

Attack the Network

AN INNOVATION PROJECT

ALPHA PLAYBOOK



This Alpha Playbook was created in March 2010 by Toffler Associates and 4iNNO for the Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) and Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) in support of General Stanley McChrystal's strategy in Afghanistan and based on the best information available at the time



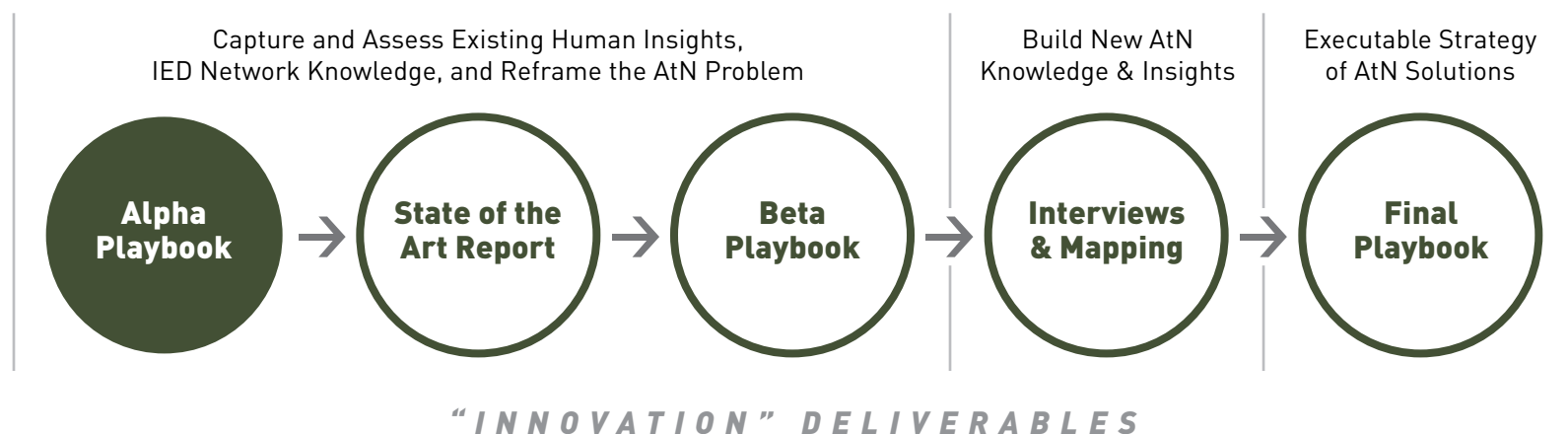


An Innovation Project

Attack the Network: An Innovation Project is novel in its approach in that it takes best practices from industry to understand holistically the behaviors and needs of the local populace, C-IED actors, and IED actors to create innovative solutions for defeating the IED network in Afghanistan.

This project will utilize methods around hypothesis building and insights about the people involved that produce a set of recommended solutions based upon their deep-seated needs. These solutions will combine innovations with current best practices for implementation across ISAF.

This Alpha Playbook provides initial concepts in a multi-step approach that leads to a “playbook” of innovative solutions.





Alpha Playbook Objective

This Alpha Playbook offers an initial set of hypothetical concepts to guide our knowledge-building efforts and interactions with subject matter experts that lead to disrupting and dismantling the improvised explosive device (IED) networks in the Lashkar Gah district of Helmand province in Afghanistan. This Playbook begins to summarize the quintessential ways to reduce the number of incidents and effectiveness of IEDs in Lashkar Gah by 90% within 3 years.

The Alpha Playbook summarizes the best contemporary ideas along with innovative and disruptive ones that are congruent with counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine and based on the motivations and experiences of Pashtun populations in and around Lashkar Gah. The concepts in this Playbook aim to meet the needs of the local populace, IED actors, and C-IED actors through innovative solutions while overcoming those barriers that currently prevent their needs from being satisfied.

This Alpha Playbook is the first phase of a multi-phase project. This phase focuses on reframing the IED problem in Lashkar Gah based on the best knowledge to date derived from experts within government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and military services. There are two additional Playbooks to be produced during this process: a Beta Playbook with new insights from subject matter experts and a Final Playbook of disruptive solutions based on insights from understanding the needs of the local populace, C-IED actors and IED actors.



Problem Statement

We continue to refine our understanding of the problem, or primary issue, that prevents ISAF from succeeding against IED networks. Today, we understand the problem or primary issue as follows:

ISAF's inability to secure the local populace's lasting support has resulted in its limited success in disrupting and dismantling the IED networks of a sophisticated adversary with a natural understanding of cultural norms.

Barriers to Success

A number of strategic barriers have frustrated ISAF's ability to secure the local populace's lasting support. They include:

Barriers to providing security that enable ISAF to build relationships and co-opt the network

- ANSF are not yet capable of giving the local populace a sense of security
- The C-IED network does not consistently operate as a COIN force
- The C-IED network lacks needed equipment and training to co-opt the IED network

Barriers to infrastructure and economic development that satisfy the needs of the local populace and incline it to cooperate with C-IED forces

- The C-IED network coordinates poorly among its members and with the local populace
- The local populace's limited employment opportunities make IED employment an attractive option

Barriers to the C-IED network's cultural understanding that enable it to relate to and build trust with the local populace

- The C-IED network lacks cultural understanding and thus fails to leverage that understanding

Barriers to communication that demonstrate ISAF's cultural understanding while countering the Taliban's message

- The C-IED network lacks an understanding of local needs, uses inferior methods, and fails to exploit media opportunities compared with the Taliban

Barriers to governance that hinder the perception of competence, effectiveness, and trust to co-opt the local populace from the Taliban

- Afghan officials degrade the populace's confidence in legitimate government efforts when they use their positions of influence to demand significant bribes

Variables for Awareness Goal

While the barriers must be overcome in order to reach success, variables are factors of which the C-IED force must be aware and adaptable:

- Pashtuns identify themselves in multiple ways that often are not uniform. Often this is in terms of tribe, but may be geographical or otherwise
- The reasons that the local populace enters the IED network are varied and not monolithic: for security, power, honor, money, or identity

Through this Playbook, we offer hypothetical concepts that intend to overcome these barriers and recognize these variables, leading to a 90% reduction in the incidents and effectiveness of the IEDs in Lashkar Gah over 3 years.



Proposition

Success against the IED network requires a multi-faceted approach to gain the trust of the local populace and co-opt the IED network. Such solutions should combine best practices from past successes with new, innovative approaches.

This Alpha Playbook proposes concepts, or potential solutions, based on the best information known today. In subsequent phases of this project, these concepts will be refined based on an in-depth revealing of specific physical, emotional, logical, and spiritual needs of the local populace, C-IED actors, and IED actors. The solutions revealed in this Innovation Project will result from those revelations. The best information available today results in the following five strategies for dramatically reducing the number and effectiveness of IEDs in Lashkar Gah. Although some of these strategies are known, we propose different means to implement these strategies by understanding the deep-seated needs of these representative populations.

Strategy 1

ENDURING SECURITY

Establish enduring security that enables the local populace to live without constant fear of insurgent violence through improved security training at the ANA and tribal level and through innovate intelligence tools, training, and tactical equipment for C-IED forces

Strategy 2

DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Ensure development outcomes are aligned with specific local populace needs through better coordination with local leaders and increased involvement from the community

Strategy 3

LEVERAGE PASHTUN CULTURE

Increase the local populace's trust in and cooperation with the C-IED network by better understanding and leveraging local cultural practices

Strategy 4

WIN THE NARRATIVE

Convince the local populace that the C-IED network's intentions are better aligned with their interests than those of the Taliban by communicating a better narrative that resonates with the needs and values of the populace

Strategy 5

STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE

Enable the local populace's cooperation with the C-IED force by displacing the Taliban from positions of influence and strengthening traditional governance structures

Where to Play

We chose a specific geographic location to narrow our focus to representative populations for in-depth interviews that reveal deep-seated needs that lead to innovative solutions. The goal in choosing a representative population is to create solutions that can be applied and scaled across Afghanistan.



AFGHANISTAN

- The IED situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated dramatically in recent years
- IEDs in Afghanistan continue to have strategic, negative effects on US and ISAF success

HELMAND PROVINCE

- A critical province in General McChrystal's strategy
- Greatest numbers of ISAF casualties in the past year
- Home to sophisticated narco-trafficking and human smuggling networks that support the IED network
- Traditionally the "bread basket" of Afghanistan and hub of commerce

LASHKAR GAH DISTRICT

- Provincial capital government where dramatic impacts have symbolic importance
- Home to significant C-IED presence: the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), US Marines, and various NGOs
- Proximity to Kandahar Province and Ring Road make it a hot-bed of illicit activities



The Who

We seek to understand the barriers each of these three populations face in achieving their needs in order to innovate solutions that overcome such barriers and satisfy such needs.

The three populations we will focus on are as follows:



Local Populace

Local residents not currently participating in the IED networks



IED Actors

Members of the local populace who participate in IED networks for a variety of reasons



C-IED Actors

ISAF and ANSF who aim to create security from the IED networks

The local population is central to the IED problem in Afghanistan, and our innovation project seeks to understand why it chooses either to participate in the IED network, to help ISAF counter the IED networks, or to remain nonparticipatory.

“WE THINK THAT MOST OF THE FIGHTERS ARE IN FACT LOCALS, AFGHAN LOCALS. THEY PROBABLY FIGHT WITHIN 30 KILOMETERS OF THEIR HOME.”

— General Stanley McChrystal

Local Populace Needs

The local populace in Lashkar Gah consists primarily of Pashtuns who are not currently participating in either the IED or C-IED networks. They represent the “neutral center,” and the C-IED and IED networks compete for their loyalty.

This pyramid of needs is an amalgamation of the needs of the typical Pashtun male, age 16-30 in Lashkar Gah.

BASIC NEEDS

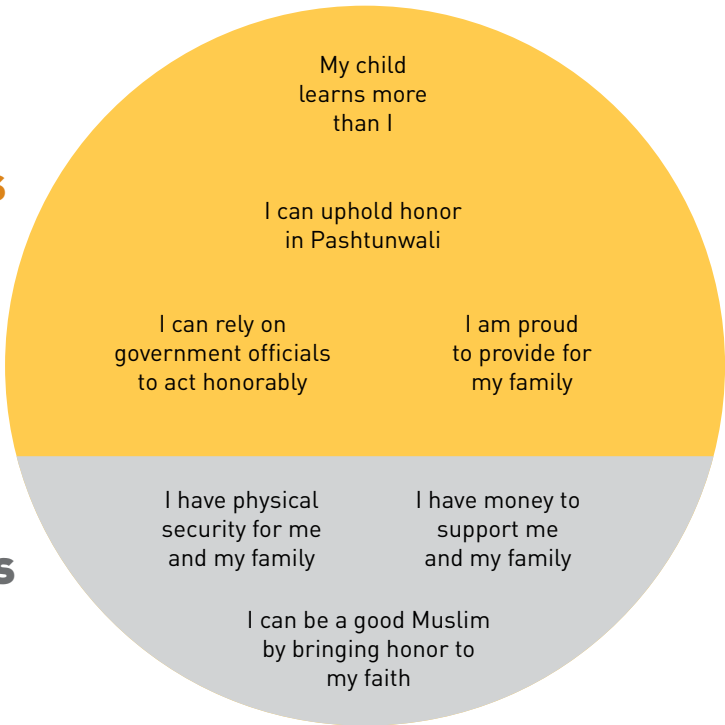
Pashtun men need a sense that they can provide physical and financial security for their families, and currently they cannot achieve these needs due to the violent impact of the Taliban in their villages and to a lack of employment opportunities. Meanwhile, Pashtun men need honor as defined by Muslim faith and Pashtunwali, and currently the most accessible opportunity to achieve this is through the Taliban.

ASPIRATIONS

Pashtun men in Lashkar Gah do not trust the government to provide justice, and they do not have sufficient employment opportunities. The Taliban provides swift justice and governance through their shadow governors and employment through participation in the IED network. The local populace generally feels unfavorable towards the Taliban and thus would favor alternative solutions.

Aspirations

Basic Needs



Local Populace Desired Experience

I want to be an honorable Pashtun man with the respect of my tribe and family. I want to live a pious life and be a good Muslim. I also want to be left alone by violent actors, either foreign or Afghan. But, while I want to be left alone, I want to know that there is security and justice in my village. Ultimately, I want to be a good man and provide for my family and know that they are safe and can live a good life.

BARRIERS TO DESIRED EXPERIENCE

- Lack of security to protect me and my family from violent actors causes me to side with strength
- Lack of economic opportunities prevents me from providing financial security for my family
- Lack of a swift and fair justice system prevents me and my family from being made “whole” again after criminal acts
- Lack of confidence in the representatives of the Afghan central government prevents me from supporting an alternative to the Taliban
- Living alongside current Taliban members discourages me from betraying them and risking their retaliation
- Foreign forces ask for assistance that goes against Pashtun and Islamic culture norms, limiting my ability and desire to support them



IED Actors Needs

IED actors share the same basic needs and aspirations as other members of the local populace, yet they choose to pursue some of these needs and aspirations by participating in the IED network. Often, these actors can be deterred from entering the IED network if their needs or aspirations can be met elsewhere. This project will uncover the elements that lead IED actors to participate in the IED network.

Our central hypothesis is that strategically “attacking the network” requires a focus on the members of the local populace who fulfill a variety of roles in the IED network. These IED actors are generally not zealots, but rather they participate in the IED network for a variety of other reasons.

IED Actors

Desired Experience

I want to align myself with power by being on the side of whoever will win. I want money to support my family and for gaining status. I want to be part of an effort to remove foreign occupiers from my country. I want to live free from fear of retribution from the Taliban for not having participated. I want to be part of an effort that is gaining status and power in the region. I want respect from other members in that powerful group. I want control and influence in Lashkar Gah. I want to avenge wrongs from government officials.

BARRIERS TO DESIRED EXPERIENCE

All of the same barriers from the local populace apply in addition to the following:

- Lack of a respected structure, such as economic opportunities, tribal structure, or effective government, prevents me from gaining status in the community anywhere outside of the Taliban
- Not knowing who will ultimately prevail among ISAF, the Taliban, the drug lords, the war lords, and the GIRoA, push me to hedge my bets by joining the most likely winner
- My limited nonviolent options to regain lost honor means that the surest way to regain such honor is through the Taliban

C-IED Actors Needs

US SERVICEMEMBERS BASIC NEEDS

They feel the support of their country when they receive adequate supplies and training to successfully carry out their mission. These basic needs are generally met for US servicemembers in Afghanistan, yet they describe needing additional training in Pashtun culture in order to succeed.

US SERVICEMEMBERS ASPIRATIONS

US forces lack the local cultural awareness and timely and accurate situational awareness to create the relationships they desire and require within the local populace. Generally, they do not feel trusted by the local populace, but instead describe individual anecdotes where and when such trust was formed.

ANA SOLDIER BASIC NEEDS

Pashtun ANA soldiers combine the needs of a servicemember with those of a Pashtun. To them, honor is defined according to their religion and tribe.

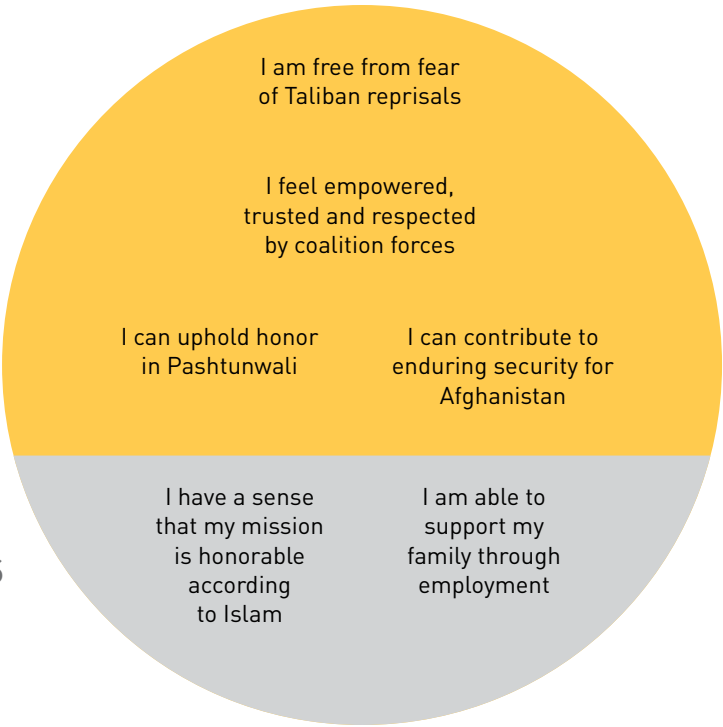
ANA SOLDIER ASPIRATIONS

ANA aspirations are similar to the local populace's aspirations, except they try to achieve theirs through the government's military force.

US Servicemembers in an Infantry Battalion



ANA Soldier



C-IED Actors Desired Experience

US SERVICEMEMBERS

I want to gain the trust of the local populace that leads to security for me and my fellow service members. I want the local populace to tell us who the Taliban fighters are and where they are. I want the authority, tools, and manpower to fight the Taliban and to provide the locals with a safer community. I want to know what new strategies and TTPs work for other ISAF units so that I can use them. I want to better understand the local populace and what it wants so I can figure out how to provide it. I want the support and respect of people back home. Ultimately, I want to win so I can protect the US and go home.

BARRIERS TO DESIRED EXPERIENCE

- Poor transfer of lessons learned across deployment cycles prevents me from benefitting from the relationships and knowledge of my predecessors
- The language barrier between Afghan locals and me puts heavy reliance on translators. Use of translators interferes with relationship-building between locals and me; many translators are not fluent in local dialects
- Wavering commitment to the war effort from the homeland shakes my commitment to our mission or requires me to expend energy explaining myself to family and friends at home
- Unclear vision of victory and the end game causes me confusion regarding the end goals
- I do not have the tools at the tactical level to counter the adversary sufficiently
- I am not sufficiently grounded in Pashtun culture

ANA SOLDIER

I want to be known and regarded with honor and as an ardent defender of Islam. I want to free myself and my country from our dependence on foreign powers to provide safety, security, and prosperity for my family, my tribe, and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

BARRIERS TO DESIRED EXPERIENCE

- Lack of funding, training, and supplies for my unit causes my enormous reliance on foreign forces
- Ties between my family members and my tribe members with the Taliban create a conflict of interest when I have to fight against the Taliban
- Corrupt behavior of some of my leaders and my peers undermines the support I receive from the very people I am trying to protect
- The Taliban spreads the perception that their fight is the only just fight, which undermines my mission

Vision & Strategies

The following pages outline a set of strategies and concepts to achieve the stated vision. Throughout the subsequent phases of this project, we will explore innovative solutions to accomplish these concepts in new ways. These strategies and concepts cover topics recommended by experts and warfighters, and our project will provide innovations to accomplish them.

Vision

The C-IED network will co-opt the local population from participating in the IED network and thus dramatically reduce the number and effectiveness of IEDs in Lashkar Gah by 90% over 3 years.



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Strategy 2

DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Ensure development outcomes are aligned with specific local populace needs through better coordination with local leaders and increased involvement from the community.

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Strategy 1

Enduring Security

Establish enduring security that enables the local populace to live without constant fear of insurgent violence through improved security training at the ANA and tribal level and through innovate intelligence tools, training, and tactical equipment for C-IED forces.

To win the Counter-IED fight, C-IED forces need the active participation of the local populace, which currently is unprepared to provide security and is fearful of reprisals from the Taliban. Furthermore, C-IED forces need better tools, training, and equipment to facilitate this security. Improvements will allow C-IED forces to complete this mission. Facilitating this security will instill confidence and a sense of strength in the local populace, who are then likely to respond by withdrawing from, implicating, or attacking the IED network.



Concepts for Enduring Security

1. Improve Tactical Social-Networking Collection and Analysis

Concept	Key Differentiator
Enable the C-IED actors to build relationships by providing dynamic situational awareness of social network relationships across the local populace and IED network	Uniformly disseminates social-networking tools, techniques, and procedures of a consistent level of quality across the tactical level

2. Begin COIN Training for ANA

Train ANA soldiers in how to co-opt the IED network by providing COIN training and other enablers beyond current concentration on conventional operations	Expands current syllabus to prepare ANA better for the type of conflict it will face in Afghanistan
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3. Better Non-Lethal Weapons for Tactical Units

Creates a sense of safety for the local populace through the use of non-lethal weapons during battles where civilians are present	Overcomes the current limitation in number and kind of weapons that are authorized for use by distributed, tactical units
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Strategy 2

Development Outcomes

Ensure development outcomes are aligned with specific local populace needs through better coordination with local leaders and increased involvement from the community.

This strategy will overcome limited vocational options, insufficient employment of locals, a lack of alignment between development projects and local needs, and poor coordination by C-IED forces. Ensuring that development outcomes are more inclusive of the local populace will increase their trust and confidence through their endorsement of selected projects and will provide alternative employment to the IED network. The trust and confidence created between the local populace and C-IED force by these concepts will decrease local participation in IED networks while increasing their willingness to provide intelligence on such networks.



Concepts for Development Outcomes

1. Maximize the Employment of Afghan Companies and Persons

Concept	Key Differentiator
Enable C-IED actors to maximize the employment of Afghan companies and persons for development projects by uniformly applying the best practices of the “Afghan First” program	Overcomes the current patchwork of methods and policies across the province with a consistent set of effective ones

2. Disrupt Smugglers

Strengthen C-IED network relationships with poppy farmers while degrading the Taliban’s IED network financing by providing advanced network-targeting tools and training to hunt and intercept Taliban actors	Overcomes current, antiquated methods of targeting and collapses the walls that exist between intelligence and drug enforcement
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3. Coordinate All District Development

Improves the quality and the alignment of projects to local needs by improving the methods and tools for coordination among C-IED actors and the local populace	Removes inefficiencies and duplication in development activities while overcoming inconsistent and limited methods to identify and coordinate development activities
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4. Increase Medical Care to Villages

Uniformly expand medical care provided to the local populace through increased supplies and training at the tactical level	Overcomes limited supply and application of a highly effective development tool for relationship-building at the village level
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Strategy 3

Leverage Pashtun Culture

Increase the local populace's trust in and cooperation with the C-IED network by better understanding and leveraging local cultural practices.

Currently, the C-IED force lacks understanding of cultural norms and how to leverage that understanding to improve cooperation with the local populace. By understanding, demonstrating respect for, adhering to, and even participating in Pashtun cultural practices, the C-IED network will build the trust needed to draw the local populace into the Counter-IED fight and to marginalize the influence of the Taliban.



Concepts to Leverage Pashtun Culture

1. Deep Dive into Pashtunwali

Concept	Key Differentiator
Create a deep understanding of Pashtunwali code to enable US forces to effectively engage the local populace by developing innovative immersion training	Provides thorough training on Pashtun culture that all US forces can complete before arriving in Afghanistan

2. Weather Reports from the Ground

Create a system that supports the C-IED actors need for relationship building by capturing and disseminating observations from warfighters about the local populace	Provides a standardized system for sharing information on the local populace, or “atmospherics”, across the tactical echelon
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3. Not Lost in Translation

Increase the accuracy and availability of translation services available to the C-IED forces	Overcomes current, limited supply of competent interpreters
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4. Rhyme Your Way to Victory

C-IED network creates and propagates dissent and humiliation of the Taliban through Pashtun poetry and song-two effective and acceptable methods for dissent in that culture	Systematically applies Pashtun language and culture to ISAF’s advantage in the battle of the narrative
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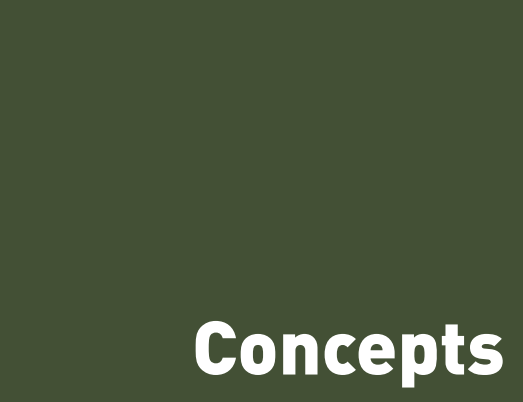
Strategy 4

Win the Narrative

Convince the local populace that the C-IED network's intentions are better aligned with locals' interests than those of the Taliban by communicating a better narrative that resonates with the needs and values of the populace.

Currently, C-IED messaging lacks an understanding of local needs, uses inferior communication methods, and fails to exploit media opportunities compared with the Taliban. As a result, the local populace holds greater respect for the Taliban's intentions than the C-IED force. By understanding the messages that resonate with the local populace and improving its messages and execution accordingly, the C-IED network can degrade the power of the Taliban's messages that promote participation in IED activities.





Concepts to Win the Narrative

1. Dishonor the Taliban

Concept	Key Differentiator
Perpetuate a narrative of dishonor associated with Taliban fighters using Pashtun and Islamic terms to humiliate them	Counters the Taliban’s narrative of honor in their cause by applying Pashtunwali against them

2. Welcome Back Program

Reintegrate former prisoners back into society by creating a reintegration program with tribal elders and tactical commanders that creates transparency and avoids the radicalization of young men	Mitigates cultural negativity around imprisonment and readily avails a practice for commanders across the battlespace
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Strategy 5

Strengthen Governance

Enable the local populace's cooperation with the C-IED force by displacing the Taliban from positions of influence and strengthening traditional governance structures.

Currently, the Taliban holds positions of influence that degrade the populace's confidence in legitimate government efforts. Displacing the Taliban from religious and political positions of influence will encourage the local populace to believe that legitimate governance is possible without the Taliban, which in turn will lessen their support of the Taliban and the IED network it operates.



Concepts to Strengthen Governance

1. Define Authorities Among Security Actors

Concept	Key Differentiator
Facilitate a shared understanding of jurisdictional lines among locals, provincial governance, and ANA through targeted training and resources for C-IED forces	Mitigates current obstacles to security

2. Leverage Fair Trade

Provide local Pashtuns alternative economic markets other than poppy by leveraging World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) best practices that facilitate goods from Helmand to Western markets	Implements proven approaches to create a new market for goods from Helmand
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Possible Disruptive Events

Several potential events present risks that would compromise this project's success. Examples of such risks include (in no particular order):

- The Taliban stops using IEDs in favor of another strategic weapon
- US withdraws its troops from Afghanistan
- A peace accord is signed between the Afghanistan government and the Taliban, causing the Taliban to stop using IEDs
- Pakistan takes control of its northwest province, the headquarters for the Taliban, and therefore diminishes the Taliban's ability to employ IED networks
- A change occurs in the Afghan government, and the new government asks for the immediate withdrawal of ISAF forces; thus, reducing the need for offensive IEDs
- Pakistan's government collapses, dramatically changing the strategic environment



- US and/or ISAF shifts focus from counterinsurgency to counter-terrorism
- DOD shifts focus away from AtN
- The US makes substantial progress in Afghanistan before this project is completed, IEDs casualties are diminished, and this project is no longer needed
- ISAF shifts focus away from Helmand Province

Acronyms

- **AFRL:** Air Force Research Laboratory
- **ANA:** Afghan National Army
- **ANP:** Afghan National Police
- **ANSF:** Afghan National Security Forces
- **C-IED:** Counter-IED
- **COIN:** Counterinsurgency
- **GIRoA:** Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- **IED:** Improvised explosive device
- **ISAF:** International Security Assistance Force
- **JIEDDO:** Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization
- **NGO:** Non-governmental organization
- **QST:** Quetta Shura Taliban
- **USMC:** United States Marine Corps



