

# Rebel Quasi-State Institutions Dataset

## Codebook

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## 1 Description of Variables in Rebel Quasi-State Institutions Dataset

The following is a description of the variables included in the Rebel Quasi-State Institutions dataset. For a full description of the coding decisions, please see the coding notes documents.

Rebel groups were coded for the entirety of their existence. Rebel group existence does not require yearly violence, provided the rebel group eventually causes at least 25 deaths. Rebel groups exist until they are officially disbanded, become a legitimate political party that renounces violence, or become the government. If a rebel institution is found after the group claims to disband, I consider the group to still be existing as long as the institution is found. In the coding notes, the years of a rebel group's existence are recorded, along with a brief description of the group.

### 1.1 Institutions

**Government:** This occurs when rebels create a system of government, either at the local or national level. It is further broken down into parallel, government-in-exile and local government. A parallel government is a national-level governing body that claims authority as the legitimate government of the state. A government-in-exile occurs when a parallel government does not reside in the state they claim. Local government is political administration set up at the local level without

a national-level, or overarching, government body external to the rebel group coordinating the local bodies. The government variable covers all three forms.

**Government-in-exile:** Members of the government do not live or govern in the territory over which they claim to be the legitimate government. For example, in 2009, the Republic of Chechnya government resided in London.

**Local/Village government:** Rebel group sets up a governing administration body at the local level without a national level government. This is only coded if the local/village government is not part of a larger national government created by the rebels. Any mention of a president, prime minister, assembly, congress, convention, or national committee means the government is not a local/village government.

**Parallel government:** Rebel group sets up a national level government with control over at least a portion of their civilian population. For example, POLISARIO created the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic which has an administration set up in refugee camps, rather than in the Western Sahara territory. This usually involves various ministries or departments, a declaration of independence, or a new state name. A national government requires a direct chain of command between administrative structures at the local level and the national level government. It is a central governing body that oversees governance at a lower administrative level.

**Paper National government** : This case occurs when a national level government is created, but the government does not have any administrative control over the civilian population. In other words, it is a government on paper. They may have individuals serving as Ministers of Education or President, but since there is no ministry for them to control, it amounts to little more than titles on a piece of paper.

For coding purposes, there must be a quote describing the government as being on paper or not having any actual control over the territory they claim to govern. The difference between

a paper national government and a government-in-exile is that members of the paper national government can reside in the country where the civil war is occurring. Government-in-exiles must reside outside the country.

**Organized like a Government:** This variable captures when a rebel group organizes itself with departments like those found in a state. For example, if a rebel group creates an internal legislature and has departments for education or health, it is considered to be organized like a government.

- This variable refers to when the group attempts to mimic state-like organization within the group itself. It does not include cases where there is a political and military side. When a group establishes a Ministry or Department that deals with Health or Education, this would count. For groups that have communist goals, this includes cases where the group establishes a political bureau separate from the military side. But, the political bureau must cover civilian issues like education or healthcare.
- This refers to the internal organization of the group, and does not include cases like the Kurdish Regional Government where the rebel groups listed in UCDP (KDP and PUK) stand for elections to participate in the government.
- For the case of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), which is listed in UCDP as a rebel group, they are considered to be organized like a government. In this case, the PNA was set up as part of the Oslo Accords and provided governance over Gaza and portions of the West Bank. Since it was set up to be a government, but is still listed in UCDP as its own group, I am considering it to be organized as a government.

**Attempt to Join International Organization (IO):** This variable captures when a rebel group attempts to join an international organization. The purpose of this variable to capture failed attempts of engaging in the international system. An example of this is the Palestinian Liberation Organization's failed attempt at gaining a seat in the United Nation's General Assembly.

There are a variety of organizations that are considered international organizations for the purposes of this variable. Some rebels attempt to or do join well-known international organizations, like the United Nations (UN) or the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

This variable also covers other international organizations that are less known, or do not have formally recognized states as members. For example, a common international organization rebel groups join is the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization. The requirement for an organization to count as an international organization here is that it must seek to connect entities (including rebel groups) across state boundaries with the purposes of collaboration and coordination between entities.

**Join International Organization (IO):** This variable captures the years when a rebel group is a member of an international organization. An international organization can be comprised of other entities that are not formally recognized as independent states.

There are a variety of organizations that are considered international organizations for the purposes of this variable. Some rebels attempt to or do join well-known international organizations, like the United Nations (UN) or the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In certain instances, a rebel group is asked to join a committee at a large International Organization like the UN. When this happens the years the rebel group is on the committee is counted. However, if a rebel group is only asked to testify or advise, without being a formal participant, it is not.

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**Border Patrol:** This variable occurs when rebels create a special unit dedicated to patrolling an established boundary or border. The “border” must be a set boundary that is routinely patrolled,

not a road or passage rebels guard to ensure safe transport. The guarding has to be routine, and the boundary has to be continuous. That is, it cannot be a constantly changing boundary that moves weekly or daily as rebels move from road to road.

- An immigration department can also be used to code for this variable.
- The border control needs to be a separate unit tasked with patrolling a border. The border must be a clear border, such as a cease-fire line or a de facto border like in Abkhazia. This variable is not capturing when rebels patrol around a base, or patrol a supply route. It is meant to capture when they monitor who crosses the boundary.

**Constitution:** This variable captures when a rebel group writes a constitution. To be considered a constitution, it must meet one of the conditions used to identify state constitutions: 1) It must declare itself to be the highest law of the land; 2) It must establish a government; or 3) The document identifies itself as the constitution (Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton, 2009).

**Elections:** This variable captures when rebels hold elections for civilian government positions. These elections can be local, for village-level governing positions, or national, like elections for a President or Prime Minister. The elections must be for civilian governing positions and allow at least some non-rebel civilians to vote. It does not include elections for civilian representation within the rebel group, or elections exclusively for rebel members for rebel leadership positions.

- These can be at a local or national level, but they must be elections for civilians, where civilians vote. For example, the rebels can hold elections for village leadership that governs civilian life and report to the rebel group. What does not count, however, are elections in a village to elect members to the rebel group leadership.

**Diplomatic Efforts Abroad (Embassy):** This variable captures when rebels send representatives abroad to engage with foreign government officials or politicians. It can include embassies and consulates; however, offices opened to engage solely with diaspora members are not counted.

Additionally, since diplomatic efforts might not be reciprocated, this variable does not require formal recognition by the foreign state. However, there must be clear evidence that the rebel group representatives abroad attempt to engage with foreign government officials or politicians.

**Identification Documents (IDs):** This variable captures when rebels create identification documents for civilians (not rebel group members). It includes passports and identification cards.

**Political Party:** This variable captures when a rebel group creates a separate political party (not a political wing) that engages in the political process of the existing state. It does not have to be considered a legal political party by the government, stand in elections or take the seats it wins, but it does have to engage as an opposition party in the political scene of the state. This does not include cases where the rebel group holds its own elections and runs. Additionally, the political party must be a separate entity from the rebel group, but be created by the rebel group and connected to the rebel leadership. Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland is a well-known example of the political parties this variable captures.

- This indicator is only for cases where the political party is separate from the rebel group, but still connected to the rebel group.<sup>1</sup> It does not count when the rebel group becomes a legitimate political party in the state and participates in elections.

**Media:** This variable captures when the rebel group has a media outlet through which they publish or report information.

- I am also counting cases where the group has a department that makes videos, even if the videos are shared via a platform they do not own or control. For example, if a rebel group makes a video and posts it on youtube.com, this will count. Platforms like youtube.com and twitter both allow groups to post and share, and it is user controlled. So, even though the rebel group doesn't own the platform, they still control the information that is posted.

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<sup>1</sup>Or at least it is widely accepted as being so.

- Cases where a rebel groups writes up a statement and it is printed or reported through a news source sympathetic to the group but the news source is not owned or controlled by the group does **not** count. For example, bin Laden used to give statements to *al Jazeera* to report, but *al Jazeera* was always independent from al Qaida. This would not count as a newspaper for al Qaida.

**Currency:** This variable captures when rebels print or use their own currency, distinct from the official currency of the state. It does not require that the currency be successfully circulated.

**Taxation:** This variable captures when the rebel group taxes civilians or civilian businesses. It includes customs taxes for goods coming across a rebel border, taxes paid in food or supplies by civilians, and income or wartime taxes. While not every civilian must be taxed, the taxation must be group-initiated and fund the group at some level. This excludes cases where individual soldiers impose civilian payments that remain with soldiers who collect it.

Taxation must be directed by the group leadership, which could be at the top, or by local area leaders. What is not included is cases where an individual soldier taxes and pockets the money. I am looking for cases when the tax collected ends up back with the group, not with the individual collector. As such, I am distinguishing between extortion and tax collection, regardless of whether it is centralized (by top leadership) or not.

The collection of taxes does not need to be across the population in general, and may be aimed at a certain “class” like the FARC’s taxation of land owners. However, everyone in the class must be subjected to the tax (at least in theory). There needs to be evidence that this is mostly followed, either through a written rule or law, or through implementation. I do not require that 100% of those targeted for the tax pay the tax, just that it is not random or occurs at the whims of individual soldiers on the ground.

Collecting taxes does not refer to sporadic, unregularized collection from individuals. For example, some groups will set up roadblocks, stop people and demand a “war tax” before letting them pass. This is not regularized and is closer to extortion or bribing for passage, additionally,

the proceeds are unlikely to make it back to the group.

**Negotiate Resources:** This variable captures when the rebel group negotiates the rights to extract a natural resource, or an agreement to share a natural resource. Because this dataset builds on the UCDP armed actor groups, it is also compatible with existing data on when rebel groups extract resources themselves.

- This variable can be coded if there is negotiation but no agreement comes about, or if an agreement is reached. You can also code it for the years where you have information that business was conducted. For example, a source might say that in 1999 the group received x amount of dollars from logging companies. That would be coded as Negotiate Resources for 1999.

**Economic Treaty:** This variable captures when rebels sign an economic treaty or trade agreement with another state. However, I do not require that the government be internationally recognized.

- This variable is for when an agreement is between a foreign state and the rebel group. It can be for specific trading of resources, or just a form of a trade agreement regarding taxation on goods. But, it must be between another state (or de facto state). If the agreement is between a private company it should be coded under Negotiate Resources.

**Education:** This variable captures rebel created or directed education for civilians. The education must include basic skills like reading, writing or arithmetic, or professional skills like a teaching college. It does not include cases where only the rebel soldiers receive education, or the education is solely rebel-group propaganda or history (often called political education). The education may be provided to children or adults.

**Health:** This variable captures when rebels provide health services for civilians. It may include medicine, health clinics or hospitals, or providing doctors in villages. The health services are not



limited to western medicine and local forms like witch doctors are counted as long as the services are provided by the rebel group. I also include health education in this variable, rather than the education variable.

**Welfare/Aid:** This variable captures when rebels provide welfare or aid to civilians. This may be done in response to a natural disaster, or an enemy attack, and it may take a variety of forms like food, money, or agricultural aid (seeds, oxen, plows, etc.).

**Housing:** This variable captures when rebels assist with providing civilians with housing. It may include building or repairing housing, or assigning civilians to abandoned houses.

**Infrastructure:** This variable captures rebel provided infrastructure and includes building or repairing roads, bridges, wells, or community buildings (orphanages, libraries, etc.) It also includes providing electricity, water, sewage, or trash collection.

**Public Transportation:** This variable captures bus, shuttle or other transportation services for civilians. While the transportation does not need to be free, it must be a service available for civilians.

**Justice:** This variable captures rebel justice systems, which includes courts, prisons, and enforcement of judicial decisions. It must be a civilian service. That is, it must have jurisdiction over civilian disputes or crimes. Cases where rebel groups allow civilians to make complaints only against rebel soldiers are not included.

**Law:** This variable captures when rebels establish laws over civilian behavior. It does not include cases of land redistribution.

- This also covers cases where Sharia law, or a law based on religious documents, is implemented. So, even though the laws themselves may not be written by the rebel group, if the rebel group is “enacting” or “implementing” them, code for this variable.

- The laws do not have to be criminal in nature. They can also be laws or bans on specific behaviors, or administrative in nature like requiring work permits to work or driver's licenses to drive. But, the laws apply to civilians.

**Police:** This variable captures rebel policing provided for intra-civilian relations. While the police may also provide security from enemy attacks, they must also provide policing for the civilians within the village or city.

**Constituency Politics:** This variable captures when rebels hear civilian complaints or issues with the current government administration and lobby on behalf of the civilians to the state bureaucracy.

- This is a rebel version of representative constituency service. In American politics Congressmen and women have a forum where constituents seek assistance with issues they have with the government. Providing this service for their constituents is a way for Representatives to get votes.

**Armed Forces:** This variable captures the presence of a professional and conventional military force. Conventional forces include aircraft, naval vessels, or mechanized weaponry like tanks. Professional forces means there must be some rebel group members who are not considered members of the armed forces of the group (or the group's government). Both of these conditions must be met for this variable to be coded.

**Other Political, Other Economic, Other Social:** These three variables capture any political, economic or social institutions that are not captured by the other institution variables. Although only a few cases were noted, examples are the creation of postage stamps and mail systems, and intelligence sharing agreements.

**Other Military:** This variable captures any military institution that is not included in the armed forces variable. The most common was the creation of military training programs. These were

only counted when the training was conducted by the rebel group itself, not cases where a foreign state or another rebel group provided training.

### **1.1.1 Other Variables**

**Illegal Network:** This variable captures when rebels engage in illicit trade, smuggling or black market sales. Common examples include drug trafficking; however, this variable does not require that the item being traded or sold be contraband (illegal or illicit). For example, rebels might smuggle diamonds, which are not illegal items, but the smuggling of them is. This variable differs from the negotiating natural resources variable because the rebels are not working with a legitimate business, but instead are using the black market. Small arms sales were not included because this is overwhelmingly a method for arming themselves, rather than a income activity for rebels.

**In Power:** This variable codes for the years when the rebel group is in power in the center. That is, when the rebel group has executive power of the state. This variable is useful in cases where the rebel group wins a civil war but is later defeated and fights again. Identifying years the group was in power distinguishes the years with no institutions because the rebel group was the government, from years where the group existed but did not have an institution.

This variable is not meant to be used as an explanatory variable, but is included to give the user some context to gaps in institutional coverage.

**Flag:** This variable codes for rebel group flags.

## 2 Coding Dates

Because I relied on multiple sources, I was able to piece together the years an institution existed. Some sources used specific years when the institution was created or existed, others refer to a specific time frame and discuss an institution. When possible, the source is quoted to include the date. Sometimes, however, the date is earlier in the section and citing the entire section would make the coding notes too cumbersome. In those cases, just the citation for the institution is included. Every quote is attached to a year (or year range) and is cited with a page number, so the dates can be verified without having to read the entire source.

Some sources talk about the beginning date of an institution and refer to it in the present tense. This was taken to mean that the institution began in the year mentioned and continued until the year the fieldwork was conducted or the book was published. When a time period was used, like “in the 1990s” I split the difference. So, if an institution began “in the 1990s,” 1995 through 1999 was coded as having the institution and 1990 through 1994 were coded as missing. If another source was found that provided more detailed dates, it would update the coding. Here is a breakdown of the common time frame phrases and how they were coded:

- BY
  - By early decade (like early 1990s) will refer to the first year (1991) of the decade, and the turning year (1990) will be coded as missing.
  - By mid-decade (like mid-1990s) will refer to 1995. You can code 1995-1999 in this case.
  - By late-decade (like late 1990s) will refer to the seventh year (1997) and the sixth year will be coded as missing.
- IN THE
  - In the early decade (like early 1990s) will refer to the first year (1991) of the decade, and the turning year (1990) will be coded as missing.

- In the mid-decade (like mid-1990s) will refer to 1995. You can code 1995-1999 in this case.
- In the late-decade (like late 1990s) will refer to the seventh year (1997) and the sixth year will be coded as missing.

- SINCE THE

- Since the early decade (like early 1990s) will refer to the first year (1991) of the decade, and the turning year (1990) will be coded as missing.
- Since the mid-decade (like mid-1990s) will refer to 1995. You can code 1995-1999 in this case.
- Since the late-decade (like late 1990s) will refer to the seventh year (1997) and the sixth year will be coded as missing.

These variables will be coded as being present until the end of the post civil-war period unless there is record that states the institution was ended. For example, if an embassy opened in 1990 and closed in 2008, then **Embassy** will be coded a 1 (as being present) from 1990 through 2008. There is one exception to the end date rule: **Attempt to Join IO** will only be coded for the years in which the attempt or negotiations took place. In the cases when the attempt and negotiations were successful, the **Join IO** will be coded. This way, the contestation dataset will identify successful and unsuccessful attempts at joining an International Organization.

**Missing Code:** When there is a source that states that one of these variables existed, but it is unclear as to the dates, use NA instead of a 0. NA will be our missing code that will differentiate between cases when there is no institution present and cases when there might have been, but there isn't enough evidence to prove it was in existence in a given year.

## References

Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg and James Melton. 2009. *The Endurance of National Constitutions*.  
New York: Cambridge University Press.