



## RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

### Transnational Crime and Conflict | November 2019

#### FEATURE STORY



From left to right: Quy-Toan Do, Aart Kraay, Franck Bousquet.

#### Increasing Transnational Crime and Conflict Threaten Lives around the Globe

Terrorism, civil war, drug trafficking, and wildlife poaching are at their highest points in decades, spilling across increasingly porous borders and highlighting the urgent need for deeper, broader, and smarter international cooperation. At a recent [Policy Research Talk](#), economist Quy-Toan Do highlighted a long list of troubling statistics on the growth of transnational threats that will be featured in a forthcoming publication on *The Internationalization of Crime, Conflict, and Violence*.

[Story](#) | [Video](#) | [Presentation](#)

#### RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

##### ✓ [Preventing Violence in the Most Violent Contexts: Behavioral and Neurophysiological Evidence](#)

[Lelys Dinarte](#) and [Pablo Egaña del Sol](#), *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 8862*, May 2019.

Recent evidence has demonstrated the efficacy of psychological interventions like cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) in improving individuals' misbehavior and criminal outcomes. An experimental evaluation of a CBT-inspired after-school program implemented in five schools located in violent communities in El Salvador shows improved emotional regulation and academic achievement for the most vulnerable students.

##### ✓ [Transnational Terrorist Recruitment: Evidence from Daesh Personnel Records](#)

[Anne Brockmeyer](#), [Quy-Toan Do](#), [Clément Joubert](#), [Mohamed Abdel Jelil](#), and [Kartika Bhatia](#), *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 8381*, March 2018 | [Blog: What drives the radicalization of foreign terrorist recruits?](#) (June 2018).

What are the drivers of transnational terrorist recruitment? A leaked copy of Daesh's personnel records for 3,695 recruits—including information on countries of residence, education level, age, self-reported knowledge of Islam, and occupation—shows a lack of economic opportunities in countries located closer to the Syrian Arabic Republic among the factors explaining recruitment success.

## ✓ [The Price Elasticity of African Elephant Poaching](#)

[Quy-Toan Do](#), Andrei A. Levchenko, Lin Ma, Julian Blanc, Holly Dublin, and Tom Milliken, *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 8335*, February 2018 | Blog: [To trade or not to trade elephant ivory? That's going to be the question](#) (September 2016).

The calculated price elasticity of the supply of illegal African ivory is relatively low (the intensity of poaching does not change much when prices change), highlighting the challenges associated with interventions that act primarily to suppress demand. This analysis brings much-needed data and empirical evidence to policy discussions about elephant conservation.

## ✓ [How Many Years Have Refugees Been in Exile?](#)

Xavier Devictor and [Quy-Toan Do](#), *Population and Development Review* 43 (2): 355–69, June 2017 | [Working Paper Version](#) | Blog: [How many years do refugees stay in exile?](#) (September 2016) | Blog: [For refugees, the average duration of exile is going down. Why is this bad news?](#) (August 2018).

An analysis of data from the 1951–2015 UNHCR Population Statistics Database shows that available refugee data can be used to clarify critical aspects of policy debates on the refugee crisis. It shows the duration of refugee displacement varies across situations. For example, in protracted situations where refugees have spent at least five years in exile, the average and median duration is rising. But overall the median duration of exile has fluctuated between 10 and 15 years since the late 1990s.

## ✓ [Predicting Conflict](#)

Bledi Celiku and [Aart Kraay](#), *World Bank Policy Research Working 8075*, May 2017.

This study looks at the performance of three alternative methodologies for predicting conflict across countries and over time. A simple “threshold classifier” model that predicts conflict when a sufficiently large number of conflict indicators exceed thresholds provides the best predictive performance.

## ✓ [Public versus Private Protection against Crime: The Case of Somali Piracy](#)

[Quy-Toan Do](#), Lin Ma, and [Claudia Ruiz](#), *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 7757*, July 2016 | Report: [The Pirates of Somalia: Ending the Threat, Rebuilding a Nation](#) (April 2013) | [Feature Story](#) | [Infographic](#)

What accounts for the observed drop in piracy attacks off the coast of Somalia since 2012? Data on attacks, hijacks, and ransoms is used to assess two deterrents: navy patrols providing security to all vessels and privately hired onboard security protecting smaller individual vessels. While armed security on smaller vessels accounts for the bulk of the observed drop in piracy attacks, navy deployments also shielded smaller vessels by offering safe transit corridors.

To access the latest Policy Research Working Papers, please click [here](#).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- **December 11, 2019:** [Policy Research Talk: The Unintended Consequences of Cash Transfers](#)
- **March 16–20, 2020:** [Land and Poverty Conference 2020: Institutions for Equity and Resilience](#)

To see more events, please click [here](#).

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### **Global Financial Development Report 2019/2020: Bank Regulation and Supervision a Decade after the Global Financial Crisis**

Over a decade has passed since the onset of the largest global economic crisis since the Great Depression. The crisis revealed major shortcomings in market discipline, regulation, and supervision. The Global Financial Development Report 2019/2020: Bank Regulation and Supervision a Decade after the Global Financial Crisis provides new data and evidence on the regulatory remedies adopted to prevent future financial instability and sheds light on ongoing policy debates.

[Website](#) | [Report](#) | [Blog](#) | [Video](#) | [Dataset: Bank Regulation and Supervision Survey](#)

### **Robert S. McNamara Fellowships Program**

The World Bank Robert S. McNamara Fellowships Program will open for applications between January 16, 2019 and February 13, 2020. The program awards grants of up to \$25,000 for PhD candidates in developing countries to travel abroad for 6-10 months under the supervision of a host research advisor at either the World Bank, a university, or other research institution. During that time, the application and the opportunity to email questions will be available.

Applicants must meet the following core Eligibility Criteria:

- Be a citizen of a World Bank member developing country
- Be 35 years of age or younger
- Be enrolled in a PhD program on a development topic in a member developing country of the World Bank
- Have completed all coursework and exam requirements for attaining a PhD.

Visit <http://www.worldbank.org/scholarships> for the complete list of eligibility and selection criteria, eligible fields of development, and the application process.

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## BLOGS FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

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### **How labor markets in South Asia can benefit from higher exports**

[Erhan Artuc](#), [Raymond Robertson](#), [Daniel Samaan](#), [Gladys Lopez-Acevedo](#) | *End Poverty in South Asia*, November 20, 2019.

Since the 1980s and 1990s, South Asian economies have taken several steps to liberalize trade. By 2016, import tariffs had fallen sharply, giving trade a jolt. Yet across the region, the ratio of trade to GDP, an indicator of trade openness, remains low. Exports of goods represent only about 10 percent of GDP, compared to above 20 percent in East Asia and the Pacific, and more than 30 percent in Europe and Central Asia. In other words, South Asia is still struggling with many closed markets and protectionist tendencies.

[Read the blog](#)

### **Bank capital regulation**

[Claudia Ruiz](#), [Miriam Bruhn](#) | *All About Finance*, November 19, 2019.

Since the global financial crisis surprised the world a decade ago, many problems with the way bank capital was regulated became evident. In a few words, banks did not have enough high-quality capital nor incentives to sufficiently curb risk-taking. Regulation was so complex that even regulators struggled enforcing it. Since then, bank capital regulation has been revamped.

Basel III is the most notorious example.

In the third chapter of the [Global Financial Development Report 2019/2020](#), we begin with the basics of bank capital: What are its functions? Why and how is it regulated? We then take a deep dive in the literature to review what we know about its impact on access to finance and stability, and more recently, its role in the global financial crisis. We also examine the regulatory responses and trends in the adoption of capital regulation that following.

[Read the blog](#)

### **Five innovations to strengthen bureaucracy**

[Daniel Rogger](#) | *Governance for Development*, November 18, 2019.

As co-lead of the World Bank's Bureaucracy Lab, I have come across a range of approaches to strengthening bureaucracies around the world. Here is a summary of five notable ones that we've come across recently based on the following questions.

1. How do we strengthen the accountability of the most senior public officials?
2. How do we ensure the best and brightest become senior public officials?
3. How do we celebrate these and other officials when they do a great job?
4. How can we learn from other bureaucrats?
5. How do we give public officials the space to innovate?

[Read the blog](#) | [Story](#).

### **Changing the culture of economics: The 2019 Nobel laureates**

[Karla Hoff](#) | *Future Development*, November 7, 2019.

The 2019 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics Sciences was awarded to Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer “for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.” Their experimental work has changed the culture of economics, especially development economics. It helped change deep assumptions about how individuals make decisions and about what economic development is. It changed the way many development economists work, where they work, and the kinds of people they work with.

[Read the blog](#)

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