

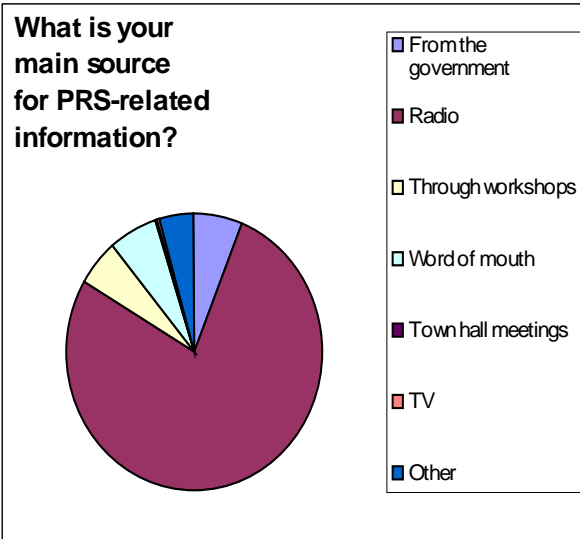
Public Polling on Perceptions of the Poverty Reduction Strategy in Liberia

SFCG is an international NGO with a mission to transform the way the world deals with conflict, away from adversarial approaches towards cooperative solutions. In Liberia, SFCG operates Talking Drum Studio, a multi media production studio, and a complementary outreach project to strengthen participation and inclusion in consolidating peace in the country. Recently, SFCG conducted a poll of Liberian citizens to gather information on their knowledge and perceptions of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).

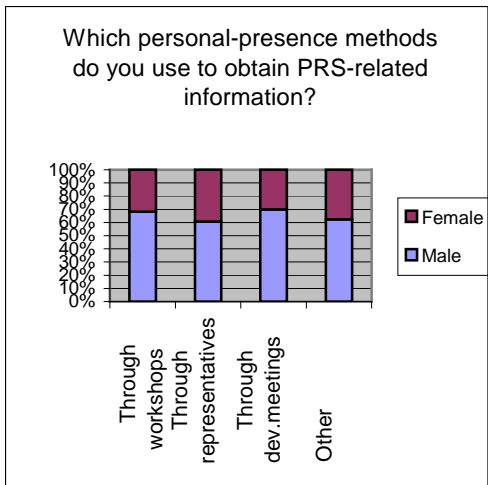
While polling results reveal the majority of Liberians to be aware of and satisfied with the Government of Liberia's (GoL) development and poverty reduction efforts, a significant minority feel excluded from the processes. In addition, women feel less involved and less satisfied than men. For both genders, radio continues to be the overwhelmingly dominant media through which to acquire information about the PRS and its development.

Specific findings include the following:

- Slightly over half (53%) of respondents have previously heard about the PRS.
- Considerably more men have heard about the PRS than women (65% vs. 43%) - suggesting more needs to be done to engage women in the political process and promote a greater awareness of such key parts of the GoL's agenda.
- Radio is overwhelmingly the dominant media resource for receiving PRS-related information. Almost 4 in 5 (78%) Liberians surveyed learned about the PRS through radio. Other media forms (e.g., newspapers, TV) were scarcely mentioned during polling. Such responses highlight the immense public reliance on radio for public affairs and current event information.
- The findings reveal less than 10% of respondents use the GoL as a primary source for information regarding PRS and its developments. Similar percentages of those polled reported both "word-of-mouth" and workshops as primary information sources. Such low positive returns regarding government information dissemination illustrate a definite need for increased GoL communication efforts. In pairing the information garnered from these responses and with those illustrating the public reliance on radio media resources, the use of the radio by the GoL presents itself as a potential method for improvement of GoL communication with the Liberian public.
- Respondent opinion was divided (50-50) on the degree of personal involvement in the development process. More men than women feel involved in the development process (52% vs. 45%).



- Men are more likely to use personal-presence means - such as workshops, meetings or information from representatives - to obtain information about the PRS, suggesting the gearing of public consultation and participation processes toward male participation.



- Almost 3 of 5 respondents reported knowing of development project implementation in their own communities, an encouraging sign that the average citizen is seeing the effects of developmental assistance and efforts.
- Similarly, 62% of respondents assert the GoL's development projects are suited to their needs, showing that PRC projects do reflect the needs and concerns of a large part of the population.
- In analyzing the same question of project suitability along gender lines, a disparity between genders becomes apparent as more men than women (66% vs. 57%) believe their needs are addressed by the GoL development projects.

- A majority (59%) of Liberians are pleased with what the GoL has done in the scope of its two years. Women are slightly less satisfied than men.

