

# THE MONTHLY MONITOR

JUNE, 2022

# LOFA Voted



## 1. Overview

In this month's Monthly, we cover our observation of the by-elections in Lofa County on June 28, 2022. We report on our findings and the utility of our inference on the outcome of the polls.

The regular theme of our Monthly is not overlooked though. This edition again covers the socio-economic trends in electoral districts around the country. Long Term-Observers report that road accessibility is relatively good, but road maintenance remains a key challenge in some areas. Inflation in prices of Liberian staples remain a serious economic situation with adverse impact on the purchasing power of ordinary Liberians in the districts. The absence of Liberian bank notes (lower denominations) is highlighted as an issue of concern for citizens which creates serious transactional disadvantage in many cases as much needed "change" must be let go. Continued

increase in illegal drug activities in every county/district is a serious concern that keeps emerging. Even though still happening in some areas, ritualistic killing was reported to be low generally.

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# 2. A Word from Our Secretariat



**Months of planning for the Lofa by-elections finally yielded fruitful results as citizens went to the polls on June 28, 2022 to elect their Senator. This means Lofa County can finally be represented at the level of the Liberian Senate after more than 15 months of underrepresentation. Whilst this is not the ideal scenario envisaged from the onset, we are however very happy that the process is finally over, and Lofa can move on.**

Let me say that aside from the post-election night tension in Foya district, LEON applauds the National Election Commission (NEC), political parties, independent candidates, assigned securities and citizens of Lofa for the peaceful manner in which the by-election was conducted. The lessons learnt from this largely peaceful exercise can be leveraged for useful outcome in the more extensive general and presidential elections in 2023.

Internally, LEON observed the by-election by deploying 85 Sample-Based Observers (SBOs) at eight five (85) polling places throughout the county. Our deployment, whilst not large considering the number of polling places in Lofa County (454), was a sample

## “FINALLY, LOFA!”

representation fit for inferring on the conduct and outcome for the by-election in general-and we did just that!!!

In our E-day and Preliminary Statements on the conduct of the by-elections, LEON rated the overall conduct of the election as free, fair and transparent. We appreciated the standard of conduct on the opening, voting, closing, counting and counting processes. We also highlighted areas needing improvements. We reserved applauds for:

1. The time of poll opening
2. The availability of polling materials
3. The transparency of the ballot box
4. Maintaining the secrecy of the vote
5. Adherence to Covid-19 protocols
6. The presence of polling staff
7. Voting and counting processes

Areas that we think need improvements are:

1. Mainstreaming people with disabilities into NEC processes; and,
2. Mainstreaming gender in the selection of the polling staff.

With the support of our partners, our Regional Coordinators, our data analysts and clerks, our Steering Committee and Liberians everywhere, LEON delivered. We are excited by the positive direction in which our electoral democracy is headed and with expected reforms to the New Elections Law in the near future, great strides are yet ahead.

LEON will be here observing it all.

### 3. Methodology

The basis of the findings in this report comes from observations of Long-Term Observers (LTOs) assigned across the 73 electoral districts of Liberia. In each district, the Liberia Elections Observation Network has recruited one resident whose responsibility it is to periodically move across the district observing the conditions of roads, road repairs, prices of staple consumables, the status of health centers and clinics and other pressing issues in the districts such as lawmakers' interaction with local constituents. LTO findings uploaded weekly to a pre-developed checklist in our data center called ELMO. Data analysts at LEON will clean the data along with LTOs each month and then analyzed the final results for these Monthly Monitors.

### 4. Trending Economic Activities

This month, we followed these trends:  
Trending social economic issues monitored for the period:

- i. Districts accessibility
- ii. Road maintenance
- iii. Reasons for non-maintenance of roads by government
- iv. Inflation in prices of commodities
- v. Prices of commodities
- vi. Ritualistic Killing
- vii. Drugs activities
- viii. Gender Involved in Drugs Activities
- ix. Drugs Dealers Living in the District
- x. Lawmakers Activities
- xi. Health related Issues
- xii. Active CSOs and CBOs

**Table 1: Number of checklists submitted per counties**

Month	County	# of checklists	# of LTOs per county
June	Montserrado	17	17
	Bomi	3	3
	Grand Cape Mount	3	3
	Gbarpolu	3	3
	Lofa	5	5
	Nimba	9	9
	Bong	7	7
	Margibi	5	5
	Grand Bassa	5	5
	Rivercess	0	2
	Grand Gedeh	3	3
	Grand Kru	2	2
	Sinoe	3	3
	Maryland	3	3
	Rivergee	3	3
	<b>Total</b>		<b>73</b>

In June all 73 LTOs nationwide send in reports on social economic activities in their districts.

### 5. Data in Tables and Charts

**Fig.1.0: Districts accessibility**

**IS YOUR DISTRICT ACCESSIBLE?**

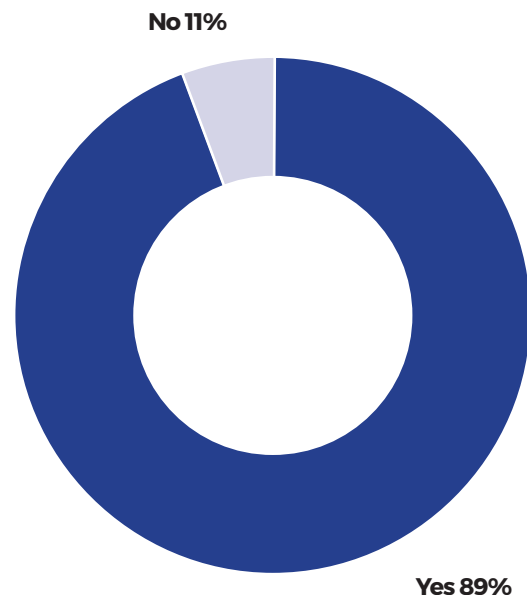


Fig.1.0: 89% of the report filed indicated road accessible, while 11% reported inaccessibility. Countries/districts that reported road inaccessibility were: (Gbarpolu, dist. 3 & 2, Grand Gedeh, dist. 2, Lofa, dist. 4 & 2, Montserrado, dist. 17, Nimba, dist. 7, 3 & 5 and Sinoe dist. 1)

**Figure 2.0: Road maintenance**

**ARE THE ROADS IN YOUR DISTRICT BEING MAINTAINED?**

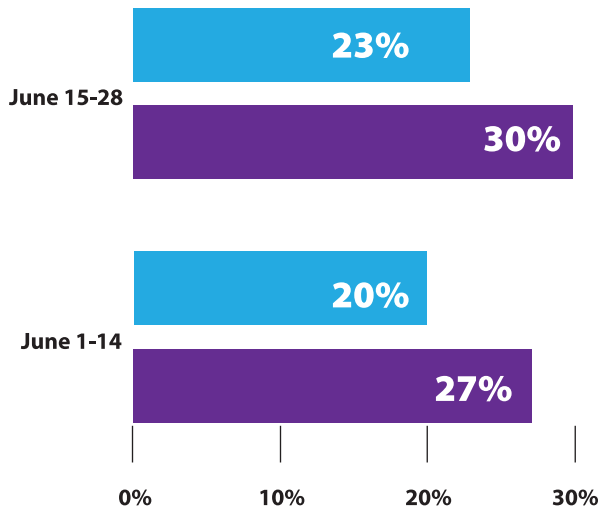


Figure 2.0: 57% reported maintained roads, while 43% reported non maintenance.

**Fig. 2.1: Reasons for non-maintenance of roads by government and other actors.**

**IF YOUR DISTRICT IS NOT BEING MAINTAINED, WHAT IS THE REASON?**

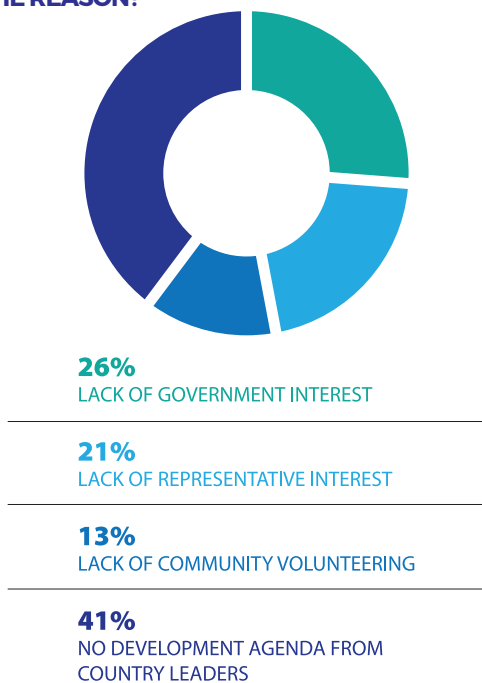


Fig. 2.1: 40% reported No development agenda as the key reason for no road maintenance, followed by lack of government interest at 26%, lack of representative interest at 21% and lack of communities volunteering at 13%, the lowest.

**Fig. 3.0: Inflation in prices of commodities**

**IS THERE INFLATION IN THE PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES?**

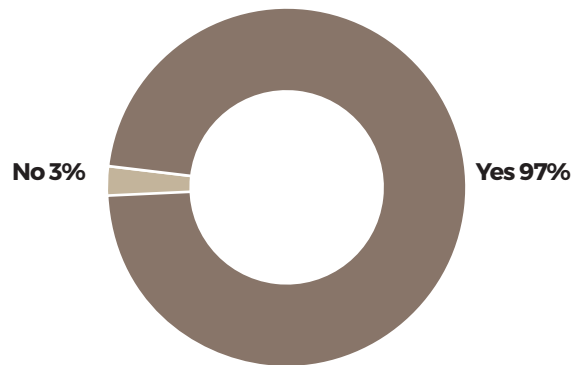


Fig. 3.0: 97% reported inflation in prices, while 3% reported stability in prices of basic commodities during the period.

**Fig. 3.1: Commodities prices**

**WHICH COMMODITIES PRICES ARE HIGH?**

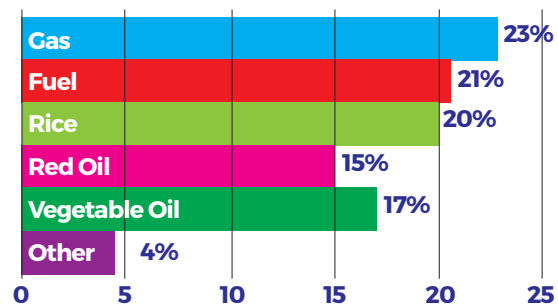


Fig. 3.1: gas was at 23%, the highest, followed by fuel at 21%, rice 20%, ago oil 17%, red oil 15% and other to be specify is at 4% the lowest.

**Fig. 4.0: Drugs activities**

**Are there drug activities in your district?**



Fig.4.0: 90% reported drug activities on the increase in their districts while 10% reported no drug activities. This means drug activities in every county/district is a serious matter of concern.

**Fig 4.1: Age group involved with drug**

**WHICH AGE ARE HIGHLY INVOLVED IN DRUG ACTIVITIES?**

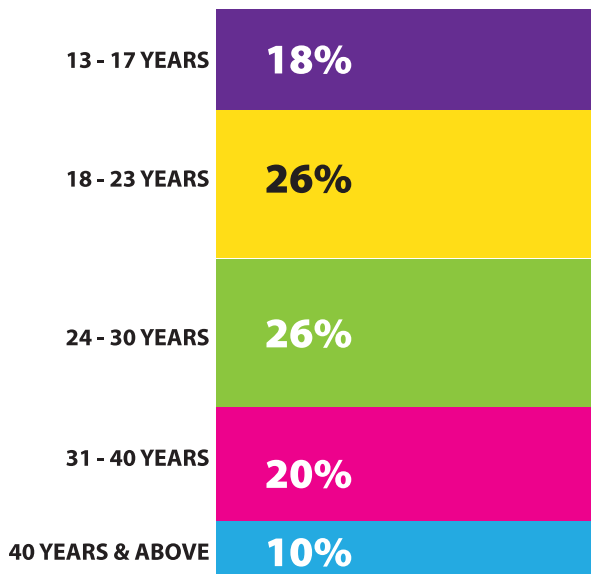


Fig. 4.1: 26% of the report classified the age 17-23 as mostly involve in drug activities, followed by age group 24-30 at 26% as well, age group 31-40 at 20%, age group 13-17 at 18% and age group 40+ at 10%.

**Fig. 4.2: Gender highly involved in drug**

**WHICH GENDER IS HIGHLY INVOLVED IN DRUG ACTIVITIES IN YOUR DISTRICT?**

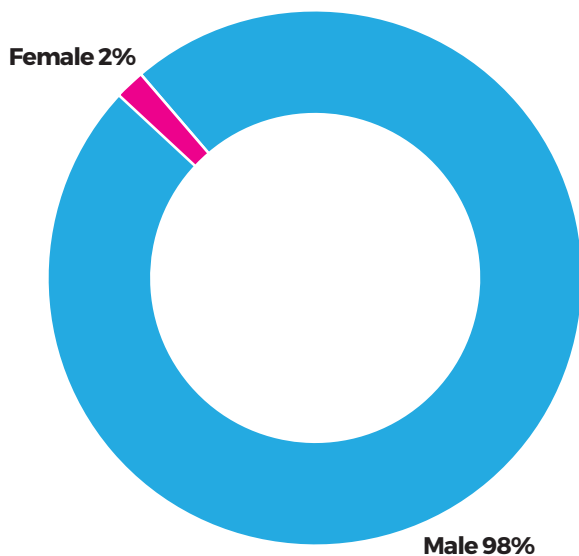


Figure 4.2: 98% of the drug activities are carry out by males, 2% by females.

**Fig. 4.3: Drugs Dealers Living in the District**

**IS THERE A DRUG DEALER LIVING IN YOU DISTRICT?**

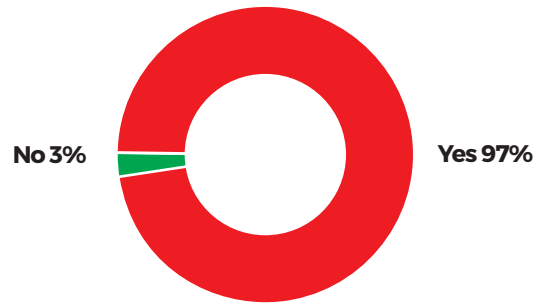


Fig.4.3: 97% reported drug dealer living in the districts, while 3% reported no.

**Fig. 5.0: Ritualistic Killing**

**IS RITUALISTIC KILLING ONGOING IN YOUR DISTRICT?**



Fig. 5.0: 92% reported no ritualistic during this reporting period, while 8% reported ritualistic killing in (Lofa dist. 4, Bong dist. 5, Grand Gedeh dist. 2, Nimba dist. 6 & 8, Grand Bassa dist. 1 and Sinoe dist. 3 & 1).

**Fig. 6.0: Active CSOs and CBOs**

**ARE THE ACTIVE CSOS AND CBOS IN YOUR DISTRICT?**



Fig. 6.0: 56% reported active CSOs & CBOs in districts, while 44% reported inactive CSOs & CBOs generally.

**Fig. 7.0: Lawmakers Activities**

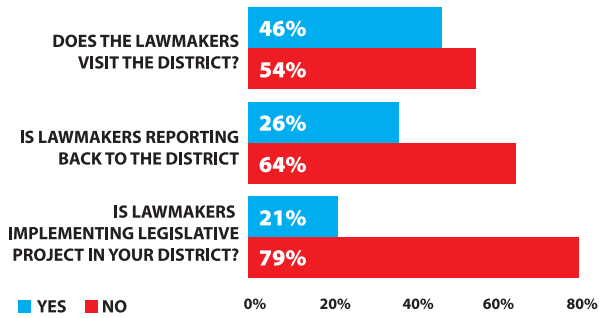


Fig. 7.0: 54% reported NO to lawmaker visit to district, 64% reported NO to lawmakers reporting back to their respective districts, and 79% reported NO to legislative project implementation in district.

**Fig. 8.0: Health related Issues**

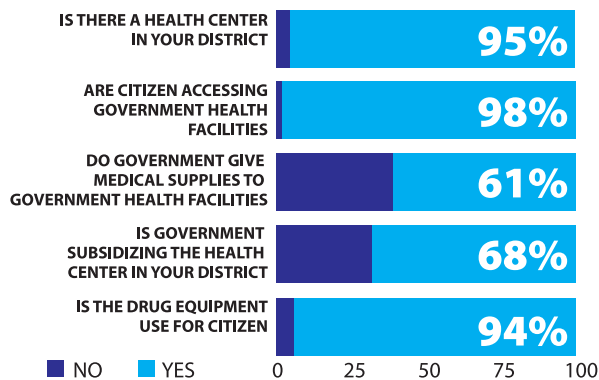


Fig. 8.0: 95% reported YES to health care centers in districts, 98% reported YES to access to government health facilities, 61% reported YES to government supplying health centers with medical supplies, 68% reported YES to government subsidizing health facilities, and 94% reported YES to use of drugs/equipment for citizens. Nimba dist. 3, 4 & 5, Gbapolu dist. 3 and Grand cape mount dist.1 was reported to have no health center in these districts.

## 6. Summary and Conclusion

With the release of this midyear Monthly newsletter, LEON continues to highlight persistent socio-economic trends in the districts for policymakers to take up and address. Our reports are windows to the districts and shows probably key issues voters might be concerned about and voting on in coming elections. Our general call is for all of us to take note and appropriately address or mitigate some of the challenging situations people all around Liberia face in their daily lives.

## 7. Focus on our staff members



This month we feature Miss Garmai Dorcas Davies. Ms. Garmai Dorcas Davies is one of four Regional Coordinators working for the Liberia Elections Observation Network-LEON. Garmai has over eight (8) years of experience working in democratic transparency and is a lead advocate for Woman Political Participation in Liberia. As one of LEON's Regional Coordinators, Ms. Davies has vast knowledge on training surveyors on the use of specialized techniques for the collection of data, training and coaching Long and Short-Term Observers to use Open Data Kit (ODK) and analyzing data for quality reporting.

Ms. Garmai Davies holds a Master of Arts Degree in Peace Studies from the University of Liberia and has over 10 years' experience in administration and teaching mediation and counseling. She also has vast understanding of conflict issues in Liberia and has been involved in mediation, conflict resolution, psychosocial counselling, and dialogue. Ms. Davies is an experienced election observer and has been observing Liberian elections since 2017 with excellent report writing abilities.

# About LEON

The Liberia Elections Observation Network (LEON) is a platform of four Liberian civil society organizations, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), Liberia Crusaders for Peace (LCP), Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) and National Union of Organizations for the Disabled (NUOD) with the overall goal of meaningfully contributing to the democratization process in Liberia by providing an avenue for civil society to participate in monitoring and observing elections and democratic processes in Liberia. LEON observed the 2017 and 2020 elections with over 1000 observers and issued statements on pre-election, election day and post-elections activities. In 2019, LEON engaged in monitoring the Legislature with the aim of increasing legislative openness and transparency for better representation that leads to improved social service delivery in constituencies.

LEON has a steering committee comprised of members of the four member organizations and a secretariat of 15 persons including four regional coordinators who will coordinate and oversee the short-term and long-term observers. LEON has a focus on the inclusion of marginalized groups including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Under this project, LEON receives funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and technical support from The Carter Center. However, its findings, reports and other determinations are independent of the two organizations and do not necessarily reflect the views of those organization.

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