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ABSTRACT:

This research project analyzes the nature and impact of development-oriented deployments of U.S. troops in Peru. We evaluate the effect on public opinion and development outcomes in the departments where such projects have been completed. To do so, the author conducted preliminary fieldwork in Peru, with the purpose of gathering firsthand information about the reach of humanitarian assistance provided by the U.S. military during the 2012 New Horizons program. The limited qualitative data available online was helpful in determining that a host population, as well as its national leaders, welcomed foreign aid. Indeed, interviews with political authorities, local journalists, and medical authorities confirmed these preliminary findings. Even though the events occurred almost six years ago, local authorities and citizens in the town of Tambo de Mora in the Ica region, still recall the time when U.S. military personnel built valuable infrastructure for the community in a record time of two months and twenty-five days. The multiuse installation built in Tambo de Mora serves an estimated 5,000 inhabitants and provides entertainment, vocational, and playground services to local seniors, young adults, and children. The participation of American military personnel in the 2012 New Horizon exercise in Peru achieved the terms of the agreement signed between the U.S. Embassy and the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations in Lima on April 26, 2012. Thus, the local perception of the U.S. government and U.S. troops remains positive. The region of Ica is the main point of entrance to the valleys of the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro rivers (VRAEM), an area of significant geopolitical importance because of the production of coca. Given the potential for such positive outcomes in a region of critical importance, the U.S. should keep providing humanitarian assistance to the people of this region through development oriented deployments.