



Project Overview

CSIS-Development Gateway partnership to develop online communities for Stabilization & Reconstruction and Disaster Response

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Summary: The the [Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC](#) (CSIS) and the [Development Gateway Foundation](#) (DGF) have partnered to develop two new online portals: *Stabilization and Reconstruction* and *Disaster Prevention and Response*. These portals will provide a virtual space where participants can share knowledge, lessons learned, best practices, and other information in an effort to build capacity, strengthen working relationships, and improve development outcomes in these areas. Particular emphasis will be placed on bringing together non-traditional partners, including government agencies, international organizations and NGOs in both developed and developing countries.

The Challenge: Many actors are involved in stabilization and reconstruction efforts and in humanitarian relief operations including local and international; civilian and military; and governmental, inter-governmental, and non-governmental participants. However, these players lack effective means for routinely sharing knowledge and expertise with one another. The lack of an established communications venue hinders the ability of disparate individuals and organizations to understand one another and work together in advance of a crisis.

Genesis of the Project: CSIS undertook an analysis of best practices in online knowledge sharing and collaboration with the goal of identifying organizations and solutions that could serve the stabilization, reconstruction and disaster response communities of practice. The Development Gateway participated in this effort as an Advisor. The result was a report titled "Wikis, Webs and Networks: Creating Connections for Conflict-Prone Settings" (http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/061018_pcr_creatingconnections.pdf).

Subsequently, the CSIS-DGF partnership was established to build relevant knowledge sharing communities of practice that conform to the best practices promulgated in the CSIS report and are based on DGF's [dgCommunities](#) platform.

Proposed Solution: The new *Stabilization and Reconstruction* and *Disaster Prevention and Response* portals will build upon existing information sharing technologies to enable government agencies, military units, international organizations, NGOs, think tanks and academic institutions around the world to share and develop knowledge. In addition, online social networking tools will be used to bring disparate actors together in a common forum where issues of mutual interest can be discussed and problems solved. This online cooperation will build trust amongst the different partners and foster the

development of communities of practice. In particular, both portals will address the unique challenges of civil-military coordination in post-conflict and disaster response scenarios.

Membership in the new communities will be open to individuals and organizations from the private, military, governmental, inter-governmental, and non-governmental sectors. Individual and institutional “Guides” will help facilitate the online communities in generating and distributing content.

Key milestones: The project will initially run for one year, during which the following milestones will be reached:

1. The strategy for online stability operations community building will be presented by November 27, 2007.
2. A workshop will be convened to discuss portal requirements, including content strategy and focus. Participants from the private, military, governmental, inter-governmental, and non-governmental sectors are invited to attend. The workshop will take place in October 2007 (exact date to be confirmed)
3. Recruitment of initial individual and organizational partners will be completed by February 2008.
4. Prototype portals for the *Stabilization and Reconstruction* and *Disaster Prevention and Response* communities will be online by April 2008. At this point, initial content and the facilitation of online discussion groups will also be made available.

For more information, please contact **Guy Ben-Ari** (gbenari@csis.org / 202-775-3206) at CSIS or **Mike Pereira** (mpereira@dgfoundation.org / 202-572-9259) at DGF.