The Air Force Building Partnership Capacity
Problem: Are We Engaged in the Right Partnerships?

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Introduction
A major challenge facing the United States military is the ability to respond to an increasing amount of threats globally as organic resources continue to dwindle. The style of warfare is ever changing, and the days of two large Armies facing each other on the battlefield have come and gone. Recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have propelled the need for active partnering and capacity building as present day wars shift from a conventional style, where Armies fight head-to-head on the battlefield, to that of a more asymmetric form, where success is determined by a nation's ability to counteract a counterinsurgency, influence the local population, and effectively set conditions prior to an event commencing.

Research Focus
From an Air Force perspective, the current method for determining partnerships and coordinating efforts is vague. There are numerous lines of effort, ranging from Combatant Commanders’ Campaign Plans to Ambassadors’ Country Plans. It is unclear what factors are important for building relationships with respective countries or how those relationships correlate to current defense strategy.

Methodology
An analysis of previous research was conducted on Air Force Building Partnerships and current stakeholder objectives. Through content analysis, common themes presented themselves for each of the stakeholder’s objectives, some to a lesser degree than others. In addition, the researcher examined the theory behind why partnerships occur. These results were taken into consideration for selecting the appropriate partnership model that most closely defined the Air Force Building Partnership strategy and tailored to incorporate building partnership terminology, to include the common themes that were identified from each of the primary stakeholders. The model’s output gauges partnership strength based on the desire to partner as well as ease of coordination.

Results
A “need” determines partnership origin. Once established, the next step will be identifying the major “driver’s or objectives in the partnership. Analysis determined the five major drivers forming U.S. partnerships have been Operational, Economical, Technological, Political, and Industrial. The “facilitators” of Communication, Trust, and Commitment ensure sustainability. As the partnership matures, it must be consistently maintained through active “components” of education and training, personnel exchanges, and joint exercises. Finally, the propensity tool confirms eligibility, partner strength, and likelihood of sustainability.