

Training Workshop on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement¹

Monrovia, Liberia 23-25 October 2001

[1] This report tries to summarize and reflect the individual opinions expressed during the workshop and do not necessarily coincide with the institutional positions of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Liberian Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) or the United Nations Resident Coordinator System in Liberia.

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Introduction

The Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) organizes 3-day training workshops on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement for government staff, NGOs, UN staff and the IDPs themselves. Since 1999, workshops have been held in the Philippines, Thailand, Georgia, Colombia, Uganda, Angola, Sierra Leone and most recently in Liberia on 23-25 October, 2001. In Liberia, the Global IDP Project was invited to deliver a workshop by the United Nations Resident Coordinator System in Monrovia and the Liberian Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), which stood as co-organizers of the event. The LRRRC operates under the Liberian Ministry of Internal Affairs and is responsible for the protection and assistance of refugees, returnees and IDPs. The UN Resident Coordinator System, together with NGOs, is working closely with the LRRRC to ensure effective protection and assistance of IDPs.

At the time of the workshop, the LRRRC was developing policy guidelines for the management of the IDP camps and the provision of assistance. The government agency therefore had a particular interest in gaining a better understanding of the Guiding Principles and their usage as a benchmark when developing national guidelines. The LRRRC draft policy guidelines have been included in an annex to this report.

In addition to the specific objective just mentioned, the workshop was delivered with the following general objectives in mind:

- To promote and disseminate the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- To explain and discuss basic international human rights and humanitarian law concepts as covered by the Guiding Principles.
- To analyse the current state of implementation of the Guiding Principles in Liberia.

- To seek ways to more fully implement the Guiding Principles in Liberia.
- To promote dialogue between national NGOs, international organizations, and government authorities on the protection and assistance needs of the internally displaced in Sierra Leone.

The workshop, held at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia, was attended by a total of 48 participants, representing LRRRC (11), other government agencies (6), national and international NGOs (18), UN agencies (8) and different IDP communities (5). More than 25 of the participants had travelled to Monrovia from the provinces.

The methodology combined a number of presentations with extensive group work, group presentations and plenary discussions. Each session was initiated with a thematic presentation based on NRC's training modules on the content and use of the Guiding Principles. Next, participants were divided up into groups and assigned group exercises. Once back in plenary, a rapporteur from each group summarized the group findings, which were then discussed in the larger group.

During the opening session, the Deputy Director of the LRRRC, Hon. J. Saah Nyumah, welcomed participants and introduced the Acting Minister of Planning, Hon. Edward T. Liberty and the Executive Director of LRRRC, Hon. Samuel N. Brown, who delivered the opening statements. Mr. Liberty reminded participants that large segments of the general population, including the local humanitarian authorities charged with the protection and assistance of IDPs, have been affected by displacement in the last decade. He further stressed the importance of paying attention to a number of Guiding Principles addressing IDP protection and the right to return.

Mr. Brown underlined the role of LRRRC in creating awareness of IDP rights. He therefore encouraged participants to take a “Training-of-Trainers” approach to the workshop and thereby take the lessons learned to the IDP camps attended by LRRRC.

Following the opening statements participants were provided with a review of the background to and the international context in which the Guiding Principles are currently being disseminated and implemented. The drastic increase in the number of IDPs was addressed, together with an outline of the

responses by the international community, including the assignment of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Internal Displacement (RSG), Mr. Francis Deng. Next, the mandate of the RSG and the development of the UN Guiding Principles were discussed. Finally, participants were given a brief overview of the UN’s so called “collaborative approach” to issues of internal displacement. Recent efforts to strengthen this approach through the establishment of a small IDP Unit within OCHA were also discussed. Thereafter, participants initiated the work on the six main topics summarized below.

Definition of an internally displaced person (Module 1)

The armed conflict in the northern county of Lofa has displaced some 60,000 IDPs during the last years. Almost 40,000 of them are hosted in five different camps, while an estimated 20,000 persons have fled to other rural areas or smaller towns. An unknown number of persons may even have found shelter with friends and family in Monrovia. The LRRRC’s draft management policy on assistance to IDPs adopts the definition of a displaced person used in the UN Guiding Principles, which would include both camp-based IDPs and non camp-based IDPs.

However, the discussion on the definition revealed that, for practical purposes, very few IDPs receive protection and assistance outside the camps. The government explained that it simply does not have the access and capacity to provide assistance to those IDPs residing in rural areas and host communities. Also, according to the LRRRC, the authorities have no way of verifying who is really an IDP outside the camps.

Non governmental participants acknowledged the difficulty involved in extending the protection and assistance activities to non camp-based IDPs, but did not think that

registration in a camp should be a prerequisite for inclusion in IDP protection and assistance programmes. Rather, when discussing the definition of an IDP, most participants argued that displacement starts as soon as you are forced to leave your home, and not when you are registered in a camp for displaced persons. Such a conclusion, in line with the Guiding Principles, would require the government and the international community to initiate and support efforts aimed at the non camp-based IDPs and to think of innovative ways of effectively identifying and reaching them.

Similarly, defining when displacement ends was not easy. Some argued that displacement ends when you are no longer registered in a camp, while most participants agreed that only a durable solution ends displacement. Such solutions include return to former homes or voluntary resettlement but also require fulfillment of some minimum conditions such as removal of causes of displacement and support to the re-establishment of livelihoods. These issues were discussed in more detail during the session on return and resettlement.

Legal background to the Guiding Principles (Module 2)

The purpose of this session was to:

- Provide participants with a better understanding of the legal basis for the Guiding Principles
- Clarify the basic differences between human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law
- Briefly examine the Liberian government's responsibility under international law

Given that the vast majority of the participants are active in the field of humanitarian assistance, rather than human rights, it was necessary to provide some basic information on the background and standing of the Guiding Principles. During this session, participants were made aware of the legal basis for the Principles, which restate and are consistent with existing international human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law. The differences in applicability between these three categories of international law were also addressed. In doing so, it was made clear that the Principles, just like international humanitarian law, have been developed to provide guidance not only to States, but also

to non-state actors such as armed rebel groups.

Participants took note of the fact that the Liberian government is a State party to practically all international conventions relevant to displaced persons protection and assistance. However, many were surprised that the government has not signed and ratified the UN Convention against Torture (CAT), particularly since the Liberian Constitution clearly prohibits this practice.

A hands-on group exercise was conducted in order for participants to gain familiarity with the concrete content of the Principles, as well as the human rights and humanitarian law instruments they are derived from. During this exercise, participants were asked to review a number of Principles and the most common human rights and humanitarian law instruments and identify similarities and direct links. Through the exercise, participants discovered that the Principles do not provide new rights, but restate already existing rights and make them more explicit to IDPs.

Protection from and during displacement (Module 3)

During this session, participants were introduced to the Principles prohibiting displacement and providing protection during displacement. The Guiding Principles take a very broad approach to protection by reaching beyond the concern for a displaced person's physical integrity. The protection Principles include the right to a minimum standard of living (food, water, shelter), health care, education and personal identification as well as the right to life and freedom from torture, for example. During an initial presentation,

these different aspects of protection were organized in four themes: non-discrimination, movement-related rights, physical protection and special needs of IDPs. Next, each working group was asked to analyze a selected number of Principles and the adherence to those Principles in Liberia. Participants were also asked to identify ways to more fully implement the assigned principles. Below are some of the protection aspects that participants considered problematic in Liberia.

Prevention of displacement

The need to prevent displacement triggered a discussion on two levels: 1) The need to prevent conflict, and 2) The obligation of the armed actors to respect civilians during conflict. Participants brought up issues such as inequitable distribution of resources, few opportunities for professional growth and lack of access to political participation in governing structures as underlying causes of the armed conflict. Also, participants stressed the need for an effective reconciliation programme involving all neighboring states.

Secondly, it was felt that improved respect for human rights and humanitarian law would go a long way to prevent displacement. It was discussed that most displaced persons have not fled combat *per se* (crossfire accidentally affecting civilians, etc.) but rather deliberate violations of the “laws of war”, while others have fled the threat of becoming victims of such violations. Therefore, participants identified a need to increase general awareness of humanitarian law and human rights among the armed actors. This could best be achieved if the relationship between the humanitarian community and the security forces is strengthened and comprehensive training efforts are initiated.

The representatives of the security forces participating in the workshop fully agreed with this suggestion and called for a closer relationship with the humanitarian community. They further described how the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) already conducts training with the army on humanitarian law. According to the representatives of the security forces, this training has already had a positive impact on the situation of the civilian population in Lofa County. It was suggested that this effort should be complemented by dissemination and training on the Guiding Principles.

In addition to the proposed training and awareness building activities, it was suggested that the judicial system be strengthened in order to effectively prosecute violators and break a circle of impunity, often followed by continued violations.

Protection during displacement

However, there seemed to be a general agreement that the protection situation in the five IDP camps is for the most part satisfactory. The presence of LRRRC staff and representatives of the national and international agencies has allowed for regular monitoring of the safety and assistance needs of the displaced in the camps. However, a number of serious protection issues affect IDPs from the moment they leave their homes until they reach an IDP camp or a non camp-

based host community. Most of the concerns addressed by participants were said to take place during that transition phase.

Rape and abduction

Participants expressed concern that displaced women fleeing Lofa often become victims of rape and sexual abuse at the hands of the armed actors. This conduct was said to be closely linked to drug abuse among soldiers. Also, abduction of women for forced domestic labour often lead to rape.

Reportedly, displaced men are also abducted by the armed actors, often when stopped at roadblocks. Participants reported that a number of IDPs suspected of being rebel collaborators were abducted from TV Tower and CARI camps, south of Lofa County.

Forced recruitment

According to participants, forced recruitment has been a standard practice in Liberia's recent history, and one which is affecting in particular the displaced men fleeing Lofa County. Furthermore, displaced children are also victims of forced recruitment. One participant pointed out that less than 30% of Liberians possess birth certificates, which sometimes makes it difficult to determine who is a minor. Therefore, the workshop recommended the development of clear standards for recruitment into the armed forces and strict implementation of those rules.

Freedom of movement

IDPs' right to freedom of movement was discussed on several occasions. Participants agreed that freedom of movement is being restricted, but differed in their evaluation of the necessity of army-imposed restrictions on freedom of movement. Since hostilities broke out in Lofa County in 1998, displaced persons have tried to move south into Bong County for protection. Many of them have been held up at a military checkpoint at St Paul Bridge between the two counties and prevented from seeking safety in Bong County. Workshop participants representing the security forces argued that the limitations imposed on IDPs' freedom of movement were due to "security reasons". The armed forces said they wanted to prevent a large influx of IDPs into the town of Gbarnga in order to avoid rumors of an imminent rebel attack on the city. The retention of IDPs at the bridge also served the purpose of screening large groups of IDPs for infiltrated rebels.

Looting of IDP property

Lastly, the protection of IDP property, insufficiently addressed by international law but covered by the Guiding Principles, was a cause of concern among participants. During the last decade of almost on-going conflict, a pattern of disrespect for private and public property has reportedly developed. Destruction and theft of property have affected the displaced from Lofa County as well as those who chose to stay behind. The armed actors were seen as the main culprits, but participants agreed that civilians also take advantage of the general turmoil during armed conflict.

In relation to theft of humanitarian assistance, a representative of the security forces argued that one way to prevent diversion of humanitarian relief items would be to assign 5% of the deliveries to IDPs for the armed forces in order to guarantee their minimum needs and to avoid theft. Other participants rejected this proposal and favored a solution linked to better and more regular pay for the soldiers.

In conclusion, a representative of the LRRRC reminded participants that his agency has a number of Legal Officers, which can advocate and defend the rights of IDPs if protection cases are drawn to their attention. In response, a participant expressed concern that the LRRRC is effectively addressing issues of humanitarian assistance, but that sensitive protection issues, such as rape and sexual abuse, have not received sufficient attention by the agency, partly because these issues are often not brought to the attention of LRRRC.

Humanitarian assistance

The working group looking at Principle 18 (right to an adequate standard of living) reviewed the current situation of delivery of humanitarian assistance in Liberia and pinpointed some weak areas. It was stated that current food supply is inadequate and that the food basket does not include food items commonly consumed in Liberia. The group also argued that food delivery is often subject to undue delays. Furthermore, some participants expressed the need for improved coordination between the World Food Programme (WFP) and implementing partners. Participants pointed out the importance of WFP providing precise information on existing food stocks, both in country and in pipeline, as well as on delivery capacity.

In the areas of water, shelter and clothing similar deficiencies were identified. Health care services also need to be improved. Training and awareness building of IDPs could improve the general state of health, particularly in relation to sanitation, STD and HIV/AIDS. Regarding HIV/AIDS, access to testing facilities should be improved.

The group called on donors to increase support to the above mentioned aspects of humanitarian assistance. Throughout the workshop, similar requests for increased resources from the international community were repeatedly voiced by both the authorities and the NGOs. The decrease in the general level of funding for Liberia over the last few years was also discussed during the workshop. One participant implied that such a drop in the level of international funding is directly related to 1) the alleged government support provided to the RUF rebel group in Sierra Leone, and 2) the allegations of violations of human rights by state agents. Hence, it was suggested that the Liberian humanitarian community (government and non government) would be well advised to advocate both with the government and the international community in order to receive increased funding for Liberia.

Return and resettlement (Module 4)

During this session, participants discussed the Guiding Principles as they address the issues of return/resettlement. Participants analyzed concepts such as “safe” and “voluntary” return. Furthermore, issues such as non-discrimination and participation of IDPs in the return process were looked at in the Liberian context. Also, possible recovery or compensation for lost property was discussed in the working groups.

Safety

Once again, participants stressed the need to address the root causes of the conflict and for authorities to “demonstrate discipline” before the IDPs can feel safe to return. It was also highlighted that the authorities on both sides of the borders (Sierra Leone, Guinea) need to find common ground and create an environment conducive to commercial cross border activities, which would stimulate the return of IDPs. Participants argued that for return to be sustainable, reconciliation or at least cessation of hostilities must take place.

The safety situation in the communities of origin must be independently verified before IDPs return. It was suggested that IDP leaders, “zoes” (traditional community leaders) and local authorities should travel to communities of origin to consult with the remaining population on the safety situation. They should also verify the state of houses and other socio-economic infrastructure left behind. Additionally, the group agreed that mechanisms for effective monitoring of human rights violation needed to be put in place in order to prevent new displacements. There should also be training for security and local authorities on their respective roles and responsibilities in communities of origin during return. Lastly, the return process must be appropriately timed in relation to school calendars, farming and rainy seasons.

Discrimination

On this aspect of return, the working group focused on the relationship between the returnees and those that had stayed behind. According to participants, those who remained in the community did so because: 1) they were too weak to flee, 2) they wanted to protect their properties, 3) they saw an opportunity to loot, or 4) they had strong ties to the armed actors. Any of these reasons could be cause for tensions and discrimination upon the return of the displaced persons.

Participants from Gbarnga reported that after the displacement from Lofa County the security forces imposed some restrictions on the movement of persons and goods between Lofa and Gbarnga. However, some younger women were allowed to go back into Lofa to bring back rice and palm oil. This situation has exposed the girls to potential discrimination upon return as a result of their alleged involvement with the soldiers. Girls staying behind or abducted by armed actors were also said to be exposed to discrimination. The security forces participating in the workshop argued that any restrictions on circulation of persons and goods were imposed in order to avoid looting.

Lastly, host communities could possibly discriminate against IDPs if they perceive that a sudden return or resettlement is overstretching limited resources or if displaced persons receive return packages placing them in a privileged situation compared to the host community.

Recovery of property

In Liberia, recovery of displaced persons’ land and property is complicated by the fact that land ownership is not well defined and the judicial system lacks capacity to handle

land and property disputes efficiently. Also, participants discussed the fact that many displaced were afraid to claim their property when it had been occupied by soldiers. On occasions, returnees had managed to recuperate their property from the soldiers but were later subject to reprisals ranging from detention to destruction of property. Similar fears applied to situations in which former military leaders had ended up as local authorities.

One participant suggested that returnees' should first enter into a dialogue with those occupying their property, before turning to the authorities. Some times, neighbors have simply looked after the property and have no intention to challenge the original ownership. However, many disputes need to be addressed by the local authorities and the judicial system, which both should be strengthened for this purpose.

Assisting IDPs to address their own needs (Module 5)

The Guiding Principles cover all stages of displacement, and in addition give some advice on how to find durable solutions for IDPs. In doing so, the Principles very much put the displaced themselves in the center of attention, suggesting that the displaced have to be part of the solution. This session discussed IDPs' capacity to play that key role through strong family and community links, effective self-help activities and an active participation in the design and implementation of IDP support programmes.

Maintaining family and community links

Participants felt that if family and community links could be maintained or quickly restored after displacement, IDPs would stand a much better chance to restore their livelihoods. Some families were split up already at the moment of leaving their homes, often as a result of threats to the younger men, suspected of being sympathetic to one or the other armed group. Participants further discussed how screening processes at military check-points also lead to family separation when suspected rebel supporters are detained. However, the Ministry of Justice is currently developing guidelines for the screening of IDPs by the Joint Security

Authorities, which could make the process more uniform and transparent. Also, some organizations provide support to family reunification, efforts which should be strengthened. In the camps, shelter layout and activities are organized along traditional community structures, which contributes to maintaining the community links.

Self-help strategies

It was clear from the plenary discussion that IDPs are involved in a series of self-help activities. Those with a professional background, particularly in health or education, are often hired or involved as volunteers by the authorities and the humanitarian agencies. The professional jobs held by IDPs include: nurses, midwives, hygiene promoters, physician assistants and teachers. In an effort to provide for IDP children's education, displaced teachers are often asked to continue their profession in the camps. Furthermore, some informal income generating activities are also undertaken, often in the form of small businesses or temporary employment with NGOs or the host community. In addition, some IDPs supplement the food aid they receive by growing their own food in small backyard gardens.

Protection needs have also been addressed through IDPs own self-help strategies. Unarmed IDP Camp Guards, with responsibility for internal security in the camps, have been recruited from within the IDPs themselves. IDPs are also involved in conflict resolution in the camps through the camp leadership and the representatives of LRRRC.

These self-help strategies could be further strengthened by both the local authorities and the NGOs. It was suggested that the local authorities' most important contribution would be the provision of agricultural land. The NGOs could complement this support by providing agricultural inputs and Food-For-Work opportunities. NGOs were also asked to support the educational efforts in the camps.

IDP participation

Participants agreed that IDPs are to some extent involved in decision-making processes and activities affecting their lives as displaced persons. When there is a need to discuss issues related to the well-being of the displaced persons in the camps an assigned person, a so called "community crier", calls a general meeting of camp residents. In these meetings, issues such as camp layout, installation of hand pumps, construction of pit latrines etc. have been discussed. The concerns raised during these meetings are later referred to the representatives of the LRRRC.

The recently developed Draft Policy Framework for IDP Camp Management (see annex) foresees IDP representatives on the Camp Management Team. The next administrative level in the camps, the Block Teams (IDP camp sections housing up to 2000 camp residents), are entirely made up of camp residents elected by the IDP community.

The issue of women's participation caused a lively discussion among participants. Currently all camp leaders are men, which was seen as far from ideal. On the level of the Block Teams (currently ad hoc), there are some IDP women represented and the Draft Policy Framework encourages female leadership. However, in the future, all members of the Block Teams will be elected and there is no guarantee that IDP women will be among them. The international agencies have therefore suggested that the LRRRC make the participation of at least one woman on each Block Team compulsory.

A representative of the IDPs argued that it would be difficult for a woman to hold a camp-leader role given the internal differences in the camp. This opinion was fiercely contested by some of the female participants who noticed that women are currently left out because of the cultural pattern in Liberia. On this point, another participant stressed the importance of involving women because they generally are more familiar with the needs of displaced children.

Humanitarian agencies and human rights

The issue of humanitarian agencies' role in protection and human rights monitoring was brought up in various sessions. Participants were therefore introduced to Guiding Principle No 27 which states that "international humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors when providing assistance should give due regard to the protection needs and human rights of internally displaced persons and take appropriate measures in this regard." (GP No.27.1)

It was agreed that humanitarian NGOs working directly with IDPs often gain access to important information on the violation of IDP rights and that, in line with the Guiding Principles, this information should be used to promote the protection of the displaced.

In view of the limited capacity of the Liberian judicial system and the absence of effective human rights monitoring bodies², a NGO monitoring/advocacy role vis-à-vis the authorities was favored by several national participants. Other participants, noticeably the international NGOs, took a more cautious approach to direct involvement in human rights monitoring. Concern was expressed that involvement in judicial issues, without relevant expertise or mandate, would be inappropriate and could jeopardize the operational activities and maybe even the safety of staff.

At this point, the facilitator noted that Guiding Principle 27 encourages protection activities by humanitarian organizations but does not specify which kind of measures to take. Trying to shed more light on this issue, he went on to suggest that protection activities more or less fall into three categories:

Denunciation

Using this method, human rights violations are documented and publicly disseminated in order to quickly create awareness of a situation of violations.

Persuasion

This approach uses "persuasion" to talk the authorities into addressing a situation of human rights violations. In a confidential dialogue with the authorities, the humanitarian actor might describe their concerns, point out the legal obligations of the authorities and suggest remedial action.

Substitution

A humanitarian player might choose to "fill in" (substitute) for the authorities and fulfill obligations, which should fall on the state (e.g. provision of food and medicine in prisons, printing and dissemination of judicial instruments, etc.).

The workshop noted that the mentioned categories of involvement (Denunciation, Persuasion and Substitution) were not necessarily appropriate for all actors in all situations. Rather, each organization has to assess 1) when it has a comparative advantage to address violations, and 2) which method/s to use. The categories described were not seen as mutually exclusive and aspects of one or several could often be efficiently combined.

[2] The government-created Liberia Commission for Human Rights was seen by participants as ineffective.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- 1) The government's efforts and resources are focused on the large majority of displaced persons currently in camps while few non-camp based IDPs receive protection and assistance.
- 2) Most participants argued that displacement starts as soon as you are forced to leave your home, and not when you are registered in a camp for displaced persons.
- 3) Prevention of displacement can be pursued on two levels: a) through prevention of armed conflict, and b) through full respect of the civilian population in a situation of conflict.
- 4) The protection situation in the five IDP camps is for the most part satisfactory. Most of the protection concerns addressed by participants take place from the moment the displaced leave their homes until they reach an IDP camp, or in a non camp-based host community.
- 5) Participants expressed concern that displaced women fleeing Lofa County often become victims of rape and sexual abuse at the hands of the armed actors.
- 6) Forced recruitment has reportedly been a standard practice in Liberia's recent history, and it also affects the displaced men fleeing Lofa County.
- 7) Participants agreed that freedom of movement is being restricted by the security forces, but differed in their evaluation of the necessity of army-imposed restrictions on freedom of movement.
- 8) Destruction and theft of property has affected the displaced from Lofa County as well as those who chose to stay behind. The armed actors were seen as the main culprits, but civilians also take advantage of the general turmoil during armed conflict.
- 9) Displaced persons' access to food, water and shelter was considered insufficient. Food deliveries are often subject to undue delays and the food basket does not always include staples commonly consumed in Liberia.
- 10) In Liberia, recovery of displaced persons' land and property is complicated by the fact that land ownership is not well defined and the judicial system does not handle land and property disputes efficiently.
- 11) On the issue of family separation, participants discussed how screening processes at military checkpoints lead to family separation when suspected rebel supporters are detained.
- 12) Currently all camp leaders and most Block Team members are men. Participants stressed the importance of assigning women to such positions.

- 13) Humanitarian NGOs working directly with IDPs often gain access to important information on the violation of IDP rights. In line with the Guiding Principles, this information should be used to promote the protection of the displaced. Each organization has to assess 1) when it has a comparative advantage to address violations, and 2) which method/s to use.

Recommendations

- 1) In addition to the support provided to the camp-based IDPs, the government and the international community should think of innovative ways to effectively identify and reach the non camp-based IDPs.
- 2) Participants identified a need to increase general awareness of humanitarian law and human rights among the armed actors. This could best be achieved if the relationship between the humanitarian community and the security forces is strengthened.
- 3) In addition to the proposed training and awareness building activities, it was suggested that the judicial system be strengthened in order to effectively prosecute violators and break a circle of impunity.
- 4) The workshop recommended the development of clear standards for recruitment into the armed forces and strict implementation of those rules.
- 5) In order to avoid theft of humanitarian assistance, participants stressed the need for the security forces to be paid well and regularly.
- 6) Food assistance should be increased and rice should be included in the basic food basket.
- 7) Health care services need to be improved. Training and awareness building of IDPs could improve the general state of health, particularly in relation to sanitation, STD and HIV/AIDS. Access to HIV/AIDS testing facilities should be improved.
- 8) The Liberian humanitarian community (government and non government) should advocate with the government and the international community in order to: a) improve Liberia's international standing (human rights and peace), and b) receive increased international funding.
- 9) The safety situation in the communities of origin must be independently verified before IDPs return. IDP leaders, "zoes" (traditional community leaders) and local authorities should travel to communities of origin to consult with the remaining population on the safety situation.
- 10) In addition, mechanisms for effective monitoring of human rights violation need to be put in place in order to prevent new displacements. There should also be training for security and local authorities on their respective roles and responsibilities in communities of origin during return.

- 11) The Ministry of Justice is currently developing guidelines for the screening of IDPs by the Joint Security Authorities. These guidelines should be in line with internationally recognized human rights and should be applied in a uniform and transparent manner.
- 12) Displaced persons in Liberia have developed a number of self-help strategies, including small-scale backyard farming. Local authorities should support this effort by providing land.
- 13) On the issue of women participation in decision-making, it was suggested that at least one seat on the Camp Block Team should always be held by a woman.

Annex one:

LRRRC Draft IDP Camp Management Guidelines

1.0 General Policy Overview/Framework

1.1 Definition and Scope

According to the UN Guiding Principles, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are a group of persons who have been forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, as a result of armed conflict, generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural or human-made disaster, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

Internally Displaced Persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedom as provided for under the Humanitarian Charter, the UN Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement and other international and domestic instruments. The Humanitarian Charter and the UN Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement reaffirm the fundamental importance of three key principles on internal displacement:

- The right to life with dignity
- The distinction between combatants and non-combatants
- The right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety and liberty and/or health would be at risk.

1.2 General Situation/Background

Liberia, like many countries in Africa, is prone to many hazard agents such as flood, epidemiological diseases, ethnic violence, civil disturbances and armed conflicts. Of particular concern, are the endemic armed conflicts, which have racked every fabric of the country, deteriorated further its precarious humanitarian situation and rendered most of the population extremely vulnerable. The armed conflict started in 1989 and for seven years, villages were ruined and social facilities destroyed. Over 200,000 persons were killed while over one million were made to languish, either as internally displaced persons or were deported to reside as refugees in neighbouring countries. More recently, the country has faced another armed conflict in the north, which has displaced over 60,000 people. In all of the incidents, the humanitarian community, though often constrained by donor fatigue and other adverse circumstances, has assisted the Liberian government to provide safe settlement in camps and minimum humanitarian assistance.

However, coupled with these constraints, the ineffective disaster preparedness and response and poor humanitarian co-ordination mechanisms to effectively apply meagre resources have, in many cases, exacerbated the situations of internally displaced persons.

1.3 Rationale of the Guidelines

The rationale of the IDP Guidelines focuses on two parameters:

- To ensure that humanitarian interventions in IDP settlements meet minimum standards that provide a conducive environment for IDPs, guarantee protection from adverse effects of climates, diseases and provide IDPs with the necessary security and privacy to ensure their dignity, health and wellbeing.
- To ensure that humanitarian assistance is freely, impartially and equitably distributed in accordance with the principles of the Humanitarian Charter and that such interventions meet the primary social needs of IDPs, incorporating as much as possible, self-sufficiency and self-management into the design and implementation of any assistance programmes.

1.4 Objective

The objective of these guidelines amongst other things is to organize, establish and maintain the Camp(s) for displaced persons (CDPs) in order to provide humanitarian assistance and protection for displaced persons. The assistance will include the following:

- A. Food and non-food items
- B. Water and Sanitation
- C. Shelter
- D. Health
- E. Education
- F. Family Re-unification
- G. Protection
- H. Agriculture and Food Security

Camps for displaced persons (CDPs) are not intended to be permanent places of residence. To prevent a permanent internal refugee situation, every effort will be made as quickly as possible to resettle the IDPs to their respective communities of origin or integrate them in their communities of choice, when the security situation so dictates

2.0 Shelter and Site Planning

2.1 Selection of a Camp for Displaced Persons

The Liberian Government, through its designated agency, the Liberia Refugee Repatriation & Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) has full responsibility to select a safe settlement for internally displaced persons. The selection shall begin with a multi-sectoral assessment, which shall involve other stakeholders including UN Agencies, Donors, NGOs, INGOs, other agencies of the Liberian Government, the local authority and representatives of the affected population, including women.

The selection shall be based on the initial assessment. The criteria for site selection and camp development shall be in line with the minimum standard as provided for in the Sphere Guidelines (Minimum Standards for Disaster Response). However, the LRRRC in collaboration with other stakeholders may develop standards for camp development that befit the prevailing reality. Details of the standards can be found in the sectoral guidelines attached in the Annex.

2.2 Camp Structure

Every center/camp for displaced persons (CDP) shall be divided into blocks by the camp management team on the basis of a clearly defined physical and structural layout of the site. It is expected that the IDP community will support the team in the execution of this task.

3.0. Co-ordination

3.1 The Camp Management Team

The Camp Management Team shall be structured as follows:

- LRRRC - Chairman/Camp Coordinator
- Lead NGO - Co-Chairman
- Selected INGO - member
- IDP Center Block Leaders - 1 representative per block
- Women's Representative

Responsibilities of the Camp Management Team

The responsibilities of the Camp Management Team shall consist of but not be limited to the following:

- Daily general supervision/management of the camp
- Monitor all humanitarian interventions
- Resolve all minor disputes/issues in the Camp
- Collect data for a unified and credible Data Base
- Promulgate rules and guidelines for the block leadership teams in accordance with these guidelines
- Establish information center for proper and timely information dissemination to IDPs, NGOs, INGOs, UN Agencies and the local and national government institutions.
- Ensure that assistance to the block residents is equitably distributed in accordance with the norm defined by the donor or contributor. (See sectoral guidelines in Annex for more details).
- Organize sectoral committees
- Promote the active participation of IDPs in all daily activities in the camp.
- Perform any and all other functions that favour the general welfare of the IDPs

Responsibilities of the Camp Coordinator

- Perform daily general supervision and administration of their respective CDPs
- Coordinate the overall supervision and administration of all humanitarian assistance
- Intervene in resolving all inter-agency issues arising thereof and the resolution of minor infraction in the CDP
- Organize NGO Coordination Meeting at all CDP
- Establish Camp Management Team
- Report to LRRRC Central Office on a weekly basis all issues and outstanding needs of concern pertaining to the welfare of the IDPs
- Perform any other function assigned thereto by the LRRRC Management.
- Build harmonious relationship with the NGO Community.
- Record new arrivals and departures from a CDP.
- Ensure good sanitation condition in CDP.
- Provide physical protection for staff of the INGOs, NGOs, UN Agencies and the IDPs in the CDPs.

3.2 Lead Agency

The concept of a lead agency is not a new development in the management of camps for internally displaced persons in Liberia. The lead agency concept entails that a particular agency is the head of all other humanitarian agencies in a camp.

Responsibilities of the Lead Agency are to:

- Direct, co-ordinate and report on humanitarian intervention in a camp.
- Assist the LRRRC to maintain a credible database of humanitarian interventions and the demography of the internally displaced people.
- Assist the LRRRC in the general management of the camp.

3.3 Block Leaders

Each block shall have a leadership structure of five persons. The inclusion of women in the structure is highly emphasised.

The Block leadership Team shall comprise the following positions:

- Block Leader
- Block Co-Leader
- Secretary
- Women's Representative
- Adviser

3.4 Procedures for Selection of IDP Leadership

All members of the block leadership will be elected by sleeping resident and ration cardholders. In an event where the block residents can not by themselves, make a selection, the Camp Management Team will assist them make a decision. All blocks should be kept to a maximum size of about 2000 residents.

Block leadership tenure of office shall initially be for a period of six (6) months. Thereafter, block leadership tenure shall be extended for a period of one (1) year.

In the election of block leadership, all efforts should be made to include females' participation. Female leadership should particularly be emphasized and encouraged.

4.0 Coordination Mechanisms

4.1 In order to ensure maximum collaboration amongst LRRRC, the IDPs, implementing INGOs and NGOs and the UN Agencies, the Camp Management Team is required to meet in full session once every week. At these meetings, a thorough review of activities of the camp will be discussed with appropriate action(s) taken.

At the Camp/Center Management Meeting, decisions reached should focus on:

- a. Ongoing interventions
 - b. Identification and prioritization of outstanding needs (immediate)
 - c. Issues of concern, which should be immediately transmitted to the IDP humanitarian coordination meeting through the LRRRC Central Office in Monrovia. The Resident Representative of an intervening organization may report the same issues to their relevant head offices.
- 4.2** The field IDP humanitarian co-ordination meeting will be held weekly to discuss the reports of the Camp Management Team and make recommendations, where appropriate, to the central coordination meeting.
- 4.3** A humanitarian or intervening agency may decide to take action in response to the needs of the IDPs. Said action or intervention should be with the consent of the Liberia Refugee Repatriation & Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) and within the context of the general policy framework of government as pursued by the LRRRC and the Camp Management Teams.
- 4.4** No institution, NGO or non-intervening partner is allowed to conduct workshops, seminars, symposia; similarly, there shall be no mass meeting held by any organization without the prior consent of the LRRRC Management.

5.0 Sectoral Committees

5.1 There shall be in every camp the below listed Sectoral Committees, which shall be headed by an agency with specialisation in that sector:

- Shelter Committee
- Food Committee
- Water and Sanitation Committee
- Health Committee
- Non-food Item Committee
- Child Protection and Family Unification Committee
- Agriculture and Food Security Committee

5.2 The responsibilities and functions of these committees will be defined appropriately to form part of these guidelines. See attached Sectoral Guidelines.

6.0 Maintenance of Safety and Protection

The Camp Management Team will make every effort to ensure the safety and protection of the camp and its inhabitants at all times. The block team leadership is the first level of conflict or dispute resolution amongst its residents. The Camp/Center Management Team is the final level of dispute resolution amongst the residents of a given camp.

Decision of the Camp Management Team is appealable to the Programme Office of the LRRRC. Any party to a dispute who is not satisfied with the decision of Programme Office/LRRRC may seek redress with the Executive Management of LRRRC.

Cases involving criminal nature shall be forwarded immediately to the nearby magisterial or Justice of the Peace Court without delay for prosecution

7.0 Registration Procedure

The LRRRC in collaboration with INGOs, NGOs, UN Agencies and the Camp Management Committee will register incoming IDPs into recognized IDP Centers after being screened by the Joint Security Authorities.

See attached Ministry of Justice Screening Guidelines.

Registration Process

1. Upon the arrival at the CDP, the prospective IDP along with his/her family is ushered to the main registration center for identification and regulation purpose.
2. The prospective IDP family information is recorded in the primary ledger, either as a family head or as a single person. Ration cards will be issued by the Camp Management Team. This ration card will indicate the registration number and name of the family head, family size and the block or transit center to which

he/she is assigned, while his/her family structure is being constructed. The card will be used for identification and distribution purposes.

3. Having received the Ration Card, the family head with his/her family will be taken to the block or transit center and introduced to the block team, who shall recount the members of the family as registered on the ration card. Upon confirmation that all members of the family are accounted for, the name of each person in the family is to be recorded in the block ledger. The block ledger represents the manifest of all individuals residing in the block.
4. The block manifest is the most detailed record of a camp. The block manifest is very important for the distribution of relief assistance, monitoring and the provision of services.

Members of the IDP Humanitarian Committee are:

LRRRC	Chairman
UNDP (RCO)/OCHA	Co-Chairman
WFP	Member
UNHCR	Member
WHO	Member
EU	Member
MSF (FRANCE)	Member
ICRC	Member
SCF	Member
OXFAM	Member
CONCERN	Member
ARC	Member
LNRCS	Member
AEL	Member
ACF	Member
CAM	Member
CRS	Member
IRC	Member
LWF/WS	Member
MPDL	Member
PMU Interlife	Member
SCG/TDS	Member
WVI	Member
FAO	Member
UNICEF	Member
UNFPA	Member
UNOPS	Member
USAID	Member
CARITAS	Member
JPC	Member

Annex two: List of participants

Name	Organization	Position
Joseph Jallah	Action Contre La Faim (ACF)	
Kemoh Sheriff	American Refugee Council (ARC)	Chief Trauma Counselor
WO1 Andrew N.W. Kakia	Anti Terrorist Unit (ATU)	Liaison Officer
Stephen. J.C.S. Kai	Association of Evangelicals of Liberia (AEL)	Church mobilization supervisor
Stanley Sheriff	CARITAS	Director
Akinlolu Oguntimehn	Christian Aid Ministries (CAM)	Director-General Relief
Joan Carey	Concern	Country Director
Niall Tierney	Concern	
Patrick Ackatia	Concerned Christian Community (CCC)	
Frank V. Taylor	Government	Commissioner
Morlu W. Scott, Sr.	Government	Commissioner
Boye Robertson	ICRC	F.O.
Abraham Fallah	IDP	IDP leader
Alice Kollie	IDP	IDP leader
Borkolleh N. Salakpayaa	IDP	IDP leader
Elizabeth Togbah	IDP	IDP leader
Harris Beyan	IDP	IDP leader
James Yekeh	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	EPM
Frances G. Morris	Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)	National Director
DI Isaac Railey	Liberia National Police	Chief of Police, Bong County
Maj. John M. Saar	Liberia National Police	Special Assistant, SI
Varfee S. B. Dorley	Liberia National Red Cross Society	Acting Relief Coordinator
Daniel S. Gbigbi	Liberians United to Save Humanity (LUSH)	
William K. Bazzie	Local Government	Assistant Superintendent

Name	Organization	Position
J. Saah Nyumeh	LRRRC	Deputy Director
David N. Garteh	LRRRC	Supervisor
J. Kiemue Kollie	LRRRC	Legal Assistant
James F. Youquoi	LRRRC	Programme Officer
Allen Kromah	LRRRC	Regional coordinator
Alfred Brima	LRRRC	Camp coordinator
Melvin Davis	LRRRC	Camp coordinator
Francis Gayflor	LRRRC	Camp coordinator
P. Mulbah Kennedy	LRRRC	Camp coordinator
Vamba Nyei	LRRRC	Camp coordinator
Zolu B. Seh	LRRRC	Coordinator
Michael Sahr	Lutheran World Federation (LWF/WS)	Information Officer
Jerome N.J. Clarke II	Ministry Internal Affairs	Mayor, Gbarnga, Bong County
D. Sarbah Toe	Ministry Planning & Economic Affairs	Director
Francis F. Saah	MSF	Supervisor
Francis Matsanga	OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Mohammed Siryon	OCHA	National Officer
Paul Jaiblai	OXFAM	WATSAN
Joseph S. Cooper	PMU Interlife	General Coordinator
Chidi Omeze	SCF (UK)	Emergency Coordinator
Karen Thompson	UN Resident Coordinator Office/UNDP	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Yvonne Wolo	UNDP	Programme Assistant
John Stewart	UNFPA	Information Assistant
Josiah K. Flomo	UNHCR	Field Assistant
Lawrence Mgbangson	UNHCR	Sr. Protection Officer
S.A. Weah-Weah	UNV Office	UNV Coordinator
Marian Narmah	WFP	Food Aid Monitor
Dr. Moses Jeuronlon	World Vision Liberia	Health Officer

Annex three: Workshop agenda

Day One

- 9:00-9:30 Opening Statement by the Minister of Planning and the Executive Director of the LRRRC
- 9:30-10:00 Presentation of workshop participants, facilitators, objectives and agenda
- 10:00-10:30 Introduction to the Guiding Principles
- 10:30-10:45 Coffee Break
- 10:45-12:30 Definition of an Internally Displaced Person (Module I)
- 12:30-14:00 Lunch
- 14:00-15:00 Definition of an Internally Displaced Person (Cont.)
- 15:00-15:15 Coffee Break
- 15:15-17:00 Legal Origins and International Obligations (Module II)

Day Two

- 9:00-10:30 Prevention and Protection during Displacement (Module III)
- 10:30-10:45 Coffee Break
- 10:45-12:30 Prevention and Protection during Displacement (Cont.)
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-15:00 Return and Resettlement (Module IV)
- 15:00-15:15 Coffee Break
- 15:15-16:30 Return and Resettlement (Cont.)

Day Three

- 9:00-11:00 Assisting IDPs to Address their Own Needs (Module V)
- 11:00-11:15 Coffee Break
- 11:15-12:30 Humanitarian Agencies and Human Rights
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 Conclusions and recommendations
- 14:30 Closure