

# High rates of unemployment does not decrease insurgent attacks against government, allied forces

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Despite contrary belief, reducing unemployment in locations with active insurgencies does not decrease the rate of insurgent attacks against government and allied forces. Additionally, it was found that unemployment in these same locations also had no impact in reducing the deaths of civilians.

A new study released in the recent issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (published by SAGE) found that there is no correlation that aiding countries with high rates of unemployed [young men](#) leads to a decrease in political violence. Additionally, the study found there is no significant relationship between [unemployment](#) and the rate of insurgent attacks that kill civilians.

"The vast majority of aid money spent to reduce political violence is motivated by an opportunity-cost theory of distracting recruits," wrote the researchers. "... (however) the data emphatically reject a positive correlation between unemployment and attacks against government and allied forces."

The authors test that prediction in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines, using survey data on unemployment and two newly available measures of insurgency: (1) attacks against government and allied forces and (2) violence that kill [civilians](#). Despite the great differences in geography, nature and intensity of insurgencies, the results from all three countries

was remarkably similar.

In light of recent worldwide events, "a better understanding of how, when, and where aid spending helps reduce political violence will both further our understanding of insurgencies, while helping to guide practitioners in applying limited development aid in conflict and post-conflict societies."

**More information:** [jcr.sagepub.com/content/early/ ...  
393920.full.pdf+html](http://jcr.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/05/09/10.1177/00220027114193920.full.pdf+html)

Provided by SAGE Publications

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