

The impact of FGB on culture of lawfulness

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Abstract

In this paper we study the impact of Colombia's alternative development program - Forest Guarding Families- in the construction of culture or lawfulness. To investigate farmers' willingness to invest in coca and to establish mechanisms of social control, we conducted a framed field experiment that replicates the main aspects of coca cultivation. The experimental design uses the structure of a repeated public bad game where farmers receive an endowment that can be allocated to coca or to an alternative crop -plantain. We mimic three aspects of real life: i) coca is more profitable than the alternative, ii) coca generates negative externalities and iii) coca is illicit and with certain probability authorities can discover and fine producers.

Our experimental design combines the presence or not of internal and external control. Under treatments with internal control farmers can impose costly sanctions to other group members who invest in coca. In the treatments with external control we use two alternative technologies. The first technology uses individual liability and is similar to manual eradication. In this case, only those cultivating coca are fined. The second technology uses joint liability and all farmers suffer the consequences of enforcement, as is the case with aerial spraying.

In November and December 2012 we conducted 28 experimental sessions in two municipalities in Cordoba: Tierralta y Puerto Libertador with 867 participants. 406 beneficiaries and 461 non-beneficiaries of the program participated in the experiments.

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