

Conflict and Stabilization Operations

COMMUNITY REQUEST FY 2020

\$5 M

FY 2020 President's Request: N/A

FY 2019 Enacted: N/A

DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is a bureau of the Department of State (DoS) dedicated to conflict prevention. CSO is home to analysis, planning, specialized diplomatic expertise, and frontline surge capacity that is unique within the DoS. It works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) and USAID to ensure that diplomacy, development, and defense can work hand in hand in the most complex crises.

WHAT DOES THIS BUY?

Funds are provided to partners for reconstruction and stabilization grants and cooperative agreements.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REQUEST

- CSO plays an important role in conflict prevention and resolution. It partners with development officials, embassies, intelligence agencies, and DoD personnel. Trained CSO experts can deploy alongside the military, often with U.S. Special Forces.
- CSO is at the forefront of **analyzing and mitigating the most pressing conflicts and national security issues**, from violent extremism to electoral violence.
- CSO uses **cutting-edge analytic tools** to anticipate and prevent instability that could otherwise result in costly military and humanitarian operations. It uses big data, geospatial techniques, and modeling in coordination with on-the-ground knowledge to make evidence-based decisions.
- The bureau forecasts risk of electoral violence and supports embassies in prevention strategies.
- CSO works across regions, with **staff embedded in over 20 countries**. Trained CSO staff have responded to major conflicts and crises in Afghanistan, Haiti, and Nigeria. They have also assisted with Central American security, the Syrian migrant crisis, and in the effort to defeat ISIS.

U.S. INTEREST

- CSO plays a **vital role in national security and stabilization efforts**. As the recent USAID-DoS-DoD Stabilization Assistance Review provides, “[s]tabilization does not require extremely high funding levels; rather, stabilization depends on consistent, flexible funding accounts...that can enable agile, targeted, and sequenced approaches to stabilization programming.”
- Analysis by the CSO bureau brings greater coherence to U.S. foreign assistance programs and enhances U.S. diplomatic engagements by identifying drivers and triggers of violent conflict early, aligning U.S. government efforts to effectively and efficiently mitigate threats.



Looking to the Future

Conflict and Stabilization Operations – TITLE III

BOLD VISION

- Additional investment could allow CSO to expand its analytical tool set and improve its capacity to predict, target, and mitigate at-risk contexts, reducing the need for costly future interventions.
- In 2019, at least 15 elections in fragile contexts could spark violence. These elections risk becoming trigger events for longer-lasting conflict. At current levels CSO can only track these elections; additional investment could address all at-risk cases.
- Additional investment could allow CSO, with its culture of agility, to seamlessly scale up the ability to anticipate, mitigate, or prevent instability in dozens of fragile and conflict-affected contexts across the globe.

IMPACT OF CUTS

Cuts could have a detrimental effect across U.S. efforts to address global conflict. Analytical capacity is critical to support efforts throughout the U.S. government. Cuts could undermine broader diplomatic and security efforts, possibly creating the need for costly military operations in the future.

¹ “A Framework for Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S. Government Efforts to Stabilize Conflict Affected Areas, 2018,” U.S. Department of State, USAID, U.S. Department of Defense.

5 YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

