

Delivering Hybrid Medical Services in Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation Operating Environments

The Benefits of Utilizing Hybrid Military/Private Contractor Medical Services in Conflict Resolution and Post-conflict Rehabilitation Operating Environments. Case Study – Eastern Ukraine and support to the OSCE in 2014/2015

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Topic: Medical Logistics

Introductions

When operating overseas, national and international organization civilian-missions such as the UN, EU and NATO routinely depend on deployed militaries for provision of their medical support. However, gaps often appear in medical coverage at points in the crisis spectrum, either because militaries are yet to be committed, cannot be committed or have been redeployed. These conditions normally exist at the pre-conflict-resolution or post-conflict-rehabilitation ends of the spectrum.

Discussion

To deliver strategic political, diplomatic and development objectives, civilian-missions are required to operate in challenging conditions, providing a persistent presence on the ground while working alongside local populations. This approach results in both physical and policy risks, which combine to constrain the civilian-mission's ability to achieve its objectives. The risks are amplified, since: civilian-missions generally do not have organic medical capabilities; there are typically under-developed local medical systems in the operating environment further weakened by conflict; and the presence of high endemic health risks exists, adding to those created by conflict.

Recent examples characterized in part by the situation described above include civilian-missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Eastern Ukraine and the Ebola-affected countries of West Africa. The latter presenting a different perspective of 'conflict', which could apply equally to any geography affected by national disaster.

Direct experience shows the importance for deployed civilian-missions for utilizing a hybrid (combined military, host nation and deployed civilian) medical system. Implementing an effective and sustainable hybrid medical system not only has a direct impact on the deployed civilian-mission, but it can also indirectly impact positively the broader political, diplomatic and development objectives of national and international organizations.

Drawing on recent experience of managing the provision of a hybrid medical system for a civilian-mission in the conflict-affected Eastern Ukraine – through the design, planning, execution and refinement phases – International SOS will address lessons learned, which can be applied to other conflict resolution and conflict rehabilitation environments.

Three educational learning objectives:

1. Participants will hear key lessons learned in hybrid medical system set-up, applicable to other conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation environments.
2. International SOS will share industry best practices for the effective design of a hybrid medical system, including the planning, execution and refinement phases to ensure short- and long-term success and sustainability.
3. The presentation will demonstrate how a hybrid medical system can contribute directly to the deployed civilian mission and indirectly to the wider political, diplomatic and development objectives of both national governments and international organisations.