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United Nations peacekeeping operations and multilateral foreign aid: Credibility of good governance

Wakako Maekawa

Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University, Japan



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ABSTRACT

Does hosting UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKOs) increase multilateral foreign aid inflows into civil war-affected countries? Under what conditions do UN PKOs make multilateral foreign aid effective, enhancing governance quality? Multilateral foreign aid agencies increasingly focus on good governance as an allocation criterion. However, multilateral aid assistance faces dilemmas when allocating aid since it undermines the credibility of government commitments to good governance. This study argues that UN PKOs mitigate such uncertainty by initiating democratization, capacity-building, and political participation while mitigating political violence, thereby increasing the multilateral aid inflows. In missions involving these initiations, multilateral aid effectively enhances governance quality. These arguments are tested using a sample of countries that have experienced civil wars between 1991 and 2009. The findings suggest that UN PKOs increase the multilateral aid inflows. Moreover, increasing multilateral aid is more effective in improving the governance quality when missions have capacity-building or electoral tasks.

1. Introduction

Prior to the departure of the UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKOs), United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), the Secretary-General expressed concerns regarding the economic recovery associated with the expected decline in foreign aid owing to phasing out of humanitarian assistance and post-conflict recovery assistance (UN, 2005a). He reported, "This would have a negative impact in the balance of payments, macroeconomic stability and the investment needed for growth. GDP growth of at least 6 per cent annum needs to be sustained for Sierra Leone to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty by 2015, though this largely depends on the availability of resources for investment from international aid flows and domestic savings" (UN, 2005a, 8). It is not uncommon for the UN to call for international aid or cooperation during the deployment of a mission. For instance, during the deployment of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), the UN stated that sustained international financial support is essential for the success of the recovery program and poverty reduction strategy (UN, 2005b, 11). In the case of Tajikistan, in 2000, the UN mentioned the importance of continued international support before the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) (UN 2000, 3).

If countries receive more foreign aid, peace may be maintained

longer after civil wars as foreign aid promotes growth (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) and prevents violence in the event of negative economic shocks (Savun and Tirone, 2012), enabling resilience. Thus, from the recipients' perspective, increasing the foreign aid inflows is crucial for civil war-affected countries. However, from the donors' perspective, multilateral assistance faces uncertainty over the recipient's commitment to good governance when considering aid allocations. This is because multilateral aid agencies aim to enhance governance quality in aid allocations (Bader and Faust, 2014; Baylies, 1995; Neumayer 2003a; Winters and Martinez, 2015; Woods, 2000), but foreign aid may undermine good governance depending on the conditions (Bauer, 2000; Bräutigam and Knack, 2004; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, 2007; Djankov, Montalvo, and Marta Reynal-Querol, 2008; Dutta, Leeson, and Williamson, 2013; Wright, 2008). Since poor governance leads to the recurrence of civil war (Walter, 2015), causing instability, multilateral aid to enhance governance quality may ironically worsen fragile governance and peace.

Do hosting the UN PKOs increase multilateral foreign aid inflows into civil war-affected countries, solving the dilemmas of multilateral assistance? Under what conditions do UN PKOs make multilateral foreign aid more effective, enhancing governance quality? It is important to address these questions, given the UN's call for sufficient resources to be raised through the cooperation of cross-governments and multilateral

E-mail address: maekawa.wakako.osipp@osaka-u.ac.jp.

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development banks or financial institutions to achieve sustainable peace. Nonetheless, the relationship between UN PKOs and foreign aid has not been thoroughly investigated. Although [Kang and Meernik \(2004\)](#) reported that UN PKOs did not significantly affect the OECD aid amount, arguing that multilateral assistance may be accompanied by direct bilateral assistance, detailed investigations of the relationship between UN PKOs and multilateral aid have not yet been conducted. Moreover, scholars have overlooked the UN's efforts to induce financial support when they become compatible with enhancing the host government's governance quality, ultimately influencing sustainable peace.

Therefore, this study investigates the effect of UN PKOs on multilateral foreign aid inflows¹ and the conditions under which UN PKOs enhance the governance quality through multilateral aid. This study argues that UN PKOs mitigate uncertainty in aid allocations, signaling the credibility of good governance. It accomplishes this by encouraging democratization, capacity-building, and political participation while mitigating political violence and increasing the multilateral aid inflows. It has been demonstrated that multilateral aid effectively enhances governance quality under missions involving these initiations. These arguments have been tested using a sample of countries that have experienced civil wars between 1991 and 2009. The results show that UN PKOs increase multilateral aid inflows. Moreover, increasing multilateral aid is more effective in improving governance quality when missions involve capacity-building or electoral tasks. These results were robust to alternative model specifications using instrumental variables and sample selection model to account for endogeneity problems.

This study contributes to both academic research and policy development. First, it extends the literature on the determinants of multilateral aid ([Burnside and Dollar, 2000](#); [Dollar and Levin, 2006](#); [Neumayer 2003a](#); [2003b](#); [Reinsberg, 2015](#); [Winters and Martinez, 2015](#)). Despite the literature describing good governance as an important criterion for multilateral assistance allocations, the presence of UN PKOs has been overlooked, signaling the credibility of good governance in the context of civil war-affected countries. This study connects the literature on UN PKOs with that of foreign aid. Although a previous empirical study shows that multilateral donors do not condition on political liberalization while bilateral donors do ([Burnside and Dollar, 2000](#); [Reinsberg, 2015](#)), this study shows that multilateral donors give more aid once PKOs are deployed, which promotes democratization and good governance. Second, it extends the literature on the effects of foreign aid on governance ([Bauer, 2000](#); [Bermeo, 2011](#); [Birchler, Limpach, and Michaelowa, 2016](#); [Bräutigam and Knack, 2004](#); [Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, 2007](#); [Djankov et al., 2008](#); [Dutta, Leeson, and Williamson, 2013](#); [Dunning, 2004](#); [Goldsmith, 2001](#); [Wright, 2008](#)). It identifies the conditions under which a third-party involvement, namely UN PKOs, mitigates the negative effects of foreign aid on good governance. Although the UN calls for international financial support during the deployment of UN PKOs, extant studies have not addressed whether UN PKOs increase the effectiveness of foreign aid in enhancing governance quality. This study shows that the UN's efforts to call for international cooperation are compatible with achieving sustainable peace through enhanced governance quality. Third, this study contributes to the literature on the effectiveness of UN PKOs on post-conflict institutions ([Bueno de Mesquita and Downs, 2006](#); [Doyle and Sambanis, 2000](#); [Fortna 2008a](#); [Fortna and Huang, 2012](#); [Joshi, 2013](#); [Steinert and Grimm, 2015](#)). While extant studies consider democratization as a dependent variable, this study considers good governance as a dependent variable. Besides signaling the credibility of good governance, UN PKOs also enhance the quality under particular missions and sufficient multilateral aid, implying that UN PKOs' effectiveness on institutions depends on the

mission strategy and international engagement.

2. Literature review

2.1. Foreign aid and good governance

Promoting democracy has become a developmental goal, regardless of whether the aid is channeled through bilateral, multilateral, or non-governmental organizations ([Bader and Faust, 2014](#)). Moreover, [Winters and Martinez \(2015\)](#) report that nearly all bilateral and multilateral international development agencies' mission statements incorporate language regarding governance when allocating aid. Regardless of constitutional constraints of becoming politically partisan, there is no reason why multilateral assistance cannot reward good governance ([Neumayer 2003a](#)). For instance, the World Bank has been at the forefront of efforts to strengthen the role of good governance in the international development agenda ([Neumayer 2003a](#); [Woods, 2000](#)). Globally, the World Bank has established an agenda on governance quality within the context of development policies and strategies ([Hout, 2007](#)). The agenda supports public participation in government decision-making, increasing public accountability ([Goldsmith, 2001](#)). The World Bank emphasizes the importance of good governance in managing a country's economic and social resources for development ([Baylies, 1995](#)).

Indeed, studies show that the recipient country's governance influences aid allocation ([Bermeo, 2017](#); [Claessens, Cassimon, and Campenhout, 2009](#); [Dietrich, 2013](#); [Freytag and Pehnelt, 2009](#); [Neumayer 2003b](#); [Schudel, 2008](#); [Winters and Martinez, 2015](#)). Moreover, such selectivity increases over time ([Claessens, Cassimon, and Campenhout, 2009](#)). Compared to bilateral aid, multilateral aid exhibits a greater degree of selectivity. For instance, [Dollar and Levin \(2006\)](#) found that multilateral aid is more selective in targeting countries with good rule of law than bilateral aid, although there are contradicting findings showing that the World Bank responds to economic governance but not political liberalization ([Burnside and Dollar, 2000](#); [Reinsberg, 2015](#)). Regardless of the empirical findings, as mentioned, at the policy level, the World Bank has been emphasizing developing good governance ([Baylies, 1995](#); [Hout, 2007](#); [Neumayer 2003a](#); [Woods, 2000](#)).

However, there exists disagreement among scholars regarding whether foreign aid indeed fosters good governance. For instance, a strand of research shows that foreign aid promotes a democratic transition ([Bermeo, 2011](#); [Birchler, Limpach, and Michaelowa, 2016](#); [Dietrich and Wright, 2015](#); [Dunning, 2004](#); [Goldsmith, 2001](#)), political institutions ([Jones and Tarp, 2016](#)), or economic liberalism ([Goldsmith, 2001](#)). Nevertheless, some studies indicate that foreign aid undermines good governance, as illustrated in the next section.

2.2. How foreign aid goes wrong

[Bräutigam and Knack \(2004\)](#) argue that "aid needs to be delivered more selectively and in ways that reinforce a virtuous cycle of development rather than contributing to a vicious cycle of poor governance and economic decline" (p. 256). Although foreign aid aims to enhance good governance, it can also have negative consequences.

According to one line of research, foreign aid may promote corruption. Corrupt officials misuse aid resources intended for democratization to use them to strengthen their control ([Dutta, Leeson, and Williamson, 2013](#)). Aid allows power to control resources, leading to a concentration of political power ([Bauer, 2000](#)). However, this may depend on political institutions. According to [Bueno de Mesquita and Smith \(2007\)](#), in small coalition systems, aid resources end up in the hands of the leaders and their cronies as private goods. Moreover, [Wright \(2010\)](#) argues that personalist institutions foster corruption and incentivize politicians to pursue economic policies designed to benefit specific groups of people who help them remain in power, preventing foreign aid from increasing economic growth. Political institutions and the time horizon can

¹ The relationship between UN PKOs and state aid has already been explored by [Kang and Meernik \(2004\)](#). They found that the involvement by UN peacekeeping is positive but not significant. This study is different from their study as this study focuses solely on multilateral aid.

influence whether foreign aid is used for personal consumption. According to Wright (2008), short-time horizons influence the autocrats' use of foreign aid for personal consumption by incentivizing them to engage in predatory and distortionary economic policies, repress or compensate challengers to the regime, and secure personal wealth as a form of insurance.

Second, foreign aid may undermine the internal democratization process. If democratization is a solution to the commitment problem, in which the poor revolt because the rich failed to fulfill their promises of redistribution, aid can alleviate the need for democratization by enabling redistributive transfers (Morrison, 2007). Indeed, Morrison (2009) found that non-tax revenue reduces redistribution and increases regime stability. Large amounts of aid can reduce incentives or democratic accountability because rentier states have little incentive to improve state capacity since revenues do not depend on the taxes paid by the citizens and businesses (Bräutigam and Knack, 2004). Consequently, foreign aid recipients are unable to commit to democratic accountability. Therefore, foreign aid has a negative effect on democracy (Djankov et al., 2008).

Third, foreign aid implementation may weaken institutional capacity by undermining policy learning and weakening state bureaucracies. As a result of dealing with multiple donor projects and agendas, the recipient government becomes passive in policy implementation, undermining policy learning (Bräutigam and Knack, 2004). When donors implement projects instead of local governments, foreign aid prevents local bureaucracies from building administrative capacity (Knack, 2001).

Finally, foreign aid may indirectly contribute to violence. Studies show that foreign aid increases rent-seeking activities (Reinikka and Svensson, 2004; Svensson, 2000). Such activities lead to competition between factions or ethnic groups (Maren, 1997; Mousseau, 2021). Mousseau (2021) argues that foreign aid exacerbates perceptions of inequitable treatment by the state, perceptions of unfairness, and access to state rents, triggering ethnic imbalances. Other scholars observe that a shock in aid flows influences instability. For instance, Nielsen et al. (2011) argue that negative aid shocks render the government incapable of credibly committing to future resource transfers, causing bargaining failures that result in violence. Additionally, the danger of aid is associated with a post-conflict environment. Allocative decisions during aid implementation tend to reinforce distributional conflicts between various social groups and local non-state elites in the short term after a conflict (de Juan, 2020). However, high institutions can mitigate the risk by increasing the fairness and transparency in allocations.

3. The role of UN PKOs in signaling good governance

As discussed previously, multilateral assistance faces uncertainty regarding the recipient's commitment to good governance when allocating aid. The central problem with aid programs lies in how they can be delivered to promote economic productivity or governance (Bräutigam and Knack, 2004; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, 2009). Political conditionality could be used as a threat to withhold aid if political conditions are not met (Baylies, 1995). However, this requires credibility of the threats made by the donors (Dunning, 2004). Therefore, donors have an incentive to maintain the credibility of aid conditionality. A dilemma arises because donors want to maintain credibility while promoting good governance in the target states. Although recipient institutions serve as a credible signal for the successful implementation of aid (Dietrich, 2013), institutions in countries experiencing civil wars are fragile and lack credibility.

This study argues that deploying UN PKOs mitigates uncertainty regarding the recipient government's commitment to good governance by initiating democratization, capacity-building, and political participation while mitigating political violence. Moreover, UN PKOs improve the situation on the ground, and the host countries can send a costly signal of commitment to good governance to the international community through the presence of UN PKOs, as putting place peacekeepers

is costly (Mattes and Vonnahme, 2010), compromising sovereignty (Krasner, 2004). UN PKOs can also signal the UN's intention to provide resources, increasing the credibility of domestic commitment (Blair, Di Salvatore, and Smidt, 2023; Ruggeri, Gizelis, and Dorussen, 2012). This mitigated uncertainty enables donors to provide aid credibly, enhancing the donors' credibility and solving the dilemmas associated with aid allocation.

First, peacekeeping missions set democratization as their primary objective (Andersson, 2000; Call and Cook, 2003; Fortna 2008a; Paris, 2004). Although anocracies, premature democratization, increase the risk of civil war (Hegre et al., 2001; Regan and Bell, 2010), UNPKOs' tasks increasingly include liberal/democratic government-related tasks (Zanotti, 2006). Particularly, An Agenda for Peace by United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali's 1992 report reflects the optimism of democratization (Omach, 2000). Further, by analyzing eight contemporary international peacebuilding documents produced or recognized by the UN, Joshi, Lee, and Mac Ginty (2014) show that "Promotion of Democracy" appear in all of these documents. According to Di Salvatore et al. (2022), out of 27 PKOs in Africa, 16 include mandates such as *Democratization*, *Electoral Security*, *Electoral Assistance*, *Voter Education*, or *Political Party Assistance*. When considering tasks that are related to norms of democracy such as rule of law or human rights, the number of operations is even greater. Blair, Di Salvatore, and Smidt (2023) argue that the prioritization of democratization is true even in missions focusing on stabilization, as seen in the case of Mali. In the case of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, Radio UNAMSIL enabled education and public information by hosting political parties' leaders in programs, contributing to institution building (Bindi and Tufekci, 2018).² Such a goal of peacekeeping mitigates uncertainty regarding commitment to the democratization process. By accepting the deployment of UN PKOs, the host government agrees to this primary objective of peacekeeping missions and initiates the democratization process. Despite mixed results regarding whether UN PKOs indeed succeeded in democratizing the host states (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs, 2006; Doyle and Sambanis, 2000; Fortna 2008a; Fortna and Huang, 2012; Joshi, 2013; Steinert and Grimm, 2015), UN PKOs often include political institutional building as one of their mandates. They ensure the establishment of political institutions by integrating them into their exit strategy. For instance, conducting elections was associated with the exit strategy during the 1990s and establishing institutions with the exit strategy since 2000 (Caplan, 2005; Hirschmann, 2012). As demonstrated in East Timor, elections provide the basis for legitimate and accountable local government (Chesterman, 2004).

Moreover, institutional development is compatible with eliminating the corruption risk associated with reliance on aid. For instance, Caplan (2005) argues that corrupt and inefficient payment bureaus in Bosnia and Herzegovina were dismantled as a part of political institutional development. As a result of establishing the fundamental democratic institutions, UN PKOs foster the government's accountability and legitimacy. Although institutional development by peacebuilders may undermine domestic legitimacy, the UN missions differ from other third parties regarding their credibility and impartiality. According to Higashi (2015), the UN's credibility as an impartial third party facilitates local compliance with the political process, making domestic legitimacy compatible. Legitimacy endogenously enhances government accountability and governance quality. A good governance system is characterized by participation, transparency, and accountability (UNDP, 1997).

Second, although foreign aid implementation may weaken institutional capacity by reducing policy learning and weakening state

² For instance, this case shows that a strategy was institution building before liberalization. Even if the democratization is not emphasized, these activities for unbiased education and political party assistance also leads to democratization.

bureaucracies, UN PKOs signal the credibility of the commitment to participatory governance by initiating capacity-building and political participation. Kofi Annan refers to participatory governance as a guideline for an exit strategy of UN PKOs and adds that sustainable development can only be achieved by the local population itself (UN, 2001). He states that the role of the United Nations is merely to facilitate the process (UN, 2001). Although an interim international administration is sometimes established, the ultimate goal is to establish effective public administrative bodies and practices and train local individuals capable of sustaining them (Caplan, 2005). In the case of Kosovo and East Timor, for instance, a co-administration was established where local individuals gained valuable experience in policy-making under the guidance of internationals (Caplan, 2004). East Timor's first Transitional Government consisted of four departments led by East Timorese and four departments led by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) (Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). The UNTAET trained community leaders through civic education programs and included local representatives in decision-making (Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). In East Timor, "health professionals had formed a working group that drafted recommendations for a national health system, which together with World Bank recommendations would form the basis for UN policy-making later" (Caplan, 2005, 103). It must be noted that the credibility of participatory governance by the UN lies in its initiation rather than its effectiveness. Once the capacity-building program is initiated, multilateral assistance is provided to further support the program. For instance, during the UNTAET in early 2000, the World Bank launched a program to support local governance and participatory decision-making, while other bilateral and multilateral capacity-building programs were also funded in different sectors (Bowles and Chopra, 2008).

It is not uncommon for the government to establish an aid coordination committee or meeting during the deployment of UN PKOs to prevent the government from becoming passive in implementing aid. For instance, the government of Burundi established a national committee for aid coordination supported by joint technical working groups, including the UN and other development partners (UN 2005, 11). In the case of Sierra Leone, a meeting of the Consultative Group for Sierra Leone was held in 2005, during which the government presented its poverty reduction strategy to donors and other major stakeholders, including members of UN agencies (UN 2005, 8). Therefore, UN PKOs establish an environment where the recipient government deals with the fragmentation of multiple projects and avoids becoming passive in policy implementation.

Finally, UN PKOs mitigate uncertainty over the risk of conflict due to foreign aid by preventing political violence and facilitating conflict resolution. Additionally, it reduces battlefield violence (Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, 2014) and local violence (Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis, 2017; Smidt, 2020). When foreign aid induces perceptions of unfairness (Mousseau, 2021), conflict management for intergroup exchange may effectively mitigate such perceptions. Since UN PKOs can initiate inclusive intergroup dialogues, which solve information and coordination problems and reduce negative feelings and biases among groups (Smidt, 2020), competition over aid projects among communal groups can be prevented from escalating into communal violence. Further, although violence could increase due to aid if violent actors sabotage aid projects to disturb the cooperation between the local population and the government (Zürcher, 2017), patrols by peacekeepers may deter violence (Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis, 2017). Moreover, considering that sabotage comes from perceptions of vulnerability, at a local level, peacekeepers facilitate cooperation between rebels and the local government by providing protections for vulnerable side (Ruggeri, Gizelis, and Dorussen, 2012).

The following hypotheses have been derived from these discussions:

Hypothesis 1: UN PKOs increase the net flow of multilateral foreign aid.

Hypothesis 2: The impact of multilateral foreign aid on governance

quality is greater when UN PKOs are involved in electoral or capacity-building activities.

4. Research design

To test the two hypotheses, this study conducts two empirical analyses using a sample of countries that have experienced civil wars between 1991 and 2009. First, this study examines the effects of UN PKOs on inflows of multilateral foreign aid for 67 civil war-affected countries. Civil war-affected countries were identified using the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Gleditsch et al., 2002; Pettersson and Öberg, 2020) and information regarding the locations. A country-year observation is included in the sample when a civil war starts and gets removed from the sample once the year reaches 2009 or 10 years have passed since the end of the civil war.³ Using this system, a total of 974 observations were analyzed.⁴ The first part of the analysis focuses on inflows of net multilateral foreign aid. Thus, the dependent variable is operationalized using AidData version 2.1 (Tierney et al., 2011). This study considers multilateral aid flows determined by International Organizations. The full list of donors is provided in Appendix Table A and the Appendix explains how those were identified. As a robustness check, some donors that seem to be controlled by their contributing donor governments are excluded from the analysis. As the list shows, UN agencies are also included in multilateral aid. Thus, models without aid from other UN agencies are also shown in Appendix A legitimate concern would be that the multilateral aid in response to UNPKOs is committed to covering the costs of the missions. However, PKOs have their own budget, and based on assessments, all UN member states have a legal obligation to pay their respective share towards peacekeeping (Maekawa, 2023).⁵ Thus, the costs of PKOs are covered by its own budget rather than multilateral aid. The multilateral aid measurement was aggregated at the country-year level for each recipient country. To address the skewness in the distribution, the log transformation of aid commitments (constant 2009 USD) was used.

The second part of the analysis focuses on governance quality as the outcome. The dependent variable was operationalized using the Impartial Public Administration from V-Dem Dataset (Coppedge et al., 2020; Pemstein et al., 2019), which captures administrative capacity (Hanson and Sigman, 2021). This measurement was used instead of alternative measurements owing to missing values or limited access as explained in Appendix section 2.

4.1. Independent variable

The first part of the analysis uses a dichotomous *UN PKO* variable as an independent variable, which takes the value of 1 if UN PKOs have been deployed in the country previously; otherwise, it is 0. Of the 974 observations, 277 take the value of 1. The information on the UN website allowed me to identify the country and year of UN PKO deployment.

The second part of the analysis uses a dichotomous *Capacity-building/Election tasks* variable as an independent variable. This variable takes the value of 1 when there have been mandates for government capacity building, election monitoring, election security, or election assistance in the past; otherwise, it is 0. The information was obtained from the Tasks Assigned to Missions in their Mandates (TAMM) dataset (Lloyd, 2021). Moreover, if a country's mission involves 'Monitor elections', 'Secure

³ If a new civil war breaks out in a country within ten years of post-conflict durations, the second civil war years and the ten years following the end of the second civil war are included in the sample.

⁴ This number is the result of deleting missing values list-wise. The missing values resulted in losing 26 observations.

⁵ United Nations Peacekeeping. "How We Are Funded." <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>.

elections', 'Assist elections', or 'Improve government capacity' tasks, the following years are coded as 1 for the country. Of the 974 observations, 169 take the value of 1. As this study aims to identify the conditions under which an increase in multilateral aid leads to improved governance quality, the model included an interaction between *Capacity-building/Election tasks* variable and *Multilateral aid*_{*t-1*} (ln).

4.2. Control variables

Since UN PKOs are not assigned random (Andersson, 2000; Fortna, 2004; Gilligan and Stedman, 2003), factors that influence the assignment of UN PKOs and each dependent variable were included. The first control variable is conflict characteristics, including *Years since the conflict* (ln) and *Intensity level*. Generally, peacekeeping operations are deployed to difficult situations (Fortna 2008b; Gilligan and Sergenti, 2008; Sambanis and Doyle, 2007). Battle deaths and duration of conflict are positively associated with the probability of UN intervention (Gilligan and Stedman, 2003). Notably, government capacity-building tasks may be assigned to countries that have experienced prolonged conflict, as these countries would have higher demands for restoring peace and order through enhanced government capacity.

In contrast, time dimension and conflict intensity have been believed to influence aid allocations. The donor community provides less and less assistance in post-conflict environments (Collier et al., 2003; Kang and Meernik, 2004). Donors reduce the amount of aid they provide to a recipient experiencing intense conflict (Balla and Reinhardt, 2008). According to Kang and Meernik (2004), violence is negatively associated with aid allocations, although this relationship is not significant. Thus, the log of years since the conflict and the intensity level are both expected to have negative associations with the inflows of multilateral aid.

Moreover, the governance quality may improve, especially after the UN PKOs' intervention. It takes time for institutions to come into effect and for democratic values to prevail in a country. Thus, the log of years since the conflict is expected to be positively associated with the governance quality in the second part of the analysis. The variable calculated the number of years since the conflict by subtracting the year the conflict began, obtained from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Gleditsch et al., 2002; Pettersson and Öberg, 2020), from the given year.⁶ The log transformation was used since the variable's distribution was positively skewed.

Similarly, information on intensity level was obtained from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Gleditsch et al., 2002; Pettersson and Öberg, 2020). The *Intensity level* takes the value of 0 during post-conflict periods, 1 if battle-related deaths are 25–999 in a given year, and 2 if battle-related deaths are at least 1,000 in a given year. As governance quality also involves the absence of violence, the intensity level is expected to be negatively associated with governance quality.

The next control variable is country characteristics, including *Democracy*_{*t-1*}, *GDP p.c.*_{*t-1*} (ln), and ln *Population*_{*t-1*} (ln). First, UN PKOs are less likely to be deployed in non-democratic countries (Andersson, 2000). Moreover, electoral-related tasks are more likely to be assigned to non-democratic countries. In contrast, promoting democracy has become foreign aid's developmental goal (Bader and Faust, 2014). Indeed, democratic values, such as political and civil rights, are positively associated with aid flows (Neumayer 2003c; Svensson, 1999). Moreover, *Democracy* is operationalized using the Polity Dataset

⁶ Since the unit of analysis is country-year, when there are multiple conflict episodes in a country in a given year, this study calculated the years since the conflict based on the oldest conflict start year. Therefore, this variable is not necessarily incremental for all countries. In some countries, the new civil war was actually a renewed civil war, which had occurred long before the previous civil war, which had just ended. In such a case, the years since the conflict are greater for the new civil war observations than for the other civil wars observations.

(Marshall and Jaggers, 2016). *Democracy* takes the value of 1 if the polity 2 score is greater than 5; otherwise, it is 0.

Second, UN PKOs, particularly multidimensional peacekeeping, include strategies for capacity expansion (Doyle and Sambanis, 2000). In this case, UN PKOs may be deployed to countries with a demand for capacity expansion. As a proxy for capacity, the log of GDP per capita from a dataset by Gleditsch (2002) was used. Concerning foreign aid, higher GDP per capita is shown to be negatively correlated with multilateral aid flows (Neumayer 2003a). Third, Gilligan and Earnest (2008) show that UN intervention is more likely to occur in less populous countries.

In contrast, the population is believed to influence aid flows, although the expected direction is unclear. Wright (2010) argues that population is generally a good predictor of foreign aid levels since donors with fixed budgets are more likely to donate to smaller countries where their contribution will have a greater impact. However, population size also indicates a country's potential economic, political, and military power, and donors may wish to strengthen ties with large or powerful developing countries (Maizels and Nissanke, 1984). The population data were taken from a dataset by Gleditsch (2002). These variables are one-year lagged. These three indicators have been considered factors influencing the onset of civil wars (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Hegre et al., 2001). Since political stability and violence influence governance quality, the second part of the analysis includes these three variables.

The final control variables are *Multilateral aid*_{*t-1*} (ln) and *State aid*_{*t-1*} (ln). Since donors use various delivery tactics and aid through non-state actors and government-to-government channels may be interdependent (Dietrich, 2013), the log of the total amount of state aid to the country was used. Besides multilateral aid, a large amount of state aid would also influence the governance quality, although the expected effect of aid on governance is mixed, as discussed in the literature review section. The amount of government-to-government aid was identified using AidData version 2.1 (Tierney et al., 2011). Since multilateral aid projects typically last for multiple years once they commence, the one-year lag was used.

The first part of analysis does not include governance quality as the argument assumes that the governance quality in a given year is a post-treatment variable, which should not be included in the model. However, the time-invariant governance quality that existed when the civil war started may have influenced the assignment of UN PKOs and the inflow of multilateral aid. Thus, a country-fixed effects model for unobserved time-invariant heterogeneity was employed.

The variance inflation factor (VIF) score was calculated to check for multicollinearity problems. For the first part of the analysis, no variables scored above 2.1, and the mean score of VIF was 1.44. For the second part of the analysis, without interaction terms, no variables scored above 1.90, and the mean score of VIF was 1.42, indicating no multicollinearity problems.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Part 1 analysis

Table 1 presents the results of the first part of the analysis, where the dependent variable is the log of multilateral aid. Model 1 is a parsimonious model where only UN PKOs and the lagged log of multilateral aid are included with fixed effects. Moreover, Model 2 includes all control variables and fixed effects. The fixed effects control for time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity. To address the non-random selection of UN PKOs, this study uses the matching technique and re-runs a parsimonious model with fixed effects on the matched sample in Model 3.⁷

These findings support Hypothesis 1. All three models of the UN

⁷ The matching details of part 1 analysis are explained in the Appendix.

Table 1
Regressions of multilateral aid.

	DV = Multilateral aid (ln)		Model (2)		Model (3) (After matching)	
	Model (1)					
UNPKO	3.366***	(0.577)	2.541***	(0.608)	4.645**	(1.824)
Years since the conflict (ln)			−0.005	(0.261)		
Intensity level			−0.670***	(0.231)		
Democracy t_{-1}			0.265	(0.401)		
GDP p.c. t_{-1} (ln)			0.987**	(0.479)		
Population t_{-1} (ln)			−0.832*	(0.497)		
Multilateral aid t_{-1} (ln)	0.536***	(0.025)	0.470***	(0.027)	0.271***	(0.103)
State aid t_{-1} (ln)			0.207***	(0.049)		
Observations	974		974		111	
Country fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
R ²	0.384		0.407		0.151	
Adjusted R ²	0.338		0.359		−0.112	

*p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01.

Table 2
Regressions of governance quality.

	DV = Governance quality		Model (2)		Model (3) (After matching)	
	Model (1)					
Capacity-building/Election tasks	−0.033	(0.614)	−0.186	(0.161)	0.234	(0.403)
Multilateral aid t_{-1} (ln)	0.010**	(0.004)	0.001	(0.004)	0.030**	(0.014)
Capacity-building/ Election tasks* Multilateral aid t_{-1} (ln)	0.036***	(0.009)	0.038***	(0.008)	0.020	(0.017)
Years since the conflict (ln)			0.046	(0.035)		
Intensity level			−0.073***	(0.031)		
Democracy t_{-1}			0.417***	(0.054)		
GDP p.c. t_{-1} (ln)			0.153**	(0.064)		
Population t_{-1} (ln)			−0.024	(0.067)		
State aid t_{-1} (ln)			−0.001	(0.007)		
Observations	974		974		294	
Country fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
R ²	0.100		0.186		0.168	
Adjusted R ²	0.031		0.118		0.017	

*p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01.

PKOs have a positive and statistically significant effect on the inflows of net multilateral aid. In Model 1, one unit increase in UN PKOs multiplies the expected value of multilateral aid by 28.962.⁸ The main finding was robust for different model specifications. First, Appendix Table C removed UN agencies from the multilateral aid categories. This is to test whether an alternative causal pathway drove the result of Table 1. This study argues that UN PKOs give credibility for good governance in the host countries by initiating democratization, capacity-building, and political participation while mitigating political violence. However, as the Appendix list of multilateral aid donors shows, UN agencies also play a role in post-conflict. Thus, an alternative argument might be that UN PKO's presence shows international commitment to a post-conflict environment, inviting other UN investment and coordinated aid programs. Second, because including a lagged dependent variable may induce bias (Keel and Kelly, 2006), Appendix Table D re-estimated the main model without the lagged dependent variable. Third, Appendix Table E presents results that removed multilateral aid controlled by the contributing donor governments. In these models, the positive and statistically significant effect of UNPKO remained. Fourth, Appendix Table G presents models without country-fixed effects. The results imply

⁸ The number was calculated by $e^{\hat{\beta}}$ (Benoit, 2011): in this case, $e^{3.366}$. Regarding whether the obtained coefficient, 3.366, is small, for instance, in a study by Bermeo (2017) that explored aid allocations using dyadic data on the log of aid commitments, DEMOCRACY variable reports coefficient 0.578 (p. 84). Although this example is only one of the findings of many aid allocation models, in this sense, the obtained coefficient of UN PKOs, 3.366, seems to be meaningful.

the potential omitted variable bias when country-fixed effects are not included. This is because, as mentioned, since UN PKOs are not assigned random (Andersson, 2000; Fortna, 2004; Gilligan and Stedman, 2003), and time-invariant country characteristics that existed when the civil war started may influence the assignment of UN PKOs and the inflow of multilateral aid. Finally, because the timing of UNPKO comes in, which is when parties agreed on a ceasefire, could have influenced the results, Appendix Table G provides results from removing active conflict periods and using only post-conflict periods. The main results hold. To explicitly compare post-conflict periods with UNPKOs and without UNPKOs, Appendix Table H provides results for a snapshot of the increase in multilateral aid after 5 years since the termination of conflict. Details of samples are explained in the Appendix. The main results hold.

For control variables, the lag of multilateral aid has a positive and significant effect, indicating that the past inflow of multilateral aid is a good predictor of the current inflow. Regarding conflict characteristics, the log of years since the conflict is not significant. Intensity level shows that indeed, intense conflict deter investments (Balla and Reinhardt, 2008). Regarding country characteristics, higher GDP per capita is associated with higher multilateral aid. This contradicts the findings of Neumayer (2003a). This may be because a higher GDP per capita is associated with greater state capacity, which is also expected to have a better governance quality. Accordingly, this supports the argument that multilateral international development agencies place a high value on governance when allocating aid (Winters and Martinez, 2015). However, Model 2 shows no significant effect of democracy, although the sign aligns with the expectations. Similarly, the population has no significant effect, but the coefficient is negative, implying that a larger population may not be preferred due to budgetary concerns (Wright,

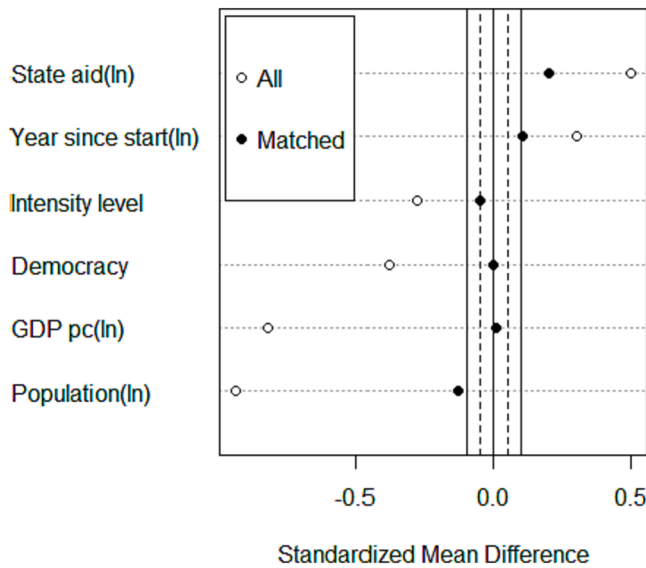


Fig. 1. Standardized mean difference (part 2 analysis).

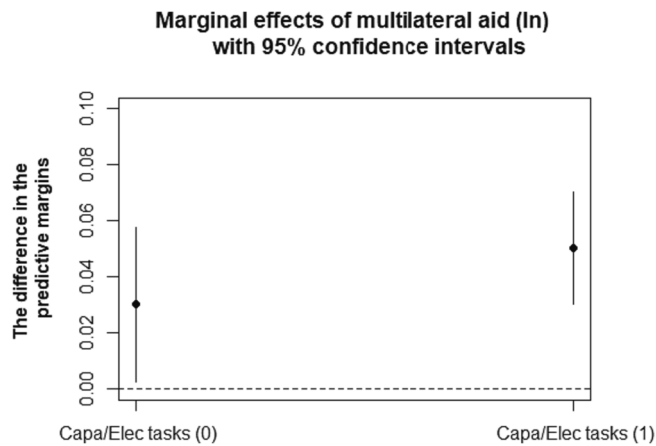


Fig. 2. Effect of multilateral aid on governance quality.

2010). Finally, the lagged log of state aid has a positive and statistically significant effect on multilateral aid inflows.

5.2. Part 2 analysis

Table 2 presents the results of the second part of the analysis, where the dependent variable is *governance quality*. Model 1 is a parsimonious model in which only interactions between *Capacity-building/Election tasks* and the lagged *multilateral aid (ln)* are included along with country-fixed effects. Model 2 includes all control variables and fixed effects. This study conducted a matching technique as *Capacity-building/Election tasks* are expected to be assigned to difficult cases where government capacity is lower, causing selection bias. Cases of a treatment (*Capacity-building/Election tasks*) and a control (no *Capacity-building/Election tasks*) where values of other covariates are similar were paired up. Coarsened exact matching (CEM) was implemented using the MatchIt package (Ho et al., 2011), which reduced observations to 294. Then, 175 observations without capacity-building/election tasks were matched with 119 observations with capacity-building/election tasks. Figure 1 shows that some variables exceeded the threshold of 0.1, implying imbalance. However, since widening the degree of maximum imbalance may provide a remedy when too many treated units are discarded in CEM (Iacus, King, and Porro, 2012), 1/3 intervals as cut points for continuous values were used. Model 3 used this matched sample and only included

Table 3 Regressions of governance quality using instrumental variables.

	First stage		Second stage	
Capacity-building/Election tasks			-0.737*	(0.392)
Multilateral aid _{t-1} (ln)	0.001	(0.002)	-0.005	(0.021)
Capacity-building/ Election tasks* Multilateral aid _{t-1} (ln)			0.068***	(0.006)
Years since the conflict (ln)	0.035***	(0.013)	0.056	(0.035)
Intensity level	-0.033***	(0.011)	-0.079**	(0.031)
Democracy _{t-1}	0.005	(0.019)	0.415***	(0.052)
GDP p.c. _{t-1} (ln)	-0.003	(0.025)	0.153**	(0.062)
Population _{t-1} (ln)	0.082***	(0.024)	-0.031	(0.066)
State aid _{t-1} (ln)	0.000	(0.002)	0.002	(0.007)
Proportion of other missions with C/E tasks	0.376***	(0.093)		
Proportion of other missions with C/E tasks* Multilateral aid _{t-1} (ln)	0.017***	(0.005)		
Number of total PKOs _{t-1}	0.000	(0.000)		
Number of total PKOs _{t-1} *	-0.000	(0.000)		
Multilateral aid _{t-1} (ln)				
Observations			974	
Country fixed effects			Yes	
R ²			0.866	

*p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01.

interactions between *Capacity-building/Election tasks* and the lagged *multilateral aid (ln)*.

These findings from Model (1) and Model (2) support Hypothesis 2. The presence of capacity-building or election-related tasks accelerates the positive impact of multilateral aid on governance quality. After matching, however, this is not the case. Figure 2 shows the effects of multilateral aid on governance quality with 95 % confidence intervals for without *Capacity-building/ Election tasks* (left) and with the task (right) obtained from Model 3. When there are no capacity-building or election-related tasks, the marginal effect of the log of multilateral aid is 0.030 [0.003, 0.058], while that with the task is 0.050 [0.030, 0.070],⁹ showing overlapping confidence intervals.

Robustness checks were then further conducted. First, there might be unobservable selection bias. Instead of difficult cases, the UN might grant tasks of *Capacity-building/Election* to countries with a higher chance of success. Thus, an instrumental variable approach that does not rely on observables was used. This study uses two instrumental variables: (1) Proportion of missions other than the country with capacity building or election-related tasks, and (2) the total number of UNPKO personnel deployed in the last year. (1) is the strategy used by Blair, Di Salvatore, and Smidt (2023). They argue that a UN mission receiving a specific mandate in a given year “depends on the number of other missions that are mandates to do the same” due to mimicry and path dependence (Blair, Di Salvatore, and Smidt, 2023: 11). Second, in terms of budget constraints that the UN faces, the previous year’s total number of UNPKO personnel deployed would affect the deployment of UNPKO in the next year. The information on the size of UNPKO was obtained from a dataset by Kathman (2013). These variables are expected not to influence governance quality, implying that violation of exclusion restriction is less likely. Both standard F-test and Sanderson-Windmeijer test show that F = 78.96 and F = 52.92 with p-values smaller than 0.000, showing that the instruments are strong. Table 3 reports the results obtained from the instrumental variable (IV) regression and Figure 3 shows the effect of multilateral aid on governance quality.¹⁰ Results show that when there are no capacity-building or election-related tasks, the marginal effect of the log of multilateral aid is -0.005 [-0.016, 0.006] while that with the task is 0.063 [0.029, 0.098]. The finding supports Hypothesis 2.

⁹ 95% confidence intervals are reported within the square bracket.

¹⁰ For other values, mean values for continuous variables and median values for dichotomous variables were used.

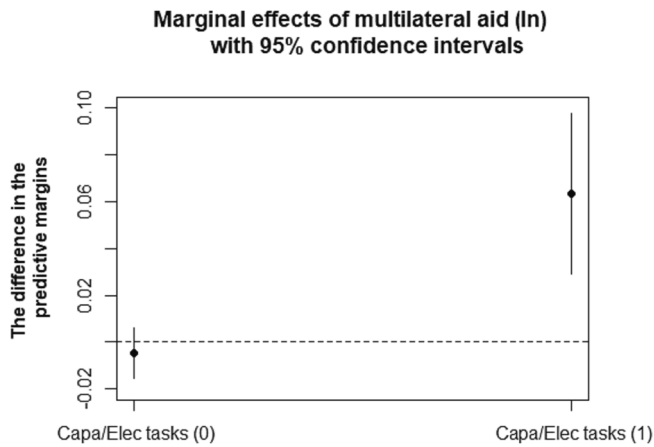


Fig. 3. Effect of multilateral aid on governance quality (IV regression).

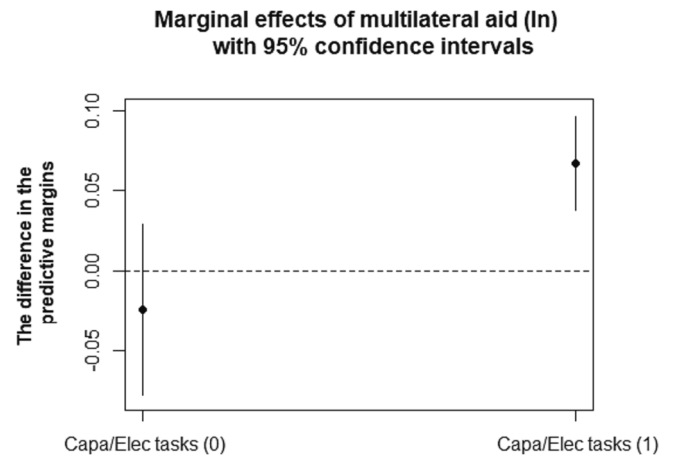


Fig. 4. Effect of multilateral aid on governance quality (Sample selection).

Table 4
Sample selection model.

Second stage: Governance quality		
Capacity-building/ Election tasks	-1.074*	(0.561)
Multilateral aid t_{-1} (ln)	-0.024	(0.027)
Capacity-building/ Election tasks* Multilateral aid $_{t-1}$ (ln)	0.091***	(0.033)
Years since the conflict (ln)	0.054	(0.203)
Intensity level	-0.333**	(0.151)
Democracy t_{-1}	1.115***	(0.318)
GDP p.c. t_{-1} (ln)	0.414**	(0.167)
Population t_{-1} (ln)	-0.285	(0.179)
State aid t_{-1} (ln)	0.057*	(0.033)
Constant	-3.643**	(1.654)
First stage: UNPKO		
Years since the conflict (ln)	0.261*	(0.148)
Intensity level	-0.167	(0.118)
Democracy t_{-1}	-0.096	(0.256)
GDP p.c. t_{-1} (ln)	-0.031	(0.141)
Population t_{-1} (ln)	-0.320**	(0.128)
State aid t_{-1} (ln)	0.026	(0.021)
Constant	1.659	(1.339)
Observations (censored)	974 (697)	
Log pseudolikelihood	-845.463	

Note: Standard errors are clustered on country. *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01.

Second, as a robustness check, a selection model that considers the process of UNPKO deployment in the first stage is used. Only focusing on the cases where UNPKOs were deployed could underestimate the effect of capacity-building or election assistance on governance quality if UNPKOs are deployed to difficult cases. Table 4 presents the results obtained from Heckman selection model. The selection equation was $Y_{it}^s(UNPKO) = \beta_{it}^s X_{it}^s + \epsilon_{it}^s$, and the outcome equation was $Y_{it}^o(governance\ quality) = \beta_{it}^o X_{it}^o + \epsilon_{it}^o$. Table 4 and Figure 4 show that when there are no capacity-building or election-related tasks, the marginal effect of the log of multilateral aid is -0.024 [-0.078, 0.029] while that with the task is 0.067 [0.038, 0.096]. The finding supports Hypothesis 2.

Appendix provides additional robustness checks. Models with an additional control variable (Appendix Table I, J, and K), models with non-UN multilateral aid (Appendix Table L, M, and N), models with multilateral aid that removes aid controlled by contributing countries (Appendix Table O, P, and Q). Overall, the main results were robust.

When there are capacity-building or election-related tasks, the increase in multilateral foreign aid does not have a positive and significant effect on enhancing governance quality. This supports the argument that aid dependence could have negative consequences on governance (Bräutigam and Knack, 2004; Djankov et al., 2008), but this study shows that such negative consequences on governance depend on certain

conditions in the context of peacekeeping operations. Such negative outcomes are prevented by capacity-building and election-related tasks. These tasks are assigned to countries where the existing institutions are initially weak. Thus, countries without such tasks could have a better governance quality due to selection bias. However, despite these initial disadvantages, aid attenuates the negative impact of UN PKO's capacity-building and election-related tasks on governance quality. Therefore, the UN's efforts to induce financial aid in post-conflict settings are not necessarily incompatible with enhancing governance quality, ultimately leading to sustainable peace.

6. Conclusion

This article explores the relationship between UN PKOs and multilateral foreign aid, raising two questions: whether UN PKOs foster inflows of multilateral aid, solving dilemmas and under what conditions UN PKOs make multilateral aid effective in enhancing the governance quality of the host country. Research has demonstrated the negative consequences of foreign aid on governance (Bauer, 2000; Bräutigam and Knack, 2004; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, 2007; Djankov et al., 2008; Dutta, Leeson, and Williamson, 2013; Wright, 2008), although multilateral aid places a high value on good governance when allocating aid. This study argues that UN PKOs mitigate such negative consequences by initiating democratization, capacity-building, and political participation while mitigating political violence, increasing the inflows of multilateral aid, and making the allocated multilateral aid effective in enhancing governance quality. Additionally, this study finds that UN PKOs increase the net multilateral aid. Moreover, when UN PKO involves capacity-building or election-related tasks, an increase in multilateral aid enhances the governance quality. When there are no such tasks, an increase in multilateral aid does not necessarily improve the governance quality.

Foreign aid can thus undermine governance quality, but if combined with certain missions of UN PKOs, negative consequences can be overcome. Under such a condition, the UN's efforts to induce international financial support would be compatible with the goal of attaining sustainable peace through enhanced governance quality. Moreover, the UN's effort to foster participatory governance can mitigate undermined institutional capacity resulting from passive foreign aid implementation. When institutional capacity is weak, the interveners may face the dilemma of implementing aid projects by themselves as an accessible solution, but even if the implementation becomes lagged, fostering local ownership ultimately results in a resilient institution. Moreover, the results indicate that even if foreign aid undermines the democratization process because of leaders' incentives, UN PKOs mitigate such negative effects by institutionalizing elections. Therefore, one of UN PKO's exit strategies, institutionalizing elections, can successfully enhance

governance quality.

This research provides a basis for future research. First, it would be beneficial to understand better how UN peacekeepers interact with foreign aid implementation. Foreign aid can be considered an intervention (Baldwin, 1968), and although interdependencies among UN PKOs and other forms of intervention have been overlooked, the host states often experience multiple interventions simultaneously. We would observe more interdependence between UN PKOs and international financial support. According to the UN, “peacebuilding requires a broad set of financing instruments and a variety of channels and sources,” and “more pooled funds supporting shared strategic objectives and with greater capitalization are required to further enhance United Nations coherence,” further calling for financial support (UN, 2022). It is important to recognize that other forms of intervention can also enhance the effectiveness of UN PKOs on sustainable peace, and vice versa, and that understanding the interdependencies would provide us with a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of interventions. Second, future research should investigate the UN PKO’s exit strategy in the context of institutional capacity. The host states are ultimately responsible for managing and implementing foreign aid projects after peacekeepers have departed, which requires institutional capacity and influences economic development. It would be interesting to investigate whether institutions established by the UN PKOs can replace a signal of credibility and, if so, when. It would be important to know when aid dependence becomes compatible with economic development following the withdrawal of UN PKOs.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2024.106531>.

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