

Box 1.1 The Effectiveness of Peacebuilding: Empirical Studies

The year 2006 saw the publication of two important studies on the effectiveness of peacebuilding strategies. Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis published *Making War and Building Peace*, a comprehensive analysis of all UN and non-UN peace operations between 1945 and 1999. They identify three key factors that impact the prospects for success of a peace operation, in what they call the “peacebuilding triangle”:

- The level of hostility between the factions, measured by the amount of deaths and displacement, as well as the type of war and number of warring parties.
- The local capacities remaining after the war, measured by per capita gross domestic product or energy consumption, and past experience with democratic governance.
- The level of international assistance—as measured by type of mandate and number of troops committed.

Their core finding is that the deeper the hostility and the less the local capacity,

the greater the need for international assistance to establish a lasting peace. This, combined with qualitative analysis of a number of cases, leads Doyle and Sambanis to a seven-step plan for effective peacebuilding: establish internal security, seek the cooperation of neighbors, identify some “quick wins” in delivering basic services, build the rule of law and constitutional consent, guarantee property rights, foster democratic participation, and promote genuine moral and psychological reconciliation.

In an August 2006 study of seventy-four cases, Paul Collier and his associates compare the political, economic, and military aspects of postconflict situations. They come up with three interesting findings on the risk of a relapse into conflict:

- An election reduces the risk substantially in the year of the election itself, but increases it even more substantially in the following year.
- Economic development substantially reduces risks, but it typically takes a

decade, and so there is a need for an interim strategy for risk containment.

- United Nations peace operations bring the risks down. Moreover, in a typical country, doubling expenditure on peacekeeping would reduce the risk over the course of the decade from 40 percent to 31 percent.

Based on their results, Collier and colleagues propose a “politics+” strategy, in which the plus would be long-term economic development through substantial aid and rapid reform, combined with a commitment to the provision of security by external peacekeepers throughout the first postconflict decade. Finally, the lower the per capita income, the higher the postconflict risks, at the outset of the peace. According to the authors, this provides a clear and uncontroversial principle for resource allocation among postconflict countries: resources per capita should be approximately inversely proportional to the level of income in the postconflict country.

Sources: Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Mans Soderbom, “Post-Conflict Risks,” Centre for the Study of African Economies, University of Oxford, CSAE WPS/2006 12, 17 August 2006.