

DECEMBER
2017



Baseline Survey Report

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INTRODUCTION

Liberia is still recovering from a 14 year civil war and peace-building is an ongoing process.

Accountability Lab Liberia is running Citizen Helpdesks in Cape Mount County to track rumors and concerns related to security issues. To this end, we have trained 10 community members who are serving as Community Frontline Associates to collect data and close the loop on critical local issues.

The Accountability Lab carried out a survey in 8 towns recently (Sinje, Vonzula, Gonzoduah, Daniel Town, Small Bomi, Muphil, Massaquoi and Bangos), and found that citizens' primary concern was food insufficiency. A total of 399 (37.43%) interviewees out of 1,065 told us that their biggest problem is a lack of food. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2 calls for zero hunger but clearly there are parts of Liberia where this goal requires much greater attention.

In the pursuit of peace, the County & Social Development Fund Framework is geared towards decentralization of development and decision making in all counties and districts. But, as seen in our survey, very little is known or heard about the utilization of these funds, and the absence of timely and factual information for the public is a real problem.

To better understand important citizen concerns, the CFAs conducted a three day survey in eight towns in December 2017. 1,065 persons were interviewed out of more than 17,000 inhabitants in a randomly selected poll. The objective of the survey was to develop evidence-based data that will guide decision making and optimize the allocation of resources to beneficiary communities for peace promotion.

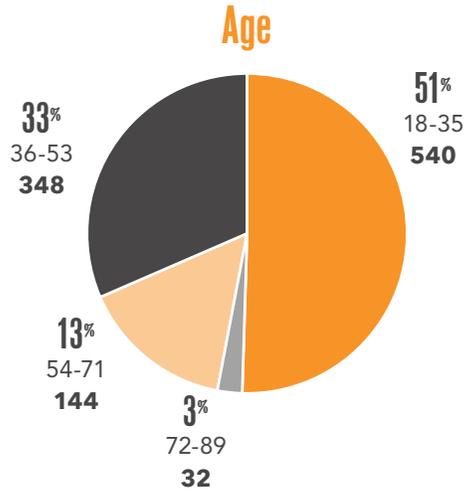


SURVEY RESULTS

43%
Homme
459

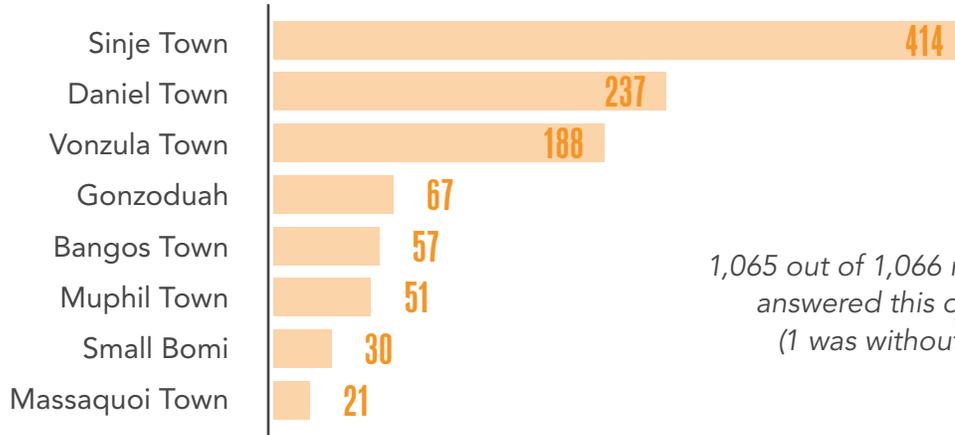


57%
Femme
606



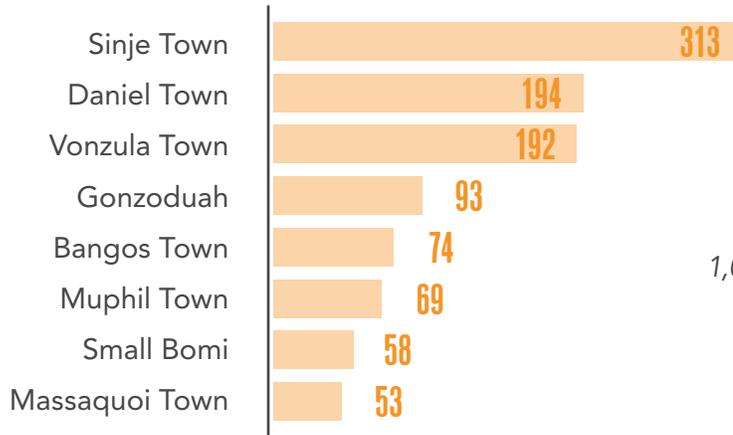
1064 out of 1066 respondents answered this question.
(2 were without data.)

Which community do you live in?



1,065 out of 1,066 respondents answered this question.
(1 was without data.)

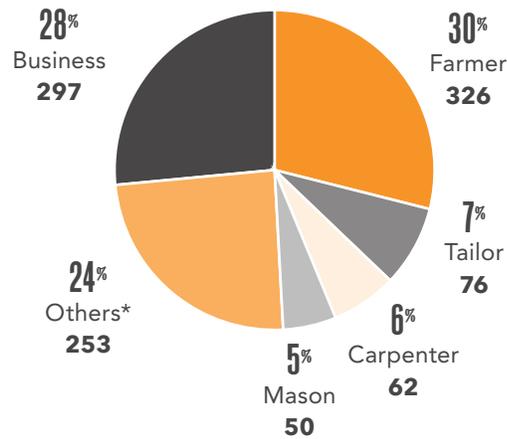
Where are you originally from?



1,064 out of 1,066 respondents answered this question.
(2 were without data.)

For ease of understanding the survey was carried out in Liberian English and the results are in Liberian English.

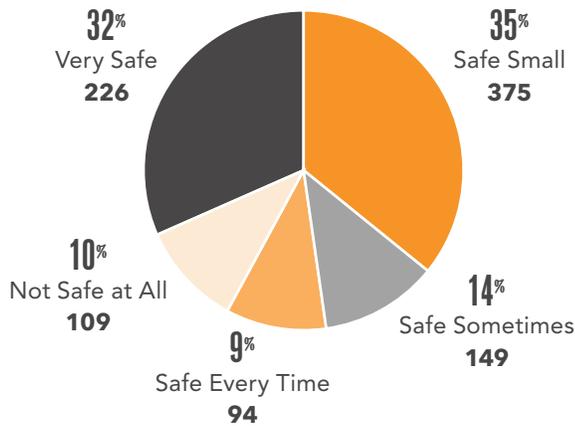
What is your job?



1064 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (2 were without data.)

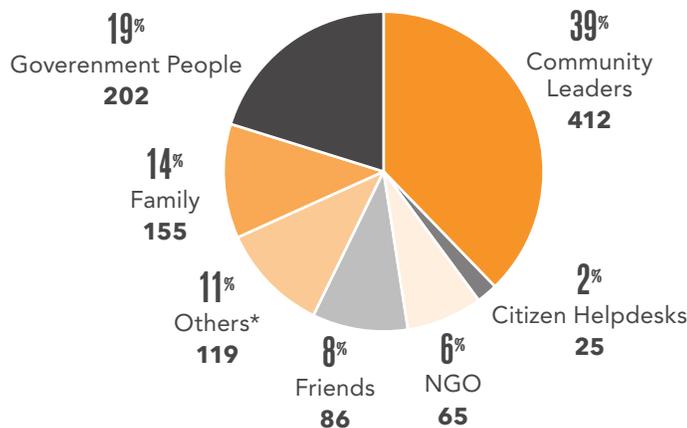
*Others include: Palm wine tapper, driver, motorcyclist, security, house wife, nurse, midwife

To what level are you safe in your town?



1063 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (3 were without data.)

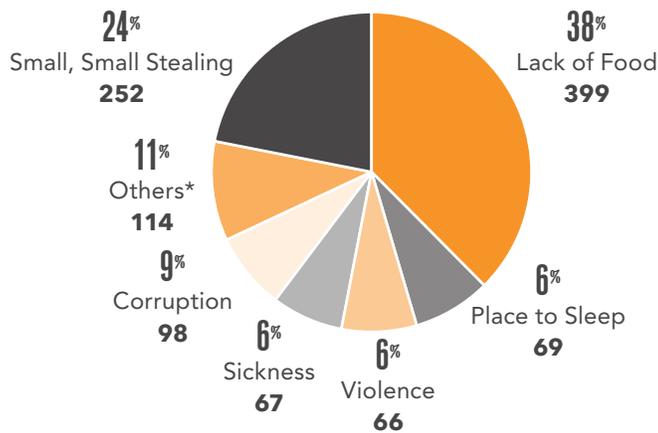
Who do you go to if you need help to know something about security and peace business?



1063 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (3 were without data.)

*Others include: Security personnel, teachers, politicians

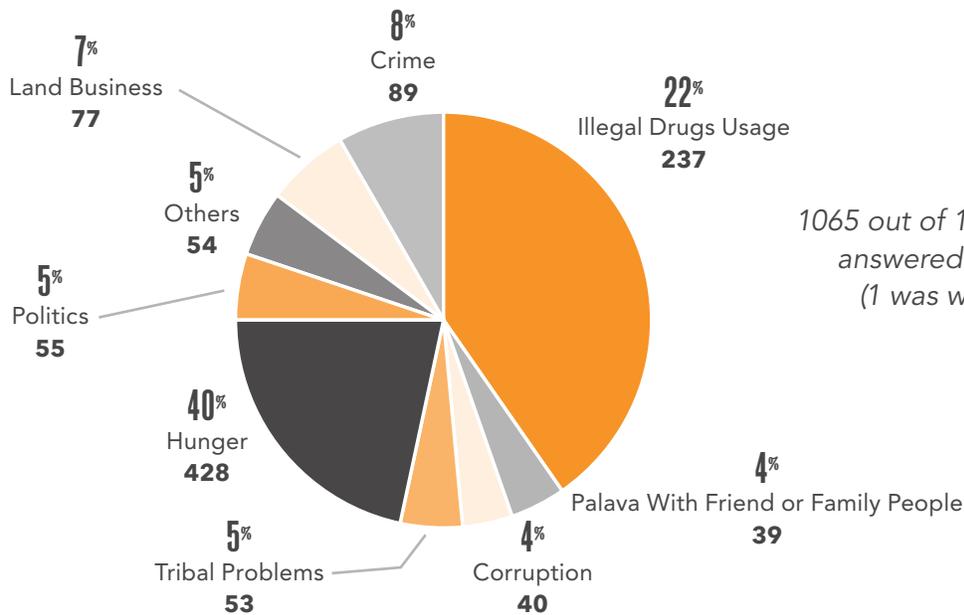
What is the biggest problem in your town?



1060 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (6 were without data.)

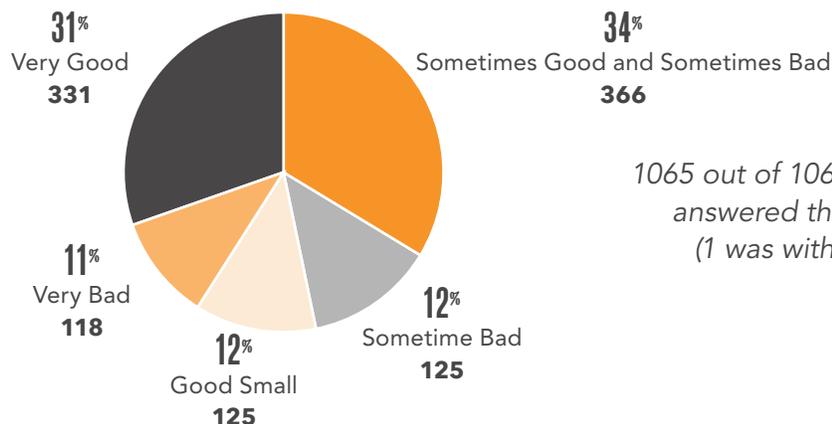
*Others include: Archaic tree taking over farm land, youths are becoming drugs users, Sime Darby is taking their farm land and hunting land.

What makes your town not safe?



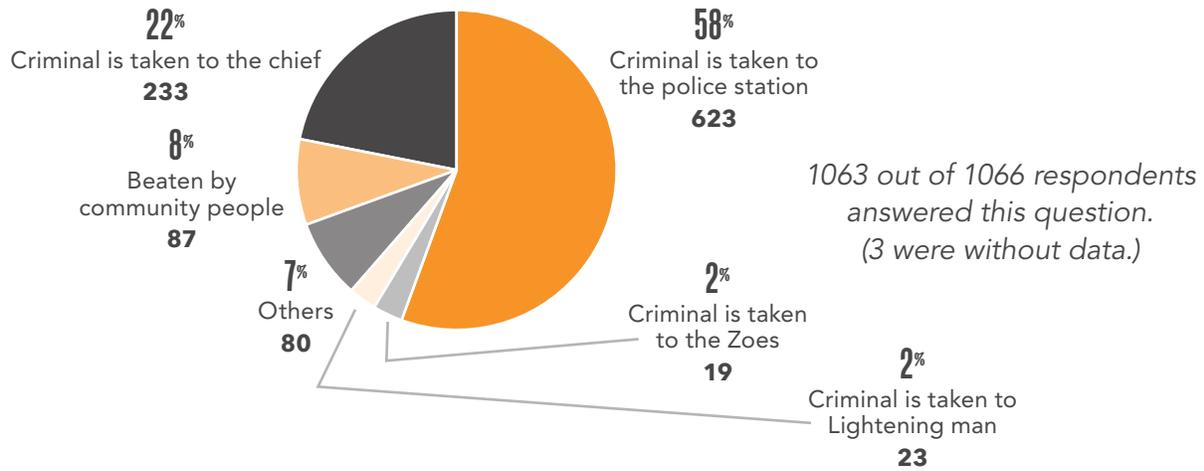
1065 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (1 was without data.)

How you and the police living here?

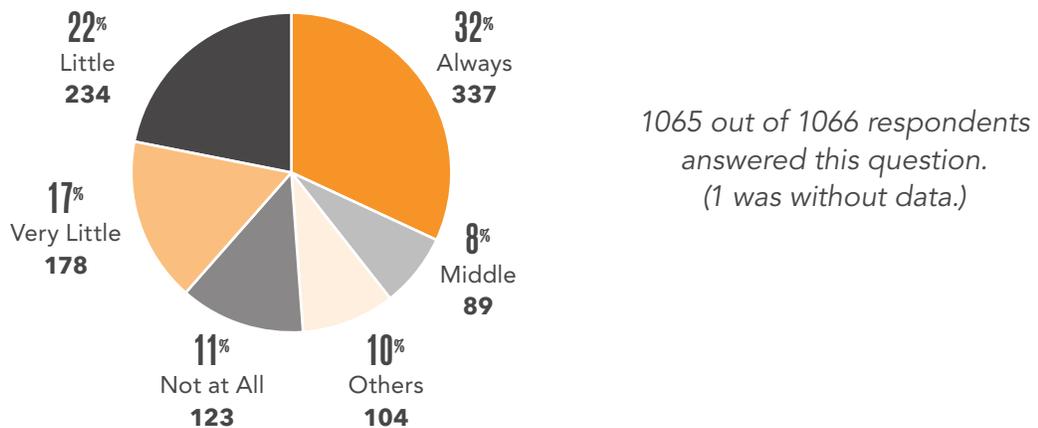


1065 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (1 was without data.)

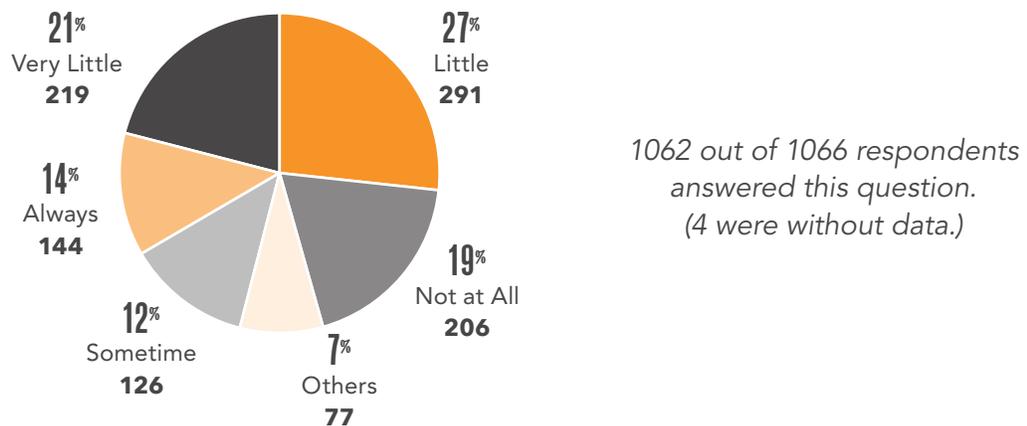
If a crime is committed in your community, what happens?



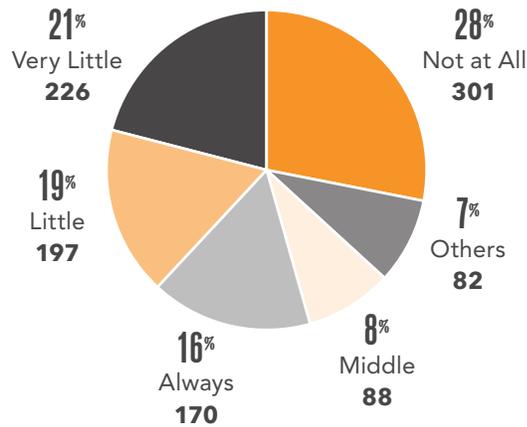
To what level stealing is a problem in your town?



To what level do you have enough food in your town?

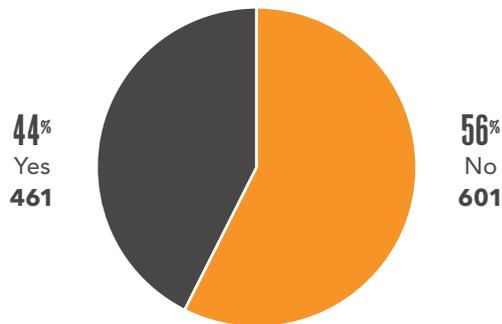


To what level beating on women is a problem in your town?



1064 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (2 were without data.)

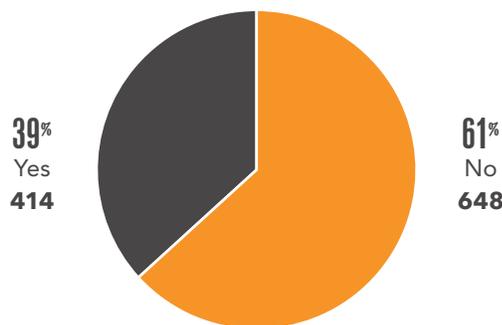
Do you know what all our government supposed to do in your town and to whom? Which ones and to whom?



1062 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (4 were without data.)

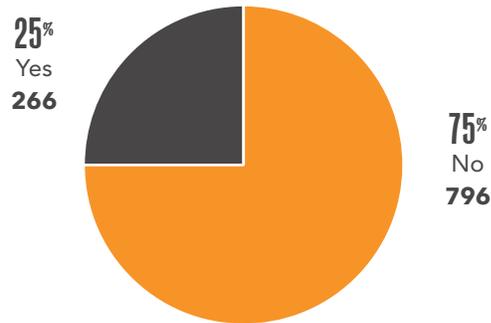
NOTE: 43.25% of those who were interviewed said 'YES' to the question asserted that government supposed to build roads, pumps, provide employment, provide housing unit, electricity, better education, quality health care, latrine and food to all community dwellers. They look at the police as a separate entity from the government.

Have you heard of something called the County Development Fund?



1062 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (4 were without data.)

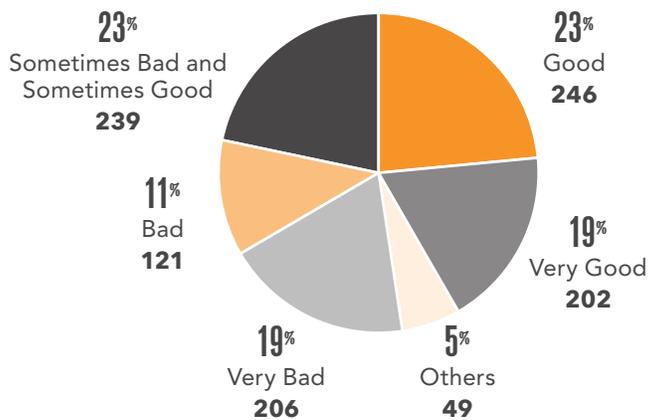
Can you name anything the government has done using the County Development Fund?



1062 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (4 were without data.)

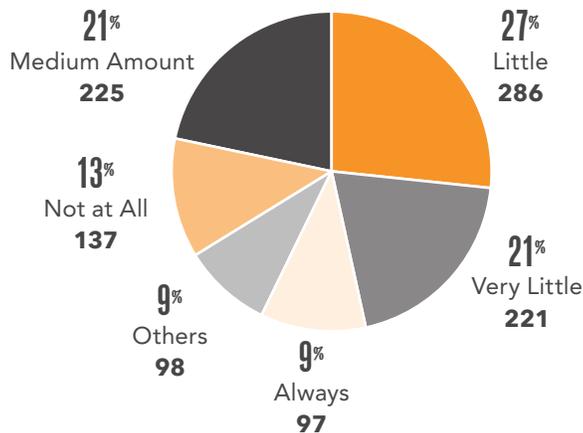
NOTE: Some of those interviewed from the 24.95% explained that the government has used County Development Fund to build school, clinic, Commission compound, palava hut and support toward the County National Sport Team.

How you look at the discussion between the government people and the town people?



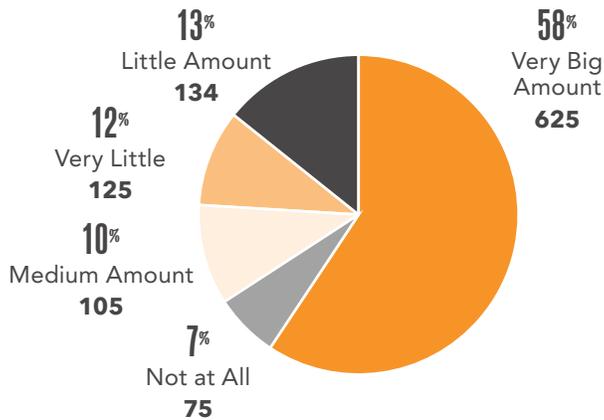
1063 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (3 were without data.)

To what level can you speak about things that have to do with peace or security business in your community?



1064 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (2 were without data.)

To what level do you think the Citizen Helpdesks are useful for you to know about peace and security in your town?



1064 out of 1066 respondents answered this question. (2 were without data.)

KEY LEARNINGS

The majority of people in and around Sinje feel safe on a personal level, with over 66% indicating that they feel very safe or “safe small”. Despite perceptions to the contrary, human security is not a critical issue for the population of the area; While the relationship with the government is broadly positive in and around Sinje, most people still go to community leaders, family or friends for help on security and peace-related issues (almost 60%). Traditional and local level approaches to peace-building- as opposed to formal systems- still predominate;

- The key driver of insecurity in and around Sinje is lack of food- the hunger crisis in the area is not yet fully appreciated or addressed by those in power- with over 35% of people indicating that a lack of food is a serious problem and over 60% indicating that they do not have enough food. 40% also indicate that hunger is the key driver of crime in the area- suggesting that interventions to improve food security would also improve security more broadly;
- The relationship with the police in the area is good (with over 40% indicating the relationship is positive and another 34% indicating that it is neither good nor bad); and almost 60% of people indicate that criminals are taken to the police when a crime is committed.
- The relationship between the community and the government is good, but more than half of the people in the community do not understand the role of the government and over 60% have not heard about the Country Development Fund (CDF) nor can they describe what it has funded. From a policy perspective, there is room for the government to work with community leaders to better explain how these funds operate and are used. There is clearly a desire for a mechanism to help citizens better understand these issues, find ways to discuss the challenges and to develop solutions- nearly 60% of the community indicated that the Citizen Helpdesks are useful in this regard.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Accessibility** – while we reached 10% of the population in the areas with this survey, many residents were working during the day and were unaccessible. For future surveys we will find a time when we can reach people at their homes- such as the weekend;
- **Feedback** – many in the community seem to suffer from survey fatigue because previous data collection processes have been extractive without feedback on how the data was being used. We are now working to disseminate these findings in the community through townhall meetings, radio shows and door-to-door outreach to make sure the community understands how this data can inform conversations and decision-making;
- **Sustainability** – we are already thinking about how the Citizen Helpdesk process could be sustained over time, and will begin conversations with the County Service Center in Cape Mount about possible partnership to help close the feedback loop on issues over time.

The Citizen Helpdesk Survey is a regular process for collecting feedback from communities around critical issues in Liberia.

We welcome any feedback and ideas as to how we can improve this process.

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