3-1-2015

Toward Context-Sensitive Statebuilding for Development: State-Local Complementarity in Rural Guatemala

Matthew Thornton Klick

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Toward Context-Sensitive Statebuilding for Development: State-Local Complementarity in Rural Guatemala

Abstract
Developing countries emerging from conflict often feature enduring, destitute poverty amid often fast-growing economies at the national level. This dissertation explores a critical question: What accounts for variation in human development levels across similar communities in conflict-affected countries? In particular it explores how some equally poor, indigenous, highland communities in Guatemala have made advances in health and education, while others have stagnated or regressed. These results are demonstrated through a quantitative analysis of all of Guatemala’s 334 municipalities, utilizing difficult to access data from myriad sources, combined with the results of qualitative field methods – including over 250 key informant interviews and focus group participants across 6 paired communities throughout the Western Highlands – which aided in process tracing the implementation of a widely acclaimed government anti-hunger program at the village level. The principal finding is that, contrary to an emerging recognition of the role of “ordinary citizens” in peacebuilding and violence reduction, human development requires complementarity of citizen mobilization and government resources. When state actors at the local level coordinate with traditional leaders, and gain the cooperation and support of the mayor – giving meaning to complementarity – local governance allows for measurable gains in human development at the local level. By highlighting stark differences in local governance and development outcomes across otherwise similar communities in the highlands of Guatemala, this paper raises important questions about: the role of durable social forces at the local level and their ability – if not taken into consideration – to thwart what are otherwise award-winning development schemes designed abroad or in the capital city; the complications of “local ownership” and local legitimacy with respect to development in complex environments of state-society discord; and the limitations of our knowledge of local forces on human development outcomes.

Document Type
Dissertation

Degree Name
Ph.D.

Department
Josef Korbel School of International Studies

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Keywords
Complementarity, Guatemala, Human development, Local governance, Post-conflict

Subject Categories
Latin American Studies | Political Science | Sociology
Publication Statement
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Toward Context-Sensitive Statebuilding for Development: State-Local Complementarity in Rural Guatemala

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Matthew Thornton Klick
March 2015
Advisor: Timothy D. Sisk
ABSTRACT

Developing countries emerging from conflict often feature enduring, destitute poverty amid often fast-growing economies at the national level. This dissertation explores a critical question: What accounts for variation in human development levels across similar communities in conflict-affected countries? In particular it explores how some equally poor, indigenous, highland communities in Guatemala have made advances in health and education, while others have stagnated or regressed. These results are demonstrated through a quantitative analysis of all of Guatemala’s 334 municipalities, utilizing difficult to access data from myriad sources, combined with the results of qualitative field methods – including over 250 key informant interviews and focus group participants across 6 paired communities throughout the Western Highlands – which aided in process tracing the implementation of a widely acclaimed government anti-hunger program at the village level. The principal finding is that, contrary to an emerging recognition of the role of “ordinary citizens” in peacebuilding and violence reduction, human development requires complementarity of citizen mobilization and government resources. When state actors at the local level coordinate with traditional leaders, and gain the cooperation and support of the mayor – giving meaning to complementarity – local governance allows for measurable gains in human development at the local level. By highlighting stark differences in local
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are not enough thanks, and love, to give to my wife, period. Thank you Lalida Crawford for your patience and support throughout the years of my research, travel, writing and, yes, the struggling. Additional thanks go to my Committee Chair and academic mentor Dr. Timothy Sisk. I sincerely thank the rest of my committee for their help along the way as well, in no intentional order: Dr. Aaron Schneider, Dr. Erica Chenoweth and Dr. Debbi Avant. Outside of Korbel, I owe additional thanks to scholars like Dr. Mike Allison, from the University of Scranton and Dr. Matt Taylor from the University of Denver’s Geography Department. In Guatemala: Thank you Carlos (“Cailin”) Zapeda for all your help and company in Guatemala City. Dr. Brendan Halloran, formerly of USAID in Guatemala, also deserves special mention. While I owe a debt of gratitude to every Chapín that patiently answered my questions, I want to especially thank the following: Esaú Guerra Samayoa of SESAN, Augusto Santos Norato with the 48 Cantones de Totonicapán among other affiliations, Jonathan Menkos and José Monson from ICEFI, and “Felipe” of San Pablo – my tuk-tuk driver and fixer par excellence – your assistance is not taken lightly. Additional help in Guatemala came from Maureen Herman with the Peace Corps and Greg Jensen. Matt Daly, also with the Peace Corps, was a huge help and great company. Alas, there are many more worthy of thanks and any gaps are strictly my fault and by no means diminishes my appreciation, but perhaps I will conclude these acknowledgements with recognition of my doctoral cohort: Sabina Hilaiel, Malliga Och and Najim Dost. I especially want to thank Dr. Roni Kay O’Dell, who also provided wonderful company, morale support and pedagogical leadership, over many lunches and coffees. Thank you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................. 1  
Justification: Local Factors in Development Analysis .................................................................... 7  
Significance ........................................................................................................................................ 12  
Project Background and Description .............................................................................................. 15  
Structure ........................................................................................................................................... 20  

CHAPTER 1: THE GUATEMALA CONTEXT .................................................................................. 24  
1.1 A Civil War Overview: From Marxism to Massacres .............................................................. 27  
1.2 The Peace Accords: Victors or Vanquished? ............................................................................ 31  
1.3 Contemporary Guatemala: A Continuum of Violence? .............................................................. 33  
1.4 Puzzle – Spatial Variation in Governance and Human Development .................................... 35  

CHAPTER 2: GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FROM A GLOBAL PERSEPCTIVE ............................................................ 40  
2.1 State Centric Theories .................................................................................................................. 44  
   2.1.1 State Strength, Weakness and Development: State Actors Rule .................................... 44  
   2.1.2 Decentralization and Development: The State Goes Local ............................................ 48  
2.2 State-Society Relations .............................................................................................................. 54  
   2.2.1 Bringing State-Society Back In: Influencing State Outcomes From Elites to Villages .......... 54  
   2.2.2 Governance and Post-Westphalian Development ............................................................ 57  
2.3 Society-Centric Perspectives on Development: Agency, Resistance, Social Cohesion and Outcomes .................................................................................................................................................. 61  
2.4 Additional considerations – Political Culture, Trust and Geospatial approaches to development ......................................................................................................................................................................... 69  
   2.4.1 Political Culture and Trust ................................................................................................. 70  
   2.4.2 Geospatial Analyses of Within-Country Development .................................................... 72  
2.5 Summary: New Directions for Local Governance and Development ..................................... 74  
2.6 Research Design and Guatemalan Case Studies ........................................................................ 77  
   2.6.1 Quantitative Dataset ......................................................................................................... 77  
   2.6.2 Qualitative Comparative Analysis ..................................................................................... 80  
   2.6.3 Process-Tracing ................................................................................................................ 84  
2.7 Conclusions ............................................................................................................................... 89
CHAPTER THREE: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN GUATEMALA

3.1 Global Model One: Testing Variation in Human Development ........................................... 93
  3.1.1 Accounting for Population Size ......................................................................................... 97
3.2 Global Model Two: Testing Against Basic Development Indicators – Illiteracy ... 99
3.3 Global Test Three: Testing Against Chronic Hunger ......................................................... 103
3.4 Conclusions .......................................................................................................................... 106

CHAPTER FOUR: PROFILES IN GOVERNANCE OF SIX HIGHLAND COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORIES ................................................................. 109

4.1 Case Selection ......................................................................................................................... 110
4.2 Profiles in Governance: Santa María Chiquimula, Totonicapán ........................................... 113
4.3 Profiles in Governance: Santa Lucia la Reforma, Totonicapán ............................................. 119
4.4 Profiles in Governance: Zacualpa, El Quiché ...................................................................... 126
4.5 Profiles in Governance: Patzité, El Quiché ............................................................................ 134
4.6 Profiles in Governance: Santa Catarina Palopó, Sololá .......................................................... 136
4.7 Profiles in Governance: San Pablo la Laguna, Sololá ............................................................. 140
4.8 Conclusions: Spatial Variability in Governance and Development ........................................ 143

CHAPTER FIVE: A QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS of SIX HIGHLAND COMMUNITIES ......................................................................................................................... 145

5.1 Communities in Conflict: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Human Development in Rural Guatemala ..................................................................................................................... 147
  5.1.1 – Social Discord .................................................................................................................. 148
  5.1.2 Civil Society ....................................................................................................................... 150
  5.1.3 Conflict and Municipal Spending ....................................................................................... 153
  5.1.4 Complementarity ............................................................................................................... 154
5.2 QCA Results: Seeking Causal Links ...................................................................................... 156
5.4 Conclusions .......................................................................................................................... 162

CHAPTER SIX: SEEKING CAUSAL PATHWAYS FROM GOVERNANCE TO DEVELOPMENT .............................................................................................................................. 166

6.1 Internal Political Divisions and Development Stagnation ....................................................... 168
  6.1.1 COCODES ......................................................................................................................... 169
  6.1.2 Political and Confessional Divisions ............................................................................... 171
6.2 Street-Level Bureaucrats ...................................................................................................... 175
6.3 State-Level Local Complementarity ....................................................................................... 178

CONCLUSIONS and DISCUSSION .............................................................................................. 183
On Statebuilding and Human Development ............................................................................... 186
State-Local Complementarity and its Components .......................................................... 188
Remaining Puzzles and Future Research ......................................................................... 193

REFERENCES .................................................................................................................. 195

APPENDIX A. List of Interview and Focus Group Participants .......................................... 207

APPENDIX B. State Density Index calculation, borrowed and translated from UNDP Guatemala 2010 .......................................................... 210

APPENDIX C. Percentage of Total Rural Poverty per Municipality (adapted from Mapas de Pobreza Rural en Guatemala 2011) ..................................................... 211

APPENDIX D. “Quality of Life” Scores per Municipality (as reported in the report titled, Vulnerbailidades de Muncipios y la Calidad de Vida de Sus Habitantes) ............. 212

APPENDIX E. Invitation to the official commemoration of the October 4, 2012 shooting by police of six Totonicapán residents ............................................................................. 213

APPENDIX F. Post-estimation Tests for Marginal Effects, Multicollinearity and Heteroskedasticity per Model ......................................................................................... 214

APPENDIX G. Summary Statistics of Variables Under Examination ................................. 220
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Summary of Human Development Scores in Guatemala ................................. 17
Table 2. QCA Coding Criteria ..................................................................................... 83
Table 3. Summary of Non-Elite Interviews and Rural Focus Groups ......................... 86
Table 4. Field Work Partners ...................................................................................... 88
Table 5. Municipal Level Data Utilized for Regression Analysis ............................... 93
Table 6. Ordinary Least Square Regression: Variation in $HDI_{extrap}$ .................... 95
Table 7. $HDI_{extrap}$ When Population<25,000: Ordinary Least Square Regression .... 99
Table 8. 2011 Guatemalan Municipal-Level Illiteracy Rates: Ordinary Least Square Regressions ........................................................................................................... 100
Table 9. 2011 Illiteracy Rates where Population < 25,000: Ordinary Least Squares Regression 101
Table 10. Change in Illiteracy (2000-2011): Ordinary Least Squares Regression ...... 102
Table 11. Difference in Chronic Hunger (2002-2008) .............................................. 104
Table 12. Initial Selection Criteria, Summary ............................................................. 110
Table 13. QCA Coding per Variable .......................................................................... 146
Table 14. Summary Table of Social Discord Across Six Guatemala Field Sites .......... 150
Table 15. Civil Society Synopsis From Six Guatemala Field Sites ............................. 152
Table 16. Spending and Conflict Across Six Guatemala Field Sites ......................... 154
Table 17. Complementarity Across Six Guatemala Field Sites .................................. 155
Table 18. QCA Truth Table ....................................................................................... 157
Table 19. Revised QCA ............................................................................................. 159
Table 20. Interview and Focus Group Summary ....................................................... 167
**TABLE OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Variation in Infant Mortality Rates Across Select Guatemalan Highland Communities (2011) ........................................................................................................................................... 6

Figure 2. Scatterplot of Changes in Chronic Hunger Rates ......................................................................................................................................................... 18

Figure 3. MDG Progress in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States .................................................................................................................................................. 41

Figure 4. Helmke and Levitsky's (2004) Typology of Informal Institutions ................................................................................................................................. 69

Figure 5. Extrapolated HDI (2011) Scores Plotted Against State Density Scores ........................................................................................................ 94

Figure 6. HDI plotted Against the Log-Transformed State Density Variable ................................................................................................................ 95

Figure 7: Difference in Childhood Chronic Hunger Rates, 2001-2008 ............................................................................................................................... 103

Figure 8: The Effect of Conflict Intensity on 2012 *Denuncias*: Bivariate Regression ............................................................................................. 104

Figure 9. Guatemala Field Site Locations ................................................................................................................................................................. 112

Figure 10. Map of Santa María Chiquimula Municipality (as published by USAID as part of a local Peace Corps Project) ........................................................................................................................................ 114

Figure 11. Totonicapán Department, scanned from Guatemala’s National Geographic Institute. 
*Note the proximity of Santa María Chiquimula and Santa Lucía la Reforma (center and top right)* .................................................................................................................. 120

Figure 12. Variation in Total Poverty Levels in Totonicapán (Source: UNDP Guatemala) .............................................................................................. 123

Figure 13. Quiché Department, with field site locations identified (Source: Scanned from National Geographic Institute) ........................................................................................................................................ 127

Figure 14. Variation in Total Poverty In Quiché Department. *Note: Zacualpa and Pachalum are mislabeled, and reversed in this image* .................................................................................................................. 129

Figure 15. Zacualpa Municipality Map with Local Field Sites Identified (Source: Scanned from map at city offices) ........................................................................................................................................ 132

Figure 16. Sololá Department Map (Source: Scan of National Geographic Institute map) ........................................................................................ 137

Figure 17. Total Poverty Rates in Sololá (UNDP) .................................................................................................................................. 140

Figure 18. Initial QCA Results, Chronic Hunger and Changes in Illiteracy .................................................................................................................. 158
Figure 19. Combining QCA Results................................................................. 160
Figure 20. *Hambre Cero* Institutional Design ...................................................... 173
Figure 21: Explaining The Presence or Absence of Complementarity and its Alternatives....... 192
INTRODUCTION

Guatemala’s thirty-six year long civil war, unfulfilled land reforms, unimplemented peace accords, and its drastically high rates of criminal violence and subsequent impunity each contribute, and intertwine, to hinder more equitable development gains nationally.¹ These factors – along with what some call a dysfunctional state apparatus, ongoing security concerns, and a structural racism that severely disadvantages the large indigenous population – remain critical to explaining Guatemala’s stalled prosperity.

This dissertation, however, diverges from the more common narratives concerning the trajectory of development in Guatemala. In fact, it probes a somewhat different and mostly overlooked phenomenon altogether – why communities of otherwise similar historical, geographical and demographic backgrounds in Guatemala have diverging experiences with, and outcomes from, twenty years of post-war development.

Specifically, some communities are doing better in reducing infant mortality, or illiteracy rates, while otherwise very similar communities continue to struggle to survive under conditions of widespread poverty and hunger. Rephrasing the question: what explains spatial variation in human development in rural western Guatemala?

This heretofore unexplained, and generally overlooked, phenomenon is significant for several reasons. First, Guatemala has received significant external assistance since the

¹ A concise synopsis of human rights and security setbacks from 2013, by Professor Mike Allison, University of Scranton, is available here: http://centralamericanpolitics.blogspot.com/2013/10/in-what-world-are-these-businessmen.html
1996 Peace Accords were struck – through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), World Bank organizations,² foreign NGOs and through bi-lateral aid.³ Despite outside assistance and capacity enhancement programs, however, and despite an alphabet soup of ministries and a revolving door of anti-poverty and development initiatives,⁴ in fact poorly-understood local conditions thwart well-intentioned and even comprehensive development programs – squandering resources and limiting both scope and impact.

Development studies and poverty reduction scholarship, nevertheless, remains principally concerned with the comparative effectiveness of different social assistance or lending programs, and their influence on individual incentives,⁵ rather than how village-level politics might affect outcomes. This paper explicitly addresses the implementation of development programming over similar communities, underscoring its complexity, and striving to tease out which local factors explain differing development outcomes.

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² Including $1.758 billion in IRBD Loans as of 5/31/2012 (http://data.worldbank.org/country/guatemala)


⁴ A frequent complaint expressed in my interviews with each local, regional and even ministerial-level officials concerned the discontinuity of social and development programs between successive administrations. Citizens I interviewed were frequently unclear as to whether they participated in Mi Bolsa Seguro, Mi Familia Progressa, or Bolsa Solidario (or which one currently existed, because most did not participate in any government program). Each is a variation of programs promoted by different administrations, which have tenures of only 4 years maximum.

⁵ This includes the vast array of literature devoted to the study of microfinance, conditional (and even unconditional) cash transfers by governments, and more recently “cash-on-delivery” models of aid. Each of the above models tinker with how small disbursements of cash to families spurs changes in the individual pursuit of education, through increased attendance, for example, or health, through increased visits to local doctors. The principal critique of such models is that they ignore “supply-side” constraints like the quality or availability of schools and hospitals. The politics of disbursement are generally omitted from analysis.
Second, spatial variation in development outcomes confounds basic assumptions of development – that rural regions, or all indigenous groups, for example, share identical needs and/or identical obstacles to development. Spatial variation, as this project demonstrates, also calls into question the efficacy of top-down statebuilding projects that, again, assume a uniform level of state legitimacy and efficacy throughout a territory, when in fact state-society relations themselves differ spatially, and considerably, with important development implications. Comparing across similar communities with diverging outcomes, as is done here, helps clarify which local conditions directly affect human development, and how.

Emerging literature supports the notion that locally-specific factors – whether a individual community’s social cohesion (Kaplan 2012) or deeply-entrenched resistance to state authorities (Pugh 2005) – can significantly influence post-war outcomes across space, upending a conventional wisdom of the state’s preeminence, and endowing the “local” with far greater agency than has traditionally been granted. This is especially relevant in a country like Guatemala, where the breadth and scope of state presence is notoriously limited, and where indigenous governance and “legal-pluralism” have had observable influence on local outcomes (Yashar 1998, Godoy 2006, Larson 2008). But whereas local communities might have leeway in affecting peacekeeping, conflict resolution, or local forest management, this paper also explores the limitations that local actors face when the dependent variable is something as complex as human development.6

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6 Human development is rooted in the philosophy of development articulated by Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen (1992), whose “capability approach” argues that an individual’s capacity (her capability set) to achieve well-being, to be well-nourished, or to avoid preventable morbidity (her functionings), will
None of the communities under investigation in this paper experience excellent outcomes in development, as they each continue to face severe challenges, and are generally low-income. Nevertheless, the variation across similarly poor communities is stark. Figure 1, for example, illustrates widespread variation in infant mortality rates across communities in the southern tier of El Quiché (see also Appendix C and D).

This paper argues that one important factor explaining this variation is the degree to which state actors, with important material resources, work with and even defer to the authority and local legitimacy of both official and informal authorities at the community level in order to mobilize citizens and distribute resources equitably and more transparently. Crucially, this paper finds that development gains are best when informal authorities are expressly incorporated into the implementation of a key development program. This is a rare occurrence, and the toxic combination of state mismanagement, deep distrust of state authorities, and increasingly local political divisions and rivalries thwart this “state-local complementarity” routinely.

Guatemala is particularly compelling in this regard. At the national level, the country has experienced modest gains in development. Its national-level human development index (HDI) score, for example, has steadily increased over the past two decades,

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indicating improvements in health and education levels and, more certainly, income (UNDP 2014: 2). These gains have not been uniformly distributed, however, and Guatemala has obtained the unfortunate distinction of becoming Latin America’s most unequal society, with alarming rates of chronic poverty, illiteracy, and malnutrition, despite moderate economic growth, and even while regional neighbors make advancements in these same areas. Deep social cleavages continue to separate Guatemala’s large, indigenous population from its ladino counterpart, broadly speaking, and socio-economic indicators confirm massive inequalities in health, education and opportunity across this divide (Brunori, Ferreira and Peragine 2013).

Guatemala, in fact, has been somewhat of a leader in missed opportunities. A recent project to rank-order 40 developing countries from around the world in their political commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition placed Guatemala at the top of its list, ahead of fast-growing African powerhouses and wealthier emerging countries. Yet

---

8 Guatemala has followed a global trend with steady improvements in HDI scores, though it remains well below the Latin America average, and is ranked 133 out of 187 countries. The country has experienced GDP growth, meanwhile, of 5 and 6 percent in certain years since the civil war. It was hampered by the global recession in 2009 (.5% growth), but has since rebounded and has reported growth of 3 and 4 percent the last two years (see: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG). These articles discuss the prevalence of the ultra-wealthy in Guatemala: http://elmundo.com.sv/fortuna-de-los-ultra-ricos-de-el-salvador-suma-20000-mil and http://centralamericanpolitics.blogspot.com/2013/09/you-want-rich-we-got-rich.html


10 The country as a whole loses an additional 31.6 percent of “potential human development” due to inequality according to the UN’s inequality-adjusted HDI (or IHDI). Guatemala scores equally poorly when the UN calculates its multidimensional poverty index (MPI), which identifies “multiple deprivations in the same households in education, health and standard of living.” (United Nations Development Program 2011). Alternative measurements of inequality also confirm Guatemala’s backwards slide: http://www.thebrokeronline.eu/Blogs/Inequality-debate/A-post-2015-development-goal-for-inequality#comment_9739 with the pertinent document available here: http://ftp.iza.org/dp7155.pdf

11 See: http://www.hancindex.org/
despite the apparent commitment in the form of progressive laws and various programs,\textsuperscript{12} results have lagged considerably, with rates of poverty and extreme poverty, and more specifically chronic and seasonal hunger and childhood stunting, ranking among the worst in the hemisphere.\textsuperscript{13} Guatemala is also the only country in the region where its poor are getting poorer.\textsuperscript{14}

Figure 1. Variation in Infant Mortality Rates Across Select Guatemalan Highland Communities (2011)

\textsuperscript{12} See: \url{http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-countries/guatemala} and \url{http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/paises/guatemala/noticias/pacto-hambre-cero/} and \url{http://www.mides.gob.gt/noticias/item/204-pacto-hambre-cero}

\textsuperscript{13} A series of news stories makes that abundantly clear: \url{http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Alta-inversion-reducido-desnutricion_0_982701757.html} and \url{http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/familias-alimentos_0_979102114.html}

\textsuperscript{14} “Guatemala’s Poor Getting Poorer.” Available at: \url{http://www.dw.de/guatemalas-poor-getting-poorer/a-17917809} (accessed September 12, 2014).
Guatemala, in fact, has been somewhat of a leader in missed opportunities. A recent project to rank-order 40 developing countries from around the world in their political commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition placed Guatemala at the top of its list, ahead of fast-growing African powerhouses and wealthier emerging countries. Yet despite the apparent commitment in the form of progressive laws and various programs, results have lagged considerably, with rates of poverty and extreme poverty, and more specifically chronic and seasonal hunger and childhood stunting, ranking among the worst in the hemisphere. Guatemala is also the only country in the region where its poor are getting poorer.

**Justification: Local Factors in Development Analysis**

The chasm between an objectively measured “political commitment” by central authorities to combat hunger, and yet poor results, suggests the potentially important role of local actors, or at least local-level factors, in influencing development outcomes at the community level, with national-level implications. While the role of local elites, tribal authorities or religious leaders in influencing peace and security outcomes after conflict has been explored in the peacebuilding literature (discussed more in Chapter Two), the role of informal actors as either “spoilers” or heroes of development is much less well

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15 See: [http://www.hancindex.org/](http://www.hancindex.org/)


understood, and is in fact only just emerging.\textsuperscript{19} Given that improving living conditions and well-being in post-war societies is an explicit goal of UN Missions and other external agencies in a post-war context, it is peculiar that little in the literature examines post-war human development outcomes more explicitly. Moreover, as global development and aid agencies increasingly embrace a “Do No Harm” position on projects and assistance, an awareness of subtle, local (even “street-level”) political dynamics is essential.\textsuperscript{20}

In Guatemala, decentralization following the 1996 Peace Accords, which ended the 36-year long civil war, was designed in order to improve both the practice of democracy (Torres-Rivas and Cuesta 2007), and the delivery of basic resources for development. Community-level development councils (\textit{consejos comunitarios de desarrollo}, or COCODES) are legally responsible for articulating pressing local needs, and then securing government resources with which to tackle the problem at hand.\textsuperscript{21} In this

\textsuperscript{19} For example, see: \url{http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/whose-legitimacy-the-spectrum-of-authority-in-conflict-settings/} (accessed October 30, 2013). There is otherwise only sporadic evidence of non-state actors influencing development, specifically, including the role of Hezbollah in supplying basic services in Lebanon for example (see: “Habitat for Hezbollah” by Melani Cammett (2006), available at \url{http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/08/16/habitat_for_hezbollah}). Other examples include the role of informal lending networks between Mexican women (see for example: \url{http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2014/04/01/292580644/lending-circles-help-latinas-pay-bills-and-invest}) Much of the literature exploring non-state service delivery, however, does not consider how populations fair under these conditions, and if health and education measurably improves.

\textsuperscript{20} “Do No Harm,” as articulated in the 2010 OECD-DAC document, “Do No Harm: International Support for Statebuilding,” has been increasingly embraced by post-conflict statebuilding actors and the broader development community as part of a wider effort to encourage more local (national) influence over outcomes.

\textsuperscript{21} The Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation was signed by representatives of the rebel umbrella group, the Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), and the Álvaro Arzú administration on 6 May 1996. Among the details, which included a commitment by the government to ensure availability of primary education and a 70% literacy rate by 2000, was the ‘potentially transformative’ commitment by the government to increase spending on health and education by 50% compared with 1995 levels, measured by percentage of GDP (Stanley 2013). In part to accomplish these goals, the 2002 \textit{Ley de Consejos de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural} (Urban and Rural Development Councils Law) was passed, following previous back-and-forth iterations, thus establishing the community development councils and formally recognizing the role of the indigenous population in public policy decision-making.
system, legal-formal actors (COCODE presidents, local mayors, and council members, for example) are easily identified by the architects of new development initiatives and programs – whether those in the central government or foreign NGOs – and are thus those recruited to act as conduits between aid agencies, material resources, and the targeted community. Development– according to the formalized blueprint of community councils – is intended to take place in a programmatic fashion that clearly articulates needs upwards, and disperses resources downwards through the dedicated channels, or persons and their offices, all the while soliciting the input of community members.

In reality, myriad actors, each endowed with varying degrees of local legitimacy, credibility and influence – not formally recognized by any code or law – complicate what is effectively local-level governance, and therefore outcomes, at the community level. Some communities, for example, where non-state actors leverage deep-seated community sympathy and influence, have resisted implementing the COCODES altogether – viewing them as a threat and a form of state control, deferring to traditional mechanisms of governance based loosely on Mayan traditions of “service” already in place,\(^2\) or more radically stamping their own authority, and demands for autonomy, over the local territory (Klick 2013, Seider 2011, Ekern 2010). These organizations and actors are frequently overlooked by government offices and non-governmental development agencies alike with respect to development governance, thus overlooking a potentially critical variable influencing the implementation, impact, and outcomes of any program or assistance.

\(^2\) Totonicapán municipality, for example, is extremely well-organized at the local level, including the powerful “48 Cantones of Totonicapán” organization, which frequently clashes with department and state offices. Because of its opposition, there are no local level development councils in Totonicapán, which is highly unusual (based on interviews, October 2013).
That is not to say that if only local conditions were embraced, or that if local actors with robust legitimacy were deferred to over central authorities always, that things would be better. In fact, this project is quite clear that “the local” can be overly-romanticized when scholars assume that customs, norms and traditions must be more inherently just, or always result in policies and outcomes which resonate more deeply with local populations. At least with respect to development, “the local” – in all of its various manifestations – can perpetuate as much harm as good when attempting to convert resources into development gains, or by actively resisting cooperation with state entities with valuable development resources (Klick 2013). This possibility remains widely overlooked by development practitioners and policymakers alike, to their detriment, and to the detriment of targeted populations and their well-being. More important for the process of development to unfold locally, and to result in measurable gains in health or education, I argue, is complementarity between state offices and local actors.

Complementarity reflects a situation in which state actors with important resources (from food aid to medicine to cash) work in harmony with more locally-trusted, non-state actors in order to deliver basic services more equitably, or to distribute resources more efficiently. Crucially, complementarity includes, on the part of state actors, recognition of the predominance of, and deference to, local authorities – formal and informal – by state

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23 Though I argue that, in our effort to embrace local contexts and conditions as starting points for more effective aid and development, local actors and conditions can sometimes be deleterious to the well-being of the community, there is a much more developed scholarly community devoted to correcting what it sees as a systematic dismissal of local conditions from scholarly work. This community has largely blossomed through a study of peace, peacebuilding and post-conflict statebuilding – arguing that conventional, liberal-oriented missions, in their effort to reconstruct an ideal OECD-type state, misunderstand the persistence, and resistance, of local orders of authority and informal rules. Outcomes instead are “hybrid” in nature. The hybridity literature, discussed more in Chapter Two, explicitly recognizes the coexistence and interaction of state institutions and a multiplicity of non-state actors and sources of legitimacy (see in particular Boege et al. 2009a, 2009b; Clements et al. 2007; Kraushaar and Lambach 2009, Wiuff Moe 2011), and emphasizes the “existing” local, or “everyday” conditions that influence outcomes (see Richmond 2010, 2011).
actors (Klick 2013). A complementary governance arrangement stands in contrast to “competitive” ones, in which local actors utilize their influence to rebuff state influence or action (see footnote 18).

This study demonstrates, in fact, that when the legitimacy, credibility and authority of local non-state actors is coupled with, or “complements,” the resources and expertise of state offices, development outcomes are indeed better, though this is rather rare. It is particularly challenging, on the one hand, for the state to strike a balance between building capacity, and imposition, especially in areas with strong indigenous identity and where the state may be perceived as a threat. On the other hand, a lack of human capital, corruption, racism, mismanagement or simple neglect plague many official government offices at the local level, including those observed in this study, and this project does not absolve the state or local officials of necessary reform. In fact, there are perverse forms of complementarity as well, in which central authorities utilize local networks to undermine local (official) government – complicating any linear notion of complementarity and underscoring the extent of heterogeneity in state-society relations in Guatemala, even among similar communities.

My findings nevertheless suggest that local, semi-formal institutions are most effective at influencing development outcomes when their legitimacy is coupled with resources that only the state can provide, and currently monopolizes, or when local institutions complement their state counterparts. This, however, hinges most frequently on whether individual actors representing the state in each community show a respectful deference of local/traditional authority, and an ability, or desire, to work with local authorities to achieve development-oriented policy implementation. Of course, in return,
official entities – like the mayor’s office in particular – are key to establishing complementarity, and are well-positioned to thwart any likelihood thereof, which is also observed in this study.

**Significance**

This project offers an important contribution to both the scholarly and practitioner understanding of development and its conundrums. First, by exploring the complex processes of development at the community level – where disbursements of resources need take place, but also where the official, local authorities confront various brands of civil society, competing political parties with active grudges, and informal actors with significant local credibility – this project is an important contribution to our understanding of how policy implementation and service delivery is manipulated at the micro level, and to a degree not readily apparent even to monitoring and assessment specialists back in Guatemala City, New York City or Geneva.

Second, despite its local focus, this study also adds to the *global* development discourse, which is currently at an important juncture. The academic and development practitioner communities are increasingly preoccupied with what will follow the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015. Much of the debate has surrounded the role of inequality, while other components concern the value of measurements and indices, human rights, and how crime and violence should be accounted for in post-2015 objectives. Ultimately, however, the post-2015 debate centers on connecting development theory with practice, resulting in well-defined and measurable targets (like reductions in poverty, premature deaths, etc.). The results of this study, therefore, which observes a

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breakdown between centrally-articulated development programs and intended outcomes because of largely overlooked social forces, raises a certain cautionary red flag with respect to the current approach to development assessment.

Third, the findings that stem from this study also shed light on the complexities of development in the most intractable cases globally, addressing directly the wider universe of cases commonly referred to as “fragile” or “vulnerable” states – or those 30-40 countries that experience recurring bouts of violence and instability, weak capacity on the part of central authorities to deliver basic services, and which have retained stubbornly high poverty rates.  

While other countries throughout the world, and certainly in Latin America, have made significant advancements in reducing poverty and delivering basic services under difficult conditions, Guatemala has failed to achieve its MDG targets, and continues to lag behind the rest of the region – with the highest rates of poverty, chronic hunger and inequality in all of Latin America. A more thorough examination of what thwarts development gains in a potentially prosperous middle-income country, in a region that has made measurable strides, is thus key to understanding what complicates development elsewhere. In so doing, this study also emphasizes the complexities that potentially await other, more recent, post-conflict states and societies, underscoring the limitations of a conventional top-down statebuilding approach for development.

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While Guatemala cannot be considered indicative of what awaits Sierra Leone or Liberia, per se, the findings here do suggest that, even in the medium to long-term, human development is particularly handicapped by the legacy of conflict, distrust of state authorities, and dysfunctional state-society relations. Guatemala, therefore, might serve as an important lead indicator of what awaits other post-conflict countries, twenty years forward, without a more thorough re-thinking of development policy.

Finally, a fourth significant contribution of this project is its emphasis on state-local complementarity. As in many fragile states, Guatemala confronts the reality of communities traumatized by war, and by demographic fault lines. These factors, combined with the state’s own shortcomings with respect to security, human rights and justice, make the state an unwelcome entity throughout much of rural Guatemala, particularly where indigenous groups have organized thoroughly and directly influence governance and local politics. The grievances of local populations cannot be ignored, nor should they be taken lightly. However, from a strictly development perspective, neither local resistance nor local legitimacy is sufficient for making measurable gains in health and human development, and the agency of the most poor should not be overstated. Though elusive, “best” outcomes are achieved when state actors tread thoughtfully, threading the needle between their responsibilities and their limitations in a local context, and deferring, and indeed cooperating, with local, formal and, crucially, informal non-state actors to deliver resources efficiently, and to begin the long process of development in places long-neglected.

With these factors in mind, I argue that more emphasis in the post-2015 policy must be placed on the micro-politics of development, and thus consider the largely hidden
barriers to progress out of poverty, and in combating hunger, that escapes even the most politically committed central governments. These micro dynamics, I argue, have macro consequences.

**Project Background and Description**

This project seeks to explain variability in *human development* outcomes across similar communities. Human development, as opposed to economic development, strictly, or national development of industrial policy, for example, places greater emphasis on measuring the well-being of citizens, as opposed to assuming that income will necessarily generate a higher standard of living by itself. From this perspective, indicators of health and education are added to income metrics in an effort to better capture the quality of life of citizens. And indeed, the most interesting cases in this study, discussed in more detail below, are those that reveal strong swings in health and education outcomes, after development indicators are disaggregated, despite little or no changes in income over time.

Human development is rooted in the philosophy of development articulated by Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen (1992), whose “capability approach” argues that an individual’s capacity (her capability set) to achieve well-being, to be well-nourished, or to avoid preventable morbidity (her functionings), will drastically affect whether or not she prospers in society. Illness contracted through dirty drinking water, for example, or weakness from malnutrition, limits an individual’s actual achievements, and furthermore, curtails her *opportunities* to achieve well-being. She may not be able to take advantage of
work opportunities, or will otherwise be less productive in her work, resulting in less income, whatever the opportunity.

Similarly, a lack of education limits her capabilities, effectively excluding her from opportunities, and limiting both her intellectual and fiscal horizons, or what Sen might call her “freedom to achieve.” Even cash transfers, or other mechanisms of augmenting income,\(^{26}\) for instance, will be of minimal value from a human development perspective if access to health and education remains limited. If large swathes of a country’s population are structurally excluded from access to health and education – either out of racism, neglect or incapacity – then economic development as measured by GDP growth will again be limited in reducing poverty or increasing opportunity, and the freedom to achieve well-being will be similarly constrained. This disconnect between income and development is particularly relevant to the Guatemala case, which has the largest economy in the region but among the lowest health and education achievements in aggregate.

Income, however, is not abandoned from this perspective altogether, but using it as a metric for “achievement” is. In other words, income should represent the means, on a minimal level, with which to achieve functionings like well-being, securing appropriate shelter and maintaining good health. It is not an adequate measure of achievement by itself, however.

\(^{26}\) See footnote no. 5
Combining income with health and education opportunities into an indicator of development, as the UN has done with the Human Development Index (HDI),\textsuperscript{27} provides a crude, but nevertheless augmented glimpse into the capability set, or the resources and degrees of freedom, with which to pursue well-being, while also providing a snapshot of general health and well-being of citizens of a country or sub-region.

This project proceeds by \textit{first} comparing the most recent HDI scores from across all 334 municipios in Guatemala.\textsuperscript{28} This initial survey reveals stark spatial variability in human development across all communities, and most surprisingly, even \textit{within} rural, mountainous and largely indigenous departments (See Table 1).\textsuperscript{29}

### Table 1. Summary of Human Development Scores in Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Obs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HDI\textunderscore 2005</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>.591</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI\textunderscore 2005, where elevation is &gt;6500 ft above sea level</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This peculiar outcome is made yet more puzzling when, after a regression analysis, no statistical relationship (P=.238) is found between the presence of the state in a given

\textsuperscript{27} The HDI was the collective effort of Sen and Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq, who spearheaded the UN’s annual Human Development Reports as well, partly as a counterweight to the World Bank’s World Development Report.

\textsuperscript{28} Municipios are much like counties in the United States in that there is a “urban” head or seat (usually with the same name), where the local government and its offices are located, which is also responsible for a designated area consisting of several much smaller villages (aldeas or cantones). Collectively they make up the entire municipio. In Guatemala, data was available only as low as the municipio administrative level for statistical analysis (n=334). During fieldwork, I visited surrounding aldeas in my three primary municipio cases as well, and conducted focus groups with villagers, in order to gather data from across the municipio itself.

\textsuperscript{29} Departments are the next administrative level up from municipios. There are 22 in Guatemala.
community\textsuperscript{30} and HDI scores and other development indicators, suggesting a disconnect between state capacity, service delivery, and development outcomes – while simultaneously leaving open the question of what better explains this variation, if not levels of state presence (See Figure 2). These early steps, along with a more thorough analysis of all quantitative data, are described in more detail in Chapters Three and Four.

![Figure 2. Scatterplot of Changes in Chronic Hunger Rates Across State Density Scores (2009)](image)

Ultimately, I argue that it is those communities which organize in such a manner as to effectively partner with state actors that are demonstrating the best returns from development programming thus far, including Guatemala’s now internationally-recognized anti-hunger initiative, \textit{El Pacto Hambre Cero} (or the “Zero Hunger Pact”). It is in these communities where basic resources can be distributed effectively and impartially, and where trust can be engendered between state-level resources (like the local medical clinic) and rural citizens. It is in these same communities where citizens are

\textsuperscript{30} State Density Index (SDI) scores were crafted and produced, at the \textit{municipio} level, for the 2009/2010 Guatemala Human Development Report, and based on indicators of the level of state offices, bureaucracy and redistributed tax revenues per capita for each \textit{municipio}. A more detailed description is available in the Statistical Annex of the UNDP report (UNDP Guatemala 2010: 410), while a translated reproduction of the index’s components is available in Appendix B of this paper.
mobilized to make the trek to area clinics as well, and get needed supplies, education or vaccinations. This happens because local leaders have been endowed with a level of respect, deference and autonomy, by state actors and the municipal mayor, which has resulted in their active participation and project “buy-in.”

Unfortunately, most communities exhibited the opposite tendencies, and each petty, personal as well as electoral grievances deepened rifts within the community and pitted state actors against municipal authorities. In these cases, no amount of local-level, indigenous authority or even self-organization could overcome such divisions. Indeed, electoral politics and party affiliation, combined with confessional divisions, were becoming increasingly salient at the village level, and also factored into which communities fostered partnerships and complementary relations between local authority structures and state service delivery.

Testing my hypothesis was not an easy task, requiring thorough familiarization with the country of Guatemala, with the communities and regions under scrutiny, their histories, and the confluence of literatures that have already explored the topics of local-level governance, post-conflict societies, poverty reduction, development, decentralization and participatory development. This paper is therefore structured in order to guide the reader through the step-wise progression of important background material and through a detailed explication of the study’s experimental design, case selection criteria, and ultimately its case studies, before a thorough analysis and discussion of the findings.

31 This is based on interviews in all six communities, and an almost unanimous consensus among interviewees, regarding the role of parties and politics on local cohesion and government relations.
Structure

Chapter One provides important background into the Guatemala context, including a brief overview of the armed conflict which officially ended in 1996. This section includes a discussion about why Guatemala, for multiple reasons, is an ideal case study for this project. I also discuss what insights a country like Guatemala might provide scholars and practitioners, concerned not only about development conundrums more broadly but also post-war reconstruction and development, despite almost 20 years after the official end of fighting and with minimal risk of a return to large-scale conflict.

Chapter Two relates the current project to an array of literature. As hinted at above, the Guatemala case was originally situated within the larger debates surrounding “local ownership” and “hybridity.” Indeed, this project can sharpen what are conceptual loose ends in both, and contribute to the debates surrounding local ownership and post-conflict peacebuilding and development. But as the study progressed, it is apparent that the Guatemala context diverges from the focus of hybridity scholars, concerned mostly with the interaction of either state or local actors and the international community (frequently UN peacekeepers or UN civilian staff). This project is more concerned, ultimately, with state and society, and the influence of informal actors and institutions on human development outcomes. First, by expanding the dependent variable to something more complex (like development, and well-being, versus the very narrow achievement of a negative peace, for example), this project inherently concerns itself with more complex socio-political dynamics and governance processes. The project also includes an unvarnished and in-depth examination of micro-level politics at the community level, also touching on a level of complexity that, as argued already, needs to be more
thoroughly considered by state and external officials alike when considering development programs and policy. Though this is a relatively nascent focus of study, important extant literature on local-level governance, including studies from Guatemala, provide important points of reference and help orient this project conceptually. Other literature under focus includes that of informal institutions, the political geography of development, political culture, state service delivery and the intersection of state and society in fragile conflict-affected states. This diverse array of literature is framed according to a rubric of state-centric, state-society, and society-centric approaches to politics and development. The chapter concludes with a more in-depth discussion concerning the puzzle under examination and an explication of the research design.

Chapter Three provides an exploratory quantitative analysis of available data. Though the quantitative analysis here, given data constraints, is insufficient by itself to facilitate conclusive findings, it nevertheless serves an important function. First, the analyses presented in Chapter Three demonstrates surprising relationships between myriad development indicators and diverse independent variables, like the level of official denunciations of formal actors for abuse of power, filed per community, for example, or conflict intensity – which is calculated at the municipal level here for possibly the first time. As well, the distinct lack of a relationship between state density at the municipal level, and development outcomes, challenges conventional wisdoms regarding statebuilding for development, and makes room for alternative hypotheses while justifying case selection.

Chapter Four provides crucial background into the six case study communities that are at the heart of this study’s qualitative analysis. They are all communities from
Guatemala’s western highlands region, but spread across three different departments (the administrative level between municipal and state). Collectively, these three departments are the worst performing with respect to development, but the experiences of the six communities themselves vary considerably. This chapter specifically explores the array of formal and informal actors influencing governance at the community level, and myriad conflicts that impinge on development outcomes, and constrain state-society relations.

In Chapter Five, a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) structures the analysis and findings from each community in order to draw out how complementarity, rival hypotheses, and development outcomes relate in each community. This chapter probes deeper into the puzzle at the local level than what is possible through a quantitative analysis, and provides critical context necessary for scrutinizing causality. Chapter Six utilizes process-tracing, through the examination of how the country’s acclaimed anti-hunger program is implemented in each community, in order to even more deeply uncover the causal chain between governance and development outcomes.

This paper concludes with a re-examination of state-society relations and human development, including policy recommendations aimed at each national and community leaders, development agencies and their field workers, and even global development policymakers, who continue to overlook just how micro-level dynamics hinder billion dollar development campaigns, including the effectiveness of the Millennium Development Goals. This study is also directed at the scholarly literature, however, that, while correctly highlighting the capacity of local actors to resist state incursions or to influence local outcomes, overlooks “the local’s” limitations, particularly when it regards the health and well-being of post-war societies. More strongly, this paper calls for a
reorientation of post-war scholarship. It argues that development and peacebuilding scholarship remain largely “siloed” in their respective search for “what works,” overlooking the inherent overlap.

This paper muddies these waters, intentionally. Robust state authority is empirically rare, and indeed governance of innumerable processes and actors fills this void. But development, unlike self-policing or internal-sanctioning, for example, requires material resources and basic services. State actors need acknowledge the extent of their limitations, while local leaders need acknowledge the depths of their needs. A marriage of the two, however fraught, is critical to human development in the 21st century.
CHAPTER 1: THE GUATEMALA CONTEXT

Much has been written concerning Guatemala’s civil war, which unfolded over thirty six long years, but which also included both spikes and lulls in intensity, a democratic transition of government despite ongoing hostilities (and despite abysmally low electoral participation in rural areas), as well as shifting rebel ideologies, coordination and leadership. Perhaps more peculiar than the episodic nature of the civil war itself, however, is that – despite nearly four decades of conflict resulting in an estimated 200,000 dead, a million displaced, and another 100,000 disappeared (the overwhelming majority of which, 93 percent in fact, being the result of state military operations)\(^{32}\) – the overall political and socio-economic divisions that were the principle drivers of conflict remain largely intact today (Fuentes 2011, Schneider 2012, Segovia 2005).

Guatemala remains, as noted in the introduction, the most unequal country in Latin America, a region already synonymous with class divisions and disparities in wealth. Somewhat more shocking, however – given relatively robust rates of economic growth and, additionally, millions of US dollars (USD) in remittances – Guatemala has the highest rates of chronic malnutrition and hunger in all of Latin America, and is in fact one of the most undernourished countries on the entire planet, despite abundant resources.\(^{33}\) It also experiences persistently high rates of poverty and extreme poverty\(^{34}\)

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\(^{32}\) Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) 1999

\(^{33}\) The World Bank ranks Guatemala third in the world in chronic hunger in children under age five, using stunted growth as its primary indicator. It also notes Guatemala’s exceptionally poor performance in this regard in comparison with countries around the globe with similar incomes, and argues that the country
while simultaneously experiencing absurd crime rates – compounded by a feeble justice system of questionable political independence with reported impunity rates of over 90 percent.\(^{35}\)

Despite a government elected in 2011 on a platform of civilian security (or perhaps because of it, according to some wary of the President’s personal history as a military officer during the civil war, with responsibility for operations in Quiché department specifically, which experienced the greatest share of conflict intensity), 2013 saw a rash of murders of media personnel,\(^{36}\) indigenous community leaders\(^{37}\) and union leaders,\(^{38}\) reminiscent of the tactics of a political elite-military alliance during the civil war which threatened and killed peasant and union organizers (Costello 1997: 13).

Guatemala, in fact, despite its middle income status, is a regional and even global development laggard, and is emblematic of both the disconnect that exists between

34 The most recent statistics (2011) from the country’s National Living Conditions Survey indicate that 40.38% of the population lives under conditions of non-extreme poverty with an additional 13.33% living under conditions of extreme poverty (ENCOSVI 2011).

35 Guatemala, as part of Central America’s “northern triangle” is considered one of the most violent countries in the world. Its homicide rate has hovered around 40 per 100,000 over the past several years, or roughly ten times the U.S. murder rate (see: http://www.estadacion.or.cr/estadisticas/compendio-estadisticas/compendio-centroamerica/compendio-centroamerica-politico or http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/homicide.html). The country is also host to the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG in its Spanish acronym), which was established because of Guatemala’s glaring judicial inefficiencies and failure to prosecute reported crimes. The impunity rate for homicides was at 95% as late as 2010, though recent reports claim this has been slashed to 70% in 2012 (see: http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204664.pdf)


economic growth and inclusive development, as well as how a combination of state fragility and durable social forces hinders human development in an otherwise prosperous context.

Exploring Guatemala’s persistent underdevelopment, despite its relatively strong economic performance, is therefore valuable for several reasons: for understanding underdevelopment in fragile and conflict-affected states more broadly – which remain the most intractable cases of development globally and to which the evolving post-2015 development debates increasingly speak, and in order to more systematically probe the largely obscured and overlooked mechanisms that complicate even well-designed and well-financed development schemes. Understanding what allows extreme poverty and underdevelopment to persist, and even flourish, in a middle-income country like Guatemala, provides important insights into what complicates poverty reduction and development everywhere.

This chapter begins with an overview of the civil war and subsequent peace accords, which on the one hand continues to reverberate throughout society, particularly in the areas which experienced the most intense episodes, but which on the other hand is increasingly fading into the past as a wave of young people see{39} seek education, a middle class lifestyle, or concern themselves more with smartphones and Spanish League soccer than past injustices. This chapter proceeds with a brief exploration of some of the longer-term complications of the war, with special focus paid to the resulting tapestry of local governance dynamics, including the diverse set of actors – formal and informal – that

influence the nature and scope of governance at the local level, and the varying nature of state-society relationships across communities throughout Guatemala. It is this diversity, I argue, that is a key part of the Guatemala story, and likewise an important variable in explaining the variations in opportunity and development that exist across otherwise similar communities.

1.1 A Civil War Overview: From Marxism to Massacres

It is first worth considering the context immediately preceding the start of the Guatemalan civil war. The October 20th, 1944 revolution first brought down the military dictatorship of Jorge Ubico, and ushered in what has probably been the most progressive era in Guatemala’s history to date or since – introducing for the first time a veneer of modern social welfare programs and anti-feudal laws that promised education, land for all citizens, including poor campesinos and indigenous peoples, while formally abolishing indentured servitude for the first time. The revolution came to a swift end in 1954, however, when the CIA and Guatemalan military elites toppled the Jacobo Árbenz administration after it decreed the turnover of uncultivated land in private holdings for redistribution, which disproportionately affected the American-owned United Fruit Company and which, through a Cold War prism, was interpreted as a lurch towards a communist ideology. The 1954 “counterrevolution,” however, according to many Guatemalan scholars,40 cemented both social inequalities and a political oligarchy – out from under which the country is still trying to progress – while snuffing out a flicker of opportunity for Guatemala’s peasants.

After a tumultuous interim, the armed civil conflict itself began when left-wing junior military officers rebelled in 1960 over fraudulent elections orchestrated by the civil-military regime. Having lost, the leaders of the uprising fled to the central and western highlands where, over time, grievances related to the systematic discrimination and social exclusion of the majority Mayan population became the driving force behind the efforts of anti-government forces in the 1970s and 1980s, though such a simple depiction of their leading role is regularly contested (Smith 1990, Nelson 2009).

Various iterations of the war and interpretations of the role the indigenous people themselves during this period are under some scrutiny. David Stoll (1999, 1993), for example, recognizes the fury with which the state army reacted to uprisings, but generally disputes the notion of a “popular” insurgency, and blames rebel forces for exaggerating the plight of poor farmers in order to garner international support. This interpretation has been widely condemned, however, and consensus – after vast amounts of social science research, the unarchiving of police records, and even ongoing forensic work – has rather definitively recognized the asymmetries between rebel and state forces, and the disproportionate response of the army that included over 600 separate massacres – the overwhelming number of victims (83 percent) being poor, indigenous peasants, including women and children, and concentrated in the Guatemalan highlands and northern Ixil region (Brett 2007, Streeter 2000, Steinberg et al. 2006, Jonas 1991, CEH 1999).\footnote{See, for example: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/pressrelease/pbs-newshour-reports-on-how-forensic-science-is-being-used-in-guatemalan-genocide-trial/}

The rebel movement was itself weakened by internal divisions – between Marxist-inspired intellectuals, for example, as well as between ladino leaders and Mayan leaders. These divisions resulted in multiple rebel factions, which included the Guerrilla Army for
the Poor (EGP), the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) and finally the Guatemalan Worker’s Party (PGT) – which only united under the single flag of the Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity (*Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* or URNG) in 1982.

Violence and oppression during the civil war reached its zenith between 1980 and 1984, under the administrations of General Romeo Luca García and the notorious General Efrain Ríos Montt, who is currently on-and-off trial in Guatemala for genocide.\(^{42}\) In fact, one of the case study locations for this project (Zacualpa, in the department of El Quiché) was a focal point of the “scorched earth” policies of Ríos Montt. Government forces there killed over six hundred civilians and even commandeered the Catholic Church – turning it into a detention and torture center while unceremoniously disposing bodies throughout the Church grounds and its wells.

Given the disproportionate effect of the violence on the young (ages 16-45), students and traditional community leadership, some authors have argued that the war, and its most intense episodes, “attacked the core of Guatemala’s human capital and dismantled its potential for social leadership,” the effects of which still reverberates today (Flores, Ruano and Fuchal 2009: 39).

The landmark report by the Historical Clarification Commission (CEH 1999)\(^{43}\) documents how community leaders – whether rural teachers, traditional health promoters

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\(^{42}\) Ríos Montt was convicted of genocide in May 2013 – the first former head of state to be convicted in his own country for such crimes – but the conviction was annulled shortly thereafter and his status remains in limbo. See: [http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2013/latam/justice-on-trial-in-guatemala-the-rios-montt-case.aspx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2013/latam/justice-on-trial-in-guatemala-the-rios-montt-case.aspx) (accessed 10/24/2013)

\(^{43}\) The CEH (1999), or in its full Spanish-language title, “La Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico de las Violaciones a los Derechos Humanos y los Hechos de Violencia que han Causado Sufrimientos a la Población Guatemalteca,” emerged from the peace process itself, and a specific accord (signed June 23,
(midwives with traditional community leadership roles), or priests – were associated with “subversion” by the state and were thus specifically targeted and frequently executed. The forced participation of community members in “civil defense patrols” (*Patrulla Civil de Autodefensa*, or PACs) designed to limit the incursion of guerillas into rural villages, divided communities further – pitting patrol members against traditional leaders, and allowing patrollers to arrest and use violence against suspected collaborators within their own communities. “Local indigenous authority,” argues Flores et al., “no longer rested with a council of elders, but rather with the head of the patrols … These fractures affected systems of authority, norms of community relations, and even elements of identity” (2009: 41). Indeed, as Tania Palencia Prado (1996) observes, the Army used PACs and other “military commissioners” to actively suppress Mayan identity, exalting a homogenous Hispanic, or *ladino*, culture instead.

Some observers (Duque 2009) have expressly linked contemporary distrust of state institutions among Guatemalans (Azpuru 2011) to experiences with violence and repression during the war. Indeed, in a surprising moment, one of my interviewees linked former PAC members to a particular political party active in her community currently, and to specific delinquencies that have resulted from political turf-battles since.44 Other observers explain limited political participation by citizens in Guatemala as another outcome that can be directly traced back to the civil war era in which any institutional organization could be construed as political, and potentially subversive (del Valle 2009).

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44 Interview in Zacualpa, department of El Quiché, with key informant (October 15, 2013).
It is unclear, however, whether the legacy of civil war outweighs even more recent experiences with heavy-handed government treatment of indigenous protestors, or a backlog of unsolved and unprosecuted murders throughout the country (International Crisis Group 2010, International Crisis Group 2011). This is discussed in more detail below.

1.2 The Peace Accords: Victors or Vanquished?

By the end of the state campaign of terror of the early 1980s, the rebels were unable to protect civilians in areas where they operated, nor muster any sort of significant military threat to state forces. Despite their relative weakness, however, their small numbers and flexibility allowed them to persist and cause sporadic damage, indefinitely. This factor, combined with the scaling back of military operations and the 1985 elections that brought to power a civilian president, opened the door for a political settlement (Arnault 1999). It would take ten years, many separate processes and negotiations, and ultimately the influence of the United Nations, which established MINUGUA (the UN Mission for the Verification of Human Right and of Compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala), before comprehensive peace accords were signed on December 23, 1996 in Guatemala City.

The rebels could hardly claim victory, but given the military asymmetries between the two parties, the ability of URNG to make their key grievances the center of debate, and ultimately negotiate a settlement, is a remarkable feat (Stanley 2013). URNG, combined with the participation of a diverse array of civil society actors, was able to make human rights, the electoral regime, and access to land and rural development central tenets of direct talks. (Ibid: 20). Despite this achievement, however, the
implementation of the Peace Accords since has been a stunning disappointment (Brett 2013, Godoy 2006: 44).

Since the 1996 conclusion of the Peace Accords process, the state of Guatemala has been unable to effectively address the country’s greatest social challenges, nor implement some of the most basic agreed-upon components of the Accords themselves. In part, this reflects what some have called Guatemala’s “permanent state of fragility,” and a statebuilding project “in crisis,” given the state’s consistent inability to coalesce a powerful economic elite around badly needed fiscal reforms, and the instability of Guatemalan politics itself, which has experienced continuous political turnover and spontaneous political party generation and disintegration (ASIES 2012, González 2014, Schneider 2012, Jones 2011).

For example, a key component of the Peace Accords was a government obligation to increase social spending in poor regions – a goal which remains largely unmet (Schneider 2012, Stewart and Brown 2009, Kurtenbach 2010, Fuentes 2002).\textsuperscript{45} Instead, Guatemala has the lowest tax revenues in Central America (and second lowest in all of Latin America). The notably regressive nature of Guatemalan taxes, as well, combined with a confusing policy patchwork and ad-hoc reforms, have resulted in state revenues that are unable to adequately fund even the state’s paltry commitments to public goods provision (Schneider 2012: 172, USAID/ICEFI 2009). Thus despite the formal end to hostilities

\textsuperscript{45} The Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation was signed by representatives of the URNG and the Alvaro Arzú administration on May 6, 1996, in Mexico City. Among the details, which included a commitment by the government to ensure availability of primary education and a 70 percent literacy rate by 2000, was the “potentially transformative” commitment by the government to increase spending on health and education by 50 percent compared to 1995 levels, measured by percent of GDP (Stanley 2013).
and the disbanding of rebel groups, contemporary Guatemala continues to cope with many of the same social grievances and inequalities that fueled the civil war. General consensus, in fact, is that Guatemala’s miserable development performance is the result of a constellation of a weak state, inchoate political parties and, crucially, a fundamental social cleavage dividing indigenous groups from Ladinos.

1.3 Contemporary Guatemala: A Continuum of Violence?

Scholars like Frances Stewart and Graham Brown (2009) argue that, regardless of revenues, the largest bilateral, multilateral and even domestic development initiatives have articulated so-called poverty reduction strategies without adequately addressing what are severe “horizontal inequalities” in Guatemala. From their analysis, disparate rates of poverty, HDI scores, levels of education, housing conditions and access to basic services between Guatemalan regions reflect a structural exclusion of the large indigenous population from post-conflict economic growth (Stewart and Brown 2009: 55).

Roddy Brett (2013) argues that the relatively robust indigenous movement that emerged from the peace process, at the time bolstered by local and international civil society pushing for collective and cultural rights, was ultimately sidestepped after the conclusion of the Accords. “Entrenched racism,” the economic and political weakness of progressive sectors, and a “return to normal” after the conclusion of the peace accords – whereby industrial and military elites returned to dominate politics, particularly as

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46 The URNG in fact would formally enter the political system as a party with the end of the civil war, and remains active, if generally uncompetitive as a political force (Allison 2009).
international influence and interest waned – spelled a quick end to the more emancipatory ambitions of indigenous rights leaders.

Another legacy of the civil war is a culture of violence that continues to afflict the populace. As noted above, Guatemala has experienced increasingly high rates of violent crime over the last decade, reflecting what some observers have called the country’s “continuum of violence” – an evolution from state-sponsored terrorism and insurgency to organized crime and street criminality (Erlyck 2001).

Some of the violence is notably the result of turf battles between drug cartels in what has become a principal thoroughfare in North-South trafficking, and a renewed mano dura (“iron fist” literally, or “security-first”) government response.47 Gangs have also been cited as the sources of much criminality in urban centers. According to a 2011 World Bank report on crime and violence in Central America, Guatemala ranks among the highest in the region in homicide rates, with measureable, negative effects on attitudes of state institutions (World Bank 2011, López 2010).48 One unanticipated result of this explosion in crime, and the apparent impunity of criminals in the vast majority of cases49 has been a rash of a form of vigilante justice referred to as “lynching” (linchamientos) resulting in yet more bloodshed, crime, and impunity (Godoy 2006).

State violence has recently re-entered the discourse as well, with the UN condemning deadly clashes between military forces and protesting indigenous groups in the Western

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47 The Guatemalan state has, under Pérez-Molina, increased its purchase of military and police weaponry, as well as new vehicles for its national police force, whose increased visibility (and effectiveness in curbing crime) is a central goal of the administration.

48 According to the World Bank (2011) “Violence and Crime in Central America: A Development Challenge,” urban areas in and around Guatemala Department (Guatemala City) have experienced crime rates that are among the highest globally.

49 See Footnote 24
department of Totonicapán, which as many as six dead and thirty injured on October 4, 2012.\(^{50}\) Even more recently, clashes over mining in San Marcos department, as well as over the future of new dams in Barillas, Huehuetenango were at times extremely violent, leaving both citizens and police officers dead, and requiring the President to personally intervene.\(^{51}\) The forced disappearance of local activists, union leaders, and even radio DJs openly critical of the government and police tactics, has been routinely reported by human rights groups throughout 2013 and 2014.

Though these events have made little in the way of international headlines, they have created a toxic mix of fear, distrust and anger throughout much of the indigenous community, though this too varies from location to location, and competes with more immediate concerns and needs, from income to surviving natural disasters like 2014’s exceptional drought in Central America.\(^{52}\)

### 1.4 Puzzle – Spatial Variation in Governance and Human Development

Perverse discrepancies in human development between indigenous-majority and the most urban departments clearly exist. But after drilling down more deeply, greater variation between rural communities (and the many different language groups) reveals

\(^{50}\) “UN Human Rights Teams Head to Scene of Deadly Clashes in Western Guatemala,” Available at: http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43218&Cr=&Cr1=#.UIDJxVEsGvs (accessed on October 18, 2012). This event hardened opposition to the state within the municipality of Totonicapán, in particular, whose well-organized, indigenous-led and inspired 48 Cantones de Totonicapán continue to memorialize this event, while also remaining perhaps the most vocal and outspoken critic of perceived injustices, and actively resisting the “incursion” of the state and state offices in its community (based on a combination of public information as well as fall 2013 interviews with 48 Cantones leadership. I attended the first anniversary events of the 2012 shootings and interviewed leadership. See Appendix E).


\(^{52}\) See: http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/04/us-centralamerica-drought-idUSKBN0GT2NK20140904
itself as well. Even after controlling for population size, a preliminary comparison of municipalities reveals surprisingly drastic variation in Human Development Index scores. Plotting HDI scores against “state density” index scores similarly reveals that, for a given density of state services/resources, HDI scores vary dramatically (See Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1, previous chapter). Other data, including illiteracy rates among children of various ethno-linguistic groups, demonstrate additional, unexplained discrepancies in performance.53

One possible explanation for these discrepancies includes the variability in local governance from community to community, or more specifically the differences across communities in who can influence decision-making at the local level, and the relationships between municipio officials and non-state actors vying for influence. In contrast to the narrative of more-or-less uniform oppression and depravity in rural communities, some scholars have already highlighted the resilience of certain indigenous communities – by resurrecting traditional alcadas idigenas (or “indigenous mayors”) in order to make executive decisions that affect local municipal governance, or by self-organizing health services by recruiting traditional promotores (that were not long-before the targets of government death squads for their leadership roles in rural communities) (Flores et al. 2009, Danel and Forgia 2005). Rachel Sieder (2011), in her effort to understand how local populations in El Quiché, Guatemala resolve a desire for sovereignty (particularly over criminal matters) with the presence and demands of formal-state institutions, provides special insight into the capacity and influence of one

53 A 2011 Procurador de los Derechos Humanos (PDH) report reveals stark variation in illiteracy across different ethno-linguistic groups, and vastly different experiences between 2008 and 2011. The Sipakapense group for example, largely concentrated in the Sipakapa municipio, experienced increased illiteracy (from 40-68% of its children from 2008-2011), while the Sakapulteca virtually eradicated illiteracy in the same time frame.
indigenous organization in a single community. Though as her work also suggests, this
capacity and influence will inevitably vary, and thus conditions, from community to
community.

There is evidence, as well, that the 2002 Ley de Consejos de Desarrollo Urbano y
Rural (Urban and Rural Development Councils Law), which created a tiered system of
increasingly local-level councils through which citizens could actively participate in
development planning, has positively impacted perception of the state in some locales
(Flores et al. 2009, Danel and Forgia 2005), whereas in other communities the system has
been captured by local elites and is perceived less positively (Torres-Rivas and Cuesta
2007). In certain communities, local, informal leaders have prevented the
implementation of COCODES altogether – citing them as a direct attempt by central
authorities to undermine their own role, and divide the indigenous community. In other
communities, locally-organized, semi-formal comités cívicos, or essentially non-affiliated
political campaigns for local offices, have influenced the local political and development
agenda in order to intentionally side-step national political parties and the formal system,
though these frequently dissolve after elections, or are otherwise ephemeral.

Some scholars have argued that, more generally, indigenous rights movements
throughout Latin America, including in Guatemala, have gained in strength since the end

54 This notion was confirmed in interviews throughout this study. A description of this system is available
here: http://sistemas.segeplan.gob.gt/siscodew/ddpgpl$modulo.indice

55 This was most obvious in Totonicapán municipality, where the 48 Cantones are well-established,
influential, and remain vehemently opposed to the idea of state-coordinated COCODES. This was
confirmed over several interviews throughout the Fall of 2013.

56 See the following link for an example: http://www.deguate.com/artman/publish/noticias-guatemala/los-
comites-civicos-alternativa-para-llegar-al-poder-local.shtml#.UUNfm1cl_0e. Comité Cívico candidates
amounted to 3.5 percent of all candidates running for office in the 2011 general elections, and, were
relatively effective in winning office (16.8% won their respective campaign – the fourth most effective
among all parties)(ASIES 2011).
of the civil war – this being a perverse outcome of liberal statebuilding that simultaneously threatened rural indigenous autonomy without compensatory opportunities to participate in formal, democratic institutions (Yashar 1998). Whatever gains might be made through such movements are called into question by others, however, who observe a division between “culturalist” and “popular” wings of the Guatemalan indigenous movements, with neither adequately penetrating the formal political realm (Thorpe, Caumartin and Gray-Molina 2006).

Other scholars have focused on the role of civil society in post-war Guatemala, documenting both qualitative differences in organizational type, function and cohesiveness, with subsequent variability in “effectiveness” (Kurtenbach 2010, Birle 2000). Finally, others have attempted to document the role of “hidden powers,” or so-called “clandestine groups” that wield power through force and who exploit criminal networks. This influence, as crime statistics indicate, also varies spatially (Peacock and Beltrán 2002).

Collectively, the above accounts suggest that, to a yet undetermined degree, there is variation in the constitution and capacity of local “societies” – or the constellation of actors influencing governance at the local level – from local NGOs and official development agencies to more traditional alcadias and even narco-traffickers.

While the state and its aid agency develop nation-wide service delivery programs, local communities have mobilized themselves, in various ways and with varying capacity, to address their own needs, or to assist in (or substitute entirely for) state governance. Guatemala is therefore not a simple story of the effects of either state capacity or decentralization on human development, but instead one revealing how a
patchwork of community-level responses, taking various institutional forms and varying in credibility and local legitimacy, interacts with national level programming to effect development.
CHAPTER 2: GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The global development community is currently at a crossroads. As the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) come to a conclusion in 2015, scholars and practitioners alike are debating the impact and value of the current model and what, if anything, should replace them. And though certain scholars praise the MDGs for, if nothing else, reorienting global development from a strictly neoliberal foundation to a more human development inspired orientation (Hulme 2010), others question the efficacy of the MDGs, and the effectiveness of foreign assistance more broadly, given the rather glaring oversight of the political dimensions of development in policy (Robinson 2010, Langford 2010). These critics argue that the lack of a human rights component in the MDGs, and the continued political disempowerment of the poor in different countries, hampers more holistic, more robust, and more effective development practice. Others more plainly wonder whether the capacity of fragile states will ever allow for measurable progress (Figure 3).

57 William Easterly’s the Tyranny of Experts (2014) builds on his previous work highly critical of the role of foreign aid in development, and cements his place among a vocal community, which includes Dambisa Moyo (2009), author of Dead Aid, who actively challenge any connection between multilateral assistance, foreign aid and development progress.

58 Figure 3 was tweeted by Laurence Chandy of the Brookings Institution on December 18, 2013 (https://twitter.com/laurencechandy/status/413329238998011904)
If there is an element of unity among the different camps, however – whether small NGOs, think tanks, donor agencies or heads of state from the Global South – it is that everyone wants (or claims to want) measurable impacts with minimal waste from foreign aid or development investment, and that poor countries need to be involved more in international development policymaking and development design.\(^5^9\)

Despite calls for “local ownership,” however, and however vague, much of the debate surrounding a revised development paradigm continues to dwell on either the international or national dimensions of poverty reduction and development (the “good governance” paradigm most notably), or legal-formal, policy instruments that overlook the prevalence and weight of informal institutions.

Figure 3. MDG Progress in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (via Laurence Chandy)

\(^{59}\)“Local ownership” has become arguably the normative cornerstone of international development policy over the last decade – rhetorically through myriad UNDP, OECD and countless NGO policy papers, but also enshrined in the OECD-brokered 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (see, for example: http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccaagendaforaction.htm). Poor countries have more recently taken at least symbolic steps in demonstrating leadership – though the advent of the g7+, or a loose intergovernmental organization of some of the world’s most conflict-affected and poor states (http://www.g7plus.org/introduction), their work with the International Dialogue to craft a so-called “New Deal” for aid and development, and now efforts by the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to solicit input directly from citizens and civil society that will theoretically inform the drafting of Post-2015 goals (see http://www.myworld2015.org/).
A diverse, only-just-emerging community has begun to explore the implications of community level dynamics on development specifically (Alexandre et al. 2013, IDS 2010, Pugh 2010) including the role of locally-relevant informal institutions (Unsworth 2009, Hyden 2006). Much of this work remains anecdotal, however, or demonstrates more the resilience and robustness of a given informal governance mechanism (Owusu 1992, Ake 1996, OECD 2009) rather than an analytical, or explicit, exploration of either their influence on development outcomes, or how formal state entities and informal institutions can be reconciled for more effective development governance. As Goran Hyden writes about African countries, generally (though in this case he could be writing about virtually any developing country), many are “caught between state and community,” and that, “finding the right pathway to governance is not easy in such circumstances” (Hyden 2006: 18). Indeed, the crux of reconciling informal with formal institutions is oft-evoked, but rarely explored.

Given this crucial yet understudied, and indeed poorly understood dimension to the conundrum of poverty and human development – combined with an acute desire by international actors to develop more impactful, pro-poor development programming – empirical research is essential to informing the current policy debates, as well as critical for addressing a key, overlooked, knowledge gap in our understanding of the persistence of poverty and poor human development at the local level. At the same time, a thorough examination of local-level political dynamics also provides important insights into local perceptions of, and/or active resistance to, the state – adding nuance to what “state

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60 Or what some might label “sub-state fragility.”
fragility” means in rural communities, with implications for development outcomes nationally.

This project is designed in order to address these specific knowledge gaps and begins here by first reviewing the vast array of literature that considers governance, local governance, and state-society relations – tying them to questions of development whenever possible – before isolating the most resonant findings and situating this project amongst previous contributions. I ultimately draw most from literature, written principally as a critique of post-conflict peacebuilding operations, that questions the preeminence of the unrivaled state as the most viable, durable, and legitimate actor in development governance. While this project does not go so far as to argue for a “post-Westphalian” conception of development, discussed below, it does arrange the state horizontally alongside other actors – including informal, non-state actors like indigenous leaders, church leaders and local government officials – as only one element constituting local development governance, or the process through which key decisions are made and implemented. The state’s influence, authority and local legitimacy, from this perspective, can vary, as will the influence of more locally situated actors. However, the agency of local actors, increasingly noted as influencing crime and violence in different contexts, is still limited with respect to human development. In order to analyze the literature efficiently, I have organized the following review of scholarly contributions along three dimensions – from state-centric schools of thought to state-society relations literature, and finally, “society-centric” orientations.

61 From semi-formalized community policing efforts in Jamaica, supported by USAID, to ad-hoc civil-defense brigades in southern Mexico tackling drug violence, community members have been increasingly cited as previously overlooked, but important, variables in influencing crime and violence at the community level. This is increasingly reflected in scholarly literature as well, discussed in more detail below.
2.1 State Centric Theories

2.1.1 State Strength, Weakness and Development: State Actors Rule

A contemporary understanding of statebuilding among scholars and practitioners in the peacebuilding and development field is most often in reference to the phenomenon of “failed,” “fragile” or “vulnerable” states. These states, it is argued, have either been dismantled or otherwise ravaged by civil conflict to a degree that their internal capacity to conduct essential operations like collect taxes, or deliver even basic services – including, especially, the provision of physical security – is undermined (Ghani, Lockhart and Carnahan 2005). The diminished capacity of fragile states erodes the legitimacy of state actors, instigating a negative cycle that, unless reversed, reinforces fragility (OECD 2010). In the aftermath of civil conflict, therefore, it has been increasingly accepted that “statebuilding” is needed to complement otherwise minimal peacekeeping interventions in order to establish a more sustainable peace, foster long-term development, and to construct lasting institutions that help consolidate the central government’s popular legitimacy.62

Thus despite direct challenges, the conventional wisdom surrounding development (and even more specifically post-conflict reconstruction, development and peacebuilding) remains a push to (re)constitute a viable “Weberian” state. In essence, according to Max Weber, a modern state is a “political organization … [that] successfully claims a monopoly over the legitimate physical coercion necessary for the implementation of its laws and decrees” (as quoted in Kalberg 2005: 222). Though Weber, himself, never

62 These ideas are evident, for example, in hen Secretary General Boutros-Ghali’s Agenda for Peace (1992) which first evoked the term “peacebuilding,” to more recent calls for multidimensional peacebuilding and “whole of government” approaches to state fragility (Patrick and Brown 2007)
ascribed to his *ideal-type* of a modern nation-state any normative implications, it has been taken by contemporary international agencies, and bi-lateral donors/advisors, to be the desired endpoint for which to strive.

Specifically, a capable, or “strong” state will, apart from monopolizing violence, cultivate an efficient public administration that “discharges official business precisely, unambiguously, continuously, and with as much speed as possible” (Ibid: 199). The “technical superiority” of a rational, legal-formal state apparatus facilitates the functioning of the free-market economy, and crucially, conveys authority and, ultimately, legitimacy.

Weber’s conception of the modern state also implies that the state – including “its laws, statutes and legal procedures – possesses *autonomy*, despite the perpetual influences exercised upon it by arrays of groupings with economic interests” (Ibid: 223, emphasis added). This also implies that public and private spheres are mutually exclusive and distinct: “States are embedded in society and can shape social relations in ways that are supportive of state rule,” notes the OECD (2010), “but they are separated through a relatively clear differentiation between the public domain of the state and the private domain of the market, family and civil society, with different rules applying to each” (2010: 17). Theda Skocpol (1979) and Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol (1985) defend the necessity of studying the state as a critical, autonomous actor in social science analysis, noting that, “the state properly conceived is no mere arena in which socioeconomic struggles are fought out. It is, rather, a set of administrative, policing and military organizations headed, and more or less well coordinated by, an executive authority” (1979: 12). These attributes – including the conception of the state as an
autonomous actor with robust agency, coupled with an increased demand by donors and donor policy for the delivery of basic services throughout the state’s territory (Milliken and Krause 2002) – make the (re)construction of the state an essential component of development programming – whether economic, industrial, human, or social.

A focus on state capacity stemming from a Weberian concept of the state also requires an analysis of rule of law and the use of state force to guarantee citizen security and promote development. Either high rates of criminal violence, as we see in Guatemala, or non-state actor use of violence, inherently reflects diminished state capacity, which necessarily undermines state legitimacy. This leaves some observers to default to what others call a “security first” perspective of statebuilding and development – whereby, under conditions of state fragility, “statebuilders can secure a social order simply by establishing a coercive presence within a fragile state that can protect people, defend property and adjudicate disputes” (Lake 2010: 40). In fact, though Robert Rotberg argues that state “strength” and “weakness” can be measured by a state’s ability to provide crucial “political goods” across a range of dimensions,63 no political good “is as critical as the supply of security, especially human security…The state’s prime function is to provide that political good of security” (2003: 3).

Ghani, Lockhart and Carnahan (2005), who concern themselves principally with aid and development, wholeheartedly embrace the most basic tenets of Weberian-based statebuilding, including their implications for citizen security, noting that “the ultimate marker (of state fragility) is a loss of the legitimate use of violence by the state and the

63 These include *inter alia* how states: “organize and channel the interests of their people, often but not exclusively in furtherance of national goals and values. They buffer or manipulate external forces and influences, champion the local or particular concerns of their adherents, and mediate between the constraints and challenges of the international arena and the dynamism of their own internal economic, political, and social realities” (2003: 2).
emergence of armed groups that through recourse to violence openly mock the authority of the state and gain control of various areas of the country” (2005: 1).  

Slightly more nuanced interpretations understand statebuilding outcomes as the interconnection between state capacity in the realms of rule of law, public finance and security, and the legitimacy of the state (which, in a circular fashion, depends in turn on the capacity to adequately provide the above services) (Call with Wyeth 2008). From this perspective, however, legitimacy varies only in accordance with the ability of the state to effectively deliver on a range of public and “political” goods, including, more recently, the provision of “legitimate representation” and “wealth and welfare” (Milliken and Krause 2002: 754). Indeed from this perspective, the Guatemala statebuilding project scores quite poorly, which is confirmed by quantitative indicators of state capacity.  

Capacity, however, is but one attribute of the “developmental state” concept of statebuilding – a dimension of statebuilding in which Guatemala also scores poorly. Political will, is also essential. The developmental state and its state apparatus, most obviously embodied by Japan (Johnson 1982), first, and later the East Asian “Tiger” countries before enacting liberal reforms, marshals resources and coordinates finance in order to develop a competitive industrial base. It also marries industrial development and employment growth with human capital investments in education and job training (Leftwich 1994, Onis 1991, Evans 1995, Woo-Cummings 1999). The developmental

64 In the most dire circumstances, the conventional wisdom of statebuilding as presented thus far motivates some scholars to defend what they perceive to be the significant benefits, if temporary, of the most overt forms of external assistance including “neotrusteeships” (Fearon and Laitin 2004) and a “shared sovereignty” (Krasner 2004) of failing states, in order to provide both the security and capacity of state institutions during what are imagined to be temporary episodes of state weakness.

state in any sense – between an economic oligarchy, demonstrated unwillingness to pass land or economic reforms and a violent social cleavage – is utterly absent in Guatemala, and major source of the country’s ongoing development failures (Schneider 2012).

Despite minor amendments, however, statebuilding for development continues to hinge on assumptions that conflate state capacity with legitimacy and citizen security. A narrow conception of the Weberian state, in fact, continues to dominate policymaking and practice. From the DRC, where the UN continues to strengthen the offensive capabilities of regional peacekeepers while explicitly calling on the government to reform its security sector for development purposes,\(^\text{66}\) to Guatemala, where the current government has invested heavily in armament and vehicles for its police force, and military helicopters for drug interdiction, state security remains at the center of development policy, and state capacity the telos.\(^\text{67}\)

2.1.2 Decentralization and Development: The State Goes Local

Another important element of statebuilding concerns institutional and state design, or “organizational arrangements.” For example, “whereas capacity refers to the ability of the police or the government’s tax collectors to discharge their responsibilities, state design refers to where and how these state powers are allocated or arranged” (Call with Wyeth 2008: 9). This has special resonance in Guatemala, where, as in much of Latin America,


\(^{67}\) UNSC resolution 2098 created the “force intervention brigade” for DRC in the most recent effort to increase the offensive capabilities of peacekeeping forces there, and to encourage security sector reform by state forces. Language in the resolution directly links these efforts to long-term human development. Similarly, Guatemala’s recent state purchases of arms (see: [http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/guatemala-to-invest-$28-million-arming-national-police](http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/guatemala-to-invest-$28-million-arming-national-police)) and vehicles (see: [http://www.centralamericadata.com/en/article/home/Guatemala_Announces_Purchase_of_700_Police_Cars](http://www.centralamericadata.com/en/article/home/Guatemala_Announces_Purchase_of_700_Police_Cars)) is at the core of its country’s development policy.
strong “centralist” systems of state authority have been increasingly decentralized, either in hopes of perceived fiscal efficiency, or more effective democratic governance (Brink-Halloran 2009, Escobar-Lemmon 2001, Torres-Rivas and Cuesta 2007).

Decentralization, in fact, has been as fundamental to the global contemporary development paradigm as free-market reforms or secular-democratization, with it now having been implemented in a diverse array of countries simultaneously throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Badhan and Mookherjee 2006, Manor 1999, Brosio 2000). Decentralization’s contemporary roots are in public economic thinking and fiscal federalism literature, which theorizes public goods being distributed more efficiently based on comparative social welfare functions, or the diverging needs of citizens from different sub-regions. From a democracy-building and fragile-state perspective, decentralization should additionally “promote a sense of autonomy in citizens, enhance social order by promoting the legitimacy of the state, and limit pressures for separatism by diverse regions or ethnic groups” (Badhan and Mookherjee 2006: 4).

With respect to human development policy, specifically, strengthening local governance is at the cornerstone of UNDP practice because “it enhances people’s

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69 Arguments in favor of devolving power to subnational authorities can be found as early as Montesquieu’s The Spirit of the Laws (1748) and The Federalist Papers (Madison, Hamilton, and Jay 1788).

70 This includes the seminal work of Tiebout (1956), which models fully-informed agents with heterogeneous tastes assessing variations in public good provisions between communities. Subsequent work building on Tiebout includes Oates (1972, 1985), Elinor Ostrom and co-authors (Ostrom and Whitaker 1973, 1974; Ostrom, Schroeder and Wynne 1993), and Dowding and John (1994).

71 In this paper, strengthening “local governance” can be both an explicit goal of decentralization, or an independent goal, for the purposes discussed above. These ideas are discussed concurrently in this section.
capabilities to participate in decision-making” and is “instrumentally significant because of the contribution improved local governance can make to service delivery and standards of living” (UNDP 2010: vii, UN Millennium Project 2005). This link between human development and decentralization has been supported by empirical studies as well. Habibi et al. (2003) explain improvements in infant mortality rates and educational retention with devolution of power to Argentine provinces. Shankar and Shaw (2003) observe a decrease in regional inequality across 26 countries after decentralization allowed for increased political competition. Johnson, Deshinkgar and Start (2005) find evidence that regional decentralization efforts in India empowered the local poor through specific programs including rice subsidies and micro-credit.

Jean Paul Faguet (2012) builds on over a decade’s work in Bolivia in his especially thorough analysis of decentralization there. Faguet utilizes an econometric analysis, combined with in-country, qualitative case studies in order to compare across Bolivian communities after the implementation of dramatic decentralization reforms in 1994. His findings are nuanced (discussed more below), but demonstrate a dramatic difference in the nature of government spending after decentralization, including a “massive shift of resources in favor of smaller, poorer districts” (2012: 25). He also finds that, following the landmark reform, “local governments’ investment decisions were far more responsive to local needs than central government’s had been before” (2012: 45). Numerous other studies find a positive relationship between decentralization and varied outcomes including pro-poor and democratic governance.72

72 These include Parker’s (1995) examination of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, Rowland’s (2001) and Blair’s (2000) documentation of improvements in democratic governance after decentralization in Bolivia, Honduras, India, Mali Mexico, the Philippines and Ukraine. Campbell (2001) goes so far as to argue that
Much of the literature is critical of decentralization’s ability to affect desired outcomes, however. Local communities, for instance, need to meet basic prerequisites in order for decentralization to benefit the poor. These include a “well-educated, politically aware citizenry,” an absence of high inequality, “law and order” and the presence of both formal (constitutional) and informal (civil society) oversight mechanisms that prevent excessive advantage accruing to select electoral candidates (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006: 9, Olowu and Wunsch 2004) – yet these criteria are rarely met at the local level in developing countries (Saito 2008). Moreover, in the absence of any one of these conditions, “the outcome of decentralization can be inferior to that of corrupt and inefficient central bureaucracy” (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006: 9, original emphasis). Francis and James (2003) argue that decentralization in Uganda facilitated elite capture rather than responsive governance. Porter (2002) argues much the same for sub-Saharan Africa more broadly. Several authors have argued that a lack of human capital and technical capacity, along with local conditions including inequality, facilitate such elite capture after decentralization (Crook and Sverrisson 1999, Smith 1985, Montero and Samuels 2004). Thus even within decentralization literature, which does not fundamentally challenge the authority, nor conception, of state actors as the principal agents affecting development, the influence of local, informal dynamics on outcomes, diverging from their theoretical script, emerges.

Faguet (2012), who as noted above demonstrates a positive relationship between decentralization and local pro-development expenditures, generally, also observes how decentralization throughout Latin America has revolutionized local governance, resulting in increased political participation and more capable local leadership.
local actors and political grievances can negatively influence governance in individual municipalities. Specifically, based on extensive field work in two different communities, he puts forth a theory of local governance distinguishing between “good” and “bad” cases of local governance after decentralization, which he attributes to the quality and vibrancy of each the local economy, local politics and local civil society. These factors are in part influenced by historical trajectories and geography as well.

By explicitly demonstrating diverse outcomes across different Bolivian municipalities from a single, national policy, Faguet raises (and indeed, entertains) the possibility that local political dynamics affect national outcomes. He argues, in fact, that “the ‘outputs’ of decentralization within any given country are largely determined by local-level political and institutional dynamics,” and that decentralization “sets into motion a substantial number of largely independent processes” (2012: 200). His conclusions from this, however, are unsurprising, and even tautological: that in essence good outcomes are the result of good local conditions, and that bad outcomes result from bad governance.

Faguet’s study is nevertheless an important reference point for this paper, given its explicit acknowledgement of how local political dynamics influence centrally directed initiatives, and by acknowledging state limitations at the local level. The project described in this dissertation, however, differs from Faguet’s in important ways:

First, where Faguet compares two very different communities, and subsequently finds very different outcomes, the influence of potentially unobserved variables is not explained, nor explored. This dissertation explicitly compares across similar communities to more rigorously control for endogeneity. Second, whereas Faguet’s econometric analysis uses local spending as its dependent variable, comparing the nature of spending
before and after decentralization, this project relies instead on development indicators themselves, or those reflecting the well-being of citizens – given skepticism of both spending statistics themselves, and the indirect, sometimes erroneous, conflation of money-spent with real development outcomes. Faguet’s insistence, however, that “within a given country, some local governments are more responsive or effective than others,” and that we lack a robust theoretical explanation for these differences (2012: 200), provides one justification for the work pursued in this study.

To summarize thus far, both development theory and policy remain rooted in the need to (re)construct strong, viable states – or those that most efficiently deliver basic resources and provide security and safe environments for its citizenry. Even decentralization is less a critique of the state capacity notion per se, but instead extends the reach, territorial penetration and predominance of the central state, crowding out the influence and legitimacy of non-state actors, if in theory responding to the needs of local citizens more efficiently.

Indeed, states do matter for development, and Guatemala’s state apparatus is in need of reform, but scholars have begun to question both the theoretical and practical implications of a Weberian state for development – under the context of globalization on the one hand, but also given the persistence, durability and influence of non-state actors – from organized criminal networks to tribal leaders – in diverse settings. The notion that states can be outmaneuvered by local actors was hinted at above, in literature that nevertheless conceptualizes the state as an autonomous agent with direct influence over sub-national outcomes. The following literature challenges this conception more profoundly, with important implications for the research described in this paper.
2.2 State-Society Relations

Migdal, Kohli and Shue (1994) explore the nature of state-society relations explicitly, arguing that local vectors of domination, and local conditions – whether religious, illicit, or violent – shape the state as much as the state shapes society. They underscore both the mutually constitutive component of state-society relations and introduce the key elements of time and history in the statebuilding process. In demonstrating how social forces can act upon the state, *communities and individuals are also assigned agency*, with which they can influence outcomes.

2.2.1 Bringing State-Society Back In: Influencing State Outcomes From Elites to Villages

The state, in this depiction, is neither a black box, nor the autonomous Skocpolian institution that coerces or redistributes resources unilaterally. Instead, states grapple with diverse social forces inconsistently while they attempt to establish authority and domination. State-society relations, according to Migdal, Kohli and Shue (1994), fall somewhere between two extreme ideal types – total domination by the state on one end of a spectrum, to “disengagement,” or when the state altogether fails to penetrate local social forces and civil society.

Scholars have since documented how complicated state-society relations operate empirically. Kenneth Menkhaus, for example, describes “hinterland” state failure, or the phenomenon of “ungoverned” peripheral regions that a strong central authority might intentionally neglect for fear of the political cost of imposition (Menkhaus 2010). Elsewhere, Menkhaus (2008) describes a “mediated state” in northern Kenya, where peace and security was informally (but with Nairobi’s blessings) sub-contracted to a local...
women’s organization that had previously brokered a cease-fire between warring clans. The notion that the state might informally devolve power to non-state actors is further substantiated by Acemoglu, Santos and Robinson (2012), who observe an electoral symbiosis between political parties and paramilitaries in Colombia, whereby preferential policies are targeted at paramilitaries in hopes that they will help deliver votes from their controlled territory.

In a post-conflict statebuilding context, Zürcher et al. (2012) demonstrate the limitations of externally-led democratization efforts. The extent of a transition to democracy, these authors argue, is less about outside expenditures and capacity-building, but hinges instead on the in-country “demand for democracy” among local political actors and elites. Though stopping short of calling for “local ownership” as much development literature ambiguously demands, the authors nevertheless demonstrate that local demands, and context, can overwhelm the resources and programming of external interventionists. Other scholars have repeatedly argued that the intrusive nature of externally-programmed statebuilding discredits local officials, undermines development, and inhibits more legitimate outcomes (Chopra 2002).

State-society relations have been conceptualized altogether differently, however – from North et al.’s (2007) “limited access orders” to DiJohn and Putzel’s “political settlements,” which in essence depict the state not as an autonomous and largely unrivaled actor, but rather “founded on a historically determined balance of power between contending interests” (2009:14). DiJohn and Putzel, in fact, explain stark differences in the developmental trajectories of Costa Rica and Guatemala since 1948, including their contemporary welfare and tax bases, based on political settlements – in
Costa Rica between a revolutionary political party and a newly empowered countryside which disbanded an oligarchic elite, versus an alliance of landed elites in Guatemala which continues to hamstring the state’s taxing powers and inhibit a social welfare policy (Schneider 2012).

Development, and even state fragility itself, from this conceptualization of statebuilding, depends on the quality and durability of foundational “elite bargains.” These underpin political settlements and are frequently “durable and adaptable to challenges over time, allowing the state to establish and maintain control over coercive power, administrative authority and popular allegiance (e.g., state resilience)” (Ibid: 15). Additional research suggests that when bargains are “inclusive of the major contending elites and protect their shared economic interests,” they have the best chance to endure over time (Wood 2000, Acemoglu et al 2003). These broad trends that determine statebuilding trends regionally, or sectorally, however, do not address the micro-variations under investigation in this study.

Another conception of state-society relations also characterizes statebuilding and the institutions that result as being highly tense political processes. Catherine Boone (2003), for example, employs a choice-theoretic model in rural Africa in order to explain institutional choice, or “variation in state-making patterns” (2003:20). Though Boone does not explicitly refer to elite bargains, she does underscore the role of local elites, and the legitimacy of communal hierarchy, as being key determinants in what explains institutional outcomes. Specifically, “the extent of rural social hierarchy determines rural elites’ bargaining power vis-à-vis the state: the more the hierarchy, the greater the rural elite’s bargaining power” (Ibid: 23). In addition, greater dependence upon the state (or
the degree of economic autonomy of said rural elites) “creates structural conditions conducive to collaboration between rural elites and the center” (Ibid). These factors in combination, according to Boone, help explain institutional outcomes across time and space, from power-sharing at the local level to “usurpation,” “administrative occupation” or “non-incorporation” (Ibid: 32-33).

For the purposes of this paper, Boone’s focus on formal and informal relations between governmental and non-governmental entities is essential. Though her work, along with that of DiJohn and Putzel’s, focuses squarely on the role of elites, she also recognizes more generally that “decisive struggles take place within rural society, and between rural interests and the state.” Borrowing from Mahmood Mandami (1996), she also argues that the state-society approach has overlooked political tensions within the countryside, that state authority depends upon everyday village politics or uneven distributions of power within rural society, and that previous assumptions of state autonomy have overestimated the capacity of outsiders to shape local politics (Boone 2003: 32). Boone strives to explain variations in state-society relations across space in Africa, but she also helps underscore the value and necessity of studying community-level politics in order to understand national-level developments, while beginning to blur the otherwise neat distinction between state and society.

2.2.2 Governance and Post-Westphalian Development

Increasingly, in fact, scholars are questioning both the conception of the modern state as a “democratic and capitalist state governed by the rule of law” on both normative and analytical grounds (Risse 2011, Migdal and Shlichte 2005). Thomas Risse, for example, argues that “such conceptualizations of statehood … obscure what we consider the most
relevant research question: Who governs for whom, and how are governance services provided under conditions of weak statehood? (Risse 2011: 4). Indeed, reconceptualizing the *problematique* as one of *governance* under conditions of “limited statehood,”73 versus state fragility or state failure, *per se*, is more analytically fruitful at the local level, in particular, where “various combinations of state and nonstate actors ‘govern’ in areas of limited statehood” (Ibid: 11). This has significant implications with respect to development studies given that projects and resource delivery is ultimately tested at the village level. The concept of limited statehood, and the governance thereof, has particular relevance to this study and its cases under investigation.

Governance, or the “interactive processes of multi-stakeholders (including government) in order to resolve common problems” (Saito 2008: 6), acknowledges, but otherwise de-emphasizes the exclusive role of the state in coordinating or producing binding rules, or collective goods – the “governance without government” conception of coordination and decision-making (Risse 2011: 9).74

A “governance approach” thus discards the dichotomous depiction of strictly state and society, or public and private, incorporating into the analysis, instead, the influence of “different constituent members including public, private, and civil organizations in order to resolve common political, economic and social issues” (Saito 2003: 6, Risse 2011, Ladwig et al. 2007). This approach also underscores the interactive *processes*

73 By Risse’s definition: “While areas of limited statehood still belong to internationally recognized states…, it is their domestic sovereignty that is severely circumscribed. Areas of limited statehood concern those parts of a country in which central authorities lack the ability to implement and enforce rules and decisions…” (Risse 2011: 4).

74 Though Risse rightly notes that governance can, even under conditions of limited statehood, include “steering by the state” (“governance by government”) and governance “via cooperative networks of public and private actors” (“governance with government”) (2011: 7). I am intentionally highlighting how a “governance approach” opens the door for analyzing the role of a wider set of actors, especially at the community, or village, level.
between stakeholders – which include semi-formal and informal actors, as well, as this study demonstrates – that constitute decisionmaking.

A governance approach can cause analytical problems, however. First, as Risse (2011) points out, and as is already suggested above, implicit assumptions of a “public-private” distinction are less meaningful under conditions of limited statehood, where non-state actors, for example, can simultaneously provide public services and undermine security. Risse calls on researchers, therefore, to “investigate empirically who serves as a governance actor – irrespective of a formal position in the political system or in society” (2011: 15). This provides yet additional justification for the empirically-based investigation this study pursues.

Second, a “governance approach” under conditions of limited statehood assumes that governance actors are working for the collective good, when frequently public services are transformed into club or private goods, or steered towards certain groups – ethnic, tribal, religious, or for vote buying in the cases detailed below in this project – while others are excluded. Risse argues that the more inclusive the social group for which goods are provided, the more that this is “governance” and not “racketeering” (Chojnacki and Branovic 2007, 2011). By isolating, in this paper, how communities and governance actors respond to a well-documented and pressing public need – high local rates of chronic hunger, poor schooling and poor basic health services in this case – this project again accounts for this potential conceptual challenge.

Finally, Risse frets that a governance approach overlooks the fact that, under condition of limited statehood as in Guatemala, non-state actors frequently substitute for

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Risse uses the example of Hamas.
government’s absence – by providing security or vaccines, etc. – rather than compliment for them under a consolidated state’s “shadow of hierarchy” (or the implicit threat of regulation and sanction by a strong, capable state, which is mostly absent under conditions of limited statehood). Risse’s answer is to suspect that a “functional equivalent” of the shadow of hierarchy – from international norms, legal standards and even international or weak state presence – helps explain why we nevertheless see governance in areas of limited statehood.

In the case studies detailed below, however, such factors are largely absent at the village level, and indeed the state’s coercive influence is minimal. Though state offices and clinics exist in each community, there is virtually no international presence that might constitute a functional equivalent of the “shadow of hierarchy.” This makes the following case studies yet more important, as exploring the scope and nature of governance without such a “shadow of hierarchy” should thus augment our analytical insights into the influence of non-state and informal actors on local governance for development.

This section strongly suggests that “governance with a small-g” exists in remote territories where state influence is lacking. In contrast to an assumption of anarchy in conventional statebuilding wisdom, with clear implications for development, local communities can instead actively “forge systems of security, law, deterrence of crime, conflict management and mutual support” (Menkhaus 2010: 182-183). Local norms, customs, perceptions and history can mandate outcomes at the local level that frequently resist, or otherwise complicate technical statebuilding “formulae.”
This realization has lead certain scholars to advocate for a yet broader understanding of the plurality of institutions, communities and overlapping perceptions of authority and legitimacy that complicate statebuilding as conventionally conceived (Albrecht et al. 2011). The following section builds on Risse, Saito and the governance approach, and explores how “society-centric” literature informs this study, before the paper turns specifically to the puzzle under investigation.

2.3 Society-Centric Perspectives on Development: Agency, Resistance, Social Cohesion and Outcomes

Departing from a post-Westphalian concept of statehood, which questions the autonomy of states in local contexts, a diverse set of literature has increasingly refocused the level of analysis to social groups, communities and even households and individuals.

Burris, Drahos and Shearing (2004), for example, prefer an analysis of governance “networks” that better captures the plurality of actors, variety of mechanisms, and temporal dynamism in determining governance outcomes:

“The venerable and conveniently simple notion that governance is the province of the independent state and its subdivisions operating through formally established, universal and reasonably stable legal modes is plainly insufficient to deal with the practical and conceptual tasks associated with good governance” (2004: 3).

“Nodes” of governance are entities where ways of thinking about governance (“mentalities”), methods (“technologies”), resources and structure coalesce to form a somewhat unavoidable conduit through which governance is conducted.

“It need not be a formally recognized or legally constituted entity,” the authors note, but it must have enough durability and structure to channel resources, mentalities and
technologies and effect outcomes. Through diverse cases studies,\textsuperscript{76} the authors contend that nodal governance better explains outcomes than top-down legal-formal regulation, state coercion, or market efficiency. Governance can therefore take place separately from the state, though at times interacting with the state as noted above, or by channeling certain state resources through a \textit{more powerful node}. Nodal governance helps underscore the complexity of interactions and actors that produce governance outcomes, including at the local level. But the variability of capacity, power and influence that nodes exhibit over time and space makes using “nodal governance” as a theoretical explanation rather difficult.

A failure to account for the role and influence of non-state and customary actors in post-conflict statebuilding, specifically, according to Albrecht et al. (2011), will continue to result in sub-optimal (or plain broken) state-legal punitive justice systems, fail to account for local needs and desires, privilege a normative understanding of the unitary, rational state (coupled with an assumption that it will dominate all other political orders), and reinforce a dichotomous understanding of the “right” and “true” state, versus the “non-state” (Ibid: 14). This perspective does not disabuse the importance of the state. Instead, “the challenge is to substitute the notion of statebuilding in the narrow sense of building the capacity of state institutions and of centralizing authority in one single unit with a more flexible concept that can encompass the pluralism of local norms and institutions (Ibid). As applied to Guatemala, Albrecht et al.’s arguments would account for at least some of the persistent levels of crime, impunity, poverty and hunger in post-

\textsuperscript{76} One being the agreement on the WTO’s Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the other a community level peace committee in South Africa.
war Guatemala, 18 years after the Comprehensive Peace Accords, and despite surprisingly robust foreign assistance and aid flows.

Another emerging strand of literature, formed mostly as a critique of the “liberal peace” and modern peacebuilding and post-conflict statebuilding operations, explores the notion of “hybridity.” Hybridity in political science is borrowed from anthropology, where scholars are attempting to understand how different elements of globalization impact diverse, non-Western communities (Kraidy 2005, Hutnyk 1997, Bhaba 1994). In political science, a “hybrid peace” and “hybrid political orders” incorporate elements of customary and indigenous practice and understanding, and are both routine (if unanticipated) outcomes of even large-footprint external peacebuilding operations (Clements et al. 2007; Mac Ginty 2008, 2010), and preferable outcomes (Richmond 2010, Pugh 2006). Routine – because as already observed – history, local agency, and understanding is not passively paved over by liberal statebuilding or centrally-located, standardized legal-formalism; preferable – because liberalism has failed to deliver adequate peace and development, and because the inclusion of local “rights, needs, customs and kinships” brings with it the potential to “enable political mobilization to deal with everyday issues (and) to build representative institutions and locally-resonant forms of statehood” (Richmond 2010: 668-669). In the best cases, hybridity is an uncontested order of governance that blends locally resonant forms of traditional leadership (chiefs for example), with formal-legal systems of representation and legislation that provides sustainability and durability (Brown 2006, Boege et al. 2008).

77 See footnotes 6 and 7.

78 See footnotes 11 and 12.
Whether scrutinizing the relationship between external statebuilders and the “liberal peace,” or the plurality of local actors and their overlapping customs, traditions and power, hybridity considers the degree and capacity to which local actors can resist, control, or adapt to exogenous statebuilding projects and the emerging central (formal) authority that is being constructed. This is both context-specific, and depends in part on the degree to which the autonomy of local agents survived civil conflict – an important consideration for this project as it investigates governance in Guatemalan communities with varying experiences during the civil war (Mac Ginty 2010: 402).

The “institutional plurality” and “hybridity” revisions of modern statebuilding after civil conflict, therefore, refer implicitly to qualitative differences in state-society relations, but crucially, endow local actors (at the village-level) with greater levels of agency than other conceptions of state-society relations, even as they endure tremendous pressure to conform and embrace alien forms of authority and regulation.

The customs, traditions, and locally-based understandings of authority and legitimacy can, even unintentionally, thwart the most well-funded and well-implemented, internationally-assisted statebuilding projects from achieving their objectives of establishing a unitary state that dominates politics and security throughout its territory.

It was hybridity literature that first informed this project in its early stages, in fact, because of its thorough re-thinking of state-society relations, and its emphasis on “the local.” Hybridity, however, remains largely theoretically-inspired – borrowing especially from critical theory in order to deconstruct the motives of Western powers in peace operations, as well as a perceived over-reliance on both market and electoral reforms for stability in post-conflict states (Pugh 2010). As illustrated above, hybridity literature is
also principally concerned with the interaction between national and international actors, reducing differences between regions or communities to a rather superficial discussion of the “everyday” political practices across post-conflict countries like Kosovo, or East Timor for example, as a whole (Richmond 2010). Moreover, while hybridity focuses on peacebuilding, and the quest for an “emancipatory” rather than liberal peace, it says little about human development, and improving the living conditions of the world’s poorest – a trait curiously in keeping with the wider “post-conflict reconstruction and development” literature that frequently bundles “post-conflict reconstruction” with “development,” but with little substantive follow-through on the development dimension of post-conflict society. Indeed, as seen above, the literature, and empirics, has steadily complicated the notion of a unitary state in complex settings, but curiously, only with respect to peace and conflict, with virtually no connection between this emerging consensus and its implications for sustainable human development.

This paper takes from hybridity the notion that local customs, and resistance to state encroachment, can be incredibly durable, and that the modern state will frequently lack credibility and authority in a village context where competing values persist.

The durability of resistance is taken up by other scholars not bound by the goals of hybridity literature specifically. James C. Scott (2000), for instance, has long examined why modern states have consistently failed, historically, in some of their most strategic plans to simplify, codify and impose order on otherwise complex natural and civic ecologies. Specifically, when state efforts at “legibility” combine with high-modernist ideology, an authoritarian state and a “prostrate” civil society, hegemonic social ordering projects – from agricultural projects to village resettlements – are doomed to failure,
largely because they “exclude the necessary role of local knowledge and know-how” (2000: 5).

In the context of modern Guatemala, in many respects Scott’s four conditions remain intact! Between its conscious effort to dam northern rivers, sell controversial mining rights and subsidize heart of palm plantations, the Guatemalan state continues to commodify natural resources that local indigenous groups find sacred. Guatemala’s steadfast adherence to the most ardent laissez-faire social policies reflects the state’s ideological commitment to market economics. Guatemala, despite consolidation in terms of elections, remains semi-democratic at best. Finally, civil society, while symbolically robust, remains marginalized in the wider policymaking discourse. Moreover, the state’s values clash diametrically with the traditional values in many Mayan communities, explaining in part the gulf in trust that separates state and society.

In The Art of Not Being Governed, Scott (2009) convincingly argues that the historic “hill peoples” of Burma – long stigmatized as “primitive,” “backwards,” and “stateless” by the state itself – are in reality “‘barbarians’ by design.” “Most, if not all, the characteristics that appear to stigmatize hill peoples,” Scott writes, “… far from being the mark of primitives left behind by civilization, are better seen in a long view as adaptations designed to evade both state capture and state formation” (Scott 2009: 9). From this historical perspective, resistance to the state, or a fervent and entrenched distrust of state, is in fact the “real” and natural disposition of rural populations, whose culture and values clash diametrically with state goals of usurpation and order. Indeed even the subsistence farming and religious practices that characterize so many of the indigenous communities of Guatemala today are, according to this perspective, long-
standing and conscious practices – however discredited by the rhetoric of state authorities past and present (Lovell and Lutz 1996).

Alas, only recently has empirical work attempted to embrace these society-centric notions and tie them to development policy specifically. Contributors to Cammett and MacLean’s (2014) *The Politics of Non-State Social Welfare*, collectively catalogue the diversity of actors, and the myriad contexts, in which non-state actors, from oil companies to terrorist organizations, provide health and other basic services. Their work, however insightful and crucial, does not examine the impact on well-being of individual populations, however, outside of a public policy-like considerations of equity. In *An Upside-down View of Governance*, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS 2010) argues in favor of a recasting of the analysis of state-centric governance for development, much in line with Risse’s views above, or what they call a “public authority” approach. “In short,” the report argues that, “‘public authority’ focuses on functions rather than on form, and is more neutral about the processes and actors involved – inside or outside the formal state, and across the public-private divide” (IDS 2010: 10).

Drawing from comparative work in Pakistan and India, a chapter dedicated to the affect of “Informal Local Governance Institutions” (ILGIs) on local development outcomes finds that ILGIs are “persistent and influential,” that they can provide goods and services, but also that they can “entrench the interests of dominant groups and perpetuate poverty” (IDS 2010: 51). ILGIs themselves vary in form and function – ranging from informal village councils to an elected officer of land-owning elites – and perform differently based on their historic origins, iterations, as well as their interactions with state actors (an observation substantiated in Guatemala by Klick 2013). More
generally, however, “their relations with the formal state are ambiguous, variable and often contested” (Ibid).

The Institute of Development Studies therefore embraces the Risse notion that diverse actors influence governance, with implications specifically for the well-being of citizens, but while also recognizing the potential diversity of local informal arrangements including potentially detrimental ones for the poor – dispensing with a tendency to over-romanticize the local while also further justifying the need for further research into the influence of ILGIs on development. As the report itself concludes: “The research moves the discussion away from the emotive issues associated with ‘traditional’ institutions, and offers a more neutral approach to thinking about the bewildering diversity of informal local governance” (Ibid).

Finally, acknowledging the local institutional and customary influence on governance underscores both the potential for variability in outcomes when formal rules confront different local contexts, and the necessity of compatibility between formal rules and informal institutions for development effectiveness (de Soysa and Jütting 2006). As de Soysa and Jütting observe, “the point here is that changing formal (macro- and micro-level) institutions that might be compatible with particular structural forms might yet not fit very well with informal institutions given underlying cultural factors that remain resistant to change” (2006: 5). Specifically, development may depend greatly “on how informal institutions moderate formal ones as they affect outcomes” (North 2005, as cited in de Soysa and Jütting 2006).

This notion has been converted into a typology of informal institutions by Helmke and Levitsky (2004), which depicts plausible outcomes from formal-informal institutional
interactions (see Figure 2.3.1). As Figure 2.3.1 indicates, informal institutions can augment the performance of formal institutions, as well as accommodate, substitute, or in the worst cases, “compete” with formal institutions.

![Typology of informal institutions]

This typology is taken from Helmke and Levitsky (2004: 728).

Figure 4. Helmke and Levitsky's (2004) Typology of Informal Institutions

As discussed in the Introduction, this project borrows the notion of competition and complementarity between informal and formal rules in order to frame the interaction between state and local forces at the community level. This notion is adapted in order to understand development outcomes.

Specifically, this project demonstrates that state-local complementarity – or when local-level institutions, both formal and informal, are able to cooperate with state actors in order to meaningfully distribute resources – is a crucial determinant in improving local human development outcomes.

2.4 Additional considerations – Political Culture, Trust and Geospatial approaches to development

Other literature does not fit neatly into the rubric of state or society-centric approaches to development, but are nevertheless relevant to the research question. This includes questions of political culture, trust and, finally, geospatial analyses.
2.4.1 Political Culture and Trust

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba ushered in the behavioral revolution with *The Civic Culture*, which endeavored to explain differences in levels of democracy and industrial development across countries with respect to the “degree to which cooperative interpersonal behavior” is valued (1963: 284). Almond and Verba were widely criticized for assuming that a supposed “culture,” based on rudimentary surveys, operated unidirectionally on institutions and politics (Pateman 1970, Barry 1978). Inglehart (1990) has since revised this position within political culture theory, allowing for the causal pathway to operate in both directions, however analytically unhelpful this might be (Johnson 2003). In contrast to what is under investigation in this study in Guatemala, political culture theory even in its most modern iterations uses sample surveys from which to draw conclusions about entire countries and prevailing attitudes. Raw data from culture surveys in Guatemala were unhelpful for this study, given the small samples from each community that were utilized to draw conclusions regarding the whole of Guatemala.

More directly related to this project, given its within-country comparisons, is Robert Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work* (1993). Putnam argues that varying levels of democratic performance across twenty different Italian regional governments is best explained by *social capital* – or the collective influence of civic values, local norms, and crucially, informal networks. The robustness of these networks relies on levels of interpersonal trust, which in turn, according to Putnam, lower transaction costs and “facilitate cooperation.” But, again, without a clear causal pathway connecting “broad

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79 Including the World Values Survey, for example.
social benefits” from a social practice, the value of trust as an explanatory value is undermined, and even lacks “intellectual merit” (Farrell 2009: 7). Moreover, social capital as a social science enterprise lacks definitional clarity and scope, too frequently “explaining-away” the otherwise unexplained (Fine 2010). Indeed as this study demonstrates as well, perverse forms of complementarity are also possible, breaking the overly-simplified notion that ‘all things good hang together.’

Trust, nevertheless, remains an important element of development literature, particularly with respect to industrial development (Burchell and Wilkinson 1996, Lane and Bachman 1997). Farrell (2009), after contrasting competing Italian industrial clusters and the Sicilian mafia, argues that “thicker” forms of trust grow out of a context of robust informal rules, which themselves proliferate in the absence of formal institutions. Others argue that such a tidy correlation between informal institutions and trust overlooks a more dynamic interplay between formal and informal institutions, and that “good” versus “bad” governance is a more appropriate starting point (Rothstein 2011, Rhodes 2011). As Rhodes notes (citing Rothstein 2011), “social trust and quality of government institutions ‘hang together’” (Rhodes 2011: 4).

A plausible argument could be made that, between the “good” and “bad” cases under examination in this study, either trust in local government or between state and local actors explains differences in development outcomes. But if, as Rothstein notes, trust is more the result of the interplay between informal rules and formal institutions, which ultimately result in either “good” or “bad” governance, we are no better equipped, analytically, to interpret what is happening in Guatemala. It remains unclear from where trust emerges, nor the sequential steps linking trust and development. In essence, each of
the communities investigated in this study operate under conditions of “bad governance” – with distrust in local government pervasive everywhere.\textsuperscript{80} Expectations, however, which are key component of trust, and the result of more robust informal institutions (Farrell 2009), might indeed help us understand the effect of emerging norms in certain, more “successful” communities. As is discussed later in this chapter and in Chapter Four, an indicator of “social cohesion” is included in the quantitative component, though the order of cause and effect remains uncertain.

2.4.2 Geospatial Analyses of Within-Country Development

In 1889, Charles Booth (1902) created a map depicting the relative prosperity of Victorian London by city block, color coding each block on a scale ranging from “vicious poverty” to “wealthy,” or the “servant keeping class.”\textsuperscript{81} But contemporary work on sub-national variation in development and its drivers is generally limited. Possibly the most ambitious effort has been conducted by Gennaiolo et al. (2011), who analyze a database of 1569 subnational regions spanning 110 countries. In a cross-regional analysis of geographic, institutional, cultural, and human capital determinants on regional development, the authors find that human capital, in particular education, is most associated with “regional development” – which is unfortunately reported as GDP per capita. Among their more interesting findings, the authors note that,

\textsuperscript{80} Or, there is a disconnect between social values and development outcomes. In Guatemala, raw data from the LAPOP survey revealed some very positive responses regarding local government, even in communities that demonstrate, according to my fieldwork, very bad governance and development outcomes. The results from each community are too few to make any reasonable conclusion, and are subsequently aggregated to yield a national-level “political culture” synopsis (which I find misleading, given the wide spatial variability in experiences across space in Guatemala).

\textsuperscript{81} See \url{http://booth.lse.ac.uk/static/a/4.html}
“We do not find that culture, as measured by ethnic heterogeneity or trust, explains regional differences. Nor do we find that institutions as measured by survey assessments of the business environment in the Enterprise Surveys help account for cross-regional differences within a country.”
(2011: 4)

While the results of this study are useful in underscoring the high returns on investment in human capital, they shed no additional light on how governance affects outcomes, nor why some communities within a sub-national region would, as we see within Guatemala, diverge. Moreover, as has already been discussed, income per capita is an inadequate proxy for development per se. Within equally poor sub-regions of Guatemala, certain communities have made striking improvements in health and education that would not be predicted by income.

Other examples of efforts to understand spatial variation in outcomes include Bollens’s studies of peacebuilding in urban environments (1999, 2007), though his results mostly result in cross-national comparisons in urban planning (between Spain and Bosnia) rather than the individual cities. Bollens (2007) nevertheless underscores how local governance is a crucial determinant of national outcomes. While cities, as key economic and cultural hubs, will be more essential to influencing national trends, Bollens’s argument that “challenges regarding identity, citizenship, and belonging need to be addressed and worked through most immediately at the local level,” and that, “our degree of progress at this grassroots level will either fortify or confine the ability to address these issues at broader geographies,” (2007:250) is an essential justification for this project.

Finally, and more recently still, work deriving from global mountain regions, frequently driven by geographers drawing explicit links between environmental
conditions and socio-economic well-being, have begun to influence development thinking. Examples include UNDP’s most recent human development report for Nepal, *Beyond Geography* (UNDP 2014), which explores the links between caste, isolation, environmental change and human development. Herman Kreutzman (2001) had already isolated mountain and highlands communities as requiring unique development indicators, and using Nepal again, demonstrates dramatic variation in human development between even mountainous regions there. Burken (2010) suggests that the resiliency of mountain communities, with a focus on those in Mexico, will depend on local institutions and their relative autonomy. Within-country spatial variation remains relatively underexplored then, but utilizing this approach provides important insight into how differing governance conditions influence development outcomes. Finally, it also complicates what are too frequently cultural and political generalizations of entire countries which, as this literature review demonstrates, are diverse, and whose sub-regions experience vastly different state-society relations and development outcomes.

2.5 Summary: New Directions for Local Governance and Development

This chapter highlights literature that challenges what has been the conventional wisdom behind post-conflict statebuilding and statebuilding-for-development: that human development requires “stronger” states with the capacity to provide security and coordinate basic service delivery. Beginning with decentralization literature, which otherwise adheres to the core concepts of a “state-centric” logic, both theoretical and empirically-grounded literature simultaneously justifies shifting the level of analysis from states and state institutions to village-level and informal (non-state) institutions, while
also underscoring the need for more empirically informed studies of governance, and specifically, how locally-based governance influences development outcomes.

That a state with the capacity to administer its basic functions efficiently, including raising sufficient revenues to supply the most basic public goods equitably, would be welcome – in Guatemala or in any post-conflict context – is not in question here. Instead, this paper challenges the premise that conventional state building is sufficient for development purposes. It also challenges the persistent notion, joining myriad literature already undermining it, that the state will be perceived uniformly across its territory. Implicit in statebuilding logic is an assumption that its “society” counterpart is monolithic, and in essence waiting to be governed for its betterment. As the above literature clearly demonstrates, the empirical reality of many communities, spread across the developing world, is that the state is a force of usurpation, extraction, and homogenization, whose values are anathema to local customs, and thus distrusted, and resisted.

“Society-centric” approaches bring us closer to understanding the persistence and empirical reality of limited statehood, as well as the breadth and depth of governance that occurs in the state’s absence. The process of governance can be messy, and involve a far greater number of stakeholders, or de facto governors that are arranged horizontally, rather than hierarchically, as predicted by legal-formal institutions. Indeed, the process itself might be governed by unwritten rules, which may themselves be in flux as political parties or state actors challenge local norms. This opens the door for a spatial variation in the form and function of local governance under, again, conditions of limited statehood.
But even society-centric literature is fraught with analytical gaps that limit its usefulness, particularly with respect to development studies.

First, much of society-centered literature consists of either individual cases – examples from Kenya, Somaliland or small island nations states, and individual communities within, most notably. Much of the rest consists mostly of theoretically-based work challenging the notions of the Weberian state. Finally, almost none of what this project labels society-centric literature, with the exception of the recent IDS report, examines development outcomes specifically. This is a glaring gap in development and local governance literatures – particularly given the policy world’s proclivity to co-join post conflict “reconstruction” with “development.”

Hybridity literature, in particular, which has done much to challenge standard conceptions of the “liberal peace” and its implications for local communities, fails to adequately capture community dynamics while all too frequently glorifying, and romanticizing, “the local” and its capacity for change. This paper embraces hybridity’s challenge to the key liberal pretenses of an otherwise helpless local citizenry in need of rescuing, and in ready acceptance of foreign, wide sweeping political and economic reforms. This paper also embraces the core hybridity tenet that communities resist these changes through daily, informal, and even invisible practices. But hybridity’s reverence for the local’s strength and resistance overlooks the social divisions, competition, and petty grievances that dominate local political dynamics in some communities under limited statehood. These dynamics have meaningful impacts on daily lives, and the prosperity of local people, but hybridity, along with much of state-society and society-centric literature, is incapable of processing this reality. Moreover, when human
development becomes the dependent variable in question, as is the case in this paper, hybridity’s starkly dichotomous state-local conception loses analytical value entirely.

This project therefore adds important empirical rigor to the exploration of local governance under conditions of limited statehood, including the role of informal actors, and crucially, how these factors influence the well-being and quality of life of citizens from community to community. The following section introduces how this study is organized in order to draw out its key findings.

### 2.6 Research Design and Guatemalan Case Studies

This project is designed in order to specifically investigate whether there is a causal relationship between the nature of village-level governance arrangements and both human development outcomes based on HDI scores as well as other development metrics including illiteracy, chronic hunger rates and changes in each over time. In order to do this, this project unfolds over three overlapping, complimentary stages. They are introduced below and then expounded upon in following chapters.

#### 2.6.1 Quantitative Dataset

The project begins with a quantitative overview of each of Guatemala’s 332 municipalities. When available, data has been compiled at the municipal level across a range of variables including descriptive variables (mean elevation, population, etc.) as well as variables reflecting the state of development at the municipal level (poverty and

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82 Data at the municipal level – which is the smallest administrative level for which data is ever reported – is reported inconsistently, and irregularly. For example, despite obtaining HDI scores for 2000 and 2005, it was not reported below the department level thereafter. National reports change with changing administrations and thus include different statistics over time. I obtained data from myriad national reports, UNDP country reports, and received the generous assistance of experts in Guatemala data and their sources from the Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Fiscales (the Central American Institute of Fiscal Studies, ICEFI) after meeting with them in Guatemala City (November 2013).
extreme poverty rates; chronic hunger from 2002 and 2008; infant mortality, illiteracy and homicide rates; and human development index scores as well as HDI scores disaggregated into their respective health and education components). The original dataset includes additional values from individual national reports on “unsatisfied basic needs” as additional development metrics.

This component also includes data for potential explanatory variables. These include an index score from 2009 representing “state density,” a binomial “electoral alignment” variable (where “1” reflects alignment in party affiliation between the local mayor and president – or Partido Patriota (Patriot Party) currently, and “0” reflects a discrepancy between local and national level party rule, based on the 2011 statewide elections. Other potential explanatory variables include a “conflict intensity” variable, which has to my knowledge never been calculated before at the municipal level. This score is the result of summing the total number of violent events – murders, tortures and kidnappings most notably – recorded in the landmark 1999 Guatemala, Memoria del Silencio report issued by the Historical Clarification Commission (CEH 1999) after the signing of the Peace Accords, for all 332 municipalities. This report is the most detailed account of specific violent events that occurred throughout the armed conflict, and identifies the nature of each event, the perpetrators (the army or guerillas for example), victims’ names if available, and the specific location of the event. This required many hours of diligent coding, but ultimately permits a more fine-grained analysis of “conflict intensity” at the municipality level. This is important because departmental trends suggest that, for example, Totonicapán was generally unaffected by the war, while Quiché was disproportionately, and negatively, impacted. Municipal level data, however, reveals a
more variegated pattern where some communities in Totonicapán indeed suffered above average levels of violence, mostly perpetrated by the state on civilians. Similarly, some communities in Quiché were left relatively unaffected directly. These outliers include some of the case study communities, so this data is critical for analysis.

Finally, from the 2012 Procurador de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights Ombudsman for Guatemala) annual report, the database records the number of “denunciations” per 100,000 citizens across each municipality. This variable, however crude, is the best and only option representing municipal levels of “social cohesion.” Despite several studies examining civil society in Guatemala (ICA/FLACSO 2006, NORAD 2008, Falise and Sanz-Corella 2009), there is no index of civil society at the local level. Stemming from fieldwork observations, however, the number of registered or operating NGOs does not correlate with social cohesion. Certain communities had many civil society actors, but they were severely curtailed in their scope of influence, while the community itself was increasingly divided between new and old religious orders as well as politics – discussed in more detail below. A hypothetical “civil society density” score therefore would not necessarily reflect social cohesion in any meaningful way.

Denunciations, at the same time, might reflect either a level of frustration with public officials and the police (and thus social discord) or the freedom/organization of individuals to protest (and thus a level of social cohesion). This component of the project operates under the assumption of the latter, or that a high level of denunciations on some level higher social cohesion.83

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83 I made this conceptual leap, for the purposes of interpreting my quantitative data, based on observations in Guatemala. For example, the well-documented and highly-organized community of Totonicapán registers much higher in denunciations (548) than surrounding communities, and even for rural communities throughout Guatemala. Chichicastenango, however, where local, relatively less organized
The variable that is not available for analysis in my quantitative component is the one explicitly representing the principle independent variable under investigation – or the complementarity between local, non-state and informal institutions with state actors – which would indeed be difficult to construct. Exploring and testing the strength of any relationship is instead reserved for the fieldwork described below. What the quantitative component does instead is underscore is the nature of the puzzle itself – the spatial variation in development and hunger across similar communities, and the independence of HDI and hunger from state density – while, crucially, justifying my case selection as well, as discussed in the Introduction.

2.6.2 Qualitative Comparative Analysis

With the six case study communities identified, it is then possible to begin the process of coding the presence or absence of theoretically-informed conditions, as well as outcomes, through a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).

QCA, as developed by Charles Ragin (1987), is intended to correct for some of the core concerns plaguing John Stuart Mill’s qualitative methods that remain the cornerstone of much social science research. In a sense, this project utilizes Mill’s method of difference by isolating similar communities (each rural, overwhelmingly Mayan, and poor) but which differ across the main dependent variable, or “human development.” I do this in order to control, as best as possible, for the macro-structural determinants of development – from access to basic resources including schools, public resources and airports (as might exist in Guatemala City for example) to prevailing indigenous groups have been in a volatile and highly public dispute with the mayor registered a scant 56 denunciations per capita. As is demonstrated later, denunciations are also inversely related to other crude metrics of social discord, like homicide rates for example.
industries (whether export-oriented palm production or light manufacturing, etc.) and even climate (all communities are considered “Western Highland” communities and reside between 5456 and 7545 feet above sea level, or within one standard deviation of elevation based on the country’s mean, calculated in Chapter 4).

For the purposes of isolating causation, however, Mill’s methods requires strict adherence to three fundamental assumptions – that of the “deterministic regularity” of a causal relation, that all causally relevant variables be identified prior to analysis, and that cases represent the full range of all possible paths (George and Bennett 2005: 165), which amount to overly strict, unrealistic assumptions. Mill’s comparative method thus relies exclusively on the logic of causal inference and does not account for equifinality – or the possibility that outcomes can result from altogether different, unobserved mechanisms.

The QCA method, most importantly for the purposes of this project, acknowledges and accounts for equifinality. This method allows the investigator to more finely detect the presence of not only multiple causal conditions (or independent variables), but configurations of causal conditions and even multiple configurations and how they interact. Using QCA to reveal otherwise unclear configurations of causal conditions also provides insight into the more nuanced and relative influence of individual conditions, including the presence or absence of conditions that are necessary, sufficient, both or neither, and still more complex combinations (or INUS causes – insufficient but necessary parts of a configuration that is unnecessary but sufficient).84

QCA does not obviate methodological concerns entirely, however (George and Bennett 2005: 165-166, Bennett and George 1997). It still requires that all causally

relevant conditions are included in the set of cases under study in order to minimize the likelihood of spurious inferences. As George and Bennett note, “the logic of causal inference for small-n comparisons is highly problematic if the phenomenon being investigated has complex, multiple determinants” as is the case for local variations in human development across rural Guatemalan communities (Ibid: 156). For this reason QCA is considered “unstable,” in that the addition of a new case, or the dropping of a single condition, can dramatically change the implications of QCA results (Ibid: 166).

Crucially, as well, in this project I make binary decisions regarding the presence or absence of the theoretically and purposefully-chosen, potential causal conditions influencing development outcomes across each case. This leaves open the possibility that more nuanced interpretations of the causal conditions, and their presence/absence, could influence initial results based on the QCA.

This concern is at least partially accounted for though the use of strict coding parameters that guide the completion of a “truth table” (see Table 2, page 80) that in turn informs the initial findings derived from this component of the investigation. The specific explanatory variables under investigation in this section are discussed in length in the following chapters, but consist of principally the long-term effects of localized conflict intensity, the observed level of either social discord or harmony, and institutional questions – in the form of social spending by municipal governments and the capability of locally-based civil society. I also code for my theorized driver of change – state-local complementarity.

Coding for either the presence or absence of these characteristics is based on a combination of available quantitative metrics, as well as the results of in situ observation.
and key informant interviews in each community. Specifically, I conducted interviews with key elites in public office (from mayors and their councils to the heads of individual government administrations), in party offices, churches, civil society organizations and with other informal or semi-formal leaders and organizations. I also attended key monthly meetings between stakeholders in which important decisions were made regarding policy and practice – most often with respect to a centrally-organized program intended to reduce hunger and malnutrition (*El Pacto Hambre Cero*, discussed below).

Table 2. QCA Coding Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of:</th>
<th>Coding Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Spending? (A=high, a=low)</td>
<td>*ICEFI/USAID “Atlas del Gasto Social Municipal”: % of total budget per inhabitant spent on “social functions” = above (high) or below (low) mean (234.54 Quetzales/person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Strong” local civil society? (B=high, b=low)</td>
<td><em>Qualitative observations and interviews: What is the presence and density of locally-resonant forms of civil society or traditional authority? How effectively can they mobilize popular issue support</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social discord? (C=high, c=low)</td>
<td><em>Qualitative observations and interviews: What are the extent and nature of social divisions within a community, if any? How do they manifest?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict affected? (D=high, d=low)</td>
<td><em>Historical experiences with the civil war: Above (high) or below (low) the mean conflict intensity “score” (96 victims/community)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementarity (E =high, e=low)</td>
<td><em>Process tracing: Observation of lead civil society actors working, or not, with government officials to implement anti-hunger program elements.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the reasons stated above, the QCA component of this project is integral to my methods, and to the investigation of conditions influencing human development outcomes in rural Guatemala. This component, by design, reveals complex relationships between conditions and key insights into how a range, and combination, of variables – from structural and historical to epiphenomenal – relate to outcomes. At the same time,
however, the QCA is only a rough sketch of potentially causal relationships, and the risk of endogeneity – or that of either unobserved variables or an unseen causal link between explanatory variables themselves – remains relevant.

In order to account for endogeneity and omitted variable bias, this project ultimately hinges on an additional methodological component: a process-tracing stage with the express purpose of observing the sequences and processes that constitute local development governance. This stage naturally overlaps with fieldwork that informs the QCA, and the coding of different variables.

2.6.3 Process-Tracing

As David Collier writes, “process tracing … is an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence – often understood as part of a temporal sequence of events or phenomena” (2011: 823). In this vein, I expressly visited three of the six original communities – each still demonstrating variation in my dependent variable – in order to trace the sequential steps, and processes, of implementing a shared, government-backed anti-hunger program in each locale.

Process-tracing requires significant time and dedication in order to appropriately document the micro-level, or “agent-to-agent” linkages, in a potentially vast series of events in a causal chain that connects independent and dependent variables (Checkel 2005). Identifying, or at least clarifying the links in such a chain, however, reduces the dependency on drawing potentially erroneous causal inferences. When, additionally, the observable implications of competing theories are taken seriously – in this project it could be either the toil of more dedicated mayors, the absence of past violence or the entrepreneurship of civil society that better explains development outcomes in my
selected communities – the theory of state-local complementarity is tested more robustly, and must withstand verification through process-tracing.

No communities are perfectly similar, however, despite my efforts to control for macro-structural and even climactic and geographic differences. As Bennett and George note, nevertheless, “process tracing can test whether each of the potentially causal variables that differ between two closely but imperfectly matched cases can or cannot be ruled out as causal” (1997). Finally, process tracing diminishes the inherent degrees of freedom, or the “too many variables, too few cases” conundrum of small-n qualitative research. “These many predicted observations,” write George and Bennett (1997), “may provide sufficient ‘degrees of freedom,’ or many more observations than variables, even when the researcher is studying a single case and using several independent variables.”

For these reasons, I explicitly incorporate process-tracing in order to complement the quantitative overview and QCA components of this project, and in order to try to correct for their respective methodological gaps in causal analysis. Though on some level process-tracing is incorporated in all of the six communities visited, in order to make judgments informing the QCA component for example, and in order to understand chronological linkages in development decision-making and implementation, I scrutinize three communities more closely still.85

This step required attending meetings in which diverse development stakeholders interacted, and utilizing interviews in order to build a chronological timeline, and a picture of the mechanics, of policy implementation at the village level. In order to increase observations, I visited remote aldeas (even smaller villages that, along with the

85 These include Santa María Chiquimula (Totonicapán department), Zacualpa (Quiché department) and San Pablo la Laguna (Sololá). See Table 3.
“urban center,” constitute the municipio). In these remote locations I interviewed “ordinary citizens” (including, for example, agricultural workers, subsistence farmers and homemakers – or those most targeted by government programs) and conducted focus groups when more feasible, in addition to conducting the usual key informant interviews described above. The focus groups and “citizen” interviews provide rich material for description as well as a decisive opportunity to test the observable implications of state-local complementarity, and the competing implications of social discord, harmony, legacy of conflict and civil society (Table 3).

Table 3. Summary of Non-Elite Interviews and Rural Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Name, and aldeas in each municipality</th>
<th>Number of non-elite interviews and/or focus group participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Santa Maria Chiquimula (SMC)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xecaxelaj</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xesana</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xesana I</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pajojchiiyats</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joesefina</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centro</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zacualpa</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasajoc I</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuchuca (Chuchuca is site location, with attendees from the following: Xejoc, Xextorian, Xemosche, Chojiomquiej)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>San Pablo la Laguna</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center*</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>n=162</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: San Pablo has no aldeas, largely because of topographical constraints, and is condensed into one “urban” zone.

Organizing these focus groups and gaining access to the villages themselves, and then conducting interviews/focus groups in a safe environment, with ready access to accurate translation (from the Mayan dialects of K’iche and Tz’utujil into Spanish), required diligence and persistence, but also patience and tactfulness. Given either pre-conceived
notions of the intentions of foreigners – as well as the potentially sensitive nature of my questions concerning local political dynamics and basic service delivery – particularly in remote, poor villages with little to no regular outside visitation, it was essential that I partner with local actors already conducting work in these areas in order to be welcomed, and in order to assemble community members.\(^{86}\)

Table 4 lists my local partners in each municipality. In two out of the three localities I was able to partner with, in my judgment, impartial actors. In Santa María Chiquimula, for example, I accompanied volunteers from the local Jesuit diocese on their semi-weekly visit to rural *aldeas* distributing food, weighing and measuring children, and conducting short classes on reproductive health. Though I stated my role as an independent researcher, by arriving alongside Church volunteers, I was warmly received, and was able to conduct many, small focus groups (from 3-10 women at a time) across multiple communities. Of course, I was unable to reach non-church affiliates in this sample. Participants – all women I should note in Santa María Chiquimula (SMC) – were very forthcoming in sharing their experiences concerning local political actors and the implementation of *Hambre Cero*. The volunteers provided regular translation help, and shared their own perspectives on separate occasions as well.

In San Pablo la Laguna (San Pablo hereforth), which is largely a singular, urban\(^{87}\) community on the shores of Lake Atitlán, I worked with a young, local *tuk-tuk*\(^{88}\) driver

\(^{86}\) All interviews were conducted in a safe environment that guaranteed confidentiality, without coercion, and only after securing permission for participation with the interviewee’s right to end the interview at any point. This study was granted authorization to conduct interviews by the University of Denver’s Institutional Review Board, and was conducted under its provisions (Protocol # 2013-2552).

\(^{87}\) “Urban” in this context refers to a central community with organized streets and plaza. Each municipality has an “urban center,” where the municipal offices and main church are located, and where weekly markets are held, and where some small businesses might exist. San Pablo given physical restrictions between the
who, with the help of his uncle, helped organize a focus group of 12 women, followed by individual interviews over following days with 10 men traveling between town and surrounding coffee plantations. I exchanged grape or orange sodas for the participant’s time, and occasionally relied on my acquaintance to translate from Tz’utujil to Spanish. I paid my tuk-tuk driver for his transportation services as per usual, but padded these haggled-for fees for his generous assistance.

Table 4. Field Work Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community (Municipality)</th>
<th>Partner Organization or Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Santa María Chiquimula</td>
<td>Local Catholic (Jesuit) dioces – specifically its organized women’s health and nutrition outreach programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zacualpa</td>
<td>NutriSalud via the local Woman’s Office (OMM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pablo la Laguna</td>
<td>“Felipe” the teenage tuk-tuk driver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Zacualpa, surrounding villages were very remote, and access was difficult via very bad, mountainous roads. Here I took advantage of a formally independent nutrition and health program organized by NutriSalud, with partial funding from USAID, which consisted of conducting workshops in certain remote aldeas. Concerting my efforts with theirs again provided me transportation to remote villages, and local partners that enhanced my personal safety, credibility and access (as well as translation help and the ability to speak with large groups of local citizens in an organized setting).

lake and steep hillsides, does not have the usual aldeas surrounding its urban center. “Urban,” however, does not resemble the more familiar, densely-populated, sense of the word.

88 Tuk-tuks are three-wheeled motorized taxis typically driven by teenage boys, ubiquitous in town centers throughout Guatemala.

In Zacualpa, however, the *NutriSalud* organizers partnered, themselves, with the local *Oficina de la Mujer*, or “Woman’s Office” (OMM) that by law now exists in each municipality. But the OMM, under the direct control of the mayor, meant that the villages chosen to receive the *NutriSalud* programs were not arbitrary, but intentional. This reality, on the one hand, arguably interfered with my goals of impartiality for the purpose of qualitative investigation. On the other hand, this process itself was informative, and OMM personnel were surprisingly forthcoming about their own selection criteria (communities which are considered mayoral strongholds), and my experiences and insights into governance in Zacualpa were in some ways enhanced by this experience, though I was unable to meet with groups from villages that do not support the mayor.

### 2.7 Conclusions

From daily insecurity to extreme rates of poverty and hunger, rural Guatemalans continue to struggle under much of the same conditions that promulgated a civil war lasting 36 years. Since the Peace Accords, however, local, informal authorities have confronted a semi-democratic central authority and ill-articulated and muddled statebuilding project with peculiar results. The persistence and legitimacy of local, informal actors sometimes mixes, and other times clashes, with formal systems of governance. This process is different across space, and might explain peculiar differences in development outcomes across communities.

With the express purpose of testing this hypothesis, I have articulated a research design that combines a quantitative analysis of Guatemalan municipalities with a qualitative comparative analysis, determined largely by field work in six communities, in order to explore how theoretically informed variables relate to one another, as well as
with the dependent variable – human development. Finally, and critically, I spent additional time in three of the six communities, meeting with both key informants and “ordinary citizens” in order to trace the implementation of the current government’s marquee social welfare program – a globally-recognized anti-hunger program (*Hambre Cero*) – in order to identify stakeholders, their influence and role, and the processes involved that determine the actual delivery of basic resources to citizens in need.

This design is intended so that each component overlaps but also complements one another, and in such a way as to robustly test the observable implications of my theory, and identify causal mechanisms that influence variation in development rather than rely on only inference. The following chapters proceed through these methods systematically, beginning with a chapter devoted to the statistical analysis, and a discussion of the relationships detected between variables and their implications for this project.
CHAPTER THREE: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN GUATEMALA

This chapter is a “first glimpse” into the relationships between possible drivers of human development across Guatemala, and variations thereof. Utilizing a novel database that combines data from the municipal level across all 332 communities – which originates from highly dispersed and sometimes obscure sources—this component utilizes ordinary least square (OLS) regressions in order to explore the relationship between a diverse set of variables and different dependent variables that represent a range of human development indicators.

The explanatory variables under investigation in this chapter are in essence rival hypotheses to my theoretical proposition – that better development outcomes are the result of state actors working in harmony and coordination with more legitimate local actors at the village level in order to deliver basic services more equitably. They also reflect state-centric, state-society and society-centric theories of development, and thus a combination of theoretical propositions discussed in the previous chapter, but also factors specific to the Guatemala context – like the lingering influence of the armed conflict as

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90 Many indicators required coding from pdfs and assorted reports, where data was otherwise unavailable.

91 The “Conflict Intensity” variable is possibly the first time that violent events from the civil war have been tabulated for the municipal level. I coded conflict intensity based on the number of victims tied to each community as recorded by the 1999 Memoria del Silencio report, published by the Historical Clarification Commission which was established by the 1996 Peace Accords, and which is still the authoritative source on civil-war related violent events. I counted all victims, regardless of perpetrator (guerilla or army) or crime (whether arbitrary execution, torture, or sexual violence) that took place or originated in each community.
well as an effort to capture how variation in local organization across space relates to development. In essence, the model under investigation is reflected by the following equation:

\[
Y_i \text{(human development)} = a_i + \beta_1 x_1 \text{(state presence)} + \beta_2 x_2 \text{(local spending)} + \beta_3 x_3 \text{(conflict intensity)} + \beta_4 x_4 \text{(local social organization)} + e_i
\]

Where \(a_i\) = the intercept and \(e_i\) = the residual error.

Importantly, both dependent and independent variables can be measured and represented differently. Human development, for example, is represented in the quantitative component of this study by HDI scores at the municipal level, first. But hunger and illiteracy rates, as well as positive and negative changes in each over time, help reflect different elements of the more rich sense of human development that this project seeks to explore. Regressing against an array of human development indicators also provides a robustness check for the relationship between independent variables and my greater goal of exploring development from a more holistic perspective. Similarly, independent variables can be captured through different metrics, with different implications. A summary of the different metrics is listed in Table 5.

This chapter compares five (5) models that vary in their deployment of predictor instruments in order to weigh the competing explanatory power of different variables. For example, elevation is a geographical instrument, yet simultaneously captures on some level the degree of remoteness, and likelihood that state presence is minimal (Callel 2014). A model that incorporates both SDI and elevation might diminish the respective explanatory power of each, and thus different models incorporate different explanatory
indicators in an effort to find a “best fit.” These same models are then run against a series of different indicators for human development (or the explained variable), beginning with HDI and progressing to changes in hunger and illiteracy over time.

Table 5. Municipal Level Data Utilized for Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Development</th>
<th>State-Influence</th>
<th>Local Authority / Spending</th>
<th>Legacy of Armed Conflict</th>
<th>Locally-Based Social Forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HDI 2011 (extrapolated)</td>
<td>State Density Index</td>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>Conflict Intensity</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ΔHDI</td>
<td>(as reported by the UNDP’s 2009 Human Development Report for Guatemala)</td>
<td>Spending on “social services” (in local currency / municipal population)</td>
<td>(based on the number of victims from violent events recorded by the 1999 Memoria del Silencio report)</td>
<td>Denunciations (as reported to the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI sub-indices</td>
<td>Elevation (from fallingrain.com)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy</td>
<td>Electoral Alignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Chronic Hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of OLS regressions, discussed below, yield some puzzling relationships. In so doing they also elucidate both the puzzle under investigation, as well as the gulf that exists between the state and local development outcomes. The results, finally, open the door for the role of still unobserved mechanisms influencing outcomes, which are explored in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Global Model One: Testing Variation in Human Development

The quantitative component of this study begins by regressing key variables against 2011 HDI levels (HDI_extrap), which is a figure extrapolated from HDI scores from two previous years (2000 and 2005) as calculated by Microsoft Excel, but which has not been

---

92 For example, regressing municipal elevation (elev, as reported by www.fallingrain.com) against 2009 State Density Index scores (SDI_2009) reveals a significantly negative relationship (N=330, P=.006). In other words as elevation increases state density decreases (though by a somewhat unimpressive $-4.44\times10^{-6}$). Incorporating both into a single model, therefore, will diminish respective explanatory powers, and thus apart from Model 2, are not run together in regressions.
reported at the municipal level since. A first “global model” therefore tests the relationship between human development \((HDI\_extrap)\) and state density \((SDI\_2009)\), local government spending (the level of local spending on social services per inhabitant, \(Gasto\_Mun\)), conflict intensity (\(Conf\_Intens\)), social organization (as represented by official denunciations of public officials and police by citizens in each community according to the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman, relative to population, \(Denperpop\)) and finally electoral alignment (\(Elect\_Align\), or whether a municipal mayor is from the same party as the President as of the 2011 elections, where 1=alignment and 0 = no alignment). Before running the regressions, I first log transform \(SDI\_2009\), creating the variable \(log\_SDI\) in order to more normally distribute the otherwise clustered nature of state density figures (see Figures 5 and 6 for comparison). The following figures also illustrate the degree of variation in HDI across communities with similarly low state presence.

![Figure 5. Extrapolated HDI (2011) Scores Plotted Against State Density Scores](image)

---

93 This was done in order to overcome the potential endogeneity when regressing 2009 state density figures and 2005 HDI levels. The extrapolated HDI figures represent approximate 2010 numbers.

94 Log transforming consists of multiplying all \(SDI\_2009\) scores by 100, then taking the log of these new values and creating the new variable \(log\_SDI\) using Stata.
Table 6. Ordinary Least Square Regression: Variation in $HDL_{\text{extrap}}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 (N=278)</th>
<th>Model 2 (N=277)</th>
<th>Model 3 (N=277)</th>
<th>Model 4 (N=325)</th>
<th>Model 5 (N=325)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>.0497943*</td>
<td>.0562005*</td>
<td>.046398*</td>
<td>.0587264**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0229995)</td>
<td>(.0233884)</td>
<td>(.0218491)</td>
<td>(.0212306)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>.0000268</td>
<td>.0000287</td>
<td>.0000314</td>
<td>.0000314</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(.0000212)</td>
<td>(.0000239)</td>
<td>(.0000239)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td>-.0000918**</td>
<td>-.0000953**</td>
<td>-.0000919**</td>
<td>-.0000884**</td>
<td>-.0000903**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.000217)</td>
<td>(.0000225)</td>
<td>(.0000226)</td>
<td>(.0000224)</td>
<td>(.0000192)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>1.867374*</td>
<td>1.805071*</td>
<td>1.956041*</td>
<td>2.644132**</td>
<td>2.475925**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.9201119)</td>
<td>(.9214902)</td>
<td>(.9274082)</td>
<td>(.7782323)</td>
<td>(.0086536)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect_Align</td>
<td>.0054443</td>
<td>.0060596</td>
<td>.0095903</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0009367*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0130069)</td>
<td>(.0130156)</td>
<td>(.0130458)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.0004267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elev</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(2.35x10^-6)</td>
<td>(2.34x10^-6)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hom_Diff</td>
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<td>.00009367*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0004267)</td>
<td>(.0004267)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Constant</td>
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<td>.4670603</td>
<td>.6401602</td>
<td>.510152</td>
<td>.4770062</td>
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<td>6.44 (6)</td>
<td>6.46 (5)</td>
<td>13.10 (4)</td>
<td>15.67 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.1018</td>
<td>.1507</td>
<td>.1570</td>
<td>.1300</td>
<td>.1196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: p<.01**; p<.05*
This first model, as a whole, is statistically significant (p=.000), but otherwise substantively insignificant, or at least limited in substantively explaining variation in HDI across communities (Table 6). For example, though several variables in this model (log SDI, Conf_Intens and Denperpop) are statistically significant, coefficients in general are very small (Model 1). Subsequent models add elevation (Model 2), leave elevation but drop SDI (Model 3), and then key in on the most significant variables – state density, conflict intensity, denunciations and the changes in homicide rates in Model 4, while Model 5 regresses only SDI, conflict intensity and denunciations. These models are each significant and progressively more robust. But they only tinker with the strength of each explanatory indicator, as coefficients remain generally quite small. It is worth noting that, for the moment, state density is positively correlated with HDI, and significant, across all of Guatemala, though again the effect is quite small. It is also worth noting that Conf_Intens is negatively correlated with HDI (and statistically significant with 99 percent confidence in each of the models). Local social spending is never a significant variable.

Finally, Denperpop – or the officially recorded denunciations of public officials and police officers submitted to the Procurador de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights Ombudsman), relative to population size – has a positive effect on HDI which is both statistically significant (p<.05 in Models 1, 2, and 3, p<.01 in models 4 and 5) and by far the strongest of any variable.

It is my contention that denuncias indicate on some level an element of “social organization.” I argue this, first, based on the logic that in a culture of fear and distrust, as is widely reported to permeate Guatemala (Azpuru 2012), higher reported denuncias
represent more the determination of local actors to organize and protest rather than actual levels of official abuse (which is arguably high everywhere). Secondly, a simple bivariate regression reveals a negative correlation between *denuncias* per capita (*Denperpop*) and the difference in homicide rates between 2003 and 2012 (*Hom_Diff*). As the number of *denunicas* per capita increase across communities, in other words, homicide rates decline slightly (Coefficient = -0.034), though this not a statistically robust relationship (n= 331, p=.8253). Nevertheless, denunciations are not related to violence, and are thus a response to something other than crime.

*Denuncias* are an imperfect reflection of social organization, certainly, and open to different interpretations, but there is no instrument or data at the municipal level that better represents this concept for the quantitative component, and it is therefore included in the study. Finally, the strong, positive, statistically significant relationship between *denuncias* and HDI is a noteworthy observation.

### 3.1.1 Accounting for Population Size

In Model 4, an increase in homicide rates is robustly correlated with higher HDI scores (n=277, p=.012) – a result which more likely than not reflects the effects of urban areas, where access to services and markets improves HDI generally, even if crime is also higher (Table 6). This realization means that, when regressing variables across all of Guatemala, the relative size of a community may disguise effects that influence results. The same models as above are therefore run again, but this time only after excluding larger municipalities (or those municipalities with a population greater than 25,000 inhabitants). The models are again significant, but important changes take place (Table 7).
First, a climbing homicide rate is indeed no longer significant. But other more peculiar relationships emerge: Municipal spending, for example, becomes significant within a 90% confidence interval in Models 1 and 2, suggesting its greater influence in smaller, likely more remote communities, though its significance drops below this in Model 3. Meanwhile both the Conf_Intens and Denperpop variables remain statistically significant, with conflict intensity particularly robust (p<.01 in each of the models) if small, while the effect of denunciations remains the most dramatic – with coefficients raging from 1.77 – 2.59 (Table 7). After excluding the most populated communities, therefore, the most dramatic relationships with human development (at least as represented by HDI) are the negative legacy of conflict, even if subtle, and more positively, some element of social organization and protest as suggested by the amount of official denuncias.

Also important – if puzzling – is that the state density sign changes from positive to negative in this test while becoming dramatically stronger as well, though it no longer remains statistically significant. In the very least, the density of state offices and resources has no bearing on the human development outcomes of smaller municipalities in Guatemala – upending the most basic premise of statebuilding and forcing a reexamination of just what does influence local outcomes.

The same tests are repeated yet again, across all municipalities as well as only smaller communities, but only after changing the explained indicator – from 2011 HDI levels as above to changes in HDI over time from 2005-2011 – in order to capture any dynamics effects of the local characteristics under investigations. The models as a whole, however, are not statistically significant and are thus not reported here.
Table 7. HDI_extrap When Population<25,000: Ordinary Least Square Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
<td>(Standard Error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log_SDI</td>
<td>-.0829566</td>
<td>-.0855112</td>
<td>-.0195352</td>
<td>-.0094573</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.051696)</td>
<td>(.0535125)</td>
<td>(.0425373)</td>
<td>(.042135)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>.0000533*</td>
<td>.0000525*</td>
<td>.0000401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0000279)</td>
<td>(.0000282)</td>
<td>(.0000272)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td>-.000218***</td>
<td>-.0002169***</td>
<td>-.0002148***</td>
<td>-.0002174***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0000685)</td>
<td>(.0000693)</td>
<td>(.0000697)</td>
<td>(.0000666)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>1.894503*</td>
<td>1.908834*</td>
<td>1.767816*</td>
<td>2.57166***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.000142)</td>
<td>(1.012271)</td>
<td>(1.014379)</td>
<td>(.900458)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect_Align</td>
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<td>.009434</td>
<td>.0067685</td>
<td>2.594271***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0188681)</td>
<td>(.0190546)</td>
<td>(.0190937)</td>
<td>(.9036133)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(3.55x10^-6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hom_Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0029894</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.0020327)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>.8987034</td>
<td>.6421548</td>
<td>.7081681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(df)</td>
<td>4.65 (5)</td>
<td>3.83 (6)</td>
<td>4.04 (5)</td>
<td>5.99 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R^2</td>
<td>.1497</td>
<td>.1111</td>
<td>.1412</td>
<td>.1096</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: p<.01***; p<.05**; p<.10*

3.2 Global Model Two: Testing Against Basic Development Indicators – Illiteracy

In this section, the same procedure is followed, but variables are instead regressed against illiteracy (or lack of literacy, importantly) and infant mortality rates as a robustness check of some of the initial findings from Section 3.1. The models for changes in illiteracy over time in communities smaller than 25,000, and all models testing 2011 infant mortality rates, are not statistically significant and are therefore not reported below. The effects on illiteracy throughout Guatemala (Table 8), across its smaller communities (Table 9) and illiteracy over time (Table 10) are insightful, however. They also reinforce the emerging findings that state density and development are disconnected in Guatemala.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 (N=256)</th>
<th>Model 2 (N=256)</th>
<th>Model 3 (N=256)</th>
<th>Model 4 (N=300)</th>
<th>Model 5 (N=163)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>-5.173085 (2.697058)</td>
<td>-4.376848 (2.734088)</td>
<td>-5.835469** (2.741042)</td>
<td>-5.769269** (2.5465)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>-0.0013705 (.0028065)</td>
<td>-0.0011194 (.0028021)</td>
<td>-0.0012666 (.0028093)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td>0.0140844*** (.0025791)</td>
<td>0.0135695*** (.002591)</td>
<td>0.0133564*** (.0025957)</td>
<td>0.013121*** (.0022661)</td>
<td>0.013117*** (.0022615)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>429.5074*** (112.2958)</td>
<td>440.3999*** (112.1504)</td>
<td>445.6105*** (112.453)</td>
<td>430.4998*** (100.0088)</td>
<td>430.9649*** (99.59223)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Elect_Align</td>
<td>-0.2216438 (.0188681)</td>
<td>-0.1373022 (.0002789)</td>
<td>-0.3689073 (1.544989)</td>
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<td>Elev</td>
<td>0.004472 (.0002789)</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hom_Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0044964 (.0681496)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>30.86702</td>
<td>50.70989</td>
<td>50.524</td>
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<td>11.96 (5)</td>
<td>16.92 (4)</td>
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<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
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<td>.1820</td>
<td>.1680</td>
<td>.1756</td>
<td>.1783</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: p<.01***; p<.05**; p<.10*

Much like with HDI scores, for example, 2011 illiteracy rates across Guatemala are most strongly correlated with high conflict intensity and denuncias per capita (p<.01 across all models for both variables) (Table 8). As before, the level of denunciations is inversely related to illiteracy. Specifically, an increase of one denunciation per capita is associated with a stunning 446 percent decline in illiteracy (Model 3). Both state density and local spending are for the most part uncorrelated with illiteracy, though in models 4
and 5 state density is significant (p<.05) and associated with 5 percent declines in illiteracy when testing across Guatemala as a whole.

Table 9. 2011 Illiteracy Rates where Population < 25,000: Ordinary Least Squares Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
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<td>(Standard Error)</td>
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<td>(4.771261)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>-.0002829</td>
<td>.0288444***</td>
<td>.0293737***</td>
</tr>
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<td>(.0029575)</td>
<td>(.0029302)</td>
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<td>(.0071164)</td>
<td>(.00705)</td>
<td>(.007054)</td>
<td>(.0070779)</td>
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<td>-354.3001*</td>
<td>-337.0204***</td>
<td>-347.3542***</td>
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<td>(.000142)</td>
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<td>(110.0757)</td>
<td>(104.0205)</td>
<td>(106.1332)</td>
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<td>.761388</td>
<td>.8456734</td>
<td>.8456734</td>
<td>.8456734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.007523)</td>
<td>(7.982922)</td>
<td>(1.983439)</td>
<td>(1.983439)</td>
<td>(1.983439)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elev</td>
<td>.0007952</td>
<td>.0006891</td>
<td>.0006891</td>
<td>.0006891</td>
<td>.0006891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.0003841)</td>
<td>(.0003724)</td>
<td>(.0003724)</td>
<td>(.0003724)</td>
<td>(.0003724)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hom_Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.5853974***</td>
<td>(.2175466)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>20.65968</td>
<td>8.326414</td>
<td>27.62416</td>
<td>23.71136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.612491)</td>
<td>(5.717079)</td>
<td>(5.717079)</td>
<td>(5.717079)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(df)</td>
<td>6.96 (5)</td>
<td>6.67 (6)</td>
<td>7.74 (5)</td>
<td>10.00 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.1901</td>
<td>.2114</td>
<td>.2098</td>
<td>.1935</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: p<.01***; p<.05**; p<.10*

When, as before, the potential effects of population size are accounted for by omitting all municipalities with populations greater than 25,000 inhabitants before running regressions, state density again becomes irrelevant (Table 9). In fact, its sign changes (to positive, suggesting a direct relationship with illiteracy) but nowhere is it statistically significant. Again, only conflict-affectedness and denunciations have significant relationships with illiteracy at the municipal level (p<.01).
Finally, when the independent variables are regressed against changes in illiteracy over time (across all of Guatemala again), and assuming, as is appropriate, that state density has been largely static over the same time,\(^95\) the role of state forces in development becomes even cloudier (Table 10). The log-transformed state density variable \((\text{log}_\text{SDI})\) is in fact statistically significant \((p<.01)\), but is now directly

\(^95\) As noted earlier, interviews with Guatemalan public policy experts – including Jonathan Menkos, Director of the Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Fiscales (ICEFI) – confirm that such an assumption is indeed plausible and/or appropriate.
associated with increases in illiteracy over time. In this case, state density is statistically correlated with negative development results – only further undermining the premise of statebuilding for development in this instance.

3.3 Global Test Three: Testing Against Chronic Hunger

Testing our same predictor variables against changes over time in chronic hunger rates only further undermines the basic premise that a transfer of state resources will benefit community health levels, at least from this more narrow proxy of health. Chronic hunger rates are based on government statistics that are the result of two different reports – the 2002 and 2009 *Censo Nacional de Talla en Escolares de Primer Grado* (or the second and third National Height Censuses of Primary School Students).

Chronic hunger in these studies is measured by the severity of stunting (or height retardation) in schoolchildren between the ages of 6 and 11 years old. Stunting is determined by whether a student’s height falls below two standard deviations of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) recommended mean height for a given age. A student between two and three standard deviations below the mean is classified as suffering from “moderate” chronic hunger, while students with heights below three standard deviations are classified as suffering from “extreme” chronic hunger.\(^{96}\) The national censuses report both cases, as well as a total level reported as a percentage of students per municipality. This is what is recorded in the database, and then separately

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96 Chronic hunger, as implied, refers to sustained nutrient deficiency over time which results in stunting – or a negatively skewed height/age ratio. Acute hunger is the result of hunger emergencies that result from distribution breakdowns, or seasonal patterns that affect harvests and local supplies. It is more commonly measured by plummeting weight/age ratios, or weight/height ratios (so-called “wasting”). Some regions of Guatemala (including coffee growing regions and regions with two distinct growing seasons) are arguably more affected by acute hunger, though chronic hunger, as already discussed, is prevalent throughout Guatemala. Chronic hunger is discussed in more detail still in Chapters 4 and 5, when comparing experiences across case studies.
changes in reported percentages between reports were calculated with Stata, creating the variable “Cron_Hun_Diff.” I begin by regressing the same models against this new dependent variable (see Table 11).

Table 11. Difference in Chronic Hunger (2002-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 (N=279)</th>
<th>Model 2 (N=278)</th>
<th>Model 3 (N=278)</th>
<th>Model 4 (N=326)</th>
<th>Model 5 (N=326)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>2.362724* (1.286329)</td>
<td>1.956537 (1.305827)</td>
<td>1.974551 (1.234109)</td>
<td>2.057491* (1.190307)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>-.0019976 (.0013256)</td>
<td>-.0021079 (.0013267)</td>
<td>-.0020133 (.0013282)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td>.0024055* (.0012494)</td>
<td>.0026269** (.0012544)</td>
<td>.0027448** (.0012548)</td>
<td>.0027783** (.0010797)</td>
<td>.0027659** (.0010771)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>-169.8314*** (.51.45253)</td>
<td>-166.0358*** (.51.46353)</td>
<td>-160.728*** (.51.45882)</td>
<td>-180.5699*** (43.94241)</td>
<td>-181.6888*** (43.66712)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect_Algign</td>
<td>.4716094 (.7269776)</td>
<td>.4320683 (.7263941)</td>
<td>.5565181 (.723793)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elev</td>
<td>-.0002198* (.0001311)</td>
<td>-.0002554 (.0001292)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.0062565 (.0241011)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hom_Diff</td>
<td>-13.53678 (-13.53678)</td>
<td>-11.37744 (-11.37744)</td>
<td>-5.355074 (-5.355074)</td>
<td>-12.54552 (-12.54552)</td>
<td>-12.76723 (-12.76723)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>5.86 (5)</td>
<td>5.36 (6)</td>
<td>5.96 (5)</td>
<td>7.14 (4)</td>
<td>9.52 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(df)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.0804</td>
<td>.0863</td>
<td>.0987</td>
<td>.0702</td>
<td>.0729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: p<.01***; p<.05*, p<.10*

Though these regressions cannot capture the effects of the current Hambre Cero program under study in following chapters, myriad other government interventions were introduced in the period between the two hunger censuses – including Mi Familia Progressa (My Family Progresses, now Mi Bono Seguro), which was designed with the
express purpose of addressing childhood hunger, maternal health and school attendance – and the Bolsas Solidarias program (now Mi Bolsa Segura) which was a direct transfer of cash and basic foodstuffs directed at the poorest families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Obs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cron_Hun_Diff</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>-7.05</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>-31.1</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7: Difference in Childhood Chronic Hunger Rates, 2001-2008

As indicated in the text box above (Figure 7), chronic hunger rates decreased on average by 7 percentage points in this age group, but significantly different experiences with chronic hunger, like development more broadly, have persisted across communities. As Table 1 illustrates, state density is inversely proportional to improvements in chronic hunger (the positive coefficient of SDI_2009, which is significant with 90 percent confidence in Models 1 and 5, suggest that an increase in one unit of state density is correlated with increased hunger rates of as much as 11 percent). 97 Though I am careful to not draw causal inferences from these relationships, the above tests further underscore a persistent disconnect between state resources, state presence, and desirable public health outcomes, which is generally unexpected.

Conflict intensity, again, is statistically correlated with those communities that have regressed, or which, more specifically, have had the most difficulty in tackling chronic hunger – possibly demonstrating the lingering influences of conflict intensity on social organization, and coordination for the purposes of development. Denuncias, for example

97 Not displayed is a model that drops electoral alignment. In this model, SDI_2009 has a coefficient of 20.56 that is significant within a 94th percent confidence interval (p=.060).
(which I argue reflect an element of social organization), are inversely related to conflict intensity from 30 years before, though this is not statistically significant, and this relationship is also weak (see Figure 8). More simply, however, it is likely that the most conflict-affected communities remain Guatemala’s most isolated, and marginalized, underscoring the country’s failed post-war reconstruction progress, even if open-conflict in no longer likely.

|       | Coef  | Std. Err | t     | P>|t| |
|-------|-------|----------|-------|------|
| Conf_Intens | -0.0098382 | 0.0178614 | -0.55 | 0.582 |
| cons   | 84.55076    | 5.473345  | 15.45 | 0.000 |

Figure 8: The Effect of Conflict Intensity on 2012 Denuncias: Bivariate Regression

Denuncias themselves are also statistically significant again (p<.01 in each of the models) and their effect is robust – with one additional denunciation per capita associated with a decrease in chronic hunger rates by as much as 180 percent (Table 11) – a surprising result that is now consistent across various human development indicators.

3.4 Conclusions

The quantitative component of this study serves an important function. First, it quite strongly suggests that state density has no bearing on local development outcomes, even as the state has expanded its development programming and expenditures. In some instances, state density appears to have a negative impact on local development outcomes. Though it is unlikely that increased state presences causes negative
development, the finding certainly underscores the limitations of the state on local development.98

Local spending on social services, curiously, was also irrelevant. “Social services” are but a grab bag of potential projects ranging from water and sanitation projects to “gray” projects that include street surfacing and other small infrastructure projects. It is widely noted that small communities favor these latter types of projects which cost-effectively demonstrate “action” and “pro-development” thinking on the part of local mayors, even if their impact on well-being in the context of hunger and illiteracy is limited.99 The accuracy of reporting is also questionable, as the transparency of both local income and spending priorities could engender local protest. Assuming a relative degree of accuracy, however, then the utter lack of a correlation between local spending and development outcome forces further examination into what, more precisely, accounts for differences in development across similar communities.

Finally, two factors that routinely demonstrate statistically significant, and often strong, positive influences on development outcomes – whether the broad spectrum HDI, illiteracy or hunger – are conflict intensity and the level of denunciations per population. In the case of conflict intensity, which has not been calculated at the municipal level before,100 the violence associated with the civil war clearly precedes contemporary development outcomes. Nevertheless the direction of causation is unclear, and its

98 Theoretically the relationship could be reflecting endogeneity, where the state is now present in those communities with the most need. Based on all accounts from development actors and analysts in Guatemala, however, this is highly unlikely. 2009 state density figures are more likely to reflect both past and current state densities per community, which are believed to be quite static overall.

99 Interviews.

100 Steinberg et al. (2003) did map massacre-events and municipios before drawing broad correlations.
influence is, speculatively, either direct – confirming the work of many that the civil war eroded civic capacity and long-term well-being – or indirect – correlated simply with what remain the most peripheral communities in Guatemala, which were among those agitating during the armed conflict. Even in the latter case, the robust relationship at the community level between conflict and development is striking, and starkly underscores the inequality that characterizes the country’s post-war development trajectory.

The influence of denunciations is more puzzling. It is consistently significant, and at times correlated with positive development gains with incredibly strong effect. Denunciations, as noted earlier, are also not a response to local levels of violence, and are thus capturing other local dynamics. Though the quantitative analysis is unable to determine in what way, if any, denunciations relate to development, the consistent strength of the relationship does suggest that an element of community organization, or enfranchisement, at least facilitates conditions under which pro-poor development advances. Appendix F includes post-estimation tests for marginal effects, multicollinearity and heteroskedasticity per model, which were negative. Appendix G summarizes all variables.

Alas, this chapter unearths dramatic relationships (and a lack of relationships) between key explanatory variables and multiple development indicators. The results are generally surprising and in principle eliminate the role of the state in explaining spatial variation in development. This alone forces further examination into what forces do influence good and bad outcomes. The following chapters utilize qualitative methods, discussed in detail, in order to more accurately determine what those factors are. First, however, the case studies are explored in detail.
CHAPTER FOUR: PROFILES IN GOVERNANCE OF SIX HIGHLAND COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORIES

This chapter details each of the six communities that form the basis of a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), which is expanded upon in Chapter 5. The six communities span three different but adjoining departments that collectively account for much of Guatemala’s “Western Highlands” – a mostly rural, indigenously populated region west of Guatemala City where towns and villages lie between elevations of 1500 and 3000 meters. I profile two paired communities from each department – on the one hand accounting for ethno-linguistic differences over space (the communities span traditional K’iche, Kaqchikel and Tz’utujil Maya territories), but on the other hand controlling for environmental and even macro-economic conditions that vary from the sugar and palm plantations of the coastal lowlands to export-oriented industry near Guatemala City (See Figure 4.1). The highlands economy, outside of the urban centers of Quetzaltenango and Sololá, and some tourism near Lake Atitlán, is dominated by subsistence milpa farming and some forestry. There is some coffee cultivation near the lake as well. Tourism and coffee in some ways impact two of the communities under investigation, in Sololá department, distinguishing them from the more remote communities of Quiché and Totonicapán where subsistence dominates. The implications of this are discussed in

\[101\] Traditional corn farming, endowed with elements of spirituality and Mayan mysticism as well.
more detail when analyzing the QCA in Chapter 5. The paper proceeds first with a case selection discussion.

4.1 Case Selection

The six communities were initially chosen from afar, based on the earliest available data, gathered remotely, reflecting variation in development and after attempting to control for obvious factors that might explain such discrepancies (see Table 12). I first controlled for elevation, for example, by including only highlands communities that varied in their respective heights above sea level within one standard deviation. Elevation can drastically affect climactic and thus growing conditions over a short distance in Guatemala, which could possibly be reflected in health or living condition indicators.

Table 12. Initial Selection Criteria, Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sololá Department</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Catarina Palopó (5456)</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pablo la Laguna (6861)</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>+.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totonicapán Department</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa María Chiquimula (6975)</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Lucía la Reforma (6013)</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>+.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quiché Department</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patzité (7545)</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zacualpa (4875)</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>+.083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

102 Based on 333 individual observations, the country’s mean elevation is 4197.141 feet above sea level (ranging from 0 – 10,898 feet) with a standard deviation of 2690.849 feet. The spread between the highest (Patzité) and lowest (Zacualpa) communities selected is 2,670 feet, or just within one standard deviation.
This paper does not intend to diminish the daily struggles or difficult experiences of lowland Guatemalan communities, which indeed are increasingly precarious, but it is the highland communities under study here that struggle most with poverty and chronic hunger. As the Guatemala’s Third National Height Census (2009: 10) notes, the three departments that are represented in this study – Sololá, Quiché and Totonicapán – are the worst performing in the country overall, with rates of chronic hunger, for example, that affect in excess of 60 percent of schoolchildren.\footnote{Quiché (63.9%), Sololá (65.2%), and Totonicapán (69.4%) are listed as suffering from “very high” rates of chronic hunger officially.} One community profiled below, Santa María Chiquimula, reports a staggering rate of 75.5 percent.

Despite the findings from Chapter Three, “state density” is controlled for as well. I again limit the spread between lowest and highest to within one standard deviation.\footnote{State Density (or the SDI\textsubscript{2009} variable) ranges from .11 to .75 (based on 331 observations) with a mean of .218 and a standard deviation of .079. The spread between San Pablo la Laguna (.22) and Santa Catarina Polopó (.15) is .07.} Though it is already clear that there is no correlation between development outcomes and state density in Guatemala, I nevertheless wanted to minimize the possibility of its influence in the case studies, and in order to more robustly compare across only the most “similar” communities.

Finally, communities were chosen that vary across the dependent variable (human development, as initially indicated by 2005 HDI scores at the municipality level). Based on initial data, I chose communities that ranged from high to medium to low. In an effort to control based on the criteria above, however, several communities were rejected because, despite low state density and unusually high HDI scores, they were either tourist destinations, regional economic hubs, or communities well populated by wealthier North
American ex-patriots near Lake Atitlán (or all three). After finding 1994 HDI scores, also reported at the municipal level, I used the difference in HDI scores over time as a more robust criterion for determining variation in my dependent variable (Table 12).

Figure 9. Guatemala Field Site Locations

Despite careful efforts to control across communities as best as possible, however, the two Lake Atitlán communities arguably benefit in absolute terms from access to resources and services (as indicated by higher HDI scores, and later, by performance in combating hunger). This is likely because of their proximity to tourist destinations and local economic hubs.\(^{105}\) I separately try to control for this phenomenon as well, however, by dividing the six communities into three nested pairs – or two communities from each department, but which themselves diverge with respect to development outcomes –

\(^{105}\) Santa Catarina Polopó, on the east side of the Lake, is only a 15 minute pick-up drive away from Panajachel, a popular tourist destination with far more services and income generation than most lakeside communities. San Pablo la Laguna, on the west side of the Lake, is far grittier, remote, and poorer compared to other lake communities, but is nevertheless a cheap tuk-tuk ride away from San Pedro, another regional tourist hub and source of employment. Coffee is also a source of income for Magueyense (what San Pablo residents call themselves, based on a local plant that grows only around their town) – a cash crop mostly unavailable to the other communities under study.
providing both a regional-geographical control while continuing to get variation across the dependent variable.

After sorting through the selection criteria discussed above, six communities are isolated that fall within each of the parameters. The result is a collection of case studies (Figure 7) that, despite their similar elevations and low state densities, have very different development outcomes according to initial data (Table 12). This chapter profiles each community, with a special focus on levels of social discord, the role of informal actors in each community and, more generally, the state of local governance for development.

4.2 Profiles in Governance: Santa María Chiquimula, Totonicapán

Santa María Chiquimula (SMC) is located at 6975 feet (2100 meters) above sea level in the interior of Totonicapán Department – a remote and infrequently visited region with a population 98% indigenous (K’iche Mayan). Though it has a population of 35,000, it is one of the larger municipios area-wise (211 km²) and is therefore largely rural, apart from a mostly sleepy urban core where the Spanish-built Cathedral dominates the landscape, and where the municipal offices are located. SMC is both one of the poorest communities in Guatemala and one of the “hungriest,” making it in essence one of the communities most affected by chronic hunger in the entire Western hemisphere.

In SMC, or “Chiquimula” as locals frequently abbreviate it, social discord is increasing, with profound implications. It stems, according to interviews, from two principle sources: newly generated sectarian religious divisions, and political divisions, or divisions between party affiliates vying for mostly local offices, and subsequent control of state-dispersed resources, from money to seeds. Chiquimula is somewhat unique among my cases in that these two drivers of social discord overlap. The locally dominant
Unidad Nacional de Esperanza party (National Unity of Hope party, or UNE) and its leaders are generally Evangelical Protestant, while the affiliates of the President’s party, Patriota (or PP), remain loyal to the more traditional Catholic church.

Evangelical Christianity has been steadily gaining in popularity in Guatemala for decades, according to some thanks to a systematic campaign of recruitment that
capitalized on mass communication and entertainment, if tinkering with doctrine in the process (McCleary and Pesina 2011, Kevin O’Neill 2010, Schultze 1992). Evangelical Christianity has itself been divided from within, however, between Pentecostals and “Neo-Pentecostals.” Though the division among traditional and new religious sects is the most obvious, multiple interview participants volunteered that emerging splits between Evangelical sects have created tensions between families and the community as a whole as well. The overlap with political identity, it was regularly affirmed, exacerbates these divisions, and has contributed to increasingly tense community relations and an inability to collectively address community concerns.

For example, several community events organized by the “Muni” (short hand terminology for the municipal authorities, which in essence is dominated by the mayor and his closest compatriots), were intentionally skipped by some families. These people were less motivated by making a political statement, however, as they were simply unwilling to associate with people with different religious practices. This practice has since extended to more mundane events – from community celebrations to sporting events – that are otherwise apolitical. The Muni, in turn, has increasingly monopolized the political process of decision-making as best it can.

Formerly influential figures, historically - from alcaldes comunitarios (village mayors), the respective COCODES of different villages, long-standing NGOs with a development focus, and even the Tzolojche, or council of elders – have had their power either systematically usurped by the Muni’s “power of purse,” or have been steadily squeezed out of the decision-making process. The Muni, itself, and potential jobs in its various offices, are used increasingly for patronage and to empower family members and
political supporters at the expense of merit-based practices. One Muni worker I interviewed was asked to either leave his post, or pay what amounted to several month’s salary. He was ultimately replaced by a family friend of the Mayor’s, with less education and experience, according to several witnesses. Meanwhile, the most prominent local NGO, which had been running a successful maternal education program with help from the Muni, was bypassed in favor of the Mayor’s daughter, who was given an ad-hoc title and responsibility for the Muni’s own maternal health program.

Though patronage in local government is common and generally unsurprising, the increasingly delimited battle lines drawn in SMC have disintegrated traditional patterns of governance by disempowering formerly influential figures, traditional authorities, and even the legal systems of decentralization, like the COCODES, designed intentionally to empower citizen influence over development governance. The result is a Muni that resembles a mini authoritarian, or “cult of personality” regime, in which dissent is rather nakedly met with retribution, sometime violent, but more frequently through exclusion.

Underscoring the tensions that exist within SMC, and further undermining development governance at the local level, key social welfare offices that had been overseen by the Muni have since been “captured” by Patriota officials, and programs are now administered unilaterally by a single political party rather than by the local government. Following Patriota’s electoral loss in SMC in 2011, but simultaneously bolstered by the party’s presidential victory, the Ministry of Social and Economic Development (MIDES), and agricultural development ministry (MAGA), in particular, moved their respective headquarters from the municipal building to different corners of the town. According to unanimous feedback from citizens in subsequent focus groups,
basic resources designated for the neediest, and hungriest, families are systematically distributed with the express purpose of vote-buying and an anti-mayor smear campaign.

Finally, several focus group participants argued that new disparities in income, largely the result of uneven access to remittances, were further complicating social divisions in Chiquimula. Newly “prominent” families, and even former residents living abroad, were said to be using money to influence politics and decisions regarding where to upgrade roads or access to electricity. On a more basic level, new three-story mansions with opulent edifices now tower over huts that house large families with few resources.

In contrast to the deep social divisions, Chiquimula arguably has a robust civil society, at least on the surface. The Development Association of Santa María Chiquimula (ADESMA), for example, is now twenty years old. The Paroquia runs a popular school, is well staffed by dedicated Spanish volunteers, and runs its own maternal health and anti-hunger program.106 Separately, village elders had only one year earlier openly chastised state officials for their mishandling of a direct transfer program.107 When I asked the director of ADESMA to list all the organizations that worked in SMC with the purpose of improving social welfare, she penned a list of over 15 organizations.

But as ADESMA’s own experience demonstrates, the mere existence of different organizations does not constitute a strong civil society. ADESMA itself had been unable to find a new foreign donor after the former director was accused of mismanagement and corruption. It currently glides on the faintest of resources, running a small micro-loans program, while its core work, including women’s empowerment, has been steadily

106 It was through this program that I was able to visit the more remote aldeas.

usurped by the Muni, or has been discarded altogether given limited resources. Other organizations have since folded, or exist only on paper. Finally, the local indigenous leaders are struggling to find traction among the young (in a country experiencing a massive youth bubble), and are increasingly squeezed out by the political parties and their money, which dominates all decision-making. Thus SMC’s civil society, despite its proximity to Totonicapán’s capital, and the highly visible 48 Cantones, is minimal, and ineffective at either mobilizing citizens, or influencing key decisions.

Finally, Santa María clearly does not demonstrate state-local complementarity. Its internal divisions, authoritative local government, and now the fallout of the 2011 elections which resulted in Patriota-staffed social welfare offices breaking from, and actively working against local authorities, has obliterated state-society relations. At the same time, the diminishing influence of traditional authorities – succumbing to youth disinterest, limited funds, and the pull of Evangelism, in particular – has negated the most likely opportunity for coherent, coordinated protest of patronage and dysfunctional governance of development.

108 Unofficially, a young, energetic local youth had managed to begin studying political science in Quetzaltenango, several hours away. On weekends, he was running a civic leadership course for teenage boys and girls from the region, and was receiving support and guidance from an influential former president of the 48 Cantones – the well-financed and capable group centered in Totonicapán, but which had failed to captivate their fellow K’iché in Chiquimula. As the former president explained to me with a wink, he was in essence grooming the young man for Mayor, and the would-be start of a revolution from within that would take back politics for the people, and for the indigenous.

109 The 48 Cantones de Totonicapán is the highly visible and well-organized indigenous group based in Totonicapán’s capital city. They have national clout, and made international news after some members were shot in a protest in October 2012. But as discussed elsewhere, they have not been effective at improving development outcomes closer to home.
4.3 Profiles in Governance: Santa Lucía la Reforma, Totonicapán

Santa Lucía la Reforma (SLR) is located at 6013 feet above sea level (1833 meters) in Totonicapán department, though its urban center is more easily reached from the department capital of El Quiché and, given difficult travel, is on the one hand tied more to Quiché than to the other communities in Toto. However, Santa Lucía is still rather remote, and was in fact once part of Santa María Chiquimula municipio itself, and thus shares much in terms of historical, cultural and even familial ties with neighboring Chiquimula – making this nested pair a particularly compelling case.

In fact, several participants in SMC interviews wondered aloud why smaller Santa Lucía, a rugged four-hour pick-up truck drive away from SMC’s center, despite bordering one another, was doing “better” than SMC. They had heard that people in need there were getting important help, that government was responsive, or at least more so, and that conditions were improving. It was hard to know what sort of credibility to give such accounts. But despite higher rates of poverty (an astounding 94.5% according to the latest figures, versus 87.5% in SMC), extreme poverty (55.4%, versus 35% in SMC), and equal rates of state density (a very low .16), Santa Lucía has outstripped its neighbor in every development metric besides income – whether illiteracy, infant mortality, HDI scores, chronic hunger and even homicides. This has occurred, moreover, despite it recording four times as many victims of conflict and violence during the civil war (a statistically significant drag on development as demonstrated in Chapter 3), and more recently, spending half as much (officially) on social services per inhabitant than its neighbor.
These two communities alone underscore the puzzle under investigation, and so I took the more reliable, if nevertheless touch-and-go option of a bus from SMC to Cuatro Caminos, another to Totonicapán’s city center, another through its sacred forests and over mountain passes on the landslide-prone road to Santa Cruz del Quiché, and finally another micro-bus – jammed to the gills as always – into Santa María’s town square.

Figure 11. Totonicapán Department, scanned from Guatemala's National Geographic Institute. Note the proximity of Santa María Chiquimula and Santa Lucía la Reforma (center and top right)
After a series of interviews with the heads of each different government ministry represented in town,\textsuperscript{110} Church leaders, indigenous leaders from around the municipio fortuitously gathered in the center, the municipal Mayor himself, and finally after participating in a monthly meeting\textsuperscript{111} organized by the mayor as part of his responsibilities under Hambre Cero – the anti-hunger program discussed more in Chapter Five – which included civil society members, it is clear that SLR is indeed operating under different conditions than Chiquimula.

Several different experiences during my visits indicate that SLR experiences far less social discord than SMC. In all of my interviews, participants described how they were working in conjunction with other offices in order to accomplish specific targets. In a contentious meeting between village leaders, organized ahead of the main market day and the monthly COMUSAN meeting with the Mayor and others, leaders hammered out their position regarding certain policies, and their respective roles in each community vis-à-vis state actors.

More telling, both the mayor and village leaders described cordial relations, but also relative independence from one another, compared with SMC where the Mayor had cowed village leaders in his effort to secure his authority.

Finally, the mayor, and separately the lead Hambre Cero coordinator, Roni Morales, described very similar experiences in working hard to actively bridge the gap between traditional church followers and the emerging Pentecostal movement that had permeated

\textsuperscript{110} MIDES, MAGA, and El Comité Nacional de Alfabetización (CONALFA, the National Literacy Committee).

\textsuperscript{111} La Comisión de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional, COMUSAN, is held monthly and chaired by the Mayor in each community that receives Hambre Cero assistance. SMC held COMUSAN meetings as well, but I was consistently told that the Mayor dominated events and resisted outside input. As I will discuss later, COMUSAN meetings are not regularly held in other communities.
even remote Santa Lucía. *Cuesta*, each told me separately, *cuesta mucho*… “It’s been very challenging”… “But,” the mayor added, “there really is no other option.”

It is important to note that the mayor of Santa Lucía is affiliated with *Patriota*, and so no conflict arises between those running *Hambre Cero*, for instance, and local government, as exists in Chiquimula. In fact a large banner covered the second story of the municipal offices during my visit, celebrating the mayor’s administration and declaring him “The Mayor that Works for His People” (*El Alcalde que Trabaja por Su Pueblo*), with a photo of the mayor and the President in one corner. Given the degree to which political parties have exacerbated tensions in Chiquimula, as well as in other communities, this factor should not be diminished. At the same time, however, the Totonicapán *departmental* director of SESAN, 112 while acknowledging the challenges he faces in coordinating events community-to-community, cites SLR as by far the community in which *Hambre Cero* had been best received, and where it is making the most impact.

Indeed, key differences exist between Chiquimula and SLR. Though the number and influence of locally-based organizations is limited in both places, as is the role of elders or indigenous organizations, *alcaldes comunitarios* in SLR are active and invested in development questions. *Alcaldes comunitarios* are semi-formal village leaders, from the *aldeas*, that represent local interests before the mayor. In one meeting, they discussed exactly how best to work with the local *Hambre Cero* coordinator in order to identify crisis situations, and the families most in need. In another, the local director of RENAP, or the government entity in charge of registering citizens and issuing new IDs (that are

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112 La Secretaría de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional de la Presidencial de la República (SESAN) oversees *Hambre Cero*.
then used for voting as well), visited the *alcaldes* and implored *them* (a truly astounding site after a month in Chiquimula and Toto) for their help in mobilizing citizens, alleviating people’s fears, and even helping arrange transportation to the office where they were digitizing registrations and issuing new identification cards. In subsequent interviews, it was clear that this was an established role of the *alcaldes*, who had already been bringing people to the local health clinic for vaccinations and ante-natal checkups, and working with state officials in order to build trust.  

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113 For the sake of transparency and full disclosure, I should also note that, while they were in attendance at the COMUSAN meeting, several were very intoxicated, even by 9 am, and were admonished by the Mayor and others for their poor judgment—a reality check before over-romanticizing their influence. They were, whether reluctantly or not, nevertheless seen as key agents in SLR.

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Figure 12. Variation in Total Poverty Levels in Totonicapán (Source: UNDP Guatemala)
In stark contrast to Chiquimula, Santa Lucía illustrates a version of state-local complementarity. Both Mayor Don Francisco, and Roni Morales, the central government’s representative, remarked separately that they have been actively working in order build trust and identify key obstacles to implementation. The mayor, who again is Patriota affiliated, dismisses the idea that the state is an object of distrust in his community, or to be avoided, despite its history of violence during the conflict and more recent arrests made in the area for marijuana production. He identified, instead, three contemporary threats to community cohesiveness and effective governance, including sectarian divisions, political party rivalries and comités, or ad-hoc groups that organize around single-issues in an uncoordinated fashion. Both the mayor and Roni underscored the hard work it has taken to try to overcome community divisions, or respond to the more obstinate local actors. Other state actors, meanwhile – from MAGA and CONALFA – described a “development-oriented” mayor who had their best interests in mind, and who was generally supportive of their respective missions.

The CONALFA representative, for example (who was in fact from Chiquimula originally), argues that, despite the influence of churches, and no obvious influence by principals (traditional elders), the community’s well-grounded Maya tradition of “service” (voluntario institucional) partly permitted more congenial relations in SLR. While this concept had frayed in neighboring Chiquimula, he asserted that its influence remained intact in SLR.

114 Based on interviews (October 10th and 11th, 2013)

115 Interviews (October 9, 2013)
Crucially, not everything is perfect. Two of ten villages in the *municipio* had refused CONALFA’s overtures, and the administrator lamented being unable to set up his programs there. Arguably, this is a state failure to penetrate remote corners of its territory. On the other hand, the representative told me that, without the support of the local leaders, *it was meaningless for him to impose himself*. This echoes my experience in a meeting of the village mayors described earlier, in which the RENAP representative pleaded for their assistance in mobilizing people in order to register, and to coordinate transportation (an obvious constraint in the rural, rugged countryside). This degree of deference to local authorities is highly unusual and highlights differences in de facto governance practice across two neighboring communities.\[116\]

Finally, in the COMUSAN meeting several days later, the mayor and Roni spoke at length, as did many others about their respective challenges, while the village leaders sat in attendance, making occasional comments. The meeting was conducted in Spanish and K’iché, interchangeably (not simultaneously). The key agenda item was how to make *Hambre Cero* useful to the locals, by addressing questions of literacy and accessibility. In this setting, the most traditional, informal actors were in the background, and had no observable influence over decision-making and implementation (though the semi-formal role of local leaders was highlighted in the meeting as crucial on separate occasions). In comparison to the other communities, state actors in SLR are deferring to local wishes and working thoughtfully through local interlocutors in unprecedented ways.

\[116\] In the COMUSAN meeting several days later, however, the CONALFA representative was taken to task for not doing more to include these communities in his campaign, which on the other hand demonstrates the unusually high motivation on the part of the governance actors in the room to make positive impacts.
4.4 Profiles in Governance: Zacualpa, El Quiché

Zacualpa (4875 feet, or 1485 meters, above sea level) is located in the southern flank of the department of El Quiché. In a sense, it is rather easily reached by bus from the regional capital of Santa Cruz. Its legacy, however, is one of tragedy. During the civil war, the army was very active in bombing the hills between Zacualpa and neighboring Joyabaj in an effort to demolish rebel hideouts. The army also commandeered Zacualpa’s church grounds, converting them into a detention and torture center, while unceremoniously dumping the bodies of victims into the church’s wells. The church today is in part a shrine to the many victims.

Zacualpa also represents the most divisive community in my study. It is here that an angry mob attempted to burn down the municipal building after the current mayor, Sr. Ernesto Calachij, won a contentious third term in 2011. Even before this incident, tensions turned into violence when pro-mayor and Patriota supporters openly clashed in the streets of this otherwise out-of-the-way and quiet community, resulting in burned cars and many injured.117 On my visit, many interview participants quietly noted that unreported incidents of retribution stemming from the election-related violence have taken place. Meanwhile the Patriota candidate at the time has since been jailed and convicted for his role in the torture and murder of two opponents, who were also COCODE members.118


Figure 13. Quiché Department, with field site locations identified (Source: Scanned from National Geographic Institute)
These overt and headline-grabbing events have largely given way to more subtle and daily acts of criminality that underscore the divisions plaguing Zacualpa. A religious leader from the Catholic Church – whose cathedral faces the Muni across the square in a seemingly symbolic squaring off of opposing camps – described how she and others from the paroquia have been stopped by machete-wielding thugs when traveling through communities widely known to be “pro-Mayor.”\textsuperscript{119} Her consistent and outspoken position on what she perceived to be abuse of authority by the mayor has, in essence, made her persona non grata in “pro-mayor” territory. The Church’s subsequent efforts to support schools in certain aldeas have been rejected by COCODES under the thumb of the mayor. She further accused the mayor of violently replacing the staff of certain government offices with his supporters, and actively drawing battle lines between those aldeas that supported him electorally, and those that did not – depriving the “opposition” aldeas of basic resources. Finally, she accused the mayor of recruiting enforcers through his network of former PAC\textsuperscript{120} colleagues, further dividing the community along lines that evoke the civil war, which resulted in over 600 casualties here and egregious human rights abuses. She concluded our lengthy interview – which was a tragic litany of stories demonstrating the community’s current turmoils – succinctly: “our social fabric (tejido social) is broken.”

I witnessed many of these phenomena myself on trips to surrounding aldeas. People in the Muni, other than the Mayor, were also surprisingly forthcoming about how only select communities were privy to assistance, and how the Muni’s relationship with

\textsuperscript{119} Interview with Sister Ana María Álvarez López (October 15, 2013).

\textsuperscript{120} Patrullas de Autodefensas Civiles (PACs, or “civil defense patrols”) were utilized by the army during the civil war in order to recruit supporters within communities, and in order to divide communities, weakening rebels and diluting their base of support.
*Patriota* and government offices like MIDES and MAGA were cantankerous, if not downright toxic.\(^{121}\)

Finally, I watched as poor families lined up outside the MIDES office on the outskirts of Zacualpa’s center, receiving their basic *bonos* (basic transfers of rice, beans and

\(^{121}\) This is based on multiple interviews with various Zacualpense Muni staff, especially in the Women’s Office (OMM), and subsequently confirmed by the workers in each government office, who confirmed that relations with the mayor were very bad (October 2013).
Incanparina\textsuperscript{122}). Multiple people from the neighborhood confirmed that these were 
Patriota supporters/supported, who could never expect assistance from the Muni. Nowhere that I had visited in Guatemala, or would visit yet, were social divisions so obviously entrenched, daily, and openly acknowledged.

Zacualpa, like Chiquimula, has a superficially robust civil society. Small NGOs, like ASODINZA\textsuperscript{123} or ASODEZA,\textsuperscript{124} work independently to provide resources to farmers and water to citizens respectively. Others, however, have become part of the wider schism that affects the community. People at ADIZ,\textsuperscript{125} for example, which works throughout El Quiché but has its headquarters in Zacualpa, told me that “the doors at the Muni are closed to us – they want nothing to do with us.” What they did not tell me initially was that its director had run for mayor and lost, assuring its place as opposition. In contrast, trips to aldeas organized by the Woman’s Office\textsuperscript{126} were funded by NutriSalud\textsuperscript{127} and USAID. These groups are independent but rely on local interlocutors to help disseminate their maternal health education package, which includes a video and presentation. The OMM, openly hostile to communities seen as in opposition to Mayor Calachij,\textsuperscript{128} provided the local Nutri-Salud coordinator the means with which to reach rural hamlets.

\textsuperscript{122} A cheap high-protein food made of cottonseed, sorghum flours, maize, yeast, etc. used to prevent protein-deficiency diseases. See: \url{http://www.incaparina.com/}

\textsuperscript{123} Asociacion de Desarrollo Integral Zacauulpense

\textsuperscript{124} Asociacion de Desarrollo de Zacualpa

\textsuperscript{125} Asociacion de Desarrollo Integral Zacualpenese

\textsuperscript{126} Oficina de la Mujer (OMM)

\textsuperscript{127} \url{http://www.urc-chs.com/news?newsItemID=295}

\textsuperscript{128} In multiple interviews with the OMM director, I was candidly told that the Mayor’s office, and its resources, won’t be wasted on ungrateful communities. “If they won’t help us, then why should we help them,” she told me in English (she lived in Rhode Island for 10 years).
The OMM then invited additional groups, like ACOMQUI (or the Quiché Association of Comudronas, or birthing assistants) to attend and nominally support the program.

The program itself was deftly run by a young Nutri-Salud coordinator, and was both well attended and engaging. But separately the program became a mini-rally for the mayor, his party, and even his church, and of course actively excluded the participation of some community members. The mayor made a surprise visit to one presentation, extolling his administration, party and even his evangelical church (though he also made a point to present and welcome me).

Though partly inadvertent, some local civil society groups had hitched their wagon to the mayor’s and are now perceived as being on one side of the divide that increasingly divides the community. More remotely, even well-regarded, internationally funded NGOs and aid agencies, despite sophisticated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, are funding a campaign of political division and exclusion at the local level.

Finally, though Zacualpa does have an alcaldía indígena, with headquarters only blocks from the Muni, its influence is limited and generally relegated to questions of culture and identity, not development policy or distribution of resources. También, también, the distinguished elder who is the current Alcadía Indígena told me – “we also do that” – when I asked if the Alcadía concerned itself with hunger, or poverty, or worked with the COCODES. But in the villages themselves, people mostly smiled at my naïveté, and explained that, “sure we have an alcadía…but this is not what he’s for…he cannot affect these matters…”

129 June 2013 interviews.
Nowhere in this study are the relations between state actors and local government officials so transparently toxic. As the local MIDES official told me, “Zacualpa is slowly dying because of the mayor.” “The mayor and his reign of terror are causing a sickness.” She went on to claim harassment, including death threats, and having been shut out of visiting certain communities by the mayor’s supporters. Other government officials were not quite as vitriolic, but acknowledged the deadlock. Meanwhile it is clear that Patriota, for its part, actively smears the mayor and has stirred the pot, though it is unclear whether it is responsible for directly organizing violent protests.
Development, meanwhile, outside minor improvements at the health clinic,\textsuperscript{130} is virtually at a standstill in Zacualpa. There are informal actors – including *madres guías* and *comudronas* (birthing assistants that have slowly gained additional training in recent years)\textsuperscript{131} – contributing to maternal and infant health in the remotest *aldeas*. But they do not coordinate in any fashion with state actors.

Alas, Zacualpa is void of the complementarity that permeated state-society relations in SLR. Its development trajectory, on paper, is positive, but outside the city center, hunger and poverty remains widespread. Arguably, incremental increases in health service in rural areas, including those by informal actors like traditional midwives, have had some impact. More likely, according to interviews both from within and outside Zacualpa, is that a somewhat famous influx of remittances to Zacualpa has bolstered livelihoods in and around the city center.\textsuperscript{132} Indeed, Zacualpa appears on the surface more prosperous than either Chiquimula or SLR. But given this prosperity, then, development indicators are remarkably low. Governance-for-development, meanwhile, is non-existent.

\textsuperscript{130} This is based on interviews with physicians at the local clinic (October 18, 2013). They acknowledge modest improvements in Zacualpa thanks to improved staffing in the most rural *puestos de salud* (health outposts), increased awareness amongst young mothers, and improved vaccination rates. They largely credit previous central governments for these changes and try to stay mostly aloof from local political dynamics.

\textsuperscript{131} A local NGO – *La Asociación de Comudronas de Quiché* – has trained 152 birthing assistants over the last 12 years, and work with village leaders to convince them to accept their presence. They claim to have improved conditions for young mothers and infants in the countryside. They do not, however, coordinate with any state actors (October 16, 2013 interviews).

\textsuperscript{132} Interviewees with policymakers and academics in Guatemala City were aware of Zacualpa because of a perception that it has prospered, in a relative sense, especially through remittances. The effects of large flows of remittances on northern communities in El Quiché – mostly negative by encouraging household debt – is discussed by anthropologist David Stoll in *El Norte or Bust* (2013).
4.5 Profiles in Governance: Patzité, El Quiché

Patzité, at a temperate 7545 feet above sea level (2300 meters), is an obscure destination for visitors in southern El Quiché department, located down bumpy secondary roads that climb slowly out of the regional capital of Santa Cruz. It largely avoided the worst of the civil war, but unlike nearby communities, like Chichicastenango in particular, neither traditional forms of leadership nor indigenous identity play a significant role in local politics. Here, the more formal system of COCODES is intact and influential, while the mayor’s office dominates.

This small community has rather quietly grappled with its development questions in isolation. In a nested pair with Zacualpa, Patzité would initially appear to be the underperformer, with a precipitous drop in its reported HDI scores from the late 1990s to 2005. But a more systematic look across a suite of indicators muddies the waters. On the one hand, Patzité has historically better education indicators (including the disaggregated HDI education indicator, as well as better illiteracy numbers, and improvements in illiteracy over time). On the other hand, it has higher chronic hunger rates (74.7% versus 57.4% in Zacualpa), but with much greater improvements in hunger over time (-6.8% versus -1.4% in Zacualpa), and far superior infant mortality rates (18 per 100,000 versus 38 in Zacualpa).

After surveying more obscure indicators from Guatemala’s National Statistics Institute (INE), the development landscape shifts more in favor of Patzité. Despite potable water being the hallmark of the Calachij administration in Zacualpa, for

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133 The Mayor mentioned potable water to me on several occasions as proof that he puts development first in his community, citing several projects that he spearheaded.
example, far more houses in Zacualpa report lacking permanent access to plumbing than in Patzité. These differences occur, moreover, despite almost identical poverty and extreme poverty rates between the two communities. Similarly, over three times as many houses in Zacualpa report lacking any form of permanent facility for the “disposal of excrement.” Finally, the more holistic indicator of “unsatisfied basic needs,” a composite index of well-being intended to capture subnational variation in access to basic resources (Hyman 2006), is far greater in Zacualpa (83.24 versus 69.33) than in Patzité. Thus in most respects, Patzité has demonstrated more robust development performance over the last decade.

Interviews with different actors\textsuperscript{134} – from the mayor and his volunteer committee members to health workers, the justice of peace, and central government actors among others – were generally positive about the direction of the most basic programs, even if most acknowledged significant challenges still. Though the mayor, when asked, hinted at the possibility of periodic political wrangling, most other interview participants diminished the influence of political conflict on their respective work. After my time in Zacualpa, this was somewhat surprising, especially since the mayor in Patzité is affiliated with the UNE party, like Chiquimula’s mayor, rather than Patriota. Overall, despite somewhat inevitable tensions between political parties, Patzité has avoided the deep social divisions that plague Zacualpa and Chiquimula.

Relative to these communities in fact, Patzité appears remarkably “development-oriented,” with a mayor and council seemingly dedicated to improving the conditions of local people – with a particular focus on education. But there is limited evidence of

\textsuperscript{134} November 2013.
Complementarity as seen in SLR. Emblematic of a more typical disconnect between state resources and local needs is the arrival of a used ambulance to the local clinic, but inadequate fuel keeps it grounded most days. As well, in interviews with MIDES and MINEDUC (Ministry of Education), staff were reluctant but nevertheless hinted at tension between their offices and the mayor’s. However, the regional director of SESAN in Santa Cruz views Patzité very favorably compared to Zacualpa with respect to his efforts at implementing Hambre Cero. In interviews he noted that, despite the Mayor of Patzité being from another party, he, himself, is able to work with the mayor effectively to help implement Hambre Cero – though I did not witness the active, and purposeful degree of cooperation as is evident in SLR. Separately, the director of CORSADEC, a Guatemalan NGO active in the region, also spoke well of Patzité’s mayor, and his general support for CORSADEC programs, and the development trajectory of Patzité more generally. But explicit cooperation with, or the use of, local, informal interlocutors by either state actors or NGOs is done on only an ad-hoc basis, if at all.

4.6 Profiles in Governance: Santa Catarina Palopó, Sololá

Santa Catarina Palopó, or SCP hereafter, is a beautiful village sandwiched between steep hillsides and Lake Atitlán, in the department of Sololá (5456 feet or 1663 meters). It is a very small, sleepy community with three aldeas. Because of its topography, the municipio as a whole is disjointed, even if physically contiguous by map. Steep cliffs separate the coastal center and the uphill aldeas, requiring as much as an hour’s drive to

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http://corsadec.org/actividades-importantes/
connect them. Though hunger emergencies are not uncommon still, SCP’s proximity to the tourist center of Panajachel has allowed for more steady employment opportunities and access to services than the case studies in Totonicapán and Quiché, discussed below. This is reflected by a relatively high 2005 HDI score (.504), though this had fallen considerably since the initial 1994 calculation and poverty remains high (Table 12).

Figure 16. Sololá Department Map (Source: Scan of National Geographic Institute map)

The Sololá region in which SCP is located is largely Kaqchikel Maya, and the seat of one of the most-well organized and dynamic forms of indigenous leadership in

136 Interviews with local clinic personnel, and further substantiated by interviews with Hambre Cero personnel (November and December 2013).
Guatemala, the *Alcadía Indígena* of Sololá municipality (Klick 2013). Sololá more generally has been site of some of the most overt resistance to state influence both during and after the civil war (centered in Santiago Atitlán, especially, to the West along the lake). But despite the relative proximity of these communities to SCP, each lakeside community, it is clear, has a distinct culture and unique historical experiences. Likewise, the influence of indigenous forms of government, and state-society relations, varies wildly across space. SCP, for example, was largely unaffected by the war in a direct sense (as measured by my calculations of violent events using CEH 1999).

With respect to social discord specifically, one phenomenon dominates all others in SCP. In interview after interview, everyone told me that if I wanted to know more about development, or anything regarding SCP for that matter, I needed to speak with *el ex-alcalde*, or the former mayor, Mariano Lopez. Even the current mayor seemed at a loss during our interview with how to govern SCP – expressing frustration as leaned far back in his chair and covered his forehead, broadly admitting to being unable to affect change. *Hambre Cero*, he further told me, simply does not exist. COMUSAN meetings have since ended as well.

Don Mariano, it seems, has a stranglehold on all development resources – including official state resources that are owed to the Muni – and uses them, in his own words “for the good of my community.” He claims only to be helping the central government distribute resources more equitably, while avoiding the “corrupt” current mayor and his “gang of thugs” (who were democratically elected only two years previously, but who are affiliated with UNE, not *Patriota*). After a health worker confirmed, unprompted, that Don Mariano *maneja todos los programas* (is in charge of all the assistance programs),
and after witnessing the current mayor’s own frustrations, it is clear that this community was divided between two distinct, political cleavages.

Palopó presents a conundrum regarding the complementarity thesis. On the one hand, the state is utilizing what is arguably the most influential actor in the community to distribute resources. On the other hand, the state is largely absent, with little oversight given that it has none of the permanent offices that the other communities have, and cannot guarantee equitable or appropriate distribution of critical resources (if it is not already actively exacerbating the political rift crippling the Muni). Informal leadership in Palopó, which consists exclusively of Maya shaman, are largely in the background – periodically intervening to urge a family to go to the hospital in the case of a hunger emergency, but on other occasions resisting the influence of the state and avoiding health officials’ pleas.

Santa Catarina Palopó therefore demonstrates a perverse form of complementarity – one in which state and local forces merge, but simultaneously undermine official governance, and underscore political tensions and discord in the community. This importantly demonstrates that complementarity is not simply a function of social capital, not always a force for good. Complementarity hinges, as is becoming clear and as will be discussed more in Chapter Five, on “brokers” in the community, and their networks, with implications for future efforts to cultivate complementarity for development as a policy tool.

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137 MIDES, MAGA, etc. are based in Sololá and perform site visits, according to the departmental SESAN office personnel (multiple interviews over November and December 2013).

138 Interviews with SESAN’s Sololá personnel.
4.7 Profiles in Governance: San Pablo la Laguna, Sololá

San Pablo la Laguna (6861 feet, 2091 meters) is on the northwestern side of the lake, but set back more than other lakeside communities, perched somewhat precariously on a sloping plateau. It is, according to locals, the only place on the lake where the Maguey plant (agave) grows, which is used for making ropes and other crafts locally, and now a symbol of unity for the community. The local language is Tz’utujil, which is similar but distinct from Kaq’chikel as is spoken in SCP.

San Pablo’s history with social discord is somewhat more peculiar than in other sites. Focus groups and interview participants acknowledge, and indeed mostly accept as given,
that *Patriota* workers support party loyalists first, including with *bonos* and other resources intended for the poorest or hungriest. Similarly, the mayor (from the rather obscure and partly religiously oriented *Victoria* party) would naturally help his most ardent supporters first. Unlike in Zacaulpa, however, the mayor’s role seems mostly symbolic, and is not the focal point of frustration or citizen grievances. Moreover, as interviews mounted, the political party–patronage system that is now entrenched in Chiquimula and Zacaualpa, appears more theater in San Pablo, and more rhetorical, than systematic.

Many interviewees noted that, in an emergency, they would seek the help of either family members, or the mayor, first, who has on more than once occasion personally driven sick community members to the hospital in Sololá, an hour-plus drive through switchbacks and mountain passes. The mayor, himself, after a lengthy explanation of how his finances worked (or rather how they *did not*, given that they largely evaporated after paying for the most basic services, salaries and overhead) characterized his own role as one of a friendly patriarch, embodying the pride and aspirations of San Pablo more than a leader with real levers with which to change its living conditions.¹³⁹

Grievances were mostly directed at an amorphous state ideal, over the insecurity of employment, and over the relative gains witnessed in nearby tourist communities like San Juan and San Pedro at the expense of San Pablo, or so it is perceived. And while healthcare seems to have improved for children, with increased access to vaccinations for

¹³⁹ This, I should note, is a common refrain of people from across the country in their respective villages – that things are in some ways immutable, and that life is more a battle for survival under the given conditions, in which politicians steal, the rich dominate politics, and where poverty is inevitable. It is a cultural reality that, in focus groups in particular (versus with heads of NGOs who are indeed committed to change), made my work challenging, as my initial questions were met with a shrug. Even more basic questions dominated their lives, whereas political questions were a luxury not yet afforded time.
example, the local clinic is otherwise unable to treat adults regularly given limited resources. In contrast to every other community, however, interview participants routinely evoked the notion of “solidarity” within the community, and then connected this directly to the meaning of development.\textsuperscript{140}

This was striking. Despite their grievances, people from San Pablo fiercely distinguished themselves from neighboring communities. Only in San Pablo (and Santiago across the lake), I was told, do sacerdotes Mayas (or traditional healers) play a visible role in village society. I trekked through coffee fields to visit Santa Ana – a peculiar rock outcropping that resembled a pregnant woman that serves as the patron saint of comadronas throughout Guatemala, but for which San Pablo residents are especially proud. I also visited Mayan altars that are in still regular use, and of special significance in the daily lives of residents. Finally, more than one participant distinguished the political culture of San Pablo from other communities – especially wealth-driven San Juan only a few minutes away – as one of socialismo. “We fight for the poor here,” explained my young, local assistant who had helped arrange many interviews for me, before dropping me off in front of a large mural dedicated to former Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez.

San Pablo in some ways represents the de-facto model of governance that is emblematic of many communities and their experiences. Traditional and informal actors have a significant influence over the beliefs and religious practices of citizens, but are otherwise not the flag bearers of indigenous resistance that might be assumed. Though different in their respective roles – whether environmental stewards, or healers – in each

\textsuperscript{140} Multiple interview and focus group participants evoked “solidarity” when asked, first, how they defined “development.” This response diverged considerably from the other five field sites.
community the most traditional forms of authority and leadership have sunk back into the shadows, their leaders loathe to take part in petty political wranglings – which is a form of resistance in itself, however passive. But in the context of limited statehood and limited funding, but immediate need, formal actors like the mayor govern less and respond more – taking ad-hoc measures to help community members when they can, and meeting with state actors as needed. Governance itself, then, becomes more symbolic than productive, with development less the result of any government’s intention, and more the temporary fortune of its people – of a good crop, of a motivated NGO, or of a new source of income –whether from remittances, work along the Pacific lowland coast, or access to a touristic hub.

4.8 Conclusions: Spatial Variability in Governance and Development

The purpose of this chapter is principally to introduce the six case studies that constitute this study. As is already evident, mostly similar communities – with respect to demographics, state presence and local economies – diverge considerably along development outcomes as well as in systems of local governance. How these factors are linked is the focus of the following chapters, which more systematically explore the causal pathways through which governance influences development.

As was noted earlier, none of the communities are particularly thriving, per se. But some communities, like Santa Lucía la Reforma in particular, are making considerable progress along basics development indicators, even if poverty rates remain staggeringly high, and despite a tragic legacy of conflict. How past conflict continues to affect communities today is still uncertain, though Zacualpa provides some insight: There, new political divisions and rivalries stem from the mayor’s past participation with civilian
patrols – pitting local *ladinos* (non-indigenous Guatemalans) against indigenous opponents, and evoking thirty year old social cleavages formed during the civil war.

More common across all communities is some element of religious cleavage, between traditional Catholic affiliations and the growing wave of Evangelical Protestantism, which either overlaps with, or deepens, emerging social cleavages. Much of the local social division, however, stems from what is unanimously recognized by citizens as the growing prominence of political party affiliation. Political party affiliation has created deep divisions within otherwise harmonious communities, and usurped the influence of informal indigenous leaders, who only recently retained great influence over local decision-making and implementation of development projects.

Making sense of the above requires a more systematic approach, however. The following chapter demonstrates how a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of all six communities assists in deconstructing the links between governance and development.
CHAPTER FIVE: A QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS of SIX HIGHLAND COMMUNITIES

Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) has been employed in social science research as a means to systematically compare across an intermediate amount of cases in order to test the necessity and sufficiency of carefully coded causal conditions. Its main purpose is to allow for such comparisons, “while at the same time giving justice to within-case complexity” (Rihoux and Ragin 2009: xviii, as quoted in Speer 2011).

Specifically, QCA methods account for multi-causality (or “equifinality”) – the possibility of unobservable interactions between explanatory variables, and limitations in a researcher’s ability to adequately make perfectly controlled comparisons (George and Bennett 2005). Equifinality is of particular concern to social science research, and small n-case study research especially, where case selection and omitted variables can skew causal inferences, resulting in spurious conclusions.

QCA allows the investigator to more finely detect the presence of not only multiple causal conditions (or independent variables), but configurations of causal conditions and even multiple configurations and how they interact. Using QCA to reveal otherwise unclear configurations of causal conditions also provides insight into the more nuanced and relative influence of individual conditions, including the presence or absence of conditions that are necessary, sufficient, both or neither, and still more complex.
combinations (or INUS causes – insufficient but necessary parts of a configuration that is unnecessary but sufficient).\textsuperscript{141}

\textit{Table 13. QCA Coding per Variable}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of:</th>
<th>Coding Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Spending? (A=high, a=low)</td>
<td>ICEFI/USAID “Atlas del Gasto Social Municipal”: % of total budget per inhabitant spent on “social functions” = above (high) or below (low) mean (234.54 Quetzales/person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Strong” local civil society? (B=high, b=low)</td>
<td>Qualitative observations and interviews: What is the presence and density of locally-resonant forms of civil society or traditional authority? More crucially, can these organizations affect change, mobilize citizens, and spur deference by other actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social discord? (C=high, c=low)</td>
<td>Qualitative observations and interviews: What is the extent and nature of social divisions within a community, if any? How do they manifest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict-affectedness? (D=high, d=low)</td>
<td>Historical experiences with the civil war: Above (high) or below (low) the mean conflict intensity “score” (96 victims/community). This is augmented by qualitative data gained through interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementarity (E =high, e=low)</td>
<td>Process tracing: Observation of lead civil society actors working, or not, with government officials to implement anti-hunger program elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements in Hunger? (DV)</td>
<td>Beginning with the difference between Guatemala’s 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} “hunger census” (which measures stunting) scores, differences are calculated as a percentage and compared across communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Illiteracy (DV)</td>
<td>Changes in illiteracy rates between 2009 and 2011 based on official statistics and compared with mean (~1.6%) and SD (5%). Greater than 2 SDs = “High”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Rates (2009) (DV)</td>
<td>Compared with mean (36.0) and SD (30.5). Differences beyond 1 SD are coded as “High,” within 1 SD = “Med”, and below the mean = “Low”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ HDI 2005-2011(DV)</td>
<td>Using the extrapolated HDI score representing 2011, change in HDI is calculated as percentage and, besides direction (+/-), is compared with the mean difference (.067)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI 2011 (DV)</td>
<td>Absolute values extrapolated from difference between 2000 and 2005 figures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{141} See fn 76.
Table 13 presents the key independent variables under investigation in this study’s qualitative component, and how their presence or absence was established, methodologically. Different proxies for development that serve as dependent variables are reiterated in Table 13 as well.

This strict coding criteria is essential for deciphering the presence or absence of key variables. Naturally, variables are present to different degrees, and “medium” cases of anything are more difficult to interpret. In these cases, however, the coding criteria allows for a firm decision with respect to the presence and absence of variables. Fortunately, and in the cases selected here, the coding criteria did not conflict with cases or force a (potentially biased) judgment call, and instead allowed for more precise coding and subsequent analysis.

5.1 Communities in Conflict: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Human Development in Rural Guatemala

This section systematically analyzes the presence or absence of each independent variable, determined by qualitative observations from all six communities with quantitative metrics where applicable, in order to build a “truth table” representing how different variables correlate with varying development outcomes in each community.

From field site visits discussed above, and the combination of key-informant interviews and focus groups in the most remote aldeas, a combination of thick description and process tracing (discussed in Chapter 6) is used to code each variable. The qualitative component allows for more exploration into the presence and influence of variables that could not be tested in the quantitative component, including “social discord,” and, crucially, “complementarity.”
5.1.1 – Social Discord

In the quantitative analysis component of this project (Chapter 3), no clear metric can capture the degree to which a community is internally divided, or “cohesive” for that matter (though I attempted to at least crudely capture an element of this phenomenon through homicide rates and numbers of official denuncias). Yet literature – ranging from political science to anthropology and even legal studies – frequently observes varying levels of community division in Mayan Guatemala, linking such social breakdown to the armed conflict and its legacy, or as the result of a state-dominant (and culturally ignorant) punitive legal system. Divisions have also resulted from a clash between traditional Mayan values, including concepts of Mayan authority rooted in the cofradia system,\(^{142}\) and the modern political system that biases the wealthy and educated candidate, and which values national priorities over local matters, further undermining tradition and traditional governance (Hawkings, McDonald and Adams 2013, International Crisis Group 2013, personal interviews in Totonicapán).

Scholars have since linked social divisions within Mayan communities to a rash of extra-legal “lynchings”\(^{143}\) – or cases of violent, sometimes lethal reprisals conducted by citizens as punishment for what are frequently minor crimes by neighbors (Godoy 2006; Hawkins, McDonald and Adams 2013; Sieder 2010). Certain Mayan communities more effectively organize themselves, however, either to deploy a collective system of Mayan

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\(^{142}\) This is the now mostly defunct system of a council of elders that elects a single leader based on leadership and demonstrated contributions to community well-being. It had, until recently, been a significant honor, and came with important responsibilities. It also carried, frequently, far more importance at the village level than elected government.

\(^{143}\) Though some would argue that lynchings represent an attempt, however misguided, by communities to reclaim what is a constitutionally-recognized local authority of Mayan law over criminal matters (Hessbruegge and Ochoa García 2011).
law in conjunction with state officials and the national police, or to self-police without the use of violence and in pursuit of greater autonomy (Sieder 2010, Hawkins, McDonald and Adams 2013, International Crisis Group 2013, personal interviews in Totonicapán with 48 Cantones leadership).

The most organized – like the 48 Cantones de Totonicapán – can evoke traditional indigenous mores, and an entrenched desire for autonomy, to mobilize citizens in protest of anything from taxes to electricity prices. The organization’s leadership – generally well-educated in legal matters and public policy – has a tense relationship with central authorities, who have deferred to Canton leadership in times of crisis, but otherwise dismiss their legitimacy. Their legitimacy, nevertheless, grants the organization tremendous influence locally, which has been used to stem violence, self-police, and to organize mass, peaceful public protest.

Peculiarly, however, the organization has not been able to convert this authority into development gains. The Totonicapán community as a whole has made only minimal gains in combating hunger (with current rates of 65 percent). Meanwhile outlying communities of the municipality, but still under the purview of the Cantons, were reporting rates of acute hunger among schoolchildren of 100 percent as late as October 2013.144

In the six communities under focus in this study, social discord is widely prominent, but varies across space and manifests in different ways. Based on fieldwork described in Chapter 4, each community’s experience with social discord is subsequently coded as either “high” or “low.” This judgment is based on the degree to which social divisions are

144 This is based on interviews with the department’s head of Hambre Cero, who shared with me original data from the program’s monitoring and evaluation program. Small communities were still reporting extremely high rates of hunger emergencies, particular amongst the youngest, in Totonicapán municipio, which is among the most well-organized indigenous communities.
reflected in the distribution of public health resources, violence and electoral violence, and more subjectively the degree to which such divisions permeated my interviews with participants (i.e., participants volunteered an unspecified level, or type, of social discord as an important factor complicating development in that community). The results of this tabulation, to be incorporated into the greater QCA truth table in Section 5.3, are located below in Table 14.

Table 14. Summary Table of Social Discord Across Six Guatemala Field Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community → Presence of</th>
<th>Sta María Chiquimula (6975’)</th>
<th>Sta Lucia la Reforma (6013’)</th>
<th>Patzité (7545’)</th>
<th>Zacualpa (4875’)</th>
<th>Sta Cta Palopó (5456’)</th>
<th>San Pablo (6861’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social discord?</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are the extent and nature of social divisions within a community, if any? How do they manifest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2 Civil Society

This section is dedicated to exploring the scope and strength of civil society in each community, including locally-based organizations (like development-oriented NGOs) and informal institutions like Mayan *principales* (elders), *alcaldías indígenas* (indigenous mayors) and semi-formal community leaders. Foreign NGOs were almost entirely absent from these six communities.

Literature has already noted the influence of different local institutions on violence and justice, as well as the ambitions of some more organized institutions to carve out local autonomy, or rebuff what is perceived to be an intrusive state and a statebuilding
project that divides indigenous groups and erodes their culture. Theoretically, therefore, different organizational capacity should influence development governance.

In the six communities of this project, however, civil society takes different forms but is largely absent from the development discourse. Even the most culturally relevant institutions in very remote, conservative communities – which have at times bargained with, or confronted, the state – have been relegated in this respect. Most indigenous leaders acknowledge their limitations vis-à-vis political parties, while others have simply not taken up the pro-development mantle – seeing themselves as keepers of language, tradition and leaders on topics including the protection of forests or rivers rather than the murkier, state-led questions of education, hunger and development.

In meetings with various participants, many described a more subtle, behind-the-scenes influence of indigenous leaders. It may not be systematic, or overt, but from Santa María Chiquimula in the highlands to Santa Catarina Palopó on the shores of Lago Atitlán, interview participants delicately reminded me that, even if they were not necessarily at the proverbial table, indigenous leaders retained important influence at the local level – intervening, for example, in order to urge a family to take their sick child to the hospital, or to quell a heated political rivalry that threatened to spillover into violence. These events, despite my efforts, are harder to catalogue, and systematically code, and are a reminder of the mysteriousness that, while drawing me to Guatemala in the first place, limit the outside investigator’s task of unveiling the “Truth” behind phenomena in a social environment as complex as Guatemala’s,

Thus despite the lore of traditional leadership, legal plurality, and strong, locally-resonant informal institutions, these phenomena appear rare, with limited overall affect
on development planning or outcomes. Though individual cases – like the aforementioned 48 Cantones in Totonicapán, or Solola’s well-established Alcaldía Indígena – are compelling, and indeed influence local governance and even outcomes, their influence outside of their own community context is limited. Most communities (including remote, traditional villages), meanwhile, proceed with a COCODE system that is dysfunctional, coopted, or that is disbanded and re-formed by the mayor at his will. In the communities under study here, political parties and electoral competition has crowded out more pragmatic discussions of development, and limited the scope of stakeholder participation in governance. One exception is Santa Lucía la Reforma, where semi-formal community leaders from outlying aldeas meet routinely, and are directly involved in the distribution of resources and program implementation, and decision-making.

Table 15. Civil Society Synopsis From Six Guatemala Field Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Strong” local civil society?</th>
<th>Sta María Chiquimula (6975’)</th>
<th>Sta Lucia la Reforma (6013’)</th>
<th>Patzité (7545’)</th>
<th>Zacualpa (4875’)</th>
<th>Sta Cta Palopó (5456’)</th>
<th>San Pablo (6861’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of ↓</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Strong” local civil society?

What is the presence and density of locally-resonant forms of civil society or traditional authority? More crucially, can these organizations affect change, mobilize citizens, and spur deference by other actors?

145 Though this influence does not extend to development matters broadly, as noted (Klick 2013).

146 Several interview participants in government offices in Quiché’s capital, Santa Cruz, shared personal frustration with the Zacualpa case, and noted that a bad precedent was set when Guatemala City’s mayor, Alvaro Arzú, when he formed additional COCODES in order to circumvent the existing ones that were opposing his policies. This tactic was subsequently supported by the Constitutional Court, and is now used regularly throughout the country by mayors.
I therefore judge civil society not on its “thickness” in terms of registered NGOs or supposed “density,” which would likely be misleading in many of these communities, but rather on the observed role, scope and influence of community organizations, however roughly organized, including traditional forms of collective action.

5.1.3 Conflict and Municipal Spending

Both conflict and municipal spending are determined by quantitative metrics, and borrowed from Chapter Three. Only in Zacualpa, which was gruesomely impacted, did some interview participants draw direct links from events that took place during the civil war to the social discord that permeates village life today. I should also note that, despite only Santa Lucía la Reforma and Zacualpa being recorded as “highly” conflict affected, it is unclear how even a small number of violent events might resonate today. Methodologically, communities can receive the same “score” of conflict intensity, while suffering differently – either because the nature of the crimes themselves were different, or by being the victim of 2 or 3 massacres, for example, versus sustained, low-intensity violence, likely influencing perceptions of state violence differently.

Finally, it is also important to note again that such calculations have likely never been done at the municipal level for the entire country, as has been done for this study. Therefore while Totonicapán as a department is frequently dismissed as having suffered very little from the civil war – which partly explains why conservative, and even militaristic groups can still do well there electorally (International Crisis Group 2013), this study reveals a more nuanced experience in which some communities in the department indeed suffered great violence while others suffered more than is
conventionally acknowledged. The results from quantitative metrics have been added to Table 16 (below).

Table 16. Spending and Conflict Across Six Guatemala Field Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Spending?</th>
<th>ICEFI/USAID “Atlas del Gasto Social Municipal”: % of total budget per inhabitant spent on “social functions” = above (high) or below (low) mean (234.54 Quetzales/person)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict affected?</td>
<td>Historical experiences with the civil war: Above (high) or below (low) the mean conflict intensity “score” (96 victims/community). This is augmented by qualitative data gained through interviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community → Presence of ↓</th>
<th>Sta María Chiquimula (6975')</th>
<th>Sta Lucia Reforma (6013')</th>
<th>Patzité (7545')</th>
<th>Zacualpa (4875')</th>
<th>Sta Cta Palopó (5456')</th>
<th>San Pablo (6861')</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Spending?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict affected?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4 Complementarity

Finally, I attempt to capture through fieldwork whether my proposed theoretical explanatory variable has any bearing on development outcomes in these six communities. I argue that it does, though its effects are frequently muted by other variables, and that its presence is generally rare. Moreover, perverse forms of complementarity can arise, in which development at the community level is complicated by the role of actors working with the state to undermine local government, though for the QCA I focus on the positive forms of complementarity.

Complementarity, as defined in the introduction, is the process through which state actors, with important resources (from food aid and medicine to cash), work in harmony
with more locally-trusted trusted non-state actors in order to deliver basic services more equitably, or to distribute resources (Klick 2013). The idea is borrowed from Helmke and Levitsky (2004) who argue that informal institutions – or the unwritten rules of expected behavior, or uncodified patterns of behavior – can either accommodate, substitute, compete, or complement formal systems of constitutional governance.

Table 17. Complementarity Across Six Guatemala Field Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complementarity (E = high, e = low)</th>
<th>Process tracing: Observation of lead civil society actors working, or not, with government officials to implement anti-hunger program elements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community → Presence of ↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sta María Chiquimula (6975')</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sta Lucia la Reforma (6013')</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patzité (7545')</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sta Cta Palopó (5456')</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pablo (6861')</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More recently, work has emerged exploring whether “informal local governance institutions” (ILGIs) complement or compete with the formal state at the local level, and its implications for governance and service delivery, specifically (Mohmand et al. forthcoming, Cheema and Naseer 2010, Institute of Development Studies 2010, Klick 2013). This project continues this emerging trend by attempting to add analytical rigor and nuance to our understanding of informal, local governance, while also – in the case of Guatemala – exploring the resilience of local institutions under conditions of increasing political party and top-down statebuilding pressures. Though I code complementarity separately from other variables, it is indeed likely that there is a relationship between other indicators – like whether or not there is party alignment
between local and state offices, or the degree of within-community social discord, for example – and complementarity itself. By separating these concepts in the QCA component, this project can explore how these factors intertwine or not, and also explore the implications of unexpected “types” of complementarity, discussed more below.

5.2 QCA Results: Seeking Causal Links

When the results from this chapter are tabulated in a “truth table” (Table 18), one can begin to decipher whether relationships exist between variables themselves, and whether the presence or absence of different conditions correlate with outcomes in each community.

I coded whether each condition discussed above was “high” or “low” in each of the six communities, followed by multiple indicators of human development – including rates of chronic hunger, infant mortality, illiteracy, the extrapolated HDI scores (representing 2010 scores) and changes in HDI between 2005 and 2010.

Using this version of the truth table (Table 18, page 157), results are somewhat ambiguous, with perhaps the exception of local social spending (A), which diverges from the quantitative work in Chapter Three and which, here, generally corresponds to the better development outcomes. Though even here, the community with arguably the most impressive development gains (SLR) has low social spending. Another potentially important variable, as discussed earlier, is whether the community experienced high levels of conflict intensity (D). Low levels (d) correlate with better outcomes, like changes in illiteracy (see Figure 18, page 157). Again, however, Santa Lucía la Reforma, which in fact had very high gains in their battle against illiteracy, suffered
disproportionately during the armed conflict. In fact a broader view of the $\Delta \text{Illiteracy}$ variable reveals very inconsistent results (Figure 18).

Table 18. QCA Truth Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community →</th>
<th>Santa María Chiquimula (6975’)</th>
<th>Santa Lucía la Reforma (6013’)</th>
<th>Patzité (7545’)</th>
<th>Zacualpa (4875’)</th>
<th>Sta. Cta Palopó (5456’)</th>
<th>San Pablo (6861’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of ↓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Spending? (A=high, a=low)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Strong” local civil society? (B=high, b=low)</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social discord? (C=high, c=low)</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict affected? (D=high, d=low)</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementarity (E =high, e=low)</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta \text{Chronic Hunger}$</td>
<td>-1.7% (Low)</td>
<td>-3% (Med)</td>
<td>-6.8% (Med)</td>
<td>-1.4% (Low)</td>
<td>-22.8% (High)</td>
<td>-21.8% (High)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta \text{Illiteracy}$ Mean=-1.6%, S.D. = 5.0%</td>
<td>-9.5% (Med)</td>
<td>-20% (High)</td>
<td>-7% (Med)</td>
<td>-.2% (Low)</td>
<td>-10% (Med)</td>
<td>-2% (Low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Mean = 36.0, S.D. = 30.5</td>
<td>75.8 (High)</td>
<td>53.0 (Med)</td>
<td>18.1 (Low)</td>
<td>38.1 (Med)</td>
<td>21.9 (Low)</td>
<td>43.7 (Med)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI (2011 extrapolated)</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta \text{HDI (2005-2011)}$ (% change)</td>
<td>+.023 (6.4%)</td>
<td>+.059 (16%)</td>
<td>-.118 (-24.1%)</td>
<td>+.029 (7%)</td>
<td>-.065 (-13%)</td>
<td>+.199 (39%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This ambiguity arises in part because of confusion over how to interpret absolute HDI numbers, conflicting results across dependent variables (like strong improvements in hunger but low changes in literacy for example), and finally inconsistency in the results of the QCA itself, with no clear patterns among variables.

I thus simplify the QCA (Table 19, page 159) in order to compare across the most similar communities in my set and by dropping those dependent variables that are either difficult-to-interpret absolute values, or development indicators that include an income metric (like HDI and ΔHDI).

The lakeside communities, for example, far outstrip their counterparts in the interior highlands in combating chronic hunger. But it was only after fieldwork that I observed the degree to which both enjoy greater access to income opportunities (between tourism and cash crops like coffee and chocolate), and even services (particularly for SCP). Though my work there still provides valuable observations, their inclusion into the QCA complicates interpretations.

Similarly, since HDI scores include an income component, larger communities like Zacualpa, holding all else equal, are likely to have higher absolute HDI values. In sum, I have reduced the QCA’s scope to the four communities in Totonicapán and El Quiché,
which have no viable tourist economies and which further share very similar ethno-linguistic identities. Relative changes between these communities are more compelling and more accurately test my hypothesis. Results are compelling as well (Figure 19, below).

Table 19. Revised QCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community → Presence of ↓</th>
<th>Sta María Chiquimula (6975’)</th>
<th>Sta Lucia la Reforma (6013’)</th>
<th>Patzité (7545’)</th>
<th>Zacualpa (4875’)</th>
<th>Sta Cta Palopó (5456’)</th>
<th>San Pablo (6861’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Spending?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A=high, a=low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Strong” local civil society?</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B=high, b=low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social discord?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C=high, c=low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict affected?</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D=high, d=low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementarity</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E =high, e=low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Chronic Hunger</td>
<td>-1.7% (Low)</td>
<td>-3% (Med)</td>
<td>-6.8% (Med)</td>
<td>-1.4% (Low)</td>
<td>-22.8% (High)</td>
<td>-21.8% (High)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Illiteracy</td>
<td>-9.5% (Med)</td>
<td>-20% (High)</td>
<td>-7% (Med)</td>
<td>-.2% (Low)</td>
<td>-10% (Med)</td>
<td>-2% (Low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI (2011 extrapolated)</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ HDI (2005-2011)(% change)</td>
<td>+.023 (6.4%)</td>
<td>+.059 (16%)</td>
<td>-.118 (-24.1%)</td>
<td>+.029 (7%)</td>
<td>-.065 (-13%)</td>
<td>+.199 (39%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Utilizing the revised QCA, more distinct patterns emerge from the data than before. First focusing on changes in chronic hunger over time (top left in Figure 19), the most
obvious pattern is that those communities experiencing high levels of internal social discord (C) have made the least progress. Those communities isolated as having made medium progress (no communities made high progress on hunger) experience low levels of social discord uniformly. Social spending (A) is less obviously important, though the only community with high levels of social spending did indeed make greater headway in combating hunger. Similar results are yielded by the civil society variable (B), in that the only instance of more highly-organized civil society corresponds with better results. The role of conflict intensity (D) is unimportant here, as conflict intensity is evenly distributed across better and worse cases. Finally, complementarity’s influence (E) is not dramatic, but like civil society and social spending, appears only among those communities doing better – *a necessary if insufficient condition for better outcomes.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronic Hunger</th>
<th>Δ Illiteracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>ab C de ab C De</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med/High</td>
<td>aB c DE aB c de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abCde</td>
<td>abCDe abCDe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abCde</td>
<td>Abede abCde abCde</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19. Combining QCA Results
Analyzing the results with respect to changes in illiteracy (top right, Figure 19), results are generally similar. Since more communities did better in this respect over time, however, results shift slightly. The effects of social spending (A), civil society (B), social discord (C) and complementarity (E) all diminish slightly, while the influence of low levels of civil war conflict intensity gain in strength.

Results of the QCA are most compelling when hunger and illiteracy are combined (bottom of Figure 19), which creates a truncated, but nevertheless more robust indicator of human development by combining both a key health and key education indicator. In this instance, the most consistent results are apparent among the worst performing communities – where limited social spending (a), an anemic civil society (b) and high social discord (C) are each 100 percent consistent across communities. An absence of complementarity is also consistent across all poor performing communities.

Amongst the better performing communities, results are less consistent, but nevertheless suggestive. Higher social spending (A) and a “strong” civil society (B) reappear (being present in two out of five communities). Only one community, of the five doing better across both hunger and illiteracy, exhibits observable social discord (C). Conflict (D) is again distributed evenly across both poor and better performing communities, making it a surprisingly non-relevant variable in determining current development outcomes. Finally, like social spending and social discord, complementarity (E) reappears, twice among the five better-performing communities, and only among those communities doing well. As well, the only community with a “High” performance in any of the development metrics (Santa Lucía la Reforma reports a 20 percent reduction
in illiteracy) exhibits clear state-local complementarity, despite higher rates of poverty and extreme poverty than any of the other communities.

5.4 Conclusions

The QCA component, by utilizing extensive fieldwork in order to code variables that are otherwise difficult to capture quantitatively, adds needed nuance to our understanding of what influences spatial variation in development across similar communities. This chapter has begun to probe the inner-workings of small, mostly remote communities operating under conditions of limited statehood in Guatemala. The governance that results, and by whom it is captured, affects the likelihood of development progress. The process that defines governance, however, is highly contentious, and subject to local contestation.

I initially anticipated that contestation would be largely driven by a local desire for autonomy, led by any number of the potential indigenous authority structures, contra state actors driven to undermine this authority. As Chapter Four and this chapter demonstrate collectively, however, indigenous leaders are only very subtly influencing outcomes, while their role in development, specifically, is negligible. This finding clashes with a suite of literature emerging from Guatemala citing the importance of traditional values on local political outcomes. In reality, informal or indigenous influence over local outcomes should be differentiated between questions regarding the “lawful” use of violence and policing, on the one hand, to protection of the environment and development matters like health and education on the other. The scope and power of indigenous and informal institutions vary, in other words, according to the issue, and it is especially constrained with respect to development.
In most communities, where a strong, well-organized indigenous NGO (like the Cantones for example) is absent, contestation has increasingly pitted local formal authorities, like the mayor, against state actors, with lines ardently being drawn between political parties. In this scenario the role of indigenous and informal authorities is crowded out, as both principle parties in the conflict utilize, and cultivate, patronage networks in a battle for votes and control.

One result is that development fails to materialize in any coherent sense. On the one hand, the parties in conflict distribute feeble resources along patronage lines. It is ad-hoc, inconsistent and arbitrarily dispersed with respect to need. On the other hand, such conflict can create more deleterious outcomes when one party of the conflict “punishes” his adversaries by depriving them of critical resources, whether from what Hambre Cero might provide, to potable water, or new schools. In this case, political decisions are directly influencing the daily caloric intake of children suffering from chronic hunger.

This chapter, through the use of the QCA component, most clearly demonstrates that social discord at the community level limits development possibilities – the mechanisms of which are explored in greater detail in Chapter Six. These internal divisions, and emerging political rivalries within small, rural, and ethnically-homogenous communities, have been largely overlooked by literature, and have virtually no bearing on contemporary development policymaking.

With respect to complementarity, the QCA does not reveal its clear deterministic function in bettering outcomes. This is no surprise, however, given the complexity of local conditions – whether environmental, social, cultural, or political, and competing and

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147 It was confirmed unanimously across my interviews, from Guatemala City to rural hinterlands, that this phenomenon has steadily increased over the last 10-15 years.
as yet unobserved variables influencing local outcomes. The QCA, after all, is only a snapshot that, while adding needed nuance to the quantitative section, is unable to demonstrate causality per se (which will be taken up in Chapter Six). Nevertheless, the QCA component has teased out the role of complementarity – along with local social spending and the strength of locally-based civil society – as a potentially critical *facilitating condition*, or in other words, a necessary if insufficient condition, that results in development-oriented governance and improved outcomes at the village level.

The case of Santa Lucía la Reforma is especially compelling. It is remote, very poor and was directly impacted by the armed conflict, and yet it has outperformed its immediate neighbor, Chiquimula, across an entire range of development indicators, including chronic hunger, despite measurably greater challenges. It is also the community with the best gains in illiteracy amongst the four communities of the interior highlands – another unexpected outcome. In this case, the complementary between semi-formal village mayors and state actors, partly coordinated and “blessed” by the mayor, is striking. Its occurrence is harder to explain. Why does Santa Lucía have active village mayors, while Patzité does not? Why do state actors, like Roni in Santa Lucía, among others, work energetically to unite disparate forces in town, and work with the village leaders in order to distribute key resources, while in other communities they do not?

Party alignment may indeed be one factor, and I cannot dismiss its influence outright. But women from more obscure state offices (like RENAP), with little material influence, were also engaging the village mayors. Moreover, as the development indicators themselves suggest, Santa Lucía has been making these gains consistently for years, through different parties and different mayors. These questions are also explored in
greater detail in Chapter Six, where I endeavor to uncover the causal chain that links social discord, on the one hand, and complementarity on the other, to variation in development outcomes.
CHAPTER SIX: SEEKING CAUSAL PATHWAYS FROM GOVERNANCE TO DEVELOPMENT

The previous two chapters have, in order, discarded the most basic notions of statebuilding for development before then raising suggestive links between key variables and development outcomes. Most notably, at the community level, the degree of social discord and a lack of viable civil society, along with other potential conditions like local social spending, are linked with worse development outcomes in a sample of similar communities. Complementarity is rarely observed, but is present in the best performing community – Santa Lucía la Reforma. How variables and outcomes are connected, however, is still unclear.

This chapter explicitly examines how the centrally-planned and initiated anti-hunger program *El Pacto Hambre Cero* (“The Zero Hunger Pact”) – which has been lauded by external development agencies for its design and scale\(^\text{148}\) – is *implemented* at the community level. By specifically observing how a single government program is implemented across the different case study communities – which were each designated “priority communities” by the government and thus privy to the same level of government response and resources – this component of the study specifies the causal pathways and agent-to-agent linkages that connect governance and development outcomes. Though, at the time of fieldwork, *Hambre Cero* was too young to have

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\(^{148}\) See footnote 11, page 6.
impacted chronic hunger systematically, interviews with both regional and local directors of the program provided early data regarding acute hunger emergencies, as well as the intended design and scope of the program at the local level. Comparing differences in Hambre Cero’s implementation across communities therefore yields crucial insight into the empirical nature of development governance at the local level – including key actors, their coordination and oversight roles, and the dispersion of resources like food aid, seeds and cash. I interpret these findings as representative of the nature of governance that characterizes each community.

Table 20. Interview and Focus Group Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Name, and aldeas in each municipality</th>
<th>Number of non-elite interviews and/or focus group participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Santa Maria Chiquimula (SMC)</strong></td>
<td>n=54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xecaxelaj</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xesana</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xesana I</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pajojchiyats</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joesefina</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centro</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zacualpa</strong></td>
<td>n=81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasajoc I</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuchuca (Chuchuca is site location, with attendees from the following: Xejoc, Xextorian, Xemosche, Chojiomquiej)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>San Pablo la Laguna</strong></td>
<td>n=24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center*</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>n=159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Process tracing, as noted earlier, is “an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence – often understood as part of a temporal sequence of events or phenomena” (Collier 2011: 823). The method requires significant time and dedication in order to appropriately document the micro-level, or
“agent-to-agent” linkages, in a potentially vast series of events in a causal chain that connects independent and dependent variables (Checkel 2005).

As noted before, process tracing is central to field work methodology in each of the six field sites, for coding the QCA variables and gauging local governance. In three communities, however – Chiquimula, Zacualpa and San Pablo – interviews and focus groups with non-elites augment key informant interviews, providing additional observations in those communities with respect to how the program influenced the most remote households, and to gain the perspective of the recipients of Hambre Cero assistance (Table 20). This chapter is organized by theme, highlighting the key obstacles to development across space, as well as the drivers of best outcomes based on findings from process tracing Hambre Cero implementation.

6.1 Internal Political Divisions and Development Stagnation

Political divisions within small, ethnically homogenous communities severely handicap the coordination and implementation of government services, including the implementation of Hambre Cero. According to interviews in each community, divisions based on party affiliation and candidate support have dramatically increased over the last ten years, undermining traditional forms of authority and community influence over politics and decision-making.149

149 Almost uniformly, this phenomenon took the form of the elevated role of the alcalde comunitario at the expense of alcaldes auxiliares, or more informal, traditional leaders. The alcaldes comunitarios are often COCODE representatives, and frequently hand-picked by the mayor as well.
6.1.1 COCODES

In rural focus groups, participants widely eschewed political activity themselves, but the affiliation of their local development council (COCODE) leaders had important consequences nevertheless. In each of the communities, the COCODE system was either defunct, or had been nakedly usurped by the mayor to reflect his politics and priorities. In Patzité, the COCODE remains the principal outlet for community participation in development governance, but this comes at the expense of traditional systems of governance, and its role is nevertheless symbolic more than effective. The mayor and his voluntary advisory board are in charge of day-to-day decision-making. The mayor in Patzité, as interviews revealed, is “development-oriented” and conscientious of local needs, which likely explains some of Patzité’s “medium” development gains, compared to the worst cases, and even to Zacualpa. But with limited stakeholder involvement, there is no coordination between government services and local programs. Interventions are ad-hoc, and as my interview with government officials in the community suggest, their own interventions, and distribution of basic resources, was limited outside the community center, or to those who took the initiative to arrive at the offices and file for their bonos.

The COCODE system, which is the cornerstone of the state’s decentralization efforts stemming from the Peace Accords, has been heralded for its potential to augment participatory development and citizen oversight of development priorities. The COCODE system, however, has no bearing on development outcomes in any of the communities under study. In fact, in multiple interviews, including those with non-elite

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150 For an example, see the World Bank’s programs to promote the COCODE system: http://web.worldbank.org/WEBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/WBIPROGRAMS/CMUDLP/0,,contentMDK:20765268--menuPK:461794--pagePK:64156158--piPK:64152884--theSitePK:461754,00.html
community members who most objectively observe its role, the COCODE system was isolated as the source of mismanagement, corruption and feeble development response. It has also been used to perpetuate growing community divisions.

In Zacualpa (Quiché department), for example, the mayor has identified which *aldeas* are considered zones of electoral support, and which ones are not, based on previous elections. Zones of support have received new schools and water projects stemming from municipal funds, while opposition zones are intentionally neglected. The COCODE system has been reconstituted locally to reflect the mayor’s prerogatives, rather than community’s. Even foreign-assisted programs, including a health education program partly funded by USAID, are controlled and restricted as to where they can participate. By deferring to the municipal government and seeking local cooperation, externally-funded programs inadvertently (and unbeknownst to their organizers) exclude those rural areas now type-cast as “opposition” by the mayor – restricting the program’s outreach and impact. In much the same way, but in reverse, *Hambre Cero* implementation is corrupted.

In the aldeas of Pasajoc I, Chuchuca, Xejoc, Xectorian, Xemosche and Chojiomquiej, which are entrenched zones of mayoral support, not one of 84 participants had knowledge of *Hambre Cero*, or had participated in any government assistance program, despite the anti-hunger program’s identification of Zacualpa as a “priority community,” and despite

\[151\] This is widely understood and confirmed by many interviews (November and December 2013).

\[152\] I witnessed the recent construction of these facilities, complete with plaques recognizing the mayor.
extremely high rates of chronic hunger in these same, hilly, remote aldeas.153 “Aquí, no hay,” with a wave of the finger, was a emphatic refrain in all of my visits to remote aldeas ... “That (government assistance) simply doesn’t exist here!”

6.1.2 Political and Confessional Divisions

State actors claim, in contrast, that they are forced to distribute their limited supplies – consisting of seeds, flour and vitamin-rich cereal – to whomever they can access, which is limited because of the mayor’s anti-(central) government policies in Zacualpa. But many citizen interviewees, in private, readily acknowledged the purposeful mal-distribution of resources, which took place openly at a ramshackle government office on the edge of Zacualpa’s city center during my visits. There, poor families amassed in a line awaiting a simple package of basic food supplies. Other interviewees confirmed that, in turn, the expectation was one of electoral support for Patriota (the current president’s party), or for participation in future anti-mayor protests, several of which had already rocked the town.

These divisions – between state actors and their electoral bases, and the Mayor’s base – have since become entrenched in Zacualpa. Other non-governmental development assistance intended for the poorest families, stemming from the Catholic Church most notably, has been turned away by vigilante groups. On more than one occasion, a car containing Church officials was blocked by armed civilians who support the mayor in rural aldeas, wary of the Church officials who have been openly critical of the mayor and

153 Chronic hunger rates for the whole municipality are approximately 57 percent, with rates in the more remote, hilly aldeas that I visited estimated to be 10-20 points higher, as suggested by one area health specialist in interviews.
his politics, further entrenching the community’s political divisions.\textsuperscript{154} Political divisions are now spilling over and creating social divisions, as evident by the rash of violent outbursts in town over the last several years.

Finally, a central component of \textit{Hambre Cero} implementation is the holding of monthly meetings of the municipal-level Food and Nutritional Security Commission (\textit{La Comisión Municipal de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional}, or COMUSAN). This meeting is designed to be coordinated by the mayor, and to include all stakeholders – from church leaders and local NGOs to the different state offices responsible for distributing food, health, education and agricultural resources (see Figure 20 for a blueprint of \textit{Hambre Cero}’s institutional design). It reflects an attempt at decentralization of the national program itself, and an effort to cultivate ownership by local authorities. As noted in Chapter Five, Santa Lucía’s anti-hunger, and now wider development discourse, is organized around COMUSAN meetings, held in conjunction with local market days in order to facilitate the participation of rural leaders. In Zacualpa, the mayor has refused to hold the COMUSAN meetings, and at this point, there is no viable \textit{Hambre Cero} implementation.

There are informal actors in Zacualpa – including \textit{madres guías} and \textit{comadronas} (the birthing assistants that have slowly gained additional training in recent years)\textsuperscript{155} – contributing to maternal and infant health in the remotest \textit{aldeas}. But they do not coordinate in any fashion with state actors. The local \textit{alcadia indígena}’s role, meanwhile,

\textsuperscript{154} Interviews in Zacualpa (November and December 2013).

\textsuperscript{155} A local NGO – \textit{La Asociación de Comadronas de Quiché} – has trained 152 birthing assistants over the last 12 years, and works with village leaders to convince them to accept their presence. They claim to have improved conditions for young mothers and infants in the countryside. They do not, however, coordinate with any state actors (October 16, 2013 interviews).
has been reduced to a merely symbolic one, with no influence on development decision-making. Development projects are devised and implemented on an ad-hoc basic, with the most basic resources distributed on purely patronage lines, versus need.

![Diagram of Institutional Design](image)

Figure 20. *Hambre Cero* Institutional Design

The governance of development, meanwhile, reflects more conflict across political divisions than it does coordination and inclusion. The municipalities “medium” development performance is difficult to interpret in light of the overt breakdown in development governance. Likely factors include the robust flow of remittances to city center inhabitants, but any positive outcomes may also reflect some increased access to
health services in remote health outposts,\textsuperscript{156} and the work of the more organized 
comadronas of Southern Quiché. In the delivery of basic services, however, Patzité – spared the worst of the political conflict dividing Zacualpa – has far outstripped larger Zacualpa in development outcomes as discussed in Chapter Five – from access to clean water and sanitation to lower infant mortality rates, even if complementarity is otherwise absent.

In Santa María Chiquimula, as well, where hunger rates are among the highest in Guatemala, internal divisions are grievous. Here, party affiliation overlaps with church affiliation (Catholic versus Evangelical, broadly), splitting the town in two and making even basic governance dysfunctional. Feeling under threat from the well-organized and well-funded Patriot Party, the mayor has reacted by attempting to monopolize development decision-making – actively shutting out long-standing local NGOs, as well as the once important elders (prinicpales or T’zoloché’). Low-ranking government officials in charge of Hambre Cero, meanwhile, have isolated themselves across town and infrequently, if at all, distribute the designated assistance packages.

In the aldeas, which suffer from some of the highest rates of chronic hunger anywhere in Guatemala, and in turn the Western Hemisphere, not one of 54 focus group and non-elite interview participants had received any form of official assistance, at any point. Only the local Jesuit diocese provides material assistance in these areas currently, though its staff too reports an awkward, tense relationship with the mayor. Interviews with church officials in Chiquimula confirmed the divisive splits in town, and the

\textsuperscript{156} For roughly one year, however, there were no health services in these aldeas because of a dispute between the health NGO contracted by the government to provide services, and the central government itself.
increase in political party activity. Likewise *Hambre Cero*’s Totonicapán director confirmed the increase in religious divisions to be one of his biggest obstacles to communicating with local officials, building trust, and implementation more generally. On the other hand, government officials charged with *Hambre Cero*’s implementation in the community itself complained that shipments of the life-saving *bonos* were sporadic and inadequate.

Though social and political rifts are not always so divisive, internal divisions in very small, remote communities, stemming from either church or party affiliation most frequently, commonly trump an indigenous or a broader community self-identity. This pervasive phenomenon, which complicates the conventional narrative of indigenous communities pitted against state forces, dramatically inhibits the most basic implementation of *Hambe Cero* in Chiquimula and Zacualpa, in particular. Crucially, historically important informal authorities in each Zacualpa and Chiquimula – whether elders or the *alcaïda indígena* – have been undermined by these changes, making their influence on outcomes virtually nonexistent. These divisions create greater space for both corruption and clientelism, in turn stalling, as in Zacualpa, if not reversing, in Chiquimula, human development.

### 6.2 Street-Level Bureaucrats

In individual cases, mayors, ex-mayors, or committed “street-level” state actors in the community determine development efficacy.\(^{157}\) In San Pablo la Laguna, for example, the

\(^{157}\) The “street-level bureaucrat” concept originates from U.S. public policy literature (Lipsky 1980, Maynard-Mooney and Musheno 2003). It assigns special agency and influence to public officials ultimately charged with implementing specific programs, arguing that their own discretion influences outcomes more than has been conventionally recognized.
Hambre Cero coordinator for the community, based in the regional SESAN office (Secretaria de Seguridad de Alimentaria y Nutricional) in Sololá city, is from San Pablo, and he and the mayor have worked in conjunction to try and secure basic funds and resources, which nevertheless remain intermittent and unreliable.\textsuperscript{158} Regardless, the intimacy of the community and informal family networks led to a level of informal cooperation between the mayor and the state actor in this case. This cooperation takes place, moreover, despite different party affiliations.

The mayor also took it upon himself to bring sick and injured community members to the hospital in the regional capital – a several hour journey through rugged terrain. This type of “reactive” governance, in which the mayor acted as more of a symbol of goodwill and community unity, differs considerably from Zacaulpa and Chiquimula, but nevertheless netted only marginal gains in development. The mayor, himself, in interviews, confirmed these limitations: “My job,” he noted, “is to pay the bills. And after that, all I can do is help people in whatever way I can, like anybody else.”\textsuperscript{159}

Across the lake, meanwhile, it is the ex-mayor who, in collaboration with government actors, monopolizes development resources including basic supplies. From interviews with diverse community actors – whether in the small community health clinic, municipal offices, \textit{and even with the current mayor} – it was confirmed that the ex-mayor had \textit{total control} of any development-related resources, and total discretion with respect to its disbursement. The ex-mayor, himself, claims to be more honestly distributing resources, and that the central government approached him in order to avoid coordinating with the

\textsuperscript{158} Indeed, none of the focus group participants had participated in Hambre Cero, or had received any governmental assistance.

\textsuperscript{159} Interview December 12, 2013 (San Pablo la Laguna, Guatemala)
“corrupt” current mayor. Santa Catarina, like San Pablo, has made modest, if mixed development gains according to official statistics, which likely result in part because of its proximity to the major lakeside tourist hub of Panajachel, a short drive away over paved roads. On the other hand, raw data obtained from the regional Minister of Public Health’s office reveals that six infants from Santa Catarina Palopó had been hospitalized (as of November 18th) in 2013 for acute hunger emergencies, as to San Pablo’s one. In neither case is coherent development governance in place. In Palopó, however, the ex-mayor’s monopoly of resources and decision-making, reminiscent of the political divisions created in SMC and Zacualpa, further erodes responsiveness and oversight.

In Santa Lucía – the mayor and a very energetic government health worker named Roni are key to the program’s success. As principal Hambre Cero coordinator, Roni spurs the participation of younger workers from other government offices, works in conjunction with the mayor to bring the local churches together, and helps organize the monthly meetings of area stakeholders that is required by Hambre Cero, but which, as noted above, is rarely fulfilled in the other communities. Critically, these meetings also incorporate the participation of semi-formal indigenous leaders from outlying aldeas as discussed in Chapter Five. Given that Santa Lucía is one of the least likely cases to demonstrate robust governance – given persistently high rates of poverty, and a legacy of violence from the civil war that surpasses its neighbors, including SMC – the pivotal role of individual actors is a key component of improvements in service delivery there.

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160 A data specialist with the Department’s central office emailed me Microsoft Excel spreadsheets of raw data on acute hunger emergencies that are otherwise unpublished and unavailable.
6.3 State-Local Complementarity

Roni\textsuperscript{161} works closely with the mayor to prioritize \textit{Hambre Cero}. But Roni also has a special rapport with local, indigenous authorities, with whom he coordinated family visits in the case of a hunger emergency, aid distribution and transportation for families to the local clinic (for vaccinations and pre-natal care for example).

In Santa Lucía, other state actors in fact \textit{relied} on local, informal leaders for help. The local coordinator of \textit{Registro Nacional de las Personas} (RENAP), which is in charge of registering citizens and issuing new, fraud-resistant identification cards, spontaneously visited a meeting held by the indigenous leaders on market day, and ahead of the coming day’s COMUSAN meeting. She spoke before the small group of mostly middle-aged and elderly men, imploring them to help mobilize reluctant or especially remote citizens. She conceded, in a subsequent interview, that her scope of influence as a state actor, alone, is limited, and that in reality it was only through these informal interlocutors that she could make measurable headway with her work.\textsuperscript{162}

This echoes the experience of the young \textit{Comité Nacional de Alfabetización} (CONALFA) employee, charged with monitoring and improving literacy rates. He admitted that two communities within the \textit{municipio} had held out, and that its leaders were reluctant to coordinate with him regarding a new literacy campaign, itself tied to \textit{Hambre Cero}. In turn, the CONALFA worker felt that, without the authority of local leaders on his side, he was unable to proceed there. At the next day’s COMUSAN

\textsuperscript{161} As \textit{Hambre Cero} coordinator, Roni represents \textit{Partido Patriota}, which is the same party as the mayor’s. Cynically, this would explain the coordination between actors, but not the energy with which Roni conducts his work, nor the extent to which both Roni and the Mayor work to overcome church divisions, and include informal actors.

\textsuperscript{162} October 9, 2013 (Santa Lucía la Reforma)
meeting, however, he was pressed by colleagues, including Roni, as to why these communities were still not enrolled, underscoring the determination with which *Hambre Cero* implementation was taken seriously.

The very visible and overt display of *trust* between informal and formal actors in Santa Lucía is striking, and in stark contrast to the divisions that plague its neighbor, Chiquimula. Both the mayor and Roni argue that these traits are long-standing in Santa Lucía – in part explaining the community’s surprising headway among basic development indicators, despite low incomes and the history of violent conflict during the civil war. Both acknowledged challenges in separate interviews, and remaining challenges, from poverty to incipient church divisions like in other communities, but they also both thanked the other for their transparency and commitment.

The CONALFA worker, meanwhile, who is originally from neighboring Chiquimula, argues that Santa Lucía distinguishes itself by its lingering commitment to Mayan *costumbre* (customary beliefs and practice), including a commitment to service and community. This concept was evoked by leaders in other Totonicapán communities, but was simultaneously subverted by political divisions, and otherwise rhetorical at most. In the COMUSAN meeting, another state worker referred to this same idea as *voluntario institucional*, as she committed herself to work more with local leaders.

Separately, the regional coordinator of *Hambre Cero* based in Totonicapán city, Esaú Guerra Samayoa, confirmed that Santa Lucia is out in front of its regional counterparts in
terms of implementation, and positive intervention, based on both internal statistics and his personal experience.\textsuperscript{163}

The phenomenon of state-local complementarity is, as suggested above, incredibly rare, and itself rests in part on other factors isolated above, from local trust of state authorities to internal political and social divisions. Underscoring its importance, however, are the results of additional interviews in government offices from Totonicapán to Santa Cruz del Quiché. Officials from the Instituto del Fomento Municipal (INFOM) regional offices admitted that, despite their mission to help “modernize” local government, political divisions, political parties, truculent mayors and corrupt COCODES prevent their engagement with local municipalities. At this stage, INFOM has been forced to adapt to local conditions, and has converted itself into an organization principally dedicated to assisting communities resolve potable water issues, at least on a case-by-case basis, regardless of its original mission.\textsuperscript{164} Similarly, Quiché’s SESAN director, Sergio Gonzales, agreed that, if he is unable to work with a mayor or COCODES, as in Zacualpa, he is in essence unable to push Hambre Cero implementation in any meaningful way.

Complementarity is therefore less an independent variable by itself, but the product of multiple facilitating conditions that include committed street-level bureaucrats, a component of social cohesion – in Santa Lucía’s case by a more robust commitment to costumbre and service than was evident in other communities, and a growing two-way

\textsuperscript{163} Based on multiple Interviews with Don Esaú in both Quetzaltenango and Totonicapán (September and October 2013).

\textsuperscript{164} Interviews with Freddy Argueta and Gilberto Barrios. November 14, 2013 (Santa Cruz del Quiché).
trust between rural, indigenous leaders and state actors (which itself hinges to some degree on the charisma of street-level bureaucrats again).

The role, influence and presence of community indigenous leaders itself is a facilitating condition in that such clout is muted or altogether absent in many communities, including some in these communities. In a recent exploration of community managed schools (CMS) in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala, and Honduras, for example, the role of traditional forms of indigenous leadership had no bearing on the political learning outcomes under scrutiny (Altschuler and Corrales 2013). In contrast, and much like in this study, the role of mayors, patronage networks, and political networks linking villages with the state are key influences on CMS viability (Ibid).

As Palopó suggests, however, complementarity can also be a perverse political outcome, in which government resources are channeled through a trusted interlocutor, but one whose actions and presence (as ex-Mayor in this case) actively erodes community cohesion, and diminishes the participation of other actors – whether the COCODEs, sitting mayor, or more traditional leaders.

For policymaking, and for harnessing complementarity for good, this means first identifying the central “broker” at both the village and state level through which complementarity can emerge, and second, utilize his/her networks for distribution and empowerment. In the Palopó case, however, this will be especially difficult, pointing to a “dark complementarity” that reinforces local patronage cleavages and village level social discord, while eroding the scope and influence of the formal authorities. Dark complementarity – arguably of long-standing form in Guatemala where cafetales dominated local labor practices and inhibited land reforms with government’s blessing,
while providing a modicum of (inadequate) social service delivery – is on the one hand much harder to subvert given the reinforcing role of the state and/or political parties and well-established patronage networks. On the other, even in Palopó the presence of a broker like the ex-mayor provides an opportunity for outside donor to utilize informal networks for service delivery, so long as it is an equal opportunity exploiter – utilizing the local formal channels to the same degree. The implications of complementarity for development are discussed more in the Conclusions.
CONCLUSIONS and DISCUSSION

This study is a response to the puzzle of spatial variation in human development in otherwise similar communities in rural Guatemala. Why have some communities, despite persistently low-incomes, made strides across different development indicators, whether chronic hunger, literacy or infant mortality? Given widespread variation in state density – or the presence of the state in health, education and administration – at the community level, a plausible hypothesis is that state density and development outcomes vary in parallel: The state’s presence, in other words, especially given its presence in health and educational services that are at the core of human development – according to Sen and the UNDP since – should explain this variation in development, and that those communities performing poorly would benefit from more state presence.

The Guatemalan state is notoriously weak, however, so any outside intervention for development should, according to the wisdom of conventional statebuilding logic, aid in building centralized institutions and administrative capacity – the “strength” of a state according to Fukuyama (2004: 6). State “scope” is more complex, but decentralization of development decision-making, as the COCODE system reflects, should theoretically encourage both the democratic participation of citizens – enhancing the legitimacy of the central state institutions – and more efficiently allocate resources to communities.
From the earliest regressions, however, it became clear that state density and development outcomes – whether reflected by HDI scores, HDI scores over time, or by robustness checks including literacy, infant mortality and chronic hunger and changes in hunger and literacy over time – are completely divorced in Guatemala. The most peculiar results reveal inverse relationships between literacy and state presence, underscoring just how ineffective state resources are currently translated into development performance at the community level. Top-down statebuilding, even after twenty years of post-war experimentation and outside assistance in Guatemala, does not bring development.

As demonstrated in Chapter Three, literature has increasingly recalculated, both theoretically and empirically, the feasibility of state-led reform for post-war development. The most critical scholars, including hybridity advocates, argue that the OECD-dominant normative foundations of statebuilding is a square peg of neo-classical economics, electoral reform and liberal institutionalism being pounded into the round hole of local context. This context – consisting of non-Western mores, alternate perceptions of authority and informal local institutions that are more resonant with local populations than imposed western institutions – trumps the technocratic fixes of outsiders. What results is either a hybrid system, in which local populations subtly resist top-down statebuilding, or more plainly, broken legal-formal systems of governance. This dissertation generally embraces this premise – that local conditions, including traditional forms of leadership as exist in Guatemala, along with a history of state distrust, result in a patchwork of governance realities at the local level. Indeed, anthropologists and historians of Guatemala have cited the influence of traditional leadership, or customary beliefs as critical variables affecting state incursion, or even levels (and types) of crime at
the village level. But this paper is concerned with a more rich sense of human
development that prioritizes access to education and health, and not only with crime. This
muddies the otherwise neat distinctions between state and society.

The agency of local actors, however crucial to the story of Guatemalan state-society
relations, is insufficient to address development needs. Local actors, no matter how
autonomous, or governed by local customs, are unable to martial the resources necessary
to reverse trends preventable childhood death, or reverse decades of staggering chronic
hunger. The state, meanwhile, is indeed but one actor among many that vie for influence,
and which struggle to shape outcomes. Development outcomes, I argue here, hinge
instead on these shifting local ecosystems of governance.

Development, by its very nature, is a complex phenomenon, and no one factor will be
enough to reverse the situation in rural Guatemala from one of frustration to one of rich,
emancipatory prosperity – in which freedom to choose a course of livelihood, or freedom
from preventable sickness or injury – is taken for granted. Indeed, as the grinding poverty
rates in even the most “successful” cases in this project illustrate, none of the
communities are positioned to truly prosper from a human development perspective.

After triangulating three overlapping methods, however, this paper demonstrates that
locally-based forces are in fact critical to the implementation of centrally-articulated
development programs and that, in the context of limited statehood that characterizes
many rural communities in Guatemala, state-local complementarity is a fundamental
component of what separates those communities making strides against basic health and
education deficiencies, from those where chronic hunger, illiteracy, and infant mortality
persist at crippling rates. This chapter summarizes some of the key findings and their significance.

**On Statebuilding and Human Development**

First, this project adds to a growing literature that underscores the influence of local political dynamics, including informal actors and institutions, over a range of state-led programs despite international efforts to consolidate post-war states. In fact, given Guatemala’s nearly two decades of post-war economic growth, and the absence of armed militant groups or the risk of a renewed conflict, the Guatemalan state’s weakness is arguably more illustrative of the limitations of top-down statebuilding than even more recent cases of post-war statebuilding, whose outcomes remains in doubt given only recent conflict or political setbacks.

This paper, unlike hybridity claims for instance, acknowledges that “strong,” capable states with the capacity to distribute resources efficiently, adjudicate disputes fairly, and provide citizens with security will more likely support prosperous, healthy citizens than their weak-state counterparts. What is in doubt, instead, is the likelihood that such a state-dominant system of governance can be replicated in Guatemala, or that such a system is truly viable. It is even less likely a possibility in the even more complex cases of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, or Libya, as examples. But even in less conflict-prone regions, from Central America to Central Asia, local political dynamics, and the legitimacy of locally-resonant forms of governance, from clan networks to tribal leadership, resist, even if passively, the encroachment of state authority. This has profound implications for peacebuilding and development policymaking that, with very little adjustment, centers on the premise of centrally-consolidated states. Such efforts, this
dissertation argues, are unlikely to generate the desired outcomes that are sought. Guatemala’s ongoing crisis with criminality, and emigration, are but small examples of statebuilding’s ineffectiveness. But this is not the end of the story.

Unlike the vast majority of the literature preoccupied with local political dynamics, this project demonstrates the importance of the state, whatever its capacity. The state, along with locally-based formal and informal actors, is one stakeholder in a melting pot that, collectively, influences governance. Whether or not the state’s heft is enough to subsume the influence of traditional leaders, the state still cannot be ignored. And crucially, while local actors might be central to conflict resolution in Colombia, or community policing in Mexico, they are unable to build schools, pay teacher salaries, stock clinics with medicine, nor reverse decades old trends in chronic hunger. This requires resources that the state can provide, and as is normatively well established, should provide. Two important points stem from this observation.

First, by making the dependent variable human development, versus something more minimal – like a negative peace or even homicide rates – this project embraces a more complex but arguably more realistic understanding of post-conflict societies which, long after conflict ceases, continue to struggle to sustainably improve well-being and welfare. As the quantitative component of this study demonstrates, those communities that were most affected by violence during the armed conflict remain most likely to suffer from poor human development performance – measured across a range of variables. From simple regressions, it is unclear whether causation lies in the path dependency of weak development stemming from conflict, or whether this reflects more simply the fact that those communities that agitated during the civil war were among the poorest then, and
remain so today in the country’s radically unequal socio-economic topography.

Regardless, the most conflict-affected communities have been unable to progress away from poor human development, despite two decades of official democracy and outside-assisted statebuilding.

Making human development the dependent variable thus requires, on some level, an acknowledgment of the myriad actors and social forces that interact to influence outcomes, including the role of non-state actors. It is unclear why more post-conflict peacebuilding literature does not consider development, specifically, or more intensively, but remains focused instead on more minimal definitions of post-war reconstruction “success,” like reduction in violent events, or even GDP growth, etc.

Second, though the state is a critical factor in determining either better, or worse, outcomes, this paper does not absolve the state of its failings. Apart from the obvious shortcomings of the Guatemalan state – from an anemic legislature and broken judiciary system to corruption and situational civil liberties – this project demonstrates how street-level state actors in most communities under focus engage in petty local politics, place political party above objectives, and more generally lack training and experience. But nevertheless, the actions of even these low-ranking government officials have important consequences for village life, and as is argued here, longer-term development trajectories.

**State-Local Complementarity and its Components**

Guatemala will never prosper without drastic wholesale reforms that augment tax revenues, and redistribute investment in poor regions, but in the near future these changes are unlikely. It is exactly under these conditions, however – those that dominate the reality of so many developing countries – that spatial variation in development is so
puzzling. Why are some communities managing to fare better along basic development indicators?

As this project makes clear, on some level better outcomes require what is referred to here as state-local “complementarity.” It might seem obvious that the best outcomes in the study are in great part the result of a marriage between state resources and local-level leadership. But, as the many case study communities which continue to struggle attest, such a harmonious relationship is anything but obvious to state and local actors on the ground. Indeed, cultivating complementarity is challenging in the context of deep-seated distrust and the growing influence of political parties, which makes turning public resources into club goods for patronage a readily-available, low-risk, default option.

Indeed, complementarity itself requires that several other factors be resolved. Principally, an embedded distrust of state intentions by local leaders, whether formal or informal, is pervasive. This distrust stems from various factors, however. Santa Lucía la Reforma was affected far more during the civil war than other communities, yet local leaders, including semi-formal indigenous leaders, cooperate with state actors constructively. Zacualpa was also impacted severely, but there the legacy of civil patrols (in which the current mayor participated) and ladino-indigenous identity and divisions still resonate, complicating alliances and thwarting cooperation. Finally, some of the most well organized communities – including Totonicapán city, which has well-established, highly-trained indigenous leaders – are unable to convert their resources, human capital and local influence into development gains. In “Toto,” indigenous leadership is organized around resistance to the state, explicitly, and the goal of increased autonomy from state influence, despite being relatively unscathed during the civil
conflict. Alas, this distrust, which stems not from the civil war, makes state-local complementarity impossible in Toto, even if its indigenous leadership is arguably better positioned to make a difference in this regard. Here, local leadership “competes” rather than “complements” state services. In summary, though conflict intensity demonstrates a strong statistical correlation with development outcomes, state-local complementarity can overcome this legacy.

One other cause of distrust is political party affiliation of local formal authorities. This is inconsistent as well, however. Indeed, Santa Lucía’s mayor is from the same political party that controls the central government, facilitating cooperation between state and local actors compared with communities where local mayors from distinct parties (like those in Santa María Chiquimula, Zacualpa or Santa Catarina Palopó) attempt to carve out autonomy from central authorities, or demonstrate the superiority of their party’s patronage over that of the President’s party.

Party non-alignment is particularly relevant to Zacualpa and Chiquimula, where the mayor’s have increasing consolidated local power and openly pitted themselves against state actors, who in turn wield their modest access to food packages for vote-buying, or organize protests. But party non-alignment in Patzité and San Pablo is less important, and multiple state actors from the regional level, and the mayors themselves, reported fruitful relations, and modest improvements in development outcomes. In these communities, the factor most absent, however, is the presence and influence of indigenous or village-level leaders. The increasing influence of political parties, campaigning, and even outside money on local elections does not just create state-local distrust, but also creates divisions
within small, rural communities, and crowds out the influence of traditional leaders on local governance. Another socially divisive factor is church affiliation.

In virtually every community visited, *divisions between traditional Catholic affiliates and evangelical Protestants* are central to political and familial rivalries within the community. Where church and political affiliation overlap explicitly, as it does in Chiquimula especially, governance is utterly dysfunctional. Alas, overcoming this sectarian divide is yet another piece of the state-local complementarity puzzle, and underscores how local political dynamics which vary over space can thwart centrally-articulated programs. The degree to which small, otherwise homogeneous communities remain divided is a key obstacle to state-local complementarity, and more effective development-oriented local governance.

Once again, where the best development outcomes are observed, state and local actors coordinate in order to bridge sectarian divisions – not without hardship, but nevertheless with far more success than is observed anywhere else. As a result, this paper recommends an approach to post-war development policy – from global to local – that is “context-sensitive.” *Context-sensitive statebuilding* strips central authorities of their normative imperative to dominate all state territory, removing from the state the burden of state *imposition*, freeing it instead to honor local interlocutors with the responsibility of both development governance, but also resource distribution. As Altschuler and Corrales concluded after their study of community-managed schools in Central America, “to expand the scope of spillovers from (participatory governance) would require a concerted state effort that is both hands-on *and hands-off*” (2013: 181, emphasis added). The active
role of the state should vary from context to context, in inverse proportion to the strength, desire and autonomy of local, frequently informal, leaders.

To make sense of the variety of outcomes and to guide policymaking with respect to complementarity, I put forth the following theoretical typology of complementarity. As discussed, complementarity hinges in some ways, first, on the degree of local autonomy, which in turn allows for the sustained influence of traditional leaders, which in turn shapes even the role of mayors, regardless of political affiliation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Broker’s Role</th>
<th>Engage</th>
<th>Disengage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High:</strong> Which allows for mayoral independence, and the influence of traditional actors.</td>
<td>Complementarity (SLR)</td>
<td>Resistance (Toto) or Competition (Zacualpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low:</strong> Which allows for increased political party influence, the crowding out of traditional leaders and the influence of patronage.</td>
<td>Political Domination (SMC)</td>
<td>Dark Complementarity (SCP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21: Explaining The Presence or Absence of Complementarity and its Alternatives

Policymakers can utilize complementary political arrangements at the village level to augment service delivery, and make innovations in service delivery more sustainable. They can simultaneously avoid, as happened in Zacualpa, making local political tensions worse by inadvertently using local networks that actively deprived communities of resources. Crucially, outside actors can engage with both state and local actors, after identifying key brokers, to systematically build, through mediation or similar means, the
complementarity that results in the development building blocks witnessed in Santa Lucía.

**Remaining Puzzles and Future Research**

From the quantitative component of this study, the “denunciations” variable is among those most consistently correlated with better development outcomes. As noted in Chapter Three, denunciations were included as a crude measurement of social cohesion, or in the very least as an attempt to capture some community level effect. Specifically, this paper assumes, a greater number of reported human rights abuses per population demonstrates an element of mobilization and solidarity that facilitates this reporting, rather than an actual increase in human rights abuses at the local level. *Does social cohesion influence development? Or, do denunciations capture something else?*

The strength of this relationship is surprising, but alone it is not enough to explain human development. Alas, like trust, and internal divisions along party or sectarian lines, social cohesion can be another facilitating condition to state-local complementarity. More unclear, however, is how development and social “organization,” as it is labeled in this study, are related, and which comes first. The quantitative component is unable to determine whether the health and well-being of citizens, first, permits protest and social organization, or whether an inherent social cohesion permits development. The latter is more likely. Regardless, and in keeping with Fine (2010), social cohesion alone is unable to explain development, and as was observed, manifests in ways that inhibit development as well.

Finally, this dissertation highlights an important disconnect between economic growth and human development, with further important policy implications. The concept
of human development and the human development index itself, developed by economists Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq, is grounded by the idea that economic prosperity alone does not automatically translate into individual well-being, as the means and ends of development are confused. As is already well documented, Guatemala’s entrenched social inequalities have in turn prevented the country’s generally strong economic performance from improving the well-being and opportunities of rural Guatemalans, and particularly its large indigenous populations. What is unique from this study, however, is the finding that some communities – remote, with a tragic history of conflict, and with shockingly high rates of poverty (and thus extremely low incomes) – have made marked improvements in literacy, infant mortality and chronic hunger.

It is uncertain, without improvements in income over time, whether such strides are sustainable, or whether current trends will translate into intergenerational social mobility. Guatemala, make no mistake, has a long road ahead. But this finding alone underscores the necessity of policy that makes access to basic services, with a special emphasis on health and education, the backbone of national development policy. Crucially, in a developing country context, and/or under conditions of limited statehood that is the empirical reality of much of the rural developing world, this will require coordination with local, and frequently non-state actors if it is to be effective. As it stands today, the children of one community in rural Guatemala, Santa Lucía, will have a greater capability set – or tool box with which to survive illness, pursue further educational opportunities, or be an informed and healthy parent someday – than their neighbors. The framers of the emerging Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which continue to overlook local and participatory governance mechanisms, should take notice.
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203


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APPENDIX A. List of Interview and Focus Group Participants.

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<td>SMC</td>
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<td>SMC</td>
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<td>Zacualpa</td>
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<td>Zacualpa</td>
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<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Patzité</td>
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<td>Harvi</td>
<td>MIDES</td>
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<td>MAGA</td>
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<td>Patzité</td>
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<td>Judge and Assistant</td>
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<td>SESAN</td>
<td>Santa Cruz del Quiché</td>
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<td>CORSADEC</td>
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<td>Consejos de Pueblos K’iché</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Interviewee</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
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<td>Minister of Health</td>
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<td>Marvin</td>
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<td>Maureen Herman</td>
<td>Peace Corps / SESAN</td>
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<td>Director, Área de Salud</td>
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<td>Don Mariano</td>
<td>Former Mayor</td>
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<td>Jonathan Menkos</td>
<td>ICEFI</td>
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<td>Angel</td>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>Guatemala City</td>
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<td>Dr. Walter Flores</td>
<td>CEGGS</td>
<td>Guatemala City</td>
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<td>12/4</td>
<td>Hirma Osorio</td>
<td>Nutri Salud (Zacualpa)</td>
<td>Via email</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>Ernesto</td>
<td>Physician, Health Post</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>12/10</td>
<td>Muni Worker</td>
<td>OMM</td>
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<td>12 women (names available as needed)</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>El Hospitalito, Santiago</td>
<td>San Pedro</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>12/12</td>
<td>Agricultural Worker</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>12/12</td>
<td>Agricultural Worker</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>12/12</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>San Pablo</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>Sololá</td>
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<td>DeviTech</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
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**Total:** 254 interview and focus group participants (251 individuals, 146 focus group participants, 107 discrete interviews)
APPENDIX B. State Density Index calculation, borrowed and translated from UNDP Guatemala 2010

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Sub-Indices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Presence of state dependents</td>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>Level of service</td>
<td>Numer of “dependants”, i_a = μ(x_{ij})</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Bureaucracy (per population)</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Personnel, Minister of Public Health and Social Services (MSPAS)</td>
<td>Employees ib = μ(x_{2j})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Budget (per capita)</td>
<td>Q/person</td>
<td>Q/person</td>
<td>Q/person i_c = μ(x_{3j})</td>
<td>IDE = μ(x_{ij})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-indices</td>
<td>i_{edu} = μ(x_{i1})</td>
<td>i_{sal} = μ(x_{i2})</td>
<td>i_{otr} = μ(x_{i3})</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C. Percentage of Total Rural Poverty per Municipality (adapted from *Mapas de Pobreza Rural en Guatemala 2011*)

Nota: Los cálculos solo consideran a la población rural de cada municipio.
APPENDIX D. “Quality of Life” Scores per Municipality (as reported in the report titled, *Vulnerabilidad de Municipios y la Calidad de Vida de Sus Habitantes*)
APPENDIX E. Invitation to the official commemoration of the October 4, 2012 shooting by police of six Totonicapán residents.

**LAS COMUNIDADES ORGANIZADORAS DE LA CONMEMORACIÓN DEL PRIMER ANIVERSARIO DE LA MUERTE DE LAS VÍCTIMAS DE LA MASACRE DEL 4 DE OCTUBRE DEL AÑO 2012**

**JUNTA DIRECTIVA DEL CONSEJO DE ALCALDES COMUNALES DE LOS 48 CANTONES DE TOTONICAPÁN**

**CONVOCAN**

A todos los pueblos y organizaciones indígenas de Guatemala, a las organizaciones sociales e instituciones solidarias nacionales e internacionales a participar en la conmemoración del primer aniversario de la masacre de los mártires del pueblo de Totonicapán a realizarse el día 4 de octubre del presente año a partir de las 08:00 de la mañana en el lugar denominado “La Cumbre de Alaska, Kilómetro 169, de la Carretera Interamericana”.

**LOS MÁRTIRES DEL 4 DE OCTUBRE DEL AÑO 2012, NO ESTÁN MUERTOS, SIGUEN VIBRANDO EN NUESTRO CORAZONES Y LUCHAREMOS PORQUE SE LES HAGA JUSTICIA**
APPENDIX F. Post-estimation Tests for Marginal Effects, Multicollinearity and Heteroskedasticity per Model

Table 6 (P. 92): Variation in $HDI_{\text{extrap}}$

**Model 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CoVariate</th>
<th>Marginal Effects at means* (ey/ex)</th>
<th>Multicollinearity** VIF</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>log SDI</td>
<td>.2300021</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto Mun</td>
<td>.0095439</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf Intens</td>
<td>-.0126931</td>
<td>1.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>.01221914</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect Align</td>
<td>.0028438</td>
<td>1.03</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Stata Command: mfx compute, eyex
** Stata Command: estat vif

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals***

***Stata: predict rstu, rstu;
Histogram rstu, norm

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of $HDI_{\text{extrap}}$ Across log SDI
Table 7 (p. 96): HDI_extrap When Population <25,000

Model 1

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<th>Marginal Effects at Means (ey/ex)</th>
<th>Multicollinearity (VIF)</th>
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<td>Denperpop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect_Algnt</td>
<td>.0048091</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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</table>

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of HDI_extrap Across log_SDI
Table 8 (p. 97): 2011 Guatemalan Municipal-Level Illiteracy Rates

**Model 1**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Marginal Effects at means (ey/ex)</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
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<td>Denperpop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect_Align</td>
<td>-.0023829</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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</table>

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals

![Heteroskedasticity Plot](image)

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of HDI_extrap Across log_SDI

![Marginal Effects Plot](image)
Table 9 (p. 98): 2011 Illiteracy Rates where Population < 25,000

**Model 1**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Marginal Effects at means (ey/ex)</th>
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</table>

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of HDI_extrap Across log_SDI
Table 10 (p. 99): Change in Illiteracy (2000-2011)

Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CoVariate</th>
<th>Marginal Effects at means (ey/ex)</th>
<th>Multicollinearity (VIF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>( y = -1.6495 &lt; 0 ), eyex not avail</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect_Align</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of HDI_extrap Across log_SDI
Table 11 (p. 101): Difference in Chronic Hunger (2002-2008)

Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CoVariate</th>
<th>Marginal Effects at means (ey/ex)</th>
<th>Multicollinearity (VIF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>$y=-7.1427 &lt; 0$, eyex not available</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>1.21</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf_Intens</td>
<td>1.03</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denperpop</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect_Align</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heteroskedasticity: Distribution of residuals

Marginal Effects: Fitted Values of HDI_extrap Across log_SDI
## APPENDIX G. Summary Statistics of Variables Under Examination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>min</th>
<th>max</th>
<th>sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IVs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI_2009</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>.2185</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.0794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log_SDI</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>3.0403</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>.2719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasto_Mun</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>234.54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2886.7</td>
<td>282.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect_Aln</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>.3533</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denuncias_2012</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>86.61</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1190.38</td>
<td>111.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>DenperPop</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>4.2743</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>81.75</td>
<td>7.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>elev</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>4197.14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10898</td>
<td>2690.85</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DV</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analf_DIFF</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>-1.5818</td>
<td>-43.81</td>
<td>19.79</td>
<td>4.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDI_extrap</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>.6578</td>
<td>.277</td>
<td>.915</td>
<td>.1076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cron_Hun_2008</td>
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<td>44.8837</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>17.81</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cron_Hun_Diff</td>
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<td>-7.05</td>
<td>-31.1</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5.83</td>
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</tbody>
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