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Understanding the Dynamics of Refugee Return During COVID-19

Researchers

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Abstract

How do refugee crises end? Despite the policy relevance of the question, very little research addresses the topic. This project will examine the determinants of the return of Syrian refugees from Lebanon, a country that has hosted over a million Syrians since the beginning of the conflict. Using a panel survey, researchers will assess how Syrians' intentions to return home relate to their subsequent choices, and evaluate the relevance of push factors in Lebanon and pull factors in Syria in household decision-making. Results will inform the design of humanitarian programming to facilitate refugees' safe voluntary choices about return. As of April 2020, we are about to begin another wave of phone-based data collection with our representative panel of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Given the concurrence of the coronavirus pandemic and our data collection with a representative sample of Syrians in Lebanon, we have added a battery of questions about impacts of the crisis on respondents' economic well-being and migration plans.

Funding for this project was provided by the UK Department for International Development, awarded through IPA's Peace & Recovery Program.

Project Outcomes of Interest

We will present nationally representative descriptives of health metrics including symptomatic prevalence, testing, access to medical care, and shelter in place. Second, we will examine relationships between our health metrics and our rich set of baseline covariates, thereby identifying policy-relevant patterns, such as where greater efforts to promote shelter in place are needed and which groups have less access to medical services during the pandemic. Also, using our rich panel data on migration and economic well-being, we will examine secondary consequences of the COVID-19 crisis.

Partners

Immigration Policy Lab (IPL)

Impact Goals

- Promote peace and safety, and improve humanitarian response
- Reduce COVID-19 transmission rates

Project Data Collection Mode

- CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing)

Results Status

No Results Yet