The Geopolitical Strategy of Refugee Camps

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Abstract

When developing countries are faced with a refugee crisis, their policy selection simultaneously invites humanitarian aid into the country, addresses domestic political interests associated with inviting outsiders in, and creates potential space for a neighboring country's rebel group to exploit refugees fleeing a civil war. Inviting humanitarian aid into a developing county might at first glance seem like a welfare-improving decision. However, this choice involves delegation with foreseeable consequences. International humanitarian groups will organize refugees and the provision of aid efficiently, which armed actors can exploit. Delegating international protection in a way that appeases domestic constituents and does not alter interstate relationships, may prove impossible. This article shows that strategic refugee policy involves asylum countries carefully balancing demands of domestic constituents against efficient provision of aid and the provocation of armed actors across an international border. The research offers an alternative explanation for refugee policy that relies on neither illiberal intentions toward refugees nor the incapacity of countries to control their territory. Refugee policy outcomes are the product of strategic balancing between domestic demands and foreign policy interests. In the Analytic Narrative tradition, the claims of this article are based on a series of case studies. The theory and its implications, though, provide insight into refugee policy selection across the developing world.

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1   Introduction

In the early 1990s, refugees fled across East Africa by the hundreds of thousands. Kenya established a large, densely populated camp for Sudanese near the border. This policy created health, environmental, and security problems in the camps and in the surrounding communities. Writing in the aftermath of these events, African scholars explain these encampment policies as the culmination of long-term trends; Tanzania and Kenya were overwhelmed with refugees (Kamanga 2002), and the public grew weary of hosting them (Rutinwa 2002). Other scholars assert that these countries were either unable or unwilling to improve the security situation near the camps and border (Lischer 2005; Salehyan 2009). However, sub-national variation in refugee policy undermines these explanations. While few Sudanese were allowed beyond the border area in Kenya, around 60,000 Somali refugees settled in the capital.[1] Countries enforce border camps for some refugees while being comparatively lax with other refugees.

This article demonstrates the logic for how foreign policy can enter into a developing country's decision making about refugee policy and explains some sub-national variation. Among developed countries, policies regarding refugees and migration are widely viewed as engaging foreign policy. The US approach toward Cuban refugees and refugees from countries allied with the USSR was explicitly a foreign policy (Scanlan and Loescher 1983). Italy and the EU have engaged state and non-state actors in Libya as part of a broad approach to asylum seekers (Camarena et al. 2020). On the world stage, refugee displacement can be a tactic of war, and therefore refugee reception has foreign policy implications (Greenhill 2010). Developing countries host the vast majority of refugees, and yet their foreign policy objectives have been analyzed in the context of refugee return (Camarena 2022; Schwartz 2022). One recent article explores refugee flow size and civil conflict dynamics and uses the case studies presented in this manuscript to motivate the argument (Turkoglu 2022). This article fills a gap by analyzing the foreign policy interests of developing countries when choosing refugee policy at arrival.

Nearly all studies of refugee policy and decisions about refugee camps in the developing world examine domestic interests. The most recent studies of developing countries investigate costs and

benefits inside the country of asylum with respect to domestic constituents and their well being (Verme and Schuettler 2021), homeland security, crime, internal stability (Dancygier et al. 2021; Savun and Gineste 2019), and public health (Baez 2011). Even when international relations are taken into account, the logic has derived from how international relationships can influence domestic costs (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019).

This article draws on this work to build a strategic model of a developing country's refugee policy making, which involves domestic policy interests and foreign policy objectives. The argument adds to work on civil war and interstate disputes with non-state actors. An expanding literature in transnational civil war examines non-state actors, like rebel groups, when they cross borders (Salehyan 2009; Carter 2015). Until now, this literature has focused on rebels and left the agency of the refugee-receiving country unexplored. Like developed countries, developing countries that host refugees engage in foreign policy with state and non-state actors. In this regard, the argument advanced is similar substantively and methodologically to recent work that examines interstate dynamics in the presences of non-state actors (Silve and Verdier 2018; Berman and Lake 2019; Carter 2015), and it challenges empirical approaches to the relationship between refugees and violence which do not take into account endogenous refugee policy selection. Last, the article speaks to a literature among humanitarian organizations and scholars on the openness of refugee policy (Milner 2009; Savun and Gineste 2019), illuminating the foreign policy incentives that refugee-receiving countries face and drawing out possible humanitarian consequences.

The theory developed in this article reveals a not often considered pathway through which an outside party can alter a civil war—rebel efficiency. For example, Kenya's encampment of the Sudanese in Kakuma made better recruiting and taxing ground for the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA). Similarly, Tanzania made the Burundian camps efficient recruiting and taxing ground for Burundian rebel groups. These refugee policy interventions operate similarly to NATO providing air support to rebels in Libya. With air cover, rebels were able to fight more effectively. Refugee camps can alter the efficiency of the rebel group, too, albeit in a less drastic way. When the group recruits more easily and taxes more easily, the group can put more effort into fighting.

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More effective fighting can change the outcome of the civil war.

An asylum country may refuse to establish border camps or have explicit dispersal policies. The model demonstrates how this choice can be strategic, too. By not building border camps and promoting dispersal, the asylum country avoids intervening in a civil war. When refugees are intermixed with host country nationals dispersed over large areas, or when they live far from the border, they are an *inefficient* place for recruiting or taxation, and a rebel group will do better by relying on their controlled territory.

Structural characteristics of refugee settlements indicate refugee vulnerability to recruitment and taxation. Rebel groups can most efficiently use areas where refugees live exclusively, that are closer to a border, have limited access to the rest of the asylum country, and are more densely populated than rebel controlled territory. When refugees are intermixed, spread out and far away from the border, it is inefficient for the rebel group to use the refugee population to recruit and tax. These refugees are therefore less vulnerable to taxation and recruitment.

Using an Analytic Narrative, this article proceeds by describing the model and deriving implications.[2] I explore three implications of the model in Kenya. I conclude with a discussion of alternative explanations, limits of the theory, and how the humanitarian community use this framework to be more effective.

2   The Model: Refugee Policy in a Strategic Civil War

The model incorporates three parties affected by a refugee policy that alters a civil war, the refugee-receiving country (asylum county), the government in the country of origin, and a rebel group. The government in the country of origin and the rebel group are engaged in a strategic civil war, where they anticipate the availability (or absence) of a border camp. Then, the refugee-receiving country selects a policy, taking into account domestic costs and geopolitical consequences. Will refugees integrate or cause economic or social tensions? Will a border camp give an advantage to a friendly insurgent group or could it undermine a productive relationship

with a neighboring country? They balance these concerns when selecting policy. Since, the rebel group and the government in the country of origin can anticipate a border camp, given the opportunity, the rebel group will use the border camp to its advantage. Knowing this, the government in the country of origin adjusts to fight a more capable foe.

The model begins with a strategic civil war, followed by the asylum country's choice of refugee policy. It is a two-stage sequential game.[3] First, the government of the country of origin and the rebel group choose their allocation to fighting. Second, the refugee-receiving country chooses a refugee policy. In this sequential framework I characterize the Subgame Perfect Nash Equilibrium (SPNE).

2.1   Strategic Civil War

The choice to intervene in a civil war depends on the war itself. Therefore, I draw on the economic rent-seeking literature and select a model of civil war that endogenizes the probability of winning a war.[4] The government of the country of origin (O) and the rebel group (R) have an endowment of resources (E). They can choose to invest in either production (B) or fighting (G). The probability that each party wins the war is based on a contest success function (p) of their investments in fighting. Each party's objective function is the expected value of winning the war. The government and the rebel group each take into account the probability of winning (p) and the total remaining resources, that is, those devoted to production (not fighting). The parties simultaneously allocate resources. The war occurs, and the winner takes all the spoils. In the absence of an intervention, the two parties' objectives can be summarized:

$$V_i = p_i(G_i, G_{-i}) \left[E_i + E_{-i} - G_i - G_{-i} \right], \ i = O, R. \tag{1}$$

In principal, a refugee policy could help the rebels in two ways. It could give them more resources or help them to fight more efficiently. This conceptual dichotomy is grounded in understanding rebellion as the production of violence (Hirshleifer 2001). In particular, there are inputs

for producing violence and tactics that employ the inputs to make violence. Small, fledgling rebel groups depend on hiding among civilians and on surprise to gain maximal violent impact from their attacks. When rebel groups secure and control territory, they set up systems of taxation and governance and use the civilian population as a source of resources, recruits and political support (Weinstein 2006). In both circumstances, the civilian population is an input into the production of violence, but the way the civilians are used to produce violence differs. The way of producing violence is the technology of violence or the tactics that the rebel group uses.

To capture both the inputs and different ways of using those inputs to produce violence in the civil war, I select a contest success function that captures both inputs (resources) and ways of translating resources into violence (which, I will call efficiency). The contest success function presented in the main article is a simple version of the only class of standard contest success functions that incorporates both resources and efficiency asymmetrically. Key results from the simple version extend to a broader class of contest success functions under modest assumptions.[5] This application of a 'production function' for violence is consistent with path-breaking work in the industrial organization of rebellion (Weinstein 2006; Besley and Persson 2011; Beber and Blattman 2013).

The model incorporates these two possibilities of changing the production of violence. First, the refugee policy might alter the resources available to the rebel group, $A_{R,x}$. Alternatively, the efficiency with which they fight, probability of winning, $p_{i,x}$, depending on the refugee policy.

A weighted lottery over the allocation to fighting captures the potential for differential efficiency. Formally,

$$p_i(G_i, G_{-i}) = \frac{\alpha_i G_i}{\alpha_i G_i + \alpha_{-i} G_{-i}} \ for \ i = O, R. \tag{2}$$

The weights, α_i, in the lottery correspond to how efficiently the parties fight. The rebel group's efficiency can be decomposed into two parts: what comes from the refugee policy, τ_x, and everything else. Thus, $\alpha_R = \tau_x \hat{\alpha}_R$, where x is the refugee policy. In the civil war where the asylum country provides the opportunity for exploitation, the rebel group uses the camp to be more effi-

cient and $\tau > 1$, which scales up the rebel group's original fighting efficiency. In other words, τ captures how useful for fighting the refugee camp is to the rebels.

Since there may or may not be help from the asylum country, I model two potential civil wars. One is the baseline, the non-intervention, in which the rebel group does not get anything ($\tau = 1$, $A_R = 0$). The other is the war in which the rebel group receives more resources and is able to fight more efficiently ($\tau > 1$, $A_R > 0$) because of the refugee policy.

Equation 3 captures the parties' objectives given the possibility of a refugee policy that is advantageous to the rebel group.

$$V_i = p_{i,x}(G_i, G_{-i})\left[E_i + E_{-i} + A_{R,x} - G_i - G_{-i}\right], \ i = O, R. \tag{3}$$

2.2 The Asylum Country

The asylum country's decision builds on the domestic determinants of refugee policy and adds to its foreign policy aims. In the model, the asylum country has two options. The first is to allow the refugees into the interior as dispersed individuals or group settlements (Dispersal (D)). This is the non-intervention option. The second is to keep all of the refugees restricted to settlements at the border (Border Camps (B)). This is the intervention option.

For the purposes of the model, Border Camps and Dispersal represent two ideal types. Border camps are long-term, densely populated, strictly enforced refugee settlements at the border. Dispersal represents policies that involve allowing (or actively facilitating) refugees to settle across the country as households or in established communities.

At first glance, it may seem as though there is a third option, which is to refuse entry to the refugees or close the border. While many asylum countries elect to close their borders, this is a *de jure* policy. Depending on what else the asylum country does, the *de facto* reduces to one of the two options above. Typically when a country closes its borders, it closes its ports of entry; refugees and other migrants simply cross through space that is not an official border crossing. This is not a matter of capacity for border enforcement. It is a reality of international borders. Even in the most

capable of countries, when borders are closed, volumes of people still enter and take up residence.[6]

The assistance to the rebel group is where the strategic interaction occurs. If the asylum country establishes camps close to the border, the rebel group can exploit those camps. Meanwhile, if the asylum country disperses refugees or situates settlements far from the border, the rebel group will not get the opportunity to use the refugees. The asylum country weighs its domestic interests and foreign policy concerns knowing that the rebel group and government in the country of origin will strategically adjust. Finally, the asylum country chooses the most advantageous refugee policy.

Domestic Interests

Domestics interests in refugee policy are studied across disciplines. I incorporate these findings into the assumptions of the model. Scholars of humanitarian action and international law argue that domestic politics often drive the openness of a refugee policy or the decision to place refugees in camps (Savun and Gineste 2019; Milner 2009; Jacobsen and Crisp 1998). Economic studies of the impacts of hosting refugees collectively are ambiguous about whether refugees are a net cost or benefit. However, some of these studies touch on political or social impacts, and together with other studies of social and political interests, suggests good reasons that central governments often view refugees as a net domestic cost.

A few recent studies evaluate political costs of refugee flows. With dispersed refugees, even with measurable economic gains, hosts around dispersed refugees report costs from hosting refugees. They perceive greater inequality and describe alienation from their central government (Kreibaum 2016). A large literature establishes an association between violence and refugee arrivals.[7] Leaders often rely on this association with violence and other security threats when explaining encampment policies (Polo and Wucherpfennig 2022). Savun and Gineste 2019 outline the logic for refugees being a net political cost. Refugees are easily scapegoated, and domestic constituents may demand their removal or their separation. While public opinion of immigrants improves with more immigrants in high and middle income countries, the narrative in Africa is the reverse. Larger refugees flows are associated with more public discontent and demands for separation of the refugees from

the citizenry (Kamanga 2002; Rutinwa 2002).[8] While aid accruing to the country of asylum provides a benefit to hosting, as refugee numbers increase, the political and social costs of refugee flows drive leader's decisions, and underlie the assumptions of the model.

First, refugee policy costs, c_x, are increasing in population, F. When there is a border camp, the cost of expanding a camp takes advantage of economies of scale.[9] By contrast, the political costs of dispersal compound with population.[10]

Assumption 1. $c'_x(F) > 0$, $x = D, B$, $c''_B(F) < 0$, and $c''_B(F) > 0$.

Border camps have a large upfront cost for set-up, s, driven largely by the allocation of land for the camp.[11]

Assumption 2. $s_B > s_D = 0$

There is always a small enough population, $\underline{F}$, for which dispersal has smaller costs than border camps.

Assumption 3. $\exists \ \underline{F}$ such that $s + c_B(F) > c_D(F)$ for all $F < \underline{F}$).

The benefits of selecting a refugee policy for developing countries, H_x, are twofold. The country gains both a reputation for compliance with international norms and access to humanitarian aid.[12] When asylum countries select border camps, humanitarian aid is greater.[13]

Assumption 4. $H_B > H_D$.

In sum, the asylum country domestic calculus, $\tilde{U}_x$, weighs the utility of the dispersal and border camps. With dispersal, the country gains the reputational benefits of hosting refugees, less the cost of dispersal, given the population. With border camps, the country gains the reputational benefits of hosting refugees, plus some international aid, less the set-up cost of a camp and the incremental cost of expanding the camp given the population arriving.

$$\tilde{U}_x = H_x - s_x - c_x(F), \ x = B, D$$

Geopolitical Interests

Scholars to date have done little to explore the foreign policy cost and benefits of a border camp policy. A primary contribution of this article is to demonstrate the logic of a foreign policy calculus in developing country refugee policy. If border camps were just a cost-saving exercise, the presence of transnational rebels and the potential for cross-border attacks could offset cost savings. Indeed, countries have discovered that border camps are costly because of cross-border attacks and have moved camps away from the border. In response to attacks, Tanzania moved camps back in the 1970s, Mexico did so in the 1980s, and Guinea in the 2000s. In each situation, hostilities de-escalated. These incidents reveal that refugee camps are worth attacking. In geopolitics, refugee camps are valuable because they help rebel groups. Depending on the foreign policy interests of the refugee-receiving country and the likelihood of cross-border attacks, helping the rebel group can be a net benefit. Thus, the model connects the asylum country's calculus to the civil war.

An asylum country prefers one regime over another in the neighboring country and considers whether border camps can change the outcome of the civil war. The foreign policy calculus incorporates the value of the rebels winning, w, and the probability that the rebel group wins the war, p_R. The value of the rebels winning, w, is a preference for convergence on regional policy.[14] If two countries agree on how to coordinate trade, migration, or other regional matters, there will be mutual gains in the long run.[15]

The objective of the asylum country, then, is the domestic utility calculus from above and the expected value of a rebel win, as summarized in Equation 4.[16]

$$U_x = H_x - s_x - c_x(F) + p_{R,x}w, \ x = D, B. \tag{4}$$

The asylum country considers how the help of a border camp will change the probability that the rebel group wins. At this juncture, the decision making in the model becomes strategic, with the asylum country anticipating the behavior of the government in the country of origin and a rebel group who are engaged in a strategic civil war. When parties in the civil war see that the rebel group will get additional help from a border camp, they change their behavior. Strategic behavior

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in the civil war thus informs the asylum country's refugee policy.

2.3 Equilibrium

The equilibrium depends on the threshold where the asylum country is just indifferent between border camps and dispersal. This threshold defines how important the rebel group has to be relative to domestic politics for the country of asylum to choose border camps (dispersal) and help (deny) the rebels. Below the threshold, if the asylum country does not care for the rebel group and it is low cost to host refugees in a dispersed fashion, the country of asylum will choose dispersal. With dispersal there will be no intervention in the civil war, and the rebel group and government will invest in the war accordingly. Alternatively, if the country of asylum values a rebel win, they will choose border camps, even if it is low cost to disperse refugees. In this situation, the government of the country of origin and the rebel group will invest in arming, anticipating that the rebel group will fight more efficiently. However, domestic considerations can outstrip the foreign policy considerations, creating a low threshold to choose border camps. If domestic costs of dispersal are sufficiently high, the asylum country will choose border camps even if, on foreign policy grounds, they would prefer not to help the rebel group.

2.3.1 Asylum Country's Best Response

Since the equilibrium is subgame perfect, the logic of backward induction requires beginning with the decision of the asylum country. The asylum country has a simple maximization problem with two options. Whichever utility is the largest, U_D (Dispersal) or U_B (Border Camps), the asylum country's best response is to choose the corresponding policy. Because the border camp will impact the civil war in favor of the rebels, the probability of the rebels winning changes the value of U_B. The probability that the rebel group wins increases when they fight more efficiently because of the presence of a border camp. The fighting efficiency feeds into the asylum country's decision.

The equilibrium refugee policy choice depends on the threshold, $\bar{w}$, the point at which the

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asylum country is indifferent between dispersal and border camps. Formally,

$$\bar{w} = \frac{(H_B - H_D) - (s_B + c_B(F) - c_D(F))}{p^*_{R,D} - p^*_{R,B}(\tau)}. \tag{5}$$

The threshold takes the domestic calculus of the asylum country and compares it to foreign policy interests, how valuable to the asylum country the rebels win is. Each of these components can dominate. If the value of a rebel win is larger than the threshold, $w > \bar{w}$, the asylum country will choose Border Camps. If the value of a rebel win is at least as small as the threshold, $w \leq \bar{w}$, the asylum country will choose Dispersal.

The threshold captures a trade-off between domestic and foreign policy interests. Suppose that the difference between dispersal and border camps on domestic grounds alone is small and fixed. If the asylum country prefers the rebel group, the asylum country will choose border camps, which help the rebels. Alternatively, if the asylum country prefers the government of the country of origin, the asylum country will choose dispersal to avoid intervening in favor of the rebel group.

In another case, suppose that the asylum country does not see much difference between the rebel group and the government of the country of origin. Then the value of a rebel win is small and fixed. If the cost of dispersal on domestic grounds alone is high (e.g. there are many refugees), then the country of asylum will choose border camps, even though they do not care much about the civil war. If the cost of dispersal is low (e.g. the refugees are culturally similar and there is plenty of space), they will choose dispersal.

2.3.2   Civil War Best Response

Proceeding backward, the next step is to consider the equilibrium choice of the parties in the civil war. In equilibrium, each party will choose their investment in fighting according to the joint available resources and their relative efficiency in fighting. Since for the model of civil war I use, the equilibria are well documented in the literature (Garfinkel and Skaperdas 2007), I present key equilibrium results, and relegate the logic of these results to the appendix. In the model that

allows for the intervention from the refugee policy, the equilibrium investment in fighting for the government is given by

$$G_{O,x}^* = \frac{E_O + E_R + A(x)}{2\left(1 + \sqrt{\frac{\alpha_O}{\alpha_R(x)}}\right)}. \tag{6}$$

For the rebel group, the equilibrium investment is

$$G_{R,x}^* = \frac{E_O + E_R + A(x)}{2\left(1 + \sqrt{\frac{\alpha_R(x)}{\alpha_O}}\right)}. \tag{7}$$

Therefore, in equilibrium, the government in the country of origin and the rebel group will select their investment in fighting, correctly anticipating the availability (or absence) of a border camp, $G_{O,x}^*$ and $G_{R,x}^*$, respectively. The asylum country will choose its refugee policy, trading off on domestic interests scaled by how the policy will impact the war on the other side of the border. When $w > \bar{w}$, the asylum country will choose border camps (B). When $w < \bar{w}$, the asylum country will chose dispersal (D).[17]

3   Efficiency and the Civil War

The model of the civil war yields two important relationships for understanding refugee policy selection, the objective of the refugee-receiving country, and how these change the civil war. The refugee-receiving country is aiming to provide (or withhold) efficiency from a rebel group. The model implies that asylum countries cannot be achieving their objective by providing resources to the rebel group. They must be achieving their objective by increasing (or leaving unchanged) the efficiency with which the rebel group fights. It turns out, this distinction makes sense in the context of civil war. It is observable in the context of the refugee policy intervention, and the result is more general than the simple model specified here might suggest.

Border camps—densely populated refugee camps, close to the border—transforms fighting for the rebel group much like irrigation transforms growing crops for the farmer. Rain fed agriculture

is uncertain. Even when there is enough rain, it may not come at the right time or it may not come with the consistency that is optimal for growing crops. The farmer must plant and harvest uncertain about yield. However with irrigation fed agriculture, the same amount of water can be introduced into crop production at the times it is most efficient to do so. Altering the flow of the inputs, increases the productivity of the farmer. Similarly, taxation and recruitment in rebel controlled territory is uncertain. Some villages might have ample potential recruits, but they are spread out over lots of territory, and there are times when potential recruits prefer to work. Other villages might be good sources for taxation, but these need not be the same villages, and there seasonality to taxation. The refugee camp creates the potential for a constant flow of recruits and taxes. Just like the farmer can better optimize production with a constant flow of water, the rebel group can better optimize their fighting with a border refugee camp.

How does the flow of taxes and recruits from the refugee camps change the character of the civil war? It makes it possible for the rebel group to plan its fighting and choose an optimal strategy. With more predictable inputs, a rebel group might engage in more conventional war rather than guerrilla warfare. With a larger set of recruits they can fight in ways that rely more on people. They may also be able to differentiate among their recruits, matching their skills and capacity of recruits to tasks for greatest impact.[18]

This result about efficiency comes from the probability that the rebels win the war in equilibrium. This probability enters into the asylum country's objective function and informs the denominator of the asylum country's threshold, $\bar{w}$. In equilibrium, the probability of a rebel win is strictly increasing in the rebels' efficiency of fighting. This means that the presence of a border camp (intervention) increases the probability that the rebels win. The equilibrium probability of the rebel group winning the civil war makes this plain.

$$p_{R,x}^{*} = \frac{\sqrt{\tau_x \hat{\alpha}_R}}{\sqrt{\tau_x \hat{\alpha}_R} + \sqrt{\alpha_O}}, \quad x = D, B. \tag{8}$$

In the absence of a border camp (non-intervention, $\tau = 1$), the equilibrium probability of a rebel win depends strictly on the efficiency with which the government in the country of origin

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and rebel group fight.[19] In the presence of a border camp (intervention, $\tau > 1$), the equilibrium probability of a rebel win is increasing in the greater efficiency or the ease with which the rebel group recruits and taxes as a result of the border camp.

Resources do not enter into the calculus of the asylum country. The reason that the resources do not matter for the asylum country's refugee policy is because resources do not alter the outcome of the civil war in probability. If the rebel group invests more resources in the civil war, the government of the country of origin will, too. Because of the strategic response, the outcome of the civil war is unaltered.

It is not as if resources in the civil war do not matter for the war itself. If a border camp were to provide only resources (and not efficiency) to the rebel group, this would change the total investment in the civil war. Greater investment in the civil war is often interpreted as making the war more violent or making it last longer. This is the mechanism for how food aid might increase civil wars (Nunn and Qian 2014) and the mechanism for how refugee camps can fuel the war economy (Lischer 2005). The model reveals, though, that this is not the mechanism through which the asylum country's policy is operating.

Instead, the refugee policy is altering the civil war—the probable outcome and relative power— through the efficiency of recruiting and taxation. Typically, rebel groups rely on the civilian population in their controlled territory for recruits and funds. They go from village to village, and the civilian population may be spread out over entire regions. Because civilians can flee, it may even be uncertain how many people and how much in the way of resources can be collected. Not so in a border refugee camp; the rebel group will find tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of civilians in a small area. These civilians have a regular source of aid from which to tax; there are new flows of taxable goods every week or month. Even though most civilians do not flee their country of origin and remain accessible to rebel groups inside their borders, accessing and taxing civilians is more difficult or uncertain.

3.1 Fighting Efficiency and the Asylum Country

While the rebel group can receive both resources and efficiency from a border camp, only the efficiency enters into the asylum country's calculus. The threshold does not contain resources (A_R). Just as better technology helps miners get more minerals out of the ground faster and improve profits, denser camps, closer to the border help rebels obtain both taxes and recruits faster and improves fighting. The improved fighting of the rebels is the object of the asylum country's geopolitical strategy in choosing or withholding border camps. This is the first implication from the model.

Implication 1. *For the asylum country to consider foreign policy aims in their refugee policy, the border refugee camp must help the rebel group to fight more efficiently.*

The asylum country's threshold contains the differential probability of the rebel group winning ($p^*_{R,D} - p^*_{R,B}(\tau)$). This is how much difference the border camp will make in the outcome of the civil war. By making it easier for the rebel group to recruit and tax, the border camp makes the investments in fighting more efficient, and this improves the probability of the rebel group winning or increases their bargaining power in negotiations. This differential probability is a function of τ, the usefulness of the camp.

The usefulness of a camp to the rebels increases with some observable features. Border camps are useful (τ is larger) when the rebels depend on large numbers of people to advance the war. Larger, closer together camps make taxing and recruitment more efficient. More people and particularly, more prime-age potential recruits—adolescent and young adult men—make a higher quality recruitment pool. Easier travel between the front lines and the refugee camp means that smuggling recruits and appropriating food or supplies is easier. Shorter distances, flatter terrain, and the absence of bodies of water increase how useful the border camp is to the rebel group.

3.2 Recruiting Efficiently in East Africa

Until now there has been scant speculation on the foreign policy object of a asylum country's refugee policy in the developing world. Implication 1 from the model clarifies a mechanism for how an asylum country can advance its geopolitical goals with refugee policy. Asylum countries choose refugee policy considering how much more easily rebel groups can recruit and tax in a camp as compared to rebel-controlled territory.

The efficiency logic is on display in how Tanzania leverages the Burundian camps. Lischer (2005, p. 111), focusing on the resources in refugee camps, categorizes Tanzania in the Burundian crisis in the 1990s as a refugee-receiving country that is able, but unwilling, to prevent the militarization of refugees. Lischer argues that Tanzania gains politically by diverting resources. It is not clear how Tanzania achieves its goals, though. Jean-Francois Durieux, a UNHCR official who worked in the region during the Burundian crisis, questions whether Tanzania's goals is to provide resources to the Burundian rebels.

> All camps hosting Burundian refugees in the Kigoma region are within walking distance from the international border . . . The location of the camps in this kind of proximity was no accident. It is the result of a deliberate policy by the government of Tanzania . . . The strategic value of refugee camps in the border area is obvious from the standpoint of [Burundian rebels]. While the precise role of the camps in a possible Tanzanian strategy is harder to figure out, there can be no doubt that they play some role in such a strategy (Durieux 2000, p. 2–3).

The model clarifies Tanzania's strategy. By offering the rebel group efficiency, Tanzania is better off. Tanzania's aim is to make the camps more useful to the rebel group than what the rebels already have in their controlled territory.

Tanzania made the camps more useful by making them more densely populated than the rebel-controlled territory. Burundian rebel groups taxed refugees shares of food and recruited in the camps along the border (Lischer 2005). The rebel group did the same thing on the other side of the border. The alternative is for a rebel groups to go from village to village taxing food aid, recruiting, and kidnapping.[20] For the camps to offer the Burundian rebels efficiency, it must be easier to tax and recruit in the camps than in their territory.

Camps that are easy to access and denser than the Burundian side of the border achieve Tanzania's objective. Burundi is among the most densely populated countries in Africa, but the Burundian camps were even denser. The provinces on the Burundian side of the border had about 100 people per square kilometer in 1990, and none of the towns had any more than 8,000 people. Meanwhile, the camps built in the 1990s housed more than 350,000 people at their peak. Most of the camps were within 30km of the border. One of the largest camps was less than 25km from the border, housed more than 80,000 refugees at its peak, and had a population density of 3,000 Burundians per square kilometer.[21] Tanzania succeeded in making the camps a more efficient place to tax and recruit by placing the camps close to the border and ensuring high population density.

4 Model Implications for Policy Selection

To connect the theoretical development and equilibrium behavior of the refugee-receiving country to cases in East Africa, this section uses insights from comparative statics and empirical context to develop two additional implications of the model.

Implication 2. *When on foreign policy grounds alone, the refugee-receiving country prefers dispersed settlements, but chooses camps, the camps will be more spread out and farther from the border (less useful to the rebel group).*

Implication 3. *When camps are chosen because of domestic policy interests, a country will expand camps, spread them out, or disperse refugees, as refugees become a greater foreign policy cost (more useful to the rebel group).*

4.1 Comparative Statics: Moving the Camp Closer to the Border

Camps that are closer to the border are more useful to the rebel group. Given a border camp, what is driving the refugee policy—domestic or foreign policy interest—determines how refugee-receiving countries respond to a camp that is more useful to the rebels. In equilibrium, when an

asylum country chooses camps for domestic reasons, camps farther from the border and farther apart are preferred. Meanwhile, when a country chooses border camps for foreign policy reasons, camps closer together and closer to the border are the best.

Figure 1 shows the comparative statics on τ and reveals the logic for the differences in behavior. The left side is the case where, on domestic grounds alone, the asylum country prefers dispersal (i.e. $(H_B - H_D) - (s_B + c_B(F) - c_D(F)) < 0$). On the right side is where, on domestic grounds alone, the asylum country prefers border camps (i.e. $(H_B - H_D) - (s_B + c_B(F) - c_D(F)) > 0$). Along the horizontal axis, the usefulness of the camp to the rebels is increasing. Choosing a border camp helps rebels to fight more efficiently. Along the vertical axis is the value of a rebel win. At the top, the asylum country prefers the rebel group; at the bottom, the asylum country prefers the government in the country of origin.
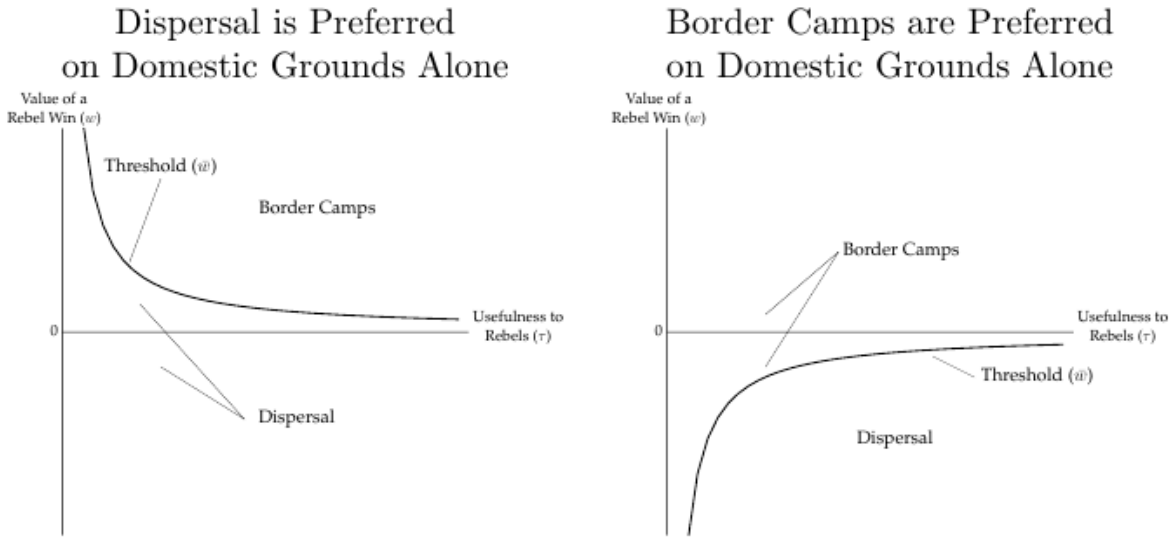

Figure 1: Comparative Statics of Camp's Usefulness to Rebels

On the left side, since the asylum country prefers dispersal on domestic grounds, in order for the country to consider building border camps (be at the threshold $\bar{w}$), the asylum country must want to help the rebels. As the usefulness of a camp to the rebels improves, the asylum country more easily chooses border camps because they will yield greater foreign policy benefits. Meanwhile, on the right side, in order for the country to consider dispersal, it must be that the country prefers

the government. As the efficiency with which the rebel group can fight because of the border camp increases, the costs of helping the rebels is greater. The asylum country has to like the value of a rebel win more (a smaller, negative number) to continue to be willing to have border camps, so the threshold becomes higher.

When increases in τ are understood as camps closer to the border or closer together, there are observable implications of the theory. In small countries, when camps are established, they are necessarily close to international borders. Therefore, the border camp is more useful to the rebel group. Small countries will be more responsive to the foreign policy cost or gains of refugee policy. In other words, small countries will select dispersal when on domestic grounds they would have preferred border camps and choose border camps when on domestic grounds they would have preferred dispersal, in response to smaller foreign policy interests than those that larger countries allow to influence their decision.

More generally, observable features of camps reveal whether domestic or foreign policy is driving the refugee policy. Given a border camp, if domestic politics are driving the camp and the camp is a foreign policy cost, the asylum country will prefer camps that are more spread out and farther from the border (less useful to the rebel group, lower τ). Since distance to the border is an observable feature of a camp, humanitarian organizations can use the model to recognize what interests are driving the border camp choice. When domestic interests are driving camps, the camps will be more spread out and farther from the border, and the asylum country will want to maintain camps farther apart. When foreign policy interests are driving the camps, they will be closer together and closer to the border. The asylum country will want to maintain their concentration.

4.2   Changes in Population and Extension to the Model

Distance in not the only observable indicator of usefulness of a camp. Population density and the availability of prime-age recruits also matter. Under this interpretation of τ, the usefulness of the camp to the rebels varies with the population. As additional refugees arrive, if there are no changes in policy, a camp becomes more useful to the rebels. For large values of a government

win and large refugee population, the asylum country may prefer to defray the foreign policy cost of a denser camp by degrading the usefulness of the camp to the rebels, making the camp itself less dense, farther from the border, or containing fewer prime-age recruits. The converse is also true; for a country that places a high value on a rebel win, each additional refugee increases the usefulness of the camp to the rebels and can be a foreign policy benefit. In this case, the refugee-receiving country prefers a denser camp, with more prime-age recruits, closer to the border.

These dynamics are apparent when considering how an additional refugee changes the refugee-receiving country's calculus. When the refugee-receiving country prefers border camps because they appease a domestic audience and has a friendly relationship with the government in the country of origin, each additional refugee is a cost to the country. When the value of the government winning is large enough, the foreign policy cost can dominate the domestic policy cost. Meanwhile, when a refugee-receiving country sets up the border camp because of its foreign policy aims, and the value of a rebel win is large enough, the marginal refugee is a benefit. By allowing the additional refugee to increase the density of the camp, the country is better off.

The intuition for these implications is as follows. When the refugee population increases, domestic pressure for border camps increases. When a refugee-receiving country values a government win, there is a countervailing pressure toward dispersal because as population increases, the refugee-receiving country wants to avoid denser camps that are more useful to the rebel group. When the refugee-receiving country places a high enough value on the neighboring government winning, the marginal refugee is a greater foreign policy cost than domestic policy cost. The asylum country does better by expanding a camp (moving it farther from the border or decreasing the number of prime-age recruits). They incur more domestic cost to defray the greater foreign policy cost associated with providing a useful camp to the rebels.[22]

5 Exploring Implications in Kenya

At this stage in the Analytic Narrative, I turn to a new context, Kenya, to explore the implications. Kenya, like Tanzania, has experienced multiple refugee crises and offers opportunities to evaluate the comparative statics. Cases in Kenya show that refugee-receiving countries choose and alter their refugee policy in response to changing foreign policy context consistent with the comparative statics of the model. Figure 2 panel A, displays a map of Africa and the countries used in the development and evaluation of the model. Figure 2 panel B displays a map of refugee sites in Kenya referenced throughout this section.
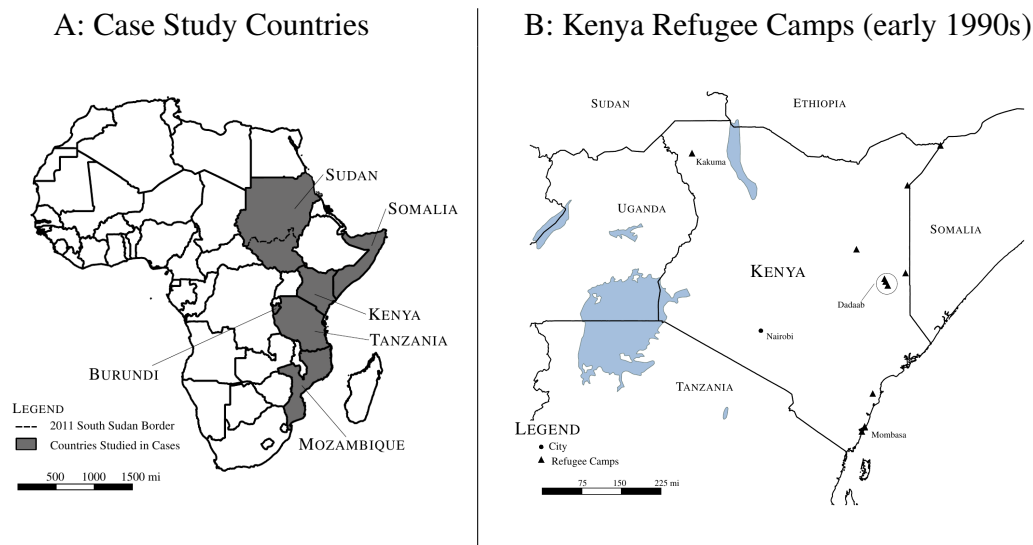
A: Case Study Countries | B: Kenya Refugee Camps (early 1990s)

Figure 2: Case Maps

To evaluate the implications, I introduce a measure for a policy's usefulness to the rebel group (τ). Next, I use two sets of unexpected events to study Kenya's policy selection in conjunction with the latter two implications from the model. The first unexpected event is near simultaneous collapses of the Somali and Ethiopian governments in the early 1990s. This triggered the arrival of refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Southern Sudan. Kenya had substantively different foreign policy orientations toward Sudan and Somalia, and this informed their refugee policy for their nationals. Later, the expansion of shipping and tourism in Mombasa, at the time of the United Nations pull-out from Somalia, created a near simultaneous-shift in both domestic and foreign

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policy objectives in Kenya. Kenya responded by changing its refugee policy toward Somalis, consistent with the third implication of the model.

5.1 Measuring Usefulness to the Rebels

A measure of usefulness to rebels (τ) must capture closeness to the border across sites. For analytic clarity the model analyzes two refugee policies, border camps and dispersal. These extremes capture one situation where the refugee policy is particularly useful to a rebel group and one where the policy is of no use to the rebels. Empirically, most policies are not these ideal types and include multiple refugee sites. So, the comparative static analysis incorporates the possibility of a continuum captured in τ.

A population-weighted distance measure does this empirically, summarizing closeness to the border and weighting sites by their refugee population. The population weighted distance, $\tilde{\tau}$, is given by $\frac{1}{\tilde{\tau}} = \sum_{All\ i} d_i s_i$. This measure takes the distance from the border of each refugee site (d_i) and weights it by the share of the refugee population (s_i) located there.

This measure is consistent with usefulness to the rebels, τ, in the model. The population-weighted distance is inversely related to the usefulness to the rebels, as distance is in the analysis of the model. As more refugees get closer to the border, the population-weighted distance is smaller, and the usefulness to the rebels gets larger. When refugees are more spread out, farther from the border, this measure captures a dimension of that dispersal. The population-weighted distance orders refugee policies by their usefulness to the rebel group.

5.2 Foreign Policy and Concentrations at the Border

Simultaneous refugee crises in Kenya in the early 1990s provide an opportunity to examine refugee policy selection implication. When on foreign policy grounds alone, the refugee-receiving country prefers dispersed settlements, but chooses camps, the camps will be more spread out and farther from the border (less useful to the rebel group). Because these crises happened at the same time and land politics are contentious in Kenya, it is clear that Kenya faced domestic pressure to set

up camps on multiple frontiers. Domestic considerations are fixed across cases. The implication suggests that when Kenya faces a refugee flow from a country where they do not want to support the rebel group, the camps should be farther from the border and more spread out. This is the situation with the Somali refugees.

With the toppling of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, hundreds of thousands of Somalis fled to Kenya. Kenya established camps up and down the Eastern half of Kenya, and a sizable group of Somali refugees settled in Nairobi. At their peak in this period, Somali refugees approached 400,000. At least 80,000 of these refugees were settled immediately at the border. Those in the Mombasa area and in Nairobi were situated the farthest from the Somali border. The population-weighted distance from the border of refugees in 1992 was 151km.

Meanwhile in 1992, tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees arrived from Southern Sudan. They were all settled close to the border with Sudan, and not permitted to live elsewhere. At the peak of the crisis, there were more than 60,000. Since all of the refugees were in a single place, the population-weighted distance to the border was 71km.

This difference in refugee density is consistent with the model because it corresponds to Kenya's foreign policy preferences at the time. Kenya had a clear interest in supporting the SPLA. The SPLA was fighting a war for Southern autonomy. An independent South Sudan would need a way to get oil out of the country. Kenya expected to be able to build a pipeline from Southern Sudan through Kenya to its port. The East African Community also expected an independent South Sudan to join. By contrast, the Government in Khartoum had a port for shipping oil and was oriented toward the north because of trade and cultural ties. Kenya had much to gain from an SPLA success.[23]

Meanwhile, Kenya had no such affinity with the groups fighting in Somalia. Siad Barre, who had been overthrown, had advocated a pan-Somalia agenda, which involved taking land from Kenya. Groups who were affiliated with Siad Barre controlled the area closest to Kenya. The internationally recognized government was only in control of Mogadishu. Shortly after the collapse, a US and a UN mission were aimed at stabilizing Somalia from the capital. Kenya's objectives did

not involve undermining the international community.[24]

5.3 Domestic Politics and Spreading out Camps

Changes in domestic and foreign policy conditions in the mid-90s in Kenya provide an opportunity to examine the final implication of the model. The model predicts that when domestic policy interests are driving camps, the refugee-receiving country will prefer camps that are less useful to the rebel group, and therefore farther from the border and farther apart. Kenya's response to changing conditions are consistent with the model; they move refugees on average farther from the border. After 1995, two things changed. First, Kenya faced increasing domestic pressure to close camps near Mombasa.[25] Second, Kenya's foreign policy interests were better defined and inconsistent with supporting the factions that controlled the Somali side of the Somali-Kenyan border.[26] Kenya's policy shift resulted in spacing out refugees, farther from the border.

Following the regime collapse in Somalia, refugees were up and down the eastern part of the country. As many as 45,000 refugees lived in and around Mombasa in a series of camps. These refugees disproportionately came from Mogadishu, the capital. Some of them were from minority groups in Somalia, and demographics suggest a greater proportion of male refugees in Mombasa than in the rest of the camps. Mombasa is a port city and the heart of the tourism and shipping industry in Kenya; refugee camps were on appreciating land. Tensions between Kenyans in Mombasa and the refugees escalated. Domestic pressure forced Kenya to close the camps in Mombasa.[27]

Kenya announced a plan that would require all Somali refugees to live in Dadaab, about 70km from the Somali border. The consolidation would take refugees from across more than 100,000 squares kilometers and locate them all within about 70 square kilometers. This plan appeased domestic constituencies. It also took advantage of refugees repatriating because of decreasing violence. The UN mission had withdrawn from Somalia, and organized fighting had decreased (Verdirame 1999). The Somali refugee population in Kenya was reduced by nearly half. The majority of the refugees returned to areas in Southwest Somalia, leaving from the camps closest to the

border. The Mombasa and Nairobi-based refugees repatriated at lower rates. The Mombasa-based refugees were given three options: they could move to Dadaab or Kakuma (in the far Northwest of the country) or repatriate. Relatively few chose to go to Dadaab. About 15,000 chose Kakuma. The rest repatriated or disappeared. Humanitarian workers concluded that those who did not go to Kakuma mostly moved to the Somali refugee neighborhood in Nairobi (Verdirame 1999).

Kenya's camp consolidation exercise actually spread Somali refugees out across the country. With the closing of all the Somali camps except Dadaab, the population-weighted distance from the border was 275km, nearly twice what it had been in 1992. Consistent with model predictions, domestic politics were driving the encampment policy, and the marginal refugee was becoming more costly because of changes in Somalia. Between 1991 and 1995, Kenya aligned itself with the groups vying for control in Mogadishu and distanced itself from the groups that were near the border and had ties to the Siad Barre regime. In 1996 Kenya invited the factions fighting in Mogadishu to Kenya for peace talks. These talks marked the beginning of Kenya's involvement in negotiations that led to the Transitional National Government, which sat in Nairobi and whose successor governments Kenya continued to fight alongside Somalia nearly 30 years later.

The cases from Kenya elucidate the implications from the model by providing relevant comparisons. Kenya's refugee policy for Sudanese refugees created more efficient taxing and recruiting grounds for the SPLA than the SPLA had in their own territory. When faced with simultaneous refugee crises, Kenya concentrated Sudanese refugees at the border because of their affinity with the SPLA. Meanwhile, Kenya spread Somali refugees out because of ambiguous relations across the border. When domestic pressure forced the closure of camps, and Kenya's geopolitical goals were aimed at supporting a fledgling government in Somalia, they closed camps and spread Somali refugees farther across the country.

5.4   Challenges to the Model and Alternative Explanations

There are several explanations for the why border camps exist. In this section, I address the most common. Among these explanations are that international organizations choose refugee pol-

icy. Even if refugee-receiving countries select policy, they are motivated by domestic matters. Sheer numbers force countries to build camps, or doing nothing results in border camps. Successive waves of refugees wear down a hospitable public. Finally, world politics, not regional geopolitics, are the main explanation; the end of the Cold War or the Apartheid era prompted restrictive refugee policy. Each of these explanations has some merit, but comparisons from the cases render many of these explanations insufficient.

One concern is whether Tanzania and Kenya are the relevant decision makers. Tanzania and Kenya had delegated most refugee management to international organizations. The UNHCR coordinated the humanitarian efforts, but the organization served by invitation from host governments. UNHCR officials note that host governments controlled encampment, the locations and space allocated for camps, and enforcement of encampment. In the Mozambican case, Tanzania declined requests to have camps early on, and ultimately established one settlement, Likuyu, which housed about 12,000 refugees and was 130km from the border with Mozambique.[28] In Kenya, the local politics determined the parcel of land for Kakuma, but the Kenyan government chose the size and level of enforcement of the camp. Kenya and Tanzania had alternative policy options and the capacity to choose them. This could limit the applicability of the model. Not all countries retain decision-making power over refugee policy. Some countries do not have capacity to enforce policy on their periphery.

The theory directly incorporates domestic determinants of refugee policy. Although not the focus of this article, domestic interests influence refugee policy. Domestic politics were a driving force behind Kenya's decision to close the Mombasa camps. In the model where the asylum country has no clear preference for the the government or rebels, domestic politics determine refugee policy. This may be relevant in the Tanzanian hosting of Congolese refugees. Domestic determinants of policy are a special case of the theory. Given the sub-national variation in East African cases, a domestic policy explanation alone is insufficient.

Among the most referenced explanations for border camps is domestic pressure from the volume of refugees. When flows get large enough, a country has no choice but to build camps. The

relationships among the cases make this explanation less compelling. All of the cases have large numbers of arrivals, ranging from more than 60,000 to nearly 500,000. The Somali case casts the flow explanation into doubt. With an estimated 60,000 Somalis in Nairobi, the numbers alone cannot explain the strict enforcement at Kakuma for 65,000 Sudanese.

Tanzanian cases undermine a public fatigue explanation and the notion of changes with the end of the Cold War or Apartheid. Tanzania alternated between encampment policies and dispersal from independence through the 1990s. For example, when Mozambique sought independence from Portugal, Tanzania supported FRELIMO, the revolutionary party, and refugees came to Tanzania. Tanzania chose to put the Mozambican refugees in camps, some of which had easy access to the border. Later, during the civil war, Mozambicans were dispersed. A population of Congolese refugees lived dispersed in Kigoma and around Lake Tanganyika through the late 1990s. While Burundians were being rounded up in this area, Congolese were mostly ignored.[29] Cumulative fatigue alone cannot explain these varied policies.

6   Discussion

This article examines reasons that refugee-receiving countries select border camps or actively disperse refugees to deal with refugee crises. On domestic grounds alone, border camps are not always optimal. Despite efforts to set an international norm of keeping refugee camps away from the border, large, dense refugee settlements close to borders persist. Sub-national variation in refugee policy suggests that refugee policy is not solely about domestic interests.

The theory and cases in this article demonstrate a foreign policy logic for refugee policy, highlight a mechanism for intervention, and identify observable characteristics of the intervention. A border camp policy helps a rebel group to recruit and tax more easily, potentially changing the outcome of a civil war. An asylum country may refuse to establish border camps or may have explicit dispersal policies because of strategic foreign policy objectives, as well. By not building border camps and promoting dispersal, the asylum country avoids intervening in a civil war.

Refugee camps that are exclusively for refugees are densely populated and located near the border, represent the greatest potential for civil war intervention, and create the greatest vulnerability for refugee taxation and recruitment.

There are some limits to generalization because of two major assumptions. The model assumes that refugee location is the choice of the asylum country. Some countries, like Guinea, Benin, and Togo, in West Africa are too small to move refugees away from international borders. Even among large countries, not all can choose camp location or distribute refugees. Malawi was so overwhelmed with Mozambican refugees in the 1980s that observers believe camp location was ad hoc. Bangladesh, while aware of its prerogative to locate Rohingya refugees, has fiscal constraints. Fiscal constraints and geographic conditions limit the applicability of the theory.

The model also assumes that refugees are fleeing a civil war with a rebel group that fights using small arms and large forces. The model extends to a government, but is more suited to asymmetric warfare. Many civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond meet these conditions, but they are limiting. Some rebel groups employ different fighting technology—urban terrorism or large weapon systems. Finally, refugees flee other kinds of violence, and this theory only applies in the presence or anticipation of a civil war.

Historical and contemporary crises suggest that the theory has broad implications. Tanzania and Kenya made camp location, size, and density part of their prerogative. Other countries do too. In the 1980s, Mexico built new camps for Guatemalans inland to decrease cross-border incursions and to quell concerns about a local rebel movement. Guinea actively dispersed refugees in response to foreign policy concerns in the 1990s. Turkey chose to build Syrian refugee camps near Free Syrian Army territory, while Lebanon dispersed Syrian refugees across the country. Zimbabwe was explicit about its reasoning on locating refugee camps for Mozambicans in the 1980s and 1990s. Bangladesh has referenced its prerogative to relocate Rohingya away from the border camps. The theory applies well to large countries, with some capacity to meet an emerging refugee flow from civil wars fought with small arms and larger forces.

Research on critical questions can build upon the theoretical contribution of this article. Re-

searchers have long intuited that refugee camps are feeding violence across the border. For one thing, the brief analysis of population suggests that this process is endogenous. How refugee outflows drive violence in their home country requires more theoretical and empirical attention. For another, this article does not explore the the origin country and rebel group's strategy in choosing foreign policy. New research should explore rebel group's foreign policy announcements or bargaining over these policies. The theory invites new research in these new areas.

For the international aid community, the theory offers key insights. By funding a refugee-receiving country's border camps, international donors may also be funding the country's foreign policy objectives, which may not be aligned with humanitarian aims. When border camps are driven by domestic politics, like the Somali case in Kenya, the international community can more easily put their funds to work limiting use by rebels. This may include sponsoring children's schooling away from the camp, expanding camps away from the border, and implementing programming to support refugees who seek economic opportunities far from the camps, as Somalis do in Nairobi. Even in the midst of security threats from al Shabaab, Kenya has invited international support for refugees in urban areas, away from camps. When it is domestic constraints that generate border refugee policies, the international community will be able to do more to mitigate the use of the camps by rebels.

The theory also suggests implications for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps and refugee flight beyond the region of origin. IDP camps near rebel-controlled territory can work like border refugee camps. Humanitarian organizations can introduce policy that limits the usefulness of camps to rebels. Encouraging schooling or working abroad are options, as is maintaining lower-density camps or camps further away from rebel-controlled territory. Finally, as refugees move beyond their region of origin, spillovers from civil war demand global attention. Since border policies are used to make recruiting and taxing easier, this article offers one explanation for why refugees flee their country and region of origin. Other reasons some refugees travel far from home demand more research.

Notes

[1] An empirical appendix is included. All numbers in this article are based on primary, contemporaneous sources including government, NGO, and IGO estimates. Secondary sources are triangulated when primary source material is unavailable or inconsistent.

[2] Bates et al. 1998 describe Analytic Narratives. Debs (2017), Lorentzen et al. (2017), Goemans and Spaniel (2016), Little and Pepinsky (2016), and Bates (2007) discuss the value of integrating formal theory and case studies. More details about the research design and implementation are with the case materials.

[3] The theory appendix details the civil war model.

[4] This model originates in Tullock 1980. Garfinkel and Skaperdas 2007 provide an overview of the model and include a review of the extensive application in the study of civil war. More details are included in the theory appendix.

[5] Details are in the appendix.

[6] During the months of 2020 that the United States closed its southern border in response to COVID-19, there were more than 220,000 border apprehensions of foreign nationals who had crossed into the United States about 30% of the preceding year. During the 2020 closure period, the Mexican Foreign Ministry issued identification to 55,000 new arrivals who were likely unauthorized, about 50% of the preceding year. (Author's calculation based on data from Tiburcio and Camarena 2023.) While closing the border may reduce flows, eliminating flows is not in the choice set.

[7] This literature begins with work like Salehyan 2008 and addresses all kinds of political and social violence from interstate war to hate crime across the world (Dancygier et al. 2021; Polo and Wucherpfennig 2022). While Zhou and Shaver 2021 find no evidence of an association between violence and civil conflict at the local level, none of the work that examines civil war has an empirical strategy that addresses endogenous refugee policy as theorized here or in Silve and Verdier 2018.

[8] See also limited survey evidence from South Africa in Skinner and Gottfried 2017.

[9] As discussed by Jacobsen and Crisp 1998 and by interviewees in Zhou and Shaver 2021.

[10] As in Kreibaum 2016 and Rutinwa 2002. The degree of concavity captures the ease of integration.

[11] See discussion of agriculture and environmental costs in Verme and Schuettler 2021.

[12] See Zhou and Shaver 2021 and infrastructure investment discussion in Verme and Schuettler 2021.

[13] As reflected in perceptions of leaders noted in Zhou and Shaver 2021 and reinforced in this author's field work.

[14] The appendix contains an extension with foundations for w.

[15] Positive w corresponds to when the asylum country prefers regime change and negative w to when the asylum country prefers to coordinate with the government. I will call the first the value of a rebel win and its opposite the value of a government win.

[16] In developing countries, using the rebel group as a proxy is ineffective in the absence of well aligned interests

(Berman and Lake 2019).

[17]More formal treatment of the equilibrium and associated proofs are in the appendix.

[18]See for example, Bueno de Mesquita (2005).

[19]I restrict attention to when the budget constraint binds (Garfinkel and Skaperdas 2007).

[20]Human Rights Watch (2004). See also Achvarina and Reich (2010).

[21]Based on author's calculations from U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (1995); IRIN for the Great Lakes (1997); and Katunzi and Ndalichako (2004). See also Turner (2010).

[22]More details on the model extension are in the appendix.

[23]See ICG (2010) and Kamau (2012). See also Medani (2012) and Hornsby (2012) discussion about affinity.

[24]See Reuters (1996), IFRC (1997) and Hornsby (2012) on pan-Somalia and Kenya's relationship to the international community.

[25]See IFRC (1996b) and IFRC (1996a).

[26]See Reuters (1996) and IFRC (1997).

[27]See IFRC (1997). See also Verdirame (1999).

[28]See Brennan (1988) and UNHCR (1996).

[29]See Human Rights Watch (1999).

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