

Afghanistan: A Multidimensional Crisis

Daniel Rajmil, Lucía Morales, Toni Aira &
Mariona Cardona Valles

UPF-BSM AGBAR CHAIR



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[Daniel Rajmil](#)^a [Lucía Morales](#)^b [Toni Aira](#)^c Mariona Cardona Valles^d

^a *Law & Political Sciences, Open University of Catalonia, Spain; BSM-UPF, Spain* ^b *School of Accounting and Finance, Technological University, Dublin, Republic of Ireland* ^c *Political Communication, BSM-UPF;* ^d *Law & Political Sciences, Open University of Catalonia, Spain;*

Abstract

Afghanistan is facing a multidimensional crisis. Consequently, it is imperative to offer critical insights into the country's geopolitical and geo-economic context framed within the threats posed by climate change and its socio-economic effects. When projecting humanitarian aid plans or on the design of policies and intervention, it is critical to include climate change to assess primary conditions that guarantee human security and the survival of the Afghan population. The new Taliban regime and the existing conflict dynamics combined with the displacement of people add significant pressures to an already challenging situation and inhibit the international community's response.

Keywords: Afghanistan; Geopolitics; Geo-economics, Climate Change; Human Security

Paper Insights

Afghanistan is on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe in parallel with the country's potential economic collapse. The state of affairs is further compounded by worsening environmental conditions derived from the ongoing effects of climate change. The country's current situation is quite dramatic, aggravated by the international community's response that mainly focuses on enabling emergency evacuations of uniquely vulnerable Afghans and international citizens and their dependents. At the same time, the humanitarian needs of the rest of the population are severely neglected. Undoubtedly, unfolding events require attention, with the need to offer some reflections and critical insights on the socio-economic and political hazards that arise when framing the magnitude of the refugee crisis and the effects of climate change as a catalysing factor on the existing conflict divisions. There is a need for theoretical and practical risk assessments that integrate climate change as a decisive force in developing future conflict and peace scenarios. In this regard, conflict and peace scenario analysis

emerges as a vital tool; as it can help project the potential impact on the human population and identify implications regarding future displacements and associated social and economic costs. Within the outlined context, this piece intends to contribute to the growing –rather imperative- need to explore the link between conflicts, peace, and climate change when assessing the case of Afghanistan and the takeover of the Taliban regime in August 2021.

The international community is in a position to require Afghanistan –regardless of whoever holds control of the government– to comply with their human rights obligations and even adopt countermeasures to force compliance with them. The climate change dimension needs to be addressed to offer primary conditions that guarantee human security and survival. The consequences for Afghans seem to be challenging in the face of climate change forecasts and severe poverty levels. The 2021 United Nations Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow represents one of the latest opportunities to address the climate change effects. In this sense, when projecting humanitarian aid plans in Afghanistan, there is an imperative need to include climate change as a decisive factor. If eluded, the devastating human consequences of the conflict will be mild compared to what is coming in an already worrying context, as the world economies are currently immersed in the potential unfolding of a severe energy crisis.

Paper Alignment with SDGs Goals: Goals 01, 13 & 16



