



Democracy and Elections in Côte d'Ivoire

Findings from a March 2012 Post-Election Public Opinion Survey



May 2012



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Lauren Serpe

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International Foundation for Electoral Systems



West Africa Network for Peace Building

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*Findings from a March 2012 IFES Post-Election Public Opinion Survey
in collaboration with WANEP-Côte d'Ivoire*

May 2012

Edited by Maité Hostetter and Samira Keita

Contributions by Coulibaly Tiohozon and Mamadou Fofana

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I. METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

SURVEY SAMPLE SPECIFICATIONS

IFES contracted *Service Ivoirien d'Etudes et de Sondages* (SIVES) to implement a survey of voting-age adults in Côte d'Ivoire through face-to-face interviews from March 14-21, 2012. The sample was designed to be nationally representative of Côte d'Ivoire's adult population (18 years or older) by covering all 19 regions of the country, resulting in a sample of 1,500 respondents.

SURVEY, QUESTIONNAIRE AND REPORT SPECIFICATIONS

- The **sample size** of the survey is 1,500 respondents.
- The **margin of error** is ± 2.53 percent.
- **Fieldwork dates:** March 14-21, 2012.
- The **survey questionnaire** was composed of 40 closed questions and seven open-ended questions, plus demographic information. Most interviews were conducted in French (89%), but for respondents who did not speak or understand French sufficiently, the survey was conducted in Baoulé (6%), Dioula (4%) and Beté (1%).
- The data was **weighted** by urban/rural areas and age groups in order to adjust for slight discrepancies in the total number of achieved interviews in these categories.
- **Regional Divisions:** Some analysis will disaggregate the data by regions. Regions were grouped into larger geographic regions of North, South, East, West, Central and Lagunes (leaving Lagunes separate because the populous Abidjan is located here, thus a large proportion of the sample). Regional Groupings are as follows: North (Savanes, Denguélé, Worodougou); East (Zanzan, Moyen-Comoé); Center (Vallée du Bandama, Lacs, N'Zi-Comoé, Marahoué); South (Agnéby, Sud-Comoé, Sud-Bandama, Bas-Sassandra); West (Dix-Huit Montagnes, Fromager, Haut-Sassandra, Moyen-Cavally, Bafing); Lagunes Region.
- **Survey firm:** IFES contracted *Service Ivoirien d'Etudes et de Sondages* (SIVES), an Abidjan research organization, to implement the survey. Oversight and monitoring of fieldwork was provided by ARC and WANEP-CI.
- **Charts:** There may be slight variations between numbers presented in the analysis and the data figures or tables due to rounding. This occurred in only a few cases, and the difference was never greater than 1 percent.
- **Report Authorship:** Senior Research Specialist Lauren Serpe of IFES' Applied Research Center (ARC) wrote the data analysis in this report. The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding-Côte d'Ivoire (WANEP-CI) provided some contextual analysis throughout the report, as well as several conclusions and recommendations. We thank them for their collaboration.
- **Questions from WANEP's 2010 Survey:** In this questionnaire, 10 questions were included that were part of a WANEP survey conducted from September 13-18, 2010. IFES wishes to credit WANEP for the inclusion of these questions, as well as for their consultations on new survey questions fielded in the IFES survey.

Sample sizes for key demographic segments:

- **Gender:**
 - Male = 775
 - Female = 725
- **Age groups:**
 - 18-24 = 274
 - 25-34 = 583
 - 35-44 = 360
 - 45-54 = 175
 - 55-64 = 74
 - 65 & older = 34
- **Education groups:**
 - No education = 313
 - Primary = 218
 - Intermediate = 314
 - Secondary = 304
 - University and higher = 349
- **Residential density:**
 - Urban = 1,024
 - Rural = 476
- **Geographic Regions:**
 - Lagunes = 656
 - North = 104
 - East = 54
 - Center = 301
 - South = 153
 - West = 232
- **Financial Situation of Household:**
 - Not enough money for basic needs = 1,068
 - Enough money for basic needs = 288
 - Enough for basic needs and savings = 100
 - No financial problems = 44

FEEDBACK

- For any feedback or questions about data analysis or methodology, please contact Senior Research Specialist Lauren Serpe at lserpe@ifes.org.
- For any questions about IFES programming in Côte d'Ivoire, please contact IFES Program Manager Daniel Laurent at dlaurent@ifes.org.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One year after the post-presidential election crisis and ensuing violence in late 2010 and early 2011, Ivoirians are cautiously optimistic that sustainable peace has returned to Côte d'Ivoire. Ivoirians are both satisfied and dissatisfied with the current political situation in nearly equal proportions, but they are optimistic there will be improvement.

Survey findings also show there is a moderate level of democratic awareness (54%) and measured satisfaction with the country's practice of democracy (43%). Concurrently, citizens feel interested, but not involved, in politics. Those aware of democracy associate it most with freedom of expression; political freedom to choose leaders and parties; and respect for human rights. More men are aware of democracy than women; more urban residents than rural residents; and awareness of democracy increases with education. Many rights and freedoms commonly associated with democracy are believed to be respected in Côte d'Ivoire, but over half of Ivoirians do not believe human rights and equality are respected before the law. A perceived lack of respect for human rights, one of the top tenets Ivoirians associate with democracy, could help explain why Ivoirians are unsure of the status of democracy in their country. Additionally, around half of Ivoirians are dissatisfied with the fight against corruption in the country.

Despite criticisms of certain socio-political situations in the country, Ivoirians express confidence in many national institutions, including the president, government, prime minister, police and media. Citizens also express confidence in the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire. In spite of their very different aftermaths, a majority of respondents view both the 2010 presidential and 2011 legislative elections as organized, free and fair. The survey findings also indicate a wide reach of the voter education campaigns prior to the December 2011 legislative elections. Nearly three-quarters of Ivoirians say they heard or saw advertisements, posters or other sources of information on procedural issues, such as how and where to vote, and campaigns encouraging people to vote in the elections. Consistent with the high visibility of information campaigns, three-quarters of Ivoirians feel they had enough information on where and how to vote, and over 90 percent of voters in the 2011 elections found it easy to locate their polling centers, to understand voting procedures at the polling station and to mark their ballots. Voters also report proper procedures were followed when they voted: they received a copy of their own ballot, their ID was checked and they were able to vote in privacy.

Just over half of Ivoirians say they plan to vote in the 2012 municipal elections. Yet, most of the 44 percent who say they will not vote or are not sure say it is because they do not have the requisite documentation. Others not planning to vote say it is because they are not interested; they do not have a candidate; they lack faith in politicians' work or think they are dishonest; they fear insecurity; or they believe political leaders remain unfairly imprisoned. Ensuring citizens have the required documentation, encouraging an interest in these elections and bolstering security around voting centers to mitigate fears of violence could help increase turnout in the upcoming municipal elections. As fewer women and young Ivoirians expressed their likelihood to vote, an emphasis could be placed on encouraging women and younger voters to turn out to vote.

In contrast to the current low political representation of women, a large majority of Ivoirians say they support women in various political roles such as women as mayors, deputies in the National Assembly, political party members, political party leaders and president of Côte d'Ivoire and there is little variation in opinion by gender. These findings imply openness to an increased number of women in political positions and civil society could utilize these statistics to support their advocacy efforts.

Finally, television is cited by most respondents as the most helpful source of information on election-related issues and French is cited as the most useful language. Survey findings indicate that future information campaigns and civic education efforts should use TV to reach the most citizens, but radio and face-to-face methods remain useful when targeting rural voters. While information campaigns in French would reach much of the Ivoirian population, information materials should also be presented in Dioula and Baoulé, preferably in an audio format, as these languages are widely understood orally and not in written form.

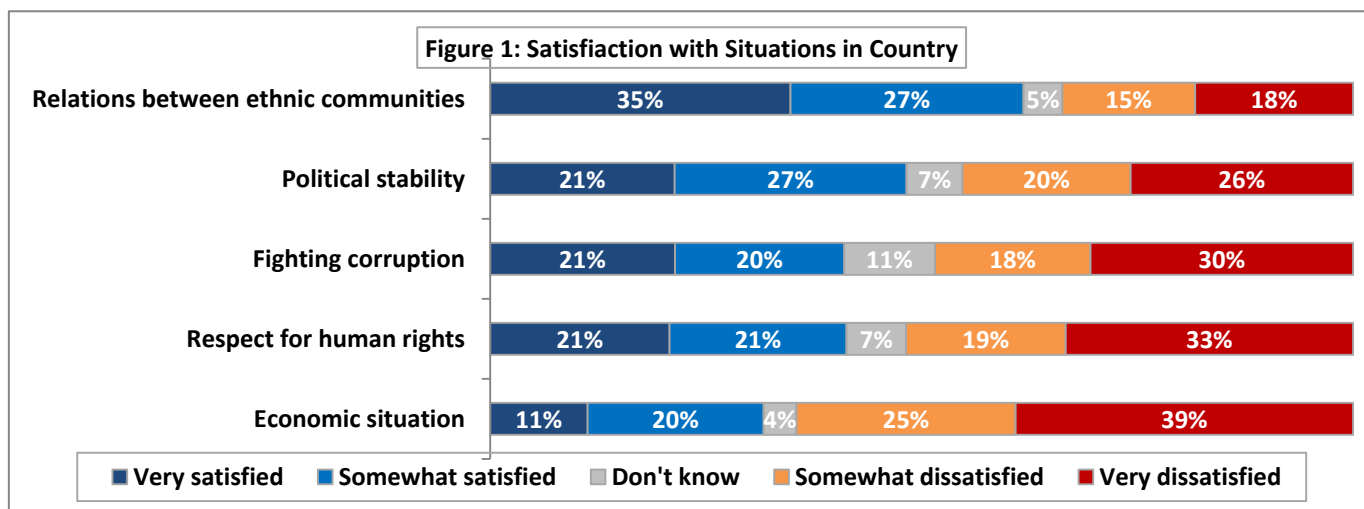
III. OPINIONS ON DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

One year after the post-presidential election crisis and ensuing violence in late 2010 and early 2011, Ivoirians have a mixed assessment of the overall political situation in Côte d'Ivoire. However, they remain hopeful that this situation will improve and are cautiously optimistic that sustainable peace has returned to the country. Ivoirians express an awareness of democracy, but less than half feel the country practices democracy correctly. Not surprisingly, the main reason cited in explanation for this sentiment is the post-election crisis in 2010 and a general feeling of insecurity. Nevertheless, there is confidence expressed for national institutions such as the president, government, prime minister, police and media. However, Ivoirians are critical of political parties saying they do not defend the interests of the people.

Mixed Satisfaction with Political, Economic & Human Rights Situations in Country

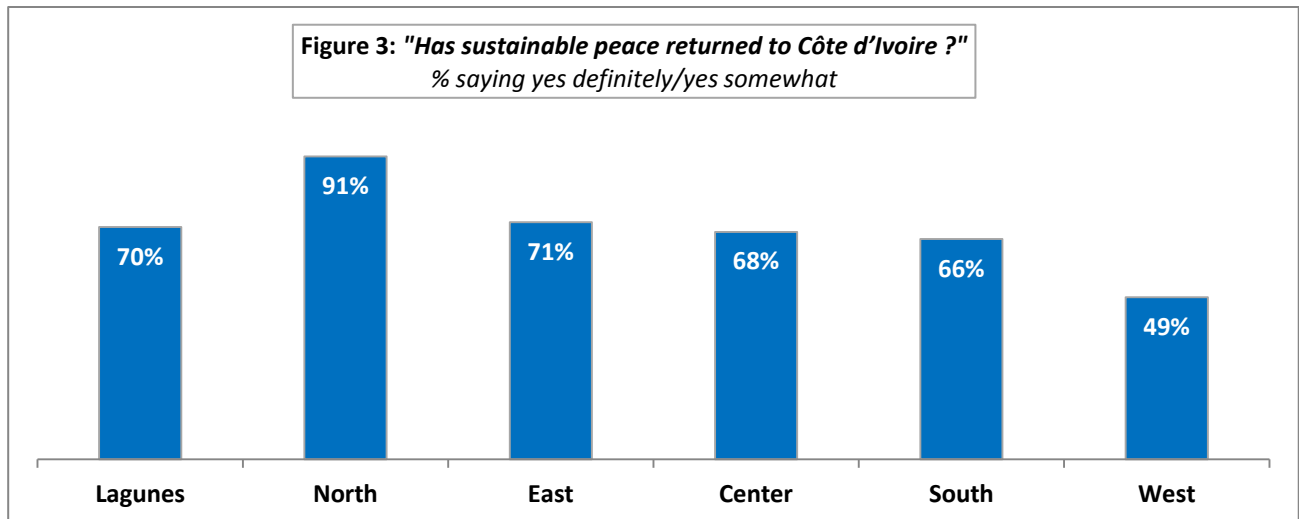
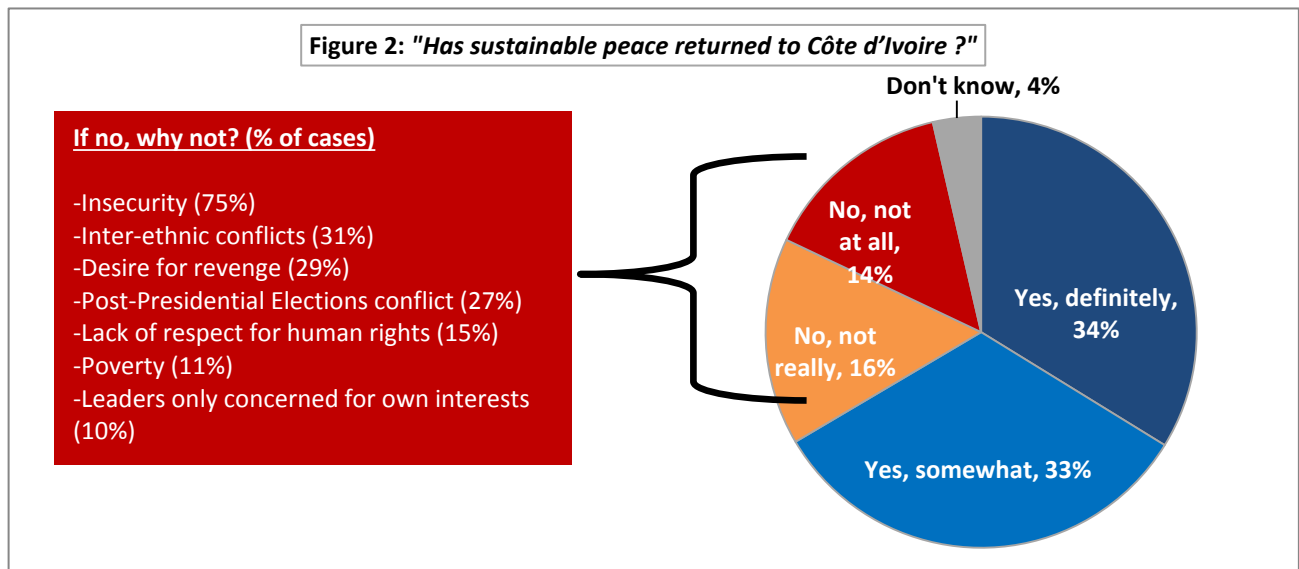
Following years of political instability and just one year after the crisis that followed the presidential elections in late 2010 and early 2011, Ivoirians give a mixed assessment of the political situation. Ivoirians are split between being satisfied (47%) and not satisfied (46%) with the overall political situation in Côte d'Ivoire, but there is optimism that there will be an improvement in the overall political situation: three quarters (76%) of Ivoirians believe there will be an improvement, only 5 percent believe there will be a decline, 9 percent believe it will stay the same and 10 percent say they do not know.

Asked about satisfaction levels with other socio-economic situations in the country, the data paints a mixed picture. The highest satisfaction is expressed for relations between ethnic communities: 62 percent say they are satisfied, compared to 33 percent who are dissatisfied. In terms of political stability, Ivoirians are satisfied and dissatisfied in nearly equal percentages (48% satisfied, 45% dissatisfied). In a few areas, higher proportions of Ivoirians express dissatisfaction: 52 percent of Ivoirians are dissatisfied with respect for human rights compared to 41 percent who are satisfied; and 48 percent of Ivoirians are dissatisfied with efforts to fight corruption in the country compared to 41 percent who are satisfied. Ivoirians are least satisfied with the economic situation in the country with 64 percent saying they are dissatisfied (Figure 1).



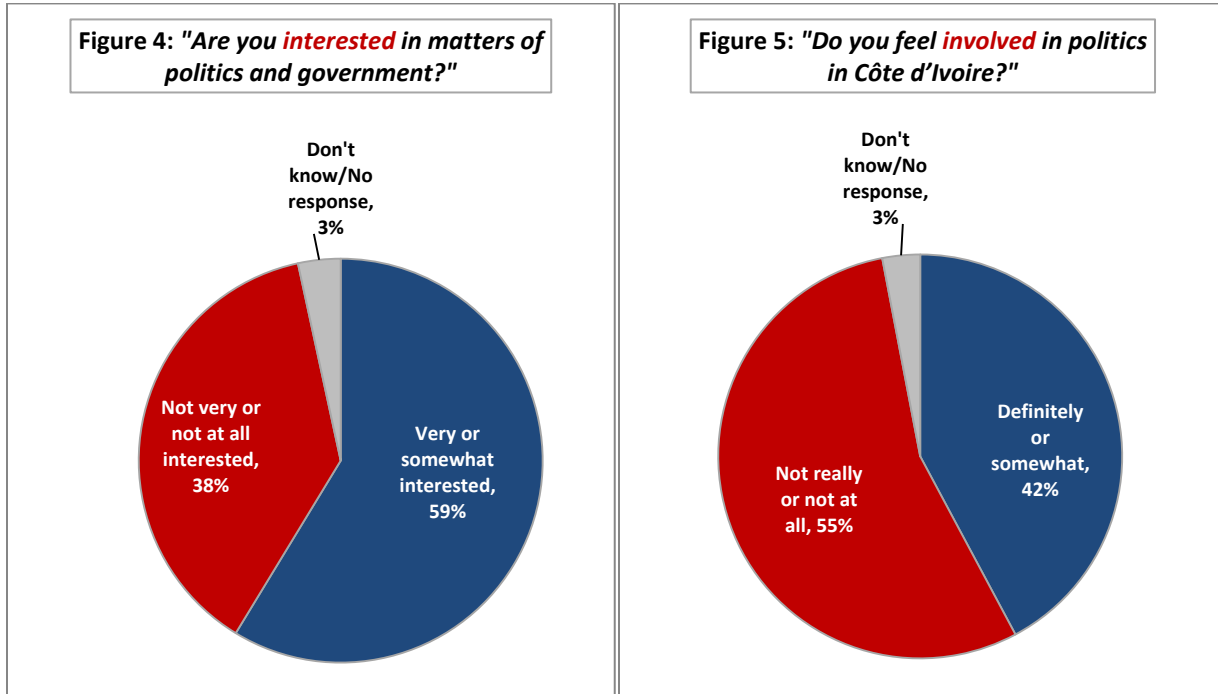
Most Ivoirians Feel Sustainable Peace has Returned

Ivoirians are cautiously optimistic that sustainable peace has returned to Côte d'Ivoire, with 66 percent saying it has definitely (34%) or somewhat (33%) returned. Still, 28 percent do not feel peace has returned (Figure 2). Opinions are largely the same between residents of urban and rural areas, but there is a stark contrast between residents of the West and residents of the other regions. Majorities of citizens in other regions are optimistic that peace has returned to the country, while just under half of residents in the Western Region believe the same (Figure 3). Calm was generally restored in most of the regions of the country after the post-election crisis, but Western Côte d'Ivoire remained confronted by sporadic violence. Thus, it is not surprising to see this assessment on behalf of Western residents. Those who do not believe peace has returned to Côte d'Ivoire blame it mostly on a lingering sense of insecurity (75% of cases), inter-ethnic conflicts (31%), the desire for revenge from past incidents of violence (29%), the remnants of the post-presidential election conflict (27%), lack of respect for human rights (15%), poverty (11%) and the belief that leaders are only concerned about their own interests (10%).



Ivoirians Feel Interested, But Not Involved in Politics

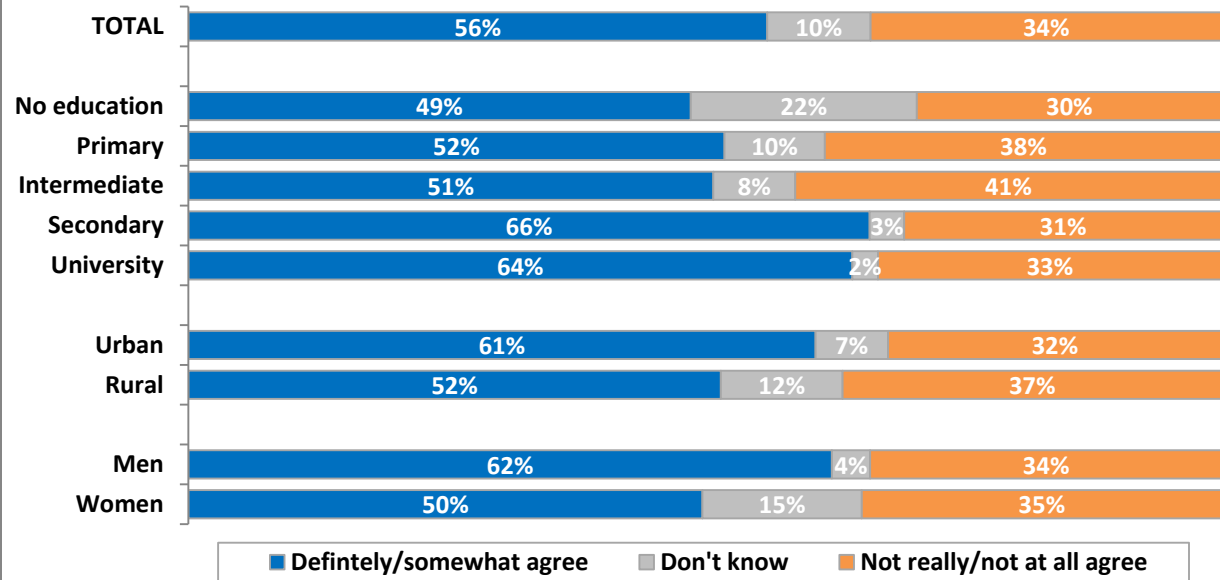
Fifty-nine percent of Ivoirians say they are very (35%) or somewhat (24%) interested in matters of politics and government (Figure 4). At the same time, less than half of Ivoirians (42%) feel involved in politics and 55 percent do not (Figure 5).



The sense of not being involved in politics is consistent with the data that shows very few Ivoirians feel they have influence on decisions made by the government. Only a quarter of Ivoirians feel they can definitely (14%) or somewhat (12%) influence the government. A majority (65%) say they do not have much influence (23%) or no influence at all on government decisions (42%), and 10 percent say they do not know.

However, when framed in terms of voting, Ivoirians feel more confident about their impact on the government. Fifty-six percent of Ivoirians feel they can definitely (38%) or somewhat (19%) influence the government through voting, while one-third (34%) feel they cannot influence the government through voting. This sentiment varies slightly by demographic groups. Men feel voting gives them influence more than women (62% and 50%, respectively), urban residents more than rural residents (61% and 52%, respectively) and educated Ivoirians more than less educated Ivoirians (Figure 6).

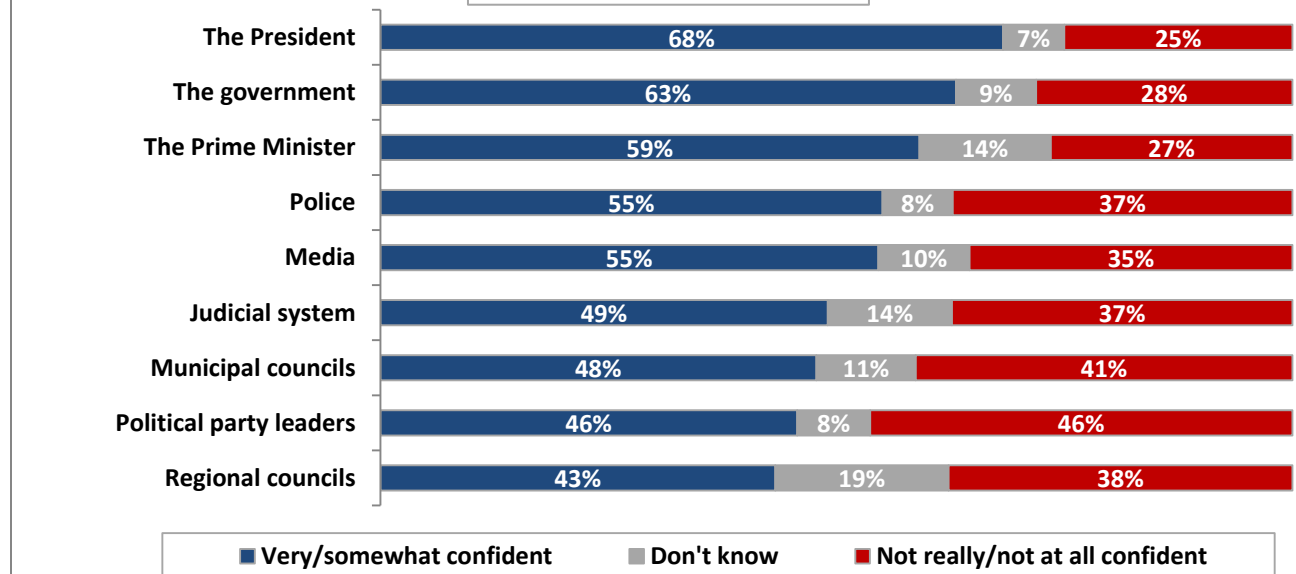
Figure 6: "Do you agree voting gives people like you a chance to influence decision-making in our country"



Confidence Expressed for Many Institutions, Yet Criticism for Politicians

Over half of Ivoirians are very/somewhat confident in national institutions such as the president (68%), government (63%), prime minister (59%), police (55%) and media (55%), but fewer citizens have confidence in the judicial system (49%), municipal councils (48%), political party leaders (46%) and regional councils (43%) (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Confidence in Institutions

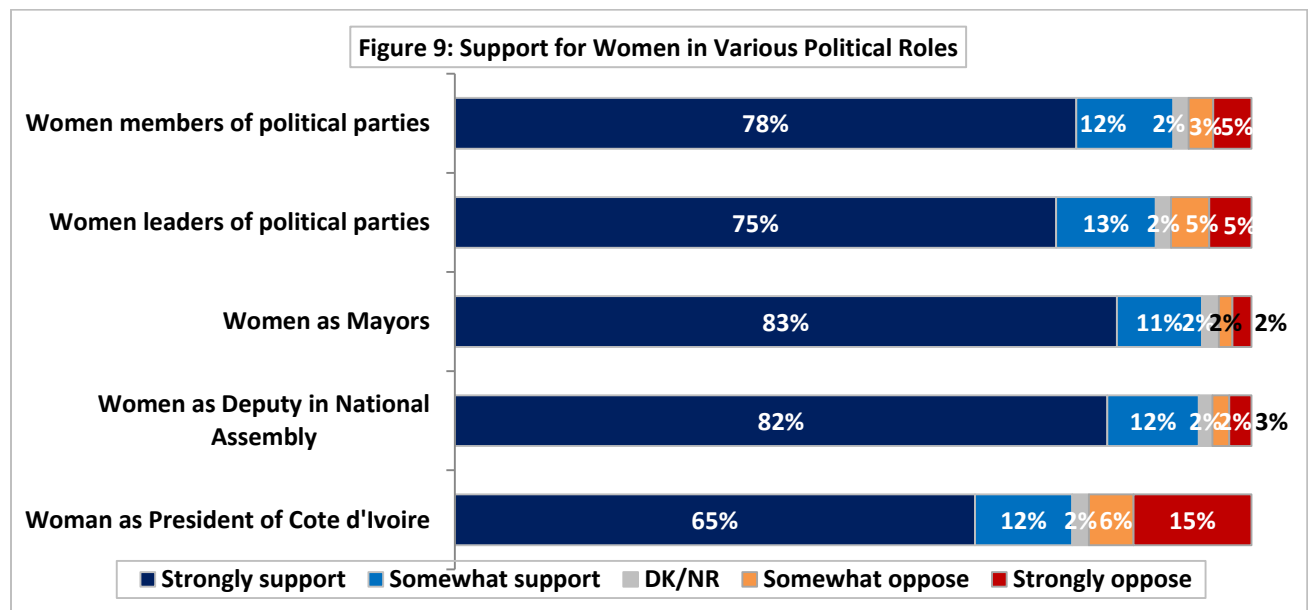
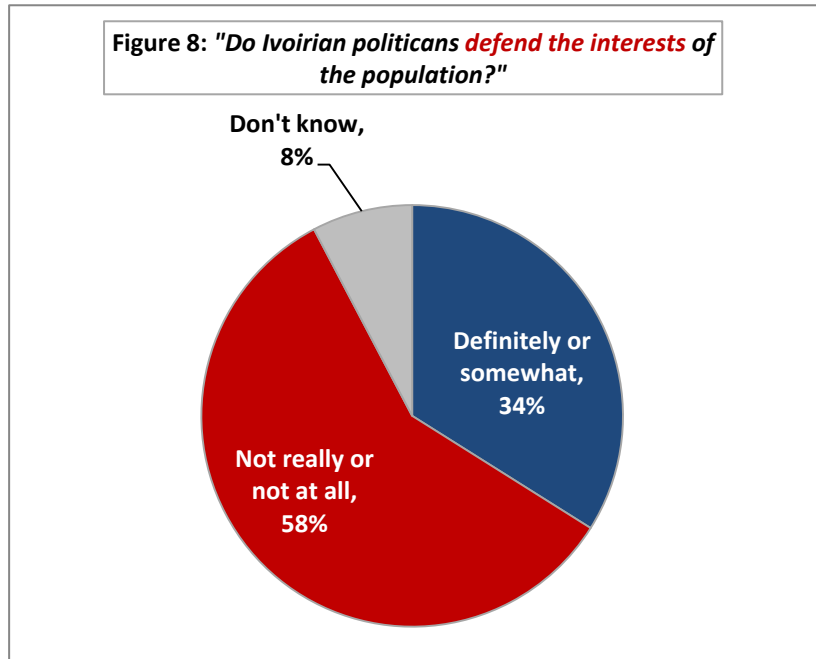


Consistent with the mixed confidence in political party leaders seen in the data above, more than half of Ivoirians do not believe politicians correctly fulfill their role in political life in Côte d'Ivoire (55%) or defend the interests of the people (58%) (Figure 8).

High Levels of Support for Women in Political Roles

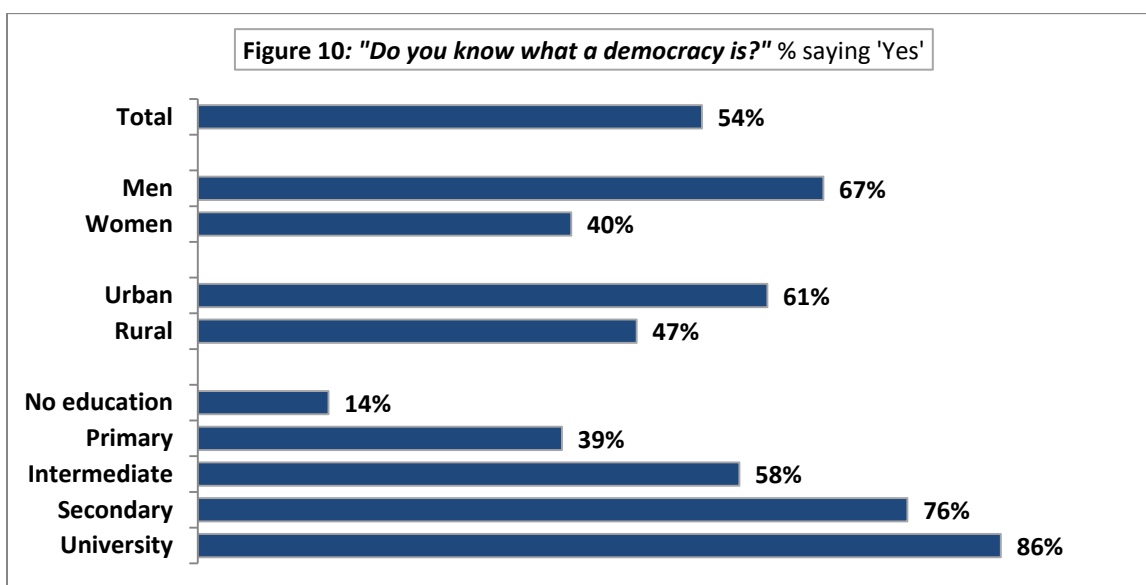
When next examining support for women in political roles, the findings show openness to women in politics. In contrast to

the current low political representation of women in decision making and political positions in Côte d'Ivoire, a large majority of Ivoirians say they support women in various political roles and there is little variation in opinion by gender. In fact, nearly seven in 10 Ivoirians strongly support women in various political roles such as women as mayors (83%), deputies in the National Assembly (82%), political party members (78%), political party leaders (75%) and president of Côte d'Ivoire (65%) (Figure 9). Support for women in various political roles is mostly the same between genders – men are only slightly less supportive of women as political party leaders, deputies and president.



Most Ivoirians Aware of and Support Democracy, Associating it with Respect for Freedoms and Human Rights

Asked generally if they are aware of the concept of democracy, just over half of Ivoirians say they are aware of what a democracy is (54%), but a significant proportion of Ivoirians are not aware (44%) and 1 percent did not respond. More men are aware of democracy than women; more urban than rural residents; and awareness of democracy increases with education (Figure 10).



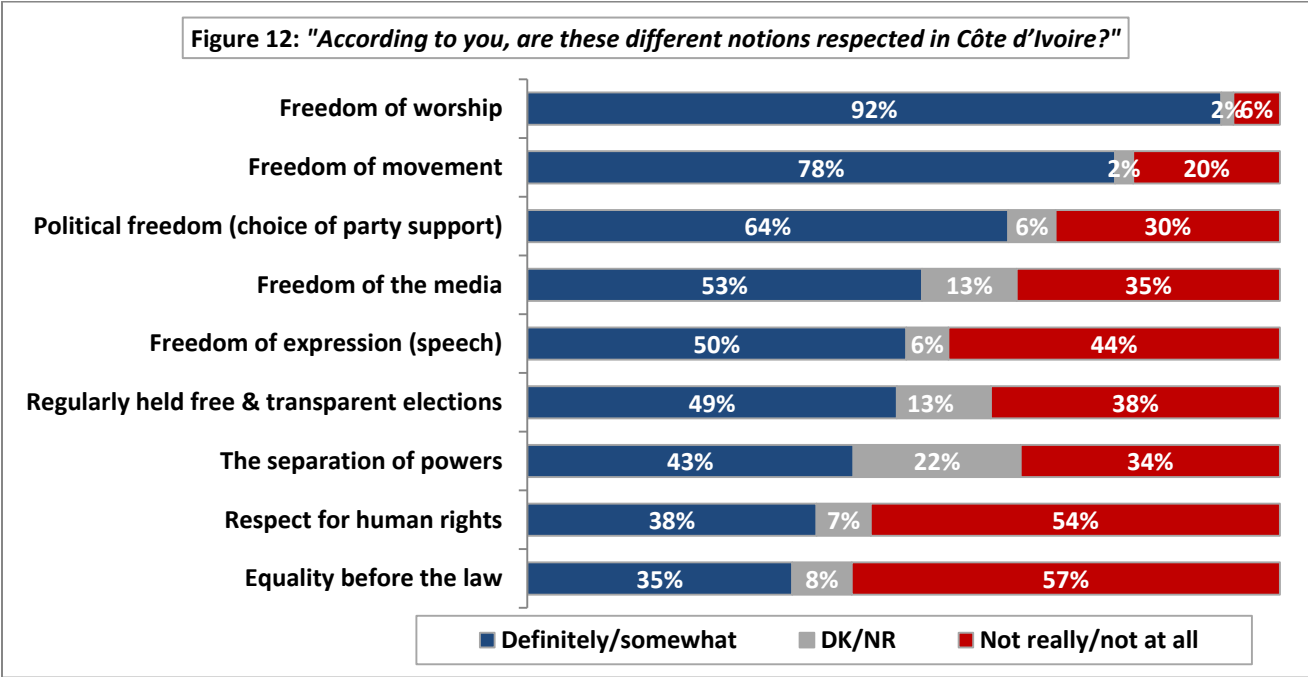
Those aware of democracy associate it most with freedom of expression (54%), political freedom to choose leaders/parties (41%) and respect for human rights (26%). Other freedoms, such as freedom of movement; free and transparent elections; peace/no violence; and good governance are also associated with democracy, but to a lesser extent (Figure 11).

Figure 11: [Of those aware of democracy] "According to you, what are the elements of a democracy?" (n=843)

Element	% of cases
Freedom of expression	54%
Political freedom / Freedom to choose leaders & party	41%
Respect for human rights	26%
Freedom of movement	18%
Free and transparent elections	10%
Peace/no violence	10%
Good governance	9%
Right to vote	8%
Freedom of worship	7%
Equality under the law	7%
Respect for results of elections	6%
Freedom of the media	5%

There is strong support among Ivoirians for a democratic system in the country. Regarding citizens' feelings toward whether democracy is fitting for Côte d'Ivoire, nearly three-quarters of Ivoirians believe democracy is definitely (58%) or somewhat (16%) fitting. Only 14 percent of Ivoirians believe democracy is not really (9%) or not at all (6%) fitting, while 12 percent say they do not know. Majorities of both those who understand the definition of democracy and those who do not say that democracy is fitting for the country.

Additionally, there is a sense that certain ideas commonly associated with democracy are respected in Côte d'Ivoire. More than two-thirds of Ivoirians believe freedom of worship (92%), freedom of movement (78%) and the freedom of political choice (64%) are definitely or somewhat respected in Côte d'Ivoire. Around half of Ivoirians believe freedom of the media (53%), freedom of expression (50%), and regularly held free and transparent elections (49%) are definitely or somewhat respected. However, more than half of Ivoirians say respect for human rights (54%) and equality before the law (57%) are not really or not at all respected (Figure 12). It is interesting to note the contradiction between what is associated with democracy and what is thought to be respected in country. Respect for human rights is the third most-mentioned tenet associated with democracy, and yet is considered not to be respected in the country. These findings point to a clear message for human rights advocacy or civic education campaigns: Ivoirians strongly value human rights and would favor a system in which these rights were better respected.

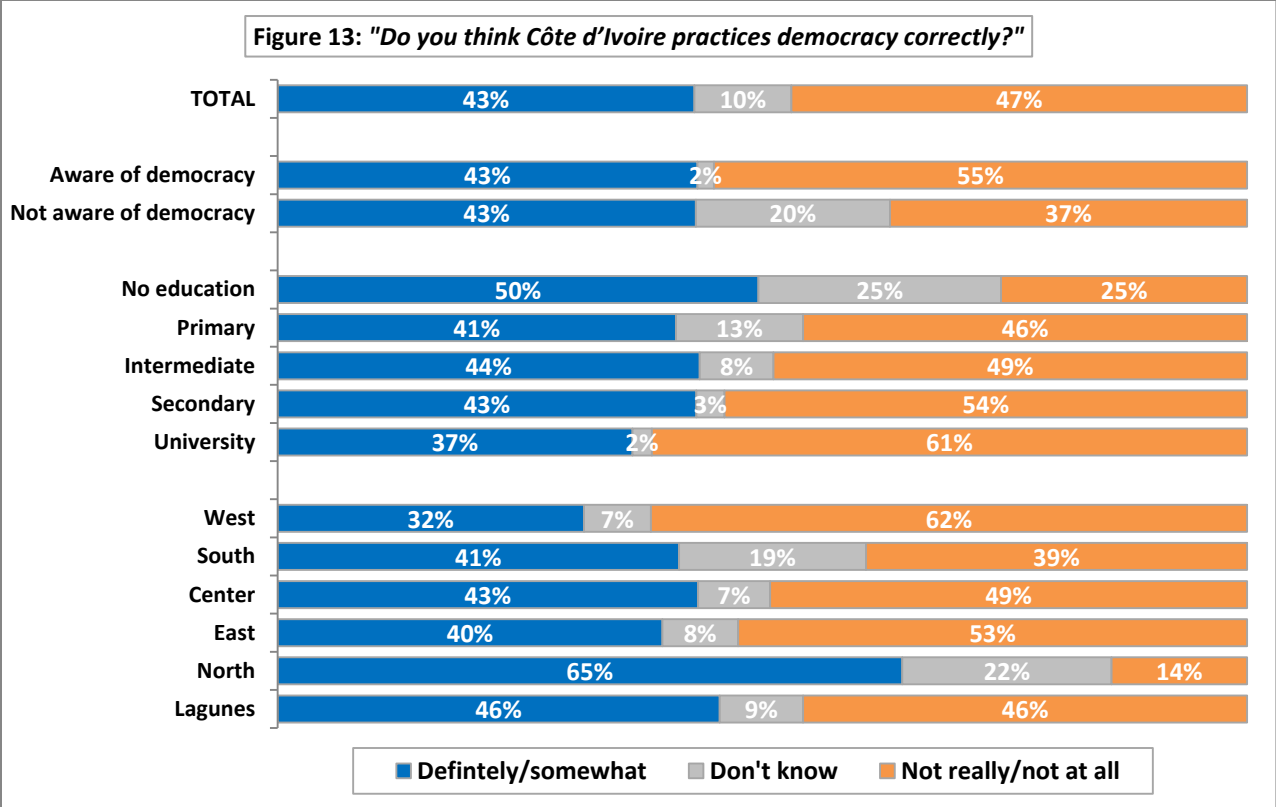


In terms of which rights and freedoms are most important to Ivoirians, respect for human rights tops the list with 67 percent, followed by freedom of expression (44%), equality under the law (40%), political freedom (40%) and freedom of worship (36%). Of these top five most important aspects of their lives, three of these are also perceived as respected in Côte d'Ivoire: freedom of worship, political freedom and freedom of expression (Figure 12). However, respect for human rights and equality under the law,

the first and third most-mentioned important tenets in their lives, are perceived not to be respected in Côte d'Ivoire. This data again highlights the demand for improved respect and defense of human rights in the country. Given this, it would seem that civil society should work toward large-scale public awareness campaigns encouraging citizens to engage in discussions around how to defend their human rights, redress past violations and, thus, work toward a more just human rights environment.

Consistent with the fact that some key elements associated with a democratic system are perceived not to be respected in the country, Ivoirians are split between believing the country is practicing democracy correctly or not. While 43 percent of Ivoirians believe the country definitely (18%) or somewhat (25%) practices democracy correctly, a higher percentage believes it does not (47%). Those who know what democracy is are more critical, believing that the country is *not* a democracy compared to those who are not aware of democracy (55% and 37%, respectively). When the data is disaggregated by education level, citizens with no education say they do not know in the highest percentages, but also represent the highest percentage of those who believe the country practices democracy correctly. People of other education levels hold mostly the same views, yet those with a university degree and above are the most skeptical of whether Côte d'Ivoire is practicing democracy correctly. This could be because citizens with higher education levels are more knowledgeable of democratic standards and thus more discerning when evaluating the country's practice of democracy.

With the exception of the Northern Region where 65 percent of respondents say the country is practicing democracy, less than half of respondents in other regions disagree, with the Western Region being most critical (Figure 13). These sentiments could reflect regional variation in party support, whether supporting the current government in power or not, or also be a reflection of the areas that experienced the throes of post-election crisis with heavy fighting.



Of those who do not feel democracy is practiced properly in Côte d'Ivoire, the most-cited reasons for this assessment include the post-electoral crisis in 2010 (35%), insecurity (30%), no freedom of expression (26%), no respect for human rights (23%) and no respect for election results (19%) (Figure 14).

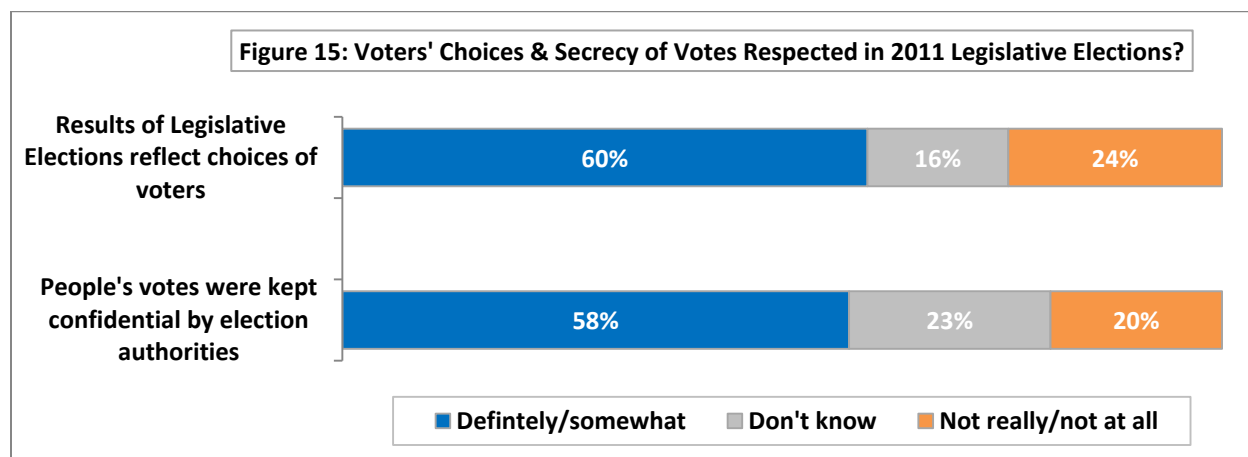
Figure 14: "Why do you think democracy is <i>not</i> practiced correctly? (n=699)	% of cases
Post-electoral crisis in 2010	35%
Insecurity	30%
No freedom of expression	26%
No respect for human rights	23%
Lack of respect of election results	19%
No equality under the law	13%
No political liberty	12%
Injustice/impunity	11%
No freedom of movement	9%
Corruption of political leaders	6%
No respect for the Constitution	6%
No respect of separation of power	5%
Intimidation in voting places	3%

IV. OPINIONS ON & PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

Overall, Ivoirians evaluate the 2011 legislative elections as free, fair and organized, and few cite obstacles to voting. Majorities feel they had enough information on where to vote and how to vote and heard/saw informational and motivational advertisements/posters prior to the 2011 elections. Additionally, voters say proper polling procedures took place and also proclaim satisfaction with various aspects of Election Day. Voters found it easy to locate their polling center, follow voting procedures at the polling station and mark their ballot. In the upcoming municipal elections, just over half of Ivoirians say they plan to vote, but 44 percent say they either will not vote or are not sure.

Ivoirians Positively Evaluate 2011 Legislative Elections, but were Concerned about Incidents Surrounding the Elections

Next, respondents were asked their impressions of the 2011 legislative elections. Overall, the elections were viewed favorably. Majorities of Ivoirians say the election results reflected the way people voted in the December 2011 elections (60%) and people's votes were kept confidential by election authorities (58%) (Figure 15). Further, only 12 percent of Ivoirians feel there were obstacles to voting, while 77 percent say there were no obstacles to voting and 12 percent say they do not know. Comparing those who report voting in the December 2011 legislative elections, voters and non-voters identify obstacles in nearly the same proportion (12% versus 11%), but non-voters were more likely to say they do not know about obstacles to voting since they did not participate. Of those who say they perceived obstacles to voting, 37 percent say it was because of disorder at the polling station, 24 percent cite the distance to the polling station, 22 percent say they were unclear on voting procedures, 22 percent cite insecurity/fear, 18 percent cite a lack of information about parties, 15 percent say because of long lines outside voting stations and 9 percent cite a lack of knowledge on where to vote.

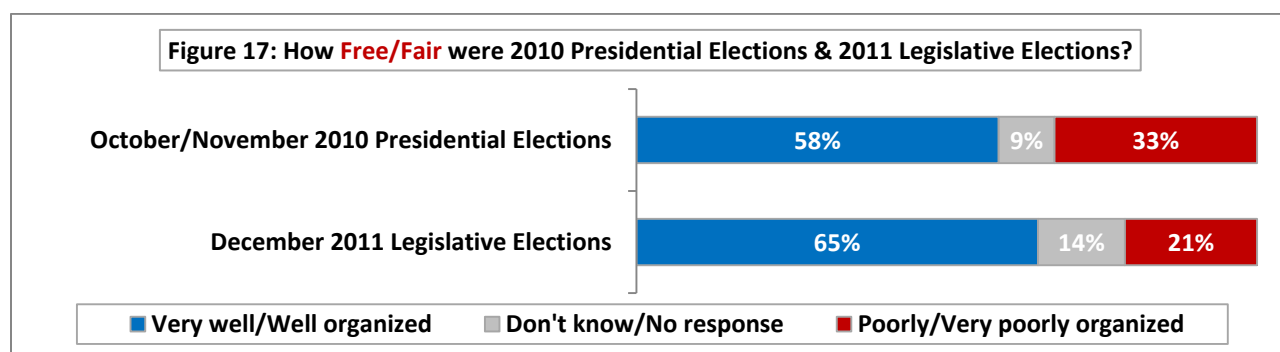
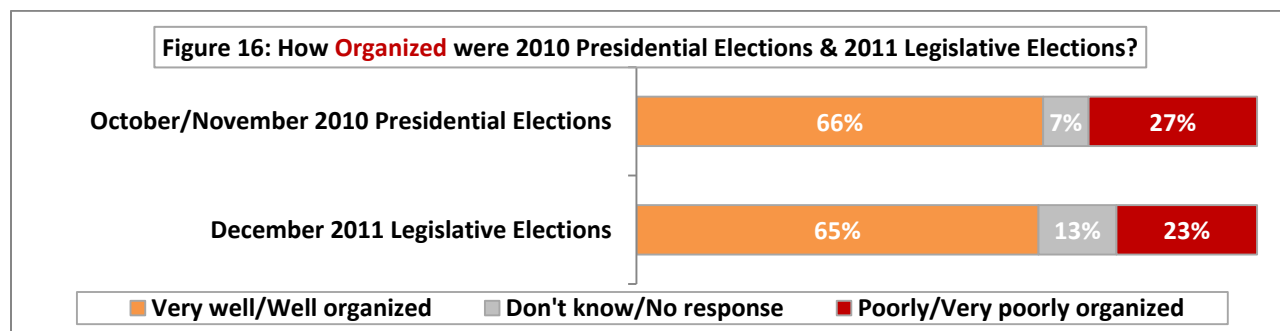


At the same time, a criticism uncovered in the findings is a sense of inequality in terms of the means that candidates have to campaign and respondents' belief there should be equality in the realm of political finance. Only 11 percent of Ivoirians say they believe candidates in the past elections had the same

means to campaign and 77 percent say they did not and 12 percent do not know. Then asked if they should have the same means, 52 percent say yes, 41 percent say no and 7 percent say they do not know.

Despite the different post-electoral aftermaths, Ivoirians evaluate the organization of the 2010 Presidential Elections and the 2011 Legislative Elections the same: 66 percent believe the 2010 presidential elections were very well (28%) or well (37%) organized and 65 percent believe the 2011 Legislative Elections were very well (25%) or well (40%) organized (Figure 16). In terms of how free or fair the elections were, Ivoirians rate the 2011 legislative elections slightly higher, with 65 percent saying they were either very (41%) or somewhat (23%) free and fair, compared to 58 percent saying the 2010 presidential elections were very (38%) or somewhat (21%) free and fair (Figure 17).

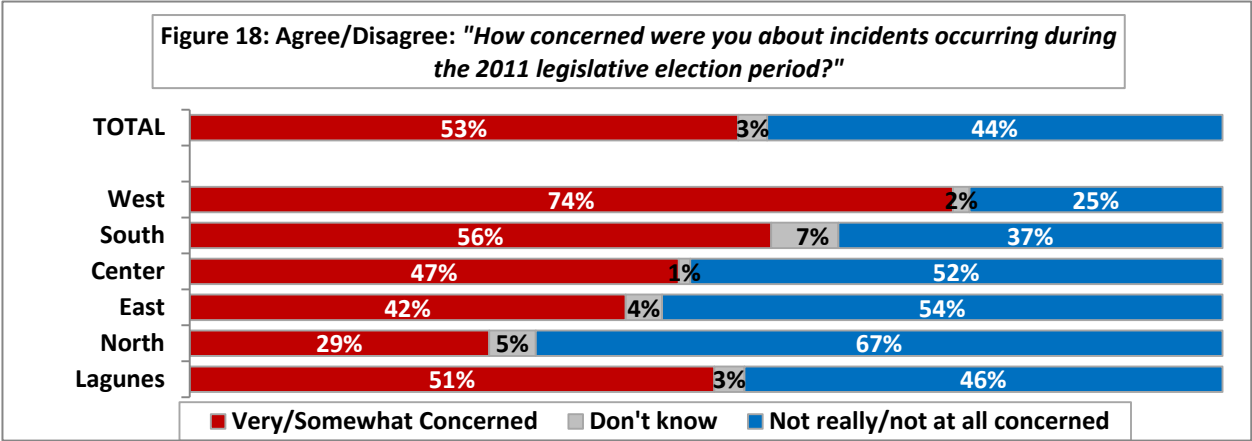
The organization of both elections are evaluated the same despite very different aftermaths. This may indicate that citizens view the elections as procedurally sound, but separately assess the post-election period where political actors either accept or refuse results. This speculation is further reflected in other data points: Ivoirians report disillusionment with political parties and a lack of information on vote counting and result announcement, but still positively rate various aspects of the electoral process. Nevertheless, further research is needed to gain insight into exactly why citizens rate these two elections equivalently in terms of organization and fairness.



Given the recent history of post-election unrest, respondents were asked to say how concerned they were about incidents occurring during the 2011 election period. Over half of Ivoirians (53%) were either very (31%) or somewhat (22%) concerned about incidents occurring during the December 2011 elections, yet 44 percent were not really (13%) or not at all concerned (32%). Both residents of urban and rural areas, and men and women, were concerned in equal proportions. However, opinions vary

between regions – with Western, Southern and Lagunes Regions expressing the most concern and the North expressing the least (Figure 18).

Those who voted in the December 2011 presidential elections were slightly less concerned about incidents than those who did not vote. Forty-five percent of those who voted say they were worried about incidents compared to 59 percent of those who did not vote. Concerns over the possibility of incidents may have deterred some from participating in elections, and indeed this is mentioned as one of the reasons people did not vote (as will be seen in Figure 24). This data gives an indication of citizens’ lingering worries about unrest surrounding election periods. Bolstering security around election periods would help reassure voters they can vote safely and live in peace following the elections, in turn possibly increasing turnout.

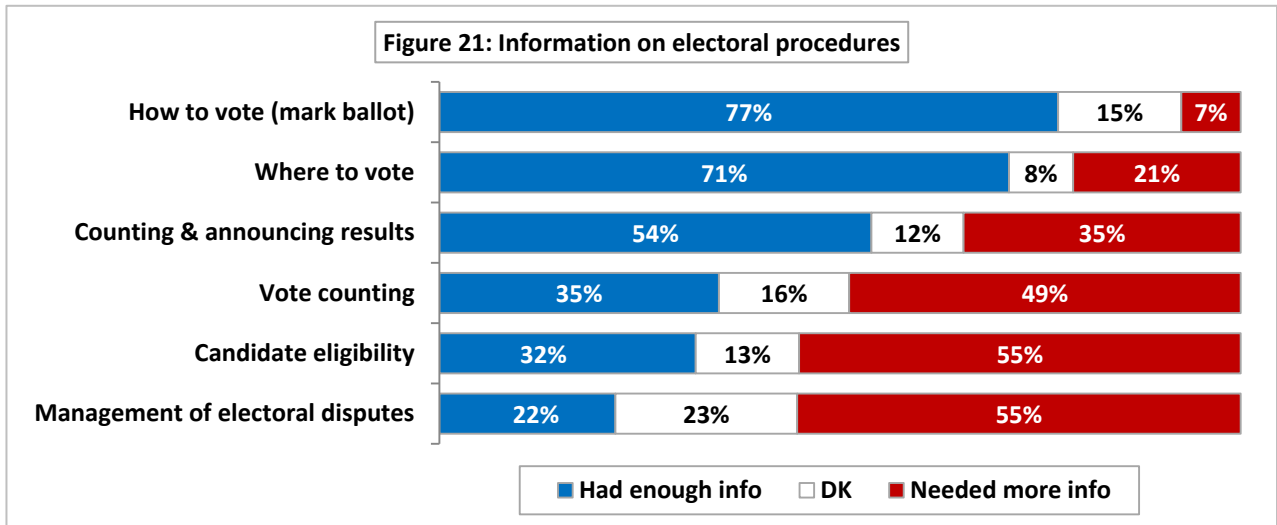
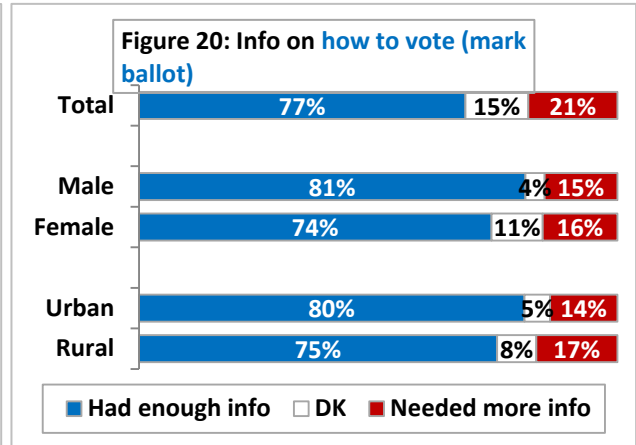
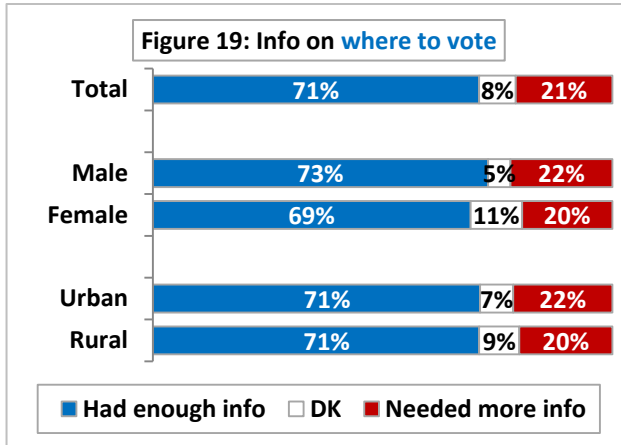


Ivoirians Have Enough Information on Some Electoral Procedures

In general, 63 percent of Ivoirians feel they have enough information to make wise decisions when voting. Still, one third of voting-age citizens (30%) do not feel they have enough information. More men than women generally report receiving enough information (69% and 57%, respectively). Only 45 percent of residents of the West feel informed, in contrast to an average of 69 percent who feel informed across the other regions.

In terms of knowledge of common voting procedures prior to the December 2011 legislative elections, majorities of Ivoirians felt they had enough information on where to vote (71%) and how to vote (77%). By gender, slightly more men say they had enough information on where to vote and how to vote. More urban than rural residents report having enough information on where to vote, but urban and rural residents in the same proportions say they had enough information on how to vote (Figures 19 and 20).

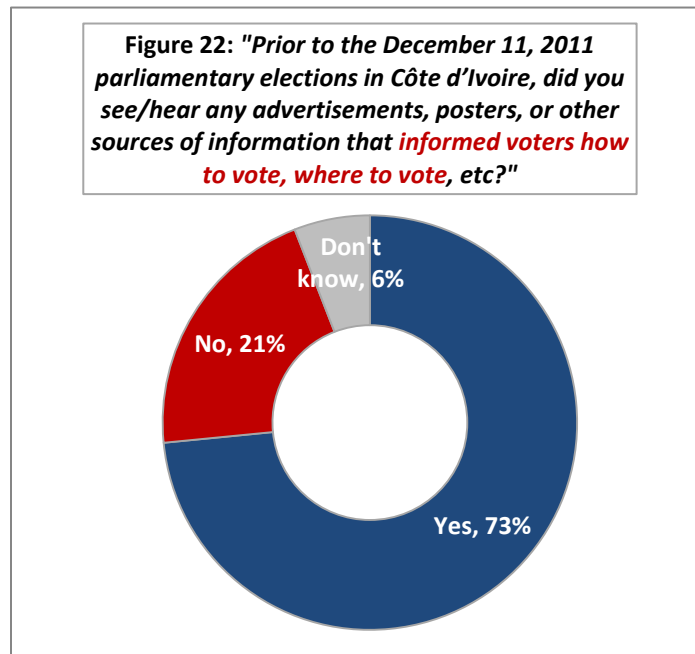
Only 35 percent of citizens had enough information on vote counting; counting and announcing results (34%); candidate eligibility (32%); or the management of electoral disputes (22%) (Figure 21). While these electoral aspects are often less-known to the average voter, the data suggests that raising awareness of these processes is important to instill greater confidence in the electoral process and that civic education efforts should be undertaken during upcoming electoral cycles.



Most Ivoirians Exposed to Electoral Informational & Motivational Campaigns

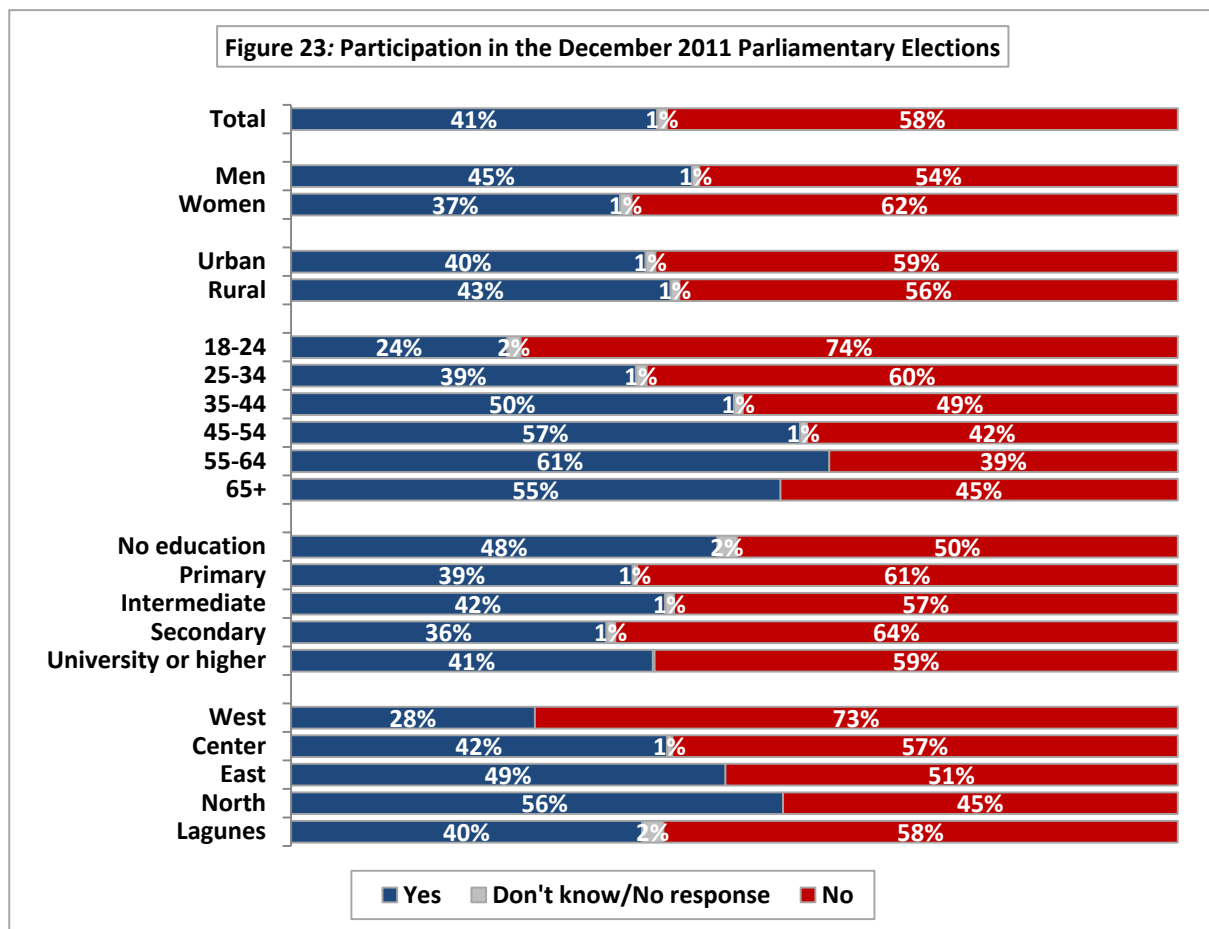
Nearly three-quarters of Ivoirians heard or saw advertisements, posters or other sources that informed voters on procedural issues such as how to vote and where to vote (73%) (Figure 22). Over three-quarters of Ivoirians across regions saw or heard information campaigns and motivational campaigns, but slightly fewer, around two-thirds, of residents in the Western Region had seen either of these campaigns. Residents of urban and rural areas report seeing the campaign in equal percentages, but men report seeing the informational campaigns in higher percentages than women (76% and 71%, respectively).

Similarly, 74 percent of Ivoirians saw or heard campaigns encouraging people to vote in the elections. Yet, only 38 percent of those who heard the motivational campaigns and who report voting say it influenced their decision to vote. Fifty-nine percent say it either did not influence (47%) or had no impact (13%) on their decision to vote.



Participation in the December 2011 Legislative Elections

Seventy-eight percent of Ivoirians say they participated in the October–November 2010 presidential elections and 41 percent say they participated in the December 2011 legislative elections. This data closely matches the official figures of 83 percent turnout for the first round of the presidential election, 81 percent for the second round and 36 percent for the 2011 legislative elections. Examining turnout in the December 2011 legislative elections by key demographics, more men than women voted, slightly more urban than rural residents voted and as age increases, turnout increases. By education, those with no education report voting in the highest proportions compared to citizens with at least some education (primary level educations and higher). Residents of the Western Region report voting in the lowest percentages (Figure 23).



Of those who did not vote, the main reasons cited are lack of interest or feelings that it is not important (24%), lack of/absence of identity papers (22%), currently displaced (19%) or fear of insecurity/trouble (15%). Other reasons cited are: there were no candidates from their party, they were sick, they did not have time or they lacked information on candidates (Figure 24). To increase turnout in future elections, it would be helpful to not only convince voting-age citizens of why it is important for them to vote, but

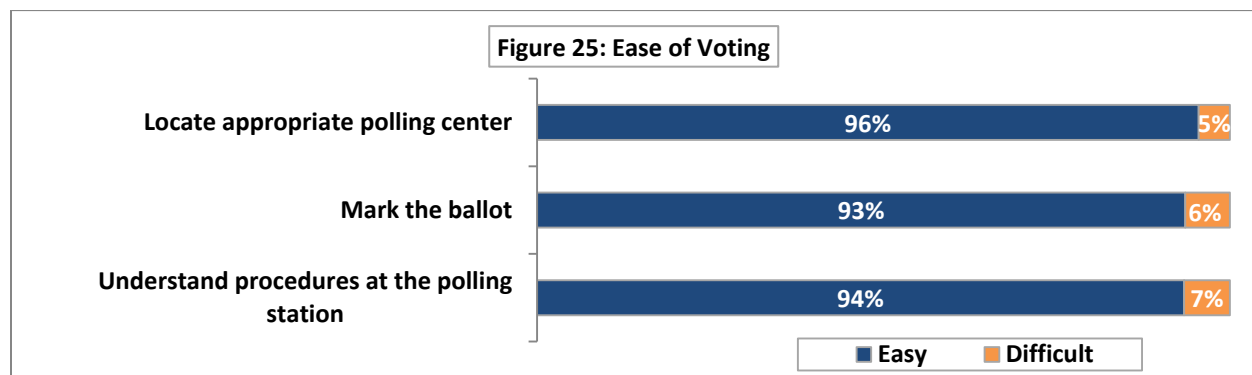
to also assist them with obtaining proper IDs, assist displaced people with voting and increase security to reduce fears of violence.

Figure 24: "Can you tell me why you did not vote?" (n=848)	% of cases
Not interested/not important	24%
Absence of identity papers	22%
Currently displaced	19%
Fear of insecurity/ trouble	15%
No candidates from my party	9%
Was sick	7%
Did not have time	4%
Without information on candidates	3%
Don't know/No response	2%

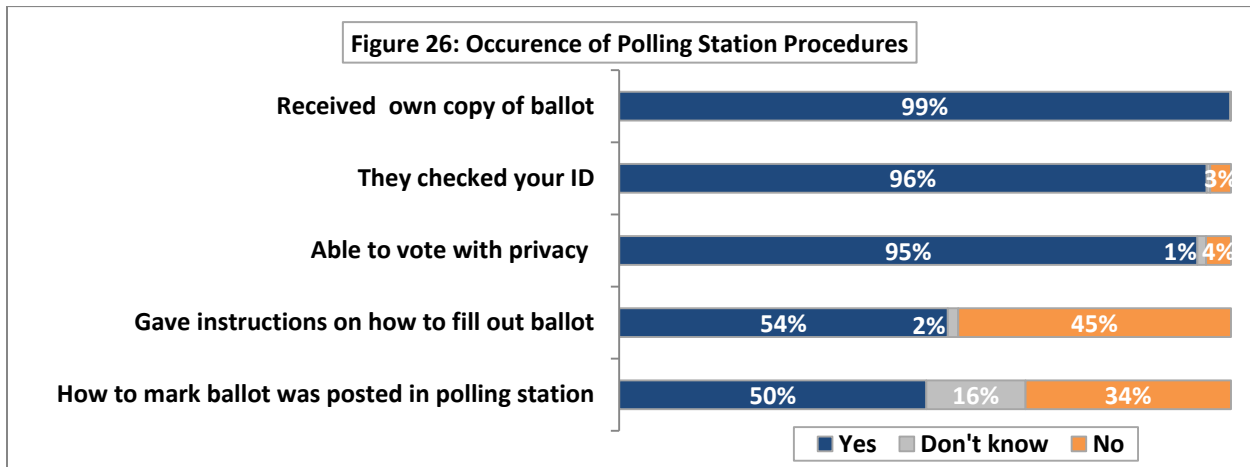
Voters Report Polling Procedures Took Place & Satisfaction with Aspects of the Elections

Overall, voters report proper procedures taking place and have positive evaluations of the December 2011 Legislative Election Day. A majority of voters believe they had enough information to make informed decisions when voting in these elections: 86 percent of voters feel they had enough (65%) or some (21%) information to make an informed decision and only 13 percent feel they did not have enough information. Ninety-six (96%) percent of voters also say they felt very free (88%) or somewhat free (8%) to vote for who they wanted to in the elections and only 4 percent did not feel free. Both men and women feel free to make their own choices in voting in equal proportions (96%).

Only 11 percent of voters say they asked for help from members of the polling station. Of those who asked for help, they found polling station members to be helpful (88%). Majorities of voters also found it very/somewhat easy to locate their polling center (96%), to understand voting procedures at the polling station (94%) and to mark their ballot (93%) (Figure 25). An average of 98 percent of residents in other regions found it easy to locate their polling station, with fewer voters in the West saying it was easy (84%). Difficulty locating polling centers could have been one factor contributing to lower turnout in the Western Region.

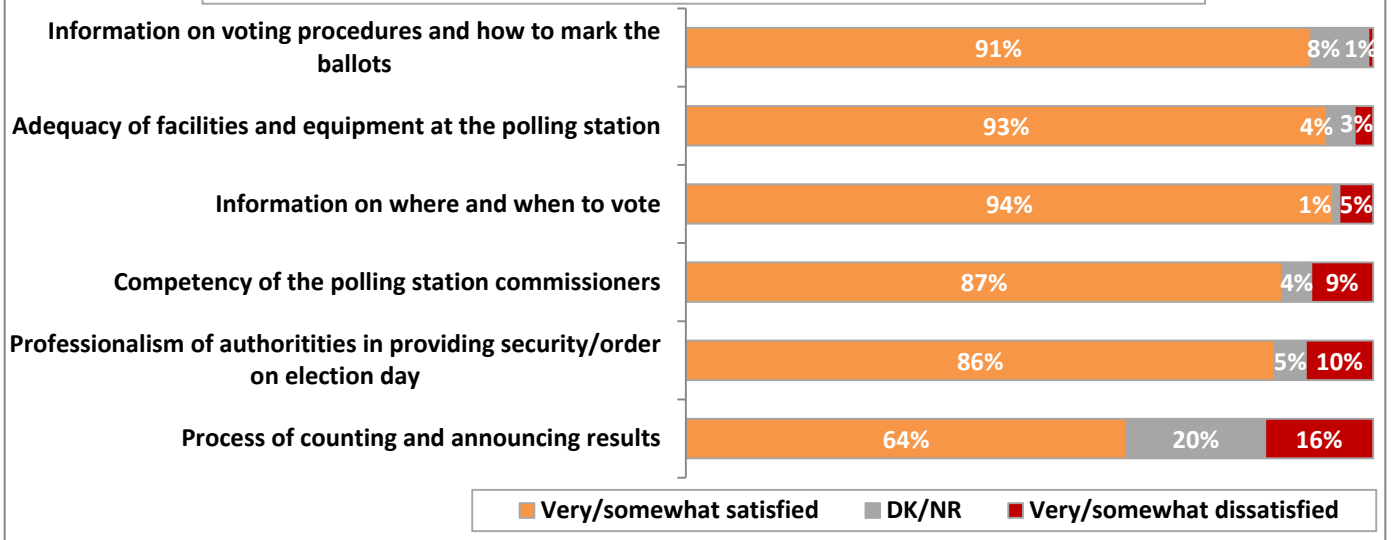


In addition to finding voting procedures and voting locations easily, voters also report in high percentages that various polling station procedures took place when they voted: they received a copy of their own ballot (99%), their ID was checked (96%) and they were able to vote in privacy (95%) (Figure 26). Fewer voters report that when they were handed the ballot a polling station official gave them instructions on how to fill out their ballot (54%). Also, 50 percent of voters say there were posters in the polling station instructing people how to vote, but 34 percent say there were not and 16 percent say they do not know. These posters were supposed to be hanging in polling stations, but it is possible voters did not pay attention to such posters and this could account for the low reported visibility.



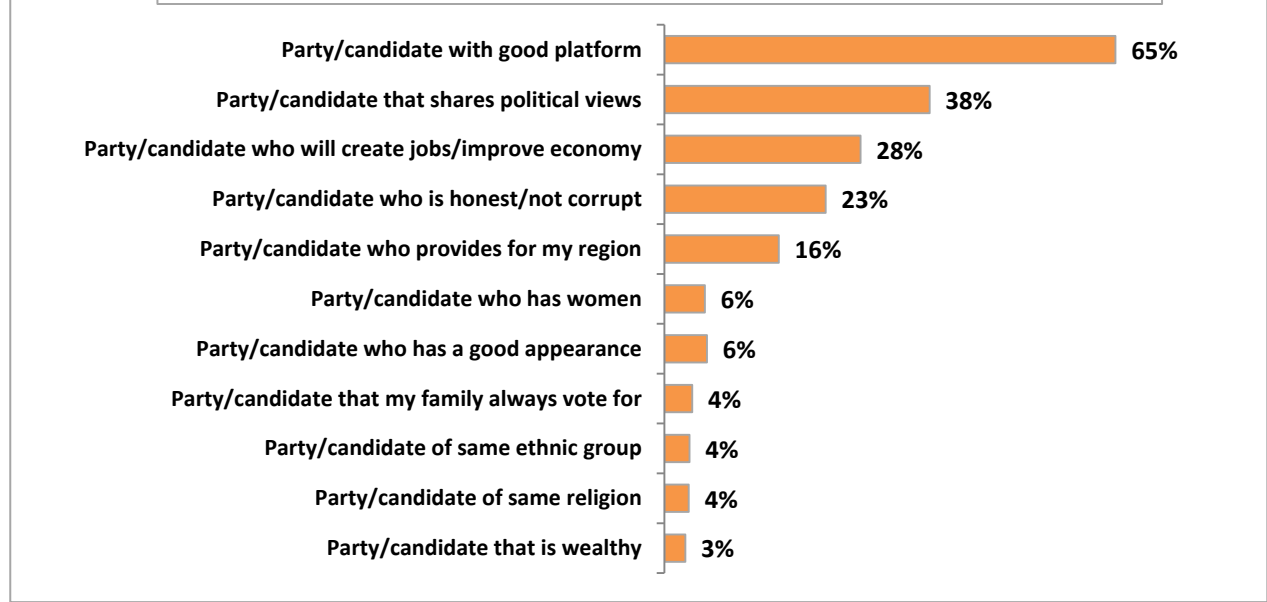
In addition to ease of voting and reports of proper polling procedures occurring, nearly nine in 10 voters say they were very/somewhat satisfied with information on where and when to vote (94%); adequacy of facilities and material at the polling station (93%); information on voting procedures and how to mark the ballots (91%); competency of the polling station commissioners in doing their jobs (87%); and the performance of the police and security officials in providing security for the elections (86%). Two-thirds of voters (64%) are satisfied with the vote counting and result announcement process. However, 20 percent of voters say they do not know, indicating unfamiliarity with this process (Figure 27). This echoes previous data seen in Figure 21, which highlighted citizens lacking information on the vote counting and result announcement process.

Figure 27: Agree/Disagree: "Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with the following aspects of the December 2011 Parliamentary Elections in Côte d'Ivoire."



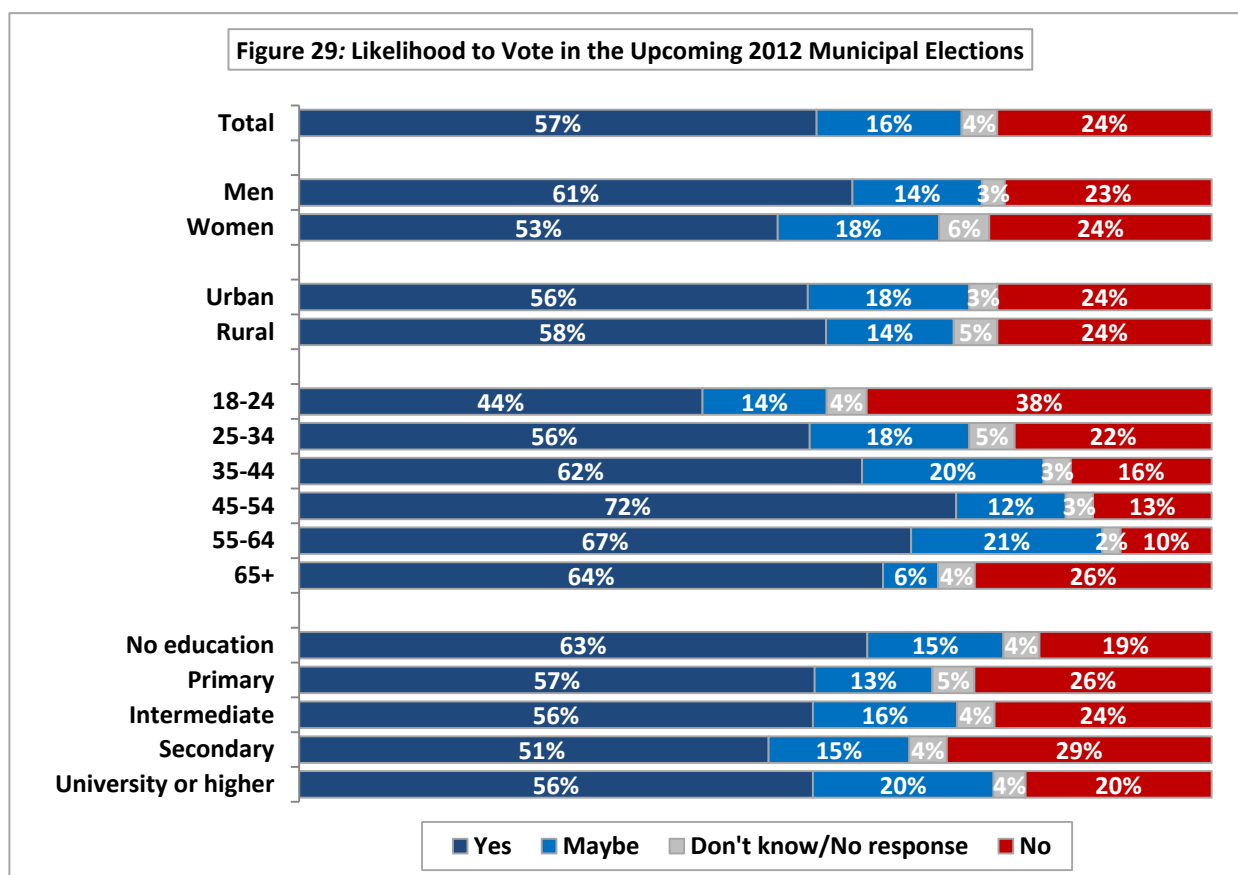
To understand how voters make choices in elections, respondents were asked what factors they considered when choosing political parties or candidates to support in the 2011 legislative elections. Most voters say they made their choice based on the party/candidate with a good platform or program (65%) and a party/candidate that shares their political views (38%). These top two considerations constitute an encouraging finding and imply that voters seem to be making voting choices based on issues rather than expectations for services or other such considerations. Other rationales behind voting choices include a party/candidate who will create jobs/improve the economy (28%), a party/candidate who is honest and not corrupt (23%), and a party candidate who provides for their region (16%). Less mentioned considerations include a candidate’s appearance, a candidate of the same religion or a candidate who is wealthy (Figure 28).

Figure 28: "When voting in the legislative elections, which of the following were the most important factors that influenced your choice?"



Over half of Ivoirians (57%) say they plan to vote in the upcoming municipal elections, while 44 percent are unlikely to vote. Of those who are unlikely to vote, 24 percent say they will not and 20 percent say they might or they do not know. Urban and rural voters express the same likelihood to vote; however, more men than women say they will vote, and the likelihood of voting decreases with educational attainment and with age (Figure 29).

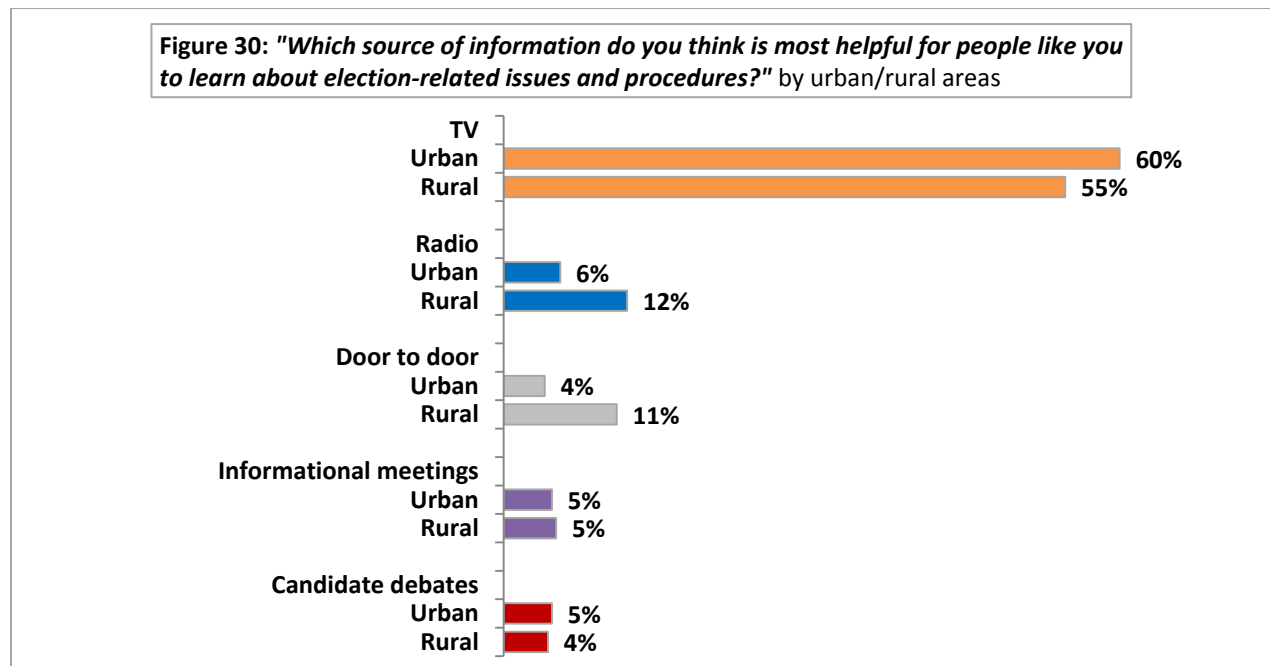
Of those who say they will not vote, or were not sure if they would vote, 41 percent say it is because they do not have documentation, 22 percent say because they are not interested, 13 percent cite insecurity/fear of trouble, 12 percent say because they do not have a candidate, 5 percent say because they believe mayors do nothing, 5 percent say candidates are dishonest, 5 percent say it is because they believe political leaders remain unfairly imprisoned, 8 percent cite various other reasons and 2 percent say they do not know or have no response. These reasons for not planning to vote in the upcoming municipal elections closely mirror the reasons respondents gave for not voting in the December 2011 legislative elections. Ensuring citizens have documentation, encouraging an interest in these elections and increasing security could help increase turnout in the upcoming elections. As they are less likely to vote in the next election, a particular emphasis should be placed on encouraging women and younger voters to turn out to vote.



TV is the Most Useful Source of Information

Finally, for future information campaigns, knowing which types of information sources and languages are the most useful is key in deciding how to best disseminate information to citizens. Survey findings reveal that television, in combination with the use of French would reach the highest number of citizens. However, other media, such as radio and face-to-face sources – and other languages – would be helpful to reach voters belonging to minority linguistic groups and across educational levels.

Television is overwhelmingly cited as the most helpful source of information on election-related issues and procedures (62%) for rural and urban areas alike. Other sources such as radio (9%), door-to-door (7%), informational meetings (5%), candidate debates (5%), Internet (3%), word of mouth (3%), posters/billboards (3%), information in written press (2%) and information/theater caravans (2%) are mentioned but much less than TV. Of note, rural residents cite TV as the most helpful source of information, but they also cite radio and door-to-door outreach in higher percentages than urban residents, indicating it may be useful to employ these dissemination methods in rural areas in addition to TV (Figure 30). Men and women mostly cite the same sources of information in similar percentages, indicating that they can be targeted with information through similar channels.



Linguistically, French holds as the most useful language in which to disseminate information on election-related issues and procedures. Of those surveyed, 82 percent of respondents say French is the first language that would be helpful to them, 9 percent say Dioula, 4 percent say Baoulé, 1 percent say Senoufo and 5 percent say other languages. Using French allows for broad dissemination, yet the 19 percent who speak Dioula, Baoulé, Senoufo and other languages should also be reached with audio messages as these languages are predominantly oral in nature. Sources utilizing detailed images to explain these topics would also reach those who do not speak and understand French well.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey findings point to some overarching recommendations that could be useful for civil society, government and others working on issues related to democracy and elections.

Democracy, Politics and Elections

- Findings show Ivoirians feel interested, but not involved in politics. They do not believe they have an influence over the government, but are more inclined to see voting as a way to influence the government. Thus, survey findings imply civic education efforts can focus on informing Ivoirians about their roles as citizens and the fundamental values of democracy in an effort to make them feel more involved, invested and interested in the political process.
- Survey findings also show there is a moderate level of democratic awareness, but tepid satisfaction with the country's practice of democracy and that overall there is specific disappointment with the protection of human rights. Many rights and freedoms commonly associated with democracy are believed to be respected in Côte d'Ivoire, but over half of Ivoirians do not believe human rights and equality are respected before the law. A perceived lack of respect for human rights, one of the top tenets Ivoirians associate with democracy, could help explain why Ivoirians are unsure of the strength of democracy in their country. These findings point to the importance of civic education efforts that further educate the population on internationally understood principles, foundations and fundamental values of democracy so Ivoirians are aware of the standards to which Côte d'Ivoire should be held. Further, given respondents' sense of human rights violations, large-scale public awareness campaigns could encourage citizen discussions around how to defend their human rights, redress past violations and work toward a more just human rights environment.

Women in Politics and Government

- In contrast to the current low political representation of women, a large majority of respondents say they support women in various political roles. Civil society groups may leverage this societal support when undertaking efforts to increase the number of female elected officials.

Voter Education

- Citizens express confidence in the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire. A majority of Ivoirians view the December 2011 legislative elections as organized and free and fair, most citizens were reached with voter education messages prior to the December 2011 legislative elections, and a majority also felt informed on where and how to vote. However, some aspects of the electoral process are less well-known. Educating voters on vote counting and results announcement would help bolster knowledge and could also result in increased confidence in the electoral process.

- Findings demonstrate that television is the most helpful source of information on election-related issues and French is the most useful language. Using TV in future information campaigns would reach the most citizens, but radio and face-to-face methods remain useful when targeting rural voters. Information in French would reach much of the Ivoirian population, but education efforts should also be presented in oral format in other local languages to reach those who do not speak or understand French well.

Turnout in Upcoming Elections

- A significant proportion of eligible voters are unlikely to vote in the upcoming municipal elections. Those who say they will not vote blame insufficient documentation, a lack of interest, lack of faith in politicians or a fear of insecurity. Survey findings indicate it will be important to undertake efforts to ensure citizens have the required documentation, encourage an interest in these elections, and bolster security around voting centers in order to mitigate fears of violence. As they are less likely to vote in the next elections, a particular emphasis should be placed on encouraging women and younger voters to turn out to vote.



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