Collective Reincorporation of Ex-Combatants and Post-Conflict Stability

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Context

- **Geographic location:** Colombia, South America; 24 Reincorporation sites.
- **Academic disciplines:**
  - Political Science
  - Peace Studies
  - Reintegration
Research Questions

• What is the impact of ex-combatant unity on post-conflict stability?
• The conventional wisdom considers that united ex-combatants constitute a threat to peace resilience. This perspective informs UN reintegration standards.
• However, case studies suggest ex-combatant unity *can* strengthen commitment to peace, in some contexts.
• The factors that condition how ex-combatant unity impacts stability are poorly understood.
• This research takes advantage of Colombia’s experimental collective reincorporation for ex-combatants to analyze the relationship between ex-combatant unity and post-conflict stability.
Methods

• Variables and Measures
  • Ex-combatant Unity: former fighters maintain socioeconomic ties after a disarmament (or not); presence/absence of ex-combatant collective tied to territory.
  • Post-Conflict Stability: peace resilience; presence/absence of armed dissidents (recidivism).

• Qualitative Analysis based on intensive field work.

• Subnational Comparisons
  • regional Variation: Southwest, South/Amazon, Caribbean.

• Data Collection
  • 72 semi-structured interviews + 50 online surveys
  • observation
  • data and reports
Anticipated Findings

• Ex-combatant unity supports post-conflict stability in the absence of opportunities to make war (military capacity; resources).
  • Group identity based on peace.
  • Supports reconciliation.
  • Attracts state and international investment in local development.

• Ex-combatant unity contributes to recidivism and resurging violence in the presence of opportunities to make war.
  • Rearmament; dissident groups.
  • Displacement; security threats against ex-combatants.
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