



# PERCEPTION SURVEY ON JUSTICE AND SECURITY SECTOR SERVICE DELIVERY



FREETOWN

SEPTEMBER 2017

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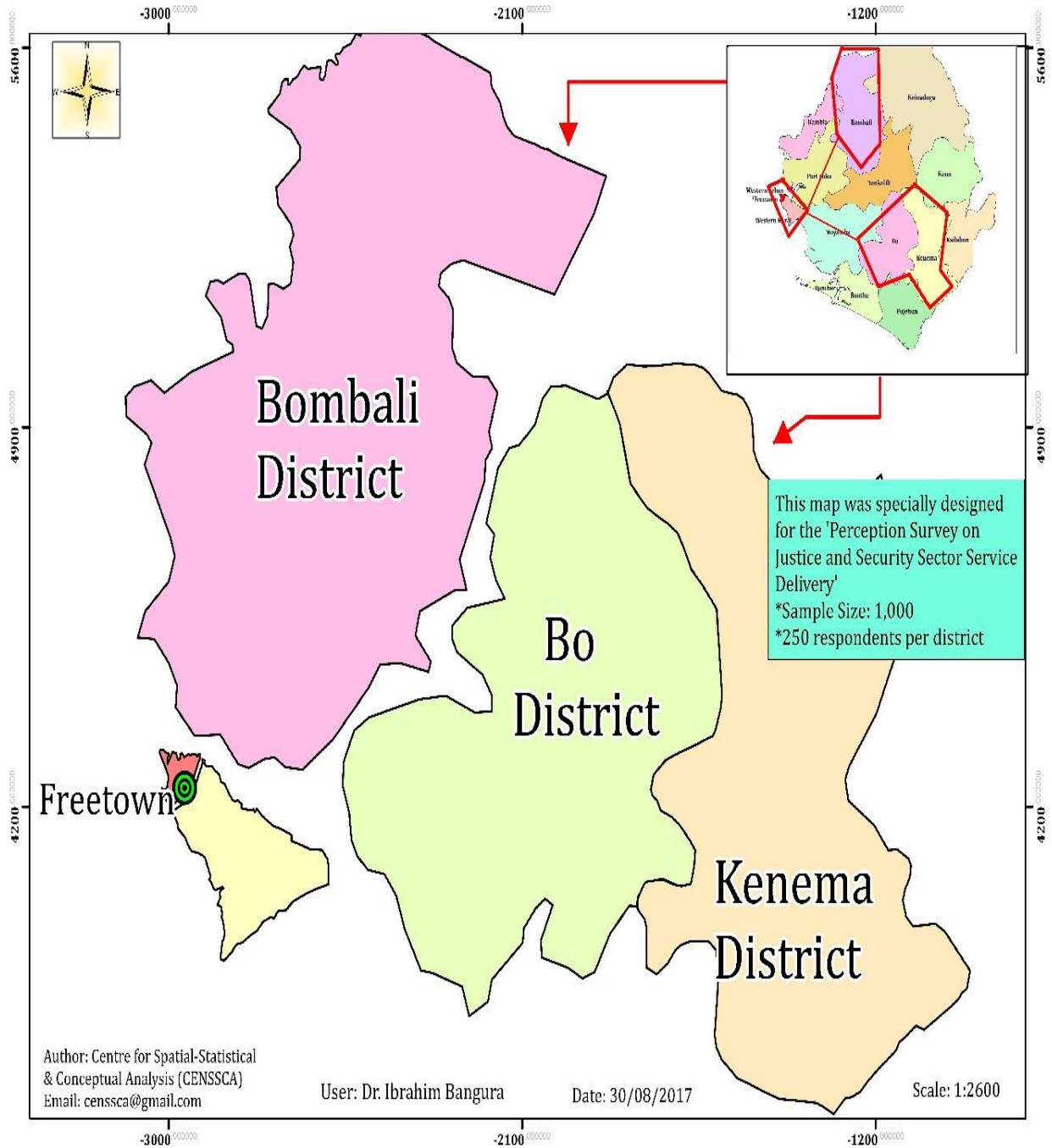
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## ACRONYMS

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ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All People's Congress
ASJP	Access to Security and Justice Programme
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCSSP	Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CHISEC	Chiefdom Security Committee
CISU	Central Intelligence and Security Unit
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
DISEC	District Security Committee
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FBO	Faith Based Organisations
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
FSU	Family Support Unit
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HRCSL	Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPCB	Independent Police Complaints Board
IMATT	International Military Advisory Training Team
ISAT	International Security Advisory Team
JSCO	Justice Sector Coordination Office
JSR	Justice Sector Reform
JSRSIP	Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAB	Legal Aid Board
LOD	Law Officers Department
LPPB	Local Police Partnership Board
LRC	Law Reform Commission

MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MSC	Most Significant Change
NACGBV	National Committee for Gender Based Violence
NCC	National Children's Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSPS	National Security Policy and Strategy
ONS	Office of National Security
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SILSEP	Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TRCSL	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIPSIL	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone
UNPBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report contains the findings from the Public Perception Survey on Justice and Security services undertaken by the Justice and Security Sectors with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP - under its Rule of Law Project). The study employed a mixed method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis and presentation of the findings. The districts where the study was done are Bombali (Northern Region), Kenema (Eastern region) and Bo (Southern Region) and Freetown (combining both Western Urban and Rural districts). This was necessary to ensure that all the regions of the country were covered.

From the findings presented, it was concluded that there still exists significant challenges in the sectors studied and much more needs to be done to further improve on the performance of the sectors in terms of relating with, and the delivery of services to the general public. While most of the ratings across the board are satisfactory, respondents clearly expressed the challenges and constraints they contend with across the country as they try to access services provided by the institutions included in the survey. While most of the challenges (including challenges in accessing security and justice institutions in remote and isolated communities or the ability of the institutions to immediately respond when called upon) could be largely attributed to the limited financial and human resource capacity of the institutions, others could be linked to the reactive rather than proactive manner in which some institutions approach service delivery. This has and continues to undermine the level of trust and confidence in some institutions among some members of the public.

Closely associated with the point above, while several achievements have been made, institutions of the GoSL appear to be less effective in communicating those achievements to the public. At the same time, most of the respondents indicated that the institutions do not communicate the challenges they contend with and as such the public is unaware of them. Thus, with limited understanding of the achievements made by the institutions of the GoSL and the challenges in the sector, conclusions from the public are based on what they perceive to be happening and not what may be the reality.

Notwithstanding this, the GoSL needs to prioritise security and justice reform processes as there is need to enforce legislations, improve and expand on service delivery,

constructively include and engage all relevant state and non-state actors in the process, employ proactive rather than reactive approaches to security and justice related issues and strengthen harmonization, synergy and complementarity in the sectors as well as invest in the institutional capacity of security and justice institutions.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Since the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone in 2002, the justice and security sectors continue to undergo reforms as part of the Government of Sierra Leone's (GoSL's) post-war reconstruction agenda to improve service delivery, foster peacebuilding and democratic development. As such, the GoSL's strategic priorities have emphasised justice and security reforms in Pillar 7 of the Agenda for Prosperity (GoSL 2012). The Security Sector for example implemented reform strategies (Security Sector Reform) with support from the British Government and institutions such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These reforms supported the establishment of institutional structures to improve governance and increase transparency and accountability in the sector.

The justice sector on the other hand, is in an advanced stage of implementing its third-generation reform strategy (Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan (JSRSIP) III, 2015-2018). These strategies are aimed at addressing among other issues: access to and expedition of justice, improving rights and accountability as well as improving the environment for commercial law and justice in the country. Together, both justice and security sectors have recorded significant and tangible gains resulting in some amount of improved access to service delivery over the years.

With the development of its new Rule of Law Project (2017-2019), UNDP in collaboration with the Justice and Security Sectors was keen to assess public perceptions of services in the two sectors. This is in order to ensure that approaches to addressing challenges identified in these sectors in future respond to existing needs and aspirations across the country. Thus, UNDP and the Justice Sector Coordination Office (JSCO) recruited a consultant to conduct a nationwide public perception survey on the delivery of justice and security services. The survey which was conducted in the four regions of the country provides a reflection of the perception of the general public on security and justice sector institutions and on the kind and quality of services they provide. The survey also draws out perspectives from the respondents on the challenges that security and justice sector actors contend with that may have implications for service delivery, while also providing recommendations on how the challenges could be overcome. It is expected that this report will inform and shape policymaking and will help to improve on mechanisms to increase performance, transparency and accountability within institutions in the sector.



## 1.1 METHODOLOGY

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The survey employed a mixed method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis and presentation of the findings. Desk research, formal, semi-formal and informal interviews, semi-structured questionnaires, Most Significant Change (MSC) tool, participant observation and 8 (2 per region) Focus Group Discussion (FGD), were used to collect data from 1,000 respondents. 93 interviewees were conducted with Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) of the GoSL, International and National Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), academic institutions, and other actors working on security and justice related issues. The participants from the above institutions were selected based on their knowledge, access and familiarity with the services delivered by the two sectors.

To ensure maximum engagement and participation, random, purposive and snow-balling sampling methods were used to specifically select, categorise and engage the different respondents. The research team used a participatory approach which included educating community members and their leadership on the aims of the project, seeking advice on the way the survey was to be conducted in their community and involving them in the mobilisation of the relevant stakeholders who participated in the survey. This approach promoted local buy-in, ownership and participation of relevant stakeholders in the process. The questionnaires were reviewed and adopted by the Justice and Security Coordination meeting co-chaired by the coordinators of the JSCO and the Office of National Security (ONS), with participants drawn from the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), the Sierra Leone Correctional Service (SLCS), the Judiciary, the Legal Aid Board (LAB) and the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) among others and was later pre-tested before being used in the field.

The survey was conducted in the following districts: Bombali (Northern Region), Kenema (Eastern region) and Bo (Southern Region) and Freetown (combining both Western Urban and Rural districts). This was necessary to ensure that all the regions of the country were covered.

The study took place over forty non-consecutive working days, during the months of August and September 2017. The consultant was assisted through the data collection and

collation phase by six research assistants (3 females and three males) with vast experience in conducting research on security and justice related issues in Sierra Leone, with work experience across several districts in the country. JSCO also provided assistance in the form of an additional staff and work station to support the conduct of the survey and analysis.

For the analysis of the data collected, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to collate and analyze the quantitative data, which are mostly presented in and analysed through graphs. The Qualitative Data Analysis Mining (QDA) software was used to analyze the qualitative data. This software allowed the researcher to code the data and then conduct content analysis through which classification and tabulation was done. However, to a large extent, direct quotes and summaries are used to provide a true reflection of the voices of the participants. It is expected that the methods applied ensures that the analysis provides a good reflection of the public's perception of security and justice services delivery in Sierra Leone.

## 2. CONTEXT

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For eleven years (1991 to 2002), Sierra Leone experienced a violent civil war that led to the death of over 60,000 people with more than a million becoming refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) (Koroma 1996). With the declaration of the end of the civil war in 2002, several reform processes ensued as part of post-war reconstruction. Key amongst these reforms includes the security and justice sectors. These processes benefitted from the Security Sector Reform (SSR) initiative that the British government particularly took interest in. However, it is important to note that SSR predated the end of the conflict. The implementation of programmes such as the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force and the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP) geared towards police reform had commenced by 1995 (Albrecht and Malan 2006; Albrecht 2009; Bangura 2016). As part of these initiatives, a British police officer served as the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone Police between 1999 and 2003 (Kabbah 2010).

However, between 1995 and 1999, initial attempts at SSR were ad-hoc as the focus was primarily on pursuing the conflict. By 1999, as peace negotiation intensified and culminated into the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, a more comprehensive approach was taken with the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme (SILSEP) adopted and primarily financed by “pooling funds from both the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), but...received support through the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP)” (Albrecht, 2009: 2). Albrecht (ibid) further stated that “Under SILSEP, the British embarked on setting up systems and structures that were crucial to the reform process and specific support to “police reform until mid-2005 went through the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP) which was terminated when the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP) was established.”

Key reforms that took place as part of SSR and JSR included the establishment of the following institutions: the Office of National Security (ONS)<sup>1</sup> and the Central Intelligence

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<sup>1</sup> The establishment of the ONS was principally based on the need to have a coordination unit that will help promote synergy and harmonisation of efforts. To strengthen this process, three vital layers were created which are, the National Security Council (NSC), chaired by the president, the National Security Council Coordination Group (NSCCG), chaired by the national security coordinator and

and Security Unit (CISU) and their respective decentralised structures such as the Provincial Security Committee (PROSEC), District Security Committee (DISEC) and Chiefdom Security Committee (CHISEC), a new Ministry of Defence (MoD), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Legal Aid Board, Independent Police Complaints Board (IPCB), and the HRCSL.

Other activities included, restructuring the SLP<sup>2</sup> and building police infrastructures across the country, transformation of the Sierra Leone Prisons Service (SLPS) to a Correctional Service, and building the capacity of institutions such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), the Judiciary, the Justice Sector Coordination Office (JSCO) to enable them function effectively and efficiently. At the heart of this process was the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP) which was succeeded by the Access to Justice and Security Programme (ASJP) that supported reforms between 2012 and 2016. Between 2014 and 2015, ONS developed a National Security Policy and Strategy (NSPS) and the justice sector is now implementing its third Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan (JSRSIP). The United Nations and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) through the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) also provided both technical and financial resources to the security and justice sectors.

However, in 2015, direct funding from DFID to institutions such as ONS, CISU and ACC came to an end as it was planned that the government will take complete financial responsibility after this period. Alongside this, IMATT transitioned into a smaller International Security Advisory Team (ISAT). Unfortunately, the challenges faced in the mining sector and the outbreak of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 2014 have been affecting government's ability to fully and timely meet its financial commitments to these institutions. In spite of the persistent challenges that the government is contending with, Sierra Leone has not relapsed into violence, and has held three general elections (2002, 2007 and 2012). Following the implementation of sectoral reform agendas, there is

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the Strategic Situation Group, which is chaired by the chief of staff of the ONS. The head of the ONS also chairs the Joint Intelligence Committee, which oversees all the different intelligence units in the country.

<sup>2</sup> Key units established were the Family Support Unit (FSU) and the Community Relations Office which are vital in addressing family, women and children related cases and rebuilding the trust and confidence of the public in the SLP.

a need to assess, learn and chart a new direction from a demand side perception. Most of the reforms have been supply driven and framed to address demand side of it as this was necessary at the time with the end of the civil war and the expediencies of that time.

### 3. FINDINGS

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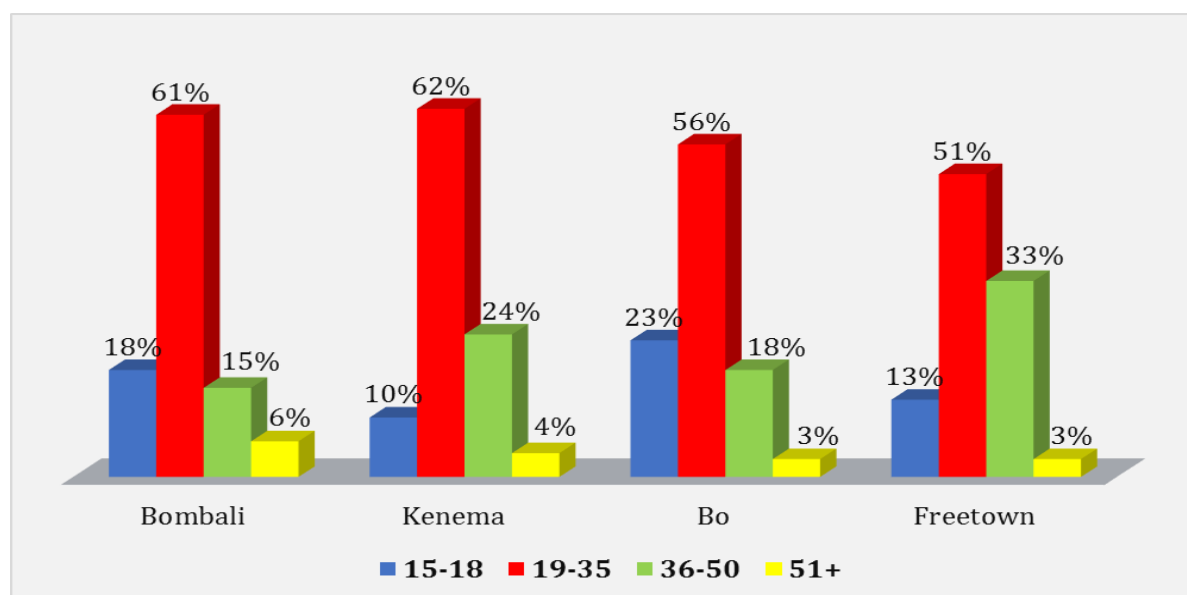
This section provides detailed presentation and analysis of data collected through the use of semi-structured questionnaires, formal and semi-formal interviews, Key Informant Interviews, the Most Significant Change (MSC) tool and Focus Group Discussions (FGD), with a wide range of actors including MDAs, international and national NGOs, CSOs, FBOs and academic institutions in Bo, Bombali, Kenema and Freetown.

#### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

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As illustrated in the graph below, out of the 1,000 respondents, approximately 57% are between the ages of 19 and 35, followed by 22.5% between the ages of 36 and 50, 16% between 15 and 18 and 4.5% aged 51 years and above. Kenema has the highest percentage (62%) of those between 19 and 35, Freetown the highest percentage (33%) of those between 36 and 50, Bo, the highest percentage (23%) of those 15 and 18 and Bombali the highest percentage (6%) of those who are 51+.

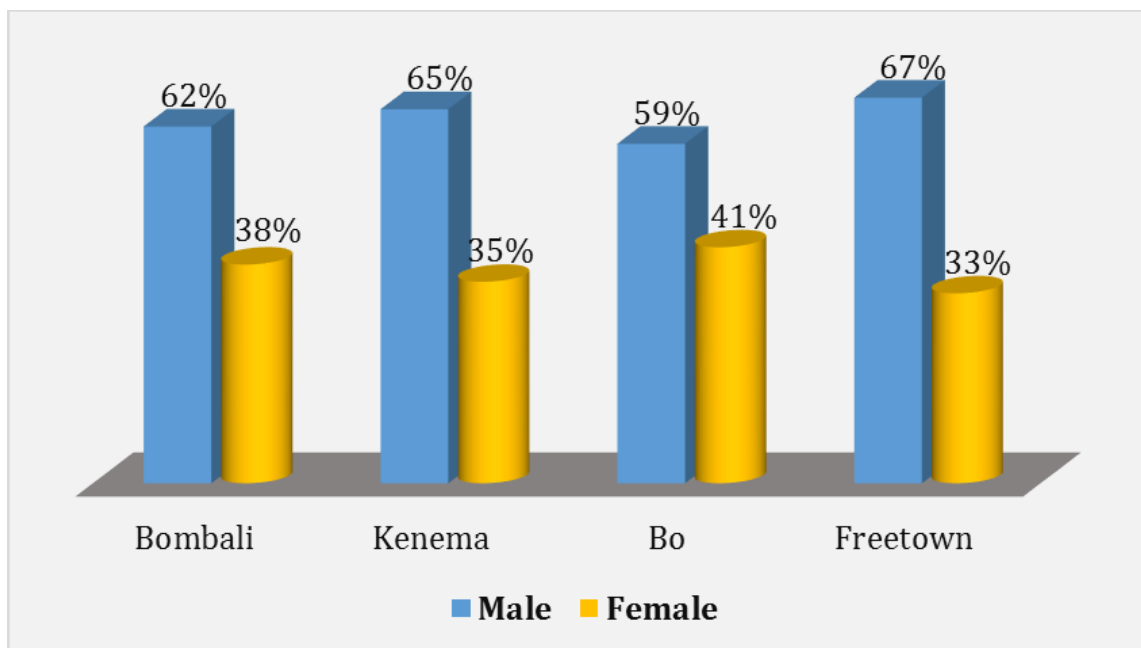
**Figure 1: Age range of respondents**



As the needs and aspirations and the way men and women perceive and interact with the security and justice sectors differ, the research team made conscious effort to have a

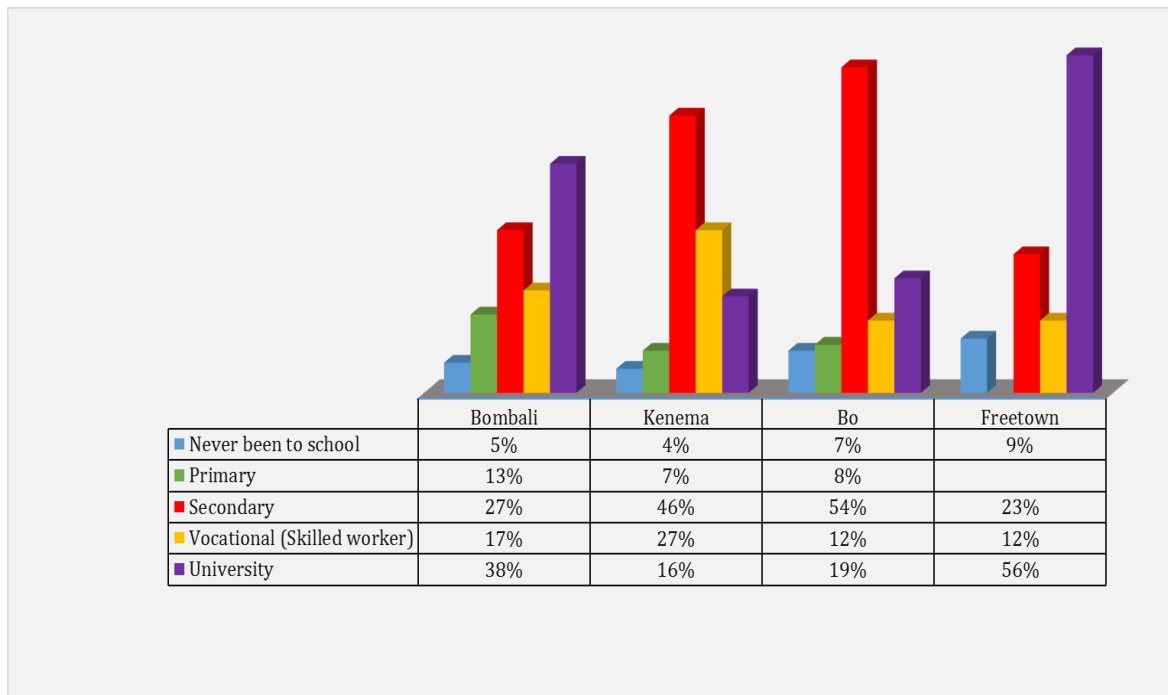
balanced mix of men and women to participate in the survey as could be seen in the graph below. While the percentages of men participating in each district were higher than that of women, it could be seen that a fair percentage of women participated in each district. For instance 41% of the respondents in Bo and 38% in Bombali were women. The contributions of women provided greater insights to their perceptions of the security and justice sectors, the challenges they contend with when dealing with the sectors and the kinds of changes/improvements they would like to see in the sectors.

**Figure 2: Percentage breakdown of respondents' sex**



To ensure that views from different categories of respondents were collected, both educated and non-educated individuals were interviewed. As indicated in the graph below, the highest percentage of respondents with university education were in Freetown (56%) and Bombali (38%), Kenema has the highest percentage (17%) of respondents with vocational education, Bo has the highest percentage (54%) of respondents with secondary education, Bombali has the highest percentage (13%) of respondents with primary education, while Freetown (9%) has the highest percentage of respondents with no formal education.

**Figure 3: Educational background of respondents**



### 3.2 KNOWLEDGE OF AND INTERACTION WITH SECURITY AND JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

As part of the survey, respondents were asked of their understanding of the security and justice sectors and what they do. The most common answers provided on what security sector included, the sector that is:

- Responsible for protection of lives and properties;
- Protection from internal and external attacks;
- Where you go when your life is threatened;
- The military and the police; and
- A collection of agencies within government responsible for the security of the state.

The common answers provided on the justice sector included, the sector that is:

- Responsible for punishing criminals;
- The courts;



- Consists of different institutions such as the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Sierra Leone Police etc.; and
- Provides access to justice and protection of freedoms.

As illustrated in the graph below, when responding to questions on institutions that they are familiar with, 43% of the respondents indicated that they are familiar with the Sierra Leone Police, while 15% indicated that they are familiar with all the institutions listed, while 3% indicated that they are not familiar with any of the institutions listed, while the rest indicated they are familiar with one or more than one of the institutions within the sectors. It is important to note that this section is not about the respondents knowing about the existence of the institutions but rather their familiarity with what they do.

A key informant interviewed in Freetown<sup>3</sup> reflected on why most people indicate the police as the only institution they are familiar with:

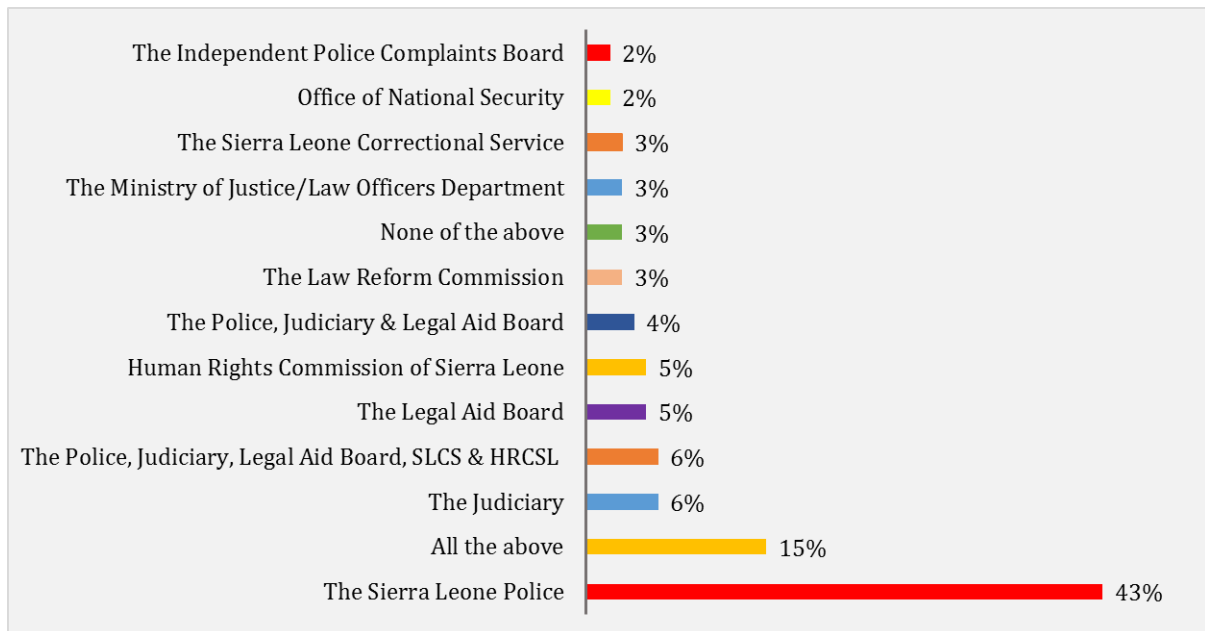
“Whatever one may say, the police has the largest presence and directly interacts with people than any other institution and deals with people in contact with and in conflict with the law. Even very young children know who a police is and it is obvious that more people will indicate the police.”

Similarly, most focus group discussants in especially rural, remote and isolated communities appeared to be mostly familiar with the police, with few of them indicating that they are familiar with the judiciary, Legal Aid Board and decentralised security structures such as the Local Police Partnership Boards (LPPB) and Chiefdom Security Committees (CHISEC).

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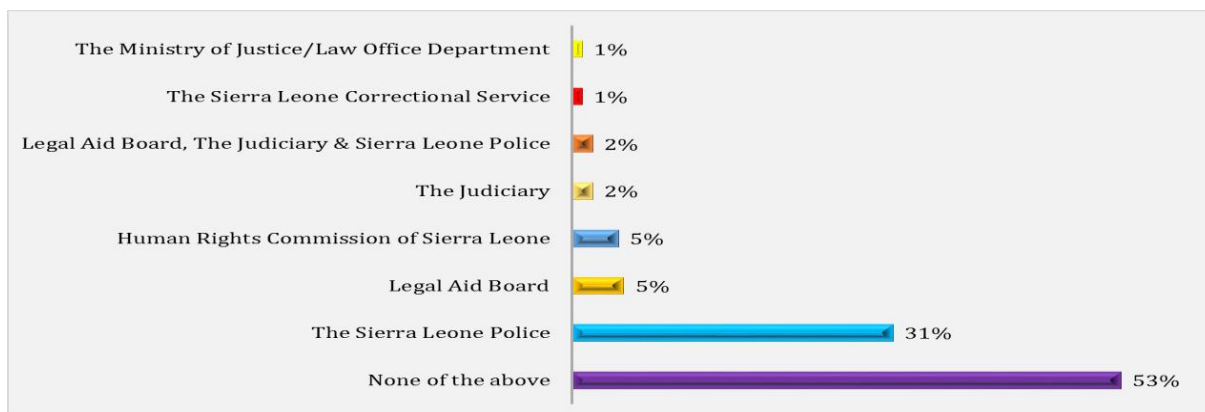
<sup>3</sup> Interview done on 7 August 2017.

**Figure 4: Which of the following institution(s) are you familiar with?**



As could be seen in the graph below, 53% of the respondents indicated that they have not requested any service from any of the institutions listed in the last 12 months. However, 31% indicated that they have requested various forms of services from the Sierra Leone Police including but not limited to family, land, community disputes, robbery, mugging, within the last 12 months. 5% indicated that they requested services from the Legal Aid Board, 5% from the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, 2% from the Judiciary, 2% from the Legal Aid Board, the Judiciary and the Sierra Leone Police, and 1% from the Sierra Leone Correctional Service and 1% from the Ministry of Justice/Law Officers Department. Services requested from the Human Rights Commission and the Legal Aid Board was related to accessing, affording and the dispensation of justice.

**Figure 5: Which institution(s) have you requested service(s) from, in the last 12 months**



Respondents who indicated having requested service from either the security or the justice sectors were, in general, satisfied with the kind of service provided to them as the bulk of the ratings ranked from excellent, good and satisfactory, as shown in the graph below. However, the highest rate of dissatisfaction was among respondents in Freetown with 38% indicating that the services were poor, while 10% rated the services received as very poor. This was followed by Kenema where 26% of the respondents rated the services as poor and 8% as very poor.

Several reasons were provided during interviews and FGDs as to why some of the services were rated poor or very poor and they are listed below:

- Delays in the justice system, cases took too long and some of the respondents lost interest in the process. This could also be linked to complaints against unavailability of justice related institutions or personnel and the reliance on itinerant magistrates and judges in some parts of the country;
- The costs associated with seeking justice are too much and some of the respondents complained of having to make unwanted compromises to avoid the costs or delays in pursuing justice;
- Police arrived at crime scene after the criminals had left;
- Perception of police receiving bribes from the complainant and failing to pursue a case as effectively as they should;
- Police wanting to be bribed by complainant before they could effectually carry out their responsibilities;
- Police complaining that they lack vehicles and resources required to go into especially remote and isolated communities and handle cases or do follow-ups;
- Lawyers providing legal aid inundated with cases and as such cannot pay full attention to any particular case.

It could be seen that most of the comments were on the police, judiciary and legal aid service providers, from whom the bulk of the services have been requested from. Complaining on the quality of services provided, a respondent<sup>4</sup> in Kenema stated:

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<sup>4</sup> Interview conducted in Kenema on 1 September 2017.

“The problem with service provision by security and justice sector actors in Sierra Leone is that they do not see themselves as service providers and they lack people and life skills. They believe they are doing you a favour and that approach is wrong. As such people are afraid of approaching them when they have issues that they need assistance with. People tend to use community related approaches even in very serious cases such as sexual violence that should not be handled at that level than go to state institutions. The institutions are intimidating and certainly not user friendly.”

However, a respondent<sup>5</sup> in Bo had a different experience, when he sought legal aid service from the Legal Aid Board.

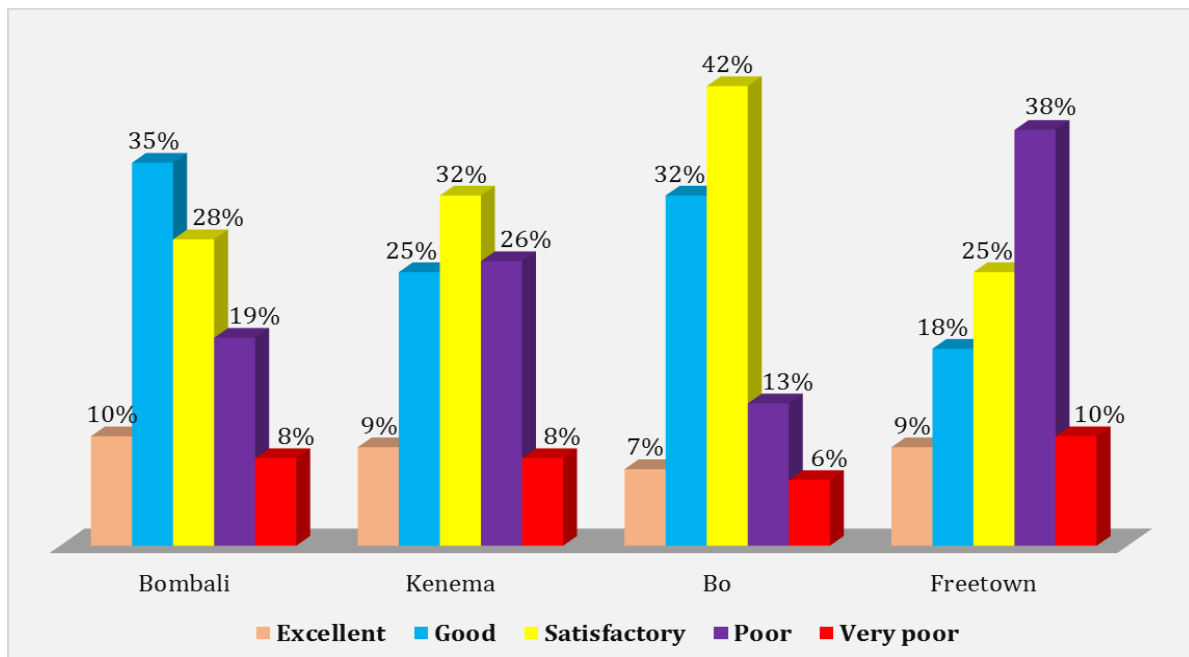
“Initially I did not want to go when people advised me to go to the Legal Aid Board as I was afraid they will be asking for money from me which I do not have. At the end I made up my mind and went there. They treated me very well, asking questions and they cared about what I was going through and they assisted me in getting justice. I am a happy man today.”

It was observed also from interviews and FGDs that some people still lack the confidence and trust permeated by the historical legacies of state institutions being used as instruments of coercion. As such, people deal with these institutions with mistrust and misperceptions, which indicates that there is the need for proactive approaches geared towards strengthening the trust and confidence between the public and state institutions. Furthermore, some of the reasons behind the poor and very poor ratings are legitimate, for instance the delays in dispensing justice, ill-equipped police etc. These factors affect the ability of citizens to believe that they could efficiently and effectively deliver services within the timeframe they are required.

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<sup>5</sup> Interview conducted in Bo on 30 August 2017.

**Figure 6: How would you rate the quality of the service(s) provided? (Overall rating of service received)**



After having been asked about the quality of the services provided, respondents were questioned on their knowledge/awareness of reforms that have taken place in the security and justice sectors over the past 5 years. As indicated in the graph below, between one third and 84% of the respondents interviewed in each of the districts surveyed, declared not being aware of the reforms in the sectors. There are little statistical differences between the two sectors. However, the histograms show that respondents located in Freetown and Kenema seemed to be slightly more aware of the reforms than in the other areas surveyed. This provides a clear indication that even though a lot has been done in terms of reforms in the last five years, the GoSL and related institutions have not adequately communicated these reforms to the general public. However, this does not mean that institutions may not be undertaking public education activities, it indicates that the approaches taken are not proving to be effective and it is crucial that citizens are informed and are aware of reforms in especially the security and justice sectors.

The respondents who indicated that they are aware of reforms in the sectors provided the following answers in the table below on their understanding of the reforms that have taken place in the security and justice sectors.

**Table 1: Reforms in the justice and security sectors identified by respondents**

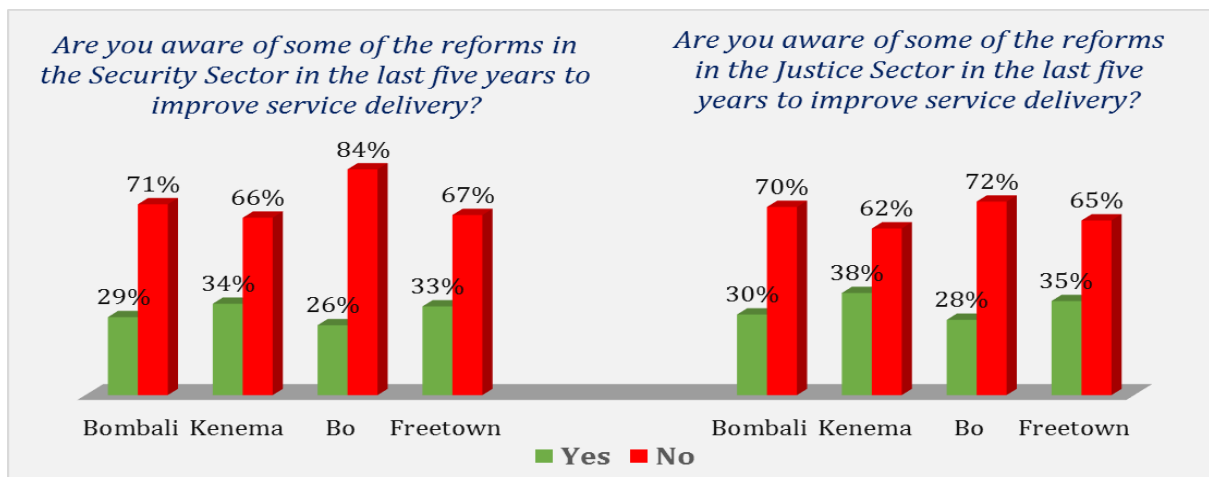
Reforms in the Justice Sector	Reforms in the Security Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establishment of the Legal Aid Board;</b></li> <li>• <b>Family Support Unit (FSU) and its handling of family and community related cases;</b></li> <li>• <b>Delay of court cases being improved;</b></li> <li>• <b>Capacity building programmes for magistrates and court officials undertaken;</b></li> <li>• <b>Improved right of inmates;</b></li> <li>• <b>Reducing of impending court cases</b></li> <li>• <b>Law Reform Commission now has the capacity to introduce more laws;</b></li> <li>• <b>Translation of laws into local languages;</b></li> <li>• <b>Improved conditions of service for magistrates and judges;</b></li> <li>• <b>More magistrates and judges now than before.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Free bail of suspects from police custody and reduction of fines;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Relatively prompt response to emergency cases;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Night patrol of police;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Establishment of the Independent Police Complaints Board;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Implementation of programmes such as the LPPBs that draw the police closer to the people;</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Gender reforms with more women recruited into the police.</b></li> </ul>

The table captures some of the reforms that have taken place in the sectors. However, some of the reforms that have taken place in the last five years include but are not limited to:

- The transformation of the Sierra Leone Prisons Service (SLPS) to a Correctional Service in 2014;

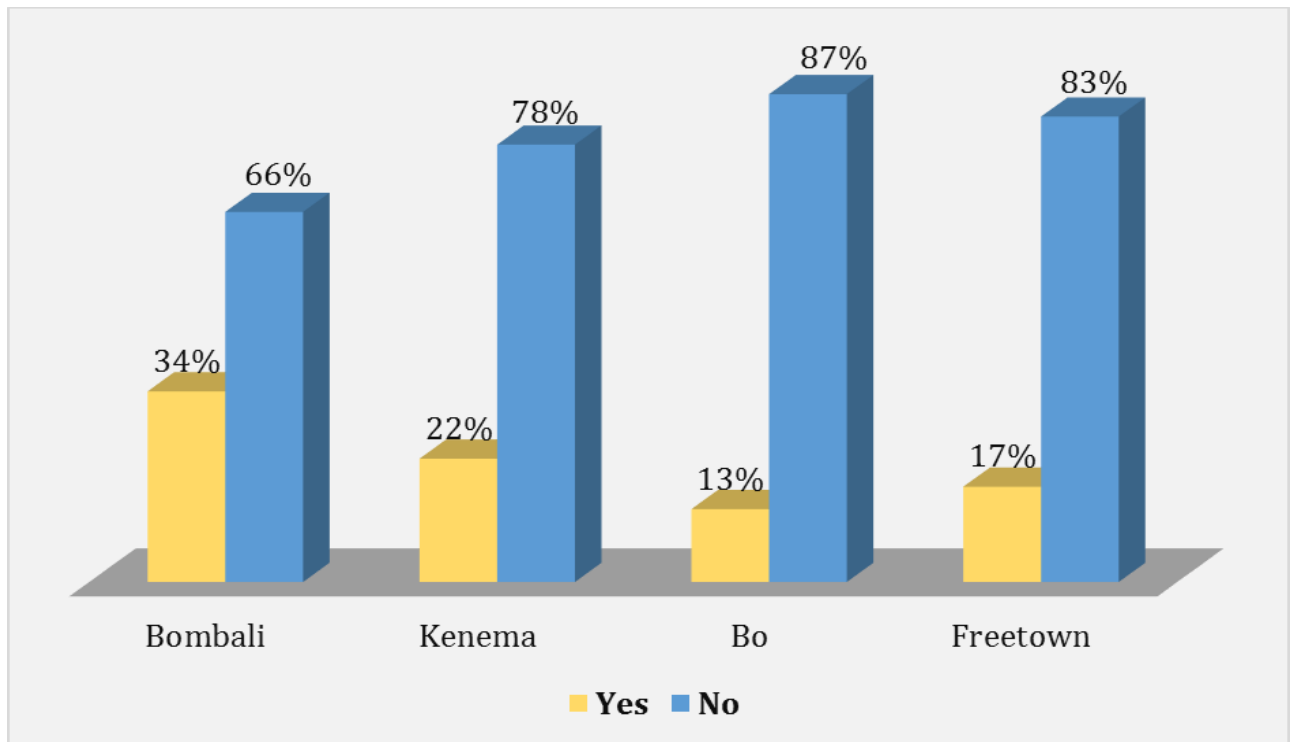
- Investments in Local Needs Policing and establishment of LPPBs across the country;
- Introduction of a National Security Policy and Strategy (NSPS) in 2017 which is the first of its kind in the country;
- Establishment of the Independent Police Complaints Board in 2015;
- Establishment of the Legal Aid Board in 2015;
- Enactment of the Sexual Offences Act of 2012;
- Revised and improved salaries and conditions of service for judges, magistrates and state counsel;
- Deployment of magistrates in every district of the country, with districts which previously had no judges such Pujehun, Kambia, Koinadugu, Port Loko and Kailahun now have sitting magistrates. Each region now has a resident judge and state counsel;
- Recruitment of approximately 20 judges, 10 magistrates and 29 state counsel since 2016;
- Revision of the Bail and Sentencing Act; and
- Revision and finalization of the Criminal Procedures Act which is now awaiting parliamentary action.

**Figure 7: Awareness of reforms in both justice and security sector**



Building on the qualitative and quantitative details provided above, it could be seen in the graph below that 87% of the respondents in Bo indicated that the government is not adequately communicating reform processes. 83% in Freetown, 78% in Kenema and 66% in Bombali also indicated the same.

**Figure 8: In your opinion, is the government communicating enough on the reforms taking place in the security and justice sector?**



Although various reforms have been implemented in the justice and security sector as stated by some of the respondents, 77% of the respondents in Bo, 69% in Kenema, 63% in Freetown and 58% in Bombali indicated that in their perception the reforms have not addressed the needs and concerns of Sierra Leoneans. In reflecting on this conclusion, a key informant in Bo<sup>6</sup> stated:

“The challenge is that there is a gap between reforms, policies and practice in Sierra Leone. Those who get directly impacted in most cases are those at the top and not at the bottom. The laws or policies are mostly not enforced and as such do not positively impact the ordinary Sierra Leonean.”

Similar sentiments were expressed by a civil society activist<sup>7</sup> in Bo:

<sup>6</sup> Interview conducted on 27 August 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Interview conducted on 23 August 2017.



“I am aware that there are laws but if you asked me if the laws impact ordinary Sierra Leoneans, I will say in most cases no. The security and justice sectors continue to fail to understand that they have the responsibility of protecting and promoting the rights and welfare of Sierra Leoneans. The police still does not understand what it means to relate with especially young people, whom they run after and kill when there are demonstrations and most Sierra Leoneans still cannot access or afford justice. Justice is mostly available in major cities and towns but not in the local communities where most of our people could be found.”

The arguments proffered by interviewees are centered on the need for the trickling down of reforms to ordinary Sierra Leoneans who appeared to be still struggling to understand how reforms directly impact them. The general consensus is that there is lack of enforcement of policies and as such there is very limited difference between their existence and non-existence. This gap is further compounded by the challenges that government institutions contend with such as limited financial and human resource capacity which limits their ability to respond to the needs and aspirations of the public. It could also be argued that the unawareness on the part of the public of the reforms also creates an impression of lack of political will and commitment to introduce and implement reforms which further strengthens the argument for government to communicate what it does and at the same time use a people centered approach which promotes local buy-in, participation and ownership.

Respondents who indicated that the reforms do address the needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans, provided several examples as indicated below on how this has happened or is happening.

**Justice Sector:**

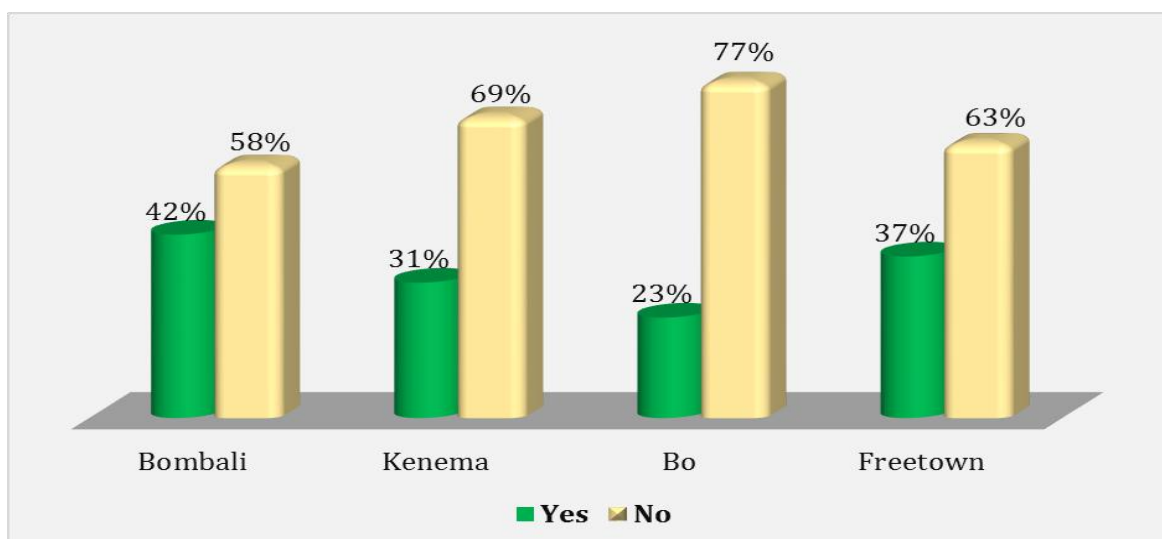
- A number of innocent convicts have been acquitted with the support of the Legal Aid Board;
- The Legal Aid Board is providing access to justice and free legal services for those seeking justice related services;
- More people are aware of their rights now than during the war due to the Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone (HRCSL);

- The FSU helps women and girls to resolve their domestic and marital issues, and also force men to take responsibility of their children;
- State institutions are much more respectful of human rights now than they use to do before and during the war; and
- More courts are now available with magistrates in them and people can have justice served easily now.

**Security sector:**

- There is now improved security and people have the freedom to go about their daily activities without fear;
- There is now an agency (the IPCB) through which people can channel their complaints when there is a violation of their rights by police officers;
- People are now part of security structures such as LPPBs;
- Criminal Investigations Department (CID) now does everything possible to resolve criminal matters through diligent investigations which is good for the ordinary man; and
- Security officers were able to stop activities of cliques/gangs which make communities safer as the safety and security of communities were threatened by the existence of those groups.

**Figure 9: Perception of whether reforms do address the needs and concerns of Sierra Leone.**



### 3.3 PERCEPTION OF PERFORMANCE BY SECURITY AND JUSTICE SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

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As could be seen in the graph below, there is a fair rating of the performance of all the institutions studied, with the HRCSL and the LAB being rated as the best performing institutions. However, it was deduced from the qualitative details provided that the respondents perceive these institutions to be much more accessible, people friendly and provide services of good quality. This is expected as these institutions provide legal aid and are seen publicly defending the rights of both victims and perpetrators of criminal offences. This is contrary to what their perception is of institutions such as the police, the MoJ/Law Officers Department and the Judiciary. From the qualitative data, some respondents see these institutions as focused on punishing rather than using restorative justice that will decongest prisons and detention facilities and improve the relationship between citizens and the state.

Commenting on the performance of the Judiciary, an interviewee<sup>8</sup> stated:

“The judiciary could have been better rated by me if they had more options than fining and sentencing and is seen proactively trying to shift from filling prisons to trying to transform people in conflict with the law into better citizens.”

It is possible that some of the ratings may have been based on negative perceptions built over the years and for instance with the police, some of the respondents based their conclusions on mostly one unit, so for instance, drivers and motorcyclists expressed frustrations and anger against the traffic unit of the police and it appears that their ratings for the police were mostly negative as they indicated the traffic unit is corrupt and harasses them daily. Similarly, their rating of the MOJ/LOD and the judiciary may have also been clouded by the perception of them being usually treated unfairly by these institutions.

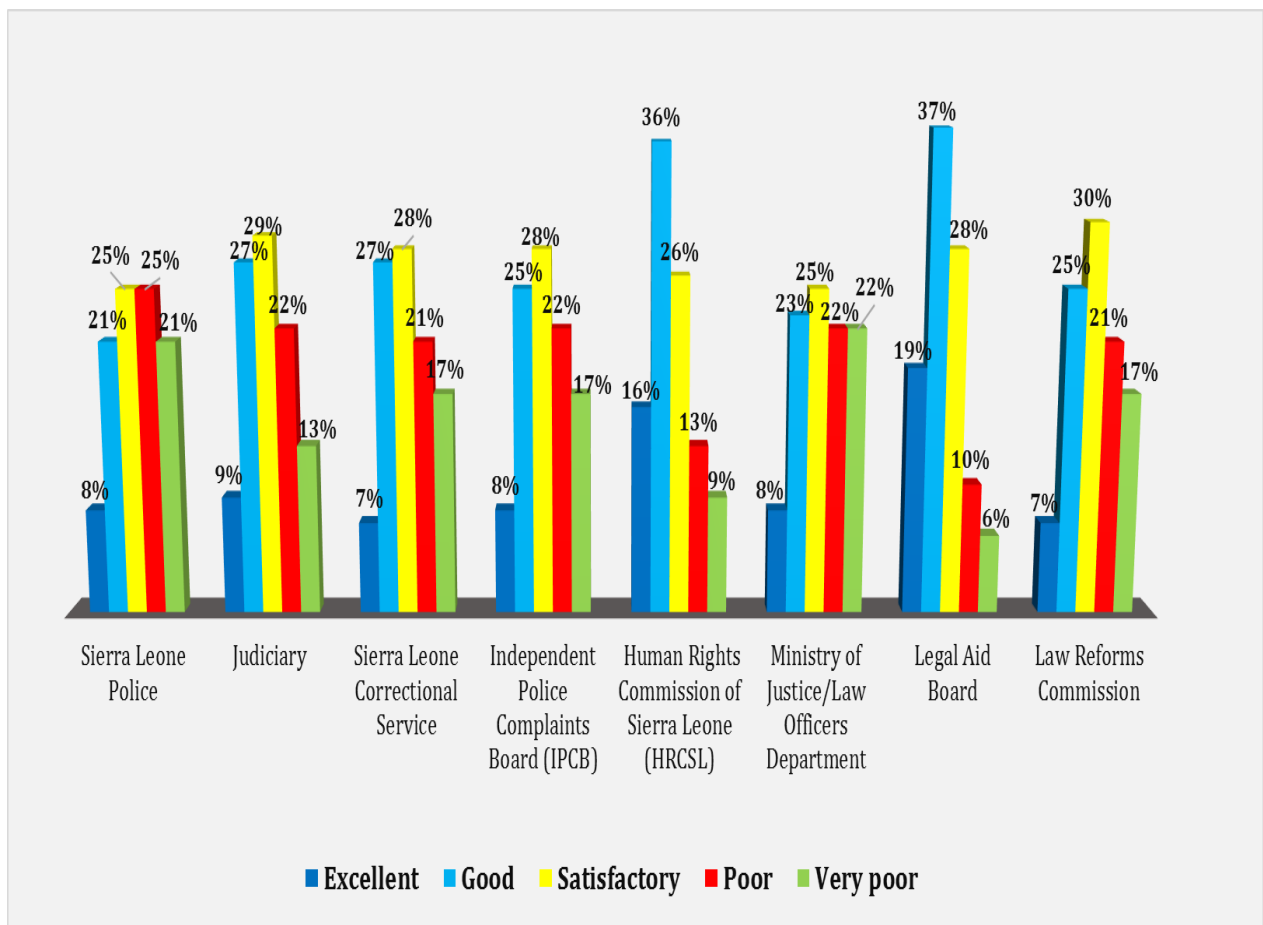
It was observed that while the ratings for the LRC and the IPCB are fair, most of the respondents struggled with rating them especially as they have not directly interacted with them and have very limited knowledge of what they do. This provides an indication that while the IPCB for instance has undertaken town hall engagements and public education

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<sup>8</sup> Interview conducted in Freetown on 3 August 2017.

campaigns across the country, there is the need for more of such engagements with the public especially on the mandate of the institution. Similarly, the LRC has a very significant role to play in getting the public know of and come to appreciate what they do. The LRC is a crucial component of government and has been effective in producing bills through the Ministry of Justice such as the Legal Aid Act of 2012, Sierra Leone Correctional Service Act of 2014, the Sexual Offences Act of 2012, revision of the Criminal Procedures Act (CPA) all of which form the core of reforms in the security and justice sectors. However, as stated in previous sections above, there is the need for the GoSL to invest in getting the public become aware of the activities of such sensitive institutions.

**Figure 8: Institutional performance rating by respondents**



Responding to questions on their opinion on the level of security in their districts, more than half of the respondents as could be seen in the graph below perceive the security situation in their communities to be normal (neither low nor high). However, 38% of the respondents in Bombali defined the level of security as high in their district, which is the

highest in all the districts studied, while the Kenema has the highest number of respondents (29%) who indicated that they have low level of security.

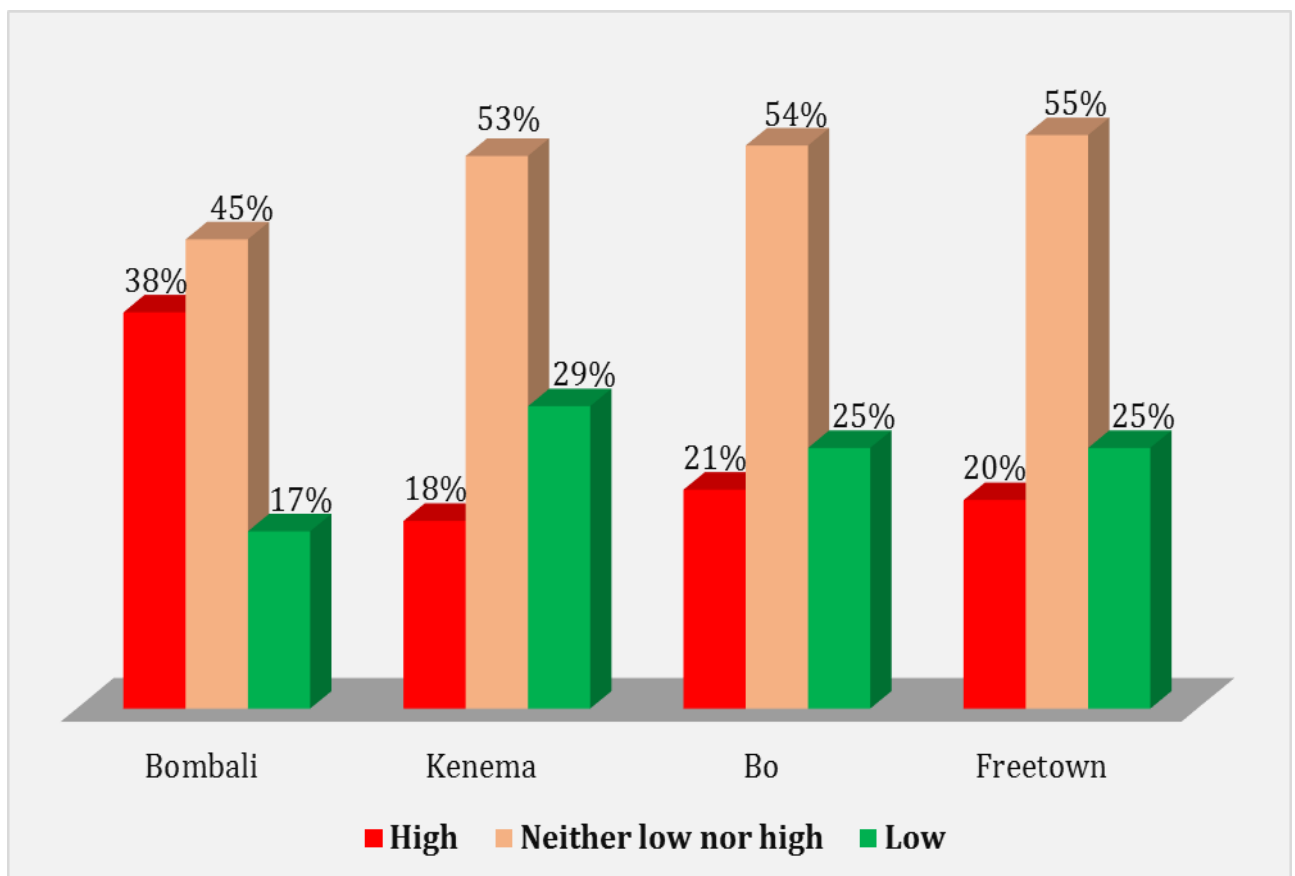
Defining what high security level means, respondents interviewed and in FGDs indicated:

- High presence of security in the district; and
- Community awareness and participation of youth and elders in provision of security in local communities.

Defining what low security level means, respondents noted:

- Limited presence and in some cases complete absence of state security agencies;
- Failure of the security to respond immediately, when called upon;
- Fewer personnel than needed in a district;
- Lack of trust between state security actors and the people.

**Figure 11: How would you rate the level of security in your district?**



### 3.3 AWARENESS OF AND EFFECTIVENESS OF DECENTRALISED SECURITY STRUCTURES

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As indicated in the context section, as part of the SSR process in Sierra Leone, institutions such as the police and the ONS established decentralised security structures to promote a human security based approach to security, take security closer to the people and foster their inclusion and participation in decision making processes within the sector. Thus, this section presents findings on the level of awareness of the structures and the perception of the respondents on their effectiveness.

In relation to decentralised security structures, a large share of the respondents indicated being familiar with the Local Police Partnership Boards (nearly 25% in each district) as could be seen in the graph below. However, most of the respondents expressed not being familiar with any of the listed decentralised security measures. This percentage is particularly important with regards to Freetown and Bo where it reaches a peak of 46% and 69% respectively. However, in Kenema 21% of the respondents indicated that they are familiar with all of them, while 13% in Freetown and 12% in Bombali stated the same. It could be seen in the graph that the structure that people are much more familiar with is the LPPB as indicated by 32% of the respondents in Kenema, 28% in Freetown, 22% in Bombali and 19% in Bo.

The difference between the LPPB and the other structures is that the LPPBs operate at the community level and are established where there are police divisions, the other structures are formal structures consisting different actors working on security and justice related issues. Furthermore, the LPPBs were very active during the fight against Ebola, working at the grassroot community levels, certainly alongside other structures. However, the LPPBs consist of community members and police officers and they are active within their own communities rather than at the district or chiefdom level and they also undertake Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), which is essential in maintaining peace and security in communities. As such, people are much more familiar with them than the other structures.

A community member in Bombali stated:

“LPPBs are playing an important role in local communities. They are in some cases, the first point of call when there is an issue. They either solve

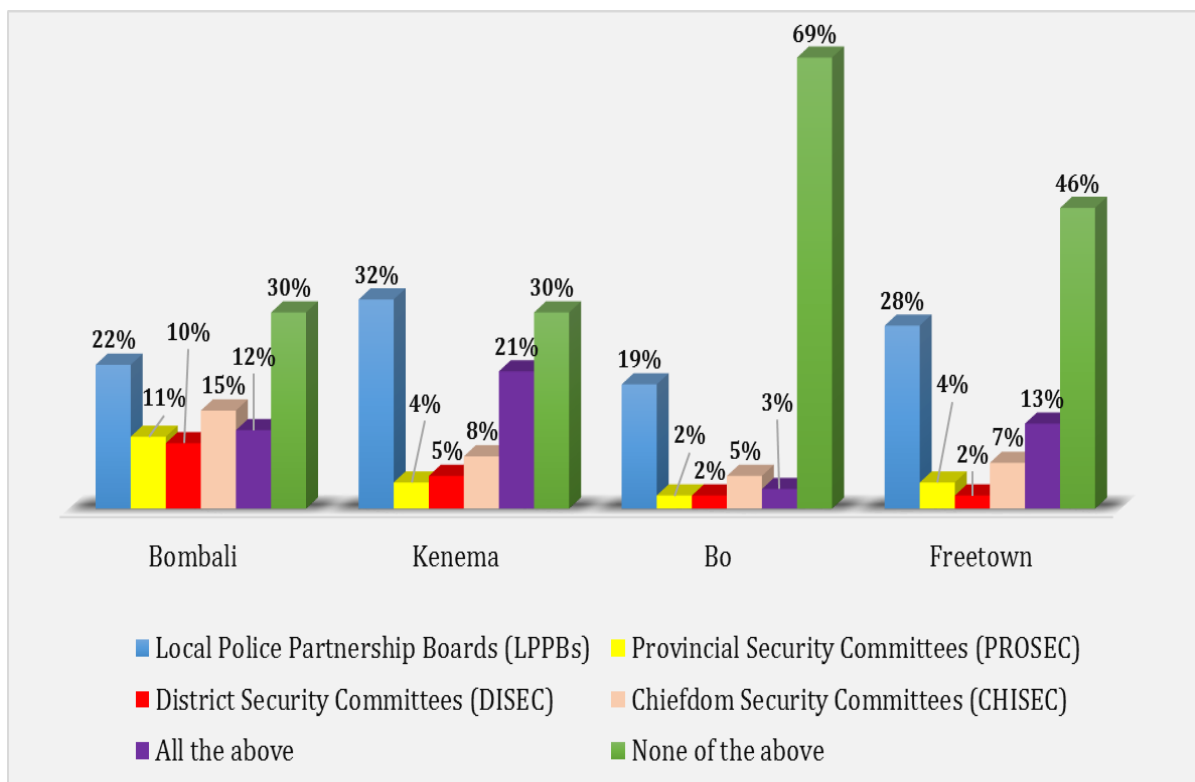
the issue or they help people understand what to do when the issue could not be solved at the local level. LPPBs are also important in improving the relationship between community members and the police.”

A civil society activist stated that:

“The LPPBs have been very active in solving community related problems and they were very active during the Ebola outbreak. Some people in our community are part of the LPPB and this gives us hope and trust in the security system.”

Comments such as those provided above provide an indication of the presence and engagement with communities by LPPBs.

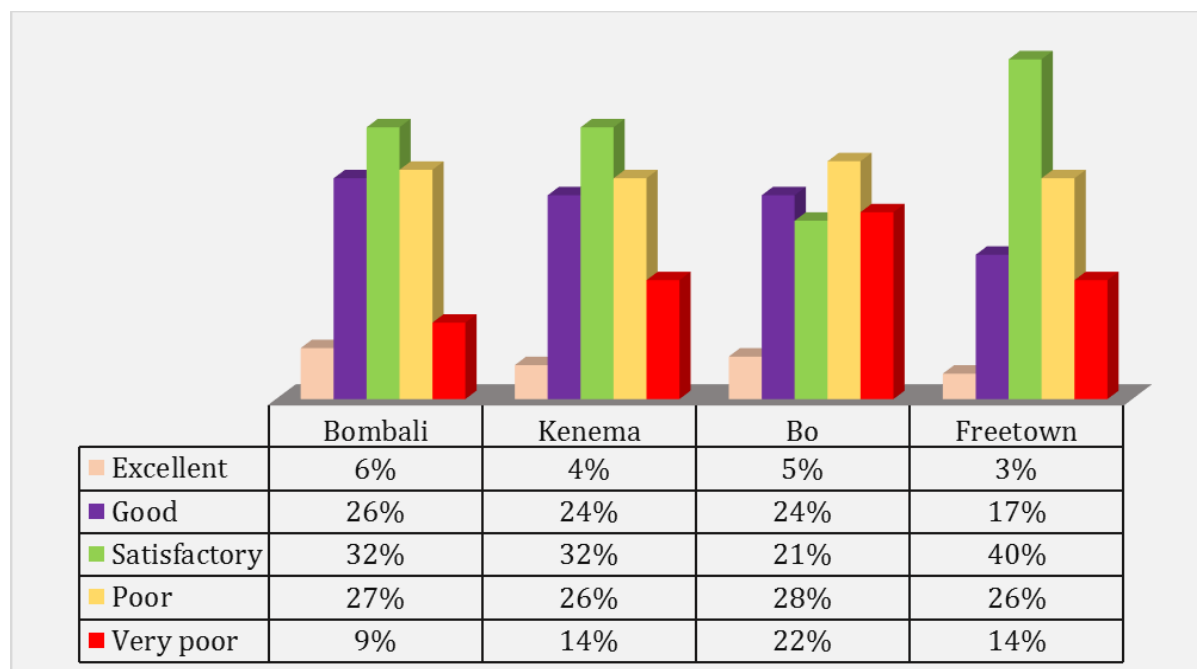
**Figure 12: Which of the following decentralised security structures are you familiar with?**



Respondents who are familiar with the decentralised security structures were asked to rate them. In each district, the results seem to follow a normal distribution. While only few respondents rated the effectiveness as excellent, more rated them between good and satisfactory, while the rest rated them between poor and very poor. It was deduced from

the qualitative data that some respondents indicated that for instance the LPPB is less active now than it used to be, which the LPPB members attributed to lack of financial and moral support they used to get from the police. However, the police are also constrained as most of the engagement with the LPPB was supported by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) through its Access to Security and Justice Programme (ASJP), which ceased operations in 2016. This provides an indication that reliance on donor support has its implications and directly negatively impacts certain activities within the sectors.

**Figure 13: How would you rate the effectiveness of the decentralised security structures listed above?**



### 3.4 EXISTING RELATIONSHIP/LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN THE SECTORS

In rating the relationship between the public and the institutions studied, respondents indicated that the relationship between the public and institutions such as the Sierra Leone Correctional Service, the LAB, the HRCSL as largely being between fair and good as seen in the graph below. While the relationship between the public and institutions such as the Police, the Judiciary, the LRC and MoJ needs significant improvement. It is important to

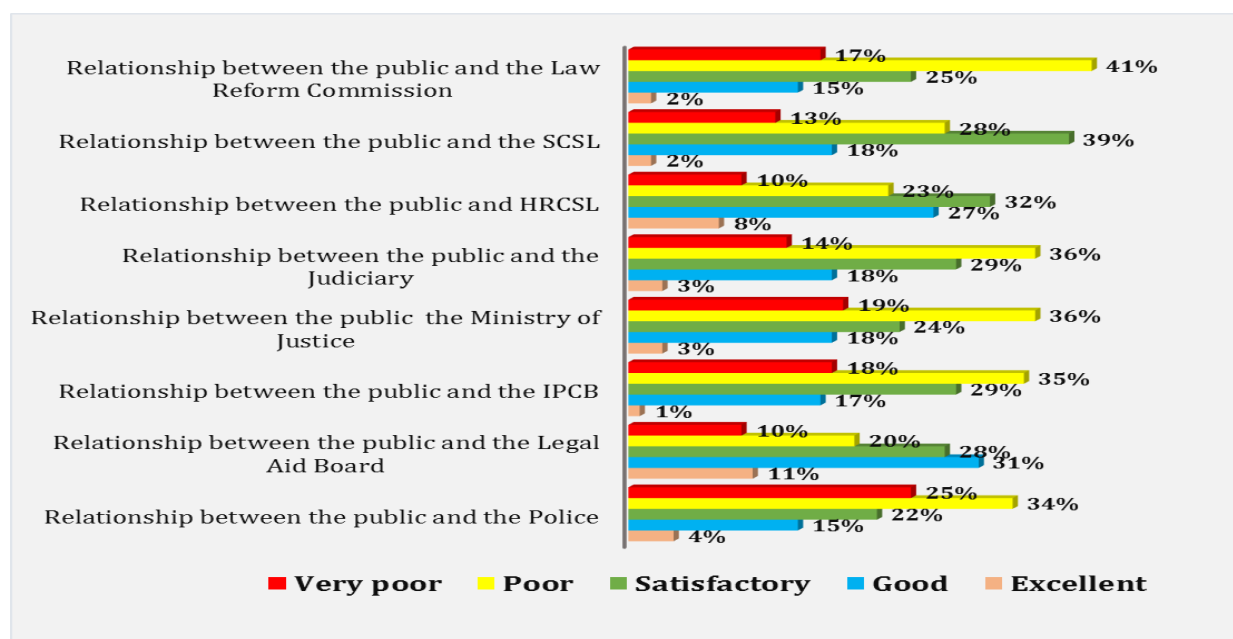


note that with most of these institutions for instance the IPCB and the LRC, there is no bad relationship in the strict sense of the word, but people rate the relationship as either poor or very poor due to the limited or not interaction or awareness in terms of what they do. This is very much different from qualitative data provided on the police, judiciary and the MoJ, that they perceive to be not people friendly.

In a FGD with university students in Freetown, 9 out of 10 indicated that the relationship between the public and the MoJ, the police and the judiciary is not good. In fact they accused especially the Judiciary of not making any effort to get closer to the public and get the public become aware of what they do and the challenges they contend with. Similarly, most of the students indicated that they are not aware of neither the existence, or of what the LRC and the IPCB do. One of the students<sup>9</sup> noted:

“I never knew of the IPCB but from your [the researcher] description of what they do, they are very important. Why is it only now that that we are having the IPCB. The police needs serious checks as they treat young people and even students like enemies when we demonstrate. Now at least we know where to report officers when they violate our rights.”

**Figure 14: Respondents’ rating relationship between the public and security and justice institutions**

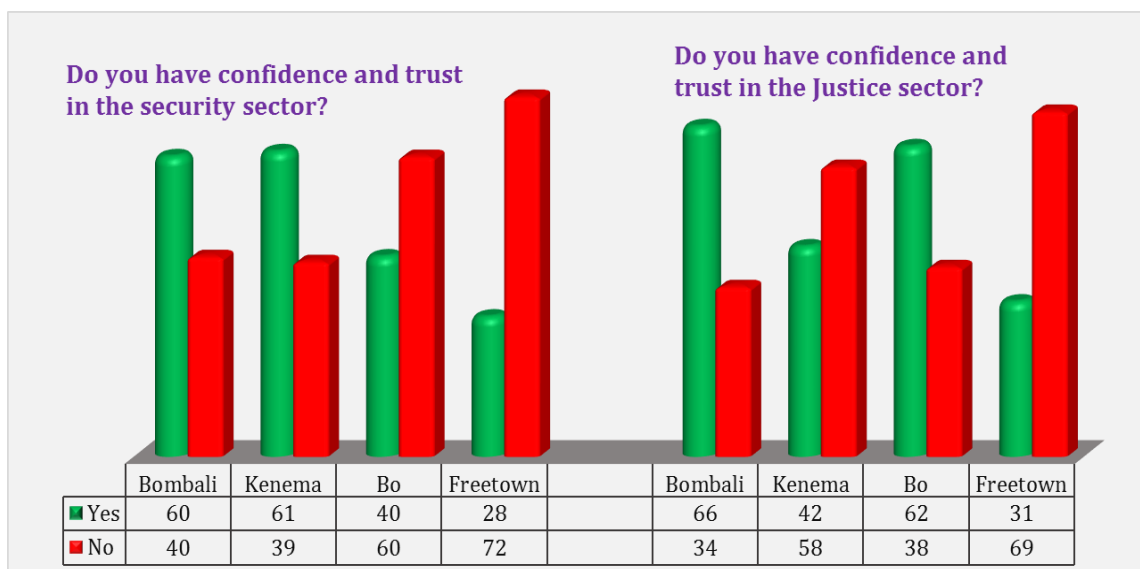


<sup>9</sup> FGD organised on 12 August 2017.

As part of the study, respondents were questioned on whether they have trust and confidence in the security and justice sectors. While 60% in Bombali and 61% in Kenema indicated that they have trust and confidence in the security sector, 60% in Bo and 72% in Freetown indicated that they do not have confidence and trust in the sector.

In relation to the justice sector, 66% of respondents in Bombali indicated they have confidence and trust in the sector and contrary to what was indicated for the security sector, 62% of the respondents in Bo indicated that they have confidence and trust in the justice sector. Most of the respondents in Bo, indicated the reason for the favourable answers is that the Legal Aid Board and the Human Rights Commission are doing a good job in the district and people have confidence and trust in them. However, 69% of respondents in Freetown and 58% indicated that they do not have confidence and trust in the justice sector.

**Figure 15: Respondents' trust and confidence in the justice and security sector**

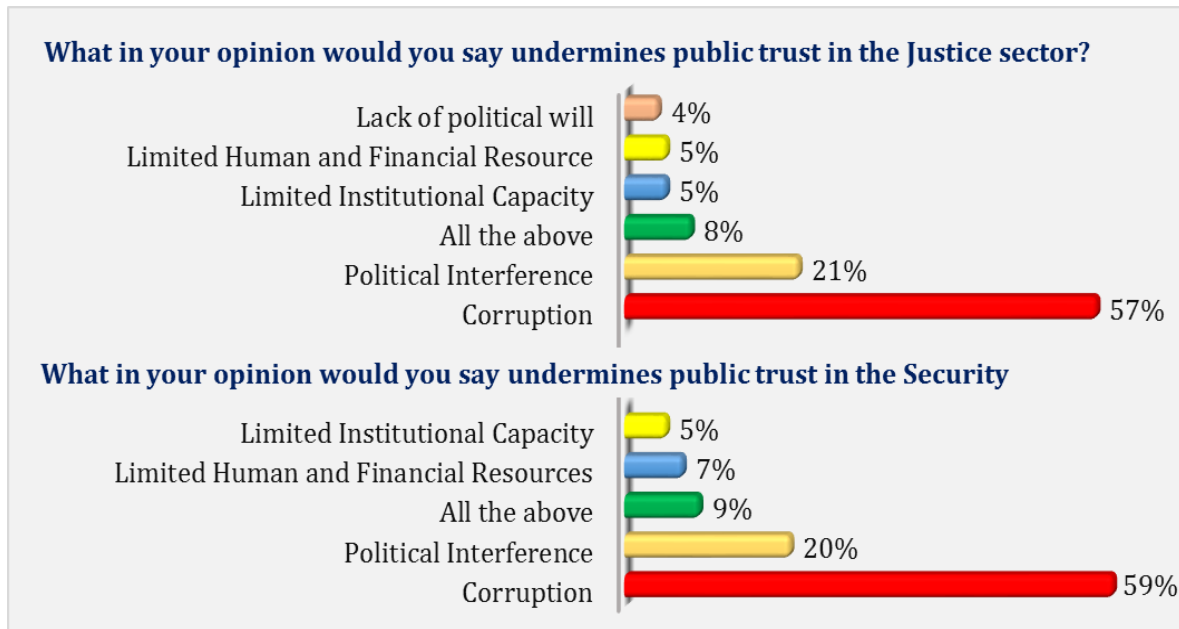


When further questioned on the specific factors that undermine public trust in the security and justice sectors, corruption stood out with an average of 58% as the most significant factor, followed by others factors such as perceptions of political interference, lack of political will and commitment and limited human and financial resources to efficiently and effectively carry out roles and responsibilities.

It was also observed that some of the conclusions are largely based on misconceptions, which have shaped the narratives within some communities over the years and as the

institutions have done very little to counter them and get people to understand their constraints, the narratives and conclusions continue to hold.

**Figure 16: Factors that undermine public trust in the security and justice sectors**

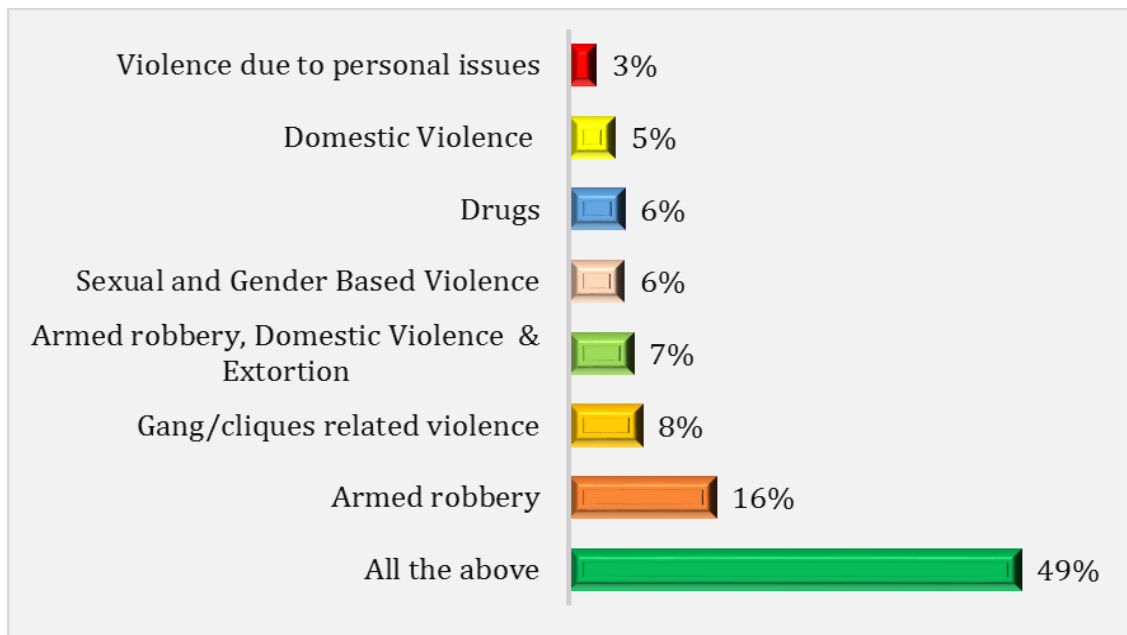


### 3.5 CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS FROM RESPONDENTS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE SECTORS

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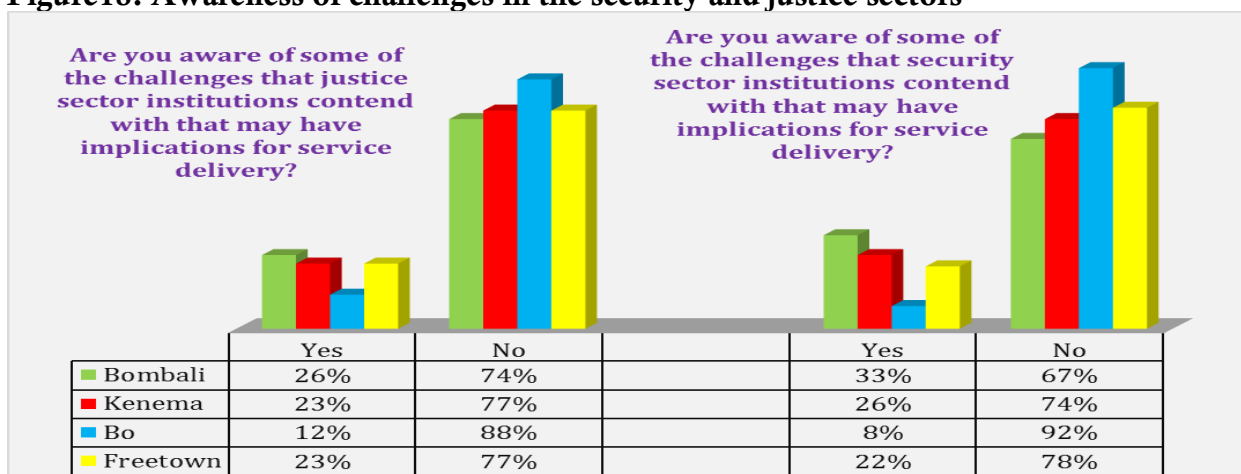
Several questions on challenges and recommendations with regards to the justice and security sectors were asked during the survey. As illustrated in the graph below, when asked which criminal acts they would like the police to focus on dealing with in their locality, 49% indicated all the crimes in the list, 16% indicated armed robbery, 8% gangs/cliques related violence, 7% armed robbery, domestic violence and extortion, 6% SGBV, 6% drugs related cases, 5% domestic violence and 3% due to violence due to personal issues. It was observed that the kinds of crimes listed are based on the security threats existing in specific locations. However, as could be seen, most of the crimes cut across all the areas surveyed.

**Figure 17: Which of the following crimes would you like the Police to focus on addressing in your locality?**



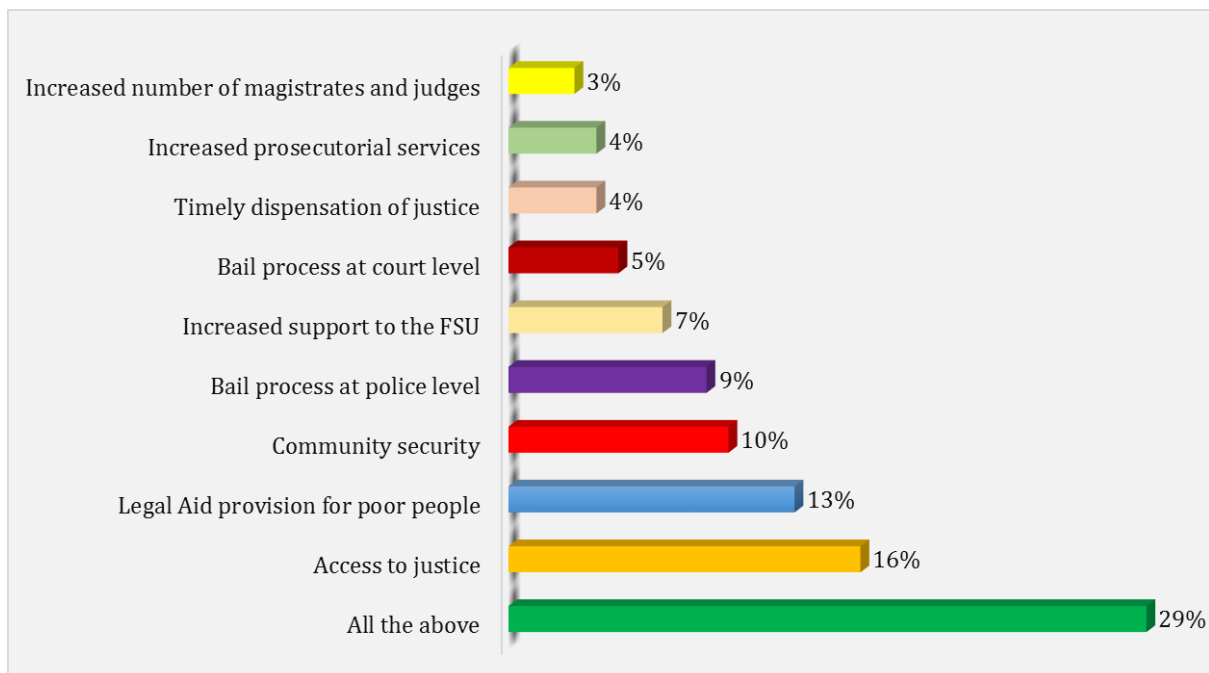
As illustrated in the graphs below, an average of 90% in Bo, 77.5% in Freetown, 75.5% in Kenema and 70.5% in Bombali of the respondents indicated that they are not aware of the challenges in both the security and justice sectors. When further probed, most of the respondents indicated that the institutions do not communicate the challenges they contend with and they should not be the ones thinking on their behalf. Of the respondents who indicated that they are aware of the challenges that the sectors contend with, 62% indicated limited human and financial resources, 23% indicated lack of political will and commitment 10% indicated infrastructural challenges a 5% indicated lack of functional systems and structures.

**Figure 18: Awareness of challenges in the security and justice sectors**



When questioned on which aspects of security and justice services that they would like to see improved, 29% indicated all of the above as could be seen below, 16% indicated access to justice, 13% legal aid provision for poor people, 10% community security, 9% bail processing at police level, 7% increased support to the FSU, 5% bail processing at the court level, 4%, timely dispensation of justice, 4% increased prosecutorial services and 3% increased number of magistrates and judges. All the issues listed are of paramount need as they specifically speak to the challenges in the sectors that respondents indicated as affecting the quality of services provided and the trust and confidence between the people and the institutions studied.

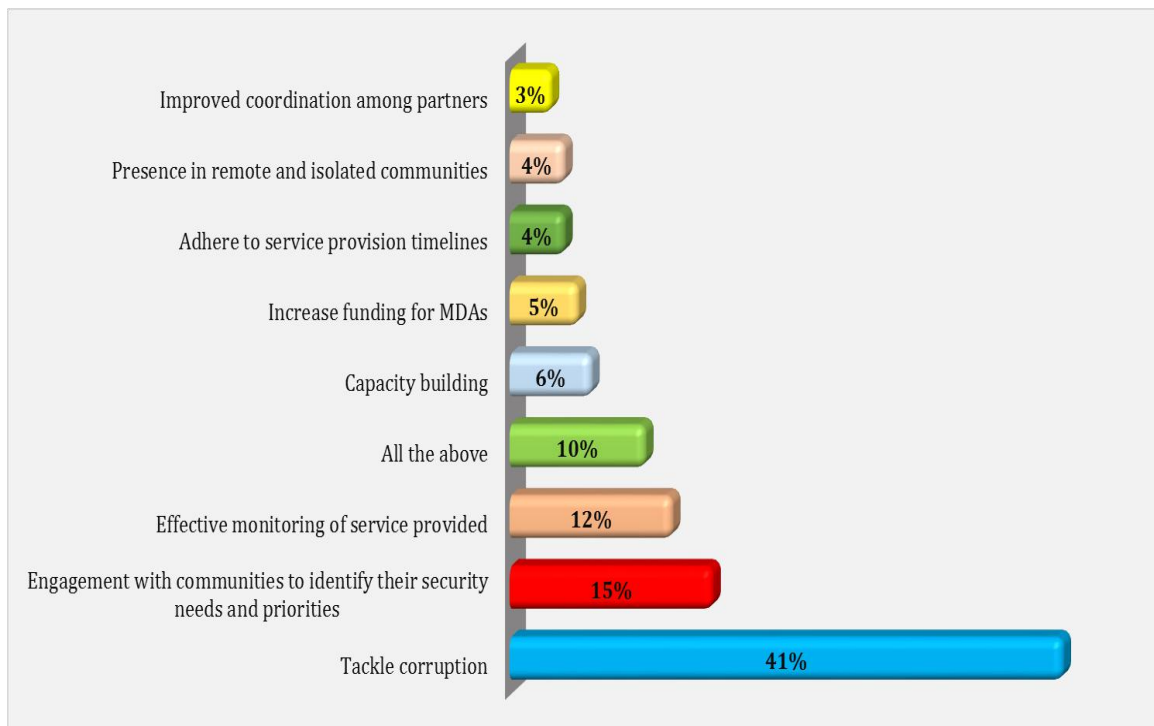
**Figure19: In your opinion, which aspects of security and justice service would you like to see improved?**



When questioned on what the government needs to do to promote effective service delivery by security and justice sector institutions, 41% of the respondents indicated that the government needs to tackle corruption within the institutions, 15% indicated that rather than assume the security needs and priorities of communities, the government needs to engage communities and together identify and work on addressing their needs and priorities, 12% indicated that the GoSL needs to monitor the activities it finances to avoid misappropriation and at the same time ensure that activities are implemented as planned, 10% indicated that all the listed points are essential and government should improve on

all of them, 6% indicated the need for investment in capacity building of institutions and their staff, 5% indicated need for increased funding for all institutions so they could fully carry out their roles and responsibilities, 4% indicated that the government has to ensure that all MDAs should strictly adhere to service provision timelines and should meet the provisions of the service charter, with those failing punished, 4% indicated the need for MDAs to be present and active in remote and isolated communities especially in promoting access to and the affordability of security and justice related services and 3% indicated that the need for improved coordination among partners to avoid duplication and promote complementarity, synergy and harmonization of efforts.

**Figure 20: What does the government need to do to promote effective service delivery by security and justice sector institutions?**



One of the core challenges often present in countries with strong patriarchal cultures and traditions such as Sierra Leone, is the lack of inclusiveness and participation of women and girls in the design and implementation of especially security and justice related activities. Thus, respondents were asked whether in their opinion, the needs and aspirations of women and girls are mainstreamed into the design and provision of security and justice related services. Approximately two-thirds of the male respondents in the districts of Bombali, Kenema and Bo indicated that in their opinion, girls and women were receiving specific attention and that their needs and aspirations are mainstreamed in

service delivery, while only a third of the women respondents shared that opinion as shown in the graph below. Interestingly, the results from the other districts in relation to male respondents vary substantially with those in the Freetown, where 59% of the male respondents stated that security and justice service delivery does not mainstream the wishes and aspiration of women and girls in the design and provision of services.

Some of the reasons provided by respondents indicating that gender is mainstreamed into service provision by the actors studied include:

- The establishment of the FSU;
- Introduction of a Gender Unit within the SLP;
- Introduction of gender specific laws such as the Sexual Offences Act of 2012, Domestic Violence Act of 2007 and the Devolution of Estates Act of 2007; and
- The introduction of a Saturday Court specifically on SGBV cases.

Commenting on gender and the security and justice sectors in Sierra Leone, a women's activist<sup>10</sup> stated:

“Claims of gender mainstreaming are all lip service, mere lip service. Our systems and structures are not women friendly and do not understand what gender mainstreaming is. The laws available are not enforced and women continue to face injustice in their homes and communities.”

Similar claims were made by a female respondent<sup>11</sup> in Kenema:

“Most of the time, decisions are made on what is best for women and girls without consulting us. Our society is largely dominated by men and while they there are attempts to be fair to us, most of what is decided on when it comes to security and justice issues center around the needs of men.”

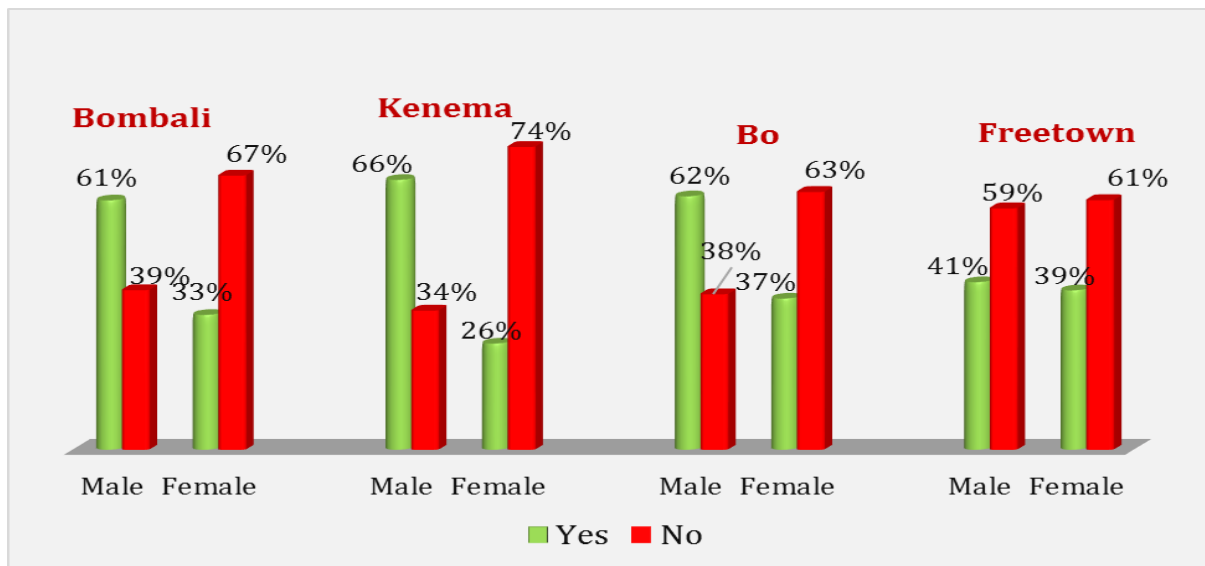
In most of the communities visited, there is the perception among women and girls that they are not treated equally to men and boys and when it comes to decision making or participation in security and justice issues, men make decisions and this is entrenched by community structures and leadership.

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<sup>10</sup> Interview conducted in Bombali on 1 September 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Interview conducted in Kenema on 5 September 2017.

**Figure 23: In your opinion, are the needs and aspirations of women and girls mainstreamed into the design and provision of security and justice related services?**





## 4. CONCLUSION

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Since 2002, the GoSL and its development partners have invested immensely in security and justice sector reform processes. The investment has succeeded in establishing a significant number of institutions and laws and policies as recommended by the 2004 TRC-SL Report. Alongside this, the country has remained relatively stable and has held three elections (2002, 2007 and 2012), since the end of the conflict.

However, from the findings presented, it could be concluded that there are still significant challenges in the sectors surveyed and much needs to be done to further improve on the performance of the sectors in terms of relating with and the delivery of services to the general public. While most of the ratings across the board are satisfactory, respondents clearly expressed the challenges and constraints they contend with across the country as they try to access services provided by the institutions included in the survey. While most of the challenges (including challenges in accessing security and justice institutions in remote and isolated communities or the ability of the institutions to immediately respond when called upon) could be largely attributed to the limited financial and human resource capacity of the institutions, others could be linked to the manner in which some institutions approach service delivery. This has and continues to undermine the level of trust and confidence in some institutions among some members of the public.

Closely associated with the point above, while several achievements have been made, institutions of the GoSL appear to be less effective in communicating those achievements to the public. At the same time, most of the respondents indicated that the institutions do not communicate the challenges they contend with and as such the public is unaware of them. Thus, with limited understand of the achievements made by and the challenges in the sector, conclusions from the public are based on what they perceive to be happening and not what may be the reality.

Notwithstanding this, the GoSL needs to prioritise security and justice reform processes as there is to need to enforce legislations, improve and expand on service delivery, constructively include and engage all relevant state and non-state actors in the process, employ proactive rather than reactive approaches to security and justice related issues and strengthen harmonization, synergy and complementarity in the sectors.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

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Based on the findings and conclusions of this survey, this section provides very specific recommendations that the GoSL and its institutions should take into consideration to enable them improve on the delivery of security and justice related services across the country.

- There is the need for more investment in the human, financial, infrastructural and logistical capacity of security and justice institutions. The perception of the respondents is that the challenges that the institutions contend with affect their ability to deliver much needed services by the public, which affects their trust and confidence in the sectors.
- Public perception could be greatly improved with better customer training and improved attitudes towards service users by justice and security institution. Most respondents believed that mechanisms such as complaints and redress systems could be strengthened but also complemented by more helpful support systems like information on how to access services and better customer service attitudes.
- From the findings, it was deduced that government institutions need to further improve on communicating their achievements and the challenges they contend with. Thus, there is the need for communications strategies to be developed for the security and justice sectors. The development and effective implementation of sectoral communication strategies will facilitate better understanding on the part of the general public of what institutions have achieved, the challenges they contend with, and at the same time manage the public's expectations in relation to service delivery.
- A sector wide approach to budgeting, strategic programming and policy coordination while maintaining the operational independence of the various institutions should be ensured by the JSCO in the justice sector and its counterpart ONS in the security sector. This will improve coordination, synergy, harmonization and complementarity of efforts between the two sectors and between the sector actors and civil society.
- The need for greater fiscal devolution of justice and security institutions to enable operational effectiveness and local accountability is essential. Local managers in

the justice and security sectors with access to operational budgets could do more to adapt services to meet local needs and interests. Some focused group discussion suggested the need to adapt different strategies and response systems to different locations. For instance, reaching communities in rural areas could be different and require innovative systems to rural areas.

- It is important to note that if institutions such as the SLP are to function efficiently and effectively, their salaries and conditions of service have to be of an improved and acceptable standard. If this is done, it will go a long way in minimising perceptions of corruption and provide officials with a state of mind that will enable them professionally carry out their roles and responsibilities. On the other hand, suitable accountability mechanisms must be instituted to deter these institutions from engaging in activities that might affect the public's perception of their integrity.
- Activities undertaken in the sectors should be regularly monitored and evaluated to ascertain their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact created and the potential for sustainability. Such exercises should be organised by the sector coordination units to ensure that an integrated approach is used in the process of collecting, processing, managing and using data to improve service delivery by the sectors.
- The human and financial resource challenges that government institutions contend with appears to be affecting their ability to efficiently and effectively deliver services. As such, there is a heavy reliance on donors which has its attendant problems. This points to the fact that there is a clear and urgent need for further investment in building institutional capacity and strengthening their ability to meet the needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans.

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