

# Relevant Databases and “What is Missing”

By Jørgen Johansen

**“ALMOST 80% OF THE STUDIES ON SOCIAL MOVEMENT OUTCOMES  
PUBLISHED DURING THE LAST 20 YEARS RELY ON DIFFERENT PROTEST  
DATABASES“**

**(UBA 2009)**

Final report to Resistance Studies Network

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## Background and introduction

This is a report on some of the existing databases on conflicts, resistance, nonviolence, and civil society actors and some suggestions for a possible pilot project to be done by RSN. The report is ordered by Resistance Studies Network (RSN) at Göteborg University, Sweden. A preliminary report was circulated within RSN and comments done by Stellan Vinthagen and Michael Schultz are included in this version.

RSN want to map databases that are relevant for their research programs and explore what is not done by others but might be included in their own research activities.

The data-collection for this report is mainly done through web-scanning, personal and electronic dialogs with key people behind the different database projects, and discussion with people who has good insight into the different projects. I am especially grateful for comments and support George Lakey, Stellan Vinthagen, Majken Jul Sørensen, and Michael Schultz.

### Historical roots

There are an escalating numbers of database projects on conflicts, civil society activities, nonviolence, and similar topics in the world. Some of them have roots back to Richardson and his dataset *Statistics of Deadly Conflicts* (Richardson 1960) and Quincy Wright *A Study of War* (Wright 1942). These had direct deadly violence against humans as the main unit in their collection of data.

In this tradition we have several datasets today and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) is one of the most well known of these (Departement of Peace and Conflict Research 2012).

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Among other noteworthy examples are Holsti on *Armed Conflicts and International Order* 1648-1989 (Holsti 1991) which includes cases of armed conflicts from the Westphalian Peace Treaty and onwards.

Ted Robert Gurr began what became the *Minorities at Risk Project* at the University of Colorado's Center for Comparative Politics in 1986 (Gurr and United States Institute of Peace. 1993). By mapping over 200 political active groups worldwide and their grievances the aim is to compare the disadvantages and conflicts of ethnic groups.

With the rising awareness, knowledge and studies about large scale societal conflicts carried out without huge losses of human lives the focus on armed/deadly conflicts were not sufficient. The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIC) located at the Department of Political Science at the University of Heidelberg started 1991 a dataset about the emergence, course and settlement of interstate and intrastate political conflicts.

The inclusion of conflicts where all or main actors used nonviolent means expanded the scope as well as the understanding and usefulness of the dataset (Pfetsch and Billing 1991, Pfetsch and Rohloff 2000b, Pfetsch and Rohloff 2000a).

The first experiments to systematically collect and analyze data on protest events was introduced by Charles Tilly in the 1970s (Tilly 2008). In one of the pioneering studies, Tilly and Schweitzer (Tilly and Schweitzer 1977) studied the effect of industrialisation and nation-building on the capacity of collective action mobilisation with the help of data on "contentious gatherings" or protest events. Today it is widely acknowledged that in order to study the mobilisation or outcomes of protests, a researcher needs access to quantitative longitudinal data on protest events (Rucht et al. 1999, Klandermans and Roggeband 2007).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This information is from a copy of a research application from Katrin Uba to FAS.

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Almost 80% of the studies on social movement outcomes published during the last 20 years rely on different protest databases (Uba 2009). This shows the importance of building databases and their usefulness for a variety of academic projects.

Geographically, the applications of protest databases cover mainly the U.S. (e.g. McAdam et al. 1996), a few Western European countries (Kriesi 1995), Denmark in Scandinavia (Mikkelsen 1999), and a few countries in Africa (Olzak et al. 2002), Asia (Uba 2007), and Latin America (Almeida 2008). There is also a data set of protests mobilised against the European Union (Uba and Ugglå 2011). There are only one systematic analysis of Swedish protest event data — a study of environmental protests 1988–1997 by Jamison and Ring (Jamison and Ring 2007).

Although highly valuable, there are still some problems with many of these data-sets: first, they are collected by means of machine coding only and have not been combined with manually checked data (e.g., the Ronald Francisco's European Protest and Coercion Data, EPCD, see <http://web.ku.edu/~ronfran/data/>) or the Protocol for the Analysis of Nonviolent Direct Action, PANDA (Bond et al. 1997).

The latest developments of global databases on conflicts are those only focusing on nonviolent conflicts. Definitions, terminology, and main units differs, but the interesting move is to include civil society actors with mainly nonviolent techniques in their toolboxes. Two of the most impressive ones is *Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes*, at Wesleyan University and *Global Nonviolent Action Database* (GNAD) at Swarthmore College. The GNAD exclude completely cases dominated by violent means.

Most of the examples mentioned have a wide or even global perspective and most of them include cases prior the the start of their project. In addition there are several databases with more limited scopes both thematically, geographically, and time wise.

There are several relevant regional and local databases on conflicts, civil society actors, and “conflict means” developed. The final report will include some of the most relevant ones.

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Outside the more formal databases there are several tools on the web that can be used as databases. Modern search tools can be utilised to extract data similar to what you can get from formal databases. This will be discussed in the chapter on “data collection”.

The last part of this report will formulate some suggestions for what is still to be done and what can fit in the RSN profile and ongoing projects. Valuable experiences from relevant existing databases will be summarised and include some suggestions for a possible pilot project. This part will also include possible cooperation with existing projects.

## Computerised Databases:

### 1. Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)

UCDP is located at Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University; Peter Wallensteen is Program Director. UCDP<sup>2</sup> collects information on a large number of aspects of armed violence since 1946. Since the 1970s, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) has recorded ongoing violent conflicts. This effort continues to the present day, now coupled with the collection of information on an ever broadening scope of aspects pertaining to organised violence, such as the resolution and dynamics of conflict. The UCDP data is one of the most accurate and well-used data-sources on global armed conflicts and its definition of armed conflict is becoming a standard in how conflicts are systematically defined and studied. Data on armed conflicts have been published yearly in the report series States in Armed Conflict since 1987, in the SIPRI Yearbook since 1988, the Journal of Peace Research (Themnér and Wallensteen 2011) since 1993 and in the Human Security Reports since 2005. In addition UCDP researchers conduct theoretically and empirically based analyses of armed conflict: its causes, escalation, spread, prevention and resolution. These studies are regularly featured in international journals and books.

Since 2004, the UCDP also operates and continuously updates its online database on armed conflicts and organised violence, in which several aspects of armed conflict such as conflict dynamics and conflict resolution are available.

The activities connected with conflict data have gradually expanded. In the autumn of 2003 the amount of work on conflict data collection led to a change in the name of the project and it was thus turned into the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. This

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<sup>2</sup> Most of the information in this chapter is from <http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/> and [http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/program\\_overview/](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/program_overview/) Both accessed 2012-03-28

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includes the regular collection of state-based armed conflicts, the global, online conflict database (UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia) as well as new forms of data relating to non-state actors and one-sided violence. Another novel aspect is the introduction of yearly fatality estimates for all conflicts, on data since 2002. Earlier there was only a broad range given. Also, issues of reconciliation, prevention, peacemaking and social impact of conflicts have led to the addition of new projects.

The latest expansions are the UCDP's Georeferenced Event Data (GED) and Peacemakers at Risk (PAR) projects, which are both currently being coded.

UCDP Armed Conflict Dataset includes conflicts which results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year. They cover the period from 1946 and onwards.

***Summery: An excellent database for armed conflicts with more than 25 killed on the battlefield annually. Start: 1946 - Ongoing***

## **2. Conflict Information System (CONIS)**

CONIS<sup>3</sup> is based at Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK). HIIK is a independent and interdisciplinary registered association located at the Department of Political Science at the University of Heidelberg.

Since 1991 the HIIK has been committed to the distribution of knowledge about the emergence, course and settlement of interstate and intrastate political conflicts. The background, definitions, and main ideas behind this project, that started under the name of Konflikt Simulation Modell (KOSIMO), is described in *Kosimo: A Databank on Political Conflict* (Pfetsch and Rohloff 2000b) and *National and International Conflicts, 1945-1995* (Pfetsch and Billing 1991).

The first edition of the database CONIS had been developed in 2003 especially for the reasons of conflict early warning. It contains the data for the dynamics of development of more than 800 political intrastate and interstate conflicts all over the world since 1945, among them the conflicts presented in the Conflict Barometer

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<sup>3</sup> Most of the information in this chapter is from <http://www.hiik.de/index.html> Accessed 2012-03-28

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(current status: Conflict Barometer 2008). The CB is published annually and contains the current research result. Furthermore, the HIIK is updating and maintaining the conflict database CONIS.

The common of CONIS and the HIIK considers political conflicts a special type of social systems. Because of this methodology *conflicts can be gathered empirically and displayed in their whole possible dynamic, starting from a non-violent conflict to a war and to possible deescalation*. Therefore the structure of the CONIS database with its several ten thousand information points allows for a detailed view on conflicts, which also makes transparent the course of violent conflicts of a low intensity.

CONIS contains course data for the following variables:

1. **intensity**
2. **directly involved conflict actors**
3. **constellation of the actors**
4. **conflict item**
5. **affected country**

***Summery: An excellent database for political conflicts. Start: 1945 - Ongoing***

### **3. Minorities at Risk (MAR)**

The MAR<sup>4</sup> Project is a university-based research project that monitors and analyses the status and conflicts of politically-active communal groups in all countries with a current population of at least 500,000. The background for this project is described by Ted Gurr (Gurr and United States Institute of Peace. 1993). The project is designed to provide information in a standardised format that aids comparative research and contributes to the understanding of conflicts involving relevant groups.

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<sup>4</sup> Most of the description here is taken from the project web-site at <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/>  
Accessed 2012-03-28

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Selected project materials on more than 283 groups (the MAR database and codebook as well as detailed historical chronologies) are available through this site for researchers, public officials, journalists, students, activists, and others interested in the topic. The project also has collected data on 118 ethnopolitical organisations representing MAR groups in the Middle East and North Africa.

The MAR project currently maintains data on 283 politically active ethnic groups. The centrepiece of the project is a dataset that tracks groups on political, economic, and cultural dimensions. The project also maintains analytic summaries of group histories, risk assessments, and group chronologies for each group in the dataset.

The Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB)

(MAROB) dataset is a subsidiary of the Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project. Initiated in 2005, the purpose of this project is to answer fundamental questions focusing on the identification of those factors that motivate some members of ethnic minorities to become radicalized, to form activist organizations, and to move from conventional means of politics and protest into violence and terrorism. Focusing initially on the Middle East and North Africa, the MAROB project provides information on the characteristics of those ethnopolitical organizations most likely to employ violence and terrorism in the pursuit of their perceived grievances with local, national, or international authority structures.

***Summary: Focus on Minorities in Ethnopolitical conflicts. Start: 1945 - ongoing***

## **4. The Protocol for the Analysis of Nonviolent Direct Action (PANDA) and Integrated Data for Events Analysis (IDEA) Projects**

A much more extensive KEDS-coded event data set is now available from the Protocol for the Analysis of Nonviolent Direct Action (PANDA) at the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions and Cultural Survival in the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University (Bond et al. 1994).

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PANDA's data set uses a superset of the WEIS coding scheme that provides greater detail in internal political events, and contains about 500,000 events covering the entire world (using Reuters leads) for the period 1984-present.

Bond and several associates, working through the company Virtual Research Associates, have developed a commercial event coding system and several information management and data visualization programs for the Windows operating system. VRA. The system is currently being used by UNICEF and several government agencies for monitoring political and economic activity.

The other major development by Bond and his collaborators is the IDEA -- Integrated Data for Events Analysis -- coding system. This will supersede the PANDA coding scheme, and more is designed to provide a general framework for coding events.

"The IDEA event form typology is a conceptual framework for use in coding social, economic and political events data. The IDEA framework is an extension and a refinement of, and is congruent with the World Event / Interaction Survey or WEIS. Like WEIS, IDEA is nominally scaled, but unlike WEIS the event forms in IDEA are not bound to state actors (though some event forms are intrinsically bound to specific actors like military forces, as in military engagement). For example, the WEIS reduction in relations event form represents a diplomatic behaviour and is therefore restricted to inter-state behaviour, but the IDEA equivalent, reduce routine activity, refers to such reductions by individuals, groups or organizations, both state and non-state. See more on <http://vranet.com/idea/>; Accessed 2012-03-28.

***Summery: Tools to map "political events". PANDA based on Reuters telegrams.***

## **5. European Protest and Coercion Data (EPCD)**

EPCD coded and upload protest and coercion data in 28 European countries from 1980 through 1995 for every day. The countries included are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, FR Germany, GDR, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg,

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Northern Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

EPCD coded all reported protest and repressive events. No event was too small. Ongoing events, such as strikes, occupations, hunger strikes, and vigils were coded each day as a separate event. Protests that grow out of events are coded separately; for example, a violent confrontation attendant to a rally or a demonstration that emerges from a religious rally would be coded separately from each rally. EPCD ignored reports of future plans for protest or strikes. Nor did they code bomb or strike threats alone. They coded only reported events for which we could identify a date and location.

These data were created because few other protest and coercion data have interval data with a long time-series. EPCD attempted to generate interval data by extracting directly as much information as they could find in news reports about domestic conflict. They also found journalistic conventions that allowed inferences about information.

Code book and datasets are available at: <http://web.ku.edu/~ronfran/data/index.html>.

***Summery: Political protests over fifteen years in 28 countries. Main source mass media. A check for Sweden shows that several cases are missing. Start 1980 - End 1995***

## **6. Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO 2.0)**

“This dataset combines cases of major non-state resistance campaigns to determine the conditions under which violent or nonviolent resistance methods have been successful in achieving their strategic objectives from 1900-2006. The dataset brings together numerous cases of violent and nonviolent campaigns with the objectives of expelling foreign occupations, regime change (i.e. removing dictatorships or military juntas), selfdetermination or separatism, and in some cases, other major types of social change (i.e. anti-apartheid campaigns). Consisting of consensus data from

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experts on major armed and unarmed insurrections, the dataset identifies the levels of success each campaign achieved according to each campaign's stated objective." (Chenoweth 2011 p. 1-2)

This the most significant development within the study on conflicts (violent and nonviolent) for many decades. The quantitative data collected in this huge database makes it possible to analyse and compare conflicts in a number of different and new ways.

The levels of success are categorised as "Success," "Limited," or "Failure," with the purpose of testing the number of successful campaigns of each type (violent or nonviolent), and to test whether the rate of success varies on the purposes of the campaigns, the violent response of the state, support from third parties, campaign membership figures, or regime characteristics (such as level of democracy, wealth, or government capacity) of the targets of the struggle (Chenoweth 2011 p. 2).

The core units in this database is called "Campaign". They define a campaign as a series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective. Campaigns are observable, meaning that the tactics used are overt and documented. A campaign is continuous and lasts anywhere from days to years, distinguishing it from one-off events or revolts. Campaigns are also purposive, meaning that they are consciously acting with a specific objective in mind, such as expelling a foreign occupier or overthrowing a domestic regime. Campaigns have discernable leadership and often have names, distinguishing them from random riots or spontaneous mass acts. Campaigns usually have distinguishable beginning and end points, as well as discernable events throughout the campaign. In the case of resistance campaigns, beginning and end points are very difficult to determine, as are the events throughout the campaign. In some cases, information on such events is readily available (i.e. Northern Ireland); however, in most cases, it is not.

Therefore, the selection of campaigns and their beginning and end dates are based on consensus data produced by multiple sources. (Chenoweth 2011 p. 4)

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So far they have included 323 major violent and nonviolent resistance campaigns seeking regime change, anti-occupation, or self-determination between 1900 and 2006. Preliminary conclusions are that nonviolent campaigns were nearly twice as likely to achieve full or partial success as their violent counterparts.

Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephen have published several articles and books on the first results from the NAVCO project (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011, Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, Chenoweth and Stephan).

***Summery: The first global quantitative dataset comparing violent with nonviolent means in political campaigns. Sources: Multiple. Start 1900 - ongoing***

## **7. Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNAD)<sup>5</sup>**

George Lakey took the initiative to this database that went on-line in 2011 and is placed at Swarthmore College, Philadelphia, US. Most of the cases at the time the database first went on-line were written by students at Swarthmore College, usually in the context of a research seminar taught in Peace and Conflict Studies by George Lakey. Most students wrote 10-12 cases but some wrote 24 or more (indicated by asterisks). Additionally, cases were contributed by students at Tufts University, supervised by peace and justice educator Dale Bryan, Georgetown University, supervised by peace scholar Barbara Wien and University of Winnipeg. In Mars 2012 GNAD has entered over 560 cases in the database, in two different formats: 2-3 page narratives that tell the story of the campaign, and searchable fields that enable the viewer to research many questions, from how other movements have used the occupation or any of the other close to 200 methods.

Since going onto the Internet last September the GNAD attracted over 23,000 unique visitors from 177 countries. (The database includes cases from over 190 countries.) A typical day attracts 300-500 visits.

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<sup>5</sup> Most of the information and description of this project is collected through direct contact with George Lakey and two of his key students. Later I have also communicated through e-mails and got copy of their internal material etc. Some of the text is copied from their Research Guide from October 2011.

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The name of the database is somewhat misleading; the main unites are not “Nonviolent Actions”, but “Nonviolent Campaigns”. They place “campaigns” between “actions” and “movements”.

They have **classified** the cases into three types: Social change, Social defense, and Third party nonviolent intervention.

Each case belongs to one of more of the following five **clusters**: Democracy, Economic justice, Environment, Human rights, National/ethnic identity, and Peace. In the database they tend to reserve "PEACE" for those situations when the campaigners are not as interested in an increment of, say, economic justice or the institutionalization of human rights as they are in reducing the level of violence/ injurious force.

The **groups/activists** involved are described by a characterisation based on demographic and/or ideological descriptions of participants in the campaign. For ex., industrial workers, farmers, women’s groups, students, Buddhist monks, villagers, socialist reformers, environmentalists, anarchists.

The database also include leaders (if applicable), partners and allies.

In addition to time and duration of the campaigns they include “**Goals**” were that is available.

When it comes to “**methods**” they use the 198 methods described by Sharp (Sharp 1973) but they are open to include new methods, and have done so to some degree.

Even if the main focus is on nonviolent campaigns they have included cases with some violence.

A very important and interesting part of this project is the way they measure the degree of success of the campaigns. One standard approach in the world of evaluation is to assess success/failure in terms of the stated goals of the protagonist. Success is rarely all or nothing, of course, so it helps to have a scale. GNAD use scale (of maximum ten points) that will be based on the stated goals of the

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campaigners/interveners, but also on some process goals that are often unstated but assumed.

Weighted score: from zero to ten points. They take three variables into account: goal attainment, survival, and growth. The three are weighted differently. While this particular scoring system is no doubt controversial in the field of social movements – people can always argue about how much weight to attach to what – they argue this procedure can still work for them, because it will provide internal consistency so we can compare campaigns and interventions with each other.

George Lakey are open to discuss cooperation with other researchers and/or universities/colleges. The operation of this project is very much dependent on Lakey as a person and there are no present plans for what to do with the project when George leaves his job within few years. For the moment he has promised to stay on until fall 2013.

***Summery: On online database on mainly nonviolent campaigns. Undergraduate students writes most of cases. They are supervised by a team of experienced students and George Lakey. Sources: All sorts. Start: No case too old - Ongoing***

## **8. Swedish Protest Databas (SPD)<sup>6</sup>**

This project aims at constructing a Swedish data base of political protests on the national and local level during the period from 1980 to 2010. It will provide systematic and detailed data on protest events (location, time, mobilising groups, targets, demands made by actors), protest characteristics (duration, size, level of violence) and direct outcomes of the action (e.g., response from politicians or police). Data will be collected from national and local newspapers, and Swedish archives of popular movements (“Folkrörelsearkivet”). The latter provides a unique opportunity, missing in many other countries, to complement media reports with information from primary

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<sup>6</sup> This description of the project is extracted from an article received from Katrin Uba and direct communication with her. Some of this text is form her application to FAS.

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sources. SPD will also look into the possibilities to use police and court archives for finding more relevant data. SPD is planned to start in the fall of 2012.

The database has four main purposes:

(1) It fills a void in Swedish research on civic activism and would help us meet the challenge provided by contemporary studies on the causes and outcomes of citizens' political action. Interest in levels of political activism and in who participates in actions like voting, contacting public officials or demonstrations have been met by several empirical studies in Western Europe (including Sweden), the United States, and elsewhere ( see e.g. Petersson and Demokratirådet 1998, Verba et al. 1995, Esaiasson et al. 2006, Deth et al. 2007). While these studies provide much valuable information on the prevalence of, and reasons for, citizen participation, they fall short in assessing whether and why policy-makers actually respond to such participation. Moreover, the individual level data like the one collected by the so called Citizenship Studies ("medborgarundersökningarna") do not allow assessing the socio-economic and political context of protest mobilisation or the reasons for diffusion of protests from one part of the state to another. The database would be of interest not only for political scientist or sociologists, but also for economists as well as for general public interested in citizens' mobilisation in Sweden.

(2) It allows us to conduct longitudinal studies, comparing Swedish trends and patterns of protests with data from other countries ( e.g. Kriesi 1995). Until now Sweden has been excluded from the comparisons of protest patterns in Western Europe; the availability of the proposed database would encourage international scholarly collaborations and would allow testing hypothesis like: —the corporatist welfare state (like Sweden) dampens the potential for protest mobilisation.

(3) It can be linked to other data on public opinion, socio-economic indicators or data on political structures (e.g., party coalitions in municipalities) for testing theories on protest mobilisation, protest development and, most importantly, the outcomes of protest mobilisation in Sweden. There are already interesting elite-surveys available

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for assessing the openness of municipal politicians for protesting (Gilljam et al. 2010) and this could be combined with the actual knowledge of protest mobilisation. The empirical knowledge thus generated will also aid theory development. During the final (forth) year of the project the collected data will be used for examining the patterns of protest mobilisation by different social groups in Sweden. This would allow comparison to the related research (Giugni 2008, Klandermans et al. 2008) which hypothesis on the one hand that unemployed or immigrant communities are not as active in mobilising political protests as other social groups; on the other hand the protests are expected to be more common in those housing areas where the segregation is higher.

(4) It could also be used for some theoretical and methodological innovations in the research of individual level political participation and collective action. Several comprehensive surveys on individual political participation in Sweden provide representative data on self-reported participation in demonstrations and strikes, as well as the socio-economic background and relevant attitudes of protest participants (Esaiasson et al. 2006). Combining this information with detailed data on actual protest events on the local and national level provide additional opportunities to improve our empirical and theoretical knowledge about collective action in the form of protest events.

***Summery: This project is planned to start in fall 2012. Will cover all sorts of protests etc in Sweden 1980- 2010. Sources: Multiple***

## **9. INTERNATIONAL CENTER ON NONVIOLENT CONFLICT(ICNC)**

ICNC has two different databases: One is an on-line list of learning material and teaching resources (<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/learning-and-resources>). The other one is a huge on-line collection of news items and articles on nonviolent actions (<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/news-and-media>). The first one is organised and searchable after resource type. The one on media coverage (News Digest) is organised chronologically. Both have mainly, but not

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exclusively, English language items. The News Digest circulates a selective digest of world news related to past, present and potential nonviolent conflicts, including active civilian-based struggles against oppressive regimes, nonviolent resistance, political and social dissidence, and the use of nonviolent tactics in a variety of causes. Users can search using any combination of the following categories: (1) Keyword, (2) Date range, (3) Tactic, (4) Issue, (5) Country, and/or (6) Region of the world.

ICNC also include stories that help readers glimpse the larger context of a conflict and that reflect on past historical struggles.

***Summery: Good source for collecting information about Nonviolent Actions. Global but not necessarily systematical or representative collection. Can be used as a source for other databases.***

## Not Computerised Databases:

### 1. John E. Jessup

Jessup (Jessup 1989) published his *The Chronology of Conflict and Resolution: 1945-1985* in 1989. That work chronicled the various manifestations of violence that humanity tends to habitually impose upon itself and the efforts that was done to resolve those issues. Nine years later he published a book (Jessup 1998) devoted to an encyclopedic review of the period 1945-1996, including some background information on events leading to the post -1945 period. The 1998 encyclopedia includes conflicts, individuals, events, organisations, and information about relevant contexts. This collection of cases are not available on-line.

**Summery: *Violent conflicts with deadly outcome. Not computerised.***

### 2. Patrick Brogan

Patrick Brogan (Brogan 1989) published *World conflicts : why and where they are happening* in 1989. And later *World Conflicts* (Brogan 1998). Both these projects cover wars, acts of terror, coups, revolutions and political assassinations since 1945 to the year of publication. None of the peaceful uprisings are included. This collection of cases are not available on-line.

**Summery: *Violent conflicts with deadly outcome. Not computerised.***

### 3. Gene Sharp and Albert Einstein Institute

Sharp published an edited version of his PhD under the title *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* in 1973 (Sharp 1973). In addition to theories on political power, a modern and technical discussion of nonviolent action the book had a list of 198 techniques of nonviolent actions. Each technique was described and illustrated with a historical example. Few, if any books, have had stronger impact on the research on

nonviolence since the Indian liberation struggle and books by Gandhi. Together with Ronald M. McCarthy Sharp published *Nonviolent Action; A Research Guide* (McCarthy and Sharp 1997) which includes a global collection of documented nonviolent actions and campaigns world wide. The first four chapters compile references from history, sociology, political science, journalism, person experiences and observations, policy statements, official reports, and other fact-oriented sources. These are arranged by country and many of them are case studies in which nonviolent actions were used. The second part of the book compiles references on the nature of nonviolent action itself and on related theories and perspectives. In all 2747 entires are included. The latest relevant book by Sharp is a dictionary of power and struggle (Sharp 2011). Only a few of the texts by Sharp is available on-line.

***Summery: A lot of data on nonviolent actions. Not computerised. Start: As long back as we have written sources. Still ongoing.***

## Tools:

### 1. The Kansas Event Data System (KEDS)

KEDS is a system for the machine coding of international event data based on pattern recognition. It is designed to work with short news summaries such as those found in the lead sentences of wire service reports or in chronologies. To date, KEDS has primarily been used to code WEIS events (McClelland 1976) from the Reuters news service but in principle it can be used for other event coding schemes.

Historically, event data have usually been hand-coded by legions of bored undergraduates flipping through copies of the *New York Times*. Machine coding provides two advantages over these traditional methods:

- Coding can be done more *quickly* by machine than by hand; in particular the coding of a large machine-readable data set by a single researcher is feasible;
- Machine coding rules are applied with complete *consistency* and are not subject to inter-coder disparities caused by fatigue, differing interpretations of the coding rules or biases concerning the texts being coded; The disadvantage of machine coding is that it cannot deal with sentences having a complex syntax and it deals with sentences in isolation rather than in context.

KEDS can be used for either machine-assisted coding or fully automated coding.

Coded events can be manually edited on the screen before they are written to a file, and the program has a “complexity detector” that can divert linguistically complex sentences – for example those containing a large number of verbs or subordinate clauses – to a separate file for later human coding.

***Summery: A system for machine coding of international events.***

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## **Bibliographical Databases:**

### **1. A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi**

Navajivan Publishing House has published a two volume bibliography compiled by Ananda M. Pandiri (Pandiri 2002). Volume one includes Biographies, works by Gandhi, and Bibliographical sources. Volume two has books and pamphlets about Gandhi. Both volumes includes only sources in English and not articles from journals and magazines. The most extensive collection so far.

***Summery: Bibliographical material on Mohandas Gandhi.***

### **2. People Power and Protest since 1945: a bibliography on nonviolent action**

April Carter, Howard Clark, and Michael Randle published to book People Power and Protest since 1945: a bibliography on nonviolent action in 2006 (Carter et al. 2006). Now the content is available on-line and new entries are added. This bibliography covers both nonviolent campaigns guided by a philosophy of nonviolence (though not all participants necessarily share this philosophy) and the larger number of pragmatic uses of nonviolent protest or resistance. The latter may involve minor sabotage, and some protesters may engage in spontaneous violence, for example in confrontations with the police. But if the primary emphasis is on use of nonviolent (though potentially coercive) methods, these campaigns are included here as significant examples of nonviolent action.

This bibliography is produced primarily for activists, students and peace researchers based in Britain, so availability in British libraries has been one consideration in selection of titles. But we hope it will also be helpful to those in other parts of the

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world with an interest in nonviolent action. Only English language sources are included and a few important works not yet translated into English.

***Summery: Database with literature on nonviolent conflicts***

## Teaching tools:

### 1. CASCON

CASCON (Bloomfield and Moulton 1997) is a computerised history-based conflict analysis and decision-support system, designed to serve as both an aid to the memory, and as an aid to the imagination. CASCON derives from earlier research at MIT under the direction of Professor Lincoln P. Bloomfield on the subject of local conflict and its prevention.

The CASCON historical database includes up to date information on 85 post-World War II conflict cases. The history of each case is structured using the Bloomfield-Leiss conflict phase model which has been widely adopted. Substantive expert codings of up to 571 factors in ten categories capture the influence of events and circumstances on the progress of each case toward or away from violence. Users may research and code additional conflict cases for use along with the historical database.

Students, scholars and professional analysts interested in preventive diplomacy and early warning have used CASCON for precedent-based searches to compare new or incipient conflict situations to some or all of the database.

### 2. People Power - The game of Civil Resistance

**People Power** is a learning tool for people who want to use nonviolent action in their own struggles for rights and freedom. The game also serves as a simulation model for academic studies of civil resistance, and an educational tool for civil society groups and anyone who wants to learn more about the power and strategic applications of civil resistance.

People Power is a single-player, turn-based game in which the player takes on the role of strategist in a nonviolent movement against a variety of adversaries in pre-

packaged scenarios. As the player takes charge of the movement's materials and human resources, recruits new members and builds alliances, the player also learns the necessity of strategic planning and the skills involved in choosing goals and tactics. The adversary is controlled by the game's artificial intelligence.

Complex models of social interaction make up the game engine, incorporating political and economic factors, ethnicity, religion, media and communications, and resource availability, among others.

## **A suggestion for a pilot project - Czechoslovakia, Georgia, and Egypt**

### **Three cases with similarities and differences**

A pilot project for a RSN-database must be limited both time-wise and geographically. To test what sort reliable and relevant information is available the pilot should include a high number of variables. Three relatively recent and different cases of revolutionary processes should be included. This will open up for comparing a variety of resistance techniques and strategies in different contexts. The use and level of violence is studied by others, but should still be central. The violent clashes in Egypt tends to disappear in the Not well covered in other databases are the roles of external actors. This is discussed a lot and would make the pilot unique and valuable. Who the participants are is another under-researched area. Their age, gender, class, ethnicity, religion should be mapped and, if possible, their percentage of the totality. The types and roles of leadership in opposition movements and insurgencies are not included in most databases. A pilot should include a variable with at least three types of leadership: Single person with a strong charisma (Václav Havel in the Velvet Revolution, Czechoslovakia 1989), a group of leaders (Rose Revolution in Georgia 2003), and no organised leadership ("Arab Spring" in Egypt 2011).

These three cases are excellent candidates for a pilot that want to test these new variables. Czechoslovakia 1989, Georgia 2003, and Egypt 2011 are all relatively recent. They are different enough to show a variety of contexts and strategies and it is possible to get access to material from archives as well as interviewing people who took part.

For such a pilot there is a need to carefully develop a code-book. Many of the existing databases already have done work that can be copied. What is still to be done is how to code the variables not included in the existing databases. The

external actors and their impact is one such “missing” variable. The type of leadership in the opposition movements is another.

There are ten key questions for any new database project:

1. **What sort of events to include?**
2. **What sort of means to include?**
3. **Identifying actors according to age, gender, ethnicity, class etc**
4. **How to collect data (sources)?**
5. **Time-frame and start.**
6. **Geographical limitations.**
7. **Outcomes? Short- and long-term.**
8. **The mobilisation**
9. **Classifying and analyse effect of external support**
10. **How to keep a consistent judgement over time?**

The databases listed above are of many different kinds and constructed for different purposes. Below follows some suggestions based on discussions with people who has been engaged in setting up databases of the kinds RSN are planning.

### **1. What sort of events shall be included?**

As we have seen above it differs a lot between the projects. Some use the unit “conflict” as the key concept. Most of these have a main focus on armed/violent conflicts. It is quite obvious that large scale political and violent conflicts are pretty well covered in existing database projects. CONIS open up for large scale political conflicts without massive use of violence, but include wars as well. Patrick Brogan in his *World conflicts : why and where they are happening includes* even some selective cases with single acts of violence.

SPD will identify “protests” and GNAD use “actions”. NAVCO use “campaigns”. They have all argued for their choices and this is probably one of the first questions you

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want to focus on in order to build a database. Based on my knowledge of RSN I would argue in favor of “**political actions of resistance with the goal to improve democracy**” as the main unit. With *political actions* I mean single acts of political manifestations outside the constitutional and parliamentary system. Protests, demonstrations, strikes, blockades, occupations, vigils and similar forms of public events are included in this term (Della Porta 2003). “Political actions” can be part of campaigns and used by a number of different actors.

**Pilot:** For this pilot the three proposed cases are what Chenoweth and Stephan labels “Campaigns”. Later it is possible to expand and include other types of cases.

## **2. What sort of means to include?**

The definition above does not exclude acts of violence. The division line between violent means and peaceful means is not easy to define. Resistance studies will include all types of means. The *level of violence* should be included as one variable.

As I am writing these lines there is a huge confrontation in Århus, Denmark, between rightwing “anti-jihad” activists and anti-racists activists. On both sides there are a number of different organisations and groups present. They differ a lot when it comes to goals, means, strategies etc. To include this case in a database it would be useful identify and to separate the many actors and their means.

Strategically planned intentionally killing of opponents is in one end of the spectra and moral objections to use of any kinds of violence in the other. Sabotage and other forms of destruction of objects is a grey zone in the discussions of violence. A database on acts of resistance should include some different types of destruction of dead objects. There is a huge difference between US soldiers burning their drafts in opposition to the war in Vietnam to dynamite against infrastructure in World War II. Symbolic acts like burning flags are very different from workers on purpose creating “accidents” in a factory with destruction of machinery as a result. The list of 198 techniques by Gene Sharp includes a lot of different kinds of sabotage (Sharp 1973). Sharp is also a good starting point to make a list of different types of actions. There is in addition a need to include a similar list of violent actions.

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This gives possibilities to compare violent vs nonviolent means. The level of violence should be at a spectrum and not either/or. Equally important is to identify who among the many actors use violence in complex processes of resistance.

In addition to the traditional type of acts of resistance it would be important to include acts of what is called “Peace Building” (Jonsson et al. 2002, Kang et al. 2009) and/or “Constructive Program” (Gandhi 1944, Shah 2009).

Here it is important to bear in mind that different actors will frequently have different strategies. The inclusion of actors in databases is a crucial issue.

**Pilot:** The suggested project should in addition to specify a number of violent and nonviolent actions<sup>7</sup> also include a list of different kinds of support from external actors.<sup>8</sup> The different actions carried out by the “position” is not part of most other databases and inclusion of these can help to expand the understanding of these kinds of campaigns.

### **3. How many and what types of actors to include?**

It is important that the database gives possibilities for identifying *which actors* that use what level of violence. To illustrate this point: A group of pacifists conduct a protest and are met with massive violence from police/military. Media will focus on the media coverage with headlines and photos on the brutal violence. If the database does not separate the means used by one actor from the means used by another, the conflict as such can will be classified as “violent”. This is necessary in order to be able to analyse the impact of different means and actors.

The number of actors in most societal conflicts are very high. There is an on-going discussion on how many to include in analysis of conflicts. I would argue that it is better to include “too many” than “too few”.

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<sup>7</sup> “Nonviolent action” is here used in the Gene Sharp understanding of the term.

<sup>8</sup> See Johansen, J. (2010). Analysing External Support to Nonviolent Revolutions. [Experiments with Peace, Celebrating Peace on Johan Galtung's 80th Birthday](#). J. Johansen and J. Y. Jones. Oxfords, Pambazuka Press: 103-114.

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On “all” sides in a conflict there are a wide variety of actors. None of the existing databases have mapped the actors in detail. They should be classified in terms of age/gender/class/ethnicity/religious orientation etc. Their relative numbers as percentage of the total should, if possible, be stipulated.

Just let me shortly return to the above mentioned confrontation in Århus, Denmark: In addition to the two, multifaceted, main groups it is obvious that the police forces was a main actor in the conflict. Local people from the city, mass media, politicians are other actors that had an impact on the outcome. The many actors had different influences and a diversity of goals and agendas. Media has an impact on many of these cases. This was obvious when Al Ajzeera covered Tahir square 24/7 in early 2011. As more and more media are covering events in real time their role has moved from reporting and commenting events to be actors in the conflicts.

For a project by RSN I don't see strong arguments for excluding any actor. Even states some times use “political actions” outside the constitutional and parliamentary system. In cases of occupations this is obvious, but also in other context we have seen governments and other state authorities use manifestations in order to win sympathy for their case. Sharp (Sharp 1973) have several examples of state representatives using nonviolent forms of action.

If the actor is an organisation or a joint project with several organisations it would be important to identify the name of the campaign or event.

**Pilot:** Actors should be specified much more than “opposition” vs “position”. To map and specify different groups within the opposition will add valuable understanding to the complexity of such societal conflicts. An illustration from the case of Egypt is the obvious need to separate some of the police forces from the military ones. In the same way the groups close to the Muslim Brotherhood acted very differently from some of the secular groups and networks. It is crucial to map the important roles of actors<sup>9</sup> like media (domestic and international), diplomacy, religious leaders, and

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<sup>9</sup> In this context I define “actor” as any group that has an impact on the outcome and have their own agenda that can be identified as separate from other actors agendas.

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other external groups. The help from outside to connect to Internet when it was closed down in Egypt is an illustration of actors not included in other existing databases. In Czechoslovakia and Georgia there are, with a few exceptions, not any detailed analysis of the different actors in the revolutions. The few books published about Georgia and Czechoslovakia does not include a comprehensive overview of the actors.<sup>10</sup>

#### **4. How to collect data (sources)?**

There are weaknesses with most sort of sources. Few are consistent over time and even fewer are global in their coverage. The combination of consistency, global AND local coverage does not exist! My conclusion is that expanding the number of sources will reduce some of the weaknesses. By comparing several sources it is possible to avoid serious misunderstandings, conscious misleading and propaganda. It is important to be aware that many secondary sources extract information from a limited number of primary and first hand sources. A high number of website with the same information is not in itself a guarantee that the information is accurate and reliable. To have good understanding of the society were the events take place and to know the political context and relevant vocabulary is essential for those who collect and code data.

Several of the above mentioned databases, including SPD and GNAD, use multiple sources in addition to media. One important possibility would be to contact some of

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<sup>10</sup> The few books available are:

Coppieters, B., et al. (2005). Statehood and security : Georgia after the Rose Revolution. Cambridge, Mass., American Academy of Arts and Sciences : MIT Press.

Karumize, Z. and J. V. Wertsch (2005). Enough! : the Rose Revolution in the Republic of Georgia 2003. New York, Nova Science Publishers.

Wheatley, J. (2005). Georgia from national awakening to Rose Revolution : delayed transition in the former Soviet Union. Aldershot, Hampshire ; Burlington, VT, USA, Ashgate.

Wheaton, B. and Z. Kavan (1992). The Velvet Revolution : Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991. Boulder, Westview Press.

Whipple, T. D. (1991). After the Velvet Revolution : Václav Havel and the new leaders of Czechoslovakia speak out. New York, N.Y.

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the main actors and establish a dialog with them about the case. With modern means of communication it should be possible to contact most of the actors with civil society.

In addition to media there are possibilities to use police reports, documentations from court cases, and in some cases investigations of the police forces behavior. In some countries there has been commissions set up to map how the secret police acted against oppositional groups (Essen and Aamand 2009, Mariager et al. 2009, Heiberg et al. 2009, Töllborg 1986, Lund et al. 1996, Hjort and Säkerhetstjänstkommissionen 2002b, Säkerhetstjänstkommissionen 2002, Molin and Säkerhetstjänstkommissionen 2002, Hjort and Säkerhetstjänstkommissionen 2002a). These and similar sources gives unique insights into the normally hidden activities by these state actors.

**Pilot:** The way sources are collected and used in the Global Nonviolent Action Database seems most appropriate. Search for all sorts of written material and, were possible, make use of local informants. There is obvious a need to use people with skills in Georgian, Czech, and Arabic languages. In all three cases there are for sure more material in local languages than in English. All these three cases took place within the last 25 years and there are a lot of people around who took part and can both be interviewed.

## **5. Time-frame and start.**

For mapping “political actions” it is possible to start with historical examples. Most of the oldest ones will have few and not too reliable sources. The closer to present time, the better sources in most cases. This is not an argument against including cases from the past. For a pilot study I would argue that it is adequate to focus on cases within the last two decenniums. In the evaluation of the pilot project it should be included a reflection on how far back in time it is meaningful to go. For each case the date of start and end should be included.

Since most of the “Political actions” probably are parts of campaigns the start and end of the campaigns should be included.

**Pilot:** The three selected cases all have roots back ing history. My proposal is to start mapping variables five years prior to the peak of the revolutionary phase. This is not

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done by any other database and will make it possible to search for pre-conditions for a revolutionary “window of opportunity”. The end of the process should include the first parliamentary election. This is relevant for the three cases in the pilot but may be different for a later extension of the database.

## **6. Geographical limitations.**

For all databases there is a balance between how wide and how deep to go. The wider the scope, the less detailed can the database be. Small scale actions of resistance cannot be included if the goal is to have a global scope.

There are two main arguments against having a global scope: 1. language problems and 2. capacity. For a pilot there are obvious limitations and for the next step these questions should be raised again. My suggestion for a pilot is to include two geographical areas. This opens up for comparative studies and to test the structure of the database in different contexts. That could be two states or two regions on a meso-level. Balkan, Baltic, Scandinavia, North Africa, North-West India are relevant candidates when it comes to regions. Georgia, Spain, Norway, Ireland, Serbia, and Estonia are good candidates for states. I would argue that it is valuable to compare two cases that are not too different. States/regions that have been (re-)born recently or states/regions with strong and old civil society are good candidates. The other way of thinking for a pilot project is to test in two very different geographical areas. It could also be of value to test how to cope with language problems etc. The suggested areas make it possible with several options.

**Pilot:** Here the limitations are given.

## **7. Outcomes? Short- and long-term.**

To what degree the different actors are able to fulfil their goals is a very important part of the database. This is not a black or white question but must be judged on a spectrum. That could be from 1 - 6 or something similar.

In order to measure their rate of success we need to know what the many actors want. It is relatively complicated to identify the goals and agendas for actors; few

have clearly stated aims. In addition they change over time. For the large scale campaigns against authoritarian regimes it is often relatively easy to identify what they are against; more difficult to be clear what they want to replace the old system with. Similar situation for many of the civil society actors.

There are more difficulties than to identify the respective goals of the actors. One crucial question is to decide *when* to measure the rate of success or failure. My suggestion would be to include three different times for measuring if they have achieved their goals or not: Immediate, after one year and after 5 years. In all three it should be used the 1 - 6 spectra.

**Pilot:** In all three cases the outcomes are change in regimes. But to be more specific on the outcome I would suggest to study how the new regime is doing on some of the core democratic freedoms and rights and how corruption is handled by the new regime. Some illustrative examples are freedom of speech, the freedom of religion, the right to create organisations, and how human rights are respected. The economical development and the quality of the educational institutions are developing are two other variables to include. Ideally these variables should be measured with regular intervals.

## **8. The mobilisation**

This variable is closely related to point 3 above. Different kinds of actors will be mobilised through different means. There has been a lot of discussions and analysis about the use and role of electronic media. A pilot project should aim at being more specific than what has been done until now and map “which actors were mobilised how?” Interviews with people who took part can give answers to how they got involved.

**Pilot:** Based on the categories of actors the pilot can specify the role of different kinds of media; what sorts of motivation people had to join the movement; and at what phase of the revolution they joined and how loyal they stayed to the movement who took power (de-mobilisation). We have seen a clear tendency that successful movements split soon after a victory. If the pilot can map why these divisions took

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place they will have a valuable contribution to the understanding of these complex processes.

### **9. Classifying and analyse effect of external support <sup>11</sup>**

The role of external actors is missing in most existing databases. Overt support is relatively easy to identify. It is obviously more difficult to measure the impact of such support. For covert support the problem is both to identify and measure the impact. The discussion about impact is in principle not different when it comes to external support than for any of the other actors or means used. The covert support has a tendency to go public after some years.

**Pilot:** Since this is a new area of research there are a number of interesting possibilities here. Some of the external supporters may be less willing to share knowledge about their contributions, other are clearly proud of what they have done. The more a pilot project can include, the better. All kinds of new information on this matter is valuable.

### **10. How to keep a consistent judgement over time?**

The classification of cases can be difficult. In order to achieve a consistency over time it is advisable to use few or only one coder per country. Try to use coders who know about the history of the country they code. Each coder learns about the protest organizations, the level of the state repression, and the important issues in the country. This context is valuable in the inevitable judgments that must be made in coding data. Write down the criteria for classification and try to teach all staff in the same way of thinking. An ongoing dialog between the coders is crucial in order to keep the same judgements in the coding.

The most difficult cases should be referred to a group of scholars/advisors connected to the project. Ideally from different parts of the world and with a variety of backgrounds. All should have a deep understanding of the theoretical framework and

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<sup>11</sup> Johansen, J. (2010). Analysing External Support to Nonviolent Revolution in *Experiments with Peace, Celebrating Peace on Johan Galtung's 80th Birthday*. J. Johansen and J. Y. Jones. Oxford, Pambazuka Press: 103-114.

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an academic background. Such a group could also be helpful in the startup of the project.

**Pilot:** For the pilot it is important to develop a manual on how different kinds of sources are used and what sort of criteria is used in judgements of sources. All those engaged in the project should regularly discuss “interesting cases of judgements” and document both their discussions and conclusions. Future generations of staff members should be trained in how sources are judged and how the coding is kept consistent over time. An external group of experts can be used as consultants in “key-cases”.

### **In General**

The ten points above are broad categories. When it comes to implementing the project I would strongly argue that the code-books of several databases are studied.

It is better to include “too many” than “too few” variables from the beginning. Easier to delete some of them at a later stage than to go back and search the sources for a new variable to be added later.

### **Resources**

A pilot on these three cases should be possible to do with an amount of work equal to three persons full time for one year. Approximately half a year work full time for a software developer and one year full time for two persons collecting and coding data. The last half time for a year is for interpretations, administration etc.

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