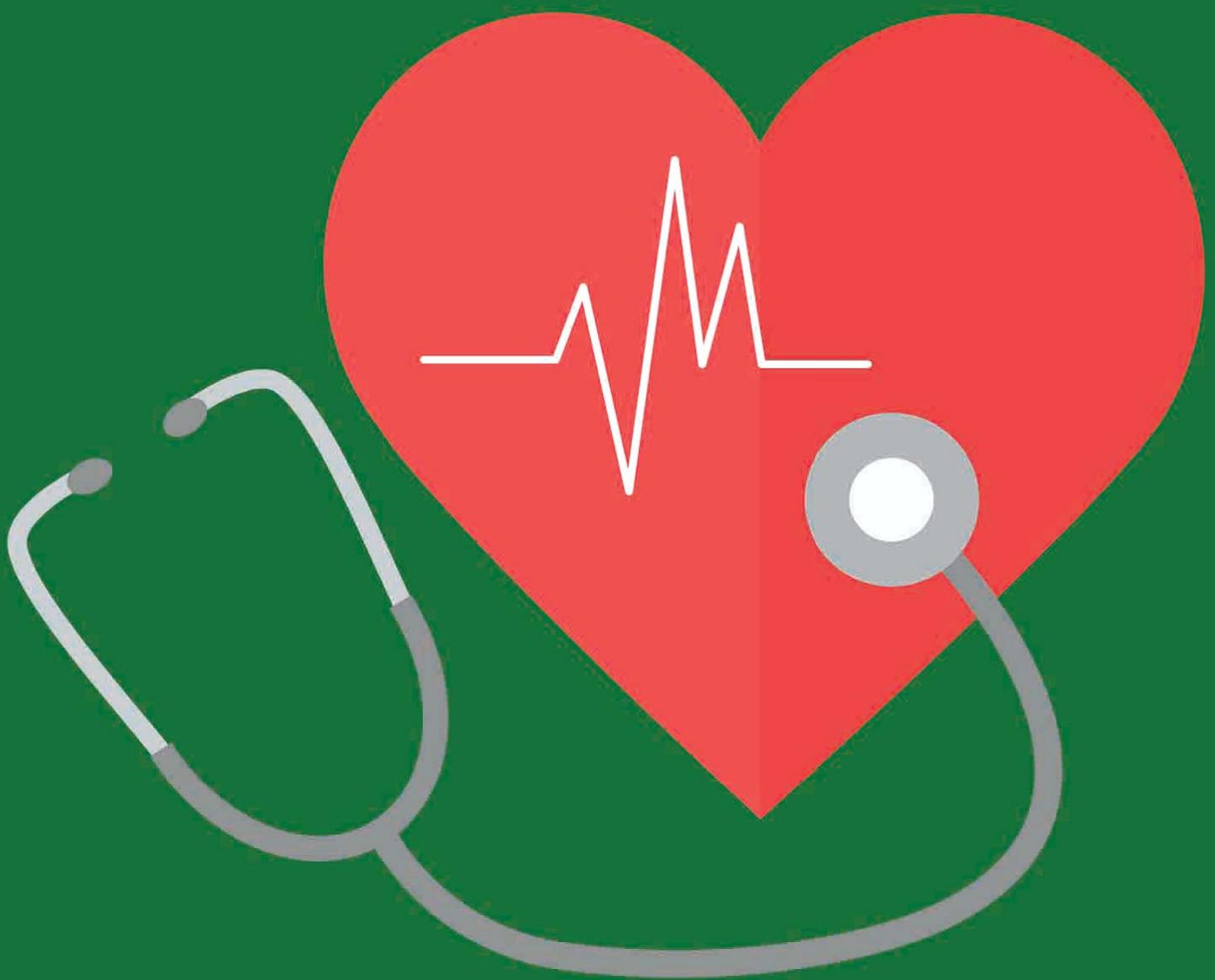


Voting Priorities in 2019 Nigerian Elections - Importance of Health



→ Executive Summary

In the build-up to the 2019 elections, Nigeria Health Watch in partnership with NOIPolls conducted a citizen’s perception survey in October 2018 to understand people’s voting priorities and how much they consider health when deciding who to vote for in the elections.

The poll sought to assess the following:

- Whether health was a priority for Nigerians in the run up to 2019 elections?
- Where Nigerians sourced information from about political aspirants?
- How confident Nigerians were in the health sector?
- The health issues Nigerians were most concerned about

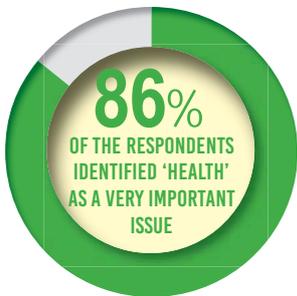
Results indicate that: **86%** of the respondents identified ‘health’ as a very important issue. ‘Radio’ was the most popular source of information that people used to gain information about political aspirants. **44%** of Nigerians have no confidence in the health system, yet **81%** of respondents believe that health is a very important consideration when deciding whom to vote for in the 2019 elections. **66%** of respondents think healthcare has not been given enough priority in previous political debates. When asked “Which health policy promise would immediately attract you to vote for a particular candidate or a political party?”, free medical treatment topped the list of health policies that attracted respondents to vote for a candidate or political party.

Objectives

The objective of the #Vote4HealthNaija campaign is to understand the voting priorities of Nigerians and to understand how much and whether they consider health as an important issue when making voting decisions. Ultimately, we need to push health up the political agenda if we are to make any meaningful change in healthcare delivery and if we want to see an improvement in Nigeria’s health indices.

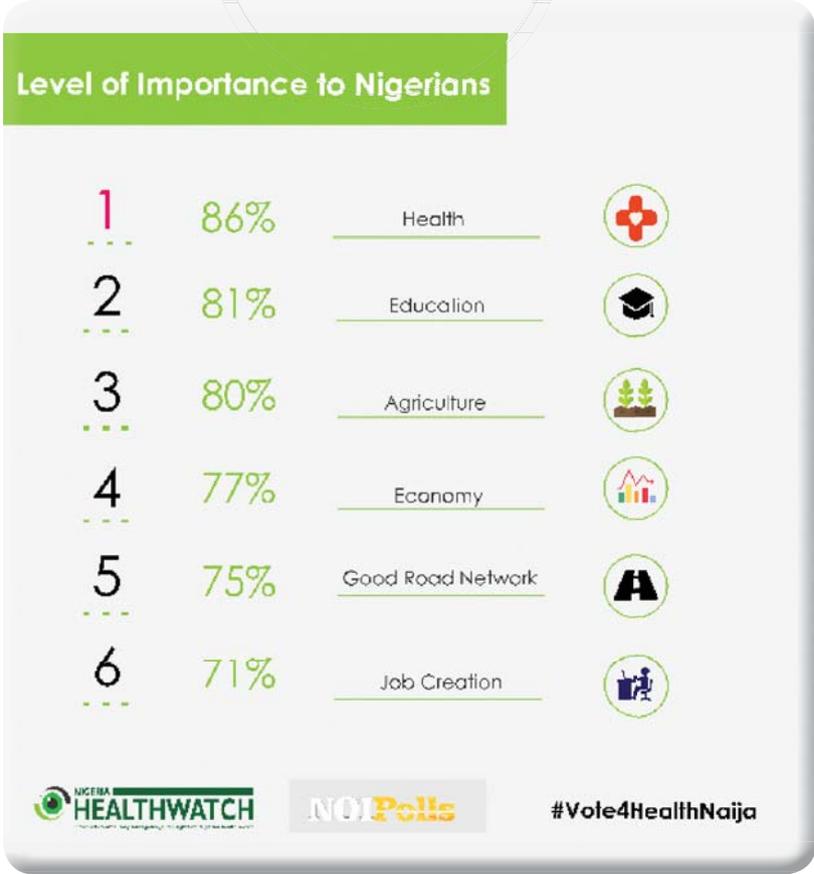
Methodology

Nigeria Health Watch in partnership with NOIPolls designed the survey questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was translated into the major Nigerian languages; including Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and Pidgin. NOIPolls ensured that the survey instrument was concise, simple, with mutually exclusive questions in order to gather complete and as accurate information as possible. The poll involved telephone interviews of a random nationwide sample selection of 1,000 respondents across all the 36 states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, drawn from the NOIPolls Numbers Database which has access to over 70 million numbers.



1,000 RESPONDENTS
ACROSS ALL THE 36 STATES

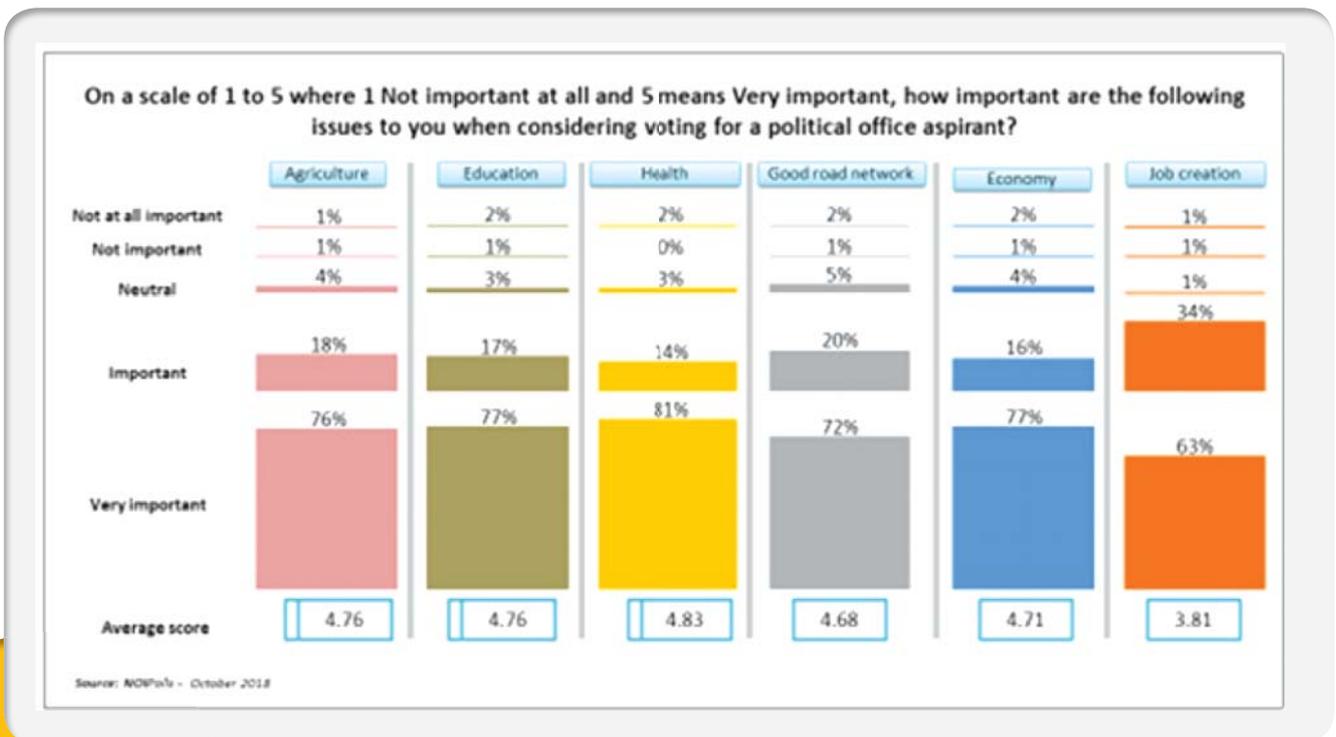
86%
OF RESPONDENTS RATED
HEALTH AS HIGHEST PRIORITY



**FIGURE 1:
IMPORTANT PRIORITY
ISSUES FOR NIGERIANS**

Respondents were asked to rate the level of importance they placed on a range of issues, with results ranking the percentage of people rating the following issues as very important; Agriculture, Education, Health, Good Road Network, Economy and Job Creation. The results indicate that Health, Education and Agriculture were very important issues for just over 80% of the respondents, with health having the highest level of importance for 86% of respondents.

FIGURE 2: IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES WHEN VOTING FOR A POLITICAL ASPIRANT



4.83

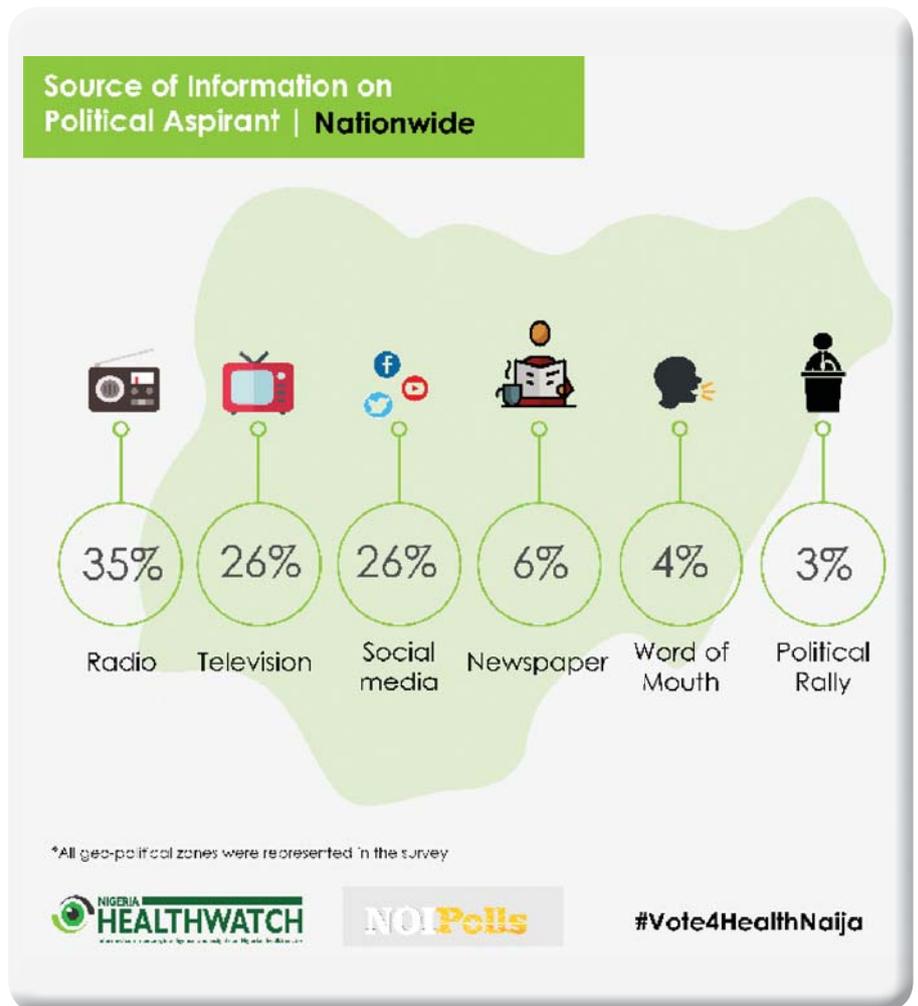
AVERAGE SCORE FOR HEALTH (OUT OF 5) AS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE WHEN WHEN CONSIDERING VOTING FOR A POLITICAL ASPIRANT

With the aim of evaluating how agriculture, education health, roads, the economy and job creation influence voting behaviour, respondents were asked the question, “On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means not important at all and 5 means very important, how important are the following issues to you when considering voting for a political office aspirant?” Findings revealed that ‘health’ was a very important issue when considering voting for a political aspirant, for **81%** of respondents with job creation being very important for just **63%** of the respondents. Overall, health was very important to the highest number of respondents when considering who to vote for. While respondents look to elected officials to create jobs, this does not seem to be an issue that affects their voting decision as much as the other listed issues.

**FIGURE 3:
MEDIA USED TO SOURCE
INFORMATION ON POLITICAL
ASPIRANTS**

Seeking to explore the media sources different respondents use to access information about political aspirants, the following question was asked, “Where do you mostly get information on different political office aspirants?” An analysis of the results revealed that ‘Radio’ (**35%**) was the most widely cited source of information nationwide, followed by television and social media, both at **26%** each. Newspapers play a limited role as a source of information for respondents, with only **6%** of respondents citing it as a source of information.

Even though political rallies are popular in Nigeria, across the country, respondents did not cite it as a key source they use to get information about political aspirants. Political rallies are often infrequent and not evenly distributed across to country, with a limited number of people attending. In addition, unless the event is also broadcast on mainstream media, its reach (and possible impact) would be limited. It should be noted also, that political rallies do not always feature the political aspirant running for the elections, but their representatives or spokesperson.



35%
OF RESPONDENTS CITED RADIO AS THE
SOURCE OF ACCESSING INFORMATION
ABOUT POLITICAL ASPIRANTS
NATIONWIDE

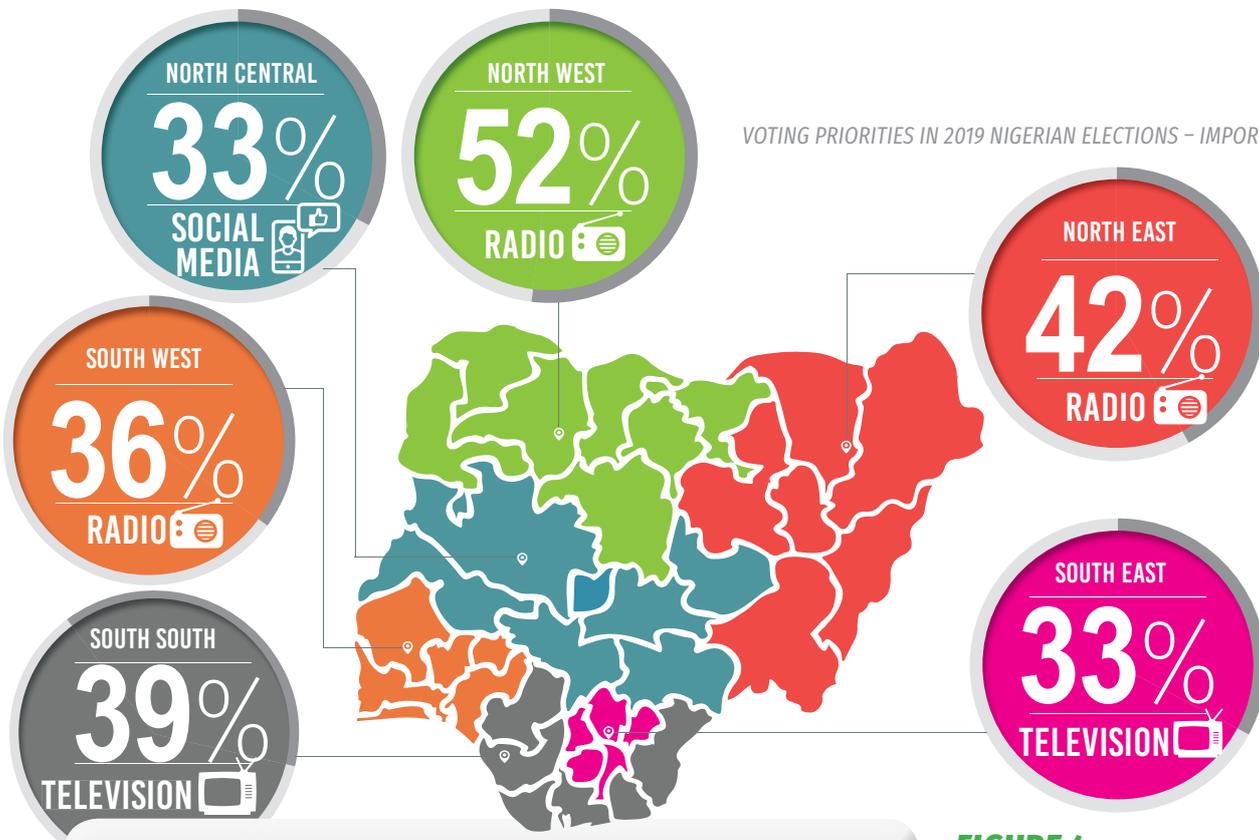
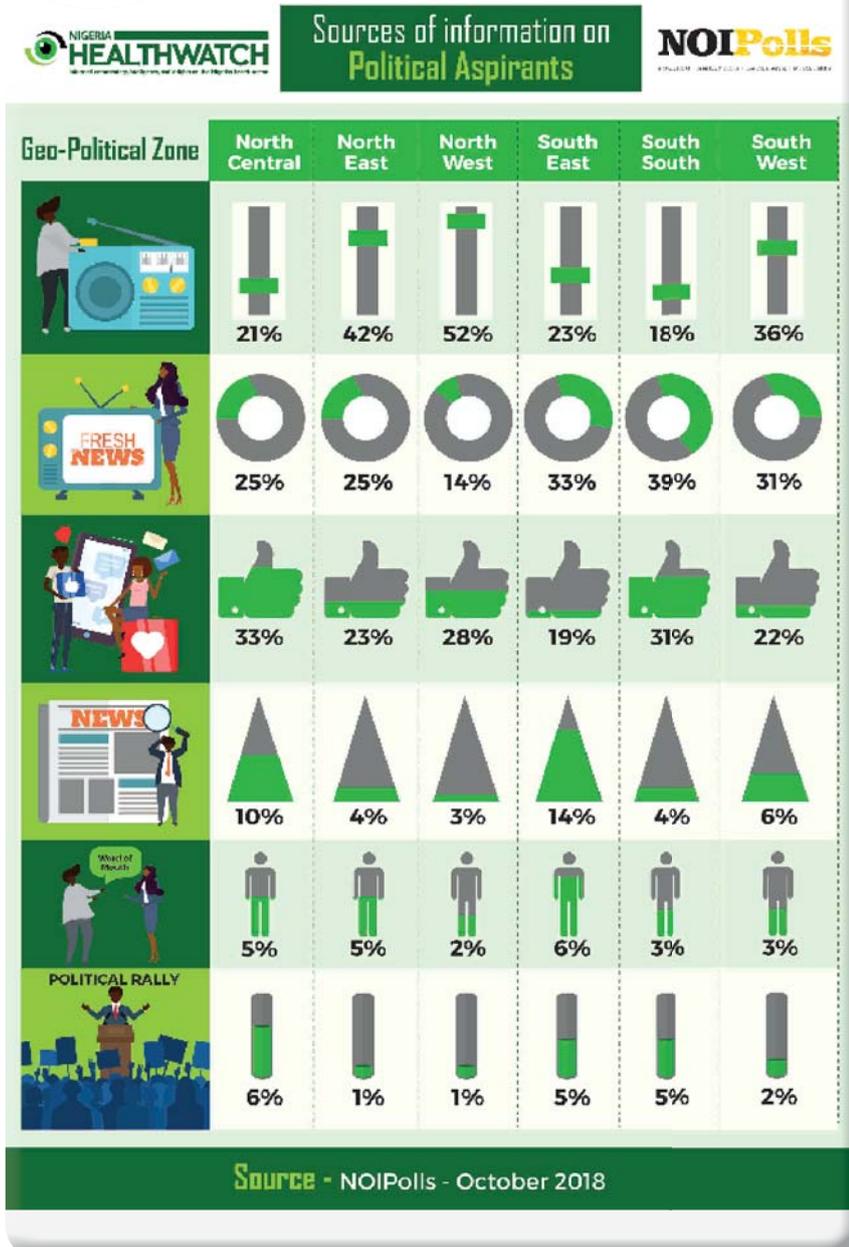
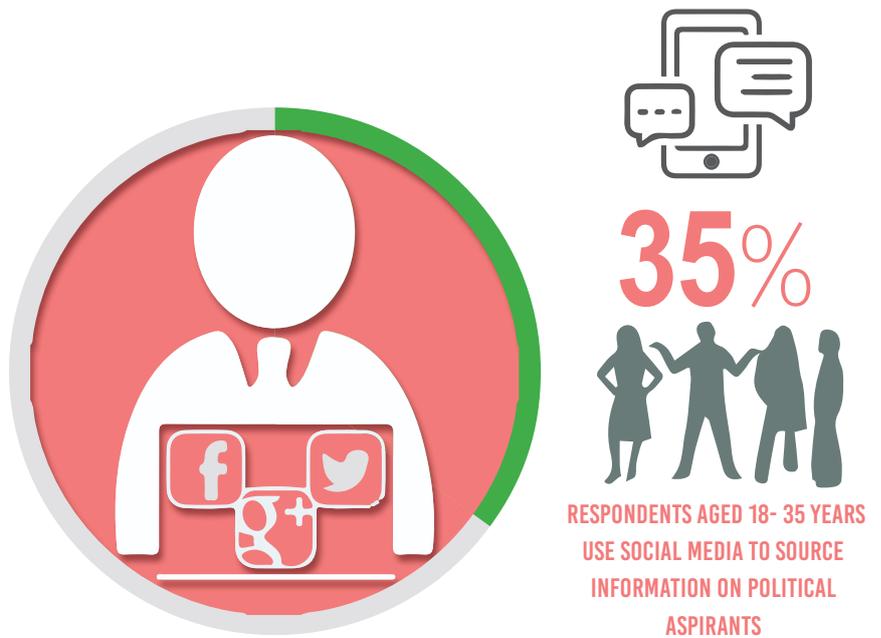


FIGURE 4:
SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON POLITICAL ASPIRANTS BY GEO-POLITICAL ZONE



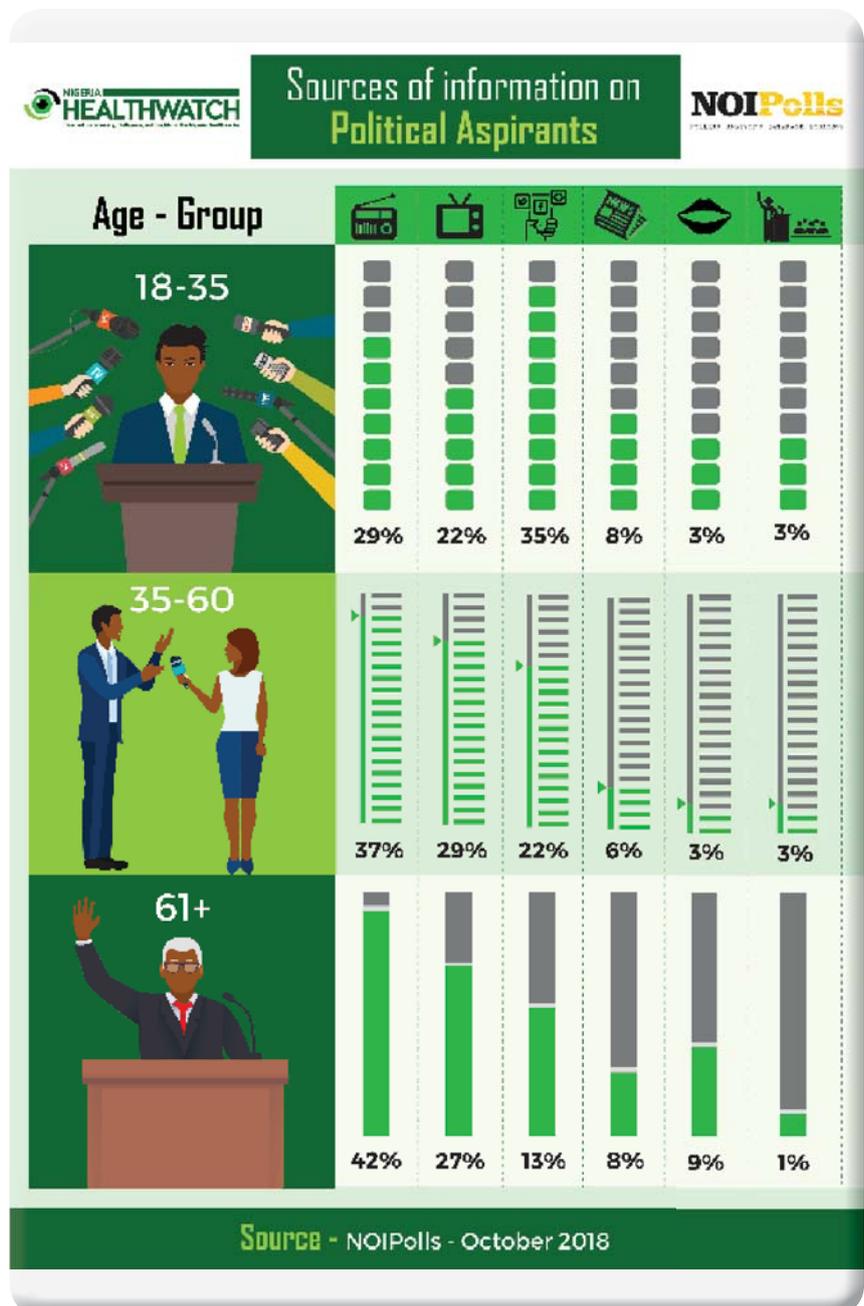
Across geo-political zones, there are clear variations in the type of media used to access information about political aspirants. Radio is the dominant medium used in the North-West cited by 52% of respondents, followed by social media with 28% of respondents citing this as an information source. There was a similar finding in the North East where radio was also a dominant medium, however television was the second most widely used medium in the North East. The South West of Nigeria shows a similar skew in favour of radio as an important information source, followed by television. Radio has the advantage that it reaches a large audience, without the need to purchase sophisticated or expensive equipment and enables information to be quickly disseminated, especially in rural areas where television or mobile phones may be out of range from satellite or phone signals.



**FIGURE 5:
SOURCES OF INFORMATION
ABOUT POLITICAL ASPIRANTS,
BY AGE GROUP**

There are clear distinctions in media consumption habits among the different age groups. Social media is the most widely used medium to source information on political aspirants by younger respondents aged 18- 35 years. A media consumer survey report conducted in 2018 by *Business Day* explored how consumers are interacting with media, entertainment and technology. The survey used a sample where **90%** of respondents were aged 16-35. The findings showed that the most frequently used medium this demographic used to get news was social media sites and online newspapers.

Respondents over the age of 36 had a preference for radio when they sought information about the different political office aspirants, with respondents 61+ having a preference for radio. Television was the second most widely used source of information about political aspirants for respondents aged 35 – 60 and 61+.



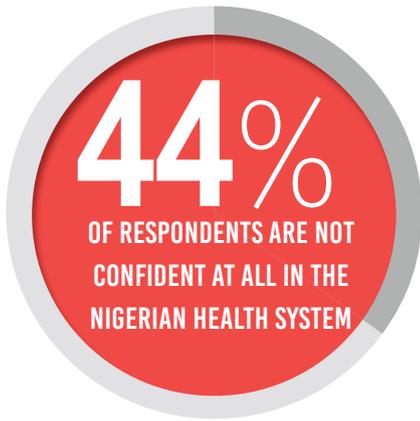


FIGURE 6:
LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN THE NIGERIAN HEALTH SYSTEM

The survey also sought to determine the level of confidence Nigerians have in the health system. When asked: “How confident are you in the Nigerian health system?”, nationwide results indicate that most respondents (44%) are not confident at all in the Nigerian health system; 30% are somewhat confident and 26% are very confident.

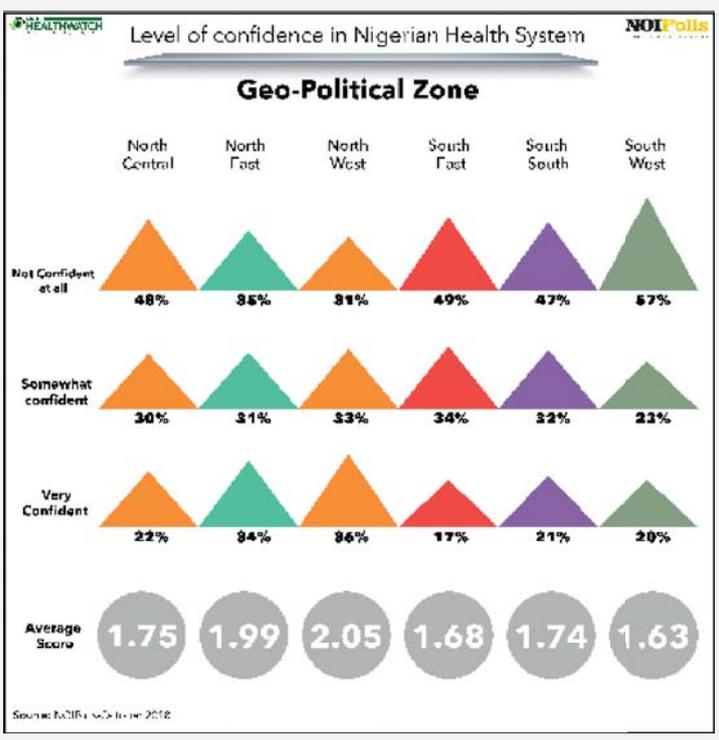
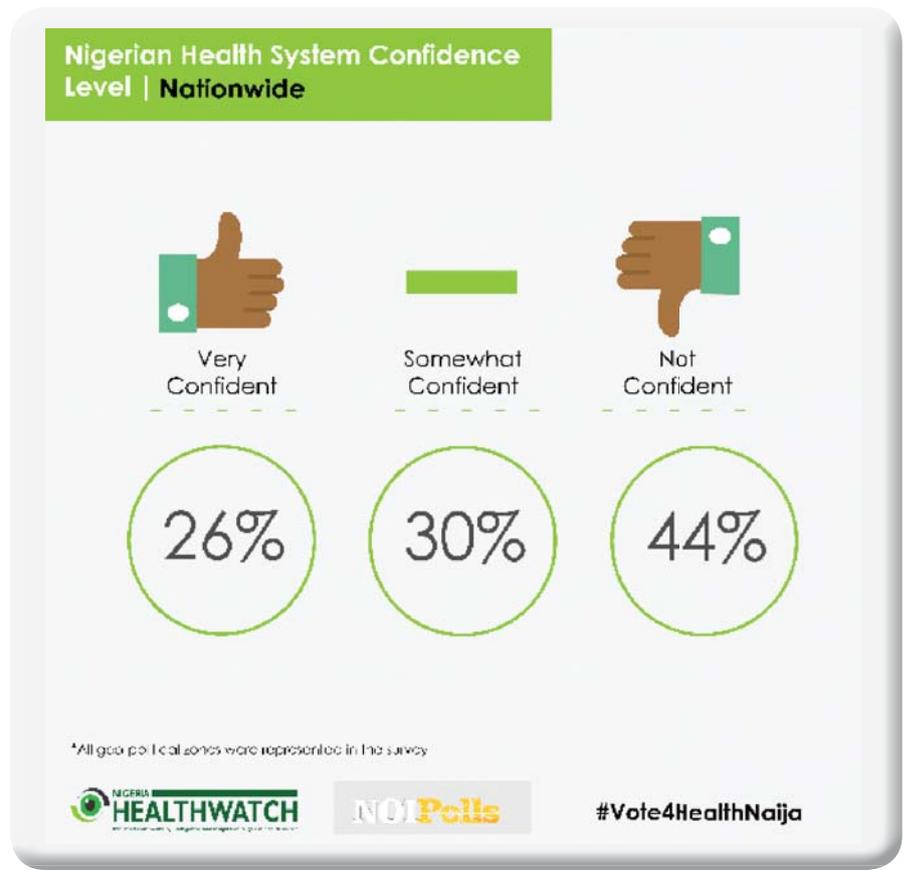
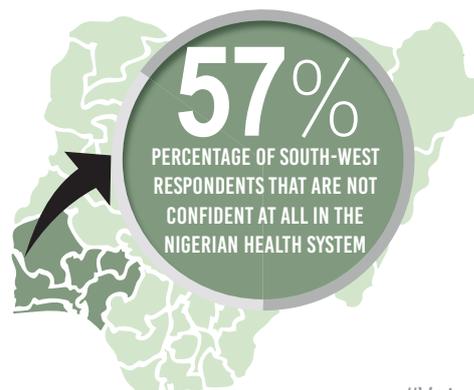


FIGURE 7:
LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN THE NIGERIAN HEALTH SYSTEM BY GEO-POLITICAL ZONE

Across geo-political zones, the South-West has the highest number of respondents who are not confident at all in the Nigerian health system (57%) and the North-West has the highest number of respondents who are very confident in the Nigerian health system (36%).

A further analysis of age-group results reveals that the highest number of respondents who are not confident at all in the Nigerian health system are in the 60+ age-group (50%), with 36% of the same age-group somewhat confident.



30%
RESPONDENTS AGED 18-35
ARE VERY CONFIDENT OF THE
NIGERIAN HEALTH SYSTEM

**FIGURE 8:
LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN THE NIGERIAN
HEALTH SYSTEM BY AGE GROUP**

Younger respondents aged 18-35 were more optimistic and were the most confident in the Nigerian health system. Many of our health indices in Nigeria have worsened. Nigeria has the 4th worst maternal mortality rate ahead of Sierra Leone, Central Africa Republic and Chad. Older respondents would have seen healthcare services in Nigeria go through many changes, and so may have experienced it worsening over time. In addition, this older age group would have more need to healthcare as with age they face greater health challenges. Their experience accessing healthcare would have exposed them more to the healthcare challenges of the country.

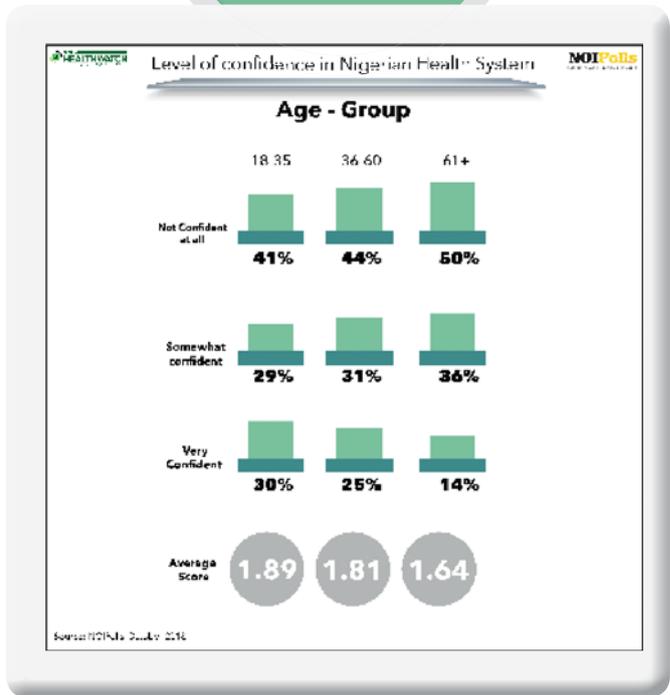
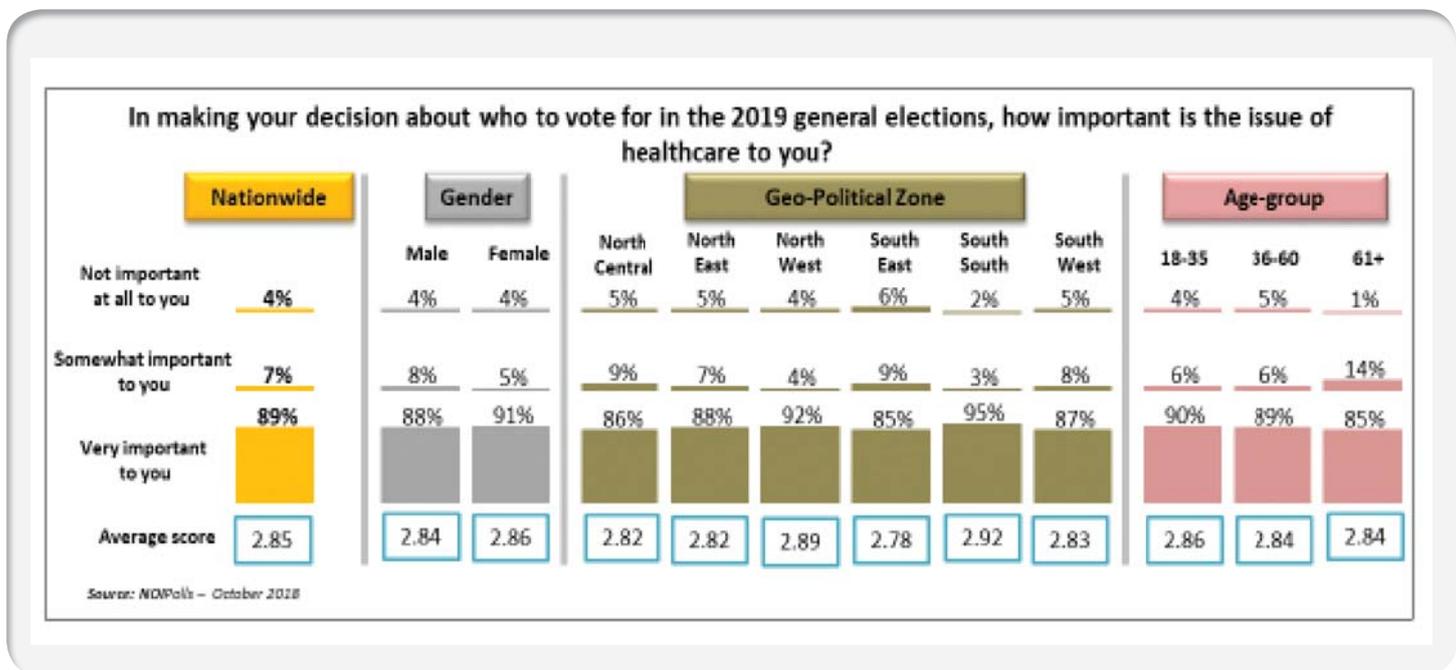


FIGURE 9: IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHCARE WHEN VOTING



To determine how important health is when deciding who to vote for in the 2019 elections, respondents were asked the question, “In making your decision about who to vote for in the 2019 general elections, how important is healthcare to you?” Nationwide results suggest that 89% of the respondents believe that health is a very important consideration in making the decision of whom to vote for in the 2019 elections. Across genders, geo-political zones and age-groups, respondents indicate a near uniform level of importance of health to them when making the



89%

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS THAT BELIEVE HEALTH IS A VERY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN DECIDING WHOM TO VOTE FOR IN THE 2019 ELECTIONS

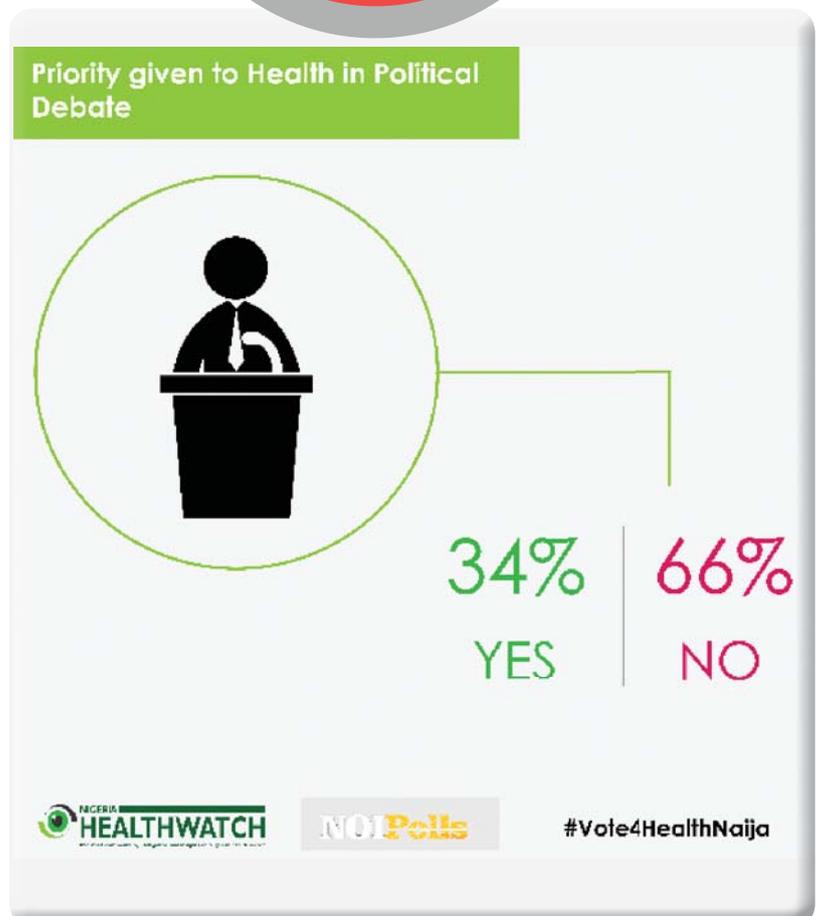
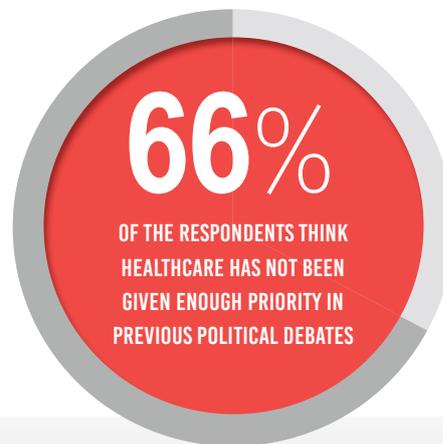
decision about who to vote for. Nationwide, in making the decision about who to vote for in the 2019 general elections, most of the respondents (89%) stated that health was very important to them when making a decision about who to vote for in the 2019 general elections.

For men and women and across the different geo-political zones and age-groups, respondents indicate a near uniform level of importance of health to them when making the decision about whom to vote for. Despite respondents overwhelmingly citing health as an important election issue, no political aspirant in the upcoming elections in Nigeria has singled out health as an important issue to focus on, in order to generate greater political support. A review of the manifestos of the political aspirants reveals that candidates make campaign promises across a range of issues which includes security, education, job creation and infrastructure.

**FIGURE 10:
PRIORITY GIVEN TO HEALTH IN
POLITICAL DEBATE**

To assess respondent’s views on how health has fared in past political debates, respondents were asked, “Do you think healthcare has been given enough priority in previous political debates?” An analysis of the results shows that nationwide, most of the respondents think healthcare has not been given enough priority in previous political debates (66%), while 34% believe that it has been given priority.

One of the ways to push for health to be given more prominence in general elections is for citizens to push as far as possible for political aspirants to take part in face-to-face details. This way, political aspirants would be asked questions directly about their specific policies around healthcare delivery in the country. Given that unanimously health is seen as an important election issue, it would be possible to hear what political aspirants have to say about how they would deal with the healthcare challenges the country faces and how they would improve the country’s abysmal health indices. The Nigerian population would then be able to hold them accountable for the campaign promises they make.



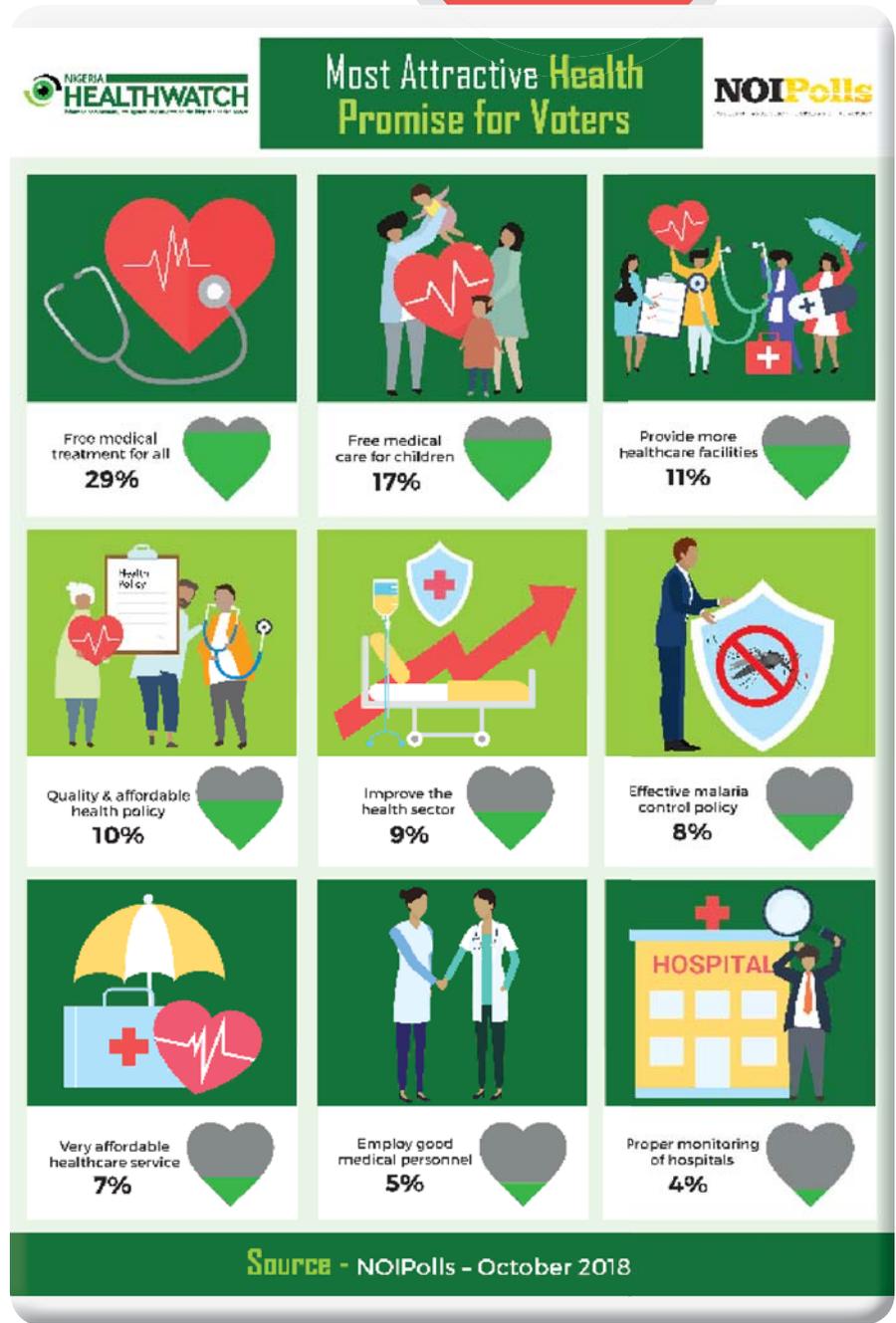
29%
RESPONDENTS RECALLED FREE MEDICAL TREATMENT AS A HEALTH POLICY PROMISE

**FIGURE 11:
MOST ATTRACTIVE HEALTH PROMISE FOR VOTERS**

When respondents were asked which health policy promise resonated with them the most, free medical treatment for all was the top choice (29%) for all respondents, followed by free medical treatment for children (17%) and provision of more health facilities (11%). The push for Universal Health Coverage is trying to ensure that all people irrespective of income have access to affordable and quality healthcare services. Respondents have a clear desire for healthcare to be free at the point of need.

Focusing on healthcare facilities where healthcare services are delivered, just over a tenth (11%) of respondents cited the provision of more healthcare facilities as an important election promise for a candidate or political party as well as quality and affordable health policy for 10% of respondent.

The different political parties have their party manifestos on their official website but evidently, a lot of Nigerians are unaware of this. Some of the aspirants also have their manifestoes on their campaign websites, but it is not clear whether the voting public has taken the time to access them. There appears to be a disconnect between views expressed in the survey and actual actions during elections. To reduce this, media organisations, civil society organizations working on voter education must make use of evidence from surveys such as this



to target messaging to appropriate channels. Analysis of manifestoes can be done on radio, published on newspapers and made into easy to understand in-fographics for social media dissemination in order to better inform the public about the campaign promises of the different political parties. However, the big question is, if these

responses translate to practice when voting? Historically, this has not been the case as voting behaviour has largely been informed by the popularity and personality of the candidates and their political parties. These usually take centre stage and eventually influence voter's choices during elections, rather than a focus on any singular issue.



Nigeria Health Watch uses informed advocacy and communication to influence health policy and seek better health and access to healthcare in Nigeria. We seek to amplify some of the great work happening in the health sector, challenge the bad, and create a space for positive ideas and action. Through its various platforms, Nigeria Health Watch provides informed commentary and in-depth analysis of health issues in Nigeria, always in good conscience. We are not afraid to take on the difficult topics that many commentators choose to ignore. Our reach is wider than ever and our “voice” is recognised across the sector as a strong advocate for the improvement of the health of our people.

NOIPolls

NOIPolls is the premier public opinion polling and research organization in Nigeria, with operations across West Africa. The company delivers forward-thinking research and relevant data on public opinions and consumer markets, to enhance the activities of decision makers across all the vibrant sectors of the Nigerian economy. NOIPolls mission is to provide timely and relevant information while empowering decision makers in the private and public sectors for better performance and improved governance. NOIPolls focuses on issues of governance, market trends, management of the economy, provision of social and market research services, as well as performance of government and private sector institutions. They partner with policy makers, donor agencies, civil societies, corporate organizations, governments and the media to enhance their data set of information, ultimately adding value to their output.

Learn more:

To learn more about this report of voting priorities for the upcoming elections, please contact: [**info@nigeriahealthwatch.com**](mailto:info@nigeriahealthwatch.com)

Disclaimer:

Nigeria Health Watch and NOIPolls are reporting on the finding from the survey conducted and are in no way sharing views or endorsing any political party.

