

'Dis Voting Ting,' 'Hot Seat,' 'Back to the Ballot Box,' and More: Experimental Evidence on UNMIL Radio's Electoral Programs and Female Political Participation in Rural Liberia. *

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Abstract

Does UN radio broadcasting enhance women's political participation? I use a field experiment in rural Liberia to address this question. Eight weeks prior to the November 11, 2011 general election, women in randomly selected villages were provided radios and organized to participate in a series of weekly listening sessions of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Radio's special programs on elections, in group settings. These programs aimed to increase women's awareness about their political rights and to provide women knowledge about electoral issues and the voting process, with the ultimate aim to enhance the level and quality of political participation. Empirical results provide evidence for positive effects of UNMIL radio, suggesting on average .30 standard deviations differences on mean effects computed across 18 outcome measures female political participation in communities that did and did not have assignment to this radio intervention. The study finds no evidence of an effect of this radio program on levels of political participation among men.

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