



The Welfare of Journalists in Sierra Leone



A Study by the
Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG-SL)
2025

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Special thanks to the MRCG's Programs Unit for pulling this through: Augustine James, Ishiaka Sannoh, Saidu I. Kamara, Patricia Christiana Sankoh, and the lead author, Francis Sowa (PhD, Esq.) for conducting this study. The MRCG will continue conducting additional follow-up studies on journalists' welfare in Sierra Leone.

ABOUT MRCG

The Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG) serves as the coordinating Secretariat for media reform, research, and capacity building. It comprises the 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).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study examines journalists' welfare in Sierra Leone. The key issues assessed include salary trends, compliance with the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) and the National Revenue Authority (NRA) requirements, the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act of 2020 (Act No. 5 of 2020), safety mechanisms, and other conditions of service for journalists in their media houses (radio, television stations, newspapers, and online media) in Sierra Leone.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach and surveyed reporters, editors, and managers at radio and television stations, newspapers, and online media across Sierra Leone, using an online questionnaire to collect data on their welfare. One hundred and twelve (112) respondents were targeted, representing 7.9% of journalists from across the country, with all regions (Southern, Eastern, Northern, North-West, Eastern, and Western Regions) represented. An interview guide was prepared and used to conduct interviews with media owners and heads of media organisations. A semi-structured approach was used to elicit additional information from the interviewees' responses. Ethical considerations were adhered to throughout the research process.

The findings generally show that the majority of journalists in Sierra Leone face welfare challenges, with **25.9%** having never received a monthly salary. Even where salaries are paid, **42%** of journalists earn below the national minimum wage, and **47.3%** are not registered with the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT).

Many media institutions were either underpaying their employees or failing to pay salaries and other social security benefits. Many journalists are not knowledgeable about the provisions of the IMC Act 2020, the National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act 2002 (Act No. 5 of 2001), and the Minimum Wage Act 1997 (Act No. 1 of 1997) and its amendments, which emphasise workers' welfare.

The President of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) said, *"The state of employment for journalists in Sierra Leone is troubling. A notable lack of formal, written contracts has created job insecurity and an unpredictable working environment. Field journalists often operate without the protective gear and equipment essential to their safety and effectiveness. Basic employment benefits, such as leave allowances, housing support, and health insurance, are frequently overlooked or unavailable. The situation is worse for journalists stationed in conflict zones or remote areas, where they are not provided with adequate compensation or accommodation assistance. Furthermore, many media houses are ill-equipped with the tools and technology required for safe and efficient journalism, hampering their ability to produce quality news coverage."* The Executive Secretary for the IMC said, "As part of our mandate to regulate and monitor media operations in Sierra Leone, we have strengthened our procedures for new registrations and the renewal of media houses. These procedures are designed to promote accountability, transparency, and better welfare conditions for media practitioners. All media institutions must now submit payment vouchers covering at least three months of the previous year, a comprehensive staff list indicating the intended personnel for the year, and proof of NASSIT registration for social security compliance. This structured approach will ensure that only media houses adhering to legal and ethical employment standards are accredited by the Commission."

The welfare of journalists is a significant concern, and the conditions many face can undermine press freedom and journalists' safety. The study therefore recommends that all media institutions should at least pay the minimum wage, provide a basic allowance, and honour their staff's social security obligations. The media regulator, the Independent Media Commission (IMC), should enforce the provisions of its law on the welfare of journalists and national media organisations. The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists should ensure that the rights and welfare of media practitioners are prioritised and safeguarded at all times.

1. INTRODUCTION

The media is an important source of information for society. To fulfil this role, journalists continue to gather and disseminate information despite potential safety risks. Research has demonstrated that providing welfare benefits to journalists increases output. This study examined journalists' welfare in Sierra Leone. By its very nature, the journalism industry is fraught with dangers, threats, and risks. Journalists typically encounter a variety of uncomfortable situations and circumstances to obtain news and information.

Since the enactment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2020, the MRCG has advocated for journalists' welfare. A key highlight of the Act is its focus on journalists' welfare. Sections 24 (3) (b) (iii) and 29 (3) (b) (iii) provide that an application for a license or registration must be accompanied by evidence of compliance with obligations imposed by section 12 of the National Revenue Authority Act 2002 (Act No. 5 of 2002), section 25 of the National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act 2002 (Act No. 5 of 2001), and the Minimum Wage Act 1997 (Act No. 1 of 1997), as amended. In essence, this means that media institutions are required to pay their staff at least the minimum wage prescribed by law and to ensure that they pay their social security dues and taxes. However, there have been a series of complaints that a majority of media institutions are either failing to pay staff salaries or paying them below the minimum wage. This practice is considered to have contributed to unprofessional conduct among media practitioners, who have had to make a living, sometimes through unethical means.

Thus, 98 media outlets (radio stations, television stations, newspapers, and online media) across Sierra Leone were included in this study to examine journalists' welfare. Concerns about the overall well-being of journalists have been raised in several countries, including Sierra Leone.

The efficiency hypothesis, sometimes referred to as the functional theory, holds that providing welfare benefits to workers protects and enhances productivity and efficiency (Varma, 2020). It suggests that employees will perform well if they receive a fair wage, good working conditions, and other benefits. Hence, welfare is a way to guarantee, maintain, and boost labor's efficiency. Therefore, even when forced to work in hazardous scenarios, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the presence of welfare packages in media houses, such as proper salaries, travel allowances, health insurance, housing schemes, and the like, for journalists will increase morale and impact productivity. Most people consider journalists to be the lifeline of media outlets. This is so because they supply the news and information needed to produce media content. Through their work, journalists enlighten and educate the public and further the advancement of society. They set the agenda for governance, hold leaders accountable, reveal unhealthy social practices, offer information in times of need, and highlight social issues and development requirements.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach and targeted 112 respondents (7.9% of journalists nationwide), representing all regions (Southern, Eastern, Northern, North-West, Eastern, and Western). The survey also targeted reporters, editors, and managers of radio, television, newspapers, and online media across Sierra Leone to collect information on their welfare via an online questionnaire. Ninety-eight (98) media outlets (radio, television, newspapers, and online media) across Sierra Leone were included in this study to examine journalists' welfare. An interview guide was prepared and used to conduct interviews with heads of media organisations. A semi-structured approach was used to gather additional information from interviewee responses.

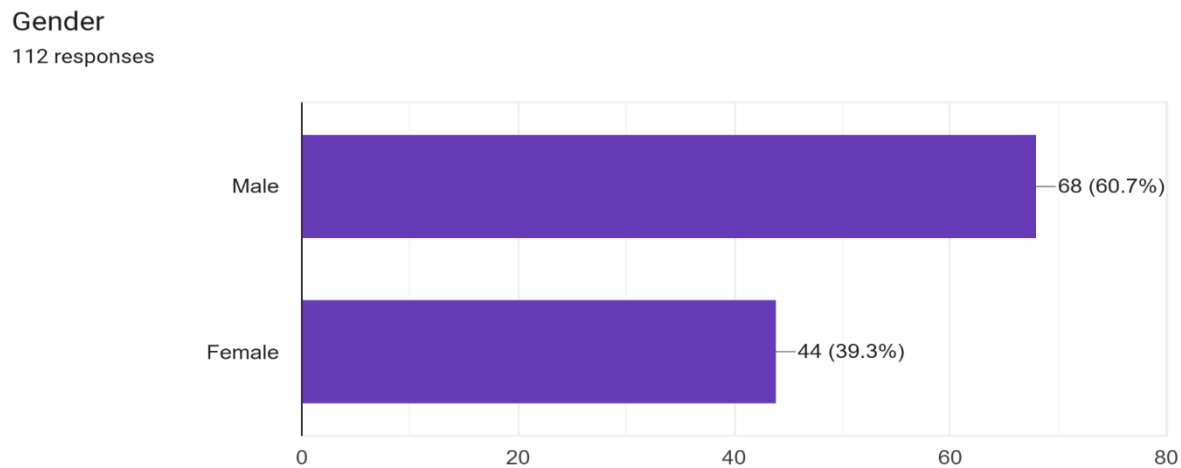
Interviews were conducted with the heads of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), the Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL), and the Independent Media Commission (IMC) in response to questionnaires that directly concerned their institutions. Ethical considerations were adhered to throughout the research process.

3. FINDINGS

This section of the study examines the demographic characteristics of respondents representing various media houses nationwide. Figures 1 to 4 below present a summary of the demographic data on the informants.

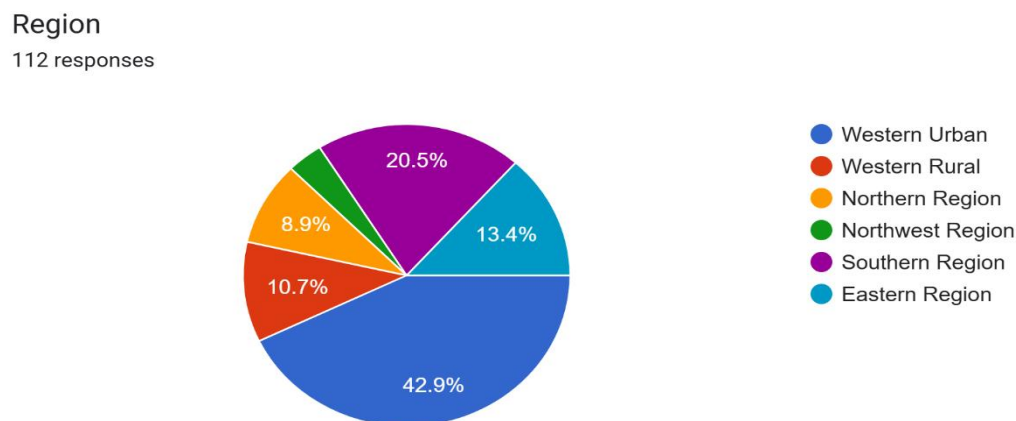
3.1 Demographic data

Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents



The figure above shows that **60.7%** of respondents were male and **39.3%** were female.

Figure 2: Regions of the Respondents

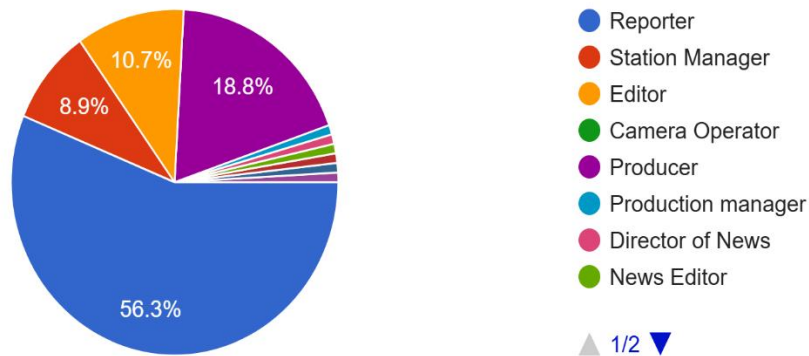


The above figure shows that **42.9 %** respondents were from the Western Urban, **10.7%** respondents were from the Western Rural, **8.9%** from the North, **3.6%** from the Northwest, **20.5%** were from the South, and **13.4%** from the Eastern Region.

Figure 3: Designations of Respondents

Designation

112 responses

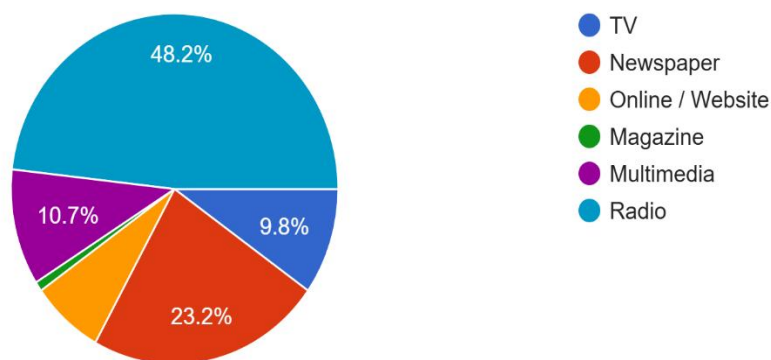


The figure above shows that **56.3%** of the respondents were Reporters, **8.9%** were Station Managers, **10.7%** were Editors, **18.8%** were Producers, and **5.3%** represented Production Managers, News Directors and Editors, Managing Editors, and camera operators.

Figure 4: On the type of Media

Type of Media

112 responses



The figure above shows that **48.2%** of respondents were from radio, **9.8%** from TV, **23.2%** from newspapers, **10.7%** from multimedia, **7.1%** from online/websites, and **1%** from a magazine.

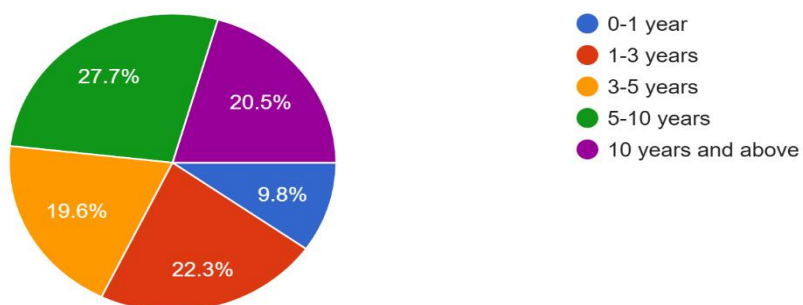
3.2 Quantitative data on Welfare Issues

The section below analyses key responses regarding the welfare of journalists in Sierra Leone. The figures and their percentages represent the responses from all respondents.

Figure 5: How long have you been working in your media house?

How long have you been working in your media house?

112 responses

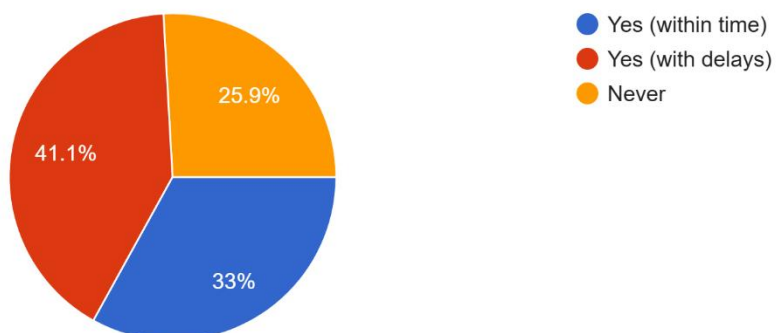


The figure above shows that **9.8%** of respondents have worked for their media houses for between zero and one year, **22.3%** for between one and three years, **19.6%** for between three and five years, **28%** for between five and ten years, and **20.5%** for ten years or more.

Figure 6: Whether they were on a monthly salary and if they have been receiving it.

Are you on monthly salary and have you been receiving it?

112 responses

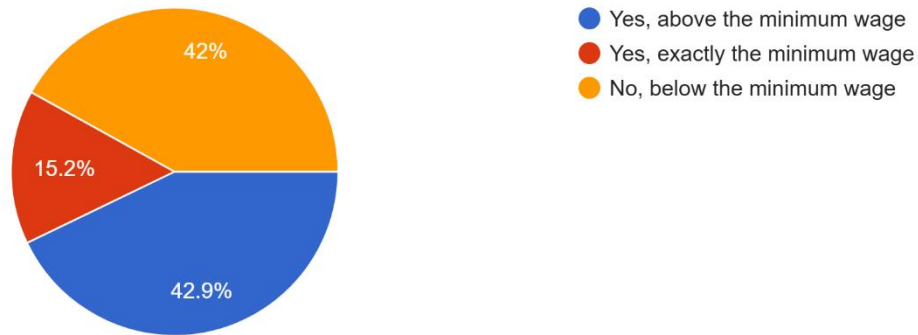


The figure above shows that **33%** of respondents were on a monthly salary and received it on time, **41.1%** were on a monthly salary but received it late, and **25.9%** had never been on a monthly salary.

Figure 7: Whether their salaries were equal to the national minimum wage of NLe 800 (approximately \$33.76).

Is your salary equal to the national minimum wage of NLe 800? (Approximately \$ 33.76)

112 responses

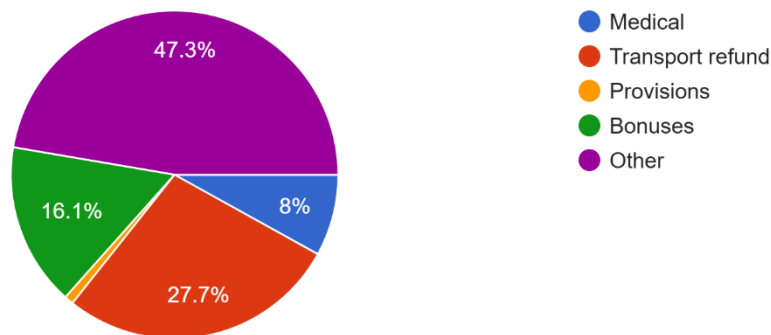


The figure above shows that **43%** of respondents receive more than the national minimum wage, **15%** receive exactly the national minimum wage, and **42%** receive less than the national minimum wage.

Figure 8: Whether they receive any other conditions of service.

Apart from monthly salary, what other condition of service does your employer provide for you?

112 responses

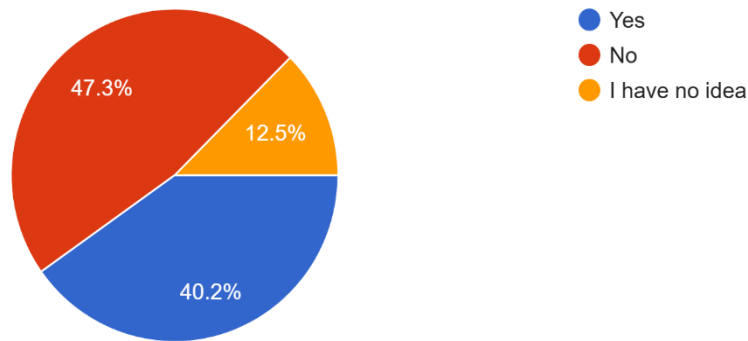


The figure above shows that **27.7%** of respondents receive transport refunds, **8%** receive medical, **16%** receive bonuses, **1%** receive provisions, and **47.3%** receive other forms of conditions of service.

Figure 9: Whether they were registered with the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT).

Has your media house registered you for the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) and is the institution paying your NASSIT contribution monthly?

112 responses

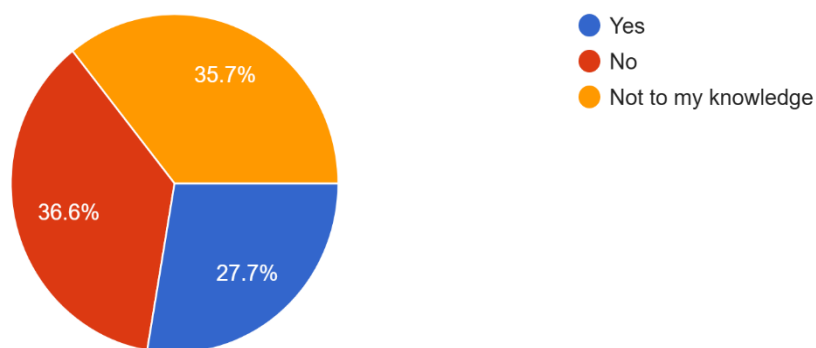


The figure above shows that **40.2%** of respondents were registered with NASSIT, **47.3%** were not, and **12.5%** had no idea.

Figure 10: Whether there was an existing policy in their media houses regarding journalists' welfare.

Is there any existing policy (written or verbal) in your media house on journalists' welfare?

112 responses

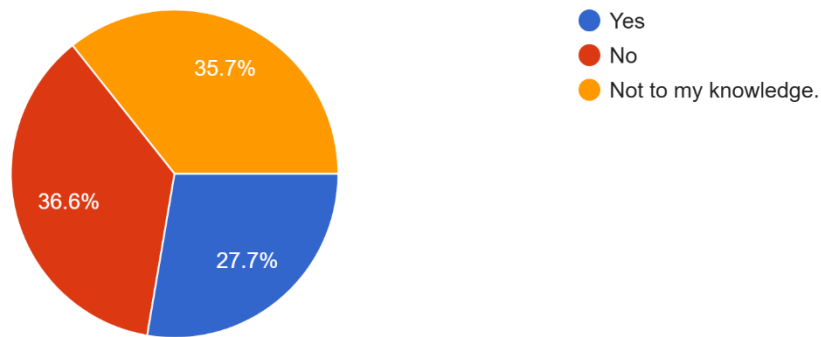


The figure above shows that **27.7%** of respondents have an existing policy on journalists' welfare in their media houses, **36.6%** have no existing policy on journalists' welfare in their media houses, and 35.7% do not know whether there is an existing policy on journalists' welfare in their media houses.

Figure 11: Whether there was a specific safety policy for female journalists.

Does your media house have a specific safety policy for female journalists?

112 responses

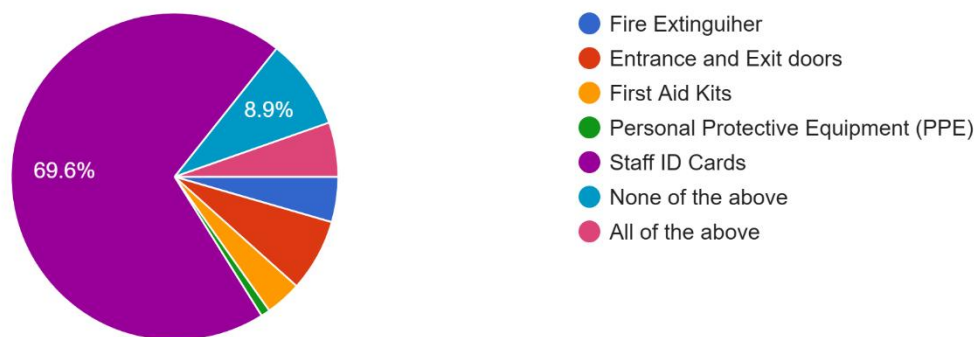


The figure above shows that **27.7%** of respondents report having a specific safety policy for female journalists in their media organisations, **36.6%** report having no such policy, and 35.7% are unsure whether one exists.

Figure 12: The types of safety mechanisms in their media houses.

What are the types of safety mechanisms in your media house that you are aware of?

112 responses

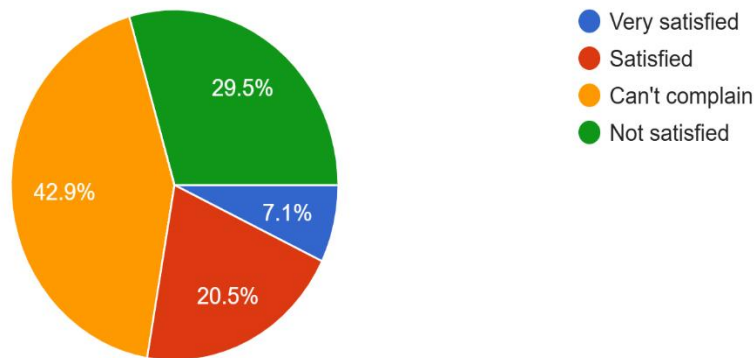


The figure above shows that **69.6%** of respondents have Staff ID Cards as a safety measure, **7.1%** have Entrance and Exit Doors as a safety measure, **3.6%** have First Aid Kits as a safety measure, **4.5%** have Fire Extinguishers as a safety measure, **5.4%** have all of the above as a safety measure, and **8.9%** have none of the above.

Figure 13: Whether they were satisfied with their jobs.

How satisfied are you with your job?

112 responses

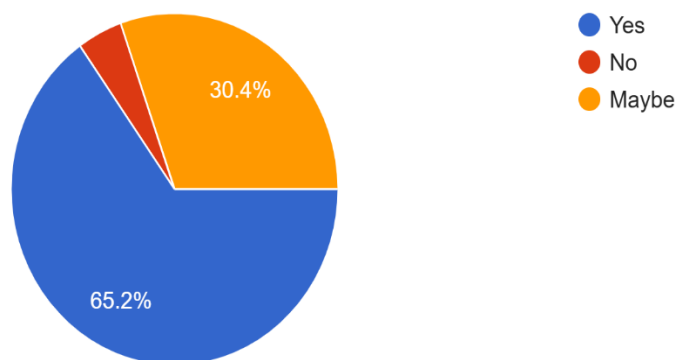


The figure above shows that **7.1%** of the respondents were very satisfied with their jobs, **20.5%** were satisfied, **42.9%** can't complain, and **29.5%** were not satisfied with their jobs.

Figure 14: Whether there were opportunities for career growth.

Do you feel there are opportunities for career growth in your current position?

112 responses

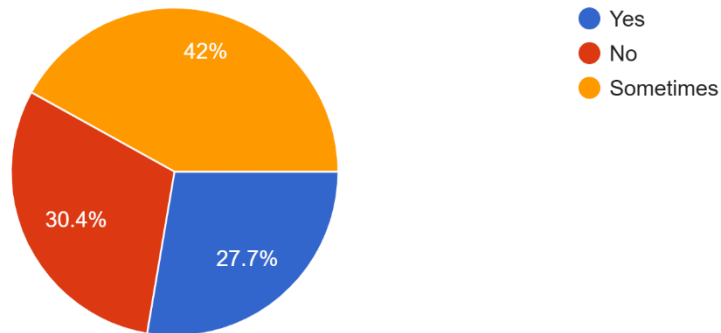


The figure above shows that **65.2%** of respondents felt there were opportunities for career growth in their media houses, **4.4%** did not feel so, and **30.4%** were unsure whether there were opportunities for career growth in their media houses.

Figure 15: On whether their media houses provide periodic training or professional development opportunities.

Does your media house provide periodic training or professional development opportunities?

112 responses

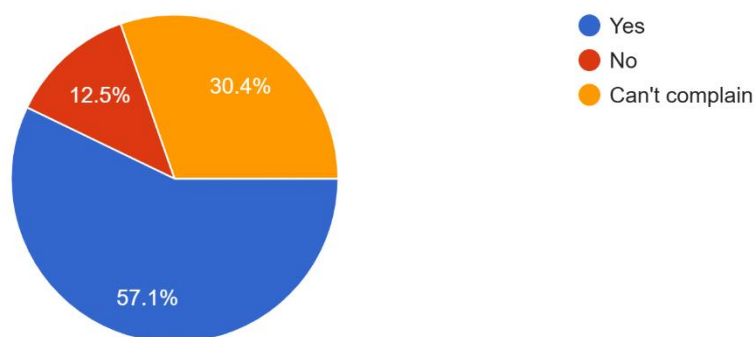


From the figure above, **27.7%** of respondents said that their media houses provide periodic training, **30.4%** said their media houses do not provide periodic training, and **42%** of respondents said their media houses sometimes do.

Figure 16: On whether they feel safe working in their media houses.

Do you feel safe working in your media house

112 responses

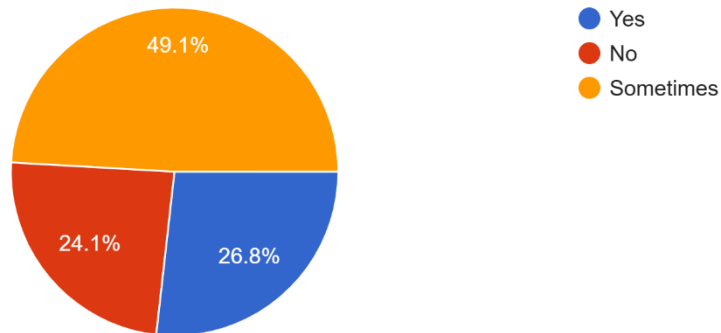


The figure above shows that **57.1%** of respondents feel safe working in their media houses, **12.5%** do not feel safe at all, while **30.4%** can't complain.

Figure 17: On whether they have access to the necessary equipment and resources to perform their duties.

Do you have access to the necessary equipment and resources to perform your duties effectively?

112 responses



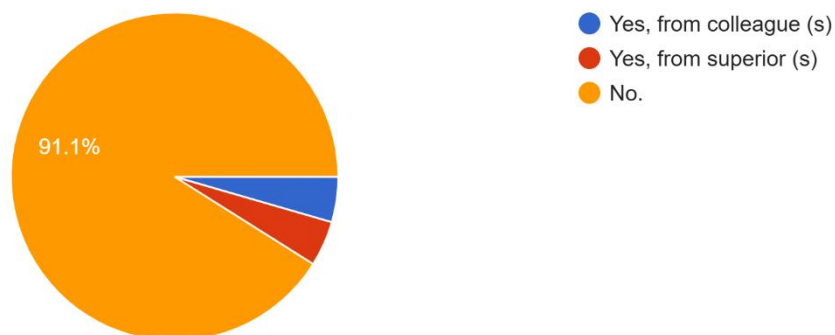
The figure above shows that **26.8%** of respondents have access to the necessary equipment and resources to perform their duties, **24.1%** do not, and **49.1%** have it only sometimes.

3.3 Quantitative data on Special Needs for Female Journalists in Sierra Leone

Figure 18: Whether there were any maternity leave provisions for female journalists

Do you get any harassment (e.g., sexual, verbal, or physical) at work?

112 responses

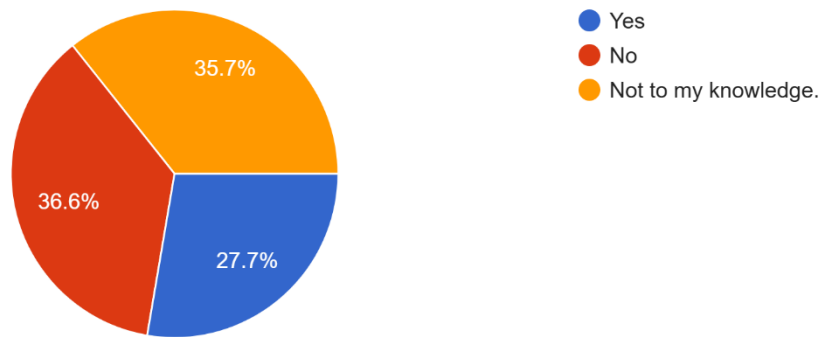


The figure above shows that **91.1%** of respondents report no harassment, **4.5%** report harassment by colleagues, and **4.4%** report harassment by superiors.

Figure 19: Whether there was a specific safety policy for female journalists.

Does your media house have a specific safety policy for female journalists?

112 responses

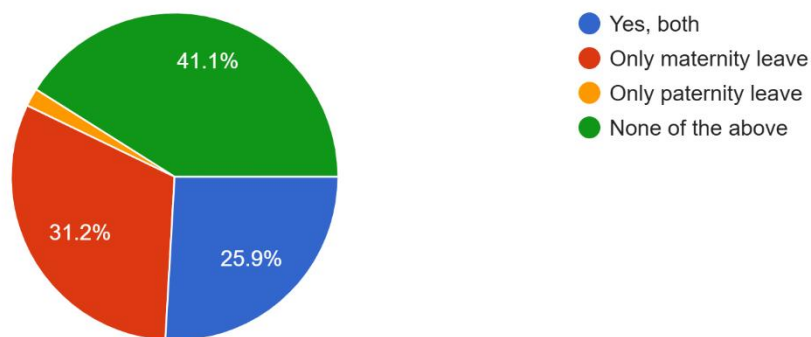


The figure above shows that **27.7%** of respondents have a specific safety policy for female journalists in their media houses, **36.6%** have no specific safety policy for female journalists in their media houses, and 35.7% do not know whether there is a specific safety policy for female journalists in their media houses.

Figure 20: On whether they receive maternity and paternity leave.

Does your media house provide maternity or paternity leave for employees

112 responses



The figure above shows that **25.9%** of respondents offer both maternity and paternity leave to their staff, **31.2%** offer only maternity leave, **1.8%** offer only paternity leave, and **41%** offer neither.

3.4 Qualitative data on Welfare Issues

The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ)

The President of SLAJ, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, noted that the welfare of journalists in Sierra Leone remains a pressing issue, attracting attention from various stakeholders in the media landscape. He added that comprehensive assessments and engagements reveal several critical challenges that media workers face nationwide, and that many journalists are entrenched in precarious financial conditions, characterised by irregular and insufficient remuneration. He also noted widespread non-compliance with the payment of statutory social security contributions by a significant number of media employers, leaving professionals vulnerable in times of need.

The employment situation for journalists in Sierra Leone is troubling. The notable absence of formal written contracts has led to job insecurity, creating an unpredictable work environment. Field journalists often operate without the protective gear and equipment essential to their safety and effectiveness. Basic employment benefits, such as leave allowances, housing support, and health insurance, are frequently overlooked or unavailable. The situation is worse for journalists stationed in conflict zones or remote areas, where they are not provided with adequate compensation or accommodation assistance. Furthermore, many media houses are ill-equipped with the tools and technology required for safe and efficient journalism, hampering their ability to produce quality news coverage (Nasralla, 2025).

In response to these alarming issues, he noted that SLAJ undertook several key initiatives between 2024 and 2025 to improve conditions for media professionals. He stated that SLAJ had organised a dialogue between the Ministry of Labour and the Guild of Editors, recognising that many media houses are owned and operated by journalists, and that the engagement was designed to sensitise media owners to labour law requirements and their responsibilities regarding staff welfare and employment conditions.

In light of welfare reports revealing non-compliance, SLAJ liaised with the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to promote strict adherence to statutory requirements for media license renewals. This, according to him, included addressing the alarming trend of the use of forged documentation by some media owners and advocating for rigorous regulatory enforcement to protect journalists' rights.

The President further stated that SLAJ, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, planned a landmark national assessment of working conditions for media workers in the country. This initiative, aimed at involving all relevant stakeholders within the media sector, would serve as the foundation for future policy developments and advocacy efforts. The President noted that, to foster better dialogue among media owners, SLAJ had initiated targeted outreach, beginning with larger operators and editors, with plans to extend the dialogue to online and regional media outlets, emphasising the importance of financial sustainability and ethical employment practices.

Regarding the SLAJ Welfare Fund, he explained that, contrary to general perceptions, the Fund, established in 2022, was not initially designed as a direct support mechanism for journalists. Instead, it was intended to fund public-interest journalism, similar to the NaFPIM initiative. Nevertheless,

acknowledging the critical needs of media professionals, SLAJ was now reviewing the Fund's structure to enhance its role in directly addressing journalist welfare. He added that a significant resolution from one of SLAJ's Annual General Meetings (AGMs) proposed that 2% of SLAJ's annual government subvention be directed to this Fund. This proposed restructuring intends to provide much-needed support for safe transport and hardship grants for journalists.

He rounded up by reaffirming SLAJ's steadfast commitment to enhancing the welfare and professional standards of journalists in Sierra Leone. While significant progress has been made through advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and fundraising, meaningful change requires a collective effort. A robust commitment to regulatory compliance, ethical business practices, and sustainable strategies across the media sector is essential for the continued growth and welfare of journalism in Sierra Leone.

The Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU)

In an interview with Yeanor Kabia, President of the Reporters Union, she acknowledged that welfare was a significant concern and a challenge for reporters. She added that since taking up office last July, the Union had been collaborating with the Ministry of Labour, NASSIT, and the Labour Congress to obtain a bargaining certificate, which would enable the Union to engage with media owners regarding the wages paid to journalists.

The strategy involves following up with reporters to discuss their actual compensation. It was noted that at gatherings, reporters said they might receive as little as 500 Leones but hesitated to confirm this on the record. The intention is to speak to reporters discreetly and then relay their findings to media owners. Once this engagement has taken place, the next step is to inform media owners that, if they wish a reporter to volunteer, there should be a clear agreement on the duration of the volunteer work. For instance, if the commitment is for six months, media owners would need to honour that timeframe and offer appropriate compensation. If the arrangement extends to one year, it should also have a specific timeline. The process involves continuous engagement; if this approach does not yield the desired results, the organisation would explore further options. Ultimately, the bargaining certificate is expected to empower them to hold media owners accountable (Kabia, 2025).

She further expressed that the Union is concerned about the potential biases and unprofessionalism that can arise in reporters' work due to lack of payment, adding that relying solely on their ID does not allow for accurate storytelling, particularly in investigative reporting, as they often spend their own money to carry out their duties, only to receive a meagre salary. Moving forward, she noted that she explained the Union was planning to begin consultations across the country with various relevant stakeholders for the welfare of reporters.

Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL)

Eastina Taylor, President of WIMSAL, told MRCG that female journalists in Sierra Leone face numerous welfare challenges, including low and unequal pay, with many earning below the country's minimum wage and less than their male counterparts for the same work. Job insecurity is prevalent, as few workers have formal contracts, leaving them vulnerable to sudden termination and to the absence of social security benefits. Additionally, she explained that they often encounter sexual harassment and gender-based violence both in newsrooms and in the field, including from colleagues, supervisors, news sources, and online trolls. Despite their skills and capabilities, women are frequently overlooked for leadership roles in managerial or editorial positions. The lack of maternity protection and family-friendly policies in many media organisations further exacerbates their challenges. At the same time, workplace discrimination and bias result in female journalists being assigned "soft" beats and denied opportunities to cover high-profile or political stories.

WIMSAL has proactively addressed challenges faced by women in the media through advocacy and policy engagement, collaborating with media owners and regulatory bodies to promote better labour policies, equal pay, and safer working environments. The organisation also focuses on capacity building and training, offering workshops and seminars that equip female journalists with essential skills in negotiation, digital safety, leadership, and self-advocacy. To support members who are victims of workplace abuse or harassment, WIMSAL provides legal referrals and psychosocial support. It is currently working with the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights organisation to file a case in the ECOWAS against a media institution for wrongfully terminating a female journalist's contract after she broadcast a national issue on her personal page. Additionally, WIMSAL facilitates mentorship programmes that help young women in the media develop resilience and professionalism and access new opportunities. In the future, the organisation aims to monitor media houses to identify discriminatory practices and share findings with relevant stakeholders to drive meaningful change (Taylor, 2025).

She added that WIMSAL has taken proactive steps to combat sexual harassment by developing and disseminating an anti-sexual harassment guideline, which will provide media houses with clear codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures. She noted that WIMSAL will launch campaigns and public dialogues on social media and in public forums to raise awareness and challenge the culture of silence surrounding these issues. To facilitate reporting, she explained that a confidential mechanism will be established, allowing female journalists to report harassment discreetly, with WIMSAL providing support for follow-up actions such as mediation, public exposure, or legal redress. Collaborations with organisations such as the SLAJ, Rainbow Initiative, and the Legal Aid Board will further enhance WIMSAL's capacity to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. "Furthermore, recognising the rising threat of online harassment, WIMSAL has conducted a series of digital safety training sessions in partnership with MRCG and Purposeful to help women protect their digital identities and respond effectively to cyberbullying," she explained.

The Independent Media Commission (IMC)

In an interview with IMC's Executive Secretary, Khalil Kallon, he told MRCG that the IMC has observed several key trends relating to the working conditions and welfare of journalists. These include a decline in the number of media professionals employed at institutional levels, compliance challenges that have led to workforce reductions and weakened job security, and documentation audits that reveal instances of forged salary documents and underreporting of employee benefits. In response to these challenges, the IMC has adopted a more proactive approach by conducting physical inspections and increasing on-the-ground oversight.

As part of our mandate to regulate and monitor media operations in Sierra Leone, we have strengthened our procedures for the registration and renewal of media houses. These procedures are designed to promote accountability, transparency, and improved welfare conditions for media practitioners. All media institutions must now submit payment vouchers covering at least three months of the previous year, a comprehensive staff list indicating the intended personnel for the year, and proof of NASSIT registration for social security compliance. This structured approach will ensure that only media houses adhering to legal and ethical employment standards are accredited by the Commission (Kallon, 2025).

Regarding improvements to the working environment, he noted that the IMC issued formal recommendations for improvement; follow-up assessments indicate notable improvements in hygiene, particularly in rural areas; and the IMC intends to monitor working environments to ensure they meet basic health and safety standards. To enhance regulatory efficiency, the IMC has also deployed District Media Monitors across Sierra Leone, marking a strategic shift from centralised oversight to localised monitoring. According to him, these district-level monitors submit regular field reports on media institutions' compliance, conduct monthly monitoring of salary payments and staff conditions, and ensure that institutional data reported to the IMC is verified on-site, enabling the IMC to act promptly and with greater accuracy in enforcing compliance.

The IMC recognises the vulnerability of some journalists who, out of fear of retaliation, conceal wage-related grievances or sign fraudulent payment documents. The Commission advises that journalists are not liable for punishment when reporting underpayment or wage fraud, as signing fraudulent documents at employers' behest is detrimental to journalists. The IMC urges transparency and whistleblower protection in salary reporting (ibid).

He added that the IMC works closely with the NRA to verify tax compliance, with NASSIT confirming active social security enrolment for media owners. At both the registration and renewal stages, compliance with tax and social security regulations is mandatory, as payment of licence fees alone does not guarantee certification without the required compliance documentation. He concluded that, although precise statistics are not available at the time of reporting, the IMC reports that a significant number of media institutions met the compliance criteria between 2024 and 2025, as media houses that fail to meet the requirements are not issued registration or renewal certificates. The Commission continues to collect and update compliance data, which will be made publicly available soon.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the welfare of journalists across 98 media outlets (radio and television stations, newspapers, and online media) in Sierra Leone. The key issues assessed included working conditions, such as salaries, NASSIT dues, the implementation of IMC's welfare provisions, and safety mechanisms.

Most media houses have failed to comply with numerous provisions of the IMC Act 2020, particularly with respect to the payment of the minimum wage, NASSIT contributions, and other conditions of service for employees. There were also no specific written or verbal policies in most media houses for any health emergency affecting employees. Media institutions need to develop and implement safety and security policies to protect journalists.

The study also revealed a serious concern among female journalists nationwide. While we advocate for the safety and security of journalists, we place particular emphasis on female journalists. Best practice worldwide provides that female staff in most organisations are entitled to maternity leave with full entitlements. Therefore, the MRCG urges media owners and employers to implement this. The issue of sexual harassment is clearly spelled out in The Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (Act No 00 of 2012) as amended, and offenders are dealt with accordingly.

The following are the recommendations.

SLAJ, SLRU, and other national media organisations should advocate for and ensure full compliance with the national minimum wage and other conditions of service.

IMC should ensure full compliance with the national minimum wage and other conditions of service during licence and registration renewals by inspecting payroll records and working conditions nationwide, with support from its regional offices and district monitors.

WIMSAL and other media organisations should advocate for measures to improve the welfare of female journalists nationwide, including ensuring equal representation and compliance with maternity leave provisions.

WIMSAL and other media organisations should advocate for the development, adoption, use, and enforcement of gender and sexual harassment policies in every media house

SLAJ, the Guild of Newspaper Editors, Independent Radio Network, and Sierra Leone Broadcasters' Association should encourage media organisations to consider merging or collaborating to pool resources, enabling investment in staff welfare and development, improving management structures, enhancing remuneration packages, and strengthening financial transparency and accountability.

SLAJ should strongly encourage media houses to leverage NaFPIM support to enhance staff welfare and invest in sustainable operational models.

Media managers should be trained in financial planning, investment models, and alternative revenue-generation strategies that extend beyond traditional advertising.

SLAJ should advocate for media owners to consider hybrid business models that integrate media with adjacent industries, including entertainment, event management, and digital services.

SLAJ, IMC, and MRCG should advocate for investment in professional development for media practitioners through targeted scholarships, training, and exchange programmes, and promote efforts to support women's media leadership by mentoring and advancing women journalists into editorial and managerial roles.

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APPENDIX: RESPONDENTS MEDIA HOUSES

No.	Media Institution	Type of Media	Region
1.	NewsWatch newspaper	Newspaper	Western Urban
2.	Epic Radio	Radio	Western Urban
3.	Radio Democracy	Radio	Western Urban
4.	Radio Mount Aureole	Radio	Western Urban
5.	Hope FM 93.3	Radio	Northern
6.	All Out Radio Bo	Radio	Southern
7.	Tumac Radio 89.3fm	Radio	Western Urban
8.	SLBC	Radio	Southern
9.	A-Z Newspaper	Newspaper	Western Rural
10.	SLBC	Television	Western Urban
11.	Voice of Women	Radio	Southern
12.	Malen Community Radio,	Radio	Southern
13.	People's Radio	Radio	Eastern
14.	Concord Times	Newspaper	Western Rural
15.	AYV Media Empire	Television	Southern
16.	Classic Television	Television	Southern
17.	Radio Newsong	Radio	Eastern
18.	Culture Radio	Radio	Western Urban
19.	Night Watch newspaper	Newspaper	Western Urban
20.	Gola Agriculture Radio	Radio	Eastern
21.	Afri Radio	Radio	Western Urban
22.	Galaxy Radio	Radio	Northwest
23.	Radio Lion Mountain	Radio	Western Rural
24.	Awoko Publications SL Ltd.	Newspaper	Western Urban

25.	Citizen Radio	Radio	Western Urban
26.	Rise Radio 96.3FM	Radio	Western Urban
27.	Liberty Online TV	Online	Western Urban
28.	Kamboi Agriculture Radio	Radio	Eastern
29.	Top Radio 103.7fm	Radio	Eastern
30.	Fry Fry radio	Radio	Northwest
31.	Star Line Radio	Radio	Eastern
32.	Eastern Community Radio	Radio	Eastern
33.	Radio Mankneh	Radio	Northern
34.	Voice of Kono radio 98.1fm	Radio	Eastern
35.	Kiss Radio Bo	Radio	Southern
36.	Radio Bankasoka	Newspaper	Northwest
37.	Radio Wanjei	Radio	Southern
38.	Northern Times Newspaper	Newspaper	Northern
39.	Moonlight Radio Bo	Radio	Southern
40.	AYV Media Empire	Television	Western Urban
41.	The Calabash Newspaper	Newspaper	Western Urban
42.	True Tok	Radio	Western Urban
43.	Expo Times	Newspaper	Western Urban
44.	Radio Maria	Radio	Northern
45.	Redeemer Media Network	Television	Western Urban
46.	Independent Observer	Newspaper	Western Urban
47.	Politico	Newspaper	Western Urban
48.	Liberty Online TV	Online	Western Urban
49.	Voice of Faith	Radio	Southern
50.	AYV Media Empire	Television	Northern
51.	Voice of Youths	Radio	Northwest

52.	Star Media one center	Television	Western Urban
53.	Engage Salone	Online	Western Urban
54.	New Citizen Press	Newspaper	Western Urban
55.	Radio Gbafth FM 91.3	Radio	Northern
56.	Community Media Network (CoMNet)	Online	Western Urban
57.	Njaluahun Community Radio	Radio	Eastern
58.	Mano Reporters	Online	Western Rural
59.	Africa24 Newspaper	Newspaper	Western Urban
60.	Expo Media	Newspaper	Western Urban
61.	Politico Newspaper	Newspaper	Northern
62.	Eagle Africa	Radio	Western Urban
63.	Salone Times Publications	Newspaper	Western Urban
64.	Expo Times	Newspaper	Eastern
65.	Politico Newspaper	Newspaper	Northern
66.	Amzaz Radio	Radio	Northern
67.	Skyy Radio Freetown	Radio	Western Urban
68.	Okentuhun radio FM 94.0	Radio	Northwest
69.	SLBC	Radio	Northern
70.	AYV Kenema	Television	Eastern
71.	SKB	Online	Northern
72.	Pikin Tok	Radio	Western Rural
73.	AWE Media	Onlin	Northern
74.	Kakua Express Newspaper	Newspaper	Southern
75.	The New Age	Newspaper	Western Urban
76.	Voice of Wusum	Radio	Northern
77.	Radio Maria	Radio	Western Urban
78.	Radio Kolenten	Radio	Northern

79.	Freedom Radio	Radio	Western Urban
80.	Radio Modcar	Radio	Southern
81.	Central University Radio	Radio	Northern
82.	The Intern Newspaper	Newspaper	Western Urban
83.	Salone Skyline	Online	Western Urban
84.	Home Times Newspaper	Newspaper	Southern
85.	Radio Wanjei	Radio	Western Urban
86.	SLBC Freetown	Television	Western Urban
87.	Eastern Radio	Radio	Eastern
88.	Slik TV	Television	Western Urban
89.	Mercy TV	Television	Western Urban
90.	Njala Radio	Radio	Southern
91.	Global Multimedia Online TV	Online	Western Urban
92.	Voice of Women	Radio	Southern
93.	Voice of Falaba	Radio	Northwest
94.	Shalom Radio	Radio	Northern
95.	Voice of the Peninsula	Radio	Western Rural
96.	Premier Media	Newspaper	Western Urban
97.	The Trumpet Communications	Multimedia	Western Urban
98.	Creative Communications Network (CNN)	Multimedia w	Western Urban