

The Impact of Armed Conflict on Agricultural Production: Case Study of Afghanistan

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This study examines the impact of armed conflict on agricultural production in Afghanistan. Conflict in Afghanistan has a series of wars since 1978, where the current (U.S. war in Afghanistan) wave of conflict occurred after the September 11 attacks in late 2001 primarily comprises of Afghan Army troops and United States troops, fighting against terrorists such as Taliban and ISIS.

Addressing and handling this challenge has remained a remarkable burden for the Afghan government so far. In addition to substantial civilian casualties and capitals lose, the country endures from a similarly vital but unobserved impact of conflict on different economic sectors in Afghanistan. Agriculture, as a sound and dynamic sector, is the main foundation of rural development. The sector (apart from opium cultivation) accounts for 20 percent of the national GDP which more than 75 percent of the rural population engaged in this business. Therefore, empirical evidence is necessary to assess the relationship between armed conflict and agriculture to provide guidance for future interventions for policymakers. It is additionally important because the agriculture sector is particularly exposed to armed conflict for several reasons.

First, studies show that conflict leads to vast migration and deaths of innocent people, which results in a shortage of labor supply. In addition, the decline of agriculture value-added percent of GDP and increase in amount deaths and injuries are is questionable and need signals to provide insight for the policymakers.

The study uses two-stage least squares (2SLS) estimation procedure using data from a household level survey conducted in 2016-2017 by the Central Statistic Organization (CSO) with conflict data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The results show, an increase in conflict intensity, measured by the total number of fatalities and injuries at the district level decreases the total gross output values per hectare by 1.2 percent, agriculture labor hours by 0.843 hours (50 minutes). Nevertheless, there is a relatively positive relationship between conflict and total cultivated but no impact on input cost and fertilizer usage.