

Talking Drum Studio Liberia
Listener Survey Report

April 2005

Introduction

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) has been operating in Liberia since 1997. SFCG's program runs two complementary projects, Talking Drum Studio (TDS) and Tinamenima. TDS is a multi-media production studio that produces 300 minutes of radio programming each week. Tinamenima is SFCG's community outreach arm, working directly in communities to facilitate dialogue and cooperative solutions.

In December 2004 and January 2005, SFCG conducted a listener survey of 453 individuals in Monrovia and six counties. The survey focused on TDS and its activities, not addressing Tinamenima's efforts. The results of the survey both provide feedback on TDS's existing programming and also offer direction on Liberians' concerns and priorities, helping SFCG's new initiatives—both media and outreach—ensure relevancy to the target groups. In addition to gathering listenership data, the survey also collected information to inform SFCG-Liberia's monitoring plan. The methodology and results of the survey are summarized in the following document.

Because some of SFCG's target locations are not covered by radio broadcast, a number of people were surveyed who do not listen to the radio. They were asked specifically about their urgent problems and needs, and not about their listening habits. The results of this component of the survey are summarized in the second section of the report.

Purpose

SFCG conducted the listener survey with two primary purposes:

1. To measure radio and Talking Drum Studio program listenership and effectiveness in changing people's lives.
2. To understand the social issues that are most important to Liberians.

The objective of the survey was to determine if listening to radio programmes leads to changes in attitudes or behaviour. Therefore the survey was designed not only to capture respondents' listening habits, but also what behavioural or attitudinal changes they identified from listening to the programmes. An additional survey objective was to establish a monitoring baseline for SFCG's activities moving forward, particularly under its Next Steps in Peace Project.

Scope

The survey was conducted in Monrovia and six counties throughout Liberia over a period of 6 weeks from early December 2004 to mid January 2005. 453 respondents were surveyed, with nearly half in Monrovia as it is home to nearly one-third of Liberia's population. The counties surveyed were Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Grand Cape Mount. They were selected because several of Liberia's population centers are found in these counties. Bong, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh Counties were specifically selected as they are the target areas for SFCG's Next Steps in Peace Project. Within these three counties, SFCG has selected eight communities in which it will conduct intensive conflict resolution activities. Of these eight communities, two do not receive radio coverage and therefore were only asked the urgent problems and needs questions of the survey (Bahn and Toes Town). The surveyors also found that radio coverage was limited in other areas and only approximately half of respondents listened to the radio (Ganta, Saclepea, Sinje, and Zwedru).

Methodology

The survey was conducted using an intercept approach following a standard questionnaire. Outside surveyors were contracted so that they would not be identified as TDS representatives and bias potential responses. The surveyors participated in a workshop on survey methodology before deploying around Monrovia by neighbourhood and the upcountry locations easily accessible from the capital. After the completion of this first phase, the surveyors met again with the lead contact at SFCG to review their experience and refresh on the survey methodology. They were then deployed to the more remote upcountry locations.

The surveyors used a standard questionnaire, filling out one form per respondent. For the questions related to specific TDS programs, the surveyors played a tape of the theme song for each program as they discussed the program to ensure that the respondent was associating the name with the correct program.

Respondents were selected to represent a cross-section of TDS's target audience. Surveyors were given a number of respondents to interview in each location, with occupation, age, gender and religion targets specified. There was some error on the part of the surveyors in meeting the demographic targets due to the availability and willingness of different people to be surveyed. An outline of the proposed respondent breakdown is attached as Appendix One. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix Two.

Findings

Demographics

Demographic information was collected for all respondents, listeners and non-listeners, and is summarized below. The number of listeners and non-listeners by county are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Distribution by Location

Demographics	Combined		Listeners		Non Listeners	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
County						
Bong	53	12%	53	14%	0	0%
Grand Bassa	25	6%	25	7%	0	0%
Grand Cape Mount	25	6%	17	4%	8	11%
Grand Gedah	37	8%	17	4%	20	27%
Margibi	36	8%	36	9%	0	0%
Monrovia	213	47%	213	56%	0	0%
Nimba	64	14%	19	5%	45	62%
Total Respondents	453	100%	380	100%	73	100%

Almost 50% of the respondents are from the Monrovia area. The next largest group surveyed is Nimba with 14% of total respondents. Approximately two thirds of the Nimba respondents are non-listeners. The remainder of the non-listeners are in the Grand Gedeh and Grand Cape Mount counties.

Table 2 – Living in County of Origin

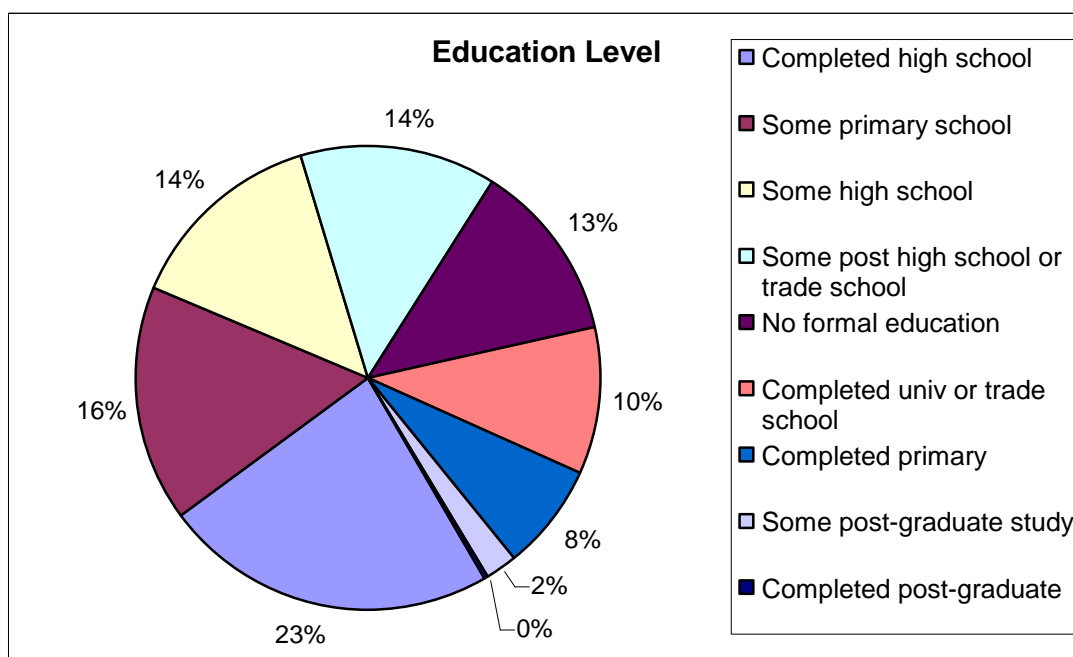
Living in County of Origin	Combined	Listeners	Non Listeners
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Yes	166	37%	111	29%	55	75%
No	287	63%	269	71%	18	25%

Just under one third of listeners are living in their county of origin while this is true for three quarters of the non-listeners surveyed. This could be because a greater proportion of non-listeners have returned to their home counties after being displaced or it could be a coincidence that occurred when respondents were selected at random.

Over one third (35%) of respondents have either finished or have some high school but all education levels are represented including those with no formal education. Children aged 6-15, which comprised 7% of the survey sample, were also included within the education level analysis.

Chart 1 - Education Level



The combined survey group is both male (56%) and female (42%). More than half the respondents (58%) did not indicate their religious affiliation and the remaining 42% are one third Muslim and two thirds Christian. This low number reporting is possibly because no other religion options were offered on the survey questionnaire. It was probably compounded by the fact that surveyors were asked to interview a minimum number of Christians and Muslims per location to ensure religious diversity in the sample, but may have stopped tallying religious affiliation when they had met the required quota. All age groups were surveyed including children over six, with the distribution shown in Table 2 below.

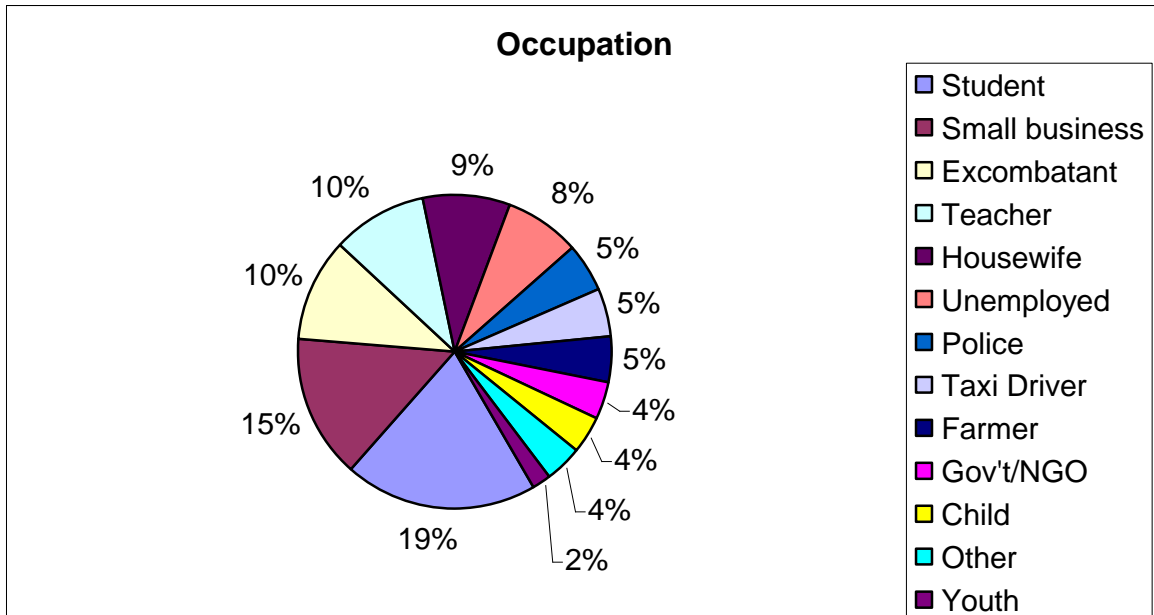
Table 3 – Age, Religion and Gender of Respondents

Age			Religion			Gender		
	#	%		#	%		#	%
16-30	169	37%	Christian	131	29%	Male	252	56%
31-40	128	28%	Muslim	61	13%	Female	191	42%

41 or over	88	19%	NA	261	58%	NA	10	2%
6-15	32	7%						
NA	36	8%						

A diverse range of occupations was surveyed and students and small business people are the largest groups represented. It is worthwhile to note that several respondents from each age group, including over 41, identified themselves as students. The distribution by profession is depicted in the chart below.

Chart 2 Respondents by Occupation



There are only a few notable differences in the demographics between the listener and non-listener groups. In the non-listener group there was a slightly larger proportion of excombatants and fewer students and generally the group had less education.

The survey also included questions asking what languages respondents spoke, and in what language they preferred to listen to radio programming. The results confirmed SFCG’s plan to develop its local language production capacity as more than 75% of respondents stated a preference for local language programming, either in conjunction with English programming or as their sole interest.

Radio Listening Audience

Radio Listening Habits

The listener survey group was asked about their radio listening habits. What follows is a summary of the responses.

Just over two thirds of the survey group (69%) listened to the radio as recently as the day before and three quarters (75%) listened to the radio in the last 7 days. Almost three quarters (73%) own a radio and most that do not usually listen to the radio of a relative (44%) or friend (19%). Most respondents listen to the radio at home (63%) or in a car (13%) with the

remainder listening in another location such as at work (6%) or at someone else’s house (4%). Just over a third (34%) listen in more than one location.

Respondents were asked about barriers that keep them from listening to radio. Almost one third (31%) of listeners said there are no barriers that keep them from listening. Of those that indicated that there are barriers to listening, they identified ‘no time/family distractions’ as the major reason (39%) and cost of batteries, radio etc. as the second greatest barrier (33%). Reception was mentioned as a barrier by 17% of listeners.

People listen most in the early morning from 6-9 am (34%), at night from 7-10 pm (25%) and in the evening from 5-7 pm (17%). The majority of respondents (55%) listen during more than one time period in the day. The number of hours respondents listen per day is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Radio Listening Habits

Number of Hours per Day			Why Do You Listen?		
	#	%		#	%
2-4	134	38%	Informed	296	37%
0-1	75	21%	Entertained	152	19%
4-6	73	21%	Educated	142	18%
More than 8	37	10%	National News	125	16%
6-8	34	10%	Local News	90	11%
	353	100%		805	100%

Reasons for radio listening varied with the most common responses being to be informed, and entertained. The reasons mentioned are summarized in Table 4 above. Many respondents (56%) mentioned more than one reason for listening.

Radio Stations

Respondents were asked to which radio stations they frequently listen. They were also asked about their degree of trust in the news presented by each station. Because of the low number of respondents outside the Monrovia area there is insufficient data to analyze the data by region. The stations that are listened to in more than two counties are summarized in the chart below.

The number of listeners for each station is listed on the first line and stations are ranked based on number of listeners and based on trust as measured by the number of listeners who said they trust the news presented by the station Very Much. These results should be only used as a general indication of popularity and trust as the numbers are too small to be statistically useful. Respondents in more than two counties listen to the following stations.

Table 5 – Multi-County Radio Stations

Multi-County Stations	UNMIL	ELWA	ELBC	BBC	Veritas	VOA
# Listeners	206	73	153	132	123	46
Rank for Region						
# of Listeners	1	5	2	3	4	6

Trust	4	6	5	1	3	2
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Of the stations that are heard in more than one county, UNMIL is the most popular station, ELBC the second most popular and the BBC third. Listeners have the most trust in the news presented by BBC, followed by VOA and Radio Veritas. It is interesting that while Radio UNMIL is the most popular, it is not very trusted by its audience. ELBC is the government-operated station, which may explain why it is not highly trusted.

Talking Drum Studio Programmes

Respondents were asked questions about their listening habits related to specific TDS programmes. What follows is a summary of those responses.

Respondents were first asked if they had ever listened to TDS programmes. Most (83%) indicated that they had. When asked unprompted what kinds of problems and issues the programs talk about, most respondents were able to accurately identify programme issues. Some mentioned specific TDS programme names while others gave general descriptions such as ‘societal ills,’ which does not clearly indicate whether they are familiar with TDSL programs. When prompted, respondents were able to mention a number of problems discussed on TDS programs. The most commonly mentioned were Peace (69 mentions), HIV (65), Health issues (57), Corruption (52), Children’s issues, Education, and Reconciliation (50 each), and the Disarmament process (49). Respondents were allowed to state several answers to this question.

They were asked to identify their favourite TDS program and allowed to give multiple responses. While most (70%) chose one favourite, the balance chose from 2 to 5 favourites. The results are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6 – Favourite TDS Program

Favourite Program	#	%
Today is not Tomorrow	146	28%
Jujay	89	17%
Common Ground News and Features	68	13%
One Step Beyond	46	9%
Golden Kids News	43	8%
DDRR Update	41	8%
Face to Face with HIV/AIDS	32	6%
Woman	28	5%
Situation Report	13	3%
Policy Issues	9	2%
	515	100%

Today is Not Tomorrow was mentioned by more than a quarter of respondents (28%) as their favourite program followed by *Jujay* (17%) and *Common Ground News and Features* (13%). Respondents gave a wide variety of reasons for the favourites they selected but most said the programs are educational (educative), informative and taught them real life lessons.

Respondents were asked specific questions about four TDS programs. Surveyors played a taped segment of the program first to ensure the respondent was commenting on the correct program.

Today is Not Tomorrow (TNT)

Over two thirds (69%) of respondents have heard the program on the radio. Most listen to it Very Often (53%), find it very relevant to their life (69%) and use the information they receive to make decisions Very Often (47%) or Sometimes (49%). The most common changes TNT inspired in their life are related to improving personal relationships both within the family and outside the home.

Most suggestions for how to make the program better or more useful revolved around making the program longer or airing it more frequently during the week.

One Step Beyond (OSB)

43% of respondents listen to OSB and do so Very Often (47%). They find it very relevant to their life (58%) and use it for decision making only Sometimes (62%). When asked how this program is relevant to their life, many respondents mentioned improved attitude and sensitivity to social issues, contributing to the community, and increased knowledge about a subject area.

Most suggestions for OSB included increasing airtime, broadcasting it in rural areas and getting input from rural communities.

Common Ground News and Features (CGNF)

Over half (51%) of the respondents listen to CGNF, and those who do listen regularly, with the bulk stating either Very Often (46%) or Sometimes (43%). They find it very relevant (70%) and use the program for decision-making Very Often (48%). In terms of the program's relevance, respondents mentioned conflicts they are able to resolve with information they obtain from the program and that they learn about peace and reconciliation.

Suggestions for improvement included dramatizing the program through cultural performances and putting the program on television and translating it to the local language.

Golden Kids News (GKN)

Less than half (47%) of the respondents listen to GKN but those that do, do so Very Often (61%). While the stated target audience for GKN is children, 80% of those surveyed who are listening Very Often are over 15. GKN's listeners find it Very Relevant to their lives (62%) and use it for decision making Sometimes (55%). In terms of what makes the program relevant, most respondents said they treated their children better and improved their attitude toward children.

Suggestions for improvement included involving children outside of Monrovia, taking the program to primary schools to expose more children and increasing the amount of airtime.

Table 7 – TDS Program Summary

TDS Programs	TNT		OSB		CGNF		GKN	
No. Who Listen	262	69%	165	43%	194	51%	180	47%
Frequency								
Very Often	140	53%	81	47%	96	46%	107	61%

Sometimes	106	40%	67	39%	91	43%	52	30%
Not in the last month	11	4%	8	5%	7	3%	7	4%
Don't know	9	3%	16	9%	16	8%	9	5%
	266	100%	172	100%	210	100%	175	100%
Relevance								
Very Much	185	69%	92	58%	146	70%	109	62%
Somewhat	71	27%	50	31%	39	19%	52	30%
Not at all	3	1%	6	4%	16	8%	2	1%
Don't know	8	3%	11	7%	8	4%	13	7%
	267	100%	159	100%	209	100%	176	100%
Use for Decision making								
Very often	128	47%	36	25%	100	48%	57	34%
Sometimes	131	49%	89	62%	82	39%	93	55%
Never	1	0%	8	6%	14	7%	8	5%
Don't know	10	4%	10	7%	12	6%	11	7%
	270	100%	143	100%	208	100%	169	100%

Talking Drum Studio

Respondents were asked about their level of trust of TDS programs and about its effectiveness in addressing issues of concern. The level of trust of TDS programs is high with over half (56%) indicating they trust the programmes Very Often and just over a quarter (27%) trusting them Sometimes.

Respondents were also asked about whether TDS programs talk about issues of concern. Surveyors listed seventeen issues and asked if TDS talked about them and, if so, how effectively they do so. The top five issues TDS is 'Very Effective' in presenting are: The Peace Process; Children; Effects of the war; HIV/AIDS and Education. Even though respondents rated TDS Very Effective for most of the issues, the three that received the fewest Very Effective ratings were Poverty, Elections and Tolerance. As preparations for the national elections are accelerating, SFCG is increasing its programmatic emphasis on the topic. Listeners' rating of TDS's effectiveness in this area will be re-evaluated at a later date for monitoring purposes.

Urgent Problems and Needs

The survey group was asked about some of the urgent problems and needs they have now in their daily lives. They were asked to comment on the state of the nation and the role TDS could play in the future. Below is a summary of the results.

Respondents were asked about whether they were ever forced to leave Liberia or were displaced because of the war. Just over a third (36%) of listeners indicated that the war had forced them to leave Liberia and over three quarters (76%) had been displaced from their home but remained in Liberia due to the war. The numbers total more than 100% because some respondents answered Yes to both questions. Surveyors did not clarify, but it is possible that the respondents were displaced on more than one occasion by the war.

Youth were asked if they fought in the war and, if they did, whether they are confident in being accepted back into the community. Of listener respondents who answered the question of whether they fought in the war, just under a quarter (23%) said yes. A small number (16%) of respondents did not answer this question. Of the respondents who admitted to

fighting in the war, over three quarters (79%) feel confident they are being or will be accepted back into the community. A small number (3%) said they are not confident they will be accepted back. The remaining 18% said that they did not know or could not answer the question.

Respondents were asked to identify the most critical problems they are facing since the end of the war. They were allowed to provide numerous answers, and the number of mentions per item were tallied to assess respondents' priorities. The number one problem for listeners is Education (252 mentions) followed by Employment (204), Access to food/water (162), Shelter (151), and Health (143).

An overwhelming number (83%) of respondents feel that peace is here to stay in Liberia. Those who do not feel that peace is here to stay have a number of ideas as to what needs to happen ranging from seizing all remaining guns to conducting peace and reconciliation workshops and developing a better understanding between themselves. Almost all (96%) of listener respondents feel informed about the peace process.

Listeners were then asked what they feel the main issues are that are facing Liberia in its development now. Again, multiple answers were allowed. Reconciliation was the top issue mentioned by respondents followed by Education Opportunities, Corruption and Employment Opportunities. This is consistent with the response to the previous question about their critical problems where they identified Education and Employment as their top two problems. The issues selected by the fewest respondents are Gender issues, Refugee/IDP return and Human rights.

Table 8 – Main Development Issues

Main Issues Facing Liberia - Listeners	#	%	Rank
Reconciliation	215	15%	1
Education Opportunities	188	13%	2
Corruption	180	13%	3
Employment Opportunities	162	11%	4
Security Reform	142	10%	5
Reintegration	116	8%	6
Health	88	6%	7
Elections	78	5%	8
HIV/AIDS	70	5%	9
Human Rights	66	5%	10
Refugee/IDP return	64	5%	11
Gender issues	40	3%	12
Other	12	1%	13

Respondents appear to perceive that communal violence is limited, with almost half (48%) of the respondents rating it Low. Of those, 36% cited domestic violence as the most common type, the most prevalent answer. 26% of respondents rated the level of violence as medium, and domestic violence was again the most common type cited (40%). Of the respondents stating that the level of violence was either high (21%) or very high (7%), however, economic was the type most frequently cited (37% for the sum of both), and property the second (24% for the sum of both). Domestic was only cited by 15% of those respondents.

Respondents also perceive that ethnic (85%) and social (88%) groups appear to be working together in their community. Strikingly, of those who responded that ethnic groups were not cooperating, 28% of them lived in Bong County, and 73% of those lived in Gbarnga. Similarly, of those who replied that social groups did not appear to be working together, 35% lived in Bong County, and 80% of those in Gbarnga. SFCG will be confirming the respondents' perception with on the ground realities through conflict assessments and community-based outreach activities in several locations, particularly in Bong, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh Counties.

Respondents were asked what they feel TDS should do in post war Liberia. Comments ranged from continuing to do what they are doing already to airing programs more frequently and on more stations and working with the Liberian people to develop solutions. They used words like 'build', 'create', 'educate' and 'open' in making their recommendations.

Non-Radio Listening Audience

There are only seventy-three respondents in the non-radio listening survey group. These participants were in Grand Gedeh, Nimba and Grand Cape Mount counties. The non-listener survey group was asked the same questions as the listeners about some of the urgent problems and needs they have now in their daily lives. They were asked to comment on the state of the nation and the role TDS could play in the future. Below is a summary of the results.

Urgent Problems and Needs

Respondents were asked about whether they were ever forced to leave Liberia or be displaced because of the war. Over half (51%) of the respondents answered Yes to this question, which is higher than for the listener survey group. A slightly higher proportion (79%) of non-listeners were displaced from their home but remained in Liberia. As above, the number totals more than 100%, indicating that respondents were displaced on more than one occasion.

Youth were asked if they fought in the war and, if they did, whether they are confident in being accepted back into the community. Just under half (48%) of respondents fought in the war and, of those, almost all feel confident they will be accepted back in their community.

Respondents were asked to identify their most critical problems since the end of the war. Their top five responses are the same as those of the listener group but are ranked in a different order. Their top issue is Education, followed by Access to food/water, Health issues, Employment and Shelter.

All respondents feel peace is here to stay in Liberia so they did not present any new ideas for what needs to happen to ensure peace and most (94%) feel informed about the peace process.

Non-listeners identified the same top four issues facing Liberia in its development as listeners did but in a different order. Non-listeners ranked Corruption first followed by Reconciliation, Education and Employment.

Table 9 – Main Development Issues

Main Issues Facing Liberia - Non-Listeners	#	%	Rank
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Corruption	48	14%	1
Reconciliation	46	14%	2
Education Opportunities	45	13%	3
Employment Opportunities	36	11%	4
Health	35	10%	5
Security Reform	29	9%	6
Reintegration	27	8%	7
HIV/AIDS	25	7%	8
Refugee/IDP return	20	6%	9
Other	9	3%	10
Gender issues	7	2%	11
Human Rights	5	1%	12
Elections	5	1%	13

The level of community violence was rated as Low (38%) to Medium (29%). For those ranking the level low, 75% stated the primary cause was Other, with no elaboration. This classification eliminates the given types of Domestic, Ethnicity, Property, Religion, and Economic. For the Medium level respondents, Domestic was the most common type of violence cited. 19% stated the level of communal violence was High, with the main type stated as Economic. Ethnic and social groups are seen to be working together in the community by most of the respondents (95%).

Respondents were asked what they feel TDS should do in post war Liberia. They suggested that TDS should interact with civil society to assist in bringing about unity, introduce programs of reconciliation and peace, air radio programs all over Liberia to educate the population on a variety of subjects and get involved at the community level.

Differences Between Listeners and Non-Listeners

- More non-listeners are living in county of origin
- Non-listener group is slightly less educated
- Non-listener group is slightly younger
- Identify the same critical problems but slightly different order
- Main issues are much the same although non-listeners identify corruption as number one
- Health appears to be a bigger issue for non-listeners
- Non-listeners are slightly less informed about the peace process which is the issue identified as most effectively presented by TDSL by listeners.
- Domestic violence is identified as the most common cause of violence by both groups
- Ethnic and social groups are seen working together slightly less in the listener group

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Listener Survey confirmed some of SFCG's assumptions and also highlighted areas of necessary added emphasis. Overall it seems TDS is on target with programming and addressing the needs of Liberians. TDS has established a solid reputation for its radio programming, both in Monrovia and in upcountry locations. It is recognized for its focus on peace, disarmament, reconciliation, and children's issues, among others. The survey also confirmed SFCG's strategy of using local languages to better engage its listeners.

Areas to change/address?

Recommendations for a Future Survey

Based on the survey implementation and analysis, several improvements could be made to the instrument to make the information gathered more user-friendly and usable. For one, too many questions were open-ended, making the responses difficult to categorize and analyze. Additionally, the data entry was not always detailed when the response did not match the provided options. When a question did not have an answer in the data analysis, it was not clear whether the person refused to answer the question or whether the surveyor missed the question. Next time the options Refused and Blank should be added to the data table.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Respondent Demographic Targets

Appendix 2 Survey Instrument