

## MOBILE PHONE SURVEY REPORT 2017



### Citizens Attitudes Towards Current Lawmakers In Liberia

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

In April and May 2017, the Naymote Partners for Democratic Development conducted a public opinion poll on citizens' perception of the current lawmakers in Liberia. The survey targeted 2,860 registered voters, 1,640 males and 1,220 females in 20 electoral districts from nine of the fifteen counties in Liberia including Montserrado, Bong, Margibi, Lofa, Nimba, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, and Grand Gedeh Counties. The survey targeted registered voters. The objective of the poll is to understand the perception of voters about the lawmakers and issues they want addressed by those seeking public offices and to design a civic engagement program.

With five months to the presidential and legislative elections, the perception of citizens of members of the national legislature is negative. 65% of the respondents said they are disappointed with the current lawmakers relating to their representational function. Overall, 28% of respondents say they have a favorable opinion of lawmakers and 7% said they do not know.

66% of respondents said they would vote during the October 10, 2017 while 34% are undecided with majority of who are women. At the security level, 59% of the respondents said they are satisfied with the current security environment as the country goes to elections and 3% said they are unsure.

With respect to their development needs, 80% of respondents identified education, the economy and health as the most important issues they care about and want political parties or representative candidates to address when they are elected.

## **2.0 Background**

In April and May 2017, Naymote conducted this national representative opinion survey targeting 2,860 registered voters in nine of the fifteen counties using mobile phones. The designed to solicit citizens' opinions towards the current lawmakers and issues they care about the most and want candidates to address during the campaign period. This will contribute to an issue-based campaign other than using manifestos to engage voters. The nine target counties included: Montserrado, Bong, Margibi, Lofa, Nimba, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, and Grand Gedeh counties. These counties were selected based on the regional representation, population, mobile coverage and vulnerability. The survey was conducted over a period of twenty-eight (28) days, from April 3 to May 10, 2017.

## **3.0 Methodology**

The poll was conducted using a "phone-bank" system of over 9,235 names and contact details of registered voter in the 73 electoral districts in Liberia. The 2,680 respondents 1,640 males and 1,220 females were randomly selected. Eight (8) enumerators were trained in random sampling methodology to conduct the survey. Twelve persons were interviewed per day each by the nine enumerators. They used mobile phones for collecting data and a system was developed for collating and analyzing data.

## 4.0 Demographics

Respondents were selected from a wide range of socio-economic background, including first-time voters, community leaders, traditional chiefs, youth, media practitioners, and women.

**Table 1: Respondents by age range**

Ages of respondents	# of respondents	% of respondents
18-22	274	10%
23-27	1,009	35%
28-32	659	23%
33-37	633	22%
38-Above	285	10%
	<b>2,860</b>	<b>100%</b>

A total of 2,860 respondents were interviewed, from an age range of 18 years and above. The demographic breakdown was informed by the 2014 voter registration listing from the National Elections Commission (NEC). According to that list, young people/voters between the ages of 18 to 32<sup>1</sup>, constituted 55% of the registered voters. The 35% of the respondents were between ages 23-27 years, this mean that young people who constitutes majority of the voting block participated in the survey while ages above 38 constituted only 10% of the respondents.

**Table 2: Total number of respondents per gender**

Sex of Respondents	# of respondents	% of respondents
ALL	2,860	100%
Male	1,640	57%
Female	1,220	43%

Gender was mainstreamed in the survey. Of the total figure of 2,860, respondents 1,640 were males constituting 57% while 1,220 were females constituting 43% of the respondents.

## 4.1 Limitations

Liberia has a population of a little over 4,728,264<sup>2</sup> based on the world population review 2017 statistics. Greater Monrovia area is home to about 25% of this number.

According to (NEC), the number of registered voters during the 2014 Special Senatorial election was 1,903,229<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, this is a national representative opinion survey consisting of 2,860 registered voters and this does not represent the sum of the total registered voters in Liberia.

<sup>1</sup> National Elections Commission (NEC), June 30, 2014 VR Update

<sup>2</sup> <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/liberia-population/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.necliberia.org/pg\\_img/VRUREPORT\\_2014\\_Final1.pdf](http://www.necliberia.org/pg_img/VRUREPORT_2014_Final1.pdf)

Table 3: The table below reflects the difference:

No.	Counties	% of respondents	% of registered voters in the 2014 VR update process
1.	Montserrado	33%	34%
2.	Bong	20%	9%
3.	Margibi	7%	7%
4.	Bomi	9%	3%
5.	Nimba	7%	13%
6.	Grand Gedeh	3%	3%
7.	Grand Bassa	11%	7%
8.	Grand Cape Mount	3%	3%
9.	Lofa	7%	8%
		100%	

## 5.0 Survey Responses

This survey considered four (4) key questions, including:

- Did Liberian citizens 18 years and above register to vote in the October 10, 2017 elections?
- How satisfied or dissatisfied are voters with the representative functions of the current Lawmakers in Liberia;
- How satisfied or dissatisfied are voters with the performance of the current security environment as the country goes to elections;
- What are the three issues voters are concern about that candidates or political parties should address?

### 5.1 Voters participation in the October 10, 2017 elections (Did you register to vote in the October 10, 2017 elections?)

Results from the survey shows that of the total number of respondents interviewed, 66% which is 1,823 (963males, 860 females) respondents between the ages of 18-above 38 years registered to vote in the October 10, 2017 election. 520 (193males, 327females) which constitutes 19% registered, but do not intend to vote while 11% which is 316 (16 males, 300 females) registered but are undecided on who to vote for and 4% which is 120 (87males, 33females) do not know.

**Chart below disaggregated by male and female per option**

No.	Category/ Option	Male	Female	%
1.	Registered to vote	963	860	66%
2.	Registered but does not intend to vote	193	327	19%
3.	Registered, not sure who to vote for	16	300	11%
4.	Do not know	87	33	4%

**5.2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are voters with the representative function of the current lawmakers in Liberia?**

1,213 (753males, 640 females) which constitutes 42% of respondents said they are dissatisfied with the representative function of the current lawmakers of Liberia, 23% which is 647 (358males, 289 females) respondents said they are very dissatisfied with the representative function of the current lawmakers of Liberia, 15% which is 429 (141males, 288 females) of the respondents said they are satisfied with the representative function of the current Lawmakers of Liberia, 13% which is 371 (217males, 154 females) said that they are very satisfied with the representative function of the current lawmakers of Liberia, 7% which is 200 (90males, 110 females) of the respondents said that they do not know.

**Chart below disaggregated by male and female per option**

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the representative function of the current Lawmakers in Liberia?**

No.	Category/ Option	Male	Female	%
1.	Very satisfied	217	154	13%
2.	Satisfied	141	288	15%
3.	Dissatisfied	753	640	42%
4.	Vey Dissatisfied	358	289	23%
5.	Do not know	90	110	7%

**5.3 How satisfied or dissatisfied are voters with the current security environment as the country goes to elections?**

1,347 (840males, 507 females) which constitutes 47% of respondents are satisfied with the performance of the current security environment as the country goes to elections, 12% which is 323 (189males, 134 females) respondents are very satisfied, 22% which is 637 (331males, 306 females) of the respondents are dissatisfied with the current security environment as the country goes to elections, 16% which is 461 (116males, 345 females) respondents are very dissatisfied with the current security environment, and 3% which is 92 (50males, 42 females) of the respondents do not know.

### Chart below disaggregated by male and female per option

5.4 How satisfied or dissatisfied are voters with the current security environment as the country goes to elections?

No.	Category/ Option	Male	Female	%
1.	Very satisfied	189	134	12%
2.	Satisfied	840	507	47%
3.	Dissatisfied	331	306	22%
4.	Vey Dissatisfied	116	345	16%
5.	Do not know	50	42	3%

### 554 What three issues do voters need candidates to address upon elected?

Respondents were asked to select any three key issues that are most important to them that need to be addressed by politicians upon elected. The three prioritized issues are: Education with (42%) followed by the economy (23%) and health (15%).

**Table 4: Responses disaggregated by gender**

No.	Category/ Option	Male	Female	%
1.	Education	753	460	42%
2.	Economy	358	289	23%
3.	Health	141	288	15%
4.	Security	217	154	13%
5.	Agriculture	90	110	7%

## 6.0 Conclusion

The 2011 elections saw a low turnout in the runoff election and the retention rating of lawmakers was 34% meaning that the majority of the representatives who contested for re-election were rejected at the polls by the voters. Similarly, of the thirteen Senators who ran in the 2014 Special Senatorial election, only two were re-elected. With this survey findings revealing that 65% of registered voters are dissatisfied with the representational performance of the current lawmakers, they need to do more work to convince the voters that they desire to be re-elected.

NAYMOTE hopes that candidates for the 2017 general elections, political parties, women groups, youth and civil society organizations, local and international partners, the media and NEC will use the results of this opinion poll in designing programs to support issues-based campaign, improve electoral outcomes and support a smooth political transition process.

NAYMOTE will continue to engage, educate and empower Liberians to support the democratic process and sustain the gains that have been made to keep the country stable. NAYMOTE will also engage citizens through its civic education intervention so that citizens can make informed decisions in electing individuals who are qualified, competent, experience, and whose character is marked by integrity. There is a need to develop a long-term citizens-state engagement program that will empower citizens in holding their leaders accountable.

## About Naymote Partners for Democratic Development

Naymote Partners for Democratic Development is a good governance and research institution working to promote democracy, transparency, and participatory governance in Liberia. The institution since 2001 has initiated and implemented several programs to foster political accountability, enhancing dialogue between lawmakers and their constituents, thereby making elected leaders more accessible and accountable to their people.

The institution has also implemented projects over the past 13 years that has built the capacities of local leaders to be more effective in service delivery, and increased youth and women participation in decision-making processes. In its role as a think-tank, NAYMOTE has conducted research on citizens' perception on the working of the lawmakers, produced publications titled 'Understanding Local Governance in Liberia', 'Fostering Social Accountability', 'Legislative Guide to Organize Town Hall Meetings', 'A Civic and Voters' Education Guide' amongst others. The institution run the Young Political Leadership School in Liberia building the political leadership and organizing skills of young people from across various political parties in Liberia.

The survey was conducted with support from NAYMOTE's staffs making personal donations from their monthly salary, the enumerators were all staffs of the institution and the report was written by Mr. Samuka L. Kabah, the institution M/E Officer and edited by Mr. Oscar Bloh, Center of Democratic Governance/Chairman of the Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC).

*Please meet our outstanding enumerators:*

*Samuka L. Kabah, Ernest D. Jallah, Andrewla N. Togba, Isaiah J. Pyne, Lauren E. A. Koleh, Tracy F. Freeman, Tracy T. Mayson and Amara S. Kamara.*

**Naymote Partners for Democratic Development**

**S. D. Cooper Road, the City of Paynesville**

**Republic of Liberia**

[www.naymote.com](http://www.naymote.com)

[info@naymote.com](mailto:info@naymote.com)

[eddie@naymote.com](mailto:eddie@naymote.com)

**+231886510479/+231770510479**

**Eddie D. Jarwolo/Executive Director**