



### About the Academy

The Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding is the education and training arm of the United States Institute of Peace.

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## **SENSE: Strategic Economic Needs and Security Exercise**

### **SENSE as a Conflict Management Tool**

The Strategic Economic Needs and Security Exercise (SENSE), developed by Richard H. White of the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), is a computer-facilitated simulation that was designed to help participants learn to implement the core skills needed to build a stable and prosperous democratic society through an experimental and rigorous structured scenario. The simulation focuses on negotiations and decision-making in an environment of transition from armed conflict.

SENSE simulates the resource-allocation challenges confronting national and international decision-makers. Its sophisticated computer support provides participants with rapid feedback on the results of their time-sensitive decision-making in terms of political stability, social justice, and economic progress. But the primary activity in SENSE is negotiation between and among those participating in the simulation. SENSE has been used in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Iraq, Poland and its neighboring countries, Afghanistan, and Tunisia, as well as the United States.

### **Objectives**

SENSE has four interrelated objectives, which can be modified depending on the target audience and curriculum:

- develop the principles of negotiating, cooperative problem-solving, and decision-making, all of which are critical for successful democratic processes
- illustrate the interrelationships among military security, economic progress, and the creation of equitable societies
- demonstrate the efficacy and efficiency of free market economies
- provide a practical and informative experience with the issues of governance in transitional societies

### **SENSE around the Globe**

Between 1999 and 2003, SENSE was successfully employed by USIP or IDA in programs with participants from USAID, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Republic of Georgia. Since then, USIP has administered SENSE both domestically and abroad, using it extensively in Iraq and empowering Poland to use it with former Soviet countries and in the Muslim world. In the United States, SENSE has been used by USIP and George Mason University with academic and U.S. government audiences (including Department of Defense [uniformed and civilian], State, Justice, and USAID), as well as nongovernmental organizations, the United Nations and other international organizations, Washington embassies, and the private sector. Since 2009, with funding from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, USIP's Academy has delivered SENSE to some 450 participants on this "whole of community" basis.

# SENSE Fact Sheet

## ***SENSE in Iraq***

In 2004, USIP conducted special SENSE training programs designed for senior Iraqi national security officials. The trainings, conducted in the Washington, DC area, employed a series of formal presentations and interactive exercises designed to:

- refine participants' skills in conflict analysis and resolution
- help them master negotiation styles and techniques
- teach the roles that third parties can play in mediating disagreements

In those programs, USIP trained 173 Iraqi officials from key ministries such as Defense (including military officers), Foreign Affairs, Interior (including police generals), Justice (including judges), Planning, and Finance. Based in part on feedback from the Iraqi participants, USIP contracted with IDA to enhance the simulation by scaling the imaginary country closer to Iraqi dimensions, including a significant oil sector (with pipelines vulnerable to terrorist disruption), and adding elements that address managing the risk of inflation in an economy in transition.

In 2005, USIP conducted several SENSE training programs for Iraqis in Jordan, and has since sponsored SENSE events conducted by Iraqis themselves (programs have been held in Baghdad and various sites in Kurdistan). Participants have included officials of the Transitional National Authority, members of Parliament, various Ministry officials, a wide range of Kurdish authorities, the Baghdad Provincial Council, and members of all of Iraq's 18 Provincial Councils. Since 2004, a total of over 1,500 Iraqis benefited from SENSE trainings. A local NGO—Iraq Institute for Economic Reform (IIER)—coordinated SENSE events from 2005 to 2007. SENSE is now delivered by USIP's Baghdad Office.

## ***SENSE in Poland***

USIP, in cooperation with IDA, partnered with the Polish Ministry of National Defense and the University of Warsaw's Center for Eastern European Studies in 2006 to conduct a series of SENSE workshops at the National Defense University. These programs, with participants from Moldova and Ukraine, enabled USIP to provide both universities with the capability to conduct SENSE trainings on their own.

Now run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the National School of Public Administration, SENSE continues to play an integral role as part of a broader Polish program promoting economic and societal reform. To date the Poles have trained some 725 participants from Belarus, Georgia, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

## ***The Continued Conflict Model***

USIP collaborated with IDA and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to create a new SENSE model that expands the capability of SENSE further, and creates game scenarios for challenges directly relevant to situations like those faced in Afghanistan. The new version features a country with an agricultural economic structure, and includes problems such as an ongoing insurgency, the growing and trafficking of illegal drugs, corruption, and other elements of organized criminality. USIP is currently conducting interagency simulation with the new iteration, while continuing to use the earlier "transitioning state" model, as well.

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USIP provides the analysis, training, and tools that prevent and end conflicts, promotes stability, and professionalizes the field of peacebuilding.

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