



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

**War-Induced Urban Poverty and Deprivation of households in Kombolcha
Town South Wollo Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia**

BY

Masresha Abebe

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Social Anthropology Presented in partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Social
Anthropology

August/ 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Declaration

I, Masresha Abebe, affirm that I am the author of the Master's thesis entitled "War-Induced Urban Poverty and Deprivation in Kombolcha Town, South Wollo Zone of Amhara Region," completed for the fulfillment of my Master's Degree in Social Anthropology at Addis Ababa University, College of Social Science, Department of Social Anthropology. This thesis has not been presented for any other academic degree or equivalent qualification at any other institution of higher learning, and I have diligently cited all sources employed in this work.

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Acronyms

ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
ESS	Ethiopian statistical service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOLOGIT2	Generalized Ordered Logit
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KOCT	Kombolcha Town Culture and Tourism
KRCAO	Kombolcha regeo Politian City Administration Office
IMF	International momentary fund
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
OLOGIT	Ordered logit
OCHA	Office for coordination of humanitarian affairs
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SAP	Structural adjustment program
TPLF	Tigray People Liberation Front
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UNECA	United Nations' Economic Commission for Africa
WFP	World Food Program
WB	World Bank

Abstract

This study examines war-induced urban poverty and deprivation in Kombolcha Town South Wollo Zone of Amhara region. The primary objective is to examine the impact of war on urban poverty and deprivation. It employs a mixed research approach, integrating survey and ethnographic data within a cross-sectional retrospective design. Multistage sampling is utilized for quantitative insights, while purposive sampling enriches the qualitative aspect. A total of 330 households participated in the survey, with ethnographic data gathered from 52 selected households through interviews, discussions, observations, and questionnaires. Quantitative analysis is conducted using SPSS version 21 and ordered logit models, while thematic analysis guides the ethnographic exploration. The research examines the impact of the conflict through quantitative and qualitative lenses, revealing insights into pre- and post-conflict dynamics. Following the conflict, a notable increase in multidimensional poverty is observed. The MPI analysis demonstrates a significant rise in poverty rates, with the adjusted headcount ratio increasing from 28.9% to 41.3%. The GOLOGIT2 analysis underscores conflict as a primary driver of poverty, elevating the likelihood of heightened poverty by 16.3%. Ethnographic narratives provide poignant accounts of the conflict's toll, highlighting economic instability, disrupted livelihoods, and the impact of displacement on poverty levels. These narratives shed light on social and psychological repercussions, such as disruptions in institutions, breakdowns in neighborhood cohesion, and increased psychological distress among residents. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, this study elucidates poverty dimensions and presents diverse individual experiences, emphasizing the necessity for tailored post-conflict recovery strategies for effective community rebuilding and healing.

Key words: War, Household, Urban Poverty, multidimensional poverty, social capital

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Poverty, a prominent challenge of the 21st century, affects an estimated 736 million people globally, as reported by the World Bank in 2020. This pervasive issue unites nations under the common goal of eradicating poverty. To tackle this global dilemma and improve livelihoods worldwide over the next 15 years, the United Nations established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Ambaye et al., 2021).

In Ethiopia, while the country remains among the world's poorest nations, there has been notable progress in reducing both income and multidimensional poverty over the past decade. Between 2005 and 2016, the multidimensional poverty index decreased by over 23% (OPHI, 2018, 2021). Various poverty indices have shown a consistent decline in recent years compared to the figures from 2015 and 2016.

The Amhara region stands out as one of Ethiopia's poorest regions, ranking third in terms of income poverty. The region exhibits a poverty headcount index of 26.1% (28.8% rural and 11.6% urban), a poverty gap index of 6.2%, and a squared poverty index of 2.7%. A multidimensional poverty assessment conducted by Getu (2018) highlighted the region's high levels of multidimensional poverty, with percentages of 96%, 97%, 90%, and 76.2% in 2000, 2005, 2011, and 2016, respectively (Getu, 2018).

Poverty remains a significant issue across many African countries, encompassing not only financial struggles but also deficiencies in education, healthcare, and overall living standards. Among the various factors contributing to this complex issue, armed conflict emerges as a primary driver. Throughout the continent's history, conflicts have disrupted social structures, strained economies, and perpetuated cycles of poverty. Prolonged conflicts strip communities of essential resources, disrupt livelihoods, and hinder access to basic services like healthcare and education, exacerbating urban poverty (Collier, 2021).

Ethiopia's history is marked by conflicts ranging from interethnic tensions to political unrest, profoundly impacting the nation. War intensifies urban poverty, turning cities into havens for displaced populations, straining resources, disrupting services, and escalating unemployment, ultimately leading to vulnerable living conditions. Such war-induced urban poverty results in multidimensional deprivation, affecting education, healthcare, housing, and social connections. These challenges underscore the severity and complexity of issues arising from prolonged conflict in Ethiopia, significantly worsening socioeconomic conditions for the urban poor (Azam, J. P., 2016).

The internal conflict between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) prompted researchers and humanitarian organizations to assess the well-being of the impoverished population in the conflict's aftermath. This conflict has resulted in significant loss of life, widespread displacement, property destruction, and disruptions to economic activities, contributing to a severe humanitarian crisis that continues to draw media attention.

According to poverty-conflict studies, poverty serves as a critical factor contributing to instability in many parts of Africa (Sambanis, 2004). Researchers highlight a strong correlation between the lack of material well-being and the likelihood of violence, ranging from crime in urban neighborhoods to political instability and social conflicts in impoverished nations (Atwood, 2005).

In light of these contexts, this thesis explores the impact of the northern Ethiopian conflict on urban poverty and household deprivation. By examining how warfare affects the multifaceted dimensions of poverty, its socioeconomic consequences, and the erosion of social capital, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between conflict and urban impoverishment.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Eliminating extreme poverty, improving education, and enhancing healthcare are pivotal developmental goals (Foster et al., 1984; Ravallion, 1992). However, armed conflict poses a formidable obstacle to these objectives by amplifying poverty conditions. While traditional

poverty measurements often focus on income-based approaches, the intricate nature of poverty becomes starkly evident when considering the disruptive effects of warfare (Sen, 1976).

Despite existing studies like Getu (2018), a significant gap persists in multidimensional poverty research in Ethiopia, particularly regarding the equitable weighting of diverse dimensions such as education, health, and living standards. The conventional equal weighting approach has faced criticism for assuming uniform importance across dimensions (Williams, 2006). Poverty, inherently ordinal and multifaceted, requires a nuanced assessment that goes beyond binary models to capture its complexity comprehensively (Williams, 2006).

As development paradigms evolve, the emphasis has predominantly been on objective poverty indicators as defined by material necessities (UNECE, 2016). However, poverty also encompasses subjective dimensions, where individuals define their impoverishment based on personal experiences across critical facets of their lives (Alkire, 2007). Integrating social capital and subjective well-being metrics into poverty assessments is increasingly recognized as essential for capturing the holistic impact of poverty on individuals' lives. Factors such as lack of political agency and internal emotional distress are critical components of poverty that must not be overlooked (Alkire, 2007).

The recent incursion of the TPLF into Afar and Amhara regions necessitates a profound examination of the complex poverty dynamics afflicting conflict-affected populations. Acute shortages of essentials like food, medicine, water, and shelter have plunged millions into dire conditions, exacerbated by displacement-induced malnutrition and destitution. Reports of theft and assaults further highlight the deepening crisis in these regions (Abbink, 2021).

While poverty research has been extensive, a notable gap exists in understanding how armed conflict amplifies challenges for urban poor populations. Previous studies have often focused on specific aspects such as education or health, neglecting a holistic view of the intricate interplay between poverty and conflict. This study aims to address this gap by exploring how conflict influences the multidimensional poverty index and social capital of interethnic urban households through a blend of quantitative and qualitative analyses.

Research Gap:

One notable gap in current literature is the limited incorporation of anthropological perspectives in understanding the lived experiences of individuals grappling with poverty in conflict-ridden urban settings. Anthropological insights can provide a deep understanding of the cultural, social, and psychological dimensions of poverty, offering a more comprehensive view of how armed conflict intertwines with social structures and individual identities to shape experiences of impoverishment. By bridging anthropological perspectives with development views, this study seeks to fill this critical gap and shed light on the nuanced interplay between conflict, poverty, and socio-cultural dynamics in urban environments.

This research contributes novel insights by:

- Introducing a data-driven weighting method for multidimensional poverty indicators to address exogenous weighting biases.
- Incorporating social capital as a vital poverty indicator, enriching the understanding of multidimensional poverty assessments.
- Employing an ordered logit model to identify variables driving multidimensional poverty, enhancing the existing literature.
- Investigating qualitative experiences of deprivation caused by conflict to illuminate their impact on household poverty in Kombolcha Town.

1.3. Research Questions

This study answered the following questions based on the data, evidence, and views of the study community:

1. How has the Northern Ethiopia War influenced the multidimensional poverty status of households in Kombolcha Town, particularly in terms of education, health, living standards, and social capital, comparing the pre-war and post-war conditions?
2. What are the socio-economic consequences experienced by households in Kombolcha Town as a consequence of the Northern Ethiopia War?
3. How do households in Kombolcha Town experience war-induced deprivation and poverty caused by the Northern Ethiopia War?

1.4. Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this thesis is to examine the impact of the Northern Ethiopia War on urban poverty and deprivation among households in Kombolcha Town, South Wollo Zone of Amhara Region.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- Determine the changes in the multidimensional poverty status of households in Kombolcha Town before and after the Northern Ethiopia War.
- Assess the socioeconomic consequences experienced by households in Kombolcha Town as a result of the Northern Ethiopia War, including income, employment changes, and access to basic services.
- Provide policy recommendations to mitigate the effects of the war on urban poverty and deprivation, promoting sustainable recovery and development in Kombolcha Town.

By addressing these research questions and objectives, the study aims to contribute a comprehensive understanding of how armed conflict intensifies urban poverty and deprivation in Kombolcha Town, Ethiopia.

1.5. Scope of the study

This research is thematically defined as an exploration of "War-Induced Urban Poverty and Deprivation of Urban Households." It aims to delve into poverty and deprivation stemming from armed conflict within urban households. The focus is on understanding the impact of the armed conflict in Northern Ethiopia, particularly the conflict between the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (2020–2022), on exacerbating urban poverty and deprivation in the study area.

The study does not delve into the causes of the Northern Ethiopian conflict but instead concentrates on the ramifications of the conflict, particularly on urban poverty and deprivation among the affected communities. Utilizing a mix of qualitative and quantitative poverty measures, including a multidimensional index, the research assesses the current status of multidimensional poverty among urban households in Kombolcha Town. It primarily scrutinizes

the economic and social dimensions of poverty, highlighting how armed conflict impacts the economic and social assets of urban households.

Special attention is devoted to the period when the TPLF controlled Kombolcha Town during the intense armed conflict between the federal government and Tigrayan forces from September 2021 onwards. This conflict negatively affected the town's economy and the livelihoods of households both during and after the hostilities.

Geographically, the study is centered in Kombolcha Town, situated in the South Wollo Zone of the Amhara Regional State. The areas of Borkena and Biraro sub-cities were chosen as representatives of urban households in the town. By focusing on the specific thematic, temporal, and geographical aspects outlined above, this study aims to contribute academically to the understanding of how armed conflicts heighten urban poverty and deprivation, with a particular emphasis on the experiences of households in Kombolcha Town within the context of the Northern Ethiopia War.

1.6 limitation of the study

Throughout this study, a number of challenges and limitations were encountered, primarily during the data collection phase. These limitations are vital to acknowledge and consider when interpreting the findings. The major limitations include:

Political Instability: The data collection period coincided with a period of political turmoil involving the Federal Government, the Amhara Regional Forces, Fano, and local militias. The federal government's efforts to disarm the Amhara Special Forces, Fano, and local militias to restructure the national defense force led to instability, posing a threat to the local population. These circumstances made it challenging to conduct fieldwork, collect essential data, and engage with relevant stakeholders within the anticipated timeline.

External Factors: The study did not fully account for external influences that might impact urban poverty in conflict-affected areas. Limited research was conducted on variables such as local and global economic trends, their interactions with armed conflict, and their implications for the extent of poverty in urban environments. Incorporating these external factors could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics at play.

Limited Temporal Scope: Focusing on specific stages of armed conflict may limit the study's ability to capture the full range of dynamics and long-term effects of urban poverty in post-war or prolonged conflict settings. A broader temporal perspective could have offered a more holistic view of the relationship between armed conflict and urban poverty.

Despite these limitations, the research carefully considered these challenges when exploring how armed conflict impacts urban poverty in Kombolcha Town. These findings are crucial for guiding interventions and policy decisions. To enhance the validity and reliability of the results, the researcher employed rigorous methodologies, triangulated data from various sources, and contextualized the findings within the larger socio-political landscape.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The exploration of armed conflict within the realm of development studies presents a novel and intriguing area offering analytical and methodological insights, albeit accompanied by challenges. Yet, the scarcity of conflict data hampers our understanding of violent conflicts' nature, consequences, and their effects on urban poverty. These data-related limitations may impede governmental and non-governmental entities' ability to efficiently target, deliver, and sustain poverty alleviation efforts, rehabilitation programs, and vital humanitarian aid to affected populations (Baker et al., 2020).

This study on war-induced urban poverty in Kombolcha town, Ethiopia, holds significant importance for both research and practical applications. Here are the specific significances of the study:

Localized Understanding: Focused on Kombolcha town, this study provides a localized insight into the impact of armed conflict on urban poverty within this specific area.

This approach enables a comprehensive exploration of the unique challenges and dynamics encountered by the urban populace in Kombolcha. Such localized comprehension is crucial for policymakers, local authorities, and development practitioners to tailor interventions and strategies precisely to meet the distinct needs of Kombolcha town.

Empirical Evidence: The study provides empirical evidence on the relationship between armed conflict and urban poverty in Kombolcha. It offers data and analysis that can substantiate claims and guide decision-making processes. This evidence-based approach is invaluable for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working on addressing conflict-induced urban poverty in Kombolcha, aiding in the development of effective policies, programs, and interventions.

Policy Recommendations: The study can inform the development of context-specific policy recommendations to tackle conflict-induced urban poverty in Kombolcha town. By examining the socioeconomic impacts and identifying the challenges faced by the urban population, the study can provide practical guidance for policymakers and stakeholders.

These recommendations may focus on areas such as livelihood support, access to essential services, infrastructure development, social protection measures, and conflict resolution mechanisms. The study has the potential to actively engage and foster participation and collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in addressing conflict-induced urban poverty in Kombolcha. It establishes a platform for decision-makers, local government officials, community leaders, civil society organizations, and development professionals to convene, exchange information, and engage in discussions. This proactive involvement nurtures a coordinated and inclusive approach toward poverty reduction, ensuring that the perspectives and opinions of diverse stakeholders are duly considered.

1.8 Organization of the thesis

The thesis is structured into six chapters, each serving a distinct purpose within the study. Chapter One sets the stage by providing an overview of the study's background, problem statement, research objectives and questions, limitations, scope, and a roadmap outlining the paper's organization. Chapter Two delves into the development of conceptual frameworks and the conduct of empirical investigations. It also explores key conceptual aspects related to understanding armed conflict, urban poverty, and theoretical perspectives on poverty, as well as various schools of thought on conflict and poverty. The third chapter focuses on elucidating the research methodology. It includes a detailed presentation of the study area, explanations of sampling techniques, specifications of sample size, and clarifications of the analysis methods employed.

In Chapter Four, "War and Multidimensional Poverty," the spotlight is on the socioeconomic landscape and the prevailing poverty status of households in Kombolcha Town. Through a meticulous analysis of quantitative data, the chapter seeks to discern the multidimensional impact of war on poverty levels, with findings interpreted within this context. Chapter Five delves into the "Socioeconomic Consequences of War," analyzing and interpreting the broader ramifications of armed conflict on various socioeconomic facets. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how war influences and shapes the socioeconomic landscape of the study area. Chapter Six offers an insightful exploration of the ethnography surrounding conflict-induced urban poverty. Through the lens of the study community, this segment delves into the lived experiences of households in Kombolcha Town, providing a nuanced understanding of the impact of conflict-induced poverty. Finally, Chapter Seven summarizes key findings and present conclusion and recommendations.

1.9. Definition of Key terms and Concepts

Poverty: Lack of essential resources and opportunities leading to economic hardship and social exclusion (World Bank, 2020).

Urban Poverty: Economic insecurity and deprivation in cities due to limited resources and social marginalization (UN-Habitat, 2016).

Deprivation: Absence of fundamental resources necessary for a dignified life, hindering basic human rights (Sen, 1999).

War: Organized armed conflict causing destruction, loss of life, and far-reaching socio-political impacts (Clausewitz, 1832).

Northern Conflict: Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) clashes with Ethiopian and Eritrean forces since 2020, causing violence, displacement, and human rights concerns.

Social Capital: Collective value of social networks fostering cooperation, trust, and mutual support within communities (Putnam, 2000).

Urban Livelihood: Means of securing income and well-being in cities through diverse economic activities and access to urban resources (Chambers and Conway, 1992).

Household: Basic social unit sharing resources and responsibilities within a dwelling, shaping social and economic dynamics (United Nations, 2018).

War-Induced Urban Poverty: Exacerbation of poverty in urban areas due to armed conflicts, leading to economic distress and heightened vulnerability (Hasan et al., 2017).

Vulnerability: Susceptibility to harm and adverse events, often due to poverty, inequality, and environmental hazards (Adger, 2006).

Multidimensional Poverty: Poverty measured across various well-being dimensions beyond income, capturing simultaneous deprivations (Alkire and Foster, 2011).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Armed Conflict and Poverty

2.1.1 Concept of Armed Conflict

War in the popular sense is a conflict between political groups involving hostilities of considerable duration and magnitude. In the usage of social science, certain qualifications are added. Sociologists usually apply the term to such conflicts only if they are initiated and conducted in accordance with socially recognized forms. They treat war as an institution recognized in custom or in law (Frankel 2024).

War is an armed conflict that transpires between two or more groups. War has existed since at least the beginning of recorded history, nearly 5,000 years ago. No generation has ever truly been free of the threat of war, and war remains one of the world's most significant problems. Most people associate wars with weapons, fighting, suffering, and destruction (Frankel 2024).

Armed conflict encompasses wars and violent protests involving fatal weapons between social groupings or a social group and a state. It is a planned, collective, and violent confrontation involving two or more actors, whether state or non-state (Woodhouse, 2000, p.19). In war-affected countries, inequalities among social groups often contribute to conflicts beyond poverty alone. Poor nations are more prone to involvement in armed conflicts compared to wealthier nations. Inequalities based on factors like ethnicity, religion, national identity, or economic class hinder peaceful change by creating uneven access to political power (Petrovic, 2017).

Ethnographic studies analyse practices such as homicide, capital punishment, raiding, feuding, and warfare, examining how they are shaped by belief systems, norms, and institutions within societies. The anthropology of war focuses on escalated conflicts where armed violence becomes a means of resolving disputes within or between societies, surpassing normal mechanisms of control and order (Richards, 2005).

2.1.2. Causes and Effects of Armed Conflict

Anthropology, like other disciplines, seeks to explain why societies wage wars. Particularly prominent are materialist explanations that see competition over scarce resources such as land or food as the fundamental causes of war (Ferguson 1984). One of the shortcomings of these accounts is that they explain the variations in the incidence of wars on the basis of the rational-choice paradigm. This, however, fails to explain the importance of other factors such as identity, culture, and socio-psychological motivations. The ‘greed versus grievance’ debate in the explanation of ethnic conflicts is linked to this: ‘greed’ refers to the argument that people engage in armed conflicts because of economic rewards based on rational cost-benefit calculations; ‘grievance’ stands for the view that people fight over issues of identity (ethnicity, religion, social class, etc.). Today, most scholars agree that both factors contribute to armed conflicts and wars.

Approaches within the social-structural tradition understand warfare mainly as an ordering principle of social relations and social structures. As anthropologist Max Gluckman concluded from his research on political systems among African tribes, social relations that are formed through marriage alliances, trade networks, gift exchange, and so forth play an important role in limiting the frequency and intensity of warfare (Gluckman, 1956).

Anthropologists have further examined how living in a chronic state of fear affects the social fabric of societies and the daily lives of people: neighbors and friends turn into enemies, families are separated by fear or forced conscription, and there is a general sense of hopelessness and trauma as effects of war on society (Robben and Suarez-Orozco, 2000).

2.2. Conceptualization of Poverty and Deprivation

2.2.1. Conceptualizing Poverty, Deprivation and social capital

Poverty definition is often as elusive as the phenomenon itself and a source of debate and dialogue for many researchers and authors (Forsyth, T., Leach, M., & Scoones, I., 1998). The level of definition has expanded from time to time until it holds the current definition. The World Bank defines poverty as a pronounced deprivation of well-being (WB, 2006). This deprivation can be economic, psychological, or social.

Therefore, there are many different aspects of poverty, including hunger, homelessness, illness and lack of access to healthcare, unemployment, inability to attend school, fear of the future, helplessness, lack of representation, and loss of freedom (World Bank, 2006).

Due (2002) emphasizes that the concepts of poverty employed in most development analyses are very ‘thin’, focusing on material and measurable elements such as income and nutrition. In contrast, ‘thick’ ethnographic work reveals far more complex, multi-layered pictures. The various concepts and definitions of poverty and wealth, or more broadly, ill-being and well-being, which policy agencies use, have emerged in specific cultural and historical contexts. The same is true of the variety of terms that are found among African peoples and languages. Material deprivation—lack of food and income, poor health—may be important everywhere (Booth et al., 1999).

Deprivation in war-related crises carries additional dimensions that are critical to understand from anthropological and sociological perspectives. These disciplines shed light on the complex nature of deprivation during armed conflict, encompassing material, social, and cultural aspects (Due, 2002). From a sociological standpoint, war-related crises intensify existing social inequalities and give rise to new forms of deprivation. Destruction of infrastructure, disruption of essential services, and population displacement contribute to severe material deprivation and unequal access to resources (Stewart et al., 2002). Sociologists also analyze how armed conflict affects social cohesion, community networks, and social capital, which further contribute to feelings of deprivation and social dislocation (Hewitt, 2013).

Anthropologically, deprivation in war-related crises takes on cultural and symbolic dimensions. Anthropologists’ study how cultural systems and practices are disrupted, leading to the loss of cultural identity, rituals, and traditions (Duffield, 2001). They explore how war-related deprivation impacts social relationships, kinship ties, and community dynamics, as well as the coping mechanisms and adaptations employed by individuals and communities (Weingarten, 2008). By considering both anthropological and sociological perspectives, the multifaceted nature of deprivation in war-related crises becomes apparent. These perspectives highlight the interconnectedness of material, social, and cultural dimensions of deprivation. Understanding these complexities informs interventions and policies aimed at addressing the diverse needs of

affected populations, going beyond immediate physical destruction to address the long-lasting social and psychological consequences of armed conflict (Galtung, 1969; Goodhand et al., 2001).

Social capital is a key concept related to social networks and refers to the resources embedded in social relationships. It includes trust, reciprocity, and networks of social connections that provide individuals and communities with access to information, resources, and support (Mayer, 2015). Social capital can be instrumental in facilitating economic opportunities, accessing services, and mobilizing resources during challenging times. Social support is another aspect of social networks that involves the provision of assistance, care, and emotional, instrumental, or informational resources by individuals or social networks to help others cope with stress, challenges, and adverse circumstances (Adger, 2000).

2.2.2 Urban Poverty

Urban poverty is often characterized by cumulative deprivations; that is, one dimension of poverty is often the cause of or contributor to another dimension. In the urban context, poverty and vulnerability (a dynamic concept whereby the “vulnerable” face the risk of falling into poverty) can be related to three distinctive characteristics of urban life: commoditization (reliance on the cash economy), environmental hazards (stemming from the density and hazardous location of settlements and from exposure to multiple pollutants), and social fragmentation (Moser, Gatehouse, and Garcia 1996).

Deprivation is a multifaceted concept. Deprivation presents itself in economics as poverty; in politics as marginalization; in social connections as discrimination; in culture as rootlessness; and in ecology as vulnerability. The many types of deprivation reinforce one another. All of these forms of deprivation are frequently experienced by the same home, area, or country. We must combat all sorts of deprivation. However, none of the other characteristics of deprivation can be addressed unless we address the issues of poverty and unemployment (Wratten, 1995).

For more than a century, urban poverty has remained an issue of discussion among sociologists and political scientists. The ever-increasing theoretical attention to urban poverty has invited discussion on the causes, consequences, and solutions to this problem. The term has had its greatest influence on the people of Africa since the 1960s. For instance, if we look at the growth

of the extremely poor in Africa, it is apparent that these regions experienced a growth rate of 164% during 1970–1980 (Curley, 2005). This increase facilitated the growth of unemployment, dependency on government support, a high birth rate, corruption, and crime. In the midst of uncertainty and complexity regarding the definition of urban poverty, two broad approaches seem to be the most common among scholars. One refers to a conventional economic approach, where the poor are identified through social indicators like income, consumption, etc. (Wratten 1995; Satterthwaite 1995). The other, primarily propounded by anthropologists and social planners, refers to poor people using the perception of nonmaterial dispossession and social discrepancy (Muwanga, 2001).

According to Alkire and Foster, poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond mere income levels. It encompasses various deprivations individuals may face in key areas such as education, health, living standards, and access to essential services (Alkire and Foster 2011). This broader perspective underscores the idea that people can experience significant hardships even when their financial resources seem adequate. By recognizing the complexity of poverty, Alkire advocates for a more nuanced understanding that captures the diverse challenges faced by individuals in their daily lives. To measure multidimensional poverty, Alkire and James Foster developed the Alkire-Foster methodology, which utilizes the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). This approach employs a dual-cutoff method for identifying poverty (Alkire 2011). First, it establishes deprivation cutoffs for each dimension, determining whether individuals are deprived in specific areas. Second, it applies a poverty cutoff to the weighted sum of these deprivations, identifying individuals as multidimensionally poor if their total deprivations meet or exceed the threshold. By considering both the number and severity of deprivations, the MPI provides a comprehensive assessment of poverty that reveals the intricacies of individuals' lived experiences.

In this study, the author incorporates both developmental and anthropological perspectives on poverty, recognizing that these frameworks offer valuable insights into the underlying causes and implications of multidimensional poverty. By integrating these dimensions, we aim to provide a richer understanding of poverty that informs more effective and context-sensitive policy interventions

2.3 Armed conflict nexus Poverty

From a purely economic point of view, war fuels poverty because of how it disrupts livelihoods and access to money. The Institute for Economics & Peace found that the 10 most conflict-affected countries lost, on average, 41% of their economic output as a result of violence (McCarthy, 2022). But if we broaden the definition of poverty to include the basic necessities of life, then nothing fuels poverty quite like war, which is catastrophic to human well-being.

There are 27 active conflicts around the world. Some of these conflicts have been going on for decades, others for only a few years. In all cases, the results have been disastrous. In Yemen, years of civil war and Saudi-led bombing campaigns have created the world's worst humanitarian crisis. More than 21 million people in the country, including 11 million children, need urgent humanitarian aid. Roughly 16.2 million people struggle to get even the barest amount of food needed to survive. Ten years of war in Syria have left more than 350,000 people dead and generated 6.6 million refugees and 6.4 million internally displaced persons. For millions of children, formal education has become impossible or a stressful experience. Hundreds of schools have been bombed, and many others lack adequate sanitation, heating and ventilation, and electricity, not to mention too few teachers. The civil war in Ethiopia has caused famine-like conditions for 400,000 people, disrupted the supply of 80% of essential medication, and pushed more than 2 million people from their homes (McCarthy, 2022)

2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks

In examining the impact of armed conflict on urban poverty, I employ a multifaceted theoretical framework that draws upon the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), Conflict Theory, and Structural Violence.

Starting with the MPI, this framework enables a comprehensive assessment of poverty by expanding the definition beyond mere income levels. It incorporates various dimensions such as education, health, housing, and social exclusion, which are particularly relevant in conflict-affected contexts. For instance, Alkire and Santos (2010) utilized the MPI to analyze poverty in Afghanistan, highlighting deprivations that resonate with the situation in Ethiopia. By applying the MPI, this study reveals how armed conflict disrupts multiple dimensions of well-being, leading not only to increased poverty levels but also to deeper social vulnerabilities.

Research consistently shows that armed conflict adversely affects access to quality education and healthcare, as illustrated by the destruction of schools and healthcare facilities (UNESCO, 2020). Additionally, displacement and damage to infrastructure contribute to housing insecurity and inadequate living conditions, further exacerbating poverty (World Bank, 2011). Utilizing the MPI allows me to identify populations that experience varying forms of deprivation, particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children, and ethnic minorities, who often face heightened challenges during and after conflicts (UN Women, 2015; Justino and Verwimp, 2013).

To complement the MPI, I incorporate Conflict Theory, which posits that societal conflicts arise from inequalities in resources and power. In the context of the TPLF and central government conflict in Ethiopia, this theory elucidates how struggles over resources and authority intensify existing disparities. The war has aggravated inequalities in access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, thereby increasing poverty levels and fostering social disintegration. As resources are diverted to military expenditures, social programs suffer, entrenching social stratification and amplifying vulnerability among marginalized populations.

Furthermore, I draw on the concept of Structural Violence, popularized by Johan Galtung, which highlights the systematic ways in which social structures disadvantage individuals and communities. War creates conditions that foster structural violence, depriving populations of essential resources, healthcare, and education. In northern Ethiopia, the conflict has disrupted critical services, leading to heightened food insecurity and loss of livelihoods. This framework allows for a deeper exploration of how the conflict perpetuates multidimensional poverty by eroding the social structures and support systems necessary for community resilience and recovery.

By integrating these three frameworks, I provide a comprehensive analysis of the interplay between armed conflict and urban poverty. This multifaceted approach facilitates a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by local communities and informs effective policy responses and interventions aimed at promoting resilience and recovery in post-conflict settings.

2.3.2. Empirical evidences of War induced poverty and deprivation

The impact of armed conflict on poverty and deprivation has been extensively studied in academic literature. Researchers such as Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and Klasen (2010) have highlighted how armed conflicts exacerbate poverty by disrupting economic activities, destroying infrastructure, and displacing populations. These studies indicate that conflict leads to widespread economic setbacks, reduced access to essential services, and increased vulnerability to poverty among affected communities. For example, Brück, Justino, and Verwimp (2012) demonstrated that households in post-conflict Rwanda experienced significant declines in income, limited livelihood opportunities, and heightened food insecurity.

Conflicts often result in severe deprivation and humanitarian crises. Stewart and Fitzgerald (2001) and Fjelde (2010) analyze the multiple dimensions of deprivation caused by conflict, including limited access to healthcare, education, clean water, and food. Their findings emphasize that conflicts disrupt social systems and exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, leading to long-lasting negative consequences for human development and well-being. Verwimp's (2013) study on Mozambique illustrates how deprivation can persist even after active fighting ends, hindering recovery and reconstruction efforts.

In addition to exacerbating poverty and deprivation, armed conflicts profoundly affect social networks and community relations. Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov (2013) explored the impact of conflict on gender dynamics in Afghanistan, revealing that conflicts disrupt social networks and traditional gender roles, resulting in significant changes in community dynamics. Habyarimana et al. (2007) examined the relationship between ethnic diversity, social cohesion, and public goods provision, demonstrating that conflicts strain intergroup relations and impede collective action. Furthermore, Blattman and Miguel (2010) provided insights into the social networks formed during conflict, such as rebel groups and diaspora networks, and their implications for post-conflict stability and development.

The economic and social impacts of armed conflict in Africa are particularly significant in countries directly involved. The estimated economic costs of armed conflicts in 23 African countries amount to around \$300 billion, with an annual loss of approximately \$18 billion (IANSAs, Oxfam, and Saferworld, 2007). These conflicts have led to an average shrinking of

African nations' economies by 15%. A stark example is the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where the economy nearly collapsed, and per capita income sharply declined after a decade of bloody fighting and political turmoil. By 2010, nearly 74% of the DRC's population lived in multidimensional poverty, with 15% experiencing multiple deprivations (UNDP, 2016). Similarly, Nigeria's history of armed conflict, including the civil war between the Biafran and Nigerian peoples and the ongoing attacks by Boko Haram, has resulted in significant loss of life and infrastructure damage.

Klasen (2010) examined the impact of conflict on poverty in South Sudan, revealing how armed conflict perpetuates and intensifies poverty through its disruptive effects on economic development and basic service provision. Justino and Verwimp (2013) conducted one of the first analyses of conflict's impact on household poverty dynamics, showing that approximately 20% of the Rwandan population fell into poverty following the 1994 genocide, with 26% moving into extreme poverty. However, their study has limitations due to the use of delayed data and a narrow focus on income and food poverty, neglecting the multidimensional nature of poverty.

The consequences of armed conflict extend beyond immediate economic impacts, resulting in losses of assets, income, and market access, as well as decreased social service spending. Poor populations often rely on social networks as safety nets; thus, the erosion of social capital due to conflict-related factors—such as displacement and child soldier recruitment—has catastrophic effects. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees are frequently overrepresented among the chronically poor. In northern Uganda, for instance, violence has led to chronic intergenerational poverty, with stark inequalities in welfare between the conflict-affected north and the rest of the country. Households underinvested in nutrition, health, and education due to prolonged conflict, resulting in long-term impacts on the poverty of children and youth.

Overall, while many micro-studies focus on single dimensions of poverty or specific indicators, this research addresses the impact of conflict on the multidimensional poverty index and social capital among interethnic urban households through both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. By adopting this comprehensive approach, the study aims to fill existing knowledge gaps and provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship between armed conflict and poverty in Africa.

2.4 Conflict in Ethiopia: Historical Context of the Northern Ethiopia War

The Northern Ethiopia War, also known as the Tigray War, arose from Ethiopia's complex historical context. The conflict erupted in November 2020 in the Tigray region, influenced by several key historical factors. First, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power in 1991 after overthrowing the Marxist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam (Christopher, 1991). The EPRDF implemented a federal system that granted regional autonomy, including to the Tigray region.

Within the EPRDF, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) held significant influence and played a central role in Ethiopian politics. However, tensions between the TPLF and the federal government grew over time, leading to a power struggle (Abbink, 2021). In 2018, Abiy Ahmed became Prime Minister and initiated reforms aimed at political liberalization, economic development, and national reconciliation. These reforms challenged the existing power structure of the EPRDF and diminished the TPLF's influence.

In 2019, Abiy Ahmed dissolved the EPRDF and established the Prosperity Party, seeking to create a unified political entity. The TPLF refused to join the new party, perceiving it as a threat to their regional autonomy and political power. Tensions escalated further when the Tigray region conducted its own regional election in September 2020, defying the federal government's decision to postpone all elections due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The culmination of these tensions occurred on November 4, 2020, when the Ethiopian federal government launched a military offensive against the Tigray region. The federal government cited the TPLF's alleged attack on federal military bases as the conflict's trigger. However, the war quickly escalated into a full-scale conflict involving multiple actors, resulting in severe humanitarian consequences.

According to a World Food Program assessment, over 9 million people in the three conflict-affected regions—Tigray, Amhara, and Afar—require humanitarian food aid (WFP, 2023).

While information is scarce and credible estimates of casualties are lacking, organizations like Amnesty International have reported widespread human rights violations throughout the conflict. Civilians have suffered immensely due to the war. The deliberate use of starvation as a military tactic has led to rapidly increasing hunger in the affected regions. Although communication disruptions complicate efforts to assess the true extent of this humanitarian crisis, reports of famine-related deaths are already emerging. Attacks on civilian targets and infrastructure have persisted (Abbink, 2021; Chamberlin & Abay, 2022). For instance, a report from Ethiopian citizen media dated December 13, 2021, indicated that the TPLF destroyed over three thousand health institutions during its five-month takeover of parts of Afar and Amhara provinces. This destruction included 60 health centers in Afar, 40 hospitals, 453 health stations, 1,850 health posts, 4 blood banks, and 1 oxygen factory in Amhara (Chamberlin & Abay, 2022).

In summary, the Northern Ethiopia War reflects a culmination of historical tensions and conflicts over power and autonomy. The humanitarian impact of the war continues to be devastating, underscoring the urgent need for international attention and intervention to alleviate the suffering of those affected.

2.5 Multidimensional Poverty in Ethiopia

Numerous studies indicate that the majority of Ethiopians are among the poorest in the world (Bogale et al., 2005; Dercon & Krishnan, 2000; Kidanu, 1999; World Bank, 2001). Examining welfare indicators such as life expectancy, access to clean water, electricity, under-5 stunting, access to education and basic living necessities reveals the severity of poverty in Ethiopia. Scholars have attempted, albeit insufficiently, to demonstrate the multidimensional nature of poverty in the country.

Gebreslassie (2013) found that the headcount poverty measure using unidimensional metrics is significantly lower than that derived from multidimensional measures. His research in various urban areas showed that only 33.9% were classified as poor according to unidimensional measures, while over 63% were identified as multidimensionally poor. Although his work is commendable for comparing monetary and non-monetary poverty, it does not examine the overlaps and differences between these two measures (Salecker et al., 2020). He failed to clarify

how many individuals who were monetarily poor were also multidimensionally poor, and vice versa.

In a national context, Goshu (2019) and M. Workneh & Eshete (2020) adopted multidimensional poverty and inequality measures. Their findings indicated that, on average, 81.3% of Ethiopians were multidimensionally poor, experiencing 46.6% of all potential deprivations. The incidence of both monetary poverty (22.1%) and non-monetary poverty (70.5%) varied significantly across regions and residential areas. Notably, income accounted for the largest share (44%) of the total Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), followed by living conditions, health, and education. They also discovered that housing, cooking fuel, toilets, sanitation, and electricity significantly impacted non-monetary multidimensional poverty.

Conversely, Gedefaw (2021) examined the multifaceted poverty of rural households in the Northern Amhara Regional State. His study demonstrated that over 90% of rural families were classified as impoverished based on eleven parameters. Many lacked access to healthcare, electricity, clean water, sanitation, education, and other essential services critical for human development and economic prosperity. Factors such as shocks, off-farm income involvement, distance to primary markets, educational attainment, and demographic characteristics significantly influenced the multidimensional poverty status in the study area.

Mare et al. (2021) assessed multidimensional rural poverty in the Burji and Konso areas of southern Ethiopia, revealing an MPI of 0.419, with a 76.6% incidence and 54.7% intensity of multidimensional rural poverty. Deprivation in school attendance was the largest contributor (15%) to the MPI, while living standards accounted for the highest deprivation component (36%). However, none of these studies considered social capital as critical dimensions of poverty. Focusing exclusively on objective measurements such as education and health fails to capture the subjective aspects of well-being. By integrating both subjective well-being and objective indicators in poverty measurement, we can achieve a more comprehensive understanding of poverty, particularly in cross-sectional studies (Alkire, 2007).

Desawi et al. (2021) explored the determinants of multidimensional poverty in a selected area of the Tigray region, finding that 60% of households were multidimensionally poor. Their analysis

revealed significant negative associations between multidimensional poverty and factors such as contact with extension agents, the education level of the household head, household size, number of plots, annual income, and access to hired labor. While several studies (Workneh, 2013; Mekonnen & Heshmati, 2016; Habtewold, 2021) have employed multidimensional poverty measures, most include income as a dimension of the MPI. However, this inclusion has limitations. First, it can lead to double-counting deprivation due to residual linkages among variables. Second, there are practical concerns regarding whether including income enhances or detracts from the quality of measurement. Lastly, if the MPI is primarily used for planning social programs, including income may be less relevant, as it mainly evaluates the outcomes of policies focused on income poverty.

Most studies in Ethiopia rely on an exogenous weighting scheme for the MPI. Importantly, no research has yet measured multidimensional poverty by considering conflict and social capital as fundamental variables. This paper aims to address these gaps by treating income and the MPI as distinct poverty measures. It employs a frequency-based weighting system for each dimension and includes social capital as an essential dimension of poverty. Additionally, the study utilizes the ordered logit model to identify factors affecting multidimensional poverty and examines the impact of conflict on poverty during the war-affected period at both individual and household levels.

Chapter Three

Description of the study area and Research Methodology

3.1 Description of the study Area

According to legend, Kombolcha Town's earliest residents used to call it Biraro. However, Kombolcha is an Oromiffa word that literally means thorny tree, referring to its acacia and semi-savannah plants. Others said the word Kombolcha comes from the Italian word 'Kampolochiya' which means 'Village of Electric Power and Light'. Through time, the name Kombolochiya was changed to Kombolcha by the local people. Its nativity began with the invasion of fascist Italian forces in 1936. The fascist administration had established a construction camp in Kombolcha for a highway; it was built from Asmara and the port of Aseb to Addis Ababa, making it the converging point of three highways: Tigray, Addis Ababa, and Djibouti (Kombolcha Town Culture and Tourism Office, 2019; Kombolcha Rejo politan Administration Office, 2022).

After the expulsion of the fascist invasion, Kombolcha continued to grow just as a roadside town until its official chartering in 1943. Its master plan was legislated in 1973, when it just had an area of close to 1,600 hectares and an estimated 4,000 people. It now covers an area of 2,184 hectares of land in urban and rural prefectures (KOCT, 2019). The town is located in Amhara Regional State, one of the eleven states that federated the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It is bordered to the north and west by Dessie Woreda and to the south and east by Qalu Woreda.

Its relative distance is 375 km from the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, 505 km from the state capital Bahirdar, 25 km from the Zonal capital Dessie. The town is built on plain table land surrounded to the north, east, and west by tall mountains, where Mount "Yegof" towers as the highest point. Mount "Yegof" is covered with a thick forest of acacia, juniper, Blackwood, and other indigenous plants. Kombolcha is one of the few towns in Ethiopia with a relatively greater number of large-scale manufacturing plants. Textiles, meat processing (ELFORA), a tannery, a brewery (BGI), steel products, and flour production are some of the industries in the town. The town is inhabited by Amhara, Oromo, Argoba, and Tigre ethnic groups.

3.2. Research Design and Methodology

3.2.1 Research Methodology

Research methodology is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically (C.R. Kothari 2004).

This research adopts a philosophical orientation that combines critical realism ontology with pragmatism epistemology. Critical realism ontology posits the existence of an external reality that exists independently of our perceptions and experiences. It recognizes that social phenomena, such as war-induced poverty, are shaped by underlying structures and mechanisms. By embracing critical realism ontology, this study acknowledges the tangible and significant impact of war on the multidimensional poverty status of households, unemployment rate, and socioeconomic impact of the war in Kombolcha town, Ethiopia.

Complementing critical realism, pragmatism serves as the chosen epistemology for this research. According to Clark (2011, pragmatism brushes aside the quantitative/qualitative divide and ends the paradigm war by suggesting that the most important question is whether the research has helped to find out what the researcher wants to know. The main reason for adopting a pragmatist position in a study is to allow a researcher to have a pluralistic stance in gathering all sorts of data in order to best answer the research questions (Clark, 2011).

3.2.2. Mixed Research Approach

This research employed mixed research approach and design. The mixed research method approach helps “to overcome the epistemological differences between quantitative and qualitative paradigms and to provide a royal road to true knowledge” (Bergman, 2008: 4). Another value of a mixed-methods approach is its triangulation component. Data triangulation in a mixed-methods study is generally accepted as a strategy for validating results obtained with the individual method (Bergman, 2008).

The overall logical structure utilized in a study to address the research question which serves as the blueprint for data gathering, measurement, and analysis is referred to as the research design (Gandhi, 2015). As a result, the research question determines the sort of study design that should be employed. In other words, after deciding on a research question, someone won't be able to

pick any research design he/she likes; rather, your research question will bound the researcher to a certain design. A research design's principal purpose is to outline how you will get answers to your research questions (Kumar, 2011). To that purpose, an embedded research design was used in this study. The embedded research design combines qualitative and quantitative methods within a single overarching framework, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted issues at hand (Gandhi, 2015).

i. Ethnography

Ethnography is a qualitative research method used in anthropology that involves immersive fieldwork, participant observation, and in-depth interviews to study the culture, social interactions, and lived experiences of a particular group or community (Creswell, 2007).

In the conflict of the north, I observed the lives of the urban households of Kombolcha Town and documented the patterns of their lives and experiences from different individual and group cases, employing ethnography supported by interviews and focus group discussions. However, due to the nature of my research topic, I was an overt passive participant observer in selected *kebeles* through the observation and interview of respondents for some extended periods.

ii. Cross-Sectional Study with Retrospective Design

A cross-sectional study involves collecting data from a group of subjects at a single point in time to analyze relationships between variables (Andrew, 2000). The study employed a cross-sectional research design, gathering data from households in urban areas affected by war at a specific point in time to explore the relationships between war exposure and poverty outcomes. Simultaneously collecting data from these households enabled an assessment of how conflict impacts poverty and socio-economic conditions within urban settings. Additionally, the study integrated retrospective data collection methods to compare pre-war and post-war experiences, providing insights into the evolving dynamics of poverty influenced by warfare.

Utilizing a survey research design, the study investigated the correlation between armed conflict and poverty by administering questionnaires to 330 households. The questionnaire covered a range of topics, including demographic information, household characteristics, income levels, and various poverty indicators, offering a comprehensive view of the participants' socio-economic status.

3.3 Sampling design and Sample size

3.3.1 Sampling Method

Based on demographic estimations for 2022, Kombolcha is anticipated to accommodate approximately 204,348 residents. Moreover, an annual population change of 4.4% has been observed in the municipality between 2007 and 2022 (ESS, 2022). According to the Kombolcha Rijopolitian City Mayor Office's Development and Planning Report (2022), the population of the city is 263,795 (126,550 males and 137,245 females). Among this population, the urban kebeles consist of 210,842 (98,177 males and 112,665 females), and the remaining 52,953 (28,373 males and 24,580 females) are rural *kebeles*. The urban *kebeles* generally consist of 62,012 urban households, which are the focus of this study.

3.3.1.1 Probability sampling method: Simple random sampling

Probability sampling is frequently referred to as chance sampling. Every item in the universe has an equal probability of being included in the sample with this sampling method (C.R. Kothari 2004). The study used multistage sampling to select samples from the population. Primary sample units are inclusive groupings in this method of sampling, while secondary units are sub-groups within these final units to be chosen that belong to only one group (Singh 2006). In this academic pursuit, a meticulous multi-stage sampling framework was meticulously orchestrated to ensure a comprehensive representation of households across diverse administrative tiers. The sampling process unfolded with the deliberate selection of Borkena and Biraro Sub-Cities from a pool of four sub-cities for inclusion in the study. Second, I randomly selected three kebeles from each sub-city for a total of six *kebeles with list of war affected households in the town*. The total list of study population in the study was 2,229 households. To determine the sample size of the study, I recruited the formula of Krejcie, R., and Morgan, D.W. (1970);

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{X^2 N P (1-P)}{e^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where X^2 = Chi square value for 1 degree of freedom at 95% = 3.841, n is the sample size, N is the population size (2,229), P is population proportion = 0.5 and e is the level of precision or allowable error (recommended = 0.05).

$$n = \frac{(3.841) \times 2,229 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \times (2229 - 1) + 3.841 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}$$
$$n = 327$$

In order to obtain reliable data, I increased the sample size to **330** households.

Table 2.1: Multistage sampling of the study

Sample areas	I Conflict affected HHs	Sample HHs	II Sample Kebele	Number of HHs	III Sample HHs
Borkena	1,336	198	12	545	80
			04	379	56
Biraro	893	132	01	412	60
			03	280	42
			05	265	39
			02	348	53
			Total	2,229	330

Source: own calculation (2023)

In allocating a total sample size of 330 households among the kebeles within Borkena and Biraro Sub-Cities, the systematic approach yielded the following distribution: Kebele 12 was assigned 80 households, Kebele 04 received 56 households, Kebele 01 was allocated 60 households, Kebele 03 obtained 42 households, Kebele 05 was designated 39 households, and Kebele 02 was assigned 53 households. These sample sizes were determined proportionally based on the total number of households in each kebele, ensuring a representative and systematic sampling strategy across the sub-cities.

Within the precincts of Borkena Sub-City, an initial count of 1,336 households was earmarked for potential participation in the research endeavor. Through a methodical sampling regimen, 198 households were judiciously chosen to form a representative sample from this locale. This selection process was executed with care to capture the intricacies and variations prevalent within Borkena Sub-City. Simultaneously, within Biraro Sub-City, a total of 893 households were considered for potential inclusion in the study. Following a rigorous sampling procedure, 132 households were meticulously selected as the final sample size for this specific geographical area. The selection of these households was conducted with precision to ensure an accurate reflection of the demographic and contextual nuances of Biraro Sub-City.

Moreover, within Borkena Sub-City, specific kebeles were targeted for inclusion. Shesha Ber (Keb 12) saw 81 households selected, while Kuteba (Keb 04) and Kebele 01 had 56 and 61

households chosen, respectively. In Biraro Sub-City, Kebeles 2, 3, and 5 were randomly selected, with 348 households from Kebele 2, 280 from Kebele 3, and 265 from Kebele 5 contributing to the sample size computation, resulting in a total of 132 households sampled exclusively from Biraro Sub-City.

In order to choose sample households from the household lists of each kebele, the research study implemented a systematic sampling technique. This method involved determining the sample interval by dividing the total number of households by the desired sample size. Subsequently, a starting point was randomly selected, and every *n*th element, where *n* represents the sampling interval, was systematically chosen from the list of household units. This systematic approach ensures a structured and unbiased selection process that is essential for maintaining the integrity and representativeness of the sampled households within each kebele.

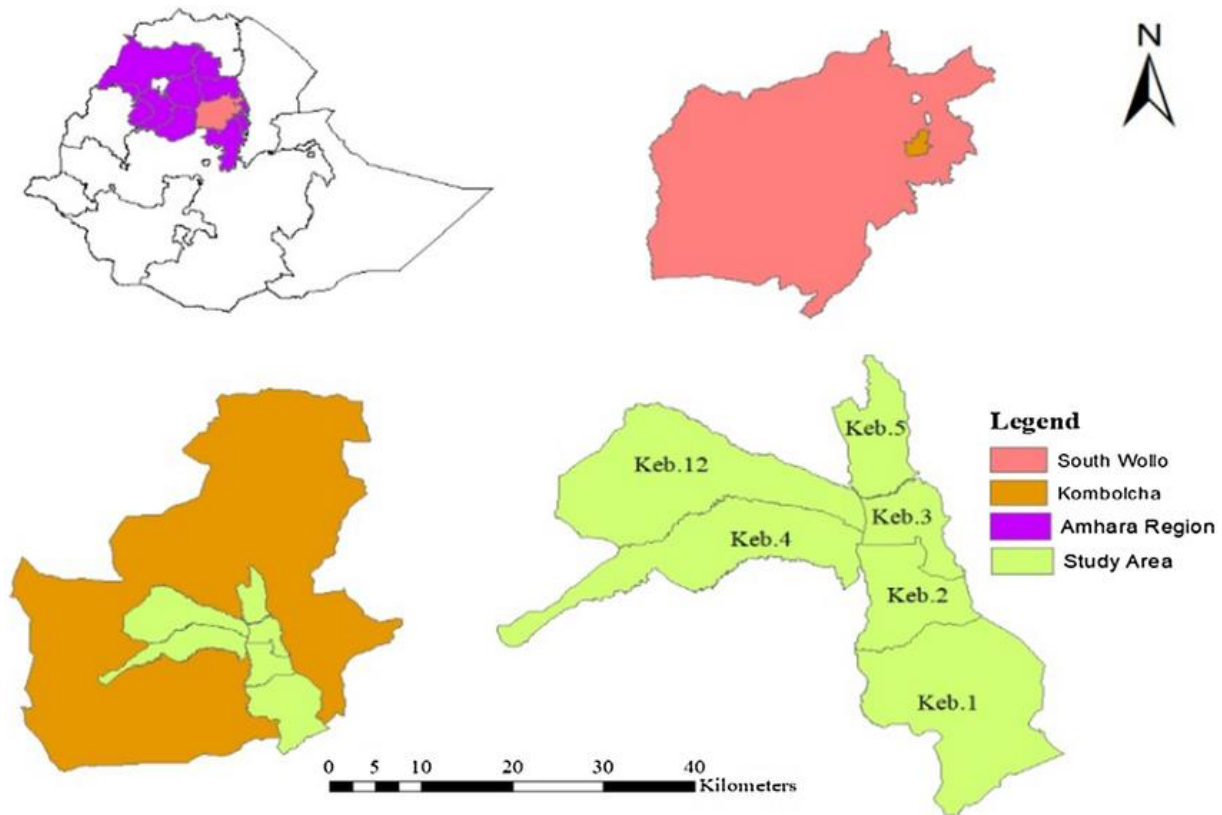


Figure 2.1 Location map of the study Area

3.3.1.2 Non probability sampling

The other sampling method employed in this study was non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. This approach involves the purposeful and deliberate selection of particular units from the universe to form a sample that represents the entire population. In this study, the purposive sampling technique was employed to obtain ethnographic data from households in the four kebeles (sub-districts) namely Shesha ber, Quteba, Borchelle and Ras Agez *kebeles* of Borkena and Biraro sub-cities. The selection of samples was conducted purposefully, targeting specific groups and individuals within the population. These groups included male-headed households, women-headed households, youths, elders, people with disabilities, as well as representatives from government bodies in the town.

It is important to mention that the sample sizes for the purposive sampling may or may not have been fixed prior to data collection. Instead, they were determined based on practical considerations and the achievement of theoretical saturation. The concept of theoretical saturation refers to the point in data collection when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions. Therefore, the sample size for the purposive sampling in this study was 52 households that consists four purposefully selected *kebeles* in the town.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

3.4.1 Primary Data Collection Techniques

As stated in the previous section, mixed research methods need mixed data collection tools. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were employed in the study.

3.4.1.1. Qualitative Methods

These methods have become important tools within this broader approach to applied research, in large part because they provide valuable insights into the local perspectives of study populations. The three most common qualitative methods ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews, and focuses groups were the basic data collection techniques in this study. In these methods, qualitative data, attitudes, opinions, and experiences of the study community, as well as the qualitative dimension of poverty, were collected from the study samples.

i. Ethnographic observation

During the research, I conducted ethnographic observations to gain contextual insights into the daily lives, social interactions, and community dynamics of conflict-affected urban areas. During my field, the author, observed the physical conditions of the affected areas, documented visible signs of poverty and deprivation, and capturing contextual information through field notes, photographs, and audio recordings. I was an overt passive participant observer in the social setting of the community by observing and recording some aspects of life around them. To do my research, I lived in the Borkena sub-city of *Kuteba Kebele* for two months. I participated in social life and engaged in social networks. In this study, I have the role of passive participant observer due to the nature of the research topic. This time, I tried to record and capture the impact of the Northern Ethiopian armed conflict on the livelihood and the living standard of the local community from a multi-dimensional view of poverty through interviewing and observing.

ii. In- depth Interview

The in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic. During in-depth interviews, the person being interviewed is considered the expert, and the interviewer is considered the student (Kothari, 2004). In this case, I engaged with participants by posing questions in a neutral manner, listening attentively to participants' responses, asking follow-up questions, and probing based on those responses. In-depth interviews are an effective qualitative method for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences.

The respondents of the study were the four *kebele* administrators of the town, namely Ras Agez and Borchelle *Kebeles* from Biraro sub-city and Shesha Ber and Kuteba *Kebeles* from Borkena sub-city. Data from sub-city government officials and *kebele*-level administrators was purposefully collected to triangulate the data from different sources. The first in-depth interview took place in Biraro sub-city, Borchelle *Kebele*, through three categories: elders (5), women-headed households (10), and people with disabilities (10). Parallel with Borhelle *Kebele*, elders (5) and male-headed households (10) in Ras-agez *Kebele* were also interviewed.

iii. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

A focus group is a qualitative data collection method in which a researcher and several participants meet as a group to discuss a given research topic (Creswell, 2007). A principal advantage of focus group discussions is that they yield a large amount of information over a relatively short period of time. For this study, I made three focus group discussions in the *kebeles*, namely Borchelle, Ras agez, and Shesha ber. The composition of focus group participants was women-headed households, people with disabilities, and male-headed households with victims of the conflict, which consisted of six participants for each group. In this discussion, the urban households who experienced the impact of armed conflict and its social, economic, and psychological effects, and research questions were explained from the participants' point of view.

3.4.1.2 Quantitative data collection method: Questionnaires

To satisfy the stated objectives, the study used primary data collected from a household survey in the study area. Structured questionnaires were used to collect information on household demographic composition, socioeconomic variables that are believed by the author affecting the poverty status of individual household. The author designed questions that are sensitive to the timing of events and the intensity of individual experiences of conflict from households experience and multidimensional poverty status. To align with the research objectives, I developed and administered a questionnaire among the sampled households to collect the necessary data. The questionnaire played a pivotal role as a data collection tool, with a total of 330 households actively participating and providing responses.

The primary aim of utilizing the questionnaire was to examine the influence of armed conflict on urban poverty and its repercussions on the socio-economic sustenance of urban households. By employing multidimensional poverty indices directly pertinent to the northern conflict in the study area, the questionnaire aimed to ascertain the incidence and magnitude of poverty. To ensure clarity and understanding among the respondents, I prepared the questionnaire in English and subsequently translated it into the local language, Amharic. This translation aimed to simplify the questions and enhance their comprehensibility for the participants.

3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection Techniques

Secondary sources of data were gathered from different official statistical sources (publications and municipal documents), books, journals, internet sources, research findings of various scholars on the topic under investigation, and other publications. On the other hand, data from different governmental and private investment sectors and industries had been incorporated and analyzed together with the survey results.

3.5 Data Analysis Methodology

As a mixed research approach, both qualitative and quantitative forms of data analysis were implemented in the analysis stage of the research.

3.5.1 Quantitative Analysis

3.5.1.1. Descriptive Statistics

Both primary and secondary sources of data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The statistical package, IBM SPSS version 21 for 64 bytes was used for processing and analyzing the data obtained from questionnaires. Descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentages, figures, pie charts, histograms were applied to facilitate analysis and interpretation of the collected data. I conducted a household survey to gather quantitative data on poverty indicators, socio-economic characteristics, MPI, and conflict-related experiences. The use of descriptive statistics is the most fundamental way to summarize data, and it is indispensable in interpreting the results of quantitative research.

To analyze what factors influence an individual's multidimensional poverty in a study area, the author used an Ordered Logit Model. Traditionally, most studies categorize Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) as either poor or non-poor. However, this study classified MPI into four outcomes: MPI non-poor, MPI vulnerable, MPI poor, and severely MPI poor. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines MPI vulnerable as individuals experiencing 1/5 to 1/3 deprivation and severely MPI poor as those facing 1/2 or more deprivations, alongside MPI poor and MPI non-poor categories. For ordinal response variables like MPI categories, a specialized model like the ordered logit model is more appropriate. This model considers the ordinal nature of the outcome by assuming that the logit of each cumulative probability is a

linear function of the covariates, with consistent regression coefficients across response categories. In this study, I preferred the ordered logit model due to its ability to handle ordinal outcomes effectively. The data analysis plan encompassed comparative assessments of pre-war and post-war poverty statuses within households, with statistical analyses to identify factors influencing poverty dynamics and war-induced urban poverty.

3.5.1.2 Alkire-Foster Model of MPI analysis and Steps

This study implements the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to assess household deprivation in Kombolcha Town. The Alkire-Foster method is used as the methodology for estimating multidimensional poverty and identifying poor households. The following steps are followed in measuring poverty:

- Defining the data source: Information is collected from the Kombolcha Town survey conducted in the sampled kebeles during March to April 30, 2023/24.
- Choosing the unit of analysis: The household is considered as the unit of analysis for identifying deprivation based on household achievements.
- Choosing the dimensions and indicators: Four dimensions are selected - education, health, living standard and social capital. Ten indicators are used, including education level, school attendance, nutrition, child mortality, access to clean drinking water, improved sanitation, clean cooking fuel, access to electricity, and flooring material and social capital.
- Indicator Weights: A frequency-based weighting scheme was used instead of assigning equal weights to all dimensions, critiquing the equal weight assignment in the MPI.
- Choosing the indicators' deprivation cut-offs: Each indicator has a specific cut-off point for determining deprivation. The indicators' deprivation cut-offs are noted as Z_i , so that person i , is considered deprived if his or her achievement in that indicator x_i is below the cut-off, that is, if $x_i < Z_i$

Z_i : deprivation cut off

X_i : individual deprivation

I_i c_i (individual HHs score):

$$\begin{aligned}
=< 1/5 & \quad I_i = \text{MPI non poor} \\
=1/5-1/3 & \quad I_i = \text{MPI vulnerable} \\
=1/3-1/2 & \quad I_i = \text{MPI poor} \\
=>1/2 & \quad I_i = \text{MPI severely poor}
\end{aligned}$$

- MPI computation: The MPI is calculated by multiplying the multidimensional headcount ratio (H) with the intensity (A) of poverty. The threshold for considering household MPI-poor is a deprivation score greater than one-third (0.33).

Alkire Foster model used for chapter four on war and multidimensional poverty status of households in the study through periods before and post conflict. Formerly most studies gave equal weight for all four dimensions. For this study a frequency-based dimension weight is determined as a function of the distribution of achievement levels in that dimension. It is frequently suggested in the context of multidimensional deprivation measurement that there should be an inverse relationship between the frequency of deprivation in a dimension and the weight of that dimension (Deutsch & Silber, 2005). Less frequent deprivations are given more weight.

Dimension	Indicator	Deprivation cut off: an individual is deprived if
Education	School achievement	If any of household member aged 15 and above has less than 8 years of education (primary education)
Health	Health facility	The perceived quality of nearest health facility the household uses is poor and has the following problems: the facility is not clean or in poor condition, few trained professional staff, staff frequently absent, lack of drugs, does not offer all services, limited opening hours
	Health Functioning	If any of household member is unable to pursue main activities due to serious illness for at least three months
Living standard	cooking fuel	Any household member resides in a household which uses dung, wood, charcoal or coal as fuel.
	Drinking water	A household resides in a household which Uses unimproved water source: river/stream, rainwater, spring water, or if it takes at least 30 min to fetch water.
	Electricity	A household resides in a household which has no access to electricity
	Housing	A household resides in a household in which at least one of the three housing materials for the roof, walls, and floor are inadequate or houses without cement, tiles, ceramic, bricks, and carpets
Social capital	Asset	A household resides in a household which does not own more than one of these assets: radio, TV, telephone, computer, bicycle, motorbike, refrigerator, car or truck.
	Social capital	If a household or its member displaced or lost connection from neighbor, social networks break down, trust is eroded, and social support systems are disrupted due to conflict, leading to isolation, limited access to economic opportunities

Source: Adopted from (Alkire, 2007; Lekobane, 2021; OPHI, 2018) with some modification and addition

3.5.2 Qualitative data analysis

Thematic analysis, a qualitative technique, is employed in this academic thesis to systematically identify, investigate, and analyze themes or patterns within the qualitative data. By carefully exploring the complexity and intricacy of the data, this method enables a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and viewpoints. Through the identification of recurring themes, thematic analysis enhances the validity and richness of the study findings, as it allows for a thorough interpretation of the data.

Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking questions, and writing memos throughout the study. In this process, the study analyzed qualitative data using thematic analysis. I made a detailed description of the setting, followed by coding, transcribing, and organizing the response thematically. Data collected from participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions were described and analyzed qualitatively through text and content analysis.

3.6. Field Work Experience

This study was conducted in Kombolcha Town, South Wollo Zone of Amhara Regional State from March 1 to April 30, 2024. By using the support letter that I obtained from Addis Ababa University, I got permission from the town mayor's office. Then the town mayor wrote a letter to the two sub-cities, Borkena and Biraro. The two sub-cities also shared the Town mayor's letter for the corresponding *kebeles* to conduct the fieldwork and survey soon. For two consecutive months, from March to April, I stayed in the town and collected preliminary data about the research objectives and basic data on the demographic characteristics of samples in the study. Then, I went to each *kebele* with the help of the Town Planning and Development Office and Culture and Tourism experts to conduct my fieldwork.

My fieldwork provided me with valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of war-induced urban poverty in Kombolcha Town. It allowed for a closer examination of the lived experiences, challenges, and resilience of the conflict-affected population. The firsthand observations, qualitative interviews, and community engagement enriched the research findings, offering a

deeper understanding of the impacts of the armed conflict on urban poverty. The fieldwork experience also highlighted the importance of context-specific research and the need for targeted interventions to alleviate urban poverty in conflict-affected areas. During my fieldwork, I encountered some challenges as follows:

Due to the reorganization of the town administration into four sub-cities and 21 *kebeles*, the data on the population in each *kebele* was not well organized. In this sense, due to the conflict in the north, many households faced economic and psychological crises, and they looked for aid and support from the government and other humanitarian organizations. When I moved around the houses of the study community and *kebele* centers, most victims expected financial support, and some members of the community challenged me about what advantage they would gain from the study and were unwilling to give information. From the bottom of my heart, this was the worst challenge for me.

In the middle of my field work and data collection, there was chaos among the Federal Government, the Amhara Regional Forces, Fano, and local militias. The federal government planned and decided the disarmament of the Amhara Special Forces, Fano, and local militias to rearrange and reorganize the national defense force of the country. The disarmament of the Amhara Forces raised the public mob and resistance among the macro- and micro-cities of the region. Kombolcha was one of the towns with the same resistance, and my fieldwork was challenging for some weeks.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

While I was conducting my study, I considered various ethical considerations. Before I conducted my field, I obtained informed consent from all participants involved in the study, ensuring that they understood the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of their participation. I provided clear and comprehensive information about the study and its implications, allowing participants to make an informed decision about their involvement.

I ensured that participation in the study was voluntary, without any coercion or pressure. Participants should have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing negative

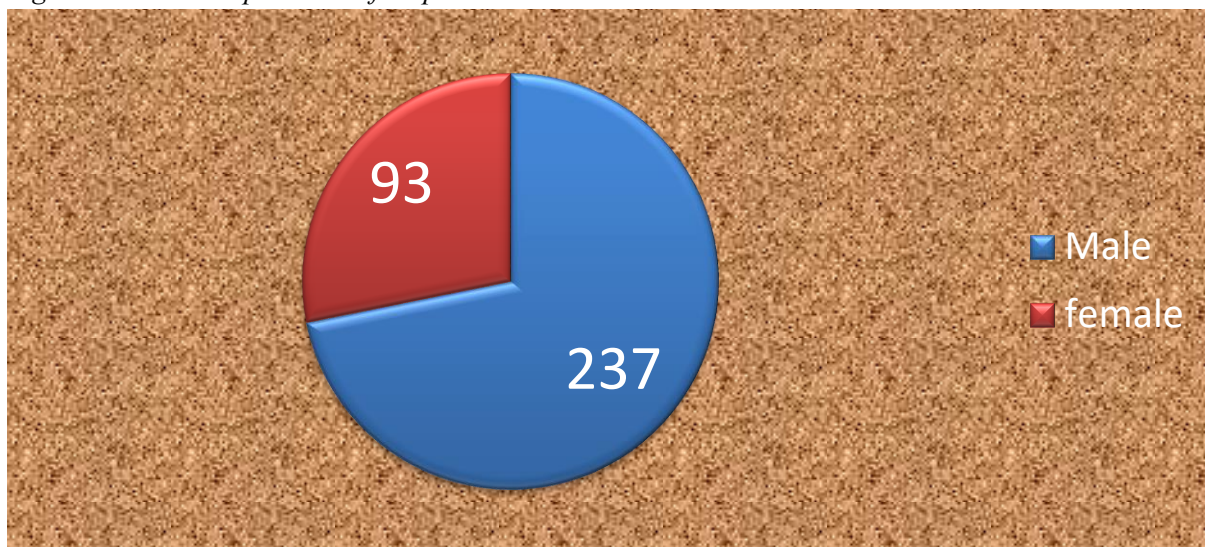
consequences. Similarly, confidentiality and anonymity were of utmost importance in this completed academic thesis. To safeguard the privacy of participants, anonymous identifiers were assigned, ensuring the non-disclosure of individual identities. Stringent measures were implemented to uphold the confidentiality and security of both responses and personal data. The protection of participant identities and the maintenance of data security were critical considerations to maintain confidentiality and establish trust and confidence among the participants in this research study. The researcher ensured that personal opinions and assumptions did not unduly influence the study by acknowledging and addressing any potential biases. Throughout the study process, self-awareness and reflexivity were practiced, reflecting a critical examination of the researcher's own perspectives and preconceptions. These measures were undertaken to minimize the impact of researcher bias and enhance the objectivity and credibility of the study.

By taking into account these ethical issues, I conducted the study in a responsible, courteous, and ethical manner. This approach enabled me to preserve the rights and well-being of the participants while making an ethically sound contribution to the development of knowledge.

Chapter Four
War and Multidimensional Poverty
4.1 General Characteristics of Sample Population
4.1.1. Household sex and age characteristics

Demographic data from sampled households, including age, sex, marital status, and average household size, were used in the study. Subsequently, the study takes into account the impact of armed conflict and the mentioned demographic traits on the poverty and deprivation status of Kombolcha Town households in the upcoming section.

Figure: 4.1 Sex compositions of respondents'



Source: Own computation 2023

The demographic profile of the study (Figure 4.1) above shows the gender breakdown of households included in the survey baseline. Based on the total sampled population data, the study revealed a higher number of males involved in the study. From the total 330 samples in this study, 237 (71.8%) were males, and the remaining 93 (28.2%) were females. It demonstrates that both male and female participants are included in the study, with a greater proportion of males and fewer females. This variable improves its representativeness for the entire town in the study area and is used to demonstrate how inclusive respondents of both sexes are.

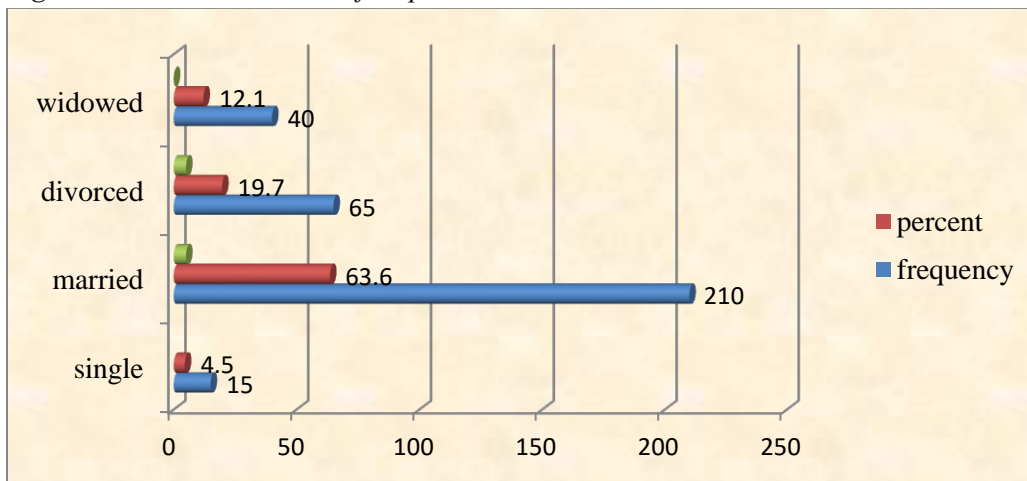
Similarly, the age composition of sample households in the study was stated in different age category. The majority of respondents were in the age range of 41–51 and 31–40, with a percentage share of 29.1 and 25.8 percent, respectively. Ages above 60 and 18–30 also have a

percentage share of 18.2 and 7.3%, respectively. Here, the purpose of showing the age composition is to show the representativeness of samples in terms of age and the determining impact of conflict on poverty status of households for the upcoming finding of the study.

4.1.2 Marital status, Average household size and composition

The marital status of households in war-induced urban poverty can vary depending on the specific circumstances and demographic factors of the affected population. In conflict situations, households may experience significant disruptions that can impact marital status. These disruptions may include displacement, separation, death of family members, or the breakdown of social and support networks. As a result, the marital status of households in war-induced urban poverty can be diverse and complex. To evaluate and assess the impact of armed conflict in Kombolcha Town, the study selected sample households as follows in their marital status of demographic characteristics.

Figure: 4.2 Marital statuses of respondents'



The above figure indicated that the marital status of the respondents' consisted of four statuses: single, married, divorced, and widowed. Among these variables, 210 (63.6%) were married, 65 (19.7%) were divorced, 40 (12.1%) were widowed, and the remaining 15 (4.5%) samples were single households. The majority of the study households constituted married and divorced household heads, respectively, followed by widowed and single households.

The head of the household is defined as the one who manages the income earned and expenses incurred by the household and are considered by other members of the household as the head (Dawit, 2018). The household head could be either male or female and is not necessarily the oldest person in the household. The participants' data show that the household heads included in this survey were 71.8 percent male and 28.2 percent female. Household size refers to the number of usual members in a household (Dawit, 2018). Usual members are defined as those who have lived in the household for at least 6 months in the past 12 months.

In conflict-affected areas, the average household size and its relationship to poverty can vary depending on several factors, including the nature and duration of the conflict, cultural norms, displacement patterns, and access to resources. In this study, I showed the household size of the sample population in the study to indicate the contextually and inclusiveness of samples for the study population as an independent variable for poverty. In 2023, the average urban household size in Kombolcha Town has been estimated. Of the 330 urban households surveyed, the average household family size was 5.2 people. The table below indicates the summary information on the household size of respondents in the study. ^[1]

Table 4.2: Household size of sample population

Family Size				
N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
330	2	9	5.20	1.494
330				

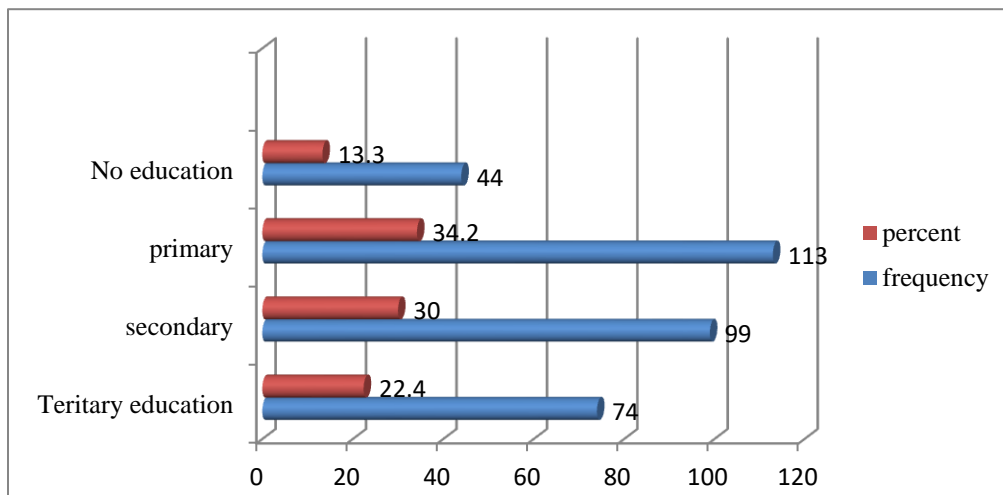
As stated in the above table, the study showed that household family size varies from one household size to the next. The minimum family size was 2 household members and consisted of 6% of the households in the study, and the maximum family size in the study was 9 family members in the household.

¹ The data from survey 2022/23

4.1.3 Educational background of households

In this study, information was collected on the literacy status of household members. However, in this case, literacy rates were computed for household heads. The data analyzed from the survey showed that in Kombolcha Town, 13.3 percent were illiterate, and the majority of the households (87.7 percent) were literate. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents were at the level of primary education, which constituted 34.2% of the study participants. The share of secondary education through the respondents' education level was 30%, and the tertiary level of education constituted 22.4% of the respondents. Figure 7 below shows the educational status of respondents in detail.

Figure: 4.3 Educational statuses of respondents'



Likewise, 71.8% of households in the study were male-headed, and the remaining 28.5% of households were female-headed. Of the total female-headed households, 22.5% of female-headed households' education level was primary school, 30.1% of them were in secondary education, 17.2% of female-headed households had a tertiary-level educational background, and the remaining 15% were illiterate.

Among 71.8% of male-headed households, 35% of the households' educational level was primary school, 30% of the households' educational level was secondary education, 22% of the household heads had a tertiary-level educational background, and the remaining 13% of them

were illiterate. Based on these data, the illiteracy level in women-headed households is higher than that of male-headed households, based on the educational background data of the respondents in the study. (See Appendix 1 table 1 for variables and their description)

4.2 Correlation between Deprivation Indicators

Finding correlations between indicators is crucial before figuring out the aggregate MPI. Appendix 1A shows the Spearman rank correlation matrix that is utilized in this study. Overall, the results show that there is little correlation between the major deprivation indices. For example, the relationship between schooling and other variables is rather weak (correlations less than 0.19). Likewise, there exists a limited correlation (less than 0.38) between health deprivation indices and other metrics. This also holds true for measures of social capital and living standard deprivation.

All deprivation variables are weakly associated, with the exception of a moderate association between asset deprivation and water deprivation (0.59) and water deprivation and fuel deprivation (0.51). This means that most of the MPI indicators are not significantly explained by deprivation in any other MPI indicator, implying that the MPI indicator of the study comprised different dimensions of multidimensional poverty and that it was safe to utilize the ten MPI variables in the analysis. The generally weak correlation between deprivation indicators justifies a more comprehensive approach to measuring multidimensional poverty (Espinoza-Delgado & Klasen, 2018).

4.3 Deprivation by Indicator

A household achievement was measured against deprivation indicators prior to determining the multidimensional poverty status. Table 4.1 depicts the level of deprivation for all identified variables in two different periods in the Town (before and after the conflict). The uncensored deprivation statistics indicated significant disparities in deprivation across indices in two different periods.

4.3. Population of Deprivation in Kombolcha Town

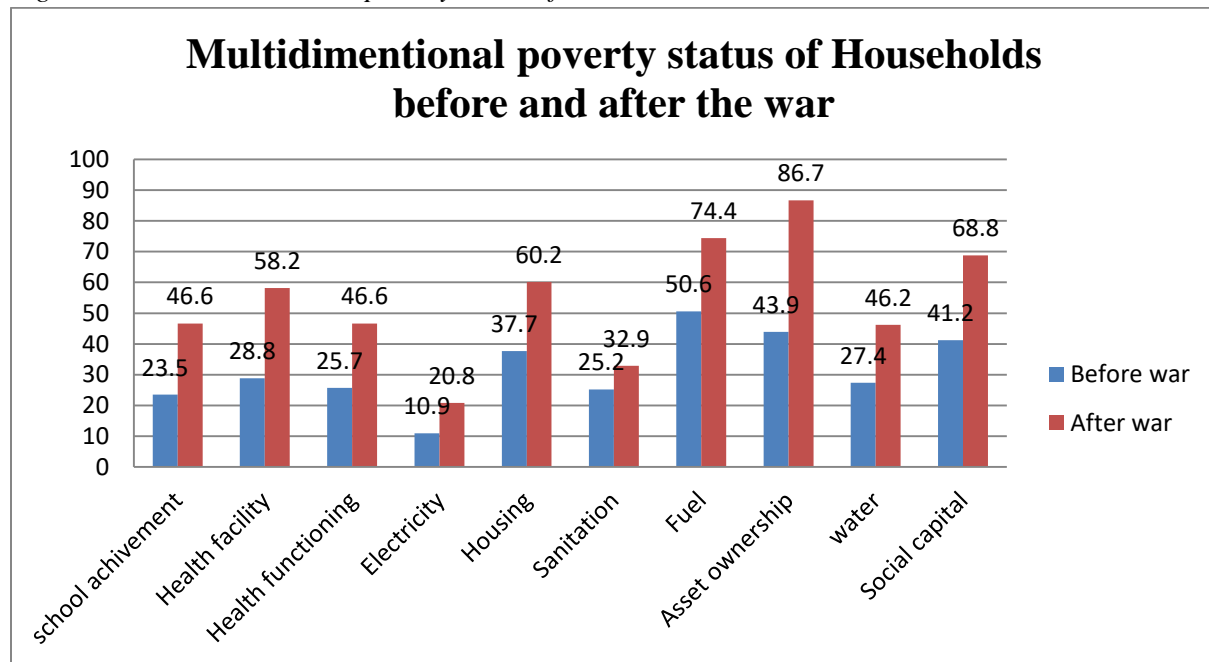
Dimension	Indicator	Before conflict	After conflict
Education	School achievement	23.59 %	46.6%
Health	Health facility	28.8%	58.2%
	Health functioning	25.7%	46.6%
Living standard	Electricity	10.9%	20.8%
	House	37.7	60.2%
	Sanitation	25.2%	32.9%
	Fuel	50.6%	74.4%
	Asset	43.9%	86.7%
Social capital	Water	27.4%	46.2%
	Social capital	41.2%	68.8%

Source: Own computation (2024)

Households in the town were severely deprived in terms of fuel indicators (50.6 percent) prior to the arrival of the TPLF forces, whereas after the invasion, a higher proportion of people were deprived in terms of asset indicators (86.7%), followed by fuel(74.4%) and housing (60.2%). This is because their assets were either destroyed or expropriated by the TPLF on the one hand and local thieves on the other. In the town, both before and after the conflict, electricity deprivation was consistently the lowest among households. However, there was a marked increase in social capital deprivation post-conflict, with approximately 68.8% experiencing deprivation compared to 41.2% before the conflict, indicating a significant impact of the war on community networks and support systems.

Regarding health, access to health facilities deteriorated significantly after the conflict, with deprivation levels rising from 28.8% to 58.2%, highlighting challenges in accessing crucial healthcare services. Health functioning deprivation saw an increase from 25.7% to 46.6%, suggesting a potential decline in overall health status following the conflict. In terms of education, a higher proportion of households faced deprivation in school achievement post-war. Around 46.6% of individuals aged 15 and above did not complete primary schooling after the conflict, compared to approximately 23.5% before the conflict. These trends underscore the complex challenges faced by the town's population in key areas such as healthcare, education, and social capital in the aftermath of the conflict.

Figure 4.4: Multidimensional poverty status of HHs



Source: own computation 2024

The data presented illustrates the shifts in deprivation levels before and after a period of conflict across diverse categories. School achievement deprivation surged from 23.5% to 46.6%, indicating a substantial hindrance to education access and quality post-war. Similarly, the lack of health facility access more than doubled, escalating from 28.8% to 58.2%, pointing to severe challenges in healthcare services post-conflict. Health functioning deprivation also rose notably from 25.5% to 46.7%, suggesting potential health-related adversities faced by the populace.

Concerns regarding electricity access intensified, with deprivation levels increasing from 10.9% to 20.8%, reflecting obstacles in obtaining essential services. Housing deprivation spiked significantly from 37.2% to 60.7%, signaling a heightened impact on living conditions following the conflict. While sanitation deprivation increased from 25.2% to 32.9%, the change was comparatively less pronounced than other indicators. Fuel access deprivation saw a notable surge, rising from 50.6% to 74.4%, highlighting challenges in meeting energy requirements post-war. Asset ownership deprivation experienced a substantial escalation, soaring from 43.9% to 86.7%. Deprivation in water access also increased from 27.4% to 46.2%, indicating struggles in securing this vital resource. Social capital deprivation surged significantly from 41.2% to 68.8%,

implying potential impacts on community networks and support systems. Similarly the percentage of deprived households in terms of sex and gender shows significant differences across the two periods. The table below shows the percentage of deprived household heads by sexes.

Table 4.4: Percentage of deprived Household heads by sex

Dimension	Indicators	Before conflict		After conflict	
		Male headed	Female headed	Male headed	Female headed
	Deprivation				
Education	School achievement	34.4%	44.2%	44%	52.2%
	Health facility	42%	42.6%	55.4%	57.3%
Health	Health functioning	38.2%	39.5%	49.6%	43.8%
	Electricity	28.5%	18.1%	28%	24.2%
	House	32%	38.4%	39.6%	48.2%
	Sanitation	37.6%	35.4%	44.2%	42.5%
Living standard	Fuel	58.2%	73%	75.7%	80.9%
	Asset	42%	38.2%	69.8%	88.5%
	Water	36%	26%	42.8%	46.2%
Social capital	Social capital	54.4%	69.6%	64.8%	79.7%

The above table depicts deprivation by gender of household heads, with the result revealing a difference in deprivation among male and female-headed households in all dimensions. Before the conflict, female-headed households displayed higher deprivation percentages in various aspects compared to male-headed households. Female-headed households had higher deprivation rates in school achievement (44.2% vs. 34.4%), housing (38.4% vs. 32%), fuel (73% vs. 58.2%), and social capital (69.6% vs. 54.4%). Health facility (42.6% vs. 42%) and health functioning (39.5% vs. 38.2%) deprivation levels were almost similar between both household types.

After the conflict, female-headed households continued to experience higher deprivation compared to male-headed households. Deprivation rates for female-headed households were higher in school achievement (52.2% vs. 44%), housing (48.2% vs. 39.6%), fuel (80.9% vs. 75.7%), asset ownership (88.5% vs. 69.8%), water (46.2% vs. 42.8%), and social capital (79.7% vs. 64.8%). Health facility (55.4% vs. 42%) and health functioning (43.8% vs. 49.6%) deprivation rates were relatively similar between male and female-headed households post-conflict.

Another finding revealed that there was a small difference in education deprivation between male-headed and female-headed households (44% vs. 52.2%). In the postwar period's indicators of schooling achievement, 52.5% of female-headed households from the town performed worse in school than male-headed households in the prewar period (44.2%). In general, a large difference was observed between the before and post-war periods in the town following the conflict. Female-headed households' deprivation rate is higher than that of male-headed households in the stated indicators. This implies that the impacts of the war on gender and the number of deprived households during and after the war have increased.

Table 4.5: Indicators weight

Indicators	Equal weighting	Frequency based weighting
School achievement	0.25	0.12
Health facility	0.125	0.11
Health functioning	0.125	0.12
Electricity	0.0417	0.18
House	0.0417	0.09
Sanitation	0.0417	0.13
Water	0.0417	0.08
Cooking fuel	0.0417	0.05
Asset	0.0417	0.06
Social capital	0.25	0.06
Total	1.00	1.00

Source: own computation (2023)

The above table displays the weights of indicators based on exogenous (equal) weighting scheme and endogenous (frequency based) weighting scheme. However, this study employs frequency based scheme to show multidimensional poverty status of households before and post war periods and show the impact of northern Ethiopia war as a determining factor of poverty in Kombolcha town.

4.4 Multidimensional Poverty

The author scrutinized the comprehensive multidimensional poverty indexes and metrics pertaining to both the incidence and intensity of poverty across two distinct periods within the town. By employing equal weighting in the analysis, it was observed that the multidimensional headcount ratio (H), representing the proportion of the population experiencing multidimensional

poverty, stood at 81.6%.

Furthermore, the deprivation share among the multidimensionally poor (A) was found to be 63%. Notably, the adjusted headcount ratio estimate (M0), which amalgamates both the percentage of the multidimensionally poor population (H) and the average extent of deprivation encountered by each household (A), was calculated to be 51.5%.

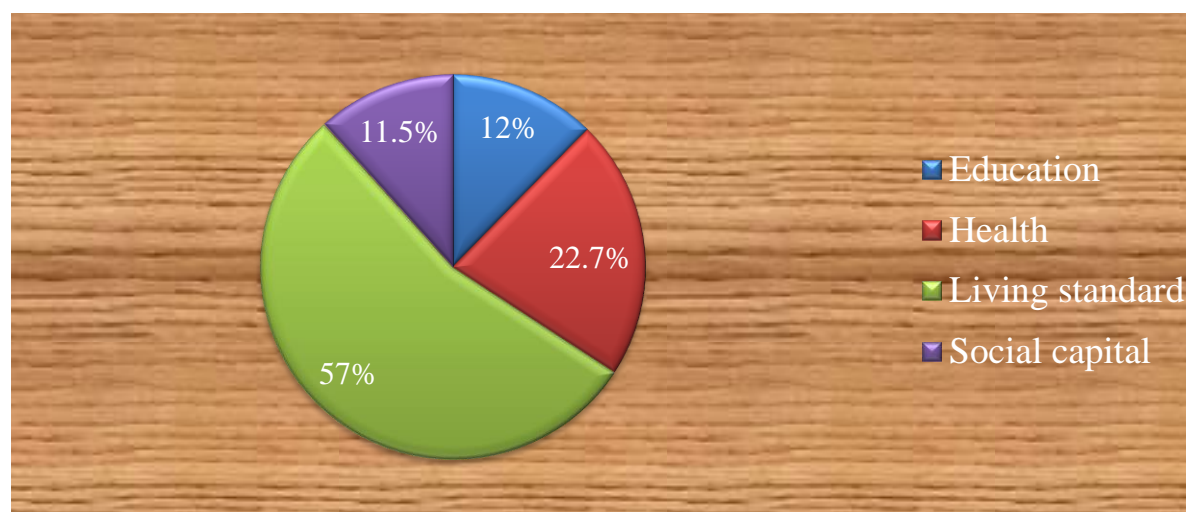
In terms of dimensional contribution to overall poverty, living standard deprivation outperformed the other four dimensions (33.6 percent). This result clearly signifies the importance of this dimension in determining overall poverty (Alkire, 2007). Using a data-driven frequency weighting scheme, results show that the total proportion of multidimensionally poor households was 71.7%. The deprivation share across the multidimensionally poor and the adjusted headcount ratio (M0) were 57.6% and 41.3% respectively.

Table 4.6: MP Indices by equal and Frequency-based weighting scheme

MP indices	Equal weighting	Frequency-Based weighting
H	81.6%	71.7%
A	63.6%	57.6%
MPI	51.5%	41.3%

The dimensional breakdown analysis shows that living standard dimension contributes most (57.4%) to the overall poverty in the study area followed by health dimension (22.7%). In terms of indicator contribution asset deprivation indicator is the largest contributor to the overall poverty followed by fuel, health facility, and social capital indicators. The following figure shows the indicator and dimensional contribution to overall poverty.

Figure 4.5: Dimensional contribution to overall MPI by Frequency scheme (N=330)

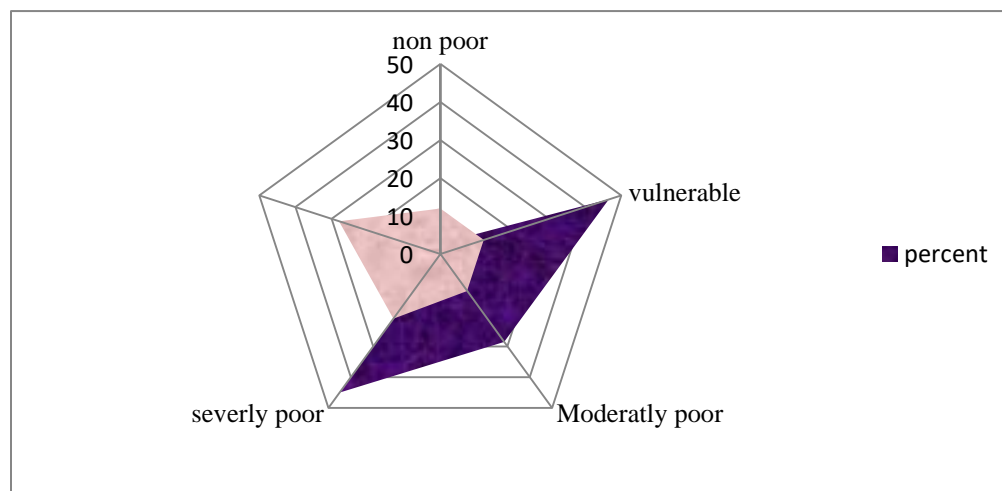


Source: own computation (2023)

Another way to look at the indices is to identify those who are extremely poor and those who are at risk of falling into poverty. Individual household with a deprivation score of less than 0.2 are multidimensionally non-poor, those with deprivation score between 0.2 to 0.33 are vulnerable to or at risk of becoming multidimensionally poor; those with a deprivation score of 0.33 to 0.50 are moderately poor; and those with a deprivation score greater than 0.50 are severely poor (Alkire & Foster, 2011a).

Given this approach, as well as the use of frequency-based weights for each dimension and indicator within a dimension, the results indicate that 46.6 percent of populations are at risk of being multidimensionally poor, implying that this group could easily join MP if simple shocks occur. Furthermore, only 2.8% of the population is impoverished (MPI non-poor), while 28.6 percent is moderately impoverished. In contrast, 45 percent of the population is considered severely impoverished (fig 4.4)

Figure 4:6 Level of Poverty status (n=330)



Source: own computation (2024)

4.5 Decomposition of MPI in both periods

This section uses a frequency-based weighting scheme to present multidimensional poverty for Kombolcha Town before and after the TPLF invention. For comparison purposes, multidimensional poverty status of households before and after the war has been estimated. Table 4.6: shows MPI Summary by the two periods (frequency based weighting)

4.6 Frequency based MPI Summary weighting

Multidimensional poverty	H	A	M0 =HA
Before war	54%	53.5%	28.9%
After war	71.7%	57.6%	41.3%

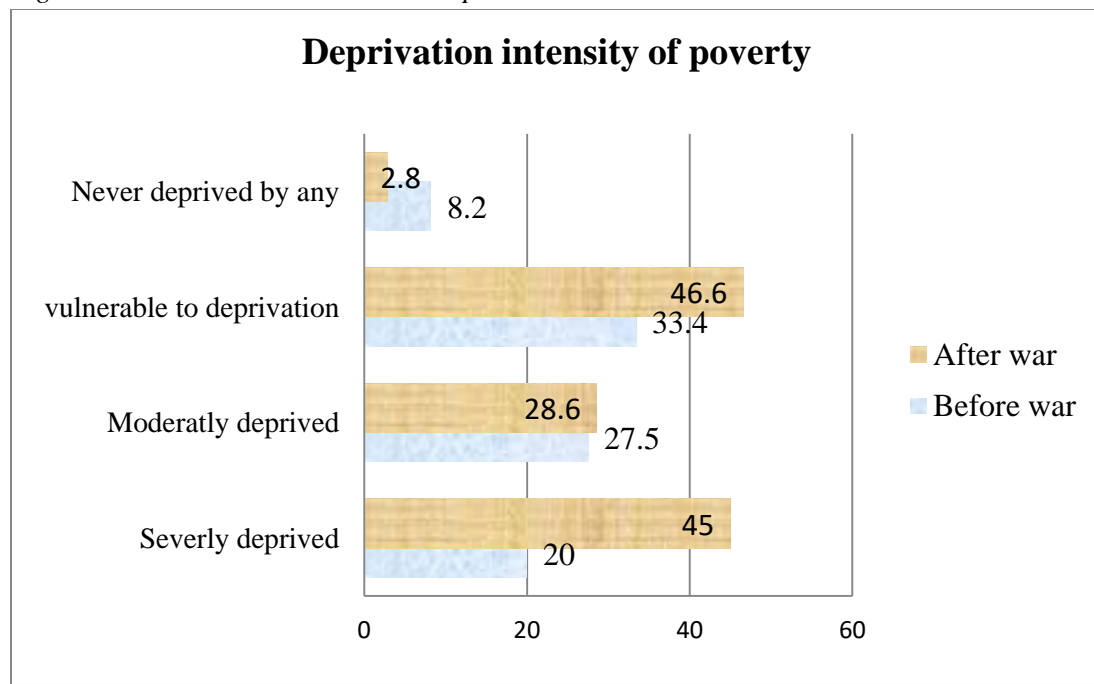
Source: own computation (2023)

According to the findings, 71.7% of the Town population was multidimensional poor after the conflict, with an adjusted headcount ratio (M0) of 41.3%. Before the war the town has lower headcounts than the war affected period, where approximately 54% percent were multidimensionally poor, with an M0 of 28.9 percent. Prior to the conflict, the town's multidimensional poverty status revealed that approximately 54% of the population was

multidimensionally poor, with an intensity of 53.5 percent. The adjusted headcount ratio (MPI = HA) was discovered to be 28.9%. One can infer that after the arrival of the force of the TPLF, multidimensional poverty was increased.

Based on poverty level and gender, after the conflict, 51%, 24.9%, 12.9%, and 11% of female headed households in the town were in MPI severely poor, MPI moderately poor, MPI vulnerable, and MPI non-poor, respectively. It was found that 42.3% of male headed sampled households in the town were severely poor multidimensionally. 37.7% of female headed households before the war were living in severe multidimensional poverty. In addition, 18.9 percent of women headed households will join MPI in the future if shock would happen. The remaining 24.9 percent were MPI poor, while 18.4 percent were MPI moderately poor. In this town, 29.9% of the male headed households were MPI poor. Figure (4.6) depicts MPI status by the two periods and gender of household heads.

Figure 4.7: MPI status across the two periods



The data provided indicates significant changes in the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) status before and after the war. Before the war, 8.2% of the population was classified as "Never deprived," indicating a relatively small proportion of the population experiencing no deprivations. In contrast, after the war, this percentage decreased to 2.8%, suggesting a decline in the number of individuals who were completely free from deprivations, possibly due to the disruptive impact of the conflict on living conditions. The category "Vulnerable to deprivation" saw an increase from 33.4% before the war to 46.6% after the war. This significant rise points to a larger portion of the population being at risk of falling into poverty or experiencing deprivations post-conflict, likely due to the destabilizing effects of war on livelihoods and social structures.

The proportions of individuals classified as "Moderately deprived" remained relatively stable, with a slight increase from 27.5% before the war to 28.6% after the war. This suggests that a substantial portion of the population continued to experience moderate levels of deprivation both pre and post-conflict, highlighting persistent challenges in meeting basic needs. The most striking change occurred in the category of "Severely deprived," which doubled from 20% before the war to 45% after the war. This indicates a significant worsening of living conditions and an increase in severe deprivations post-conflict, likely due to the destruction of infrastructure, loss of livelihoods, and disruptions to essential services during the war. The data underscores the devastating impact of war on poverty levels, with a notable increase in severe deprivations and vulnerability to poverty post-conflict.

4.6 Ordinal Regression Model

According to the descriptive analysis, the incidence of poverty was 71.7%, the intensity of poverty (A), and the adjusted headcount ratio (M0) were 57.6% and 41.3%, respectively. When the 330 sample respondents are divided into poverty categories, it is found that the majorities (45%) are MPI severely poor, 28.6% are MPI moderately poor, 46.6% are MPI vulnerable and only 2.8% are MPI non-poor.

Therefore, to investigate significant determinants of multidimensional poverty in study area, econometric analysis using the ordered logit (ologit) model is made. Prior to conducting the ordinal regression model, it is crucial to ensure that the proportional odds assumption is met. This assumption posits that the relationship between being in or below a certain category versus being above that category is consistent across all category boundaries. To test this assumption, likelihood-ratio tests were employed using the "omodel" to assess the parallel lines assumption. In this study, the "omodel" was utilized to examine and confirm the proportional assumption (refer to Appendix 3). The null hypothesis under scrutiny is that there are no disparities in the coefficients among the outcome groups.

It is implied that there is a difference in the coefficients across response categories by the test result, which displays a significant p-value and rejects the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the coefficients between categories. Thus, using the ordered logit model in this situation is quite deceptive. The Generalized Ordered Logit Model² is an alternate strategy that considers this supposition.

By rerunning the model with and without the variables included in MPI, the endogeneity problem resulting from observable selection bias (simultaneity bias) was further examined (see to appendix 3). The outcome indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the two regression results. Therefore, endogeneity is not a significant issue in my study, and using all of the explanatory factors is acceptable. The table below displays the gologit2 output.

² Generalized Ordered Logit Model: assumes consistent relationships between predictors and outcome categories, as well as independence and no perfect predictor relationships for accurate estimation.

Table 4.7: GOLOGIT2 estimate (determinant of MP).

Variables	Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		Category 4		Marginal effect	
	Coef.	t-stat	Coef.	t-stat	Coef.	t-stat	Coef	t-stat	dy/dx	t-stat
Conflict	0.93	4.72***	0.768	5.0***	0.723	4.39***	0.623	4.39***	0.163	4.51***
Age	0.062	5.77***	0.022	4.19***	0.013	2.48**	0.014	2.48**	0.003	2.48**
Sex	0.1	0.53	-0.277	-1.79*	-0.081	-0.51	-0.071	-0.51	-0.019	-0.51
No of family	-0.22	-2.95**	-0.119	-1.9*	-0.413	-5.58***	-0.412	-5.58***	-0.095	-5.62***
Educ_level	-0.5	-4.96***	-0.316	-5.55***	-0.643	-9.69***	-0.647	-9.69***	-0.147	-9.81***
Saving	-0.96	-3.75***	-1.16	-5.36***	-0.577	-2.47**	-0.587	-2.47**	-0.125	-2.66**
Health status	1.7	6.46***	1.718	9.85***	1.84	10.56***	1.85	10.56***	0.422	10.68***
Housing	-1.9	-6.1***	-1.50	-7.43***	-0.445	-2.36**	-0.445	-2.36**	-0.103	-2.33**
Electricity	-15.2	-0.03	-4.7	-4.71***	-2.93	-11.6***	-2.93	-11.6***	-0.612	-18.28***

Note: *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5% & 1% levels, respectively.

Source: own estimation (2024)

The analysis involves comparing Category 1 (MPI non-poor) with Categories 2, 3, and 4 (MPI vulnerable, moderately poor, and severely poor) in the first panel. The second panel examines the contrast between Categories 1 and 2 (MPI non-poor and vulnerable) versus Categories 3 and 4 (moderately poor and severely poor). Lastly, the third panel scrutinizes the differentiation between Categories 1, 2, and 3 (MPI non-poor, vulnerable, and moderately poor) and Category 4 (severely poor).

Positive coefficients suggest that elevated values of the explanatory variable tend to increase the probability of households moving into a higher category of multidimensional poverty, while negative coefficients indicate a greater chance of remaining in the current category or dropping to a lower one. For instance, being in a conflict-affected period significantly raises the likelihood of entering a higher multidimensional poverty category by 16.3% (refer to Table 4.7 across categories). This indicates that conflict could be a pivotal factor driving multidimensional poverty. Furthermore, as individuals grow older, the probability of them belonging to a higher multidimensional poverty group increases significantly.

Living in a household with a larger number of family members is associated with a notably reduced likelihood of being in a higher category of multidimensional poverty. In simpler terms, as the family size increases, the probability of experiencing severe multidimensional poverty decreases by 9.5%. This discovery contrasts with findings from studies like that of Brück &

Sindu (2013), where family size was linked to consumption poverty but not multidimensional poverty. Conversely, other research demonstrates a direct relationship between family size and poverty. For instance, in their examination of family size and poverty in Tanzania, C. Lwechungura & William (2000) identified a statistically significant trend showing lower poverty levels with larger family sizes. They attribute this correlation to the presence of more labor in households within labor-intensive socio-economic systems, resulting in decreased poverty levels.

Moreover, those with improved educational level, own house and save or live with a household that saves has a lower probability to be in the higher category of multidimensional poverty and the result shows statistically significant. The marginal effect revealed that if a household's degree of education grows, he or she owns a home and saves or lives in a household that saves the likelihood of being in higher multidimensional poverty lowers by 14.7%, 12.5%, and 44.5% respectively. The findings supports that education, along with demographic factors, plays a significant role in being in a state of higher multidimensional poverty (Bici & Çela, 2017; Niazi & Khan, 2012). Conversely, the presence of a severe health issue amplifies the chances of falling into a higher category of multidimensional poverty. This observation aligns with the research by Oshio & Kan (2014), indicating that individuals with chronic health conditions are significantly more prone to multidimensional poverty compared to those without such conditions. Furthermore, a substantial portion of individuals living in multidimensional poverty reportedly grapple with chronic health issues.

In contrast, access to electricity serves as a protective factor against higher levels of multidimensional poverty. Individuals with electricity access exhibit a diminished likelihood of belonging to the more severe multidimensional poverty group. This finding is consistent with the research of Alkire et al. (2021), who highlighted that those lacking access to electricity constitute a significant portion of MPI poor individuals globally, across rural and urban areas. Their study also revealed that over 410 million individuals without electricity are entrenched in severe poverty, with deprivation levels exceeding 50%. Lack of electricity worsens severe multidimensional poverty globally, presenting a sobering reality.

Chapter Five

5. Armed Conflict and Its Socio-economic Consequences

5.1 Watersheds of the northern Ethiopia conflict in Kombolcha Town

During the conflict, there was a direct cost instigated by the devastation of resources that would otherwise have been employed in production. This directly impacts contemporaneous economic performance in the conflict-affected territory. During my field, I observed the damages of the town and both governmental and private industrial sites. The war affects economic development and leads to poverty in the aftermath of the humanitarian crisis triggered by war and the contraction of investments due to instability. ^[3] During armed conflict, looting and destruction of governmental and private properties, including different equipment, hotels, hospitals, factories, and other business organizations, reduced the GDP of the town. ^[4]

Ato Kemal Nur is an Administrator of *kebele* 03 at Borkena sub city. Regarding on the armed conflict and economy of the town, he stated the town experience follows:

Certainly. The armed conflict of the north has had a devastating impact on the local economy. We have witnessed a decline in investments, a rise in unemployment rates, and significant damage to factories and industries due to looting and damage. As a result, the overall economy of the town has been severely affected and has experienced a notable downturn. During the conflict, both private and government properties were damaged.

According to the government officials in Borkena Sub-City, during and after the conflict, government and non-governmental investment projects were spoiled and new investment alternatives declined. This leads to a high rate of unemployment and the fire-out of employment agreements among firms and industries. This doubled the government's task to expand and reorganize infrastructural and development works.

Hibst is a 26 old woman who lives in Biraro sub city of 06 kebele. She explained the town situation and her experience during and post conflict as follows:

War is evil. It damages everything, human, material, town all at the same time. I worked at BGI Company for more than 5 years. During the conflict big companies were damaged

³ I observed the material destruction in the town.

⁴ Survey data for 2023 and Kombolcha Town mayor data

** See more on conflict leads poverty school of thought on Goodhand:2001

and looted and workers fired out from the company. From our family I and my brother are victims and have lost our jobs due to the damage of the companies in the war.

This showed that the effects of armed conflict lasted for years, and the government's infrastructural development works were overdue due to the losses and extra expenses of the government to reorganize the lost properties and institutional functioning of damages. The data from the survey, and interview confirmed that armed conflict reduced the income of the town at large and individual households in particular and narrowed the choices and opportunities of urban households in their lives. This situation directly relates to the argument that conflict leads to poverty (Goodhand, 2001). It exacerbates the poverty situation and status of households in both the economic and social dimensions of poverty.

The study found that the economic condition of the town faced severe economic losses and destruction, which led to the rise of unemployment and job insecurity among urban households and the economic activities of the town. According to the data of the Kombolcha Town mayor administration office, properties of the town, such as vehicles, electronics equipment, furniture, fixed office equipment, movable office furnitures, buildings, and other properties damaged at the town which cost over ETB 520,742,036 only at the government office level of the town. The study showed the overall economic destruction from the town sector administration offices, regional and federal institutions, and private trade and investment sectors as follows:

Table 5.1: Cost of armed conflict in Kombolcha town

	Destruction	Quantity	Total estimated price(ETB)
1.	Kombolcha sector offices destruction	36,705	523,461,405
2.	Regional and Federal Institutions	249	1,876,971,017
3.	Private trade and investment	353	3,153,934,070
	Total	37,307	5,554,366,492

Source: Kombolcha metropolitan city Mayor Office (2023)

The above data highlights the extensive destruction caused by the armed conflict in Kombolcha Town. The special command forces from the region and the Mayor office collected data on the loss of the town and estimated its loss in terms of ETB. Based on the estimation the loss of the

town was ETB 5,554,366,492 and the estimated total price of the loss signifies the significant economic burden resulting from the destruction of sector offices, regional and federal institutions, and private trade and investment establishments. As stated above, the sector offices of the town administration were economically damaged, which cost an estimated value of ETB 523,461,405, which is much higher than the town's annual budget and income. Similarly, the regional and federal institutions faced destruction in the item, type, and quantity of 249, with an estimated cost of ETB 1,876,971,017. Other private and investment sectors that offered job and employment opportunities for thousands of people were subjected to destruction. The destruction cost of these sectors was ETB 31,539,345,070, and generally, the study showed that the town lost over 5,554,366,492 due to armed conflict ^[5].

Data from the survey and interview proved that war and conflict in the urban community exposed the larger economic and investment sectors to social and economic crises and exposed people to extreme poverty and deprivation who depended on those sectors for their lives. This situation leads to a high degree of deprivation among the urban poor and other vulnerable groups due to chronic poverty and deprivation. One of the informant who is the resident of Biraro sub city and owner of a bakery before the war described his experience and the situation as follows:

Before the war, I had a medium-sized bakery and employed 10 workers in my own business. However, during the conflict, I lost all my properties, and all of the workers in my business were turned over due to the closing of my bakery. Working machines and different equipment were looted, and now I am a daily laborer and earn insufficient income for my family. My children stopped schooling for half a year and then shifted to government school after a year of dropouts.

It revealed that the conflict enhanced the socioeconomic crises and deprivation of households that engaged in conflict, which affected the economic sectors of Kombolcha Town. This destruction process enhanced deprivation through victimization of the local community, as poverty by itself is a process rather than the end. The conflict costs at the individual and institutional level for economic and sociocultural damages, which aggravate deprivation through the dimensions of education, health, and living standards. This finding also confirmed the impact of conflict on poverty and deprivation which has similar point with works of Justine and

⁵ Data on the town mayor and firms in the town

Verwimp (2006) in their war and poverty study. Scholars such as Collier (1999), Justino (2006), and Verwimp (2006) agree that national incomes dwindle and poverty deepens during periods of conflict such as civil war.

Due to the damage caused in connection with the war, the town administration and the community of the town exposed too many snags. The study revealed that the destruction cost of the town was higher as compared to the annual budget and income of the town. The study took 2018/19 budget year as references to compare the level and cost of the conflict in the town before and after the war 2022/23. Based on the former data that showed the annual budget and income of the town, the study used income and budget as a benchmark for analysis and comparison by taking 2018–19 budget year report of the town. The table below shows the comparison result of the two periods and war related cost

Table: 5.2. The town's annual budget and Destruction cost of the Town

Annual Budget and Income	ETB	Conflict impact on Income of the Town (Change in Per cent)
Annual income of the town(2018/19)	188,392,211	None
Annual income of the conflict year (2022/23)	141,294,157	25% lower than 2018/19
Annual budget of the town 2018/19	172,962,839	None
Annual budget of the town 2022/23	182,254,542	+5.3%
Destruction cost of the Town 2022/23	5,554,366,492	5,554,366,492
Cost of the conflict in the Town	5,554,366,492	32 years annual budget of the town

Source: Own computation based on the town report and budget

In the year 2018/19, the town had an annual income of 188,392,211 Ethiopian Birr (ETB). However, during the conflict year of 2022/23, the annual income decreased to 141,294,157 ETB, representing a 25% decline compared to the previous year. This significant decrease in income highlights the adverse impact of the conflict on the town's economic activities and revenue generation. The lower income indicates reduced economic productivity, disrupted business operations, and potential losses across various sectors.

The annual budget of the town for the year 2018/19 was 172,962,839 ETB. However, the data shows that the annual budget for 2022/23 increased to 182,254,542 ETB, reflecting a 5.3% rise compared to the previous year. This increase in the budget may be attributed to various factors, such as inflation, population growth, or adjustments to accommodate the additional financial burden caused by the conflict. The higher budget allocation suggests an effort to address the town's immediate needs and support post-conflict recovery and development. On the other hand, the destruction cost of the town during the year 2022/23 amounted to a substantial ETB 5,554,366,492 which is equivalent to the town's budget for 32 years based on 2018/19 budget report of the town.

5.2 Cost of Conflict on Assets

5.2.1. Socio economic impacts of armed conflict in conflict affected area of the town

During armed conflict, prowling and obliteration of properties, both human and non-human capital, were the noticeable effects of war in the study area. The conflict in the north caused the looting of properties, machines, and resources from the town. According to the town administration data, the Tigriyan forces looted and damaged huge machines and equipment, resulting in cost of billions worth of losses. Ato Fekadu is the town mayor's administration office head, and he explained the destruction level of the town as follows:

The offices of the town administration were extremely destructed; the general documents, computers, electronics, equipment, and furniture of the town administration were looted and damaged. Besides the destruction, the offices were full of hate speeches and insults of ethnic identity. To change the image of the office and erase the statements of hate speech, the town administration incurred over a million in terms of financial costs, and this in turn increases the town's expenses and reduces investment and infrastructural works of the town administration.^[6]

From the above data, the study confirmed that losses and destruction in the town contributed to multidimensional poverty by raising extra expenses, shrinking the town's economy, and increasing employment insecurity rates in the town. The material destruction of properties and psychological stress and trauma contributed their share to the town's poverty and deprivation level. After the withdrawal of Tigriyan forces from Kombolcha Town, I observed the town and its public sector administration offices and talked to government officials and experts in the town

⁶ I interviewed one of the government officials in Borkena sub-city on March 15, 2023.

with the sentiment of victimization. The walls of the buildings and the offices of different sectors were painted with hate speech and insulted people ethnically. The town administration budgeted and changed the working and town environment by cleaning and organizing the sector offices to re-function properly. ^[7] This damage directly and indirectly affected the lives of households in the town in different ways.

Kewulet was one of my informants from Kuteba *Kebele*. During the conflict, she lost her husband, and the family was dependent on her husband's income. Then she was forced to engage in other economic activities. She stated the life experience of her family as follows:

Now I can't send my children to school and fulfill their basic needs. I work washing clothes and baking injera in private houses, but the amount of money I get is insufficient to cover our expenses. Related to the nature of my work and my prior health case, I also have severe health problems for which I couldn't get medical treatment. One of my children has a malnutrition problem, and she has a medical record of being underweight. Similarly, during the conflict, I was pregnant and suffering from illnesses related to poor nutrition and depression; later, I gave birth to a low-birth-weight child. ^[8]

The data similarly confirmed that conflict affects not only industries and investments but also human assets, which are the source of income for households. The injury and death of productive household members also lead to complicated poverty. War-related depression and psychological trauma resulted in poor productivity among households in the conflict zone. The general output of the data indicated that households' deprivation levels in the context of living standards, health, and education have grown because of armed conflict-related deaths of household heads.

5.2.2 The Impact of Armed conflict on livelihood and job Employment

Job opportunities have irreplaceable roles in determining the well-being status of households. The study revealed that the conflict in the north contributed to the high unemployment rates among urban households in Kombolcha Town by narrowing and blocking new job opportunities and reducing workers from the prior private and governmental economic sectors due to the huge destruction of assets and resources. ^[9]

⁷. I observed the mess of the town administration office and the town on October 30/2023.

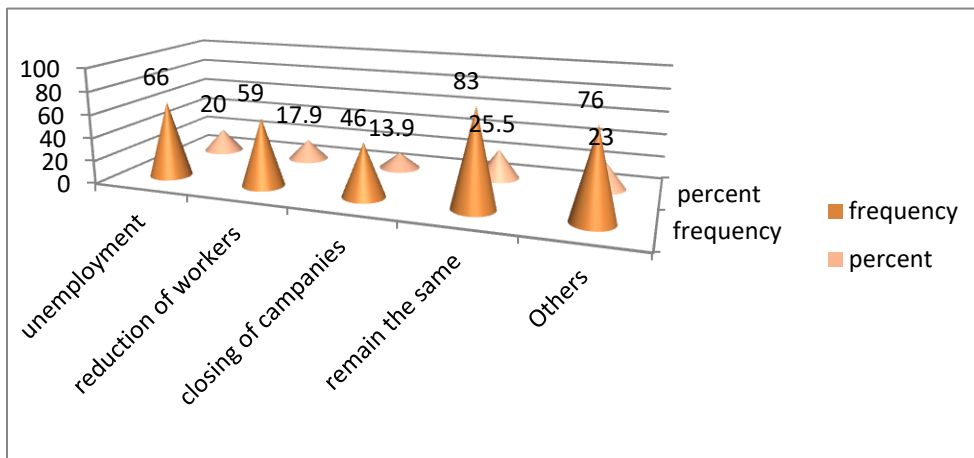
⁸ I interviewed Woizero Kewulet on March 8, 2023

⁹ Survey and interview data for 2023

The nature of urban livelihoods is sensible to crises that are dependent on the cash economy, which includes industrial and construction work in addition to trade and other business activities. The conflict targeted industries and companies that host thousands of workers as a means of livelihood on a temporary or permanent basis. Metal and woodworking, street vending, and other services in the town are livelihood strategies for households exposed to damage and looting.

The figure below in 4.2 indicated how war of the north affected the livelihoods of the town and job opportunities in Kombolcha town. And households in the town lost their capital and economic assets directly and indirectly. It shows the impact of armed conflict in Kombolcha Town through the cases of sampled household heads in the study.

Figure 4.8: The impact of armed conflict on job opportunities



To grade the level and type of impact the households faced, measures were constructed related to employment. The impacts on the households of the town are labeled in the categories of 'unemployment,' reduction of factory workers, 'closing of companies, and dispersal of company workers' related to the conflict. Similarly, to measure the households' status and economic situation, I labeled 'they remained the same', not affected by conflict. The last category specified 'others' impacts but not employment and income-related in the stated category.

The study revealed that 20% of households face unemployment, and 17.9% of household heads are reduced from their former workplaces and jobs due to the partial destruction of companies and factories and reduced capacity of production. In these economic sectors, they were forced to

reduce manpower and labor. 13.9% of households lost their jobs due to the total destruction and closing of companies, and they faced joblessness.^[10] The data presented shows the impacts of the conflict in terms of frequency and percentage.

Similarly, data were collected from the same households in the study to answer the unemployment rate of households before and after the conflict in the town. In this study, the households remembered the household's employment status, before the conflict and after the conflict. The data was summarized as follows and analyzed accordingly.

Table: 5.3 Unemployment rates of HHs in 2020/21 and 2022/23

	Unemployment rate of 2020/21 Variables	Rate	Unemployment rate of 2022/23 Variables	Rate	Rate of change
1.	No of unemployed individuals	298	No of unemployed individuals	478	33.27%
2.	Number of labor force	852	Number of labor force	956	
3.	Unemployment rate of 2020/21	34.9%	Unemployment rate 2022/23	50%	
Rate of change					

The provided data highlights the changes in unemployment rates between 2020/21 and 2022/23. An analysis of the variables reveals that the number of unemployed individuals, the labor force, and the unemployment rate all experienced significant shifts during this period. The number of unemployed individuals in the household increased by 16.1% indicated a substantial rise in joblessness. Simultaneously, there was a 12.21% increase in the labor force, suggesting a growth in the overall working-age population. Perhaps the most notable change was observed in the unemployment rate, which surged by 33.27%.

The data from ethnography in the study also showed a similar result in the impact of armed conflict on the poverty status of households. Even though some individuals got some opportunities from the armed conflict through selling and transferring illegal weapons and looting of properties during the war, the general image of the war exacerbated poverty and

¹⁰ Survey data for the town in 2023

deprivation of households in the conflict area. My field observation also confirmed that Factories and industries were targeted during the conflict in Kombolcha Town. Most factories were overwhelmingly damaged and not well recovered yet. Workers of factories and industries were suffering, some of them with reductions from the industries due to their poor capacity of production and inability to pay for workers. The Kombolcha textile industry is one of the well-known factories that hosts to hundreds of household workers in the town. One of the informants in the study stated her experience as follows:

I had worked in the company for 5 years and led my life and the family through the income earned from it. I supported my income through part-time and extra work at the company. However, during the conflict, a high amount of the companies' production equipment was destroyed, and their production capacity declined. From solid ground, over half of the workers, including me, were reduced from our jobs. I am looking for a job, but there are no job opportunities, and I became dependent on the family.

The other informant in the study from Biraro Sub City also raised similar experiences, and he was working at a popular hotel whose owner has a Tigriyan ethnic identity. In relation to the conflict, the hotel was destroyed and damaged by the local youths. They suspected him (the owner) as he was an informant, supporting the TPLF forces, giving information about the Amhara Fano, Milisha, and Federal forces, and even showing directions for looting and destruction. The owners of the hotel fled from the town to another neighboring area. Therefore, all workers at the hotel lost their jobs and were left jobless. Daniel (his name changed) stated his experience as follows:

I was a manager in the hotel for the last 5 years and served for more than 8 years in different positions in the hotel. The owner of the hotel was Tigriyan, and most of the workers were from the town. When the TPLF controlled Kombolcha Town, some of the TPLF leaders stayed at the hotel due to their prior information that it was the Tigriyan hotel. The youths later targeted the hotel and damaged it due to their suspicion of working with the TPLF forces. I have lost my job and have been jobless for over a month. Then I migrated to Saudi Arabia through illegal brokers in 2022 but failed to fulfill my plan to work in Saudi Arabia. After a month of traveling and having arrived in Saudi Arabia, I was detained for 3 months and have returned to my homeland.^[11]

Due to the conflict, business organizations were targeted by both parties in different ways. Even though the Tigriyan forces damaged and destroyed the town's economic or investment sectors, the local youths and military forces also respond by attacking suspected Tigriyan people assets.

¹¹ I interviewed Ato Daniel for his conflict-related experience on March 15, 2023.

Hotels and other businesses that belonged to the Tigrian ethnic group in the town were targeted by the local youths and militias due to their suspicion of working with the Tigray defense force (see Figure 4.9 below).



Figure 4.9: Effect of conflict after two years of conflict on Hotels (April, 2023)

Different cases from the town showed that, related to the conflict from middle-level to high-level, businesses suffered and were troubled, and hundreds of workers from those businesses were forced to turn over and fire their employment agreements and work as livelihood opportunities. Some organizations are totally closed, and some others are partially functioning with a limited number of workers. In the discussion from Borkena Sub-City, it was shown that, related to the conflict, Kombolcha railway project workers totally lost their jobs.

A female informant from Quteba *kebele* of Borkena Sub-City who was working at the railway project company told her job-related experience as follows:

We all, who were working on the Kombolcha railway project, lost our jobs. I have been working at the Rail Works Company for more than 8 years. The company gave job opportunities to over 4,000 workers. All of the workers in this company are now out of their jobs, and the project has stopped its work. I am jobless, living with my relatives and dependent on others. The conflict raised employment insecurity. I am looking for a job,

but I haven't had the opportunity to get it. I have two children, both of whom are of school age, but I didn't send them to school due to my unstable life.^[12]

The life experience of the above individual case shown that, households in conflict area faced complex poverty and deep multi-dimensional deprivation. The situation exacerbates the dependency rate of household members due to the loss of jobs and the social pressure on household heads. It similarly leads to educational deprivation among households. The above data indicated that the household faced child educational deprivation, which showed that the household could not send school-age children to school.

In terms of job opportunities, both male-headed and female-headed households in the town faced challenges differently. During the focus group discussions, female-headed households shared their harrowing experiences front the conflict. One participant, Amina, tearfully recounted her personal ordeal, stating,

We had to flee our home in the middle of the night, leaving behind everything we owned. Our house was burned down, and we lost all our belongings. It was terrifying, and we still live with the trauma.

Another participant, Rahel, expressed the economic struggles they faced, saying,

Before the conflict, I had a small business that provided for my children. But now, everything is gone. My shop was looted, and I have no means to support my family.

The discussions also revealed instances of gender-based violence, as highlighted by Sara, who bravely shared her story, saying,

I was attacked by armed men while trying to protect my children. They threatened me and violated me. I felt helpless and scared for my life.'

These quotes reflect the lived experiences of female-headed households, exposing the deep impact of the conflict on their lives. While female-headed households faced unique challenges, it was evident that males were also specifically targeted for killing. Haile, a participant, recounted the tragic loss of his brother, stating,

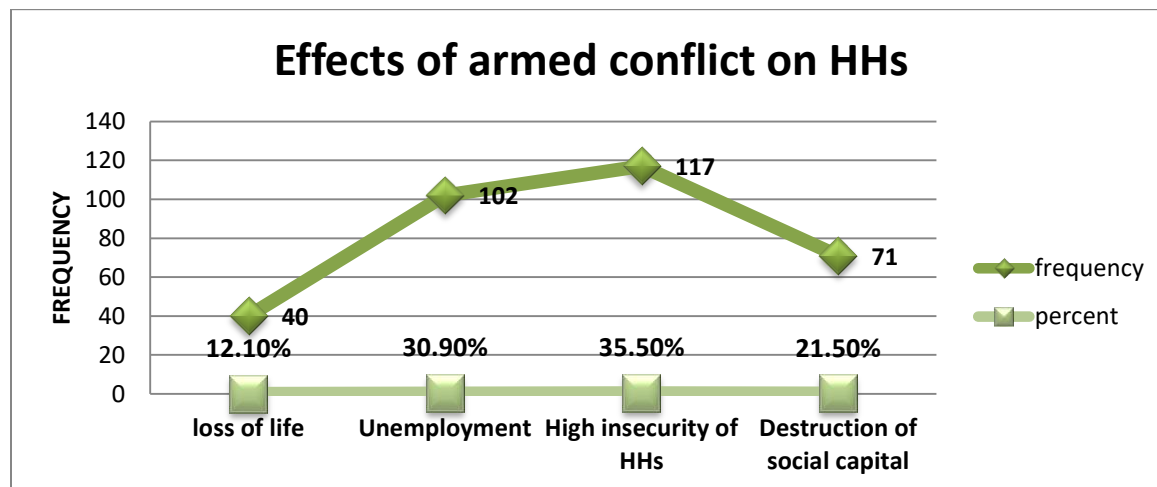
¹² I recorded the individual household case study and experience on April 10, 2023.

My brother was forcefully taken from our home and never returned. We later found out that he was killed. It devastated our family, and we are still grappling with the grief.

These accounts highlight the indiscriminate violence that affected both men and women in the conflict, emphasizing the widespread impact and loss experienced by households irrespective of gender.

Similarly, the survey data of the study confirms that some of the households in the study were affected by poor job opportunities, while others had experienced job losses. The remaining is exposed for permanent hard injury and disability related to the war. The majority of women-headed households are affected by all the negative impacts of the conflict in the town as compared to male-headed households. ^[13] The table presented below delineates the impacts of armed conflict on Komnolcha town, specifically focusing on the direct repercussions of the war.

Figure 4.10: The effects of the northern armed conflict in urban households



The study showed that 75% of households in the study experienced a decline in income in their household economy. Based on the responses of households in the study, 12.1% of households experienced losses in their household members, 30.9% experienced unemployment directly related to the conflict, 35% of households faced high insecurity in food and living standards, and

¹³ Survey data for Kombolcha town in 2023

the remaining 21.5% experienced the destruction of social capital. These all showed that the conflict in the north aggravated the deprivation level of households in the town through the loss of resources, including both human and non-human, high unemployment and insecurity of jobs, and the erosion of social capital, which are social guarantees for the social and economic security of households in the town.

5.2.3. The Impact of Armed Conflict on Income

The study made comparisons of the households' incomes at different time intervals with the same households. Data were collected from each household in the study based on the estimated monthly income of the household before and after the conflict. Then the impact of armed conflict on the income of the household is compared concurrently based on the stated data of monthly income per head. Then the data was analyzed based on the household income, mean, maximum, and minimum values as follows:

Table: 5.4 Incomes before and after Conflict

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average income of the household before northern conflict	330	900.00	50000.00	7725.4545	11163.48343
Average income of the household after conflict of the north	330	500.00	60000.00	5833.6364	7214.57842
Valid N (list wise)	330				

The data provides information about the average income of households before and after a conflict in the surveyed households in Kombolcha Town. Before the conflict, the average income ranged from ETB 900.00 to ETB 50,000.00, with a mean income of ETB 7,725.4545. This means that, on average, households had an income of around ETB 7,725. After the conflict, the average income ranged from ETB 500.00 to 60,000.00, with a mean income of ETB 5,833.6364. This indicates a decrease in average income compared to the pre-conflict period.

The standard deviation measures the spread of the data around the mean. In the case of the average income before the conflict, the standard deviation is ETB 11,163.48343. This suggests a

wide variation in income levels among households, indicating that some households had significantly higher incomes while others had lower incomes. Similarly, the standard deviation for the average income after the conflict is ETB 7,214.57842, indicating a considerable variation in income levels during this period as well. The "Valid N (list-wise)" value of 330 indicates that there were no missing values in the dataset, and all 330 observations were considered for analysis.

The income of the households in town has significant differences and changes. The general income of the households before and after the conflict had made a difference in the households' minimum and average income in the town. The post-conflict income of households in the town reduced in some degree, and the minimum and maximum income of the households were 500 and 60,000 ETB, respectively; the mean income in the town was 5,833 ETB. The mean difference showed a high interval between before and after the conflict, and due to the conflict, the average income of the town was reduced by 25%. It means the income of households in the town is extremely reduced, and households have faced income-related challenges in their lives.

In the focus group discussions, respondents shared their personal experiences and provided further insights into the impact of the war on household income. One participant expressed their frustration, saying,

Our town used to be thriving, but now everything has changed. Businesses have closed down, and many of us have lost our jobs. It's not just about the loss of income; it's the uncertainty of how we will support our families that weighs heavily on us.

This response highlights the broader economic consequences of the conflict, with businesses shutting down and livelihoods being disrupted. Another woman-headed household respondent added,

In woman-headed households, the burden is even heavier. We not only have to deal with the loss of income but also take on additional responsibilities without proper support. It's a struggle to make ends meet and provide for our children.

This data underscores the specific challenges faced by women-headed households, who often bear the dual burden of income generation and caregiving responsibilities. The loss of jobs, closure of businesses, and the emotional toll of uncertainty create a challenging environment for the affected communities. In the focus group discussions, participants shared additional insights

regarding the changes in household income following the conflict. One respondent expressed their frustration, stating,

Our lives were turned upside down by the conflict. Many of us lost our jobs and had to rely on whatever limited resources we had. Our income dropped drastically, and we struggled to make ends meet.

This quote highlights the significant disruption experienced by households, resulting in a sharp decline in their income and financial stability. Another participant in the focus group discussion also mentioned the experience they faced as follows:

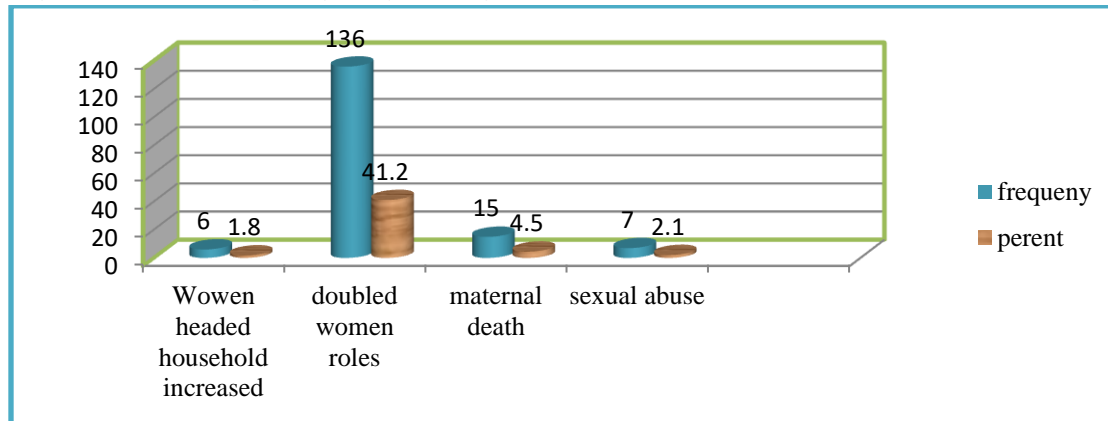
Even those who managed to find new jobs after the conflict faced reduced wages. The opportunities were limited, and employers took advantage of the situation to pay lower salaries. It was a challenging time for everyone.

The focus group discussions, along with the provided data, underscore the profound impact of the conflict on the income of households in the town. Participants expressed feelings of economic hardship, job loss, and reduced wages, highlighting the struggle to meet basic needs and maintain their previous standard of living. The quotes from the respondents exemplify the shared experiences of financial instability and the daunting task of rebuilding their livelihoods in the aftermath of the conflict. Overall, the data reflects the profound consequences of the war on household income, with respondents expressing their concerns, frustrations, and the difficulties they face in meeting their basic needs.

5.2.4. Conflict led deprivation on gender

The conflict in the north affected the lives and living standards of women in different dimensions of poverty, and it led to deprivation at the household level. Related to the conflict, women in the household and in the town at large faced different challenges and problems in their lives.

Figure 5.12: The impact of Conflict on gender



*According to MPI if there is maternal death in the household, the household is deprived in health

The above data in the table indicates that armed conflict has complicated impact on the gender dimension of households in the town. The study revealed that the number of women-headed households increased by 1.8% with the death of the husband in the conflict, either in direct war or in another way. Similarly, due to the conflict and involvement of men in the military service, the reduction of workers from factories, and other effects of conflict on job insecurity domains, 41.2% of women's roles in the household have doubled on both indoor and outdoor responsibilities. The other significant effect of the conflict, which contributed its share to poverty, was maternal death in the household. Among the household heads in the study, 4.5% of households experienced maternal death related to the conflict through inaccessible health services during the conflict and direct injury from the war. This exposed the household to complicated health and economic problems. The other 2.1% of households in the town experienced sexual abuse and harassment directly related to the conflict.

The upcoming chapter delves into an anthropological examination of urban poverty exacerbated by conflict. It delves into the day-to-day realities faced by vulnerable groups contending with poverty within the backdrop of armed conflict, offering supplementary insights to enrich the preceding survey findings on conflict zones. The primary aim of this chapter is to provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics of urban poverty by showcasing the authentic narratives of marginalized societies.

Chapter Six

Ethnography of war-Induced Urban Poverty and Deprivation in Kombolcha Town

In this chapter, I delve in into ethnography of war-induced urban poverty and explore the lived experiences of the study community.

6.1 War-Induced Urban Poverty and lived experiences of households

6.1.1 Disruption of Livelihoods and Poverty

The conflict in Kombolcha Town had a severe impact on the residents' livelihoods, causing widespread economic turmoil and social disruption. Discussions with focus groups confirmed that the town, once a thriving commercial center with prosperous businesses and stable incomes, faced devastating events after the conflict. Factories were destroyed, markets were left in ruins, and essential infrastructure suffered damage, leaving families without their usual sources of income. The once-vibrant economy collapsed, leading many residents into unemployment, poverty, and uncertainty. Among the affected households, Birhanu's family, comprising five members, faced significant hardships as their economic stability collapsed in the aftermath of the war's destruction. He mentioned his household experience as follows:

Our store was looted and set ablaze, leaving us not only without a source of income but also in debt due to the destruction of our business. The once vibrant shop, a symbol of our hard work and dedication, now stood in ruins.

According to Berhanu, he had relied on the revenue generated by their modest grocery store to make ends meet. As the conflict escalated, their store was plundered and set ablaze, leaving them not only without a means of livelihood but also burdened by debt resulting from the destruction of their business.

Similarly, Alemu's family faced a harrowing ordeal during the conflict. Alemu, the family's primary breadwinner, had worked as a mechanic in a local garage. However, the escalation of conflict resulted in the bombing of the garage, leaving Alemu without a job and suffering from severe injuries. Alemu one of the informant stated his testimony as:

The garage was bombed, leaving me without a job and with severe injuries. Our family, once financially stable, now faced uncertainty and struggled to meet basic needs, with my medical bills adding to our financial burden.

Once financially stable, the family now grappled with uncertainty, struggling to meet basic needs while being burdened by Alemu's mounting medical expenses. The war not only deprived Alemu of his livelihood but also shattered the family's sense of security and stability.

Selam, a skilled tailor in Kombolcha Town, had established a thriving business over the years, catering to the sartorial preferences of the community. However, the onset of conflict in the town led to the despoliation of her shop. Looted and vandalized, Selam's source of income was abruptly snatched away, leaving her adrift in a sea of despair and loss.

My shop became a casualty of the conflict. Looted and vandalized, my livelihood was abruptly snatched away, leaving me with a sense of despair and loss.

These poignant narratives of families like Berhanu, Alemu, and individuals like Selam underscore the structural and socially constructed nature of poverty in Kombolcha Town. The destruction of businesses and infrastructure during the conflict not only disrupted economic stability but also reinforced existing structural inequalities that perpetuate poverty. Furthermore, the social dynamics of stigma and exclusion exacerbate the struggles faced by families like the Berhanu and Alemu, impeding their access to support and resources necessary for rebuilding their livelihoods.

6.1.2. Displacement and Homelessness

One significant consequence of the armed conflict is the displacement of individuals and families¹⁴, leading to homelessness and informal settlements. This displacement further exacerbates poverty and deprivation, depriving individuals of security, stability, and dignity. The interview data obtained from one of the displaced women shows many faces of conflict-induced displacement and deprivation. Betselot is a 28-year-old woman who lives in Kombolcha town, 03 Kebele, and she stated her experience as follows:

The escalating tensions between the Amhara and Tigrian communities, fueled by conflict in the north, strained relationships even within households. My small grocery store, personally owned, became a target and was lost during the unrest. Additionally, my Tigrian spouse had to leave town, compelling me to shoulder the household's financial burden alone. Despite taking on extra work, financial struggles persisted, leading us to relocate to makeshift tents in Borchelle Kebele. This displacement has severely impacted

¹⁴ Interview with Betselot March 25/2023

my children's well-being, with limited living conditions, inadequate diets, and health concerns. Sadly, one child couldn't attend school, and another was sent to Saudi Arabia under risky circumstances by unauthorized individuals.

Sara is a 45-year-old widow and mother of three children in Borchelle Kebele. She experienced complicated socioeconomic chaos and crises in her life and explained it as follows:

Before the conflict, I worked as a seamstress, earning a modest income that helped support my family. However, due to the conflict, my small business was destroyed, and I lost my sewing machine and materials. With no means to generate income, I and my children now face severe food insecurity. We often go hungry, and I worry about my children's health and future.

Ahmed is a 28-year-old man who used to work as a construction laborer in Kombolcha town. Due to the conflict, he was exposed to complicated life struggles and poverty in different ways.

Upon the outbreak of the conflict, I was compelled to abandon my residence and my employment. As a consequence, I find myself displaced without a viable means of income. The pursuit of shelter and the fulfillment of my fundamental necessities have become arduous tasks. A profound sense of insecurity and ambiguity regarding the future engulfs me, as I remain unsure if and when I will regain stability and lead a life of dignity.¹⁵

Yonas, a young resident of Kombolcha Town, recounts his journey of homelessness wrought by the war's impact. With his neighborhood torn apart by conflict and control dynamics shifting unpredictably, Yonas was left with no choice but to abandon his home in search of safety. He shares what he experienced as follows:

I had no choice but to abandon my home in search of safety. Now living on the streets, I grapple with the harsh realities of homelessness, facing daily struggles to find food, shelter, and a sense of belonging in a town plagued by uncertainty and displacement.

This personal story illuminates the profound impact of war-related displacement and homelessness on individuals and families in Kombolcha Town. The experiences of Yonas underscore the human cost of conflict, where the loss of homes and communities leaves displaced individuals vulnerable to insecurity, deprivation, and the harsh realities of life on the margins. In a focus group discussion with displaced families, Woizero Alem shared her struggles with housing. She recounted,

¹⁵ Interview with Ahmed on March 25/2023

Our house was destroyed during the fighting. We had to flee with only the clothes on our backs. Now we live in a cramped room with three other families. It's hard to maintain privacy and dignity in such conditions.

In an ethnographic interview, Ato Tadese, a shop owner in Kombolcha town, shared his struggles with urban livelihood and housing due to the armed conflict. He expresses,

The conflict has devastated our town and our business. My shop was destroyed, and I lost everything. Now, I am left without a source of income and with no place to live. My family and I are staying with friends, but it's a temporary arrangement. We desperately need assistance to rebuild our lives and find stable housing.

Woizero Amarech, a widowed woman, shared her personal account of the conflict and its consequences. She tearfully recounted:

My husband was killed in the fighting, and our house was destroyed. With nowhere to go, I had to flee with my children. We live in a small room at my sister's house now. It's crowded, and there is not enough space for everyone. I worry about the future and how I will rebuild our lives.

Ethnographic interviews and observations highlight the significant displacement of individuals and families as a result of armed conflict in Kombolcha Town. The data indicates that many displaced residents find themselves in overcrowded temporary shelters or informal settlements, lacking adequate housing and basic amenities. This displacement and homelessness exacerbate poverty and deprivation, depriving individuals of security, stability, and dignity.

6.1.3 The toll of war on the social capital of households

The conflict between the TPLF and Amhara forces aligned with the federal government in Kombolcha Town has profoundly impacted the social capital of both the Amhara and Tigray communities. The hostilities have eroded trust, fractured relationships, and strained the social fabric that once bound these households together. Social capital serves as a robust assurance of job prospects, providing mutual support in times of necessity. However, conflict diminishes the value of this vital asset. In the focus group discussion of Ras Agez *kebele*, participants raised the social capital of the two communities they have built for centuries. One of the participants stated that:

Before the conflict, our community had a strong sense of social capital. We had thriving cooperative groups that worked together on various projects, such as building infrastructure or organizing community events, but the conflict shattered our unity. Many of the cooperative members were forced to flee, and our projects came to a halt. It's disheartening to see the decline of our social capital, as the once-active groups have disbanded and the spirit of collaboration has been replaced by a sense of uncertainty and mistrust.

The other participant from the focus group discussion also added additional background on the two ethnic groups' social cohesion and social capital as follows:

Social cohesion used to be the hallmark of our community. We would come together for religious celebrations, cultural festivals, and neighborhood gatherings. But the conflict tore us apart. Our community became fragmented. The once vibrant community spaces are now empty, and the absence of shared experiences and interactions has eroded our social cohesion. Rebuilding these bonds and restoring the sense of togetherness will require significant effort and healing.

In addition to the armed conflict, the hate speech of elites has a significant impact on the social capital and social cohesion of the two ethnic groups. Ato Feredegn, one of the participants in the focus group discussion of Raz Agez Kebele, stated the elites hate speech as a contributing factor for hostility and suspicion of the two ethnic groups as follows:

Before the conflict, I had close Tigray friends whom I considered family. We celebrated festivals together, shared meals, and supported each other in times of need. However, the hate speech by Tigray political elites changed everything. They started painting the Amhara people as enemies. And their divisive rhetoric seeped into our relationships. My Tigray friends began to distance themselves, and eventually, we lost touch. The bonds we once had were broken, and it's heartbreaking to see how hate speech can tear apart friendships and erode social cohesion.

On the other hand the Tigrayan community member also raised similar idea as the Amhara elites they targeted as enemy. Haftom stated what he feels as follows:

Amhara elites propagate a narrative portraying Tigrayans as sworn enemies who have encroached upon Amhara territory, instigating feelings of animosity and distrust within their communities. This rhetoric underscores a deep-rooted sense of grievance and perpetuates a narrative of victimhood among the Amhara populace.

Ato Feredegn's narrative reflects the transformative effect of Tigrayan elites' hate speech on personal relationships. His testimony underscores how the vilification of the Amhara community by Tigrayan political leaders engendered distrust and hostility, leading to the dissolution of

longstanding friendships and the erosion of social cohesion. This anecdote highlights the real-world consequences of elite rhetoric in rupturing social ties and fueling intergroup tensions.

Haftom's account mirrors this sentiment by shedding light on the reciprocal nature of hate speech propagation. The portrayal of Tigrayans as aggressors by Amhara elites not only fosters animosity and victimhood within Amhara communities but also perpetuates a cycle of mutual distrust and enmity. This cyclical pattern of hate speech deepens existing divisions and impedes efforts for reconciliation and unity, ultimately fracturing the social fabric of both communities.

The breakdown of once-close relationships due to divisive rhetoric not only erodes social cohesion but also diminishes social networks that are crucial for economic support and opportunities. The loss of friendships and support systems can isolate individuals, limiting access to resources and economic opportunities, thus perpetuating cycles of poverty. The following ethnographic data in Kombolcha town shows the social dimension, lived experiences, and struggles of individuals and communities affected by the conflict.

Belete's family, long-standing residents of Kombolcha Town, once epitomized the tight-knit bonds that characterized the community. He stated what he experiences as follow:

The onset of conflict destroyed the trust that had long united us, causing suspicions and fear to infiltrate our social bonds that had endured for generations. As the conflict intensified, doubts and anxiety seeped into our community, weakening the strong connections we had relied on during difficult times. Due to our perceived support for TPLF through financial aid and information sharing with the local Amhara, we came under suspicion. Formerly close neighbors, who used to enjoy meals and laughter together, now regarded each other with uncertainty, unsure of who could be trusted in a town overwhelmed by turmoil.

The echoes of violence reverberate through the community, leaving a trail of shattered lives and fractured connections in their wake. In this context Pierre Bourdieu, a well-known anthropologist he explained how war impacted social capital and poverty as:

In the fog of war, social capital dissolves like mist, leaving behind a landscape of fractured relationships and weakened networks that sow the seeds of poverty, entwining the destinies of communities in a tragic dance of loss and hardship¹⁶.

¹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu: The Forms of Capital (1986)

Bourdieu's insights on the impact of war on social capital align closely with the findings of this study. The experiences of individuals such as Fantahun and Kedija illustrate the profound effects of conflict on community cohesion and individual livelihoods. Fantahun's loss of support and Kedija's trauma following her husband's death exemplify the disintegration of social networks during times of violence. This fragmentation not only intensifies personal suffering but also exacerbates broader socioeconomic challenges, entrenching poverty and hardship within affected communities. Thus, the findings underscore the critical relationship between the erosion of social capital and the perpetuation of vulnerability in the context of conflict.

6.2 The transformative influence of war on power dynamics and community relation

6.2.1. Power dynamics and poverty

Before TPLF invasion, both Tigrian and Amharas held influential positions in trade and government offices. When the TPLF took control of Kombolcha, they reshaped the administrative structure, appointing their own loyalists to key positions. A local business owner, who preferred to remain unnamed, recounted,

I witnessed a significant shift in power dynamics as the TPLF took over. Suddenly, connections to the previous government became liabilities rather than assets.

Supporters and collaborators of the TPLF benefited from business and government opportunities during their brief tenure. However, this period lasted nearly for only two months. Subsequently, intense fighting between the Ethiopian government and Amhara forces led to the expulsion of the TPLF from Kombolcha. The central government then reestablished control, implementing changes in governance and socio-economic sectors. A local elder in the interview stated,

After the central government regained control, a wave of restructuring ensued. Individuals associated with the TPLF found themselves marginalized as the government sought to reestablish its authority.

According to a report by a local human rights organization, the power shift had a profound impact on the economic landscape:

Many individuals who were once thriving in their businesses faced economic downturns due to their perceived affiliations. This led to a visible disparity in economic opportunities between different factions in the town.

The transformation in power dynamics directly affected poverty rates in the town. In a focus group discussion, a community leader stated,

Power struggles have increased the disparity between the wealthy and the poor. Numerous at-risk families, already facing financial difficulties, became more marginalized during the power shift. The fluctuation in power structures not only disturbed urban households' stability but also exacerbated the economic gap in the community.

The oscillation of power structures not only disrupted the stability of urban households but also deepened the economic divide within the community.

Reciprocity and redistribution play pivotal roles during crises like war and power transitions, influencing economic transactions, resource redistribution, access to aid and support, and challenges in redistributive efforts. As echoed by an informant,

The shifting power dynamics have disrupted traditional norms of reciprocity, creating hurdles for businesses trying to navigate the new landscape.

The redistribution of resources under different bodies has led to the concentration of wealth among specific factions, exacerbating the disparities between economic strata within Kombolcha. A community elder in the study emphasized,

The redistribution of resources favored certain groups, widening the gap between the wealthy and the marginalized, further straining the socio-economic fabric of our town.

Efforts to redistribute resources for equitable development have encountered significant obstacles due to the entrenched interests within the town. Moreover, power dynamics often dictate access to crucial resources such as land, capital, and social networks in Kombolcha Town. As specific individuals consolidate their control over essential resources, marginalized groups find themselves marginalized from opportunities for economic progress. This unequal distribution of resources perpetuates cycles of poverty, ensnaring vulnerable households in a cycle of deprivation and vulnerability. The reshaping of power dynamics subsequent to the conflict has disrupted the provision of social services and support systems within the community. data from FGD confirmed that communities that previously relied on stable governance for assistance encountered obstacles in accessing vital services like healthcare and education, further intensifying their encounter with poverty. The experience of Selam who is Tigrian ethnically explains:

The dynamics of power and influence post-conflict have reshaped the social fabric of our community. As a result of economic setbacks, I have experienced firsthand the stigma and exclusion that come with shifting power structures, hindering my ability to recover economically and socially.

The entwined nature of power dynamics and poverty in Kombolcha Town underscores the intricate relationship between social, economic, and political forces. The misuse of humanitarian aid exacerbates poverty by diverting essential resources away from vulnerable populations, hindering recovery efforts, and perpetuating cycles of deprivation. A victim of this misallocation from Ras Agez lamented,

The aid that was supposed to help us rebuild our lives was used to strengthen the powerful, pushing us deeper into poverty.

This diversion not only deprives communities of critical support but also undermines their ability to bounce back from crises, as highlighted by a local NGO worker who stated,

Misused aid weakens our resilience, making it harder for us to recover and escape the cycle of poverty.

Furthermore, the erosion of trust resulting from aid misappropriation hampers collective efforts to address poverty, as noted by a community leader:

When aid is misdirected, it breaks down the trust within our community, making it difficult for us to come together and tackle poverty effectively.

Ultimately, the distorted prioritization of aid based on political affiliations rather than genuine need distorts efforts to uplift the most vulnerable, perpetuating inequalities and stifling economic opportunities for those already struggling to make ends meet. This cycle of misallocation not only exacerbates poverty but also hampers long-term development prospects for communities in conflict-affected regions like Kombolcha Town.

6.2.2. Intra and interethnic relation dynamics, and poverty

The repercussions of the conflict in Kombolcha Town extended beyond the disruption of businesses owned by the Tigrayan community. The town itself bore the brunt of violence, with widespread looting and damage inflicted by the TPLF during the conflict with the central government¹⁷. In the aftermath, residents, including Tigrayans aligned with the TPLF, faced

¹⁷ Focus group discussion held on May, 18/2023

heightened fear and insecurity as the central government regained control. This climate of fear prompted some Tigrayan supporters to also leave the town, exacerbating the already profound impact of the conflict on the town's infrastructure, economy, and social fabric. The closure and destruction of businesses, including those owned by Tigrayans, led to a significant increase in joblessness, pushing many individuals further into poverty as the economic stability of the community was severely compromised.

From my field, I observed the relationship between the Tigrian and the Amhara communities in the town. Politics interrupted the social and cultural capital of households in the town, as the conflict eroded the cultural values guided by hate speech from politicians belonging to the Tigrian and Amhara political elites from both groups. The social values of tolerance, love, and respect among the Tigrayans and the Amharas exposed each other to suspicion. This suspicion and discrimination based on ethnic identity influenced the social network and solidarity among inter-ethnic groups. ^[18]

i. Strengthening Intra ethnic Bonds

Due to the two war parties, the interethnic relation and social capital of households in the town severely affected. The qualitative data illuminates a remarkable trend of strengthening intra-ethnic bonds in the face of turmoil and discord. Through personal narratives and community testimonials, the following examination sheds light on how shared challenges have catalyzed a deepening sense of solidarity and cohesion within each distinct ethnic group.

Qualitative data collected within the Amhara and Tigray communities amidst escalating conflict reveals a significant strengthening of intra-ethnic bonds, showcased through personal narratives that emphasize resilience, solidarity, and unity emerging from shared adversity within each community. Selam, a community elder explained her community experiences as follows:

Despite the diversity in religious beliefs and perspectives within the Amhara community, both churches and mosques serve as vital hubs for the equitable distribution of resources, transcending any religious divides. Through the lens of conflict, a remarkable unity emerges. We come to understand that in moments of turmoil, we are fundamentally interconnected, recognizing that together, we stand as each other's greatest support.

Belay is also a local activist and explained his experience on how the war shapes the Community Support Networks as follows:

¹⁸ I observed the social relations and networks of the two brother ethnic groups in 2022 and 2023.

Seeing Amhara families supporting one another through these tough times is inspiring. It's a reminder that our bonds run deep, regardless of our individual differences.

The Community Initiatives also strengthen among the interethnic relations. Ato Zenebe, the coordinator of kebele 06 at Biraro sub city also explained his community experience as follows:

Our neighborhood has come together like never before. We've set up food distribution centers, organized medical aid, all driven by a sense of unity and shared purpose among us Amhara.

Similarly, Tewodros, a Tigrayan community member also reflected on the evolving community dynamics:

The adversity brought by conflict has only reinforced our bonds within the Tigrayan community. Witnessing the unwavering support and solidarity among Tigrayan families has been truly inspiring. It exemplifies the profound connections that bind us together, emphasizing that our ethnic identity unite us in times of need.

Furthermore, insights from Wubayehu, a community elder in a Tigrayan neighborhood, highlighted the growing community initiatives and collaborative efforts:

As a community, we have mobilized like never before. Tigrayan neighborhoods have established support networks, distributed essential resources, and provided aid to those in needs. This collective effort is driven by a strong sense of unity and a shared commitment to uplift and empower one another.

Qualitative data from the Amhara and Tigray communities during conflict reveals a strengthening of intra-ethnic bonds amid adversity. Personal stories highlight how shared challenges have deepened solidarity within each group. Churches and mosques serve as unifying hubs, emphasizing mutual support across religious divides.

ii. Weakening Inter-Ethnic Bonds

This study delves into the disheartening trend of weakening bonds between historically intertwined groups, shedding light on the challenges posed by historical grievances and external pressures that exacerbate divisions and sow seeds of discord. Through personal testimonies and qualitative data, this study delves into the nuances of identity, trust, and belonging within the context of escalating tensions, offering insights into the fragile nature of inter-ethnic relations amidst conflict and upheaval. Aregash, a community elder explained the experience of interethnic relation among households as follows:

The conflict has reopened wounds that we thought had healed long ago. Suspicion and animosity now color interactions between Amhara and Tigrayan communities, unraveling the threads of shared history that once bound us together.

Haile, a displaced resident explained the toll of the war on the Loss of Trust among interethnic bonds as follows:

I used to have friends from both communities, but now it feels like we are worlds apart. The conflict has shattered the trust that once existed between us, leaving us wary and isolated within our own ethnic groups.

Amanuel, a community elder, reflects on the strained inter-ethnic relations as below:

The conflict has sown seeds of distrust and division between our Tigrayan community and our Amhara neighbors. Once intertwined by shared experiences, we now find ourselves on opposite sides, grappling with suspicion and fear.

Selamawit, a young Tigrayan woman, shares her experience of fractured inter-ethnic bonds as follows:

I grew up in a community where Amhara and Tigrayan families lived side by side harmoniously. But now, the conflict has torn apart these bonds of friendship and cooperation. The sense of belonging and trust that once defined our interactions has been replaced by uncertainty and distance.

Additional accounts from Tigrayan individuals shed light on how the conflict has impacted inter-ethnic dynamics, highlighting the growing distrust, separation, and isolation between the Tigrayan and Amhara groups. The personal stories shared in this study provide a poignant view of the difficulties and intricacies of inter-ethnic relationships in the midst of conflict. These narratives reveal that the breakdown of inter-ethnic connections not only widens rifts but also presents substantial challenges to unity and economic prosperity.

6.2.3. The complexities of war and its diverse repercussions

The data of the study showed the multifaceted effects of the conflict in the town at large. Conflict causes not only economic damage and destruction, but it also relates to social, cultural, and psychological crunch¹⁹. It proves the argument that Social capital aids in creating economic opportunities, accessing services, and pooling resources during difficulties. Social support within

¹⁹ Interview with *Kebele* administrators in Shesha ber on May 20/2023

networks involves offering care, assistance, and resources to help individuals navigate stress and challenges (Adger, 2000). Due to ethnic based tension and war, the common and strong social capitals of the community towards the value of living together and neighbourhoodness through social institutions such as Edir, Equb, Mahmer, and other long-lived social institutions for social and economic solidarity, reciprocity, and redistribution mechanisms affected by the war which has vital role in the socioeconomic wellbeing of the local community²⁰.

Ras Agez Kebele emerges as a poignant example of the profound repercussions of conflict within Kombolcha Town. The kebele, characterized by a dense concentration of merchants and businesses, bore the brunt of war-induced devastation, leaving a trail of economic ruin, social upheaval, and psychological distress in its wake. A remarked a local community leader, reflecting on the widespread impact of the war as:

In Ras Agez, the scars of conflict run deep, with economic and social crises gripping the kebele in a vice of despair.

High numbers of businesses, from small enterprises to large-scale ventures, lay in ruins, plunging households into financial turmoil and exacerbating social instability within the kebele. The survey and discussion data of the kebele highlight the harrowing experiences endured by residents of Ras Agez. Reports reveal that five women in different households faced the traumas of rape and sexual abuse, while three male household heads met violent ends in front of their families, leaving lasting scars of loss and trauma that continue to reverberate through the community.

Despite the passage of time, the wounds of Ras Agez have yet to heal fully, with profound psychological misery and nuanced challenges persisting among affected households. "The injuries inflicted go beyond the visible," emphasized a mental health worker involved in post-conflict support efforts, underscoring the hidden scars and unresolved trauma that demand urgent attention and specialized care for the holistic recovery of the kebele's communities.

Sarmidir village is one of the well-known areas of the residential site of the poor in Ras Agez Kebele. It is the village of the poor, and people with lower economic levels and engaged in

²⁰ FGD in Borchele kebele held on May 21/223

most informal urban economic activities are living widely in the village of Sarmidr. One of the elder informants in the village stated his experience with the village as follows:

Comparatively, this is the village of the lower class, and some of the households are leading their lives through begging and others through informal economic activities, including labor work on construction, selling of small goods and cooked foods, Gult gebeya (ጉልጉ ገበያ), and other temporary works. This community was economically poor even before the conflict. However, after the conflict, they exposed themselves to a further deep and chronic level of poverty and deprivation. The poor lost what they had; their choices and opportunities narrowed, and their voice and power were underestimated. Their economy and subsistence strategy were more dependent on the cash economy and daily labor work (ወዛደር). However, in this economic transaction, small-scale market activities, including small-goods selling (ሱቅ በደረጃ), collapsed because of the capacity of those small-scale sellers to buy goods^[21]

Through the lens of Ras Agez Kebele, the aftermath of conflict in Biraro Sub City unfolds as a narrative of shattered lives, disrupted livelihoods, and unhealed wounds, highlighting the imperative for comprehensive interventions that address the multifaceted needs of communities grappling with the enduring legacies of war.

Borchelle Kebele in Biraro Sub-City was also one of the conflict-affected areas where many died and migrated from the town to surrounding areas due to fear of the militias, identity-based attacks, and immoral assault. The TPLF forces harassed and forced households to give money and to show the allied forces and their supporters in the town. These psychological and social crises contributed to deepening poverty among household members both during and after the conflict. One of the informants in the study stated that:

While the TPLF forces were controlling the town of Kombolcha, in addition to looting and destruction of properties, they enforced kneeling on the ground and assaulting themselves with bad words, which were racist and inhuman and that I didn't raise here. I had been harmed by psychological trauma; the Tigriyan militias assaulted and physically harmed me, including hate assaults and speeches. They mugged and dehumanized me in front of my family and used racist words to embarrass us for our ethnic identity. Similarly, household heads and economically active household members died, and some others were wounded in the conflict. My household is one of the victims of this conflict.
[22]

It shows the psychological chaos and trauma caused by the conflict have a multidimensional long-term effect, and such psychological illness and trauma cause poor productivity and health problems among the

²¹ I interviewed one of the Elder in Ras Agez kebele of Sarmidir village on April 17,2023

²² I interviewed the experiences of individual households in Borschele Kebele.

household members. This situation has also had a direct impact on the social and cultural values of the community. In relation to this, Kedija, a 33-year-old woman, has to say the following:

I faced physical and psychological injuries in the conflict. While the TPLF forces were rotating door to door, they caused physical and psychological injuries ^[23] and dehumanized the community in the town. My husband was killed by militias in front of the family. He was a Bajaj, a three-wheeled small vehicle driver, and didn't have any participation in military activities. Then after, I became the responsible head of the household, with dual indoor and outdoor activities.

Kedija's account highlights the trauma she faced during the conflict, including physical and psychological injuries from TPLF forces. After witnessing the killing of her husband, a non-combatant Bajaj driver, she became the head of her household, taking on both indoor and outdoor responsibilities.

6.3. Conflict and poverty for Vulnerable Groups

I. People with disabilities

People with disabilities faced many problems during and after the conflict in the war of northern Ethiopia. While the Tigriyan forces were controlling Kombolcha town, disabled people were more vulnerable to further hardships. Ato Mekonnen, the disabled man in Biraro Sub City, stated his experience and the story of his friends during the conflict as follows:

We were targeted by the TPLF forces, considered a spy of the federal government, and suspected of other missions. Those who had mental and psychological problems were targeted and shouted at by the militias. On the other hand, some disabled people with hearing problems were also crucified by the Tigriyan forces due to their suspicions in connection with the government. When they asked them questions and information, the disabled people with disabilities (deaf) didn't replay their question. But the militias' suspected it was spying. Some of them were killed; others were highly injured. Two of my friends were injured and one killed during the conflict. ^[24].

The other participant in the focus group discussion of Ras Agez Kebele stated his experiences as follows:

As a person with a disability, the armed conflict has significantly impacted my life. Before the conflict, I had access to support services that helped me navigate daily challenges. However, the conflict disrupted these services, leaving me without the assistance I relied upon. I now face

²³ I interviewed the experiences of individual households in Borschele Kebele.

²⁴ I interviewed my key informant, Ato Zelalem Muhabaw, chairman of people with disabilities in Kombolcha town, on March 17, 2023.

increased vulnerability and struggle to meet my basic needs, as the conflict has further marginalized individuals with disabilities like me.

This case sheds light on how armed conflict disproportionately affects individuals with disabilities. The disruption of support systems, such as healthcare, assistive devices, and accessible infrastructure, leaves them more vulnerable and unable to cope with the challenges they face. The conflict exacerbates their existing disabilities and hampers their ability to access necessary assistance, leading to increased marginalization and difficulties in meeting their basic needs.

Sar Sefer, known for its high population of disabled individuals in Biraro Sub City, suffered a severe setback on June 30, 2021, when their housing settlement was struck in a bombing incident. Four residents sustained injuries in the assault, lacking immediate access to necessary medical assistance. This tragic occurrence occurred in a community already facing economic hardships and heavily reliant on informal economic endeavors. The destruction of homes and loss of livelihood assets further entrenched the village in poverty, showcasing how the conflict exacerbated economic inequalities and vulnerabilities within this marginalized community. Following this devastating event, the inhabitants of Sar Sefer not only grappled with physical harm and financial setbacks but also with the daunting challenge of reconstructing their lives amidst heightened destitution and uncertainty.

Birhan was a disabled and handicapped adult who engaged himself in his own men's hair salon and worked in the town. He has his own barber shop and men's hair salon equipment, and he generates his income from this job. However, during the conflict, all his properties, which were estimated to be worth of 80,000 ETB, were looted and out of service. He stated his experience as follows:

Getting job opportunities for people with disabilities is a very difficult task. I worked for over ten years and had generated my income before the conflict. I have two children, and my wife is also jobless. My younger child stopped schooling due to the economic problems we faced. My wife was working with me at a men's hair salon before the conflict. Now both of us are jobless, and she sometimes makes money through the labor wage in private homes. ^[25]

²⁵ I Interview and Individual case study of the respondent in Biraro sub city

Fantahun is a disabled man with limitations in his mental development. He was working in a grain mill as a grain combiner and a laborer. He has a seven-year-old disabled child. They got the support of a cow and her calf from the Help Association. But during the conflict, they were stolen and snatched by the militias, and he lost his assets. He stated his life experience as follows:

Now I lead my life by begging at the church and on the street. I couldn't rent a house and lived in a narrow container with my child.^[26]

Fantahun's quote highlights the devastating effects of conflict on his life. After losing his job and the support of a cow and calf to militia theft, he now relies on begging for survival. Living in a narrow container with his disabled child underscores their dire situation, emphasizing the urgent need for assistance for vulnerable individuals affected by conflict.

II. Conflict, elders and poverty

Most elders were not displaced during the conflict, and they weren't able to migrate to other towns. There was no transport access to move from the town to other secured areas. The case of Ato Alemu presented below illuminates the circumstances elderly people experience during the conflict.

Ato Alemu is 72 years old. He lived for 45 years in Kombolcha town. His wife died before 10 years, and his only child died in the Ethio-Eritrea war.^[27] *Since then, Ato Alemu has lived alone. He worked as a wage laborer for his daily consumption, but through time he became weak and unable to work and earn money. He led his life by begging for some years, and later he joined the town elders association and gained some support from the town's women and social affairs office. While the conflict was arriving in the town of Kombolcha, which was under the control of Tigrian forces, Ato Alemu stopped his regular health medication, and later his health condition became worse and worse. After the war, the life of his family did not improve. Now the support of the town for women and social affairs has stopped, and he went out to the street.*

In the conflict, elders and people with disabilities were affected in different ways. Those social groups were more vulnerable and victims of the conflict in the town. One of the elders in Biraro Sub City, who was the chairman of the elders' association in Biraro Sub City, stated conflict-related crises and poverty among elders as follows:

²⁶I Interview and Individual case study of the respondent in Biraro sub city

²⁷ I interviewed Ato Alemu observed the lived experience during the study

** The Ethiopia-Eritrea war took place from May 1998 to June 2000.

One of the elderly who was taking antiretroviral therapy (ART) died due to his health problem when he was trying to find a pharmacy and crashed into a car accident in the town. Other 80-year-old elders also died due to stress, psychological trauma, heavy weapon sounds, and poverty-related cases.^[28]

These data confirmed that elders are profoundly affected by conflict, facing increased vulnerability due to isolation and loss of family support. Limited access to healthcare leads to neglected medical needs, while exposure to violence results in heightened stress and psychological trauma. Additionally, poverty exacerbates their difficulties in meeting basic needs, highlighting the urgent need for targeted support during crises.

When TPLF controlled Kombolcha town, they looted and ransacked foreign aid essentials, and private and public properties including the WFP food supplies for malnourished children in Kombolcha. WFP reported that it suspended distributing food aid after Tigray gunmen looted its warehouses, and stole large quantities of essential food supplies while holding aid staff at gunpoint. A UN spokesperson also communicated another mass looting in the town and the additional high jacking of 18 WFP aid trucks by TPLF forces²⁹. This situation worsens the living condition of elders and the direct victim civilians in the war. After the withdrawal of the Tigray forces the aid and support works couldn't satisfy the victims and peoples in need.

III. Armed conflict and women

The Northern Conflict has impacted women in a number of ways. The data from individual cases and the focus group discussion below confirm gender-based victimization in the social and economic spheres of their lives. They have suffered from all quarters.

Fatima is one of the victims in Borkena Sub City, and she stated her experience as follows:

During the conflict, my village was attacked, and I witnessed horrifying acts of violence. I lost my husband and was forced to flee with my children. As a displaced woman, I face constant fear and uncertainty. The risk of gender-based violence is ever-present, making it difficult for me to feel safe. I yearn for a sense of security and the opportunity to heal from the trauma that lingers within me. Even after the conflict, schools have reopened, but I can't attend my school due to socioeconomic challenges I faced.

²⁸ I interviewed the chairman of the elders association in Biraro Sub City on April 22, 2023.

²⁹ Reuters. 9 December 2021

Bereket was the other interviewee on Borkena Sub City, and she described the impact of the conflict on women and shared her struggle for livelihood as follows:

The conflict destroyed our local markets and disrupted the economy. As a widow and mother, I bear the responsibility of providing for my children. However, finding stable employment is a constant struggle. I am unable to provide my family with a stable income because of the unstable economy and lack of opportunities, which keeps me mired in a cycle of poverty.

Bereket's case sheds light on the economic challenges faced by widows and single mothers in conflict-affected areas. The destruction of local markets and limited employment opportunities create significant barriers to securing a sustainable livelihood. The following three case stories also illustrate the experiences of women in armed conflict situations in Kombolcha Town.

Case 1:

Serkalem was 25 years old when her husband, a contractor, was killed by the militants, who had demanded revenge for their suspicion of support for the federal and Amhara forces. They came to his house at 7:30 in the evening and took her husband along. Her 9-year-old son started crying when he saw them taking his father away, and they shot him. Serkalem ran to look for her husband when she heard gunshots. After running for about ten minutes, she saw his body beaten before being shot. His chest and forehead were bleeding. She started crying, and no one in the village came out of the houses. She stated her experience of psychological stress and trauma related to her husband's death and the victims she faced. Her nightmare was the time when she saw the militas capture her husband and shoot him at his home.

Case 2:

Seada was a 39-year-old woman in Kuteba Kebele, Borkena Subity. She was working on the railway project and worked there for 6 years. She managed her family with the income she earned. However, due to the conflict, the project went out of business. Now she is working as a laborer, including washing clothes and baking bread named 'Injera' (አገጅራ). Her husband died in the conflict, and she holds dual responsibility as a father and a mother in the family. She sent one of her children to her grandparents out of town because of her inability to fulfill basic needs. Due to the nature of her work, she is feeling sick and has a serious health problem, and she didn't get medication in town.

The personal stories of Serkalem and Seada in Kombolcha Town vividly portray the deep effects of armed conflict on women, unveiling a complex interplay of trauma, grief, socio-economic turmoil, and gender-specific vulnerabilities. The conflict thrusts women into poverty and deprivation by disrupting their livelihoods, causing health emergencies, fostering social isolation,

and exacerbating their vulnerabilities. This cascading cycle of deprivation not only limits economic prospects but also obstructs their capacity to recover and reconstruct their lives in the aftermath of conflict.

In the study, the ethnographic narratives vividly illustrated the profound impact of conflict-induced structural violence on individuals and communities. Through the lens of structural violence theory, the research revealed how systemic inequalities and power dynamics exacerbated by conflict led to economic instability, shattered livelihoods, and heightened social distress. These findings underscored the intricate ways in which conflict permeates through social structures, disrupting social institutions, eroding social capital, and deepening poverty levels.

Moreover, the application of conflict theoretical frameworks illuminated the nuanced interplay between conflict dynamics and intergroup relations. By examining how the war both strengthened and weakened interethnic relations among the Amhara and other ethnic groups, the study highlighted the complexities of social cohesion and fragmentation in conflict-affected settings. This dual impact on social relations, coupled with the vulnerabilities faced by already marginalized groups, emphasized the multifaceted nature of poverty in urban contexts.

The unique strength of this study lies in its comprehensive approach, blending quantitative data with qualitative ethnographic narratives. By integrating these methodologies, the research not only uncovered the structural underpinnings of poverty but also delved into the intricate personal experiences that underscore the broader social, cultural, and psychological implications of war-induced poverty. This holistic perspective underscores the necessity of tailored and multifaceted interventions for post-conflict recovery, emphasizing the importance of addressing economic, social, and psychological well-being in tandem.

Chapter Seven

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1 Key Summary of the Finding

The comprehensive study conducted in Kombolcha Town, Ethiopia, scrutinized the multifaceted impact of conflict through both quantitative analysis and ethnographic exploration, revealing profound insights into the pre- and post-conflict landscape.

Quantitative results unveiled a staggering escalation in multidimensional poverty post-conflict. Deprivation indicators surged across various dimensions, with health facility deprivation skyrocketing to 58.2%, housing deprivation peaking at 60.2%, and asset deprivation hitting 86.7%. Female-headed households bore a disproportionate burden, experiencing higher deprivation levels both before and after the conflict, with 51% categorized as severely multidimensionally poor post-conflict. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) analysis starkly demonstrated the post-conflict surge in poverty rates, with an adjusted headcount ratio soaring from 28.9% to 41.3%. The Generalized Ordered Logit Model (GOLOGIT2) analysis underscored conflict as a significant driver of multidimensional poverty, increasing the likelihood of heightened poverty by 16.3%. Factors such as education, homeownership, health status, and access to electricity were also pinpointed as crucial determinants of post-conflict poverty levels.

Ethnographic narratives provided poignant accounts of the human toll exacted by the conflict, portraying vivid experiences of individuals and households in the study. These narratives painted a vivid picture of economic instability and suffering, illustrating disrupted livelihoods, shattered businesses, and precarious incomes. Displaced households and individuals shared their struggles, shedding light on the harsh realities of seeking refuge in overcrowded shelters and makeshift settlements, emphasizing the profound impact of displacement on poverty levels within the community.

Moreover, the ethnographic findings highlighted broader social and psychological repercussions of the conflict on community dynamics. Disruptions in social institutions, breakdowns in neighborhood cohesion, and heightened psychological distress among residents revealed the deep-seated scars left by the conflict. The integration of quantitative data with qualitative ethnographic narratives underscored the imperative for tailored and holistic approaches to post-conflict recovery, stressing the necessity of addressing economic, social, cultural, and psychological well-being for effective community rebuilding and healing in the aftermath of conflict. The study reveals how warfare affects social capital, crucial for fostering economic opportunities, accessing services, and mobilizing resources in adversity, emphasizing the repercussions of conflict on this indispensable resource.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study not only highlighted the structural dimensions of poverty but also provided a rich tapestry of individual experiences, shedding light on the social, cultural, and psychological impacts of war-induced poverty.

7.2. Conclusion and recommendation

In conclusion, this study has meticulously examined the intricate ramifications of war-induced urban poverty and deprivation in Kombolcha town, Ethiopia, employing a mixed research methodology to unveil the multifaceted impact of conflict. Through a combination of quantitative analysis and ethnographic exploration, this research has illuminated the socioeconomic repercussions of the northern Ethiopian war, providing profound insights into the landscape both before and after the conflict. The quantitative analysis has underscored a troubling escalation in multidimensional poverty post-conflict, with deprivation indicators spiking across various dimensions. Notably, female-headed households have emerged as a particularly vulnerable group, grappling with heightened levels of deprivation throughout the conflict and its aftermath. The integration of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) analysis and the Generalized Ordered Logit Model (GOLOGIT2) has highlighted the pivotal role of conflict as a driver of post-conflict poverty, emphasizing the necessity for targeted interventions that address the root causes of poverty disparities.

Complementing these quantitative findings, the ethnographic narratives have provided poignant accounts of the human toll exacted by the conflict, portraying vivid experiences of economic instability, displacement struggles, and social ruptures within the community. These narratives have not only enriched our understanding of the individual experiences but have also shed light on the broader social and psychological repercussions of the conflict, emphasizing the imperative for tailored and holistic approaches to post-conflict recovery. By integrating quantitative rigor with qualitative depth, this study has offered a comprehensive analysis of war-induced poverty, underscoring the importance of developing nuanced interventions that address the multifaceted nature of poverty.

Recommendations for Future Action

- **Targeted Support Programs:** Implement specialized programs aimed at empowering female-headed households through improved access to essential services and economic opportunities, addressing the heightened deprivation levels they face post-conflict.
- **Community Rehabilitation Initiatives:** Establish community-driven initiatives to rebuild social institutions, enhance neighborhood cohesion, and address the psychological distress prevalent among residents, fostering resilience and aiding in the healing process post-conflict.
- **Integrated Development Strategies:** Develop comprehensive strategies that integrate economic, social, and cultural dimensions to address the underlying determinants of poverty levels, emphasizing education, homeownership, and access to essential services for effective post-conflict recovery efforts.

These recommendations are vital for guiding stakeholders towards the implementation of effective strategies that promote sustainable post-conflict recovery, foster community resilience, and enhance overall well-being in the aftermath of conflict in Kombolcha town, Ethiopia.

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APPENDICES

Appendix: 1 Interview and FGD questions and Questionnaire
Addis Ababa University

College of Social Science

Department of Social Anthropology

Dear informant and interviewee, this is the interview question for research of Masters of Social Anthropology entitled "War-Induced Urban Poverty and Deprivation Kombolcha Town, South Wollo Zone of Amhara Regional State". You are free to resign when you ever you want.

Interview Questions

Tape recorder is **on**:

1. Can you describe the ways in which armed conflict has affected socioeconomic conditions in kombolcha town?
2. How has armed conflict specifically contributed to the exacerbation of urban poverty in kombolcha town?
3. What is the effect of the war among the urban households in their livelihood; social relation and social networks of inter household cases?
4. In what ways has armed conflict disrupted livelihoods and income generating opportunities for individuals and communities in kombolcha town?
5. Can you discuss the impact of armed conflict on employment opportunities, income generation, and economic stability of households in Kombolcha Town?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. How has armed conflict affected the overall social fabric and community dynamics in kombolcha town?
2. Can you share specific examples of how armed conflict has impacted the livelihoods and economic activities of individuals and communities in kombolcha town?
3. How has armed conflict influenced access to basic services, such as healthcare, education, soicial capital of households in the town?
4. What did you experience on the impact of the war on social capital of households in your locality?
5. What are the primary challenge and obstacle faces by individuals and communities in Kombolcha town in Overcoming armed conflict induced urban poverty
6. Based on your collective experiences, what recommendations do you have for policy makers, local authorities, and organizations to address the impact of armed conflict on urban poverty in kombolcha town?

Tape recording off!

Thank you for your participation!

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SOIAL ANTHROPOLOGY
QUESTIONNAIRES FOR HOUSEHOLD

	condition, (2) Few trained professional staff, (3) staff frequently absent, (4)lack of drugs, (5) Does not offer all services, (6) limited opening hours & (7) no problem at all. Put the number below			
Living standard				
3.1	House flooring: what is your material for the dwelling floor?(sand(1), dung(2), wood planks(3), cement(4), carpet(5)			
3.2	What is your material for the dwelling wall? Wood with mud(1),stone with mud(2), cement(3),			
3.3	What is your material for the dwelling roof? Wood plastic (1) ,metal (2),wood (3),cement(4)			
3.4	Sanitation: What kind of toilet facility do members of your household usually use? Flush to Pit latrine(1), flesh to unknown place (2), flush to somewhere else(3)			
3.5	Do you share this toilet facility with other households? Yes(1), No(2)			
3.6	Cooking Fuel: what type of fuel does your household mainly use for cooking? Electricity(1) animal dung(2), Charcoal(3), wood(4), biomass(5)			
3.7	water: What is the main source of drinking water for the household members? Piped water(1), dug well(2), from spring(3), bottled water(4)			
3.8	How long does it take to get to the water source, get water and come back? Minutes _____			
3.9	Asset: Did/do you have any of the following assets?			
	Electricity: yes(1), No (0)			
	Radio: Yes(1), no(0)			
	Refrigerator: Yes (1), No (0)			
	Television: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Telephone: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Bicycle: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Motor bike: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Car: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Truck: Yes(1), No (0)			
	Computer: Yes(1), No (0)			
4	Social Capital: impact of war on social capital			
	Please rate the following using likert scale as: strongly agree (1), slightly agree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) slightly disagree (4) Disagree (5) strongly disagree (6) put the number in front of the statements.			
4.1	Reduced access to information and support networks			
4.2	Decreased community trust and cooperation			
4.3	Limited access to economic opportunity			

2.2 Economy of the households

1. Average monthly income of your household before the recent northern conflict_____ ETB during _____ETB, Post conflict_____ ETB
2. Number of productive household members before conflict____during____after conflict_____
3. Does the conflict have negative impact on the employment opportunities and livelihood of your household?
 1. Yes
 2. No
4. If your answer is yes for question number 3, what are those effects?
 1. Losing job
 2. Reduction of workers
 3. Closed employment opportunities
5. How is the impact of conflict in gender roles and power in your household level?
 1. Women headed household increases
 2. Double roles and responsibility of woman increased
 3. Maternal death
 4. Other
6. Do your household members experienced gender based violence due to the conflict?
 1. Yes
 2. No
7. If your answer is yes by whom they experienced?
 1. By local militias
 2. By Tigryan forces
 3. Federal government forces
 4. Unknown
8. Is there the northern conflict related death with in your household?
 1. Yes
 2. No
9. If your answer is Yes how it happened?
 1. Joining the federal force in the war
 2. by lethal weapons of the Tigriyan forces in the town
 3. Due to inability of the conflict and instability to visit hospital or clinic
 4. Others
10. Is there maternal or child death related with the northern conflict in the household?
 1. Yes
 2. No
11. Is there a malnutrition record in the household, children under weight?
 1. Yes
 2. No
12. Does the northern conflict in the town of Kombolcha affect your household in education negatively?
 1. Yes
 2. No
13. If your answer is yes, what are its effects?
 1. Dropout of student from school
 2. Inability to cover school fee
 3. Shift from private to governmental school
 4. Destruction of schools

Appendix: 2

Appendix 2.1 Variables Description

Variables	description
Age	Age of individual (continuous)
Sex	Sex of individual (1= male, 0= female)
No of family.	The total number of families in which an individual lives with (continuous)
Educ_level.	Level of education (0=illiterate, 1=primary, 2=secondary, 3=

college/university, 4=diploma, 5= degree & above)

Saving	Individuals who lives with saver household or saves for himself (1= save, 0= not save)
Health status	Condition of health of individuals (1= being ill, 0= not ill) House House type (1= own house, 0=rented house)
Electricity	Electricity of lightning (1= yes,0= no)
Conflict	TPLF invasion (1= being from conflict-affected area, 0= from conflict non-affected area)

Appendix 2.2: Test of the sensitivity of MPI indicators/Spearman correlation between MPI indicators (N=2229)

MPI indicators	SC	E	HFA	HF	F	H	S	W	A	SC
School(SC)	1.00									
Electricity(E)	-.003	1.00								
Health fac.(HFA)	-0.06	-0.09	1.00							
Health fun.(HF)	0.12	-0.03	0.36	1.00						
Fuel (F)	0.19	0.25	0.05	0.03	1.00					
House (H)	0.13	0.29	-0.04	0.09	0.39	1.00				
Sanitation (S)	0.04	0.34	-0.13	0.09	0.29	0.45	1.00			
Water (W)	0.15	0.33	0.14	0.028	0.51	0.16	0.11	1.00		
Asset (A)	0.12	0.28	0.09	0.02	0.41	0.14	0.11	0.59	1.00	
Social capital(SC)	0.01	0.13	0.38	0.18	0.18	0.02	0.06	0.22	0.25	1.00

Appendix 3

Appendix 3.1 Generalized Ordered Logit Estimate

MPI frequency	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95%
Number of obs =330					
LR chi2(27) =225.37					
Prob > chi2 =0.0000					
Log likelihood = -1115.245					
Pseudo R2 = 0.2932					
Conf.	MPI non-poor				
Saving	-.963945	.2567562	-3.75	0.000	-1.467178 - .4607122
Conflict	.9256482	.1959183	4.72	0.000	.5416555 1.309641
Age	.062788	.010879	5.77	0.000	.0414657 .0841104
Sex	.1009234	.191999	0.53	0.599	-.2753876 .4772345
Family size	-.2208033	.0748202	-2.95	0.003	-.3674481 -.0741585
Housing	-1.913342	.3136378	-6.10	0.000	-2.528061 -1.298623
Health status	1.701595	.2635104	6.46	0.000	1.185125 2.218066
Electricity	-15.22077	592.8228	-0.03	0.980	-1177.132 1146.69

Education level	-.5034711	.1014817	-4.96	0.000	-.7023717	-.3045705
_cons	18.06726	592.8228	0.03	0.976	-1143.844	1179.979
MPI vulnerable	-1.167205	.2176455	-5.36	0.000	-1.593783	-.740628
Saving						
Conflict	.7689543	.1539058	5.00	0.000	.4673045	.070604
Age	.0221134	.0052735	4.19	0.000	.0117775	.0324493
Sex	-.277329	.1551401	-1.79	0.074	-.58139	0267399
Family size	-.1198256	.0629612	-1.90	0.057	-.2432273	.0035761
Housing	-1.501741	.202015	-7.43	0.000	-1.897683	-1.105799
Health status	1.7188	.1744559	9.85	0.000	1.376873	2.060728
Electricity	-4.750958	1.008702	-4.71	0.000	-6.727977	-2.77394
Education level	-.3168057	.0571038	-5.55	0.000	-.4287271	-.2048843
_cons MPI poor	6.10862	1.040328	5.87	0.000	4.069615	8.147624
Saving	-.5775586	.2333861	-2.47	0.013	-1.034987	-.1201304
Conflict	.7235507	.1649143	4.39	0.000	.4003245	1.046777
Age	.0131778	.0053031	2.48	0.013	.002784	.0235717
Sex	-.0817402	.1599195	-0.51	0.609	-.3951766	.2316963
Family size	-.4137784	.0741931	-5.58	0.000	-.5591942	-.2683627
Housing	-.4450555	.1883118	-2.36	0.018	-.8141398	-.0759713
Health status	1.846078	.1748129	10.56	0.000	1.503451	2.188705
Electricity	-2.930979	.252485	-11.61	0.000	-3.425841	-2.436118
Education level	-.6431507	.0663615	-9.69	0.000	-.7732169	-.5130846
_cons	3.59482	.4033799	8.91	0.000	2.80421	4.38543

Appendix: 3.2 gologit result (for comparison purpose)

MPI frequency	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
MPI non-poor						
Saving	-1.785259	.2140303	-8.34	0.000	-2.20475	-1.365767
conflict	.7637412	.1808911	4.22	0.000	.4092011	1.118281
Age	.0525837	.007039	7.47	0.000	.0387875	.0663799
Sex	.277766	.1782768	1.56	0.119	-.0716502	.6271822
Family size	-.4703721	.0655981	-7.17	0.000	-.598942	-.3418022
Cons	2.280482	.3364669	6.78	0.000	1.621019	2.939945
MPI vulnerable						
Saving	-1.715417	.1648877	-10.40	0.000	-2.03859	-1.392243
conflict	.7502521	.134807	5.57	0.000	.4860352	1.014469
Age	.0277345	.004455	6.23	0.000	.0190029	.0364661
Sex	-.0653465	.1374038	-0.48	0.634	-.334653	.20396
Family size	-.4422033	.0513932	-8.60	0.000	-.542932	-.3414746
_cons	1.650735	.2580732	6.40	0.000	1.144921	2.156549
MPI poor						
Saving	-.561187	.1818549	-3.09	0.000	-1.867607	-1.154749
conflict	.7634579	.1363655	5.60	0.000	.4961866	1.030729
Age	.0291762	.0041176	7.09	0.000	.0211058	.0372467
Sex	.0615307	.1341641	0.46	0.647	-.2014261	.3244874
Family size	-.5441908	.0525585	-10.35	0.000	-.6472036	-.441178
_cons	.6073854	.2487201	2.44	0.015	.1199029	1.094868

Variable	Marginal effects of highest category	t-stat	p-value
Saving	-0.1297	4.49	0.000
Conflict	0.176	5.77	0.000
Age	0.006	7.09	0.000
Sex	0.01	0.46	0.646
Family size	-0.127	-10.43	0.000

Appendix 4

Appendix: 4.1: *General destruction of the Town*

No	Destructions/losses	Quantity	Estimated cost
1	Government institutions	34364	520,742,036
2	Kebeles destruction	2341	2,719,369
3	Kombolcha agricultural investment		7,937,600
4	Small and micro enterprises	83	11,291,069
5	Industry parks and factories	61	3,104,786,724
6	Destruction of cooperatives association	209	539,606
7	Kombolcha Hospital		799,061,185
8	Waliya capital	4	107,929
9	Tikur abay transport		122,740,040
10	Kombolcha prison property		31,202,060
11	Kombolcha court		8,466,412
12	Amhara metals engineering corporation		10,153,505
13	Kombolcha poultry		67,405,764
14	Amhara microfinance		1,502,630
15	AWSOD		125,656,035
16	Agriculture college		65,798,609
17	Road authority		
18	Plants conservation clinic		60,321,175
19	Animal laboratory		33,850,000
20	AWGUQUD		40,139,338
21	Commercial bank of Ethiopia		10,927,104
22	Private banks		29,327,104
23	Revenue ministry	230	4,302,300
24	Road authority		172,838,802
25	Customs office		169,989,192
26	Dry port		101,242,852
27	Ethio-industrial inputs development organization		50,798,252
28	ACX		488,300
TOTAL		37292	5,554,366,492

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY



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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA

Date: March 07, 2023

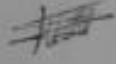
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To Whom It May Concern

Our student Masresha Abebe Demissie is working on her/ his research entitled The Impact of Armed Conflict in Aggravating Urban Poverty and Its Implications in South West, Amhara regional state.

We appreciate your support to the student for her /his research work.

Sincerely,


Kiya Gezahegn (PhD),
Chairperson, Department of Social Anthropology





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Amhara National Regional State
Kombolcha Rejopolitan City Mayor Office

ቁጥር/Kemo ሰ-1/2207/2015
REF.No. 17/228
ቀን 17/08/2015
DATE

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ከላይ ዘርዕሰ ስሙገሰሰ እንደተሞከረው ስለት ማሰሪሻ ስበብ ከአዲስ ስበብ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በቀጥታ SDAN/AD/2023 ዘተላረ ደብዳቤ የሰጧን ሺትዩታዎ ዐርነት በኮምዩናል ከተማ ማህበረሰብ ማህበራዊ እሴቶችና ሊኮኖሚያዊ ዘዴዎች ላይ ያሳደረው ተሰዕና በሚሰጠው ርዕስ ጥናት እንደሚሠሩ አሳውቀውና። በዚህም መሰረት በክፍል ከተማችሁ ስር የሚገኙ ቀበሌዎችን በመዘቀም አስረሳቢውን መረጃ እንደተሰጧቸውና ትብብር እንደተደረገባቸው እናሳውቃለን።

"ከላላምታ ኃር"

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