Strategic Goods Provision in Hezbollah's Resistance

by

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A.B., Political Science (2009)
The University of Chicago

Submitted to the Department of Political Science
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Abstract

The provision of goods and services is thought to be a key way that groups are able to gain political power. However, current work has offered a highly fragmentary view of what specific gains can be made with what type of goods provision, and what potential interaction between strategies might exist. This paper integrates key rational actor and electoral models, and tests the resulting predictions against empirical data on Hezbollah’s provision of goods and services. Two basic types of models link success in violent contestation to the provision of goods to a restricted community and success in electoral contestation to provision of broadly accessible goods and services. However, across several major types of goods and services Hezbollah consistently provided easily accessible good far before they considered participating in elections, provided more accessible goods relative to restricted goods then can be explained by the importance of electoral and violent contestation, and expanded or contracted the scope of provision at points in time that do not correspond to strategic shifts. As an alternative, I suggest that goods may be geographically rather than temporally strategic, a need to create compliance among the population, and the need to create a sense of agency within the Shia population to increase proactive support for the resistance may be greater drivers of goods provision then has been explored.
Understanding how political authority is gained and lost in contested states requires examining the strategies insurgent organizations use to gain the consent of the population. Studies that utilize the lenses of terrorism, insurgency, civil society, and electoral participation to analyze opposition groups all point to the importance of the strategic deployment of goods and services provision to furthering movement goals in each arena. Considered independently, these theories each present a compelling recipe for movement success ranging from vote-getting to preventing member defection by targeting different goods and services, in different areas, to different people. What is missing from this story, however, is full recognition that the majority of groups compete in several of these arenas, requiring the pursuit of multiple goals at any given time. Groups that act as insurgents against a foreign occupier can also serve as a competitive opposition party in national elections and as an incumbent power in municipal races, all of which may be responsible for creating power for the organization over the course of a conflict. When considered in the context of this broader understanding of contestation, the plethora of different goods provision strategies suddenly appears problematic as following the strategy suggested to further one goal often works against achieving another goal, and limits on resources further constrain the organization’s choices. How, then, do groups attempt to balance alternative strategies of goods provision in order to reflect competing organizational needs?

This thesis aims to test the existing models of goods provision against a prominent case and to suggest a new model to explain the strategic deployment of goods and services in light of insurgent groups’ need to compete across arenas of activity. I examine the case of the Lebanese group Hezbollah from its founding in 1982 through its reconstruction efforts following the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese war. A review of existing literature that attempts to describe the benefits accrued by insurgent groups through goods provision reveals two prevailing theories. One school of thought stresses that groups can enhance their ability to participate in violent contestation by providing goods to a narrow group of constituents who clear a high threshold for participation. Another ties electoral success to the provision of goods available to a broad constituency with low barrier to entry. Within the existing literature, these are assumed to coexist, with little attempt to examine potential tradeoffs between the two strategies, or to examine whether changes in contestation over time correlate with the predicted changes in goods provision.

To test these two predictions simultaneously against a single case, I examine whether the level of violent and electoral competition correlate as expected by both electoral and violent contestation theories with trends in the provision of differently accessible goods by Hezbollah. After illustrating the change in the relative importance of violent and electoral competition over time, I use the hypotheses to build predictions of trends in the more openly accessible goods associated with electoral success in current literatures on one hand, and the more restrictive offerings that are linked to successful violent contestation on the other. I then show that when compared to actual trends in a wide range of types of goods provision, predicted trends fail to materialize. Accessible goods are offered much earlier than the first post-civil election, the relative magnitude of the two types of provision is inverted from the predictions, and expected...
changes in the direction of growth emerge inconsistently. After examining where and how predicted trends break down, I then propose a new model of strategic legitimacy for future study.

Hezbollah serves as a strong case in which to build a model because of the relative wealth of data available. The range of types of contestation, and the degree to which Hezbollah is able to participate in multiple types of contestation, makes it perfect for observing a wide range of behaviors. Furthermore, the particularities of Lebanese history have meant that Hezbollah has been able to participate fully and openly in elections while simultaneously waging an insurgency for over a decade, an unusual situation due to the scarcity of elections during civil wars. While this may somewhat limit the potential scope of my findings, it creates a strong potential ‘best case’ on which to test the models’ validity. Furthermore, conflicts such as those in Colombia, Iraq, and Afghanistan increasing occur in this type of setting as foreign intervention creates a pressure for states fighting insurgencies to maintain or create democratic traditions. Finally, as an organization, Hezbollah is highly aware that being data-conscious can make it easier to sell its record of accomplishments, both to local constituents and more the western development community. This means that far more data is available over a substantial period of the organization’s lifetime then is the case for many insurgent groups.

Literature Review

While the exploration of goods provision is not new to academic literature on irregular conflict, the current understanding of how it operates has been shaped by work within different subdisciplines, which frequently do not consider related studies conducted in other frames. This disconnect has led to the creation of multiple, and at times contradictory, understandings of how insurgent groups are able to strategically deploy the provision of goods. Older social movement theory and recent rational choice models tend to focus on how making goods that are available to a narrow portion of the population in return for risky or high-cost behavior can further an organization’s capacity for violent contestation. Work that owes more to comparative politics and anthropology emphasizes how broad provision of goods can win electoral loyalty, create deeper ties between supporters of the movement and the surrounding community, and create reputations for good governance, all of which can improve an organization’s chances of electoral victory. This literature review lays out the prominent arguments from both camps, highlighting flaws and strengths in each.

The most established strand of literature highlights the importance of public goods provision by social movements in order to win supporters, both within the local population and abroad. One of the dominant views in the literature relies on the logic of collective action and views public goods as selective incentives that can be used to overcome the potential costs of risky collective action (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). While this basic model provides a rationale of why groups might pay the high costs associated with goods provision, it fails to offer meaningful leverage in explaining the huge range of possibilities as to how, when, and to whom goods are provided. This model’s explanatory value has also been increasingly called into question by recent work that has theorized that during civil wars the common assumptions about the costs of participation may be exactly inverted, negating the incentive for groups to provide costly services to constituents whose support they would have anyway (Kalyvas and Kocher 2007).

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3 Harik, 89
While the majority of the literature on goods provision at least seriously considers the selective incentives model, a range of models drawing on literature from economics and sociology have offered more complex notions of how rational choice-based considerations may come into play. However, this literature has remained fairly fractured because different types of contestation are generally studied by different subdisciplines within political science. Groups like Hezbollah are usually studied through the lens of violent contestation, ranging from riots to civil wars, and these studies often consider the organization’s ability to perpetrate violence at the expense of other types of contestation. To the extent that this literature does look at goods provision and other economic activities, it is often overly reliant on rational actor assumptions borrowed from business literature. This tendency creates overly simplistic models that implicitly assume unproven claims about the decision-making processes and preferences of relevant actors. By contrast, civil society literature examines how groups are able to organize to provide peaceful goods, but these analyses tend to treat goods as an end in and of themselves, rather than considering how groups with broader objectives might be able to leverage them. The exception to this rule is the literature on social movements, which has focused on the elements of civil society and formal political systems that are actively engaged in contesting the regime. While this basic division makes logical sense, it causes studies of groups whose activities belong to both categories to be bifurcated along artificial lines. In the following section, I consider how the social movement and violent contestation literatures treat the provision of goods and services, and attempt to place them into dialogue to flesh out the true state of current knowledge on the topic.

The most active segment of the civil war literature on goods provision offers refinements and expansions to the original selective incentives-based rational choice models that attempted to detail the connection between goods provision and extremist groups’ ability to perpetrate violence. These papers range from simple models of future earning security for potential combatants (Azam 2005) to a mechanism for vetting recruits (Bueno de Mesquita 2005). Along similar lines as the simple rational choice models, another strand of the literature focuses on the club model of goods provision, in which the private goods that motivate potential recruits are available only after an individual has performed high-cost signaling gestures. Club goods are generally viewed as a means of mobilizing poor participants in a way that generally weeds out defectors, creating a resilient organization (Berman and Laitin 2005, Berman 2009). However, in most cases, the arguments presented address only a game theoretic model, which assumes that both individual potential supporters and organizations as a whole will follow economically-defined rational self interest rather than considering more complex or altruistic payoff functions, and in very few cases is any empirical evidence presented in support of the model. Thus, these models fail to take seriously the presence of the many, and more complicated, other forces that might affect decision criteria including ideological and network affiliation. This flaw is particularly problematic when examining a case like Hezbollah’s, in which the use of goods is quite explicitly tied into many of the organization’s ideological commitments and (as I will discuss later) targeted to help build networks of sympathizers by providing them benefits, making other causal pathways seem perfectly valid. Furthermore, the goods and services in question are generally assumed to be selective, without much attempt to explore how provision of more accessible goods by the same group might alter the proposed equilibria. Finally, the models frequently overlap, contradict, and complicate one another, but there is no work that attempts to synthesize or evaluate models in light of these discrepancies.
The few notable exceptions to the dominance of micro- and macro-level studies on goods use by insurgents appears in works that derive their primary influence from industrial organization literature, which takes the structure and rules of the organization as a major component of patterns of behavior. The most important of these studies is work on the role of goods as payment to rebels (Weinstein 2007). However, this model assumes that goods are provided only to active recruits, instead of the much broader type of provision I will demonstrate is seen in cases like that of Hezbollah. The model has nothing to say about why an insurgent group would choose to allow members of the population who are not ideal recruits to take advantage of the services, rather than limiting them to individuals who are in the process of joining or have already taken up arms. Furthermore, the study focuses on economic spoils rather than on goods and services, and it is unclear how applicable the model might be in this broader context. While it is easy to understand how cash payments to men under arms might corrode codes of conduct, it is not apparent how even the majority of selective services, much less more accessible services, could be expected to have the same effect. To the contrary, a perfectly reasonable alternative hypothesis might be that providing goods and services, rather than lootable resources, as pay is a means of controlling troops who are not ideologically committed to the cause. As in the rational choice models discussed earlier, many of these flaws are rooted in a failure to consider that goods and services have more dimensions then simpler cash payouts, and thus often affect users in more complex ways.

A fair number of meso-level studies of individual cases also consider the phenomenon of goods provision during civil war, but do so within the broader operations of the organization. One particularly strong example of this category of literature is found in Wood’s *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (2003), which includes a chapter on civil society involvement by rebel groups in El Salvador. Her descriptions offer the strong empirical evidence that was so evidently missing from the previously discussed models. However, because the chapter is intended as part of a larger argument on the ideological motivations for participation in the civil war, it is undertheorized and overdetermined when considered in isolation. Current discussions are also limited to works that focus on the termination of wars, when there is a stronger interest in the potential for groups to wield non-military power if they want to maintain power after the state obtains a monopoly on power (ex. Zuckerman-Daily 2010), without much consideration of periods in which violence is still prevalent. While I make use of several existing studies of Hezbollah that fall into this category, they are used as a source of empirical data, rather than potential theories.

A final element that is frequently alluded to in the literature on violence is the use of charities as advertisement to potential supporters both within the population and abroad. Most often, this theory is mentioned in passing in discussion of propaganda, and is not systematically examined. However, a model has been proposed that lays out how support might be gained within the host population by treating goods as a means by which the organization can credibly signal their commitment to a particular subsection of the population (Ly 2007). Given the strong link between foreign support and successful rebellion (Bob 2005), it might be productive to expand this model to consider third-party supporters as well, particularly in cases like Hezbollah that receive the majority of their funding on the basis of a shared ideological commitment.

In contrast to the narrow focus of the works on violence, literature that speaks to the use of the provision of goods and services as part of political contestation, including non-violent social movements, has offered a range of more complex narratives of the work goods can do for...
organizations. This function is particularly important when studying groups like Hezbollah, which participate in electoral competition at both the national and local levels. The most significant of these highlights the use of institutions for welfare provision, which target electorally salient voters in a type of "bricks and mortar clientelism" that creates voter loyalty to the party (Cammett 2010). While the study is focused on the provision of goods to ethnic out-group members, I argue that the argument is equally persuasive when applied to electoral competition more generally.

Also relevant is work that argues that the institutions that provide goods and services, such as clinics and schools, are a critical means of creating links amongst middle-class constituents, who are the main providers and consumers of the services (Clark 2004). Other models in this vein stress the role of goods provision in creating informal networks that can allow the organization to survive in the face of political oppression by the regime (Wiktorowicz 2001). Both of these pieces tend to focus on the incumbent regime as the key limiting factor of a group’s activities, which is less of a concern in the case of Hezbollah, since it has not had to endure the same level of oppression as other, otherwise comparable groups. However, the theories serve as useful lenses through which to examine who benefits from the work of an organization, and what exogenous factors may be affecting trends in provision.

The final strand of thinking on goods and service provision is focused on questions of legitimacy and governance and is the view most often articulated by members of Hezbollah and in field or case studies of the group. Authors such as Naim Qassem (2005), Judith Harik (2004), and Mona Harb (2008) stress that Hezbollah’s ability to outstrip other service providers, including the government, are critical in winning popular support for resistance activities. Augustus Norton (2007), in contrast, places Hezbollah’s goods provision in the context of Shia political empowerment, forming an alternative to traditionally powerful Shia families. While these authors are not uniform in their description of how strategic goods provision is, they generally assume that the benefits the groups gains are long-term, somewhat intangible forces that do not allow for easy causal analysis, except through ethnographic study.

Building the theoretical models

Because of the range of traditions that have attempted to address questions about the effects of goods and services, there is currently a huge range of definitions and sub-categorizations. However, rather than creating a clear menu of descriptors, the literatures frequently talk past one another, creating a need for clarification. For the purposes of this study, I consider as goods and services benefits the organization provides to some segment of the population that are not directly required for the group’s chosen form of contestation. For example, I do not consider the distribution of arms or military training from an insurgent group as goods or services, because they are directly necessary in order to pursue fighting. Nor would I consider voter turnout drives by electorally active organizations, because they can be directly tied to electoral returns. This definition also excludes two types of service that are frequently considered in discussions of insurgent goods provision: security to the population and the operation of media outlets. In the case of security, I eliminate it from the analysis because of the impossibility of distinguishing between armed forces patrolling to protect the population and occupying an area out of strategic necessity in the context of a given operation. Similarly, information relayed to the population via insurgent media outlets can represent an honest effort at informing the public or an attempt at public relations and influence management; it is
impossible to distinguish service to the community from self-service necessary for contestation. Even assuming that only one force is motivating the behavior, it is impossible to distinguish between the two without depending on assessments of motive and intent reliant on normative arguments, or a simplistic reliance on the public transcript of the organization and population. However, even with these limits, my definition covers a wide range of activities, from health care provision to medical insurance, from scholarships to tractor shares.

Goods and services can be further categorized in a number of potentially useful ways, but the key characteristic at play in the literature on strategic use is how access is controlled by the insurgent organization. Arguments rooted in the logic of selective incentives and rational choice economics rely on the ability of the group to limit access to goods in order to force members to live up to their obligations. Alternatively, the arguments based on electoral gains and legitimacy require that goods be accessible to broad swaths of society. For the purposes of this paper, I define goods provision by three levels of accessibility: open, communal, and network.

Open goods and services are those which the organization has no effective control over who can and cannot access. Often these are goods that form physical infrastructure, such as roads and wells, or services to maintain public areas, such as garbage collection. Within the current literature, these goods are almost always discussed as public goods, that is “products that… benefit everyone or almost everyone in society regardless of whether people pay for them or not”. From the perspective of the population, these are goods that have a very low, if any, cost to access.

In contrast, communal goods and services are those which are accessible to individuals, provided they are willing to follow a set of insurgent-established rules and restrictions on personal behavior. The group can restrict access on the basis of ascriptive characteristics, such as style of dress or ability to pay and minimal fee, which proxy for belonging to a particular community identity, but cannot single out individuals or verify that an individual ‘belongs’ to the target population. Communal goods frequently take the form of social welfare goods, such as education and health care.

The last of these three categories I consider, network goods and services, is the most restrictive of the three. Individuals receiving network goods are actively identified and ‘admitted’ by the organization based on who a specific individual is (family relations, individual beliefs, personal status in the community) or through application for membership. The receipt of the good is further dependent on the recipient’s fulfilling a fairly specific set of obligations, with a reasonable expectation that they can be policed to ensure a reasonable degree of compliance. Examples of network services include direct salary and benefits paid to participants and services provided to the dependents of militia members in the event of their death. Club goods also figure into this category, as they are available only to individuals who have already demonstrated ideological and practical commitment to the movement.

Using these three levels of accessibility, it is possible to categorize the types of good provision existing models depend on to drive their logic. The network access approach to goods

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4 Often the provision of security and media is also considered in this category. I avoid discussing both in this thesis, in the case of security for fear of creating issues of endogeneity when dealing with an organizations ability to pursue violent contestation, and in the case of the media because of the very strong ideological influence an organization’s output can have in the population independent of its force as a service.
5 Tsai, 2007
6 Berman and Laitin, 2007
and service provision can be used to incentivize and control potential participants in violence, according to models drawn from civil war and terrorism literature. Alternatively, electoral politics models illustrate that open and communal goods access approach can be used to swing voters to the insurgents’ candidates through clientelism or as a means of demonstrating an ability to govern better than the incumbents. Thus, if these hypotheses are correct and organizations are aware of the benefits and able to properly implement a strategy of goods provision, we would expect the trends of the organization’s goals to be closely mirrored by the trends in goods provision over time because of the group’s desire to achieve violent or electoral success.

If network goods are in fact used by the organization to support recruiting and retention and prevent defection, then in periods during which there is more fighting, in which fighting occurs over a greater area, and in which Hezbollah actively engages more opponents, this theory assumes that the need to sustain more fighters, operating under conditions of greater risk, will promote the use of network goods. Conversely, while commitments made during periods of greater violent contestation will require some continued support, and thus the continued provision of goods, periods in which violent contestation declines should also see some decline in the provision of network goods.

Similarly, periods during which Hezbollah is more invested in electoral contestation should correlate with increases in communal and open goods provision. Election cycles in which there is perceived to be greater rewards for electoral victory, greater costs for electoral failure, or greater competition for a given position all entail greater levels of contestation. I assume that the correlation between trends in open and communal goods and electoral competition will be roughly similar to that between network goods and violent contestation.

Mapping Hezbollah’s goals

In the first stage of my analysis, I seek to determine the relative importance of different arenas of contestation to Hezbollah’s overall agenda as a basis for predicting goods provision using current models. Existing literature on the history of Hezbollah has taken a range of views about the organization’s goals over time; however, the vast majority seek to categorize the group by its consistent use of violence, by a trend of increasing ‘pragmatism,’ or by continued tensions between the two perspectives.

A focus on the organization’s militancy and extremism is most common in early works on the group, as well as works throughout the time period of my analysis by officials of U.S., Israeli, and other governments that have been on the receiving end of Hezbollah’s armed capabilities. Analyses by Jaber (1997) and Ranstrop (1997) epitomize this perspective, viewing Hezbollah’s militancy as a permanent feature of the organizations and stressing its use of terrorism. This perspective also tends to stress the influence of Syria and Iran in directing the strategic objectives and tactics of Hezbollah.

Much of current conventional wisdom speaks of a “transformation” or “transition” in Hezbollah, from its early violent ideological convictions to an organization of political realists who recognize that both military and political participation are necessary if Hezbollah is to maintain relevance. In some cases, authors portray this transition as an essential betrayal of the ideological roots of the movement for pragmatic gain. On the other hand, works like Harik (2004) stress the presence of moderate elements from fairly early stages and authors like Hamzeh (2004) focus on how the structure of the organization allows both dynamics to exist.

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simultaneously. Still others see Hezbollah as an ideological social movement that, while flexible in tactics, embraces fundamentally radical goals (both military and political) dictated by the conservative Shia theology that motivates the long-term objectives of the organization. Regardless of the authors’ understanding of ideological motivations for the change, this work tends to stress the importance of political engagement within Lebanese society.

While these overarching narrative lenses demonstrate deep disagreements about the goals and trajectories of the organization, there is actually relatively little disagreement about historical changes in the organization and activities of Hezbollah. Rather, the differences in interpretations of the nature of Hezbollah come from differing assessments of the long-term goals that motivate strategic decisions and, more rarely, of the intended effect of changes in policy. Because the relevant variable for my study is the change over time of the relative importance of these components, I can draw fairly consistent trends in the levels of contestation.

In the following sections, I offer brief histories of Hezbollah’s violent and electoral contestation. To do this, I track key military and electoral events including Hezbollah’s level of engagement in events, the number of parties Hezbollah is opposing, and the stakes for the organization in potential outcomes. One important caveat of this analysis is that I do not consider Hezbollah activities that took place outside of Lebanon. This focus insures that the same audience is being addressed in the same manner as, while actions inside Lebanon are sometimes intended for a foreign audience as well, the group must at least consider the effects on the domestic population in a way that can be avoided when dealing with overseas attacks.

Hezbollah’s military priorities

What would become Hezbollah’s militia, the Islamic Resistance (al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah) was officially formed in 1984 from an amalgamation of militant offshoots of existing movements that had begun operations as early as 1982. The most notable of these groups was an offshoot from the fractured Amal movement, which had served as the dominant Shia faction in the civil war. One major breaking point between the groups was Amal’s informal (and quickly retracted) support of the 1982 Israeli invasion: although the older Shia group disliked foreign occupation, much of the moderate leadership welcomed the opportunity to break the deadlock between Palestinian guerillas in the south, which were seen as oppressive occupiers in their own right. A combination of the extension of the initial Israeli invasion into occupation of much of the country, the lack of any faction that could maintain a monopoly on force in Lebanon, fundamentalist ideological stirrings within the Shia movements inspired by the 1979 Iranian revolution, and the availability of Iranian and Syrian sponsorship allowed the Amal splinter movements to form a loose cabal in 1982 that by the mid-1980s gradually solidified into a cohesive organization. The earliest written statement of the intentions of the group (now known as Hezbollah) was an open letter published in 1985. The document clearly showed the strength of Iran’s influence on the organization, both as a source of ideological inspiration and as a compass for navigating the international system. The use of violence to resist occupation was defended in the face of the world’s inaction and manipulation.

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8 Azani 2008
9 For the remainder of this paper I will refer to the assorted factions that were linked into the structure that became Hezbollah without specifying the details of factional affinity for simplicity’s sake.
10 Norton, 35-7
While Hezbollah's use of violence is often depicted as a simple proxy for the desires of Iran and Syria, the relationship was more complicated than such a narrative allows. The early sponsorship of both Iran and Syria is widely cited as a critical driver of Hezbollah's military goals; however, over the course of the civil war period, the commitment of the two sponsors fluctuated. The early recruitment and training efforts of what would become Hezbollah took advantage of the Syrian-controlled Biq'a valley, since the region was off-limits to Israeli forces as part of an informal agreement that banned Syria from actions in the south of Lebanon. While this placement reflected the importance of Syrian patronage in training, strategic planning, and logistics, Syria's relationship to a group better known for its ties to Iran was often antagonistic. Syrian interests were always in ensuring a balance of power in Lebanon that would allow Syria freedom of action. When Hezbollah facilitated Syrian interests, the group was allowed to operate freely and receive substantial operational assistance. However, when Syria objected to a Hezbollah road block in West Beirut in 1987, the militia members involved in the incident were quickly rounded up and executed by Syrian troops. Less dramatically, Syrian support to Amal during the 1985 'War of the Camps' placed it on the opposite side of Hezbollah, which backed the Palestinian refugees because of the shared objective of opposing Israel's presence. Hezbollah's leadership quickly learned Syria's backing would only be available when it suited Syrian interests.

The connection to the Iranian regime was generally deeper due to the greater ideological affiliation, but even this relationship was subject to the whims of changing Iranian interest. The end of the first Gulf War in 1988 and death of revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 brought a new, more moderate regime to power, just as domestic concerns became increasingly pressing. In all, by the end of the civil war period the influence of Syria and Iran on Hezbollah's strategic thinking remained important, but not overwhelming, as domestic constituencies and rivalries began to guide decision-making.

While the American image of Hezbollah's activities in the 1980s is dominated by the April 1983 bombing of the American embassy in Beirut, the October 1983 attack on the American and French contributions to the Multinational Force (MNF), and subsequent kidnappings and hijacking that targeted Westerners, in context it is hard to see these operations as more than a part of Hezbollah guerrilla operations. While high-profile kidnappings and hijackings of Western targets gained Hezbollah international notoriety and wrung some concessions from Western countries, the dissolution of the MNF in 1984 after the French and American withdrawal was the only important change to the status quo. In many cases, Hezbollah claimed not to have been involved in the incident and, given the proliferation of minor radicalized factions within the Shia movements, it is difficult not to allow for this possibility. Even assuming Hezbollah involvement in most of the high-profile kidnappings and hijackings, with only 50 cases and small bands of perpetrators, Israel's estimate of 7000 Hezbollah-controlled partisans is far larger than would be required for such operations. Thus, this study generally focuses on Hezbollah's use of conventional violence.

The focus of Hezbollah's earlier efforts was resistance to the Israeli occupation of large swaths of Lebanon. While Israel's occupation of the south in 1978 prompted protest and the

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11 Harik, 40
12 Norton, 72
13 Norton, 44
14 Ranstrop, 1997
passage of UN Security Council Resolution 425 calling for withdrawal, it was not until Israel expanded the area under its control in June 1982 that widespread resistance began. During the early stages of the occupation, resistance operations were undertaken by groups ranging from secular communist militias and Nasserist organizations to religious militias, who by 1984 were responsible for an Israeli casualty every three days. However, Hezbollah’s funding, effectiveness and professionalism made it the dominant resistance militia by the late 1980s. By January 1985, Israel was forced to “redploy” its forces to the southern ‘security zone’ that would remain in contention until full withdrawal in 2000. While initial gains are often credited to ‘martyrdom operations,’ more traditional guerilla tactics made up the vast majority of operations, and militia were generally trained with this approach in mind. While the religious faith of the fighters was stressed, so to were fighters’ experience, and the militia was known for strict discipline that prevented the banditry and corruption that were endemic to many militias.

While western commentators and Hezbollah alike focus on the resistance operation of the group in the period prior to the end of the Lebanese Civil War, Hezbollah was certainly not immune from the conflict with the other militias in operation. Even during the earliest periods, Hezbollah-led confrontation with the Lebanese army in order to prevent the implementation of a May 1983 agreement between the Christian-led government and the Israeli army. Tensions within the Shia community of Lebanon were particularly able to provoke violence. As the 1985 Israeli withdrawal allowed Hezbollah greater influence in areas that had previously affiliated with the more moderate mainstream of Amal, the ideological divisions between the two Shia entities deepened. Tensions between Amal and Hezbollah exploded into open violence in 1988 over the kidnapping of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)-attached U.S. Marine Lt. Colonel William Higgins. As Amal’s dominance in the south was due largely to its ability to work with UNIFIL forces, the abduction forced them to turn against the more radical elements within its own ranks as well as Hezbollah in its attempts to rescue the American. While the short-term effects were to strengthen Amal’s hold over the south, by the autumn fighting between the Shia factions had expanded to the southern suburbs, where Amal lost decisively. The loss of influence in the capital was further compounded by continued fighting in the South, where Amal’s position was seriously eroded over the course of 1989.

Hezbollah gained a major advantage over these rivals when the 1990 Ta’if accords disarmed all militias as part of the power-sharing agreement that ended the Lebanese Civil War, while the Hezbollah ‘resistance groups’ were able to keep their arms to fight Israel and their proxy Southern Lebanese Army (SLA) activities in the south. However, as part of the peace process, Hezbollah did agree to lay down arms outside of the ‘security zone’ and its immediate vicinity. While Hezbollah’s leadership described the smooth disarmament as a show of commitment to not using arms “for any internal balance or control purposes,” it might just as easily be attributed to the broad popular support that allowed the party to pursue its objectives in the south. It is also worth noting that Hezbollah limited operations in order to soothe the concerns of both the new Lebanese government and Amal. No declared bases were established

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15 Norton, 81
16 Norton, 80
17 Hamzeh, 87
18 Hamzeh, 83
19 Qassem, 191
that might create political ties in a region Amal relied on for political support, and Hezbollah restricted operations only to areas that had active Israeli or SLA contingencies.\(^{20}\)

In the first few years after the ceasefire, informal ‘rules of the game’ developed governing the use of force by both Israel and Hezbollah. Hezbollah’s activities would be restricted to the security zone, while Israel would not attack civilians on the Lebanese side of the border. These rules were codified by oral agreement following the 1993 Israeli “Operation Accountability” and succeeded in reducing violence for the next three years. In 1996, these rules broke down after Lebanese civilian casualties prompted the use of katyusha rockets into northern Israel. In April, the rising domestic toll of rocket attacks forced the Israeli Defense Force to launch a major campaign, “Grapes of Wrath,” in an attempt to dismantle Lebanese popular support for resistance and change the balance of forces on the ground in such a way as to encourage Syria to rein in Hezbollah and its allies. Some have argued that Syria’s ability to manage and manipulate the inherent tensions between Hezbollah militia units and the desires of a nascent Lebanese government that lacked the ability to control major armed actors within its own territory, rather than simply give in to Israeli demands was largely responsible for the failure of Israel’s military actions to further the integration process.\(^{21}\) Others argue that the massacre of 106 civilians in a UN-protected zone in Qana was critical to preventing the desired turn in Lebanese public opinion and prompting the US to negotiate a return to the ‘rules of the game,’ with the addition of an international monitoring group that provided an alternative mechanism to hold both parties to their promises\(^{22}\).

Ehud Barak’s 1999 campaign for prime minister promised withdrawal from Lebanon, with or without Syria involvement, but after the US-led negotiations broke down Israel prepared to move forward with a unilateral withdrawal. In the face of Beirut’s and Damascus’ confused objectives, Hezbollah issued a statement that clearly outlined its preparations, including promises to prevent retaliatory killings. The only point on which Hezbollah refused to clarify its stance was whether the withdrawal would mark the end of resistance operations. Only after the completion of the May 2000 withdrawal (and close consultation with Iran) did the group declare that the continued presence of Israel in the Shebaa farms region of the Golan Heights constituted the continued presence of an occupying force, and thus a pretext for a continued military posture.

Prior to 2006, the border situation had stabilized to a remarkably low level of violence, so much so that Hezbollah’s leadership believed that the resistance had won Lebanon a deterrence shield from future Israeli aggression\(^ {23}\). While Hezbollah maintained an aggressive border posture, complete with taunting billboards in Hebrew and piles of stones available on the Lebanese side of popular crossing points for easy hurling, both sides generally agree that the violence in this period was within acceptable norms. Only one Israeli citizen died from Hezbollah rocket fire, along with seventeen soldiers, who were killed in clashes along the new border (commonly known as the Blue Line) or in the Shebaa farms area\(^ {24}\). Israeli violations of Lebanese air space resumed after only a few months, and Hezbollah began firing anti-aircraft missiles south, occasionally hitting civilian targets with spent rounds. In fact, prior to Operation

\(^{20}\) Qassem, 193
\(^{21}\) Harik, 111
\(^{22}\) Norton, 84
\(^{23}\) Norton, 93
\(^{24}\) Norton, 91
Cast Lead, commentators spoke routinely of stable ‘peace,’ despite earlier predictions of mayhem caused by the back draft of Israeli withdrawal\(^{25}\).

The 2006 War fundamentally undermined the deterrence-based balance that had formed along the border, calling new attention to the armed wing of Hezbollah. Hezbollah’s assistance to Hamas compromised Israel’s patience in the winter and spring of 2006, and a series of Hezbollah attacks promoted increasingly dramatic Israeli responses and a deterioration of respect for the rules that had governed the conflict since the withdrawal. In July, the rules broke down into all-out war after a Hezbollah raid in Israel set off a series of escalating cross-border attacks. The 34-day war displaced huge numbers of civilians on both sides of the border, and while the results were technically a draw, Hezbollah’s ability to hold its ground against a force most analysts believed to be better armed, better trained, and better prepared is often read as a victory for the group. Perhaps more importantly, the conflict proved that deterrence along the border could break down, suggesting a continued need for an armed Hezbollah.

While this fairly standard narrative outlines the increasing importance of military objectives during the mid to late 1980s, followed by a period of rough but uneven decline, several other metrics of military operations are important to consider. Because the arguments made about the use of goods to support violence speak specifically to recruiting and retention efforts, the number of troops commanded by Hezbollah, as well as the type and number of operations they were involved in are also critical to consider. By the mid-1980s Israeli estimates put Hezbollah’s fighting force near 7,000\(^{26}\). By the mid-1990s that estimate had dropped to 5,000\(^{27}\), and by 2001 estimates had sunk as low as 1,000\(^{28}\). However, the decrease in forces should not be taken to indicate a drop in the number of operations launched. Figure I shows that the number of operations undertaken against the IDF and SLA actually increased dramatically over the period, even as the number of fighters fell. While this figure does not include early 1980s or mid-2000s guerilla operations (which only numbered in the dozens), or the mid- and late 1980s infighting between Hezbollah and other Lebanese and Palestinian groups, it is improbable that the addition of anything but the 2006 War would represent a substantial change in the trend.

By synthesizing these trends, it is possible to develop an understanding of the changes in the level of violent contestation over time. As the amount of territory and number of actors Hezbollah contested grew during the 1980s, so too did the importance of military operations. While 1990 marked a dramatic reduction in both opponents and contested area, the surge in the number of operations prevented a more substantial decline initially and was then responsible for an increase in the importance of the resistance, culminating in the last push to accelerate the Israeli decision to withdraw. The sudden drop in operations tempo, contested territory and troop numbers following the withdrawal of Israeli forces in 2000 reduced the importance of violent contestation. Finally, the importance of military efforts has elevated following the 2006 discovery that a deterrence shield against Israel would not hold without careful balancing. Figure IIa gives a rough graphical sense of the changing level of contestation used to meet Hezbollah’s military objectives.

\(^{25}\) Norton, 117
\(^{26}\) Harik 40
\(^{27}\) Jaber, 147
Figure I: Tempo of Islamic Resistance Military Operations

Data from Hamzeh, 82, 84 and 89. Because Hezbollah conducted and reported guerrilla operations in conjunction with Amal and various Palestinian groups, clear numbers prior to 1985 are not available. Please note uneven time frames.
Hezbollah’s political priorities

While the 1985 letter is often used to mark the beginnings of Hezbollah as a political organization, it was a politics that rejected the status quo of the Lebanese system without a clear alternative. Throughout the 1980s the majority of Hezbollah leaders decried the pre-war system for its injustice, its secularism, and, most of all, for its corruption. However, as Hezbollah took over areas in Beirut and the south, some engagement in local management became necessary in order to promote the Islamic practices the group advocated. In 1989, the growing importance of political activities for the organization was institutionalized with the addition of the Politbureau to the formal structure of the organization. None of these shifts, however, provided a particular sense that at the war’s end, Hezbollah would be willing to participate in elections.

The formal end of the war reinstated the pre-war electoral system, influenced by a heavy dose of Syrian micromanagement, but just before the 1992 parliamentary elections Hezbollah shifted stances and decided to run candidates for office under party auspices. The Ta’if agreement at the end of the war in 1991 put in power a temporary parliament that was heavily seeded with Syrian allies. As one of the members of the committee that ultimately led to Hezbollah’s participation in the 1992 elections, Naim Qassem’s account of the deliberations is generally considered authoritative and stresses that participation as a means of promoting change from within would best serve the interest of constituents while ensuring that an Islamic voice would be heard within the government. Arguably just as important to the decision was the blessing given to electoral participation by Ayatollah Khamenei, who had succeeded Khomeini as Hezbollah’s supreme legal authority. In the end, while a few hard liners left the party over the decision, contesting the election was seen by the party as a necessary way of keeping visibility and authority in post-conflict Lebanon. Hezbollah’s internal discussion began as early as 1990, but no decision was announced until July 1992. This delay left little time for proactive campaigning before the August 24 elections, making the organization’s successes even more notable.

A quick note on structure of Lebanese elections may prove useful here. The 128 parliamentary seats are divided equally between Muslim and Christian contingents, with 27 seats reserved for Shia partisans. Voters in confessionally mixed districts vote for candidates for all seats, regardless of the confessional identity of the candidates, and campaigning is generally done by inter-sectarian coalition lists in order to attract votes for allies in confessionally mixed neighborhoods. Therefore, as a sectarian party, Hezbollah’s candidates are in direct competition only with those of other Shia parties it has not allied with. Finally, voting registration is determined not by town of residency, but rather by the location of birth of the male head of household, which has historically reinforced the power of families that act as political bosses in a locality.

The twelve-seat bloc (see Table I for a breakdown of results) returned by Hezbollah and its allies crushed expectations, which suggested the resistance party would only hold a few seats in its traditional base. Hezbollah’s candidates successfully campaigned on their record of resistance against both Israel and the corruption and economic disparity that had plagued

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30 Azani, 71
31 Ranstorp, p. 41
32 Qassem, 313-320
33 Qassem, 320
34 Cammett, 13
Lebanon, but generally did not invoke religious themes, or campaign on promises to convert Lebanon to a more Islamic society. These played quite well when compared to the traditional families and Amal, which failed to present a record of service to justify to the voters their expected sweep.

Table I: Parliamentary Election Results by number of seats won, 1992-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Shia Seats Distribution</th>
<th>Non-Shia Hezbollah Allies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amal</td>
<td>Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the complexities of Lebanon’s post-war relationship with Syria make it somewhat difficult to interpret many parliamentary elections as a legitimate reflection of popular will. In the absence of international election monitors, it is impossible to determine how much Damascus interfered with the vote, both by influencing the pre-election formation of lists to reduce competition between Amal and Hezbollah, and by more direct election tampering. Furthermore, Christian boycotting of the 1992 election because of Syrian interference improved the chances of pro-Syrian lists in mixed districts. However, Hezbollah victories in mixed Muslim areas, as well as continued victories in the years after the boycott, suggest that this argument affected Hezbollah’s success in a fairly limited way.

What is certainly true is that the 1992 returns became the model for the two subsequent rounds of parliamentary elections; shifts in the distribution of representatives each parliament show meaningful change. Table I shows the seats held by Hezbollah, Amal, and the unaffiliated traditional political families, as well as the confessional breakdown of Hezbollah’s allies from 1992 to 2005. The results of the 1996 and 2000 involved no changes that would have dismantled the balance of power that was so convenient for Syria, but over time the foreign power became less and less effective at creating the precise desired results. While Hezbollah’s share of seats dropped slightly in the election that followed the 1996 Israeli “Operation Grapes of Wrath,” important gains in the share of list spots in the south reflected both Syria’s active mediation of disputes between Amal and Hezbollah, and its increasing willingness to support Hezbollah over its more traditional allies. The 2000 elections represented an even greater shift, and Hezbollah was able to increase the proportion of representation it held compared to Amal. In part, Rafiq al-Hariri’s landslide victory in 2000 defied the carefully gerrymandered blocs intended to split Beirut’s Sunni support indicated a decrease in Syria’s ability to influence electoral results. In fact, Iran played a much more active role in shaping Hezbollah’s political alliances with Amal,

35 Norton, 102
36 Harik, 51
37 Norton, 103
38 Norton, 98
39 Hamzeh, 114
40 Hamzeh, 114
41 Norton, 124
and the change in broker undoubtedly had quite a bit to do with the gains which were made. Additionally, the withdrawal of Israel earlier that year made Hezbollah a force that had to be recognized by other parties, increasing the party’s legitimacy outside of its traditional support base. Furthermore, eight years of service in the government had convinced many of Hezbollah’s commitment and competency.

While the February 2005 assassination of al-Hariri and the withdrawal of Syrian troops in April failed to prompt the “Cedar Revolution” hoped for by many in the West, they did remove a portion of Syria’s direct influence over the election process, loosening the imperative to maintain non-competitive electoral alliances. Instead, two massive protests held in March defined two rival multi-confessional coalitions. March 14 which was generally nationalist and March 8 which included Hezbollah and much of the established political elite who maintained ties to Syria. However, the seat returns from the May election shown in Table I demonstrate that while the independent Shia families, many of whom had strong connections to Syria, did take a substantial hit, freer election practices failed to change the essential bargain of split power in the alliance of Amal and Hezbollah, nor did Hezbollah win substantial new support for the resistance from other confessional groups.

In contrast to the relatively non-competitive norms that dominated the parliamentary elections, municipal elections saw far less Syrian involvement, and are thus seen as more competitive. Furthermore, in a political culture dominated by clientalism, control of local and often lucrative sources of funding was often perceived as being more ‘useful’ if a candidate’s goal was control over the local area, whereas parliamentary control of the flow of cash was much more indirect. Therefore, municipal elections are frequently interpreted as both more important to Hezbollah and a better gauge of the group’s actual electoral clout.

Table II shows the returns from key areas in 1998 and 2004. It is readily apparent that Hezbollah both preferred considerably better here than in the national elections, and, with the exception of a few suburbs of Beirut, did better in 2004 than in 1998. Particularly important are the gains made in Southern Lebanon, showing an erosion of Amal’s traditional support base, and in Biq‘a, where radical splits of Hezbollah drew votes away from the party in 1998.

| Table II: Municipal Election Results by percent of contested seats won |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                     | Hezbollah         |                | Amal            |                |
| Mount Lebanon       |      |      |      |      |
| Borj al-Barajneh    | 100% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Ghobairi            | 100% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Haret Hureik        | N/A | 100% | N/A | 0% |
| A‘ley               | 100% | 76% | 0% | 24% |
| Shouf               | 100% | 67% | 0% | 33% |
| Jbeil               | 100% | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| South Lebanon       |      |      |      |      |
| and Nabatiyyah      |      |      |      |      |
| Biq‘a Valley        | 40% | 65% | 60% | 35% |

42 Azani, 125
43 Hamzeh, 128-9
Figure IIb offers a sketch of the trends in electoral contestation. Beginning in 1992, each electoral cycle is indicated as a peak on a saw wave, representing the gradual build-up to the election, followed by a rapid deflation of the importance of electoral contestation following the vote. The municipal elections of 1998 and 2004, as well as the more open 2004 parliamentary elections, are perceived as more contentious because of the limited Syrian control and greater competition that was seen in those three races.

*Figure IIb: Impressions of Trends in Electoral Contestation*

Mapping Predictions of Goods Provision

Finally, Figure III gives a visual sense of how I argue that the two sets of trends relate. Given that much of the conversation in 1992 was concerned with whether electoral participation would support or undermine the military resistance, it is difficult to ignore that military resistance was still Hezbollah's priority, and would remain so until Israel's withdrawal in 2000. While electoral competition shortly took over as the dominant priority of the organization because of heightened competition and an assumption of an essential stalemate along the Blue Line, the 2006 War forced Hezbollah to reevaluate those assumptions, thus raising the relative importance of violent contestation again.

The last step is to use the two models to generate predicted levels of goods provision based on the trends displayed in Figure IV. Returning to the models I outlined earlier, it is clear that expecting a perfect correlation between the trends in contestation would not be theoretically reasonable given the somewhat diffuse causal pathways involved, nor is it testable given the uneven nature of available data. In the case of violent contestation, I would expect some smoothing due to an inability to precisely predict need. In the case of electoral goods, I expect that the rapid changes of an electoral cycle will be impossible to follow because of the need to establish norms of loyalty and obligation, which are generally achieved over years not months.
Figure III: Impressions of Trends in Comparative Hezbollah Objectives

Figure IV: Predicted Goods Provision
Furthermore, it seems logical to assume in both cases that Hezbollah would be resistant to removing goods provision at the same rate it was provided, because of the very real risk of creating resentments over the withdrawal of provision. Taking these patterns of correlation into account, if both models are able to correctly predict goods provision, I would expect patterns such as those shown in Figure IV, with a gradual but uneven increase in communal and open goods provision across the entire period and uneven increases to network goods until the late 1990s and early 2000s, at which time provision dried up substantially.

**Mapping the provision of goods and services**

In order to test whether the correlations predicted by the models hold against the goals and objectives of the organization, it is necessary to trace out the trends in relative provision of network, communal, and open goods. Data on goods provision was gathered from a range of existing academic studies of Hezbollah. Taken together, a range of qualitative assessments of types and trends in provision as well as nearly seventy distinct quantitative metrics of goods provision appear. However, most include only one or two observations, creating two methodological complications given the need to establish clear trend lines of the period of study. The first complication is the necessity to create a set of coding rules by which particular instances of goods provision can be categorized as either network, communal, or open given inconsistent reporting about the nature of access to a good. The second is the need to create a system for comparing different kinds of provision that do not offer clear means of translation from one set of units to another.

Of the three goods types, network goods are the most difficult about which to gather data. While there are clear incentives for Hezbollah to publicize its efforts to build hospitals and schools, activities generally seen as positive by the international community as well as the Lebanese population, disclosing exact numbers and kinds of benefits paid out to active fighters and their dependents would risk compromising key Hezbollah assets with little benefit. That said, there are still multiple means of tracking network goods provision trends over time. The most obvious is to track when specific programs transform from being available only to fighters and their families to being accessible at a much broader level. While it is still possible (if not probable) that Hezbollah fighters receive preferential treatment, opening up the service radically changes the population’s expectation of access, diminishing the extent to which the good can be perceived as a selective incentive. Another available option is to compare the number of individuals who receive a type of service because of their network affiliation to those in a similar timeframe who gain the service through communal ties, with a comparison of the quality of the benefits received. For example, determining if the scholarships or welfare payments being offered to the two groups are the same, and if not how substantial the difference is, gives a reasonable sense of how different the provision to the two groups might be.

While communal and open goods are much easier to gather data on, the addition of these categories raises the issue of coding reliability. Because the key distinctions I wish to highlight are differences in access, I have mined the existing accounts for information about who is able to use the goods and service and what barriers exist to monitor and control access. Key types of barriers to access include situating service centers in areas that are inaccessible to non-party members (such as in armed Hezbollah camps), requiring recipients to pay fees above competitor party or government issued goods, requiring recipients follow elements of Sharia or Islamic modesty laws that are not required by national or local legislation, or requiring proof of
community identity, such as mosque attendance or family affiliation. Therefore when coding open goods, I tend to look for items which serve entire areas equally, such as garbage service, or those in which there is no evidence of a barriers to entry, such as open roads and other infrastructure. Network goods are given either to people sought out by the party, such as civilian casualties of combat, or people who are explicitly accepted to the program via application, such as resistance fighters who have undergone a recruitment process, or welfare recipients who apply for support. Communal goods are those that fall between the other two categories, requiring recipients to change some elements of their life but not the dedication needed for receipt of network goods. In instances in which the category of a good or service is in doubt, I have attempted to show that my construction of trends is insensitive to a change in coding of any given good or service.

Creation and change in umbrella organizations

A relatively simplistic, but informative, first step to establish trends in the provision of goods and services is to look at the dates on which various aspects of Hezbollah’s charitable endeavors were given status as a distinct unit. Structured goods provision by Hezbollah is managed under the Executive Council (Majilis al-Tanfizi), with the majority of goods and services provision being managed by the Social Unit. Management of specific services is handled by the Holy Struggle Construction Foundation (Mu‘assasat Jihad al-Bina’), The Martyrs Foundation (Mu‘assasat al-Shahid), the Foundation for the Wounded (Mu‘assasat al-Jarha), the Khomeini Support Committee (Lujnat Imdad al-Khomeini), the Education Unit (al-Ta‘bia‘ al-Tarbawiyya), and the Islamic Health Unit (al-Haya‘ al-Suhhiyyah al-Islamiyyah), each of which handles a range of services for particular audiences.

Holy Struggle Construction was first recognized by the government of Lebanon in 1988, but had been active since 1985, serving as a massive building and reconstruction organization. While the group’s development efforts have largely focused on improving Shia-majority areas in the Biq‘a valley and south, the group assists populations of other sects, particularly in post-war reconstruction efforts. Employees are often Western-educated engineers, architects, and other construction professionals. While the U.S. considers Holy Struggle Construction an active supporter of terrorism and subject to sanctions, it serves as a major U.N. contractor in Lebanon.

The Martyrs Foundation, Foundation for the Wounded, and Support Committee are all offshoots of Iranian parent organizations intended to serve those who had been most affected by the resistance, as well as the faithful poor. While deep economic ties still link the organizations to Iran, administrative decisions are made by local Hezbollah members. All three services manage financial support, medical care, and education provision through a network of volunteers responsible for determining need for a wide range of services within their communities and ensuring that the terms of the aid are followed. Established in 1982, the Martyrs Foundation is intended to support the families of those fighting in the resistance. The Support Committee was founded immediately after the Israeli invasion in 1982 and cares for the poor as a government-recognized charity. The Wounded Organization is the most recent addition. Founded in 1990, the unit is intended to help those who are wounded in Israeli attacks, including civilians and resistance fighters.

44 Janer, 148
45 Love, 66
46 Harb 2008, 218
The Islamic Health Unit (IHU) was officially recognized by the government in 1988, although Hezbollah involvement in broad medical services reaches back to 1984. It provides broad medical care, including prescriptions and preventive care. While the focus of the unit is in geographic areas in which Hezbollah has deep roots, government performance on health care is so abysmal that the IHU is competitive far into the north, in areas that are too poor to support private health services.\(^{47}\)

The final two units, the Education Unit and Good Loan microfinancing program, both began as elements of the Support Committee before splitting off into separate units with a broader mandate of service. The Education Unit, established as a distinct entity in 1991, runs a series of private schools in addition to a much broader program of scholarships and financial support to help parents better bear the cost of schooling. Good Loan microfinancing was established in order to support the creation of small businesses by poor families. At first it was available only to those already part of the Support Committee network, but beginning in 1996, loans became much more widely available.

As creating a new unit often required state sanction and the possibility of oversight, formally establishing a unit was not a cost-free action. Therefore, by looking at the dates at which formal changes were made to the types of goods the organization was responsible for and when that type of provision became an important enough element of Hezbollah's work to warrant a distinct oversight unit, it is possible to get some sense of how priorities changed over the earlier years of the organization's existence.

Figure V illustrates the dates of change within each of the major sections, alongside dates of the changes to the status quo highlighted in the previous sections. The most striking element of this figure is the extent to which periods in which umbrella organizations form or dramatically alter the rules that govern access do not correspond to the peaks in goods provision predicted by existing models. The early prevalence of network goods fits into existing rational choice models, but the equally early appearance of communal service from the Islamic Health Unit would have undermined the attempt to utilize network goods as selective incentives by providing similar goods without the tight restrictions on access. The early appearance of communal goods also cannot be easily explained by existing theories stressing potential electoral gains, as the majority of the institutions appeared well before the decision was made to enter the 1992 electoral cycle. There also does not seem to be much correlation between changes in the military and political status quo (listed in grey across the top of the figure) and the foundation of units, suggesting the goods provision may not be as tightly tied to these changes as existing theories assume.

However, the limitations of this method are substantial, suggesting the need for more detailed analysis. Each umbrella organization runs a multitude of programs, with different starting and ending points masked in the figure above by using the overall organization as the unit of analysis. Furthermore, different programs within the same unit can simultaneously fit into different categories of goods access, and in many cases services of the same kind provided by different units are more similar than work that takes place within the same unit. Finally, the number of beneficiaries between different programs can be radically different, which should be taken into account when assessing relative trends. Looking at the effects of different programs in comparable terms would provide a much better sense of the changes seen by constituents on the ground.

\(^{47}\) Hamzeh, 55
However, using less aggregated units of goods provision raises concerns over data consistency and integrity. While Hezbollah releases far more of their data in far more accessible forms than most insurgent groups do, available accounts are still subject to a high degree of bias and inconsistency. Existing records of goods are compiled from a huge range of documents, some released by Hezbollah itself, some based on the collection efforts of independent researchers. Thus there is very little consistency about what types of data were collected, for what programs, in what years, making it difficult to build a consistent picture of provision over time. It is also extremely rare to have more than one source available to support a given measurement, so it is generally not possible to use triangulation as a check on data accuracy. Additionally, the following should not be read as the total provision of goods, as I have not included discussions of goods that are recognized to constitute a large portion such as the provision of utilities, but for which I could find only very scattered and incomplete information that was not useful in developing a picture of provision over time.

In the following section, I have used two techniques to attempt to draw trend lines from existing research. First, I narrow analysis to define four categories of service: health care, education, financial support, and reconstruction. These classifications allow me to compare similar types of care provided under different rules of access. Where enough data exist to reasonably attempt to extrapolate trend lines for a given good within one category I do so, with supporting evidence of trend robustness to measurement and conversion error where possible. I
also attempt to establish the relative scale of different categories of good provision within the same type—such as the relative emphasis placed on network scholarships versus communal scholarships. Applying both methods to the quantitative data below, supplemented by qualitative descriptions of trends over time provided by other researchers, forms a series of imperfect but compelling glimpses into the changing trends.

Healthcare

One of the most established forms of service provision is health care. Beginning in 1983, Hezbollah began providing small-scale care in the Dahiyeh, which has expanded both geographically and in terms of the range of services provided over time. By 1984, full-scale health centers were operational, and by 1987, hospitals that rivaled the best in the country had been build in areas that had no public option available. Medical staff were often Western-educated and of very high quality, and many of the employees are generally supportive of the movement. 48

The Islamic Health Unit, Martyrs Foundation, Foundation for the Wounded, and the Support Committee all provide health care benefits, though the rules for access between them and over time differ somewhat. In almost all cases 49, services are offered to all who are willing to follow very basic modestly codes at the same locations and in comparable quality 50. The key difference is that in the case in which the beneficiary is eligible for network services, Hezbollah funds much more, if not all, of the cost of care. Additionally, management of any given institution often involves participation of multiple elements. For example, the three hospitals constructed during the 1980s were all funded by Iranian charitable organizations, but upkeep and operations are managed by branches of Hezbollah, allowing them to control both expansions in service and rules for accessing the institutions.

Figure VI shows the expansion in the number of Hezbollah institutions providing health care. While records of early provision are too anecdotal to be included, they are quite relevant in fleshing out the full extent of communal provision of care prior to the end of the civil war. The presence of specialized maternal and pediatric centers as early as 1984, as well as the creation of large expensive hospitals instead of clinics that might have been better suited to treating battlefield injuries demonstrate a serious commitment to early provision of health care the male dominated fighters of the movement. Hezbollah maternal care does insist on allowing male doctors to attend to pregnant patients only in cases where the mother’s life is in danger, indicating some ideological overtone to the provision of care. However, there is little evidence that the general population felt these restrictions compromised care, particularly when Hezbollah charged rates only one third of those charged by competitor institutions 51. More generally, health care fees are kept to a minimum 52, and in many cases are charged only because free services are outlawed by the government 53.

48 Harik, 83
49 A few small institutions which specialize in physiological trauma from exposure to the war are run by the Foundation for the Wounded and a center for disabled youth is run by the Support Committee. (Hamzhe, 52)
50 Harik 84
51 Jaber, 159-60
52 Harik, 84
53 Jaber, 159
While this figure gives a good sense of the expansion of provision over time, it does not allow for easy comparison between provision that is accessed by following relatively low-cost rules, such as wearing a headscarf, which is quite common at hospitals and health centers\textsuperscript{55}, versus care which is provided to active fighters or civilian casualties, who must clear a much higher bar. The focus on numbers of institutions also fails to effectively convey both the number of beneficiaries and the cost of services provision, which vary substantially between different types of institutions.

Figure VII breaks out the number of beneficiaries of both network and communal health care services. Because the vast majority of the institutions are accessible under both network and communal rules, analyzing provision by beneficiary gives a better sense of the differences in the scale of network and communal provisions. Furthermore, because of the massive differences in the scale of provision available through a hospital versus a clinic, breaking down the type of care received gives a better sense of what is being done for individuals. Additionally, because provision of network care tends to be on a case-by-case basis, either because of an existing arrangement with one of the three main service organizations or because of the immediate cause of the medical condition, looking at the number of beneficiaries is a much more coherent way to track provision.

\textsuperscript{54} Data from Jaber, 158-160; Flanigan, 510; Hamzeh, 50 and 53

\textsuperscript{55} Harik, 84
Recipients of Support Committee health care are needy, pious families who are willing to allow relatively strict supervision of their lifestyles in return for health care support that can include medication and long-term care. The Martyrs Foundation pays all medical expenses for fighters and 70 percent for civilians caught in attacks. While information is not available for all types of service, or for all years, the data give some sense of patterns of provision by the Foundation for the Wounded, Support Committee, and Islamic Health Unit (IHU). While the Martyrs Foundation does not release as much information about its beneficiaries as the other units and so was not included in the chart, information about the numbers of Hezbollah casualties is available and offers some sense of the upper bounds of the possible number of beneficiaries. Between 1982 and 1999, 1248 martyrs were recorded, and it is estimated that another 1000 were injured in combat. Assuming that all fighters were heads of household without alternative means of support, that all had the national average-sized household of five (both of which seem generous assumptions given that recruits were often young and thus less likely to have dependent family members who would qualify for support), and that the entire household became dependent on yearly care, that still only represents around 11,000 beneficiaries, approximately equal to the number we know were supported by the Support Committee.

Figure VII: Network vs. communal health care beneficiaries compared to predicted trend lines

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56 Hamzeh, 53
57 Harik, 84
59 Data from Jaber, 158-160; Flanigan 2008, 510; Hamzeh, 50 and 53
The most striking element of this figure is the massive disparity in the number of cases using communal and network access. Services provided through the Foundation for the Wounded, which are generally the focus of discussions of the network provision of good, over an eleven-year period are two orders of magnitude smaller than the number of individuals served by communal hospitals in one year. Including the 1997 number of beneficiaries of the Support Committee, and the generous estimate of those depended on the Martyrs Foundation still suggest an annual total only slightly more than half of the annual totals suggested by the 2000-2002 IHU beneficiaries of hospital, dispensary, mobile clinics and dentists. In contrast, the existing models predict that the importance of the violent resistance against the Israeli occupation through the 1990's would require a greater expenditure on network goods.

Several methodological limitations should be taken into account when examining this figure. The 1993 numbers for hospitals were calculated by assuming the same growth rate of the Hospital of the South applied to all three hospitals operating during the period. However, it is difficult to know how much and in what direction this estimate might bias the measurement. Similarly, the 1993 reading for mobile clinics and the 2005 reading for dentistry were projected by assuming the same average number of beneficiaries at each clinic as in 2001, and adjusting for the change in the number of institutions. While this method is also subject to both upward and downward bias, the relatively consistent, small size of these institutions as well as their popularity suggest that assuming each physical institution would saturate its service ability unlike at more complex institutions like hospitals, leading me to believe that bias is likely to be less serious for this estimate. Finally, services provided by the Foundation for the Wounded were calculated by assuming that the provision of goods over an eleven-year period was unchanging. While this is almost certainly not the case, no redistribution of the goods provided would contradict the overwhelming dominance of communal distribution.

Taken together, these pictures suggest two critical findings which undermine the model. The relative importance of the two types of goods provision is exactly reversed from the dominance of network goods proposed by the hypothesis (see Figure IV). Medical care provided on the basis of Hezbollah's network makes up only a fraction of total health provision, even at fairly early periods in the society's history, when they would be predicted to be using selective incentives the most to grow their organization if those incentives were the optimum approach to organizational growth and survival. Furthermore, while there is not enough data to get a sense of the trends in network provision, communal provision seems to have some notable differences from the predicted patterns, even recognizing the highly inconsistent nature of the data. Communal medical care was available much more widely much earlier than can be explained by a causal narrative involving electoral contestation, and growth trends in the period with more available data suggest a much steeper growth curve then is predicted in the model.

**Education**

Network and communal provision of education by Hezbollah follows a similar structure to that of health care, except that there is less emphasis on providing institutional services in favor of individual scholarships. The Foundation for the Wounded, Martyrs Foundation and Support Committee all offer scholarships on similar terms to their health care offerings, while the Education Unit offers competitive scholarships and spots at Hezbollah-operated schools with relatively limited barriers to entry.

60 Jaber, 159
Taken together, communal education efforts by Hezbollah represent a massive investment. The Educational Unit’s budget for scholarships is estimated to be approximately three-fifths of Hezbollah’s annual expenditure for communal provision of health care. However, because that money goes directly into the hands of beneficiaries, rather than being used in part to cover basic staffing and operating costs for large institutions, it is likely that the effect felt on the ground is much more substantial. While studies of education provision do not go into details regarding the content of the application process, my working assumption is that the process probably favors pious Shia when decisions need to be made between candidates. Imam al-Madhi schools teach the national curriculum with extra religious training, and often cover material beyond the curriculum. Several beneficiaries mentioned that while they were not particularly concerned that their child receive extra religious training and be taught in gender-segregated classes, the superior English programs at the schools made up for the more conservative ideology.  

Figure VIII charts the number of students who receive scholarships through either the Foundation for the Wounded or the Support Committee. Just as the number of patients was the most practical available metric for health care, the number of pupils supported by individual programs is the most logical means of tracking education provision. The figure shows that Hezbollah’s private school system represents a relatively small portion of its education efforts.

Figure VIII: Network vs. Communal Education Provision

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61 Harb 2008
expenditure, and that provision of network education is an even smaller portion than that. While the later data somewhat support the theory that electoral priorities would prompt more provisioning of communal goods than network, the gap is too large for it to explain. Furthermore, the trend of communal provisions seems to suggest steeper growth prior to 2000 then was suggested by the flatter curve of the prediction, and either a flattening of growth or a decrease following 2000, when the model predicts accelerated growth.

Like in the case of the healthcare data, several potential methodological flaws should be kept in mind when considering the sensitivity and robustness of the finding. The number of education beneficiaries in all years but 2000 assume that each student received the same average amount as in 2000. However, the inclusion of an estimated number of beneficiaries if it assumed (shown as blue stars in Figure VIII) indicated the trend is sensitive to large changes in that assumption. The bar for Foundation for the Wounded shows the average yearly provision over the eleven year period, and so cannot be used to determine any trends in the provision of network goods. Studying education provision is further complicated by data scarcity problems that prevent any extrapolation of network healthcare provision before 1996. This situation is worse for education than health care because of the lack of anecdotal evidence available due to the longevity of specific hospitals and clinics.

**Financial services and charity**

Beyond the institutional provision of health care and education, Hezbollah provides a range of monetary support to different groups. In addition to the three committees designed to support the wounded, martyrs and the poor, which all offer welfare services, more openly accessible financial services have become available to support small businesses. Additionally, early recruitment to Hezbollah was inarguably assisted by the financial benefits for fighters offered by Iran. The Biq'a valley, traditionally neglected by the state of Lebanon and lacking access to the patronage of the major Shia families in the south, had high unemployment and little access to the funds needed to improve war torn infrastructure which limited commercial profits. Economic motivations created by this situation, combined with the relatively more conservative strain of Shi'ism associated with the region which made Hezbollah theological ideology more appealing, encouraged residents to join the resistance. It has even been suggested that during this period, Iran was the single largest employer in the area. However, pay to active soldiers represents only a small portion of Hezbollah's financial and welfare services.

In addition to other provisions discussed above, the Support Committee provides stipends to the poor. In order to be eligible, families must be willing to adhere to an “Islamic way of life” and must be working towards self-sufficiency. The focus on self-sufficiency has also led to programs to fund small start-up businesses, vocational schools, and Lebanon’s first employment office. Beginning in 1996, microloan services became more generally available. Loans to poor agricultural villages in the south and Biq’a valley also included follow-up assistance from technical experts to help implement modernizing technology. By 2001, Hezbollah was the

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62 Harik, 40
63 Jaber, 160
64 Jaber 149
65 Jaber, 149
66 Harik, 88
single largest microlender in the country with annual loans totaling some $4.5 million dollars, much of which is never fully repaid\textsuperscript{67}. Hezbollah also offers social security-like programs in these areas for those who do not qualify for government programs to cover emergency medical care and cushion against unemployment\textsuperscript{68}.

Figure IX shows the number of yearly beneficiaries of some of Hezbollah’s key welfare programs. The data for Support Committee welfare provision are particularly interesting because there are enough data points to get a real sense of the trend in provision over time. While the initial peak fits with the predicted trend of high provision of network goods, the substantial drop shown by 1998 does not match the predictions derived from an increased violent contestation in the last days of the war. However, this is also the only segment of the data that shows the predicted relationship between the two types of provision, with many more beneficiaries of network goods, particularly in the late 1908’s and early 1990’s.

While this study has focused on the provision of institutionally-based goods because of their sustained impact in individual communities and on network goods such as scholarships and health care that mirror them, the Support Committee Foundation for the Wounded and the Martyrs Foundation also act to organize a wide range of community-based charities (or jam ‘iya). These organizations often serve as important welfare services for vulnerable Shia, and can often recruit volunteers who then participate in more sustained efforts. Generally, a jam ‘iya acts as a

\textsuperscript{67} Harik, 89
\textsuperscript{68} Harik, 88
\textsuperscript{69} Data from Harik, 88; Public relation office, Imdad committee for Islamic Charity. “Report about the advance and the help of Emdad committee for Islamic Charity until date of 31/3/1997” http://almashriq.hiof.no/lebanon/300/320/324/324.2/hizballah/emdad/)
center for coordinating various religious donations (such as zakat, khum, sadaqat, and Ramadan donations) to support a wide range of charitable projects both within the local community and the broader Islamic community. These institutions are particularly critical in the Dahiyah, which lacks the deep community roots that provide for family patronage networks and the awqaf trusts that have historically managed Islamic charitable services.70

While the very decentralized nature of these organizations makes them effective as a local response mechanism, it also makes tracking the strength of the jam'iya system difficult. Changes in the structure of the staff can provide a sense of how and by whom the intuitions are being utilized. When the institutions were founded in the 1980s, they were staffed exclusively by men at the urging of the Iranian mother organization. As the work of the organizations expanded in the late 1980s, the male workers began to petition for female co-volunteers, who would be better able to liaise with women, particularly martyrs’ widows. By the early 1990s, a network of female Hezbollah-affiliated volunteers was established to act as the main conduit between the local communities where they lived and worked and the male-run administrative hubs. These women were all party members who were willing to act as physical embodiments of Hezbollah’s ideals as, “The way we are dressed, the way we look, the way we talk are all indicators of our political commitment.”71 By the 2000, the rules about volunteer party affiliation had loosened to allow the pious but apolitical to work for Hezbollah-affiliated charities. By this point, an American anthropologist was able to participate in the work of the charity with little opposition72, suggesting that the de facto rules were even more accommodating to those who had not embraced the politics of Hezbollah. While these changes in staff policies does not inherently imply a similar expansion of eligibility for goods (particularly those from the Martyrs Foundation), they do suggest a profound shift in the attitude of the organization in the unit with the greatest incentive to maintain rigid standards for access. Furthermore, the timing of the changes in policy does not seem particularly well timed to argue for a correlation with changes in either electoral or violent contestation, further suggesting that the model fails to adequate capture the phenomenon.

Reconstruction and rural assistance

The two of the major areas of open goods provision noted by previous studies are Hezbollah’s capacity to run reconstruction and development programs. Primarily run by Holy Struggle Reconstruction, these efforts are frequently described as a means of allowing the Lebanese people to overcome both the long Israeli occupation and the economic disparity of traditional society73. These efforts have largely focused in the south and Biq‘a valley areas, which did not see the same governmental commitment to economic growth as more urban parts of the country.

Because of Hezbollah’s role as the head of the resistance, it is notable that the group has also taken on the responsibility of helping people who are caught in the crossfire to rebuild. Since 1985, money has been set aside to help repair bomb damage74. The Support Committee

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70 Deeb 2006
71 Fawaz 251
72 Deeb 2006
73 Qassem, 165
74 Qassem, 161
alone provided assistance to 45,519 individuals in 1993 and 42,529 individuals in 1996\textsuperscript{75}. Furthermore, Holy Struggle Construction claims to have repaired every home known to have been damaged during Israeli raids. In 1993, the organization repaired or rebuilt some 5,000 houses in 82 villages\textsuperscript{76}, and between 1988 and 2002 it is estimated that some 9,640 private homes were fixed at no expense to their owners\textsuperscript{77}. What is notable here is that one of the largest types of open goods provision is tied to violence, rather than electoral contestation.

Hezbollah's reconstruction activities following the 2006 war were even more comprehensive. By the end of Israeli bombings, Holy Struggle Construction already compiled staff assessments of total damage from the shelling. The unit then reached out to a network of hundreds of engineers and architects for post-conflict surveys, who volunteered their time. Many of these individuals had worked on previous development and rebuilding efforts allowing Hezbollah to actively outreach to a network of specialists in the crisis, while others were notified of the effort through listings posted at other Hezbollah institutions, linking reconstruction efficiency to existing communal goods provision. All of the damage in southern Beirut was catalogued with the results computerized after ten days.\textsuperscript{78} The speed at which the organization was able to provide aide to the families who had lost homes was even more impressive. Hezbollah used the network of institutions already in place as staging areas and temporary shelters and called on extensive networks of local volunteers to support programs. Hezbollah claims that by August 2006, its plan to pay each family $1200 plus compensation for destroyed furniture was able to accommodate 75\% of those in need within 48 hours of a claim being made.\textsuperscript{79}

The second category of service is the provision of development assistance to rural areas. Rural programs in the Bīqʿa valley have been active since 1988, when an Iranian gift of thirty tractors allowed Hezbollah to begin a substantial agro-technology program that has grown to include equipment sharing programs, technical assistance with advanced techniques such as soil testing, and eight farm outlets offering below-market cost seed and fertilizer. Programs also include vocational schools and training programs, which by 1996 numbered ten. With the possible exception of the equipment co-ops and vocational schools which require application to enter, these goods were accessible to anyone. Hezbollah also runs several small businesses that are experimenting with new industries, in part to provide income support to rural families and in part to serve as testing centers. Businesses that have been established on this model of this strategy include honey production, dairy farms and tomato canning plants.\textsuperscript{80}

While the data on Hezbollah’s reconstruction and rural development are too varied and inconsistent to allow for the construction of trends over time, some general comments about the timing of provision can be made. Rural development assistance, on the other hand, seems more like the patterns of early provision seen in health care or education including the beginning of provision well before electoral participation. Patterns in reconstruction not only begin earlier than a correlation with electoral politics could explain, they are directly tied to the timing of

\textsuperscript{75} Public relation office, Imdad committee for Islamic Charity. “Report about the advance and the help of Emdad committee for Islamic Charity until date of 31/3/1997” http://almashriq.hiof.no/lebanon/300/320/324/324.2/hizballah/emdad/)
\textsuperscript{76} Usher, 84
\textsuperscript{77} Hamzeh, 50
\textsuperscript{78} Harb 2008, 240
\textsuperscript{79} Harb 2008, 239
\textsuperscript{80} Harik, 86-8; Qassem, 162
Israeli bombing campaigns. While this correlation seems unsurprising at first glance, when taken as part of a strategy that claims to correlate with electoral success, it seems unlikely that myopic voters would make such huge expenditure pay off at the polls.

**Summarizing the relationship between data and model**

While each of the four cases tells a somewhat different story, several broad trends are apparent. Communal and open goods are provided very early in Hezbollah's history, often targeting those who were not eligible to participate in resistance operations. They were also provided to a far greater number of beneficiaries than network goods served. While the sparse data makes drawing trend lines difficult, there is some evidence that changes in the direction of expansion of service not only are not those predicted, they occur at moments that do not lend themselves to the construction of a narrative linked to either electoral or violent contestation. When these findings are compared to the original model the gap between theory and reality becomes obvious.

Across all four subsections of goods provision, very few aspects of predictions made by the models linking communal and open goods provision to electoral success and network goods provision to success in violent contestation held up to reality. The model suggested first, that up until 2000, network provision should dominate goods provision. The model also argued that while communal goods should see a gradual uneven upward trend, network goods provision would drop off notably between 2000 and 2006. However, with the exception of the segment of financial data, there is little evidence to support these claims. Both the education and healthcare data showed communal trends which were more extreme than predicted, and exactly the inverse relationship between the scale of communal and network goods. While the financial data does approximate the predicted relationship between network and communal provision, the trend in provision shows little connection to the levels of violent contestation which are intended to drive provision.

One possible explanation for the difference in the scale of provision between network and communal goods is that there is simply less demand for network goods because fewer fighters than voters are needed. While the difference in scale of demand is an entirely logical assumption, it fails to resolve the issue of communal goods undercutting the incentives of network goods. Given the gap between the quality of network goods and open and communal goods is much smaller than the gap between competitor goods and Hezbollah's less restrictive offerings, it is not clear why a rational individual would be willing to shoulder massive addition risk to gain the network good. For example, it is hard to imagine that the difference between 75% off the cost of health care and 100% off would be significant enough to justify the change in risk between wearing a head scarf and enlisting the fight a war.

Beyond the data concerns discussed in my presentation of finding, it is also worth confirming that the core assumption that limit resources prevent Hezbollah from spending as much as it likes on goods so that there is a need to be strategic in provision holds in the data. While Hezbollah is understandably leery at the thought of releasing its full budget, US analysts estimated that the annual operating budget in 2007 was between $500 million and $1 billion, with some 50% being spent in support of goods and services provision. While that figure is certainly generous, it isn't infinite. Furthermore, a large portion of that money is an annual contribution by Iran, and Hezbollah is conscious of the fact that there is not a guaranty of

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81 Love, 62
continued provision at that level if domestic circumstances change as they have in the past. Therefore it seems reasonable to assume that real tradeoffs are required.

**Building an alternative model**

Given how dramatically the predictions failed to describe the provision of goods on the ground, it is worth asking if the basic premise on which the model was built could have been applied differently to create viable theory. One possibility is that the correlation is much simpler than the one this paper attempts to model, and a large-n study of groups engaged in contestation would find on average that group that provide network goods *at all* are more successful at military contestation, and that those that provide communal or open goods would see greater success in election. Unfortunately, such a study would be very difficult to execute well because of the huge number of potential covariates influencing both electoral and violent contestation and goods provision.

Another potential reframing of the theory would be to stress that while a correlation over time between time-variant violent and electoral contestation and network communal and open goods is not evident in the data, it is possible that the geographic distribution of the goods does produce the proposed correlations. Cammett (2010) presents evidence that the location of Hezbollah’s institutions of service provision (including schools clinics and hospitals) in 2008 lined up reasonably well with areas of electoral success. However, because the bulk of the paper relies on a quantitative proof of correlation, she does not track this pattern over time outside of a single very narrow case study, it is tricky to determine if Hezbollah is getting the votes as a reward for serving the community, or if communities are rewarded for their loyalty. While I was not able to gather consistent enough data on the geographic distribution of provision over time to include in this paper, field work could allow form a much expanded analysis. If it turned out that Cammett’s results of a correlation between high voter value areas holds over time (that is the Hezbollah does not provide more goods during more important cycles, but rather focus on placing good in the most geographically strategic location), it would also be interesting to see if data on sites of recruitment share a similar pattern of correlation to goods provision.

Alternatively, we can assume that the case study authors have it right, and that Hezbollah uses goods to gain ‘support’ and ‘legitimacy’, which in turn allows the group to be more successful in both violent and electoral contestation. By doing more to identify what these terms mean from the perspectives of both Hezbollah and its potential constituent then is currently done, it might be possible to use the concept as an actual mechanism, rather than as vague term as it so often is. A potentially useful starting place is Marget Levi et. al.’s definition of legitimacy as “sense of obligation or willingness to obey authorities... that then translates into actual compliance”83, which suggest that if goods provision promotes legitimacy, there should be a real correlation between those who receive goods and services form Hezbollah, and the probability that that individual will obey an order from Hezbollah.

Another potential mechanism which appears in some of the ethnographic work on Hezbollah’s charities84 argues that goods provision as practiced by Hezbollah is able to create a sense among the population that they are capable of agency in their own lives. This model would offers an explanation for why aids to violent contestation such as recruiting and defection

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82 Jaber, 150-2
83 Levi et.al., 355
84 Deeb, 2006, Fawas, 2000
might improve be improved by network goods, even when communal and open goods are able to undercut selective incentive. Wood’s (2004) work highlighting population’s willingness to participate in rebellion because doing so created positive emotional rewards of pride and a sense of control clearly illustrated how valuable the ability to create such an emotional response in a population for an insurgency hoping to mobilize popular support.

Most rational actor models seem to be driven by a dissatisfaction with the standard narrative of goods as a means of gaining ‘legitimacy’ or a reputation for ‘good governance’ as advanced in the current case studies in part because these models tend not to think about what strategy might drive who and how goods are received. However, I believe that by combining the last three models discussed above, it is possible to form a model of that assumes more strategic behavior on the part of the insurgent organization, but still takes seriously the notion that legitimacy can serve as an asset in contestation.

The new model would assume that at any point in time, resources for goods expansion will be geographically allocated based on a calculation of where an improvement in compliant or agency-based legitimacy will best improve the group’s strategic interest, whether it be the opportunity to sway a district that was narrowly lost in the last election or the need to recruit more fighters. However, what the good is spent on will be decided by the local Hezbollah volunteers and employees. Given that we already know that Hezbollah’s volunteers are encouraged to serve as a feedback loop to insure local needs are met and that reports on successes and failures are convoyed up the chain, such a decentralized model certainly seems plausible. However, reliance on these feedback loops allows for the staff of organizations to manipulate the system to achieve local objectives. Thus the nature of the work force will tend to determine what the rule for accessing the new institution are. If the volunteers are more conservatively pious, I would expect that service provision in the future should be based around network access that will allow them to identify beneficiary who match their image. More liberal members of the party will be more interested in open access. This is likely to set up a feedback cycle, as new volunteers and beneficiaries will gravitate to services that are provided using rules they are comfortable abiding by. Thus we would expect that the national level division between network and more open good will not correlate well with the objectives of Hezbollah central, because they in fact represent local interests. However, at any given time the geographical placement of where good are provided would look quite intentional, as Cammett’s data shows.

Moving forward with this project would require data collection on several points that are currently not available in the available literature, indicating that field work would be required to test the new model. Perhaps most importantly, access to the budgeting process would be necessary in order to defend the core assumption of the process Hezbollah uses to allocate resources. Because the new theory relies on the contrast between strategic budgeting and local control of product, insuring that these function as expected is particularly important. Field data would also allow for a more complete temporal and geographic picture of goods provision, allowing much better analysis of trends and correlation between organizational goals, provision on the ground, and greater success in violent and

Field work would also allow for the addition of a comparative case, which would strengthen the model by proving applicability beyond Lebanon. While some authors have attempted to argue that Hezbollah’s status as resistance fighters who can participate in elections is unique, potential cases including Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Colombia and Ireland also have

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85 Clark 2004
seen insurgencies which actively used both violent and electoral contestation. The case of al-Sadr’s Jaish al-Mahdi all seem particularly interesting because of the ideological similarities between the two movements and the cultural similarities between Lebanon and Iraq would make for a strong confirmation of case findings. Perhaps even more useful would be Columbian data, which would offer a comparison that does not control for ideological or cultural elements which would strengthen evidence of a generally applicable model that is not tied to specifically Shia norms. In either case, the addition of an additional case would serve to offer further confirmation of the model’s validity, and clarify the relevant scope conditions for its application.

Conclusion

In sum, this thesis offers several important contributions to the existing literature on the provision of goods and services by insurgent groups by demonstrating the points of failure of existing theories and suggesting an alternative which better fits the empirical realities of Lebanon. By establishing a typology of goods based on accessibility, I am able to combine work that has been done in several different strands of literature. Because groups like Hezbollah simultaneously use violence and electoral participation to advance their goals, this approach allows me to more accurately model the strategic choices of the group then is possible using previous models. I then compare the models’ predictions to data on the strategic goals and goods provision of Hezbollah, and find three major points of failure which call into question the strength or the correlation between goods provision and the level of violent and electoral contestation. While the steps made in this thesis towards formulating a new model are tenuous, I am able to suggest several alternative theories which take the suggestion of legitimacy that is prevalent in existing literature seriously while offering testable hypothesis for future consideration.

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