Abridged Supplemental Information for: "Sustained government engagement improves subsequent pandemic risk reporting in conflict zones"

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Note: This document is an abridged version of the SI for the CUP website. The section, figure, and table numbering reflect the same numbering as in the full SI for ease of reference.

The full SI can be found in the Harvard Dataverse: `https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/C139OP`.

Table of Contents

A.1 Materials and Methods

A.1.1 Study Context

Our project took place in Bicol Region of the Philippines, one of 17 regions across the country. Bicol consistently ranks among the poorest and less well-served by government public goods in the Philippines. Each region in the Philippines is numbered (with the exception of Metro Manila); Bicol is also known as Region V ("region five"). Bicol has six provinces: Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon.

A.1.2 Geographic Units

Our study is focused on the two most local levels of administration in the Philippines: municipalities and barangays. Both are considered LGUs (Local Government Units), that are endowed with specific governance powers, even as they are limited in their fiscal and policy-making capacity.

Municipalities and cities are led by elected mayors who serve three year terms and may be re-elected twice (for a total of three terms at a time). They also have municipal legislative councils that may pass local ordinances. Barangays, sometimes translated as *villages*, are the lowest level of administration in the Phlippines.[1] They are led by kapitans and barangay councils, who serve three year terms, but the elections are not held at the same time as mayoral elections.

A.1.3 Important Actors

Village Leaders (Barangay Kapitan): For this experiment, the primary participant and respondent is the Barangay Kapitan (Village Chair). This person is the main interlocutor that most community members would go to when seeking to interact with the government.

Barangay kapitans in the Philippines vary greatly in terms of the formality of their role and their incorporation in normal government functions. In many urban and wealthy areas, barangay kapitans function more as the local arm of government and their role entails a high degree of formalization. In more remote areas, especially those that are conflict-affected, barangay kapitans function with a high degree of independence from higher levels of government and function more as civilian community leaders who interface between their communities and the government.

In many ways, barangay kapitans in rural, conflict affected areas face similar incentives compared to the ones identified by the literature on "ordinary" citizen information-sharing and trust in government in conflict zones. For example, in the canonical model by Berman, Shapiro, and Felter (2011), civilians' decision over whether to cooperate with the government is shaped by the extent to which they believe the government will deliver them public goods in exchange for cooperation. Barangay leaders from communities that have experienced a very low baseline of service delivery from the national government face a similar calculus. Like ordinary civilians, barangay leaders gain benefits as a result of their communities receiving access to government services, but their past experience likely makes them wary that the government will actually deliver on these promises. In line with the literature, we contend that experience with effective government service delivery (through a program like UT) can build barangay leaders' trust in the government and increase the expectation that cooperation will lead their communities to receive public goods.

[1] Village is not a perfect translation because urban municipalities and cities also have barangays, which are akin to 'neighborhoods.' Because this experiment has primarily been carried out in rural areas (just 27, or about 3%, of our 800 barangays are categorized by the Philippine Statistical Agency as 'urban'), the *village* translation is roughly appropriate.

That said, compared to ordinary citizens, barangay kapitans gain different *benefits* from government service delivery and can also take different *actions* to demonstrate their cooperation with the government. On the first point, barangay kapitans likely face lower direct benefits from partaking in the services provided by national government programs. Instead, they may benefit from the sense that their actions led to improved conditions in the community as a whole or, more cynically, from improved electoral prospects that result from their ability to claim credit for the services. On the second point, barangay kapitans have a wider range of actions available to them compared to regular citizens, whose primary cooperative behavior according to the literature is to provide "tips" on insurgent activity or crime. Local elites, especially the local elected representatives of the population, are critical intermediaries between government actors, rebels and the public. For example, local elites have greater information about insurgent activities in their community, have control over resources that shape the ability of rebels to carry out activities and are opinion leaders that shape the behavior of many other people in their community. Crucially, barangay kapitans also regularly interact with government agencies and can take efforts that allow the government to conduct regular operations, such as disaster response, that further build a cycle of trust between government and ordinary citizens.

In summary, barangay kapitans are key "gatekeepers" that can determine the effectiveness of government operations in their villages. However, because of the fact that their communities have largely been forced to be self-reliant in the past, the incentive structure and decision calculus of barangay kapitans is in many ways similar to ordinary citizens. But because of the higher stakes and central role for local leaders, they are special cases of citizens for whom the confidence-building mechanism is particularly important and relevant.

Other important actors: Descriptions of further important actors, including government agencies, police stations, and village youth leaders can be found in the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

A.1.4 Sampling

The Usap Tayo (UT) intervention was designed to be rolled out throughout Bicol region (Region V), which contains 6 provinces that, in turn, contain 7 chartered cities, 107 municipalities, and a total population of 5.8 million people. Contained in the 114 cities and municipalities there are 3,471 barangays, which have an average citizenry of 1,670 people.

Starting with the full set of administrative units across Bicol region, we then pared down the sample to units that were determined to be safe for research and the UT intervention. In order to protect the safety and security of all participants, we conducted a five step process to determine which units were eligible for inclusion on ethics and safety grounds. These steps were taken in partnership with the Philippine National Police (Region V) and Department of Social Work and Development (Region V), our experienced research manager, and a wide range of civilian stakeholders across the region.

Step 1 We consulted 2009-2015 AFP intelligence reports to rule out a set of potentially dangerous barangays and set our initial sampling frame. The AFP's barangay-level coding of NPA infiltration are based on intelligence officers' reports regarding NPA *presence* rather than counts of violent incidents. The AFP intelligence reports categorize each barangay on a three point scale (green, yellow, red) at the end of each quarter, ranging from 'cleared' to NPA 'infiltrated.' We ruled out all barangays that were coded as 'red' (or 'infiltrated') during any year in the 2009-2015 range. NPA presence was significantly more widespread in 2009-2015 than in 2019-2020 which allowed us to systematically limit ourselves to a conservative

potential sampling frame as a first step. We ruled out approximately 11% of the barangays across the region in this step.

Step 2 We reviewed data on the implementation of the 'war on drugs' to eliminate locations where extra-judicial killings were reported from June 2016 (when the drug war began) to the end of 2018.

Step 3 We consulted all regional, provincial and municipal offices of the PNP and DSWD to ensure that none of the barangays in our sample were known to be NPA infiltrated or dangerous. Our prior experience working with the Bicol PNP suggested that municipal PNP offices, in particular, are highly conservative when it comes to accepting assignments in NPA-affected areas, which are generally left under the purview of the AFP.

Step 4 We relied on the personal networks and local knowledge of our Bicolano coauthor and field research manager to further vet each barangay and confirm that they were safe for research. Over the course of a year leading up to the start of UT, our local research manager and a small team of senior field officers traveled to each municipality across the region and engaged in structured (though informal) discussions with these stakeholders about the benefits and risks associated with the intervention.

Step 5 We confirmed using the updated 2019 Quarter 2 AFP intelligence reports that none of the final sample barangays were NPA-infiltrated at the start of the program.

An expanded discussion of the logic behind aspects of this process can be found in the research ethics section of this appendix.

In addition to the ethical considerations that drove our sample selection procedure, we included several additional criteria:

- Exclude the 7 urban areas (chartered cities), where the NPA is not particularly active and service access challenges are not typically related to conflict.
- Exclude Daraga (in Albay province), which is the pilot municipality
- Exclude the 4 otherwise eligible municipalities that have fewer than 10 barangays (the minimum to be able to carry out the intervention in a comparable way across municipalities).

This yielded a sample of 80 municipalities, as show in Table A.1. Within each of the municipalities, we sampled 10 barangays, focusing on 'yellow' areas (as categorized by the AFP intelligence reports). These places are threatened by the NPA but not completely infiltrated. To select the 10 barangays per municipality we did the following (see summary in Table A.1):

1. Following the aforementioned safety procedure, we excluded 105 barangays based on the AFP data, MPS feedback or research team information.
2. We lexicographically sorted remaining eligible barangays by (1) maximum level of AFP-reported NPA influence (yellow, green), (2) weighted average of standardized poverty level and education level and (3) population density
3. We select the first 10 barangays in the sorted list (based on the criteria above) in each municipality, reserving #11 and #12 as replacements.[2]

Because this program focuses on the elected leadership of each barangay, sampling within villages is simple. Based on the most recent election (or by-election) results, it is public knowledge who the barangay kapitan and SK Chair is in each location. The municipal police stations and DSWD offices already had contact information for each of these elected leaders from the official list of elected officials collated by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

[2]To date, the replacements have not been utilized.

Table A.1: Municipality and barangay counts per province

Province	Total Municipalities	Sampled Municipalities	Total Barangays	Sampled Barangays
Albay	18	11	650	110
Camarines Norte	12	9	282	90
Camarines Sur	37	25	1023	250
Catanduanes	11	7	315	70
Masbate	21	15	550	150
Sorsogon	15	13	541	130
Total	114	80	3361	800

A.2 Description of Usap Tayo program

A.2.1 Planning and Piloting

Initial discussions were launched between the research team and the Police Community Relations (PCR) branch of the PNP Region V in April 2018. In the months prior to these discussions, the Region V PNP team developed the framework for the Usap Tayo intervention (at the time referred to as "Kapehan" or "Coffee-time") and invited the PI team to discuss an evaluation of this new program. The PIs have a longstanding relationship with the Region V leadership in the PNP and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), based on past research activities in Sorsogon Province. The leadership at PNP Region V (including a former regional Chief of Staff, who led project development through the bulk of the program) have a keen interest in rigorous research.

The Region V PNP leadership long felt that government efforts to wind down the NPA insurgency had an overly 'kinetic' approach, that is, too much shooting and not enough service to the community. "We have to deal with underlying causes," remarked the chief of staff in an early meeting, "lack of opportunity, unemployment, feelings of isolation and neglect, and the impression that the police and army are too trigger-happy." From that point, the goal was to understand why services were not making their way to conflict-affected barangays, even when the budget had been appropriated and government agency staff were officially responsible for these areas. Several critical factors became clear: (1) lack of focus on these areas by line agency bureaucrats due to the additional effort required to engage with remote, conflict-effected areas, (2) there was a general sense that these zones were the purview of the military, rather than civilian governance, (3) lack of political impetus to focus on these low-population areas by municipal mayors (who can influence line agency officials to distribute funds as patronage), and (4) some in government assumed that these communities did not want to participate in government programs.

Over the course of 2018, the Usap Tayo program went through two iterations of design with the researchers and two primary partners, the PNP and the DSWD. In July-August 2018 a first pilot was carried out in Daraga municipality of Albay province; this allowed the agencies to test out bureaucratic mechanisms and the PIs to pilot data collection techniques and make recommendations to the intervention design. The pilot was carried out in partnership with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), who provided a small scoping grant to the project in its early stages and hosted staff for the pilot. During this pilot, it was determined that 'soft' government services, such as employment programs and livelihood services, were a good fit for barangay needs and would also allow for safe implementation. 'Hard' government infrastructure projects were left out of the UT agendas.

Importantly, the pilot motivated the regional directors of the PNP and DSWD to make commitments to the project for 2019. In early 2019, a second pilot took place in Daraga municipality of Albay, and barangays of Sorsogon that had been left out of the sample (these were primarily 'green' and 'yellow' areas). Through the pilots, several additional line agencies became interested; once the final Memorandum of Agreement for the Usap Tayo program and impact evaluation was signed between the agencies and PIs on April 15, 2019, nine additional line agencies, including the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Department of Agriculture (DA), signed on as partners who would participate in the Usap Tayo activities throughout the experiment. Because the DSWD had the highest capacity and motivation of the line agencies (for example, DSWD has local offices in all municipalities while other agencies do not), they took the leading role among the civilian line agencies.

The final product was a series of meetings that would be convened by the Philippine National Police's Community Relations officers, but would primarily involve connecting selected vulnerable barangays in each municipality with line agency representatives who could incorporate their citizens into government programs. At the same time, the meetings would build rapport and trust. The police's imprimatur would help to motivate agencies to participate and carry out their responsibilities (the "security externalities" were an effective frame).

A.2.2 Usap Tayo Meetings

Further details on the Usap Tayo meetings can be found in the full SI on the Harvard dataverse:

A.3 Data Collection

In this section we discuss three types of data collection: (1) baseline administrative and survey data collection that occurred before intervention activities, (2) planned endline data collection that has been indefinitely postponed due to COVID-19, and (3) the emergency midline data collection that took place in late March in response to the accelerating COVID-19 pandemic, and which forms the outcome data for this study.

A.3.1 Baseline data

Before collecting any baseline survey data, we acquired administrative data about all the municipalities and barangays in Bicol region. The most important data and their sources are:

- 2010 and 2015 Census data on each barangay in the region, including population, population density, urban/rural status, average level of education, typical housing construction quality[3] and location.
- Armed Forces of the Philippines data on the extent of insurgent presence from 2009-2015.
- DSWD data on the percentage of households classified under the national conditional cash transfer scheme as 'poor households' in 2018. This allows us to know, in general, the level of poverty by barangay (and per municipality).
- DSWD data on previous anti-poverty and conflict-zone specific development program access (Kalahi-CIDSS) from 2013-2017.

The summary statistics for the critical covariates, used for blocking and testing balance are shown in Table A.2.

Baseline Survey

[3]We later learned that the quality of census data from 2010 was not reliable, and thus dropped it as a covariate.

Table A.2: Summary statistics: Sample of barangays

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.
Log Population (2015)	800	7.01	0.69
Pct. Listahanan (% poor households)	800	0.38	0.14
Education index (1 primary school, 2 secondary, 3 tertiary)	800	1.64	0.26
Did NPA ever have a strong presence 2009-2015? (per AFP)	800	0.56	0.50
Urban (vs. rural) barangay	800	0.03	0.18
Did village ever receive Kalahi-CIDSS?	800	0.53	0.50

Once the sample of 800 conflict-impacted barangays was established using the sampling rules described in the 'Study Unit' section above, we carried out a baseline survey of kapitans and SK chairs in each barangay, for a total of 1,600 respondents. All participants "self-enumerated" their responses on secure tablets with updated security and encryption software installed by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), the team we hired to administer the baseline survey. After arriving at the survey site, experienced IPA enumerators provided participants with consent documentation and the enumerators were available to answer questions about the consent process. Participants were then led to a private place to sit and handed a tablet with the survey open in the Qualtrics mobile application. Enumerators helped the respondent with the self-enumeration procedure while answering two practice questions ("How likely are you to eat adobo this week?" and "I like dogs more than cats. Agree/Disagree"). At this point, enumerators let the participants complete the remainder of the survey on their own unless they requested help with a specific question. Respondents chose via a dropdown on the device what language they wished the survey to be displayed in. When they reached the end of the survey, participants clicked the "Finish Survey" button, which locked their responses and closed the survey. Even enumerators could not access participant responses at this point. Self-enumeration was possible because the local officials and government agency personnel who made up our list of participants were on average significantly more educated than the average citizen in Bicol and all of the participants were literate. Previous research indicates that self-enumeration procedures like these reduce participant discomfort, nonresponse and sensitivity bias.

In addition to the leader survey, we surveyed police officers and DSWD municipal representatives in each of the 80 municipalities, for a total of over 300 respondents (we interviewed both the primary PCR officer and deputy PCR officer in each municipality, as well as all DSWD municipal reps that were assigned). The survey of government representatives was also self-enumerated and the representatives were presented with a similar consent form (included in this appendix).

The baseline data were used to do stratification for the barangay-level treatement assignment and carry out the examination of heterogenous treatment effects. Specifically, four questions from the baseline were employed for stratification: (1) Whether respondents were willing to answer a question about level sympathy for NPA (2) How difficult respondents believe it is to access government services (3) Trust in government and (4) Would you think twice to report violent incident to the PNP? Summary statistics on baseline questions used for stratification (and included in Appendix results as covariates) are included in Table A.3. For the heterogeneous treatment effects, four baseline survey outcomes were used: (1) average NPA net endorsement effect from endorsement experiments, detailed below; (2) "How much do you trust the government of the Philippines"; (3) "Do you think that DSWD, TEDSA, DOLE and other government agencies are able to meet the needs of your barangay"; (4) "Is it harder to access government resources if you do not have a personal connection?"

Missingness includes 43 kapitans (5 % of the sample) that could not be correctly linked to their barangay due to a clerical error by enumerators, as well as questions that respondents chose not to answer.

Table A.3: Summary statistics: Baseline survey questions

Variable	**Obs**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Does not own land (binary)	710	0.42	0.49
Trust in government (rating out of 10)	752	7.47	2.32
Would you think twice about calling the police? (binary)	725	0.35	0.47
Refused to answer Q about NPA sympathy (binary)	757	0.30	0.46
Difficult to access services if not politically connected? (binary)	739	0.63	0.48
NPA average net endorsement effect	770	-0.14	0.17
Government trust (terciles)	752	2.05	0.83
Government meets needs (binary)	779	0.75	0.34

Endorsement Experiments

On the baseline leader survey, we carried out two endorsement experiments that were intended to measure, at the municipality level, implicit support for the NPA rebels. Because support to the rebels is a highly sensitive question, nearly all respondents, if asked directly, will say they do not support the rebels; on the corresponding direct survey questions on a 0 to 10 feeling thermometer, the mean score was just 1.3, even though most barangays interviewed are in well-known NPA supporting zones.

Following standard techniques, we used two questions about relevant policies of the day, asking a random subset of respondents a 'placebo' version of the question and another random subset a version where the NPA endorses the policy. Below, we describe the questions.

1. K-12 Education policy
    - Placebo: "Recently people have proposed repealing the K-12 law, returning to the former education system. Do you support this?"
    - NPA endorsement: "Recently the CPP-NPA have proposed repealing the K-12 law, returning to the former education system. Do you support this?"
2. Logging policy
    - Placebo: "Recently people have proposed relaxing the ban on logging. This would help increase jobs but may cause environmental damage. Do you support this?"
    - NPA endorsement: "Recently the CPP-NPA have expressed support for relaxing the ban on logging. This would help increase jobs but may cause environmental damage. Do you support this?"

To compute the endorsement effects we collapse the results by municipality, giving average values for each version of the question. We then subtract the placebo share in favor from the NPA-endorsed share in favor to get a net endorsement effect. We average the two net endorsement effects to get an average net NPA endorsement effect, which we use in our hetereogenous effects regressions.

A.3.2 Future endline data

Details on future endline data collection can be found in the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

A.3.3 Emergency COVID-19 data collection

On March 16, 2020 Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte issued an emergency order that put the entire island of Luzon, which contains Bicol region, as well as the Metro Manila are, under "enhanced community quarantine." The goal was a lockdown of all non-essential business to halt the spread of COVID-19. As part of this order, detailed contact tracing was initiated to track down infected cases and prevent further community spread.

In principle, the onus of rapidly assessing the extent of possible exposure to COVID-19 was on the Department of Health (DOH). However, DOH had limited capacity to deploy resources to swiftly implement a risk assessment on a region-wide scale. Faced with significant budget constraints since health service delivery was devolved to local government units in the 1990s (Magno 2001), DOH simply could not accomplish the time-sensitive task without support from the other members of the inter-agency Covid Task Force. The PNP, as part of the Region V Covid Task Force, stepped in and took on the role of implementing the COVID-19 risk reporting protocol in conflict-affected barangays in the region where security concerns are of prime consideration.

Following the enhanced community quarantine guidelines, the PNP Region V office and other Task Force members (especially the DOH) worked to adapt a short phone survey protocol that the PNP could deploy to collect critical information about COVID-19 community risk. Using barangay contact information publicly available from the Department of Interior and Local Government, the PCR team reached out to barangay kapitans in more remote areas around the region. After a short pilot to ensure that the question protocol was replicable and accurate, the PNP representatives conducted the risk surveying from March 26, 2020 to March 31, 2020, yielding the data that was used for this study. They shared with us, without providing any PII or specifics about the submission, which barangays responded to the request for COVID-19 risk information.

Each Kapitan received SMS messages and phone calls requesting them to respond to the following questions:

- How many "high risk" individuals (age 60+ and/or chronic medical conditions, including heart disease, diabetes or lung disease) reside in the barangay?
- How many individuals in the barangay have visited Metro Manila in the past 30 days?
- Do any "high risk" individuals currently exhibit COVID-19 symptoms (Fever and dry cough)?

We are able to present data about whether kapitans responded to the request with the required information (a binary measure). Our partners informed us that in all cases kapitans either responded with all the requested information or none.

For the barangay kapitans the main costs associated with providing this information is time and effort. It would have required the kapitan to review records, collect information from people in the village, and probably consult with the barangay health officer. It is highly unlikely that it would be used in any way against the community or rebels, as the information is not relevant to counterinsurgency efforts.

A.4 Research Design

To evaluate Usap Tayo we employed a randomized controlled trial, with design elements that helped us ascertain if there were spillovers between barangays. Of the overall sample of 80 municipalities in Bicol region, 40 are randomly assigned to treatment and 40 to control. Within each municipality, five of the ten sampled barangays were randomly assigned to treatment and five to control. All ten barangays in control municipalities did not receive the treatment.

A.4.1 Treatment assignment

We assigned treatment at two levels, using stratified randomization to allocate municipalities and barangays into treatment. This allowed us to make inferences about the effects of the program at both levels. The procedure and resulting assignments are summarized in Table A.4 and Figures A.1 and Figure 2.

A.4.2 Randomization

Municipality randomization

At the municipal level we stratified first on province, since our partners asked that there be a similar percentage of treated and control municipalities in each province. Next, within each province we stratified, using pair matching, based on the same set of factors – NPA activity, years of education, population density, share of households on the national poverty list and household construction quality. We then randomized within each pair. This yielded 40 Treated municipalities (T) and 40 Control municipalities (M), as displayed in Table A.4.

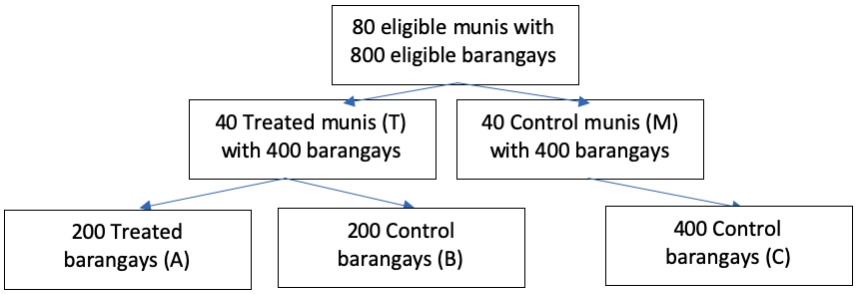
Table A.4: Municipality treatment assignment

Province	Treated Municipalities	Control Municipalities
Albay	5	6
Camarines Norte	5	4
Camarines Sur	12	13
Catanduanes	4	3
Masbate	7	8
Sorsogon	7	6
Total	40	40

Barangay randomization

Next, stratifying on the administrative data-sourced factors and information from the baseline survey (outcomes and information about the socio-economic character of each barangay), we randomized barangays in treated municipalities into two groups: Group A, which was invited to the Usap Tayo program, and Group B, who was not. The 10 barangays in each control municipality (M) were assigned to Group C. The baseline survey outcomes we incorporated into stratification were: (1) Reported level sympathy for NPA (2) How difficult respondents believe it is to access government services (3) Trust in government and (4) Would you think twice to report violent incident to the PNP?

Figure A.1: Treatment assignment chart



A.4.3 Spillovers

A crucial thing we wanted to ensure was that there were no spillovers between units, what would violate the stable unit treatment value assumption (SUTVA).[4] We were primarily concerned with mitigating two kinds of potential spillovers. First, control barangays within a municipality may inadvertently be exposed to the treatment or learn about the treatment and be upset to find out they were not included. Depending on the direction of the spillover effect, this could bias our results upwards or downwards.

We did several things to address this. We emphasized to our partners that although the Usap Tayo program was not a secret, the integrity of the evaluation would be strongest if they did not broadly advertise that these activities were going on and who was being targeted. Because the specific programs that villages were receiving are longstanding government programs, it did not appear to their neighbors to be out of the ordinary. In addition, all activities were held in the municipal center, which meant that neighboring barangays would not notice extra traffic to the treated villages.

Importantly, we tested for whether this kind of spillover took place, with respect to our outcome of interest – Covid risk responses by barangay leaders. By comparing control barangays in treated municipalities with barangays in control municipalities, we can get a sense of whether there were spillovers within the treated municipality. If these two groups are indistinguishable on the main outcomes of interest, we can feel more confident that spillovers did not occur.

The second type of spillover that we were concerned about was that municipal agencies might learn something from the Usap Tayo meetings that provokes a policy change across the municipality. Presumably, this could also occur at the province or region level, but because information was being passed along second or third hand to these higher levels of authority, and because the PIs, through our relationships with decision-makers, felt more confident that they could head off decisions at the higher levels, we were less concerned.

To deal with potential spillovers of this kind, we chose to do both the municipality-level randomization and the barangay-level randomization. In short, we would want to see consistent results within and across municipalities to feel confident about the results.

A.4.4 Statistical analysis

A randomized controlled trial allows for a fairly simple empirical strategy: difference in means between the treatment and control groups. We operationalized this using OLS in Stata, with and without pre-treatment covariates. We ran the analysis on a variety of subsamples, taking advantage of the multiple levels of randomization. Last, we checked for spillovers within municipalities. The basic specification is:

$$Y_{mi} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_{mi} + \beta_2 X_{mi} + \epsilon_{mi}$$

where Y is a binary indicator for whether a given Kapitan in barangay i in municipality m responded to the call for COVID-19 risk information. T is an indicator of treatment status, while X is a vector of pre-treatment administrative covariates at the barangay level and baseline survey responses at the barangay leader level. ϵ is the error term, which in all analysis is clustered at the muncipality

[4] See Rubin, D. B. (1978). Bayesian inference for causal effects: The role of randomization. *The Annals of Statistics*, 34-58.

level (the most conservative choice).[5]

Further discussion of the statistical analysis can be found in the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse.

A.4.5 Research design diagnostics

To check that the randomization was a success and the treatment and control groups were comparable before the experiment began, we present balance tests on important administrative and baseline survey measures. Table A.5 presents the means of the treatment and control group for the municipal and village-level randomizations. It thens presents the p-value from a difference in means test between the two groups, implemented using OLS (regressing the covariate on the relevant treatment indicator). The results of this exercise indicator that there are no substantive or statistically significant differences between the two groups, evidence of an intact RCT.

Table A.5: Balance test between treatment and control units

[Results in Table A.5 found in full SI on the Harvard Dataverse]

A.5 Study Timeline

See full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

A.6 Research Ethics

In social science research it is a longstanding formal requirement, as well as a moral imperative, to protect human subjects. This section documents the steps the authors took to identify and mitigate risks associated with the research.

This study went through an IRB review and approval process to ensure that the activities were in line with US regulations regarding the protection of human subjects. After a period of due diligence and piloting from April 2018 to February 2019, the project received a full IRB review process at UCSD and, after revision, was approved in April 2019. Amendments related to data collection and extensions were approved in June 2019, February 2020 and May 2020. Beyond the formal requirements of the IRB, the PIs took additional care to ensure the ethical appropriateness of the research, concern for which was heightened by the context: a region affected by conflict, working in collaboration with a government that had been widely understood to have engaged in human rights violations in the context of President Duterte's "War on Drugs."

Our approach to this research was primarily guided by the principle of "do no harm" (Wood, 2006).[6] Although there were significant potential ethical benefits to the research, simply aiming to offset potential risks with benefits is not sufficient to protect the integrity and safety of participants and the general public in the conflict-affected context. The principles of the Belmont report also guided our decision making. For example, the fact that local elected leaders, rather than the general public, be the primary participants in the intervention was in part shaped by concern that typical civilians in a conflict-affected area are potentially vulnerable to coercion (what the Belmont report calls "justice").

[5] See e.g. Abadie, A., Athey, S., Imbens, G. W., & Wooldridge, J. (2017). When should you adjust standard errors for clustering? (No. w24003). *National Bureau of Economic Research*.

[6] Wood, E. J. (2006). The ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones. Qualitative Sociology, 29(3), 373-386.

Second, provided we could sufficiently mitigate risks to participants and the general public, we assessed that there was a very high ethical 'upside' for improving practices in a context where there is a long history of abuse and neglect. In addition to the benefits associated with knowledge produced by the project, we assessed that there were substantial potential benefits associated with empowering leadership within the PNP whose policy goals were focused on leaving behind abusive practices and who were committed to evidence-backed approaches. When presented with the opportunity to collaborate on the Usap Tayo project, we felt that there was strong potential for the project to make meaningful and sustainable improvements to policing and development practices across Bicol region, and that the results of the study might lead these practices to be adopted at an even wider scale. Our primary partner within the PNP was credited with overseeing a dramatic, positive transformation to community policing practices as a Provincial Police Chief from 2015-2018, where he received the national award for "Best Province for PCR Practices" in 2018.

During the nearly year-long due diligence phase (from April 2018 to March 2019) the PIs did not commit to carrying out the experiment. It was agreed amongst the authors that even though the learning that would be possible from the project was potentially extremely valuable, we would not engage in a program that would significantly increase the risk to participants. During the course of the due diligence phase we received feedback from experts in the study of conflict and Southeast Asia, specifically on the subject of research ethics, during panels at the Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG) annual meeting, as well as the Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) annual meeting. The PIs, with the help of our full-time local research manager, also conducted extensive fieldwork during the due dilligence period in order to accurately assess the benefits and risks specific to the context in Bicol.

This critical feedback led us to substantially change the design of the study and rule out activities that would have been too risky. For example, we resolved to not cooperate with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and that we would not allow for any PNP patrol activities to be a part of the project. Based on our fieldwork, we determined that participant safety could be protected by focusing on 'soft' government service projects (such as livelihood support and employment training) rather than 'hard' infrastructure projects that are subject to NPA capture and violence. We also decided to move the main activities from the barangay level to the municipality level to insulate regular citizens from additional contact with the PNP. Over the course of the design process we made dozens of adjustments to the sampling and baseline data collection process, and suggested changes to structure for the intervention to the PNP, all of which were accepted by the leadership.

Another important contributor to our ethical considerations and subsequent design choices was that one of the PIs (Ravanilla) for this study is a Filipino scholar, someone who was born and raised in Bicol and has extensive experience working on issues related to conflict in the region. Without extensive local knowledge, our project would be difficult to implement safely and ethically. Prof. Ravanilla's intuitions and experience were crucial to every aspect of the research: including sample selection, enumerator hiring, wording the questionnaire, appropriate consent language, where meetings would be held, and determining how to assess and mitigate any remaining risks of NPA backlash or government abuse.

The structure of this research ethics section follows the American Political Science Association's "Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research" (ratified by the APSA council in April 2020). We list each of the 12 principles from the APSA, describe the potential risks associated with our project and the set of steps we took to mitigate each one. We also delineate the ethical benefits of the project, which we believe were significant.

A.6.1 Principle 1: "Political science researchers should respect autonomy, consider the wellbeing of participants and other people affected by their research, and be open about the ethical issues they face and the decisions they make when conducting their research."

Resolving violent conflict is a vitally important goal, and research that will provide actionable insights into the most effective measures for achieving that goal has a clear ethical upside. At the same time, the downside risks are also potentially severe. One must evaluate the trade-off between the benefits of learning what conflict resolution methods are effective — and the potential lives saved and improved by utilizing that knowledge — against the possibility that a research endeavor might inadvertently increase the level of conflict.

Conflict-affected areas are complicated because citizens are typically exposed to very negative experiences that they have no control over. Conflict actors, sometimes including the state, regularly engage in repression, violence, threats and other violations of autonomy and human rights. The flip side is that the benefits of research that can de-escalate conflict by providing conclusive evidence can be transformational in individual people's lives. In the specific case of this project, we thought about the long duration of the NPA insurgency (ongoing since the 1960s) and the multiple generations of Filipinos that had experienced neglect and violence, determining that there was a significant benefit to be gained as long as we could minimize the downside risks associated with the project.

Importantly, early in the due diligence phase of the project we spent a considerable amount of time with a senior leader in the Philippine National Police Region 5 who expressed a strong desire to change the way that the Philippine security establishment approached the conflict. He expressed to the PI team that the violent approach of the Army and government towards the NPA and citizens over the five decades of conflict had been a major mistake and that a dramatic change towards service delivery and collaboration was the only way forward.

His view was that a scientific experiment that proved that a service-delivery focused method could be successful would be one of the few ways that the decision makers within the military and police could be convinced to change their approach. He told the PI team that the participation of foreign scholars, in collaboration with Filipino researchers, would give the study a weight that could aid in changing the policy. Lastly, he felt that with the imprimatur of US universities he could sell it to the regional commander, which indeed was ultimately successful. It also turned out that the leadership of PNP and the military in Manila were also very interested in receiving presentations of the results and integrating the findings into the updated policy the government is formulating with respect to the NPA conflict.

The aforementioned senior officer was the primary interlocutor for the project within the PNP, who was ultimately promoted to decision making authority in the Region while the project was being implemented. Without the commitment to change from this particular officer, it is unlikely that we would have carried out the study.

The PI team felt that this was an important and timely opportunity. Although it would undoubtedly be complicated, and raise an ongoing number of ethical concerns, the authors felt that the potential benefits were very high. First, greater government services being brought to a region that has long been neglected would be extremely welcome and would be a net social benefit even if there were a null effect on the conflict-related outcomes. Second, if the experiment were to reduce the intensity of the conflict, both by decreasing the incentives for the NPA to engage in violence and demonstrating to the AFP and PNP the value of service-first interventions, this would improve citizen welfare. Lastly, if the experiment were to prompt the PNP and AFP to modify their approach to conflict in general to a less coercive approach, this would improve citizen welfare nationwide.

A.6.2 Principle 2: "Political science researchers have an individual responsibility to consider the ethics of their research related activities and cannot outsource ethical reflection to review boards, other institutional bodies, or regulatory agencies."

Although the insights of the ethical review boards that were involved in this product were helpful and important, throughout the project our team recognized that maintaining the ethical integrity of the research was on the shoulders of the PI team. To achieve this, we carried out a year-long due diligence period that included numerous rounds of feedback from colleagues in the Philippines and the US, both in formal and informal settings. Critical also was having a Filipino PI on the project who could provide critical context and intuitions when making judgments about safety, cultural appropriateness and ethics.

The study went through full review and was approved by the IRB at UCSD. The IRBs at the home institutions of the other authors have reliance agreements in place with the IRB of record. The reviews we received from the IRB were very detailed and required multiple revisions, including on many of the same issues addressed in this ethics appendix.

We also presented our research design at the 2019 Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG) conference as well as the 2019 Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) conference and subsequently engaged in conversations about research ethics with scholars who had extensive experience conducting research in the Philippines, including scholars of Philippine origin. During the year-long planning period for Usap Tayo, we spoke with leading practitioners at UNDP, the World Bank, and the National Economic Development Agency of the Philippines (NEDA) to ensure that the Usap Tayo program aligned with the principles of the "Conflict-Sensitive and Peace-Promoting" paradigm for development. For ethical considerations specific to Bicol, we reached out and got feedback from local academics at Bicol University and Sorsogon State College.

The PIs, along with our local research team, also conducted extensive field work to appropriately assess risks that were specific to our research context. We relied on the personal networks of our research manager and Bicolano coauthor to vet all the barangays in our sample to ensure that participation would not pose significant risks to barangay kapitans and SK chairs in these areas. During this process, we also identified a number of potential strategies to mitigate risks, including focusing on 'soft' development projects and holding meetings in the municipal center. Having worked on more than a dozen projects together across Bicol region over the last decade, Prof. Ravanilla and field research manager established extensive civilian contacts in most municipalities across the region. These contacts included academics at local universities, NGOs, government agencies, and staff of local politicians. This network also includes former NPA members and individuals that continue to maintain strong relationships with the NPA and their political arm, the CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines). At this stage, we eliminated from consideration 22 of the 107 municipalities in the region. After establishing our initial sampling frame, our field manager returned to discuss all barangays in our sample with the local civilian contacts she had cultivated over the course of the previous year to ensure that none of the remaining barangays were ones where participants would be exposed to considerable risks.

The collection of data conducted by the Region V Covid-19 task force did not undergo IRB review, due to the fact that this constituted administrative data collection from already-existing government procedures that was eventually shared with us. No personally-identified information was collected by the Covid task force as part of their requests to the barangays; they only asked for aggregate, barangay-level statistics. In addition, none of the information collected by the task force posed a risk of the PNP or other government partners discovering other personally-identified information about barangay officials collected during the course of the study.

A.6.3 Principle 3: "These principles describe the standards of conduct and reflexive openness that are expected of political science researchers. In some cases, researchers may have good reasons to deviate from these principles (for example, when the principles conflict with each other). In such cases, researchers should acknowledge and justify deviations in scholarly publications and presentations of their work."

Throughout the next nine subsections of this ethics note, we do our best to articulate the risks and trade-offs and justify the choices we made, in an open and transparent manner.

A.6.4 Principle 4: "When designing and conducting research, political scientists should be aware of power differentials between researcher and researched, and the ways in which such power differentials can affect the voluntariness of consent and the evaluation of risk and benefit."

Early in the project due diligence period we decided that we would only participate in evaluating an intervention that was focused on local elected officials rather than regular citizens. The concern was that because of the coercive power of the associated government agencies (the PNP, the DSWD and others) and our own privileges as scholars, typical citizens from far-flung areas would feel compelled to participate and would thus be unable to provide informed consent.

In contrast, elected barangay officials are very familiar with the agencies involved in the project, and are much more comfortable with interactions with outsiders. Because of their experience of regular interactions with PNP officers and line agency officials in a similar setting, the UT intervention was unlikely to put barangay officials in a new position where they would be likely to inadvertently reveal information that would lead to harm. We also resolved that the PIs, especially the foreign members of the team, would not interact directly with any of the research subjects. Furthermore, the subject recruitment and surveying process would provide an easy way for barangay officials to choose not to participate in the program. During the informed consent process for the baseline, the enumerators made sure that officials knew that this was optional and not tied to the normal DILG benefits they are due. Using a monitoring survey by SMS, leaders could easily withdraw their consent if they so chose to, without backlash.

During the baseline survey, only survey enumerators and the barangay officials were present; no police officers or line agency representatives were present. They were enumerated on a different day. In the end, 6 invited barangay leaders did not to participate in the baseline due to communication difficulties and/or challenges traveling to the municipal center on the surveying days (3 that ultimately were assigned to treatment, 3 to control). These were from very remote areas where mobile phone coverage is spotty and travel distances are very far. All 6 of these barangays remained eligible for the program and the three that were randomized into treatment did choose to participate, though we do not have baseline survey data for those units.

As we elaborate in section A.6.9, our team never shared any personally identifiable or geographically disaggregated data with the PNP, AFP or any other government agency. The only survey data reported to the security services was a region-level aggregate report presented to Regional PNP leadership by the PIs immediately after the baseline survey. The purpose of the report was to identify government services that citizens needed most so that appropriate civilian partner agencies could be incorporated into UT programming. We did not share any administrative data collected by our research team with any of the other government agencies participating in the project.

A.6.5 Principle 5: "Political science researchers should generally seek informed consent from individuals who are directly engaged by the research process, especially if research involves more than minimal risk of harm or if it is plausible to expect that engaged individuals would withhold consent if consent were sought."

Informed Consent from Community Leaders (Kapitans and SK Chairs)

All of the community leaders included in our research study (from both treatment and control areas) provided their consent to participate. We provided consent forms to all participants prior to the baseline survey and our research staff were on hand to answer any questions that arose. This consent form was approved by a University IRB in the United States as part of the larger project approval, and is included as an attachment at the end of this appendix. We informed barangay officials that they were participating in a research study and that their community was randomly selected for inclusion. In accordance with Principle 6, there was no deception involved in community leaders' participation in the study or during any parts of the survey.

The baseline survey was self-enumerated on tablets, with barangay officials themselves responding to survey questions (or choosing to skip questions) on their own. Enumerators were available to answer questions and help as needed, but were not able to view the responses that the subjects were submitting. This was made clear to respondents ahead of time.

Because we recognized the possibility that our context was one where the "risks of harm change during a study," (Principle 5, sub-point B), at each UT meeting we gave community leaders the opportunity to opt out of future meetings. We thought that opting out in person might be seen as socially undesirable, so we also gave leaders the opportunity to indicate that they did not wish to participate in future meetings via a short SMS monitoring survey conducted in the week after each meeting. A small subset of leaders (33 Barangay Kapitans) missed at least one meeting and indicated to our research staff that the reason for being absent was their time commitment to other obligations, not a risk to their safety. In all these cases they attended the rest of the meetings. No community leaders were coerced into participation in the program.

The consent process did not include reference to the queries of the Covid-19 taskforce because this constituted administrative data collection on the part of the government. These queries were part of the agencies' existing operations and were made across the region. The Covid task force data collection, with the involvement of the PNP, took place without our involvement. The Region V inter-agency Covid Task Force met immediately after the region was placed under "enhanced community quarantine." The Covid task force in each of Philippines' 17 regions included the regional PNP, and Bicol region was no different. At the task force meeting, the PNP agreed to contribute to data collection for Covid risk assessment in remote and less secure areas of the region due to resource constraints at the Department of Health (DOH).

Our local research manager learned about the task force meeting and PNP's commitment to collect data regarding Covid exposure risk during discussions with the Regional Police Community Relations (PCR) leadership at the time. We were not in attendance at the task force meeting and only learned about this commitment after the fact. The official contact list for the barangay kapitans is freely available to all government agencies.

In analyzing possible risks to participants associated with the release of the Covid-19 administrative data to our research team, we considered whether PII or protected health information would be shared. Because neither PII nor personal health information was included in the dataset, we determined this risk to be minimal. Although the identity of the barangay kapitan is public knowledge, no health information associated with the kapitan themselves could be known to be

included in the data.

Informed Consent from Police and Line Agency Officials

We provided police officers and line agency officials who participated in our survey and/or the UT meetings with a consent form that was similar to the one provided to community leaders (also included at the end of this appendix). Like with barangay leaders, we gave officers and agency representatives the option to opt-out of the survey at any time. In contrast with barangay leaders, however, participation in the UT intervention by police and line agency officials was part of their regular duties and thus subject to assignment from their supervisors. Thus, officials could be obliged by their supervisors to attend UT meetings or reassigned at will (as researchers we did not have control over this). That said, we did provide opportunities for the police officers and line agency officials to report on their experience with the UT meetings, specifically to learn if they perceived any safety hazards, which we could then bring to the senior leadership. We did not receive any reports of safety issues.

A.6.6 Principle 6: "Political science researchers should carefully consider any use of deception and the ways in which deception can conflict with participant autonomy."

No deception was used in this study.

A.6.7 Principle 7: "Political science researchers should consider the harms associated with their research."

Site selection and associated safety considerations

Because this study was taking place in a conflict-affected zone, careful consideration went into site selection for the eligible sample. In line with the "do no harm" approach to empirical research in conflict settings, we chose to err on the side of caution in our sampling procedure (Wood, 2006). Units were only included in the ultimate sample if they passed a five-step vetting procedure that included inputs from a range of partners, administrative data and experts.

In this subsection, we describe our full site selection process, which included the following steps:

1. Consulting 2009-2015 AFP intelligence reports to avoid a set of potentially dangerous barangays (erring on the side of caution) and set our initial sampling frame.
2. Reviewing data on the implementation of the 'war on drugs' to eliminate locations where extra-judicial killings were reported from June 2016 (when the drug war began) to the end of 2018.
3. Consulting all regional, provincial and municipal offices of the PNP and DSWD to ensure that none of the barangays in our sample were known to be NPA infiltrated or dangerous.
4. Relying on the personal networks and local knowledge of our Bicolano coauthor and field research manager to further vet each barangay and confirm that they were safe for research.
5. Confirming using the updated 2019 Quarter 2 AFP intelligence reports that none of the final sample barangays were coded as NPA-infiltrated by the AFP at the start of the program.

After discussing site selection, which we think is a crucial part of reducing risks posed by the NPA, we turn to a discussion of additional risks we identified, and the steps we took to mitigate these

risks. While the focus of this section is on ex-ante considerations made by our team, we also think it is important to note that over approximately 9 months of the program, there were no reported incidents of violence against program participants, including community leaders, line agency staff, PNP officers or our field research team.

One concern is whether we were able to effectively rule out NPA-infiltrated "red" areas, a criterion we included to protect participants. As discussed in the manuscript, our goal was to include only "yellow" barangays that are vulnerable to NPA influence. Of particular concern is that the AFP data we used to categorize high-risk barangays might be 1) biased due to the relationship between insurgent presence and levels of violence or 2) out of date.

The data we used were from Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) intelligence reports that explicitly aimed to capture NPA presence.[7] In four quarterly periods each year, local AFP intelligence officers provide reports that are used by base-level leadership to classify each barangay on a scale ranging from "cleared" barangays to those that are "infiltrated" by the NPA. Using this scale, we sought to avoid all NPA-infiltrated areas from our study sample.

Even though we were using a measure that is explicitly intended to capture insurgent presence, two additional concerns arise. First, the AFP might have an incentive to under-report insurgent presence, which would be an issue if the AFP wanted to show that they are making progress in rooting out the NPA. Mitigating this concern is the fact that these intelligence reports are kept highly confidential and are not shared with the public. They had been shared with the study authors previously for another observational research project. AFP leadership uses these reports for internal planning purposes and so they have an incentive to 'get it right.' If anything, interviews with leadership of civilian government agencies (including DSWD) conducted by the PIs suggested that base-level military leadership occasionally over-reports NPA presence in order to justify requesting more resources from Congress. Felter (2005) shows that according to these same intelligence reports, NPA presence consistently increased year-over-year from the early 1990s through 2011, suggesting the AFP leadership is unlikely to manipulate the reports to show reductions in conflict.

A second concern is that the intelligence reports are outdated and do not accurately reflect NPA presence during the study period, given that the most recent year for which we have comprehensive data is 2015. However, we think the 2009-2015 NPA presence data provide a useful starting point. As a half-century old conflict, there is significant stagnation in terms of the barangays where the NPA is able to establish a strong presence. To illustrate this fact, consider patterns of NPA control in the 3,471 barangays in Bicol region over the six-year period preceding 2015 (seen in the table below). In the 2009-2012 period, nearly 11% of the barangays in Bicol Region were classified as being NPA-infiltrated in at least one year. The number of infiltrated barangays declined by half during the 2013-2015 period. Between these two periods, the NPA was only able to infiltrate two new barangays (.0006%). Interviews with local experts on the NPA indicated that in the post-2015 period, the NPA continued to slowly lose ground across the region. Out of an abundance of caution, we took great efforts to exclude from our sample all barangays that were coded as NPA-infiltrated during any year from 2009-2015.

NPA-Infiltrated Bgys 2009-12 (early period)	NPA-Infiltrated Bgys 2013-15 (late period)	Bgys infiltrated by the NPA between the early and late period
379 (10.9%)	196 (5.6%)	2 (.0006%)

[7] An alternative to this approach, using violence data, is a poor choice when estimating insurgent presence because the most strongly insurgent-controlled areas often experience little violence (see, for example, Kalyvas 2006)

We viewed the process described above as a conservative first step towards eliminating barangays from our sample where program participants might be put at risk. This step was useful for us because it allowed for the use of systematic, region-wide criteria to designate an initial set of barangays for consideration in the study. However, recognizing that despite these precautions we could not entirely rule out the possibility that we were including some post-2015 NPA-infiltrated areas (or that some areas were infiltrated covertly, without the knowledge of the AFP), we took several additional precautions.

First, we gave the leadership at each Municipal Police Station (MPS) the opportunity to eliminate any barangays where the program might endanger participant safety. Because of their day-to-day experience operating in a specific municipality, MPS leadership are likely to have a more accurate sense of up-to-date local conflict dynamics. Based on previous experience working with the Bicol PNP we came in with a prior that MPS leadership is very resistant to operating in NPA-affected areas. At the time of our study, the PNP required advanced AFP clearance in order to conduct any activity in barangays more than five kilometers (5km) from the MPS stations. Receiving this clearance in areas with even minimal risk of conflict is both time consuming and expensive. The PNP is required to foot the bill for the AFP personnel who conduct advance patrols and determine which areas are safe. MPS leadership must receive approval from provincial PNP leadership before making such requests. As a result, MPS leadership usually prefers to avoid potentially risky areas completely and leave them under the purview of the AFP. During advanced visits to all MPS stations, our research manager worked with the MPS leadership to remove any remaining barangays that would require them to receive advance AFP clearance.

Second, we relied on the personal networks of our local research manager and Bicolano coauthor to conduct a vetting of all barangays in our sample. Relying entirely on the security services poses some risks, even though we had strong reason to believe that the initial steps in our security procedure produced a very cautious set of barangays. As described in our description of the fieldwork in above sections, our civilian contacts included academics at local universities, NGOs, government agencies, and staff of local politicians. This network also includes former NPA members and individuals that continue to maintain strong relationships with the NPA and their political arm, the CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines). The preparation and piloting period for the UT intervention lasted more than a year, from July 2018 to August 2019, during which our research manager traveled to all sample municipalities to discuss the project with her contacts. At this stage, we eliminated from consideration 22 of the 107 municipalities in the region. After establishing our initial sampling frame, our field manager returned to discuss all barangays in our sample with the local civilian contacts she had cultivated over the course of the previous year to ensure that none of the remaining barangays were ones where participants would be exposed to significant risks.

Third, one of our PIs, along with our local field research manager, reviewed the most up-to-date AFP intelligence reports in person immediately prior to launching the intervention. The reports were shared with us by the Regional PNP leadership, who regularly receive the updated reports for security purposes. We were able to review together our list of sampled barangays and verify that none of them had become coded as NPA-infiltrated at the start of the program.

Additional risks associated with the NPA

We believe our procedure for eliminating NPA-infiltrated areas from the sample significantly reduced the probability of direct contact between NPA personnel and barangay officials in our study sites that might threaten the safety of those officials. Nevertheless, we cannot rule out that barangay officials in study sites did not at any point interact with NPA personnel during the course

of the study. A key standard for proceeding with involvement in the project was a determination of whether participation in the UT program would result in increased risks for barangay officials in cases where they did interact with the NPA.

First, only elected officials participated as subjects in the trial. These individuals are those who have chosen to participate in political activities (in conflict zones) and are well-suited to manage the associated risks. Given their positions as community leaders, it is likely that most of the study participants had repeated experience interacting with NPA personnel in the past.

As part of the vetting process during the year-long preparation and piloting stage, our local research manager and Bicolano coauthor discussed with a number of barangay kapitans the potential risks of the project stemming from interactions with the NPA. The main risk we identified during our fieldwork was that the UT program might be labeled as "counter-revolutionary" by the NPA, leading NPA personnel to threaten barangay officials who participated in the program. We also discussed this possibility with our contacts who held ties to the NPA and were familiar with how the NPA assessed programs of a similar nature.

These conversations elucidated the fact that the types of government development projects that lead the NPA to target local officials with threats of violence are almost exclusively physical infrastructure projects. Physical infrastructure projects, roads in particular, involve large sums of money paid to local contractors and are commonly targeted with extortion by the NPA. The NPA sometimes threatens barangay officials because of their role in negotiating the terms of these contracts and determining the 'cut' received by the NPA. Roads are also seen as particularly threatening to the NPA because of the increased mobility they afford to security personnel. Finally, physical infrastructure projects provide a coordination point for violent attacks because of their high visibility. As a result of these risks, representatives for the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) were not present at any UT meetings and it was stipulated that no physical infrastructure projects be involved in UT.

Instead, UT agendas focused exclusively on government services that were delivered directly to individuals, such as livelihood assistance and job training programs (commonly referred to as "soft" development in the Philippines). All of our contacts indicated to us that participating in discussions regarding these types of services posed virtually no risk to barangay officials. The amount of money involved in these projects is negligible compared to infrastructure projects and is not easily extorted. Preventing access to these programs targeted directly at the poor would also be extremely unpopular with the NPA's base of support. Historically, the NPA has not targeted violence at line agency staff or barangay officials who delivered these programs or the recipients of these services. This pattern is evident in two papers by Crost, Felter, and Johnston (2014, 2016), who show that government infrastructure projects (implemented under Kalahi-CIDSS) attracted increased violence by the NPA but that the Philippines' flagship Conditional Cash Transfer program (4Ps) had a violence-reducing effect. Throughout the project, we monitored whether the NPA issued any public statements labeling UT or any of the participating programs as "counter-revolutionary and anti-development," the label applied to programs such as Kalahi-CIDSS that the NPA frequently tries to undermine. To date, this has not occurred.

We also considered whether barangay officials may be placed at increased risk due to perceived association with the PNP as a result of UT. For example, civilians who are seen interacting with police officers in private locations or traveling to police stations are sometimes questioned by the NPA. Our conversations with local civilian contacts suggested that risks of this nature associated with UT were negligible. The NPA expects that elected barangay officials will regularly interact with government officials and PNP officers because it is a part of their official duties. For example, for a number of years the Bicol PNP has held regular 'Enhanced Managing Police Operations' (EMPO) meetings where barangay officials meet at the municipal police station regarding safety

and security issues in their areas. Elected barangay officials, including those from more rural areas of the region, travel to the municipal center for meetings with government officials at least once a month, on average. Meetings where elected officials meet with the police or other government agencies as a group (such as UT) are seen as particularly non-threatening because barangay officials have the expectation that any sensitive information they share could become public. We also want to underscore the fact that we frequently reiterated to barangay officials that they had the option to withdraw from the UT program at any time. If study participants felt that the program too closely associated them with the PNP to the extent that it put their safety at risk, they could drop out of the program or designate a replacement at any time.

A.6.8 Principle 8: "Political science researchers should anticipate and protect individual participants from trauma stemming from participation in research"

Because some of the subjects may have been exposed to violence in the past, is important to protect them from trauma related to revisiting those incidents on the survey or in intervention activities. Also, even if surveys are anonymous, subjects may feel discomfort expressing their true views about sensitive topics.

To mitigate these risks we designed the survey instruments for barangay leaders and government officials to not include questions that refer to past violence. We also chose to use embedded endorsement style questions for sensitive topics rather than asking directly, this helped to insulate subjects from trauma. We also noted in the consent form the range of topics that would be included so that nothing was a surprise. The self-enumeration of the surveys also allowed for respondents to engage with questions at their own pace and skip any questions they were not comfortable with, without external pressure. The wording of questions was done in a cultural sensitive manner. Our research staff is well-trained to identify and respond appropriately to symptoms of distress.

The content of the Usap Tayo meetings themselves were deliberately designed to focus on forward-looking service provision topics. The ongoing insurgency or violence associated with it were not topics of discussion in the UT meetings. This helped to reduce potential trauma among participants.

Lastly, the study did not engage with average members of the public, only local elected village leaders. These leaders have past experience engaging with government in the context of conflict, and, in order to their job, must develop coping mechanisms. We think that the risks for this subjects is much lower than average citizens.

A.6.9 Principle 9: "Political science researchers should generally keep the identities of research participants confidential; when circumstances require, researchers should adopt the higher standard of ensuring anonymity."

For the baseline data we collected, we kept all information confidential and committed to not sharing the survey data with Philippine government partners or anyone else. The results of the study will only be communicated in aggregate form. Replication data for the study will be published in aggregate form.

Because the research participants are elected officials (barangay leaders) it is not possible to keep their identities anonymous. They play a public role and are responsible for interacting with municipal government agencies on behalf of their constituents as part of their job, which they voluntarily sought as a candidate. That said, we were careful to closely restrict the number of people who knew that the program was taking place and the set of people in the room during the Usap Tayo meetings and the baseline data collection.

The only UT participants were two designated representatives of each barangay (typically the kapitan and SK chair), and the representatives of the government agencies (usually the DSWD and Police Community Relations, and then additional other agencies on occasion). No members of the public participated, only those elected representatives. During surveying, only the survey enumerators were present, no government officials nor members of the public. Furthermore, transport reimbursements were made generic rather than associating them with a government program (e.g. with the insignia of the police or DSWD). The reimbursements were made in cash.

Risk of respondents' views being revealed during baseline

Part of the risk mitigation strategy, given a lack of anonymity, was to assiduously protect the integrity of the baseline data collection process so that no respondent or barangay more generally could be subject to any retaliation for their political views.

All surveys were conducted in private rooms at neutral locations in the municipal centers and the PNP was not informed about the details of the enumeration. Moreover, all surveys were self-enumerated by the respondents on secure tablets with updated security and encryption software installed by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA). After arriving at the survey site, participants were provided with consent documentation by experienced IPA enumerators who were available to answer questions about the consent process. Participants were then led to a private place to sit and handed a tablet with the survey open in the Qualtrics mobile application. Enumerators helped the respondent with the self-enumeration procedure while answering two practice questions ("How likely are you to eat adobo this week?" and "I like dogs more than cats. Agree/Disagree"). At this point, enumerators let the participants complete the remainder of the survey on their own unless they requested help with a specific question. Respondents chose via a dropdown on the device what language they wished the survey to be displayed in. When they reached the end of the survey, participants clicked the "Finish Survey" button, which locked their responses and closed the survey. Even enumerators could not access participant responses at this point.

The self-enumeration procedure made it virtually impossible for security forces or enumerators to access any information about individual respondents' attitudes towards the government or the NPA from the survey. Questions and responses were not conveyed verbally and only the respondent had access to their responses. Self-enumeration was possible because the local officials and government agency personnel who made up our list of participants were on average significantly more educated than the average citizen in Bicol and all of the participants were literate. Previous research indicates that self-enumeration procedures like these reduce participant discomfort, nonresponse and sensitivity bias.

In addition, all questions about the NPA were asked using endorsement experiments, making it so that even if participants' responses were somehow revealed, one could not discern an individual respondent's views about the NPA.

Risk of learning political attitudes during UT meetings

The municipal PNP officer in charge of Police Community Relations (PCR) coordinated and attended each of the UT meetings. However, we view the risk of the PNP officer ascertaining barangay leaders' views towards the NPA because of UT meetings to be very low. First, and most importantly, UT meetings were not focused on issues relating to the NPA and all activities focused specifically on the extension of services delivered by civilian government agencies. None of the meeting agendas contained any security-related items. The training session that we planned and funded, which stressed ethical, safety and implementation standards, made it clear that these topics

were off base for the UT meetings. Anonymous note-takers from our research team were present at a random subset of UTs in each municipality to spot-check the conduct of the meetings, and in none of these cases was the NPA discussed.

In addition, interactions with PCR officers are in no way unusual for the types of barangay officials who were participants in the UT program. As a result, barangay officials are well-practiced at withholding any information that they do not feel comfortable revealing and the UT program was very unlikely to have put barangay leadership in a new position where their views towards the NPA would be involuntarily revealed.

Protecting PII

Our team never shared any personally identifiable or geographically disaggregated data with the PNP, AFP or any other government agency. The only survey data reported to the security services was a region-level aggregate report presented to Regional PNP leadership by the PIs immediately after the baseline survey. The purpose of the report was to identify government services that citizens needed most so that appropriate civilian partner agencies could be incorporated into UT programming. The PNP only had access to their own internal administrative data (crime blotter reports, for example) along with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) contact list for all elected barangay officials. The DILG contact list is freely available to all government agencies and was already held by regional, provincial, and municipal PNP offices prior to the start of the UT program. The PNP uses these lists to contact barangay officials for other regular meetings, such as Enhanced Managing Policing Operations (EMPO) meetings that are held occasionally between Police Stations and barangay leadership across the region. The same list was used to coordinate UT meetings and contact barangay leadership for COVID-19 data collection.

A.6.10 Principle 10: "Political science researchers conducting studies on political processes should consider the broader social impacts of the research process as well as the impact on the experience of individuals directly engaged by the research. In general, political science researchers should not compromise the integrity of political processes for research purposes without the consent of individuals that are directly engaged by the research process."

In considering the broader social impacts of this study before we chose to undertake it, we thought about the possible risks, whether they could be mitigated, and the possible broader social benefits from the project. In line with our commitment to "do no harm," however, benefits would not be weighted against potential risks, instead, those risks would need to be mitigated irrespective of potential benefits before committing to engage.

For risks, we thought about possible issues for line agency staff, enumerators, and community members who were not directly engaged with the program. We considered privacy for potential beneficiaries of programming brought about by the UT meetings (i.e. would youths invited to government training programs be targeted in some way afterwards). We also thought about whether this project would be empowering an agency (the PNP) that has sometimes engaged in abuse of civilians in the context of the recent 'War on Drugs.' Lastly, we thought about whether our involvement would raise the probability of sensitive health information being inadvertently released.

On benefits, we weighed the importance of potentially contributing to a major reform in the way that the Philippine National Police engage with the population in conflict affected regions. Given the population's past experience of neglect, punctuated by violence, on the part of the government, we felt that this was a significant opportunity to change the status quo for the better, in

social impact terms. By engaging with the Usap Tayo program, we could also steer the site selection away from zones we felt were too risky; in the absence of our engagement the program likely would have occurred in on average more risky locations. Lastly, if the intervention were to help reduce the intensity of conflict in Bicol region, where insurgency has been ongoing since the 1960s, the benefits would be highly significant. The conflict has greatly inhibited economic growth, access to education and healthcare, and has exposed residents to the many negative effects of violence.

Direct risks to non-participants

We believe the risks posed to enumerators were very low. Enumerator activities mainly included 1) overseeing the self-enumerated surveys in the municipal centers and 2) conducting spot-checks of UT meetings. The main risks to enumerators posed by field experiments like ours derive from traveling to conflict-affected areas, where they might risk encounters with insurgents or hostile community members (Wolfe 2020).[8] Enumerator activities for our project were conducted entirely in municipal centers where the NPA virtually never operates. Because the surveys were self-enumerated, the risks of survey respondents becoming hostile to enumerators was very low. It is also important to note that our enumeration team included only five members in addition to our research manager. The enumerators hired for the project were the five most senior members of the IPA Bicol team, each of which was a native Bicolano and had more than five years of experience working as an IPA enumerator prior to the project. Our research manager and enumerators all worked on a previous RCT involving the Bicol PNP, which gave them extensive experience interacting with security officials. Still, we conducted a 3-day training workshop for the enumerators that focused on ethics and safety in the field.

For line agency staff, the main risk we identified was potential targeting by the NPA. Similar to the situation for barangay officials, instances when the NPA targets civilian government personnel with violence almost exclusively involve physical infrastructure projects. For this reason, we concurred with our government partners' preference to omit all infrastructure projects from UT programming and focused instead on services delivered directly to individuals.

In contrast to civilian line agency staff, the NPA does sometimes target PNP officers with ambushes. We do not believe the UT program increased the risk of ambush for PNP officers, because the UT program did not increase police presence in NPA-infiltrated areas. The only areas where there is substantial risk of ambush are those that are NPA-infiltrated, which we took substantial steps to exclude through the process in our sampling procedure.

Even in the unlikely event that a barangay were to be covertly infiltrated by the NPA, our other safety procedures, including holding the meetings in municipal centers, make it extremely unlikely that the program increased the risk of ambushes. The risk of ambush in the municipal centers, where the UT meetings were held, is exceedingly low. In addition, we have strong reason to believe that UT did not result in adjustments to PNP patrol schedules. The PNP staff in the operations division who are in charge of making officers' patrol schedules were not involved in UT. In addition, at the time of our study, the PNP required advanced AFP clearance in order to conduct any activity in barangays more than five kilometers (5km) from the MPS stations. Receiving this clearance in areas with even minimal risk of conflict is both time consuming and expensive. The PNP is required to foot the bill for the AFP personnel who conduct advance patrols and determine which areas are safe. MPS leadership must receive approval from provincial PNP leadership before making such requests. As a result, MPS leadership usually prefers to avoid potentially risky areas

[8] Wolfe, R. (2020). The Benefits and Challenges of Randomized Control Trials in Conflict Environments: Reflections From a Scholar-Practitioner. In: *Acar Y., Moss S., Uluğ Ö. (eds) Researching Peace, Conflict, and Power in the Field.*

completely and leave them under the purview of the AFP. Finally, to the extent that UT increased PNP officers' understanding of communities, this likely increased officers' ability to interact safely with the population.

Another concern may be that barangay officials would share information about community members that indirectly raised their risk of experiencing violence through contact with the PNP. We assessed this risk to be quite low for a few reasons. UT meetings were used to identify community members who were eligible to receive services through existing civilian government agency programs. Line agency personnel provided barangay officials with the eligibility criteria for certain programs during a UT meeting and indicated that services could be provided if officials identified potential recipients that met these criteria. When barangay officials produced a list of eligible participants, they handed them directly to civilian line agency program officers.

Importantly, during the due diligence phase, we learned that two core agencies that would be involved in providing programming – DSWD and DOLE – have strict privacy protocols around their beneficiary data. They have extensive experience dealing with this in the context of the 4Ps program, which is the Philippines' conditional cash transfer program. In fact, these agencies would not release eligibility data at the household level even to the PIs.

We instructed the spot-checkers on our research team to indicate to us any instances where PNP officers at UT meetings looked at this list of eligible participants or took a copy of the list, and in no cases did this occur. We asked our spot checkers to take note of any instances where a UT meeting turned to a discussion of particular community members, which also never occurred in the meetings they observed. As mentioned above, we got no indication that the PNP adjusted its patrol schedules in response to UT, making it unlikely that the program led to increased contact between officers and community members who were eligible for programs discussed during UT meetings.

One exception where citizen information likely reached the PNP was for DSWD's security guard training program, which reached a few dozen beneficiaries around the region. The PNP are the licensing agency for private security guards in the Philippines and thus upon graduation the completion certificate and biodata for the prospective guard must be shared. The licensing unit within the PNP is distinct from those who participated in the UT program or who are involved in operations. When prospective beneficiaries applied to be part of the security guard training they were made aware by DSWD that licensing required their information to be shared with the PNP.

In addition to the low risks faced by community members, they also faced very large potential benefits. Historically, follow-through on service provision by government programs in sample barangays was very limited. Previous research suggests that the types of government services discussed during UT meetings (livelihood assistance from DSWD, seedling programs from DA, employment training from TESDA, etc.) can bring important economic and social benefits to previously excluded segments of society.

Collaborating with potentially abusive authorities

One of the overarching principles guiding our involvement was that it had the potential to empower leadership within the PNP whose policy goals were focused on leaving behind abusive practices and who were committed to evidence-backed approaches. When presented with the opportunity to collaborate on the Usap Tayo project, we felt that there was strong potential for the project to make meaningful and sustainable improvements to policing and development practices across Bicol region, and that the results of the study might lead these practices to be adopted at an even wider scale. The senior leadership we worked with had been credited with overseeing a dramatic, positive transformation to community policing practices as a Provincial Police Chief from 2015-2018, where he received the national award for "Best Province for PCR Practices" in

2018. In her chapter on the research ethics of development interventions in conflict zones, Rebecca Wolfe (2020) notes that the ethical benefits of empowering proponents for positive change should be weighed strongly alongside the risks. In short, we assessed that there was a very high ethical upside for improving practices in a context where there is a long history of abuse and neglect.

Second, given the PNP's record of abuse, we were cautious when it came to weighing the downside risks of the collaboration. One manifestation of these risks we spent a lot of time discussing was whether street-level PNP officers and local PNP leadership down the chain of command were likely to commit abuses despite the buy-in of the regional PNP leadership. Collaborating with municipal police stations that were involved in killings of civilians in the name of drug enforcement was not something we were willing to do. However, after reviewing data from ACLED's dedicated dataset on the Philippine Drug War and through interviews with civilian leaders and human rights advocates during the preparatory period, we learned that the drug war and the Usap Tayo program would not overlap much at all.

The drug war was almost entirely conducted in urban areas, with a particular focus on Metro Manila. In contrast, the Usap Tayo program would be operating exclusively in rural municipalities, where drug war operations seldom took place. Bicol region as a whole was relatively quiet during the drug war, even in the several mid-sized urban centers around the region. From 2016 to 2018, there were about 2.7 fatal drug-involved PNP incidents per month across the entire Bicol region (.04 incidents per 100,000 population). Although we do not have data about the pre-Duterte period, our contacts reported that this was roughly the same as before the "War on Drugs." Also, we excluded from Usap Tayo all areas where there was a fatal drug war incident from 2016-2018. Those areas were largely excluded already because we removed the provincial capitals from each of the six provinces in Bicol region, where more than 80% of the fatal drug-related incidents occurred. Municipal capitals, which were also not included in the study, hosted the remaining 20% of the incidents.

Third, while the PNP helped initiate and coordinate the effort, the primary implementing agencies of the program were actually civilian line agencies. The DSWD in particular has a very strong reputation for professionalism and effectiveness. Of all the civilian agencies, the leadership at DSWD has been most vocal about its opposition to policies like the Drug War that have disproportionately affected the poor. In private discussions with the Bicol DSWD leadership, they expressed great enthusiasm for the PNP's involvement in Usap Tayo because they felt that the program could finally improve their ability to deliver services to conflict-affected areas of the region. Within the PNP, it was the Police Community Relations (PCR) units that engaged in all of the Usap Tayo activities, and these units are generally opposed to militarization within the PNP.

Researcher involvement

The UT program would have gone forward without the involvement of the research team. We got involved in the evaluation of the UT program when one of the PIs was in Bicol for another research project. A high ranking regional official invited the PI team to discuss an evaluation of this new program. As noted above the senior officer felt that a new program focused on service provision and "root causes of insurgency," would be an improvement on past, more violent, approaches. His initial plan was to deploy this program to as much of the region as his police community relations team could handle.

Regarding the scope of the intervention, it is likely that a very similar set of barangays would have been treated without our involvement. In the initial planning meeting, the PNP and other agency leadership discussed a region-wide program with approximately five barangays per municipality being targeted. In addition, the type of villages selected for the program would likely have

been very similar without our involvement. The program was designed to re-incorporate conflict-affected barangays into government service provision, but the PNP has strict security procedures in place that prevent them from operating in NPA-infiltrated barangays without an advance security clearance from the AFP.

However, these security procedures would likely have allowed the PNP to operate UT in barangays that although not NPA-infiltrated in 2018 may have been recently in the 'red' zone. Our sampling procedure removed a number of zones that had active NPA activity as recently as 2015 that would have been part of UT, which might have put participants, line agency officials or the PNP at risk. Thus, our involvement likely reduced the number of potentially risky barangays involved in the program.

Perhaps the best evidence that the activities of the program would have been similar without our involvement is the fact that we provided very little monetary assistance to implementation. Nearly all of the funds the research team contributed to the project went directly towards research activities (surveying, monitoring, etc.). The only funds we contributed to the intervention itself went towards producing materials and hiring a trainer for a 2-day training of the PCR officers and line-agency staff involved in the UT program. We insisted on contributing these materials for the purpose of standardizing the intervention across all municipalities, and ensuring that PNP and agency participants received ethics and safety training. We also contributed funds to cover the travel costs for some barangay officials who resided very far from the municipal centers. Unlike many other field experiments of this scale, our limited financial contribution to the actual intervention means that our implementing partners were unlikely to have undertaken activities they would not otherwise take.

A.6.11 Principle 11: "Political science researchers should be aware of relevant laws and regulations governing their research related activities."

We were diligent in following all laws and regulations governing this research. Our local research team and the Filipino PI are highly experienced in conducting survey research and experiments in Bicol region within the confines of the law. In addition, working with government agencies required a strict adherence to the law on their side as well.

A.6.12 Principle 12: "The responsibility to promote ethical research goes beyond the individual researcher or research team."

In order to build the strongest ethical foundation that we could for the study, we did trainings for everyone involved in the administration of the data collection and intervention. At the start of the program, we did a training for the enumerators that emphasized ethics and safety considerations. We also did a major training for the PNP PCR officers and DSWD reps that emphasized ethical treatment and protection of human rights. This training required mobilizing dozens of police officers and DSWD representatives from 40 municipalities to two training sites. We also worked with the PNP and DSWD regional leadership to instill that safety and ethical conduct was critical to making Usap Tayo a success.

A.6.13 Attachments

The consent form and invitation letter can be found in the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

A.7 Supplementary Text, Tables and Figures

A.7.1 Tables for Main Results

In this section we present the underlying regression table for the coefficient plot displayed in Figure 3, an exploration of potential mechanisms for the effects uncovered (including those shown in Figure 4), and a series of robustness checks. This includes estimating the treatment effects only within treated municipalities (comparing treated villages and control villages), including various covariate sets (baseline survey, village census characteristics) and verifying that there are no apparent within-municipality spillovers.

The results in Table A.6 reflect what is displayed in the coefficient plots of the manuscript's main text: treated barangays were ten percentage points more likely to respond to Bicol Region's COVID-19 Task Force with critical risk information; the estimate is the same with and without covariates.[9] This holds for both the barangay and municipality level randomizations. We do not find any evidence of spillovers between villages, as shown by a precisely estimated null finding in columns 5-6. Table A.7 displays the estimated treatment effect only in treated municipalities, which is consistent with our overall findings.

Table A.6: Main treatment effects

	Main Sample		Municipal-level Randomization		Spillovers Sample	
Treated Barangay	.103**	.101**				
	(.033)	(.033)				
Treated Municipality			.102*	.100*	-.002	-.000
			(.039)	(.040)	(.045)	(.044)
Census Covariates	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
N	800	800	600	600	600	600
Municipalities	80	80	80	80	80	80

Notes: Columns 1-2 compare all treated villages with all control villages. Columns 3-4 compare treated villages in treated municipalities with control villages in control municipalities. Columns 5-6 compare control villages in treated municipalities with control villages in control municipalities. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

A.7.2 Robustness

For robustness of the results to different model specifications, see the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

A.7.3 Mechanisms

Table A.8 presents heterogeneous effects by baseline survey responses; these results are presented in the main text in Figure 4. Marginal effects are presented in the main text using Stata's 'margins' command. For (1), 'negative attitudes' is defined as -0.2 NPA net endorsement, 'neutral' is 0, and

[9] The estimates shown in the plot are exact, in the table below they are rounded to a the nearest percentage point.

Table A.7: Treatment effects in treated municipalities

Treated Barangay	.105**	.105*
	(.039)	(.040)
Census Covariates	No	Yes
N	400	400
Municipalities	40	40

Notes: Compares treated and control villages only in treated muncipalities. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

'positive' is 0.2. Trust in government is broken into terciles, which are defined as: first tercile is < 7, second tercile is $>= 7$ and < 9, third tercile is $>= 9$. Government capacity and political connections needed are binary variables interpreted as such.

Overall, we find that the treatment effects are largest where leaders held pro-NPA attitudes at baseline, although there are significant positive effects also where attitudes towards the NPA were netural or negative. The effect was greatest for leaders that were in the middle 'bin' of trust towards government, and for those who though the government did not have the capacity to meet community needs (at baseline).

There are three reasons we think that the UT intervention was particularly effect in areas that were pro-NPA at baseline. First, the NPA for years told supporters that the government was incompetent and corrupt, and incapable of responding to crises on their behalf (**?**). UT likely countered this by providing concrete evidence of competence through service delivery. Second, the rebels may be ill-suited to addressing a pandemic compared to the state, as they do not have the medical expertise or public health infrastructure (though the Philippine government's Department of Health too has its limits in very rural areas). Third, the very low response rates (44%) in control communities that were pro-NPA gives a lot of space for growth, relative to anti-NPA areas, where the control group rates were 52%.

How might ceiling effects play into this, especially when thinking about how these results might generalize to a more acute type of disaster, such as a typhoon, tsunami, or earthquake? On the one hand, the rally-around-the-flag effect might be stronger in this case and communities might have a stronger sense that the government is the only actor they can turn to for help. On the other hand, the chaos of a tsunami or typhoon, paired with power outages and inconsistent phone signal, would likely raise the costs for people to respond, muting the effect of the rally. To learn more about this, we spoke with officials in the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) for Bicol, who told us that barangay information sharing rates with their disaster response system after typhoons are typically around 20%. While technical obstacles in this case likely result in a lower effective ceiling on response rates, the RDRRMC indicated that their outreach efforts have led this number to increase in recent years. This suggests that building further trust in the effectiveness of government service delivery still has room to shape community cooperation, even in the case of more acute disaster.

Table A.8: Heterogeneous Effects Regressions

[Results in Table A.8 found in full SI on the Harvard Dataverse]

Previous Kalahi-CIDSS

An alternative mechanism for the effects we find could be that barangays that participated in the UT program had additional information about members of their community, which may have allowed them to more easily respond to the request from the Covid task force. To probe this mechanism, we test whether villages that had past experience with the Kalahi-CIDSS program react differently to Usap Tayo than those that did not. As a community-driven development project, Kalahi-CIDSS would also have required barangay captains to seek information about members of their community, potentially attenuating the effect of UT. In addition, Kalahi-CIDSS requires that barangays be below a poverty threshold, possibly allowing barangay captains to access information from the census of the poor that was taken during the period when barangay eligibility was established. As shown in Table A.9 below, we find no significant difference in treatment effects based on previous experience with Kalahi-CIDSS.

Table A.9: Mechanisms: Previous Kalahi-CIDDS Experience

[Results in Table A.9 found in full SI on the Harvard Dataverse]

Security

Another alternative mechanism is that the Usap Tayo intervention increases security for treated barangays, rather than operating through improved trust or cooperation. On the baseline survey village leaders were asked to name the two top problems in their community. About 30% of village leaders included "public safety" as one of their top two issues. The other 70% did not. If security were the primary mechanism for the effects of Usap Tayo, then we would expect the treatment effect to be considerably higher for those who reported a concern about public safety at baseline than those who did not.

As seen in Column 1 of Table A.10, what we find is in fact the reverse: for those 70% of barangays that did not list public safety as a top concern, the average treatment effect is 12 percentage points. For the 30% that listed security as a problem, the treatment effect is near zero. Although the standard errors are too large to precisely estimate this difference (the p value on the interaction term is 0.275), it at least rules out security improvements as driving the effect.

Patronage

Patronage may also help drive the effect we observe. Collecting new data on the 2019 barangay-level election returns, we examined the incumbent mayors' barangay-level vote-shares, seeing whether villages in our sample voted (on average) for the mayor or a competitor. This data allows us to test whether village leaders who were effective brokers for the incumbent mayor (measured by how well the mayor performed electorally in their barangay) were more likely to provide timely COVID-19 risk information to the Task Force. Overall, 81% of barangays voted (on average) for the winning mayor, while 19% voted for someone else.

As seen in Column 2 of Table A.10, we find is that the effect is driven strongly by barangay kapitans who are politically connected with the incumbent mayor, although the effect is only marginal statistically significant by conventional cutoffs. The relatively small number of villages that were not connected to their respective mayors reduces the statistical power of this exercise. We interpret this finding as consistent with the story that village leaders view Usap Tayo as another way to bolster their "downward" clientelistic ties and have therefore responded more favorably to the intervention.

Updating of Beliefs

Our preferred explanation is that the Usap Tayo meetings changed the attitudes of persuadable

Table A.10: Mechanisms: Security, Patronage

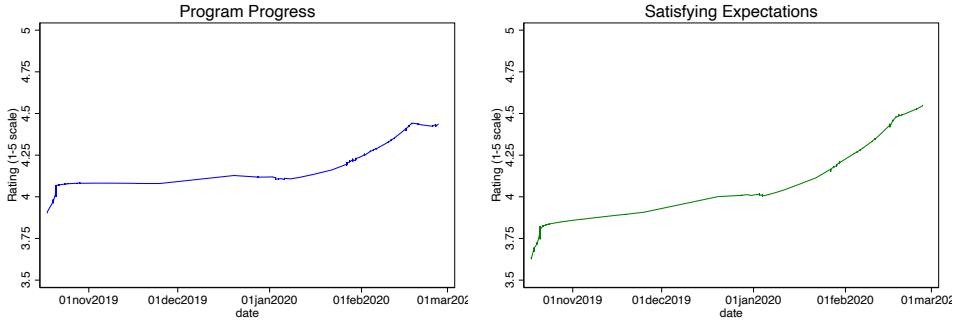
	Security Mechanism	Patronage Mechanism
Village Effect	.12**	-.02
	(.04)	(.08)
Village Effect × Public Safety Concern	-.11	
	(.10)	
Village Effect × Mayor Broker		.16+
		(.09)
N	757	800
Clusters	79	80

Notes: Standard errors clustered at municipality level. For details about baseline survey missingness, see section A.3: Data Collection on appendix page A.3.

village leaders through sustained interaction and service delivery. In the past, rebel leaders made the case to citizens that the government and its allies are incompetent, inefficient and corrupt in their relief operations, and thus not worth engaging with Walch (2014, 2018). The credibility of such arguments relies on the population agreeing with the rebels' contention that the government is inept and dishonest in their service provision.

What we find from our monitoring surveys (see Figure A.2 below) and free response qualitative information is that participants in Usap Tayo updated their beliefs about the effectiveness of the municipal government. Therefore, it makes sense that the strongest effects would be in pro-NPA villages where anti-relief rhetoric has been deployed for at least the past decade. In short, the UT program seems to have countered rebel propaganda about government effectiveness, as well as increasing personal trust, and thus made local leaders more likely to feel comfortable cooperating.

Figure A.2: Monitoring Survey: Average responses (1-5 rating) over time



Familiarity with surveys

Because the outcome of interest in this study is a response to a data collection exercise carried out by the government, one concern might be that barangay kapitans in treated villages (who were sent monitoring surveys as part of the intervention) might simply be more experienced and comfortable with such activities. To test this, we examined the monitoring survey response rates over the course of the Usap Tayo program to see if greater experience filling out the survey was

associated with a higher response rate on the COVID risk assessment. Across our 200 treated barangays, 184 responded at least once to the monitoring survey, but the regularity of responses varied considerably, ranging from 0 to 6 times over the course of the treatment.

Regressing the ultimate outcome of a COVID risk response on the number of monitoring survey responses that were submitted, we find a precisely estimated null. As seen in Table A.11, the coefficient is 0.009 +/- .02 (95% confidence interval. Thus, we do not think that experience surveys drove the effects we find.

Table A.11: Mechanisms: Experience with surveys

[Results in Table A.11 found in full SI on the Harvard Dataverse]

Is program attention correlated with pro/anti-government attitudes?

Why is it that there are distinct effects in areas that are pro-rebel, neutral towards rebels, and anti-rebels? One possibility would be that the implementing agencies could figure out which treated villages were more or less supportive and then target their efforts accordingly. We do not think this is likely, for a few reasons. First, the research team assiduously protected the baseline attitudes of respondents – the government partners did not have access to this data and thus would have had to rely on their own intuitions. Topics related to conflict and the NPA were not discussed during UT meetings, which focused instead on the line agencies' service programs. Second, we tested whether baseline attitudes were correlated with average responses on three monitoring survey questions: (1) overall program progress, (2) 'are there relevant opportunities for your barangay opportunities under UT,' and (3) 'has your barangay received concrete benefits from UT thus far.' Table A.12 shows that there is no correlation between baseline level of trust in the government and reported progress or access to opportunities or benefits during UT.

Table A.12: Mechanisms: Selective Attention from Govt Agencies

	(1) Program Progress	(2) Opportunities	(3) Benefits
Government Trust	.07	.00	.02
	(.06)	(.03)	(.03)
N	166	171	171

Notes: Stata Robust standard errors. Trust in government has three levels (1-3), based on terciles, which are defined as: first tercile is < 7, second tercile is $>= 7$ and < 9, third tercile is $>= 9$. Sample is barangays who responded to at least one monitoring survey and have baseline data on government trust.

NPA Capture

The strong effects of UT in areas that were, at baseline, supportive of the NPA might be driven not by trust-building but instead by the NPA intentionally attracting government development projects. The NPA is well known to siphon funds and other goods from government development projects and to collaborate with local politicians in return.

From a theoretical perspective, we think the NPA-capture mechanism is unlikely to be at play in the case of Usap Tayo because the program focused exclusively on "soft" development services delivered directly to individuals, such as employment training and livelihood support. The NPA is far less likely to 'tax' these services because they do not involve large budgets (which makes them less

attractive targets), they are not easily extorted (because implementation is not delegated to local contractors), and they would be costly for the NPA to undermine (due to reduced legitimacy among their support population). Instead, the NPA is far more likely to engage in the actions described by the reviewer when the projects in question are government infrastructure projects, which were not included in UT. For example, Crost, Felter, and Johnston (2014, 2016) show that the NPA targeted government infrastructure projects (implemented under Kalahi-CIDSS) with violence but did not take similar actions towards the Philippines' flagship Conditional Cash Transfer program (4Ps).

From an empirical perspective, the NPA-capture mechanism appears unlikely to be the primary driver of the results when taking into account broader patterns of cooperation with the Covid taskforce. If the treatment effects for UT were driven primarily by the NPA pushing to capture it, we would expect to find strong effects in pro-NPA zones, but little to no effect (or perhaps negative effects) in neutral and anti-NPA areas. However, we find positive effects across the board — pro-NPA, neutral towards NPA and anti-NPA — the difference is simply in the magnitude of that positive effect. UT still increased response to the Covid taskforce by 7 percentage points in locations with ex-ante negative attitudes towards rebels. The comparison here is treated units that were anti-NPA at baseline vs. control units that were also anti-NPA at baseline. In addition, if the effects were driven primarily by the NPA encouraging barangay officials to draw in Covid relief funds, we would expect to see higher baseline response rates to the Covid task force among pro-NPA units in the control group relative to anti-NPA units in the control group. Instead, the difference in the magnitude of treatment effects is driven by lower baseline cooperation levels in pro-NPA areas. This reflects a convergence dynamic, where pro-NPA areas treated by UT are 'catching up' with the rates of cooperating in anti-NPA areas.

To further investigate this mechanism, we look at how treatment effects are shaped by the overlap between attitudes towards the NPA and trust in the government. Existing knowledge suggests that the NPA is most likely to engage in a "corrupt bargain" with local politicians in areas that are NPA strongholds (where support for the NPA is high and trust in the government is low). In these areas where the NPA has the most sway, they can be confident that elected officials will follow through on funneling goods to them and that project effects on government legitimacy do not pose a real threat to their staying power. On the other hand, we expect that the trust-building mechanism is most likely to drive results in "swing" areas where barangay officials have a baseline ambivalent view towards the government and the NPA. In our survey data, attitudes towards the government and the NPA are correlated, but not in a deterministic sense. For example, in the 18 municipalities where there were net positive attitudes towards the NPA, about 30 percent of barangay leaders nonetheless had a relatively high level of trust in the government.

Although our sample contains too few units to very precisely estimate triple interactions, we can observe if there is indicative evidence of an interaction effect between respondents' views of the NPA and the government. In our survey data, attitudes towards the government and the NPA are correlated, but not in a deterministic sense. For example, in the 18 municipalities where there were net positive attitudes towards the NPA, about 30 percent of barangay leaders nonetheless had a relatively high level of trust in the government.

In barangays that were both pro-NPA and anti-government, we find a small, statistically insignificant effect of UT (.04 +/- .07, see full SI in Harvard Dataverse). Instead, as illustrated by panel 2 in Figure 4, the effect is driven primarily by "swing" locations that did not have an overly positive or negative view of the government at baseline, consistent with the trust-building mechanism.

[Table A.13, showing results from the triple interaction, can be found in the full SI on the Harvard Dataverse]

Quid pro quo?'

Is it possible that officials participating in the UT program believed that future benefits from UT would be contigent on cooperation with the Covid data collection, thus creating a 'quid pro quo' that narrows the importance of the findings?

It is very unlikely that the PNP officers who communicated with barangay kapitans *explicitly* promised them access to programs through UT in exchange for answers to these questions. Our research manager was present at the meeting where regional PNP leadership conveyed instructions to the staff who implemented the Covid data collection effort and UT was not discussed at the meeting. In addition, the PNP personnel who made the calls for the task force were operations staff in the regional office who had no connection to UT, and were likely only peripherally aware of the program (UT was implemented entirely by municipal PCR officers).

Second, for several reasons, it is also unlikely that barangay officials perceived an *implicit* quid pro quo of services delivered through UT in exchange for cooperation with the Covid task force. In the initial SMS message to barangay officials, the Covid task force member identified themself as being from the regional police office, whose personnel are entirely distinct from the personnel in municipal offices with whom barangay officials interacted during Usap Tayo. Based on our interviews with barangay officials in the lead up to Usap Tayo, we found that they were highly cognizant of the disconnect between regional PNP staff who planned programs and the municipal officials in charge of implementation. Barangay officials were told that the information they provided would be shared with DOH, an agency that was not involved in any of the UT meetings. In addition, barangay officials were likely aware that the information held little independent value to the PNP or the task force officers, making them unlikely to think that providing the relatively mundane information would constitute a 'favor' to the PNP or its personnel.

A.8 Pre-Registration

Pre-registration for the study was filed on March 24, 2020 with the Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) Design registry[10], can be found at `https://osf.io/qwfuv`.

A.9 UT Meeting Materials

See full SI on the Harvard Dataverse:

[10]Located at `https://www.egap.org/design-registrations`