

User Story: Apollo Côte d'Ivoire



Given the tumultuous history around recent elections in Cote d'Ivoire, with over 3,000 killed when the former president refused to concede defeat in 2010, it has been crucial for Ivoiriens to have trustworthy, independent electoral information to prevent civil unrest. POECI (Civil Society Platform for the Observation of Elections in Côte d'Ivoire), a coalition of civic groups that came together to conduct nonpartisan election monitoring through systematic observation, adopted Apollo to help in this high-stakes election data collection and analysis process.

POECI conducted the country's first-ever sample-based citizen observation for the 2015 Presidential election, which used Apollo to



collect data on the conduct of the election to provide credible, independent analysis on the quality of the process. POECI observers used cell phones, SMS messages, and standardized checklists to provide real time data on key aspects of voting and ballot counting, including the opening and closing times

for polling stations, presence of appropriate electoral materials, successful deployment of new biometric authentication technology, and adherence to the electoral code. Their observation also enabled an independent estimate of the election results.

On election day, POECI deployed observers to a representative sample of 755 polling stations across the country, covering each of the 14 districts, 31 regions, and 107 departments of Côte d'Ivoire. Observer reports, in the form of coded text messages, were aggregated in Apollo, for rapid review and processing by trained statisticians. POECI ultimately received 5,285 observer reports via 38,000 text messages, which included 396,375 data

points – and 100 percent of the data expected from every single observer.

POECI observers reported that the process of voting went smoothly; nearly all polling stations had the right supplies and staff and followed the correct procedures. The observation statement noted scattered incidents, including intimidation or violence towards election officers, but no nationwide trends raised questions on the overall credibility of the elections. The evaluation of the process as free, fair, and credible, along with the verification of the outcome, helped candidates and political party members accept the results and advise their supporters to remain peaceful, win or lose.

In the 2016 parliamentary elections and 2018 regional and municipal elections, POECI continued to improve its capacity to deploy observers, collect data and communicate seamlessly across the organization. They have used Apollo and integrated communication tools to mass message observers for activity reminders, as well as to customize survey question responses from groups of observers on the fly. POECI is planning to continue to use Apollo as they look ahead to monitoring the presidential elections in 2020.

