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Social Return on Investment for US Army Africa Security Force Assistance Operations

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Abstract: Strategic investments produce both an economic and non-economic return on investment (ROI). Unfortunately, ROI is typically expressed solely in terms of economic returns. In developing countries, non-economic ROI is an important topic for developmental considerations, to include building partner capacity, cultivating military to military relationships, aid, etc. The Army and other government agencies must justify how its investments benefit the national security interests of the United States in order to receive funding for future activities. In support of US Army Africa (USARAF) a non-economic ROI methodology, Social Return on Investment, was developed. This methodology accounts for values not normally considered in financial terms. This research will attempt to identify possible areas USARAF can measure in order to determine the value it gains from its activities in Africa. By quantifying the non-economic value using measurable benefits, USARAF can better prioritize investments and conduct trade space analysis.

Keywords: Return on Investment, Social Return on Investment, Africa Investments, Strategic Investments