



Deployment of Public Resources, Service Delivery, and Stability: Evidence from Niger

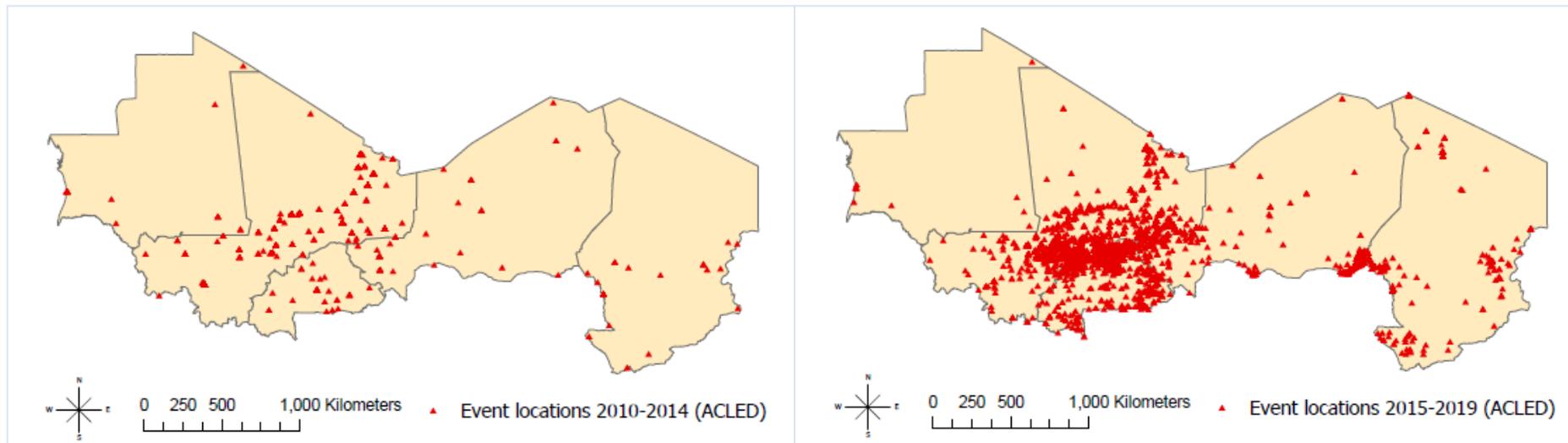
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Motivation

- Recent increase of violence & fragility in Sahel region.
- By 2030, >50% of world's poorest population in FCV countries (WBG, 2020 est.).
- Governments & donors seek to strengthen capacity to address fragility.
- Limited local state presence & public service access cited as causes fueling FCV.
- **Little empirical evidence in FCV settings if state deployment *defined as LG human, material, and financial resources* reduces conflict & improves trust in institutions.**

Violent events in G5 Sahel countries



What this paper is about

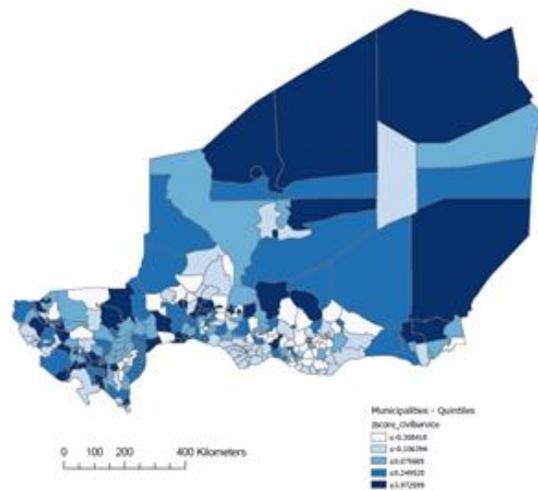
- Address this knowledge gap & linked with Niger & Sahel engagement.
- **Study if higher capacity Nigerien LG experience lower levels of conflict using both municipality & individual-level information.**
- Estimate correlation between LG capacity and: i) service delivery; ii) violent events; iii) citizens' perception & attitudes towards the state.
- **Our results: higher *local* state presence associated with higher citizen satisfaction with the government & lower levels of experienced violence.**

The Nigerian context in brief - decentralization

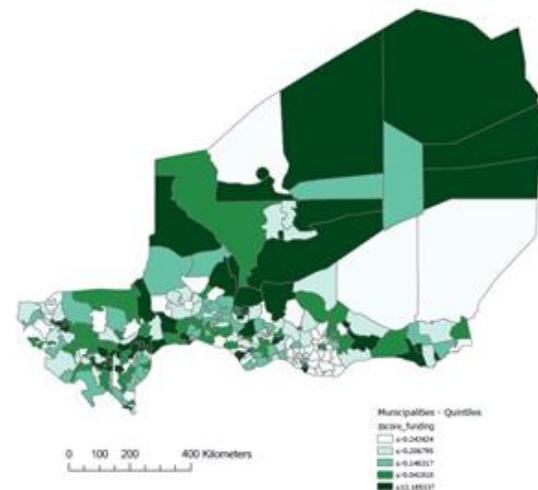
Highly interesting and relevant case to study.

- Ongoing decentralization & transfers of competences to LGs.
- Elected LGs responsible for education, health, & water services.
- In general, LGs have limited human, financial & material resources.
- Significant disparities in extent of state deployment across & within regions.

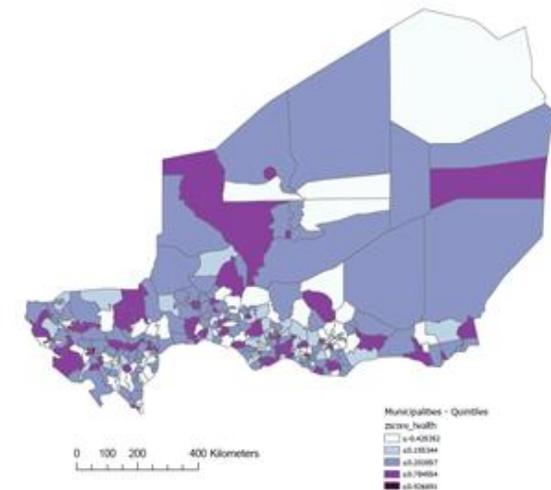
Civil service capacity index (quintiles)



Fiscal capacity index (quintiles)



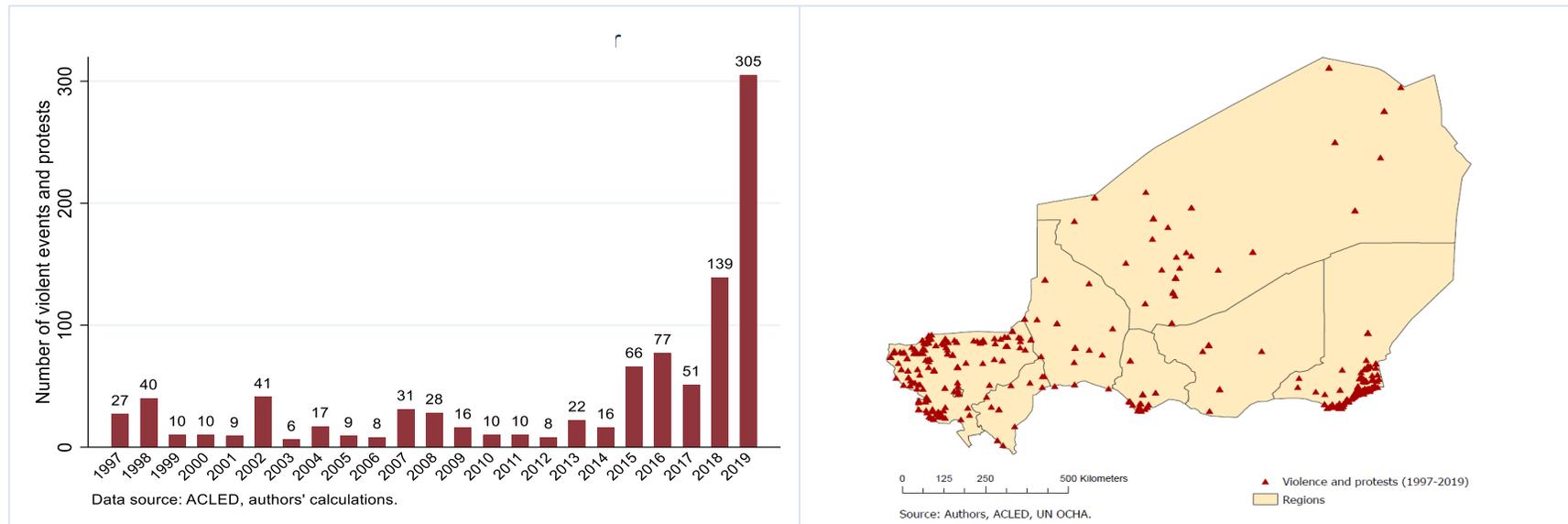
Health services index (quintiles)



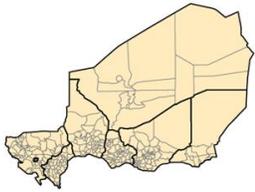
The Nigerien context in brief - violence and insecurity

- Violence & insecurity have deteriorated in recent years in Niger.
- Instability concentrated in Lake Chad region & South-West border - 'Spill-over' from conflicts in neighboring countries.
- Long-lasting tensions between local ethnic communities: competition over natural resources, limited access to services, grievances from past conflicts.

Violence and protests events in Niger



Analysis based on three fine-grained datasets:



- **Local government capacity census.**

- Conducted by WB in 2018
- Information on municipalities, including administration capacity aspects & service delivery.



- **Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED).**

- Geocoded violence & protests events.
- Merged with municipality census.



- **Afrobarometer measures of citizen perceptions & behaviors.**

- 7th round conducted in 2018.
- 1,200 individuals with location information.
- Nationally representative.

Empirical approach

Empirical analysis conducted at two levels:

1. Municipality level analysis

- Estimate correlation between LG capacity and :
 - Service delivery
 - Violence

2. Individual level analysis

- Estimate correlation between LG capacity and:
 - Government performance evaluation
 - Trust in government institutions
 - Experienced violence

Municipality-level analysis: methodology

- Analysis exploits cross-sectional variation.
- Model estimated:

$$y_c = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot LG_capacity_c + X'_c \cdot \beta_2 + \eta_r + \varepsilon_c \quad (1)$$

- Outcome y_c : indicators of service delivery or instability in LG c .
- The vector X_c : LG characteristics likely to matter in explaining observed patterns. Region fixed effects η_r capture region-specific factors affecting outcomes.
- OLS estimate Equation 1 & heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors reported.
- *Identification of a valid instrumental variable unsuccessful so far.*

Municipality-level analysis: results

LG capacity and service delivery:

- Higher local civil service and fiscal capacity associated with higher access to public services and infrastructure.

LG capacity and stability:

- State deployment: consistently negatively correlated w/protests, riots, & fatalities.
- Coefficients are not significant at conventional levels.
- Given endogeneity concerns, findings suggest state deployment can reduce violence.

	(1) Z-score education	(2) Z-score health	(3) Z-score infrastructure	(4) Protests 2019	(5) Riots 2019	(6) Fatalities 2019
Z-score civil service	-0.0902 (0.119)	0.0577 (0.0718)	0.206*** (0.0614)			
Z-score fiscal	0.0164 (0.0244)	0.0402* (0.0230)	0.0165 (0.0429)			
Z-score state deployment				-0.0672 (0.103)	-0.0286 (0.0323)	-2.126 (2.598)
Observations	243	243	243	256	256	256
R ²	0.308	0.378	0.526	0.435	0.171	0.229
Covariates and Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Covariates: population (log), commune area (log), urban municipality dummy, transport costs to Niamey (log), mining dummy, violent events between 2010-2014.

Individual-level analysis: methodology

Does local state deployment translate into improved citizens' attitudes?

- Analysis links individual answers with LG capacity.

$$y_{i,j} = \beta \cdot LG_capacity_j + \gamma \cdot C_{i,j} + AdminUnit + \varepsilon_{i,j} \quad (2)$$

- $y_{i,j}$: answers of respondent i from village j on trust in government institutions, performance, & experienced violence.
- Both Afrobarometer and LG census measures of LG capacity.
- $C_{i,j}$: vector of location & individual control variables. *AdminUnit* : village or region fixed effects.
- OLS & standard errors clustered at the village reported.

Individual-level analysis: results

Using both state capacity indicator from the LG census or Afrobarometer:

- Respondents in locations w/higher state capacity evaluate Gov. performance as more positive.
- Correlated with lower levels of feared & experienced violence.
- Suggestive evidence that greater local state presence can foster stability, in particular law & order institutions.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Performance of Government	Performance of Government	Trust in Government	Trust in Government	Violence	Violence
Z-score law and order	0.103** (0.0468)	0.0480* (0.0285)	0.146** (0.0597)	0.119*** (0.0379)	-0.00964 (0.0598)	-0.00772 (0.0374)
Observations	1175	1175	1172	1172	1175	1175
R ²	0.225	0.180	0.385	0.334	0.110	0.073
Covariates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FE	Department	Region	Department	Region	Department	Region
Cluster	Village	Village	Village	Village	Village	Village

Notes: OLS Estimates. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Afrobarometer and LG census data. Covariates include population (log), urban municipality dummy, respondent age and age squared, respondent gender dummy, Niamey transport costs (log).

Conclusion

- We show that greater local state presence associated w/lower probability of unrest & higher citizen satisfaction with Gov. performance.
- Findings have important policy implications for Niger & fragile states:
- Building core institutions & deploying state resources at local level can be instrumental in reducing violence and fostering trust in institutions.
- Findings contribute to the literatures on decentralization, state capacity building, security-development nexus, and conflict.
- This paper is the first output of a broader Sahel research agenda that also informs operational work.