Does Personal Exposure to Political Processes Increase Voters’ Receptiveness to Performance Information?

*Author information and acknowledgements omitted*

(to facilitate anonymous peer review)

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Abstract

This study seeks to test whether first-hand experience with municipal governance processes increases performance-based voting and, more generally, voters’ interest in and receptiveness to performance information about their municipal government. The experiment will be carried out in 44 rural municipalities that are located within six of Burkina Faso’s thirteen administrative regions. It consists of two sequential, cross-cutting treatment arms: First, personal invitations for randomly selected voting-age citizens to attend municipal council meetings. Second, an individually-targeted information intervention that provides voters with information about the performance of the previous incumbent municipal government.
# Contents

1 About this Pre-Analysis Plan 3

2 Research Question and Relevance 3

3 Theoretical Framework 7
   3.1 Causal chain 7
   3.2 Modeling assumptions about voting intent and vote choice 9
   3.3 Assumptions about voters' preferences over electoral candidates 10
   3.4 Hypotheses 11

4 Experimental Treatments 13
   4.1 Meeting invitation treatment 13
   4.2 Performance information treatment 15

5 Treatment Assignment 18
   5.1 Citizen invitations 18
   5.2 Selection of municipalities for inclusion in this study 18
   5.3 Performance information 19

6 Data Collection 19

7 Data Analysis 21
   7.1 Voter preferences and voter turnout 21
   7.2 Effects of performance information 22
   7.3 Effects of personal invitations to municipal council meetings 25

8 Sampling Strategy and Power Calculations 27

9 Appendix 30
   9.1 Measurement strategies 31
   9.2 Contributions to Meta-Analysis 34
1 About this Pre-Analysis Plan

This research design document documents the initial hypotheses, measurement strategies and data analysis plans for this study prior to the author’s access to the data. The study is part of the EGAP Metaketa Initiative, a coordinated cluster of studies on information and voter behavior, organized by Evidence on Governance and Politics (EGAP). For further information, see http://egap.org/content/information-and-accountability-metaketa. A first draft of this document was shared with the principal investigators of the Metaketa Initiative on August 18, 2015. The research design was registered at the EGAP experimental design registry on December 1st, 2015. A revised draft of the pre-analysis plan received peer feedback from Taylor Boas and F. Daniel Hidalgo in April 2016, which has subsequently been incorporated. This version of the document is being submitted to the EGAP experimental design registry on May 18, 2016, prior to the authors’ access to any data from the study. Additionally, the authors have strictly refrained from accessing or informing themselves about the results of any other study in the Metaketa Initiative to ensure independence of the studies within the cluster.

2 Research Question and Relevance

Political competition at the local level is often inhibited by local party hegemony. Local party hegemony can come about if voters in local elections make their choices based on national-level patterns of party loyalty, identity-based appeals or clientelistic exchanges. An important question is therefore: Can voters be induced to evaluate local-level politicians, such as mayors and municipal
councilors by their actual or expected performance in office, rather than on the basis of other sources of affinity?

We will refer to the practice of conditioning vote choices on candidates’ expected competence and effort at providing public goods to their constituents as *performance-based voting* and contrast it with affinity- or identity-based voting. Our objective is twofold. First, we investigate whether and to what extent voting behavior in municipal-level elections is responsive to detailed and accurate information about the performance of the incumbent municipal government at providing local public services. Second, we test whether performance-based voting in municipal elections can be increased by providing voters with the opportunity to gain first-hand experience with political processes at the municipal level. For that purpose, we work with municipal leaders to individually invite citizens to attend a local council meeting as “citizen observer”.

We conjecture that personal exposure to municipal decision processes, through the “citizen observer” intervention, induces greater awareness of and more personal reflection about the responsibilities of municipal politicians. As a consequence, we expect that personal exposure to political processes impacts citizens’ demand for and responsiveness to municipal performance information. While third-party-mediated learning interventions, such as civics trainings (see Adida et al. 2015), leave citizens largely passive, we hypothesize that giving citizens the opportunity to actively familiarize themselves with local-level political processes, by inviting them as “citizen observers” to a municipal council meeting, could create more profound changes in their interest in matters of municipal governance. The reason is that citizens can connect future information and discussions about municipal governance to an unusual, memorable personal experience, which might increase their attention and motivation to acquire information about municipal governance and could cause them to reflect more on information they receive. However, personal experiences with municipal governance processes are also likely to be much more heterogeneous and context-dependent than third-party mediated learning. Therefore, it remains to be investigated how personal experience actually affects voters’ processing of pertinent information. This study is the first experimental test of how personal exposure to municipal decision processes impacts performance-based voting and receptiveness to performance information.
The upcoming 2016 municipal elections in Burkina Faso offer a unique opportunity to investigate the relationship between personal exposure to municipal decision processes and performance-based voting. Under the transitional regimes that are currently in place at the municipal level, voters can be exposed to real-world municipal institutions and decision processes without simultaneously being exposed to either the incumbent government or to the opposition candidates. Following a popular uprising in 2014 and the subsequent national-level political transition, the elected municipal governments were temporarily suspended in January 2015 and replaced by externally appointed special delegations that are not themselves contesting in the upcoming municipal elections. The members of the special delegations fulfill the responsibilities of the elected municipal councilors, and the presidents of the special delegations fulfill the responsibilities of the mayors. Municipal decision-making under the special delegations operates within the same legal framework as previously under the elected councils and mayors. This rare and unusual situation makes it possible to manipulate citizens’ exposure to municipal decision processes relatively independently of citizens’ informedness about the performance of the previous incumbent government, and vice versa. It becomes possible to disentangle the two processes much more than it would normally be possible and to test more directly how exposure to municipal decision processes alters voters’ processing of and response to performance information.

In this experiment, we use two sequential, cross-cutting treatments to manipulate both citizens’ personal exposure to municipal decision processes, as well as their access to performance information about the previous incumbent, independently of one another. To manipulate citizens’ personal exposure to municipal decision processes, we work with the presidents of the special delegations to personally invite randomly selected voting-age citizens from different villages to attend a municipal council meeting, typically for the first time in their lives. After completion of the citizen-invitation intervention, we provide a random subset of voters in the treatment and control groups of the citizen-invitation intervention with performance information about the previous incumbent municipal government. This performance information was collected in 2014, prior to the political transition. Therefore, it is clearly attributable to the previous elected municipal government, rather than to the non-elected interim government, and will be presented accordingly.
An important research design challenge is to either directly measure or indirectly infer the weight voters place on performance-related aspects in their evaluation of candidates. We pursue two alternative empirical strategies towards this goal. First, we ask voters directly about the relative weight they place on different candidate features. Second, we use the information intervention as a vehicle to estimate how voters’ preferences over different candidates depend on their expectations about their performance. Within pre-specified subgroups, we evaluate the interaction effect of the information intervention with prior personal exposure to municipal decision processes. This enables us to test whether personal exposure reinforces the effect of performance information on vote choice, without having to rely on strong modeling assumptions.

In addition to measuring the effect of council meeting invitations on performance-based voting, the information intervention is also of interest in its own right. First, access to information could plausibly have a direct influence on performance-based voting. If voters are uncertain about their beliefs, they might not place much weight on the expected performance of candidates. In such a situation, better availability of information should increase performance-based voting, because it increases voters’ certainty. Second, by manipulating voters’ perceptions of candidate quality, the information intervention helps us understand how voters’ motivation to turn out on election day depends on the nature of their preferences over different candidates. Third, the information intervention and proposed data collection directly contribute to meta-analysis within the EGAP Metaketa research cluster on information and accountability.

We plan to collect outcome and process data with respect to all applicable hypotheses in the Metaketa pre-analysis plan. Like four other studies in the Metaketa cluster, we focus on local government performance, providing voters with information about the incumbent government (in our case about the winner of the previous election). However, by exploring how the effect of providing performance information to voters is modified by prior personal exposure to municipal decision processes, we will shed light on an aspect of voters’ responses to performance information that no other study in the cluster is investigating. Moreover, our citizen-invitation treatment is a

1http://egap.org/metaketa
novel and easily scalable intervention. Finally, the case of rural Burkina Faso is valuable to the overall research agenda of the Metaketa cluster, because it represents a context where objective information about the quality and performance of municipal governments is very difficult to access for individual citizens, many of whom are illiterate and spend most of their time in their villages.

3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Causal chain

Access to information about politician performance could be an important prerequisite of political accountability, if such information causes voters to update their beliefs about the quality of electoral candidates and voters condition their vote choice on their expectations about the different candidates’ performance if elected to public office. However, despite of the popularity of this hypothesis, the underlying causal chain is challenging to specify and often involves strong and untested assumptions. To guide our research, we outline a basic conceptual framework in Figure 1. The causal chain that links voters’ access to information to electoral outcomes (turnout decisions and vote choice) consists of three elements: voter learning (information processing and belief formation), preference formation, and voting behavior.

Conditional on their prior beliefs about the quality of electoral candidates, we hypothesize that access to information about incumbent performance (provided through our experimental treatment) causes voters to update their expectations about the quality of electoral candidates, along with their subjective certainty about these expectations, but only if voters actually pay attention to such information. Changes in the expected quality of candidates may translate into changes in voters’ preferences over different candidates, depending on the weight voters place on a candidate’s expected performance if that candidate were to win the election. Finally, voters’ preferences simultaneously influence their potential vote choice and their propensity to actually vote. For the sake of analytical parsimony and empirical realism, we refrain from modeling the voter learning and preference formation stages. However, for reasons that will become obvious, we find it useful
to outline a simple decision-theoretic model of voter turnout and vote choice in section 2.2.

Figure 1: Hypothesized causal pathways. Solid arrows represent the hypothesized causal relationships with circles representing moderating variables.

We conjecture that the citizen observer treatment influences the relationship between information access and voting behavior by directly manipulating two important moderators along the causal chain: voters’ interest in and attentiveness to information about the previous incumbent government’s performance and the weight voters place on a party’s or candidate’s expected performance in office in forming their preferences over electoral candidates. We also conjecture that the citizen observer treatment may have direct effects on voter turnout which are independent of political preferences, by giving the citizen observers a sense of agency in municipal affairs and increasing their interest in political participation. At the same time, we are relatively confident that the citizen observer treatment by design has no effect on voters’ prior beliefs about the quality of different electoral candidates (because the incumbent governments have temporarily been suspended and replaced by an externally appointed special delegation), nor any direct effects on voters’ political preferences (because the special delegations are politically neutral and experience of attending a special delegation meeting does not involve contact with electoral candidates or previous incumbents, as it would be the case in regular municipal council meetings).
3.2 Modeling assumptions about voting intent and vote choice

To illustrate the theoretical framework from which our arguments and hypotheses are derived, we use a simple threshold voting model. In this framework, voters are presented with a set of candidates $C = \{c \in \mathbb{N} : 1 \leq c \leq m\}$. Voters make two choices: First, which candidate they prefer. Second, whether to vote or to abstain.

**Turnout**

Independent of the mechanism by which voters form their candidate preferences, we assume that a voter’s turnout decision $Y \in \{0, 1\}$ is determined by their intrinsic motivation to vote as well as their extrinsic incentives, broadly conceived. Voters’ extrinsic incentives may include physical opportunity costs, such as time and transportation costs to get to the polling station, but also social incentives, such as the anticipated reputational consequences of voting. These different extrinsic incentives add up to a total opportunity cost $\theta$. Individuals turn out vote if their intrinsic rewards $u(L, \xi)$ from doing so exceed the costs $\theta$, which are defined as the opportunity costs of voting net of any extrinsic rewards for voting:

$$Y = \mathbb{I}[u(L, \xi) \geq \theta]$$

We assume that a voter’s choice conditional on $Y = 1$ will be $V = \{c \in C : L_c = L^*\}$, assuming that ties are broken at random. Additionally, we assume that voters’ intrinsic motivation to vote $u(L, \xi)$ is a function of how much the voter likes each candidate, represented by a vector $L \in \mathbb{R}^m$, and the voter’s beliefs about how likely each candidate is to win, represented by an m-dimensional vector of probabilities $\xi$.

$$u(L, \xi) = u_0 + v(L^*) + w(\tilde{L}(L, \xi))$$

Here, $u_0$ is the motivation a voter derives from sources that are independent of candidate qualities (e.g. from their sense of civic duty or a habit to vote), $L^* = \max(L)$ is the voter’s enthusiasm for her most-preferred candidate, and $\tilde{L}(L, \xi) = \xi'(\max(L) - L)$ is a measure of the voter’s indifference between candidates. More specifically, $\tilde{L}(L, \xi)$ is a weighted measure of how much less a voter likes all of the non-preferred candidates, relative to the most-preferred candidate, weighted by each
candidate’s electoral chances. If a voter is perfectly indifferent between all candidates who have a positive chance of winning, then \( \bar{L}(L, \xi) = 0 \), otherwise \( \bar{L}(L, \xi) > 0 \). We assume that \( v \) and \( w \) are both monotonically increasing in their arguments.

We believe that this is a realistic and intuitive representation of voter’s intent to vote, because voting in this model is purely expressive (i.e. individual voters do not expect to be pivotal), and yet the model can accommodate both strategic voting (if \( L \) depends on \( \xi \)) and the possibility that individuals are more likely to turn out if an election is more contested. Given that \( \partial u(L, \xi)/\partial L^* > 0 \), turnout propensity should be increasing in how much a voter likes the most-preferred candidate. The more enthusiastic a voter is about her most-preferred candidate, the more likely she is to turn out (H 1.1). Holding her enthusiasm about her most-preferred candidate constant, two other mechanisms could increase her motivation to turn out. First, the less positive she feels about her non-preferred candidates, especially about those with greater chances of winning. Second, the less likely her most-preferred candidate is to win. Everything else equal, both mechanisms would decrease the voter’s indifference. In the model, greater indifference is associated with lower motivation to turn out (H 1.2), since \( \partial u(L, \xi)/\partial \bar{L}(L, \xi) > 0 \).

### 3.3 Assumptions about voters’ preferences over electoral candidates

For parts of our empirical analysis, we assume that voters’ candidate preferences \( L \) are a Cobb-Douglas-type function of a voter’s expectations \( X \) about candidate performance, as well as of other candidate characteristics \( Z \),

\[
L_c = X_c^\gamma \prod_k Z_{ck}^{\lambda_k}
\]

In our study, the main parameter of interest is \( \gamma \), the weight voters place on expected performance. We conjecture that \( \gamma \) depends on voters’ awareness of the importance of municipal decisions for their overall welfare, and of the consequences of poor incumbent performance for municipal decisions. We seek to test whether personal exposure to municipal decision processes increases voters’ belief that municipal governance matters, and hence the weight voters place on expected performance in forming their electoral preferences (H 3.2).
3.4 Hypotheses

With the experimental data, we seek to test three families of hypotheses, related to (1) the validation of our theoretical assumptions, (2) the effects of performance information, and (3) the effects of personal exposure to municipal decision processes.

Theoretical assumptions

HYPOTHESIS 1.1 The more enthusiastic a voter is about her most-preferred candidate/party, the greater is her motivation to vote, conditional on the voter’s indifference between candidates/parties.

HYPOTHESIS 1.2 The more indifferent a voter is between her most-preferred candidate/party and other candidates/parties, the lower is her motivation to vote, conditional on the voter’s enthusiasm for her most-preferred candidate/party.

Effects of performance information

HYPOTHESIS 2.1a Access to performance information increases pro-incumbent voting, if the incumbent’s performance is better than the voter had expected.

HYPOTHESIS 2.1b Access to performance information decreases pro-incumbent voting, if the incumbent’s performance is worse than the voter had expected.

HYPOTHESIS 2.2 If voters were previously uncertain about the incumbent’s performance, access to performance information about the incumbent causes voters to place greater weight on expected performance in forming their candidate preferences.

Effects of invitation to municipal council meeting

HYPOTHESIS 3.1 Personal invitations to municipal council/delegation special meetings reinforce the effect of performance information on vote choice.

The subgroup-specific treatment effects of the performance information treatment on vote choice measure citizens’ responsiveness to performance information. We conjecture that personal invitations to serve as citizen observers at a municipal council/delegation special meetings could
potentially increase citizens’ responsiveness to performance information, by increasing the weight voters place on expected performance in forming their preferences over candidates/parties (Hypothesis 3.2a), if the meeting invitations cause citizens to reflect on the role and importance of elected municipal politicians. Additionally, the meeting invitations could increase citizens’ interest in municipal government performance, by inducing associations with a memorable personal experience, and potentially also by increasing demand for performance information (Hypothesis 3.2b).

Thus, in the hypothesized causal chain from receiving a personal invitation to a municipal council/delegation speciale meeting to greater responsiveness to performance information, Hypothesis 3.2a and 3.2b are subordinate to Hypothesis 3.1.

**Hypothesis 3.2a** Personal invitations to municipal council meetings cause voters to place greater weight on expected performance in forming their candidate preferences.

**Hypothesis 3.2b** Personal invitations to municipal council meetings increase citizens’ interest in/attentiveness to performance information.

In addition to evaluating the effects of personal invitations to municipal council/delegation speciale meetings on voters’ responsiveness to and interest in performance information, we also evaluate the effects of this intervention on citizens’ motivation to vote, measured by their self-reported turnout probability.

**Hypothesis 3.3** Personal invitations to municipal council meetings increase citizens’ motivation to vote.

**Hypothesis 3.4** Actual attendance of a municipal council meeting increases citizens’ motivation to vote.

Hypotheses 3.1-3.4, which concern the impact of invitations to attend a municipal council/delegation speciale meeting, are a subset of the hypotheses to be tested in a larger randomized controlled trial (RCT) of the citizen observer intervention. This larger RCT is carried out in two phases (before and after the municipal elections) in all of 118 rural municipalities within six regions of Burkina Faso. The 58 randomly selected treatment municipalities include including the 42 municipalities that are
part of this study. The larger RCT investigates the impact of the citizen observer intervention not only on voters’ receptiveness to performance information, but also on participation and voluntary engagement in local governance, knowledge of municipal institutions, and subjective empowerment, using several alternative measures within each family of outcomes. At the level of municipalities, the RCT also investigates the impact of citizen observers on the dynamics and outcomes of council meetings. The proposed hypotheses and analyses for this larger study are detailed in a separate pre-analysis plan.

4 Experimental Treatments

4.1 Meeting invitation treatment

The council meeting invitation treatment is designed to give individual voting-age citizens first-hand exposure to municipal decision processes. The intervention consists of a personal invitation to randomly selected citizens from different villages within a municipality to attend a municipal council meeting. Until the May 2016 municipal elections, these meetings will be meetings of the special delegations, rather than of elected municipal councilors. The special delegation meetings serve the same purpose and operate under the same legal framework as the previous meetings of the elected municipal councils, but the members of the special delegations are externally appointed and are not candidates in the upcoming municipal elections. By law, the special delegations include representatives of the regional administration, of the municipal service providers, of women, youth and handicapped citizens in the municipality, as well as of local civil society organizations. Elected municipal councils will be reconstituted after the municipal elections in May 2016. There are typically four municipal council meetings per year. Prior to the municipal elections, we implement the citizen invitation at one meeting of the delegation speciale per municipality, either in Q4 of 2015 or in Q1 of 2016. This study will be based on a midline data collection immediately prior to the municipal elections. The intervention will continue after the elections for one regular meetings of the newly elected municipal councils (after their initial constitutive meeting during which the
mayor is elected) and will be followed by an endline data collection.

At each council meeting, a different sample of voting-age citizens are personally invited to attend. The targeted citizens receive personal invitation letters from the president of the special delegation, encouraging them to attend the upcoming municipal meeting as “citizen observers” and to share their views at a townhall meeting that will take place in conjunction with the deliberations of the council/special delegation (see an example in the appendix). The invitation letters, signed by the president of the special delegation, are hand-delivered to each selected citizen. A potential constraint to participation is transportation, due to the dispersed nature of many rural communes and the apparent lack of affordable public transportation. However, transportation did not emerge as a constraint in early pilot tests of the intervention. Furthermore, initial attempts at reimbursing municipal administrations for the provision of need-based free transportation to citizen observers proved to be vulnerable to mistargeting and appeared to create unnecessary administrative burden and accounting challenges. For this reason, very early in the implementation phase the intervention protocol was modified so that the available funds were instead used to provide refreshments to council meeting participants, including the citizen observers.

As “citizen observers”, the invited citizens are formally welcomed by the president of the special delegation and are invited to attend the council session and, where applicable, a lunch break. Additionally, they are invited to attend a townhall meeting during which they will be asked to share and discuss their points of view and those of their co-villagers with the delegates. For the targeted citizens, receiving a personal invitation from the president of the special delegation is likely to be an unusual experience. It is expected that the invitations will encourage citizens to actually attend the council session and therefore give them first-hand exposure to municipal decision processes.

Even if individual citizens choose not to attend the meeting, receiving a personal invitation to do so...
so may change their perception of municipal politics: Rather than perceiving municipal decision-making as a distant affair that does not directly concern them or their families, receiving a personal invitation may cause them to associate issues that concern the municipal council with a memorable personal experience. In the context of rural Burkina Faso, receiving any personal communication from the mayor or the president of the special delegation, let alone a hand-signed letter that invites a citizen to be a citizen observer at a municipal council/delegation spéciale meeting, is a highly unusual experience for many ordinary citizens. Education, literacy levels and mobility are low and much of citizens’ day-to-day experience is limited to their immediate surroundings in the village and in their family. Political processes, even at the municipal level, are distant from ordinary citizens’ lived experience. As such, receiving a letter is an unusual event, because Burkina Faso’s postal service does not distribute mail to private residences in the rural areas. In addition to creating a memorable experience, receiving a personal invitation to a municipal council meeting could have the following effects: First, it may cause citizens to feel more respected by the municipal government. Second, it may cause citizens to wonder why previous municipal governments have never invited ordinary citizens to attend a municipal council meeting as citizens observers. Any of these three outcomes – associations with a memorable personal experience, feeling respected by the municipal government, and learning that some municipal governments welcome the presence of citizen observers – could cause citizens to take a greater interest in municipal governance and to become more receptive towards information about municipal government performance.

4.2 Performance information treatment

The performance information treatment is designed to provide study participants with credible and detailed information regarding the performance of their previous elected municipal government at providing local public goods. The treatment will be delivered to study participants prior to the May 2016 municipal elections, in conjunction with a mid-line survey of treatment and control individuals in the council meeting invitation experiment.

Information will be provided both in terms of specific indicators that correspond to national stan-
dards for local public service delivery (i.e. normative targets), as well as in the form of a weighted overall performance score. We will draw upon data on municipal service delivery performance that was collected prior to the popular uprising in 2014 and the subsequent dissolution of the elected local governments. As part of a separate ongoing randomized-controlled trial with the PACT, we developed a municipal service delivery scorecard to assess performance in terms of nine indicators relating to primary education, primary healthcare, water, and civil services. These indicators were identified through a consultative process and represent essential areas of local service delivery over which municipalities have (at least partial) de facto control as well as de jure responsibility. Municipalities have jurisdiction over a number of aspects of governance at the local level. In practice, municipal government performance in these areas varies widely, with municipalities often failing to meet the standards set by national norms. We conjecture that many citizens lack awareness of these national norms or of their municipality’s absolute and relative performance in these areas.

The performance information treatment will be administered to individuals targeted for the mid-line survey, via the following procedure:

1. All study participants (treatment and control) receive an explanation of nine critical indicators of the municipality’s service delivery performance in the areas of primary education, health, water and sanitation, as well as administrative services. For each indicator, the presentation is supported by graphical illustrations on flash cards that highlight the importance of each dimension of municipal performance. The accompanying explanations convey what the municipal government is responsible for (a normative target corresponding to national standards for service delivery), why this is important, and what the consequences are if the municipal government fails to fulfill its responsibility.

4 The other experiment targets municipal administrators over a longer time horizon, providing them with annually updated performance scorecards. No short-term spillovers to our population of interest in this study (ordinary citizens in the villages) are expected. Additionally, assignment of municipal administrations to the performance scorecard exercise is blocked by municipal-level treatment status in the citizen invitation intervention, so any potential influences of changes in the behavior of municipal administrators can easily be controlled for.

5 Sector-specific jurisdiction may be divided into four categories: (i) environment and natural resource management; (ii) health and sanitation; (iii) education and vocational training; and (iv) culture, sport, and leisure. Of these areas, we focus on (i) and (ii), as these are areas in which there are clear national norms and/or where it is possible to define performance criteria consistently across Burkina Faso’s culturally and ecologically diverse regions.
2. To record prior beliefs, all study participants (treatment and control) will be asked to guess how their previous elected municipal government (in 2013/14, prior to the popular uprising) ranked within their region with respect to the aforementioned performance indicators for municipal service delivery, and how well it fulfilled its responsibilities in the areas of primary education, health, water and sanitation, and administrative services (on a five point scale that is anchored to narratively describe quintiles in the distribution of municipal service delivery performance). They will also be asked how certain they are about their beliefs.

3. Study participants in the treatment group will receive a slide show on flash cards, along with scripted explanations. The slide show will contain performance information with respect to each of the nine service delivery performance indicators, illustrated with simple bar charts (see Appendix), as well as information about the municipality’s ranking within the region. The slide show is expected to last approximately ten minutes.

4. Following the slide show, surveyors will assess the extent of participant interest and attentiveness through a short set of comprehension checks.

5. At the end of the information treatment, study participants in the treatment group will receive a weighted overall rating of their previous incumbent government’s performance, both relative to national targets and in terms of their municipal government’s rank within the region. To the extent possible, the same phrasing and word choice will be used as in step (2).

The detailed verbal and visual design of the scripts and infographics has been pilot-tested extensively in collaboration with our data collection partner, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and a professional illustrator. The key design principle is to make the content accessible to illiterate populations in multiple vernacular languages (see the infographics in the Appendix).

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6In order to minimize surveyor bias, surveyors will not be informed that the purpose of these comprehension checks is to compare treatment and control individuals of the meeting invitation intervention. Additionally, surveyors will be informed that their own performance at delivering the information will not be assessed by the comprehension checks, but via automated recordings on the tablets while they are delivering the slide show. Surveyors will be sensitized that the goal of the comprehension checks is to accurately measure the attention study participants paid to the information, which may vary for reasons that are independent of the surveyor’s performance.
5 Treatment Assignment

5.1 Citizen invitations

The citizen invitation intervention has been launched in 58 randomly selected municipalities, out of the 118 rural municipalities that are located within the six regions in which the PACT operates. At the municipal level, treatment assignment to the citizen invitation intervention was block randomized by region, since in every region a different implementation partner is in charge of training and supporting the municipalities in carrying out the citizen invitation. Within every treatment municipality, five villages are selected into the citizen invitation treatment. At each council meeting, eight randomly selected citizens per village, from each of the five villages, receive a personal invitation from the acting mayor (the president of the special delegation) to attend the council meeting. The individuals are randomly selected from a census of village residents aged 18 to 65, carried out in 2014 by the World Bank-assisted Local Government Support Project (Programme d’Appui aux Collectivités Territoriales, or PACT), with technical assistance from the authors of this study and their local team members.

5.2 Selection of municipalities for inclusion in this study

Out of the 58 treatment municipalities included in the citizen invitation initiative, 44 municipalities have been selected for inclusion into this study. In these 44 municipalities, but not in the other treatment municipalities, the municipal government was controlled by the same party after both the 2006 and 2012 municipal elections. Continuity of incumbent party ensures that the available municipal government performance information for 2013/14 can unambiguously be attributed to the previous incumbent party.

Within each of the 44 municipalities, three out of five treatment villages of the citizen invitation

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7 In communes with fewer than 10 villages, half of the villages were sampled for implementation of the citizen invitation treatment.

8 The census was carried out in ten villages per municipality, including the five treatment villages in the treatment municipalities, in all of the 118 rural municipalities of the six regions.
Intervention are sampled at random for inclusion in the study. In each of the three treatment villages, it will be attempted to survey all citizens who were randomly assigned to receiving a council meeting invitation (typically eight individuals per village). In every treatment village we will additionally survey half as many non-invited citizens (i.e. typically four individuals per village). These control individuals are sampled from the same sampling frame that was used to select the recipients of council meeting invitations. Finally, one control village of the citizen invitation intervention per municipality will be surveyed for this study. In these control villages, typically twelve individuals will be sampled at random using the same procedure (see Sampling Strategy and Power Calculations). The inclusion of control villages of the citizen observer intervention will make it possible to estimate (and, if necessary, correct for) potential within-village spillover effects of the citizen observer intervention.

5.3 Performance information

Treatment assignment to the performance information treatment is randomized at the individual level among the survey participants, blocked by village and treatment status in the citizen invitation intervention. In every village included in the survey, half of the survey participants assigned to the council meeting invitation and half of the survey participants assigned to the control group will receive the information treatment. The information treatment will be administered jointly with the data collection in April/May 2016, mid-way through the survey (see Data Collection).

6 Data Collection

The data collection will be carried out in April/May 2016, in the weeks before the municipal election. The survey and information treatment will be administered to study participants in one of approximately six major vernacular languages. The data collection procedure will consist of

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9 In municipalities with fewer than five treatment villages, the number of villages for inclusion in the study was adjusted proportionally.
10 Since some of these languages have no alphabet or no widely understood orthography, all surveyors will transcribe the professional and back-translated survey protocols into their own way of writing the language. On the tablet
the following modules (an asterisk (*) indicates that the module will only be administered to study participants receiving the information treatment):

1. Baseline information (time-invariant individual characteristics, as well as post-treatment information with respect to the meeting invitation intervention)

2. Record priors about the performance of the previous incumbent municipal government.

3. Record subjective certainty about priors.

4. (*) Information intervention.

5. (*) Measure attentiveness to and comprehension of the information treatment.

6. Inform study participants which party previously controlled the municipal government in their commune. If the previous mayors are now candidates for a different party, inform study participants for which party the previous mayors are now running for office.

7. For every party on the local ballot (or every significant party, if the ballot size becomes unmanageable), record study participant’s relative expectations about the party’s performance at providing local public goods, if the party wins the 2016 municipal elections in their commune.

8. For a list of salient candidate features, ask study participants to indicate the relative importance (weight) of these features for their voting decision. The list of salient candidate features will be derived from an ongoing, preliminary study of voter preference formation in the 2016 municipal elections.\(^{11}\)

9. Measure relative candidate preferences, by asking study participants to assign tokens among the different parties on the ballots, in proportion to how much they like each party. The scales are anchored at ten tokens for the party the respondent likes most and one token for the party the respondent likes least.

10. Measure study participants’ enthusiasm for their most-preferred candidate.

\(^{11}\)See pre-analysis plan at [http://maltelierl.info/files/BurkinaVoterPreferences.pdf](http://maltelierl.info/files/BurkinaVoterPreferences.pdf)
11. Measure study participants’ intent to turn out to vote in the municipal elections.

12. Confidentially measure study participants intended vote choice via a ballot box simulation, using invisible identifiers and procedures to safeguard anonymity.[12]

13. Record study participants’ beliefs about the different parties’ chances of winning the municipal elections in their commune.

14. Questions about exposure to the citizen invitation treatment (invitation receipt and uptake, reasons for not attending, experiences at the council meeting)

15. Other endline information

Table 2 in the appendix provides an overview over the key variables of interest and the corresponding measurement strategies.

7 Data Analysis

7.1 Voter preferences and voter turnout

While the ballot-box simulation permits us to measure individual vote choices with reduced social desirability bias, it would be difficult to extrapolate from simulated voting in the experiment to real-world electoral impacts without understanding how voter preferences affect voter turnout. Given the complex endogenous relationship between voter preferences over candidates and voter turnout, we are forced to rely on restrictive modeling assumptions to derive predictions. Within our theoretical framework, turnout propensity is defined as $P\{T = 1\} = 1 - P\{u(L, \xi) \leq \theta\}$. We assume that performance information targeted at an individual has no effect on their opportunity

[12] We print unique UV-visible codes on each ballot paper. When handing out the ballot paper, surveyors discreetly retain a stub with a different identifying code, and record this identifying code with the survey data. The concordance list between the visible and invisible identifier codes will be locked in advance of the data collection. To safeguard anonymity, the data from the ballot box simulation will be entered by a different team. The PIs, who have access to the concordance list, will receive access to the ballot box data and be able to match it up with the survey data only after the survey data has been anonymized. That way, it will be possible to match up individual voting choices in the ballot box simulation with the survey data, without violating the anonymity of the ballot box simulation.
costs of voting $\theta$ but can change both $L$ and $\xi$.

Econometrically, $u(L, \xi)$ can be treated as an unobserved latent variable in a model of voter turnout.

\[
Y = \begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if } U^* > 0 \\
0 & \text{if } U^* \leq 0
\end{cases} 
\]  
(1)

\[
U^* = u_0 + \beta_1 L^* + \beta_2 \tilde{L}(\xi) + \theta 
\]  
(2)

Our theoretical assumptions would be falsified if H 1.1 or H 1.2 were rejected, i.e. if $\beta_1 < 0$ or $\beta_2 < 0$. By asking voters to evaluate all candidates and their chances of winning, we can observe both $L_c$ and $\xi_c$. This allows us to construct both $L^*$ and $\tilde{L}(\xi)$.

### 7.2 Effects of performance information

**Defining “good news” and “bad news”**

Analogous to the common Metaketa pre-analysis plan, we define “good news” as $Q > P_i$ or ($Q = P_i$ and $Q \geq \hat{Q}$), where $Q$ is content of the information treatment regarding the incumbent’s performance, $P_i$ is a study participant’s prior expectation about the incumbent’s performance, and $\hat{Q}$ is the median value of $Q$ in a region. Since the performance information presented to study participants is multi-dimensional (consisting of a total of nine indicators), we focus on a summary metric of incumbent performance $Q$ that is based on a point rating of municipal service delivery performance (out of a maximum of 100 points), as defined by Burkina Faso’s *Programme d’appui aux collectivités territoriales* (PACT) for the purpose of tracking municipalities’ progress towards attaining national standards for public service delivery. This point rating is a weighted sum of non-linear point scales associated with each of the nine indicators. Since the point rating itself will not be intuitively understandable by most study participants (since many rural residents in

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$^{13}$This assumption might not hold if information were to be disseminated broadly to entire communities. Other studies in the Metaketa cluster, comparing individual and group-based information dissemination, will likely provide further insights into this possibility.

$^{14}$The weights reflect the PACT’s policy priorities. Most point scales are marginally increasing as municipalities come close to attaining the performance targets, to reflect the increasing marginal effort necessary to meet the targets.
the study areas have not have access to basic education and may lack numeracy skills), we divide the municipalities within a region into five performance categories, corresponding to the quintiles of the distribution of point ratings among all municipalities of a region. To record study participants’ prior expectations $P$ about the incumbent’s performance, these five performance categories are verbalized as follows:

1. The previous municipal government came close to meeting the standards for municipal services or even exceeded them, and they performed better than most other municipalities in the region.

2. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, but still performed better than most other municipalities in the region.

3. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, but performed like most other municipalities in the region.

4. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, and performed worse than most other municipalities in the region.

5. The previous municipal government performed extremely poorly, both with respect to national standards and in comparison to the other municipalities in the region.

Additionally, we record study participants’ expectations with regard to the rank of their own municipal government’s performance among the municipalities of their region:

“As you know, every commune in Burkina Faso had an elected municipal government in 2013, before the popular insurrection. There are [NUMBER] communes in this region, the region of [REGION]. I would like to know your opinion on whether the previous elected municipal government of your commune performed better or worse than the other municipal governments in this region. If you had to make a guess, how many out of the [NUMBER] municipal governments in this region performed better at fulfilling their responsibilities in 2013 than the elected municipal government of your commune?”

---

15 Including the municipalities that are not included in this study.
Thus, we consider two alternative definitions of “good news”: (1) A municipal government’s performance is in a higher performance category than expected by the respondent, or in the same category, but above the median performance score in the region. (2) The incumbent municipal government’s performance score ranks higher within the region than expected by the respondent, or ranks as expected by the respondent, but above the median within the region. Both alternative definitions are derived from the aforementioned summary metric of the nine different performance indicators.

To validate our definitions of “good news” and “bad news” regarding the performance of the incumbent municipal government, we directly ask study participants in the treatment group how the information they received compares to their original expectations:

“If you look at all the information I gave you about the performance of your previous elected municipal government at providing public services, was their performance better than you thought, worse than you thought, or similar to what you thought?”

Candidate preference and vote choice

In H 2.1a and H 2.1b, our primary outcome of interest is pro-incumbent voting $V_{\text{incumbent}}$, measured via the ballot box simulation. Analogous to the common Metaketa approach, we divide study participants into two subgroups, based on whether the information treatment is “good news” ($L^+$) or “bad news” ($L^-$) about the incumbent’s performance, relative to their prior beliefs. For each subgroup, we estimate the average effect of the information intervention on pro-incumbent voting, using the following estimating equations:

$$
\mathbb{E}[V_{i,\text{incumbent}} | i \in L^+] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 N_{i,\text{incumbent}}^+ + \beta_2 T_i + \beta_3 T_i N_{i,\text{incumbent}}^+ + \sum_{k=1}^{K} (\nu_{1k} Z_{ik}^+ + \nu_{2k} Z_{ik}^+ T_i)
$$

$$
\mathbb{E}[V_{i,\text{incumbent}} | i \in L^-] = \delta_0 + \delta_1 N_{i,\text{incumbent}}^- + \delta_2 T_i + \delta_3 T_i N_{i,\text{incumbent}}^- + \sum_{k=1}^{K} (\nu_{1k} Z_{ik}^- + \nu_{2k} Z_{ik}^- T_i)
$$

where $N_{i,\text{incumbent}}^\pm$ is the linear difference between the content of the information treatment and
the study participant’s prior expectation with respect to the incumbent’s performance $Q - P_i$, standardized to have mean zero and variance of one within $L^+$. $N^-_{i,incumbent}$ is the analogue for $L^-$. $Z^+_t$ and $Z^-_t$ are covariates that are also standardized to have zero mean within the respective groups: the incumbent’s previous vote share in the respondent’s village, as well as the respondent’s age and years of education.

Under H 2.1a and H 2.1b, we would expect $\beta_2 > 0$ and $\delta_2 < 0$. We would also expect $\beta_3 > 0$ and $\delta_3 < 0$, as in two separate dose-response relationship for “good news” and “bad news”.

In order to further understand the underlying mechanisms, we ask voters to evaluate all candidates, measuring both $L_c$ and $X_c$ as intermediate outcomes. If good news about the incumbent’s performance increase voting for the incumbent and/or bad news about the incumbent’s performance decrease voting for the incumbents, we would expect to see analogous effects on our measure of how much study participants like the incumbent relative to the other candidates, $L_{incumbent}$.

As a manipulation check, we will furthermore test whether good news increase respondents’ expectations of how the incumbent party would perform in office if re-elected (denoted by $X_{incumbent}$). This will be tested by repeating the aforementioned analyses with $X_{incumbent}$ as the dependent variable. Our prior expectation is that if “good news” about the incumbent increase pro-incumbent voting, this should be due to an increase in $X_{incumbent}$. We do not assume that an increase in $X_{incumbent}$ automatically increases voters’ liking of the incumbent, because voters’ preferences may be driven by other dimensions of candidate differentiation. It would, however, be highly surprising if good news about the incumbent’s performance increased pro-incumbent voting without simultaneously increasing voters’ expectations about the incumbent party’s performance after being re-elected.

### 7.3 Effects of personal invitations to municipal council meetings

With regard to the effects of personal invitations to municipal council meetings, this study focuses on the question whether (and through what mechanism) personal exposure to political processes at the municipal level increases performance-based voting (H 3.1 and H 3.2). A secondary and related research question is whether personal invitations to municipal council meetings (H 3.3) and actual
meeting attendance (H 3.4) increase voter turnout. Since performance-based voting cannot be directly observed, we pursue two alternative ways of conceptualizing it. Additionally, we measure study participants’ interest in and attention towards the performance information.

**Interaction effect of citizen invitation and performance information treatments**

In H 3.1, we seek to test whether personal invitations to municipal council meetings reinforce the effect of performance information on vote choice. Since this effect is likely to be heterogeneous, our strategy for testing H 3.1 will be contingent on prior analyses of heterogeneous effects. If H 2.1a and H 2.1b are confirmed, we will focus on the interaction effect of invitations to municipal council meetings with the information treatment within each of the two subgroups defined by H 2.1a and H 2.1b.

**Self-reported, subjective weight of performance information**

Given that analyses of respondents’ vote choice and their subjective evaluations of the incumbent may not allow us to unambiguously determine whether the citizen invitation treatment reinforced the effect of performance information on vote choice, an alternative approach is to estimate its effect on the *weight* study participants attribute to expected performance in their evaluation of candidates (H 3.2), i.e. their receptiveness to performance information.

We directly ask respondents to indicate the relative importance of different candidate features for their candidate evaluations (see Data Collection). Our outcome of interest will be the relative weight voters attribute to a candidate’s expected performance at providing local public goods if elected into office, among these different candidate features. We will estimate the intent-to-treat effect of the citizen invitation intervention on this outcome via OLS regression, including municipality fixed effects.

**Interest in and attention towards performance information**

As an intermediate outcome along the hypothesized causal chain, we present the standardized mean effect of council meeting invitations on three measures of study participants’ interest in and attentiveness towards the information treatment: (1) the interviewer’s assessment of the study
participants’ interest (a blinded assessment, because at this point the interviewer does not know yet whether the respondent was invited to a council meeting or not), (2) the study participant’s subjective assessment of how interesting or boring the information was, (3) the number of indicators for which the study participant is able to correctly recall the information content, (4) a measure of the respondent’s demand for performance information. To measure study participants’ demand for performance information, they are confronted with the following hypothetical scenario:

“In your opinion, if a foreign donor is willing to support your commune with 5 million Francs, would it be better if the donor gave this money to your municipal government, or would it be better if the donor used this money to provide regular information to the citizens of your the commune about how well the municipal administration is fulfilling its various responsibilities?”

**Voter turnout**

To estimate how invitations to municipal council meeting affect voter turnout (H 3.3), we focus on the intent-to-treat effect, estimating the difference in turnout rates (as well as in the self-reported intent to vote) between the treatment and control groups of the citizen invitation intervention via OLS regression, including village fixed effects and municipality fixed effects.

Additionally, we are interested in whether actual attendance of a municipal council meeting increases voter turnout (H 3.4). To address the issue of selection bias, we include a survey module to record exogenous reasons for non-attendance (e.g. unexpected family emergencies on the day of the council meeting). If the necessary data can easily be obtained, we will explore the possibility of using inclement local weather (such as excessive heat or excessive rainfall) on the day of the council meeting as an instrumental variable for meeting attendance.

**8 Sampling Strategy and Power Calculations**

The proposed sample size is a compromise between funding constraints, statistical power of the key hypothesis tests, and external validity of the results. For two reasons, we deemed it necessary to keep
the number of municipalities in the study relatively large. First, the contents of the information intervention as well as the nature of political competition vary by municipality. Therefore, a larger sample of municipalities will lead to greater external validity of the results. Second, the number of invitations municipalities can accommodate per council meeting is limited, and municipal leaders prefer to invite citizens from multiple villages to every meeting, to avoid the appearance of favoritism. Therefore, larger sample size requirements for invited citizens require more villages within municipalities and more municipalities overall to be included in the study. Table 1 lists the proposed sample sizes per treatment cell.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting invitation</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>114 villages included in the citizen-invitation intervention (up to 3 per municipality)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information treatment</td>
<td>513 (typically 4 per village)</td>
<td>260 (typically 2 per village)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>516 (typically 4 per village)</td>
<td>253 (typically 2 per village)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>44 villages not included in the citizen-invitation intervention (1 per municipality)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information treatment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>264 (typically 6 per village)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>264 (typically 6 per village)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>≤ 1029 (no replacements)</td>
<td>1041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Sample sizes (individuals to be surveyed), by treatment cell and village-level treatment status in the citizen-invitation intervention. Study participants will be sampled from 160 villages in 44 municipalities. Twelve individuals are surveyed per village. For the purposes of retaining a sufficient sample size to evaluate the information treatment in the control group of the citizen observer experiment, respondents in the control group who cannot be found or do not consent to participating in the study are replaced by randomly sampled backup respondents from the same villages. Respondents who were assigned to being invited to a council meeting cannot be replaced.

We focus on individual-level outcomes, such as vote choice in the ballot-box simulation and self-reported intent to turn out, because the small number of individuals treated per village would

16 Due to logistical considerations of our implementing partner, only discrete adjustments to the sample size are cost-effective. The next larger option would be to survey on average four treatment and 1.5 control villages per municipality, resulting in a 50 percent greater sample size.
make it difficult to have detectable effects on overall precinct-level election results. Additionally, we aim to retrieve data on actual individual-level turnout decisions from the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), and expect to be able to repeat hypothesis tests with this real-world turnout data with only slightly diminished statistical power (since it may not be possible to trace back the voter ID numbers for all study participants).

Among the proposed hypothesis tests, statistical power will be most limited with regard to H 3.1, the subgroup-specific interaction effect of the citizen invitation and performance information treatments. At the same time, H 3.1, along with H 3.2, directly address our motivating research question, whether invitations to municipal council meetings reinforce the effect of performance information on vote choice. We therefore present power calculations with respect to H 3.1 for a range of subgroup sizes. Assuming that the council meeting invitations have no effect on the vote choices of individuals who did not receive the information treatment, a very conservative approach is to calculate power for a difference-in-proportions test with respect to the incumbent vote share among recipients of the information intervention in the “good news” or “bad news” subgroups alone. Figure 1 indicates the power for each of the two subgroup tests under H 3.1, as a function of the subgroup size.

The power calculations in Figure 1 should be understood as a lower bound on our actual power to test H 3.1, because in the actual analysis, because we expect to be able to reduce variability by including precinct- and municipality-level vote shares in the previous elections, which should be strong predictors of local vote shares in the ballot box simulation, and pooling the data from the

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17 For the municipal elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) reports election results that are disaggregated to the village level. However, since the variance of village-level election results is high, detecting a treatment effect of either intervention would have required us to treat a large number of citizens per village. Although both interventions are randomized at the village level, it is practically impossible to expose a large number of individuals per village to the council meetings, because the number of citizens a municipality can reasonably be expected to accommodate at a meeting is very limited and only four regular meetings take place per year. Furthermore, individually targeting a large number of citizens with the performance information treatment would require very large survey teams or overnight stays in villages, which would unreasonably inflate the costs of the study or limit it to a few, hand-picked municipalities. The latter option is problematic, because the number of individuals in the citizen invitation treatment is very small per municipality, and hence our statistical power to detect an interaction effect between the treatments in the individual-level analysis would have been unreasonably diminished.

18 There is no reason to expect that they would have an effect, because the intervention neither exposes study participants to the former incumbent government, nor to any opposition candidates.
treatment and control groups of the information intervention (focusing on the interaction effect of the meeting invitation and information treatments). The power for testing H 3.1, in turn, should be regarded as a lower bound for the power of any the other hypothesis tests, since those will be carried out on the entire data set, rather than on subgroups, and may use continuous outcomes.

Figure 1. Power calculations by subgroup size. Indicated above is the power to detect an effect size of 0.2 (which corresponds, for example, to reducing the incumbent vote share from 60 to 50 percent in the “bad news” subgroup), assuming equal proportions of treated and control individuals in each subgroup, a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, one-sided tests, and Bonferroni correction for two subgroup comparisons.

9 Appendix

$^{19}$ We define effect size as $h = 2 \sin^{-1} \sqrt{V_{1, \text{incumbent}}^{1,1} - 2 \sin^{-1} \sqrt{V_{1, \text{incumbent}}^{0,1}}}$, where $V_{1, \text{incumbent}}^{1,1}$ is the proportion voting for the incumbent among the study participants who received both a meeting invitation and the information treatment, and $V_{1, \text{incumbent}}^{0,1}$ is the proportion voting for the incumbent among study participants who received only the information treatment.
### 9.1 Measurement strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable of interest</th>
<th>Measurement strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior beliefs</strong></td>
<td>(1) Please tell me which of the following statements, in your opinion, best describes the performance of your previous elected municipal government, before the popular uprising of 2014. Your previous elected municipal government was led by the <em>incumbent party, and the mayor was incumbent mayor</em>. If you are not sure, please tell me your best guess. [1. The previous municipal government came close to meeting the standards for municipal services or even exceeded them, and they performed better than most other municipalities in the region. 2. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, but still performed better than most other municipalities in the region. 3. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, but performed like most other municipalities in the region. 4. The previous municipal government did not meet the standards, and performed worse than most other municipalities in the region. 5. The previous municipal government performed extremely poorly, both with respect to national standards and in comparison to the other municipalities in the region. ] (2) If you had to make a guess, out of <em>number of region municipalities</em> in the region, how many municipal governments had performed better at fulfilling their responsibilities in 2013 than your previous elected municipal government?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certainty about priors</strong></td>
<td>(3) How certain are you about that?/about your guess? [Completely certain, Mostly certain, Uncertain but relatively confident, Mostly uncertain, No idea]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>(1) Intent to turn out is measured through a confidential touch screen interface; study participants choose among pictograms representing five levels of motivation to turn out to vote. (2) To obtain actual turnout data, study participants’ voter IDs will be collected and a request to CENI will be made for individual-level turnout information for this set of voter IDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote choice</td>
<td>(4) Ballot box simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter turnout</td>
<td>(5) Weight given to performance information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>(1) For a list of salient candidate features, study participants are asked to indicate the relative importance (weight) of these features for their voting decision, by allocating a fixed amount of tokens among pictograms representing the different candidate features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected performance of candidates</td>
<td>(6) Now I am going to show you a list of the political parties that are contesting in the upcoming municipal elections in your commune. For each of these parties, I would like to ask for your expectations about how well the municipal government of your commune would perform at providing public services, if this party were to win the municipal elections and to nominate the mayor of your commune. [This question uses the same performance categories that are used to record beliefs about the incumbent’s past performance. ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable of interest</td>
<td>Measurement strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Intermediate Outcomes (ctd.)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters’ overall evaluations of candidates</td>
<td>$L_c$ asking study participants to assign tokens among the different parties on the ballots, in proportion to how much they like each party. The scales are anchored at ten tokens for the party the respondent likes most and one token for the party the respondent likes least.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters’ enthusiasm for their most preferred candidate</td>
<td>$L^*$ Now I would like to ask you about one specific party, the [preferred party]. How strongly do you support this party in your commune? [1. I support this party enthusiastically. I would even consider joining this party or helping with its campaign for the municipal elections. 2. I have positive feelings about this party. I would recommend it to others, but I would not join this party or help with its campaign. 3. I have neutral feelings about this party. I would not actively recommend this party, but I have no negative feelings about it. 4. I do not have positive feelings, but I feel less negatively about this party than about the other parties. I wish there were better alternatives to choose from in the municipal elections. 5. I am intimidated by this party or otherwise obliged to it. I feel like I have no real choice between parties in the municipal elections.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about candidates’ electoral chances</td>
<td>$\xi$ Study participants are asked to divide a fixed number of tokens among the different parties on the ballot to indicate how likely each party is to win at least one of the two council seats of the respondent’s village. If a party has no chance of winning a seat in the respondent’s village, the party should get zero tokens. Study participants have to allocate all tokens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentiveness to performance information</td>
<td>Attention checks and comprehension questions after the information treatment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Measurement strategies for the key variables of interest.
## 9.2 Contributions to Meta-Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis in MetaKeta PAP</th>
<th>Contribution of this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a Positive information increases voter support for politicians (subgroup effect).</td>
<td>H 2.1a + investigating whether this is reinforced by first-hand experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b Negative information decreases voter support for politicians (subgroup effect).</td>
<td>H 2.1b + investigating whether this is reinforced by first-hand experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a Bad news decreases voter turnout.</td>
<td>Collecting turnout data and self-reported intent to vote. Testing whether access to information will increase turnout among uncertain voters (H 2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b Good news increases voter turnout.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 Positive (negative) information increases (decreases) voter beliefs in candidate integrity.</td>
<td>Post-treatment questions to record perceptions of the previous elected mayors and councilors. (see above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 Positive (negative) information increases (decreases) voter beliefs that the candidate is hardworking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5 Politicians mount campaigns to respond to negative information.</td>
<td>Not applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 Information effects are more positive for voters that do not share ethnic identities.</td>
<td>If voting in the November 2015 national elections is along ethnic lines, we could test this at the level of parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7 Information effects are more positive for voters that with weaker partisan identities.</td>
<td>Measure partisan identity prior to information treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8 Information effects are more positive for voters who have not received clientelistic benefits from any candidate.</td>
<td>Ask about campaign gifts prior to information treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9 Informational effects are stronger in informationally weak environments</td>
<td>Rural Burkina Faso is an informationally weak environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10 Informational effects are stronger in more competitive elections</td>
<td>The 2016 municipal elections can be expected to be somewhat competitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11 Informational effects are stronger in settings where elections are believed to be free and fair</td>
<td>Measure perceptions of election fairness prior to treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12 Information effects – both positive and negative – are stronger when the gap between voters’ prior beliefs about candidates and the information provided is larger</td>
<td>Measuring priors on the same scale as the overall summary of information content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13 Informational effects are stronger the more reliable and credible is the information source</td>
<td>We expect high credibility of the information treatment (and will include endline question about credibility).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14 Informational effects are stronger when information is provided in public settings</td>
<td>Information is disseminated in a private setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15 Informational effects are not driven by Hawthorne effects.</td>
<td>Treatment is integrated in data collection procedure, no Hawthorne effects expected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Contributions to meta-analysis within the EGAP Metaketa cluster.
## 9.3 Timeline and Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event/Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completed and in progress</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last municipal elections</td>
<td>Dec 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection on municipal performance</td>
<td>Aug 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution and establishment of transitional government in Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Oct/Nov 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census of voting-age citizens in sample villages</td>
<td>Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissolution of Municipal Councils</td>
<td>Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of Special Delegations</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and instruction of regional NGOs to facilitate meeting invitations</td>
<td>Jul 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary coup d’état by the presidential guard</td>
<td>Sep 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data entry and production of personalized meeting invitation letters</td>
<td>Oct 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of meeting invitation intervention</td>
<td>Nov 2015 - Oct 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential elections</td>
<td>29-Nov-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracting of IPA as data collection partner</td>
<td>Oct 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial design registration at EGAP registry</td>
<td>1-Dec-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot testing of data collection instruments</td>
<td>Jan/Feb 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripts and visual design for the information treatment</td>
<td>Dec 2015 - Mar 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot testing of information treatment</td>
<td>Jan/Feb 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication of candidate lists for municipal elections</td>
<td>Apr 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upcoming</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midline data collection and delivery of information treatment</td>
<td>Apr/May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of final pre-analysis plan</td>
<td>18-May-2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal council elections</td>
<td>22-May-2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain electoral registry data and outcome data</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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REGION [REGION] 
COMMUNE DE [COMMUNE NAME] 

Téléphone: __________________

Le Président de la Délégation Spéciale

A

[Gender : M. if (male) and Mme. if (female)] [first name] [last name]

Résident(e) du village de [village name]

Objet : Invitation à participer à la réunion de la délégation spéciale

En tant que président de la délégation spéciale de la commune de [commune name], j’ai l’honneur d’inviter [citizen name] à participer comme citoyen observateur à la session de la délégation spéciale qui se tiendra le _______________ de _____ heures à _____ heures au lieu suivant : ____________________________________________________________.

A votre arrivée à la mairie, vous serez accueilli par le président de la délégation spéciale en personne et par les autres travailleurs de la mairie.

Votre participation à cette réunion vous permettra d’avoir une compréhension des questions qui sont discutées pendant ces réunions par les représentants de votre commune. A la fin de la réunion, vous auriez l’occasion de poser des questions directement à tous les membres de cette délégation spéciale. En ce moment, vous pourrez soulever les problèmes que votre village rencontre et demander à vos représentants les solutions qu’ils proposent pour résoudre ces problèmes.

Votre participation comme citoyen observateur à cette réunion est importante parce que vous pouvez influencer de cette manière les décisions que les membres de la délégation spéciale vont prendre et qui vont affecter vos conditions de vie dans votre village. Vous êtes parmi les plus chanceux car vous avez été sélectionnés par hasard parmi tous les autres citoyens de [village name]. Aussi, [village name] et plusieurs autres villages ont été
sélectionné par hasard parmi tous les autres villages de [commune name]. Nous avons fait la sélection de cette manière pour donner une chance égale à tous les citoyens et aussi à tous les villages de [commune name] à recevoir une invitation à la réunion.

Il est important de savoir que vous ne devrez pas vous faire représenter à cette réunion par une autre personne. En venant à la réunion, je vous demande donc d’apporter avec vous cette lettre et aussi votre document d’identification tel que votre CNIB ou tout autre document comme votre carte d’électeur. Je vous encourage à prendre part à la réunion et à la séance de question et réponse qui aura lieu immédiatement après la réunion. Après cette réunion, je vous encourage à partager de manière ouverte vos impressions de la réunion avec votre famille et vos voisins dans votre village.

L’ordre du jour de cette réunion de la délégation spéciale porte sur __________________________________________________________
                                                                                       __________________________________________________________.
Nous vous encourageons à partager ces informations avec les autres personnes dans votre village. Si vous avez des questions, n’hésitez pas à me contacter au numéro suivant : ____________________________.

Dans l’attente de vous recevoir à cette réunion de la délégation spéciale, je vous adresse mes salutations distinguées.

[commune name], le ____________________________

[Signature et cachet]

Le président de la délégation spéciale
9.6 Infographics: Presentation of Indicators
RETARD D’APPROVISIONNEMENT EN FOURNITURES SCOLAIRES
ACCES PROCHE A L’EAU POTABLE POUR LA POPULATION
NOURRISONS VACCINES
Les municipalités devront s'assurer que toutes les écoles ont une source d'eau potable pour les élèves.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, 28% des écoles de TIEFORA avaient accès à l'eau potable.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 6 municipalités avaient des écoles avec un plus grand accès à l'eau potable.
TIEFORA

LATRINES FONCTIONNELLES A L’ECOLE

Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que toutes les écoles ont au moins une latrine par classe.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, 60% des écoles de TIEFORA avaient des latrines fonctionnelles pour chaque classe.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 4 municipalités avaient des écoles avec un plus grand nombre de latrines fonctionnelles pour chaque classe.
Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que les écoles reçoivent les fournitures scolaires à temps pour la rentrée scolaire.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, les fournitures scolaires sont arrivées avec 19 jours de retard après la rentrée.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 12 municipalités avaient vu leurs écoles recevoir leurs fournitures scolaires plus tôt.
TIEFORA

ADMISSION AU CERTIFICAT D'ÉTUDES PRIMAIRE

Les municipalités doivent s'assurer que tous les enfants réussissent le certificate d'études au premier essai.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, 42% des enfants de TIEFORA avaient réussi le CEP au premier essai.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 15 municipalités avaient un plus grand nombre d'enfants réussissant le CEP au premier essai.
TIEFORA

ACCES PROCHE A L’EAU POTABLE POUR LA POPULATION

Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que pour chaque 300 personnes, il y a un forage à moins d’un kilomètre.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, 47% personnes de TIEFORA avaient accès à un forage fonctionnel.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 13 municipalités avaient un meilleur accès à un forage fonctionnel.
TIEFORA

STOCK DE GAS DES CENTRES DE SANTE ET DE PROMOTION SOCIAL

Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que tous les CSPS ont un stock de gas suffisant pour conserver les medicaments et vaccins au frais.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, près de 100% des CSPS de TIEFORA avaient reçu un stock de gas suffisant.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 0 municipalités avaient un plus grand nombre de CSPS ayant reçu un stock de gas suffisant.
TIEFORA

NOURRISSONS VACCINES

Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que tous les nourrissons agés de 0 à 11 mois soient vaccinés contre les maladies.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, près de 100% des nourrissons de TIEFORA avaient été vaccinés.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 4 municipalités avaient un plus grand nombre de nourrissons vaccinés.
Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que la naissance d’un enfant soit assisté par du personnel de santé formé.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal, 73% des accouchements de TIEFORA avaient été assistés par du personnel de santé.

Sur 17 communes, de la région, 9 municipalités avaient un plus grand nombre d’accouchements assistés par du personnel de santé.
TIEFORA

ACTES DE NAISSANCES DELIVRES

Les municipalités doivent s’assurer que tous les enfants nés ont un acte de naissance.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, 19% des enfants nés de TIEFORA avaient reçu un acte de naissance.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 13 municipalités avaient un plus grand nombre d’acte de naissance délivrés.
TIEFORA

RESUME

Les municipalités doivent assurer les services mentionnés précédemment. Une note est donnée basée sur la performance de votre précédent gouvernement municipal élu.

En 2013, sous le précédent gouvernement municipal élu, TIEFORA a reçu une note de 49 sur 140 points sur ses performances.

Sur 17 communes de la région, 9 municipalités avaient reçu une meilleure note.