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CÔTE D'IVOIRE TRANSITION INITIATIVE 2 (CITI2)

FINAL REPORT



May 9, 2016

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Chemonics International Inc.

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Contract No. AID-OAA-I-14-00006, Task Order No. AID-OAA-TO-14-00008

Cover photo: During filming of Ma Voix, Mon Avenir , a music video with positive messages about youth empowerment, local residents join the video's dancers and wave flags. To strengthen youth engagement in a peaceful election, CITI2 worked with popular Ivoirian musicians to develop the Ma Voix, Mon Avenir (my voice, my future) national song, video, and dance movement. Photo: USAID

DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

CCSCY	Comité de coordination de la Société Civile de Yopougon
CDVR	Truth, Dialogue, and Reconciliation Commission
CEI	Independent Electoral Commission
CEL	Local Electoral Commission
CONARIV	National Commission for Reconciliation and Reparation for Victims
EPP	USAID's Election and Political Processes Fund
EWER	Early warning and early response system
FNCR-CI	Forum National des Confessions Religieuses de Côte d'Ivoire
FPI	Front Populaire Ivoirien
ICC	International Criminal Court
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NIDE	National Instrument for Democracy and Economic Development
PDO	Program Development Officer
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPDO	Senior Program Development Officer
TAP	Transitions Activity Pool
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID/OTI's Côte d'Ivoire Transition Initiative 2 (CIT12) project, implemented by Chemonics International, ran from June 2014 through March 2016. In October 2015, during the lifetime of CIT12, Côte d'Ivoire held its first peaceful presidential election in more than 20 years. While not an indication that issues resulting in past violence in Côte d'Ivoire was fully resolved, this election marked a significant milestone in Côte d'Ivoire's history made possible by Ivoirian actors committed to peace. During the four years preceding this election USAID/OTI supported these efforts, funding local partners, sowing the seeds of peace through fast-acting, adaptive, and responsive grassroots programming.

USAID/OTI began its programming in Côte d'Ivoire in September of 2011 with the first iteration of the program known as Côte d'Ivoire Transition Initiative, or CITI. Implemented by AECOM, CITI began four months after the end of post-election violence that claimed the lives of 3,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands of others. Implemented from September 2011 through August 2014, the project increased public confidence in the post-conflict recovery process through supporting enhanced governance processes and effective community initiatives. As CITI came to a close, USAID/OTI shifted priorities to focus on strengthening community cohesion in the lead-up to the 2015 election. In June 2014, USAID/OTI awarded Chemonics a 22-month follow-on project to build upon work begun under CITI to focus more closely on election-related programming.

CIT12 used a fast and flexible mechanism to provide local partners with funding to carry out activities on the ground. CIT12 used this funding mechanism, called a transition activity pool (TAP), to implement grants, short-term technical assistance, and direct distribution of goods and services in response to

CIT12 BY THE NUMBERS



ENGAGEMENTS

117

Grants Awarded

74

Local Partners

244

Dialogue Engagements

847

Media Activities



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

2,516

Radio Programs Aired

11

TV Programs Produced, Aired 277 Times

248,646

Print Media Products Produced



PEACEBUILDING TRAINING

112

Consensus-building Forums Held

21

Journalists Trained

98

Groups Trained In Conflict Resolution Skills



MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

21

Government Offices Equipped and Furnished

18

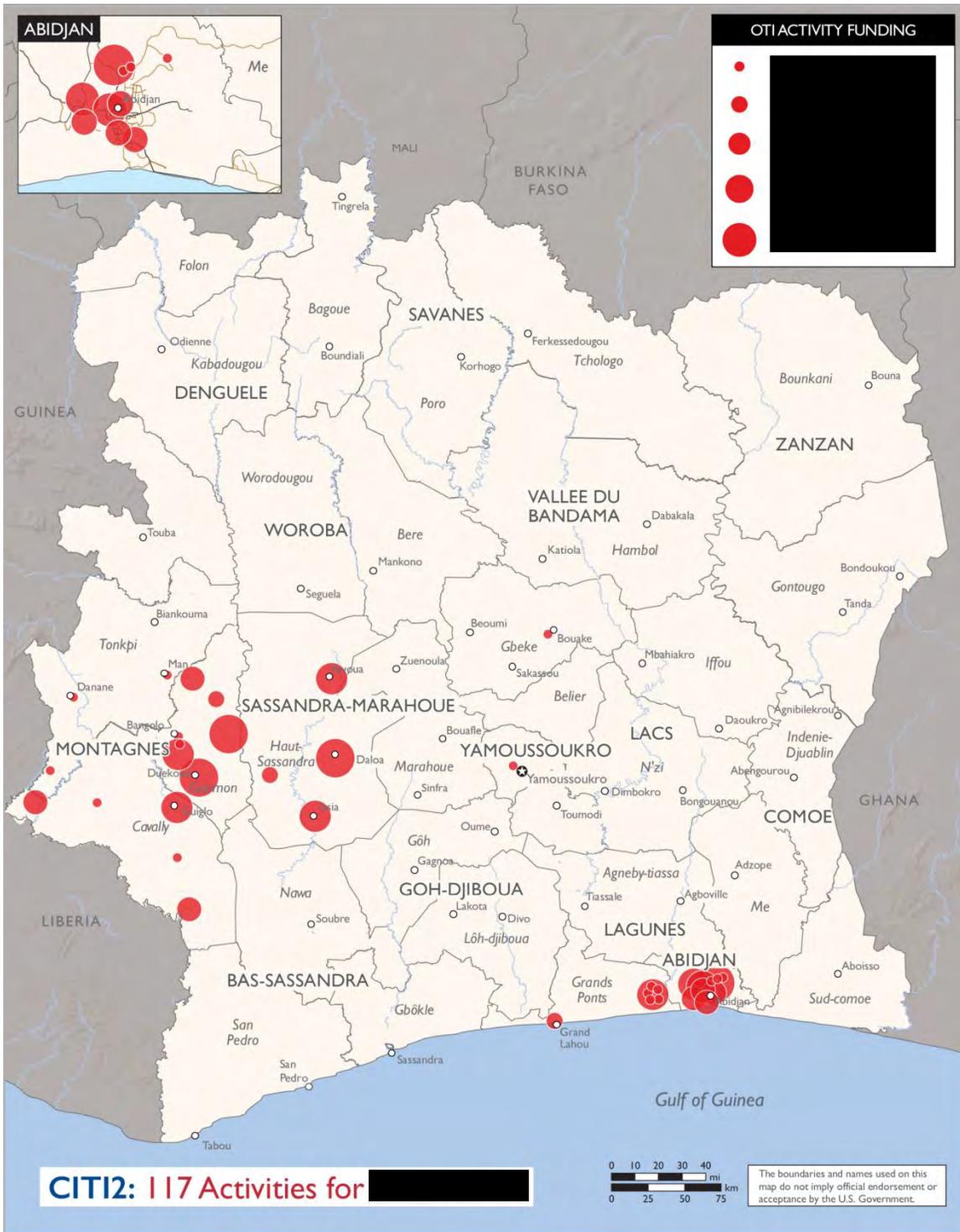
Media Organizations Equipped and Furnished

constantly changing transition needs. The project carried out 117 grants focused on two objectives:

- Support an inclusive and credible electoral process
- Increase community cohesion

CITI2's geographic focus included communities in and around Côte d'Ivoire's economic capital of Abidjan, as well as in western Côte d'Ivoire. Initially, CITI2 selected target communities after conducting a "hotspot" mapping analysis to identify geographic zones most prone to violence and vulnerable to political manipulation. While still allowing for flexibility given the fluid political context, this geographic prioritization allowed CITI2 to concentrate its limited resources and maximize its impact on critical vulnerable communities. CITI2's strategy was to first lay the groundwork at the community level in its target areas, building relationships through activities supporting social cohesion, and then to leverage these established platforms and community relationships to amplify messages of peace and inclusion prior to and during the election.

CIT2 ACTIVITY FUNDING BY PRIORITY GEOGRAPHIC AREA



SECTION I

COUNTRY SITUATION

CIT12 began during a time of relative calm for Côte d'Ivoire; more than three years had passed since the 2010-2011 electoral crisis, and Côte d'Ivoire was the fastest-growing economy in West Africa. Since assuming the presidency in May 2011, Alassane Ouattara had promoted economic growth, extended state authority and services across the country, and overseen relatively peaceful legislative and local election in 2011 and 2013, respectively.

However, despite the semblance of relative calm, the underlying causes of the 2010-2011 crisis had been only partially addressed, allowing community divisions beneath the surface to deepen and political tensions to simmer. CIT12 began in June 2014, shifting USAID/OTI's focus toward promoting peace prior to and during the 2015 presidential election process.



PHOTO: Felix Youli/CIT12

Two youth from Daloa show their Côte d'Ivoire pride before a CIT12-supported African Cup of Nations soccer match viewing in which Côte d'Ivoire's national soccer team, Les Elephants, won the Cup. CIT12 capitalized on this momentum with soccer match viewings bringing youth from diverse ethnic and political backgrounds together around peace and tolerance.

IN THE SHADOW OF “LA CRISE”

CIT12's work in Côte d'Ivoire began in the shadow of the 2010-2011 post-election political crisis (often called “the crisis,” or “la crise” in French). In 2010, following the first round of the presidential election, a run-off vote was held between incumbent Laurent Gbagbo and challenger Ouattara, after which the National Electoral Commission (CEI) declared Ouattara the winner. Gbagbo and his supporters refused to concede victory to the CEI-declared winner, and the ensuing post-election violence killed 3,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands. Gbagbo and his wife, Simone, were captured by Ouattara's forces in April 2011, and Gbagbo was later transferred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face charges, including crimes against humanity. CIT12's major objective was to prevent a reoccurrence of post-electoral violence in the 2015 election.

JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

The formal process of holding perpetrators accountable for atrocities committed during the crisis evolved during CITI2. While former president Gbagbo was held in detention at The Hague, in March 2015 Côte d'Ivoire concluded a trial of 83 close associates of Gbagbo, including his wife, Simone, who had been held since her capture in April 2011. Mrs. Gbagbo was sentenced to 20 years in prison for “treason, taking part in an insurrection, and public disorder.” Pascal Affi N'Guessan, a leader in Gbagbo's political party Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), received an 18-month suspended sentence, while Gbagbo's son was sentenced to five years in jail. The ICC in The Hague also issued an arrest warrant for Simone Gbagbo, accusing her alongside her husband of crimes against humanity. Côte d'Ivoire refused to transfer her to The Hague, arguing that this would adversely affect national reconciliation and that the Ivoirian justice system would try her fairly. Given the opaque and complex judicial process, the widely-held perception of a politically-motivated judicial system, the divergence of evidence, and dearth of witness testimony, some doubted the credibility of the Ivoirian legal process.

In 2011, Côte d'Ivoire established the Truth, Dialogue, and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR), an 11-member commission, comprising religious leaders and regional representatives, to forge unity after the violent crisis. The committee submitted its final report to President Ouattara on Dec. 15, 2014, at an official ceremony attended by cabinet ministers, heads of government departments, and other state commissions. In response to claims that the committee's response was insufficient and unbalanced, President Ouattara announced a review of the CDVR recommendations and pledged to increase the CDVR's efforts, also launching a US \$20 million fund for victims. In March 2015, the government announced the creation of a National Commission for Reconciliation and Reparation for Victims (CONARIV). According to a government press release, the new commission was created to “finalize” the work of the CDVR. CONARIV was tasked with the dual objectives of establishing a list of victims who suffered violence, and compensating them appropriately. CITI2 partnered with a number of civil society organizations at the grass-roots level to complement the efforts of the CDVR. Many Ivoirians criticized the CDVR's failure to engage with many communities who suffered violence. From Abobo and Yopougon in Abidjan to Daloa, Duékoué, Bangolo, and Guiglo in the West, CITI2 assumed much of the reconciliation work many communities felt the CDVR had not sufficiently addressed.

PARTY POLITICS

Because Gbagbo was held in The Hague, the justice and reconciliation process was inextricably linked with identification of an opposition candidate to run against Ouattara for president in the 2015 presidential election. On Nov. 12, 2014, one day after the ICC's extension of Gbagbo's detention order, former President Gbagbo announced his candidacy as a presidential candidate. Gbagbo's full trial was set to begin in mid-2015. FPI party leader N'Guessan also announced his candidacy for the same party position. A tense public struggle ensued between supporters of Gbagbo and N'Guessan for the party president position. FPI party hardliners demanded Gbagbo's release from the ICC

and continued to boycott election, while more moderate party members supported N'Guessan and sought party restructuring and public participation. Eventually N'Guessan lodged a successful petition to nullify Gbagbo's candidacy for the presidency, and tensions rose within the two factions of the FPI. On May 21, 2015, N'Guessan was declared the FPI's official presidential candidate to face President Ouattara in the October election.

In contrast, the nomination ceremony for President Ouattara was much less divided, as the governing coalition unequivocally backed its incumbent candidate and successfully mobilized tens of thousands of supporters on April 25, 2015, in the Félix Houphouët-Boigny stadium in Abidjan.

Given the tensions within the opposition party, CITI2 identified opposition areas as most in need of civic education on the democratic process and peaceful election engagement. CITI2 worked with civil society, interreligious platforms, the local administration, and the central government to promote confidence in the electoral process and encourage participation, not only on voting day itself, but through political debate, information sharing, and civic education on citizenship, rights and responsibilities, and electoral issues.

PRE-ELECTION PLANNING

As the 2015 presidential election approached, despite the relative calm, a lack of social cohesion and trust in the electoral process remained. In October 2014, concerns about the composition of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) and the appointment of its president threatened to aggravate social tensions and instigate violence, as it appeared that the CEI would not be inclusive and broadly representative. The government attempted to address opposition concerns by adding additional CEI members, but the FPI still formally withdrew its members. In November 2014, however, opposition representatives, including a member of the FPI, resumed their participation. The opposition alliance described the expansion of the CEI secretariat as a small step forward which could be the basis for better orienting the CEI to “defend the interests of the opposition.”

In December 2014 the CEI took the first important step in preparation for the election by establishing local electoral commissions from the regional to the sub-prefectural level. Additionally, the National Assembly approved revisions to the Electoral Code on April 2, 2015. This provided the legal framework for the October presidential election.

Voter registration began June 1, 2015, and was later extended by 12 days due to low new voter turnout. CITI2 supported the registration process in a variety of ways, including logistical support to the local electoral commissions in three regions in the west, civic education support to civil society partners, and information campaigns such as community radio broadcast, a television mini-series, social media campaigns, comic strips, and wall murals. The CEI published the final electoral list at the end of September 2015, which contained 6.3 million registered voters, including 3.1 million women and

344,295 new voters. According to its most recent census, Côte d'Ivoire had eight to nine million citizens of voting age, with 2.3 to 3.3 million people who had turned 18 since the 2010 election. Thus, only 10-15 percent of potential new voters registered.

On Aug. 5, the CEI officially announced the date of the presidential election- Oct. 25, 2015. Thirty-three candidates, including three women, declared their candidacies. On Sept. 9, the Conseil Constitutionnel released a list of ten candidates whose application files had been formally accepted in accordance with constitutional regulations. Following this announcement, large protests by pro-Gbagbo supporters against Ouattara's candidacy erupted, most notably in the Marcory and Yopougon communities of Abidjan, and in several towns in southern and western Côte d'Ivoire. One person was killed, several were injured, roads were blocked, and property was damaged. Abouré youth, who belonged to the same ethnic group as Gbagbo, clashed with Djoulas, a predominantly Muslim ethnic group from the North who supported Ouattara.

On Oct. 9, 2015, official campaigning began. Billboards sponsored by the Ouattara campaign with the slogan "Avec Ado" (with Ado) dominated the streets of Abidjan. Ouattara launched his re-election campaign in the Ivoirian capital of Yamoussoukro, while Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) candidate N'Guessan launched his campaign in Gagnoa, a stronghold of former head of state Gbagbo.

THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

The presidential election was held on Sunday, Oct. 25, 2015. Election day was peaceful, despite delays in voting station opening times across the country. Significant delays were encountered due to malfunctioning biometric computers intended to make the voting process faster and easier. Reverting to manual voting and verification caused long lines, with many waiting for hours and some leaving stations before voting. Delays forced the CEI to extend voting center opening hours throughout the country.

At 4:40 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27, the CEI president declared Ouattara the winner by a landslide. Ouattara had earned 84 percent of the vote, and main opposition candidate N'Guessan had garnered only 9.29 percent. In a momentous gesture, N'Guessan ceded and congratulated Ouattara on his victory. He noted that figures "indicate that Alassane Ouattara has taken the presidential election. I take note of this result and I present to him my congratulations." However, N'Guessan also noted that "this ballot reveals that Côte d'Ivoire is still in crisis, Côte d'Ivoire is still divided. This ballot confirms that the country needs reconciliation and democracy." He pointed to the "rates of abstention greater than 50 percent in areas which had lived through the post-electoral crisis in 2010-2011 and where populations have decided to keep to themselves." He concluded, "these people abstained from voting, considering the election a serious threat to their security."

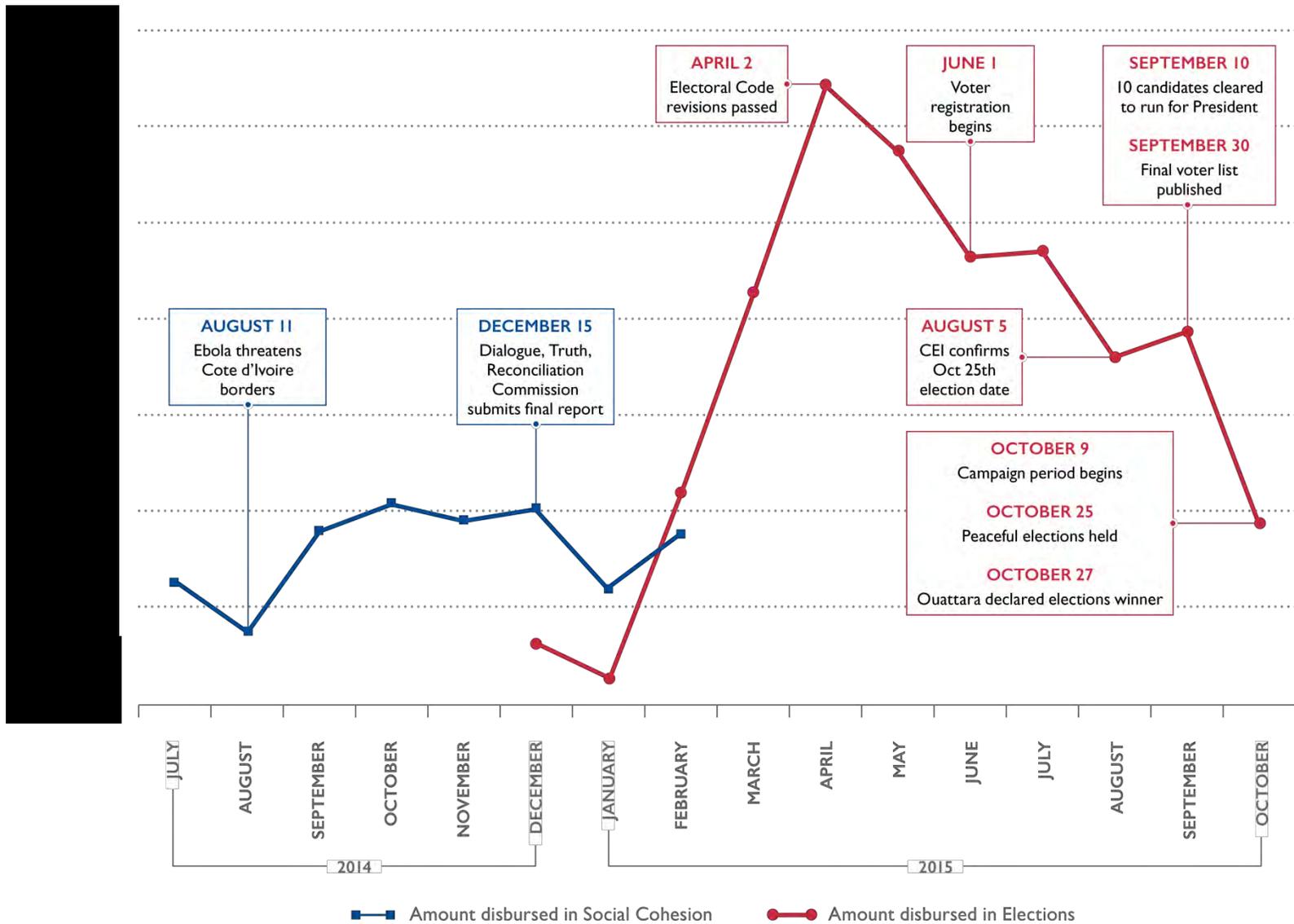
Observer missions, the international community, and unsuccessful candidates were unanimous in concluding that polling was conducted freely and fairly. The swearing-in ceremony for the newly re-elected president was held on Nov. 3, 2015, in the Presidential Palace in Abidjan. In his acceptance speech, the President described “a great victory” for the country in demonstrating “to the whole world that she [Côte d’Ivoire] can organize election in

peace.” He went on to announce “two major initiatives” for his second term in office. Firstly, he said, “we have to strengthen the national reconciliation process, with new consultations which I will undertake...” The second major issue, he said, was, “we must give ourselves a new constitution which has to guarantee equality, national cohesion, and the stability of our institutions.” He said, “the changes which we intend to make, will take account of our history, our culture, and our values which we want to promote in the new Côte d’Ivoire.”

“This election has proven the determination of Ivoirians to turn the page on violence; it has shown their desire to see the country stand among the great democratic nations.”

— President Alassane Ouattara

FINAL ACTIVITY AMOUNTS CLEARED PER MONTH, PER OBJECTIVE



SECTION II

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Building on the groundwork laid by the successful CITI program, CITI2 began in June 2014 with the objective of increasing community cohesion and supporting a peaceful, inclusive, and credible 2015 presidential election. CITI2 worked exclusively with local Ivoirian partners to engage vulnerable communities in the western part of the country, as well as key neighborhoods in and around Côte d'Ivoire's commercial capital of Abidjan, which had sustained most of the violence and instability following the 2010 election. By its end, the project had implemented more than 117 activities hand-in-hand with 74 organizations. CITI2 worked with a broad array of grantees, including national Ivoirian government entities such as the CEI and Audiovisual High Authority along with local women's and youth groups, university students, radio stations, religious and traditional leaders' forums, community organizations, local authorities, recording studios, and other media groups.

CITI2 PROJECT GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT

While CITI2 had initially planned to establish offices in Abidjan and the northern Côte d'Ivoire city of Bouaké, changing political dynamics prior to the election revealed an increased risk of instability in western Côte d'Ivoire. During project startup, CITI2 rapidly adapted its operational plan to establish an office in Abidjan and to shift the location of CITI2's second office from Bouaké to Daloa. Daloa was accessible both to USAID/OTI and partner staff as the most effective launching point for CITI2's work in the west. CITI2's Abidjan office managed relationships with national partners and engaged with at-risk communities in and around Abidjan, from inner city districts like Yopougon and Abobo to the outlying suburb of Dabou. CITI2's chief of party, senior operational staff, and senior program development officer were based in the Abidjan office. CITI2's Daloa office worked at the regional and community levels, building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders in Daloa and other western towns affected by violence during and after the crisis, such as Duékoué, Guiglo, Bangolo, Issia, and Vavoua. The Daloa

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



3,266 RADIO PROGRAMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Live radio round table discussions featured local community members discussing peace, civic engagement, and the electoral process.



244 DIALOGUE ENGAGEMENTS

OTI activities provided safe platforms for facilitated discussions to address grievances and move toward reconciliation for groups divided by the 2010 electoral crisis.



102 COMMUNITY GROUPS TRAINED

Targeting youth and women's groups, training addressed conflict management, peaceful dispute resolution, resisting political manipulation, and the electoral process.

office was managed by CITI2’s regional program manager and supported by a staff of Ivoirian program and operational staff.

THE GRANTS CYCLE: KEY TO IMPLEMENTATION

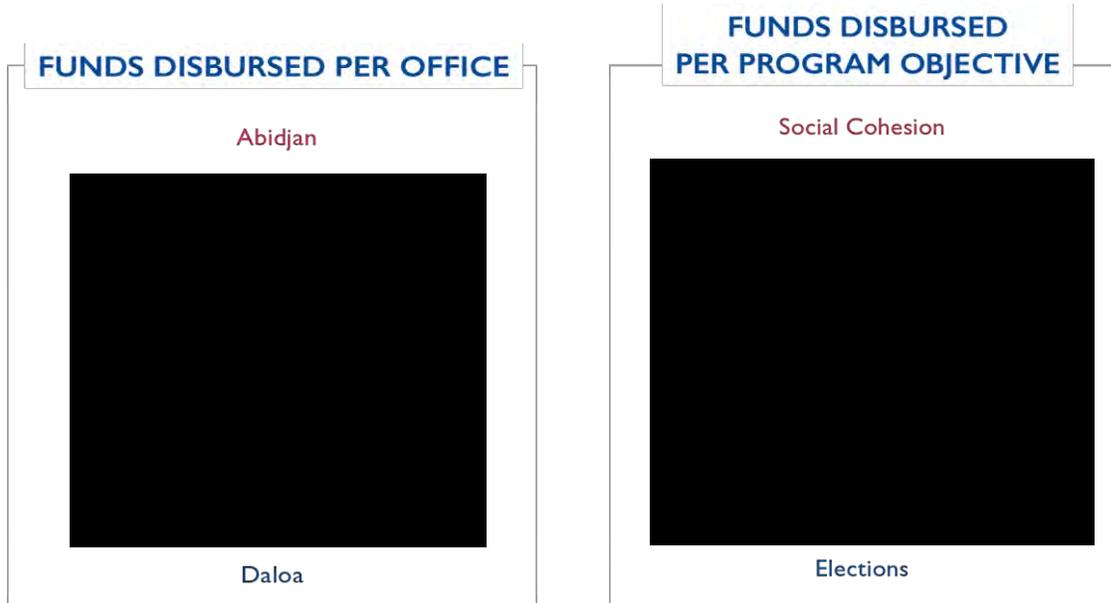
The CITI2 approach to grants and other transition-assistance pool (TAP)- supported activities emphasized speed and flexibility. The approach was a hand-in-hand approach that stressed coordination among CITI2 staff, OTI, and local partners and stakeholders. CITI2’s local staff were the core of grant development and implementation, working at the grassroots level in the most volatile areas of the country to identify partners and work closely with them to develop activities to address root sources of community tension. CITI2 organized its activity development and implementation teams into grant management units, including a program development officer, a grant manager, and a procurement specialist, who closely coordinated from grant inception through closeout to facilitate strengths-driven activity management. This approach resulted in high-quality, rapidly implemented activities that supported CITI2’s well-defined program objectives.

TAP activities were intended to provide support that capitalized on windows of opportunity throughout the pre-election period as well as during elections. Recipients ranged from newly-emerging community groups to national-level government entities. The project’s policies and procedures were designed to award grants and support other activities in a flexible, rapid, and fully compliant fashion and to appropriately target project objectives and respond to locally-identified priorities. Regardless of the programmatic vehicle used, TAP procedures emphasized simplicity, accountability, transparency, speed of implementation, and flexibility. Flexibility was particularly important for grants which were developed prior to elections and ongoing during elections.

A menu of TAP programmatic vehicles minimized the level of risk to USAID and ensured efficient, effective implementation. For maximum flexibility, the project used three programmatic vehicles: grants under contract, short-term technical assistance, and direct distribution of goods and services. The majority of grants issued under CITI2 were in-kind awards, which allowed flexibility to work with lower-capacity and nascent



groups embedded in communities with real potential to affect grassroots change and promote social cohesion.



By project end, CITI2 had used this flexible grant cycle to clear and disburse [REDACTED], or 99.9 percent of the project’s obligated TAP funds, on social cohesion and election-related activities. A majority of project funds supported election-related activities and were roughly divided between the two offices and surrounding target areas.

WEB-BASED DATABASE

CITI2 was one of USAID/OTI’s first programs to pilot the web-based database. A key implementation tool, this database was accessible in real-time to all staff, and served to track and manage programmatic interventions. All TAP activities, including grants under contract, short-term technical assistance, and direct distribution of goods and services, were recorded in the database. USAID/OTI was able to review and approve activities in the database, and all staff could upload notes from field visits, generate data visualizations, obtain TAP financial data, and track activity close-outs over time. This tool was critical in helping CITI2 achieve its program objectives.

A SPECIAL FOCUS ON GENDER

During its second year, CITI2 received funding for programming to engage women and integrate gender considerations into the project's election-related activities. CITI2 identified and fielded a gender specialist who conducted a rapid gender review, and developed innovative mechanisms and tools to enable CITI2 to better consider the implications of OTI election activities on both women and men, with the goal of ensuring their equitable participation in and benefit from activities. Based on guidance from the project's gender consultant, the project used a seven-domain gender screening form, translated into French, to ensure gender considerations were taken into account by program development officers (PDOs) when developing activities. CITI2 also added a "gender integration" field into the web-based database, where the team began including gender screening questions used during the development of each relevant election-related activity (see text box), in addition to any specific plans for gender integration during activity implementation.

EXAMPLES OF CITI2 GENDER SCREENING QUESTIONS

Below are examples of the types of questions CITI2 program staff posed when screening an activity for gender considerations:

- What unique security risks do men and women face
- due to the proposed location of this activity?
- What measures can the project take to attenuate the security risks for men and women associated with this activity?
- Was this activity conceptualized in a way that would allow for active participation of both men and women?
- What are the standard responsibilities of men and women regarding childcare and housework?
- How can the project help facilitate men and women's participation in and benefit from the activity?

CITI2 STAFF IN PROFILE: ██████████, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, DALOA OFFICE

██████████ served as the CITI2 Program Development Officer in Daloa, and previously, as the CITI Program Development Officer in Bouaké. To ██████████, the clarity of CITI2’s objectives was key to successful programming. ██████████ is proud of how CITI2 incorporated past lessons learned and predicted potential complications when formulating activity ideas with partners.

One of ██████████’s project highlights was working with the Mona village outside of Guiglo, one of CITI2’s first activities in the west. He explained how Mona’s traditional village chief, an ethnic Guéré and supporter of former President Gbagbo, had fled in 2011 to Liberia amid Guiglo’s post-election violence. Ouattara-supporting villagers in Mona created a “crisis committee” and elected their own temporary leader, a supporter of President Ouattara. After the conflict subsided, President Ouattara issued a decree asking all village chiefs to return to their posts to help mend ties and restore order. Mona’s villagers allowed the former chief to return but the temporary crisis committee leader would not relinquish his power, reigniting tension and inter-ethnic conflict between groups sympathetic to Gbagbo and those supporting Ouattara. CITI2 learned that previous mediation efforts had failed because past mediators sent to Guiglo were perceived as biased toward one side or the other. CITI2 carefully selected and hired a consultant, ██████████ ██████████ to examine the situation and identify measures the program could take to support consensual solutions to achieve peace. From ██████████’s thorough and impartial examination of the impasse at Mona, CITI2 supported the local government (“sous-prefecture”) to moderate discussions and work with all stakeholders to create a new consensual mechanism for decision-making in Mona. These discussions yielded a more transparent traditional system that was equitable in its decision-making abilities and trusted by all ethnic groups. The result was a grateful and unified community. ██████████ was proud of this work, noting, “It was this success that initially gave CITI2 its positive reputation. After this, any time we went to a new community, we were welcomed with open arms. The inclusivity of CITI2’s approach stood out to people.”



PHOTO: Kendra Heimer/USAID

██████████ served as a program development officer in CITI2’s Daloa office. Mr. ██████████ was proud of CITI2’s work designing and implementing social cohesion activities such as an activity promoting peace between conflicting villages outside Guiglo in the West.

SECTION III

INCREASING COMMUNITY COHESION

As described in the executive summary, initial CITI2 grants focused on establishing relationships and platforms at the community level to foster community cohesion. As reflected in the timeline above, the majority of CITI2's funds for increasing community cohesion were programmed between June 2014 and February 2015; the passing of Côte d'Ivoire's electoral code bill on April 2, 2015, and the project's strategic review session in March 2015 marked the project's transition toward election programming starting in March 2015. CITI2's good local reputation and strong relationships with communities allowed it to seamlessly pivot toward election-related programming as the pre-election cycle kicked off in early 2015.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY STRATEGIES AND PROMOTING NON-VIOLENT METHODS TO REDUCE CONFLICT

Scars of the 2010-2011 post-election violence in communities in Côte d'Ivoire run deep. Supporting communities to prevent a resurgence of violence and use non-violent methods of conflict resolution required a significant investment of time, a commitment to inclusivity, and a focus on working hand-in-hand with community partners to promote tolerance, forgiveness, and trust between ethnic groups. CITI2 seized windows of opportunity prior to the 2015 election to bring groups together through sporting events and cultural festivals, radio and film communications pieces, and traditional forgiveness ceremonies and facilitated dialogues. This work was often sensitive, requiring CITI2 to bring in communications experts and psychologists to ensure victims of violence felt safe and could express themselves freely. Some key achievements in Abidjan and the west are presented below.

Conflict early warning and early response (EWER) system in target communities. A key element of CITI2's community cohesion strategy was the expansion and strengthening of a conflict EWER system into four CITI2 target communities. CITI2 partnered with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), which had been working to establish EWER infrastructure in Côte d'Ivoire since the early 2000s. Each intervention was tailored to the unique needs of each community in Abidjan and the west, building on existing structures. For example, with CITI2 support, WANEP established a local

EWER system in the Abidjan inner-city community of Abobo, the site of extreme violence during the 2010-2011 post-election crisis. Community groups were already monitoring indicators of violence but lacked necessary tools to document and share collected information. CITI2 and WANEP trained monitors from a local organization on EWER and helped the community identify conflict triggers. Local responses to issues could then be developed in real-time to halt the cycle of violence plaguing the community. CITI2 established a similar system in Yopougon, another inner-city community in Abidjan, which experienced paralyzing violence during the crisis. Pre-election politics continued to inflame passions in Yopougon and violent inter-group conflict was a frequent occurrence. In the west, CITI2 operationalized Duékoué's early warning committee to provide local authorities the necessary information to take preventive measures and address tensions before they become violent. Duékoué has residents from many of the country's conflicting ethnic groups and is found at the center of the country's flourishing cocoa industry. In Duékoué, innocuous misunderstandings in communities often evolved into ethnic conflict and deadly violence, and rumors spread quickly. Duékoué's conflicts were usually perpetrated by youth and reverberated in neighboring villages with similar ethnic makeups. With WANEP and local organization Plateforme des Organisations de Jeunesse de Duékoué (POJED), CITI2 equipped the committee and trained its members on the use of EWER equipment. Additionally, CITI2 worked with WANEP and local organization Source du Bonheur to establish a similar EWER in the community of Bangolo, providing equipment and capacity building support. In total, CITI2 trained more than 290 field monitors and civil society leaders on conflict early warning systems.

CONFLICT EARLY WARNING SYSTEM LESSONS LEARNED

In June 2015, CITI2 engaged an external consultant to review and make recommendations for improvement on CITI2's early warning/early response mechanisms in four geographic areas. Below are some examples of EWER recommendations, most of which CITI2 implemented ahead of the October 2015 election. Future EWER programs should pay special attention to these potential challenges in Côte d'Ivoire:

- Engagement: Ensure all local community groups such as religious leaders, political parties, and youth and women's groups, are linked with conflict monitors
- Indicators: Pare down and streamline conflict indicators to reduce duplication, ensure indicators reflect reality at the most local level
- Equipment: Provide training, coaching to monitors on using IT equipment to collect and report data, ensure connectivity to transmit data and reports to relevant audiences
- Learning: Invite monitors to come together periodically to share experiences, learn from one another

Facilitating local solutions to manage land disputes. In the west, CITI2 identified land disputes as a key driver of violence. In Bangolo and Duékoué, for instance, land disputes strained the land administration system; the post-crisis vacuum aggravated the already-tenuous land tenure system by creating opportunities for social groups to “grab” land or question previously negotiated contracts. Border disputes created distinct social divisions between groups, which escalated regularly into incidents of violence and risked intensifying further during the pre-election period.

“Eighty percent of my time was spent resolving land disputes in my district... there was never a day I wouldn’t have villagers from Dah and Béoué in my office with complaints over land demarcations.” Since the meetings, “we haven’t recorded a single threat or complaint.”

-SUB-PREFECT OF BANGOLO,
[REDACTED]

While limited in what the project could achieve in its short duration, CITI2 built on successful land tenure activities conducted under CITI to support local governments and communities in understanding on how land issues could be resolved peacefully. For example, in the Dah-Zagnan and Beoue-Zagnan communities in the Bangolo environs, CITI2 worked with local government officials to organize a series of inter-community dialogues, land conflict management training workshops, inter-community meetings, and public land demarcation ceremonies. These processes included key stakeholders such as village elders, traditional leaders, elected officials, youth, women, and individuals with significant community influence living in Abidjan or the overseas diaspora. A national conflict management expert conducted a three-day workshop on land conflict management, followed by six days of inter-community meetings. During these CITI2-sponsored activities, the participants drew maps of land and natural resources to serve as a basis for negotiation, negotiated and came to consensus on mutually acceptable boundaries, and then drafted bylaws with diverse community witnesses to manage land and natural resources in a way that would prevent conflicts from turning violent.



PHOTO: CITI2

In September 2014 in the western village of Dah, one hundred and forty-six people, including 39 women, participated in inter-community meetings on land conflicts. The session opened with Dah residents offering liquor to Béoué visitors, symbolizing the desire to resolve disputes through consensus rather than violence.

Communities then ceremonially walked the length of each village's boundaries together to plant boundary markers along with the local agricultural service representative and held a public traditional ceremony to document boundary agreements on paper. Evidence of the effect of CITI2's efforts were recognized during the closing ceremonies — the event opened with customary offerings of liquor by the hosts to the visitors — symbolizing the desire to resolve disputes through consensus rather than violence. Sharing liquor in the local culture represents bonding and is a pledge of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Social cohesion through women's empowerment. CITI2 organized strategic interventions targeting women as change makers for peace and social cohesion. For example, CITI2 organized two celebrations around International Women's Day on March 7, 2015, a women's half marathon in Abidjan in partnership with local NGO Maninka and the Ministry of Health, and a day of cultural events in Dabou outside of Abidjan. The goal of these events was to disseminate messages of peace and solidarity to women from different political and ethnic backgrounds, empowering women to collaborate to reduce violence.



PHOTO: Simplice Kouassi/CITI2

Gueré and Malinké women embrace after a day selling goods in the market together. CITI2 supported local organizations bringing women together as conduits of peace in communities which fought each other during the 2010 crisis. The activity supported Gueré women working in Carrefour Market and Malinké women working in Kokama market.

In Dabou, CITI2 provided logistical support to women's group Unir et Servir to organize more than 350 women (and some men) from Dabou and seven surrounding villages which fell into conflict after the 2010-2011 crisis to work together for two months to prepare for and organize cultural events around International Women's Day. The day's events included a parade, traditional dancing, and a cooking contest. Village chiefs and other influential local leaders spoke at the event to spread messages of peace and reconciliation. Events encouraged women from different political and ethnic backgrounds around Dabou who do not often interact to meet and build relationships, strengthen cross-village networks, and take leading roles in the reconciliation process. The half-marathon in Abidjan took place in the suburb of Cocody, and more than 5,500 Ivoirian women from more than 13 neighborhoods around Abidjan participated. In addition to messages of peace, reconciliation, and election participation, breast and cervical cancer screenings were also offered free of charge at the event.

In Duékoué in the West, CITI2 partnered with local organization Coalition of Women Leaders Combatting Violence against Women and Girls (Coalition des Femmes Leaders pour la Lutte Contre les Violences faites aux Femmes et Filles) to tap into the catalytic potential of women to bring the Carrefour and Kokama communities together. The activity targeted Guéré women working in the Carrefour Market and Malinké women working in the Kokama market. The Kokoma neighborhood, inhabited mainly by the Malinké ethnic group, is known to be aligned with the Ouattara government while Carrefour, comprising mainly Guéré, is aligned with former President Gbagbo and his associated militias. These communities clashed violently during the post-electoral crisis when each side accused the other of atrocities which left nearly 1,000 people dead and buried in mass graves in Carrefour. The Carrefour Market itself, previously a meeting point and melting pot of Guéré, Malinké, and Baoulé women vendors, was burned to the ground. CITI2 provided technical assistance, material, transportation, meals, and logistical support for an inter-community dialogue and two market days accompanied by an information campaign aired on local radio stations.

Engaging youth to reduce conflict. Throughout Côte d'Ivoire, marginalization and political manipulation led to youth serving both as perpetrators and victims of violence following the 2010-2011 political crisis. Four years after these events, unemployment remained extremely high and youth were particularly at high risk of political manipulation to commit violence or contribute to unrest. Youth remained divided along ethnic and political lines and saw little improvement in their economic situation. CITI2 developed activities to break the cycle of violence and political vulnerability characterizing youth activism in recent years. CITI2 engaged 113,056 youth through more than 43 activities in Abidjan and the West in constructive dialogue to improve their interactions with each other and their communities.

- The western city of **Bangolo** served as a base for the largest militia comprising mainly youth from the Guéré ethnic group responsible for violent clashes during the post-election crisis. Ethnic and political clashes pitted youth militias against one another, and youth were unequipped with knowledge and skills to resolve confrontations without violence. The Bangolo local government called its own city a “tinderbox,” with tensions exacerbated by rumors, political manipulation, and lack of economic opportunities. Inter-ethnic disagreements often spiraled in violence. CITI2 partnered with the Bangolo local government to provide in-kind assistance in the form of materials, transportation, meals, refreshments, technical assistance to train 50 Guéré and Malinké youth leaders on nonviolent techniques for conflict management, and provided material



PHOTO: Simplice Kouassi/CITI2

Youth sing and play music together during a CITI2 activity in Bangolo in the West designed to equip youth with knowledge and skills to peacefully resolve conflicts.

support for joint education campaigns on nonviolence and social cohesion. Through this activity alone, CITI2 trained more than 2,400 youth in 11 communities on nonviolent mechanisms for conflict resolution. CITI2 later supported these same Guéré and Malinké youth leaders with training to improve their ability to recognize, understand, and resist political manipulation and constructively participate in democratic processes. Based on recommendations of these youth leaders regarding the root causes of instability in their communities, CITI2 also provided training for 200 marginalized Guéré and Malinké youth in Bangolo on farming techniques and group dynamics to provide an economic outlet prior to the 2015 election, while also enhancing their community image.

- In **Yopougon**, CITI2 worked to forge interaction and reconciliation between the Doukouré and Yaoséhi neighborhoods. Doukouré is populated primarily by pro-Ouattara supporters and Yaoséhi by pro-Gbagbo supporters. Violent clashes among youth in these neighborhoods during the 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis created deep divisions and mistrust. CITI2 worked with Yopougon's civil society platform to organize two workshops facilitating discussion between youth of each neighborhood, a neighborhood clean-up day, and a soccer game to build trust and resilience to potential political manipulation. Forty youth were also trained as peer mediators as part of the workshop.

- **Guiglo** is a town in the West divided among political and ethnic lines. In 2010, politicians incited communities by bringing up long-standing grievances over land rights in this region where groups perceived to be “non-native” represent more than three quarters of the population. Youth are often the target of politicians' violent rhetoric and the most susceptible to manipulation because of unemployment and lack of engagement in politics. CITI2 partnered with the Youth Leaders of Guiglo, an association with youth representation from the



PHOTO: Luc Armand Bohoulet/CITI2

A public television screening of the African Nations soccer championship playoff with targeted peace and unity messages and theater skits exemplified a successful community event that fostered peace and tolerance among youth groups in Daloa in February 2015. The political crisis during the last election turned into an ethnic conflict between warring political parties. CITI2 partnered with the Daloa Youth Leaders Platform to organize this event in Daloa to contribute to more positive political and social engagement of youth.

three most popular political parties. Together, CITI2 and the Youth Leaders of Guiglo organized discussion to facilitate constructive dialogue, along with a community clean-up day to promote volunteerism. About 120 youth participated in organized dialogue sessions, and 1,500 youth participated in community clean-up activities to install street signs and clean streets in 10 neighborhoods.

Reducing violence and promoting forgiveness through participatory theater. CITI2 used many creative means of

bringing communities together to facilitate dialogue and to identify solutions for peace. For example, in Abobo near Abidjan, CITI2 supported equipment and technical assistance for participatory theater activities. CITI2 partnered with local organization POSCA to use participatory theater to help Abobo residents better resist political manipulation and find peaceful ways of engaging in the political process. With CITI2 funding, POSCA hired

several comedic actors who first gathered information from people regarding their experiences during the crisis and their experiences of violence. The comedic actors and POSCA developed skits together based on those experiences, and engaged actual community members in 15 role-playing performances. Performance attendance was more than double project predictions: More than 8,200 people attended performances at 15 sites, including 3,902 men, 4,169 women, and 129 community leaders. CITI2 replicated similar participatory street theater activities in communities in the west, such as in Bangolo.



Youth in Abobo perform skits to help Abobo residents identify ways to resist political manipulation and find peaceful ways of engaging in politics. CITI2 worked with local organizations who interviewed residents on their experiences of violence during the crisis, and designed participatory theater performances based on these experiences to facilitate dialogue and identify peaceful solutions to conflict.

INCREASING DISTRIBUTION OF CREDIBLE INFORMATION

In many of its intervention areas, CITI2's work increasing the distribution of credible information bridged the objectives "increasing community cohesion" and "supporting an inclusive and credible election process." One key cross-cutting intervention type was community radio broadcasting that established early in the project as sustained, consistent information platform covering and linking the pre-election, election, and post-election periods.

For example, in Douékoué and in Daloa, CITI2 partnered with Radio Guémon and Radio Tchrato, respectively, to organize on-air roundtables on the prospects for peace in the region. These roundtables allowed citizens who were victims of various cycles of violence over the past decade to freely express themselves, and for communities to peacefully engage with one another. In Abidjan, CITI2 engaged local radio as a platform for victims of violence to share their stories to promote tolerance and forgiveness to reduce mistrust between Yopougon populations. Côte d'Ivoire's formal forgiveness process is important in Ivorian culture as a traditional method of restoring peace after conflict. Therefore, community reporters with the support of psychologists and communications specialists interviewed both victims who had forgiven their perpetrators unconditionally and wished to participate in mending rifts between communities, as well as victims who had not yet forgiven and still desired revenge. Discussions helped raise awareness within Yopougon's population of election-related violence, its long-term repercussions, and the need to avoid a repeat of such violence ahead of the 2015 election.



In Daloa, youth from local radio stations interview community leaders as part of activities facilitating peace in areas which experienced post-election violence in the 2010-2011 crisis.

CITI2 continued to build and expand relationships with community radio stations and used community radio to support an inclusive and credible election. Examples of CITI2's use of community radio around this objective are found in Section IV, Increasing Distribution Of Credible Information, Targeted Use of Community Radio.

SNAPSHOT

Promoting Dialogue Among Abobo Youth

To reduce tension and avoid a return to violent conflict during Côte d'Ivoire's 2015 presidential election, CITI2 supported capacity-building activities for leaders and youth in Abobo to prevent conflict, promote dialogue, and focus on activities to bring communities together.



PHOTO: Chemonics International

Youth in Abobo participate in a song contest as part of a cultural day to build solidarity in areas affected by the 2010-2011 political crisis.

"We should no longer consider the youth of Kennedy (the Malinké tribe) as enemies because we know each other now, ate together and today we are even playing together...there is nothing good about fighting."

— [REDACTED], Ebríé youth of Abobo

The Abobo commune of Abidjan has experienced a population explosion in recent years. Originally dominated by the Ébrié community, rapid urbanization of greater Abidjan in recent years changed the ethnic balance and caused tension between the Ébrié and recently arrived inhabitants. Violent clashes occurred during the post-electoral crisis of 2010-2011. The Ébrié population is now a minority, and the population felt that it had been stripped of economic and political power.

Political differences also play into ethnic tension. The Ebríé supported former President Laurent Gbagbo. With population shifts, Abobo supports Alassane Ouattara. There had been minimal interaction between Ébrié villagers and those from the Kennedy neighborhood. The football field at the intersection of the neighborhoods was used by Kennedy youth, and Ébrié youth had been denied access to Kennedy along the main road passing through their village.

With CITI2 support, people expressed concerns through a community diagnosis process: "They consider us enemies to such an extent that they closed the access road, so we also consider them our enemies!" said [REDACTED], president of Kennedy youth association. The focus turned to promoting solidarity.

CITI2 held a sports and cultural day to build camaraderie. The Abobo Baoulé road, which had been blocked by Ebríé youth after the post-election crisis, finally reopened. "Our children are now working together to end conflict and help us move about safely," said [REDACTED] chief of the Kennedy neighborhood.

SECTION IV

SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE AND CREDIBLE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Côte d'Ivoire's electoral law, passed on April 2, 2015, marked the country's transition into the pre-election period. CITI2 also transitioned its focus at this time to the 2015 presidential election, leveraging relationships built through social cohesion activities to ramp up programming to support an inclusive and credible electoral process.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN A PEACEFUL ELECTORAL PROCESS

To strengthen public engagement, CITI2 sought to increase participatory behaviors among voters, and to increase efforts by actors influential in Ivoirian society, such as traditional leaders, to engage citizens around the election. The following examples feature the project's work to counter voter apathy and increase public engagement in the electoral process.

Engaging religious leaders to reduce tension and promote peace. Côte d'Ivoire is diverse religiously and ethnically, with roughly equal numbers of Muslims and Christians and a significant animist minority. The country has a history of religious harmony; religious leaders had an important moderating influence during the post-electoral crisis of 2010-2011. In the lead-up to the 2015 presidential election, CITI2 built on this positive momentum to engage religious leaders to disseminate messages of peace and tolerance. CITI2 worked with the Abidjan-based National Forum of Religions (Forum National des Confessions Religieuses de Côte d'Ivoire or FNCR-CI) and with platforms of religious



Religious leaders from the town of Duékoué, western Côte d'Ivoire, pose in a photo included on billboards encouraging peaceful participation in a communications campaign targeting areas of the West which experienced significant violence during the 2010-2011 crisis. In the lead-up to the 2015 presidential election, CITI2 engaged religious leaders in Abidjan and the West to disseminate messages of peace and tolerance.

leaders in Duékoué and Daloa in the West to provide training and interfaith idea exchanges during the presidential campaign and post-electoral period. CITI2's work with FNCR-CI included training and implementing an awareness campaign in 11 towns and cities comprising radio shows and billboards promoting positive messages. Billboards featured locally influential religious leaders standing united with leaders of other faiths. CITI2 also held a press conference 10 days prior to election day featuring influential religious leaders. To expand the campaign's reach CITI2 disseminated messages on national and religious radio stations, in newspapers, and through social media. Religious leaders in Abidjan and the West also conducted direct outreach to youth and women; the FNCR-CI includes several female religious leaders who CITI2 actively engaged in community outreach and promotional material distribution.

“‘Who benefited from all of that bloodshed?’ we asked of the people. ‘Think of the blood of Christ that was shed.’ The places where we worship should not be a playground for politicians [to manipulate and cajole]...or for those with weapons.”

— [REDACTED], CHURCH PAPA NOUVEAU IN DABOU

Using the arts and creative outlets to mobilize youth for peaceful participation. In 2010, youth were involved in disruption and violence during and after the election, which prevented election agents from conducting electoral education. Given this recent history and the predominance of youth in Côte d'Ivoire's population (77 percent of the country's population is under 35), the project considered youth its key target population. CITI2 staff identified creative communication mechanisms popular with youth, such as music, art, and dance, to be the most effective way to reach this target group. Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan specifically, is renowned for its vibrant music and dance scene. New, youth-led music and dance genres such as "Coupé-decalé" emerged at the beginning of the military-political crisis in 2002 and have remained popular. Building on this, CITI2 developed the Jeune, Ma Voix, Mon Avenir (Young, My Voice, My Future) national song, video and dance movement encouraging youth to engage actively



PHOTO: Kendra Helmer/USAID

Top Ivoirian singer Bamba Ami Sarah entralls fans during a peace concert hosted by CITI2 in the Abidjan suburb of Koumassi just before the 2015 election. To mobilize the youth vote in Côte d'Ivoire leading up to the Oct. 25 presidential election, USAID teamed up with singers like her to produce a music video and a tour to communities affected by violence following the 2010 presidential election.

and peacefully in the election. CITI2 engaged several high-profile Ivoirian artists representative of the country's diverse regions, such as Ismael Isaac, to come together to write and record a song and dance routine and music video. Artists also performed at concerts in Abidjan neighborhoods such as Abobo, Yopougon, and Koumassi. These concerts were a hit with youth and attracted more than 20,000 attendees. The video also became popular: CITI2 grantees distributed it on CDs at concerts and by the October 2015 election it had received over 120,000 views online.

Given the popularity of soccer in Côte d'Ivoire and the national team's recent Africa Cup of Nations championship, CITI2 partnered with local NGO Foot'Attitude and popular Ivoirian soccer and music stars to create a media campaign titled "Ivoirian stars for peaceful presidential election." Using the theme "Elections, c'pas gnaga" or "elections are not about fighting," popular music and sports stars recorded 30-second video and audio clips together around tolerance and peaceful engagement. CITI2 diffused messages through television, radio, billboards, and social media outlets such as popular youth blogs. Those stars selected were influential among youth and represented the country's diversity.

CITI2 conducted outreach to youth through other artistic means such as comic strips and wall murals. CITI2 worked with a local artist in Abidjan to describe the electoral process through a comic strip on themes such as voter registration (see comic strip sample below), verifying one's registration status, "what is the CEI and how does it work," "why vote," and acceptance of results. CITI2's partner network distributed 148,000 copies of six comic strips during key pre-election moments and during CITI2-supported activities. In partnership with the Institut National Supérieur des Arts et de l'Action Culturelle, CITI2 supported art school students to produce large murals on prominent walls in Abidjan. Murals featured messages on voter registration, depicted people voting, and featured "no to violence" imagery. The students staffed information kiosks near murals to discuss the electoral process with youth passing by. Through these efforts, more than 7,000 people signed a pledge committing to peaceful election participation.

TU ES NOUVEAU MAJEUR ?
TU NE T'ES JAMAIS INSCRIT SUR LA LISTE ÉLECTORALE ?
C'EST LE MOMENT !



**INSCRIS-TOI SUR
LA LISTE ÉLECTORALE !**

Episode I



In Daloa, with the National Instrument for Democracy and Economic Development (NIDE), CITI2 targeted secondary school students vulnerable to political manipulation and notoriously difficult to reach. In 2010, youth of this age group were often involved in politically motivated violence in the community and in schools. CITI2 worked with NIDE to hold a performing arts competition with Daloa's 25 secondary schools, a traveling caravan in the most densely populated areas of Daloa, and mural painting on school walls to depict images of peace, social cohesion, reconciliation, and civic duty. Through these activities CITI2 brought more than 6,000 secondary-school students together to listen and discuss the root causes of violence in their homes, community, and schools. Youth identified ways to tap into their networks of family, friends, and classmates to address issues before they turned into conflict, and explored creative ways to develop a healthier environment prior to the October election.



PHOTO:CITI2

In the Abobo neighborhood of Abidjan, CITI2-trained female community mobilizers hold an informal in-depth discussion, or “causeries,” around coffee to communicate information on election and encourage peers to vote. CITI2 trained more than 300 mobilizers to organize traditional West African village-based discussion groups to discuss election and their roles and responsibilities in peaceful election.

Engaging women. Many women associated the election with violence, given their often-traumatic experiences during the 2010 political crisis. CITI2 recognized that ensuring both men and women’s voices were heard through participation in the election process would require more than mass communications campaigns. CITI2 used feedback from local partners and its gender tools to identify effective ways to engage women in the election process.

CITI2 developed “get-out-the-vote” activities in Abidjan and the West focusing on youth and women. In the Duékoué, Daloa, and Vavoua regions CITI2 organized teams of youth and female members of CITI2 partners experienced in social cohesion activities. In local neighborhoods and villages, the teams organized “causeries,” or traditional West African village-based discussion groups, comprising youth, women, and men to discuss and share election information and their roles and responsibilities in peaceful election. These discussion groups were the centerpiece of the get-out-the-vote campaign. As an alternative to a mass messaging campaign, closer discussions with groups of women, youth, and village elders allowed for more in-depth deliberation to assuage concerns and motivate people to vote through interpersonal communication. CITI2 found that deeper, meaningful exchanges were more likely to result in positive outcomes than generally-targeted messaging.

CITI2 followed a similar approach in Abidjan, where the project trained female mobilizers to organize discussions with women in markets, shops, and other locations popular with women. CITI2 partner women’s groups trained and supervised more than 300 mobilizers in Abobo, Yopougon, and Koumassi. Mobilizers were equipped with information on the election so they could speak with other women directly, answer questions, address concerns, and encourage them to vote. In total, CITI2 reached more than 40,000 women; 80 percent of these women committed to voting on election day and shared their contact details to receive CITI2’s text message updates with information during and after the election.

Other innovative activities CITI2 conducted to engage women in the election included:

- With local partner Fédération des Associations de Femmes de Daloa, CITI2 facilitated women-led, community-level forums and radio programs on the registration process to raise awareness of the importance of the female voice in the democratic process. CITI2 held information sessions on the various stages of the electoral calendar so women would be better informed and could, in turn, educate members of their own communities.



PHOTO: Fahriaman Rodrigue Korie

Women outside the Daloa city hall proudly display a traditional African fabric, or pagne, they designed to promote peaceful election. CITI2 supported the design and reproduction of a series of pagnes, primarily worn by women, carrying messages emphasizing the importance of registering to vote.

- CITI2 supported the design and reproduction of a series of pagnes, or traditional African fabrics, carrying messages emphasizing the importance of registering to vote. Fabrics were used to convey messages to women and the wider public culminating in a large, open-air event to mark Mother’s Day, bringing together more than 5,000 women from Daloa and surrounding areas. This event involved dance, theater skits, and a women’s soccer match, infused with election messaging.
- CITI2, in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and UN Women, supported the Women Politicians Group of Côte d’Ivoire to hold their

first national workshop to promote women’s engagement in the electoral process as voters, candidates, observers, or as part of the legal and institutional electoral governance framework. The workshop brought together nearly 200 politically active women in Yamoussoukro and led to the adoption of a “Declaration for the participation of women and their representation in decision making bodies.”

CITI2 formed several other partnerships to encourage women’s engagement in the electoral process. The project worked, for example, with a network of female journalists, the Réseau des Femmes Journalistes et des Professionnelles des Médias de Côte d’Ivoire to increase women’s participation in the election in Daloa, Issia, Guiglo, Duékoué, and Bangolo through production of fabrics and fashion shows encouraging women to participate in election. In the Abobo and Dabou neighborhoods of Abidjan, CITI2 worked with women’s groups to carry out civic education on the electoral code, and the roles of the CEI and the Constitutional Council. These activities encouraged young men and women to actively participate in the electoral process.

INCREASING DISTRIBUTION OF CREDIBLE INFORMATION

To amplify messages communicated through direct outreach, CITI2 also leveraged the power of strategic multilingual mass and social media to achieve its end goal of a peaceful election. We describe below examples of unique ways CITI2 used media to encourage participation, discussion, and open debate around the election.



PHOTO: Kendra Heimer/USAID

Targeted use of community radio. Given the unique reach and influence of radio in both rural and urban Côte d’Ivoire, support to local radio

the managing director of Radio Arc-en-Ciel (in orange) in Abobo, facilitates an on-air discussion with youth in local languages to encourage election participation and promote issues-based politics. CITI2 supported local radio stations like Radio Arc-en-Ciel in Abidjan and the West to educate populations on the electoral calendar and encourage voter participation.

stations popular with target groups was key to CITI2 strategy. CITI2 supported local radio stations to educate populations on the electoral calendar and to encourage voter participation. In Abidjan CITI2 partnered with Radio Yopougon and Radio Arc-en-Ciel in two large, densely populated communes, Yopougon and Abobo. With these stations, CITI2 supported radio programming to encourage election participation and promote issues-based politics through general political discussion and debate. CITI2 also provided equipment and in-kind technical assistance to these stations to produce and broadcast

street interviews and reports in local languages such as Ebraïé, Dioula, Baoulé, Bété, Guéré and Attié. Communication in local languages was critical to reach non-French speaking youth in Yopougon and Abobo, many of whom were illiterate and had little formal education. Radio program topics included the role of the CEI and the Conseil Constitutionnel (CC), the importance of a violence-free election, and social issues around the election.

CITI2 also worked with local radio department of Dabou, 50 km from Abidjan, which faced a high risk of election destabilization given its complex, mixed ethno-political make up. In Dabou CITI2 partnered with Radio Leboutou – the most popular local station and the only station with reach throughout the entire region – to encourage participation and create opportunities for peaceful expression. CITI2 supported regular "on the ground" talk shows within Dabou and its seven surrounding villages. These shows provided a safe, public discussion forum where residents could express their views and interact with different radio personalities and leaders. These activities encouraged actual participation in the electoral process beyond just voting on election day through engagement in political debate.

Encouraging electoral participation through TV drama. CITI2 supported production of a seven-part TV drama titled *À Toi de Décider* ("it's up to you to decide") to educate audiences on the electoral calendar. Topics ranged from voter registration and verification, to "what to expect" during announcement of official results. The show was broadcast on Côte d'Ivoire's national TV channel, RTI, twice a week during peak viewing hours. RTI also sponsored additional airings more frequently as election day approached. While RTI does not collect official information on viewership, anecdotal information revealed that the show's popularity was high, reaching at least several hundred thousand viewers across the country. The show was also made available on YouTube; episodes were shared widely on social media. To amplify the impact of the TV series, several well-known TV actresses who starred in the series took the show on the road to reach women in three of Abidjan's busiest markets (Abobo, Koumassi, and Yopougon) and in three markets in the West (Bangolo, Duékoué, and Guiglo). Several thousand women came to watch these short, interactive drama sketches on make-shift stages in market centers. Actresses who took part were well-known to market women for their previous work on national TV. During the short skits, actresses promoted the ongoing series to encourage women to watch.

"Women must just come together for peace so that this peace we talk of can become a reality. I'm really happy to hear this message coming from television stars. I'm going to vote for the candidate I want on election day and I'm going to work with the women I know so that they do the same."

— MADAME [REDACTED]
GUGLO MARKET TRADER

Amplifying project reach using social media. CITI2 encouraged civil society partners to use social media to get messages out to as many people as possible, and to foster online

discussion and debate. Activities such as the national campaign with Ivoirian soccer stars, CITI2's conflict early warning and response activities, and the popular song and video, "Jeune, Ma Voix, Mon Avenir" were prolifically shared through social media to amplify project reach. CITI2 also managed its own Twitter handle and Facebook page which generated hundreds of tweets and posts, several thousand followers, and tens of thousands of views and comments over its two years of social media presence.

To build capacity of CITI2 partners to use social media, CITI2 partnered with Akendewa, an Ivoirian civil society organization engaging tech-savvy youth to use ICT to develop tech-driven solutions to benefit civil society and the Ivoirian private sector. With CITI2 support, Akendewa trained 50 young men and women to use computers and social media (blogs, for example) to promote nonviolence and participation in the electoral process. This group of young bloggers took the initiative to create a code of good conduct to guide their social media activity around the election. They also developed a hashtag (#civelection) for Côte d'Ivoire's 2015 presidential election and used it to encourage debate and information-sharing among themselves and the wider online and social media community in Côte d'Ivoire. The project made a unique effort to train and engage young female bloggers, who had been vastly outnumbered by men on Ivoirian social networks. CITI2-supported female bloggers targeted the female electorate with messages of encouragement and supported women active in popular local discussion forums.

By election day 50 young bloggers (25 men and 25 women) had led 20 Facebook discussion groups, each posting an average of four messages per day. The hashtag developed by the bloggers, #civelections, became the de facto official hashtag of the 2015 election with more than one million hits in the week of election, on Twitter. The young bloggers also published 77 articles on their own dedicated blog, and three articles on the website of a local civil society umbrella group – the Civil Society Electoral Observation Platform.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT ELECTION

As part of CITI2's strategy, the project worked closely with the USAID/Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening project, implemented by National Democratic Institute, to bolster capacity of institutions implementing the election with the necessary technical and operational resources to execute their responsibilities. CITI2 filled strategic gaps at the national level, but given its stability objective the project focused on expanding capacity of the CEI's local electoral commissions (CELs) in vulnerable neighborhoods of the West.

Support to the CEI. Support to the CEI was a central pillar of the CITI2 project at central and regional levels. Many CITI2 activities involved coordination with the CEI (for example, production of comic strips and TV series tailored to the electoral calendar and the CEI's expert input), and others involved direct capacity building support to the CEI. For example, the project worked hand-in-hand with CEPPS partner IFES and the CEI on

developing and distributing copies of the CEI's Civic Education Strategy for the election in CITI2's target areas. Beyond this high level of coordination, the project also implemented several grants directly with the CEI itself, at the national level in Abidjan, and with the CELs in Haut-Sassandra, Cavally, and Guémon in the West.

CITI2 focused on improving the CEI's outreach and communications capacity to increase public confidence in its ability to carry out a peaceful and legitimate election. CITI2 worked with the CEI in Abidjan to improve information management and institute an archive system. This system made information more readily available to voters and election candidates, enabling voters to better understand the electoral process and leading to greater likelihood that voters would have confidence in results. The project worked with CELs in the West to communicate information on CEI's capacity to organize a fair election. Informal data showed that more than half of voters in the West had supported former President Gbagbo in the 2010 election and refuted the 2010 election results; the CEI had to assure those voters that the 2015 election would be legitimate and transparent. We include below some examples of CITI2's partnership with the CEI to further this objective:

- CITI2 promoted voter engagement and registration with the CEI through public education campaigns including public forums and radio shows, distribution of civic education materials, and interviews with experts from the national-level CEI on the role of CELs during the various phases of the electoral calendar.
- CITI2 worked with the CEI to support creation and printing of more than 10,000 copies of a simplified version of Côte d'Ivoire's Electoral Code. This publication included 60 questions and answers on laws governing management and conduct of the electoral process. This document proved an invaluable aid to civic education efforts by a host of CITI2 partners, civil society groups, and the CEI itself.
- CITI2 supported CELs in posting electoral lists on notice boards in front of CEL offices and at voter registration centers during the appeals period. Ensuring proper public display of voter registration lists at all polling stations and in key public places reduced accusations of corruption and malfeasance. CITI2 produced and distributed more than 300 bulletin boards used to display electoral lists in 12 departments within three regions in the West.
- In addition to notice boards, CITI2 supported the CEI to design and produce 250,000 copies of an information sheet describing steps of the appeals process. This document, written in elementary-level French, described the timeline for different phases of the process and the steps voters should take if they wished to appeal the public voter list. This activity helped citizens understand how to follow democratic procedure to resolve issues peacefully rather than resorting to violence.
- CITI2 provided direct support to CELs in Abobo, Yopougon, and Dabou including essential equipment, materials, and training on technical aspects of managing the entire electoral process.

- Following the 2015 election, CITI2 organized a four-day, lessons-learned workshop in Yamassoukoro for 56 participants including the 16 central CEI commissioners and other senior CEI staff from Abidjan. The workshop allowed the central CEI to reflect on the electoral process from the beginning through announcement of results. During the workshop the CEI identified ways to improve management of the forthcoming legislative and local election. In the West, CITI2 supported the organization of workshops for the Haut-Sassandra, Guémon, and Cavally CELs to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their management of the 2015 electoral process, and to develop recommendations to improve future election. CEL representatives shared outcomes of these sessions with the broader public through local radio stations, allowing listeners to call in with questions and comments.

SNAPSHOT

TV Series Urges Women in Côte d'Ivoire to Cast Their Votes

Actors take to the road to tell citizens “you decide”



PHOTO: Educom

“These women’s messages really hit home because many of us gave our lives for these politicians but today there’s nothing to show for it.”

— [REDACTED] a youth residing in Yopougon, Abidjan

March 2016—Following the violence of the 2010 presidential elections, many Ivorian women were reluctant to take part in the electoral process after experiencing traumatic events, including forced displacement, rape and killings. These women had come to consider elections as synonymous with trouble.

“Let those people have their election and leave us alone. We only want to get on with our lives,” was the common refrain from women. The absence of women from future elections would not only affect the credibility of the elections, but would also eliminate their needs from the political agenda.

To mitigate this, USAID supported the production and broadcast of a TV series, *You Decide!*, sharing information targeted at women and youth on the electoral process and the benefits of participating. The show was broadcast throughout the election season last year. At least 1.7 million viewers watched the series.

Actors from the mini-series also took the message on the road with information-sharing caravans held in the markets of Koumassi, Abobo, Yopougon, Duékoué and Bangolo. These events were widely appreciated, particularly in the west, where one of the youth participants in Bangolo, [REDACTED], remarked, “We don’t usually see our favorite stars—all the better as they are talking peace. Because they don’t belong to any political party, we are reassured about the sincerity of the message.”

At least 4,500 women were reached through the awareness campaigns in the west, and 15,000 around Abidjan, the country’s largest city.

Turnout for this election proved to be balanced: 50 percent of voters were women.

SECTION V

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED: SOLUTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

CHALLENGES AND METHODS FOR ADDRESSING THEM

While CITI2 successfully promoted a peaceful, inclusive presidential election, the project encountered challenges and identified fast and flexible solutions to these challenges along the way. This section highlights some of the most significant challenges the project faced and some of the actions taken to overcome them.

Transitioning to a new project and strategic framework. CITI2 began in June 2014 as the follow-on project to CITI. Operational and administrative handover between CITI implementing partner AECOM and CITI2 implementing partner Chemonics was seamless and collaborative. During project start-up, CITI2 developed a new strategic framework to guide implementation; this new framework represented a significant change in strategy from CITI. While the new CITI2 strategy was clear – to consolidate social cohesion and support the electoral process – the team took time to adapt to the new project’s activity cycle processes. In response, OTI and Chemonics developed new resources and templates and held training sessions to assist program staff with activity development under the new strategic framework. The CITI2 senior management team trained and mentored staff on new work practices to streamline idea and grant development and improve grant submission timelines. This ensured CITI2 could achieve a sustained high volume of activities throughout the project, and that the team could respond quickly during periods of particular intensity.

[REDACTED]

Managing a regional field office with remote target areas. Initially, regional project operations were to be based out of Bouaké, with a satellite office in Korhogo, similar to

the CITI structure. However, during start-up OTI and CITI2 determined the project could have more impact in western Côte d'Ivoire, and thus shifted the regional office to Daloa. CITI2 modified the staffing plan to reflect the new geographical footprint. Operating in Daloa presented several operational challenges, such as low availability and capacity of vendors able to provide materials and services for project activities. To address this challenge, project staff closely managed service providers from Daloa, and Abidjan procurement staff provided additional logistical support to address Daloa's operational needs. The wide geographical expanse of target zones served from Daloa also proved challenging, as activities often occurred more than a hundred kilometers from the office. Staff proved adept at managing multiple activities spread throughout a wide area, and used a variety of methods such as training grantee staff in project management and reporting responsibilities, and mobile money, to ensure availability of resources.

Uncertainty and delays with CEI election planning. CITI2's ability to plan responsive election-related activities around key election milestones was hampered by the CEI's delay in finalizing key electoral dates. For example, the June 1, 2015, start date for revision of the electoral register (i.e. voter registration) was announced on May 13, 2015, providing only two weeks' notice. CITI2 used OTI's fast and flexible activity mechanisms to quickly respond and develop community-level voter registration campaigns targeting women, youth, and the transportation sector, and national media campaigns including comic strips, TV series, and social media. When voter turnout was low, the CEI announced a 12-day extension of the voter registration period late in the final day of June 30, 2015. CITI2 grant activities continued messaging throughout this period and helped communicate date changes to voters. The uncertainty and constant changes around the calendar reflected the CEI's capacity challenges, which were most vividly demonstrated on election day, Oct, 25, 2015, when late arrival of voting materials to voting stations resulted in delays to voting station opening times. Biometric computers which had been introduced to expedite voter identification, malfunctioned, causing additional delays. Reverting to manual verification caused long voter lines, resulting in some voters leaving stations without voting. Because of these delays the CEI extended voting hours nationally. CITI2 helped the CEI communicate these changes on social media through CITI2 partners and through SMS to CITI2's contact database. CITI2 responded to timelines as they materialized, extending or amending grants as appropriate.

LESSONS LEARNED

Using an evidence-based, participatory planning process. The value of CITI2's evidence-based, participatory planning process as a basis for project decision-making cannot be overstated. The CITI2 strategic framework drew heavily from the CITI Final Evaluation, which was informed by staff, grantees, and other stakeholders. One recommendation of the CITI Final Evaluation, for example, was to engage an external firm to conduct a "hotspot mapping exercise" to identify CITI2 geographic priorities. Additionally, the Final Evaluation recommended aligning CITI2's programmatic focus with the country's current socio-political context. The evaluation suggested Côte d'Ivoire's government

had regained post-crisis local service delivery capacity, and suggested CITI2 focus programming on the upcoming presidential election. CITI2 used the Final Evaluation and hotspot mapping building blocks to develop the project's strategic framework. With assistance from a planning expert from the OTI bullpen, CITI2's OTI and Chemonics senior management team came together over several days to brainstorm and elaborate a clear, detailed strategic framework with goals, objectives, and sub-objectives for CITI2. The joint planning team also developed tools to assist the wider team to implement the new strategy such as an "Activity Idea Template," an "Activity Cycle Guide," and a "Final Evaluation Report" template. The one-team approach throughout strategic planning enabled Chemonics and OTI to help staff transition to the new strategy and new work practices. OTI and Chemonics collaborated to roll out the strategy and ensure staff engagement in its continual ground-truthing and fine-tuning.

Engaging a politically connected and respected local senior program development officer. The role of the senior program development officer (SPDO) was vital for the project and for the senior management team. A mature professional with more than a decade of experience in civil society in Côte d'Ivoire, the SPDO opened doors and built relationships with local and national-level organizations that would otherwise have proved challenging. The SPDO was trusted in civil society and governmental circles, and represented CITI2 to entities such as the CEI, government ministries, commissions, and NGOs in a way that facilitated partnership and information sharing. Although program development officers on CITI2 brought valuable experience from CITI and backgrounds in peace-building, the shift in CITI2 strategic direction and the need "to engage fully on the political issues" (1), meant the experience and perspective of a politically aware senior program staff member was invaluable. As a member of the senior management team, the SPDO contributed to management decision-making and brought a well-informed local perspective, not only of the socio-political context, but also of human resources, labor law and the general local operating environment.

Institutionalizing gender integration on OTI projects. An important innovation and lesson learned on the CITI2 project was the formal integration of gender issues and analysis into CITI2's activity development cycle. Integrating gender considerations into activity design is particularly important for projects working in conflict, emergency, and transitional environments, as women and vulnerable groups have unique needs resulting from these environments that must be taken into consideration to ensure effective programming. Chemonics fielded a short-term gender specialist who conducted a rapid gender review of the program in April 2015. The review provided valuable recommendations on the project's gender integration, noting "the inclusion of women in activities is usually limited to making sure we meet a standard indicator of 30 percent of participants being female, rather than addressing how men and women can both actively participate in activities. There is no specific process for gender integration." (2) Following the gender review, CITI2 began a process of identifying gender concerns at the idea development stage, using a list of guiding questions based on the seven-domain

¹ *Preliminary Findings and Recommendations*, CITI Evaluation Team (July 2014)

² *CITI 2 Rapid Gender Assessment – Findings and Recommendations*, Alyssa Amparan (April 2015)

framework. In addition, CITI2 nominated the Daloa regional program manager as CITI2's gender focal point, who then supervised the gender integration process in the remainder of the project.

CITI2 made significant progress in thinking through the unique needs of men and women during activity development. Future programs could strengthen gender integration even further by conducting a more structured, rapid gender analysis during activity development, to ensure activity design addresses all potential barriers to men and women's equal participation and benefit. CITI2's gender review occurred mid-way through project implementation, and thus the full adaptation of gender consideration integration could not be achieved during the lifetime of the project. Future projects should consider a gender review during project start-up, which would be even more effective in ensuring gender integration throughout the program and across offices. Examples of ways to institutionalize this integration could be including gender concerns in the strategic framework, and including the gender analysis process in activity design templates such as the Activity Idea Template.

Lessons learned on cluster evaluations. The project used “cluster evaluations,” or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of activities grouped around a common objective, as a tool to inform ongoing programming. The project conducted two formal cluster evaluations: one external evaluation of activities supporting early warning and early response (EWER) and an internal evaluation conducted by the project M&E staff of the “social cohesion” cluster. The EWER evaluation was useful in informing the project's approach, fine-tuning ongoing activities, and developing additional support to partners implementing EWER. The second evaluation, an internal evaluation which reviewed CITI2 activities with the activity-level objective of “developing or strengthening community strategies to cope with and reduce violence and conflict and promote the use of non-violent methods to manage and reduce violence and conflict.” The cluster included 39 individual activities throughout all project geographical focus areas. The M&E team selected 10 grants from Daloa and five from Abidjan for in-depth analysis. Despite this small sampling the evaluation proved cumbersome, and although it produced useful findings, it was conducted in August 2015, which was too late to significantly influence election programming. To yield more effective results, evaluations could have focused on a smaller number of grants, around a key topic, or in a defined geographical area, rather than on such a broad sub-objective. This would have provided more rapid analysis which could have better informed programming in real time.

SECTION VI

THE ROAD AHEAD

Over the past five years, Côte d'Ivoire has experienced a remarkable transition. Having emerged from deep ethnic and political divisions that blighted the country for more than a decade – culminating in the bloody post-electoral crisis of 2011 – the country has turned the page toward greater social and economic stability. Since 2011, economic recovery has been on the rise including as follows:

- GDP increased by an average 9 percent between 2012 and 2013 and almost 8 percent in 2014
- GNP increased by more than 20 percent from 2012 to 2014
- The introduction of minimum price guarantees for major export crops such as cocoa, cashew nuts, and cotton boosted agriculture and brought certainty for rice, plantain, cassava, and maize producers
- Major infrastructure improvements have further increased productivity

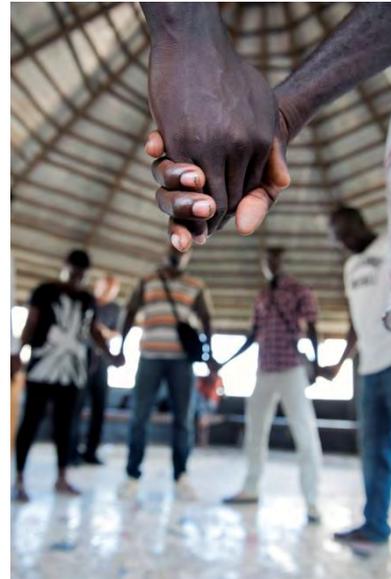


PHOTO: Kendra Helmer/USAID

Actors from different religious and ethnic backgrounds gather to practice ahead of a performance to educate communities about civic engagement and the importance of nonviolence.

Despite Côte d'Ivoire's increasing economic prosperity, the pain from deep wounds inflicted during years of instability and crisis remains palpable. President Ouattara acknowledged at his November 2015 swearing-in ceremony that Côte d'Ivoire must "strengthen the national reconciliation process." The presidential runner-up, N'Guessan, also declared, "the ballot confirms that the country still needs reconciliation and democracy." He pointed to the "rates of abstention greater than 50 percent in areas which had lived through the post-electoral crisis in 2010-2011 and where populations decided to just keep to themselves." The 2015 election, however, occurred peacefully and marked a major milestone of hope as the country sought to leave behind its painful past.

CIT12 engaged with communities in the West and in Abidjan most affected by 2011 post-election violence. Working at the community level through Ivorian community-based organizations, CIT12 built on the successes of CIT1 to bring formerly warring communities together for the first time since the crisis. By building trust and forging partnerships between communities, civil society, and local government institutions, the project prepared the groundwork for long-term reconciliation, responsible civic

engagement, and peaceful election participation. CITI2 partners benefitted not only from in-kind assistance specific to CITI2 activities, but also from capacity building in proposal development, project management, budgeting, reporting, advocacy, and networking. Following the 2015 elections CITI2 conducted an assessment of partners' equipment needs and identified critical strategic materials and equipment that partners needed in order to continue their activities related to peacebuilding and social cohesion. Items included equipment for community events (microphones, sound system equipment, tents, and chairs), and office equipment (laptops, photocopiers, etc). These items helped ensure CITI2 partners could continue activities after CITI2 end. In February of 2015 CITI 2 held two events bringing together CITI2 partners from Daloa and Abidjan at the US Embassy to help them build networks to leverage one another's strengths through partnerships after CITI2's end. 64 partners from Daloa and 40 from Abidjan attended the event, including representation from a host of civil society organizations, local Mayors' offices from the region, and regional heads of administration. CITI2 worked hard to ensure that its network of 74 partners will remain strong and continue to support social cohesion and community engagement after project close.

CITI2's 20 government partners are also now consolidating social cohesion and supporting participation in free and fair electoral processes. CITI2 forged close working relations with the National Commission for Compensation to Victims, the Ministry for Solidarity, Social Cohesion, and the Compensation of Victims, and the National Program for Social Cohesion. CITI2 linked each of these institutions with CITI2 civil society partners to build relationships. CITI2 strengthened the capacity of the CEI at national and local levels; the CEI has committed to work in partnership with CITI2's civil society network in civic education, peace messaging, and electoral observation. CITI2's work with USAID's CEPPS will enable these partners to pick up where CITI left off, leveraging successful working relationships fostered by CITI and CITI2.

CITI2 compiled a spreadsheet of the project's civil society, local, and national government partners and expert consultants. This information was shared with U.S. Embassy counterparts to encourage follow-up and ensure continuity with future U.S. Government-supported programming in CITI2 target areas. Similarly, all civic education and governance resources, guides, and manuals produced by the project have been made available to U.S. Embassy counterparts and partners. CITI2 is confident its many empowered Ivoirian partners and resources will continue to ensure progress is made toward achieving ever-greater social cohesion and political stability in Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire now looks forward to upcoming legislative elections, as well as the 2020 presidential elections, when a new set of political leaders will compete for power. CITI2 has left behind a legacy of tools and trained peace champions with the capacity to help the country maintain the positive momentum fostered by Côte d'Ivoire's first peaceful presidential elections in more than 20 years.

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20523

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

www.usaid.gov