



*Human Terrain System*

# **The Human Terrain System: Mission, Organization, and Capabilities**

**9 April 2008**



# The Focus vs The Target

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# HTS Objectives



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- Provide BCT/RCT commanders with relevant, socio-cultural information and knowledge, and the dedicated expertise to integrate that understanding into their military decision-making process
- Minimize loss in continuity between unit Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority
- Research, interpret, archive and provide cultural information and knowledge to enhance operational effectiveness
- Maximize effectiveness of operational decisions by harmonizing COAs with target area cultural context



# What Makes HTS Unique?



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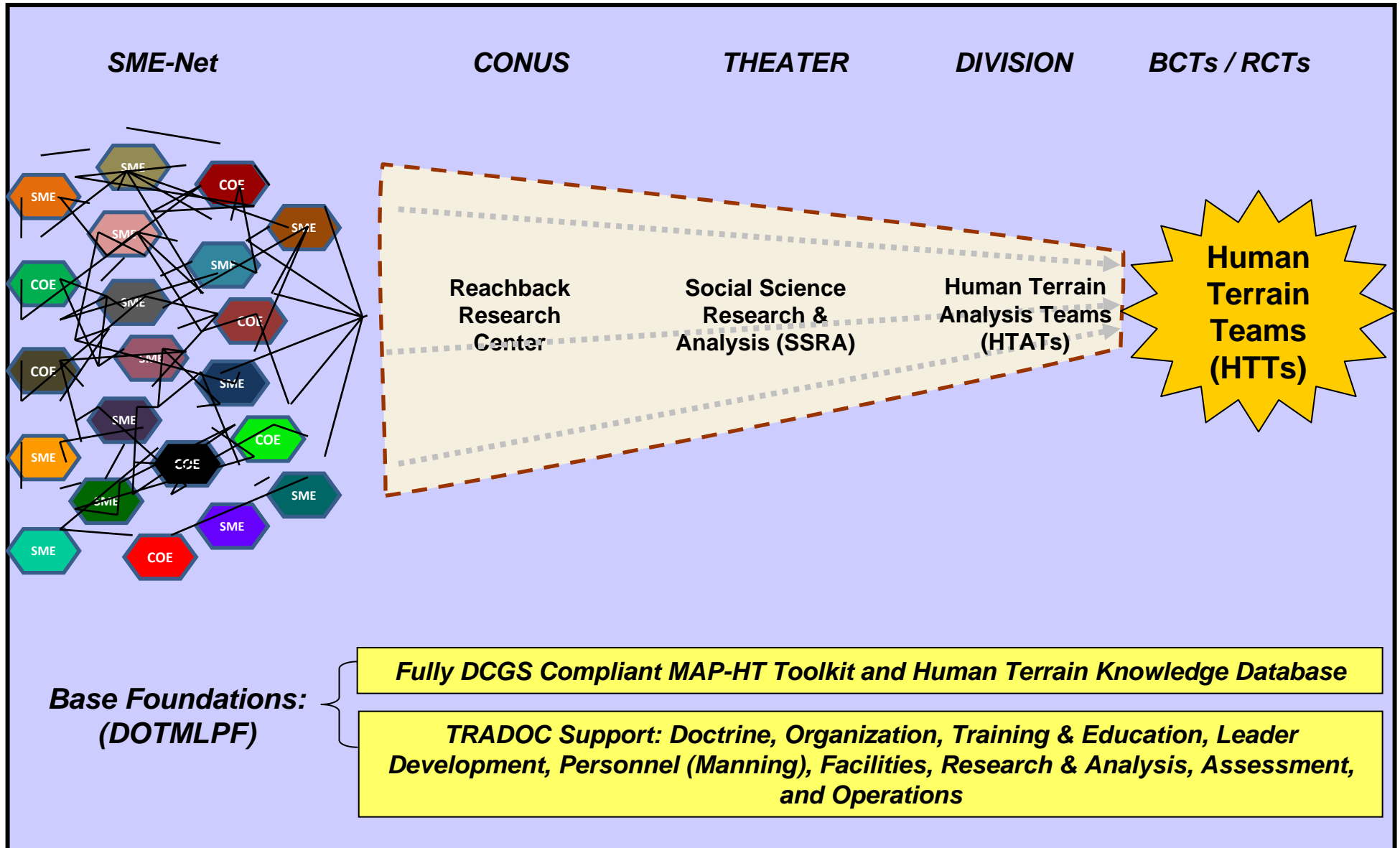
## The HTS has two primary social science capabilities:

1. **Area Studies (History, Sociology, Literature, Culture, Language)**
  - Leverages the existing body of knowledge from the social sciences and humanities that is relevant to the Area of Operations
  
2. **Anthropology**
  - Provides the **field research** capability to acquire additional knowledge tailored specifically to operational need and local relevance



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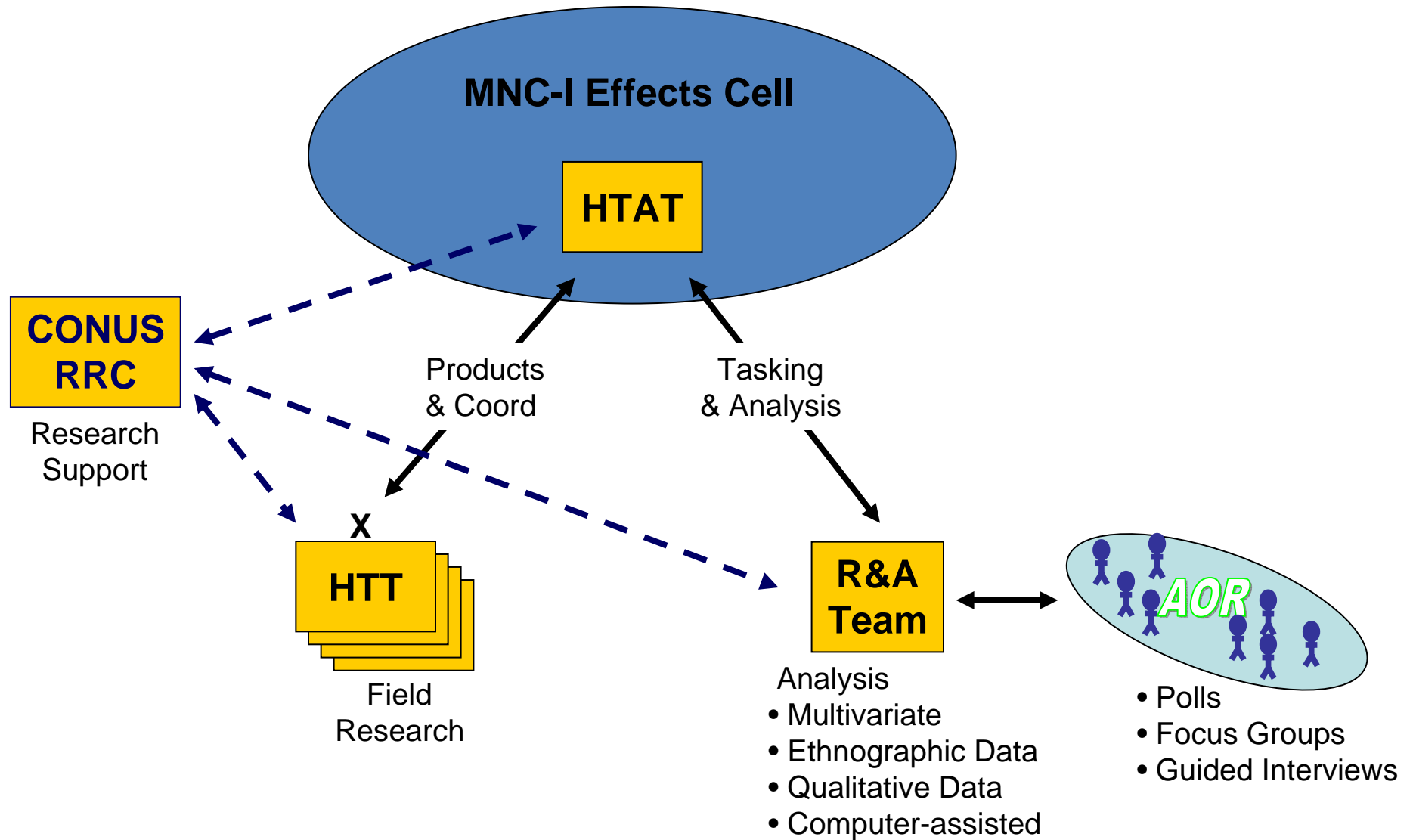




# HTS Support of XVIII ABC as MNC-I



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# Human Terrain Team (HTT) – BCT/RCT



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## Human Terrain Team Leader

Specs: AC or RC / Retired Military, O-5/6,  
Cbt Arms/SOF  
Former BDE/BN Cmd

Duties: Commander's Human Terrain Advisor,  
Integration of human terrain with MDMP,  
Represent population at unit planning

## Social Scientist

Specs: Civilian, MA/PhD,  
Cultural Anthropologist/Sociologist  
Duties: Advise HTT and unit staff,  
conduct/manage ethnographic/social  
science research and analysis

## Human Terrain Analyst

Specs: Military, E-6 to O-4,  
CA/PSYOP/SOF or MI

Trained debriefer & data researcher  
Duties: Primary human terrain researcher  
from Coalition elements (SOF, patrols, NGOs  
GOs etc)

## Human Terrain Research Manager

Specs: Military, E-6 to O-4,  
CA/PSYOP/SOF or MI

Duties: Integrate human terrain research plan  
with unit intelligence collection plan/OPLANS  
Serve as first CI screen for HT data,  
Secondary human terrain data researcher

## Social Scientist

Spec: Civilian, MA/PhD,  
Area Studies / Intl Relations,  
Fluency in area language  
Duties: Provide local area interpretation of  
human terrain information  
and run focus groups with locals

## Human Terrain Analyst

Specs: Military, E-6 to O-4,  
CA/PSYOP/SOF or MI

## Human Terrain Research Manager

Specs: Military, E-6 to O-4,  
CA/PSYOP/SOF or MI  
Secondary human terrain data researcher

Team size  
expanding to nine



# Village Assessments



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## Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Protocol

- Local perspectives provide a measure of priority
  - “we need a walkway...”
  - “we don’t have anything that uses electricity...”
  - What they don’t know they need
- Eliciting tribal info; organization, leadership, power, problems
- Identify social networks that affect the local economy
- Street shura, focus groups, open-ended interviews, MEDCAPs



***Key contribution of HTT is understanding of local human dynamics***



# HTT Impact Assessment - Aug 07



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- Brigade Commander:
  - "When we took over, of 83 formal and informal districts, 19 districts supported the government last year, and now it's 53. [COL (P) Mick Nicholson] made some of the progress, but I absolutely attribute that change to the HTT."
  - "Without the HTT filter on the COAs and the alternative maneuver tools they identified to create the exact same effect, we would have lost double the lives and would have had double the contacts. The US military has been here for years now and this unit [82nd Airborne] has been here for two rotations, and it's had no effect until now."
  - "We estimate that, as a result of the HTT, we have reduced our kinetic operations by 60-70%."
- Company commander:
  - "Without the HTT, our actions would not have been as precise. If they weren't there, I would have cordoned off the village, gathered local elders and told them what we were doing, I would have told them to show me their personally-owned weapons, and if they didn't show us their weapons we would have torn up the village and taken them. Because of the HTT, I understood my alternatives!"