When Do Rebel Governors Become Rebel Diplomats?

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Abstract: How and when do rebels that govern civilian populations engage in diplomacy abroad? While prior research suggests that governance-oriented rebels are more likely to engage in diplomacy due to their legitimacy aspirations, we argue that the relationship between rebel governance and diplomacy is contingent on the resource constraints that rebels face. Providing governance and conducting diplomacy are both financially and administratively demanding, requiring rebels to balance these competing demands. Using a novel dataset on rebel lobbying via private firms—which is an exceptionally costly form of diplomacy—combined with existing data on conventional rebel diplomacy, we examine 230 rebel groups across 70 countries from 1945 to 2012. Our findings challenge the assumption of a straightforward governance-diplomacy link. Consistent with our argument, only rebels with strong institutional capacity engage in both governance and diplomacy, while organizationally weak governance-providing rebels are no more likely to engage in diplomacy. Moreover, social-service-providing rebels are significantly less likely to engage in diplomacy during active conflict than in periods of relative peace, highlighting the constraining effects of resource strain. Our study contributes to the international relations scholarship on non-state actors by demonstrating how resource deficiencies and the lack of international recognition fundamentally constrain rebels' ability to mimic sovereign state behavior, even when they aspire to do so.

Keywords: rebel governance, diplomacy, international legitimacy

Introduction

In 1986, the Angolan rebel group known as the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) hired the Washington-based lobbying firm Black, Manafort, Stone, and Kelly for $600,000 to push for U.S. military aid (Ottoway and Tyler 1986). The Reagan administration responded with a proposal to channel $10–$15 million in covert assistance through the CIA. At the same time, UNITA maintained a vast social service network in rebel-controlled Ovimbundu territories, including nearly 1,000 schools (Callelo 1991).

Were UNITA's governance efforts in rebel-held territories and its diplomatic campaign abroad interconnected elements of a broader strategy? At least one influential line of research suggests they were, asserting that domestic governance and international diplomacy are mutually reinforcing (Coggins 2015; Huang 2016a). The logic is straightforward: demonstrating an ability to deliver essential social services enhances a rebel group's prospects for external recognition, while securing international support bolsters local legitimacy.

Building on this idea that domestic and international legitimacy are intertwined, a growing body of research examines various nonviolent rebel behaviors—including compliance with international law (Jo 2015; Fazal and Konaev 2019; Fazal 2021), social service provision (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2016; Heger and Jung 2017; Stewart 2018; Loyle 2021), media and Internet use (Jones and Mattiacci 2019; Manekin and Wood 2020; Bestvater and Loyle 2023; Walter and Phillips 2024), and wartime elections (Arves, Cunningham, and McCulloch 2019; Cunningham, Huang, and Sawyer 2021)—as signals of legitimacy-seeking.

Despite growing attention to rebel legitimation strategies, empirical evidence on whether rebel groups simultaneously pursue multiple strategies remains limited. Huang's (2016) seminal study on rebel diplomacy provides an early empirical test, indicating that groups providing social

services are more likely to engage in diplomacy. However, its broad theoretical scope, extending beyond governance, leaves key questions unanswered about the mechanisms linking domestic governance to international diplomacy. Additionally, its reliance on time-invariant data from high-intensity civil wars raises concerns about the generalizability of its findings.

Recent empirical studies further challenge long-standing assumptions about the effects of rebel governance on conflict dynamics. While governance is often assumed to enhance military capacity, evidence suggests it can, at times, undermine it (Stewart 2020). Similarly, politically driven governance efforts are frequently disrupted—or even abandoned—due to escalating warfare costs and administrative burdens (Revkin 2020). These findings highlight the need for a more rigorous examination of whether, and under what conditions, rebel groups integrate governance and diplomacy as complementary legitimacy-seeking strategies. Recognizing rebels as strategic actors, their policy decisions must be understood not only in terms of legitimacy aspirations but also in response to shifting wartime constraints.

This study presents a revised framework for understanding the rebel governance-diplomacy nexus. Expanding on the established "feedback loop" between domestic and international legitimacy, we propose that beyond the *dual legitimation* effect, the simultaneous pursuit of governance and diplomacy generates two additional feedback mechanisms: *resource reinforcement* and *administrative institutionalization*. These mechanisms suggest that (a) governance generates funds to sustain diplomacy, while diplomacy secures external resources that bolster governance, and (b) governance develops administrative capacity for diplomacy, while diplomacy enhances strategic insight, strengthening institutional maturity for governance.

These additional mechanisms refine earlier theories that assume a universally positive relationship between governance and diplomacy by identifying the conditions under which rebels

employ multiple legitimation strategies in tandem. We argue that because both governance and diplomacy are resource-intensive and administratively demanding, the extent to which they reinforce each other depends on wartime exigencies and organizational constraints. Specifically, we contend that resource shortages—whether due to (a) military strain that compels rebels to prioritize warfare over institution-building or (b) limited administrative capacity that prevents them from managing multiple governance functions—force rebels to treat governance and diplomacy as trade-offs rather than mutually reinforcing strategies. Consequently, the positive impact of governance on diplomacy weakens, or even disappears, during periods of escalating conflict and when groups lack the institutional capacity to sustain both efforts simultaneously.

To evaluate our propositions, we focus on social service provision—specifically education and healthcare—, given its centrality to both the broader study of rebel governance and our theoretical framework. First, education and healthcare are "broadly similar across time and space" (Stewart 2020, 20), enabling systematic comparisons of governance provision across diverse rebel groups (Joo and Sosa 2023, 9). Second, service provision uniquely intersects legitimacy-building and resource allocation challenges. Unlike coercive governance functions such as taxation or policing, which may serve extractive purposes, education and healthcare have the potential to shape civilian perceptions by demonstrating a commitment to public welfare. However, they also impose significantly greater resource and administrative demands (Heger and Jung 2017; Joo and Sosa 2023; Wagstaff and Jung 2020) because they require sustained investment in personnel and infrastructure, making them a key test case for assessing how rebels navigate governance-diplomacy trade-offs under military strain and capacity constraints.

Empirically, we contribute two key advancements over previous studies. First, we test our expectations using time-series cross-sectional data on 230 rebel groups across 70 countries

from 1945 to 2012, offering a more representative sample that accounts for variations in conflict intensity and organizational capacity. Second, we introduce novel data on rebel groups' hiring of private lobbying firms in the United States—an exceptionally high-cost diplomatic strategy. We collect this data from the U.S. Department of Justice's annual reports to Congress under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). Complementing this with existing data on conventional rebel diplomacy (Albert 2022), we compare governance's relationship with lobbying versus lower-cost diplomatic efforts, such as maintaining foreign offices.

Our findings reveal that while rebel governance and diplomacy are linked, this relationship is more nuanced than previously assumed and shaped by organizational capacity and military strain. At baseline, rebels providing social services are more likely to engage in diplomacy than non-providers. However, among service-providing rebels, only those with moderate to strong capacity pursue both lobbying and conventional diplomacy at significantly higher rates, whereas weaker organizations are no more likely than non-service-providers to engage in diplomatic efforts. This underscores that governance aspirations alone do not translate into diplomacy without institutional strength. Moreover, social-service-providing rebels are significantly less likely to engage in diplomacy during active conflict than in periods of relative peace, highlighting the constraining effects of military strain on governance-diplomacy linkages. Finally, consistent with our argument, our results indicate that private lobbying is more vulnerable to the curtailing effects of organizational limitations and military strain than conventional diplomacy, likely due to its higher financial and administrative demands.

This article makes several important contributions. By examining the conditions under which governing rebels engage in diplomacy, we introduce a new dimension to the study of rebel governance and its consequences. A growing body of literature argues that effective governance

yields legitimacy, both domestically and internationally (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2016; Heger and Jung 2017; Stewart 2018; Loyle 2021). Our findings problematize this argument. Legitimacy gains from governance largely depends on service-providing rebels' ability to publicize their efforts. While domestic audiences may recognize governance through direct experience, international legitimacy often hinges on diplomatic engagement. If resource and administrative demands hinder diplomatic outreach, not all governing rebels can capitalize on the external legitimacy benefits of governance. This raises further questions: Why do some rebels persist in governance despite lacking the means to translate it into diplomatic leverage? Under what conditions might they abandon governance altogether?

Moreover, by highlighting the trade-offs between warfighting and institution-building, we underscore the state-like qualities of organizationally capable governing rebels (Huang 2016a; Stewart 2018) while identifying a key limitation in direct state-rebel comparisons. Research on government social spending during wartime highlights similar trade-offs (Carter and Palmer 2015), but while states sustain diplomatic efforts during military crises—whether through alliance-building, covert communication, public signaling, or negotiations (Carson 2016; Banks 2019; Katagiri and Min 2019; Min 2020)—our findings reveal that governing rebels are significantly less likely to engage in diplomacy under similar conditions. The absence of international recognition and formal diplomatic channels fundamentally constrains rebels' ability to mimic state behavior, even when they aspire to do so.

This article also contributes to the literature conceptualizing governance and diplomacy as "technologies of rebellion" (Huang 2016a; Stewart 2020). While existing studies examine how rebels select violent tactics (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010; Wood 2014; Horowitz, Perkoski, and Potter 2018; Qiu 2022; Blair 2024) or calibrate violence with nonviolence (Dudouet 2013;

Chenoweth, Pinckney, and Lewis 2018; Arves, Cunningham, and McCulloch 2019; Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020; Cunningham 2023), our study extends this by showing that rebels navigate trade-offs between different nonviolent technologies of rebellion.

Finally, as digital connectivity expands, scholars increasingly examine how rebels use social media and digital activism to conduct public diplomacy and solicit international support. While conventional wisdom suggests that digital platforms offer a lower-cost alternative to traditional diplomacy (Zeitzoff 2017; Walter 2017). However, while digital activism may amplify rebel messaging, it does not necessarily overcome the core challenges of securing international legitimacy and material support. The extent to which governing rebels turn to digital activism as a substitute for formal diplomacy, and whether it effectively advances their legitimacy goals, remains an open question.

Rebel Governance During Wartime

Rebel governance is now widely recognized as a defining feature of contemporary civil wars (Huang and Sullivan 2021, 795).[1] Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly (2015, 3) define rebel governance as "the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war".

At its core, rebel governance aims to secure civilian cooperation and compliance, which reduces defection (Mampilly 2011, 55) and enhances popular support and legitimacy (Stewart

[1] Earlier research on rebel governance primarily focused on territory-controlling groups, but recent studies challenge the notion that territorial control is a prerequisite for governance (Jackson 2018; Cunningham, Huang, and Sawyer 2021; O'Connor 2021; Aponte González, Hirschel-Burns, and Uribe 2024; Loyle and Onder 2024).

2020, 18; Loyle 2021, 109). These then facilitate the extraction of war-fighting resources, such as food and shelter (Weinstein 2006, 163), and the recruitment of fighters (Flanigan 2008). While taxation (Revkin 2020), elections (Cunningham, Huang, and Sawyer 2021) and judiciary (Loyle 2021) are also important components of rebel governance, most existing research focuses on the provision of public goods, particularly education and healthcare (e.g., Heger and Jung 2017; Huang 2016b; Mampilly 2011; Stewart 2018; 2020).

Previous studies show that rebel groups that seek international legitimacy and ideologically emphasize a civilian support base—such as secessionist (Stewart 2018) and leftist groups (Mampilly 2011; Kalyvas and Balcells 2011; Kalyvas 2015; Huang and Sullivan 2021)—as well as those with greater mobilization capacity, either through strong organizational structures (Cunningham, Huang, and Sawyer 2021) or external assistance in the form of funds and training (Huang & Sullivan, 2021), are more likely to provide governance. However, as governing requires substantial material and administrative resources, only rebels with both the necessary capacity and strategic incentives to govern are likely to do so.

Yet, governance is not merely a byproduct of these conditions; it also reinforces or reshapes them. For example, governance can enhance rebel legitimacy by demonstrating political competence and strengthening bargaining power. Heger and Jung (2017) find that service-providing rebels are more likely to enter negotiations, as their governance structures reduce the risk of fragmentation and signal cohesion to opposing governments. The theoretical assumption that governance directly strengthens rebel organizations, however, is more contested. While mobilization capacity facilitates governance, Stewart (2020) finds that governance does not always translate into greater military strength. Building on this scholarship on the consequences

of rebel governance, we theorize and empirically examine how rebels' wartime governance affects their wartime diplomacy.

Rebel Diplomacy During Wartime

Following Huang (2016a, 90), we define rebel diplomacy as "a rebel group's conduct of foreign affairs during civil war for the purpose of advancing its military and political objectives." Huang (2016a) emphasizes that rebel diplomacy is as integral to a rebel group's wartime political strategy as diplomacy is to statecraft. Similar to how governments conduct diplomacy to advance their interests, rebel groups also undertake external outreach to influence external actors, which could shape the trajectory of fighting in their favor. Put differently, rebels, like states, employ both violent and non-violent tactics to pursue their objectives (Coggins 2015).

Rebel groups conduct diplomacy for several reasons: (1) to gain international recognition, legitimacy, and acceptance; (2) to signal their capacity for governance and viability as state actors; and (3) to secure external support that enhances their military strength (Mampilly 2011; Asal, Conrad, and White 2014; Coggins 2015; Huang 2016a). Rebel diplomacy encompasses a range of interactions, including engagements with foreign governments, international organizations (IOs), and transnational advocacy networks (TANs). For instance, the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) in Djibouti frequently dispatched its leadership abroad in the 1990s to meet with foreign heads of state (Kadamy 1996). The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the Philippines successfully engaged with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), leading the OIC to recognize the MNLF as the legitimate representative of the Bangsamoro people in the 1970s (Organization of Islamic Cooperation 1975, 2003). Similarly, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) mobilized the Eritrean

diasporas and allied with leftist and liberal political organizations in Europe and the United States, successfully garnering international advocacy for Eritrean independence (Pool 1998).

Extant literature identifies two common types of rebel diplomacy: (1) conventional diplomacy and (2) public diplomacy. When conducting conventional diplomacy, rebels establish their own "foreign ministries," open foreign offices, and send representatives abroad (Huang 2016a; Albert 2022). For example, Sikh insurgents in India formed the Council of Khalistan in the 1980s to oversee diplomatic activities (Thomas 1984). The Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) had foreign offices in Germany, Portugal, and the United States (Vines 1991). Similarly, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) sent its "diplomats" to Yugoslavia, Australia, India, and Sweden to secure both political and material support (Reed 1993).

In contrast, rebels engage in public diplomacy with the aim of influencing foreign publics and elites, often leveraging traditional media, such as radio and television (Coggins 2015), as well as newer platforms like social media, including Twitter and YouTube (Albert 2022; Bestvater and Loyle 2023; Jones and Mattiacci 2017; Loyle and Bestvater 2019). Through public diplomacy, rebels seek to generate international awareness, legitimize their cause, and solicit external public support (Manekin and Wood 2020; Walter and Phillips 2024). For instance, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) incorporated public diplomacy into its strategy by publishing and circulating newspapers in multiple countries (Marcus 2007). Similarly, a significant number of active rebel groups continue to rely on social media to engage with international audiences (Bestvater and Loyle 2023; Loyle and Bestvater 2019). Some groups, however, take public diplomacy a step further by hiring lobbying or public relations (PR) firms in target countries (Kim 2024; Mattiacci and Jones 2020). For example, in the late 1990s, Chechen separatists hired Advantage Associates, Inc. to lobby for aid in Washington (Coggins 2015).

Mutually Reinforcing Benefits

To disentangle the relationship between rebel governance and diplomacy, we first examine the argument that these processes operate in tandem due to their mutually reinforcing benefits (e.g. *dual legitimation*). While building on prior research that assumes a positive correlation between governance and diplomacy, we extend the theoretical framework underlying their connection. We argue that rebel governance in domestic contexts and diplomatic engagement abroad create three reinforcing feedback mechanisms: *dual legitimation*, *resource reinforcement*, and *administrative institutionalization*.

The *dual legitimation* feedback mechanism describes a mutually reinforcing cycle in which governance enhances local legitimacy, strengthening a rebel group's diplomatic standing, while international recognition and support further validate its governance claims at home. When rebel groups provide social services, develop infrastructure, and maintain order in contested or rebel-controlled territories, they demonstrate their capacity to function as viable alternatives to the state (Huang and Sullivan 2020). This provision of services—particularly when perceived as inclusive and equitable—significantly enhances rebels' legitimacy among local populations (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2016; Heger and Jung 2017; Stewart 2018; Loyle 2021).

Although civilians may resist aspects of rebel governance that contradict social norms (Gowrinathan and Mampilly 2019; Rubin 2020; Martin 2021; Stewart 2021; van Baalen 2021), governance that aligns with communal expectations (Mampilly and Stewart 2021) signals that the rebel group is not only capable of addressing immediate grievances but is also committed to long-term political transformation (Stewart 2018; Revkin 2021; Loyle 2023). At the same time, diplomatic engagement with foreign governments, IOs, and TANs enables rebels to secure external support beyond their immediate geographic reach. Diplomacy not only facilitates

material aid—such as arms, funding, and logistical assistance—but also garners political recognition, reinforcing legitimacy on the global stage (Arves, Cunningham, and McCulloch 2019; Tokdemir et al. 2021).

However, obtaining external backing often requires rebels to demonstrate political competence (Huang 2016a; Stewart 2018; Fazal 2021; Huang and Sullivan 2021). By showcasing their ability to govern effectively and act as legitimate representatives of civilian interests, rebels can attract and maintain foreign support, whether from actors seeking to destabilize their target states (Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011; San-Akca 2016; Tamm 2016; Lee 2018) or from those prioritizing humanitarian standards in civil wars (Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014; Jo 2015; Fazal and Konaev 2019). Successfully securing external aid, particularly in defiance of government efforts to undermine diplomatic outreach, further reinforces rebel credibility and legitimacy among local constituencies (Huang 2016a; Carnegie et al. 2022). Ultimately, the *dual legitimation* mechanism rests on the premise that legitimacy gained through governance enhances rebels' credibility in the eyes of international actors, while international legitimacy, in turn, strengthens their claims to governance at home.

The *resource reinforcement* feedback mechanism describes another self-sustaining cycle in which domestic economic activities generate funds for military and governance functions, while diplomatic efforts abroad attract external financial support that can be reinvested into governance structures. Governing civilian populations allows rebel groups to establish and sustain economic systems within their areas of control, ranging from simple extortion practices to institutionalized taxation and rebel-controlled markets (Revkin 2021; Gilbert 2022; Mampilly and Thakur 2024). These economic activities provide resources essential for maintaining military operations and supporting governance initiatives. At the same time, revenues from domestic

economies can be strategically allocated to diplomatic efforts, such as opening foreign offices or hiring lobbying and public relations firms. Diplomatic engagement, in turn, creates alternative channels for resource acquisition, including financial support from sympathetic foreign governments, diaspora donations, and assistance from TANs. These external funds can then be reinvested into governance efforts, enhancing administrative capacity and expanding governance structures (Coggins 2015; Huang and Sullivan 2021).

The administrative institutionalization feedback facilitates the continuous development of both rebel governance and diplomacy by strengthening bureaucratic structures and organizational capacity. Effective governance—particularly inclusive social service provision—requires the establishment of sophisticated administrative frameworks and bureaucratic processes (Stewart 2020; Revkin 2021; Loyle 2021). This institutional development enhances organizational discipline and efficiency, equipping rebel groups to manage complex bureaucratic functions alongside military operations. Improved organizational capacity also enables more strategic resource management and long-term planning, which are critical for sustaining diplomatic outreach. At the same time, the global awareness and strategic insights gained through diplomatic interactions with foreign governments, IOs, and TANs can inform and refine domestic governance practices, fostering more effective administration and service provision.

> *H1:* Rebel groups that provide governance to civilian populations are more likely to conduct diplomacy abroad than those that do not.

Countervailing Trade-Offs

While the theoretical framework outlined above is intuitively appealing, it does not fully account for the core constraint underlying the *resource reinforcement* and *administrative institutionalization* feedback mechanisms—namely, that both governance and diplomacy are resource-intensive and administratively demanding.

Both governance and diplomacy impose substantial costs on rebel groups. Governance, whether through social service provision, judicial systems, or taxation, requires the allocation of tangible resources that could otherwise support military objectives to maintaining civilian services. Additionally, effective governance requires non-military personnel to operate schools, health centers, courts, and tax offices (Conrad, Reyes, and Stewart 2022). For example, by 2006, Hezbollah's social service network—including four hospitals, 12 clinics, 12 schools, and two agricultural centers—was valued at hundreds of millions of dollars (The New Humanitarian 2006). Due to these financial and administrative burdens, rebel groups engage in governance only when they possess the necessary capacity (Kasfir 2005) and typically concentrate governance efforts in strategically significant areas (Mampilly 2011; Stewart 2018). Consistent with this, existing research finds that rebels weigh the costs and benefits of governance before committing to it (Wagstaff and Jung 2020; Cunningham, Huang, and Sawyer 2021; Mampilly and Stewart 2021), and a group's resource and administrative capacity directly affects its ability to provide services effectively (Huang and Sullivan 2020).

At the same time, diplomatic engagement is equally demanding in both financial and administrative terms. For instance, during its conflict with the Sri Lankan government in the late 1990s, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) operated a foreign office in London (Eelam House), which relied on regular monthly contributions from the Tamil diaspora. These contributions reportedly ranged between £10,000 (approximately $17,000) and £30,000 (approximately $52,000) (Human Rights Watch 2006). Similarly, as noted earlier, UNITA spent $600,000 in 1986 to hire an American lobbying firm (Ottoway and Tyler 1986). Beyond financial costs, diplomacy requires significant administrative investment. For example, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) created a foreign affairs body, the Political

Diplomatic Commission, in 1981—an institutionalized apparatus tasked with managing international relations and dispatching representatives abroad, all of which demanded substantial bureaucratic capacity and organizational resources (Montgomery 1995, 114).

Given these substantial costs, rebels facing military strain may be forced to prioritize either governance or diplomacy. More specifically, resource constraints stemming from battlefield losses and counterinsurgency pressures can prompt rebels to prioritize short-term survival over institution-building and diplomatic engagement (Wood 2014; Joo and Sosa 2023). For instance, the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic (FPRC), which initially invested in inclusive public services, later abandoned these efforts in favor of coercion and extortion amid economic and military strain (Glawion and Le Noan 2022).

A key implication of this argument is that as conflict intensifies, governance-providing rebels may reduce diplomatic activism due to mounting resource pressures. Escalating violence demands increased spending on military personnel, weaponry, and logistics, diverting resources from long-term initiatives like diplomacy. Under these conditions, rebel groups may scale back diplomatic efforts not out of disinterest, but because the immediate imperatives of warfare take precedence. Thus, the extent to which governance facilitates diplomacy likely depends on the conflict environment. In periods of relative peace, governance can strengthen diplomacy by demonstrating administrative competence, political legitimacy, and organizational capacity. Conversely, during intense military confrontations, the urgent need to sustain combat operations constrains rebels' ability to simultaneously maintain governance and diplomatic efforts.

> *H2:* Governance-providing rebel groups are less likely to conduct diplomacy abroad during periods of active armed conflict than during periods of relative peace.

Another key implication of our argument on resource constraints is that the extent of trade-offs between governance and diplomacy is contingent on a rebel group's organizational

strength. Less institutionalized groups, which often lack stable bureaucratic structures and efficient resource mobilization mechanisms, are more likely to face zero-sum trade-offs between governance and diplomacy. However, highly organized groups with stronger administrative structures, clear chains of command, and specialized political or diplomatic divisions can better manage both governance and diplomacy in parallel.

For example, both UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique, which reached military parity with government forces by sustaining over 60,000 fighters in the early 1990s and more than 20,000 in the late 1980s, respectively (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009), successfully provided governance while actively engaging in external diplomacy. Their ability to delegate administrative responsibilities and maintain dedicated political and diplomatic wings enabled them to pursue diplomacy abroad without undermining governance efforts at home. By compartmentalizing these functions, organizationally stronger rebel groups can sustain diplomatic initiatives even in the face of competing governance demands.

> *H3:* The more organizationally capable rebel groups that provide domestic governance are, the more likely that they are to engage in diplomatic activism.

Finally, the extent to which governance affects diplomacy likely depends on the costliness and complexity of specific diplomatic initiatives. Diplomatic efforts vary in their financial and administrative demands, with some requiring far greater resources than others. Conventional diplomacy, which includes sending representatives abroad to meet with foreign government officials or maintaining political offices in foreign states, carries logistical and administrative costs but remains more financially and operationally feasible than capital-intensive alternatives. While travel, security, and personnel expenses are involved, these efforts can often be conducted with relatively modest investments, whereas foreign offices can operate with minimal staffing.

In contrast, capital-intensive diplomacy, such as contracting private lobbying firms in foreign capitals, imposes significantly higher financial and administrative demands. Lobbying firms require substantial upfront financial commitments and long-term strategic planning, which likely involves continuous funding. While rebels may still engage in less costly diplomatic activities alongside providing governance, capital-intensive diplomatic activities are more susceptible to being deprioritized in exchange for governance efforts at home.

> *H4:* Rebel lobbying done through a private firm is more susceptible to resource constraints than rebel conventional diplomacy.

Research Design

We examine the relationship between rebel social service provision and diplomacy using original data on rebel lobbying via private firms, combined with existing data on rebel governance for 230 rebel groups across 70 countries from 1945 to 2012. The sample includes all groups responsible for at least 25 battle-related deaths in civil wars that cumulatively resulted in a minimum of 1,000 deaths (Kreutz 2010; Albert 2022). Because H2 predicts variation in rebel diplomatic behavior based on whether a group is engaged in active conflict in a given year, our dataset covers the entire duration of a group's existence, rather than only the years in which it met the 25 battle-related deaths threshold. The unit of analysis is dyad-year, yielding a total of 4,548 dyad-years.

Dependent Variables

Our dependent variable is rebel diplomacy, which we disaggregate into two components to test H4: (1) rebel conventional diplomacy; and (2) rebel lobbying.

Rebel conventional diplomacy captures whether a given group sent representatives abroad to meet with foreign government officials or politicians or operated offices abroad. Since these diplomatic efforts constitute core pillars of formal diplomacy, a practice historically

considered "reserved for states" (Coggins 2015, 100), we refer to them as "conventional diplomacy". We obtain this information from the Rebel QSI dataset's "embassy" variable.[2] *Rebel conventional diplomacy* is coded 1 if a rebel group conducts conventional diplomacy in a given year, and 0 otherwise. 38 out of 230 groups in our data (17 percent) engaged in conventional diplomacy at least once during their existence. Figure 1 (Panel A) presents the geographic distribution of rebel conventional diplomacy between 1945 and 2012.

To measure rebel lobbying, we collect original data on rebel groups' lobbying efforts in the United States, drawing on the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) to identify instances of lobbying by rebel organizations engaged in civil wars. Under FARA, any American PR firms or individuals representing foreign principals—including foreign governments, rebel groups, and corporations—before U.S. government agencies or officials must register annually with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). The DOJ is then legally required to submit an annual report to Congress, which is subsequently published and made publicly available.

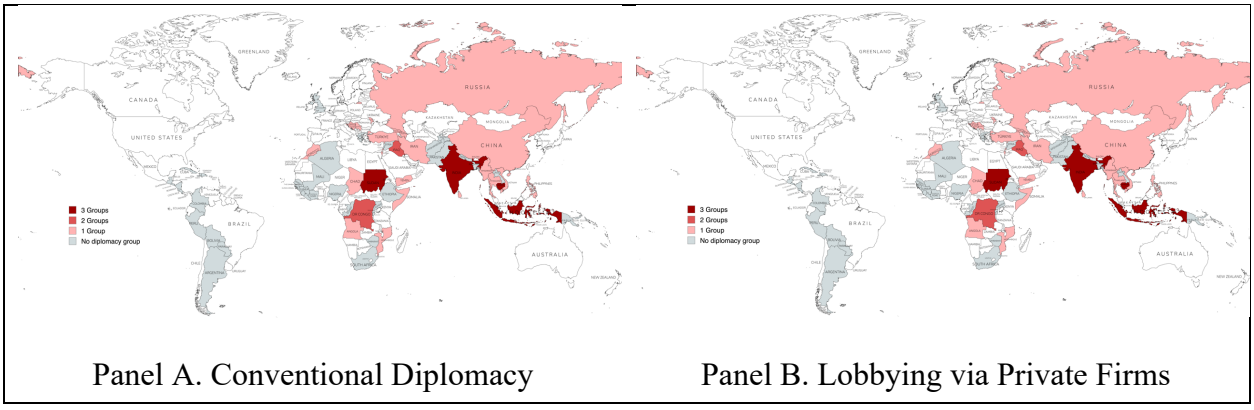
Following established research on governments' lobbying efforts (e.g., Mattiacci and Jones 2020), we limit our lobbying data to the U.S. for two key reasons. First, the U.S. has historically been one of the most frequent interveners in civil wars, making it a crucial target for rebel lobbying efforts. Second, the U.S. remains the only country with a long-standing, legally mandated, publicly accessible, and relatively systematic registry of foreign lobbying activities.

While rebel lobbying also occurs in other democracies, existing transparency frameworks remain far more limited in scope than FARA. Recent legislative changes in the U.K. and the EU

[2] Albert (2022, 625) emphasizes that rebel foreign offices functionally resemble embassies and consulates but these efforts by rebel groups are not necessarily recognized by the foreign state.

reflect a growing emphasis on lobbying transparency, but these mechanisms are still evolving. For instance, the European Union Transparency Register lacks strict enforcement, as non-compliance results in access restrictions rather than penalties, meaning failure to register does not incur fines or criminal charges. Similarly, the United Kingdom's 2014 Lobbying Act applies only to third-party 'consultant lobbyists' meeting financial thresholds, thereby excluding in-house lobbying and leaving many lobbying activities unregulated. While the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS) is being developed, it is not yet operational and primarily focuses on national security concerns rather than general lobbying transparency (Good et al. 2024).

We systematically examined public FARA records to identify which rebel groups in our dataset hired lobbying firms and when they did so. Our analysis focuses on whether a group lobbied, rather than the specific lobbying activities, as prior research highlights that such details are often inconsistent and "quite noisy" (Mattiacci and Jones 2020, 873–874). *Rebel lobbying* is coded 1 if a rebel group hired a lobbying firm in the U.S. in a given year, and 0 otherwise. 34 of the 230 groups in our data (15 percent) engaged in lobbying in the U.S. at least once during their existence. The geographic distribution of rebel groups lobbying is shown in Figure 1 (Panel B).



Panel A. Conventional Diplomacy Panel B. Lobbying via Private Firms

Figure 1. Rebel Diplomacy, 1945-2012
Note: Darker shades indicate more rebel groups engaging in diplomacy.

Independent Variables

We have three main independent variables: (1) rebel social service provision; (2) active armed conflict; and (3) rebel organizational capacity. Rebel *social service provision* captures whether a group provided education or healthcare services to civilians. It is coded 1 if the group provided either service in a given year and 0 otherwise. This information is obtained from the Rebel QSI dataset. 76 of 230 groups in our data (33 percent) offered these services at least once.

Active armed conflict distinguishes periods of intensified combat from periods of relative peace. It is coded 1 if fighting between a rebel group and the government resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a given year, and 0 otherwise. This 25-death threshold follows the conventional cutoff point applied in major conflict datasets, including the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset. The variable is derived from the Rebel QSI dataset's "ArmedConflict" variable. 1704 out of 4548 dyad-years in our data (37 percent) are denoted as period of armed conflict.

Rebel *organizational capacity* measures the relative power balance between groups and the governments they confront. It is an ordinal, time-invariant variable ranging from 1 to 3. A value of 1 indicates that a rebel group is militarily much weaker than the government, 2 signifies that the group is weaker but not drastically so, and 3 represents cases where the group is either at parity with or stronger than the government. Data for this variable come from the Non-State Actor (NSA) data (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009)[3]. 72 of our 230 groups were classified as militarily much weaker whereas 27 of them were either in parity or more powerful.

[3] The original "*rebstrength"* variable in the NSA has five categories. However, given that the number of rebel groups coded as *more powerful* or *much more powerful* than the government is minimal (5 and 1 cases, respectively), we collapsed these two categories into the *parity* category.

We also use an alternative measure: rebel groups' mobilization capacity from the same NSA dataset in our robustness checks in Appendix 5. While we acknowledge the limitations of these measures as proxies, we follow established research that employs the same proxies (Thomas, Reed, and Wolford 2016; Loyle 2021; Tokdemir et al. 2021; Joo and Sosa 2023).

Control Variables

We control for several potential confounders. First, we account for *secessionist* rebel ideology, as secessionist groups are more likely than non-secessionist ones to engage in diplomacy (Huang 2016a) and social service provision (Stewart 2018). Second, we control for *rebel taxation*, as a systematic taxation system may enable groups to better sustain both service provision and diplomatic efforts. Both variables are binary and derived from the Rebel QSI dataset.

We also control for the *Cold War* period, using a dummy. As Huang (2016a, 110) notes, in the absence of superpower competition, diplomacy may have become a more critical tool for rebel groups in the post-Cold War period. Additionally, we control for *conflict duration*, measured in years, as longer conflicts increase the likelihood of both social service provision (Joo and Sosa 2023; Wagstaff and Jung 2020) and diplomatic engagement (Huang 2016a).

In our extended models, we further control for *external state support*, as such support may result from diplomatic efforts and provide resources for service provision (Huang and Sullivan 2021). Additionally, using data from the NSA dataset, we control for whether a rebel group has a formal *political wing*, as groups with dedicated political branches are documented to engage in diplomacy at higher rates (Huang 2016a, 112). We also account for *leftist ideology* (i.e., groups espousing a Marxist, Maoist, communist, or socialist ideology), as they are more likely to provide social services to civilians (Huang and Sullivan 2021). Finally, using the "territorial" variable of the Rebel QSI dataset, we control for groups' *territorial control*, as

holding territory increases both the ability and motivation to engage in public goods provision (Huang and Sullivan 2021, 801). Summary statistics are presented in Appendix 1.

Results

We conduct a series of logistic regressions to examine the effect of service provision on lobbying through private firms and conventional diplomacy. Our analysis proceeds in three stages.

First, we test H1, which posits that rebel groups providing social services are more likely to engage in diplomacy than those that do not. Second, we evaluate the conditional relationship in H2 by interacting service provision with active armed conflict to assess whether conflict intensity shapes the link between governance and diplomacy. Third, we test H3 by interacting service provision with organizational capacity, examining whether stronger rebel groups are better positioned to sustain both governance and diplomacy. Our baseline models include only service provision and conditioning factors as predictors, while extended models incorporate additional control variables. All models employ robust standard errors clustered on rebel group.

Across various model specifications, our findings consistently support the conditional hypotheses (H2 and H3), indicating that the relationship between rebel social service provision and diplomacy is more nuanced than a simple positive association.

Social Service Provision (H1)

The coefficient plot in Figure 2 presents the results of our first set of analyses, demonstrating that the relationship between rebel social service provision and diplomacy is more complex than previously assumed. In the naïve models (black bars), social service provision is strongly and significantly associated with both lobbying and conventional diplomatic missions, aligning with previous research suggesting that governance facilitates diplomatic engagement (Huang 2016a). However, once control variables are introduced (red bars), the effect weakens, remaining

significant for lobbying but disappearing for conventional diplomacy. In the fully specified models (blue bars), the relationship vanishes entirely.

These findings diverge from Huang (2016), which identified a stronger link between governance and diplomacy. Several factors may explain this discrepancy. First, Huang's data is time-invariant, meaning that if a group engaged in diplomacy at any point, it is coded as having always done so. Our dataset is time-variant, tracking when groups engaged in lobbying over time. Second, Huang's sample includes 127 major civil wars, with a high threshold for inclusion—500 to 1,000 deaths in the first year or 1,000 deaths in the first three years. By contrast, our dataset captures a broader range of groups, including those in less lethal wars. This expanded scope allows us to observe variation in diplomatic engagement among smaller groups or those involved in low-intensity conflicts, where the ability to simultaneously govern and engage in diplomacy may be more constrained. Next, we move on to testing H2 and H3, which propose that the link between governance and diplomacy is contingent on resource constraints.

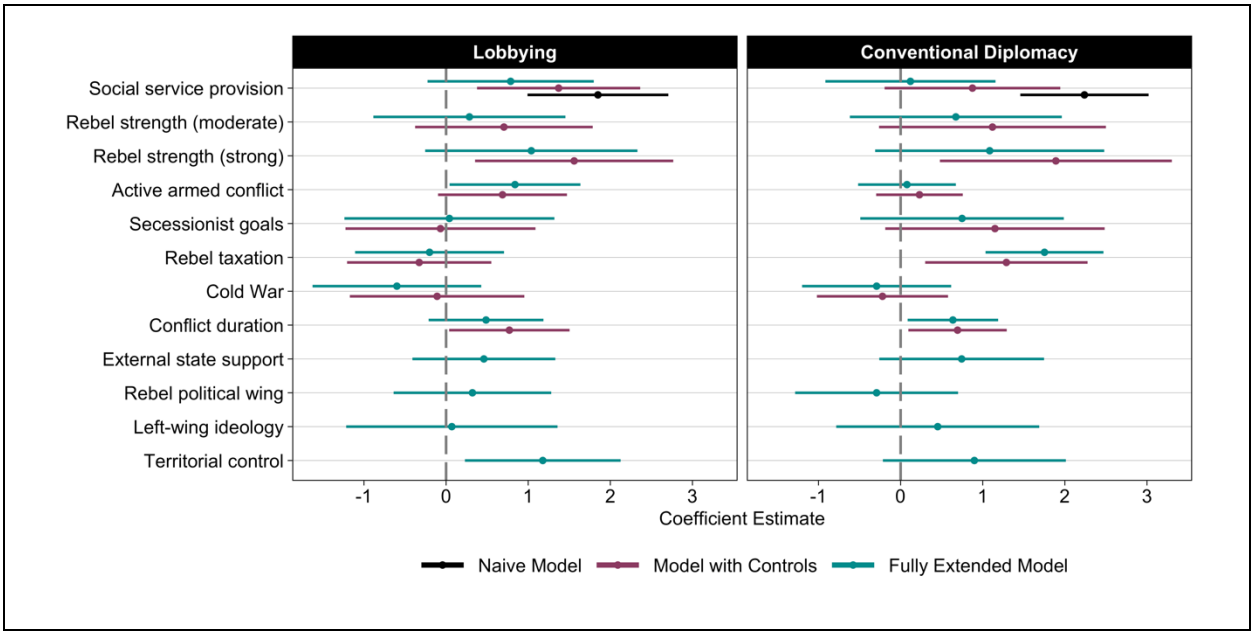


Figure 2. Rebel Social Service Provision and Diplomacy
Note: Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals. Full regression table in Appendix 2.

Active Armed Conflict (H2)

To assess whether social service-providing rebels are less likely to engage in diplomacy during periods of active armed conflict (H2), we examine the interaction between service provision and conflict intensity. The model specifications are the same as those in Figure 2, with the addition of this interaction term. The full regression table is reported in Appendix 3.

The consistently significant coefficient on the interaction term provides strong support for H2. To substantively interpret this effect, we turn to the predicted probabilities from our models. Figure 3 illustrates the interaction effect between service provision and active conflict on rebel lobbying and conventional diplomacy, demonstrating that governance-oriented rebels are less likely to engage in diplomacy when actively engaged in conflict than during relative peacetime. The left panel shows that among social-service-providing rebels, the probability of lobbying is substantially higher when they are not engaged in active conflict (27 percent) but drops to 17 percent when they are involved in conflict. This suggests that service-providing rebels only prioritize diplomacy when they are not preoccupied with military operations.

A similar pattern emerges for conventional diplomacy (right panel). Social-service-providing rebels engage in conventional diplomacy at much higher rates during peacetime (51 percent), but this probability declines sharply to approximately 25 percent during active conflict. These findings provide strong support for H2, reinforcing the argument that active conflict imposes constraints on rebels' ability to simultaneously govern and conduct diplomacy.

While these results support our conditional hypothesis, they also provide some evidence for the broader claim that governance at home facilitates diplomacy abroad. For rebels that do not provide social services, the probability of engaging in either lobbying or conventional diplomacy remains consistently low, and notably lower than for service-providing rebels across

all conditions. This suggests that while the baseline models in the previous section did not establish a direct relationship between social service provision and diplomacy, the interaction models reveal that this relationship exists but is contingent on conflict dynamics. These findings underscore the limitations of treating governance as a sufficient condition for diplomacy and highlight the need to account for strategic trade-offs and shifting priorities during active conflict.

Organizational Capacity (H3)

To assess how organizational strength shapes the relationship between social service provision and diplomacy, we examine the interaction between social service provision and rebel strength. The models include interaction terms for a categorical measure of rebel strength. In all models, weak rebel groups serve as the baseline category. The full regression results, showing the consistently positive and significant interaction terms, are presented in Appendix 4, and we focus here on the predicted probabilities generated from our models.

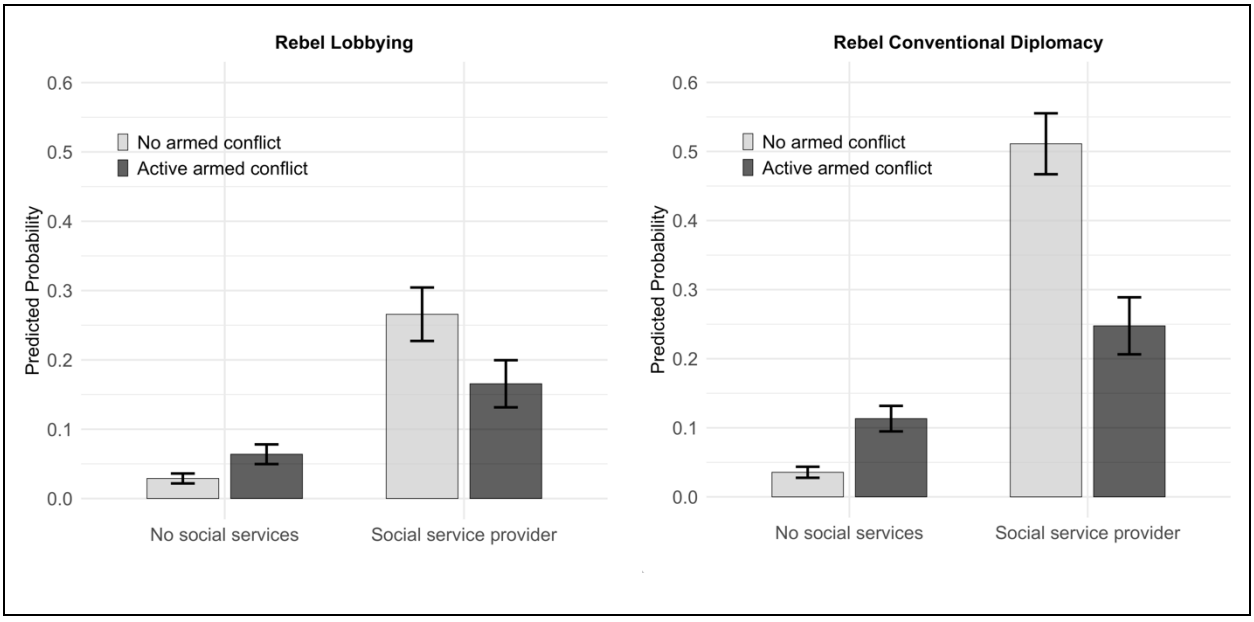


Figure 3. Predicted Probabilities for H2
Note: Predictions are generated using the naïve models in Appendix Table A3.

The findings provide strong support for H3, which posits that the more organizationally capable a social-service-providing rebel group is, the more likely it is to engage in diplomacy. Figure 4 illustrates how organizational capacity influences lobbying and conventional diplomacy among social-service-providing and non-service-providing rebels.

The left panel of Figure 4 shows that among social-service-providing rebels, moderately strong groups are significantly more likely to engage in lobbying (14 percent) than weak providers, suggesting that a certain threshold of organizational strength is necessary for groups to effectively pursue both governance and diplomacy. The probability of lobbying increases even further among the strongest service-providing rebels (38 percent), making them nearly 13 times more likely to lobby than weak providers. These findings support for H3. The right panel reveals a similar trend for conventional diplomacy, where moderately strong and strong social-service-providing rebels exhibit a progressively higher likelihood of engaging in diplomatic missions.

Notably, organizationally weak social-service-providing rebels are no more likely than non-providers to engage in diplomacy. Among rebels that do not provide social services, both lobbying and conventional diplomacy remain rare, with little variation across weak, moderate, and strong groups. However, organizationally weak social-service providers show no meaningful difference from non-providers, maintaining similarly low probabilities (3 percent) for both lobbying and conventional diplomacy.

These findings challenge the assumption of a direct governance-diplomacy link. The fact that weak service-providing rebels are just as unlikely as non-providers to engage in diplomacy highlights that organizational capacity is a necessary condition for governance aspirations to translate into diplomatic action. Only those with the organizational capacity to sustain both governance and external outreach can effectively pursue diplomacy alongside service provision.

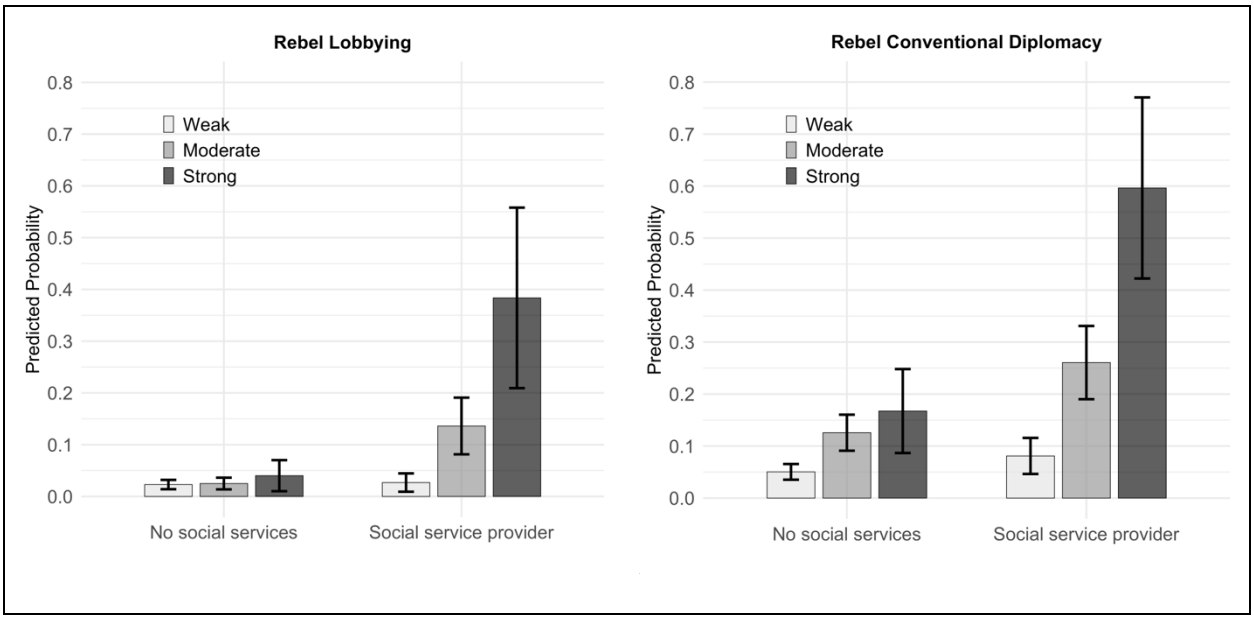


Figure 4. Predicted Probabilities for H3
Note: Predictions are generated using the naïve models in Appendix Table A4.

Lobbying vs. Conventional Diplomacy (H4)

Across all models, our findings consistently show that service-providing rebels are far more likely to engage in conventional diplomacy than in lobbying via private firms. The predicted probabilities further illustrate this distinction: even among the most organizationally capable governance-oriented rebels, the likelihood of engaging in conventional diplomacy remains substantially higher than the likelihood of lobbying. These findings provide strong support for H4, demonstrating that lobbying via private firms is more susceptible to resource constraints. While diplomacy may be a strategic priority for governing rebels, particularly those with high organizational capacity and during peacetime, the ability to sustain more resource-intensive diplomatic initiatives, such as private lobbying, remains constrained by financial burdens.

Conclusion

This study examines the relationship between rebel governance and rebel diplomacy, challenging the assumption that rebels providing social services are more inclined to engage in diplomacy than their non-service-providing counterparts. While previous research suggests that governance-oriented rebels are more likely to seek international legitimacy, we argue that this relationship depends on key structural and organizational factors rather than an inherent tendency. Specifically, we contend that both governance and diplomacy impose substantial resource and administrative demands, requiring rebels to carefully navigate these trade-offs. Rebel groups with greater institutional capacity are better positioned to pursue governance and diplomacy simultaneously, particularly during periods of lower conflict intensity.

Empirically, we introduce a novel measure of rebel lobbying, systematically tracking insurgent groups' formal engagements with the U.S. government. Our findings demonstrate that lobbying, as a high-cost form of diplomacy, is more constrained by resource limitations than conventional diplomatic efforts, such as maintaining foreign offices or dispatching representatives abroad. Even among organizationally strong rebels and those experiencing relative peace, conventional diplomacy remains more common than lobbying through private firms, reinforcing the resource-intensive nature of international lobbying. These findings reveal a hierarchy of diplomatic strategies, suggesting that the most consequential forms of diplomacy for securing external support may ultimately be too costly for most rebel groups to pursue, making the distinction between high- and low-cost diplomacy particularly important for understanding how rebels interact with international actors.

Our contributions are threefold. First, we refine theories of rebel legitimacy-seeking by emphasizing the resource-intensive and administratively demanding nature of both governance

and diplomacy. While prior research assumes that governance-oriented rebels are naturally inclined to pursue diplomacy—often transitioning from *rebel governors* to *rebel diplomats*—we demonstrate that this relationship is conditional, depending on a group's ability to navigate resource-intensive trade-offs. Second, we introduce a new typology and measure of rebel diplomacy, distinguishing between low-cost and high-cost diplomatic strategies. This framework provides fresh insights into how rebels engage in international politics and allocate limited resources across governance, diplomacy, and military efforts. Third, we contribute to the broader international relations scholarship on non-state actors, showing how rebels mimic sovereign state behavior by developing diplomatic institutions and lobbying foreign governments—yet remain fundamentally constrained in their diplomatic efforts by their lack of formal recognition in the international system.

Beyond advancing scholarly debates, our findings have significant implications for international diplomacy, foreign policy, and global governance concerning non-state actors. First, we demonstrate that, like governance, rebel diplomacy is shaped by a group's organizational capacity, suggesting that only the most institutionally developed rebels can sustain high-cost diplomatic engagement long-term. This insight is particularly relevant for mediators and policymakers assessing which rebel groups are viable negotiation partners in peace processes, as it indicates that a group's ability to engage in diplomacy may signal its institutional strength and long-term political viability.

Second, our findings highlight the role of foreign governments in shaping rebel diplomacy. Given the high cost of lobbying, rebels must strategically select which states to engage with, meaning that democratic powers, major international donors, and international organizations inadvertently influence the diplomatic landscape of insurgent groups. Future

research should examine how states respond to rebel diplomatic overtures, particularly in the contexts of international law, sanctions, and foreign aid.

Finally, our findings point to several promising avenues for further research. Expanding data collection on rebel lobbying to other major democracies—particularly in Europe and Asia—would enhance our ability to make inferences about rebel diplomacy. Further investigation is needed into the impact of digital diplomacy as well: do rebels increasingly rely on social media and online activism to circumvent the high costs of traditional diplomacy? More broadly, future research should assess the effectiveness of rebel diplomacy—do lobbying efforts and conventional diplomacy yield tangible gains, such as increased external support or recognition? Addressing these questions would offer deeper insights into how non-state actors navigate the international system.

Ultimately, this study advances our understanding of how rebels engage with international politics and seek legitimacy beyond the battlefield. By demonstrating that both governance and diplomacy are resource-dependent strategies, we provide a more nuanced framework for analyzing how insurgent groups interact with global actors. As civil conflicts continue to shape international security and governance, recognizing rebels as strategic diplomatic actors will become increasingly important for scholars, policymakers, and international organizations alike.

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Appendix

When Do Rebel Governors Become Rebel Diplomats?

Appendix 1 – Summary Statistics

Table A1. Summary Statistics

Variable	Median	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Rebel Lobbying	0	0.079156	0.270011	0	1
Rebel Conventional Diplomacy	0	0.13022	0.336583	0	1
Rebel Social Service Provision	0	0.227431	0.419222	0	1
Rebel Organizational Capacity	2	1.598204	0.632772	1	3
Active Armed Conflict	0	0.383611	0.48632	0	1
Secessionist Rebel Ideology	1	0.503958	0.500039	0	1
Rebel Taxation	0	0.223884	0.416893	0	1
Cold War	0	0.476253	0.499491	0	1
Conflict Duration (Log)	2.639057	2.552026	0.880389	0.693147	4.234107
State Support to Rebels	1	0.545351	0.497996	0	1
Rebel Political Wing	0	0.42555	0.494497	0	1
Leftist Rebel Ideology	0	0.258662	0.437965	0	1
Rebel Territorial Control	0	0.426202	0.494593	0	1

Appendix 2 – Baseline Results Regression Table (H1)

Table A2. Rebel Social Service Provision and Diplomacy

	DV: Rebel Diplomacy					
	Lobbying			Public Diplomacy		
	Naive	Controls	Extended	Naive	Controls	Extended
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Social service provision	1.849***	1.370***	0.786	2.239***	0.875	0.119
	(0.438)	(0.507)	(0.516)	(0.398)	(0.546)	(0.529)
Rebel strength (moderate)		0.704	0.284		1.118	0.672
		(0.552)	(0.597)		(0.705)	(0.658)
Rebel strength (strong)		1.560**	1.038		1.891***	1.085
		(0.616)	(0.659)		(0.721)	(0.712)
Active armed conflict		0.687*	0.839**		0.230	0.077
		(0.400)	(0.407)		(0.269)	(0.304)
Secessionist goals		-0.068	0.040		1.149*	0.748
		(0.590)	(0.653)		(0.682)	(0.632)
Rebel taxation		-0.327	-0.201		1.288**	1.752***
		(0.448)	(0.463)		(0.504)	(0.366)
Cold War		-0.109	-0.599		-0.221	-0.292
		(0.542)	(0.524)		(0.407)	(0.463)
Conflict duration		0.771**	0.486		0.693**	0.637**
		(0.374)	(0.357)		(0.306)	(0.281)
External state support			0.460			0.743
			(0.444)			(0.512)
Rebel political wing			0.321			-0.292
			(0.490)			(0.506)
Left-wing ideology			0.070			0.452
			(0.656)			(0.631)
Territorial control			1.177**			0.898
			(0.484)			(0.568)
Constant	-3.148***	-6.056***	-6.005***	-2.711***	-5.998***	-6.119***
	(0.302)	(1.025)	(1.059)	(0.285)	(0.920)	(0.878)
Observations	4,309	3,141	2,916	4,216	3,077	2,852
Log Likelihood	-1,080.421	-625.407	-540.006	-1,384.803	-866.147	-766.777
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,164.842	1,268.814	1,106.013	2,773.606	1,750.294	1,559.554

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 3 – Service Provision and Armed Conflict Interaction (H2)

Table A3. Social Service Provision-Active Armed Conflict Interaction

	DV: Rebel Diplomacy					
	Lobbying			Public Diplomacy		
	Naive	Controls	Extended	Naive	Controls	Extended
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Social service provision	2.497***	2.082***	1.390**	3.343***	1.715***	1.108*
	(0.612)	(0.527)	(0.549)	(0.506)	(0.600)	(0.611)
Active armed conflict	0.828*	1.292***	1.265***	1.241***	0.934***	0.792**
	(0.468)	(0.339)	(0.351)	(0.321)	(0.355)	(0.387)
Rebel strength (moderate)		0.631	0.210		1.070	0.577
		(0.553)	(0.592)		(0.714)	(0.656)
Rebel strength (strong)		1.502**	0.943		1.823**	0.941
		(0.632)	(0.647)		(0.732)	(0.682)
Secessionist goals		-0.145	-0.045		1.069	0.649
		(0.589)	(0.651)		(0.702)	(0.653)
Rebel taxation		-0.358	-0.276		1.241**	1.647***
		(0.443)	(0.465)		(0.491)	(0.353)
Cold War		0.009	-0.522		-0.067	-0.158
		(0.539)	(0.511)		(0.370)	(0.452)
Conflict duration		0.789**	0.526		0.705**	0.693**
		(0.368)	(0.351)		(0.312)	(0.282)
External state support			0.447			0.713
			(0.442)			(0.517)
Rebel political wing			0.246			-0.436
			(0.487)			(0.535)
Left-wing ideology			0.025			0.433
			(0.645)			(0.638)
Territorial control			1.187**			0.929
			(0.493)			(0.582)
Social service * Armed conflict	-1.430**	-1.233***	-0.918**	-2.397***	-1.697***	-1.850***
	(0.618)	(0.460)	(0.467)	(0.531)	(0.550)	(0.629)
Constant	-3.512***	-6.414***	-6.251***	-3.299***	-6.344***	-6.477***
	(0.438)	(1.024)	(1.009)	(0.382)	(0.919)	(0.860)
Observations	4,211	3,141	2,916	4,121	3,077	2,852
Log Likelihood	-1,045.394	-618.102	-536.757	-1,295.375	-844.865	-745.789
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,098.787	1,256.204	1,101.514	2,598.750	1,709.731	1,519.578

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 4 – Service Provision and Organizational Capacity Interaction (H3)

Table A4. Social Service Provision-Organizational Capacity Interaction

	DV: Rebel Diplomacy					
	Lobbying			Public Diplomacy		
	Naive	Controls	Extended	Naive	Controls	Extended
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Social service provision	0.348	0.158	-0.289	1.082***	0.508**	-0.031
	(0.332)	(0.348)	(0.362)	(0.231)	(0.248)	(0.282)
Rebel strength (moderate)	0.262	0.085	-0.267	0.608***	0.997***	0.689***
	(0.219)	(0.240)	(0.266)	(0.162)	(0.180)	(0.198)
Rebel strength (strong)	0.197	0.576	0.039	0.421	1.332***	0.443
	(0.391)	(0.412)	(0.443)	(0.287)	(0.318)	(0.353)
Active armed conflict		0.813***	1.001***		0.268**	0.120
		(0.171)	(0.190)		(0.134)	(0.145)
Secessionist goals		-0.031	0.049		1.126***	0.696***
		(0.167)	(0.191)		(0.139)	(0.154)
Rebel taxation		-0.496**	-0.396*		1.224***	1.717***
		(0.206)	(0.239)		(0.143)	(0.165)
Cold War		-0.218	-0.653***		-0.286*	-0.346**
		(0.185)	(0.207)		(0.150)	(0.162)
Conflict duration		0.742***	0.502***		0.666***	0.625***
		(0.118)	(0.126)		(0.094)	(0.103)
External state support			0.462**			0.768***
			(0.188)			(0.147)
Rebel political wing			0.247			-0.305*
			(0.201)			(0.157)
Left-wing ideology			-0.021			0.393**
			(0.218)			(0.176)
Territorial control			1.195***			0.916***
			(0.225)			(0.163)
Social service * Strength (moderate)	1.372***	1.658***	1.520***	0.702**	0.388	-0.026
	(0.387)	(0.408)	(0.428)	(0.274)	(0.299)	(0.334)
Social service * Strength (strong)	2.163***	2.541***	2.541***	2.343***	1.487***	1.580***
	(0.569)	(0.595)	(0.610)	(0.462)	(0.496)	(0.524)
Constant	-3.400***	-5.612***	-5.705***	-2.890***	-5.762***	-5.989***
	(0.152)	(0.432)	(0.455)	(0.120)	(0.358)	(0.384)
Observations	3,356	3,141	2,916	3,289	3,077	2,852
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,413.275	1,246.163	1,087.012	2,117.827	1,744.740	1,550.950

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 5 – Alternative Measure of Organizational Capacity

Table A5. Mobilization Capacity Measure from the NSA Dataset

	DV: Rebel Diplomacy					
	Lobbying			Public Diplomacy		
	Naive	Controls	Extended	Naive	Controls	Extended
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Social service provision	1.477***	1.077***	0.558**	1.855***	0.855***	-0.130
	(0.136)	(0.171)	(0.227)	(0.114)	(0.140)	(0.183)
Mobilization capacity (moderate to high)	-0.097	-0.015	0.014	0.318***	0.414***	0.237*
	(0.128)	(0.135)	(0.172)	(0.105)	(0.115)	(0.132)
Active armed conflict		0.225	0.940***		0.257**	0.153
		(0.139)	(0.187)		(0.124)	(0.147)
Secessionist goals		0.228	-0.001		0.945***	0.553***
		(0.140)	(0.185)		(0.128)	(0.145)
Rebel taxation		0.174	-0.168		1.600***	1.854***
		(0.162)	(0.225)		(0.131)	(0.162)
Cold War		0.376***	-0.691***		-0.288**	-0.439***
		(0.144)	(0.208)		(0.131)	(0.166)
Conflict duration		0.847***	0.460***		0.514***	0.610***
		(0.100)	(0.123)		(0.083)	(0.102)
External state support			0.453**			0.669***
			(0.189)			(0.146)
Rebel political wing			0.360*			-0.343**
			(0.190)			(0.151)
Left-wing ideology			0.039			0.559***
			(0.211)			(0.174)
Territorial control			1.229***			0.957***
			(0.215)			(0.159)
Social service * Capacity (moderate to high)	0.947***	1.079***	1.121***	0.789***	0.946***	1.232***
	(0.193)	(0.209)	(0.282)	(0.162)	(0.182)	(0.226)
Constant	-3.182***	-5.889***	-5.741***	-2.743***	-4.938***	-5.517***
	(0.090)	(0.346)	(0.419)	(0.074)	(0.284)	(0.345)
Observations	4,225	3,988	2,913	4,132	3,898	2,849
Log Likelihood	-987.118	-873.502	-529.120	-1,267.434	-1,014.779	-740.882
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,982.236	1,765.004	1,084.240	2,542.868	2,047.558	1,507.765

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01