**ONLINE APPENDIX**

*The CAPAM Database*

The Criminal Attacks against Political Actors in Mexico (CAPAM) Database is an original newspaper-based databank of criminal attacks against government authorities, political candidates, and party activists perpetrated between 1995 and 2012, which we created. Information from CAPAM is drawn from a systematic analysis of eight national daily newspapers, eighteen subnational daily newspapers, and two weekly magazines specialized in drug trafficking and organized crime, listed in Table A1.

**Table A.I. National and Subnational Newspapers for Data Collection**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **State** | **Source** |
| National |  | *Reforma*\*\* |
|  |  | *El Universal* |
|  |  | *La Jornada* |
|  |  | *Proceso*\* |
|  |  | *Milenio* |
|  |  | *Excélsior* |
|  |  | *Crónica* |
|  |  | *El Economista*  *El Sol de México* |
| Local | Baja California | *Zeta de Tijuana*\* |
|  | Campeche | *La Tribuna de Campeche* |
|  | Coahuila | *El Siglo de Torreón* |
|  |  | *El Zócalo* |
|  |  | *Vanguardia* |
|  | Chihuahua | *El Heraldo de Chihuahua* |
|  |  | *El Norte de Ciudad Juárez* |
|  |  | *El Diario* |
|  | Durango | *La Voz de Durango* |
|  |  | *El Siglo de Durango* |
|  | Guerrero | *La Jornada Guerrero* |
|  |  | *El Sur de Acapulco* |
|  | Jalisco | *La Jornada Jalisco* |
|  | Michoacán | *Cambio de Michoacán* |
|  |  | *La Jornada de Michoacán* |
|  | Sinaloa | *Noroeste* |
|  | Sonora | *El Imparcial* |
|  | Tabasco | *Tabasco Hoy* |
|  |  | *Diario Avance de Tabasco* |

\*\* Main source.

\* Weekly magazines specializing in reporting on drug trafficking and organized crime. Note that *Zeta de Tijuana* offers an extensive coverage of crime in the state of Baja California, but it also publishes news from the rest of the country.

Unlike other datasets on political violence that focus exclusively on the murder of mayors, CAPAM measures lethal attacks against executive authorities, political candidates, and party activists. Also, unlike other datasets that measure only murders, CAPAM provides detailed information about a wide range of attacks, including murder and murder attempts, public threats, and kidnapping.

We followed strict criteria that allowed us to verify the involvement of organized criminal groups (OCGs) in such events.

First, we attributed an attack to organized crime when at least two sources (*Reforma* and another national or local source) named a specific OCG as the perpetrator of the attack.

Second, in the case of murders, when news reports did not include the name of the OCG involved, we relied on three indicators associated with the modus operandi of drug cartels and their criminal associates to include the event in the dataset: a) the use of assault weapons for killing; b) signs of torture and brutal violence (e.g., bodies wrapped in a rug or mutilated); and c) written messages left on the bodies. The type of assault weapons used was also an important indicator for the inclusion of an attack in our dataset.

Third, in the case of public threats, we only included the event in our dataset if a publicized threat by OCGs against public authorities or party candidates resulted in one of three actions: a) candidates were forced to leave the electoral competition; b) political parties explicitly recognized they had been unable to place candidates for a specific position; and c) public authorities were subsequently forced to resign or move out of their municipality. When threats did not meet these criteria, we did not consider them in our dataset.

Note that, as we explain in the article, there are two types of threats that OCGs make against government authorities and political candidates: private and public. Private threats are very hard to measure and, even though newspapers do report some of them, we decided not to include them in our dataset to avoid a potentially important source of measurement error. When a mayor or a political candidate colludes with OCGs, s/he would have incentives to say that s/he did it under threat. If there is no public evidence of such a threat, it would be very hard to actually corroborate whether the threat ever existed. In contrast, public threats are more likely to be corroborated because OCGs have incentives to publicize their threats through messages left on victims (e.g., wrapped bodies are left with a message) or hanging banners with their message on public places (e.g., bridges) Despite the publicity, as we explain above, we restricted the case of public threats to those that actually led to the withdrawal of local authorities or party candidates from their professional activities.

Based on these criteria, our coders adhered to the following routine as part of the data generation process. The routine began with the revision of the eight national daily newspapers to make an initial count of lethal attacks directed against government officials and politicians. The systematic evaluation was conducted using *Infolatina*. When these reports did not provide enough information, we used subnational newspapers, which often provided extensive follow-ups in the cases of attacks against local politicians. These follow-ups were published a few months after the attack and sometimes included information from the state prosecutors’ investigations. When we found inconsistencies between two sources, we looked for further information that allowed us to clearly determine the involvement of organized crime in the attacks. If we did not find enough detailed information to cross-verify one source of information, we excluded the event. Overall, the use of multiple sources of information – national and subnational – maximizes the precision of our measure of high-profile criminal attacks, while at the same time minimizing sources of geographic bias.

*Additional Statistical Results*

**Table A.II. Logit and Rare Logit Models (Based on Table 3)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Model 1** | **Model 2** |
|  | **Logit** | **Rare Logit** |
| *Turf wars* |  |  |
| Drug-related murder rate (CVM)^ | 0.401\*\*\* | 0.332\*\* |
|  | [0.110] | [0.131] |
| *Vertical partisan fragmentation* |  |  |
| PAN-PAN-PRI | 0.415 | 0.424 |
|  | [0.483] | [0.447] |
| PAN-PAN-PRD | -0.06 | 0.382 |
|  | [1.100] | [1.018] |
| PAN-PRI-PAN | 0.537 | 0.427 |
|  | [0.433] | [0.424] |
| PAN-PRI-PRI | 0.753\* | 0.693\* |
|  | [0.399] | [0.371] |
| PAN-PRI-PRD | 0.481 | 0.431 |
|  | [0.534] | [0.506] |
| PAN-PRD-PAN | 1.468\*\*\* | 1.450\*\*\* |
|  | [0.563] | [0.487] |
| PAN-PRD-PRI | 1.758\*\*\* | 1.687\*\*\* |
|  | [0.459] | [0.417] |
| PAN-PRD-PRD | 1.763\*\*\* | 1.714\*\*\* |
|  | [0.457] | [0.413] |
| *Election cycles* |  |  |
| Local election | 0.451\*\*\* | 0.421\*\*\* |
|  | [0.155] | [0.137] |
| Federal election | -0.500\*\* | -0.490\*\* |
|  | [0.254] | [0.238] |
| *Territorial ambition* |  |  |
| Attacks among adjacent neighbors (t-1) | 0.394\*\*\* | 0.431\*\*\* |
|  | [0.083] | [0.074] |
| *Controls* |  |  |
| Fiscal revenue | 0.052\*\*\* | 0.049\*\*\* |
|  | [0.013] | [0.013] |
| Prosecutor offices^ | 1.103 | 1.109 |
|  | [1.331] | [0.925] |
| Political and geographic controls | YES | YES |
| Constant | -7.546\*\*\* | -5.711\*\*\* |
|  | [1.417] | [1.406] |
| Observations | 9,853 | 9,853 |
| Number of municipalities | 1,995 |  |
| Log-likelihood | -928.6 |  |
| \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.10. | | |
| ^per 1,000 inhabitants. | | |
| Clustered standard errors in brackets. | | |

*Additional Information for Endogeneity Section*

**Michoacán and Guerrero**

As shown in Map 2 in the main article, we use municipalities from the Tierra Caliente region located across the state borders of Michoacán and Guerrero to isolate the potential impact of subnational election cycles on criminal attacks against local authorities, party candidates, and party activists. Table A.III reports detailed information about these two regions. The comparison reveals that this is a set of remarkably similar municipalities that happen to be separated by state borders. Note that the table includes information that may not be directly relevant for the study of criminal attacks (e.g., % Catholics per municipality) but that nonetheless helps us substantiate that on average the sample of Tierra Caliente municipalities from Michoacán shares multiple characteristics with the sample of Tierra Caliente municipalities from Guerrero – in other words, that in terms of geography and key sociodemographic, cultural, economic and political features this is a self-contained region split by a state border.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Situated in the basin of the Balsas River, the Tierra Caliente municipalities comprise a low-level region that is fairly distant from the Michoacán and Guerrero state capitals. Predominantly rural and Catholic, this is a region where over one-third to a half of the population are employed in agricultural activities, and the rest participate in mining and service-related activities. Municipalities on both sides of the border have the same level of poverty (almost half the population living in conditions of destitution), and levels of income inequality are practically identical. Municipalities on both sides of the border have very weak taxing capacities and are by default equally dependent on fiscal transfers from the federal government. Politically, both states have a long leftist tradition, and in 2011 both were ruled by governors from the leftist PRD. At a more local level, Tierra Caliente municipalities on both sides of the border have been ruled by elected officials from the PRI and the PRD, and the conservative PAN has had a very limited presence.

Tierra Caliente is known as a violent region that has become a focal point for drug production (marijuana and poppy), drug trafficking (marijuana and poppy), and deadly inter-cartel wars in the 2000s (Zepeda 2018). La Familia Michoacana had been the dominant cartel on the Michoacán side of the border, and the Sinaloa Cartel first and later breakaways from the Sinaloans dominated the Guerrero side of the border (Grillo 2011). By 2010, however, municipalities from both sides of the state border were immersed in major turf wars: La Familia Michoacana against the Sinaloa Cartel on the Michoacán side and La Familia against breakaways from the Sinaloans on the Guerrero side (Kyle 2015). As the evidence from CVM reported in Table A.III reveals, inter-cartel violence has been more intense among the Tierra Caliente municipalities of Guerrero, but evidence from CAPAM shows that prior to 2011 municipalities from both sides of the state borders had similar histories of criminal attacks against local government officials and party candidates. Taking a national view, this was one of Mexico’s deadliest regions for mayors and local party candidates.

Despite multiple similarities, Tierra Caliente municipalities from the two states had one significant difference: in 2011 Michoacán had a full subnational election cycle (governor, state legislature, and mayors), while Guerrero had a partial cycle (governor). Although there was a long history of criminal attacks against municipal authorities and local party candidates in both regions, in 2011 the Michoacán municipalities experienced eight times more attacks than their Guerrero counterparts. As Table A.III shows, this gap remains significantly large even if we weight the number of attacks by population size. As we argue in the article, we attribute this gap in attacks to the opportunities that a full subnational election cycle opened in Michoacán in 2011 – including the election of 113 new mayors – but not in Guerrero.

Note that although peasants and OCGs on both sides of the state borders are engaged in marijuana and poppy cultivation, the evidence from crop eradication reported in Table A.III could be considered as a partial indication that poppy cultivation is significantly greater in the Guerrero municipalities than in Michoacán. To be sure, only some parts of the territory of three of the municipalities in our sample (Coyuca de Catalán, Pungarabato, and Ajuchitlán) are part of the “opium pentagon” – a major mountainous area of poppy cultivation in the western and central part of Guerrero (Greco and Espino 2015). This difference in poppy cultivation across regions should not be a major concern for two reasons. First, a significant share of the poppy produced in the Guerrero municipalities is processed into heroin in the Tierra Caliente region of Michoacán and subsequently shipped into the United States. Since both regions are involved in the production of heroin – one cultivating the plant and the other processing it into an illegal drug – differences between both regions become less salient. Second, due to the heavy involvement of the three Guerrero municipalities in the cultivation of poppy – a much more profitable illicit crop than marijuana – we would expect to see more, not fewer, attacks at any time on the Guerrero side than on the Michoacán side. And yet, in 2011 due to differences in the subnational election cycles, we saw exactly the opposite: a significantly higher number of high-profile attacks in Michoacán.

**Table A.III. Comparison of Border Municipalities of Michoacán & Guerrero**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Michoacán**  **Tierra Caliente**  (border municipalities) | **Guerrero**  **Tierra Caliente**  (border municipalities) |
| *Geographic* | | |
| Altitude\*  Measured in meters above sea level (masl)  Source: INEGI | 435 | 265.71 |
| Distance from state capital\*  Linear distance (km) | 103.20 | 149.41 |
| Distance from state capital\*  Driving distance (km) | 177.48 | 218.45 |
|  | | |
| *Sociodemographic* |  |  |
| Municipal population, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 22,398 | 27,260 |
| % indigenous population, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 0.36 | 0.16 |
| % youth, ages 15–39, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 17.99 | 17.71 |
| % international migrant, 2010\*  Mexicans who were international migrants in 2005 but counted in 2010 Census  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| % population living in rural localities, 2010\*  Localities with 2,500 inhabitants or fewer  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 65.79 | 61.19 |
| % Catholic, 2010  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 92.24 | 87.45 |
|  | | |
| *Economic* |  |  |
| Poverty, 2010\*  Source: Conapo, 2010 Marginality Index, Rescaled 0–100 | 47.99 | 48.27 |
| Gini index of inequality, 2010\*  Source: Coneval | 0.46 | 0.46 |
| % population employed in agriculture, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 47.52 | 35.93 |
| % municipal income from local taxes, 2007–2011\*  Source: INEGI, Public Finance Statistics | 0.58 | 1.05 |
|  | | |
| *Political* |  |  |
| Leftist governor | YES  (2007–2011) | YES  (2005–2011) |
| % PRD municipalities from sample\*\*  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2008–2011: 12.5 | 2009–2012: 14.29 |
| % PRI municipalities from sample\*\*  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2008–2011: 75 | 2009–2012: 71.43 |
| % PAN municipalities from sample\*\*  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2008–2011: 12.5 | 2009–2012: 14.29 |
| **Subnational election cycle (2011)** | * **Governor** * **40 State legislators** * **113 Mayors** | * **Governor** |
|  | | |
| *Narco activity* |  |  |
| Cartel presence & inter-cartel conflict | * La Familia Michoacana * Sinaloa Cartel | * La Familia   Michoacana   * Sinaloa Cartel |
| Drug-related murder rate per 10,000 inhabitants, 2007–2011\*  Source: CVM Dataset | 4.65 | 9.11 |
| Drug trafficking region | YES | YES |
| Marijuana crop eradication by federal govt, 2007–2010 (hectares)\*  Source: Sedena 2007-2011 | 221.83 | 30.35 |
| Poppy crop eradication by federal govt, 2007–2010 (hectares)\*  Source: Sedena 2007–2011 | 1.43 | 416.91 |
| High-profile criminal attacks, 2007–2010  Source: CAPAM Dataset | 7 | 9 |
| **High-profile criminal attacks, 2011**  Source: CAPAM Dataset | **8** | **1** |

\*Regional mean (includes only the municipalities under analysis).

\*\*The sample includes the municipalities under analysis shown in Map 2 in the main article.

**Michoacán and Guanajuato**

As shown in Map 3 in the main article, we use municipalities located across the state borders of Michoacán and Guanajuato to isolate the likely impact of vertical party fragmentation on criminal attacks against local authorities, party candidates, and party activists. Table A.IV reports detailed information about these two regions. The data reveal that the municipalities across the state borders share multiple similarities and constitute a homogeneous region that happens to be separated by state borders. Note, again, that the table reports information that may not be directly relevant to the study of criminal attacks but that nonetheless helps us make the point that we are comparing municipalities that constitute a self-contained region due to a number of geographic, sociodemographic, cultural, and economic similarities.

Northern Michoacán and southern Guanajuato constitute a homogeneous region with deep roots in the Cristero Movement – the Catholic rural militias that fought against the anticlerical laws that resulted from the 1910 Mexican Revolution and the 1917 constitution (Meyer 1976). As shown in Table A.IV, this is an area of high-elevation, and municipalities in both regions are relatively proximate to their states’ capitals. While municipalities in Guanajuato are more populated than in Michoacán, around one half of the population on both sides of the border live in rural localities and are predominantly Catholic. Approximately one quarter of the population on both sides of the border are employed in agricultural activities, and the rest participate in service-related activities. A little over one quarter of the population on both sides live under conditions of poverty, and levels of inequality in both regions are practically identical. Municipalities from northern Michoacán and from southern Guanajuato have weak taxing capacities and are (roughly) equally dependent on federal fiscal transfers.

Although La Familia Michoacana’s main bastions were in southern Michoacán, particularly in the Tierra Caliente region, the cartel had a strong presence in the state’s northern municipalities and had made important inroads into southern Guanajuato starting in 2005. In the context of the main battles between La Familia and the Zetas – the private militia of the Gulf Cartel that became an independent cartel – for the control over Michoacán (Grillo 2011), the municipalities of northern Michoacán and southern Guanajuato represented the front door to La Familia’s domain and both cartels fought fierce battles to control this strategic entry point (Álvarez 2009; Espinosa 2012). As the data in Table A.IV show, these were not drug cultivation regions but drug trafficking corridors. Between 2008 and 2011 inter-cartel and state-cartel violence across state borders were equally intense – although not nearly as intense as in the Tierra Caliente region.

Politically, one major difference between both regions is that from 2008 until 2011 municipalities from northern Michoacán were under the rule of a leftist PRD governor, while southern Guanajuato municipalities were under the rule of a PAN conservative governor. As shown in Table A.IV, the political landscape in the municipalities was another important difference. While in Michoacán, the PRD (53%) and the PRI (35%) were the dominant political forces and the PAN had a limited presence (11%), in Guanajuato the PAN (59%) and the PRI (32%) were the leading forces and the PRD had a limited presence (9%). Using the categories of party layering from the article, this means that most municipalities in Michoacán belonged to the PAN-PRD-PRD and PAN-PRD-PRI layers. In contrast, most cases in Guanajuato belonged to the PAN-PAN-PAN and PAN-PAN-PRI layers.

In terms of criminal violence, a major difference between regions is that between 2008 and 2011 municipalities from northern Michoacán experienced a significantly larger number of high-profile attacks than their neighboring municipalities of Guanajuato. This gap remains equally large whether we use absolute numbers or per capita numbers of attacks. As we discussed in the article, after isolating partisan vertical fragmentation as an important difference across otherwise nearly identical municipalities separated by state borders, we attributed differences in attacks to different patterns of partisan fragmentation. First, despite multiple similarities, municipalities from this region belonged to states with different governors. Michoacán municipalities belonged to a state where a conservative federal government was engaged in a major political conflict with a leftist governor and as a result local authorities facing criminal threats were left unprotected by the federation (see the Michoacán case study in the main article). In contrast, Guanajuato municipalities belonged to a state where a conservative federal government and a conservative governor closely cooperated to deter high-profile criminal attacks (Univisión 2009; Álvarez 2011; El Sol del Bajío 2011; Excélsior 2011). Second, consistent with our statistical findings reported in the article, the micro comparison across borders confirms that within leftist states leftist PRD and PRI municipalities experienced a higher probability of attacks than PAN municipalities.

**Table A.IV. Comparison of Border Municipalities of Michoacán & Guanajuato**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Michoacán**  **Northern Region**  (border municipalities) | **Guanajuato**  **Southern Region**  (border municipalities) |
| *Geographic* | | |
| Altitude\*  Measured in meters above sea level (masl)  Source: INEGI | 1,938.12 | 1,792.73 |
| Distance from state capital\*  Linear distance (km) | 64.97 | 86.12 |
| Distance from state capital\*  Driving distance (km) | 94.73 | 124.45 |
|  | | |
| *Sociodemographic* |  |  |
| Municipal population, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 28,057 | 88,754 |
| % indigenous population, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 0.23 | 0.15 |
| % youth, ages 15–39, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 17.51 | 17.45 |
| % international migrant, 2010\*  Mexicans who were international migrants in 2005 but counted in 2010 Census  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 0.03 | 0.01 |
| % population living in rural localities, 2010\*  Localities with 2,500 inhabitants or fewer  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 59.44 | 45.84 |
| % Catholic, 2010  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 95.57 | 94.70 |
|  | | |
| *Economic* |  |  |
| Poverty, 2010\*  Source: Conapo, 2010 Marginality Index, Rescaled 0–100 | 29.97 | 26.31 |
| Gini index of inequality, 2010\*  Source: Coneval | 0.40 | 0.41 |
| % population employed in agriculture, 2010\*  Source: INEGI, 2010 Population Census | 29.56 | 21.76 |
| % municipal income from local taxes, 2007–2011\*  Source: INEGI, Public Finance Statistics | 2.71 | 5.05 |
|  | | |
| *Political* |  |  |
| **Governor’s party** | **PRD**  **(2007–2011)** | **PAN**  **(2006–2011)** |
| **% PRD municipalities from sample\*\***  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2005–2007: 46.87  2008–2011: 59.37  **Average: 53.12** | 2007–2009: 4.50  2010–2012: 13.64  **Average: 9.07** |
| **% PRI municipalities from sample\*\***  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2005–2007: 46.87  2008–2011: 25  **Average: 35.94** | 2007–2009: 27.27  2010–2012: 36.36  **Average: 31.82** |
| **% PAN municipalities from sample\*\***  Source: State Electoral Institutes | 2005–2007: 6.25  2008–2011: 15.62  **Average: 10.93** | 2007–2009: 68.18  2010–2012: 50  **Average: 59.09** |
|  | | |
| *Narco activity* |  |  |
| Cartel presence & inter-cartel conflict | La Familia Michoacana  Zetas | La Familia Michoacana  Zetas |
| Drug-related murder rate per 10,000 inhabitants, 2007–2011\*  Source: CVM Dataset | 0.76 | 0.51 |
| Drug trafficking region | YES | YES |
| Marijuana crop eradication, 2007–2010 (hectares)\*  Source: Sedena | 3.49 | 0.17 |
| Poppy crop eradication, 2007–2010 (hectares)\*  Source: Sedena | 0.02 | 0 |
| **High-profile criminal attacks, 2008–2011**  Source: CAPAM Dataset | **5** | **1** |

\*Regional mean (includes only the municipalities under analysis).

\*\*The sample includes the municipalities under analysis shown in Map 3 in the main article.

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1. The Tierra Caliente region extends to the neighboring Mexico State and hence is split into three different states. However, we focus only on the comparison between Michoacán and Guerrero. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)