Fatalities and Lethal Violence in Port-au-Prince (2002-2017)

Starting in 2002, *Komisyon Episkopal Nasyonal Jistis ak Lapè*, or The National Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace (JILAP) collected information about lethal violence. Each JILAP report provides information about incidents of lethal violence in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. The violence is measured by the number of fatal casualties recorded per month. The reported deaths include homicides, as well as other causes of death (e.g., suicides, deaths due to traffic accidents, and vigilante violence).

To gather this information, JILAP consults with designated observers in neighborhoods around Port-au-Prince, who meet with witnesses and/or independently investigate reported deaths. They also use newspapers to gather more information on reported deaths.

The data contain information from 63 distinct quarterly reports, from 2002 through 2017, documenting 10,086 incidents. These data are the most complete, publicly available information on fatalities in Port-au-Prince. Detailed crime statistics from the National Police and the UN are not publicly shared, and those that are periodically reported by the UN are only reported in aggregate for a given time period. For example, the July 2017 report lists 278 homicides in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area for the four-month period between March 1 and June 30. All MINUSTAH mission reports are available here: (http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/reports.shtml).

Translation process

JILAP releases quarterly reports with details about lethal violence in the metropolitan Port-au-Prince area. Each quarterly report lists observed deaths, from both natural and unnatural causes. All observations include the name of the victim(s), cause of death, location where the body was found, and any additional information about the death. Because all reports are produced in Haitian Creole, each was translated to English via Google Translate. If the report was in PDF form, it was first converted into a Word document in order to preserve the structure of the report when it was entered into the translator. From there, all translated reports were combined into one master file.

Variables

All JILAP reports include information on the name of the victim(s), cause of death, location where the body was found, and any additional information about the death. If possible, JILAP also includes information on the age and profession of the victim. Starting in 2012, JILAP began coding the sex of the victim. We include a dummy variable for sex after this period, but incidents that occurred prior to this are coded as N/A (however, because the names of some victims are available, future users of the data could code sex back to the beginning of the observation period).

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful for the generous support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy and the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University. The authors thank JILAP, Jocelyne Colas and Lynn Selby for sharing the reports; Almathe Jean and Pierre Anderson Soulouque for translation and research assistance in Haiti; and Danielle Villa and Laura Huber of Emory University for research assistance. For questions please contact: danielle.jung@emory.edu or dara_cohen@hks.harvard.edu.

Included files:

English codebook
English data

Haitian Creole codebook
Haitian Creole data