

Baseline for Democracy and Governance Project

Search for Common Ground

Background

Over the next three-year period, Sierra Leone must capitalize on the opportunities provided by the end of the civil conflict to ensure a peaceful transition into a long-term development phase. These opportunities include:

- the discourse of public participation and dialogue
- tolerance for openness and freedom of the press
- implementation of a decentralization policy and structural reforms.

Media tolerance and diversification is central to a wider and broader range of available public information. A viable and functioning public information network supports deeper analysis on issues and the mobilization of the population for engagement in governance processes, including local and national elections, anti-corruption initiatives, and budgetary monitoring, among others.

Search for Common Ground in Sierra Leone (SFCG) with the support of the United States Agency for International Development through cooperative agreement 636-A-00-05-00040 is supporting these transformation processes over the next three to five years. Capitalizing on new entry points created by governance reform and decentralization, SFCG, using its trusted media tools integrated with community outreach, will support the creation of demand for good governance and accountable leadership through participation, engagement and good citizenship.

SFCG's overarching goal for its democracy and governance project is to: **Strengthen democratic governance in the districts of Kono, Kailahun, and Koinadugu, and Tongo Fields in Sierra Leone**, which supports Special Objective #2 (SO2) under USAID/Sierra Leone's Transition Strategy Phase 2, (FY 2004-2006).

SFCG's program objective is to: **Stimulate an active citizenry**. This supports Intermediate Result (IR) 2.2: "Citizens, local government, and CSOs better informed on democratic governance" of SO2.

SFCG established three specific IRs and one crosscutting IR to guide its program, namely:

- IR#1.1** Ability of citizenry to understand democratic principles and processes increased;
- IR#1.2** Reliable and credible information networks formed;
- IR#1.3** Citizen's ability to make informed decisions on issues of democratic governance enhanced; and
- IR#1.4** Greater inclusion of the interests and concerns of women and youth in targeted communities ensured.

These IRs under the program objective are sub-IRs to USAID's strategy. Specifically, development of the information infrastructure will contribute to IR#1.1 and SFCG's media programming through its multi-media studio Talking Drum Studio (TDS) supports IR#1.2. In

addition, SFCG's program strategy also supports SO1 of the Transition Strategy by addressing a root cause of the war: manipulation of information for the disempowerment of others.

Introduction

SFCG conducted a survey to establish the baseline for the performance indicators set for its USAID-sponsored democracy and governance project. SFCG has three results for which performance indicators are agreed on with USAID, one at the strategic objective level and the other two at the intermediate result level. They are as follows:

Performance Indicator for Strategic Objective 2 (SO2): Democratic governance strengthened:

- Percentage of surveyed central level government official who are aware of issues in their constituent regions

Performance Indicators for USAID's IR 2.2: Citizens, local government, and CSOs better informed :

- Percentage of targeted groups surveyed who find public information very useful in their decision making role and
- Percentage of youth surveyed in the targeted districts that can demonstrate an understanding of their civic rights and responsibilities.

This baseline builds on previous surveys conducted by SFCG, including listenership surveys in 2002 and 2004 as well as focus group discussion on governance issues held in 2005. SFCG has developed a methodology for respondent selection as well as questionnaire administration, outlined below.

The report that follows highlights the information that will be used strategically to support our program on the ground as we implement the strategy for D&G. Two sections are reported on – the rural baseline and the policy makers baseline. The Performance Monitoring Sheets for the two IR indicators and the SO indicator are in annex 1.

Methodology

Given the two different target groups for the SO and the IRs, SFCG used two different survey questionnaires to gather the necessary information. The SO level questionnaire targeted decision makers within the governance structure, and the questions were designed to elicit information from this specific group of policy makers in urban/government offices. The IR baseline questionnaire targeted residents of the rural geographical locations where SFCG is implementing its D&G project, namely Kailahun, Kenema, Kono and Koinadugu districts.

a. Scope

The SO level questionnaire was administered in Freetown to government officials representing the four target districts, Kailahun, Kenema, Kono, and Koinadugu.

The IR level questionnaires were administered to 100 residents in each of the four target districts. The following towns were surveyed, broken down by district and then chiefdom. Five surveys were administered per town, except where noted otherwise. This survey structure was selected because it tracks the progression of information from centralized locations with more developed information infrastructures out into more rural locations, as well as vice versa. Rural locations were selected by accessibility and representation of the various sections of the chiefdoms.

1. Kailahun District:

- a. Luawa Chiefdom: Kailahun, Kenewa, Nyanyahun, Borbu, Tonkporbu
- b. Upper Bambara Chiefdom: Pendembu, Manawolu 1, Siam, Manowolo, Njiama
- c. Kissi Teng Chiefdom: Kangama, Dambo, Guesseou, Weima, Koingu
- d. Jawie Chiefdom: Benduma, Madina, Bombohun, Daru, Brotuma

2. Kenema District

- a. Nongowa Chiefdom: Kenema, Tissor, Hangha, Waima, Combema
- b. Small Bo Chiefdom: Serabu, Blama, Wajaima, Laliehun, Kpai
- c. Dama Chiefdom: Ngiema, Gboghoma, Karuma, Kpandebu, Gofor
- d. Lower Bambara Chiefdom: Panguma, Kamboma, Ngeima, Tongo Fields (10)

3. Kono District

- a. Tankoro Chiefdom: Saqueetown, Kensay, Oldmelyama, Mbaoma 11, Sokogben
- b. Nimiyama Chiefdom: Gbankaya, Teiko, Sawafe, Nyalehun, Goedanra
- c. Nimikoro Chiefdom: Bumpeh, Njiama, Simbakoro, Motema, Yengama
- d. Gbese Chiefdom: Boroma, Koeyor, Small Safedu, Yardu, Kamadu

4. Koinadugu District

- a. Wara-Yagala Chiefdom: Kabala, Tanuka (4), Katubo11 (4), Henenalreno (4), Komasokola (4), Makukune (4)
- b. Folosoba/Dembela Chiefdom: Doggobla, Koromasillaya, Mandina, Affia, Alusainer
- c. Sengbeh Chiefdom: Malaforia, Ismalia, Kondeya, Bendugu, Gbenekoro
- d. Kasunko Chiefdom: Weredara, Sangbanuba, Fadugu, Kafoko, Tongomaia

b. Survey Design

1) Intercept Groups

The survey was designed to capture information from particular groups of society targeted under the D&G project, rather than administered by random sample. The intercept groups were divided into three components, corresponding to the target groups. Selection of the intercept groups followed recommended guidelines established through previous surveys conducted by SFCG in Sierra Leone, developed by Amr Abdalla and Dr. Ed Palmer.

In the first intercept group, enumerators sought to engage the relevant actors in communities that have entered the governance sector through new structures being established under decentralization. These people included ward committee members, local councilors, civil society representatives, members of community-based organizations, and members of women's and youth groups. Respondents from these groups comprised 257 interviewees out of the 400 total for the IR-level questionnaire.

In the second group, interviews targeted rural residents drawn from marginalized sectors of society, including the rural poor, women, and youth. Enumerators used types of livelihood to identify these respondents, namely: farmers/gardeners, miners, drivers, market vendors, schoolteachers, and housewives. Respondents from these groups comprised 143 people out of the 400 total.

Within both of these groups, enumerators tried to apply gender and age balance criteria to their selection of respondents. Enumerators were instructed to aim for at least a 55-45% distribution between men and women; however, this fell short in every district as enumerators had difficulty locating women respondents within the targeted intercept groups given the lower involvement of women in governance. They were also instructed to seek respondents over 15, with an emphasis on those 15-35. Education levels were tracked in the questionnaires, but were not used as criteria for selection of respondents.

The third intercept group was policy-makers at the national level, based in Freetown, surveyed for the SO indicator. People targeted within this intercept group include Members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, other Ministry officials, and Directors who have constituencies or origins in the more rural areas, and specifically within the four targeted districts. Gender and age balance were not sought from this group given the predominance of older men in these positions. They were selected so as to be able to assess information flow on issues in communities and whether this information is moving at both the national and community levels. Information gathered from these people will inform efforts to link community constituents with their representatives, and reflect progress in building awareness and engagement between constituents and the central government decision-making bodies. 40 people were surveyed under this component.

2) Selection of Enumerators

SFCG is a learning organization and this philosophy permeates every level of what we do. Rather than contracting researchers, SFCG employed members of the youth population in each of the target districts to conduct the survey. SFCG has established networks with youth groups in each of the four districts, and these relationships provided the entry point for selecting enumerators. These youth networks have been developed and working with SFCG since 2000 through the organization of solidarity events and follow-on projects. They have organized themselves, engaging in developing their institutions and projects dedicated to their youth interests. SFCG thought engaging these youth around D&G issues and furthering their organizational development to be an important consideration. This approach also had the benefit of perceived neutrality of the enumerators on the questions as they were neither SFCG employees nor contractors. Coming from the target areas, the enumerators possessed the appropriate local language skills as well as community contacts necessary to conduct the survey.

To identify the specific youth to engage, SFCG first posed the selection to the networks themselves. Youth group executives were asked to make the initial recommendations on youth to participate, based on their experience with conducting surveys, educational level, and reliability. SFCG's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer then selected six youths per district from these groups, for a team totaling 24 enumerators.

To prepare them for the task, SFCG's Regional Director and M&E Officer conducted a two-day workshop on survey techniques for the 24 selected youth. Training topics included:

- Background information and discussion on D&G issues in the country
- General information on the task: their responsibilities and expectations, survey organization and logistics, and confidentiality of information collected
- Objectives and nature of the survey
- Review of the questionnaire: concepts and definitions used, clarity of questions, how to enter responses, etc.
- Procedures to follow in administering the questionnaire
- Practical work/pre-testing questionnaire: Enumerators visited some of the target areas and administered some questionnaires as a test of the clarity of the questions, the responses they would receive, and also their skills as enumerators
- Editing: Discussion of filled-in questionnaires, explanation of concepts and definitions in light of experience in the field; revision of questions, review of procedures to follow
- Final quiz on the questionnaires and procedures.

Within the sessions, the workshop discussed translating the English questionnaire into local languages, and the distortions that can occur. Given the rural focus of the survey, it is likely that many of the interviews needed to be conducted in local languages. In a practical exercise, enumerators translated questions in local languages and then a third party translated the local language question back into English to confirm its meaning. This process applied to the two sets of questionnaires for the D&G survey.

3) Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was developed based on experience derived through conducting similar surveys in 2002 and 2004. The two questionnaires were drafted by the M&E Officer and revised with input from program staff and other stakeholders. The pre-testing conducted during the enumerators' training also informed the final version of the questionnaire.

Questions within the instrument were designed to capture demographic information, radio listenership habits to inform activity design and implementation, specific knowledge on D&G issues, and dynamics of group behavior in the target locations. Some questions that have been included in previous surveys were again utilized in order to compare differences in habits and preferences between rural and urban locations. Some of SFCG's major operational assumptions were also tested, including that radio is still the preferred channel of information in the country as the media landscape is broadening and diversifying.

Most questions were formulated as closed questions, with one response allowed. In some cases, however, multiple answers were allowed. To minimize errors, multiple answers were not prioritized in questioning by the enumerators. A few open-ended questions were also included in the survey. In the data analysis, these questions were grouped by common responses to enable comparisons and conclusions to be drawn.

4) Data Entry and Analysis

SFCG used the software Quikpoll for the data entry and analysis. Quikpoll is a survey analysis program that tabulates questionnaires with calculations, charts and graphs. It has the capacity for cross-tabulation as well as disaggregation. It was SFCG's first time using this software, and some learning and experimentation was necessary, but it was found to be very useful for analysis of the data. Because of concern about errors from first-time usage and contracted data entry, and to validate the tabulations, some questions were analyzed manually.

Limitations

The survey for the IR indicators was limited to broadcasting range of radios in these districts. There are few if no newspapers in these communities. The questionnaires were developed in English and presented to the enumerators in English. During the working sessions many of the questions were translated into the appropriate eight languages and agreement sought on the use of the words across different language groups. Possibilities of discrepancies leading to misunderstanding of concepts and in recording of answers from local languages to English were reduced through this exercise, which took a whole afternoon of the two day workshop and was done before the enumerators did the practical field exercise. After their return from the testing, the group debriefed on survey questions identified to have ambiguity, and confusion was cleared through discussion. Despite these precautionary steps, there are still margins for error when translating questions, and then translating back answers.

The enumerators were assigned specific quotas for different intercept groups to interview per location. While these were all written down on a flipchart during the training session, there is margin for error as the enumerators copied down their assignments and then applied interception in their location based on their notes. As a lesson learned, next time SFCG will provide each enumerator with specific printed instructions on the various quotas and other criteria for intercept group interviewee selection.

For the SO level indicator, tracking the central government officials proved to be a limitation as they were perpetually busy and difficult to engage. Enumerators who had proven themselves to be exceptionally mature and reliable during the rural questionnaire were contracted to administer the questionnaire to the policy-makers. This approach ensured that the surveyors were familiar with nature of the information that SFCG was pursuing and the type of questionnaire that SFCG wanted to implement. It also built on their experience in the first survey, allowing them to correct any mistakes and improve the administration of the second questionnaire.

While the questionnaires were carefully administered, SFCG has some concerns about the accuracy of the data entry. In response, all of the questionnaires are being reentered into the software and the data will be reanalyzed for confirmation. In the meantime, many of the questions have been analyzed manually to ensure accurate results.

Findings

The findings are divided into two sections – one for the rural baseline and the other for the policy makers' survey.

Demographics of Rural Baseline

The sample was equally spread between four districts, Kailahun, Kenema, Koinadugu and Kono.

Table 1: Sampling Locations

Kailahun		Kenema		Koinadugu		Kono	
Luawa	25	Nongowa	25	Wara Wara Yagala	25	Tankoro	25
Upper Bambara	25	Small Bo	25	Folosoba Dembela	25	Nimiyama	25
Kissi Teng	25	Dama	25	Sengbeh	25	Nimikoro	25
Jawie	25	Lower Bambara	25	Kasunko	25	Gbese	25
42 females		[37 females		40 females		40 females	
58 males		63 males]		60 males		60 males	

An intercept type of sample methodology targeting a variety of stakeholders in the community by occupation was used, resulting in a sample that is 67% male and 33% female. 143 people of specific occupations were targeted to capture the perspectives of marginalized groups representing the rural poor, women, and youth. The table below shows how the sample was characterized by the most frequently mentioned occupational groups.

Table 2: Intercept Sample Occupation

Stakeholder/District	Kailahun	Kenema	Koinadugu	Kono	Total	%
Farmer/Gardener	17	21	8	11	57	40%
School teacher	5	7	8	8	28	20%
House wife	5	6	6	8	25	17%
Market Vendor	7	6	2	4	19	13%
Miners	1	3	5	0	9	6%
Driver	2	1	1	1	5	3%
Total	37	44	30	32	143	

Over one third of the sample (38%) have no formal education, 14% have some or completed primary, over one third (39%) have some or completed secondary and the remainder (8%) have completed university or postgraduate studies. The sample captured relatively equal numbers of younger and middle aged people with a smaller portion over 55 years of age (see Chart 1). The age and education of the sample was cross-tabulated and is presented in Chart 2.

Chart 1: Age of Sample

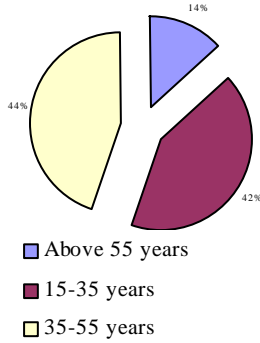


Chart 2: Age and Education Characteristics

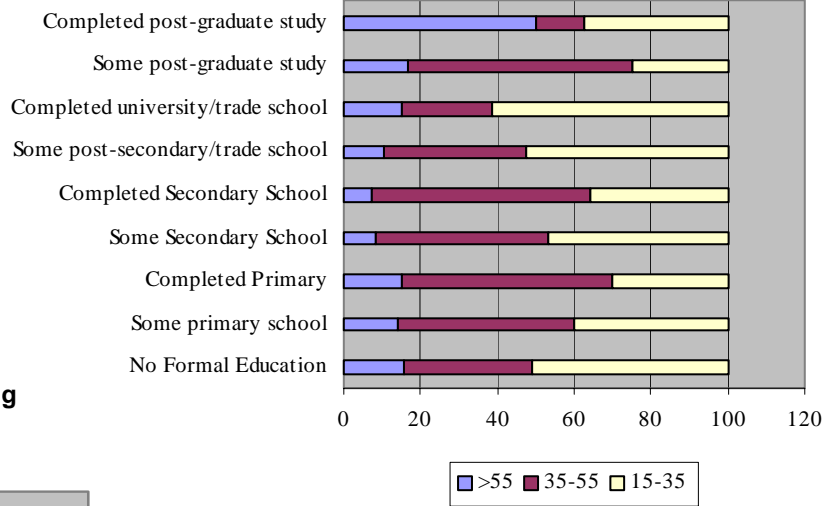
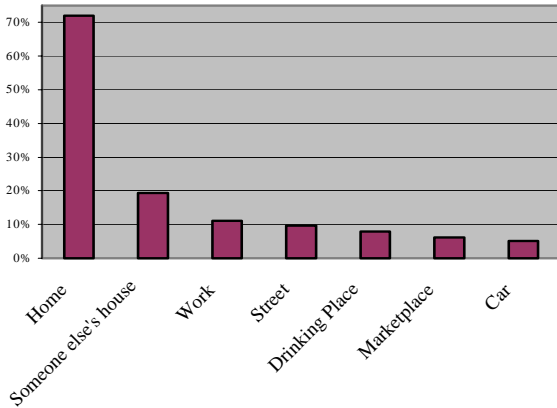


Chart 8 Most Frequent Listening Locations

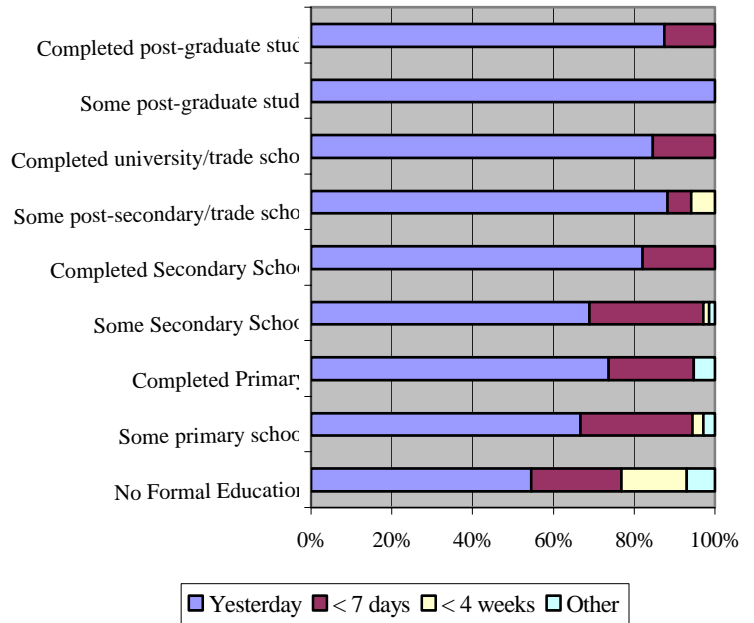


Radio Listening Habits

In each of the four districts sampled approximately 70% of those surveyed listen to the radio. This is a relatively high level of listenership and indicates an avid interest for information or entertainment. The 30% who do not listen to radio were not included in the radio listening results.

Radio stations exist in each of the four districts. In Kailahun district, which has the highest percentage of recent listeners, a community radio station called Radio Moa was established in 2003 with the support of USAID. In Koinadugu district, Radio Bintumani was established in 2002 supported by the European Union. SLBS can be heard in Kailahun¹, Kenema² and Kono districts. In this predominantly rural sample from Koinadugu, Kailahun, Kenema and Kono, listening

Chart 4: Listenership by Education Levels



¹ The SLBS in Kailahun broadcasts intermittently.

² After this survey was completed Eastern Radio, an independent station established by Network Movement for Justice and Development was opened covering three districts of Kailahun, Kenema and Kono – based in Kenema town.

habits are well entrenched as is evident from the series of charts presented.

Cross tabulated by levels of education it is apparent that the higher the education level the more recently the respondent listened to radio (see Chart 4).

In this rural sample women listen to the radio far less than men (see Chart 5).

Chart 5 Listenership by Gender

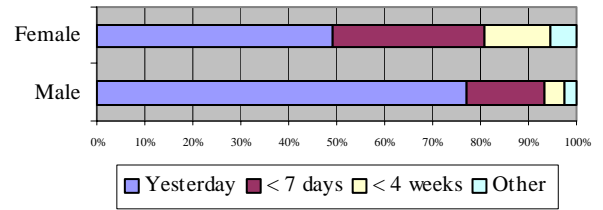
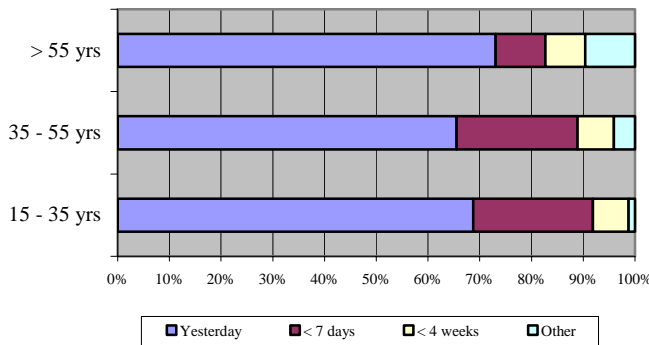


Chart 6 Listenership by Age



Listenership varies somewhat by age (see Chart 6). The younger age group (15 – 35 years) is listening to radio more widely than those over 55 years of age.

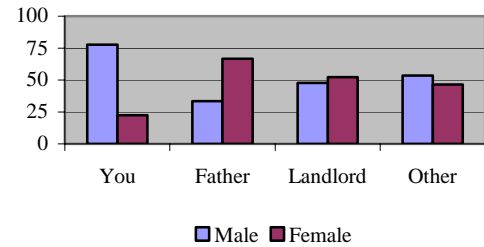
Access to Radio and Ownership

Almost 90% of the respondents have a radio in the house where they reside. Of the total number of radio owners, 70% own the radio themselves, the landlord owns 7% and

fathers own 3%. The remaining 20% are owned by ‘other’, most often a husband or brother. This means that over 70% of the respondents have control over what they listen to, assuming the radio owner controls selection. Over one third (38%) of radio owners were 15-35, almost half (48%) were 35-55 and the remainder (13%) were over 55 years of age. It is interesting to note that over two thirds of respondents age 15-35 own their own radio.

Of the total number of radio owners, 70% own the radio themselves, the landlord owns 7% and

Chart 7 Radio Ownership by Gender



Further analysis of radio ownership reveals that the results are not as encouraging for women as they are for men. Of people who own their own radio, over 75% were owned by males and less than a quarter by females. Assuming the owner of a radio has the most

influence in determining what programs are listened to, females have less control over what they listen to.

Chart 8 Most Frequent Listening Locations

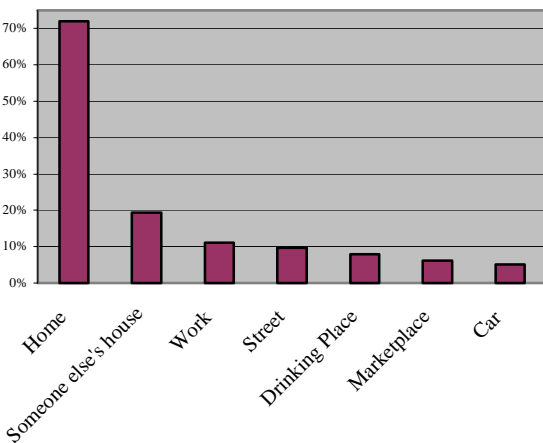


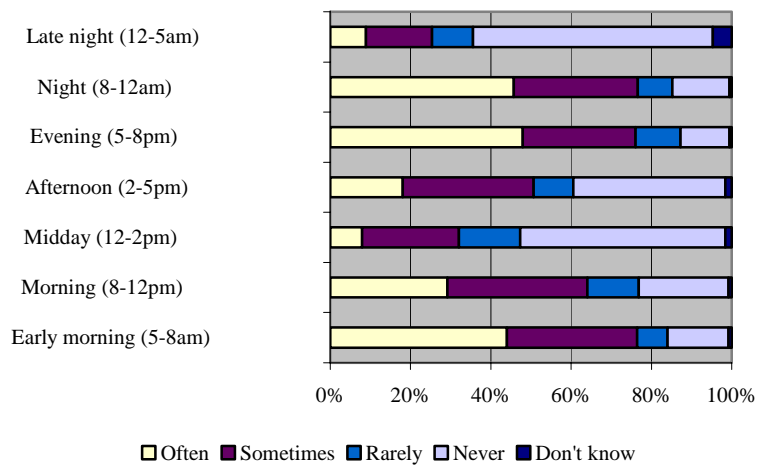
Chart 8 illustrates the locations respondents said they listen ‘most often’ and ‘often’. For the most part people listen at home and sometimes in other people’s homes. People listen less frequently at work, on the street and in drinking places. People rarely listen to the radio in the market place or in cars.

As Chart 9 shows, most respondents listen to radio in the early morning, in the evening and at night. This has implications for establishing radio programming during peak listening times.

People listen to the radio primarily for news and information especially about ‘my community’ (38%) and ‘world news’ (25%). They also listen to be entertained. The respondents in the sample like to listen to the radio station within their area because of the community news (40%) and news in general (60%). They also like these stations because of the entertainment and educational value to their programming (20%). Since the research was originally conducted by

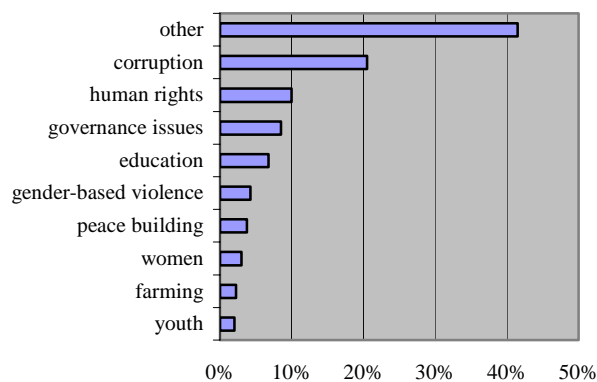
and for TDS, respondents were asked specifically about TDS programming. Most (88%) of the respondents have heard TDS programs on the radio. Of this number, almost all (91%) say they know the reason for TDS radio programs. The most frequently mentioned radio program that the audience listens to is TDS’s *Atunda Ayenda*, followed local language programming and finally community news in that order of preference.

Chart 9 Radio Listening Times



The top four answers for the major issues that TDS works on are corruption, human rights, governance and education. Other popular responses included national development, awareness raising (sensitization), HIV/AIDS, child protection, taxation, food security, and family links, in that order of frequency. Most (95%) of the sample indicated that the information in these

Chart 10 Issues Discussed by TDS Programmes



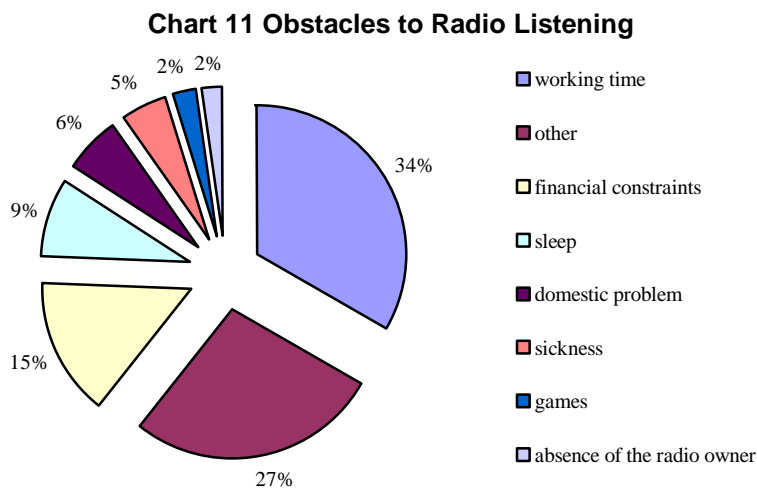
programs assist them in their work. About 94% felt that TDS programs tell the truth most (59%) or some (35%) of the time meaning that the information presented by TDS is considered credible. To further support this, 80% of the respondents indicated that they make a special point of tuning into TDS programs. When asked their priority issues, most respondents mentioned governance, corruption and education, which could corroborate TDS’s effectiveness in raising awareness on these issues with the audience.

Supporting other independent research³ almost all (92%) of the respondents know there are

³ A study funded by UNESCO and carried out by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) in Mali, Ghana and Senegal found that survey respondents appreciate African language broadcasts and want more programming in African languages. Among other things,

local language programs available. Of those, most (96%) of listen to the local language programs and prefer them (99%). Our research shows that the more highly educated listen to and appreciate English or Krio language radio programs while those with less education prefer programming in local languages. This is not surprising given differences in language comprehension between more and less educated populations. Currently most information on the major vectors, namely radio, is in Krio or English.

In terms of obstacles to radio listening, Chart 11 shows that respondents identified ‘working’ as the primary reason followed by ‘other’ reasons. Financial constraints were a barrier to only 15%



of respondents, which goes against the common misconception that the cost of batteries and purchasing radios is the most difficult obstacle to overcome. Radio ownership is a status symbol similar to owning a gold chain or watch and gives the owner a higher standing within his community.

important while 11% think they are not and 7% don't know. More men (87%) than women (74%) feel Local Councils are important. In addition, the research found that the higher the respondents' education level, the more important they feel Local Councils are. When

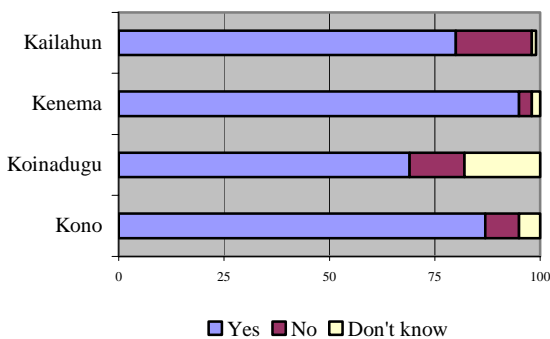
Local Governance

Overall, 83% of the respondents think Local Councils are

Table 3: Perception of Importance of Local Councils

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Men	87%	9%	4%
Women	74%	16%	10%

Chart 12 Importance of Local Councils by District



desegregated by age it is apparent that the older generation has more appreciation or confidence in the importance of the local council while the younger generation has somewhat less.

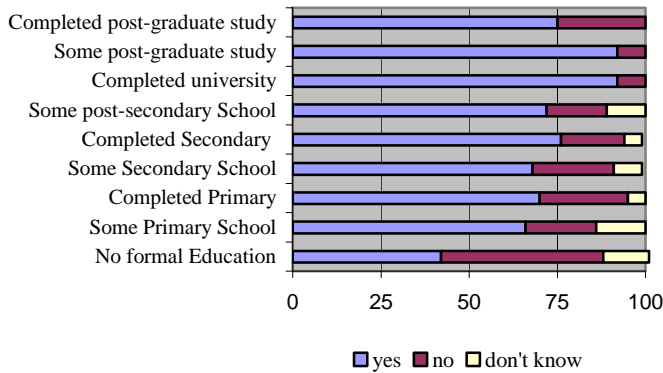
When analyzed by district, Kenema has the highest number of respondents who feel Local Councils are important and Koinadugu has the lowest (see Chart 12), with a larger number in the ‘don't know category’.

Generally 61% of the respondents say they are aware of the duties of their councilors while

the survey report found that “The deepening of the culture of democracy is a distinct feature of the impact of African-language FM radios”. http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=18836&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

30% say are not aware and 9% don't know how to answer the question. As expected, women have a lower level of knowledge (48% yes) as compared to men (67% yes). Women also had a higher percentage of respondents who didn't know (16%) than men (6%).

Chart 13 Awareness of Ward Committee Duties by Education Level



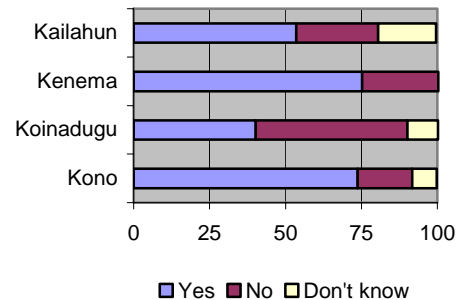
As expected the level of knowledge about duties of the councilors is correlated to education levels as Chart 13 shows. When analyzed by district, the levels of understanding about the duties of their councilors displays a similar pattern to that of appreciation of local councils.

To learn more about people's in-depth knowledge of Local Councils, respondents were asked if they are aware of the duties of Ward Committees. Over half (52%) said they know what the duties are, 38% said they do not know and 10% did not know how to answer

the question. Although a majority said they are aware of the duties, when asked to provide an example, only 38% could respond. Women are less aware of the duties, and more educated respondents are more aware.

There were some interesting results by district. Three quarters (75%) of respondents in both Kenema and Kono said they are familiar with the duties of Ward Committees while just over half in Kailahun and about 40% in Koinadugu could say the same. As expected, Koinadugu shows the lowest level of understanding of the role of ward committees since respondents from this district also feel most strongly that Local Councils are not important.

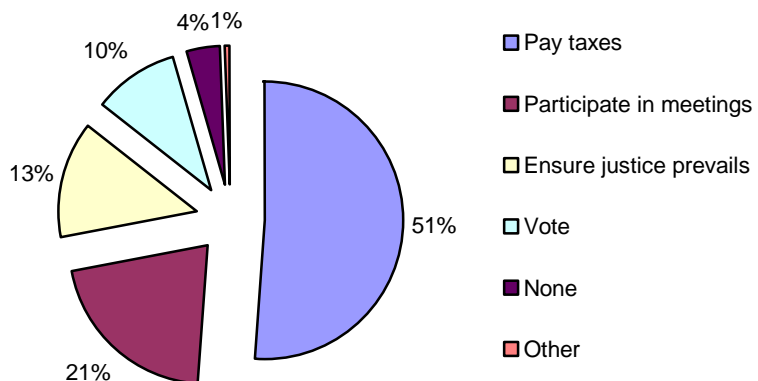
Chart 14 Ward Committee Knowledge by District



When asked what kind of information they wanted from the Local Councils, 19% of respondents did not answer, 64% of the sample indicated they wanted development information and 10% said they wanted information on the council's activities. Further informed by focus groups with young people, women and men in four locations, this "development information" was explored and defined as the programs and projects intended for the area, the benefits that would accrue to the area and the involvement of the community.

To further define relationships and interactions between the respondents and their local council, they were asked how they support their councilors.

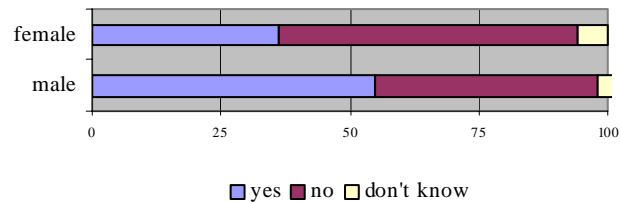
Chart 15 How I Support My Councilor



Respondents mentioned paying taxes (51%), and participating in community meetings (21%) as the two most common ways. Also mentioned were ‘ensure that justice prevails’ (13%) and ‘vote’ (10%). A small number (4%) said they do not support their councilor in any way.

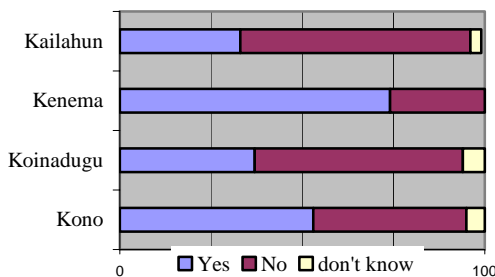
Asked if they are receiving adequate information about the council’s activities, 49% said yes, 48% said no, and 3% said they didn’t know. Chart 16 illustrates that women respond lower to this question than men, which matches the results of the radio ownership and listening data.

Chart 16 Information Received by Gender



Disaggregated by age, the data shows similar trends, however, the results by education level are different than expected. Educational level appears to have no correlation since respondents with no formal schooling and those with postgraduate education have the same level of satisfaction with the amount of information they are receiving. Less than half (43%) of younger people (15-35 years of age) feel they are getting adequate information about council activities while more than half of the respondents in both of the other age groups feel they are getting enough information.

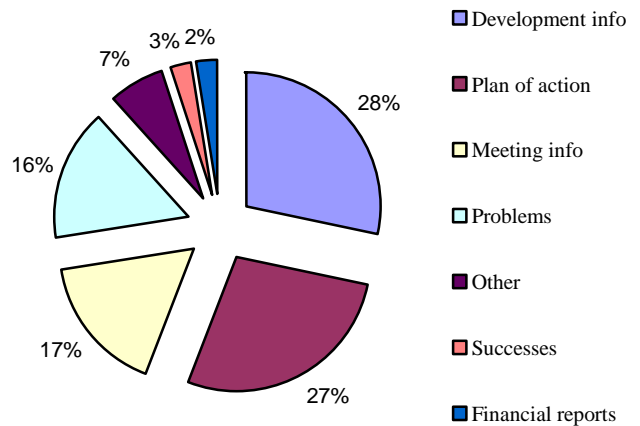
Chart 17 Information Received by District



When analyzed by district, as might be expected, Kenema is the highest in terms of getting adequate information about the council’s activities. Kailahun and Koinadugu are the lowest.

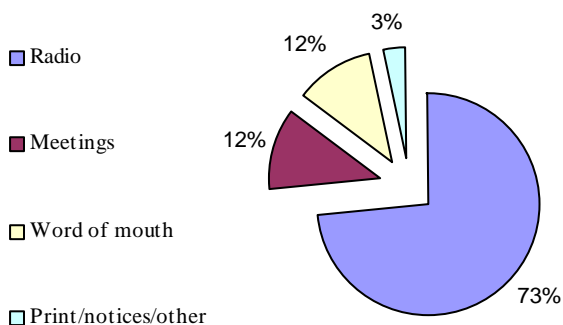
When asked about the type of information they are seeking, respondents mentioned development activities (28%) and a plan of action (27%) most often. Information pertaining to meetings (17%) and problems (16%) were also cited (see Chart 18).

Chart 18 Information Sought



Communication Channels

Chart 19 Communication Channels



Ninety-two percent (92%) of the respondents offered their preferred channel of communication to receive information; the rest did not answer the question. Of these, almost

three quarters (73%) identified radio as their preferred medium. Word of mouth and meetings were the second most common methods (12% each) while print, notice boards and 'other' were each mentioned by just 1% of respondents.

To get a sense of the level of engagement, respondents were asked about attendance at public meetings. Most (85%) said they attend these meetings while 15% said they did not. Disaggregated by age, gender and education level, the expected trends are apparent. As expected, women (77%) attend at a lower rate than men (89%) and the older age group participates more than the younger people. People who are more educated are more likely to attend although the trend is not as strong as expected. A lower level of attendance in Koinadugu follows the established trends for that district. At the meetings three quarters (75%) said they were given space to participate in the meeting while 25% were not. Two thirds (66%) of those given space felt that their participation was effective and meaningful while 22% said it was sometimes effective.

Most (92%) of respondents said they have access to public information. The sources of this information are the same as the preferred channels of communication mentioned above (see Chart 19). Radio is by far the priority source followed by word of mouth. Newspapers and poyo bars or ataya bases are next at only 3%. The vast majority (93%) of the sample affirmed that the radio is the most valuable and trusted source while only 2% said the same for newspapers.

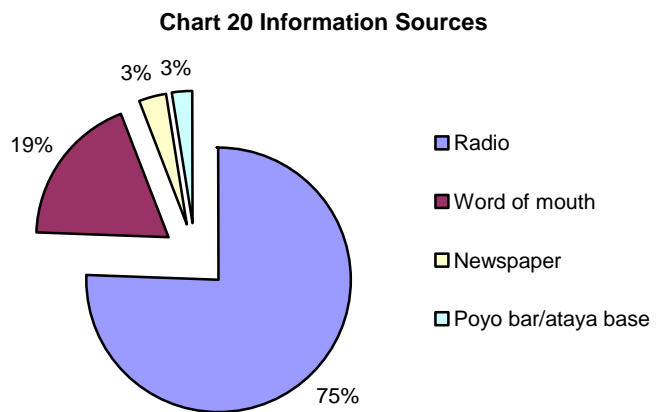
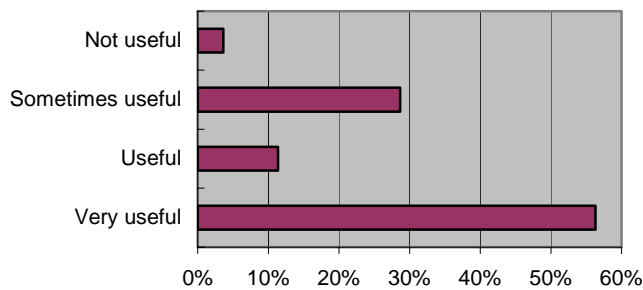
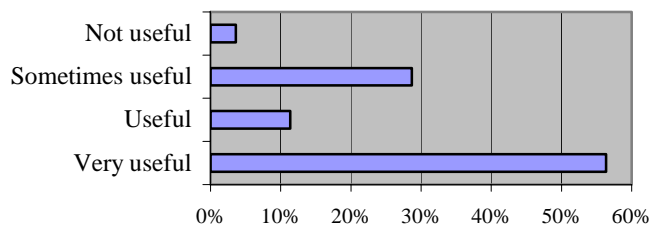


Chart 21 Usefulness of Information for Decision Making



Public information is very useful for decision making to over half (56%) of respondents while a further 11% said it is useful and less than 5% said it is not useful. There were no differences in response by gender, age group or level of education. Koinadugu District had the lowest rating on usefulness of public information.

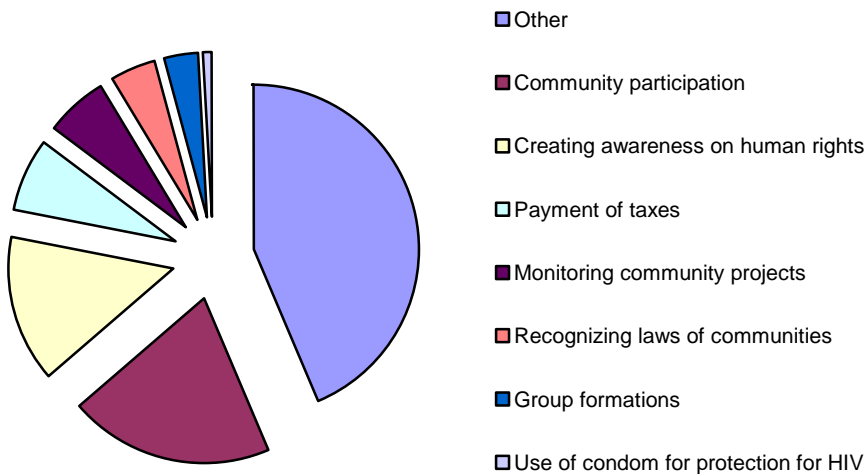
Chart 22 Usefulness of Information for Taking Action



85% said that issues raised by the radio and newspaper were discussed in the group meetings, while 10% said they were not. This means that existing groups are a very useful mode of deepening analysis of issues aired over the radio.

To see how information accessed is put into practice, respondents were asked if the information had resulted in any individual or community action. While respondents felt information was useful in helping with decision making (see Chart 21) it was less useful in affecting individual and community action (see Chart 22). Just under two thirds (65%) of the sample were able to provide a concrete example of action they had taken. Respondents mentioned both individual and community actions, with most identifying some kind of community participation (Chart 23). A large number of responses were combined into ‘other,’ which suggests a lack of consistency of action taken as a result of public information.

Chart 23: Responses to Public Information



Community Groups

Almost all (97%) of the respondents belong to groups. The greatest proportion of respondents belong to women or youth groups as well as community-based organizations (CBOs). Two thirds of respondents feel the groups are balanced in terms of gender, age, identity and ethnicity but

only one third feel that groups are balanced in terms of party politics.

In terms of the issues that the groups talk about, respondents mentioned development (55%) as well as corruption (28%), taxation (18%) and fairness and equality issues (17%). There was no differentiation between the sexes or age, educational level or district on the issues their groups talked about, which is somewhat surprising.

87% said that their group had raised issues with community leaders and of the 80% who responded to this question, 68% said they had had a mostly positive experience.

Regional Differences

The four districts surveyed showed a number of differences in the responses to the surveys. Although Kenema had the lowest number of recent listeners of the four districts, the respondents in this area appear to have the highest understanding of what goes on in local government and feel the Local Councils are important. Koinadugu has the lowest overall listenership, and appears to have the lowest level of knowledge and understanding about local government. Not surprisingly, they are the lowest district in terms of their belief in the usefulness of public

information and the importance of Local Councils. This could be because residents of this district have had access to radio programming for less time than any of the other three districts.⁴

Table 4: Comparison of Key Data by District

District Comparator	Kailahun	Kenema	Kono	Koinadugu
% of respondents	31%	26%	22%	21%
Recent listeners	highest	lowest		lowest
Importance of Local Councils		highest		lowest
Understanding of Ward Committees		highest		lowest
Knowledge of duties of Ward Committees		highest	highest	lowest
Information about Council activities	lowest	highest		
Usefulness of public information				lowest
Meeting attendance				lowest

Summary of Rural Baseline

A number of interesting findings have come from the rural baseline research. The main points include:

1. Radio Listening

- Radio is the most important communication channel.
- Men own most radios.
- People listen in the early morning, in the evening and at night.
- People listen at home or at someone else's home.
- The program listened to most often is *Atunda Ayenda*.
- People prefer local language programming.

2. Local Councils

- Local councils are seen as important.
- Half the population is aware of the duties of Ward Committees.
- People see paying taxes as the primary way to support their local Councilor.
- Half the population is getting adequate information about the activities of Local Council.
- More educated people feel Local Councils are important.

3. Public Information

- Most people attend public meetings.
- Women are less well informed than men.

⁴ While Radio Bintumani was established before Radio Moa, Kailahun had been served by an SLBS station that broadcast intermittently since 2002.

- Young people are more actively seeking public information.
- People feel they are getting enough information about local government.
- People feel information is useful for decision-making but less useful for taking action.
- Koinadugu district is the least well developed of the four districts in terms of dissemination and understanding of public information.

Policy Maker Questionnaire

Analysis of Results

Findings

Policy makers are defined as individuals in government positions who influence policy decisions. They are also referred to in this document as decision-makers. Forty decision makers were polled in Freetown although they hail from a variety of places around the country. 14 respondents are from Kono, nine each from Koinadugu and Kailahun, and eight from Kenema. It was important to poll decision makers from the provinces to see how they use the media and information to support the work that they are doing. Further away from the center of governance, information is that much more difficult to access to inform every day decision-making.

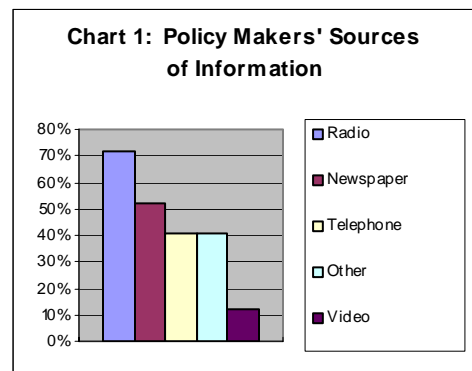
While the sample was predominantly male, reflecting the reality of the policy maker groups where few women participate, a number of types of decision makers were polled including Parliamentarians, Cabinet Ministers and Directors of government ministries.

Information Sources

The respondents were asked if they had sufficient information about their region to be able to use it at work to inform their decision-making. Almost all (89%) said yes. The primary source of this information is radio (71%), with newspapers (52%), telephone (40%), other sources (40%) and video (12%) also providing information about their region.

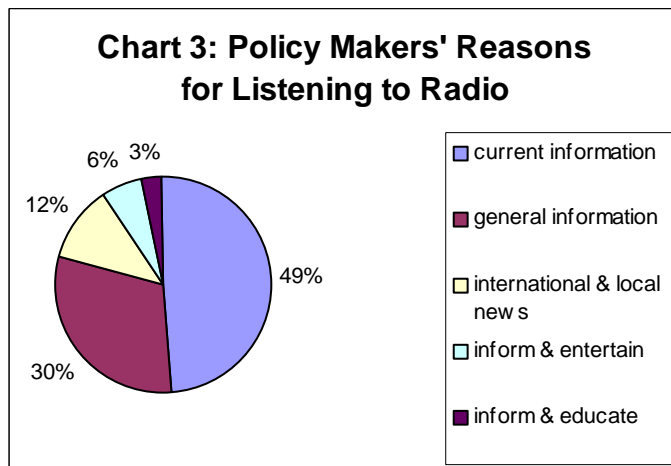
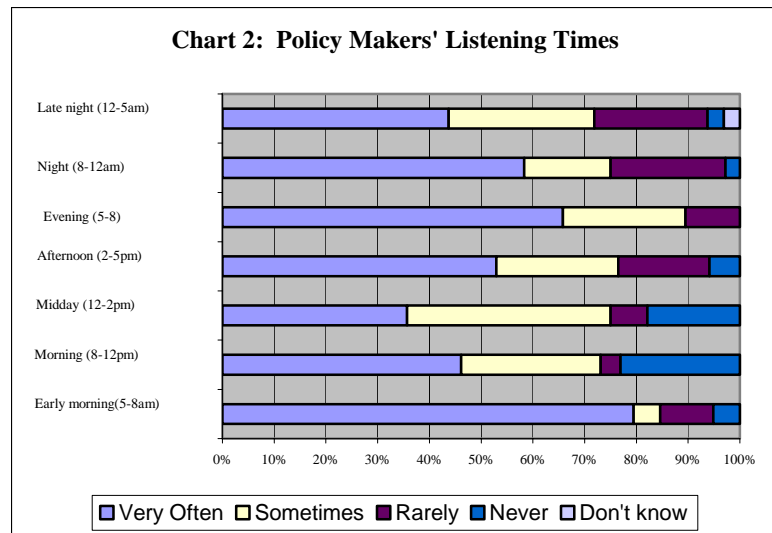
Asked how they access public information from their region, the dominant channel is radio (89%) with one or two responses for telephone, video and other channels.

Newspapers were not mentioned as a source of information, which seems reasonable since all papers originate in Freetown.



Radio Listening

Most policy makers, like the rest of the population, listen to radio preferring to listen at home. Their listening habits, illustrated in Chart 2, indicate that the most frequent listening time is the early morning, however afternoon and evening also feature. The major barriers to listening were being too busy (73%) and being occupied with worries (13%). Cost was not an issue for these respondents.



Ayenda (57%), followed by *Parliament Bolhat* (30%). A few respondents mentioned *Salone Uman* (9%) and *Golden Kids News* (3%). Over 94% of the respondents said that the information in TDS programs helps them in their work. The key issues TDS works on were listed on the survey as in Table 1 in order of priority. The first three issues were identified by half (50%) of respondents as priorities.

Policy makers are clear about their reasons for listening to the radio. They look to radio as a source of current and general information (79%) while entertainment and education are lower priorities (see Chart 3).

In this decision making group 95% said they listen to TDS programs. The program preferred by most respondents is *Atunda*

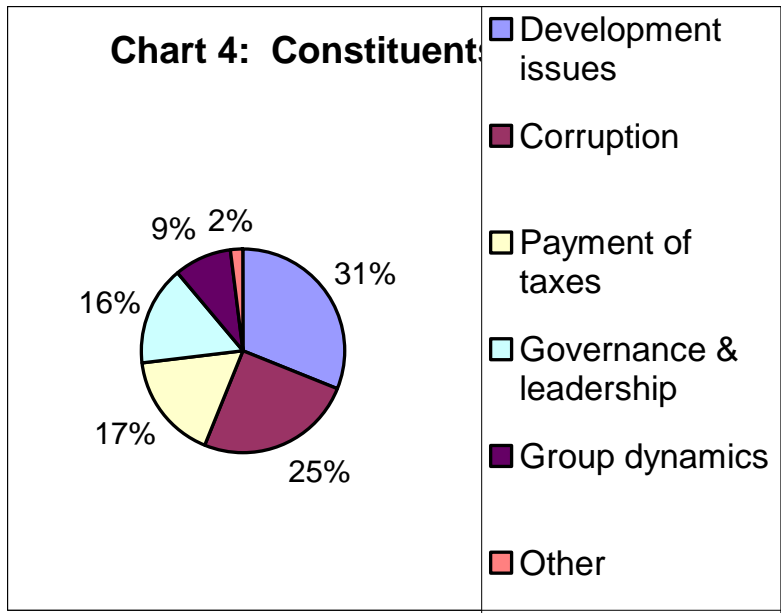
Table 1: Issues Addressed by TDS

Human rights
 Rule of Law & Governance
 HIV/AIDS
 Gender equality
 Education
 Girl child education
 Development issues

Constituent Interaction

Policy makers receive information from their constituents that also informs their decision making. Chart 4 illustrates the constituents' issues mentioned by respondents and shows that development is the priority concern of the people. They believe corruption is the second-most important concern of their constituents. Policy makers were asked to give a concrete example of the type of issues constituents bring to them and how they handle them. The issues they mentioned with frequency in brackets are:

Governance & leadership (11)
 Development issues (9)



Corruption (8)
 Payment of taxes (7)
 Misuse of resources (diamonds) (3).

Almost all (92%) respondents say they give feedback to their individual constituents or stakeholder groups in response to concerns. While the most often mentioned method of doing this is meetings, a number of other interesting mechanisms were listed (see Table 2). They

share information with others in the same region using public meetings (69%) and visits (14%). It is interesting to note that policy makers indicate they do not use media channels (radio, newspapers, video) to provide feedback to their constituents.

Summary

Policy makers' sources of information and radio listening habits are no different from those of the general population although, not surprisingly, they had slightly more interest in international news. It is interesting to note that while decision makers rated development issues as most important to their constituents, they did not provide any examples of individual or group stakeholders coming to them with development-related concerns. Likely the most significant finding is that policy makers do not use radio as a feedback mechanism to their constituents despite evidenced use of this channel for receiving information by both policy makers and constituents.

Table 2: Method of Responding to Constituents

meeting	21
letters	7
visits	4
messages	3
parades	3
workshop	3
announcements	2
memo	2
mobile phone	2