In operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, there was a failure to recognize, acknowledge, and accurately define the operational environment. This led to a mismatch between forces, capabilities, missions, and goals.

"Decade of War: Enduring Lessons from the Past Decade of Operations"
Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis
June 15, 2012

I firmly believe that the ability of terrorists to rapidly adapt in our complex world, combined with our lack of persistence and imagination, will continue to create blind spots in our counterterrorism efforts. The implications of these gaps are significant.

General Joseph L. Votel
West Point Senior Conference
July 28, 2015

Better Preparing Units for Gray Zone Operations

How do we integrate the complexities of the human domain into realistic military training?

Challenge

We have to do a better job of preparing units to analyze and understand complex operational environments (OEs). However, training exercises often don't support the real-world requirements.
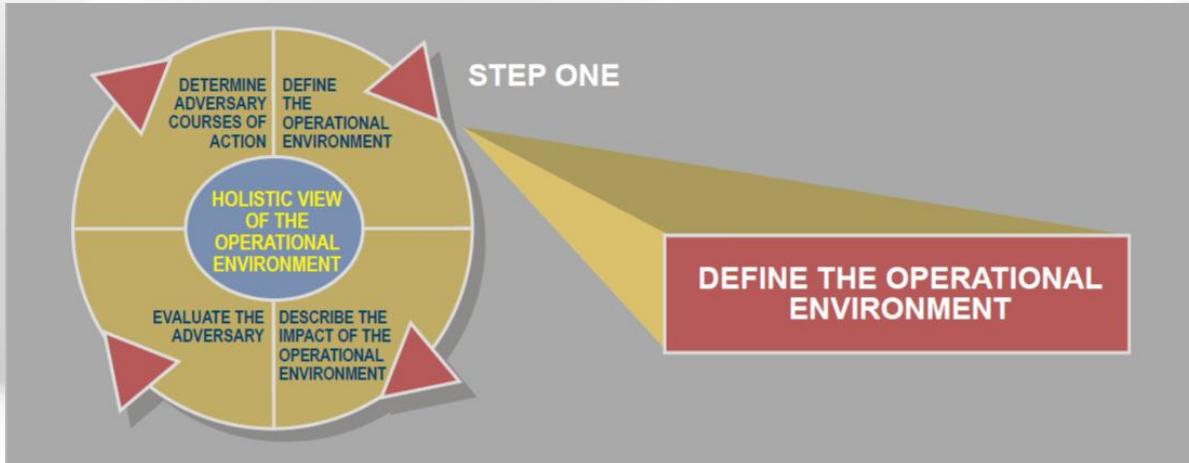
Why Is It a Problem?

Key Factors

- Scenario materials don't have the depth required for analysis
- Interactions of key actors and groups aren't represented
- Lack of realistic conflict dynamics (i.e. the causes of violence)
- Missing socio-cultural context
- Inability to accurately reflect the second- and third-order effects of operations
- Weak linkages to interagency, intergovernmental and nongovernmental partners
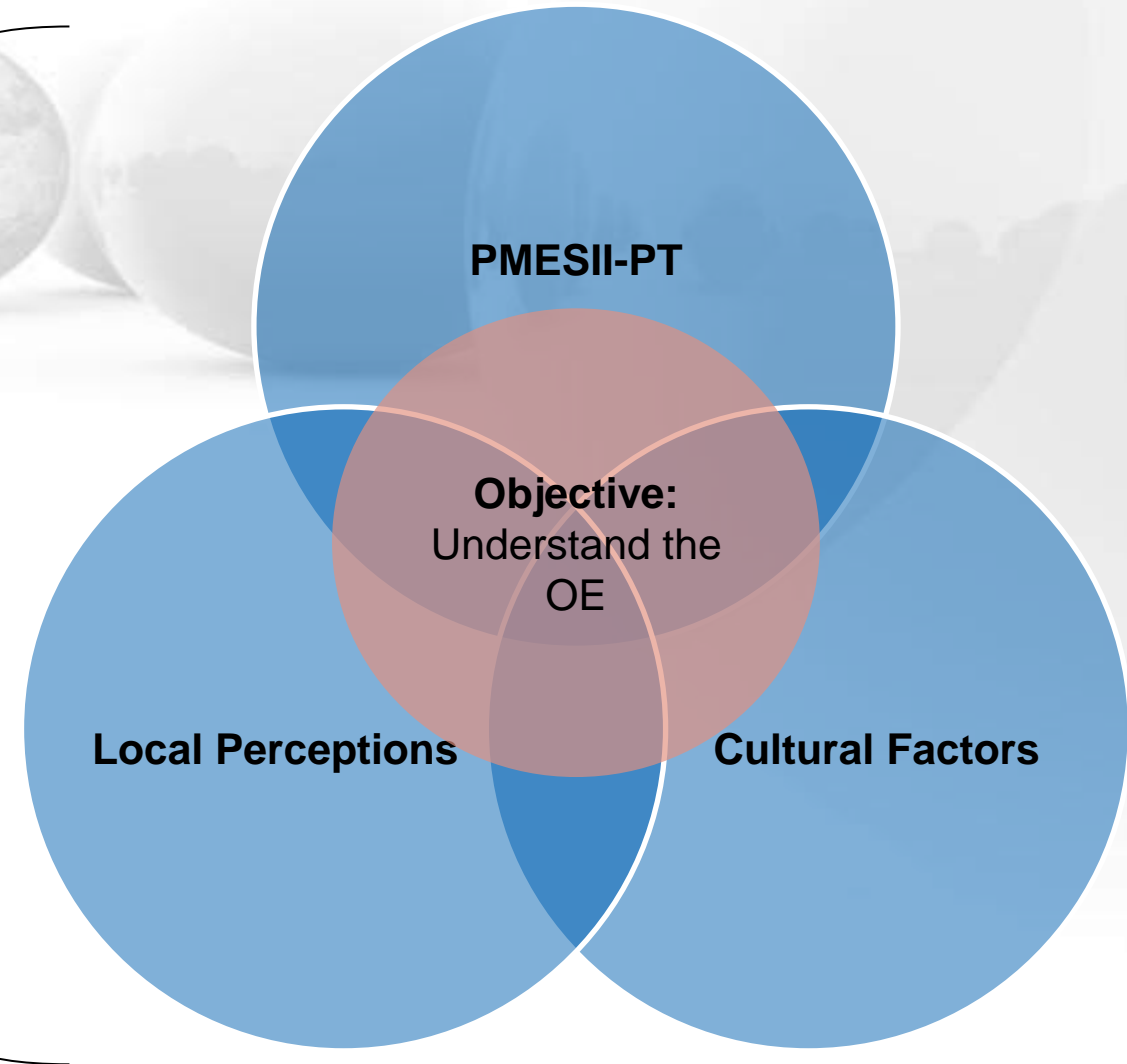- No way to objectively measure progress against training tasks

How do we bridge the current gap between mission requirements and training models?

A More Effective Training Model

STEP ONE

DETERMINE ADVERSARY COURSES OF ACTION · DEFINE THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

HOLISTIC VIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

EVALUATE THE ADVERSARY · DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
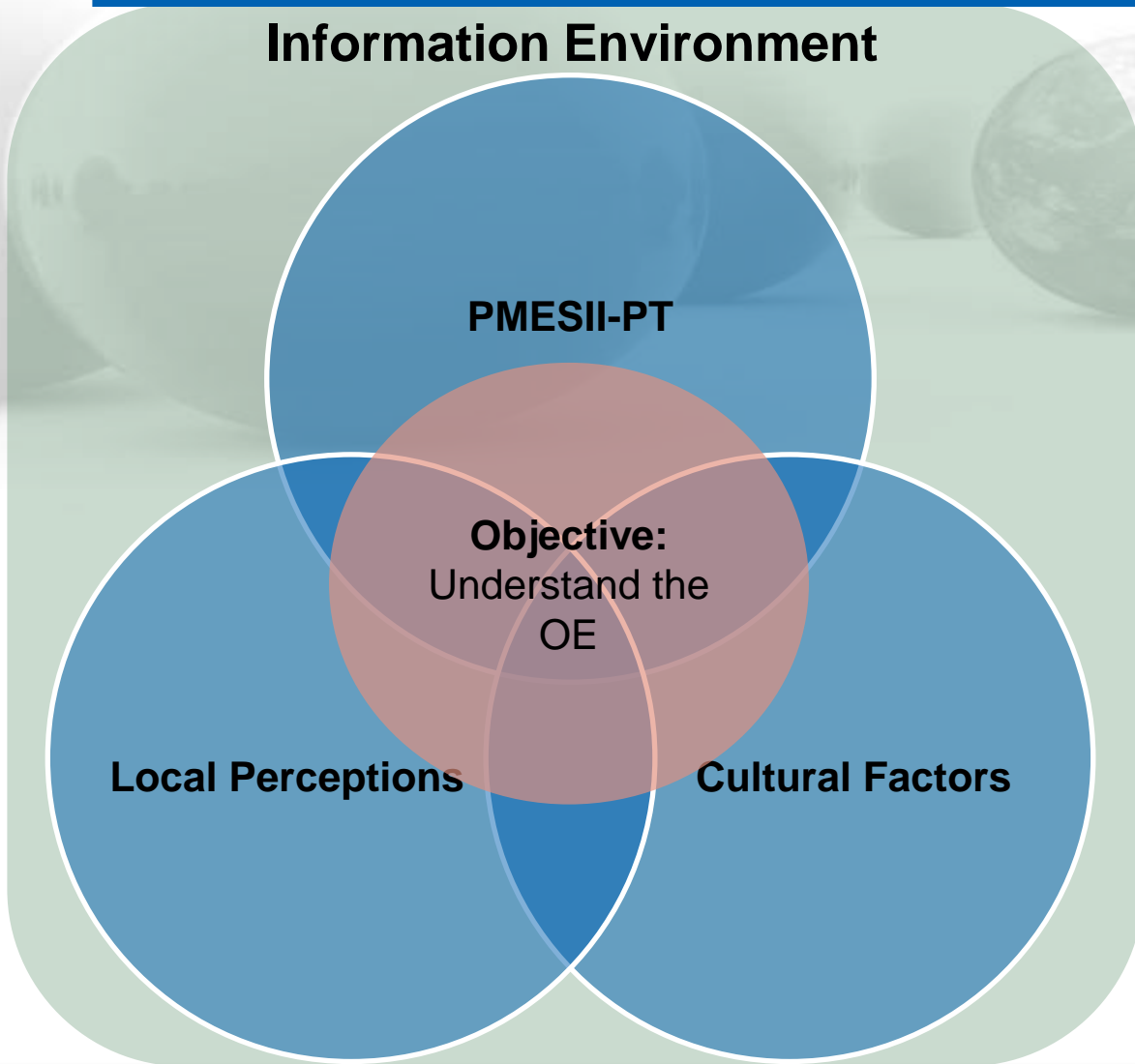
DEFINE THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

JP 2-01.3: Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE)

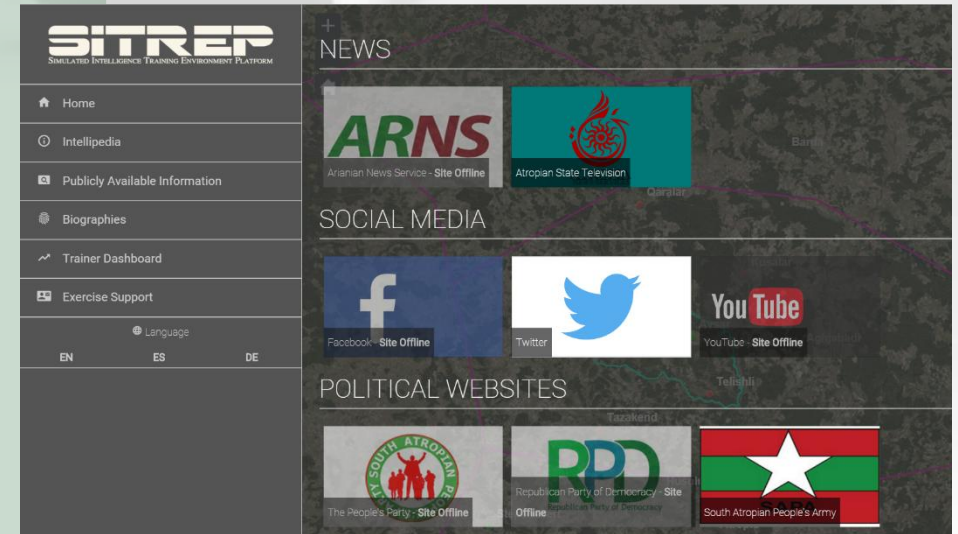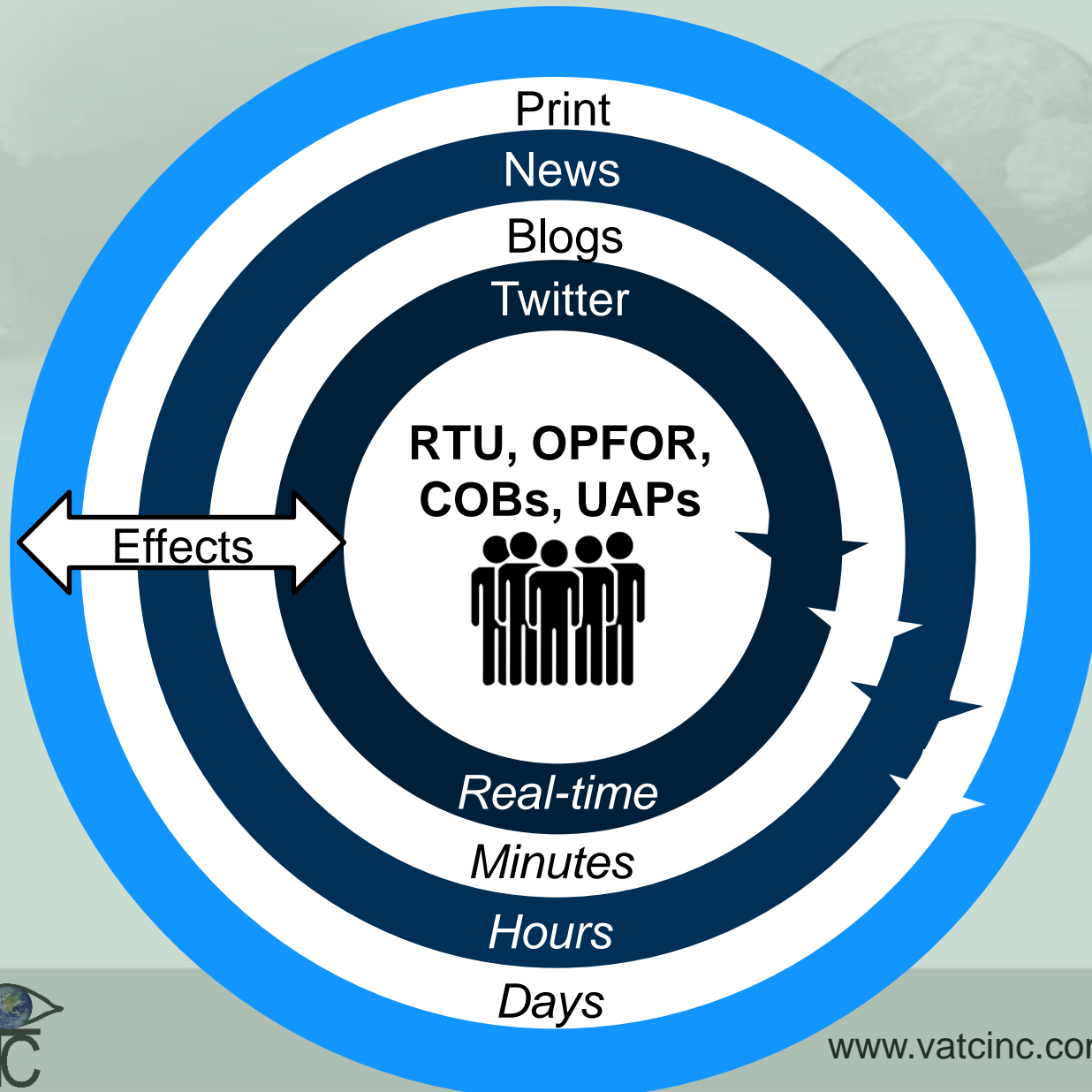**Effective, holistic targeting (lethal & non-lethal) depends on understanding the OE.**

PMESII-PT

Objective: Understand the OE

Local Perceptions

Cultural Factors

A Model Driven by Synthetic Media

Information Environment

PMESII-PT

Objective:
Understand the OE
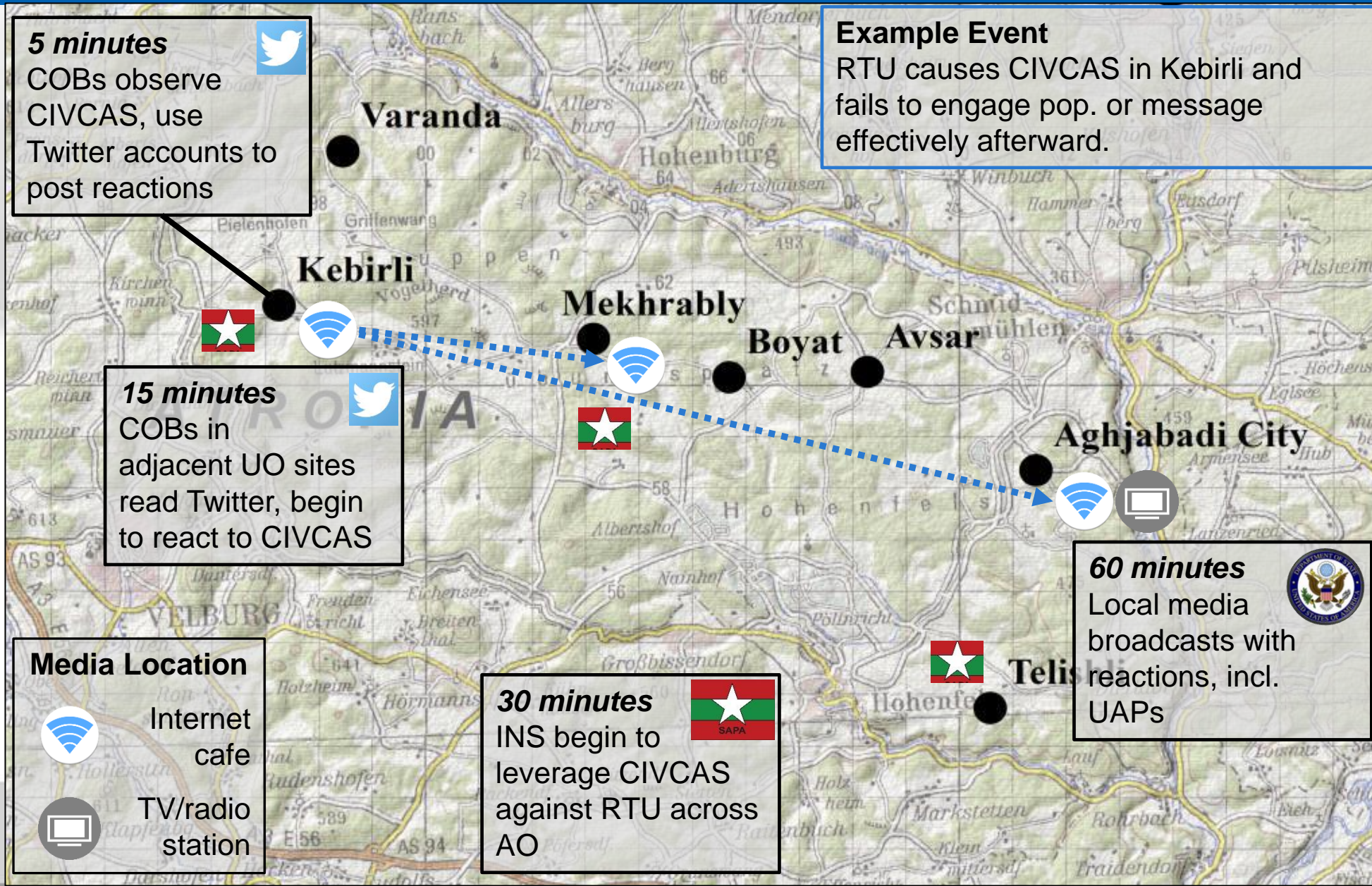
Local Perceptions

Cultural Factors

- Enables understanding of the OE by reflecting PMESII-PT variables, local perceptions, and cultural factors
- Supports effective, holistic targeting
- Gives scenario materials depth
- Demonstrates interactions among key actors & groups
- Provides socio-cultural context
- Reflects the second- and third-order effects of operations
- Links to interagency, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations
- Makes it possible to track users in real-time to measure effectiveness

A Complex, Responsive Information Environment

www.vatcinc.com

Training Vignette

5 minutes
COBs observe CIVCAS, use Twitter accounts to post reactions

Example Event
RTU causes CIVCAS in Kebirli and fails to engage pop. or message effectively afterward.

15 minutes
COBs in adjacent UO sites read Twitter, begin to react to CIVCAS

60 minutes
Local media broadcasts with reactions, incl. UAPs

Media Location
Internet cafe

TV/radio station

30 minutes
INS begin to leverage CIVCAS against RTU across AO

Future Development

Lessons Learned

- Accurately define the training objective & associated trainings tasks
- Academics should link to and support specific training tasks
- All training data has to be synchronized (OE data, threats, biographies, intel threads)
- The information environment must reflect the target OE, not vice versa
- Social & news media platforms should be tailored to the OE
- Either the effect is immediate, or it doesn't matter
- *Technology tools are not a substitute for subject matter expertise*

This is only part of the solution for bringing the complexities of the human domain into training.

Point of Contact

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Capabilities Video

Follow this link to view a high definition SITREP capabilities video hosted on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t38JYR6676s