# Activation of Ethnic Tensions: Resettlement, Diversity, and Conflict in the Long Run*

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**Abstract**

How does diversity affect conflict when intergroup cleavages become salient? Between 1984-86, Ethiopia forcibly resettled over 600,000 people in an emergency program, increasing ethnic diversity across districts. In 2015, unrelated protests over Addis Ababa's expansion plan triggered a nationwide surge in ethnic salience. Using a difference-in-differences design, I show that historically resettled districts that had been peaceful for years saw more conflicts targeting civilians, perpetrated by militias, when ethnicity became salient. Rising ethnic salience increased in-group identification and eroded interethnic trust. Conflict was severe in less integrated resettlement districts, where the national shock to ethnic relations activated latent local divisions.

**Keywords**: Migration, Resettlement, Diversity, Conflict, Salience, Ethnic Divisions

**JEL Codes**: D63, D74, J15, J18, O15, R23

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# 1 Introduction

Why do some ethnically diverse communities that have long remained peaceful suddenly descend into violence? Over the past decade, conflict, climate shocks, and state-led interventions have driven large-scale internal migration, increasing ethnic cohabitation. Understanding how demographic shifts shape social relations, particularly when differences become salient, is critical for anticipating conflict. While we know broadly about the effects of diversity on conflict in the cross-section, there is limited evidence on how the activation of ethnic identities modulates the effect of diversity on conflict in the long-run.

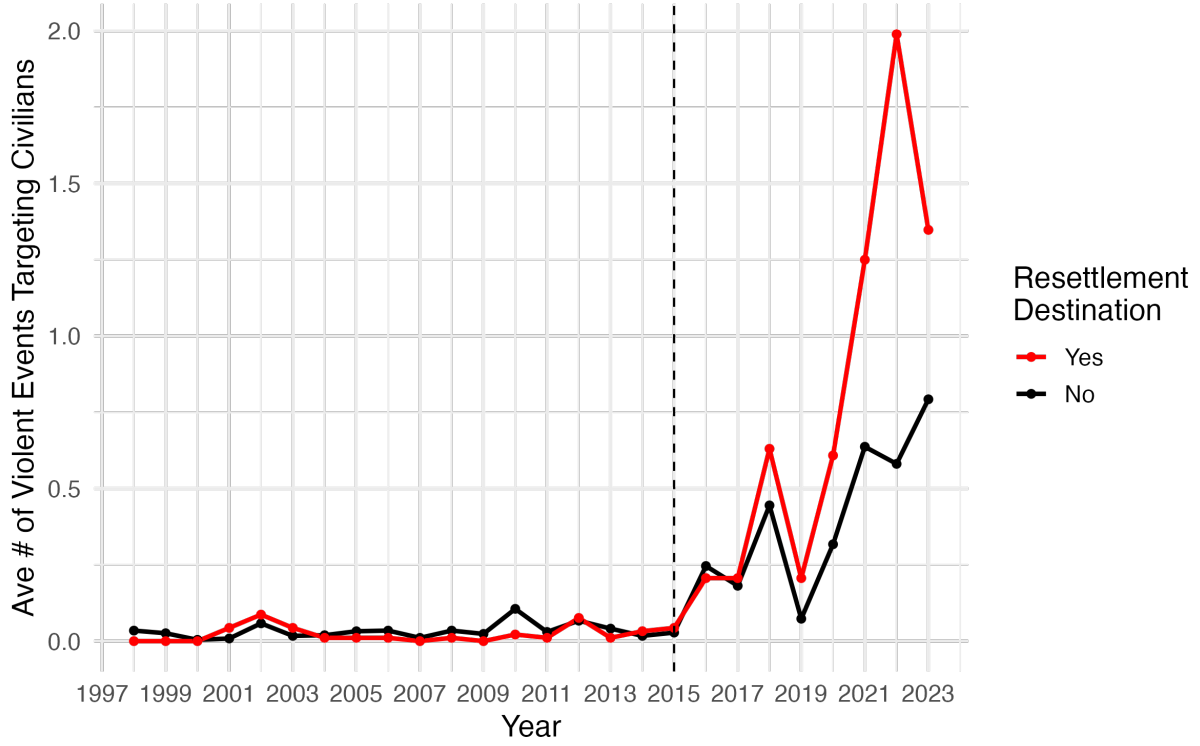
Conflict is not an inevitable consequence of diversity even when intergroup cleavages become salient. Indeed, the literature on diversity and conflict finds mixed evidence on their relationship (Kanbur et al., 2011). Greater diversity increases exposure to wider perspectives and strengthens shared identity (Allport, 1954; Abel, 2019; Bazzi et al., 2019; Carlitz et al., 2024), which can help diverse communities withstand rising forces of division. However, diverse communities are also vulnerable to manipulation of grievances by elites (Fearon and Laitin, 2000; Belmonte and Rochlitz, 2019) and competitions over power and resources (Esteban and Ray, 2011), which can fuel conflict during heightened ethnic tensions. Furthermore, the strength of ethnic identification is shaped by the social landscape and historical context (Green, 2022). In this paper, I study how ethnic cohabitation induced by forced resettlement in Ethiopia affects conflict when intergroup divisions became salient due to nationwide protests unrelated to the historical resettlement.

In response to the 1984 famine, Ethiopia relocated over 600,000 people from the densely populated, drought-prone highlands to sparsely settled lowlands. The resettlement was implemented hastily disregarding the rights of the resettled and host communities. It resulted in land dispossession of indigenous communities who had depended on the reallocated land under customary tenure and increased ethnic diversity in destination areas. Decades later, protests against the expansion of Addis Ababa into the Oromia region ignited a nationwide surge in ethnic salience and group-based mobilization, generating a widespread shock to interethnic relations. The historical variation in forced resettlement, combined with the recent and unrelated rise in ethnic tensions, offers a unique setting to study how diversity shapes conflict when ethnicity becomes salient.

As Figure 1 shows, resettlement and non-resettlement districts, which substantially differed in their diversity, had similarly low levels of conflicts targeting civilians for several years after the resettlement. However, following the nationwide surge in ethnic tensions in 2015, there is significant rise in incidence of conflict, particularly in resettlement districts. This paper studies how the activation of ethnic identities by external forces can

transform local diversity from a source of coexistence into a potential fault line for conflict.

**Figure 1:** Violence Targeting Civilians By Resettlement Status




*Source*: Conflict data is from ACLED (Raleigh et al., 2010), and resettlement status is based on the *Report on census of population and housing and on survey of demographic changes in the resettlement areas* (CSO, 1991)

I employ a difference-in-difference design that leverages the variation in the historical resettlement intensity across districts and recent nationwide rise in ethnic salience to examine how the resettlement affects conflict when interethnic differences become salient. The main outcomes are incidences and fatalities from conflicts targeting civilians constructed using ACLED (Raleigh et al., 2010). The baseline specification includes district and province-by-year fixed effects to account for time-invariant district characteristics and flexibly allow for differential trends in conflict across provinces. In addition, I include the interactions between a set of baseline correlates of resettlement intensity with post 2015 indicator to account for the potentially confounding effects of these factors. I also use an event-study specification to assess pre-trends and examine the dynamic response of conflict to the national level rise in ethnic salience by resettlement intensity.

I find that high resettlement intensity districts experience substantial increases in conflict incidence and fatality during periods of heightened ethnic salience. High resettlement districts observe more frequent and severe violence targeting civilians that are mainly perpetrated by ethnic militias. Civilians from the Amhara ethnic group, who accounted for

64% of the initial settlers, are more targeted in high resettlement districts. The event study analysis demonstrates that there were no differential trends in conflict outcomes between high and low resettlement destinations prior to the sharp rise in ethnic salience in 2015. However, following the nationwide rise in ethnic salience, high resettlement districts experience more frequent and fatal conflicts targeting civilians.

The nationwide rise in ethnic salience catalyzed the activation of ethnic divisions in resettlement districts, which are more vulnerable given their demographic composition and history. Long after the implementation of the program, high resettlement districts are still more ethnically diverse and have a greater share of non-indigenous populations. Despite the substantial increase in the ethnic diversity of resettlement districts, there was no differential incidence of conflict in these districts for several years following the resettlement. However, after the nationwide surge in ethnic salience, destination districts with greater ethnic fractionalization and polarization saw significant rise in conflict. Individuals in resettlement districts became more likely identify with their ethnicity over their national identity and less trusting of their neighbors. The increase in ethnic identification is more pronounced for indigenous residents while the lack of trust in neighbors is stronger among non-indigenous residents. The increase in local ethnic division and deterioration of trust in high resettlement districts is consistent with the observed increase in violence targeting civilians by ethnic militias.

Furthermore, the modality of the historical resettlements shapes the long-run effects of the forced cohabitation on conflict. Districts with a greater share of integrated resettlement villages, where the resettled were embedded within indigenous communities rather than being isolated in newly formed villages surrounded by natives, experience fewer conflicts targeting civilians. Overall, the results show that resettlement destinations, particularly those where the resettled are segregated from host communities, may be more vulnerable to conflicts targeting civilians during periods of heightened ethnic salience.

I conduct a battery of checks to test the robustness of the main findings. The results are robust to considering alternative definitions of the treatment, using Google search intensity based measures of ethnic salience, different sample restrictions, alternative specifications that account for an extensive list of potential correlates of resettlement intensity, and considering alternative measures of conflict outcomes. While the estimates vary slightly across these specifications, I consistently find significant increases in conflict in high resettlement districts following the rise in ethnic salience nationwide. The main results are also robust to accounting for the changes in national-level measures of state capacity and control over territory as well as district-level changes in mobile connectivity that may be correlated with the recent rise in ethnic salience.

This paper contributes to the literature on how historical legacies and identities can be reactivated by external shocks to shape contemporary outcomes. Recent studies show that collective memories of past trauma, such as Ottoman pillaging in Austria or Nazi reprisals in Greece, can be mobilized during moments of political or economic tension to generate backlash against out-groups (Ochsner and Roesel, 2024; Fouka and Voth, 2023). Elites can also exploit group-based grievances to consolidate power, and rising minority salience can polarize majority group's political behaviors (Belmonte and Rochlitz, 2019; Colussi et al., 2021). Political and economic shocks can also interact to trigger ethnic conflict (Grosfeld et al., 2020). This paper shows that the nationwide surge in ethnic salience, ignited by protests unrelated to the historical resettlement, reactivated ethnic identities in resettlement districts, fueling violence by ethnic militias against civilians. The findings underscore how historical grievances, such as those seeded by forced resettlement that disregarded host and settler rights, can be reignited to produce new cycles of conflict.

This paper also speaks to the literature on the long-run effects of forced cohabitation on socioeconomic outcomes considering a unique natural experiment.[1] Dippel (2014) find that forced integration of historically autonomous sub-tribal bands in 19th century US hampered economic development. On the other hand, Abel (2019) finds that resettlement communities in South Africa, which are more ethnically diverse, had higher levels of social capital because of the increased inter-ethnic interactions. I find that the increased ethnic fractionalization induced by the forced resettlement contributed to greater conflict. However, consistent with Abel (2019), districts with a greater share of integrated resettlements experience lower incidence of conflict even during periods of heightened ethnic salience. The results highlight that the effects of forced ethnic cohabitation may depend on the salience of intergroup cleavages and the nature of the relocation schemes.

In its effort to study how resettlement-induced diversity affects conflict, this paper also contributes to the literature on ethnic diversity and nation building. Bazzi et al. (2019) study the effects of a planned resettlement in Indonesia and find that increased ethnic fractionalization fostered greater integration while polarization exacerbated ethnic attachment. Similarly, Carlitz et al. (2024) find that a resettlement in Tanzania (*Ujamaa*), bolstered national identity among the cohorts that were young enough to be exposed. In this paper, I find that the ethnic fractionalization and polarization induced by the resettlement resulted in greater ethnic strife during period of heightened ethnic salience.

Three key factors may explain the differences in the main findings of this paper compared to Bazzi et al. (2019) and Carlitz et al. (2024). First, this paper studies the differential

[1] Becker and Ferrara (2019) present an extensive review of the literature which documents how episodes of forced migration can pose various challenge for migrants and receiving populations.

effects of resettlement induced diversity on conflict when ethnic divisions become salient. Second, unlike in Bazzi et al. (2019), the Ethiopian resettlement moved people of different ethnicities to areas already populated by indigenous groups that were aggrieved by the land dispossession. Finally, unlike *Ujamaa*, which included measures to bolster national identity, the Ethiopian resettlement was driven by agroeconomic objectives without a concerted effort to integrate settler and host communities. Overall, the findings in this study show that forced cohabitation without the requisite efforts to integrate the new communities and address historical grievances can have detrimental consequences in the long-run.

This paper is also related to the literature on the roots of civil conflicts. A rich literature within economics and political science highlights the economic origins of civil conflicts (McGuirk and Burke, 2020; Berman and Couttenier, 2015; Bazzi and Blattman, 2014; Besley and Persson, 2008). Another strand of the literature emphasizes the role of political and ethnic grievances in shaping intrastate conflicts (Jakobsen and De Soysa, 2009; Horowitz, 2000). Arbatlı et al. (2020) argue that interpersonal population diversity is the underlying determinant of intrasocietal conflicts. I find that the recent rise in civil conflict in Ethiopia is partly explained by ethnic militia's targeting of non-indigenous civilians in resettlement districts. Resettlement-induced diversity can generate a fertile ground for the activation of ethnic divisions and violence targeting outsiders by ethnic actors.

Furthermore, McGuirk and Nunn (2024) find that agricultural development projects that displace traditionally pastoral groups increase the risk of conflict. A significant share of the Ethiopian resettlement destinations were inhabited by small ethnic groups who seasonally depended on the land, under flexible customary tenure, for shifting cultivation and nomadic pastoralism (Pankhurst, 1992). The government's reallocation of land for sedentary agriculture without sufficient considerations of the livelihoods of the indigenous communities may have instilled a deep resentment. Hence, this paper's findings are consistent with McGuirk and Nunn (2024) result on the detrimental effects of mismatched sedentary agricultural projects that expropriate land from indigenous communities.

This paper is also the first study to empirically examine how the 1984-86 Ethiopian resettlement affects socioeconomic outcomes in the destination areas. Yntiso (2004) conducts a case study of resettlement areas in Metekel and documents how the resettlement spurred conflict over resources and power in the destination areas. Early studies of the resettlement have also highlighted how the forced ethnic cohabitation and land dispossession may have instilled deep-rooted grievances between host and settler communities (Woldemeskel, 1989; Rahmato, 1991; Pankhurst, 1992). I complement the existing qualitative studies of the resettlement program by exploring its interactions with ethnic salience and using robust causal inference methods to examine its effects on conflict.

The rest of this paper proceeds as following: Section 2 provides the background on the resettlement program and the recent changes in ethnic salience, Section 3 discusses the data, Section 4 presents the empirical strategy, Section 5 discusses the main results and robustness checks, Section 6 explores the mechanisms, and Section 7 concludes.

# 2 Background

## 2.1 The 1984-86 Resettlement

The 1984-86 resettlement was largely motivated by the government's stated concerns about the suboptimal spatial distribution of the population as well as the unexpected challenges and opportunities that arose due to the 1984 famine. In its *Ten Year Plan for 1984-1993*, formulated prior to the famine, the government had planned to resettle 3-4 million people arguing that "*while we have heavy concentrations of people in the highlands, lowland areas with scarce population and large fertile lands, remain underutilized*" (RRC, 1985a). In 1984, Ethiopia experienced a severe drought that contributed to famine, particularly in the northern highlands already encumbered by low agricultural productivity due to land overuse and degradation.[2] The government accelerated the resettlement plan to address both the immediate famine issue and the population distribution concerns (RRC, 1985b).

A new resettlement plan, called the "*Action Programme*", was adopted in October 1984 to permanently resettle 1.5 million people. The program promised that the resettled population, who largely originated from areas densely populated and/or severely affected by the 1984 drought, would receive free and adequate land, agricultural inputs, and government services that would allow them to become self-sufficient within three years (RRC, 1985a). The government saw the resettlement both an emergency relief measure to relocate famine victims and a long-term solution to address the deterioration the agricultural productivity of origin locations (RRC, 1985b). The new program aimed to relocate half of the people it originally intended to resettle over a decade within just a year. The resettlement was implemented with extreme haste. Within six months of the program's commencement, over 340,000 people were already resettled.[3]

The program came to a halt in January 1986 after over 600,000 people were relocated, partly driven by substantial criticisms of the policy and implementation challenges. Non-

[2]See Figure A1 for the spatial distribution of drought severity and population density in 1984. Figure A2 presents a map of famine severity at the awraja level. The severity of the famine led to highly publicized global relief efforts, including the *Live Aid* concerts, that were organized to generate funds to help famine victims.

[3]Figure A3 shows the total number of people resettled by origin province and month.

governmental organizations argued that the resettlement was a pretext to move people aligned with Tigrayan rebels and weaken opposition against the government (Clarke, 1986).[4] Following reports of officials forcing unwilling famine victims to relocate to meet resettlement quotas, there was international condemnation of the program's use of force and haphazard implementation (Pankhurst, 1992; Kloos and Aynalem, 1989). In response, donor countries prohibited the use of relief funds from being redirected towards the resettlement efforts. Officials within the government also disagreed about the merit and scope of the program due to its deviations from the Ten Year Plan and the lack of resources to implement it successfully. The head of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), who initially led the resettlement program, defected to the United States citing opposition to the central leadership and its ill-conceived policies (Wolde Giorgis, 1989).

## 2.2 Settling the New Comers

As Figure 2 shows, the settlers mainly came from the northern highlands and densely populated areas in the south, and they were relocated to the lowlands in western and southwestern regions. They were distributed across 92 districts over 5 provinces. Among the destination districts, the resettled accounted for 13.8% of the total district population on average. There was substantial variation in the resettlement intensity across districts, ranging up to 85% of the population in some districts.

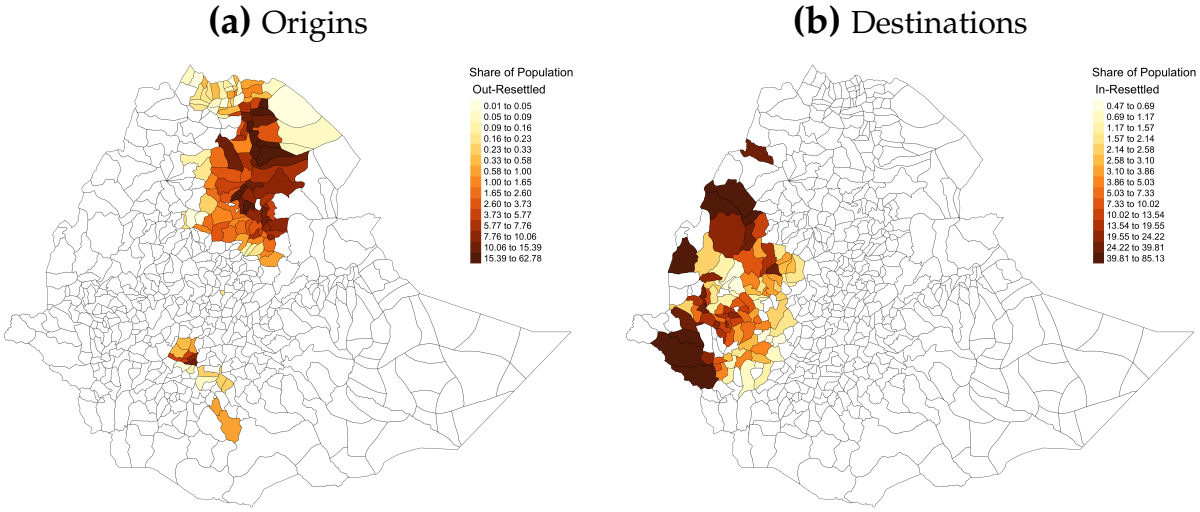
The resettlement program, both in the selection of the people to be relocated as well as the origin and destination sites, was characterized by a severe lack of consideration for the rights of the resettled and host communities. According to policymakers, the origins and the number of people to be resettled were to be determined based on four criteria: (1) incidence of recurrent drought, (2) extent of land degradation, (3) population density, and (4) unsuitable terrain for agriculture (Clarke, 1986). However, officials were provided with out-resettlement quotas for their jurisdiction based on province targets without a thorough consideration of local factors. Given bureaucratic incentives, officials were zealous to meet their assigned quotas, including through the use of force and ignoring the aforementioned criteria (Rahmato, 1991; Pankhurst, 1992).[5]

[4] Amhara and Tigrayan settlers accounted for 64% and 15% of the resettled population, respectively. Furthermore, there were no settlers from the Eritrea despite the rebel activity in the province. Hence, the claim that the resettlement intended to depopulate rebel strongholds may not have strong empirical evidence.

[5] Gebresilasse (2024) shows that beyond the local agroclimatic factors, such as the severity of the drought and population density in 1984, the centrally imposed district quotas shaped the variation in resettlement intensity across origin districts. Given this paper's focus on the effects of the resettlement on the destination districts, I focus the discussion in this section on the determinants of the variation in resettlement intensity across destination districts.

While the individuals resettled in the initial phase of the program may have volunteered, given the famine severity and limited land access in their homelands, there is substantial evidence that people were also forced to resettle. Furthermore, the forced nature of the program is also evinced by the fact that the resettled were restricted from returning to their homelands, and those who tried to return faced imprisonment (Pankhurst, 1992).

**Figure 2:** Resettlement Origin and Destination Districts




Source: Gebresilasse (2024)'s calculation based on data from CSO (1991).

There was also a shocking level of negligence in how the government decided on the resettlement destinations. The head of the RRC argued that the selection of resettlement sites was largely dictated by the whims of the president – *"Mengistu [the president] started traveling around Ethiopia looking for sites on his own. He flew over Kaffa, Wollega, Ilubabor, and Gambela and was impressed by the dense forests and abundant water. ..... He made on-the-spot decisions on settlement sites without any research. His flock of planners, economists, and agronomists, simply nodded at all his decisions.'*(Wolde Giorgis, 1989). In addition to the detrimental long-run effects explored in this paper, the resettlement's haphazard implementation also resulted in significant loss of life due to starvation, disease, and harsh conditions during transit and in the resettlement sites that had not been sufficiently prepared.

In Table A1, I evaluate the baseline characteristics that may have shaped the variation in the incidence and intensity of in-resettlement across districts. Consistent with aforementioned claims regarding President Mengistu's decisions, districts that had a greater area under forest cover, more abundant water (as proxied by proximity to rivers), and better land access (as proxied by the average crop area) were more likely to be selected

as destinations and received a greater share of settlers. In addition, districts less exposed to the drought in 1984 and on the border were also more likely to receive the resettled population. However, the variation in resettlement is uncorrelated with baseline ethnic fractionalization and polarization, or population density. Overall, the results in Table A1 demonstrate that agroclimatic factors related to availability of land and water rather than local ethnic and demographic factors shaped the variation in the resettlement intensity.

The resettlement program resulted in unprecedented increase in the ethnic diversity of the destination locations. First, the settlers were already diverse since they originated from different parts of the country. They comprised of Amhara (64% of the resettled population), Tigrayan (15%), Oromo (7%), Kembata (6%), Hadiya (5%), and more than ten other ethnic groups (3%).[6] Second, the destination districts were already inhabited by diverse indigenous ethnic groups which were often different from the resettled population. As Figure A4 shows, there is also substantial variation in the destination locations of the resettled population. In Section 6.1, I show that the resettlement program led to persistent increases in ethnic fractionalization and polarization in destination districts.

There were two types of resettlement schemes: conventional and integrated. Under the conventional scheme, the resettled were moved to newly formed villages. Under the integrated scheme, the resettled were placed within existing villages based on the availability of land. Hence, the conventional resettlements often appeared as islands consisting of outsider ethnicities surrounded by villages comprising of mainly indigenous ethnic groups. On the other hand, in the integrated villages, the settlers were embedded within the indigenous communities, which allowed for more contact and integration between the resettled and host populations. Hence, the modality of the resettlement may shape the health of the relationships between different ethnic groups and the extent to which the heightening in ethnic tensions nationally affects the likelihood of local conflict.

From the beginning, the resettlement had created tensions between the ethnic groups that were suddenly brought together by the forced resettlement program. First, there were substantial ethnolinguistic differences between the settler and indigenous groups, and within the resettled populations, that made social relations difficult. The head of the RRC noted that *"the old inhabitants were resentful of the new settlers. They did not share the same language, culture or religion with the new comers; even their physical features were different"* (Wolde Giorgis, 1989). Second, the government's reallocation of land without sufficient considerations of the rights of the settlers and hosts. Following the 1975 Land Reform, all land belonged to the state, and the central government was unconstrained in allocating (arguably) unused land to the new comers. However, in many parts of the resettlement

[6] Amhara settlers mainly originated from the famine stricken parts of Wollo province.

areas, the indigenous communities depended on the reallocated land seasonally under customary tenure for shifting cultivation and nomadic pastoralism. For the integrated resettlement schemes, indigenous farmers were forced by local officials to make room for the new comers (Holcomb, 1985). Overall, the resettlement increased ethnic diversity and seeded grievances among indigenous residents that could be activated by ethnic actors.

However, the indigenous communities also played an important role in welcoming the settlers, including preparing the settlement sites for the new comers by building temporary housing and sharing supplies with the resettled (Pankhurst, 1992). While the resettlement districts occasionally experienced skirmishes between different ethnic groups, as Figure 1 shows, the incidence of conflicts targeting civilians were similarly very low in resettlement and non-resettlement districts for a long time following the resettlement. However, there was a stark rise in the incidence and severity of conflicts targeting civilians, particularly in high in-resettlement districts, starting in 2015. In the following section, I discuss how the nationwide spread of protests organized along ethnic lines, for reasons unrelated to the resettlement, increased the salience of ethnicity that may have contributed to the activation of ethnic grievances and conflict in resettlement districts.

## 2.3 Protests and the Increased Salience of Ethnicity

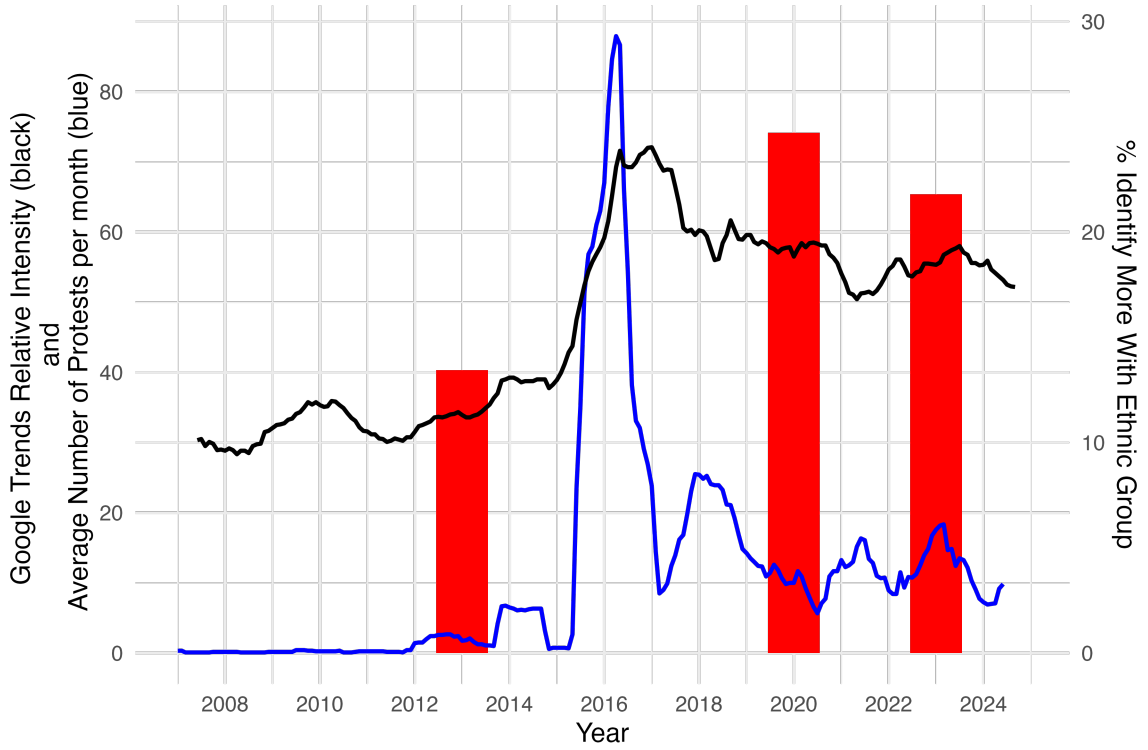
The rise in nationwide ethnic salience in 2015 was ignited by protests, initially led by Oromo students, against the 2014 Addis Ababa Master Plan's proposed expansion of the boundaries of city into Oromia. The expansion aimed to accommodate the increasing demand for land following the capital's economic boom. The protesters denounced the lack of consultations with the impacted communities and the violation of the territorial integrity of Oromia. Even after the government abandoned the Master Plan, the protests spread nationwide and galvanized ethnic mobilization, strengthened by grievances of persistent ethnic and economic inequality, and political marginalization of major ethnic groups, particularly of the Oromo and Amhara (Raleigh and Pinaud, 2017). Figure 3 shows, there was a steep rise in the number of protests starting in November 2015 that persisted for months. At the peak in 2016, there were close to 90 protests per month.

Figure 3 shows that the mobilization of protests was followed by a stark increase in ethnic salience nationwide. The plot presents two alternative measures of ethnic salience. The first measure of ethnic salience is calculated using monthly data on the relative interests in Google Trends searches for the names of major ethnic groups within Ethiopia.[7] The second ethnic salience measure is the percentage of respondents in Afrobarometer sur-

[7] Murad et al. (2024) follows a similar approach in using Google Trends data to measure ethnic salience and discrimination.

veys who identify more or only with their ethnic group over their national identity. Both measures shows that there was a stark increase in ethnic identification in Ethiopia starting in 2015. The Afrobarometer surveys show that the percentage of respondents who identify more or only with their ethnic group almost doubled from 13% in 2013 to 25% in 2020. While ethnic salience has decreased moderately since its peak in 2016, it is still considerably higher than the pre-2015 level.

**Figure 3:** Nationwide Protests and Heightening of Ethnic Salience




*Source*: The line plots present the 12 month rolling averages of the number of protests from ACLED (in blue) and the relative interest in the Google Trends searches for major ethnic group names (in black). The bar graph (in red) shows the percentage of respondents in Afrobarometer surveys who stated that they identify more or only with their ethnic group compared to the Ethiopian national identity.

The protests were not directly related to 1984-86 resettlement program, as they were ignited by opposition to Addis Ababa's expansion plan, far from the resettlement districts. Furthermore, as shown in Section 6.3, the were no differential incidence of protests in resettlement districts. However, the concerns about ethnic inequality and land dispossession that dominated opposition against Addis Ababa's expansion plan may have particular resonance among indigenous groups affected by the 1984-86 resettlement program. The protests led to an exogenous change in ethnic salience nationally that may have implications for ethnic relations across the diverse resettlement districts.

Overall, the variation in the historical resettlement intensity across districts combined with the nationwide rise in ethnic salience due to factors orthogonal to the resettlement provide a unique opportunity to study how the forced ethnic cohabitation affects conflict, particularly those targeting out-groups, when interethnic differences become salient.

# 3 Data

I complied and harmonized datasets from multiple sources to measure the variation in historical resettlement intensity and changes in outcomes related to conflict and social relations across Ethiopian districts over several decades. Since the original data on resettlement activity are available using the 1984 administrative divisions, I harmonize all district level variables to the 1984 *woreda* (district) boundaries.

**Resettlement Intensity:** To measure the extent of historical resettlement intensity, I use the data from Gebresilasse (2024), which digitized the 1991 *Report on census of population and housing and on survey of demographic changes in the resettlement areas* (CSO, 1991). The report has information on the total number of people that were resettled in each destination district by the 1984-86 resettlement program. I measure in-resettlement intensity as the ratio of the number of people in-resettled and the total pre-resettlement district population from the 1984 census plus the new resettled population.

**Conflict Outcomes**:

**ACLED** – The main outcome measures on conflict come from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) dataset (Raleigh et al., 2010). ACLED provides geocoded information on dates, types, actors, and fatalities of all conflict events compiled using reports of local and international media and NGOs. Given the objective of this study, I focus on the incidence and severity of conflict events tagged as *Civilian Targeting*, which are events such as direct violence against civilians, explosions, protests, and riots/mob violence in which civilians were the main or only targets. The *Civilian Targeting* category excludes events in which civilians were incidentally harmed, such as battles with civilian causalities. Hence, *Civilian Targeting* measure aims to directly capture violence that potentially targets civilian populations such as those that were in-resettled by the 1984 program.

**UCDP** – In the robustness analysis, I also construct measures of conflict outcomes based on the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Georeferenced Event Dataset (Sundberg et al., 2012), which is another commonly used dataset that has georeferenced

information on conflict incidence and fatality. While ACLED includes non-fatal events in its database and provides finer disaggregation of conflict events, UCDP restricts its domain to events which result in a fatality. Since this paper aims is to examine the factors that shape the emergence all conflict types (include non-fatal events) that target civilians, the ACLED dataset is more suited for the analyses.

**Ethnic Diversity**: I construct measures of ethnic diversity, fractionalization and polarization, at the district level using aggregated ethnic group population shares based on 10% individual level samples from each of the three national censuses that were conducted in Ethiopia in 1984, 1994 and 2007. Fractionalization (F) is defined as $F = 1 - \sum_{g=1}^{G} \pi_g^2$ , where G is the number of ethnic groups in the district and $\pi_g$ is the population share of ethnic group $g$ in the district. The measure captures the probability that two randomly drawn individuals from the district population belong to two different ethnic groups. Polarization (P) is constructed as $P = \sum_{i=1}^{G} \sum_{j=1}^{G} \pi_i^2 \pi_j d_{ij}$, where $d_{ij}$ is linguistic distance between ethnic groups i and j that is used to proxy for differences in preferences between groups (Fearon, 2003). The polarization measure is intended to capture the intensity of differences across ethnic groups as shaped by group sizes and inter-group differences as proxied by linguistic distances. As Figure A5 shows, district level ethnic fractionalization and polarization are highly correlated in Ethiopia, with a correlation coefficient of 0.82.

**Ethnic Identification and Trust**: I use individual level geocoded data from all the available rounds of the Afrobarometer surveys (Afrobarometer, 2025) that were conducted in Ethiopia, 2013 (Round 5), 2020 (Round 8) and 2023 (Round 9), to examine how ethnic identification and trust respond to the interactions between historical resettlement patterns and national changes in the salience of ethnicity. In addition, the Afrobarometer surveys also provide detailed information on respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and their views regarding safety, ethnic relations, and economic and political conditions.

**Agroclimatic and Geographic Controls**: I use the data from Gebresilasse (2024), which digitized a set of report books from "*The General Agricultural Survey*" (EPPD and Department, 1984) series that provide district-level information on agricultural and socioeconomic outcome, for 1982 and 1983, to account for the effects of pre-resettlement district characteristics. I measure drought severity using remote-sensing datasets (Vicente-Serrano et al., 2010) on Standardized Precipitation-Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI). Similarly, I calculate district level percent of area under tree cover using NASA's Vegetation Continuous Fields dataset (Hansen, 2018). I calculate distance from represen-

tative set of points within each district to the nearest rivers and national and provincial capitals. I also generate district level average measure of Transhumant Pastoral Index following the methodology in McGuirk and Nunn (2025) and using data from the Ethnographic Atlas and Murdock's Map of Ethnic Groups (Kincaide et al., 2025).

# 4 Empirical Strategy

As the discussion in Section 2 highlighted, there was a sharp increase in ethnic identification in Ethiopia starting in 2015, precipitated by protests against a plan to expand the boundaries of Addis Ababa that subsequently spread nationwide. This paper examines how the historical resettlement affects conflict outcomes during periods of heightened ethnic salience nationally. To this end, the main identification strategy employs a difference-in-difference design that exploits the variations in historical in-resettlement intensity across districts and compares changes in conflict outcomes across these locations before and after the national rise in ethnic salience in 2015.

The main specification is as follows:

$$Y_{dpt} = \beta * InReset_d X Post2015_t + \eta_d + \delta_{pt} + \Lambda * BaselineControls_d X Post2015_t + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (1)$$

where $Y_{dpt}$ are outcomes of interest such as frequency of conflict incidence and fatality in district d within province p in year t, $InReset_d$ is the population in-resettled during 1984-86 as a share of the total district population inclusive of the settlers, $Post2015_t$ equals 1 for years after 2015, $\eta_d$ are district fixed effects, and $\delta_{pt}$ are province-by-year fixed effects. The district fixed effects account for any time-invariant district characteristics (such as terrain, agroclimatic suitability, proximity to major cities) that can affect resettlement intensity and conflict outcomes. The province-by-year fixed effects flexibly allow for differential trends by provinces due to account for province specific factors that may shape trends in conflict across provinces.

Given the difference-in-differences design, two key assumptions are needed for the identification strategy to provide causal estimates on how the interaction between historical in-resettlement intensity and recently heightened ethnic salience affect conflict outcomes. First, in-the absence of national-level heightening of ethnic salience starting in 2015, the incidence and severity of conflict between high and low resettlement destination districts would have evolved in a similar manner. Second, to attribute the changes in conflict outcomes by resettlement status in the post-2015 period to be solely due to the interactions between historical resettlement and heightening of national ethnic tensions,

there must be no other concurrent changes that could similarly interact with resettlement.

There are several facts that provide credible support for the main identifying assumptions. As Figure 1 shows, the incidence of conflict events targeting civilians were trending in an identical manner, at low levels, in resettlement and non-resettlement districts prior to the rise in ethnic salience in 2015. However, I employ an event study specification to rigorously evaluate concerns regarding pre-existing differential trends in conflict outcomes between districts that differ in resettlement intensity. While the examination of pre-trends does not fully rule out the potential divergence in post-treatment outcomes for reasons unrelated to resettlement or ethnic salience, the analyses is informative about the extent to which the parallel trends assumption is reasonable. The event study specification, described in the equation below, also allows for the examination of the dynamic interactions between historical resettlement intensity and the recent activation of ethnic tensions.

$$Y_{dpt} = \sum_{j \neq 2015} \beta_j * InReset_d X \mathbb{1}_{t=j} + \eta_d + \delta_{pt} + \sum_{s} \sum_{j \neq 2015} \lambda_{sj} * BaselineControls_d X \mathbb{1}_{t=j} + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (2)$$

As shown in Figure 3, there was a sharp rise in ethnic salience in Ethiopia in the post-2015 period. This trend is consistent both when proxying for ethnic salience using the intensity of Google searches of ethnic group names as well as using survey based measures of identification with own ethnic group over the national identity from the Afrobarometer surveys. While it is difficult to fully rule out other concurrent changes, these results do highlight that the post-2015 period is marked by heightened levels of ethnic salience and identification, and provide some support for the third identifying assumption. To get at whether the changes post-2015 are attributable to the interactions between resettlement intensity and ethnic salience, I also evaluate the robustness of the main findings to directly measuring the heightening of ethnic salience using a continuous Google search based measure of ethnic salience instead of the binary post-2015 indicator.

Given the difference-in-difference design, the identification does not require the levels of resettlement intensity vary randomly across district, but rather that these differences would not have differential impact on conflict after 2015. However, the arguably exogenous allocation of the resettled population across destination districts is supported by the lack of differences in baseline characteristics, such as ethnic composition, between high and low resettlement districts that was documented in Table A1. The resettlement was implemented hastily without sufficient consideration of destination characteristics, and the resettled population had no say in where they ended up. The head of the organization charged with implementing the resettlement stated that *"He [the president] made on-the-spot decisions on settlement sites without any research. His flock of planners, economists, and*

*agronomists, simply nodded at all his decisions"* (Wolde Giorgis, 1989). To allay any remaining concerns, the main specification directly accounts for potential confounding effects of baseline district characteristics by controlling for the interactions between the post-treatment indicator and a set of main baseline district characteristics (district border status, and population density, drought severity, fractionalization and polarization in 1984).

I also conduct a battery of robustness checks that evaluate the stability of the main findings to alternative outcome measures, treatment definitions, sample restrictions, and empirical specifications. I examine the robustness of the main results to measuring conflict incidence using data from the UCDP database and survey-based responses on safety and local conditions from the Afrobarometer surveys. I examine whether the results are robust when defining resettlement on the intensity margin (share of population resettled) or extensive margin (any presence of resettlement).

The main estimation sample excludes origin districts, due to the concern that they were directly affected by the resettlement, and all districts from the Tigray province, given the differential trends this province may have experienced after the rise of TPLF and the recent conflict in the region which is orthogonal to the resettlement issue. In addition, the discussion in Section 2 shows that border districts were more likely to be resettlement destinations. I evaluate the robustness of the results to including origin districts or districts from Tigray, excluding districts from each of the provinces at a time, focusing on non-border districts, or restricting the estimation sample to only destination districts. In the analysis which restricts to only destination districts, the identifying variation comes from comparing resettlement districts that differ which each other in the magnitude of the relocated population relative to the initial district population size.

In addition to the controls included in the main specifications. I also examine whether the key findings are robust to accounting for the direct confounding effects of a battery of additional baseline characteristics that can affect both the probability of in-resettlement and conflict outcomes, including a demanding set of awraja-year fixed effects, or simplifying the empirical specification to exclude all additional controls.

To account for serial and spatial correlations, in all the specifications, I calculate Conley (1999) standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km.[8]

[8] All the estimates are generated using R package from Berge et al. (2023).

# 5 Results

## 5.1 Resettlement and Conflict

In this section, I present the main results on the effects of historical resettlement intensity on incidence and severity of conflicts when ethnic divisions become salient nationwide.

Table 1 examines the effects on incidence and fatalities from all conflicts within the district as well as those that specifically targeted civilians. Across the board, high resettlement destination districts experience substantial increases in overall conflict incidence and fatality during the period of heightened ethnic tensions. Columns (1) and (3) show that a 10 percentage point increase in the share of the population in-resettled results in 6.5% and 6.4% increase in incidence of any conflict and those targeting civilians, respectively. Similarly, columns (2) and (4) report that a 10 percentage point increase in the share of resettled population results in a 13.2% and 12.1% increase in fatalities from any conflict and conflicts specifically targeting civilians, during the period of heightened ethnic salience. In combination, these results highlight that long after the implementation of the resettlement program, high in-resettlement destinations experience more frequent and severe conflicts, particularly those targeting civilians, when interethnic cleavages become salient.

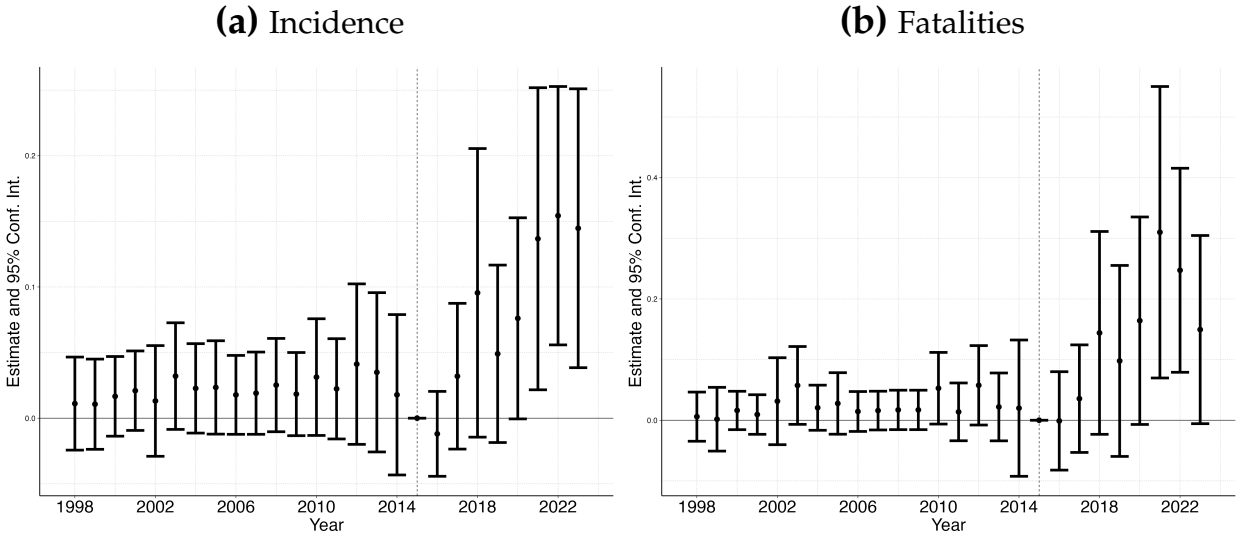
**Table 1:** Resettlement and Conflict Incidence and Severity

| | Log Number of | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Conflicts | | Civilian Targeting | |
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.065*** | 0.132*** | 0.064*** | 0.121*** |
| | (0.023) | (0.048) | (0.011) | (0.031) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

Figure 4 presents the dynamics in how resettlement affects incidence and fatalities of conflict events targeting civilians using the event study specification. First, the results show that there were no differential trends in incidence or fatalities due to conflicts targeting civilians prior to the rise in ethnic tensions after 2015. Furthermore, following the increase in heightening of ethnic tension in the post 2015 period, there is a substantial and increasing prevalence and severity of conflicts targeting civilians in districts with a greater share of in-resettled population. Figure A6 shows similar patterns in how resettlement intensity affects incidence and fatalities when considering all conflict events.

**Figure 4:** In-Resettlement and Conflicts Targeting Civilians




*Notes*: The graphs plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how in-resettlement affects incidence and fatalities from conflicts targeting civilians using the event study specification defined in equation 2. I calculate Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km.

Overall, the event study results provide strong support for the identifying assumption that the likelihood and severity of conflict would have remained similar in the absence of the rise in national activation of ethnic tensions in the post 2015 period. Consistent with the increasing salience of ethnic tensions in recent years, resettlement districts experience steep rise in violence targeting civilians. Furthermore, the lack of significant differences in conflict intensity between high and low resettlement districts prior to 2015 shows that resettlement on its own may not necessarily cause conflict in destination districts. However, during periods of heightened ethnic tensions, resettlement destination may face greater risk of conflict due to the potential activation of the dormant ethnic and social cleavages that were created by the historical population relocation schemes.

## 5.2 Resettlement and Involvement of Ethnic Actors Targeting Civilians

In Table 2, I examine how in-resettlement intensity affects incidence of conflict targeting civilians by the type of actors perpetuating the violence. Columns (1)-(5) uses ACLED's classification of actors in conflicts involving interactions with civilians to disaggregate the number of civilian targeting events by mutually exclusive perpetrator types. ACLED defines political militias as armed groups with political goals that use of violence where as identity militias are defined as armed and violent groups organized around a collective, common feature, such as ethnic identity. However, some groups defined as political militias, such as the *Fano Youth Militia*, in the ACLED dataset are also shaped by ethnic identity considerations. In column (6), I determine the involvement of ethnic actors by considering cases whether ACLED's descriptions of the conflict actor/associated actors targeting civilians match the word "Ethnic" (e.g. "Unidentified Ethnic Militia").

**Table 2:** Effects on Conflict by Actors Targeting Civilians

| : | Log Number of Conflict Events Targeting Civilians By Perpetrator Types | | | | | By Ethnic |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Political militia | Identity militia | State forces | Rioters | Rebels | Actors |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.028*** | 0.051*** | 0.005 | 0.001* | 0.001 | 0.053*** |
| | (0.009) | (0.012) | (0.005) | (0.001) | (0.003) | (0.012) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

As Table 2 shows, the increase in violence targeting civilians in high resettlement districts is largely driven by militias and to a lesser extent by rioters/mob violence. In addition, the lack of effect on conflicts targeting civilians by state forces corroborates that the effect of resettlement and ethnic salience estimated in Table 1 is not picking up government related conflicts or violent responses to protests. Furthermore, Columns (2) and (6) consistently show that militias organized along ethnic identity lines substantially contribute to the observed increase in violence targeting civilians in high resettlement districts.

To address concerns about the choice of a specific year (2015) to define the period of heightened ethnic salience, in Table 3, I directly account for it using a continuous measure of ethnic salience constructed using Google Trends data on the relative interest of major ethnic group names within Ethiopia.[9] Across the board, the results are fairly consistent with the main findings. When ethnicity becomes salient nationwide, high resettlement districts experience more conflicts targeting civilians. These conflicts are largely perpetrated by ethnic actors and increasingly target out-group communities such as Amhara civilians, who accounted for a 64% share of the initial settler population. These results provide additional evidence that the increase in conflict in resettlement districts after 2015 reflects the differential impact of rising ethnic salience in historically resettled districts, which are diverse with latent intergroup cleavages seeded by the resettlement program.

**Table 3:** Ethnic Salience and Conflicts Targeting Civilians

| | Log Number of Civilian Targeting Events | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Civilians | | Amhara Civilians | | By Ethnic Actors | |
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Log Salience (Google) | 0.063*** | 0.132*** | 0.023*** | 0.065*** | 0.055*** | 0.128*** |
| | (0.015) | (0.039) | (0.007) | (0.016) | (0.017) | (0.040) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 6,511 | 6,511 | 6,511 | 6,511 | 6,511 | 6,511 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## 5.3 Robustness

So far, I find consistent evidence that districts that had higher in-resettlement intensity experience greater incidence and severity of conflicts, particularly violence targeting civilians, when ethnic identity becomes salient nationwide. In this section, I show the robustness of the main findings to additional checks.

[9] As shown in Figure 3, the Google search based measure captures the rise in ethnic identification starting in 2015 that that is consistent with Afrobarometer surveys.

**Measuring Resettlement on the Extensive Margin**: Table A3 shows that the effects of resettlement on conflict during periods of heightened ethnic salience are qualitative similar when defining the treatment based on any presence of in-resettlement. The event study presented in Figure A7, which leverages the extensive margin variation in resettlement, is also fairly similar to main result reported in Figure 4.

**Measuring Conflict on the Extensive Margin**: Instead of the logarithmic transformation, Table A4 examines the effects on conflict outcomes using binary indicators for any incidence of conflict event or fatality. Consistent with the main findings, the probability of a conflict event targeting civilians increases substantially in higher resettlement districts. The likelihood of conflict fatality occurring in high resettlement districts also increases .

**Alternative Sample Restrictions**: The main estimation sample excludes origin districts since they are directly affected by the resettlement, and all districts in Tigray, due to the region's distinct post-TPLF trends and recent large-scale conflict. Columns (1)-(2) in Table A5 show that including origin districts and Tigray does not meaningfully alter the results. Columns (3)-(7) exclude each resettlement destination province in turn; estimates remain consistent in magnitude and significance, indicating that no single province drives the findings. As noted in Section 2, border districts received a disproportionate share of resettlers and may be more exposed to cross-border violence (Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, 2016). Column (8) shows that excluding all border districts leaves the main results unchanged. Finally, to address concerns that destination and non-resettlement districts may differ systematically, column (9) restricts the sample to destination districts to leverage only the within destination districts variation in intensity. The estimate remains qualitatively similar, albeit slightly attenuated.

**Alternative Specifications**: Table A6 tests the robustness of the main result to alternative specifications. Column (1) drops controls for correlates of in-resettlement, column (2) replaces province-by-year with *awraja*-by-year fixed effects to capture finer regional trends, column (3) estimates a simple difference-in-differences without controls, and columns (4)-(6) account for the effects of all the baseline correlates of resettlement from Table A1. While coefficient magnitudes vary slightly, the estimated effect of resettlement on conflicts targeting civilians remains robust throughout.

**Accounting for Changes in State Capacity**: An alternative explanation of the post-2015

rise in conflict in high resettlement districts is weakened state capacity rather than heightened ethnic salience. Table A7 addresses this by accounting for the differential effects of historical resettlement intensity by national indices of state capacity and territorial control from O'Reilly and Murphy (2022), using lagged values of these measures to mitigate endogeneity concerns. While weakened state capacity and reduced territorial control exacerbate the effect of historical resettlement on conflict, the core finding of increased civilian targeting in high-resettlement districts after 2015 remains robust.

**Accounting for District Mobile Access**: Mobile connectivity in Ethiopia expanded significantly over the past decade, overlapping with rising ethnic salience. One concern is that the post-2015 rise in conflict in high-resettlement districts is induced by increased connectivity rather than heightening of ethnic salience. Furthermore, the Google search based proxy for ethnic salience could be shaped by internet access. Table A8 addresses these concerns by controlling for the direct and differential effects of district-level annual 2G coverage, constructed using data on population distribution in 2010 (Liu et al., 2024) and cell-tower locations and first year of observation in the OpenCellID database (OpenCelliD, 2025). The main result remains robust, as does the effect of historical resettlement intensity by the Google search intensity based measures of ethnic salience.

**Data on Conflict from the UCDP**: The Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Event Dataset (UCDP) (Eck, 2012) is another commonly used dataset that has georeferenced information on conflict incidence and fatality. Unlike ACLED, which includes both fatal and non-fatal events, UCDP only records conflicts resulting in fatalities. Columns (1) and (2) in Table A9 present the estimates considering measures of conflict constructed using UCDP. Consistent with the main results based on the ACLED dataset, after 2015, high resettlement intensity districts experience increased incidence of conflict, particularly those involving non-state actors and civilians (one-sided violence). The coefficient magnitude is smaller given UCDP's fatality-only threshold.

**Conflict Measures Based on Afrobarometer Surveys**: An alternative approach to measure conflict outcomes is to consider survey responses on respondents' feeling of safety, local conditions, and social relations. In Table A9, using all the available Afrobarometer surveys for Ethiopia, I estimate the effects of resettlement intensity on perceptions of safety, concerns about the state of the country, and ethnic relations. During the period of heightened ethnic salience, individuals in high resettlement districts are more likely to report that they felt unsafe and the country is in bad condition. They are also more likely

to report that their ethnic groups is being treated unfairly.

Overall, these results using conflict data from UCDP and Afrobarometer surveys corroborate the main findings based on ACLED datasets, which show increased incidence of conflict, particularly targeting civilians, and ethnic strife in high resettlement districts during periods of heightened ethnic tensions nationally.

# 6 Mechanisms

The results consistently show that, several decades after the 1984-86 emergency resettlement, districts with a greater share of population in-resettled experience higher rates of conflict during the period of heightened ethnic tensions. The increase in violence is driven by ethnic militias targeting of civilians, particularly non-indigenous residents. In this section, I present the key mechanisms that may explain how the forced ethnic cohabitation created by the historical resettlement interact with recent heightening of ethnic tensions to exacerbate conflict in resettlement destinations.

In particular, the resettlement created substantial ethnic diversity in the destination districts by relocating people of different ethnic backgrounds in ethnic homelands of other groups. Districts with higher ethnic fractionalization are more likely to experience conflict during periods of heightened ethnic tensions. The resettlement program, which was implemented with extreme haste and lack of consideration of the rights of indigenous and settler communities, may have also fostered resentment between the resettled and host populations that could be activated by actors when ethnicity becomes salient. Indeed, following the rise in the salience of ethnicity nationwide, individuals in resettlement districts, particularly those indigenous to the area, are more likely to identify with their ethnic group rather than their nationality identity.[10] There is also a reduction in trust of neighbors, particularly among the non-indigenous residents who vulnerable to the violence.

## 6.1 Resettlement and Diversity

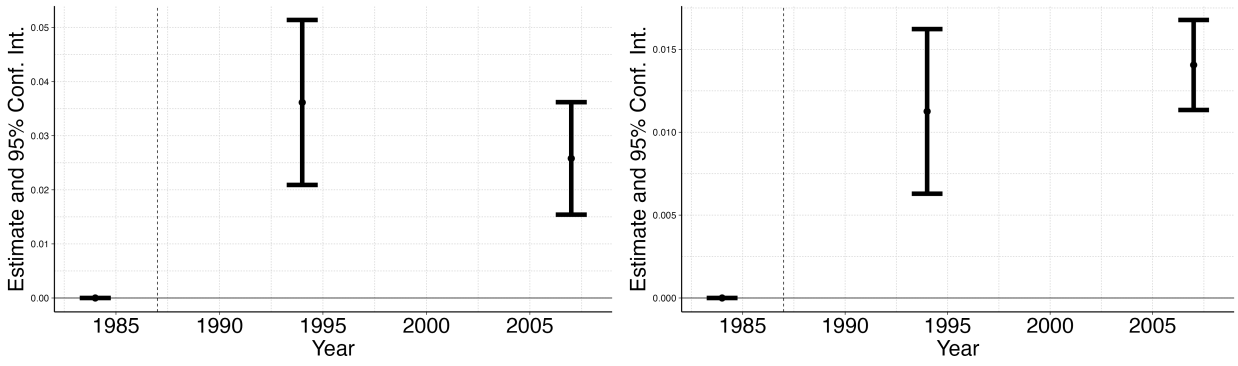
Employing a difference-in-difference strategy that exploits the variation in in-resettlement intensity across districts and changes in population composition over 1984-2007, I examine how the resettlement program shaped ethnic diversity across districts in the long-run. Figure 5 presents the event study results in how in-resettlement intensity affects ethnic

[10]The increase in ethnic identification in high resettlement locations may be both the result of activation of ethnic identity due to national level changes as well as a consequence of observed increase in ethnic conflict in the later periods.

fractionalization (a) and polarization(b). The results show that the resettlement had a persistent effect in increasing ethnic fractionalization and polarization in destination districts several decades after the implementation of the program.[11]

**Figure 5:** Effects of Resettlement on Ethnic Diversity

**(a)** Fractionalization **(b)** Polarization




*Notes*: The graph plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how in-resettlement affects ethnic fractionalization and polarization.

The persistent changes in ethnic composition of resettlement destinations would be expected for four reasons. First, the resettled population was already diverse since the resettlement program forcibly relocated people from different ethnicities to cohabit in the destination districts. Second, the destination were also composed of diverse indigenous ethnic groups who were often different from the resettled population. In addition, the rise in ethnic polarization is also expected since the resettlement program facilitated the relocation of northern ethnic groups (particularly Amhara and Tigrayan) along with other populations from the southern highlands (such as Hadiya and Kembata) in ethnic homelands of indigenous groups with substantial linguistic and cultural differences. Finally, the substantial scale of the program and various barriers that initially limited the resettled population ability to leave the resettlement, such as the punitive directive by the government that forbade the resettled from leaving the resettlement sites (Pankhurst, 1992).

## 6.2 The Mediating Effects of Ethnic Fractionalization

The results thus far show that the resettlement led to substantial and persistent increase in ethnic diversity and presence of individuals from non-indigenous ethnic groups in desti-

[11] Table A2 also shows that high resettlement districts still have a greater share of residents of Amhara ethnic group, who accounted for 64% of the initial settlers.

nation locations. In this section, I examine whether the increased ethnic fractionalization and polarization explain the observed rise in conflict.

In particular, I estimate whether the changes in district ethnic fractionalization and polarization over 1984-2007 affect the frequency and fatalities from conflicts targeting civilians. Hence, the analysis from these specifications are informative about how the changes in diversity, partially induced by the resettlement program as shown in Figure 5, shape incidence and severity of conflict during periods of heightened ethnic salience nationally. I estimate these specifications considering the baseline sample as well as restricting to only destination districts. In the latter specification, the identifying variation comes from the changes in diversity between 1984 and 2007 within resettlement districts.

The estimating equation is as follows:

$$Y_{dt} = \beta * \Delta Fractionalization_d \times Post2015_t + \phi * \Delta Polarization_d \times Post2015_t + \eta_d + \delta_{pt} + \Lambda * BaselineXs_d \times Post2015_t + \Gamma X_{dt} + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (3)$$

While the use of the diversity measures from 2007 for the latter period is partly due to data limitations since the most recent census in Ethiopia was undertaken in 2007, it also has the advantage that the measured changes in diversity are pre-determined relative to the spike in the salience of ethnic identity that occurred after 2015 and thus less subject to reverse causality concerns.[12]

Table 4 shows that districts with a larger increase ethnic fractionalization experience significant rise in incidence and severity of all conflicts and those targeting civilians in particular. These results are robust when considering the baseline sample or restricting to only destination districts and exploiting the within resettlement destinations variation in changes in ethnic diversity. Ethnic polarization also has a significant effect on incidence of conflict event targeting civilians. However, after controlling for ethnic fractionalization and restricting to only resettlement districts, polarization does not have a robust effect on conflict incidence.[13]

[12] In addition, in Table A10, I show that estimated effects of changes in diversity on conflict are similar if we consider the changes in diversity between 1984-1994.

[13] These estimates should be interpreted cautiously given the signficant correlation between ethnic fractionalization and polarization reported in Figure A5. Table A11 shows that change in ethnic polarization, when considered without controlling for fractionalization, also has a significant effect on conflict incidence.

**Table 4:** Changes in Ethnic Diversity over 1984-2007 and Conflict

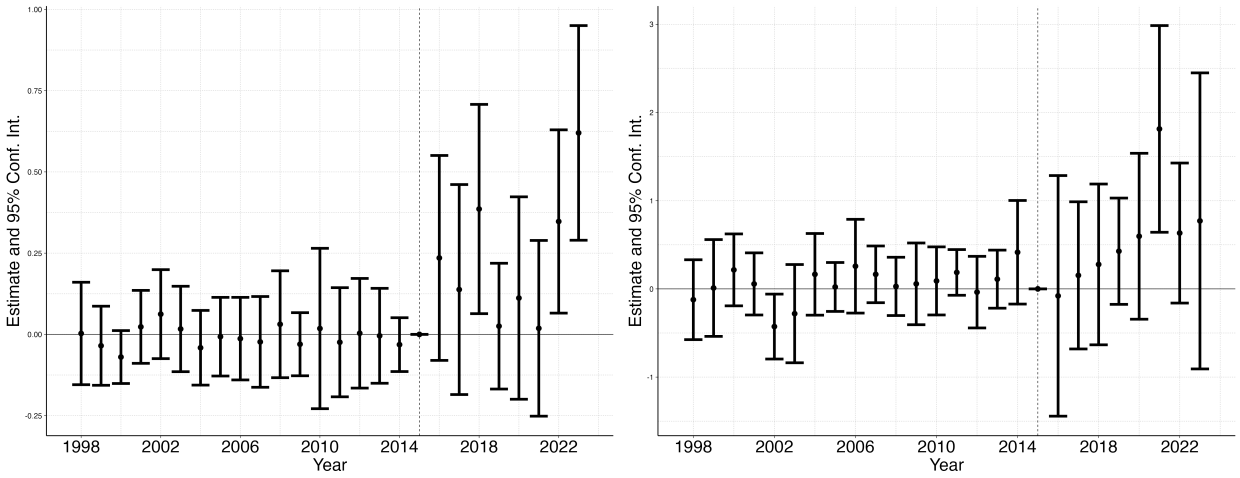
| | Baseline Sample | | Only In-Resettlement Districts | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Log Number of Conflict Events | | | |
| | All Conflicts | Civilian Targeting | All Conflicts | Civilian Targeting |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Δ Fractionalization (2007-1984) × Post-2015 | 0.502*** | 0.243*** | 0.495*** | 0.461*** |
| | (0.059) | (0.037) | (0.130) | (0.102) |
| Δ Polarization (2007-1984) × Post-2015 | 0.120 | 0.516*** | -0.980 | -0.041 |
| | (0.279) | (0.183) | (0.599) | (0.408) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 9,612 | 9,612 | 2,322 | 2,322 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

In Figure 6, I present the estimates from event study analyses on how changes in ethnic diversity affects incidence of conflict targeting civilians by adjusting the specification in Equation 3. The results show that there were no differential trends in the effects of ethnic fractionalization or polarization on conflict incidence prior to 2015. However, districts that experienced greater changes in ethnic diversity between 1984 and 2007 experience a significant and increasing incidence of violence targeting civilians during periods of heightened ethnic salience. The patterns in the event study estimates of the effects of fractionalization on violence targeting civilians are fairly similar to the results documented in Figure 4. These results provide additional support to the argument that historical resettlement affects conflict through the effect it had in shaping the changes in ethnic fractionalization in destination districts that increased the vulnerability of the non-indigenous populations during periods of heightened ethnic salience.

**Figure 6:** Ethnic Diversity and Incidence of Conflicts Targeting Civilians

**(a)** Effect of Δ Fractionalization (2007-1984) **(b)** Effect of Δ Polarization (2007-1984)




*Notes*: The graph plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how the changes in ethnic fractionalization and polarization indices from 1984 to 2007 affect incidence of conflicts targeting civilians.

## 6.3 Activation of Ethnic Identity

The event-study estimates in Figures 4 and 6 show no link between resettlement intensity and the incidence or severity of conflict before 2015, despite persistent increases in ethnic diversity in resettlement districts. Why does the variation in historical resettlement intensity (and subsequent changes in ethnic fractionalization) affect incidence and severity of conflict after 2015? This section provides evidence that while ethnic diversity alone does not increase conflict, resettlement districts become more vulnerable when national shocks activate ethnic identities and latent grievances.

Using individual-level data from Afrobarometer surveys (2013, 2020 and 2023), Table 5 examines how ethnic identification and trust respond to heightened ethnic salience. Panel A shows that, after the nationwide rise in ethnic tensions, individuals in high-resettlement districts are more likely to identify with their ethnic group over the nation, less likely to trust neighbors, and more likely to perceive ethnic discrimination.[14]

Panel B tests whether the changes in ethnic identification and trust differ by indigeneity. Indigenous residents, defined as members of ethnic groups considered local and politically powerful in the region, display sharper increases in ethnic identification. Both indigenous and non-indigenous residents report lower trust of neighbors. However, the

[14]The event study results in Figure A8 present similar picture of increased in-group identification.

mistrust of neighbors is larger for non-indigenous residents, who are more likely to be targets of ethnic militia violence. By contrast, column (3) shows no change in trust toward relatives, consistent with a selective erosion of trust towards non-coethnic neighbors. These patterns align with the main results that the national shock to interethnic relations fueled conflict in high resettlement districts by exacerbating ethnic identification and eroding interethnic trust.

**Table 5:** Increased Ethnic Identification and Deterioration of Trust

| | Identify More/Only With Ethnicity | Trust | | Own Ethnicity Treated Unfairly |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Neighbors | Relatives | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Panel A: Overall Effects | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.052*** | -0.064*** | 0.000 | 0.014* |
| | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.015) | (0.008) |
| Panel B: Heterogeneity By Indigeneity | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.048*** | -0.069*** | 0.001 | 0.013* |
| | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.015) | (0.007) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 × Indigenous | 0.026*** | 0.034*** | -0.004 | 0.002 |
| | (0.003) | (0.012) | (0.015) | (0.007) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Interviewer Homelanguage FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 4,927 | 3,349 | 3,351 | 4,918 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

The reactivation of dormant interethnic cleavages is also evinced by the results in Table A12 which examines the heterogeneous effects of resettlement intensity by awraja level prevalence of social integration problems in the immediate years following the resettlement. A 1987/88 census of resettlement villages documented whether resettlement sites had social integration problems and the causes of these problems (CSA, 1991). Table A12 shows that high resettlement intensity districts in awrajas that initially faced greater integration problems due to conflicts have higher rates of violence targeting civilians in the

post 2015 period. Furthermore, these districts are more likely to experience increased ethnic identification and conflicts perpetrated by ethnic actors when ethnicity becomes salient. Overall, these results suggest that the national shock to interethnic relations reawakened dormant cleavages in high resettlement districts and reignited civil conflict.

A potential concern regarding the results in Table 5 is that the rise in ethnic salience nationwide could be endogenous to resettlement intensity or local conflict. While it would be hard to fully rule out feedback from conflict and ethnic tensions in resettlement districts to the nationwide ethnic tensions, there is a substantial evidence the national level ethnic salience is largely driven by factors orthogonal to resettlement. As discussed in Section 2, the national surge was triggered by protests over Addis Ababa's expansion, events far from resettlement areas. Resettlement districts are peripheral, sparsely populated, and thus unlikely to drive national trends. Moreover, if local diversity and discord in these districts had driven national ethnic salience, these effects would have emerged well before 2015, since the resettlement was implemented during 1984-86.

**Table 6:** Resettlement, Protests, and Government Reactions

| | Log Number of Events | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Peaceful Protests | Protests with Interventions | Excessive Force Against Protesters | Violent Demonstrations |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | -0.004 | -0.001 | -0.002 | 0.001 |
| | (0.008) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.004) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

Table 6 further addresses this concern by testing whether high-resettlement districts saw more protests or state repressions post 2015, which would be expected to occur if changes in resettlement districts are driving the national trends. The results show no effect on protest incidence. Furthermore, the null results on protests rule out the possibility that

the main findings simply capture protest activity or associated state violence rather than the targeted civilian attacks documented in the conflict data.

Overall, the Afrobarometer evidence shows that high-resettlement districts, which had become ethnically diverse with large non-indigenous populations, are fertile ground for the activation of ethnic identities during periods of heightened national salience. Non-indigenous groups in these areas appear particularly vulnerable to mistrust and targeted violence.

## 6.4 The Tempering Effects of Integrated Resettlements

As detailed in Section 2, the 1984-86 resettlement was implemented under two different schemes, conventional and integrated, that allowed for differing extents of interethnic contact. In Table 7, I examine whether the effects of resettlement and ethnic salience on in-group identification and conflict depend on the resettlement schemes. I restrict the analysis to only resettlement destinations and estimate the heterogeneous effects of historical resettlement by the share of integrated resettlement villages within the district.[15]

Column (1) shows that individuals in resettlement districts with a greater share of integrated villages are less likely to identify more or only with their ethnicity during periods of heightened ethnic tensions. Hence, the activation of local ethnic identity is relatively muted in more integrated resettlements. Consistent with this, columns (2) and (3) show that high resettlement districts with more integrated resettlement sites experience lower incidence of conflict targeting civilians, including those perpetrated by ethnic actors.

The results in Table 7 suggest that integrated resettlement schemes can help to lessen the detrimental effects of forced cohabitation during rising ethnic tensions. In contrast to conventional resettlement schemes, where the resettled were relocated to new villages consisting of only settlers surrounded by hosts, integrated resettlement schemes may generate greater social linkages and cultural assimilation that foster more trust and unity between the resettled and host populations (Bazzi et al., 2019; Carlitz et al., 2024).

[15] *Share Integrated* is scaled 0-1 in order to facilitate the interpretation of the heterogeneous effect of resettlement intensity between districts with no integrated vs all integrated settlements.

**Table 7:** Heterogeneous Effects by Resettlement Schemes

| | Identify More or Only With Ethnic Group | Log Number of Civilian Targeting Events | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | All | By Ethnic Actors |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.092*** | 0.051*** | 0.033*** |
| | (0.018) | (0.014) | (0.008) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 × Share Integrated (÷100) | -0.018*** | -0.070** | -0.035* |
| | (0.003) | (0.031) | (0.021) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Interviewer Homelanguage FEs | ✓ | | |
| Age FEs | ✓ | | |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 927 | 2,457 | 2,457 |

*Notes*: Column (1) reports Conley standard errors that are spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis, while columns (2) and (3) allow for both spatial correlation up to 500km and serial correlation at the district level. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

# 7 Conclusion

This paper studies how ethnic cohabitation induced by a forced resettlement affects conflict in the long run when interethnic cleavages become salient. Exploiting variation in historical resettlement intensity and a nationwide rise in ethnic salience, I find that high-resettlement districts experienced significant increases in violence targeting civilians during periods of heightened ethnic tensions. The violence is mainly perpetrated by ethnic actors, and non-indigenous residents are more likely to be targeted. The effects are larger in districts where the resettled were less integrated with the host communities. Despite the increase in ethnic diversity of resettlement destinations, these areas did not experience differential incidence of conflict for years until the nationwide rise in ethnic salience activated in-group identification and reduced interethnic trust.

Experts estimate that, by 2050, over 143 million will be internally displaced in developing countries due to climate change (Clement et al., 2021). This paper show that the demographic changes that accompany such large scale population movements could affect con-

flict in the long-run when intergroup differences become salient. Migration destinations, particularly those where the newcomers are less integrated with the host communities, are vulnerable to conflicts due to the activation of latent divisions by ethnic actors.

State-led planned resettlements are also increasingly being considered to mitigate the effects of environmental adversities. Gebresilasse (2024) shows that the 1984-86 resettlement improved agricultural productivity in origin locations by easing population pressures on the environment and facilitating land consolidation. However, the results in this study show that resettlement schemes that create forced ethnic cohabitation and grievances may sow the seeds for future violence in the destination areas. Policymakers must weigh these long-run social costs alongside economic gains when designing migration and resettlement programs. Furthermore, resettlement schemes that respect the rights of settler and host communities and foster greater social integration in the destination districts could help to lessen the likelihood of ethnic conflicts in the long-run.

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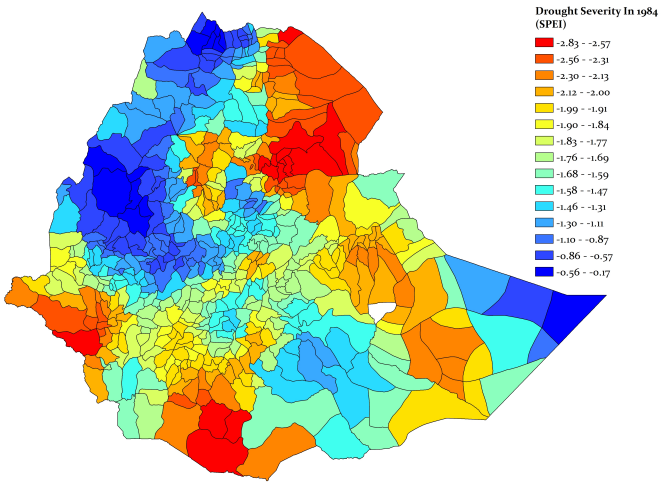
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# A Additional Figures and Tables

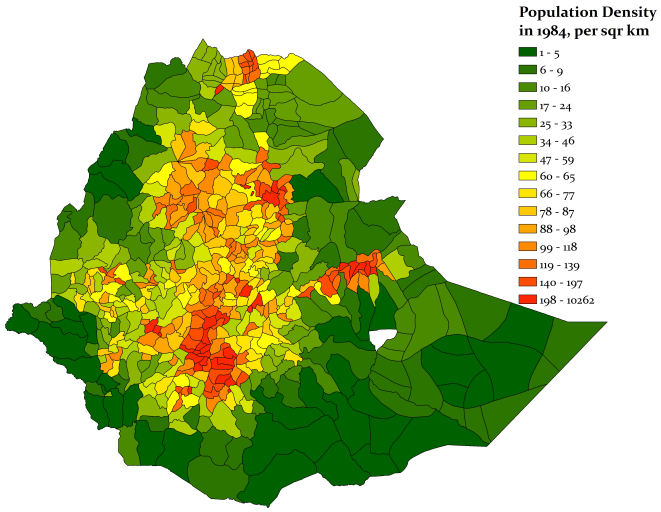
## A.1 Additional Figures

**Figure A1:** Drought Severity and Population Density in 1984

**(a)** Drought Severity (SPEI) in 1984

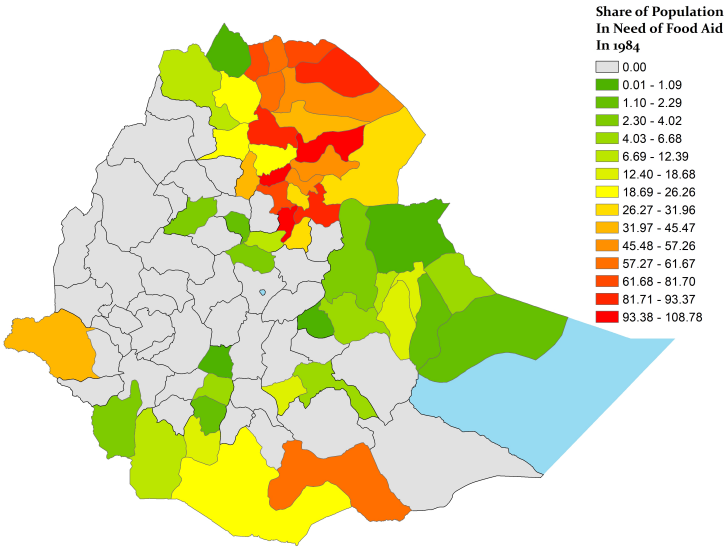



**(b)** Population Density in 1984



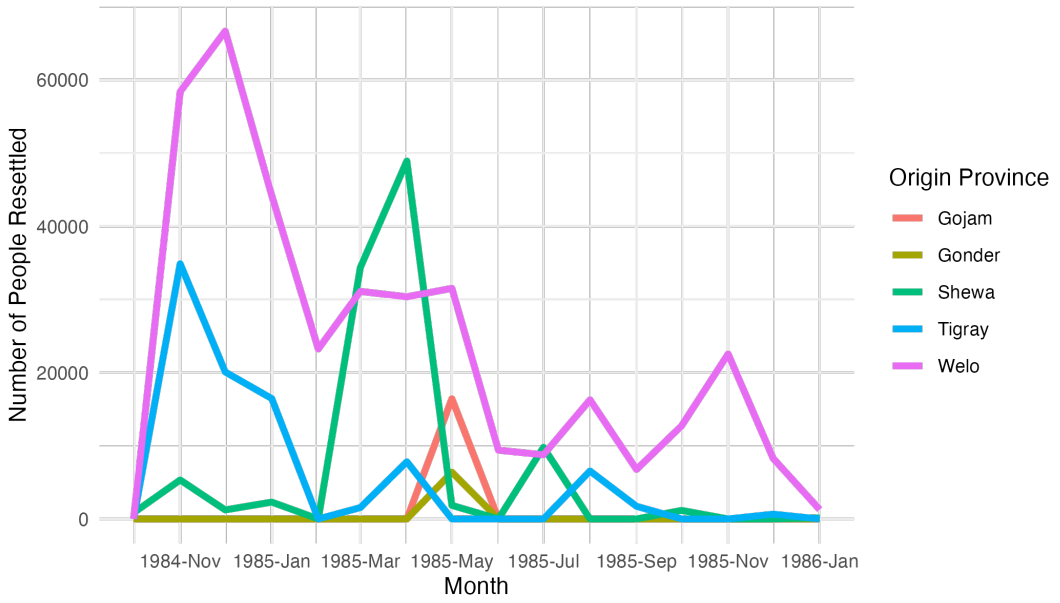

Source: Author's calculation using SPEI data from Vicente-Serrano et al. (2010) and district population data from the 1984 census CSA and Commission (1991)

**Figure A2:** Famine Incidence in 1984




Source: Author's calculation based on data from the United Nations Development Program Emergency Unit for Ethiopia (1999) database.

**Figure A3:** Population Resettled by Month and Origin Province




Source: Author's calculation based on data from Sivini (1986) compiled using reports from the RRC.

**Figure A4:** Ethnic Composition of Resettled Population By Destination Province

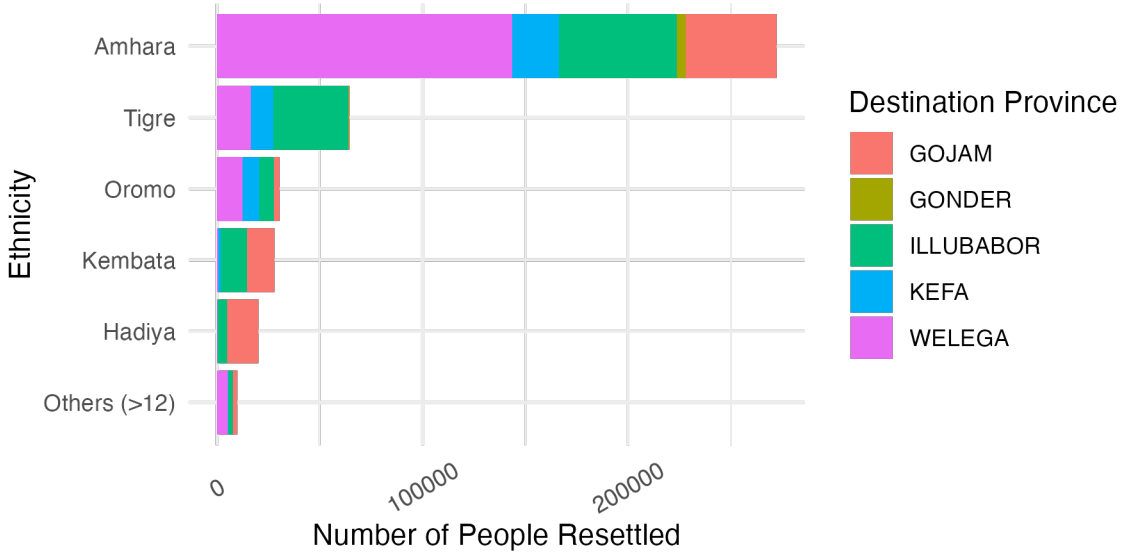


**Figure A5:** Correlation Between Fractionalization and Polarization (2007)

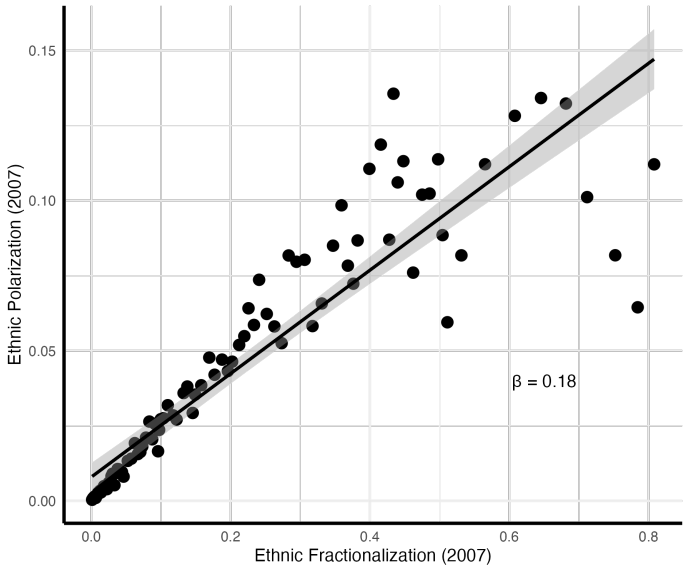
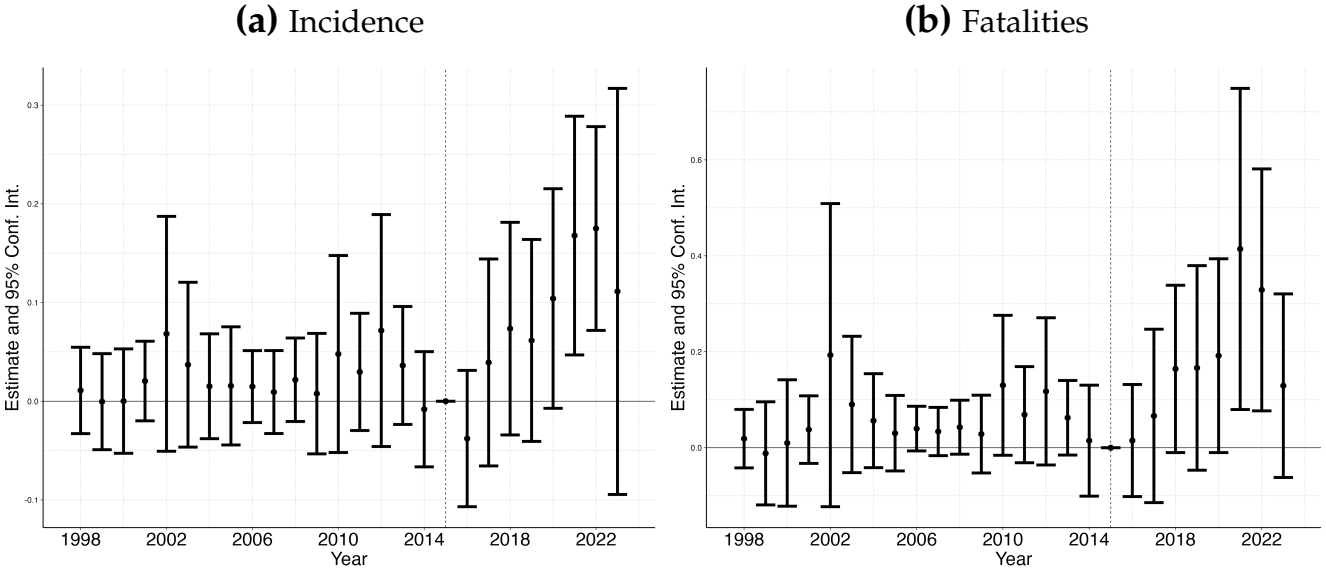


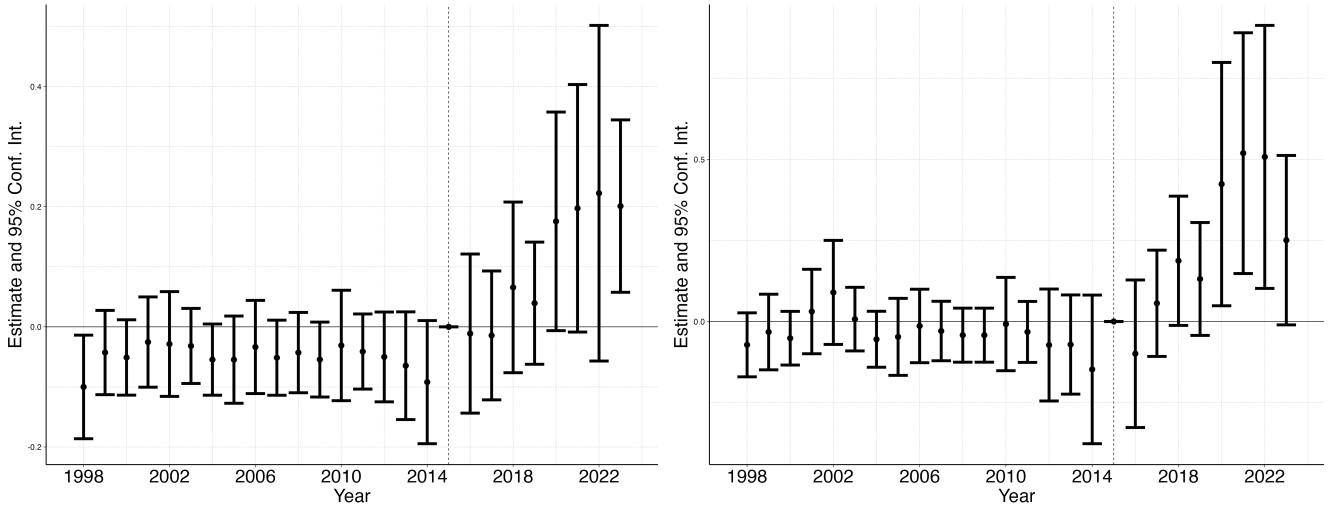

**Figure A6:** Resettlement and All Conflict Events




*Notes*: The graphs plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how in-resettlement intensity affects incidence and fatalities from all conflicts using the event study specification defined in equation 2.

**Figure A7:** Any In-Resettlement and Conflicts Targeting Civilians

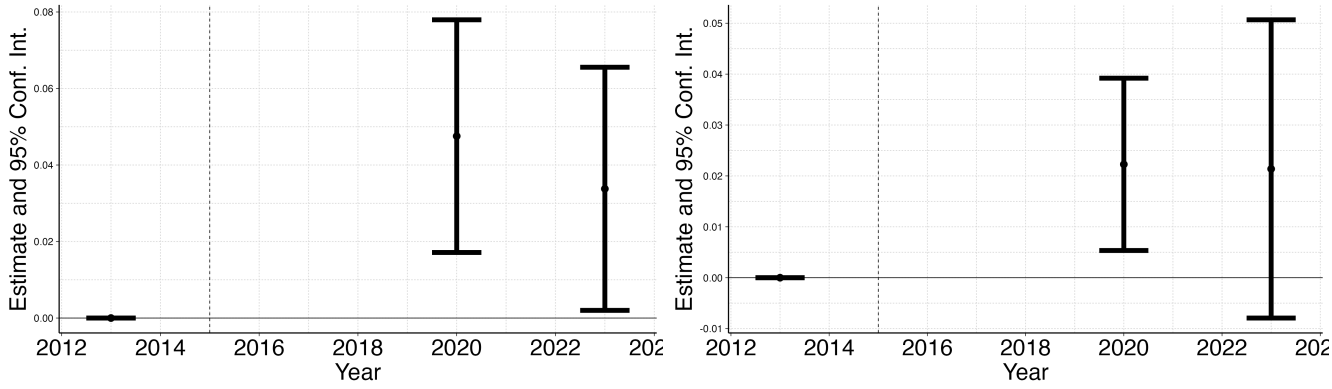
**(a)** Incidence **(b)** Fatalities




*Notes*: The graphs plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how any presence of resettlement in the district affects incidence and fatalities from conflicts targeting civilians using the event study specification defined in equation 2.

**Figure A8:** Effects of Resettlement on Ethnic Identification

**(a)** Identify More Ethnic than National **(b)** Identify Only Ethnic




*Notes*: The graph plots the point values and 95% confidence intervals for the estimates on how in-resettlement and ethnic salience affects identification with ethnic vs national identity. 2.

## A.2 Additional Tables

**Table A1:** Predictors of In-Resettlement

| | Any In-Resettled (1) | Share In-Resettled (2) |
|---|---|---|
| Drought Index (1984) | 0.337*** | 1.204* |
| | (0.028) | (0.646) |
| Pop Density (1984) | 0.000 | -0.002 |
| | (0.000) | (0.003) |
| % Tree Cover (1984) | 0.009*** | 0.056*** |
| | (0.003) | (0.019) |
| Distance to rivers | -0.007 | -0.265** |
| | (0.009) | (0.110) |
| Border District | 0.111 | 5.085*** |
| | (0.085) | (1.561) |
| Transhumant Pastoral Index | -0.038 | -0.799 |
| | (0.134) | (0.901) |
| % Literate (1983) | 0.003 | 0.019 |
| | (0.004) | (0.020) |
| Farmer Type: Crop Only (1983) | 0.002 | 0.044 |
| | (0.002) | (0.033) |
| Ave Area Annual Crops (1983) | 0.236*** | 3.137 |
| | (0.072) | (1.959) |
| % Always Farm During Belg (1983) | -0.002* | -0.016 |
| | (0.001) | (0.015) |
| Baseline Cereal Productivity (1982) | 0.171*** | 1.188 |
| | (0.026) | (0.774) |
| Ave Farm Income (1,000 Birr) (1983) | -0.062 | -1.623 |
| | (0.121) | (2.193) |
| Distance to Service Cooperatives (1983) | 0.005** | -0.003 |
| | (0.002) | (0.033) |
| Distance to Big Market (1983) | -0.001 | -0.022 |
| | (0.004) | (0.016) |
| Distance to Addis | 0.000 | 0.009* |
| | (0.000) | (0.005) |
| Distance to Provincial Capital | -0.001 | -0.008 |
| | (0.001) | (0.007) |
| Fractionalization (1984) | -0.044 | 1.277 |
| | (0.191) | (2.859) |
| Polarization (1984) | -0.226 | 0.588 |
| | (0.788) | (7.190) |
| N | 214 | 214 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A2:** Resettlement and Ethnic Diversity

| | Ethnic Diversity | | Share of Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Fractionalization | Polarization | Amhara Ethnicity |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-Resett | 0.031*** | 0.013*** | 1.308** |
| | (0.006) | (0.002) | (0.576) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 1,121 | 1,118 | 1,121 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A3:** Robustness to Defining Treatment on Extensive Margin

| | All Conflicts | | Log Number of Civilian Targetings | | Amhara Civilian Targetings | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Any In-Resett × Post-2015 | 0.163*** | 0.302** | 0.157*** | 0.280*** | 0.046*** | 0.136*** |
| | (0.059) | (0.127) | (0.039) | (0.087) | (0.009) | (0.024) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

**Table A4:** Robustness to Defining Conflict Outcomes on the Extensive Margin

| | Any Incidence of | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Conflicts | | Civilian Targetings | | Amhara Civilian Targetings | |
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.019 | 0.039** | 0.044*** | 0.039*** | 0.020*** | 0.019*** |
| | (0.014) | (0.018) | (0.013) | (0.011) | (0.004) | (0.005) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

**Table A5:** Robustness to Alternative Sample Restrictions

| | Alternative Estimation Samples | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Including Origins | Using All Districts inc. Tigray | Illubabor | All Districts Except Districts from Province Kefa | Gonder | Gojam | Welega | Exclude Districts On the Border | Only Destination Districts |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.066*** | 0.066*** | 0.082*** | 0.065*** | 0.067*** | 0.048*** | 0.071*** | 0.059*** | 0.038*** |
| | (0.014) | (0.014) | (0.025) | (0.015) | (0.014) | (0.018) | (0.018) | (0.020) | (0.011) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| N | 12,069 | 12,555 | 11,637 | 11,502 | 12,042 | 11,610 | 11,205 | 9,585 | 2,457 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A6:** Robustness to Alternative Specifications

| | Alternative Specifications | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.069*** | 0.037*** | 0.057*** | 0.063*** | 0.061*** | 0.059*** |
| | (0.010) | (0.007) | (0.015) | (0.010) | (0.020) | (0.014) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) | | | 0.002 | | | |
| | | | (0.003) | | | |
| Post-2015 | | | 0.211*** | | | |
| | | | (0.020) | | | |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Awraja-Year FEs | | ✓ | | | | |
| Baseline Cont. X Post | | | | | ✓ | |
| Baseline Cont. X Lin. Trend | | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Baseline Cont. Additional X Post | | | | | ✓ | |
| Baseline Cont. Additional X Lin. Trend | | | | | | ✓ |
| N | 11,583 | 11,583 | 11,583 | 10,341 | 4,995 | 4,995 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

**Table A7:** Robustness to Accounting for State Capacity and Territorial Control

| | Log Number of Civilian Targeting Events | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Civilians | | Amhara Civilians | | By Ethnic Actors | |
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| | Panel B: Controlling for Lagged State Capacity Index | | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.039*** | 0.094*** | 0.020*** | 0.061*** | 0.031*** | 0.082*** |
| | (0.010) | (0.030) | (0.006) | (0.023) | (0.009) | (0.023) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × State Capacity Index (Preceding Year) | -0.093*** | -0.100*** | -0.001 | -0.004 | -0.082*** | -0.114*** |
| | (0.024) | (0.037) | (0.010) | (0.016) | (0.024) | (0.033) |
| | Panel B: Controlling for Lagged State Control Over Territory | | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.025*** | 0.072*** | 0.016*** | 0.048** | 0.018** | 0.058*** |
| | (0.008) | (0.026) | (0.006) | (0.020) | (0.008) | (0.018) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Control over territory (Preceding Year) | -0.003*** | -0.004* | 0.000 | -0.001 | -0.003*** | -0.005*** |
| | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.000) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.002) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 | 10,341 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

# **Table A8:** Robustness to Accounting for District Mobile Connectivity

| | Log Number of Civilian Targeting Events | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Civilians | | Amhara Civilians | | By Ethnic Actors | |
| | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities | Events | Fatalities |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| | Panel A: Using Binary Indicator for Post 2015 | | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.068*** | 0.139*** | 0.024*** | 0.077*** | 0.057*** | 0.124*** |
| | (0.020) | (0.033) | (0.004) | (0.020) | (0.016) | (0.029) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × % Dist Pop With 2G Access | -0.001 | -0.002 | 0.000*** | -0.001*** | 0.000 | -0.001 |
| | (0.001) | (0.003) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.001) | (0.002) |
| % Dist Pop With 2G Access | 0.002** | 0.002 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.001* | 0.001*** |
| | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.001) | (0.000) |
| | Panel B: Using Google Search Based Measure of Ethnic Salience | | | | | |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Log Salience (Google) | 0.052** | 0.130*** | 0.022*** | 0.072*** | 0.043** | 0.120*** |
| | (0.025) | (0.034) | (0.008) | (0.026) | (0.018) | (0.029) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × % Dist Pop With 2G Access | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.001) | (0.002) |
| % Dist Pop With 2G Access | 0.002 | 0.002** | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.001*** | 0.001*** |
| | (0.002) | (0.001) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.000) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 5,745 | 5,745 | 5,745 | 5,745 | 5,745 | 5,745 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A9:** Robustness to Considering Alternative Measures of Conflict

| | UCDP | | Afrobarometer | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Log Number of Conflict Events | | Responses on Safety and Ethnic Bias | | |
| | All Events | Non-State and One-Sided Violence | Felt Unsafe | Country's Condition Is Bad | Ethnic Group Treated Unfairly |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.014* | 0.019*** | 0.054*** | 0.037*** | 0.014*** |
| | (0.009) | (0.007) | (0.015) | (0.006) | (0.004) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Interviewer Homelanguage FEs | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Age FEs | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Standard-Errors | | Custom | | 500km | |
| N | 13,405 | 13,405 | 5,092 | 5,012 | 4,918 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A10:** Change in Ethnic Diversity (1984-1994) and Conflict Incidence

| | Baseline Sample | | Only In-Resettlement Districts | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Log Number of Conflict Events | | | |
| | All Conflicts | Civilian Targeting | All Conflicts | Civilian Targeting |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Δ Fractionalization (1994-1984) × Post-2015 | 0.423*** | 0.203*** | 0.411** | 0.439*** |
| | (0.076) | (0.043) | (0.198) | (0.153) |
| Δ Polarization (1994-1984) × Post-2015 | -0.087 | 0.419** | -0.944 | -0.630 |
| | (0.347) | (0.197) | (0.856) | (0.602) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 8,181 | 8,181 | 1,836 | 1,836 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A11:** Change in Ethnic Diversity (1984-2007) and Conflict Incidence

| | Log Number of Conflict Events | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Conflicts | | | Civilian Targeting | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Δ Fractionalization (2007-1984) × Post-2015 | 0.515*** | | 0.502*** | 0.309*** | | 0.243*** |
| | (0.044) | | (0.059) | (0.028) | | (0.037) |
| Δ Polarization (2007-1984) × Post-2015 | | 1.778*** | 0.120 | | 1.320*** | 0.516*** |
| | | (0.193) | (0.279) | | (0.124) | (0.183) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 9,666 | 9,612 | 9,612 | 9,666 | 9,612 | 9,612 |

*Notes*: Conley standard errors that are serially correlated at the district level and spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.

## **Table A12:** Heterogeneous Effects by Prevalence of Initial Social Integration Problems Within Awraja Due to Conflict

| | Identify More or Only With Ethnic Group | Log Number of Civilian Targeting Events | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | All | By Ethnic Actors |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 | 0.018 | -0.048*** | -0.027** |
| | (0.013) | (0.016) | (0.011) |
| Share In-Resett (÷10) × Post-2015 × % Social Problems (1988): Conflict | 0.047*** | 0.018*** | 0.011*** |
| | (0.001) | (0.003) | (0.002) |
| District FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Province-Year FEs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Interviewer Homelanguage FEs | ✓ | | |
| Age FEs | ✓ | | |
| Drought Index (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pop Density (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fractionalization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Polarization (1984) X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Border District X Post | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| N | 927 | 2,457 | 2,457 |

*Notes*: Column (1) reports Conley standard errors that are spatially correlated up to 500km in parenthesis, while columns (2) and (3) allow for both spatial correlation up to 500km and serial correlation at the district level. Significance levels: $*$ : 10% $**$ : 5% $***$ : 1%.