



UNITED STATES
INSTITUTE OF PEACE
Making Peace Possible

USIP's Work in Civ-Mil Relations



What are civilian-military relations?

They're the relationships among civilian and military organizations, covering a spectrum of activities—from awareness to cooperation and collaboration—and a range of issues, including civilian control of the military.

USIP works with a variety of governmental and nongovernmental partners, including:



STATE OF THE FIELD

Establishing enduring peace in fragile and conflict-affected states requires a coordinated approach, one in which civilian and military agencies consciously collaborate. However, many groups aren't aware of other organizations' initiatives, don't understand their purposes, and fail to synchronize resources—resulting in duplicative, piecemeal efforts, inefficient use of limited resources, and other negative consequences.

USIP'S WORK

The U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) promotes lasting peace in areas of conflict by implementing a comprehensive approach across government agencies and nongovernmental and international organizations. Through education, engagement, and interactive exercises and training, USIP makes national and international actors more aware of each other's efforts and encourages cooperation. Recent work includes:

Conducting Practical Exercises. The Interorganizational Tabletop Exercise (ITX) program employs a distinct framework that allows the civilian and military communities to work together on common issues and challenges.

USIP partners with the Departments of Defense and State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and nongovernmental and international organizations to design and implement each ITX. These exercises:

- ▶ Promote and develop relationships, mutual understanding, knowledge sharing, coordination, and cooperation.
- ▶ Seek to improve the measurable impact of civilian and military assistance.
- ▶ Address specific themes and geographic areas that participants identify as important.
- ▶ Facilitate dialogues to build on existing information sharing and coordination.

- ▶ Place civilian organizations in the lead role so that the exercises reflect their priorities—a rare feature among the many exercises available to these organizations.
- ▶ Incorporate presentations, small group work, and simulated scenarios.

Engagements. USIP inhabits a unique role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: As an independent, nonpartisan institute, USIP can engender trust on multiple sides of conflicts. Building on this role, the Institute brings together civilian and military practitioners and policymakers to troubleshoot issues identified in the field. Some of our work includes:

- ▶ **Civilian-Military Working Group:** Since 2005, the Civilian-Military Working Group has served as an informal body that examines international humanitarian crises, relief, and recovery. The working group:
 - Convenes experts to build knowledge and share information while promoting collaboration and serving as a forum for problem solving.
 - Advises the crisis response community on policies and procedures.
 - Communicates best practices, lessons learned, and emerging issues to policymakers and practitioners.
- ▶ **Senior Service Colleges:** USIP hosts students and fellows from the U.S. Army War College and the National Defense University to inform about USIP's role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and as a resource to the interorganizational community.

“The ITX is a truly valuable interorganizational exercise that includes organizations from across the community of interest and practice both from inside and outside the government which focuses on some of the world’s most conflict affected regions. During the exercise leaders in a safe space can discuss holistically the challenges and propose solutions that will have the greatest impact on reducing violence and violent extremism and build sustainable peace.”

– Elizabeth Hume
Alliance for Peacebuilding

Educating Practitioners. USIP has designed and developed a five-day course to increase the knowledge and skills of mid-level practitioners and enhance relations among personnel from different organizations.

The course, “Civilian-Military Relations in Complex Operational Environments: Improving Effectiveness in Shared Spaces,” is organized around three themes: environment, actors, and transitions. Leadership and communication are integrated throughout. Two central questions guide the curriculum:

- ▶ How can external actors improve efforts to strengthen fragile states and engage across the conflict spectrum (from prevention to recovery)?
- ▶ How can civilian and military practitioners work most effectively in shared, complex environments?

A second example of our education work is the Service Academy Education and Development Initiative. In collaboration with the U.S. Military Service Academies, USIP hosts future military officers for a summer internship to introduce and broaden their understanding of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The 2018 ITX—Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the Southern Philippines

USIP collaborated with the Departments of State and Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and nongovernmental and international organizations to direct an ITX focused on preventing and countering violent extremism in the Philippines. The siege of Marawi by ISIS-affiliated extremists in 2017 highlighted the long-standing tensions between the Muslim population and the Philippine government. The reconstruction of Marawi and implementation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law will inform prospects for peacebuilding.

Outcomes included:

- Increased understanding of all stakeholder priorities, roles, policies, programs, and planning efforts related to CVE in the southern Philippines.
- Greater clarity on opportunities and limitations for coordination among the range of CVE actors.
- Recommendations to inform CVE related policies and organizational planning efforts for the interorganizational community.

“USINDOPACOM found the CVE ITX very useful, and the findings important to their planning. They have incorporated the findings and recommendations into their planning efforts for this region.”

– Shehzi Khan
Chief, Strategic Partnerships/Global Engagements
U.S. Indo-Pacific Command