

Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD)

The Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) project focuses on the creation and maintenance of a comprehensive database of terrorist organizational characteristics and linking that data to prominent event, insurgency and country-level characteristics datasets.

BAAD DATASETS

BAAD Version 1.0 (BAAD1) contains a single snapshot of 395 terrorist organizations active (meaning they perpetrated at least one attack) between 1998 and 2005. This dataset grew from the information originally hosted by the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism in their Terrorism Knowledge Base. The case-by-variables dataset is available for download, and the network data will be available for download early in 2014.

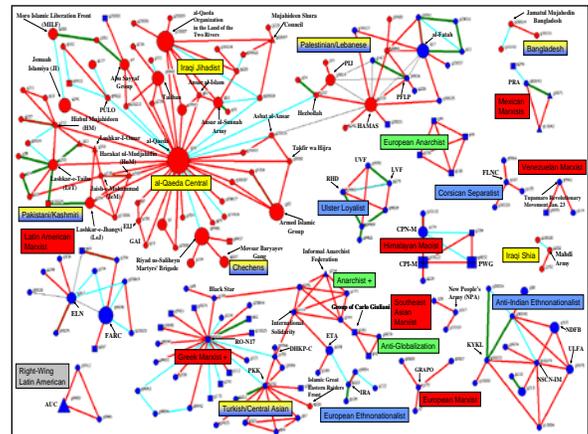
BAAD Version 2.0 (BAAD2) improves upon BAAD1 by:

- providing time series data in yearly slices,
- expanding the time period forward through 2012,
- increasing the number and depth of variables collected and coded,
- expanding the number of entities covered in the dataset, and
- providing a “cross-walk” that enables researchers to link BAAD2 characteristics data to other data sources.

BAAD2 is made up of three major components: organizational variables, social network data and the terrorist organization identification system. The organizational variables include: group name, aliases, homebase, ideology, size, age, structure, financial and material support, electoral and political involvement, leadership loss, territorial control, provision of social services and counterterrorism efforts directed at the organization.

SOCIAL NETWORK DATA

BAAD2’s social network data characterizes relationships (1) between terrorist organizations and (2) between countries and terrorist organizations. Relationships are coded for categories such as: suspected ally, ally, faction, splinter group, rival, enemy, target and state sponsor. This data can then be used to create dynamic visualizations to show the networks evolving over the period covered in the dataset.



TERRORIST ORGANIZATION IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

The Terrorist Organization (TORG) identification system, which currently contains entries for more than 2,400 primary entities and more than 2,800 aliases, is designed to provide an authoritative list of primary terrorist entities and associated aliases across time.

For each primary entity, TORG includes the primary “homebase” country code (both the Correlates of War coding system and the ISO country coding system), age of founding and associated ID numbers from allied datasets, including the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), the Minorities at Risk-Organizational Behavior (MAROB) dataset, the Profiles of Incidents Involving CBRN by Non-state Actors (POICN) dataset and the Uppsala Conflict Program (UCDP) datasets.

- Using country codes, it is also possible to link data in BAAD2 to information from a wide range of country characteristic datasets, including the Quality of Governance (QoG) dataset that has harmonized information from 70 sources.
- Using the TORG “crosswalk” yearly summaries of, for instance, incident and fatality counts may be extracted from the GTD, participation in CBRN activities may be included from POICN, and country-level characteristics for a given year may be drawn from variables in the QoG.

The TORG system is designed to help researchers broaden the range of factors that may be included in models of terrorist organizational behavior and to bring information on terrorism and terrorist organizations into studies of war, insurgency and non-lethal forms of political violence.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Coding is complete for 580 terrorist entities that appear in the GTD, UCDP Battle Deaths and/or the POICN datasets for the years 1998-2007; initial analysis of this data is currently under way. Primary coding for the years 2008-2012 and expansion to include more organizations from the GTD, UCDP and POICN will be completed during Q1 2014, with initial analysis of data available in Q2 2014.

CONTACT

Victor Asal, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Political Science | Director, Center for Policy Research | Co-Director, Project on Violent Conflict
Rockefeller College | University at Albany, SUNY
vassal@albany.edu | 518-591-8729

R. Karl Rethemeyer, Ph.D.

Associate Dean and Chair, Department of Public Administration and Policy | Co-Director, Project on Violent Conflict
Rockefeller College | University at Albany, SUNY
kretheme@albany.edu | 518-442-5283



START ▶▶

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is supported in part by the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through a Center of Excellence program based at the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics and social and psychological impacts of terrorism. For more information, contact START at infostart@start.umd.edu or visit www.start.umd.edu.

This research was supported by the Office of University Programs of the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security made to the START and the first author. The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security or START.