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**Applying the Framework for Operations
Assessment: Military Operations
Pursued in Support of Lord's
Resistance Army Disarmament and
Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009**

Eliza M. Johannes

December 2013

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and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009**

Eliza M. Johannes

Executive Summary

Background

This paper presents a framework for assessing operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The rebel group first began as a religious movement with its members seeking to achieve a Uganda ruled in accordance with the Ten Commandments. The LRA is also active in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan.

For over two decades, military operations with the mission to capture and eliminate Joseph Kony and the LRA as a rebel group in the Great Lakes Region of Africa have been launched. Among these are military operations such as Operation Lightning Thunder (OLT), launched in 2008 after the unsuccessful peace negotiations between the Ugandan government and the LRA; Tusker Sand, in which American contractors were searching for Kony in four countries, enacted in 2009; and Operation Observant compass, launched in 2011.

This paper focuses on OLT, primarily because this operation was the beginning of the many that followed. The Ugandan military, in collaboration with the forces from the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, supported by the United States, carried out attacks targeting the LRA central camp in Garamba Park in the DRC.

Framework for Operations Assessment

The Framework for Operations Assessment described in this report is a set of prescriptive steps that support the decision-making of leaders at various levels seeking to develop and act on a comprehensive understanding of an operation's performance. The proposed framework combines elements of two existing frameworks, and extends them by including operations research methods. One contributing framework is the Context, Input, Process, Product Evaluation Model, which originated as a means to evaluate education policy during the 1960s. This model has since gained wide acceptance and use across a variety of governmental arenas. Another framework, denoted in this report as the RAND Assessment Framework, extends a general methodology for evaluation by using it to assess the Global Train and Equip Program, or Program 1206.

Conclusions

Any review of OLT should begin by recognizing what makes the operating environment different from others that the United States is actively engaged in (e.g., infrastructural and force-size differences, varied levels of community support, and so forth). Next is the need to move beyond simply saying the operation has yet to succeed or counting the number of LRA defections and training exercises as a measure of success. Instead, specific activities used to support achieving operational success should be identified and evaluated against the outcomes they have produced in the operational environment. While the intentions behind implementation of the Public Law 111-172 (the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009) are indeed noble, the methods, if not well integrated, have the potential of yielding poor results. It is imperative that when implementing the strategic policies of Public Law 111-172, existing evaluation frameworks and continuous engagement with past interventions are combined and extended by incorporating operations research methods.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
	A. Background: The Lord’s Resistance Army	3
	B. Background: Counter-LRA Operations and Policy.....	4
2.	Framework for Operations Assessment.....	9
	A. Part I, Problem Definition: Description and Social Context	11
	B. Defining the LRA Problem	12
	C. Part II, Intervention: Description and Political Context.....	14
	D. Applying Intervention and Political Context Descriptions to Counter-LRA Operations	17
	E. Part III, Context + Intervention: Juxtaposing the Problem and Its Generative Factors against the Planned Intervention	20
	F. Applying the Context + Intervention Assessment to Counter-LRA Operations	21
	G. Parts IV–VI, Assessment Methodology: Influence on Outcome, Returns on Investment, and Relative Efficacy	24
3.	Conclusions	27

1. Introduction

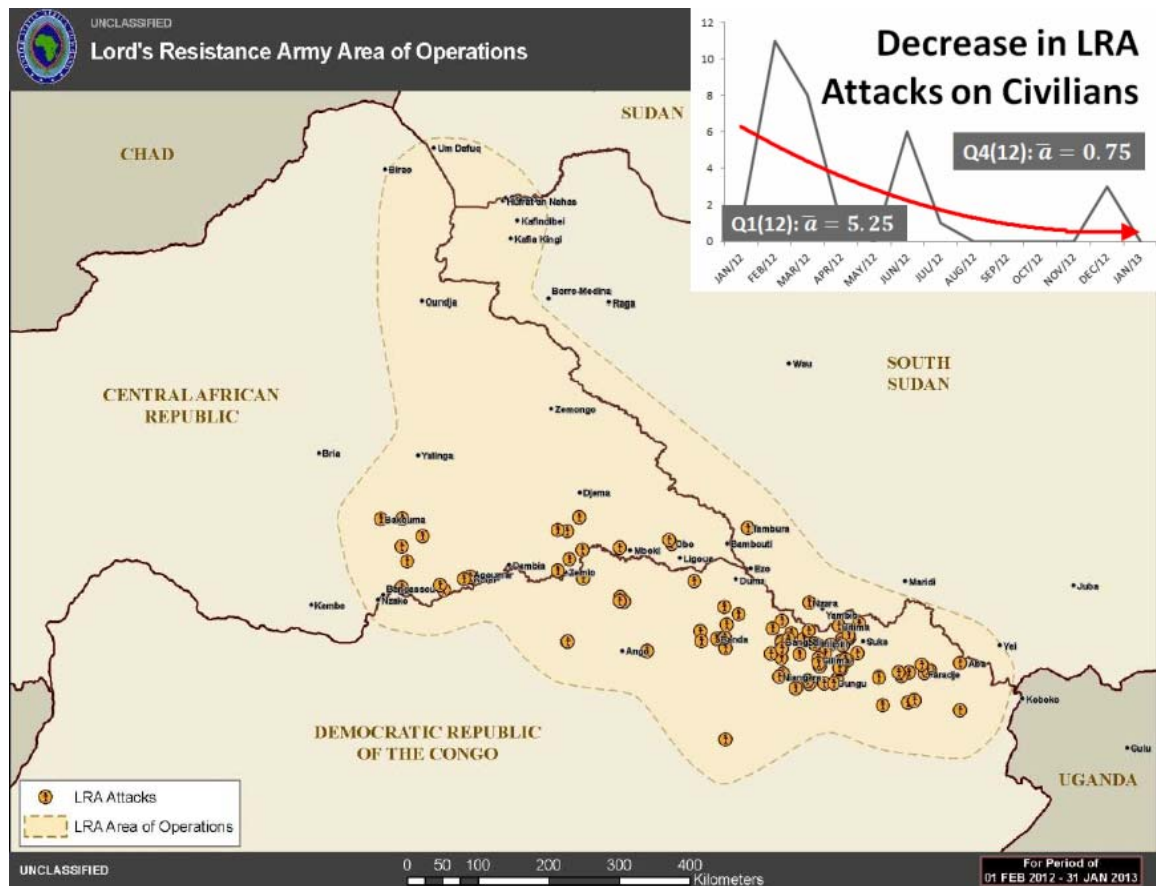
The uniqueness of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) lies in its regional focus and geographical fluidity. The rebel group first began as a religious movement with its members seeking to achieve a Uganda ruled in accordance with the Ten Commandments. With its background, the LRA sometimes is examined as an extreme Christian organization. Closer examination reveals that the movement has articulated numerous concerns about marginalization of Northern Ugandans by the Museveni government.

On March 7, 2013, General Carter Ham, United States Africa Command Commander at the time, testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee that "advice and assistance from U.S. forces enhanced the capabilities and cooperation of military forces of Uganda, South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Democratic Republic of Congo...engaged in operations to counter the Lord's Resistance Army." As evidence, General Ham related how over the past year increasing numbers of LRA members had defected, counter-LRA forces had captured key LRA leaders, and civilians in affected areas had suffered fewer LRA attacks.

Figure 1 shows a map General Ham submitted as part of his briefing, along with additional information drawn from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). The map shows a considerable decrease in the number of LRA attacks over the course of a year from January 2012 to January 2013. The change in the average number of attacks from five during the first quarter of 2012 to less than one during the last quarter is a strong indicator of progress toward policy goals outlined in the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009 (also known as Public Law 111-172, or PL 111-172). As the analysis in this report shows, simple assertions of success do not constitute effective assessments, nor do they contradict the entire picture of the factors to take into account when determining whether military actions have achieved goals ascribed by policy.

This paper presents a framework for operations assessment that builds upon existing approaches to provide a more nuanced than proscribed evaluation of military operations. It follows existing frameworks by including such features as an account for political context surrounding an operation. Identifying military action intended to realize stated policy is not enough. An important component to successful force action is adequate resourcing. Without it, operations have a lower likelihood of expected success, which may cause some military leaders to decline executing them altogether.

In addition to incorporating elements of existing approaches, the defined framework extends them by describing how situational uncertainty can complicate the interpretation of effectiveness metrics. Simply put, situational uncertainty means that more than one interpretation of an observed outcome may exist. When differing interpretations indicate diverging possibilities, which ultimately influence final assessments of the beneficial or detrimental nature of an operation, it is worthwhile to attempt to alleviate the uncertainty. When doing so, it is noteworthy to be candid regarding its presence and to include it in the final decisions. Assuming that a state of the world that biases assessment in one direction or another as a matter of convenience is unacceptable.



Source: Adapted from the “2013 AFRICOM Posture Statement” (www.africom.mil/NEWSROOM/Transcripts) and the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset or ACLED (www.acledate.com)

Figure 1. Decreased LRA Violence against Civilians

The following sections of this report describes the LRA according to its history and its arc of activities to the present—along with actions taken by Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), South Sudan, and the United States to counter the rebel group. A description of the Framework for Operations Analysis follows, which includes applying certain parts of it to the

characterization of counter-LRA operations. The report concludes with thoughts on the assessment of counter-LRA operations and possible directions for applying the framework in the future.

A. Background: The Lord's Resistance Army

The past two decades have witnessed atrocities as a result of the LRA's involvement in violent contestation with the Ugandan government. As time passes, the rebel group has been accused of brutally violating local populations in countries like the CAR, the DRC, Uganda, and South Sudan. Joseph Kony's rebel movement remains a threat to peace and stability in Northern Uganda, the DRC, South Sudan, and the CAR. These countries have experienced violence in the past and continue to experience insecurity at present. All four countries have undergone decolonization and had coups and wars, a legacy that has shaped their political and economic arenas. Every presidential regime in these countries, with the exception of the late Kabila of the DRC, came to power through violent coups.¹

In December 2003, the Ugandan government referred Joseph Kony and his senior commanders to the International Criminal Court (ICC), and in 2005, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Kony and his four senior commanders, accusing them of creating a "pattern of brutalization of civilians."² Kony participated in the peace agreements made between the government of Uganda and the LRA signed on September 2006. Since then, Northern Uganda has remained relatively safe from the LRA atrocities. The same peace talks paved the way for other peace discussions in Juba, South Sudan. The discussions, which ended in April 2008, resulted in Kony's refusal to sign the final agreement.

In its early years, the LRA restricted its criminal activities to the Acholi ethnic group in the district of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Amuru, Nowya, Agao, and Lamwo. But the group gained attention from the country when the conflict spread to include the eastern districts of Soroti, Katakwi and Palisa, reaching as far as the West Nile districts of Arua and Adjumani.³ The turning point for the Ugandan government was when the LRA expanded its activities to include those districts. Such activities renewed the government's commitment to eliminate the rebel group or participate in peace talks. The LRA has devastated the affected districts in four different countries differently, and some, like Northern Uganda, are currently undergoing the post-conflict recovery process.

¹ K. Titus and O. Joel, "Tito Okello: The President Who Was Kept on His Toes." *New Vision*, 2012. Downloaded at: www.newvision.co.ug/mobile/Detail.aspx?newsid=628582&catid=417.

² International Criminal Court, Warrant of arrest for Joseph Kony issued on 8 July 2005 as amended on 27 September 2005.

³ P. Kasajja, "The ICC Arrest Warrants for the Lord's Resistance Army Leader and the Peace Prospects for Northern Uganda," *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4 (1) (2006): 179–87.

Did the LRA have a political agenda geared toward gaining equality for its people in the north? Doom and Vlassenroot believe so, arguing that there was a political rationale in the activities of the LRA.⁴ They affirm the rebel group had a concrete political message in its first phases; however, the focus disappeared when the war became an end in itself, as opposed to being a means to achieve particular articulated objectives. Doom and Vlassenroot assessed that Joseph Kony began murdering his own people, the Acholi, when they failed to demonstrate support for him and the rebel group.⁵ The LRA previously saw itself as a force fighting for the people, per the demands made at the peace negotiations in Juba.⁶ For example, the movement demanded the disbanding and reconstitution of the Ugandan People's Defense Force to include a more national character. It is important to observe, however, that although the LRA had a political agenda, its actions of abuse against the local population makes whatever political agenda it has invalid. In the responses to the failed peace negotiations, a series of military operations were developed and implemented to counter the rebel group. These mission operations included a request for assistance from the national and international partners such as the United States.

B. Background: Counter-LRA Operations and Policy

For over two decades, military operations with the mission to capture and eliminate Joseph Kony and the LRA in the Great Lakes Region of Africa have been launched. Among these are the following military operations:

- Operation Lightning Thunder (OLT) launched in 2008.
- Operation Observant Compass, launched in 2011.

Furthermore, this year, the African Union announced its commitment to eliminate the LRA, and to this end, it deployed troops to the CAR to contribute to the efforts of hunting the LRA. Other operations such as Operation Merlin have all contributed to the efforts of eliminating the LRA. In short, there is a large interest in eliminating the LRA and its leaders, both nationally and internationally. But the question remains: With such efforts and resources, why have not Kony and the LRA as a rebel group been captured and eliminated?

This paper is concerned with OLT, particularly because this operation was the beginning of the many that followed. OLT was launched after the unsuccessful peace

⁴ R. Doom, and K. Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," *African Affairs* 98 (309) (1991): 5–36.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ J. Puijenbroek, and N. Plooijer, "How Enlightening Is the Thunder: A study on the Lord's Resistance Army in the Border Region of DR Congo, Sudan, and Uganda," Utrecht, Ikv, pax Christi, 2009, <http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/media/files/how-enlightning-is-the-thunder.pdf>.

negotiations between the Ugandan government and the LRA. The Ugandan military in collaboration with the forces from the DRC and South Sudan, supported by the United States, carried out attacks targeting the LRA central camp in Garamba Park in the DRC.

Many camps of the LRA in Garamba Park in the DRC were destroyed. A three-month ground offense followed.⁷ When OLT destroyed the LRA base camp, the fighters scattered into the DRC, South Sudan, and Central African Republic. The objectives of the operation were declared a success as it weakened the LRA chain of command, and roughly 300 civilians were rescued. In the same offensive, 150 LRA fighters were killed and some captured.⁸ In 2009, the Uganda People's Defence Force withdrew from the operation, handing it over to Armed Forces of the DRC. Since Operation Lighting Thunder, the LRA senior commanders have been captured, some have surrendered, and others have been killed.⁹

Under OLT, other series of operations were conducted. Tusker Sand, begun in 2009, is an operation where U.S. contractors participated in the search for Kony, flying surveillance aircraft to gather electronic intelligence from airspace over the LRA-affected countries. AFRICOM was interested in expanding the Tusker Sand program and sought additional aircraft and equipment to continue countering Kony and conduct counterterrorism missions. It was in the command's interest that the U.S. Senate Armed Service Committee authorized \$50 million for DOD to expand surveillance operations in the search for Kony and the LRA members.¹⁰

President Barack Obama signed PL 111-172 into law on May 24, 2010. The law calls for the United States to develop a strategy whose enactment eliminates the threat the LRA poses to communities in four African countries: Uganda, the DRC, the CAR, and South Sudan. It outlines how achieving the desired end state consists of realizing two goals. The first consists of eliminating the organization by using intelligence support, capacity building, and other means to capture or kill the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, along with other key members of the organization. Efforts to convince key leaders as well as the rank and file to defect and reintegrate into society are also important, as they effectively and symbolically reduce organizational strength. The second goal is to support development of the affected regions by enhancing provision of various public goods,

⁷ Santurino Mashereka Tumuranzye, *Factors Affecting Peace Negotiations in Resolving Armed Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa*, master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2011.

⁸ United Nations, "1,200 killed and 1,400 abducted in 10 months LRA rampage in DRC," 2009, <http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/E1ECECCD38089F94C1257693003B2C9B?opendocument>.

⁹ Voice of America, "19 LRA Members Surrender to Ugandan Forces in CAR," December 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/content/nineteen-lra-surrender-to-ugandan-forces-in-car/1808286.html>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

such as improving security, political, judicial, and economic systems through training, resourcing, and emphasizing professionalism. Other development goals include improving factors affecting health and general infrastructure. The four general precepts drawn from the law are as follows:

- Increase the protection of civilians and communities affected by the LRA.
- Apprehend (and/or kill) Joseph Kony, the leader, and other LRA senior commanders.
- Promote defections from the LRA and support the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of the remaining LRA fighters.
- Provide humanitarian relief to affected communities.

Operation Observant Compass was created in October 2011. One hundred U.S. special operations force soldiers deployed to the region to train and equip regional forces. At the same time, “War Crimes Rewards Program,” an operation with a \$5 million reward for any information leading to Kony’s capture, was announced.¹¹ Currently, under this operation, the United States is seeking to expand its support in the efforts to eliminate the LRA.

Over the years, there has been national and international interest in the LRA from the United Nations Security Council and the African Union. This collaboration has resulted in the improved coordination of efforts geared toward dismantling the rebel group. In addition, the African Union has created an African Union–led Regional Cooperation Initiative to eliminate the LRA. The operation, launched in 2012,¹² can be viewed as an example of an active partnership needed between the UN, United States, and the African Union to address security concerns causing instability in the region. Previously, the African Union had been regarded as weak, lacking organizational objectives and mission. As time passes, however, the African Union continues to collaborate with its international partners, and it is currently able to address security threats from rebel groups such as the LRA. When operations to capture Kony were suspended in the CAR, current president Michel Djotodia agreed to cooperate with the African Union in pursuit of the LRA.¹³

¹¹ Kevin Held, “Where Is Joseph Kony?” *USA Today*, September 24, 2013, accessed on November 13, 2013, <http://www.ksdk.com/news/article/399372/28/Wheres-Kony-US-lends-more-aircraft-to-aid-in-search->.

¹² Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Central Africa Lord’s Resistance Army, 2012, <http://global2p.org/countrywork/country.php?country=87>, accessed October 3 2012.

¹³ Steven Candia and agencies, “UPDF Launches Fresh Bid to Capture,” *New Vision*, October 9, 2013, <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/648048-updf-launches-fresh-bid-to-capture-kony.html>, accessed October 15, 2013.

The launch of OLT generated mixed reactions among analysts and the local populations in countries affected by the LRA. Civil society organizations were vocal in their opposition to militarism as an option to the Juba peace negotiations. In many views, the operation created an avenue through which the LRA regrouped into smaller formations to attack and abduct the locals.¹⁴ Furthermore, Kony retaliated by undertaking massive attacks against civilians in the DRC. Those interviewed in Uganda and Goma, DRC, asserted that the operation failed to meet its objectives.¹⁵ It is never easy to establish what happens in the fog of war. It is particularly challenging to measure success of an operation when the majority of the information available to the locals comes from the Uganda People's Defence Force and Armed Forces of the DRC, entities the locals have little trust in. Ugandans interviewed in Mbarara shared that the national governments have incentives to paint different pictures of events on the rebel group. Others maintained that it was a military failure as the operation was poorly executed.¹⁶

Analyzing OLT is critical to this paper and not only because OLT demonstrates the seriousness of countering the LRA after the Juba peace negotiations failed. The analysis is important if one is to understand the burgeoning development of coherent policies toward dealing with African rebel groups. There is a need to understand past operations to set them apart from the current offensive operations to ensure that past operational mistakes are not repeated. After all, OLT was the Ugandan People's Defense Force's first military offensive campaign against the LRA. After its launch, national militaries as well as the United Nations troops contributed efforts to counter the LRA.¹⁷ Given the number of lives lost already, which appears to be the result of flawed policies at the national level, it is important that a more serious approach be made to better understand the relevant factors affecting the full range of policy alternatives. These could include the prospects of negotiations.

The ultimate goal, which stresses more than eradicating the LRA, lies in the objectives of achieving security in the Great Lakes Region. Conflicts have taken shape in countries where the LRA operates; these areas have become safe havens for rebel groups, thereby threatening U.S. national security interests. The continued U.S. military efforts, along with the consolidated regional forces, may defeat the LRA. But as regional and international forces intensify the hunt for the rebel group, an operational methodology is needed to help the mission and implement the objectives outlined in the U.S. law against Kony.

¹⁴ J. Puijenbroek, and N. Plooijer, "How *Enlightening* Is the Thunder."

¹⁵ Interview with Ugandan locals and Congolese refugees in Nakivale refugee camp, Uganda, March 9, 2013.

¹⁶ Interview with Northern Uganda IDPs in Mbarara, February 23, 2013.

¹⁷ Ronald R. Atkinson, "Revisiting Operation Lightning Thunder," *The Independent*, 2009, <http://www.independent.co.ug/column/insight/1039-revisiting-operation-lightning-thunder->.

2. Framework for Operations Assessment

The Framework for Operations Assessment (FOA) described in this section is a set of prescriptive steps that support the decision-making of leaders at various levels seeking to develop and act on a comprehensive understanding of an operation's performance. For the purposes of this report, an operation is defined as "a military action or the carrying out of a strategic, operational, tactical, service, training, or administrative military mission."¹⁸ The systematic focus of the framework is on making assessments during and following an operation's execution.

The proposed framework combines elements of two existing frameworks and extends them by including perspectives and operations research methods. One contributing framework is the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Evaluation Model, which originated as a means to evaluate education policy during the 1960s. This model has since gained wide acceptance and use across a variety of governmental arenas.¹⁹ Another framework, denoted in this report as the RAND Assessment Framework (RAF),²⁰ extends a general methodology for evaluation²¹ by using it to assess the Global Train and Equip Program, or Program 1206.²² Inputs from the operations research literature have quantitative origins, as their primary foundation is logic. In all, the framework for operation assessment consists of the following six elements: Problem Definition, Intervention, Context and Intervention, Outcome, Return on Investment; and Relative Efficacy. Figure 2 represents how addressing these six framework elements helps illuminate understanding by resolving the operations assessment puzzle.

¹⁸ The Joint Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: 2010, as amended through 2013).

¹⁹ D. Stufflebeam, "Evaluation as Enlightenment for Decision-Making," an address delivered at the Working Conference on Assessment Theory, Sarasota, FL, 1968, downloaded on December 17, 2013, from ERIC, <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED048333>; D. Stufflebeam, "The Relevance of the CIPP Evaluation Model for Educational Accountability," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of School Administrators, Atlantic City, NJ, 1971, downloaded on December 17, 2013, from ERIC, <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED062385>.

²⁰ J. D. P. Moroney, J. Hogler, L. Kennedy-Boudali, and C. Paul, "How Successful Are U.S. Efforts to Build Capacity in Developing Countries? A Framework to Assess the Global Train and Equip '1206' Program" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011).

²¹ P. Rossi, M. Lipsey, and H. Freeman, *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004).

²² 1206 Program is a name relating to the fact that its basis originally stems from Section 1206 of National Defense Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2006.

Framework for Operations Assessment

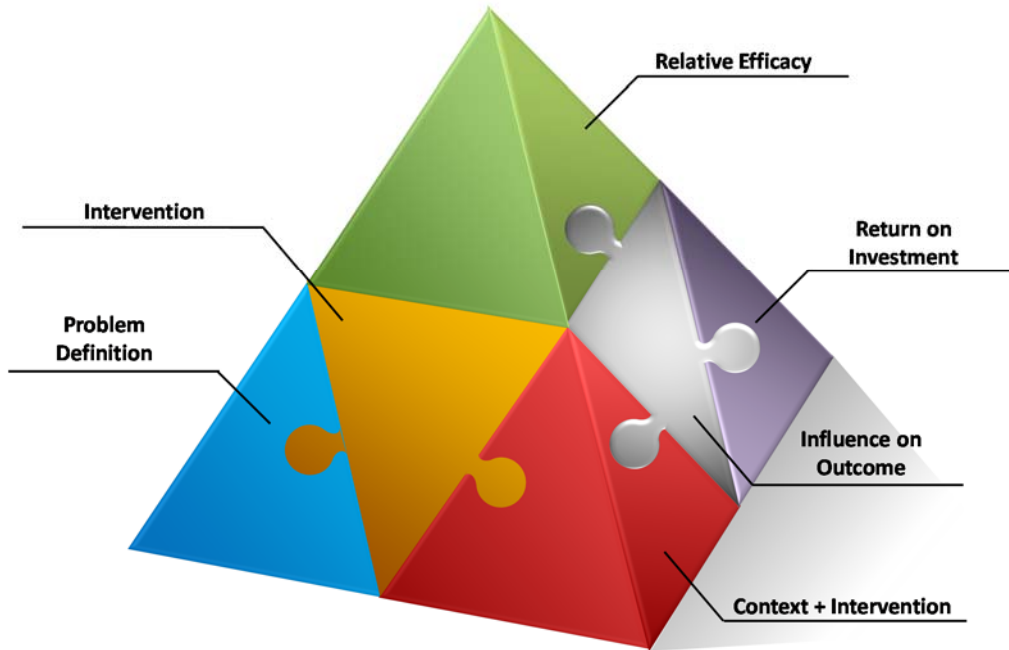


Figure 2. Solving the Operations Assessment Puzzle Using the Framework for Operations Assessment

In this report, the terms “assessment” and “evaluation” are used interchangeably. To illustrate the discussion, reference to the definitions and terminology associated with the CIPP Evaluation Model serves as a useful starting point.

Generally, *evaluation* means the provision of information through formal means, such as criteria, measurement, and statistics, to supply rational bases for making judgments, which are inherent in decision situations. To clarify this definition, it will be useful to define several key terms. A *decision* is a choice among alternatives. A *decision situation* is a set of alternatives. A *criterion* is a rule by which values are assigned to alternatives, and optimally such a rule includes the specification of variables for measurement and standards for use in judging that which is measured. *Statistics* is the science of analyzing and interpreting sets of measurements. And *measurement* is the assignment of numerals to entities according to rules, and such rules usually include the specification of sample elements, measuring devices, and conditions for administering and scoring the measuring devices. Stated simply, “*evaluation is the science of providing information for decision-making*” (emphasis added).²³

This section defines and describes each framework element, in addition to providing descriptions of potential research questions. The discussion applies the proposed

²³ D. Stufflebeam, “Evaluation as Enlightenment for Decision-Making,” 22.

framework to the description, analysis, and assessment of military operations countering the LRA.

A. Part I, Problem Definition: Description and Social Context

To assess how effective an operation has addressed a problem first requires defining the problem itself. Questions such as “*Who, what, why, and how?*” arise as they relate to a situation. The CIPP refers to this step as Context Evaluation, where the stated objective is “to define the environment where change is to occur, the environment’s unmet needs, and the problem underlying those needs”²⁴ Meanwhile, the RAF denotes this step as “need for the program [or activity],” which, it stresses, “focuses on the problem to be solved or goal to be met and identifies the population to be served and the kinds of services that might contribute to a solution. Once a needs assessment establishes that there is a problem to resolve or a policy goal worth pursuing, different solutions can be considered.”²⁵ Unlike the RAF, the FOA and CIPP frameworks separate discussions of the problem and solutions used to resolve it. The FOA takes this approach because the third step in the framework assesses relationships between identified problems and operations pursued as solutions. The framework highlights any problem or problem element without an associated operation as a “gap” in executed effort. An additional demand for the framework is that the statement of the problem and its fundamental factors be clear.

Clearly describe the problem the military operation addresses. Include an account of the social context underlying the problem by identifying *WHAT* the problem is, *WHO* is responsible for it, *WHY* they choosing to cause it, and *HOW* they are doing so.

Identifying the “what” associated with a problem means indicating the observable outcome or outcomes of interest that one or more military operations are meant to remedy. Examples of problematic outcomes are numerous and include hardship by natural disaster, threats to human security borne from insurgent and terrorist violence, damage to health from natural or manufactured pathogens, and other threats to stability and combinations therein.²⁶ Describing “who” is responsible for the problem can be

²⁴ D. Stufflebeam, “Evaluation as Enlightenment for Decision-Making,” 35.

²⁵ Moroney et al., “How Successful Are U.S. Efforts to Build Capacity in Developing Countries?” 5.

²⁶ One example of how a combination of events brought hardship to a population is Typhoon Haiyan, which struck the Philippines in November 2013, and its aftermath. Whereas landfall of the typhoon confronted the Philippines with the worst typhoon on record (over 6,000 killed), the chaos of disrupted basic services, such as water, electricity, health care, and food, led to rampant looting. No military operation existed to stop Haiyan, but the Filipino Army did eventually deploy to reestablish order in communities by gaining control of goods disbursement and the enforcement of laws (Special Broadcasting Service, “Typhoon Haiyan: One Month On,” 2013, <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/storystream/super-typhoon-haiyan-millions-risk>).

straightforward, while ultimately leading to determining the explanation for “why” the individual or group responsible is doing what it does. Establishing “why” can be difficult for a number of reasons. On one hand stated reasons could reflect attempts to have a message resonate with a specific audience (i.e., not everyone is a “true believer” in his or her expressed cause). Another is that a sincerely stated cause may transform into other reasons later. In other words, rationalization for action can be amorphous—a point that psychologists studying attitudes have grappled with for a long time.²⁷ Clearer explanations, on the other hand, tend to be available for describing “how” events occur, since doing so relies on reporting the facts about behaviors leading to an outcome instead of interpreting the motivations for an individual or group conducting them.

B. Defining the LRA Problem

The “what” associated with the LRA is clear. It constitutes a threat to human security among citizens living in the border regions of Uganda, the DRC, the CAR, and South Sudan along with their environs. Something the LRA does not currently constitute is an existential threat to the regimes of the aforementioned countries. While true, the lack of an existential threat does not mean the LRA is not damaging to national governments. Its persistence over the past 20-plus years, despite many attempts to degrade it and capture or kill Joseph Kony, attests to the weakness of countries combating it. In a region of the world where the ability of governments to project strength across a majority of their sovereign territory is constantly challenged, perceptions of a terrorist granted mystical powers obviating the will of the state do not bode well.²⁸

Joseph Kony is the official face of the LRA, but understanding “who” the army’s members are is more difficult, as very few have backgrounds similar to his. After consulting the profiles of the relatively few LRA top leaders listed on the LRA Crisis Tracker website (<http://www.lracrisistracker.com/>), it is apparent that LRA members come from all manner of backgrounds. Of the 46 profiles reviewed, 21 had enough information to approximate whether transition into the group occurred voluntarily or against their will. Of these, about 40 percent (roughly 17 percent of the total) either have been confirmed abductees or a review of the facts makes it plausible they were kidnapped. The remaining 60 percent (roughly 26 percent of the total) joined voluntarily, or have been in the organization so long their origins are unknown, while their loyalty is not in doubt. In reviewing the profiles, no clear pattern is present, but that does not mean one does not exist. What is clear is that although LRA membership and associates

²⁷ See discussions on the questionable stability of expressed attitudes in A. H. Eagly and S. Chaiken, eds., *The Psychology of Attitudes* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group/Thomson Learning, 1993).

²⁸ S. Farmar, “My Interview with Joseph Kony,” 2013, retrieved from ABC—Australia News Online, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-03-13/my-interview-with-joseph-kony/4570406>.

consists of many abductees, they do not appear to be in the majority—at least outside the rank and file.

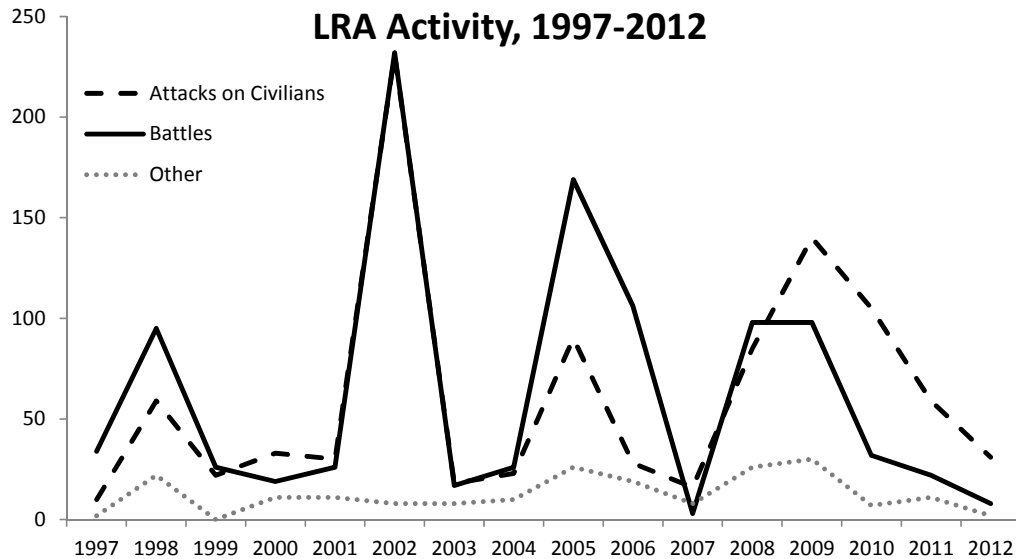
The background section in this report briefly captures reasons Joseph Kony has expressed for “why” he is leading the LRA in this supposed insurgency. Since the beginning, the fight against the Ugandan government and has been political for those who were part of the old guard and lost position after President Museveni deposed them. For them, the fight is a matter of retribution. Kony and his mother (before she died) claim a mystical connection with divine forces motivating them to act, in addition to wanting to “free” Ugandans from the Museveni government. This may be true for him and his followers, but the practices of taking on multiple wives, kidnapping other girls and forcing them to be sex slaves, and stealing whatever is within his power to grasp all likely serve as pecuniary benefits to the movement that are far less abstract.

<p>What: <i>Violence resulting in human insecurity and regional instability</i></p> <p>Who: <i>The LRA</i></p> <p>Why: <i>Insurgency against Uganda and various</i></p> <p>How: <i>Personnel + materiel and low skill + poorly resourced security sector</i></p>
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“How” the LRA continues to wage terror on communities is clear: neither national governments nor local authorities have the wherewithal and the capacity, in terms of skills and resources, to be a consistent bulwark against LRA threats. For much of the past 20 or more years, the inability (or unwillingness) of governmental actors in the region to control sovereign territory enabled the LRA to act on a simple formula of producing certain types of actions when able to combine sufficiently motivated and numbered personnel with sufficient amounts of required materiel.²⁹ Figure 3 displays

how the type and volume of LRA activities has varied considerably with time according to its own decisions as well as the actions taken against it by regional governments led by Uganda, as described in the background section and explored in greater depth next.

²⁹ Flows of small arms and light weapons that are steady in volume and relatively inexpensive to acquire describes the supply of materiel in the region. See Kennedy Agade Mkutu, *Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley: Pastoralist Conflict and Small Arms* (Indiana University Press, 2008). The ability to earn needed cash relatively easily (e.g., through the mass killing of elephants for their ivory and possibly other criminal activities) ensures the ability to purchase most of what is necessary to act.



Source: Adapted from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, or ACLED (<http://www.acleddata.com/>).

Figure 3. Varying Levels and Types of LRA Activity, 1997–2012

C. Part II, Intervention: Description and Political Context

In the United States, military operations tend to result from policy guidance (1) outlining desired end states, (2) defining acceptable actions for achieving them, and (3) ascribing resources to support said actions. The nature of these three aspects of policy is such that they have independent and interdependent elements, making it necessary to consider them individually and in relation to one another to develop a complete perspective of the political backdrop to military action.

An end state is a change to the current situation (the status quo) that political leaders hope to achieve by applying military action. These actions can range in scope (e.g., breadth of geographical area, number of implied missions, and so forth) and type,³⁰ in addition to occurring independently or in combination with other nonmilitary operations.³¹ One feature of an end state is whether it is determinate or indeterminate. A determinate end state is one that targets a problem and focuses on resolving the problem at its source. An indeterminate end state is one that resolves the results of a problem—the symptoms—rather than the source, irrespective of the rhetoric surrounding a pronouncement. Another feature of an end state is its implied timeline. Indeterminate end

³⁰ Some possible military operations include everything from humanitarian assistance disaster relief to those combating terror, narcotics, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

³¹ Examples of non-military operations include various development assistance programs sponsored by the Department of State, such as those in the areas of agriculture, education, governance, and infrastructure, among others.

states have indeterminate timelines, by definition. Determinate end states theoretically have finite timelines, but it is sometimes difficult to specify them exactly. For example, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations are determinate in that they tend to focus on supplying basic necessities to a population while simultaneously rebuilding its capacity to do so on its own. They are indeterminate in that rebuilding capacity, if left broadly stated and without specific targets (e.g., a return to previous capabilities or a return to these with additional ones), can proceed at length without a clear end in sight.

Rarely is it the case that political leaders supply military leaders with *carte blanche*, allowing them to operate as they see fit to achieve the expressed goal. Instead, policy commonly outlines the types of activities deemed acceptable and those deemed unacceptable. Such specifications do not extend downward to a delineation of acceptable and unacceptable missions (e.g., there is no selection of items from mission essential task lists). Rather, they are broader, stating, for example, whether the effort will be a direct or indirect one against the perceived problem. A *direct* activity, in the case of a determinate goal, is one where U.S. forces engage a problem at its source. An *indirect* activity in the same context is one where U.S. forces support a partnering nation and its effort to engage a problem at its source. Another feature is the type of activities U.S. forces can do, which can consist of *full range* (all kinetic plus non-kinetic activities) or *limited range* (a subset of kinetic and non-kinetic activities that includes none of a certain type). Kinetic activities are those involving combat or direct engagement that can lead to lethal outcomes. Non-kinetic activities include those that may be in support of a partner engaged in combat, such as capacity-building measures for a military force and intelligence sharing in preparation for, or in support of, a partner's kinetic mission. Clearly representing these two aspects of defined activity sharpens understanding of the exact nature of policy implementation pursued through military operations. Irrespective of the added clarity that end state and action definitions provide, they amount to no more than the outline of a great idea without the resources necessary for enacting it.

Political expressions for resourcing define the maximum amount of funds available for pursuing an end state. Sheer dollar amounts tend to convey how relatively important a targeted end state is when compared alongside dollar amounts tied to other policies. An important caveat, however, is that not all problems involve large amounts of money, so a more nuanced assessment of resourcing involves determining whether political leaders have set aside the funds deemed necessary for accomplishing the outlined job. Definitively answering this question is difficult and rarely (if ever) occurs, as mixed incentives exist on both sides of the line. Political leaders tend to want to spend the least amount of money as possible, while military leaders prefer having enough resources to pursue an objective equipped with 100 percent confidence they will achieve it. What an operation actually requires (i.e., the optimum between minimizing cost while maximizing the chance of success) tends to be somewhere between political and military extremes,

but arriving there can be time consuming if not outright challenging. When political leaders effectively declare amounts by fiat (e.g., as part of public law), military leaders are left to sort out how best to act given the budget constraint Congress and the president have presented to them.

Another important aspect of funding is the timing associated with it. For instance, have political leaders set aside a set of funds that the military may exhaust as it sees fit, or are the funds expendable only during a fixed period? Once the initial expiration date arrives, what is the review and funding protocol for the way forward? These may appear to be tedious questions unnecessary to answer, but they are important when it comes to considering the consistency and tempo of an effort over time. Problems generated in the real world tend to follow their own timelines, which can lead to the consternation of those involved in an operation when opportunities arise that forces cannot act upon because funding is pending or otherwise unavailable.³²

To sort out what the implications are for an operation given the set of political context features attached to it requires stitching them together into a sequence of influence. One means for identifying and presenting the sequence of political context draws upon decision-analysis methods frequently used in operations research, economics, sociology, and other disciplines.³³ Extensive trees represent sequences of options and consequences of those options in a manner that is useful as a means of description, in addition to providing a means for counterfactual comparison of alternative but unobserved political possibilities.³⁴ Assigning values to a sequence follows from the three context points outlined in this section. For example, the first question to answer is whether a defined end state is determinate or indeterminate, as defined relative to the problem at hand. The next question addresses the types of military action deemed acceptable. Will it be direct or indirect action? Will it be kinetic and non-kinetic, kinetic only, or non-kinetic only? Last, what is the funding situation?

Figure 4UB = upper branch; LB = lower branch; ISR = intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

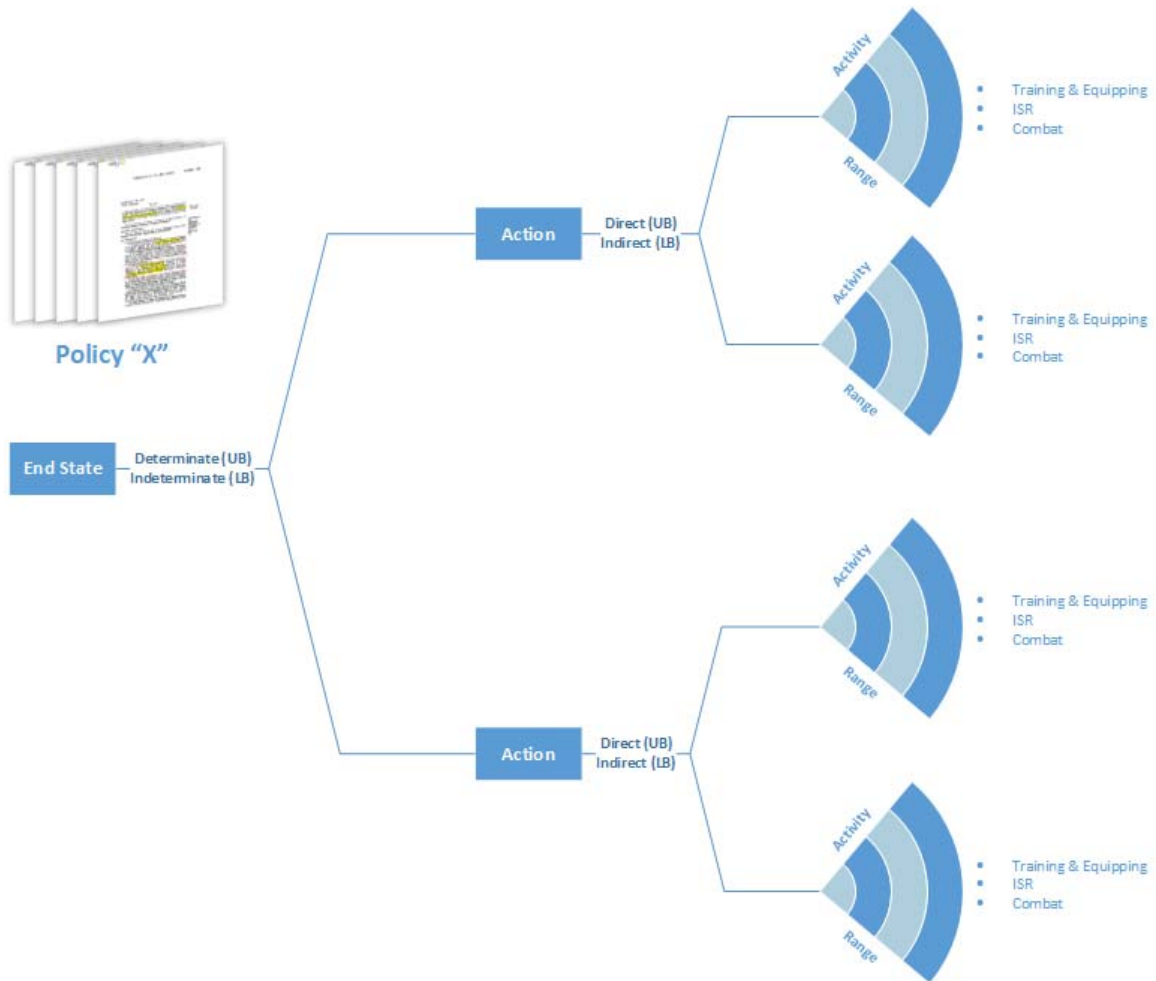
Figure 4 illustrates the basic components for two political context features of a military operation enacting Policy “X.” According to the description provided in this section, it shows that an “End State” can be *determinate* (UB = upper branch) or *indeterminate* (LB = lower branch). An “Action” feature has two parts, with the first

³² In addition to funding, actions requiring political approval tend to derail efforts of a time-sensitive nature, especially when they require a number of principals to agree.

³³ F. S. Hillier and G. J. Lieberman, *Introduction to Operations Research*, 9th ed. (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2009).

³⁴ More formal treatments of extensive trees and other methods in strategic analysis can involve the calculation of most likely outcomes from a proposed set of possible actions given an outlining of “players” (or social actors) involved combined with assumptions about their decision mechanics and preferences over possible outcomes.

describing whether it is *direct* or *indirect* and the second describing what out of a range of possible activities the policy authorizes the military to do. Is it a *full range* of activities or a *limited* one? If limited, what are the restricted activities restricted to? The options of “Combat,” “Training & Equipping,” and “ISR” are examples and not an exhaustive listing.



UB = upper branch; LB = lower branch; ISR = intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Figure 4. Example Political Context Extensive Tree

D. Applying Intervention and Political Context Descriptions to Counter-LRA Operations

The background section of this report introduced Public Law 111-172, better known as the Lord’s Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009. While the military has a role in both eliminating the LRA and assisting in the recovery of affected communities in the region, military operations pursued in support of the former are of most interest here. Phrasing found on the first page of PL 111-172 is

important, because it designates the LRA as a terrorist group on the Terrorist Exclusion list and Joseph Kony as a “specially designated terrorist.”³⁵ Making these designations associates the supporting military operations with counterterrorism and therefore provides access to lines of funding that would be otherwise unavailable.³⁶

The policy goal is to “protect civilians and eliminate the threat posed by the Lord’s Resistance Army.”³⁷ The operative phrase is *eliminate the threat*. Discussion in the problem definition section established the nature of the LRA threat. Recall that the chaos the organization sows involves fighting battles against government forces, conducting raids on towns and villages, abducting and otherwise abusing citizens, and similar activities associated with mayhem. It does this by growing and maintaining organization membership (*personnel*) and supplying them with small arms and light weapons (*materiel*). Reference to research established the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the region; hence, eliminating the threat by severing its access to materiel is not a viable option. A more feasible option is to eliminate the threat by removing its personnel, accomplished using nonlethal (e.g., coerced defections and captures) and lethal measures (e.g., battle deaths and lethal targeting). Efforts to drive down organizational membership mean removing current members and negating the incorporation of new ones through volunteerism and abduction. Such an endeavor is a *determinate goal with an indeterminate timeline*.³⁸

PL 111-172 does not afford the military the full might and muscle of the United States to eliminate the LRA. Rather, it is to consult its wealth of knowledge (e.g., experiences with manhunting and counterterrorism in Operation Enduring Freedom in

³⁵ Lord’s Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, S. 1067, 111th Cong. § 2(3).

³⁶ For example, the Global Train and Equip Program (or the 1206 Program) funds support the training and equipping (where costs of procurement do not exceed certain amounts) of Ugandan forces. Moroney et al. (“How Successful Are U.S. Efforts to Build Capacity in Developing Countries?”) suggest applying the RAF to evaluate the 1206 Program using a type of top-down or OSD-out approach at the same time they acknowledge tracking true measures of effectiveness is difficult. The FOA provides an alternative means to evaluate programs from the bottom up by beginning with the operations and other activities they support and assessing how different lines of funds contribute to specific activities. Close inspection reveals that such an approach sometimes offers the opportunity to evaluate effects through “natural experiments” that could prove useful for determining the true effects of program funds. Varying tactical configurations emerge during an operation according to amounts of funding approved for mission execution. Assessing the effect of a program under these circumstances is possible by comparing missions executed with and without the funds.

³⁷ Lord’s Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, S. 1067, 111th Cong. § Abstract.

³⁸ A significant element of indeterminacy is that a personnel level at time t depends upon the number of personnel present at time $t - 1$, subtracting the number of personnel who defected, killed, or were captured between times $t - 1$ and t , and adding the number of volunteers and abductees who joined between times $t - 1$ and t .

Afghanistan) and appropriated resources as means of support to a regional, multilateral effort that counters the LRA. The official statement of policy is as follows:

It is the policy of the United States to work with regional governments toward a comprehensive and lasting resolution to the conflict in northern Uganda and other affected areas by—

- (1) providing political, economic, military, and intelligence support for viable multilateral efforts to protect civilians from the Lord's Resistance Army, to apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield in the continued absence of a negotiated solution, and to disarm and demobilize remaining Lord's Resistance Army fighters...³⁹

Congress further mandated the president to develop a strategy for enacting the policy. Specific requirements of the plan having a strong military presence are as follows.

(b) CONTENT OF STRATEGY.—The strategy shall include the following:...

- (2) An Assessment of viable options through which the United States, working with regional governments, could help develop and support multilateral efforts to eliminate the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army.
- (3) An interagency framework to plan, coordinate, and review diplomatic, economic, intelligence, and military elements of United States policy across the region regarding the Lord's Resistance Army."⁴⁰

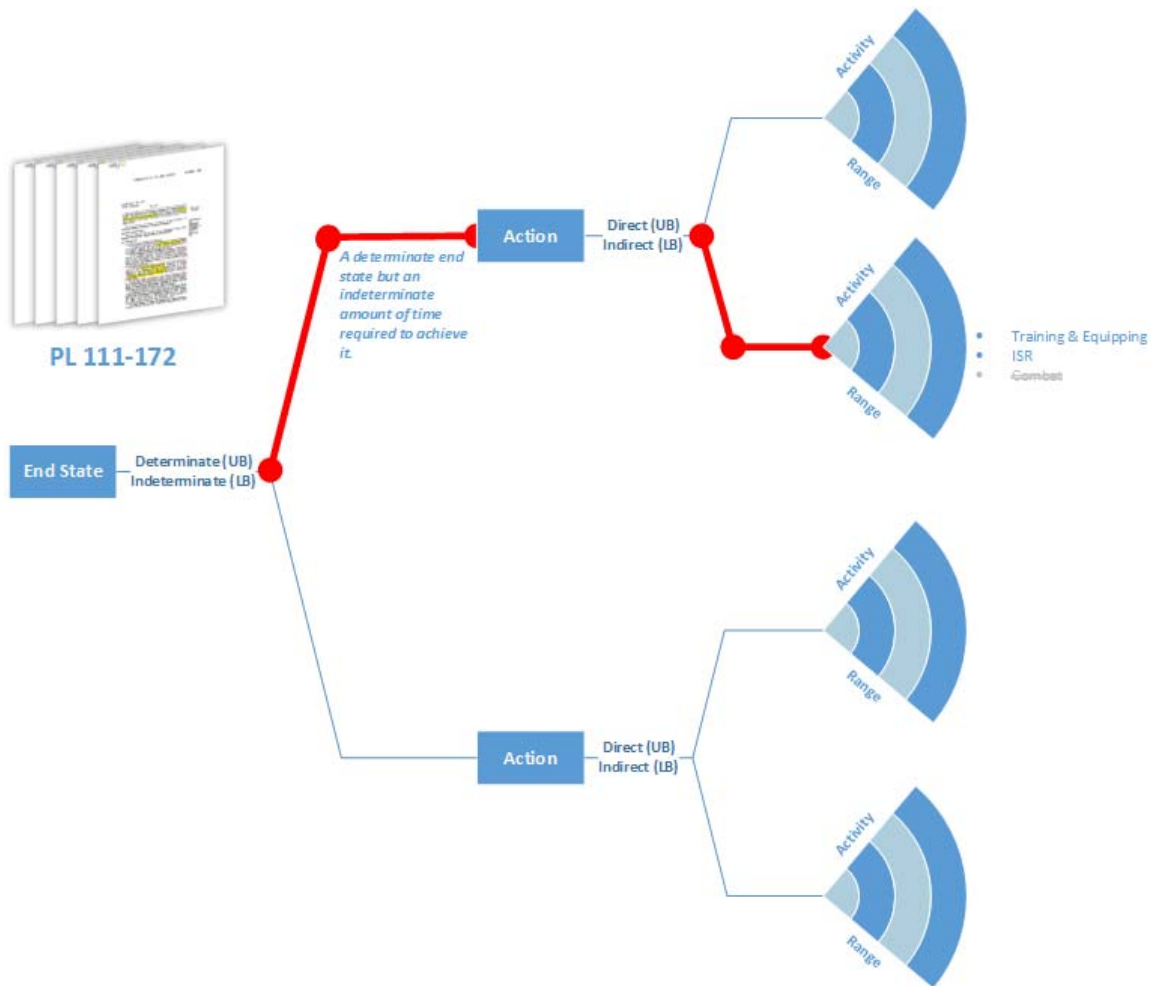
Language in PL 111-172 emphasizes that the military should have primarily a supporting role in counter-LRA operations.⁴¹ This means that action is *indirect* and restricted to a *limited range* of options. Before moving onto the next section, which discusses methods for calculating and comparing the effectiveness of activities pursued in support of counter-LRA operations, it is worthwhile to discuss what the implications are for the context surrounding it. As Figure 5 shows, it is an operation with a *determinate*

³⁹ Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, S. 1067, 111th Cong. § 3(1).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, § 4(b).

⁴¹ Military efforts have not consisted exclusively of support; however, all forms of direct engagement have required additional presidential approval, along with other forms of review.

end state but indeterminate timeline pursued in an indirect manner using a limited range of activities.⁴²



UB = upper branch; LB = lower branch; ISR = intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Figure 5. End State and Actions Contexts of the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009

E. Part III, Context + Intervention: Juxtaposing the Problem and Its Generative Factors against the Planned Intervention

Parts I–II make up the descriptive portion of the proposed framework, laying a foundation for separately understanding the problem according to its driving factors in addition to the military operations used to resolve it. Parts IV–VI collectively constitute the analytic layer used to determine how effectively military operations have been. Descriptive and analytic layers require a conceptual bridge that links problem and

⁴² Resourcing details of the operations are important but classified and therefore beyond the scope of this report.

intervention descriptions with data, information, and analytic techniques used to evaluate their efficacy. Part III combines context with intervention to describe the problem, its applied solution, and information used to determine how effective the applied solution is. It makes explicit what the problem is, the alternative forms it may take, the factors driving occurrences of these different forms, and operations undertaken to counter them. Explicitly connecting problem components with interventions renders the terms of evaluation clear. Doing so highlights information and data required to carry out the analysis, potential complications associated with the identified metrics, and the analytic gaps that will emerge as a consequence of not capturing and correctly analyzing needed information. Figure 6 provides an example illustration of a link chart connecting problem components with their alternate forms, driving factors, associated outcomes, operational activities used to counter them, and outcomes of these operations.

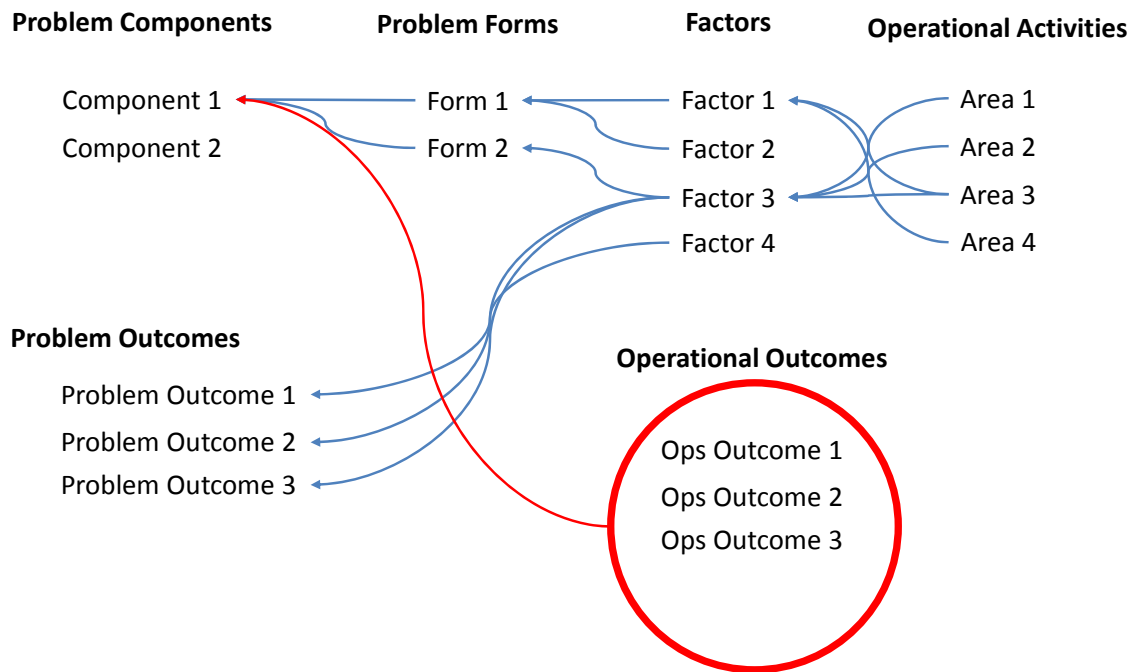


Figure 6. Notional Context + Intervention Relational Schematic

F. Applying the Context + Intervention Assessment to Counter-LRA Operations

Part I defined the LRA problem as one where the organization uses combinations of personnel and materiel to conduct battles with governmental forces, to raid towns (for the purposes of capturing supplies and abductees along with generally sowing terror), and to launch ambushes. Part II described PL 111-172, the military operations of which seek to eliminate the LRA threat through a variety of attacks on its membership. Figure 7 depicts the LRA problem, showing (1) its components (personnel and materiel); (2) the

alternative forms its components can take on (volunteers and abductees); (3) driving factors of the alternate forms (violent and separatist ideology, poverty, physical insecurity, and low partner capacity); and (4) the observed outcomes they produce (force-on-force battles with government forces, town and village raids, and ambushes). Operational activities the schematic depicts include capacity-building measures (training and equipping). It also shows the operational activities (capacity-building, equipping, assisting, and information operations).

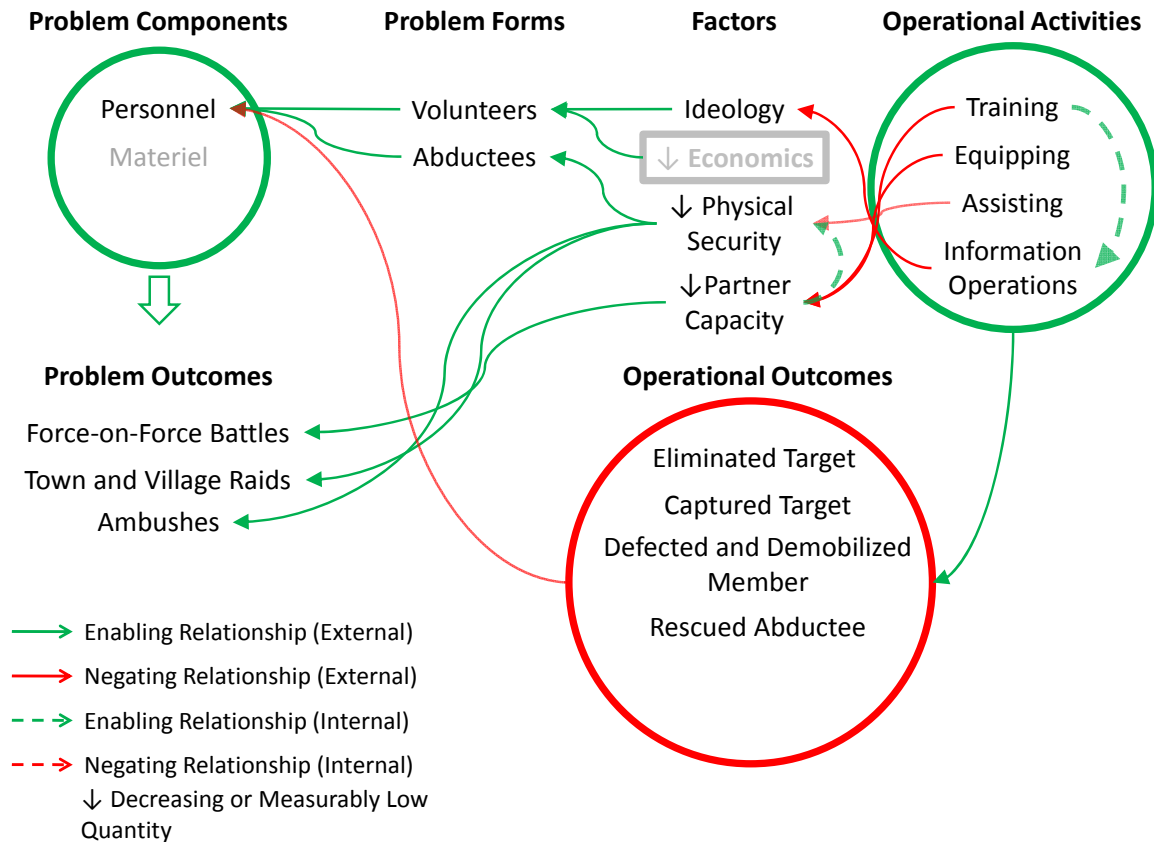


Figure 7. LRA Context + Intervention Relational Schematic

The schematic shows that at least two types of LRA members exist—those who volunteered and those who were abducted. It also shows that suspected driving forces compelling volunteers include shared ideology and low economic development. Physical insecurity among members in communities directly contributes to abductions, while the relatively low capacity (according to measures of numbers, skill, and equipment) of U.S. partners leaves areas unmonitored and thereby indirectly contributes to abductions. Physical insecurity and low partner capacity also contribute to the observed LRA behavior—battles with government forces. Physical insecurity (again, the result of low partner capacity) contributes to raids on towns and villages, along with ambushes.

Conducting information operations and training partners to conduct them helps to counter ideology. Training partners to conduct counterterrorism operations, collect and process relevant information, and develop other skillsets, combined with equipping them appropriately, provides additional improvements to partner capacity. Outcomes resulting from these efforts, which affect LRA membership size, include kinetic and non-kinetic acts on targets in addition to coerced defection and rescues of abductees before the LRA can convince them to identify with the group goals and behavior.

As a review of Figure 7 makes clear, the operational nature of U.S. military activities against the LRA amounts to a series of manhunting missions and military information support operations. What is not clear in the graphic is how the indirect nature of U.S. operations against the objective affects mission execution, success, and the interpretation of information used to track success. Even under the best of circumstances, such as when directly executing operations, the process of tracing operational outcomes to problem outcomes and therefore influences on problem components (i.e., the organizational willingness and capacity to act) is fraught with uncertainty. Doing so becomes more onerous with the addition of potentially mixed incentives among partners to whom the United States has delegated important shares of the manhunting task.

Manhunting is “the deliberate concentration of national power to find, influence, capture, or when necessary kill an individual to disrupt a human network.”⁴³ U.S. special operations forces (SOF) commonly execute these missions following the find, fix, finish, exploit, analyze, and disseminate (F3EAD) methodology,⁴⁴ which can be extremely efficient when conducted fluidly but less so when conducted under unfavorable conditions.⁴⁵ At issue is the need under indirect action to persuade partners to act (i.e., finish), while not allowing the burden of navigating intelligence-sharing protocols to bring potentially effective actions to a halt. In short, international coordination of F3EAD can compromise the ability to use “a network to fight a network,”⁴⁶ but it need not upend efforts entirely.

When political and military leaders across countries have similar preferences for operational outcomes, the indirectness of execution is less troubling. But when, as is possibly the case with countering the LRA, leaders do not share similar preferences, indirect execution can prove problematic. Without belaboring the point, one concern is the level of effort applied by partners to eliminate the LRA, who currently serve as a

⁴³ G. Crawford, *Manhunting: Counter-Network Organization for Irregular Warfare* (Hurlburt Field, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2009), 1.

⁴⁴ C. Faint and M. Harris, “F3EAD: Ops/Intel Fusion? Feeds? The SOF Targeting Process,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2012, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/f3ead-opsintel-fusion-%E2%80%9Cfeeds%E2%80%9D-the-sof-targeting-process>.

⁴⁵ S. McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York City, NY: Portfolio Publishers, 2013).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

source of funds in addition to being a useful pawn to use against regional rivals. In the case of kinetic eliminations, analysts can only hope to evaluate trends in observed organizational activities, with an emphasis on evaluating changes in them to associate with the removed member. Non-kinetic eliminations allow the possibility of interrogating detainees and collecting valuable intelligence. One way, albeit an imperfect one, to contend with a partner suspected of mixed incentives is to evaluate the value of intelligence wrought by its sources (e.g., defected and captured personnel along with human intelligence assets developed from the communities living in the areas of operation).⁴⁷ However one resolves interpretation of uncertain indicators used to judge operational results, the concluding point of this section is that doing so requires some form of judgment.

G. Parts IV–VI, Assessment Methodology: Influence on Outcome, Returns on Investment, and Relative Efficacy

This section briefly describes the main thrusts behind three cumulative, analytic techniques to apply when assessing an operation. The first step involves determining what influence an operation has had on an outcome of interest. The point of determining influence on outcome is to arrive at a point of understanding the relationship between an operational activity as an input and changes in the problem-associated outcome as an output. A complicating feature to the analysis may arise when it is nearly impossible to unequivocally detect the underlying status of a problem. For instance, it is apparent that the LRA and similar organizations require personnel and materiel to act, but what is not clear is how much of each they require, on average, to do any combination of their possible actions. Under such circumstances, it may prove useful to perform preliminary data analysis to establish these quantities. In this case, the analyst would establish how many LRA members tend to be involved in battles, raids, and ambushes. Additional data work would estimate the total number of each activity when membership is at an estimated strength and the operating environment is of a certain character (e.g., how permissive it is for the enemy). In the case of assessing counter-LRA operations, the goal is to estimate what effect removing personnel (1) in general and (2) for qualitatively different skill sets has on observed organizational behavior. If using statistical regression, such a determination is a marginal effects calculation.⁴⁸

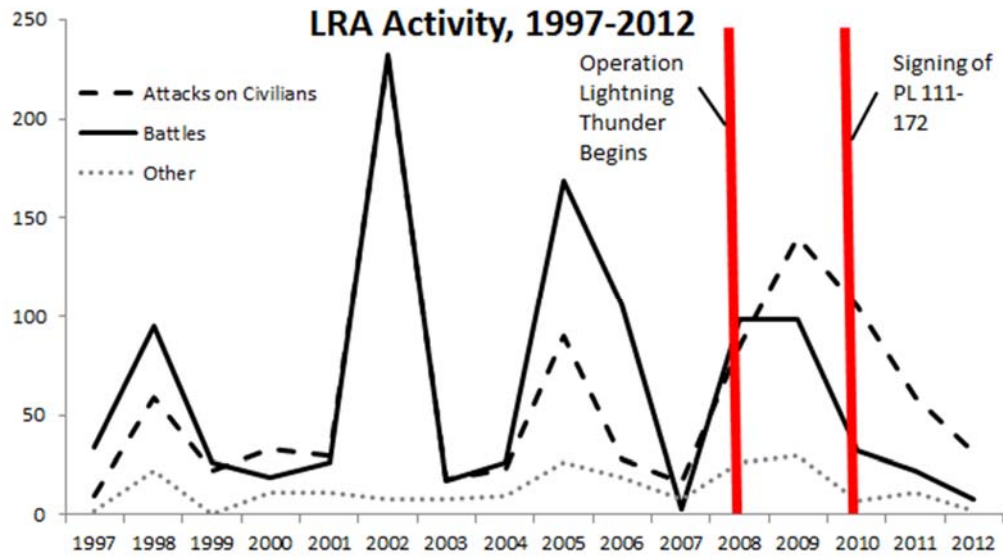
⁴⁷ Emphasis on the provision of useful intelligence is also useful from a counterintelligence standpoint. The LRA has not survived fighting against state governments for over two decades without being strategically astute. To protect against defectors that are in fact impostors, similar requirements for useful intelligence should be in place.

⁴⁸ Incorporating the observational uncertainty described in Part III amounts to allowing for different states in the data, where the analyst denotes with some probability that an observation is of Type I, with some other probability that it is of Type II, and so forth across all the possible states. Doing this for each

The next analytic step is to translate recorded action by monetizing it and denoting the dollars used to support that action, the hardest part of which may be simply collecting the data. A renewed movement toward cost-base analysis in DOD may prove helpful for these purposes. The analytic goal is to attach currency value to calculated marginal effects, as that will result in understanding how many expenditures and estimated amount of change are required. Once that is complete, it is straightforward to compare different returns on investment across operating activities and targeted outcomes. When preferred data are unavailable or unavailable in the quantities desired, creative approaches are necessary; these may include using surveys to solicit opinions, archival analysis to support comparative statics, and so forth.

A thorough assessment of LRA operations is beyond the scope of this paper, as much of the required data describing funding, military activities, and results of military activities are classified. A collection of open-source data depicted in Figure 8 is illustrative of current, easy-to-observe trends, while a deeper understanding of LRA operations remains unknown. By the time President Obama signed PL 111-172 into law, the Ugandans had already witnessed an increase in LRA attacks on civilians that peaked in 2009 and began steadily declining afterwards. Similar trends—decreases across the board—emerged regarding the number of battles fought between Ugandan and LRA forces, along with a variety of other LRA-related activities. Figure 8 reveals how the United States involved itself in a conflict already swayed in the partnering nation’s favor. Such an observation is not a criticism but merely a point of fact that makes assessing how effective the policy was more difficult. Specifically, the matter of establishing PL 111-172 as effective is not resolved by emphasizing the decreasing trends in LRA activities, because the decline preceded U.S. involvement. Alternatively, claiming the U.S. involvement as an outright failure because Joseph Kony remains free seems equally inaccurate.

observation, and then aggregating the results accordingly, would be one approach of systematically accounting for observational uncertainty.



Source: Adapted from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset or ACLED (www.acledate.com)

Figure 8. LRA Activity, 1997–2012

3. Conclusions

This study offers an alternative framework for analyzing actions taken to combat the LRA in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa. Assessing how successful these efforts have been depends upon the perspectives applied. Kony remains free, and the LRA as a terrorist organization continues to cause insecurity in the region. Thus, OLT is not yet a success. On the other hand, actions taken by the United States and, increasingly, by Uganda, combined with forces from the DRC and the African Union, have led to defections from the LRA, which points to the successes of policies outlined in the Public Law 111-172.

A more nuanced review of OLT should begin by recognizing what makes the operating environment different from others that the United States is actively engaged in (e.g., infrastructural and force-size differences, varied levels of community support, and so forth). Next is the need to move beyond simply saying the operation has yet to succeed or counting the number of LRA defections and training exercises as a measure of success. Instead, specific activities used to support achieving operational success should be identified and evaluated against the outcomes they have produced in the operational environment. While the intentions behind implementation of the Public Law 111-172 are indeed noble, the methods, if not well integrated, have the potential of yielding poor results. It is imperative that when implementing the strategic policies of Public Law 111-172, existing evaluation frameworks and continuous engagement with past interventions are combined and extended by incorporating the various perspectives and methods popular in the fields of operation research.

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14. ABSTRACT This document presents a framework for operations assessment that builds upon existing approaches to provide a more nuanced than proscribed evaluation of military operations. It follows existing frameworks by including such features as an account for political context surrounding an operation. Identifying military action intended to realize stated policy is not enough. An important component to successful force action is adequate resourcing. Without it, operations have a lower likelihood of expected success; this causes some military leaders to decline executing them all together. Criticizing an operation for failing at something it did not attempt is disingenuous. In addition to incorporating elements of existing approaches, the defined framework extends them by describing how situational uncertainty can complicate the interpretation of effectiveness metrics. Simply put, situational uncertainty means that more than one interpretation of an observed outcome may exist. When differing interpretations indicate diverging possibilities, which ultimately influence final assessments, as to the beneficial or detrimental nature of an operation, it is worthwhile to attempt to alleviate the uncertainty. When doing so, it is noteworthy to be candid regarding its presence and to include it in the final decisions. Assuming a state of the world that biases assessment in one direction or another as a matter of convenience should be unacceptable.						
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