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DOCTORAL STUDIES

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
PhD, Economics, Expected completion June 2013
DISSERTATION: "Less Guns, More Violence: Evidence from Disarmament in Uganda"

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND REFERENCES

Professor Esther Duflo
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Professor Michael Greenstone
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PRIOR EDUCATION

MSc. Economics	London School of Economics	2007
BSc. Economics *(First Class Honors)*	London School of Economics	2005

CITIZENSHIP UK

GENDER: Female

FIELDS

Primary Fields: Development

Secondary Fields: Experimental, Environmental

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

14.160 Experimental and Behavioral Economics
14.137 Psychology for Economists
14.73 Undergraduate Development Economics

RELEVANT POSITIONS

World Bank, Short-term Consultant	2010
RA to Professor Michael Greenstone, MIT	2009-10
RA to Professor Nicholas Stern, LSE	2007-08
Asian Development Bank, Intern	2007

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

MIT Martin Fellowship	2011-12
George and Obie Schultz Fund Grants	2010-12
Kennedy Scholarship	2008-09
ESRC Research Fellowship	2006-08
LSE Economic Department Prize	2005

RESEARCH PAPERS

"Less Guns, More Violence: Evidence from Disarmament in Uganda" (Job Market Paper)

This paper studies the effect of Uganda's 2006 disarmament policy in the Karamoja region in East Africa, a traditional tribal area that is one of the most violent places in the world. From 2004 to 2009, the homicide rate was more than ten times as high as the US rate and three times as high as the Mexican rate. Most of these deaths occurred during livestock raids that impacted 3-5% of the total livestock in the region each year. The disarmament policy greatly reduced the guns of tribes in the Ugandan districts of the region but not in the Kenyan districts. The theoretical impact of the disarmament is ambiguous, however, since guns can be used for deterrence as well as helping aggressors carry out raids. For example, the disarmament could reduce the advantage of heavily armed tribes over weakly armed tribes and lower the number of tribes willing to carry out raids. At the same time, it will also lower the expected cost of confrontations for all tribes, which may lead to more tribes initiating raids, particularly if weakly armed tribes begin to raid. Empirically, I find that the disarmament campaign had the unintended effect of increasing the frequency of raids in Uganda by about 40%, while, consistent with the idea that disarmament reduced the costs of raiding, I find no impact on the monthly death rate. Moreover, this increase in raids in Uganda was driven by an increase in Ugandan initiated raids on other Ugandans, not an increase in Kenyan initiated raids on Ugandans, suggesting that in this context the deterrent effect of guns outweighs their impact as a tool of aggression.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

"How does stress affect social interactions?" (with Johannes Haushofer)

This paper studies the impact of stress on social behavior by exogenously stimulating the two biological systems associated with stress: the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA) and noradrenergic (NA) system

and measuring behavior in interactive tasks in a laboratory experiment. Our preliminary findings suggest that the concurrent stimulation of both systems, through the administration of 60mg of hydrocortisone and 20mg of yohimbine, did not lead to statistically detectable changes to behavior in any of the social tasks. It did, however, manifest in lower opinions of the trustworthiness and fairness of other people, as well as a decrease in the value associated with helping other people, as measured through a visual analog scale survey. Given these initial results, we find preliminary evidence for a relationship between stress and anti-social behavior as revealed through lower beliefs on social standards, and we plan to extend the number of participants in the study to further investigate these results.

"Conflict and Climate Variation: A Micro-level Analysis"

Several studies have identified the impact of adverse economic shocks on civil conflict using rainfall variation as an instrument for income or growth. This paper contributes to this literature by carrying out a micro-level analysis on the relationship between climate and resource variation with armed conflict using a novel dataset on inter-tribal violence manifested through livestock raids in a pastoral-dependent region of East Africa. Consistent with previous work, I find that across the region there is a negative relationship between both forage and rainfall with conflict. In particular, a standard deviation decrease in average level of forage across the region leads to a 13.5% increase in the total number of raids per month and a 10% increase in the proportion of land with no rainfall leads to a 4.7% increase. I posit three potential explanations for these findings: (1) desperate times lead to desperate measures, such that tribes under resource strain will resort to predation regardless of the resource condition of the tribes they target, (2) the most resource-scarce tribes are driven to predation, but they preferentially target tribes with higher resources, (3) strategic predation drives conflict, such that resource-rich tribes prey on the most vulnerable tribes in times of stress. Using tribe-level variation in rainfall and forage, I try to identify which of these explanations is most relevant. I find that decreases to a tribe's own rainfall and increases to their target's rainfall lead to an increased probability that they will raid. Similarly, I find that tribes are most vulnerable to attack when they experience negative rainfall deviations. Thus, in this context it appears that violence is most likely to occur when tribes are resource-scarce and the marginal gains to raiding are greatest.

"Estimating the Impacts of Global Climate Change" (with Jennifer Peck)

This paper estimates the impact of climate change on global health-related welfare. In particular, we examine the relationship between annual climate fluctuations and human mortality, electricity consumption, net migration and overseas development aid (ODA). We use historical temperature and precipitation fluctuations within countries to identify the effect of climate changes on these outcomes, and then use two different climate models to predict the effects on future mortality and other outcomes. The results show a

strong impact of extreme temperatures on mortality, with cold days associated with an increase in mortality among infants and the elderly and hot days increasing mortality in all age groups. Electricity usage is highest in years with more cold days in poor countries and lowest for years with more hot days. Precipitation fluctuations are correlated with migration and aid flows, with low precipitation leading to greater migration out of autocratic nations and greater ODA directed to Asian nations, while high precipitation is associated with an increase in per capita ODA to poor countries.