Deployment of Public Resources, Service Delivery, and Stability: Evidence from Niger[1]

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Abstract

The impact of state deployment on stability in fragile contexts is of major public policy importance. Using Niger as case study, this paper investigates the determinants of local state deployment and whether higher levels of local state capacity correspond with higher levels of trust towards the government. Using geographically disaggregated data on municipal government capacity and attitudes towards institutions, we find that increasing the human, material, and financial resources of local government entities improves access to frontline public services. We also find that state capacity investments correspond with higher citizen satisfaction with the state and lower levels of experienced violence. Our results imply that strengthening local government entities can improve confidence in institutions in fragile environments. Our findings contribute to the literatures on decentralization, state capacity building, security-development nexus and conflict.

Keywords: Deployment of State Resources; Conflict; Decentralization; Niger; Security-Development Nexus; State capacity; Unrest.

JEL Codes: H7; I3; O1.

[1] The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this paper reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the World Bank, the Executive Directors of the World Bank or the governments they represent.

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1. Introduction

Violence and fragility are a key impediment to growth in many developing countries. Over half a billion people live in areas affected by conflict and by 2030 more than half of the world's poorest population will live in countries plagued by fragility, conflict, and violence (World Bank Group 2020). Governments and international organizations are looking for ways to strengthen the capacity of governments to address fragility and improve the ability to navigate conflicts. Yet, little evidence exists on whether and how state deployment reduces actual conflict.

This paper investigates the determinants of local state deployment and whether higher levels of local state capacity in Niger correspond with lower levels of violence. Specifically, we study whether local municipality governments (*collectivités territoriales,* LGs) in Niger that have higher financial, material and personal capacity experience lower levels of conflict. We then examine whether these state capacity investments correspond with higher citizen satisfaction with the state.

Niger offers a particularly suitable case to study the relationship between conflict and state capacity. In recent years, Niger has experienced an extensive process of decentralization that resulted in the election of local governments who have independent fiscal responsibilities and are responsible for education, health, hydraulics and environment. Yet, while the current political momentum for state deployment of financial and human resources is strong, there is significant variation in the extent of state deployment across regions. Fiscal and human resources remain concentrated in the capital city of Niamey or regional capitals. Most municipalities are understaffed, do not receive the full resources allotted to them, and deliver limited public services. As a result, considerable variation in the local capacity of LGs exists, allowing us to study its impact on fragility which still prevails in the country.

Violence and insecurity have deteriorated in recent years in Niger. The prevalence of attacks and protests has been multiplied by 30 between the beginning and the end of last decade according to ACLED data[2]. While unrest affects the whole country, two epicenters of conflicts can be found in the Lake Chad basin and the South-West border region with Mali. The factors most commonly put forward to explain the patterns of violence seen include competition over natural resources, limited state deployment and access to public services, grievances from past conflicts between communities, and spillovers from regional conflicts involving armed groups and extremist movements[3].

To estimate the effects of state capacity on violence the paper uses several fine-grained data sets. We measure state capacity using a 2018 census of all LGs in Niger. This data set offers a rare opportunity to study state capacity in a setting of fragility. We measure conflict using the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) geo-coded data set and merge it with the LG census, which also contains information about violence. Furthermore, the Afrobarometer provides geo-coded measures of citizens' perceptions of and behavior towards the state. We then estimate the correlation of state capacity and violent events at the LG level as well as the correlation between state capacity and citizens' perception of and behavior towards the state.

Defining state capacity as the human, material, and financial resources of the state, we find a strong correlation between local state capacity and citizens' evaluation of the performance of the government and trust towards government actors. Respondents to the Afrobarometer living in LGs with higher levels of

[2] Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2011-2019 data for Niger.
[3] World Bank (2019). Evaluation des Risques et de la Résilience dans la Région du Sahel.

state deployment rate the performance of the government more positively and report higher trust in governance institutions. Using the Afrobarometer and ACLED data, we also find suggestive evidence that local state capacity reduces some indicators of violence especially protests and riots. Given that reverse causality would predict a positive correlation (the security apparatus is more likely to deployed where violence is prevalent), this negative correlation suggests that state resources could reduce violence.

Our findings contribute to the literatures on decentralization, state capacity building, security-development nexus and conflict. While scholars have studied the efficacy and logistics of decentralization efforts (Bardhan, 2002; Faguet, 2014), little evidence exists in a context of fragility and especially its implications for conflict. Our fine-grained data on state capacity of LGs offers a rare opportunity to study this and contributes to the literature on state capacity that suffers from measurement problems (Gadenne and Singhal, 2014). We also contribute to the literature on conflict by examining how conflict might be addressed with increased state deployment. So far, the literature has mostly focused on the inverse relationship, namely how conflict shapes state deployment (Tilly, 1985; Olsen, 1993; Bates, 2001; Besley and Persson, 2010; Sanchez de la Sierra, 2020).

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 summarizes the literature on decentralization, state deployment, and conflict. Section 3 provides the context of the decentralization in Niger, which Section 4 enriches with descriptive results on state deployment and conflict across Niger's communes. Section 5 shows our empirical results using opinion survey answers and Section 6 concludes and provides policy recommendations.

2. Literature review

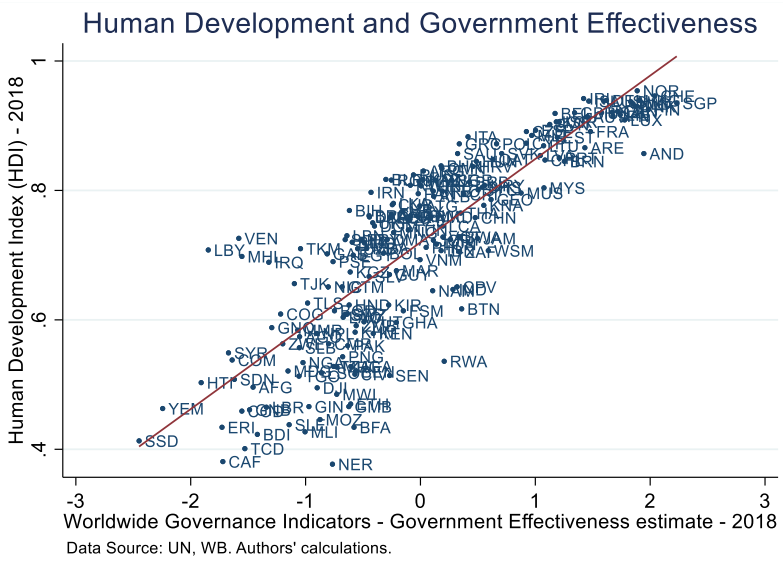
The following section summarizes the current academic and policy literature on state capacity challenges, decentralization, and conflict. We identify three gaps in the literature that this paper tries to fill. First, the literature on decentralization has little empirical evidence on the service delivery and violence implications for fragile states. Second, there is a general lack of high-quality subnational data of state capacity in Fragile, Conflict and Violence Affected (FCV) states. Third, the literature on the relationship between state capacity and violence has largely focused on the effect of conflict on state capacity or relied on national level variation.

Effective institutions and good governance are crucial components for achieving stability and enabling economic development (Acemoglu 2005; Acemoglu and Robinson 2018; Besley and Persson 2010; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2013). Strong bureaucratic and fiscal capacities allow states to provide public services more widely and more efficiently. Fragile states, in contrast, lack these capacities (Acemoglu 2005; Herbst 2000; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2014). Figure 1 illustrates this relationship by showing that states countries that have more effective governments tend to score higher on the human development index[4]. State capacity has great potential for improvement in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the Fragile State Index (2017), 20 of the 30 most fragile states are in Africa and no African country is classified as "stable."

[4] Government Effectiveness captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies. The estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

Under certain conditions, decentralization offers a potential remedy for the central states unable to project their power and govern effectively. Scholars have studied the costs and benefits of delegating public service delivery to LGs and estimated the effects on development outcomes (Tiebout, 1956; Oates, 1972; Inman and Rubinfeld, 1997; Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006; Rodden, 2008). LGs might be better at mobilizing resources and ensuring local accountability. Decentralization can empower communities to exert influence over local services. It is likely to be particularly beneficial when preferences are highly heterogeneous across jurisdictions, as is the case in many ethnically or socially diverse developing countries (Gadenne and Singhal, 2014). At the same time, some LGs might lack the necessary capacity to implement policies and could be at risk of capture (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2000). Furthermore, the relationship between LGs and the central state can vary in the level of support LGs receive financially and logistically and whether the central state actively competes with the authority of LGs (Breton, 1996; Cai and Treisman, 2004; Volden, 2005; Henn, 2020).

Figure 1: The Relationship between State Capacity and Human Development



There is little existing empirical evidence on decentralization policy outcomes in developing countries and fragile states. This is partly due to the difficulty to construct complete and consistent subnational government data series (Gadenne and Singhal, 2014). Meanwhile, introducing decentralization processes in fragile environments is associated with several challenges. Important requirements for local accountability such as voice and exit, implementation rules, or oversight arrangements might not be present in those contexts (White, 2011). Decentralization can be held back due to insufficient local absorptive capacity and fiscal resources. Elected officials can be constrained in their efforts to enact change by the lack of qualified civil servants. In environments with large spatial economic disparities and limited fiscal local capacity, decentralization might exacerbate territorial inequality rather than mitigate it (Prud'homme, 1995).

Given the specificities of fragile states, building capacity of central institutions in charge of decentralization is often required. Furthermore, strengthening local institutions and addressing their capacity constraints are essential for decentralization policy to be successful (IEG, 2008). It is critical for decentralization to deliver on its development potential that consistent policies and frameworks are designed with clear allocations of functions across levels of governments. Strong and transparent financial management systems need be

adopted. It is important to conceive good governance, accountability and anticorruption systems from the initial reform stages (IEG, 2018). The importance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in local public service provision needs to be understood and responsibilities between NGO actors and the state clarified (Gadenne and Singhal, 2014). More generally, decentralization needs to be gradual to avoid overwhelming LGs and generating resistance (IEG, 2018).

As in many contexts of fragility, the Sahel region suffers from numerous challenges to building and sustaining state presence. Most nation states on the African continent are facing challenges to establish universal presence across their territory and population. According to the Fragile State Index (2019), none of the Sahel[5] countries are classified as "stable" and they are all among the 25% most fragile states. Furthermore, all Sahel countries except Mauritania are classified as FCV according to the Bank's FCV list (World Bank Group, 2020). Niger specifically ranks 18th out of 178 countries in fragility and has low scores for its security apparatus (14th) and public service provision (7th). Several factors have led to an under-provision of the state in the Sahel region. First, limited resources, geographic constraints, and low population density makes it costly to establish state structures across Africa (Scott, 1998; Herbst, 2000) and particularly in the Sahel states, which have vast territories and low population density. Second, scholars have documented that many African regimes lacked political interest to invest in state capacity (Bates, 1983) and the media and citizens are often unable to monitor performance of the state (Campante and Do, 2014). Third, the relationship between the central state and its local officials are subject to principal agent relationship issues, which are intensified by education levels, resource constraints, and governance challenges as documented in many developing countries (Epstein and Sharyn, 1994; Evans, 1995). While much of the existing evidence is based on non-Sahel countries, given the characteristics of Sahel countries, it is reasonable to presume that the same constraints to deploying state resources apply.

Even more than the capacity of the central state, local state presence really matters for stability. More so than the national characteristics of institutions, how governance works on the ground locally is key (Henn, 2020). Local state capacity, the ability of the central state to project power through its local state apparatus, i.e. to govern and implement policies, has been shown to increase economic development (Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, 2014; Dell, Lane, and Querubin, 2018) and decrease conflict (Boulding, 1962; Depetris-Chauvin, 2017). However, few studies of the impacts of state capacity contain high quality and subnational measures of state capacity in a setting of fragility.

Given the prevalence of conflict in many fragile states, scholars and policy makers are increasingly focusing on the relationship between state capacity and violence. Researchers have documented the direct detrimental effects of conflict on state infrastructure and capacity (Collier, 1999; Ghobarah, 2003; Lai & Thyne, 2007; Chamarbagwala & Moran, 2011), while others have investigated the incentives conflicts generate towards state capacity investments (Tilly, 1985; Olsen, 1993; Bates, 2001; Besley and Persson, 2010; Sanchez de la Sierra, 2020; Henn, Larreguy, and Marshall 2020). Scholars have also studied the effect of state capacity on conflict, most notably the role of military capacity (Collier, Hoeffler, and Soderbom, 2004; Lacina, 2006) in preventing conflict onset and intensity, the role of state capacity in preventing the spread of conflict across borders (Braithwaite, 2010), the role of national level institutions (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Fjelde and De Soysa, 2009), as well as the effect of fiscal capacity on conflict (Hendrix, 2011). However, the existing research relies almost exclusively on national level measures of state capacity and is thus unable to examine the *local* effect of state capacity on conflict.

[5] Sahel countries are defined here as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger.

Understanding the relationship between state capacity and conflict is critical since development and state building initiatives are major tools governments and international organizations can deploy to address fragility. One approach to address fragility has been the deployment of troops as well as reforming or improving the existing security structures. Consolidating and coordinating security services is an important first step in institutional reforms to prevent violence. Such security initiatives are aimed at addressing the immediate consequences of conflict and preventing its escalation. These initiatives are often combined with development and state building efforts aimed at addressing both original inequalities that may have spurred the conflict as well as mitigating the conflicts' developmental impacts (World Bank 2011, 2020). To date, we still understand little about the impacts of these state building efforts on conflict and state legitimacy.

Niger offers a unique opportunity to study the interaction of state building and conflict and contribute to these literatures due to its context of fragility and efforts to decentralize which will be outlined in the following section.

3. Nigerien Context

This section discusses first the decentralization process in Niger. In the second part, it introduces the LG census and presents descriptive statistics on LG capacity and service delivery. Some background on the security situation is provided in the third part.

Niger, located in the Sahel and classified as an FCV country[6], is ranked last on the Human Development Index[7]. With a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of US$944 in 2018 (constant 2011 U.S. dollar), Niger is among the least developed countries in the world. The economy is not diversified, and the majority of the population generates income from rain-fed agriculture and livestock[8]. Population density stood at 17.7 people per sq. km in 2018, well below Sub-Saharan Africa's average of 50.8 people per sq. km[9]. Low density combined with rapid population growth generates significant development challenges. The country is also exposed to natural disasters, mainly desertification and rainfall shocks. Furthermore, it shares borders with states experiencing political turmoil and conflicts. Instability imported from Mali and Nigeria has begun to affect certain parts of Niger in recent years. Despite its multi-faceted vulnerability to external factors, Niger has proved to be rather resilient compared to its neighbors (Mahanty and Meeker, 2019[10]).

3.1 Decentralization process

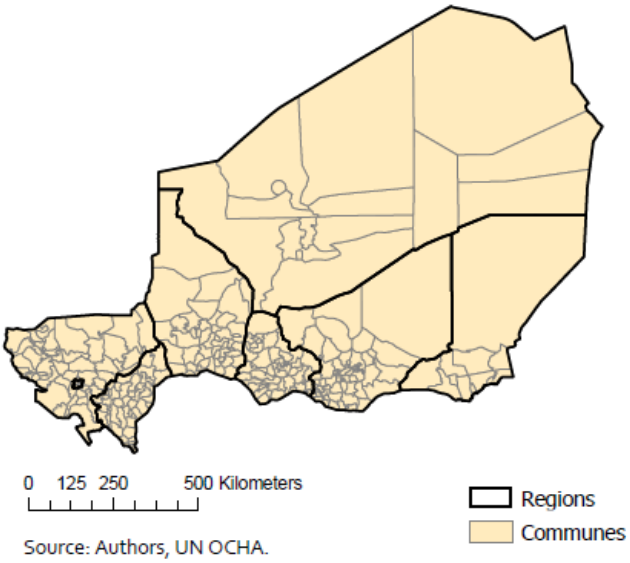
Since the 1960s, the decentralization agenda has gone through various phases of progress and recoil. Decentralization has gained momentum since the 2010 Constitution and the 2011 local elections, and the country is presently implementing a new wave of decentralization reforms. The ultimate proclaimed objective of the current reforms is to strengthen democracy, promote local development, improve public service delivery, and increase citizen involvement in local matters. A number of laws and policies clarifying the roles of the various government levels have been adopted since the beginning of the past decade[11]. In 2012, the National Decentralization Policy Framework was adopted. Several decrees detailing the competences transferred respectively to municipalities and regions were passed in 2016[12]. The government

[6] World Bank Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV), 2020.
[7] Human Development Index, 2019.
[8] World Bank Systematic Country Diagnostic (2017). Priorities for Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity.
[9] World Development Indicators, 02/27/2020 update.
[10] Mahanty, D., and Meeker, W. Niger: A Bulwark against Further Instability in West Africa. CSIS Briefs, July 2019.
[11] World Bank Governance of Extractives for Local Development Project Appraisal Document (2020).
[12] 2016-075 decree of January 26, 2016 and 2016-076 decree of January 26, 2016.

is currently implementing transfers of competences to sub-national governments for the education, health, water and environment sectors. This is undertaken through the implementation of the 2018 plan to incrementally transfers responsibilities and related resources for these sectors in 2018-2021.[13]

Regions and municipalities (*communes*) are the two types of sub-national governments in Niger. The country is currently divided in eight regions (including the capital city Niamey) and 255 municipalities. Of those 255 municipalities, 214 are classified as rural and 41 as urban. Four large municipality cities (Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua and Zinder) are further divided in 15 districts (*arrondissements*) bringing the total of municipality-equivalent LGs to 266[14] (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Administrative map of Niger[15]



Local municipality governments and Regional governments (RGs) in Niger have some autonomy over the management of their resources and the elaboration of their development plans. Municipalities are the lowest levels of administrative division of the country. They are responsible for local public services and look after the interests of their populations. Municipalities are managed by directly elected municipal council members and a mayor chosen by the council. They have their own budget, staff, equipment, and exert their functions over a distinct territory. Regions have existed in Niger since the 2011 elections. Their operating mode is similar to that of municipalities. Regions are managed by regional councils of elected members and a chosen president. Municipal and regional council members are elected by universal suffrage. In both municipalities and regions, traditional leaders are included in policy making.

The two types of sub-national governments take measures aimed at promoting economic, social, and cultural development. Responsibilities de jure transferred to RGs and LGs are mostly about infrastructures (maintenance, equipment, construction), and management of support staff. Line ministries keep

[13] 2018 presidential decree on the plan of transfers to LG.
[14] Direction Générale de la Décentralisation et des Collectivités Territoriales (2015). *Brochure d'information sur la décentralisation au Niger*. Edition 2015. République du Niger.
[15] The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Bank or the authors concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

responsibilities for qualified staff management (e.g. teachers, doctors), policy making, and control of service delivery quality. RGs and LGs are now also in charge of primary health care provision, water provision, primary education[16], and public safety and justice. In practice, the transfer of competences and resources from the central government to municipalities and regions has not yet been completed.

Nigerien RGs and LGs collect revenue from various sources. They receive fiscal transfers from the central government and a share of the national taxes collected. In addition, municipalities can raise taxes at the local level. Moreover, the 2014 legal framework provides for a sharing arrangement of 15 percent of oil and mining revenues to sub-national governments from extractive regions in order to mitigate negative impacts from extraction. LGs are allocated 85 percent and RGs 15 percent of the total mining related revenue in principle. The majority of those funds are meant to be invested in local development. In practice, revenue related transfers have been well below the legal requirement[17]. A national agency has been created in 2008 to enhance LGs' capacity and facilitate the transfer of central resources to fund LGs. The National Agency for Financing Local Governments (*Agence nationale de financement des collectivites territoriales*, ANFICT) provides resources to LGs via two funds. The Decentralization Support Fund focuses on recurrent expenditures whereas the Equalization Fund is dedicated to finance investments[18]. In practice, the allocation of resources to the ANFICT has been volatile and limited information is published regarding its operations[19].

LGs have financial autonomy over the resources they have. Mayors draft annual budgets with the support of tax collectors, general and permanent secretaries, and other relevant staff. Local councils then meet to discuss and approve the budget. Municipalities prepare multi-annual local development plans (*Plan communal de développement*, PCD) which define local priorities in terms of economic and social public interventions. Annual investment plans (*Plan d'investissement annuel*, PIA) are linked to PCDs and define the investment component in LG annual budgets.

While decentralization has made progress in recent years, the scope to increase resources for front-line service delivery is significant. The deconcentration and devolution process is still ongoing, and competences have not been fully transferred yet to LGs. Decision making authority stays mostly centralized. The government's human and financial resources remain concentrated in Niamey as well, even though more than 80% of the population lives in rural areas. In terms of financial resources, more than 90% of the government's budget was spent at the central level between 2010 and 2015 and most of the expenditures remained in Niamey. In terms of human resources, more than 65% of government employees are based in the capital city[20]. As a result, there is insufficient human and fiscal capacity at the municipality level. This concentration of resources limits the public administration capacity to reach the population and deliver pubic services outside of the capital city and large urban centers.

3.2 Local state capacity – data and measurement

In this part we provide descriptive evidence on state deployment at the LG level in Niger. We mobilize the LG census conducted in 2018 by the World Bank, which provides detailed information on the socioeconomic characteristics of Nigerien LGs, including local administration aspects and service delivery.

[16] Niger Decree 2016-075 and 2016-075.
[17] World Bank Governance of Extractives for Local Development Project Appraisal Document (2020).
[18] World Bank Technical Assessment of Service Delivery Challenges (2017).
[19] UCLG-OECD (2016). Niger Decentralization Profile. OECD.
[20] World Bank Technical Assessment of Service Delivery Challenges (2017).

LG authorities filled in the census questionnaire, which covers several modules ranging from staff, services, and infrastructures, to financial resources and local governance. The availability of precise and comprehensive data on LG resources and public sector characteristics is rare in fragility contexts.

Despite important obligations, LGs have limited human and material resources to meet their mandates (Table 1). Among key staff resources, municipalities can find support in a secretary general, a tax collector and an accountant. In reality, the availability of civil servants exerting those roles varies very much by region. For instance, tax collectors are present in only 67% of Agadez region's LGs. Very few communes have accountants working in the town hall. Meanwhile, there is no municipality where both a tax collector and an accountant are present. The region of Agadez exhibits the highest average number of executive employees per capita. Material resources are limited for most LGs as well. Few municipality town hall buildings have access to the Internet or electricity for instance. Only 2% of Tillabéri's town halls have access to the Internet. Above 95% of municipalities are staffed with less than 1 executive civil servant per 1,000 residents (Figure 3).

To condense the information on local civil service capacity, we create a z-score index. It is defined as the municipality average of the standardized values of the following binary and continuous variables: secretary general present, secretary permanent present, presence of at least one tax collector, presence of at least one accountant, presence of at least one deconcentrated agent, number of civil servant staff per capita, and number of executives civil servants per capita. Figure 4 shows the great spatial variation there is in Niger in terms of LG civil service capacity.

Table 1: Human resources and equipment of communes – regional averages

Region	Secretary general present (%)	Tax collector present (%)	Accountant present (%)	Number executives per capita (in 000s)	Town hall has Internet (%)	Town hall has electricity (%)
Agadez	73.3	66.7	26.7	0.7	13.3	86.7
Diffa	41.7	100.0	0.0	0.2	16.7	100.0
Dosso	78.6	92.9	7.1	0.2	4.7	72.1
Maradi	59.1	84.1	4.5	0.2	8.5	72.3
Niamey	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.5	40.0	100.0
Tahoua	83.7	72.1	7.0	0.1	11.4	88.6
Tillabéri	73.8	90.5	7.1	0.3	2.2	80.0
Zinder	32.1	69.8	15.1	0.1	5.5	63.6

Source : Niger 2018 Commune census, authors' calculations.

Figure 3: LG human resources

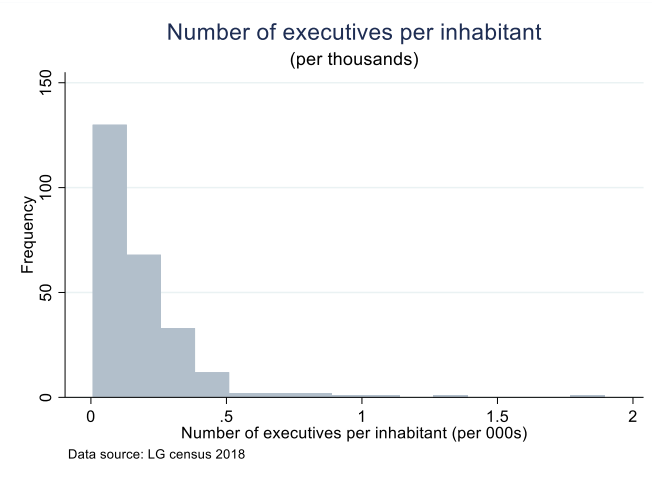
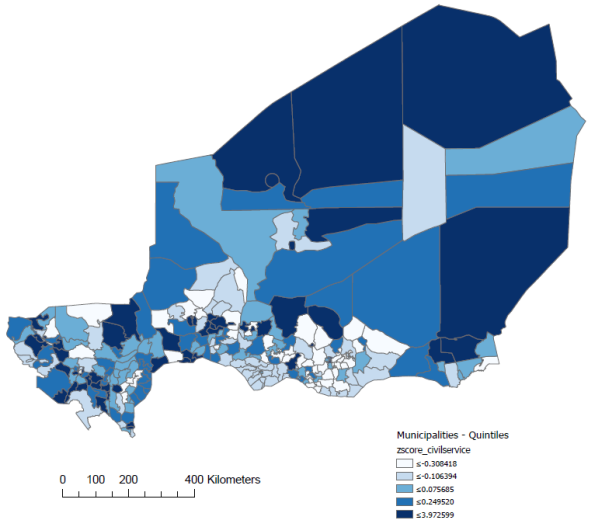


Figure 4: Civil service capacity



Municipalities have limited financial resources. This limits their capacities to deliver public services. Most LGs don't receive more than a third of the central transfers they are entitled to (Table 2). They also display low local tax recovery rates. Diffa displays an average local tax recovery rate of 26%; the lowest of all eight regions. Most LGs have adopted a local development plan and an investment plan. However, the budget execution rate doesn't exceed 50% in all cases. The highest execution rates are found in the capital Niamey and the region of Tahoua at 45% and 46% respectively. There is some inequality in terms of revenue across municipalities as well (Figure 5).

We create a z-score index measuring fiscal capacity to aggregate information on the revenue and expenditures capacity of LGs. The z-score is based on the LG average of revenue per capita and expenditures per capita. LG fiscal capacity is unevenly distributed across Niger's territory (Figure 6).

Table 2: Revenue, budgeting and expenditures – regional averages

Region	Planned transfers received (%)	Local tax recovery rate (%)	Total revenue per capita (FCFA 000s)	Local Development Plan exists (%)	Annual Investment Plan exists (%)	Budget execution rate (%)	Expenditures per capita (FCFA 000s)
Agadez	36.4	36.5	4.2	100.0	100.0	34.7	9.7
Diffa	57.1	26.0	1.1	100.0	100.0	34.2	1.0
Dosso	23.1	48.9	1.0	100.0	86.0	44.4	1.0
Maradi	15.9	34.8	0.6	100.0	89.1	35.0	0.4
Niamey	0.0	55.1	.	80.0	60.0	45.0	.
Tahoua	28.6	45.4	0.6	100.0	90.9	45.7	0.6
Tillabéri	21.4	35.0	1.2	93.3	97.8	36.0	0.8
Zinder	14.3	29.6	0.5	92.6	75.5	31.7	0.4

Source : Niger 2018 Commune census, authors' calculations.

Figure 5: Local revenue mobilization

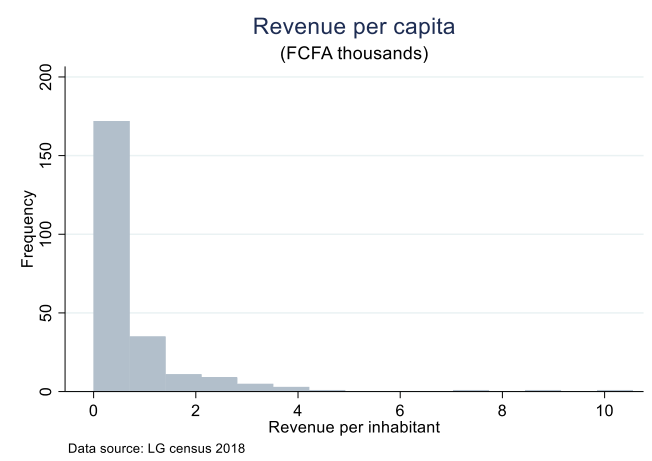
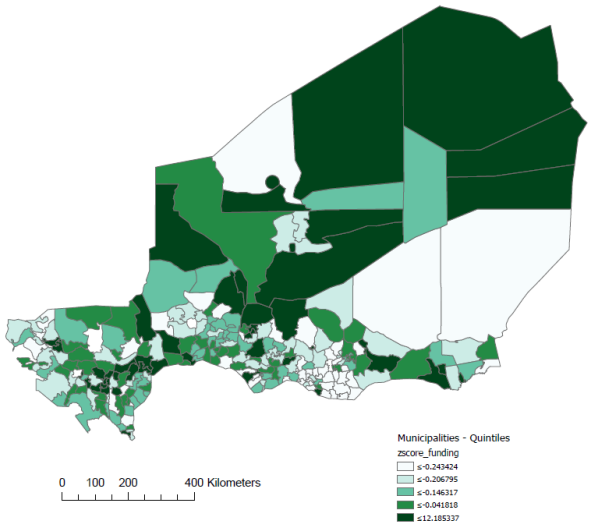


Figure 6: Fiscal capacity



Access to public services remains limited outside of the capital city Niamey. While nearly every municipality has at least one middle school, in most regions only half of the communes have a high school

in operation. For instance, 57% of Maradi communes have an operating high school according to the LG census (Table 3). There is more spatial inequality in health services delivery. The population has access to a hospital in about only 25% of municipalities. The share of LGs with a maternity is higher, but in places like Dosso or Zinder one third of the communes do not have access to that essential public service. Streetlights and waste collection services are unequally available in municipality capitals.

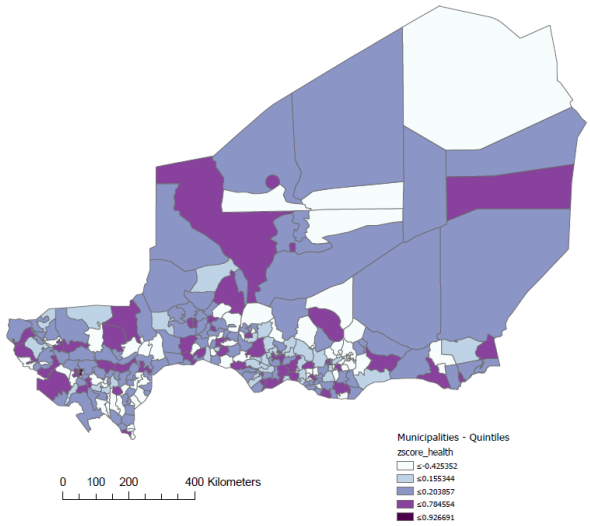
Given the broad range of public services LGs provide, we create four types of public services z-scores. The education services index is based on standardized binary variables for the presence of a primary school, koranic school, middle-school, high-school, literacy center, and training center. The health services index is based on the presence of a maternity, hospital, health center, and pharmacy. The infrastructure services index covers the presence of a bus station, national electricity grid connection, streetlights, public water network connection, sewage system, waste collection services, and 3G network. Finally, justice, law, and order services are aggregated in a z-score based on tribunal presence, police station presence, and prison presence. Health services tend to be available to a different extent across Niger (Figure 7).

Table 3: Service delivery at commune level - regional averages

Region	Middle-school present	High-school present	Maternity present	Hospital present	Street-lights	Waste collection services
Agadez	93.3	53.3	86.7	26.7	26.7	57.1
Diffa	100.0	41.7	83.3	25.0	8.3	75.0
Dosso	100.0	46.5	65.1	14.0	34.9	34.9
Maradi	100.0	57.4	89.4	23.4	40.4	48.9
Niamey	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Tahoua	100.0	41.9	84.1	27.3	47.7	61.4
Tillabéri	97.8	53.3	93.3	31.1	17.8	37.8
Zinder	96.4	40.0	67.3	18.2	27.3	37.0

Source : Niger 2018 Commune census, authors' calculations. In % unless otherwise indicated.

Figure 7: Health services

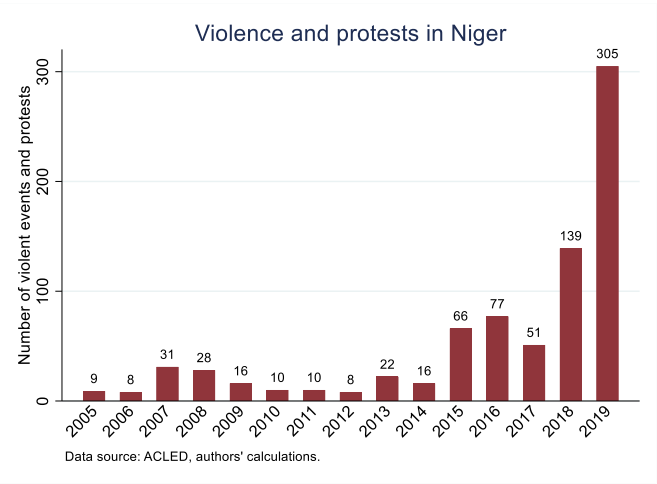


3.3 Violence and Unrest

Insecurity has rapidly escalated and spread throughout the Sahel region in recent years. Niger is embroiled in regional conflict dynamics and is confronting its own set of internal challenges. It is classified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as 'spill-over country' for conflict in neighboring Mali and Nigeria[21]. Long-lasting tensions between local ethnic communities also prevail.

The security situation in Niger has deteriorated markedly over the last 10 years. While the level of security was fairly stable between 2005 and 2014, the situation has rapidly worsened since 2015. The number of violent events and protests recorded in ACLED increased by a factor of 30 between 2011 and 2019 (Figure 8). Since 2015, the number of conflict related fatalities has been above 200.

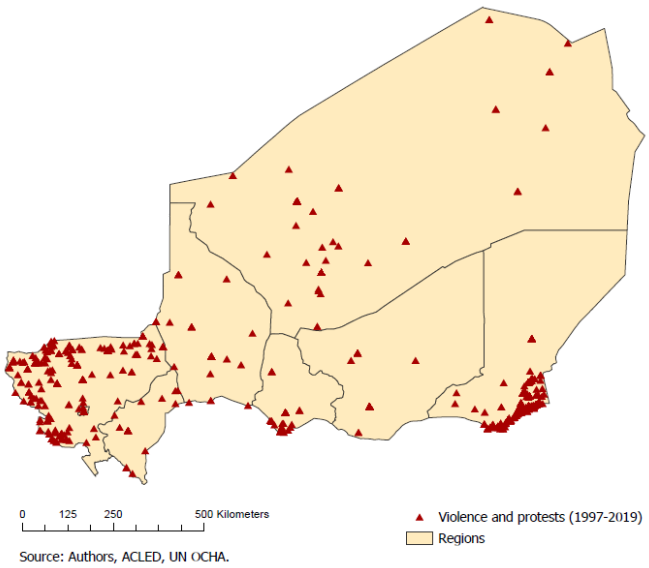
Figure 8: Social unrest evolution over time



Violence in Niger tends to be concentrated in two main locations: The Lake Chad basin in the South-eastern part of the country and along the south-western border with Mali (Figure 9). The populations of the Lake Chad region have been exposed to growing competition over natural resources; chiefly water and land. In addition, limited access to public services, the continuing presence of armed militias and the conflict contagion from neighboring Nigeria have fueled local tensions and violence. The drivers of conflict in the Tillabéry region at the border with Mali are complex. Tensions over land and natural resources between herders and farmer communities on either side of the borders have existed for decades. The stability challenges in Mali over last two decades have facilitated access to weapons in the area and sometimes encouraged individuals to enroll in armed groups to gain protection. Extremist movements have also exploited local grievances to recruit men and establish themselves in the region[22]. Finally, the northeast border with Libya is also vulnerable to criminal activities and armed groups. The area is rife with illegal trafficking and displaced combatants.

[21] UNDP (2015). Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach. Programme document.
[22] World Bank (2019). Evaluation des Risques et de la Résilience dans la Région du Sahel.

Figure 9: Map of violence and protests location[23]



4. Determinants of State deployment across Niger's communes

This section examines the factors correlated with local resource mobilization (LRM) and service delivery. It first introduces the methodology adopted and then describes the empirical results. In a nutshell, the findings suggest that local state capacity is an important determinant of access to public services.

4.1 Empirical methodology

The analysis is conducted at the municipality level (*communes*), and it is based on the Nigerien LG census described above. Given the nature of the data available, the analysis exploits cross-sectional variation to find which factors are statistically significantly correlated with LRM and public service delivery.

The main model estimated is the following:

$$y_c = \beta_0 + X'_c.\beta_1 + \eta_r + \varepsilon_c \qquad (1),$$

where y_c refers to indicators of either LRM or access to public services in LG c. The vector X_c includes several LG characteristics likely to matter in explaining observed patterns. In the core specification, it includes the following structural factors: population size (in log), municipality area in squared kilometers (in log), transportation costs to the capital city (in FCFA, log), urban municipality binary variable, and a binary variable for the presence of mining activities. It is expected that urban and more populated municipalities have higher public resources due to their greater proximity with authorities and higher population size. More capital city-distant and physically larger communes might have more difficulty deploying state capacity. The addition of the mining variable is done for two reasons. It helps control for the types of economic activities present in the municipality, and it captures the specific status such municipalities have with respect to mining revenue transfers.

[23] The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the authors or the World Bank concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

In specifications where we aim to understand the determinants of LRM and expenditures, we include several variables related to local civil service capacity such as presence of a secretary general or number of executives per capita. We also incorporate a composite z-score of civil service capacity to aggregate the information in a single variable. In specifications where we instead examine the drivers of local public service access, we include z-scores for civil service capacity and fiscal capacity in addition to the structural control variables outlined above.

Equation 1 includes region fixed effects η_r, which capture region-specific factors affecting the outcome variables of interest. The parameters β_k are to be estimated and ε is the error term. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) are used to estimate Equation 1 and heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are reported.

4.2 Determinants of local revenue mobilization and expenditures

LG staff appears to be an important determinant of LRM. The results in Table 4 show that variables measuring local administration staff capacity matter for LG revenue per inhabitant. Municipalities with a general secretary appear to have more revenue at their disposal (Column 1). The number of total staff and executives working for the local government are both positively and statistically significantly associated with revenue per inhabitant as well (Columns 6 and 7). In the last column where the composite civil service capacity z-score index is introduced, we find a positive but insignificant association with LRM.

Other interesting findings emerge from the analysis in Table 4. The regression analysis confirms that urban municipalities collect more revenue per person. In each column the urban commune binary variable is positive and statistically significant. LGs that are closer in terms of transportation costs to the capital city Niamey also seem to collect more revenue. Interestingly, the presence of mining activities is not positively associated with higher LRM despite the 15% extractive revenue sharing agreement in place.

The analysis of LG expenditures determinants confirms the importance of civil service capacity. The results in Table 5 show that municipalities with a general secretary and permanent secretary do manage to spend more (Columns 1 and 2). So do municipalities with more personal and executives per capita (Columns 6 and 7). The aggregated civil service capacity index is positively associated with expenditures in Column 9 and the correlation is statistically significant at the 10% level. Rural and capital-city-distant communes are found to report lower amounts of expenditures per inhabitant.

4.3 Public service delivery

Local civil service and fiscal capacity appear to matter for accessing public services. Table 6 examines how access to social, infrastructure, and justice services is correlated with the composite civil service index and fiscal capacity index. The former is found to be positively and strongly correlated with local infrastructures and justice services. Higher local fiscal capacity is positively associated with all four kinds of public services, but the correlation is only significant (at the 10% level) for the health index.

More populated and urban municipalities tend to provide more public services of all types to their residents. Everything else equal distance to the capital city does not seem to affect public services availability. With the exception of education, municipalities where mining activities take place do not seem to provide a differential access to public services. Meanwhile, education infrastructures appear to be higher in mining municipalities.

A stronger local justice and security capacity is associated with higher service delivery for education, health, and infrastructures alike. We examine the role of law and order infrastructures in facilitating access to public services in Table 7. For each service sector type, we assess the influence of the presence of a tribunal,

prison, and police station separately. We also aggregate the local law and order capacity in a z-sore index and examine its correlation with service access. On the whole, we find that the presence of law and order structures are correlated with higher social and infrastructure service delivery. The presence of a police station and a tribunal seem to be the two types of infrastructures driving the positive and statically significant relationship found.

4.4 State deployment and violence

Can state deployment lead to lower levels of violence in a setting of fragility? Testing the effect of state deployment on violence is challenging for two reasons. First, there is a problem of reverse causality in so far as the state is more likely to deploy resources (especially the security apparatus) where violence is happening. We control for levels of violence between 2010 and 2014 in the LG to partially address this concern. Second, deployment of state resources might *temporarily* increase violence where the state is trying to resolve conflict, while in the long run help reducing violence. We are only able to look at violent events as late as 2019 thus within a year of our state deployment measure in 2018. Table 8 shows the results of regressing state deployment on violent events. We find that state deployment (and especially law and order) are consistently negatively correlated with the occurrence of protests, riots, and overall fatalities. The coefficients are not significant at conventional levels, yet given the two concerns which should result in the effects of the opposite direction these findings are suggestive that state deployment can reduce violence.

Other sub-indicators of violence (e.g. battles or terrorist group events) do not follow this negative correlation with state deployment, but instead have small positive but statistically insignificant coefficients. Given that state resources are likely to be deployed in areas where violence is high which we can only imperfectly control for, and since the use of state resources to address insecurity might cause an increase in reported violence, this is not surprising. In contrast it is encouraging that increases in state deployment is consistently, though not significantly correlated with lower protest, rights, and overall fatalities. This is indicative of higher state capacity enabling local governments to deploy state resources more in line with civilian preferences in mind, resulting in lower protests, riots, and fatalities even as overall violence does not necessarily decrease.

Table 4: Determinants of local revenue per inhabitant

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Dependent variable: Revenues per capita (log)								
General secretary present	0.354**							0.251	
	(0.179)							(0.173)	
Permanent secretary present		0.0990						-0.0714	
		(0.178)						(0.169)	
Tax collector present			-0.0458					-0.178	
			(0.211)					(0.210)	
Accountant present				0.426				0.373	
				(0.270)				(0.258)	
Deconcentrated agent present					-0.0219			-0.107	
					(0.178)			(0.173)	
Personnel per capita (log)						0.545***		0.466***	
						(0.135)		(0.137)	
Executives per capita (log)							0.311***	0.138	
							(0.108)	(0.118)	
Z-score civil service									0.0810
									(0.368)
Population (log)	-0.227	-0.175	-0.171	-0.168	-0.175	0.220	0.0609	0.250	-0.174
	(0.162)	(0.165)	(0.161)	(0.160)	(0.162)	(0.172)	(0.173)	(0.185)	(0.148)
Commune area (sq. km in log)	-0.0159	-0.0184	-0.0192	-0.0299	-0.0163	-0.0329	-0.0223	-0.0666	0.00110
	(0.0864)	(0.0865)	(0.0879)	(0.0878)	(0.0855)	(0.0815)	(0.0843)	(0.0815)	(0.0813)
Urban commune	0.793***	0.835***	0.855***	0.850***	0.856***	0.382*	0.712***	0.350	0.844***
	(0.184)	(0.189)	(0.182)	(0.182)	(0.184)	(0.216)	(0.204)	(0.217)	(0.200)
Niamey transport cost (log)	-0.0346	-0.0378	-0.0409	-0.0440	-0.0431	-0.114*	-0.0511	-0.0494	-0.114
	(0.0720)	(0.0800)	(0.0799)	(0.0818)	(0.0803)	(0.0612)	(0.0733)	(0.0526)	(0.0809)
Mining activity presence	-0.278	-0.264	-0.249	-0.264	-0.253	-0.246	-0.262	-0.258	-0.240
	(0.169)	(0.168)	(0.169)	(0.168)	(0.170)	(0.165)	(0.168)	(0.173)	(0.174)
Observations	226	226	226	226	226	230	226	225	231
Adjusted R-squared	0.180	0.164	0.163	0.173	0.163	0.235	0.197	0.235	0.167
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: OLS Estimates. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. LG census data (2018).

Table 5: Determinants of LG expenditures per inhabitant

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Dependent variable: Expenditures per capita (log)								
General secretary present	0.599***							0.478**	
	(0.218)							(0.185)	
Permanent secretary present		0.299**						-0.0517	
		(0.147)						(0.150)	
Tax collector present			-0.126					-0.435*	
			(0.200)					(0.227)	
Accountant present				-1.115				-1.204	
				(0.760)				(0.760)	
Deconcentrated agent present					0.0892			-0.0956	
					(0.163)			(0.138)	
Personnel per capita (log)						0.612***		0.446***	
						(0.171)		(0.148)	
Executives per capita (log)							0.354***	0.246*	
							(0.124)	(0.133)	
Z-score civil service									0.304*
									(0.171)
Population (log)	-0.417***	-0.337***	-0.324***	-0.347***	-0.328***	0.116	-0.0686	0.127	-0.289**
	(0.120)	(0.122)	(0.123)	(0.123)	(0.126)	(0.192)	(0.155)	(0.185)	(0.131)
Commune area (sq. km in log)	0.136	0.126	0.127	0.166*	0.130	0.100	0.126	0.117	0.127
	(0.0887)	(0.0839)	(0.0863)	(0.0955)	(0.0847)	(0.0713)	(0.0812)	(0.0830)	(0.0846)
Urban commune	0.930***	0.988***	1.041***	1.058***	1.039***	0.506**	0.875***	0.459**	0.982***
	(0.170)	(0.182)	(0.177)	(0.188)	(0.179)	(0.213)	(0.186)	(0.188)	(0.199)
Niamey transport cost (log)	-0.0703	-0.0714	-0.0809	-0.0824	-0.0836	-0.146***	-0.0989	-0.0715	-0.144*
	(0.0643)	(0.0659)	(0.0741)	(0.0749)	(0.0759)	(0.0563)	(0.0642)	(0.0634)	(0.0753)
Mining activity presence	-0.225	-0.222	-0.177	-0.157	-0.189	-0.172	-0.189	-0.147	-0.191
	(0.160)	(0.163)	(0.166)	(0.164)	(0.163)	(0.162)	(0.164)	(0.172)	(0.167)
Observations	230	230	230	230	230	234	230	229	235
Adjusted R-squared	0.266	0.242	0.233	0.281	0.233	0.302	0.263	0.360	0.247
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: OLS Estimates. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. LG census data (2018).

Table 6: Access to local public services

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dependent variable:	Z-score education	Z-score health	Z-score infrastructure	Z-score law and order
Z-score civil service	-0.0902	0.0577	0.206***	0.257***
	(0.119)	(0.0718)	(0.0614)	(0.0707)
Z-score revenue and expenditures	0.0164	0.0402*	0.0165	0.0425
	(0.0244)	(0.0230)	(0.0429)	(0.0265)
Population (log)	0.361***	0.247***	0.239***	0.166***
	(0.0737)	(0.0622)	(0.0457)	(0.0437)
Commune area (sq. km in log)	-0.0483	0.0331	-0.0383**	0.0340
	(0.0326)	(0.0280)	(0.0193)	(0.0311)
Urban commune	0.284***	0.700***	0.922***	1.638***
	(0.0759)	(0.0714)	(0.0947)	(0.122)
Niamey transport cost (log)	0.0269	-0.0105	0.00546	0.00820
	(0.0297)	(0.0225)	(0.0325)	(0.0193)
Mining activity presence	0.154**	0.0361	0.0182	-0.117
	(0.0661)	(0.0783)	(0.0786)	(0.0744)
Observations	243	243	243	243
Adjusted R-squared	0.308	0.378	0.526	0.735
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: OLS Estimates. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. LG census data (2018).

Table 7: The role of law and order services

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dependent variable:	Z-score education	Z-score education	Z-score health	Z-score health	Z-score infrastructure	Z-score infrastructure	Z-score all services	Z-score all services
Tribunal present	0.196		0.283		0.580***		0.353***	
	(0.175)		(0.175)		(0.202)		(0.120)	
Police or Gendarmerie station present	0.357***		0.211***		0.235***		0.268***	
	(0.0720)		(0.0743)		(0.0603)		(0.0497)	
Prison present	0.0238		0.00168		0.0784		0.0346	
	(0.105)		(0.120)		(0.148)		(0.0974)	
Z-score law and order		0.339***		0.233***		0.338***		0.304***
		(0.0817)		(0.0750)		(0.0702)		(0.0508)
Z-score civil service	-0.211*	-0.177	-0.0143	-0.00222	0.122*	0.119*	-0.0344	-0.0203
	(0.114)	(0.111)	(0.0785)	(0.0767)	(0.0654)	(0.0648)	(0.0487)	(0.0474)
Z-score revenue and expenditures	0.0105	0.00201	0.0358	0.0303	0.00717	0.00213	0.0178	0.0115
	(0.0226)	(0.0220)	(0.0221)	(0.0220)	(0.0477)	(0.0471)	(0.0214)	(0.0202)
Population (log)	0.285***	0.305***	0.197***	0.209***	0.175***	0.183***	0.219***	0.232***
	(0.0719)	(0.0719)	(0.0647)	(0.0639)	(0.0431)	(0.0429)	(0.0471)	(0.0468)
Commune area (sq. km in log)	-0.0547*	-0.0598*	0.0258	0.0252	-0.0531**	-0.0497**	-0.0273	-0.0281
	(0.0315)	(0.0318)	(0.0260)	(0.0264)	(0.0208)	(0.0207)	(0.0177)	(0.0184)
Urban commune	-0.0158	-0.272	0.389**	0.317**	0.295*	0.369**	0.222**	0.138
	(0.175)	(0.168)	(0.163)	(0.143)	(0.178)	(0.144)	(0.0950)	(0.0997)
Niamey transport cost (log)	0.0191	0.0241	-0.0148	-0.0124	0.00177	0.00269	0.00202	0.00480
	(0.0284)	(0.0279)	(0.0218)	(0.0222)	(0.0293)	(0.0292)	(0.0176)	(0.0182)
Mining activity presence	0.182***	0.194***	0.0641	0.0633	0.0713	0.0576	0.106*	0.105*
	(0.0690)	(0.0670)	(0.0816)	(0.0795)	(0.0730)	(0.0727)	(0.0568)	(0.0561)
Observations	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243
Adjusted R-squared	0.379	0.362	0.400	0.400	0.575	0.573	0.590	0.583
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: OLS Estimates. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. LG census data (2018).

Table 8: Correlation between State Deployment and Conflict

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Protests 2019	Riots 2019	Fatalities 2019	Protests 2019	Riots 2019	Fatalities 2019
Z-score state deployment	-0.0672	-0.0286	-2.126			
	(0.103)	(0.0323)	(2.598)			
Z-score law And order				-0.0191	-0.0344	-0.913
				(0.0868)	(0.0378)	(1.189)
Events 2010-2014	0.861***	0.0643	0.198	0.862***	0.0663	0.202
	(0.136)	(0.0425)	(0.176)	(0.138)	(0.0437)	(0.178)
Niamey transport cost (log)	-0.0140	-0.00430	1.352	-0.0130	-0.00396	1.376
	(0.0183)	(0.00771)	(1.003)	(0.0177)	(0.00790)	(1.032)
Population (log)	0.0833	0.0405**	-0.137	0.0812	0.0433**	-0.164
	(0.0993)	(0.0196)	(0.893)	(0.0966)	(0.0206)	(0.935)
Urban commune	0.420**	0.0478	0.579	0.400	0.0827	0.469
	(0.204)	(0.0532)	(2.653)	(0.249)	(0.0771)	(1.718)
Mining activity presence	-0.0373	-0.000310	-3.282**	-0.0437	-0.00472	-3.504**
	(0.0604)	(0.0289)	(1.483)	(0.0574)	(0.0289)	(1.655)
Observations	256	256	256	256	256	256
R^2	0.435	0.171	0.229	0.435	0.174	0.228
FE	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region

Notes: OLS Estimates. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. LG census data (2018).

5. Local State capacity and individual attitudes towards public institutions

Below we present the results of our cross-sectional analysis of the relationship between state capacity and individual perceptions of government.

5.1 Empirical Strategy

We use geo-coded data from the 7th Round of the Afrobarometer. This round was conducted in 2018 with a nationally representative sample of 1,200 individuals (600 women and 600 men). The Afrobarometer contains information about public good provision (schools, hospitals, army or police stations, roads, electricity, running water, etc.) at each survey location, which we combine into a state capacity index. We merge the Afrobarometer data with the LG census to obtain another measure of state deployment and capacity. Respondents in the Afrobarometer were are asked a series of questions about the local economic and political situation. We create a trust index that combines answers for how much a respondent trust the president, members of parliament, local government, ruling party and other government institutions. We also create a performance index that combines how respondents evaluate the government's performance on several policy issues ranging from unemployment to criminality. Lastly, the Afrobarometer survey also includes whether respondents have experienced or feared different types of communal violence in the previous year. We run the following specification:

$$Y_{i,j} = \beta State\ Capacity_j + \gamma C_{i,j} + AdminUnit + \varepsilon_{i,j} \quad (2)$$

with Y being the outcome variable for respondent i in village j; *State Capacity* the main explanatory variable, namely the level of public good provision in village j; C being a vector of location (distance to national

capital, LG population, etc.) and individual controls (age and gender); *AdminUnit* being fixed effects for the Department or Province; and standard errors, ε, are clustered at the village level.

Afrobarometer provided us with the LG of each respondent. We merge this data with the locations of all regional and department headquarters and their boundaries to calculate each respondent's distance to her administrative headquarters to obtain an alternative measure of state presence. This allows us to run the following specification:

$$Y_{i,j} = \beta LogDistanceHQ_j + \gamma C_{i,j} + AdminUnit + \varepsilon_j \quad (3)$$

With *LogDistanceHQ* being the log distance to the department or region capital.

5.2 State Capacity in the Afrobarometer and LG Census

We first try to establish whether state capacity investments at the LG level translate into higher state capacity at the village level. In other words, are LG governments able to use their increased resources to improve state capacity across their area?

To answer this question, we analyze whether the measures of state deployment in the LG census correlate with the measures in the Afrobarometer data. Table 9 shows that state capacity in the Afrobarometer is indeed highly correlated with the State Deployment measure in the LG census and all its sub-indicators. Table 14 in the appendix also shows that the same strong correlation holds across the sub-indicators of the Afrobarometer state capacity indicator. LG governments with higher levels of state deployment are able to leverage these resources in higher observable state capacity in their localities.

Are LGs closer to higher levels of governments better equipped to deploy state resources across their localities? Table 10 tests this claim by looking at the correlation between distance to administrative headquarters, in this case the departmental capital, and reported state capacity in the Afrobarometer data. LGs closer to district capitals are better equipped to deploy state resources across their localities. An increase in distance to the department capital leads to a sizeable and significant decrease in state capacity across all sub-indicators. Distance to administrative headquarters is indicative of lower state capacity.

5.3 State Capacity and Public Opinion about Governance

Does this ability to deploy state resources across localities translate into improved citizens' attitudes? We now turn to the public opinion questions in the Afrobarometer to see whether increases in state capacity increases how citizens evaluated the performance of the government and trust political actors. First, we use the Afrobarometer measure of state capacity. Columns 1-2 in Table 11 show that respondents in locations with higher state capacity do indeed evaluate the performance of the government as more positive. However, this does not translate in higher trust as the negative coefficients in Columns 3-4 indicate. Citizens in localities with higher state capacity report higher levels of satisfaction with the performance of the government, but building trust in institutions might take time.

When looking at the state capacity indicator from the LG census in Table 12 we see a positive effect on the evaluation of performance as well as trust and a slightly reduced level of violence. These effects are not significant at the conventional levels though the effects are sizeable. In a setting of conflict and fragility, an immediate focus of citizens and policy-makers alike are to improve institutions related to the rule of law and security. Our indicator "law and order" focuses on such institutions as it includes the existence of a tribunal, police resources, and prisons. Table 13 shows that higher levels in "law and order" institutions

correspond with significantly higher levels of satisfaction in the performance of the government and higher trust in government actors. Columns 5-6 show a surprising and encouraging result. Higher levels of "law and order" institutions are correlated with lower levels of feared and experienced violence. While these coefficients are not significant, they go again the presumed reverse causality. We would expect the government to invest more in law and order where violence levels are high and thus see a positive correlation between these institutions and violence. The fact that the effect is marginally negative provides suggestive evidence that law and order institutions can reduce communal violence.

Table 9: Correlation between Census State Deployment and State Capacity in the Afrobarometer

	Dependent Variable: Afrobarometer State Capacity					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Z-score state deployment	0.482***	0.445**	0.566			
	(0.134)	(0.214)	(0.418)			
Z-score state capacity				0.387***		
				(0.126)		
Z-score services					0.450***	
					(0.121)	
Z-score law and order						0.199***
						(0.0561)
Niamey transport cost (log)		-0.0253	-0.0403			
		(0.0242)	(0.0249)			
Population (log)		-0.128	-0.130			
		(0.130)	(0.167)			
Urban commune		0.112	0.230			
		(0.164)	(0.320)			
Observations	1200	1176	1176	1200	1200	1200
R^2	0.132	0.150	0.476	0.113	0.129	0.125
FE	Region	Region	Department	Region	Region	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.

Table 10: Correlation between Distance and State Capacity in the Afrobarometer

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Afrobarometer State Capacity	Z-Score Development	Z-Score Public Goods	Z-Score Security
Distance to Department HQ	-0.00413*	-0.00443*	-0.00302	-0.00562**
	(0.00232)	(0.00238)	(0.00253)	(0.00272)
Observations	1200	1200	1200	1200
R^2	0.062	0.196	0.039	0.108
FE	Region	Region	Region	Region
Cluster	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.

Table 11: Effect of State Capacity on Performance Opinion and Trust in the Afrobarometer Data

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Performance of Government	Performance of Government	Trust in Government	Trust in Government
Afrobarometer State Capacity	0.0544*	0.0663**	-0.0675*	-0.0529
	(0.0285)	(0.0302)	(0.0345)	(0.0333)
Niamey transport cost (log)	0.0223	0.0379***	-0.00992	0.0162
	(0.0163)	(0.0141)	(0.0134)	(0.0184)
Population (log)	-0.0191	-0.0404	0.00990	0.0165
	(0.0489)	(0.0293)	(0.0616)	(0.0374)
Urban commune	0.0306	-0.0651	0.0680	-0.0759
	(0.0528)	(0.0407)	(0.0658)	(0.0476)
Respondent Age	-0.00525	-0.00707	0.000438	-0.00149
	(0.00603)	(0.00573)	(0.00643)	(0.00580)
Age Squared	0.0000570	0.0000740	0.0000459	0.0000661
	(0.0000672)	(0.0000635)	(0.0000717)	(0.0000643)
Respondent Gender	0.00456	0.00290	0.0716**	0.0714**
	(0.0292)	(0.0284)	(0.0319)	(0.0311)
Observations	1175	1175	1172	1172
R^2	0.225	0.182	0.384	0.330
FE	Department	Region	Department	Region
Cluster	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.

Table 12: Effect of Census State Capacity on Performance/Trust/Violence in the Afrobarometer Data

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Performance of Government	Performance of Government	Trust in Government	Trust in Government	Violence	Violence
Z-score state capacity	0.0889	0.0778	0.142	0.0726	-0.0154	-0.0872
	(0.109)	(0.0573)	(0.131)	(0.0738)	(0.130)	(0.0715)
Niamey transport cost (log)	0.0212	0.0352**	-0.00603	0.0154	0.0125	-0.000568
	(0.0165)	(0.0142)	(0.0160)	(0.0193)	(0.0309)	(0.0187)
Population (log)	-0.0233	-0.0444	0.0129	0.0218	-0.0488	-0.0223
	(0.0489)	(0.0287)	(0.0633)	(0.0385)	(0.0690)	(0.0519)
Urban commune	-0.00756	-0.0966*	-0.0958	-0.153*	0.167	0.140*
	(0.106)	(0.0516)	(0.129)	(0.0798)	(0.122)	(0.0721)
Respondent Age	-0.00535	-0.00750	0.000592	-0.00107	0.000654	-0.00338
	(0.00605)	(0.00574)	(0.00642)	(0.00580)	(0.00751)	(0.00750)
Age Squared	0.0000578	0.0000788	0.0000443	0.0000614	-0.0000588	-0.00000917
	(0.0000675)	(0.0000637)	(0.0000714)	(0.0000642)	(0.0000822)	(0.0000813)
Respondent Gender	0.00431	0.00283	0.0713**	0.0714**	-0.109***	-0.105***
	(0.0292)	(0.0285)	(0.0320)	(0.0312)	(0.0380)	(0.0374)
Observations	1175	1175	1172	1172	1175	1175
R^2	0.224	0.180	0.383	0.329	0.110	0.073
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.

Table 13: Effect of Census State Capacity on Performance/Trust/Violence in the Afrobarometer

	(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**	0.0480*	0.146**	0.119***	-0.00964	-0.00772
	(0.0468)	(0.0285)	(0.0597)	(0.0379)	(0.0598)	(0.0374)
Niamey transport cost (log)	0.0284	0.0366**	0.00401	0.0163	0.0118	-0.00240
	(0.0182)	(0.0145)	(0.0183)	(0.0209)	(0.0315)	(0.0198)
Population (log)	-0.0291	-0.0505*	0.00476	0.00877	-0.0483	-0.0202
	(0.0465)	(0.0280)	(0.0585)	(0.0362)	(0.0689)	(0.0518)
Urban commune	-0.146	-0.118**	-0.280**	-0.297***	0.174	0.0869
	(0.110)	(0.0501)	(0.136)	(0.0785)	(0.136)	(0.0848)
Respondent Age	-0.00529	-0.00725	0.000684	-0.000377	0.000648	-0.00338
	(0.00606)	(0.00579)	(0.00643)	(0.00585)	(0.00750)	(0.00747)
Age Squared	0.0000571	0.0000758	0.0000433	0.0000533	-0.0000588	-0.00000912
	(0.0000677)	(0.0000643)	(0.0000716)	(0.0000649)	(0.0000821)	(0.0000810)
Respondent Gender	0.00440	0.00279	0.0715**	0.0713**	-0.109***	-0.105***
	(0.0292)	(0.0285)	(0.0320)	(0.0312)	(0.0380)	(0.0374)
Observations	1175	1175	1172	1172	1175	1175
R^2	0.225	0.180	0.385	0.334	0.110	0.073
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.

6. Conclusion and policy recommendations

Scant evidence exists on the influence of state capacity on social unrest in developing country and fragility contexts. This paper makes headway by contributing to our understanding of how *local* state deployment can reduce conflicts in FCV states. Using fine grained local government data and individual opinion survey answers for Niger, we first show that LG human and material resources do matter for local service delivery. So do law and order structures. We then show that greater state presence at the local level is associated a lower probability of unrest and higher citizen satisfaction with government performance.

Our findings have important public policy implications for Niger and fragile states more broadly. Our results indicate that increasing the human, material, and financial resources of local government entities improves access to frontline public services and increases stability. Building core institutions and deploying state resources at the local level can be instrumental in reducing violence and fostering national cohesion.

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Table 14: Correlation between Census State Deployment and State Capacity in the Afrobarometer Across Sub-Indicators

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
	Develop-ment	Develop-ment	Develop-ment	Develop-ment	Public Goods	Public Goods	Public Goods	Public Goods	Security	Security	Security	Security
Z-score state deployment	0.483***				0.371**				0.606***			
	(0.145)				(0.143)				(0.192)			
Z-score state capacity		0.438***				0.266*				0.487***		
		(0.143)				(0.135)				(0.172)		
Z-score services			0.395***				0.383***				0.564***	
			(0.126)				(0.133)				(0.176)	
Z-score law and order				0.199***				0.157**				0.242***
				(0.0625)				(0.0607)				(0.0773)
Observations	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
R^2	0.248	0.248	0.229	0.242	0.075	0.058	0.083	0.074	0.172	0.153	0.168	0.160
FE	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region	Region
Cluster	Village	Village	Village	Village	Village	Village	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.