



MEDIA AND ELECTIONS 2023

A COMPILATION OF THE WEEKLY AND MONTHLY MEDIA MONITORING ANALYTICAL REPORTS IN SIERRA LEONE

**A PUBLICATION OF THE MEDIA REFORM
COORDINATING GROUP-SIERRA LEONE
(MRCG-SL)**

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ABOUT MRCG

The Media Reform Coordinating Group (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), Faculty of Communication, Media and Information Studies (Fourah Bay College), Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC).

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is a compilation of the weekly and monthly monitoring reports of the media institution's performance in the 2023 elections. The reports tracked the media's coverage and reportage of the electoral processes in Sierra Leone by monitoring various broadcasts and publications on the June 2023 elections. Field monitors collected data and information related to elections contents in the media, issues of violence, mis/disinformation/fake news, and conflict related messages. The report is part of the Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG)'s work to collect, analyze and disseminate accurate and timely data on the media and elections. It was written by Francis Sowa (PhD) with support from Rosaline K. Amara and Augustine S. James. The monitors were Ishiaka Sannoh, Saidu Conteh, Osman Sesay, Paul Kamara, Sheuman Mansaray, Vandy Bawoh and Ayoub Joaque.

1.1 Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data, with key focus on content analysis from the media houses monitored. The analysis was based on pre-designed questions in the media monitoring checklist that the media monitors used in the field to gather data. Apart from the checklist, the monitors on daily and weekly basis presented summaries of the general overview of media coverage of the elections. The monitors sent their reports to the focal person at the media situation room, and the data were analysed. The monitoring was mainly on the current affairs programs and dedicated elections programmes of the media houses.

1.2 Key Issues Analyzed

The media monitors observed and reported on the contents of radio, television stations and newspapers. The thematic areas covered in the report are: *current affairs programs, news stories and editorials that are elections related* (Work of EMBs (NEC, PPRC, Security Forces, Judiciary), Voter education, Party Manifesto/campaigning, Violence /Intimidation, Elections and Security) and *Conflict sensitive reporting* (Mis/disinformation, politics and power, accountability by political parties), including the general coverage of the process.

2. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The report presents data produced from the media contents published and broadcast from March to June 2023. The broadcast media contents monitored were from the current affairs programs from the different media houses. The print media monitoring was done on news stories, features, opinions and editorials. The monitoring covered media institutions in all the regions of Sierra Leone.

In March 2023, a total of 59 broadcast contents on elections were monitored and analysed. 34 contents were monitored from 4 radio stations across the country and 25 contents from 2 TV stations in Freetown.

In April 2023, 68 broadcast contents were monitored and analysed. 37 contents were monitored from 5 radio stations across the country and 31 from 2 TV stations in Freetown.

In May 2023, 102 broadcast contents were monitored and analysed. 61 contents were monitored from 6 radio stations across the country and 41 from 2 TV stations in Freetown.

In June 2023, 80 broadcast contents were monitored and analysed. 46 contents were monitored from 2 TV stations in Freetown and 34 from 5 radio stations across the country.

The highest number of contents for radio was monitored on **SLBC**, predominantly from the ‘*Morning Coffee*’ and **Radio Democracy’s** ‘*Good Morning Salone*’ programmes. Television, contents were mostly monitored on the **SLBC TV**, predominantly from the ‘*Good Morning Sierra Leone, We Yus and Bottom Line*’ programmes and **AYV TV** on the *AYV on Sunday, Sierra Leone Decides, Wake Up Sierra Leone, and Lunch Time Show* programmes..

2.1 Analysis of the Broadcast Media’s Coverage

The MRCG’s weekly analysis report titled ‘**Media and Election Monitor**’ tracked the media’s coverage and reportage of the electoral processes in Sierra Leone. This aspect of the monitoring of the media’s broadcasts and publications started one month to the June 2023 elections.

From 23 to 27 May 2023, MRCG media monitored three radio stations and two television stations in Freetown. They were **Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Radio, Radio Democracy** and **Epic Radio**. The two television stations were **Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC TV) and Africa Young Voices Television (AYV TV)**. The monitoring was based on the current affairs, live coverage and elections related programmes of the media houses.

On 23 May 2023, **SLBC radio and TV, AYV TV and Radio Democracy** had live broadcasts of the launch of the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) manifesto and campaign in Kenema district, Eastern Region of Sierra Leone. Also, **SLBC TV** in the *Elections Special* programme hosted the presidential candidates of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFPP), 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 discussed included the RUFPP’s manifesto, SLPP’s 5 year achievements and their manifesto, the APC planned campaigns and the need for peaceful elections. The **SLBC’s News Hour** also covered the declaration of the former People’s Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) leader, Charles Margai for the SLPP, Chairman for the APC and their support to the party and its presidential candidate. **Epic Radio** in the ‘*Epic Morning Show*’ hosted Imran Sillah of the Strategic Communication Unit of the MIC and discussed the SLPP campaign and launch of their manifesto.

On 24 May 2023, the **SLBC TV Elections Special** programme hosted the Public Relations Officer of the APC, Sidi Yaya Tunis, a member of the Strategic Communication Unit, Iram Sillah, Project Manager, PLAN International, Victoria Precious Lebbie and CEO of STOP IT-S, John Koroma, 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** 'Podium' hosted a member of the SLPP campaign team to discuss the SLPP's manifesto. The SLPP on 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 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's** morning show hosted Chairman of the PMDC, Tommy Songa, a member of APC media team, Abdulai Bayraytay and representative of Civil Society Organizations, Charles Mambu. The discussion was centred on the PMDC's alliance with the APC.

On 26 May 2023, **AYV TV** had a live coverage of the SLPP campaign in Tombo community in the Western Rural District.

From 28 May to 2 June 2023, MRCG monitored twenty-two (22) radio stations and three television stations across the country. Out of these 22 radio stations, 17 of them were monitored in the regions; 4 from the South, 6 from the East, 7 from the north-west region and 5 radios and 3 TV stations were monitored in Freetown.

On 28 May 2023, **SLBC TV** in the *Weekend News Hour* covered civil society organizations (CSOs) electoral education on the proportional representation (PR) system and human rights and also provided an update on the SLPP's campaign in Tombo community. **Star TV** on the same date held a special programme on the launch of APC's manifesto in which they hosted former APC Members of Parliament (MPs).

On 29 May 2023, **SLBC TV** in the *Elections Special* programme hosted a member of APC media team, Minkailu Koroma, a member of SLPP media team, Imran Sillah, and Executive Secretary of the Political Parties Regulation Commission (PPRC), Olushogo David. The discussions were based on SLPP and APC's commitment to peace during the 2023 elections, APC's proposed manifesto, PPRC's follow up to ensure political parties adhere to the campaign calendar and maintain peace, and update on SLPP's campaign in Bo. On that same day, **SLBC TV and Star TV** had a live coverage on the launch of APC's manifesto in Freetown. **Epic Radio** in their programme, *Yu Vote* hosted Hon. Tawa Conteh of SLPP and Abdul Kpaka, independent candidate. Hon. Tawa Conteh spoke about the gains of the SLPP in the last five years and Mr. Kpaka spoke about his desires and plans to bring positive change if elected. The *Epic Morning Show* also hosted Abdulai Bayraytay of the APC and Data Management Officer, ECSL, Mohamed Swaray. The concerns raised by the APC over the non-compliance and disclosure of voter's registration data by ECSL were discussed. **SLBC Radio's Morning Coffee** had a live report of the PMDC campaign launch in Bo, the APC campaign in Karene, and the UDM campaign in Makeni and Kenema districts. In the studios they hosted APC Publicity Secretary, Sidi Yaya Tunis, Staff of ECSL, Joseph Turay, Executive Secretary, PPRC, Oloshogun Davies, and a member of the Strategic Communication Unit, MIC, Imran Sillah. The discussions were based on APC's manifesto, the ballot boxes from Guinean government to ECSL, signing of peace pledge by political parties and their adherence to the peace pledge. **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone** programme had a live report of the SLPP's campaign

in Porto Loko while **Rise Radio**' *We Yone Salone* hosted the Assistant Director of Media and Communications, ECSL Christopher Jones, who provided updates on the work of the Commission leading up to June 24th elections.

On 30 May 2023, the **AYV TV** programme *Sierra Leone Decides* hosted the Director of Electoral Education, ECSL, Momoh Kanneh, who updated the public on the ECSL's preparedness for the elections, including issues of voter education. The **AYV TV Prime Time News** covered ECSL's update on the completion of the printing of electoral registers, the SLPP's campaign launch in Pujehun and the APC's campaign launch in Kenema. **Star TV** in the *Star Good Morning Show* hosted the APC National Publicity Secretary, Sidi Yaya Tunis, and the discussions were on the themes in the APC manifesto and their plans to fix the economy and to create jobs. **SLBC Radio** *Morning Coffee* programme hosted the President of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, President of the Sierra Leone Bar Association (SLBA), Edwina Michealla Swallow and Spokesman of National Election Watch (NEW), Sallieu Kamara,. The guests discussed the importance of the signed peace pledge by political parties. **Rise Radio's We Yone Salone** did an interview with the Director of External Relations, ECSL, Albert Massaquoi, on the Paramount Chief Member of Parliament elections conducted by the Commission in May 2023.

On 31 May 2023, **Radio Democracy** in their *Gud Morning Salone* programme hosted Programs Manager, Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Sahr Kendema, on the organisation's views of the manifestos of the APC and SLPP. **Epic Radio** in the *Epic Morning Show* programme hosted a member of APC Media Committeem Minkailu Koroma and Dr. James Mathew, representing CSOs on the contents of the APC manifesto. **SLBC Radio's Morning Coffee** hosted the Director of Legal Affairs, ECSL, Fatoma Fabundeh and a member of the Strategic Communication Unit, MIC Imran Sillah. The discussions focused on voters' right and responsibility and the SLPP's engagements with CSOs and the media. Also, during the programme, there were live reports on the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFF) and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) party campaigns in Bo district.

In the Southern Region, apart from the regular programmes in which all political parties were given opportunity to campaign, the governing SLPP, unlike other political parties, dominated the airwaves on a more frequent basis with campaign jingles and live paid for programmes in the form of discussion/talk shows.

In the Eastern Region, **Top Radio** in most of the flagship programmes mainly hosted the SLPP. **Nongowa, Gola, All Out Radio, Nyapui , Vote FM** and **SLBC** provided airtime to the main opposition party, APC only when it had activities such as launch of manifesto and campaigns.

In the North and Northwest Regions, the radio stations dedicated specific dates for elections programmes for each political party. The APC campaigns were mainly covered in these regions.

On 1 June 2023, **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone** programme, hosted the SLPP Mayoral Candidate, Mohamed Gento Kamara, who explained his plans to change Freetown if elected. **SLBC Radio's Morning Coffee** had a live report on the community peace rally in

Magburaka, Tonkolili district led by MAWOPNET. **Epic Radio** in the programme, *Yu Vote* hosted the Executive Director of Youth and Children in support of the SDGs, Bashiru Bah and Dr. Vandy Konneh, Founder and Executive Director of Disability Right Movement. The discussions were centred on disability issues as captured in the APC and SLPP's manifestos. **SLBC TV** covered the SLPP campaign in Western Urban District on the same day.

On 2 June 2023, **SLBC TV** in their *We Yus program* interviewed the Head of Media and Public Relations, Sierra Leone Police (SLP), Assistant Commissioner of Police, Brima Kamara, who spoke about their preparedness and mobility to provide security during and after the 2023 elections.

On 3 June 2023, **Radio Democracy** and **Star TV** had a live coverage of the launch of SLPP's mayoral candidate manifesto in Freetown. On the same day, **Star TV** also had a live coverage of the 2023 Mayoral debate between Yvone Aki Sawyer of APC and Seray Kabbah, an independent candidate.

On 5 June 2023, **SLBC TV** in the *Elections Special* hosted the Director of Outreach and External Communication, PPRC, Lucian Momoh and Alhaji Njai, a civil society activist. The discussions were based on monitoring the campaign activities of political parties to ensure compliance with PPRC's campaign regulations. **Star TV** on the same day in the programme *Star Good Morning Show* hosted a member of the APC Media Team, Abu Bakarr Daramy, who gave highlights of the APC's approach and strategies during the campaign period. **Rise Radio's We Yone Salone** had a live coverage of PPRC's engagement with local authorities to ensure they provide equal access to all political parties in their chiefdoms. **AYV Radio** in the *Inside D Baray* hosted the Program Manager, Transparency International Sierra Leone, Edward Koroma, who discussed the importance of security and the need for peace throughout the electoral period. **Epic Radio's Morning Show** also hosted the Chairman of SLPP North America Branch, Desmond Pessima and a member of the APC Media Team, Abu Bakarr Daramy, where they discussed their political parties' plans to ensure food security in the country. Also in **Epic's** programme *Yu Vote*, they hosted the Director of Voters Education ECSL, Momoh Kanneh, who discussed the importance of voter education especially for first time voters.

On 6 June 2023, **Tumac Radio** in their *Opinion Poll*, a phone-in programme, hosted by Mohamed (General) Kalokoh, citizens raised concerns about ECSL's handling of the electioneering process. **Rise Radio** in their programme *Rise N' Shine* hosted Ansumana Keita of Patriotic Advocacy Network (PAN) who discussed the importance of patriotism, peace and security during and after the elections. **Hands of Hope Radio** had a live report on ECSL's voter education on the PR system. **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone program** hosted Director of Operations, ECSL, Mohamed Turay who informed citizens about ECSL's preparedness to conduct free, fair and transparent elections and the conduct of political parties during the campaign period. **Epic Radio** in the *Epic Morning Show* hosted Imran Sillah, Strategic Communication Unit, MIC and Abdul Karim Kamara, member of the publicity unit APC. They discussed the plans of the APC and SLPP on sustainable energy in Sierra Leone. **SLBC Radio** in the *Morning Coffee Programme* hosted the National Publicity Secretary APC

and head of the Strategic Communication Unit, MIC, Abu Bakarr Joe Sesay. They both discussed the gains made by the two political parties during the campaign period.

On 7 June 2023, **Justice Radio** in the *Justice Breakfast Show* hosted by Justice Boima, highlighted the following issues; praised the ruling party's five years in governance and urged the people to support SLPP; claimed that the main opposition APC party is not good for the country; criticised the main opposition presidential candidate as not having solution to country's economic challenges, and called on Sierra Leoneans to massively vote President Bio. **Epic Radio's Epic Morning Show** hosted Hon Abdul Muniru Lansana, member of SLPP Communication Outreach, and Abdul Karim Kamara, member of APC Publicity Committee who discussed their parties plans to address unemployment in the country. **Hands of Hope Radio** in their programme *Talk Waves* had a live coverage on IMC's Election Regulations, 2022. The IMC's Executive Secretary, Khalil Kallon, called on the press to promote peace in their various media houses.

On 8 June 2023, **Tumac Radio** in their *Opinion Poll*, called on citizens to maintain peace and political parties to refrain from violence. The following issues were also raised that APC supporters were being harassed and intimidated in the south-eastern regions; that SLPP was responsible for all violence in the country and that Sierra Leoneans should not vote SLPP for a second term. **SLBC TV** had a live coverage of the SLPP's campaign in Pujehun.

On 9 June 2023, **SLBC TV** in the *Election Special Programme* hosted the Leader and Presidential candidate, RUFPP, Abdulai Saccoh Deputy Director of Strategic Communication, Office of National Security (ONS), Abdul Karim Will and Mohamed Bangura, Liberals Brotherhood-FBC who discussed RUFPP's policy and priority in their manifesto, ECSL's handing over of final voter registrations to political parties and Liberals Brotherhood training of young people on peace ahead of the elections. **Hands of Hope Radio** in the *Talk Waves* programme had a live coverage of ECSL's handing over of the final voter's registration to political parties. **Justice Radio** in the *Justice Breakfast Show* hosted by Justice Boima, highlighted the following issues; that Aki Sawyer of APC is evil and not good for Freetown and that people of Freetown should vote for SLPP's Gento Kamara. **Tumac Radio** in their *Opinion Polls* hosted by Charlie Mahoi, highlighted that; political parties should stop intimidating each other as the campaign continued in the south-east and that the SLPP should stop victimizing supporters of APC in the south-east.

The radio stations monitored in the Southern Region covered activities (voter education, election preparedness and security). They also covered political parties' activities, campaigns and manifesto launch. **Radio New Song**, hosted the SLPP hour which is a paid-for program by the SLPP party and gave updates on their campaign activities in the region.

Eastern Region

In the Eastern region, 6 radio stations were monitored and all hosted and covered activities of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) and political parties. On 5 June 2023, **Gola Agriculture Radio** in their programme *Focus on Salone* hosted Batilo Brima Janneh of the National Council for Civic Education and Development (NaCCED), who discussed the voter education on the

PR system and the role of youths for a peaceful and non-violent elections. **VOTE F.M** on the same day in their program *Day Break Salone* hosted Braima James Musa, Sub-Inspector, Sierra Leone Police (SLP) Media, who discussed their preparedness ahead of the elections. **Kamboi Agriculture** in their programme *Kamboi Good Morning Show* hosted Samuel Active Conteh, APC parliamentary candidate who discussed APC's manifesto and the APC-PMDC Alliance.

On 6 June 2023, **Gola Agriculture Radio** in the programme *Focus on Salone* hosted Emmanuel Steven Bio and Mohamed Pujeh of the Eastern Technical University and their discussion was based on the non-violent elections and students' role in politics. **VOTE F.M** on the same day in their programme *Day Break Salone* hosted Brima Batilo Janneh from NaCCED) and Alhaji Swaray-National Youth Ambassador, East. The discussion focused on civic rights and responsibilities, political tolerance and violence free elections. On 7 June 2023, **VOTE F.M** in the programme *Day Break Salone* hosted the APC mayoral candidate for Kenema, Emmanuel Tarmoh and APC PRO-East, Mohamed S. Kamara. They discussed the party's manifesto and a non-violent elections and voter education ahead of the general elections.

Northern Region

In the northern region 3 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security sector institutions. On 5 June 2023, **Hope FM** in their programme *Issues of the Day* hosted Jonathan Pelham and Albert Massaquo of ECSL. They discussed the following issues: the importance of the voter register in the electoral process, free fair and transparent elections and combating misinformation around the elections. On 7 June 2023, in their *Youth Hour* program hosted Esther Kamara, Adel Cole, John Abu Koroma Esq. and Bibtia Kallon, who discussed the following issues: the negative impact of Abdul Will Kamara alias Adebayor's audios, impact of hate messages, ways to combating negative messages and importance of civic education among the youth. In 9 June 2023 edition of *Issues of the day* Arabieu Barrie, Macho Conteh, Ibrahim Kabba and Albert Massaquo of ECSL were hosted. The discussions focused on combating misinformation, the importance of fact checking information and police preparedness ahead of the elections.

From 11 to 16 June 2023, MRCG monitored twenty (20) radio stations and three (3) television stations across the country. Out of these 20 radio stations, 14 of them were monitored in the regions; 3 from the South (**Kiss FM, Radio New Song and SLBC Radio Bo**), 4 from the East (**Top Radio, SLBC 93.5, Gola Agriculture Radio and Kamboi Agriculture**), 3 radio stations in the North (**Hope FM, Voice of Wusum and Radio Maria**), 4 radio stations in the Northwest (**Radio Bankasoka, Lunsar Radio, Galaxy Radio and Advocacy Radio.**), and 6 radio and 3 TV stations were monitored in Freetown. The media houses monitored in Freetown were: **Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Radio, Radio Democracy 98.1, Epic Radio, Rise Radio, Hands of Hope Radio, and Justice Radio.** The three television stations were **SLBC TV, AYW TV and Star TV.** The monitoring was based on the current affairs, live coverage and elections related programmes of the media houses.

On 12 June 2023, **Hands of Hope radio** had a live coverage on Media Matters for Women engagement with women to promote sustainable peace during and after the elections. On the

same day, **Radio Democracy 98.1** *Gud Morning Salone* programme hosted the Head of Programs and Policy, Action Aid Sierra Leone, Mohamed Abdulai Fofanah to discuss issues of peace before, during and after the elections. **Epic Radio**'s *Morning Show* hosted the Chairperson of Coalition of Progressive Political Parties (COPP), Femi Claudius Cole and Interim Chairperson for Alliance Democratic Party (ADP), George Macaulay. The discussion was based on 9 political parties' declaration of support for APC and the difference it would make in the elections. **AYV TV** on the same day did an exclusive interview with the Presidential Candidate for RUFF, Abdulai Saccoh, and the discussion was based on why he wanted to become president and his plans if elected. **AYV TV** in the *Wake Up Salone* hosted the Minister of Youth Affairs, Mohamed Orman Bangura and Founder and Executive Director of Global Youth Network, Musa Khalil Koroma, as they discussed the role of young people in building peace and national cohesion ahead of the June 24 election. On the same day **SLBC Radio** in the *Morning Coffee* programme hosted the Director of Operations, ECSL Mohamed Turay, to discuss the update on the voter register. **Hands of Hope radio** on the *Talk Waves* programme hosted Victor Kamara, a youth activist and discussed youth comportment towards the general election in Sierra Leone.

On 13 June 2023, **SLBC TV** in the *Podium* programme hosted Abdulai Baraytay, member of APC media team, National Chairman, PMDC, Paul Songa, the Minister of Youth Affairs, Mohamed Orman Bangura, and the Presidential Candidate for RUFF, Abdulai Saccoh, where they discussed APC's on-going campaign and their 'One Nation' manifesto, political parties to positively engage youths on election violence, APC and SLPP supporters attacking each other and other party members during campaigns, and RUFF requesting PPRC to call on mega political parties to conduct themselves properly. **Rise Radio** on the *Wi Yone Salone* programme hosted Sheriff Barrie, Independent Mayoral Candidate for Freetown, to discuss his vision and how he planned to develop Freetown if elected. **SLBC TV** in the *Election Special* programme hosted ACP Brima Kamara, Head of Media and Public Relations; Sheik Abubakar Conteh, Inter-Religious Council, Reverend Daniel Sesay, Inter-Religious Council, Mohamed Abdulai Fofanah, Head of Action Aid, Philip Bona, Representative, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, Sahr Kendema, Representative, CGG. The discussions were based on peace and security in Sierra Leone, the role of political parties in achieving peace in Sierra Leone. **Radio Democracy** on the same day in the *Gud Morning Salone* programme hosted the Coordinator for SLAJ iVerify, Ophaniel Gooding, to discuss the verification of information on social media before, during and after the elections. On the same day, **Epic Radio** in the *Epic Morning Show* hosted the National Publicity Secretary of the APC, Sidi Yayah Tunis, to discuss whether Samura Kamara, presidential candidate for the APC would run for the presidential elections. **SLBC Radio** hosted the Program Manager for Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Sahr Kendema, Former President of Inter-Religious Council, Sheikh Abubakarr Conteh and the Coordinator for Inter-Religious Council, Reverend Daniel Sesay. The discussion was based on the issue of non-violence, peace and national cohesion. On the same day **AYV TV** and **Star TV** had a live coverage of the 9 political parties' declaration for the SLPP presidential candidate at the New Brookfields Hotel.

On 14 June 2023, **SLBC TV**, **AYV TV**, **Radio Democracy** and **Star TV** had a live coverage of the opposition APC presidential candidate, Dr. Samura Kamara's press conference. On the same day **Radio Democracy** had a live coverage of ECSL's engagement with political parties ahead of the elections. **SLBC TV** and **AYV TV** had a live coverage of ECSL's demonstration of the results management system at the tally center in Wellington. On the same day **SLBC TV** in the **Elections Special** programme hosted the Spokesman of the All Political Parties Association (APPA), Victor King, Imran Sillah of the Strategic Communication Unit, Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC), Mayoral Candidate, NDA, Sheriff Barrie, Spokesperson, National Elections Watch (NEW), Salieu Kamara, Deputy National Publicity Secretary, APC and the President of National Youth Council. The discussions were based on peaceful engagement with 11 political parties to commit to peace during the elections, signing communiqué to commit to peace, vision in making Freetown the Dubai of Africa once elected mayor of Freetown and NEW's elections strategy

On 15 June 2023, **Hands of Hope** had a live broadcast of ECSL's briefing for accredited national and international observers and the media. On the same day **Radio Democracy** hosted National Publicity Secretary of APC Sidi Yayah Tunis and the Minister of Information and Communication, Mohamed Rahman Swarray, to discuss the responsibilities of political parties in maintaining peace and non-violence before, during and after the elections. **Epic Radio** in the **Epic Morning Show** hosted APC's Western Area Campaign Coordinator, Ade Macauley and Melvin Tejan Mansaray, Political Analyst, where they discussed the allegation by the APC presidential candidate, Dr Samura Kamara, against ECSL on giving the party a wrong and incomplete voter register. **SLBC Radio Morning Coffee** program hosted APC's Hon Abdul Kargbo and Imran Sillah, of the Strategic Communication Unit, MIC to discuss Dr. Samura Kamara's press statement. **Justice Radio** on the **Justice Breakfast Show** commented on the possibility of APC to give peace a chance for the elections to hold and that former President Ernest Bai Koroma had 'placed a price on his head to be killed.' **SLBC TV** on the **Elections Special** programme hosted Hon. Abdul Kargbo, member of APC media team, Imran Sillah, member of SLPP media team, Salia Kpaka, representative, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion (ICPNC); James Tamba Lebbie, Commissioner, IMC to discuss APC's demand for the resignation of the ECSL Chairman and other top officials within 72 hours, the snapshots by officials of ECSL with their five fingers in the air with the picture of President Bio in the background, the alleged plans by the APC to boycott the elections, ECSL's failure to give the voter registration data to political parties months before the elections, the ICPNC observation of violence and threats from supporters of political parties during election campaigns, and IMC's banning phone-in-programmes for **Tumac, Justice and Citizen radios** for lack of proper control. Also on the same day **SLBC TV** on the **Podium** programme hosted Ajibu Jalloh from the media team of the APC and Abubakar Joe Sesay, media team SLPP where they discussed APC's demands for the resignation of ECSL's Chairman and other top officials.

On 16 June 2023, **Hands of Hope Radio** had a live coverage of the SLPP press conference. On the same day **SLBC TV** on the **Elections Special** programme hosted the Director of Media, ECSL, Raymond George, Paul Bangura, Independent Mayoral Candidate and Executive Director, Accountability Now, William Sao Lamin. They discussed ECSL's early voting process and its readiness for the elections, visions and aspirations for mayoral position and

political parties to maintain peace in the country ahead of the elections. On the same day **SLBC Radio** hosted Raymond George, Director of Media and Communication and Jonathan Paul Sidike Bangura, Independent Mayoral Aspirant to discuss the concluded voting process of hajj pilgrims and the candidate's plans for Freetown if elected as mayor.

Southern Region:

In the Southern Region, 3 radio stations were monitored. On 12 June 2023, **Radio New Song's Live Hits Program** hosted the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and Publicity Secretary of the SLPP, Lawrence Lahai Leema, Victor Tutu Rogers, Reporter for **Radio New Song** and the District Elections Manager, Kono Osman Joe Kamara, where they discussed campaign activities in Sowa Chiefdom, Pujehun district, cross carpeting of APC members to SLPP, situation report of a nationwide strike action ahead of the elections, and the PR system of voting (including procedures, rules and regulations).

On 15 June 2023, **SLBC radio Bo** on the *Inside the Region* programme hosted the Senior Public Education Officer, National Commission for Democracy, Abdul Rahman Gassama and Team Member, National Youth Commission, Iye Abu. The discussions were focused on reaction to the proposed demonstration ahead of the elections, town hall engagement with first time voters, women and persons living with disability on election related matters, formation of elections laboratory (trained peace ambassadors), and organization of peace and non-violence concerts.

On 16 June 2023, **SLBC radio Bo Inside the Region** programme hosted ECSL's District Elections Manager Bo, Francis B. Musa and Youth Chairman, Kakua Chiefdom Bo district, Mohamed Fanbulleh. They discussed the voting process at polling stations, the voter register, issuance of accreditation to election observers (including party agents and the media), and peace rally on elections and non-violence. On the same day, **Kiss FM's Independent News** programme discussed the SLPP and ECSL's reaction to the APC press conference calling for the resignation of the Chief Electoral Commissioner and Regional Commissioners and Action Aid's project on promoting peace in the electioneering process. **SLBC Radio** in the *SLPP Hour*, a paid for program hosted Patrick Maada Koroma, SLPP North America Chapter PRO and Miatta Rogers, SLPP North America Chapter Chairperson and they discussed SLPP 2023 Manifesto and campaign for the re-election of President Bio.

Eastern Region

In the Eastern Region, 4 radio stations were monitored and all hosted and covered activities of EMBs and political parties. On 12 June 2023, **Top Radio** on the *Top Basket* programme hosted local council aspirant NGC, Bartholomew George Alie and Brima James Musa, Regional Media-SLP. The discussions were based on SLPP-NGC Progressive Alliance, sensitization on non-violence, hate messages and drug abuse, and policing political campaigns. On the same day **SLBC Kenema Elections Talk** program hosted Morie M. Farma and Bockarie Sannoh, both representing the ADP, where they discussed SLPP and NGC's progressive alliance and sensitization on non-violence.

On 13 June 2023, **Top Radio** on the *Top Basket* programme hosted the Commissioner East, National Commission for Democracy (NCD) Momoh Bockarie and the Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation, Rex Bonapha, where they discussed the role of the NCD for

democracy in electioneering process and SLPP's campaign overview and manifesto. On the same day, **Gola Agriculture Radio's Focus on Salone** programme hosted Inspector Prince Bernard J. Kamara of the Police Media, East to discuss the Sierra Leone Police's position on the call for protest ahead of the elections

On 14 June 2023, **Kamboi Agriculture Radio's Good Morning Show** programme hosted ECSL's Voter Education and Training Officer, Ensah Brima. The discussion focused on voter education, including the Proportional Representation (PR) system. On the same day **Gola Agriculture Radio's Focus on Salone** Program hosted Ibrahim Feika of Health for all Coalition to discuss the political atmosphere and the level of tolerance in Kenema.

Northern Region

In the northern region 3 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security matters. On 11 June 2023, **Radio Maria** on their *News Around the Church* programme hosted Emile Jengo, Grace Kamara, and Abibatu Sesay to discuss the role of the church in promoting peace during elections.

On 12 June **Hope FM's Issues of the Day** programme hosted Elkas Sannoh of the Sierra Leone Judiciary and Albert Massaquoi of ECSL, where they discussed the impact of the court, including addressing issues on elections offences, unlawful delay of publication of the elections data and the fairness and credibility of the elections.

On 13 June 2023, **Hope FM's AM Live** programme hosted APC's Sidi Yayah Tunis, Albert Massaquoi, Director of External Relations, ECSL and Shebora Samba Kamara to discuss the publication of data in promoting fair, free and credible electioneering processes, and the modalities put in place for the conduct of the forthcoming elections.

On 14 June 2023, **Voice of Wusum's Wake up Salone** program hosted Ediatu Momohdu, Ahmed Jalloh and Kaninatu Sesay to discuss misinformation and disinformation during elections.

On 16 June 2023, **Hope FM** on the *Salone Woman* programme hosted Emilia Jengo, Veronica Kamara and Betty Alimamy. The discussions were based on the need for tolerance among political parties, combating misinformation and gender empowerment.

Northwest Region

In the Northwest Region, 4 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security matters. On 12 June 2023, **Radio Bankasoka's Woman Talk** programme hosted Mariatu Bangura, Mayoral candidate, NDA where she discussed her ambition to develop the city through advocacy for improved healthcare and lobbying for women's empowerment by providing start up capitals for women. **Lunsar Radio** on the same day on their *Election Hour* hosted Wurie Bah, SLPP's District Secretary to discuss the party's manifesto and preparedness to win the elections.

On 14 June 2023, **Galaxy Radio**'s *Elections Update* program hosted Ibrahim Saccoh, APC's aspirant for the Chairperson of the District Council. The discussion was based on his past work as councilor and his plans to develop the district if elected. On the same day, **Radio Bankasoka**'s *Elections Tok* programme hosted Ansu Bangura of ECSL and Nancy Gbamoi, Regional Coordinator, NEW and they discussed the voting procedures, the campaign calendar, and what CSOs observed during political parties campaigns in the district. **Advocacy Radio** on the same day on their *Election Time* programme hosted the NGC District, Chairman Dauda Kamara and the NGC Regional Women's Leader, Aminata TS Kamara, and they discussed the SLPP-NGC alliance and urged the people to vote for President Bio for a second term and to also vote for NGC Member of Parliament (MP) and councilor candidates in the district.

From 19 to 23 June 2023, MRCG media monitors in the field monitored twenty (20) radio and three television stations across the country. Out of these 20 radio stations, 14 of them were monitored in the regions; 3 from the south (**Radio New Song, Kiss FM and Moonlight radio**), 6 from the east (**Top Radio, Vote FM, Star Line Radio, SLBC 93.5, Gola Agriculture and Kamboi Agriculture**), 2 radio stations in the north (**Hope FM and Voice of Wusum**) 3 radio stations in the northwest (**Radio Bankasoka, Advocacy Radio and Lunsar Radio**) and 6 radio and 3 TV stations were monitored in Freetown. The media houses monitored in Freetown were: **Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Radio, Radio Democracy, Epic Radio, Rise Radio, Voice of Hope and Hand of Hope Radio**. The three television stations were **SLBC TV, AYV and Star TV**. The monitoring was based on current affairs, live coverage and elections related programmes of the media houses.

On 19 June 2023, **SLBC TV** had a live coverage of the national stakeholders' dialogue on PR system, peace and reconciliation. On the same day **Rise Radio** had a live broadcast on the Commonwealth Election Observers Mission Team Lead, Professor Yemi Osinbajo's meeting with the media on their work during elections, and the Campaign for Human Right and Development International (CHARDI'S) concern over the tension in the country. **AYV TV and Voice of Hope radio** also had a live broadcast of the arrival of the ballot papers and the result reconciliation forms at the Freetown International Airport. **Star TV** on the *Star Good Morning Show* hosted Ibrahim Sorie Dumbuya to discuss elections and security, accusations and counter accusations and the preparedness of ONS and the police to protect lives and property.

On 20 June 2023, **AYV TV** on the *Wake Up Salone* programme hosted, Director of Media and Communication, Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL), Raymond George, to discuss the arrival of the ballot papers at the Lungi International Airport and the early voting conducted for the pilgrims. **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone** program hosted the Chairman of Political Party Regulation Commission (PPRC), Abdulai Bangura Esq. and the presidential candidate for Republican National Independent Party (ReNIP), Beresford Williams. The discussion focused on the details of the meeting between All People Congress (APC), ECSL and PPRC and the plans of the presidential candidate of ReNIP if elected president of Sierra Leone. **Star TV** on the *Star Good Morning Show* hosted Edmond Cole, National Coordinator, Unifiers Sierra Leone and Joseph Sama, Member of Coalition of Elections Observers Sierra Leone, where they discussed the contributions of Civil Society Organizations and election observers to maintaining peace before, during and after the election. The **SLBC TV Elections Special** programme hosted the Director of Operations at ECSL, Mohamed Turay and they

discussed ECSL's dialogue with APC, Commonwealth engagement with stakeholders ahead of the elections and training of ECSL polling center managers, presiding officers and voters' identification managers in Kambia. **SLBC TV** had a live coverage of the Sierra Leone People Party (SLPP's) family gathering at Aberdeen-Lumbley Beach Road and President Bio's address to the nation ahead of the general elections. **SLBC's Radio Morning Coffee** programme hosted Chairman of PPRC, Abdulai Bangura Esq. and Director of Operations, ECSL Mohamed Turay, where they discussed the dialogue between APC and ECSL.

On 21 June 2023, **SLBC TV** on the *Elections Special* programme hosted Imran Sillah, Strategic Communication Unit, Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC), Reverend Jessy Forna, representative of Inter-Religious Council Sierra Leone (IRCSL), Edmond N. Kpaka, representative, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion (ICPNC) and Joseph Sannoh, Executive Director of HEAL Sierra Leone. The discussions were on the analysis of President Bio's address to the nation ahead of the elections, Inter-Religious Council's peace message, and CSOs concerns on political tension and peace during the elections. On the same day **SLBC Radio** hosted Reverend Jessy Forna, General Secretary of IRCSL and Edmond N. Kpaka, representative of ICPNC to discuss the role of IRCSL to maintain peace. **Rise Radio** had a live coverage of ECSL's press briefing with the media and stakeholders on APC's request to release voters' registration data. The **AYV TV Wake Up Sierra Leone** program hosted Press Secretary, State House, Yusif Keketoma Sandi, to discuss President Bio's address to the nation on elections and peace. On the same day, **AYV TV** had a live coverage on ECSL's press briefing where they updated the media and stakeholders on ECSL's elections preparedness. **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone** programme hosted Abdulai Bayraytay, member of APC media campaign team, Mohamed Rahman Swaray, head of SLPP media team, where they both called on voters to vote for their respective parties. On the same day, **Radio Democracy** had a live coverage of ECSL's media update by the Chief Electoral Commissioner, Mohamed K Konneh.

On 22 June 2023, **SLBC TV** on the *Elections Special* programme hosted Abigail Stevens, Executive Director, AMNet, Reverend Gibrilla Kargbo, Public Relations and Communications Manager, National Commission for Democracy (NCD), Ishmail Alfred Charles, Programs Director, Caritas; Abdul Rahman Kaikai, Communication Person, Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS regions and Edmond Cole, National Coordinator-Unifiers Sierra Leone. The discussions were based on engaging the youth on promoting peace, political tolerance, monitoring the elections campaigns in the country, a town hall meeting for support to female candidates in Kono and peace and security for women during the elections. On the same day, **SLBC TV** on the *Podium* programme hosted Ansumana Keita, Executive Director, Patriotic Advocacy Network (PAN); Edmond Cole, National Coordinator, Unifiers Sierra Leone; Ibrahim Jalloh, Director of Fourah Bay Organization, to discuss how to engage youths on peace during elections, uniting Sierra Leoneans and preaching peace ahead of the elections. **Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone** programme hosted Abdul Fatoma, Chief Executive, CHARDI, and they discussed the need for peace in the June 24 elections.

On 23 June 2023, the **SLBC TV Elections Special** programme hosted Momoh Kanneh, Director of Electoral Education, ECSL, Abdul Karim Will Kamara, Deputy Director of Strategic

Communication, Office of National Security (ONS); Alhaji Njai, Founder of project 1808, Joseph Sannoh, Executive Director, HEAL Sierra Leone and Mohamed Salaami, representative, Sierra Leone Debating Council. The discussions focused on ONS security readiness and deployment for elections, ECSL's readiness to conduct free, fair and credible elections as a pillar for peace and stability and allowing youths to participate in the electioneering process. *SLBC's radio Morning Coffee* programme hosted William Saio Lamin, Executive Director, Accountability Now Sierra Leone, Momoh Kanneh, Director of Electoral Education, ECSL, ACP Brima Kamara, Head of Media and Public Relations, Sierra Leone Police and Abdul Karim Will Kamara, Deputy Director of Strategic Communication, ONS. They discussed the release of data by ECSL to APC, and updates on the protection of lives and property before, during and after the elections. *Radio Democracy's Gud Morning Salone* programme hosted Valnora Edwin, Board Member, ICPNC, Reverend Christiana S. Koroma, a member of Eminent Women Peace Mediators; and Mohamed Turay, Director of Operations, ECSL. They discussed issues of maintaining peace during the June 24 elections and after the announcement of results; the role of CSOs to maintain peace ahead of the elections, and the release of data by ECSL to political parties. On the same day, *Star TV* on their *Star Gud Morning Show* programme hosted Abdul Karim Kamara, Publicity Officer, APC and ACP Brima Kamara, Head of Media and Public Relations, SLP. *Epic Radio's Epic Morning Show* program hosted Hawa Samai, Executive Secretary, ICPNC and Reverend Canon Rogers Wright, Consultant-Council of Churches Sierra Leone. They discussed peaceful general elections in Sierra Leone.

Southern Region

The 4 radio stations monitored in Bo district covered voter education, election preparedness and security of ECSL in the southern region. They also covered political parties' activities, campaigns and manifesto launch. *Radio New Song* on their *Live Hit* programme hosted the Resident Minister South, Mohamed K Alie and Sahr Moseray Representative of ONS South. They highlighted the engagement with women aspirants in Pujehun, the burning of the APC Southern Regional Office, the Provincial Security Committee meeting in Pujehun regarding political violence incidents, update on campaigns, the impasse between APC and ECSL and using sports to preach peace.

On 22 June 2023, *Kiss 104.1 FM's Independent News* programme hosted Abu Easton Morovia – Parliamentary aspirant of Sierra Leone People Party (SLPP) to give an update on SLPP's preparedness to contest in the June 24 elections and the Independent Radio Network (IRN) training of its reporters. *Moonlight radio* on the same day on their *This Morning* program hosted Alhaji Osman Mansaray, Police Media Officer, South and Hassan Juana Koroma, representative, SLAJ South. They discussed the security to protect lives and property during and after the elections and SLAJ's preparedness for the elections.

On 23 June 2023, *SLBC Radio Bo* on their *Elections Special* programme hosted Chief Superintendent Barrie, Local Unit Bo West Police Station to discuss the security situation in Bo and the punishment for those intending to scare people from voting. *Radio New Song's Live Hit* programme hosted Alusine Mansaray, independent candidate for councilor where he

discussed his candidature for the election. *Kiss 104.1 FM's Special Elections Update* on the same day hosted Francis M Sandy, Deputy Secretary General, SLAJ South, to give updates on the status of accreditation to journalists to cover the elections, training of journalists on ethical conduct and SLAJ's meeting with members to ensure professional reportage on the elections. *SLBC radio* on their *Understand Islam* hosted Sheikh Ibrahim Koroma, Chief Imam of Kowama Mosque Bo, to talk on anti-violence and anti-war messages during elections.

Eastern Region

In the Eastern Region, 6 radio stations were monitored and they hosted and covered activities of EMBs and political parties. On 19 June 2023, *Gola Agric radio* on their *Focus on Salone* programme hosted Lahai Brima, SLPP District PRO to discuss party's position on APC demands for the resignation of ECSL's boss and their preparedness ahead of the polls.

On 20 June 2023, *Star Line Radio's Special Elections Broadcast* programme hosted Thomas Baio, SLPP Mayoral Candidate for Kenema district; Alex Ansumana Kanneh ReNIP party representative; Charles Silva, National Grand Coalition District Secretary General; and Bokarie Sannoh, NGC Mayoral candidate. They discussed a no run-off campaign for SLPP Presidential Candidate and SLPP-ReNIP alliance.

On 21 June 2023, *SLBC 93.5* on their *Good Morning Nongowa* programme hosted John Sivalie, APC District PRO and Lahai Brima SLPP District PRO where they discussed their parties' preparedness for their final campaigns in the district.

On 22 June 2023, *Kamboi Agriculture Radio's Good Morning Show* hosted Sheku Tanga, Information Attache to Nigeria, Abubakarr Dakowa, Information Attache to Kenya; and John Koiyama, SLPP Chairman, Australia. The discussions were focused on violence free elections, voter education, voting pattern and the previous government's development projects. On the same day, *Gola Agriculture Radio's Focus on Salone* programme hosted Alhaji Sheku Kamara, Chairman, IRCSL East spoke about their position on violence during and after the elections.

On 23 June 2023, *Star Line Radio's Breakfast News* programme hosted Hassan Samba Yajah, Commissioner Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone. He discussed human rights issues related to elections and expectations of voters and a non-violent elections. On the same day, *SLBC 93.5* on their *Good Morning Nongowa* programme hosted Reverend Julious Bokarie Sengova, Vice Chairman, IRCSL and Alhaji Sheku Kamara, Chairman of IRCSL East. They both discussed the need for peaceful elections and proper conduct of voters at polling stations. *Kamboi Agriculture Radio's Good Morning Show* hosted Victoria Bernard, Regional Chairperson of SLAJ East; Mustafa Sheriff, Member of SLAJ and Alex M Vandy Member of SLAJ where they discussed non-violent election messages and the expected conduct of first time voters. *Vote FM's Day Break Salone* programme hosted Joseph Pedia Alie, Regional Coordinator of Coalition of Elections Observers and Sheku Sannoh, Program Manager of Coalition of Election Observers to discuss non-violent elections and conduct of youth at polling stations. *Top Radio's Top Basket* programme hosted Prince B.J Kamara, Head of Media SLP East; and Patrick Adu, Regional Coordinator of Movement for the Restoration of Democracy.

The discussions focused on elections security and preparedness of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) ahead of the elections, non-violence and CSOs preparedness to observe the polls.

Northern Region

In the northern region, 3 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security. On 19 June 2023, *Hope FM's Issues of the Day* programme hosted John Abass, Yusuff M Suma and Sidi Yayah Tunis, the National Publicity Secretary of APC and their discussion was centered on the impact of a peaceful protest, APC's demands to the ECSL, and the SLP's preparedness to react to protest without a police clearance. On 20 June 2023, *Hope FM's AM Live* program hosted Amadu Kamara; Albert Masaquoi, Director of Outreach and External Relations ECSL; Samuel Komeh and Mohamed Papa Bangura to discuss the elections data and publication of voters list and the mitigation of misinformation. On 21 June 2023, *Hope FM's Youth Hour* program hosted Ibrahim Barrie, Pastor Kingsley Sesay, Judah Kamara, Kadiatu Bah and Abu Dabor. The discussions centered on peaceful ways of expressing views, demands of APC, democracy and good governance and the effects of involving in a protest without police clearance. On 23 June 2023, *Voice of Wusum* on their *Elections Watch* programme hosted Ediatu Momohdu, Esther Kamara, Ahmed Jalloh and Grace Martha where they discussed elections updates, no violence and voting rights and obligations. *Hope FM's AM Live* program hosted Albert Massaquoi, Director of Outreach and External Relations-ECSL; and Elkass Sannoh, Communications Manager, Judiciary of Sierra Leone; John Abass and Shebora Samba Kamara. They discussed ECSL's preparedness to conduct free, fair and credible elections, the establishment of the electoral college and electoral offences.

North West Region

In the Northwest region, 3 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties and EMBs. On 20 June 2023, *Advocacy Radio's Special Elections Hour* programme hosted the Chairman of Civil Society Organizations in Portloko and Ansu Bangura VETO, ECSL. They discussed the distribution and deployment of elections materials and the need for peace during elections day. *Lunsar Radio's Elections Special* programme hosted Sahr Lamin, Chiefdom Youth Council Chairman who called on the youth of Lunsar to stay out of violence during and after the elections. On 22 June 2023, *Radio Bankasoka* on their *Elections Update* programme hosted Ansu Bangura, VETO, ECSL who gave updates on ECSL's preparedness for the June 24 elections and non-violence during and after the elections.

From 26 to 30 June 2023, MRCG monitored seventeen (17) radio stations and three television stations across the country. Out of these 17 radio stations, 13 of them were monitored in the regions; 3 from the South (*Classic Radio, SLBC Bo and Moonlight Radio*), 4 from the East (*Top Radio, Vote FM, Star Line Radio, and Radio Nongowa*), 2 radio station in the North (*Hope FM and Radio Maria*), 4 from the Northwest (*Radio Bankasoka, Advocacy Radio, Lunsar Radio and Galaxy Radio*) and 6 radio stations and 3 TV stations were monitored in Freetown. The media houses monitored in Freetown were: *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Radio, Radio Democracy, Epic Radio, and Justice FM*. The three

television stations were **Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC TV)**, **AYV** and **Star TV**. The monitoring was based on the current affairs, live coverage and elections related programs of the media houses.

On 26 June 2023, **SLBC TV** on the *Elections Special* programme hosted Abdul Karim Will Kamara, Deputy Director of Strategic Communication Unit, Office of National Security (ONS), Reverend Gibrilla Kargbo, Public Relations and Communications Manager-National Commission for Democracy; and Sallieu Kamara, Spokesman of the National Elections Watch (NEW). The discussions focused on the update on the security situation in the country; announcements of results by Independent Radio Network (IRN); security situation of the country; cautioning of political parties to desist from announcing results as winners; democracy and the general elections processes and National Election Watch (NEW) update on the election results. On the same day, **Justice Radio** on the *Justice Breakfast* show hosted by Justice Boima discussed that from the unofficial results in his possession, SLPP has won and there would be no run off and that people should not trust the results announced by Independent Radio Network (IRN) because the IRN boss has been paid by members of the APC to announce that APC was ahead. **Star TV** and **Radio Democracy** on the same day had a live coverage of Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) press conference which updated the public about the elections process and announcement of the results. **AYV TV** on the *Sierra Leone Decides* programme on the same day hosted Moses Mambu, Head of CSOs who discussed different roles of CSOs during the just concluded multi-tier elections in the elections process and challenges involved in keeping the peace.

On 27 June 2023, **Radio Democracy's** *Gud Moning Salone* programme hosted Albert Massaquoi, Director of External Relations, ECSL and the Chairman of Election Observers Network, Ambassador Sullay Darami. The discussion was focused on the 60% of result announced by ECSL and why should the country maintain peace after the final announcement of the result. **SLBC TV** on the *Elections Special* programme had a live coverage of the tallying process of votes and announcement of 60% of votes cast by ECSL. **AYV TV** on the same day in the *Sierra Leone Decides* programme hosted Abdul Fatoma, Chief Executive, Campaign for Human Rights and Development International (CHRDI). He spoke about the political parties' declaring themselves as winners on social media even when the results had not yet been announced.

On 29 June 2023, **SLBC TV** on the *Elections Special* programme hosted Mohamed Rahman Swaray, Minister of Information and Communication and Alphonso Manny, a Civil Rights Coalition (CRC) activist, where they discussed President Bio's national address after the elections, calling on all Sierra Leoneans to maintain peace and CRC's concerns on the press releases by NEW and EU elections observers. **Epic Radio's** *Morning Show* hosted Edward Kpaka a Board Member of Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion (ICPNC) and Imran Sillah, member of the Strategic Communication Unit at the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC). The discussion focused on peace and reconciliation after the elections and the work of ICPNC after the elections. **Radio Democracy's** *Gud Moning Salone* programme hosted Umaru Napoleon Koroma, National Secretary General of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) and on the phone Abdul Kargbo a member of the All

Peoples Congress (APC). The discussion was centered on the way forward to unite Sierra Leone after the June 24 elections and the view of APC after the announcement of the result by ECSL. *AYV TV* on the *Sierra Leone Decides* programme hosted Abdul Will Kamara, Deputy Director of Strategic Communication Unit, Office of National Security (ONS) who discussed the different initiatives put in place by ONS and other security institutions to ensure peace and democracy in the country.

On 30 June 2023, *SLBC Radio's Morning Coffee* program hosted Andrew Lavalie, Executive Director, Institute for Governance Reform (IGR), Professor Adam Steven, University of Maryland and Alhaji Alpha Kanu. They discussed the meeting that CSOs held with regards to things that would destroy the country's peace, National Elections Watch (NEW) Process and Result Verification Data that questioned the credibility of ECSL presidential election results, experts view on the elections results, the meaning of the re-election of President Bio and the way forward for Sierra Leone after the election. *AYV TV* on the same day on the *Lunch Time Show* hosted Abdul Karim Will Kamara, Deputy Director of Strategic Communication Unit, ONS and Mohamed Lamin-Youth Ambassador. The discussion was centered on the importance of maintaining the peace, preventing civil war in the country, the vital role citizens should play in order to prevent violence and conflicts among themselves especially the youth because they are always the leading individuals used by the politicians and also how important it is to follow the laws of the country.

Regional Analysis

Southern Region 078700738

The 3 radio stations monitored in Bo district, covered voter education, election preparedness and security of ECSL in the Southern Region. They also covered political parties' activities, campaigns and manifesto launch. On 26 June 2023, *Moonlight Radio's Post Elections Coverage* programme hosted Paul Kamara, a media practitioner who discussed mis/disinformation. *Classic Radio's Special Elections* programme hosted Mohamed .E.K Alie, Resident Minister South and Alie Katisco Sesay, APC Regional Coordinator, South. They discussed peace dialogue meeting for political parties, which was organised by the Regional Police Commander, South and ONS Regional Coordinator South. *SLBC BO's Inside the Region* programme hosted Edmond Sylvester Alpha, ECSL Regional Commissioner, where he gave updates on the tallying process of elections results at the Regional Tally Centre Bo and APC and SLPP's reaction to the regional tallying process. *Moon Light Radio's Post Elections* programme hosted Andrew George, Program Manager, NCD and Joseph Blackie, Regional Coordinator, Network of Elections Observers. The discussion was focused on the political situation in Bonthe district, and NCD's district level engagement for youth on non-violence.

On 27 June 2023, *SLBC Bo* on the *Inside the Region* programme hosted Newman Anthony Levey, a journalist working for Moonlight Radio and Joseph Blackie, Regional Coordinator, Network of Election Observers where they discussed the situational updates from Pujehun and Bonthe districts and on the media coverage on polling day. On 30 June 2023, *SLBC Bo* on the *Inside the Region* programme hosted Sheku Marrah, Public Relations Officer, Traders Union-

Southern Region, who discussed the assessment of the conduct of the youth during the electioneering process and the need for unity among traders –depoliticising Traders Union

Eastern Region

In the Eastern Region, 4 radio stations were monitored and all hosted and covered activities of EMBs and political parties. On 26 June 2023, **Radio Nongowa** on the *Community Hour* programme hosted Brima James Musa, Head of Media and Public Relations, Sierra Leone Police, Eastern Region, Jacob Sheriff a Journalist and Joseph Pedia Allieu a Civil Society Activist. They discussed the security updates following the polls.

On 27 June 2023, **Top Radio's Top Basket** programme hosted Momoh Bokarie, Commissioner NCD and James Jemie Fornah, a journalist. The discussion was focussed on citizens expectations in the post elections era. On the same day, **Vote FM's Special Discussion** programme hosted Catherine Katimu Kanara, Alhaji Mattia and Abdul Gbanabu, all journalists. They gave updates on their observation during the polls. **Star Line Radio's Special Discussion** programme hosted Sufian M. Fofana, Sahr Yongai and M.S Barrie, all journalists. They discussed the presidential speech following the polls.

On 28 June 2023, **Radio Nongowa's Community Hour** programme hosted Prince Kamara, Community Relations Officer, SLP Kenema Division, and Benson Quee, a member of the SLPP media team and they discussed how citizens should celebrate victory within human rights and the law.

Northern Region

In the Northern Region 2 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security. On 26 June 2023, **Hope FM's Issue of the Day** programme hosted Shebora Samba Kamara and Edna Samura and they discussed the issue of strongholds, acceptance of the result, misinformation and disinformation.

On 27 June 2023, **Hope FM** on the *AM Live* programme hosted Albert Massaquoi, Director of External Relations, ECSL, Ibrahim K Bangura and Shebora S Kamara. They discussed the announcement and acceptance of the remaining 40% of the results, and analysis of the credibility of the elections.

On 28 June 2023, **Hope FM's Youth Hour** programme hosted Albert Massaquoi, Director of External Relations ECSL, Matthew Kanu, John Abass and Emilia Jengo. The discussion was centered on the fairness of the elections, National Elections Watch (NEW) speculation of the elections results, maintenance of peace, democracy and good governance. **Radio Maria** on the *You End Community* programme hosted Sorie Kamara, Samba Samura, Tina Koroma and Emilia Jengo who gave highlights of the situation analysis in the country, the perception of people and the maintenance of peace and order.

Northwest Region

In the northwest region 4 radio stations were monitored that reported and covered issues of political parties, EMBs and security. On 26 June 2023, *Advocacy Radio*'s *Special Elections Hour* programme hosted Yakoyah Kamara a civil society activist and Alusine F Kargbo, of Africa Youth and Children's Network (AYCN) where they discussed the need for the youth to be peaceful and not to allow politicians to misuse them, the need for people to patiently wait for the result from ECSL and the need for people to stop spreading fake elections results.

On 27 June 2023, *Lunsar Radio*'s *Elections Coverage* programme was hosted by 'Pilot Lalas' who gave highlights of Independent Radio Network (IRN) results update.

On 28 June 2023, *Radio Bankasoka*'s *Woman Tok* programme hosted Haja Yapate Sankoh, a member of the APC and Isatu Fornah of the SLPP where they advised the women of different political parties to come together and work in the interest of the district and for women to talk to their children and husbands to keep the peace.

On 30 June 2023, *Galaxy Radio*'s *Elections Hour* programme was hosted by Pilot Jalloh who gave update of IRN elections update.

2.2 Issues covered by the broadcast media

This section presents detailed analysis of all the issues monitored on the various programs held in the media houses for the month of March to June 2023.

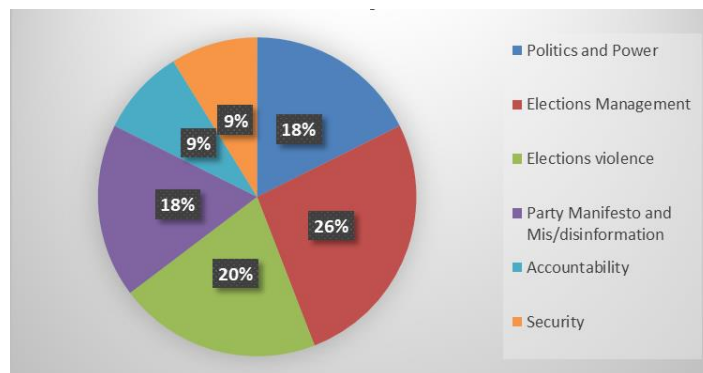


Figure 1: Issues addressed by radio stations in March, 2023

The chart above shows that for March 2023, 26% of the issues covered and discussed by the radio stations monitored were elections management, 20% was elections violence and 18% each for politics and power, party manifesto and mis/disinformation among others.

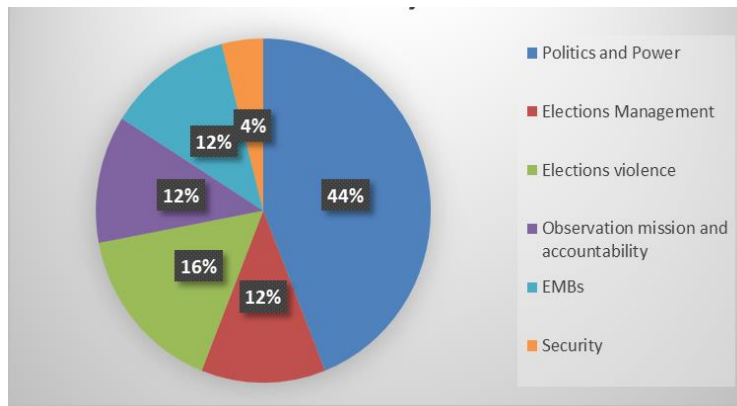


Figure 2: Issues addressed by television stations in March 2023

The chart above shows that in March, 2023, 44% of the issue covered and discussed or addressed by the 2 TV stations were politics and power, 16% were based on elections violence, 12% for observation and accountability and 12% for elections management bodies (EMBs).

Discussions on elections management were focused on the roles and mandates of elections management bodies like the Political Parties Regulation Commission (PPRC), Electoral Commission Sierra Leone (ECSL), elections observers, the security sector, and questions about the quality of voters ID cards raised by some civil society activists.

Discussions on politics and power were focused on the roles of political parties, the nomination of members of parliament, accountability of political parties, the need to implement the 30% quota for women representatives for MP positions, political parties internal campaigns for flagbearers and running mates, choice of presidential candidates and campaign messages from political parties representatives in the studios, though it was not the period of campaigning.

Discussions on elections violence were based on the need for peaceful and violence free elections in order to prevent violence during campaign period, the PPRC's ban on street rallies which was supported by All Political Parties Association (APPA), the need for heads of political parties to engage with their support to stay away from violence, peace messages to schools and communities and messages of unity among Sierra Leoneans.

Though discussions of fake news and mis/disinformation is a new phenomenon in Sierra Leone, most of the media houses monitored held programs or news stories that were related to combating hate speech, fake news and mis/disinformation.

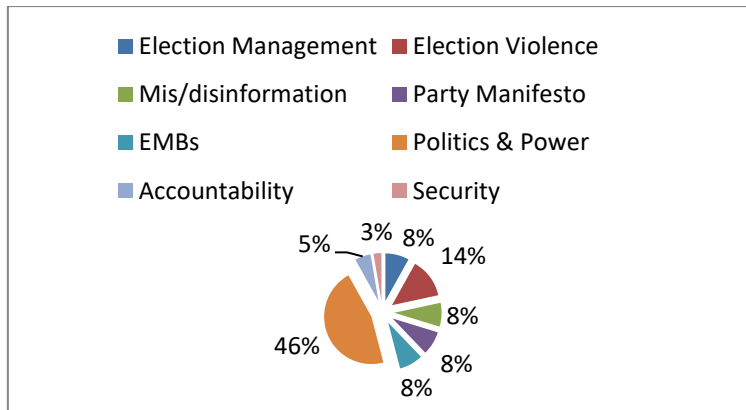


Figure 3: Issues addressed by radio stations in April 2023

The chart above shows that in April 2023 discussions on politics and power (46%) topped all other issues that were covered and discussed by the radio stations, seconded by election violence (14%) among others.

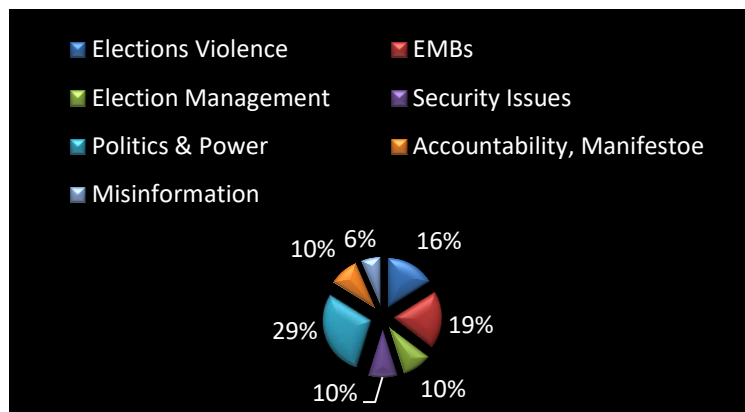


Figure 4: Issues addressed by television stations in April 2023

The chart above shows that in April, 2023, 29% of the issues covered and discussed by the 2 TV stations were politics and power, 19% were based on elections management bodies (EMBs) and 16% were based on elections violence among others.

Discussions on elections management were focused on the roles and mandates of elections management bodies like the Political Parties Regulation Commission (PPRC), Electoral Commission Sierra Leone (ECSL), elections observers and the security sector.

Discussions on politics and power were focused on the roles of political parties, the nomination of members of parliament, accountability of political parties, the need to implement the 30% quota for women representatives for MP positions, political parties internal campaigns for flagbearers and running mate, choice of presidential candidates and campaign messages from political parties representatives prior to the period of campaigning.

Discussions on elections violence were based on the need for peaceful and violence free elections, in order to prevent violence during campaign period, non violence and peace.

There were discussions on combating hate speech, fake news and mis/disinformation.

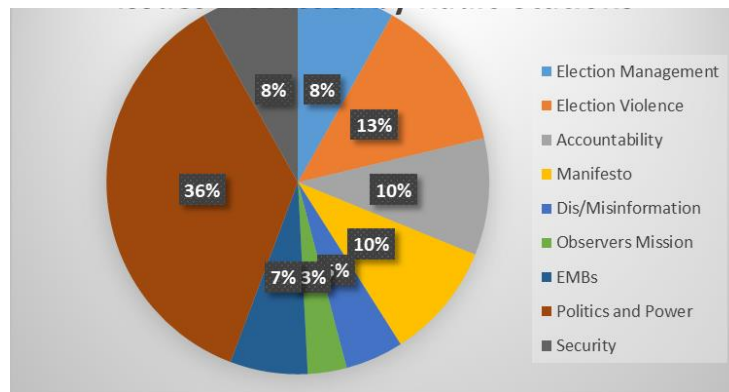


Figure 5: Issues addressed by radio stations in May 2023

The chart above shows that in May 2023, discussions on politics and power (36%) topped all other issues that were covered and discussed by the radio stations, seconded by election violence (13%) among others.

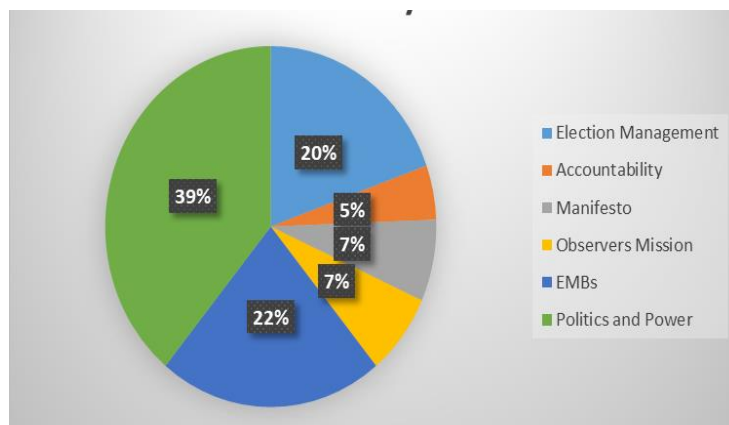


Figure 6: Issues addressed by television stations in May 2023

The chart above shows that in May 2023, 39% of the issues covered and discussed by the 2 TV stations were politics and power, 22% was based on the works of elections management bodies (EMBs) and 20% based on election management.

Discussions on elections management and works of EMBs were focused on the roles and mandates of elections management bodies and the need to have free and fair elections. The nominations of presidential and parliamentary candidates were the key issues discussed. The ECSL and other civil society organizations engaged in voter education and sensitization on the PR/district block system.

Discussions on politics and power were focused on the roles of political parties, their commitment to peace, consultation within their parties about developing their manifestoes,

internal party campaign for symbol and screening their candidates for the nomination process. Most of the political parties contesting the election especially the 2 main parties pledged to ensure 30% quota for women representation.

Discussions on elections violence were based on the need for peaceful and violence free elections, including during campaign period, on election day and post election. The youth were encouraged in the programs to stay away from violence and not to allow politicians to use them. Messages of non-violence were in the form of music.

Discussions of fake news and mis/disinformation focused on the negative impacts of misleading/false information especially on social media where people created their own untrue contents. Some of the guests advised that information should be verified and facts checked before posting them. The SLAJ iVerify platform was popularized. Security preparedness ahead of the election was also part of most of the discussions.

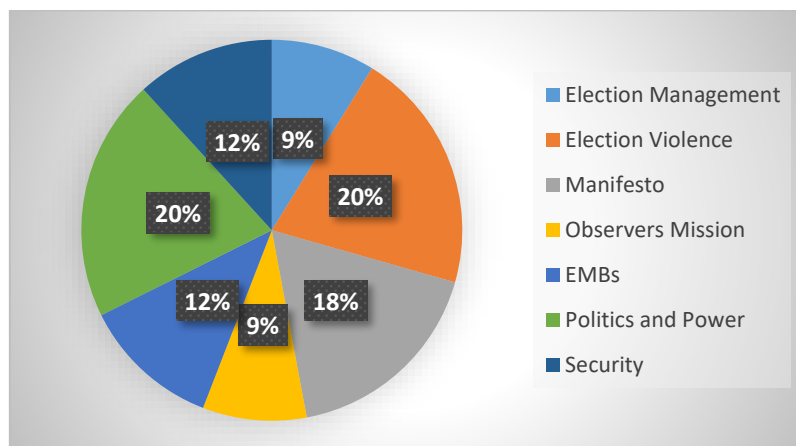


Figure 7: : Issues addressed by radio stations in June 2023

The chart above shows that in June 2023, politics and power (20%) and election violence (20%), were the highest to be covered and discussed by the radio stations, seconded by party manifesto (18%).

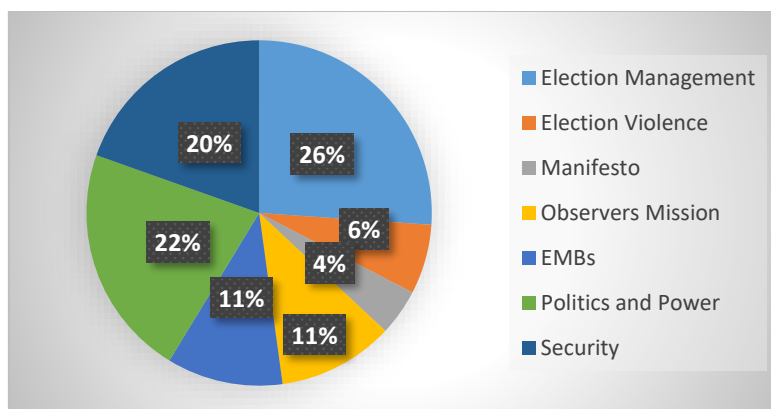


Figure 8: Issues addressed by television stations in June 2023

The chart above shows that, 26% of the issues covered and discussed by the 2 TV stations were based on election management, 22% were on politics and power and 20% on the works of EMBs among others.

Discussions on elections management and works of EMBs were focused on the readiness of the ECSL to conduct free and fair elections amidst challenges and accusations from opposition parties. There were calls from the main opposition APC party for ECSL to make the registration data available to all parties. National Elections Watch (NEW) trained and deployed observers across the country. The media also covered the activities of international observers: (EU, ECOWAS and AU). There were discussions on the need of political parties to abide by their campaign dates and to respect the cooling off period. The media also covered the distribution of voting materials by ECSL to their districts offices.

Discussions on politics and power were focused on the roles of political parties, their campaign and manifesto launch. There were reviews of the manifestoes of political parties by political analysts, while discussions on elections violence focused on the need for peaceful and violence free elections. There were allegations that the security sector favoured the ruling party, but ONS assured all of the neutrality of the security sector and their readiness to combat violence.

2.3 Analysis of the Print Media

On 31 March 2023, 31 elections related contents were monitored in 5 newspapers.

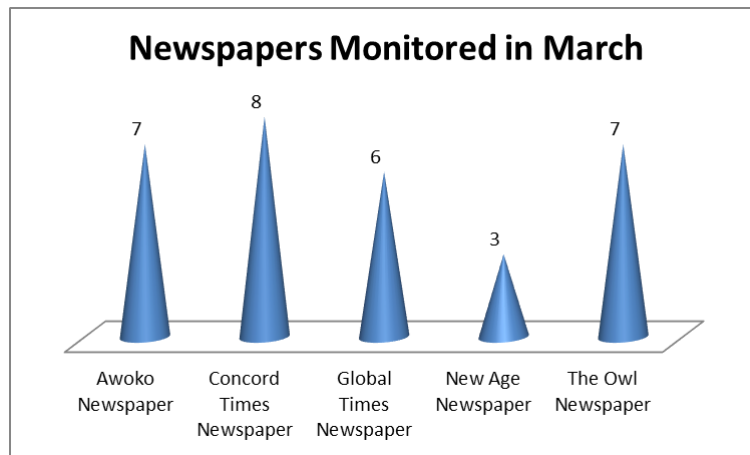
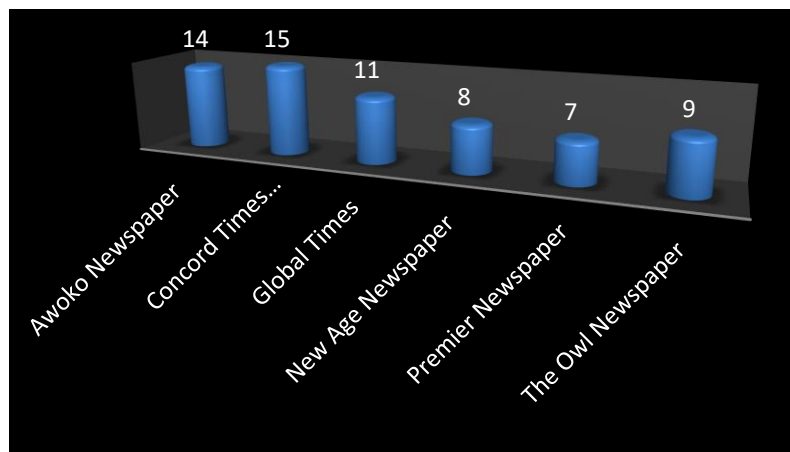


Figure 9: Newspapers monitored in March 2023

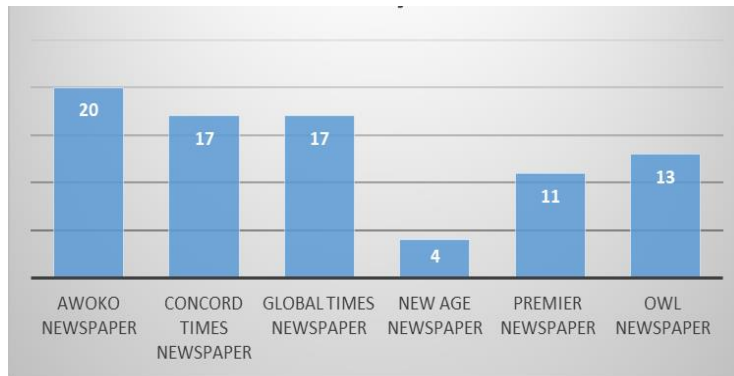
The chart above shows the number of publications of the newspapers. Among the 31 publications monitored, the data show that majority (21) of the stories covered in the various newspapers was based exclusively on the presidential election/candidates of the two major political parties. Eight stories (8) had a mix of presidential and local council elections and the least two were on parliamentary elections.

In the month of April 2023, 64 elections related contents were monitored in six newspapers.



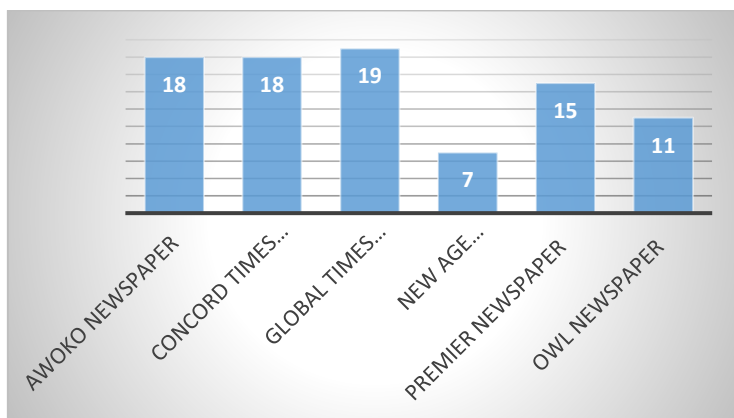
The chart above shows the number of publications of the papers. The data show that 85% of the stories covered in the various newspapers were based exclusively on the presidential election/candidates of the two major political parties with little attention to the other political parties, 9% of these stories were based on local councils and 6% on parliamentary.

In the month of May, 2023, 82 elections related contents were monitored in 6 newspapers.



The chart above shows the number of publications of the papers. The data show that 80% of the stories covered in the various newspapers were based exclusively on the presidential election/candidates of the two major political parties with little attention to the other political parties, 9% of these stories were based on local councils and 11% on parliamentary.

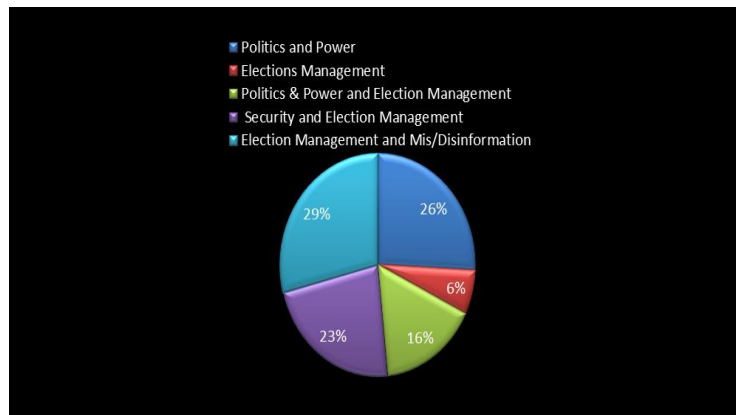
In the month of June 2023, 88 elections related contents were monitored in 6 newspapers.



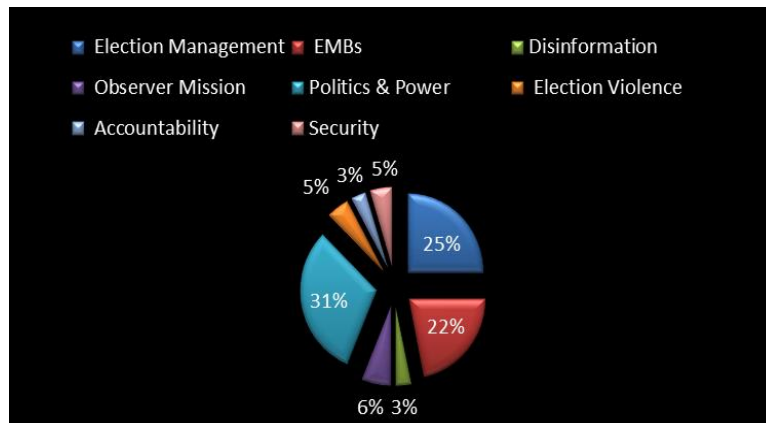
The chart above shows the number of publication of the newspapers. The data show that majority 90% of the stories covered in the various newspapers were based exclusively on the presidential election/candidates of the two major political parties with little attention to the other political parties, 7% of these stories were based on parliamentary and 3% on local councils.

2.4 Issues Addressed by the Print Media

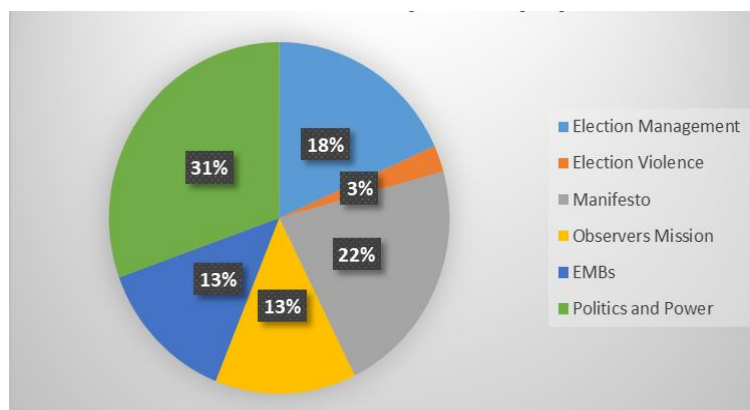
This section presents detailed analysis of all the issues monitored from the various newspapers' coverage on the elections from March to June 2023.



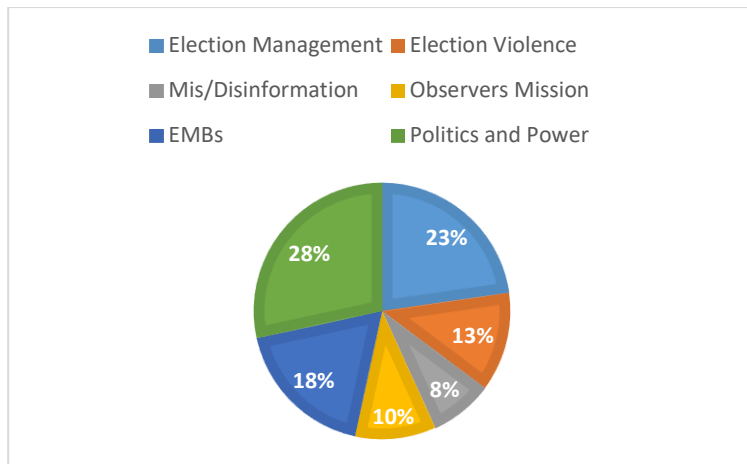
For the newspaper monitoring in March 2023, the results show that 29% of the issues reported by the newspapers were elections management and mis/disinformation, 26% of the issues were politics and power and 23% security and elections management among others.



For the newspaper monitoring in April 2023, the results show that 31% of the issues reported by the newspapers were on politics and power, 25% were on elections management and 22% on EMBs among others.



For the newspaper monitoring in May 2023, the results show that 31% of the issues reported by the newspapers were on politics and power, 18% were on elections management and 22% on party manifestos among others.



For the newspaper monitoring in June 2023, the results show that 28% of the issues reported by the newspapers were on politics and power, 23% were on elections management and 18% on the works of EMBs.

CONCLUSION

The MRCG observed that generally, media houses (radio/TV) had their programs moderated well and the tone of coverage was positive and largely conformed to professional standards. The categories of guests to discuss some of the issues were diverse as most of the time they hosted representatives from different political parties, civil society activists, observers, security personnel, and officers of EMBs. However there were issues with some media houses that were not ethical in their presentation. SLAJ, MRCG, IRN, NEW, inter-religious council and other civil society organizations were fully involved in all the electoral processes.

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