The KLE Cycle

Identify Key Leader or Entity

Intelligence Preparation of the Environment

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

KLE
Is a Cyclical Process.

- ① Identify Key Leader or Entity
- ② Intelligence Preparation of the Environment
- ③ Identify Desired Effects
- ④ Prepare
- ⑤ Execute
- ⑥ Debrief/Report
- ⑦ Reengage

What Is KLE?

- KLE is a method for building relationships with people and entities of influence in your area of operation. KLE occurs at all levels.

- Coalition Forces best achieve desired KLE effects through deliberate and focused face-to-face meetings with local leaders.

- Effective KLE fosters and expands communications and cooperation between Coalition Forces and influential people within Afghan communities.

Command Guidance

"Protecting the people is the mission. The conflict will be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy. ISAF will succeed when the GIRoA earns the support of the people."

—GEN McChrystal and CSM Hall, August 2009

① Identify Key Leader

- Identify the person(s) or entity of influence
- Determine the potential for long-term influence
- Evaluate the key leader network

② Intelligence Preparation of the Environment

- Confirm/deny key leader's capability in relation to desired effects (is this the right person to engage?)
- Ethnicity (language/dialect)
- Tribal background and perspective (tribal code)
- Religious background
- Political affiliation
- Associations
- Alliances (personal/tribal)
- Resources
- Social network
- Discern key leader's agenda, motivation, and interests

- Information operations vulnerabilities assessment (hot-button issues)
- Develop contingencies and counters to unfavorable responses
- Review previous post-engagement reports, if available
- Use forward-thinking options to build on prior engagements and gather critical information from key leaders for increased operational benefit
- Leverage other collection assets

③ Identify Desired Effects

- Identify what you want to achieve
- Identify supporting objectives
- Identify preliminary conditions required to achieve the desired effect(s)
- Predetermine what you are able to offer in order to get what you want
- Identify the probability of a favorable response to the request/desired effect
- Develop the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA)
- Consider utilizing other enablers

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4 Prepare

- Discuss desired effects and common terms with cultural advisor and interpreter
- Identify roles: designate a recorder, note taker, and photographer (at the KLE, introduce everyone to the key leader)
- Determine who takes the lead (see *Afghan Societal Roles* chart)
- Practice social nuances
- Get your story straight
- Learn gift-exchange expectations
- Be prepared to confront corrupt officials
- Show respect to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) throughout planning and KLE execution (get the ANSF involved in the process as well as the execution)
- Conduct standard mission planning (security, maneuver, logistics, communications, contingencies, etc.)
- Attempt to learn at least a few words of the local dialect
- Understand and realize that the key leader will also have an agenda and internal goals

Afghan Society

Afghan Societal Roles

Before the 1980s (prior to the Soviet invasion), secular authorities were dominant in villages. Since the 1980s, the rise of the Taliban has meant that local authority varies by village, with both secular and religious leaders often vying for power.

Secular Authorities

Wali (provincial governor): Semi-autonomous with extraordinary power and freedom of action

Elders: Respected older members (often with gray beards); decision-makers at *jirga* (tribal assembly of elders)

Khan: Traditional tribal/subtribal leadership in Afghanistan (same as a *Malik* in Pakistani tribal regions); frequently, but not always, a hereditary position

Jang Salar: War lord (usually a derogatory term)

Arbab: Appointed as a village representative, by the government and to the government, liaison officer, or "landlord" for the government; has varying degrees of power; however, normally substantial power
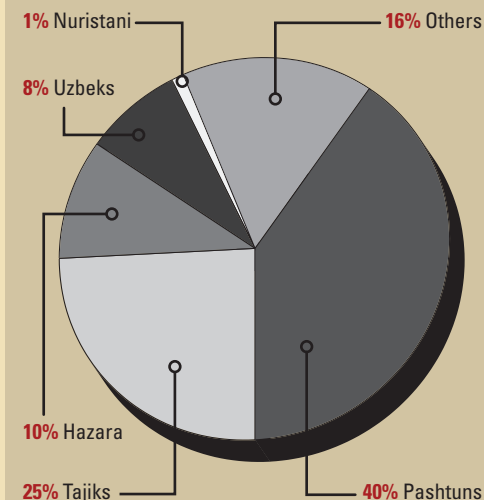
Religious Authorities

Maulani/Mawlani: Local religious leader, a "must" to "bless" projects and agreements; more prone to identify with the Taliban religious platform (the source of their legitimacy)

Mullah: Local religious leader, similar to but slightly lower ranking than *Maulanis*

Pir: Sufi cleric with an above average "following" who is seen as very holy, often with mystical powers; does not ordinarily involve himself in secular matters

Population: 29 million

- 1% Nuristani
- 16% Others
- 8% Uzbeks
- 10% Hazara
- 25% Tajiks
- 40% Pashtuns

5 Execute

- It's all about mutual respect
- Follow Afghan meeting etiquette
- Be patient and a good listener
- Know when to speak
- Look at the host, not at the interpreter
- Apply other enablers as appropriate
- Focus on the objective
- Promise only what you can deliver
- Instill local ownership in solutions
- Conclude the meeting by clarifying/repeating agreements

6 Debrief/Report

- Conduct post-KLE debrief/after-action review
- Submit post-KLE report in accordance with unit's standard operating procedure
- Input relevant key leader information into designated databases for future use
- Establish Battalion/Squadron and Company/Troop system of record for continuity and uniformity

Post-KLE Report Format

Unit: _____ Date: _____

Meeting Leader Contact Info.: _____
_____

U.S. Attendees: _____

ANSF Attendees: _____

Afghan Key Leader Attendees: _____
_____

Objective: _____

Items of Discussion: _____

Commitments (U.S. and Afghan): _____
_____

Overall Assessment: _____

Future KLE Recommendations: _____
_____

Info. of Potential Intelligence Value: _____
_____

Additional Observations: _____
_____

Open Action Items: _____
_____

7 Reengage

- Reengagement equals effective KLE
- Sustain/maintain relationship
- Provide method for key leader to contact you between KLEs
- Make maximum use of Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) and civil–military cooperation (CIMIC) to meet commitments
- Review previous KLE reports and agreements before the next KLE
- Monitor key leader development and protection

Measuring Success

- ❏ Level of local cooperation
- ❏ Establishment of Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) services
- ❏ Economic development
- ❏ Local participation in projects
- ❏ Security improvements
- ❏ Prosecution conviction rates

Reference

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