[CANCELADO] Seminario 45: Is there a balloon effect? Coca crops and forced eradication in Colombia

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ELEONORA DÁVALOS es doctora en política pública de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte en Charlotte. En su investigación, ella utiliza microeconomía aplicada para el análisis de problemáticas sociales. Su interés en la investigación social se basa en su experiencia de trabajo de campo con comunidades en estado de vulnerabilidad y funcionarios del gobierno local en los países en desarrollo. La Dra. Dávalos ha participado en el diseño e implementación de proyectos de desarrollo social con el objetivo de reducir la pobreza y promover la equidad social en varios municipios de Colombia. Ella es economista de la Universidad del Valle en Cali, con maestría en Economía Ambiental de la Universidad de los Andes en Bogotá.

Resumen del documento: One explanation for the increasing number of hectares with coca cultivation is that eradication strategies displace coca crops but fail to completely clear affected areas. In the drug policy literature, that dynamic shifting is commonly known as the balloon effect. This study integrates georeferenced agricultural data through spatially explicit econometric models to test the hypothesis that forced eradication generates spillover effects. Using annual data for 1,116 contiguous municipalities in Colombia between 2001 and 2015, we estimate a spatial Durbin model (SDM) with municipal and time fixed effects. Our results suggest that, on average, aerial fumigation in a municipality diffuses the benefits of this crime control strategy to neighboring municipalities. Aerial fumigation in a municipality is associated with a reduction of the new area under coca cultivation by 9 percent inside that municipality and by 7 percent in neighboring municipalities. We did find crime displacement, but only in municipalities with indigenous reserves that implement aerial eradication therein, implying negative returns on crime control at these sites. Yet, while discussions on the implementation of eradication in Colombia remain locked between the use or disuse of aerial fumigation, neither alternative has succeeded to control illicit crops in the long-term because they need to tackle underlying causes of coca cultivation.

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