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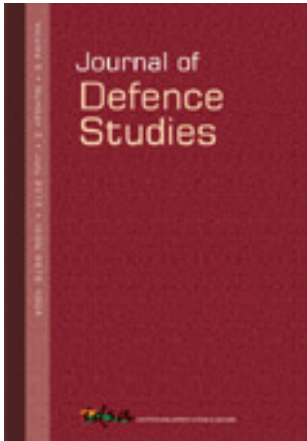
No.1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg
Delhi Cantonment, New Delhi-110010

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A Conceptual Framework for Assessing Traditional Peace Operations

A.K. Bardalai [*]

Despite decades of experience in peace operations, most United Nations (UN) operations have faced serious criticism for being unable to implement the mandate. At the same time, while the UN is in the process of establishing a clear framework for performance evaluation, as of now, there are no standard criteria to judge the performance of a peace operation. Therefore, it will be unfair to make only the peace operation missions accountable because of their inability to implement the mandate. For an objective assessment, there is a need for a conceptual framework and to standardise the success criteria. This article makes an attempt to develop a conceptual framework for evaluating peace operations. Being one of the major troop-contributing countries (TCCs), the suggested framework may help India to pitch in with its own share of contribution to the development process of the framework for performance evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

Since the launch of the first peace operation in 1948, that is, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), there have been 71 peace operations till date. Currently, there are 14 operations in place with more than 88,000 uniformed personnel from across the world.[1] Unfortunately, most of the operations have come under serious criticism because of their late deployment, weak mandate, inadequate resources and above all, ill-equipped and untrained peacekeeping troops. Given such a track record, there is now a question mark on the continued

[*] Major General A.K. Bardalai (Retd.) is an Indian Army Veteran.

relevance of United Nations (UN) peace operations; indeed, their very ability to implement the mandate is doubtful. The UN, however, understands that, ultimately, it is about performance. In this regard, during a thematic debate on peace operations on 12 September 2018, the Under-Secretary-General (USG) Jean-Pierre Lacroix confirmed to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that a clear framework of performance standard and assessment based on the performance by the military units has already been established. He further confirmed that all missions will be expected to use this framework by 2020.[2] This same resolution was adopted by the UNSC on 21 September 2018.[3] The USG, however, did not mention anything about the performance evaluation of the whole mission; but it may be safe to assume that the framework will be further developed for its application to the whole mission. Until that happens, evaluations made by academicians will continue to be based on individual perception of the concerned scholars, supplemented by knowledge gained from the study of literature on the subject. Hence, such evaluations are likely to be subjective.

In order to determine whether the peace operations have succeeded or not, a conceptual framework for evaluation of peace operations is a prerequisite. However, to develop the conceptual framework, a good comprehension of the causes for success and failure of peace operations is imperative. While a peace operation may fail because of its own weaknesses, there are numerous conceptual, organisational and conflict-specific variables (on which both the peacekeeping mission and the peacekeepers have little control) that directly impact the outcome of a peace operation. It is, however, not the intention to list out the causes of success and failures in this article.[4] The aim here is to develop a conceptual framework and identify common success criteria to evaluate the performance or effectiveness of a peace operation. The UN's effort to establish the framework for evaluation would, by now, be in an advanced stage. Hence, this is an appropriate time for India, as one of the important troop-contributing countries (TCCs), to use the suggested framework to pitch in with its own share of contribution. Towards this, it will be argued that a concept based on Diehl and Druckman's idea of goal setting, and that of pillar questions by Shields and Rangarajan, can act as a guide for the assessment of peace operation.[5] Accordingly, key or pillar questions can be framed to determine the extent to which the mission's goals have been achieved. The next section gives the goals, key questions and success criteria which can be used as a template for the assessment of the United

Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). While many scholars have tried to assess different peace operations, the case of UNIFIL has been generally neglected. With continuous conflict-like situations between some factions in Lebanon and Israel, unravelling of Syria due the internal strife and ever-present Palestinian and Israel skirmishes, UNIFIL assumes an important place in this region, necessitating a better understanding and analysis. The final section is the conclusion.

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

Before developing the conceptual framework, it will help to have a brief look at the current evaluation method followed in the UN and its weaknesses.

UN Performance Evaluation

At the UN Headquarters (HQs), Inspection and Evaluation Division (IED) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is mandated to evaluate the performance of all peace operations.[6] However, apart from generic guidelines, the *Inspection and Evaluation Manual* is silent on the detail modalities for evaluation.[7] According to K.B.S. Sirohi, an Indian Army officer who was the former section chief of IED and recently retired from UN services, even though the process of evaluation generally follows the guidelines given in the manual, much is left to the interpretation of the evaluation team.[8] Coning and Brusset have also stated, 'The main weakness of the current performance system is that it lacks a common frame of reference. Different tools serve different purposes without clearly distinguishing between their accountability, feedback on implementation and organisational learning roles.'[9] To that end, Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network (EPON), which is coordinated by Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), has done some pioneering work to assess the effectiveness of UN peace operations. Its assessment report of United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) concludes that 'UNMISS role here, in pushing for inclusivity, and in supporting more local level agreements in support of the agreement, does appear to have positively influenced the process.' It goes on to state, 'When considering how to measure the impact of the UN on the political landscape of South Sudan, a significant degree of humility about its ability to transform the system of power and authority is warranted.'[10] Thus, though the report complements UNMISS for its effort, at the same time it hints that UNMISS is required to do

much more than what it is doing. Similarly, in case of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), the report, noticing the presence of numerous political and security dilemmas, acknowledges that the mission has been able to reinvent and adapt to the changing conflict dynamics.[11] These reports have tried to assess the effectiveness across a few critical dimensions. The different dimensions for different missions have been derived from both the concept of the operations and what has been identified as critical to the effectiveness of the mission. Likewise, dimensions selected for assessment of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), whose final report is yet to be published, are different from UNMISS and MONUSCO.[12] All the three reports have generally left the conclusion of the overall performance of the missions to the readers' interpretation. In case of MINUSMA, the report has clearly concluded that since 2016, effectiveness of MINUSMA has decreased.

Nonetheless, these reports have probably provided the input for the formulation of the UN tool for performance evaluation of the whole mission. According to Ahmed, who has served in United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) as a political affairs officer:

> This proves UN responsiveness to the long-standing critique that it does not have a sufficiently robust one. It has apparently taken the benefit of several studies dwelling on an assessment framework and has a working one in place. It is now forming part of reports of the Security Council for some pilot missions. This is a positive step that needs taking further and the framework needs being kept updated.[13]

That the report of Secretary-General on UNMISS also devotes a paragraph on the performance evaluation of the military component is an indication of the UN's sincerity in this field.[14] Since all reports of the Secretary-General are drafted by the respective missions, performance evaluation of the military component of UNMISS is the reflection of the Head of the Mission of UNMISS and not the Secretary-General. To that end, audit or assessment of any organisation made by the head of the same organisation can never be honest. Keeping this aside, it is also an indication of the first step of acknowledging the need for performance evaluation at each level. Otherwise, best practices learnt over decades will be consigned to the archives of the UN. Given that, criticism on the absence of a performance assessment framework, as well as the impression that the UN continues to not have one, may not be absolutely correct.

Performance evaluation of peace operations has always been difficult because the system lacks a common reference point. Setting the parameters for conceptual framework for performance evaluation, or the benchmarks, and identification of correct indicators are the most crucial elements of the development process for establishing the framework for performance evaluation. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations–Department of Field Support (DPKO–DFS) has launched a planning toolkit that provides guidelines, checklist and templates that can be used for different plans, including strategic framework and mission's result-based budget (RBB).[15] While the planning toolkit focuses only on the planning aspects of the programme, the list of dos and don'ts and examples are good inputs for setting benchmarks for budget planning. The dos and don'ts can be applied even to set goals (derived from the mandate) by the peacekeeping missions. The list of examples of indicators to measure expected accomplishment relating to cross-cutting issues, as given in the tool 6.6.1, is something that can be appropriately modified for measuring performance of a peace operation. The toolkit also contains examples of good and bad indicators to measure progress towards expected accomplishment. Even though it provides very good guidelines and technique to measure progress for RBB and other programmes, it is not enough to use it as a framework for performance evaluation of whole of the peace operation mission. This is because there are other essential elements that must comprise the conceptual framework. This will be covered later in the article.

Effectiveness

There is no fixed definition of effectiveness.[16] In the context of UN peace operations, apart from the periodic UN Secretary-General's report to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly and the UNSC, there are no objective criteria to measure the effectiveness of any peace operation.[17] Different organisations use different measures to assess their achievements and effectiveness. For example, the corporate world, using multidimensional research instruments designed to capture consumer expectations and perceptions, looks at the shareholders' wealth and capital formation.[18] However, while measuring performance, another indicator that needs to be considered along with effectiveness is efficiency.[19] For example, an organisation may employ hundreds of individual, efficient employees, but yet it may not be able to deliver because of certain constraints that are beyond the control of the organisation. Similarly, if

the management is able to get the best out of its inefficient employees, the organisation still may be able to deliver. Therefore, while efficiency is derived from the comparison between output and input, effectiveness is the overall contribution towards achieving the goals. Mitchell explains that most non-profit leaders define organisational effectiveness as the extent to which an organisation achieves specified levels of progress, cost efficiency and goals.[20]

In case of UN peace operations, cost and resources are the inputs and the end state is the output. However, like other organisational set-ups, comparison between input and output in the case of peace operations is slightly difficult and complicated. This is because, first, the inputs that contribute towards a peace operation, like the structure of the mission, leadership, work culture of different peacekeeping contingents, communication and quick reaction capability, are difficult to be quantified. Second, in a commercial organisation, there is some kind of commonality in the workers' background, professional skill and culture and tradition. However, a peace operation comprises diverse contributors in terms of military, police and civilian peacekeepers coming from all over the world, with different work ethos, cultures and traditions, religions, standards of training and operational ethos, and that too for a short duration. Therefore, interpretation of the relationship between effectiveness and efficiency, and its application on peace operation, will vary from that of commercial organisations. For instance, despite a mission comprising capable and well-equipped peacekeepers, it still may not be effective on ground. To elaborate further, a capable quick reaction force (QRF) may not be able to take control of a sensitive situation on time because of the adverse effect of the underdeveloped terrain on its mobility. On the other hand, in spite of a good communication network, an inefficient QRF may not be effective to control the same situation. Hence, in case of the former, labelling the peace operation as ineffective will be unfair. The commonality between the effectiveness of a commercial organisation and UN peace operation is that both can be judged from their achievement of set targets or goals. At the same time, the multiple variables make it difficult to measure the effectiveness of a peace operation in achieving its goals. Therefore, standardisation of the assessment criteria for peace operations, though imperative, cannot be precise for its use as a template.

Framework for Evaluation

Defining success criteria for peace operations has not been easy. Scholars as well as practitioners are at variance in their opinions on how to assess peace operations. From studies of peace operations from 1962 to 1992, it can be stated that defining the criteria for determining whether a peace operation is a success or not is complex and goes beyond the traditional measures of military success, like destroying enemy formations or capturing an objective (it could be seizing a piece of terrain, which has vital military importance to the enemy). Majority of the works lack any indicator or specification to assess peacekeeping.[21] Some of the scholars have reached their conclusion on success or failure without identifying the criteria for assessment to develop such a concept.[22] A few authors, while trying to develop success criteria, have ended up only in identifying some basic minimum criteria that a successful peace operation must meet. The conclusion that these authors have arrived at after analysing a few peace operations is generally in consonance with the essential factors for a successful peace operation, as listed in the 'Capstone Doctrine':[23]

1. Strict adherence to the principles of peacekeeping, that is, consent, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence.
2. Local population perceive the peace operation as legitimate and credible.
3. Emphasis on national and local ownership's contribution for a sustainable peace.
4. Presence of genuine commitment by the stakeholders for the peace process to move forward.
5. There must be some hope to recover the peace.
6. The peace operation has a clear, credible and achievable mandate; well-trained and well-equipped peacekeepers; a strong logistical system; and adequate financial support.
7. Presence of a clearly visible unity of purpose within the members of the UNSC in support of the UN peace operations.
8. Host country's commitment for unhindered freedom of movement and actions by the members of the UN peace operation.
9. Both the neighbouring countries and regional actors actively engage in the peace process.

10. The mission adopts an integrated operational approach by effectively coordinating with the host nation as well as other actors on the ground.
11. Peacekeepers maintain a high standard of professionalism and good conduct, and are sensitive and respectful to the local culture and tradition.

The given list is not exhaustive. For instance, citing General Cosgrove's contribution to the success of the UN operation in East Timor (smooth transition of initial multinational peace operation—International Force East Timor [INTERFRET]—to the establishment of United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor [UNTAET]), Ballard has highlighted that the selection of individuals or units and the person to lead these personnel is one of the most critical factors in determining the outcome of the operation.[24] Indeed, because of the diversity of opinions expressed by the analysts, it is unlikely that a common analytical framework can guide all evaluations. That notwithstanding, by emphasising different aspects of the peace process, it should, be still possible to get a better understanding of the diverse challenges and opportunities of peacekeeping.[25] Even though the all-encompassing work in this field perhaps has been done by Bratt and Diehl and Druckman, there is an absence of any standard criteria.[26] For any framework for evaluation to be logical and coherent, a few other essential factors that can influence the development of the concept for evaluation should also be considered. These are discussed next.

Factors Affecting Evaluation Framework

Mandate

The easiest way to evaluate a peace operation possibly would be to develop a scorecard and tick the boxes against the mandated tasks of the mission.[27] There are, however, certain extra mandated activities, such as infrastructure development, provision of medical care, better education and humanitarian aid, that contribute immensely towards the peace process. Lack of these would lead to dissatisfaction and may even compel a section of the populace to pick up arms and rebel against the administration. For the local population, unless their basic rights are guaranteed, it cannot be said that a sustainable peace has been restored at the end of the mission.[28] Therefore, answers to simple questions on mandate implementation will not be enough to comment on the

effectiveness of a peace operation. Effectiveness of peace operations means much more than mandate implementation. That notwithstanding, measuring performance of peace operations that is based on the end state of the mission, which is derived directly from the mandate, will produce results which are likely to be fairer than any other method.[29]

In addition, while checking whether a peace operation has fulfilled its specific mandate, the contribution of peacekeeping to bigger issues, such as limiting violent conflict, reduction of human suffering, preventing the spread of conflict and promoting conflict resolution, should also be factored into the process of evaluation. This is because unless violent conflicts that lead to human sufferings are limited, a peace operation cannot be called a success regardless of whether these are specifically mandated or not. Using these criteria, Pushkina assessed 17 peace operations between 1945 and 1998. These missions have been classified as successful, partially successful and failed. The UNIFIL fell in the category of failed missions.[30]

Measures of Effectiveness

Another approach to measure the performance is examining peace operations at three different levels, namely, strategic, operational and tactical. At strategic level, it will be difficult to quantify such performances. However, at operational and tactical levels, measuring the outcome of the mandate implementation is possible by: developing a comprehensive plan that synchronises efforts of all the major players; identification of key measures of effectiveness that measure all aspects of the mission; and effective management and control of major events.[31] List of indicators or 'Measures of Effectiveness' (MoE) used to assess an operation in the field include measures of security, humanitarian relief operations, governmental, infrastructure, public health and agricultural and economic activities.[32] All these indicators, however, may not be applicable to peace operations across the board. For instance, details of humanitarian relief, restoration of governmental machinery, development of infrastructures and public health measures are the actions taken by the international community to rebuild a society more in the context of intra-state conflicts and less in inter-state conflicts. However, some of the suggested security measures, such as weekly/monthly incidents of hostile fire, violent crimes, number of patrols by the peacekeeping troops and total number of illegal weapons collected, will be applicable to traditional peace operations like UNIFIL.

Operational Outcome

While operational outcome/success is measured in terms of mandate implementation, performance of the peace operation should also be judged by its ability to facilitate conflict management and limitation of casualties. Even though rarely specified in the mandate, these are important inputs to evaluate the overall impact of the operation in the peace process.[33] Some of the criteria such as limitation of casualties, however, can be contested because combatant and civilian casualties due to absence of timely humanitarian intervention may not be the correct input for assessing peace operations.[34] Yet, combatant and civilian casualties, either directly due to the conflict or indirectly because of lack of timely humanitarian intervention, would provide a better input to the process of assessment than by keeping it generic, like limiting the armed conflict.[35] The logic for using 'limiting casualties' however makes sense in case of UNIFIL. The UNIFIL is a traditional peace operation and the local population has suffered due to hostilities among the Israeli forces and some of the Lebanese factions, or because of internal sectarian conflicts inside Lebanon.[36] Unlike most of the traditional peace operations, UNIFIL is not located in a neutral territory but inside Lebanon. This makes UNIFIL different from other missions, making its relations with the local population very crucial. For example, during the 2006 war, Israel used cluster bombs in Lebanon. As per *Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor*, by the end of 2012, there had been at least 3,683 mine casualties (903 killed; 2,780 injured).[37] Therefore, limiting both combatant and civilian casualties and the way the operation is perceived by the local population in terms of its contribution to bring back peace to the conflict zone become important indicators to evaluate UNIFIL.

Based on this theory and combined with development of criteria by Browne and Diehl, Bratt studied 39 former peace operations and developed five success criteria, which can also be called key questions:[38]

1. Was the mandate fulfilled?
2. Did the operation lead to resolution of the underlying dispute of the conflict?
3. Did the operation contribute towards maintenance of international peace and security?
4. Was the operation able to limit armed conflict?
5. Did the operation facilitate conflict resolution?

In one of the very recent studies to assess the effectiveness of the UNMISS, EPON applied a similar framework for their research in South Sudan.[39]

Conflict-specific Variables

These criterion questions, however, should not be answered in a vacuum but in the context of factors which are beyond the control of both the mission and the peacekeepers, but affect the performance of UN peace operations. To cite an example, as per the mandate of MONUSCO, Article 31 of Resolution 2409 explains that MONUSCO's priorities are: (i) protecting civilians; and (ii) supporting the implementation of the 31 December 2016 agreement to hold elections. The critical question that must be addressed now is: has MONUSCO been able to implement the mandate? On the one hand, the country did hold elections, which fulfils one of the mandate's objectives, even though the polls were controversial to say the least. In fact, immediately after the election results were made public, the population took to the streets and violence recurred. On the other hand, there was also widespread evidence of peacekeepers' involvement in sexual abuse, human rights violations, corruption and failing to protect Congolese civilians.

The peace process may also fall apart leading to resumption of conflict due an inconclusive peace agreement, dissention within the UNSC and lack of serious commitment on part of contributing nations to send in well-trained and well-equipped troops. Rwanda is a clear example of such a paradox. To fulfil its mandate, General Dallaire, the Force Commander (FC), felt that the ideal option was 5,500 troops, but he had to manage with a small force of 2,600 troops.[40] Rwanda is also an example of the inability of the decision makers at the UNSC to identify the actual problem. Even though United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was deployed post signing of the Arusha Peace Agreement of 1993, neither the Security Council nor the Secretariat was aware of the emergence of a Hutu power centre that was against any political reconciliation with the Tutsis who ruled the Hutus in spite of being the minority. It needed only an incident like death of the Rwandan President in an air crash on 6 April 1994 to trigger the violence that took more than 800,000 innocent lives. The weakness in UNAMIR's structure, however, is not indicative of lack of will on part of the entire mission. Without making virtue of the inadequacy, the FC and a few other observers did not spare any effort when it came to saving

innocent Tutsis and moderate Hutus. It is a different matter that even if UNAMIR had been provided the full strength of 5,500 peacekeeping soldiers, it might not have been able to control the genocide. But with a larger strength, there were reasonable chances of saving at least a few hundreds, if not thousands, of lives.

Such variables, which will differ depending on the type of the conflict, can range anything from the role of parties to the conflict, existence of a comprehensive settlement agreement, the role of five permanent members of the UNSC, the role of the regional powers, maintenance of the basic principles of peacekeeping, including consent, impartiality and neutrality, use of force, decision-making process, mandate, role of the UN Secretary-General, selection of mission leader and the peacekeepers, to planning for the operation.[41]

Goal Setting

Success or failure is directly proportional to the objectives or goals that have been set and what has been achieved. Therefore, answering the key questions, which are based on the overall aim of the peace operation, seems to be a practical method to assess a peace operation. Accordingly, the key questions and the sub-questions should be framed based on the peace operation's ability/or the lack of it to achieve its goals. Setting a goal for performance evaluation has its own benefits. Amongst others, it enhances the knowledge base and helps to take on additional responsibility. It is also a simple and easy method to plan and implement a project.

Therefore, the evaluation process should begin by identification of these goals. Out of these, some goals will be common to all peace operations and others will be mission specific.[42] The UN peace operations are given a mandate based on which the mission structure is built. Thus, goals for the missions should be derived from the mandate. However, in addition to the mandates being a product of political manipulations, while broad objectives of the mandate are laid down, the essential part of the 'how' remains to be defined, resulting in lack of clarity in the instructions on the method of mandate implementation. It is difficult to state if such lack of clarity is for either giving some kind of latitude or an incentive to the main disputants in return of their consent to the peace agreement. It could also be for providing flexibility to the commanders on the ground to use the most appropriate method to implement the mandate.[43] No matter what may be the actual reason,

the concerned peacekeepers will have to be adequately geared in terms of operational capability, with reasonable clarity in the instruction for mandate implementation. Therefore, simply by asking questions whether these goals were accomplished or not would not provide a true assessment of any peace operation. An objective as given out in the mandate, but without a framework (outlining the mode for implementation), will have implications for all components of the mission and the affected elements of the host nation. Accordingly, in order to make an objective assessment, achievement of the peace operations will have to be analysed in the context of the challenges for fulfilling the goals.

In all peace operations, diffusing a conflict situation and bringing back normalcy are the common goals of stakeholders in the conflict zone. This, however, cannot be achieved unless a secure situation is created by the uniformed peacekeepers for the political process to move ahead and for uninterrupted work by other allied agencies to rebuild the society. Given this as a precondition that is common to all peace operations, the five common goals, which can be called 'core goals', are: reduction of violence; conflict management; conflict resolution; relationship with local population; and organisational values.[44]

In addition, there are also certain mission-specific tasks for which separate goals will have to be formulated. For instance, one of the tasks of UNIFIL is to restore international peace and security as per the UNSC resolutions of 1978, which still holds good.[45] This is an ambitious goal, the like of which is rather impractical for any peace operation to achieve. Mission leaders, therefore, must exercise caution in setting ambitious goals, which are difficult to achieve and likely to result in a negative judgement. Similarly, a goal such as 'to complete disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration' (DDR), without adequate support in terms of strategy and adequate funding, would be a goal set for failure even before it is attempted. Although set within the framework of organisational vision, mission and principles or strategies to support organisation advancement, such a method of assessing a peace operation based on the goals is not completely without problems. For instance, first, the goals may not be related to each other and second, there will be more than one question related to each goal and equal or a greater number of measures of progress. Further, all indicators of the measures of progress may not always be available. Under these circumstances, it will be more practical to pass judgement on the success and failure of the

operation after weighing the overall benefits of the operation against the limitations under which an operation has to perform.

Base Line for Assessment

The framework for evaluation, however, should not be limited only by goal setting consideration of conflict-specific variables and basic criteria for success. It should be comprehensive and part of the discourse that includes other factors with direct bearing on the assessment. Three such major variables are: stakeholders and success for whom; time perspective; and quantified or qualitative.[46] Putting it differently, these can be termed as essential baselines for assessment, and hence must be part of the overall framework for evaluation.

1. *Stakeholders and Success for Whom:* Being the worst sufferers, civilian population in the conflict zone is the primary stakeholder in almost every peace process. In addition, there will be many others who will have a stake in the peace process. Some of the common ones are: national, regional and local authorities in the host state; members of the peace operations (both uniformed and civilian); international and regional organisations; and UN and non-UN agencies, including NGOs and other experts who may be involved in work in the conflict zone. All stakeholders will have their own perception of success depending on their national or organisational motives. Accordingly, answers to the same key questions will vary when seen from different perspectives. For an illustration, those having the power to influence the opinion of the international community, or for that matter even the nations which do not participate in the operation with uniformed peacekeepers, may have only strategic interests in supporting a peace operation because they could benefit from the victory of one or more parties to the conflict. To this end, permanent members of the UNSC are the major stakeholders in the conflict zone. As the distance from their homeland increases, their interests are driven more by economic gain and less by security concern. For example, on the one hand, the Middle East is a major security concern to the European nations. On the other hand, it is the centre of envy for the entire world for its oil deposits. Similarly, both the Great Lake regions and South Sudan are famous for rich mineral resources and oil respectively. At least three permanent members' hold on the unofficial tradition of 'pen-holder' system

in drafting the UNSC resolution is indicative of the extent to which the outcome of the conflict can be shaped and reshaped by powerful nations. Consequently, trajectory of the conflict and peace operations in the conflict zone are guided less by ethics and more by selfish motives. Such nations, therefore, tend to judge a mission's performance from the narrow prism of the peace operation's inability/failure to prevent the conflict from recurring. The local population, who suffer the most, will judge the performance from how and when their misery can come to an end. For example, since the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) failed to save thousands of innocent lives in Bosnia, the mission was a failure for the Bosnian Muslims, even though it was not the specific mandate of the peace operation. Motivation of each of the stakeholders will be steered by their selfishness. However, in case of the local population, the motivation is simply to be able to survive the conflict and move ahead with their lives. Therefore, opinion of this section of the stakeholders will be more impartial than the rest.

2. *Time Perspective:* The span of the assessment period should be compared to other peace operations, time of authorisation and deployment of the peace operation and characterisation of the peace operation, such as its structure, standard of training of the peacekeepers, strategy and mandate. The type of the peace operation—whether traditional or peace enforcement operation—is the other factor that will have a major effect on the evaluation. For example, multiple options would be available to decide the timing of the assessment. If the time span of the assessment covers the period which begins with the peak of the violence until the ceasefire, it is likely to indicate a success. On the other hand, if the period covered is from the time of ceasefire to end of the mission, it is likely to indicate a low success rate. At the same time, an assessment made during the course of an operation would help to make the necessary mid-course corrections, if required. Similarly, an assessment made at the end of the operation would help to get a clearer perspective of the long-term impact on the peace process. Correspondingly, if the gap between the end of the operation and the time of assessment is too long, it will be difficult to get a correct perspective.

3.   *Quantitative or Qualitative:* Both are methods that are used for research design, but the consideration of either of the two will be determined by who is being assessed. For example, in commercial organisations whose performance is judged by their market value, that is, how much profit has been made, the input for assessment will be largely quantitative. Even for a classical military operation whose success or failure will be umpired by achievement of the military goals, it will be quantitative. However, the mandate of peace operations is far more complex, relatively more abstract and its achievements are difficult to quantify. Even then, statistics like increase or reduction of civilian casualties, frequency of cross-border firing or military incidents will generally indicate the degree of effective control, or the lack of it, of any peace operation in the conflict zone. Therefore, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches would be better suited for a more objective assessment of peace operations.

Both the conflict-specific variables and base line for assessment are important and inseparable inputs for evaluation of a peace operation. While the former affects the outcome of the peace operation, the later influences the evaluation. Deciding the baseline for assessment is a challenge and will need a fine and unbiased judgement.

Success Criteria

There are two different but closely associated fundamentals that should be at the centre of any basic framework for evaluation. At the conceptual level, the interrelation between the indicators for success and failure and the basic conditions to be met for a peace operation to be successful are is interlinked. The second fundamental is setting the mission objectives and goals at the operational level. These goals will be both political and operational. Framing key questions and determining whether these goals have been achieved or not will have to be examined in the context of meeting the basic conditions for a successful peace operation. A few important core goals that would be useful to evaluate a peace operation are:

1. mandate implementation;
2. contribution towards conflict resolution;
3. contribution towards conflict management;
4. limiting causalities;

5. mitigating situations that have the potential to trigger a bigger conflict between warring factions/states;
6. effect on the local population;
7. restoration of law and order;
8. return of normal functioning of the civil administration;
9. state of disarmament and demobilisation of armed group/groups; and
10. freedom of movement of the peacekeepers.

The next category of goals is mission specific, which will have to be derived from the core goals as applicable to the mission. For example, tasks such as protection of civilians in the context of an intra-state conflict will be implied, even though in some cases such a task is clearly specified. Accordingly, a peace operation like UNMISS, which is always under criticism for failing to protect innocent civilians' lives, will be generally judged for limiting civilian casualties. At the same time, it will not be applicable to a traditional peace operation like UNIFIL because it is located inside Lebanese territory. Most of the casualties in Lebanon and Israel were, and would continue to be, the victims of collateral damages as a result of cross-border violence between the two countries. Thus, under the core goal of 'limiting casualties', the mission-specific goal for a traditional mission like UNIFIL could be *reduction of civilian casualties as a result of cross-border violence*. Each goal should be followed by a key question and list of indicators. Answers to these questions, when analysed in the context of conflict-specific variables, presence/absence of the basic criteria for a successful peace operation and different base lines for assessment, would help to make an objective assessment of the performance of the peace operation.

Assessment Report

Defining success and identifying criteria for assessment of peace operations has never been easy. Further, no matter howsoever it is tried and what template is used, there will always be some amount of subjectivity in the assessment. Therefore, it will not be appropriate for a rigid adherence to any format. What is important, however, is that the report should be comprehensive and make a coherent argument in support of the assessment. After spelling out the key elements of the established framework that have been considered at the beginning of the report, performance evaluation should be done across the critical dimensions as applicable to the mission. For example, in case of a peace operation

deployed in a high-intensity intra-state conflict, analysis of dimensions like incidence of intra-party clashes, number of civilian casualties and progress on DDR should be considered to assess the performance. Similarly, for a traditional peace operation like UNIFIL, the number of incidents along the Blue Line (BL),[47] number of cross-border firing and landmine causalities will be the critical dimensions for evaluation. Essentially, these dimensions are the key questions to determine the progress of the key goals of the mission. Such analysis must take into account the variables that can impact the output and corroborated from both primary and secondary sources. In order to derive full benefit of the evaluation, assessment should also end with the major weaknesses and pointed recommendations for corrections if required. A lot will depend on the ingenuity of those who are responsible to assess the performance. Suggesting a fixed format, hence, has been deliberately avoided. In the following section, as an example, the case of UNIFIL has been used to highlight a few essentials for establishing the framework for evaluation for a traditional peace operation. This can be appropriately modified for performance evaluation of even complex intra-state conflicts.

UNIFIL: A Case Study

Applying this concept, it is possible to develop and generate a few essentials that can form the core of the framework for evaluation of UNIFIL:

1. *Key Goals:* The key goals for UNIFIL derived from the mandate are:
    (i) Restoration of peace and security.
    (ii) Creating conditions to prevent resumption of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel.
    (iii) Ensuring south Lebanon is free of armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Lebanese government and the UNIFIL.
    (iv) Assistance to Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in fulfilling its security responsibilities.
    (v) Ensure support from the local population.
    (vi) Maintain operational effectiveness of the mission.
2. *Key Question:* The key question to ask against a key goal like 'restoration of peace and security' will be: 'is violence still present?' Some of the indicators to find an answer to the key questions can be: what is the duration without clashes/war; details of face-offs of the rival factions; and cross-border shooting

in case of a traditional peace operation. While statistical data will be available to support answers to some of the questions, analysis of other responses will have to be qualitative. For instance, one of the tasks of UNIFIL is to 'Assist LAF in establishing an area between the Litani River and the Blue Line (BL), free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL'.[48] Such a task can never be quantified because there is no parameter to judge if it is UNIFIL which has failed to assist the LAF or it is the LAF that has failed to fulfil its part of the mandate despite sincere commitment and best efforts on the part of UNIFIL. Hence, quantitative criteria will not be the appropriate for an evaluation. Criteria for such a task will perforce have to be qualitative, based on the stakeholders' perceptions of success.

3. *Stakeholders:* There are far too many stakeholders in UNFIL with varying interests. It is not only Israel, Lebanon, Hezbollah, Palestinian refugees or the outside powers that take sides. It is so complicated that an apt account of the complexity was given by Marrack Goulding, the then USG of UN in charge of peacekeeping, in his book, *Peacemonger.* To understand it well, a word-by-word description is necessary. He stated:

> Think of Lebanon as a cockpit. But it's not a normal cockpit. The fights are not single combats between two cocks; they are fights between teams of cocks, in ever-changing alliances. And the floor of the cockpit is strewn with brightly coloured beads. They are called 'assets' and they come in various colours—blue for political assets, yellow for economic assets, khaki for strategic assets, white for ideological and religious assets, red for criminal assets. Inside the cockpit there are several resident teams of cocks. The four principal ones are the Maronite Christians, the Sunni Muslims, the Shiite Muslims and the Druze, a heretical Islamic sect. There are other lesser teams of cocks. Each team includes some fighting cocks, called 'militias.' The teams fight with each other to accumulate and control as many of the assets as possible. Alliances between teams are frequently formed and frequently dissolved. Sometimes, teams fight within themselves and split into two or more smaller teams. The fights are violent and cruel; many team leaders are assassinated, sometimes by members of their own team. Around the cockpit there are several gamblers. The principal ones are Israel, Syria, Iran

and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Lesser ones are Egypt, Iraq and Jordan. Like the resident teams, the gamblers' objective is to accumulate and control assets in the Lebanese cockpit. Three of them (Israel, Syria and PLO) have, or have had, their own fighting cocks in the cockpit. But, all of them also hire the services of *one or more of the resident teams, as does Iran and the lesser gamblers* (emphasis in original).[49]

Even though it is very far away, a nation like the United States (US) has a large stake in the shape of Israel–Lebanon relations. Against the backdrop of its support to its long-term ally, Israel, and fearing failure of the Camp David Accords of 17 September 1978, the US ignored the existence and political motives of other players of the region at the time of establishment of UNIFIL in 1978.[50] It hurriedly pushed for deployment of the peace operation without understanding the intricacy of the bilateral relations. This, in turn, created a flawed image of the mission in Lebanon and led to the inability of UNIFIL to fulfil its mandate. In fact, this image has not changed even after so many years. For the US and Israel, the inability to disarm Hezbollah is the biggest failure on part of UNIFIL because it has deliberately ignored the growing capacity of Hezbollah to produce missiles inside Lebanon. The US simply wants UNIFIL to rein in Hezbollah, regardless of whether disarming Hezbollah is mandated to UNIFIL. To illustrate, even though there has not been a major conflict between Israel and Lebanon after 2006, both the US and Israel are highly critical of UNIFIL.[51] On the other hand, Iran looks at UNIFIL from the prism of Hezbollah's survival and its dominance over Lebanese politics. Thus, to pick up the most appropriate stakeholder for evaluation will always be a challenge. However, since there is no disagreement over the universally accepted ultimate role of UN peace operation to save human lives, the perception of the Lebanese local population and, to some extent, also the population of Israel must play a dominant role for assessment of UNIFIL.

4. *Timing of Assessment:* For the purpose of evaluation, based on the mandate and the timing, UNIFIL can be divided into two distinct phases. With reference to the period from 1978 till when the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) voluntarily pulled out from south Lebanon, in 2000 UNIFIL was considered

a failed mission.[52] Prior to 2006, UNIFIL could never meet the conditions essential for the force to be effective. All that it achieved was only secondary contribution for maintenance of peace.[53] From the time of IDF's voluntary withdrawal and till the outbreak of the war in 2006, southern Lebanon was calm and the guns were silent; but the potential for serious incidents still existed.[54] After the war of 2006, as approved by Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1701 (2006), the UNIFIL was given a different and stronger mandate, with a different organisational structure than what was before. Therefore, the period covering adoption of the SCR 1701 till date will be more appropriate to evaluate the performance of UNIFIL.

While some of the criteria which have been identified are common, the same cannot be applied to UNIFIL as a template. Dynamics of UNIFIL are peculiar. Hence, for an objective assessment and to be fair to the mission, the evaluation process must take into account the peculiarity of UNIFIL. The most appropriate and practical method to judge UNIFIL will be by determining the extent to which the mission has been able to achieve its goals. A table with suggested key goals, key questions and measures of progress that can be used for evaluation of UNIFIL post-2006 is given in the Annexure (see Table A1).

<div align="center">

Conclusion

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Past evaluations of peace operations have been generally based on limited criteria that were developed by scholars based on their own perceptions. Most of operations have come under criticism because of the missions' failure to implement the mandate, lack of operational capability and in few cases, the lack of will. In case of complex intra-state conflicts, there is a general consensus to term a mission failure if it has not been possible to adequately protect the innocent civilian population, whatever the reasons may be. While intra-state conflicts are marked by extreme violence, it is relatively easy to assess such a peace operation's performance with help of the available statistics. However, evaluation of peace operations like UNIFIL, where the mission is mostly in assistance role, it is difficult to come to an objective assessment. Nevertheless, it has dawned on the UN that, in the end, it is performance which matters. Seized with this awakening, there has been sincere effort on part of the UN to establish a clear framework for performance evaluation of, first, the uniformed component of the mission and second, the whole of the mission. Even

though there has been a substantial progress and the UN has set the deadline of 2020 for all missions to follow the established framework, there is still much more to do. Until then, evaluations, especially by the scholars and academicians who lack field experience, are likely to fall short of an objective assessment. In this article, an attempt has been made to develop a conceptual framework and thereafter suggest an acceptable framework for evaluation of traditional peace operation. The UNIFIL has been selected because of its uniqueness. While the UN probably is in the advanced stage of establishing the framework for evaluation, it is an appropriate time for a major TCC like India to pitch in with its own idea of performance evaluation of UN peace operation.

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Annexure

Table A1 Key Goals and Questions for Assessment of UNIFIL

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
1. Restoration of peace and security.	(a) Violence between Israel and Lebanon.	• Is violence still present?	• Duration without clashes/war in past 10 years. • Details of IDF and LAF face-offs near BL. • Cross-border shooting and air space violation.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews
	(b) Violence against peacekeepers.	• Has violence against peacekeepers by Lebanese and non-Lebanese armed elements other than Lebanese security forces reduced?	• Number of incidents of attack or threat or attempt to attack against peacekeepers. • Details of peacekeeper casualties (fatal and non-fatal).	• UN documents • Mission reports
	(c) Humanitarian de-mining.	• What has been the effect of humanitarian de-mining?	• Total area cleared of cluster bombs/unexploded ordnance (UXO). • Details of total arsenals destroyed. • Number of civilian mine causalities.	• UN documents • Mission reports
		• Has UNIFIL succeeded in persuading Israel to hand over maps?	Details of maps handed over.	• UN documents • Reports from LAF

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
2. Creating conditions for prevention of resumption of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel.	(a) Mechanism available for prevention of hostilities.	• What are the available mechanisms for prevention of resumption of hostilities?	• Periodical meetings, like tripartite meetings, chaired by UNIFIL. • Exchange of liaison teams. • Interactions between Head of Mission/FC of UNIFIL with appropriate authority in Israel and Lebanon. • Rapid/quick investigation of incidents/complaints of incidents reported by Israel and Lebanon. • Progress of BL marking.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Articles in professional journals, local Lebanese and Israeli media reports.
	(b) Conflict management	• Has the conflict expanded geographically? • Have the established mechanisms helped to resolve the disputes?	• Comparative state of violent incidents in the area of operations (AO). • Number of incidents of peacekeepers confronting armed groups (non-governmental). • Assistance provided by UNIFIL for removal of these armed groups—joint check posts, joint operations and joint training, recovery of arms and other arsenals. • Feedback from IDF.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
3. Ensuring south Lebanon is free of armed personnel, assets and weapons other than that with the Lebanese government and the UNIFIL.	(a) Prevent presence of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias other than Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL in south Lebanon.	• Are there unauthorised armed personnel in south Lebanon?	• Details of incidents—reports involving armed elements other than Lebanese security force (LAF). • Reports/evidence received from IDF.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Opinions in local, regional and international newspapers
		• Are the measures to ensure assistance provided by UNIFIL for removal of these armed personnel effective?	• Details of armed groups operating in Lebanon and south Lebanon. • Influence of the armed groups in governance of Lebanon by the elected body. • Role of the armed groups, including Hezbollah and Palestinian refugees, in the internal policy and internal security of Lebanon and Israel–Lebanon relationship.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Opinions in local, regional and international newspapers
4. Assistance to LAF in fulfilling its security responsibilities.	(a) Resolving disputes of occupied areas.	• Have Lebanon and Israel resolved their major disagreements?	• Vacation state of occupied areas. • Progress of BL marking.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews
		• Has the marking of BL helped in resolving disputes?	• Progress of BL marking. • Details of hotspots along BL.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
	(b) Capacity building of LAF.	• Has the capability of LAF in fulfilling its responsibilities enhanced?	• Total strength of LAF and troops to task ratio of LAF deployment in the AO. • Operation reliability in terms of strength, training and equipment. • Area under effective control of LAF.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Reports from LAF • Reports from IDF
		• Is there freedom of movement for locals and UNIFIL in the AO?	• Number of available primary roads available for movement in the AO. • Number of incidents of restriction of freedom of movements by the local population. • Perception of local population about freedom of movement.	• UN documents • Mission reports
		• Has LAF's cooperation with UNIFIL for enhancing its operational effectiveness improved?	• Mechanism available to improve the cooperation. • Details of joint patrolling and operations. • Details of joint training activities. • Details of external aid to LAF (money, equipment and training). • Progress of operational response from LAF to UNIFIL's requests.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Reports from LAF • Published materials

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
5. Ensure support from the local population.	(a) Good relation and support from the local population.	• Does the local population support UNIFIL?	• Data on extent of peacekeepers' knowledge of local population. • Data on extent of population support for operation. • Data on contribution by the mission for infrastructure development of the AO in support of the locals. • Number of attacks on UNIFIL personnel. • Number of incidents on restriction of movement of peacekeepers in the AO.	• Mission reports • Opinion poll if available • Interviews • Published material
		• Are there social ills created by peacekeepers?	• Incidents of rape and prostitution associated with the mission. • Incidents of local crimes associated with the mission.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews
6. Maintain operational effectiveness of the mission.	(a) Clear and achievable mission mandate.	• Is the mission mandate clear and achievable?	• Feasibility of implementing the operational tasks. • Adequacy of strength of the peacekeepers. • Standard of training and state of equipment of the military contingents.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews
		• Is the mission operationally prepared to effectively execute the mandated tasks?	• Level of peacekeepers' awareness of the mission, local culture and tradition and other sensitivities.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews

Key Goals	Sub-Goals	Key Questions	Measures of Progress	Data Source
			• State of support to the military contingents from the respective national governments. • Adequacy of the budget in support of the mission. • Availability of administrative support for mission sustainment.	
		• Is there adequate support from the parties to the conflict of the mission for mandate implementation?	• Political support to Lebanese security forces and IDF for mandate implementation. • Cooperation to resolve pending disputes and investigation of incidents by the mission.	• UN documents • Mission reports • Interviews • Published materials
	(b) Organisational structure for mandate implementation.	• How effective is the multinational force structure of the mission?	• Interoperability amongst the contingents in terms of operational ethos, training and equipment. • Diversity in philosophy of UN peacekeeping and culture—its effect on the operations.	• Interviews • Media reports and published materials (interviews only)
		• Are the rules of engagement (ROE) adequate to meet the operational needs of the mission?	• Understanding and interpretation of ROE by contingents of different nations. • Presence/lack of national directives on interpretation of ROE.	• Interviews • Media reports and published materials