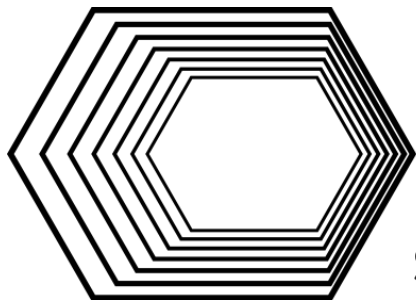


But, What Do They Want?

How Simulation-Based Trainings Can Teach Us
About Security, Humanitarianism, and
Understanding in Urban Refugee Response



LESSONS LEARNED
Simulations and Training

13th NATO OR&A Conference:
“Challenges for NATO OR&A in a Changing
Global Security Environment”
7-9 October 2019
Ottawa, Canada

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Who am I?



What is the problem?

- My problem: **Humanitarian organizations do not typically “red team” their operations**
 - And thus we make avoidable mistakes
- Our problem: **Existing wargame methods often (not always) fail to capture civilian “green cell” actors with any useful resolution**
 - Not always, but often!
 - Random event systems are not enough



The current state of affairs

- Most wargames do a very good job of modeling combatants
- Some wargames do a good job of modeling UN and INGO systems (“yellow cells”)
- Non-combatants (or humanitarian “beneficiaries”) tend to be reduced to a piece of the furniture
 - When they do show up: most often modeled via a random event system (card flips, die rolls, automated injects...)
 - At best, we occasionally get a briefing + role play
 - This does not allow for insight on civilian/refugee/”beneficiary” decision-making



Why do we care?

- Humanitarian and military operations are increasingly entwined
- From refugees to insurgents, the behaviour of conflict-affected populations should be our concern



What is the problem - redux?

- How do we model “green cell” behaviour accurately and usefully?
 - We are very good at modeling military actors (operational, tactical, and strategic levels)
 - We are good at modeling political actors
 - We are increasingly good at modeling humanitarian actors
- We don't really have a good framework for building models of civilian behaviour

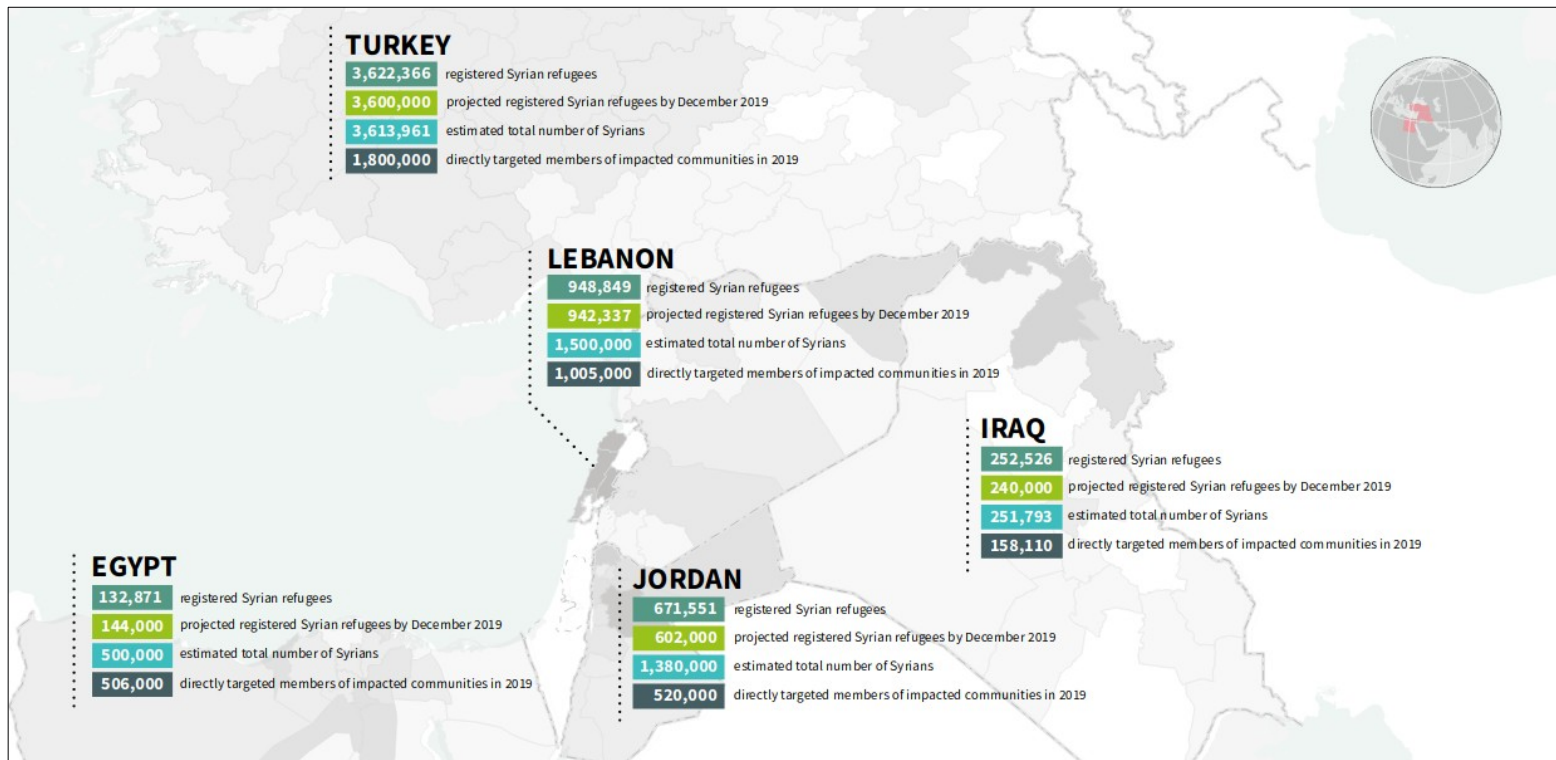


How to model civilian behaviour

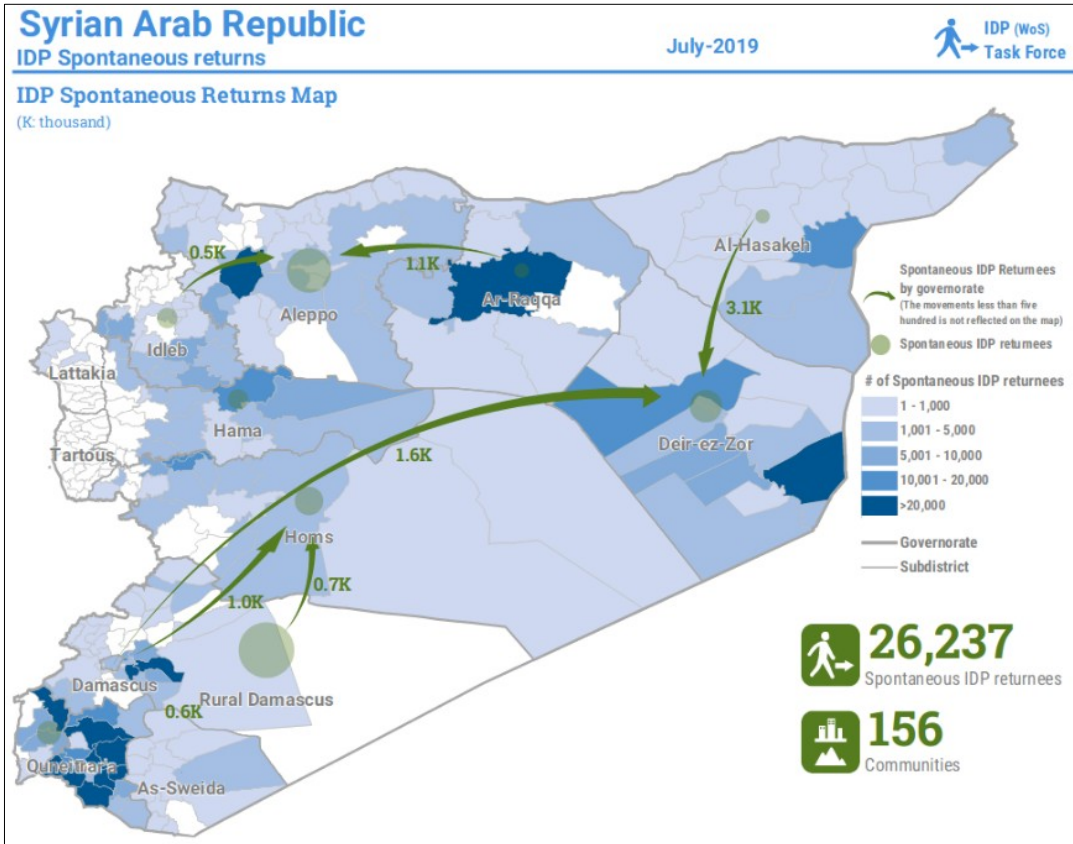
- Step 1: What are the **lessons** we want to learn?
- Step 2: Who are the **stakeholders** we need to model to learn those lessons?
- Step 3: What are the **goals and motivations** of those stakeholders?
- Step 4: What **decisions** do stakeholders make in achieving their goals and pursuing their motivations?
- Step 5: What are the **systems** that shape and restrain the decisions they make?
- Step 6: How can we **model** those systems?

Case study: Syrian Return

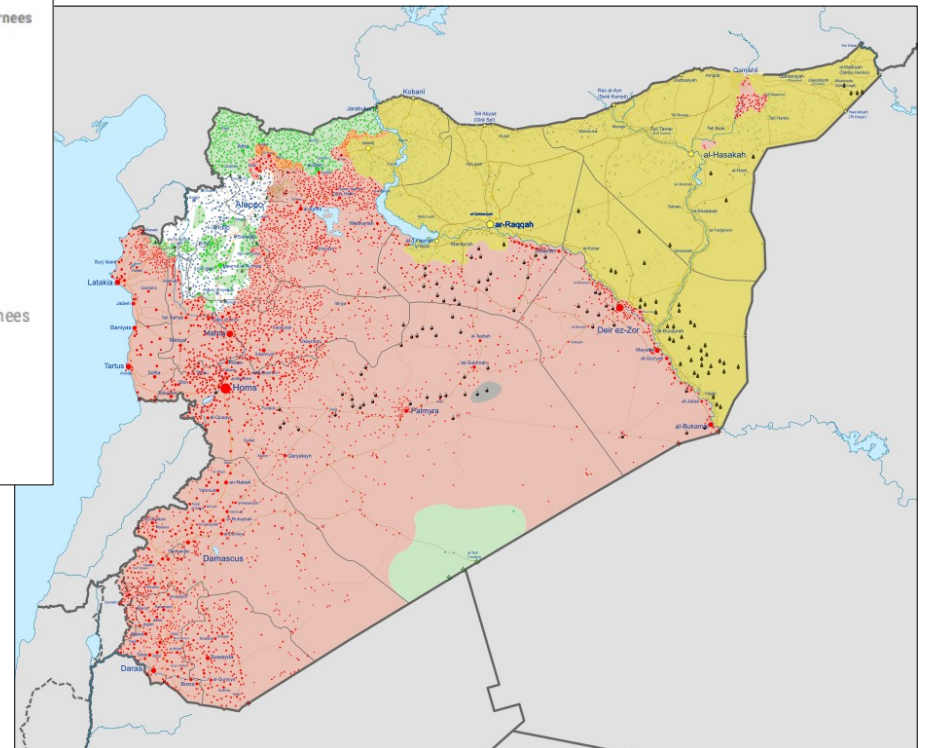
- The conclusion of the Syrian Civil War seems near and the outcome seems inevitable
- Humanitarian and state actors are beginning to speak of Syrian refugee return



Case study: Syrian Return



Territorial Control
 (Wikimedia Commons)



Migration of Internally Displaced
 (OCHA)

Case study: Syrian Return

- Matrix game with extended mechanics
- Approximately six participants
- Primarily training and strategic insight
 - not a robust analytical product



Step 1: What are the lessons we want to learn?

In this case study:

- Under what circumstances will refugees return to Syria?
- How can a safe state for return be fostered?
- Which actors might undermine this goal, and how?



Step 2: Who are the stakeholders we need to model to learn those lessons?

Refugees (Sunni / Shi'a? Rebel or Gov't sympathies?)	Internally Displaced People	Local civilians (Kurds?)	
Government of Syria (Hezbollah?)	Extremist Rebel groups	Moderate Rebel groups (Kurds?)	
Neighbouring Governments (Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan?)	International Regime (EU, USA, Russia...)	Humanitarian System (UN, INGOs, local NGOs)	Other extra- territorial actors? (Hezbollah? ISIS?)

Recall: Each stakeholder group can *always* contain sub-groups



Step 2: Who are the stakeholders we need to model to learn those lessons?

Refugees (mechanically represent multiple groups / merge with IDPs)	Internally Displaced People	Local civilians	
Government of Syria (capable of controlling Hezbollah + Russian units?)	Extremist Rebel groups	Moderate Rebel groups (Kurds?)	
Neighbouring Governments (Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan?)	International Regime (merge)	Humanitarian System (merge)	Other extra-territorial actors? (merge with other actors)

Who can we eliminate or conglomerate as less relevant to our learning goals?

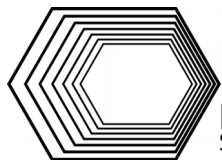


Step 2: Who are the stakeholders we need to model to learn those lessons?

Refugees (mechanically represent multiple groups / merge with IDPs)	Internally Displaced People	Local civilians	
Government of Syria (capable of controlling Hezbollah + Russian units?)	Extremist Rebel groups	Moderate Rebel groups (Kurds)	
Lebanese Government (Turkey, Jordan)	International Regime (merge)	Humanitarian System (merge)	Other extra-territorial actors (merge with other actors)

Can we restrict geographical area to limit actors?

- In this case, we can restrain our map to Western Syria and Lebanon



Step 3: What are the overall issues and specific goals and motivations of those stakeholders?

Refugees / IDPs

Government of Syria

Extremist Rebel groups

Moderate Rebel groups

Lebanese Government

International Regime

Humanitarian System

Step 3: What are the overall issues and specific goals and motivations of those stakeholders?

Refugees / IDPs

- Access to stable livelihoods
- Maintenance of land claims
- Safety and security
- Settlement with like social/political peers
- Desire to return

Government of Syria

- Encourage return for reasons of control & legitimacy
- Control territory
- International legitimacy

Extremist Rebel groups

- Retain control of territory
- Limit military losses
- Maintain ideological purity
- End the conflict with a power-sharing agreement & control of territory

Moderate Rebel groups

- Retain control of territory
- Limit civilian and military losses
- Legitimacy via politics
- End the conflict with a power-sharing agreement & control of territory

Lebanese Government

- Encourage returns
- International funding
- International legitimacy

International Regime

- “Not in my backyard”: keep refugees out of Europe
- Establish Syria as a safe space ASAP (with aim of returning people)
- Limit spending of donor dollars

Humanitarian System

- Safety and security
- Reputation
- Funding

Step 4: What decisions do stakeholders make in achieving their goals and pursuing their motivations?

Refugees / IDPs

Government of Syria

Extremist Rebel groups

Moderate Rebel groups

Lebanese Government

International Regime

Humanitarian System

Step 4: What decisions do stakeholders make in achieving their goals and pursuing their motivations?

Refugees / IDPs

- Is return safe?
- Will return improve my quality of life?
- Will I lose ownership of land in Syria?

Government of Syria

- Continue the conduct of the war or make concessions for peace?
- Prosecute or welcome refugees?

Extremist Rebel groups

- Continue the conduct of the war or push for peace?
- Prosecute or welcome refugees?
- Maintain ideological purity?

Moderate Rebel groups

- Continue the conduct of the war or push for peace?
- Prosecute or welcome refugees?
- Compete for international legitimacy?

Lebanese Government

- Deport refugees?
- Place limits on humanitarian actions?

International Regime

- Put pressure on peace process?
- Guarantee protections of refugees?
- Continue funding the humanitarian response?
- Intervene?

Humanitarian System

- Enter Syria?
- Design projects within scope of Lebanese gov't demands?
- Speak out against forced movements of refugees?

Step 5: What are the systems that shape and restrain the decisions they make?

Refugees / IDPs

Government of Syria

Extremist Rebel groups

Moderate Rebel groups

Lebanese Government

International Regime

Humanitarian System

Step 5: What are the systems that shape and restrain the decisions they make?

Refugees / IDPs

- Information flow on situation in Syria
- Quality of Life
- Threats in home territories

Government of Syria

- Control of territory
- International Legitimacy
- Available resources/funds

Extremist Rebel groups

- Control of territory
- Ideological Legitimacy
- Available resources/funds

Moderate Rebel groups

- Control of territory
- International Legitimacy
- Available resources/funds

Lebanese Government

- Size of refugee communities in their territories
- Available resources/funds
- Local unrest

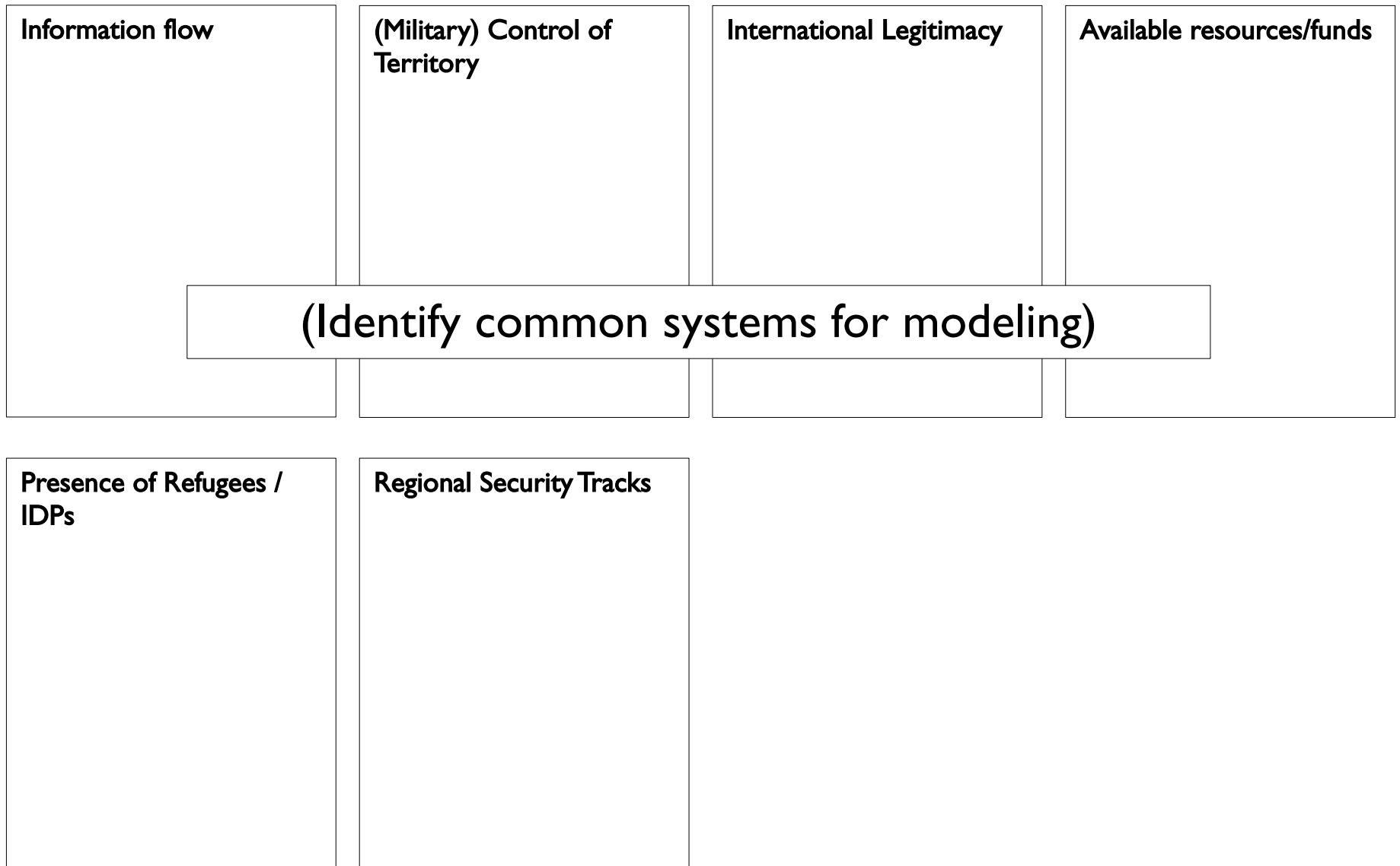
International Regime

- Limiting humanitarian budget
- Public support (tied to migration control)

Humanitarian System

- International Legitimacy
- Available resources/funds

Step 5: What are the systems that shape and restrain the decisions they make?



Step 6: How can we model those systems?

Information flow

- Secret tokens (face up/ face down)
- Scouting mechanism (visiting a map area reveals security rating)

(Military) Control of Territory

- Map with area control
- Simplified military tokens

International Legitimacy

- Legitimacy scores (affected by military action, refugee hosting, assessment of international actor participant, etc)

Available resources/funds

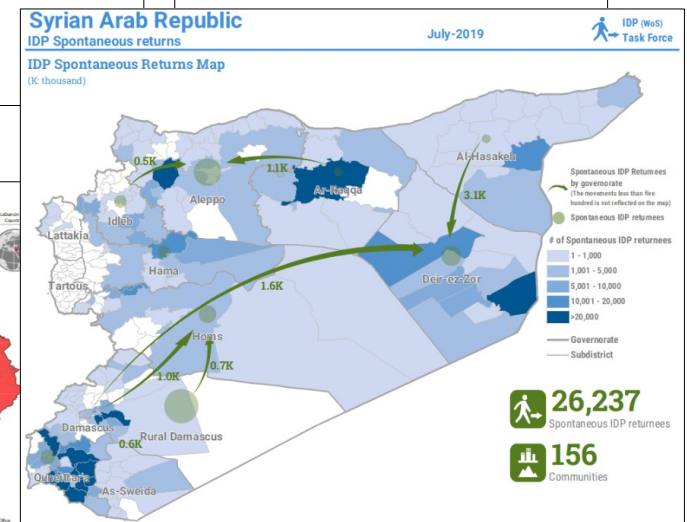
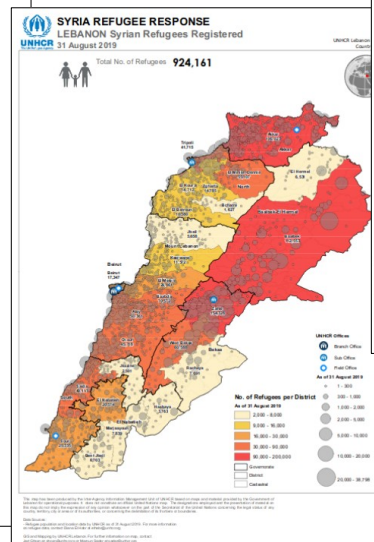
- Universal cash/resource currency

Presence of Refugees / IDPs

- Tokens on map
 - Represent different political / social sympathies
- Migration mechanics, including closed borders
- Distinction between IDPs and refugees

Regional Security Tracks

- Hidden ranking
- Affected by:
 - Conflict
 - Political / social affiliation
 - Security actions



Review - How to model non-military behaviour

- Step 1: What are the **lessons** we want to learn?
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Example: “The Day My Life Froze”

15-30 participants, 3-4 hours including briefings / debriefings

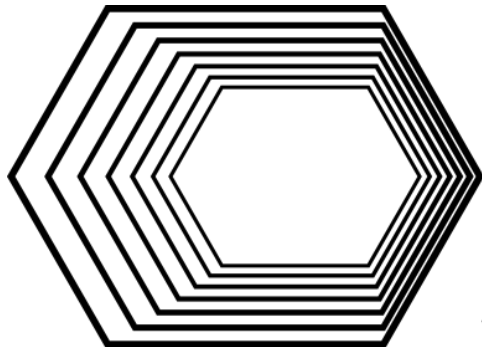
- Refugee households
- Humanitarian workers
- Donor reps
- Host state ministers



...Any questions?

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