

Perceptions of Bias and Local-Level Peacekeeping

How UN Peacekeepers Prevent the Violent Escalation of Local Disputes

William G. Nomikos*

Abstract

How do peacekeeping operations prevent violence from breaking out? Existing research focuses on how peacekeepers incentivize armed groups to adhere to negotiated peace agreements. But these accounts do not examine how peacekeepers manage conflicts that arise from local agendas at the level of the individual, family, or clan. By ignoring the conduct of peacekeepers at the local level, we risk missing a key factor that can explain why some operations succeed where others do not. In this paper, I argue that peacekeepers prevent locally-motivated disputes from escalating to violence by incentivizing intergroup cooperation as a means of resolving grievances. I draw upon evidence from fieldwork conducted in Mali, the site of an ongoing ethnic conflict with United Nations and French peacekeeping operations. I leverage a lab-in-the-field and survey experiment implemented across post-conflict areas of Mali to demonstrate that UN peacekeepers increase intergroup cooperation and decrease the likelihood of violence relative to domestic security-sector actors or French peacekeepers. My findings further suggest that perceptions of the UN as a relatively unbiased enforcer of individual interactions account for its ability to mitigate the risk that local disputes will escalate and become violent. These findings highlight a concrete pathway by which the UN is uniquely capable of building peace in post-conflict settings.

April 23, 2019

Word Count: 11,476

Key words: peacekeeping, peacebuilding, UN, ethnic conflict, civil war, local conflict

*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis. Email: wnomikos@wustl.edu.

Introduction

In the aftermath of civil wars, intracommunal disputes—disagreements between individuals, families, or clans living in the same community about local issues such as cattle herding, property rights, or the value of goods—can quickly become violent. International peacekeeping operations send troops to communities with the explicit purpose of limiting the escalation of such disputes. For instance, a clash between farmers and cattle herders in north-eastern Cote d’Ivoire in March 2016 claimed the lives of 20 people and forced the displacement of thousands more, casting a hard-won peace in the country into doubt.¹ However, the United Nations peacekeeping mission to Cote d’Ivoire immediately deployed 105 peacekeepers to the area, stopping any further violence.² Not all peacekeeping operations have the same level of success, however. Despite a constant military presence since January 2013 and a renewed investment in local peacekeeping operations since 2015, France has failed to contain the escalation of local disputes in Mali.³ In 2018 alone, more than 200 individuals died in more than 40 villages near French areas of responsibility as a result of violence from intracommunal disputes.⁴ What accounts for the divergence in local peacekeeping effectiveness and what are the implications for broader peacekeeping success?

To answer these questions, I offer an account of how UN peacekeepers are uniquely capable of preventing intracommunal disputes from undermining the prospects of peace in a state recovering from civil war. Intracommunal disputes frequently arise in post-conflict states.⁵ Multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations offer the international community a powerful tool to address the threat that these disputes pose to international order—a typical

¹“Cote d’Ivoire: au moins 20 morts dans des affrontements à Bouna,” *RFI Afrique*, March 25, 2016.

²“Final progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire,” January 2017; “Security Council Presidential Statement Marks Withdrawal of United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire, Affirms Continuing Partnership in Next Phase,” June 2017.

³Gillier 2015.

⁴“Self-Defense Group Abuses in Central Mali,” *Human Rights Watch*, December 7, 2018.

⁵Autesserre 2010.

such mission deploys more than 10,000 peacekeeping troops and spends more than \$1 billion annually. A robust record of cross-national evidence suggests that these operations frequently succeed in keeping the peace.⁶ However, these accounts do not examine UN actions designed to address local-level disputes, focusing instead on international efforts to persuade leaders of armed groups to abide by peace agreements.⁷ Recent critiques of the UN argue that peacekeepers fail to contain intracommunal disputes because of this “top-down” focus on elites.⁸ By contrast, this paper documents efforts by UN peacekeeping operations to prevent disputes from escalating and presents evidence that peacekeepers succeed at this task.

Specifically, this paper makes two contributions, one theoretical and one empirical. First, I highlight a pathway by which UN peacekeepers build peace from the bottom up. Drawing on social psychological and behavioral economic models of cooperation, I develop a theory of local-level peacekeeping that illustrates how domestic perceptions of the UN as an unbiased actor shape peacekeepers’ ability to prevent local disputes from escalating. Because civilians living in post-conflict settings perceive of the UN as relatively unbiased, they find UN peacekeeper threats to punish any party that violently escalates a dispute credible. As a result of this deterrent effect, the presence of UN peacekeeping patrols encourages residents of post-conflict settings to cooperate rather than fight. By promoting a peaceful means to address grievances, UN peacekeepers provide civilians with an alternative to violence. In contrast, domestic groups tend to perceive of non-UN peacekeepers as biased, neo-colonial occupiers driven by a desire to protect favored minorities. When non-UN forces intervene, locals do not believe that peacekeepers will protect them should a dispute escalate. Consequently, non-UN deterrence is likelier to fail and lead to intergroup violence.

Second, the paper presents causally identified evidence of the ability of UN peacekeepers to contain local-level conflicts drawn from fieldwork conducted with subjects of a UN peace-

⁶Fortna and Howard 2008.

⁷Walter 2002; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Fortna 2008; Howard 2008.

⁸Autesserre 2015.

keeping operation.⁹ Using research designs pre-registered with Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP), I present evidence consistent with my theory from a lab-in-the-field experiment and a survey experiment conducted in Mali, the setting of an ongoing ethnic conflict begun by members of the Tuareg minority in 2012. Although French military forces and UN peacekeepers deployed to Mali in 2013, intracommunal disputes continue to plague the country. The lab-in-the-field experiment leverages a trust game played with 512 residents of Bamako, the capital of Mali. I randomly assigned respondents to a control group or a treatment in which they were told that either UN or French peacekeepers would observe their behavior. This approach allows observation of actual intergroup cooperation under circumstances that do not introduce additional factors that may bolster or undermine cooperation. The survey experiment connects the theory's micro-level mechanisms with the broader prospects of peace. Respondents read about a hypothetical land dispute between farmers and cattle herders and discuss their beliefs about its potential resolution. I conducted the survey with 874 residents of eight neighborhoods of Bamako and twelve rural villages of central Mali.

Together, these experiments demonstrate that UN peacekeepers uniquely lower the likelihood that an intracommunal dispute will become violent by promoting intergroup cooperation. Specifically, the experiments yield three findings. First, UN peacekeepers increase intergroup cooperation. Malians who believe UN peacekeepers monitored their behavior in the lab experiment sent approximately 33% more of their initial allotment to their non-coethnic partners compared to control. Second, UN peacekeepers decrease the likelihood that a dispute will become violent. Respondents who were told that a UN patrol discovered the land dispute in the survey experiment were 23% less likely to say that it would become violent compared to those respondents who were not given this information. I do not find

⁹This paper is a part of a growing set of studies that incorporate causal inference strategies into fieldwork in an active UN peacekeeping setting. See [Mironova and Whitt 2015](#); [Blair 2014, 2016](#); [Karim 2017](#); [Beber et al. 2017](#).

corresponding effects for French peacekeeping in either experiment. Third, analysis of interviews with participants in the studies as well as the results of a nonparametric causal mediation model confirm that perceptions of the UN as an unbiased actor account for its effectiveness.

This study extends existing research in political science, economics, and security studies that analyzes the conditions under which the international community can reduce the fragility of post-conflict settings.¹⁰ Specifically, the paper homes in on a new causal mechanism by which international actors can reduce the likelihood that violence will emerge in a weakly institutionalized setting. I expect the findings presented in the paper to generalize to other post-conflict settings because Mali is a difficult test for the theory. Because of UN cooperation with French military operations in the area, some Malians remain dubious of the impartiality of the UN peacekeeping presence in Mali. In UN peacekeeping settings lacking a state-led military contingent, a greater proportion of locals are likely to perceive of the UN as unbiased. For this reason, UN peacekeepers are likely less effective in Mali than they would be in other settings.

The paper proceeds as follows. The first section outlines existing explanations for the success of peacekeeping operations. I subsequently contrast these explanations to my theory, highlighting the importance of local perceptions of international actor bias in shaping peacekeeping outcomes. I follow the discussion of the theory with an overview of intracommunal disputes and peacekeeping operations in Mali, the setting of the paper's empirical tests. Next, I describe the research design and results from the lab-in-the-field experiment as well as the research design and findings of the survey experiment. After the discussion of the evidence in favor of the main theory, I assess the viability of alternative mechanisms. A final section concludes with a discussion of my findings, implications for further research on

¹⁰Berman et al. 2011; Beath et al. 2012, 2013; Blattman et al. 2014; Crost et al. 2014; Sexton 2016; Findley 2018.

local-level peacekeeping, and policy prescriptions for decision-makers pursuing peacekeeping operations.

How Peacekeepers Prevent Dispute Escalation

The containment of intracommunal disputes is key to the success of peacekeeping operations. The escalation of these disputes changes the economies of states, supports the existence of armed militias, undermines the legitimacy of state institutions, and spurs the internal displacement of entire ethnic groups.¹¹ The resulting instability diminishes the ability of peacekeepers to forge national-level peace. The ongoing “cattle war” in the Central African Republic illustrates how the escalation of local-level disputes destabilizes an entire state. Majority Christian militias, known as the anti-Balaka, financed their rebellion through banditry, targeting the Muslim Peulh (Fulbe) civilian population and their cattle.¹² The local-level clashes have led to thousands of deaths and the displacement of tens of thousands of Peulh without their cattle. It has also radically changed the shape of the economy—herd figures have dropped by 77% according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The cattle war, a conflict driven almost entirely by local agendas, has thus become the primary driver of instability in the Central African Republic.¹³

Although scholars have studied local-level conflict and peacekeeping outcomes in isolation, the existing literature has offered relatively few systematic explanations for the connection between the two. Research has shown that peacekeepers lower the likelihood that a post-conflict state will return to violence,¹⁴ increase cooperation between leaders of armed

¹¹Autesserre 2010.

¹²“‘Cattle war’ rages amid Central African Republic sectarian violence,” *News 24*, September 2, 2015.

¹³Jan-Philipp Scholz and Adrian Kriesch “The forgotten war in the Central African Republic,” *Deutsche Welle*, April 30th 2017.

¹⁴Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 2006; Gilligan and Sergenti 2008.

groups,¹⁵ increase the duration of post-conflict peace,¹⁶ stimulate economic development¹⁷ improve the prospects of peace in the midst of conflict,¹⁸ and reduce levels of civilian victimization by armed groups.¹⁹ Yet the dynamics by which peacekeepers prevent local disputes from destabilizing post-conflict states remain poorly understood.

Local-Level Peacekeeping Enforcement

Local-level peacekeeping enforcement is central to the success of peacekeeping operations. Specifically, international actors deploy peacekeepers—either from the UN or from a state—to patrol villages, towns, and neighborhoods of cities in order to maintain order.²⁰ These peacekeepers prevent the escalation of intracommunal disputes through the punishment or threat of punishment of individual violations of the law. Peacekeeping at this level is a question of deterrence. Peacekeepers aim to discourage locals from resolving their disputes violently or to prevent the continuing escalation of an already violent dispute. They draw a clear line between violence used to resolve disputes and the punishment of such violence. The message to local actors is clear—if they use violence, peacekeepers will respond in kind or detain them. As a result, residents of multiethnic communities are less likely to escalate disputes in the presence of peacekeepers. Hypothesis 1 summarizes this prediction.

Hypothesis 1 *Peacekeepers decrease the likelihood that individuals will violently escalate an intracommunal dispute.*

In cooperation with domestic police forces, traditional authorities, civil society leaders, and community leaders, peacekeepers interact with civilians, learn about ongoing disputes

¹⁵Mironova and Whitt 2015.

¹⁶Fortna 2004, 2008.

¹⁷Mvukiyehe and Samii 2010.

¹⁸Hultman et al. 2014; Ruggeri et al. 2017.

¹⁹Hultman et al. 2013; Bove and Ruggeri 2015; Fjelde et al. 2019.

²⁰I use the term “peacekeeper” as shorthand for any type of personnel from the UN or a state that enforces intracommunal disputes through coercive threats, be they military troops or police.

in a locality, and attempt to stop such disputes from escalating. As an example, consider the duties of Gladys Ngwepekeum Nkeh, a Cameroonian officer in UNPOL deployed as part of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). During one of her daily patrols in a neighborhood of Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, Nkeh discovered that a resident of the neighborhood had raped a thirteen-year-old girl. In a state with limited security and judicial institutions, events like this rape can begin a cycle of retaliation and counter-retaliation between families and members of a community. Instead, Nkeh and her UNPOL contingent quickly apprehended a suspect, helping bring him to justice swiftly.²¹

Existing Explanations for Peacekeeping Success

Scholars have offered two mechanisms to explain variation in the success of local-level peacekeeping enforcement—capacity and information. First, multidimensional UN peacekeeping deployments possess substantial operational capacity, with an annual budget in excess of \$1 billion and 10,000 troops for operations in states like Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the South Sudan. As the logic goes, the more well-outfitted troops there are in a given locality, the more operational resources peacekeepers have to enforce local-level peace.²² The capacity mechanism, however, cannot explain why UN peacekeeping operations consistently outperform peace operations with more troops, more funding, and better training. For instance, the United States sent an annual *average* of \$62 billion and 105,160 troops to Iraq after the completion of combat operations, an order of magnitude more than what the best-equipped UN missions have had at their disposal.²³ Yet UN peacekeepers have

²¹“Meet Gladys Nkeh, a UN police officer in the Central African Republic,” *UN News* video, October 24, 2017.

²²Hultman et al. 2013; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Fjelde et al. 2019.

²³Neta C. Crawford, “US Budgetary Costs of Wars through 2016: \$4.79 Trillion and Counting Summary of Costs of the US Wars in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan and Homeland Security,” *Costs of War Project*, September 2016.

had much greater success in limiting the spread of violence driven by local agendas than the U.S. mission in Iraq.²⁴

Additionally, existing research has also emphasized the importance of having information about a dispute, including the setting in which the dispute takes place, in order to enforce the peace.²⁵ Information about a dispute allows peacekeepers to deter violence from escalating. According to these explanations, peacekeepers gather information through daily patrols around a locality.²⁶ Yet these theories do not explain why individuals would share information with peacekeepers. The sheer size of a peacekeeping operation does not guarantee automatically that peacekeepers will secure relevant information from local populations. In particular, UN peacekeeping operations rarely deploy enough troops to secure and fully occupy a given territory. For this reason, they cannot guarantee the safety of potential informants, eliminating individual incentives to collaborate with the UN.²⁷ Moreover, locals do not always understand the motivations of peacekeepers, making them reticent to cooperate enough to give vital information.²⁸

How Perceptions of Bias Shape Peacekeeping Outcomes

In contrast to existing explanations, I argue that perceptions of peacekeeper bias account for variation in the effectiveness of local peacekeeping enforcement. To unpack the mechanisms by which peacekeeping works at the micro-level, I draw upon a critical insight from the social psychology literature—the context and content of past and present interactions between individuals and the groups to which they belong shape their beliefs about each other’s biases.²⁹ In peacekeeping, perceived biases are central to the operational success of local-

²⁴Sambanis and Schulhofer-Wohl 2007.

²⁵Autesserre 2015.

²⁶Gordon and Young 2017.

²⁷Kalyvas 2006.

²⁸Pouligny 2006.

²⁹Tajfel et al. 1971; Brewer 1999, 2001.

level missions. I argue that UN peacekeepers are uniquely able to limit the escalation of intracommunal disputes because local populations perceive of them as relatively unbiased.

Sources of Perceptions of Bias

A complete discussion of the potential sources of perceived bias lies outside the scope of this study. Nonetheless, I posit that locals will perceive of peacekeepers from the UN as more unbiased than peacekeepers from a foreign state for at least three reasons.

First, the UN lacks a colonial legacy of intervention and targeted favoritism. Domestic populations associate states with favored groups—usually minorities—because of a history of colonial occupation or neo-colonial intervention. Colonial occupiers typically divided their subjects to subjugate and govern them. In some cases, colonial powers favored a particular ethnic group, typically a minority group. In other cases, they targeted certain minority groups, generating greater anti-colonial resentment among these groups than others. Members of non-favored groups have prior beliefs about the presence of international actors in their state that predate the ongoing conflict.³⁰ Locals will interpret contemporary peacekeeping through the prism of these priors. For this reason, domestic groups perceive of peacekeepers from states like the United Kingdom or France as biased. In contrast to states, multilateral international organizations such as the UN operate without the burdens of colonial legacies.³¹

In addition, locals will perceive of the UN as unbiased because the UN is, by construction, a multilateral international organization with a separate framework for peacekeeping. The UN has an established institutional mechanism—the Department of Peacekeeping Operations—that implements and leads its peacekeeping operations independently of states. The independence of this framework allows the UN to “launder” or “whitewash” their actions

³⁰Horowitz 1985; Tambiah 1989; Posner 2005.

³¹Bush and Prather 2018.

so as to disassociate from the potentially biased perceptions of states.³²

Finally, individuals are also more likely to perceive of the UN as unbiased because UN peacekeepers rarely victimize civilians.³³ When international actors commit violence against individuals from a certain group, they make other members of that group believe that the international actor is biased against them. For example, existing research has demonstrated that American violence increased Sunni tribal identification and support for insurgents in Iraq³⁴ and decreased the willingness of Pashtuns to cooperate with American forces in Afghanistan.³⁵ The difference between state-led and UN-led peacekeeping lies in the nature of their operations. States have broad and expansive mandates that permit the use of violence against civilians. Moreover, states couple ground patrols with aerial bombing campaigns that indiscriminately target civilians.³⁶ By contrast, UN peacekeeping operations' mandates limit, as much as possible, violence against civilians.³⁷ As a result, local citizens are less likely to perceive of the UN as biased against them.³⁸

Skeptics question whether the UN is truly unbiased. Some suggest that UN impartiality is a “delusion.”³⁹ According to this line of thinking, when an actor invests as much human and

³²Abbott and Snidal 1998, 2000.

³³A critical exception is when UN peacekeepers commit acts of sexual exploitation and assault (SEA) against local populations. The importance of civilian victimization to UN peacekeeping operation effectiveness, as I highlight in this paper, suggests that SEA is not merely a normative concern for the UN. Indeed, the unique advantages of UN peacekeeping operations hinge on its ability to limit SEA by peacekeepers moving forward. See Anderlini 2017; Karim and Beardsley 2017. I examine this issue from an empirical perspective in greater detail in the Online Appendix. I show that only 2% of men and women that I surveyed in Central Mali believe that UN peacekeepers commit SEA against locals. Nonetheless, reports of SEA should be a central concern for UN policy-makers.

³⁴Sambanis et al. 2012.

³⁵Lyall et al. 2013.

³⁶Shurkin 2014.

³⁷Brahimi 2000.

³⁸Existing research suggests that exposure to violence has no adverse effects on behavior toward members of an in-group. See Bellows and Miguel 2006; Blattman 2009; Voors et al. 2012; Gilligan et al. 2014. However, violence committed by international actors in peacekeeping operations can still have adverse effects on behaviors toward an out-group (e.g., an international actor or another ethnic group). A recent review of this literature concurs with this assessment. See Bauer et al. 2016, p. 1.

³⁹Betts 1994.

financial capital in a post-conflict state as the UN does, it cannot maintain its impartiality.⁴⁰ It is also possible that the bias of the UN Security Council in favor of certain armed groups might manifest in perceptions of individual UN peacekeepers.⁴¹ Indeed, research shows that member states use their position on the Security Council to influence where UN peacekeepers are posted.⁴² However, these theories apply to political elites and armed groups rather than citizens disputing over local issues. In fact, interviews and survey evidence suggest that regular citizens in states with UN peacekeeping missions express greater concern that the UN does too little than that it does too much.⁴³ Moreover, these critiques conflate unbiasedness and impartiality with neutrality.⁴⁴ Since the UN actively intervenes to maintain order, it is not neutral. However, since the UN applies force equally to any party or individual that disturbs the peace, domestic audiences will perceive of UN peacekeepers as relatively unbiased.

Unbiasedness Improves the Effectiveness of Local Peacekeeping

Unbiased peacekeepers convince individuals *not* to choose violent escalation as an option. For individuals embroiled in an intracommunal dispute, it is simply not worth it to use violence to resolve a dispute. The unbiased peacekeeper will, in their minds, stop any violence, attack any perpetrators of violence, or detain survivors. At best, violence will be ineffective. At worst, it will be counter-productive. The deterrent effect of unbiased peacekeepers also re-assures individuals that other parties to local-level disputes will not use violence for the same reason. Should they try, the unbiased peacekeeper will stop them. And so, by process of elimination, peaceful resolution becomes more appealing (less costly) than violence. By contrast, biased peacekeepers fail to reassure individuals that they will

⁴⁰Lake 2016.

⁴¹Talentino 2007; Benson and Kathman 2014; Rhoads 2016.

⁴²Mikulaschek 2017; Carnegie and Mikulaschek 2017.

⁴³Talentino 2007; Kelmendi and Radin 2016.

⁴⁴Kydd 2010.

protect them from violence by favored parties. Individuals from non-favored groups do not doubt that biased peacekeepers will punish them should they turn to violence.⁴⁵ They doubt, however, whether biased peacekeepers will punish their favored group to protect non-favored civilians from violence.

Regardless of the sources of its perceived unbiasedness, perceptions of the UN as unbiased directly improve its ability to contain intracommunal disputes. For instance, Muslim Peulh cattle herders and Christian farmers in the Central African Republic perceive of the UN as largely unbiased.⁴⁶ In any single dispute, the payoffs from escalation are relatively low for both Muslims and Christians since they will face swift retribution from the UN. Moreover, they do not have to worry that the other party in the dispute will use violence since UN peacekeepers will punish them as well. With violent alternatives no longer feasible, both sides will seek out a peaceful resolution to any dispute. In this way, the presence of UN peacekeepers in the Central African Republic has limited the spread of local-level conflict. By contrast, French peacekeepers have struggled to convince Muslim groups, including Peulh, that they are not biased in favor of the Christian anti-Balaka groups. For this reason, Muslim Peulh in intracommunal disputes with Christians have continued seeking the support of armed groups from the Séléka rebel group coalition rather than France.⁴⁷ These rebels frequently escalate disputes, continuing the cattle war in the Central African Republic.⁴⁸

Therefore, I expect that peacekeepers from the UN will have greater success than peacekeepers from a foreign state in persuading locals not to escalate an intracommunal dispute. Because members of the community will perceive of the UN as unbiased, they will find credible UN peacekeeper threats to punish any violations of the peace. Hypothesis 2 summarizes

⁴⁵Favretto 2009.

⁴⁶Lewis Mudge, “The UN Shouldn’t Fail the Central African Republic,” *Human Rights Watch*, November 14, 2017.

⁴⁷Because this coalition has officially been disbanded, members of these groups are also known as “ex-Séléka.”

⁴⁸“Muslims protest at French troops in Central African Republic,” *FRANCE 24*, December 12, 2013.

this argument. It contrasts with Hypothesis 1, which suggests that any peacekeeper, from the UN or a state, can contain intracommunal disputes.

Hypothesis 2 *UN peacekeepers decrease the likelihood that individuals will violently escalate an intracommunal dispute because they are perceived as unbiased.*

This argument implies that biased peacekeepers will fail to contain intracommunal disputes. Yet some scholars argue that bias may actually improve an international actor's chances for promoting peaceful outcomes. According to this perspective, only biased peacekeepers can credibly convince their favored group about the resolve of other ethnic groups since they are effectively "on their side."⁴⁹ Additionally, bias may reveal private information about an international peacekeeper's willingness or resolve to enforce peace.⁵⁰ Or, biased peacekeepers may have unique leverage over their favored parties, which they can use to promote peaceful outcomes.⁵¹

Bias is unlikely to help peacekeepers promote local-level peace, however, for two reasons.⁵² First, it is not clear why a biased peacekeeper would be able to persuade non-favored groups not to take violent action. Indeed, since they wish to achieve the best possible outcome for their favored group, non-favored groups will not take seriously private information held by biased peacekeepers. Similarly, biased peacekeepers will not hold any unique leverage over non-favored groups.⁵³ Second, while biased international actors may be well-suited to elite-level conflicts in which there exist informational asymmetries about relative power and resolve, they are less well-suited to local-level conflicts characterized by intergroup mistrust.⁵⁴ In these cases, biased peacekeepers will support their favored side, regardless of trustworthiness, making them unreliable enforcers of intracommunal interactions.

⁴⁹Kydd 2003; Smith and Stam 2003; Savun 2008.

⁵⁰Favretto 2009.

⁵¹Touval 1982; Zartman and Touval 1985.

⁵²Empirical evidence in favor of biased international actors is mixed. See Rauchhaus 2006; Savun 2008; Beber 2012.

⁵³For a similar discussion, see Kydd 2003, p. 298 and Beber 2012, p. 404.

⁵⁴Kydd 2006.

Setting: Mali

Ethnic Conflict and Local-Level Peacekeeping in Mali

I test my theory in Mali, a landlocked West African state with a UN peacekeeping operation deployed to resolve an ongoing ethnic conflict that began in 2012. Relations between the Tuareg ethnic minority, numbering about 1.5 million (almost 10% of Mali's population) and Mali's dominant "Mandé"⁵⁵ ethnic groups structure Malian politics.⁵⁶ After independence from French colonial occupation in 1960, the Mandé-based central government refused to grant the Tuareg their own independent state. Instead, the new government enacted policies to make Mali a purely Mandé nation-state.⁵⁷ In response, Tuareg leaders launched rebellions against the central government in 1963, 1990, 2006, and 2012.⁵⁸

A coalition of major Tuareg armed groups signed a peace accord with the government to formally end the most recent round of hostilities in June 2015.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, intracommunal disputes persist.⁶⁰ With overextended local police, abusive domestic military forces, and a corrupt court system, the Malian state cannot enforce the rule of law.⁶¹ Farmers, traders, and cattle herders instead call upon armed groups or self-defense militias to settle local scores and resolve intracommunal disputes.⁶² Outside of the major cities, which fall under

⁵⁵Mandé denotes a cultural history shared by a majority of Mali's ethnic groups, particularly those in the South. Most prominently in Mali, the Bambara, Malinke, and Soninke ethnic groups, which jointly account for a majority of the Malian population [Conrad and Conde 2004](#).

⁵⁶Paradoxically, observers have often noted the lack of salience of ethnic divisions in Malian politics. [Dunning and Harrison \(2010\)](#) have argued that the presence of cross-cutting cleavages due to cousinage has tempered the salience of ethnic divisions in Mali. As they note, however, cousinage does not extend to intergroup relations with Tuareg in Mali [Jones 2007](#). In particular, their study is based upon interactions among non-Tuareg Malians, not non-Tuareg-Tuareg interaction in multiethnic communities.

⁵⁷[Snyder 1967](#); [Jones 1972](#).

⁵⁸[Lecocq 2010](#); [Lecocq et al. 2013](#); [Wing 2013](#); [Pezard and Shurkin 2013](#).

⁵⁹[Pezard and Shurkin 2015](#).

⁶⁰"Mali: Spate of Killings by Armed Groups," *Human Rights Watch*, April 5th, 2017; ; "Self-Defense Group Abuses in Central Mali," *Human Rights Watch*, December 7, 2018.

⁶¹[Pezard and Shurkin 2015](#).

⁶²This does not deny the ongoing dangers posed to Malians by Islamist groups and other ethnic groups, such as the Peulh. I am merely highlighting important obstacles to cooperation between Tuareg and non-Tuareg ethnic groups, which resemble similar relations between ethnic groups with a history of separatist

the protection of the UN, trade has become dangerous and has decreased dramatically. Many Malians report a sense of helplessness—they want to trade but fear being taken advantage of or worse.⁶³ For example, in January 2015, two men travelled to the Amasarakate market near the city of Gao in northern Mali in order to sell a motorcycle, a common mode of transportation in urban Mali. On their way home from the market, four armed Tuareg men, one of whom they had traded with, ambushed them and took the money they had earned.⁶⁴

In response, both France and the United Nations have engaged in local-level peacekeeping. French forces, in addition to their ongoing counter-insurgency efforts against Islamic extremists (Operation Barkhane), have launched peacekeeping operations throughout Mali.⁶⁵ The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), established by Security Council Resolution 2100, deployed in April 2013. MINUSMA employs a defense (military) force, tasked primarily with preventing violence from armed groups and individuals associated with armed groups, and a security (police) force, tasked primarily with lower engagement missions to prevent local crime and to enforce communal peace.⁶⁶ MINUSMA short-range patrols target communities, providing them with an opportunity to report crimes and to register local grievances. Additionally, MINUSMA police deploy long-range patrols that accompany Malians to weekly markets outside of major population centers to encourage trade and protect them from intergroup predation. The purpose of the patrols is to prevent violence before it occurs while also protecting civilians that engage in cooperative behavior like trade with other ethnic groups.⁶⁷ For instance, UN patrols in northern Mali routinely accompany cow herders to markets outside of secure city centers to make sure that the herders

violence elsewhere. See Max Bearak, “Parts of Niger and Mali are already lawless. U.S. strategy might make it worse,” *Washington Post*, October 23, 2017.

⁶³ “Mali: Islamist Armed Group Abuses, Banditry Surge,” *Human Rights Watch*, January 18, 2017.

⁶⁴ “Mali: Lawlessness, Abuses Imperil Population”, *Human Rights Watch*, April 14, 2015.

⁶⁵ Gillier 2015.

⁶⁶ Author interview with MINUSMA Police Commissioner, August 3rd, 2016. Throughout the paper, I use “peacekeepers” to refer to both the defense and security forces of the mission.

⁶⁷ Author interview with MINUSMA Deputy Police Commissioner, August 3rd, 2016.

or the farmers they interact with at these markets do not cheat or steal from their trading partners, who are frequently from another ethnic group.⁶⁸

Perception of International Bias in Mali

Non-Tuareg Malians largely perceive of the UN as an unbiased international actor that does not favor any domestic groups. Survey evidence provides strong evidence in favor of this claim. When asked about the UN's motives for becoming involved in Malian affairs, the vast majority of the 512 respondents I surveyed did not associate the UN with any particular favoritism or bias.⁶⁹ 57% answered that the UN was intervening for all of Mali, about 11% said for peace, and 21% said for the UN's own self-interest. Moreover, with the exception of French interests (4%) and "great power" interests (1%), respondents did not mention any particular national interest dominating the motives of the UN. About 1% of the respondents said that the UN intervened for the Tuareg. Moreover, Malians generally think of UN peacekeepers as international and not just from a particular state. In another survey that I conducted with 514 Malians, I asked respondents whence they perceive individual UN peacekeepers come. Only 28% said "a specific country." 54% simply said the "UN." An additional 10% mentioned "a part of the world" (e.g., sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, East Asia).⁷⁰

As opposed to their perceptions about the UN, non-Tuareg Malians are likelier to perceive of France as favoring Tuareg Malians. During the colonial era (1880-1960), the French governed the Tuareg via indirect rule, appointing Tuareg chiefs as local administrators. The French granted significant autonomy to Tuareg clan confederations, describing Tuareg culture

⁶⁸For an example of these activities by the UN, see [UN Secretary General \(2016, III. 19-21\)](#).

⁶⁹I describe the sampling procedure for this survey in greater detail below—see the discussion of sampling for the lab-in-the-field experiment.

⁷⁰I describe the sampling procedure for this survey in greater detail below—see the discussion of Round 1 sampling for the survey experiment.

as “noble” and worthy of preservation.⁷¹ By contrast, France governed Mandé Malians using direct rule, sending French colonial administrators to Mandé parts of its colonial territories. Moreover, throughout its colonial history, the French relied on Mandé Malian soldiers to serve in its military campaigns abroad, including in both World Wars and colonial independence struggles in the Middle East and Indochina.⁷²

When Mandé Malians took over the government after independence, they portrayed the Tuareg as colonial favorites who had collaborated with France to rule over the Mandé population. These perceptions about France’s favorable treatment of Tuareg Malians linger in modern-day Mali. Among non-Tuareg Malians, stories pervade of French soldiers allowing Tuareg to dominate governance, trade, and life in certain parts of Mali. A prominent such example was the 2016 battle over the northern town of Kidal, where the Malian government had struggled to gain control after the signing of the 2015 peace agreement. In July 2016, the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), a coalition of Tuareg armed groups, seized violent control of Kidal, further fueling suspicions of French favoritism. Mainstream Malian newspapers reported on the story featuring headlines such as “France Saves the CMA (Again).”⁷³

In order to systematically assess Malians’ perceptions, I asked the 874 respondents in my survey experiment questionnaire⁷⁴ about the bias of the UN and France. The survey asked the respondents whether they believed that the UN or France, respectively, was biased in favor of an ethnic group in Mali. Figure 1 graphs their responses. As the left side of the figure shows, 0.67 of all respondents said that they perceived of the UN as unbiased, compared to 0.41 who perceived of France as unbiased, a substantively and statistically significantly lower proportion. Moreover, as shown on the right side of the figure, 0.38 of all respondents said

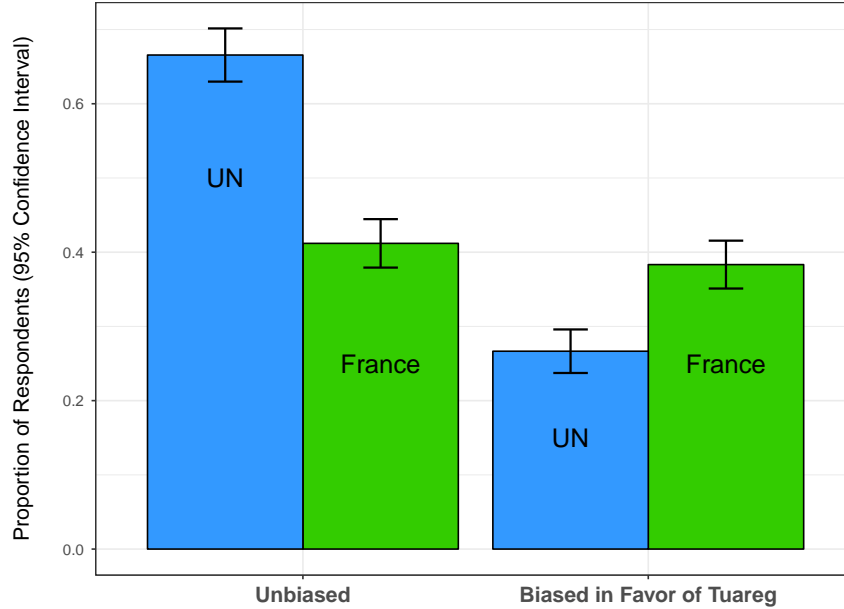
⁷¹Horowitz 1985; Lecocq 2010.

⁷²Mann 2006.

⁷³L’Aube 2016.

⁷⁴I describe the sampling procedure for this survey in greater detail below—see discussion of Rounds 1 and 2 of my survey experiment.

Figure 1: Perceptions of International Actor Bias



that France was biased in favor of the Tuareg. 0.27 said that the UN was biased in favor of the Tuareg, a difference of 0.11, statistically significant at the .05 level.⁷⁵

The results of this survey suggest that though most Malians perceive of the UN as unbiased and more Malians see France as biased, a small proportion still perceive of the UN as biased in favor of the Tuareg. This perceived bias likely stems from a combination of two factors. First, the UN peacekeeping operation has inevitably become entangled with the French military intervention. This association has compromised the UN's independence, at least in the mind of some Malians. Second, the UN peacekeeping operation in Mali has occasionally engaged in firefights with armed groups that have resulted in civilian casualties.⁷⁶ As a result, Mali presents a least likely case—the UN will struggle to convince a part of the local population that it is unbiased and will enforce intergroup cooperation without favoring the Tuareg. If the analysis offers evidence in favor of my theory, I would expect the theory

⁷⁵The next largest group mentioned was Maure or Arab Malians, who only 0.03 of all respondents said either the UN or France was biased in favor of.

⁷⁶Kevin Sieff, "The World's Most Dangerous U.N. Mission," *Washington Post*, February 17, 2017.

to generalize to other peacekeeping settings as well.

Lab-in-the-Field Experiment

In order to test the mechanism underlying my theory in a controlled environment, I implemented a lab-in-the-field experiment in February and March 2016 designed to elicit cooperative behavior from non-Tuareg Malians toward Tuareg partners. In the fashion of a “trust game,”⁷⁷ I tasked participants with sending a part of an initial salary to a Tuareg partner that they then had to trust would reciprocate the attempt at cooperation. In the experiment, I randomly assigned participants to a control group or one of two treatments. If assigned to a treatment, I informed them that a peacekeeper, either from the UN or France, would observe and fine low contributions. I used the UN treatment to operationalize the presence of a UN peacekeeping patrol. The France treatment established a baseline of comparison for the UN treatment—France is a different international actor than the UN but still a third-party enforcer. Moreover, Malians perceive of the UN as relatively more unbiased than France. And so, by comparing the UN and French treatment effects, I can ensure that any observed UN treatment effect is due to its identity as an unbiased actor, not merely its ability to enforce interactions as a third party.⁷⁸

Research Design

Sampling Procedure

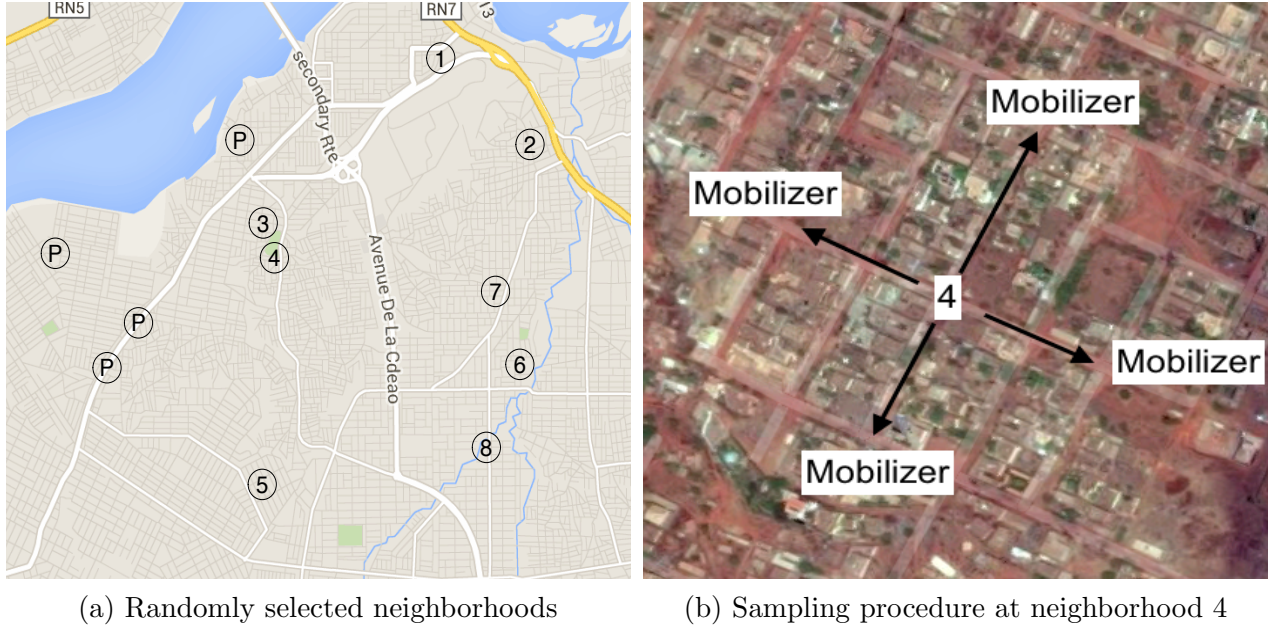
I drew a sample of 512 non-Tuareg Malians from eight randomly selected neighborhoods of southeast Bamako, a residential part of the capital city of Mali (Figure 2a).⁷⁹ I sample from

⁷⁷Berg et al. 1995; McCabe et al. 2003.

⁷⁸Fehr and Fischbacher 2004; Bernhard et al. 2006; Mironova and Whitt 2015.

⁷⁹I randomly selected 12 neighborhoods—4 for piloting (indicated with a P) and 8 for the actual experiment (numbered).

Figure 2: Sampling procedure for lab experiment.

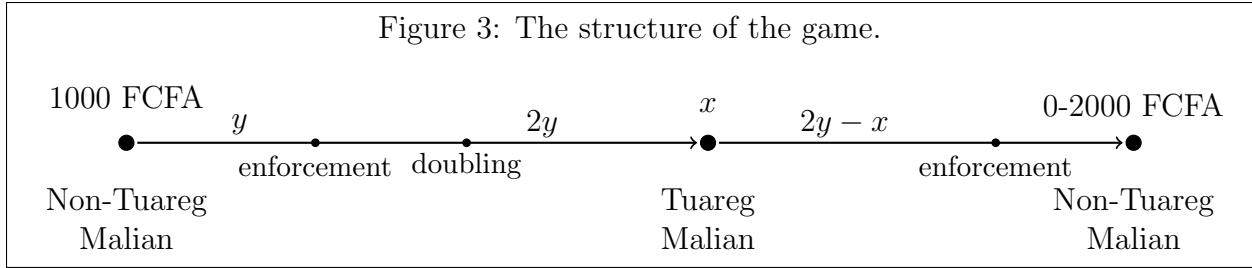


this part of Bamako specifically to minimize the differences between Bamako and other areas of Mali, which can mostly be attributed to the urban areas of Bamako not sampled here.⁸⁰ I randomly selected eight sets of GPS coordinates in this part of Bamako. Then I traveled to the coordinates and found the closest four-point intersection. I took pictures of the four-point intersection so that my local mobilizers could easily find it. Once at the four-point intersection, four mobilizers would move in opposite directions until they were faced with a major road or obstacle, at which point they would take a right turn (see Figure 2b). This would continue until each mobilizer recruited their daily quota. Although the mobilizers did not have a specific recruiting protocol beyond these instructions, they were told to gather subjects from diverse backgrounds.⁸¹

⁸⁰This sample is representative of residents in Bamako. However, it is not representative of all residents of Mali in two respects. First, even in these residential areas, the proximity to the center makes life substantially different than it is for rural residents of Mali. Second, the ethnic make-up of the sample differs between Bamako and the rest of Mali, specifically in regard to the Tuareg population. To the extent that this study samples only non-Tuareg Malians, this is less of an issue.

⁸¹The only severe sampling issue that arose was that I under-sampled women. Although this limits the ability to generalize some of my findings, cultural considerations made sampling women very difficult. In particular, very few women were willing to leave their neighborhoods and come to the location of the

Figure 3: The structure of the game.



I chose Bamako as the setting for the lab experiment for three reasons. First, Bamako is the center of international peacekeeping operations in Mali.⁸² Participants will likely be familiar with the UN peacekeeping mission. Survey question responses from the experiment confirm this. 68% report seeing UN peacekeepers “all the time” or “often.” Only 2% report never having seen them. As such, Bamako offers the lab experiment a high degree of internal validity. That is, given the awareness of the UN, the observed treatment effects are likely to operate as theorized. Second, since 2012, violence in northern and central Mali has forced internally displaced Tuareg to take up residence in Bamako. This migration has further diversified the ethnic make-up of neighborhoods in Bamako. Finally, the attacks on the Radisson Blu hotel in November 2015, the first of their kind since the June 2015 peace accords, likely increased the salience of violence for respondents at the time of the experiment.⁸³ Moreover, the frequent attacks on UN peacekeepers and surrounding populations make for ubiquitous headlines in Bamako. These factors have combined to make Bamako one of the most active test cases of local-level peacekeeping in Mali.

Protocol

The mobilizers brought the subjects to a central location where one of eight enumerators would meet a participant and explain the rules of the game. A local field manager provided each participant a detailed briefing before the game and debriefing after the game to ensure full comprehension. The protocol of the game was as follows. First, enumerators gave participants 1,000 West African francs (FCFA)⁸⁴ in an envelope. Second, enumerators showed each participant a picture of their partner in the game—a Tuareg man—and told them his name and ethnicity to make sure that they understood that I was asking them to cooperate with someone from the Tuareg ethnic group. Although participants thought their partner was human, I pre-programmed the Tuareg partner’s behavior in advance.⁸⁵ Third, participants were assigned to one of three groups: (1) no enforcement (control), (2) UN enforcement (unbiased peacekeeping treatment), or (3) French enforcement (biased peacekeeping treatment). Randomization worked as expected and participants were balanced across treatments. Fourth, enumerators told the participants that the study organizers would double however much they send for a maximum of 2,000 FCFA. However, they were also told that the Tuareg partner would choose to keep between 0 and 2,000 FCFA for themselves and send back only the remainder. If the participants were assigned to UN or French peacekeeping, the enumerators explained that peacekeepers would look at both contributions and assess a fine of 500 FCFA if they considered either amount low:

2 peacekeepers from [the United Nations OR France] are in another room of this

experiment. This was less of an issue in the survey experiment since enumerators went directly to respondents’ homes. The findings of the survey experiment suggest that the predominantly male findings of the lab-in-the-experiment generalize to a more representative sample.

⁸²MINUSMA has both its main peacekeeping headquarters and its central police operations in Bamako, in its UN “Super Camp.”

⁸³Shortly after the conclusion of the experiment on March 21st, there was another armed group attack on the EU training mission in Bamako.

⁸⁴1000 FCFA corresponds to approximately \$1.72. However, in the neighborhoods from which I sampled, the staples to cook a meal could be purchased for 100-300 FCFA.

⁸⁵I discuss my use of deception in greater detail in the Online Appendix.

building to monitor how much you and your partner send to each other. They will look to see how much you send to each other in the envelope. If the peacekeepers believe that one of you is not being generous enough, they will impose a fine of 500 FCFA, corresponding to half of your salary, on the individual who is not being generous.

Fifth, enumerators left the participants alone to decide how much to send to the Tuareg partner. Sixth, enumerators returned to collect the envelope and the game ended.⁸⁶

Estimation and Model Specification

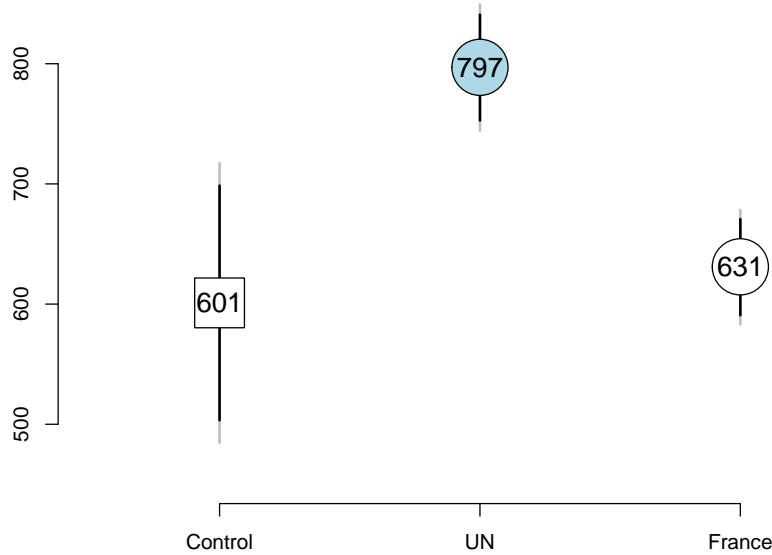
I estimate the treatment effects in the lab-in-the-field experiment with an OLS estimator given by $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_j Z_{i,j} + \alpha_n + \alpha_e + \epsilon_i$, where Y_i is the amount sent by the non-Tuareg Malian participant i to their Tuareg partner and $Z_{i,j}$ indexes the j treatment groups (with control as a reference group). Randomization occurred at the cluster level where the cluster was the enumerator-day. For this reason, I use “robust cluster” standard errors, which allow the error terms within the clusters to be related while assuming only that the error terms from different clusters are independent.⁸⁷ Because I was unable to collect neighborhood-level data or sufficient individual-level data before treatment, I could not block-randomize assignment to treatment in the field. Thus, in order to recuperate the efficiency losses from clustering and the inability to block-randomize the treatments, I estimate the average treatment effect with neighborhood fixed effects, denoted α_n , and enumerator fixed effects, denoted α_e . This estimation strategy allows for a conservative, theory-based improvement in precision without needing to include further covariates or alternative model specifications that may introduce bias due to overfitting.⁸⁸

⁸⁶To minimize any source of interethnic tension, all participants received 1,500 FCFA.

⁸⁷ Angrist and Pischke 2008; Samii and Aronow 2011.

⁸⁸See Gerber and Green 2012 for more details on covariate-based adjustment to conservatively improve imprecision.

Figure 4: Amount Sent to Tuareg Partner by Treatment



Results

The principal outcome of interest in the lab experiment is the amount (out of 1000 FCFA) that the non-Tuareg Malian participant decided to send to her Tuareg partner. I use the amount sent to operationalize the level of intergroup cooperation in the experiment. By comparing how much participants sent in the UN treatment group to the control group, I can measure by how much UN peacekeepers increase intergroup cooperation. A greater willingness to cooperate indicates the presence of a non-violent means of resolving intergroup disputes. Higher levels of intergroup cooperation suggest a lower likelihood that those respondents would escalate a dispute with a member of an out-group (a Tuareg Malian) in their community.

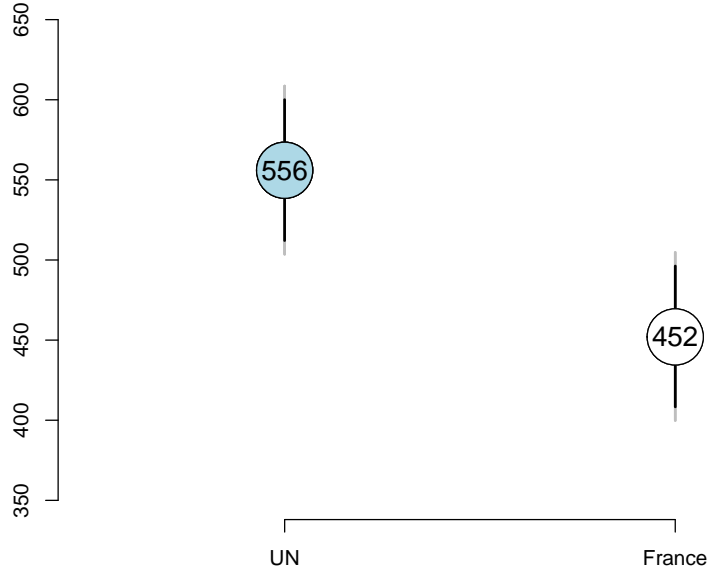
UN Peacekeepers Increase Intergroup Cooperation

The main results suggest that UN peacekeepers increase intergroup cooperation. Moreover, I find that while UN peacekeepers, who Malians perceive as unbiased, increase intergroup cooperation, French peacekeepers, who Malians perceive as biased, do not. And so, contrary to Hypothesis 1, peacekeepers are not uniformly effective at the local level. Participants assigned to UN peacekeeping send 797 out of 1,000 FCFA to their Tuareg partners. This represents an increase of 196 FCFA or 32.6% compared to control, a substantive and statistically significant difference. Participants assigned to French peacekeeping send 631 out of 1,000 FCFA to their Tuareg partners. This corresponds to an increase of 30 FCFA or 5% compared to control, though the difference is not statistically distinguishable from zero. As Figure 4 shows, the amount sent by participants in the UN treatment group differs to a substantively and statistically significantly extent from the amount sent by participants in the French treatment group. And so, it is unlikely that third party enforcement alone accounts for these findings.

Testing the Mechanism: Unbiased Peacekeeping and Intergroup Cooperation

The evidence suggests that UN peacekeepers increase the willingness of non-Tuareg Malians to cooperate with Tuareg Malians in the form of contributions in a trust game. However, this offers only an indirect measure of the mechanism proposed in this paper. I argue that perceptions of the UN as unbiased account for its ability to promote intergroup cooperation as a nonviolent method of dispute-resolution. To more directly test this mechanism and the predictions of Hypothesis 2, I asked each participant after the game—but before they were told about the final monetary outcome of the game—what they thought their Tuareg partner had sent back to them. According to the proposed theoretical mechanism, individuals perceive UN peacekeepers as more unbiased than French peacekeepers. As a result, participants in the game would expect Tuareg Malians to cooperate more under UN peacekeeping than

Figure 5: Beliefs about Tuareg Return Amounts by Treatment



under French peacekeeping. Thus, participants assigned to UN peacekeeping should expect their Tuareg partners to return *more* than those assigned to French peacekeepers since they would believe that UN peacekeepers would punish low contributions by the Tuareg partner.

An analysis of participants' answers to this question reveals that participants assigned to UN peacekeeping believe that their Tuareg partners will send back more than those assigned to French peacekeeping. Figure 5 graphs the amount that participants believe the Tuareg will return by treatment condition. As the figure shows, the participants' beliefs about the amount that the Tuareg partner would return are in line with the expectations of the main mechanism underlying my theory (Hypothesis 2). When assigned to French peacekeeping, respondents believed, on average, that their Tuareg partner had returned 452 FCFA. However, when assigned to UN peacekeeping, subjects believed, on average, that their Tuareg partner returned 556 FCFA, a difference of 104 FCFA or about 20% ($p = 0.0518$).

Might it be the case that participants believed that their Tuareg partner will send more in the UN group simply because they themselves sent more to the Tuareg in the first stage of the game? As a robustness check, I looked at the how much participants believed the Tuareg Malians sent back as a proportion of what was available to them. That is, if the non-Tuareg Malian participant sent 500 FCFA and believed that the Tuareg Malian would send back 250 FCFA, the participant believed that the Tuareg would send back 0.25 of what was available to them (since 1,000 FCFA would be available). Subjects in the French treatment condition believed that the Tuareg sent back, on average, 0.42 of the allotment available to them. Subjects in the UN treatment condition believed that the Tuareg sent back 0.51 of the allotment available to them, a substantively and statistically significant difference ($p = .069$).

Interviews with Malians about Intergroup Cooperation and Peacekeeping

Interviews with the participants of the experiment provide additional support for the mechanism underlying Hypothesis 2. Some participants contrasted the UN to a colonial intervener. For example, a 22-year-old male respondent said that he preferred the UN to France because “it did not colonize Mali and therefore will not target any interests (Participant DI6).” Others referenced the multi-national nature of UN peacekeeping operations as a consideration. Another 22-year-old man, who was assigned to the UN treatment and sent the Tuareg 750 FCFA, said that he preferred the UN “because it’s an international institution specifically created to maintain peace (Participant CF12).” When asked whether he considered the UN to be unbiased and why, a 35-year-old male respondent said that he believes the UN is unbiased because it is “supporting Mali, its role is to create an area of peace, dialogue, and reconciliation, and it’s doing the job well (Participant BE21).”

These interviews also provide further evidence that the participants of the experiment perceived France as biased in favor of the Tuareg. For example, a 28-year-old man assigned to the French treatment that sent 400 FCFA to his Tuareg partner said that he did not think

that France is unbiased because “it helps the Tuareg (Participant AE20).” Some specifically highlighted French alliances with Tuareg armed groups as a sign of persistent French bias. A 28-year-old man who sent 450 FCFA doubted that France is unbiased because “it supports the Tuareg rebels (Participant CH10).” A 51-year-old Malian man assigned to the French treatment who sent the Tuareg 500 FCFA, said that he does not trust France to manage the Malian crisis because “France supports the Tuareg rebels (Participant AG15).” Another participant, a 26-year-old man also assigned to the France treatment that sent his partner 350 FCFA, specifically identified French support of the Tuareg armed group Ansar Dine as a cause for concern (Participant DH13).

Survey Experiment

I complement the lab experiment with a survey experiment to illustrate that the results of the lab experiment generalize to a more concrete example of intergroup tension at the local level. I conducted the survey with 874 Malian respondents across 20 locations in Mali. The design of the experiment specifically investigates whether the UN lowers the likelihood that an intracommunal dispute will become violent.

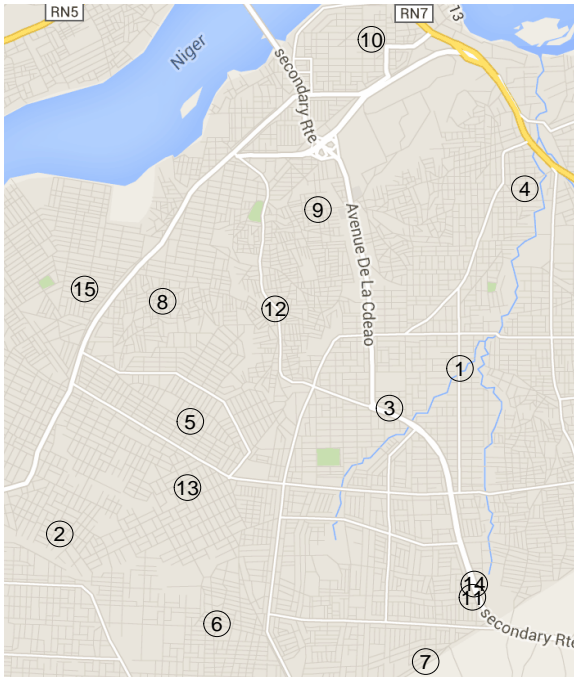
Research Design

Sampling Procedure

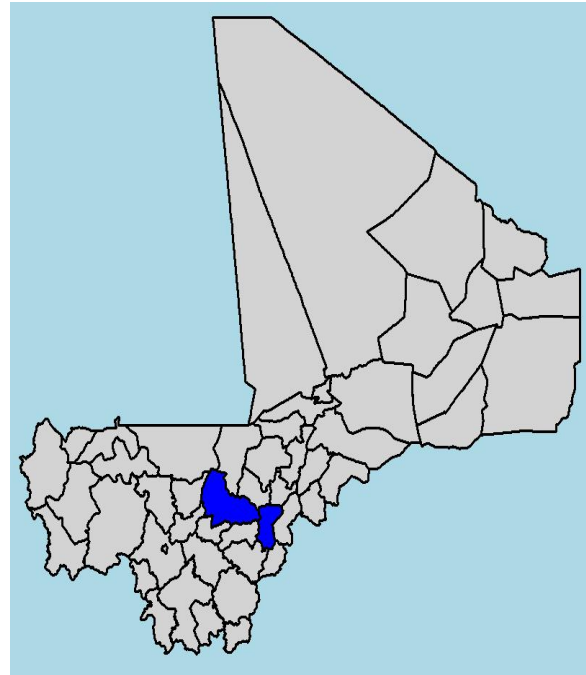
I sampled respondents for the survey in two rounds. In the first round (July-August 2016), I sampled 514 respondents from 8 randomly selected neighborhoods of Bamako using the same four-corner procedure described for the lab experiment sampling (Figure 6a).⁸⁹ In the second round (December 2017), I sampled 360 respondents from 12 villages in the Markala and San

⁸⁹15 neighborhoods were randomly selected in Bamako. Numbers 1-4 were used for piloting, 5-12 were used for the survey experiment. 13-15 were not used.

Figure 6: Sampling for survey experiment.



(a) Neighborhoods in Bamako (Round 1)



(b) *Communes* in Segou Region (Round 2)

communes in the Segou region of Central Mali (Figure 6b).⁹⁰ Four enumerators under my supervision implemented the survey directly in the field with the questions pre-programmed into tablets.

I sampled from Segou in addition to Bamako for three reasons. First of all, the villages provide rural respondents in addition to the mostly urban residents from Bamako sampled in Round 1. Second, while Islamic extremists seized control of Segou during the heavy fighting of 2012-2013, the combined efforts of the French, the UN, and Malian military have since made the area safer for researchers and participants in their studies. Thus, Segou is a recent post-conflict area in which it is safe to conduct research. Third, intracommunal strife has pervaded life in Central Mali since the end of 2014, making Segou an especially relevant case

⁹⁰Because of the existence of high levels of local-level violence in Segou, the Malian government has outlawed travel by motorbike in the region. This law combined with the travel distances between villages and the lack of navigable roads in Segou made data collection much more challenging in Segou than Bamako. For this reason, I was only able to sample 360 respondents from 12 villages.

for the empirical study of the topic.

Survey Experiment Vignette, Treatment, and Outcome

The survey had three components. First, a pre-treatment questionnaire in which I ask basic demographic questions and establish baselines for people’s perceptions of international peacekeepers, interethnic relations in Mali, governance, and past exposure to violence. Second, a vignette describing an intracommunal dispute with a randomized treatment. Randomization proceeded as expected and respondents were balanced across treatments. Third, an outcome question used to operationalize the likelihood that the dispute will become violent.

I designed the vignette to resemble a land dispute over cattle between two ethnic groups:

Before the war, [family 1]⁹¹ herded their 80 cows on land which they owned. [Family 1] had bought the cows over many years and had owned this land for 35 years. In December 2013, [family 1] was forced to leave their land and cows under threat of violence from armed bandits. When they left, [family 2] seized the land and the cows that were left on the land. When [family 1] returned to their land earlier this year, [family 2] refused to give or sell the land or the cows back to them. Some of [family 1] now wants to take back their land and cows by threatening [family 2] using guns.

I randomly assigned respondents to a control group or one of two treatments. Respondents in the control group received no further information. Respondents in the first treatment group were told that two peacekeepers from the UN in the area discovered the dispute between the two families. Respondents in the other treatment group were told that two peacekeepers from France in the area discovered the dispute. As in the lab experiment, the second treatment establishes a third party baseline of comparison. Because this treatment group uses France—an international actor perceived as biased—it allows me to compare the treatment effect of biased peacekeepers to the treatment effect of UN peacekeepers, who Malians perceive as unbiased.

⁹¹I randomly varied the names of the families between four different names in order to avoid any bias due to specific association with a family name.

After presenting respondents with the vignette, I asked them how likely they thought it was that violence would break out. Respondents could answer on a five-point scale ranging from “very unlikely” to “very likely.”

Estimation

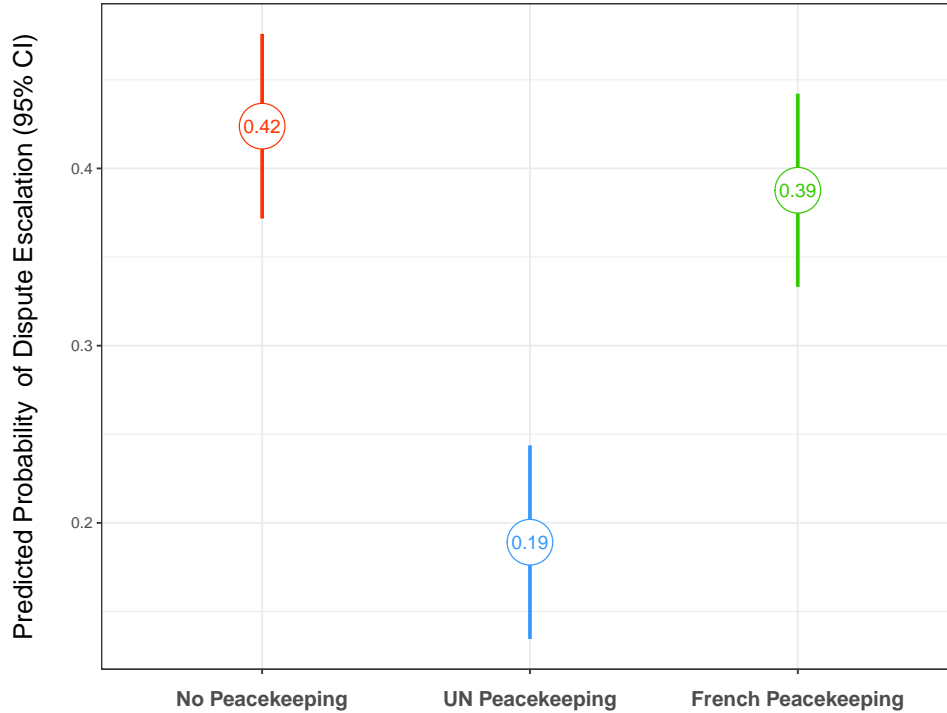
The primary outcome of interest in the survey experiment was whether respondents thought violence would break out. For use as a dependent variable, I created a binary indicator that took on a value of 1 if the respondent said that violence was either “likely” or “very likely” to break out and 0 otherwise. I estimate the treatment effect of a UN or French peacekeeping patrol relative to control in the experiment with an OLS estimator given by $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_j Z_{i,j} + \epsilon_i$, where Y_i indicates whether respondent i believed violence was likely and $Z_{i,j}$ indexes the j treatment groups (either UN or French peacekeeping with no peacekeeping as a reference group). I derive predicted probabilities of violence escalation from these estimations for ease of interpretation.

Main Results

Figure 7 graphs the results of the survey experiment. I find that UN patrols reduce the predicted probability that respondents say a dispute will become violent. 0.42 of respondents assigned to a dispute without a peacekeeper present believe that the dispute will become violent. The fact that more than two-fifths of all respondents believe violence will break out suggests how volatile disputes in Mali are. 0.19 of respondents believe that violence between two families will break out in the presence of a UN peacekeeping patrol. This difference of 0.23 is statistically significant at the 95% level. These results suggest that UN peacekeepers reduce the predicted probability of dispute escalation by more than half.

Additionally, I find that French peacekeepers do not have the same predicted effect on dispute-escalation. 0.39 of respondents assigned to French peacekeeping patrols say that the

Figure 7: Predicted Probability of Dispute Escalation, by Survey Experiment Treatment



dispute will become violent. Although this proportion represents a slight decrease compared to no peacekeeping, this effect is not statistically significant at conventional levels. Moreover, assignment to the UN peacekeeping treatment decreases the predicted probability of dispute-escalation by 0.20 compared to assignment to French peacekeeping. This difference suggests that UN peacekeepers are more effective at containing intracommunal disputes than French peacekeepers.

These findings offer more evidence against Hypothesis 1, which held that any peacekeepers would effectively reduce the likelihood of dispute escalation. Moreover, they provide evidence in favor of Hypothesis 2, which states that the presence of UN peacekeeping decreases the probability that involved parties will resolve an intracommunal dispute with violence. The survey experiment extends the results of the lab-in-the-field experiment—UN peacekeepers increase the prospects of intergroup cooperation and decrease the probability

that intracommunal disputes will become violent.

Mediation Analysis

This paper specifically argues that perception of the UN as unbiased mediates the ability of the UN to contain local-level disputes (Hypothesis 2). In order to examine whether this is the case, I asked respondents at the conclusion of the survey whether they believed the UN or France favored any particular ethnic group. I constructed a new variable, `UNBIASED`, that takes on a value of 1 if a respondent said that they did not perceive the international actor in their vignette to be biased in favor of a certain group and 0 otherwise. I also code another variable, `UN_TREATMENT`, that takes on a value of 1 if a respondent received the UN treatment and a 0 if they receive the France treatment. I omit respondents in the control group because any analysis of the perception of international actor unbiasedness requires the presence of an actual international actor.

The evidence suggests that assignment to the UN peacekeeping treatment increases the probability that respondents will say that an international actor was unbiased. In Models 1 and 2 of Table 1, I regress perception of the international actor as unbiased on assignment to UN peacekeeping. I find that respondents who are told a UN peacekeeping patrol discovers a dispute are 24-30% more likely—depending on model specification—to say the patrol is unbiased relative to those who are told a French peacekeeping patrol discovers the dispute.

Regression results also show that perceptions of unbiasedness are associated with lower likelihood of dispute escalation. Model 3 in Table 1 reproduces the results graphed in Figure 7—UN peacekeepers decrease the likelihood that an individual says that a dispute will escalate by nearly 20% relative to French peacekeepers. This effect is robust to the inclusion of the measure of unbiasedness (see Model 4). However, the magnitude of the UN peacekeeping effect drops to 14%. In addition, the regression results suggest that individuals who perceive the peacekeeping patrol as unbiased are 12.5% less likely to say that a dispute will escalate

Table 1: Perceptions of unbiasedness mediate the ability of international actors to contain disputes

	Perception as Unbiased		Dispute Likely to Escalate	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
UN_TREATMENT	0.239*** (0.044)	0.300*** (0.050)	-0.199*** (0.038)	-0.139*** (0.051)
UNBIASED				-0.125** (0.050)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	493	377	551	377

*p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01

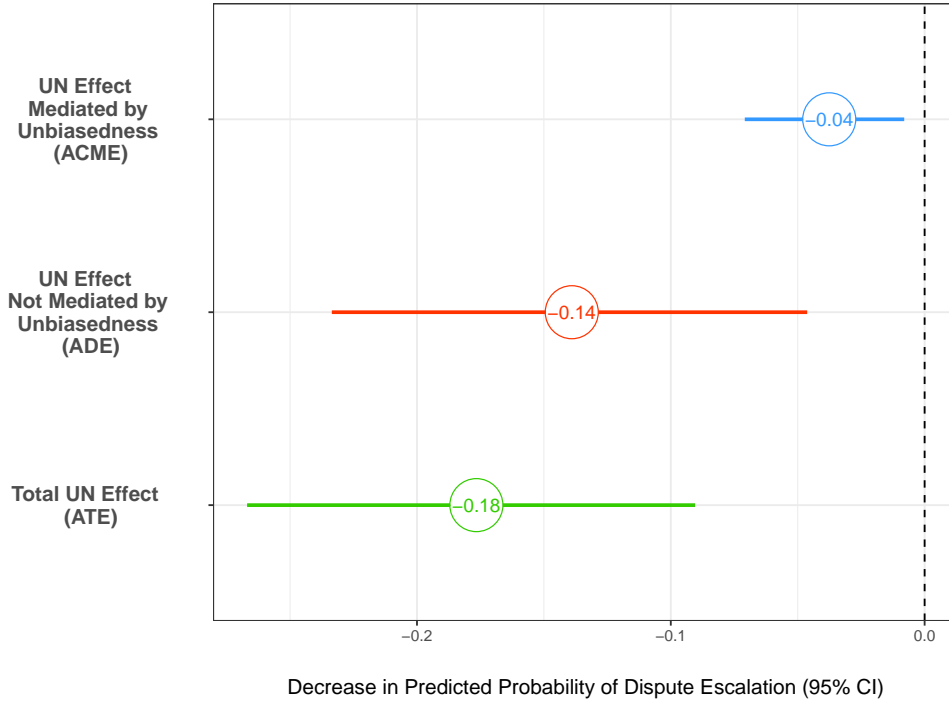
Notes: This table reports the coefficient estimates from OLS regression models with standard errors in parentheses. In all models, UN_TREATMENT is a binary indicator for whether respondents received UN peacekeeping treatment with French peacekeeping as a reference category. In Models 1 and 2, the dependent variable is a binary indicator of whether the respondent perceived the international actor in the given vignette as unbiased. In Models 3 and 4, the dependent variable is a binary indicator of whether respondents said the dispute was likely to become violent or not.

relative to those who say that peacekeepers are biased. The fact that the magnitude of the effect decreases when perceptions of unbiasedness are included suggests that at least a part of the effect of UN peacekeeping patrols is due to these perceptions.

Next, I investigate whether my proposed mechanism—perception of the UN as unbiased—accounts for the observed difference in effect size between UN and French peacekeeping. Although the above discussion suggests that unbiasedness does indeed mediate a part of the effect of the UN treatment, it is not clear how large this mediated effect is. In order to find the magnitude of the mediated effect, I employ a nonparametric causal mediation model. I use this method to estimate the magnitude of the UN peacekeeping effect that is mediated by the perception of the UN as unbiased.⁹² This method decomposes the average treatment

⁹²I use the method articulated by Imai et al. (2011) with the MEDIATION package that they developed for R.

Figure 8: Estimated Size of UN Treatment Effect, by Mediator



effect (ATE) into two component parts: (1) the average causal mediation effect (ACME), the part of the ATE caused by the proposed mediator—unbiasedness in my case—and (2) the average direct effect (ADE), the remaining part of the ATE effect size, attributed to other potential causes.

I find that the UN decreases the likelihood of dispute escalation because locals perceive of the UN as unbiased relative to France (Hypothesis 2). Put otherwise, perceptions of unbiasedness drive a significant part of the average treatment effect. Figure 8 graphs the total estimated UN effect (the ATE) at the bottom—assignment to UN peacekeeping patrols decreases the proportion of respondents who say disputes escalate by 0.18 relative to assignment to French peacekeeping patrols.⁹³ The figure displays the magnitude of the effect due to

⁹³I use the results from Models 2 and Model 4 in Table 1 to derive the ACME, ADE, and ATE, which is why the UN effect size is slightly different than in other models. I construct a 95% quasi-Bayesian confidence interval derived from 1,000 simulations.

the proposed mediator (ACME) at the top—0.04 of the 0.18 UN effect is due to perceptions of the UN as unbiased, a substantively and statistically significant difference. Put otherwise, perceptions of the UN as unbiased account for nearly one-quarter of the UN’s predicted effectiveness on their own. All other differences between France and the UN combined account for the remaining three-quarters of the estimated difference in effect magnitude.

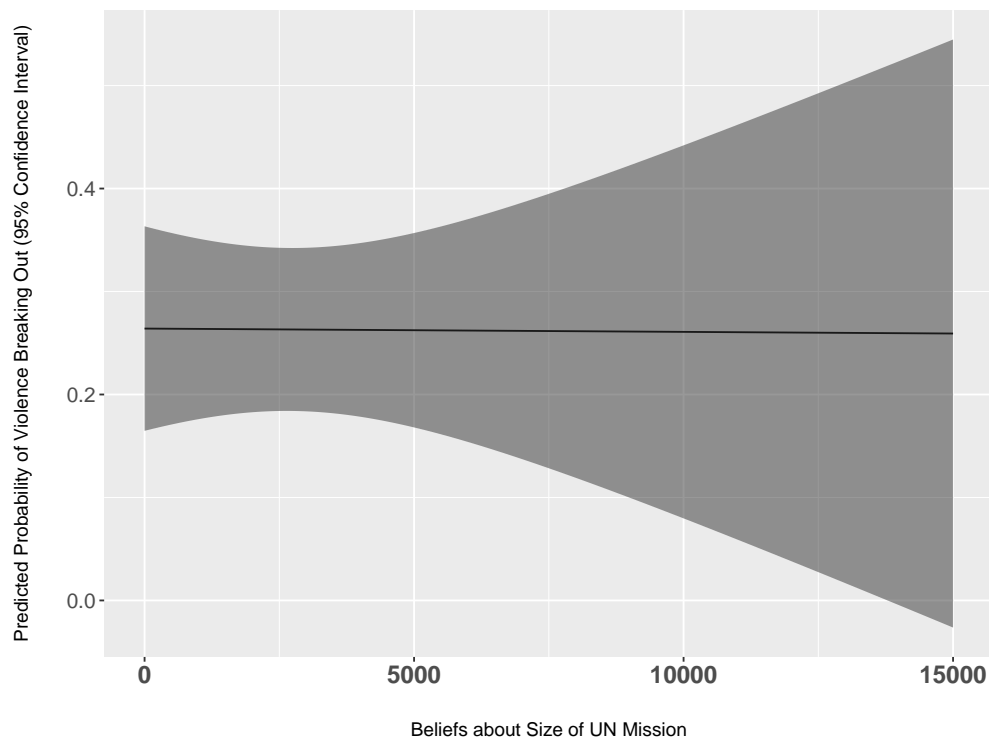
Alternative Explanations

In this section, I discuss the evidence in favor of two alternative explanations for the UN’s effectiveness in limiting the impact of intracommunal disputes: (1) the UN’s ability to bring to bear a preponderance of local coercive capacity and (2) UN peacekeepers’ ability to collect information about local disputes. I address other potential explanations at greater length in the Online Appendix.

Local Operational Capacity Explains UN Effect

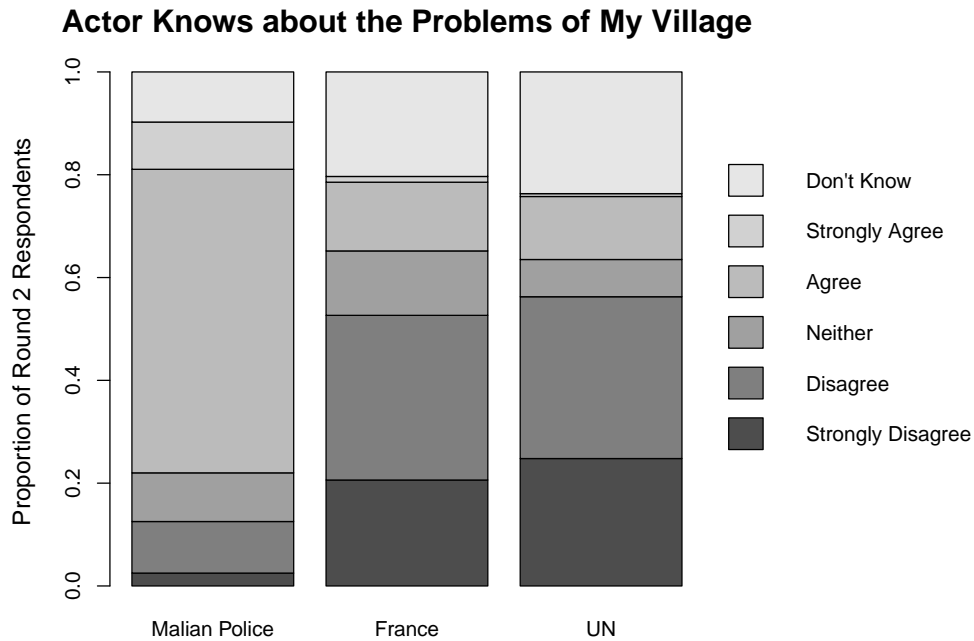
The UN’s operational capacity in post-conflict states allows it to deploy peacekeepers to areas where they can prevent intracommunal disputes from escalating. But the evidence from the two experiments indicates that capacity is not sufficient in explaining the UN’s success. I included France as a treatment in both experiments to isolate the effect of identity compared to capacity. The design of the lab experiment controlled for any potential variation in beliefs about local capacity by keeping constant across treatments the number of peacekeepers (two), the distance to the individual (“in this building”), and enforcement capability (identical fine). Participants assigned to UN peacekeepers sent 26.3% more to their Tuareg partners than to those assigned to French peacekeepers, a statistically significant difference. This difference in treatment effects suggests that capacity alone cannot explain the success of UN peacekeeping operations.

Figure 9: Predicted probability respondents say dispute is likely to escalate as a function of assignment to UN treatment and respondents' beliefs about UN capacity.



To further explore the possibility that capacity accounts for the effectiveness of the UN, I asked respondents in the first round of my survey experiment how large they thought the UN presence in Mali was. I then conducted an OLS regression of the likelihood that they say that violence will break out on whether they received the UN treatment or not, how large they thought the UN mission was, and the interaction of the two. In Figure 9, I graph the predicted probability respondents say dispute is likely to escalate as a function of assignment to UN treatment and respondents' beliefs about UN capacity. There is neither a statistically nor substantively significant relationship between beliefs about UN capacity and the whether respondents say the dispute is likely to become violent. This lends further credence to the idea that beliefs about local capacity alone cannot explain the perceived effectiveness of the UN.

Figure 10: Malian respondent beliefs about peacekeeper information about intracommunal disputes.



Access to Local Information Explains UN Effect

I also find no evidence that Malians’ beliefs about the amount of information available to peacekeepers account for the effectiveness of the UN. I designed the lab experiment so that UN and French peacekeepers would have the same amount of information about the intergroup interaction. In both treatment groups, enumerators tell participants that two peacekeepers will look at the amount that they send to their Tuareg partners. For this reason, information alone cannot account for the difference in treatment effects between France and the UN. As an additional check, I asked the respondents in the second round of the survey experiment whether they agreed with the statement that a given actor—the Malian police, France, or the UN—knows about the problems in their village. I included the Malian police since this is the primary security-sector actor in a village when there is

no peacekeeper present. Figure 10 graphs the results of this question. 14.3% of respondents agree or strongly agree that France knows about village disputes compared to 12.7% for the UN. In addition, a vast majority of respondents (68.8%) agrees or strongly agrees that the Malian police knows about local disputes. Yet evidence from the experiments demonstrated that UN peacekeepers are more effective than either French or local police. This suggests that information about disputes alone cannot explain the UN's ability to prevent disputes from escalating.

Conclusion

In this paper, I argue that UN peacekeepers avert the breakout of violence in post-conflict settings from the bottom up. My findings demonstrate that UN peacekeepers succeed in multifaceted ways—not only do they enforce peace agreements between armed group leaders, as previous research has shown, but they also prevent civilians living in multiethnic communities from fighting to resolve disputes. I show that the perception of the UN as an unbiased peacekeeper, compared to a state that locals perceive as biased in favor of a certain social group, makes the UN especially capable of promoting peaceful resolutions to local-level disputes. I present evidence from a pre-registered lab-in-the-field experiment and a pre-registered survey experiment implemented in Mali in line with these arguments. The lab experiment offers micro-level evidence that the UN increases levels of intergroup cooperation but France does not. The controlled lab setting as well as follow-up interviews with participants suggests that perceptions of bias rather than a set of alternative mechanisms account for these difference. The survey experiment furthers these findings. It demonstrates that the increased intergroup cooperation observed in the lab extends to an intracommunal dispute between two families from different social groups.

The logic of this theory applies to any post-conflict setting involving different types of

social groups and a multidimensional international peacekeeping presence, whether it be UN or state-led. Importantly, perceptions of international actors and their associations vary in different conflict settings. The perception of France as biased in favor of the Tuareg minority in Mali is rooted in the specific French colonial practices there. However, in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire, France had much better relations with majority groups both during colonialism as well as afterward. Though conflict has still ravaged Cote d'Ivoire in the past couple of decades, international peacekeeping operations have been more successful than in Mali, in large part thanks to French peace enforcement, which is not perceived as biased in favor of any group.

Moreover, the theory is not limited to European powers conducting peacekeeping operations in former colonial possessions. For instance, the argument could explain the success of peacekeeping operations led by the United States and the UN in Bosnia. Lacking a past legacy of occupation in the former Yugoslavia, the United States and its allies could credibly signal their lack of bias when bolstering intergroup cooperation between Bosnian Muslims, Croats, and Serbs.⁹⁴ The mechanisms underlying the theory can also help explain the micro-level logic behind cases in which multidimensional UN operations have succeeded in promoting cooperation at the local level, as in Eastern Slavonia, Croatia following the end of the civil war in 1995.⁹⁵

Additionally, states can experience a high degree of subnational variation in the rates of post-conflict recovery and, indeed, degree of recurring conflict. For states in which numerous international actors have intervened, the theory presented here can explain variation in intergroup cooperation subnationally, conditional on the spatial implementation of peacekeeping operations by different states and international organizations. For example, Iraqi Shi'a perceived British soldiers in Iraq, burdened with a perceived legacy of beginning the

⁹⁴Holbrooke 1998.

⁹⁵Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Howard 2008.

legitimization of Sunni (Hashemite) governance in Iraq, as favoring Sunni, rendering the British particularly ineffective peacekeepers in those areas of Iraq in which their soldiers were deployed. Nowhere were these struggles more obvious than in Basra, where 86% of residents said that British troops had had a negative impact on security from the beginning of the invasion and occupation until their time of departure in 2007.⁹⁶

Finally, these findings suggest three policy prescriptions for the practice of UN peacekeeping. First, the UN should invest in peacekeeping troops that can rapidly deploy to communities where disputes might become violent. A small contingent of UN peacekeeping troops can prevent the escalation of intracommunal disputes. Second, the UN should carefully delineate its cooperation with state-led military interventions. States engaged in interventions often carry legacies of colonialism, occupation, and violence. Because of this historical record, domestic populations perceive of these states as more biased than the UN. Associations with these states lowers the likelihood that the UN is perceived as unbiased and that it will successfully limit the the impact of intracommunal disputes. Third, the UN should limit, as much as possible, indiscriminant violence against civilians. Violence hardens social cleavages, making it more challenging for the UN to promote intergroup cooperation and contain local-level disputes.

⁹⁶BBC News 2007; Kamber and Glanz 2008.

References

- Kenneth W Abbott and Duncan Snidal. Why states act through formal international organizations. *Journal of conflict resolution*, 42(1):3–32, 1998.
- Kenneth W Abbott and Duncan Snidal. Hard and soft law in international governance. *International organization*, 54(3):421–456, 2000.
- Sanam Naraghi Anderlini. Un peacekeepers’ sexual assault problem: How to end it once and for all. *Foreign Affairs*, 2017.
- Joshua D Angrist and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. *Mostly harmless econometrics: An empiricist’s companion*. Princeton university press, 2008.
- Severine Autesserre. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, 2010.
- Severine Autesserre. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Michal Bauer, Christopher Blattman, Julie Chytilov, Joseph Henrich, Edward Miguel, and Tamar Mitts. Can war foster cooperation? Working Paper 22312, National Bureau of Economic Research, June 2016. URL <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22312>.
- BBC News. Basra residents blame uk troops, December 2007.
- Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov. Winning Hearts and Minds through Development. 2012.
- Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov. Empowering Women through Development Aid: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan. *The American Political Science Review*, 107(03):540–557, July 2013.
- Bernd Beber. International mediation, selection effects, and the question of bias. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 29(4):397–424, September 2012. URL <http://cmp.sagepub.com/content/29/4/397.abstract>.
- Bernd Beber, Michael J. Gilligan, Jenny Guardado, and Sabrina Karim. Peacekeeping, compliance with international norms, and transactional sex in monrovia, liberia. *International Organization*, 71(1):130, 2017. doi: 10.1017/S0020818316000242.
- John Bellows and Edward Miguel. War and Institutions: New Evidence from Sierra Leone. *The American Economic Review*, 96(2):394–399, 2006.
- Michelle Benson and Jacob D Kathman. United nations bias and force commitments in civil conflicts. *The Journal of Politics*, 76(02):350–363, 2014.

- Joyce Berg, John Dickhaut, and Kevin McCabe. Trust, reciprocity, and social history. *Games and Economic Behavior*, 10(1):122–142, July 1995. ISSN 0899-8256. URL <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0899825685710275>.
- Eli Berman, Jacob N Shapiro, and Joseph H Felter. Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq. *Journal of Political Economy*, 119(4):766–819, 2011.
- Helen Bernhard, Ernst Fehr, and Urs Fischbacher. Group affiliation and altruistic norm enforcement. *The American Economic Review*, 96(2):217–221, 2006. ISSN 00028282. URL <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30034645>.
- Richard K Betts. The delusion of impartial intervention. *Foreign Affairs*, 73:20, 1994.
- Robert Blair. Peacebuilding and the Rule of Law: Micro-Level Evidence from a Survey and List Experiment in Liberia. *Working Paper.*, December 2014.
- Robert Blair. Legitimacy After Violence: Evidence from Two Lab-in-the-Field Experiments in Liberia. *Working Paper.*, October 2016.
- Chris Blattman. From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda. *American Political Science Review*, 103(02):231, 2009.
- Christopher Blattman, Alexandra C. Hartman, and Robert A. Blair. How to promote order and property rights under weak rule of law? an experiment in changing dispute resolution behavior through community education. *American Political Science Review*, 2014.
- Vincenzo Bove and Andrea Ruggeri. Kinds of Blue: Diversity in UN Peacekeeping Missions and Civilian Protection. *British Journal of Political Science*, pages 1–20, June 2015. doi: 10.1017/S0007123415000034. URL http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0007123415000034.
- Lakhdar Brahimi. Report of the panel on united nations peace operations. 2000.
- Marilynn B Brewer. The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love and Outgroup Hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3):429–444, 1999.
- Marilynn B Brewer. Ingroup identification and intergroup conflict: When does ingroup love become outgroup hate? In Richard Ashmore, L Jussim, and D Wilder, editors, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, pages 17–41. Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.
- Sarah Sunn Bush and Lauren Prather. Who’s there? election observer identity and the local credibility of elections. *International Organization*, pages 1–34, 2018.
- Alison Carnegie and Christoph Mikulaschek. The Promise of Peacekeeping: Protecting Civilians in Civil Wars. *Working Paper*, November 2017.

- David C. Conrad and Djanka Tassej Conde. *Sunjata: A West African Epic of the Mande Peoples*. Hackett, 2004.
- Benjamin Crost, Joseph Felter, and Patrick Johnston. Aid under fire: Development projects and civil conflict. *American Economic Review*, 104(6):1833–56, 2014.
- Michael Doyle and N Sambanis. *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2006.
- Michael W Doyle and N Sambanis. International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis. *The American Political Science Review*, 94(4):779–801, 2000.
- Thad Dunning and Lauren Harrison. Cross-cutting Cleavages and Ethnic Voting: An Experimental Study of Cousinage in Mali, 2010.
- Katja Favretto. Should peacemakers take sides? major power mediation, coercion, and bias. *American Political Science Review*, 103(02):248, 2009.
- Ernst Fehr and Urs Fischbacher. Third-party punishment and social norms. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 25(2):63–87, 2004. ISSN 1090-5138. doi: 10.1016/S1090-5138(04)00005-4. URL [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1090-5138\(04\)00005-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1090-5138(04)00005-4).
- Michael G Findley. Does foreign aid build peace? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21: 359–384, 2018.
- Hanne Fjelde, Lisa Hultman, and Desirée Nilsson. Protection through presence: Un peacekeeping and the costs of targeting civilians. *International Organization*, 73(1), 2019.
- Virginia Page Fortna. Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War. *International Studies Quarterly*, pages 269–292, 2004.
- Virginia Page Fortna. *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents Choices after Civil War*. Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Virginia Page Fortna and Lise Morjé Howard. Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature*. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11(1):283–301, June 2008. doi: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.9.041205.103022. URL <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.polisci.9.041205.103022>.
- Alan S Gerber and Donald P Green. *Field Experiments: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2012.
- Marin Gillier. *La coopération dans le sahel: Une approche globale*, 2015.
- Michael J Gilligan and Ernest J Sergenti. Do UN interventions cause peace? Using matching to improve causal inference. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 3(2):89–122, 2008.

- Michael J Gilligan, Benjamin J Pasquale, and Cyrus Samii. Civil War and Social Cohesion: Lab-in-the-Field Evidence from Nepal. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(3):604–619, 2014.
- Grant M Gordon and Lauren E Young. Cooperation, information, and keeping the peace: Civilian engagement with peacekeepers in haiti. *Journal of Peace Research*, 54(1):64–79, 2017.
- Richard Holbrooke. *To End a War*. Random House LLC, 1998.
- Donald Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985.
- Lise Morjé Howard. *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- L Hultman, J Kathman, and M Shannon. Beyond Keeping Peace: United Nations Effectiveness in the Midst of Fighting. *American Political Science Review*, 108(04):737–753, October 2014. doi: 10.1017/S0003055414000446. URL http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0003055414000446.
- Lisa Hultman, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. United nations peacekeeping and civilian protection in civil war. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(4):875–891, 2013.
- Kosuke Imai, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley, and Teppei Yamamoto. Unpacking the black box of causality: Learning about causal mechanisms from experimental and observational studies. *American Political Science Review*, 105(4):765–789, 2011.
- Rachel A. Jones. You eat beans! kin-based joking relationships, obligations, and identity in urban mali. Senior Honors Thesis, Anthropology Department, Macalester College, 2007.
- William I Jones. The Rise and Demise of Socialist Institutions in Rural Mali. *Geneve-Afrique*, 11:19–44, 1972.
- Stathis Kalyvas. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006.
- Michael Kamber and James Glanz. Iraqi crackdown on shiite forces sets off fighting. *The New York Times*, 2008.
- Sabrina Karim. Restoring Confidence in Post-Conflict Security Sectors: Survey Evidence from Liberia on Female Ratio Balancing Reforms. *British Journal of Political Science*, pages 1–23, 2017.
- Sabrina Karim and Kyle Beardsley. *Equal Opportunity Peacekeeping: Women, Peace, and Security in Post-Conflict States*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Pellumb Kelmendi and Andrew Radin. Unsatisfied? public support for postconflict international missions. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2016.

- Andrew Kydd. Which Side Are You On? Bias, Credibility, and Mediation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(4):597–611, 2003.
- Andrew H Kydd. When Can Mediators Build Trust? *The American Political Science Review*, 100(3):449–462, 2006.
- Andrew H. Kydd. Rationalist approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.*, 13(1):101–121, May 2010. ISSN 1094-2939. doi: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.032108.135916. URL <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.032108.135916>.
- David A Lake. *The statebuilder’s dilemma: on the limits of foreign intervention*. Cornell University Press, 2016.
- L’Aube. Kidal : La france sauve (encore) la cma. <http://www.maliweb.net/la-situation-politique-et-securitaire-au-nord/kidal-france-sauve-cma-1693212.html>, July 2016. maliweb.net.
- Baz Lecocq. Disputed Desert: Decolonisation, Competing Nationalisms and Tuareg Rebellions in Mali, 2010.
- Baz Lecocq, Gregory Mann, Bruce Whitehouse, Dida Badi, Lotte Pelckmans, Nadia Belalimat, Bruce Hall, and Wolfram Lacher. One hippopotamus and eight blind analysts: a multivocal analysis of the 2012 political crisis in the divided Republic of Mali. *Review of African Political Economy*, 40(137):343–357, 2013.
- Jason Lyall, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai. Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan. *American Political Science Review*, 107(04):679–705, 2013.
- Gregory Mann. *Native Sons: West African Veterans and France in the 20th century*. Duke University Press, 2006.
- Kevin A. McCabe, Mary L. Rigdon, and Vernon L. Smith. Positive reciprocity and intentions in trust games. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 52(2):267–275, October 2003. ISSN 0167-2681. URL <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167268103000039>.
- Christoph Mikulaschek. The Power of the Weak: How Informal Power-Sharing Shapes the Work of the UN Security Council. *Working Paper*, March 2017.
- Vera Mironova and Sam Whitt. International Peacekeeping and Positive Peace: Evidence from Kosovo. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, September 2015. doi: 10.1177/0022002715604886. URL <http://jcr.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/0022002715604886>.

- Eric Mvukiyehe and Cyrus Samii. The Subtle Micro-Effects of Peacekeeping. In *American Political Science Association Conference Paper*, pages 1–35, August 2010. URL http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1642803&download=yes.
- Stephanie Pezard and Michael Shurkin. Toward a Secure and Stable Northern Mali. Technical report, Santa Monica, CA, 2013.
- Stephanie Pezard and Michael Shurkin. *Achieving Peace in Northern Mali: Past Agreements, Local Conflicts, and the Prospects for a Durable Settlement*. RAND Corporation, 2015.
- Daniel N Posner. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Béatrice Pouligny. *Peace operations seen from below. UN missions and local people*. Hurst, 2006.
- Robert W. Rauchhaus. Asymmetric information, mediation, and conflict management. *World Politics*, 58(2):207–241, 001 2006. doi: 10.1353/wp.2006.0027. URL <https://www.cambridge.org/core/article/asymmetric-information-mediation-and-conflict-management/EE032A1DA6F629881C813072F9C09339>.
- Emily Paddon Rhoads. *Taking sides in peacekeeping: impartiality and the future of the United Nations*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Andrea Ruggeri, Han Dorussen, and Theodora-Ismene Gizelis. Winning the peace locally: Un peacekeeping and local conflict. *International organization*, 71(1):163–185, 2017.
- N Sambanis and Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl. UN and Non-UN Peace Operations. In Dimitris Bourantonis, Kostas Ifantis, and Panayotis Tsakonas, editors, *Multilateralism and Security Institutions in the Era of Globalization*. Routledge, London, 2007.
- Nicholas Sambanis, Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl, and Moses Shayo. Parochialism as a Central Challenge in Counterinsurgency. *Science*, 336(6083):805–808, 2012.
- Cyrus Samii and Peter M Aronow. On equivalencies between design-based and regression-based variance estimators for randomized experiments. *Statistics & Probability Letters*, 2011.
- Burcu Savun. Information, bias, and mediation success*. *International Studies Quarterly*, 52(1):25–47, 2008. ISSN 1468-2478. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2007.00490.x. URL <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2007.00490.x>.
- Renard Sexton. Aid as a tool against insurgency: Evidence from contested and controlled territory in afghanistan. *American Political Science Review*, 110(4):731749, 2016.
- Michael Shurkin. France’s War in Mali. Technical report, Santa Monica, CA, 2014.

- Alastair Smith and Allan Stam. Mediation and Peacekeeping in a Random Walk Model of Civil and Interstate War. *International Studies Review*, 5(4):115–135, 2003.
- Francis G Snyder. The Political Thought of Modibo Keita. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 5:79–106, 1967.
- Henri Tajfel, M G Billig, R P Bundy, and Claude Flament. Social categorization and intergroup behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1(2):149–178, 1971.
- Andrea Kathryn Talentino. Perceptions of peacebuilding: The dynamic of imposer and imposed upon. *International Studies Perspectives*, 8(2):152–171, 2007.
- Stanley J Tambiah. Ethnic conflict in the world today. *American ethnologist*, 16(2):335–349, 1989.
- Saadia Touval. *The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab-Israeli conflict, 1948-1979*, volume 82. Princeton University Press Princeton, NJ, 1982.
- UN Secretary General. Report of the secretary general on the situation in mali, May 2016.
- Maarten J Voors, Eleonora E M Nillesen, Philip Verwimp, Erwin H Bulte, Robert Lensink, and Daan P Van Soest. Violent Conflict and Behavior: A Field Experiment in Burundi. *American Economic Review*, pages 1–25, 2012.
- Barbara F Walter. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2002.
- Susanna Wing. Making Sense of Mali. *Foreign Affairs*, 2013.
- I. William Zartman and Saadia Touval. International mediation: Conflict resolution and power politics. *Journal of Social Issues*, 41(2):27–45, 1985.