

Governance Restoration in Iraq: Lessons from Local Governance

Ronald W. Johnson

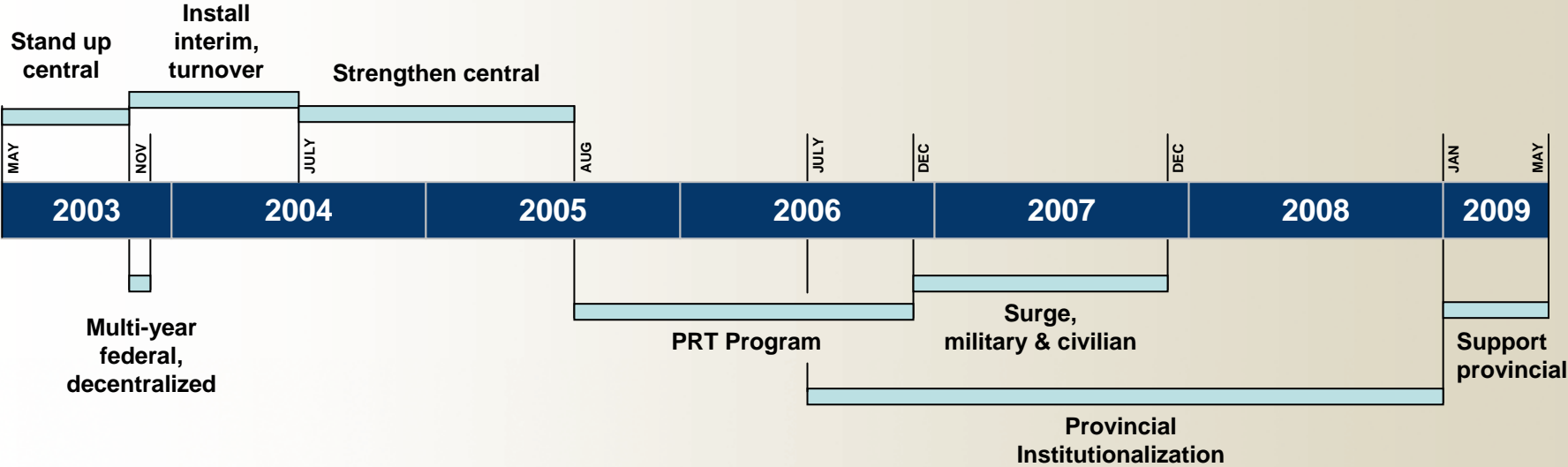
Presentation at:
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Restoring Governance in Conflict-Affected Countries:
Extending Hard Lessons Learned

Presentation themes

- Central versus local tension: Both U.S. and GOI Strategies
- Social Contract: Iraqis' perception of the state's performance of *governance* functions tells a story
- The story helps us understand some of the *lessons learned*

Governance Strategies Shifted Over Time



Early Governance Restoration: Strong Central with Brief Decentralization Flirtation

May – Oct 2003

CPA stand up central government

Oct – Nov 2003

multi-year program to develop federal, decentralized state

Nov 2003 – July 2004

Install interim government and turn over responsibility

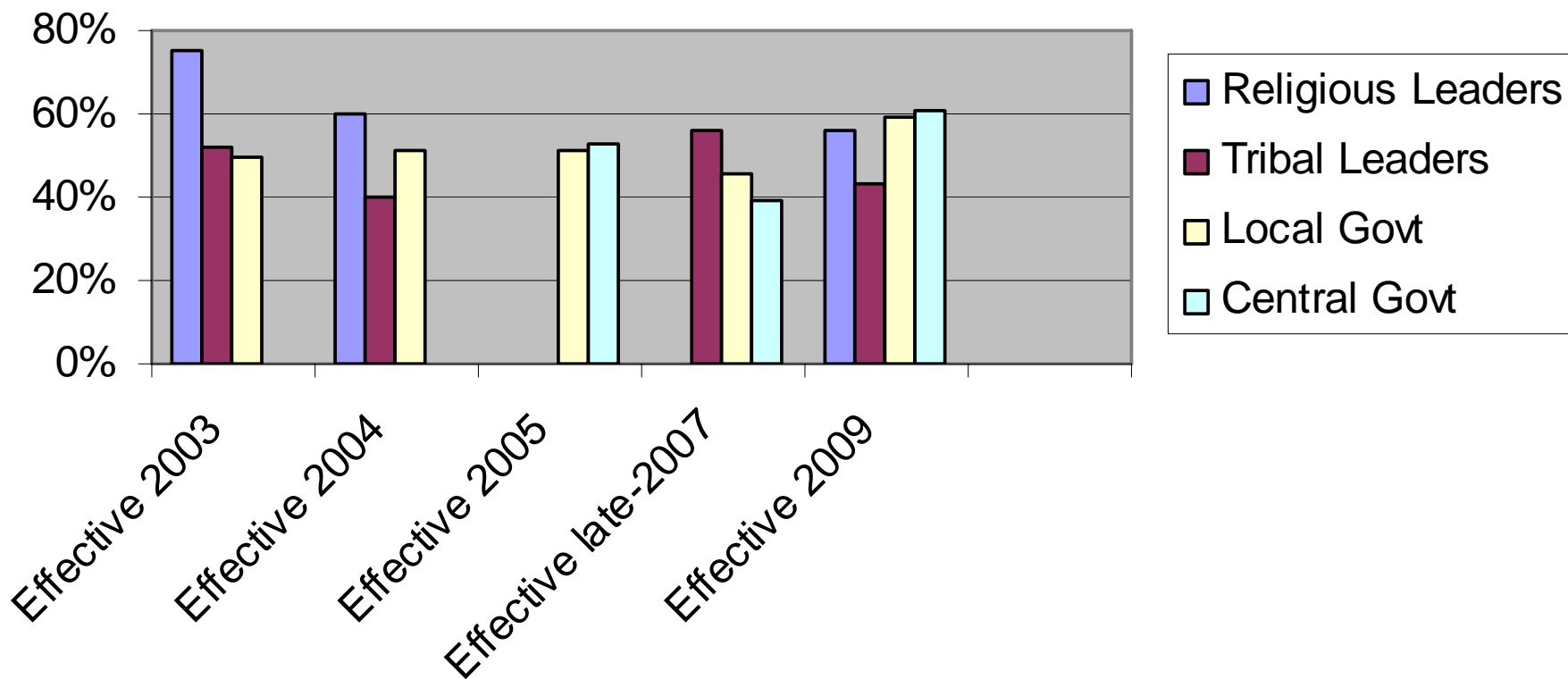
July 2004 – Aug 2005

“I am accredited to the central government of Iraq; my priorities are security, employment, and strong central government” (newly appointed Ambassador John Negroponte)

Strategic (U.S.) Reversal: Renewed Focus on Provincial Authority, not Neglecting Center

Aug 2005 – Nov 2006	PRT program, emphasizing provincial
Nov 2006 – Dec 2007	Surge in troops and civilians deployed to provinces, districts and neighborhoods
Aug 2005 – Jan 2009	Electoral and practical institutionalization of provincial government; strengthen central capacity
Jan 2009 – present	Strengthen capacity of elected provincial officials

The Social Contract: Opinion Leadership and Views of Institutions Have Shifted in Iraq



Graphic shows the percent of respondents who rate the respective institutions as effective

Sources: 2003, 2004 RTI International: *Iraq Quality of Life Surveys*; 2005 – 2009, ABC/BBC Opinion Polls

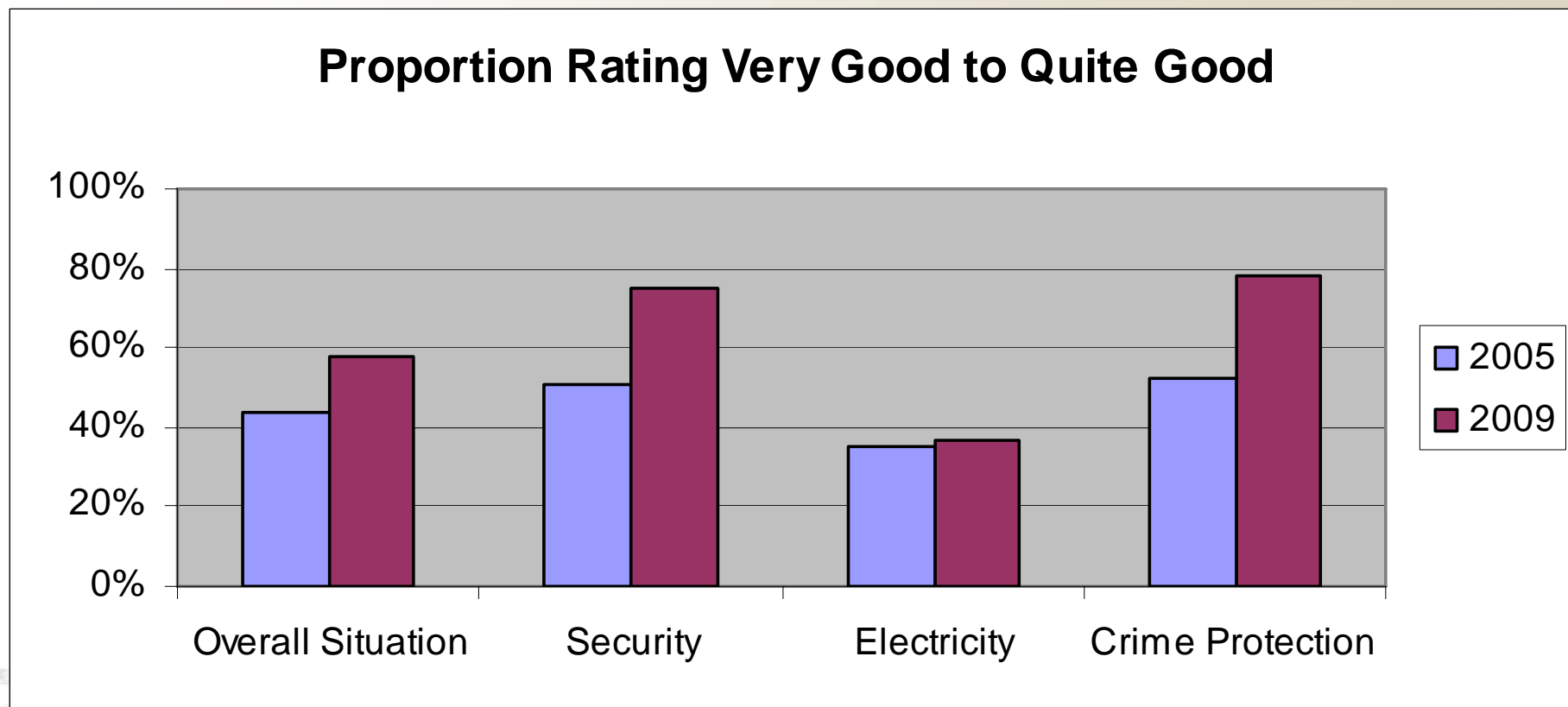
Opinion Shifts About Performance Relate to Perceived Importance of Different Institutions

- During occupation, religious and tribal leaders most highly favored
- During periods of violence, especially sectarian, opinions about religious affiliated parties shifted downward
- Opinions about tribal leaders during heightened violence, on the other hand, improved
- More recent views of effectiveness of governmental institutions has improved with improved security, improved services, and more responsive political processes

Governmental Effectiveness Has Shown Changes

- Water, electricity, sewerage, drainage, solid waste services hovered around 20% approval in 2004 (RTI QOL Surveys)
- Same services in 2009 improved in approval ratings to around 40%, and with electricity removed, exceeded 50% (ABC/BBC polls)
- Security improved considerably

Selected Categories of Service Improvement: 2005-2009



Source: ABC/BBC Opinion Polls, February 2009

Representation Function

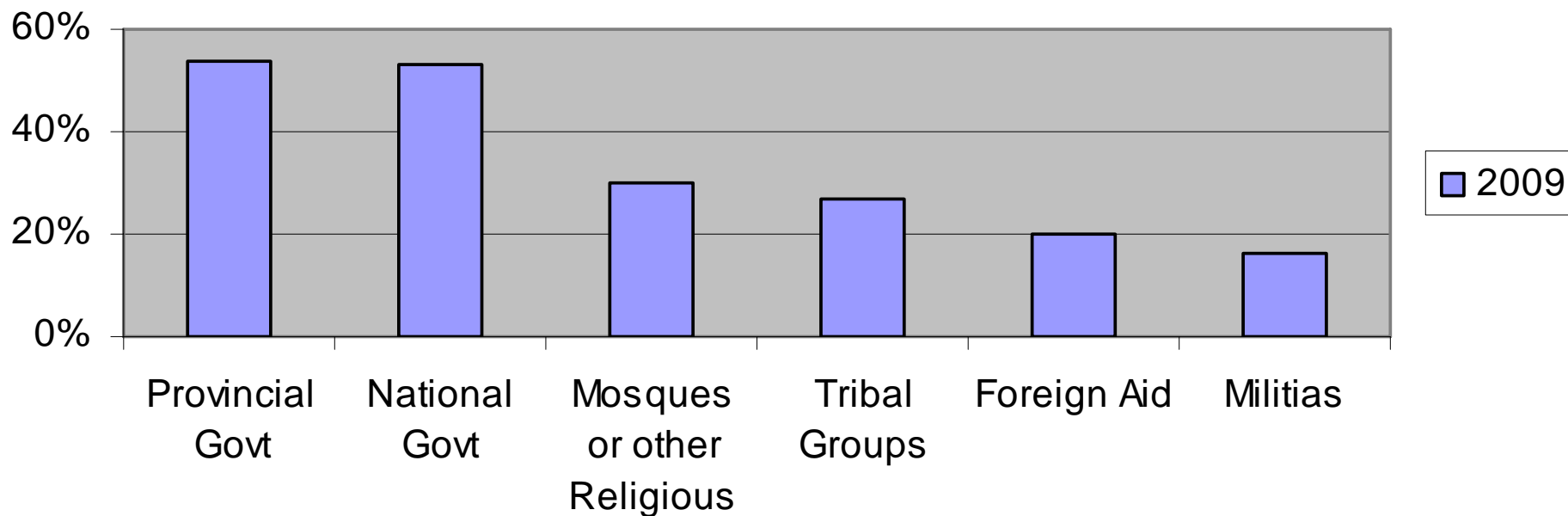
- 2003 – Contrary to U.S. policy (*RTI QOL Survey*)
 - 75-80% population felt Iraq ready for local elections
 - 40% population felt Iraq ready for national elections
- 2009 – Confidence in Iraq's freely electing leaders (*ABC/BBC*)
 - 43% believe provincial elections **increased** their confidence
 - Only 18% believe provincial elections **decreased** their confidence
 - Similar views on prospects for security, service delivery, conflict resolution and economic opportunity

What Do These Trends Tell Us About the Functioning of the State?

- Causal directions among services improvements, security and representation are complex
- Provincial election outcomes indicate some success of more secular, more issue-focused candidates and parties
- Traditional authority seems to be waning in importance

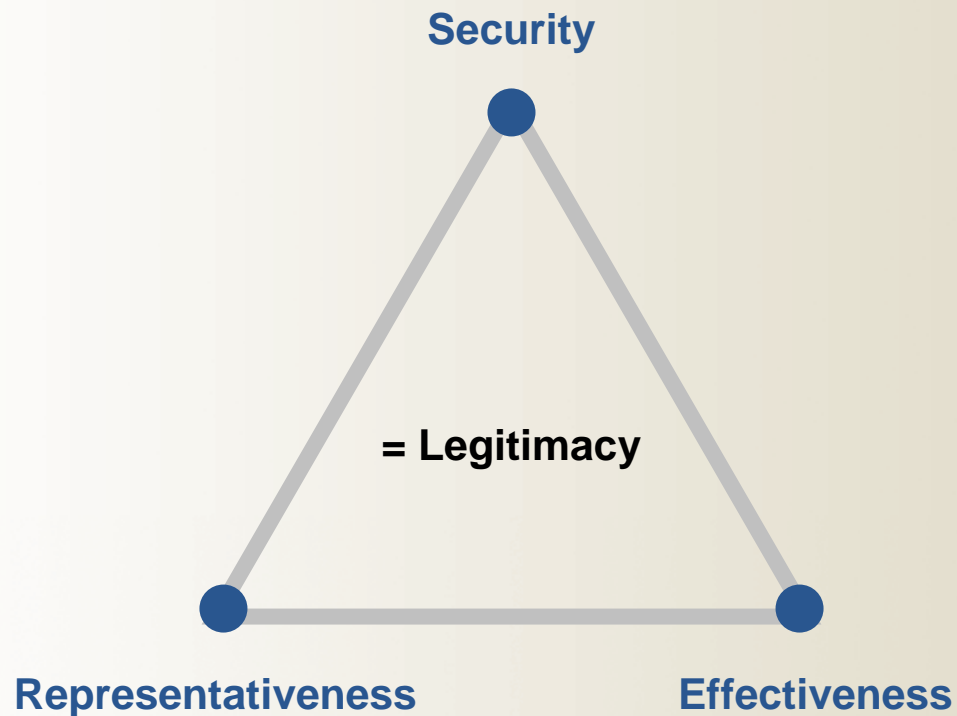
Attribution of Improvements Has Shifted to Governmental Institutions

Extent to Which Groups Provide Services



Source: ABC/BBC Opinion Polls

Legitimacy and Prospects for Stability at the Nexus of Governance Functions



Implications for Governance Restoration: Some “Hard-earned” Lessons

- Balanced attention to security, services effectiveness and representation
- Citizens’ appreciation of the role of the state in these functions critical
- Central – Local balance in restoration strategy
- Postponing elections, at least at local level, is costly strategy

For More Information

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