

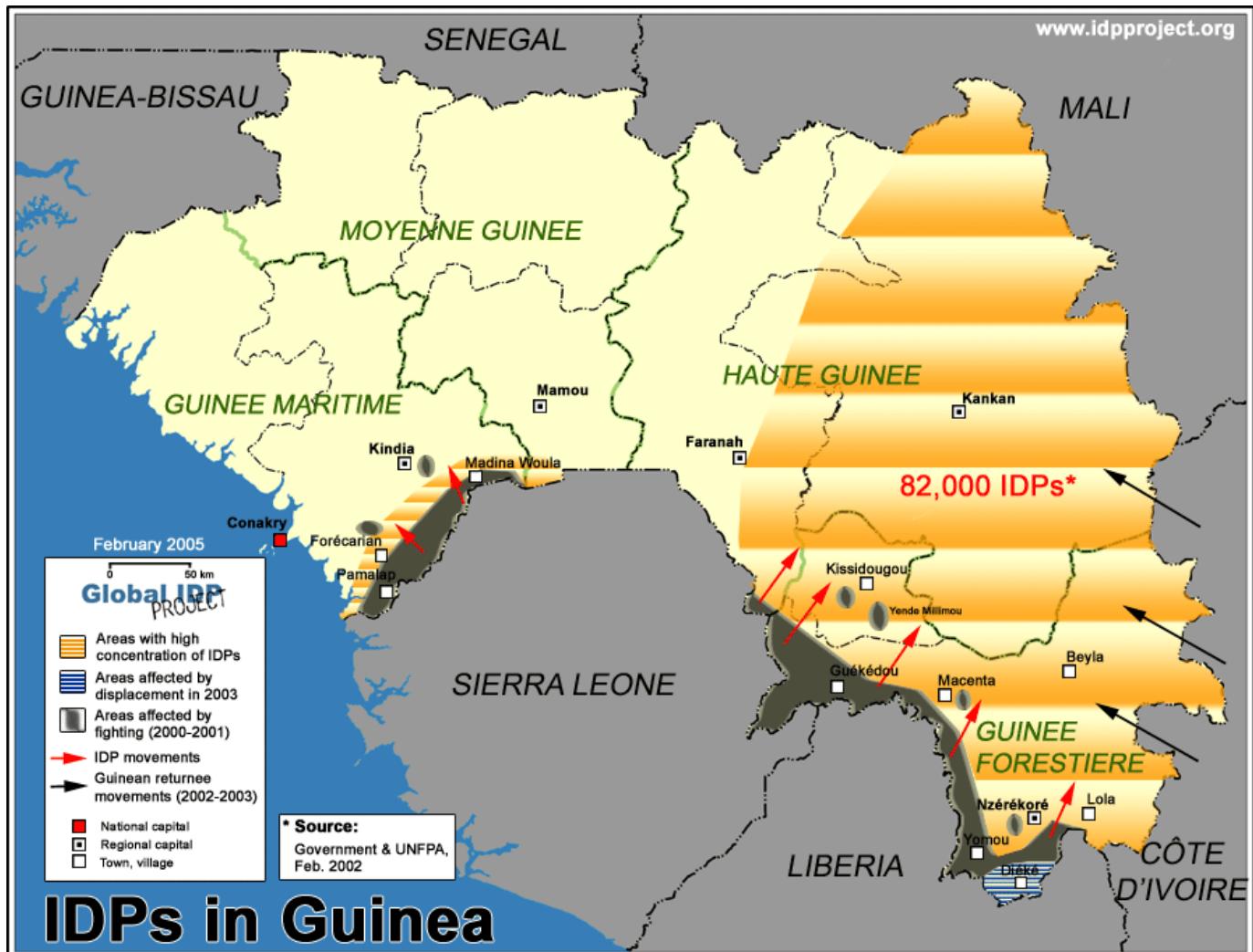
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Guinea's forgotten internal displacement crisis

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Map of Guinea



Executive summary

For 15 years instability and armed conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone and, more recently, Côte d'Ivoire have spilled over into Guinea, causing death, physical injury, material destruction and large-scale displacement of civilians. Guinea has not fully recovered from the impact, especially of a series of armed incursions in 2000/2001. While refugees across international frontiers are being catered for in Guinea, programmes to help internally displaced people (IDPs) and Guineans returning from neighbouring countries are insufficient and seriously under-funded. Unless better provision is made for these groups, and long-suffering host communities, tensions could escalate into renewed conflict and undermine hopes for peace in the region.

At the height of the conflict, there were up to 360,000 IDPs in Guinea. A census conducted in February 2002 found that some 82,000 people were still internally displaced at the time, mostly in Guinea Forestière and Haute Guinée, but since then no systematic assessment and evaluation of the living conditions and location of IDPs has been done. However, a number of surveys and rapid assessments carried out throughout 2004 indicate how vulnerable IDPs, returnees and host communities are. Four years after the rebel attacks, the living conditions of IDPs and returning Guineans who fled persecution in neighbouring countries are deteriorating. They have not been able to integrate into the places of refuge and their presence has put a heavy burden on the absorption capacity of host communities sharing their meagre resources and land, as well as on the already precarious social infrastructures and services in their area of displacement. Most of the displaced are not able to return to their homes because of a lack of infrastructure, public services and support for the reconstruction of houses in the areas devastated by the 2000/2001 attacks.

During the course of the 1990s, Guinea became increasingly embroiled in the interlinked conflicts which have plunged several neighbouring countries into near-anarchy and chaos. Guinea opened its borders for refugees fleeing the fighting in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone, and hosted a total of nearly one million people during the past decade. Among these were a number of opponents of the regime of Charles Taylor, who came to power in Liberia in 1997. Operating from Guinean territory and with ostensible acquiescence by the government, they formed a rebel group, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and crossed into Liberia to fight the Taylor regime. At the same time, Guinea supported the government of Sierra Leone in its fight against the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which in turn was backed by the Liberian government under Charles Taylor. Fighting eventually spilled over into Guinea when various armed groups began to cross the border from neighbouring Sierra Leone and Liberia with increasing frequency. The number of incursions peaked in 2000 and 2001 and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee the border areas.

While the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone at the beginning of 2002 slightly improved the security situation in Guinea, the escalation of the conflict in Liberia between 2002 and 2003 led to increased fear of renewed instability, in particular in the Guinea

Forestière region. This was caused by further cross-border incursions by armed men and the presence of rebels in the town of N'Zérékoré. It was only after the end of major fighting in Liberia in August 2003 that the security situation in Guinea Forestière improved significantly.

However, Guinea has yet to recover from the physical, economic and psychological damage that has been caused by 15 years of sub-regional instability. The country remains in a transitional phase and is still unable to enter into a sustainable development phase. The massive movement of populations in and around Guinea Forestière has put significant pressure on local communities, creating tensions and economic decline that could turn into open conflict between host communities and IDPs if nothing is done.

Although no comprehensive assessment has been made, there are reports indicating that many IDPs have settled permanently into local communities with only very few having returned home. Most of those who returned still live in precarious conditions and have received little assistance for their reintegration. It is unclear whether those who have not returned to their area of origin have resettled voluntarily or whether they still have the intention of returning.

Despite the fact that Guinea's social indicators are at the same level as in other countries that have experienced war, the international community has shown limited interest in assisting the government to provide sustainable solutions to the IDP problem. The issue has been neglected as the attention of both the government and the donor community has been focused on refugees and on the crisis in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire.

It is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the work of the various contributors to rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, and of basic needs still to be covered. The Guinean government should make a proper assessment of the situation of those displaced from the Guinea Forestière region, including with regard to their preferred durable solutions. The authorities must also uphold the right of IDPs to return by providing conditions that allow for the displaced to go home voluntarily and in safety and dignity.

Key recommendations

To the government

- develop a national humanitarian action plan prioritising the needs of IDPs, returnees and host communities
- develop and implement a strategy for the resettlement or the return and reintegration of IDPs and returnees, also in order to alleviate the burden on host communities
- improve and maintain basic social infrastructures in hosting areas, in order to reduce mortality, morbidity and malnutrition rates, and to prevent a complete loss of coping mechanisms of IDPs, returnees, ex-volunteers soldiers and host communities
- resume and implement full demobilisation and reintegration of ex-volunteer soldiers in order to defuse the psychosis of insecurity and restore security
- support the Radios Rurales which play an important role in keeping IDPs informed and advising them on their relations with host communities
- support local NGOs such as the Mano River Women for Peace Network in their efforts towards conflict prevention

To the government, local authorities and the UN

- address rehabilitation needs related to IDPs, returnees, ex-volunteers and host communities
- implement the vulnerability analysis as proposed in the CAP for 2005, gather and consolidate available data on IDPs, returnees, ex-volunteers and host communities and evaluate their living conditions and rehabilitation needs in order to establish and implement an action plan for a collaborative response

To the UN

- provide capacity-building and training to local and national human rights, humanitarian and development actors and authorities
- train and sensitise local authorities on IDPs rights for return, reintegration or resettlement and their responsibility towards the displaced

To donors:

- Specifically consider and address the issue of Guinean host communities, returnees and IDPs who still suffer from the consequences of the 2000/2001 rebel attacks and the pressure from the presence of refugees from neighbouring countries by:
 - providing financial support to programmes designed to target IDPs, returnees and host communities
 - increasing support to communities in their effort for rehabilitation and recovery by financing projects designed to facilitate IDP return, reintegration and resettlement and the rehabilitation of host communities

Background

For more than a decade Guinea has been facing the political, economic and social consequences of the armed conflicts that have successively erupted in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, and also within its own borders. During the course of the 1990s, Guinea became increasingly embroiled in these interlinked conflicts which – fuelled by the proliferation of small arms and trade in illegally-mined diamonds and gold – have plunged several countries into near-anarchy and chaos.

Guinea opened its borders for refugees fleeing the fighting in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone, and hosted a total of nearly one million people during the past decade. Among these were a number of opponents of the regime of Charles Taylor, who came to power in Liberia in 1997. Operating from Guinean territory and with ostensible acquiescence by the government, they formed a rebel group, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and crossed into Liberia to fight the Taylor regime. At the same time, Guinea supported the government of Sierra Leone in its fight against the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which in turn was backed by the Liberian government under Charles Taylor.

Fighting eventually spilled over into Guinea when various armed groups began to cross the border from neighbouring Sierra Leone and Liberia with increasing frequency for limited hit-and-run attacks, mainly in Guinée Forestière. In 2000, the situation escalated as the RUF staged a series of incursions into Forécariah and Liberian soldiers were blamed for an ambush at Macenta, killing 27 Guineans. More incursions followed during 2000 and 2001, now larger operations with the apparent goal of destabilising the country, which in turn prompted reprisals by the Guinean army. The RUF carried out raids into Forécariah, Pamélap, Benty, Kindia, Dar Salam and Madina Woula, while armed groups from Liberia attacked the areas of Kissidougou, Macenta, Yomou and N'Zérékoré. At the height of the fighting, the Guéckédou area and Parrot's Beak were also primary sites of clashes, and even villages at some distance from the frontier were affected. Among the armed groups operating in the border areas were also Guinean army deserters and insurgents recruited by the Liberian government (ICRC, 15 December 2000; Guéckédou Prefecture, 23 November 2004).

Several peace initiatives launched within the framework of the Mano River Union, of which all three states are members, and by the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) failed to resolve the conflict. However, a number of activities by grass roots civil society organisations such as the Mano River Women's Peace Network contributed to ease the tensions between the three countries.

The security situation in the Guinean border regions improved somewhat after the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone at the beginning of 2002, but fear of renewed instability increased again when the conflict in Liberia escalated between 2002 and 2003. Cross-border incursions into Guinée Forestière by armed assailants and the presence of Liberian rebels in the town of N'Zérékoré continued to give rise to security concerns. It was only after Charles Taylor went into exile in Nigeria in August 2003 and the end of major

combat in Liberia that the security situation in Guinée Forestière improved significantly (IRIN, January 2005).

Causes and patterns of displacement

Displacement in Guinea was mainly caused by multiple incursions of armed groups from Sierra Leone and Liberia, and fierce clashes between these groups and the Guinean army. As a result of the fighting many towns and villages in the border areas were destroyed, looted and burned. Pamelap on the border with Sierra Leone and in particular the Parrot's Beak located south-west of Guéckédou have faced several incidents of attacks that led to the massive displacement of local residents and refugees sheltering in camps.



House destroyed during the attacks in Guéckédou prefecture
(Photo: Mpako Foaleng/Global IDP Project, November 2004)

Hundreds of thousands of people fled the combat zone towards more stable areas either eastward to the préfecture of Macenta, or north towards Haute Guinée. Often the displaced sought refuge with relatives in safer areas. The Kissi and Guécké people, for example, generally moved to join relatives in Kissidougou. Many other people who had moved south from other parts of Guinea over the past decades were forced to go back to their area of origin as a result of the violence. Others left their homes only for the period of the incursions and went back after calm had returned. At the height of the conflict, Kissidougou hosted at least 136,500 IDPs in a prefecture of some 206,000 inhabitants.

The escalation of fighting in northern Liberia between March and August 2003 caused additional displacement. The Guinean authorities evacuated civilians from the areas around the Diecke-Ganta border point with Liberia. They declared the surrounding area a 'no-go' zone for military and security reasons (OCHA, April 2003; UNHCR, 5 August 2003).

Security situation

The overall security situation in the border areas has improved considerably during 2004. However, the abundance of small arms and the presence of roaming gunmen still constitute a real security risk in these areas. The latter include several thousand volunteers who joined the Guinean army at the height of the conflict but have not been demobilised yet, as well as armed men who fled to Guinea to avoid being disbanded and disarmed in neighbouring countries. In addition, there are widespread rumours of rebel infiltrations and possible attacks, nurturing an atmosphere of fear and lack of confidence in the sustainability of peace and stability in the border regions among the displaced populations.

In 2004, rumours about imminent attacks prompted the arrest of a number of people and the reinforcement of the borders with Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone which remain closed. There have also been widespread rumours of illegal traffic of weapons and people, as well as the forced and voluntary recruitment of minors and unemployed youths into armed groups (UN, 11 November 2004, p.1; OCHA, 15 June 2004; UNICEF, 14 November 2004).

In order to quash rumours of impending attacks in N'Zérékoré, local authorities, traditional leaders, and Mano women and youth groups from the Liberian and Guinean border areas met to renew a non-aggression pact between the Mano ethnic communities living along the two sides of the frontier. There are plans to extend this initiative to other areas all other areas at the border (OCHA, January 2005).

The lack of reconstruction of housing and rehabilitation of public infrastructure and services by the government appears to be seen by many IDPs as a confirmation of their suspicion that the affected areas may not yet be safe enough for return. Many buildings were destroyed during attacks in the prefectures of Kindia, Mamou and Forécariah bordering Sierra Leone, and the prefectures of Macenta, Guéckédou and Yomou bordering Liberia, and only a very limited number of houses have since been rebuilt or rehabilitated (OCPH, 18 October 2004; Interviews, 23, 26 November 2004; Interview with the governor, Kindia, 26 November 2004; OCHA, December 2004).

Uncertainty over how many persons remain displaced

Uncertainty remains about how many people are still displaced in Guinea. With attention focusing on refugees in recent years, the scope of the displacement crisis has never been properly assessed. In addition, the continuous movement of populations in the border areas and confusion about the categorisation of IDPs, refugees and Guineans returning from neighbouring countries complicated efforts to identify the internally displaced as a group with particular needs and vulnerabilities.

At the height of the conflict in 2001, there were some 320,000 IDPs in Guinea. But after a census done in 2002 with the support of the UN, local NGOs, ICRC and local authorities, the government published the number of 82,000 IDPs. This is the latest available number of IDPs from a census. In April 2003, WHO reported that there were

some 150,000 IDPs in the Guiné Forestière region (WHO Guinea, April 2003, p.4). A month later, in May 2003, WHO gave the figure of 100,000 IDPs in need of humanitarian assistance in the same region (WHO Guinea, May 2003, p.4). However, although no inter-agency assessment has been done, reports say it is believed that many IDPs have settled permanently into host communities with a few having supposedly returned home. But most of the IDPs who returned still live in precarious conditions and have received little assistance for their reintegration (USCR, May 2004).

As the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire that broke out in September 2002 also resulted in an influx of Guinean returnees. The returnees, who had migrated to neighbouring countries for economic, political and other reasons over the past decades, often arrive by the same means and in the same condition as refugees. The stream of returnees continued during 2003 and – albeit at a lower level – in 2004. In 2002 alone, some 48,000 Guinean returnees were registered in Guiné Forestière and Haute Guinéa. The entry points for these groups were the prefectures of Lola, Beyla Yomou and N'Zérékoré. Another 50,000-150,000 Guinean returnees are reportedly spread out in the main urban zones along the Guinean-Ivorian border. Most of these people found shelter in local communities which provide basic support by sharing their already meagre resources. In the communities along the border, returnees make up about eight per cent of the total population. Of these, 50 per cent are children, and their presence is placing particular strain on education services, especially in the smaller villages. In order to receive assistance some Guinean returnees registered as refugees (OCHA, 15 December 2003, p. 4; IRIN, 7 July 2004). In contrast to those who returned from Côte d'Ivoire, the situation of Guineans who returned from Liberia has never been fully assessed.



IDPs in N'Zérékoré still hoping to return to Guéckédou
(Photo: Mpako Foaleng/Global IDP Project, November 2004)

Subsistence needs

The general humanitarian environment in Guiné is gradually worsening, with parts of the population, including IDPs, losing more and more of their coping mechanisms and becoming increasingly vulnerable. Beyond the limited emergency assistance that was provided right after the attacks, there have been very few systematic programmes

targeting IDPs to help them return to their area of origin or to integrate in their area of displacement. There has been no assessment of the current needs of IDPs in Guinea. Their situation is made worse by the fact that most of them took refuge in urban districts where they settled alongside indigenous communities, further blurring their IDP-specific needs (UN, 11 November 2004, p.7).

As Guéckédou and many other villages in the prefecture came under attack, they were totally emptied of their inhabitants. The attackers looted or burned the belongings of the inhabitants, stole the harvests and livestock, and destroyed local markets and public infrastructures, including schools, hospitals, health centres and communication systems. Most IDPs who decided to return home did so without any assistance and are currently in a difficult situation as they still have to recover all of what was lost during the incursions. Many of the social services and infrastructures have not been restored or reconstructed. In some places, schools and hospitals are being rehabilitated, but the situation before the incursions is still far from being restored. Consequently, pressure is still great on the limited infrastructures available (UN, 11 Nov 2004, p.25). Many displaced girls have had to abandon school because they have lost their parents and means of survival. There is no mechanism available to take care of this category of people. In Beyla, children study in tents set up by local communities (Interviews, N'Zérékoré, Kissidougou, Kankan, November 2004).

In Guéckédou, at least 25 to 30 per cent of the returned IDPs are in need of food assistance and aid to rebuild their houses and sanitary facilities. The prefectures' services also need institutional support to carry out an assessment of IDP needs for complete rehabilitation (Prefecture

Guéckédou, 25
November 2004).

Although IDPs who have received assistance from the FAO/OCPH programmes to resume agriculture may start coping and slowly integrating into local communities, many others will continue to be dependent on host communities for survival.

In many areas, the aftermath of rebel attacks is still visible in the level of damages and destruction caused by the clashes. In the town of Guéckédou, for example, many of those who returned are still living in critical conditions as their houses are not yet repaired. In Daro prefecture, only a quarter of the houses have



House destroyed during attacks on Guéckédou
(Photo: Mpako Foaleng/Global IDP Project, November 2004)

been rebuilt. In the prefecture of Macenta, 90 per cent of the homes and buildings destroyed still need to be rebuilt or repaired. Returned IDPs have to share the few houses that are available with newly arriving IDPs (OCPH, 18 October 2004; Prefecture Guéckédou, 25 November 2004).

Land access

Since 2003, some returning IDPs have been able to resume agricultural activities. Often, the more established returnees share their harvest with new arrivals who in exchange help in the fields. The newcomers often lack the seeds and agricultural tools in order to work their own field. In some areas of displacement such as Macenta and Kissidougou prefectures, IDPs have to give away a great part of the harvest to pay rent (Interviews, Macenta, Kissidougou, 23, 24 November 2004).

In Haute Guinea, there are tensions between local residents and their relatives who left the area, sometimes generations ago, but have returned to their places of origin after having been displaced from the south. Invoking customary ancestral rights, these IDPs now often claim what they consider their legitimate share of the family land, thus challenging the current distribution of land among local residents. The lack of arable land in Haute Guinea means that IDPs are often left with no other option than to occupy lands likely to be affected by floods such as the one that devastated the region in 2001. In many other parts, IDPs have access to land but lack the means to prepare and make it arable (OCHA, November 2001; Interviews, Kankan, 26 November 2004).

Overburdened host communities

Although host communities have borne the brunt of the influx of IDPs, refugees and returning migrants, they have received only sporadic assistance from the Guinean government and the international community. In addition to suffering from deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the country, they also have had to share their limited resources with the displaced, which has resulted in a steady erosion of their living conditions and coping mechanisms.

In the prefectures of Kissidougou and Kankan, the burden of the presence of IDPs is felt on public services such as schools and hospitals. Although many children in these areas do not go to school, classrooms are hugely overcrowded, with between 150 and 300 children in each of them (Interviews, N'Zérékoré, Kissidougou, Kankan, November 2004).

In Kissidougou prefecture, an area normally not affected by food shortages, the presence of IDPs and other vulnerable groups led to a general increase in malnutrition rates between 2002 and 2003. In 2003, the number of IDPs in need of assistance in the area was as high as 75,000. The presence of IDPs and refugees in Kissidougou and other main towns of the Guinea Forestière region appears to have increased the risk of HIV/AIDS spreading there (Interviews, Kissidougou, 24 November 2004; IRIN, 26 July 2004).

Concerns have also been raised over environmental degradation due to the presence of IDPs and other vulnerable groups over the years in Guinea Forestière. The need for wood for firewood, to build shelters and create more space for rice cultivation, has led to serious deforestation. At least 200,000 hectares of forest have been lost to such activities in Guinea Forestière (UN, 11 November 2004, p.7).

Guinean returnees' hardship

Guineans who have returned from Liberia and Sierra Leone throughout the 1990s and the beginning of the following decade never received any assistance for their resettlement back home, and the problems they face are very similar to that of IDPs. Many women lost their husbands on their way back home. In order to survive and to feed their children, some women are forced to prostitute themselves to men who can prepare and make land arable for them to work on.

Consequently, they often give birth to more children, each with a different father, further aggravating their already dire situation. These women normally do not have the financial means to send their children to school (Interviews, Konian Aviation, 22 November 2004).

Guineans who have returned home from neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire because of instability and xenophobia there are facing further hardship in the border regions of Guinea Forestière and Haute Guinée. Although some of them have received assistance, most still live in precarious conditions and are as much of a burden on their host communities as the internally displaced. In the places where they settled there are few opportunities to work and earn enough money to make a living. As a result, many face serious food insecurity.

There is a lot of variation in numbers due to population movement, especially in the border areas. Returnees arrive in border areas and then move to the interior of Haute Guinée. Some men go back and forth to Côte d'Ivoire. Their wives and children remain in Guinée alone and have to cope by themselves (IRIN, 2 July 2004; Interviews, OCPH, 23 November 2004).



Guinean families who returned from Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, Konian Aviation (Photo: Mpako Foaleng/Global IDP Project, 22 November 2004)

Assistance needed to ease tension-spots

In a number of communities, the scarcity of resources, compounded by the presence of IDPs, and other vulnerable groups has resulted in growing tensions, which could turn into open conflict if nothing is done to provide sustainable solutions to IDPs and relieve overburdened host communities (UN, 11 Nov 2004, p.24). In N'Zérékoré, for example, historical tensions between local populations and migrants from the north resurfaced in disputes over land rights in June 2004 (IRIN, 7 July 2004).

Limited access to water, health care and education also is a source of conflict between host communities and IDPs, as is the fact that IDPs, unlike local residents, do not have to pay taxes to access public services (Interviews, Kankan, 26 November 2004).

Guinea is in a transitional phase and has rehabilitation needs that should be met in order to pass to the post-conflict phase. There is a need to support communities where IDPs are trying to integrate. A distinction between the two groups in the implementation of any aid programme would exacerbate tensions that are already perceptible between host communities and IDPs. Assistance in return areas is also needed as an incentive to encourage those IDPs who want to return to their area of origin.

National response

Despite having the potential of being one of Africa's richest countries, Guinea's humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate as a result of a combination of the unresolved displacement crisis, lack of political reforms and international isolation. Its social indicators are those of a country that has been through war and in 2004 it was ranked 160th out of 177 countries by the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index, a decline of three places as compared to 2003.

The Service National pour l'Action Humanitaire (SENAH) is the governmental agency that has primary responsibility for coordinating the work of humanitarian actors and giving assistance to all vulnerable groups including IDPs. In order to better assess the needs and coordinate various activities, five sectoral sub-groups (food security, health/nutrition, water/sanitation, education and protection) have been created under the stewardship of SENAH. The SENAH is decentralised and, through the Regional Bureaux for Humanitarian Action, present in all four regions of the country. However, the government structures have so far failed to establish conditions that would allow IDPs to voluntarily return to their homes or resettle elsewhere under conditions of safety and dignity.

Most donors have severed their bilateral cooperation and put a hold on their activities in the country because of lack of political reforms. This factor has been used as an excuse by the government to avoid complying with its obligations with regard to the provision of basic social infrastructures and services, making life difficult for the bulk of the Guinean population and worse for more vulnerable groups such as IDPs, Guinean returnees and host communities. The UN warned that this could lead to a humanitarian crisis even in the absence of a war or natural disaster if nothing is done (UN, 11 Nov 2004, p.7).

The authorities should maximise the means available in order to ease the tensions between IDPs and host communities. For instance they should support and give more capacity to the Radios Rurales which play an important role in sensitising IDPs about their relations with the local population, and informing them about such issues as health and the situation in their area of origin.

Authorities should also support local NGOs such as the Mano River Women for Peace Network in their current efforts for conflict prevention. The Network is playing an important role in reducing tensions between host communities, IDPs, Guinean returnees, refugees and migrants.

With the financial contribution of international agencies, some local NGOs provide limited assistance to IDPs. Supported by FAO, the Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humanitaire (OCPH) helps IDPs to resume agricultural activities and, between 2002 and 2004, carried out socio-economic revival projects benefiting displaced populations in the Kissidougou, Guéckédou and Macenta prefectures. In Macenta and Kissidougou, the NGO assists some 600-800 heads of families, supported by the German Caritas, and provides assistance to IDPs wishing to return home. The NGO also distributes items to some 1,000 families in four other prefectures of Guinea Forestière. Although these efforts have visibly provided some hope for a better life for IDPs who have returned, OCPH's contribution covers only 12 per cent of the needs the organisation identified in these areas. There are plans for 2005 and 2006 to extend reintegration programmes, if funded, to other prefectures of the region affected by war (OCPH, 23 November 2004; UN, 11 November 2004, p.26).

International response

Since the end of the 2000/2001 attacks, beyond the emergency response provided by some humanitarian actors to IDPs, there have been some efforts to facilitate the rehabilitation process. A number of other activities in the field of education, shelter, and non-food assistance carried out by UN agencies and NGOs benefited IDPs and host communities. For instance, the World Food Programme supported agricultural production in 2001 and 2002 (food, seed and tools distributions) (UN, April 2003, p.4). The children's agency UNICEF has provided psychological support for children and women affected by armed conflict and immediate emergency responses on a number of occasions to vulnerable groups (OCHA, May 2003). Plan Guinea, the national bureau of the anti-poverty charity Plan International rebuilt some destroyed houses, schools and hospitals and supported the stabilisation of the nutritional level in Guéckédou prefecture. Plan Guinea also contributed to the rehabilitation of public infrastructures and health centres. At the end of the attacks Plan Guinea provided some 2,500 families in the commune of Guéckédou with 500,000 Guinean francs (\$177) each as an incentive to return home (Plan Guinea, June 2002, pp. 5-6).

OCHA Guinea has organised regular coordination meetings between local authorities, UN agencies and local and international NGOs in N'Zérékoré, Guéckédou, Kissidougou and Kankan. These are forums of discussion to, among other things, plan and coordinate

humanitarian responses to vulnerable groups including IDPs, Guinean returnees and host communities.

However, there remain serious gaps in the international response to internal displacement in Guinea. There has been insufficient support to IDPs upon their return, resettlement and reintegration, as well as of host populations. Programmes to assist refugees have been receiving more financial support than those directed toward internally displaced persons and host communities. There are many humanitarian organisations providing assistance in Guinea but mainly to refugees or the population at large on the assumption that this will benefit IDPs.

The lack of assistance to IDPs is in part due to the critical under-funding of humanitarian and recovery programmes targeting IDPs and host communities (OCHA, 15 June 2004). Although the 2004 Consolidated Appeal (CAP) received nearly 70 per cent of the funding requirements, none of these funds were specifically allocated for assistance to IDPs or communities hosting displaced populations. At the same time, some \$24 million were earmarked for programmes targeting refugees, and another \$2.5 million for communities living around refugee camps (OCHA, 22 December 2004).

The lack of data on IDPs figures combined with the lack of precise information on the needs of IDPs, both in host communities and in the area of origin, might also have constrained donor community support. The planned assessment of the vulnerability of IDPs, returnees and host communities, foreseen in the CAP 2005 should be carried out as soon as possible in order to be able to better prioritise programmes aiming at assisting them.

The CAP 2005 is requesting some \$44 million to provide assistance to conflict-affected populations, including IDPs, in and around Guinea Forestière, Haute Guinea and other areas. Only if they are adequately funded will the initiatives foreseen in the CAP 2005 be able to update the available information and evaluate the living conditions and needs of returnees and IDPs. Additional funding would also complement a number of recovery and rehabilitation activities in order to alleviate the burden borne by host communities and to give IDPs and Guinean returnees the chance to become self-sufficient (UN, 11 November 2004). The consolidation of a lasting peace in the Mano River Region will depend also on the provision of durable solutions to IDP needs in Guinea.

To defuse the risk of growing tensions at community level turning into open conflict, more donor support is needed for the return, reintegration or resettlement of IDPs and returnees and the recovery of host communities from more than a decade of social and economic pressure.

Note: For more detailed information on the internal displacement situation in Guinea, please visit the [Guinea country page](#) on the Global IDP Project's online IDP database.

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*Note: All documents used in this profile summary are directly accessible on the
[List of Sources](#) page of the Guinea country page.*

About the Global IDP Project

The Global IDP Project, established by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 1996, is the leading international body monitoring internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Geneva-based Project contributes to protecting and assisting the 25 million people around the globe, who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Global IDP Project runs an online database providing comprehensive and frequently updated information and analysis on internal displacement in over 50 countries.

It also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In addition, the Project actively advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

For more information, visit the Global IDP Project website and the database at www.idpproject.org.

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