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Warfare Within: Understanding Societal Militarization

From running hotels and banks to assuming law enforcement responsibilities, directing educational and public health initiatives, many militaries around the world are increasingly assuming roles that extend beyond traditional military affairs. Over the past decade, societies across the world have witnessed a surge in militarization—the expanding military involvement in the social, political, and economic spheres. The multifaceted involvement of militaries in domestic affairs raises significant concerns about its consequences for societies, including the quality of democracy, civilian control of the military, authoritarian resiliency, corruption, state repression, political violence, and citizens' trust in institutions, among others. Despite its severe implications, there is no comprehensive empirical cross-national research that explain the emergence, type, and consequences of military assuming domestic roles beyond defense. This project is the first of its kind to comprehensively capture the various domestic roles militaries have assumed around the world through generating a cross-national observational data as well as a dataset of citizen's response to such initiatives. The project aims to map militarization around the world, explain its causes and its implications for several outcomes, including quality of democracy and democratization/authoritarianism/democratic backsliding, political violence, as well as societal trust.

Award: \$20,000