

# Trust the hand that protects you Does UN PK harm governments' legitimacy?

Jessica Di Salvatore  
Associate Professor in Political Science and Peace Studies  
University of Warwick

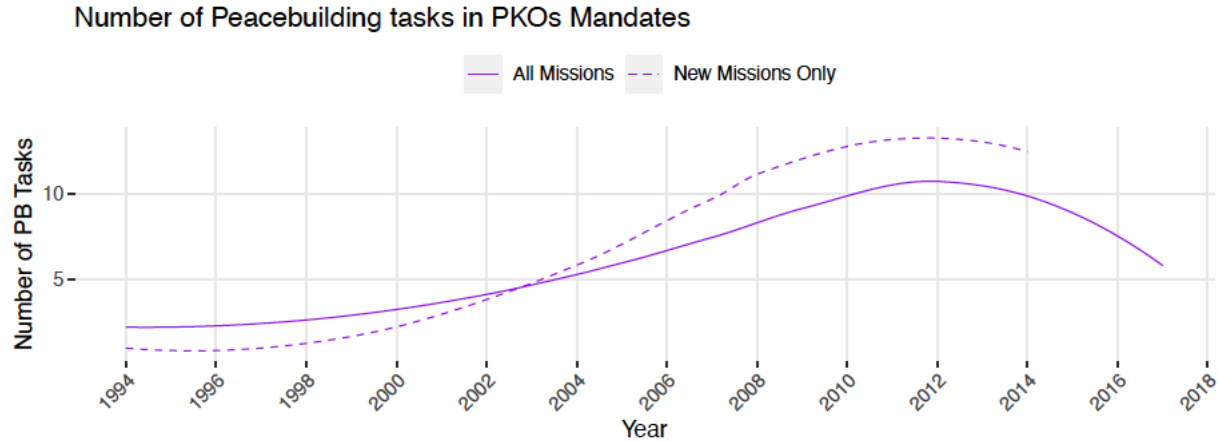
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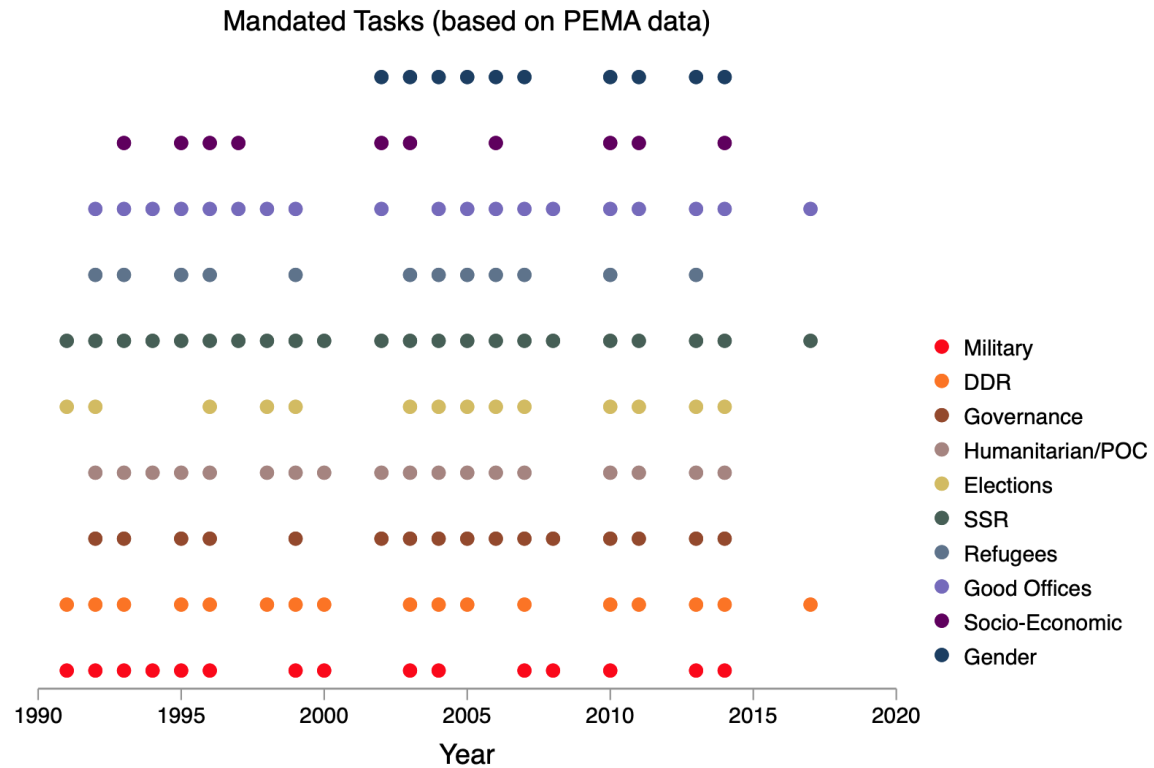
## Peacekeeping as Statebuilding?

- Policy-wise we see:
  - **Agenda For Peace (Boutros Ghali 1992), Brahimi Report (2000), Capstone Doctrine (2008)**
- Empirically, the trend is:
  - **Broader mandates; longer and phased presence**
- Can (should) UN interventions re-build states?
  - **Consider the risks of externally-led statebuilding on legitimacy in the eye of populations**

## The evolution of Peacekeeping Mandates



# The evolution of Peacekeeping Mandates



## A trade-off?

- Statebuilding goals as part of peacekeeping goals
- Facilitating effective governance may result in:
  - Better performances for national governments
  - Problems in attributing efficacy
- Do missions with strong peacebuilding component threaten or boost states' legitimacy?

## Building Capacity

- Robust link between risk of conflict relapse & state fragility (aka the conflict trap)
- State capacity as multifaceted concept
- Key dimensions in state formation (Rubin 2005)
  - ❖ Coercion
  - ❖ Capital
  - ❖ Legitimacy
- Can be applied to state-building as well

# How the UN Builds Capacity

## ❖ Coercion

- DDR and overall violence reduction (Hultman et al 2013, 2014; Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017)
- Security Sector Reforms (Blair 2020, 2021)

## ❖ Capital

- Aid flows and development programs
- Economic boost (Bove, Di Salvatore, Elia 2021)

## ❖ Legitimacy

- Procedural approach: Elections & Democracy

# How the UN Builds Capacity

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## ❖ Legitimacy

- Procedural approach: Elections & Democracy
- **Performance-based approach**



## How the UN Builds Capacity

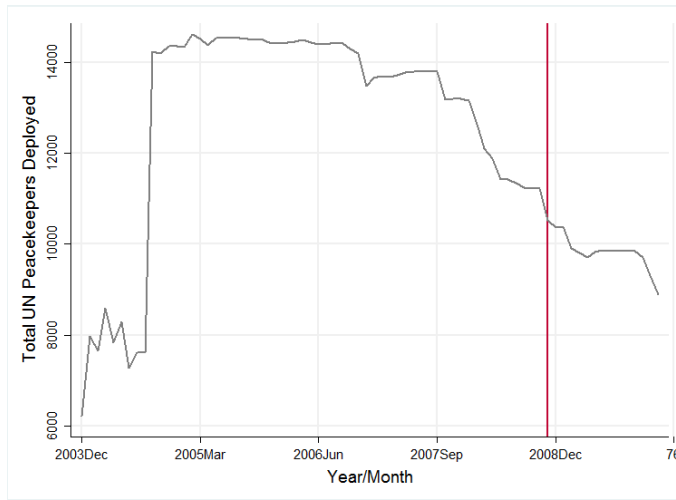
- Can the UN build performance-based legitimacy?
  - We do not know whether service provision improves (probably null, see Lake and Fariss 2014)
  - Provision of goods reinforces trust (Newton and Norris 2000)
  - But who provides matter (Zoellick 2008)
  - And bypassing states can be costly for democratization (Blair, Di Salvatore, Smidt 2022 w.p.)

## Mobilizing Legitimacy

- Peacekeepers are effective security providers
- Peacekeepers heavily assist governments in reforming
- Long missions, with visible deployments, may indicate weakness
  
- Some observable implications:
  1. Citizens close to UN deployment areas are more likely to trust governments and police
  2. The relationship is mitigated by:
    - a. The duration of the deployment
    - b. The effectiveness of the deployment

## Research Design – Case and Data

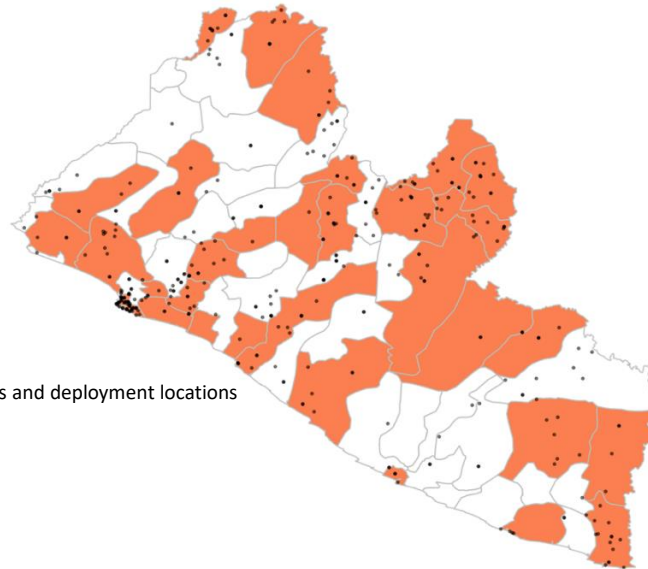
- UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL, 2003-2018)
- Afrobarometer waves 2008, 2012, 2015 (withdrawal phase)
- Subnational deployment data (GeoPKO) + Survey data (Afrobarometer)



## Survey Data (Afrobarometer)

- Sampling Strategy based on 2008 National Census
- Citizens age 18 yrs or older
- Nationally representative
- Response rate: > 0.9

Liberia's Counties and Afrobarometer Respondents  
UNMIL presence in orange



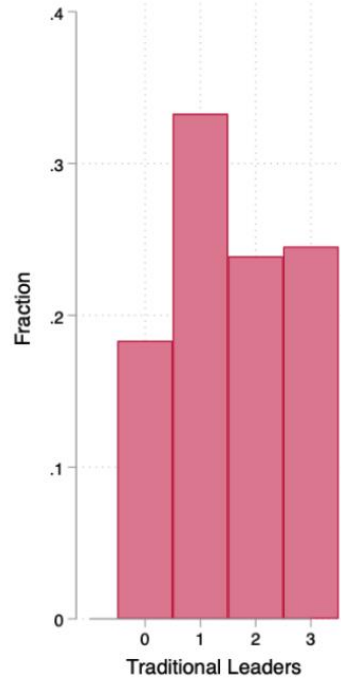
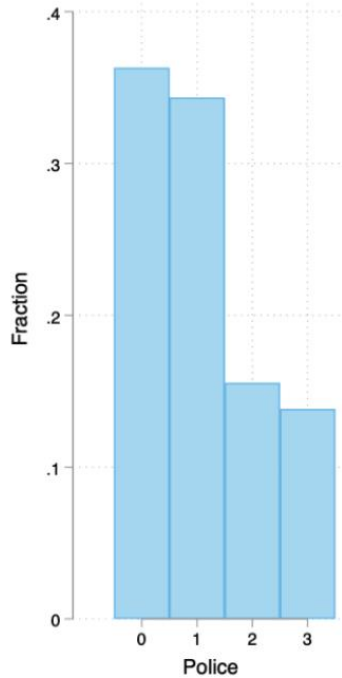
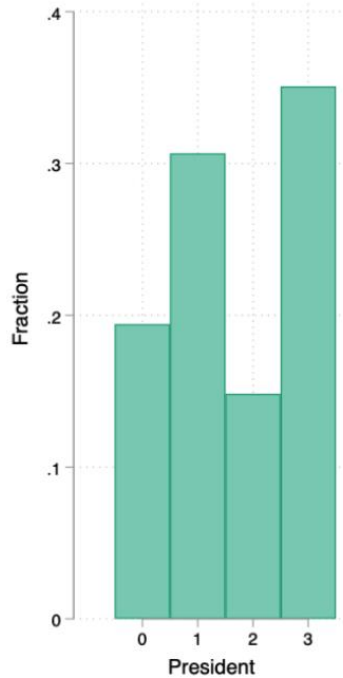
Liberian counties boundaries, Afrobarometer respondents' locations and deployment locations

## Research Design

- 3,598 georeferenced respondents across 3 waves
- DV: Trust for institutions (dummy):
  - President
  - Police
  - Traditional leaders (informal)
- IV:
  - 1 if county of respondent ever hosted UNMIL
  - Duration of deployment in months
  - Average monthly deployment of military before survey
- Mediators: Post-deployment violence; perceived support from UN
- Main model is logit with county-level FE
- Initial plan for ‘unexpected event’ design could not be used

# How much do you trust...?

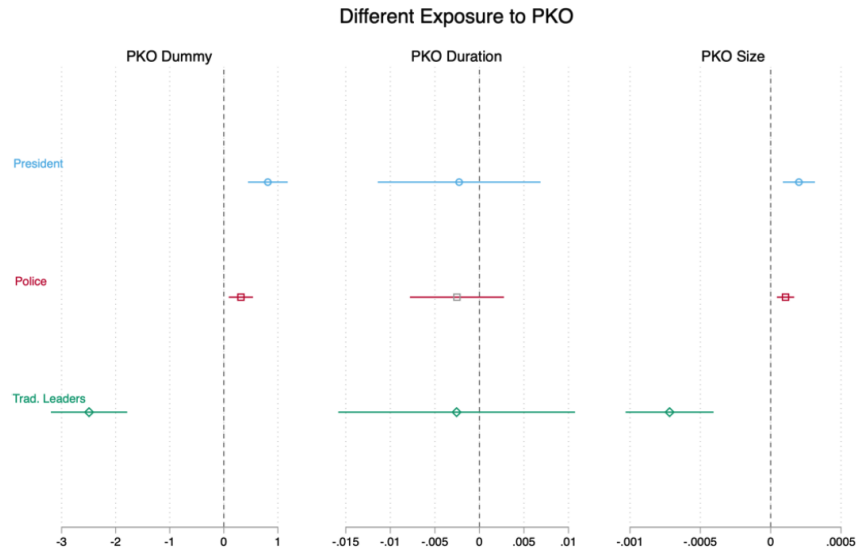
Respondents' Trust Toward:



- 0 = Not at all
- 1 = A little
- 2 = Somewhat
- 3 = A lot

Dichotomized DV

# Does PKO affect reported institutional trust?



Furthermore:

- Satisfaction with democracy robustly explain trust for president
- Younger respondents trust traditional leaders more, less so president
- Provision of goods associated with lower trust (quality?)

## Conditional Effects

- Exposure to PKO increases probability to trust the president, but this declines as deployments get longer
  - 10 pp from 6 to 12 months
- Ongoing violence post-deployment with UNMIL:
  - Reduces trust for president
  - Increases trust for police
- Citizens acknowledging UN support to Liberia are more likely to trust the president (only run for wave 4 [2008])
- Trust toward traditional leaders has somewhat distinct patterns compared to formal institutions
  - Trust is more likely in absence of UNMIL exposure



## So... what is the overall assessment?

- UN peacekeeping does not threaten governments' legitimacy, even when mandates are strongly oriented toward peacebuilding
- However, long deployments may erode trust, possibly by signalling lack of capacity
- When violence lingers:
  - **Governments are blamed**
  - **Security forces may get a confidence boost**
- If the mission performs well, this positively reflects on domestic actors as well