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# Social Network Structures and the Politics of Public Goods Provision: Evidence from the Philippines

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CESI CRUZ , JULIEN LABONNE  and PABLO QUERUBÍN 

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## Abstract

We study the relationship between social structure and political incentives for public goods provision. We argue that when politicians—rather than communities—are responsible for the provision of public goods, social fractionalization may decrease the risk of elite capture and lead to increased public goods provision and electoral competition. We test this using large-scale data on family networks from over 20 million individuals in 15,000 villages of the Philippines. We take advantage of naming conventions to assess intermarriage links between families and use community detection algorithms to identify the relevant clans in those villages. We show that there is more public goods provision and political competition in villages with more fragmented social networks, a result that is robust to controlling for a large number of village characteristics and to alternative estimation techniques.