

### **Effect of Research, monitoring, and assessment on Political security**

Civic Education and Town Hall Programs improved voter awareness, reduced fear, and lowered invalid votes, while Security Committee Programs had smaller effects. Overall, interventions had a small effect on political security.

**Geographical Region:** Sub-Saharan Africa

**Effect:** Small effect ( $g=0.055$ )

**Confidence in study findings:** Low (1 study with 6 effect sizes)

### **Short Summary**

Research, monitoring, and assessment interventions, including Civic Education and Town Hall Programs and Security Committee Programs in rural Liberia, had a small effect on political security. Civic education increased voter knowledge, reduced fear of retribution, and lowered invalid votes. Security committees had smaller impacts. Overall, interventions modestly improved electoral integrity and voter empowerment, with limited broader effects on political security.

### **Long summary**

#### *The intervention*

Civic Education and Town Hall Programs provided electoral education, candidate information, and facilitated community discussions. Security Committees established village-level committees with UN peacekeepers to monitor electoral security and improve communication.

#### *How the intervention is expected to work*

The interventions aim to overcome barriers to electoral participation. Civic education reduces misinformation, increases knowledge of electoral rights, and encourages coordinated voting. Security committees enhance perceived and actual security by connecting communities with UN peacekeepers, reducing intimidation, and supporting safe participation.

#### *The evidence base*

The cell includes one cluster-randomized field experiment across 142 towns in five Liberian counties: Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, and Nimba.

#### *Evidence findings*

Civic education and town hall programs had a small positive effect on political security, improving voter awareness and reducing invalid votes. Security committees alone had minimal impact, making overall effects modest and context-specific.

*Included studies:* the cell includes one impact evaluation, assessing the effects of two interventions on political security, presenting both individual and combined intervention impacts. A summary of the study is provided here:

**Mvukiyehe (2017)** focusing on manipulation, surrendering of rights, and invalid vote proportions. The study evaluated two interventions during Liberia's 2011 elections: civic education and security committees, using a cluster-randomized design across 142 towns, targeting rural, war-affected communities. The civic education program included town halls

discussing governance, elections, and voter rights, while the security program created community-based early-warning systems to address election violence. The civic education program increased participants' awareness and willingness to report voter intimidation, with self-reported exposure to manipulation rising by 14% compared to control groups. However, this effect may indicate greater willingness to recognize and report manipulation rather than an increase in actual intimidation. Notably, civic education reduced perceptions of being "in trouble" for voting against local patrons by 5 percentage points. The civic education intervention significantly reduced invalid votes by 5 percentage points in presidential and senate races ( $p < 0.05$ ). This reduction reflects improved voter understanding of ballots due to the program's training components. The security program, while less impactful, also contributed to slight reductions in invalid votes. Overall, the study highlights civic education dual effect: empowering voters against manipulation and enhancing electoral quality, though potentially increasing short-term local contestation.

#### *Confidence assessment*

Overall, the cell has low confidence due to the limited number of studies.

#### **Other outcomes in this study:**

Social Cohesion/ willingness to participate.

Community & state governance/Civic participation