



INDICATOR ANALYSIS

ORGANIZED VIOLENCE

ANALYSIS CONDUCTED BY FRANCOIS DAUDELIN & VAL PERCIVAL
FOR THE LANCET-SIGHT COMMISSION ON PEACEFUL SOCIETIES THROUGH HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY

<p>How is the indicator calculated?</p>	<p>The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) employs the definition for fatal organized violence proposed by Sundberg and Melander (2013):</p> <p>"The incidence of the use of armed force by an organized actor against another organized actor, or against civilians, resulting in at least 1 direct death in either the best, low or high estimate categories at a specific location and for a specific temporal duration" (1).</p> <p>Based on this definition, the UCDP dataset released to the public includes events of fatal organized violence where more than 25 fatalities occurred over a calendar year. The UCDP disaggregates organized violence into three mutually exclusive categories based on the nature of the event: state-based armed conflict, non-state conflict, and one-sided violence.</p> <p>The identification of an instance of organized violence by the UCDP is done through the following steps (2):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A global search is conducted using the factiva database to identify news reports which contain information about individuals killed or injured. "As a minimum, UCDP uses at least one of the global newswires (AFP, Reuters, Xinhua, or Agencia EFE) in addition to BBC Monitoring" (2). Other local sources are also consulted as well as "data from non-governmental organizations (NGO) and international organizations (like the UN), case studies, truth commission reports, historical archives and other sources of information" (2). 2. Each source is screened to identify potential interests in misrepresenting violent events. An attempt is made by the UCDP to trace back data to primary sources. 3. Each source is read by a UCDP staff member and events that qualify as organized violence are coded into the dataset. <p>The UCDP notes that real fatalities are often suspected to be higher than the numbers they provide.</p>
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GLOBAL TRENDS	
<p>What are the global trends for the indicator?</p>	<p>The UCDP has found that fatalities in organized violence have decreased in the past four years to the lowest levels since 2012, largely driven by a decrease in State-based armed conflict (3). Fatalities from one sided violence have dropped in recent years while non-state conflict has remained high.</p>

UTILITY	
What does the indicator measure?	This indicator measures state-based armed conflict, non-state conflict, and one-sided violence events resulting in more than 25 fatalities over a calendar year.
What does it NOT measure - what does it miss?	It does not capture conflicts that fall below the 25+/yr. fatality threshold e.g. if there are 24 deaths in December of one year and only 24 deaths in the following January neither year will be included in the dataset. It is difficult to gather conflict data, especially in the developing world. As time has progressed and sources have improved more conflicts have been recorded with better accuracy. However, past conflicts with little data have not been included even if they did occur. If a conflict is not public it is not recorded. There could also be concerns in cases where there is only one source since the event cannot be cross-validated. It is both a strength and weakness in UCDP to cross-reference news agencies with BBC monitoring. Higher accuracy due to cross-verification but also a tendency to undercount if a source covers any event that cannot be verified using other sources. For example, Iraq Body Count (IBC) employ wikileaks as a source with limited ability for cross-verification - whereas UCDP does not employ wikileaks.
If and how does the indicator relate to interface/relationship among health, gender and fragility/stability;	Organized violence impacts men, women, and LGBTQI+ people differently. Men's health outcomes from organized violence are often connected to fighting i.e. death, loss of limb etc.; however, there is more data arising presenting sexual violence against men in conflict. Women's health outcomes are often related to reproductive health e.g. maternal mortality rates, but sexual violence and combatant death can also be issues. The limited data available on LGBTQI+ seems to indicate they are often targeted with sexual violence, or targeted for violence based on being LGBTQI+. In terms of fragility, the distinction between types of actors is useful in understanding the various types of opponents included in this dyadic dataset.

AVAILABILITY	
Sources for indicator (CRVS, DHS etc - include links);	The UCDP dataset is available at the following link: https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/ucdp-data/
Dates available;	The dataset for state-based armed conflict covers 1946-2020, while those for one-sided violence and non-state conflict cover 1989-2020.
Availability across geographic areas;	Data is available in most geographic regions.

Availability in conflict affected settings;	Yes
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GRANULARITY	
<i>Disaggregation at national level</i>	
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<i>Disaggregation at sub-national level</i>	
Disaggregation at sub-national level:	Yes - some of the data sets "are sufficiently fine-grained to be geo-coded down to the level of individual villages, with temporal durations disaggregated to single, individual days" (4). It may be difficult to conduct a detailed sub-national study of many conflicts within the dataset but there are instances of sub-national detail.
Data disaggregated by geographic region;	Yes
Data disaggregated by identity group (race, ethnicity);	No
Data disaggregated by income.	No

SOURCES OF BIAS	
What bias can exist with this data?	Bias towards English media sources. Omission Bias - the data are not sufficiently disaggregated for most intra-state conflict studies. Inclusive Bias - Data is not taken directly from conflict zones.

	The data are aggregate in nature and therefore strive for breadth in coverage rather than in-depth characteristics of each event.
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VALIDITY	
Clear and accepted international standards for indicator;	Yes, UCDP is transparent about their standards and definitions for measurement (2).
Validity of measurement of indicator generally accepted;	Yes

RELIABILITY	
Reliability of indicator generally accepted;	Yes, this data is used by academics, IO's, governments, and the media.

COMPLEXITY	
Enables analysis across time and location.	Yes, this indicator does enable for analysis across time and location as there is no geographic or time-related limitation explicitly identified within its definition.

OTHER REFLECTIONS	
Is the indicator modelled?	No.

Other reflections on debates, accuracy etc;	<p>Funding Sources:</p> <p>"The work of the conflict data program has basically rested on external funding: various research foundations and governmental agencies have extended considerable support to the work. Currently, the Swedish Research Council and Uppsala University are major contributors to the work of the program. Previously, the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation and Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) were major contributors to the program. UCDP has also cooperated with international research institutes and projects. For example, the close connections to PRIO (Peace Research Institute Oslo) and HSRP (Human Security Report Project) at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, have generated projects for backdating conflicts as well as venturing into the issues of non-state conflicts and one-sided violence" (5).</p>
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References

1. Sundberg R, Melander E. Introducing the UCDP georeferenced event dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2013;50(4):523–32.
2. UPPSALA department of peace and conflict research. UCDP Methodology [Internet]. Uppsala University, Sweden; [cited 2021 Sep 29]. Available from: <https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/methodology/>
3. Pettersson T, Högladh S, Öberg M. Organized violence, 1989–2018 and peace agreements. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2019;56(4):589–603.
4. UPPSALA department of peace and conflict research. UCDP Dataset Download Center [Internet]. Uppsala University, Sweden; [cited 2021 Sep 29]. Available from: <https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>
5. UPPSALA department of peace and conflict research. UCDP Background [Internet]. Uppsala University, Sweden; [cited 2021 Sep 29]. Available from: <https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/about-ucdp/ucdp-background/>