



# Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)

## User Quick Guide

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Further information and maps, data, trends and publications can be found at [www.acleddata.com](http://www.acleddata.com) or by contacting [admin@acleddata.com](mailto:admin@acleddata.com)

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## **User Quick Guide and Details**

### ***What does ACLED data cover?***

ACLED collects realtime and historical data on political violence and protest events in nearly 100 countries. As of April 2019, ACLED covers Africa (from 1997 to real time), Middle East (from 2016 to real time), South and South-Eastern Asia (from 2010 to real time) and Europe (from 2018 to real time).

### ***Where can you access ACLED data?***

Data are published on ACLED's website ([acleddata.com](http://acleddata.com)) with real-time updates. There are detailed instructions about how you can export the data you are interested in, including selecting by group, event type, country, or with a keyword.

### ***How are the data disaggregated?***

The ACLED dataset seeks to provide information about political violence and protest which is disaggregated by date (when the event happened); type of violence (what happened); actors (who is involved); and location (where the event happened). Reports of violence are broken down into individual, discrete events, determined by whether they took place at a different time, involved different types of violence or actors, or occurred in different locations. In practical terms, this means that events that take place on different days, involving different types of violence, with different types of actors or in a different location are all coded as separate events. Additional information on ACLED methodology can be found on the website.

### ***How are these data collected?***

ACLED data are collected by a range of experienced researchers who use information primarily from secondary sources and code it according to a process outlined in the codebook.

ACLED takes a variety of steps to help ensure that the data are both accurate as well as accessible for academics, policymakers, and practitioners to work with and integrate into their own research. ACLED data are collected each week after individual researchers have scrutinized information from available reports; they are then aggregated and revised by the first coding reviewer, investigated and cross-checked by the second reviewer and then event notes and details are inspected by the third and final reviewer.

In addition to weekly review of the real-time conflict data, an overarching cleaning and data management effort is undertaken on an annual basis, leading to the annually-



released dataset publication. See the website for additional information about data collection and review.

### ***Can I use ACLED for my own research?***

ACLED data are publicly available without charge. The data included is not confidential and so can be shared and analysed publicly. ACLED data can be used for academic and policy research, as well as analysis specific to organisations operating in target countries.

### ***How do I cite ACLED data?***

If you are a non-commercial entity (e.g. non-profit, government, academic institution) and seek to use ACLED data and/or analysis for non-commercial/non-profit purposes, you are permitted to do so free of charge provided you follow the attribution policy below. Use of ACLED data and/or analysis is contingent upon observation of this policy:

1. If using ACLED data in any way, direct or manipulated, the data must be clearly acknowledged. Acknowledgement should include **1)** a footnote with the full citation which includes a/the link to ACLED's website (see below for examples), **2)** in text citation/acknowledgement, stating where the data you use are from and that ACLED data are publicly available, and **3)** clear citation on any and all visuals making use of ACLED data
2. If generating a data file for public or private use, and presenting those data to another party, the ACLED data included must be directly acknowledged in a source column (ACLED's full name and a link: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED); [acleddata.com](http://acleddata.com)).
3. To reference the ACLED codebook, please cite: ACLED, (2019). "Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Codebook".
4. If using ACLED data in an academic paper or article, please cite: Raleigh, Clionadh, Andrew Linke, Håvard Hegre and Joakim Karlsen. (2010). "Introducing ACLED-Armed Conflict Location and Event Data." *Journal of Peace Research* 47(5) 651-660.
5. If referring to figures or statistics published in ACLED analysis, infographics, working papers, etc., please cite the individual analysis piece or paper, including the author(s), as follows: *Hart, Tom, and Lauren Blaxter. (23 November 2018). "Ceasefire Divisions: Violations of the Truce with Gaza Lead to Rising Political Pressures in Israel." Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED).* If the



piece doesn't have an author recognized (often the case for pieces on ACLED methodology), you should include ACLED as the author.

6. If using ACLED data in a visual, graphic, map or infographic of your own, please attribute the source data prominently on the visual itself or within the key / legend.
7. If you wish to reproduce or publish an image, graph or map ACLED has already published (rather than creating an original image using raw data), please cite the individual analysis piece or paper, including the author(s), as follows: *Hart, Tom, and Lauren Blaxter. (23 November 2018). "Ceasefire Divisions: Violations of the Truce with Gaza Lead to Rising Political Pressures in Israel." Figure 1, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED).*

#### ***What do the specific columns mean in ACLED data?***

In the ACLED dataset, each column contains specific information on the exact location, date, actors and other characteristics of politically violent events. Data about the specific columns are available in the Resources section of the website.

#### ***What is the difference between event types?***

ACLED currently codes six types of events, both violent and non-violent, that may occur during a conflict. These include:

1. *Battles* (Violent interactions between two organised armed groups);
2. *Explosions/Remote violence* (One-sided violence events in which the tool for engaging in conflict creates asymmetry by taking away the ability of the target to respond);
3. *Violence against civilians* (Violent events where an organised armed group deliberately inflicts violence upon unarmed non-combatants);
4. *Protests* (A public demonstration against a political entity, government institution, policy or group in which the participants are not violent);
5. *Riots* (Violent events where demonstrators or mobs engage in disruptive acts or disorganised acts of violence against property or people);
6. *Strategic development* (accounts for often non-violent activity by conflict and other agents within the context of the war/dispute. Recruitment, looting and arrests are included).

In addition, twenty-five sub-event types were introduced to further disaggregate instances of violence within the wider event type categories. Additional information on event types in ACLED can be found online in our codebook.



***Can I use ACLED data to find information about the number of people killed by a specific group?***

ACLED does not code fatality figures according to which group suffered casualties because most source reports do not offer this level of detail. Instead, the events include, when available, the total number of deaths arising from a conflict event. The estimated number of fatalities associated with a single event is reported in the fatalities column.

For this reason, the data cannot generally be used to estimate the number of deaths *caused* by one actor or another in a conflict, as a single event may contain information on casualties suffered by both parties in a battle, for example. The only exception to this is in incidents of violence against civilians: because ACLED only codes events of violence against civilians where the targets were unarmed, non-combatants, the number of fatalities reported for each event of violence against civilians is taken to be the reported number of civilians killed.

All fatalities recorded are ‘reported fatalities.’ ACLED does not independently verify details of fatalities, and includes this information as an estimate only, reflecting the content of media reports. We further specify in our user guides and other resources that fatality data are particularly prone to manipulation by armed groups, and occasionally the media, for various reasons, and urge users to take this into account in their analysis of fatalities. As such, ACLED codes the death toll as it is reported; where a range of fatalities is reported, we code the lowest of that range, and seek to note in the ‘Notes’ section when there has been a dispute.

***Can I use ACLED data to find information about the number of people injured by a specific group?***

The fatalities column in our dataset refers to the estimated number of reported fatalities associated with a single event. ACLED does not collect casualty data, but such information may be in the notes.

***What is the date format for ACLED events?***

The data use a dd-mm-yyyy format (UK style) and for all future iterations of the dataset, the format will be consistently a dd-mmmm-yyyy format to alleviate any problems.

***How can I make a comment, or pose a question, to the ACLED team?***

Please contact us through our general email ([admin@acleddata.com](mailto:admin@acleddata.com)) or via twitter’s direct message (@acledinfo).