

Dissertation Outline

Foreign Aid and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

The introduction presents a puzzle and suggests a possible answer: why are resource-poor states more likely to develop in the aftermath of civil war? I argue that resource-poor leaders face greater incentives for reform than their resource-rich counterparts. In the first chapter, I demonstrate how my idea builds upon the existing argument that aid helps postwar states when it compensates for their weak capacity at the ceasefire. I then present the quantitative and qualitative methodologies to test the theory, introduce the main variables under study and their data sources, and then introduce the four case studies and the logic for comparing them. The chapter concludes with an outline of the book.

Chapter 2 proposes the theory. It explains how reform incentives for leaders are structured by the resources available and the urgent need to access funds to finance patronage and strengthen defense. The chapter also argues that multilateral aid is more likely to avoid the “aid curse” often associated with aggregate aid flows because multilateral aid is more likely to be disbursed in response to recipients’ extent of reform. Bilateral aid, on the other hand, comes with fewer policy conditions since bilateral donors tend to give aid according to their geostrategic objectives.

Chapter 3 tests the quantitative observable implications of the theory. The findings include, first, that reliance on multilateral aid increases the probability of postwar development in resource-poor states while it has no positive effect in resource-rich states. Second, the chapter offers evidence suggesting that reform is a mechanism for development by showing that higher reform rates improve the impact of multilateral aid in resource-poor states. In addition, reform compliance increases future multilateral aid flows while the overthrow of a reform leader decreases them. Finally, bilateral aid works differently than multilateral aid. Reliance on it has no effect on postwar development. In addition, bilateral disbursement does not respond to reform and does not decline when reform leaders are overthrown.

Chapter 4 is the first of two case-study chapters comparing two pairs of cases with similar war terminations, but varied resource endowments. These chapters compare resource-poor Uganda and resource-rich Angola, states where wars ended decisively, but developed very differently. The chapters also compare resource-poor Mozambique and the resource-rich Central African Republic (CAR), states where wars terminated with negotiated settlements supported by multidimensional UN interventions, but again with contrasting development results. Chapter 4 demonstrates that resource-poor leaders signed strict aid agreements, received large amounts of aid, and complied with conditionality requirements. It then argues that post-conflict reconstruction in resource-poor states is actually a byproduct of these reforms. In contrast, resource-rich leaders signed fewer strict aid agreements, received less aid, complied less often with reform requirements, and their states stayed in decay.

Chapter 5 turns to the strategic logic between leaders and rivals. It demonstrates that resource-poor rivals calculated they would be better off by supporting the existing regime after the regime secured multilateral aid flows. Further, it demonstrates there was no evidence of rivals threatening the government.

Chapter 6 concludes by addressing policy implications for both multilateral and bilateral foreign aid.