

PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE ON
THE REVIEW OF THE POLICE ACT 1964:

Between 2014 to 2016, The Law Reform Commission undertook a project to review the Police Act, 1964. A subcommittee was established with the mandate to “*to review the Police Act of 1964 taking into consideration any pertinent provisions in the Constitution of Sierra Leone, relevant case law and legislation from other jurisdictions, the views and recommendations of any interested stakeholders, and any other source the Sub-committee considers relevant*”. The subcommittee held several meetings and concluded with the writing of a report that contained recommendations.

This project was revived in 2023 by the reconstitution of a subcommittee to continue the mandate of the 2014 subcommittee. The Commission has over the last year or more built partnerships with both local and international bodies. The Commission was able to trigger the interest of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support moving forward with the review of the Police Act, 1964.

The Commission has developed this questionnaire, with the hope of soliciting the views of the wider public in addition to other forms of public consultations. This is one effective method of giving ownership of the work of the Commission and the legislative work under review to the public.

This questionnaire is meant to be administered to Stakeholders identified by the sub-Committee. It would be anonymous but respondents are required to indicate their titles. Kindly note that views expressed will help in developing modern and progressive law that will govern the Police Force of Sierra Leone. All answers and suggestions will be accorded utmost confidentiality so as not to divulge the identity of respondents.

A. PERSONAL DETAILS:

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. What is your age?:

a. Below 18 years

b. 18 to 35years

c. 36 to 55 years

d. 56 to 69 years

e. 70 and above

3. What is your marital status?:

a) Married:

b) Divorced:

c) Separated:

d) Single:

4. What is your highest level of education?:

a) Post-graduate

b) First degree

c) Undergraduate courses

d) Senior Secondary School

e) Basic education or below

B. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE POLICE AND ITS LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

5. In your opinion, what is or should be the primary role and function of the Police in society?:

a) To prosecute criminal matters in court

b) To protect life and property

c) To investigate criminal matters

- d) To intervene in civil matters such as debt collection
- e) To protect the fundamental human rights & civil liberties
- f) Others (please state)

C. APPOINTMENT AND DISCIPLINARY CONTROL OVER POLICE:

6. Is the Police in your opinion free from political influence / manipulation / interference?:
- a) Not at all
 - b) To a limited extent
 - c) To a large extent

7. Should the Police be independent of political influence / manipulation / interference?:
- a) Completely
 - b) To a limited extent

D. POLICE OVERSIGHT:

8. The Independent Police Complain Board provides civilian oversight over the Police. Do you think they have enough powers to exercise such a role?
- a) To a Large extent
 - b) To a limited extent
 - c) Not at all

E. ROLE AND DUTIES OF THE POLICE:

9. Do you believe that the Police should have traffic duty roles when there are traffic wardens?:
- a) Yes
 - b) To a limited extent
 - c) No at all

10. The Public Order Act, 1965 allows the Inspector General of Police to disallow the holding of processions or impose conditions on such processions. Do you think that the Inspector General of Police should have such powers?:
- a) Yes
 - b) Not at all
 - c) To a limited extent
11. Do you think the Inspector General of Police must have a security of tenure?:
- a) Yes
 - b) No
12. If your answer to question 11 above is “yes”, How long do you want the tenure of the Inspector-General of Police to be?:
- a) 4 years renewable for another term of 4 years only
 - b) 4 years only
 - c) 5 years renewable for another term of 5 years only
 - d) 5 years only
 - e) Any other (Please specify)
13. The Police Act, 1964 makes provision for the recruitment of temporary or reserved police constables called “supernumerary constables” or “special constables”. These provided temporary services as the case may arise and are terminated after the particular situation is resolved. Do you think such a practice should be re-introduced?:
- a) Yes.....
 - b) No.....
 - c) I do not care
14. What do you think should be the retirement age of police officers?:
- a) 55 year.....

- b) 60 years.....
- c) 65 years.....
- d) Other (Please specify)

15. Have you ever been arrested by the Police?:

- i. Yes
- ii. No

16. Should the Police be given more powers in terms of maintenance of law & order?:

- a) What they have now is adequate
- b) What they have now is inadequate
- c) What they have now should be reduced

17. What is the level of freedom from political influence the Police now have in carrying out their functions?:

- a) High
- b) Medium
- c) Low
- d) None

18. Police are mandated to prosecute minor criminal offences. What is your opinion of how they discharge this function?:

- a) Excellent
- b) Average
- c) Poor

19. Should the Police be deprived of their function of prosecuting minor offences?:

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Should be reformed

20. What is your impression of the Sierra Leone Police in general?:

- a) Excellent
- b) Very good
- c) Average
- d) Poor

21. Should the Police be empowered to obtain the call records of suspects when investigating serious criminal matters?:

- a) To a limited extent
- b) To a very wide extent
- c) Not at all

22. Should the Police collaborate with and work in partnership with the communities they serve in respect of law enforcement, peace maintenance, security, crime prevention, etc.?:

- a) Yes:
- b) To a limited extent.....
- c) Not at all
- d) To a very large extent

23. Would the involvement of the communities in policing work be beneficial to the Police and the communities they serve?:

- a) To a very large extent
- b) To a limited extent
- c) Not at all

24. Is the Police more inclined to grant bail to suspects arrested on suspicion of crime?:

- a) Not at all
- b) Most of the time
- c) Seldomly

25. Is the Police adequately funded to carry out or execute their duties?
- a) Adequately
 - b) To a limited extent
 - c) Inadequately
26. Would you say that the Police are sufficiently trained to execute their day-to-day functions?:
- a) Not Adequately
 - b) Poorly
 - c) Extremely
27. Is the use of force generally exercised by the Police excessive?:
- a) Very excessive
 - b) Excessive
 - c) Reasonable
28. Do you believe that the Police are educated or knowledgeable of the fundamental human rights of citizens?:
- a) Not at all
 - b) Barely
 - c) Sufficiently
29. Should the Police undertake regular training of personnel in human rights and crowd control techniques?:
- a) Regular & rigid
 - b) Regular
 - c) Intermittently
 - d) Not at all.

F. ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE POLICE:

30. The Police is periodically accused of brutality and using of excess force and violence. What is your reaction to this?:

- a) False
- b) Very true
- c) True but exaggerated

31. Should Police officers accused of crime be prosecuted or just be subjected to disciplinary proceedings?:

- a) Be prosecuted only
- b) Be disciplined internally only
- c) Be both prosecuted and disciplined

G. GENERAL / OMNIBUS:

32. What changes in the Police would you like to see in a new Police Act?:

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