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Is More Better? Evaluating External-Led State Building After 1989

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Center on Democracy, Development, and The Rule of Law
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CDDRL was founded by a generous grant from the Bill and Flora Hewlett Foundation in October in 2002 as part of the Stanford Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. The Center supports analytic studies, policy relevant research, training and outreach activities to assist developing countries in the design and implementation of policies to foster growth, democracy, and the rule of law.

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Is More Better? Evaluating External-Led State building after 1989¹

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External-led state building is at the forefront of international security governance; it has been called “a growth industry”; and it is, against the backdrop of the US-led intervention in Iraq, more controversial than ever. Since the end of the cold war, the UN have launched more than 60 missions in 24 countries.² Whilst the primary objective of all of these missions was to monitor, keep, enforce or build peace, a second objective, which is intrinsically linked to the first, was to contribute directly or indirectly to the reestablishment of functioning state-hood. Peace-building mission have become state-building missions. There are two broad reasons for this. First, fragile states are seen as a risk to both their societies and to international security. And second, it is now broadly assumed that one vital condition for sustainable peace is that the state-apparatus has the capacity to exercise core functions of state-hood in an efficient, non-violent and legitimate way. Consequently, peace-building is more and more seen as state-building, and this evolution is reflected in both UN strategy documents, and the development aid strategies of most nation states.³

¹ This paper has enormously benefits form comments and inputs of my colleagues at CDDRL, especially the participants at CDDRLs state-capacity discussion group. I am indebted to Sarah Riese and Cornelius Graubner ((Free U Berlin) for incredible efforts in providing research assistance.

² The discrepancy in mission numbers and country numbers is explained by the fact that many mission have changed name and mandate over time.

³ For the UN see for example in the Brahimi-report (2000), and the resolution A/RES/60/180

It is against this background that the need for a systematic evaluation of successes and failures of external-led state building emerges. This in turn requires a framework that enables a cross-case comparison of outcomes of external-led state building efforts.

This paper has two objectives: First, I propose a framework that allows for the tracing of the absolute and the relative state-building progress of countries hosting a state-building operation. I argue that “success” should be disaggregated and measured along five dimensions: the absence of war, the reestablishment of a full monopoly over the means for violence, economic development, democracy, and institutional capacities. I discuss at some length the implications for data collection and proxying these measures of success. Secondly, I evaluate the outcome of 17 UN-led peace-building operations, using a new data set. I compare the successes and failures of state-building along these five dimensions against three hypothetical scenarios: The first one is “more is better”. In this scenario, it is assumed that the more intrusive the intervention, the more successful the outcome. This scenario has been favoured by the few available comparative studies of external-led state building (Dobbins 2003; Dobbins et al. 2005; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Paris 2004). The second scenario can be called “less-is-more” and assumes that too intrusive missions are counterproductive, because they hinder the endogenous emergence of stable statehood. This scenario is by and large favoured by single-case studies, mainly on Kosovo, Bosnia and East-Timor. (Chopra 2002; Cox 2001; Traub 2000). The third scenario is the “trade-off-scenario”. Here, it is assumed that more intrusive interventions produce better outcome in some policy fields and worse in others. This then would point to existing trade-offs between different objectives of state building. Rather than assuming that all good things go together, in the “trade-off”-scenario the success in one dimension (for example democracy) comes at the expense of less success in another dimension (for example economic development). These sort of trade-offs are well documented in micro-level studies, especially in the field of conflict prevention and development (Koehler and Zürcher 2005; Koehler and Zürcher 2006; Zürcher 2004), but there is no comparative study on the macro-level that systematically traces patterns of trade-offs.

On the peace building commission. As an example of national strategies, see for example the action plan of the German Government (2005) “Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building” containing various strategic leverage points and building on an extended security concept. The plan foresees initiatives to establish stable state structures (rule of law, democracy, human rights and security) and also to create the potential for peaceful development within civil society, the media, cultural affairs and education. Other major development agencies have adopted similar strategies (DFID; USAID)

The Sample

I include in my sample peace-building operations that have started between 1989 and 2001. I exclude missions that started later because I intend to measure success five years after mission start. (as an exception, I included Afghanistan which started in 2002). There were missions in 24 countries: Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Central Africa, Chad, Congo/Zaire, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Abkhazia, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia/Timor, Liberia, Mocambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tajikistan, West Sahara/Morocco, Yugoslavia – Kosovo, Yugoslavia Bosnia, Yugoslavia Croatia. I further exclude missions that have lasted less than six months and that were predominately observer mission in an inter-state conflict. This leaves a sample that contains seventeen cases:

Case	Control Group
1. Angola	Africa South Of Sahara
2. Central Africa	Africa South Of Sahara
3. Congo / Zaire	Africa South Of Sahara
4. Liberia	Africa South Of Sahara
5. Mozambique	Africa South Of Sahara
6. Namibia	Africa South Of Sahara
7. Rwanda	Africa South Of Sahara
8. Sierra Leone	Africa South Of Sahara
9. Somalia	Africa South Of Sahara
10. Afghanistan	Asia
11. Cambodia	Asia
12. Indonesia / Timor	Asia
13. Tajikistan	Former Socialist Bloc
14. Yugoslavia - Kosovo	Former Socialist Bloc
15. Yugoslavia Bosnia	Former Socialist Bloc
16. El Salvador	Latin America and the Caribbean
17. Haiti	Latin America and the Caribbean

The literature

There is a rich and growing literature on external-led state-building and the difficulties involved (Ball 2002; Brownlee 2005; Milliken and Krause 2002; Hawk Hill 2002; Ottaway 2002;). There also exists a wealth of excellent cases studies on individual peace-building mission, for example on Bosnia (Cox 2001; Dempsey 2002) Kosovo (Dempsey 2002), Afghanistan (Cramer and Goodhand 2002a;

Cramer and Goodhand 2002b; Middlebrook 2004), East Timor (Chesterman 2002a; Chopra 2002; Hohe 2002), or on the UN interim administrations (Chesterman 2004; Chesterman, Ignatieff and Thakur 2005). Most of these studies, which are based on intimate expertise of both the region, and the politics of the specific state-building mission, are sceptical with regard to the possibilities of external-led state building, and many stress the importance of early “local ownership” which they see as too often undermined by highly intrusive interventions.

By contrast, there are only a few studies that systematically compare the outcomes of international state-building missions across cases. Among them are two widely quoted studies by the RAND corporation (Dobbins 2003; Dobbins et al. 2005). The first explores how US-led state building after World War II in Germany, Japan, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan fared. The authors single out the German and Japanese occupations as particularly successful cases of nation building that “set standards for post-conflict transformation that have not since been equalled” (Dobbins 2003). They attribute this success rightly to the fact that both Germany and Japan were, even at the end of the war, highly developed states with highly capable state apparatuses, and with relatively homogenous populations. Ethnic or tribal strife did thus not hinder the reconstruction of statehood. But, as the authors argue, the success of Germany and Japan can not only be attributed to their starting from a high level of development, or to the absence of societal fragmentation. In addition, these countries also received substantial “inputs”: High level of economic assistance, and high numbers of troops deployed for a long time were crucial for the success. Thus, the authors argue that “more” state-building is “better” state-building.

These findings, and the overall design of the study, are not entirely without problems. I will raise three: First, it is doubtful whether the long-term military occupation of two highly developed industrial states can serve as the background against which the state-building missions after the cold war should best be evaluated. After all, roughly three out of four internal wars take place in low income countries, and it is typically the poorest states that are plagued most by fragile statehood. Second, and related to the first point, it seems rather difficult (to say the least) to derive any policy recommendation from these cases of success. It is neither feasible nor, arguably, desirable that long-term military occupations become the best available strategy for external-led state building. Thirdly, there is a range of methodological problems associated with this study. The most important refers to the measure of success that is applied. The authors proxy successful nation-building with “democratic elections” and “increased per capita

GDP” While it is evident that both economic development and democratic participation are both characteristics of successful peace-building, it is doubtful whether the success of external-led state building is adequately grasped by focusing on elections and GDP growth only.

In a subsequent study, (Dobbins et al. 2005) investigate and compare eight US-led missions (Germany, Japan, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq) and eight UN-led mission (Congo, Namibia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Eastern Slavonia, Sierra Leone and East Timor). The authors proxy success by “absence of war”, “economic growth”, and “democracy”. As “inputs” of the nation-building mission they use duration and manpower of the mission, and per capita assistance during the mission. They find marked differences between UN and US-led operations. UN forces have tended to remain in post-conflict countries for shorter periods of time than have US forces, UN missions have normally fielded much smaller contingents than American-led operations, both in absolute numbers and in relation to the local population, and UN-led missions seem to be slightly more successful in providing sustained peace than US-led mission. Of the eight UN-led cases, seven are at peace today, whereas of the eight U.S.-led cases, four are not. Hence, in contrast to the findings of their first study, the findings of the second study suggest that “more state-building” is not always better state-building”.

Another study that systematically investigates the outcomes of UN-missions is Roland Paris’ “At War’s End”. (Paris 2004). In this survey of how war-torn countries that have hosted UN peace operations in the 1990s have fared, Paris concludes that, although most are still at peace, few are fully democratic and prosperous. There are two key arguments emerging from this study: First, Paris convincingly shows that holding elections prematurely can do more harm than good in the ongoing reconstruction of statehood. Early elections run the risk of being perceived by the parties to the conflict as a “winner-take-all-game”, which increases the risk that the losing party defects from the peace process. Furthermore, early liberalization can lead to increased societal stress by deepening economic inequalities (as in Guatemala) or ethnic divisions (as in post-Dayton Bosnia). Second, Paris finds that more intrusive UN operations, including those that temporarily take over a state's administration, have fared better than less intrusive operations, to ensure that liberal democracies can emerge. Hence, Paris argues in favour of a “institutions first-approach” to post-conflict state building, and against a Wilsonian approach that emphasises the benefits of less intrusive strategies, early elections, and early exit.

Perhaps the most ambitious and methodological sophisticated study today is Doyle and Sambanis 2000 (also Doyle and Sambanis 2006, forthcoming). Based on data from 124 civil wars since 1945, the authors assess the statistical probability that, once a civil war has ended, the country remains at peace. Among other explanatory variables (such as type of war, duration of war, pre-war level of development, or number of battle related deaths), the authors test also for the effect of UN peace operations. They find that, while traditional peacekeeping is not significant in enhancing the prospect for a peace-building success, multidimensional peace-keeping operations (missions with extensive civilian functions, economic reconstruction, institutional reforms and election oversight) were extremely significant and positively associated with peace-building success. Their measure of success is the absence of large scale violence and a minimum standard of political openness. This measure of success is proxied by the absence of war (applying a threshold of 1000 battle related death per year or during the war) and a score of 3 or more on a 20-point democracy scale, where 0 is least open, and 20 most open. This scale was adopted from polity III index, a widely used index that measures the openness of a political system. A score of -10 means most autocratic, +10 means most democratic. Doyle&Sambanis transformed the original scale into a scale from 0 – 20. Their minimal threshold for “success” is 3, which equivalents -7 on the polity III scale, which is a little better than North Korea and Uzbekistan (-9), and on the same level as China. Although the authors call this measure “strict”, it could be argued that it is indeed a rather lenient measure. The absence of war and a level of democratic openness that is a tick above North Korea may be better than civil war, but it is certainly less than most observers and practitioners would expect from complex, hugely expensive and ambitious state-building missions

A framework for comparison: Intrusiveness of mission, level of difficulties, and a measure of success

Constructing an analytical framework that allows comparing the outcomes of external-led state building missions across cases is a challenge: First there is a high heterogeneity of the units. External-led-state building mission differ in manpower, resource endowment, quality of coordination, mandate and coercive capacities. Moreover, they change over time. Some mission start as observer mission and turn into complex peace building operations, others are rapidly scaled down after an initial peak. Second, there is a measurement problem. If one assumes that the success (“output”) of a mission depends on the quality of the mission (“input”)

and on the level of difficulties with which the mission has to cope, which are suitable proxies for success, for the quality of the mission and for the level of difficulties? Third, there is data problem. Once proxies have been defined, data is needed on characteristics of the war that preceded the mission, on the economic, social and political situation at the end of the war, and on the mission itself. These data is often very hard to get, since most civil wars and consequently many missions take place in countries which are not exactly famous for their statistical rigor (neither is the UN). In the following, I outline the approach that has been taken for this study.⁴

I follow the logic of Dobbins (2005) and Doyle & Sambanis (2000, 2006) and assume that the outcome of a state-building operation is contingent on scope and scale of the operation, and on the level of difficulties it encounters. Hence, a comparison of the success or failure of the operation needs to take into account both the quality of a mission and the level of difficulties it has to deal with.

Difficulties

I assume that the higher the level of war damages, the more difficult it will be to rebuild viable state structures. War damages can be proxied by the duration of the war, by the number of battle related deaths, and by the general level of development at the war's end. I measure **war duration** in months; a war is untypically long, when the duration is in the highest quartile of war duration of all internal wars, after 1945 (123 months). I measure **battle-related death** per 1000 pre-war population. A war is untypically bloody when the number of battle related deaths is in the highest quartile of all internal wars after 1945 (12.68 per 1000). Finally, I measure the **level of development at the end of the war** by real GDP per capita. A country is atypically rich when its GDP is in the highest quartile of all post-war countries (around 2000 USD) and it is untypically poor when its GDP is below the median of all post-war countries (around 900 USD).

⁴ For a detailed explanation of coding rules and data sources, see the Code book. www.http.

Level of intrusiveness

Assessing the quality of a mission is a daunting task. As mentioned above, international peace building missions are moving targets, there is surprisingly little systematic data available, and the measurement problems are immense. Dobbins et al. (2005) provide data on the levels of military and police presence, per capita assistance and duration of the missions, but do not attempt to create a composite variable to denote the overall scope of the mission. Doyle and Sambanis (2000), by contrast, code a variable (untype) that is based on the mandate of the operation and is intended to reflect the level of intrusiveness. The lowest level denotes mediation of the dispute, including submissions of proposals on how to end the fighting and promote reconciliation; the second level denotes the deployment of neutral military and/or civilian observers, the third level denotes traditional peacekeeping operation, with military and civilian personnel, the fourth level denotes a complex multidimensional peacekeeping/peacebuilding mission that includes extensive civilian functions, economic reconstruction, institutional reforms and election oversight, and the highest level of intrusiveness denotes peace enforcement, either multilateral through the United Nations or by a third party or coalition of parties, acting under a multilateral, UN-sanctioned mandate, and also includes the assumption of executive authority and supervising authority by the UN.

For this paper, I have constructed an **index of intrusiveness**, which is based not on the mandate, but on the level of de-facto intrusiveness in the political process of the country. This differentiation is essential. Take for example, the case of Afghanistan. The UN has been heralding its light footprint approach, which would make sure that Afghans were in the driving seat. Different from the missions in East Timor or Kosovo, the UN adopted the guiding principle that it should first bolster Afghan capacity – both official and non-governmental – and rely on as limited an international presence and on as many Afghan staff as possible (Chesterman 2002b). The social reality looks indeed very different, and the reconstruction of Afghanistan, for the good or the worse, is a highly intrusive attempt at social engineering: The Afghans may be in the driver's seat but the car is remotely controlled. (cf. Lieven 2001; Middlebrook 2004; Sedra 2005).

I constructed a composite index from 1 to 10, by answering five questions: Did interveners enforce peace with military power; did interveners decisively shape the new constitution and / or the legal codex; did interveners assume (formally or informally) some or most of executive power, for at least 2 years; did interveners assume, (formally or informally), some or most legislative power for at least 2

years; did interveners decisively shape economic policies during the first two years; did interveners participate in executive policing. The answers were weighted, the first three, compared to the last two, had double weight. We coded an intervention as highly intrusive when the score reached 6 or higher.

Country Case	Level of Intrusiveness
Intrusive Missions	
Yug – Kosovo	10
Indonesia / Timor	10
Cambodia	10
Afghanistan	10
Yug – Bosnia	8
Sierra Leone	6
Non-Intrusive Missions	
Namibia	5
Haiti	5
El Salvador	5
Somalia	4
Liberia 1	4
Congo / Zaire	3
Angola	2
Mozambique	1
Central Africa	1
Tajikistan	0
Rwanda	0

Outcomes: The Dimensions of success

(...) *Emphasizing* the need for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving sustainable peace, *recognizing* the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development (Resolution for UN peace commission, source: UN 2005)

A definition of success needs to meet four criteria. First, it should specify the benchmarks against which success is measured. Defining these benchmarks

depends necessarily on a priori formulated, normative, expectations of the researcher. These benchmarks are high when success is compared against fully democratic, stable, developed countries; they are lower when success is compared against the typical low-income country recovering after civil war. Second, the definition should be in line with the objectives of the mission, otherwise the comparison is perhaps unfair; third, success should be measured in those policy fields where progress is assumed to make a difference with regard to a country's propensity for internal war. Thus, the criteria for success should be informed by theory. And last, the criteria that are applied for measuring success should make a comparison across cases possible.

In this paper, I differentiate between absolute success and relative success using two different benchmarks. Absolute success is measured by comparing the level of state-building five years after mission start with the level at mission start. This measure reflects the progress of a country in time. Relative success is measured by comparing the level of state building a country has reached five years after mission start to the average level of state-building of countries in the same region at the same point in time. This second benchmark provides a snapshot of the relative position of a country within its peer group. This comparison has the benefit that it does not unfairly punish countries which start from a general lower level of development (for example sub-Sahara states) by comparing them with countries with a general much higher level of state capacities (for example highly developed OECD states). I define six control groups: Africa South of Sahara, Asia, Former Socialist Bloc, Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa and Middle East, North Atlantic and Europe (for the composition of each see the codebook).

I measure the success of external-led state building along five dimensions:

The first is the **absence of war**. This is the core business of UN peace operations and a minimal requirement for success, and consistent with the objectives of all missions. I apply the standard definition of internal war, which requires that one party to the conflict is the government, and that there are 1000 battle related death a year or during the war. Absence of war is coded when there is no internal war ongoing. We use data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme and Doyle and Sambanis 2000)

The second dimension is the **reestablishment of a full monopoly over the means for violence**. This second dimension is related to the first one, but differs in an important way. A country may suffer from organized violence short of full-scale internal war. There may be ongoing low-scale fighting between the government and rebels (with less than 1000 battler related death), there may be ongoing armed conflicts between rivalling armed fractions, or armed gangs may routinely use violence against civilians. Neither form of violence meets the

definition of civil wars, but all are a threat to the monopoly over the means of violence. I measure the reestablishment of a monopoly over the means of violence by the absence of organized fighting between government and rebels (threshold 25), and by the absence of organised violence between armed factions, and by the absence of organised systematic violence of an armed gang against civilians. We use data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme and further secondary sources.

The third dimension is **economic development**. This is consistent both with the overall objectives of the UN peace building strategy, and with the lessons from conflict research. It is by now widely accepted that low-income countries face a much higher risk for internal war than more developed countries. (Collier et al. 2003; Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Fearon and Laitin 1999; Sambanis 2000). Sustainable peace therefore requires sustainable development. I measure economic development by levels and growth of GDP per capita. I code an absolute success when there was an annual average growth equal, or higher than, 5%. I code a relative success when GDP per capita of the country that hosts the mission is equal or higher than the median of the control group, five years after mission start. Since I hypothesize that external-led state building leads to high level of economic dependency, I also measure aid dependency (as % of GNI). An absolute high aid dependency is coded when the five year average (after mission start) exceeds 5%; a relative high aid dependency, is coded when aid dependency, five years after mission start, is above the median of the control group. The data is taken from World Bank Development Indicators and secondary sources.

The fourth dimension is “**democracy**”. This is consistent with the normatively based objectives of UN strategy. Whether democracy per se actually reduces the risks for internal violence remains hotly debated. Some scholars, (and most policy makers), argue that more democratic countries are less prone to organized violence than less democratic countries. Other scholars find that, once they control for the level of development, there is little empirical evidence that democracy, per se, reduces the risk for conflict (Collier and Hoeffler 2001; Collier 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003). Others find that authoritarian regimes and institutionally consolidated democracies were far less vulnerable to conflict than mixed systems or transitional regimes. Very authoritarian and very democratic regimes display a similarly low conflict risk, while intermediate regimes were four times more susceptible to conflict. (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Goldstone et al. 2005; Hegre et al. 2001, also Snyder 2000). These results suggest that democracy, per se, is not a reliable safeguard against internal war, and that democratization is indeed a risk-adder. Democracy only unfolds its peace-building potential in combination with economic development and reliable state-institutions. I measure **democracy** with the polity IV score. I code an absolute success when there is an increase in the score during the first five years after mission start. I code a relative success

when the score five years after mission start is equal or higher than the median in the control group.

The fifth dimension is **institutional capacities**. This is consistent with the normatively based objectives of UN strategy and with the findings of recent conflict research, which point to the overarching importance of the reestablishment of state institutional capacities (Ottaway 2002; Paris 2004). States need institutional capacities in order to exercise domestic authority (e.g. the ability of getting things done: this means that principal-agent problems within the bureaucratic structures are solved, and that the policies of the state bureaucracies are met with a measure of societal compliance). In order to differentiate the “raw power state” (Ottaway 2002) from a state which exercises domestic authority via infrastructural power (Mann 1986), it is important that the state exercises its authority based on the rule of law. Institutional capacities thus result from a combination of effectiveness of government and the rule of law. I measure **effectiveness of government**, using the World Bank governance indicators. (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2005). I code an absolute success when there is an increase in the score during the first five years after mission start. I code a relative success when the score five years after mission start is equal or higher than the median in the control group. I measure **rule of law** using the World Bank Rule of Law Indicators. I code an absolute success when there is an increase in the score during the first five years after mission start. I code a relative success when the score five years after mission start is equal, or higher, than the median in the control group

Results

Six out of a total of 17 missions in the sample qualify as highly-intrusive missions, involving the enforcement of peace by military means and the assumption of legislative and executive powers by the interveners. (Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Timor, Cambodia and Sierra Leone). The missions in these countries were also among the largest in scale: In Bosnia, initially there were more than 60.000 men fielded, in Kosovo 50.000, in Afghanistan 30.000 and in Timor 10.000. In Sierra Leone, after a slow and disastrous start the number of fielded personnel was increased to 25.000 (15.000 of which were under UNOMSIL command). The average mission in the sample fielded initially around 8,000 men, the median is around 3,500.

Four of the six intrusive missions took place in untypically poor post-war countries, whereas two (Bosnia and Kosovo) were at war's end, well above the average and qualify as untypically rich post-war countries. Afghanistan and Cambodia qualify as most difficult cases: the wars were untypically long, extremely bloody, and the level of development at war's end was untypically low.

11 missions do not qualify as highly intrusive, although Liberia, Namibia, Somalia, El Salvador and Haiti come close (with a score of four or five). Least intrusive were the missions in Angola, Central Africa, Congo/Zaire, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tajikistan. This is notable, because both Tajikistan and Mozambique are seen as (rare) cases of successful turn-arounds. Among the non-intrusive missions, Angola, Congo/Zaire and Mozambique are most difficult cases, plagued by untypically long and untypically bloody wars and a low level of development at war's end. All in all, seven out of the 11 non-intrusive missions did take place in untypically poor countries.

In the following sections, I use five structured comparisons in order to map the successes and failures of these missions. I compare (1) absolute successes along five dimensions, (2) relative successes along five dimensions, (3) absolute success in poor and rich countries, (4) absolute success in countries which have suffered from untypically bloody wars, and (5) absolute successes in intrusive and non-intrusive cases.

Chart 1: Disaggregating Success

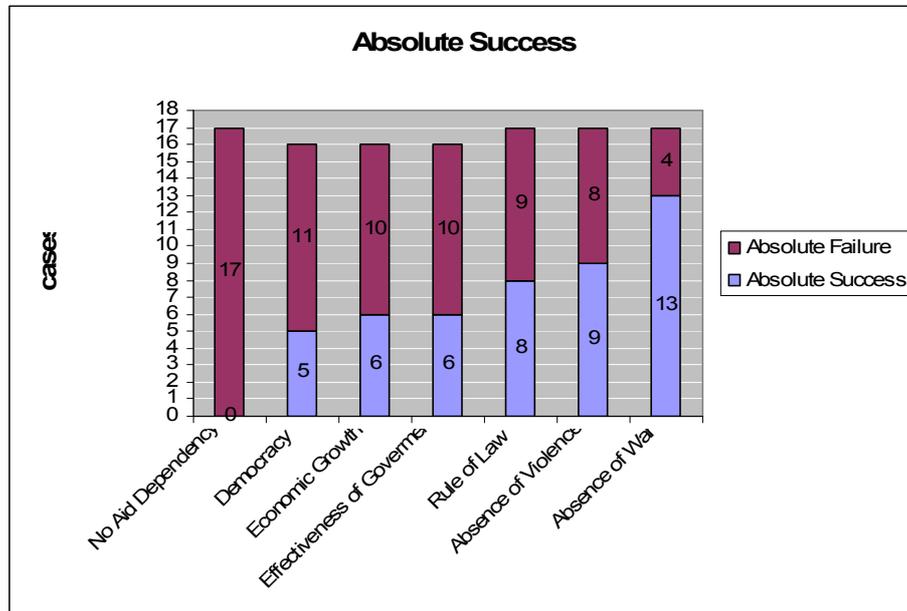


Chart 1 disaggregates absolute success into five components. Success is coded when the country that hosts the mission passes a certain predefined threshold five years after mission start. A failure is coded when the country does not pass this threshold. The frequencies displayed in the chart suggest that missions are best at their core business: 13 of 17 missions were successful in securing the absence of war. Missions are far less successful when it comes to other dimensions of state-building. The establishment of a full monopoly over the means of violence failed in nine out of 17 cases. Likewise, less than half of the states increased their institutional capacities during the first five years after mission start: An increase of the rule of law and the effectiveness of government did only happen in 8 respectively 6 out of 16 cases. Economic development at an annual average of 5% did take place in 6 cases. Finally, and perhaps most surprising, the actual level of democracy failed to significantly improve in 11 (out of 16) cases. Thus, it seems that building democracy is a lot harder than securing the absence of war.

Chart 2: Disaggregating Relative Success

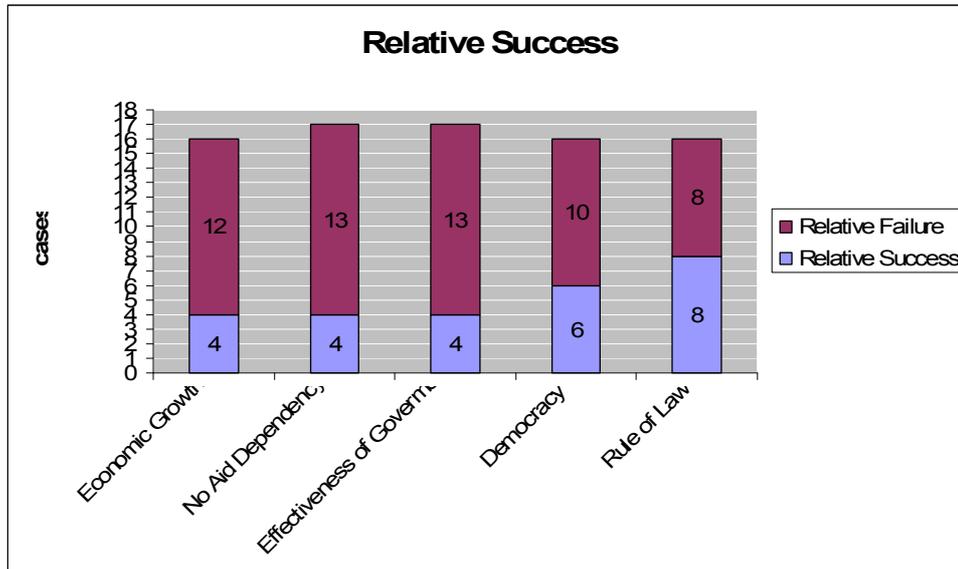


Chart 2 shows the disaggregated relative successes. Whereas the absolute success (chart 1) referred to the progress of a country over time, the relative success pinpoints the level of success that a country has reached five years after mission start, compared to the average level of countries in the same region. Recall that we have defined six control groups (Africa South of Sahara, Asia, Former Socialist Bloc, Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa and Middle East, North Atlantic and Europe). This chart reflects the number of post-war, intervention countries that have managed to catch up with the average levels of their peers.

Perhaps not surprising, most post-war countries did, in most areas, not catch up. They scored best in “rule of law”, where half of all countries reach the average of the control group. They scored worst in economic development, effectiveness of government and aid dependency, where roughly only one out of four of the countries reached the control groups average. Six out of ten reached the same level of democracy as the control group’s average. By and large, this chart is a strong reminder of the fact that “instant statehood” is wishful thinking, rather than social reality. International state-building, despite its often enormous efforts and resources, cannot easily compensate for the war damages and structural lack of capacity.

Chart 3 and 4: Level of Development and Success

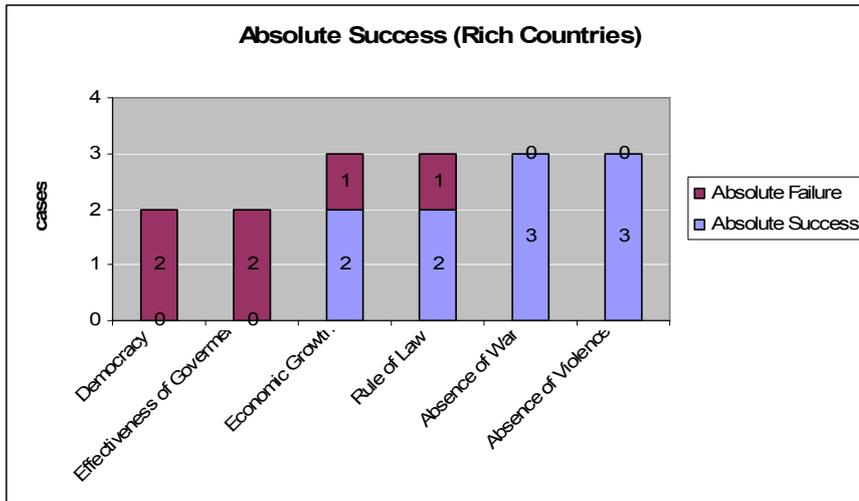
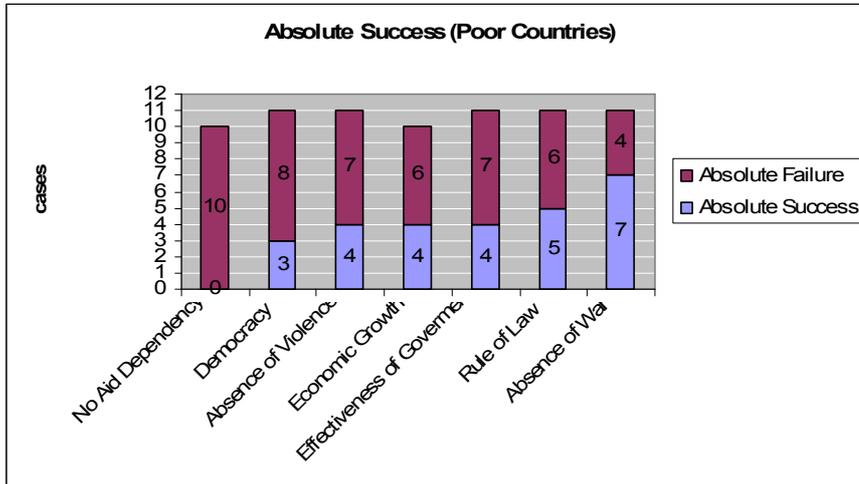


Chart 3 and chart 4 compare the successes of untypically poor countries with those of untypically rich countries (for the number of successes among all countries see chart 1). Although we should be cautious to take frequencies alone as evidence for causal effects (because the sample is too small, and because the dependent variable could have picked up the effect of a variable other than poverty, for example untypical long wars), these graphs suggest that a low level of development does negatively affect the chances of success of mission. Evidently, rich countries score better than poor, (although the sample of rich countries is too small for qualified generalisations), with the notable exception of democracy. In poor countries, securing the absence of war seems to be considerably more difficult: 4 out of 11 countries relapsed into war. None of the rich countries relapsed into war. Overall, 4 out of 17 countries relapsed back to war. This finding resonates with what is by now widely accepted in conflict theory: A very low level of development increases a country's propensity for war, and it also seems to reduce the country's propensity for a quick recovery after intervention.

Whereas low levels of development seem to negatively impact state-building efforts, untypically bloody wars do not. The next graph (chart 6) shows successes and failures of states that have had untypically bloody wars before the intervention. The frequencies for democracy, development and institutional capacities are low, but not unusually low. By now, we are already used to the fact that state-building missions are not very good in areas other than keeping war away. Countries emerging from blood wars are no exception. But with regard to the core business of missions (security), countries that have suffered from untypically bloody wars fare quite well. Only two out of them relapsed into war. Taken together, the frequencies displayed in charts 4 – 6 provide some evidence to assume that the level of development matters more than the level of hostility. This has potentially far reaching implications.

Chart 6: *Untypically bloody wars*

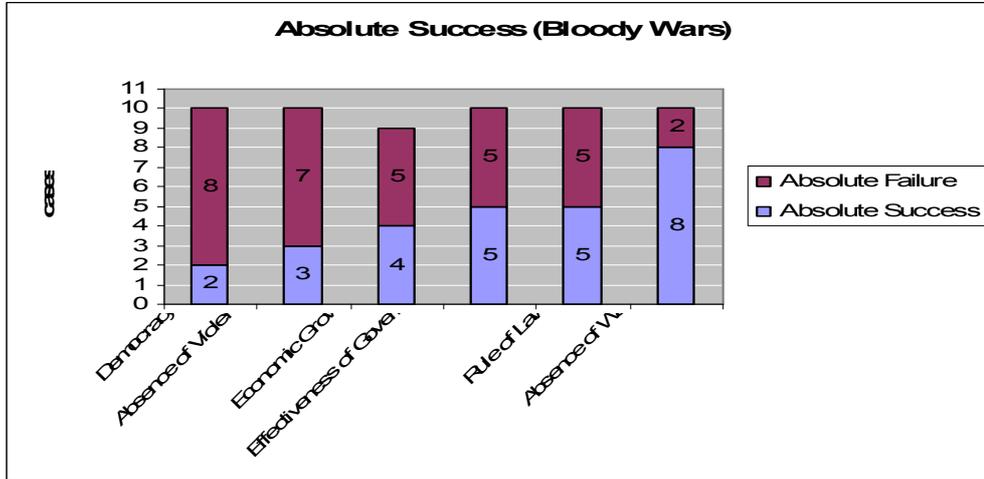
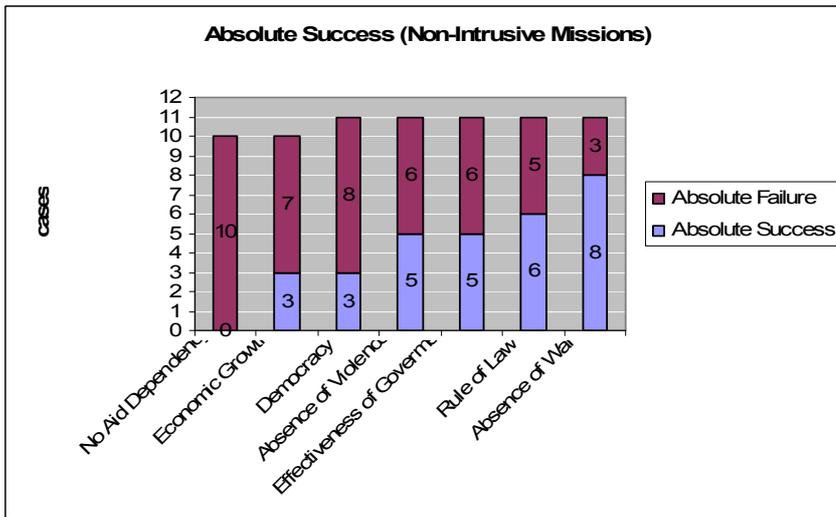
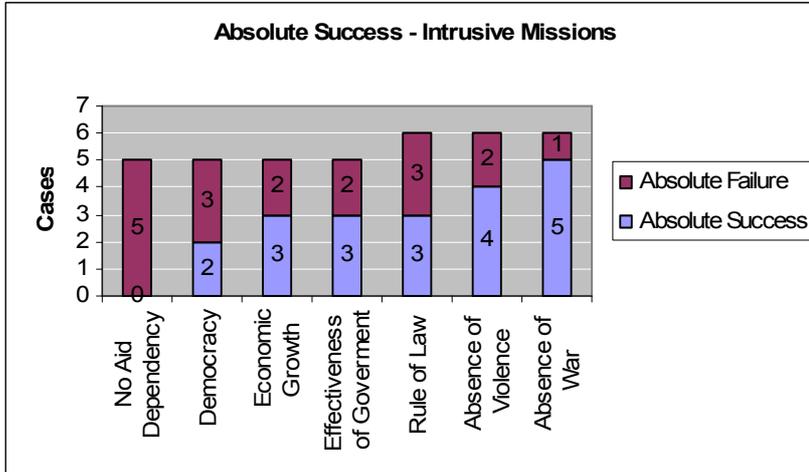


Chart 7 and 8: Intrusive vs. Non-Intrusive missions

This last pair of charts compares the success of intrusive missions (chart 7) with the success of non-intrusive missions (chart 8):



Before I report the results, a word of caution is in order. There are good reasons why we should be cautious with attributing causal mechanisms: First, the sample

is very small. Second, the coding of the key variable “intrusiveness” is difficult and unavoidably involved arbitrariness, and third, because the frequency graphs may have picked up the effects of variables other than “level of intrusiveness”. Having said this, two observations seem noteworthy:

First, intrusive missions are slightly better than non-intrusive mission, in all but one area. Second, the differences are quite small, and both intrusive and non-intrusive missions are best at securing the absence of war, but not very successful at inducing positive change along the four other dimensions of success.

In securing the absence of war, intrusive mission have had success in five out of six cases. (The failure is Afghanistan, where we have coded an ongoing war. It should be mentioned that we measure the success of Afghanistan three years after intervention start, whereas in the other cases we measure five years after intervention start. The coding may thus be a bit “unfair”). Non-intrusive missions have had success in eight out of eleven cases. Thus, intrusive mission show a success rate at 80%, and non-intrusive at 70%. Intrusive missions are also slightly better at establishing a full monopoly over the means of violence (66% success vs. 45%), they are better at increasing the level of effectiveness of government (60% vs 45%), and at spurring economic growth (60% vs. 30%) and democracy (40% vs 27%). They score slightly worse at increasing the rule of law (50% vs. 55%).

These differences are rather small, they point to a gradual rather than a categorical difference. Intrusive and non-intrusive mission are both not very successful at facilitating absolute progress in aspects of state-hood other than security. Low levels of economic growth, institutional capacities and, above all, democracy seem to resist more often than not external attempts at state-building.

Conclusions

Difficulties

Some interventions face more difficulties than others. The level of development in a country at war's end increases the difficulties. Low local capacities make a state-building mission more difficult. In untypical poor post-war countries, missions fare in all respects worse than in better-off countries. Surprisingly, by contrast, neither duration of war nor number of deaths seem to negatively impact the chances for success. If one accepts that the number of deaths is a valid proxy for the level of hostility, then one can interpret these findings as evidence for the claim that the level of hostility matters less than the material capacities that are available in the country when the mission starts. Is this good or bad news? It may be both. On the one hand, most internal wars and consequently many state-building missions take place in poor countries, which means that they face considerable problems, in most cases. On the other hand, it could also be argued that, while there is no way of changing the past and that the level of hostility usually changes only very slowly if at all, it is -theoretically - quite possible to increase the material endowment of a post-war country, thus increasing its chances of full recovery. Whether an increased material endowment will remain a band-aid, or transform into sustained state-building depends on whether development aid can actually trigger sustainable economic development. We have reasons to believe that it rarely does.

Outcomes: Security

State-building missions are most successful in their core business, that is, in securing the absence of war. Here, the track record is quite impressive: Only in one case of highly intrusive missions and in three cases of unintrusive missions, did war recur. Considerably more difficult than securing the absence of war is restabilising a full monopoly of violence. Roughly half of all post-war countries were, five years after mission start, still plagued by organized violence (albeit short of full scale war).

Institutional Capacities

The (re-)building of institutional capacities lags behind the increase in security. Only roughly half of all post-war countries have in absolute terms increased the level of rule of law five years after mission start, and less than half have increased the effectiveness of government during the first five years of the mission. Rule of

law and effectiveness of government are the core areas of state-building, but the results suggest that external-led state building is only modestly successful. Other than securing the absence of war, the provision of rule of law and effectiveness of government cannot be outsourced to third parties, but require essentially domestic capacity building and domestic reforms. This may explain why progress is rare, slow, and hard to establish from the outside.

Economic Development

As with institutional capacity, evidence from our sample suggest that there is little reason to assume that foreign-led state building can produce economic miracles. Neither intrusive nor non-intrusive missions seem to be particularly successful at producing economic development. Admittedly, there is in most post-war countries substantial economic growth after the end of the war, but it starts from a very low level and falls short of catching up with what has been lost during the war. Only one out of three countries has reached five years after mission start a level of development that is similar to the average within the region. Moreover, being exposed to a state-building mission goes hand in hand with increased aid dependency. All of the countries have a very high aid dependency (aid accounts for more than 5% of GNI), and three out of four countries have a higher aid dependency than most countries within their region (aid in% of GNI is higher than the median of the control group). This increased aid dependency is surely a result of the increased technical and development aid that accompanies the mission and is thus per se not a bad thing. However, aid dependency tends to become a permanent feature of many post-intervention states, and we know from a wealth of case studies that it does usually not help to bring along responsive and accountable government with social ties to its population. To quote Ivan Krastev, the governments of aid receiving states may have a love affair with their electorate, but they are married to the donors. In that respect, a sustained high dependency on aid is actually counter productive to the ultimate objective of state building.

Democracy

All of the countries in the sample have been, to various degrees, the addressees of ambitious efforts at democracy promotion, but the results suggest that the success has been very modest. Only one out of three post-war intervention countries achieved a significant increase in the level of democracy during the first five years of the mission (measured as an increase of 3 or more on the 20-point polity scale), and only one out of three reached a level that is equivalent to the average within

the region. The poor performance in democracy promotion is no small surprise, given the fact that the strengthening of democracy is, after security, the top priority of all peace building missions (and indeed of the foreign policy agendas of many nation states). In the light of the outcome of recent state-building missions, it seems that building up democratic structures is, contrary to widely held assumptions, by no means a task that can easily be helped or managed by external actors by imposing electoral laws or insisting on early elections.

So - Is more better?

Among other things this paper has asked whether more intrusive missions are better suited, than less intrusive missions, to help post-war countries rebuild essentials of functional state-hood. I hypothesized three possible answers: More intrusive missions are better, or they are not, or they are better in some areas and worse in others. As it turns out, the findings do not fully correspond to either scenario. By and large, intrusive mission are slightly better than non-intrusive missions in all areas (most clearly perhaps in the core area: securing the absence of war), but these differences are rather small and could be influenced by measurement problems. Likewise, there is no clear evidence of a trade-off: I find no support for the argument that intrusive missions have, in some areas, an adverse effect as compared to less-intrusive missions.

However, disaggregating the different dimension of state-building and comparing the success across cases brings another remarkable result to the forefront: While intrusive missions have fared a tick better than non-intrusive, neither has been very successful at boosting progress in policy fields other than security, that is, in policy fields which can not easily be outsourced to third parties, but require domestic reform and domestic capacity building. This finding then urges a reformulation of the question that has guided this paper: The problem that needs to be solved is not whether intrusive missions are better or worse than non-intrusive missions. Rather, we need to ask why even intrusive missions seem poorly equipped to induce change in three policy fields crucial for state-building: democracy, institutional capacity and economic capacity. The tentative answer to the guiding question of this paper is therefore “yes, more is better, but not good enough”. And this opens up new research avenues.

Future research avenues

Against the backdrop of the findings of this study, three promising research avenues emerge:

The first one is the eternal quest for better data and better proxies. It would be desirable to refine the composite index of the level of intrusiveness that I have used for this study. This in turn requires including more details on strategy, administration, implementation, sequencing and resource deployment (men and material resources) of the various missions. This data exists (with the notable exception of the quality of the administration), but it is not easy to collect, and very difficult to build into a composite variable. Also interesting would be to include into the analysis certain aspects of the domestic structure of the country hosting the mission, for example natural resource endowments, or cleavage structure within the elites.

Second, in a next step the investigation should move from largely descriptive statistics/frequencies to approaches that are better suited to identify causal mechanisms. The obvious choice for doing so would be standard regression analysis; however, given the small sample and the large number of dependent variables, a more promising choice is a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) that draws on Boolean algebra. (Meur, Rihoux and Yamasaki 2002; Ragin 1987; Ragin 2000; Ragin, Berg-Schlosser and Gisèle 1996).⁵

⁵ I favour a Boolean approach over the in IR more widely used statistical approaches for a number of reasons. (This is not to say that in a subsequent step one could not also turn to a statistical analysis measuring the effects of one variable on the outcomes, although there are considerable data problems to overcome). First, I am interested in categorical outcomes rather than quantitative (scalar) outcomes. Second, Boolean analysis, unlike standard regression techniques, is not handicapped by a small number of cases and dichotomous variables. Recall that I am interested in explaining the outcome of state building missions, and I have defined five different dimensions of success. Formally speaking, I am interested in explaining five dependent variables, using a sample of 17 cases, and testing for the effects of four explanatory variables (War duration, number of deaths, level of economic development at wars end, and intrusiveness of the mission). Such a data structure does not easily allow for statistical analysis, and since the sample used for this study is rather a population than a random sample, standard significant test would be highly questionable. Third, Boolean analysis is well suited to identify possible causal combinations, and, by logical deduction, eliminates irrelevant combinations. It also allows identifying the status of a factor as necessary, sufficient, or both for the outcome, and it enables the researcher to identify multiple causal mechanisms to explain one outcome. There may be different paths to a successful state-building operation. Whereas standard regression analysis is typically concerned with estimating how much of one variable produces how much of the result, a Boolean analysis is more concerned with the possible combination of factors that lead to the specific outcome. Boolean analysis requires the construction of a so called truth table which provides all possible combination of independent variables. The variables are coded dichotomous, indicating the presence of absence of a given factor. For each

And third, it may be promising to expand the model that has informed this study by an additional dimension, namely social interaction, or more precisely, the bargaining games between domestic elites and “interveners”.

The limited success of complex peace-building operations can be attributed to the difficult conditions they confront, including a lack of local assets, the high levels of destruction from the violence, continuing conflict, and a lack of commitment and resources by the peace builders. This is indeed the core assumption that has defined the research design of most studies in the field. (Doyle and Sambanis 2000, Chesterman 2004; Dobbins 2003; Dobbins et al. 2005). The present paper has also adopted this logic. However, the limited success of external-led state building could also be explained as the equilibrium outcome of a “game” that is played between local elites and interveners. Michael Barnett and I have referred to such a model as the “peace-builders contract.” The model identifies the preferences of and constraints to these preferences on three sets of actors: (1) the coalition of peacebuilders; (2) the emerging central elites in the postconflict state; and (3) the elites in the periphery. The ability of these three sets of actors to accomplish their goals is dependent on decisions of the other actors. Consequently, their strategies are themselves reflections of their preferences and the constraints imposed by the environment and the strategies adopted by the other actors. Their strategies inform an informal contract - the peacebuilders' contract. Peacebuilders want stability at the lowest possible price, which is dependent on the collaboration (or non-opposition) of local elites. Local elites want a stability that secures their positions of power. Under the contract, peacebuilders get security and local elites maintain their power. Since their power is based on informal networks of patronage and financed by informal rent-seeking mechanisms, these mechanisms are reinforced. (see for a description of such arrangements Koehler and Zürcher 2004; Zürcher 2005; Zürcher 2006). Given this dynamic, de facto peace building will not actually change the social fabric of the state. However, since both peacebuilders and elites draw their legitimacy and their funding from the fact that they are building peace and democracy, both will invest considerable resources in symbolic peace building. Because aid is frequently made conditional on their willingness to adhere to certain features of the peace building process, they are likely to ensure that it is ceremony and symbols, and not the substance, of peace building, which endures. This model

combination of factors the table also reports the particular outcome that has been observed, and the frequency of that particular combination. By applying Boolean algebra, and by defining a frequency threshold, the number and complexity of the combinations that are associated with producing a certain outcome can be reduced. The result is an equation that reports all combinations that can produce the outcome(s) the researcher is interested in.

then presents an alternative explanation for the limited success of external-led state-building. Making intrusive interventions more effective would depend less on overcoming difficulties resulting from structural weaknesses or war damages, but rather on rewriting the peace builders contract.

Variable Matrix
Internal war and international state building operations
 1989 - 2005

Variable	Africa south of Sahara										Asia			Former socialist bloc			Latin America & Caribbean	
	Angola	Central Africa	Congo / Zaire	Liberia 1	Mozambique	Namibia	Rwanda	Sierra Leone	Somalia	Afghanistan 5	Cambodia	India/Pakistan	Yug - Kosovo	Yug - Bosnia	El Salvador	Haiti		
Difficulties																		
DURH	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0		
DEATHSH	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0		
GDPL	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0		
GDPH	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0		
NEIGH	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0		
State Building Mission																		
UNAVEM III;		MINURCA	MONUC	UNOMIL	ONUMOZ	UNTAG	UNAMIR	UNOMSIL; UNAMSIL;	UNOSOM	UNAMA	UNAMIC;	INTERFET; UNTAET; UNMISSET; UNOTIL	UNMOT	KVM; KFOR;	UNPROFOR; IFOR; SFOR; EUFOR; EUPM; OHR; UNMIBIH	ONUSAL	UNMIH; UNSMIH; UNTMIH; MIPONUH	
MONUA																		
STARTM	95	98	99	93	92	89	93	98	92	2002	91	98	94	92	91	93		
ENDM	99	00	ongoing	97	94	90	96	ongoing	95	ongoing	93	ongoing	00	ongoing	95	00		
MDUR	50	23	ongoing	48	25	12	30	ongoing	46	ongoing	26	ongoing	66	ongoing	46	74		
UNTYPE	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	5	5	4	5	2	4	4	4		
UNCINT	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	no data	3	4	2	4	3	3		
INTRUS	2	1	3	4	1	5	0	6	4	10	8	10	0	10	8	5		
MENH	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0		
MENL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		
Results																		
NONWAS	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1		
NONVIO	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1		
DEVA	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	no data	1	0	0	0	1	0	0		
DEVR	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	no data	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		
AIDDEPA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	no data	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
AIDDEPR	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	no data	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
POLA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	no data	0	1		
POLR	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		
VACA	1	0	1	1	1	no data 1	1	1	1	0	(1)	1	1	no data	1	0		
VAGR	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	no data	0	0		
EOGA	0	0	0	1	1	no data 1	1	0	0	1	(1)	0	1	no data (0)	0	0		
EOGR	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0		
ROLA	0	0	1	1	1	nodata1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0		
ROLR	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0		

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