire senior General Schedule (GS) 13-15 billets that were classified as non-managerial positions.

Yet this lack of USG authorities prevents the proof of a true-to-concept prototype given that a defining characteristic of the RED Team concept is officers' ability to perform inherently governmental functions; design, fund, and implement activities on behalf of the USG; and reach back to USAID as necessary. The lack of these capabilities would complicate the placement process and limit the ability of interagency teams to serve as an integrated unit.

Alternative Host Agencies for RED Teams

Several of those interviewed from SOF and the IC stated that it may be more efficient for other agencies to cultivate their own DHs or contractors to fill their perceived capability gaps. Such an approach would ensure that personnel meet the stringent interoperability requirements of SOF and IC forward operating teams, and that individuals are not potentially encumbered by restrictive CoM authorities.

Yet others argued that USAID is best positioned to provide the unique skillsets and perspectives of the proposed RED Team officers. Moreover, USAID PSCs or DHs would have the ability to mobilize USAID's additional funding pools, information, authorities, and decision-making authority forward into critical battlespaces, a key differentiator.

Recommendations for USAID's Reflection

PSCs are the most feasible USG hiring mechanism to facilitate the initial A&S of RED Team officers. They may also be the most feasible mechanism to facilitate an initial prototype of the proposed concept, assuming that the restrictions to their ability to perform inherently governmental functions can be effectively navigated. One potential solution to this problem could be the incorporation of a Washington-based DH supervisor able to provide necessary planning approvals who could also mobilize USAID funds for PSC RED Team officers on demand.

Even if the RED Team concept can be prototyped using PSCs, it is recommended that the Lab consult with USAID Bureaus that may house the capability in the future to ensure that they begin securing DH billets for selected personnel. It is equally important to identify a supervisory structure for anticipated RED Team personnel as a means of ensuring advancement and feeding officers' experiences from the field back into the assessment and selection process.

Begin discussions with HR surrounding special provisions and/or exemptions for DH RED Team personnel at the earliest signs of concept success. Considerations include: 1) Customized Position Descriptions (PDs), Knowledge, Skills, and Aptitude (KSA) requirements, and interview questions for RED Teams solicitations; 2) Host Bureau preliminary reviews of each application received and permanent presence on Technical Evaluation Committees (TEC); 3) Hiring non-term limited FS or CS personnel despite

their lack of supervisory duties; and 4) A modification of or exemption to the Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) process given the unique nature of RED Teams deployments.

Resist the temptation to solely utilize contractors to execute a pilot given their inability to perform inherently governmental functions. Do, however, consider the role of existing or new implementing partners as potential force multipliers for RED Teams. Explore whether existing contracts like Development Alternatives International's (DAI) CVE contract in Mindanao, International Organization for Migration's (IOM) contract in Somalia, and the Syria Essential Services (SES) mechanism in Syria could be leveraged as potential force multipliers for potential RED Team pilots launched nearby.

Deployment Mechanisms and Theaters of Interest

Concept Summary

RED Teams would work under extremely difficult conditions, where the USG has a priority national security interest, and where conventional military, law enforcement, or other security operations and traditional socio-economic development programs may be ill suited or ineffective.

They would focus on missions with a mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations in environments of extremism, austere conditions in select geographies where other "non-traditional USG partners" are operating in small teams.

The proposed concept proposes the following missions and geography:

"Disrupt and prevent violent extremist's recruiting, radicalization, proselytizing or ability to find refuge... in fragile areas including the southern Philippines, the Sahel, central Asia, and Yemen, where conventional military operations and traditional socioeconomic development programs may be ill-suited or ineffective..."

USAID DH employees (civil or foreign service), would be deployed as two-person teams which could be increased, decreased or echeloned to most effectively engage the problem set.

Feasibility Considerations

Deployment Mechanisms and Models

USAID's RED Team concept does not offer much detail on deployment mechanisms or alternative options beyond that statement that they would be two-person teams that could be combined depending on the mission. Many interviewees with significant operational experience felt that two-person teams were too small and suggested a

minimum of three-person teams. Additionally, they recommended mirroring the structure of current intelligence support capabilities to deployed SF and modular SOF teams that facilitate continuous rotational deployments. In both cases, while a team is forward deployed, there is another operational team supporting them daily stateside. For entities with ample budgets, a third team is resting and/or conducting deep dive research and fulfilling training and educational requirements in between CONUS and OCONUS operational deployments. In the USAID context, the integrated 1:1 operational team lash up is analogous to the way the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance's (OFDA) Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DART) and Response Management Teams (RMT) engage to manage the daily developments associated with natural disasters and complex emergencies.

It is expected that USAID RED Team members would, at a minimum, match the deployment timelines of their interagency colleagues and not take extra family or rest breaks that others were not allowed. This is essential for morale and team building. It might be important for USAID RED Team members to provide longitudinal knowledge if their interagency counterparts rotate in and out during short term assignments. For example, if RED Team members could help an SF Captain leading an ODA team understand his environment and transition critical power-broker relationships in half the normal time it usually takes (one SF COL estimated it took at least three of the six months of most ODA rotations to fully grasp deep context for a mission), this could be an incredible contribution to “enabling the ‘pace of SOF’” and helping teams with the pain points they experience getting up to speed in these environments.

Theaters of Interest

The original concept specified the “southern Philippines, the Sahel, central Asia, and Yemen” as potential locations for RED Team pilots. Exact geographies will depend on the partner and its unique operational and access requirements. Different motivations informed interviewees’ recommendations for pilot locations. Several suggested “following the money” and targeting priority issues identified by partner agencies in the short to medium term in the Middle East or South Asia. Within these parameters, one interviewee suggested limiting the geographic variety among RED Team prototypes when asked whether it would be better to pilot multiple teams with multiple partners within a single area or multiple teams with a single partner across multiple areas. She noted, “the more differentiation there is, the harder it is to test. The question at the end of a pilot should not be, “is the problem Waziristan or the team?”

Others suggested locations that offered “paths of least resistance.” According to these interviewees, South American countries were ripe for pilots. These were “under-reported, low-profile, idiot-proof locations” where USG civilian access is fairly unrestrained by DS and where there is a positive American relationship with the host government. In response to a nascent ISIS threat emerging in Brazil and the Caribbean, one interviewee noted that “if we aren’t in these places now, we are going to lose in the

long term.” It should be noted that this approach is at odds with those who suggested “following the money.” Indeed, interviewees with knowledge of SOUTHCOM or SOCSOUTH budgets cautioned that they had limited funds.

Another group advised that the most viable pilots would likely be in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Syria where placements with SOF would likely be relatively straightforward to arrange. This was contrasted with the Lake Chad Basin region given Third Group’s (3SFG) casualties in 2017. These events and the ongoing investigation have heightened sensitivity to the USG’s presence in the region and sparked a debate surrounding CT mission creep on the African continent.

Recommendations for USAID’s Reflection

USAID should consider expanding RED Teams from two to a minimum of three-person teams. It should also cycle teams between field and Washington-based rotations, ensuring the teams serve as each other’s operational support when CONUS based. One member of the CONUS-based RED Team should seek to be placed at the HQ of the interagency team where their OCONUS RED Team counterparts are placed. Ideally, an interagency liaison officer would be placed at USAID to replace the CONUS RED Team member and facilitate integrated planning and support of the OCONUS field teams.

Align champions with the money to fund a pilot who also have access to specific theaters or countries and the command authority to dictate RED Team placement with partners. Consider pursuing a pilot in Afghanistan via the Commander of The Special Operations Joint Task Force, Major General James Linder, or his likely successor Major General Kurt Sonntag, who is the current Commander of Army Special Operations Center of Excellence. Potential funding for training and deployment could be explored and facilitated through SOCOM, SOJTF-A, and SWCS. General John (Mick) Nicholson the Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan and NATO’s Operation Resolute Support is another promising champion, though he changes command soon. Additionally, explore funding and pilot locations with the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade as well as the incoming First Group Commander, COL Owen Ray, in cooperation with either SOCPAC or SOCCENT. A summary graphic of the champions, funding, and access proposed by interviewees and Senior Leader Salon attendees is provided below. In the final section of this report, *Moving Forward: Recommendations for Campaign Planning and Prototyping*, Frontier aligns prospective champions, funding, and access into proposed pathways for USAID’s consideration.



Figure 2: Pilot Pathways - Champions, Money, and Access.

Financial

Money

Concept Summary

While the RED Team concept document does not specify how teams would be funded, USAID indicated their preference that the pilot would either be fully or partially funded by USG partner organizations during the Senior Leader Salon. This funding approach was used at least once in Afghanistan when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) fully reimbursed USAID for a detailee serving in a USAID CRC-A billet who deployed to support the management of infrastructure projects for the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) for 18 months. This was the exception to the rule as USAID CRC-A positions were rarely funded by other government agencies. However, it demonstrates the feasibility of a reimbursable funding model.

Securing funding will depend on USAID’s ability to help partner agencies visualize specific tasks RED Team members would conduct and how these would help close gaps perceived by SOF or IC colleagues.

Feasibility Considerations

The following is a discussion of potential funding models that are compliant with ADS 306. There may be additional funding alternatives, however we believe those enumerated below are the most viable. Note that the options below have not been

thoroughly discussed or evaluated with USAID personnel to determine potential constraints and preferences.

Use of Existing Program / Mission Funds

Since the RED Team concept seeks to support CVE objectives, it may be possible to use existing Program and/or Mission funds to pay for RED Team personnel. This may require that RED Team personnel be hired as PSCs with program funds given that DH positions require the use of limited OE funds. Assuming internal USAID support for the concept, this is likely the easiest way to fund the pilot since funding would be more immediately available. This may not be an ideal approach for a long-term program as it would likely limit the scalability of the RED teams and create operational challenges since the funding programs would dictate hiring and personnel management.

Congressional Authorization and Appropriation

Perhaps the most difficult and time-consuming of all RED Team funding approaches would be the pursuit of a Congressional authorization and direct appropriation for the program. Depending on USAID's relationships on Capitol Hill and in the White House, this process could take several years. Indeed, it took approximately two to three years to authorize and fund the CRC with Congressional and White House support.

Since the FY 2019 President's Budget has already been submitted, the first opportunity to request a direct appropriation would be in the FY 2020 President's Budget, which would provide funding in October 2019. This approach is not feasible for funding a pilot, however it would provide the most stable and predictable funding stream for implementing the concept in the long-term.

Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funds

The RED Team concept is focused on supporting critical areas of emergent national security interests and clearly meets the criteria for OCO funding. OCO funds can be requested as part of the President's budget request or as part of an emergency supplemental request, providing multiple opportunities to request funding. OCO funding is defined more broadly than a specific program authorization and likely provides a more expedient route to obtain funding for the RED Team concept. OCO should be considered for both the pilot (depending on the anticipated time frame) and the long-term funding of the RED Teams.

Fee-for-Service (FFS) / Reimbursable Funds

If Congressionally appropriated funds cannot be obtained using the previously discussed funding approaches, then a reimbursable or FFS model should be considered. Under this model, the organization requesting or receiving RED Team personnel would fully

reimburse USAID. In addition to salary and benefits, this reimbursement would ideally cover all associated program costs including training, administration, and overhead.

It is also possible to combine a FFS model with a Congressional appropriation. Under such an arrangement, a portion of the program costs would be covered by the Congressional appropriation and a portion of the costs are paid by the receiving organization. It should be noted that these hybrid-funded programs typically start with a Congressional appropriation and use the FFS model to expand.

While the FFS model (or a hybrid model) is ideal for the long-term program, it may be difficult to convince an outside government agency to fund a pilot as previously discussed.

Detailees from other Government Agencies

The least desirable funding option is to have other government agencies hire the RED Team members and detail them to USAID on a non-reimbursable basis. This would allow USAID to staff the RED Teams without using USAID funding. The primary downside of this approach is that USAID would not control the hiring and career development process for individuals detailed from other agencies. It could also create organizational conflict if there is disagreement between USAID and the individual's "home" agency.

Despite these concerns, this approach may be a viable option for a short-term pilot if the right individual is available and the corresponding agency supports the idea.

Recommendations for USAID's Reflection

Using existing Program and/or Mission funds (including OCO funds) is likely the quickest way to fund a RED Team pilot since it does not require a request and subsequent receipt of funds (either from Congress or a USG partner). This assumes there is a Program / Mission that is supportive, has sufficient funding available, and the pilot meets the Congressional intent of the available funds. Frontier recommends evaluating whether these conditions exist internally before considering other funding alternatives. It is possible that pilot funding could come from a mix of programs/Missions including Lab funding.

If existing USAID funds are insufficient to fund a pilot, Frontier recommends pursuing additional USAID funding in the next OCO supplemental if possible. If that is not an option, then USAID would need to work to find a USG partner that is either willing to fund a pilot or provide detailees to support a pilot. Frontier identified several potential partner organizations that may be willing to provide funding for a pilot. These organizations and their interests are discussed in the demand section of this report as well as in the final recommendations section.

USAID should consider long-term funding for the proposed concept as soon as possible since the next available funding window starts in October of 2019. Assuming a pilot effort was to be successful, it may make sense to include additional funding for RED Teams in the FY 2020 OCO budget request. Alternatively, USAID could pursue the FFS model without seeking a Congressional appropriation, however this approach carries risk if partners are not willing to provide sufficient funding to fully support the concept.

Moving Forward: Recommendations for Campaign Planning and Prototyping

After the RED Team concept was introduced to members of the IC and SOF communities at the Senior Leader Salon held on January 29, USAID explained that the best way to determine interagency demand was via the market; the Lab is seeking a USG partner to financially support a modest pilot experiment. Such a request is understandable given today’s asymmetrical budget environment that favors defense over development, but it will require USAID to pitch the pilot to meet the interests of a paying external partner while ensuring USAID’s equities are also protected.

Securing buy-in for a pilot within USAID is equally critical but must be messaged differently. The original RED Team concept note, available in Appendix A, was penned by the Lab for an internal USAID audience. It should be re-written and calibrated appropriately for any external audiences with whom it will be shared prior to circulation.

Illustrative Pathways to Launching a Pilot/Prototype

Aligning Money, Champions, Theater/Country Access, and Commands



Figure 3: Aligning Money, Champions, Access, and Geographies

Afghanistan: Members of the SOF and intelligence communities repeatedly suggested that Afghanistan be considered as a pilot location for the RED Teams concept for the following reasons:

- It is a current Defined Theater of Armed Conflict (DTAC), which would allow USAID to more easily pilot the joint CoM – COCOM designation authority.

- The Lab wants to quickly generate a buzz and buy-in, so it should work to build momentum in an environment where it accrues faster than anywhere in the world. One SOF official stated, “If you can prove the case there – among the Captains and Team Sergeants who are the SF super stars – and they start saying, ‘we need to bring this everywhere we go!’ That’s buy-in.”
- There was a widespread willingness to introduce USAID leadership to commanders and influencers who had money and theater access in country. Put simply, if they believed in USAID’s RED Team concept and saw it in their interest, they could make the pilot a reality. These include:
 - Major General James Linder, the current Commander of Special Operations Joint Task Force (SOJTF)-Afghanistan. However, he will be leaving in late Spring.
 - He is expected to be followed by Major General Kurt Sonntag, the current Commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence (SOCoE). The offer is on the table for an introduction to MG Sonntag as well. Doing so soon would be a benefit to also explore a joint training pipeline via SWCS prior to RED Team deployment.
 - General John (Mick) Nicholson, Commander of U.S Forces in Afghanistan and NATO’s Operation Resolute Support.

U.S. SOCOM Pre or Post Change of Command: Those interviewed suggested pitching the RED Team concept directly to the Four Star headquarters at SOCOM (vice the USASOC Three Star headquarters commanded by Lieutenant General Kenneth Tovo, who has been briefed on the concept via two members of his Commander’s Initiative Group (CIG) who attended the Senior Leader Salon). Ideally, USAID could leverage their SOCOM Senior Development Advisor (SDA), assuming they have access to leadership and an excellent reputation.

To support the SDA, there are others who have a personal relationship with the current SOCOM Commander, General Raymond Anthony Thomas. A former USAID officer who served in USAID’s DCHA Bureau, was a career CA officer, and was General Thomas’ West Point classmate can arrange an introduction for USAID leadership to discuss the RED Team concept. Three other individuals who know and have briefed General Thomas have also offered to help USAID prepare a briefing to him (two are former Green Berets who have held command in Afghanistan and the Philippines and the other is a famous journalist and researcher who travels regularly with senior SOF officers and is well known to many of them). However, several of these people noted that General Thomas has not been extensively involved in FID missions.

It is rumored that Lieutenant General Austin “Scott” Miller, Commander, Joint Special Operations Command, will take over for General Thomas as Commander of SOCOM this summer. Given his extensive engagement with the VSO model in Afghanistan, many believe he would be more amenable to the RED Team concept than his predecessor. If

he does not land at SOCOM, General Miller will likely assume command of one of the regional COCOMS, positioning him as an important partner for USAID in any of his future capacities.

The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade Funding “Broadening Assignments” and Red Team Pilots: Shortly after the Senior Leader Salon, two participants emailed Frontier to share a proposal from the CA community. They expressed an interest in detailing Civil Affairs officers and mid to senior NCOs to fill RED Team billets. The Senior Leader Salon participants offered:

“[the NCOs] have passed a selection process similar to the one you would put potential recruits through. They could attend a development program put on by USAID as training before being deployed under USAID authorities and with COCOM/TSOC and/or State/USAID funding, depending on the situation. There are opportunities for CA folks at those stages of their careers to do what we call ‘broadening assignments’ and I think this may be a good one.”

Frontier’s recommendation to USAID is to consider how to further “broaden” this proposal by coupling USAID officers with these CA officers and NCOs on RED Teams. Perhaps by suggesting that for every one or two Civil Affairs placements, a USAID officer could be funded to deploy forward. If designed carefully, this could represent interagency teaming at its best and leverage DoD funds to support USAID deployments.

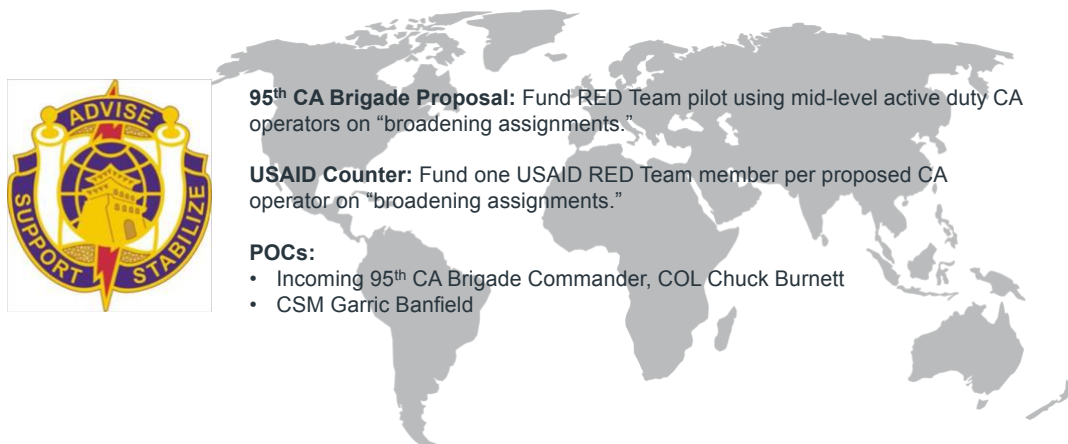


Figure 4: Leveraging the 95th for RED Teams

Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) + ARMY Special Forces Group + Countries of Mutual Interest + DS Approval: Though there was a diversity of opinion among interviewees and Salon participants about exactly where to launch pilot RED Teams, many people suggested what they believed was a winning formula: Find a friendly TSOC and group commander that could commit discretionary resources to fund the pilot, give the RED Teams theater/country access, and use command authority to

dictate RED Team personnel placed with small teams on the ground. This would enable a focused discussion about specific countries, regions and communities where a pilot could take place that would then facilitate a negotiation with DS. Ideally, with self-sufficient RED Teams placed in an ODA or ODB, DS, RSOs, and CoMs would feel comfortable delegating authorities to those SOF teams.

- Several interviewees suggested SOCSOUTH as the candidate TSOC, including a Deputy SOCSOUTH commander. However, he cautioned that they had very limited funds.
- Another interviewee noted SOCPAC as an ideal TSOC known for their innovation. Others suggested working closely with SOCCENT given their “bags of cash” and the fact that “they need help right now.”
- Colonel Owen Ray, incoming First Group (1SFG) Commander, participated in the Senior Leader Salon and expressed a strong interest in and demand for the RED Team concept. USAID should approach Colonel Ray to explore fielding a pilot in countries of USAID’s and 1SFG’s mutual interest in coordination with both SOCPAC and SOCCENT, where DS may be likely to accommodate an experiment. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - The Philippines
 - Bangladesh/Myanmar WRT radicalization among Rohingya
 - Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria

Whether and how RED Team prototypes are launched by USAID is still an open question. A SOF Lieutenant General who participated in the Senior Leader Salon and who expressed support for the concept reflected on his community’s thirty-year transformation. As USAID considers how to make itself more relevant as a national security agency and assesses the feasibility and utility of novel capabilities such as RED Teams, it should heed the LTG’s advice: “worry more about how to start this journey than about how it ends.”

“Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.” - Goethe

Appendix A: Original RED Team Concept (November 2017)

Statement of Need

Victory against ISIS and other violent extremist organizations requires a complete whole-of-government response across the breadth and depth of the field. A large segment of this global conflict is being contested block-by-block and valley-by-valley. Our analysis has revealed a cogent need for USAID to develop a cadre of highly capable personnel able to deliver agile capacity building and development activities while embedded with other government agencies under in extremis conditions to disrupt and prevent violent extremist's recruiting, radicalization, proselytizing or ability to find refuge within vulnerable communities. Current interagency opportunities exist, including but not limited to the United States Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC), U.S. Army Special Forces, State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), and with operational elements of the international operations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

Rapid Expeditionary Development (RED) Teams techniques are suited to a narrow niche of conditions in which violent groups are working against community values and interests in fragile areas including the southern Philippines, the Sahel, central Asia, and Yemen, where conventional military operations and traditional socioeconomic development programs may be ill-suited or ineffective. RED Teams are intended to combine with other U.S. government entities down-range into a fluid mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations emphasizing broad mission guidance, individual initiative within the commander's intent, and individuals who can anticipate and adapt quickly to changing conditions.^{20,21,22}

Authority, Design, and Function

Authority

The Global Development Lab will conduct an 18-month proof-of-concept experiment as part of our ongoing mission to "source, test and scale solutions" leveraging Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnership. Upon successful demonstration of program efficacy, sufficient interagency demand, and sustainability, USAID will transfer the concept, program activities, and personnel to the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) or other appropriate operational unit within USAID.

Design

²⁰ Department of the Army. 2011. *Unified Land Operations*. (Army Doctrine Publication 3-0). Washington DC.

²¹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2017. *Joint Operations*. (Joint Publications 3-0). Washington DC

²² Kleinfeld, Rachel and Harry Bader. 2014. *Extreme Violence and the Rule of Law- Lessons from Eastern Afghanistan*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Found at CarnegieEndowment.org/pubs. Hereafter referred to as Kleinfeld and Bader.

Proposed is the formation of six 2-person prototype teams with the ability to rapidly design and execute activities directly without the need for third party implementers utilizing USAID, DOD, or other funding sources. Based upon the directed mission, the size of the deployed team can be increased, decreased or echeloned to most effectively engage the problem set. The personnel on these teams must be able to live in austere environments for extended periods of time.

Function

These highly trained professionals will be placed further forward than USAID personnel traditionally deploy and they will routinely not fall under Chief of Mission authority and Regional Security Officer (RSO) security purview. Teams will not be limited to traditional development strategies, methodologies or tools which typically work well in permissive or semi-permissive environments, but rather will focus on novel techniques, practices, and procedures narrowly tailored to deliver social change necessary to mitigate the deleterious effects of violent extremism in highly kinetic areas. Individually, team members will seize critical windows of opportunity to utilize social movement theory and analyze societal dynamics that lead to vulnerability and radicalization, to design, fund and implement hyper-localized programming in support of local CVE efforts, designed to disrupt enemy access to human and financial capital, which alienates the extremist from the community. For example, RED teams may be active participants in the physical establishment and execution of Special Forces A-camps or similar operations.

Precedent

Civilian Operations & Revolutionary Development Support

From 1967-1972 the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support ²³ (CORDS) program was a groundbreaking sub-national pacification and COIN construct comprised of USAID, DOD, CIA, USIA, and host nation personnel under a USAID or DOD commander. The chief intent of the CORDS program was to directly challenge Viet Cong insurgent forces by utilizing traditional development practices and new conceptual programs at the village level, while deftly utilizing social and cultural anthropologists from American universities for both pre-deployment and reach back subject matter expertise. CORDS was a true interagency organization with both military and USAID leadership; at the province-level and below DOD and/or USAID were senior advisors to South Vietnamese CORDS leaders. Under CORDS, the vast majority of USAID civilian personnel were posted remotely in 250 districts rather than in the capital or major cities.²⁴

²³ Komer, R.W. (1970, DECLASSIFIED 2005). Organization and Management of the New Model Pacification Program. RAND Document Debrief. See also: Coffey, MAJ Ross. 2006). Revisiting CORDS-The Need for Unity of Effort to Secure Victory in Iraq. *Military Review*. Volume: March-April.

²⁴ McCullum, James. 1983. The CORDS Pacification Organization- A Civilian/Military Effort. *Armed Forces & Society* 10:(1).

Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell

The Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell²⁵ was formed to develop and implement localized non-lethal counterinsurgency tactics to provide a compelling alternate narrative for young military age males. From January 2010 to May 2011 in eastern Afghanistan, the NRCC brought together United States State Department, USAID, Department of Defense, and Intelligence elements in a psychologically astute program that denied the insurgency access to human, financial and material capital in highly contested, non-permissive valleys. The NRCC analyzed the nexus of natural resources, criminal networks, the insurgency, local government and the Pashtun populace to offer a more compelling narrative. Through recognition of the roles of honor, status and desire for respect over personal economic gain or political advancement the NRCC partnered with local tribal communities to conceive and design activities, while providing technical assistance and advice.²⁶

USAID members of the NRCC were not under Chief of Mission authority, but under DOD authorities, restrictions and security responsibility.²⁷ In a July 2010 cable, Ambassador Eikenberry described the NRCC as a highly successful civil-military program concept that advanced governance, development and security deep into vulnerable communities.²⁸ Similar to both CORDS and NRCC, civilian personnel in RED Teams would require longer terms in the field with less customary leave entitlements (i.e. vacations) than their counterparts at an Embassy or USAID Mission.²⁹ This aspect of NRCC promoted continuity, and built relationships among USAID, DoD, and local communities. Whereas USAID civilian personnel serving with the NRCC received a total of only 10 work days leave per year, taken as two five-day regional rest breaks.^{30,31}

Additionally, the NRCC demonstrated that persistent presence of development professionals in highly contested areas, from foreign and/or international sources, restricts the ability of violent extremist organizations from conducting counter-deterrence operations and regaining a foothold. Improvements in economic security and education today have occurred simultaneously with increases in community radicalization. Therefore, unlike CORDS, which focused on government services such as schools,

²⁵ Bader, Harry, and Douglas, Clint, Hanna, Clint, Poplack, David, & Fox, Dr. John. 2014. Operations of the Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell- Theory and Practice Implementing Non-lethal Unconventional Warfare Approaches in Eastern Afghanistan. *Stability Institute Journal*. Issue 15 – Special Edition. Hereafter referred to as Bader, et. al.

²⁶ Kleinfeld and Bader.

²⁷ Bader, et. Al.

²⁸ United States Department of State Cable. 07-08-2010. *Civilian-Military Collaboration in the Eastern Zone: Activities of the Natural Resources Counterinsurgency Cell* [UNCLASSIFIED].

²⁹ Bader, et. al.

³⁰ Bader, et. al.

³¹ Greentree, Todd. 2013. Bureaucracy Does Its Thing- U.S. Performance and Institutional Dimension of Strategy in Afghanistan. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. 36:(3).

sanitation, roads, and livelihood opportunities, RED Team programs would focus on more granular drivers of local instability, similar to NRCC activities which focused upon a “purpose driven life” where honor, esteem, and valorization were more important than material gain and economic security.³²

Recruitment, Training, and Selection

Recruitment

Individuals will be sought out for their personal, professional and academic background that demonstrates significant knowledge, skills and abilities prerequisite to successful participation in expeditionary development in austere, non-permissive environments. Prior to deployment, prospective team members must possess a Top Secret – Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS-SCI), a worldwide-available medical clearance (Class I), and possess a rudimentary understanding each of the following languages: Arabic, French, and Spanish (written and spoken language, with a minimum vocabulary of 500 words), and be a proficient English speaker.

Training

Training for this program would be performance based, requiring successful completion of a rigorous four-month training regimen with arduous standards. Failure to complete the training with a satisfactory level of proficiency would result in dismissal. During the training phase, candidates would be temporarily on-boarded into USAID as U.S. Personal Service Contractors (USPSCs) on a month-by-month contract, renewed contingent upon successful completion of the training requirements the previous month. After having met the performance requirements for each of the four training months, the successful candidates will be on-boarded into USAID as a direct hire Civil Service or Foreign Service officer. Consistent with past practice at NRCC and CORDS, RED Team civilians would be authorized to train, carry, and use weapons for defensive purposes.³³ This is a critical component for success.

Selection

Following the successful completion of the training and a final interview, candidates would be hired into USAID as government direct-hire GS Schedule A(r) or FSL officers. In addition to prerequisite requirements, candidates must demonstrate mastery of curriculum subject matter, performance of essential skills, and minimum level of physical fitness (Appendix A). During the training phase of this project the Lab anticipates an attrition rate of up to 75%.

³² Kleinfeld and Bader.

³³ Bader et. al. and McCullum.

Dedication

This paper, and the concept herein developed, is dedicated to John Paul Vann and Michael D. Bengé.

Mr. Vann, a USAID officer and Army veteran was posthumously awarded, as a USAID civilian, the Distinguished Service Cross (the second highest military award for extreme gallantry in combat), and the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his service to CORDS. Killed in 1972, his name is engraved on the memorial wall at USAID headquarters in the Ronald Reagan Building.

Mr. Bengé a Marine veteran who retired as a Senior Foreign Service Officer after 45 years with USAID, served as the Economic Development Officer and the senior civilian advisor on the joint civilian-military Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) program (1965-1968). Captured during the Tet Offensive and Imprisoned in Cambodia and Vietnam from 1968 until his release in 1973, Mr. Bengé was awarded the State Department Awards for Heroism and for Valor, and is listed by the Defense Prisoner of War Center as a Prisoner of War.

The broad training requirements are as follows:

Curriculum Content

- USAID Organization and Function (ADS Series 100 - 300, and 600)
- USAID History (CORDS, NRCC, OTI, OFDA, and PRTs)
- Social Movement Theory and Community Mobilization Techniques
- Development Theory of Change - Comparison of International

Development Approaches

- USAID CVE Toolkit
- Interagency History, Organization, and Function
- Special Operations Command History, Organization, and Function
- USAID Contracting Officer Representative (COR) Training

Essential Skills Completion

- Emergency First Aid (more than FACT)
- Weapons Handling and Use (more than FACT)
- Small Team Organization and Tactics
- SERE (or some functionally appropriate version)
- Personnel Recovery
- Communication
- Off-road / Unimproved Road Drivers Training (more than FACT)

Physical Fitness Requirements

- Walk 3 miles with a 50 lb. pack in 45 minutes or less
- Drag a 180 lb. dummy 20 yards in 20 seconds or less
- Lift a 60 lb. dead weight bag from the floor and place on a wall of 5 feet repeating 4 times in 1 minute or less
- Complete all of the above tasks within a 1.5-hour test period

Appendix B: Recommendations Table

TECHNICAL

Core Functional Competencies

- Design RED Team competencies and differentiators together with external partners to augment their unique needs and ensure their political and material support. However, augment social movement theory and community mobilization with additional skillsets as needed to close discrete partner knowledge, skill, or authority gaps.
- Unpack/translate “social movement theory” and “community mobilization” into a specific set of activities (i.e. a Mission Essential Task List (METL)) so partners understand core tasks.
- Draw distinctions between RED Teams’ and USAID’s other civil-security/military expeditionary deployment models, underscoring the diversity and value-add of the Agency having both.
- Design a RED Team reporting mechanism to relay critical information from denied environments to USAID/Washington to inform broader USG national security dialogue.
- Position RED Teams as “super enablers” that revive USAID’s long-lost “doing capacity,” leveraging and contributing to USAID’s many assets including data, knowledge networks, and thought leadership.

Operating Authorities: Access and Funding

- Ensure a partnership model that 1) retains valuable civilian authorities; 2) leverages USAID’s assets including data, maps, program information, and a robust human network; and 3) enables freedom of movement in NPEs that have historically only been accessible to military and intelligence communities.

Recruitment

- Develop or further refine specific recruitment requirements once USAID has selected pilot partners, geographies, and missions. Optimize for “operational empathy” among RED Team members.
- Alternatively, create a recruitment profile and associated screening algorithm that meets a baseline of the known criteria for ideal RED Team recruits. Finalize in consultation with prospective partners.
- Engage trusted colleagues with robust networks of savvy field practitioners to solicit interest among potential recruits while simultaneously testing beta version of a screening algorithm.

Assessment and Selection

- Once assignments and regional/functional competencies are established, liaise with partner agencies and specially-hired former SOF/IC trainers to create an appropriate assessment and selection regimen.
- Determine the appropriate level of weapons qualification required and socialize this within USAID.
- Utilize pre-existing training and qualification courses whenever possible to maximize cost-effectiveness.

Hiring

- Utilize PSCs to facilitate an initial, rapid fielding of the RED Team prototype.
- Ensure that USAID bureaus that may house the capability in the future begin securing DH billets.
- Identify a supervisory structure for RED Team personnel to ensure advancement and iterative adjustments to the assessment and selection process based on personnel experiences in the field.
- Begin discussions with HR surrounding special provisions and/or exemptions for DH RED Team personnel.
- Do not utilize contractors to execute a pilot given their inability to make inherently governmental decisions. Consider the role of existing or new implementing partners as potential force multipliers for RED Teams.

Deployment Mechanisms and Theaters of Interest

- Increase the minimum size of RED Teams to three personnel. Develop a rotation schedule, allowing CONUS-based operators to provide operational support to OCONUS units. Trade a CONUS RED Team member with an interagency liaison officer from the partner agency’s HQ, integrating planning and support of field units.
- Align champions with the money, theater access, and command authority required to execute a pilot.
 - Afghanistan: Major General James Linder, Commander of The Special Operations Joint Task Force (or his likely successor, Major General Kurt Sonntag, currently Commander of Army Special Operations Center of Excellence). Training and deployment funding through USSOCOM, SOJTF-A, and SWCS. GEN Nicholson, Commander of Operation Resolute Support (RS).
 - TBD: Incoming 1st SFG Commander, COL Own Ray, in collaboration with SOCPAC/SOCCENT in their AORs.
 - TBD: 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, CSM Garric Banfield and COL Chuck Burnett WRT their broadening assignment proposal, global reach.

OPERATIONAL

FINANCIAL

Money

- Evaluate if there are supportive USAID CVE programs or Missions with available funds to support the rapid execution of a RED Team pilot, as this would prevent the Lab from having to request and receive supplemental funding.
- If existing USAID funds are insufficient to support a pilot, pursue additional USAID funding in the next OCO supplemental. If this is not possible, identify a USG partner willing to fund or provide personnel for a pilot.
- Lobby for long-term funding as soon as possible since the next available funding window is in October 2019. Assuming a pilot effort is successful, it may make sense to include additional funding for RED Teams in the FY 2020 OCO budget request. Alternatively, USAID could pursue a Fee-for-Service (FFS) model without seeking an appropriation. This approach carries risk if partners are not willing to fully support a concept.

Appendix C: Senior Leader Salon Agenda

Agenda, Senior Leader Salon





January 29, 2018 from 5:00-7:30 pm @ **Le Méridien Hotel in Rosslyn**
1121 19th Street North, Opus Boardroom 4th Floor, Arlington, VA 22209

Purpose

Demand-Desirability: Explore whether and to what extent a demand exists among the SOF and IC communities for a new expeditionary development capability to counter violent extremist organizations in non-permissive environments.

Feasibility: Determine initial feasibility of notional capability to include priority enablers and inhibitors for USAID's future consideration (i.e, authorities, cost-support models, etc).

| Time | Agenda Items |
|---------|---|
| 5:00 pm | <p>Welcome, purpose and agenda review, Chatham House rules refresh</p> <p>Introductions and reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants briefly introduce themselves and share their reflections on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you encountered USAID/SOF/IC colleagues in the field? Was it positive or negative? Why? In your opinion, what is the most significant knowledge, skills, or abilities gap facing your current/former organization in the current fight against violent organizations? |
| 5:45 pm | <p> DEMAND - DESIRABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief introduction to new development officer capability concept. What are USAID's most compelling differentiators, as experienced and understood by its non traditional partners within the SOF and IC communities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can USAID do for these partners that they can't do for themselves? What can USAID do to impact this mission with these partners that it couldn't do otherwise? Which specific orgs/teams within the SOF/IC communities are most likely to embrace this concept? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What geographies and taskforces/missions/units should be prioritized for consideration? |
| 6:45 pm | <p> FEASIBILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key enablers of this concept? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champions, existing authorities, all the reasons why a concept might succeed? What are the key inhibitors and obstacles of this concept? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skeptics, authorities, risk models, all the reasons why a concept might fail? |
| 7:20 pm | <p>So what? Next steps</p> |

For assistance please contact Justin Loustau
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Creativity. Courage. Commitment.



Appendix D: Senior Leader Salon Rapporteurs' Report

Senior Leader Salon
Rapporteurs' Report
January 29, 2018

Senior Leader Salon Purpose and Participants

Explore whether and to what extent a demand exists among non-traditional USG partners – the special operations forces (SOF) and intelligence community (IC) – for a new expeditionary development capability to counter violent extremist organizations (VEOs) in non-permissive environments (NPEs). Then, determine the initial feasibility of the notional capability to include priority enablers and inhibitors for USAID's future consideration (i.e. authorities, cost-support models, etc.).

Though Frontier is assessing the demand signal for the proposed capability across a broad spectrum of non-traditional USG partners under this scope of work, this Salon gathered participants from a narrow community of interest: a subset of SOF and the IC comprised of green berets and seasoned CIA paramilitary and case officers. These groups were prioritized because they expressed a strong interest in participating in a dialogue, are highly expeditionary and engaged in this specific mission set, respect the work and reputation of USAID, and share an operational culture and ethos with USAID.

Perspectives on USAID's Comparative Advantage

USAID's Contributions in Non Permissive Contexts

USAID has more frequent engagement with SOF in NPEs than with members of the IC. In these contexts, the diversity of USAID-SOF missions has varied greatly across theaters between counterinsurgency, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and reconstruction and stabilization. SOF Salon participants spoke with great respect about their USAID colleagues who “create the space” to “fix village problems with village solutions.” One participant urged the need the reverse the traditional civilian-military relationship: “We need to get to the point where we [rapidly deploy USAID personnel] so the military can be in service to their development and stabilization goals.”

USAID does not interact with the IC in an operational role in the field in the same ways it does with SOF “because intelligence collection priorities are not [heavily] focused on stabilization and reconstruction missions.” However, IC participants expressed respect for USAID and its spectrum of expeditionary capabilities. They also acknowledged the need to protect USAID's development mission and “not contaminate it” by engaging too closely or overtly in contested environments.

A SOF participant shared his perspective on the unique hallmarks that distinguished his community. He suspected these might also apply to USAID given his experience

working with development practitioners in Washington and in the field. After sharing the four points below, one IC participant noted, “this has harmonic resonance given my experience at the CIA.”

- Cultural premium on problem solving at the small group and individual level.
- Resist centralization. As such, “less than popular” with their parent organizations.
- Skeptical of authority, propelling effectiveness.
- Act as guilds, not industries, valuing tailored solutions for specific contexts.

USAID’s perspective on its own collaboration with SOF and the IC had a common refrain. There are a handful of exceptional AID officers who have served and will continue to serve with distinction alongside SOF and other interagency partners in the most difficult and dangerous environments in the world. But there will never be enough of them and they may never be able to act as swiftly or be as agile as their SOF or IC colleagues. Unfortunately, because the same few exceptional officers are deployed over and over again it is not a sustainable pattern.

Absence from Denied Environments

Despite USAID’s past contributions in NPEs and the shared affinities between USAID, SOF, and the IC, USAID direct hires remain largely absent from denied environments. For example, in Syria, there is “less than a handful” of USAID personnel present in country to support work in newly liberated areas due to strict State/Diplomatic Security (DS) restrictions on civilian access and movements. One SOF operator dialing in from the area noted, “whether it’s humanitarian assistance or governance, we can’t get the right people to the problem!” A USAID official exclaimed, “In Raqqa, the entire USAID humanitarian assistance team could fit in a Toyota Hilux. It is a massive problem.”

Demand + Desirability of Proposed Development Officer Capability

Concept Summary

The Global Development Lab is proposing a non-duplicative operational capability utilizing social movement and community mobilization theory to augment USAID’s existing capabilities in non-permissive or denied environments. If there is a validated demand among non-traditional USG partners who are willing to fund a pilot capability (in whole or in part), small teams of specially-targeted and trained USAID direct hires would be placed with forward DoD, IC, U.S. Public Health Service Commission Corps, Drug Enforcement Agency, and/or Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearm units and be delegated the authority to act independently and perform inherently governmental functions. The goal of this notional, additive, and niche capability would be to identify and execute solutions to unique problems, like securing communities vulnerable to violent extremist radicalization. These new officers would be distinct from existing USAID employees because they would be able to fund, execute, design, and implement an

activity immediately in response to an urgent and pressing requirement as opposed to working by, with, and through an implementing partner and contracting mechanism.

USAID Reaction

It was unclear to one USAID officer how the skillset of the proposed Development Officers would differ from existing specialized USAID teams. For example, the official argued that the governance gaps identified by their SOF and IC colleagues could be filled by existing Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) personnel, assuming access to non-permissive or denied environments could be negotiated. In response, the author of the proposed capability reaffirmed the concept's unique focus on social movement and community mobilization theory, as well as the training requirements that would ensure interoperability and trust with elite forward operators working in some of the most denied environments in the world. Proposed Development Officers would also be direct hires and not utilize implementing partners.

SOF Reaction

While SOF officials voiced a strong demand for forward-deployed USAID personnel, the technical areas of expertise requested varied and in some cases were outside the purview of the Lab's envisioned Development Officer capability. Only one SOF officer argued that the proposed capability would attempt to "fill vacuums of space" and counter the underlying drivers of extremist proliferation and recruitment, allowing Operational Detachment Alphas (ODA) to focus on ensuring the security of local communities. Another SOF attendee stated that Development Officers with rule of law experience could have strengthened the community policing and governance efforts of Village Stability Operations (VSO) teams in Afghanistan. Additional SOF personnel argued that Development Officers could leverage governance expertise, provide basic services, or arrange temporary employment to "win local populations over."

One SOF officer highlighted that the proposed capability would provide much-needed "connective tissue" between forward operators and USAID, stating, "we need a card-carrying member from other agencies that can provide connections back to their operational headquarters, ensuring they have skin in the game."

IC Reaction

Immediately after concluding the introduction of the concept, a seasoned CIA paramilitary officer claimed, "I'll buy stock in that concept!"

A senior USAID official noted that USAID has a responsibility to share information it collects during routine operations with the USG, but that USAID personnel cannot be asked to collect information on behalf of another government agency. One senior IC member added, "this is why we stay back," and noted that open source information including social media is an alternative mechanism to cull measures and effectiveness and broader sentiment data that could be leveraged creatively.

A former Chief of Station cautioned USAID to engage in detailed risk planning to define the worst-case scenarios before launching the teams, should USAID move forward with a pilot: "...define your failures... know your human risks, your operational risks, your program risks, and your political risks."

Feasibility of Proposed Development Officer Capability

Authorities

Attendees raised the issue of operating authorities on several occasions. Questions asked included: What authorities would the proposed Development Officers possess? How do you align a team deployed under different authorities (including Titles 10, 22, and 50 of the U.S. Code (USC)), yet preserve the unique functions and capabilities of individual operators? Or, how do you adapt authorities with your partners to achieve your goals (i.e. Title 60)? How does this process differ when operating inside vs. outside a Defined Theater of Armed Conflict (DTAC)?

Deployment Mechanisms

The author of the notional capability proposed that USAID Development Officers be placed with interagency partners for "legal, logistical, and financial" reasons. It remains unclear what the consequences of such an arrangement would be. Participants raised the following potential benefits or drawbacks:

Potential benefits include:

- Joint personnel sourcing and readiness preparation processes.
- Bypassing Chief of Mission (CoM) authority constraints.
- Leveraging the funds of other government agencies to support personnel deployment costs.

Potential drawbacks include:

- Loss of adequate USAID oversight.
- Loss of unique civilian Title 22 authorities ensuring status as an independent USAID officer.
- Inability to leverage USAID program funds or information while on assignment.

Following the Salon, USAID General Counsel referred the facilitators to ADS Chapter 306 and stated that the aforementioned variables would "depend on the circumstances and how USAID and another agency set up a placement. USAID enjoys broad authority under Section 632(a) and 632(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act to enter into arrangements with other USG agencies as long as the transferred funds are obligated for development purposes."

Negotiating Civilian Access to Denied Environments

The uncertainty surrounding authorities and interagency partnerships combined with the underutilization of existing USAID direct hire personnel in non-permissive or denied environments led a USAID official to argue that negotiating a higher risk tolerance for USAID's existing teams with new political leadership at DS would be a better use of USAID capital than developing a new small scale and risk-prone capability.

Given DS' reluctance to deploy civilians to NPEs following the 2012 Benghazi attacks, other USAID officials argued that it would be more tenable to negotiate access to denied areas for elite development operators on a country-by-country basis. Assuming the proposed Officers were repeatedly successful, these smaller one-off arrangements could slowly shift perceptions of civilian deployments to NPEs at USAID, State, and across the broader interagency.

Development Officer Recruitment

All attendees agreed that recruiting Development Officers with interagency experience and the ability to problem solve despite ambiguity would be critical to the successful execution of the proposed concept. A senior SOF official added, "you can make mistakes anywhere along the pipeline *except* for recruiting." Few current USAID employees have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform in the proposed role, raising concerns that USAID's top performers would be poached from existing teams. One attendee exclaimed, "we can't change development until we change the talent pool." To execute a concept that depends on personnel with unique curated expertise and attitudes, USAID must shift the incentives of its traditional hiring mechanisms, targeting individuals that do not seek to accrue service years or achieve lifetime employment.

Ensuring Interoperability with Interagency Partners

In addition to identifying personnel with relevant interagency experience, recruits would undergo a highly selective screening and training regimen with an attrition rate of up to 75 percent. SOF and IC attendees supported a protocol leveraging core trainings from their respective communities (e.g. SERE, weapons qualification) to ensure "operational empathy" and trust with elite forward operators. Some USAID personnel were concerned by the potential cost of such an extensive and selective protocol, especially given that USAID may not be reimbursed by interagency partners for start-up costs. Others balked at the notion of arming Development Officers, arguing that such a move would negatively impact USAID's optic and effectiveness in communities.

Moving Forward: Congressional Involvement, Champions, and Starting the Journey

The most immediate factor preventing the implementation of the proposed capability is the need to negotiate civilian access to denied environments. USAID, SOF, and IC attendees agreed that advocating for a congressional mandate – not an executive order – would be "the surest but most perilous" means to drive such change. Drawing parallels to the Nunn-Cohen Amendment of 1987 which established U.S. Special Operations

Command (USSOCOM) and congressionally-apportioned Major Force Program (MFP)-11 funding, a SOF official argued that it takes executive, legislative, and non-governmental champions able to withstand the potential corporate failure of a high-risk/reward concept following failed and widely scrutinized operations (e.g. Operation Eagle Claw) to spur congressional action.³⁴

In the spirit of “upping USAID’s game” and improving the USG’s ability to execute development work while champions are identified (e.g. friendly Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) Commanders, influential journalists such as David Ignatius), the Director of the Global Development Lab proposed piloting the Development Officer concept as a means to refine a future, USAID-wide request to Congress. A SOF attendee added that while such a pilot might rely on a somewhat inconvenient placement model, a fully-fledged iteration of the concept, if proven, may look very different. Reflecting on USAID and SOF efforts to transform their respective communities, the SOF official remarked, “worry more about how to start this journey than about how it ends.”

“Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.” - Goethe

³⁴ Veazie, Todd. “Generals, Politicians, The Mafia and the Fourth Estate Rebuilding Special Operations Forces.” National Defense University. National War College. Washington, DC.

Appendix E: Assessment Briefing Slides



RED Teams Demand and Feasibility Assessment Final Briefing
February 23, 2017

 FRONTIER DESIGN GROUP

RED Team Assessment Final Briefing | 23 February 2018

 USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

“The problems of the world cannot possibly be solved by skeptics or cynics, whose horizons are limited by the obvious realities. We need men who can dream of things that never were, and ask why not.”

President John F. Kennedy

USAID RED Team Concept and Assumptions

Conditions

- Austere
- "Extremis"
- Not under CoM
- Sahel, Central Asia, Yemen, Philippines
- Armed

Team composition

- Modular
- Six, two-person units
- Design and execute activities without IPs
- Interoperability with MARSOC, ARSOF, INL, FBI, DEA, and other interagency partners

Missions / functions

- Disrupt and prevent VE recruitment, radicalization, proselytizing, and influence/access/refuge within vulnerable communities where traditional socioeconomic programs are ill-suited or ineffective.
- Novel analytic capabilities and practices:
 - Social Movement Theory, accompaniment to build SOF A camps, Jed analysis, financial capital disruption, psychosocial analysis/support re: honor, esteem, and valor.



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Contract Scope

- Explore whether and to what extent a demand exists among non-traditional USG partners for a new expeditionary development capability to counter VEOs in NPEs.
- Discuss the initial feasibility of the notional capability to include priority enablers and inhibitors for USAID's future consideration.

Out of Scope

- Frontier did not create a roadmap for the implementation of the proposed RED Team concept.



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Methodology

Contacted: 53
Interviewed: 34
Interviews: 36

Table with 2 columns: Organization/Field and Related Interviews. Lists various military and intelligence organizations such as Special Operations Forces (SOF), Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and others.

Agenda: Senior Leader Salon. Includes a timeline from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm with topics like Welcome, agenda and objectives, and a Q&A session.



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SOF Demand



Army Special Forces Groups

- Interest: Achieve Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Counter-insurgency (COIN) and Unconventional Warfare (UW) missions...
RED Teams Value Add: Mobilize and place with ODAs to secure/hold areas formerly occupied by VEOs...



95th Civil Affairs Brigade

- Interest: Improve the durability of human domain solutions, while becoming more effective at governance and counter-governance essential tasks.
RED Teams Value Add: CA officers and NCOs deploy via 'broadening assignments' with RED Teams to help map the human terrain...



US SOCOM

- Interest: Reduce redundancy and strengthen command and control in rapid iteration cycles to improve the economy of SOF's activity and force and achieve 'persistent presence.'
RED Teams Value Add: Provide 'connective tissue' with USAID's experienced personnel, information flows, and 'programmatic rocket fuel'...



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SOF Demand (cont'd)



Military Information Support Operations Command

Interest:

- Improve stability operations and COIN planning at the company command level, strengthening SOF's broader strategy and operations across an entire AOR.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Place RED Team members at the ODB level to coordinate with the command and control element and rotating ODAs, broadening the team's COIN "field of vision" without "stressing an individual ODA's span of control."



Naval Special Warfare Group

Interest:

- Improve the sophistication of analysis, targeting, and lethality of counter-network capabilities, adding "levers" that can be pulled to achieve favorable outcomes.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Support local leaders allowing SOF operators to target networks, money flows, and community structures and knowledge
- Provide data sets to feed into SOF databases and augment modeling in exchange for info that can be mined by USAID using computational social science methods to aid strategic planning
- Utilize unique authorities to leverage cutting edge technologies (listening devices, drones, etc.)



Defense Intelligence Agency & Joint Special Operations Command

Interest:

- DoD's National Military Strategy shifts focus to state-on-state conflict with Russia, China, and North Korea. GPF Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) may take over many traditional COIN/FID SOF missions in Iraq and Afghanistan to enable SOF elements to push into other missions and geographies.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Bolster the FID/COIN missions of GPF and SFABs by considering RED Team placements with these communities.
- Consider prioritizing Afghanistan as the priority location for future prototypes/pilots for RED Teams.



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Intelligence Community Demand



National Counterterrorism Center

Interest:

- Improve the USG's approach to confronting complex and cross-cutting national missions such as counterterrorism, developing effective whole of government strategies and plans.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Provide an effective proof of concept of an interoperable small-team development unit with intellectual firepower, diverse skillsets, unique authorities, and development funding worthy of SOF support to advance the CT mission and reverse a "development war" the USG is currently losing.



Central Intelligence Agency

Interest:

- Focus on covert action to thwart threats to the homeland.
- Bolster the Agency's ability to combat resilient VEO networks and recruitment cycles that have endured despite the CIA's successful leadership decapitation campaign.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Transition covert action to community engagement activities.
- Conduct ethnographic research to achieve political stability by informing ceasefires and reconciliation deals with powerbrokers and tribes.
- Analyze information and offer unique technical competencies.



Office of Dir. of National Intelligence

Interest:

- Manage "global coverage" of intelligence collection priorities and assets via National Intelligence Managers (NIMs), who provide "strategic warning" to policymakers about risk and potential crises.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Help DNI "buy down the risk as a low cost, low tech investment" by providing meaningful context and insight about what is happening in denied areas where the USAID Mission and/or Embassy may not have information or reporting.



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State and USAID Demand



Interest:

- Extend the reach of diplomatic and development USG personnel who are highly trained and self sufficient in NPEs.

RED Teams Value Add:

- Highly experienced and trained personnel bring civilian skillsets and funding forward with elite interagency operators, minimizing risk to RED Teams and providing valuable information back to USAID and the State Department to guide strategic planning and future civilian-military efforts.
- Identify allies and mobilize small amounts of cash to establish community buy-in/relationships, prosecuting COIN more effectively.
- Reconstitute the "doing capacity" of USAID; "Super enablers," observing situations on the ground and responding immediately by designing, funding, and implementing small-scale activities.
- Exercise "reach back" to USAID, providing valuable reporting on "bottom-up realities" and unleashing additional development programming streams to amplify or build on their immediate efforts; Reporting can serve as strategic resource for USAID to connect hyperlocal environments directly with Washington, DC national security dialogues.

Concerns Raised by Prospective Partners and USAID

Perception Management

USAID is a "contracting agency without any doing power?"

"We must preserve USAID's development mission and reputation."

"Define your failures... know your human risks, your operational risks, your program risks, and your political risks."

Competition Surrounding Roles and Responsibilities

"How are RED Teams different than pre-existing USAID or partner capabilities?"

"How do you harness the goodness that is USAID, distill it, and not compete with other government agencies?"

State/DS Risk Aversion

"We can't get civilians to the problem!"

Policy Support from the White House

"There is limited utility in engaging the discussion without a clear presidential endorsement."

Technical Feasibility

Core Functional Competencies

- Design RED Team competencies and differentiators together with external partners to augment their unique needs and ensure their political and material support. However, augment social movement theory and community mobilization with additional skillsets as needed to close discrete partner knowledge, skill, or authority gaps.
- Unpack/translate "social movement theory" and "community mobilization" into a specific set of activities (i.e. a Mission Essential Task List (METL)) so partners understand core tasks.
- Draw distinctions between RED Teams' and USAID's other civil-security/military expeditionary deployment models, underscoring the diversity and value-add of the Agency having both.
- Design a RED Team reporting mechanism to relay critical information from denied environments to USAID/Washington to inform broader USG national security dialogue.
- Position RED Teams as "super enablers" that revive USAID's long-lost "doing capacity," leveraging and contributing to USAID's many assets including data, knowledge networks, and thought leadership.



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Operational Feasibility

Operating Authorities: Access and Funding

- Ensure a partnership model that 1) retains valuable civilian authorities; 2) leverages USAID's assets including data, maps, program information, and a robust human network; and 3) enables freedom of movement in NPEs that have historically only been accessible to military and intelligence communities.

Recruitment

- Develop or further refine specific recruitment requirements once USAID has selected pilot partners, geographies, and missions. Optimize for "operational empathy" among RED Team members.
- Alternatively, create a recruitment profile and associated screening algorithm that meets a baseline of the known criteria for ideal RED Team recruits. Finalize in consultation with prospective partners.
- Engage trusted colleagues with robust networks of savvy field practitioners to solicit interest among potential recruits while simultaneously testing beta version of a screening algorithm.

Assessment and Selection

- Once assignments and regional/functional competencies are established, liaise with partner agencies and specially-hired former SOF/C trainers to create an appropriate assessment and selection regimen.
- Determine the appropriate level of weapons qualification required and socialize this within USAID.
- Utilize pre-existing training and qualification courses whenever possible to maximize cost-effectiveness.



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Operational Feasibility (cont'd)

Hiring

- Utilize PSCs to facilitate an initial, rapid fielding of the RED Team prototype.
- Ensure that USAID bureaus that may house the capability in the future begin securing DH billets.
- Identify a supervisory structure for RED Team personnel to ensure advancement and iterative adjustments to the assessment and selection process based on personnel experiences in the field.
- Begin discussions with HR surrounding special provisions and/or exemptions for DH RED Team personnel.
- Do not utilize contractors to execute a pilot given their inability to make inherently governmental decisions. Consider the role of existing or new implementing partners as potential force multipliers for RED Teams.

Deployment Mechanisms and Theaters of Interest

- Increase the minimum size of RED Teams to three personnel. Develop a rotation schedule, allowing CONUS-based operators to provide operational support to OCONUS units. Trade a CONUS RED Team member with an interagency liaison officer from the partner agency's HQ, integrating planning and support of field units.
- Align champions with the money, theater access, and command authority required to execute a pilot.
 - Afghanistan: Major General James Linder, Commander of The Special Operations Joint Task Force (or his likely successor, Major General Kurt Sonntag, currently Commander of Army Special Operations Center of Excellence). Training and deployment funding through USSOCOM, SOJTF-A, and SWCS. GEN Nicholson, Commander of Operation Resolute Support (RS).
 - TBD: Incoming 1st SFG Commander, COL Own Ray, in collaboration with SOCPAC/SOCCENT in their AORs.
 - TBD: 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, CSM Garric Banfield and COL Chuck Burnett WRT their broadening assignment proposal, global reach.

Financial Feasibility

Money

- Evaluate if there are supportive USAID CVE programs or Missions with available funds to support the rapid execution of a RED Team pilot, as this would prevent the Lab from having to request and receive supplemental funding.
- If existing USAID funds are insufficient to support a pilot, pursue additional USAID funding in the next OCO supplemental. If this is not possible, identify a USG partner willing to fund or provide personnel for a pilot.
- Lobby for long-term funding as soon as possible since the next available funding window is in October 2019. Assuming a pilot effort is successful, it may make sense to include additional funding for RED Teams in the FY 2020 OCO budget request.
- Alternatively, USAID could pursue a Fee-for-Service (FFS) model without seeking an appropriation. This approach carries risk if partners are not willing to fully support a concept.

Pilot Pathways: Champions, Money, and Access

CENTCOM: Engage General Votel for pilot funding.
SOCOM: Engage General Thomas or (likely) General Miller for pilot funding.
USASOC: Engage USASOC Commander LTG Tovo and CIG.

TSOCs: Engage Commanders at SOCSOUTH, SOCPAC, and SOCCENT for funding/buy-in for RED Team placements within their AORs.
Afghanistan: Engage MG Linder or (likely) MG Sonntag for funding/buy-in for RED Team placements with SOCC-A/SOJTF-A. Engage GEN Nicholson for funding/buy-in for RED Team placements with Operation Resolute Support (RS).

1SFG: Approach incoming Commander COL Owen Ray to explore fielding a RED Team pilot in countries of mutual interest in Middle East, Asia Pacific.
5SFG: Based on AOR, potential pilot in Middle East.
7SFG: Based on AOR, potential pilot in Central/South America.
10SFG: Based on Lab engagement with 4th BTN/Jedburghs.
98th Civil Affairs Brigade: Approach incoming CSM Gamic Banfield to explore his proposal for broadening assignments for CA personnel to RED Teams and associated funding.

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Pilot Pathways: Champions, Money, and Access (cont'd)

SecDef

COCOMs

USASOC & TSOCs

SF Groups/Task Forces

Countries / AORs

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Pilot Pathways: Champions, Money, and Access (cont'd)



95th CA Brigade Proposal: Fund RED Team pilot using mid-level active duty CA operators on "broadening assignments."

USAID Counter: Fund one USAID RED Team member per proposed CA operator on "broadening assignments."

POCs:

- Incoming 95th CA Brigade Commander, COL Chuck Burnett
- CSM Garric Banfield



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Touchpoints to Consider with the Intelligence Community



- Pulse USAID Mission Directors to determine who has strong working relationships with Chiefs of Station on country teams. Explore cooperation with RED Teams in critical countries of mutual interest for pilot/prototype
- Consider USAID placement at the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC), Global Jihad (GJ) or regional Mission Centers.



- USAID to attend National Intelligence Management Council meetings with regional NIMs to explore mutual interests with respect to strategic warning and risk
 - Open invitation offered from NIMC manager and Africa and MENA NIMs @ DNI



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