

**STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT NAIROBI, KENYA (UNON)**

**BY
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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
THE DEGREE ON MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.**

NOVEMBER 2015

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for award of a degree at the University of Nairobi and any other University

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D61/681/2013

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank the Almighty God for the grace he has bestowed upon me throughout the course of the MBA programme. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Martin Ogutu for the continuous support of my MBA study and related research, for his patience, motivation and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this project.

My sincere thanks go to my colleagues at work who provided me an opportunity to join their team as an intern and later as staff. Without their precious support, it would not be possible to conduct this research.

I thank my classmates for the stimulating discussions, for the sleepless nights working before deadlines.

Last but not the least; I would like to thank my family, for supporting me during the writing of this project and my life in general.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father Francis Mulwa, my wife Stella Chebet and our children Annette Mumbua and Aiden Thabo for their unending support and encouragement through the program.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GA	- General Assembly
UNON	- United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNEP	- United Nations Environment Programme
UN-HABITAT	- United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
OHRM	- Office of Human Resource Management
AI	- Administrative Instruction
SGB	- Secretary General's Bulletin
ERP	- Enterprise Resource Planning
OIOS	- Office of Internal Oversight Services
JIU	- Joint Inspection Unit
CMT	- Change Management Team
RBM	- Results Based Management

ABSTRACT

Management of strategic change has become a necessity in modern organizations. This is because organizational health is mirrored in its ability to strategically adapt to global influences on modern business. Globalization and internationalization of modern business requires organizations to develop a global philosophy and approach to business, globally acceptable approaches and technology, techniques and methods, quality standards, processes and products for global customers, global marketing approaches, strategic management practices, global vision of business, globally acceptable political systems to support and facilitate globalization of business and continuous benchmarking with the leading players in the industry. Strategic management has become a global practice for managing strategic change. This is because it enables organizations to be responsive to environmental needs and changes, see competitive challenges in advance, achieve operational effectiveness, develop strategic objectives and actions, effectively mobilize and utilize existing scarce resources and develop effective directional policy. It has become necessary for organizations to continuously adapt their subsystems to enable them meet the requirements of the dynamics in the environment to guarantee their positioning, competitiveness and survival. This is because an organization, as a functional living organism, has to account for its existence by having a mission. Strategic management of change provides this answer. The study sought to establish strategic change management practices at the United Nations Office in Nairobi which, since its inception in 1996, has continued to operate in a constantly changing environment.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The emergence of new economies has ushered in imminent business opportunities for many organizations, both private and public. This has resulted in most traditional organizations – for example, public sector organizations – accepting the phenomenon of change and often coming to realize that if they do not change they will perish (Beer & Nohria 2000). Likewise, Macredie, Sandom and Paul (1998) maintained that successful organizations of the future, be it private or public, must be prepared to embrace the concept of change management or face extinction. Adding to this dilemma is the issue of the need for change and the environment in which organizations currently operate.

Burnes (1996, Kanter (1989) and Peters and Waterman (1982) argued that many modern organizations, including those in the public sector, now find themselves in a volatile environment whereby the need to introduce and manage change successfully has become a competitive necessity. This environment determines the manner in which the organization must operate but as Jury (1997) has stated, there is no accepted definition of what constitutes this current environment. However, a practical working definition is that the environment is closely related to the environmental variables which influence organizations. Simply stated, these environmental variables are political, economic, technological and sociological in nature.

Organizations exist as open systems and that is why they are always in continuous interaction with the environment in which they operate. Changes have taken place all over the world and this has affected the way organizations conduct their businesses. In order to succeed organizations should be able to align their operations to the constantly-changing environment. This will entail designing a strategy that legitimizes change programme in order to survive and remain relevant (Johnson and Scholes, 1999).

The United Nations Office at Nairobi, the UN headquarters in Africa, was established by the General Assembly in 1996. The office is headed by a Director-General, at the Under-Secretary-General level, serves as the representative office of the Secretary-General in Nairobi and performs representation and liaison functions with permanent missions, the host-country and other Governments, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in Nairobi, as well as other organizations of the United Nations system in Kenya; facilitates cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations; provides administrative and other support services to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); provides joint and common services to other organizations of the United Nations system in Kenya, as applicable; and manages and implements the programmes of administration, conference services and public information and provides security and safety services for United Nations staff and facilities in the United Nations Office at Nairobi (<http://www.unon.org>).

1.1.1 Strategic Change Management

The importance of strategic change management in organizations can never be over-emphasized since environment in which organizations interact with is in constant flux. The issue of managing organizational change is of key importance within management theory and practice. Organizations are currently living in a period within which the speed of change is so high that most organizations experience the present when it is already gone. Beckhard and Beyer (1983) define change as the awareness of a current unacceptable state to a preferred state. The increased pace of change over the past ten years has been dramatic. Competition has heated up across board and to succeed, the organization of the future must serve its clients better, create new advantages and survive in bitterly contested markets. Organizations have to be relevant and competitive in the long term hence the need to assume compound changes with increasing speed, effectiveness and success (Arnaboldit and Azzone, 2005). Organizations have to come up with well-designed efforts to make their organizations more proactive and initiative.

Only change is constant. There is nothing as difficult and as hard to succeed in as change. (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979, Brown and Eisenhardt, 1998). Therefore it does not come as a surprise that managing change in an organization is one of the greatest challenges of managers. Globalization has seen the tearing down of previous international market barriers. It becomes challenging for strategic change management because most companies operational strategies reflect past business realities making them inertia.

Analysing organizations and their needs to adopt change means auditing their structures and financial situations and conducting environmental and internal analysis (Randal, 2004). Drivers for change can emanate from internal aspects such as productivity and profitability issues and external factors for instance due to competitions or governmental regulations changes. All these aspects, calls for organizations' adoption to strategic change management. Creating a solid understanding of the need for change is vital and an awareness of the factors and the reasons behind change has to be understandable among the organization members.

1.1.2 General Overview of the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON), Kenya

Throughout the United Nations history, the organization has played a vital role as a meeting place for discussion of global issues and setting global standards, and for much of that history the key function of its Secretariat and staff, working mainly at Headquarters, has been to service those conferences and meetings. Much of this work has been, and is, important and substantive. The global norms set during this period have changed the world profoundly. Today's United Nations is vastly different from the organization that emerged from the San Francisco conference more than 60 years ago. Moon (2006) reinstates that its normative work continue to remain important and substantive. The United Nations is no longer a conference-servicing organization located in a few headquarters locations.

It is highly diverse organization working worldwide to improve the lives of people who need help (Moon 2006).Such a radically expanded range of activities calls for a radical

overhaul of the United Nations Secretariat – its rules, structure, systems and culture. In the General Assembly 2006, Ban ki Moon confirms that this has not happened and that organization's staff members, the most valuable resource have been increasingly stretched (2006). It is worth noting that today's global and social environment has changed and Organizations reflects that since because of its interrelation with the environment. In the last 20 years, it has lived through dramatic expansion of operations, budgets and functions. The United Nations today carries out complex operations and directly delivers critical services around the world (Moon 2006).

Carrying the mandate of the Secretary General of the United Nations, the United Nations Office in Nairobi has embraced these strategic changes by putting a priority in investing in its staff. Immanent within the organization is the realization that the confidence that member states have in the organization has been severely tested. This has called for change strategy to restore back the confidence of its stakeholders while remaining relevant to its mandates. Experience within the United Nations system and elsewhere confirms that reform or strategic change management initiatives often fall apart over time unless there is strong leadership from the top, supported by group of managers and responsible officials assigned to make the change happen. One of strategic change initiatives that the organization has launched is the implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool which has been named UMOJA. The ERP is been implemented to ensure a thorough streamlining of UN administrative processes. The ultimate goal of the UMOJA is to provide a harmonized, simplified and real-time approach to the organization's management of finances, resources and assets.

In this fast-changing world, the United Nations needs a new way of managing its resources in order to operate efficiently, meet member state mandates and credibly report results. In doing this, the implementation process has seen some internal challenges. Majorly, even though communication has done, it has not taken effect to the staff member. Fear of losing jobs affected staff members since the change was supposed to streamline activities in the organization. Staff members who could not embrace new

technology that come with the new change brought new challenges to the implementation of the tool.

The management of the United Nations Office in Nairobi through collaboration with office of human resource management has resulted to more training to enable staff members handle the tools of change. There has been major communication to all staff to embrace the change. The newly appointed under secretary general of OHRM stresses the need to have the right attitude in change which she highlights that change itself brings new opportunities (Wainaina, 2014)

1.2. Research Problem

Organizations as open systems are vulnerable to both internal and external environment. For organization to deliver on their mandates they must be sensitive to any change. Change management aims at moving individuals, teams, organizations and societies from the current state to a desired future state. This will require adoption of appropriate strategies. In lieu of change management, organizations would need to exploit existing or emerging opportunities and deal with threats in the market. This calls for the readiness to change within the organizations and the ability to implement the proposed change.

According to Handy (1994) managing strategic change is the ability to deal with the unfolding, non-linear dynamic processes during strategy implementation. It involves alignment and re-alignment of policy, systems, styles, values, staff and skills of an organization to realize a strategy. Strategic change management largely entails developing the people's values, attitudes, preferences, organizational structure, process, and information technology as well as the physical aspects of the work environment (Handy, 1994). As a system each organization has its own ways of managing change. In other words there are no universally agreed approaches of managing change in the both private and public sector organizations.

Empirical studies by Balasnian (2006) revealed that different actors in the change process have different powers and exert different influences. Thus there is a risk that change

model may represent a political fix. He added that for many development practitioners, change and capacity are distinct but evidence suggests that they are intertwined (Balasnian, 2006). The issue of organizational and institutional change has been given relatively light treatment in practical development situations (Balasnian, 2006). Many reforms have been initiated within the organization; however while generating some significant improvements, they have sometimes addressed the symptoms other than the causes of the organization's weaknesses, and have failed to adequately address new needs and requirements. The organization needs to adequately respond to the changing environment through change management structures.

Locally a number of scholars have investigated change management in different work environments. Maroko (2013) put particular emphasis to employee assistance in coping with change. However, it still remains obscure on how the management communicates change strategies in the organization. Strategic change in an organization is necessitated by the fact that organizations want to be relevant to stakeholders and clients and to align themselves to the changing market demands (Maroko, 2013). Whilst it is true that over the past the organization has strived to ensure that it aligns itself with the changing environment, there has been a gap on the process in which the strategies are implemented. There has been an urgency to make things work hence failing to allow extensive planning and the impacts to the staff. What approaches has United Nations Office in Nairobi adopted in strategic changes management practices and what factors have influenced them?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study has two objectives.

- i. To establish approaches adopted in strategic change management in United Nations Office in Nairobi.
- ii. Determine challenges faced when managing strategic change.
- iii. Determine strategic change management practices adopted by United Nations Office in Nairobi.

1.4 Value of the Study

In view of the important role strategic change management plays in organizations, this research is of immense benefit not only to the United Nations Office in Nairobi but the other agencies of United Nations at large. How well the organization manages its change strategies will be a bench to other non-governmental organizations in the international arena. The study will guide management practices at the United Nations Office in Nairobi. The research will also benefit stakeholders within the organizations in understanding the dynamics of strategic change management.

Moreover, the study equips both policy makers and stakeholders with knowledge to identify the strengths and weaknesses of various change strategies and practices as well as policy guidelines on areas that require immediate intervention. This makes it easier for the organization and stakeholders to combine and adopt the best practices with the appropriate policy interventions and incentives to achieve the desired organizational goals.

The study also contributes to the body of knowledge for the researchers and scholars interested in management of strategic change in international non-governmental organizations. The research will be a stepping stone for further studies especially in the area of change management.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the literature and authorities on strategic change management. Different issues on strategic change management will be critically reviewed focusing on management of strategic change with its process while identifying strategic change challenges and strategic change management practices.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Change management has become a large field with a number of renowned practitioners highly contributing to the models of change management. There is enormous literature and consulting practice aimed at helping managers deal with major change in their organizations – turnaround, revitalization and downsizing to mention but a few (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel, 1998). Change management regards the how of organizational transformation. It is concerned with how to implement content and how to bring the organization from its status quo through the implementation phase to the desired situation. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004), examines how organizational change can be viewed as moving from a status quo condition (alpha), through a transformational phase (trajectory), into the new condition (omega). This new condition is viewed generally as the desired condition which the proponents of reform strategy have developed.

Planned or programmatic transformational change (Beer & Nohria 2000, Mintzberg et al 1998, Weick 2000 and Pettigrew 2000) is sort of change management in which change is analysed and then structured and planned in phases. This sort of strategic change management in which the change is analysed and then structured and planned in phases stems from the early works of Kurt Lewin who was a pioneer in the field of organizational change (Burnes, 2004). His three step model for organizational change in which he described that organizational change is a three-step process.

Lewin three-step model is based on phases of unfreezing, changing and refreezing. Firstly it describes how the organization must be taken through an unfreezing stage in which the organization will be made ready for taking in the change. After the refreezing phase, the organization is taken through a moving phase. In this phase the organization is changed and altered according to the change question. In his view, this phase requires iterations of action, evaluation, and repetitions (Lewin, 1947). Lastly the organization must go through a re-freeze phase to ensure that the change will remain.

Kotter (1995) model on organizational change management proposed the eight-step model in which he studied what went wrong in major organizational transformations. He then focused on how to avoid these errors. He noted that the key to overcoming the errors was to understand why organizations resist the needed change and how leadership was required to drive the process in a socially healthy way. Kotter (1996) illustrated the importance of leadership in change management by describing leadership as the engine that drives change.

The eight stage model is clearly an elaboration upon Lewin's model. Kotter (1996) describes that the first four steps help defrost a hardened status quo which is the same as Lewin's unfreezing even though Kotter does not make a direct link to Lewin's model. Kotter further describes how phases five to seven introduce new practices (ibid) which is in essence equivalent to Lewin's movement phase. Kotter finally notes that the last step is grounding the changes in the corporate culture and helping them stick. These phase models focus on planned change rather than emergent change (Pettigrew, 2000). They work with systematic models as opposed to other change approaches such as Appreciate Inquiry processes (Magruder and Mohr, 2001) or changing conversations in organization and consulting in the shadow systems by initiating dialogues in the organization around themes rather than end-targets (Shaw, 2002). In these processes the end target is fairly open and the basis for the target is largely formulated through bottom-up process (Shaw, 1997).

2.2. Management of Strategic Change

One of the features that emerge in an analysis of the change management literature is that there is no one theory that defines or explains organizational change. Lewin (1947) described organizational change as being a combination of change and constancy: ‘change and constancy are relative concepts; group life is never without change merely differences in the amount and type of change exist.’ Lewin (1947) indicated that the first stage of change involves preparing the organization to accept that change is necessary or ‘unfreezing’. This involves breaking down the existing practices before building a new way of operating the organization. After the organizational uncertainty that is created in the unfreeze stage, the ‘change’ stage is where employees begin to resolve their uncertainty and move to accept the identified new ways to operate in the organization. When the changes are taking shape and employees have embraced the new way in which the organization operates, then it is time ‘refreeze’ and ensure that the changes are embedded into the day to day operations of the organization.

In his analysis of change theories, Dunphy (1996) identified five factors that inform a theoretical consideration of organizational change. Firstly, ‘a basic metaphor’ of the nature of the organization which encourages the organization to be considered as an open system and one that is in active interchange with its environment. This allows the organization to be considered in the context of the wider prevailing economic, political and social forces. Secondly, the ‘analytical framework or diagnostic model’ considers change as a series of processes or systems arising from the external environment. Thirdly, the ‘ideal model’ factor suggests the directions for change and the values which will be used to assess the effectiveness of the change once completed.

Another prominent change management theory was provided by Van de Ven and Poole (1995). The authors developed a theory of change that places primacy on the two key dimensions of change, namely the unit of change and mode of change. Their typology of change identified four basic process theories of change; each characterized by a different event, sequence and associated change mechanism (Weick and Quinn, 1999). The four theories comprised: life cycle theories which considers change as part of the

establishment of an organization. Teleological theories which consider change as a series of defined goals. Dialectical theories which consider change a form of organizational conflict and evolutionary theories which consider change as a natural form of organizational development (Weick and Quinn, 1999).

As pointed out, lack of an overarching theory has been supported by other students of change managements (Palmer and Dunford, 2002; Kenny, 2003). The desire for one theory of change, and the argument against adopting such a concept, was articulated by Dunphy (1996): ‘what we need instead, however, as do all truly scientific fields, is not a single theory but comprehensive theories of change and a healthy debate about their respective values bases and biases (Dunphy 1996). Dunphy (1996) proposed the view that organizational change is of itself a failure of the organization to continuously adapt the organization.

The need to initiate change arises where continuous improvement has not been undertaken and the organization requires corrective action. Weick and Quinn (1999) discussed the concept of continuous change within an organization as on-going, evolving and cumulative. They wrote that: ‘The distinctive quality of continuous change is the idea that small continuous adjustments, created simultaneously across units, can accumulate and create substantial change’ (Weick and Quinn, 1999). While such changes have been viewed as deliberate they require systematic management agendas to ensure fully implementation, hence the concept of strategic management discussed in the next subsection.

2.3. Strategic Change Management Process

Ansoff and McDonnell (1990) conceive change management as structured and systematic approach to achieving a sustainable change in human behaviour within an organization. Change management involves the application of systematic techniques to ensure that organizational change are guided in the planned direction, conducted in cost effective and efficient manner and completed within the targeted time frame and with the desired results. The need for strategic change is driven by the desire to exploit already existing or

new opportunities while at the same time dealing with threats in the external environment. Once an organization is conscious about the need for strategic change it becomes easier to create a competitive advantage. This implies the readiness to change within the organization and the ability to implement the proposed change (Pearce and Robinson, 1991).

A large and growing body of literature has shown that strategic management does not follow the ideal of rational decision making (Cyert and March, 1963, Mintzberg et al., 1976, Nutt, 1984, Quinn, 1980). Strategies do not form according to previous plans but develop as complex and meandering processes. Mintzberg (1978) coined the term strategy formation, with which he expressed the idea that strategy is formed by a complex interactive process of intertwined formulation and implementation activities which are influenced by politics, values, organizational culture, and management behaviour (Mintzberg and Quinn, 1996). Thus, strategy process, including all activities of individuals and organizations from formulation to implementation, should be seen as a process of change (Chia, 1994, Hendry, 2000, Langley, 1995, Laroche, 1995, Sminia, 2009).

According to Handy (1989), managing strategic change entails unfolding non-linear dynamic processes during strategy implementation. It involves change or alignment and re-alignment of policy, systems, styles, values, staff and skills of an organization to realize a strategy. Therefore strategic change management practices entail actions, processes and decisions that are executed by an organization's members to realize their strategic intentions (Handy, 1989).

The increasing pace of change and complexity of operation leads to a recognition of change process as an on-dynamic journey and not a discrete event shifting from one unfrozen state to another frozen state (Van de Ven et al., 1999). In 1947, Lewin presented 'ice model' for change. The model included three basic phases for change process; unfreezing, moving and refreezing. This is the upmost and most general level on how change can be described. Unfreezing means preparing organization to be ready for a

change through making people aware of the need for a change and create a will to change.

Change management process is familiar to most organizations today however how well they manage the change and how successful they are at it varies enormously depending on the nature of the business. Organizations that handle change well appear to thrive, whilst those that do not may struggle to survive. As highlighted by Kurt Lewin (1950), through his model of change, known as unfreeze – change – refreeze, organizations should start by creating a motivation to change. It is important to change bad existing attitudes to prepare the ground. Organizations move to the change process and phase by promoting effective communications and empowering people to embrace new ways of working and learn new values.

The process ends when the organization returns to a sense of stability (refreeze) and the benefits of the change are realized, which is of vital importance for creating the confidence from which to embark on the next inevitable change. During this process of refreezing, managers will praise and reward good works and those who meet targets. This is required on individual level to enhance effective performance at an organization level

2.4. Challenges of Strategic Change Management

The challenge of managing change is very fundamental to the operation of business and organization. The challenge of change has been brought to prominence with the degree of technological change and made it a key emphasis for the management of organizations (Beer and Nohira, 2000; McLagan, 2002; Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia and Irmer, 2007) The identified theories of change management indicate that the way in which change occurs can challenge the operations of an organization and can cause it to be paralyzed until the change process has concluded. As explained by Carnall (1986) ‘any significant change to an organization will disturb the established order of that same organization’ (Carnall, 1986).

Understanding the manner in which staff in organization responds to the change and react to the impact of change is also a major challenge. The emphasis on competitive advantage and the need for continuous improvement has its roots in the resource-based perspective of the organizational development which sees change as a planned and natural feature of the dynamic of organizational development (Garg and Singh, 2007).

The sorts of challenges needed to manage change programs through to success involve understanding the range of factors which represent resistors to challenge. Within Lewin's (1947, 1951) focus on the process of preparing for the change, managing the change and returning the organization to stability post the process of change, he advocated a strong focus on dealing with the forces for change. Lewin (1947, 1951) conceptualized that there were forces working in favour of the change or 'driving force', as well as those working against the change, or 'resisting change'.

A successful approach to the change management in the organization was to minimize or eliminate the resisting forces and exploit the driving forces. The 'driving force' positively influence change and include the availability of new technology, economic pressure from competitors or changes in local or national legislation (Lewin, 1947, 1951). The resisting forces that can oppose change might include a firmly established organizational culture, structure or industry-specific customs. Lewin (1947, 1951) proposed that any process of organizational change can be thought in the context of a dynamic balance or equilibrium of these forces working in different direction.

Building on the identification of the resisting forces with a view to managing them, Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) established that resistance was not a phenomenon of employees. Indeed, organizations themselves created the conditions for resistance through the inertia of their powerfully stable systems and operations. Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) then identified seven individual sources of resistance to change and identified for each of these the manner in which they could be managed.

2.5. Strategic Change Management Practices

Business leaders are in constant pressure from stakeholders to comply with their demands while maintaining the organizations' competitiveness in increasingly complex markets. As a result, such leaders are striving to continuously formulate new strategies that will help them deliver more value to their customers and other stakeholders. Vividly, organizations have had to change in order to align their operations to the environments in which they operate.

The starting point of strategic change involves the locus of control and influence, i.e., it is where change is initiated and developed. There are many different approaches to starting change (Bourgeois and David, 1984). The two main directions of change are top-down and bottom up change approaches. The former is driven by executives but does not necessarily mean that participation or collaboration is neglected. This type of change is the most popular because it holds the promise of breaking inertia and achieving quick results in an elegant way. Winning the hearts of others in order to ensure the realization of change and enable continuous improvement depends on the next step, which includes the empowerment and the involvement of people (Mintzberg et al., 2005).

Changing paradigms impact so much on the strategic planning of an organization. An emergent change is viewed as a continuous open ended and unpredictable process of aligning and realigning the organizations to its changing environment. The organizations recognize the need to align their practices to the external conditions. Under this practice, organizations characterize as a rational series of decision making activities and events. Grundy (1993) defined emergent change as change which is marked by rapid shifts in strategy.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, data collection techniques and methods of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized a case study form of research design. The case study collected in-depth data to establish strategic change management practices at the United Nations Office in Nairobi. According to Kothari (2004) a case study research design is appropriate where detailed analysis of a single unit is desired as it provides a focused and valuable insight into the phenomenon under the study. In addition, the case study is suitable since it describes the variables of interest in details. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) justify the use of case studies as enabling researchers to collect data and explain phenomena more deeply and exhaustively.

3.3 Data Collection

Primary data was collected. The researcher collected data from respondents using designed research instruments. Data was collected using in-depth open ended interview guide and focus group discussions (FDGs).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data was analysed using content analysis. In this case content analysis assisted the study in making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified strategic change management practices at the United Nations Office in Nairobi.

The data collected was summarized according to the study themes being change management process at UNON, changes that have taken place, approaches adopted in strategic change management, factors that influenced strategic change management and resistance to change.

The data was evaluated and analysed to determine its adequacy, credibility, usefulness and consistency. Cooper and Schindler (2003) justify content analysis as a technique for measuring the semantic content or the “what” aspect of the message. The breadth of content analysis makes it flexible and wide- ranging tool that may be used as a methodology or as a problem- specific technique. Cooper and Schindler point out that content analysis guards against selective perception of content, provides for rigorous application of reliability and validity criteria.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four presents data analysis, results and discussion of the data collected from the field. Discussions and findings of the study with reference to the research methodology are presented in this chapter. Findings on management of strategic change practices adopted at the United Nations Office at Nairobi are presented. Data was collected from 12 interviewees working in different capacities through use of interview guides as per the instrument of research.

4.2 General Information

The interviewees, position and the section of work in UNON at large was sought in this study. As per the findings the respondents positions were as follows, Director, division of administration section (DAS), Chief of Human Resources Management (HRMS), Chief, Recruitment and planning section (RPS), Chief, Staff training and development unit (SDTU), Chief ICTS, Chief, Support Services Section (UNON/SSS), Head, Umoja Deployment Team, Chief, Department of Security Services (DSS), HR Officer, Head, OIOS, HR Assistant, Administrative Assistant and IT Assistant. The interviewees were directly involved in making key decisions in UNON and undertaking its implementation and thus were better placed and aware of changes which had taken place in this organization and strategic change management practices adopted.

4.3 Strategic Change Management Processes at UNON

This study sought to find out the strategic changes which have taken place at UNON over the recent past. The interviewees clearly brought out that many of the changes and transformation had taken place in the last five years and some of the changes are still taking place even now. According to the interviewees, the UN Nairobi duty station does not operate in isolation and thus has to align its operations as the other UN duty stations globally. From the study findings, the interviewees revealed a variety of emerging practices within the system which were geared to changing how the organization

operates. In specific areas, in particular for operational activities for development, progress towards consistency and harmonization of planning processes has been made over the last few years.

Hitherto, different duty stations would have their different working plans and hence this resulted to inconsistencies among the UN globally because of working in isolation. The research revealed that currently there is an existence of an informal network, the United Nations Strategic Planning Network (UNSPN), involving nearly 30 organizations for the United Nations that have set up regular exchange of information and joint brainstorming around common issues of interest and challenges in their respective organizations with the aim of strengthening planning methods, tools and impact across the system.

As part of the ongoing United Nations reform, the interviewees cited the team set up by the SG, Change Management Team (CMT) to identify strategies to strengthen, inter alia, effectiveness and efficiency in delivering the five-year agenda of the Secretary-General. The change plan prepared by the team emphasizes the need for coherent strategic planning as follows 'To help bring about greater synergy and coherence among United Nations system development actors, there will be a need to put in place a coherent strategic change management process.

The interviewees cited the CMT recommendations of a consultative process to design the next set of strategic priorities for the United Nation common system to be initiated in alignment with the comprehensive policy review 2012 and in consistent with the Secretary General's priorities to allow the key normative and operational entities to clarify their division of labour around practical results rather than abstract and reinforce the decision of General Assembly in the last Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) to harmonize the planning cycles of the funds and programmes. This by far shows the commitment the United Nations Office in Nairobi management team has towards the strategic change management and the aspects in which they base their agendas on. The interviewees' assertions on the whole idea of synergy highlights the direct involvement the organization in managing change for better. This is to ensure that

it operates in sync with the rest of UN common system. The duration of the overall cycle varies depending on the type of mandate of the organization. The interviewees confirmed existence of this cycle on which normative mandates easily function with longer-term planning change cycles, since their activities do not evolve at the same pace as those of operational mandates.

4.4 Changes at the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON), Kenya

The study established that changes introduced at the organizations were in line with the recommendations of United Nations sixth session of the General Assembly 2006 on investing in the United Nations for a stronger organization worldwide. A key area has been on enhancing trust and confidence towards stakeholders and client orientated organizational culture. The management has prioritized in engaging member states in support of common goals. There was unanimous agreement that that a key driver of mistrust was lack of relevant and usable information on key issues to take informed decisions. Given the sheer volume of reports, resolutions and publications, the duty station has initiated an effective information exchange between member states hence responding to the specific information needs of all member states. There is a call to all staff to be available for discussions with member states, whether individual or groups of member states, particularly on strategic issues, to ensure they have information they require to make informed decisions.

According to the findings, it has been established that there is renewed engagement of staff with a view of drawing them to a common vision. Management understands the importance of the confidence between staff and senior management since staff is UN's greatest asset. Biennial staff survey has been instituted to rebuild trust and confidence among staff with management being encouraged to respond constructively to the results of the survey. This has greatly aided the management to track changes in staff attitudes and hence enabling them to work with them and plan for changes.

In line with Secretary General's bulletin ST/SGB/274, issued in 1994, the management has highlighted the need to lead a process of continuous change and innovation through

facilitating regular consultations with staff. This is aimed at changing organizations culture towards the desirable culture with staff leading the change. According to the findings of the research, it was noted that constantly the director general invites for discussions with the staff member to know what issues they are facing. There has enhanced a good working environment.

There has been a focus on engaging staff with an aim of attaining a global, dynamic, adaptable, meritocratic and physically secure workforce. According to the research, there is better deliverance of outcomes while pursuing a better work-life balance. Staff have flexi working hours and also they can also work from home through systems that have been put into place. Departments are constantly being encouraged to adopt flexible working arrangement (FWA). According to research, it has shown that greater use of FWAs has challenged managers as much as it has engaged staff. Managers have been able to define better deliverable results for staff on expanded FWAs, and in this way, results-oriented work culture has been affirmed.

Support and affirmation of the implementation of a comprehensive mobility policy for the organization has been highlighted as one of key change areas. The framework for comprehensive, functional and geographic mobility of all categories of staff is being worked on in consultation with all stakeholders with the aim of presenting a comprehensive policy. Also this seeks to allow the organization to deploy effectively where it is required.

A key area of focus is the change of working system within the organization. According to the findings the organization is now implementing a new enterprise resource planning tool called UMOJA. There is being implemented across all UN agencies. It is a tool that will help in providing the stakeholders with information that they require in real time to make key decisions. Previously, the organization has been using IMIS to do its operation. The interviewees attested that the tool was not able to generate reports which the member states could use to make decisions. With the onset of the new tool, the finding foresees a significant support from all stakeholders. To facilitate staff support of the system, the

organization has embarked on training all staff on the tools of the system to enable them work smoothly.

4.5 Approaches adopted in Strategic Change management at UNON

In order to respond to the first objective of the study, the researcher sought to find out daily activities that determined change within the organization. Data obtained from the sampled respondents revealed that a number of change management steps corresponded with various models of change. The findings established adoption of Kotter's two step model (1995). They embraced the model by responding to the threats and opportunities from the environment to create a sense of urgency hence engaging the participants within the organization around change through creation of a strong synergy. From the senior managers to the subordinates, the changes had to be inculcated. The managers have by far facilitated the changes and monitored the implementation process.

Kotter (1995) stresses the articulation of desired end result of a change process through the creation of a change vision and articulation of the vision within the organization. The appointment of new assistant secretary general to office of human resource management was a key indication of where the Secretary General wanted the organization to go. The new ASG/OHRM has a track record of steering change in different organizations. There was organized meeting to the duty station to enable the management communicate the vision and mission of the United Nations and management commitment to it. The core values and competencies have re-articulated.

Kotter's (1995) model allows the implementation of the vision through empowering others to alter systems, processes, policies and procedures. The step is natural extension of the involvement acquired through synergy. This is attributed to strong team work spirit as sampled with the respondents. Change drivers were responsible for setting the change initiatives in motion towards successful strategy implementation. There was communication regularly to all staff. It was noted that once strategic programme was approved by the senior management team the same support cascaded downwards to all the staff. Findings show that the interviewees were in agreement that once a change

strategy gets supports from the top then there is a high possibility of it gaining support across board throughout the organization as the in the case of the organization under study.

It was noted in the study that various teams were established to develop and support a common approach of adopting a new change programme. The respondents reported that the teams identified and defined the problems clearly, analysed and generated possible solutions. The teams were also responsible for implementation and monitoring as well as the evaluation of the change programmes. The teams were chosen based on their technical, functional or professional skills relevant to the tasks that the group was to undertake.

The rational approach as supported by Brewer (1995) was embraced by UNON. The study established that staff held regular meetings within respective departments to share the progress of change. There was regular update from the task team to show when the implementation will start. Computer based courses were given to enable staff navigate the system with ease. The importance of the management of change was reiterated through different forums and expected outcomes outlined. To create a sense of urgency, departmental heads were tasked in developing action plans with expected outcomes outlined. Staffs were also constantly requested to keep updating themselves and discuss impending changes and recommend the best course of action.

Brewer (1995) approach was adopted by UNON. The researcher established the need for change at the organization was necessitated by the need to set a new strategic direction. The direction has taken the organization to higher levels of effectiveness and relevance in line with the mandate of the Secretary General and General Assembly Council mandates. Similarly aspects of organizational vision as suggested by Cummings and Worley (1997) model were assumed at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, although aspects of transitions were not adequately covered.

4.6 Factors that influenced Strategic Change Management at UNON

Responding to the second objective of the study, the researcher sought to find out the driving forces that determined changes within the organization. The study established that the need for change at the UNON was necessitated by strategic direction. The direction on which the organization is heading to, can either propel or sink the organization.

The study established that the use of formal communication channels also worked well and in favour of strategic change management. Channels in place were downwards, upwards and horizontal in direction. Management used downwards communication when sending messages to staff below the hierarchy. Through upward communication, the employees offered their views and ideas to the management while horizontal communication was used when passing information across departments.

Once the management was clear on set change programmes, service chiefs received the information through meeting with the senior managers and directors for the entire organisation. This was followed by departmental meetings where the rest of staff will get the information. This was also sent out through emails so that everyone knows what is happening and helping to reach a wider scope as possible. The use of organization's website was used too as key tool for communication within the organization's intranet.

4.7 Resistance to Change at United Nations Office in Nairobi

The study investigated on whether UNON encountered challenges in managing strategic change. From the study findings, the majority of the respondents attested that the organization encountered challenges in managing strategic change. The challenges in managing strategic change were; employee resistance, middle management resistance due to perceived loss of power. During implementation of strategies, UNON experienced resistance from some staff who were not in support of the change process. This killed the morale of staff who wanted to learn the new system. This was caused majorly by perceived loss of job as highlighted earlier. This was a new technology, and the fear was that the system will not require a lot of staff to perform one particular task. The fear

caused delays when staff never showed for training. The difficulties with the system were often communicated and staff developed phobia around the systems for fear of failure.

Another challenge presented when implementing change was lack of proper infrastructure to handle the systems. According to the study the capacity was not there. UNON houses over 3000 staff so there was no adequate training areas for this system. The respondents felt that more office space could have been created in anticipation.

Another major challenge was lack of enough trainers who will be able to educate the staff on the new system. This ended up overworked the already tired trainers hence not being able to deliver as required. Only a few trainers had a way through the system which meant that huge classes given to one trainer. The finding indicated that staff did not get much out of the trainings.

4.8 Discussion

From the findings, the United Nations Office in Nairobi uses various strategic change management practices which is in line with Newton et al (2003) who stated that approaches directing change need to differ according to context. Supporting collaboration between sections through group meeting, restructuring and intentional employment practices was found to be common practice used before change. The findings indicated that generally, UNON researches on best practices in managing strategic change. This is done through benchmarking with the best companies or organizations being considered.

Several measures were noted on the commitment the top management pays on management of strategic change. Seminars are organized depending on programs, provision of financial support and devising and supporting policies on strategy implementation. More so, communicating the changes to all staff as well as appointing highly qualified and competent staff showed that top management highly support and are committed to the process. Bhambri and Sonnenfeld (1988), notes that for change management to be successful, the organization and its culture must move from this sense of loss to one of commitment to the new behaviours, attitudes, values and beliefs.

The findings established that depending on the type of change, every concerned employee and sections heads are involved in the change, with clear defined leadership and scope. Bolman and Deal, (1999) affirms that if managers and change agents utilize a well-orchestrated, integrated design that responds to needs for learning, realignment, negotiation and grieving, they might find themselves in the fast lane toward success and improvement. The need for a powerful organization member for realizing change is raised by Quinn (2000) with his call for a change leader.

There is constant feedback on strategy management process in UNON. The organization continuously reviews what is working as well as acknowledging the strategic management process. There are programs put in place to enable employees implement strategies while managers of various sections manage the processes. The manner in which the strategies are presented to the staff makes them acceptable to them. This ensures an all-inclusive approach, which incorporates views from everyone in the organization.

Generally, most change efforts were found to meet targeted objectives mostly doing away with systems which were not working. Some sections were found to hold to the view that some changes were hurriedly introduced without considering the need for proper planning and failed to meet desired goals. This is in line with Pederit (2000) assertion that that successful organizational adaptation is increasingly reliant on generating employee support and enthusiasm for proposed changes, rather than merely overcoming resistance.

In attempt to respond to the researcher objective, the researcher sought to establish various approaches as adopted by the United Nations office in Nairobi. As an open system, it can be noted that, like any other entity, too the organization interacted with several stakeholders in the external environment. Partly, the interaction presented the driving forces that subsequently responded to the second objective which was to establish factors that influence strategic change management at UNON. This concurs with Dunphy's (1996) theoretical framework argues that organization as an open system

actively interacts with its external environment in the context of the wider prevailing economic, political and social forces.

The fact there is not one overarching theory in change management, the uniqueness of UNON has seen it adopting several approaches and models. UNON embraced Kotter's model, rational and strategic approaches as proposed by Brewer. Other practices at UNON were consistent with some steps suggested by Cummings and Worley model and Victor and Franckeiss model. Common among all these approaches and models were the aspects of communication, leadership, strategic direction and performance management as embraced at UNON.

Internal training such as e-learning programs and exchange programs within organizations were found to be a key area while managing strategic change with UNON. Certifications for various disciplines were fully supported by HR partners. These were aimed at enabling proficiency at entry level and also before or during introduction of new technology were found to be the pre-strategic change management training carried by UNON. Peters and Waterman (1982) concur that training is the cornerstone for building knowledge about the change and the required skills. Managers need to develop training requirements based on the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to implement change.

In Kenya several studies have focused on strategic change management. Kiptoo's (2008) study on strategic change management at the University of Nairobi found that external environment in the tertiary education sector presents both opportunities and threat in implementing strategic policies at the University of Nairobi. He further notes that the maintenance of status quo among senior teaching staff and non-staff as the primary restraining force to change management at the University of Nairobi. Maingi's (2005) on management of strategic change at Municipal Council of Kiambu established the organizational culture; failure to embrace information technology and corruption negatively affected the implementation of key strategies.

Change was found to be mostly influenced by top management teams but also it was found that external factors influenced the change. In relation to this, Balogun and Hailey (2008) stated that change leader or change agent can be realized by the chief executive, or even a team of people who are responsible for managing the change process. Kanter (1983) adds that not only change agents but also ideal champions are necessary to promote new ideas.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study findings on approaches adopted in strategic change management at the United Nations Office in Nairobi and factors that influence change process at UNON. The summary is followed by conclusions and recommendations. The chapter concludes with the limitation to the study and suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary

The first objective of the study sought to establish strategic change management approaches at UNON. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher interviewed UNON's management team and conducted focus group discussions with representatives of selected stakeholders. The main aspects of strategic change management approaches investigated included the changes at UNON, change management process at UNON, variables such as forces of change, teamwork, stakeholder analysis, organizational culture, organizational structure and leadership were investigated.

The research findings indicated that change process at UNON was done in participatory process. There were adequate consultations among the staff through meetings and other modes of internal communication. This facilitated change process and minimized factors that negatively affected change management. The study established that UNON embraced Kotter's model, rational strategic approaches as proposed by Brewer. In addition some steps as proposed by Cummings and Worley model and Victor and Franckeiss model were factored.

The second objective of the study sought to establish factors that have influenced strategic change management at UNON. The study established that the need for change at UNON was necessitated by strategic direction. This strategic advanced the duty station to

high levels of effectiveness and relevance in line with the UN mandates and its core values.

The study established that use of formal communication channels also worked well in favour of change management. Once the management was clear on the change programmes service chiefs received communication through meetings. The use of information technology at the organization radically changed many aspects of communications at UNON.

5.3 Conclusion

Currently UNON stands as United Nations headquarters in Africa and has successfully navigated through the change management transition through adoption of various strategies paramount to its effectiveness. However various factors have militated against the implementations of change at UNON. Resistance to the latest modes of information technology, lack of autonomy and coordination together with high bureaucracy have been limiting to the successful implementation of strategic changes. It is against this backdrop that the study recommends the following.

5.4 Recommendation

The researcher recommends the following which is divided into three major areas namely implications of the findings, recommendation on managers at UNON and recommendations on Managerial practice.

5.4.1 Implications

In terms of capacity building and training, the development of UMOJA guidelines and manuals would be necessary. What need to be addressed is the basic policies, systems and procedures required for effective operations. This exercise may require adequate support expertise. Clear alignment of individual responsibility for service delivery should be recognized among trainers and UNON staff.

According to the interviewees, this transformation was for the better and has yielded a lot of positive fruits. However, all the interviewees seemed to agree in that the way the change was introduced into the organization was rather harsh, there is need to have a human face when introducing change as change in itself is a process. In the future should more changes be introduced in this institution there is need to do it in a humane way, and if need be set a guiding and counselling office to enable employees to cope with the change.

In the course of all these transformation, and most of the changes adopted and change programs having succeeded, no rewarding was done especially for the staff who were on the front line to see the changes come to be. In the future, UNON should develop a reward system; this goes a long way in motivating the employees and boosting their work morale.

5.4.2 Management at UNON

The study recommends that leaders must exhibit and encourage others within without bias for action. Even though strategic change management was recognized and supported and celebrated within United Nations Office in Nairobi, some sections were analysed to be of the view that only senior managers take the credit and therefore the rewards. The study therefore recommends individual and group recognition as a necessary component of change management in order to cement and reinforce the change in the organization.

The study recommends that changes anchored on corporate strategy be communicated properly. Other challenges such as lack of support on needed capabilities to carry change through from the management should be enhanced. There should be continued commitment and identification of change agents from the management team to help steer the change management train and to completion. This will enable the organization to avoid the existence of commitment gap, lack of compelling figures hence ensuring a

smooth adoption process for strategic changes in order to gain a competitive edge within the arena in which it operates.

5.4.3 Management Practice

For success in strategic change management, the study recommends that the processes must look into the challenges present in implementation of change strategies. They should be involvement from all stakeholders to enable smooth management process. The involvement will help in communicating strategies to the rest of employees hence overcoming message distortions by employees through the cascading processes.

There should be increased involvement in strategic change agents who will act as consultants to different companies and organizations hence filling in the gap that is there whenever organizations are faced with change challenges. Environment threats have necessitated turnaround strategies and these threats have forced some of organizations out of operation. They have no capacity to deal with the changes therefore the need for more practitioners.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study encountered several limitations. This study on the United Nations Office in Nairobi borrows heavily from the UN Common System as a whole; one cannot talk about the UNON in isolation with UN and this necessitated intensive study of the whole UN which was time consuming to better understand UNON.

Another limitation was that the interviewees being top officials in the UNON had very limited time for the interview due to the nature of their jobs and tight schedules. And this called for one to rush through the interview guide so as to cover all the questions. But what was interesting is that all respondents seemed to have similar responses to the questions and equally shared similar experiences with regard to change management.

Another limitation to this study is that when the research was being conducted most of these changes were still taking place, some of the strategic change management practices were still on trial basis and it was not easy to make a conclusion that it was that particular practice adopted which made managing change a success.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

This study focused on strategic change management at United Nations in Nairobi, Kenya and challenges encountered. This study was done when changes were still taking place. Changes continue to be experienced even now, there is need to carry a further study on which other changes have taken place and different strategic change management practices adopted. There is also need to carry out a study to find out if the change momentum has been sustained. According to the interviewees, maintaining the change momentum was one of the threats to this great transformation.

The study sought to establish strategic management practices adopted by UNON. Further research is recommended based on the on the strategic management practices and the challenges in other UN entities in Kenya as well as Africa. This will allow for generalization of the results and pave way for new policies. This will bring in the views of all the key players in the United Nations which would be beneficial to the United Nations body and its stakeholders hence improvement on the relationships among them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1) Describe the process used to develop the strategic change management at the United Nations Office in Nairobi?
- 2) What necessitated strategic change at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya?
- 3) Did the management form teams to execute the change process?
- 4) Were there plans in place for strategic change in the United Nations Office in Nairobi?
- 5) How well was the strategic change communicated?
- 6) In your view, do you perceive support of the change strategies among the management level?
- 7) How did you prepare for the change strategies?
- 8) In your view what difficulties did you did experience in the strategic change process?
- 9) What role did you play in the process?
- 10) In your view explain how the following factors affected the outcome of the process
 - ✓ Values among the staff of the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya
 - ✓ Organizational structure.
 - ✓ Information technology
 - ✓ Stakeholders
 - ✓ External environment e.g. political or economic.
 - ✓ Others (please specify)

APPENDIX II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

- 1) What are your views on the management of strategic change process within the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON)?
- 2) How do you view the implementation strategic change programme within UNON?
- 3) Do you think the organization was prepared for change?
- 4) How inclusive do you think the programme was?
- 5) In your view, do you think new structures; systems and processes in the United Nations Office in Nairobi have affected change management?

APPENDIX III: INTRODUCTION LETTER

October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am an MBA student at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a management research on Strategic Change Management at the United Nations Office in Nairobi.

In order to undertake the research, you have been selected to form part of the study. By this letter, I request your assistance in collecting information to enable me carry out the research. The information you give will be treated with strict confidentiality, purely for academic purposes.

Your assistance and cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Frederick Mulwa
MBA Student