Peacebuilding Beyond Civil Wars:
UN Election Assistance and Election Violence

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Abstract

The United Nations (UN) has implemented peacebuilding initiatives in more than a hundred countries worldwide since 1989. Yet research on these initiatives has focused on a subset of states: those with a civil war history. This paper expands the analysis of UN peacebuilding to the broader universe of developing countries and examines one prominent type of UN peacebuilding: election assistance. Using UN data on election assistance and original data on post-election violence, I provide the first statistical evidence demonstrating the positive impact of this type of peacebuilding. The analyses indicate that election assistance has contributed significantly to reducing election-related violence in both Latin America and Africa since 1990. I argue that such assistance contributes to more peaceful post-election periods because it builds trust. By bolstering the credibility of the election commission, election assistance also increases the level of trust that citizens have in the announced election result, which in turn reduces incentives for electoral losers to challenge results through violence. In addition to documenting effectiveness in developing countries broadly, this paper furthers research on UN deployment decisions by empirically distinguishing country demand and UN supply of election assistance. I find that local demand for election assistance is highest when governments are weak, and that the UN is most likely to respond to this demand when the domestic political will for improvement and proper elections is high. UN supply, however, is unrelated to civil war history in Africa, again suggesting that scholarship would benefit from broadening the horizon beyond civil-war countries.

Since its inception, the United Nations (UN) has sought to promote peace and security around the world. Scholars have long debated the UN's effectiveness in these fields as well as the motivation behind its deployment decisions. This research has focused on war-torn countries, especially those riven by civil war.[1] UN peace operations, however, are not limited to civil war settings and traditional peacekeeping, i.e. monitoring cease-fires and enforcing peace agreements between former combatants. The UN devotes much of its work to *peacebuilding*, also known as conflict prevention, multidimensional peacekeeping or third-generation peacekeeping.[2] Peacebuilding programs seek "to preserve the investments" made by peacekeeping[3] but also addresses *potential* instability sources and attempts to "manage risk in fragile countries"[4] – regardless of whether they have recently suffered from civil war.[5] As such, peace building aims to "reduce the risk of *lapsing or relapsing* into conflict"[6] and "promote sustainable peace by addressing the 'root causes' of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution."[7] Peacebuilding tries to prevent conflict by strengthening domestic institutions through a multitude of initiatives, such as supporting political processes, deepening non-violent dispute resolution mechanisms, and promoting democracy and development, all of which are substantially different from merely separating warring parties (peacekeeping). For example, the UN invested in peacebuilding after Guinea's non-violent coup in 2008, and through election assistance in Malawi and Mexico off and on since 1994; none of these deployments were in a post-war context.[8] In short, the UN implements peacebuilding programs in a wide range of countries, many of them *without* civil war experience.

While the UN considers peacebuilding to be more broadly applicable (all developing countries) than peacekeeping (only conflict countries), research on these interventions has used the same sample of states to test their arguments: only war-torn countries.[9] However,

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[1]In this article, I use the phrases war-torn countries, (post-) conflict and civil war countries interchangeably. Civil war refers to an intra-state armed conflict between the government and a rebel group resulting in more than 1,000 fatalities overall and in at least one single year (see Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 783). Some research has applied the lower threshold of 25 battle-deaths per year (Hultman, Kathman, Shannon 2013 and 2014). For research on peacekeeping and inter-state wars, see Fortna 2003.

[2]UN 2008, 25-28; Doyle and Sambanis 2006, 10, and 2000, 791; Fortna 2008, 7; Barnett 2007, 42, 44.

[3]Ban Ki-moon 2011; Brahimi Report 2000, 5, 6; UN 2008, 25.

[4]Ban Ki-moon 2011.

[5]Boutros-Ghali 1992, 7; Newman, Paris, and Richmond 2009, 3; Paris 2008, 404.

[6]UN 2008, 18; itallics added. Also see Barnett et al. 2007, 36, 37, 42.

[7]See UN statement on peacebuilding, available at `http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pbun.shtml` While peacekeeping treats conflict symptoms, peacebuilding addresses its sources (Brahimi Report 2000, 3).

[8]Ibid. Guinea's civil war had ended in 2001 and the UN assistance in 2008 was prompted by the coup.

[9]For the civil war focus in peacebuilding, see e.g. Doyle and Sambanis 2000 and 2006; Fjelde and Höglund 2011. For the civil war focus in peacekeeping, see e.g. Fortna 2008; Walter 2009; Hultman, Kathman, Shannon 2013, 2014.

if the goal is to learn about the effectiveness of peacebuilding generally, we must increase this sample size to all countries potentially receiving such assistance. I propose to overcome this inconsistency between research and policy by examining UN peacebuilding in developing countries broadly, focusing on one prominent type of peacebuilding initiatives (technical election assistance) and accompanying measure of effectiveness (election-related violence). Fortunately, only a number of countries have engaged in civil war. However, violence, death, and civil unrest are not exclusive to civil war – they also occur in transitional democracies, especially during the election cycle, when the monopoly on domestic power structures is in transition. Each year, about a quarter of elections worldwide have violent aftermaths,[10] and this violence is often triggered by information or belief that the electoral process was flawed and thus not credible. Not surprisingly, the UN considers election assistance as an important component of peacebuilding[11] and has provided election assistance to many more countries than it has provided peacekeepers; more than three times as many countries, to be exact.[12] After supervising of Namibia's 1989 elections, the UN has deployed technical election assistance to over 100 countries worldwide, only a fraction of which had a peacekeeping mission.[13] Implemented many months (and sometimes years) before any given election, these efforts aim at improving electoral processes by supporting domestic electoral institutions and empowering civil society.[14] Since UN peacebuilding programs are also implemented in non-post-conflict countries, conflict research will benefit from widening the focus from post-conflict countries to *all* developing countries. This article is a first step in that direction.

I argue that UN technical election assistance (TA) can reduce violence in the aftermath of elections by building trust in domestic election management bodies and the outcome they announce, securing the loser's consent. Long before elections are held, technical support centers on boosting institutional capacity and credibility to bolster the reputation of the electoral process. Besides institutional reforms, TA also encourages contestants to stay calm, and aims to socialize citizens and parties to acknowledge that losing is just part of the democratic game, which they may win in future competitions. Taken together, these

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[10]von Borzyskowski 2014, chapter 2; Fischer 2002; Salehyan and Linebarger 2013.

[11]Boutros-Ghali 1992, 15; Brahimi Report 2000, 3, 7; UN 2008, 26, 28; Ludwig 2004, 186.

[12]Since 1991, more than 100 countries have received UN election assistance (http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/main/issues/elections) For comparison, between 1990 and 2003, the UN has provided technical election assistance to 87 countries and peacekeepers to 32 countries. About half of these countries (17/32) had UN technical election assistance at some point during the peacekeeping mission. The vast majority of countries with UN election assistance (70) has never had peacekeepers and only a handful had peacekeepers at other points in their history. Author's calculation from Ludwig 2004; and Kathman 2013.

[13]For example, in the 2009-2011 period, only 11 of the 55 countries receiving UN election assistance also hosted traditional peacekeepers. A/66/314, annex II.

[14]Ludwig 1995 and 2004.

efforts increase citizens' trust in the national election commission and in the result that it announces, so that questioning results becomes less viable. Thus electoral losers have fewer incentives to challenge the results, which reduces violence risks. Using UN assistance data as well as original data on post-election violence, I present statistical evidence that UN election assistance significantly reduces violence in Latin America and Africa. The mechanism of trust-building is illustrated with a case study of elections in Guyana since 1992. UN assistance has helped build peace in developing countries broadly, not just war-ridden countries.

Accordingly, my contributions are two-fold: (1) advancing knowledge about deployment decisions by distinguishing between country demand and UN supply as well as testing existing deployment explanations on a larger sample size for a prominent type; and (2) evaluating the effectiveness of peacebuilding in developing countries generally (not just post-conflict) around elections. I elaborate on each contribution in turn.

First, this article advances the literature on UN intervention decisions, i.e. why missions are deployed to certain countries, by distinguishing between demand and supply and testing existing explanations on a broader set of countries. Examining deployment is important in its own right but also necessary for evaluating effectiveness since we cannot adequately evaluate effects without understanding to what places the UN is more likely to go. I deepen prior analyses of deployment by examining the component parts of country demand and UN supply separately. The local demand by the "peacekept" is critical for consent-based missions to be initiated, and domestic political will is key for any operation's success.[15] Prior work on civil war countries has theorized local demand for peacekeeping as a function of government weakness;[16] and explained UN supply as driven by the host country's political will,[17] resource endowment,[18] degree of democracy,[19] and intensity of the conflict.[20] In contrast to *theorizing* dynamics of demand and supply separately, though, research has *empirically* examined the aggregate outcome (UN presence) of these two processes.[21] Consequently, the

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[15]Fortna and Howard 2008, 294; Fortna 2008a, 18. The question of demand for peacekeepers is not trivial, as some civil war countries resist peacekeeping. Fortna 2004, 281.

[16]Studies proxy this concept with small armies (Gilligan and Stedman 2003, 38; Fortna 2004, 281; Fortna 2008, 29) or the absence of military victory (Walter 2009; Fortna 2004, 278; Fortna 2008, 22-23).

[17]Fortna 2008, 30; Fortna 2004, 278 especially for multidimensional peacekeeping.

[18]Fortna 2004, 281. A related factor – P-5 trade ties to host countries (Stojek and Tir 2014) – is not applicable to election assistance because the UNSC does not decide about such assistance but rather the DPA and UNDP.

[19]Fortna 2008, 29; Fortna 2004, 281.

[20]Gilligan and Stedman 2003, 38.

[21]Fortna (2008a, chapter 2) tries to empirically get at the demand vs. supply question by comparing deployment of consent-based chapter 6 missions (peacekeeping) to non-consent based chapter 7 missions (peace enforcement); the latter only need supply but not technically demand/consent from local parties. However, that means we infer demand/supply drivers from deployment differences between intervention

following remain empirically open questions: What stimulates local demand? And given domestic demand, which factors increase UN supply? I find that local demand for election assistance is highest when governments are weak, and that the UN is most likely to respond to local demand when the domestic political will for improvement and proper elections is high. These findings are consistent with research on peacekeeping, suggesting that *some* factors are more broadly applicable. In contrast to existing research, however, which has mainly examined peacebuilding in connection with peacekeeping, I find that UN supply of assistance is unrelated to the presence of peacekeepers. Peacebuilding in the form of election assistance is no more or less likely when peacekeepers are present. This is yet another indicator that UN scholars would benefit from broadening the horizon beyond war-ridden countries.

Second, this paper contributes to the debate on the UN effectiveness in conflict management by expanding the universe of analyzed countries to developing countries broadly (instead of just conflict countries) and examining a prominent form of peacebuilding. Within the UN effectiveness debate, the weight of the evidence points to the UN being effective at keeping the peace once civil wars end,[22] and even being able to reduce fatalities in active conflicts.[23] Apart from keeping the peace, a related literature has explored the UN's effectiveness in building peace in post-conflict settings,[24] which intersects with research on post-conflict elections.[25] Among the different types of UN peace operations, peacebuilding has a large effect on reducing violence and perhaps even improving democracy.[26] But again this finding is based solely on the subset of civil war countries. More importantly, peacebuilding itself encompasses a wide range of elements, making it difficult to attribute success to one tool over another, and even more challenging to develop policy implications. I advance scholarship on UN effectiveness by analyzing its effect on a particular domestic institution, namely electoral processes. I find that UN peacebuilding in the form of election assistance is effective in improving peace in so far as it reduces electoral violence, thereby increasing stability and improving the democratic process.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 1 provides background on UN election technical assistance. Section 2 introduces the theory linking this assistance, trust, and violence and

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types; this approach does not examine peace operations' demand and supply separately.

[22] Gilligan and Sergenti 2008; Fortna 2008.

[23] Hultman, Kathman, Shannon 2013, 2014.

[24] Doyle and Sambanis 2000 and 2006, Jarstad and Sisik 2008, Fjelde and Höglund 2011.

[25] Kumar 1998; Nooruddin and Flores 2012; Brancati and Snyder 2011 and 2013.

[26] For the effect of UN multidimensional peacekeeping missions on violence, see Fortna 2008a, 112. For their effect on democratization, see Fortna (2008b, 65) and Doyle and Sambanis (2000, 790-791); the latter measure "strict" mission success as an end to violence and a minimum level of democracy. In some analyses peacebuilding (i.e. multidimensional missions) emerges as the only effective UN tool (Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 790-791).

specifies the hypothesis. Section 3 lays out the research design and section 4 discusses the results for demand/supply and effectiveness. Section 5 illustrates the mechanism with the representative case of Guyana. The final section concludes.

1 Background: UN Election Assistance

The UN first deployed election assistance in Namibia in 1989 and Nicaragua in 1990. Shortly after, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution to strengthen the UN's role in "periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization."[27] This paved the way for UN election assistance as part of broader peace-building missions.[28] Under the UN umbrella, election assistance is mainly implemented by the UN Development Programme (UNDP)[29] but can also involve the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) within the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) if the country already hosts such a mission. Given the variety of agencies involved, the UN established a "focal point" for election assistance, currently the DPA Under-Secretary-General.

While election assistance is only a fraction of the UN's overall portfolio, it is unrivaled in scope. According to its own estimates, 83 UNDP country offices completed 394 electoral support projects during 1999-2011, with a total price tag of $3 billion.[30] In terms of regional distribution, about 40 percent of the country offices providing election assistance are in Africa and about 20 percent in Latin America (the two focus regions of this study), followed by Asia/Pacific, the Arab states, and the broader Europe.[31] The financial scope of assistance varies widely across countries, from small projects to large projects of several hundred million USD.[32] Importantly, the UN's election assistance comes in several forms:[33]

- **Technical Assistance**: the most commonly requested service (and the focus of this study); it includes assistance to the election commission, advice on systems, laws, and registration methods, poll-worker training, civic education, logistical support, and procurement of election materials (ballots, ballot boxes, staining ink).[34]

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[27]See the 1994 Resolution A/RES/48/13; and Ludwig 2004, 178, 185.

[28]Ludwig 2004, 186.

[29]According to a recent UN survey, 53% of all UN electoral support staff worked for the UNDP, 20.5% for the DPA/EAD and 9.6% percent for the PKO. UNDP 2012, 135.

[30]UNDP 2012, 18.

[31]UNDP 2012, 19.

[32]Large UNDP projects for electoral assistance include Nigeria ($112 million during 2006-2011), Sudan ($196 million during 2004-2011), and Afghanistan ($809 million during 2004-2011). UNDP 2012, 19.

[33]Ludwig 2004, 173-176; Ludwig 1995.

[34]Ludwig 1995, 342; Ludwig 2004, 173.

- Supervision: certifying elections during decolonization due to the absence of sovereign states; last provided in Namibia 1989-90

- Verification of elections as part of peacekeeping, mostly in the early 1990s; first in Nicaragua 1990; later examples include Angola 1992, El Salvador, Mozambique and South Africa 1994

- Follow and Report: these small observation missions (1-2 observers) are rather rare; examples include Russia 1993, Paraguay 1993, and Algeria 1996

- Organization and Conduct: organizing elections in their entirety; provided only twice: Cambodia 1992-93 and East Timor 1999-2002

- Coordination and Support of International Observers: logistical assistance, deployment plans to avoid duplication of effort; no certification by UN; examples are Ethiopia 1992, Armenia 1995

- Support of Domestic Observers: training domestic NGO observers; first in Mexico 1994

In terms of specific activities, the largest components of UN technical election assistance focus on election administration, civic and voter education, and sustainable electoral processes.[35] To help countries establish independent election management bodies (EMBs), institutional capacity development includes "training in the management of electoral systems, ... support for legal reform, institutional restructuring, improving professional development programs, and strengthening public information and outreach capacity, resource management, and sustainability programs."[36] To explain how this assistance influences violence in the wake of elections, the next following section outlines the theoretical argument about how this assistance boosts the capacity and credibility of domestic institutions, increases trust in the announced result, thus leads to fewer disputes in the wake of elections.

To receive UN election technical assistance, the host country government must formally request it.[37] Following this request, the UN "focal point" conducts a desk review or a needs assessment mission, consisting of two experts in country for about ten days.[38] The UN's decision about whether to provide assistance is based on the type of assistance requested, domestic political conditions, the viability of the electoral process, sufficient lead time, and UN budget constraints.[39]

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[35]Smaller components include electoral system reform, electoral dispute resolution, political party work, resource mobilization, and strengthening the role of the media and women. UNDP 2012, 22-23.

[36]Ponzio 2004, 217-218.

[37]Governments need to request support several months prior to election-day. In rare cases (i.e. post-conflict), the process begins with a mandate of the UN Security Council or General Assembly. See Ludwig 2004, 171; Ludwig 1995, 342-343; and UNDP 2012, 17.

[38]Ludwig 2004, 172-173.

[39]Ludwig 1995, 342.

2 Theory: Loser's Consent, Trust, and Violence

Peaceful elections (and democracies more generally) depend on the loser's consent, i.e. the support of a substantial portion of citizens who are displeased with the election outcome and agree to be governed by the winner rather than challenge the result.[40] Election losers are important at these junctures because they "decide whether to fight on" after adverse results.[41] Consequently, how losers respond to loss and why they comply with election results are important issues.[42] In advanced democracies with regular and fair elections, the loser's consent has become habitual political behavior. However, in many nascent democracies, losers constitute a "weak link in the chain of stable democratic governments."[43] Here, domestic agents are still struggling to make the loser's consent a regular feature. At times, (sore) losers challenge election results, which can lead to unrest. Yet, while virtually all elections produce losers, only some elections are challenged and accompanied by unrest. Many elections remain peaceful, even in developing countries.

I argue that the loser's consent is more likely when the election result is credible,[44] and that this credibility can be boosted by technical assistance. International technical assistance aims at improving the capacity and credibility of the election administration. It should increase trust in electoral institutions and thus improve perceived electoral fairness.[45] The next sections outline in more detail how technical assistance can increase institutional trust, and how that trust can affect violence in the wake of elections.

Technical Assistance and Institutional Trust

At the heart of trust in elections is trust in a key institution: election management bodies (EMBs).[46] Institutional trust means "that the truster knows the normative idea of

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[40]Schedler 2001, 71; Anderson et al. 2005.

[41]Riker 1983, 62.

[42]Przeworski 1991, 15.

[43]Anderson 2005 et al., 109.

[44]Pastor (1999b) finds that administrative problems often play a role when an election is perceived as *not* free and fair and results are rejected.

[45]Perceived fairness and institutional trust are strongly related because the goal of EMBs is "to conduct an election that is judged fair by all sides." Pastor 1999b, 2; and Pastor 1999a. Empirical evidence supports the argument that EMB performance is a strong and positive predictor on citizen's perception of electoral fairness. For a cross-national study of EMB performance in Africa, see Kerr 2013. For within-country study of poll worker performance in the US, see Hall, Monson, and Patterson 2009; and Atkeson and Saunders 2007.

[46]These institutions can be categorized into three types: (1) an office / agency located within a ministry of home or internal affairs (as in many advanced democracies), (2) an office under other supervisory authority; and (3) a self-contained, more or less independent institution (as in many new democracies and also Canada, Australia, India; see Lopez-Pintor 2000, 13, as quoted in Elklit and Reynolds 2000, 6) In the last type, EMBs

the institution, and has some confidence in the sanctions that provide additional motivations for officials to behave according to this idea."[47] Put differently, institutional trust builds on three elements: (1) that the institution is fair in its legal setup, (2) competent in its ability to work by its rules, and (3) that citizens have knowledge about the first two.

Technical assistance can help with all three elements: It can change rules and regulations, increase capacity (through funding, logistics, training), and increase information flow to the relevant audience (citizens) through communication campaigns, civic and voter education. Apart from institutional capacity and compliance, citizen knowledge is key: if people understand the institution and its function, "it will motivate their support for the institution and their compliance with its rules."[48] Strategies to reduce a deficit of trust can be either top-down (to make institutions comply better with their rules) or bottom up (to make citizens trust more in institutions).[49] In that sense, TA can be effective from both directions because it aims to affect institutions themselves as well as citizen's perceptions about these institutions.

Apart from election technical assistance – which has received little academic attention – there are a number of other drivers of trust in elections. On the individual level, important factors include support for a losing party, perception of corruption, political interest, and socio-economic characteristics (age, education, income).[50] Characteristics of the election itself influence trust in the election, such as the closeness of the race, campaign dynamics, and alternation in power.[51] Lastly, country-level differences matter for trust in elections, including the level of democracy, development, and the type of electoral system.[52]

Institutional Trust and Post-Election Violence

How does institutional trust matter for post-vote violence? Administrative competence is critical because technical problems can be seen as politically motivated.[53] For example, Kenya has long struggled with trust in its National Election Commission because of capacity and credibility issues. When the lack of trust is coupled with irregular institutional behavior, greater distrust can lead to violence. Even though institutional reforms took place before

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are often called national election commissions (NECs).

[47]Warren 1999, 349.

[48]Offe (1999) summarized in Warren 1999, 6. To some extent this also involves trusting individuals working inside an institution: that such people share the institution's rules and regard them as binding.

[49]Warren, 7.

[50]See Anderson et al. 2005; Banducci and Karp 2003; Maldonaldo and Seligson 2013; and Birch 2008.

[51]See Maldonaldo and Seligson 2013; and Birch 2008.

[52]See Maldonaldo and Seligson 2013; Banducci and Karp 2003. Norris (2004) finds a limited effect of cultural variables such as religion, language group, and ethnicity.

[53]Pastor 1999b.

the 2013 election, the past actions of the commission made citizens wary of trusting the institution. After polling for the 2013 election, some people felt that, "technical glitches have opened up the space for doubt. And that's a problem in an environment where the perception of integrity is as important as the reality."[54] In other words, trust – or the perception of integrity – is important to keep political competition peaceful. When elections and thus the resulting government are perceived as illegitimate, election results are more likely to spur popular protests and violence. This has been the trend in Eastern Europe as well as sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.[55]

In most advanced democracies, institutions are perceived to have high integrity because they have a positive track record from past elections. That positive record generates trust among the citizenry and keeps violent contestation low. This history and perception of integrity is lacking in most developing countries. If post-election violence breaks out because the election result is not perceived to be generated by a trustworthy institution, then one way to reduce violence is to increase electoral institutions' integrity. This is a major purpose of technical assistance. Greater trust in the EMB and/or an increase in the perceived electoral fairness should lead to less post-election violence. Taken together, this suggests that the provision of technical assistance should be associated with less post-election violence because such assistance can increase the capacity and credibility of the election commission, which in turn should lead to fewer post-election challenges. This leads to the main hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis.** *The provision of UN election technical assistance should be associated with a decrease in post-election violence.*

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[54]Available at `http://aje.me/ZZ3NOg`

[55]For the color revolutions, see Tucker 2007; Thompson and Kuntz 2004; Kuntz and Thompson 2009. For Africa, see von Borzyskowski 2014, chapter 5. For global analyses, see Hyde and Marinov 2014; and Kuhn 2012.

3 Research Design

I test this prediction in a statistical analysis of national elections in Latin America and Africa from 1990 to 2008. The key variable is *UN TA*, which is coded 1 if the UN provided election technical assistance in the run-up to an election, and zero otherwise. This is a measure of supply and eventual deployment. A separate binary variable, *UN TA demand* captures whether countries have requested such assistance. For both measures only technical election assistance (by far the most frequent type) was included in the analysis; I excluded coordination and support of observers, verification, supervision, and the organization of entire electoral processes.[56] Latin American and African countries requested UN election technical assistance for about 40 percent of their national elections and the UN responded positively in about 25 percent of elections. Figure 1 shows the gap between country demand and UN supply over time in Latin America and Africa, marking variation in terms of the number of countries. Country demand has spiked in 1992, when many African countries held their first national elections, and in 2002 for post-conflict elections.

Figure 1: Demand and Supply of UN Election Technical Assistance
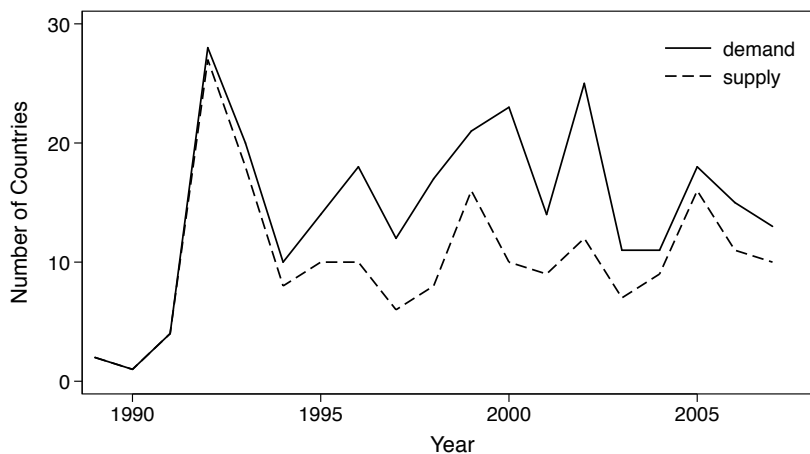
To measure post-election violence, I draw on my own data collection, the Global Election Violence (GEV) Dataset. These data capture electoral violence before, during, and after national elections from 1990 to 2012 worldwide.[57] This dataset focuses on election violence as distinct from other types of violence that happen to occur during an election period (generic crime, drug violence, terrorism, family feuds etc). To be included, political violence must be

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[56]UN documents, various years and departments.

[57]These data include 1,227 elections and 34 variables. They are coded from a monthly news digest, *Keesing's Record of World Events*, which summarizes events in each country.

related to a national election.[58] The GEVD defines election violence as behavior involving physical force intended to hurt or kill people or damage property in order to influence any stage of the election cycle. While election violence thus includes a variety of actions, such as tearing down campaign posters, protesting violently, and assassinating a candidate, this paper focuses on fatalities. The specific variable used here is *fatalities count*, i.e. the number of people killed as a result of such post-election violence. In terms of timing, all electoral violence up to three months after polling is included.

To model local demand for UN election assistance, I build on prior research and include several measures of government weakness:[59] *transitional* government, resource poverty in terms of *GDP per capita*, and the combined *opposition vote share*.[60] In addition, the binary variable *incumbent confident*[61] captures strategic behavior by the government; it may be more willing to reform the system when it is confident to win anyways. Since demand may also be driven by prior conflict, I also control for whether the country has had a *civil war in the past 10 years* and whether there was *violence at the last election*.[62] I expect that weaker governments, confident incumbents, and countries with a conflict history are more likely to request assistance. All variables are lagged by a year to mitigate endogeneity, except for *transitional* election and *incumbent confident*. Since demand is measured as a binary variable, I use probit estimations.

To model UN supply of assistance, I lean on the UN's stated election assistance conditions and prior research on peacekeeping, measuring four concepts.[63] The first is the country's political will for improvement,[64] which I proxy with *UN TA demand lead-time*, i.e. the logged number of months between the request and an election. Election dates are usually known sufficiently in advance to initiate this process and engage in comprehensive reform, so the timing of the decision lies in the purview of the government. Governments can reasonably expect that longer lead times are associated with a higher likelihood of UN assistance and more comprehensive reforms. The average request is 9 months before the election, varying between 0 months and 4 years. I also control for basic domestic political and economic conditions: the degree of democracy in terms of *executive constraints* and

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[58]For example, bombing a polling center is coded as election violence while bombing market places is not.

[59]Fortna and Howard 2008, 294; Fortna 2008a, 18.

[60]Hyde and Marinov 2012; World Bank 2012; Beck et al 2001.

[61]Hyde and Marinov 2012.

[62]von Borzyskowski 2014, chapter 2; UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, version 4. The civil war variables is a binary indicator of government-opposition conflicts with a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths per year.

[63]For the UN's conditions and objectives, see Ludwig 1995, 342; UNDP 2009, 52. For prior work on these supply factors in peacekeeping, see Fortna 2004, 281; Fortna 2008, 29.

[64]Fortna 2008, 30; Fortna 2004, 278.

resource endowment in terms of *GDP per capita*.[65] Lastly, controls for the intensity of conflict[66] are *violence at the last election*, *civil war in the past 5/10 years*, and the *presence of peacekeepers*.[67] I expect that the UN is more likely to respond positively to demand when the government signals strong political will for improvement; it may also be more forthcoming when the government has few resources and is less democratic. Unlike previous research, I have no strong expectations for the association of conflict history and peacekeepers since election assistance is often implemented in non-civil war countries. Note that the sample size of the supply models will be much reduced because they are conditional on country demand. Since the sample size falls below 100, I thus use OLS regression in these models. All variables are lagged by a year to mitigate endogeneity.

To model the effectiveness of election assistance, the key variable of interest is *UN TA*, as described above. I control for *pre-election violence*, i.e. the logged number of election-related fatalities in the six months prior to the national election, as well as *poll type* (legislature, executive, or both), *GDP per capita*, *executive constraints*, *natural resources* per capita, the logged *population size*.[68] To control for conflict history, I include *civil war in the past 10 years* and two measures of peacekeeping troops (binary and count).[69] All variables are lagged by a year except for the peacekeeping variables and election type. Since the dependent variable is the count of election-related fatalities in the three months after the election, I use a count model.[70] To appropriately model zero-inflation and overdispersion,[71] the specific count model I employ is a zero-inflated negative binomial model. In all analyses (demand, supply, effectiveness), standard errors are clustered by country to capture unobserved heterogeneity between states. Descriptive statistics are in Table 6 in the Appendix.

Table 6 here

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[65]World Bank 2012 and Marshall and Jaggers 2011. The interpretation of results does not change when I replace the generic capacity measure with one specific to elections (sr12cap in Kelley 2012a). However, because that variable has 30 percent missing values (66 out of 220 elections in Africa), it further decreases sample size, so that the coefficient loses significance.

[66]Gilligan and Stedman 2003, 38.

[67]von Borzyskowski 2014, chapter 2; UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, version 4; Kathman 2013.

[68]von Borzyskowski 2014, chapter 2; Hyde and Marinov 2010; World Bank 2012; Marshall and Jaggers 2011; Ross 2012.

[69]UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, version 4; Kathman 2013.

[70]For a recent similar modeling approach, see Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2013.

[71]Between 9 and 17 percent of observations have non-zero values on the dependent variable (i.e. violence) in Latin America and Africa, respectively. The outcome is also over-dispersed (variance exceeds the mean), which makes negative binomial models more appropriate than poisson models. As further evidence, the over-dispersion parameter α is significant, suggesting that zinb models are preferred over zip.

4   Results

4.1   Demand and Supply

Table 1 presents the results of the demand analysis. It provides strong evidence that country demand of UN election technical assistance is largely driven by government resources: poorer countries are more likely to request UN election assistance than richer countries. The coefficient on per capita GDP is statistically significant and consistently negative. Government resources are also substantively important. The probability of requesting assistance declines from 58 to 7 percentage points as per capita GDP rises from its minimum to its maximum.[72] This is illustrated in Figure 3. The other measures of government weakness – transition government and opposition vote share – are insignificant. Conflict history also has an effect, although it is less than half of the resource effect and not consistent in Africa. In Latin America, having had a civil in the last ten years increases the probability of requesting assistance by 23 percentage points (from 32 to 55 percentage points).[73] There is also some indication that political strategy plays a role because assistance requests are more likely when the incumbent is confident to win the upcoming election. The effect is similar in size to the conflict effect, increasing the probability of demand by 20 percentage points (from 13 to 33).[74] However, this coefficient is not significant in the sample of African countries. Finally, experience with election violence at the last election does not affect demand. Thus, the most important driver of local demand of assistance in both Africa and Latin America since 1990 has been government weakness in terms of resources.

Figure 2: Effect of Government Resources on Demand of Assistance

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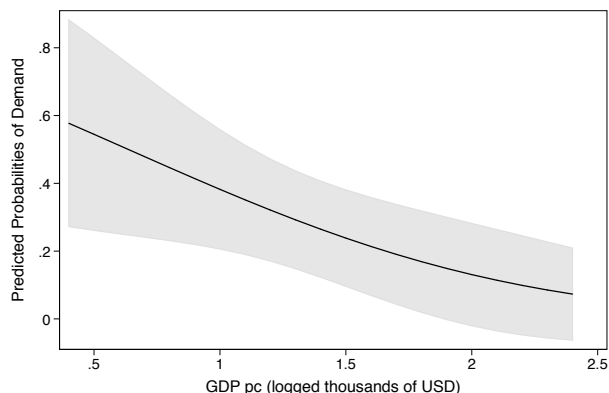
[72]Predicted from model 2 in Table 1 with the other variables set at the median. The minimum is $370 USD in Haiti 2010 and the maximum is $10,000 USD in Argentina 2009.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Predicted from model 4 in Table 1 with the other variables set at the median.

Table 1: Country Demand

	Latin America				Sub-Saharan Africa			
Model	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Transitional government	0.845				0.142			
	(0.529)				(0.300)			
GDP pc		-0.824**				-0.527***		
		(0.393)				(0.154)		
Opposition vote share			0.001				0.003	
			(0.009)				(0.009)	
Incumbent confident				0.665***				-0.242
				(0.256)				(0.278)
Civil war in past 10 years	0.731**	0.637**	0.732**	1.306***	0.511**	0.292	0.562**	0.510
	(0.313)	(0.296)	(0.317)	(0.368)	(0.253)	(0.232)	(0.251)	(0.316)
Violence at last election	0.033	-0.229	0.036	-0.497	-0.055	0.005	-0.027	0.039
	(0.275)	(0.277)	(0.277)	(0.309)	(0.218)	(0.216)	(0.221)	(0.253)
Constant	-0.664***	0.524	-0.641**	-1.099***	-0.441**	-0.852***	-0.486**	-0.269
	(0.178)	(0.537)	(0.321)	(0.255)	(0.188)	(0.213)	(0.208)	(0.212)
Observations	133	131	133	106	143	148	145	99
Clusters	23	23	23	22	42	44	43	36
AIC	173.00	164.03	176.74	126.09	193.47	182.06	195.11	137.83
BIC	184.56	175.53	188.30	136.75	205.32	194.05	207.02	148.21
LL	-82.50	-78.01	-84.37	-59.05	-92.73	-87.03	-93.56	-64.91

Notes: The table reports estimates from probit models. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of country demand for UN election technical assistance. The unit of observation is a national election. Coefficients are reported with country-clustered standard errors. ***, **, and * indicates significance at the 1, 5, and 10% level.

Table 2: UN Supply (Conditional on Demand)

	Latin America				Sub-Saharan Africa			
Model	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
UN TA demand lead-time	0.327***	0.269***	0.331***	0.318***	0.173*	0.172*	0.174*	0.172
	(0.091)	(0.080)	(0.092)	(0.094)	(0.102)	(0.102)	(0.101)	(0.109)
Executive constraints	-0.013	-0.025	-0.010	-0.014	0.044	0.048	0.049	0.044
	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.054)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.031)
GDP pc	0.073	0.101	0.072	0.095	-0.100	-0.082	-0.065	-0.099
	(0.114)	(0.107)	(0.117)	(0.140)	(0.094)	(0.088)	(0.087)	(0.099)
Violence at last election	-0.041	-0.118	-0.039	-0.048	-0.091	-0.085	-0.095	-0.091
	(0.128)	(0.119)	(0.135)	(0.127)	(0.104)	(0.102)	(0.100)	(0.113)
Civil war in past 5 years		0.319**				0.080		
		(0.115)				(0.095)		
Civil war in past 10 years			-0.040				0.123	
			(0.138)				(0.098)	
UN peacekeepers present				0.076				0.008
				(0.123)				(0.107)
Constant	0.090	0.161	0.088	0.077	0.269	0.250	0.246	0.272
	(0.327)	(0.331)	(0.327)	(0.352)	(0.421)	(0.422)	(0.415)	(0.448)
Observations	44	44	44	44	46	46	46	46
Clusters	18	18	18	18	28	28	28	28
AIC	48.32	44.29	50.21	50.09	32.88	34.33	33.48	34.87
BIC	57.24	54.99	60.91	60.79	42.02	45.30	44.45	45.85
LL	-19.16	-16.14	-19.10	-19.04	-11.44	-11.16	-10.74	-11.44

Notes: The table reports estimates from OLS models because of the reduced sample size (supply conditional on prior demand). The dependent variable is a binary indicator of UN supply of election technical assistance. The unit of observation is a national election. Coefficients are reported with country-clustered standard errors. ***, **, and * indicates significance at the 1, 5, and 10% level.

For UN supply – that is, when the UN responds positively to country demand – the host country's political willingness emerges as the sole important factor. Recall that I proxied for political willingness with the number of months between country request and election date. The coefficient on this variable is positive throughout and statistically significant. In substantive terms, the probability of UN supply increases from 13 to 100 percentage points as the lead-time increases from observed minimum to maximum (0 to 31 months).[75] This is illustrated in Figure 3. Governments usually know far in advance when the next election will be held. Many countries take advantage of long lead times while others only ask for help shortly before voting. Venezuela, for example, usually asks for UN assistance only in the month preceding the election. Even if the UN were able to jump in, no meaningful changes could be made so shortly before voting. Consequently, the UN has turned down all of Venezuela's requests. Short request times indicate the lack of willingness and are merely a formality to gain the veneer of political legitimacy.

Figure 3: Effect of Political Willingness on Supply of Assistance
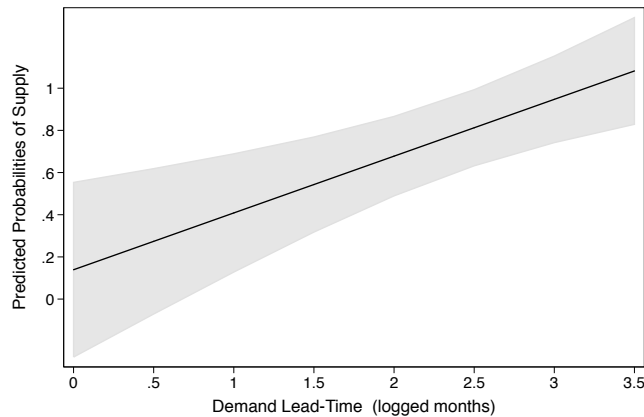
Other potential correlates of supply (democracy, development, conflict) are not significant. There are several potential reasons for this. First, the sample size might be too small to estimate any effect without noise. Note that I estimated supply conditional on demand – as policies generally unfold – so that results in Table 2 are based on the set of countries that have requested assistance in the first place. Second, this "demand sample" is also different from the broader universe of developing countries examined in Table 1, so that the included variables (except for lead-time) have a different mean and smaller standard variation, reducing any potential effect. Third, these other potential variables could simply have no effect on UN supply.

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[75]Predicted from model 2 in Table 2 with the other variables set at the median and mean.

In summary, the UN deploys to countries that are much poorer and have had some civil strife in the last decade. That means that UN assistance goes where it is most needed. It also means that the UN mainly deploys in difficult places where building peace poses a greater challenge. This is important for assessing the effectiveness of UN assistance. If the UN were to assist countries that would hold peaceful elections anyways (pick easy cases), then we would see an association between UN and peace, but it would be an artifact of selection. To further ascertain that the violence-reducing effect of UN assistance (detailed below) is robust and *not* the result of selection, the remainder of this section provides further evidence against the selection concern.

If the UN would attend elections where peace is likely to last, then these elections would be peaceful anyways, regardless of UN involvement. At the core, this involves the issue of non-random treatment. To make this more specific, consider Figure 4, which shows the proportion of UN-attended election per country since 1990. On the left side of the graph, there is a group of countries which never got assistance or only received assistance at about a quarter of their elections. At the far right side of the graph, a group of countries has received assistance at most of their elections (e.g. Haiti, Mexico, Mozambique). It stands to reason that these two groups are different along a number of political and economic dimensions. If the countries with frequent UN assistance (far right) would be generally more peaceful, then we would (wrongly) attribute the lack of violence to UN actions.

Figure 4: Non-Random Treatment
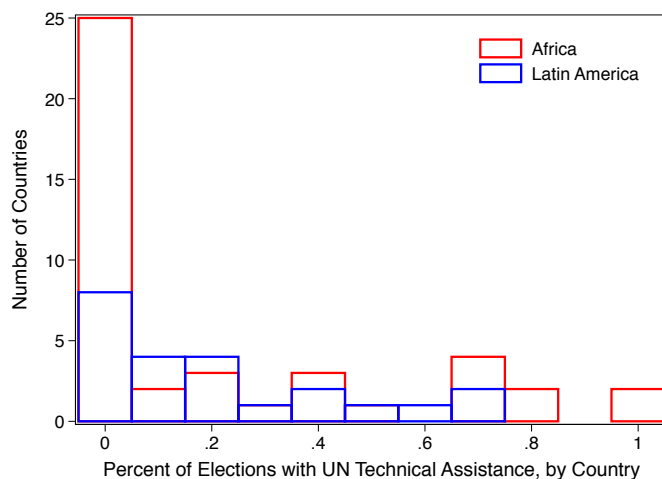
The selection concern is unfounded, as Table 7 in the Appendix shows. If anything, the UN selects into countries that are *more* prone to post-election violence – and still reduces violence in these places, as discussed in the next section. The dependent variable in Table 7 is again *UN TA*, the binary measure of assistance; in contrast to Table 2, this analysis includes

all countries in the two regions, not just those that requested assistance. The variable of interest, probability of post-election violence (*fatalities count*), is predicted as a function of election and country covariates.[76] The coefficient on that variable is insignificant in Africa: expected violence has no influence on whether the UN attends. In Latin America, the coefficient is significant but positive, suggesting that the UN is selecting into elections with a *higher* expected probability of post-election violence. Overall then, UN election technical assistance tends to be deployed to violence-prone countries. This biases *against* finding a violence-reducing effect of the UN. Thus the estimated coefficient of effectiveness (discussed below) represents a conservative estimate, at least in the case of Latin America.

Table 7 here

4.2 Effectiveness

Before presenting the multivariate analysis of UN effectiveness, a simple look at the bivariate relationship is helpful. Table 3 compares whether violence occurred after UN-assisted versus non-UN elections. Violence erupted more often when the UN was absent than when the UN attended. In Latin America, violence erupted after 5.6 percent of elections without UN assistance but only after 3.5 percent of elections when the UN was present. Thus the probability of violence given TA is about half of the probability of violence without TA in Latin America. The "effect" is quite similar in Africa, where violence erupted after 11 percent of elections without the UN present, but only after 5 percent when the UN attended. That is a two-fold reduction in violence when the UN attends elections in Africa. While this is a large point estimate, it is not precisely estimated: the differences are statistically indistinguishable (t-tests p=0.15 and p=0.56) and do not account for a host of other covariates. However, this simple cross tabulation is suggestive of the underlying relationship.

Table 4 reports the results of the statistical analysis, showing estimates of the count stage. It provides strong evidence that UN election assistance is associated with a substantial reduction in post-election violence. As expected, the coefficient of UN election technical assistance is negative and significant. This holds for both Africa and Latin America since 1990, and across all models. This effect is also substantively important. For example, the provision of UN assistance is associated with 6 fewer fatalities per post-election period in Africa.[77] In fact, the estimated effect reduces violence from 6 to zero fatalities, effectively

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[76]To predict post-election violence, the included election-level predictors are violence in previous election, poll type, and boycott. Included country-level predictors of post-election violence are civil war in the past 5 years, executive constraints, GDP per capita, natural resources per capita, incumbent years in office, and population size. From this estimation, the predicted probabilities of violence for all elections are saved and included as the key independent variable in the selection stage (Table 7).

[77]Predicted from model 4 in Table 4 with other variables set at their median and mean.

Table 3: UN Technical Assistance and Post-Election Violence

(a) Latin America 1990-2008, N=142

		Violence Onset	
		no	yes
UN TA	no	71.8 %	**5.6 %**
	yes	19.0 %	**3.5 %**

(b) Africa 1990-2008, N=192

		Violence Onset	
		no	yes
UN TA	no	61.5 %	**11.5 %**
	yes	21.9 %	**5.2 %**

eradicating violence. This is illustrated in Figure 5. To put this in context, the average number of post-election fatalities in the Africa sample is 14, so this is a 42 percentage point decrease in violence. The estimated effect is smaller in Latin America, but still consistently negative and significant.

Figure 5: Effect of UN Assistance on Post-Election Violence
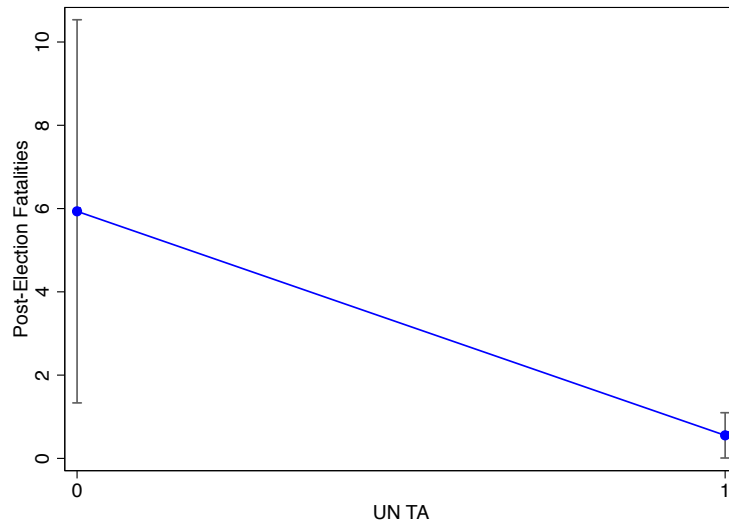
In addition to the strong violence-reducing effect of UN assistance, the analysis also reveals a few other noteworthy findings. Surprisingly, this analysis suggests that within Africa and Latin America richer countries incur more post-election fatalities than poorer countries. This could be because actors in poor countries have little to gain from violence,

Table 4: Determinants of Post-Election Violence

	Latin America			**Sub-Saharan Africa**		
Model	1	2	3	4	5	6
UN TA	-1.437***	-1.697***	-1.722***	-2.987***	-3.050***	-3.051***
	(0.326)	(0.457)	(0.437)	(0.522)	(0.446)	(0.442)
Poll type	3.114***	3.321***	3.332***	0.144	0.367	0.349
	(0.528)	(0.758)	(0.740)	(0.300)	(0.567)	(0.597)
Pre-election fatalities	-0.756***	-0.736***	-0.732***	0.402**	0.366**	0.370**
	(0.082)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.165)	(0.151)	(0.157)
GDP pc	10.790***	13.097***	13.291***	1.526***	1.575***	1.572***
	(0.923)	(2.870)	(2.966)	(0.503)	(0.461)	(0.466)
Executive constraints	0.741***	0.802***	0.834***	0.157	0.147	0.147
	(0.115)	(0.197)	(0.199)	(0.126)	(0.128)	(0.128)
Civil war in past 10 years	8.672***	9.190***	9.179***	-0.492	-0.945	-0.909
	(0.963)	(1.606)	(1.617)	(0.634)	(1.068)	(1.094)
Oil and gas pc	0.008***	0.010***	0.010***	-0.107**	-0.097**	-0.098**
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.052)	(0.048)	(0.048)
Population Size	-3.669***	-4.273***	-4.317***	0.275	0.119	0.131
	(0.393)	(0.990)	(1.008)	(0.169)	(0.343)	(0.353)
UN peacekeepers present		1.997			1.591	
		(1.543)			(2.466)	
UN peacekeepers count			0.240			0.177
			(0.179)			(0.317)
Constant	15.950***	18.179***	18.180***	0.791	2.222	2.114
	(2.518)	(5.444)	(5.502)	(1.542)	(3.229)	(3.316)
Observations	146	146	146	175	175	175
Clusters	23	23	23	40	40	40
Zeros	133.00	133.00	133.00	146.00	146.00	146.00
AIC	180.33	179.60	179.55	387.40	390.66	390.63
BIC	237.01	236.29	236.23	447.53	457.12	457.09
LL	-71.16	-70.80	-70.77	-174.70	-174.33	-174.31

Notes: The table reports estimates from count models. The dependent variable a count of election-related fatalities in the three months after the election. The unit of observation is a national election. Coefficients are reported with country-clustered standard errors. ***, **, and * indicates significance at the 1, 5, and 10% level.

but as material wealth increases, the spoils of victory become greater and worth fighting for. Also note that many countries in this analysis are still developing countries, and thus the high end of GDP per capita is not actually accounted for. Thus the positive coefficient is more indicative of a u-shaped form, where more violence is associated as countries become more developed, but then violence decreases again at high ends of developed, industrialized states. Beyond that, there are important regional differences. While natural resources and campaign violence are strongly associated with post-election violence in both regions, the effects point in different directions. This makes sense for pre-election violence, which is distinct and often motivated by different reasons than violence after elections. In contrast to post-vote violence, campaign violence is used to change turnout and vote choice, rather than to upend an announced outcome. Thus, we would expect inconsistent relationships. The mixed findings for natural resources is interesting and deserve more attention in future research. Beyond these control variables, other factors – including civil war history – achieve

significance only in the Latin American sample but not Africa. It is noteworthy, though, that peacekeeping is also not related to post-election violence, as it was not to UN provision of election assistance.

5 Mechanism

The previous section showed that UN technical assistance is significantly associated with a substantial reduction in post-election violence. As outlined in section 2, I argue that the mechanism through which TA reduces violence is trust in the election management body (EMB). To explore this mechanism, this section draws on a case study of elections in Guyana. This country is chosen as a representative case of how technical assistance can reduce post-election violence. It is intended as a plausibility test illustrating the causal mechanism – TA increasing capacity and credibility, and thereby reducing violence – rather than a definitive test of the argument. After historical and electoral background, I concentrate on the 2006 election because these were the first violence-free elections in over a decade and were preceded by extensive UN assistance and a substantial overhaul of the administrative process.

Nestled between Venezuela and Suriname, Guyana gained independence from the UK in 1966. Before the British handed over governance, the electoral system was changed from first-past-the-post to proportional representation in order to reduce the effect of ethnic tensions. As one of the poorest countries in the Western hemisphere and with a population of less than a million people,[78] Guyana's main fault lines run between the Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese. Afro-Guyanese represent about 30 percent of the population and mainly support the People's National Congress (PNC), which dominated politics from independence to 1992. Indo-Guyanese comprise about 43 percent and mainly support the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which has ruled since 1992.[79]

Although four elections were held between 1968 and 1985, the 1992 election was hailed as the first free and fair election since independence. Even though this 1992 and all subsequent elections were internationally endorsed as "free and fair," though, violence unfolded after the 1992, 1997, and 2001 elections whereas 2006 and 2011 remained peaceful.[80] Since credible observers have endorsed all elections since 1992, their consistent verdict cannot explain variation in violence. Similarly, little has changed on the domestic scene since the early 1990s.

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[78]Data from World Bank Development Indicators. In 2011, Guyana's GDP per capita rose to $1,200. The population size is around 750,000 people.

[79]The remaining population is of mixed heritage (17 percent) and of Amerindian descent (9 percent).

[80]GEV data. This data is consistent with Nelda29 except for 2011 (which is not available) and 1992 (which Nelda29 says had riots). According to GEV data, 1992 was peaceful after the election; but election-day was violent, with 2 people killed, 200 arrested and property damage in the capital, Georgetown.

In contrast, technical assistance and the changes in electoral administration it generated, are a plausible reason for reduced violence in the 2006 and 2011 elections. Table 5 shows IO support and post-election violence for Guyana's national elections.[81]

Table 5: Guyana's TA Support and Post-Election Violence

Election	Extent of TA Support	Post-Election Violence
1992	extensive	no
1997	limited	yes
2001	limited	yes
2006	extensive	no
2011	limited	no

A common theme throughout Guyana's post-vote violence is the refusal of some political parties to accept the election results, caused by parties' distrust of the election commission (GECOM) and rumors spread by the local media: "In the decades following independence in 1966, voting ... was a harbinger of instability and violence. With each poll came *accusations* of stuffed ballot boxes and election malpractice, stoked ... by biased reports from the country's polarized media."[82] The skepticism of the election process and media reports to that effect regularly caused the opposition PNC party to challenge the announced results through violent street demonstrations. Guyanese came to expect violence around their elections. As the head of the election commission (GECOM) put it, "Every single election in this country was associated with bloodshed, burning ... It was as if concomitant with an election there must be mayhem."[83]

Forbes Burnham ruled Guyana as a competitive authoritarian regime from 1966 until his death in 1985. Under his tenure, elections were regularly rigged, the government used violence and intimidation against the opposition, and curtailed independent media.[84] In 1974, Burnham declared the PNC party paramount and the country a socialist state, tightening relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union, and nationalizing most industries. After Burnham's death in 1985, economic and international pressure for reform mounted. President Hoyte took over, abolished the one-party state, rolled back socialist policies, and began

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[81]For UNDP and IFES support for the 1992 election, see IFES 1992, 15-16. UNDP support in 2001 and 2006, see UNDP 2010, 25. For UNDP support of the 2011 elections, see http://www.undp.org.gy/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=88

[82]Commonwealth, "Hopes for peaceful elections in Guyana as media strike deal," 13 April 2010. Available at http://secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/news/34580/34581/222429/1304codeofconductguyana.htm Accessed 6 April 2014. Itallics added.

[83]GECOM head Surujbally, quoted in Chaubey 2011, 2. Also see EAB 2006, 13.

[84]Levitsky and Way 2010, 147.

electoral reforms. As part of these reforms, Hoyte transferred responsibility for the election process to a newly created, more independent election commission (EC). The commission overhauled the voter registry, which made proxy and overseas vote fraud much more difficult. As a result, the PNC lost control over the election administration. Change did not occur over night, though, as the extent of electoral reforms needed was overwhelming. Further, voter confidence in elections had been shattered by decades of manipulation.

Following Burnham's death, the first elections were held in 1992 after a two-year delay due to insufficient preparations.[85] President Hoyte's electoral reforms also included efforts for a new voters' list, rule changes, and a new chairman of the elections commission. Beginning in 1991, the UNDP supported electoral reforms quite extensively: it "paid the monthly rent for the Elections Commission building; provided computer hardware, software, and technical personnel for voter registration, logistics, and vote tabulation efforts; and vehicles and staff for Election Day support."[86] IFES provided further technical support, while other international organizations provided logistical support (generators, ballot boxes, and signage).[87] The international observers – CC and CW – endorsed the election, as did the domestic observer (EAB). The 1992 election resulted in a power transition, with the PPP party gaining a majority after PNC had ruled since the 1960s. The election result was implemented smoothly, with the PNC leaving power peacefully.[88] No post-election violence broke out.

In contrast to 1992, the 1997 elections received only limited technical support, and violence broke out when the opposition PNC challenged the result. In the run-up to the 1997 elections, technical assistance was limited: the UNDP did not provide election assistance, and IFES' assistance was primarily logistical support: special paper for the voters' list, UV lamps to verify ID cards, and a new computer system for the Commission headquarter (hardware, software, training).[89] The PPP party received 55 percent and the PNC 40 percent of the vote. As before, domestic and international observers – IFES, CW, OAS – endorsed the election.[90]

However, administrative breakdowns delayed the announcement of results, triggering

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[85]International advisors from the Carter Center and the Commonwealth advised to postpone the election because they deemed preparations insufficient.

[86]IFES 1992, 15-16.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Levitsky and Way 2010, 149. On the 1992 election, also see Carroll and Pastor 1993.

[89]IFES 1998, 1, 26. UNDP supported the coordinated between international observers. Two UNDP staff members were present but these were resident representatives, who also coordinate other economic, health, and education programs in the host country. Also see the government's account of elections, which does not mention the UNDP for 1997, at `http://www.guyana.org/post_election97.htm` Accessed 6 April 2014.

[90]For a summary of all statements, see `http://www.guyana.org/post_election97.htm` Accessed 6 April 2014.

violent protests for weeks. After ballots were counted at polling stations, it took more than twelve hours for the results and ballot boxes to reach the commission's headquarters;[91] this was a significant delay given Guyana's small geographic dimensions. The transmission breakdown deepened distrust of the commission's work and led the opposition (and losing) PNC party to protest the results violently with riots and massive demonstrations in the capital, Georgetown. A further two-week delay in results announcement[92] also aggravated tensions until CARICOM mediators brokered an agreement, known as the Herdmanston Accord, for a full recount and further electoral reforms. The international audit of the election confirmed the results, finding only marginal differences.[93]

The Herdmanston Accord of January 1998 ended weeks of post-election unrest and called for a re-drafting of the constitution, further electoral reforms, and new elections within three years. The election commission was established a permanent body, the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), in 2000. Acknowledging the ethnic basis of election violence, new electoral laws made it a criminal offense for anyone to do or say something that can result in racial or ethnic violence or hatred – with deterrent costs. Any candidate or party found in violation of this law could be barred from running for five years, face half a million USD penalty, and be subject to a special inquiry commission (which formed only after the 2001 election).[94]

While these were substantial reforms, they did not address the administrative shortfalls of 1997,[95] so that 2001 represented a deja-vu of sorts: "The crises of confidence surrounding the 1997 and 2001 electoral processes is ... a direct result of electoral flaws – not fraud – compounded by a lack of political good will and trust. When added to misinformation, inflammatory statements and actions, the potential for civil commotion increases significantly."[96] Similar to 1997, the PPP won (with a slight majority), international and domestic monitors endorsed the election,[97] and administrative problems again led to the PNC challenge and violent demonstrations. The administrative problems included citizens missing from the voter roll and a four-day delay in the announcement of results by GECOM. Local media played an important role in speculating about reasons for the delay, fueling rumors of malpractice. Again, the opposition PNC was convinced of rigging and rejected the results

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[91]EAB, see `http://www.guyana.org/post_election97.htm`

[92]Elections were held on 15 December 1997 and results announced 30 December 1997. Riots lasted into the new year.

[93]See `http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/pres17_98.jsp`

[94]Chaubey 2011, 3

[95]Chaubey 2011, 4.

[96]EAB 2006, 13.

[97]International monitors were the European Union, the Carter Center, and the Commonwealth. These IOs supported a domestic monitors under an umbrella organization, EAB.

with weeks-long violent riots, resulting in four deaths and property damage.[98]

5.1   Guyana's 2006 Elections

In the run-up to the 2006 elections, Guyana received extensive technical support from the UNDP and IFES, with international donors covering over half of the $7 million budget. None of the reforms were magic, but most were overdue, and several contributed to a peaceful post-election period. The reforms fall into two groups: support to institutions (GECOM voter registry and tabulation, media monitoring) and support for civil society (voter education, communication, violence monitoring, and peacebuilding).[99] Guyana chose deliberately to not only request TA support but to outsource important implementation positions to foreigners because domestic leaders would face greater distrust in the ethnically polarized climate.

Institutional reforms for GECOM focused on updating the voter registry and speeding vote tabulation. In previous electoral cycles, the voter registry was mainly updated in the few months prior to polling, which coincided with party campaigning. This politicized the registry process and undermined credibility in the registry as well as voter ID cards. In response, GECOM changed the timing of this process by introducing a *continuous* registration system; this meant updating the voters' roll since October 2005 instead of summer 2006 for the 28 August 2006 election. It also established more permanent and temporary registration offices in each region, concentrated on the more populous coastal areas and Georgetown. In addition, GECOM introduced technological innovations, such as "check digits" and parallel coding to reduce human error, and biometrics (photo and fingerprints) collected by door-to-door verification. To check fingerprints for multiple registrations, GECOM deliberately involved an external actor (a US vendor) to allay parties' distrust of domestic institutions.[100] GECOM also chose a foreigner (a British citizen) to head the IT department "to quell public perceptions of political bias" after the two prior Guyanese heads since 2001 resigned in frustration about distrust against them.[101] The IT department at GECOM is responsible for entering and storing data on voter registration.

To speed the dissemination of results after polling – whose delay had previously led to rise of rumors and violence – it increased phone capacity and made each of the ten regions report to the national headquarter rather than thousands of polling stations. GECOM decentralized the process by having each polling station tabulate and announce results locally, and also

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[98]Violence data from GEVD. Also see Chaubey 2011, 2; Commonwealth 2006, 10, 37; and "A small riot in Guyana," *The Economist,* 12 April 2001. Available at `http://www.economist.com/node/569348` Accessed 6 April 2014.

[99]Much of the following discussion draws on Chaubey 2011.

[100]Chaubey 2011, 6.

[101]Chaubey 2011, 11.

added new staff and polling stations in overworked districts (most populous regions).[102] These reforms were effective: the commission released results within three days of voting (instead of 6 days after 2001 and 15 days after 1997), reducing opportunity for rumors and frustration to spread.

A third institutional reform, funded by the UNDP, focused on a media monitoring unit (MMU), which was responsible for monitoring and enforcing the media code of conduct. That code, drafted and signed by local media representatives, aimed to eliminate inaccurate, biased, or inflammatory statements, which had played a key player in instigating violence in earlier elections.[103] Again, external help was enlisted for this purpose, with a veteran journalist from the BBC leading the effort.[104] The MMU kept a tab on inflammatory language and equal reporting (documenting inches in newspapers and minutes in broadcast media). Violating media outlets were notified in writing and referred to an independent panel – also financed by UNDP – and composed of two veteran journalists from external Caribbean countries. As a result, the media was much more responsible in its reporting.[105]

Apart from institutional reforms, technical assistance also worked with civil society. This included voter education about the process and implemented reforms, local monitoring of election violence, and a social cohesion program to mitigate ethnic tensions. IFES implemented its Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) Program with a local NGO, the Electoral Assistance Bureau (EAB). The IFES-EAB collaboration trained citizens to monitor election violence in their communities by observing rallies and documenting cases of violence, intimidation, threats, tensions. The EVER project operated in seven of the most affected regions. This program was created to "monitor, report and analyze election-related violence,"[106] empowering civil society and creating greater accountability for (potential) perpetrators. EAB issued six reports between June and October 2006, detailing any tensions, accusations and incidents and naming perpetrators.[107] The program seems to have had some deterrent affect, as "politicians frequently cited the reports to warn supporters against using violence."[108]

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[102]Chaubey 2011, 8.

[103]Commonwealth statement, see http://secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/news/34580/34581/222429/1304codeofconductguyana.htm Accessed 6 April 2014.

[104]Chaubey 2011, 7.

[105]Commonwealth quoted in Chaubey 2011, 12.

[106]EAB 2007, 23

[107]For example, the fourth EAB-EVER report stated "People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) party supporters stoned the house of and severely beat a People's National Congress/Reform One Guyana (PNC/R-1G) party candidate on August 8th at Hope West, Enmore, East Coast Demerara; PPP/C supporters were caught tearing down the posters of PNC/R-1G by the supporters of the PNC/R-1G at Industrial Site, Ruimveldt, Georgetown on August 11." EAB 2006 report #4, 2.

[108]Chaubey 2011, 10.

Where, as in Guyana, post-election violence was triggered by citizens' distrust and *perceptions* of malpractice, institutional reforms are only of limited effect unless they are communicated broadly to citizens. Civil society work also focused on voter education generally and communicating GECOM reforms specifically. Three weeks before the election, GECOM released a statement about its "safeguards aimed at preventing (i) multiple voting, (ii) other forms of skullduggery, and (iii) any potential for dissatisfaction on election-day."[109] This six-page document outlined how difficult personation/multiple voting had become due to the photo ID, verification, and indelible ink. Ballot stuffing had also become more challenging due to transparent ballot boxes, the continuous presence party representatives and the police in every polling station, the temporary presence of domestic and international monitors, and the local count of ballots in front of these stakeholders. It pointed out that any violating elector or staff person "will be subjected to questioning, and possibly, be arrested immediately."[110] These were not empty threats. On election-day, a presiding officer from district four (which includes the capital) was suspended within the hour "after allowing a number of people to vote, even though they were not on the list."[111]

Finally, another civil society initiative focused on non-violence campaigning and ethnic inclusiveness. The EAB recruited local VIPs to convey the importance of peaceful elections on the radio and television. In addition, the UNDP financially supported the inter-religious organization (IRO) to implement a "social cohesion program" to bridge the divide between the Afro- and Indo-Guyanese communities. This program organized marches for peace and thousands of conversations between ethnic groups and gave them an opportunity to interact with each other, and build trust on the local level.[112] Again, the UNDP took the lead in implementing the program and enlisted the help of a foreigner, this time a European development advisor, because of mistrust against Guyanese government officials.

The extensive technical assistance contributed to the first peaceful transition of power in more than a decade. Not only did the losing PNC accept the results in 2006, it even conceded defeat a day before official results were announced. The PNC conceded defeat, thereby allowing a peaceful implementation of the election result. The EAB directly attributed post-election peace "to the acceptance of the election results by all of contesting parties" and noted that in prior elections "the main opposition party had not been satisfied with the elections or their results, and in marching to air grievances, violence and looting broke out."[113]

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[109]GECOM release on 8 August 2006. Available at `www.gecom.org.gy/pdf/release_polling_safeguards.pdf` Accessed 6 April 2014.

[110]Ibid.

[111]Commonwealth 2006, 41.

[112]UNDP 2009, 68.

[113]EAB 2006 report #6, 2.

The front page of the Guyanese Chronicle summarized this as a "peaceful poll surprise."[114] Combined with the absence of campaign violence, the 2006 elections were declared to be "free, fair and peaceful for the first time since Independence."[115] IO technical assistance was key in creating more peaceful elections. The UNDP concluded that

> facilitation by the international community converted what was almost universally expected to be an elections process fraught with violence into the most peaceful and universally endorsed electoral process in Guyana's 40 years of post-independence history.[116]

Guyana demonstrates the importance of running "administratively credible elections that limit the space for rumor and suspicion to take hold.[117] In 2011, the UNDP offered limited assistance,[118] mostly focusing on media monitoring, and these elections again remained peaceful. Guyana also illustrates how IOs can substitute for local processes when domestic capacity is insufficient or trust has eroded. Guyanese officials consistently "out-sourced" programs to UNDP and deliberately chose foreigners for key positions because local officials faced higher skepticism in the charged political environment.

5.2 Alternative Explanations

Several competing explanations of the switch to peaceful elections in 2006 can be ruled out. First, international election monitoring has low explanatory leverage because external observers were present at all elections since 1992 and have consistently endorsed each election.[119] Their positive verdict has not kept Guyanese parties and voters from challenging election results in 1992, 1997, and 2001, which all resulted in street protests and violence.

Second, several domestic factors can be ruled out as causes. The electoral system (PR) and winning party (PPP) did not change since 1992. The PNC has lost every election since 1992 but the same outcome (defeat) was sometimes accepted (when seen as fair) and sometimes rejected (when not seen as fair). Economic development did not notably improve until 2011, when it cleared the $1,000 per capita GDP hurdle. One potential competing explanation, decreased voter interest, is plausible but has quite different effects in other

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[114]Commonwealth 2006, 52.

[115]EAB 2007, 8.

[116]UNDP 2009, 67.

[117]Chaubey 2011, 2.

[118]Limited UNDP assistance consisted of USD $850,000 and a focus on media monitoring instead of the nearly $4 million and comprehensive approach for the 2006 elections. For 2011 funding, see `http://www.undp.org.gy/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=88`

[119]The Carter Center attended in 1992, 2001, and 2006. The EU attended in 2001. The Commonwealth of Nations attended in 1997, 2001, and 2006.

countries. While turnout decreased by 20 percent in 2006 compared to 2001, it remains unclear whether this reduction in voter interest causes less violence. As a counter-example, Afghanistan's 2014 election was also the first peaceful contest in decades but voter turnout sharply increased from about 37 percent in 2009 to 60 percent in 2014.

A more promising competing explanation is that citizens became tired of election violence, and were ready for a new approach. However, that citizen tiredness/weariness may itself be a result of the non-violence programs implemented with UNDP and IFES support. TA peacebuiding programs on the need for peaceful elections, the consequences of violence, and mediation initiatives were intended to make citizens more aware of the human cost. Therefore, if the TA initiative had any effects, it *should* make citizens weary of violence and stimulate discussion about alternative means. In that way, a change in voter and party attitude may well have contributed to peaceful elections; but it would represent an indirect effect of technical support on violence rather than a competing explanation.

6   Conclusion

Since its inception, the fundamental purpose of the UN has been "maintaining worldwide peace and security."[120] Scholars have assessed how well the UN has served this purpose, but the majority of research has looked for the lost keys only where the light shines – in civil war countries. Although not as obvious as traditional peacekeeping, UN peacebuilding has been far more extensive, deployed to more than a hundred countries since 1989. Thus, any effort to measure UN effectiveness in maintaining peace based only on civil war countries is incomplete.

This paper investigates the effect of UN peacebuilding in a broad array of countries through election technical assistance. This prominent type of peacebuilding aims at boosting the capacity of election management bodies, reforming the voter registry, and conducting voter education. I argue that the provision of such assistance in the run-up to elections can contribute to more peaceful post-election periods. Using UN data on election assistance and original data on post-election violence, I present statistical evidence that technical assistance has significantly reduced violence in Latin America and Africa since 1990. This effect is also substantively important: technical assistance is associated with a 42 percentage point decrease in fatalities, which can make the difference between violent and peaceful aftermaths.

This documents that peacebuilding can be an effective tool of conflict management, preventing conflicts from escalating in the first place as well as reducing the risk of *re*-lapsing into intense conflict. The mechanism linking UN assistance and reduced post-vote violence

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[120]UN Charter, Article I.

involves the loser's consent to the announced results. When citizens trust the electoral commission to follow the rules, they are more likely to perceive the outcome as fair and acceptable, which should in turn lower incentives for election challenges and violence after voting. The mechanism of trust-building is illustrated with Guyana's experience with assistance and violence. Beyond exemplifying the causal mechanism linking technical support and reduced violence, the case study of Guyana also illustrates another interesting feature of IO support: that it can *substitute* for local processes when domestic capacity is insufficient or trust eroded. Guyanese officials consistently "out-sourced" programs to UNDP and deliberately chose foreigners for key positions because local officials faced higher skepticism in the charged political environment.

The violence-reducing effect of this peacebuilding initiative is a conservative estimate. An analysis of country demand, UN supply, and overall selection, shows that UN election assistance goes where it is most needed. Local demand for election assistance is highest when governments are weak in terms of resources, and the UN is most likely to respond to this demand when the domestic political will for improvement and proper elections is high. UN supply, however, is unrelated to civil war history in Africa, again suggesting that scholarship would benefit from broadening the horizon beyond civil-war countries. Analyzing the domestic-international dynamic and their component parts (demand and supply) separately instead of the aggregate, eventual outcome (deployment) also advances prior research on UN peace operations.

As this paper has shown, peacebuilding through election technical assistance can empower civil society and also reform state institutions – helping to transform national election commissions into capable and credible bodies, and furthering cooperation between election management and the security sector. Most centrally, this assistance can help improve the administration of elections, making them legitimate fora for competition. It is not a panacea; changes crucially depend on domestic political will and take time. But it is a promising tool of conflict management and democracy promotion that has been underappreciated.

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8 Appendix

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Latin America					Sub-Saharan Africa				
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
UN TA	0.244	0.431	0	1	180	0.253	0.436	0	1	217
UN TA percent	0.219	0.31	0	1	181	0.201	0.337	0	1	220
UN TA demand	0.410	0.494	0	1	134	0.396	0.491	0	1	164
UN TA demand lead-time	8.547	6.476	0	31	53	9.754	7.748	0	48	65
UN TA demand lead-time, logged	2.004	0.764	0	3.466	53	2.118	0.781	0	3.892	65
Post-election fatalities count	4.415	25.426	0	236	142	14.103	102.422	0	1000	195
Post-election fatalities count, logged	0.242	0.921	0	5.468	142	0.422	1.181	0	6.909	195
Pre-election fatalities count	3.232	17.201	0	163	142	4.482	18.277	0	133	195
Pre-election fatalities count, logged	0.273	0.911	0	5.100	142	0.433	1.068	0	4.898	195
Previous election violence	0.316	0.466	0	1	174	0.521	0.501	0	1	215
Transitional government	0.064	0.245	0	1	173	0.144	0.352	0	1	202
Incumbent confident	0.306	0.462	0	1	144	0.606	0.49	0	1	155
Poll type	0.609	0.489	0	1	174	0.882	0.847	0	2	220
cowcode	103.643	39.518	40	165	185	489.527	61.426	402	625	220
year	1998.973	5.475	1990	2008	185	1999.473	5.207	1990	2008	220
Civil war in past 5 years	0.260	0.44	0	1	181	0.255	0.437	0	1	220
Civil war in past 10 years	0.381	0.487	0	1	181	0.318	0.467	0	1	220
UN peacekeeping dummy	0.094	0.293	0	1	181	0.045	0.209	0	1	220
UN peacekeeper count	235.544	1175.062	0	7963.167	181	275.745	1811.444	0	16160.17	220
UN peacekeeper count, logged	0.596	1.968	0	8.983	181	0.351	1.661	0	9.69	220
GDP per capita, logged	1.272	0.504	0.323	2.461	178	-0.700	1.024	-2.846	2.079	212
Opposition vote share	28.832	23.134	0	83.55	185	9.903	16.425	0	65.540	206
Executive constraints	5.769	1.378	1	7	173	3.419	1.876	1	7	186
Chief executive years in office	1.141	0.711	0	3.761	181	2.137	0.757	0.693	3.664	206
Natural resources capita	325.755	986.696	0	8545.842	181	-5.413	6.347	-9.210	9.492	206
Population size, logged	9.353	1.17	6.584	12.133	181	8.327	1.652	4.272	11.873	220
ODA per capita, logged	3.775	1.168	0.868	6.43	181	-2.748	0.928	-6.03	-0.101	220

Notes: Variables below the line are lagged by a year.

Table 7: Testing for Selection

Scope	Latin America		Sub-Saharan Africa	
Model	1	2	3	4
Probability of post-election violence	3.278***	2.768**	-1.360	-0.957
	(1.263)	(1.130)	(0.870)	(1.213)
UN TA percent	8.809***	9.159***	1.338**	1.811**
	(1.721)	(1.532)	(0.662)	(0.788)
ODA pc	0.452	0.251	-0.260	-0.703*
	(0.287)	(0.845)	(0.266)	(0.410)
GDP pc	2.118*	1.514	-1.266***	-1.331***
	(1.090)	(0.971)	(0.473)	(0.488)
Year	-0.015	-0.054	-0.070***	-0.067***
	(0.046)	(0.056)	(0.023)	(0.022)
Executive constraints		0.292		-0.017
		(0.227)		(0.139)
Poll type		0.565		0.149
		(0.539)		(0.265)
Natural resources pc		0.000**		-0.037
		(0.000)		(0.048)
Population Size		0.007		-0.432
		(0.791)		(0.352)
Constant	20.507	99.294	136.856***	133.154***
	(91.447)	(109.616)	(45.918)	(44.545)
Observations	172	172	177	177
Clusters	23	23	40	40
AIC	118.75	122.22	173.94	177.47
BIC	137.64	153.70	193.00	209.23
LL	-53.38	-51.11	-80.97	-78.74

Notes: The table reports estimates from logit models. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of UN election technical assistance. The unit of observation is a national election. Coefficients are reported with country-clustered standard errors. ***, **, and * indicates significance at the 1, 5, and 10% level.