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Learning to build peace? United Nations peacebuilding and organizational learning: developing a research framework: Developing a Research Framework

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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Forschungsbericht / research report

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Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Benner, T., Binder, A., & Rotmann, P. (2007). *Learning to build peace? United Nations peacebuilding and organizational learning: developing a research framework: Developing a Research Framework.* (Forschung DSF, 9). Osnabrück: Deutsche Stiftung Friedensforschung. https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-260336

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Learning to Build Peace? United Nations Peacebuilding and Organizational Learning: Developing a Research Framework

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Gestaltung, Satz und Herstellung: atelier-raddatz.de und DSF
Druck: Günter-Druck GmbH, Georgsmarienhütte
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Printed in Germany 2007

Spendenkonto der Deutschen Stiftung Friedensforschung:
Sparkasse Osnabrück, Konto 1230, BLZ 265 501 05

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DSF-Forschung erscheint in unregelmäßiger Folge. Für Inhalt und Aussage der Beiträge sind jeweils die Autorinnen und Autoren verantwortlich.

Abstract

While there is an increasing number of articles and studies identifying lessons from the record of UN peacebuilding operations, it is striking how little we know about the UN's very capacity for organizational learning on peacebuilding, and about learning in international organizations in general. This pilot study seeks to lay the foundations for an in-depth investigation of the UN's record on organizational learning.

Our study is motivated by both, a research and a policy imperative. On the research front, studying organizational learning within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy contributes to opening up the "black box" of international organizations. So far, mainstream work in the discipline of International Relations (IR) has produced surprisingly few studies on the everyday workings of international organizations, let alone their ability to learn. Studying organizational learning calls for an interdisciplinary approach bringing together IR (including peace and conflict studies), public management and the sociology of organizations. This has the potential of advancing conceptual debates within the discipline of IR.

On the policy front, organizational learning provides the missing link that is needed to address a key challenge pointed out by the Brahimi Report: the need to reconcile "the temporary nature of specific operations with the evident permanence of peacekeeping and other peace operations activities as core functions of the United Nations". In other words, organizational learning is one answer to the question of how to "bring together the imperative of ad hoc missions with the persisting reality of permanent engagement". Continuous efforts to learn within and across missions can offer an important antidote to the ad-hocism that characterizes the day-to-day operations of peacebuilding. This has also been realized by the UN Secretariat, which (supported by a number of key member states) has started to intensify its efforts to promote organizational learning on peacebuilding (for example through the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit and other recent reform efforts promoted by Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping). Also, member states have tasked the new Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) with identifying lessons learned. While the need for learning ranks increasingly high on the agenda of officials within the UN system, this realization stands in stark contrast to the dearth of knowledge within the UN about its track record on organizational learning.

The study proceeds in four steps. The first step surveys the relevant literature from different disciplines and concludes that peace research, IR and organization theory do not offer ready-made frameworks for the analysis of organizational learning in international organizations. Building on existing research, we identify key elements of a new framework starting with a definition of the key term, organizational learning: We define organizational learning "as a process of cognitive change through the questioning of the means and/or ends of addressing problems. The process manifests itself in the development and implementation of new rules and routines guiding the organization's actions."

In a second step, we survey the evolution of the "infrastructure of learning" in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy over the past 15 years. We hold that a number of factors (lack of will both within member states and the UN Secretariat as well as the lack of resources and appropriate incentive structures) contributed to the very slow recognition of the UN's

learning needs. Major crises (such as the soul-searching after Rwanda and Srebrenica) plus the Brahimi Report in 2000 provided a certain momentum that brought the need to build up the UN's learning capacity higher on the agenda. Still, a lot of work remains to be done.

In a third step, we present a list of variables that influence learning that need to be considered in a future in-depth study. This list of factors includes power, organizational culture, leadership, human capital, staff mobility, knowledge management systems, as well as access to external knowledge. Outlining an agenda for future research, we present a draft model of the learning process that includes 1) knowledge acquisition, 2) advocacy/decision-making, and 3) institutionalization.

We also discuss the substantial methodological challenges future in-depth studies will need to overcome. We suggest that future in-depth research concentrate on a single focal organization, e.g. the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy around the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) or the peacebuilding bureaucracies in the US or the UK. Only once we have a number of in-depth single case studies can we undertake credible cross-case comparisons. Second, we suggest to "zoom in" on a number of selected "focal issues" from the three areas of security, governance, and welfare (*Sicherheit, Herrschaft, Wohlfahrt*) as well as the area of cross-cutting problems such as coordination of disparate actors. In doing so, further research can cover a broad range of peacebuilding tasks while at the same time putting a premium on in-depth analysis. Tracking processes of learning on concrete issues over a longer time-span allows us to draw more informed conclusions than simply focusing on different peacebuilding missions as the unit of analysis.

The current state of research should prevent us from rushing to policy recommendations. For example, we need additional research in order to make detailed recommendations on options for improving the knowledge management system within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy. Further down the road, this knowledge-practice transfer is a highly desirable goal – and one that can count on great interest on the part of the policymakers and officials in the UN system as our interviews during the pilot project underlined.

We conclude that given what the often invoked international community has achieved so far in the area of peacebuilding, modesty and self-reflection are in order. At the same time, this is a call to intensify our efforts at "learning to learn". As Ernst Haas, the pioneer of the study of organizational learning in international organizations, put it: "There is never a final lesson to be learned." Haas' dictum holds true for both researchers and policymakers.

Zusammenfassung

Eine zunehmende Anzahl wissenschaftlicher Publikationen hat in den letzten Jahren versucht, Lehren aus der bisherigen Bilanz von UN-Friedensmissionen zu ziehen. Umso überraschender ist es, wie wenig wir über die grundlegende Frage der Lernkapazität der Vereinten Nationen im Hinblick auf Friedensmissionen wissen. Diese Pilotstudie legt die Grundlagen für eine weitergehende Untersuchung institutionellen Lernens in der *Peacebuilding*-Bürokratie der Vereinten Nationen.

Die Studie verfolgt ein doppeltes Ziel. In wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht trägt die Beschäftigung mit Organisationslernen im UN-Sekretariat dazu bei, die *„black box“* internationaler Organisationen aufzubrechen und ihr Innenleben als soziale und politische Organisationen zu betrachten – ein Thema, das die Forschung in der Disziplin der Internationalen Beziehungen (IB) bislang weitgehend ignoriert. Organisationslernen als Forschungsgegenstand erfordert einen interdisziplinären Ansatz aus den Fächern IB (inkl. Friedens- und Konfliktforschung), Verwaltungswissenschaft und Organisationssoziologie. Damit ist auch die Aussicht verbunden, konzeptionelle Debatten innerhalb der IB voranzubringen.

In praktischer Hinsicht ist die Lernfähigkeit der UN-Bürokratie der Schlüssel, um – wie bereits im Brahimi-Bericht im Jahre 2000 angemahnt – „den temporären Charakter konkreter Einsätze mit der offenkundigen Dauerhaftigkeit der Friedenssicherung (…) als Kernfunktionen der Vereinten Nationen“ in Einklang zu bringen. Anders ausgedrückt: Wie lässt sich die ad hoc-Logik der meisten Missionen mit der Realität dauerhaften Engagements der UN im Bereich *Peacebuilding* vereinbaren? Eine Antwort auf diese Frage liegt in der Rolle institutionellen Lernens. Stete Lernbemühungen können ein wichtiges Gegengewicht zum ad hoc-Charakter der täglichen *Peacebuilding*-Praxis sein.

Zu diesem Schluss ist auch das Generalsekretariat gekommen. Mit Unterstützung einzelner Mitgliedsstaaten hat es begonnen, Organisationslernen im *Peacebuilding*-Bereich stärker zu verankern, z.B. durch die *Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit* und die Reformbemühungen des Leiters der Abteilung für Friedensoperationen (DPKO), Jean-Marie Guéhenno. Auch dem neuen *Peacebuilding Support Office* (PBSO) haben die Mitgliedsstaaten eine Rolle in der „Lerninfrastruktur“ des Sekretariats zugewiesen. Der immer stärker geteilten Erkenntnis, dass Organisationslernen von zentraler Bedeutung ist, steht jedoch ein Mangel an Wissen über die bisherige Lernbilanz der UN und die Entwicklung der Lernkapazität gegenüber.

Die Studie ist in drei Schritte gegliedert. Im ersten Schritt erfassen wir die relevante Literatur aus unterschiedlichen Disziplinen und kommen zu dem Schluss, dass weder Friedensforschung noch IB oder Organisationstheorie einen fertigen Forschungsrahmen für die Analyse von Organisationslernen in internationalen Organisationen bieten. Wir müssen also ein eigenes konzeptionelles Gerüst schaffen, zunächst indem wir den Schlüsselbegriff „Organisationslernen“ definieren. Darunter verstehen wir „einen Prozess kognitiven Wandels durch die Infragestellung der Mittel und/oder Ziele des Angehens von Problemen. Dieser Prozess äußert sich in der Entwicklung und Umsetzung neuer Regeln und Routinen, die die Handlungen der Organisation leiten.“

Im zweiten Schritt stellen wir die Entwicklung der „Lerninfrastruktur“ in der *Peacebuilding*-Bürokratie der UN über die letzten 15 Jahre dar. Eine Reihe von Faktoren (fehlender politischer Wille in den Mitgliedsstaaten und im Sekretariat sowie mangelnde Ressourcen und ungeeignete Anreizstrukturen) trugen zunächst dazu bei, dass die Notwendigkeit des Lernens nur sehr langsam erkannt wurde. Große Krisen (Ruanda, Srebrenica) sowie der Brahimi-Bericht (2000) brachten die Notwendigkeit zum Ausbau der UN-Lernkapazitäten auf die Tagesordnung.

Im dritten Schritt entwickeln wir eine Liste von Faktoren, die das Organisationslernen beeinflussen und in weitergehenden Studien zu berücksichtigen sind. Dazu gehören Macht, Organisationskultur, Führung, Humankapital, Mobilität des Personals, Wissensmanagement sowie Zugang zu externem Wissen. Wir entwerfen zudem ein heuristisches Modell des Lernprozesses in drei Stufen: 1) Wissenserwerb, 2) Aushandlung und 3) Institutionalisierung/Umsetzung neuer Regeln und Routinen.

Es gibt einen deutlichen Bedarf an tiefergehenden Studien, die zahlreiche methodische Herausforderungen zu bewältigen haben. Wir schlagen vor, weitere Arbeiten auf eine einzelne Organisation zu beschränken, z.B. die *Peacebuilding*-Bürokratie der UN oder die der USA und Großbritanniens. Bevor eine Reihe weitergehender Einzelfallstudien vorliegen, können wir keine belastbaren Vergleiche vornehmen. Zweitens schlagen wir vor, ausgewählte Themen aus den Bereichen Sicherheit, Herrschaft, Wohlfahrt sowie dem Querschnittsbereich (z.B. Koordination unterschiedlicher Akteure) zur Analyse herauszugreifen. Dadurch können weitere Studien einen hinreichend breiten Ausschnitt von *Peacebuilding*-Aufgaben untersuchen und gleichzeitig den Schwerpunkt auf eine gründliche Analyse legen. Wenn wir Lernprozesse zu konkreten Themen über längere Zeit verfolgen, können wir besser begründete Schlüsse ziehen als aus einem einfachen Vergleich verschiedener Missionen als Analyseeinheiten.

Angesichts des derzeitigen Forschungsstandes wäre es voreilig, bereits Politikempfehlungen abzugeben. Weitere Forschungsanstrengungen sind erforderlich um z.B. Vorschläge zur Verbesserung des Wissensmanagements in der *Peacebuilding*-Bürokratie der UN zu entwickeln. Zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt ist uns der Wissenstransfer in die Praxis ein wichtiges Anliegen – und eines, das nach den Erfahrungen unserer Interviews im Rahmen des Pilotprojektes auf großes Interesse bei Politikern, Diplomaten und UN-Mitarbeitern stößt.

Die Erfolgsbilanz der internationalen Gemeinschaft bei *Peacebuilding*-Projekten gibt Anlass zu Bescheidenheit und Selbstkritik – und ist ein dringender Aufruf, „das Lernen zu lernen“. In den Worten von Ernst Haas, des Pioniers der Erforschung institutionellen Lernens in internationalen Organisationen: „Lernen ist nie beendet.“ Haas’ Diktum ist für die Wissenschaft ebenso gültig wie für die Politik.

1. Introduction[1]

Historians might well look back on the year 2006 as a decisive year in the history of the United Nations' peacebuilding operations. In mid-2006, the UN Peacebuilding Commission became operational, giving formal recognition to the central importance of peacebuilding for the world body. At the same time, the number of personnel deployed in what are officially still called "peacekeeping" missions reached new record highs. Already starting from an all-time high of 85.000 at the beginning of the year, it hit the 100.000 mark in the fall of 2006. With the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations predicting a rise to about 140.000 soldiers in the year 2007, there seems to be no end to growth.[2]

The year 2006 also offered a number of stark reminders of the difficulties and trappings of the complex and intrusive peacebuilding operations that have come to dominate the UN peace and security agenda. East Timor, which had been widely regarded as a success story, reverted to violence. This forced the return of international forces and raised questions about the UN having prematurely shifted attention and resources away from the country before a real stabilization was achieved.[3] The situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) proved to be shaky during the elections, and observers raised pointed questions about what the achievable medium-term strategic objectives of external involvement could and should be. In Afghanistan, the UN mission faced a rapidly deteriorating security environment. As the UN Secretary-General emphasized in his report to the Security Council, the country "finds itself in the midst of a new crisis. A third of the country is racked by violent insurgency. The situation […] is unlikely to improve in the near future and the prospect of further deterioration cannot be excluded."[4] In Kosovo, the "most intensive mission ever, receiving more international money, staff and effort per local person than any mission before or since"[5], the security situation was better but prospects of moving towards settlement looked bleak. In October 2006 UN envoy Martti Ahtisaari expressed his increasing frustration: "Even if we sat at the negotiation table for the rest of my life, I don't think the parties would move in the negotiations."[6] In Lebanon, many observers voiced grave doubts as to whether the revamped UNIFIL mission had a chance of succeeding. And this is all without even mentioning the situations in Iraq and Darfur.

In light of these developments, it is not surprising that in both political and academic discussions, serious doubts about the viability of peacebuilding missions have been raised. In both the United Kingdom and the US, there is a rising domestic backlash against military engagement abroad. In Germany, it will probably take the first instance of German mass casualties for a thorough national debate on how and why "our freedom needs to be defended in the Hindukush"[7], the Congo and Lebanon. In the academic debate, Michael Barnett attacks the Western peacebuilding agenda that in his view seeks to create an "ideal society" defined by the rule of law, markets and democracy. Castigating "liberal

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1 A longer version of this study (Benner, Thorsten, Andrea Binder and Philipp Rotmann (2007): Learning to Build Peace? United Nations Peacebuilding and Organizational Learning: Developing a Research Framework. GPPi Research Paper Series No. 7.) is available at http://www.globalpublicpolicy.net/fileadmin/gppi/GPPiRP_ LearningToBuildPeace_Feb2007final.pdf.

2 Johnstone (2006a); UN DPKO (2006).

3 ICG (2006).

4 UN Secretary-General (2006).

5 King and Mason (2006: X). Kosovo received twenty-five times as much money and fifty times as many troops on a per capita basis than Afghanistan.

6 Deutsche Presseagentur (2006).

7 As stated by then-German Minister of Defense, Peter Struck, in 2001 to justify the post-9/11 intervention in Afghanistan.

peacebuilders" for doing "more harm than good", he takes the lack of institutional and cultural requisites for liberal statehood as a starting point to lay out his counter vision of "building a republican peace".[8] Along similar lines, David Chandler castigates the often invoked international community for not clearly recognizing the inherent limits and contradictions of the "neo-Wilsonian ideals of exporting democracy"[9]. Taking the same critique even further, William Bain argues that it is sheer "folly" to think the West is capable of running other peoples' states and societies by means of a benevolent despotism called "transitional administration".[10] At the other end of the debate, authors such as Iain King and Whit Mason draw opposite conclusions from the undeniable problems on the ground. They agree that we need a fundamental re-thinking of both our "institutional infrastructure and strategic approach."[11] But rather than abandoning complex and intrusive peacebuilding missions, they call for increased resources: "Remedying the deep-rooted problems of post-conflict societies requires more robust instruments and longer time horizons […]".[12]

Obviously, there is considerable disagreement over which lessons to draw from the mixed track record of peacebuilding for future strategy. The purpose of this study is not to take sides in this debate. Rather, we take a step back and investigate the UN's capacity for drawing and applying lessons in the first place. While there are an increasing number of articles and studies offering lessons learned, all too often the UN appears poised to reinvent the wheel and repeat its own mistakes. This observation is at least as old as the early calls from over ten years ago for an institutional capacity for learning – which makes it all the more surprising how little we know about the UN's capacity for organizational learning on peacebuilding, and about learning in international organizations in general.

This pilot study seeks to lay the foundations for an in-depth investigation of the UN's record on organizational learning. Our study is motivated by both a research and a policy imperative. On the research front, studying organizational learning within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy contributes to opening up the "black box" of international organizations. So far, mainstream work in the discipline of IR has produced surprisingly few studies on the everyday workings of international organizations, let alone their ability to learn. Studying organizational learning also calls for an interdisciplinary approach bringing together IR (including peace and conflict studies), public management and the sociology of organizations. This has the potential of advancing conceptual debates within the discipline of IR.

On the policy front, organizational learning provides the missing link that is needed to address a key challenge pointed out by the Brahimi Report: the need to reconcile "the temporary nature of specific operations with the evident permanence of peacekeeping and other peace operations activities as core functions of the United Nations"[13]. In other words, organizational learning is one answer to the question of how to "bring together the imperative of ad hoc missions with the persisting reality of permanent engagement"[14]. Continuous efforts to learn within and across missions can offer an important antidote to the ad-hocism that characterizes the day-to-day operations of peacebuilding. This has also been realized by the UN Secretariat, which (supported by a number of key member states) has started to intensify its efforts to promote organizational learning on peacebuilding (e.g.

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8 Barnett (2006).
9 Chandler (2006).
10 Bain (2006).
11 King and Mason (2006: X).
12 King and Mason (2006: X).
13 United Nations (2000: XIII).
14 Thakur (2006: 44).

through the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit and other recent reform efforts promoted by Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping). Also, member states have tasked the new Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) with identifying lessons learned. While the need for learning ranks increasingly high on the agenda of officials within the UN system, this realization stands in stark contrast to the dearth of knowledge within the UN about its track record on organizational learning.[15]

A note of caution is in order: As a first cut at the issue, this pilot study can only aspire to lay the foundations for further in-depth research on organizational learning within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy. We chose our research design for this pilot study accordingly. The current state of the research does not allow for a testing of hypotheses. Rather, our retroductive research design uses both deduction (from the theoretical literature) and induction (from the empirical record) in order to distill different factors that influence learning. Furthermore, it is important to point out that our goal is not to gather the ten crucial lessons learned on peacebuilding. Rather, we take a step back to analyze the UN's very capacity to draw these lessons with a view to identifying the factors that promote or hinder organizational learning.

Our study proceeds in four steps. First, we present a brief survey of the relevant literature with the goal of developing a framework for the analysis of organizational learning. We start with the literature on peacebuilding operations, go on to take a look at the broader literature on IR and international organizations before moving to organizational theory in sociology, public management and business administration. We conclude that none of the relevant disciplines offers a ready-made framework for our purposes. We thus take the first step toward developing our own conceptual framework by providing a definition of organizational learning to guide our subsequent empirical explorations. We also briefly discuss methodological issues informing our choice of a research design using retroduction (chapter 2). Second, we survey the development of the UN's "infrastructure for learning" on peacebuilding over the course of the past 15 years (chapter 3). Finally, we present conclusions for both a research and a policy agenda. Drawing on the literature reviewed in chapter 2 and our own empirical findings, the research agenda presents the initial attempt to draft a model of the learning process and an overview of the factors that influence learning. The policy agenda focuses on the crucial issues the UN needs to take into account when trying to improve its infrastructure of learning as well as its learning record (chapter 4).

15 This is a view shared by all of the UN officials we interviewed in New York in April 2006.

2. Conceptual Foundations: In Search of a Framework

In the first part of this chapter we present a brief survey of the three areas of research that could inform the study of organizational learning on peacebuilding: the literature on multi-dimensional peacebuilding missions; the literature on international institutions and organizations within the discipline of IR; and organization theory and the approaches of organizational learning within this theory. Rather than providing an exhaustive overview of these very extensive areas of research, we review the literature with the goal of identifying building blocks for a research framework that could be applied to organizational learning on peacebuilding in the UN. In the second part, we present a crucial starting point for such a framework: a definition of organizational learning in international organizations.

Before embarking on these two steps, a brief clarification of our use of the term "peacebuilding" is in order.

2.1 Terminological Primer: What is Peacebuilding?

Our study operates in an area marked by significant terminological proliferation and confusion. Therefore it is essential to clearly define the terms used in this study. We take "multidimensional peacebuilding" (short: peacebuilding) missions to include both civilian and military personnel mandated to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting in a country emerging from war. "Transitional administration" is a special case of peacebuilding, while "peace operation" is a more general term comprising diplomatic peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacebuilding (Schneckener, 2005; Paris, 2004: 38). A number of different tasks are associated with peacebuilding that can be clustered in the areas of security, governance and welfare *(Sicherheit, Herrschaft, Wohlfahrt)*.[16]

It is important to note that this more recent understanding of peacebuilding goes far beyond what the term described in the early 1990s. Within the UN context, peacebuilding often referred to diplomatic missions and meditation efforts spearheaded within the UN Secretariat by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). Today, the two remaining "peacebuilding support offices" in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, described by DPA as "forward platforms for preventive diplomacy", pay tribute to this legacy.[17]

In the late 1990s, peacebuilding increasingly became the term of choice for multi-dimensional and increasingly intrusive missions with the goal of stabilizing societies and states. In the UN context, the term peacebuilding clearly won the competition against the terms "state-building" and "nation-building", which many regard as less politically acceptable because they convey greater intrusiveness and a broader political mandate.[18]

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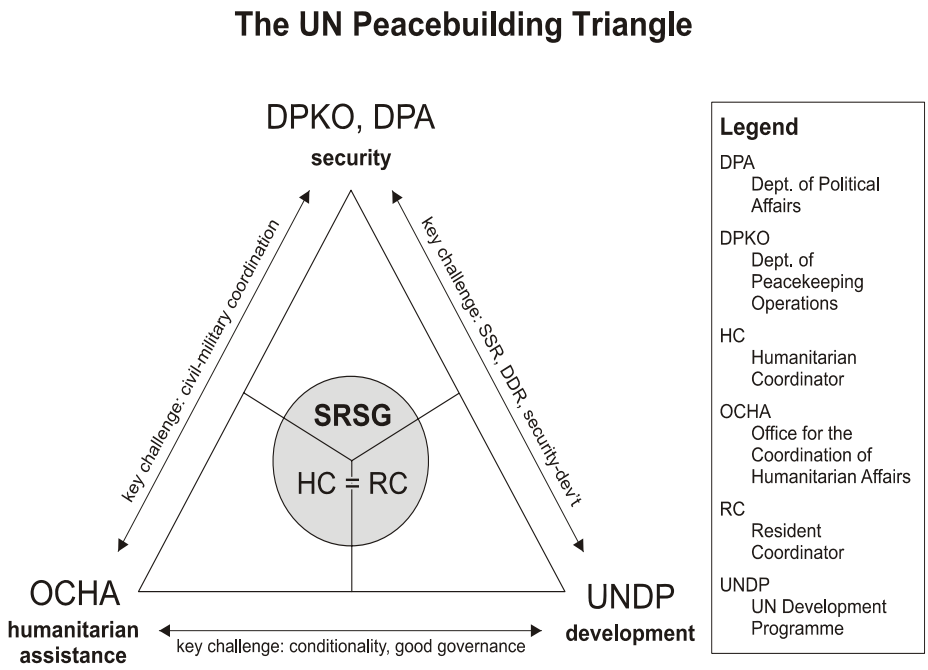
16 See Schneckener and Weinlich (2005); Kühne (2005); CSIS (2002).

17 The term "peacebuilding support office" for DPA field offices in war-torn countries must not be confused with the new Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) that was established at headquarters in 2006 together with the Peacebuilding Commission. With regard to "peacebuilding" as such, the historical discussion in chapter 3 sometimes makes use of the old definition when describing the diplomatic peacebuilding activities by the Department of Political Affairs.

18 Some members of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that presented its report "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility" in December 2004 (United Nations, 2004b) would have preferred the term "state-building". While they regarded the term "state-building" as more to the point, they ended up favoring the term "peacebuilding" for the very reason that it was more acceptable politically. Interview, New York, 25 April 2006.

Our use of term is not based on any political or normative judgment. Rather, we regard the level of intrusiveness of each peacebuilding mission as an open empirical question.

The “peacebuilding triangle” (see Figure 1) illustrates the multidimensional nature of UN peacebuilding operations. The triangle distinguishes three areas that are each serviced by different branches of the UN system: security, humanitarian assistance, and development. The security angle (which comprises both military and police components) is mostly run by the DPKO in cooperation with the DPA. In some missions without a UN military compo-



Source: Interview with Nicole Ruder, New York, 24 April 2006

Figure 1: The UN Peacebuilding Triangle

nent, DPA takes the lead. The humanitarian assistance angle is coordinated by the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The development angle is most often run by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in conjunction with a host of other agencies. NGOs and other private contractors play roles in all three areas.[19] All these different players operate according to their own logic and principles, leading to a massive challenge of coordination in all peacebuilding missions. At the heart of this triangle (at the intersection of security, humanitarian assistance and development) is the overall goal of building up a society and a state with stable institutions true to the ideals of “good governance”. This makes coordination an even more difficult and crucial task.

19 In the field, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) has the lead on security issues. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the Resident Coordinator (RC) are mostly the same person to allow for better coordination of the humanitarian and development pillars. See chapter 3.3 for a more detailed description of the different parts of the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy.

With this terminological primer in mind, we move into the first part of this chapter, a brief survey of the relevant literature for the study of organizational learning on peacebuilding. We start with an overview of the empirical research on peacebuilding operations. We then move on to the more conceptual literature on international organizations and IR theory in general before taking a look at the literature in organizational theory (or better: organizational theories), which is fed by the sociology of organizations, public management and business administration.

2.2 Research on UN Peacebuilding Operations

In recent years, in accordance with developments in UN practice, research has increasingly moved from a focus on traditional peacekeeping to a focus on peacebuilding.[20]

One strand of this research has focused on the normative and legal basis for multidimensional peacebuilding missions – especially those that *de facto* and/or *de jure* take over large parts of the governance functions in a territory.[21] Since our study is not concerned with the overall normative questions related to complex peacebuilding, this strand of research is only relevant to the extent that it highlights concrete problems of accountability in multidimensional peacebuilding missions.[22] A large number of smaller studies focus on individual missions[23] or certain aspects of peacebuilding (e.g. security-sector reform).[24] In the context of our project, these studies will be helpful as background material for analyzing learning in different issue areas.

Among the analyses aiming at a more comprehensive look at the peacebuilding record, five recent book-length studies stand out. The works by Simon Chesterman (2004), Richard Caplan (2005a) and James Dobbins et al. (2005) all build on multi-year research projects on transitional administration as a special form of multidimensional peacebuilding.[25] These studies identify many of the crucial tasks and areas associated with peacebuilding: public order/internal security, civil administration, economic reconstruction, political institution-building, judicial reconstruction and dealing with the past. They also point to some of the cross-cutting challenges such as effectiveness, exit strategies and the overall inconsistencies between liberal ends and illiberal means. Another important work is the book by Roland Paris (2004) who, based on his reading of the peacebuilding record in 11 cases, advances his prescription of a particular policy mix putting a premium on building institutions: “institutionalization before liberalization” (IBL). The most comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of UN peacebuilding operations is the recent “Making War and Building Peace” by Michael Doyle and Nicolas Sambanis.[26] Doyle and Sambanis’ main assertion is that “while the UN is very poor at ‘war’, imposing a settlement by force, [it] can be very good at ‘peace’, mediating and implementing a comprehensively negotiated

20 For a good overview see Schneckener (2005) and Kühne (2005), Ferdowsi and Matthies (2003) and also Cousens and Kumar (2001). Likewise, the seminal volume by Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2001) on international conflict management in its latest edition devotes more than half a dozen chapters to peacebuilding. For a critique of peacebuilding research see Paris (2000).
21 For a recent contribution see Bain (2006).
22 See, for example, Caplan (2005b).
23 See, for example, Rubin (2006); Rathmell (2005); Philpott (2006); Knaus and Martin (2003); Jones (2006).
24 See, for example, the latest special issue of International Peacekeeping on security-sector reform edited by Brzoska and Law (2006); on law and public order cf. Jones et al. (2005).
25 See Chesterman (2004) distilling the results of a project by the International Peace Academy; Dobbins et al. (2005) presenting the results of a RAND study; and Caplan (2005a) which builds on an earlier Adelphi Paper (Caplan, 2002).
26 Doyle and Sambanis (2006), building on Doyle and Sambanis (2000).

peace."[27] They regard international capacities, local capacities and level of hostility as the key factors for the success of peacebuilding missions.

These five major studies exhibit two traits that are characteristic of the broader research on peacebuilding. First, these studies analyze UN peacebuilding missions without opening up the "black box" of the UN Secretariat and agencies to take a close look at the workings of the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy. The absence of theoretically informed and empirically rich studies of the different organizations involved in UN peacebuilding is a striking gap in the literature.[28] Second, these studies do not focus on issues of organizational learning. While there are a few anecdotal observations such as Chesterman's conclusion that learning "has not […] been one of the strengths of the United Nations. A senior Secretariat official describes this as an unwritten rule that 'no wheel shall go un-reinvented'"[29], we lack any systematic analysis of the gathering and application of lessons learned within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy.[30]

We now turn to the general literature on IR/international organizations as well as organizational theory/organizational learning in order to gather building blocks for a conceptual framework that allows us to analyze organizational learning in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy.

2.3 Research on International Organizations and IR theory

The past 25 years in particular have seen a flourishing of research on international institutions within the discipline of IR. At the same time, however, there has been a growing disconnect between mainstream research on international relations, research on international organizations and research on the UN. Today, there is a rich and theoretically diverse body of literature dealing with the creation, functioning and effects of international institutions.[31] Much of the focus of the past quarter century has been on international regimes and (more recently) on networks and partnerships in global governance. Formal international organizations, which in the first decades after 1945 were at the heart of research as a "manifestation of what was 'new' about post-war international relations"[32], have been sidelined in theoretically interested work. International organizations as everyday international bureaucracies were, as the late Susan Strange observed, a "great yawn".[33] Excellent overviews of the study of international organizations notwithstanding,[34] there have been very few theory-driven studies of international organizations and the UN in particular. It is only recently that international organizations are being re-discovered as

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27 Doyle and Sambanis (2006: 5).

28 Notable exceptions are the study by Durch et al. (2003) on the implementation of the Brahimi Report and the recent article by Johnstone, Tortolani and Gowan (2006). The new "Annual Review of Global Peace Operations" also promises to be an important source for facts on peacebuilding missions (Johnstone, 2006). On the UN secretariat in general, see Dicke (1994); Fröhlich (2005), and Benner (2006).

29 Chesterman (2004: 256). A former senior UN official made a similar observation in an interview in Cambridge, MA, 4 November 2004.

30 The only exception is a recent study by Rainer Breul (2005) which presents a first cut at the issue. Breul's study is a diploma thesis at the University of Constance. Breul focuses on a single mode of organizational learning where crisis is the single important "trigger". The study by Julian Junk (2006), also a diploma thesis at the University of Constance, is another attempt at bringing together the literature on peacebuilding with that on public administration. In this context see also the articles by Irving (2006) and Lipson (2002).

31 For a general overview see Simmons and Martin (2002) and Sprinz (2003), a good overview on the UN is given in Gareis and Varwick (2003) and Weiss (2004).

32 Simmons and Martin (2002: 193).

33 Quoted in Barnett and Finnemore (2004: VIII).

34 See Rittberger, Zangl and Staisch (2003) and also Martin and Simmons (2002).

important players in world politics "because they have agency, agenda-setting influence and potentially important socializing influences."[35]

The following review of the three main strands of theorizing in international relations (neo-realism, rationalist institutionalism, and sociological/constructivist institutionalism[36]) shows that only one approach holds significant promise as a basis for our study that aims to open up the "black box" international organizations.[37]

Neo-realists do not allow for the independent importance of international organizations in the first place. Therefore, in the eyes of neo-realists, any efforts to open the "black box" international organizations are futile – why spend time analyzing an organization that does not have any relevance in its own right?

Rationalist institutionalists mainly concentrate on the question of why states set up international organizations to begin with, rather than how they work after their creation. Therefore, a lot of rationalist institutionalist work is either concerned with why states create or act through international organizations[38], or with the rational design of international organizations.[39] Principal-agent theory as a sub-field of rationalist institutionalism has mostly focused on the interests and strategies of the principal actors, in this case states, and what states can do to control agents (international organizations/bureaucracies). As a recent overview article aptly observes, principal-agent-theory driven work "contains a remarkably thin view of agent behaviour."[40] As a consequence, principal-agent theorists have made very few direct claims about agent behaviour, which in our context is the behaviour of international bureaucracies. More than 20 years ago, Oliver Williamson coined the memorable phrase that agents are "self-interest seeking with guile."[41] However, subsequent principal-agent-theory inspired research has not fleshed out or tested this assertion. Hawkins and Jacoby (2006: 279) are the first principal-agent theorists to claim that "international organizations matter not only because states have designed rules to resolve problems, but because those international organizations are themselves independent actors and interact strategically with states and others." However, the tools they propose (associating leverage of international organizations with situations in which only a small pool of agents exists and high costs are associated with the creation of agents) contribute very little to the analysis of long-term processes such as organizational learning.

Only approaches based on *sociological institutionalism*[42] state the explicit goal of analyzing the workings of international organizations as international bureaucracies.[43] Amid growing

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35 Simmons and Martin (2002: 198).

36 Here we follow the early distinction by Keohane (1993) who differentiates between a rationalistic and a reflectivist approach to the study of international institutions. The former is inferred from economics, the latter deduced from sociology. The broader assumptions of sociological institutionalism include the importance of impersonal social forces as well as the impact of cultural practices, norms, and values that are not derived from calculations of interests (Hall and Taylor, 1996).

37 Contrary to other rationalist IR theories, liberalism as the one major IR theory missing from this discussion does not take states but groups within states as its central unit of analysis (Zangl and Zürn, 2003). Consequently, results of international politics are explained by constellations of interests of the different dominant groups within states (Moravcsik, 1997). However, this additional level of analysis does not help to open up the "black box" of International Organizations, and therefore, to explain learning processes within the UN bureaucracy.

38 Abbott and Snidal (1998).

39 Koremenos, Lipson and Snidal (2001).

40 Hawkins and Jacoby (2006: 277).

41 Williamson (1985: 30) quoted in Hawkins and Jacoby (2006: 277).

42 For the purposes of this study we assume that the terms sociological and constructivist institutionalism are exchangeable.

43 According to Keohane (1993), the adherents of sociological institutionalism have neither the coherence nor the self-confidence of rationalists. Since the time of his writing, it is fair to say that at least the latter problem has improved.

interest in the study of international organizations as bureaucracies,[44] the recent work of Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore stands out. Barnett and Finnemore (2004: 3) assert the autonomy of international organizations by means of different sources of authority:

> "We ground our analysis on the fact that IOs are bureaucracies. Bureaucracy is a distinctive social form of authority with its own internal logic and behavioural proclivities. It is because of their authority that bureaucracies have autonomy and the ability to change the world around them. Bureaucracies exercise power in the world through their ability to make impersonal rules."

Only by assuming that international organizations have autonomy, albeit limited, can we allow for processes of organizational learning to take place. Without autonomy, the capacity for learning is not present.

Barnett and Finnemore (2004: 16) argue that "to understand how international organizations work, we found ourselves turning to theories of organization rather than theories of international politics. We were not the first to do this." In fact, while Barnett and Finnemore certainly are not the first, the list of their predecessors is rather short.[45] Among them, the work by Ernst Haas (1990) on learning in international organizations also stands out. While Haas' work is an inspiration and one obvious starting point for our proposed project, there are two caveats: First, his work remained largely typological – Haas in the end did not fully open up the "black box" international organizations by tracing learning processes in depth; secondly, his understanding of learning processes is very much based on the importance of consensually held scientific knowledge on environmental problems, which is much less applicable to the field of peacebuilding since there is no equivalent "science of peacebuilding".

2.4 Organizational Learning Theory and Organization Theory

In our search for a framework to analyze learning within international organizations we now turn to research on organizational learning, a subfield of organization theory.[46] Any hopes to find ready-made "plug & play" frameworks for the analysis of learning in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy are bound to be disappointed. While organization theory features a wealth of interesting and creative approaches, it does not offer tested models tailored to the analysis of learning in international bureaucracies.

There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the field of organizational learning is characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity. In the words of two leading contributors to this literature: "Research in organizational learning has suffered from conceptions that were excessively broad, encompassing nearly all organizational change, from ontological complaints that

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44 Cf. Liese and Weinlich (2006); Bauer (2006); Mathiason (forthcoming, 2007). This research builds on older studies of international organizations as bureaucracies, for example Cox and Jacobsen (1971). See also the recent studies by Fröhlich (2005); Weaver and Leiteritz (2005); Nielson, Tierney and Weaver (2006).

45 One example is Ness and Brechin (1988). Another interesting attempt is Ansell and Weber (1999), although their piece is much less focused on international organizations per se. There are a number of studies on learning within the EU context, see for example Jachtenfuchs (1996).

46 For overviews of the field, see Berthoin Antal et al. (2001) and Easterby-Smith and Lyles (2003). We have reviewed but do not include in this overview the approaches on the "learning organization" in management. For a stimulating critique of these approaches, see Kühl (2000).

organizations cannot learn, and from various other maladies that arise from insufficient agreement among those working in the area on key concepts and problems."[47]

Second, much of the literature on organizational learning focuses on business organizations, often relying on quasi-Darwinian market forces as explanatory factors while critically under-emphasizing the political factors in organizational processes. The analogy does not hold; international organizations rarely operate in a market-like environment where they are likely to go out of business based on the forces of supply and demand.[48]

While it does not offer a tailor-made framework for the purposes of our study, we rely on elements of the current literature on organizational learning for two purposes: as building blocks for our heuristic model of learning, and to deduce hypotheses on the key factors that affect learning (chapter 4.1).

To this end, we draw on parts of the more recent literature on organizational learning which clearly demarcates itself from earlier approaches on two fronts: on the one hand, the traditional understanding of organizations as closed systems in the 1970s gave way to a more open concept that allowed for the interaction between an organization and its environment; on the other hand, the new scholarly recognition of such interaction remained limited to a one-way relation, namely, that the institutional environment determines the organization's goals and the instruments to reach them. On the contrary, more recent approaches see the organization and its environment as mutually constitutive.[49]

In conceptualizing the learning process, we have found further approaches from organization theory, policy analysis and administrative science to be useful. This includes the bounded rationality tradition,[50] the "garbage can",[51] "muddling through" and "multiple streams"[52] models as well as the concept of "organized hypocrisy"[53]. These models deal with decision-making in bureaucracies and can therefore inform our analysis of factors influencing the process of organizational learning.

2.5 Organizational Learning Defined

The brief overview of the three research fields most relevant for our subject – peace operations research, IR and organization theory – has demonstrated that we can neither draw on tailored and tested frameworks[54] nor on empirically rich studies on organizational learning and peacebuilding. Research into organizational learning in international organizations therefore needs to develop its own model, building on different elements from the available literature. As a first step toward this end, in the remainder of this chapter we

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47 Cohen and Sproull (1991: Editor's Introduction).

48 John Bolton, at the time US Ambassador to the United Nations, implied the opposite when stating: "Americans […] look at [the UN] as a competitor in the marketplace for global problem-solving, and if it's successful at solving problems, they'll be inclined to use it. If it's not successful at solving problems, they'll say, 'Are there other institutions?'" Quoted in Lynch (2005).

49 Meyer and Scott (1992); Scott and Meyer (1994); Breul (2005); Dingwerth and Campe (2005). This is in line with sociological institutionalists considering structure and agency as mutual constitutive, cf. Wendt (1987); Barnett and Finnemore (2004); Ulbert (2003).

50 March and Simon (1958).

51 Cohen, March and Olsen (1972/1988); March and Olsen (1976). Lipson (2004) applies the concept to peace operations.

52 Kingdon (1984).

53 See Lipson (2002) for an application to the area of peacekeeping.

54 March and Olsen (1988); Levitt and March (1988); Hedberg (1981); Huber (1991).

develop our definition of the key term “organizational learning” in the context of international organizations.

There is no generally accepted definition of organizational learning. Organizational learning is at present more akin to a widely applied metaphor than to the bedrock of a well developed research paradigm.[55] This reflects both the level of fragmentation of organizational learning research and the inherent complexity of the learning process itself. Transferring the concept of learning from the individual level to an organization adds to the challenges of clearly defining and operationalizing the concept.

Our definition of organizational learning needs to meet two criteria. First, its basic elements must allow for operationalization, rather than remaining at the level of a metaphor. Second, to the broadest extent possible, we aim at building on concepts already in use instead of creating additional ones. By doing so, we strive to ensure maximum compatibility of our research with the few other projects in this area and make use of potential synergies.[56]

In line with the majority of recent research on organizational learning, we reject both simple behavioural stimulus-response models and models that analyze organizations as closed systems independent of their environment.[57] We hold that:

1. Organizational Learning is a *collective process* driven by groups of individuals;[58]
2. Organizational Learning is a process with a *strong cognitive dimension*,[59] in which
3. the organization *interacts with its environment* and that this
4. manifests itself in the *development of new rules and routines*.

We therefore define organizational learning as *a process of cognitive change through the questioning of the means and/or ends of addressing problems*. *The process manifests itself in the development and implementation of new rules and routines*[60] *guiding the organization’s actions*. Note that we speak of learning only if the negotiations about these new rules and routines are significantly based on knowledge. A change of rules and routines that occurs solely due to a change in power relations is not included in our definition of organizational learning.

Our definition combines the knowledge-based approach of Haas (1990) with that of Barnett and Finnemore (2004) who focus on the importance of rules as the basic *modus operandi* of international bureaucracies.

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55 Argyris and Schön (1978); Klimecki, Laßleben and Riexinger-Li (1994).

56 In particular, we are working closely with the related projects on the planning and management of peacebuilding operations undertaken at the University of Constance. Earlier research by the project team has been published by Blume (2004), Breul (2005) and Junk (2006).

57 For example, Cyert and March (1963).

58 We take it as a given that individuals in an organization learn – however, learning becomes only consequential at the group and organizational levels: “The significance that work groups […] have in organizations means that knowledge acquisition by individuals is an indispensable, but usually insufficient, component of organizational learning” (Maier, Prange and von Rosenstiel, 2001). Our detailed examination of the learning processes within the UN therefore starts at the group level.

59 Klimecki, Laßleben and Thomae (1999).

60 According to Barnett and Finnemore (2004: 18), “bureaucratic rules are the standard operating procedures that allow the organization to respond more effectively and predictably to environmental demands.” Change of rules generally applies to a broad continuum from operational procedures to grand doctrines.

2.6 A Word on Methodology

Any mind striving for parsimonious research designs testing clearly delineated causal hypotheses must feel a sense of desperation after reviewing the state of the research on organizational learning in the peacebuilding bureaucracy. For one thing, organizational learning is a complex process that is not directly observable. For another, there are no established frameworks for the analysis of learning, let alone robust and testable causal hypotheses on what influences organizational learning. Therefore, given the present state of research, organizational learning is still more akin to a metaphor than a clearly specified scientific concept usable for empirical research.

What some might see as a reason for despair, others might simply regard as a strong reminder for the need to be modest on what a first cut at the issue can achieve – as well as to choose a methodology that fits the current state of the research. To combine insights to be translated from other disciplines with empirical observations on our particular object of inquiry – organizational learning in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy – we found a retroductive research design to be best suited.[61] Retroduction means that the researcher develops a preliminary model through the use of analogies and deduction from theories from related fields that fit the observation that is to be explained. A first set of preliminary hypotheses is drawn from the model and "fitted" to the empirical reality, i.e. tested to which extent it fits the actual field of research. This testing is not to be confused with the testing of causal hypotheses but must rather be seen as a much earlier step to develop or adapt such hypotheses. With the help of such empirical work new variables might be found, others refined or even rejected. After several repetitions of theoretical deduction and empirical induction in a spiral process of theory development, the candidate hypotheses will be generated with these new and refined variables.

This study seeks to lay the foundations for the application of a longer process of retroduction in future in-depth research. In terms of theory-building, our present study needs to content itself with a very modest first step: to identify possible factors that influence learning from related disciplines and empirical research[62]. These factors can later be refined and worked into hypotheses.

With this in mind, we now turn our attention to the empirical picture. We analyze the evolution of what we call the "infrastructure of learning" in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy. In chapter 4 we return to broader conceptual issues and present a first cut at a model of the learning process as well as an overview of the different factors that we distilled by means of both deduction from the relevant literature and induction from our empirical work.

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61 Schimmelfennig (1995: 21).

62 The "case examples" are available in the longer version of this study (Benner, Thorsten, Andrea Binder and Philipp Rotmann (2007): Learning to Build Peace? United Nations Peacebuilding and Organizational Learning: Developing a Research Framework. GPPi Research Paper Series No. 7.), available at http://www.globalpublicpolicy.net/fileadmin/gppi/GPPiRP_ LearningTo BuildPeace_Feb2007final.pdf.

3. Evolution of the Learning Infrastructure in the UN Peacebuilding Bureaucracy

> "Much has been written in the last few years on post-conflict peacebuilding. If even a small portion of that knowledge were translated into practice, some of the serial failures of international assistance to countries emerging from conflict might have been avoided."[63]

This chapter presents a brief overview of the development of the infrastructure of learning in the UN's peacebuilding bureaucracy. The peacebuilding bureaucracy refers to those parts of the Secretariat that are regularly and officially tasked with managing peacebuilding operations. The infrastructure of learning comprises functional units and institutional mechanisms dealing with the promotion of learning, e.g. the collection of lessons and best practices and their mainstreaming into future operations.

To our knowledge, this is the first attempt to analyze the evolution of the infrastructure of learning. The limits of such a first-time undertaking based on secondary sources and officially available documents are clear. A full-fledged historical analysis is outside the remit of this study. It would require in-depth oral history with the key individuals and an analysis of internal documents that are not publicly available, in particular since 2000, as the renewed surge in peacebuilding activity has produced a multitude of new actors and *fora*. The primary purpose of this chapter is to provide the basic context on how the infrastructure of learning evolved. In this first cut, we can only hint at a number of factors that are likely to have influenced this development, such as leadership, supporting countries, crises, and structural factors.

Taking the initial appearance of the term "post-conflict peace-building" in UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's "Agenda for Peace" (1992) as a starting point, section 3.1 recounts the development of the secretariat's capacity for organizational learning throughout the 1990s. Despite a number of initiatives during these years, real progress was made only following the "Brahimi Report" (2000). Section 3.2 summarizes its recommendations on learning and their subsequent (non-)implementation. Finally, in section 3.3, we present a snapshot of the current learning infrastructure as it presents itself in mid-2006. As much as possible, we take into account the new Peacebuilding Support Office that was just established in order to strengthen the work of the new Peacebuilding Commission.

3.1 The Slow Recognition of the UN's Learning Needs in the 1990s

> "… the United Nations did not have in place, as of the end of 1993, proper arrangements for institutional memory [or] to learn from recent experience in peacekeeping."[64]

When Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali submitted his "Agenda for Peace" to heads of states in June 1992, his prime concerns were with issues of policy, not

63 Necla Tschirgi quoted in Cutillo (2006: Preface).
64 From a report prepared by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services (UN Secretary-General: para. 16).

management.[65] His call for a larger role of the UN in conflict prevention, peace-making, and "post-conflict peace-building" was aimed at decision-makers in member state capitals and embassies. However, with the exception of the need for additional early warning and preventive diplomacy capabilities, Boutros-Ghali did not spell out any consequences for the UN bureaucracy of such an expanded role. Member states provided the requested resources for early warning which led to the establishment of the DPA Affairs. Having created the DPKO just four months earlier,[66] the Secretary-General did not seek any further changes in this area. "The established principles and practices of peacekeeping," he wrote in an optimistic tone, "have responded flexibly to new demands of recent years."[67]

As it turned out, this belief in flexible adaptation by muddling through was misplaced. The result was (as the Office of Internal Oversight Services noted in 1995) a lack of strategic capacity and the complete absence of an institutional infrastructure for learning. This added to the overall lack of coherence in the evolving area of peacekeeping and peace-building, a field that was very much in flux during the 1990s and therefore in dire need of capacity for analysis and learning. While the key departments, mainly DPA and DPKO, wasted too much time on turf fights, adequate capabilities for planning, analysis and learning were hardly forthcoming anywhere in the bureaucracy. A first, small step in this direction was taken in DPKO in the mid-1990s.

3.1.1 A First, Small Step: The Establishment of DPKO's Lessons Learned Unit

When Kofi Annan took over the DPKO in March 1993, the explosion of demand for peace-keeping had begun to take a toll on the Secretariat. In the previous year alone, there had been a fivefold increase in troops and a twofold increase in missions.[68] Just three days after leaving his post and moving to DPA, Annan's predecessor Marrack Goulding told an academic audience at the University of Oxford that "the departments concerned […] need to be strengthened if they are to have the planning and command and control capability to support operations on the scale currently deployed."[69]

This slowly but steadily growing awareness led Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali to give more attention to pressing management issues. In his June 1993 implementation report on the "Agenda for Peace" Boutros-Ghali called for an in-depth investigation of the start-up phase of peacekeeping operations, a request granted by the General Assembly.[70] This independent investigation became the driving force for establishing the first embryonic elements of a learning infrastructure within DPKO. The investigation produced a progress report in 1994 and a final report in 1995.[71] In terms of learning, the "progress report [made] clear [that] the United Nations did not have in place, as of the end of 1993, proper arrange-ments for institutional memory [or] to learn from recent experience in peacekeeping."[72]

In March 1994, the Mission Planning Service in DPKO began to test a first "lessons learned mechanism" aimed at the systematic collection of end-of-mission assessments by

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65 On the role of the "Agenda for Peace" for peacekeeping generally, see Johnstone, Tortolani and Gowan (2006: 59-60).

66 See Boutros-Ghali (1992: para. 51-52); the General Assembly's response (UN General Assembly, 1992); and the Secretary-General's implementation report (Boutros-Ghali, 1993). DPKO was created in February 1992 with Marrack Goulding as its first Under-Secretary-General. In March 1993, Goulding moved on to head the newly created DPA as Kofi Annan took over DPKO.

67 Boutros-Ghali (1992: para. 50).

68 UN Secretary-General (1997b: 13-14).

69 Goulding (1993: 470). The speech was in the same year published in "International Affairs".

70 UN Secretary-General (1994: para. 4).

71 UN Secretary-General (1994); UN Secretary-General (1995).

72 UN Secretary-General (1995: para. 16).

senior mission staff.[73] The Secretariat stepped up its call for more resources over the course of the year. In doing so, it took advantage of the explicit show of support for the investigation's progress report from both the General Assembly and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. The latter, in particular, strongly supported better analysis and planning capabilities within DPKO.[74] In a November 1994 report on the command and control of peacekeeping operations to the Special Committee, the Secretary-General pushed for budget increases to fund a broad range of planning and analysis tasks at DPKO, including a Lessons Learned Unit.[75]

In 1995, as the final report of the independent evaluation mandated in 1993 was issued, new resources were finally forthcoming.[76] In April 1995, DPKO's Lessons Learned Unit was established as part of the Planning Division, Office of Planning and Support, with only two positions: a Head of Unit and one research assistant. However small and understaffed, the unit was the first of its kind in the UN's peacebuilding bureaucracy.

3.1.2 The Late 90s: Stalemate in the Battle for Resources

During the second half of the 1990s, the general context for peacekeeping changed. After the failures of Rwanda and Srebrenica, demand for UN operations began to fall and the previous enthusiasm within the organization gave way to self-doubt and soul-searching. Developing countries pushed through a decision to send home all military personnel that (for the most part Western) governments had provided to the Department free of charge to offset staffing shortages. In this context, there was not much progress to be made for the learning infrastructure at DPKO.

From its inception in 1995 until about 2001, DPKO's Lessons Learned Unit was for the most part sustained by voluntary contributions. Up to 1997, for example, a trust fund provided up to four additional posts as well as other resources to the unit, mostly paid for by the Ford Foundation and the governments of Sweden and Germany.[77] In the first one-and-a-half years of its existence (until its first serious funding crisis), the unit issued a total of five reports: three on field missions (UNOSOM in Somalia, UNAMIR in Rwanda, UNMIH in Haiti), one on "multidisciplinary peacekeeping" in general, and one on the implementation of lessons learned.[78]

As Kofi Annan took office as Secretary-General in 1997, donors indicated they would not foot the bill indefinitely for what the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) had, in 1995, called a core task of the strategic management of peace operations. As part of a larger package of funding requests, the Secretary-General asked for the replacement of the four donor-funded posts with three posts from the peacekeeping budget.[79] In July 1997, despite Annan's explicit call to fund DPKO at a level "that reflects the Department's real personnel requirements",[80] member states denied most of his requests but encouraged resubmission of a budget proposal specifically for the Lessons Learned Unit.

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73 UN Secretary-General (1995: para. 17). The exercise was obviously not very successful, as the same task is again being undertaken since late 2005 by the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section.
74 UN General Assembly (1995); UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (1994: para. 73).
75 Boutros-Ghali (1994: para. 15-16).
76 Boutros-Ghali (1995); UN Secretary-General (1995).
77 UN Secretary-General (1997a: para. 15); UN Secretary-General (1997b: para. 29, p. 63).
78 UN Secretary-General (1997a: para. 8); United Nations (1995); United Nations (1996).
79 UN Secretary-General (1997b: para. 30).
80 Annan (1997: para. 118).

The Secretary-General did just that, only to get permission to redeploy up to three existing staff to the unit but not to create any new posts.[81]

By March 1998, two of the three authorized posts for the Lessons Learned Unit had been redeployed within DPKO from the Mission Planning Service, leaving the unit with a total of four regular staff, plus changing resources from external donors. In trying to elevate their standing, both the Lessons Learned and the equally under-funded Policy and Analysis Unit were reassigned from the Office of Mission Support to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General.[82] Subsequently, the two units were merged to form the Policy Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit, with a total of 17 posts by 1999, most of which were still funded by external donors.[83]

Not surprisingly, given this resource base, the unit continued struggling to fulfill its purpose. Throughout 1999 and 2000, member states and external observers alike criticized DPKO for its failure to better incorporate past "experiences […] into peacekeeping policy and planning than has been the case to date."[84] The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations observed that the unit had failed to "develop guidelines and standard operating procedures, as well as [to promote] the sharing of best practices among missions."[85]

While the efforts to build up a learning infrastructure at DPKO stalled in the late 90s, the DPA only made very slow progress on this front despite the growth in responsibilities attributed to it by Annan's 1997 program of reform.[86] Alongside a push for better funding of its conflict prevention functions, DPA undertook a number of efforts to strengthen strategic planning and coordination. In 1998, under the tenure of Kieran Prendergast, the DPA established a Policy Planning Unit along with a Conflict Prevention Team, both of which were to provide policy guidance on preventive action.[87] Until today, however, the Policy Planning Unit has not been able to set up a lessons learned capacity even for its core business.[88]

Also in 1998, DPA made plans for a small Peacebuilding Unit tasked to "assist mission planning and support for peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding support offices, special political missions and peacemaking/diplomatic activities. It would also build and maintain a peacebuilding information system and establish contacts for the department with academic institutions and research centers."[89] The unit which was guided by the definition of peace-building as preventive diplomacy prevalent at the time suffered much the same fate as DPKO's Lessons Learned Unit: after being denied regular funding in 1999, the idea remained dormant until the Brahimi Report reanimated the project in 2000. To improve coordination at the inter-departmental level, Kofi Annan's reforms introduced an Executive Committee for Peace and Security (ECPS) including all Under-Secretaries-General and some of the Assistant-Secretaries-General working on issues of peace and security, chaired by the head of DPA. Without any stable funding for even a small secretariat and

81 UN ACABQ (1997: para. 21); UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (1997); UN General Assembly (1997a); UN Secretary-General (1997a); UN General Assembly (1997b).
82 UN Secretary-General (1998: para. 8, 9-11, 37); UN ACABQ (1998: para. 3).
83 UN Secretary-General (1999: para. 5, 17).
84 UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (2000: para. 42); Interview with DPKO official, 24 April 2006.
85 UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (2000: para. 43).
86 Annan (1997: 40).
87 UN Secretary-General (2001b: para. 73).
88 Interview with UN official, 25 April 2006.
89 Durch et al. (2003: 57).

hamstrung by inter-departmental feuding, the Secretary-General found the ECPS, four years later, still "not living up to its full potential."[90]

3.2 The Brahimi Report and Beyond: Learning at the Center of Management Reforms in Peacebuilding

> "The work of DPKO's existing Lessons Learned Unit does not seem to have had a great deal of impact on peace operations practice, and the compilation of lessons learned seems to occur mostly after a mission has ended."[91]
>
> "Under the current practices there is no process for elevating certain practices to 'best practices' and subsequently incorporating them both in the field and at headquarters …"[92]

Following years of stagnation in the number of peacebuilding operations and decline in field personnel and DPKO support staff alike, a new and rapid surge in demand for UN peace operations began in June 1999. Quite unexpectedly, member states called for some of the largest and most ambitious missions to be deployed to Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – missions that were much more complex and intrusive than most of what the UN had been engaged in before. To avert a renewed overstretch of DPKO's support capacities[93] and avoid repetition of the UN's mistakes in handling the situations in Rwanda 1994 and Srebrenica 1995, the Secretary-General convened a high-level panel to suggest improvements to the management of UN peace operations. The panel produced what became known as the "Brahimi Report", named after the panel's chairman, former Algerian foreign minister and UN Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi.

The panel did not come up with entirely new concepts. This was not necessary as one of the main intentions was to distill once more the numerous ideas that had been proposed in previous years but failed to attract sufficient funding and political will on the part of the member states. On a conceptual level, the report officially broadened the notion of peace-building to bring it closer to the realities of post-conflict state-building: "to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war." The following list of tasks is both comprehend-sive and intrusive, from electoral assistance and human rights education up to the "training and restructuring of local police, and judicial and penal reform."[94] Among the operational suggestions in the Brahimi Report were three initiatives to improve the learning infra-structure in the peacebuilding bureaucracy.[95] These were: 1) a new "strategic analysis" capacity at DPA for the assessment and evaluation of peacebuilding activities, 2) the introduction of Integrated Mission Task Forces to oversee field operations, and 3) re-vitalizing DPKO's Policy Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit.

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90 UN Secretary-General (2001a: para. 298).
91 Brahimi Report, United Nations (2000: para. 229).
92 Dahrendorf (2003: para. viii).
93 Dahrendorf (2003: para. 14).
94 United Nations (2000: para. 13).
95 On the general relevance of the Brahimi report for UN peacekeeping see, among others, Johnstone, Tortolani and Gowan (2006: 62); Durch et al. (2003); Malone and Thakur (2001); Cockayne and Malone (2005).

These three proposals encountered a similar fate as the panel's overall recommendations. They were only partly met with support from the member states. The eminence of the panelists and the strong support of the Secretary-General provided the necessary momentum to secure much-needed funding to implement at least key elements of the recommendations, including the creation of 191 new posts for DPKO.[96] But for the most part the history of the implementation of the recommendations demonstrated "that the doctrinal lessons of the Brahimi Report will only be learnt when reinforced by realities on the ground."[97]

The three recommendations relating to the infrastructure of learning are a case in point: the first recommendation failed, the second was implemented with mixed success, and the third has, after some time, led to considerable activity to promote organizational learning at DPKO. In the following sections, each will be treated in turn.

3.2.1 Creating a Strategic Analysis Capacity at DPA: The EISAS and PBU Disaster

"[T]o strengthen the permanent capacity of the UN to develop peacebuilding strategies and to implement programs in support of those strategies,"[98] the Brahimi Report advocated that an ECPS Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat (EISAS) be established to support the Executive Committee for Peace and Security (ECPS).[99] The new body was to pull together a number of disparate policy and analysis units scattered throughout the secretariat, including the policy analysis part of DPKO's recently merged Policy Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit, its Situation Centre, and DPA's Policy Planning Unit. The plans for EISAS also included the creation of a new Peacebuilding Unit (PBU).[100]

Facing instant opposition from member states who felt that too strong an early warning and "intelligence" capacity of the United Nations might compromise their sovereignty,[101] the Secretary-General pulled back and requested a much smaller version of EISAS and a separate Peacebuilding Unit to be established as part of DPA.[102] In May 2002, the request was finally denied. According to well-placed observers, the PBU's failure must be regarded as collateral damage from the political storm that had broken out over the EISAS concept.[103]

3.2.2 Integrated Mission Task Forces

As a second proposal relevant to the learning infrastructure, the Brahimi panel proposed the establishment of Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTFs) as a management tool to bring all actors relevant for the recently introduced "integrated missions" together at the headquarters level. An IMTF would be assembled for every specific multidimensional peace operation to coordinate its planning and management at a relatively high level of seniority. Starting well ahead of a formal mandate of the Security Council and operating throughout the life cycle of its mission, the group would play the role of a crucial hub through which all information and decisions would flow. Its inclusiveness and decision-making authority would go a long way to improve the implementation of past lessons learned. Ideally, the IMTFs would also help to coordinate the collection of lessons learned during and the end of missions.[104]

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96 Durch et al. (2003: 3-5).
97 Johnstone, Tortolani and Gowan (2006: 66).
98 United Nations (2000: para. 44-46).
99 UN Secretary-General (2000: para. 42-58).
100 United Nations (2000: para. 243a).
101 UN ACABQ (2000: para. 21); Chesterman (2006: 154).
102 UN Secretary-General (2001a: para. 301).
103 Durch et al. (2003: 87-88).
104 United Nations (2000: para. 200ff.).

After five years, the result is mixed at best. According to one recent study, IMTFs "have been established on only a limited number of missions and they performed below expectations."[105] In more detail, according to another assessment, they "succeeded in resolving technical issues of day-to-day coordination and policy differences" but, "there was still an overall incoherence in the international response mechanism".[106] In particular, observers point to a persistent lack of cohesiveness among the UN agencies, between the UN agencies and a number of regional organizations, and between these entities and some of the major powers involved in the process.

While the IMTF doctrine has been revised, refined, and adapted for each UN mission since its first application in the planning of UNAMA for Afghanistan in 2001/02, a fundamental tension persists: while representatives from the political, humanitarian and development agencies on the ground feel that DPKO planners fail to adequately take their local experience and perspectives into account, DPKO staff complain that UN country teams often "are unwilling to adapt to the new realities."[107] Lacking effective integration with processes of learning, a study team found that even in 2005, mission design in the cases of Liberia and Sudan reflected "the inclinations and predilections of senior mission management, with little if any substantive reference to best practices, concepts of integration or modern management practices."[108] They conclude that the IMTF process has been undermined by a lack of clear reporting lines and decision-making leverage, that it has not been sufficiently country focused, and that it had only provided a very loose form of integration.[109]

3.2.3 The Further Development of DPKO's Lessons Learned Unit

Having been appointed on 1 October 2000 with an explicit determination to implement the Brahimi Panel's recommendations and "professionalize" DPKO's organizational culture, the new Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno made "change management" one of his personal priorities.[110] Instead of following the Brahimi panel's recommendation to move the Policy Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit into the Office of Operations – internally considered the most understaffed, bureaucratic and change-resistant part of DPKO[111] – he kept the unit as part of his immediate office.[112] As member states finally provided new resources for the department in 2001, the unit was strengthened and once more renamed into Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (PBPU).

However, despite the additional staff and funding, it took more than two years and several changes in personnel to improve the standing of the unit. In 2003, while one external study still complained about the lack of an effective learning capacity at the department,[113] the appointment of David Harland as head of the unit led to a turnaround. A Harvard-educated career UN official who, in 1999, drafted the organization's damning report on the Srebrenica massacre, Harland could build on a broad range of previous assignments in various departments and in the Bosnia and East Timor operations. Nonetheless, it took another two years until a plan to systematically collect end-of-mission reports and other lessons learned was put into practice.[114]

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105 Cutillo (2006: 20).
106 Eide et al. (2005: 12).
107 Eide et al. (2005: 19).
108 Eide et al. (2005: 19).
109 Eide et al. (2005: 23); similarly Durch et al. (2003: 47-50).
110 Guéhenno (2002); Interview with DPKO official and external experts, New York, 25/26 April 2006.
111 Interview with DPKO official, New York, 24 April 2006.
112 United Nations (2000: para. 233e); UN Secretary-General (2000: para. 48).
113 Dahrendorf (2003: para. viii).
114 Durch et al. (2003: 41); Johnstone (2006b: 11); Porter (1999); Interviews with DPKO officials, 24-26 April 2006.

3.2.4 The High Level Panel and the 2005 Summit

In 2005, the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change again took up the need for an institutional home for the cross-cutting task of peacebuilding. In the meantime, the topic had been prominently featured in the recommendations of two critical reviews of the UN's record in peacebuilding.[115] Together with the proposal of an intergovernmental Peacebuilding Commission to coordinate sustained peacebuilding activities by the UN, a Peacebuilding Support Office became part of the Secretary-General's subsequent report "In Larger Freedom". After the endorsement of heads of state at the 2005 World Summit, both bodies were mandated in December of that year.[116]

Issues of learning, however, did not come up in the High-Level Panel report, nor did the state of DPKO's support infrastructure for peacebuilding operations. This might prove a crucial omission given the renewed surge in demand for new operations that is set to increase the number of troops by nearly 50% in 2006 (including a 17,000-strong Darfur mission). The strain of having planned for new deployments in East Timor, Lebanon and Sudan alone in the month of August 2006 is already showing, and prompting new questions whether the infrastructure and procedures available at DPKO are up to the number and size of operations requested by member states.[117]

3.3 A Snapshot of the Current Infrastructure for Learning

At the time of this writing in the autumn of 2006 during the final months of Kofi Annan's tenure as Secretary-General the Secretariat and DPKO in particular remain under significant restructuring and change. In many ways, the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy remains a moving target for analysts. In the following, we present a snapshot of the peacebuilding bureaucracy, as of mid-2006.

In organizing the complex array of departments, agencies, field offices, and intergovernmental bodies for the purpose of an analysis of organizational learning, we distinguish between three levels of operation facing different kinds of internal logics and external constraints: 1) the inter-governmental level (Security Council and General Assembly with the respective committees, the governing bodies of the various specialized agencies, member state representatives); 2) the headquarters level (UN Secretariat and the secretariats of the various specialized agencies), and 3) the field level (peacebuilding missions; see Figure 2 on page 29). In the following discussion, we focus on the UN bureaucracy at the head-quarters and field levels. We also discuss on how this peacebuilding bureaucracy interacts with bodies at the intergovernmental level and how it interfaces with non-state actors such as NGOs and think-tanks.[118]

3.3.1 The Learning Infrastructure Within the Peacebuilding Bureaucracy

Under the political mandate of the Security Council, formal authority over peacebuilding operations rests with the Secretary-General. Through the Under-Secretary-General heading the DPKO, field leadership on the ground is delegated to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs). Still, the Secretary-General's Executive Office may be involved in the political aspects of higher profile operations. In particular during the start-up

115 Durch et al. (2003: 102); Dahrendorf (2003: para. vi).
116 United Nations (2004); Annan (2005); UN General Assembly (2005); UN Security Council (2005).
117 Turner (2006).
118 Much of the following is based on UN DPKO (2003) and Cutillo (2006).

and transition phases of a mission, this includes mandate negotiations, marshalling troops and resources, and defining the mission's relationship to the host country and other interested parties.

DPKO is in charge of planning, logistical support, and day-to-day operational management of peacebuilding missions. The department's senior officers are also the key points of contact at the headquarters for mission leadership in the field. Even as the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is directing a few smaller operations without military or police components, DPKO's experience and expertise in the logistics of peace operations as well as the organizational muscle provided by a much larger staff give the department de-facto primacy on most operational issues.[119]

Other departments and agencies such as the UN family's humanitarian and development actors frequently contribute their particular operational strengths to specific missions but until now are usually not involved in the overall planning and management of operations.[120] However, a number of inter-departmental and inter-agency committees are supposed to integrate their perspectives into the planning and management process. Each of these suffers from its individual shortcomings: the Executive Committee for Peace and Security (ECPS, see section 3.1 above) meets on the level of Under-Secretaries-General, mostly confining it to general questions not specific to any mission, and is being led by the head of DPA, not DPKO. The Secretary-General's Policy Committee, in contrast, is much less hamstrung by departmental or agency politics but is limited in membership to the Secretariat itself. On a mission level, Integrated Mission Task Forces (see section 3.2 above) are often perceived in other departments as dominated by DPKO.[121] Meanwhile, the new Peacebuilding Support Office is only beginning to find its role as we write.

Mirroring this distribution of authority in the strategic management of peacebuilding, the promotion of organizational learning remains largely with DPKO's *Peacekeeping Best Practices Section* (PBPS). Like the department, the unit has taken the initiative on wider issues of peace*building* even though its formal authority remains restricted to peace*keeping* as such.[122] The Department of Political Affairs, being even more stripped of resources than DPKO, never received the necessary funding to set up a Peacebuilding Unit, while its Policy Planning Unit does not have any lessons learned capacity even for the department's core tasks.[123] UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), in contrast, is better resourced but concentrates on the specific tasks its field offices are engaged in. While collecting best practices and lessons learned on, for example, UNDP's electoral assistance work, the BCPR has rarely engaged in learning support for peacebuilding more generally.[124]

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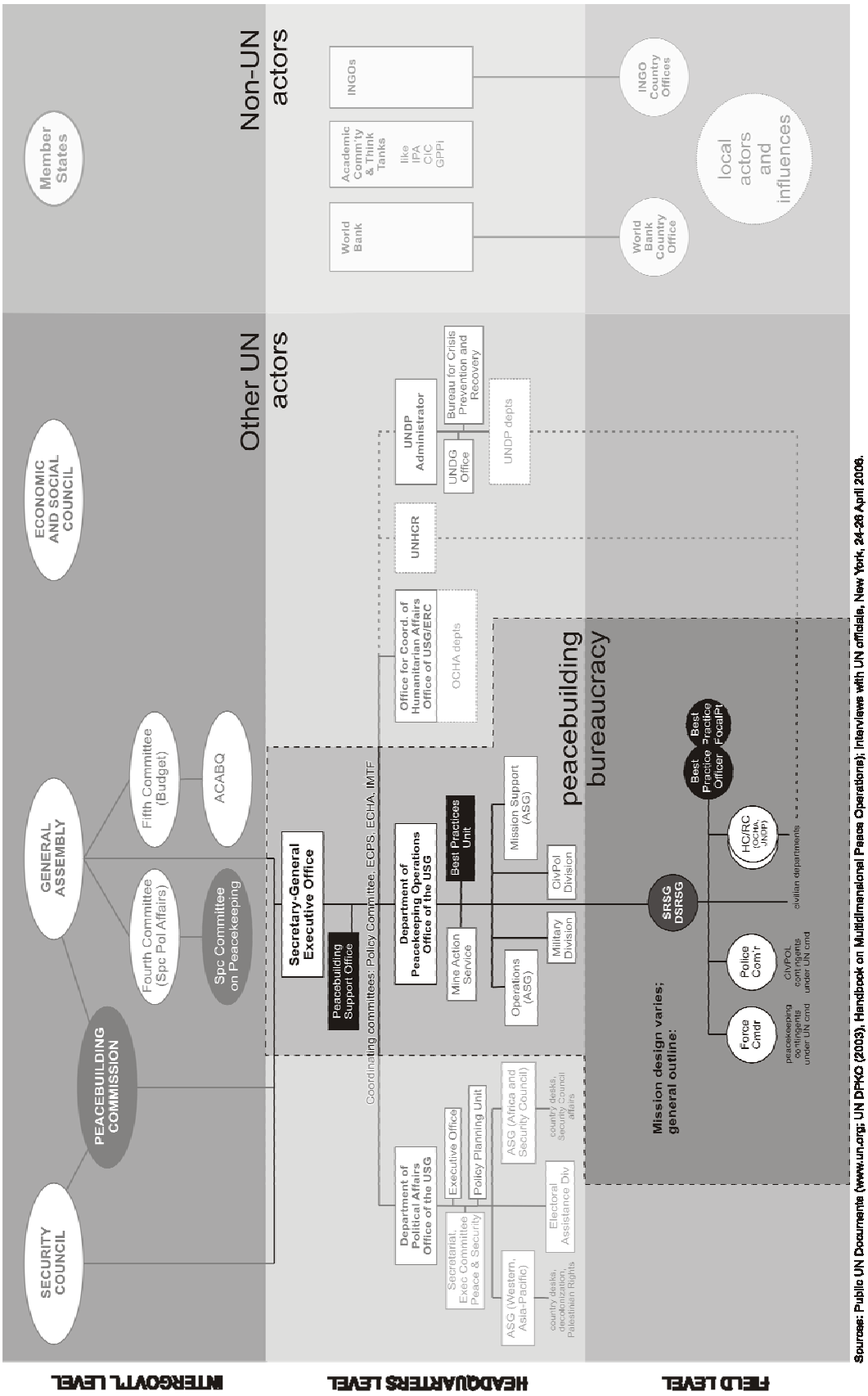
119 In 2006, this included the mission to Iraq (UNAMI), among others. Larger missions, even those staffed primarily by DPA and not including a UN security presence, are generally run by DPKO. Examples include UNAMA (Afghanistan), UNOTIL (Timor-Leste, the successor to DPKO's UNTAET operation) and UNIOSIL (Sierra Leone, the successor to DPKO's UNAMSIL).
120 Cutillo (2006: 21).
121 Eide et al. (2005: 19).
122 Interview with DPKO official, New York, 25 April 2006.
123 Interview with DPA official, New York, 25 April 2006.
124 Cutillo (2006: 24).

Figure 2: The UN peacebuilding bureaucracy



Sources: Public UN Documents (www.un.org; UN DPKO (2003), Handbook on Multidimensional Peace Operations); Interviews with UN officials, New York, 24-28 April 2006.

The Peacebuilding Best Practices Section at DPKO collects reports and best practice proposals from mission staff with the assistance of Best Practice Officers or Focal Points in each field mission.[125] In addition, the section conducts its own studies (often with the help of external consultants), either on missions or with regard to cross-cutting themes that are relevant to many current or anticipated missions. On issues that transcend the departmental experience or authority of DPKO, resulting policy decisions are made by inter-departmental *fora* to ensure input and ownership of other relevant departments.[126] Among the recent initiatives by PBPS to support organizational learning on peacebuilding are its Knowledge Management Team and the Guidance Project, both introduced in late 2005. The Guidance project is tasked to establish a comprehensive body of reviewed and/or changed rules on the full range of peacebuilding tasks. The Knowledge Management team is expected to improve, in quantity and quality, the gathering of lessons learned and best practices from field reports. Concrete learning initiatives within this framework are expected to be operational in early 2007.[127]

Another innovation with potentially significant impact is the newly created Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) which is tasked, among other things, to "gather and analyze information relating to […] best practices with respect to cross-cutting peacebuilding issues."[128] As the small office was only becoming operational in the summer of 2006, it remains to be seen how its learning role will fare in relation to its coordination and support tasks vis-à-vis the Peacebuilding Commission. In any case, the office is designed to coordinate general rather than mission-specific peacebuilding policy and to concentrate on issues of sustainability rather than immediate crisis management.

The first Assistant-Secretary-General to head the PBSO, Carolyn MacAskie of Canada, was a senior choice for the position. While she brings experience from within headquarters, as well as from running the field operation in Burundi to the job,[129] some hold that the head of the PBSO should rather have more experience with knowledge management. The fact that the current head of the PBSO has an inclination to get involved in current operational issues instead of focusing on knowledge work has only emboldened sceptics working to sideline the PBSO. Ideally, the PBSO with its institutional position as part of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and not beholden to the internal logic of any one department involved in peacebuilding activities is well suited to play a coordinating role in knowledge management.[130] It remains unclear whether it can evolve into this role.

On the ground, the capacity for learning is still very much defined by the resources and personal leadership of mission management. DPKO is a field-driven department and the influence of headquarters to promote the collection of lessons learned is limited or at least at the mercy of those responsible for running the mission on the ground. The effectiveness of improvements in the organizational infrastructure of learning, like the recently introduced Best Practice Officers or Focal Points, is hampered by the fundamental problem of coordination. The rhetorical and doctrinal move toward "integrated missions" under the leadership of SRSGs who would enjoy line authority not only over peacekeepers, police forces, and other DPKO-supplied components but also over the field offices of other UN agencies

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125 As of early 2006, only four of the current 14 peace operations under DPKO's management have been assigned a single full-time Best Practice Officer. In the other missions, one person has been designated Best Practice Focal Points in addition to their other responsibilities (Interview with DPKO staff, New York, 26 April 2006).
126 Interview with DPKO staff, New York, 25 April 2006.
127 Interviews with DPKO staff, 24/25 April 2006.
128 UN Security Council (2005).
129 Interviews with various UN staff and outside experts, 24-26 April 2006.
130 United Nations (2006).

involved, has not yet been effectively implemented. As a consequence, any inter-agency sharing of lessons learned or best practices depends on personal networks and initiative, while the official infrastructure of learning covers only the core tasks and components under DPKO's authority.

Being far removed from their understaffed and overworked operations desks in New York, mission leadership usually enjoys an exceptional extent of freedom from interference by headquarters. A quite different organizational culture in field missions, based on different recruiting practices and the demands of the tasks themselves, often adds to the disjoint between headquarters and field. As a consequence, it might be easier to learn for individual missions, but harder to institutionalize best practices across missions or into headquarters doctrine.

3.3.2 Influences of the political and institutional environment

Within the UN system, there are two important sets of constraining or enabling actors with influence on organizational learning in the peacebuilding bureaucracy: on the intergovernmental level, the principal organs on peace, security and development (Security Council, General Assembly), and their relevant subsidiary bodies (Budget Committee, Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and the new Peacebuilding Commission) enable or constrain the freedom of action of the peacebuilding bureaucracy with regard to learning and rule change. On the headquarters and field levels, other bureaucratic actors within the UN system – mainly DPA, OCHA, UNHCR, UNHCHR, and UNDP – operate under their own mandates and governance arrangements on certain aspects of peacebuilding. While cooperating with DPKO as part of the "integrated missions" doctrine set out above, these organizations also cater to different sets of demands and expectations and keep their own learning and evaluation structures.

External to the United Nations as such, the World Bank, NGOs, major governments, and think-tanks each play a role for the peacebuilding bureaucracy and its learning capability. The particular features of these roles, though in many cases vital for particular processes of learning at headquarters or in the field, are hard to generalize without further detailed research. Examples include the considerable and sustained budgetary support to DPKO's learning unit from several European governments such as Sweden and Germany, as well as charitable foundations such as the Ford Foundation. The governments of Norway and the UK, among others, have funded numerous external studies and conferences in close connection to the UN secretariat and with the explicit purpose of compensating for the limited internal resources for such evaluation work. Another such example is the recently introduced "Senior Mission Leaders Course" for senior leaders in peace operations, conducted by the German Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF) together with DPKO and other member state agencies. Think-tanks close to the Secretariat, like the International Peace Academy, the Center for International Cooperation at New York University, or the Henry L. Stimson Center have been instrumental in providing intellectual support for many of the advances made in recent years – not least in providing much of the research staff for the Brahimi and High-Level panels.[131]

131 Malone and Nitzschke (2004).

4. Learning in the UN Peacebuilding Apparatus: Pushing the Frontiers of Research and Practice

> "As long as they are carried out by human beings, interventions to put weak societies on a more stable footing will never be perfect. […] They will continue to suffer from our flawed understanding, ideological blinkers, divisiveness, weak will and shortsightedness. But we are also capable, albeit inefficiently, of learning from our mistakes. […] Applying these lessons ultimately depends on political will."[132]

What lessons can we learn for the study and practice of organizational learning in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy? In this chapter we present elements of both a future research and a policy agenda on peacebuilding and organizational learning. In doing so, modesty needs to be our most basic guiding principle. This study has only started to scratch the surface of what is a promising area of research and an important concern for policymakers. More focused in-depth studies are needed in order to produce more robust research findings that can then inform recommendations for policymaking. In light of this, readers need to take the following preliminary sketches of agendas for research and practice with a grain of salt.

One further clarification is in order in this context: Making the question of organizational learning the focus of our research does not presuppose that such learning has frequently and successfully taken place. Anecdotal evidence from the available literature points in the opposite direction.[133] At the same time, we need to take the broader concerns of sceptics seriously. Michael Barnett, for example, argues that the bread-and-butter business of an international bureaucracy such as the UN, namely determining and operating on universal and generalized rules, might not be possible in the case of peacebuilding because of the historic specificity of the individual cases. Barnett argues that bureaucratic universalism is dangerous: "In order to be the rationalized, efficient actors that they present themselves to be, [UN peacebuilding officials] must flatten diversity and ignore contextual variations."[134] It should be clear that learning cannot and should not equal the search for a "one-size-fits-all template".[135] At the same time, from a policy perspective we hold that ultimately a learning organization that revises doctrines and guidelines based on experience and relevant new knowledge is a model worth striving for. Only a thorough and sober analysis of the successes and (even more importantly) the failures, shortcomings and roadblocks can point to promising and realistic policy strategies for getting closer to this model.

4.1 Future Research Agenda

Our case examples[136] have surveyed a wide variety of instances of learning. We have seen both completed and aborted learning processes. We also pointed to instances of "no

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132 King and Mason (2006: 263-264).
133 See chapter 2.
134 Barnett (2005: 5).
135 Therefore, any attempts to use "pre-fabricated constitutions" (Benard, 2005) or "Governments-out-of-a-Box" (CMI and IPA, 2004; von der Schulenburg, 2005) are of most doubtful promise.
136 Available in the longer version of this study (Benner, Thorsten, Andrea Binder and Philipp Rotmann (2007): Learning to Build Peace? United Nations Peacebuilding and Organizational Learning: Developing a Research Framework. GPPi Research Paper Series No. 7.) is available at http://www.globalpublicpolicy.net/fileadmin/gppi/GPPiRP_LearningTo BuildPeace_Feb2007final.pd

learning" when, with the benefit of hindsight, we concluded that the actors did not identify a problem even while outside observers convincingly pointed out the need for a new perspective regarding the same issue. In addition, we discussed a case of "lessons misapplied" as valid lessons from the Kosovo experience were insufficiently contextualized and therefore misapplied in East Timor.

Overall, this is a broad spectrum that points to a number of problems that any further research in this area must confront and address. First, "no learning" is a typical instance of a non-case that can hardly be made visible, certainly not in a reliable way that goes beyond accidental selection by external complaint. Second, and more importantly, the universe of different forms of learning and the universe of peacebuilding are simply too large to design in-depth research studies covering the whole of them.

Instead, it is crucial to concentrate on a particular manifestation of organizational learning, like we intend to do with our focus on cognitive change leading to a shift in bureaucratic rules. To achieve a degree of similarity between observations, a further research agenda also needs a more narrow selection of issues. After all, the entire field of peacebuilding offers simply too many instances of diverse learning processes to be a viable object of research as a whole. Looking into organizational learning in international organizations, we stand only at the beginning of a spiral process of retroduction, combining theoretical progress with further empirical research, and along the way dealing with new material on both fronts.

For now, there are three substantial building blocs for further research that we can take as the results of this study's conceptual review and empirical analysis: 1) a preliminary model of the learning process, 2) a set of factors influencing that process, and 3) the choice of an appropriate methodology.

4.1.1 A Model of Organizational Learning in International Bureaucracies

Returning to our basic premise to see learning as a process, we need an initial concept of how this process evolves in order to study it – in short, a model. In developing a stylized process model of learning in international organizations rather than corporations, we must lead traditionally business-focused organizational learning theory onto completely new territory. Based in part on the works of Huber (1991) and Crossan, Lane and White (1999), our model is designed to trace the learning process in a very general way. In line with the requirements of the early stage in the retroductive method, the idea is just to organize the concepts that constitute learning. In a subsequent step, the model can be used to organize preliminary hypotheses drawn from related theories and observations of the empirical reality.

In line with most organizational learning scholars we distinguish different stages of the learning process as cognitively driven rule change for heuristic purposes:[137] 1) knowledge acquisition, 2) advocacy/decision-making, and 3) institutionalization. Ideally, the three phases would add up to a learning cycle, i.e. the institutionalized rules would be subject to continuous review and further learning.[138] Our heuristic model does not include

137 March and Olsen (1976); Crossan, Lane and White (1999); Berthoin Antal et al. (2001); DiBella, Nevis and Gould (1996). However, our model departs from most models of learning in so far that it understands learning to be a process of knowledge-based rule change rather than information processing.

138 On feedback loops see Argyris and Schön (1978); Haas (1990).

assumptions of the factors that influence the learning process, which we will discuss in the next section.

1. Knowledge Acquisition: Initially, the organization either actively searches for or passively receives knowledge from its environment, or converts its own previous experience into knowledge. Potential sources include a field officer's end-of-assignment report; a study conducted at the Best Practices Section to actively identify ways to solve new problems (or better solve existing ones); or the organization's decision to adopt and incorporate the recommendations of a policy paper prepared by an outside think-tank.

2. Advocacy/decision-making:[139] After knowledge acquisition, the carriers of knowledge spread the word about the new knowledge in the organization and develop knowledge-based proposals for new rules. Building coalitions and negotiating the relevance of their new knowledge and rule-changing proposals, they try to convince key people to accept their newly acquired knowledge and its implications for rule adaptation. In this phase it will be examined how knowledge is formed into proposals for new rules and how these proposals gain (or do not gain) momentum within the organization. The advocacy stage ends with an authoritative decision on whether and how to change the rules.

3. Institutionalization*:* Once a decision has been taken, it must be codified and implemented. The new rules are integrated within the existing body of rules and disseminated among concerned units and staff. The learning process is completed when the newly made rules are applied. In an ideal learning process the implementation is followed by an evaluation of the new rule, activating a feedback loop and restarting the learning process.

More detailed steps in the learning process can only be made visible by means of applying process tracing (see below) to concrete cases. Of course this is only a stylized model which does not allow us to make predictions on how different factors influence individual processes of learning. It is only a necessary preparatory step for subsequent in-depth research on the factors that influence learning.

4.1.2 Influences on Learning

Determining the relative importance of different factors supporting and hindering processes of organizational learning will be at the heart of any future in-depth research. Our study has produced some initial observations of potential factors both inductively (from our case examples) and deductively (from the literature on organizational learning).

The case examples surveyed in the research project and detailed in a longer version of this paper[140] show a number of factors that have influenced processes of learning. We saw the complex interplay between the bureaucratic and the intergovernmental levels where it was fundamentally political power that played an important role in supporting or forestalling learning. The negative effects of organizational structure on learning became apparent in the bureaucratic politics and turf fights documented in various cases. An interesting dyna-

139 We owe the suggestion for this term to Patrick Stadler (University of Bern).

140 Benner, Thorsten, Andrea Binder and Philipp Rotmann (2007): Learning to Build Peace? United Nations Peace-building and Organizational Learning: Developing a Research Framework. GPPi Research Paper Series No. 7.); available at http://www.globalpublicpolicy.net/fileadmin/gppi/GPPiRP_ LearningTo BuildPeace_Feb2007final.pdf.

mic that merits further attention in subsequent research are the differences between headquarters and field levels and the interaction between the two in learning processes. On the one hand, learning processes in the field might be less constrained by bureaucracy and grand politics than those at headquarters. At the same time, staff in the field often seems independent of what are regarded as "the recent management fads" coming out of headquarters – the importance of learning being one of them. The day-to-day pressures of operating in the field are certainly not conducive to putting a premium on actively contributing to learning processes. Staff at headquarters on the other hand has to cater to political masters, bureaucratic imperatives and generalize across the whole range of very different situations on the ground. The influence of human capital for learning is obvious in the impact of staffing levels, recruitment policies and the role of local knowledge in mission planning and management. Human capital is also at work in the role of dedicated learning support, be it one-time internal evaluations or a permanent infrastructure of organizational learning. Access to external knowledge has been recognized as a factor on learning as well, as has the role of leadership, particularly by the SRSG personally. This is exemplified by the role of the first head of the UNAMA mission in Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, whose strong personal leadership together with the high level of political attention and ample resources might have provided one of the best possible real-world situations for learning short of crisis-induced revolutionary change.

Reviewing the relevant literature, we discovered a multitude of "factors", "conditions", "antecedents" and "triggers" said to be in one way or another causally linked to learning. As of now we lack both a systematization of these variables as well as detailed empirical investigations into how they actually influence learning.[141] As a first step toward systematization for the purposes of an in-depth follow-up study, we came up with a way of organizing and selecting plausible candidates for independent variables that might influence one or more stages of the learning process.

In a comparison of factors deduced from the literature and factors induced from the case examples and the interviews conducted as part of the pilot project (see Annex 1), we distilled eight clusters of potential independent variables that we found to apply to at least two different areas of the learning system (the peacebuilding bureaucracy, other UN actors, and non-UN actors) and that were supported both deductively by the organizational learning literature and inductively by our empirical research (with one exception that is strongly supported by our interviews). Table 1 gives an overview of the resulting clusters of potential independent variables.

The cluster organizational culture, for example, includes the organization's decision-making culture (top down vs. bottom up), its absorptive capacity, its bureaucratic nature, etc. Future research needs to determine the most relevant clusters and single out the most important independent variables. In contrast to approaches focusing on single dominant causes or triggers of learning (most often a crisis),[142] we believe that a more fine-grained process tracing analyzing different factors that (co-)influence learning has the potential of presenting a much richer analysis of organizational learning.[143]

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141 Babuji and Crossan (2004); Dodgson (1993); Huber (1991), among others.
142 See the discussion in Breul (2005), chapter 3.2.
143 This is underlined by Hannan and Freeman who assert that "organizational outcomes depend heavily on internal politics, on the balance of power among the constituencies. When such an organization faces an external problem, which action will be taken, if any, depends as much on the coalition structure of the organization as on the contribution of alternative actions to organizational survival or growth. In such situations outcomes cannot be easily matched rationally to changing environments." (Hannan and Freeman, 1989: 23 quoted in Pierson, 2004: 126)

Applicability (cf. Figure 2) (and sources)	**Peacebuilding Bureaucracy**		**Other UN actors**		**Non-UN actors**	
Clusters of potential IVs	deductive	inductive	deductive	inductive	deductive	inductive
Power	X	X	X	X	X	X
Organizational culture	X	X		X		
Leadership	X	X		X		
Human capital	X	X		X		
Organizational structure	X	X		X		
Staff mobility and fluctuation	X	X	X	X		
Technical infrastructure for knowledge management		X				
Access to external knowledge					X	X

Table 1: Clusters of potential independent variables

4.1.3 Methodological Suggestions for Future In-depth Studies

As discussed in chapter 2, we suggest that future in-depth studies define organizational learning, the dependent variable, following Haas (1990) and Barnett/Finnemore (2004) as *a process of cognitive change through the questioning of the means and/or ends of addressing problems that manifests itself in the development of new rules and routines guiding the organization's behavior*. Some approaches propose a more complex scale of learning (e.g. by distinguishing between simple and complex learning or single-/double-loop learning).[144] We do not think that such fine-grained scaling adds much value at this stage of research on organizational learning in international organizations. The scaling of our dependent variable is nominal. Instead, we suggest relying on a simple nominal scale of "learning" (completion of the learning process) and "no learning" (non-completion of the learning process).[145]

On top of the inherent complexity of organizational learning as a non-observable process, any further research will have to deal with a multitude of independent variables or, in other words, multiple causality. We make two suggestions for addressing this challenge.

First, we suggest that future in-depth research concentrates on a single focal organization, e.g. the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy around DPKO or the peacebuilding bureaucracies in the US or the UK. Only once we have a number of in-depth single case studies, can we undertake credible cross-case comparisons.

Second, we suggest to "zoom in" on a number of select "focal issues" from the three areas of security, governance, and welfare[146] as well as the area of cross-cutting problems such

144 For example Nye (1993), Argyris and Schön (1978). In a similar vein, Haas (1990) distinguishes adaptation and learning.

145 It follows, of course, that we cannot trace all cases of no learning because processes that never started and rules that were never supposed to change cannot be made visible.

146 "Sicherheit", "Wohlfahrt" and "Herrschaft" in the terminology used by Czempiel (1981: 198).

as coordination of disparate actors.[147] In doing so, further research can cover a broad range of peacebuilding tasks while at the same time putting a premium on in-depth analysis. Tracking processes of learning on concrete issues over a longer time-span allows us to draw more informed conclusions than simply focusing on different peacebuilding missions as the unit of analysis.

A decision to design future in-depth studies as single case studies using retroduction also has consequences for the choice of method.[148] Process tracing seems to be the most suitable method for future research along the lines suggested in this study. Process tracing helps to unwrap the process by which the "initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes".[149] The researcher searches for evidence by dividing the process into smaller steps and looking for discernable evidence of each step.[150] Therefore, process tracing is perfectly suited to detect how complex processes such as organizational learning unfold. At the same time, by dividing the process into stages – knowledge acquisition, advocacy/ decision-making, and institutionalization – and investigating a few different focal issues, process tracing helps increase the number of observations.

4.1.4 Challenges and Opportunities of Further Research

Future in-depth studies hold the potential of breaking new ground both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically, they can help develop a framework for analyzing and operationalizing organizational learning, a concept that until now has largely remained at the metaphorical level. Tailoring such a framework to an international organization, they can add a political dimension to a field that until now has mostly focused on corporations. In doing so, future research needs to continue to bring together approaches from IR with organization theory – a literature so far underutilized for both the analysis of peacebuilding and the study of international organizations in general.[151] At the same time, in-depth studies on organizational learning would also help to remedy one theoretical weakness of the existing literature on peacebuilding which (according to one prominent observer) has "paid relatively little attention to the conceptual foundations of peacebuilding itself, or the basic premises upon which these operations are based."[152]

Empirically, further studies on organizational learning in international organizations would contribute to opening up the "black box" of international bureaucracies[153] by means of an empirically rich process-tracing of (non)-learning. At the same time, the results promise to be relevant for the practice of the respective organization. In the case of UN peacebuilding, for example, the policy relevance for the design of learning systems at DPKO and the new PBSO is readily apparent (see next section).

Future research should not shy away from taking a closer look at the role of factors that are often overlooked in political science research. This includes the issue of leadership. While research in IR has produced a wealth of literature in institutionalist, structuralist or

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147 For the area of peacebuilding, these categories have been adapted frequently, cf. Kühne (2005); Schneckener and Weinlich (2005); CSIS (2002).
148 Schimmelfennig (1995); Eckstein (1975); Lijphart (1971).
149 Van Evera (1997: 64).
150 Cf. Van Evera (1997).
151 We share this observation and research interest with our partners at the University of Constance who are working on peacebuilding in the context of their projects "Administrative Science Meets Peacekeeping and Casualties of the New World Order".
152 Paris (2004: 4). Paris states that while "the literature on peacebuilding has burgeoned since the end of the Cold War, few writers have scrutinized the assumptions that underpin the design and conduct of these operations" (Paris, loc. cit.).
153 See Mathiason (forthcoming, 2007).

systemic traditions, it has shied away from the role of leadership.[154] It would also be desirable for future research not to remain confined to the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy but also take an in-depth look at the learning record of other organizations charged with similar tasks. Interesting cases for comparison could be other international organizations such as NATO or the EU ESDP bureaucracy but also institutions such as the U.S.-/UK-led Coalition Provisional Authority.

4.2 Future Policy Agenda

In 1993, John Ruggie observed: "The United Nations has entered a domain of military activity – a vaguely defined no-man's land lying somewhere between traditional peacekeeping and enforcement – for which it lacks any traditional guiding operational concept."[155] Ten years later, Simon Chesterman concluded that learning "has not […] been one of the strengths of the United Nations. A senior Secretariat official describes this as an unwritten rule that 'no wheel shall go un-reinvented'"[156]. Many observations in this study support these opinions. At the same time, on the basis of the scant evidence available thus far, it would be premature and presumptuous to rush to a final verdict on the UN's learning capacity. The current state of research should also prevent us from rushing to policy conclusions and recommendations. For example, we need additional research in order to make detailed recommendations on options for improving the knowledge management system within the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy. Further down the road, this knowledge-practice transfer is a highly desirable goal – and one that meets great interest on the part of the policymakers and officials in the UN system. At this stage, we need to confine ourselves to a number of observations on the practice of organizational learning in the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy.

The analysis of the evolution of the "infrastructure of learning" has demonstrated that the UN bureaucracy in recent years has attributed greater importance to mainstreaming the gathering and application of lessons into its peacebuilding operations. The current leadership of DPKO seems to have achieved a modicum of success with its efforts along these lines. However, both the resources and political will devoted to improving the "infrastructure of learning" still do not seem to be commensurate to the challenges at hand. The UN's capacity to gather and apply lessons is an important corrective to the ad-hocism that characterizes its peacebuilding operations. Since the UN is in this business for the long haul, and since (as discussed in the introduction) demand for peacebuilding operations seems to be steadily increasing, further investment in its capacity to gather and apply lessons learned is all the more urgent. Here the support of member states (such as the German support for the Peacebuilding Best Practices Unit early in its existence and the ongoing support of the governments of Canada and the UK, among others) can make a real difference in the overstretched peacebuilding apparatus. Member states should increase their investments into the UN's infrastructure of learning. Here it is important to note that future investment should not be confined to the Peacebuilding Commission. The resources available for learning in the relevant departments, most importantly DPKO, are much more critical and therefore deserve sustained attention and targeted funding.

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154 See Keohane (2005).
155 Ruggie (1993).
156 Chesterman (2004: 256). The former senior UN official Sir Kieran Prendergast, head of the Department of Political Affairs from 1997-2005, made a similar observation in an interview in Cambridge/MA, 11 April 2005.

While funding and resources are critical, it is as important to remember that (as the opening quote in this chapter underlines) people are crucial to the business of learning. Without motivated, dedicated and able staff, further investment in the infrastructure of learning will be without effect. Therefore, UN officials operating under huge pressure in tough environments need to have both the incentives and the tools to gather and apply lessons. On the one hand, this presupposes an incentive system in career development that puts a premium on the contribution of the staff members to the organization's learning capacity. To a large extent, the UN peacebuilding bureaucracy is a knowledge-based organization but its current personnel management system does not reflect this. Other knowledge based organizations such as management consultancies put strong incentives in place in order for their employees to contribute to the collective knowledge base.

In terms of tools, on a very basic level this presupposes linking the expertise of different UN officials. DPKO's Best Practices Section has recently made great efforts to support organizational learning on peacebuilding, particularly in the form of its Knowledge Management Team and the Guidance Project. The Guidance project is tasked to establish a comprehensive body of reviewed and/or changed rules on the full range of peacebuilding tasks. Meanwhile, the Knowledge Management (KM) team is expected to improve, in quantity and quality, the gathering of lessons learned and best practices. Both initiatives were planned in late 2005. Concrete learning initiatives within this framework are expected to be operational in early 2007.[157] Meanwhile, peacebuilding operations still lack a comprehensive database listing the areas of expertise and the track record of the respective staff members. However, learning to learn is more than a question of technology. Ultimately, drawing and applying lessons is a craft. As the example of the "misapplied" lessons from Kosovo in East Timor demonstrates, finding the right balance between generalization and context-specificity is a constant challenge. Training programs can contribute to improving this craft. Investing in people is a crucial component of strengthening the overall learning capacity of the UN peacebuilding apparatus.

Given what the often invoked international community has achieved so far in the area of peacebuilding, modesty and self-reflection are in order. At the same time, this is a call to intensify our efforts at "learning to learn". As Ernst Haas, the pioneer of the study of organizational learning in international organizations, put it: "There is never a final lesson to be learned."[158] Haas' dictum holds true for both researchers and policymakers.

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157 In addition, the newly created Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) aspires to "gather and analyze information relating to […] best practices with respect to cross-cutting peacebuilding issues." (UN Security Council, 2005). As of now, the workplan for the PBSO is unclear. In case, the PBSO develops any activities on our four focal issues we would also include this in our research.

158 Haas, 1990.

Appendix

Acknowledgments

We are very grateful to the German Foundation for Peace Research (DSF) for the generous support of our pilot project on “Learning to Build Peace?”. Special thanks go to Dr. Thomas Held (Managing Director of the DSF) and Prof. Dr. Volker Rittberger (Chairman of the Board of the DSF) who devoted a lot of energy and enthusiasm to making this a better, more focused and manageable project. We are also grateful for the suggestions provided by the anonymous reviewers of our research proposal.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the UN officials and member state representatives who made time in their busy schedules to be interviewed for this project (see Annex 1). Their insights helped to shape our understanding of the issues. We are also grateful to Prof. Dr. Michael Doyle (Columbia University), Sebastian von Einsiedel (International Peace Academy), Dr. Bruce Jones (New York University) and Scott Gilmore (Peace Dividend Trust) for taking the time to discuss the project during our research trip to New York in April. Richard Gowan (New York University) provided feedback on the draft study.

At GPPi, as always, this project was a team effort. Amil Alidina, David Beffert, Sabine Donauer, Eric Edwards, Justin Dubois, Jan Ortgies and Ji Hae Kim contributed to the background research and provided editorial support. Dr. Jan Martin Witte, Associate Director of GPPi, helped to make resources available for this project to get off the ground. Dr. Wolfgang Reinicke, Director of the GPPi, was a constant source of support and guidance.

We greatly profited from our cooperation with two partner projects at the University of Cambridge and the University of Constance. At the University of Cambridge it was Dr. Ricardo Soares De Oliveira, also a GPPi fellow, who first suggested that GPPi take on the issue of peacebuilding. His intellectual support was crucial throughout the project. Prof. Dr. James Mayall and Dr. Ricardo Soares De Oliveira were generous in inviting us to be part of their International Protectorates Program. The participants of a workshop at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in February 2006 also provided a number of helpful suggestions. At Bellagio, Dr. Richard Caplan (University of Oxford) and Dr. Simon Chesterman (New York University) generously shared their insights as we presented an early version of this project. At the University of Constance, we would like to thank Till Blume, Julian Junk and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Seibel for helpful discussions and suggestions and also for including us in a conference in September 2006 where some of the ideas in this study were presented.

We are also grateful to Dr. Katrin Böhling (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin), Anna Herrhausen (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin), Andrea Liese (Free University Berlin and Center for European Studies, Harvard University), Dr. Thomas Rid (IFRI Paris), Prof. Dr. John Ruggie (Harvard University), Prof. Dr. Johannes Varwick (University of Kiel) and Silke Weinlich (University of Bremen) for helpful suggestions and comments on the project.

List of Abbreviations

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (UN)
ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
BSU	Boundary-spanning Unit(s)
CIVPOL	Civilian police
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DPA	Department of Political Affairs (UN)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPS	Executive Committee on Peace and Security (UN)
EISAS	ECPS Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
EU	European Union
FC	Force Commander
GA	General Assembly (UN)
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator (OCHA)
ICG	International Crisis Group
IFOR	Implementation Force (in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
IMPP	Integrated Mission Planning Process
IMTF	Integrated Mission Task Force
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INTERFET	International Force for East Timor
IPTF	International Police Task Force (part of UNMIBH)
IO	International Organization
IR	International Relations (as a discipline)
JMAC	Joint Mission Assessment Cell (in UN peacebuilding missions)
KM	Knowledge Management
LLU	Lessons Learned Unit (DPKO)
MILOB	Military Observer
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OHR	Office of the High Representative (in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
OL	Organizational Learning
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PBPS	Peacekeeping Best Practices Section (UN DPKO)
PBPU	Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (UN DPKO)
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission (UN)
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office (UN)
PC	Police Commander
PMSS	Personnel Management and Support Service (UN DPKO)
RC	Resident Coordinator (UNDP)
SC	Security Council (UN)
SFOR	Stabilization Force (in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan

UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq
UNAMET	United Nations Mission to East Timor
UNAMSIL	United Nations Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNMIL	United Nations Mission to Liberia
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNOHCI	United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNOTIL	United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force (in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAES	United Nations Transitional Authority in Eastern Slavonia
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group (in Namibia)
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
USG	Under-Secretary-General
WFP	World Food Programme

List of Interviews

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