The owl and the dove: knowledge strategies to improve the peacebuilding practice of local non-governmental organisations
Verkoren, W.M.

Citation for published version (APA):
Verkoren, W. M. (2008). The owl and the dove: knowledge strategies to improve the peacebuilding practice of local non-governmental organisations Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA - Amsterdam University Press

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
# Table of contents

List of abbreviations 13  
List of tables, figures and text boxes 15  
Acknowledgements 17  
Introduction 19  
  - Theory and conceptualisation 23  
  - Approach 26  
  - Structure of the book 28  
  - Use of terms: North and South 29  

**PART 1. CIVIL SOCIETY, KNOWLEDGE AND PEACEBUILDING** 31  

Chapter 1. Pieces of peace. Civil society and peacebuilding 35  
  - Civil society and NGOs 35  
  - The context: war and peace in the 21st century 40  
    - Present day wars 40  
    - Conflict, peace and development 42  
    - Conflict and peace in West Africa and Southeast Asia 44  
  - Peacebuilding 51  
  - NGOs and peacebuilding 53  
    - Positioning peace work in relation to other NGO activities 53  
    - Lasting peace as the ultimate aim 55  
    - The added value of NGOs in peacebuilding 56  
  - Activities of the NGOs visited 57  
    - Types of activities 58  
    - The countries compared 62  
    - Categorising the activities 64  
  - Discussions about the role of NGOs in peacebuilding 66  
    - Limits and gaps in the practice of peace NGOs 66  
    - Reduced political role 68  
    - Legitimacy 70  
    - Neutrality in conflict 72  
    - Weakening states 73  
    - Is it really that bad? On constraints and results 73  
  - Concluding remarks 75  

Chapter 2. Recipes for peace? Peacebuilding knowledge 77  
  - Types of knowledge 78  
    - ‘If only we knew what we know’: Explicit, tacit and implicit knowledge 78  
    - ‘Nothing more practical than a good theory’. Academic versus practitioner knowledge 82  
  - Knowledge, conflict and peace 84  
    - Types of knowledge applied 84
2.2.2  Knowledge of conflict and knowledge for peace  85
2.3  Sources of peacebuilding knowledge  87
  2.3.1  Peace and conflict studies as an academic field  87
  2.3.2  Academia and practice in the peacebuilding field  89
  2.3.3  Indigenous versus external knowledge  94
2.4  Different knowledge systems  96
2.5  The applicability of knowledge: how context-specific is knowledge?  98
2.6  Implications: forms of peace and conflict knowledge  99
2.7  Concluding remarks  105

Chapter 3. Processes, actors, relationships. Knowledge and learning in NGOs  107
3.1  Learning processes: Retaining and using knowledge  108
  3.1.1  Defining learning  109
  3.1.2  Schools of thought about learning  111
  3.1.3  Learning cycles  114
  3.1.4  Learning in conflict  117
3.2  Organisational learning  118
  3.2.1  Principles of organisational learning  118
  3.2.2  Knowledge management  123
  3.2.3  Scaffolds: knowledge institutions and other external actors  124
  3.2.4  Organisational learning tools  125
3.3  Development of learning in development  128
3.4  The learning strategies of Northern NGOs  130
  3.4.1  Characterising the organisational learning of NNGOs  130
  3.4.2  Organisational characteristics affecting NGO learning  133
  3.4.3  Improving organisational learning by NNGOs  135
3.5  The South as a gap in the literature  136
3.6  Capacity building: from knowledge transfer to mutual learning?  138
3.7  Networking for peace by NGOs  143
  3.7.1  Networks and peacebuilding  143
  3.7.2  Categorising networks  145
3.8  Concluding remarks  150
3.9  Concluding Part One: Towards a model of processes, actors, and relationships  152
3.10  Research design and methodology  156
  3.10.1  Spread and representativeness of NGOs visited  156
  3.10.2  Regional differences, culture and context  160
  3.10.3  Methodological approach  162
  3.10.4  Interviews  164
  3.10.5  Action research  165
  3.10.6  (Active) observation  166
  3.10.7  Survey for GPPAC case study  167
  3.10.8  Bias and role of the researcher  167
  3.10.9  Research ethics and outcomes  169
PART II. STRUCTURE AND AGENCY IN THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGIES OF SOUTHERN PEACE NGOS

Chapter 4. One way street? Structural inequalities in knowledge generation, dissemination and recognition

4.1 Inequalities in knowledge production and recognition 176
4.2 Research capacities in the South 184
4.3 Knowledge policy 187
4.3.1 National knowledge for development policies 187
4.3.2 Policies of Northern NGOs vis-à-vis their Southern partners 191
4.4 Knowledge regimes in development and peacebuilding 193
4.5 Discourse 196
4.6 Donor-driven projects 199
4.7 Capacity building and partnership 206
4.7.1 Capacity building in practice 206
4.7.2 Partnership and capacity building 209
4.7.3 Ownership and partnership different in peacebuilding? 212
4.8 Concluding remarks 216

Chapter 5. Practice to knowledge and knowledge to practice. Learning and sharing by Southern peace NGOs

5.1 Peacebuilding knowledge in practice 224
5.1.1 Knowledge for peacebuilding 224
5.1.2 Indigenous and external knowledge 227
5.2 A two-way exchange: Knowledge demand and supply in the field 230
5.2.1 Knowledge demand 230
5.2.2 Knowledge supply 233
5.2.3 Interactive knowledge generation and learning 235
5.3 Organisational learning activities 237
5.3.1 Acquiring knowledge 237
5.3.2 Retaining knowledge within the organisation 242
5.3.3 Adapting, passing on, and applying knowledge 245
5.3.4 Research and dissemination 248
5.3.5 Concluding 5.3 251
5.4 Monitoring and evaluation as a tool for learning 252
5.4.1 M&E as a tool for learning and knowledge sharing 252
5.4.2 Difficulties: funding regimes and the special nature of peacebuilding work 254
5.4.3 Developing methods and indicators for peacebuilding work 258
5.4.4 A learning approach to M&E 264
5.4.5 Concluding 5.4 267
Chapter 5. Canyons and bridges. Exchanging knowledge between organisations

5.5 Exchange with other local NGOs

5.5.1 Exchange with international organisations and government agencies

5.5.2 Exchange with local beneficiaries

5.5.3 Capacity building by Southern NGOs

5.5.4 Exchange with knowledge institutions

5.5.5 Concluding 5.5

5.6 Obstacles to learning and knowledge sharing

5.6.1 Time and money

5.6.2 Competition and distrust

5.6.3 Organisational capacity and characteristics

5.6.4 Limitations posed by politics and conflict

5.6.5 Power relations

5.6.6 Cultural issues and gender

5.6.7 Knowledge changing over time

5.6.8 Concluding 5.6

5.7 Concluding remarks

Chapter 6. Hubs and links. Networking for peace

6.1 Networks and networking in the field of peacebuilding

6.1.1 Networks encountered in the field

6.1.2 Categorising the networks

6.2 Potential benefits of networking for peace

6.3 Challenges for networking

6.4 Factors influencing network success

6.4.1 Capacity of the member organisations

6.4.2 Relationship between the member organisations and the network

6.4.3 Characteristics of the network

6.4.4 Governance, legitimacy and organisation of the network

6.4.5 Coverage and inclusiveness of the network

6.4.6 Content of the network

6.4.7 Context of the network

6.4.8 Funding of the network

6.5 Case study: the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

6.5.1 Foundation and development of WANEP

6.5.2 WANEP objectives and activities

6.5.3 The national networks

6.5.4 Challenges

6.6 Requirements for successful networking applied: the case of WANEP

6.6.1 Capacity of the member organisations

6.6.2 Relationship between the member organisations and the network

6.6.3 Characteristics of the network
PART III. FACILITATING THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGIES OF SOUTHERN PEACE NGOs: TWO CASE STUDIES

Chapter 7. Running a global network. The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict

7.1 Introduction
7.1.1 The global partnership
7.1.2 The network strengthening review
7.2 Functions of GPPAC
7.3 Capacity of the member organisations
7.3.1 Capacity of members and capacity building
7.3.2 Time for networking
7.3.3 Constituencies
7.4 Added value and aims
7.4.1 Added value
7.4.2 Discussions on aims and political role
7.5 Governance, politics and power issues
7.5.1 Democratic governance and ownership
7.5.2 Power, competition and conflict
7.6 Facilitating knowledge sharing
7.6.1 Knowledge sharing in the regions
7.6.2 Global knowledge sharing
7.6.3 Stimulating framework
7.6.4 Flexibility
7.6.5 Safe space, trust and levels of learning
7.6.6 Balance between inclusiveness and focus
7.7 Content and outcomes of knowledge sharing
7.7.1 Content balance
7.7.2 Outcomes of knowledge sharing
7.8 Monitoring and evaluation
7.9 Concluding remarks

Chapter 8. Action learning for peace. Applied Conflict Transformation Studies

8.1 Background, aims and development of ACTS
8.1.1 Background and aims
8.1.2 Development and implementation of the course
8.2 Improving the learning of local peace NGOs through action research 402
8.3 North-South and academic-practitioner cooperation to implement the programme 405
  8.3.1 Global standards and regional variation 405
  8.3.2 North-South NGO partnerships in ACTS 407
  8.3.3 Cooperation between academia and NGOs 409
8.4 Education as a scaffold: teaching the course 411
  8.4.1 Expectations and opinions of students 411
  8.4.2 Capacities of the students 413
  8.4.3 Learning and development of the students 414
  8.4.4 Cultural issues 415
  8.4.5 The meaning of ‘academic’ 416
  8.4.6 Development of course content 417
8.5 Strengthening the knowledge base: documentation and dissemination 418
  8.5.1 Research outcomes so far 418
  8.5.2 Dissemination of outcomes 419
8.6 Learning by ACTS itself 420
  8.6.1 Learning attitude 420
  8.6.2 M&E in the regions 421
  8.6.3 Development of global M&E framework 424
8.7 Concluding remarks 426
8.8 Concluding Part Three: Global initiatives to support learning 428

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 433

Chapter 9. Conclusions and recommendations 435
  9.1 Overall conclusions 435
    9.1.1 The role of local non-governmental organisations in peacebuilding 435
    9.1.2 Forms of peace and conflict knowledge 437
    9.1.3 Organisational learning by Southern peace NGOs 440
    9.1.4 Factors that constrain and support the learning of Southern peace NGOs 443
    9.1.5 Power differences, donor relations and North-South dynamics 444
    9.1.6 Initiatives to improve the learning processes of Southern peace NGOs 446
    9.1.7 Global networks 448
    9.1.8 Involving knowledge institutions 449
    9.1.9 Ways in which Northern actors may support the learning of local peace NGOs 450
    9.1.10 Overall concluding remarks 453
  9.2 Recommendations 455
    9.2.1 For Southern peace NGOs 455
    9.2.2 For Northern NGOs with partners in the South 456