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On the economic consequences of civil war

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Abstract

A model of the economic effects of civil war and the post-war period is developed. A key feature is the adjustment of the capital stock through capital flight. Post-war this flight can either be reversed or continue, depending partly upon how far the capital stock has adjusted to the war.

The model is tested on data for all civil wars since 1960. After long civil wars the economy recovers rapidly, whereas after short wars it continues to decline. We then consider the effect on the composition of economic activity, distinguishing between war-vulnerable and war-safe activities. Evidence for Uganda shows such compositional effects to be substantial.

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