

## DEALING WITH THE CONUNDRUM OF AMHARA POPULATION GROWTH

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### Abstract

*Although demographic change needs scientific justification, the reports of the government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia have failed to inform the causes of the diminishing of the Amhara people. The issue is still a conundrum. This article is aimed at dealing with this conundrum in view of at least identifying the major causes of the decrement and the where-about of millions of Amhara. Methodologically, drawing on qualitative analysis based on the data gained from primary and secondary sources, the article proves that the people of Amhara have been depopulated, underreported and uncounted. Amhara have depopulated due to that since the early 1990s the Amhara People have faced systemic attacks that range from inclusive marginalization to mass murder and ethnic cleansings. The population number and the growth rate of Amhara people proved to be underreported by the post-1991 regime. Further, the lack of infrastructure, security and topographic constraints, and the prevalence of forcefully concealed Amhara identity as well the unwillingness of some households to disclose their family numbers resulted in the uncounted population of Amhara.*

**Keywords:** *Amhara, Population, underreported, depopulation, conundrum*

### 1. Introduction

Ethiopia is one of the multi-ethnic and ancient states of Africa. One of the major inhabitants architecting the state of Ethiopia is the Amhara people. These people can trace their origins back to Shem, eldest son of Noah (Joshua Project, 2018). However, there are a number of conflicting analysis and approaches in history and related literature about the definite background and identity of the Amhara although most argue Amharas are Semitic and give them a Semitic ethnic code. Numerically, the Amhara people are one of the two largest ethno-linguistic groups in Ethiopia (the other group being the Oromo) (Biritannia.com, 2018). In the post-1984, the government reported the gradual diminishing of the number of Amhara people.

Indeed, there was practical government driven factors affecting the population number of Amhara. Since the coming of EPRDF in the country's political scene by 1991, displacement, ethnic cleansing, mass murder, eviction, plundering, and marginalization from politics and economy are common practices. The gravity of such perpetrations against the Amhara was relatively higher in the areas that are out of "Amhara region".

The past 25 years transformed Ethiopia in a tumultuous and complicated way into a living hell for each and every Amhara (Abinet, 2016). The absence of real political representatives for Amhara people in the government apparatus is one the key reasons for persistence of the unhalted atrocities. We are living witness for the countless mass executions of Amhara in different parts of Ethiopia from 1990 to 2017. For instance, in the near past, according to Abinet (2016), 'the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary democratic Front (EPRDF)

has committed untold persecution in the form of extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detentions in the Amhara state by using the Anti-terrorism proclamations of 2009 and the State of emergency of 2016/17.’ Similarly, the Oromo and Konso people were the other major victims of the atrocities.

Although the above mentioned executions and the EPRDF’s ant-Amhara moves have negative impacts on the general rate of population growth, the post-1984 reports of the government of Ethiopia likely exaggerated the diminishing of Amhara population. The act of mass displacement, mass murder, ethnic cleansing, and eviction were not severe in Amhara regional state. But, the government has reported the region as the least in population growth. In the last 25 years, the region has not faced special factors of population number declination such as aggravated natural disaster, fatal disease, drought and conventional war. It has been reported that the levels of urbanization, economic potentials and civilization of Amhara region are similar with other underdeveloped areas of the country. Such conditions are factors for the prevalence of high fertility rate and general population growth rate of the said region.

In contrary, according to the government reports, the growth rate and the number of Amhara people are below the expectation. By the 2007 report of the government, the population growth rate of Amhara region was 1.7 while the national standard was 2.6 (CSA, 2010). Based on the simple mathematical calculation using the average national growth rate (3%) the Amhara people have been diminished by 2.5 up to five millions of people between 1984 and 2007.

Such bewildered conditions have posed persistent argumentations by activists, scholars and politicians. Claims of illegitimizing the reports were rampant. Even the parliamentarians of the FDRE have not common position on the presented the population data of Addis Ababa city and Amhara region. The amazing thing here is that although there were question on the credibility of the census report regarding Amhara people, the regime had a deaf ear and continued to use the illegitimate data to allocate resources of any type. Despite of the prevalence of controversies on the issue, there were no ample scientifically investigated researches that deal with mystery Amhara population diminishing. Therefore, the objective of this piece of writing is to investigate the empirical phenomenon regarding the puzzle on the decrement Amhara populations. Moreover, in my way to deal with the conundrum of Amhara population, my hypothesis pinned up on the possibility of “underreported and uncounted population and the prevalence of actual depopulation as well.

## **2. Methodological Issues**

The assessment on the puzzle of the gradual numerical diminishing of the Amhara people includes a range of variables whose effects are difficult to isolate. The study takes into consideration various contextual issues, and thus, the descriptive study is the best method to arrive at meaningful conclusions. By choosing such a strategy, the study used sources and benefit from theories to guide the analysis of data. To achieve the general objective of this study, multiple sources of evidence, that are mainly secondary and primary sources were used. As secondary sources different qualitative documents were critically analyzed. It includes public reports, official reports, and academic literatures. In addition, interview sources and the legal codes are also used as primary sources of evidence.

## **3. Theoretical perspectives on the determinants of population growth**

The causes of depopulation and diminishing of growth rate are both manmade and natural. These are also further divided into several categories. War of both civil and conventional, urbanization and economic development, civilization, assimilation, antenatal governmental policy and incentive for limiting fertility and

the prevalence of birth control mechanisms are the major causes of population growth declination. Furthermore, fertility varies between countries, as a result of differences in culture, economic status and health factors which interfere with the process of human reproduction. Factors such as the social position and role of women in a society, economic needs and old age security schemes, and the prevalence of verities of diseases affect fertility (Hailemariam et`al 2013). Note that the decrement of population growth rate may be occurred due to a single, double or multiple reasons.

The essential focus of this topic is the investigation of the key factors that determine the population growth rate of and fertility. Therefore, the discussion stresses on the relationship between population growth and war, epidemic disease, urbanization and economic development/ civilization, migration, ethnic cleansing, and population policy driven birth control incentive.

I). **War of any kinds:** Both civil and interstate wars are the causes for actual depopulation. War is the use of armed forces in a conflict, between groups within a country and between countries. `The conventional view is that for a conflict to be classified as a war, it should culminate in at least 1,000 battle deaths (Griffiths, et`al, 2008). For example, according to McCarthy (2016), during the Second World War, high number of civilians killed which was 3% of the 1940 world population. We are witness that the civil war in Syria has been highly downsizing the population number of Syrians. It is no doubt that war and population growth have inverse relationship.

II). **Disease:** The prevalence of epidemic disease deterring fertility and causing mortality is one of the factors that can limit the rate of population growth. HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Malaria, Cholera and other diseases belongs to this category. However, in a state that has inadequate health services, simple diseases such as influenza and simple bodily injuries could have resulted in mortality and population diminishing.

III). **Urbanization and aged marriage:** Populations with a high age at marriage are likely to be more urbanized and have an increased likelihood of using modern contraception. Thus, the populations may show low fertility, not only because of their lost reproductive years due to late marriage but also because of deliberate limitation of fertility (United Nations, 1987). Urbanization exposes people for better awareness about the negative impacts of unhealthy population growth as well as the imperativeness of family planning. Corollary, accelerated Population growth is unlikely in urban centers.

IV). **Economic development:** Among the different theories on population growth and decrement, “the Demographic Transition Theory” (Kirk, 1996) and the “Neo-classical Micro Economic Theory” (Becker and Lewis, 1973) are considered to be the most essential. They associate high fertility with low level achievement of economic development. The theorists stress the most important contributing factors to the high levels of fertility in economically poor areas whose manifestations are low levels of contraceptive use, and the relatively low social status, educational of women. Furthermore, Cleland and Wilson (1987) in their theory known as “the Ideational Theory of Fertility” argue that economic progress is the variable determines the fertility rate of women since economically strong women have the access to information.

VI). **Other factors:** Moreover, Genocide, migration to other states, assimilation, antenatal governmental policy and incentive for limiting fertility and the prevalence of systemic but clandestine birth control mechanisms are also the causes of population growth declination. Ethnic cleansing, and grave social unrest as well as marriage and fertility curtaining poverty have also impact on the state of population growth.

Apart from the above factors, the decrement of population number in official reports may be resulted from the failure to conduct reliable census. To reinstate, there will be intentional leaving of some sections of society uncounted for political reasons. On the other hand, people may not be counted due to unintentional reasons. These include civil conflict, topographic constraints and population volatility, misinformation by the information providers. For instance, some families of Ethiopia are also unlikely disclose the number of their families due to the cultural values of society (Seyum, 2019). For these groups of families counting children one by one is a taboo.

**4. The conundrum on Amhara population: Dealing with the empirical issues**

For the sake of having an inclusive understanding about the issue under question, the assessment of the officially reported empirical data in the light of key determinants of population growth is imperative. Due to that the study is all about population number and population growth, the forthcoming discussions are mainly based on the data enumerated in the following tables.

Table 1: Annual Population Growth Rate by Region between 1994-2007

No.	Administrative Regions	Population growth rate	Remark
1	Tigray	2.5	
2	Afar	2.2	
3	Amhara	<b>1.7</b>	Lost in national standard
4	Oromia	2.9	
5	Ethiopian Somali	2.6	
6	Benishangul Gumuz	3.0	
7	South Nations Nationalities & people	2.9	
8	Gambella	4.1	
9	Hararai	2.6	
10	Addis Ababa	<b>2.1</b>	The second lowest
11	Dire Dawa	2.5	
12	Country level average	2.6	

Source: *Summary and Statistical Report of the 2007 Population and Housing Census Results*

Table 2: Data showing the gradual decrement of Amhara people

Nations/ethnic group	1974	1984	1994	2007
Amhara	10 millions	12,055,250	16,007,933	19,878,199
Oromo	7 millions	12,387,664	17,080,318	25,363,756
Tigrie	-	-	3,284,568	4,486,513
Others	-	-	16,759,460	24,022,464
Total	-	42,616,876	53,132,279	73,750,932

Source: *The 2007 FDRE Central statistical Agency cited in Muluken Tesfaw 2016:27*

**a. Official argumentations on the conundrum of Amhara population**

Based on the above table (table 1), the reports of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia provides that the growth rate of Amhara region was 1.7 while the national standard was 2.6. This average population growth exceeds the Amhara population growth almost by one. It was also reported that in 1994 the growth rate of

Amhara was 1.83 while the national standards was 3.0. According to the official report, the total population of the region was 17,221,976. From this only 15,752,992 were Amharas. The same source revealed that in 2007 the total number of population of Amhara was 19,878,199 (CSA, 2010). Based on simple calculation using the national growth rate (3%), in the 13 years span there would be additional 6,243,093.87 Amhara, and the would-be Amhara population number by 2007 is 22,251,026.87. Hence, 2.5 millions of Amhara have not reported. If our calculation traces back to 1984 the lost Amhara population would be around five millions. Similarly, in 20107, the reported population number of Addis Ababa city was also below the expectation. Note that the majority of the residents of the city are Amhara.

After 2007, the population number of Amhara region and Addis Ababa city administration was a debatable agenda of a parliamentary session of house of People representatives. Such parliamentary argumentation and debate was new to the said parliament. This official debate on the conundrum was an indicator of the commission of systemic depopulation especially for the less informed Ethiopian masses. During a session, a man called Yilma said “It was my desire to see non-distorted population data, and standardized and uniform statistics; but the reality shows the inverse” (ZeHabesha TV, 14, Aug 2016). “I have been discontented by the report since irregularities and distortions of data against the population number of Amhara and Addis Ababa city have political, economic and social implications”, he added. From the other corner of the parliament Mr Bulcha Demekissa, one of the figures opposition leadership downplayed the reported figure of Addis Ababa populations in the following manners.

“Since the population average growth rate of Ethiopian people is 2.6 it is not legitimate to report such data that are less than the previous one” (it is to say the 1994 data). In his way to recommend the imperativeness of recounting he said that” regarding Addis Ababa’s demographic distortion discussion is not enough (ibid). He also argued that the increase in rural-urban migration (Addis Ababa is a number one destination) could not be resulted in the decreasing of urban dwellers. Meanwhile, Adisu Legese (the former Deputy Prime Minister and former President of Amhara Regional State), one of the long serving EPRDF officials responded for the parliamentarians in the following ways.

“In fact, the problem of population growth and relative decrement of population have prevailed in Amhara region. The census was based on the approved measurements technics and the basis of the current report of CSA was the census. However, after we had observed discrepancy of population upon the report of CSA, we attempted to re-assess the former census report. Based on our assessment, we proved that the 1994 growth rate of Amhara region was approximately 1.83” “This is also not convincing; the general situation Amhara region has nothing special, and has numerous commonalities with other rural communities of Ethiopia. Even, we have raised questions on the problem on Amhara population growth.”

Adisu’s statements are not in a position to clarify the real causes of the problem. Actually, his statements were expression of his confusion by the mystery of Amhara population decrement. The deputy PM was bewildered in his explanation of the numerical data. Even he has still his own unanswered questions about the subject under question.

Further, in the same venue, Samia Zekaria, the chief secretary of Population and House Census Commission appeared to deal with the issue before the parliamentarians. In her ways to elaborate the issue, “she said that the number of Amhara population showed a systematic decrement of two millions Amhara.” Hence, her saying

has better values in dealing with the conundrum. She said “the characteristic of the problem was systemic”. Since Samia was the head of the census commission she has the detail about deterioration of the growth rate of Amhara people. System problem involves the prevalence of norms and policies, institutionalized, budgeted and possibly government driven. Systemic action is calculated, and formally executed by system builder. In Ethiopian case no one can have the capacity to do such a kind of project except the government. This project may encompass limiting the availability of health infrastructure and medicines, clandestine birth control and sterilization, economic deterioration, eviction from the possession and proportional expropriation, silent ethnic cleansing what has been done in south west and eastern part of Ethiopia.

#### **b. depopulation vis a vis key specific determinants**

1). Disaster and Disease: Unlike the Eastern and Southeast part of Ethiopia, relatively the Amhara region has not affected by grave natural disasters and drought for the last two decades. On the other hand, Amhara region did not faced epidemic or fatal disease in the last 25 years. To reinstate, there were no fatal disease peculiar to the Amhara People though due to the absence of adequate health service any curable disease could be resulted in death. Regarding HIV/AIDS, it has been official reported that the highest rate the transmission is in Gambella region. In contrary, the population growth rate of this region reported to be 4.1 (CSA, 2010) which exceed the Amhara by 2.4. However, the region’s very poor health status is the reflection of the destitution and squalor into which the region has been plunged by the deliberate policy of impoverishment of the region by the government (Asefa Nagash, 2012). Hence, the simple diseases are unlikely to be cured.

2). Wars within the two decades: After the 1998-2000 Ethio-Eritrea war, Ethiopia has been in a state of no war no peace. The 1998 war was happened in the north tip of the post-1991 Ethiopia and the first victim was the people of Erop and Tigray. Though the participation of the Amhara youths and war veterans was high and there were an approximate tenth of thousands dead toll, it was not as such special to the Amhara to cause the loss of millions of people.

3). Ethnic cleansing: There was intentionally constructed false allegation against the Amhara to prepare political and moral ground to wage inclusive attacks against the people. Negatively loaded epithets such as Neftegna, national oppressor, blood-sucker, parasite, Timkitegna, etc have been interchangeably used by various political actors to portray Amaras as “national oppressors” (Bekalu Atnafu, 2018). Indeed, one generation of Ethiopia indoctrinated with this politically motivated false propaganda.

The ethnic cleansing task against Amhara people has been completely the result of the government plan. EPRDF elites who believe that ethnic groups in Ethiopia could be identified and territorially fixed tried to send the Amhara farmers to an area where the majority of the members of their ethnic groups are found, and started the act of eviction (ibid). To compare, in one hand, more than twenty thousand Tigray communities have settled in Benishangul–Gumuz regional states (ESAT, 2016), on the other hand tens thousands of Amhara have been displaced. It is so paradoxical that Amhara communities were displaced and persecuted from their farming land in Benishangul–Gumuz, but Tigray communities were allowed to settle in these areas (Bekalu Atnafu, 2018). Benishangul Gumuz is one of the earthly hells for Amhara. For instance, by the aid of TPLF agents the local Government of Kemash Zone has displaced 5,000 Amhara by the 2012. In 2015, 88 Amhara were massacred by members of the Gumuz community in Melkan and Ayigali-Mozambique Kebeles (Moresh Wegene, 2015). According to the same source, about 224 Ahmaras have been displaced and forced to flee for their lives from Dobi and Chilanko Kebeles of Bulen Wereda (Asefa Negash, 2012). In 2017 and in late 2018, approximately more than 180,000 Amharas and Oromos have displaced from Kemash Zone.

The 1991 onward act of ethnic cleansing in Welqayit is highly aggravated. The uprooting of Amharas in Welkayit, Tsegede, Humera, Dansha, Tselemet and the resettlement of the area by no less than 500,000 armed Tigreans in an act that amounts to ethnic cleansing following the annexation of the fertile lands of Gondar to Tigray, is something which has been muted and has not got any national or international media coverage (Assefa Negash, 2012). The newly inflicted armed Tigreans have dishonestly taken over the land that used to belong to Amharas by the name of investors and settlers. Such act of evicting and chasing of Amhara from Eastern, Southern and central part of Ethiopia was common. One of the near past horrendous events was the *deportation of Amharas from Bench-Maji* in southern Ethiopia. According to Assefa Negash (2012), Hailu Shawel (a late Chairman of opposition party) stated that the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was the master mind of the eviction of 78,000 Amharas. Note that almost all the evictions, displacements and ethnic cleansings were accompanied by death of hundreds of Amharas. The phenomenon could be summarized by the following claims of Muluken Tesfaw.

*It has been proved that the campaigns and attack against the Amhara people were coordinated and inclusive. Since the 1991, ethnic cleansing, displacement of Amhara in one or two areas of the country has been accompanied by mass murder and killing by throwing over cliff or hill in another part of the country. Further, there were practices of ethnic cleansing, and curtaining birth rate by the pretext of family planning (Muluken Tesfaw, 2016).*

As stated above, the lack of protection by the government as well as the direct and indirect involvement of the government of EPRDF contributed for the depopulation of Amhara people. During the time from the 1974 onward the growth of Amhara people seems an arithmetic progression while others showed in a geometric progression.

3. Family planning policy: The FDRE government has national guide of family planning. The national guide was inspired by the need to coordinated Family Planning Programs and services in the country to ensure standardized, high quality, client-centered all reaching family services that recognizes the various level of care from the primary health care unit to the central referral hospitals (Ministry of Health, 2011). However, there are no incentive oriented antenatal policies. Ethiopian households have free choice to implement the family planning policy. The family planning scheme is not bad if its ultimate goal is reducing unplanned fertility to improve the quality of life for all through saving lives of women and children. Hence, it could not be blameworthy even it caused depopulation. But, it is vital to assess the nexus between the implementation of family planning technics such as the use of contraceptive kits and the quality of life of Amhara people. It was by 2014 Aljazeera termed the Amahara region as the poorest region of the world. Here is the conundrum. Other questions: Why the provision of contraceptive supplies to the Amhara regional states (84%) (USAID, 2004 cited in Abinet Hunegnaw, 2017) exceeds the other regional state? Why the quantity and quality of hospitals as well as the medical services of Amhara region lags behind?

4). Economic progress: Cleland and Wilson (1987) in their theory known as “the Ideational Theory of Fertility Decline” state that fertility decline in developing countries can come without accompanying changes in economic development. According to this theory, economic development can enable the practice of fertility control by giving women better opportunities to access family planning information and services. Their effectiveness, however, depends on the extent to which “traditional norms and values” can be broken and penetrated with the new ideas (Hailemariam Teklu, et`al 2013). Regarding the Amhara people especially in the region, the economic access of women as well the general economic growth rate was in significant. The

life of multimillions Amhara was dependent on subsistence farming on fragmented land. To the worst, according to Aljazeera (2014), Amhara region is the poorest regions not only in Africa but also in the world. The government reports also inform as that the region is one of the least developed regions of the country in economy and education. Corollary, economic progress does not have impact to limit fertility and population growth. Instead, the economic backwardness, lack of awareness and agrarian life that accompanied by early marriage could have values in increasing population growth of Amhara.

5). Miscellaneous Factors: Migration towards the Arab world, brain drains due to lack of access to job at home, and economic deterioration to the extent limiting fertility are some of the common phenomenon for Amhara people. Accordingly, some of these are causal factors for depopulation.

#### 4.3. Underreported and Uncounted

Underreport: Circumstance that prevailed in Amhara region such as the absence of war, relative diminishing of severe drought and natural disaster, the lack of civilization, lack of awareness and the persistence of backwardness of people and early marriage are factors that are contributory for the increase in population numbers. At least, the increases of fertility and growth rate due to these positive factors could have the potential to balance the depopulation of Amhara caused by other negative determinants. Amhara region has all the general and most particular circumstances in common with the other regions of Ethiopia that have high population growth.

There are circumstances and data evincing that the numbers of Amhara people are deducted not only due to actual depopulation but also as a result of underreporting. According to a comparative survey conducted by Hailemariam Teklu, et`al (2013) under the auspices of MoFED, UNICEF and others, the three years such as the 2000, 2005 and 2011 average fertility rate of Amhara region was 4.93 which was exceeded the average fertility rate of Gambella (4.13), Afar (4.77), Harari (3.93), Dire Dawa (3.5) and Addis Ababa (1.7).

As a matter of fact, Population growth and decline are mainly affected by fertility. Moreover, in recent decades, the growth of the developing world population has dramatically outpaced that of high income countries (Hailemariam Teklu, et`al, 2013). The highest growth rates of population are almost entirely concentrated in poor states, whereas the smallest rates of population growth are observed in most of the developed regions and countries. The Amahara region is proved to be the poorest region not only in Africa but also in the world (Aljazeera, 2014). However, the population growth of this region is less than the relatively developed areas and urbanized such as Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and the like. More importantly, in Amhara region, there were no special and aggravated incidents that fuel death rate-affecting demography.

Despite of these circumstances, according to the 2007 report of the government the annual population growth of Amhara region was the lowest compared to the national standard. The report lacks rational bases and scientific grounds. Hence, the general numerical discrepancy and irrationality are the apparent reasons to say that the people of Amhara were either not-counted or underreported especially from 1994 and 2007. Due to these facts, one can conclude that the numbers of Amhara population have been underreported.

Uncounted population: In the Amhara region, visible signs of their demographic decline have been in evidence as witness the result of the 2007 national census whereby some 2.5 million Amharas have been unaccounted for (Assefa, 2012). This may be caused by differ factors that are both manmade and natural. After 1991, in some areas of Ethiopia people who have Amhara identity were forced to conceal their identity for fear of exclusion from the political and economic system. However, they had not able to escape from exclusion since



the governmental institution and their cadres have already identified them as an Amhara. Naming and shaming is one of the instrument applied by the government to belittle and disregard the Amhara identity. Timikitegna, Neftegna and Nostalgic are the terms used to disregard the people. Such systemic and pervasive propaganda millings are the factor to conceal the real Amhara identity. In welqayit and other areas that forcefully annexed with Tigray region, Amharas have been forced to replace their identity by Tigrian one (Amhara TV, 2018). According to televised news by Amhara Television to the extent the Amhara youths deterred to speak their native language in their private work place (ibid). These and others practices such as assimilation, eviction, expropriation, killing and detention were committed to ease any manifestation of Amhara identity from the aforementioned areas.

Some families of Amhara were reluctant to inform their number of boys and daughters (Almaz Ahmed, 2019). As we know from the experience, in rural areas of the country, this is may be due to the lack of awareness as well as the trauma of national of service scheme (families were forced to give youths for military service) of Derg regime. The North Wollo topographic constraints as well as the North Gondar security complex are factors for the prevalence of uncounted population (ibid). To conclude, in addition to depopulation and underreporting, the prevalence of millions of people who left uncounted could be the cause of the post-1991 diminishing of Amhara population reported by the government.

### **Concluding Remarks**

From the early 1984 onward, the gradual diminishing of Amhara population has been reported by the government of Ethiopia. According to this article, the numerical deductions were caused by systemic depopulation and underreporting as well as the prevalence of uncounted of Amhara.

The lack of access to health service and health care, migration to abroad, family planning implementation, killing and mass incarceration by the pretext of fighting terrorism were the empirical negative determinants of population growth of Amhara region. In areas out of Amhara region, the acts of mass killing, displacement, ethnic cleansing, land eviction and economic alienation proved to similar impact on Amhara population. That means, virtual depopulation has committed in both Amhara region and out of the region in different degrees.

According to this article, circumstance that prevailed in Amhara region such as the absence of war, relative diminishing of drought and natural disaster, the lack of awareness and the persistence of backwardness, and early marriage are factors that are contributory for the increase in population numbers. At least, the increases of fertility and growth rate due to these positive factors could have the potential to balance the depopulation of Amhara caused by other negative population growth determinants. Amhara region has all the general and most particular circumstances in common with the other regions of Ethiopia that have high population growth. Due to these facts, I conclude that significant numbers of Amhara population have been underreported and uncounted.

Inter alia, a key factor motivating factor for the acts of depopulating the Amhara people is the anti-Amhara federal structure introduced in the country. The panacea to ease the policy driven depopulating of the Amhara people hinges up on the establishments of real democratic institutions and the amendment of the normative frameworks of both the federal and regional administrations of Ethiopia. The reform is to ensure fair and just representation of Amhara and others in both the federal and regional systems of the country. Note that the legitimacy of an institution that can undertake house and population census is dependent up the institutionalization of real democracy. Such institutionalization is a means to ensure proper and reliable conduct of population census and production of credible report.

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