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DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

FINAL REPORT

AUGUST 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Tetra Tech ARD.

APPRECIATION

The team wishes to express its appreciation for the invaluable contributions provided by Ivorian public officials, civil society leaders, journalists, and business leaders as well as the staff of the Côte d'Ivoire's international development partners with whom we met. We deeply appreciate the time they allocated to meeting with us and their candor and insights during our discussions.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADCI	*Association des Démobilisés de Côte d'Ivoire*
ADDR	Agency for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
AFD	Alliance of Democratic Forces
ANRMP	National Regulatory Authority for Public Procurement
C2D	Debt Reduction and Development
CAEF	Economic and Finance Commission of the National Assembly
CDVR	Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission
CEI	Independent Electoral Commission
CEREF	Center for Research and Training
CGECI	General Confederation of Companies in the Côte d'Ivoire
CITI	Côte d'Ivoire Transition Initiative
CNCA	National Counsel on Audio-Visual Communication
CNDHCI	National Commission for Human Rights in Côte d'Ivoire
CNP	National Press Counsel
CONARIV	National Commission for Reconciliation and Reparations for Victims
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Civil Society Platform
DCHA	USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DDR	Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration
DRG	Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
EU	European Union
FDS	Defense and Security Forces

FESCI	Federation of Students and Scholars of Côte d'Ivoire
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FPI	Ivoirian Popular Front
FRCI	Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire
FSI	Failed State Index
HABG	High Authority for Good Governance
HACA	High Authority of Audio-Visual Communication
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IBP	International Budget Partnership
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Studies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INSCT	Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism
JP	Young Patriots
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LIDER	Liberty and Democracy for the Republic
LSP	Legislative Support Program
MFA	Forces of the Future Movement
MIM	Minister of Industry and Mines
MPCI	Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
PANA	Pan-African News Service
PDCI-RDA	Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire-African Democratic Rally
PRADD	Property Rights and Artisanal Diamond Development
PSCPD	*Plateforme de la Société Civile pour la Paix et la Démocratie*
PST	Parent-Student-Teacher
RDR	Rally of Republicans
RFI	French International Radio
RHDP	Rally of Houphouëtistes for Democracy and Peace
SAF	Strategic Assessment Framework

SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SPC	Special Investigative Cell (Ministry of Justice)
TI	Transparency International
UDPCI	Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

MAP OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings, analysis, and recommendations of a USAID-sponsored democracy, human rights and governance (DRG) assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to identify major DRG trends and challenges in Côte d'Ivoire and recommend a medium-term strategic approach to assist with the strengthening of democratic governance and human rights as the country transitions from a post-conflict environment following the contentious 2010 elections.

In contrast with the previous DRG assessment in 2011, Côte d'Ivoire is no longer in an immediate post-crisis context but is instead attempting to bring to a close its transition with the restoration of peace, civic order, and administrative governance. This new phase brings with it new DRG challenges at a time when USAID/Côte d'Ivoire is itself undergoing major programmatic changes, most notably the end of the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) program and a dramatic reduction in the DRG budget. The focus of this assessment is therefore to analyze the changes in both the Ivoirian and USAID environment in order to identify the current DRG problems that USAID is best suited to contribute to resolving over the coming years.

This DRG assessment employed the framework set out by USAID in its DRG Strategic Assessment Framework. Based on this methodology, the assessment was divided into four overlapping steps designed to:

- Ascertain the core DRG problem through analysis of six political variables (Section 2.0);
- Identify and analyze the key actors and institutions to determine which may serve as allies in solving the DRG problem and the relevant institutions that are amenable to political reform (Section 3.0);
- Evaluate the constraints and opportunities based on USAID's operational and programmatic environment (Section 4.0); and
- Develop recommendations for strategic programming for the DRG sector of USAID/Côte d'Ivoire (Section 5.0).

The analysis presented in this report is based on documentation collected by the assessment team, focus groups, and interviews conducted in both Côte d'Ivoire and Washington, D.C., in April and May 2015.

THE DRG PROBLEM AND PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of its findings, the DRG assessment team identified several lingering issues related to Côte d'Ivoire's two decades of political instability and armed conflict. Fortunately, these issues have been reduced in number and/or intensity since the last assessment as a result of effective reconstruction and reform efforts by the Ouattara administration in collaboration with the donor community (including DRG programming by USAID). Despite these efforts, many of the underlying sources of conflict, notably tensions around identity, land rights, and the electoral process, have not been adequately addressed, or have needs arising from the aftermath of conflict, such as reconciliation and promotion of social cohesion and disarmament, demobilization, and reconciliation (DDR). As the country moves beyond its post-conflict period, the assessment team determined that the most prominent DRG problems are those associated with furthering democratic reforms and enhancing government performance, although conflict-related grievances, human rights abuses, and security issues persist.

Specifically, the team observed a need to strengthen relations between public officials and the Ivoirian population to ensure greater political accountability and government responsiveness as well as encourage consensus, rule of law, and government effectiveness. A related issue is a high level of frustration among Ivoirians over the continuing poor quality and quantity of public services provided by the government, a frustration that extends across the country and multiple sectors, most notably security, judiciary, health, and education.

Consequently, the team developed a composite DRG statement that attempts to capture both the achievements of and challenges facing the Ivoirian government as it moves beyond the post-conflict transition:

> ***Despite the rapid restoration of State authority following the 2011 post-electoral crisis and the State's numerous efforts to rebuild government institutions, the economy, and social cohesion; confidence in the Ivorian government is undermined by the government's inability to engage the population effectively and perform core government functions, such as providing security, justice, and social services.***

The overarching goal of DRG programming should be, therefore, to increase the population's confidence in the Ivoirian government with the two strategic objectives: 1) to increase public officials' interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors; and 2) to improve the performance of government core functions. Increasing the population's confidence in the Ivorian government is fundamental to reducing the risk of conflict recurrence. The specific focus of these interactions and performance areas must take into consideration the drivers (e.g., disputes over land tenure and national identity) and consequences of the conflict to ensure conflict-sensitive programming.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I: TO INCREASE PUBLIC OFFICIALS' INTERACTIONS WITH AND RESPONSIVENESS TO SOCIETAL ACTORS

The DRG assessment found that a general lack of confidence in the Ivoirian government was often the result of insufficient interaction between public officials and the population, particularly societal actors who could hold the government accountable for public policies and performance (Strategic Objective II). In order to fulfill the first strategic objective, the team identified three sets of intermediate results that would need to be pursued: i) greater commitment of public officials to engage societal actors actively; ii) improved capacity of non-state actors, specifically civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media, to engage public officials effectively; and iii) reinforcement and/or creation of State-society forums for civic engagement.

Intermediate Result 1: Greater Commitment of Officials to Engage Societal Actors Actively

In developing democracies such as Côte d'Ivoire, the attitudes of and incentive structures among public officials do not typically reflect a willingness, let alone a desire, to engage societal actors actively. This is the result of a combination of factors, including: a long history of autocratic leadership (benign or malign), an incomplete transition or consolidation of democratic reforms, and a political economy of donor dependence that skews accountability of officials toward international versus domestic actors.

To achieve this intermediary result, DRG programming should work with all three categories of Ivoirian public officials—elected officials, political appointees, and administrative functionaries—in all branches of government and at all levels to generate a greater commitment to civic engagement. DRG programming could include:

a) Training (*sensibilisation*) public officials about their roles as representatives of the people (versus a party) and as civil servants, a role shared by *all* public officials;

b) Informing public officials about the advantages of civic engagement, including enhanced legitimacy and more realistic expectations by an informed public;

c) Establishing a system to praise and/or reward officials who effectively engage societal actors through any number of social accountability mechanisms, including State-society forums (the third intermediate result for this strategic objective); and

d) Ensuring that ministerial websites include their policies, programs, and budgets, while encouraging the addition of links that permit public comments and questions.

While recognizing the limited resources at the disposal of the DRG sector, the assessment team strongly recommends the mission develop a DRG program that explicitly focuses on the reinforcement of attitudes and incentive structures within State institutions that can provide an enabling environment for social accountability and government responsiveness. This dedicated DRG program should be combined with activities in support of the other intermediate results designed to promote State-society engagement and government performance, both within the current DRG program as well as other USAID programs, most notably those in the education and health sectors.

Intermediate Result 2: Improved Capacity of Non-State Actors to Engage Officials Effectively

Although the first strategic objective may appear to emphasize the active role of public officials in their interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors, non-state actors are not, and should not be, passive recipients of increased engagement by public officials. CSOs, the media, and the private sector each have a critical role to play in encouraging State-society engagement.

Consequently, developing their capacity for civic engagement and social accountability is critical to ensuring receptive and responsive public officials. While this intermediate result is relevant to the private sector, the recommended activities, given the assessment findings regarding the low capacity and high politicization of civil society and the media in the Côte d'Ivoire, focus specifically on building the capacity of these two sets of non-state actors through DRG programming that could include:

a) Enhancing the professionalism of journalists and CSOs, which would entail, inter alia, greater independence from partisan pressures and donor dependency;

b) Developing CSO capacity to identify and advocate for their goals and objectives through persuasive oral and written communication as opposed to political rhetoric or adversarial posturing;

c) Strengthening the capacity of CSOs and journalists to monitor and report on State functions, public policies, and the performance of officials, which is likely to involve technical training in certain policy areas such as public finance and knowledge of relevant legislation and policies;

d) Increasing public access to information and the capacity of the CSOs and journalists to generate and disseminate alternative sources of information based on informed opinions, independent research, and/or investigative reporting; and

e) Building capacity in business management and fundraising skills to improve self-sufficiency, autonomy, and public (versus donor) accountability.

These activities can also be incorporated into current programming; however, a project specifically designed to strengthen the capacity of civil society and journalists to engage public officials is more likely to enhance their accountability and consequently government performance and is recommended (Strategic Objective II).

Intermediate Result 3: Reinforcement and/or Creation of Forums for Civic Engagement

The third and final proposed intermediate result designed to strengthen State-society engagement is to reinforce and/or create State-society forums. DRG programming could include:

a) Assisting in the institutionalization of forums regularly convened by public officials to disseminate information and respond to inquiries from non-state actors in order to promote governmental transparency and accountability (e.g., press conferences, public hearings, and ministerial information officers);

b) Encouraging journalists to create space in print, broadcast, and social media that encourages informed public debate on governmental policy, pending legislation, and other public affairs, most notably at present paths to further national reconciliation and social cohesion; and

c) Supporting CSO programming that includes the participation of public officials as colleagues, policy experts, and/or collaborators rather than adversaries.

The new DRG programming proposed above should be pursued if at all feasible especially in light of its centrality to both strategic objectives and the overarching goal of increasing public confidence in the Ivoirian government. Current DRG and other USAID projects that have established relations with both the executive and legislative branches can be modified to promote the institutionalization of State-society forums through their current and planned activities. The development of forums by civil society and the media as well as other non-state actors (e.g., the private sector) should also be incorporated into existing projects.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE II: TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT CORE FUNCTIONS

Given the importance of social accountability to improving governance and political stability, each of the intermediate results that contribute to the first strategic objective of increasing State-society engagement and government responsive would undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of the second strategic objective of improving government performance, specifically by:

1) Enhancing the commitment of public officials to engage societal actors actively;

2) Improving the capacity of non-state actors to engage public officials effectively; and

3) Reinforcing and/or creating State-society forums for civic engagement and social accountability.

In addition to the overlap with the first set of intermediate results, two additional intermediate results ought to be pursued in order to fulfill the second strategic objective of improving the performance of core government functions: i) improved competency of public officials and ii) reduced corruption among public officials.

Intermediate Result 4: Improved Competency of Public Officials

To enhance the competency of public officials, the DRG sector will need to consider which of the three categories of public officials—civil servants, political appointees, and/or elected officials—they may wish to focus on, and at what level—national, regional, municipal, and/or rural. One possibility would be to work with a cross-section and then focus geographically, as other USAID projects have done. Ideally, they should consider focusing on the sectors that the team has identified as critical—specifically security, justice, health, and education. Such DRG programming could include:

a) Ensuring competitive, merit-based recruitment and promotion of the civil servants;

b) Establishing systematic performance monitoring of public officials;

c) Offering public officials appropriate ongoing training that informs and is informed by results from the systematic performance monitoring; and

d) Providing incentives for improved performance and sanctions for poor performance by public officials beyond the electoral process.

Programming by the DRG sector currently focuses on the training of public officials in the legislative branch of the central government and the judicial sector, particularly at the sub-national level. While both are valuable to improving government performance, if there is limited funding available, the findings of the DRG assessment suggest that judicial reform has greater potential for more significant short-to-medium-term benefits. That said, capacity building of the legislative branch may have the advantage of better addressing the strategic objective of enhancing State-society interaction.

Based on the assessment's findings, it would be ideal if a DRG project seeking to enhance the competency of public officials included a component that addresses the impact of the convoluted intra-governmental relations (between ministries and levels of government). The USAID country team, in possible collaboration with the donors' Governance Working Group, could also encourage the Ivoirian government to undertake administrative reforms that would encourage a merit-based civil service incentivized by appropriate rewards and sanctions. If cross-sectoral programming is possible and/or additional funding available, the DRG sector could consider incorporating other public officials, particularly those operating at the local level who are directly responsible for providing administrative and social services.

Intermediate Result 5: Reduced Corruption among Public Officials

Pervasive corruption in Côte d'Ivoire undermines not only government performance but also the political economy of the country—and potentially the political stability if it is perceived that only some groups are benefitting while other groups are more egregiously harmed by corrupt officials. Reducing corruption is a long-term endeavor that will require commitments from all Ivoirian actors and the international community, including USAID. To achieve the intermediate result of corruption reduction, DRG programming could include:

a) Reinforcing the capacity and autonomy of accountability mechanisms within the government (e.g., ministerial inspections) and parastatal commissions charged with combatting corruption (e.g., National Regulatory Authority for Public Procurement [ANRMP], Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, or High Authority for Good Governance [HABG]);

b) Strengthening the capacity and autonomy of the legislative and judicial branches so they can follow through on the work of anti-corruption institutions and provide an institutional check to executive dominance, which can leave corruption in this powerful branch unchecked; and

c) Developing social accountability mechanisms among non-state actors, particularly civil society and the media, at both the national and local levels to monitor against and respond to corruption in governmental institutions and by individual public officials (e.g., budget tracking by CSOs and public affairs programs on community radio).

Current DRG programming designed to strengthen the functioning of the legislative and judicial branches could incorporate components that specifically focus on anti-corruption measures and collaboration with both State institutions and non-state actors working on this issue. Activities are currently underway that promote social accountability mechanisms in DRG programs and programming by other USAID sectors, most notably the work with Parent-Student-Teacher (PST) organizations and Educational Management Information System (EMIS) in the education sector. These activities could also be expanded upon, perhaps in conjunction with the relatively new ANRMP and HABG commissions charged with combatting corruption in both the government and private sector.

Moreover, the work with the media currently being done by the Public and Economic Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy might be extended to address anti-corruption measures such as investigative journalism and budget analysis training and development of alternative funding models. This would permit greater media independence, including the transformation of State media into a public good rather than a mouthpiece for the party in power.

The assessment team recommends that new programming that builds the capacity of civil society and the media be developed given its centrality to both strategic objectives and multiple intermediate results. Activities in these areas should also be incorporated into existing USAID projects wherever possible.

PRIORITIES AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

Setting priorities for future DRG programming is complicated by the dramatic budget cuts the sector has sustained. Anticipating that future funding will be more closely in line with requested levels, the assessment team strongly recommends the design of new standalone programming that explicitly focuses on building the attitudes and incentive structures within State institutions as well as the capacity of civil society and media in order to create an enabling environment for social accountability and government responsiveness. At the same time, the DRG sector should incorporate these goals into its on-going programming in order to attain the intermediate results and strategic objectives outlined above.

Ideally, other sectoral teams would "buy into" the DRG programming to create a more holistic approach to addressing the critical governance issues that will likely impede the ability of achieving development gains across sectors. This type of programming is increasing in sub-Saharan Africa as USAID missions recognize the importance of addressing these critical issues across sectors. Funding options through the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) or the U.S. State Department, as well as possibilities of cross-sectoral programming particularly in the health and education sectors, should be further explored. This undoubtedly requires further consideration and exploration within the Côte d'Ivoire Country Team and other relevant USAID and intra-agency colleagues, but it will be critical during those discussions for the DRG sector to retain its autonomous programmatic goals and objectives and work as an equal partner regardless of the funding sources for their joint programming. It is important to stress that reduction of DRG programming during this critical post-conflict period would significantly reduce the sector's capacity to build on its successful programming and to address the underlying sources of conflict that remain.

Finally, the assessment team would be remiss not to consider alternative scenarios to the relatively positive one that has been presented in this report. The team found a general consensus that the upcoming presidential election is likely to be flawed but will transpire without widespread violence or descending into armed conflict as occurred in the 2010 elections. The possibility for renewed violence in the near term, however, still exists and must be taken into consideration when planning future DRG programming. In addition, the underlying issues that led to prolonged conflict continue to simmer, as they have not yet been adequately addressed. Investments in the DRG sector can play a critical role in improving these conditions and consolidating political stability to mitigate the risk of political crisis and resumption of armed conflict. Should Côte d'Ivoire regrettably descend back into this maelstrom, the DRG sector, USAID as a whole, and the U.S. Embassy will need to recalibrate the manner in which they engage the Ivoirian government.

A more middle-range scenario is that the Ivoirian Popular Front opposition will decide to boycott the election, possibly with a faction of the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire that is discontent with Bédié's decision to support President Ouattara's re-election. This could severely undermine the legitimacy of the victor and his government and serve as a clear indication that Côte d'Ivoire has failed to move beyond its post-conflict transition. In this case, DRG programming may need to revisit the recommendations of the 2011–2012 assessment. Investing in capacity building for civil society and the media, along with other

recommendations laid out in this report, would remain relevant—if not critical—to addressing the DRG problems in this alternative scenario. In addition, as one of the main reasons that Côte d'Ivoire was unable to establish a stronger basis for national reconciliation and social cohesion is precisely because of the failure of the Ouattara administration to engage more fully with all political tendencies in the Ivoirian population, the team's recommendation to focus on increasing public officials' interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors should be adopted to ensure the achievement of the programming goal and objectives laid out in this report as well as those of the previous assessment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE DRG ASSESSMENT

This report presents the findings, analysis, and recommendations of a USAID-sponsored democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to identify major DRG trends and challenges in Côte d'Ivoire and recommend a medium-term strategic approach to assist with the strengthening of democratic governance and human rights as the country transitions from a post-conflict environment following the contentious 2010 elections.

In contrast with the previous DRG assessment in 2011, Côte d'Ivoire is no longer in an immediate post-crisis context but rather is attempting to bring to a close its transition with the restoration of peace, civic order, and administrative governance. This new phase brings with it new DRG challenges at a time when USAID/Côte d'Ivoire is itself undergoing major programmatic changes, most notably the end of the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) program and a dramatic reduction in the DRG budget. The focus of this assessment is therefore to analyze the changes in both the Ivoirian and USAID environments in order to identify the current DRG problems that USAID is best suited to helping resolve over the coming years.

1.2 COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

The DRG assessment was conducted by a team of three consultants assembled by Tetra Tech and two USAID staff members. The Tetra Tech team consisted of Dr. Francis Akindes, Professor of Sociology at the Alassane Ouattara University in Bouaké; Dr. Linda J. Beck, Professor of Political Science at the University of Maine-Farmington; and Dr. Jeanne Maddox Toungara, Associate Professor of History at Howard University. The USAID staff were drawn from the USAID/Côte d'Ivoire office, represented by Benjamin Olagboye, Democracy and Governance Specialist, and the USAID/Washington Africa Bureau, represented by Dr. Brooke Stearns Lawson, Senior Conflict Advisor, Organized Crime.

1.3 STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE ASSESSMENT

This DRG assessment employed the framework set out by USAID in its Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Strategic Assessment Framework (SAF) as updated in 2014. Based on this methodology, the assessment was divided into four overlapping steps designed to:

1) Ascertain the core DRG problem(s) through an analysis of six political variables (Section 2.0)[1];

2) Identify and analyze the key actors and institutions to identify allies in solving the DRG problem(s) and the relevant institutions that are amenable to reform (Section 3.0);

3) Evaluate constraints and opportunities based on USAID's operational and programmatic environment (Section 4.0); and

4) Develop recommendations for strategic programming for the DRG sector of USAID/Côte d'Ivoire (Section 5.0).

[1] The SAF typically includes only five variables: consensus, inclusion, competition and political accountability, rule of law and human rights, and government responsiveness and effectiveness. Given the post-conflict context in which Côte d'Ivoire has been operating since the 2011 post-election crisis, the team was asked to include a conflict lens highlighting drivers of conflict, vulnerabilities, and geographic trouble zones within these five variables.

Following this brief introduction (Section 1.0) and a subsequent overview of the political, economic, and social context in Côte d'Ivoire, the findings and analysis from each of these four stages in the SAF are presented in Sections 2.0–5.0. Included at the end of the report is a bibliography and two annexes containing a list of the actors and institutions the team met with and a rubric of interview questions employed.

The team spent three weeks in Côte d'Ivoire, from April 27–May 15, 2015. Before the mission, the team conducted an extensive desk study of the country's political, economic, and socio-cultural context utilizing documents produced by Ivoirian state and non-state actors, international donors and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), academics, and journalists. Prior to conducting meetings with Ivoirian actors and other international donors, the team met with USAID and U.S. Embassy staff in both Washington, D.C., and Abidjan to be briefed on U.S. foreign policy interests in Côte d'Ivoire and USAID's operational and programmatic environment.

During the mission, the team met with over 350 actors representing over 180 different institutions. Most of these meetings took the form of a semi-structured interview, although several focus groups were conducted, most notably with members of the media, private sector, women's organizations, youth groups, and civil society organizations (CSOs) with missions and/or programming related to DRG. Given that USAID programming and thus the assessment are designed for the country as a whole, the team traveled outside of the capital of Abidjan to meet with actors in five different secondary towns. One portion of the team held meetings in Korhogo in the north and Bouaké in central Côte d'Ivoire, while the second conducted research in the three western towns of Man, Duékoué, and Daloa. In this fashion, the team was able to cover the three major geographic regions that were most adversely affected by the political instability and armed violence Côte d'Ivoire has experienced since the turn of the century.[2] Moreover, these towns were selected as they permitted the team to visit both localities where USAID is currently operating and areas in which they currently have no programs.

After completing its research, the team held a workshop with USAID and embassy staff to present preliminary findings and, equally importantly, to discuss the relevance and salience of the identified DRG problem before considering alternative recommendations for USAID programming. The interactive nature of this workshop, as opposed to a simple briefing, provided the team with insights and ideas that both confirmed their findings and furthered their analysis.

1.4 THE IVOIRIAN CONTEXT

Following three decades of autocratic rule and another two of debilitating political instability and armed conflict, Côte d'Ivoire has achieved a remarkable restoration of governance and recovery of its economy in a relatively short period, especially in contrast with other post-conflict countries in the region.

Following independence in 1960, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny assumed leadership of the country and quickly established an autocratic although stable one-party regime that he led for over three decades until his death in 1993. Houphouët-Boigny was a skillful politician who maintained political stability by adeptly balancing competing ethno-regional interests through an inclusive form of clientelist ethno-arithmetic that assured political positions and economic resources to the elite of each group in the country. During this period, the Ivoirian administration was highly centralized and political participation was severely restricted, with little opportunity to express political views let alone opposition.

Up until the economic downturn in the early 1980s, Côte d'Ivoire was considered one of sub-Saharan Africa's most stable political systems with a flourishing export-oriented agricultural economy based on cocoa production, permitting it to become one of the sub-region's few middle income countries. Dating

[2] These three geographic regions are known as the CNO zones—Center, North, and West—that were most profoundly impacted by the violence.

back to the French colonial period and continuing in the decades following independence, the intensive labor needs of cocoa farming encouraged northerners and people from neighboring countries to migrate to the western region. With falling commodity prices on the global market in the 1980s, however, economic conditions started to deteriorate and political discontent began to grow.

As economic crisis set in, problems with the land tenure system surfaced. To encourage cocoa production, the Houphouët regime offered usufruct rights to cultivators, often Ivoirians who were not indigenous to the region (*allochtones*) or who migrated from neighboring states (*allogènes*), notably Mali and Burkina Faso. Historically, this land was considered the customary land of local ethnic groups (*autochtones*) who were not cocoa farmers. While cocoa prices were high, land conflicts were kept manageable because there was sufficient revenue to compensate everyone involved. With the economic downturn, the customary owners of the land, particularly young adults who could no longer readily find employment, sought to reclaim ownership and use of the land.

Faced with a deepening economic crisis and rapid growth in poverty, the patronage system of Houphouët-Boigny's Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) could no longer contain mounting economic and political grievances. The regime responded by following the global trend toward political liberalization that had reached the shores of Africa by the end of the twentieth century. In 1990, Houphouët-Boigny won the country's first multi-party election, beating Laurant Gbagbo of the Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI). Following Houphouët-Boigny's death in 1993, a brief power struggle ensued between the president of the National Assembly, Henri Konan Bédié, and Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara. The latter ultimately bowed to the constitutional provision (Article 35) that the former should assume the office upon the death of the president.

Although Ouattara resigned as prime minister and resumed his position at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), he returned to Ivoirian politics in 1994 and formed the Rally of the Republicans (RDR), a splinter party from the PDCI. In a clear effort to sideline Bédié's most formidable opponent in the 1995 presidential elections, the PDCI-controlled National Assembly passed an electoral code that barred candidates if either of their parents were not born in Côte d'Ivoire or they had assumed another nationality.[3] The new law was part of a new nationalistic ideology dubbed *Ivoirité* that also restricted voting privileges and access to land based on this narrow definition of nationality. In protest, the RDR and FPI boycotted the 1995 elections, permitting Bédié to easily gain his electoral anointment as president of Côte d'Ivoire.

Ouattara did not, however, abandon his presidential aspirations, obtaining a certificate of nationality in fall 1999 that made him eligible to run in the upcoming elections. After a court annulled this certificate and a warrant for his arrest was issued, General Robert Guëi staged the country's first successful military coup. Initially, he claimed to have usurped power to serve as an "umpire" in the standoff between the two civilian politicians.[4] However, the inclusion of the principle of *Ivoirité* in the new constitution adopted just prior to the 2000 presidential elections clearly indicated that General Guëi hoped to use this exclusionary ideology to "civilianize" his leadership of the country. In addition to Ouattara, a dozen other candidates were excluded, leaving only Gbagbo, the leader of a marginal leftist party, and a candidate

[3] Allegations have been made regarding the nationality of both Ouattara's mother and farther. Despite claims that his mother was allegedly from Burkina Faso, she was from Gbeleban, a northwestern town on the border with Guinea. Ouattara's father was born in Côte d'Ivoire although his paternal roots belong to the Kong, a huge Mande kingdom that stretched from northern Côte d'Ivoire into southern Mali. As for travel on a foreign passport, Ouattara was issued a passport from Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) while studying there after receiving a scholarship from the African American Institute. The president has offered the explanation that since classes were beginning soon, he needed to travel directly to the U.S. from Upper Volta and was thus given permission by Houphouët-Boigny to travel on a Voltaique rather than Ivoirian passport.

[4] Ouattara described Bédié's ouster as a revolution supported by the Ivoirian people rather than a coup d'état.

from another micro party to stand against Guëi.[5] With the support of both Ouattara and Bédié, however, Gbagbo won the election, and despite having declared himself the victor, Guëi was forced to step down as a result of massive popular protests.

Rather than call for new free and fair elections, Gbagbo sought to strengthen his political base among the *autochthone* ethnic communities in the west by embracing the doctrine of *Ivoirité* (although without ever employing the term), applying exclusionary policies to recruitment and promotion in the civil service and military.[6] Heightened social tensions in Ivoirian society and the military led to an unsuccessful attempt in 2002 to overthrow Gbagbo's regime by a northern-led segment of the military, giving rise to the civil war, which lasted five years and cost thousands of lives.

Following the failure of four peace accords, the 2007 Political Accord of Ouagadougou sought to defuse the explosive nationality issue by outlining a process for determining the status and rights of foreigners and establishing the parameters for a new, more inclusive presidential election.[7] While the nationality question remains a contentious, unresolved issue (as discussed in Section 3.0), the Gbagbo regime repeatedly delayed the presidential election no less than six times until 2010 when the poll finally took place. After Gbagbo received only a plurality of 38 percent of the vote in the first round, he was forced to face Ouattara, who had won 32 percent, in a second round since no candidate had received a clear majority. Although the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) certified Ouattara as the winner of the second round with 54 percent of the vote, the Constitutional Council reversed this ruling, proclaiming Gbagbo as president by disqualifying votes from seven northern and central districts in Ouattara's electoral stronghold. Both candidates held swearing in ceremonies and attempted to establish their authority over the government, leading to months of armed conflict that resulted in over 3,000 deaths, the displacement of millions of Ivoirians, and massive destruction of infrastructure as well as the Ivoirian economy. Supported by United Nations (UN) and the French military, the pro-Ouattara forces conquered Gbagbo's stronghold in the west and captured him and his top political aides and military leaders. Many of his supporters fled into exile in neighboring countries.

In the aftermath of the crisis, the Ouattara government pursued a two-pronged approach: the creation of the Dialogue, Truth, and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR), which has been widely criticized for its failure to complete successfully its mission of national reconciliation before concluding its work in 2013; and criminal prosecution of those suspected of committing criminal offenses and/or human rights abuses during the post-election crisis. Led by an alleged Ouattara ally, Charles Konan Banny, the CDVR held public hearings. These were generally viewed as a farce rather than a forum where victims could confront the perpetrators of violence during the 2011 post-election crisis. The commission argued that its work was stymied by a lack of resources and ongoing prosecution of Gbagbo supporters, a process that had been subject to criticism due to the failure to prosecute Ouattara supporters as well for crimes committed during the armed conflict. This two-pronged approach reflects the continued political division within the country and lack of consensus over how to pursue national reconciliation (see Section 2.0).

Despite lingering post-conflict issues—most notably issues related to security social cohesion, transitional justice, and the initial drivers of conflict (e.g., land tenure and national identity)—the Ouattara administration nonetheless had impressively rebuilt the Ivoirian political economy. The regime has managed to organize free and fair legislative and local elections in 2011 and 2013, respectively, although the legitimacy gained from the polls was undermined by opposition boycotts. The continuing dominance of the political system by the executive and increasing dominance of the ruling Rally of Houphouëtistes

[5] Toungara, Jeanne Maddox. "Francophone Africa in Flux: Ethnicity and Political Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire," Journal of Democracy. July 2001.

[6] Akindès, Francis. Côte d'Ivoire: Socio-Political Crises, 'Ivoirite,' and the Course of History, African Sociological Review (7)2: 11-28, 2003.

[7] Elowson, Camilla. Minor Conflict, Major Consequences: Facing an Unresolved Identity Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. Stockholm: Swedish Defense Research Agency, February 2011.

for Democracy and Peace (RHDP) coalition place Côte d'Ivoire squarely in the category of "developing democracies."

Economically, the Ouattara administration also receives mixed reviews. The country's high economic growth rate has undoubtedly been buttressed by the State's massive investments in infrastructure projects.[8] In addition to reconstruction of infrastructure destroyed by the prolonged violence, the government seeks to expand the Ivoirian economy with the goal of recapturing the country's earlier reputation as a regional powerhouse. For now, however, it remains a low income country (170 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index) with a high poverty level of just over 40 percent of the population.[9] It is therefore not surprising that the regime is criticized for its failure to balance investment in infrastructure with the provision of more critical social services, not to mention the need for redistribution of economic wealth that is seen as increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few political elites well placed in or closely allied with the Ouattara administration.

The growing economic disparity is particularly worrisome given generational differences in economic opportunities and the increasing "youth bulge" of unemployed young adults, many of whom are not fully demobilized let alone reinserted into Ivoirian society. Unfortunately, many of these youths are seen as part of the ongoing security threats associated with incomplete disarmament of former combatants and contributing to the alarming rate of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Côte d'Ivoire. Fortunately, the problems DRG currently faces are no longer overshadowed by the need for post-conflict recovery but focus instead on the strengthening of the country's institutions and practices in support of DRG in Côte d'Ivoire.

[8] According to the World Bank, Côte d'Ivoire's economic growth rate was -4.7 percent in 2011, but it bounced back to 10.7 percent in 2012, 8.7 percent in 2013, and between 9 and 10 percent in 2014 (World Bank. Côte d'Ivoire Overview, Washington, D.C.: January 12, 2015).

[9] United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Human Development Report: Côte d'Ivoire, 2014.

2.0 STEP ONE: CÔTE D'IVOIRE'S DRG CHALLENGES

To understand the challenges and opportunities Côte d'Ivoire is facing related to the promotion of DRG, this section examines the legacies of decades of political instability and armed conflict and the degree to which the country has been able to move beyond the post-crisis transition. Based on the SAF, the section is broken down into analyses of the five core elements identified by USAID as critical components of the DRG analysis: consensus, inclusion, competition and political accountability, rule of law and human rights, and government responsiveness and effectiveness. As anticipated, there is a fair amount of overlap among these concepts with several issues resurfacing in more than one sub-section.

Because Côte d'Ivoire is still considered a post-conflict country, a sixth element was added to the analysis in order to determine the drivers of conflict, vulnerabilities, and geographic trouble zones. The analysis of conflict, however, is contained within the five core elements and thus is incorporated into those discussions, noted in *italics* for ease of identification. Moreover, a gendered analysis of each of these elements is considered critical to understand the core DRG challenges and their implications for both sexes fully. Key issues related to gender are underlined.

2.1 CONSENSUS

Consensus is a critical component of the DRG assessment, particularly for Côte d'Ivoire, as the country's two decades of institutional political instability and armed violence were the result of the failure of the political class to find an acceptable consensus on the rules governing the country.

Fortunately, the Ivorian government has been able to restore a remarkable level of public order, State authority, and government administration in a relatively short period of time, especially in comparison to other African states that have similarly experienced prolonged political instability associated with an armed conflict. While there is a great deal of consensus on the achievements of the Ouattara administration, there remains *considerable contention around its ability to promote national reconciliation, address the underlying issues of the politico-military conflict,* and provide an inclusive form of political leadership that generates confidence in and a willingness to abide by the democratic rules of the game.

The achievements of the Ouattara government are quite impressive, particularly in light of the status of the country during the last DRG assessment in 2011–2012. Over the period of just four years, the State has successfully restored its authority and administration over the entire territory. There continue to be security issues in some regions, most notably the western and northern portions of the country as a result of incomplete disarmament of former combatants and economic hardships that encourage them to engage in banditry and other forms of economic and violent crime (see Section 2.4). The resumption of basic services and reconstruction of infrastructure have reinforced the legitimacy of the government, although their insufficiency and poor quality were frequently noted throughout the country (see Section 2.5). While the improvement of conditions have placed it among the top ten most-improved countries on the 2014

Fragile State Index (FSI), Côte d'Ivoire still remains in the FSI High Alert category, an indication of the continued fragility of the Ivoirian State and the political consensus underpinning it.[10]

Ivoirians across the country expressed relief that peace has been restored, although there are significant regional differences in how citizens view the achievements of this process. These differences mirror the geographic distribution of political supporters for the country's three major political figures: the northern political base of President Alassane Ouattara and those of former Presidents Henri Konan Bédié and Laurent Gbagbo located in the center and south, respectively.

Not surprisingly, Ivoirians in the north tend to feel that the Ouattara administration has successfully navigated the peace and reconciliation process in that the exclusion that they experienced under the prior regimes has come to an end (see Section 2.2). In the center of the country, the population also clearly appreciates the benefits of the return to peace and order, but they do not feel that they have fully recovered from the suffering experienced under the rebel occupation that resulted in a lack of State investment in the region, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire's second-largest city, Bouaké. By contrast, the perceived inadequacy (if not outright failure of peace and reconciliation) is most pronounced among Ivoirians in the west. The tendency in this opposition stronghold is to emphasize the negative aspects of governmental action (or inaction) even if there is a general recognition that the political and security environments have improved in comparison to the aftermath of the 2010 elections.

Unfortunately, one of the greatest challenges to consensus revealed by the assessment is the *general failure of the CDVR to generate a basis for national reconciliation. Despite budgetary and political constraints,* the CDVR was able to hear testimony from over 64,000 victims, 30 percent of whom were women, however, this was insufficient to achieve national reconciliation. The commission's final report, including recommendations for reparations and other political and judicial measures, was reportedly submitted to the government but not made public.

The commission could not even manage to obtain agreement in opposing camps on the criteria by which reconciliation could be measured. For the opposition and its supporters, there can be no reconciliation as long as members of its leadership are still in prison, either in Côte d'Ivoire or the Hague (Gbagbo), living in exile, and/or have their bank accounts blocked. While most refugees have now been permitted to return and some political prisoners have been released, an estimated 77,000 remain in neighboring countries and hundreds are still in detention[11,12] Consequently for supporters of the former president, a general amnesty represents the best path to reconciliation.[13] For supporters of President Ouattara and the ruling coalition, there can be no reconciliation without justice. However, the exclusive prosecution of crimes committed by forces loyal to the former President Gbagbo has led to the frequent charge that a "justice of victors" is being applied rather than one that will lead to reconciliation (see Section 2.4).

The implications of the failure of the CDVR to generate the basis for national reconciliation could have serious longer-term implications. However, this does not yet appear to pose an immediate threat to the country's political stability, largely because there is a general appreciation for the return to peace and a

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[10] This improvement is particularly impressive given that the country topped the FSI list of most fragile states as recently as 2005. (Fund for Peace. "State Fragility Index," published in Foreign Policy, Washington, D.C., July-August, 2014).

[11] United States State Department. Côte d'Ivoire 2013 Human Rights Report, Washington, D.C., 2014.

[12] Lack of security and continued illegal occupation of private dwellings by the Republic Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI) may explain hesitancy to return, especially in western Côte d'Ivoire (United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014).

[13] The lack of consensus on the path to national reconciliation and social cohesion was also evident in survey results from a 2014 poll conducted by AfroBarometer. While more than a fifth of the respondents (21 percent) support a general amnesty, only 10 percent recommend a judicial approach. The plurality of respondents (36 percent) support a process of confession followed by pardon (AfroBarometer. Les Ivoiriens indiquent la voie de la réconciliation nationale et de la cohésion sociale, compiled by Centre de recherche et de formation, February 17, 2015).

desire to ensure that the country does not return to a state of violence and instability again. As a result, *"conflict fatigue" has reinforced an attitude of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, though not social cohesion*. In light of the failure of the CDVR to attain its objectives regarding national reconciliation, the Ouattara government has put into place the National Commission for Reconciliation and Reparations for Victims (CONARIV), which has already promised to ensure reparations for the victims of the conflict in response to complaints that only the perpetrators of violence (the former combatants) have been provided resources to ensure their demobilization.

To further reconciliation and ensure the country's political stability, it will be *critical to establish consensus on the central issues underlying the last two decades of political violence, in particular national identity, land tenure, and administration of the electoral process.* As discussed in Section 1.0, national identity was first politicized in the 1990s through the concept of *Ivoirité* employed by President Bédié, ultimately becoming one of the major causes for the civil war in 2002.[14] Although this discourse is no longer politically acceptable in mainstream Ivoirian politics, the question of national identity has not yet been fully resolved despite two important new pieces of legislation introduced by the Ouattara government.

In August 2013, the National Assembly adopted two laws aimed at easing restrictions on nationality and citizenship. The first permits foreign spouses of Ivoirian nationals to acquire citizenship, thereby removing prior restrictions on foreign men.[15] The second more significant and thus controversial piece of legislation is the extension of citizenship to foreign-born residents who moved to before and have lived continuously in the country since 1973, along with their descendants.

To ensure implementation of the new laws, the government undertook several initiatives framed as a more general campaign to improve access to official documents (*problème des papiers*), including birth certificates, national identity cards, and certificates of nationality. To achieve this, a new procedure of "naturalization by declaration" was introduced and mobile courts created to process these declarations. In addition, some members of parliament attempted to disseminate information about the new laws to residents in their districts. However, according to UNOCI, only approximately 50,000 people have applied for Ivoirian nationality under the new code, a fraction of the 700,000 presumed to be eligible [16]

While these laws arguably constitute an important advancement toward the inclusion of the country's large "stateless" population (see Section 2.2), their contentious nature is a clear indication of a continuing lack of consensus on who is or should be Ivoirian. The new process of naturalization by declaration and state-funded mobile courts, initiated only six months before a presidential election, are interpreted by opposition supporters as a political strategy to create a voting bloc (*bétail electoral*) for the ruling party, given that a significant number of undocumented residents are from Burkina Faso, ethno-regionally associated with Ouattara's political stronghold in northern Côte d'Ivoire.

This suspicion regarding the motives behind the Ouattara administration's effort to resolve the question of national identity only serves to reinforce continuing concerns about the electoral process for which consensus remains elusive (see Section 2.3) and pernicious land tenure disputes that constitute an estimated 80 percent of court cases in the Côte d'Ivoire while reinforcing social exclusion of non-*autochthones* (see Section 2.2).

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[14] In the 2003 Linas Marcoussis Accords, identity was singled out as a problem that must be given priority. Again in the 2007 Ouagadougou Accords, resolution of the question of national identity was explicitly cited, along with land tenure and the electoral process, as requiring urgent attention (Akindès, Francis. The Roots of the Military-Political Crises in Côte d'Ivoire, Sweden: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Research Report No. 128, 2004; Marshall-Fratani, Ruth. "The War of 'Who Is Who': Autochtony, Nationalism, and Citizenship in the Ivorian Crisis." African Studies Review, 2006).

[15] There were no restrictions on foreign wives.

[16] United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

Achieving greater consensus on these and other "rules of the game" in Côte d'Ivoire has been undermined by the increasingly dominant ruling coalition, RHDP, led by President Ouattara's RDR party in alliance with the PDCI of former President Bédié and two other smaller parties. Opposition leaders have repeatedly denounced the use of the coalition's control of both the executive and legislative branches to politically pervert the rules of the game in their favor, citing first and foremost the politicization of the Independent Electoral Commission (see Section 2.3).[17]

Unfortunately, partisan politics by the dominant coalition falls along ethno-regional lines in Côte d'Ivoire, like many other African countries, as parties rely on ethno-regional identity to mobilize electoral support and gain access to patrimonial resources controlled by politicians, thereby engendering a perception of ethno-regional favoritism and exclusion (see Section 2.2).

The ability to build consensus on legislation, public policy, and the general rules of the political game is further hampered by the continuing marginalization of women of all political stripes from the seats of socio-political and economic power, a topic that is developed further in the following section.

2.2 INCLUSION

Longstanding issues of inclusion, from who is a citizen to who has equal access to justice, economic rights, and protection under the law, are tied to basic human rights developed further in Section 2.4, Rule of Law and Human Rights. Despite the continuing challenges to reconciliation discussed in the previous section, the Ivoirian State has made *great strides toward reintegration of combatants* in the post-conflict context. In 2012, the Ouattara government assumed responsibility for the DDR program instituted in 2004 by the UN Security Council under the auspices of the UNOCI. At this time, the Ivoirian government created the DDR Agency (ADDR) to assist ex-combatants with the challenges of reintegration into society as law-abiding productive citizens through re-socialization and job training.

Participants in the ADDR program go through a four-phase process: 1) disarmament; 2) certification of their status as a former combatant; 3) re-socialization through a one-month program of civic and human rights education; and 4) job training for one to two months in the public, private, agricultural, or livestock sectors. International donors are funding "1,000 microprojects" for ex-combatants, including training in transportation, mechanics, masonry, carpentry, construction, and plumbing. ADDR participants also receive a stipend of up to 800,000 CFA, distributed in installments, to verify their demobilization from combat activities. In addition, respondents indicated that in filling at least some positions within the administration preference is given to ex-combatants.

Based on the extent of the resources provided to ex-combatants, it is not surprising that complaints abound over a perceived favoritism toward this group. Regular Ivoirian troops are particularly frustrated by the favored treatment of ex-combatants who are offered a payout of up to 5 million francs CFA after their integration into the armed forces. Meanwhile, ordinary citizens, particularly women, complained that they too were adversely impacted by the conflict and yet have received no compensation (although this misconstrues the ADDR's purpose to disarm and demobilize in order to avoid a resurgence of violence, rather than to compensate those harmed by the conflict). However, even women who did participate in the conflict (but typically did not carry a weapon) do not qualify for this reintegration process.[18]

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[17] The RHDP controls a super majority of 88 percent in the National Assembly largely as a result of the decision by the FPI and other splinter opposition parties to boycott the 2011 legislatives, a questionable strategy that they employed again in the 2013 local elections.

[18] Of the 2,258 former combatants who turned in weapons and ammunition, only 147 were women (United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire [UNOCI]. Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014).

Nevertheless, according to an AfroBarometer poll in 2014, the majority of respondents (69 percent) agree that ex-combatants should receive monetary compensation, although only one in four Ivoirians thought they should receive jobs within the administration.[19] Objection to the longer-term benefits of employment may be tied to concerns that false (*faux*) as well as the true (*vrai*) ex-combatants are gaining from the ADDR program. Many people cited examples of men who allegedly used bribery or their socio-political connections to be included on one of the lists put together by former commanders that are used to verify their status as ex-combatants[20]

Perhaps of graver concern is the fact that funding for the ADDR is due to end on June 30, 2015, although only 40 percent of the estimated total of 74,068 ex-combatants have undergone the reintegration process.[21] Moreover, members of the Ministry of Justice admit that they are ill-equipped to maintain security in the zones where ex-combatants are rumored to still operate (Section 3.5).[22] Ivoirian civilians, especially women continue to fall prey to economic exploitation, sexual violence, and trafficking by armed ex-combatants and other violent elements in Ivoirian society who have easier access to weaponry as a result of the politico-military conflicts over the last two decades.[23]

Given the history of prolonged civil strife in Côte d'Ivoire, it is not surprising that one of the **primary sources of perceived exclusion is based on political affiliation.** There is the sentiment, particularly among FPI supporters, that the State and all its "spoils" are now controlled by the RDR and its allies, preventing others from not only gaining high-level political nominations but also access to other public resources, ranging from civil service appointments to selection for training and scholarship programs. [24] The phrase "*rattrapage ethnique*" (ethnic catch-up) used by President Ouattara during a broadcast is now commonly employed to justify this political bias, as Ouattara supporters feel they were excluded from such political benefits under the Gbagbo administration as well as under the Guei and Bédié regimes. At the same time, this expression is also ironically evoked by southerners who denounce the discrimination implicit in this form of affirmative action.

Unfortunately, this sense of politically motivated exclusion is complicated by the **regional split in political affiliation** in Côte d'Ivoire. A mapping of electoral results in the second round of the 2010 presidential elections clearly illustrates the consistent support Ouattara received in the north in contrast to Gbagbo's solid support in the south (Map 2, next page). Thus the perception of exclusion based on political affiliation extends to a sense of regional favoritism in which northerners are seen as privileged politically and thus economically in terms of regional investments in infrastructure inter alia.

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19 AfroBarometer. La situation des ex-combattants préoccupe les Ivoiriens, compiled by *Centre de recherche et de formation*, February 17, 2015.

20 Radio Français International (RFI). *Côte d'Ivoire: Soupçons de corruption dans le processus de réintégration des ex-combattants*, March 10, 2013.

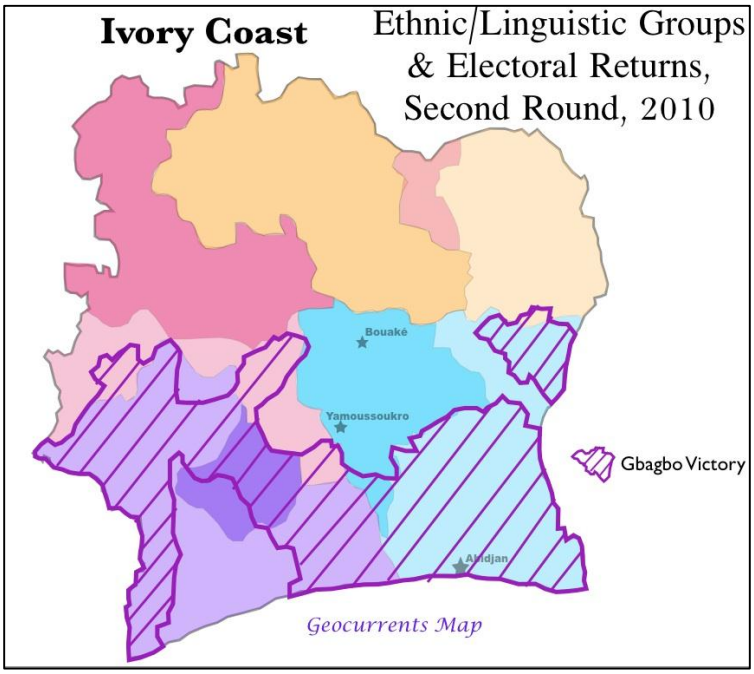
21 Autorite pour le Desarmement, la Demobilisation et la Reintegration (ADDR). *ADDRinfos*, November–December 2014.

22 Informants in the western region claim that many ex-combatants are hiding in the forests with huge stashes of arms, citing specific hot zones near Duékoué, Bangolo, Guiglo, and Toulepleu. They therefore insisted on the need for continued work on DDR as well as reconciliation to avoid a return to armed conflict.

23 Human Rights Watch (HRW). *Côte d'Ivoire: No Where to Turn for Protection*, December 2014.

24 For example, the *Jeunes Patriotes*, the FPI youth wing loyal to Gbagbo, is frustrated by their inability to obtain funding for a conference they wish to organize on social cohesion and peace building. They perceive the lack of support as a reflection of a political bias based on their party affiliation that overshadows what they can contribute to the reconstruction of national solidarity.

MAP 2. ETHNO-REGIONAL MAP OF RESULTS FROM THE 2010 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



Source: Martin W. Lewis. 2011. "Ethnic Dimensions of Conflict in Ivory Coast," *GeoCurrents,* April 28.

As **ethnic and religious differences** also fall along regional lines, cultural identities are tied into this sense of exclusion, with some southerners feeling that one has to have a "northern patronym" to gain opportunities under the current regime. This is cause for concern particularly among youths attempting to enter a very tight labor market.[25]

The sense that northerners are privileged is also tied into the debate over national identity as discussed in the prior section on consensus. Legislation passed in 2013 that contains less-stringent citizenship criteria and set up more accessible procedures for documenting this status is perceived as favoring non-nationals who come from neighboring countries (e.g., Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Mali) and who ethno-regionally are associated with northern Ivoirians and thus President Ouattara.

Ironically, these same reforms of the nationality law can be seen as enhancing inclusion by permitting Côte d'Ivoire to make real strides in fighting against statelessness within its borders. According to Mohamed Askia Toure, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) representative in Abidjan, an estimated 700,000 people living in the country are either stateless or of undetermined nationality, the largest number in West Africa. Toure notes that "there is still work to be done in Côte d'Ivoire to address gaps in the country's nationality legislation that continue to create cases of statelessness, as well as other obstacles to the acquisition of nationality."[26] These obstacles undoubtedly include Ivorian ethno-regional politics that has politicized the inclusion of hundreds of thousands of

[25] Estimates as to the unemployment rate range from 15.7 percent, as reported in 2008 by the National Institute of Statistics, to a quarter of the adult population, according to the General Confederation of Companies in the Côte d'Ivoire (CGECI). Unemployment rates among young adults are believed to be even higher. According to an article in the *Global Post*, the Ivorian government pegged unemployment among those 15–35 years old at 60 percent in 2012 (Ross, Aaron. "Young and Restless in Côte d'Ivoire," *Global Post*. May 8, 2013). Although the economy has improved since then, the unemployment rate is likely to be close to if not more than half of Ivorian young adults.

[26] United Nations High Commission on Refugees. *Abidjan meeting brings hope for stateless people in West Africa*, February 17, 2015.

stateless people who have resided continuously in Côte d'Ivoire for decades along with their descendants who were born there.[27]

Exclusion based on ethno-regional identity is also evident in the country's extensive and often virulent land tenure conflicts that reinforce divisions and tensions between three socio-geographic categories: *autochtones* (indigenous or original inhabitants), *allochtones* (migrants typically from other Ivoirian ethno-regional groups), and *allogènes* (non-national immigrants also from different ethnic groups). Particularly common in the wealthy coffee- and coco-growing region in western Côte d'Ivoire, denial of land ownership is a source of economic as well as socio-political exclusion.

Despite the 1998 legal provision that land belongs to those who cultivate it, the *autochtones* are considered the original landowners who can only sell their land to other Ivorian nationals, i.e., *allochtones*. The purchaser, however, can only gain full title of the land after 10 years *unless* during that period a family member challenges the sale, a legal provision that appears to invite contestation and a sense of unprotected property rights by migrant populations. *Allogènes* do not have a legal right to own land they have occupied and developed for generations.[28] The application for Ivorian citizenship by the *allogènes* under provisions in the new nationality code could address their categorical exclusion from land ownership but may only transform the nature of land conflicts unless underlying socio-political tensions among these groups can be addressed. Given the ethno-regional and economic nature of land issues, skirmishes could be readily politicized by political entrepreneurs to mobilize electoral support.

Regardless of their socio-geographic category, women in Côte d'Ivoire are customarily prohibited from owning land. Even women who inherit land from their husbands are threatened and discouraged from claiming it in rural areas.[29] Despite a provision in the 1998 Rural Land Law that grants women equal rights to land, this code has never been fully implemented to ensure that women are issued individual title deeds. A woman's access to land therefore remains based on her relationship to male family members and involves only usage rights. Consequently, widows and divorced women are particularly vulnerable to exclusion from their familial land.

Moreover, although Article 30 of the Ivoirian constitution grants them equal rights, women generally have limited access to resources and decision-making arenas, socio-economic and socio-political phenomena that reinforce each other.[30] Furthermore, Ivorian law prohibits discrimination based on gender; however, there is still resistance to hiring women, particularly in the private sector, and women still have trouble obtaining loans, primarily because they do not meet lending criteria.

While no formal barriers prevent them from participating in politics, socio-economic factors have effectively limited the role of women in political life. In addition to gendered family responsibilities that limit their time for political activism, discrepancies in employment and economic opportunities constrain the financial capacity of women to run for office. As a result, of the 251 members of the National Assembly, only 26 (just over ten percent) are women.[31]

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[27] Many of these families arrived prior to or around the time of independence. This included immigrants who came to work in the cocoa and coffee plantations from the former colony of Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), a group that had served as a labor pool for the better endowed and more developed neighbor under colonial rule.

[28] Agreements over long-term usage can be misconstrued as the sale of the land, once again leading to land conflicts.

[29] Bouquet, Christian. Géopolitique de la Côte d'Ivoire, Le Désespoire de Kourouma. Paris, Amrand Colin Editor, 32-33, 2005.

[30] Other legal protections Ivorian women enjoy include Article 3 of the constitution that requires the State to take appropriate measures to ensure the development of women and realization of their human rights.

[31] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

In an effort to gain influence in the National Assembly, female deputies recently banded together to **create a women's caucus** in November 2014 to advance women's rights, mainstream gender in the work of parliament, and promote the participation of women in parliamentary decision-making.[32] This is one of several indicators that the status of women and girls is beginning to evolve, partly due to pressure from women's organizations and State reforms but also due to donor programming around gender and women's rights.[33]

In addition to gender, **sexual orientation is a basis for social exclusion and discrimination** in Côte d'Ivoire. Members of the Ivorian lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community are not nearly as physically or judicially threatened as other communities in Africa (most notably Senegal and Uganda). However, in January 2014 a mob of approximately 200 people attacked the offices of *Alternative Côte d'Ivoire*, an NGO working with the LGBT community, and the home of its director that resulted in several injuries.[34] Moreover, laws against public displays of affection and lewd behavior are applied more severely to this group than to heterosexual couples. Yet while Ivorian society currently rejects any special consideration for protecting their rights (e.g., the right to marriage) as a reflection of "Western" culture and mores, discussions particularly with Ivoirian youths indicate a consensus that the LGBT community should be protected on the basis of basic human rights. Given the depth of cultural objections in both the Muslim and Christian communities, this consensus appears to reflect the depth of the human rights discourse in Côte d'Ivoire.

2.3 COMPETITION AND POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In Côte d'Ivoire, there are no legal mechanisms that exclude individuals or groups of citizens from political competition. The constitution provides for the popular election of the president, National Assembly, and local (regional and municipal) officials. Since the legalization of opposition parties in 1990, however, Côte d'Ivoire has not yet experienced an election that has been both fully competitive and peaceful.

Since coming to power, the Ouattara administration has organized two elections—the 2011 legislative elections and the 2013 local elections—that were deemed to be procedurally free and fair with little violence despite some protests over the electoral results. However, the FPI and other splinter opposition parties boycotted these polls, thereby curtailing their competitiveness and the legitimacy of the electoral process. In contrast with over 80 percent participation in the 2010 presidential elections, voter turnout in the 2011 legislative elections was reduced to a mere 36.6 percent of the electorate.[35]

Although leaders of the RHDP ruling coalition maintain that delegitimizing the electoral process and the Ouattara administration was the true motivation behind the boycott, opposition leaders and their supporters insist that their decision was motivated by concerns about the electoral process, specifically political bias in the structure and leadership of the CEI.[36] They argue that the current composition of the

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[32] A minority of women have held prominent positions in the Ivorian government (e.g., ministerial posts, chair of commissions, and vice president of the National Assembly) but never the leadership position of president, prime minister, or speaker of the assembly. Moreover at the local level, only 11 out of 197 mayors are women, while women lead only 5 percent of municipal councils and 3 percent of regional councils.

[33] In March 2015, the UN gave the caucus $100,000 to assist female deputies in carrying out their duties (Pan-African News Service [PANA]. *UN Women, Caucus of Ivorian Women MPS Sign Pact*, March 4, 2015).

[34] Amnesty International. *Côte d'Ivoire: Activists in Hiding after Wave of Homophobic Attacks*, January 29, 2014.

[35] Bouquet, Christian and Irène Kassi-Djodjo. "Les Élections Législatives En Côte D'ivoire Marquent-Elles La Sortie De Crise?" EchoGeo, 2012.

[36] As is often the case with opposition boycotts in Africa, the FPI's decision may also have been tied to its *inability* to stand in the legislative elections. Organized just eight months after the post-election violence, the opposition party could hardly have been

national CEI, with four representatives from the ruling coalition, four from the opposition, four from civil society, and four from the administration, tips the balance of the commission in favor of members with links to the ruling coalition either as political allies or appointees of the president.[37] Furthermore, the opposition objects to the unilateral designation by President Ouattara of Youssou Bakayoko as the CEI president given his lack of legitimacy from his tenure as the head of the CEI during the 2010 elections and his presumed political bias as PDCI leader from northern Côte d'Ivoire. Despite their continuing criticism of the CEI composition and the re-appointment of Bakayoko to its leadership, opposition leaders appear to intend to participate in the 2015 presidential elections, having drawn hard lessons from the earlier boycotts that marginalized them from seats of power, decision making, and public resources.

By boycotting the 2011 and 2013 elections, the FPI ironically (but not surprisingly) strengthened the growing political dominance of the RHDP coalition. This is most notable in the National Assembly where three parties in the RHDP coalition control 88.4 percent of the seats in parliament: of 251 seats, the RDR holds 133 deputies, the PDCI-RDA 89, and the Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (UDPCI) 10.[38] As opposition parties intend to participate in the legislative elections in 2016, the RHDP coalition is unlikely to maintain this same level of dominance in the legislature, although it is likely to retain control of the legislature given the splintering of the FPI since the detention of Gbagbo.

Without a significant opposition presence in the parliament, debate over legislation proposed by the executive branch is less likely to be dynamic, weakening the check that the legislature can play on the executive.[39] The dominance of parliament by the president's ruling coalition reinforces the tendency in Ivoirian politics, as elsewhere in Africa, toward a hyper-presidential system in which the powers of the executive go largely unchecked. This poses serious challenges to both competition and accountability in Côte d'Ivoire.

In addition to an absence of effective "horizontal" accountability between governmental branches, social accountability of Ivoirian public officials to the population is undermined by the limited capacity and politicization of both the Ivorian media and civil society.

While the State media, which is the most widely consumed, remains beholden to those in power rather than serving public interest, the Ivorian private *press has been politically polarized by nearly two decades of politico-military conflict*. [40] Divided into political camps ("blue" versus "green" newspapers), the press serves more as *organes de combat* than news organizations reporting on current events, disseminating information about government policies and activities, and providing a forum for public debate: all functions that are critical to accountability. As Côte d'Ivoire moves beyond the post-conflict period, this phenomenon continues to be reinforced by a lack of financial resources (e.g., advertising revenue) that makes the private press beholden to its benefactors.

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well prepared to participate in an election with much of its leadership and members in prison or exile and many of its supporters too intimidated to return to the polls.

[37] In the local CEIs, CSOs complained that they were excluded entirely from the commission that included only four representatives of the ruling coalition, four from the opposition, and one representative of the local administrator. As one NGO staff member from Korhogo noted, "There is the impression that [the CEI] is a tool of the political parties." (National Democratic Institute. *Report of the Electoral Reform Mission to the Côte d'Ivoire*, Washington, D.C.: December, 2013:5).

[38] The initial number of deputies was 255, but four have died since assuming office.

[39] It is therefore somewhat reassuring that the chair of the National Assembly's Economic and Finance Commission (CAEF) is working diligently with newly appointed technical advisors from the General Secretariat for the Reinforcement of Legislative Capacity to engage in an informed discussion with the Minister of Budget about the formulation and execution of the budget. Ideally the CAEF chair would like to have each minister appear before the commission to justify the expenditures in their budget both in terms of allocation and execution, a level of accountability that has been unheard of in the Côte d'Ivoire and very rare in Africa.

[40] Zio, Moussa. Les Médias et la Crise Politique en Côte d'Ivoire. Legon, Ghana: *Fondation pour les médias en Afrique de l'Ouest*, p. 11, 2012.

A notable exception is new community radio programming that is attempting to fill the gap in political dialogue on important issues such as social cohesion and national reconciliation despite their general lack of training and limited access to financial resources. This is possible due to a 2012 legal reform in which the government opened up the broadcast industry to private radio and television after more than two decades of governmental promises to liberalize the airwaves. Under the previous 2004 law, the few private radio stations that existed were limited to entertainment and cultural programming, and no private television stations were permitted. Private broadcast outlets can now legally cover public affairs, which community radios are gradually beginning to do, though the fees to start a commercial television station are set prohibitively high at $2 million.[41]

Harassment, violence, and other obstacles to freedom of the press have also reportedly declined, although the Ouattara administration continues to use various legal and regulatory mechanisms to suppress media coverage of reports that are critical of the government in a form of State censorship. In July 2013, for example, the opposition newspaper *Le Quotidien d'Abidjan* was suspended for seven days for publishing a list of political prisoners held by the regime on the grounds that the publication could "incite rebellion." In addition to governmental censorship, media outlets also self-censor not only politically sensitive topics but also reports that are likely to upset or threaten their financial backers, be they the State, a political party, or wealthy Ivoirians.

Another important recent development critical to the media and political accountability in general is improved access to State-held information. In December 2013, the National Assembly passed an access to information law that includes the appointment of an information commissioner, a critical mechanism to ensure the law is actually implemented. Indeed, the Ouattara administration is highly committed to improving government transparency given its critical role in promoting good governance, which is highly valued and promoted by international donors as well as foreign investors.

The primary method for disseminating governmental documents and other information dissemination is, however, the governmental portal on the Internet. While this allows free access to some official documents, only about 4.5 percent of the population have access to the Internet.[42] Moreover, the government remains highly protective of information deemed politically sensitive. In June 2013 Ivoirian police questioned for six hours two journalists from the investigative weekly *L'Eléphant déchaîné* over leakage of "sensitive information regarding the security of Côte d'Ivoire" after the paper published an article about unpaid debts to companies hired to rebuild military infrastructure after the 2011 conflict.[43]

Like the media, *civil society has been highly polarized by the Côte d'Ivoire's politico-military conflicts.* Consequently, CSOs are often characterized as either apologists for the regime or overly combative, and their valid criticisms are not taken into account as they appear to be politically motivated.[44] [45] As with the media, Ivoirian civil society is also severely under-funded and lacks capacity particularly in monitoring government policy and programs that require technical skills such as budget monitoring. As one local CSO leader noted, "There is a significant need for [civil society] capacity building … Most often, when a donor comes, the NGO starts its work and when the project stops, the NGO stops as well. If we built the capacity of NGOs, maybe this wouldn't happen." The lack of continuity in the activities of CSOs is likely attributable to dependence on donor or other outside funding.

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41 Freedom House. *Freedom of the Press 2014: Côte d'Ivoire*, New York, 2014.

42 United States State Department. *Côte d'Ivoire 2013 Human Rights Report*, Washington, D.C., 2014.

43 Freedom House. *Freedom of the Press 2014: Côte d'Ivoire*, New York, 2014.

44 Akindès, Francis. Côte d'Ivoire: De la stabilité politique à la crise. Vers un politique de rehabilitation basee sur la responsibilisation des communautes à la base, Abidjan: World Bank, 2007.

45 Floridi, Maurizio and Stefano Verdaecchia. Etude de Faisabilité du Programme d'Appui à la Société Civile en Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan: European Union Delegation in Côte d'Ivoire, 2010.

One of the brighter spots in Ivoirian civil society are the dynamic youth and women's organizations that are non-partisan and heavily involved in social accountability (e.g., advocacy and governmental monitoring) as well as providing critical social services, particularly to victims of domestic violence and rape. Moreover, the Civil Society Platforms that have been created around the country are beginning to address the lack of forums for State-society interaction to promote greater accountability of public officials to their constituents. For example, the Platform in Bouaké developed a list of policy reforms that it would like to see implemented by local officials. The list was submitted to candidates in the 2013 municipal and regional elections, all but one of whom signed a pledge to address these issues if elected.[46] This Platform is also working with the mayor's office in Bouaké on a participatory budgeting project that promotes government accountability and legitimacy but also responsiveness and effectiveness (see Section 2.5).

In addition to promoting accountability at the local level, there is an even greater need to develop mechanisms that connect elected officials to their constituencies at the national level. This is particularly the case for members of the National Assembly who appear more responsive to the party leadership who nominates them than to the voters who elect them. Although quite preliminary, both deputies in the Assembly and local civil society leaders offered favorable impressions of the USAID-funded program in which legislators return to their constituency to assess the outcome of government-funded infrastructure projects they had authorized. This sort of networking between legislators and their constituents can not only strengthen social accountability but also the legislature's capacity to monitor and check the power of Côte d'Ivoire's hyper-presidential system.

2.4 RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Progress has been made over the last five years in the implementation of rule of law particularly in terms of security. This is remarkable not only because of the prolonged instability and violence from which Côte d'Ivoire is still recovering, but also because of renewed security issues in neighboring countries, including the recent health threat of Ebola in the region. Fortunately, increased cooperation with neighboring Liberia and Ghana has permitted Côte d'Ivoire to curb violence and mercenary activities along the countries' porous border regions, while vigilance on the western border with Liberia permitted Côte d'Ivoire to (almost miraculously) avoid the spread of the Ebola virus. Nevertheless, significant issues of corruption and access to justice continue to plague rule of law in the Côte d'Ivoire, as well as lingering security threats and the human rights issues identified above in the inclusion section.

In addition to the *demobilization of tens of thousands of former combatants* through the UNOCI and ADDR, several administrators and security officers confirmed that the *dozo*, traditional hunters turned rebels, are no longer active and most have returned to their customary roles. However, there continue to be reports of violent attacks against both military and civilian targets by armed elements around the country.[47] [48]

This persistent yet increasingly sporadic violence highlights the difficulty that the government has faced in disarming former government, rebel, and militia forces. Outside of Abidjan, numerous Ivoirians reported the continued prevalence of arms held by ex-combatants, some of whom have turned in a weapon to receive access to the resources provided for demobilization but who retain one or more additional arms. The circulation of weapons undoubtedly undermines the stability of the country,

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[46] *Plateforme de la Société Civile pour la Paix et la Démocratie* (PSCPD). Mémorandum de la société civile pour un contrat socio-politique avec les candidats aux élections municipales de la commune de Bouaké et régionales de la région de Gbeke. Bouaké, April 16, 2013.

[47] Economist Intelligence Unit. *Côte d'Ivoire: Country Report*, April 26, 2015.

[48] Human Rights Watch (HRW). *Côte d'Ivoire: No Where to Turn for Protection*, December 2014.

particularly in western and northern corners where they are used for extortion and banditry.[49] Nevertheless, violence has been dramatically reduced and relatively small scale, and there is little indication that armed opponents of the government have the means to scale up these attacks into a major assault that could jeopardize peace and order in Côte d'Ivoire.

One cause for concern is that the UNOCI is scaling back its military presence and is scheduled to end its support for the ADDR program at the end of June 2015.[50] [51] With only 40 percent of the ex-combatants having undergone demobilization, it is unclear how the State will continue this process, although the director of ADDR has publicly stated, "We will not stop the DDR process in June 2015." The Defense Minister has also asserted that the government envisions a "post-ADDR" in which existing State structures will be reinforced to provide the services required for DDR of the remaining 60 percent of unprocessed ex-combatants.[52]

In addition to transitioning to a post-UNOCI security scenario, Côte d'Ivoire is confronted by several issues regarding the Republican Forces of the Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), the Ivoirian professional armed forces. In November 2014, disgruntled troops, including ex-combatants, took to the streets in eight major towns including the capital to protest their salary arrears and other grievances. After the ministers of Defense and the Interior and Territorial Administration publicly called for negotiations, the government met some of the soldiers' demands.[53] The government's quick response, in contrast to the persistent strikes by teachers and student unions that appear to be largely ignored by public officials, permitted the authorities to avoid any major turbulence.

The ability of Côte d'Ivoire to move beyond its current post-conflict phase is also hampered by the fact that the military has operated as both defense and police forces. For over 10 years, neither the police nor the gendarmerie has performed effectively due to insufficient training and equipment. As a result, the FRCI assumed many functions normally associated with the police. Without basic training in maintaining public order, it has relied heavily on repression, thereby undermining its already tenuous relations with the population.[54] [55]

Public confidence in Ivoirian security forces remains a challenge due not only to their involvement in the post-electoral violence but also to frequent charges of ongoing human rights abuses.[56] While individual members of the FRCI have been accused of rape and murder (for which there has been no investigation let alone prosecution), the military as an institution appears to permit (if not condone) extrajudicial

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[49] According to the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism, estimates as to how many unregulated weapons are circulating range from one to three million (INSCT. *Côte d'Ivoire Risk Assessment 2014*, INSCT Middle East and North Africa Initiative, Syracuse University, 2014).

[50] *Autorité pour le Desarmement, la Demobilisation et la Reintegration* (ADDR). *ADDRinfos*, November-December 2014.

[51] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

[52] ADDR. *ADDRinfos*, November-December 2014.

[53] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

[54] INSCT. *Côte d'Ivoire Risk Assessment 2014*, INSCT Middle East and North Africa Initiative, Syracuse University, 2014.

[55] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

[56] Members of the FRCI allegedly employed rape and murder as tools for suppressing Gbagbo supporters. Consequently, the influence within the FRCI of former zone commanders, many of whom are accused of human rights abuses during the conflict (although none have been indicted), remains a challenge affecting public trust particularly in the western region.

killings, torture of detainees, and arbitrary detention.[57] [58] Corruption is also allegedly rampant in the FRCI, including the use of security checkpoints and arbitrary arrests throughout the country to extort bribes. According to the president of the Ivorian Chamber of Commerce, an estimated US$300 million is spent each year on bribes at checkpoints.[59]

Indeed, corruption, another major threat to rule of law in Côte d'Ivoire, is widespread throughout the country's political and economic institutions. According to Transparency International (TI), corruption appears to have its greatest impact on the accountability of the armed forces, along with judicial proceedings, contract awards, and taxes and customs fees—to which the assessment team would add the health and education sectors. The TI Corruption Perception Index (2013) ranks Côte d'Ivoire at 136 out of 177 countries and territories surveyed.

The disruption of institutional functioning by the country's politico-military conflicts appears to have resulted in higher levels of systemic corruption and predatory behavior, from petty bribery by civil servants to large-scale smuggling and counterfeiting operations. Corruption is so deeply entrenched that it is recognized as one of the most efficient methods for most bureaucratic transactions, a fact that seriously challenges the legitimacy of the government and its ability to govern effectively. While 75 percent of entrepreneurs think corruption is a major constraint on doing business, it can prevent the average Ivoirian citizen from obtaining critical basic services such as state-funded "free" legal aid and subsidized public health care.[60]

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation for Ivoirians, as well as foreign direct investment, the Ouattara administration has created several institutions and legal reforms to combat corruption, including the National Authority for Good Governance (HABG), the National Regulatory Authority for Public Procurement (ANRMP), and a new law on the disclosure of assets by public officials.[61] While these mechanisms for fighting corruption are relatively new and thus difficult to assess, they indicate an initial commitment on the part of the government that must be expanded upon if they are to promote transparency and good governance effectively rather than simply pay lip service to international pressure.[62]

The ANRMP, for example, was created with funding from the World Bank to monitor and enforce fair competition for government contracts. In light of the fact that somewhere between 40 and 50 percent of these contracts are awarded to a single source without a competitive bid, the ANRMP clearly has much work to do.[63] [64] The commissioners have already demonstrated a capacity and willingness to investigate and sanction unfair business practices, annulling various government contracts for irregularities in the

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57 UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

58 United States State Department. *Côte d'Ivoire 2013 Human Rights Report*, Washington, D.C., 2014.

59 INSCT. *Côte d'Ivoire Risk Assessment 2014*, INSCT Middle East and North Africa Initiative, Syracuse University, 2014.

60 One Ivoirian after another reported to the assessment team of accounts of nurses at state maternity clinics who asked for "gifts" before processing birth certificates, children deprived of critical medical attention because their parents could not afford the bribe required to see a state doctor, and medicines that had to be privately purchased only to be stolen by staff members at public hospitals.

61 No disclosures of assets has been made public yet, the next step in fully implementing this reform. Additional legislation such as protection of whistleblowers is not yet in place but could also greatly enhance current anti-corruption efforts.

62 Two other prominent examples of the Ouattara administration's concern (if not obsession) with international standards of good governance is their work to become compliant with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the Open Government Partnership (OGP). In various meetings with ministers and members of their staff, references were made to having achieved "EITI compliance" and their current pursuit of the remaining points required for their candidacy to the OGP by the deadline at the end of the year.

63 *Autorité Nationale de Régulation des Marches Publics* (ANRMP). *Pamphlet on the National Authority for the Regulation of Public Procurement*, no date.

64 Transparency International. *Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Côte d'Ivoire*, April 19, 2013.

contract bidding process. Unfortunately to date, a small fraction of public contracts have come under review by the ANRMP. For the commissioners to play their role in fighting corruption fully, however, they will need more human and financial resources, a common theme with the HABG.

Unfortunately, their most likely allies in this campaign (the media and civil society) are currently poorly situated to contribute to these anti-corruption efforts given their own limited human and financial resources as well as political polarization (see Section 2.3).

Insufficient resources have also hampered the Ivoirian judicial system, which is plagued by lengthy delays in deliberation on civil cases and prosecution of criminal cases despite efforts to help speed up the process through digitization funded by USAID (see Section 4.0). Consequently, the judicial system has been ripe for corrupt practices such as bribery to expedite a case or obtain a favorable ruling (or even a dismissal). A critical element of rule of law, access to justice in the Côte d'Ivoire is far from equitable, giving rise to the expression "*justice à double vitesse*" ("justice at two speeds"). Ivoirians repeatedly cited examples of how the wealth, social status, or political connections of a defendant or litigant influenced the judicial proceedings—if they even took place at all. As one civil society leader in Bouaké stated in reference to the role money plays, "Justice has fallen. It is money or nothing." Similarly, another CSO leader in Abidjan described the Ivoirian judicial system as "justice of bankers."

The corruption of the judicial system is a threat to stability in Côte d'Ivoire because it is critical to the national reconciliation process. In any post-conflict situation the authorities face the delicate balancing act of ensuring that perpetrators of human rights abuses are brought to justice while at the same time fostering national reconciliation, a challenge faced by many African countries including several Ivoirian neighbors. To address this issue, the Ouattara government set up the Special Investigative Cell (SPC) within the Ministry of Justice.

Created in June 2011 to investigate crimes committed during and after the post-election crisis, the SPC remains under-staffed, without a sufficient budget, and "susceptible to political meddling."[65] On several occasions, the Minister of Justice has replaced the cell's investigative judges while the number of judicial police officers has been reduced from 20 to 4.

Even more egregious, prosecutors have complained that the government has prevented them from initiating investigations against pro-Ouattara forces. In what has been dubbed "victor's justice," not a single member of the pro-Ouattara FRCI has been arrested for human rights abuses committed during the crisis although it is widely acknowledged that members of both political camps (those of Ouattara and Gbagbo) committed human rights abuses and various other crimes during the post-electoral conflict.[66] Failure to prosecute perpetrators consistently regardless of their political loyalties undermines the judicial system, deepens distrust in the government, and prevents national reconciliation.[67] To compound the issue, detention conditions in Côte d'Ivoire are described as atrocious, harsh, even "life threatening." [68][69]

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[65] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

[66] Amnesty International. Côte d'Ivoire: La loi des vainqueurs. La situation des droits humains deux ans après la crise post-électorale. January 31, 2013.

[67] The bête noire for Gbagbo supporters is the failure to prosecute the *dozo* who allegedly engaged in severe human rights violations during the civil war as well as the post-electoral conflict as documented by the UNOCI (2014). The other prominent irritant is the government's reluctance to prosecute former *Force Nouvelle* combatants, including their leader former Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, the current President of the National Assembly.

[68] United States State Department. *Côte d'Ivoire 2013 Human Rights Report*, Washington, D.C., 2014.

[69] In September 2014, some 300 detainees went on a hunger strike at Abidjan's central civilian prison to protest against their poor living conditions and prolonged detention without trial. Despite commitments from the authorities, including acceleration of judicial proceedings, detainees who had ceased their hunger strike were forced to resume it again in early December in an effort to obtain their human rights and civil liberties from the Ivoirian government (Freedom House. *Freedom in the World 2014: Côte d'Ivoire*, New York, 2014).

There continue to be extensive although reduced human rights issues in Côte d'Ivoire, ranging from arbitrary detention and extrajudicial killings by the military to SGBV against women and children. The new Human Rights Commission has been charged with addressing all of these through the monitoring, investigation, and sanctioning of these abuses. The current commission was set up in 2012 and is seen as an improvement over its predecessor because of the inclusion of representatives from civil society and the selection of a more competent, less controversial president. Once again, however, its resources are limited and dependent on the good graces of the government, which is seen as undermining its autonomy.

Of the various populations that the commission seeks to protect, Ivoirian women and girls are particularly vulnerable to infringements on their human rights despite extensive efforts by women's organizations and international donors to disseminate information about women's rights and legal protections. Various Ivoirian women working on these issues maintained that these efforts are unfortunately insufficient and often inappropriate. For example, workshops held during the middle of a workday should instead be conducted via mobile units that could meet with women where they live and work.

Despite various constitutional and legal protections, Ivoirian women also continue to suffer legal and economic discrimination due to the failure to implement these legal codes.[70] For example, the 2012 law on marriage equality stipulates both husband and wife should manage household affairs, and that a woman has the right to perform various economic activities such as opening a bank account, obtaining a job, or starting a business without her husband's permission.[71] The effectiveness of this new law in practice remains to be seen and is likely to be dependent on factors such as the greater vulnerability of rural women to customary practices that restrict women's legal rights.[72]

Perhaps the most egregious violations of women's human rights are various forms of SGBV, most notably rape, domestic violence, and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). *Rape was common during the 2011 crisis and remains widespread.* Over a six-month period in 2014, the United Nations verified 180 cases of rape, including 32 gang rapes, of which 95 were perpetrated against children. Barely half of the alleged perpetrators were arrested, only 29 stood trial and those convicted were reclassified as a lower crime of indecent assault.[73] Women who work with rape victims attribute this high level of impunity for SGBV to a number of causes. In many cases, perpetrators are released because victims fail to provide a costly medical certificate (up to $100) or they withdraw their complaints or fail to attend the hearings owing to a lack of confidence in the judicial system.[74]

Crimes of rape and forced excision (FGM/C) are often settled at the village level by customary authorities. This deprives women of adequate counsel or compensation by allowing chiefs to mediate based on customary practices and perpetrators with financial means to payoff chiefs. According to one prefect, unfortunately "the honor of the rapist outweighs justice for the victim."

Cases of domestic violence and spousal rape are even more complicated to prosecute because there are no specific legal codes outlawing these forms of SGBV. Nor are there any laws making same-sex activity illegal. Despite social prejudice and taboos against LGBT stemming from the religious beliefs of both

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[70] According to a 2013 World Bank report, 75 percent of rural woman live below the poverty line and yet are typically required to receive permission from their husband or families to cultivate food crops.

[71] Freedom House. *Freedom in the World 2014: Côte d'Ivoire*, New York, 2014.

[72] The assessment team heard reports of dynamic women's movements being stopped in their tracks by young thugs paid by politicians to threaten the women with violence when they sought to march in protest of the high price of commodities at the market. Feeling helpless and unprotected, the women canceled their march.

[73] UNOCI. *Thirty-Fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the UNOCI*. New York: UN Security Council, S/2014/892. December 12, 2014.

[74] One particularly heart-wrenching story was of a young woman who was taunted by her rapist who bribed his way to freedom after being convicted.

Catholic and Muslim Ivoirians, there are some indications of greater tolerance among Ivorian youths tied to their commitment to human rights (see Section 2.2).

2.5 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS AND EFFECTIVENESS

In an impressive example of post-conflict state reconstruction, the Ivoirian State has been able to reestablish its presence across the country despite the protracted disruption of administrative services over large portions of the country—particularly in the judicial, security, education, and health sectors—and extensive destruction of State infrastructure during the civil war and post-electoral conflict.[75] Nevertheless, public service delivery by the State is still inadequate to meet the needs of the population. Constraints on the responsiveness and effectiveness of the Ivoirian State are undoubtedly attributable in large part to limited public finances as well as widespread corruption (see Section 2.4) that undermines effective use of those resources. Several other critical factors identified during the assessment include the weak capacity of non-state actors to demand government accountability, incomplete deconcentration of public administration, a lack of administrative competence, and policy choices that have limited State investment in human services.

Many of the factors influencing government responsiveness in Côte d'Ivoire overlap with those affecting its accountability, specifically the weak capacity and polarized nature of the Ivoirian media and civil society. Undoubtedly, these constraining factors also influence the effectiveness of the Ivoirian government in that a stronger relationship with non-state actors could provide public authorities with critical feedback and guidance on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of governmental policies and programs.

In discussions with ministerial officials, civil society leaders, journalists, business leaders, and members of the international community in Côte d'Ivoire, it was abundantly clear that the Ivoirian government, at least at the national level, is far more in tune with the expectations, objectives, and interests of international donors and potential foreign investors than members of Ivoirian society. This is a common phenomenon in African countries that are donor dependent and/or seek greater foreign direct investment to stimulate their economy, as is the case in Côte d'Ivoire.

Perhaps one of the most prominent examples from the assessment is international pressure for greater transparency and access to information to improve political and economic governance and, equally important to donors, to assure that international funding is appropriately spent to further the development goals of the country. Both the Budget Minister and the Minister of Industry and Mines (MIM), who is responsible for coordinating the Côte d'Ivoire's candidacy to the OGP, were keenly aware of international expectations of transparency of public finances, particularly the budget process.

The MIM technical advisor charged with shepherding the OGP qualification process went so far as to reach out to the Ivoirian CSO Social Justice that is coordinating the Open Budget Survey Tracker for the INGO International Budget Partnership (IBP). It is indicative of the nature of government responsiveness in Côte d'Ivoire that the ministry had no prior contact with this Abidjan-based organization (that has been working on governance issues for years) until the technical advisor stumbled on Social Justice while researching the IBP's open budget programs.

The implications of the government's responsiveness being skewed toward the international community as opposed to Ivoirian society is that these two sets of actors do not always have the same objectives, priorities, or capacities when engaging public officials. Thus their measures of government responsiveness may be quite different. For example, the international community may be willing to credit

[75] Administration of the central, northern, and western regions (the CNO zone) was essentially non-existent during the civil war. Even after the Ouagadougou Accords of 2007, State presence was not fully reestablished there until the onset of the post-electoral crisis in 2011.

the Ivoirian government with enhancing its fiscal transparency through the dissemination of budget documents on its governmental portal, but this does not necessarily ensure access to information to the overwhelming majority of Ivoirians who do not have access to the Internet. Therefore, international pressure for political reforms should ideally incorporate the involvement of Ivoirian non-state actors to promote government transparency and responsiveness.

There are currently a limited number of platforms for dialogue between the Ivoirian government and civil society leaders, including participation in various commissions noted above (e.g., ANRMP, the EITI, and the Human Rights Commission). Their capacity to ensure government responsiveness, however, is limited by the minority status given to CSOs on these committees and their designation by the government, as opposed to being selected by their peers. Governmental control of the nomination process may be in part a product of polarization within civil society. The adversarial relationships that exist between certain organizations could affect their participation in these State-society platforms, seen by the government as unproductive and of course politically undesirable.

Not surprisingly, government accessibility (if not responsiveness) at the local level appears to be significantly higher, particularly in localities outside of Abidjan. There are several reasons for this, first and foremost being lower population size that permits easier access to and familiarity with public officials, both elected and administrative.

An impressive example of a State-society platform that promotes government responsiveness is a participatory budgeting project in Bouaké. Following on the heels of a similar USAID project that helped popularize the concept and build governmental and CSO capacity, the current European Union (EU)-funded project supports mayor's office to coordinate with the local CSP a constituent-driven development project co-funded by the municipality and local contributions. In the initial phase, the CSP is organizing a series of meetings to collect information about the priorities of local communities while educating the population about the budget process, including the limited funds available in the municipal budget. The first adjunct mayor expressed his satisfaction with this opportunity not only to work collaboratively but also to debunk popular misconceptions that the municipality hoards or misappropriates a large pot of money. Beyond the life of this donor project, this State-society platform can establish and/or reinforce relations between municipal officials, civil society leaders, and the local population that can then be transferred to other mechanisms to ensure government responsiveness and accountability as well as legitimacy.

While the CSP leaders spearheading the Bouaké project hope to expand it to other localities in the region, extending this pilot would be complicated by the general lack of capacity in Ivoirian civil society. According to the EU staff responsible for the project, the Bouaké CSP is the only organization with sufficient capacity to undertake the project that responded to their repeated calls for CSO participation.

Although local administrators and elected officials in the Ivoirian national government are still all male, greater access to local authorities and their staffs permit female CSO leaders, who appear to be more numerous at the local level, to engage and obtain responses from local government that address their needs and concerns more readily. Nonetheless, the downside to increased responsiveness by local authorities is that they have less access to or control over state funding and other public resources than their counterparts in the central government.

As a result of reforms introduced to deconcentrate the administration and thereby improve government responsiveness and efficiency, local officials are responsible for the provision of an expanded number of basic administrative and social services. However, public finances and international funding remain highly centralized in the national government. Local administrators particularly in rural areas are thus forced to carry out their increased responsibilities despite meager budgets, poor infrastructure, a lack of transportation, an absence of reliable telephone communications (let alone Internet access), and other material deficits (e.g., office supplies and governmental forms). Mired in a heavily centralized

bureaucratic system that often requires inter-ministerial negotiations, local officials repeatedly reported the challenges they face in attempting to gain authorization let alone funding for public works such as the construction of schools, health centers, or other development projects.

The limited capacity of the administration to provide administrative and social services is further hampered by a frequent lack of competency and training of civil servants. This has been aggravated by the appointment of new personnel who have been incorporated into the civil service for political reasons and/or as part of the ADDR program. The incompetency of these new civil servants is particularly maddening to Ivoirians when it is believed that they are "faux" ex-combatants who have dishonestly obtained their position.

Finally, the Ouattara administration's decision to focus State investments in large infrastructure projects has had some impressive results but at the cost of other public programs, particularly health and human services. It has become a common refrain for Ivoirians to complain that they do not feel the benefits of the country's remarkable economic growth, which reached 8.2 percent in 2014.[76] While it was not surprising that civil society leaders and particularly political opponents would criticize the government's failure to invest more in social services, it was stunning to hear this critique echoed by Ivoirian business leaders who insisted that the government must invest in Côte d'Ivoire's human as well as physical capital in order to ensure future economic growth.

These critiques of the Ivoirian government's effectiveness, along with the numerous other illustrations offered in prior sections (e.g., problems within the security, judicial, and health sectors), could arguably be more readily addressed if there were better mechanisms for government responsiveness, specifically greater opportunities for dialogue between State and non-state actors. This could include a wide range of activities and forums, ranging from regularly scheduled press conferences by government officials to public hearings with deputies on legislation pending. In order for non-state actors to participate in these forums fully, however, there would need to be extensive capacity building of both civil society and the media.

2.6 THE DRG PROBLEM STATEMENT

In summary, the DRG assessment team identified some lingering issues related to Côte d'Ivoire's two decades of political instability and armed conflict. Although these issues have been reduced in number and/or intensity as a result of reconstruction and reform efforts by the Ouattara administration, continued efforts are required to avoid conflict recurrence. At the same time, as the country moves beyond its post-conflict period, the most prominent DRG problems that were pervasive across the five core elements are associated with furthering democratic reforms and enhancing government performance although human rights and security issues persist.

Specifically, the assessment team observed a need to strengthen relations between public officials and the Ivoirian population to ensure political accountability and government responsiveness as well as encourage consensus, rule of law, and government effectiveness. Another related issue that the team found is a high level of frustration among Ivoirians over the continuing poor quality and quantity of public services provided by the government that extends across the country and multiple sectors.

Consequently, the team developed a composite DRG statement that attempts to capture both the achievements of and challenges facing the Ivoirian government as it moves beyond the post-conflict transition:

> ***Despite the rapid restoration of State authority following the 2011 post-electoral crisis and the State's numerous efforts to rebuild government institutions, the economy, and social cohesion; confidence in the Ivorian government is undermined by its inability to engage the population***

[76] Economist Intelligence Unit. *Côte d'Ivoire: Country Report*, April 26, 2015.

effectively and perform core government functions, such as providing security, justice, and social services.

Based on this statement, the team then considered the various State, non-state, and international actors operating in Côte d'Ivoire to determine which are working to resolve the identified DRG problem, which have the capacity and/or interest to contribute in the future, and which might pose an obstacle to its resolution. This analysis is outlined in the next section.

3.0 STEP 2: KEY ACTORS AND INSTITUTIONS

Based on the identified DRG problem, the assessment team examined the role of key actors and institutions operating in the Côte d'Ivoire to determine those who could contribute to the resolution of the problem and those who are more likely to pose obstacle(s) based on their incentive structures and capacity to influence political reform. For example, individual actors may be strong proponents for political reform, but if they are constrained by the incentives of the institutions in which they operate or a lack of resources that they can mobilize in support of political reform, these proponents may not be able to actualize the changes they seek. The existence of the DRG problem indicates a priori that there are too few or weak proponents of political reform and/or too many or powerful opponents.

The task of the assessment team was therefore to: 1) identify who are the current and/or potential proponents and opponents to reform; 2) analyze how the capacity of proponents could be reinforced to make them more effective in their efforts to address the DRG problem; and 3) consider how the incentive structures of opponents (or ambivalent actors/institutions) may be modified to make them more amenable to political reform. This political economy analysis of the stakeholders in the Côte d'Ivoire is a critical step that permitted the assessment team to be able to craft the DRG assistance strategy presented in Section 5.0.

Among the 13 sets of actors and institutions identified in the SAF guidelines, the team chose to reorganize these into nine different categories based on analytical overlap (e.g., regrouping civil society, media, and the private sector together as critical societal actors). The team identified several other key non-state actors in the Ivoirian context, youth and women who are deeply impacted by the DRG problem, and former combatants whose incomplete demobilization and reintegration pose a significant obstacle to resolving the DRG problem as well as a continual threat to the peace and order that has been established in the post-conflict period.

3.1 EXECUTIVE BRANCH

As presented in detail in Section 1.4, Country Context, the succession of political crises that wreaked havoc in Côte d'Ivoire for over a decade beginning in 1999 profoundly impacted the political, economic, and social structures of the country. Upon coming to power in 2011, President Ouattara inherited a severely weakened State and crippled economy while confronting the immense challenge of creating a basis for national reconciliation and social cohesion in the face of profound socio-political fractures in Ivoirian society. The dramatic improvements that this administration has been able to initiate are quite impressive, including the re-establishment of public administration over the near totality of the territory and the reassertion of Côte d'Ivoire as West Africa's fastest growing economy.[77]

These achievements reflect the high level of commitment by the Ouattara administration to improve the functioning of the Ivoirian government. Given that President Ouattara is currently anticipated to win re-election in 2015, it is therefore highly likely that the USAID's DRG sector will find the executive branch to be a willing and highly motivated collaborator in its efforts to improve the performance of core

[77] According to the Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Administration, the Ivoirian government has effective control over at least 95 percent of the territory.

government functions. In term of evidence of a commitment to improving its engagement with the population, the Ouattara administration has also instituted various reforms that enhance government transparency and has created several commissions designed to improve governance that include members of civil society and the private sector.

There remain, however, several concerns regarding both the commitment and capacity of members of the executive branch as proponents of reforms to address the identified DRG problems, including:

- The high concentration of power in the central government, specifically in the executive branch, that severely constrains political accountability;
- Evidence of political bias and exclusion based on partisan politics in an increasingly dominant party system;
- Widespread corruption within ministries and civil service that are critical to service delivery of core government functions;
- A development approach favoring investment in economic infrastructure that dwarfs allocations to critical social services and that is perceived as favoring a small elite from one region of the country; and
- Indications of a shallow commitment to political reform based on international interests and indices rather than a genuine commitment to creating a more responsive, responsible government based on the interests and concerns of the Ivoirian population.

While these are formidable obstacles to the executive branch providing substantial support for genuine democratic reform, DRG programming can collaborate with committed reformers within the executive branch in alliance with proponents for reform among the other stakeholders outlined below to improve civic engagement and core government functions. Moreover, shallow incentive structures created by international indices, such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation's emphasis on anti-corruption, can nevertheless be utilized to introduce critical policy and legislative changes that create obligations and expectations. These in turn can be used by non-state actors to hold the government accountable by shining an international spotlight on its successful or failed implementation of these reforms.

3.2 POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

Despite the existence of multiple political parties, Ivoirian politics is in effect bifurcated into two political factions: the ruling RHDP coalition led by President Ouattara's RDR party in alliance with former President Bédié's PDCI, and the opposition Alliance of Democratic Forces (AFD) coalition led by the FPI. With the opposition's decision to boycott the 2011 legislative elections, the Ivoirian party system has quickly taken on the characteristics of a dominant party system that is less likely to be held electorally accountable and thus less responsive to its constituents let alone the electorate as a whole. This clearly poses an obstacle to enhancing effective engagement of the population.

The growing dominance of the RHDP has been reinforced by the splintering of the opposition, specifically the FPI as a result of a crisis of leadership with the detention of former President Gbagbo in The Hague and the assertion by Affi Nguessan to assume the helm of the party and stand as its presidential candidate in 2015. The FPI has in effect been split into two factions if not yet wholly independent parties. There are, however, two recent trends that may increase the competitiveness of party politics in Côte d'Ivoire: the rise of tensions within the ruling RHDP coalition and efforts to form a new coalition in opposition to President Ouattara's political dominance.

The RHDP was formed as a political alliance in 2005 to ensure the ouster of President Gbagbo. Under the slogan "*Tout sauf Gbagbo*" ("Anyone but Gbagbo"), Ouattara was able to win the second round of the

2010 presidential elections with the support from Bédié's PDCI-RDA, the UDPCI of former president General Robert Guéï, and the small "micro" party, the Forces of the Future Movement (MFA). After Ouattara was able to assume power, the UDPCI and MFA received one ministerial appointment each with the remainder distributed to leaders of the larger RDR and PDCI parties.[78] Rivalries have arisen between these two first-among-equal members of the coalition over the distribution of political posts and electoral competition between their party candidates during the legislative and local elections. These tensions came to a head when Bédié announced that the PDCI would support Ouattara's re-election and not field a presidential candidate even in the first round. Members of the PDCI criticized Bédié's unilateral decision, which is seen as a reflection of his own personal interests at the expense of the party and its democratic internal processes. Currently, members of the opposition are attempting to mobilize a new "National Coalition for Change" that would include disgruntled members of the PDCI, the FPI splinter group, and several other small parties under the electoral slogan of "*Tout sauf Ouattara*." While its prospects for carrying an electoral majority in October 2015 are slim at best, it does represent one possible avenue for dislodging the political dominance of the RHDP.

The political asymmetry in Ivoirian politics is also reflected in the country's electoral institution, CEI, which continues to be a bone of contention between the ruling RHDP coalition and the opposition AFD coalition. The opposition's two primary objections are the political imbalance in the composition and unilateral designation of its president as discussed in Section 2.3. After the two AFD commissioners withdrew from the CEI in protest last September, the government did attempt to resolve the problem by proposing legislation that added three new officers (a vice president and two secretaries) to the national bureau thereby increasing the membership from six to nine. Although the AFD commissioners agreed to return to the CEI in November 2014, the opposition continues to maintain that the electoral reform does not address the imbalance in the CEI's composition nor the lack of a consensus on its president.

The lack of confidence in the CEI among the opposition and its supporters poses a serious threat to the credibility of the upcoming presidential elections that could potentially lead to a post-electoral crisis if the opposition claims that the inadequacies of the CEI have undermined the validity of the electoral results. Political observers, however, remain dubious that this could descend into the political violence experienced in 2010–2011, although the possibility exists. Nevertheless, the problems associated with Ivoirian electoral institutions do not pose an obstacle to addressing the DRG problems so much a possible derailment into an alternative scenario considered in Section 4.0.

3.3 LEGISLATURE

As is the case in most African countries, the legislature has played a highly constrained role in Ivoirian politics, dating back to the one-party system under Houphouët-Boigny. Even with the establishment of a multiparty system in the 1990s, there was little change in the Côte d'Ivoire's heavily presidential system with the National Assembly doing little other than formally approving the laws proposed by the executive involving little debate and no significant challenges or changes. Then the political instability and violence that began at the turn of the century rendered the parliament basically non-functional for over a decade.[79]

Since the 2011 legislative elections, the National Assembly has resumed its legislative functions of passing laws and has even *begun* to debate legislation proposed by the executive as well as pose questions to ministerial officials about the financing and functioning of the government. However, the capacity of

[78] The MFA leader Innocent Anaky Kobenan objected to his party's meager share of political posts, but his party forced him to step down and replaced him with Anzouama Moutaye who reaffirmed MFA's allegiance to the RHDP alliance.

[79] The chair of one legislative committee described the deputies as basically "being here but not working" from 2000–2011. For example, the assembly failed to even give its historical "rubber stamp" approval of the State budgets proposed by the executive, which were instead enacted by presidential decree. The deputy noted with disdain that despite the "enormous amount of money involved, there was no legislative control. It was like a country without a balance sheet."

the legislature to place checks on executive power has been seriously thwarted by the opposition's decision to boycott the elections, leaving the legislators with little political incentive to challenge the president to whose ruling coalition they belong.[80] This situation is likely to be altered in the next round of legislative elections that are scheduled to be held around the same time as the DRG office will be reviewing and revising its programming (2016–2017).

In addition to the problem of party-driven incentive structures in the Ivoirian National Assembly, legislators and their limited administrative staff lack the capacity to perform their functions, from the ability to review financial documents to writing professional letters. There have been some significant efforts to increase the institutional capacity of the Ivoirian National Assembly in order to be able to provide a check and balance to the dominant executive branch, including the USAID-funded Legislative Strengthening Project (LSP, Section 4.0). Most notably, the USAID program provides technical assistance to legislative committees, while the National Secretariat for the Reinforcement of Capacity, recently created with funding from the World Bank, has just begun to provide technical advisors to the various legislative committees.

Given power differentials between the executive and legislative branches, however, this technical capacity building is unlikely to impact efforts at democratic reform significantly unless the legislature can truly claim to speak on behalf of the Ivoirian people. Unfortunately, to date, contact between deputies and their constituents has been sporadic at best and few if any forums for political dialogue exist between them.[81] Moreover, legislators appear to have little if any contact with CSOs working on related policy areas. When one deputy was asked about the assembly's work with members of civil society or the media, he replied, "We haven't arrived there yet," implying that this may be a next stage in enhancing the role of the legislature in Ivoirian politics.

It should be noted that there was some critique during the mission of the political motives behind efforts to empower the legislature vis-à-vis the executive branch, specifically the political ambitions of the president of the National Assembly, Guilliaume Soro, a former prime minister and leader of the New Forces rebel movement. Whatever the incentives driving this political actor, be it the desire to promote democratic reform and/or his political career, Soro is likely to be a powerful ally in promoting reforms to more "effective engage[ment of] the population" and "enhancing the performance of core government functions," the dual challenges identified in the DRG problem. Moreover, the creation of a new caucus of female deputies committed to advancing women's issues in the legislature indicates an important new avenue for enhancing political accountability to this key population.

3.4 JUDICIARY AND LEGAL PROFESSION

According to members of the Ivoirian judiciary and bar association, the judicial branch, like the legislative branch, has historically had insufficient autonomy from the executive to adequately serve as a check on presidential power or avoid impunity among politically and/or economically powerful individuals in Ivoirian society. Despite a constitutional provision for judicial independence, the lack of autonomy in practice is tied to the institutional structure of the Council of the Magistrate, a legacy of the French colonial system, in which members of the executive branch control the appointment and promotion of members of the judiciary as well as disciplinary actions taken against them without any legislative oversight or provisions for appeal.

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[80] The ruling coalition of parties controls all but a handful of seats held by micro parties in the opposition.

[81] Interestingly, during the assessment, one of the most widely praised USAID-sponsored activities was the "*mission de formation*" organized to permit members of the National Assembly to tour different localities, investigating how public monies are being spent and meeting with the local population. This type of project has the advantage of both getting the legislators out of Abidjan, in direct contact with Ivoirian voters, and promoting the legislators' role of monitoring the executive branch.

Members of the legal profession repeatedly cited the lack of judicial independence due to the dominant role of the executive in the Council of the Magistrate as their primary concern, claiming that it "undermines the autonomy of the magistrates who are frequently concerned about how a decision will be perceived particularly in sensitive cases," either due to the nature of the topic or individuals involved. They insisted that despite various reforms and improvements since 2011 (and even before then), there has been no effective change in the system or its partisan nature as a result of this institutional distortion of the incentive structures among Ivoirian magistrates.

Nevertheless, there clearly have been a number of important improvements in the judicial system since its collapse during the civil war and subsequent post-election crisis. During this period, much of the judicial infrastructure was physically destroyed, the judiciary was highly politicized, and corruption, which has always tainted the Ivoirian judicial system, became rampant. With significant donor investment by the African Development Bank, the European Union, Japan, and the United States, there have been some indications of improved efficiency and access. Programs such as USAID's Côte d'Ivoire Justice Sector Support Program (ProJustice, Section 4.0) have helped to improve access to the judicial system through digitization of the court clerks' offices, legal aid to the indigent, and training for members of the judiciary and their court staff. Moreover, the creation of a new Commerce Tribunal was widely praised by stakeholders including representatives of the business community as a means to ensure prosecution (and thus hopefully prevention) of financial crimes.[82]

Despite these efforts at judicial reform, the poor functioning of and corruption within the judicial system continue to make it one of the most-frequently criticized sectors of the Ivoirian political economy. Politicization of the judicial process remains evident in the failure to prosecute supporters of the Ouattara administration for alleged crimes during the last decade of political violence, giving rise to the perception of the reign of a "victor's justice" in Côte d'Ivoire (Section 2.4). Moreover, the system remains overburdened and under-resourced, making it vulnerable to corrupt practices that have created a bifurcated system of justice at "two speeds" depending on one's political clout and economic resources. This corruption has undermined the performance of this core government function as well as efforts to enhance access to justice. While some Ivoirians have undoubtedly benefited from the legal clinics provided through the Ministry of Justice with funding from USAID, others reported that these clinics are not accessible because they are not "free," as the civil servants administering them often demand payment before placing citizens in contact with pro bono legal counsel.[83] Interestingly, the legal clinics operated by CSOs in Bouaké were seen more favorably as they did not require bribes to gain access to legal advice. A donor-funded project that ran its life cycle, these CSO clinics are no longer functioning, offering perhaps an opportunity for State-civil society collaboration to ensure a longer-term solution to the legal needs of indigent Ivoirians.

3.5 STATE SECURITY FORCES AND NON-STATE ARMED ACTORS

The State security forces are composed of the FRCI, police, gendarmes, customs officers, and water and forest rangers. The armed forces have been reintegrated following the civil war and post-election violence, and there has been a major reorganization of the police force. Moreover, the security threat of attacks by pro-Gbagbo elements seeking to reignite an armed struggle seems to be minimal though there is some suspicion of Ivoirians based in Ghana and Liberia who could be organizing coordinated attacks as well as rumors of former militia lying in wait in remote rural areas of western Côte d'Ivoire.

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[82] It is difficult to assess at this time the potential impact of the planned reform to split the Supreme Court into three specialized courts—a judicial Court of Appeals (*Cour de Cassation*), an Administrative Court (*Conseil de l'Etat*) to try cases against public officials or the government, and a Court of Auditors (*Cour de Comptes*) that monitors State allocations and expenditures. This judicial reform could potentially enhance the expertise and thus the efficiency and capacity of these new courts.

[83] In addition, there were some reports that the failure by the ministry to remunerate pro bono lawyers for their services has contributed to an insufficient supply of them, particularly in areas outside of Abidjan.

However, despite significant improvements in security during the post-conflict period, there remains a general lack of confidence in the Ivoirian security system due several factors, including: a perception of the FRCI as an "army of victors" in some regions of the country, its failure to return to the barracks and permit law enforcement to maintain civic order, the continued militarization of the police, the incomplete disarmament and demobilization of armed non-state actors, and a consequent high level of criminality often associated with armed ex-combatants who have become involved in criminal activities as well as youth in urban gangs. As a result, improved performance of the State security forces represents one of the critical core government functions targeted in the DRG problem statement.

Created during the height of the post-electoral crisis, the FRCI represents a fusion of the Security and Defense Forces (FDS) of the former Gbagbo government and the New Forces, the military force of the Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI) that controlled the northern region of the country.[84] Given the composition of the New Forces (largely Malinke from the north), the ethnic makeup of the FRCI represents a significant change that some argue rectifies the ethno-regional imbalance of the country's security forces under the Gbagbo regime (largely Attie, Bete, Dida, and Guere from the south and western regions). However, others feel that the meteoric rise of northern elements in the armed forces justifies their suspicions surrounding this institution, making it difficult to view it as a "republican army" but rather an "army of the victors."

In addition to this lack of confidence in the armed forces, the State appears to be over-reliant on the FRCI to maintain public order. During the post-electoral crisis, the Ouattara administration depended on the FRCI out of necessity given the poor state of the police force. However, the FRCI is now seen as overstepping its authority and needing to "return to the barracks" and leave policing to the police. The requisite demilitarization of law enforcement also extends to a need to retrain the police force on how to maintain order without excessive force and repression of the population. Both of these reforms will require a high level of pressure within the State security forces as well as political will within the Ministry of Defense and, above all, the office of the president. If the 2015 elections transpire without significant security issues, this may give the executive branch sufficient confidence in the security situation to undertake the significant reforms required.

In addition to State security forces, Côte d'Ivoire has had a significant number of non-state armed actors dating to the 2002 rebellion. In the north and central portions of the country, the New Forces mobilized support among local militia and the *dozo*.[85] To protect his power against the insurgency by the New Forces, Gbagbo in turn incorporated militia and youths into his security forces, forming defense forces in the south and southwestern regions of Côte d'Ivoire. As discussed in Section 2.4, the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants is far from complete, with a substantial number of small arms and light weapons continuing to circulate throughout the country.

This has contributed to the abnormally high level of criminal activity despite the restoration of public order. Theft and extortion, particularly highway robberies, are most common and seem to be increasingly violent. Former combatants are often suspected as the perpetrators although it is difficult to distinguish them from other Ivoirians who can readily obtain an illegal weapon.

Contributing to the high crime rate is a new phenomenon in Côte d'Ivoire: urban youth gangs known as "microbes." Led by young men in their late teens and early twenties and composed of children as young as 10 years of age, these gangs are found in the "popular neighborhoods" (ghettos) of Abidjan as well as towns in the interior of the country such as Man and Daloa. They have terrorized their neighborhoods, stealing cell phones and money, operating shacks where illegal drugs can be bought and consumed, and killing anyone who opposes them. The failure of the State to respond to this security threat has resulted in

[84] Fofana, Moussa. "Des Forces Nouvelles aux Forces Republicaines de la Côte d'Ivoire: Comment Une Rebellion Devient Republicaine," Politique Africaine 122: 161-178, 2011.

[85] Miran-Guyon, Marie. Guerres Mystiques en Côte d'Ivoire: Religion, Patriotisme, Violence (2002-2013). Paris: Karthala, 2015.

violent vigilantism, including the torture and decapitation of a microbe leader in Abidjan just prior to the mission.[86] To respond to this new security threat, the Ivoirian government will need to not only enhance the capacity of its police force, but also provide more social services, economic redistribution, and job creation to stem the tide of this rising youth violence.

3.6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Since the 1980s, each successive Ivoirian administration, under significant international pressure (specifically from the World Bank) has undertaken political reforms to decentralize political authority to regional and local governments, and to administratively deconcentrate its highly centralized government. Each of these successive administrations has failed to fully implement the reforms they have adopted, primarily because it is not in the interests of a centralized State to cede its political authority and control over public resources. The Ouattara administration is no exception.

The strengthening of local government—both elected officials and civil servants—should in theory enhance government engagement of the population given their closer proximity and thus accessibility, thereby reinforcing the performance of core government functions (as citizens can more readily demand accountability from their local officials). This widely held development theory has not yet been tested in Côte d'Ivoire because of the continued concentration of political power in the central government.

After assuming office in 2011, Ouattara made his contribution to the latest effort at deconcentration with the adoption of Ordnance no. 2011-262, under which the territorial administration was further carved into 31 regions from the preexisting 19.[87] The problem is that this administrative reform is little more than a disregarded *lettre morte* without the transfer of competence, specifically administrative authority and public funding, to undertake policy initiatives and development projects such as the construction of schools and health clinics. Unsurprisingly, the central government continues to guard these prerogatives jealously, requiring regional and local governments to conduct cumbersome inter-ministerial negotiations to take actions on behalf of their local populations.

Given the structural constraint of the central government's institutional interests of the central government, along with the political interests of key national actors, it is unlikely that effective deconcentration will be implemented without significant combined international and pressure. However, the effectiveness of local government in engaging the population and delivering core services may be enhanced through current efforts at participatory budgeting. First initiated by USAID as a pilot in Bouaké and Korhogo, participatory budgeting is now being promoted by an EU project with Bouaké's CSP. Such programs have the potential for re-engaging the population in contributing to local development projects by enhancing the transparency of local budgets and permitting them to identify their priorities for public investment. Moreover, local officials recognize the advantages of educating the population about the financial and administrative constraints they face in delivering the infrastructure and social services that the public expects the State to provide.

Although the culture of participatory management that requires financial as well as political participation by the population was not fully appreciated during the initial USAID pilot, both the local population and municipal officials of Bouaké are now keenly aware that they will need to contribute financial resources to achieve their priorities rather than wait for the sponsoring international donor to finance them as was their mistaken impression with the USAID project. Moreover, the CSP has taken the participatory budget

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[86] Grisot, Maureen. "Un Chef des 'Microbes' decapité à Abidjan," Le Monde: May 8, 2015.

[87] Before the 2011 reform, the country was divided into 19 regions that were subdivided into prefectures (*départements*) and then sub-prefectures. In the name of deconcentration, the Ouattara administration created a new layer of local government, 12 districts and two autonomous districts (Abidjan and Yamasoukrou) that are subdivided into the 31 new regions, with the prefectures expanding from 81 to 95, and the sub-prefectures from 393 to 497. There are now over 1,200 municipalities and 8,000 villages.

process one step further by obtaining pledges from nearly every candidate in the last local elections to work toward the fulfillment of a long list of needs identified by their constituents. This type of engagement is much more difficult, although not impossible, on the national level given sufficiently dynamic CSOs with strong networks and institutional capacity.

Finally, the Ouattara administration has initiated a new law that recognizes the authority of traditional authorities (kings and chiefs) as a means to reinforcing local authority and political decentralization. Adopted in 2014, the new law recognizes the legitimacy of traditional chieftaincies, thereby strategically attaching them to the Ivoirian State (in the past they have been more closely affiliated with political parties seeking their electoral support). While there is potential for this reinforcing civic engagement and political accountability given their social status and proximity to the local population, it is also a problematic strategy in that the concept of "traditional authority" is highly variable among different localities and, more importantly, it reinforces social hierarchies and the near exclusion of women.

3.7 SOCIETAL ACTORS: CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

Societal actors—civil society, the media, and private sector—have critical roles to play in promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance through civic engagement with public officials and social accountability mechanisms that monitor government policies and actions. However, the potential contribution of societal actors in Côte d'Ivoire, specifically CSOs and the media, has largely gone unfulfilled due to their limited capacity and skewed interests as a result of their politicization and need to "follow the money."[88]

As discussed in detail in Section 2.0, Ivoirian civil society and the media have been heavily politicized after years of political instability and violence. Non-partisan participation in public life was impossible during the civil war and subsequent post-electoral crisis. Choosing political camps was a matter of survival, affording these actors financial support if not physical protection. During the post-conflict transition, the Ivoirian media has continued to be largely bifurcated by green (pro-Gbagbo) versus blue (pro-Ouattara) allegiances that prevent independent media reporting and rigorous investigative journalism. Meanwhile, CSOs, particularly those involved in areas related to DRG, remain highly politicized, often associated with one political camp or the other, thus preventing them from being viewed as advocates for citizens' rights and a responsible, responsive government but rather as partisan actors.

The politicization of these societal actors that has skewed their interests and strategies has been reinforced by the limited capacity of the Ivoirian media and civil society, specifically their lack of financial and human resources. During focus groups with civil society leaders, they themselves requested more training to enhance their technical knowledge and professionalism in order to better engage public officials and more effectively advocate for political reform in the various policy areas in which they work. Their lack of financial resources has limited their programming capacity or made it highly donor-dependent, contributing to a foreshortened life cycle among CSOs and their programs that typically cannot be sustained beyond the duration of donor funding. The private press is similarly constrained by limited advertising resources that makes them reliant on bankrolling by political parties or wealthy owners whose identity is not always transparent.

Fortunately, there has been a growing number of exceptions over the last few years, a trend that could be reinforced through DRG programming. Among CSOs, new and renewed groups have explicitly embraced non-partisan missions and objectives, in particular women's groups and youth organizations. There are also new CSOs at the national and local level that are embarking on social accountability mechanisms,

[88] The assessment team chose not to focus on the private sector in the analysis of key actors, although the business community represents potential allies for both state and non-state political reformers. This decision was based on an acknowledgement that, unlike civil society and the media, the private sector is not "the most relevant" to the identified DRG problem.

such as the promotion of budget transparency by Social Justice and participatory budgeting by the CSP in Bouaké.[89] Reinforcing such trends among these and other civil society actors is a critical role USAID can play in altering the politicized interest structures and limited capacity of CSOs to enable them to effectively engage public officials and demand better delivery of core services by the national and local governments in Côte d'Ivoire.

Similarly, there are opportunities for DRG programming to build upon positive developments in the media, particularly among dynamic community radio stations supported by OTI that have been making important contributions to rebuilding Ivoirian civil society. In Daloa, for example, programming on Radio Tcerato has broadcast nearly two dozen programs on political rights, social cohesion, and national reconciliation. Directed by a young Ivoirian woman, the series has had a wide audience as well as listener participation from across the political spectrum. Meanwhile, in Duékoué, broadcasters from *La Voix de Guemon* have taken their microphones into the countryside to broadcast roundtables in which villagers are allowed to speak spontaneously on any issue they wish. Many of the participants have seized the opportunity to confess their roles as perpetrators of violence and ask forgiveness of their neighbors, thereby playing a critical role post-conflict healing that the CVDR has grossly failed to do.

With the imminent departure of OTI from Côte d'Ivoire following the 2015 presidential elections, both of these stations are concerned about continued funding for personnel and equipment maintenance to sustain such programming, a role DRG programming could fill and potentially expand on with an eye to assisting these and other media outlets to develop greater fiscal autonomy in the medium to long term.

3.8 KEY POPULATIONS: FORMER COMBATANTS, YOUTH, AND WOMEN

The assessment team identified three key populations in Côte d'Ivoire that warrant a separate analysis both in terms of how they can contribute to and benefit from the resolution of the DRG problem: former combatants, youth, and women.

Former combatants is a sociologically heterogeneous category composed of the young and not-so young, men and women, from all political leanings, ethnicities, and religious groups. Their incomplete disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration into society continues to pose significant risks to the rest of the population as well as the future stability of Côte d'Ivoire. Addressing their needs, however, is complicated by conflicting views of this group as alternatively privileged or marginalized. Civilians who did not take up arms, particularly Ivoirian youths, are critical of the extensive resources the former combatants receive, while they see themselves as stigmatized and poorly compensated after "risking their lives to re-establish peace and democracy Côte d'Ivoire" according to a former combatant in Korhogo.

The perception of being marginalized is tied to the poor administration of the State organizations responsible for their demobilization, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. The CDVR was highly politicized and never held accountable for what is widely seen as its failed mission (see Section 2.1). The ADDR has also been poorly administered according to former combatants who met with the assessment team. They complained of insufficient payment (800,000 CFA) paid in two to three installments (if the subsequent payments were ever made) that prevented them from having sufficient capital to embark on a self-sustaining socio-economic activity. Former combatants also criticized the lack of foresight that led to the saturation of local transportation markets with the massive distribution of motorcycles as compensation to former combatants. "What are we going to do with 500 motorcycles in (the small town of) Korhogo?" Some criticized the mismanagement of resources by NGOs subcontracted

[89] In each of these cases, the CSOs have been reliant on funding from international donors, specifically the project promoting budget transparency implemented by Social Justice with funding from the International Budget Partnership and the CSP in Bouaké project funded by the EU. The ability of Social Justice and CSP-Bouake to sustain their involvement in social accountability beyond the life of these donor projects will be critical and hopefully an objective of their international benefactors.

by the *Association des démobilisés de Côte d'Ivoire* (ADCI) to distribute the monies to the former combatants, while others criticized corruption in the system set up to verify their identify and thus eligibility for the DDR program. The dominant sentiment among the former combatants is that the DDR process would have produced better results if the government had consulted them when the ADDR was put into place. "The directors of the ADDR do not know the problems that the former combatants face."

These complaints by former combatants reflect the seriousness and pervasiveness of the problems outlined in the DRG statement. In this sense, the former combatants may be ideal proponents for political reforms to address these issues in the security and other critical sectors of Côte d'Ivoire's political economy. Moreover, mobilization of the disabled among the former combatants may also become a basis for advocating for another marginalized group much as disability rights took off after the Vietnam War in the United States as a result of well-organized disabled veterans.

Another overlapping key population is Ivoirian youths. To date, the Ouattara administration has been more concerned about who among them has arms than the youth as a socio-political group, despite frequent references to the youth as the country's future. The need for a more developed youth policy is clear in terms of its demographic explosion, commonly referred to the "youth bulge," the high rate of unemployment of Ivoirian youths, and their sense of having been "used" during the civil war and post-election crisis only to be ignored by an older generation of political and economic elites who are the beneficiaries of Côte d'Ivoire's economic boom.

According to the 2014 national census, the total Ivoirian population under the age of 35 is 77.7 percent, with youths between the ages of 15 and 34 representing 36.2 percent. This social category has been particularly hard hit by un- and under-employment. Victims of Côte d'Ivoire's decade-long political crisis, they were not only deprived of a well-functioning education system but also recruited to risk their lives in the armed conflict. Political promises of more and better employment for the youth have been undermined by their poor education and training, the extension of the retirement age, and an economic environment that has generated few entry-level jobs.

Consequently, Ivoirian youths perceive themselves as a marginalized social category that is ignored and seldom heard. They are highly critical of the frequently repeated slogan that the future belongs to them as there is no political policy that explicitly addresses the problems of the youth, the greatest preoccupation of which is unemployment as young Ivoirians repeatedly emphasized in our meetings. For these reasons, the youth represent clear allies in pushing for political reforms that could address the DRG problems but their lack of capacity to influence Ivoirian politics is likely to require alliances with other more powerful stakeholders to ensure their demands are heard and responded to by public officials.

The third key population is Ivoirian women who, like youths, have not benefited from an explicit policy to address socio-economic and politic issues of gender inequality. As a direct product of the extensive work by donors on the rights of women and girls, there is a gender discourse in Côte d'Ivoire but it has not yet amounted to much more than a "political slogan."

While women are heavily underrepresented in both political institutions and the market place, there is some evidence that things are changing for Ivoirian women, such as the new women's caucus in the National Assembly. If women are to gain greater political influence and economic power, however, they will need to not only address socio-cultural constraints but also their own socialized norms that makes them reticent to speak out in public let alone run for public office.

3.9 INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL ACTORS

The assessment team identified three different types of international and global actors that have significant capacity to influence the Ivoirian government and its ability to both perform its core functions and engage its population: international donors, regional actors, and the United Nations security forces.

Among the international donors operating in Côte d'Ivoire, the World Bank is undoubtedly the predominant force in terms of the size and breadth of its portfolio and thus its capacity to negotiate with the Ivoirian government, garnering more weight in its policy decisions and political reforms.[90] The World Bank remains somewhat constrained, however, in promoting reforms that address DRG problems due to its charter that prohibits involvement in political (as opposed to financial) governance issues and defines the Bank's sole client as the national government. Nevertheless, under a new directive from Washington, D.C., that requires *all* current and future Bank projects to explicitly encourage civic engagement and social accountability, the World Bank is currently embarking on an analytical study to determine how it can incorporate this dimension into its programming while adhering to its narrowly defined mission.

As co-leader of the donor's governance group with a mission statement that is less restricted to "apolitical" governance issues, USAID is well placed to collaborate with the World Bank in the promotion of civic engagement and social accountability. Indeed, one of the greatest challenges to effective international cooperation in Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere in the world is the structural constraints on coordinated and complementary actions by technical and financial partners. Fortunately, the USAID DRG sector has a close collegial relationship with its colleagues at the World Bank, which should permit effective collaboration in addressing the identified DRG problem.

In terms of regional actors, Côte d'Ivoire's membership in the West Africa Economic and Monetary Unit (UEMOA) is the most influential given the direct impact that UEMOA accords have on Ivoirian public policy and political reforms.[91] A currency and customs union, the UEMOA has undertaken reform initiatives in a wide array of policy areas, ranging from the structure of higher education to public finance management in its eight member states.[92] In terms of the identified DRG problem, results-based budgeting that promotes participatory management of public finances has significant potential "to improve program delivery and strengthen management effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability." In this sense, the interests of the UEMOA clearly coincide with DRG programming that would seek to enhance the performance of core government functions. However, the process by which the Ivoirian government has given its assent to UEMOA accords, particularly budget reforms, is fraught with considerable international pressure from France and the EU in light of the fixed exchange rate between the CFA and the euro. Membership in this regional organization creates an obligation to assent to and abide by the "consensus" that reflects external international interests. This can often mean that the application of UEMOA accords is not assured but variable depending upon the State's capacity or commitment to implement the reforms.

Finally, the international actor that has dominated the Ivoirian security sector for the last decade is the UNOCI, which has been operating in the country since 2004 with over 7,500 uniformed personnel as of March 2015. The UNOCI is currently drawing down on its troops and operations with a view to leaving after the "successful" completion of the 2015 presidential elections this fall although current authorization is due to end on June 30. Beyond providing an armed security force, the UNOCI has been involved in various civic campaigns through mediums such as community radio. The departure of the UNOCI along with USAID's OTI will leave a large hole in DRG programming that will need to be picked up in order to avoid backsliding, which is too frequently associated with the departure of foreign presence in a post-conflict zone.

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[90] The second most influential international donor in Côte d'Ivoire is the former colonial power, France, currently framed within its Debt Reduction and Development (C2D) contributions and programming. Most notably, the EU is handing over to the French its programming on judicial reform, which could be more effectively coordinated with USAID ProJustice.

[91] Côte d'Ivoire is also a member of Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, but neither of these regional organizations has the same impact on governmental decisions and policies.

[92] The UEMOA is composed of seven francophone countries—Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo—along with lusophone Guinea Bissau, which joined in 1997.

Based on this political economy analysis of stakeholders operating in Côte d'Ivoire, it is clear that there are significant opportunities for DRG programming to address the identified problem statement. It is therefore critical to assess the capacity and comparative advantages of the DRG sector of USAID in light of USAID/Côte d'Ivoire's operational and programmatic environment.

4.0 STEP 3: OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENT

The third step in the DRG assessment process is to consider U.S. Government and USAID interests, policies, strategies, current assistance programs, resources, and comparative strengths and weaknesses. This information serves as a filter for the DRG problem to weed out strategic or programmatic options that may fall outside the focus or capabilities of the USAID team while highlighting those that are a good fit.

4.1 U.S. GOVERNMENT INTERESTS AND FOREIGN POLICY

Although Côte d'Ivoire's profile has been rising over the last year, its overall importance to U.S. foreign policy in West Africa is dwarfed by Nigeria and Ghana. Nonetheless, as part of its broader interest in the Africa region and the world, the U.S. Government has a strong interest in assisting the Côte d'Ivoire in becoming a more stable, democratic, and prosperous country.[93] An important regional power in West Africa, the country has capacity to serve as either a stabilizing or destabilizing force particularly the Mano River region, a geopolitical area critical to U.S. foreign policy. Promoting democracy, good governance, and human rights while preventing and mitigating conflict in the country has the added value of combating the rise of violent extremism, signs of which have not yet begun to appear in Côte d'Ivoire. Moreover, although the U.S. Government does not have extensive economic interests in Côte d'Ivoire, economic growth in Côte d'Ivoire has the capacity to stimulate economic development in the region.

As outlined in the U.S. State Department's Factsheet (2015), U.S. Government assistance toward Côte d'Ivoire consequently aims to:

- Support multi-ethnic participation in the democratic process through free, fair, and competitive elections and other follow-on activities;
- Reinforce national, provincial, and local governmental institutions to improve governance in terms of responsiveness and effectiveness;
- Enhance the capacity of the media and civil society to increase political accountability and public confidence in the democratic process; and
- Promote respect for the rule of law and human rights.[94]

In addition, the U.S. Government has a strong commitment to addressing the global HIV/AIDS epidemic through the expansion of access to preventive care and treatment services in Côte d'Ivoire. This is particularly challenging in the Ivoirian context given the large populations of refugees and internally displaced peoples as well as the country's porous borders.

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[93] The basis for U.S. Government foreign policy in Côte d'Ivoire is laid out in two documents: the White House's 2012 *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan African* and the State Department's 2015 *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*.

[94] U.S. Department of State. *U.S. Relations with Côte d'Ivoire Factsheet*, Washington, D.C., 2015.

In light of the DRG problem identified by the assessment team, it is important to note that the first pillar of the White House's 2012 *U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* is to strengthen democratic institutions. In order to promote more accountable, transparent, and responsive governance in the region, the U.S. Government is committed to expand its "efforts to support and empower key reformers and institutions of government at all levels" and to strengthen civil society and an independent media.[95] Similarly, the 2015 *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* "strongly reinforces [the U.S. Government] commitment to democracy, human rights and accountable governance, and deepening partnerships with civil society."[96]

4.2 USAID STRATEGIES, DRG OBJECTIVES, AND CURRENT PROGRAMMING IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

USAID strategies and programs align with U.S. political, economic, and military interests in Côte d'Ivoire, although U.S. Government foreign policy priorities in the region do not appear to be in line with the level of USAID investment in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly the DRG sector (Section 4.5). The 2013 USAID DRG Strategy emphasizes the importance of participation and accountability in order to achieve DRG objectives and specifically outlines an approach for supporting and defending civil society.

Current DRG programming in Côte d'Ivoire includes four projects:

- **Legislative Strengthening Project:** This five-year (2012–2017), $13 million project provides expert guidance, training, resources, and organizational support to help reinforce the capacity of the National Assembly as "an independent government branch able to carry out needed oversight, effective policy development, and responsive constituent representation" (USAID FactSheet). Legislators and constituents alike offered positive feedback on components of the project that have encouraged monitoring of government expenditures and, to a lesser degree, constituency consultation. The legislature remains, however, severely handicapped in its capacity to fully playing its role as representatives of the people and a counterbalance to the executive.[97]

- **ProJustice:** This five-year (2013–2018), $19 million project targets Côte d'Ivoire's much maligned and terribly overwhelmed justice sector, including a training program that targets key actors in the justice sector, the provision of material and technical support, and infrastructure rehabilitation. One component of this project is to support the Government of Côte d'Ivoire's legal aid program, although Ivoirian civil society leaders claim that access to these services continues to be obstructed by corrupt practices by gatekeepers.

- **Electoral Reform Project:** This four-year (2014–2018), $5.4 million project is designed to support the reform of Côte d'Ivoire's electoral framework in order to promote peaceful elections, increase citizen awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and improve participation in the elections process. The upcoming 2015 presidential elections will be a critical test of the capacity of Côte d'Ivoire to hold free, fair, and competitive elections in a peaceful environment. Based on the DRG assessment, one of the greatest, most fundamental challenges to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process and thus the legitimacy of the Ivoirian government remains the credibility of the CEI and its leadership.

- **Support for Protection and Human Rights Promotion of the LGBT Community and Other**

[95] The White House. *U.S. Policy toward Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington, D.C., 2015.

[96] U.S. Department of State. *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, Washington, D.C, 2015.

[97] Members of the team who met with the assembly leadership were particularly concerned that the only change they would make to the project is shifting the destination of their fact finding trip from their counterparts in Africa to more desirable junkets in Europe that are less likely to provide models for reform and practices in Côte d'Ivoire.

Vulnerable Populations: USAID/Côte d'Ivoire has also received $1.2 million from USAID's Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) Bureau to support efforts to promote human rights of the LGBT community and other vulnerable populations, including victims of the conflict, marginalized groups, and survivors of SGBV.

In addition to DRG programming, USAID's OTI has been engaged in activities under the Côte d'Ivoire Transition Initiative (CITI) program that has been implemented in two phases. The first phase, CITI I (2011–2014), sought to enhance government processes and community initiatives in order to increase public confidence in the post-conflict recovery process. The current phase, CITI II (2014–2016), is focused on supporting greater social cohesion and political stability in the lead up to the 2015 presidential election. As the OTI program is due to phase out after the election this fall, funding has been declining, most notably from $23 million in FY 2013 to $5 million in FY 2014, but has been increased to $9 million in FY 2015.

Particularly in light of the conclusion of the OTI program, the DRG problem statement, as well as the proposed strategic approach recommended in Section 5.0, clearly aligns with USAID's DRG strategy. Moreover, the assessment team considers current DRG programming in the country to be a good catalyst toward implementation of future programming around the problem statement due to the capacity building and social capital generated by these USAID projects.

Three of the current projects appear to be able to contribute to the identified DRG problem: the Legislative Strengthening, Electoral Reform, and ProJustice projects.

- Regarding the Legislative Strengthening Project, the assessment team is fairly skeptical of the feasibility of the National Assembly becoming a true counterweight to the executive branch even in the medium term; however, continued investment in institutional capacity building is necessary if this critical objective is to be achieved in the longer term. Nevertheless, in the short to medium term, the National Assembly could at least contribute to monitoring of the executive even if on its own the assembly is unlikely to be able to hold it accountable. Moreover, the legislative branch can provide excellent forums for State-society dialogue and enhanced government transparency that can contribute to government responsiveness if not efficiency.
- The Electoral Reform Project explicitly targets capacity building of Ivorian civil society through its various activities, including monitoring elections and disseminating "messages of peace." In addition, the project created a forum for female political leaders of all political stripes.[98] The training of CSOs and female politicians could undoubtedly be extended to include enhancement of citizen engagement in order to address this identified DRG problem.
- ProJustice aligns well with the proposed strategic focus on the enhancement of key government services, notably justice. Fully funding the remaining "mortgage" for ProJustice is therefore critical to continue the important contributions of this project, which can also serve as an important foundation for future activities under the proposed DRG strategic approach in the following section. The projects on electoral reform and LGBT human rights are also related to the identified DRG problem, but more indirectly; they could be incorporated into future DRG programing but have not been prioritized by the team.

4.3 OTHER USAID AND U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

In general, the USAID office and U.S. Embassy in Côte d'Ivoire work closely together and coordinate

[98] The project set out to support a female candidate from each party in every region, but this has proven to be too costly.

well on various programs and activities. Moreover, the relatively limited investments by the U.S. State Department in DRG sector programming mean there are more gaps than areas at risk of redundancy. There are a few areas where there could be duplication of efforts: the Public and Economic Affairs Section of the embassy has a program to support local media; the State Department's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) Bureau has programming on security sector reform at the ministerial level, as well as at the local level in Western Côte d'Ivoire; and the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) Bureau is seeking opportunities to provide small-scale support to human rights efforts.

As for other USAID programs, the 2013 USAID DRG Strategy states that it supports "core" DRG programming while also recognizing the importance of devoting other sectoral resources to address the governance issues that are crucial for achieving and sustaining objectives in other sectors. To consider cross-cutting strategies and programming, it is therefore important to review the other USAID assistance priorities and programs in Côte d'Ivoire. The five other major projects in USAID's portfolio besides DRG and the OTI conflict transition programming are: a regional agricultural production and trade facilitation program, the Property Rights and Artisanal Diamond Development project (PRADD II), an education program, a public health program, and a new program on economic growth. As most of the USAID/Côte d'Ivoire budget responds to health-related earmarks, however, there is very limited discretionary funding.

The PRADD II project in particular is closely related to DRG work, including:

- Collaboration on capacity building with various anti-corruption, most notably EITI and the High Commission on Good Governance;
- Close work with local authorities (prefects, sub-prefects and mayors) who have strong relationships with local communities and are responsible for provision of basic services under deconcentration of the administration; and
- Extensive work with community radios on information campaign about the Kimberley Process and diamonds.

While there are clearly governance issues in all USAID programming, the assessment highlighted the importance of addressing issues in civil society engagement in and service delivery of key government sectors, notably security, justice, health, and education. Consequently, the possibilities for cross-sectoral strategies and programming appear to be greatest with USAID's education and public health programs should resources from these sectors be made available to "buy into" the DRG program. This would enable a consistent approach to promoting good governance across sectors with the potential for greater synergies between government actors, while also addressing some of the underlying governance challenges that hinder the ability of technical approaches to achieve their desired gains in health and education.

While the current education program in Côte d'Ivoire consists largely of school construction, there is also has a small component supporting parent-student-teacher (PST) organizations and an Educational Management Information System (EMIS) to improve planning, transparency in decision making, and strategic allocation of resources. The work of the PST organizations and EMIS is clearly tied to governance issues and could contribute to resolving the identified DRG problems of insufficient citizen engagement and inadequate public service delivery. Moreover, support for these institutions through cross-sectoral DRG programming could contribute to all three objectives of the 2011 USAID Education Strategy: improve primary students' reading skills, enhance relevant workforce skills, and, particularly for post-conflict Côte d'Ivoire, increase equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments.[99]

The public health program, which represents the overwhelming majority (85 percent) of the USAID budget, is not explicitly DRG-related, focusing on HIV/AIDS and maternal and child health. Although

[99] USAID. *USAID Education Strategy: Opportunity through Learning*, Washington, D.C, 2011.

these funds are earmarked to address these health needs, resources can be invested in addressing the governance issues that hinder gains in this sector, although this type of programming depends on commitment from a range of stakeholders. Nevertheless, the assessment clearly revealed serious governance issues in the health sector that need to be addressed in order to assure that USAID investment in the health sector results in effective service delivery. Moreover, two of the six core priorities in the 2012 USAID Global Health Strategic Framework are strengthening responsiveness and efficiency of the sector, both of which are directly related to governance of the sector.[100]

While there are clear advantages to such cross-sectoral programming, it is critical to note that this should not replace DRG program in that there are important issues that would not be fully addressed by a series of sectoral approaches (e.g., capacity building of governmental institutions and non-state actors that are not explicitly engaged in specific sectors). Moreover, any cross-sectoral programming undertaken to promote governance issues must be structured to incorporate the DRG sector as an equal partner in collaboration with another policy sector so that the DRG sector is not reduced to an "implementing partner."

4.4 RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR DRG PROGRAMMING IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Although the USAID/Côte d'Ivoire country office has recently expanded to a staff of 30, the DRG team is relatively small with only one Foreign Service Officer and one Foreign Service National. The main challenge the DRG sector is currently facing, however, is the dramatic reduction of its budget over the last few years. Following the re-establishment of USAID's presence in Côte d'Ivoire in 2011, the DRG budget was frontloaded to address the urgency of the post-conflict context. DRG has dropped from an annual budget of $10 million in FY 2011–2013 to $8 million in 2014 and, most severely, to $2.5 million in 2015. This dramatic reduction in DRG funding potentially threatens funding for current programs that are not due to end for several more years, not to mention radically restricting the ability of the DRG sector to undertake new programming efforts to address the problems identified through the assessment process.

As a result, consideration of cross-sectoral programming may be more than an option for consideration but a necessity to ensure that Côte d'Ivoire makes continued progress in DRG areas that are critical to the success of programming in other sectors as outlined in Section 4.3. As Côte d'Ivoire works to move from its post-crisis transition to peaceful consolidation of democratic governance, USAID's investment in DRG is core to meeting governance challenges and essential to ensuring economic recovery and sustainable development. In addition, Côte d'Ivoire is at a critical juncture as it works to transition out of the 2011 electoral crisis and to establish a peaceful, inclusive democracy. Insufficient DRG funding could hamper the important contribution USAID has made to the work of international donors in this policy area, and increasing the population's confidence in the Ivorian government is critical for the consolidation of security and political stability. In light of Côte d'Ivoire's strategic position in West Africa, stability in the country is critical not only to its own future, but also to the region more broadly.

Beyond additional USAID funding through cross-sectoral programming, the DRG sector should consider other funding sources. For example, staff at the U.S. State Department noted that they can invest up to $150,000 in hot spots to address DRG issues.

4.5 PROGRAMMING OF AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL DONORS

Finally, it is important for the DRG sector of USAID/Côte d'Ivoire to consider how its work is or can be complementary to programing by other international donors. Fortunately, USAID plays a significant role

[100] USAID. *Global Health Strategic Framework: Better Health for Development*, Washington, D.C, 2012.

in coordinating the donor's Governance Working Group, which permits the DRG sector to not only readily coordinate with other donors but also facilitate the discussion of governance issues between the Ivoirian government and the international community. The other critical bilateral donor working in this area is France, with Germany and Japan involved in DRG programming to a lesser degree.[101] Among multilateral donors, the World Bank is undoubtedly the top donor although the EU and UNDP have extensive programming related to DRG.

The *Agence Francaise de Développement* (AFD) are largely working in the justice sector, focusing on infrastructure construction and training, with a small decentralization program. They are also using Debt Reduction and Development (C2D) funding, AFD's debt forgiveness and reinvestment program, to focus on education and, to a lesser degree, health.

The specific details of the second C2D are still being negotiated, but it is expected that approximately 7.5 million euros will be allocated for justice for construction of a judicial training center in Yamoussoukro, the Court of Appeals building, youth detention centers, and prison infirmaries. AFD will also be assuming from the EU responsibility for training judicial system staff and providing help to vulnerable populations through judicial clinics. These clinics have been praised by Ivoirian civil society leaders, contrasting with those provided by the Ivoirian government with USAID funding that are riddled with corruption.[102] The French have also provided significant support for women's rights, including support to the Association of Female Jurists.

Despite relinquishing the judicial reform portfolio to AFD, the EU will remain a major donor in the DRG sector, continuing to work on economic governance (including its participatory budget project in Bouaké) and reconciliation between police and the population with the UNDP. In addition to training journalists on the Electoral Reform System, EU programming during FY 2015–2017 will focus on capacity building of civil society and other non-state actors.

Finally, the Côte d'Ivoire's "top" donor is the World Bank, whose activities in the DRG sector include: economic governance, transparency, and anti-corruption through support of the ANRMP; institutional capacity building of the legislature; and a new program on reinforcing the civil service.[103] Finally, the Bank is considering undertaking work on civil society and social accountability with a specific focus on issues regarding corruption, impunity, and failure to implement legal codes (rule of law).

While there is clear overlap among the various programmatic foci of international donors operating in the Côte d'Ivoire, there is clearly enough work for complementary efforts. Coordination, however, will be critical so that programs mutually reinforce the institutional capacity building and reforms undertaken by the various bilateral and multilateral donors and cover any gaps in DRG programming.[104] Moreover, it is important that international donors coordinate their DRG programming to insure that the drivers of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire are addressed, most notably simmering conflicts related to land tenure and national identity that are both challenging and politically sensitive.

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[101] Japan is funding UNDP's work on security governance, and GIZ is working on justice and security.

[102] France has amended the clinic model that was used by the EU as it was extremely expensive and not sustainable. They may also potentially support DDR transit centers.

[103] The Bank's work with the National Assembly is at an early stage. The donor wants conduct more trainings for legislators and staff. In particular, the Bank wants to help deputies to identify appropriate questions for ministers in order to keep the executive more accountable or at least transparent. They are focusing their work with the secretary general of the National Assembly.

[104] One area already identified by staff at the U.S. State Department is limited work on strengthening media independence and non-partisanship. Another lacuna identified is the absence of a public watchdog, although Social Justice appears to be attempting to fill that gap in its work on budget transparency and coordination for EITI.

4.6 PRACTICAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE RECIPIENT SIDE

Despite the impact of prolonged conflict and instability, the absorptive capacity of the country remains intact. This means that the country has some resilient capacities. The personnel resources of Côte d'Ivoire appear to be adequate for implementing the proposed strategy, which includes efforts to strengthen the human capacity of both Ivoirian state and non-state actors. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges for personnel is a lack of time as a result of understaffing as opposed to poor training.

In the case of the Ministry of Justice, for example, consultants coordinating the ProJustice project noted a significant need to reinforce the capacity of directors at the central level who "are completely busy managing daily stuff that they don't have time to think about how to improve procedures … They have very intelligent people, but they don't have the time and they aren't organized." Capacity building is therefore "about management, budget planning, perspective, [and] organization," in addition to managing issues of corruption, which typically receives the greatest attention.

USAID is currently working with the country under the bilateral cooperation (Limited Scope Grant Agreement) through USAID implementing partners. The procedures are in place to ensure effective management of funds and programs are based on USAID/USG procedures. In addition, efforts by the broader international community and regional actors are further strengthening public financial management systems, transparency, and other mechanisms to ensure effective management of funds and programs. Finally, the risk to recipients for working with USAID/USG is very limited due to the administrative and financial mechanisms in place.

5.0 DRG STRATEGIC AND PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

As is the case with many concluding sections in an analytical report, programmatic recommendations in DRG assessments are at risk of being underdeveloped, more of a quick conclusion or afterthought following a rich analysis of the political economy of the country, its current DRG problems, and the opportunities and constraints for resolving them. To avoid this common critique, the Côte d'Ivoire assessment team set aside time while still in country at the conclusion of the mission, following input from the workshop with USAID and U.S. Embassy staff, to discuss at length alternative recommendations. Based on this discussion, the team identified from the DRG problem statement one specific goal with two strategic objectives and five sets of intermediate results designed to guide the development of appropriate DRG programming. Ideally, USAID will have resources to develop a new, standalone DRG programming with "buy-in investments" from other sectors to achieve this goal and the corresponding objectives and intermediate results. Recognizing the uncertainty of future budgets, however, these programmatic recommendations include options to integrate new program objectives into existing DRG budgets and into cross-sectoral programming, in addition to a new standalone DRG program.

5.1 THE OVERARCHING GOAL TO ADDRESS THE IDENTIFIED DRG PROBLEM: TO INCREASE THE POPULATION'S CONFIDENCE IN THE IVOIRIAN GOVERNMENT

After further consideration of the key Ivoirian actors and institutions, USAID operations, and the international programmatic environment, the assessment team remains convinced that future DRG programming in the medium term would be best suited to address the following DRG problem statement as presented in Section 2:

> ***Despite the rapid restoration of State authority following the 2011 post-electoral crisis and the State's numerous efforts to rebuild government institutions, the economy, and social cohesion, confidence in the Ivorian government is undermined by its inability to engage the population effectively and perform core government functions, such as security, justice, and social services.***

The overarching goal of DRG programming, therefore, should be to increase the population's confidence in the Ivoirian government with the two strategic objectives: 1) to increase public officials' interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors; and 2) to improve the performance of government core functions. Increasing the population's confidence in the Ivorian government is fundamental to reducing the risk of conflict recurrence. In order to enable adaptive programming that can respond to variable needs of different groups in society, and not just partisan supporters of the ruling party or members of the administration, the Ivoirian government must develop broader interactions with population and be responsive to societal actors, addressing issues that have been drivers of conflict in the past (e.g., contentions around land tenure and national identity) as well as continuing concerns from the post-crisis

period (e.g., issues of security and reconciliation). It is important to recognize that the population's confidence in the Ivorian government cannot be achieved if these key conflict-related issues remain inadequately addressed. Moreover, this assessment has identified critical core functions (i.e., justice, security, health care, and education) as areas that our research has demonstrated as the most important for strengthening confidence in Ivoirian government.

5.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I: TO INCREASE PUBLIC OFFICIALS' INTERACTION WITH AND RESPONSIVENESS TO SOCIETAL ACTORS

The DRG assessment found that a general lack in the confidence of the Ivoirian government was often the result of insufficient interaction between public officials and the population, particularly societal actors who could hold them accountable for public policies and the performance of the government (Strategic Objective II). In order to fulfill the first strategic objective, the team identified three sets of intermediate results that would need to be pursued to meet the first strategic objective: i) greater commitment of public officials to engage societal actors actively; ii) improved capacity of non-state actors, specifically CSOs and the media, to engage public officials effectively; and iii) reinforcement and/or creation of State-society forums for civic engagement. Programming should be adaptive to address lingering issues from the post-crisis period and simmering areas of contention that contributed to political instability and armed conflict that has characterized Ivoirian politics for nearly two decades as ideal opportunities to bolster the population's confidence in the Ivorian government.

5.2.1 INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1: GREATER COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO ENGAGE SOCIETAL ACTORS ACTIVELY

In developing democracies such as Côte d'Ivoire, the attitudes of and incentive structures among public officials do not typically reflect a willingness let alone a desire to engage societal actors actively. This is the result of a combination of factors, including a long history of autocratic leadership (benign or malign), an incomplete transition or consolidation of democratic reforms, and a political economy of donor dependence that skews accountability of public officials toward international versus domestic actors.

Consequently, to achieve this intermediary result, DRG programming should work with all three categories of Ivoirian public officials—elected officials, political appointees, and administrative functionaries—in all branches of government and at all levels to generate a greater commitment to civic engagement. DRG programming could include:

a) Training (*sensibilisation*) public officials about their roles as representatives of the people (versus a party) and as civil servants, a role shared by *all* public officials;

b) Informing public officials about the advantages of civic engagement, including enhanced legitimacy and more realistic expectations by an informed public;

c) Establishing a system to praise and/or reward officials who effectively engage societal actors through any number of social accountability mechanisms including State-society forums, the third intermediate result for this strategic objective; and

d) Ensuring that ministerial websites include their policies, programs, and budgets, while encouraging the addition of links that permit public comments and questions.

Ideally, the DRG sector should develop a standalone project that explicitly focuses on the reinforcement of attitudes and incentive structures within state institutions that can provide an enabling environment for social accountability and government responsiveness. This could be readily combined with the activities

in support of the other intermediate results designed to promote State-society engagement and government performance.

If resources at the disposal of the DRG sector are limited, then these types of activities could be incorporated into current DRG programming as well as other USAID programs, most notably those in the education and health sectors. Increased interactions in specific sectors, however, are unlikely to achieve the overall goal of increased confidence in the Ivorian government if key grievances are left unaddressed.

5.2.2 INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2: IMPROVED CAPACITY OF NON-STATE ACTORS TO ENGAGE PUBLIC OFFICIALS EFFECTIVELY

Although the first strategic objective may appear to emphasize the active role of public officials in their interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors, non-state actors are not, and should not be, passive recipients of increased engagement by public officials. CSOs, the media, and the private sector each have a critical role to play in encouraging State-society engagement.

Consequently, developing their capacity for civic engagement and social accountability is critical to ensuring receptive and responsive public officials. While this set of intermediate results is relevant to the private sector, given the assessment findings regarding the low capacity and high politicization of civil society and the media in the Côte d'Ivoire, the recommended activities focus specifically on building the capacity of these two sets of non-state actors through DRG programming that could include:

a) Enhancing the professionalism of journalists and CSOs, which would entail inter alia greater independence from partisan pressures and donor dependency;

b) Developing CSO capacity to identify and advocate for their goals and objectives through persuasive oral and written communication as opposed to political rhetoric or adversarial posturing;

c) Strengthening the capacity of CSOs and journalists to monitor and report on State functions, public policies, and the performance of public officials, which is likely to involve technical training in certain policy areas such as public finance and knowledge of relevant legislation and public policy;

d) Increasing public access to information and the capacity of the CSOs and journalists to generate and disseminate alternative sources of information based on informed opinions, independent research, and/or investigative reporting; and

e) Capacity building in business management and fundraising skills to improve self-sufficiency, autonomy, and public (versus donor) accountability.

The professionalization component is critical to reducing the perception of a deeply partisan nature of the media and civil society that is undermining social cohesion and increases the risk of a return to open conflict. Once again these activities could be incorporated into current programming; however, a project specifically designed to strengthen the capacity of civil society and journalists to engage public officials is more likely to enhance their accountability and, consequently, government performance and is recommended by the team (Strategic Objective II).

5.2.3 INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: REINFORCEMENT AND/OR CREATION OF STATE-SOCIETY FORUMS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The third and final proposed intermediate result designed to strengthen State-society engagement is to reinforce and/or create State-society forums. DRG programming could include:

a) Assisting in the institutionalization of forums regularly convened by public officials to disseminate information and respond to inquiries from non-state actors in order to promote governmental transparency and accountability (e.g., press conferences, public hearings, and ministerial information officers);

b) Encouraging journalists to create space in print, broadcast, and social media that encourages informed public debate on governmental policy, pending legislation, and other public affairs, most notably at this time paths to further national reconciliation and social cohesion; and

c) Supporting CSO programming that includes the participation of public officials as colleagues, policy experts, and/or collaborators rather than adversaries.

The new DRG programming proposed above should be pursued if at all feasible especially in light of its centrality to *both* strategic objectives and thus the overarching goal of increasing public confidence in the Ivoirian government. Current DRG and other USAID projects that have established relations with both the executive and legislative branches can be modified to promote the institutionalization of State-society forums through their current and planned activities. The development of forums by civil society and the media as well as other non-state actors (e.g., the private sector) should also be incorporated into existing projects.

5.3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE II: TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT CORE FUNCTIONS

Given the importance of social accountability to improving governance, each of the intermediate results that contribute to the first strategic objective of increasing State-society engagement and government responsive would undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of the second strategic objective of improving government performance, specifically by:

1) Enhancing the commitment of public officials to actively engage societal actors;

2) Improving the capacity of non-state actors to effectively engage public officials; and

3) Reinforcing and/or creating State-society forums for civic engagement and social accountability.

In addition to the overlap with the first set of intermediate results, two additional intermediate results ought to be pursued in order to fulfill the second strategic objective: i) improved competency of public officials; and ii) reduced corruption among public officials. To achieve this overall goal, the specific core functions targeted in DRG programming should respond to the areas that most affect the population's confidence in the Ivorian government. In particular programming should target those issues that undermine social cohesion as well as those that have been sources of conflict in the recent past, such as land tenure and national identity. Both of these are looming politically sensitive issues that appear to exceed the capacity of current DRG program, but which should be pursued in concert with the larger donor community to insure the future stability of the country. Similarly, the policy key areas identified during the field assessment included security (which generally falls outside of USAID's manageable interests in Côte d'Ivoire but should not be ignored), along with justice, health, and education.

5.3.1 INTERMEDIATE RESULT 4: IMPROVED COMPETENCY OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

To enhance the competency of public officials, the DRG sector will need to consider which of the three categories of public officials (civil servants, political appointees, and/or elected officials) on which to focus and at what level (national, regional, municipal, and/or rural). One possibility would be to work with a cross section and then focus geographically as other USAID projects have done. Ideally, USAID would consider focusing on the sectors identified by the team as critical, specifically security, justice, health, and education. Such DRG programming could include:

a) Ensuring competitive, merit-based recruitment and promotion of the civil servants;

b) Establishing systematic performance monitoring of public officials;

c) Offering public officials appropriate ongoing training that informs and is informed by results from the systematic performance monitoring; and

d) Providing incentives for improved performance and sanctions for poor performance by public officials beyond the electoral process.

Programming by the DRG sector currently focuses on the training of public officials in the legislative branch of the central government and the judicial sector particularly at the sub-national level. While both are valuable to improving government performance, the DRG assessment findings suggest that, if there is limited funding available, judicial reform has greater potential for more significant short- to medium-term benefits. However, capacity building of the legislative branch does has the advantage of better addressing the strategic objective of enhancing State-society interaction.

Based on the assessment's findings, it would be ideal if a DRG project seeking to enhance the competency of public officials included a component to address the impact of convoluted intra-governmental relations between ministries and levels of government. The USAID country team, in possible collaboration with the donors' Governance Working Group, could also encourage the Ivoirian government to undertake administrative reforms that would encourage a merit-based civil service incentivized by appropriate rewards and sanctions. If cross-sectoral programming is possible and/or additional funding available, the DRG sector could consider incorporating other public officials, particularly those operating at the local level who are directly responsible for providing administrative and social services.

5.3.2 INTERMEDIATE RESULT 5: REDUCTION OF CORRUPTION AMONG PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Pervasive corruption in the Côte d'Ivoire undermines not only government performance but also the country's political economy, and potentially its political stability, if it is perceived that only some groups are benefitting while other groups are more egregiously harmed by corrupt officials. Reducing corruption is a long-term endeavor that will require commitments from all Ivoirian actors and the international community, including USAID. To achieve the intermediate result of corruption reduction, DRG programming could include:

a) Reinforcing the capacity and autonomy of accountability mechanisms within the government (e.g., ministerial inspections) and parastatal commissions charged with combatting corruption (e.g., ANRMP, EITI, and HABG);

b) Strengthening the capacity and autonomy the legislative and judicial branches so they can follow through on the work of anti-corruption institutions and provide an institutional check to executive dominance, which can leave corruption in this powerful branch unchecked; and

c) Developing social accountability mechanisms among non-state actors, particularly civil society and the media, at both the national and local levels to monitor against and respond to corruption in governmental institutions and by individual public officials (e.g., budget tracking by Social Justice and public affairs programs on community radio in Daloa).

Again, to achieve the overall goal, the specific focus for accountability mechanisms should be on areas where a lack of accountability most significantly undermines the general public's confidence in the Ivorian government, including the key conflict-related issues and priority sectors. Current DRG programming designed to strengthen the functioning of the legislative and judicial branches could incorporate components that specifically focus on anti-corruption measures and collaboration with both State institutions and non-state actors working on this issue (e.g., ANRMP, EITI, HABG, and Social Justice). Some activities are currently promoting social accountability mechanisms in DRG programs and programming by other sections, most notably the work with PST organizations and MEIS in the

education sector. These could also be expanded upon, perhaps in conjunction with the relatively new ANRMP and HABG commissions charged with combatting corruption in both the government and private sector.

Moreover, the work with the media currently being done by the Public Affairs Section might be able to be extended to address anti-corruption measures such as training in investigative journalism and budget analysis, and the development of alternative funding models that would permit greater media independence, including the transformation of State media into a public good rather than a mouthpiece for the party in power.

The assessment team recommends that new programming that builds the capacity of civil society and the media be developed given its centrality to both strategic objectives and multiple intermediate results. However, activities in these areas should also be incorporated into existing USAID projects wherever possible.

5.4 PRIORITIES, CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS, AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS FOR DRG PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Setting priorities for future DRG programming is complicated by the dramatic budget cuts the sector has sustained. Anticipating that future funding will be more closely in line with requested levels, the assessment team strongly recommends new standalone programming to support capacity building for civil society and the media to engage in effective civic engagement and social accountability. Ideally, other sectoral teams would "buy into" the DRG programming to create a more holistic approach to addressing the critical governance issues that will likely impede the ability of achieving development gains across sectors. This type of programming is increasing in sub-Saharan Africa as USAID missions recognize the importance of addressing these critical issues across sectors.

At the same time, the DRG sector should incorporate these and other activities proposed to attain the intermediate results and strategic objectives outlined above into its current DRG programming. Funding options through the USAID Bureau for DCHA or the U.S. State Department, as well as possibilities of cross-sectoral programming particularly in the health and education sectors, should be further explored. This undoubtedly requires further consideration and exploration within the Côte d'Ivoire country team and other relevant USAID and intra-agency colleagues. However, it will be critical during those discussions for the DRG sector to retain its autonomous programmatic goals and objectives working as an equal partner regardless of the funding sources for their joint programming. It is important to stress that reduction of DRG programming during this critical post-conflict period would significantly reduce the sector's capacity to build on its successful programming and to address the underlying sources of conflict that remain.

The assessment team has identified several policy areas that could be targeted to achieve the overall program goals and objectives in order to improve the responsiveness of the government to societal actors and enhance core government functions. These recommendations are based on observations during the mission that reflect the needs and demands of the population as a whole. It is critical that public officials reduce the perceived partisanship of government policies and programs, and that the politicization of the media and CSOs is reduce to permit them to play their role in holding government accountable. Programming should be adaptive to respond to these priorities while attempting to more adequately address the past drivers of conflict to reduce the risk of political destabilization and a return to armed conflict. In this manner, the programming can address key areas of concern, including conflict-related issues, to not only promote good governance, but also peace and stability. Without continuing to address the persistent conflict-related issues that most significantly undermine the population's confidence in the Ivorian government, particularly the adversaries of the current administration, efforts toward the two

objectives of increased interaction and improved government functioning will not achieve the overall goal.

Finally, the assessment team would be remiss not to consider alternative scenarios to the relatively positive one that has been presented in this report. The team found a general consensus that the upcoming presidential election is likely to be flawed but will transpire without widespread violence or descending into armed conflict as occurred in the 2010 elections. The possibility for renewed violence, however, still exists and must be taken into consideration when planning future DRG programming. Should Côte d'Ivoire regrettably return to this maelstrom, the DRG sector, USAID as a whole, and the U.S. Embassy will need to recalibrate the manner in which they engage the Ivoirian government. Absent continued efforts to address the underlying drivers of conflict, including land tenure rights and national identity, the risk for renewed conflict in Côte d'Ivoire in the medium to long term remains significant and requires continued attention. The assessment team recognizes, however, that addressing these looming, highly politically sensitive issues will require coordination among international donors and the Ivoirian government.

A middle-range scenario is if the FPI opposition decides to boycott the election, possibly with a faction of the PDCI that is discontent with Bédié's decision to support President Ouattara's re-election. This could severely undermine the legitimacy of the victor and his government, in which case DRG programming may need to revisit the recommendations of the 2011–2012 assessment, as this would be a clear indication that Côte d'Ivoire has failed to move beyond its post-conflict transition. The investment in capacity building for civil society and the media, along with other recommendations laid out in this section would nevertheless remain relevant if not critical to addressing the DRG problems in this alternative scenario. In fact, one of the main reasons why Côte d'Ivoire was unable to establish a stronger basis for national reconciliation and social cohesion is precisely because of the failure of the Ouattara administration to more fully engage with all political tendencies of the Ivoirian population. A recommendation that should now be taken up to ensure the achievement of the programming goal and objectives laid out in this report as well as those of the previous assessment.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Ministry of Economy and Finance: Adama Coulibaly, Chief of Staff
Ministry of the Budget at the Prime Minister's Office: Abdourhamane Cisse, Minister
Ministry of Industry and Mines: Jean Claude Brou, Minister; Ehouman Chantal, Technical Advisor; Angoua Kouande, Technical Advisor
Ministry of Interior and Security: Hamed Bakayoko, Minister; Michel Rosier, Chief of Staff
Ministry of Justice: G. Mamadou Coulibaly, Minister
Ministry of Planning and development: Dr. Lancina Kouamé, Chief of Staff
Ministry of Petroleum and Energy: Fatimata O. Thes, Deputy Chief of Staff and Permanent Secretary of the Kimberly Process

NATIONAL COMMISSIONS

National Commission on the Regulation of Public Procurement (ANRMP): Coulibaly Non Karma, President
High Commission for Good Governance: Jacques Achiado Iii, Director; Jerome N'guessan N'dri, Director; Francine Aka-Anguih, Member
High Commission for Audiovisual Communication: Ibrahim Sy-Savané, President
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative: Julien Tingain
National Commission of Human Rights: Paulette Badjo Ezouehou, President

LEGISLATURE

Secretary General of the National Assembly: Lath Ahonzi, Secretary General
Caucus of Female Deputies: Sara Sako Fadiga, 1st Vice President of the National Assembly
Economic and Financial Committee: Deputy Braima Yves Kone, President; Kady Félicité Ouattara, Technical Advisor

REGIONAL COUNCILS

Korhogo: Adama Diawara, Director
Man: Koufougoa Ouattara, Director; Karim Ibrahima, HR Director

JUDICIARY AND LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

Supreme Court: Kanvaly Diomande, President of the Court of Auditors; Anastasie Lucie Agnimel Adja, Advisor; Bouadou Eba Julien, Advisor
Bar Association: Beugre Adou, President
Association of Women Jurists[105]: Abe Nicole, Geneviève Sissoko Diallo, Madeleine Maka Amlan, N'Dja Brou Eugénie, Goule Singolou Emilienne, Elizabeth Ma Savané, Blah Yvette Claude Philomene,

[105] Also listed under "Women's Organizations."

Sali Sylla Temenan Vale, Sarr Bakassa Traore, Estelle Juska Kouakou, Anne N'Guessan, Christine Kok, Karidja Coulibaly, Secreoua Adou, Marcelline Kamenan Marcelline, Agathe Koffi Lou, Irene Ouattara, Rosine Blai, Rogatienne Degrou Boni

LOCAL MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY

Bouaké: Kalilou Kone, 1st President Appellate Court
Daloa: Jules Pangni N'guessan, Prosecutor General
Man: Drissa Dagnoly, Tribunal President; Charles Bini K. Maiza, Judge; Bruno Djuei Aka, Prosecutor; Sylvanus Menez, Deputy Prosecutor

POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS[106]

National Independent Electoral Commission (CEI): Issouf Bakayoko, President
Sub-National Electoral Commissions:
Bouaké: Mamadou Fofana, Regional Electoral Commission President
Daloa: Issouf Doumbia, Regional Electoral Commission President
Korhogo: Bagaoussou Kamagaté, Local Electoral Bureau Coordinator
Ivorian Popular Front (FPI): Agnes Monnet, Secretary General; Bernadine Biot, National Secretary for African Affairs; Williams Atteby, National Secretary for Elections; Kra Kouakou, National Secretary for Elections; Navigué Konaté, National Secretary FPI Youth; Barthelemy Gonepa, Vice President Territory and Public Administration and Good Governance; C. Akpe, The National Bureau of FPI Women
Republican Union (RDR): M. Lemassou, National Secretary for Training; M. Foungbe, Assistant to National Secretary for Training

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Bangolo: Evariste T. Sah, 2nd Deputy Mayor; Guy G. Banhi, 3rd Deputy Mayor
Bouaké: Zoumana Ouattara, 1st Deputy Mayor; Hamadou Bamba, 2nd Deputy Mayor
Daloa: Brou Kouame, Prefect; Dao K. Sanogo, Prefecture Secretary General
Korhogo: Daouda Outtara, Prefect; Eugene Kouadio, Secretary General; Emile Sorho, 5th deputy mayor; Soro Valerie, Rural Development Director
Man: Lancine Diabaté 1st Deputy Mayor; Toure Sekou, 3rd Deputy Mayor; Ibrahim Kamara, Director Human Development; Soro Kayaha Jerome, Region Prefect; Victor Gnangbi, Prefecture 1st Secretary General; Ernest M. Gouassiro, Prefecture 2nd Secretary General; Soungalo Diakité, Deputy Prefect of Podiagouiné; Benjamin G. Kessa, Deputy Prefect Gbadegouiné; Maurice N'Zi, Deputy Prefect of Bogouiné; Guillaume Konan, Deputy Prefect of Sangouiné

CIVIL SOCIETY

NATIONAL AND ABIDJAN-BASED

Social Justice: Julien Tingain President; Kra K. Constantin, Member Social justice; Otcho R. L. Ghauly, Member; Hyacinthe Kouassi, Member; Anita Djaman, Member
Community Assistance and Development: Kongouek Mozart, President
Action for the protection of Human Rights: Wele H. Mathias, Executive Vice President
Lidho: Micheline Kahran, M. Adjoumani Kouamé
Transparency Justice-Amah Acouba Nadine
Movement Ivorien Droits d'Homme: Ganyou Latif, M. Doumbia Yacouba

[106] The team had appointments with other political parties, but unfortunately was not able to gain an audience with their leaders.

Regroupement des Acteurs Ivoriens Droits de l'Homme: M. Bamba Sindou
Actions pour la Protection des Droits de l'Homme: M. Denis Yorobat
Genre Developpement et Droits Humain: Blandine Kramaud, Konan AmelanNatacha

LOCAL CSOS

Bouaké:

Civil Society Platform:
Apoh: Lilian Amani N'Guessan, Leader
Midh: Amara Doumbia, President
Lidho: Kouassi Kouman, President; Pefigue Sanogo, Departmental Secretary General
Ofaci: Awa Doumbia, President; Kounte Aminata, Member
SOS Exclusion: Kassoum Outtara

Daloa:

Civil Society Platform: Sigui Bi Kien; Victor Maka
COSH-HS: Tape Daleba, President; Bernard Yoro Kao, Interim Secretary General, Ouattara Zié Sylla
Association Amour Fédération: Louise A. B. Nadraud, President
NGO Gnouwieta-CI: Fanda N. Fofana, President
NGO Bada: Christophe B. Sery
UEVCO: Wohi T. L. Irie, President
NGO The Stars of CI: Amassou E. Damo, President and Founder

Man:

Man Youth Association: Kla Marius Didier, President; Binate Ibounahima,
Imam Council (COSIM): Imam Kone Aboubakar, Coordinator
Association of traditional Chiefs (ASCTM): Germain Gla, Secretary general
Radio General Council of the Tonkpi: Frejus Guene
Youth of Grobapleu: Laurent Mahan, President
High School Youth: Tia Sokpo Leopold, President
Cansea Youth: Yves Mohomye Kehoua, President
NGO IFS: Alexis Bih, President
Association of Young Tradesmen: Zoumana Bamba, President
COSI: Donis Doua, President

Korhogo:

Poro Civil Society Platform: Drissa Soro
Inter-Religious Committee: Navigue Tuo; Seydou Soro; Tiekoura Yekongo; Pierrette Gotha
NGO FESADE: Minata Camara
NGO AIPS: Madeleine Singa
NGO WPS: Salimata Coulibaly
NGO ILES: Doufougognon Koné; Guy –Michel Savifon
NGO OSD: Losseny Fanny
Language and Tradition: Soro G Roger, Cultural Director
Services Platform: Lancine Zie Coulibaly, Coordinator
GIDS: Soro Seydou
Synebaei/KGO: Tiercoura Yekongo
Playdoo CI: Gotta Pierette

TRADITIONAL/CULTURAL LEADERS

Bouaké:

Association of Traditional Chiefs: Nanan Gustave K. Kouassi, Chief of Bouaké; Nanan Kouame Kouadio, Chief of N'Gattakro; Nanan Kouadio N'Goran, Chief Andon-Sakassou; Nanan

René Konan, Chief Akanzakro; Nanan Remi N'Zi Kouamé, Chief of Boblenou; Nanan Ernest Kouadio, Chief Of Kamonoukro; Nanan Felix K. Kouadio, Chief of Brobo; Nanan Modeste Y. Koffi and Nanan Faiman Kouakou, Chiefs of Belle Ville; Nanan Kopkplo, Chief of Koko; Nanan Oussou N'Goran Chief of Mezoukonankro

MEDIA

NATIONAL AND ABIDJAN-BASED

Fraternité Matin: Jean Baptiste Behi, Chief Editor
Ivorian Press Agency: Pascal Kouao, Deputy Director of News Development
Le Patriote: Emmanuel Koré, Editor-in-Chief
Le Nouveau Réveil: Saint Clair Akwaba, Senior Editor
Nord-Sud Quotidien: Sindou Cisse, Editor-in-Chief
L'Expression: Mariame Toure, Publisher
Le Jour: Seydou Coulibaly, Publisher
Notre Voie: Abdoulaye V. Sanogo, Senior Editor; Ferdinand N'Guessan, Journalist
Le Nouveau Courrier: Stephane Guede, Publisher
Le Temps: Yacouba Gbane, Publisher
Le Quotidien d'Abidjan: Allan Aliali, Publisher
L'Inter: Felix Diby Boni, Senior Editor; Bertrand Gueu, Journalist
Soir Info: Nazaire Ahou Kikié, Editor-in-Chief
Intelligent d'Abidjan: Hamadou Coulibaly, Publisher; Sabine Kouakou, Editor-in-Chief
Tribune de l'Economie: Chekh Kone, Journalist
Belier Intrepied: Bertin N'Guessan, Journalist
LG Infos: Joseph Ateumglre, Journalist
Radio Yopougon: Moussa Zio, Director
MSA – TV 0: Lagson Beugre, Journalist

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS AND COMMUNITY RADIO

Bouaké:

L'Inter: Bertrand Gueu, Journalist
La Tribune de l'Economie: Chekh Kone, Journalist
Notre Voie: Ferdinand N'Guessan, Journalist
Le Belier Intrepide: Bertin N'Guessan, Journalist
LG Info: Joseph Attoungbre, Journalist
MSA-TV: Legson Beugre, Journalist

Daloa:

Radio FM Daloa: Jean S. Dié, Director
Radio TCHRATO: Tokpa Yudy Innocent, Supervisor Radio; Nicole S. Daigne, Head of Broadcasting; Mamadou Bakayoko, Member of the Board of Directors; Dieudonné Agodio, Producer; Roger Zouzoua, Journalist
Medoune N'Diaye, Community Radio Producer
Carine Meho Tahiro, Community Radio Announcer

Duekoué:

Radio La Voix du Gueumon: Hamidou Kouakou Kouassi, General Manager; Oumar Dao, Deputy General Manager; Keunia Dion, Executive Secretary

Korhogo:

Ivorian Press Agency: Adjoua P. Kouamé, Journalist
RPC: Eugene M. Brick, Journalist
Arc-en-Ciel: Achille L. Kado, Journalist

Soir Info: Aly Ouattara, Journalist
Le Sursaut: Oumar Sidibe, Journalist
Radio Satellite FM: Etienne Tuo Lamina, Journalist
ADDR: Issiaka Diabaté, ADDR
RTI: Sié Kouassi, Journalist

KEY POPULATION GROUPS

FORMER COMBATANTS

Bouaké:

Association of the *Dozos*: Mamadou Bamba, President; Lassina Keita, Secretary
ADCI: Sory Kaba, President; Souleymane Ouedraogo, Siamatie Diomande, Souleymane Kone, Souleymane Boiré, Aubin Youan Bi Tra, Abdoulaye Paré, Members

Duékoué:

CEFACOD: Silue Yenipra, President; Doh P Maxime, 1st Vice President; Kouame K Roger, 2nd Vice President; Keita Lancine, Member

Korhogo:

Brahima Doumbia, Director of ADDR Korhogo; Issaka Diabate, Regional Communication Officer
Associations of Ex Fighters: Konaté Adama, President

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

National and Abidjan-Based:

AFUBE-HV: Stephane M. K. Kla, President
AHEKA-BA: Laurentine A. NGuéssan, Secretary
Association of Women Jurists: Abe Nicole, Geneviève Sissoko Diallo, Madeleine Maka Amlan, N'Dja Brou Eugénie, Goule Singolou Emilienne, Elizabeth Ma Savané, Blah Yvette Claude Philomene, Sali Sylla Temenan Vale, Sarr Bakassa Traore, Estelle Juska Kouakou, Anne N'Guessan, Christine Kok, Karidja Coulibaly, Secreoua Adou, Marcelline Kamenan Marcelline, Agathe Koffi Lou, Irene Ouattara, Rosine Blai, Rogatienne Degrou Boni
CSB: Biba Touré, Secretary
Houkami: Louise A. A. Kouame, Executive Secretary
OFED: Guindo N. Soro, President
RFGDVG: Jeannette A. N'Guessan, Secretary
RIPHIDIM: Epouse Bly Dieuou
Women against AIDS: Suzanne Zongo
Women's Association of Loniya Ababo (Abidjan): Sarr Bakassa Traore
Yehouka Yehoun: Singuin J. Koffi, Member

LOCAL WOMEN'S GROUPS

Bouaké:

Ofed: Guindo Naminata Epse Soro, President
Rfvgdci: N'guessan Aheman Jeannette, Secretary
Aheka: N'guessan Amoin Laurentine, Secretary
Ye Wouka Ye Houm: Singuin Jeanne Epse Koffi
Csb: Biba Toure, Secretary
Afube: Klah Marie Stephane, President
Ong Houkai: Kouame Adjo Louise Alice
Femme Face Au Sida: Zongo Suzanne

Korhogo:

Vaï Valerie Yene David, Director of Center of Excellence for Women in Man (CEFM)

Man:

Malinké Women: Madoussou Soumahoro, President; Mama Sangaré, Member
Akan Women: Mrs. Tanaud
Amazones of Man: Jocelyne Kemeyayan
Women of Bafing: Fatou Sanogo
Union of Women of Grand Gbapleu (UFGG): Valerie H. Sery; Therese Mahan; Leocadie S. Tahon
Association for Development: Marie L. M. Ble, President
Monguy Association: Naty Lamissa
APOBASOMBO: Bernadette Oue; Martine Nabo

YOUTH GROUPS AND LEADERS

National and Abidjan-Based:

Alumni Association of the Business and Management School (ESAM): Yves R. B. Atcheman
Association of Students: Romeo Kouakou Kouadio; Marc N'Dri Kouakou
Association of Youth of Palmeraie (Abidjan): Anne S. K. Konan
Association of Young Ivoirians: Cyrille S. B. Moumou
Association of Young Students and Friends of Côte d'Ivoire (ADJA): Moise Kouadio, Student Member
Movement for Development: Thierry Kouamé, President
Youth Organizers: Serge Doh; Karim Ouattara; Franck Tahou

LOCAL YOUTH LEADERS

Bouaké Youth Organizations:

Commune Youth Association (UJCB): Silué Pegnabela, President; Soro Hamidou, Secretary General; Karamoko Traore Organization Secretary; Moustapha Diomande, Secretary; Masieke Kone, Secretary General of Sokoura
Air France 2: Raimond B. Kouadio, President; Fidele A. DOUA, Kamenan Francis, Melanie N'Goran, Claver K. Konan, Members
Youth Association: Jocelyne Djué Aya, Member
CONAJED: Soumaila Sylla, President; Adama Berthe, Mamadou Traoré, Youssouf Kana Sekongo, Members
Assoumakro Youth: Jean Bonheur K. Konan, Vice President
Youth Health Network CI: Louis P. Y. Konan
Youth of Kamonoukro: Severin T. K. N'Guessan, President
JEDA: Nativité Inza Diaby, President

Bouaké Student Organizations:

CEEMUCI: Diomandé Nama; Soumahoro Ibrahim; Dosso Moussa Motse; Traoré Arouna
Youth Power: Koné D. Georges; Ouattara Baba Adama
UEEBB: Yeo O. Jean Baptiste
UFE 2: Kamagate Gboko; Kouakou Kouame Serge
Club Gestion: Gueye Al-Assan
UNESCI: Assienin Kouassi Sylvain
FUCI: Gnakaby Henri Lopez; Soro D. Charles Roger
AEJCI: Fossou E. Romeo; Logou Levi Marc
UDEEN: KOUASSI Kouame Robert
AEEMCI: Coulibaly Arouna; Soumaila Kinda Ismael
CEECI: Diabaté Drissa

CASUAO: Koné Kpamatiogo
FESCI: Diomandé Mory; Digbo Dolea Erwan
AIESEC: Me Koudio Arnaud; Kouadio Vanessa Desirée
University of Bouaké CLUB ECONO: Odoukou Ayi Audrey; Ané Ehouman J J; Debe Fulgence; Kinibouo Angelo
University of Bouaké Student Council: Kone Yaya, President; Diby K. Michel; Konan Angellou

Duékoué:

Duékoué Youth Project (POJED): Vazoumana Sylla, President; Rich S. Gueye, Vice President; Mamadou Koné, Organization Secretary; Aboubakar Koné, Mobilization Secretary; Diomandé Vakaba Responsible for Sports; Renaud Guela, Joseph K. Kouakou, Do Alain, Gadek Guillaume, Mamadou Cisse, Jean M. Y. Koffi, Gralion Paul, Fabrice Bossio, Stanley A. Nessmon, Members
NGO SADE: Agnes Gbaou GueÏ, President
Youth Association of Duekoué Commune: Théophile Mohan

PRIVATE SECTOR

Chamber of Commerce and Industry: Salim B. Maguiraga, President of the Infrastructure, Tourism, and Environment; Valy Kanaté, Vice President in Charge of Information and Advice to Companies; Georges A. Akobe, Vice President in Charge of International Cooperation; Faman Touré, 1st Vice President

INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL ACTORS

European Union: Mody Diop, Program Officer; Elise Hadman, Governance; Charles Coste, Public Finance; Delphine Auzanneau, Civil Society
French Embassy: Elodie Richie, Governance; Marion Poullain, Mission Director; Camille Gouyet, ENA Intern
Human Rights Watch (Washington, D.C.): Jim Wormington
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs: Christiane Pelchat, Resident Director
Search for Common Ground: Quentin Kanyatsy, Country Director
UNOCI: Eugene Nindorera, Director of the Human Rights Division and Representative of the UN Human Rights Commissioner; Habib Bumaya, Senior Political Affairs Officer; Daria Miglietta Ferrari, Directore of Joint Mission Analysis Center
UNDP: Aissata Gueye, Country Director
World Bank: Robert Yungu, Senior Public Sector Specialist

US STATE DEPARTMENT

Washington, D.C.:

Megan Anderson, DRG
Anton Ghosh, INR

US Embassy:

Terence McCulley, Ambassador
Chris Campbell, First Secretary of the Political and Economic Affairs Section
Mike Lamb, Defense Attaché
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USAID

Washington, DC:

Roslyn Waters-Jensen, West Africa Deputy Director

Andy Michels, SSR Advisor
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John Gattorn, Senior Program Advisor DCHA/OTI
Jeanne Briggs, OTI

Côte d'Ivoire Office:

Jeff Bryan, Development Counselor
Leah Kaplan, DRG Officer
Michelle Konin, Education Officer
Olivier N'Guetta, Health Officer
Mark D. Emmert, OTI Country Representative
Adja Manogodjon, OTI Officer
Rebecca Levy, Economic Growth Officer

USAID Funded Projects:

Legislative Strengthening Program: Temzer, Director
ProJustice: David de Giles, Deputy Director
Property Rights and Artisinal Diamond Development (PRADD II): Terah DeJong, National Director; Bakayoko Brahima, Governance Coordinator

ANNEX 2: SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEX 3: RUBRIC OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

	Question Topics
Consensus and Inclusion (Including Gender)	1. Post-Conflict Reconciliation and Social Cohesion 2. New Laws Governing National Identity 3. Upcoming Presidential Elections and CEI 4. Gender-Based Bias, Discrimination and/or Violence in Political, Economic and Social Contexts
Competition and Political Accountability	1. Political Climate and Discourse 2. Separation of Power/Executive Dominance 3. Electoral Competition and Party Politics (e.g., impact of boycott on political institutions) 4. Status of Civil Liberties especially Freedom of Expression and Access to Information as relates to Media (State and Independent) 5. Evaluation of Capacity and Impact of Civil Society, including obstacles/constraints
Rule of Law and Human Rights	1. Assessment of Judicial System: independence, corruption, efficiency, citizen confidence 2. Assessment of Security Forces: Military v. Police, State v. Non-State 3. Impact of Corruption on Functioning of State and Economy 4. Assessment of Human Rights (including Gender, LGBT)
Government Responsiveness and Effectiveness	1. Assessment of Restoration of State presence and functioning since end of 2011 conflict: Does a parallel administration still exist 2. Capacity of State to Delivery Services: Quality, Access, Corruption/Biases 3. Capacity of Local Government, including constraints and their sources
Conflict Lens: Drivers of Conflict, Vulnerabilities, Geographic Trouble Zones	1. Inter-Communal Relations/Social Cohesion 2. Assessment of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Militants, particularly the non-state armed actors 3. Continuing Armed Conflicts and/or Insecurity related to post-conflict context

ANNEX 4. PEER REVIEW FOR THE DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

As part of the DRG Assessment process, USAID commissions an independent expert on the democratic transition in the subject country or region to undertake a peer review of the Final Report. The purpose of the peer review is to provide an external commentary on how well the DRG Assessment captures the essential political dynamics of the subject country and the soundness of its analysis and recommendations. The review offers an expert opinion on the overall quality of the report, it identifies any innovative findings that may have emerged in the up-to-date DRG Assessment, it points out any key gaps in the analysis as well as noting differences of political interpretation, it evaluates the extent to which the recommendations are logically derived from the analysis, and provides an occasion for the reviewer to comment on the overall appropriateness of USAID's DRG methodology for elaborating a DRG strategic approach that is rooted in a clear and compelling understanding of a country's political dynamic.

Review submitted by Dr. Tyler Dickovick, Independent Consultant, September 21, 2015.

This is a very thoughtful and informative report that carefully documents governance conditions in present-day Côte d'Ivoire, and leverages an understanding of these conditions to point toward prospects for programmatic interventions by USAID. The authors have demonstrated knowledge and insight that is both wide and deep, and the report has many merits as a result. Several positive attributes of the report can be noted at the outset. First, it exhibits a thorough and nuanced understanding of the many complexities in the country today (especially in sections 2 and 3, which follow the introduction and correspond to Step 1 and Step 2 of the DRG Assessment, respectively). Second, it offers precision on the key actors and institutions (Step 2), with particularly strong analyses of those crucial actors in Côte d'Ivoire that may differ from those in some other USAID countries, including ex-combatants and non-state armed actors. Third, the report makes appropriate and courageous analytical choices when it comes to USAID strategy, resources, and programming. It does so notably in section 4 (Step 3 of the Assessment) by proposing possibilities that would be beneficial while taking care with assumptions about what is actionable. (An example of such possibilities would be the desirability of future DRG programming working alongside other USAID sectors, such as Health and Education.) Fourth, the Assessment offers useful detail on the Strategic Objectives and Intermediate Results in section 5. As a

final note (though it refers to the beginning pages of the DRG Assessment), the report presents a plausible set of takeaway lessons in an effective executive summary. The authors have done well to identify many key challenges for this country and have built on this work in proposing forward-looking solutions in a demanding programming environment.

In the interest of contributing to USAID's deliberative process, this review will not focus simply on enumerating and elaborating upon the Assessment's merits (though these will be referred to throughout). Rather, the review will focus on remaining questions and areas where other interpretations of the evidence may be useful, or where further discussion in USAID (in Washington and/or the Côte d'Ivoire mission) may be warranted. Several of these have to do with the overarching goal outlined in the report, and the strategy for action.

1. The Overarching Goal: Is "confidence" an optimal goal, and is it measurable?

The overarching goal of the proposed strategy is worth quoting, as it is central to the assessment. According to page viii, it is:

> *[T]o increase the population's confidence in the Ivoirian government with the two strategic objectives: 1) to increase public officials' interactions with and responsiveness to societal actors; and 2) to improve the performance of government core functions.*

This is clearly linked to the "problem statement", which enumerates security, justice, and social services as important core government functions that must be improved.

There are several observations to make about this overarching goal. One question worth raising is about the pros and cons of the goal being focused on the *confidence* of the population in the government's ability to provide services, versus simply the government's ability (and incentives) to provide services. The issue worth considering is both what USAID's "end goal" is and how it is measured. To consider the plan for action, it may be useful to present the "development hypothesis" from the report schematically as follows:

→ improved citizen engagement → improved confidence

USAID support in government

→ improved service provision →

That is, confidence in the government is the *end result* of this causal chain. And it does indeed seem that confidence would follow from improvements in the state engaging with citizens and in providing better services (including justice and the rule of law). But it is worth considering: does that make "improved confidence" necessarily the *end goal* of USAID action? One possibility to consider is whether the overarching goal can or should be defined as improved government action, rather than subjective measures of popular confidence in that government action. There are several reasons to pursue this question further.

First, there are theoretical questions about what affects "confidence", and many things that do affect it are difficult for USAID (or even a well-intentioned Côte d'Ivoire government) to control. One possibility is that popular confidence will just not increase in linear fashion with "objective" indicators of governance. For instance, one could hypothetically consider that as government outreach and service provision improve, the citizenry may become *more* aware of government failings, *more* organized and capable of holding government to account, *more* critical of government in the process, and would develop a *stronger* "negative" voice about government action. This could imply more effective and constructive expressions of dissatisfaction with government action. Would this be seen as a programmatic *failure* if public opinion on "confidence" thereby declined while state engagement and service provision themselves improved? (In a cross-national comparative context, there are correlations between many quality of governance

indicators and citizen perceptions of governance quality, but not a perfect correspondence.) Moreover, confidence in governance and assessments of government performance will be partly affected by *other exogenous variables*, such as the broader international macroeconomic context that is not a function of government policy and domestic politics alone.[107] In short, "confidence" as a goal may prove elusive even in certain circumstances where government efficacy has in fact improved (perhaps as a direct function of USAID support). USAID will want to carefully consider whether its DRG strategy might even *understate* (!) the impact of its interventions if an elusive and fickle "public confidence" is its end goal.

Second (and on a related note), public confidence is susceptible to challenges of measurement. While it may prove possible to gather valid public opinion data in USAID's programming communities, the DRG program will face challenges that are common to survey instruments when trying to measure confidence: question framing, sampling, and the issue of whether a given indicator is actually measuring what one wants to measure. USAID will also want to consider the direct costs of gathering evidence. If the process of measuring government services provided would require a smaller fraction of the programming budget than measuring public confidence (which seems quite possible), then more of a given budget is available for programmatic intervention itself.

Third, in terms of USAID's analytical framework, a focus on the goal of improvement in government activity could place the overarching DRG goal even closer to the two strategic objectives identified (interaction and responsiveness, and improved performance). It would also dovetail with the formulation in USAID's overall DRG strategy (see *DRG Strategic Assessment Framework*, p. 6).[108]

As a smaller and final point, it is worth noting that there are occasional references to "the people" and "the general public" (see pp. 44, 47, etc.), which are presumably those actors who have high or low confidence. Yet in the absence of consensus about who "the people" are, this becomes thorny. A lingering problem in Côte d'Ivoire and much of Africa (and indeed the world) is whether those actors presumed to work in the public interest – from elected representatives to the catch-all phrase of "civil society" – are in fact working for the public good or for much more limited constituencies of ethnic or regional nature.[109] It is important to be skeptical about whether "the people" of Côte d'Ivoire act at all in circumstances where internal divisions still mean that many citizens feel there are "peoples" that deserve different forms of inclusion and exclusion; the question of people of (partial) Burkinabé descent, land tenure (autochthony, etc.) and Ivoirité highlights this, and are well-documented by the authors.[110]

These questions are about the desirability of different measures of impact, but it should be noted that this question about the wording of the goal does not greatly affect the underlying programming approach, nor the spirit of the DRG assessment. The findings and direction of the report are wholly intact, whichever "end goal" is chosen. Moreover, no measure is perfect. Using direct outputs as the goal also has its drawbacks (and does not always "objectively" measure desired outcomes). This question raised here is about a minor reformulation of the goal, and is intended largely to ensure that the resulting DRG programming has the best fit possible with USAID's evidence-based approach.

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[107] See, e.g., Radelet, Steven and Jeffrey Sachs. 1998. "The Onset of the East Asian Financial Crisis," NBER Working Paper No. 6680. Available at: http://www.nber.org/papers/w6680 and http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACC890.pdf (accessed September 14, 2015).

[108] The DRG Strategic Assessment Framework is hereafter referred to as the DRG SAF for short.

[109] This question has been put, famously and controversially, in Chabal, Patrick and Jean-Pascal Daloz. 1999. *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (It has also been raised in many other studies, often in forms that have generated less polemics and more attention to specific empirical cases.)

110 See Lentz, Carola. 2013. *Land, mobility, and belonging in west africa: natives and strangers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

2. Can "government responsiveness and effectiveness" articulate further with other "Key Elements" of DRG?

USAID has identified in its Assessment Framework its five key elements of DRG: consensus; inclusion; competition and political accountability; rule of law and human rights; and government responsiveness and effectiveness. The five key elements are clearly interrelated. Indeed, sample problem statements (see DRG SAF, p. 25) demonstrate that DRG approaches will regularly be at the intersection (or overlap) of different elements.[111] This raises the question about the extent to which DRG strategies should focus on one "key element" or multiple "key elements". A related question is whether the five key elements serve as a menu of choices that encourages mainly selecting certain elements over others (see the discussion of "prioritization" and "primary", "secondary", and "tertiary" challenges on DRG SAF p. 25) or serves to structure strategic thinking with a recognition that many interventions will cut across the five elements.

In its programming recommendations, the Côte d'Ivoire Assessment focuses most directly on the fifth of the five elements: *government responsiveness and effectiveness*. This is a reasonable choice that is clearly informed by the knowledge of the authors and from the results of the assessment study itself. There are many reasons for the authors to emphasize what they have, and to make the programming recommendation they have. I will not recapitulate the assessment in detail, but will enumerate several reasons why the authors' perspective has high validity; I will thereafter raise questions for further consideration.

The first reason to concur with the authors' decision is analytical, with specific reference to the historical trajectory of Côte d'Ivoire. The authors note that there has been improvement over time (especially from 2011 onward) on questions such as consensus and inclusion. The analysis is convincing in showing that Côte d'Ivoire has moved beyond an immediate post-conflict phase and has moved into a next phase of (re)building government institutions to provide services for long-run improvements in the depth and quality of democracy. The authors themselves say as much (see bottom p. 6 and the "problem statement"), and their ample evidence certainly supports the interpretation they offer. The report's main conclusion addresses this directly: existing movement toward consensus, inclusion, and the reestablishment of state authority in recent years leaves government effectiveness and responsiveness as a major gap. This conclusion lends itself to programming that helps fill that gap in DRG.

The second reason to concur with the authors' conclusion is methodological, with specific reference to the depth of the study that has been undertaken. It is clear that the recommendations emerge from on-the-ground contact with a large number of key stakeholders (to include the USAID mission, along with Ivoirian institutions). This superior on-the-ground knowledge is a key attribute of the assessment, and should be valorized. The authors have been attentive to the observations of interlocutors and have closely considered possibilities in light of the strengths and availability of existing USAID resources (in the context of budgetary challenges). This is not to say that the mere existence of any field study guarantees that the conclusions of the study should not be challenged (and indeed, I will aim to raise questions for further consideration below), but it is to say that recommendations should not be supplanted without analytical and empirical cause. The authors know this case deeply and write it up well.

The third reason for supporting the recommendations is pragmatic, with specific regard to what USAID programmatic goals might gain traction. Below, I will raise questions about the key elements of *consensus* and *inclusion*, as these arguably deserve profound consideration (and some kind of central role) in the forthcoming country strategy. Yet the authors have identified a key element of DRG, and accompanying strategic and programmatic recommendations, that have the merit of allocating resources

[111] See for instance, the problem statement at the bottom of p. 25, in which "the most critical threats… lie in the confluence of *exclusion* [italics added] and contested state identity [note: this relates to *consensus*]… The fundamental challenge is… characterized by an almost complete absence of *political accountability*". Similar admixtures of the five elements are found in other sample problem statements.

in ways that can make for meaningful change. By contrast, other key elements of DRG in Côte d'Ivoire may be very important, yet beyond USAID's ability to alter significantly. The major issues here are questions of national identity, consensus on the nature of the nation-state, and perceptions of who should be included in the polity. These may be indispensable and even preeminent questions, and may deserve (very significant) programmatic support, but could conceivably be hard to influence through even the best development partner programs in the short run. Questions of identity deserve public deliberation (that the likes of USAID may be able to facilitate), but are not always easily amenable to programming that draws on USAID strengths. In short, other key elements may be central to Côte d'Ivoire's DRG challenges, but the presence of a given problem does not necessarily mean that it is possible for donors/partners to address that problem. The question is where limited resources are best allocated. The optimal action is not always to address the most fundamental challenge, but rather to address the most fundamental challenge *that can be addressed with given resources*. Put another way, the authors of this assessment demonstrate that there is a "fit" between the problem to be addressed and the resources to address it.

To follow on the authors' convincing analysis, a couple of observations may be in order that could help a continuing conversation about how the five key elements overlap in Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, the authors note that the Côte d'Ivoire government needs to supply *justice* as one key public good. This is obviously closely linked to the idea of establishing a rule of law and progress on human rights (elements 3 and 4 of the DRG SAF). Yet Steps 1 and 2 of the analysis also provide very convincing demonstrations of the unavoidable salience of *consensus* and *inclusion* in particular. The authors do well to note the country's enduring challenges of national identity. In fact, the question of identity and national unity in Côte d'Ivoire seems to remain omnipresent throughout the assessment. This yields an intriguing finding: the report extensively documents challenges in the area of national consensus on basic political questions, yet recommendations for action are largely about government service provision. In a sense, it seems the "prescription" is pointing in a somewhat different direction than most of the "diagnosis".

It is worth noting that the large portion of the paper dedicated to questions of identity, consensus, and inclusion could be partially an artifact of the DRG SA framework, which requires attention to these questions specifically. Yet it is clear that these issues are very salient throughout the assessment, even when they are not the questions being prompted. Evidence can be seen in several features of the report:

- Questions of national identity and consensus dominate the important (and well-synthesized) section 1.4 (The Ivoirian Context), pp. 2-5
- Questions of politico-military conflict, ex-combatants, and internal divisions also predominate in sections 2.3 (Competition and Political Accountability) and 2.4 (Rule of Law and Human Rights), pp. 13-18
- The "Key Populations" (section 3.8) specific to the Ivoirian context features non-combatants prominently, and see also sections 3.2, 3.5, and 3.7 on sources of internal division within the country.

In short, the assessment shows convincingly that questions about resolving civil conflict and internal divisions are never far away, even where progress has been made since 2011. (The authors' repeated acknowledgement of this reality is a strength of the assessment.)

Even when narrowly addressing electoral politics, the authors show that Côte d'Ivoire's governance issues are often traceable to the enduring divisions in the country. In electoral politics, an illuminating event is the recent decision by the opposition to boycott the elections. How do we read that? The decision may be "justified" or "unjustified" (or somewhere in between). If the opposition is "justified" in boycotting, that raises questions about whether the Ivoirian state has made necessary progress on basic questions of inclusion and the rule of law, and whether the diagnosis of real progress (from the problem statement) can hold up. If the opposition is justified in a boycott, it would seem an argument can be made that USAID action on other elements (consensus, inclusion, rule of law, rights) should come sequentially *before* government responsiveness. On the other hand, if the opposition is not "justified" in boycotting, then they are probably avoiding an election they know they would lose. This too is problematic for basic

definitions of the consolidation of democracy: the opposition is not accepting free and fair elections as "the only game in town."

The question raised here is not to challenge the authors or advocate for a different key element or core goal, but rather to highlight the importance of *articulation across the five key elements when programming*, and indeed to applaud the authors for incorporating questions of government "supplying" rule of law and justice "services" as part of their programmatic goal. In short, the elements of consensus and inclusion feature to such an extent in the assessment that it would seem worthwhile to consider even further how and whether the proposed goals and strategic objectives can be articulated with those. USAID has done well in its DRG SAF to require authors to think hard about making choices under scarcity and budget constraints, and the authors have demonstrated an effective way of squaring the circle in arguing that some of the most important services government can provide (and that USAID can support) come in the form of access to justice and the rule of law that may support national consensus and inclusion.

This reviewer is inclined to support the authors' conclusions for the reasons stated above. But it is worth asking whether USAID (and the Côte d'Ivoire mission) views the five key elements as needing to come in any kind of sequence. For instance, does *consensus* need to be in place before we can talk meaningfully about *government effectiveness and responsiveness*? USAID's five key elements are reminiscent of prominent theories in political science that hold a degree of "stateness" is necessary *before* democracy can be consolidated.[112] If USAID officers would concur that these come in sequence, then DRG strategies in countries like Côte d'Ivoire will necessitate that even government effectiveness programming focus substantially on "inclusion" and "rule of law" services (perhaps even before other service sectors such as education and health).

3. Questions regarding USAID strategy across sectors

A final set of observations involves questions for USAID that this assessment stimulates. One of these is about incentives for cross-sectoral programming. The authors make several keen observations about the DRG sector possibly benefiting from collaboration with other sectors. Given the resource constraints facing DRG programming and other sectors, and given the possibilities for synergy, this review would be remiss if it did not comment on cross-sectoral initiatives.

The comments here are not critiques of the assessment *per se*, since the assessment cannot make assumptions about whether and how cross-sectoral programming may take shape. Rather, these are forward-looking issues for USAID; as such, they can be posed as questions for further consideration in bullet form:

- Should USAID provide *incentives* to structure collaboration between DRG and other sectors (in program planning and project implementation)?
  - If so, should collaboration be the responsibility primarily of DRG officers/teams?
  - Can/should collaboration with DRG be incentivized for other sectors (education, health, etc. to facilitate collaboration with DRG)?
- Given the overlap between DRG "key element #5" and public service provision, should USAID incentivize cross-sectoral collaboration *particularly* where DRG undertakes programming in *government effectiveness and responsiveness?*
  - Put more bluntly, can sector-specific programming to improve service provision be effective without bringing to bear real expertise in DRG?
  - And conversely, can DRG programming in government effectiveness and responsiveness be effective without coupling it with sector-specific expertise in areas such as health and education?

[112] This idea was formulated most prominently in: Linz, Juan and Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

- What are optimal USAID financing provisions to encourage work across sectors?
  - Is DRG likely to be in the position of seeking funding support from other sectors?
  - Can financing maximize impact by facilitating collaboration across sectors (via incentives)?

These are questions that neither the assessment authors nor the reviewer can answer. They are posed because they emerge as salient considerations from the assessment here. In the eyes of this reviewer, the authors have done a service in pushing for attention to DRG key element 5 and linking this to the question of collaboration with other sectors.

Conclusion

The DRG Assessment for Côte d'Ivoire (2015) exhibits a thorough and nuanced understanding of the major issues in the country today. The assessment makes solid and reasonable recommendations to work in the area of government effectiveness and responsiveness, with an emphasis on service provision (to include improving the government's capacity to supply justice and rule of law).

In terms of issues for further consideration, it is clear that the authors are attuned to the importance of the lingering questions in Côte d'Ivoire about national identity and participation in the polity; these get at issues of consensus and inclusion that may be seen as nearly prerequisites for effective service provision. It may thus be worthwhile for the mission to consider how the recommendations here can be further informed by linkages between the five key elements of DRG, since all are salient in the Ivoirian context. Given the scarcity of resources for any programming, the authors have made judicious choices in their recommendations for strategy and programming. It is hoped that this assessment will provide ample justification for a DRG strategy that earns adequate budgetary support – ideally including collaboration across sectors – with a view toward programmatic successes in this crucial and still-fragile country.

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