



MEDIA REFORM COORDINATING GROUP

MEDIA AND ELECTION MONITOR

Reporting Period – 23rd to 27th May 2023

The ‘**Media and Election Monitor**’ tracks the media’s coverage and reportage of the electoral processes in Sierra Leone. It is a publication of the Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG) which contains findings from the monitoring of the media’s broadcasts and publications on the June 2023 elections. This is the first edition that captured the media’s work exactly a month to the elections.

From the 23 to the 27 May 2023, MRCG media monitored three radio stations and two television stations in Freetown. They are: *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Radio, Radio Democracy* and *Epic Radio*. The two television stations are *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBC TV) and Africa Young Voices Television (AYV TV)*. The monitoring was based on the current affairs, live coverage and elections related programs of the media houses. In the week under review, 104 newspaper publications were also monitored to ascertain the extent to which the print media covered and reported on the electoral processes.

On the 23 May, 2023, *SLBC radio and TV, AYV TV and Radio Democracy* did a live coverage of the launch of Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) manifesto and campaign in Kenema district, Eastern Region of Sierra Leone. Also, the *SLBC TV* in their *Elections Special* program, hosted the presidential candidates of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF), a member of the Strategic Communication Unit of the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) and a former *All Peoples Congress (APC) Member of Parliament*. Some of the issues that were discussed included the RUF’s manifesto, SLPP’s 5 years achievement and the manifesto, the APC planned campaign and the need for peaceful elections. The *SLBC News Hour* also covered the declaration of the former People’s Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) leader and SLPP Chairman for the APC and their support to the APC party and its presidential candidate. *Epic Radio* in their ‘*Epic Morning Show*’ also hosted Imran Sillah of the Strategic Communication Unit of the MIC and discussed the SLPP campaign and manifesto launch.

On the 24 May, *SLBC TV* in their *Elections Special* program hosted Sidi Yaya Tunis, Public Relations Officer of the APC, Iram Sillah of Strategic Communication Unit, Victoria Precious Lebbie, Project Manager, PLAN International, and John Koroma CEO of STOP IT-SL. Some of the issues discussed included APC’s first day of campaign in Karene district, North West Region

of Sierra Leone and the National Unity and Reconciliation Party (*NURP*) campaign in Kono. On the same day, the *SLBC TV* program ‘*Podium*’ hosted a member of the SLPP campaign team to discuss the SLPP manifesto. The SLPP on the 24 May 2023 launched their campaign in Kambia district, Northern Sierra Leone and the event was broadcast live on the *SLBC TV and AYV TV*.

On the 25 May 2023, *AYV TV* had a live broadcast of SLPP’s mayoral candidate campaign in Freetown and the SLPP campaign in Gbinti, Karene District, North West Region of Sierra Leone. *Epic radio* in their morning show hosted Tommy Songa, Chairman- PMDC, Abdulai Bayraytay, member of APC media team, and Charles Mambu, representative of Civil Society Organizations. The discussion was centred on the PMDC’s alliance with APC.

On the 26 May, *AYV TV* had a live coverage of the SLPP campaign in Tombo community in the Western Rural District.

From the 23 to the 26 May 2023, the MRCG reviewed 104 newspaper publications. Out of the 104 newspapers, **94 newspapers had headlines and stories that were related to the electoral processes.** The table below, describes the frequency of coverage by the print media on the various political parties and Election Management Bodies.

Political parties / EMBs Coverage by Newspapers	Frequency
Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP)	40
All Peoples Congress (APC)	35
National Grand Coalition (NGC)	5
Peoples Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC)	4
United Democratic Movement (UDM)	1
Republican National Independent Party (ReNIP)	1
Election Management Bodies (EMBs)	8

The stories by the newspapers were on the presidential, parliamentary and local councils.

This weekly report is produced by MRCG with funding support from the **National Endowment for Democracy (NED)**.

MRCG is the coordinating Secretariat for media reform, research and capacity building. It comprises Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), Independent Radio Network (IRN), Guild of Editors (GoE), Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL), Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), Sport Writers Association of Sierra Leone (SWASAL), Mass Communication (Fourah Bay College), Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC), Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC).