158th TAOYAKA PROGRAM SEMINAR Abstracts

14:00-14:45
VALLY KOUBI, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Climate Change Migration and Urban Conflict

Abstract: Despite the potential importance of migration for the link between climate change and conflict, we still have a limited understanding of the precise mechanisms underlying these relationships. In this paper, we examine whether and how climate-induced rural-to-urban migration contributes to political instability in urban areas. We argue that the mainly forceful and involuntary nature of relocation reduces migrants' willingness to adjust to their new location. We thus expect that environmental migrants are more likely to perceive conflict and to express an intention to support violence in their new location relative to economic or social migrants. Using original survey data from Vietnam and Kenya, we find that environmental migration results in both heightened conflict perceptions and an increased potential for political violence. Furthermore, we find that while sudden-onset events, including storms or floods, lead to an increased support of low-intensity political violence, such as riots and protests, gradual events like droughts or desertification are linked to more salient and intense attitudes and conflict behavior. The involuntary movement of people due to climatic changes clearly presents major societal and governance challenges. Governments and international organizations need to adopt proactive rather than reactive policies in order to ensure planning and preparedness for climatic changes and to increase the resilience of communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change in order to prevent future urban conflict.

14:45-15:30
AKIRA HIBIKI, Tohoku University

Gender differences in associations of household and ambient air pollution with child health: Evidence from household and satellite-based data in Bangladesh

with Masamitsu Kurata (Sophia Univ), Kazushi Takahashi (Sophia Univ)

Abstract: Reduction in health risks from household air pollution (HAP) and ambient air pollution (AAP) is critical for achieving sustainable development globally, especially in low-income countries. Children are at particularly high risk because their respiratory and immune systems are not fully developed. Previous studies have identified the adverse impacts of air pollution on child health. However, most studies do not focus on HAP and AAP simultaneously nor address differences in the timings and magnitudes of prenatal and postnatal exposures across genders. Therefore, this study examines how prenatal and postnatal exposures to ambient particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 μm or less (PM2.5) along with household use of solid fuels (a main cause of HAP) are correlated with child health in Bangladesh. We combine individual-level data from nationally representative surveys with satellite-based high-resolution data on ambient PM2.5. We find that (1) the use of solid fuels is associated with respiratory illness among girls but not boys, (2) prenatal exposure to ambient PM2.5 is associated with stunting in boys but not girls, and (3) postnatal exposure is associated with stunting in both genders. These results provide new evidence for heterogeneous influences of AAP and HAP on child health across gender and timing of exposure. The main policy implications are that interventions against HAP would be more effective by targeting girls, and interventions against AAP should also target pregnant women. In sum, our findings highlight the importance of protecting women from air pollution and achieving Target 3.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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15:45–16:30

JOSHUA FISHER, Columbia University

Environment, Peace, & Security: Overcoming conflict to achieve the 2030 Sustainability Agenda

Abstract: The 2030 Sustainability Agenda is the world's most ambitious attempt to enable equitable economic development while promoting environmental sustainability. However, history has shown it is difficult to pursue both objectives simultaneously. Many well-intentioned efforts have unintentionally produced social, political, and environmental conflicts that undermine both development and sustainability. With only ten years remaining to achieve the Sustainability Agenda, there is a pressing need to develop strategies to effectively manage these conflicts. Fortunately, the field of Environment, Peace and Security has developed tools and lessons to assist governments, communities, and private sector organizations work toward socially and environmentally beneficial solutions. This talk will discuss this new field and lessons learned from applied research. The talk will also highlight new areas of research and practice needed to support the 2020 agenda.

16:30–17:15

SHOKO KOHAMA, Hokkaido University

Searching for Soft Power in Experiments: Confirmation Bias, Leader Cues, and Negativity in Public Diplomacy

with Kazurnori Inamasu and Atsushi Tago

Abstract: This study investigates why a message conveying a foreign government's public diplomacy is interpreted differently by people from other countries. The effects of a foreign political leader's image and message tones are examined in a (hypothetical) situation wherein the two countries compete for public support from another country. Three randomized experiments were conducted in Japan, using vignettes of China in dispute with the US and Russia in dispute with Turkey. Japanese respondents consistently expressed negative attitudes toward China and Russia, regardless of the message tones and their evaluation of its political leader because of their preexisting negative attitudes toward these countries. Conversely, President Trump exerted source cue effects to those who have non-negative attitudes toward him, but not to those who dislike him. We also found that a message that denounces another country was influential unless respondents have negative pre-attitude toward the messenger country or they accept a cue from the messenger country's political leader. The experimental results suggest that confirmation bias invalidates public diplomacy exerted by unpopular countries and that source cue effects overshadow the message content.

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