One team, one nation: Football, ethnic identity, and conflict in Africa

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Abstract

Do collective experiences that prime sentiments of national unity reduce interethnic tensions and conflict? We examine this question by looking at the impact of national football teams' victories in sub-Saharan Africa. Combining individual survey data with information on official matches played between 2000 and 2015, we find that individuals interviewed in the days after a victory of their country's national team are less likely to report a strong sense of ethnic identity and more likely to trust people of other ethnicities than those interviewed just before. The effect is sizeable and robust and is not explained by generic euphoria or optimism. Crucially, national victories do not only affect attitudes but also reduce violence. Indeed, using plausibly exogenous variation from close qualifications to the Africa Cup of Nations, we find that countries that (barely) qualified experience significantly less conflict in the following six months than countries that (barely) did not. Our findings indicate that, even where ethnic cleavages have deep historical roots, patriotic shocks can reduce interethnic tensions and have a tangible impact on conflict.

Acknowledgements

"Men and women of Côte d'Ivoire, from the North, South, Center and West: We proved today that all Ivoirians can coexist and play together with a shared aim: to qualify for the World Cup. We promised that the celebration would unite the people. Today, we beg you, on our knees. ... Forgive. Forgive. Forgive. The one country in Africa with so many riches must not descend into war. Please lay down your weapons. Hold elections. Everything will be better."

- <u>Didier Drogba</u> after Côte d'Ivoire's historic qualification to the 2006 FIFA World Cup

1. Introduction

A vast literature has documented the detrimental effect of ethnic divisions on various aspects of socioeconomic development. In particular, ethnically diverse communities tend to experience more corruption and conflict, and less social cohesion, public good provision, and growth (Easterly & Levine, 1997; Alesina, Baqir, & Easterly, 1999; Alesina & La Ferrara, 2005; Miguel & Gugerty, 2005).[1] The consequences of ethnic divisions are especially severe in Africa, where the arbitrary drawing of borders by European powers forced different ethnicities to cohabitate (Cederman, Gleditsch, Salehyan, & Wucherpfennig, 2013; Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, forthcoming) and where ethnic cleavages were used by colonizers to divide and rule over the indigenous population (Mamdani, 2014; Herbst, 2014).

Two questions that remain largely unexplored are where interethnic tensions originate and whether anything can be done to mitigate them. On the one hand, previous evidence suggests that interethnic mistrust has deep historical roots and can be traced back to experiences, such as the slave trade, that occurred several centuries ago (Nunn & Wantchekon, 2011). On the other hand, other studies have shown that ethnic sentiments are surprisingly malleable and can be primed by factors such as political competition or propaganda (Eifert, Miguel, & Posner, 2010; Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014). Indeed, the desire to promote interethnic cooperation by reinforcing national identity has motivated the adoption of "nation-building" policies in various African countries after independence (Miguel, 2004).[2] Yet what collective experiences can contribute to appease ethnic tensions, and how long-lasting their impact may be, remains largely unknown.

This paper examines this question by looking at the impact of one phenomenon that spurs nationalistic fervor like few others: football. Specifically, focusing on sub-Saharan Africa, we test whether the victories of national football teams make people identify less with their own ethnic group and more with the country as a whole, and can ultimately contribute to reducing interethnic tensions and violence. Indeed, sport in general, and football in particular, have traditionally played a key role in nation-building in Africa. As argued by

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[1] Two (non-mutually exclusive) sets of theories have attempted to rationalize the negative association between ethnic fractionalization and public good provision. According to some, lower public good provision in more ethnically diverse communities could be attributed to differences across ethnic groups in preferences for different types of public goods (Alesina et al., 1999), aversion to "mixing" with other ethnic groups (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2005), and/or preferences for public goods that benefit one's own ethnic group (Vigdor, 2002). Other theories have instead emphasized the importance of social sanctions and community pressure in sustaining collective action; because social interactions are less frequent between members of different ethnic groups, social sanctions that discourage free-riding are harder to enforce in less ethnically homogeneous communities.

[2] Examples of such policies include the change of the country's name (Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso), of the capital city (Tanzania, Malawi, Nigeria), or of the national currency (Ghana, Angola); the introduction of military conscription; the promotion of national services (Zambia, Nigeria); the imposition of religious and linguistic homogenization (Sudan, Mauritania, Tanzania); the introduction of non-ethnic censuses (Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania); and the nationalization of land (Ghana, Tanzania, Sudan). For a comprehensive survey of these policies and a discussion of their mixed results, see Bandyopadhyay and Green (2013).
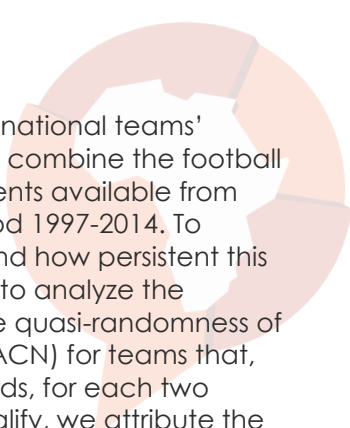
Darby (2002), football has greatly contributed to "construct a sense of national identity and to create a feeling of bonded patriotism cutting across tribal and ethnic allegiances." An eminent example of the unifying power of football is represented by the historic qualification of Côte d'Ivoire for the 2006 FIFA World Cup under the charismatic leadership of Didier Drogba, which many argue helped pave the way to a peaceful solution of the civil war that had ravaged the country for more than five years (Stormer, 2006; Mehler, 2008).[3]

We aim to examine how the success of national football teams in important international competitions influences the strength of ethnic identification, attitudes toward people of other ethnicities, and actual interethnic violence. To do so, we combine different empirical approaches and use data from a variety of sources. First, to study the impact of national teams' victories on individual attitudes, we combine survey data from four waves of Afrobarometer with information on more than 70 official matches by African teams played between 2000 and 2015. In this case, our identification strategy exploits plausibly exogenous differences in the timing of the interviews relative to the timing of the matches. In particular, we compare self-reported attitudes of individuals interviewed in the days immediately before a victory of their national team and of individuals interviewed in the days immediately after. Since our regressions control for country×year, language group (a proxy for ethnicity)×year, and, in the most demanding specification, country×match fixed effects, we identify the effect from comparing individuals with the same ethnic background, interviewed in the same country, in the same period, but respectively before and after a given match, two groups that, we show, are comparable along most dimensions.

Applying this approach to more than 28,000 respondents in 18 countries, we find that individuals interviewed after a national team's victory are 4% less likely to report a strong sense of ethnic identity than those interviewed just before the match. This effect is sizeable, corresponding to a 20% decrease in the average probability of ethnic self-identification. Furthermore, the effect does not appear to be particularly short-lived; in fact, it is quite persistent within the limited time window for which data are available (i.e. up to 30 days before and after the match), and becomes even larger several days after the match. Additional results further support the view that the victory of the national team – perceived as a successful collective venture – galvanizes national supporters and tilts the balance between ethnic and national identity in favour of the latter. First, only a victory, and not the mere occurrence of an important match, affects ethnic sentiments. Second, the effect is driven only by victories in high-stakes official games (i.e. Africa Cup of Nations and FIFA World Cup qualifiers and finals), while friendly matches are inconsequential. Third, the effect is substantially larger for victories against traditional rivals, which are likely to trigger a stronger emotional reaction. Fourth, the effect is similar for victories in home and away games, which indicates it is not driven by respondents' direct participation in the event. Interestingly, while national teams' wins weaken ethnic identification, defeats do not seem to have any significant effect.

These results are further corroborated by the fact that post-match respondents are also significantly more likely to trust other people, particularly members of other ethnicities. Crucially, respondents' lower emphasis on ethnic identity and higher trust in others do not merely reflect a generally positive mood due to post-victory euphoria. In fact, we find no effect of national teams' victories on either trust in the ruling party or approval for the incumbent, a result that suggests that politicians' effort to use national teams' achievements to boost their own popularity may not pay off. Furthermore, we find that national teams' victories do not affect respondents' optimism about their own or the country's economic

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[3] Another notable example is represented by the unexpected success of the South African national rugby team – the Springboks – in the 1995 Rugby World Cup, which President Nelson Mandela masterfully exploited in his effort to build a common national identity and bridge racial divisions in the immediate post-apartheid period.

prospects.[4] We then explore whether, in addition to people's attitudes, national teams' victories have a tangible impact on violence and conflict. To do so, we combine the football data with data on the occurrence and severity of political violence events available from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) for the period 1997-2014. To investigate the impact of national teams' success on violent conflict, and how persistent this effect may be, we resort to a different empirical strategy that allows us to analyze the evolution of conflict over a longer time span. Our approach exploits the quasi-randomness of the qualification for the final tournament of the Africa Cup of Nations (ACN) for teams that, prior to the last game of the group stage, could still qualify. In other words, for each two teams in the same group that, prior to the very last game, could still qualify, we attribute the one that actually qualified to the treatment group and the one that barely failed to do so to the control group. We then compare the evolution of conflict in the six months before and after the (missed) qualification for countries in the two groups, which, we show, are *ex ante* comparable along many dimensions. Our results indicate that countries whose teams (barely) qualified for the ACN tournament experience significantly less conflict in the following six months than countries whose teams (barely) did not. This effect is sizeable and significant, and robust to controlling for country×qualifier and week fixed effects, as well as for the intensity of conflict in the months prior to qualification. Interestingly, the effect is stronger for teams that had never qualified before or that had not qualified in a long time, and whose success was rather unexpected.[5] Crucially, the reduction in conflict intensity that follows a successful qualification campaign appears to be quite persistent, up to several months after the event.

Taken together, our findings indicate that successful collective experiences – such as important sport victories – can be effective at priming sentiments of national unity and at attenuating even deeply-rooted ethnic mistrust, with tangible effects on violence. Though the effect of these events is likely to be transient, our results suggest that it may last long enough to open a precious window of opportunity for political dialogue, negotiations, and reforms capable of producing long-lasting improvements.

Our research contributes to various streams of literature. First, it relates to previous work on the determinants of ethnic identification that indicates that the strength of ethnic identification may be malleable by factors such as electoral competition or economic modernization (Eifert et al., 2010; Robinson, 2014). Yet, due to data limitations and identification issues, it has been difficult for these contributions to go beyond correlations and draw causal conclusions. Our paper fills this gap by providing robust causal evidence that the patriotic sentiments primed by important sport events can affect the strength of ethnic identity.

Our paper also relates to previous work on the determinants of interpersonal trust that has documented how historical episodes, such as the slave trade, the introduction of the Napoleonic civil code, or the East German system of mass surveillance, had long-lasting effects on contemporary trust attitudes (Nunn & Wantchekon, 2011; Buggle, 2016; Jacob & Tyrell, 2010). Our findings indicate that other, more transitory factors can also have a substantial impact on trust attitudes, particularly toward people of other ethnicities. In this respect, our results are especially related to recent work by Robinson (forthcoming), who

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[4] To better interpret our findings on respondents' attitudinal changes, we relate them to previous work in social psychology that has discussed various ways in which sport results may influence social identity.

[5] Our finding that unexpected results are more consequential than expected ones is in line with previous evidence on the effect of sport events on various outcomes. For example, in their study on the impact of games in the U.S. National Football League on intra-household violence, Card and Dahl (2011) find that upset losses are associated with a 10% increase in violence toward female partners while expected losses have no impact. Similarly, Munyo and Rossi (2013) find that upset losses increase violent property crime whereas unexpected victories strongly reduce it, though both effects are extremely short-lived and mainly due to incapacitation.

shows that manipulating the salience of national identity in a "lab-in-the-field" experiment improves interethnic trust, and by Miguel (2004), who argues that nation-building policies can improve interethnic cooperation.

Finally, our work contributes to the vast literature on the determinants of civil conflict by documenting that priming national identity can contribute to reducing violence.

2. Data

2.1 National football teams' matches

We collect information on all official matches played by men's national teams of various sub-Saharan African countries over the period 1990-2015; these data are available from the FIFA statistical office.[6] In particular, we focus on matches played for both the qualifying and the tournament phases of the two most important competitions for African national football teams: the Africa Cup of Nations (ACN) and the FIFA World Cup (WC).[7] For each match, we have information on the date, the location, the opponent, the competition, the phase, and the final score. We use the date of the match to combine the data with both the individual survey data and the conflict data described below. Overall, for the individual-level analysis, we use information from nearly 70 official matches played between 2002 and 2013 while Afrobarometer surveys were administered. For the country-level conflict analysis, we also collect information on teams' standings in nine ACN qualifying rounds between 1997 and 2013. In particular, we record all teams' standings before and after the final match of the group stage to identify teams that, prior to the last game, could still qualify for the tournament phase and, among these, those that eventually did and did not.[8]

2.2 Survey data on individual attitudes

We use individual survey data from four waves of Afrobarometer conducted between 2002 and 2013. Afrobarometer is a series of nationally representative surveys covering many African countries. Interviews are conducted in the national and local languages, and questions are standardized so that responses can be compared across countries. Questions are designed to assess respondents' attitudes on a range of issues, including democracy, political actors, markets, and civil society. For our analysis, we focus on questions regarding individuals' identification with the nation and with their own ethnic group, and trust in others, particularly in people from other ethnicities. In addition, we use information on a range of respondents' personal characteristics, with particular regard to the main language spoken at home, which, following Eifert et al. (2010), we use as a proxy for ethnic background.[9] Overall, we use data from 47 surveys conducted in 24 sub-Saharan African countries.

Our main outcome variable is a measure of ethnic identification, which captures the strength of an individual's ethnic identity relative to national identity. The variable is based on responses to the following question: "Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a [National] and being a [Respondent's ethnic group]. Which of these two groups do you feel most strongly attached to?" While Round 2 Afrobarometer survey respondents could only choose between the options "national identity" and "group identity," in rounds 3-5 they

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[6] We disregard countries from the Maghreb region because, for these countries, Afrobarometer surveys do not include questions on attitudes regarding ethnic identity.

[7] We also collect information on friendly matches, which we use for a robustness check reported below.

[8] The qualification phase for the 2013 ACN did not involve a group stage but sequential two-legged knockout pairs. We thus consider in our analysis only the last two-legged knockout stage. However, our quantitative and qualitative results do not depend on the inclusion of the 2013 qualification phase.

[9] Language is the best available proxy for ethnic background since the Afrobarometer questionnaires did not systematically include explicit questions on the respondent's ethnicity.

could pick any of the following five options: 0 ("only [National]"), 1 ("more [National] than [Ethnic group]), 2 ("equally [National] and [Ethnic group])", 3 ("more [Ethnic group] than [National]"), and 4 ("only [Ethnic group]"). In order to compare respondents' answers across rounds, we construct a binary measure of ethnic identity that takes value 1 for all respondents in Round 2 who chose the option "group identity" and for all respondents in rounds 3-5 who reported feeling "only [Ethnic group]" or "more [Ethnic group] than [National]."

In Figure 1 we plot the share of respondents who reported stronger ethnic than national identity, separately for the sample of countries and years we exploit in our analysis. As shown, the relative strength of ethnic identity varies considerably across countries, and even in the same country over time, possibly also due to the impact of the type of major sport events we investigate. One suggestive example in this regard is Mali, where more than 30% of the individuals interviewed in 2002 emphasized ethnic over national identity, but where less than 15% did so in 2013, when the Malian national football team achieved third place in the Africa Cup of Nations, its best performance in the history of the competition.[10] The strength of ethnic identity appears to be lower and more stable in other countries; for example in Tanzania, a country known for its effective nation-building policies (Miguel, 2004), less than 10% of respondents in any round emphasized ethnic over national identity.

Figure 1: Ethnic identification over time and across countries

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[10] Similarly, the typically high share of Zambians who report a strong sense of ethnic identification was greatly reduced in 2013, a year after the country's historic and unexpected victory in the 2012 ACN. Incidentally, the finals took place in Libreville near the place where, 20 years earlier, most of the Zambian national football team died in an air crash, a circumstance that further strengthened the emotional valence of the victory.

To explore the impact of national teams' victories on respondents' trust in others, we use four additional variables. First, we construct a measure of generalized trust computed as the average score on four questions regarding trust in i) relatives, ii) other acquaintances, iii) neighbours, and iv) compatriots, all defined on a four-point scale ranging from 0 ("not at all") to 3 ("a lot"). Second, using questions on respondents' trust in people within and outside their own ethnic group, we construct measures of interethnic and intra-ethnic trust, also defined over the same four-point scale, as well as a measure of interethnic trust premium given by the difference between the two.[11] To assess the effect of national teams' victories on support for the government, we code two additional variables: trust in the ruling party (with answers ranging from 0 "not at all" to 3 "a lot") and approval of the president (with answers ranging from 1 "strongly disapprove" to 4 "strongly approve"). Finally, to examine whether victories influence respondents' overall mood, we code two measures of respondents' assessment of their current living conditions and of the country's economic situation (indicating 1 for "fairly good" and "very good" and 0 otherwise) and two measures of how they expect these conditions to evolve in the future (indicating 1 for "better" and "much better" and 0 otherwise).

2.3 Country-level conflict data

To study the impact of national teams' victories on actual violence, in the last part of our analysis we use country-level data on conflict from the Armed Conflict Location % Event Data Project (ACLED). The data, available for the period 1997-2013, include information on the date and location of any episode of political violence, i.e. battles, killings, or riots that involve the government, rebel groups, militias, or civilians. The data also include information on the severity of the events, measured by the number of associated fatalities. Based on this information, we construct three measures of conflict intensity at the *countryweek* level: i) a dummy for whether any conflict event occurred, ii) the number of conflict events that occurred, and iii) the number of fatalities associated with these events. We also construct analogous measures specifically for ethnicity-related conflict. Though the ACLED data do not explicitly distinguish between ethnic and non-ethnic conflict, some of the information in the ACLED records can be used to indirectly make this distinction. Specifically, we code as ethnically relevant conflict any event that involves the participation of actors who are classified as ethnic militia or whose denomination refers to an ethnic faction (e.g. "Bete ethnic group"), or any event for which the ACLED records include a specific reference to ethnic tensions as a cause of violence. Such a procedure is of course vulnerable to substantial measurement error, namely to the risk of coding as non-ethnic episodes that are in fact driven by ethnic motives. Yet, to the extent that it affects the dependent variable and is unrelated to the timing of qualification, measurement error should only reduce the precision of our estimates. According to our classification, about 6% of the observations in our sample can be classified as ethnicity-related (i.e. observations for which at least one ethnicity-related conflict event occurred in a given country in a given week). Summary statistics of the measures of conflict used in our analysis are reported in Appendix Table A.5.

3. Individual-level analysis: Empirical strategy and results

Our empirical strategy to estimate the impact of national teams' victories on individual attitudes is summarized by the following equation:

$$Outcome_{i,e,c,t} = \alpha + \beta PostVictory_{c,t} + \gamma X_i + \Gamma_{c,t} + \Delta_{e,t} + \varepsilon_{e,t} \qquad (1)$$

where *i, e, c,* and *t* denote respectively individual, language group (a proxy for ethnicity), country, and year. *Outcome* is one of the attitudinal variables described in the previous

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[11] Because the question on interethnic trust was only included in Afrobarometer Round 3, the analysis on this aspect relies on a substantially smaller sample.

section; *post-victory* is the main regressor of interest and takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed in the days after a victory of her national team in an official match, and 0 otherwise; X_i is the vector of baseline individual controls (i.e. education, gender, age, age squared, unemployment status, and an indicator for living in a rural area); Γ and Δ are country×year and language group×year fixed effects, respectively; $\varepsilon_{e,t}$ is an error term that is heteroskedasticity-robust and is clustered by language group×year.

We also estimate an alternative and more demanding specification summarized by the following equation:

$$Outcome_{i,e,c,m,t} = \alpha + \beta PostVictory_{c,m,t} + \gamma X_i + \Theta_{c,m} + \Delta_{e,t} + \varepsilon_{e,t} \qquad (2)$$

where *m* denotes the match and $\Theta_{c,m}$ the country×match fixed effects. Hence, while when estimating Equation (1) we identify the effect of *post-victory* by comparing respondents interviewed after *any* victory of their national team in a given year with all other respondents of the same country and language group interviewed in the same year, with Equation (2) we compare respondents interviewed after a given match with others of the same country and language group interviewed *before the same match*.

We mainly focus on the sample of individuals interviewed in the 15 days before and after official matches of their national football team. We consider, in particular, the sample of respondents exposed to only one match, which includes more than 28,000 individuals in treatment and control groups. For purposes of robustness, we also look at the larger sample of respondents potentially exposed to one or more matches, which includes more than 35,000 individuals. Descriptive statistics for the first sample for all variables used in our analysis are presented in Appendix Table A.1 Half of the individuals were exposed to a match in the 15 days prior to being interviewed. Roughly 18% of them experienced a victory, while 22% and 10% saw their national team losing and drawing, respectively.[12]

Our identification strategy relies on the quasi-random nature of the date and final result of matches relative to the timing of the Afrobarometer interviews. Hence, our identifying assumption is that national teams' matches did not interfere with the implementation of the survey, or, more precisely, that victorious matches did not interfere differently than non-victorious ones. Such a possibility seems especially unlikely since, as emphasized by Eifert et al. (2010), the logistics involved in the implementation of the Afrobarometer survey – selection of the enumeration sites, setting up of the field teams, etc. – require many months of preparation and are hardly related to the occurrence of sport events, let alone to their unpredictable results.

To assess the validity of our identification strategy, we conduct a balance test for several respondent characteristics that may potentially correlate with the timing of the interview and the outcomes of interest. These include gender, education, age, unemployment status, religious membership, whether the respondent belongs to the country's ethnic majority, whether (s)he lives in a rural area, and whether (s)he lives in an area where basic public goods are available.[13] To control for the possibility of social desirability bias, we also test to ensure that several characteristics of the interviewer are not systematically different between treatment and control groups. These include gender, education, whether the interviewer speaks the same language as the respondent, and whether the interviewer thought anyone

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[12] In a robustness exercise, we increase the length of the time window to 30 days before and after a match. In that case, the sample size increases to nearly 44,000.

[13] Evidence suggests that these characteristics can potentially affect ethnic sentiments. For instance, Robinson (forthcoming) shows that urban status, education, gender, and formal employment all positively predict national (relative to ethnic) identification. Regarding age, however, Eifert et al. (2010) find no evidence that young people are more likely to self-identify in ethnic terms.

influenced the respondent during the interview.[14] Specifically, we perform two balance tests: one comparing individuals interviewed before and after a match, regardless of the outcome of the match (i.e. Played), and another one comparing individuals interviewed before and after a victory. To ensure that we compare respondents from the same country interviewed around the same match, we regress each variable on either treatment including country×match fixed effects, and cluster standard errors at the same level. The results are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Balance in covariates

Covariate	N	Panel A: Played		Panel B: Victory	
		Estimate	Std. error	Estimate	Std. error
Male	28,758	0.006	0.004	0.009*	0.005
Education	28,758	-0.213	0.134	-0.291*	0.153
Age	28,758	0.799	0.687	1.109	0.777
Unemployed	28,758	0.003	0.015	-0.008	0.014
Major ethnicity	28,758	-0.024	0.055	-0.028	0.041
Rural	28,758	-0.002	0.009	-0.007	0.010
Religious group member	28,647	-0.025	0.020	-0.020	0.026
Public goods	28,758	0.007	0.024	-0.021	0.017
Same language	28,758	-0.046	0.038	-0.022	0.045
Influenced by others	28,710	-0.002	0.006	-0.000	0.008
Male interviewer	28,758	-0.002	0.014	-0.005	0.018
Education	28,728	-0.037	0.052	-0.072	0.062
Interviewer's age	28,758	0.109	0.118	0.194	0.141

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at country-match level. Each panel presents point estimates and standard errors for 13 regressions of a covariate (listed at the left) on Played (Panel A) and Victory (Panel B). Played takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed within 15 days after a game (regardless of the result), 0 otherwise. Victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed within 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise. All estimates are based on OLS regressions using 55 country-match dummies to ensure that the comparison in the covariates is made between respondents in the proximity of the same game and in the same country.*

We first show that individual characteristics are largely balanced between respondents interviewed before and after the same match (Panel A). The same pattern holds when comparing individuals interviewed before and after a victory of the national team (Panel B). The only exceptions are education and gender, but the marginally significant differences in these two variables between treatment and control group are very small: On average, individuals interviewed after a victory were only 0.9% more likely to be men than women and displayed lower educational attainment by just 12% of a standard deviation (or 8% of its mean value). Furthermore, the potential biases from these imbalances are likely to operate against finding an effect, since men and less educated people generally tend to display higher levels of ethnic identification (Robinson, 2014). In any event, in all the regressions presented below, we control for the entire set of respondents' individual characteristics,

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[14] A large literature argues that interviewers' observable traits such as race, ethnicity, and gender can influence respondents' answers (see West and Blom (2017) for a summary). In particular, using Afrobarometer data, Adida, Ferree, Posner, and Robinson (2016) find that respondents give systematically different answers to coethnic and non-coethnic interviewers.

though their inclusion does not affect our results. Finally, regardless of whether they are defined based on all matches or just victorious ones, treatment and control groups are also balanced with respect to all interviewer-related variables.

3.1 Results: National teams' victories and ethnic identification

In Table 2 we test the empirical relationship between national teams' victories and ethnic identification on the baseline sample of all respondents exposed to just one match. In Column 1 we regress the dummy for stronger ethnic than national identity on a dummy for being interviewed after a victory, controlling for country-year dummies. The inclusion of country×year fixed effects allows us to control for all country-level confounders that vary between years, such as political or economic events (e.g. national elections, ethnic conflicts, nationwide economic policies, yearly variation in commodity prices).

Table 2: National teams' victories and ethnic identification

|	Dependent variable: Ethnic over national identity (0-1 dummy)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	Probit
Post-victory	-0.017** (0.008)	-0.020** (0.008)	-0.044*** (0.014)	-0.036** (0.014)	-0.036** (0.014)	-0.165** (0.065)
Post-draw					-0.004 (0.031)	
Post-defeat					-0.014 (0.016)	
Country×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Individual controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country×match FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	28,758	28,758	28,758	28,758	28,758	27,118
R-squared	0.059	0.070	0.116	0.116	0.116	—

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$ Robust standard errors in parentheses in columns 1 and 2, clustered by language group×year in the other columns. Sample includes respondents interviewed within 15 days before and after an official game. Post-victory, Post-draw, and Post-defeat take value 1 if the respondent was interviewed in the 15 days after a victory, a draw, or a loss, respectively, and 0 otherwise.*

The results indicate that national teams' victories have a significant negative effect on the probability of self-identifying with one's own ethnicity as opposed to the country as a whole. The coefficient becomes slightly larger and more significant in Column 2 when we include

the baseline set of individual controls. Results are even stronger and more significant in Column 3 when we include language group×year fixed effects and cluster standard errors at the same level. The estimated effect is quite large: Individuals interviewed after national teams' victories are 4.4% less likely to report a strong sense of ethnic identity than other respondents of the same language group interviewed just before; this corresponds to a more than 20% decrease in the average probability of ethnic self-identification. In Column 4 we include country×match fixed effects, hence restricting the comparison to compatriots interviewed before and after the same victorious game of their national team. Even under this more restrictive specification, the magnitude and significance of the coefficient of interest remain largely unchanged. In Column 5 we examine the effect of different results of national teams' matches; the results indicate that while the successful performance of the national team weakens national identity, losing or drawing a match has no particular effect. The lack of an effect of national teams' defeats is especially interesting, as it suggests that negative collective experiences do not necessarily undermine national unity. Finally, in Column 5 we show that the results are qualitatively similar when estimating a non-linear probit model instead of the linear probability model used in the previous columns.[15]

Next we examine how the effect on ethnic identification evolves in the days after a victory. In Figure 2 we plot the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for dummies for three-day periods before and after the victory.

Figure 2: Ethnic identity before and after national teams' victories
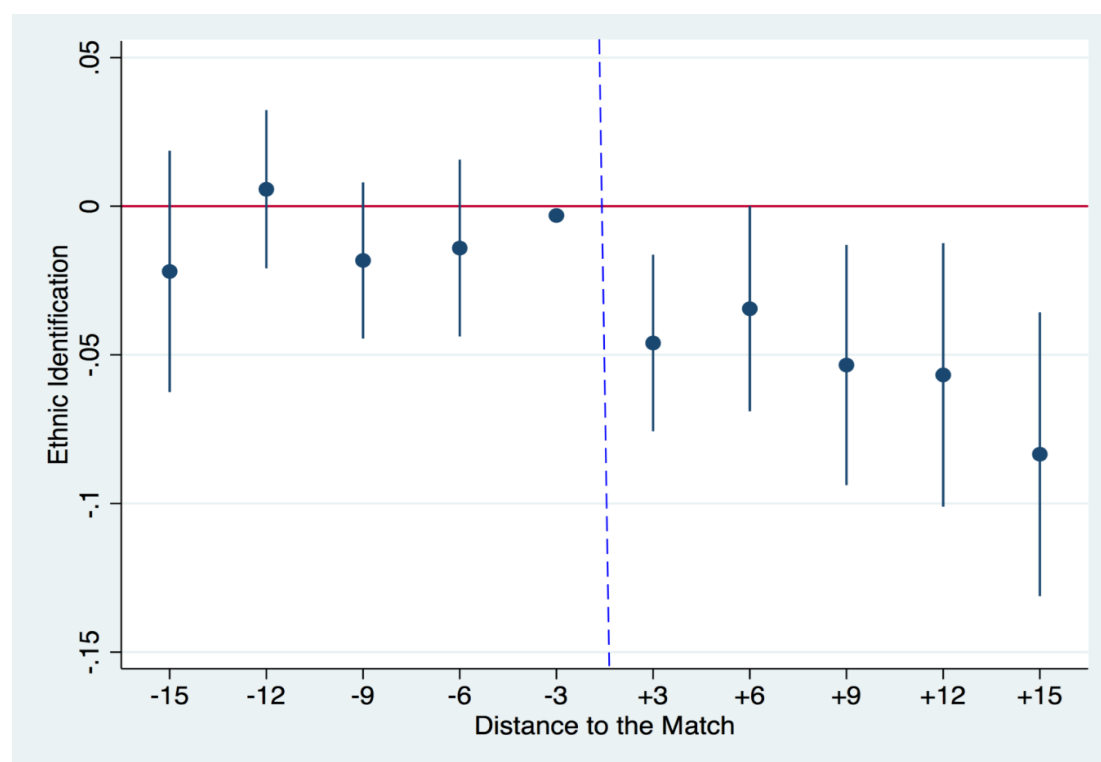
The figure plots the coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for nine dummies indicating three-day blocks from 15 days before to 15 days after a victory of the national football team. The coefficient for the period of three to one days before the match is normalized to zero. Confidence intervals are based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors clustered by language group. The coefficients are estimated from a unique regression in which we control for individual characteristics, country×year and language group×year fixed effects, and the proximity to draws or defeats.

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[15] We obtain similar results using as the dependent variable the original five-point measure of ethnic identification, which, however, is not available for all rounds of the Afrobarometer surveys. The results, both OLS and ordered probit estimates, are reported in Appendix Table A.2.

The coefficients are estimated from a unique regression in which we control for individual characteristics, country×year and language group×year fixed effects, and the proximity to draws or defeats.[16] Since we normalize the coefficient for the three days before the victory to zero, the other coefficients indicate how ethnic identification changes over time relative to the eve of the event. The figure confirms that individuals are less likely to report a strong sense of ethnic identification after a victory of the national team, and indicates that the effect persists and, if anything, becomes stronger several days after the match. In contrast, ethnic identification does not seem to evolve in any particular way in the days prior to the match.

We also test that our baseline results – based on a 15-day window before and after a victory – are robust to the choice of alternative time windows. In Table 3, we estimate our baseline specification with country×match fixed effects on the sample of respondents interviewed in the five, 10, 20, 25, and 30 days before and after a match. The results indicate that, regardless of which time window is selected, the effect of national teams' victories on ethnic sentiments is remarkably stable, with a somewhat larger coefficient when focusing on the days immediately before and after the match.

Table 3: Alternative time windows

	Dependent variable: Ethnic over national identity (0-1 dummy)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	+/-15 days	+/-5 days	+/-10 days	+/-20 days	+/-25 days	+/-30 days
Post-victory	-0.036** (0.014)	-0.039*** (0.014)	-0.031** (0.014)	-0.035** (0.014)	-0.035** (0.014)	-0.035** (0.014)
Country×match FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	28,758	10,901	19,438	32,785	38,459	43,600
R-squared	0.116	0.150	0.124	0.109	0.108	0.110

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$ Robust standard errors clustered by language group×year in parentheses. Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed in the x days following a victory of the national team, with the value of x indicated at the top of each column, and 0 otherwise.

We then explore which types of victories are more likely to affect the strength of ethnic sentiments. In particular, we examine whether the stakes, the emotional valence, the location, the margin of victory, and the entertainment value of the match matter. In the first column of Table 4, we start by looking at whether ethnic identity is also affected by victories in friendly games, and how this compares to the impact of victories in official matches documented above. The results indicate that victories in friendly matches have virtually no effect on ethnic identification, consistent with the view that low-stakes games are less effective than high-stakes matches at spurring patriotic fervor. We next test the hypothesis that victories against traditional rivals are more consequential than other victories. To do so, we interact our *post-victory* variable with an indicator of rivalry. The results indicate that, though all victories negatively affect ethnic identification, the effect is considerably larger for victories against traditional rivals, which arguably trigger a stronger emotional reaction. In

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[16] Appendix Figure A.1 reports the coefficients obtained when including country×match instead of country×year fixed effect; the coefficients are very similar in magnitude though somewhat less precisely estimated due to the lower statistical power.

Column 3 we focus on the heterogeneous effect of victories in matches played at home. The facts that the interaction term is not statistically significant and that *post-victory* is still associated with a significant decline in ethnic identification suggest that the effect is not driven by people's direct participation in the event but rather by the resulting wave of nationalistic fervor. In Column 4 we examine whether winning by a large margin boosts pride in the national team and reduces ethnic identification even further. To do so, we interact the *post-victory* dummy with a dummy for whether the team won by two goals or more (i.e. the top 20% of the distribution). The large and negative coefficient on the interaction term, though marginally insignificant (p-value: 0.14), provides some support for this hypothesis. Finally, in Column 4, we examine whether victories in games in which a large number of goals were scored are associated with a larger reduction in ethnic identification. This exercise allows us to test whether our baseline effect is driven by enthusiasm for witnessing a particularly spectacular game rather than a genuine increase in national pride. We find that the interaction between the *post-victory* dummy and the number of total goals scored is small and insignificant, a result that provides little support for this alternative hypothesis.

Table 4: National teams' victories and ethnic identity: Stakes, location, margin of victory, and entertainment value

	Dependent variable: Ethnic over national identity (0-1 dummy)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-victory	0.010 (0.012)	-0.030** (0.014)	-0.036** (0.014)	-0.032** (0.015)	-0.033** (0.016)
Post-victory×rivalry		-0.090* (0.051)			
Post-victory×home game			0.014 (0.028)		
Post-victory×wide margin				-0.043 (0.029)	
Post-victory×= # goals in game					-0.005 (0.009)
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country×match FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample	Friendly games	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Observations	28,767	28,758	28,758	28,758	28,758
R-squared	0.093	0.116	0.117	0.117	0.116

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Robust standard errors clustered at the language group level in parentheses. Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed within 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise.*

Finally, we analyze whether certain segments of the population are more responsive to the patriotic influence of national teams' victories. In particular, interacting the dummy p*ost-victory* with various individual characteristics, we test whether the effect is larger for men vs. women, for younger vs. older cohorts, for more vs. less educated individuals, for people in

urban vs. rural areas, and for people belonging to the largest ethnic group in the country. The results, presented in Appendix Table A.4, indicate that none of these attributes is associated with a stronger effect of national teams' victories, which suggests that important sport achievements influence the public as a whole and not just sport fans or people who are more likely to have a coethnic on the national team. An important exception is the interaction with rural status, which displays a significant positive coefficient of a magnitude similar to the coefficient on the *post-victory* dummy; this implies that, for individuals in rural areas, the effect of national teams' victories is virtually zero.

3.2 National teams' victories and interethnic trust

We then examine whether national teams' victories also affect individual propensity to trust others, particularly people from other ethnicities. First, we look at the effect of victories on trust toward other people in general. In Column 1 of Table 5, we estimate our baseline specification with country×match fixed effects using generalized trust as the dependent variable.

Table 5: National teams' victories and trust in others

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Generalized trust	Interethnic trust	Interethnic trust	Interethnic trust premium	Interethnic trust premium
Post-victory	0.114***	0.253**	0.145***	0.047*	0.076**
	(0.032)	(0.106)	(0.038)	(0.028)	(0.033)
Generalized trust			0.587***		-0.154***
			(0.030)		(0.016)
Country×match FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	25,475	7,992	7,990	7,979	7,977
R-squared	0.242	0.196	0.392	0.056	0.079

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, *$p<0.1$. Robust standard errors clustered at the language group×year level in parentheses. Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed during the 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise. Generalized trust is the average level of trust in relatives, other acquaintances, other compatriots, and neighbours. Interethnic trust is the self-reported score of trust in people of other ethnicities, while interethnic premium is the difference between the latter and trust in coethnics.*

The results indicate that, following a victory of the national team, individuals tend to generally trust others more. In Column 2 we test whether this effect is stronger for interethnic trust, using as dependent variable the self-reported measure of trust in people of other ethnic groups. Again the coefficient on *post-victory* is negative and significant; furthermore, it is larger than the one for generalized trust, which suggests a stronger effect on trust outside one's own ethnicity. The estimated coefficient is economically meaningful, since it represents an increase in trust equivalent to one-fifth of its mean value in our sample.[17] This result is confirmed by the fact that the coefficient on p*ost-victory* remains large and significant even

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[17] The implied standardized beta coefficient is 0.05. This effect is quite large compared to other determinants of trust examined in the literature. For example, it corresponds to more than half the long-term effect of slave trade on interethnic trust estimated by Nunn and Wantchekon (2011).

when we explicitly control for generalized trust (Column 3). To further test for the larger effect on trust across rather than within ethnic groups, in columns 4 and 5 we use as dependent variable a measure of interethnic trust premium, given by the difference between trust outside and within one's own ethnic group. Consistent with the previous findings, national teams' victories improve respondents' relative propensity to trust people of other ethnicities, regardless of whether generalized trust is controlled for.

3.3 National teams' victories and other attitudes

An important question is whether weaker ethnic identity and higher interethnic trust reflect a genuine change in attitudes or, rather, a generally euphoric mood due to a national team's achievements. One way to test this hypothesis is to examine whether victories are also associated with changes in other attitudes unrelated to ethnic sentiments. We perform this exercise in Table 6. In Column 1 we start by assessing whether national teams' victories are associated with an increase in respondents' trust in the ruling party.[18] When estimating our most complete specification, we find that p*ost-victory* has no significant effect on the outcome of interest. A similar pattern emerges in Column 2 when we use as dependent variable the respondent's approval rate for the president. These results indicate that football-driven patriotic shocks do not necessarily translate into generally more positive political attitudes or higher support for incumbent rulers.

Table 6: National teams' victories and other attitudes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Trust in ruling party	President's approval	Assess country's economic conditions		Assess own living conditions	
			Present	Future	Present	Future
Post-victory	0.010 (0.034)	-0.000 (0.035)	-0.018 (0.019)	-0.004 (0.021)	-0.013 (0.017)	-0.035 (0.023)
Country×match FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	27,270	27,330	28,752	28,746	28,725	28,733
R-squared	0.184	0.241	0.121	0.160	0.125	0.162

Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed during the 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise. Trust in ruling party is a dummy variable that takes value 1 if the respondent reports trusting the ruling party (either "somewhat" or a "lot") and 0 otherwise. President's approval is a dummy that takes value 1 if the respondent reports approving the president's performance in the previous 12 months (either "approve" or "strongly approve") and 0 otherwise. The other dependent variables are dummies for whether the respondent has a positive assessment of the country's current economic conditions and her own living conditions, respectively ("good" or "very good"), and positive expectations about the evolution of the country's and of their own conditions in the future, respectively ("better" or "much better"). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors clustered at the language group×year level in parentheses.

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[18] Evidence that sport victories, and the resulting euphoria, can boost support for the incumbent is available, for example, from Healy, Malhotra, and Mo (2010), who find that victories in U.S. college football games lead to an increase in the incumbent's vote share in Senate, gubernatorial, and presidential elections.

To further rule out that the effect of national teams' victories is driven by general euphoria, we test whether victories affect respondents' perception of the country's and of their own economic situation and prospects. In columns 3 and 4 we estimate our baseline specification using as dependent variables dummies for whether a respondent reports having a positive assessment of the country's current economic conditions and positive expectations of whether they will improve in the near future, respectively. In columns 5 and 6 we do the same using as dependent variables dummies for whether a respondent has a positive assessment of her own living conditions and expects these to improve in the future. The lack of significant coefficients in any column further corroborates the view that football-driven patriotism does not make individuals more optimistic in general and does not alter their perception of the conditions they live in.

All the results presented so far are based on the sample of individuals exposed to just one game. In Appendix Table A.3, we replicate the results on the larger sample of individuals who, in the days prior to the interview, may have experienced more than one match of their national team, which is rather common in the case of back-to-back matches. In this case, the treatment is less clear-cut, since a team may have contrasting results in different matches (e.g. win one but lose another one). To address this issue, we use as main regressor of interest either the share of all matches won or the share of available points won (with a win corresponding to three points, a draw to one point, and a loss to 0 points). The results confirm that a more successful performance by the national team is associated with a reduction in the strength of ethnic identification and an increase in generalized and interethnic trust, while there is no effect on other opinions or expectations.

3.4 More on the interpretation of the individual-level results

To better interpret the results presented, we relate them to previous research in social psychology on the impact of sport results on social identity. Several hypotheses have been discussed in this literature.

The first one is that high-profile sport events reinforce group identification because they provide group members with an opportunity to unite against a common enemy, and this regardless of whether the collective effort is successful or not (Heinila, 1985; Hargreaves, 1992). While this argument can explain the effect of national teams' victories, it is inconsistent with the lack of such an effect for defeats.

The second hypothesis is that to improve their self-image, individuals associate themselves more with their group following a victory and less following a defeat, in an attempt to bask in the reflected glory of success and avoid the shadow of failure (Cialdini et al., 1976; Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Cialdini & De Nicholas, 1989). According to this argument, victories should increase group identification while defeats should decrease it – the latter a prediction that our findings do not support. One possibility is that the two effects might both be at work, but while they reinforce each other for victories, they offset each other for defeats. However, the available data do not allow us to separate these two interpretations.

Finally, a third hypothesis is that due to the euphoria of the victory, individuals may be more likely to adopt pro-social attitudes and behaviours toward both in-groups and out-groups (Platow et al., 1999). This argument may explain the positive effect on generalized trust since, after a victory, individuals may be more prone to believe other people can be trusted. Yet it cannot explain why victories should reduce ethnic identification, or why they should increase trust in members of other ethnicities disproportionately.

4. Country-level analysis: Empirical strategy

The results presented so far indicate that football-driven positive shocks contribute to reducing ethnic identification and interethnic mistrust. An important related question is whether the documented attitudinal change may contribute to decreasing actual violence,

and how long-lasting this effect may be. To shed light on this issue, we analyze how civil conflict in sub-Saharan African countries evolves following important achievements of national football teams. Specifically, we attempt to exploit quasi-experimental variation in whether a team qualified for the tournament phase of the African Cup of Nations (ACN), the most important continental competition for African national teams, which generates widespread popular attention. The ACN involves two phases: i) a qualifying stage in which all teams compete, and ii) a final (or tournament) stage in which only the teams that ranked highest in the qualifying round compete for the title. In the qualifying round, teams are divided into groups; each team plays each of the others in the group twice (once at home and once away), with each match assigning a certain number of points; and the teams (usually one or two per group) with the most points qualify for the final round. The qualifying stage is usually very competitive, and qualification is often decided only in the last match based on a narrow point margin or goal difference. Our strategy consists of i) identifying pairs of teams in the same group that, until the last match day of the group stage, were both in a position to qualify, but one of which barely did while the other did not, and ii) comparing the evolution of conflict in the two countries in the six months before and after the qualification.

Our identification strategy is summarized by the following equation:

$$Conf_{c,q,t} = \alpha + \beta Qual_{c,q,t} + \sum_{k=1}^{4} \delta^k Conf_{c,q,t-k} + \sum_{t=-25}^{25} \Gamma_t + \Delta_{c,q} + \varepsilon_{c,q} \qquad (3)$$

where c, q, and t denote country, qualification, and week since qualification (-25 to +25). *Conf* is one of the three measures of conflict intensity described above. *Qual*, our regressor of interest, is a dummy variable that equals 1 for countries of teams that qualified only in the weeks after qualification, and 0 otherwise. $\sum_{t=-25}^{25} \Gamma_t$ is a set of dummies for each of the weeks before and after the qualification, while $\Delta_{c,q}$ are country×qualification fixed effects. To control for possible auto-correlation in conflict events, we also control for the occurrence of conflict in the previous weeks (up to four). Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are clustered by country×qualifier.

4.1   Qualification for ACN and social conflict

For our analysis, we use data from ACLED on the occurrence and severity of violent conflict events in sub-Saharan African countries between 1997 and 2013, with a particular focus on the months before and after each ACN qualification campaign. As mentioned above, our key comparison is between countries that barely qualified for the ACN final round (our treatment group) and those that did not (our control group). The underlying identification assumption is that if two teams in the same group got to the last match day with concrete chances of qualifying, which one would actually qualify would be determined by quasi-random circumstances, such as a goal scored in the final minutes of the last match by one side or the other. One example of such a scenario, depicted in Figure 3, is available from 2012, when three teams in qualifying Group A, Mali, Zimbabwe, and Cape Verde, were in a position to qualify until the last match day while only one team, Liberia, had already been eliminated. In the last two matches, Cape Verde defeated Zimbabwe while Mali was only able to tie Liberia but still managed to qualify due to a three-goal difference. In this case, Mali would be included in the treatment group while both Cape Verde and Zimbabwe would be in the control group.

Figure 3: Example of close qualification: Group A, ACN, 2012

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Mali	5	3	0	2	7	4	3	9
Zimbabwe	5	2	2	1	6	3	3	8
Cape Verde	5	2	1	2	5	6	-1	7
Liberia	5	1	1	3	5	10	−5	4

08/10/2011	Liberia	2 – 2	Mali
	Cape Verde	2 – 1	Zimbabwe

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Mali	6	3	1	2	9	6	3	10
Cape Verde	6	3	1	2	7	7	0	10
Zimbabwe	6	2	2	2	7	5	2	8
Liberia	6	1	2	3	7	12	−5	5

Table 7 reports the countries included in the treatment and control groups for the various qualifying campaigns (totaling 46 and 55 entries, respectively). In Table 8, we test whether the countries in the two groups are balanced along a range of characteristics that may affect conflict. We focus in particular on the following variables, measured in the year prior to qualification: GDP per capita, poverty rate, income inequality, life expectancy, population density, share of urban population, index of political corruption, and autocracy index, as well as two measures of past conflict intensity, i.e. the number of active conflicts and a dummy for whether the country experienced a civil war in the 1990s.[19] In columns 1 and 2 we report the mean for each variable separately for treatment and control groups, and in Column 3 the p-value for the difference. The only two variables that are somewhat unbalanced (differences significant at the 10% level) are autocracy and political corruption, which are both somewhat higher for treatment than for control countries. The differences are, however, rather small, corresponding to respectively one-third and one-fourth of a standard deviation on the sample of sub-Saharan African countries for the period of interest. In Column 4 we test whether covariates are balanced between countries that did and did not qualify in the same qualifying campaign; to this end, we report the coefficients from separate OLS regressions of each covariate on our treatment variable and on a set of nine qualification-campaign dummies. The results indicate that the difference is insignificant for all but three variables: political corruption, autocracy, and poverty rates. Yet in our empirical analysis we control for country×qualifier fixed effects, which capture all observable and unobservable factors specific to a country in a given year that may affect conflict.

To further corroborate our identification strategy, we also test that conflict was not evolving differently in the treatment and control groups prior to qualification, a situation that would threaten our difference-in-differences approach. To do so, we estimate a variant of Equation 3 pooling observations for treatment and control groups and assigning a fictitious treatment for the pre-qualification period to countries that will eventually qualify. Specifically, this variable takes the value 1 for the 12 weeks prior to qualification and 0 otherwise. If conflict

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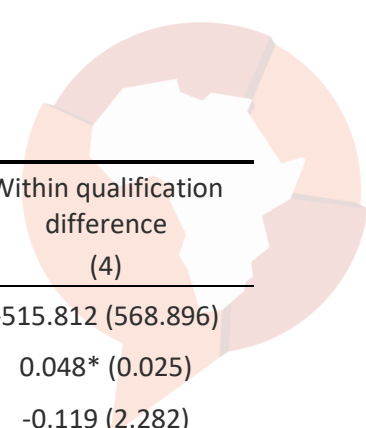
[19] Data on GDP, poverty rates, income inequality, life expectancy, population density, and share of urban population are from the 2017 version of the World Development Indicators; data on political corruption are from Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem, v6.2); data on the autocracy index are from the Polity IV project; data on civil conflicts in the 1990s are from Fearon and Laitin (2003); the indicator of active conflict is constructed based on the Uppsala Conflict Data Program/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.

was evolving differently in the two groups in the pre-qualification period, we would expect the fictitious treatment to display a significant coefficient. The results, reported in Table 9, seem to rule out this possibility: Regardless of which measure of conflict is used and whether we control for conflict in previous weeks, we find no evidence that conflict was evolving differently in the 12 weeks preceding qualification in countries that would eventually qualify relative to countries that would not.

Table 7: Treatment and control groups by qualifying process

Tournament year	Treatment group	Control group
1998	Angola, ***Namibia***, *DRC*, and Mozambique	***Zimbabwe***, *Mali*, *Senegal*, Gabon, Liberia, and *Malawi*
2000	Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, and *Congo*	Guinea, *Mali*, *Liberia*, and *Uganda*
2002	Zambia, Burkina Faso, and DRC	*Angola*, ***Zimbabwe, Madagascar Lesotho***, and Gabon
2004	***Benin,*** *Kenya*, ***Rwanda***, Mali, DRC, South Africa, and ***Zimbabwe***	Zambia, Togo, *Sierra Leone*, Côte d'Ivoire, ***Madagascar***, and Uganda
2006	DRC and South Africa	Burkina Faso
2008	Côte d'Ivoire, *Sudan*, Senegal, Guinea, *Namibia*, *Benin*, and South Africa	Gabon, ***Gambia***, Uganda, ***Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea***, Mozambique, and DRC
2010	Zambia and *Malawi*	*Rwanda* and Guinea
2012	Mali, *Guinea*, ***Niger***, Angola, and *Sudan*	*Zimbabwe*, *Sierra Leone*, Nigeria, Malawi, *South Africa*, Cameroon, ***Cape Verde***, *Uganda*, *Kenya*, ***CAR***, and ***Gambia***
2013	Côte d'Ivoire, *Ethiopia*, ***Cape Verde***, Niger, Angola, Togo, *DRC*, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, and Zambia	Malawi, Botswana, *Uganda*, *Sierra Leone*, Senegal, *Liberia*, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Sudan, Guinea, Mozambique, *Zimbabwe*, Gabon, and ***CAR***

Note: Italic is used to denote that an overdue qualification was at stake (defined as at least three years without qualifying for the ACN final round). Italic bold is used to denote that a first-time qualification for the ACN final round was at stake. Due to a lack of conflict data, Mauritius is not included in the analysis despite the fact that it narrowly missed qualifying for the 2000 ACN on the last match day.

Table 8: Balance check

Variable	Qualified	Not qualified	*P*-value of difference	Within qualification difference
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	1689.92	2252.11	0.396	-515.812 (568.896)
Poverty rate	0.49	0.44	0.246	0.048* (0.025)
Gini index	44.18	44.49	0.826	-0.119 (2.282)
Life expectancy	53.82	54.17	0.785	-0.447 (0.930)
Population density	45.10	65.66	0.131	-21.190 (18.468)
Urban population rate	37.88	38.25	0.909	-0.175 (2.775)
Autocracy	1.64	2.31	0.081	-0.674* (0.313)
Political corruption	0.66	0.72	0.084	-0.065* (0.029)
Fraction civil war 90s	0.29	0.33	0.603	-0.037 (0.059)
Number of conflicts	0.30	0.26	0.696	0.039 (0.083)

For a set of covariates (listed on the left) in the year before the end of each qualification process for the ACN, columns 1 and 2 report the unconditional means for (barely) qualified countries (46 observations) and (barely) not qualified countries (55 observations). Column 3 reports the p-value associated with the mean difference test between 1 and 2. A second test is presented in Column 4, which presents the OLS coefficients from separate regressions of each covariate on a treatment status (i.e. qualified) conditional on nine qualification process dummies to ensure that comparison in the covariates is made between countries in the same year. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses (in Column 4). Each test includes 101 observations except in poverty rate and Gini index with 100 observations.

Table 9: Parallel trends test

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:	Dummy for any conflict		Number of events (log+1)		Number of fatalities (log+1)	
12 weeks before qualification	0.036 (0.038)	0.040 (0.037)	0.048 (0.067)	0.040 (0.056)	-0.107 (0.104)	-0.103 (0.081)
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	2,525	2,121	2,525	2,121	2,525	2,121
R-squared	0.010	0.023	0.008	0.040	0.008	0.033

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers 25 weeks before the end of qualification process (i.e. pre-treatment period). The variable 12 weeks before qualification takes value 1 during the 12 weeks immediately before the end of the qualification process for the countries that will eventually qualify to the ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

4.2 Qualification for ACN and conflict

In Table 10 we examine the effect of national teams' (close) qualification on conflict prevalence and intensity. We start by estimating, in Column 1, our baseline specification with country×qualifying campaign and week fixed effects (Equation 3), using as dependent variable a dummy for whether any conflict event occurred in the country in a given week.

Table 10: Impact of ACN qualification on conflict

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Conflict dummy	Conflict dummy	Number of events (log+1)	Number of fatalities (log+1)
Post-qualification	-0.078**	-0.068**	-0.105***	-0.147**
	(0.031)	(0.026)	(0.038)	(0.058)
Conflict variable$_{t-1}$		0.112***	0.261***	0.163***
		(0.021)	(0.024)	(0.032)
Conflict variable$_{t-2}$		0.012	0.069***	0.129***
		(0.019)	(0.026)	(0.024)
Conflict variable$_{t-3}$		0.023	0.041*	0.051**
		(0.017)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Conflict variable$_{t-4}$		0.009	0.076***	-0.018
		(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.032)
Long-run impact	-0.078	-0.081	-0.190	-0.218
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	4,646	4,646
R-squared	0.010	0.024	0.118	0.070

*The sample includes the 25 weeks before and after the close qualification for 101 country×qualifier pairs. The variable Post-qualification takes value 1 for the team that qualified for the weeks after the qualification and 0 otherwise. The dependent variables are respectively a dummy for whether any conflict event was recorded in the country in a given week (columns 1 and 2), the log+1 of the number of conflict events recorded in a given week (Column 3), and the log+1 of the number of fatalities associated with those events (Column 4). All conflict data are from the ACLED data set. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, *p<0.1. Robust standard errors clustered by country×qualifier reported in parentheses.*

The results indicate that the probability of experiencing conflict is significantly lower in the months following the qualification; the effect is sizeable, corresponding to a 9% decrease in the probability of conflict in a given week. The effect remains largely unchanged in Column 2, where we control for conflict in each of the previous four weeks.[20] The results are qualitatively similar in columns 3 and 4 when we use the two measures of conflict intensity, i.e. (log+1 of) the number of conflict events that occurred and (log+1 of) the number of

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[20] The results are virtually the same if we include the four lags of conflict occurrence one by one or in any combination. They are also very similar when we estimate a probit model rather than a linear probability model (results shown in Appendix Table A.6).

fatalities associated with them. The effect is economically sizeable: Countries whose teams barely qualified experience reductions of 18% in the number of conflict episodes and of 20%-23% in the number of fatalities relative to countries whose teams narrowly did not. The table also reports the long-run impact of the qualification, which takes into account the effect of a reduction in today's conflict on future violence. We obtain analogous results when using the number of conflict episodes and victims (i.e. without the log transformation) and when estimating negative binomial regressions (see Appendix Table A.7).

In Figure 4 we provide additional graphical evidence of the impact of qualification on conflict and examine the duration of this effect. To this end, we plot the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals of the interaction terms between the treatment variable and dummies for 11 four-week periods in the months before and after the qualification.

Figure 4: Occurrence of conflict and number of conflict episodes before and after qualification

A: Occurrence of conflict (four-week bandwidths)
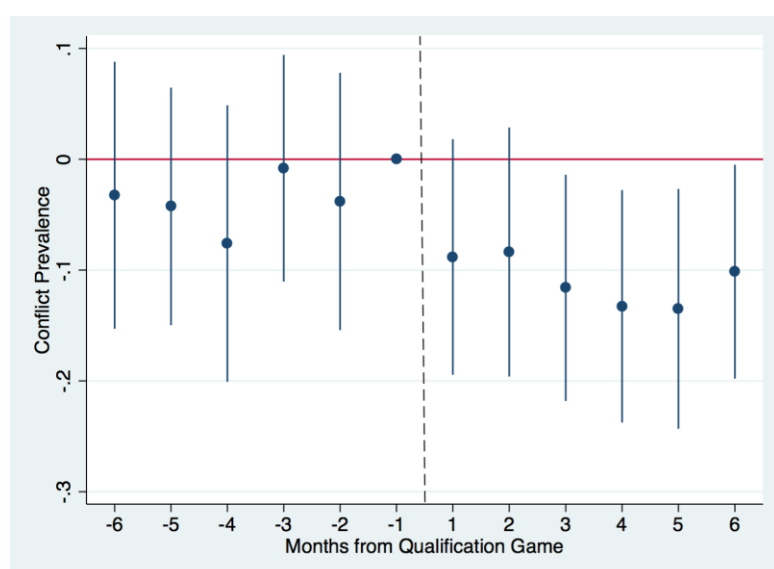
B: Number of conflict episodes (four-week bandwidths)
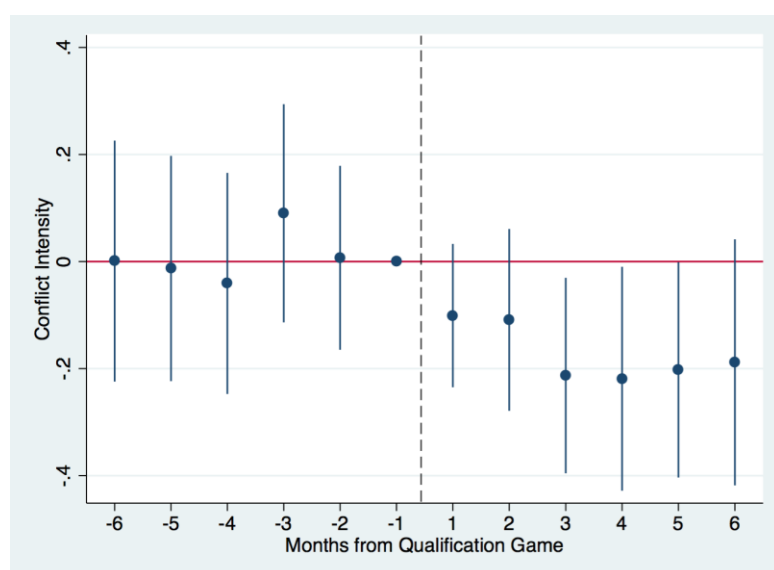
Figures plot coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for interactions between the dummy for countries that barely qualified for the ACN and 11 dummies for four-week period included between 25 weeks before and after the qualification. The coefficient for the four weeks immediately before the qualification is normalized to zero. The dependent variable for the top panel is a dummy for whether any conflict event has been recorded in the country during the week, while for the bottom panel is log+ 1 the number of conflict events recorded in the country during the week. The regressions also include week and country×qualifier dummies. Confidence intervals are based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors clustered by country×qualifier.

The coefficients are obtained from a regression that also includes 50 week dummies and 101 country×qualifier dummies. To facilitate the interpretation of the results, we normalize to 0 the coefficient on the four-week periods immediately before qualification.

The results indicate clearly that the occurrence and the number of conflict events (top and bottom panel, respectively) decrease sharply in the weeks following the qualification for the ACN tournament. Indeed, all the coefficients for the post-qualification periods are significantly different from 0 at the 10% level, and most of them at the 5% level. Two additional patterns emerge quite clearly. First, none of the coefficients for the periods before qualification is significantly different from zero, confirming the absence of any differential trend in countries that would later qualify, documented in Table 9. Second, the effect of qualification on conflict persists and, if anything, becomes stronger as more time elapses since qualification, especially three months after.

To further test the persistence of the effect, in Table 11 we re-estimate our difference-in-differences specification, splitting the post-qualification period in two sub-periods: i) the first 12 weeks after qualification and ii) the following 13 weeks. The results document a reduction in conflict occurrence and intensity of a similar magnitude for the two periods; in fact, the point estimates for the second period are somewhat larger and more significant when using the dummy and the number of events as dependent variables (columns 1-4) but slightly smaller for the number of fatalities (columns 5-6). Results are largely similar when controlling for the lags of conflict (columns 2, 4, and 6). Combined with the results on attitudes, these findings provide robust evidence that important achievements of the national team, by priming a sentiment of national unity and by reducing interethnic cleavages, can contribute to reducing violence in a tangible and rather persistent way.

Table 11: Evolution of conflict after qualification

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:	Conflict dummy		Number of events (log+1)		Number of fatalities (log+1)	
1-12 weeks post-qualification	-0.061*	-0.056**	-0.149**	-0.107***	-0.238**	-0.169**
	(0.032)	(0.027)	(0.069)	(0.038)	(0.100)	(0.069)
13-25 weeks post-qualification	-0.090**	-0.078**	-0.214**	-0.116**	-0.229*	-0.144*
	(0.040)	(0.035)	(0.098)	(0.054)	(0.121)	(0.080)
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.010	0.024	0.014	0.119	0.012	0.070

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/- 25 weeks around the end of qualification process for 101 country×qualifier pairs. The variable 1-12 weeks after qualification takes value 1 during the 12 weeks immediately after the end of the qualification process for the countries that barely qualified for the ACN, 0 otherwise. The variable 13-25 weeks after qualification takes value 1 starting the 13th week after the end of the qualification process for the countries that barely qualified for the ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.*
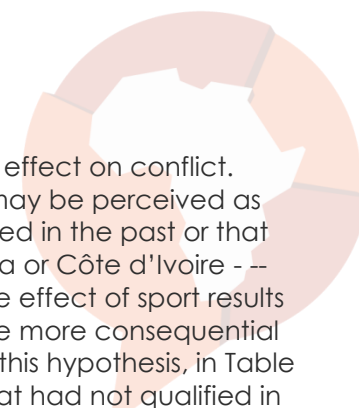
4.3 Effect of qualification on conflict: Heterogeneity

We then examine whether unexpected qualifications have a stronger effect on conflict. Indeed, it seems plausible that qualification for the ACN tournament may be perceived as an especially important achievement for teams that had never qualified in the past or that had not qualified in a long time, as opposed to teams – such as Ghana or Côte d'Ivoire - -- that usually qualify. This hypothesis is in line with previous findings on the effect of sport results on violence and crime, which indicate that unexpected outcomes are more consequential than expected ones (Card & Dahl, 2011; Munyo & Rossi, 2013). To test this hypothesis, in Table 12 we estimate our baseline specification separately for i) countries that had not qualified in three or more years and ii) countries that had never qualified. The results provide strong support for the above-mentioned hypothesis: The reduction in the occurrence and intensity of conflict is generally larger and more significant for overdue and first qualifications, with the exception of the decrease in the number of fatalities, which is marginally insignificant for first qualifications.
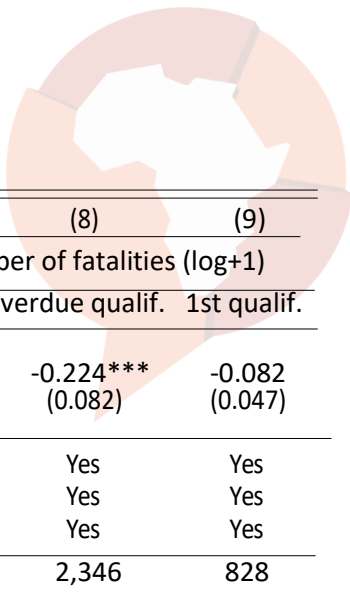
4.4 Qualifications and ethnic conflict

In Table 13 we investigate the effect of qualification for the ACN tournament on conflict events classified as ethnicity-related according to the procedure described in Section 2.3. When estimating our most comprehensive specification – with country×qualifier and week fixed effects and lags of conflict – we find that national teams' qualification for the ACN finals reduced the occurrence of interethnic violence (Column 1) as well as its intensity measured both by the number of conflict events and associated fatalities (columns 2-3). Though smaller than for overall conflict, the effect is rather sizeable: The qualification reduced the likelihood of ethnic violence by one-third of the mean value of the dummy variable.[21]

4.5 Alternative explanations

Finally, we analyze two alternative explanations of the negative effect of qualification on conflict documented above. The first one is that the decline in conflict may be partly due to coincidence with the ACN tournament, which in some cases took place within six months of the qualification. Indeed, since the ACN final round is very popular and is broadcast around the continent, it may distract many individuals who may otherwise engage in violence, particularly in countries that qualified. To test for this possibility, in Table 14 we re-estimate our baseline specification excluding from the sample the weeks during which ACN final-round matches were taking place. The results indicate that, regardless of which measure of conflict we use and whether we control for lagged conflict, the effect of qualification on conflict remains virtually unchanged.[22]

[21] As shown in Table A.8, the results are similar when we use the number of conflict events and fatalities instead of their log+1 version.

[22] As an additional test, in Appendix Table A.12 we look at the entire sample but include a dummy for the weeks during which the ACN's final-round matches are taking place only for teams that qualified. The results are largely consistent with those in Table 14.

Table 12: Overdue and first qualification effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Dependent variable:		Conflict dummy			Number of events (log+1)			Number of fatalities (log+1)	
Sample	Full	Overdue qualif.	1st qualif.	Full	Overdue qualif.	1st qualif.	Full	Overdue qualif.	1st qualif.
Post-qualification	-0.068**	-0.114**	-0.158**	-0.105***	-0.168***	-0.218***	-0.147**	-0.224***	-0.082
	(0.026)	(0.044)	(0.072)	(0.038)	(0.059)	(0.102)	(0.058)	(0.082)	(0.047)
Country×qualifier FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,646	2,346	828	4,646	2,346	828	4,646	2,346	828
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.024	0.031	0.090	0.118	0.161	0.221	0.070	0.077	0.092

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Post-qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set. An overdue (first-time) qualification is defined as reaching the last match day with chances of qualifying for the ACN final round after three or more years of not having qualified (after never having qualified before). See Table 7.
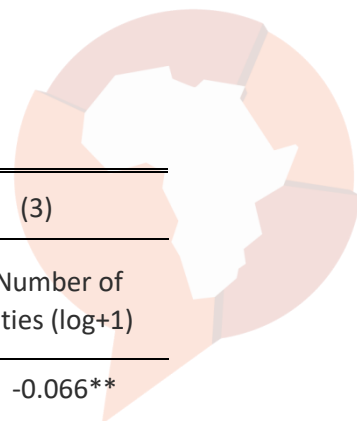
Table 13: Impact on ethnic conflict

Dependent variable:	(1) Dummy for any conflict	(2) Number of events (log+1)	(3) Number of fatalities (log+1)
Post-qualification	-0.024**	-0.022*	-0.066**
	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.031)
Long-run impact	0.029	0.034	0.086
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,646	4,646	4,646
R-squared	0.029	0.083	0.055

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Post-qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Ethic conflict is coded using conflict data from the ACLED data set.*

Table 14: Effect of qualification and ACN finals

Dependent variable:	Dummy for any conflict event		Number of conflict events (log+1)		Number of fatalities (log+1)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-qualification	-0.076**	-0.066**	-0.179**	-0.106***	-0.231**	-0.151**
	(0.031)	(0.026)	(0.070)	(0.037)	(0.094)	(0.060)
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Excluding ACN finals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,782	4,378	4,782	4,378	4,782	4,378
R-squared	0.010	0.023	0.015	0.112	0.013	0.071

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Post-qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process, except for observations in weeks wherein the ACN final-round matches took place, which are excluded (268 weekly observations). Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.*

The second possibility relates to the news-based nature of the ACLED conflict data. A conflict event is recorded by ACLED only if it is mentioned by at least one of a multiplicity of local, national, or international media, in addition to reports by local NGOs. It is in principle possible that the qualification of a national team to the ACN tournament may lead to an increase in

the number of football-related news reports in local media that may crowd out news about the conflict, potentially leading to a mechanical reduction in the number of conflict events recorded by ACLED.[23] To the extent that football-related news reports are likely more extensive during the final round of the ACN, the results in Table A.12 are reassuring that this aspect is not driving our results. Yet it could be that football news increases in the months prior to the ACN final round as discussion about players' selection and teams' prospects intensifies. One way to test for the crowding-out hypothesis is to verify that the effect is not driven by less severe conflict events, which should be more likely to go unreported due to competition from football news than events involving a higher number of fatalities. We implement this approach in Table 15, where we estimate our baseline specification for the occurrence of conflict events of increasing severity, i.e. involving 10 or more fatalities, 25 or more fatalities, and 50 or more fatalities. The fact that the results are similar for the different samples, both in terms of magnitude and significance, suggest that reporting bias is not driving our results.

Table 15: Conflict occurrence by number of fatalities

| Dependent variable:	Dummy for at least one conflict event in a week					
	Events with 10 or more fatalities		Events with 25 or more fatalities		Events with 50 or more fatalities	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-qualification	-0.042**	-0.035**	-0.034**	-0.027*	-0.030**	-0.022*
	(0.021)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Mean dep. variable	0.089	0.089	0.043	0.042	0.024	0.023
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.010	0.026	0.011	0.045	0.012	0.053

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Post-Qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

5. Conclusions

This research examines how successful collective experiences that prime national pride and unity can contribute to alleviating interethnic tensions and reducing violence. We investigate this issue in the context of sub-Saharan Africa by looking at the impact of national football teams' victories on both individual attitudes and political violence.

Combining information on more than 70 official matches by 24 national teams with survey data from four rounds of the Afrobarometer survey, we find that individuals interviewed in the

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[23] Evidence that news coverage of important sport events on TV can crowd out news about other issues, such as natural disasters or conflict, is available from Eisensee and Stromberg (2007) and Durante and Zhuravskaya (forthcoming).
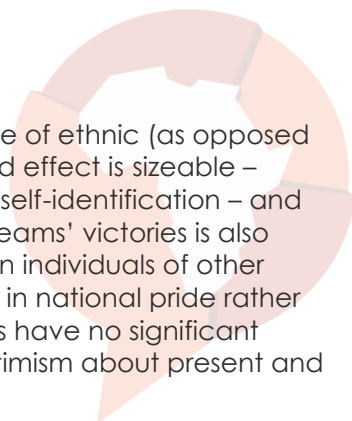
days immediately after a victory are less likely to report a strong sense of ethnic (as opposed to national) identity than those interviewed just before. The estimated effect is sizeable – accounting for a 20% decrease in the average probability of ethnic self-identification – and robust to different specifications and controls. Exposure to national teams' victories is also associated with a higher level of trust in others, both in general and in individuals of other ethnicities. These effects appear to be driven by a genuine increase in national pride rather than generic post-victory euphoria; indeed, national teams' victories have no significant impact on other attitudes such as support for the government or optimism about present and future economic conditions.

To test whether the effect of football on national identity extends beyond attitudes to more tangible outcomes, we then look at the evolution of conflict around the time of important national team achievements. Specifically, we find that countries whose national teams (barely) qualified for the final round of the Africa Cup of Nations experience significantly less conflict in the six months after the qualification than countries whose teams (barely) did not qualify. This effect is not only sizeable and statistically significant but also persists for several months after the successful event.

Taken together, the evidence presented indicates that, even in regions where ethnic tensions have deep historical roots, events that prime patriotic pride can reinforce national identity, reduce interethnic mistrust, and have a tangible impact on violence. Though specific to the case of sport events, our findings suggest that policies that favour emotional participation may be most effective at forging a shared sentiment of unity and set the foundations for more long-lasting cultural and political changes.
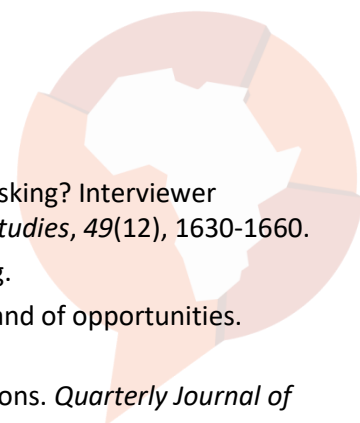
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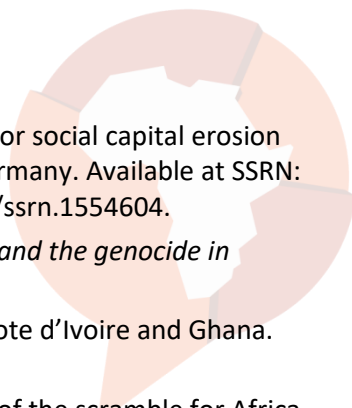
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Appendix

Figure A.1: Ethnic identity before and after national teams' victories, including country-match fixed effect
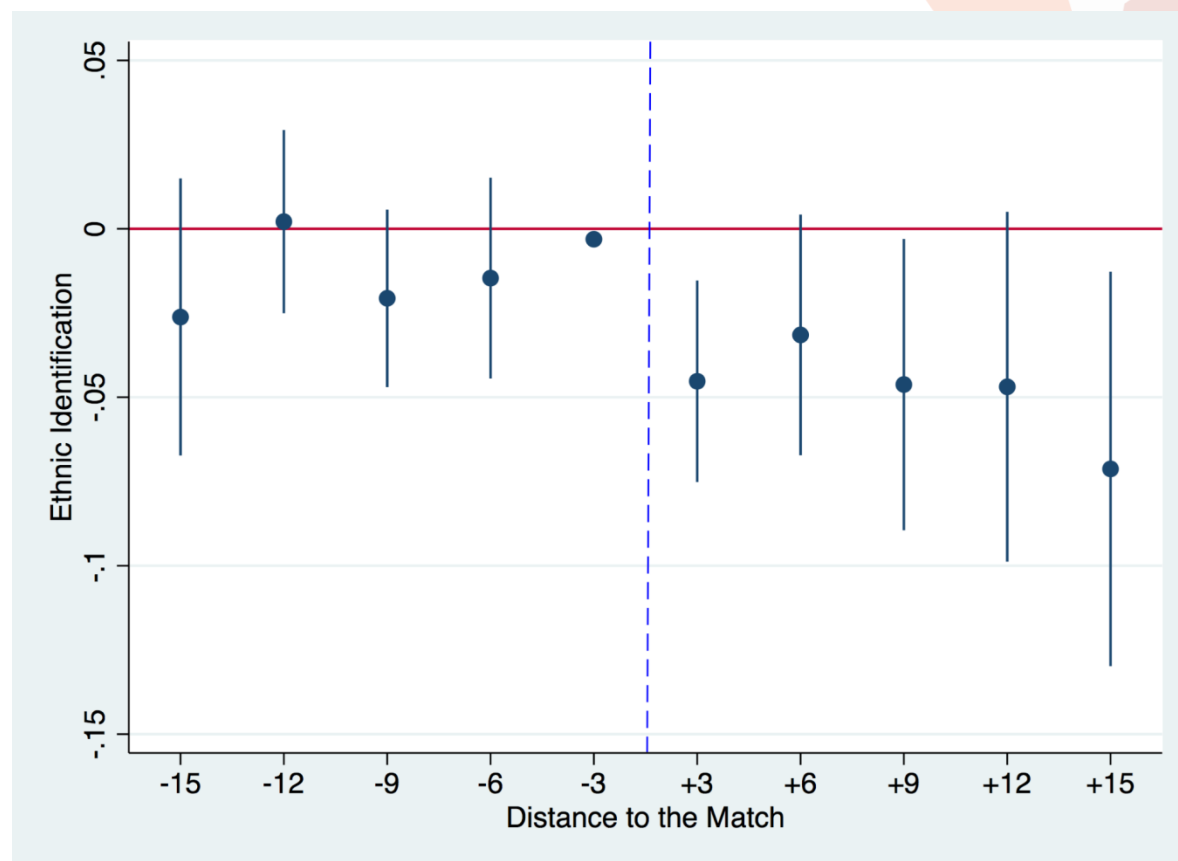
The figure plots the coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for nine dummies indicating three-day blocks from 15 days before to 15 days after a victory of the national football team. The coefficient for the period between three to one days before the match is normalized to zero. Confidence intervals are based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors clustered by language group×year. The coefficients are estimated from a unique regression in which we control for individual characteristics, country×match, and language group×year fixed effects and for the proximity to draws or defeats.
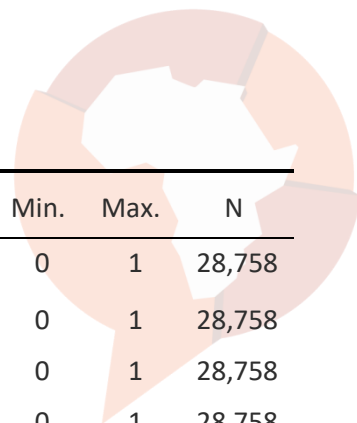
Table A.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Ethnic over national Identity	0.149	0.356	0	1	28,758
Post-play	0.505	0.5	0	1	28,758
Post-victory	0.181	0.385	0	1	28,758
Post-defeat	0.225	0.418	0	1	28,758
Post-draw	0.099	0.299	0	1	28,758
Generalized trust	1.946	0.826	0	3	25,475
Interethnic trust	1.414	1.057	0	3	7,992
Intra-ethnic trust	1.734	1.054	0	3	8,078
Trust in Ruling Party	1.544	1.128	0	3	27,270
President's approval	2.759	0.963	1	4	27,330
Country's economic conditions today (1=good)	0.268	0.443	0	1	28,752
Country's economic conditions future (1=good)	0.526	0.499	0	1	28,746
Own economic conditions today (1=good)	0.291	0.454	0	1	28,725
Own economic conditions future (1=good)	0.561	0.496	0	1	28,733
Male	0.505	0.5	0	1	28,758
Age	36.4	14.537	18	130	28,758
Unemployed	0.294	0.456	0	1	28,758
Rural status	0.21	0.407	0	1	28,758
Education	3.023	2.078	0	9	28,758
Major ethnicity	0.383	0.486	0	1	28,758
Public goods provided	0.47	0.305	0	1	28,758
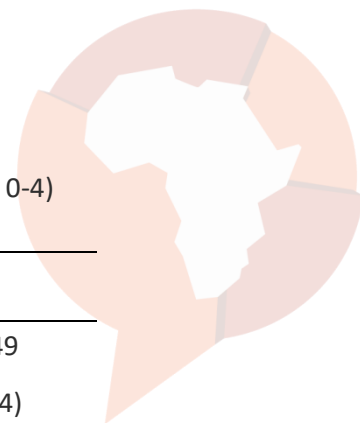
Table A.2: Ordered dependent variable

| | Dependent variable: Ethnic identity (ordered, 0-4) | | | |
| | OLS | | Ordered probit | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-victory	-0.086***	-0.044	-0.091***	-0.049
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.034)
Country×year FE	Yes	No	Yes	No
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country×match FE	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	25,293	25,293	25,293	25,293

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors clustered at the language group×year level in parentheses. Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed within 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise.

Table A.3: Multiple games

	Panel A: Share of victories					
	Ethnic identification	Generalized trust	Interethnic trust	Interethnic trust premium	Trust in ruling party	President's approval
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Share of victories	-0.039***	0.064	0.147***	0.077**	0.002	0.039
	(0.014)	(0.048)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)
Generalized trust			0.589***	-0.154***		
			(0.030)	(0.016)		
Observations	35,069	33,910	8,200	8,186	31,983	31,864
R-squared	0.110	0.236	0.389	0.079	0.199	0.233

	Panel B: Share of points won					
	Ethnic identification	Generalized trust	Interethnic trust	Interethnic trust premium	Trust in ruling party	President's approval
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Share of points won	-0.039***	0.075*	0.147***	0.077**	0.016	0.047
	(0.013)	(0.039)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.033)
Generalized trust			0.589***	-0.154***		
			(0.030)	(0.016)		
Observations	35,069	33,910	8,200	8,186	37,735	37,556
R-squared	0.110	0.236	0.389	0.079	0.165	0.231
Multiple games	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors clustered at the language group×year level in parentheses. Share of victories accounts for the fraction of total games won. Share of points won accounts for the fraction of total possible points obtained (a win, draw, and loss award three, one, and 0 points, respectively).

Table A.4: Victories and ethnic identification: Heterogenous effects

	Dependent variable: Ethnic over national identity (0-1 dummy)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-victory	-0.044***	-0.044***	-0.044***	-0.043***	-0.045***
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Interaction	0.012	0.001	0.000	0.044**	0.009
	(0.012)	(0.004)	(0.000)	(0.021)	(0.028)
Uninteracted term	-0.023***	-0.018***	-0.003***	-0.001*	-0.009
	(0.007)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.012)	(0.034)
Interaction term	Male	Education	Age	Rural	Ethnic majority
Country×match FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language×year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	28,758	28,758	28,758	28,758	28,758
R-squared	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.116

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors clustered at the language group×year level in parentheses. Post-victory takes value 1 if the respondent was interviewed in the 15 days after a victory, 0 otherwise.
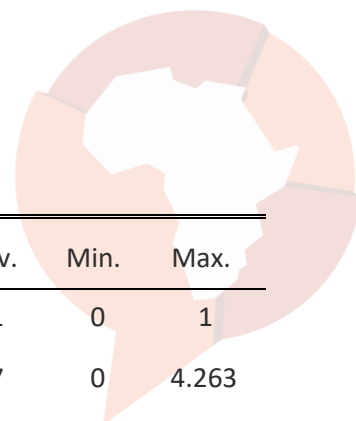
Table A.5: Summary statistics for conflict measures

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Conflict dummy	0.406	0.491	0	1
Number of events (log+1)	0.618	0.907	0	4.263
Number of fatalities (log+1)	0.544	1.251	0	10.131
Ethnic conflict dummy	0.062	0.242	0	1
Number of ethnic events (log+1)	0.065	0.277	0	2.773
Number of ethnic fatalities (log+1)	0.115	0.604	0	6.909
Riot dummy	0.188	0.39	0	1
Attack on civilians dummy	0.234	0.423	0	1
Government event dummy	0.268	0.443	0	1
Battle event dummy	0.188	0.391	0	1
Number of riot events (log+1)	0.194	0.458	0	3.807
Number of attack on civ. (log+ 1)	0.286	0.598	0	3.892
Number of govt events (log+1)	0.346	0.666	0	3.871
Number of battles (log+1)	0.252	0.59	0	3.466
Number of fatalities in riots (log+1)	0.029	0.23	0	4.836
Number of fatalities due to attack on civ. (log+1)	0.294	0.874	0	10.127
Number of fatalities in govt events (log+1)	0.308	0.93	0	6.987
Number of fatalities in battles (log+1)	0.334	1.002	0	6.987
Sample size	5,050 weeks			
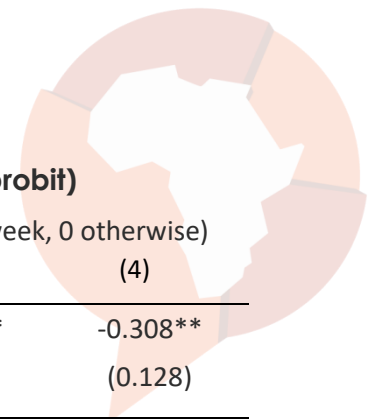
Table A.6: Impact of ACN qualification on conflict prevalence (probit)

Dependent variable: Conflict prevalence (1 if at least one conflict in week, 0 otherwise)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Qualification	-0.336**	-0.301***	-0.200**	-0.308**
	(0.133)	(0.117)	(0.079)	(0.128)
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	No	No
Random effect model	No	No	No	Yes
Qualifying country indicator	No	No	Yes	No
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	No
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,650	4,278	5,050	5,050

Estimates from probit regression models. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

Table A.7: Impact of ACN qualification on conflict intensity (maximum likelihood negative binomial)

Dependent variable:	Num. events		Num. fatalities	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Qualification	-0.440**	-0.332**	-0.803**	-0.797**
	(0.194)	(0.146)	(0.327)	(0.335)
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646

Estimates from negative binomial regression models. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.
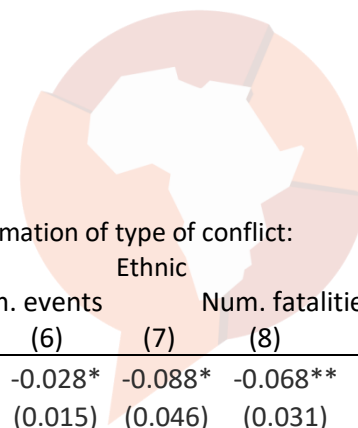
## Table A.8: Conflict intensity (IHS transformation)

	Dependent variable: Inverse hyperbolic sine transformation of type of conflict:							
	All				Ethnic			
	Num. events		Num. fatalities		Num. events		Num. fatalities	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Qualification	-0.225**	-0.136***	-0.265**	-0.174***	-0.041	-0.028*	-0.088*	-0.068**
	(0.090)	(0.048)	(0.106)	(0.066)	(0.026)	(0.015)	(0.046)	(0.031)
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.013	0.111	0.012	0.068	0.010	0.080	0.011	0.061

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. *Qualification* takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

Table A.9: Conflict prevalence by type of conflict

	Dependent variable: Conflict prevalence (if at least one conflict in week, 0 otherwise)							
	Riots		Attacks on civilians		Government		Battles	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Qualification	-0.089***	-0.083***	-0.063**	-0.052**	-0.045	-0.043*	-0.014	-0.005
	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.020)
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.017	0.037	0.014	0.032	0.008	0.024	0.010	0.022

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks after the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.
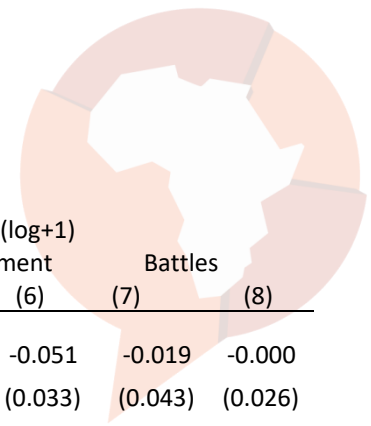
## Table A.10: Conflict intensity by type of conflict (num. events)

	\[Riots\]		\[Attacks on civilians\]		\[Government\]		\[Battles\]	
Dependent variable: Number of conflict events by type (log+1)								
	Riots		Attacks on civilians		Government		Battles	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Qualification	-0.124***	-0.100***	-0.084	-0.055*	-0.086	-0.051	-0.019	-0.000
	(0.039)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.029)	(0.058)	(0.033)	(0.043)	(0.026)
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.018	0.085	0.012	0.070	0.008	0.096	0.011	0.093

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

Table A.11: Conflict intensity by type of conflict (num. fatalities)

Conflict type:	Riots		Attacks on civilians		Government		Battles	
Dependent variable: Number of fatalities by type (log+1)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-qualification	-0.004	-0.011	-0.132**	-0.112**	-0.112	-0.066	-0.152**	-0.106**
	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.062)	(0.054)	(0.073)	(0.048)	(0.074)	(0.053)
4 lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.011	0.020	0.011	0.022	0.009	0.035	0.011	0.047

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. Post-qualification takes value 1 during the 25 weeks following the qualification for ACN, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.
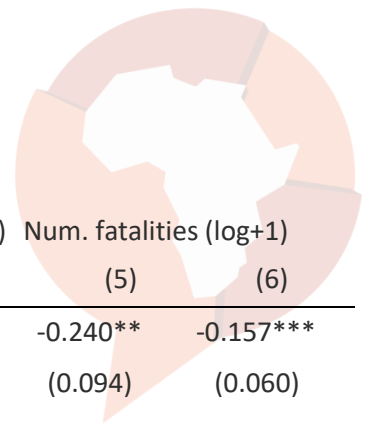
Table A.12: Incapacitation effect due to ACN finals?

Dependent variable:	Conflict prevalence		Num. events (log+1)		Num. fatalities (log+1)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Qualification	-0.075**	-0.065**	-0.190***	-0.111***	-0.240**	-0.157***
	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.072)	(0.037)	(0.094)	(0.060)
During ACN final round	-0.024	-0.027	0.100	0.050	0.134	0.101
	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.092)	(0.067)	(0.152)	(0.122)
Country×qualifier FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 Lags of conflict	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646	5,050	4,646
R-squared	0.010	0.024	0.014	0.119	0.012	0.070

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at the country×qualifier level. Sample covers +/-25 weeks around the end of qualification process. During ACN final round takes value 1 for qualified teams during the weeks in which ACN final-round matches are taking place, 0 otherwise. Conflict data come from the ACLED data set.

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