



AGDI Gender Outlook Series

5

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

The African Centre for Gender (ACG) *Gender Outlook #5* aims to benchmark Côte d'Ivoire's performance in the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), highlight challenges and offer prioritized policy recommendations to accelerate progress towards gender equality. The AGDI is based on two components. The first is the Gender Status Index (GSI), a quantitative snapshot of 44 indicators that capture gender disparities¹ in the social, economic and political arenas. The second component is the African Women's Progress Scoreboard (AWPS), a qualitative self-evaluation of government performance in the implementation of more than 30 treaties, declarations, and resolutions affecting women's rights and women's empowerment in the social, economic and political arenas. All data² are provided by stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire, including various ministries and civil society organizations. This profile draws on the results from the AGDI Country Report for Côte d'Ivoire, one of the 14 countries in Phase 2 of the AGDI³.

Key Messages

- As with other AGDI study countries, the Côte d'Ivoire situation highlights the importance of political stability

for development in general and gender equality in particular. Weak budgetary allocations are among the critical challenges the country faces in terms of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

- While females in Côte d'Ivoire slightly exceed gender parity in the Social Power block, this merely reflects the fact that twice more women than men are using antiretroviral treatment (ART) services, as they are close to eight times more likely than men to have HIV/AIDS. Gender disparity in enrolment rates, even at primary level, is a big concern along with the large disparity in literacy rates.
- Another substantial challenge is women's access to the means of production. Only 5 per cent of arable land is owned by women. Large wage gaps are observed across all sectors, particularly in agriculture.

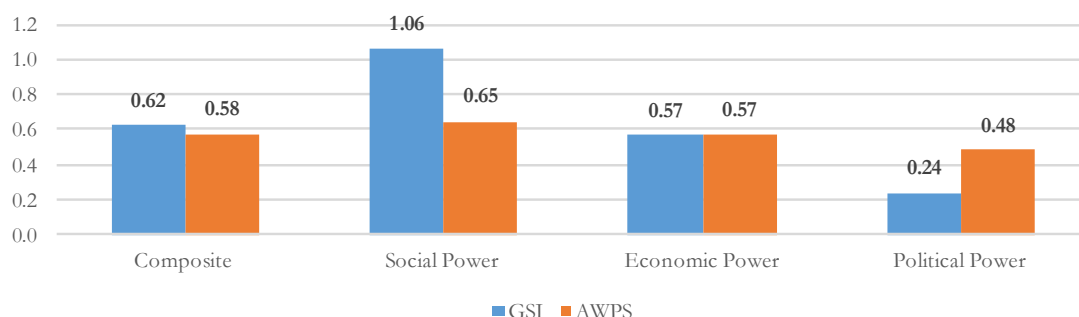
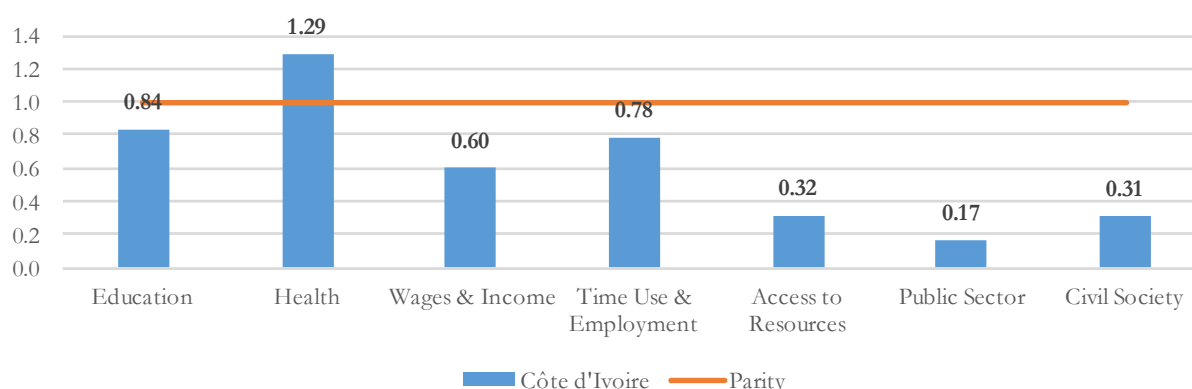
Figure 1 provides a comparative perspective on Côte d'Ivoire's GSI and AWPS.

Côte d'Ivoire is far away from achieving gender parity in policy outcomes, and its implementation of policy commitments that emanate from international or regional instruments remains weak. While both GSI and AWPS indicators are consistently low in the Economic Power block, there are large disparities in the Social Power and Political Power blocks in opposite directions. Côte d'Ivoire has a low score in the Social Power block of the AWPS but exceeds gender parity in the GSI because twice more women than men are using antiretroviral treatment (ART) services, and they are nearly eight times more likely than men to have HIV/AIDS. Regarding the Political Power block, women's representation is extremely low in the political sphere despite some progress in gender mainstreaming and affirmative action. Women's absence in traditional governance is likely to persist, given

¹ The GSI for most of the indicators are calculated by dividing the indicator for female achievement by that for male achievement for the particular indicator. A tolerance level of 3 per cent is set around the full gender parity score, leading to a parity bandwidth of 0.97-1.03 whereby scores below (above) this bandwidth indicate gender disparity against women (men). However, there are eight reverse indicators, i.e. stunting, underweight, mortality, prevalence of HIV/AIDS, share of women under poverty line, time spent on non-market activities and domestic care and volunteer activities and youth unemployment rate, that follow a slightly different formula such that overshooting in these normatively negative indicators are neutralized for the consistency of the index.

² The Country Report from Côte d'Ivoire was finalized and received by the ACG in July 2012. While the ACG has strived to update various indicators using international databases, e.g. Demographic and Health Survey and Inter-Parliamentary Union, the majority of the indicators are from 2012 and were provided by the government of Côte d'Ivoire.

³ Other countries that were part of AGDI 2 are Botswana, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, Togo and Zambia.

Figure 1. African Gender and Development Index Snapshot - Côte d'Ivoire**Figure 2. Disaggregating Côte d'Ivoire's GSI**

the minimal policy implementation on this front. Finally, Côte d'Ivoire needs to strengthen the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on peace and security and involve women in policy dialogue in an effort to ensure stability.

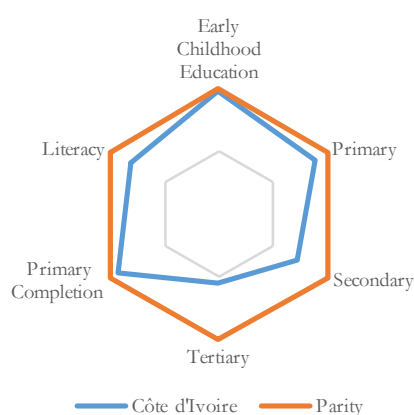
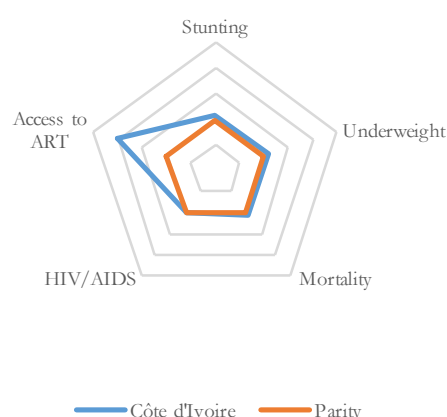
Figure 2 sheds further light on Côte d'Ivoire's GSI. Females exceed parity in the *Health* area due to their higher rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence and use of antiretroviral treatment services. In the Economic Power block, women in Côte d'Ivoire have increased their share in non-agricultural employment substantially in recent years, recording one of the highest scores among countries under review. In the Political Power block, while Côte d'Ivoire follows a trend with significantly worse outcomes than in the Social and Economic Power blocks, similar to that of most African countries, women's presence in traditional governance is extremely low, thereby driving a large wedge between the two components.

- The **Social Power** block is made up of the *Education* and *Health* sub-components. While gender parity is to a large extent attained in *Health*, policy action is needed to raise female enrolment and literacy rates in *Education*.

In *Education*, gender parity is attained only with respect to early childhood education, which unfortunately involves

mostly richer households in urban areas. Côte d'Ivoire is among a few African countries with very low enrolment rates at all subsequent levels, with the gender gap increasing significantly after primary education. The primary completion rate is very close to gender parity and at par with the average for AGDI Round II countries, but there is need for policy action to address the gender gap in literacy rates. While 41 per cent of male youth aged 15-24 are literate, the rate drops down to 33 per cent for female youth. In addition to the fact that only 50 per cent of those who start primary schooling complete it, it is a pressing policy issue to raise the quality of education, particularly in rural areas.

In *Health*, Côte d'Ivoire follows the same trend as several other AGDI Round II countries with respect to child health and HIV/AIDS indicators. There is rough gender parity in stunting, underweight and child mortality. Since the prevalence rates for HIV/AIDS are very low, the GSI score for this indicator suggests gender parity. However, the prevalence rate for females aged 15-24 years is almost eight times more than the prevalence rate for males in the same age group. The main reason why females exceed parity in the *Health* component is because there are twice as many women as men who use ARTs, reflecting the larger HIV/AIDS prevalence and infection rates. Access to ARTs needs to be increased for both men and women.

Figure 3a. GSI for Education indicators**Figure 3b. GSI for Health indicators**

Notes: ART = antiretroviral treatment; mortality refers to the mortality rate of children under the age of 5; HIV/AIDS relates to prevalence for people between the ages of 15 and 24.

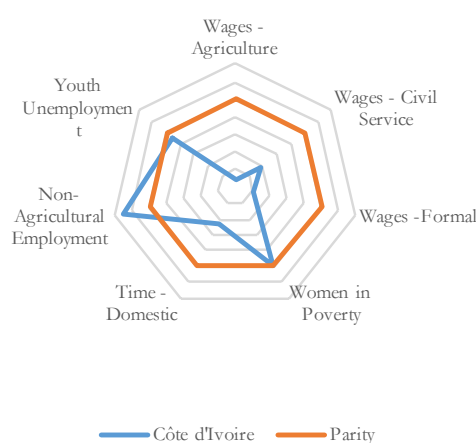
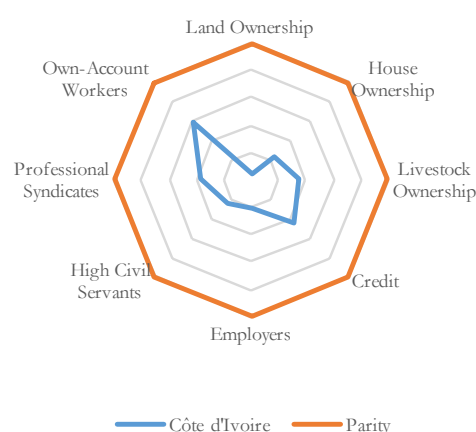
- The **Economic Power** block is made up of the *Wages and Income*, *Time Use and Employment* and *Access to Resources* sub-components. While Côte d'Ivoire is missing data for only 6 out of 44 indicators, 5 of these 6 indicators are in the Economic Power block, leading to a less comprehensive review.

In the *Wages and Income* component, Côte d'Ivoire reports alarmingly high wage disparities across all sectors, particularly in agriculture, where women have an average wage rate less than one-tenth that of men. The situation is similar in the private sector but improves slightly in the civil service. The average gender wage gap is much wider than in many African countries. While there are no data on income, available statistics indicate similar shares of male- and female-headed households under the poverty line.

In *Time Use and Employment*, Côte d'Ivoire reports women spending on average twice more hours per week than

men on domestic chores. The extent of time poverty for women is substantial, given that majority of them are in non-agricultural employment, unlike in the majority of countries under review. Figure 4a reflects the fact that 66 per cent of women are in non-agricultural employment compared with 50 per cent of men. A striking insight from the AGDI County Report is anecdotal evidence from the formal private sector that there is unwillingness to hire women due to potential pregnancy, time devoted to domestic chores and marital problems. This is a clear violation of the national Labour Code, which prohibits discrimination based on gender in hiring⁴. However, there is no restriction in Côte d'Ivoire against companies enquiring about the family status of prospective employees. Efforts to address gender disparity in youth unemployment rates must tackle such disadvantages faced by women in the labour market in urban areas.

In *Access to Resources*, Côte d'Ivoire needs strong political commitment from national authorities and close scrutiny

Figure 4a. Economic Block**Figure 4b. Economic Block (contd.)**

4 Labour Code [LC], Act No 95-15 of 12 January 1995 as amended by Act n° 97-400 of 11 July 1997. See: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/eplex/termmain.showCountry?p_lang=en&p_country_id=114

Figure 5a. Political Power block

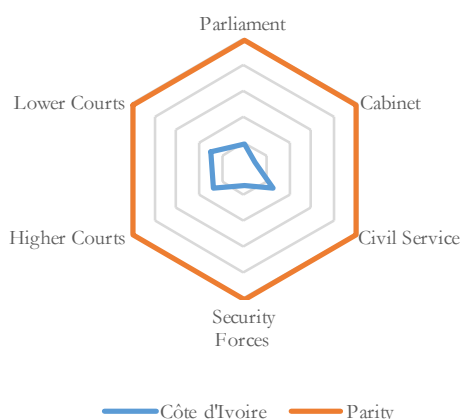
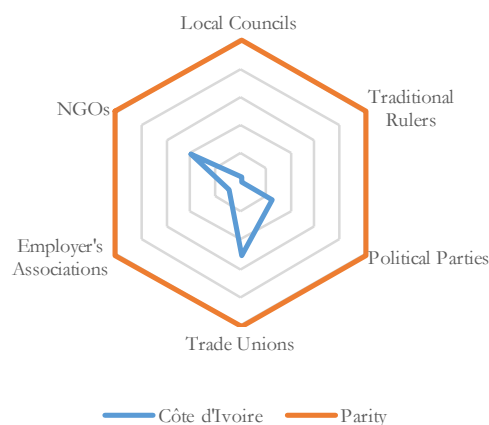


Figure 5b. Political Power block (contd.)



from civil organizations to raise women's access to land as shown in Figure 4b. Only 5 per cent of arable land is owned by women. There is also a large disparity in urban areas regarding house ownership. Women are again far from parity in access to livestock and credit. For instance, only 30 per cent of beneficiaries of commercial and microcredit enterprises are women because compared to men, they have limited control over assets that can be used as collateral. In terms of management, women's representation among employers and high civil servants is minimal and in the informal sector, women's presence among own-account workers is much lower than in other countries under review. Côte d'Ivoire already has two-thirds of women in non-agricultural employment. The challenge now is to help women in all sectors boost their productivity as well as their access to decent jobs with job security.

- The **Political Power** block is a function of the quantity and quality of female participation in the *Public Sector* and *Civil Society*. Figures 5a and 5b show that Côte d'Ivoire's outcomes are far from the parity benchmark.

Women's presence is limited in legislative bodies and there are no prescribed quotas to promote women's political participation⁵. The AGDI Country Report suggests that

gender parity is not a priority for political parties, which explains the dismal number of female candidates during elections. In addition, there is anecdotal evidence of women's unwillingness to participate in politics due to lack of time and financial resources as well as the prevalence of violence. Despite this discouraging outlook, a positive outcome recently achieved is that the GSI score for female representation in parliament almost doubled between the early 2010s and 2016⁶. The picture is less encouraging in the executive branch, the security forces, the civil service in general, as well as in local-level elected and non-elected posts.

In the *Civil Society* sub-component, women are virtually absent in employers' associations. Trade unions and NGOs have some female presence in the higher ranks, particularly with around half of top-ranking union executives being women. However, less than a quarter of political party executives are women. With such minimal female presence in civil society organizations, it is unclear how government policy performance can be scrutinized and galvanized, particularly with regard to women's economic and political empowerment.

⁵ International IDEA at: <http://www.quotaproject.org/country/cote-divoire>

⁶ IPU (2016).