

A stylized world map composed of a grid of small grey dots, serving as a background for the title and authors information.

Democracy Promotion and Electoral Quality: A Disaggregated Analysis

Carie A. Steele, Daniel Pemstein,
Stephen A. Meserve

September 2020

Working Paper

SERIES 2020:107

THE VARIETIES OF DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
DEPT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a new approach to conceptualization and measurement of democracy. The headquarters – the V-Dem Institute – is based at the University of Gothenburg with 19 staff. The project includes a worldwide team with six Principal Investigators, 14 Project Managers, 30 Regional Managers, 170 Country Coordinators, Research Assistants, and 3,000 Country Experts. The V-Dem project is one of the largest ever social science research-oriented data collection programs.

Please address comments and/or queries for information to:

V-Dem Institute

Department of Political Science

University of Gothenburg

Sprängkullsgatan 19, PO Box 711

SE 40530 Gothenburg

Sweden

E-mail: contact@v-dem.net

V-Dem Working Papers are available in electronic format at www.v-dem.net.

Copyright ©2020 by authors. All rights reserved.

Democracy Promotion and Electoral Quality: A Disaggregated Analysis *

Carie A. Steele
Northern Arizona University

Daniel Pemstein
North Dakota State University

Stephen A. Meserve
Texas Tech University

* This research was supported, in part, by: National Science Foundation, Grant SES-1423944; Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Grant M13-0559:1.

Abstract

The international community spends significant sums of money on democracy promotion and support, focusing especially on producing competitive and transparent electoral environments in the developing world. In theory, this aid empowers a variety of actors, increasing competition and government responsiveness. Most efforts to determine the effect of democracy aid, however, have focused on how aggregate measures of democracy, and broad concepts, such as electoral competition or media freedom, respond to aid efforts. We argue that to fully understand the effect of aid on democratization one must consider how democracy aid affects specific country institutions. Building on theory from the democratization and democracy promotion literature, we specify more precise causal linkages between democracy assistance and electoral quality. Specifically, we hypothesize about the effects of democracy aid on the implementation and quality of elections. We test these hypotheses using V-Dem's detailed elections measures, using Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson's (2007) data and modeling strategy, to examine the impact of democracy aid. Intriguingly, we find that there is no consistent relationship between democracy and governance aid and the improvement of specific micro-level indicators of democratic institutions or election quality, but that aggregate measures still capture a relationship between aid and democracy. We then investigate the possibility that empirical relationships between aid and democracy may not reflect aid-induced democratization, but may instead reflect investments countries make in regimes they observe democratizing.

1 Introduction

In the post-Cold War era, democracy promotion has become a key foreign policy objective of developed democracies (Burnell 2005, Carothers 1999, Collins 2009, Ikenberry 2000, Youngs 2002). Yet, the question of whether meaningful democratic change can be promoted through external stimuli remains a matter of scholarly and public debate. Democracy promotion may take a variety of forms, including economic sanctions and rewards—often in the form of preferential trade agreements or economic aid—diplomatic pressure, and even military action. Here, we focus on the effectiveness of foreign aid as a tool to promote democracy.

A growing literature has found that foreign aid is associated with higher levels of democracy under some conditions (Goldsmith 2001, Bermeo 2011, Dunning 2004, Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson 2007, Scott & Steele 2011). While the literature has focused on democracy, writ large, when examining the relationship between democracy promotion and regime quality, we attempt to examine the micro-foundations of this relationship. Specifically, following Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson’s (2007) influential paper, we ask whether democracy promotion works through the empowerment of agents and the building of nut-and-bolts institutions that support democratic process. Specifically, we examine the relationship between democracy aid and the quality of electoral institutions like voting registries and electoral management boards, and between aid and aspects of the electoral process such as suffrage, vote buying and irregularities, voter intimidation, and electoral violence.

While we successfully use new measures to replicate earlier findings that show a positive relationship between democracy aid and aggregate levels of democratic quality, replicating existing results, we find surprisingly little evidence that democracy promotion works by building the institutional capacity necessary for conducting clean and safe elections. Our models cannot establish a robust association between USAID spending on democracy and governance aid and even basic technical capacities such as improved or more autonomous election

management. The mechanisms through which technical foreign aid promotes democracy remain, therefore, troublingly elusive. We speculate that our inability to find a relationship between governance aid and democracy except at the broadest aggregate level (e.g. Polity scores, high aggregate V-Dem indices) may reflect endogenous processes in aid distribution. Specifically, aid-providing countries may identify already democratizing targets and distribute funds to bolster democratization, but may not induce democratization themselves with their programs. We perform preliminary analysis using synthetic control methods that suggests that, indeed, aid may follow broad changes in aggregate democracy rather than building democratic countries from the ground up.

2 Foreign Aid and Democratic Change

Evidence that aid can have a meaningful impact on democratization is inconsistent. Notably, while many scholars provide evidence that aid promotes democracy (Carnegie & Marinov 2017), a variety of studies have found that aid has relatively little effect (Knack 2004), or even a detrimental impact (Brautigam & Knack 2004, Djankov, Montalvo & Raynal-Querol 2008, Knack 2001, Licht 2010) on democratic change and institutional development.

Variation across these findings reflect the diversity of approaches researchers use to identify causal mechanisms by which aid might promote democratic change. Theories of democracy promotion attempt to meld foreign policy and democratization theories in the hope of providing a convincing causal story of how external stimuli influence internal political processes. In doing so, scholars have studied a variety of potential relationships.

Democratization theories generally focus on power relations between the incumbent government and other societal actors such as dissidents or opposition groups, minorities, winning coalitions, civil society groups, and the military (Acemoglu & Robinson 2006, Moore 1966, Ansell & Samuels 2014). Theories of democracy promotion suggest that aid might be used

to directly and indirectly affect these groups' relative power.

Indirectly, foreign aid could be used to promote economic development. A considerable volume of literature links democratization to economic development, suggesting that as populations become wealthier repression becomes more costly (Moore 1966, Acemoglu & Robinson 2006, Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub & Limongi 2000). Likewise, as the wealth of a population grows, it traditionally becomes a source of revenue for governments through taxation unless provided by other, independent, means (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson & Morrow 2003, Stasavage 2003, Robinson 2006, Haber & Menaldo 2011). When governments are dependent upon tax revenue, citizens can demand greater political liberalization. Thus, if foreign aid were to effectively improve economic development, it would be expected to have the indirect effect of promoting democracy. Indeed, several studies suggest that economic aid is correlated with greater democratization. Goldsmith (2001), for example, found that aid is associated with higher levels of democracy. Bermeo (2011) and Dunning (2004) find that, while aggregate aid is not associated with democratic change, aid from democratic donors has a positive impact on regime change and democratic improvements, especially in the post-Cold War era.

These theories assume a causal relationship between taxation and the devolution of power from the regime to citizens. In turn, these arguments suggest that, if a government has an independent source of income and is not dependent upon taxation, there should be no real pressure to make democratic change. In these cases, which echo the resource curse, the financial independence of the government created by foreign aid may help stabilize and entrench authoritarian governments (Djankov, Montalvo & Raynal-Querol 2008, Licht 2010). However, other studies have found that the “free money” effect is conditioned by domestic political factors (Altincekic & Bearce 2014, Bader & Faust 2014, Kono & Montinola 2009) and how aid is delivered. Aid delivered through NGO's or third party partners is likely to have a substantially different impact than direct budgetary assistance (Wright & Winters

2010, Dietrich 2013, Dietrich & Wright 2015).

In addition to these indirect linkages, foreign aid might instead be used directly to support democratization by empowering societal actors. Although many studies examining economic aid and democratization discuss agent empowerment as the primary causal mechanism, most rely on the previously discussed indirect linkages. By contrast, democracy assistance is aid that is designed and allocated specifically to empower specific societal actors and build institutional knowledge and capacity for the purposes of creating democratic change. Governments around the world hope to build democratic institutions and agents from the ground up using foreign aid.

While traditional development aid may further democracy indirectly in the long term, it also may be used to serve a variety of foreign policy objectives. Thus, it is generally difficult to track its use and evaluate its impact on democracy, either positive or negative. Democracy assistance, on the other hand, is only intended to support democratization, and thus may be more easily tracked. In addition, the causal mechanisms between democracy assistance and democratic change are more direct than, say, foreign policy objectives. Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) explains: “Targeted democracy assistance, by contrast, works to educate and empower voters, support political parties, labor unions, and womens advocacy networks, strengthen human rights groups, and otherwise build ‘constituencies for reform’; it thus attempts to influence democratic outcomes in both the short term and the medium term.” By empowering domestic actors, institutions, and organizations, democracy assistance attempts to directly alter the power relationship between an incumbent government and key domestic actors, prompting liberalization and democratic opening.

While Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) argue that democracy aid works through “agent empowerment,” Scott & Steele (2011) suggest “anticipated reactions” may also directly influence democratic change. Their argument suggests that democracy assistance encourages recipient governments to implement democracy changes in order to secure further

funding from democratic donors.

Although both Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) and Scott & Steele (2011) find evidence that democracy assistance does promote democracy, a variety of studies suggest that relationship between democracy assistance and democratic change is more complex than the “agent empowerment” and “anticipated reactions” mechanisms suggest. Wright (2009) points out that democracy assistance may be conditioned by recipient participation. Where democracy assistance may seek to fund the administration and holding of free and fair elections, elections may be riskier for some autocrats than others. Wright (2009) argues that in autocracies where elections are riskier, democracy assistance aid will likely be used by the government in a manner in which it will have the least impact: avoiding elections. Thus, according to Wright (2009), democracy assistance should only bolster democratization in instances where the risk of an incumbent losing office is low.

In addition to considering when recipients will accept democracy assistance or not, Bush (2015) argues that the nature of democracy assistance has changed dramatically, making it both more acceptable to authoritarian recipients and less effective. Specifically, Bush (2015) argues that since the end of the Cold War, and especially since the turn of the century, US democracy assistance targeting opposition or dissidents directly has declined dramatically; aid to dissidents has decreased in real dollars and as a proportion of democracy assistance. Instead, aid for what is known as “good governance” has made up an ever increasing proportion of democracy assistance aid. Aid for good governance includes technical support for elections and electoral institutions, support for legislative bodies and training of legislative staff, and promotion of women’s groups. Aid designed to improve governance is less confrontational towards dictators, and focuses on clearly measurable outcomes. This fundamental change in the nature of democracy assistance means that donors are now, more than ever, most focused on attempting to identify the more micro-level causal relationships that promote higher order democratic change.

Technical assistance, “the provision of donor funded personnel to supply missing skills and train local people” (Arndt, 2000, p. 159) is regarded by various aid organizations as a key instrument that enhances governance. Three types of technical assistance predominate. First, aid agencies work to fill knowledge gaps through consultants and advisors. Second, they help with the creation and strengthening of institutions, often by improving bureaucratic function, working to standardize procedures within institutions. Third, agencies train recipient country officials, usually to support oversight or capacity building activities (Arndt, 2000). Technical assistance is believed to create a monitoring effect, giving donors greater oversight when they cannot trust funding and implementation to recipient government agencies (Arndt 2000, Berg 2000, Maipose 2000).

Whether the “taming” of aid produced more or less effective democracy assistance is up for debate. Bush suggests that the taming of democracy assistance has made it less effective in promoting democracy while Gibson, Hoffman & Jablonski (2015) offer evidence that technical aid can be effective. Specifically, Gibson et al argue that, in post-Cold War sub-Saharan Africa, technical assistance increased political concessions by incumbent governments and decreased resources available for patronage. The inconclusive findings within the democracy assistance literature suggest a variety of problems when trying to evaluate the impact of democracy assistance aid. First, while there has been some effort to identify causal linkages between aid and the process of democratization, further theoretical development is needed to better incorporate domestic factors, such as including incorporation of strategic calculations by recipient governments. Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) provided one of the most detailed theoretical explanations for how democracy assistance might affect democratization. However, in the nearly ten years since its publication, limited effort has been made to flesh out the dynamics among donors, recipient governments, and key domestic democratic agents.

Technical theories generally focus on the mobilization and empowerment of a variety of

domestic actors and agents, including opposition forces, civil society, voters, minorities and under-represented groups, and the media. However, most quantitative studies rely on higher level measures of democracy to evaluate the impact of aid. Only a small portion of the literature attempts to tie democracy assistance to mid-level changes as Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) do. Fewer still attempt to tie democracy assistance to micro-level changes or trace micro-level changes to higher order measures of democratic change. Using new data, our study attempts to fill this gap.

Agent empowerment, as described by Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007), forms the foundation of our theory. We start by considering whether democracy assistance promotes democracy by empowering key domestic agents, thereby altering the calculations of the incumbent government. We add empirical depth to a well established argument by incorporating micro-level explanations. As Wright (2009) suggests, recipient governments are active participants in the aid process and may accept or reject democracy assistance. It is unlikely that incumbent governments accept democracy assistance packages that will seriously undermine their political power.

This does not mean that an incumbent authoritarian will reject all democracy assistance, only aid that may pose a threat to their power. Democracy assistance in its current form is rarely of a kind that directly confronts autocrats through the funding of dissidents. As a result, the vast majority of democracy assistance is technical assistance directed at small measurable outcomes. These small measurable objectives are less threatening to autocratic incumbents than opposition cultivation, yet technical assistance that supports voter registration, enables the formation of additional parties, strengthens the electoral management board, and increases the cost of electoral fraud may all increase the likelihood of political reform (Faye & Niehaus 2012, Hyde & Marinov 2014, Resnick & van de Walle 2013). If it does so, it provides an acceptable way for foreign governments to enhance democracy, regardless of regime preferences.

Agent empowerment may take any of several forms. The US Agency for International Development (USAID)—the agency responsible for directing and managing US democracy assistance—identifies two democracy specific development objectives within their “Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance” strategy framework. The first objective is to “promote participatory, representative and inclusive political processes and government institutions” (US Agency for International Development 2013). This includes activities that support the implementation of participatory political processes by state institutions, including advising, training, and financial support for electoral management boards.

The second objective is to “foster greater accountability of institutions and leaders to citizens and to the law” (US Agency for International Development 2013) This objective focuses on activities that support citizen participation, such as voter registration. In addition, it encourages the development of institutions and systems that promote political competition—including the creation and inclusion of political parties—and seeks to assist governments and state institutions by building public trust in government through institutional reform. We use these strategic objectives and their corresponding activities to propose a series of micro-level outcomes that we can examine to test the impact of democracy assistance.

If “agent empowerment” is the primary mechanism through which democracy assistance promotes democratic change in recipient countries, one should expect to observe micro-level changes in democratic agents’ power in addition to previously observed macro-level shifts in aggregate level of democracy. Specifically, one would expect democracy assistance to be correlated with improvements in voter registration, stronger and more autonomous electoral management boards, growth in legal political parties, and less electoral fraud. On the other hand, if democracy aid works primarily through “anticipated reactions,” we might expect to see macro-level shifts in democracy in the absence of such micro-foundations. Similarly, if the relationship between democracy aid and aggregate democratic quality is endogenous

and aid agencies reward states for improvements in democratic function rather than build democracy, we might also see a positive aggregate relationship between aid without also observing a relationship between aid and the effectiveness of the agents and institutions that democracy aid is thought to support.

3 Data and Methods

We use Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson's (2007) modeling strategy as a starting point for our analysis. Building on their dataset, which contains detailed cross-national information on US democracy assistance and recipient country characteristics for the period between 1990 and 2003, we examine the relationship between democracy aid and changes in the quality of the set of micro-level outcomes that we described in the previous section. We specify models that replicate Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson's (2007) specifications using new dependent variables. In particular, we fit hierarchical growth models that are meant to capture and predict differences in the timing and trajectories of recipient country regime characteristics. These models use random intercepts for recipient country with an accompanying year random slope, along with a linear year term. They also adjust errors for heteroscedasticity and a time dependent AR1 error structure. The models contain a set of dynamic, time-varying variables (including the critical measures of U.S. aid behavior), in addition to a series of static country characteristic variables which are allowed to interact with the linear time trend. Instead of predicting traditional democracy variables like Freedom House or Polity, however, we instead begin by examining how both election assistance and aggregate governance aid predict measures of a variety of agent capacities and electoral characteristics. We finish by predicting dependent variables which closely resemble aggregate measures like Policy and Freedom House, replicating Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson's (2007) results.

In order to test the effects of U.S. democracy and governance aid on the empowerment

of micro-level electoral agents/characteristics, we use newly released data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project (Coppedge, Gerring, Lindberg, Skaaning, Teorell, Altman, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Knutsen, Marquardt, McMann, Miri, Paxton, Pemstein, Staton, Tzelgov, Wang & Zimmerman 2018). V-Dem data represent expert rated observations at the country level for virtually all countries, with an extensive timespan. V-Dem uses the assessment of many country expert raters for each observation, scaled together using a Bayesian measurement model (Pemstein, Marquardt, Tzelgov, Wang & Miri 2015, Marquardt & Pemstein In Press), to provide assessments of hundreds of individual country, regime, and election characteristics. Of particular interest for this project, V-Dem coded a number of variables that measure plausible electoral agents/policies that could be directly affected using foreign aid to improve electoral democracy (e.g. election management boards). V-Dem simultaneously incorporates indices measuring high-level, aggregated, characteristics like strength of party competition or free and fair elections indices, allowing us to compare the effect of aid on specific characteristics of electoral democracy along with the effect on high-level assessments of democracy level. In short, the granularity of the data allow us to find out which agents are being empowered and if that empowerment is associated with aggregate level changes in electoral quality and better competitive, multiparty, democracy.¹

First, we use V-Dem’s measurements of several specific electoral institutions that should be directly tied to technical democracy assistance aid as the dependent variable. We use V-Dem variables measuring the accuracy of voting registries in the country (ordinal by assessment of accuracy), de facto suffrage (%), election management board (EMB) autonomy (ordinal by level of autonomy), and electoral management board capacity (ordinal by capacity).² These are the types of observable, nuts and bolts, improvements to democracy that

¹Note that all variables at the election level, which include many of the micro-level data on elections, are only measured for each election. We repeat observations of the last election for any characteristic measured only at election year and repeat it until the next election. We are currently debating alternate ways to handle this issue in future versions of the paper.

²Variables 3.1.12, 3.1.74, 3.1.6, 3.1.7, respectively.

could be directly empowered by technical foreign aid for democracy. They are logical targets for modern, measurable, foreign aid improvements in democracy that empower agents.

We move next to modeling changes in micro-level characteristics of elections themselves. We model changes in the quality of elections using specific characteristics of a country's last election measured by V-Dem: extent of vote buying behavior, incidence of voting irregularities, amount of government intimidation, and level of overall electoral violence, all measured using ordinal assessments.³ Here, we can see if foreign aid affects the propensity of specific maladies that often plague elections in new and developing democracies.

Finally, we model changes in V-Dem's aggregate indices of the quality of democracy in countries. Specifically, we predict how multiparty and competitive a country's last election was, how free and fair, overall, its elections are, and its aggregate quality of electoral democracy using both an institutional and liberal concept of democracy.⁴ The final two variables are of interest because they correspond most closely with the literature at large's aggregate democracy dependent variables represented by Polity or Freedom House. Changes in these variables are simultaneously the most important but also the most causally distant from actual democracy improvement projects because it can be conceptually difficult to associate specific objectives or projects with broad-based changes in the overall level of democracy within a country.

4 Results

Table 1 shows a consistent, surprising trend: democracy and governance aid is not associated with improvements in the specific electoral institutions we might expect to benefit from

³Variables 3.1.21, 3.1.24, 3.1.27, 3.1.30, respectively

⁴Variables 3.21, 2.2.6, 2.1.1, 2.1.2 represent indices scaled together from a number of other extant V-Dem variables to measure a bigger picture concept.

democracy and governance aid projects.⁵ By contrast, democracy measured in its broadest sense does appear to covary with aid disbursements. In fact, the more micro and technical we delve with respect to the dependent variable, the more ambiguous the results. The money toward specific projects that aids the conduct of electoral democracy may be associated with changes in, for example, a broad liberal conception of democracy, but shows no statistically significant effect in predicting improvements in those institutions that directly conduct of elections.⁶

To begin, Models 1-3 trace the most micro-level possible connection between aid and democracy. Specifically, these models include an independent variable from Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) that granularly tracks money disbursed by USAID for projects to assist in the conduct of elections and its covariance with three micro measures of electoral quality: quality of voter registry, and autonomy and capacity of electoral management boards (EMB). These measures are relatively non-political and represent the sort of aid that could be considered purely technical at the project level. The results are inconclusive; electoral project aid is almost completely unrelated to quality of voter registry changes while it is at best only mildly correlated with election management board improvements.

Because it is possible that all kinds of democracy and governance aid, not just election aid, could bolster core electoral functions and institutions, Models 4-7 expand on the previous modelling approach by using a less granular independent variable, all USAID democracy and governance aid. The results of these models suggest that the quality of election registry, the openness of suffrage, and the autonomy and capacity of the electoral management board were not improved by any type of USAID democracy and governance spending. In fact, the measures tracking these agents show few statistically significant improvements from any

⁵For brevity, we simply present the coefficient and standard errors for the democracy and governance aid variables of interest in these tables. See appendix for full results from all models.

⁶Note that all ordinal V-Dem variables (all dependent variables in the paper save suffrage restriction in Model 2) are coded such that positive changes correspond to normatively desirable changes; thus a positive sign for Registry indicates a predicted improvement in the quality and accuracy of the country's voter registry and a positive sign for vote buying indicates a country predicted to have *less* vote buying activity.

Table 1: Predicting Electoral Quality Characteristics with U.S. Elections Aid

Dependent Variable	US Elect Aid	US Election Aid Std Error	US DG Aid	US DG Aid Std Error
Voter Registry (Model 1)	-0.0019	(0.0083)		
EMB Autonomy (Model 2)	0.0241	(0.0169)		
EMB Capacity (Model 3)	0.0213	(0.0130)		
Voter Registry (Model 4)			0.0023	(0.0028)
Suffrage (Model 5)			0.1340	(0.0955)
EMB Autonomy (Model 6)			0.0034	(0.0051)
EMB Capacity (Model 7)			0.0031	(0.0027)
Vote Buying (Model 8)			-0.0033	(0.0021)
Vote Irregularities (Model 9)			-0.0006	(0.0037)
Gov Intimidation (Model 10)			0.0114**	(0.0044)
Election Violence (Model 11)			0.0001	(0.0047)
Multiparty (Model 12)			0.0131**	(0.0043)
Free & Fair (Model 13)			0.0025*	(0.0013)
Polyarchy Index (Model 14)			0.0017*	(0.0007)
Lib Dem Index (Model 15)			0.0016**	(0.0006)

Coefficients and standard errors for democracy and governance aid extracted from full specification tables presented in the appendix. Models 1-3 use a granular independent variable of democracy and governance aid used for election projects, while Models 4-15 use democracy and governance aid overall as the key explanatory variable.

** p-value less than .05

* p-value less than .10

type of foreign aid, technical or non-technical.⁷

Moving to our second type of dependent variables, measuring potential impediments to fully democratic elections, we predict how widespread vote buying, voting irregularities, government intimidation during elections, and electoral violence are using U.S. foreign aid flows and USAID democracy and governance aid in particular. One explanation for our previous results is that while democracy and governance aid may not bolster the agents running the specific institutions we have solid measurements for, perhaps other, unmeasured, agents are being empowered to improve democracy that are not systematically measured. If that is so, we might expect that democracy and governance aid tracks closely with the containment of types of non-democratic behavior associated with tainted elections but does not move assessments of electoral capacity. This might allow us to pinpoint which maladies are managed

⁷See full model results in the appendix for tables showing non-democracy and governance and a myriad of other variables.

effectively by democracy and governance aid. Models 8-11 on table 1 yield only one clear result (government intimidation), and it is not wholly supportive of the empowering agents approach suggested by the literature that justifies technical aid strategies. USAID democracy and governance aid is not statistically associated with any type of electoral improvements save for a reduction in government intimidation around elections. But if USAID democracy and governance aid is improving democracy by empowering agents to prevent cheating, disorder, and misconduct, it is confusing that the only behavior changed by aid is the incumbent government's willingness to alter election results through repression, intimidation, violence, or harassment. Indeed, this explanation may be more consistent with a story of potential sanction by international actors than empowerment of agents and institutions—incumbent governments receiving governance aid may be afraid of cracking down too hard during elections to ensure desirable results due to reputation effects with donors (Scott & Steele 2011). Regardless of the salience of sanction, it is fair to say that there is little evidence from these models that democracy and governance aid significantly alters the incidence of specific types of misconduct in elections and at the polls as its proponents expect.

On the other hand, when we return to the aggregate picture with our models, our results bear out Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) and others' findings on the impact of governance aid on the quality of democracy and democracy level. Models 12-15 show a reasonably robust and statistically significant positive relationship between governance aid on the overall levels of democracy within countries. Elections are more competitive and multi-party, elections are freer and fairer. Moreover, democracy measured on the aggregate using institutional and liberal measures of democracy provided by V-Dem are positively associated with democracy and governance aid. Countries that receive technical USAID democracy and governance aid are more democratic, as found previously with Polity in the original paper and again here with V-Dem indicators. Moreover, the more aggregate the dependent variable becomes and the more we pull away from the institutional measures of democracy—see the

V-Dem liberal democracy measure, which emphasizes less tangible human rights and other considerations—the stronger the relationship between aid and democracy becomes.

4.1 Expaining Micro/Macro Patterns

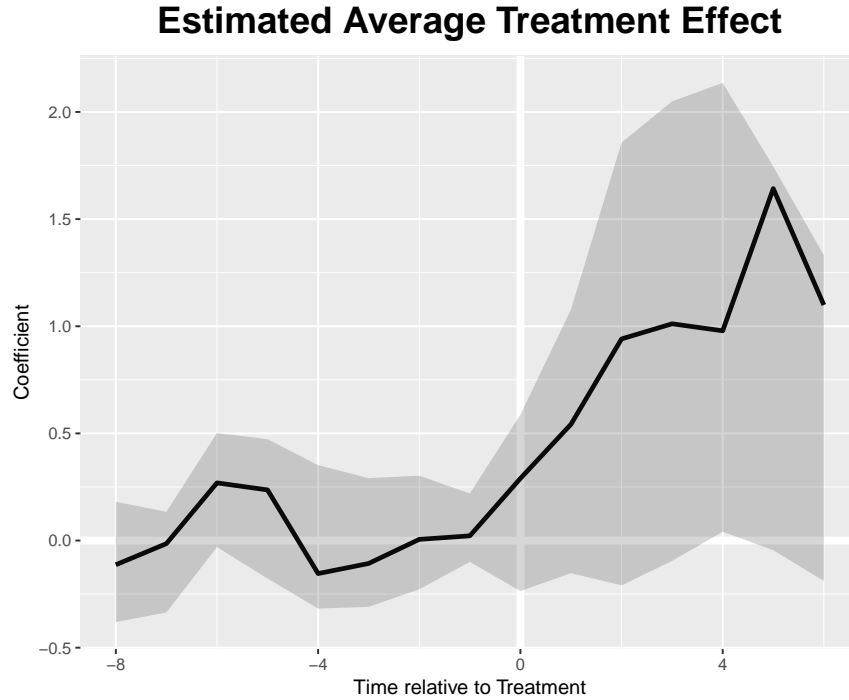
In sum, although democracy aid appears to be correlated with increases in higher level measures of democracy, it does not appear to be correlated with improvements in agent empowerment and institutional governance, the theorized mechanisms through which governance aid is supposed to improve democracy for the empowering agents story. In order to better understand this discrepancy, we examined the data to determine which cases were driving the results. We specifically examined cases where substantively significant increases in democracy aid preceded significant increases in democracy measures. Within our sample, only 45 cases experienced a greater than one standard deviation increase in democracy aid one year and a greater than one standard deviation increase in democracy the following year. These cases, in which aid might reasonably be argued to have influenced democracy in the broadest sense, are a collection of relatively unique instances in which other mechanisms may be at play. For example, 10 of the cases represent improvements to democracy in eastern European states following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Likewise, several cases are the result of separation of an existing state or creation of a new state, such as the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and creation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, or the independence of Eritrea, both in 1993. In addition, several cases reflect other unique and tumultuous circumstances. For example, South Africa's 1994 transition from apartheid and the end of Sierra Leone's civil war in 2003 are both influential cases in our sample. Similarly, the end of the UN Mission to Haiti in 1996, and the establishment of Palestinian interim self-government in West Bank and Gaza under the Oslo Accords in 1995 also coincide with improvements in democracy in both cases.

Total democracy and governance aid to these countries accounts for nearly 51% of all

democracy and governance aid in our study. These cases illustrate a key problem with many explanations of how aid influences democratic change: donor uncertainty and donor incentives to successfully appear to send money to democracies. The previously outlined explanations begin with the assumption that donors are able to identify key actors and institutions that can be supported at key moments in order to support democratization. Unlike the cases described above, where internal shifts and external influences can be easily observed from outside the recipient state, the process of democratization is often more incremental and driven by domestic forces that are difficult to observe. Likewise, identifying key actors to empower may also be difficult. While donors may attempt to assist the process, in most cases, identifying potential democratizers is more akin to reading tea leaves than the systematic selection of recipients. Indeed, within our data, donors only pick democratic “winners” about half of the time; and many of those cases are identifiable because of easily observed characteristics favoring democratic improvements.

Donors’ difficulty in identifying ideal targets for democracy aid may help explain our unexpected findings. The previously discussed cases include clearly identifiable movement or changes that preceded changes in democracy and may have served as cues to donors to increase aid. Such cues are not present in all cases. Without such signals, donors may attempt to observe and interpret other signs of democratic promise—a difficult task with greater levels of uncertainty. As a result, donors target many recipients with varying levels of aid depending on what a donor observes about and within a potential recipient. Providing low levels of aid to many countries that are slowly democratizing may provide a positive correlation between aid and higher level measures of democracy, regardless of whether aid is targeting a particularly promising recipient or contributing to the creation of democracy domestically. This still leaves us with questions regarding if, and by what mechanisms, low levels of technical aid are contributing to improvements in democracy if not through these institutional mechanisms.

Figure 1: USAID DG Aid After Positive Democracy Shifts



As an alternative explanation for our data, if donors are attempting to pick future democratizers in the absence of clear cues such as the end of a civil war or the creation of an independent states, they will likely be seeking recipients with demonstrable improvements in democratic norms and institutions. Greater democratic changes within a potential recipient are both more easily observed by donors and also induce greater confidence among donors that the recipient will be a democratic “winner.” Thus, donors may give more aid to recipients with more observable changes in democratic norms and institutions. If this is the case, aid may follow rather than lead democratic improvements.

We use generalized synthetic control methods (Xu 2017) to examine the plausibility of this reverse causal process. Treating change in democracy as the treatment, we ask if broad democratization leads aid. In particular, we test whether positive shifts in V-

Dem’s polyarchy index predict governance aid investments by USAID.⁸ Figure 1 presents the estimated average treatment effect (ATE) of positive polyarchy shifts on USAID’s democracy and governance aid disbursements. The synthetic control method suggests a substantial positive shift in aid to “treated” cases, relative to synthetic controls, although the noise around the ATE is substantial. This result is nominally consistent with the idea that USAID picks winners. Nonetheless, we do not wish to place too much significance on this result. While we do not observe a similar estimated ATE in the other direction—positive aid shifts, defined in a variety of ways—are not generally associated with democratization, according to this method, our result is sensitive to specification. For example, if we define treatment as a large positive shift in democracy (e.g., 0.2 on the polyarchy scale) we recover an ATE that is indistinguishable from zero. The 1990–2003 panel upon which Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson (2007) rely is short, and contains only a few cases that meet this more stringent standard. This estimation strategy is also substantially more demanding of the data, and relies on less stringent assumptions, than the Finkel, Perez-Linan & Seligson’s (2007) growth modeling approach. Thus, while we are hesitant to claim that USAID is clearly picking winners, our results—both the lack of support for the purported mechanism linking democracy aid to democratization, and the synthetic control estimates of the ATE of democratization on aid allocations—call seriously into the question the extent to which these data support the contention that democracy and governance aid strengthens democratic institutions.

5 Conclusion

We find the results here tantalizing. How are improvements in democracy being created using technical election aid if not by improving specific, identified capacities or improving aspects of

⁸We define treatment as non-negligible positive shift—a positive move of 0.05 or more—in the V-Dem polyarchy measure. This definition is, admittedly, arbitrary, but is intended to capture any meaningful positive shift.

elections? Returning to our results (Models 1-11), we find only a single association between typical micro-level targets of specific democracy and governance USAID projects and aid levels, one that could also be explained by a different, non-agent empowerment, mechanism. We can think of several possible explanations. The most obvious is that democracy and governance aid does not, on average, improve democracy within countries. It does not improve capacity, voter registration, or reduce a variety of misconduct in elections. In fact, the only micro-level result we find, that democracy and governance aid is associated with a reduction in government intimidation during elections, is more consistent with a reputational explanation of aid's democratizing effect than the importance of meaningful technical improvements.

If this is the case, then what is the United States spending its democracy and governance aid on? In Models 12-15, we find evidence that supports previous accounts of foreign aid, that aid does covary with important higher order measures of democracy level. While we cannot conclude with finality based on the data, we find some evidence that democracy and governance aid flows into countries when the fundamentals of democracy improve, not vice versa. Democracy and government aid chases democracy but does not create it, which appears as over-time covariance with aggregate democracy changes in models. Substantively, one can interpret this pattern several ways. Cynically, bureaucrats at aid agencies seek out democratizing countries to support with their foreign aid, attempting to find "winners" that make their performance appear better and justifies their agency and its strategies. Alternatively, the same facts could suggest that agencies know, in practice, that despite their stated goals of creating democracy, they instead do the most good by bolstering democratizing countries that already show democratic progress. Either interpretation, however, does suggest that democracy and governance aid does not induce democracy, a finding consistent with the idea that modern authoritarians would choose not to accept aid that could endanger their regimes.

Alternatively, there could be more mundane reasons for our non-findings. We may not have identified (or do not possess) the proper variables to measure the strength of the right empowered agents. In particular, we have not measured the empowerment of civil society or non-electoral agents. Extant theory does suggest that democracy could be strengthened through the solidification of civil society using foreign aid monies. On the other hand, for recipient governments to accept civil society aid bolstering domestic groups, it must surely be apolitical aid. Similarly, it is possible that the particular agents we measured were not empowered in the 1990-2003 panel of data tested, and so yield no results, while other agents that were empowered in the data are not measured at the micro-level; the takeaway from our paper would therefore be to examine a much longer timeframe in a similar fashion.⁹ We also find this possibility slightly implausible given that, qualitatively, USAID identifies the conduct of clean elections as one of its primary goals and allocates technical projects accordingly. Another possibility is that foreign aid democracy and governance programs generate democratic outcomes, but primarily do so through other mechanisms than the proposed agent empowerment framework. Of course, then we might ask why so many individual projects themselves are premised upon empowering various democratic institutions and agents within domestic countries when we drill down to project descriptions and actual aid uses. What is the purpose of an elaborate democracy and governance smokescreen if the real democratizing impact of aid comes from traditional sources of power mostly related to international political circumstances?

References

Acemoglu, Daron & James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.

⁹On the other hand, a great deal has already been inferred in the positive direction arguing for the effectiveness of this type of aid from data using similar timeframes. Indeed, our paper is a replication using the data from an already influential paper for this reason.

- Altincekic, Ceren & David H. Bearce. 2014. "Why there Should be No Political Foreign Aid Curse." *World Development* 64:18–32.
- Ansell, Ben & David Samuels. 2014. *Inequality and Democratization: An Elite-Competition Approach*. Vol. 43 Cambridge University Press.
- Arndt, Channing. 2000. *Foreign Aid and Development*. Routledge chapter Technical Cooperation, pp. 290–311.
- Bader, Julia & Jorg Faust. 2014. "Foreign Aid, Democratization, and Autocratic Survival." *International Studies Review* 16:575–595.
- Berg, Elliot. 2000. *Foreign Aid and Development: Lessons Learnt and Directions for the Future*. Routledge chapter Aid and Failed Reforms: The Case of Public Sector Management, pp. 225–241.
- Bermeo, Sarah Blodgett. 2011. "Foreign Aid and Regime Change: A Role for Donor Intent." *World Development* 39.
- Brautigam, Deborah A. & Stephen Knack. 2004. "Foreign Aid, Institutions, and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 52:255–285.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson & James D. Morrow. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. MIT Press.
- Burnell, Peter. 2005. "Political Strategies of External Support for Democratization." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 1:361–384.
- Bush, Sarah Sunn. 2015. *The Taming of Democracy Assistance: Why Democracy Promotion Does Not Confront Dictators*. Cambridge University Press.
- Carnegie, Allison & Nikolay Marinov. 2017. "Foreign Aid, Human Rights, and Democracy Promotion: Evidence from a Natural Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3):671–683.
- Carothers, Thomas. 1999. *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Collins, Stephen D. 2009. "Can America Finance Freedom? Assessing US Democracy Promotion via Economic Statecraft." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5:367–389.
- Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Staffan I. Lindberg, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, M. Steven Fish, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Kyle Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Farhad Miri, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Jeffrey Staton, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang & Brigitte Zimmerman. 2018. "V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset v8." Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.

- Dietrich, Simone. 2013. "Bypass or Engage? Explaining Donor Delivery Tactics in Aid Allocation." *International Studies Quarterly* 57(4):698–712.
- Dietrich, Simone & Joseph Wright. 2015. "Foreign Aid Allocation Tactics and Democratic Changes in Africa." *International Organization* 77(1):216–234.
- Djankov, Simeon, Jose G. Montalvo & Marta Raynal-Querol. 2008. "The Curse of Aid." *Journal of Economic Growth* 13:169–194.
- Dunning, Thad. 2004. "Conditioning the Effects of Aid: Cold War Politics, Donor Credibility, and Democracy in Africa." *International Organization* 58:409–423.
- Faye, Michael & Paul Niehaus. 2012. "Political Aid Cycles." *American Economic Review* 102:3516–3530.
- Finkel, Stephen, A. Perez-Linan & M.A. Seligson. 2007. "The effects of US foreign assistance on democracy building, 1990-2003." *World Politics* 59:404–439.
- Gibson, Clark C., Barak D. Hoffman & Ryan S. Jablonski. 2015. "Did Aid Promote Democracy in Africa? The Role of Technical Assistance in Africa's Transitions." *World Development* 68:323–335.
- Goldsmith, Arthur A. 2001. "Foreign Aid and Statehood in Africa." *International Organization* 55:123–148.
- Haber, Stephen & Victor Menaldo. 2011. "Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism? A Reappraisal of the Resource Curse." *American Political Science Review* 105:1–26.
- Hyde, Susan & Nikolay Marinov. 2014. "Does information facilitate self-enforcing democracy? The role of international election observation." *International Organization* 68:329–359.
- Ikenberry, G. John. 2000. *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*. Oxford University Press chapter America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era, pp. 103–126.
- Knack, Stephen. 2001. "Aid Dependence and the Quality of Governance: Cross-Country Empirical Tests." *Southern Economic Journal* 68:310–329.
- Knack, Stephen. 2004. "Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?" *International Studies Quarterly* 48:251–266.
- Kono, Daniel Yuichi & Gabriella R. Montinola. 2009. "Does Foreign Aid Support Autocrats, Democrats or Both?" *Journal of Politics* 71:704–718.
- Licht, Amanda A. 2010. "Coming into Money: The Impact of Foreign Aid on Leader Survival." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54:58–87.

- Maipose, Gervase S. 2000. *Corruption and Development in Africa: Lessons from Country Case Studies*. Palgrave chapter Aid Abuse and Mismanagement in Africa: Problems of Accountability, Transparency, and Ethical Leadership, pp. 87–103.
- Marquardt, Kyle L. & Daniel Pemstein. In Press. “IRT Models for Expert-Coded Panel Data.” *Political Analysis* Forthcoming.
- Moore, Barrington. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Beacon Press.
- Pemstein, Daniel, Kyle L. Marquardt, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang & Farhad Miri. 2015. “The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data.” V-Dem Institute.
- Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub & Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development*. Cambridge University Press.
- Resnick, Danielle & Nicholas van de Walle. 2013. *Democratic Trajectories in Africa*. Oxford University Press chapter Democratization in Africa: What Role for External Actors?, pp. 28–55.
- Robinson, James A. 2006. “Economic Development and Democracy.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 9:503–527.
- Scott, James & Carie Steele. 2011. “Sponsoring Democracy: The United States and Democracy Aid to the Developing World 1988-2001.” *International Studies Quarterly* 55:47–69.
- Stasavage, David. 2003. “Transparency, Democratic Accountability, and the Economic Consequences of Monetary Institutions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47:389–402.
- US Agency for International Development. 2013. “USAID Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance.”.
- Wright, Joseph. 2009. “How Foreign Aid can Foster Democratization in Authoritarian Regimes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 53:552–57’.
- Wright, Joseph & Matthew Winters. 2010. “The Politics of Effective Foreign Aid.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13:61–80.
- Xu, Yiqing. 2017. “Generalized synthetic control method: Causal inference with interactive fixed effects models.” *Political Analysis* 25(1):57–76.
- Youngs, Richard. 2002. *The European Union and the Promotion of Democracy: Europe’s Mediterranean and Asian Policies*. Oxford University Press.

Table 2: Appendix: Predicting Micro-level Electoral Agent Quality with U.S. Elections Foreign Aid

	Registry		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Dynamic Variables			
USAID Elections DG	-0.0019 (0.0083)	0.0241 (0.0169)	0.0213 (0.0130)
USAID Non-DG	-0.0005 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	0.0002 (0.0002)
Non-USAID US	0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0002 (0.0001)
Regional DG	-0.0021 (0.0037)	0.0024 (0.0029)	-0.0020 (0.0058)
Regional Non-DG	0.0007 (0.0005)	-0.0006 (0.0006)	0.0007* (0.0004)
ODA DG	-0.0003 (0.0001)	-0.0003 (0.0002)	-0.0000 (0.0001)
ODA Non-DG	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
GDP Growth/Capita	-0.0024 (0.0017)	-0.0021 (0.0019)	0.0032* (0.0019)
Democracy Diffusion	0.0372 (0.0437)	0.2091** (0.0511)	0.0637* (0.0386)
U.S. Military Assistance	0.0002 (0.0036)	-0.0078 (0.0053)	-0.0014 (0.0025)
Political Violence	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
State Failure	-0.0411 (0.0290)	0.0757 (0.0680)	-0.0533 (0.0433)
Year trend	-0.0753 (0.0509)	-0.0644 (0.0561)	-0.0032 (0.0269)
Static Variables			
Prior Democracy	1.5123 (2.9413)	6.3926** (2.5253)	1.9711 (1.8089)
Pre-1990 USAID	0.0014 (0.0012)	-0.0011 (0.0018)	-0.0006 (0.0010)
Population	-0.0001 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0001** (0.0000)
Size in km^2	0.0152** (0.0025)	0.0058** (0.0028)	-0.0028 (0.0025)
Income/Capita	-0.4305 (3.5287)	1.2904 (2.8918)	-0.1529 (1.9085)
Ethnic Fraction	-159.9851** (77.2292)	-61.0235 (63.2856)	-46.6574 (42.5979)
Income Inequality	-3.0934* (1.6224)	-3.1571 (2.1889)	-0.6494 (1.1241)
Intercept	149.7308 (101.7098)	125.7313 (112.0587)	6.3650 (53.8568)
Static*Year trend			
Prior Democracy	-0.0007 (0.0015)	-0.0032** (0.0013)	-0.0010 (0.0009)
Pre-1990 USAID	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Population	0.0000* (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)
Size in km^2	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Income/Capita	0.0003 (0.0018)	-0.0006 (0.0015)	0.0002 (0.0010)
Ethnic Fraction	0.0795** (0.0387)	0.0308 (0.0317)	0.0232 (0.0213)
Income Inequality	0.0016* (0.0008)	-0.0007 (0.0009)	0.0003 (0.0006)
N	1,518	1,537	1,537

Coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Models contain random intercept and year random slope for receiving country. Errors adjusted for AR1 process and robust to heteroscedasticity. Model 1-3 DV repeat observations from last election between election periods.

** p-value less than .05

* p-value less than .10

Table 3: Appendix: Predicting Micro-level Electoral Agent Quality with U.S. Foreign Aid

	Registry Model 4	Suffrage Model 5	EMB Autonomy Model 6	EMB Capacity Model 7
Dynamic Variables				
USAID DG	0.0023 (0.0028)	0.1340 (0.0955)	0.0034 (0.0051)	0.0031 (0.0027)
USAID Non-DG	-0.0005 (0.0004)	0.0133 (0.0092)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Non-USAID US	0.0000 (0.0001)	0.0024 (0.0061)	-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Regional DG	-0.0021 (0.0036)	-0.1514 (0.1885)	0.0021 (0.0029)	-0.0022 (0.0057)
Regional Non-DG	0.0007 (0.0005)	0.0228 (0.0162)	-0.0006 (0.0006)	0.0007* (0.0004)
ODA DG	-0.0003** (0.0001)	-0.0029 (0.0074)	-0.0003 (0.0002)	-0.0000 (0.0001)
ODA Non-DG	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0017 (0.0015)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
GDP Growth/Capita	-0.0024 (0.0017)	0.0957 (0.1505)	-0.0018 (0.0019)	0.0034* (0.0021)
Democracy Diffusion	0.0378 (0.0440)	3.4826** (1.3964)	0.2100** (0.0508)	0.0645* (0.0386)
U.S. Military Assistance	-0.0003 (0.0038)	0.0621 (0.1054)	-0.0082 (0.0057)	-0.0018 (0.0027)
Political Violence	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0041 (0.0068)	-0.0001** (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
State Failure	-0.0425 (0.0289)	-9.8088** (4.1923)	0.0746 (0.0687)	-0.0544** (0.0446)
Year trend	-0.0774 (0.0508)	0.5655 (1.5366)	-0.0623 (0.0560)	-0.0012 (0.0268)
Static Variables				
Prior Democracy	1.4900 (2.9358)	10.8596 (57.5582)	6.3578** (2.5226)	1.9343 (1.8122)
Pre-1990 USAID	0.0015 (0.0012)	0.0142 (0.0342)	-0.0010 (0.0018)	-0.0005 (0.0011)
Population	-0.0001** (0.0000)	0.0003 (0.0017)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0001** (0.0000)
Size in km^2	0.0156** (0.0027)	0.0120 (0.0965)	0.0060** (0.0029)	-0.0026 (0.0026)
Income/Capita	-0.4729 (3.5273)	60.0849 (89.7169)	1.3091 (2.8757)	-0.1334 (1.9005)
Ethnic Fraction	-159.9901** (77.3409)	517.6823 (2438.1710)	-64.2609 (63.2636)	-49.3251 (42.3412)
Income Inequality	-3.1613* (1.6202)	6.9502 (63.2795)	-3.0462 (2.1751)	-0.5526 (1.1197)
Intercept	154.0783 (101.6553)	-1063.921 (3071.145)	121.4204 (111.899)	2.5293 (53.7006)
Static*Year trend				
Prior Democracy	-0.0007 (0.0015)	-0.0054 (0.0288)	-0.0031** (0.0013)	-0.0009 (0.0009)
Pre-1990 USAID	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Population*trend	0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)
Size in km^2	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Income/Capita	0.0003 (0.0018)	-0.0299 (0.0449)	-0.0006 (0.0014)	-0.0001 (0.0010)
Ethnic Fraction	0.0795** (0.0387)	-0.2576 (1.2198)	0.0324 (0.0317)	0.0246 (0.0212)
Income Inequality	0.0016* (0.0008)	-0.0035 (0.0317)	0.0015 (0.0011)	0.0003 (0.0006)
N	1,518	1,536	1,537	1,537

Coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Models contain random intercept and year random slope by receiving country. Errors adjusted for an AR(1) process and robust to heteroscedasticity. Model 4 and 5 DVs repeat observations from last election between election periods.

** p-value less than .05

* p-value less than .10

Table 4: Appendix: Predicting Micro-level Electoral Characteristics with U.S. Foreign Aid

	Vote Buying		Irregularities		Gov Intimidation		Violence	
	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11				
Dynamic Variables								
USAID DG	-0.0033 (0.0021)	-0.0006 (0.0037)	0.0114** (0.0044)	0.0001 (0.0047)				
USAID Non-DG	0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0004** (0.0002)	-0.0011** (0.0005)	-0.0007 (0.0005)				
Non-USAID US	0.0002 (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0002)	0.0003* (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0002)				
Regional DG	-0.0173** (0.0079)	-0.0107* (0.0061)	-0.0018 (0.0042)	-0.0008 (0.0043)				
Regional Non-DG	0.0011* (0.0007)	0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0013 (0.0008)	0.0001 (0.0005)				
ODA DG	-0.0004 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0004 (0.0003)	-0.0002* (0.0002)				
ODA Non-DG	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)				
GDP Growth/Capita	0.0013 (0.0017)	0.0006 (0.0015)	-0.0025 (0.0021)	-0.0001 (0.0015)				
Democracy Diffusion	-0.0270 (0.0544)	0.0455 (0.0606)	0.1944** (0.0645)	-0.0708 (0.0685)				
U.S. Military Assistance	-0.0002 (0.0024)	0.0048 (0.0045)	-0.0052 (0.0036)	0.0017 (0.0055)				
Political Violence	-0.0002** (0.0001)	-0.0007** (0.0002)	-0.0006** (0.0003)	-0.0004* (0.0002)				
State Failure	-0.0565* (0.0325)	-0.0519 (0.0430)	-0.0509 (0.0350)	-0.0858** (0.0390)				
Year trend	-0.1744** (0.0443)	-0.2308** (0.0584)	-0.1206** (0.0519)	-0.0684 (0.0453)				
Static Variables								
Prior Democracy	1.9622 (2.5903)	2.6372 (2.6723)	5.3076** (2.6374)	2.6127 (2.4467)				
Pre-1990 USAID	-0.0039** (0.0013)	-0.0022 (0.0021)	0.0002 (0.0024)	-0.0016 (0.0014)				
Population	-0.0001** (0.0001)	-0.0002** (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)				
Size in km^2	0.0097** (0.0042)	0.0190** (0.0052)	0.0084** (0.0034)	0.0051 (0.0031)				
Income/Capita	-9.0705** (3.2647)	-10.3210** (3.4384)	-3.0878 (3.3438)	-2.9224 (2.8296)				
Ethnic Fraction	16.2778 (68.8994)	-105.207 (82.9254)	-18.5075 (77.7310)	98.0015 (62.6955)				
Income Inequality	-5.4793** (1.3409)	-6.7106** (1.8531)	-4.1736** (1.7501)	-4.0094** (1.6622)				
Intercept	349.2449** (88.4965)	460.0909** (116.4806)	202.4658* (103.4899)	137.7268 (90.5098)				
Static*Year trend								
Prior Democracy	-0.0010 (0.0013)	-0.0013 (0.0013)	-0.0026** (0.0013)	-0.0013 (0.0012)				
Pre-1990 USAID	0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)				
Population	0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0000** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)				
Size in km^2	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)				
Income/Capita	0.0046** (0.0016)	0.0052** (0.0017)	0.0016 (0.0017)	0.0015 (0.0014)				
Ethnic Fraction	-0.0081 (0.0344)	0.0525 (0.0415)	0.0094 (0.0389)	-0.0491 (0.0314)				
Income Inequality	0.0027** (0.0007)	0.0034** (0.0009)	0.0021** (0.0009)	0.0020** (0.0008)				
N	1,518	1,518	1,518	1,518				

Coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Models contain random intercept and year random slope for receiving country. Errors adjusted for ARI process and robust to heteroscedasticity. Model 8-11 DV's repeat observations from last election between election periods.

** p-value less than .05

* p-value less than .10

Table 5: Appendix: Predicting Macro-level Democratic Characteristics with U.S. Foreign Aid

	Multiparty Model 12	Free+Fair Index Model 13	Polyarchy Index Model 14	Liberal Democracy Index Model 15
Dynamic Variables				
USAID DG	0.0131** (0.0043)	0.0025* (0.0013)	0.0017* (0.0007)	0.0016** (0.0006)
USAID Non-DG	-0.0004* (0.0002)	0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Non-USAID US	-0.0001 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
Regional DG	0.0127 (0.0089)	0.0007 (0.0012)	0.0014 (0.0011)	0.0008 (0.0007)
Regional Non-DG	-0.0016 (0.0011)	-0.0002 (0.0000)	-0.0003** (0.0001)	-0.0003* (0.0001)
ODA DG	-0.0001 (0.0003)	-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
ODA Non-DG	-0.0001 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
GDP Growth/Capita	-0.0022 (0.0026)	0.0004 (0.0007)	-0.0000 (0.0003)	-0.0000 (0.0002)
Democracy Diffusion	0.2259** (0.0680)	0.0509** (0.0140)	0.0354** (0.0085)	0.0230** (0.0071)
U.S. Military Assistance	-0.0043 (0.0065)	-0.0005 (0.0022)	-0.0020** (0.0005)	-0.0016** (0.0003)
Political Violence	-0.0004 (0.0003)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)
State Failure	-0.0074 (0.0733)	0.0116 (0.0153)	-0.0118 (0.0089)	-0.0150** (0.0076)
Year trend	0.0624 (0.0481)	-0.0196 (0.0126)	-0.0089 (0.0082)	-0.0095 (0.0072)
Static Variables				
Prior Democracy	6.1149** (2.3107)	1.0706* (0.6278)	1.3776** (0.4534)	1.3231** (0.4940)
Pre-1990 USAID	0.0023 (0.0017)	0.0001 (0.0004)	0.0001 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0003)
Population	0.0000 (0.0001)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
Size in km^2	0.0021 (0.0058)	0.0029** (0.0009)	0.0020** (0.0006)	0.0016** (0.0006)
Income/Capita	7.4647** (2.7283)	-0.9034 (0.8112)	-0.2051 (0.5649)	-0.7424 (0.6236)
Ethnic Fraction	-163.3281 (60.4949)	-19.0900 (16.0211)	-20.1387** (10.1437)	-17.5880* (9.3019)
Income Inequality	1.4328 (1.7222)	-0.7101 (0.5059)	-0.4631 (0.3164)	-0.4339 (0.2660)
Intercept	-127.4934 (96.36007)	39.0308 (25.0936)	17.7616 (16.3721)	18.8425 (14.3749)
Static*Year trend				
Prior Democracy	-0.0030** (0.0012)	-0.0005* (0.0003)	-0.0007** (0.0002)	-0.0007** (0.0002)
Pre-1990 USAID	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Population	-0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Size in km^2	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)	-0.0000** (0.0000)
Income/Capita	-0.0037** (0.0014)	0.0005 (0.0004)	0.0001 (0.0003)	0.0004 (0.0003)
Ethnic Fraction	0.0820** (0.0303)	0.0096 (0.0080)	0.0101* (0.0051)	0.0088* (0.0047)
Income Inequality	-0.0007 (0.0009)	0.0004 (0.0003)	0.0002 (0.0002)	0.0002 (0.0001)
N	1,518	1,534	1,533	1,533

Coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Models contain random intercept and year random slope for receiving country. Errors adjusted for AR1 process and robust to heteroscedasticity. Model 12 DV repeats observations from last election between election periods.

** p-value less than .05

* p-value less than .10