

**CIVIL-MILITARY TRANSITION AND CRISIS GOVERNANCE: A MODEL FOR PROGRESSIVE CIVILIAN INTEGRATION****TRANSIÇÃO CIVIL-MILITAR E GOVERNANÇA DE CRISES: UM MODELO PARA A INTEGRAÇÃO PROGRESSIVA DE CIVIS****TRANSICIÓN CIVIL-MILITAR Y GOBERNANZA DE CRISIS: UN MODELO PARA LA INTEGRACIÓN CIVIL PROGRESIVA**

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**Marcus Vinicius Gomes Pereira<sup>1</sup>, Jacintho Maia Neto<sup>2</sup>****ABSTRACT**

Prolonged military involvement in humanitarian crisis management challenges subsidiarity and military exceptionality, necessitating a structured civilian transition. This article therefore develops a strategic model for the gradual transfer of military operational functions to specialized civilian institutions. Employing a comprehensive qualitative multiple case study, it comparatively analyzes Brazil's Operation Acolhida, national (São Francisco), and international experiences (Somalia, Libya, Mali). Data derived from detailed documentary analysis and theoretical review. The study identifies key factors for successful military-to-civilian functional transfer, proposing a structured framework for progressive replacement of military leadership. Grounded in inter-institutional planning, clear competency delineation, and effective local capacity building, this model contributes to defense public policy and civil-military management, fostering sustainable, legitimate, and democratically accountable humanitarian operations and civil-military management through civilian primacy.

**Keywords:** International Cooperation. Humanitarian Intervention. Military Intervention. International Organization.

**RESUMO**

O envolvimento militar prolongado na gestão de crises humanitárias desafia os princípios da subsidiariedade e da excepcionalidade militar, exigindo uma transição civil estruturada. Este artigo, portanto, desenvolve um modelo estratégico para a transferência gradual de funções operacionais militares para instituições civis especializadas. Utilizando um estudo de caso múltiplo qualitativo abrangente, analisa comparativamente a Operação Acolhida do Brasil, experiências nacionais (São Francisco) e internacionais (Somália, Líbia, Mali). Os dados foram obtidos por meio de análise documental detalhada e revisão teórica. O estudo identifica fatores-chave para o sucesso da transferência funcional de militares para civis, propondo uma estrutura para a substituição progressiva da liderança militar. Fundamentado

<sup>1</sup> Postdoctoral researcher in International Security and Defense. Escola Superior de Guerra. E-mail: marcus.pereira@defesa.gov.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1616-9711> Lattes: 0182704220595324

<sup>2</sup> Doctor of Business Administration. Escola Superior de Guerra. E-mail: jacintho.neto@esg.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5694-448X> Lattes: 5927345327001433



no planejamento interinstitucional, na clara delimitação de competências e no efetivo desenvolvimento de capacidades locais, este modelo contribui para as políticas públicas de defesa e para a gestão civil-militar, promovendo operações humanitárias sustentáveis, legítimas e democraticamente responsáveis, bem como uma gestão civil-militar pautada pela primazia civil.

**Palavras-chave:** Cooperação Internacional. Intervenção Humanitária. Intervenção Militar. Organização Internacional.

## RESUMEN

La prolongada participación militar en la gestión de crisis humanitarias pone en entredicho los principios de subsidiariedad y excepcionalidad militar, lo que exige una transición civil estructurada. Este artículo, por consiguiente, desarrolla un modelo estratégico para la transferencia gradual de funciones operativas militares a instituciones civiles especializadas. Mediante un exhaustivo estudio de casos múltiples cualitativo, se analizan comparativamente la Operación Acolhida de Brasil, así como experiencias nacionales (São Francisco) e internacionales (Somalia, Libia, Malí). Los datos se obtuvieron a partir de un análisis documental detallado y una revisión teórica. El estudio identifica factores clave para una transferencia funcional exitosa de militares a civiles y propone un marco estructurado para el reemplazo progresivo del liderazgo militar. Fundamentado en la planificación interinstitucional, una clara delimitación de competencias y un eficaz fortalecimiento de las capacidades locales, este modelo contribuye a la política pública de defensa y a la gestión cívico-militar, fomentando operaciones humanitarias y una gestión cívico-militar sostenibles, legítimas y democráticamente responsables mediante la primacía civil.

**Palabras clave:** Cooperación Internacional. Intervención Humanitaria. Intervención Militar. Organización Internacional.



## **1 CONTEXTUALIZATION AND JUSTIFICATION**

Civil-military relations are critical to national security, particularly in crisis contexts. While Armed Forces often provide a rapid initial response due to their logistical and operational capabilities (Brazil 2020a), their sustained involvement necessitates a planned, gradual transition to specialized civilian agencies for operational continuity and social stability. This strategic planning, considering political objectives and a clear end state (Brazil 2020a), is essential.

Operation Acolhida exemplifies this need, as its persistent military participation, despite civilian coordination, lacks clear guidelines for replacing military capabilities with permanent civilian structures. This study, by analyzing international experiences, aims to support effective and legitimate future transitions.

To achieve its objectives, this research adopts the multiple case study method, with Operation Acolhida as its main focus, complemented by international (Somalia, Libya and Mali) and national (Operation São Francisco) experiences. This approach allows the analysis of patterns, lessons learned and critical factors in different contexts, expanding the validity of the propositions developed.

## **2 PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

While Armed Forces are essential in initial humanitarian crises due to rapid response capabilities, their prolonged involvement presents institutional and social challenges, necessitating a gradual transition to specialized civilian institutions that adheres to subsidiarity and exceptionality principles.

This research addresses the central problem: "How to structure and operationalize an effective and gradual transition of the Armed Forces' functions to specialized civilian institutions in humanitarian crises, ensuring operational continuity, institutional efficiency, and social stability?"

To answer this, the study investigates:

- Critical factors influencing transition effectiveness;
- Lessons from similar international experiences;
- A strategic-operational model to reduce risks and optimize resources;
- Necessary institutional and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms.

This contributes to specialized literature and public policy formulation for Operation Acolhida and similar contexts.



## 2.1 GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The study's general objective is to develop a structured model for the gradual and coordinated transition of Armed Forces' operational and administrative functions in humanitarian operations to specialized civilian institutions, ensuring action continuity, institutional efficiency, and social stability.

To achieve this, the study's specific objectives are to:

- Identify and analyze critical factors influencing effective military-to-civilian transition.
- Examine lessons and good practices from international experiences of military responsibility transfer to civilian bodies.
- Propose strategic and operational guidelines to minimize risks and optimize resource use during transition.
- Develop institutional and inter-institutional mechanisms for effective coordination and cooperation between military and civilian personnel.
- Develop indicators for monitoring and evaluating transition effectiveness, enabling continuous adjustments.

These objectives aim to strengthen national capacities in humanitarian crisis management, providing practical tools and a solid conceptual basis for future operations and public policies.

## 2.2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

Crisis governance in contemporary contexts necessitates intricate civil-military coordination, respecting distinct competencies and constitutional limits. The increasing military involvement in traditionally civilian roles underscores the need for progressive functional transition from temporary military responses to permanent civilian-led governance, vital for democratic stability and effective public policy (Huntington, 2016; Brooks, 2007; Mazurkiewicz, 2022).

Samuel P. Huntington's (1956, 2016) distinction between objective and subjective civilian control is foundational: objective control entails a professional, politically neutral military serving civilian purpose, while subjective control risks effectiveness through direct political influence. Brooks (2007, 2016) critiques this model for modern military roles, highlighting "mission creep" and "civilianization" where military expertise extends beyond combat, potentially weakening civilian capacity and democratic legitimacy. In Brazil, military involvement in Guarantee of Law and Order (GLO) operations operates under the principle of exceptionality (Federal Constitution, 1988; Brazil, 1999), but its transitory nature often blurs functions, challenging civilian primacy (Krupski, 2023; Mazurkiewicz, 2022).



This study conceptualizes gradual military functional transition through Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) and Institutional Capacity Building (ICB). TGP views military intervention as provisional, requiring planned demilitarization and structured responsibility transfer. ICB strengthens civilian capacities through training and robust coordination networks (Mazurkiewicz, 2022; Pereira & Diniz, 2021). This transition aligns with subsidiarity (local intervention when civilian capacity is lacking) and exceptionality, ensuring civilian primacy and sustainability. Effective transition demands mutual understanding and sustained coordination among governmental, military, multilateral, and civil society actors, termed crisis governance (Grigoli, 2023).

Functional transition, involving the progressive replacement of emergency military functions with permanent civilian structures, requires robust inter-institutional governance and meticulous planning. Administrative and legal tools, such as contractual renegotiations and inter-federative agreements, are crucial (Pereira & Diniz, 2021). Operation Acolhida exemplifies this challenge, with its inter-institutional coordination lacking a defined transition plan (Silva & Pereira, 2023), highlighting inherent tensions in long-term military involvement. While Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) concepts (NATO CIMIC Doctrine AJP-3.4.9, 2013) inform Brazilian experiences like Operation São Francisco and Operation Acolhida, a critical gap exists in formal instruments for systematic military replacement and sustained civilian primacy. International literature emphasizes advance planning, clear role definitions, and staggered demobilization for effective transitions (Clayton et al., 2023; Brazil, 2020a).

In summary, the theoretical landscape underscores the complexities of transitioning responsibilities from military to civilian authorities. A sustainable approach necessitates a thorough understanding of civil control, inter-institutional coordination, and managing role expectations. Principles of subsidiarity and exceptionality, combined with lessons from diverse experiences, highlight the critical importance of strategic advance planning, robust civilian capacity building, and legitimate shared governance mechanisms as the foundation for the proposed transition model.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory multiple case study approach, following Yin (2015) and George and Bennett (2005). This methodology aims to deepen the understanding of gradual transitions in humanitarian crisis management from military to specialized civilian institutions, by comparing diverse national and international contexts. It specifically examines how theoretical constructs from civil-military relations and governance transition theories manifest in real-world scenarios.



The research combined theoretical and empirical dimensions. The theoretical dimension involved a comprehensive literature review on civil-military relations, crisis governance, and institutional capacity building, including the evolution from Huntingtonian paradigms to contemporary critiques by Brooks. The empirical dimension was based on qualitative comparative analysis of selected cases through rigorous documentary analysis (Creswell, 2014).

Cases were carefully chosen based on thematic relevance, contextual similarity, and potential for theoretical generalization (Yin, 2015; George & Bennett, 2005). International cases included:

- Operation Restore Hope (Somalia): Highlighting military involvement challenges in civilian transition (Clayton et al. 2023).
- Operation Unified Protector (Libya): Illustrating complexity of interventions requiring robust post-conflict structures (Mazurkiewicz 2022).
- Operation Serval (Mali): Exemplifying international military-local civilian cooperation and operational integration (Duursma 2023). Operation São Francisco (Brazil) served as a national reference for inter-institutional cooperation in urban emergency contexts.

Operation Acolhida was the main case study, selected for its ongoing nature and analytical potential to understand transition challenges and institutional perceptions (Silva & Pereira, 2023). Contextual similarity across cases ensured analytical coherence and pattern extraction for institutional transition.

Data collection relied solely on documentary analysis, systematically interpreting information from official and academic records. Primary sources included legal standards, interministerial ordinances, management reports, FT Log Hum documents, public contracts, and Civil House guidelines. Secondary sources comprised scientific articles, multilateral organization reports (UNHCR, IOM), Armed Forces doctrinal publications, and academic studies.

Data analysis utilized documentary content analysis (Bardin, 2011; Cellard, 2008), involving floating reading, thematic categorization, and triangulation. Cross-case analysis (George & Bennett, 2005) identified patterns and divergences across experiences, guided by axes such as civil institutionalization, legal support, military involvement, local capacity, and inter-institutional coordination.

Methodological rigor, transparency, and reproducibility were ensured through manual coding (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2015) and methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978), combining primary and secondary sources.



Acknowledged limitations include the absence of interviews with key actors, restricting in-depth analysis of institutional perceptions, and the qualitative approach's lower generalization degree compared to quantitative methods. However, the author's 17-month direct experience as a member of FT Log Hum in Operation Acolhida partially minimized the interview limitation, providing valuable insights into operational and interministerial dynamics.

The adopted procedures provide methodological grounding for the findings, relevant for public policy and institutional strategies in crisis management and civil-military transitions.

### 3.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

This section comparatively analyzes five distinct case studies, Somalia, Libya, Mali, and Brazil's Operations São Francisco and Acolhida, using the multiple case study method (Yin, 2015; George & Bennett, 2005). The analysis examines divergent and convergent approaches to military-to-civilian functional transition in crisis contexts, through the analytical lenses of Huntington's (2016) objective and subjective civilian control, Brooks' (2007) critiques on military roles, and the frameworks of Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) and Institutional Capacity Building (ICB). These cases, selected for empirical relevance and institutional diversity, provide insights into challenges and facilitators of sustainable transitions.

The comparative analysis employs four categories: (1) initial Armed Forces' role (alignment with exceptionality, "mission creep" potential); (2) transition planning (adherence to TGP); (3) civilian institution involvement and capacity building (alignment with ICB); and (4) inter-institutional governance mechanisms (fostering civilian primacy and objective civilian control).

### 3.2 OPERATION RESTORE HOPE (SOMALIA)

Operation Restore Hope (1992–1993), a UN-authorized humanitarian intervention in Somalia, saw extensive military deployment (UNITAF, UNOSOM II) undertaking roles beyond traditional combat, such as security and aid distribution. This broad military engagement exemplified "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007) and external subjective civilian control, challenging military exceptionality and organic objective civilian control. A critical failing was the absence of robust prior planning for phased demobilization and functional transfer to civilian structures, a significant deviation from Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) principles. Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) efforts were severely hampered by profound political fragmentation and the near-total lack of legitimate local civilian institutions, preventing viable civilian alternatives to military functions. Moreover, the mission struggled



with civil-military integration, leading to coordination failures and undermining sustainable civilian governance (Murphy 2007; Mazurkiewicz 2022). The Somali experience vividly illustrates the profound risks of neglecting strategic transition planning, ICB, and integrated governance, demonstrating how prolonged military reliance can inadvertently undermine long-term stability and legitimate governance. Detailed comparative aspects are presented in Table 1.

### 3.3 OPERATION UNIFIED PROTECTOR (LIBYA)

NATO's Operation Unified Protector (March-October 2011) saw military forces execute decisive kinetic operations to protect civilians, leading to the Libyan regime's collapse. From a Huntingtonian perspective, this represented external military power without an established framework of objective civilian control. A critical failing was the absolute absence of a coordinated stabilization or institutional reconstruction plan, starkly deviating from Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) principles. This created a strategic void, resulting in abrupt "demilitarization" without a corresponding "civilianization" strategy (Chivvis 2014). The intervention was overwhelmingly military, with a striking neglect of Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) for local civilian structures, contributing to a post-conflict power vacuum (Barfi 2014) and disregarding the principle of subsidiarity. Post-intervention, fragmented inter-institutional governance and a lack of robust coordination with civilian actors compromised legitimacy, fostering militia proliferation and authority fragmentation (Lynch 2012; Bellamy & Williams 2011). The Libyan experience underscores that military success, without comprehensive TGP planning and robust ICB, paradoxically generates prolonged instability, emphasizing the need for integrating these frameworks into strategic planning for contexts like Brazil's Operation Acolhida. Detailed comparative aspects are presented in Table 1.

### 3.4 OPERATION SERVAL (MALI)

Operation Serval (2013), initiated by France with UN authorization, successfully addressed the jihadist threat in northern Mali, yet faced significant challenges in transitioning to durable civilian governance (Tardy 2013). This intervention, predominantly military in character, risked creating a dependence on military solutions, embodying Brooks' (2007) "mission creep" and limiting early civilian authority. A critical flaw was the absence of a structured, pre-planned transition strategy from its inception, or subsequent to its replacement by Operation Barkhane, fundamentally deviating from Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) principles (Boeke & Schuurman 2015). Malian local civilian institutions remained weak and poorly integrated, with insufficient Institutional Capacity





Building (ICB) efforts to absorb complex responsibilities, hindering the application of subsidiarity. Inter-institutional governance suffered from divergent agendas between the French military and the UN mission (MINUSMA), compromising coordination and undermining objective civilian control (Charbonneau 2016). The Malian experience reinforces that tactical military success alone does not guarantee effective functional transition. For contexts like Brazil's Operation Acolhida, it underscores the paramount importance of prior, theoretically informed planning for gradual military replacement, emphasizing early civilian capability consolidation and clear governance mechanisms. Detailed comparative aspects are presented in Table 1.

### 3.5 OPERATION SÃO FRANCISCO (BRAZIL)

Operation São Francisco (2014–2015) in Rio de Janeiro's Complexo da Maré exemplified a Brazilian urban military intervention under a Guarantee of Law and Order (GLO) decree, reflecting military exceptionality due to temporary civilian security incapacity (Campos 2016). While the deployment (Silva & Figueiredo, 2017) provided immediate security, it expanded military capabilities into civilian domains, posing a "mission creep" risk (Brooks, 2007) and challenging objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016). The operation included a formal phased withdrawal plan aligned with Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) principles (Campos, 2016), yet execution faced significant challenges. Despite extensive interagency collaboration, the operation failed to consolidate lasting public policies or strengthen local civilian institutions, indicating limited Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) and hampering subsidiarity. Post-intervention, fragmented governance lacked long-term integrated strategies between federal, state, and municipal entities, undermining sustained objective civilian control. Operation São Francisco thus serves as a vital national lesson for contexts like Operation Acolhida, emphasizing the imperative of proactive, federative planning for legitimate, sustainable functional transitions, grounded in sustained ICB and robust inter-institutional governance. Detailed comparative aspects are presented in Table 1. The table below summarizes the role of the Armed Forces, transition planning, civilian institutional involvement, and inter-institutional governance mechanisms in each of the analyzed operations:



**Table 1**

*Comparative Analysis of Case Studies: Theoretical Manifestations of Civil-Military Transitions and Crisis Governance*

<b>Case Study</b>	<b>Role of Forces (Initial Phase)</b>	<b>Armed (Initial Phase)</b>	<b>Transition Planning</b>	<b>Involvement of Civilian Institutions</b>	<b>Inter-institutional Governance Mechanisms</b>
<b>Operation Restore Hope (Somalia)</b>	Massive expansion of military roles (security, aid, infrastructure) beyond traditional combat. Evident "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007) and subjective control by external actors.	Largely absent or severely hampered; lack of clear adherence to Post-Crisis Governance Theory (TGP) principles. Provisional nature not conceived upfront.	Largely absent or severely hampered; lack of clear adherence to Post-Crisis Governance Theory (TGP) principles. Provisional nature not conceived upfront.	Limited efforts towards Institutional Capacity Building (ICB); profound political fragmentation and absence of legitimate local civilian counterparts. Subsidiarity significantly hindered.	Struggled with integration (civilian/military components); fragmented mechanisms undermining objective civilian control. Lack of mutual understanding and trust (Mazurkiewicz, 2022).
<b>Operation Unified Protector (Libya)</b>	Decisive kinetic operations (no-fly zone, embargo, strikes) with a narrow focus. Minimal military role expansion beyond combat, but left a strategic void. Lack of early civilian integration.	kinetic (no-fly zone, embargo, strikes) with a narrow focus. Minimal military role expansion beyond combat, but left a strategic void. Lack of early civilian integration.	Absolute absence of coordinated stabilization/reconstruction plan. Clear deviation from TGP principles. Abrupt "demilitarization" without corresponding "civilianization" strategy.	Overwhelmingly military intervention; striking absence of local civilian structures and neglected ICB. Principle of subsidiarity largely disregarded post-conflict.	Lack of robust coordination (international/local). Fragmented post-intervention governance, contributing to militia proliferation and undermining legitimacy. Sustainable governance (Mazurkiewicz, 2022) absent.
<b>Operation Serval (Mali)</b>	Direct military character for territorial security and neutralization. Risk of military capabilities	Direct military for territorial security and neutralization. Risk of military capabilities	No structured, pre-planned transition strategy from inception. Subsequent military expansion without (Barkhane)	Local civilian institutions remained weak and poorly integrated. Insufficient ICB	Persistent coexistence of divergent agendas (French military vs. UN MINUSMA), compromising



inadvertently clear civilian efforts. coordination and  
 supplanting civilian reconstruction Subsidiarity synergy.  
 functions due to guidelines. Critical hampered by Challenges in  
 immediate deviation from TGP. civilian capacity. establishing robust  
 operational objective civilian  
 demands (Brooks, control.  
 2007).

<b>Operation São Francisco (Brazil)</b>	<p>Military intervention (GLO) in urban security, illustrating military exceptionality. Military capabilities expanded into civilian security domains, posing tension to objective civilian control and risk of "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007).</p>	<p>Included a formal plan for phased military withdrawal and progressive transfer of responsibilities. Explicit adherence to TGP principles for demilitarization, though execution faced challenges.</p>	<p>Extensive interagency collaboration, but failed to consolidate lasting public policies or strengthen local civilian institutions. ICB efforts limited, hampering subsidiarity and civilian leadership.</p>	<p>Interagency arrangement existed, but lacked long-term integrated strategies between Union, State, and Municipality. Fragmented post-intervention governance undermined objective civilian control.</p>
<b>Operation Acolhida (Brazil)</b>	<p>Significant &amp; sustained logistical/operational role (FT Log Hum) in humanitarian response; expanded into inherently civilian functions (reception, infrastructure). Evident "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007) challenging military exceptionality and objective civilian control</p>	<p>Conspicuous absence of formalized, structured transition plan from inception. No formal demobilization schedule or clear TGP framework. Transition technically recognized but not a political/institutional priority, contributing to prolonged military presence.</p>	<p>Limited capacity of local civilian governments (Roraima, Boa Vista, Pacaraima) to absorb complex functions. Significant institutional fragility and insufficient Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) efforts, hindering the operationalization of the</p>	<p>CFAE exists as a coordinating body (Civil House, ministries, UN agencies, local admin). However, it critically lacks a comprehensive transition plan with clear targets/indicators for military demobilization and civilian consolidation, leading to persistent challenges in establishing a fully civilian governance model.</p>



(Huntington,  
2016).

subsidiarity  
principle.

### 3.6 GENERAL LESSONS ON MILITARY-CIVILIAN TRANSITIONS: INSIGHTS FROM COMPARATIVE CASES

The comparative analysis of Somalia, Libya, Mali, and Brazil's Operation São Francisco critically reveals that military-to-civilian transition is a complex institutional and political process, intertwined with objective civilian control, military exceptionality, and civilian capacity. While initial military presence provided immediate stabilization in all cases, long-term sustainability hinged on establishing autonomous civilian structures.

These diverse cases (detailed in Table 1) consistently highlighted recurrent challenges. A governance vacuum emerged post-withdrawal due to inadequate Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) and fragmented coordination (Murphy 2007). Instability often followed military tactical success lacking concurrent political coordination and comprehensive institutional reconstruction (Chivvis 2014). Objective civilian control was undermined by divergent operational objectives and fragile local civilian institutions (Charbonneau 2016; Silva & Figueiredo, 2017). These experiences underscore how prolonged military reliance without clear civilian transition pathways impedes legitimate governance.

Across these diverse experiences, several common critical factors for effective military-civilian transitions emerge:

- **Explicit Understanding of Roles and Boundaries:** Clear delineation between civilian and military actors to prevent "mission creep" and ensure objective civilian control (Mazurkiewicz 2022).
- **Proactive Civilian Capacity Building:** Sustained investment in ICB to empower civilian entities to gradually assume leadership, addressing the fragility of local civilian structures.
- **Integrated and Shared Governance Mechanisms:** Clear, legally-defined, and adequately resourced mechanisms with robust multi-level coordination to ensure civilian primacy.
- **Transition as a Continuous Process (TGP Application):** Recognizing transition as an ongoing, deliberate process requiring adaptive management, aligned with Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP).

In conclusion, successful and legitimate transition demands more than military demobilization. It requires structured civilian protagonism, systematic institutionalization of local civilian authority, and sustained inter-institutional coordination. These synthesized



lessons critically inform strategic proposals for Operation Acolhida, emphasizing sustainability, efficiency, and legitimacy, rooted in constitutional principles of subsidiarity and military exceptionality.

### 3.7 MAIN CASE STUDY: OPERATION ACOLHIDA (BRAZIL)

Operation Acolhida serves as the main case study, illustrating the Brazilian State's prolonged response to the complex Venezuelan migration crisis. Operation Acolhida's mandate includes dignified reception, emergency assistance, and migrant integration (Brazil 2018b; 2018c). Formalized by Decree No. 10,917/2021, its institutional arrangement, coordinated by the Civil House (CFAE), integrates federal ministries, public agencies, UN organizations (UNHCR, IOM), and civil society. A defining feature is the significant and sustained military participation, primarily through the Humanitarian Logistics Task Force (FT Log Hum), responsible for crucial logistical support (Brazil 2021).

Operation Acolhida is characterized by its expansive scope, remarkable duration (since 2018), and inherent inter-institutional complexity, blending civilian and military capabilities across federal, state, and municipal levels. This case offers a pivotal opportunity to analyze the transition of operational and logistical functions from Armed Forces to permanent civilian structures, framed by constitutional principles of subsidiarity and exceptionality. Prolonged military involvement in civilian functions challenges objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016) and risks "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007), making investigation especially relevant for reducing military presence and consolidating civilian management, aligning with TGP and ICB.

### 3.8 CONTEXTUALIZATION AND SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS

Operation Acolhida's execution centers on three axes: border control, emergency shelter, and voluntary migrant relocation, intricately integrating Armed Forces logistics with civilian and international expertise (Ministry of Social Development 2024). Although FT Log Hum operates with temporary military contingents, personnel reduction has stagnated since 2023. This persistent military presence in civilian roles challenges military exceptionality and signals "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007), highlighting the critical need for a systematic civilian transition plan.

Logistical and contractual planning, managed by FT Log Hum under the Ministry of Defense's Work Plans (PTrab), details substantial expenditures (e.g., R\$340 million in 2023 for food, transportation, surveillance, utilities – Brazil 2023). Contract management is jointly executed with the Executing Management Unit, ensuring financial oversight. A significant



portion of these administrative and logistical contracts is suitable for civilian transfer to Roraima, Boa Vista, or Pacaraima. FT Log Hum's accumulated technical knowledge and Work Plan insights provide invaluable instruments for this transition, serving as a basis for contractual renegotiations, inter-federative agreements, or direct budget transfers. Operation Acolhida thus functions as a de facto model for military-to-civilian transition, offering empirical insight into objective civilian control and subsidiarity in crisis governance.

### 3.9 OPERATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

Operation Acolhida's long-term viability under civilian management faces intricate operational and institutional challenges. Operational dependence on FT Log Hum for daily tasks, despite military rotations, hinders continuity and institutional knowledge accumulation, reinforcing "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007). The centralized budgetary and contractual execution by military units under the Ministry of Defense (CISSET/MD, 2024) reveals limited technical capacity in local administrations (Roraima, Amazonas), aggravating the governance vacuum and undermining ICB for objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016).

A significant regulatory lacuna exists: no comprehensive legal framework explicitly governs the progressive military replacement in prolonged humanitarian contexts. Current legislation (MP No. 820/2018, Law No. 13,684/2018, Decree No. 10,917/2021) establishes the mandate but lacks demobilization targets or transfer criteria, perpetuating federal military centrality and impeding subnational accountability (Brazil 2018b; 2019). This regulatory void prevents operationalizing military exceptionality and subsidiarity.

Unplanned military withdrawal risks disrupting sensitive services (e.g., 30% of 2024 budget for food supply). Local municipalities like Pacaraima, with limited administrative structures, struggle with complex contractual management without federative support (Pereira and Diniz 2021). Weak inter-institutional coordination between subnational entities and federal agencies, despite CFAE's role, lacks a comprehensive transition plan with clear timetables, goals, and indicators for civilian consolidation. Overcoming these multifactorial challenges demands deliberate political decision and a robust, phased technical-institutional transfer process to restore military exceptionality and civilian primacy.

### 3.10 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTIONS

Analysis of institutional perceptions reveals tensions and absence of formalized guidelines regarding Operation Acolhida's military-to-civilian transition. Documentary evidence (Brazil 2023; 2024) confirms FT Log Hum's effectiveness and operational centrality, fostering a "militarized management logic." This prolonged military predominance indicates



that civilian transition is not a political priority, as existing regulations (Decree No. 10,917/2021; Law No. 13,684/2018) lack concrete transfer parameters (Brazil 2018b; 2021). This institutional inertia and lack of TGP framework suggest a de facto acceptance of military engagement beyond exceptionality, challenging objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016).

Ministry of Defense internal reports (CISSET/MD, 2024) acknowledge the need to rationalize resources and replace military-managed contracts with civilian structures, indicating technical awareness but not political prioritization. Local governments, particularly Pacaraima and Boa Vista, exhibit limited administrative and technical capacity for complex logistical functions. The absence of regulatory instruments for systematic technical and financial transfer hinders ICB initiatives.

The author's 17-month direct empirical experience as an FT Log Hum general staff member provided unique insights into the operation's interministerial and logistical dimensions, strengthening the analytical foundation, despite personnel rotations.

In summary, the transition, while technically acknowledged, lacks political and administrative structuring. Persistent military presence stems from institutional inertia and absence of viable civilian alternatives, rather than deliberate strategic guidelines. This underscores the critical importance of a gradual, legally supported, and operationally viable proposal prioritizing civilian primacy and military exceptionality.

### 3.11 STRUCTURED MODEL FOR GRADUAL TRANSITION

The longevity of Operation Acolhida, which has been running since 2018, combined with its complex interministerial configuration and the prolonged role of the Armed Forces in administrative and logistical activities, reinforces the need for clear guidelines for a progressive functional transition. This chapter presents a preliminary proposal for structuring the gradual replacement of military operational management by civilian structures, based on comparative analyses of national and international cases, current institutional norms, and the constitutional principles of subsidiarity and exceptionality in the use of the Armed Forces.

Although focused on Operation Acolhida, the model is adaptable to other emergency situations with exceptional military action. It is organized into four axes: conceptual foundations, operational guidelines, cooperation strategies and transition assessment.

### 3.12 CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF TRANSITION: REASSERTING CIVILIAN PRIMACY

The proposed model for Operation Acolhida systematically structures the progressive transfer of Armed Forces' administrative and logistical functions to qualified civilian



institutions, maintaining the Civil House's political leadership via CFAE (Decree No. 10,917/2021). This transition is anchored in subsidiarity (Union intervention only when local entities lack capacity) and military exceptionality (Armed Forces' temporary, emergency-driven use, Federal Constitution Art. 142; CL No. 97/1999). Adherence ensures gradual demobilization, safeguards objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016), and counters "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007), fostering civilian primacy and ICB.

Drawing on comparative analysis (Somalia, Libya, Mali, Operation São Francisco) and guided by Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP), the model has four pillars for a legally supported and institutionally articulated functional transition:

- Formal Recognition in Normative Acts: Explicitly embedding the transition with clear goals, realistic deadlines, and metrics for increasing civilian competences and reducing military presence. This formalization creates a transparent roadmap, crucial for accountability and signaling commitment to civilian primacy.
- Functional Classification of Military Activities: Meticulously categorizing all Armed Forces' activities to identify civilian transfer potential, distinguishing:
  - Contracted Services (e.g., transportation, food): Prime candidates for immediate civilianization.
  - Direct Operational Activities (e.g., perimeter security, camp management): Require phased transfer to civilian forces/agencies, often needing significant ICB.
  - Physical and Legal Assets (e.g., facilities, contracts): Essential comprehensive mapping and transfer protocols for continuity.
- Creation of a Technical Transition Group (GTT): A dedicated, multi-stakeholder group (Union, affected states/municipalities, international partners) for planning, negotiating, and overseeing function transfer. The GTT acts as CFAE's operational arm for transition.
- Maintenance of a Minimum Military Nucleus: A residual military nucleus (Ministry of Defense-linked) for strategic monitoring, technical advisory, and contingency response, ensuring military readiness for core defense mandates while respecting day-to-day function transfer.

This comprehensive model offers a realistic, legally sound, and institutionally articulated functional transition. It addresses the operation's inter-institutional complexity, addressing medium and long-term challenges of the Brazilian humanitarian response while upholding democratic principles and objective civilian control.





### 3.13 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES: TRANSLATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Effective functional transition from military to civilian management in Operation Acolhida requires integrated operational guidelines for adaptive planning, responsive to evolving civilian capacity. Each step is informed by Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP), aiming for objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016) and strengthened Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) while upholding subsidiarity.

The fundamental steps for this transition are:

- Comprehensive Mapping of Functions and Contracts: Meticulous inventory of all FT Log Hum-managed activities, responsibilities, and contracts, including resource allocation, personnel, and interdependencies. Crucial for identifying "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007) and establishing a baseline for military-to-civilian function transfer.
- Strategic Contract Partitioning and Re-profiling: Partitioning complex contracts (by shelter, region, service) enables incremental, gradual transfers to civilian management. This minimizes disruption and risk, facilitating manageable absorption by civilian entities and controlled implementation of subsidiarity.
- Phased Planning and Incremental Transfer: Adherence to a meticulously phased plan, starting with simpler administrative/support functions and progressing to complex military-managed routines. This approach supports ICB by allowing civilian entities to gradually develop expertise and infrastructure, ensuring responsible demilitarization consistent with TGP.
- Legal-Administrative Redesign and Formalization: Deliberate redesign to formalize responsibility transfer, using assignment clauses, inter-federative cooperation terms, and direct decentralization. Meticulously documented transfers ensure accountability and legal clarity, embedding the transition within Brazil's constitutional framework and affirming civilian authority.
- Targeted Training and Assisted Coexistence for Civilian Entities: Comprehensive and targeted ICB programs for civilian personnel, ideally during "assisted coexistence" with military counterparts. This facilitates practical knowledge transfer and mentorship, mitigating operational vacuums and ensuring a smooth shift in leadership and expertise.
- Maintenance of a Residual Military Readiness Core: A minimum military nucleus (Ministry of Defense-linked) for strategic monitoring, technical support (during civilian expertise development), rapid response contingency, and institutional memory. This ensures national security and reinforces military exceptionality by limiting military engagement to support and contingency roles.



These operational guidelines provide a pragmatic roadmap for a successful, sustained, and democratically legitimate transition from military to civilian leadership in complex humanitarian operations.

### 3.14 INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION: A CORNERSTONE FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION

Consolidating the functional transition from military to civilian leadership in humanitarian operations demands a meticulously structured framework of interinstitutional cooperation and robust federative governance, informed by lessons from cases like Somalia, Libya, Mali, and Operation São Francisco. Key strategies ensuring civilian primacy and sustained Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) include:

- Creation of a Dedicated Interinstitutional Transition Committee (CIT): A paramount technical and strategic group, formally linked to CFAE (Decree No. 10.917/2021). Comprising representatives from the Civil House, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, directly impacted states/municipalities (Roraima, Amazonas, Boa Vista, Pacaraima, Manaus), and international organizations (e.g., UNHCR, IOM). The CIT's operational mandate focuses on executing FT Log Hum function replacement, translating policy into actionable plans, fostering shared understanding, and mitigating inter-organizational friction, thereby reinforcing objective civilian control.
- Enhancement of Regional and Subnational Governance Forums: Strengthening existing platforms like State and Municipal Social Assistance Councils and SUAS's Bipartite Intermanagerial Chambers. These are vital for federative alignment, promoting subsidiarity by empowering local capacities, and ensuring continuity and legitimacy of civilian actions.
- Promotion of Intermunicipal Public Consortia: A viable alternative for municipalities with limited capacity, enabling resource, expertise, and contractual pooling for joint management of transferred responsibilities (e.g., shelter, food, transportation). This directly addresses local ICB weaknesses, fostering collective capacity and efficient resource utilization.
- Formalization via Agreements and Terms of Cooperation: Solidifying the transition through legally binding instruments for decentralized execution, clear responsibility delineation, and establishing financial/operational accountability. This legal formalization is indispensable for transparency, compliance, and sustained federative commitment to Post-Crisis Governance Transition (TGP).



- Active Integration of International Organizations: Crucial participation in the CIT, training programs for civilian entities, and monitoring transition progress. IOs provide external expertise, additional resources, and ensure adherence to international humanitarian standards, enhancing legitimacy and ICB.
- Development of a Unified Digital Information System: A centralized, accessible, and continuously updated system for managing contracts, schedules, risks, and performance indicators, accessible to all relevant entities. This enhances transparency, improves decision-making, and supports adaptive management through real-time data.
- Cultivation of a Culture of Cooperation and Trust: Fostering collaboration and mutual trust among military and civilian personnel beyond formal structures. This requires horizontal communication, clear role articulation (avoiding duplication/gaps), and unwavering institutional commitment to a successful civilian-led response, underpinning objective civilian control.

### 3.15 ASSESSMENT AND INDICATORS: MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS CIVILIAN PRIMACY

Robust monitoring and evaluation are fundamental for the proposed transition from military to civilian structures, crucial for achieving sustainable objective civilian control and ensuring military exceptionality. This model adopts specific indicators, inspired by public policy monitoring (Brazil, 2020a; Pereira & Diniz, 2021) and international evaluation methodologies (UNHCR, IOM, UN system).

Indicators are organized into four interconnected dimensions:

Operational Execution: Quantitatively tracking the effective transfer of Armed Forces' functions to civilian entities, reflecting demilitarization. Metrics include:

- Percentage of contracts and assets transferred to civilian management.
- Number of shelters under direct civilian management (municipal, state, or consortium).
- Degree of budget decentralization for local civil administrations.

Service Quality: Rigorously assessing service delivery effectiveness, reliability, and human-centeredness post-transition, ensuring humanitarian outcomes are not compromised. Metrics include:

- Contractual compliance rate (deadlines and targets).
- Number of operational failures recorded (audits/technical reports).
- Degree of beneficiary satisfaction (qualitative/quantitative research).



**Institutional Capacity:** Directly measuring the preparation, autonomy, and robustness of civilian structures to independently assume and sustain transferred functions, reflecting ICB success. Metrics include:

- Number of civilian employees trained in key areas.
- Presence and operational readiness of Civilian Executive Management Units (UGEs) at local level.
- Regularity of budget execution and accountability of decentralized resources.

**Interinstitutional Governance:** Monitoring the quality, cohesion, and effectiveness of coordination among all entities involved (federal, local, international partners). Metrics include:

- Frequency and outcome of Interinstitutional Transition Committee (CIT) meetings.
- Number of formalized agreements (Union, States, Municipalities, International Partners).
- Timeliness and completeness of the Operation's Unified Information System.
- Findings from external evaluations by International Organizations.

These indicators will be periodically monitored and evaluated by dedicated technical bodies linked to the CIT, comprising representatives from implementing agencies, local governments, international organizations, and experts. Coordination with internal/external control mechanisms (e.g., Ciset/MD, Federal Court of Auditors) ensures continuous adjustments, public transparency, and alignment with results-oriented governance, ultimately safeguarding objective civilian control.

### 3.16 DISCUSSION: NAVIGATING THE COMPLEXITIES OF CIVIL-MILITARY TRANSITION TOWARDS CIVILIAN PRIMACY

The proposed transition model directly addresses the imperative for planned, gradual replacement of Armed Forces' functions in complex humanitarian operations, exemplified by Operation Acolhida's institutional dependence and "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007) that challenges objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016). Rooted in Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP) and informed by comparative experiences, the model offers practical, legally viable guidelines for public managers. Key elements include formalizing transition in normative acts, functional classification of military activities, and maintaining a residual military nucleus, all designed to ensure civilian primacy and avoid prolonged militarized responses.

A central axis is functional demilitarization, operationalized through mandates, resource decentralization, and strengthening local civilian management units (UGEs) to



enable sustainable civilian assumption of roles. The study emphasizes interinstitutional coordination, proposing technical forums (CIT), valorizing existing civilian governance bodies, and fostering intermunicipal public consortia to empower civilian actors and exercise subsidiarity. This framework is anchored in Brazilian constitutional principles of subsidiarity and military exceptionality, ensuring temporary military engagement focused on core defense mandates while civilian institutions progressively build Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) to lead humanitarian responses. This article provides a foundational systematization for civil-military functional transition, highlighting the need for robust, context-specific solutions. Ultimately, successfully navigating this transition is a critical democratic imperative to prevent emergency military responses from inadvertently undermining civilian governance and control.

#### **4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CIVILIAN PRIMACY IN HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS**

This study meticulously analyzed the intricate dynamics of functional transition in prolonged humanitarian operations, with a particular emphasis on Brazil's Operation Acolhida. Through a rigorous multiple case study approach (Somalia, Libya, Mali, and Operation São Francisco) combined with normative analysis and empirical observation, it critically examined how military involvement can extend beyond its exceptional mandate. Findings highlight a persistent tension between immediate military operational efficacy and the long-term imperative of upholding objective civilian control (Huntington, 2016) and military exceptionality.

The core contribution is a comprehensive strategic model for gradual military-to-civilian functional replacement, rooted in Brazilian constitutional principles of subsidiarity and exceptionality. Drawing on comparative lessons, this model emphasizes phased planning, leveraging legal instruments, sustained Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) for civilian entities, and maintaining residual military technical support during transition. This framework deliberately counters "mission creep" (Brooks, 2007), ensuring a legitimate, democratically accountable humanitarian response.

Academically, this study advances the understanding of institutional transitions in complex interagency operations by operationalizing theoretical constructs like Post-Crisis Governance Transition Theory (TGP), ICB, and objective/subjective civilian control in empirical cases. The propositions offer a robust reference for public managers, governmental bodies, military institutions, and researchers.



Acknowledged limitations include the absence of direct interviews with current Operation Acolhida actors, restricting nuanced institutional perceptions, and the model's as-yet untested practical implementation. Consequently, future research should focus on practical validation through pilot implementations, longitudinal studies on service continuity and quality post-transition, and in-depth investigations into intergovernmental articulation mechanisms. Such continued scholarly engagement will broaden the model's applicability, strengthen civil-military relations theory, and contribute to managing sustainable institutional transitions in complex global contexts.

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