

International Stabilization and Peacebuilding Initiative

(Concept Note – 29 January 2010 – For Circulation)

Overview

The Washington Workshop on Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Peacebuilding, held from October 26-27, 2009 at the Canadian Embassy and U.S. State Department in Washington, DC, represented an effort to improve stabilization and peacebuilding outcomes by enhancing civilian capability globally and strengthening interoperability among international actors. Following the workshop, interested bilateral and multilateral organizations launched the “International Stabilization and Peacebuilding Initiative” (or ISPI) to further these goals. Cognizant of the need to complement related efforts such as the International Network on Conflict and Fragility and the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centers, and broadly speaking to support the implementation of the *Report of the UN Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict*, distinguishing features of ISPI are likely to include: i) an informal network of government, multilateral, and international implementing partners connected through a shared commitment to improving stabilization and peacebuilding initiatives and outcomes; ii) a chief, twin focus on enhancing civilian capabilities and interoperability among member organizations; iii) an emphasis on sharing knowledge and the development of practical tools to help bilateral and multilateral organizations develop civilian capabilities for stabilization and peacebuilding; iv) a commitment to whole-of-government, whole-of-systems, and results-oriented (“3Cs”) approaches to stabilization and peacebuilding; and v) a balanced Global North-South membership and dedication to reach out to actors from the Global South engaged in international civilian efforts in conflict-affected societies. Communications for the ISPI will be facilitated through a password-protected web-platform and multiple email listservs managed through the German Center for International Peace Operations’ CivCap project.

Activities

- Establish sub-groups to promote civilian capabilities and practical steps towards comprehensive interoperability in both the headquarters and field-based operations of member organizations.
- Establish a Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice to expand civilian capabilities and deepen cooperation among the emerging international community of practitioners—from across governments, international organizations, and international implementing partner organizations—engaged in stabilization and peacebuilding issues.
- Prepare principals for dialogue with their counterparts at international meetings, in order to expand civilian capabilities and deepen cooperation and interoperability among international actors contributing to stabilization and peacebuilding.

Structures

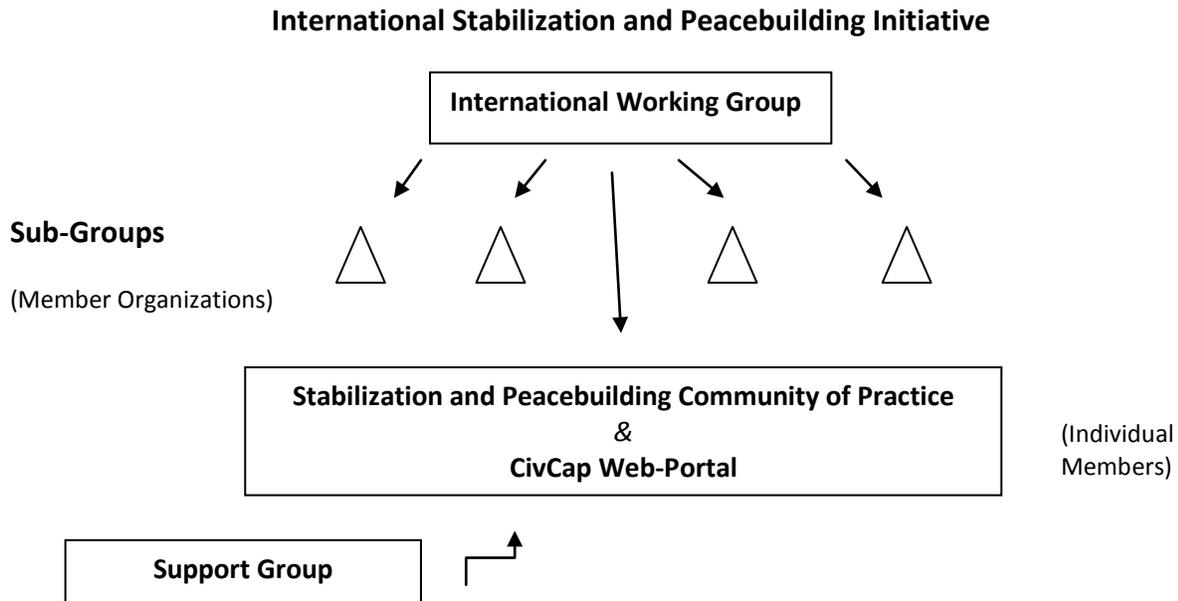
International Working Group: As the main organizational body for the International Stabilization and Peacebuilding Initiative, the International Working Group will establish key overarching objectives, including to expand civilian capabilities of member organizations and deepen interoperability among the emerging international community of practitioners engaged in stabilization and peacebuilding issues. It would oversee the formation and work of issue-specific Sub-Groups and the Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice. Membership could be open to any country or multilateral (intergovernmental) organization that contributes to stabilization and peacebuilding (with implementing partners participating through their home government). To keep the main international working group manageable (e.g., 30-40 members), participation could be limited to no more than two representatives per participating organization (whether bilateral or multilateral). Similarly, participation in the technical sub-groups could be limited to one representative per organization.

Sub-Groups: Initiated by individual country or multilateral organizations with the participation of other interested country or multilateral organizations, as well as implementing partner organizations, sub-groups related to stabilization and peacebuilding could prepare and oversee work on concrete cooperation activities on a variety of issues and functional areas, such as joint training & exercises, roster management, recruitment/retention/standards for deployment, assessment/planning/metrics in field operations, and lessons learned on interoperability. Sub-Groups are expected to include roughly between 15 and 20 technical specialists and communications will be facilitated by an e-discussion group, teleconferences, and occasional (off-line) workshops.

Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice (SP-CoP): Consisting of potentially thousands of mainly field-based practitioners, the SP-CoP will establish a professional community whose members seek to share information, experience, and facilitate international cooperation. Three major objectives could include: 1) to provide reach-back support to forward deployed practitioners in the areas of stabilization and peacebuilding, particularly through real-time responses to field-based queries and 4-6 week structured thematic discussions resulting in succinct knowledge products; (2) to serve as a multi-faceted platform for incorporating best practices and lessons learned into training, exercises, planning, and operational capabilities that support improved performance in the field, as well as basic information-sharing about relevant events and joint engagement opportunities; and (3) to serve as an important instrument for building a stabilization and peacebuilding community brand or identity, including the participation of colleagues awaiting future field deployments.

CivCap Web-Portal: A password protected on-line workspace (with the ability to upload and archive SP-CoP e-discussions and documents), which could include a rolling calendar of events (including a “blackboard” for updating events), members profile database, and a user-friendly library which includes briefing papers, policy, technical, and guidance notes, sample planning documents from the field, and archived documents such as thematic e-discussion summaries, synthesized responses to queries, and the monthly e-newsletter for the SP-CoP.

Support Group: Consisting of a few, active members of the International Working Group, the Core Group could provide regular guidance and suggestions to the CivCap Project Manager, the Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice Facilitator, and Research and Administrative Associate (see below).



Staffing Needs

In addition to the current inputs provided by ZIF (CivCap), S/CRS, SU, and START, the ISPI will require at a minimum:

Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice Facilitator: Based in Berlin at ZIF (and reporting to the CivCap Project Manager), responsibilities could include:

- **Oversee the development of the Stabilization and Peacebuilding Community of Practice (SP-CoP), including by moderating the discussions and queries within the community.**
- **Establish a rolling work program for the SP-CoP, including upcoming discussions, queries, and monthly e-newsletters and encourage members to share knowledge and contribute actively to the community.**
- **Work with bilateral, multilateral, and implementing partner organizations to identify new individual members for the SP-CoP and design a communications strategy for the SP-CoP.**

- Function as the SP-CoP's operational focal point *vis-à-vis* other stabilization and peacebuilding entities (beyond member organizations) and build links to external professional groups.
- In support of the CivCap project team, help drive the content development for the password protected on-line workspace, including the collection of documents, such as briefing papers, policy, technical, and guidance notes, and sample planning documents from the field, to upload onto the website.
- Consolidate information on lessons learnt/good practices and disseminate through the SP-CoP listservs and CivCap web-platform.

Research and Administrative Associate: Based in Washington at S/CRS, responsibilities could include:

- Providing research and information management support to the SP-CoP Community of Practice Facilitator.
- Managing a members' database, calendar of events, and other key administrative tools for ISPI.
- Providing general administrative, technical (computer), and logistical support, including in the support of future SP-CoP workshops, training, and other activities.