

## **POLS303033 Environment, Human Security, and Conflict**

Dr. Richard Frank  
School of Politics and International Relations  
richard.frank@anu.edu.au  
@richwfrank

---

### **WEEK 8 WORKSHOP 2022**

---

#### *Logistical notes*

#### **Literature reviews and research proposals**

For those of you completing grading options 1 or 3, let me know if you have any questions about your literature review feedback or completing your research proposal.

---

#### *Breakout groups*

##### Part 1: Theory

1. Draw a path diagram of the main argument (and control variables) in one of the assigned readings for this week. If you are not sure what a path diagram is check out the ones in this week's lecture slides.

You can draw it in Word, PowerPoint, or whatever software you choose. If you want to draw it on a piece of paper, take a picture of the path diagram and either insert it in your Word workshop document or insert it as an attachment to your Wattle workshop post answer. Let me know if you have any technical issues doing this.

2. What do you find compelling about this argument?

3. Is there a separate causal story from one of the other readings that you could add to your path diagram?

If so, add it to your path diagram above (also include a causal arrow(s)) and label it so I can see what you are adding.

4. In what ways is your path diagram similar to others we have seen so far (e.g., those in this week's lecture slides)?

##### Part 2: Evidence

5. Choose a conflict from UCDP (<https://ucdp.uu.se/>) that started or was ongoing in the last ten years (i.e. not included in van Weezel's 2016 analysis).

6. Who are the actors involved in this conflict?

7. Choose a type of food that people in this area are likely to consume.

8. See if this commodity is available at the following cost of living website.

<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/historical-data>

9. Now choose a city that is in the Numbeo dataset that is as close as possible to this conflict.

10. Is there any relationship between food prices and the conflict that you can spot? If not, can you think of reasons for why there is no connection?

11. Are there any other priced items included in Numbeo's list that you think captures how the cost of living can fluctuate in areas of uncertain security? Why did you choose this item (or items)?

12. Any links you can draw from the theoretical arguments or empirical findings in the article you chose above to this conflict?

### **Part 3: Substantive effects**

Vesco et al. (2021) include lots of fancy models and new ways of measuring crop concentration. They also try and interpret and present their substantive effects in several ways. If you have the time, please look at two ways of presenting these results: the last sentence of the abstract (p. 98) and Figure 2 (p. 109). Both are ways of showing how the chance of having a civil conflict increases as the climate gets more uncertain and agricultural production becomes more concentrated. The first is a percentage change, the second is a graph of different percentage levels.

13. Can you see roughly how the first number connects to the figure? If so, can you describe it?

14. If you have difficulties connecting the two, can you describe the sticking point for you?