

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS AND POST-
CONFLICT REFUGEE RETURN: A
STATISTICAL AND NETWORK ANALYSIS

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2016

Dissertation directed by: Dr. Ernesto Calvo, Department of Government
and Politics

I examine determinants of refugee return after conflicts. I argue that institutional constraints placed on the executive provide a credible commitment that signals to refugees that the conditions required for durable return will be created. This results in increased return flows for refugees. Further, when credible commitments are stronger in the country of origin than in the country of asylum, the level of return increases. Finally, I find that specific commitments made to refugees in the peace agreement do not lead to increased return because they are not credible without institutional constraints. Using data on returnees that has only recently been made available, along with network analysis and an original coding of the provisions in refugee agreements, statistical results are found to support this theory. An examination of cases in Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Liberia provides additional support for this argument.

CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS AND POST-CONFLICT REFUGEE RETURN: A
STATISTICAL AND NETWORK ANALYSIS

by

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Dedication

To Mom and Dad, for your never-ending love and support. From standing in the driveway to put me on the school bus for the first day of school, to both being on the phone to hear about my last day of school from 500 miles away, your dedication and belief in my studies is the reason I am who I am today.

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List of Abbreviations

- ECOMOG – Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
- FRUD – Front pour le Restauration de l’Unité et la Démocratie
- HLP – Housing Land and Property
- INPFL – Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
- LURD – Liberians United for Reconstruction and Democracy
- MODEL – Movement for Democracy in Liberia
- NCRRR – National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation
- NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
- NPRL – National Patriotic Front of Liberia
- NRC – National Recovery Committee
- PAM – Peace Agreement Matrix
- RUF – Revolutionary United Front
- UCDP – Uppsala Conflict Data Project
- ULIMO – United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia
- UN – United Nations
- UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- USCR – United States Committee for Refugees

Chapter 1: The World of Refugees and The Journey Home

1.1 Introduction

The world is currently experiencing the largest refugee crisis on record. As of January 2015, the United Nations reported that 50.5 million people were displaced around the world (UNHCR Global Appeal 2016-2017). To address this crisis, most world leaders have sought to create peace in the conflict zones that have created these refugees. Indeed, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon made such an argument on September 30, 2015 before a high-level meeting on migration and refugee flows in New York. He exclaimed:

Of course, the best solution for refugees is voluntarily returning home, in dignified and safe conditions. We must step up our work to prevent and stop wars and persecution. But we know that conflicts will not disappear overnight. More people will flee crisis, and people will keep moving in search of better opportunities. We must be better prepared. (Ki-moon, 30 September 2015)

A public consensus has formed that stopping wars and persecution will allow for a solution to refugee crises – and returns home. In this view, ending wars should allow refugees to voluntarily return to their country of origin and to rebuild their livelihoods. However, the data shows that this is not always the case. The establishment of peace does not lead simply to refugee return, and a great deal of variation exists in the level of return even in peaceful post-conflict countries.

I argue that this is because political problems often continue to exist. Governments can promise to address the concerns of returnees, yet they can easily break this promise unless there are repercussions for doing so. I will argue that by raising the

costs of breaking promises, government institutions that punish executives for breaking promises provide a credible commitment to refugees that promises are more likely to be kept. Under these conditions, refugee return is more likely.

Consider Sierra Leone's peace agreement in 1999. Government institutions provided political accountability through relatively democratic institutions. In this context, the government followed through and created agencies tasked with assisting refugee return. Indeed returns occurred at a fairly high level in this post-conflict peace period. However, Djibouti's peace agreement in 2001 also promised to assist in refugee return. Government institutions did not provide the same level of political accountability due to one party rule and a boycott by the opposition. In this context, promises were broken without consequence, and the government did not place its resources into assisting refugee return. As a result, almost no refugees returned to Djibouti.

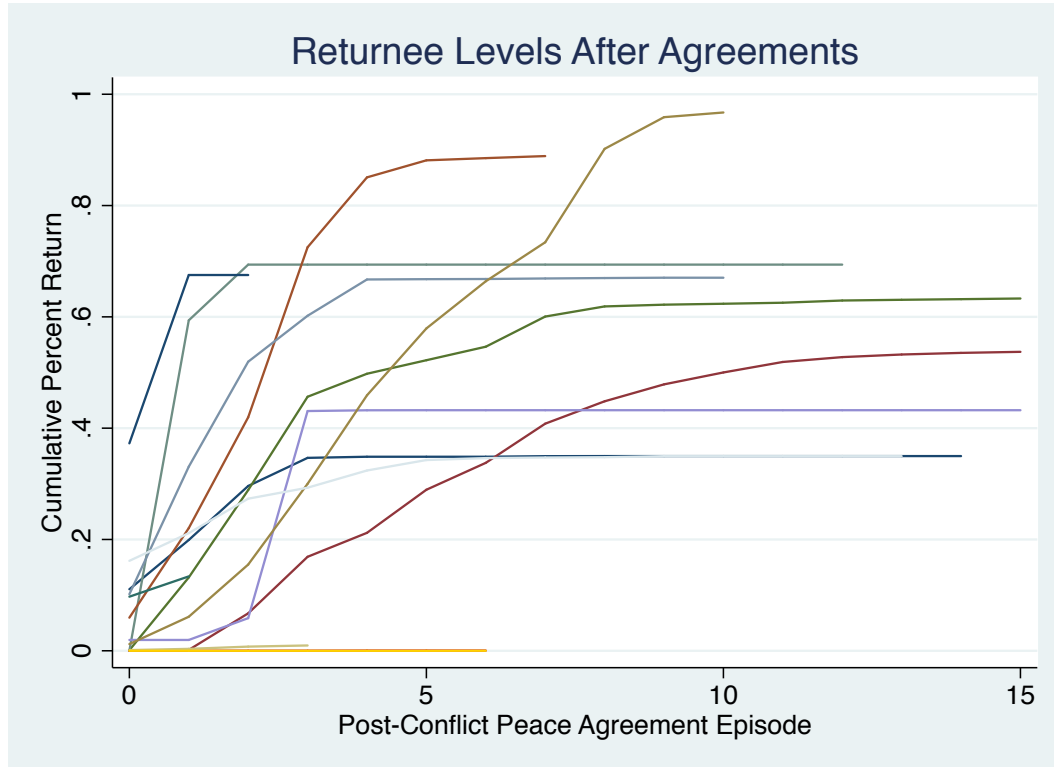
In this context, this research aims to assist policy makers and non-governmental organizations that seek to assist refugee return in post-conflict environments. Such research – it is hoped – should allow for the international community to place focus not just on peace, but also on the political solutions necessary to achieve durable solutions to refugee crises.

The overall evidence shows that after governments make commitments to refugee return in peace agreements, the actual level of refugee return varies substantially.

While some post-conflict countries have seen returns that occur quickly and in large numbers, other countries have seen tepid returns and even an increase in number of refugees. Return is often a priority for asylum countries that hold refugees, and a priority for inclusion in peace agreements. Return is also often a priority for refugees themselves – in January 2016 the New York Times reported that the “vast majority” of Syrian refugees desire to return home after the war ends (White 2016). However, the evidence shows that some refugees continue to reside outside their home country after civil war, and some new refugees can be created even in the post-conflict period.

This can be depicted graphically. The chart below shows cumulative refugee returns as a percentage of the amount of refugees originating from a country at the time of its peace agreement. The chart in Figure 1.1 shows that – while there is generally a shift upwards in returns – countries experience very different levels of return.

Figure 1.1



The end of the conflict is only the starting point in a complex and often difficult path towards a solution to displacement. Indeed, evidence shows that a number of problems face refugees who seek to return. First and foremost among these are housing, land, and property (HLP) issues. HLP rights are often in jeopardy after conflicts because houses have been destroyed, land taken, and property records lost (Leckie 2009; Leckie and Huggins 2011). Returning refugees face legal battles over their land amongst weak and sometimes nonexistent legal systems (Unruh and Williams 2013). Further, refugees face physical threats to their security from former combatants, government and non-government security forces, and unexploded ordinances on their land. Refugees face a lack of public services including health,

sanitation and education. And finally, refugees can face political disenfranchisement (Kibreab 2003; Chimni 2002).

Further evidence from UN studies on return and reintegration conclude that returning refugees often face governments that do not have the political will to address returnee concerns. In a review of returns in Angola, Crisp, Riera, and Freitas (2008) find that the government had “limited interest” in devoting resources to returnees because they were thought to be associated with the former rebel group (12).

...the repatriation and reintegration activities undertaken by UNHCR were of particular importance because all other actors in Angola – national and local governments, development agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations – were generally unable or unwilling to provide the same kind of services. (Crisp, Riera and Freitas 2008, 13)

Examples such as this reinforce that returning refugees often face governments that are uninterested in assisting them, and that simply achieving peace is not the end of the road for returnees.

I will argue that returns are not entirely explained by an end to violence or a creation of economic opportunity. I argue that returns are more likely to occur when credible political commitments are made to establish conditions that address the needs of refugees. If credible commitments are not made, refugees will not return. While some peace agreement refugee commitments are specific in their guarantees to returning refugees, others are not. Yet, regardless of the specificity of these commitments – I argue that it is the credibility of the commitment that matters. Credible commitments

create signals to refugees that at least some of the conditions of difficulty that they face will be addressed and ameliorated.

Organizations that aim to assist refugees such as the UNHCR and various NGOs play an important role in assisting refugees. Often these groups provide assistance where the government cannot or will not do so. By taking into account the realities of post-conflict political environments, such organizations can better assist returnees.

1.2 The Politics of Refugees

Refugees differ from migrants in that – while migrants may cross borders for any number of reasons – refugees have a “well-founded fear” of persecution in their country of origin. The definition originates from the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. Refugees are unable to count on the protection of their country of nationality due to fear of persecution regarding race, religion, nationality, social groups or opinions (UNHCR 2015). For this reason, refugees are often referred to as “forcibly displaced”. Refugees are the responsibility of the international community. Signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention have a legal obligation to “protect refugees and their well-being” (White 2016).

It is important to recognize that refugees represent this specific category of migration. In reporting movements of people or the number of displaced, mistakes can be made in describing different groups. People often are displaced by conflict but do not cross international borders when fleeing to safety. These people are termed “internally displaced”. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) differ from refugees only in that they

do not cross international borders and are still legally under the protection of their country of origin (UNHCR 2015). Further, asylum seekers are often confused with refugees. Asylum seekers are those who claim to be refugees, but haven't had their claim "definitively evaluated" (UNHCR 2015). Those that seek asylum are evaluated and may be determined to be refugees. In this project I focus solely on refugees from conflict countries, those that have crossed international borders to seek protection from civil conflict. These often occur in mass movements in which the circumstances from which they are fleeing are quite evident (UNHCR 2015).

At the time of this publication, the world is seeing the highest level of refugees since World War II. In 2015, the United Nations reported that nearly 60 million people were forced from their homes. To put this in perspective, 1 out of every 122 people alive in the world were forced to leave their home at some point (Zarracina 2015). War in Syria in particular created a massive wave of refugees that began to flow upwards into Europe. By September of 2015, world attention grew as a drowned toddler – Aylan Kurdi – was photographed on the coast of Turkey in early September.

Yet the response in many countries shows the political difficulties that arise when addressing the flow of refugee movements. While the 1951 Refugee Convention requires countries to take in refugees, observers have noted that the cost of taking in refugees has grown while the benefits have diminished – many in the United States fear terrorism while many in Germany fear crime such as sexual assaults that were alleged to have been committed by asylum seekers (Sengupta 2016). In many

countries, assisting refugees has become a major policy concern over fears that terrorists could be among those seeking refuge. In fact, a major campaign issue in the 2016 presidential election cycle in the United States has been a disagreement about whether or not to allow refugees from Syria into the United States. In November 2015, 25 state governors in the United States publicly vowed to block resettlement of Syrian refugees in their states until the federal government could assure that they did not pose a threat (Healy and Bosman 2015).

Yet resettlement in America and European countries and is not the most common way of resolving refugee crises for the United Nations. The most desirable of the three “durable solutions” advocated by the UN is voluntary return to country of origin. Other durable solutions include local integration and third-country resettlement (UNHCR 2004). With local integration, refugees are permanently settled into the community of asylum, where they sought refuge. With third-country resettlement, refugees are permanently settled in an alternative third country. Another key concept is refoulement. Refoulement is the forcible return of people to their country of origin. This has occurred for a number of reasons, including renewed conflict in areas of refugee asylum. Typically, voluntary repatriation is the preferred resolution to the crisis of displacement. Voluntary returns are discussed in terms of repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration – meaning that refugees must return home and resettle in their country of origin and reintegrate into society. This can be difficult due to the socioeconomic status of refugees and the lack of security that is often pervasive in a

post-conflict society. Indeed, the focus of political and legal literature on return has been “just” and “dignified” returns (Bradley 2008).

The central puzzle I seek to solve is why displacement persists in countries where return and reintegration is part of the post-conflict agreement. A reasonable expectation is that the signing and implementation of a peace agreement including refugee return will lower the level of displacement originating from a country. However, the data shows that this is not the case. About half of post-Cold War peace agreements have included some provisions to address refugees and the internally displaced; however, more than half of these continue to have a persistent displacement problem (Sert 2008). Why are some better able to provide durable solutions to displacement than others? Answers in the literature suggest that the level of violence and the level of economic opportunity may matter. Borrowing from theories of post-conflict peace duration, I add to these a new answer: credible commitments made by post-conflict political institutions.

1.3 Refugee Returns as a Durable Solution

The concept of refugee return as a durable solution to refugee crises is fairly new. Historically, refugees were most often permanently displaced and did not return home (Rogge 1994 in Allen & Morsink 1994, 21). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established to assist refugees following World War II, yet the focus on the return of refugees was minimal until the 1980s (Chimni 1999; Black & Gent 2006). Up until that time, refugee return discussions focused mainly on return to Israel and Palestinian demands to return. Other refugees were mainly

integrated into countries other than their country of origin (Allen & Morsink 1994, 2-3). Many refugees in Western countries originated from the communist East, and Western countries shared common cause with providing for them. The West scored political points by welcoming refugees from the Eastern bloc, conveying that “the Western way of life was better and more attractive than life behind the Iron Curtain” (Sengupta 2016). However, since the end of the Cold War, many countries have viewed hosting refugees as a burden (Black & Gent 2006).

The change of focus since the end of the Cold War has led to an increased reliance on return as the preferred durable solution to refugee crises. Indeed, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees claimed that the 1990s would be a “decade of repatriation” (Black & Gent 2006). The UN General Assembly has mandated UNHCR to monitor returnees’ safety, to support national judicial efforts towards reconciliation, to support rehabilitation, reconstruction, development and reintegration for returning refugees (UNHCR 2004).

With such a focus on return, the question then becomes how to achieve it. For the UNHCR, return is a durable solution when it is free and voluntary, and focuses on returnees’ safety and dignity (UNHCR 2004, 8). The literature on durable solutions largely agrees with these focus points. Findings suggest that in order to achieve a “sustainable” return for returned refugees, states must resolve four critical insecurities: (1) physical insecurity (2) social insecurity (3) legal insecurity and (4) material insecurity (Chimni 2002; UNHCR 2004). This is important because the

conditions created for returnees can look very different across space. Physical security refers to the ability of returnees to be free from violence and improved overall security including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants and security sector reform processes. Social security refers to the reconciliation of differences and the equity of returnees in the community, conceptualized as post-conflict justice processes, amnesties, truth commissions, and reparations that foster reconciliation. Legal security refers to the political status of returnees – they must have full citizenship rights and not be legally barred from return. Finally, material security refers to the ability of returnees to access property and housing, much of which was destroyed or stripped from returnees when they were displaced (UNHCR 2004). These conditions consist of the basic needs that returnees require in order for their return to be lasting and viable as a livelihood. Without these conditions, further displacement is likely, and returnees are not considered fully “reintegrated”. Other scholars refer to these conditions as “just return” (Bradley 2008). These conditions can vary greatly among post-conflict countries.

1.4 Refugee Returns in Peace Agreements

Peace agreements that address refugee return issues are relatively new phenomena. In the context of an increase in international peace missions in the 1990s, refugee return has become a “central pillar” of peace processes. Refugee return has been a way to inspire confidence in peace-building programs (Black and Gent 2006). Recent research has examined the efficacy of peace agreements as a whole, suggesting that peace agreements may improve chances for peace due to their ability to reduce

uncertainty about actions and tensions (Fortna 2003). However, no study has examined the specific aspects of refugee commitments and their ability to foster return.

Thus, by “refugee agreements”, I am referring to the subset of the specific peace agreement that addresses the concerns of refugees and conditions of their return. Recent research shows that since the end of the cold war, about 30% of all peace agreements – including partial and dyadic agreements – included some form of provision for refugees specifically (Högbladh 2011). Projects such as the Peace Agreement Matrix provide data on the specific provisions of refugee agreements and their level of implementation (Joshi, Quinn and Regan 2015). Much variation exists in the type of guarantees provided and the level of implementation seen. While some refugee agreements span the course of several paragraphs outlining guarantees to returning refugees, others are vague, and cover only a few sentences acknowledging that return should occur.

For analysis of the commitments made to refugees, I coded for specific refugee provisions in each peace agreement since 1989 using data from Joshi, Quinn and Regan (2015). Refugee return agreements come with a few broad themes. First, some refugee agreements attribute specific guarantees to returning refugees. These can be promises for political rights and documentation, return of property, access to resources, financial assistance, and guarantees of safety including clearing of landmines and amnesties for returnees. These are not mutually exclusive. Agreements

may offer one or more of these guarantees. Second, refugee agreements often only state desired objectives such as physical safety, return, reintegration, and resettlement of refugees. Such provisions fall short of guaranteeing assistance but can vary in how far reaching their objectives are. Again, such objectives are not mutually exclusive. Refugee agreements may provide one or more objectives. Finally, refugee agreements may include provisions that establish specific refugee return implementation commissions, third party assistance – often in the form of NGOs and UNHCR assistance – and time tables for enacting refugee provisions. These refugee agreements can range from specific to vague.

My coding – which will be discussed in Chapter 5 – attempts to parse these differentiations. Forty-six percent of refugee agreements included specific security commitments for returnees. Fifty-eight percent included specific socioeconomic commitments such as financial or political commitments. The bulk – 45% – contained 0-1 commitments, while only twelve percent contained more than 5 commitments.

1.5 The State of the Literature on Return and My Approach

This projects ties together literature from refugee, democratization, and post-conflict peace studies. In developing my theoretical expectations, I draw heavily from the literature in democratization that explores credible commitments made by elites to citizens. I apply these concepts to the study of commitments made by governments to refugees in post-conflict settings. While there is much research using the credible commitments mechanism that is focused on democratization and peace durability, applying it to the topic of refugee return has seen less focus. Most of the studies

conducted on refugee return are case study, or country specific explorations. I seek to contribute large-N statistical models to this literature.

The refugee movement literature argues that violence and economic opportunity drive forced migration. I borrow from the democratization literature to add political institutions to the determinants of refugee return. While prior research has focused mainly on refugee outflows, I seek to apply knowledge from that field to refugee returns. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.6 The Argument

My central argument is that credible commitments to the provisions in the refugee agreement lead to higher levels of refugee return. Credible commitments must be made through political institutions that contain strong constraints on the executive. The constraining institutions act as a credible commitment because they raise the cost of reneging and establish future policy stability in the area of refugee returns. Further, these institutions will act as a signal to refugees that return is viable. Importantly, I do not contend that the end of violence and the availability of economic opportunity no longer matter. Instead, I argue that these institutions provide an additional incentive to return. And thus, even in countries that remain peaceful we see variation.

1.7 Outline of Sections

I begin in Chapter 2 by establishing my theoretical expectations and hypotheses given the state of the literature. In Chapter 3 I present the descriptive evidence about refugee return flows. I also provide three illustrative cases to further reinforce the

intuition behind my theory and to provide examples. In Chapter 4 I turn to the empirical analysis of my theory. I test my hypotheses using datasets I compiled at the country year level and the dyad year level. This allows me to use network analysis. Chapter 5 then turns to a discussion of specific commitments that are made. I advance the argument that no specific commitment matters as much as its credibility. I conclude in Chapter 6, where I discuss the results in detail and consider the policy ramifications of this research.

Chapter 2: An Institutional Theory of Displacement and Return

2.1 Introduction

Although many post-conflict peace agreements contain provisions for refugee return, returns do not always occur at high rates. In fact, the level of returns in post-conflict peace periods varies quite widely. Thus, these periods of peace do not explain all of the variation in refugee return. Simply establishing peace in the country of origin will not resolve refugee crises. I present a new argument: post-conflict countries attract refugee returns when their political institutions allow them to credibly commit to policies that favor returnees.

By signing a peace agreement with returnee provisions, regime-owners have made promises to assist returnees in some form. These promises can range from physical safety upon return to allocation of property or money. Safety might require activities such as demining or increasing police presence. Property rights might require legal appointments, restitution rights, or access to new land. Such promises may differ, yet all promises require some allocation of resources to returnees. The problem is that such promises can be broken. Even if the regime-owner initially follows through on the promise, there is nothing to stop them from reneging when it becomes inconvenient to allocate resources to returnees. This is known in the literature as the credible commitment problem. The commitments made in peace agreements are not credible because there is no mechanism to enforce them.

I will argue that these promises cannot be credible without political institutions that provide some form of punishment for reneging. Institutions that hold regime-owners in check via elections, veto powers, or opposition party votes, are able to provide credible commitments because of the increased cost of reneging. If the regime-owner reneges, elections can remove the leader, or opposition votes can strike down the policy. Importantly, these institutions provide the only means by which regime-owners can establish credibility. Only institutions such as these provide punishment for broken promises. Without such punishment, there is no cost for broken promises. Therefore, I argue that the most important factor in determining refugee return in the post-conflict environment is not the achievement of peace, but the political environment. Political institutions that constrain the executive's ability to renege on the promise provide credibility to the promise. Refugees have no other means by which they can be assured that return is viable.

My approach examines refugee returns in terms of two main actors: the chief executive of the government and the group of refugees that exist outside the country. I borrow from the literature on democratization and peace durability to apply the mechanism of credible commitments to refugee return. Credible commitments made by democratic institutions foster favorable outcomes such as refugee return. In the chapter that follows, I outline the literature on democratic transitions and the mechanism of credible commitments. I then proceed to show how this structure can be applied in a way that allows for leverage in explaining refugee return. I examine this at the country level, the dyad level, and within specific commitments.

2.2 Credible Commitments via Democratic Institutions

The literature on transitions from nondemocracy to democracy adds a valuable framework to the study of refugee return. The literature establishes how democratic institutions provide the only means by which regime-owners can credibly commit to allocation of resources to the masses. I will apply this logic to allocation of resources for returning refugees. To develop my theory of refugee return, I borrow the concepts of political conflict, individual preferences, and credible commitment from the democratization literature. In this chapter I will describe the framework of the democratization literature that will set the stage for my theory of refugee return, and then turn to how its mechanisms can be applied to my theory. From this I develop observable hypotheses. Democratization is one of the main areas of study in the field of comparative politics, and my discussion here cannot be exhaustive. For a more complete survey of this literature see works such as Geddes (1999) or Coppedge (2014). I derive from the democratic transitions literature a theory to explain the politics of refugee return. I begin with a discussion of that literature, and then describe how it applies to refugees.

Broadly speaking, transitions from nondemocracy to democracy can be conceptualized as a political conflict over access to resources. The power of the state is used to decide allocation of resources, and in doing so it creates winners and losers in the political system (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Because of this, the study of these transitions often focuses on broad societal groups. Indeed, Moore (1966) views transitions through the lens of political conflict between the upper, middle, and lower

classes. Moore famously argues that without a strong middle class there will be no democratization (1966). O'Donnell et al. (1986) argue that transitions to democracy come from political conflict between hardliners and softliners within the regime elite. Such conceptions abstract the conflict over political resources to a macro level involving broad societal groups, and can prove very useful to understanding transitions. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) conceptualize those who rule nondemocracies as the *elite*, while those who rule in democracies are the *majority* of people. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) argue that the important characteristic of democracies is that the “majority of the population is allowed to vote and express their preferences about policies” (17). Thus, democracies generally represent the interests of the *majority*, and represent *political equality* as compared to nondemocracies. Likewise, nondemocracies represent the preferences of the *elite*. Nondemocracies do not take into account the preferences of the majority. Thus, nondemocracies represent a situation of relative *political inequality* (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 17).

This generalization about the level of political inequality is meant as a useful abstraction to develop theoretical expectations. However, it misses some important variation within democratic and nondemocratic regimes. Nondemocratic regimes can vary in their institutional make up. The type of nondemocratic regime can vary, whether it is rule by monarch, military dictator, or civilian dictator. Each of these nondemocratic regimes themselves can vary, with inclusion of various “nominally democratic” institutions such as legislatures or political parties. Such nondemocratic

institutions can still exert some level of influence on the policies enacted by these regimes (Gandhi 2008). In this sense, nondemocracies are not all equivalent in terms of political inequality. Yet, they all share elite decision makers that aim policies at the elite coalition. Likewise, democracies vary in terms of majoritarian or proportional representation, as well as presidential versus parliamentary systems (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003). Presidential systems concentrate more power in an elite figure, the president. However, the important takeaway from this literature is the conceptualization of the political conflict that exists over access to resources: it is between those groups that hold power and those who do not. It is between those who are winners and losers in the political system. This conceptualization will prove useful for the study of refugee return. Refugees are often disenfranchised and seek resources from those who hold power.

The literature on democratic transitions also makes valuable use of the concept of rational choice economic preferences. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) assume that individuals prefer more income rather than less, fairness rather than unfairness, and also security rather than insecurity. Boix (2003) uses a similar framework. With these preferences, the elites that rule nondemocracies do not want to redistribute resources away from themselves, and the majority desires democracy precisely so that it can redistribute resources towards itself. For this reason, Boix (2003) argues that democracy comes about when redistributive pressures are lower: elites will only agree to democratize if the majority is relatively equal to it in terms of property. In a democracy where the elite and majority are fairly equal, policies favoring the

majority are less likely to require redistribution. The literature does not discount the fact that groups matter and can influence decision-making, but the fact that individuals have well defined preferences of which they are aware is a valuable framework for discussing democratization. I make use of this in my theory of refugee return in developing the preferences of the government and the returnees.

One of the defining characteristics of this literature is the discussion of the commitment problem. The transition to democracy is a political conflict over who controls allocation of resources between the elites and the majority. On the one hand the elite have the power of the state, both in terms of physical force and of legal state institutions. On the other hand the majority has the threat of revolution in which they could upend this order and redistribute wealth in a more equitable fashion. Disagreement exists over at what point the majority demand or the elite offer democracy (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003; Przeworski 1991). But at some point, demands are made for a more equal distribution of political resources. However, any promise by elites to redistribute resources towards the majority is not credible because of the time dynamic: there is a today and a tomorrow (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 23). Faced with the threat of revolution, elites have a few options: repress, offer concessions while maintaining power, or giving up power through inclusion of citizens in a democracy. Repression may be desirable because it allows elites to maintain power “without having to make any concessions to the disenfranchised” (29). However, if repression fails and the revolution succeeds, this is the worst possible outcome for elites (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 29). However,

Acemoglu and Robinson argue (2006), another option is to give citizens what they want today – redistribution of income or policies that favor the majority (26). The issue is that these promises are not *credible*. The threat of revolution may exist today, but if that threat subsists tomorrow, the incentive for elites to continue inclusive policies also subsists. A credible promise must change not only the distribution of power today, but also tomorrow. Thus, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) argue that democracy comes when the concessions aren't credible and the cost of repression is too high. Democratic institutions are the creation of a credible commitment to the majority. The political institutions of democracy create a credible commitment to concede political resources today, but also tomorrow. They do this because institutions have an overall tendency to persist. They persist because it is costly to overthrow democracy. Organizations that citizens participate in – such as political parties, trade unions, etc. – all invest in the democracy and so its overthrow would destroy these investments. This gives citizens the incentive to struggle to maintain democracy (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 29).

It is important to note that the level of commitment is largely centered around real constraints on the chief executive. The academic exploration of credible commitments has noted that the level of executive constraints varies even within democratic and nondemocratic systems. Some democratic institutions can be “structured to limit the power of the majority”, allowing elites to renege on some concessions (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 34). Indeed, with fewer constraints on the executive in a democracy, elites may be able to block radical policy proposals,

resulting in less redistribution towards the majority (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 35). Boix (2003) argues that presidential systems offer executives greater power to confiscate assets than parliamentary systems, due to the concentration of power in the executive in presidential systems (15-16). Thus, commitments in these settings hinge on the constraints on the executive. I make use of this framework in my analysis of refugee return.

A similar examination of credible commitments has been examined in nondemocracies. Nominally democratic institutions within nondemocracies have shown an ability to influence some policies, yet the issue is that government guarantees remain noncredible. The question, Gandhi (2006) argues, is whether institutions act as “real” constraints on executive power (186). She argues that executives in nondemocracies do not accept the legitimacy of any institutional constraints (186). As a result:

...when conditions change such that [dictators] no longer need institutions to neutralize opposition and co-opt outsiders, dictators can abolish these institutions. Because these institutions have no means by which to challenge such moves, in the end, they do not constrain autocrats in the same way that institutions constrain democratic rulers. Nor can these institutions signify a completely credible commitment on the part of autocratic rulers. (187)

Yet even while the promises are not credible, Gandhi finds that the presence of legislatures and parties even within dictatorships helps to achieve some level of transparency because it is a platform for announcing plans, as well as policy stability due to increased costs for arbitrary policy switching (2006, 182). Indeed, some form of institutionalization can have some effects in nondemocracy. Gehlbach and Keefer (2012) find that “organizational arrangements that facilitate collective action by

regime supporters” can create a credible commitment to investors in nondemocracies (2012, 634). The takeaway from this literature is the level of constraint on the executive matters. Whether there are ways to take recourse on an executive that reneges matters for forcing policy stability and commitment to policies. I will apply this to the commitments that governments make to returning refugees.

The focus on credible commitments in post-conflict settings has focused mostly on the ability of warring factions to commit to peace. Warring parties need a credible commitment to peace or else they lack incentive to stop fighting. Even if both sides come to an agreement, peace is difficult to achieve due to lack of enforcement (Walter 1997, 1999). A post-conflict government may use its new power to repress the opposition group. Knowing this, the opposition groups are slow to disarm. This slow disarmament creates incentive for governments to maintain their militarization and to renege on their promises to peace. It gives incentive for the government to act against opposition groups that it may view as a threat (Posen 1993; Fearon 1995; Walter 1999). In this context, credible commitments have mostly been examined in the form of physical power. For example, military victory can help to create a credible commitment to peace. With military victory, the loser is less likely to pose a threat because it has been defeated. The group that achieves military victory is thus less likely to view the defeated side as a threat and break its promise of peace (Licklider 1995; Atlas and Licklider 1999; Walter 1997). Third-party peacekeepers can also create credible commitments because they can create assurances that neither side needs to maintain arms in light of external force (Walter 1997; Fortna 2004).

In regards to peace, democratic institutions are not necessarily viewed as the sole producer of credible commitments. Walter (1999) argues that post-conflict democratic institutions might be too “frail” to be able to make commitments to peace. New democracies may lack the institutional strength and civil society to foster peaceful participation in politics, and elections themselves may open the way for autocrats to “hijack” the process (Flores and Nooruddin 2009; Paris 2004; Clague et al. 1996). Established non-democracies, due to their stability, may provide greater guarantees of property rights than new democracies (Clague et al. 1996). However, not all evidence points in this direction. Well-designed democratic institutions that encourage coalition forming among parties and appropriate constraints on the executive may be able to overcome such challenges (Flores and Norruddin 2012; Cammett and Malesky 2012). Flores and Nooruddin (2012) argue three mechanisms might help this commitment problem in post-conflict contexts: security institutions, well-designed electoral infrastructure, and constraints on the executive (562). Again, emphasis on executive constraints appears to influence outcomes. It is this concept that I apply to my theory of refugee return.

As an additional form of constraint on the executive, post-conflict peace literature has examined the effect of power sharing institutions. Power sharing institutions are found to address security concerns by giving groups assured access to government influence (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003, 2006; Hoddie and Hartzell 2005). Such institutions ensure each group’s access to political, economic, territorial, or military

influence. Power-sharing institutions generate signals of “conciliatory intent” to both parties, fostering a cooperative relationship (Hoddie and Hartzell 2005). The ability of power-sharing institutions to foster long-term peace is not without challenge. Roeder and Rothchild (2005) find that – while important to resolving the security dilemma in the short term – power-sharing institutions only inflame ethnic tensions by creating a political order along the very ethnic divisions that were part of the conflict. Instead, they argue that power-dividing institutions are more effective at consolidating a longer lasting peace. Power dividing institutions emphasize individual civil liberties, separation of powers, and checks and balances (Cammett and Malesky 2012, f3 1010). Yet again – the focus is on the level of constraint on the chief executive.

I borrow from this literature the concept of credible commitments and apply it to another important aspect that goes beyond democratization or peace in the post-conflict environment. I focus on the commitments governments make to those displaced by the conflict. Countries that provide provisions for refugee return in their peace agreements are making a commitment to refugees. Refugee provisions make a number of commitments to refugees in the post-conflict episode. Not all are equal. While some are short and vague, others are long and detailed. Commitments include security guarantees, economic guarantees, and political guarantees. These provisions can vary widely, yet all share a common notion: that the return of refugees is welcome. However, these commitments are not credible without strong constraints on the executive.

2.3 Refugee Incentives and Preferences

The incentive to return to a country that was previously unable to provide security for its citizens is complicated in nature. Refugees often consist of the most vulnerable groups, and returning refugees are a subset of this group. Refugees are often those targeted in the conflict, and consist of women, children, elderly, and minority groups. Some research has examined why refugees return, and under what conditions they do so. The study of the determinants of return has been largely confined to smaller-scale case studies that examine the processes at a micro-level. Data from UNHCR suggest that returns do not always occur on a large scale. Explaining this variation is the task of this project. I first explore incentives that might encourage refugee return, and then explore incentives that might discourage it. Finally, I discuss preferences that refugees have given these expectations. Deriving expectations from the democratization literature, I expect that returning refugees have a defined set of preferences. Refugees prefer greater access to economic opportunity over less, more political rights over fewer, and conditions of physical security over lack of security.

Indeed, previous research reinforces these preferences. Research finds that return is shaped by the economic opportunity – particularly assets such as access to land. If returning refugees have access to such assets in the reception or origin sites, return may be more likely (Deininger, Ibáñez, Querubin 2004; Klinthäll 2007). Much of the policy literature is focused on how to grant returning refugees precisely these: economic, political, and social guarantees of safety (UNHCR 2004 handbook). Research on internally displaced persons suggests that the internally displaced will

return when institutions such as property rights are strongest (Sert 2014). However – when considered in terms of refugees – such rights may also influence staying in the area of asylum. Kibreab (2003) finds that when countries of asylum offer refugees civil, social, and economic citizenship rights such as secure employment and social services, they are less likely to see return as a viable or desirable option (24). Thus – as will be discussed in detail in section 2.6 – the decision to return may be a product of where the refugee is seeking asylum. However, any economic incentives to return to the country of origin may be fleeting: in the context of post-conflict refugee situations, the same property was expropriated or had to be abandoned due to lack of protection during the conflict. In the absence of credible commitments to the protection of economic resources, refugees may not choose to return.

Without a credible commitment to return assistance, conditions in the return area often provide an incentive not to return. Returning refugees face underlying issues such as reconciliation of grievances, instatement of property rights, removal of landmines and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of violent forces that are crucial for successful repatriation and reintegration (Black & Gent 2006; Chimni 2002). Returnees face conflicts over property and housing because those that remained in the country during the war may have taken property. Under such conditions, returnees must seek justice within a weak legal system, and often lack the documentation to prove ownership due to the destruction caused by the conflict (Unruh and Williams 2013; Leckie 2009; Leckie and Huggins 2011). Such battles drive political competition (Boone 2014). Because of these hardships, more

vulnerable households – such as those headed by women or minorities – are less likely to return (Hardgrove 2009). Further, refugees who faced higher levels of trauma during the conflict may be less likely to return (Sert 2008). Indeed, the majority of evidence suggests that the main driver of forced migration in the first place is violence and a fear for physical safety (Adhikari 2013, Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Edwards 2009; Melander and Öberg 2006; Melander, Öberg, and Hall 2009; Moore and Shellman 2004, 2006, 2007; Schmeidl 1997; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989).

These conditions will inform the preferences that returnees have. Given their vulnerabilities and experiences, I expect that returning refugees seek security, political rights and economic access. Refugees make the decision to return in regard to the information they have about the area of return. Thus, they can make the decision to return given these options:

- 1) Settle where there is physical, economic and political security
- 2) Settle where there is some physical, economic or political security – but not guaranteed / is uncertain
- 3) Settle where there is a threat to physical economic and political security.

I assume that refugees prefer option (1) over option (2), and option (2) over option (3). If refugees choose option (1), the conditions of vulnerability in which they exist are most likely to be addressed. With physical safety, refugees alleviate the threat that caused them to flee, and with economic security, refugees can create livelihoods. With political security, refugees can become full members of the society where they

settle. Such guarantees allow returning refugees to overcome the challenges they face in return. If refugees choose option (2), at least some of the conditions of vulnerability in which they exist might be addressed. This is often the only option, but it is preferable to option (3). In option (2), refugees may be hedging their bets that the conditions will improve over time and that at least some form of security will be addressed. I assume that it is unlikely that refugees would choose option (3), as this is the reason they have fled in the first place. However, this may occur due to no alternative options. With option (3), refugees face threats to physical security, lack of economic opportunity, and political rights.

Given these options, I assume that refugees will choose option (1), due to the higher likelihood of achieving a livelihood. Thus, refugees will make the decision to return, resettle, or stay based on the likelihood of achieving the highest amount of option (1). In the theory that follows, I expect that returnee preferences are always option (1) over option (2) and option (2) over option (3). In order to achieve the highest level of option (1), refugees will make decisions based on the level of commitment to actually receiving such resources. I expect that credible commitments via institutions that constrain the executive create signals to returnees that promises to distribute physical, economic and political security will be met.

2.4 Government Incentives and Preferences

In the analysis of the government incentives and preferences, I am referring to the chief executive. This is the leader of the executive branch of government: the

president, prime minister, or dictator. The nature of the executive can vary across regimes. In parliamentary regimes, the chief executive is often described as part of a collective group as opposed to a presidential system, where the chief executive is often described as an individual. The chief executive may have direct lawmaking powers or merely “considerable” powers (Cheibub et al 2010, 80). However, for the sake of this analysis, the chief executive is considered to have one set of preferences, similar to analyses of democratization in which researchers view the regime elites with one set of preferences. Of course, it is possible for splits to exist within the regime elite, but this analysis considers the chief executive as having one set of preferences.

Post-conflict governments are unique in that they face strong incentives to quickly consolidate political power, establish security throughout their borders and grow economically so as to rebuild. This environment shapes the preferences that governments have regarding refugee return after conflicts as opposed to after natural disasters. Post-conflict governments must often weigh the costs of establishing capacity in political, economic, or security areas over concerns for returnees. Thus, deriving post-conflict government incentives from the democratization and peace-durability literature, I expect that chief executives in the government will prefer more economic resources for projects that favor their constituents rather than less. I expect this regardless of regime type: authoritarians prefer to consolidate economic resources among the winning coalition much the way that democrats do. The difference is that the winning coalition in a democracy is much larger. Indeed prior research evidence

suggests that this is the case (Bueno de Mesquita et al 2003). I also expect that chief executives will prefer a higher level of physical safety rather than a lower level. Indeed, evidence shows that governments attempt to achieve this in a number of ways, including processes of demobilization of warring factions or through coup proofing (Quinlivan 1999). Finally, I expect that chief executives prefer to consolidate their political power in their respective institutional system. Democratic leaders seek to shore up voter support, while authoritarian leaders seek to establish their hold on power. Post-conflict governments are transitioning from a period in which they were unable to provide basic guarantees of safety to their citizens – so the extension of resources to refugees is the result of a balance in these forces.

Finally, I note that I do not seek to explain the reasons why governments choose to extend credible commitments. These could be complicated in nature: democratic, executive constraining institutions may have already existed due to previous forces that lead to democratic transition, or to the forces at play in the peace process. Additionally, governments may make a commitment to refugee return because they see it as a human rights obligation. Recent theoretical work makes the case that post-conflict governments have an obligation to create the conditions for return out of respect to the human rights of refugees and as reparations for the wrongs that were done to refugees during the conflict, as well as the hardships that they faced both in exile and return (Souter 2014; Bradley 2008; Amirthalingam & Lakshman 2013; Aysa-Lastra 2011; Kaun 2008; Romana 2005). Due to pressure in this regard, governments may have an incentive to commit to provisions that the UNHCR

considers durable solutions to displacement: physical, social, legal, political, and economic security guarantees (UNHCR 2004). However, this incentive is not a credible commitment in itself. Even if governments are convinced to see refugee return as a human rights obligation, there is no mechanism to enforce that they undertake actions to create the conditions for return. While international and public pressure may give the government incentive to commit to refugee return while signing the peace agreement or in the days immediately following the conflict, such pressure may diminish over time, and with that diminishment the government can renege on its commitment without consequence. Thus, I focus only on whether the government has *made* a credible commitment or *not made* one. This focus is aimed to allow policy makers to understand the realities on the ground during post-conflict refugee crises.

Governments may also commit to refugee return because they see it as an integral part of the peace process. Research suggests that durable solutions to refugee crises must be found as a way to stem further violence and foster economic recovery. Indeed, reintegration of former combatants is tied to lower post-conflict hostility and is thus a major part of many peace operations (Annan et al 2011; Humphreys and Weinstein 2007). Regarding reintegration of refugees in particular, evidence suggests that lack of integration of refugees may be a source of international conflict due to the ability of refugee camps to produce warriors and exacerbate conflict (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2008). Some evidence suggests that a durable peace requires refugee repatriation specifically (Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo 1989). However, others find

that refugee repatriation itself is not a necessary condition for durable peace but that the refugee issue must be resolved through other means, or else “refugee warriors” may develop (Adelman 2002, 273). In this way, providing for refugee return may be a practical course of action for post-conflict governments to maintain security. However, such incentive is again not itself a credible commitment. As soon as the threat of conflict subsides, the government no longer faces the incentive to contribute to returnee needs because they no longer face a threat. As peace becomes more likely, the commitment to returnees becomes less needed.

Ethnicity might also play a role in the desire of governments to create credible commitments to refugees. If refugees are mainly coethnics with those in government power, then the government should have an incentive to create a credible commitment to returnees through the use of institutions that guarantee stability towards policy. However, as strong as ethnic ties may be, ethnicity itself cannot act as a credible commitment. Ethnicity does not provide a constraint on the executive itself. No matter how unpopular with fellow coethnics, the executive is still free to renege on promises to returnees when institutions lack constraining power. This makes sense particularly if one considers that the executive only needs the support of the winning coalition (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Thus, ethnicity may be a reason why a government extends institutional inclusion – but it does not itself provide a credible commitment for returnees.

Non-constrained Executive Options

I first consider the options and expected payoffs in regards to a non-constrained executive. With these preferences, non-constrained executives have two basic options in regard to the commitments they made to refugee return: (1) adhere or (2) renege.

If governments adhere to the commitments they made, they must take on the cost of doing so. Costs include that of establishing security, clearing landmines, and demobilizing fighters. Costs include allocation of resources towards basic infrastructure services like health, sanitation and education. Costs may also exist in a strain on the legal system due to property disputes amongst returning refugees. Politically, governments may not have much to gain. Returning refugees may upset the political balance in place at the end of the conflict, and returning refugees may have political grievances against the government.

Economically, investment during the conflict is often low due to fears of damage or expropriation of property by force, and often continues to remain low or decline in the post-conflict period (Artadi and Sala-i-Martin 2003; Blomberg and Hess 2002; Collier 1999; Gupta et al. 2004; Imai and Weinstein 2000; Kang and Meernik 2005; Koubi 2005; Mohammed 1999; Murdoch and Sandler 2002; Flores & Nooruddin 2009). Thus, with limited post-conflict economic resources, any returning refugees can pose a threat to property gained or resources won during the conflict. In line with the expectations from Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003), governments often choose to focus on economic support for their own interests rather than that of the returnees.

Examining UNHCR's work on return in Angola, for example, Crisp, Riera & Freitas (2008) find that the Angolan government chose to put post-conflict resources towards oil and urban development rather than towards returnees that were perceived to be former supporters of the rebel group (12).

Governments can also experience an incentive to renege if returnees threaten the political balance. Post-conflict elections are becoming increasingly common – with the number more than doubling between the 1980s and 1990s (Flores and Noruddin 2009). At conflict termination, the political balance in the country was set without the inclusion of refugees. Returning refugees thus may upset the political balance. They may contribute or detract from a party's ability to retain power. Thus, governments may choose to ignore the issues facing returnees up to and including not giving documentation, land, or political rights to returnees.

And finally, refugees may expand rebel networks, and their presence in border camps can increase the risk of further conflict (Salehyan & Gleditsch 2006). Thus, governments may fear that these same refugees – when returning – will pose a threat to security. Such fear of refugee warriors has recently become a concern with refugees originating from Syria in the United States. For this reason, governments may prefer not to commit to refugee return. That is why strong institutions hold them to the agreement. Governments must face a penalty for reneging when faced with such incentives.

For these reasons, it is most likely that the government – without constraining institutions – will choose to (2) renege. Faced with the economic costs, non-constrained executives should choose to place limited resources towards those in their winning coalition. Because refugees are not part of the group that put the executive in power, they are not part of this group in non-constrained countries. Faced with the political instability that returns might cause and the threat of possible security issues, non-constrained executives should choose not to follow through on their commitment.

Governments also face incentives to renege on refugee return commitments. These reasons may be economic, political, or security based.

Constrained Executive Options

I next consider how the inclusion of constraints on the executive changes the preferred choice, and thus leads to a *credible* commitment. Again, the executive has two basic options in regards to the commitments made in the refugee agreement: (1) adhere or (2) renege.

With a constrained executive, the costs associated with adhering are no longer simply economic. Now, executives face political punishment if they renege. Political costs can be even more costly than economic ones for politicians, since the result is the loss of power: the worst-case scenario. While executives will have to weigh the costs of

adhering to the guarantees in the refugee agreement, they now have to weigh them against political costs.

Here it is helpful to consider the costs with a payoff box. I make a few assumptions to inform my expectations. I assume that politicians seek to gain and hold office first and foremost. I assume that political costs are greater than economic costs since the ultimate goal of politicians is to stay in power. Similar to the democratization literature, I contend that losing political power is the worst-case scenario for elites (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Thus, it is reasonable to expect that a politician would incur economic costs in order to stay in power. Therefore, in my discussion of payoffs I make representation of this concept by assigning economic advantages a value of (1) and political advantages a value of (2). Table 1 illustrates this logic using political and economic payoffs.

Table 2.1

Government Options	Without Executive Constraints	With Executive constraints
Adhere	Economically costly, Politically no cost to executive Payoff = 2	Economically costly, Politically necessary Payoff = 2
Renege (No action)	Economically not costly, Politically no cost to executive Payoff = 3	Economically not costly Politically costly Payoff = 1

Each scenario has the possibility of 3 points: 2 for political advantages and 1 for economic advantage. The government preferences without executive constraints are explained as follows: Creating the conditions for return results in a payoff of 2

because it is economically costly (-1) but not politically threatening since there are no constraining institutions (+2). Doing nothing results in a payoff of 3 because it is not economically costly (+1) and again incurs no political costs (+2).

Introducing political constraints changes these payoffs. By introducing political constraints on the executive, the payoff for creating the conditions is now 2 because it is politically necessary for survival (+2) even while being economically costly (-1). The payoff for doing nothing now drops to 1, because doing nothing is now politically costly (-2) even if it is economically advantageous (+1). Here enters the major distinction: *introducing political institutions that constrain the executive increases the political cost of reneging and decreases the political cost of adhering*. Thus, introducing constraints on the executive results in altered preferences, and creates a more credible commitment to returns.

2.5 Return Hypotheses: By Country of Origin

I now use these expected payoffs given institutional constraints to develop hypotheses about refugee return. Government commitments in the refugee agreement to provide displaced populations with the economic, political and physical security guarantees are subject to change after refugees return, or after the government comes to power. A government may come to power promising to act inclusively and protect the concerns of returning refugees, but it is free to change its priorities at a later time. Borrowing from the literature, I argue that the existence of direct elections, strong legislatures, and power-sharing agreements in post-conflict countries can each act as a credible

commitment to provide stability in terms of the refugee agreement, and can provide signals to refugees that the refugee agreement will be implemented. Such institutions punish executives if they renege on commitments to refugees. Thus, such institutions should result in greater levels of refugee return. Similar to the way institutions provide credible commitments to distribute resources towards the majority of people in the process of democratization, these institutions transmit information that commits governments to distributing required resources towards refugees upon their return.

Informed by the literature on credible commitments, I expect specific constraints – direct executive elections, independent legislatures, and power sharing arrangements – to matter. First, consider direct constraints on the executive. As recalled from that literature, democratic elections for executive office with a credible opposition produce audience costs for executives. If an executive reneges on the promise to create conditions of return, the executive may be elected out of office. This makes it more difficult for leaders to change policy radically from what they promise, and forces them to commit to the refugee agreement. Such elections also signal to the refugee population that the government is less likely to renege on promises of physical, political, or economic security because doing so would subject them to a harsh response at the polls.

Independent legislatures also place audience costs on the executive, forcing accountability to the policies promised and placing costs on reneging from the refugee agreement. Opposition parties force adherence to the refugee agreement

through their ability to hold the executive accountable by increasing audience costs and ultimately acting as a veto player during the election.

Further, the inclusion of a hard veto player acts as a serious constraint on executive power. Power-sharing arrangements include the opposition in a definite position of power, making this an added veto player. This should increase the accountability of the executive to adherence to the agreement and should provide stability in the form of a veto on both sides. Borrowing from the power-sharing literature on peace durability, I thus hypothesize that power sharing will influence displacement solutions durability through the mechanisms of accountability and inclusion of opposition veto.

I contend that returnees respond to signals as to the way they will be treated in the new government. Even if refugees want to return, they will not do so if they fear that their return will only result in another round of displacement. In addition to information about the end of violence and the economic opportunities in the area of origin, displaced people will react to information about the inclusiveness of government institutions so as to improve their chances of reintegrating successfully. I assume that refugees will always prefer guarantees of physical, economic and political security. Thus, returns are more likely with constraining institutions since constraining institutions are more likely to create these guarantees due to the government's incentive structure. Return is high risk without institutions that constrain the executive because returning refugees face the risk of reneging. The

refugees originally left because the government was unable to provide them with safety, and thus return to this land is risky.

When considered in terms of the country of origin's institutional makeup, these expectations provide for three main observable hypotheses:

1a) In home countries with direct election of the executive, the level of refugee returns will be higher than in home countries without direct election of the executive.

1b) In home countries with more independent legislatures, the level of refugee returns will be higher than in home countries without independent legislatures.

1c) In home countries with power-sharing arrangements, the level of refugee returns will be higher than in home countries without power-sharing arrangements.

2.6 Return Hypotheses: By Dyad

To further explore refugee return, I alter the preference expectations for returning refugees by introducing the incentives and constraints that they face in their country of asylum. Including information about the country of asylum is important because evidence suggests that the experience in the country of asylum can affect the decision to return. Fagen (2011) argues that many refugees will reject the option to return home if the education or health services are lower than what they have at the refugee camp. If this is backed by a credible commitment by the asylum country to maintain such policies, refugees may prefer not to return home. Thus, the conditions in the home country matter only in so far as they relate to the conditions in the country of asylum.

The country of asylum is the country to where refugees have fled in the wake of the conflict. This is the country from which they will return, if they are to return. The country of origin is the home country; this is the country where they had originally fled from and where they will return to if they are to go home. The commitments from each country remain the same. Countries of asylum can credibly commit to continuing to offer safety if constraining institutions signal policy stability to refugees. However, countries of origin can credibly commit to the refugee return agreement if constraining institutions signal that it is unlikely to renege.

Refugees face the same economic and political costs of return. However, the decision for refugees to return can be altered by the conditions in the country of asylum. If the conditions in the country of origin provide less political signals of stability to refugees than in the country of asylum, refugees may elect not to return because they will always prefer to have guarantees. In a simple game, I assume that refugees assign their preferences a value of (1) and not getting their preferences as a value of (-1).

Thus, refugee preferences are best explained as follows:

Table 2.2

Credible Commitments From:	Asylum Country Only	Both or Neither Country	Origin Country only
Refugee Payoffs	Return: -1	Return: 0	Return: 1

The incentive structure in this scenario is shaped by the dyad relationship. The signal to the refugees consists of information from both the country of asylum and country

of origin. When only the country of asylum signals credible commitments via constraints on the executive, the expected payoff is (-1). In this scenario, refugees are most likely not to return because the country of origin has not signaled credibility to its commitment, and meanwhile the country of asylum is signaling a credible commitment. In this dyad relationship, I expect to see most refugees stay in their country of asylum or resettle in a third country.

In the second relationship, one of two scenarios occurs. Either both the country of asylum and country of origin make credible commitments, or neither country makes a credible commitment. For both scenarios, refugee preferences are given a value of (0). This results because the credibility of refugees achieving the most resources is roughly equal in both countries. Thus, in this dyad relationship, I expect to see minimal refugee return.

However, in the third dyad relationship, the expected payoff is (1). This is because the credible commitment via constraints on the executive in the country of origin signal to refugees that their preferences will be met. At the same time, the country of asylum lacks such signals. Thus, when this is the case, I expect that refugees are most likely to return home.

My hypotheses are thus updated by introducing the dyad relationship. I expect the same constraining political institutions to provide credible commitments to policy stability and act as signals to refugees in both countries. Thus, I expect that direct

elections of the executive, more independent legislatures, and power sharing arrangements will matter in their relationship between the country of asylum and country of origin. When credible commitments exist only in the country of origin, refugees will be more likely to return home since this is the most likely way to achieve the most guarantees. When such commitments are equal between the two countries, refugees will face equal incentive to stay and go because both countries signal either policy stability or instability. Finally, when credible commitments exist only in the country of asylum, refugees should face an incentive not to return home, because staying in the country of asylum presents the best opportunity for guarantees of assistance due to the signals of stability.

These expectations lead to a number of observable hypotheses

2a) When the country of origin has greater direct electoral constraints on the executive than the country of asylum, the level of refugee returns will be higher.

2b) When the country of origin has greater legislative independence than the country of asylum, the level of refugee returns will be higher.

2c) When the country of origin has greater power-sharing constraints on the executive than the country of asylum, the level of refugee returns will be higher.

2.7 Return Hypotheses: By Commitment Type

I now examine whether the preferences of governments or refugees change in regard to specific commitments of the agreement. Lack of attention to details in the agreement can cause problems – for example land tenure or property concerns (Unruh and Williams 2013). Thus, a realistic expectation is that specific commitments in the agreement matter. However, because these commitments are not credible without

constraining political institutions, I expect that specific agreement commitments do not drive refugee return. Rather, I expect that refugees seek the signals of government institutions, and that governments cannot credibly commit to any specific provision without such institutional constraints. Thus, it matters less what the specific provision says than whether institutions constrain the executive, producing a credible commitment to the provision. I thus examine the efficacy of specific provisions.

The specific commitments in refugee agreements can be wide ranging. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. However, commitments can be placed into two main categories: 1) security commitments and 2) socioeconomic commitments. Security commitments are those that establish physical security such as clearing of landmines, and protection from physical harm. Socioeconomic commitments are those that establish access to legal documentation, property, amnesties and political rights. It also might be assumed that a larger number of commitments are more valuable – many practitioners emphasize the numerous areas that must be addressed.

No matter the specific wording in the agreement, commitments that fall under these categories do not provide credible commitments. Instead, the existence of institutions that produce constraint on the executive provide such credible commitments. I assume that executives assign preferences based on the desire to minimize their costs while maintaining political power. Constraining institutions alter these. To illustrate this, I again assume that governments assign economic advantages a value of 1 and political advantages a value of 2. The results are in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3

Government Options	No constraining institutions	Constraining institutions
Adhere to Security Commitments	Economically costly Politically no cost Payoff (2)	Economically costly Political advantage Payoff (2)
Adhere to Socioeconomic Commitments	Economically costly Politically no cost Payoff (2)	Economically costly Political advantage Payoff (2)
Adhere to More Total Commitments	Economically costly Politically no cost Payoff (2)	Economically costly Political advantage Payoff (2)
Reneg	Economical advantage Politically no cost Payoff (3)	Economical advantage Politically costly Payoff (1)

Without constraining political institutions, the cost structure plays out similar to our previous expectations. No matter the commitment type, each is economically costly. Because institutions do not punish renegeing, the political cost of renegeing is zero. Due to this, the government preference is to renege. Renegeing provides the best economic advantage and has no political cost. Thus, I expect that without constraining political institutions, the type of provision or number of provisions will not produce incentive for refugees to return since governments cannot credible commit to the provisions they made.

The preferences are altered when politically constraining institutions are introduced. Producing the provisions might be economically costly, but due to the threat of loss of power if the executive reneges, adhering to the provisions provides a political advantage to holding power. Thus, regardless of commitment type of the number of

commitments, the government will only have incentive to follow through based on the institutions that exist, making such commitments credible.

In this example, refugee preferences stay the same – they prefer to go where they will have greater guarantees of security, economic and political guarantees. Thus, when there are no constraining institutions, refugees will choose to stay in the country of asylum regardless of commitment type or amount of commitments. When there are constraining institutions in the country of origin, this will signal a credible commitment to refugees that whatever provision is proposed is likely to be upheld.

I also expect this relationship to hold when considering return between dyads. Even if the country of origin has numerous and important commitments to refugees guaranteeing assistance with returns, refugees will not seek return unless the government in the country of origin can credibly commit as compared to the country of asylum. I thus plan to test this third set of hypotheses in both country level and dyad level models. A number of observable hypotheses generate from these preferences.

3a) Regardless of commitment type, countries with direct constraints on the executive will have greater level of refugee return as compared to countries without direct constraints on the executive.

3b) Regardless of commitment type, countries with more independent legislatures will have a greater level of refugee return as compared to countries independent legislatures.

3c) Regardless of commitment type, countries with power-sharing arrangements will have a greater level of return as compared to countries without power-sharing arrangements.

2.8 Research Design

Much of the existing research has focused on the outward flow of refugees. Here, I focus on determinants of return. Previous studies have relied on case studies – yet none have systematically examined return on the large-N level. To test these hypotheses I propose a large-N research design using returnees as the dependent variable and operationalization of these concepts as the explanatory variables. In addition, I propose controlling for the findings in the literature that are most associated with forced refugee flow: violence and economic opportunity.

Preceding the statistical analysis is a discussion of three illustrative cases. These show the workings of the theory and trace the process of my mechanisms to support the large-N data. In addition, these cases allow me to show graphical and descriptive data that supports my analysis.

Chapter 3: Displacement and Re-placement: Illustrative cases and Patterns of Return

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide descriptive evidence to support the theoretical expectations described in the previous chapter. Here I present the general trends in refugee return as well as three brief cases to illustrate the intuitions behind my theory. In Chapter 4, I turn to statistical analysis, where the statistical models that include data from these cases – and others – will provide support for these trends.

I begin by showing the variation in refugee return after conflicts, and then turn to case studies that differ on my main theoretical mechanism: the institutions. In Sierra Leone, return policy was nearly fully implemented by the creation of specific action plans and government committees to address returns, and the percentage of returns were high. However, in Djibouti, the government took no action to address returnees, and returns remained near zero. In Liberia, returns increased and peaked with the introduction of democratic institutions that constrained the executive. Through these examples, I weave together a narrative that shows how political institutions credibly commit governments to implement provisions of their refugee agreements and how these signals result in a higher level of return.

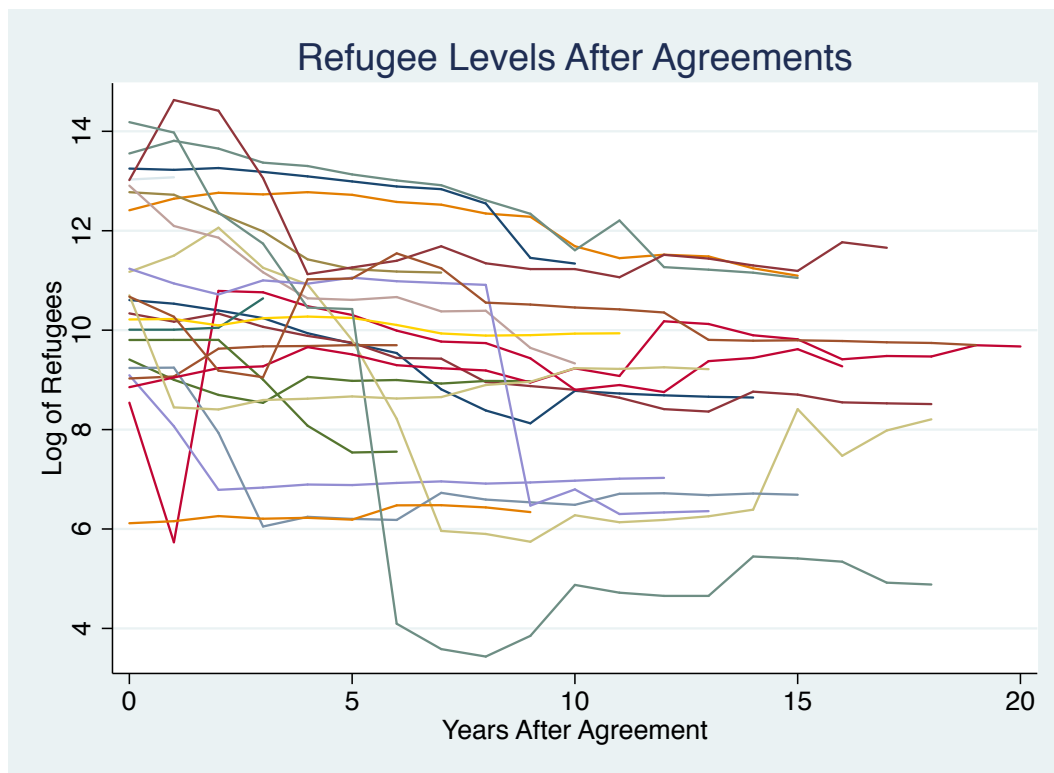
3.2 Conflicts, Refugees, Returnees, Institutions, and Agreements

Since 1989, there have been 188 partial, full, dyadic and comprehensive peace agreements. Of these, 58 have made some provisions for refugee return. I select this time period because the focus on return has grown since the collapse of the Soviet Union – and the data on returns has become more available since this time. However, for my analytics, I focus on 24 post-conflict agreements in 23 countries since this time. These are the agreements that are full and comprehensive peace agreements – meaning they were the final agreement in the process and they were between all fighting groups party to the conflict. I use evidence from these cases to show examples of my expectations in this chapter.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees tracks the total number of refugees originating from each country each year. This number is not a measure of flow of refugees each year, but rather it is a measure of the total number of refugees that have gathered over time from the country. The same family might be counted in more than one year whether or not they were forced to flee their country in that year. Nonetheless, the total number of refugees originating from a country each year is valuable for purposes of this project because the level of returns in a given year is directly dependent on the number of refugees that exist. Thus, the first order of business is to track how many refugees originate from the countries in each post-conflict period. Figure 3.1 below shows the total number of refugees across the 24 post-conflict periods in this study. The level of refugees over time decreases. This is

expected. As countries transition from conflict, those that claimed refuge should either return or resettle elsewhere.

Figure 3.1

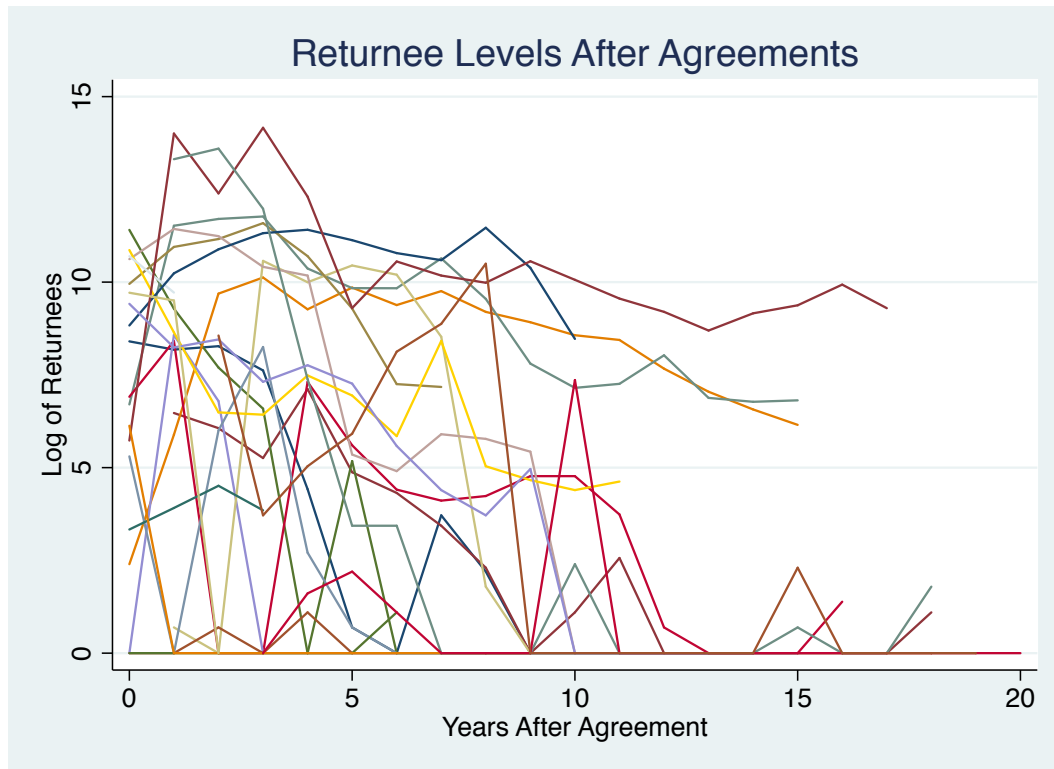


As shown in Figure 3.1 – the level of refugees can remain high even 10 years after the peace agreement providing for their return. In some cases, refugees originating from the country continue to grow even in the post-conflict period. However, we do see a general trend towards low levels of refugees as time goes on.

The UNHCR also provides data for returns during these 24 post-conflict periods. Figure 3.2 below shows the variation in returns over post-conflict periods. Over time the level of returns tapers. This is expected. As there are fewer refugees originating,

there are fewer people to return home. Alternatively, some people may simply choose not to return home. Figure 3.2 shows that variation exists in the level and timing of returns.

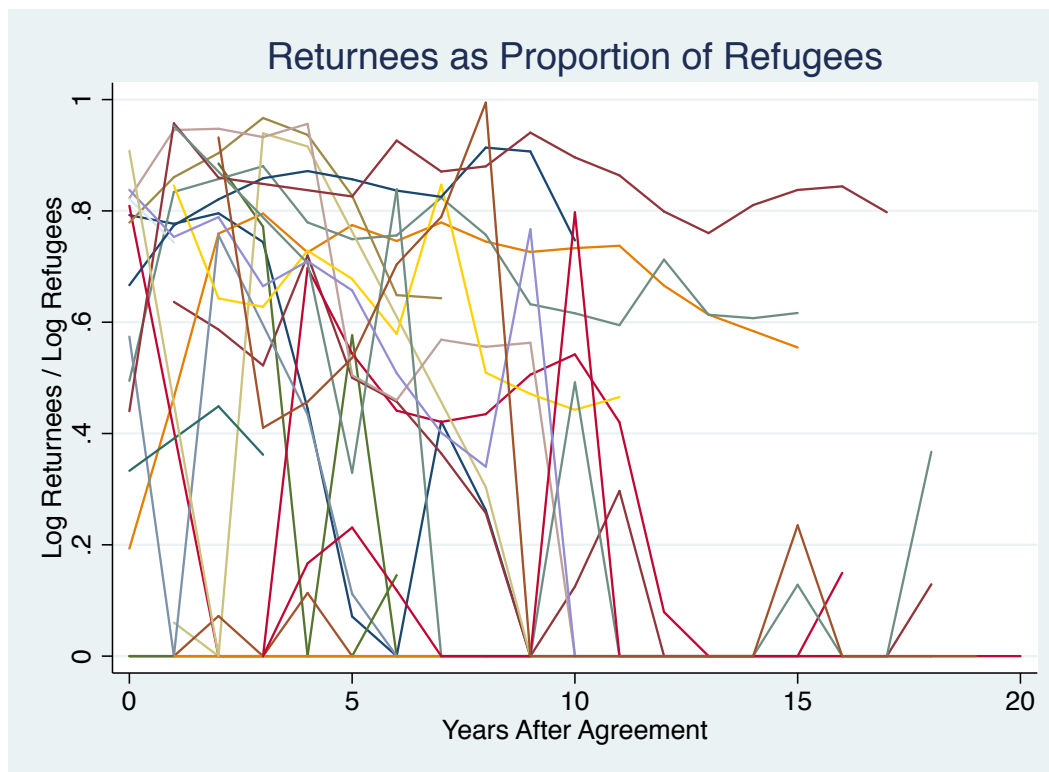
Figure 3.2



As shown here, the level of returns can vary quite a bit. While many cases see returns that are low in number, some cases see a spike of returns – and it is not always constant. Also of note is that spikes in level of returns can occur even between 5 and 10 years after the peace agreement. Thus, refugee returns vary even among cases with peace agreements providing for their return.

Figure 3.2 is helpful in showing variation, yet it can also be helpful to show returns as a proportion of the level of refugees. Figure 3.3 shows how many returned each year in the post-conflict episode by taking into account how many refugees existed each year from that particular conflict. The variation in level of return is quite high. This variation is what this project seeks to explain. Note that there are a small number of cases where the level of return exceeds the level of refugees for that year. I drop these outlying cases in Figure 3 because their inclusion takes away from the visualization of the other cases. For reasons why outliers exist and for a depiction of the graph with the outliers, see Appendix 3.

Figure 3.3



Note that there is seemingly no pattern to this variation. Jumps in levels of return as a percentage of how many refugees have originated from the country in that year

appear to occur within 10 years of the signing of the agreement. This variation is what I seek to explain. When do refugees return home? My argument is that they will return when they receive credible commitments to the refugee provisions. When there are not commitments to these provisions, they will not return.

3.3 Illustrative Cases

While the figures in the previous sections are messy, some clarity comes when breaking these data down by country. Examining cases will allow me to trace out mechanisms that are at play and produce depictions that are most explanatory. I proceed by selecting cases that differ on the explanatory variable: institutions. I first choose a case where institutions exist that constrain the executive, and examine how return works in that case. Then I select a case where the institutions do not meaningfully constrain the executive. I will finish with a case that examines within case variation: a shift from non-constraining institutions to constraining institutions.

3.4 Sierra Leone – Refugees With Executive Constraints

3.4.1 Conflict Background

In 1991, civil war broke out in Sierra Leone. The cause of the war is difficult to pinpoint – but observers suggest it was caused by a decline in state power, a shift in international focus after the Cold War, and most importantly: diamonds. Notably, ethnic and religious rivalries were not a cause of this conflict (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). The conflict would continue for the next decade.

In 1991, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) – led by Charles Taylor – crossed into Sierra Leone and engaged with Sierra Leone’s army. Eventually the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) – led by former Sierra Leonean army corporal Foday Sankoh – aligned with the NPFL and engaged in civil conflict with the government of Sierra Leone (Fyfe 2015). In this way, the Sierra Leonean civil war is sometimes thought to be a spillover of the Liberian conflict. Indeed, Charles Taylor of Liberia and Foday Sankoh of Sierra Leone were connected through time spent training for insurgency in Libya (Harris 2014, 83). However, the conflict in Sierra Leone was more complicated than merely a spillover from Liberia.

One of the main factors in the outbreak of civil war in Sierra Leone was the slow decline of state power since independence in 1961, and some of the fighting was done over grievances with the collapse of the patrimonial state (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). The end of the Cold War meant that the ideologically motivated aid that had earlier flowed into Sierra Leone stopped flowing into the country and the already weak post-colonial government lost revenue (Harris 2014). The loss of such revenue contributed to further collapse of state power.

One of the most cited factors in the Sierra Leone civil war is greed. Sierra Leone is a major producer of diamonds, and the revenues from these diamonds often fueled and drove Sierra Leonean rebels. Rather than ideological rebels, many fighters were conscripted children, who were drugged and forced to fight (Harris 2014, 86-88).

Indeed, the Sierra Leonean ambassador to the UN claimed as much when he stated that the conflict:

...is not about ideology, tribal or regional differences. It has nothing to do with the so-called problem of marginalized youths, or, as some political commentators have characterized it, an uprising by rural poor against the urban elite. The root of the conflict is, and remains, diamonds, diamonds and diamonds. (Harris 2014, 90)

The international community continued to buy such “blood diamonds” even as conflict wore on (Harris 2014, 85). Harris (2014) notes that that many called the RUF not ‘rebels,’ but ‘bandits’, in another nod to how little ethnic and religious ties had to do with this conflict (89).

A lull in the conflict occurred with a peace agreement in 1996, and elections were held. The RUF sought to discourage voting by engaging in pre-election violence, including the amputating of hands. In light of this, voter turnout was under 50% (Harris 2014, 102). However, this fragile peace failed and the government was overthrown in a coup in 1997 (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). A major rebel offensive went north in October of 1997, but West African ECOMOG troops drove back, ousting the coup plotters and restoring the elected government in 1998 (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007, iii). However, on January 6 of 1999 there was a major rebel attack on Freetown and the war raged on (Harris 2014, 110-111).

After pushback by internationally backed forces, the Lomé Accord was signed in July 1999. This is the accord that would eventually cement the peace deal that includes refugee return. The agreement proposed a power-sharing plan. However, some rebels

began fighting over inclusion in the power-sharing plan (Fyfe 2015). The Lomé Peace Agreement fell apart as the government failed to allocate the seats to the RUF that were promised in the agreement, and Sankoh continued fighting; the RUF kidnapped 500 UN peacekeepers in 2000 (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). However, Sankoh and other RUF members were arrested as a result (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). Weakened by military defeats, the RUF rejoined peace negotiations. In November of 2000 the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement was signed as a supplement to the Lomé Peace Agreement, and it reaffirmed the commitments of the 1999 Lomé Agreement (UCDP database). This supplement to the Lomé agreement in 2000 included provisions for refugee return. By January 2002, 72,000 combatants had been registered for DDR (Harris 2014, 116). The official end of the conflict for the UCDP conflict termination dataset is 2000, although the official ceremony declaring peace occurred in January of 2002.

3.4.2 Displacement

Displacement was a major part of the Sierra Leonean conflict. It is estimated that throughout the conflict approximately 2,000,000 were displaced (Fyfe 2015). According to UNHCR refugee data (2015), the amount of refugees originating from Sierra Leone reached a peak of 490,000 in 1999. An estimated 300,000 were in Guinea, 70,000 in Liberia, 10,000 in Gambia, 4,000 in Nigeria, 2,000 in Ghana, 2,000 in Côte d'Ivoire, and 1,000 in Mali (USCR 2001). Thus, the bulk of refugees sought refuge in neighboring countries.

The war in Sierra Leone took place mainly in the diamond-producing region, causing displacement of those who lived in that region (USCR 2001). During the conflict the RUF and AFRC controlled the eastern diamond-mining regions and northern rural areas of the country (USCR 2001). However, during the 1999 offensive into Freetown, the rebels captured about two thirds of the city and caused massive displacement of that urban area (USCR 2001).

Because of the geographical and economically induced origins of the conflict, refugees originating from Sierra Leone did not necessarily originate from one specific ethnic or religious group. Sierra Leone has about 18 ethnic groups. The two main groups are the Mende and the Temne. The Mende are found mostly in the east and south, while the Temne are found mostly in the center and northwest of the country (Fyfe 2015). Because of this, fighting that occurred in the east and north resulted in the displacement of both main ethnic groups. The RUF itself was a multi-ethnic rebel group (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). The RUF was dominated by mostly unemployed and uneducated youths (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007).

The main divisions in the country are by administrative region: Western, Northern, Eastern and Southern regions. The All People's Congress (APC) mostly represents the Temne-dominated central and northern region of the country, while the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) represents the mostly Mende southern and eastern parts of the country (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007).

3.4.3 Refugee Agreement Provisions

The Lomé Peace Agreement that was signed in 1999 is the comprehensive agreement that is the backbone for the post-conflict period in Sierra Leone. While some fighting continued, this is the basis for the peace that occurred when the RUF became signatories to the agreement. The Lomé Agreement contained two main articles addressing the refugees.

Article XXII: Refugees and Displaced Persons

The Parties through the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction agree to seek funding from and the involvement of the UN and other agencies, including friendly countries, in order to design and implement a plan for voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Sierra Leonean refugees and internally displaced persons, including non-combatants, in conformity with international conventions, norms and practices.

Article XXIII: Guarantee of the Security of Displaced Persons and Refugees

As a reaffirmation of their commitment to the observation of the conventions and principles of human rights and the status of refugees, the Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to ensure that the right of Sierra Leoneans to asylum is fully respected and that no camps or dwellings of refugees or displaced persons are violated.

These provisions provide a number of guarantees: funding will be sought from the UN and other agencies to “implement a plan” for return. While vague – this does cement in the agreement the idea of the resources that must be distributed towards refugees in order for return to occur. As will be examined in the section below, this provision was carried out for the most part: UN and other agencies repatriated and funded returnees.

The second article guarantees safety of Sierra Leoneans in camps. This article suggests not an overt guarantee of overall safety, but a commitment to the refugees as

they transition. Again, as will be discussed, the actions of the government demonstrated some commitment to this provision: the government sought to protect Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea that were threatened. Other articles in the agreement called for power sharing and disarmament. These also contributed to the safety of environment for returnees.

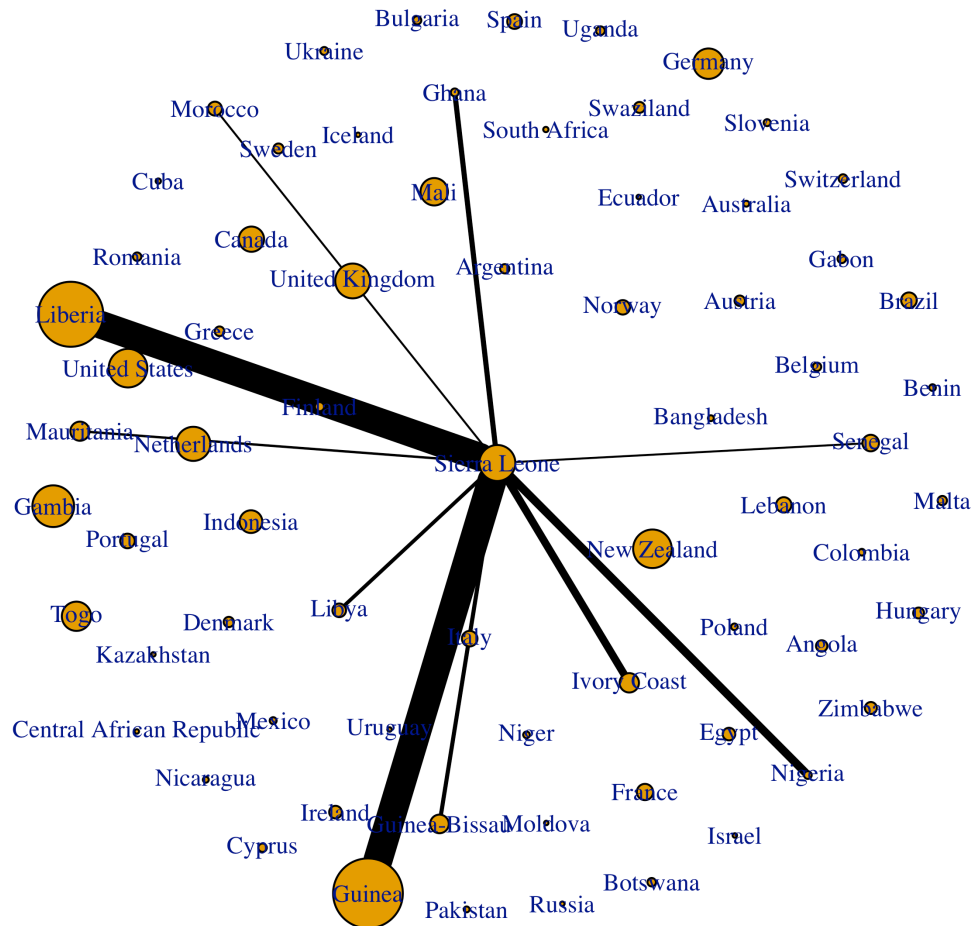
3.4.4 Returns to Sierra Leone

Returns reached nearly 270,000 10 years after the agreement (UNHCR data). In the months following the peace agreement in 1999, some returns occurred under unsecure conditions. Some of this return was due to conflict in surrounding areas. In May 2000 the last efforts of RUF rebels created conflict in Guinea, and tens of thousands returned to Sierra Leone. Unable to return to their homes, these returnees added to the level of internally displaced in Sierra Leone (USCR 2001). However, returns were in full swing by the beginning of 2002. In March 2002 the UN began twice-weekly convoys to return refugees home from Guinea, for which the demand was high. At that time, 15,000 refugees in Guinea had applied for repatriation to Sierra Leone. And 8,900 had returned from Liberia (UNHCR 2002).

To examine returns in more detail, I created a graphical representation of returnees. Each country is represented by a vertex, the size of which is related to the level of refugees originating from Sierra Leone. The size of the edge between the country and Sierra Leone is representative of how many returns occurred in 2002. As can be seen, the majority of returns were from the neighboring countries of Liberia and Guinea, countries that also held the majority of Sierra Leonean refugees. However, other

countries also saw returns, including Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Libya, Senegal, Morocco, and Mauritania. Other neighboring countries that held a number of Sierra Leonean refugees – such as Gambia, Mali, and Togo – did not see returns during 2002.

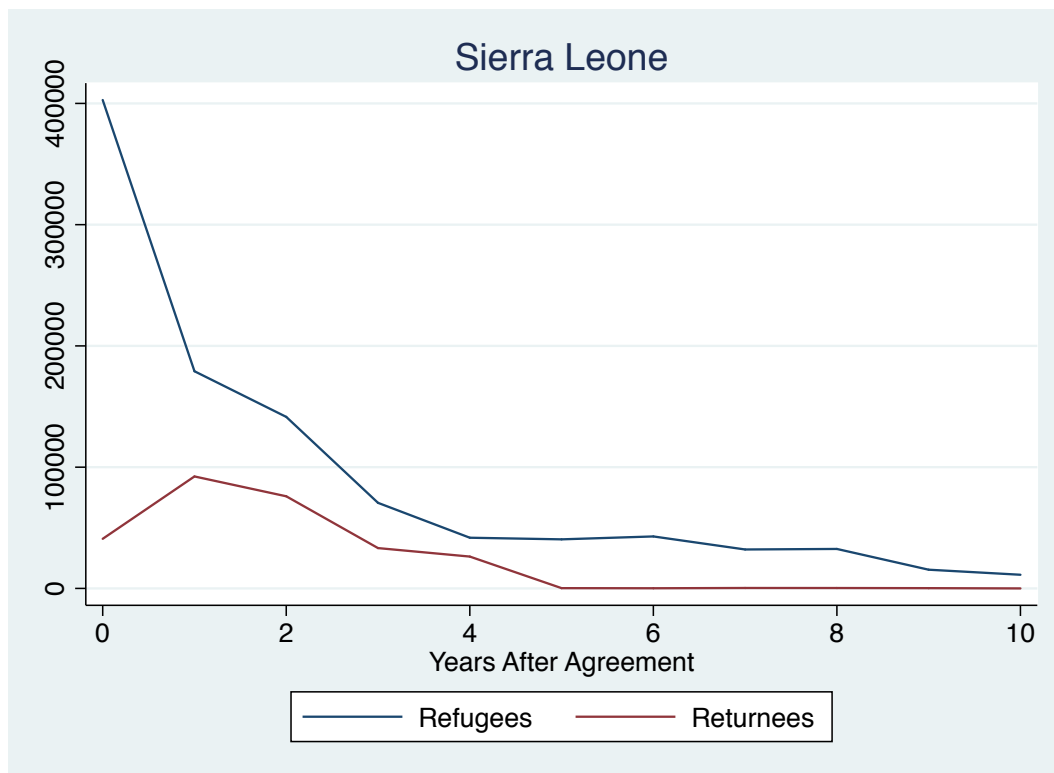
Figure 3.4



Due to the skew in level of refugees, the size of both the vertices and edges between them does not show the level of refugees linearly. However, the graph is indicative of a strong level of refugee returns from countries holding Sierra Leonean refugees during the post-conflict period. This number continued to grow over time. The figure below shows returns starting in 2001 as year 1. Returns are strong throughout the first

5 years in the post-conflict episode as the level of refugees originating from Sierra Leone sharply drops.

Figure 3.5



In what follows, I connect this drop to the institutions that are present in Sierra Leone, and connect this to the ability of these institutions to commit the government to contributing to the needs of returnees.

3.4.5 Institutional Structure

Sierra Leone is a former British colony, and structures reflect that influence. The government is divided into three branches: legislature, executive and judicial. The legislature is a unicameral parliament; the president is head of the executive, with an

appointed cabinet that is approved by the legislature. Both executive and legislative representatives serve 5-year terms. There are 124 seats in parliament, with 112 members elected by popular vote and 12 filled by chiefs that are elected in a separate election (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007).

The post-conflict elections were held in May 2002. During these elections Kabbah won the majority of the vote. Kabbah's administration focused on "fostering reconciliation, maintaining internal security, and promoting economic recovery and reform" (Fyfe 2015). And further, the 2007 elections brought opposition leader Ernest Bai Koroma to power, further cementing the democratic nature of the institutions in Sierra Leone (Fyfe 2015).

In the post-conflict period, Sierra Leone had a president that faced meaningful opposition in the competition for office. Kabbah won about 70% of the vote, while the opposition candidates got 22% and 3%. Additionally, the turnout was not so high as to suggest it was highly irregular: it was 82%. Comparatively to prior elections, the level of election violence was low (Harris 2014, 120-122). And finally, in 2007, the executive party changed. This is significant in that the ultimate test of democracy is whether the party that loses an election indeed gives up power (Cheibub et al 2010). In the legislature, out of a total of 69 legislative seats, the government side had 44 seats, while the main opposition had 17 seats and the second opposition had 5 (Keefer 2012).

Sierra Leone had political, military, and economic power sharing as part of the agreement. The agreement included a grand coalition cabinet, “with four ministerial and four deputy ministerial posts to the RUF (of an 18 member cabinet)” (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007, 20). The agreement also gave Sankoh control of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD), which gave him “de facto control over the diamond rich areas in the east and north of the country” (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007). The agreement also incorporated rebel elements into the national military. Sankoh was to be appointed vice president (Dupuy and Binningsbø 2007).

While the government maintained a strong majority, credible commitments to the refugee agreement were formed because of the inclusion of a directly elected executive, a fairly sizeable opposition in the legislature and the existence of power sharing arrangements. These institutions provided increased cost for reneging on the commitments made in the agreement. Below, I tie these constraining government structures to the actions that were taken in regards to refugees and their ability to return. I trace the effect of these institutions through the actions that were taken and the level of return that occurred.

3.4.6 Government Actions

In the context of the political institutions outlined above, several government actions occurred. The government assisted with returnee political participation in elections, and made strides to find areas for resettlement and to ensure safety. While the

capability of the post-conflict government was imperfect, such actions stemmed from the existence of institutions that demanded such action.

The government formed the National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) in December of 2000 and formed a strategy in October 2001 to establish a plan for refugee resettlement (Brookings). Also in 2001, to coordinate returns, the National Recovery Committee (NRC) was formed, chaired by the Vice-President. The NRC coordinated with donor countries, NGOs, the UN, and the government of Sierra Leone to deliver resources to returnees (Cook 2003, 42). The NRC conducted a nationwide assessment of districts in 2001 and in 2002 had a strategy that provided recommendations to the government for where returnees could return (Cook 2003, 42). This strategy was the “Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas,” which was published in May of 2002. This strategy emphasized resettlement repatriation and reintegration (Brookings). During this period the government conducted many projects to improve health, education, and local administration abilities (Cook 2003, 42).

Evidence shows that these groups followed through – at least partially – on their plans. World Bank documents shows that a November 2001 National Consultative Conference was held in which the government cited progress on preconditions for the upcoming elections that included repatriation of refugees and voter registration (World Bank 2002). This meeting cited partial progress towards this goal, with 60% returned. The World Bank – which funded the effort of the NCRRR in part – cited

that the government's plan would focus on shelter for returnees, and strong support for agriculture (2002, 18).

Furthermore, the government took actions to address the problems associated with returns. Due to the lack of government capacity during initial returns, many returnees were forced to stay in temporary settlements (Cook 2003, 41). However, efforts were made by the government to address these returnees, especially as the 2002 elections drew closer. The government established a policy to allow internally displaced people to vote. This was called "transfer voting," in which people with valid voter ID cards and transfer slips could vote at the places where they had transferred even if their names were not on the registration lists (Harris 2014, 121). Such actions were an attempt to incorporate returnees.

The government also made efforts to secure safety for refugees in their camps and to foster an environment for return. As the fighting spilled into Guinea in May of 2000, the government sponsored a ferry to transport thousands of Sierra Leoneans from Guinea back to Sierra Leone (USCR 2001).

However, the picture of returns is not entirely positive when taken from the view of public opinion. Public opinion research suggests that the government follow-through on many initiatives was lacking (Sesay et al. 2009). Sesay et al. (2009) conducted personal interviews and local surveys to examine the level of satisfaction with humanitarian and reparation goals set by the government (73-74). Their findings

suggest that the government could have done more with the resources available to it through the international community's donations, but chose not to. One reason for this might be corruption (Sesay et al 2009, 74). Yet – while the public may have desired more – some action did undeniably occur, and international funds did flow into the country with the aim of assisting in these actions. Sesay et al. (2009) note that Sierra Leone was viewed favorably abroad, and that the international donor community largely donated funds to Sierra Leone due to the perception that Kabbah was a democrat and the democratic process was worth ideological support.

3.4.7 Discussion and Challenges

While not all refugees returned to Sierra Leone, returns occurred at a higher rate than many other post-conflict countries. Sierra Leone is not without challenges in the area of returns. The country continues to have refugees that originate from its territory, and the information we have about the reintegration of returnees is not complete. Thus, the quality of returnee experience may still require attention. However, the government consisted of meaningful constraints on the executive, and thus provided a credible commitment. This indeed proved credible as the government acted inclusively and with concern for the needs of returnees. The NCRRR and NRC were created as a way to create the conditions that would contribute to durable return. While not all challenges that returnees face were addressed, these government actions contributed to the large level of return.

Notably, ethnic tensions were not a part of the conflict in Sierra Leone, which had larger economic dimensions. This may be one reason why credible commitments in

terms of executive constraints were extended: because refugees were not of one particular ethnic group, it was perhaps easier for Sierra Leone to extend a credible commitment. While I do not test for factors that led to credible commitment, I do argue that the credible commitment itself is immensely important to the created conditions for refugee return. While this and other factors may have played a role in refugee return to Sierra Leone, I argue that the effect of institutions cannot be overlooked. The purpose of this illustrative case is to identify the process of how political institutions can contribute to return.

3.5 Djibouti – Refugees without Executive Constraints

3.5.1 Conflict Background

Djibouti is a small country on the horn of Africa, with a population of about 730,000. The conflict took place between two ethnic groups – Issa and Afar. The Issa have maintained power over government, while many Afar are nomadic and are not included in government. By the numbers, Djibouti is approximately 60% Somali and 35% Afar. Of Somalis, about 40% are Issa (Yoh 2003).

The president in the early 1990s was Hassan Gouled Aptidon – a member of the Issa ethnic group. President Aptidon ruled since independence in 1977 until 1999 when he became ill (Schraeder & Steedle 2008; World Factbook 2013-14). During his rule, he mostly supported his own Issa ethnic group and imprisoned or exiled his opponents (Yoh 2003).

Without allowing Afar tribesmen access to government, and with some economic downturn, the Afar turned to war from 1991 to 1993. The Afar insurgency was led by the Front pour le Restauration de l'Unité et la Démocratie (FRUD) – which consisted of about 3,000 Afar guerilla fighters (Schraeder & Steedle 2008). FRUD launched a military offensive to topple the Issa-led regime in 1991. During the conflict, Aptidon enacted some reforms to quell the violence. Such measures included writing a new constitution and legalizing more political parties. In light of this, elections were held in 1992 and 1993. However, due to continued inequalities in participation, FRUD and most members of the Afar community boycotted these elections. As a result, Aptidon and his party easily won reelection.

After his reelection, Aptidon launched an offensive against FRUD in 1993 (Schraeder & Steedle 2008). In 1994, an agreement was signed between moderate members of the Afar insurgency; however, the radical wing of the insurgency continued fighting and did not sign an agreement until 2001 (IRIN). When president Aptidon became ill and Ismaël Omar Guellah came to power in 1999, the leader of the militant faction of FRUD – Ahmed Dini – returned and the civil war finally came to an end. A formal peace agreement was signed in 2001, officially ending the conflict (Schraeder & Steedle 2008).

3.5.2 Displacement

The Afar live in the north and west of the Gulf of Tadjoura, which juts into the center of the country. The Somali are concentrated in the capital and southeast of the country. In Djibouti, nearly two thirds of the population lives in or near the capital.

Because of this, Djibouti is one of the most urbanized countries in Africa, with four-fifths of the population in urban centers (Cutbill 2015). Many Afar were displaced during the insurgency, which occurred mostly in northern and southwestern Djibouti (IRIN). At the end of 1994, over 18,000 people were refugees originating from Djibouti – a country of roughly 650,000 people at that time.

Ethiopia was one of the most common destinations for Djiboutian refugees. From 1991 to 1994 an estimated 9,000 mostly Afar civilians had fled to Ethiopia and Eritrea (Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project, 2009). By 1997, the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1996 reported that 10,000-18,000 displaced Djiboutian Afars were living in Ethiopia (MAR 2009).

President Aptidon claimed that these displaced Afars were free to return – and indeed the level of violence in the country was below conflict threshold in 1997 – yet these refugees did not return for fear of their safety in these regions (MAR 2009). Rather than return, many of these refugees resettled elsewhere as returns from 1994-2000 were nonexistent, except for 2 people in 2000. However because of settlement elsewhere, the official level of refugees originating from Djibouti at the time of the agreement in 2001 was 452 (UNHCR data 2015). Data on their resettlement or perhaps local integration into Ethiopia is not available. However, the lack of returns can be directly tied to the institutional structure. While promises such as the refugee agreement and presidential comments suggested return was viable, refugees did not return without guarantees in the form of institutions such as occurred in Sierra Leone.

3.5.3 Refugee Agreement

By 1994, the FRUD had splintered and the largest – more moderate – group signed a peace agreement largely ending the civil war. However, the final agreement with the last faction of FRUD was signed in 2001 (Cutbill 2015). On May 12, 2001, the agreement was signed. It included a provision in Article 8 section B regarding refugees:

b) Facing the enormity of the task of national reconciliation, the two Parties have agreed to grant this budget item a very special significance and to involve all the appropriate measures having in view the rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons, the compensation of individuals whose belongings have been destroyed during the conflict and the reconstruction of public infrastructure. (PAM 2015)

This is notable for a number of reasons: first, it outlines budget appropriations for property restitution and access to public resources for refugees. These are two main areas of assistance guarantees. However, the agreement does not address other refugee issues, and as will be shown, the implementation of its provisions will be nearly nonexistent, as government institutions provided no commitment to returnees.

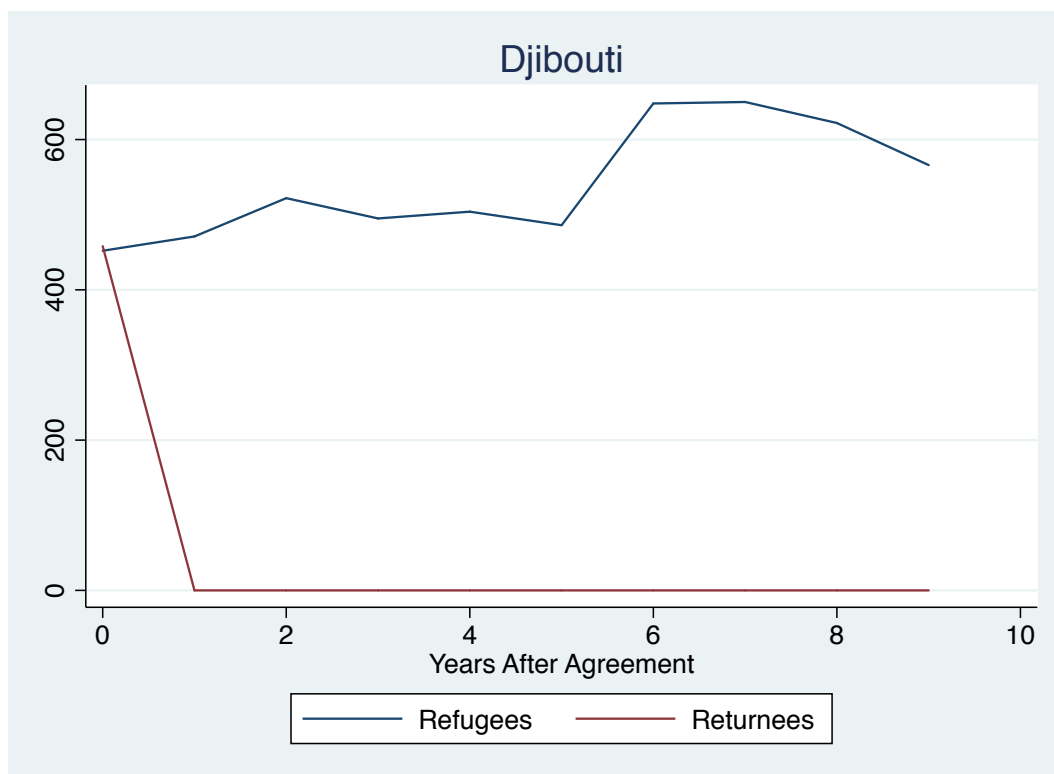
3.5.4 Returns to Djibouti

According to UNHCR, the year before the agreement there were 1,910 refugees originating from Djibouti. This is not a large number as a proportion of the number of refugees worldwide, but it is large considering the population of Djibouti at the time of the agreement was 733,732 (World Bank 2015). Djibouti saw about a quarter of those refugees return during the year of the agreement – and none in the years following. While some returned alongside the original agreement, the government has actually blocked and forced out those it considers illegal immigrants in the time since then (Bezabeh 2011, 603-604). On October 31, 2001 – the year of the agreement –

UNHCR was set to return some 600 Djiboutians of Afar ethnic origin to Djibouti from Ethiopia (UNHCR 2001). The actual number returned would be 452.

The graphical representation below shows returns to Djibouti after the final peace agreement. Other than the 452 that return on the year of the peace agreement, Djibouti sees no returnees. Further, the level of refugees originating from Djibouti actually continues to rise in the years that follow, suggesting that government reneged on its promise to foster returns.

Figure 3.6



As the numbers show, refugees simply did not return to Djibouti in large numbers. In fact, the level of refugees originating from Djibouti in the years after the agreement actually increased.

3.5.5 Institutional Structure In Djibouti

The institutions in Djibouti during this time provided little to no constraints on the executive. Thus, the commitments in the refugee agreement were not credible – and returns did not occur at a meaningful rate. Historically, Djibouti was a single party state. However, a new constitution in 1992 allowed for multiple parties. Some of the moderate FRUD leaders who took part in the 1994 peace agreement became ministers in the government. Additionally, these members of FRUD were allowed to legally register as a political party in 1996. However – even with these reforms – Djibouti remained a de facto one-party state during this time. In 2001 – as the final agreement was signed – the new president Guelleh named an Afar – Dileita – as prime minister, and lifted the previous restriction on number of political parties in 2002. In January 2003, elections took place. Of the 8 parties that took part, they fell into two major blocks. The first was the government backed Union pour la Majorité Présidentielle (UMP) and the second was the opposition (Dini formerly of FRUD) backed Union pour une Alternance Démocratique (UAD). The government-backed party includes the wing of FRUD that aligned with the government in 1994. The opposition-backed party was made up of the FRUD wing that continued fighting. The opposition party – UAD – lost despite winning 37% of the vote. The incumbent UMP party won all seats in the National Assembly. UAD planned protests but they were banned and the Constitutional Court rejected their case. In 2004 the opposition leader Dini died. Without a clear leader, the opposition boycotted the presidential election of 2005, citing “the need for greater transparency and electoral change” (Cutbill 2015). The governing UMP party won all seats in the election. Guelleh abolished presidential

term limits in 2010 and again the opposition boycotted the presidential poll (Cutbill 2015).

Djibouti has remained an effective one-party state, with no meaningful constraints on the executive. Without credible commitments via constraints on the executive, no signal was given to refugees that return was viable. And – unfortunately – no meaningful return occurred in Djibouti.

3.5.6 Government Actions in Djibouti

Government actions are difficult to track in Djibouti, as not much attention has been placed on this small country. However, the evidence that exists shows a country that is attempting to reformulate its citizenship laws, and has not focused squarely on fostering return. Evidence suggests the government did not follow through with actions to implement the refugee agreement.

According to Bezabeh (2011), the government was found to be involved in expelling any non-Issa that entered from Ethiopia – even those that were not refugees (604). Indeed, in 2003 the government attempted to expel about 100,000 people by labeling them “illegal migrants” (Bezabeh 2011). Such evidence suggests that – rather than create the conditions necessary to foster return – the government of Djibouti placed its focus elsewhere. After the peace agreement, the early 2000s involved an economic investment in the capital city, with little to no resources going to the outer-lying areas where the Afar community lives. The compromises with the FRUD opposition were

not implemented and decentralization did not occurred in practice (Abdallah 2007, 277).

As the result of very slow implementation of the peace agreement, armed clashes broke out in 2005, which were quickly stamped out by the government. Also in 2005, the destruction of the Arhiba slums – which were predominantly Afar – was met with protests by thousands. The destruction was done in the name of an urban renewal project. Indeed, as of 2006, the government had not honored the pledges in the peace agreement, even while a number of Afar were allowed to participate in government (MAR 2009).

3.5.7 Discussion and Challenges

Ultimately, this case represents an example of a government without constraining structures that reneged on its promise to create conditions for return. There is no evidence in this case that any committees or commissions were created to foster returns. No evidence points to the government creating funds for returnees to help them reintegrate, and in fact evidence points to continued persecution of the Afar minority through expulsions of what Djibouti considers non-citizens.

Challenges remain. The use of this illustrative case is to exhibit how lack of constraining institutions can allow a government to renege on its promises in the agreement. Djibouti thus provides an excellent example of how the lack of constraining institutions provides no credible commitment to the provisions in the agreement. In Djibouti's case, it focused more on economic development than

refugee return. These actions suggest that a government's unconstrained preferences are not always in line with refugee return, and the importance of institutions cannot be overlooked.

3.6 Liberia – Within Case Variation

The Liberian case allows for examination of within-case variation. The political institutions immediately following the peace agreement in 2003 were not as constraining on the executive as the institutions following the elections of 2006. This allows for examination of returns both with and without constraining institutions in a post-conflict period where some other country level variables remain constant. Although not all factors in the post-conflict transition remained constant – this allows for some leverage in examining the effect of institutions via case study.

3.6.1 Conflict Background

The Liberian conflict consisted of two closely related civil wars. The First Liberian Civil War began December 24, 1989 when the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) – led by Charles Taylor – attacked Nimba County in Liberia. Taylor had left Liberia in 1985, and after a short prison stint in the United States, returned to Africa to train for insurgency in Libya with – among others – Foday Sankoh of Sierra Leone (Alie 2009, 84). This conflict also came at the end of the Cold War, when – similar to Sierra Leone – ideological funds dried up and the Liberian state was weak.

The NPFL at this time was made up mostly of mercenaries from Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire – but also consisted of young and disaffected Gio and Mano from Nimba County in Liberia (Alie 2009, 84). Similar to Sierra Leone, these youths were

drugged and made to commit horrible crimes. The fighting soon spread to many factions. The NPFL split into the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL). And the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) split into ULIMO-J – led by Roosevelt Johnson and mainly Krahn – and ULIMO-K – led by Alhaji Kromah and mainly Mandingo (Alie 2009, 84).

A peace process in 1997 called for elections. Taylor's National Patriotic Party won with 75% of the vote – and some feared that if he lost he would continue the war (Alie 2009, 85). Taylor's government was not inclusive, and resistance to his rule formed. In 1999 a rebel group – Liberians United for Reconstruction and Democracy (LURD) – formed in Sierra Leone and attacked northwestern Liberia (Guannu 2009, 36). By 2003 the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) formed out of LURD and attacked the southeast and central Liberia. This, along with an intense attack by LURD on Monrovia, pressured Charles Taylor to resign, and the Accra Peace Talks took place after his resignation (Guanni 2009, 36). On August 18, 2003 the key actors met in Ghana under President John Kufuor (Chairman of ECOWAS) and signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Alie 2009, 86). The main result of this agreement was Taylor's resignation and exile (Alie 2009, 86).

3.6.2 Displacement in Liberia

Scott (1998) examines the causes of displacement in Liberia. While the conflict is the most central reason for refugees, Scott cites a number of additional factors for displacement including tensions between coastal elites and indigenous populations over inequalities between them, the political and material interests of the ethnic

groups involved, and how control over territory pushed subsequent groups (Nilsson 2003, 11). Throughout the mid-1990s, refugees peaked at almost 800,000 according to those registered with UNHCR. Due to returns and resettlements between the first and second Liberian Civil Wars, that number peaked at 350,000 refugees by the time the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2003 (UNHCR data).

Including internal displacement, nearly all Liberians were forced from their homes at some point during the conflict (Shilue and Fagen 2014). Many Liberians fled to Guinea, where about 400,000 sought refuge, while another 240,000 sought refuge in Côte d'Ivoire (Nilsson 2003, 12). Another estimated 17,000 sought refuge in Sierra Leone. These refugee destination were not always secure as active conflicts occurred with a military coup in Côte d'Ivoire and with fighting along the borders of Guinea and Sierra Leone as Charles Taylor fought with LURD (Nilsson 2003, 7).

During the Liberian conflict, the first to leave were the “Liberian intellectuals, human rights defenders, journalists, political opponents, and former government workers” since these groups were targeted by all sides in the violence (Dabo 2012). Dabo (2012) argues that the subsequent involvement of refugees in the peace process as opposed to IDPs is due to their educated nature.

3.6.3 Refugee Agreement

The provisions in the refugee agreement are from the Peace Agreement Matrix hosted by the University of Notre Dame. The provisions in the agreement include Article XXX, which refers specifically to refugees and displaced persons, as well as articles

that provide for security of the humanitarian agencies and physical security specifically for returnees guaranteed by an international force.

ARTICLE XXX: REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

1. (a) The NTGL, with the assistance of the International Community, shall design and implement a plan for the voluntary return and reintegration of Liberian refugees and internally displaced persons, including non-combatants, in accordance with international conventions, norms and practices.

(b) Refugees or internally displaced persons, desirous of returning to their original Counties or permanent residences, shall be assisted to do so.

(c) The Parties commit themselves to peaceful co-existence amongst returnees and non-returnees in all Counties.

ARTICLE XIV: HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

1. (a) The Parties re-affirm the commitment made in the Ceasefire Agreement, to provide security guarantees for safe and unhindered access by all humanitarian agencies to vulnerable groups throughout the country, in order to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with international conventions, principles and norms governing humanitarian operations.

(b) Accordingly, the Parties agree to guarantee the security and movement of humanitarian personnel, that of their properties, goods transported, stocked or distributed, as well as their projects and beneficiaries.

2. The Transitional Government provided for in this agreement shall ensure the establishment of effective administrative and security infrastructure to monitor and support the implementation of these guarantees contained in sub-paragraph 1b of the present Article XIV.

3. The said Transitional Government shall request the International Community to assist in providing humanitarian assistance for those in need, including internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees.

4. The Parties shall ensure the presence of security guarantees for the safe return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons and the free movement of persons and goods.

ARTICLE IV: INTERNATIONAL STABILIZATION FORCE

3. The Parties request the ISF to assume the following mandate:

(e) Assist in the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance to displaced persons, refugees, returnees and other war-affected persons;

(f) Facilitate the provision and maintenance of humanitarian assistance and protect displaced persons, refugees, returnees and other affected persons;

ARTICLE XXIV THE NATIONAL TRANSITIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (NTLA)

3. The NTLA shall have a maximum of Seventy-six (76) members who shall come from the following entities:

(b) The present Government of Liberia, the LURD, MODEL, the Political Parties, Civil Society and Interest Groups including the National Bar Association, the Liberian Business Organizations, Women Organizations, Trade Unions, Teachers Union, Refugees, the Liberians in the Diaspora/America and the Youth.

(PAM 2015)

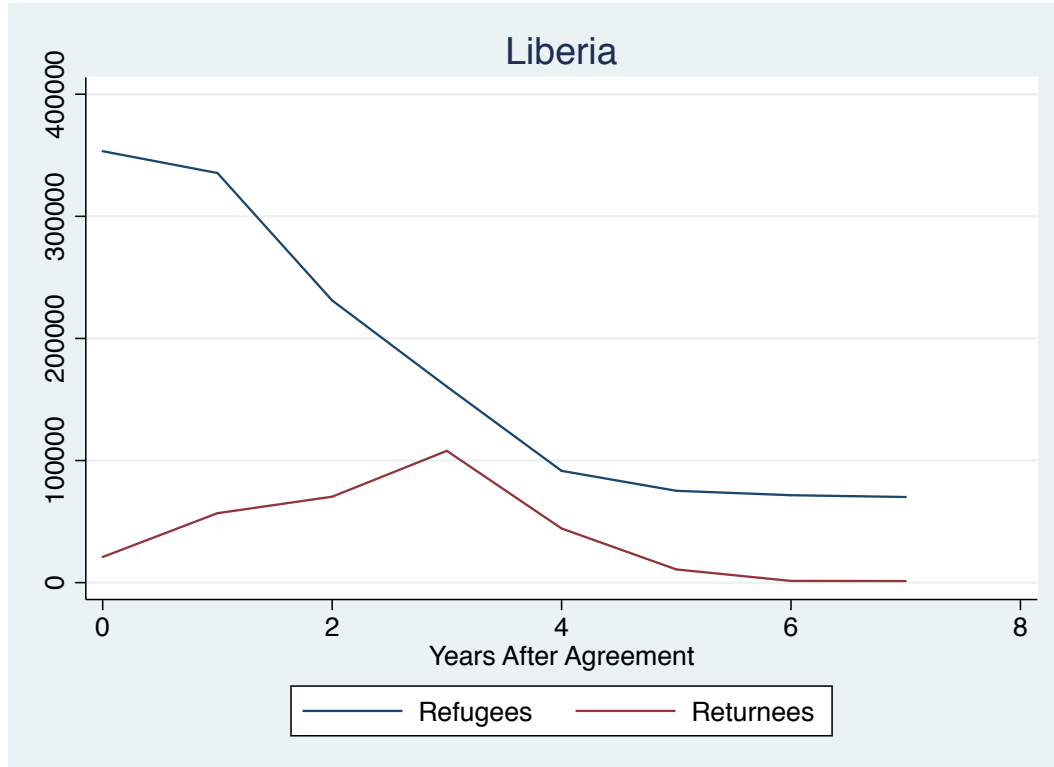
The provisions in this agreement are more detailed than the previous examples, yet the important factor in the peak of refugee return, as will be shown, is the change in institutional structure in the years following the conflict. It is the political implementation of these that is of importance.

Provisions in this agreement fall under a number of distinct categories. First, physical security is guaranteed to returnees. Article XXX commits the parties to peaceful coexistence of returnees and non-returnees, Article XIV commits physical security for humanitarian groups, and Article IV requests the International Stabilization force to provide security specifically for returning refugees.

3.6.4 Returns in Liberia

From 1997 to 2000 an estimated 377,000 people returned to Liberia with some assistance from UNHCR (Nilsson 2003, 20). However, due to continued fighting new groups of people were displaced and many of those who returned became internally displaced (Nilsson 2003, 20). With the peace agreement in 2003, returns began anew. The level of return spiked with the election of the new government in 2006. Overall displacement has greatly diminished in Liberia, and by the end of 2012 international organization assistance wrapped up. The graphical representation below shows the returns from the time of the peace agreement in 2003 through 2010.

Figure 3.8



We can further examine from where returns occurred using the first year after the agreement: 2004. Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone contained the largest levels of Liberian refugees and so it is no surprise that the largest volume of returns occurred from these countries, especially as they are closest. Returns also occurred in 2004 from Libya, Nigeria and Ghana. In the illustration that follows, the size of the circle represents the level of refugees originating from Liberia residing in the country. The thickness of the line connecting the vertices represents the level of returning refugees that exists between the countries in 2004.

The graph illustrates a network of countries, with Liberia at the center. The thickness of the lines connecting Liberia to other countries indicates the strength of the relationship. The countries connected to Liberia are: Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Guinea, Ivory Coast, China, Germany, Greece, South Africa, Egypt, Colombia, and the United Kingdom. Other countries shown include Canada, United States, France, Norway, Hungary, Botswana, Malaysia, Cuba, Angola, Gabon, Ukraine, Lebanon, Ghana, Senegal, China, Ivory Coast, Belgium, Argentina, Panama, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Poland, Namibia, Nicaragua, Sweden, Gambia, Switzerland, Philippines, Netherlands, Venezuela, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Israel, Chile, Australia, Czech Republic, Austria, Zimbabwe, Mauritania, Thailand, India, Belarus, Finland, Syria, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Benin, France, Ecuador, Ireland, Cameroon, Canada, and Central African Republic.

The graph illustrates the network of relationships between Liberia and 50 other countries. The central node is Liberia, and the surrounding nodes are the other countries. The thickness of the lines indicates the strength of the relationship. The countries are arranged in a circular pattern around Liberia, with the most prominent connections to Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, United States, and Ghana.

3.6.5 Institutional Structures in Liberia

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elections – and the inauguration of the elected government in 2006 – that Liberia officially became democratic and the institutional structures that put constraints on the executive were established.

By examining this change in constraint on the executive, I hope to gain some leverage over whether institutional structures encourage refugee return. While the interim government was certainly aimed at creating democratic institutions, and had its own share of constraints to face in terms of limited capacity and competing political interests, the constraining structure on the executive was not quite the same as that after the 2005 elections.

The interim government consisted of an executive branch – headed by Gyude Bryant, and an interim parliament – the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (Cook 2005). The interim government faced challenges in the form of discord over state positions and allocation of resources among the warring factions that took part in the interim government and limited state capacities and corruption (Cook 2005). During this time Liberia was not considered a democracy, as these leaders were not democratically elected. However, at this time power-sharing constraints were put into place as the warring factions were to take part in the interim government. This created some friction as Chairman Bryant initially rejected three of the LURD candidates for the cabinet in 2003 (PAM 2015) – however subsequent nominees were accepted. Further, as Chairman Bryant sought to fill assistant ministerial positions – a process not covered in the peace agreement – the leaders of MODEL and LURD initially

called for his resignation due to the distribution of representation – however this too eventually passed (PAM 2015). The transitional government was established on January 7, 2004. Constraining institutions on the executive in the form of direct executive elections, elected legislature with opposition vote share came into effect after the 2005 elections. This also coincides with the highest level of refugee returns.

3.6.6 Government Actions in Liberia

The actions of the government toward refugees can be viewed through the lens of the political institutions. First, I examine the actions of the interim government. The interim government implemented projects ranging from nutrition, water, and sanitation to health and transportation infrastructure (Cook 2003). The Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) had been created before the end of the conflict, and was responsible for “constructing and implementing” programs for the displaced. However, during the initial post-conflict period it was yet to begin its work and return assistance occurred mostly through the auspices of the UNHCR (Nilsson 2003, 20). The LRRRC had been created by the then Interim Legislative Assembly in 1993. It was established to “formulate policies and implement programmes of the Government of Liberia and the International High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR) in the process of providing... repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of Liberian returnees...” (LRRRC). The LRRRC is an organization that provides resources including cash grants in some cases for returnees (LRRRC).

In early 2004, LRRRC and UNHCR were encouraging refugees not to return, since the official program to assist with returns had not yet begun. Refugees that sought return on their own at this time faced being charged large sums and were subject to internal displacement upon return since the programs for assistance were not yet in place (IRIN 2004). However, by late 2004, LRRRC began to assist with returns. From 2004 to 2012, the LRRRC along with UNHCR facilitated 155,560 Liberian returnees. Thus, the interim government did begin to implement some aspects of the agreement. However, in 2005 the interim government shifted focus from addressing specific needs of returnees and instead focused on broader programs to address broader needs through the Agenda for Transformation and Poverty Reduction Strategy (Shilue and Fagen 2014, 1). These programs focused on security, economic issues, governance issues, and infrastructure and basic service delivery (Shilue and Fagen 2014).

After the elections of 2005, a new democratically elected post-conflict government came into power in January of 2006, led by president Johnson-Sirleaf. Observers noted Johnson-Sirleaf's constraints as she sought not to alienate members of the elite while seeking to win over the confidence of key opposition figures to "avoid contentious political deadlocks" (Sesay et al 2009, 49). Further, the government had to deal with different parties controlling leadership positions in the legislature (Sesay et al 2009, 49). Evidence of the nature of constraint on the executive is in the creation of the Forum for Political Party Leaders (FOPPAL) reached in June 2007. This group "committed its members to regular inter-party consultations and meetings aimed at

consensus building on key national issues...” (Sesay et al 2009, 50). Such actions are indicative of the constraints that executives face under the political institutions in the country, and connect to the creation of the conditions that foster return.

With the coming to power of the democratically elected government in January 2006, that year Liberia saw its highest level of returns. Returns in this year topped over 100,000 (UNHCR). By this time the LRRRC was working in hand with UNHCR. The UNHCR completed the final repatriations in 2013 – refugees over 18 were given US\$375 and under 18 were given US\$275 by UNHCR to help with transportation and reintegration costs. The LRRRC referred returnees to job opportunities, scholarships, and assisted with acquiring land to build (UNHCR 2013).

3.6.7 Discussion and Challenges

The returns to Liberia occurred in large number, particularly as the democratic institutions took hold, and the signal of credible commitment to the refugee agreement was made. The government of Liberia faced constraints from opposition parties and took serious steps to address returnee conditions. In Liberia, evidence shows that returns occurred after these steps and the democratic institutions took shape. Whether ethnic dimensions led to the creation of credible commitments is unexplored here. However, the creation of credible commitments appears to be associated with an increase in the level of returns. This helps to illustrate the use of credible commitments in creating a signal to returnees that return resources will be distributed.

Chapter 4: Explaining the Politics of Return: Empirical Models

4.1 Introduction

I now turn to the empirical models that examine my theoretical expectations. This chapter first discusses the collection of data, issues related to the data, and the appropriate models used for evaluating my hypotheses. I then turn to statistical analysis of my data and a discussion of the results. The chapter evaluates my hypotheses using two main sets of models. The first set consists of count models using country-year as the unit of analysis. The second set consists of count models using the dyad-year as the unit of analysis. Both sets of models use returnees as the main dependent variable. The first measures overall levels of return to the post-conflict country, while the second measures levels of return in regard to conditions in both the post-conflict country and the country of asylum.

While many post-conflict peace agreements contain provisions for the return of refugees, many countries still do not experience return over the post-conflict period. This sets the puzzle for my study. I expect that increased constraints on the executive will lead to higher levels of return in the post-conflict period because of their ability to create credible commitments. Constrained executives can face backlash for reneging on their promises. Therefore, I expect that direct executive elections, more powerful legislatures, and power-sharing arrangements will lead to a higher rate of return due to the ability of these institutions to increase the incentive for the executive

to follow through on the refugee agreement. These institutions provide a credible commitment to refugees, and signal that return is welcome.

4.2 The Data

The country-year dataset I compiled relates to my first set of hypotheses. I use it to evaluate the conditions in the post-conflict country and the total level of returns that the post-conflict country experiences. Among post-conflict returnee agreement countries, I expect that countries that have greater constraints on the executive will see higher rates of return than countries that do not have such constraints on the executive. Below I discuss operationalization of this data.

4.2.1 Scope

Since I am interested in the level of returns in post-conflict periods, I identified countries emerging from civil conflict using the Uppsala Conflict Data Project's (UCDP) dataset on Conflict Termination (Kreutz 2010). This dataset considers a country to be in conflict if more than 25 battle related deaths occur, and cites termination after this ceases. This data covers up until 2009. Because I am interested in the post-conflict country as a whole, I consider cases where a country simultaneously experienced multiple civil conflicts to be a single conflict episode. I measure from the start date of the first conflict, to the last date of the final conflict. This method is standard in studies where the post-conflict episode is of interest (Flores & Noorudin 2012).

The fact that displacement can remain an issue even when countries have peace agreements that agree to refugee return motivates this project. For my dataset, I

identified countries that had peace agreements that included provisions for refugees using the UCDP data on peace agreements (Högbladh 2011). This dataset codes for *Return* and provides a link to the text of the peace agreement that contains such provisions. I also cross-referenced these cases with the Peace Agreement Matrix project run by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. This project has also identified which agreements contain provisions for refugees, and it provides the text for the provisions that do so. It also provides information on the implementation of these provisions.

The resulting list of cases combines data from these two sources, with a few exceptions. I am only interested in comprehensive agreements. Thus, if the agreement was merely dyadic – not occurring between all warring parties – it was dropped. This was the case for Serbia, Sudan, Afghanistan, and the Philippines. Further, if the agreement focused merely on the internally displaced, it was not included because internally displaced mechanisms are outside the scope of this project. This was the case for Uganda and Nepal.

This provided me with 24 post-conflict periods with return agreements since 1989, which is the basis for my study. These include countries in Africa, Europe, South America and Asia. One country, Djibouti, appears twice due to two separate post-conflict periods that ended with two separate refugee agreements. The UCDP data on post-conflict periods carries through the end of 2009, so the base dataset covers 20 years, from 1990-2009.

Figure 4.1

Country	Date of Agreement	Name of Agreement
Guatemala	12/29/96	The Agreement for a Firm and Lasting Peace
El Salvador	1/16/92	The Chapultepec Peace Agreement
Macedonia	8/13/01	The Ohrid Agreement
Croatia	11/12/95	The Erdut Agreement
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12/14/95	The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Dayton Agreement)
Georgia	4/4/94	Declaration on measures for a political settlement of the Georgian/Abkhaz conflict
Guinea-Bissau	11/1/98	Abuja Peace Agreement
Mali	4/11/92	National Pact
Senegal	12/30/04	Accord general de paix entre le gouvernement de la republique du Senegal el le Mouvement des forces democratique de la Casamace (MFDC)
Niger	4/15/95	Accord e'tablissant une paix définitive entre le gouvernement de la republique du Niger et l'organisation de la résistance armée
Cote D'Ivoire	3/4/07	Ouagadougou Political Agreement
Liberia	8/18/03	Accra Peace Agreement
Sierra Leone	11/10/00	Lomé Peace Agreement (Date for Abuja Ceasefire - Supplement to Lome)
Congo	12/29/99	Accord de Cessez-le-Feu et de Cessation des Hostilités
Dem. Rep. Congo	3/23/09	Peace Agreement Between The Government And The Congress National Pour La Defense Du Peuple (CNDP)
Burundi	8/28/00	Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi
Rwanda	1/9/93	Arusha Accord (Protocol Agreement 9 Jan 1993)
Djibouti	12/26/94	Accord de paix et de la reconciliation nationale
Djibouti	5/12/01	Agreement for the Reform and Civil Concord
Mozambique	3/12/92	General Peace Agreement for Mozambique
Lebanon	10/22/89	Taif Accord
Tajikistan	2/21/97	The Moscow Declaration - General agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan
Bangladesh	12/2/97	Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord
Cambodia	10/23/91	Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict "The Paris Agreement"

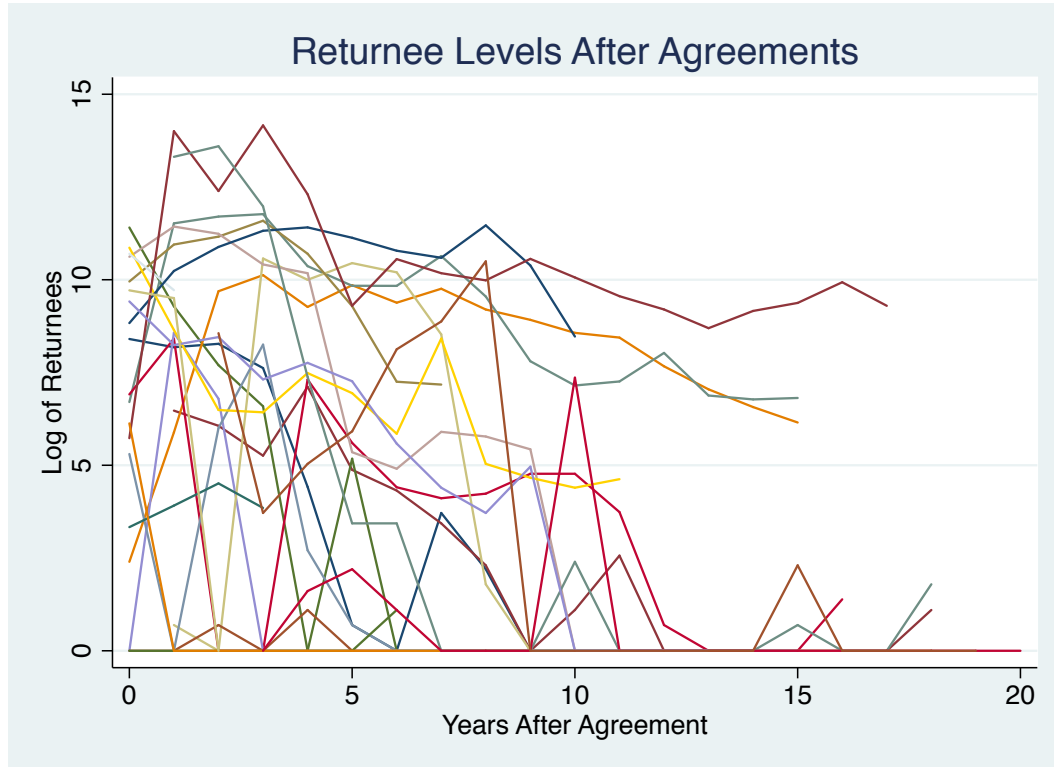
4.2.2 Dependent Variable

Returned refugees are difficult to measure. Many people who cross international borders are not counted or registered. Further, returns often happen spontaneously and without notice. However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) provides data measuring the stock of refugees originating from each country by year. The UNHCR relies on governmental agencies, UNHCR field offices, and NGOs to obtain this data. The data are collected using registers, surveys, registration process or censuses. The collection method varies by country (UNHCR). This presents a number of challenges: many of those that qualify do not or cannot register. Refugees living outside camps are much more difficult to measure, yet the UN provides an estimate of such populations where applicable (UNHCR). This is by no means ideal, yet it is the best data available on the amount of refugees. Other academic research has relied on this data, including Moore and Shellman (2004; 2006; 2007) among others. For a further discussion of the difficulties regarding refugee data, see Crisp (1999).

As early as 1993, the UNHCR also started keeping data on returning refugees. Return data is likewise difficult to measure. Often returns are spontaneous and tracking is difficult. However, the UNHCR measures the flow of returnees for each year since 1993. Starting in 2000, UNHCR kept track of returnees by dyad, which I will examine in the second half of this chapter. The measure of country-level return is the main dependent variable for my model. This number is simply the number of returned refugees that returned to the post-conflict country in a given year. Thus, this dataset is formatted by country-year. I connected this data in time-series format from 1990-2009 to cover the 24 post-conflict periods with returnee agreements. The level of returnees varies widely. A descriptive depiction of that data is given in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2



From this figure it is evident that many countries experience very low levels of return. However, others experience returns on a large scale. Return can also spike early or later in the years after the agreement. From this it is evident that a great deal of variation exists in returns after an agreement that calls for return.

4.2.3 Explanatory Variables

The first explanatory variables are the direct constraints on executive action. I expect that meaningful elections will provide this type of constraint. I use two sources for information on meaningful elections. First, the *Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited* data by Cheibub et al. (2010) is used; and second, I use the *Database of Political Institutions* by Keefer (2012). The Cheibub et al. data is available for countries from 1990-2008. The Keefer data covers from 1990-2012. From these

datasets I use information on the direct election of executives through the variable *democracy* and the competitiveness of those elections through the variable *ieec* respectively. The Cheibub et al. (2010) variable for direct democracy is a dummy variable measuring 0 if not a democracy and 1 if a democracy. The key distinction in this dataset is that a country is considered a democracy if the ruling party has left office after losing election. Thus, this variable measures the meaningful constraint that elections have on executives not just in that they are elected democratically, but also in that they respect the democratic process when elections are lost. The Keefer (2012) variable for executive election competitiveness is an ordered variable ranging 1-7 from not elected, to elected with a lower portion of vote percentage, signifying meaningful opposition within the election. One (1) indicates no chief executive, such as when there are rivaling chief executives in a country. Two (2) indicates an unelected executive. Three (3) indicates an elected executive, but without opposition. Four (4) indicates multiple candidates but only 1 party. Five (5) indicates multiple parties are legal but only 1 won seats. Six (6) indicates multiple parties won seats but largest won more than 75% of the vote. And seven (7) indicates that the executive party received less than 75% of the vote. This thus measures the level to which the executive is constrained.

The second set of explanatory variables consists of the legislative constraints on executive action. I expect that more independent legislatures will provide this type of constraint. If a legislature has multiple parties, if they have increased competitive elections for their seats, and if the opposition has a greater vote share, they should be

further able to constrain the executive. The same two datasets – Cheibub et al. (2010) and Keefer (2012) – provide information on the legislature. The first variable I use – *lparty* – is a measure of whether no parties, one party, or multiple parties exist in the legislature. The second and third variables are from the Keefer (2012) data. The first measures the level of competition in the legislature on an ordinal scale from 1-7 starting with nonelected legislatures and going up to legislatures with vote shares more spread out. This scale is identical to the executive competition scale described above. Finally, I use a measure of the percentage of opposition vote to get at the level of how constraining the legislature can be.

The third set of explanatory variables in my hypotheses consists of power-sharing constraints on executive action. I expect that countries with power sharing as part of the agreement will provide this type of constraint through the injection of opposition into positions of power. For this measure, I use the Power Sharing Event Database (PSED) to measure specific areas of power-sharing that result from agreements (Ottmann & Vüllers 2014). The PSED database measures whether a political, economic, military or territorial power sharing agreement was reached. I combine these into one measure of power sharing.

4.2.4 Controls

Control variables are used to address alternative explanations for return. The leading theories are that violence causes displacement and that economic opportunity can influence where refugees go (see Ch 2 for discussion). Thus, we can expect that an end to conflict, and a better economic situation should influence refugee return. I thus

include these two variables of interest as controls. First, I use the years in conflict from the UCDP termination data to create a dummy variable for years in conflict in my dataset. It should be noted that in some post-conflict refugee agreement periods there are instances of violence above the 25 battle-death threshold, including some cases where the level of violence does not immediately fall down after the peace agreement. Thus, this is an important control to include in that violence may affect returns at these periods of time.

The second control that I use is data on each country's Gross Domestic Product per capita. This information I attained from the World Bank. This data was connected in longitudinal format. Finally, I also connected population data on each country to the dataset because the population is important for exposure in count models.

This provides me with the set of variables that I will use in these models. The table below presents the summary of variables in dataset.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Returnees	400	22035.48	109358.00	0.00	1410782.00
Refugees	470	121409.40	243717.00	1.00	2257573.00
Democracy	432	0.39	0.49	0.00	1.00
Executive Electoral					
Competitiveness	458	5.42	2.05	1.00	7.00
Parties in Legislature	432	1.61	0.72	0.00	2.00
Legislative Electoral					
Competitiveness	458	5.83	1.92	1.00	7.00
Opposition Vote Share	483	14.98	19.79	0.00	75.10
Power Sharing	483	0.35	0.48	0.00	1.00
Conflict	460	0.29	0.45	0.00	1.00
Log GDP per Capita	446	6.37	1.12	4.17	9.67

4.3 The Model

I analyze the amount of returning refugees over 24 post-conflict periods. The most basic count model uses the Poisson distribution. This distribution, however, assumes that each unit counted is independent of all others. Since we are measuring returnees, I do not make the assumption that their actions are independent. Returnees may often return as a group or because others have already returned. Therefore, following Moore and Shellman (2007) I use a negative binomial distribution. This distribution allows for relaxing the assumption of independence of counts. Furthermore, the Poisson model assumes that the “variance of the number of occurrences equals the expected number of occurrences” (Kennedy 2008, 246). Notice in the summary of data that the variance of Returnees is larger than the mean. Since the Poisson model ignores this, it produces underestimated standard errors, and often produces many significant explanatory variables (Kennedy 2008, 246). As Kennedy notes, a popular way of introducing unobserved heterogeneity is to use the negative binomial distribution (Kennedy 2008, 260). Thus, I use a negative binomial distribution for my analysis in this chapter.

I use the level of refugees that have originated from the country as exposure for the level of returns. The exposure weights counts by the number of available to be counted. Consider: if a small amount of refugees return, this could be because there were only a small amount of refugees originating from the country. This is further important because while we might see a high volume of returns, we could also

potentially see an increase in the number of refugees being created that same year. Using refugees as exposure for returns allows for a proper specification of return.

Finally, since my data is longitudinal, it is appropriate to discuss fixed versus random effects. I run Hausman tests on my models to compare the random and fixed effects models. This allows me to determine whether to use fixed effects. In cases where the Hausman test is significant, random effects is not an appropriate model. Yet when possible, random effects are more efficient. Thus, when appropriate, I use fixed effects. Where possible, I use random effects. This is noted at the bottom of each model in the results.

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Executive

Direct Elections

I hypothesized that direct constraints on the executive would lead to higher levels of return to a country that has a refugee agreement in a post-conflict episode. The motivation for this hypothesis has been discussed, as has the operationalization of the variables. I now evaluate what the data show. The results of the cross-sectional time-series negative binomial regression are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees
Democracy	0.490*** (0.168)	
Executive Electoral Competitiveness		0.108** (0.0481)
Conflict	-0.836*** (0.176)	-0.766*** (0.178)
GDP per Capita	-0.164** (0.0782)	-0.117 (0.0810)
Constant	-11.27*** (0.507)	-11.95*** (0.535)
ln_r	0.496 (0.465)	0.00626 (0.385)
ln_s	10.52*** (0.673)	9.490*** (0.638)
Observations	248	262
Number of PAID	22	23
Fixed Effects	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1655	-1660
Chi Square	31.70	24.61

Cross Sectional Time Series Negative Binomial Models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The positive coefficients for democracy and executive electoral competitiveness indicate support for my hypothesis. The coefficients listed here can be interpreted as incident rate ratios by using the exponent of the coefficient. Therefore, in the discussion of my results I will refer to an increased rate of return in terms of percentage. The formula for arriving at this incident rate ratio is $\exp(\text{coefficient})$. While holding all else constant, having a meaningful democracy leads to a 63% increase in the level of returnees as opposed to countries that are not democracies in post-conflict countries with refugee agreements. This is significant at the 99% confidence level.

The competitiveness of the electoral process for the executive also has a positive effect on the level of returns. While holding all else constant, each increase on the scale of executive electoral competition leads to approximately an 11% increase in the level of returns. This is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Thus, the models suggest empirical support for my hypothesis regarding direct executives constraints having a positive effect on refugee return. Credible commitments to returnees via direct constraints on the executive are associated with statistically significant higher levels of return. This result holds even while controlling for alternative hypotheses such as returns being associated with lower levels of violence and higher levels of economic opportunity. These two control variables still explain variation some variation in return. The occurrence of violence results in less return, and is statistically significant. Increased economic opportunity has mixed results, but is associated with less return in model 1. This could be because it takes capital to return, and those without money cannot return to a higher cost of living. Nonetheless, the credible commitments given via institutional constraints on the executive play a role in whether countries experience a higher level of return.

4.4.2 Legislative

The next set of hypotheses relate to the legislature. I hypothesize that when executives face constraints from their legislature, their commitments to the refugee agreement are credible because they will be punished for breaking promises. Thus, with stronger legislatures returns should increase. The motivation for this hypothesis

has been discussed, as has the operationalization of the variables. I now turn to statistical analysis. The results of the negative binomial regression are listed in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Parties in Legislature	0.429** (0.169)		
Legislative Electoral Competitiveness		0.110** (0.0545)	
Opposition Vote Share			0.0145*** (0.00403)
Conflict	-0.757*** (0.176)	-0.842*** (0.179)	-0.798*** (0.179)
GDP per Capita	-0.0706 (0.0773)	-0.121 (0.0807)	-0.111 (0.0763)
Constant	-12.48*** (0.643)	-11.98*** (0.542)	-11.67*** (0.495)
ln_r	0.393 (0.444)	0.0528 (0.395)	
ln_s	10.39*** (0.642)	9.568*** (0.648)	
Observations	248	262	268
Number of PAID	22	23	22
Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes
Log Likelihood	-1655	-1660	-1473
Chi Square	27.82	24.37	37.80

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results suggest support for my hypotheses, with positive coefficients showing a relationship between the variables of legislative constraints and higher refugee return. Again, I use the exponentiation of the coefficients for interpretation. All else constant, countries with multiple parties in the legislature are associated with a 54% increase in the level of refugee of return. This is significant at the 95% confidence level.

The effect of increased legislative electoral competition is also a significant indicator of increased refugee return. Holding all else constant, the effect of each increase on the scale of legislative electoral competition results in a 12% increase in the level of return. This is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Finally, the effect of increased vote share for opposition parties is also significant at the 99% confidence level. Holding all else constant, the effect of each percentage point increase in vote share is associated with a 1% increase in return rates. This result is substantively large when considering percentage point increases in vote share are associated almost one-to-one with a percentage point increase in return rates.

In Table 4.2 the empirical evidence suggests support for my hypotheses. Greater levels of constraint on the executive – through having a more powerful, independent, and inclusive legislature – are associated with higher levels of refugee return. This result holds even while controlling for common alternative hypotheses. Here, conflict still explains whether refugees will return, with statistically significant results in each model resulting in less refugee return when violence occurs. However, the economic effect is not statistically significant. This suggests that perhaps legislative constraints provide an even more powerful explanatory effect than economic explanations. Overall, these results suggest that while other factors may still play a role, the role of credible commitments to returnees via legislative constraints on the executive is

helpful in explaining why some post-conflict countries experience greater returns of refugees.

4.4.3 Power-sharing

I now turn to my hypotheses regarding power-sharing arrangements. I expect that executives experience constraint through power sharing arrangements. Power sharing arrangements consist of mandating a position be open in the government to opposition groups, which can often be rebel representatives. These can be political, military, economic, or territorial. I estimate a count model of returnees as a function of whether a country has a power-sharing arrangement. I expect that countries with power-sharing arrangements will have lower levels of refugees and greater levels of return. Again, I use the most common alternative explanations – violence and economic opportunity – as controls. The results are indicated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees
Power Sharing	0.738*** (0.192)
Conflict	-0.928*** (0.178)
GDP per Capita	-0.0880 (0.0784)
Constant	-11.87*** (0.516)
Observations	268
Number of PAID	22
Fixed Effects	Yes
Log Likelihood	-1471
Chi Square	38.35
Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)	
Dependent variable is count of returnees	
Exposure(Refugees)	
Standard errors in parentheses	
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

The results show support for my hypothesis. Holding all else constant, countries that have power sharing arrangements have a 109% increase in the level of returnees compared to countries that do not have power sharing arrangements. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. Thus, credible commitments via power sharing institutions appear to lead to greater refugee return.

In this model, the controls for alternative reasons refugees might return also maintain some explanatory power. Countries where violence occurs experience significantly lower levels of refugee return. However, better economic conditions do not attract greater refugee return in this model, as GDP per capita is not significant. Nonetheless, the importance of credible commitments via constraining institutions cannot be overlooked. They hold up even when taking these alternative explanations into account.

4.4.4 General Model

I now turn to a general model encompassing all of the variables. While evidence thus far has shown that credible commitments are important for influencing return in a variety of settings, this model aims to evaluate which types of credible commitments are most effective. For this general model, I include one variable from my models on executive, legislative, and power sharing constraints. For executive constraints, I use the measure for democracy. For legislative constraints on the executive, I use the percent of opposition vote share. And finally, for power sharing, I use the same measure for the existence of power sharing or the non-existence of power sharing.

This general model evaluates the effect of specific types of credible commitments, while holding each other type constant. The results are listed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees
Democracy	0.336* (0.181)
Opposition Vote Share	0.0136*** (0.00425)
Power Sharing	0.713*** (0.198)
Conflict	-0.841*** (0.179)
GDP per Capita	-0.179** (0.0816)
Constant	-11.62*** (0.526)
Observations	248
Number of PAID	22
Fixed Effects	Yes
Log Likelihood	-1386
Chi Square	67.37
Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)	
Dependent variable is count of returnees	
Exposure(Refugees)	
Standard errors in parentheses	
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

These results show that credible commitments have a statistically significant, positive effect on refugee returns even while holding various commitment types constant. Holding all else constant, having a democracy results in a 40% increase in the rate of returnees compared to non-democracies. This is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level. Conventional confidence levels require 95% confidence, so this result suggests weak support for this hypothesis.

Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share in the legislature results in a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level.

Holding all else constant, having a power sharing arrangement results in a 204% increase in the rate of returnees as compared to countries that do not have power sharing arrangements. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. This is a quite substantively significant increase in the level of returnees.

Again, I find that these results hold not only when accounting for other commitment types, but also when controlling for alternative hypotheses. Conflict and GDP per capita are both statistically significant predictors of a decreased rate of refugee return. The fact that violence leads to less return is not surprising, since it is a determining factor in the creation of the crisis in the first place. However, a decrease in return rates due to an increased GDP per capita is surprising. This result could be because of the need for capital to return. However, the important result is that the constraining institutions are associated with greater rates of return even while accounting for these factors.

4.4.5 Discussion

The results of the country-level count models ultimately provide support for my hypotheses. The effect of each type of constraint on the executive is a significant predictor of refugee return. Thus, I find evidence that credible commitments of various types matter for explaining refugee return. Indeed, even in the general model

that isolates for the effect of each variable separately, each type of credible commitment predicts higher refugee return. This provides strong support for the idea that credible commitments lead to higher refugee return – even when controlling for alternative explanations such as an end to violence and a higher economic opportunity. However, this is not the entire story. From here I turn to a discussion of the networks of return. I measure returns by dyad, rather than country-year, so as to measure the effect of institutions not just in the country of return, but also what refugees experienced in the country of asylum.

4.5 Explaining Returnee Networks

4.5.1 Introduction

To evaluate my next set of hypotheses, I need to evaluate the networks of return. Here I evaluate two countries: the country of origin is the post-conflict country. This is the country from where the refugees originated. This is the country to which they will perhaps return. The country of asylum is the country to which the refugees fled during the conflict. This is the country from which they will perhaps return. Conditions in the country of asylum may be an important factor in the decision to return. From my theoretical expectations, I expect that returns will be more likely when the country of origin makes a more credible commitment to return than the country of asylum. In operation, I expect that this will occur when the country of origin has greater constraints on the executive than the country of asylum. I expect this to be the case because if the commitments to distribute resources in the home country are less credible than in the country of asylum, refugees should prefer to stay

where the commitments and signals to refugees are most credible. This has been developed in the theoretical section, so the discussion here turns to the operationalization of the concepts into variables and the analysis of the empirical models.

4.5.2 The Data

The dependent variable is the number of returned refugees between country dyads by year. I use the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data on returns, which includes the country of asylum and country of origin. This dataset covers the world's refugees starting in 2000. When I refer to the country of origin, I mean the country to which the refugees are returning, and by the country of asylum I mean the country where they were temporarily staying as refugees.

Since I am interested in the implementation of post-conflict refugee agreements, I constricted this dataset to dyads where the country of origin 1) was in a post-conflict period and 2) had an agreement pertaining to the return of refugees. I used both the UCDP data on conflict termination and the UCDP data on peace agreements (Kreutz 2010; Högladh 2011) to determine these time periods in the same fashion as in the first dataset in this chapter. This information covers through the end of 2009. Because UNHCR data on returnee dyads begins in 2000, the final network dataset covers the 10 years from 2000-2009.

The scope of cases consists of all countries of asylum that are holding refugees during the post-conflict period from the country of origin, where the country of origin has a

peace agreement addressing refugee return. I use the UNHCR database to cover both refugee and returnee information between the dyad. UNHCR measures the number of refugees as the stock of refugees being held by the asylum country from each origin country, and the number of returned refugees as the flow that occurred between that asylum and origin country during the year. Thus, the number of refugees may not have all left the origin country during the same year, but they are the scope of possible refugees that may seek return. The question then becomes, which dyads saw a greater amount of refugees return. This dyad structure is the key difference from the first half of the chapter.

Explanatory Variables

The explanatory variables here are the same as the previous analysis, with an important caveat. They are measured as the difference in the returnee's country of origin from the country of asylum. This is referred to in network analysis as the *homophily* (Kolaczyk & Csárdi 2014, 91). This concept allows us to examine the likelihood of flow between the two nodes as a measure of difference in the attributes of the two nodes. My explanatory variables cover three main areas: constraint on the executive directly, constraint on the executive through legislatures, and constraint on the executive through power sharing institutions.

I make use of two measures of direct constraint on the executive to test my first set of hypotheses. The first, democracy, is the same measure of democracy as introduced earlier in this chapter. However, here the measure of democracy measures the level of

democracy in the country of origin, subtracted from the level of democracy in the country of asylum. This means that higher values of democracy indicate that democracy exists in the country of origin but not the country of asylum, while lower values of democracy indicate that democracy exists in the country of asylum but not the country of origin. This differentiation allows for analysis including the institutions in both countries.

The second measure I use is the level of competitiveness in the executive. Again, this is the same measure of executive electoral competition introduced earlier in this chapter. Here the measure for executive competition is the level of competition for the executive in the country of origin subtracted from the level of competition in the country of asylum. Thus, higher scores of this variable indicate higher levels of executive office competition in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum, while lower scores indicate the country of asylum has higher levels of executive competition as compared to the country of origin.

I make use of three measures of the ability of legislatures to provide a constraint on the executive. These are the same variables introduced in the first part of this chapter. As with the other explanatory variables in this analysis, the measure of parties is the difference between the level of party participation in the country of origin and the country of asylum. Higher values indicate that there is higher party participation in the country of origin, as compared to the country of asylum. The measure of legislative competitiveness is similar to the measure of executive competitiveness.

This is also measured as the difference between the country of origin and the country of asylum: higher values of this variable indicate higher levels of legislative competition in the country of origin, as compared to the country of asylum. The measure of opposition vote in this dataset measures the difference between the country of origin and the country of asylum. Higher values of this variable thus indicate that the percentage of vote share for the opposition party in the country of origin are higher than the percentage of vote share for the opposition in the country of asylum.

Finally, I measure power sharing arrangements. These arrangements could include political power sharing, military power sharing, economic power sharing and territorial power sharing. The measure I use captures all of these, and is the same variable as introduced earlier in this chapter. The main distinction here is that it is measured in terms of the difference between the country of origin and the country of asylum. Thus, higher scores indicate that power sharing existed in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum, whereas lower values indicate that the country of asylum has power sharing arrangements where the country of origin does not.

For each model, I also include the most common explanations for refugee return, as I did previously: violence and economics. In addition, I can now add information on the distance between the dyad. This adds a control for the cost of return. It can be assumed that greater distances increase the cost of return. For violence and economics

I again make use of the homophily: higher numbers indicate a higher level of either violence or GDP per capita in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum. The distance between them is measured using their geographic coordinates and the Pythagorean theorem.

The following is a summary of variables in the dyad-level dataset. The names are the same as earlier in this chapter, yet they now often include negative values that indicate differences between asylum and origin countries.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Returnees	2136	378.80	3787.01	0.00	82000.00
Refugees	2136	1751.96	14652.69	1.00	352640.00
Democracy	1796	0.01	0.62	-1.00	1.00
Executive Electoral Competitiveness	2126	-0.69	2.45	-6.00	6.00
Parties in Legislature	1796	0.04	0.51	-1.00	2.00
Legislative Electoral Competitiveness	2127	-0.43	2.12	-6.00	6.00
Opposition Vote Share	2128	-6.70	32.81	-83.55	75.10
Power Sharing	2136	0.68	0.49	-1.00	1.00
Log GDP per Capita	2123	-2.88	1.68	-6.15	1.87
Conflict	2136	0.02	0.44	-1.00	1.00
Distance	2136	52.33	36.90	0.00	191.75

4.5.3 The Model

The model is a count model, used to determine the expected count of returnees given the difference in executive constraints between the country of asylum and the country of origin. The model uses a negative binomial distribution and uses the number of refugees existing in the dyad as exposure. I use the log of GDP per capita, but no other variables are transformed.

I run Hausman tests on each model so that I can determine if the model is more appropriately fit with fixed effects or random effects. When the null hypothesis of the Hausman test is not rejected, I use random effects, as it is a more efficient estimator. However, when the null hypothesis is rejected, I use fixed effects for the model since the random effects model is no longer a consistent estimator.

4.5.4 Results

4.5.4.1 Executive

I hypothesized that credible commitments via direct constraints on executives in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum will increase the likelihood of return in post-conflict refugee agreement countries. The motivation for this hypothesis and the operationalization of the variables has been discussed, so I now turn to analysis of the model. The first column represents the results of the model for the measure of democracy, while the second column represents the results of the model for the measure of electoral competitiveness for executive elections. The results follow in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees
Democracy	0.805*** (0.133)	
Executive Electoral Competitiveness		0.176*** (0.0233)
GDP per Capita	0.0223 (0.104)	-0.0746 (0.0962)
Conflict	-0.830*** (0.121)	-0.882*** (0.120)
Distance	0.0578*** (0.00985)	0.0456*** (0.00981)
Constant	-10.57*** (0.147)	-9.961*** (0.118)
ln_r	-1.873*** (0.136)	-1.768*** (0.125)
ln_s	-2.216*** (0.315)	-2.206*** (0.306)
Observations	1,789	2,118
Number of Dyads	433	529
Fixed Effects	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1633	-1866
Chi Square	180.3	207.9

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results provide support for my hypothesis that executive constraints in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum will result in an increased rate of refugee return. As with previous models, I interpret the results here by using the exponent of the coefficients. This allows for interpretation of the incidence rate ratio. Holding all else constant, having a democracy in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 124% increase in the rate of refugee return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level.

Holding all else constant, the effect of each increased on the scale of executive electoral competitiveness in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 19% increase in the rate of refugee return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level.

These two models suggest support for my hypothesis that executive constraints matter along the networks of return. In both models, the alternative hypothesis that higher GDP per capita will lead to refugee return is not a statistically significant predictor of return. However, the alternative hypothesis that continued violence will result in fewer returnees is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. Counter to intuition, greater distances between dyads are associated with greater returns, and are statistically significant with 99% confidence. The distance result is puzzling, but it may suggest that those further away from the conflict perhaps have a greater ability to return. Ultimately, these results show that while other factors may still influence returns between dyads, direct constraints on the executive are an important factor in predicting return. While it is important to end violence, it is not the whole story. I find support for my hypothesis that refugees will return based on the credibility of the commitment to the policies that affect their access to resources.

4.5.4.2 Legislative

I also hypothesized that when the country of origin has greater legislative constraints on the executive than the country of asylum, the rate of return should increase due to the increased credibility of the promise in the country of origin. If the legislature is

better able to constrain the executive, the executive is more likely to follow through on its agreement and such institutions signal to refugees that return is viable.

I use three measures to explore legislative constraints on the executive in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum. The first is whether the legislature has multiple parties. The second is the level of competitiveness in the legislature and the third is the opposition vote share. All three are measured as a comparison of origin and asylum countries. The motivation for use of these variables has already been discussed, and we now turn to the evidence these concepts provide. The results are listed in Table 4.6

Table 4.6

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Parties in Legislature	0.404*** (0.126)		
Legislative Electoral Competitiveness		0.141*** (0.0303)	
Opposition Vote Share			0.00964*** (0.00183)
GDP per Capita	0.130 (0.106)	0.0431 (0.0956)	0.170* (0.0936)
Conflict	-1.011*** (0.112)	-1.184*** (0.107)	-0.959*** (0.111)
Distance	0.0585*** (0.0107)	0.0452*** (0.0102)	0.0491*** (0.00986)
Constant	-10.24*** (0.128)	-10.07*** (0.122)	-10.14*** (0.125)
ln_r	-1.889*** (0.138)	-1.755*** (0.125)	-1.774*** (0.125)
ln_s	-2.279*** (0.326)	-1.991*** (0.352)	-1.858*** (0.367)
Observations	1,789	2,118	2,118
Number of Dyads	433	529	529
Fixed Effects	No	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1649	-1884	-1883
Chi Square	175.5	190.3	188.1

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The model provides support for my hypothesis that legislative constraints increase the level of return. Holding all else constant, the effect of having multiple parties in the legislature in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 50% increase in the rate of refugee return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. Holding all else constant, the effect of each increase in the scale of legislative electoral competition in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum is a 15% increase in the level of returnees. This is also significant at the 99% confidence

level. Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share in the legislature in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level.

These results support my hypothesis that increased legislative constraints on the executive lead to higher levels of return. This reinforces the importance of credible commitments in both the home and asylum countries. In these models, increased economic opportunity is only a significant predictor of increased rate of return when considering opposition vote share. This again suggests only weak support for the alternative hypothesis that economic opportunity will lead to greater return rates. As expected, the occurrence of violence leads to a significantly lower rate of refugee return. Further, as occurred previously, increased distance between origin and asylum is associated with an increased rate of return. This is puzzling, yet the results show that even when accounting for these alternative hypotheses, the importance of constraining institutions that produce credibility to commitments made by governments to refugees that might return cannot be overlooked.

4.5.4.3 Power Sharing

I hypothesized that credible commitments via power sharing that exists in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum will increase the likelihood of return. I use a measure of power sharing in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum. The motivation for these variables and the details of their nature has already

been discussed, so I now turn to the model analysis. The results are listed in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees
Power Sharing	0.232* (0.135)
GDP per Capita	0.134 (0.0932)
Conflict	-1.126*** (0.105)
Distance	0.0461*** (0.00989)
Constant	-10.15*** (0.137)
ln_r	-1.777*** (0.125)
ln_s	-1.942*** (0.360)
Observations	2,123
Number of Dyads	531
Fixed Effects	No
Log Likelihood	-1906
Chi Square	171.9
Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)	
Dependent variable is count of returnees	
Exposure(Refugees)	
Standard errors in parentheses	
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

The results suggest some support for my hypothesis. Holding all else constant, the effect of having power sharing arrangements in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum is a 22% increase in the rate of return. This is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level. While lower than the conventional 95% confidence, this does suggest some weak support for my hypothesis.

In this model, conflict continues to be a significant predictor of lower rates of refugee return. Higher GDP per capita in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum is not a statistically significant predictor of return. Again, increased distance between dyads is associated with statistically significant higher levels of return. These results are similar to previous models, yet again they show that the importance of constraining institutions cannot be overlooked. Such institutions are associated with increased rates of refugee return even when controlling for these other factors.

4.5.4.4 General Model

Having found general support my hypotheses concerning increased institutional constraints between country dyads, I now turn to a general model that considers each type of credible commitment by holding the others constant. Similar to the general model in the previous section, I again evaluate this model using democracy to measure constraints on the executive, opposition vote share to measure constraints on the executive through the legislature, and power sharing to measure the constraints on the executive through power sharing arrangements. Again, the variables are measured as the difference between the country of asylum and country of origin. The results of the model are evaluated in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees
Democracy	0.393** (0.178)
Opposition Vote Share	0.0105*** (0.00305)
Power Sharing	0.166 (0.169)
GDP per Capita	0.114 (0.105)
Conflict	-0.883*** (0.127)
Distance	0.0574*** (0.0104)
Constant	-10.53*** (0.179)
ln_r	-1.843*** (0.137)
ln_s	-2.096*** (0.340)
Observations	1,785
Number of Dyads	431
Fixed Effects	No
Log Likelihood	-1616
Chi Square	190.6

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The effect of specific credible commitments varies in this model. Holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy in the home country as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 48% increase in the rate of return. This is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share in the legislature in the home country as opposed to the country of asylum results in a

1% increase in the rate of return. This is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level.

The effect of having power sharing in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum is not statistically significant. Thus, it appears that the strongest credible commitment between dyads of countries is democracy and opposition vote share in the legislature.

4.5.4.5 Discussion

The results between refugee country dyads show some support for my hypothesis that credible commitments explain refugee return. Multiple measures of credible commitment hold up to controls. Thus, I conclude that credible commitments to refugee policies are important in terms of the country of origin, but also in terms of what is promised in the country of asylum. When such credible commitments are considered in relation to one another – both democratic and legislative constraints are associated with increased refugee return. The loss of power sharing as a significant predictor of refugee return in the general model casts some doubt on that particular institution, but the general hypothesis about credible commitments through constraints on the executive still holds. I find statistical support for the hypothesis that credible commitments via constraints on the executive in the home country as opposed to the country of asylum will lead to higher rates of return. While not all constraints on the executive work equally, the fact that some constraints seem to have an effect cannot be overlooked. (Please see Appendix II for Zero-Inflated Models).

Chapter 5: Explaining Commitment Types

This chapter turns to empirical evaluation of my next set of hypotheses regarding the commitments themselves: returnee provisions in peace agreements. The return provisions data will be discussed at length, and then I will turn to an evaluation of my hypotheses given these data. The hypothesis is that these commitments are not credible, no matter the type. Credible commitments exist through institutions that constrain the executive. Refugee provisions in peace agreements come in a few broad categories: security provisions, housing land and property (HLP) provisions, financial, and political provisions. I consider each of these a *commitment*. Yet, each requires *credibility* to be an effective driver for refugee return. I begin by exploring these and explaining how I coded the data from the peace agreements. I then turn to the evaluation of the hypotheses.

5.1 Refugee Agreement Data

I created a dataset covering the provisions in refugee agreements by coding whether such provisions were present in the full text of refugee return agreements. I relied on the text concerning refugees listed in the Peace Agreement Matrix (Joshi, Quinn and Regan 2015). I cross-referenced this information with the list of agreements citing return from the UCDP peace agreement database (Högbladh 2011). This database also links to full text of agreements.

I coded this data based upon commonly held notions of what parts of the agreement might be important in terms of insuring refugee return. Agreements vary in the type

and amount of guarantees that are proposed for refugees. Agreements can range from a few sentences that allow for refugee return, to multiple sections outlining the details of return and returnee management.

I coded for 1) unspecified guarantees 2) financial guarantees 3) property guarantees 4) political guarantees (such as voting rights) 5) legal documents (such as citizenship ID) 6) security guarantees 7) guarantees of access to resources (food, water, farming, education) 8) and guarantees of assistance to women. These categories are not mutually exclusive. The refugee sections of peace agreements may have referred to more than one of these categories.

I coded other variables that do not play a central role in my analysis. For further information on these, see Appendix II. Appendix II has information on the codebook. I code for objectives (return, reintegration, resettlement) as well as whether there was a specific implementation commission set up for refugee return. Also, I included whether a timetable was given for the refugee provisions specifically.

The assistance commitment variables that I coded are disaggregated, yet for this analysis I file them under categories that are theoretically important in the literature. Refugees that return require assistance in two main areas: socioeconomic commitments and security commitments. For this analysis, the socioeconomic commitments consist of financial, property, political, legal, resource access, and women's commitments. For security commitments, anything related to security was

coded under security. Finally, I made use of the total number of assistance commitments proposed. From my theoretical expectations, I argued that more commitments might encourage refugees to return. Thus, I produced a variable measuring the total of all the commitments. I connected this data to the dataset compiled.

5.2 Commitments to Physical Security

Perhaps most common commitment is the provision for security. Security provisions in regards to refugees take a few different angles. They may guarantee safety of movement back into the country, general safety throughout the country, or safety specific to the area to which refugees return. The latter may consist of increased police presence, security sector reforms, or activities such as de-mining. Additionally, security commitments may come in multiple forms in the same peace agreement. For example, an agreement may provide for security of return and demining in the area of origin. Or, an agreement may provide for security of return only. However, all security provisions guarantee the physical safety of refugees. Overall, security commitments of this nature are found in 11 out of the 24 agreements examined, or 46%.

Provisions that guarantee physical security for returning refugees can be quite specific, outlining precisely the actions the government must take. For example, in Guatemala's Agreement for a Firm and Lasting Peace, the provision for security aimed specifically at the removal of explosive devices so that returnees could return to these areas.

4. Concerned about the security of those who are being resettled or who live in the zones affected by the conflict, the Parties recognize the urgent need to remove all types of mines or explosive devices buried or abandoned in these areas, and they commit themselves to cooperate fully in these activities. (PAM 2015)

Provisions like this one address specific needs for physical security that refugees face. Particularly in rural countries, landmine removal is imperative because returnees will not be able to access the land if it is littered with landmines. Specific commitments such as this may vary across conflicts, yet I seek to evaluate whether the specificity of commitments of physical security credibly signal that return is a viable option.

Other examples of physical security commitments often come in the form of guaranteed safety during the process of return itself. This is important because refugees may fear a return because of the likelihood of being attacked or harassed as they cross back into the country. Such commitments are stated in Georgia's Declaration on Measures for a Political Settlement of the Georgia/Abkhaz Conflict:

4. The Parties agree to cooperate and to interact in planning and conducting the activities aimed to safeguard and guarantee the safe, secure and dignified return of people who have fled from areas of the conflict zone to the areas of their previous permanent residence.

5. For the purpose of the present agreement, the parties will guarantee the safety of refugees and displaced persons in the course of the voluntary repatriation and rehabilitation operations to be organized. (PAM 2015)

Again, this addresses specific concerns that returning refugees have. Refugees leave because their country of origin was unable to provide them with protection. Thus, commitments such as this are meant to assure returnees that they will now be protected. For this reason, one might hypothesize that inclusion of commitments such

as these would increase return; however, without a credible commitment to stick with these provisions, I argue that they will not increase refugee return.

Other physical security commitments address only general security. Commitments of this nature establish that security must be guaranteed, but are not specific as to where or how. For example, in El Salvador's Chapultepec Peace Agreement, the provision merely states that security will be guaranteed:

3. Full guarantees and security for the return of exiles, war-wounded and other persons currently outside the country for reasons related to the armed conflict. (PAM 2015)

This is a common type of non-specific commitment. Other commitments like this include Burundi's Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement:

(c) Return must be voluntary and must take place in dignity with guaranteed security, and taking into account the particular vulnerability of women and children (PAM)

These general physical security commitments do not outline whether the security is to be given during the journey or in the area of return specifically. However, such commitments of security could intuitively signal that returns will be secure, encouraging refugee returns. However, my hypothesis is that these provisions will not encourage returns, and that it is the political institutions that provide credibility to these commitments.

Finally, physical security commitments might be related to refugee return by guaranteeing physical security to the humanitarian agencies that are seeking to assist returnees. Providing security for these groups can be an important step towards

helping refugees return. Often the majority of assistance given to refugees is from the humanitarian organizations that are present in the country, particularly UNHCR. Thus, such commitments might also be viewed as important. In Liberia's Accra Peace Agreement, the provision is stated as follows:

1. (a) The Parties re-affirm the commitment made in the Ceasefire Agreement, to provide security guarantees for safe and unhindered access by all humanitarian agencies to vulnerable groups throughout the country, in order to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with international conventions, principles and norms governing humanitarian operations.
- (b) Accordingly, the Parties agree to guarantee the security and movement of humanitarian personnel, that of their properties, goods transported, stocked or distributed, as well as their projects and beneficiaries. (PAM 2015)

All told, security provisions can vary. Yet they all include basic commitments of physical security to reestablish government protection of citizens. In my coding, I include any provisions for security that fall under these categories as security provisions. While each post-conflict agreement establishes security commitments specific to its own crisis, each establishes commitments to security that one might intuitively assume provide signals of safety to returnees. For my coding, I consider an agreement to have security guarantees if it has a minimum of 1 of these. Some agreements have more than one, but to be included the agreement must have at least one provision for security of returnees.

Interestingly, not all post-conflict agreements guarantee the safety of returning refugees. Thus – when examining refugee returns – one might expect that a certain amount of leverage could be gained by examining whether or not security provisions such as these are included in the agreement. My hypothesis, however, is that such

guarantees won't matter unless the political situation is conducive to establishing the conditions: institutions that make these commitments credible must be present in order for returns to increase.

5.3 Socioeconomic Commitments

Socioeconomic commitments are another type of commitment made in refugee return agreements. Social and economic commitments – if implemented – can help to lower the cost of return. Assistance commitments of this nature tend to be more specific to the needs of returnees to each country, yet they carry common threads. Socioeconomic commitments seek to establish political rights to returnees and to reinsert them into the economic and social fabric of the country. Commitments of this nature may include one or more aspects of socioeconomic assistance. Thus, while each refugee agreement is different, I include socioeconomic commitments as a larger measure to leverage whether overarching themes such as these provide incentive for return. I include different measures of socioeconomic commitments under one measure because agreements often have more than one socioeconomic guarantee. For example, the guarantee of documents often comes along with the right to political participation. Access to economic resources is often tied to direct financial assistance. Thus, by considering these as an aggregate measure, I hope to leverage the larger theme of socioeconomic incentive that might occur. Overall, socioeconomic guarantees such as those that I code here exist in 14 out of 24 agreements, or 58%.

I coded a number of different factors that make up such provisions, such as guarantees of the right to political participation, guarantees of legal or political

documents, as well as guarantees of amnesty to returning refugees for any participation in rebellion and guarantees that focus on gender concerns. Further, I coded for direct financial assistance, assistance with property return or new property distribution, and guarantees of access to resources.

First, consider provisions that guarantee documents for participation in politics. Refugees often have difficulty proving their land ownership, citizenship, or voter registration due to the destruction of property or loss of records. In fact, since post-conflict elections have become a central focus in many post-conflict periods, voter registration is particularly important.

Many agreements thus establish commitments to provide such documentation. For example, Guatemala's Agreement for Firm and Lasting Peace went to great lengths in Section 7 to outline the political and legal documents that would be provided for returnees so that they can enjoy "basic services" and "political rights". The text is quite extensive and outlines steps to provide documents, register individuals, and ensure that the displaced can enjoy citizenship rights.

7. The lack of personal documentation for the majority of the uprooted population groups increases their vulnerability and limits their access to basic services and the enjoyment of their civil and political rights. This problem requires urgent solutions. Consequently, the Parties agree that the following steps are necessary:

7.1. In order to arrange for the documentation of uprooted persons as soon as possible, the Government, with the cooperation of the international community, shall intensify its efforts to streamline the necessary mechanisms, taking into account, where appropriate, the registers kept by the uprooted communities themselves;

7.2. Decree No. 70-91, a provisional act concerning replacement and registration of birth certificates in civil registers destroyed by violence, shall

be revised so as to establish a system adapted to the needs of all the affected population groups, with streamlined, free-of-charge registration procedures. For such purposes, the views of the affected sectors shall be taken into account. Personal documentation and identification shall be completed as soon as possible;

7.3. The necessary administrative rules to streamline formalities to ensure that children of uprooted persons born outside the country are registered as native Guatemalans, in compliance with article 144 of the Constitution of the Republic, shall be promulgated;

7.4. For the implementation of this documentation programme, the Government shall request the cooperation of the United Nations and the international community. (PAM 2015)

This program is far more extensive than many other social commitments. The commitments here are specific and outlined in detail. However, other refugee agreements provide similar commitments for documentation. In El Salvador's Chapultepec Agreement, commitments were far less detailed but also sought to provide documentation so as to allow citizens to enjoy political rights:

I. Respect for and Guarantee of Human Rights

7. Displaced persons and returnees shall be provided with the identity documents required by law and shall be guaranteed freedom of movement. They shall also be guaranteed the freedom to carry on their economic activities and to exercise their political and social rights within the framework of the country's institutions (PAM 2015)

Such commitments might intuitively provide incentive for returnees because participation in politics allows for voice and allocation of resources. Thus, I will consider these commitments in terms of the level of credibility that they have. While the text guaranteeing documentation can vary, the overall concept is similar. For this reason I coded guarantees such as these as socioeconomic guarantees.

Beyond documentation, the right to participation is of equal importance for refugees aiming to return to their country of origin. Other refugee agreements provide

commitments that are focused more specifically on political rights such as enabling returnees to participate in elections. In post-conflict Cambodia, one of the main areas of focus was to enable citizens to vote in the elections. In that context Cambodia's Paris Agreement specifically made provisions for returnees to take part in elections – and gave repatriation a sense of urgency.

Part V. Refugees and Displaced Persons

Article 19

Upon entry into force of this Agreement, every effort will be made to create in Cambodia political, economic and social conditions conducive to the voluntary return and harmonious integration of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons.

6. With a view to ensuring that refugees and displaced persons participate in the elections, mass repatriation should commence and be completed as soon as possible, taking into account all the political, humanitarian, logistical, technical and socio-economic factors involved, and with the cooperation of the SNC. (PAM)

Cambodia's agreement makes specific reference to the ability of returnees to participate in the social and economic environment of the country through political participation. For this reason, provisions such as this are included under socioeconomic commitments. While different from other countries due to the specific concerns in this country, political commitments might intuitively give incentive to refugees to engage in return. For this reason I aim to evaluate them in terms of the credibility of such commitment.

As further evidence of socioeconomic commitments – consider how amnesty plays a role in the participation in social life. Political commitments that tie social and economic life with being forgiven for any wrongdoing during the conflict should allow for returnees to reinsert themselves into society. Tajikistan's Moscow

Declaration tied social, political, and economic guarantees to a commitment not to “institute criminal proceedings”.

7. The Commission shall have the following functions and powers:
Implementing measures for the safe and appropriate return of the refugees and their active involvement in the social, political and economic life of the country, and provision of assistance in reconstruction of the housing and industrial and agricultural facilities destroyed by the warfare.
2. The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan assumes the obligation to reintegrate returning refugees and displaced persons into the social and economic life of the country, which includes the provision to them of humanitarian and financial aid, assistance in finding employment and housing and the restoration of all their rights as citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan (including the return to them of dwellings and property and guaranteed uninterrupted service), and not to institute criminal proceedings against returning refugees or displaced persons for their participation in the political confrontation and the civil war, in accordance with the legislative acts in force in the Republic. (PAM 2015)

Thus, including amnesty for returnees in a country’s socioeconomic commitments should allow returnees to take advantage of activities such as reconstruction of housing, facilitation of agriculture, financial aid including assistance in finding employment. Refugees are those that have a well-founded fear of persecution in their home country. Thus, commitments like this may be an important incentive for refugees to return. While amnesty commitments like this vary by country, I include them in socioeconomic commitments for this reason. However, as stated, I expect that political institutions are needed to make these commitments credible. I evaluate this in the empirical models in this chapter.

Direct financial commitments are also an important socioeconomic commitment included in many refugee agreements. These commitments step further than the political and seek to ensure that financially vulnerable refugees get assistance. While

specific to each country, direct financial assistance is common. In Rwanda, the agreement specifically guaranteed that returnees would be paid so as to meet vital needs.

Article 14

Upon their arrival in the country, repatriates shall each be paid a small amount of money to enable them to meet vital needs not catered for by the aid programme. (PAM 2015)

Direct payments should allow returnees to survive for a short period of time until they can reintegrate into economic and political life. Often, payments may not be large enough to buy property or rebuild, but they can provide for basic necessities. Agreements such as these should provide incentive for refugee return in that returnees will know that assistance will be provided. However – without institutions to provide credibility – such commitments may not provide this incentive.

Direct financial assistance may also come in the form of directly inserting returnees back into the economy. In Mali, the agreement went so far as to outline the creation of a specific fund for returnees. Mali's National Pact agreement made provisions for assisting returnees with "reinsertion" in industry as well as for compensation for the consequences of the conflict. Mali's provisions:

11. The reinsertion of displaced populations and the assistance to victims of all the consequences of the armed conflict in Northern Mali will give rise to the creation of two Funds:

- a Fund for development and reinsertion, which will support the creation of small and medium-sized industries, and small and medium-sized enterprises, and the insertion of the displaced populations into production systems,
- a Fund for assistance and compensation to civil and military victims of the two parties and their heirs, for all the consequences of the armed conflict. This Fund will compensate as a priority, victims identified by the Independent Commission of Enquiry. (PAM 2015)

The provisions here are more detailed in nature and emphasize not only direct assistance, but also reinsertion in economic life. This may create a socioeconomic incentive for refugees to return, and thus I include this as a socioeconomic commitment. Yet, I expect that political institutions are needed to create the credibility behind this commitment.

Socioeconomic commitments may specifically address property and property restitution. Property is one of the more important issues facing returnees because without it returnees lack access to shelter and livelihoods. Returnees may need new areas in which to resettle, or may require restitution of their former homes. Commitments such as this are central to refugee concerns. This was the case in Mozambique. Mozambique's General Peace Agreement outlined that refugees would be guaranteed restitution of their property as well guaranteed the right to take legal action to retake it.

(e) Mozambican refugees and displaced persons shall be guaranteed restitution of property owned by them which is still in existence and the right to take legal action to secure the return of such property from individuals in possession of it. (PAM 2015)

Property is often destroyed, taken, and disputed. Thus, resolution of property rights should be an important socioeconomic incentive for return. I include this as a socioeconomic commitment, yet I expect that political institutions will provide credibility to these commitments and drive returns more so than the specific commitment.

Finally, socioeconomic commitments cover vulnerable groups such as women. Refugees are often made up of the most vulnerable in society. Women and children may return without equal access to political and economic life. Thus, agreements that address these vulnerable groups should provide incentive for return. Burundi's agreement made specific guarantees to women, by granting them equal access to socioeconomic commitments. Burundi's Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement sought specifically to avoid discrimination against women in resettlement and reintegration.

- (c) Return must be voluntary and must take place in dignity with guaranteed security, and taking into account the particular vulnerability of women and children;
- (h) In the return of the refugees and the resettlement and reintegration of the returnees and displaced and regrouped persons, the principle of equity, including gender equity, must be strictly applied in order to avoid any measure or treatment that discriminates against or favours any one among these categories. (PAM 2015)

Because returning refugees are often groups that consist of vulnerable populations that are discriminated against, provisions that ensure anti-discrimination should provide an important incentive for return. For this reason I include provisions like this under socioeconomic commitments. However, as stated, I expect that political institutions are needed to provide credible commitment to provisions such as these. I examine the aggregate measure of socioeconomic commitments because I want to capture the larger incentive, and because the commitments are often closely tied to each other.

As discussed in the theoretical section, one might expect that the detail and commitment type matters for increasing the level of return. It makes intuitive sense that having more detailed commitments, or more commitments overall would encourage and facilitate return. However, these commitment types provide no leverage for explaining refugee return because they fail to credibly commit the government to enacting them. While leaders can make these promises, they face no repercussions for breaking them. Without punishment for renegeing, commitments may not become policy. The following statistical models provide evidence for these hypotheses.

5.4 Results of Non-Credible Commitment Models

I now turn to evaluation of the specific provision types. In this chapter I use the same country-level and dyad-level datasets that I used in Chapter 4. The models are the same: cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models. I also use the same set of variables to establish constraint-type as I did in the general models in Chapter 4: democracy, opposition vote share and power sharing. I use the number of returnees as the dependent variable and the number of refugees as the exposure. I control for violence and economic opportunity, and where applicable, distance. For a larger discussion of these models, see Chapter 4. Here I simply make the addition of the provision types to the datasets to evaluate their importance.

Summary of Variables in Country-level Dataset:

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Returnees	400	22035.48	109358.00	0.00	1410782.00
Refugees	470	121409.40	243717.00	1.00	2257573.00
Socioeconomic					
Provisions	483	0.44	0.50	0.00	1.00
Security Provisions	318	0.47	0.50	0.00	1.00
Total Provisions	318	2.37	2.27	0.00	7.00
Democracy	432	0.39	0.49	0.00	1.00
Executive Electoral					
Competitiveness	458	5.42	2.05	1.00	7.00
Parties in Legislature	432	1.61	0.72	0.00	2.00
Legislative Electoral					
Competitiveness	458	5.83	1.92	1.00	7.00
Opposition Vote Share	483	14.98	19.79	0.00	75.10
Power Sharing	483	0.35	0.48	0.00	1.00
Conflict	460	0.29	0.45	0.00	1.00
Log GDP per Capita	446	6.37	1.12	4.17	9.67

The models provided below present the statistical evidence following the coding of refugee agreement provisions. As noted in the table, I use aggregated measures for security and socioeconomic commitments. I also include a measure for “total commitments” which is the total number of disaggregated commitments. This allows for an examination of the intuition that more commitments of either socioeconomic or security nature should provide incentive to return home. Ultimately I argue that these are not credible commitments. Credible commitments must come through political institutions that provide constraint on the ability to renege.

5.4.1 Assistance Commitments and Executive Constraints

I now turn to evaluating the aspects of the agreement in terms of direct constraints on the executive. My hypothesis is that credible commitments given through direct

constraint on the executive are needed to increase refugee return. The type of provision or the amount of provisions in the agreement should not matter because they are not credible on their own. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provisions, security provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return. For simplicity, in this model I use democracy to incorporate direct constraints on the executive. The results are listed in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	-0.141 (0.196)		
Security Provisions		0.0875 (0.196)	
Total Provisions			0.0257 (0.0431)
Democracy	0.497*** (0.167)	0.465*** (0.176)	0.467*** (0.173)
Conflict	-0.850*** (0.177)	-0.691*** (0.176)	-0.679*** (0.178)
GDP per Capita	-0.173** (0.0791)	-0.154* (0.0796)	-0.150* (0.0802)
Constant	-11.10*** (0.556)	-11.36*** (0.571)	-11.41*** (0.578)
ln_r	0.545 (0.472)	0.499 (0.464)	0.473 (0.471)
ln_s	10.58*** (0.678)	10.48*** (0.668)	10.45*** (0.682)
Observations	248	247	247
Number of PAID	22	22	22
Fixed Effects	No	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1655	-1643	-1643
Chi Square	32.50	23.20	23.21

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

These results suggest support for my hypothesis that direct constraints on the executive provide the credible commitment for refugee return as opposed to the specific provisions in the refugee agreement. I expected that such refugee agreement provisions would not contribute to refugee return because of their lack of credibility.

In Model 1 in Table 5.1, socioeconomic commitments are not significant in explaining variation in return. However, holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy results in a 64% increase in the rate of return as compared to non-democracies. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 2 of Table 5.1, I find that security commitments likewise are not significant in explaining variation in return. Again, holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy results in a 59% increase in the rate of returns as compared to non-democracies. This is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 3 in Table 5.1, I find that more commitments do not lead to statistically significant greater rates of return. Holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy results in a 60% increase in the rate of return as compared to non-democracies. This is significant at the 99% confidence level.

Thus, as hypothesized, it is more important to have the institutions that constrain the executive directly than it is to have security, socioeconomic, or more total non-credible provisions included in the refugee agreement. The agreement means nothing unless the credibility of the provision is established through strong constraints on the executive. Democracy is significant in each model and predicts return.

As with previous models in Chapter 4, the effect of violence still significantly predicts lower rates of return. This is expected. As with the same previous models, the effect of increased GDP per capita results in lower rates of return. This is unexpected, and may be due to factors including the need for capital to return. However, the important result is that constraining institutions cannot be overlooked in explaining refugee return rates. While other factors – such as violence – may continue to be important, they do not explain the whole story. Commitments made to returnees must be credible.

5.4.2 Assistance Commitments and Legislative Constraints

I now turn to evaluating provisions in the agreement in the context of legislative credible commitments: legislative constraints on the executive. My hypothesis is that credible commitments through legislative constraints will lead to greater returnees regardless of the type of provision or the amount of provisions in the agreement. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provisions, security provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return. For simplicity, in this model I use opposition vote share as the credible commitment via legislative constraints on the executive. The results are summarized in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	-0.310 (0.216)		
Security Provisions		-0.146 (0.183)	
Total Provisions			-0.0169 (0.0412)
Opposition Vote Share	0.0148*** (0.00381)	0.0118*** (0.00390)	0.0114*** (0.00385)
Conflict	-0.835*** (0.182)	-0.660*** (0.175)	-0.660*** (0.176)
GDP per Capita	-0.119 (0.0760)	-0.210*** (0.0780)	-0.200** (0.0780)
Constant	-11.38*** (0.538)	-10.89*** (0.549)	-10.99*** (0.559)
ln_r		0.544 (0.453)	0.547 (0.454)
ln_s		10.51*** (0.640)	10.51*** (0.638)
Observations	268	268	268
Number of PAID	22	23	23
Fixed Effects	Yes	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1472	-1731	-1731
Chi Square	41.73	26.49	26.18

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

These results suggest support for my hypothesis. In Model 1 of Table 5.2, socioeconomic commitments are not statistically significant. They do not lead to increased refugee return. However, holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share in the legislature results in a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 2 in Table 5.2, security commitments are not statistically significant, as expected. However, holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share results in a

1% increase in the rate of return. This is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 3 in Table 5.2, I find that more specific commitments of assistance do not lead to greater levels of return. The total provisions variable is statistically insignificant. However, holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share leads to a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. These results suggest that the credible commitment formed through legislative constraints on the executive is more important at explaining increased rates of refugee return than any specific provision type.

In these models – as with the first set – the occurrence of conflict results in statistically significant lower rates of return. Furthermore, in models 2 and 3 higher GDP per capita leads to lower rates of return. These results are similar to what has been found thus far. Again, I emphasize that the important aspect is that constraints on the executive appear to explain higher rates of return even when controlling for these alternative explanations. This suggests that the importance of constraints on the executive cannot be overlooked.

5.4.3 Assistance Commitments and Power Sharing Constraints

I now turn to evaluating the aspects of the agreement in terms of credible commitments created through power sharing constraints on the executive. My hypothesis is that constraints on the executive through power sharing will lead to greater returnees regardless of the provision type or the amount of provisions in the agreement. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provisions, security

provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return. The results are in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	-0.119 (0.218)		
Security Provisions		-0.300 (0.187)	
Total Provisions			-0.0353 (0.0467)
Power Sharing	0.728*** (0.192)	0.610*** (0.179)	0.692*** (0.198)
Conflict	-0.935*** (0.179)	-0.797*** (0.178)	-0.845*** (0.184)
GDP per Capita	-0.0897 (0.0784)	-0.205*** (0.0783)	-0.100 (0.0799)
Constant	-11.76*** (0.555)	-10.89*** (0.554)	-11.64*** (0.577)
ln_r		0.664 (0.449)	
ln_s		10.65*** (0.631)	
Observations	268	268	267
Number of PAID	22	23	22
Fixed Effects	Yes	No	Yes
Log Likelihood	-1471	-1729	-1460
Chi Square	39.11	28.18	28.14
Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)			
Dependent variable is count of returnees			
Exposure(Refugees)			
Standard errors in parentheses			
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

These results indicate support for my hypothesis. Power sharing institutions provide a positive and significant increase in the level of returnees, while the specific assistance commitments in the refugee agreement are not significant.

In Model 1 of Table 5.3, socioeconomic commitments are not significant in explaining variation in return. However, holding all else constant, the effect of having power sharing arrangements in a post-conflict country results in a 106% increase in the rate of return as compared to countries not having power sharing arrangements. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 2 in Table 5.3, security commitments are not significant in explaining variation in return. However, holding all else constant, the effect of having power sharing arrangements in a post-conflict country results in a 84% increase in the rate of return as compared to countries not having power sharing arrangements. This is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. In Model 3 in Table 5.3, I find that more provisions of assistance do not lead to greater levels of return. Total commitments are statistically insignificant. Holding all else constant, the effect of having power sharing arrangements in the post-conflict country results in a 100% increase in the rate of return as compared to countries that do not have power sharing arrangements. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. These results suggest support for my hypothesis that credible commitments via power sharing constraints on the executive drive returns rather than specific refugee agreement commitments.

As with the previous models, the occurrence of conflict is associated with lower rates of return. Increased GDP per capita shows mixed results in these models. However, again I emphasize that the constraints via power sharing arrangements hold explanatory power even when controlling for these alternative explanations. The importance of such constraints cannot be overlooked.

5.4.4 Assistance Commitments General Model

I now turn to a general model to isolate the effect of each provision while holding constant the others. I also include the different measures of constraint on the executive – direct, legislative, and power sharing – so as to isolate those effects. This evaluation isolates for the effect of each provision and constraint type. The results are found in the Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	-0.503 (0.340)
Security Provisions	-0.529* (0.314)
Total Provisions	0.135 (0.0822)
Democracy	0.246 (0.189)
Opposition Vote Share	0.0119*** (0.00435)
Power Sharing	0.441* (0.231)
Conflict	-0.640*** (0.194)
GDP per Capita	-0.239*** (0.0842)
Constant	-10.76*** (0.589)
ln_r	0.408 (0.481)
ln_s	10.24*** (0.737)
Observations	247
Number of PAID	22
Fixed Effects	No
Log Likelihood	-1633
Chi Square	46.70

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

These results suggest some support for my hypotheses. I expected that socioeconomic commitments, security commitments, and total commitments would not achieve statistical significance because they are not credible. Neither socioeconomic nor total guarantees reached significance. However, security guarantees appear to have an effect when isolating its effect in regard to all other factors. Surprisingly, this effect is negative. Holding all else constant, having security guarantees in the agreement results in a 41% decrease in the level of returnees. This is significant at the 90% confidence level, which is less than what is typically desired. Yet, it suggests that perhaps – when considering all other factors – certain commitment types might actually lead to less return. This result suggests that perhaps refugees perceive provision promises as threats if they are not backed up by democratically constraining institutions. Such promises might only signal a regime that is pandering to the international community in cases where the constraint types are not present. Regardless, the constraint types continue to show some evidence of importance.

I expected that democracy, opposition vote share, and power sharing constraints would result in an increase in the level of returnees due to their creation of credible commitments towards the provisions listed. Credible commitments via opposition vote share and power sharing maintain their statistically significant effects. However, it appears that credible commitments via democracy may not be as important in relation to the specific commitment types.

Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share results in a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level, showing strong support for this variable. Meanwhile, the effect of having a power sharing arrangement results in a 55% increase in the rate of return, holding all else constant. However, this is significant at the 90% confidence level. This is not quite as high as is typically accepted, but does show some support for this hypothesis.

Thus, when considered in a general model that isolates the effect of each type of constraint, credible commitments are still positive and significant drivers of refugee return. While some credible commitment mechanisms provide stronger support than others, this fact cannot be overlooked. Contrary to expectations, it appears that security commitments might effect the level of return, albeit negatively. Nonetheless, the effect of the guarantees does not surpass the 95% confidence level.

From here I turn to an evaluation of these models at the dyad-year level. This allows for incorporation of the country of asylum in the model. After the presentation of these models, I will discuss the overall results of the effect of the refugee agreement provisions.

5.4.5 Assistance Commitments and Executive Constraints by Dyad

I now turn to evaluating agreement commitments in terms of direct constraints on the executive, when considered between the dyad of asylum and home country. The dataset for evaluating these is the same dyad level dataset as used in Chapter 4. The models are cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models and all variables are

the same. However, this time I add the provision variables. The table below summarizes the variables used in this evaluation. For further discussion see Chapter 4.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Returnees	2136	378.80	3787.01	0.00	82000.00
Refugees	2136	1751.96	14652.69	1.00	352640.00
Socioeconomic Provisions	2136	0.08	0.27	0.00	1.00
Security Provisions	2136	0.53	0.50	0.00	1.00
Total Provisions	2136	1.03	0.99	0.00	4.00
Democracy	1796	0.01	0.62	-1.00	1.00
Executive Electoral Competitiveness	2126	-0.69	2.45	-6.00	6.00
Parties in Legislature	1796	0.04	0.51	-1.00	2.00
Legislative Electoral Competitiveness	2127	-0.43	2.12	-6.00	6.00
Opposition Vote Share	2128	-6.70	32.81	-83.55	75.10
Power Sharing	2136	0.68	0.49	-1.00	1.00
Log GDP per Capita	2123	-2.88	1.68	-6.15	1.87
Conflict	2136	0.02	0.44	-1.00	1.00
Distance	2136	52.33	36.90	0.00	191.75

My hypothesis is that credible commitments to refugees in the home country as opposed to the country of asylum will lead to greater returnees regardless of the type of assistance provision in the refugee agreement or the amount of provisions provided. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provisions, security provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return between dyads. For simplicity, in this model I use democracy as a control to incorporate direct constraints on the executive. The results are summarized in Table 5.5:

Table 5.5

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	---		
Security Provisions	---	-1.910*** (0.316)	
Total Provisions	---		-0.756*** (0.199)
Democracy	---	0.882*** (0.143)	0.617*** (0.149)
Conflict	---	-0.198 (0.135)	-0.465*** (0.157)
GDP per Capita	---	-0.0170 (0.138)	-0.118 (0.121)
Distance	---	0.0808*** (0.0184)	0.0571*** (0.0105)
Constant	---	-9.277*** (0.265)	-9.643*** (0.273)
ln_r		-1.880*** (0.138)	-1.852*** (0.134)
ln_s		-2.977*** (0.321)	-2.491*** (0.307)
Observations		1,789	1,789
Number of Dyads		433	433
Fixed Effects		No	No
Log Likelihood		-1617	-1625
Chi Square		216.1	202.5

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results show some support for my hypothesis. Model 1 in Table 5.5 would not converge. This suggests a number of factors might be affecting the outcome. The peace agreement variables do not vary within cases, and because they are measured for only the country of origin side of the dyad in these network models, this results in a limited number of observations available for the model. Increased observations in future research might address this issue. Furthermore, the dyad level data has an

increased level of zeros in the dependent variable, returnees. A more appropriate model may be a zero-inflated negative binomial model, which is explored in the appendix to this chapter.

Nonetheless, the models that do converge suggest some support for my hypotheses, and suggest that provisions on their own may even provide negative signals to refugees. Holding all else constant, security provisions for refugees in peace agreements are associated with an 85% decrease in the rate of return, significant at the 99% confidence level. This suggests that in the absence of credible commitments via institutions that constrain the executive, the provisions themselves may actually be seen as a threat to refugees. Returnees perceive that they cannot trust promises that are made without credibility.

Meanwhile, the constraining institutions that provide credibility to promises continue to lead to refugee return. Holding all else constant, democracy leads to a 142% increase in the level of returnees, significant at the 99% confidence level. Again this suggests that even if security commitments themselves do not lead to an increase in returns, returns are higher when the country of origin makes a credible commitment by having greater constraints on the executive than the country of asylum.

In Model 3 in Table 5.5, holding all else constant, more total commitments of assistance are associated with a 53% decrease in the level of returnees, significant at the 99% confidence level. Again, this suggests that in the absence of institutions that

provide constraints on the executive, such provisions may actually be perceived as a threat to refugees. Refugees may perceive that such promises are likely to be broken without meaningful constraints on the executive. Holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy is an 85% increase in the rate of return as compared to non-democracies. This suggests support for my hypothesis that returns are higher when the country of origin has greater constraints on the executive than the country of asylum – and that this is true regardless of provision type.

5.4.6 Assistance Commitments and Legislative Constraints by Dyad

I now turn to evaluating credible commitments to refugee agreements in terms of legislative constraints on the executive in the country of origin versus the country of asylum. My hypothesis is that greater legislative constraints on the executive in the country of origin will lead to greater returnees regardless of the type of provision type or the amount of provisions in the agreement. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provision, security provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return. For simplicity, in this model I use opposition vote share in the legislature in the country of origin as compared to the country of asylum to evaluate credible commitments by the executive. Table 5.6 provides the results of this analysis.

Table 5.6

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	0.901* (0.489)		
Security Provisions		-1.517*** (0.350)	
Total Provisions			-0.486*** (0.120)
Opposition Vote Share	0.00994*** (0.00185)	0.0116*** (0.00212)	0.0109*** (0.00204)
Conflict	-0.939*** (0.113)	-0.509*** (0.171)	-0.719*** (0.129)
GDP per Capita	0.156 (0.0956)	0.113 (0.106)	0.0848 (0.0998)
Distance	0.0498*** (0.0101)	0.0608*** (0.0182)	0.0516*** (0.00947)
Constant	-10.18*** (0.131)	-9.047*** (0.240)	-9.567*** (0.181)
ln_r	-1.753*** (0.124)	-1.789*** (0.129)	-1.807*** (0.123)
ln_s	-1.951*** (0.369)	-2.437*** (0.502)	-2.074*** (0.325)
Observations	2,118	2,118	2,118
Number of Dyads	529	529	529
Fixed Effects	No	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1881	-1868	-1874
Chi Square	188.9	208.0	198.1

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

These models provide conflicting evidence on the importance of specific provisions for refugee return. In Model 1 of Table 5.6, holding all else constant, the effect of having socioeconomic guarantees in the refugee agreement is a 146% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 90% confidence level, which is lower than is typically accepted. However, it suggests some doubt that socioeconomic provisions do not lead to return. However, holding all else constant, the effect of each percentage

point increase in opposition vote share is a 1% increase in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. This suggests that regardless of the socioeconomic commitment, the level of legislative constraint on the executive in the country of origin is an important factor in predicting refugee return.

For Models 2 and 3, I again find that provisions actually lead to a decrease in the level of returns. As discussed, this could be due to the perception that governments are unable to keep their promises without credible commitments via institutions. In Model 2 in Table 5.6, holding all else constant, having security provisions in the refugee agreement leads to a 78% decrease in the rate of return. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. However, opposition vote share also continues to be statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. Each percentage point increase in opposition vote share is associated with about a 1% increase in the rate of return, holding all else equal. This again suggests that rather than security commitments resulting in higher return, greater legislative constraints in the country of origin lead to higher levels of return. In fact, security provisions in the absence of credible institutions may discourage refugees from returning.

In Model 3 in Table 5.6, a greater number of provisions for refugee assistance leads to a 38% decrease in the rate of return, holding all else constant. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. Again, opposition vote share maintains its statistical significance at the 99% confidence level, leading to a 1% increase in the rate of return holding all else equal. This suggests that having more total commitments does not

lead to higher rates of return. Instead, having greater legislative constraints in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum leads to greater returns. This again emphasizes that the commitment must be credible. Indeed, without credible commitments, increased provisions for assistance may discourage return.

5.4.7 Assistance Commitments and Power Sharing by Dyad

I now turn to evaluating credible commitments to the refugee agreement in terms of power sharing constraints on the executive. My hypothesis is that greater power sharing constraints on the executive in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum will lead to a higher level of returnees regardless of the type of commitment or the amount of commitments in the agreement. These models measure the effect of socioeconomic provisions, security provisions, and total provisions on the likelihood of return. I use power sharing as the constraint on the executive. These results are summarized in Table 5.7:

Table 5.7

VARIABLES	(1) Returnees	(2) Returnees	(3) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	0.811 (0.496)		
Security Provisions		-1.294*** (0.296)	
Total Provisions			-0.437*** (0.122)
Power Sharing	0.260* (0.139)	0.112 (0.145)	0.112 (0.137)
Conflict	-1.118*** (0.106)	-0.771*** (0.149)	-0.905*** (0.126)
GDP per Capita	0.117 (0.0956)	0.0526 (0.104)	0.0460 (0.100)
Distance	0.0466*** (0.00996)	0.0561*** (0.0120)	0.0492*** (0.00903)
Constant	-10.20*** (0.143)	-9.155*** (0.245)	-9.570*** (0.202)
ln_r	-1.760*** (0.125)	-1.802*** (0.123)	-1.817*** (0.123)
ln_s	-2.033*** (0.358)	-2.476*** (0.349)	-2.180*** (0.305)
Observations	2,123	2,123	2,123
Number of Dyads	531	531	531
Fixed Effects	No	No	No
Log Likelihood	-1904	-1894	-1899
Chi Square	173.7	202.0	188.5

Cross-sectional time-series negative binomial models (xtnbreg)

Dependent variable is count of returnees

Exposure(Refugees)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

This model provides some support for my hypothesis that commitments must be credible to drive refugee return. Socioeconomic provisions in the refugee agreement are not statistically significant at predicting refugee return. However, power sharing leads to a 30% increase in the rate of return, holding all else constant. This is significant at the 90% confidence level. This is lower than the conventional 95%

confidence level, but does provide some evidence that power sharing matters more than socioeconomic provisions for encouraging returns.

As with the previous table, Models 2 and 3 show that specific provisions may discourage returns. In Model 2, security commitments lead to a 73% decrease in the rate of return, holding all else constant. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. This again suggests that security commitments without constraining government institutions to provide credible commitments might actually discourage returns. In this model, power sharing is not statistically significant. While the effect of power sharing goes away when considering security provisions, the security provisions themselves do not lead to increased return.

In Model 3 in Table 5.7, more provisions of refugee assistance lead to a 35% decrease in the rate of return, holding all else constant. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. This suggests that without credible commitments to uphold the provisions via government institutions that constrain the executive, refugees may actually be discouraged from returning even when promises are made. Such promises are not credible and may even be seen as a threat. In Model 3, power sharing loses its significance as well. The credible commitment made via power sharing loses its explanatory effect when considered in terms of the total number of commitments made – but the total number of commitments lead to less refugee return.

Considered in these models, the effect of the control variables remains much the same as before. Occurrence of violence leads to less returns, and increased distance leads to greater returns. GDP per capita is not overwhelmingly influential for returns in these models. However, a new trend is emerging: some provision types may lead to a decrease in rates of return when holding constraint type constant. This suggests not that constraints do not matter, but in fact they may be specific signals not to return if they are not backed up by the credibility of constraints on the executive.

5.4.8 Assistance Commitments and Constraints by Dyad – General Model

The dyad-level data does not allow me to consider a model in which I can isolate for the effect of each provision type and constraint type. With all explanatory variables present in the model, the model will not converge using the previous model parameters. This emphasizes the importance of model specification. As mentioned, this could be due to the low number of observations, the lack of within-country variation in peace agreements, and the lack of data on promises made in the asylum country. This results in a large number of zeros in the data. In the appendix, I address these issues using zero-inflated negative binomial models to account for over-inflation of zeros and the resultant lack of variation across dyads in the dependent variable.

5.5 Discussion

The results of this chapter show some support for my hypotheses. While it makes intuitive sense that provision commitments should be a major draw for refugees when deciding whether to return, the actual levels of return are not strongly associated with

specific commitments in the agreement. Instead, returns are more likely to occur when strong institutional constraints are placed on the executive, creating a credible commitment.

The results in the general model at the country level (5.4.4) show that some constraints on the executive may have a stronger influence than others. While the loss of significance for the democracy variable casts some doubt on that constraint, the continued significance of opposition vote share and power sharing arrangements suggest overall support for the hypothesis that constraints on the executive leads to higher levels of return.

In the results of the models at the dyad level, a trend began to emerge where some provisions actually led to decreased rates of returns when controlling for constraint type. This suggests stronger evidence that provision types are not the answer. Provisions and the promises that they hold must be backed up with credibility provided by constraints placed on the executive that will punish broken promises.

Thus, I can conclude that specific commitments within refugee agreements are not a significant driver of return. While it makes intuitive sense that commitments would provide incentive for refugees to return, this is not always the case because they lack credibility. Security, socioeconomic, and total number of commitments were not significant predictors of increased rates of return in the models in this chapter. Indeed, some may even be significant predictors of decreased rates of return. What matters

more than provision type is that the provisions are enforced through institutional constraints. (Please see Appendix II for Zero Inflated Models).

Chapter 6: The Journey Home and Beyond

6.1 Conclusion: Credible Commitments and Executive Constraints

I argued that political institutions that place constraints on the executive create a credible commitment for executives to create the conditions required for durable return, and provide a signal to refugees that the return investment is worthwhile. The empirical evidence provides general support for this argument. While other factors such as the end to violence and economic opportunity are important – the existence of credible commitments cannot be overlooked. Additionally, I found that specific commitments in the refugee agreement are not as important as the credibility of the commitment.

The results as pertaining to the effect of direct elections show general support for my hypothesis. The models show a positive effect on the level of return in democracies when measured at the country-year and dyad-year level. These results hold even in the general models that isolate the effect of democracy with other forms of constraint. Additionally, when establishing whether specific provision types mattered for increasing refugee return, democracy continued to show some significance. However, when considering credible commitment type in the general model at the country-year level it was not significant. The overall picture suggests fairly strong support for the idea that having direct constraint on the executive is tied to refugee return. In most models, the constraints placed on the executive via direct elections led to higher rates of return. This suggests that the presence of these institutions provided credibility to

the promises made by the regime, and that this signaled to refugees that return was a viable option.

6.2 Conclusion: Legislative Constraints

The results as pertaining to the effect of legislative constraints on the executive also show general support for my hypotheses. Countries that have an increased opposition vote share in the legislature, or an increased level of competition in the legislature – result in greater levels of refugee return. At the country level, the legislative constraints proved to be significant predictors of refugee return. This held true even in the model that isolated the different commitment types. At the dyad level, the legislative constraints proved to be significant predictors of refugee return.

These results remain as expected when considering commitment types. The commitment types do not predict higher rates of refugee return, while higher levels of opposition vote share continue to predict refugee returns. Overall this suggests support for the argument that legislative constraints provide the type of credibility to the promises that governments make regarding returnees. With increased independence and power of opposition in the legislature, the promises that are made by the regime-owners cannot be broken without repercussion. With this mechanism in play, refugees return at higher rates when opposition legislatures hold more power.

6.3 Conclusion: Power Sharing Constraints

The power sharing constraints on the executive provided some explanatory power, however the results were somewhat mixed. At the country level, having a power

sharing arrangement was a statistically and substantively significant predictor of refugee return. This result held even in the general model that isolated the effect of each type of executive constraint. However, the effect of power sharing when considered in the dyad model was not as straightforward. While significant in the individual model, the effect in the general model was not a significant predictor of higher refugee return rates.

Interestingly, when considering the effect of power sharing in regard to refugee agreement commitment types – the effect of power sharing was a significant predictor of refugee return across all models. Regardless of commitment type, power sharing was a significant predictor of refugee return at both the country level and dyad level. This result held even in the general models that isolated the effect of each constraint type. Thus, I maintain that credible commitments through power sharing cannot be overlooked in explaining refugee return.

6.4 Conclusion: Mechanisms

Constraining institutions encourage two separate factors that lead to higher refugee return. First, constraining institutions create a credible commitment to follow through on the refugee agreement. While a government may sign a peace agreement supporting the policy of creating conditions for return for refugees, they are free to renege on this policy once they have taken power. However, in the context of constraining institutions, this ability to renege becomes less likely. The cost of renegeing increases because of the ability of people to vote out the executive, the

ability of the legislature to block policies or hold the executive accountable, and the ability of veto players to stop reneging.

As a result, when constraining institutions exist, we are more likely to see policies created that result in positive conditions for durable return. Such was the case in Sierra Leone and Liberia – the illustrative cases in which the government created committees and funds that were tasked with handling refugee return.

Secondly, constraining institutions create a signal to refugees that are abroad. When peace breaks out, refugees may desire return. However, if the political situation signals that the leader of the country will be held accountable, refugees will use this information in their decision to return. Refugees will not seek to stay in an asylum country that is uncertain when they could return home to a more certain treatment. Further, refugees will stay in the country of asylum or resettle elsewhere when they find that the political institutions at home do not commit to creating the conditions for durable return.

The illustrative cases in Chapter 3 provided evidence of these mechanisms. The existence of constraining institutions was directly tied to the creation of committees and strategies for addressing the conditions of refugee return. In Sierra Leone, the institutions allowed for the inclusion of interests that desired the creation of the conditions of return for refugees. However, in Djibouti, the lack of institutions that placed constraint on the executive meant that the executive was able to not follow

through without consequence. This provides an example of a regime that broke its promise. Without institutions to punish, there was no consequence for doing so. The evidence from the statistical analysis largely backed these intuitions.

6.4 Policy Implications

The implications of this research can inform policy decisions. Policy makers might better address refugee crises if focus is placed not only on ending the conflict, but on creating credible commitments to refugees that their needs will be addressed. Policy makers can support institutions that credibly commit governments to creating the conditions necessary for return. Without tending to these issues, policy makers may miss a large driver of returns.

Largely, the findings suggest that refugee return is subject to factors that might be outside the control of NGOs and policy makers seeking to address refugee crises. However, understanding the realities should provide grounds for better addressing the needs of returnees. If peace is seen not as the only end but an important first step, then policy makers can make sure to aim focus towards specific returnee needs in the aftermath of conflict.

Post-conflict peacebuilding can focus not only on peacekeepers that deliver security or economic investment for rebuilding that produces growth, but such peace builders can also focus on projects that create credible commitments for returnees. Much focus has been placed on how to deliver aid to returnees. However, by placing an equal

focus on the credible commitments that foster durable returns, policy makers may better be able to assist citizens and to succeed in alleviating displacement.

6.5 Durable Solutions to Refugee Crises: Challenges and Future Research

The journey home is an important aspect of refugee crises that deserves more widespread attention. Often the focus is on addressing the needs of refugees in refugee camps or as world countries seek to resettle them. When return is discussed, it is often in terms of ending the conflict. This project has shown that ending the conflict is only the first step in fostering refugee return. Thus, durable solutions to refugee crises must focus not only on ending conflicts, but also on establishing institutional conditions that will enable for refugee inclusion in society and for the creation of conditions that address refugee needs. Here I briefly discuss further challenges that face those seeking to assist returnees, and how future research might address it.

Reintegration

Achieving a larger level of refugee returns is only the first step in creating durable solutions for displacement. Even after return, and in the context of government assistance, reintegration can be difficult. Often, return can result in only further internal displacement within the home country, as returnees have trouble reintegrating and resettling. Observers note that until recently the UNHCR often measured “success” in terms of “timely provision of physical transportation and relocation of exiles rather than the subsequent process of reintegrating them into society” (Arowolo 2000, 60). Success in terms of reintegration requires knowledge of the conditions

under which and the community in which returnees live (Arowolo 2000). Future research might focus on this ability to reintegrate.

In recent years, policy makers have made such concerns their focus. In 2004 the UNHCR released a handbook outlining activities that would enable durable returns. The UNHCR recommends that four main categories be addressed: physical safety, legal safety, material safety, and reconciliation (UNHCR 2004). This research project finds that constraining institutions are more likely to result in higher return because of a commitment to create these conditions. However, the existence of these conditions can use more study as additional data becomes available.

Data regarding the conditions that returnees experience is often difficult without tracking each returnee. Yet it is often difficult to track the status of individuals as they return back to the country, due to the lack of services and nature of such movements. Further, such tracking is likely to be expensive. Perhaps as data becomes more available, this challenge can be met. However, alternatives might exist. Community level data could be used to examine the conditions that are generally applied to the areas of return. Thus, data gathered on public services and public opinion may be valuable for meeting this challenge. Future research could help to predict where governments are best able to deliver services, and where returnees are best able to rebuild their livelihoods. Gaining an understanding of this process will allow policy makers to step past merely achieving return and step towards addressing the process of reintegration.

Additionally, return is not always the most favorable option. This research has noted that without proper institutions, refugees do not and perhaps should not return home. This presents a policy challenge as governments must then seek to do what is best for refugees. Often, policy makers urge refugees to return home even when conditions are not best for return (Fagen 2011). Sometimes the only source of services is from the international community, as governments do not provide economic, security or basic services (Fagen 2011).

Returns may also exacerbate problems, which should be the focus of future research. Some evidence suggests that returns – when done in suboptimal conditions – contribute to only further strains on the government. For example, in Afghanistan, a country with suboptimal conditions for returnees – corruption and lack of rule of law is widespread, security has deteriorated, shelter is scarce, disputes over land ownership have grown, and internal displacement is common as returnees struggle to earn a living (Schmeidl and Maley 2008).

This project has provided an initial step towards understanding refugee returns. It seeks to examine the conditions under which refugees are more likely to return. Yet it does little to address the rest of the process: how returnees reintegrate following their return home.

Programs

While this project found that commitments lacked meaning with credible commitments, left unanswered is how commitments backed by credible institutions can best improve returnee lives. Future research may examine the types of government programs that are best able to address returnee concerns. Future research should help returnee programs to predict returnee needs and supply the tools necessary to those assisting returnees. Programs in this regard can consist of giving assistance to returnees until such a time as they can rebuild, and the development of urban planning and development strategies to deal with an influx in people and economic opportunities in both rural and urban areas. Such programs need to have a long-term focus. Too often, the focus is on the short-term emergency while the long-term strategy for integration is ignored (Fagen 2011).

6.6 Conclusion

The world of refugees is a difficult one. Refugees face problems ranging from the humanitarian to the political. This dissertation hopes to address some of the political difficulties that refugees face on their journey home. With an increased focus on the ability of governments to deliver services to returnees including physical, economic, and social securities – the resolution to crises of displacement is more likely to be effective and efficient.

Margaret Levi notes that one of the defining problems in modern political science is how to build effective governments (2006). She notes that we are particularly adept at explaining how governments break down, but that we lack a complete understanding of how to build them back up. In effect, she argues that we need to know how to

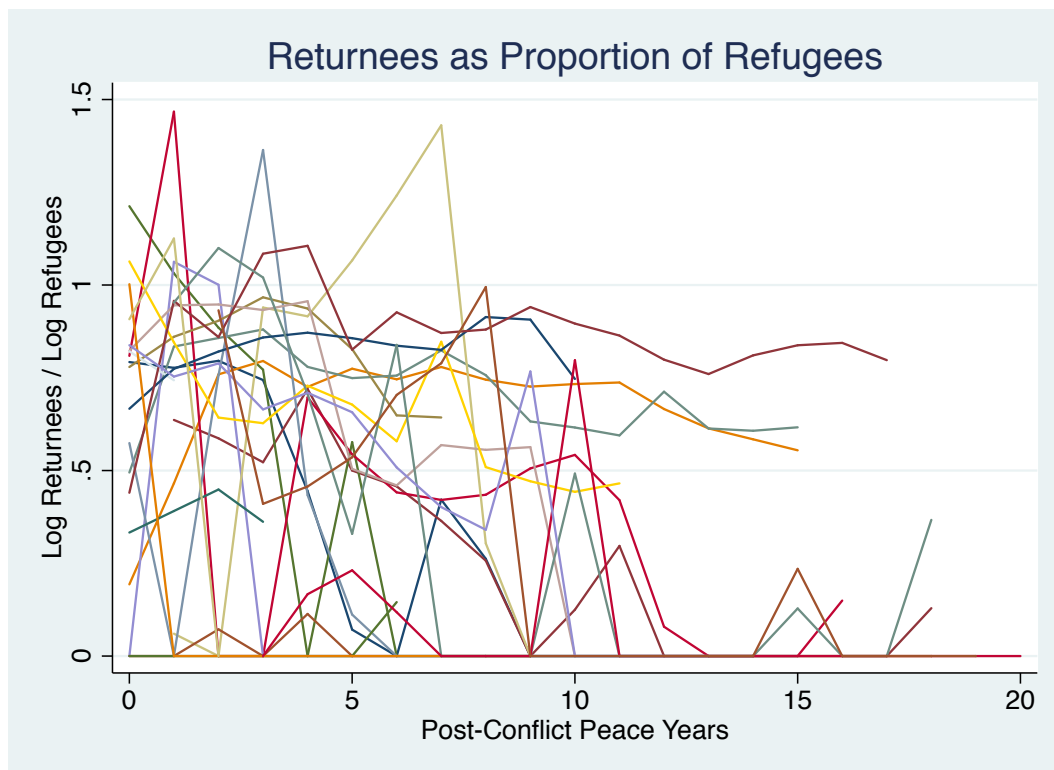
“transform governments that have failed their citizens abysmally into governments that protect their citizens, provide them with health, education, infrastructure and other public goods” (Levi 2006, 6). It is with this concern that I hope to have made a contribution. By examining the models that show increased return – I am defining a model that explains how governments can turn from one that was unable to accomplish its most basic task – protecting its citizens – to one that encourages these same citizens to return and creates the conditions that allow them to rebuild their livelihoods.

Protecting refugees is one of the most basic tasks that post-conflict governments can do. Refugees are among the world’s most vulnerable people. Fleeing death, many refugees face difficulty in finding conditions that allow for their livelihood. Perhaps with an increased focus on durable solutions to refugee crises, data-backed solutions can provide a way forward.

Appendices

Appendix I

In Chapter 3, Figure 3.3 depicts returnees as a proportion of refugees. However, for sake of clarity I omitted cases where there were more returnees than refugees in a country-year. However, this did occur in some cases. This might occur due to a higher level of refugees that were created and returned during the year – since returns are measured as total returns over the year, and stock is measured as total refugees at the end of the year. This is not the general trend, but a few cases like this exist. The figure below depicts this:



Appendix II

Returnees as a dependent variable contain many instances of zero. This is due to the fact that – while many refugees exist outside the country – return does not always occur. Sometimes it occurs in very large numbers, and sometimes it is slow and steady. Yet, overall there is often a large proportion of the time that returns are zero. In my country-level dataset, zero makes up 38% of the density of returnees. In the dyad-level dataset, zero makes up 90% of the density of returnees. This high level of zeros – particularly in the dyad-level dataset – can cause problems. As I added more variables to the dyad-level dataset in Chapter 5, some models began not to converge. This could be due to the over-inflation of zeros. To correct for this, a zero-inflated negative binomial model can be used. In this appendix, I explore a few of the key models using zero-inflated negative binomial models.

Zero-inflated negative binomial models specify two models. The first model, labeled “Inflate” is the model predicting the likelihood of being almost a “certain-zero”. Given this, the model then predicts the rate of return given those who are not predicted to be certain-zeros. The intuition behind this is explained by the following example. Consider counts of daily cigarette usage. Many respondents have zero, yet some cases are because the respondent never smokes, while other cases are because the smoker did not smoke that day. Zero-inflated negative binomial models aim to predict the people who never smoke, so as to more accurately predict the counts among the overall population. In fact, zero-inflated negative binomial models are used for refugee research, including Moore and Shellman (2007).

To specify the model predicting zero, I included the main explanatory factors that I hypothesized would result in refugee return: executive constraint, violence, economic opportunity, and in the case of dyads – distance. Then I specified the model predicting rate of return. In this model I hypothesized that in addition to these variables, the amount of return in the previous year and the overall number of refugees available would influence rate of return. So rate of return model includes these variables.

Upon use of the zero-inflated negative binomial models, the results of my hypotheses are quite mixed. In some cases general support is provided, but in others significance drops. In some cases the opposite is suggested. In future research, these models will be explored. Here I present some highlights of the zero-inflated negative binomial models.

First I consider constraints in both country-year and dyad-year models, as I explored in Chapter 4. In this appendix, I use opposition vote share for exploration because it is perhaps the most central form of constraint on the executive. Elections may not present an immediate or definite punishment for renegeing. Power sharing arrangements may vary in their ability to provide direct punishment for renegeing. Yet, opposition vote share has the potential for immediate punishment for broken promises and the ability to veto attempts to renege by the executive. Thus, consider the following models of opposition vote share.

VARIABLES	(1) Inflate	(2) Returnees
Opposition Vote Share	-0.0165** (0.00839)	0.000395 (0.00710)
Conflict	-1.455*** (0.561)	0.320 (0.313)
GDP per Capita	0.156 (0.129)	-0.470*** (0.113)
Refugees		4.84e-06*** (8.97e-07)
Lag of Returnees		5.91e-06*** (2.22e-06)
Constant	-1.406 (0.855)	11.04*** (0.764)
Observations	338	338
Log Likelihood	-2332	-2332
Chi Square	117.7	117.7

Zero-Inflated Negative Binomial Model (zinb)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Both models can be interpreted with exponentiation of the coefficient. The first model predicts the likelihood of not being a returnee. Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share in the legislature leads to a 2% decrease in the likelihood of not being a returnee. This is significant at the 95% confidence level. In other words, increased opposition vote share leads to a significantly greater chance that one will be a returnee. This supports my hypothesis. As for the rate of return, opposition vote share is not a significant predictor of rate of return. This does not support my hypothesis. Yet, the fact that one is more likely to be a returnee shows some promise.

The same result holds when considered at the dyad-level. Using the dyad-year dataset I specified the same model – this time with the inclusion of distance as a control. The

results again indicate that opposition vote share in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum increases one's chance of being a returnee, but does not have explanatory power for rate of return.

VARIABLES	(1) Inflate	(2) Returnees
Opposition Vote Share	-0.0334*** (0.00777)	0.00162 (0.00606)
Conflict	1.351 (1.234)	-1.260* (0.685)
GDP per Capita	-1.118*** (0.247)	0.220 (0.180)
Distance	0.0444*** (0.0157)	-0.0599*** (0.0145)
Refugees		0.000119*** (2.83e-05)
Lagged Returnees		0.000206*** (7.36e-05)
Constant	-3.441*** (0.687)	3.811*** (0.315)
Observations	1,567	1,567
Log Likelihood	-1224	-1224
Chi Square	192.9	192.9

Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Model

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in vote share of the opposition in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 3% decrease in the probability of not being a returnee. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. In other words, increase in opposition vote share results in a 3% increase in the probability of being a returnee. However, increase in opposition vote share does not lead to a significantly greater rate of return.

I now highlight some findings related to provision type at the country-year and dyad-year levels. In these models I explore the significance of socioeconomic provisions in

regard to all three types of constraint types. I specified these models similar to the first two in this appendix, except I added the provision type.

At the country-level, socioeconomic provisions provide explanatory power for neither the probability of being a returnee nor the rate of return. However, democracy and opposition vote share hold some explanatory power.

VARIABLES	(1) Inflate	(2) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	-0.0140 (0.375)	-0.239 (0.330)
Democracy	0.425 (0.377)	0.758** (0.363)
Opposition Vote Share	-0.0288* (0.0153)	-0.0101 (0.00836)
Power Sharing	-0.512 (0.366)	-0.266 (0.301)
Conflict	-1.727*** (0.670)	0.267 (0.358)
GDP per Capita	0.179 (0.148)	-0.447*** (0.122)
Refugees		5.07e-06*** (9.21e-07)
Lag of Returnees		6.27e-06*** (2.27e-06)
Constant	-1.460 (1.028)	10.95*** (0.825)
Observations	317	317
Log Likelihood	-2228	-2228
Chi Square	113.4	113.4

Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Model

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The effect of having a democracy on the probability of being a returnee is not significant. However, holding all else equal, the effect of having a democracy results in a 113% increase in the rate of return as compared to non-democracies. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. Further, holding all else equal, the effect of

each percentage point increase in opposition vote share results in a 3% decrease in the likelihood of not being a returnee. This is significant at the 90% confidence level.

This is below conventional confidence levels, but provides some weaker support for the idea that increased opposition vote share leads to a greater likelihood of being a returnee.

I then evaluate this same model in regard to the dyad-level dataset. This evaluates the same set of provisions and constraints as the previous models except that all variables – with the exception of socioeconomic guarantees – are measured as a difference between origin and asylum countries. The results are as follows:

VARIABLES	(1) Inflate	(2) Returnees
Socioeconomic Provisions	7.857*** (2.148)	-0.108 (2.593)
Democracy	-1.295** (0.516)	-0.774* (0.432)
Opposition Vote Share	-0.0209** (0.00878)	0.0109 (0.00760)
Power Sharing	0.194 (0.526)	-0.281 (0.464)
Conflict	2.338* (1.296)	-0.989 (0.724)
GDP per Capita	-0.971*** (0.245)	0.343* (0.179)
Distance	0.0514*** (0.0157)	-0.0560*** (0.0146)
Refugees		8.95e-05*** (2.75e-05)
Lagged Returnees		0.000184*** (5.85e-05)
Constant	-3.041*** (0.786)	4.643*** (0.511)
Observations	1,335	1,335
Log Likelihood	-1109	-1109
Chi Square	176.1	176.1

Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Models

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Holding all else equal, the effect of socioeconomic guarantees in the refugee agreement results in a 2582% increase in the likelihood of not being a returnee. This is significant at the 99% confidence level. Such substantively and statistically high result suggests that socioeconomic guarantees are very much associated with not being a returnee when controlling for constraint types. This again suggests support for the hypothesis that promises made in the absence of the right political institutions are perceived to be false promises or perhaps even threats to returnees. And as hypothesized, the inclusion of socioeconomic guarantees has no effect on the rate of return.

Both democracy and opposition vote share result in statistically significant probabilities of being a returnee. Holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 23% decrease in the likelihood of being a returnee. This is significant at the 95% confidence level. In other words, democracy leads to a statistically significant chance of being a returnee. This supports my hypothesis. However, the model suggests that democracy results in a lower rate of return. Holding all else constant, the effect of having a democracy in the country of origin as opposed to the country of asylum results in a 54% decrease in the rate of return.

Holding all else constant, each percentage point increase in opposition vote share results in a 2% decrease in the likelihood of not being a returnee. This is significant at

the 95% confidence level. In other words, each percentage point increase is associated with a 2% increase in the probability of being a returnee. This supports my hypothesis. However, opposition vote share is not associated with a statistically significant increase in the rate of return. This does not support my hypothesis.

Most of the results follow this trend. Ultimately, there is tentative support for my hypotheses, but some mixed results. It appears that constraining institutions are associated with refugee return at some level – whether it is the probability of being a returnee, or the rate of return. Future research should explore these trends, using the zero-inflated negative binomial model to more accurately predict causal effects on refugee return.

Appendix III

I coded data from text of Peace Agreements using the Peace Agreement Matrix and supplementing with the UCDP Peace Agreement Database when necessary. Below is the codebook for these variables.

Codebook

Country:

IDREF: Did the agreement define who counts as a refugee?

- 0: no
- 1: yes

RETOWN: Did returnees own the process? Agreement specifies they will have input?

- 0: no
- 1: yes

I: ASSISTANCE GUARANTEES

AGUN: Assistance Guarantees: Unspecified. Is “assistance” listed but not specified?

- 0: no
- 1: yes

AGFIN: Assistance Guarantees: Financial

- 1. Coded 1 if assistance is monetary: returnees get actual money

AGPROP: Assistance Guarantees: Property

- 1. Coded 1 if assistance is in terms of property: they actually give or assist in attaining property

AGPOL: Assistance Guarantees: Political/legal

- 1. Coded 1 if assistance is given in terms of establishing political rights for returnees, including legal citizenship

AGDOCS : Guarantees: Documents

- 1. 1 if yes

AGAMN: Assistance Guarantees: /justice/amnesty

- 1. Coded 1 if assistance is in terms of legal/justice/amnesty

AGSEC: Assistance Guarantees: Security

- 1. Coded 1 if assistance is in terms of physical security

AGRESACC: Assistance Guarantees: Resource Access

1. Coded 1 if assistance is in terms of access to resources: water, food, farming, education

AGWOM: Women guarantees

II: OBJECTIVES

OBSEC: objective: security

OBRET: Objective: Return

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for refugees to return to country of origin

OBREINT: Objective: Reintegration

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for refugees to reintegrate in the country

OBRESTL: Objective: Resettlement

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for refugees to resettle in the country

OBPROP: Objective: Property Restitution

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for refugees to get restitution for property

OBRECONC: Objective: Reconciliation

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for reconciliation among returnees

OBQUAL: Objective: Quality of Life

1. Coded 1 if stated objective of agreement is for improved quality of life for returnees

OBCHOI: Objective: give refugees a choice of where to return to

1. Coded 1 if stated objective is to give refugees free choice of where to return

IMPCOM: Implementation Commission

1. Coded 1 if states commission to oversee implementation

IMP3P: Implementation 3rd party

1. Coded 1 if implementation will be assisted by 3rd party

TTABLE: Time Table

1. Coded 1 if states a time table

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