

**INTER-AGENCY WORKING GROUP MEETING
27 SEPTEMBER 1995**

**REPORT ON INTER-AGENCY MISSION
TO SIERRA LEONE AND THE SUB-REGION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
SIERRA LEONE	3
Introduction	3
Overview	3
Internally Displaced People	4
Humanitarian Assistance	4
Reorientation of UN Agency Programmes	6
Complementarity of UN/NGO/IO Activities	8
Contingency Planning	8
Information Flow and Management	9
Resource Requirements	9
Security	9
Sierra Leone Coordination	10
Overview	10
National Level Coordination	11
UN Coordination	12
Observations and Recommendations on Sierra Leone	13
LIBERIA	16
General	16
Humanitarian Assistance	17
Coordination Arrangements	19
COTE d'IVOIRE	21
General	21
Humanitarian Assistance	21
Coordination Arrangements	23

Page

GUINEA	24
General	24
Humanitarian Assistance	24
Coordination Arrangements	26
OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON SUB-REGIONAL ISSUES	27
ANNEXES AND MAPS	
Annex I Mission Composition	30
Annex II Terms of Reference	31
Annex III Mission Itinerary	34
Annex IV IDP and Refugee Caseload Figures in Sierra Leone	45
Annex V Current Status of Resource Requirements for Sierra Leone	47
Annex VI Draft Terms of Reference for Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer in Sierra Leone	49
Annex VII Humanitarian Assistance Principles and Protocols for Operation in Liberia	50
Annex VIII Proposed Terms of Reference for Focal Point for Coordination	56
Annex IX Outline Proposal for Support for UN Regional Focal Point for Coordination	57
Map I Humanitarian Access in Sierra Leone	
Map II IDP Camp Locations and Caseloads in Sierra Leone	
Map III Humanitarian Access in Liberia	
Map IV Refugee Locations in Sub-Region	
Map V Principal Cross Border Routes for Relief Supplies	

Executive Summary

The UN Inter-Agency Mission to Sierra Leone and the Sub-Region visited Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea during the period 28 July to 21 August 1995. The mission had two principal tasks:

- assess the status of coordination arrangements made in response to the humanitarian emergency in Sierra Leone.
- identify humanitarian assistance issues of sub-regional significance with a view towards improving regional coordination and information mechanisms and cross-border delivery of aid.

The mission was composed of both UN and NGO representatives. The mission had the opportunity to meet with a wide variety of UN, NGO, international organization and government representatives as well as visit numerous relief sites.

Civil war and unrest in both Sierra Leone and Liberia have created a chronic humanitarian crisis with impacts on the entire sub-region. Prevailing insecurity in much of Sierra Leone and Liberia has hampered both internal relief efforts and cross-border activities. Particularly alarming is the band of need which stretches across much of Sierra Leone and Liberia containing upwards of one million people. Access to this isolated and forgotten population is either difficult or impossible. This situation is most acute in Sierra Leone where the major roads for relief supplies are frequently cut by ambushes, leaving those in the interior in desperate circumstances.

A massive internally displaced person and refugee flow has taken place. It is estimated there are between 1.5 and 2 million IDPs in Sierra Leone and another 830,000 within Liberia. Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea are host to 305,000 and 536,000 refugees, respectively. In this regard, the mission was impressed by the commitment and organization demonstrated by both Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea to care for and integrate refugee populations.

Given the dimensions of the humanitarian crisis in the sub-region, the mission was struck by the low visibility and seeming lack of interest the situation attracts. Continued indifference to the urgent needs of many thousands of people will only prolong human suffering at best and exacerbate the situation at worst. This must change.

With respect to humanitarian coordination arrangements within Sierra Leone, the mission noted that while a number of initiatives have recently been undertaken to strengthen humanitarian coordination, additional support to the UN Resident Coordinator is required in order to provide effective humanitarian coordination and enable the UN to exercise a leadership role. This requires augmenting the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator with experienced humanitarian coordination staff who will support the Resident Coordinator and work with the Government of Sierra Leone and coordinating body, the National Relief and Rehabilitation Committee (NARECOM).

Reviewing sub-regional humanitarian assistance issues, the mission noted the close linkage events in one country have upon other countries in the sub-region. Given that linkage, the effectiveness of the international humanitarian relief effort would be enhanced by a strengthening of a sub-regional approach. All agencies working on the crisis would benefit from improved information sharing, joint strategic planning and a more flexible approach at both the country and sub-regional level. This could have a particularly positive impact on cross-border operations which need further strengthening and coordination in order to maximize their effectiveness.

To that end, the mission supports the role of the recently designated Regional Focal Point for Coordination as a first step towards improving delivery of humanitarian assistance in the sub-region. The Focal Point's primary duties will be the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of information on sub-regional issues and chairing consultations of humanitarian actors on a sub-regional level.

While political reconciliation is the key requirement to resolve problems within the sub-region, effective and sustained humanitarian advocacy at country, sub-regional and international levels will focus the world's attention on a forgotten crisis, reduce human suffering and facilitate a return to more normal conditions. To this end, the mission recommends that the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and other senior level humanitarian officials, undertake a visit to the sub-region in order to promote humanitarian action on a variety of fronts.

Sierra Leone

Introduction

The principal purposes of the mission to Sierra Leone was to examine in-country humanitarian coordination mechanisms and activities and to review regional coordination issues and linkages. The mission had the opportunity to meet with a full range of UN agency, NGO, ICRC and government representatives as well as conduct field visits to a variety of relief sites. This report provides an overview of the major factors affecting humanitarian assistance in Sierra Leone, reviews humanitarian coordination arrangements, summarizes key humanitarian assistance efforts and issues and provides recommendations as appropriate.

Overview

In November 1994, the four year old war in Sierra Leone escalated significantly. Attacks on towns and ambushes on convoys along most major roads leading to the interior have resulted in increased insecurity, reduced access to large areas of Sierra Leone, rising numbers of internally displaced persons and increased demands for humanitarian assistance. Attacks have been attributed primarily to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

Due to security problems, all UN and many NGO staff have relocated to the Western Province (vicinity of Freetown). This has reduced the capacity to deliver aid, monitor the humanitarian situation and respond appropriately. Access to many interior locations is either restricted or not permitted. The continuing threat to convoys carrying either commercial or relief goods has made most overland travel a risky proposition. Truck owners are increasingly reluctant to risk their lives and property. It should be noted that most relief supplies are carried by privately owned truck transport; some items are transported by coastal barges but they confront the same overland transportation problems upon reaching their destinations. Available air assets (all commercial) are limited in number and expensive and are generally used only to transport relief workers to inland sites.

The problem was vividly illustrated during the mission's visit. On 2 August, while the mission had traveled by air to the isolated and increasingly desperate town of Bo, an overland convoy enroute to the same destination carrying commercial goods was attacked. Approximately 70 trucks of the estimated 77 in the convoy were destroyed; known casualties numbered 20 dead or wounded though it is estimated that there were many more. It should be noted this convoy was accompanied by a Sierra Leone army escort.

Map I indicates areas considered either restricted or "no go" as of August 1995. Moreover, areas considered "safe" have experienced sporadic attacks or are difficult to reach as the roads pass through areas considered unsafe.

The flow of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has increased since late 1994. It is now estimated there are between 1.5 and 2 million IDPs in Sierra Leone, which approaches 50 per cent of the population. The great majority have been taken in by families and relatives. Some have settled in IDP camps; map II indicates principal camp sites and populations.

The cumulative effects of insecurity, reduced access, loss of trucking capacity, increasing numbers of IDPs and requests for assistance, create a growing and significant humanitarian emergency. If current negative trends continue (and there are no indications they will not), we could be confronted with significant humanitarian requirements in the increasingly crowded Western Province as well as the prospect of losing all contact with already besieged and isolated cities in the interior.

Internally Displaced People

In Sierra Leone it has become extremely difficult to monitor the movement of the population and assess their needs for food, health services, water supply, sanitation, shelter and education.

The pre-war population of Sierra Leone was estimated at 4.4 million. As a result of the war, 330,000 people have become refugees in nearby countries: 210,000 to Guinea and 120,000 in Liberia. Precise figures for internally displaced people in Sierra Leone are not available. However, the main movement of population has been towards the capital, Freetown, which is thought to have absorbed at least 750,000 displaced people though only 70,000 are registered and verified. There have also been significant shifts in population towards the main towns: Bo, Makeni, Kenema, Segbwema, Daru, and Magburaka. In these interior towns, more than 900,000 people have been registered for food aid. No information is available on the number of people who have been displaced within the rural areas. It can be assumed however that nearly 50 per cent of the national population or approximately two million people have been displaced as a result of the war. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimates that at least 30,000 civilians are living behind rebel lines in the Kailahun district of Eastern Sierra Leone. In addition there are approximately 4,500 Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone. Annex IV indicates the location of the registered IDPs and refugees who are supported by the World Food Programme (WFP) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

Although there are no general malnutrition figures for the whole country, reports are available on specific areas. Action Internationale Contre la Faim (AICF) has reported 14% global malnutrition and 5% severe malnutrition in the Western Area. ICRC found 70 per cent global and 30 per cent severe malnutrition behind rebel lines in the Kailahun District in Eastern Sierra Leone.

Humanitarian Assistance

For the most part, the Sierra Leonean population is using its own coping mechanisms to meet the needs of the displaced. Constant ambushes on convoys along the main roads of the country have made it impossible to maintain a regular supply of humanitarian assistance beyond the Western Area. Thus, of the more than 993,500 people who have registered for food aid from WFP and CRS, many are not receiving a full ration or any food at all due to lack of access. At the end of July 1995, only Makeni and the Western Area (Freetown & its environs) were receiving food. This means that relief agencies are able to reach only 12 per cent of their total caseload.

There is, however, adequate relief food available to support accessible populations. As of the end of July, the combined food stock balance between WFP and CRS was 15,000 MTs. In addition, the WFP regional Protracted Refugee Operation (PRO) has the flexibility to mobilize food quickly within the sub-region. The major problem is access to affected populations. Even where access is possible, enumeration and verification of

affected populations have proved problematic, due to disagreements among the paramount chiefs, the international relief community and the Government. Several meetings have been held to address this issue and it is expected that a standardized form of enumeration and verification will soon be adopted.

In Freetown, only 70,000 people are registered for food aid, while an estimated 680,000 displaced people depend on the support of family, friends and the community. A similar situation exists in the main towns in the provinces which have not received any food aid since the beginning of July.

The Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO) reports that no reliable data on production levels after 1992 are available. However, the war has meant that agricultural production has not kept pace with the demand for food, and large numbers of internally displaced people are causing environmental degradation. During 1995, there has been a suspension of all Institutional Agricultural Programmes and projects outside the Western Area and the main provincial towns.

The mission was able to visit displaced camps in the Western Area and Bo. Health, water and sanitation arrangements appeared satisfactory. Information from national authorities and NGOs suggest that health care delivery outside the camps is seriously stretched. A current cholera outbreak is being contained by the Department of Health with the support of the UN agencies and NGOs. For this year, 5,148 cumulative cases were reported with the fatality rate at 2.4 percent at the end of July. Immunization services no longer have the capacity to reach the majority of the population. Serious efforts are being made to ensure that essential drugs reach the camps and the towns. Where access is proving difficult along the roads, airlift activities (Médecins Sans Frontières) are being undertaken. This approach is likely to be too expensive to be sustained.

School-age children constitute about 30 percent of the displaced population. However, there is a near collapse of the educational system. The University and the Teacher Training Colleges are closed. High schools and primary schools in areas attacked by the rebels are not operational. The influx of displaced persons into the towns has placed a tremendous burden on existing educational infrastructure. As many displaced children as possible have been absorbed by existing structures and the Government has exempted these children from the payment of school fees. For the other displaced children, agencies have been supporting camp schools, where material and equipment are in short supply and teachers are less motivated. Camp populations reported that education is their highest priority, second only to returning home.

Reorientation of UN Agency Programmes

World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP is the major provider of relief in Sierra Leone. Through its partners, WFP has identified a case load of 796,069 persons in need of food aid. Additionally, WFP carried out specially targeted programmes for vulnerable groups. WFP is also in the forefront of the challenging task of registering and verifying displaced populations. WFP has developed a flexible strategy to respond to the emergency situation. The elements of the strategy are:

- the flexible utilization of resources;
- flexibility in adjusting food aid modalities;

- phasing-in and phasing-out strategies in terms of geographical coverage or development activities;
- effective targeting of beneficiaries;
- response to the needs of beneficiaries with limited resources.

Implementation of this strategy will be assisted by the planned procurement of a fleet of trucks for use in food delivery and convoy operations.

World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO responded to the emergency by assisting the Department of Health & Social Services (DOHSS) to formulate a National Health Emergency Plan for the period between March to December 1995. The Plan includes the coordination of emergency health activities, inter-sectoral emergency management, and the provision of institutional support and capacity building to the Department of Health. The agency has provided emergency kits and supplies to the Department of Health (DOH) and NGOs for free distribution. WHO provided technical guidance and assistance for an Early Warning System covering cholera, meningitis and measles, and for the redesign of the country's Health Information System to meet the needs of the emergency. The agency also assisted the DOH through the Cholera Task Force to monitor cholera epidemics. It provided guidelines, drugs and vaccines to control outbreaks of meningitis in Koinadugu and Kono and a number of UNV doctors have been redeployed to various displaced clinics in the Western Area. WHO is funding all of these emergency activities through the reorientation of its regular budget.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

UNHCR, through its implementing partner CAUSE Canada, continues to support 4,534 Liberian refugees located in the Jui camp outside of Freetown. UNHCR will also facilitate voluntary repatriation of these refugees, when required. In addition, UNHCR provides assistance to returnees and displaced persons in the Eastern and Northern provinces in the form of shelter material and household utensils distributed through the Sierra Leone Red Cross, Catholic Relief Services and the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone (CCSL).

Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)

FAO drew up an emergency programme in June 1995 to be implemented as security permits. The first phase of the programme calls for support to 60,000 destitute farm families (approximately 480,000 beneficiaries) in the Western Area. The second phase (March-June 1996) will provide agricultural, fishery and livestock inputs to 180,000 war-affected farmers still living in camps or returning to their homes.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF has re-oriented its country programme for the emergency. The agency has emergency programmes in health and nutrition, basic education, household food security, water and sanitation, children in especially difficult circumstances and planning and social statistics. Highlights include support for immunization and diarrhoea disease control programmes, hygiene education, food production and income generating activities for women, education for displaced children, and assistance to traumatized children and women. The new programme aims to cover population concentration points in the Western Area, Bo, Kenema, Kono, and Makeni. However, at present, it is reaching only 17 communities in the Western Area. If security conditions improve, emergency activities will be extended to other affected areas.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The UNDP country office has been re-organized to establish a more effective mechanism to support humanitarian assistance coordination. UNDP is also supporting efforts to strengthen emergency response coordination at the National Relief and Rehabilitation Committee (NARECOM), the Government focal point for coordination of humanitarian assistance (see below).

In addition, a mid Term-Review (MTR) of the ongoing country programme, conducted with the government, has re-oriented the programme objectives, taking into account the war, the current emergency situation, government objectives and priorities and a belief that development activities should address the root causes of conflict. The following programming areas have been identified:

- Peace, Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction;

- Good Governance;
- Poverty Reduction;

- Economic Management.

It was observed by the mid-Term Review that in the areas identified special attention should be given to preventive development, capacity building and the enhanced use of NGOs. UNDP has funded the National Conference on the Elections which brought together members of civil society to discuss plans for forthcoming elections and is collaborating with the World Bank and UNICEF to address poverty alleviation.

Complementarity of UN, NGO & IO activities

The NGOs are the leading implementors of humanitarian assistance in Sierra Leone. The major operational NGOs include AFRICARE, AICF, Care International, Cause Canada, CCSL (Council of Churches of Sierra Leone), CRS (Catholic Relief Services), EFSL (Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone), MSF/Belgium, Federation of the Red Cross of Sierra Leone and Plan International. Despite the evacuation to Freetown of expatriate staff, a number of NGOs have continued operations up-country through national staff.

NARECOM and the NGOs have agreed upon an NGO to be designated as a "lead agency" for each displaced camp (see map II). The lead agency coordinates the interventions of all other organizations in its

assigned camp. This arrangement enables UN agencies to more efficiently support relief efforts. All distribution of World Food Programme food at relief sites is carried out by NGOs.

The International Committee of the Red Cross started relief activities in Sierra Leone in 1993. Operations were suspended in late 1994 after the execution of 2 ICRC nurses by the RUF. ICRC has prepared a plan for a cross border relief intervention with food support from WFP to address the needs of civilians living behind RUF lines in Eastern Sierra Leone. This plan has been submitted to the government of Sierra Leone for approval.

Contingency Planning

Under the leadership of NARECOM, an inter-agency sub-committee has developed a Western Area preparedness plan for implementation in the event of a rebel attack on Freetown. Sectoral sub-committees have been formed (water and sanitation, medical and health, shelter and non-food items, food and logistics and communications) and geographical areas of responsibility have been agreed upon.

Whilst individual UN agencies and NGOs may have internal plans, the mission is not aware of any additional contingency efforts in place for other scenarios.

Information Flow and Management

NARECOM convenes bi-monthly meetings of NGOs, UN agencies and government ministries to facilitate the sharing of information and the discussion of issues of common concern. The minutes indicate that NGOs submit reports of their activities, that critical issues are discussed and that follow up actions are agreed and recorded. These minutes are distributed to all participants. Parallel to the NARECOM meetings, coordination of emergency response information occurs on an informal basis, particularly among the NGOs and government line ministries. The information flow in the health sector appears to be working best.

There is no centralized management of information relating to humanitarian assistance. The NGOs have local information on their areas of operation. This information is fed through their own systems to their country offices and sometimes to the line ministries. Each agency thus has its own data which may be made available to others upon request. The information is presented in varied format, quality and quantity.

Data from the UN agencies is compiled by the Emergency and Reconciliation Team of UNDP. This information is produced as the bi-monthly SITREP which is distributed to the UN system, international and local agencies involved in humanitarian assistance.

Resource Requirements

The UN Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal of March 1995 is the only vehicle for a coordinated approach to resource mobilization. Although response to the appeal has been relatively weak to date, no mention was made by the Disaster Management Team of the need to undertake a further joint resource

mobilization exercise. The current status of contributions to the appeal can be found in annex V. In addition to those funds sought through the Appeal, UNDP has earmarked a total of US\$218,000 for the strengthening of UN system coordination.

Security

A UN Security Officer has been in place since April 1995. Considerable progress has been made on improving security arrangements for the UN community, including completion of a security and evacuation plan, stockpiling of emergency rations, establishing night security patrols, improved communications equipment and procedures and provision of security briefings to the UN community. NGOs have been invited to participate in the UN security plan and three organizations have done so. All UN staff travel outside the Freetown area must be approved by the Designated Official.

Discussions with NGOs indicated a keen interest in information on security matters. Currently, security information is provided at bi-monthly NARECOM meetings and by informal telephone consultations. The mission is of the opinion that collection and dissemination of security information needs to be strengthened.

Concerning convoy security, the mission was informed by the Deputy Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), Brigadier J.M. Bio, that additional measures will soon be adopted. These measures include the training of a special convoy escort force, equipped with special escort vehicles, and improved convoy planning and management procedures. It was also agreed to include UN agencies and NGOs in convoy planning activities.

Sierra Leone - Coordination

Overview

Several mechanisms are in place to coordinate relief operations in Sierra Leone. At the field level, NGOs and operational UN agencies implement joint activities and organize regular meetings to reinforce coordination. At the central level, meetings are convened by the National Relief and Rehabilitation Committee -NARECOM, the UN Disaster Management Team, an International NGO Forum, and the Sierra Leone Association of NGOs (SLANGO). In addition, the Humanitarian Assistance Situation Report Task Force produces a situation report twice monthly. Under the umbrella of NARECOM, relief agencies have carried out joint assessments and, as noted above, have agreed upon lead agency allocation and drawn up a contingency plan for the Western Area.

However, there is widespread dissatisfaction within the relief community regarding present arrangements for coordination. The UNICEF mid-year review of emergency humanitarian assistance June 1995 states "there has not been an effective coordination of relief at the national level and [there is] thus... weak collaboration on the ground." The report goes on to point to duplication of efforts among the large number of NGOs, and insufficient and uncoordinated data to facilitate decisions for effective and coordinated implementation. This was confirmed by information gathered by the mission and echoed repeatedly by

Government officials, UN Agencies, NGOs, and local authorities. The mission also believes that current coordination arrangements are inadequate to cope with any escalation of the humanitarian crisis.

National Coordination

NARECOM was founded in 1991 within the office of the Deputy Chairman of the NPRC. It is headed at the working level by a Coordinator, who is supported by a Deputy Coordinator, a Public Relations officer and a Technical Unit consisting of professionals from relevant line ministries. These include the Departments of Agriculture, Development, Customs, Forestry, Education, and Information. The ministries of Health, Finance, Internal Affairs, Works and Social Services have yet to assign a staff to NARECOM. NARECOM has Desk Officers in the towns of Bo, Kenema, and Kono who report to the Coordinator. NARECOM operational expenses come from the Deputy Chairman's office, but the organization has no specific budget as such. NARECOM's principle mechanism for coordination is a bi-monthly meeting, convened by its chairman and bringing together representatives of UN Agencies, NGOs and donors. NARECOM also sponsors a WFP-chaired sub-committee on food aid.

There is wide agreement in both international and government circles that NARECOM has been hampered by a shortage of human and material resources since its inception. This severely limits its ability to perform its mandated functions. Further, NARECOM's structure has prevented it from drawing on the resources or significantly influencing the actions of the line Ministries on which it depends for effective implementation of relief programmes. The mission also heard that NARECOM Desk Officers have only limited independence from political structures at field level. This will become a critical constraint in the event of increased competition for relief resources and intensified political pressures on the relief operation as a result of the democratization process.

Much work has already been done not only to analyse the performance of NARECOM, but also to propose measures for its strengthening. The most extensive undertaking of this nature was a UNDP-SPR funded project, known as "Crichton Report", which developed specific proposals for strengthening NARECOM. The report, which was finalized in March 1994, called for an augmentation of the Technical Unit of NARECOM with three professional staff at the central level and three qualified staff to serve as Desk Officers in the field. The report also recommends that current staff out-posted to NARECOM should return to their respective departments and constitute a liaison team which will ensure coordination between NARECOM and different line departments/ministries. The "Crichton Report" met with approval from both NARECOM and the UN system.

A number of follow-up activities have been undertaken since the report was submitted. These included:

- a UNICEF 1995 mid-year review, which focused on NARECOM and Emergency Humanitarian Assistance; and
- a July 1995 UNDP-sponsored workshop on strengthening NARECOM.

The UNDP July workshop proposed that NARECOM should become a stronger, semi-autonomous institution responsible for spearheading disaster management. It should be staffed with qualified managerial personnel as well as professional staff skilled in information and data analysis, peace and conflict resolution,

food security and emergency management. The functions and duties of the NARECOM Technical Unit were to be as follows:

- integrate disaster management into national planning (including the re-orientation of sectoral plans to address the present emergency and forward planning for rehabilitation and preventative development);
- foster peace-building and reconciliation;
- undertake day-to-day decision-making on actions required to respond to the emergency, including identifying lead departments and agencies (including registration, verification of displaced and delivery of relief food and non-food items);
- undertake resource mobilization for relief and rehabilitation activities; and
- serve as an information and data clearing house.

The technical unit would be supported by a nation-wide network of representatives at the provincial level and information specialists at the district level.

The UN Resident Coordinator indicated that a combination of IPF funds and donor commitments will provide resources to at least partially implement the workshop proposal.

UN Coordination

Parallel to the initiative to strengthen NARECOM, UNDP has proposed the establishment of a system to support UN Coordination to:

- 1) assess and monitor the humanitarian system through the sharing of information, joint missions and studies;
- 2) establish a database on all aspects of the emergency;
- 3) make policy and strategic decisions;
- 4) make plans and take joint actions to match needs with resources;
- 5) mobilize resources;
- 6) provide training and institutional strengthening.

These activities have been assigned to the recently created Emergency and Reconciliation Team within the UNDP - Freetown office. The Emergency and Reconciliation Team currently consists of two national professional officers and one support staff who are responsible for producing a bi-monthly humanitarian assistance situation report. UNDP plans to augment this team with a National Emergency Support Officer, two UNVs and support staff. The National Officer will be “responsible for liaising with the technical operational

units of the relief community and NARECOM...[and for ensuring that] development continues as part of the response of the crisis.” The two UNVs will strengthen the emergency information management capacity of the UN Resident Coordinator’s office.

The UNDP initiative to support the Resident Coordinator further proposes that the Emergency and Reconciliation Team will function within a UN System Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Sierra Leone which is based on a three step system made up of:

- 1) the **DMT**, operating under the framework of the heads of agencies committee and meeting on programming, security, other matters and humanitarian assistance issues;
- 2) a **UN/Donors/ NGO Consultative Group**; &
- 3) **Sectoral and Technical Committees**, working in support of the DMT and the UN/Donor/NGO Consultative Group, including:
 - a **UN Government Working Group on Emergency**; &
 - the **Humanitarian Assistance Report Task Force** (which is managed at the working level by the Emergency and Reconciliation Team)

The overall objective of this three step, multi-tiered system is “to enhance the overall national coordination of preparedness and response to the emergency and humanitarian disasters.”

Observations

- The defining characteristic of the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone is insecurity, which denies access to humanitarian assistance to all but those in the Western Area
- A significant percentage of internally displaced persons in Sierra Leone are having their needs met through local coping mechanisms.
- There are only very limited cross border operations being undertaken into Sierra Leone, due to security constraints. ICRC has taken the initiative in developing a plan to deliver relief supplies from Guinea into the eastern province. MSF(F) hopes to follow on the ICRC initiative. The NGO ACTIONAID is utilizing local staff to deliver limited amounts of relief items into the Northern province. The mission was not made aware of any other cross-border initiatives by the broader relief community despite the inability to reach affected populations from within Sierra Leone.
- The general perception of the relief organizations active in Sierra Leone is that the United Nations is not at the centre of the relief operation. Though ad hoc coordination does occur, it is neither UN nor NARECOM driven. The reaction of the NGO community to this situation is mixed. Some agencies believe the present system of informal coordination is adequate; many others disagreed.

- Almost without exception, UN agencies and NGOs would like to see NARECOM perform a stronger coordinating role.

- The existing proposal to strengthen the response of the UN Resident Coordinator's office for the emergency, through the UNDP Emergency and Reconciliation Unit, is inadequate. The scope of the emergency, the number of actors involved, and the magnitude and complexity of the relief intervention requires the devoted attention of experienced humanitarian assistance personnel. The current proposal to augment the unit with two UNV information specialists and a National Emergency Support Officer is not sufficient to redress this shortcoming. The Emergency and Reconciliation Unit is also responsible for addressing UNDP's Preventative Development programme, making it responsible for activities not directly related to emergency coordination. This responsibility should be kept separate from the mechanisms that will undertake relief coordination. However, liaison activities and production of the Humanitarian Assistance Report in particular are relevant to the relief coordination effort.

- The proposals for enhanced UN coordination and the strengthening of NARECOM would benefit from increased clarity to avoid overlap and duplication. Any action taken to improve coordination should reduce this overlap and emphasize complementarity.

- The tendency to create overlapping structures is also seen in the multi-tiered coordination system. The number of mechanisms, task forces, etc., many with similar mandates, objectives, and membership needs to be rationalized.

- It is essential that proposals for reinforcing the UN Resident Coordinator's ability to coordinate, facilitate and act as the principal advocate for humanitarian assistance operations in Sierra Leone clearly separate these responsibilities from the implementation of any agency's mandate-driven programme.

- Several previous missions have made recommendations based on the assumption that the violence in Sierra Leone was about to come to an end and that therefore the need for relief activities would soon be superseded by an emphasis on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. The mission observed that the majority of humanitarian agencies do not share this view.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Humanitarian Agencies should continue to plan for a range of different scenarios, the worst of which involves further deterioration in the operating conditions for delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- Procedures for registration and verification of affected populations should be standardized and implemented without delay.

- International relief agencies should take measures to ensure that relief measures strengthen local coping mechanisms.

- Response to the basic education requirements of the displaced population are not being adequately addressed. Urgent measures are required to remedy this situation.

- The UN Security Officer be available to provide and exchange security information to NGOs on a daily basis. This information should have a country-wide perspective, including regular NARECOM input.

- Undertaking cross border operations should be rigorously pursued by the humanitarian assistance community and most particularly by the UN agencies.

- A Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit should be established. It will have the dual function of supporting the Resident Coordinator in her overall leadership of the international relief operation and complementing the activities of NARECOM. The Unit should report to the UN Resident Coordinator. The Unit should combine elements of existing proposals by UNDP for the strengthening of the coordination function with a new injection of experienced international humanitarian relief staff.

- The Humanitarian Assistance Unit should consist of the following:

- A Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer and two Humanitarian Affairs Officers with relevant and extensive experience in humanitarian emergencies, recruited by DHA or seconded from agencies.

- While the structure and activities of the unit should be determined by the UN Resident Coordinator in consultation with the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Disaster Management Team, and NARECOM, the responsibilities of the unit should include:

- **the establishment of coordination mechanisms and agreements;**
- **assessing and addressing humanitarian needs;**
- **humanitarian advocacy;**
- **emergency information dissemination; &**
- **support to NARECOM.**

- The Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer should be deployed to Freetown at the earliest possible date, with the preliminary terms of reference focusing on finalizing details regarding the structure and duties of the unit. Draft terms of reference for the regular functions of the Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer are attached in annex VI. The two additional Humanitarian Affairs Officers, while working to support the Senior Officer in execution of his/her terms of reference, should be specialized in field coordination and emergency information management.

- The Emergency/Relief Programme Officer (NPO) and the two UNVs should be integrated into the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit.

- UNDP should continue existing initiatives to strengthen NARECOM. UNDP has indicated that funds are readily available for four locally recruited specialists. Their proposed job titles should be changed in order to cover the following areas:

- emergency information management
- field coordination
- logistics
- policy development and planning

- Measures should be taken to reduce the number of mechanisms coordinating humanitarian assistance. One option is to enlarge the membership of the DMT to include NGOs, thus eliminating the need for the UN/Donor/NGO Consultation Group and the Humanitarian Assistance Report Task Force.

- Coordination of humanitarian assistance in Sierra Leone should be reviewed six months after the Humanitarian Assistance Unit is in place.

Liberia

General

Five years of civil war in Liberia have shattered the country's economic and social fabric and destabilized the sub-region. Whilst a government is seated in Monrovia, its influence does not extend beyond the zone protected by ECOMOG, the regional peace keeping force of the Economic Community of West African States. The remaining 65% of the country is controlled to varying degrees of effectiveness by four armed factions. As a result of the war, over 150,000 people have been killed and hundreds of thousands have fled their homes. Nearly 800,000 have become refugees in neighbouring countries and 830,000 have become displaced internally. Current estimates are that

within the ECOMOG controlled area alone, 1.3 million persons require humanitarian assistance. An undetermined number of displaced persons remain in areas controlled by factions.

Humanitarian assistance organizations are just beginning to return to areas they were forced to vacate in September 1994, when factions pillaged relief agencies working outside the ECOMOG zone. Losses suffered by UN Agencies, NGOs and international organizations ran into the millions of dollars. Regaining access has been painstaking. Existing road networks are such that the country is easily broken up by factions, requiring negotiations with multiple interlocutors to reach populations in need. Continued weaknesses in commanders' control of their fighters on the ground have further complicated access discussions. It has not been uncommon for an agreement made at the level of the commander to be blocked by troops on the ground. Despite recent gains, much of the country is still a "no-go" zone, including Lofa county in northeast Liberia and the area stretching from Buchanan to the Cote d'Ivoire border (See Map III). It is estimated that as many as 300,000 people (including refugees) remain in these areas.

In this context, the major UN operational agencies and a number of international and local NGOs have been working together to deliver assistance to populations in need wherever security guarantees have been deemed sufficient. Support for their activities has come largely from the European Union and USAID, the two donors who have maintained a presence in Monrovia,.

Humanitarian Assistance Situation

Rationalizing different estimates of population concentrations outside ECOMOG controlled areas is difficult. The sum of refugee populations, displaced persons in ECOMOG controlled areas and estimates of populations in areas controlled by factions in some accounts totals as many as 4 million. The accepted pre-war population of Liberia is between 2.3 and 2.5 million.

800,000 Liberians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. 405,000 have sought refuge in southwestern Guinea and approximately 305,000 have fled to eastern Cote d'Ivoire. The remainder are in Sierra Leone and Ghana. In both cases, refugee flows are facilitated by ethnic compatibility of refugees and local populations. This compatibility has also allowed for considerable movement of persons in and out of Liberia from the Forestiere area of Guinea and Dananae Prefecture in Cote d'Ivoire.

While needs assessments are carried out in ECOMOG controlled areas, this has generally not been possible in areas controlled by the factions. Where assessments in faction controlled zones have been possible, results have been ominous. A recent MSF-B, SCF-UK, EU study found global and severe malnutrition in upper-Margibi and lower-Bong counties at 56% and 42% respectively. Given the magnitude and duration of displacement, it can be assumed that populations in unreachable areas have not been able to produce agriculturally. The absence of a functioning economy further limits displaced Liberians' capacity to obtain their basic needs. As a result, many civilians in unreachable areas are very likely in the sort of conditions reflected by the recent MSF-B, SCF-UK, EU study.

While security constraints are the primary obstacle to data collection, constructing a complete picture of the status of populations is also limited by the absence of a standardized or coordinated approach to information management. Compilation of assessment findings is ad hoc at best.

In the absence of a fully functioning Government and a greater international presence in Liberia, the UN system and the NGOs have a tremendous responsibility to respond to the emergency. Food aid is the major component of this response. WFP and CRS are the principal importers of food aid, and work with LWS, SCF-UK and local NGOs to carry-out a general distribution of free food to all accessible populations, including those in shelters. In water and sanitation, health and agriculture, the traditional partners are active, including UNICEF, WHO, MSF- Belgium, France and Holland, Africare, AICF, SCF-UK, FAO and local NGOs. In the case of camp shelter, UNOPS and AICF have taken leadership roles. UNHCR targets its limited activities towards a relatively modest number of returnees and 25,000 of the 120,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia. Interventions in ECOMOG controlled areas usually also include the participation of the Liberian Repatriation, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee.

Generally speaking, emergency needs are best being met in ECOMOG controlled areas, where an estimated 1.3 million people require emergency assistance. Relatively stable security conditions have allowed the relief community to develop useful arrangements for working together in their respective areas of expertise. The approach is less systematic outside areas of ECOMOG control.

Cross-Line Activities

The past two months have seen considerable progress in the resumption of cross-line deliveries of relief materials. As a result of negotiations between ECOMOG, UNOMIL and a number of factions, key roads have been opened, including the Bomi highway as far as the border of Sierra Leone border, the Gbarnga highway and the Bong Mines highway to Bong Mines town. UN Agencies and NGOs have been able to reach populations cut-off since September 1994, including approximately 27,000 persons in Bong Mines town, 50,000 persons in lower Margibi and upper-Bong counties and 10,000 in Bomi county. Increased access cross-line has also allowed agencies to begin de-emphasizing more costly and time consuming cross border delivery to Bong, Nimba and Margibi counties. This progress in cross-line access, though appearing modest in reach, also opens the way for further negotiations with factions to reach greater numbers of persons in need.

A number of Agencies have taken advantage of the road openings to begin cross-line activities. WFP, through its local implementing partners, is moving food along the Bomi highway to Tubmanburg, LWS is moving relief supplies along the Gbarnga highway from Monrovia and CRS is transporting food from Monrovia along the Bong Mines Highway. A number of other agencies are also taking steps to begin sustained cross-line activities, including UNICEF, WHO, SCF-UK, MSF-F, B and H.

There does not appear to be any current possibility for cross-line activity into Lofa county, where 200,000 civilians are alleged to be situated, or to the sparsely populated area south and east of Buchanan.

Cross-Border Activities

A relatively secure environment, logistical support capacity and Government facilitation have made the Dananae area of Cote d'Ivoire the principal launching point for cross border activities into Liberia since February 1995. In May 1995 cross border activity increased somewhat when CRS, LWS, SCF-UK and local NGOs undertook delivery of seed and milled rice to 46,000 farmers and their families in Bong, Nimba and Margibi counties. Currently, LWS delivers food from Dananae, in the Cote d'Ivoire, to Nimba and Upper Bong

counties, while SCF-UK delivers food and relief supplies from Dananae to lower Bong and Upper Margibi counties.

Activities from Guinea have been more limited. MSF-B, F and H carried out a cross border assessment from Macenta in Guinea, into upper-Lofa in early July. Security has prevented any sustained follow-up. MSF-B has, however, been able to distribute medical supplies from Guinea into upper-Lofa utilizing national staff.

Logistics and information support for cross-border initiatives is arranged by individual agencies on an ad hoc basis. The regional approach taken by WFP in resource allocation makes it particularly capable of launching of cross-border activities. LWS is also well placed to support its cross border activities, with considerable resources in place in Dananae devoted to cross-border activities.

A number of agencies pointed to their mandate in order to explain the difficulty in taking cross-border initiatives. UNHCR-Liberia in particular, made it clear that their activities must be limited to within Liberia. This view was echoed by other UNHCR offices in the region.

Coordination

In the early stages of the Liberian emergency, coordination of the humanitarian assistance programme was viewed with widespread satisfaction by UN Agencies and NGOs. This is no longer the case, as there is no mechanism in Liberia devoted to the systematic coordination of the overall relief effort. Information exchange does occur however. Discussion on issues of global concern is undertaken during a weekly UN/NGO/Donor information sharing meeting. In addition, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office issues a bi-monthly humanitarian assistance situation report. The report is widely distributed to concerned parties including UNDP Resident Representatives in the region, Heads of UN Agencies and donor representatives in Liberia, Government officials in Liberia, UNOMIL and IASC Headquarters' focal points. The report does not appear to be distributed among NGOs within Liberia, although their activities are extensively reported therein. The report does not appear to be distributed among UN agencies or NGOs in the countries of the sub-region either. The WFP situation report is also circulated among all organizations involved in food distribution in Monrovia as well as to a number of agency headquarters in Europe and the United States. The mission did not learn of any other regularly shared situation reports.

Coordination has also been carried out through a number of ad hoc emergency committees, established in order to coordinate the response of the relief community to specific, unforeseen emergency situations, including the massive influx of internally displaced persons into Buchanan in early 1995.

In the food aid sector, agencies concerned seem to have developed an agreeable division of responsibilities regarding areas of coverage. There is no overlap, therefore, regarding delivery of food aid, both cross-border and cross-line. The other sectors, however, do not share an equivalent level of organization or coordination in their interventions outside ECOMOG controlled areas.

Though there is no mechanism in place devoted to the coordination of humanitarian assistance activities in Liberia, gains have been made in this area during the last three months. This progress is perhaps best represented by the formation of an Access Committee, made up of representatives from the UN, NGO and Donor communities, and formed to elaborate the position of the relief community on access issues. The major

relief organizations have also increased their level of collective thinking through a recently-completed series of joint workshops, during which the outline of a draft humanitarian assistance strategy has been formulated. The strategy is expected to provide the structure for the upcoming UN consolidated appeal.

The absence of a single, recognized advocate for the humanitarian assistance community in Liberia became apparent earlier this summer. The June and July discussions that resulted in recent road openings were undertaken by ECOMOG, UNOMIL and relevant factions. Representatives of the humanitarian community were not included in these discussions. In an attempt to off-set this omission, and in order to emphasize the unique status of relief activities, the humanitarian community, through the Access Committee, developed an agreed list of protocols and principles for implementation in all dealings between individual agencies and factions during both cross-line and cross border activities. (see annex VII) The principles and protocols will also be featured in the upcoming UN Consolidated Appeal for Liberia. Though expressing a unified position, the agreement on the principles and protocols did not result in the designation of a single advocate for humanitarian access.

A small number of agencies, listed above, have recently taken action to start moving relief supplies cross-line and cross-border. These activities are being undertaken unilaterally, and despite their conforming to the principles and protocols, have created some tension within the relief community concerning perceptions of security, feasibility of operations and the need for a balanced extension of operations.

Cote d'Ivoire

General

Cote d'Ivoire is central to humanitarian assistance activities in the sub-region. The country is host to 305,000 Liberian refugees who have been largely integrated into local communities. Cote d'Ivoire serves as the primary communications node and logistics base for humanitarian organizations in the sub-region. Ports of entry at Abidjan and San Pedro support humanitarian relief operations within the country. Cote d'Ivoire is the principal point of departure for cross-border movement of relief supplies into both Liberia and Guinea.

The role of Cote d'Ivoire in sub-regional humanitarian assistance is enhanced by the leadership, organization and support to humanitarian organizations demonstrated by the government at all levels which was noticeable throughout by the mission. Particularly noteworthy is the decentralization of the administration within Cote d'Ivoire which is an important factor in effective management of the crisis at the local level.

Humanitarian Assistance

The principal humanitarian assistance activities in Cote d'Ivoire are the provision of food and other aid for refugees, support for projects designed to enhance self-sufficiency among the Liberian refugee population and the trans-shipment of relief supplies to Liberia and Guinea.

The first group of Liberian refugees arrived in western Cote d'Ivoire in early 1990. They settled in the prefectures of Dananae and Guiglo. Current estimates of Liberian refugee populations in Cote d'Ivoire are 305,445. Of this figure, 91,697 can be found in the prefecture of Dananae, 82,595 in Guiglo and 131,153 in Tabou. Of these, 227,148 are considered to be "old refugees" (i.e. arrived between 1990 and 1993) and 78,297 as "new refugees" who fled Liberia in the wake of renewed fighting during 1994. The refugee population rose particularly during the September/October 1994 timeframe when fighting between the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) intensified. The bulk of the population in Maryland County, Liberia, is reported to have sought refuge in Cote d'Ivoire.

Government policy towards refugees has been guided by two principles: an "open door" welcome for all refugees and a policy of integrating refugees into communities rather than establishing separate camps. This approach has been aided by compatible ethnic populations on either side of the Liberian-Cote d'Ivoire border. The government's policy has significantly contributed to enhanced living and economic conditions which can often surpass comparable conditions for Ivoirian citizens.

The extended stay of refugees in Cote d'Ivoire, the perception among some Ivoirians that refugees are doing better than they and the lack of prospects for any sizeable return to Liberia in the foreseeable future, have

contributed to an undercurrent of resentment against the refugees. This has become an issue in the current electoral campaign.

A particularly troubling incident occurred in June 1995 when Liberian fighters, reportedly from the LPC faction, attacked the border town of Tai in southwestern Cote d'Ivoire. Thirty two (32) people of both nationalities were reportedly killed in the fighting. Local administrators have alleged that some Liberian refugees actively collaborated with the fighters. Both Ivoirians and refugees were displaced by the attack. The government has been forced to increase security in the area and relocate some refugees who were unwilling to return to the Tai area. One consequence has been the creation of a "transit village" near the town of Guiglio for some 2400 refugees displaced by the fighting.

Forthcoming changes in food distribution policy to be implemented by WFP was frequently raised during the mission's visit to Cote d'Ivoire. The new policy, based on nutritional surveys, commodity availability, programme costs and the recognition of the generally successful integration of refugees, will gradually phase out general food distribution (ongoing for 5 years) and replace rice with bulgar and cornmeal. Liberian refugees focused their complaints on the substitutions for rice while a variety of government officials expressed their concern about possible unrest among refugees and potential negative impacts on Ivoirian citizens.

Cross-Border Activities

The support of the Ivoirian government has greatly facilitated the movement of relief supplies across borders and has resulted in Cote d'Ivoire becoming the key hub for humanitarian assistance in the region. WFP uses the Dananae to NzereKore corridor to meet over 50% of the food needs of Liberian refugees in the forestiere area of southeast Guinea. WFP also regularly undertakes cross border deliveries from Man (Cote d'Ivoire) to Nimba County in northeast Liberia.

Cote d'Ivoire has the best communications infrastructure in the sub-region which well supports cross border operations into Liberia. The active participation of government officials at both the national and regional levels has also facilitated such issues as port taxes and usage, access to the national transport network, customs and security clearances and mediation with transport unions.

Refugees have additionally benefitted from the government's policies as they have allowed easy transit across the Liberian-Cote d'Ivoire border. Refugees are free to come and go as long as they are not armed. This policy has contributed to increased economic activity for refugee populations. The mission had the opportunity to observe this practice in action at the Loguato border crossing north of Dananae.

The conduct of cross border operations is greatly facilitated by the presence of field staff and support structures. Both WFP and UNHCR maintain offices in Dananae and Guiglio. Lutheran World Services (LWS) has a large logistical base for refugees and cross border operations in Man town.

International NGO participation in cross border activities primarily includes LWS and Save the Children Fund-UK. LWS convoys 20 trucks per week from their base in Man to Nimba County. These convoys meet the food needs of 56,000 beneficiaries. LWS is using local NGOs; notably Liberians United to Save Humanity (LUSH) to manage food distribution. More recently, SCF-UK has extended the reach of cross-border operations to Gbarnga, where they are organizing general food distribution and supplementary feeding for vulnerable

groups. The frequency of food distributions is still being regularized. The NPFL has requested greater regularity in the flow of food.

Security is still the biggest constraint on cross-border operations. Agencies and NGOs are still dealing with the impact of the September 1994 looting in Liberia. This has resulted in an unwillingness to risk additional assets to either more looting or a new outbreak of fighting. Moreover, there is a lack of confidence in the ability of factions to control their fighters and thus guarantee the safety and security of humanitarian staff. Confidence among the humanitarian community at large is only gradually returning as current cross-border operations encounter a sustained positive experience.

Logistic difficulties also present serious constraints. Heavy usage of border transit roads has contributed to their rapid deterioration which hampers deliveries especially during the extended rainy season (May through November). This is particularly true on the heavily travelled Dananae to Gbinta route which is crumbling under the weight of food deliveries to refugees in the Guinea forest area. Transport logistics are further complicated by the monopoly exercised by the Ivoirian transporter's union, which controls the cost and availability of cross-border transportation.

The availability of trucks poses further limitations. The European Union is providing 55 DAF 4.5 ton four-wheel drive trucks for refugee relief operations in Cote d'Ivoire and the Eastern Forestiere region of Guinea, and under certain conditions, for cross-border operations into Liberia. The conditions require that the trucks should not be escorted by armed personnel nor subject to seizure and that guarantees can be made that the food will reach vulnerable populations. At present these conditions cannot be met. The fleet is therefore being used almost exclusively for operations in Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea.

Coordination Arrangements

National coordination arrangements in Cote d'Ivoire are a model for the sub-region. Under the leadership of the government, the National Committee for the Coordination of the Assistance to the Liberian Refugees in Cote d'Ivoire (CNCARL) has been established. CNCARL includes all organizations with a role in either refugee assistance or cross border operations. CNCARL includes UN agency heads, local and international NGOs; ICRC, IFRC, donors and relevant government ministries. CNCARL meets monthly to discuss humanitarian assistance issues with sectoral sub-committees convened on an as required basis.

CNCARL is linked to similar committees at the regional (prefecture) level which mirror the membership and purpose of the national body. An illustrative example is the Guiglio Prefecture Committee which the mission had the opportunity to discuss with the Préfe of Guiglio who chairs the group. The Guiglio committee has established a series of functioning special committees covering liaison with refugees, water/sanitation, equipment/infrastructure, food, management and security. The local committee includes refugee tribal leaders as well as local officials, UN and NGO representation.

The national and local committee structures provide an excellent forum for all involved to exchange information on cross border operations and sort out coordination arrangements. However, the missing link in cross border operations (with the notable exception of WFP and LWF) appears to be a regular exchange of information with counterpart UN agencies and NGOs in Liberia. Information on humanitarian conditions and needs within areas of Liberia inaccessible from Monrovia is lacking along with coordinated planning and action

to meet these needs. This is particularly so in the non-food sectors. Cross border activities conducted in the absence of such information tend to be on an ad hoc, one off basis. In this regard, several UN agencies and NGOs acknowledged that limited contact with counterparts in Liberia and difficulties in shifting country specific programmes "across borders" as target populations shifted, often resulted in gaps in coverage.

Guinea

General

Guinea, which shares borders with critically affected areas of Liberia and Sierra Leone, is hosting the largest number of refugees in the sub-region. The June 1995 estimate of the refugee population in Guinea was 536,000 persons. The mission was struck by the dimensions of the refugee situation and the impressive efforts of the Government of Guinea to respond to the problem.

Humanitarian Assistance

Of the 536,000 refugees in Guinea, two thirds were Liberian and one third Sierra Leonean. Some 89,000 arrived during the period September 1994- June 1995. There were 35,000 new arrivals during the months of June and July 1995. These came mainly from Sierra Leone, though there were also arrivals from Lofa, Bong and Nimba Counties in Liberia. The percentage of Sierra Leoneans in the refugee population has risen from 28% in February 1994 to 34% in June 1995. This is one indicator of the deterioration of security and humanitarian conditions in Sierra Leone.

The mission was able to visit refugee sites in the Fourecariah area, where approximately 19,000 refugees from Sierra Leone are situated. The mission was impressed by the commitment of the local administration to meet the needs of the refugees, the professionalism of the relief operation and the dynamism of the refugee population.

The Government of Guinea registered its concern over recent changes in food aid policy that followed a WFP, UNHCR, donors Joint Evaluation Mission in July 1995. The mission concluded that urban refugees that arrived in Guinea in 1990-1992 have now reached a level of self-sufficiency that compares favorably with that of the local population. Consequently, they will no longer be eligible to receive general rations as of 1st January 1996. An "intermediary" group who arrived in 1993, will receive basic rations to cover the first quarter of 1996. Another group of rural refugees who arrived in the period 1990-92 will receive a basic ration for the five months of the hungry season in 1996. New arrivals from 1994 and 1995 will continue to receive a general distribution until the end of 1996.

In a meeting with the mission, the Government of Guinea expressed dissatisfaction with the Interagency Mission Report of July 1995. The Government's main concerns are that the report assumes that all 1990-92 refugees are now self-sufficient and therefore require no more food assistance. The Government argues that

while certain refugees have benefitted from income generation activities, significant numbers of refugees had not benefitted from this type of assistance. The Government believes the change in food policy will cause resentment among the refugee population and this may have political repercussions. The Government would prefer that the changes in food relief policy come into effect in July 1996. This would allow time for efforts to sensitise the refugee population about the change of policies. The Government of Guinea suggested to the mission that if it had agreed to the establishment of refugee camps at the beginning of the crisis, food aid would still be forthcoming for the 1990-92 refugee population.

Cross-Border Activities

The mission noted that Guinea is ideally situated to provide the base for cross-border relief operations into Northern and Eastern Sierra Leone and Northern Liberia. However, at present, the only agencies involved in cross-border operations out of Guinea are Médecins Sans Frontières and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Médecins Sans Frontières was engaged in health programmes across the Guinean border into Liberia as long as security conditions permitted. This is no longer the case. The ICRC has received permission from the Government of Guinea to mount a cross-border food relief operation in favour of 30,000 civilians caught behind RUF lines in the Kailahun District of Sierra Leone.

During discussions with the mission, the Government of Guinea stressed that it reserved the right to examine requests for permission to carry out cross-border operations in the light of security considerations. It was not willing to give the go-ahead for cross-border operations if such operations would expose its own citizens to security risks. Apart from this, the Government of Guinea confirmed that it remained open to proposals for cross-border operations should the security situation on the Sierra Leone side of the border permit. The Government repeatedly stressed to the mission that there are no political or diplomatic constraints to cross-border operations.

However, at the time of the mission, security conditions within Eastern Sierra Leone and the Upper Lofa area of Liberia were the biggest constraint to cross-border operations. Refugees interviewed in the Fourecariah area came from several regions of Sierra Leone but were unwilling to return to their homes in Eastern Sierra Leone in view of the uncertain security situation. Since convoys leaving Freetown were proving vulnerable to attacks from unidentified fighters along the main roads, the mission believes that cross-border relief convoys will be equally vulnerable to armed attack without security guarantees from relevant factions. Nevertheless, the mission was informed that certain NGOs have restarted operations in the Kambia area. This illustrates the variability and unpredictability of the security situation.

Most agencies have already lost large amounts of equipment and supplies to fighters from various factions in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In spite of the assurances given by the leadership of the different factions, relief and logistics agencies do not feel that there is sufficient security to cover cross-border operations from Guinea.

Malnutrition rates among newly arriving refugees are reported to be high (30% global). This indicates serious food and health difficulties in the places from which people are fleeing. However, there is no regional structure for information sharing that would allow agencies operating along the borders of Guinea to keep abreast of the humanitarian situation in Liberia or Sierra Leone.

The mission also noted that the modus operandi of UN Agencies (with the exception of WFP) is not at present conducive to the rapid organisation of cross-border operations to refugees living in a third country. For example, there are 50,000 Sierra Leone refugees living in the Upper Lofa area. They are accessible from Guinea if security conditions improve. But the agencies would then have to make arrangements between three country offices in order to mount relief operations. This is a cumbersome and time-consuming arrangement and points to the need for innovative mechanisms for more efficient operations in the sub-region.

Coordination Arrangements

In-country coordination arrangements appear to be well-established in Guinea. The Government has taken the lead by establishing a Committee which includes the participation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Interior and Security. At the level of affected préfectures, the préfets have set up similar bodies that bring together all government, NGO and international agency representatives involved in providing relief and development assistance to the refugees. Within refugee settlements, refugee committees have been established to ensure refugee participation in relief activities. Consistent with its mandate, UNHCR has taken the UN leadership role in meeting the needs of refugees. This includes channelling funds to refugee support programmes. They are assisted with food aid provided by the World Food Programme, transported up-country by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and distributed by the Guinean Red Cross. Medecins sans Frontieres and OXFAM have been responsible for water supply, sanitation and health measures. The USA and the European Union are the principle suppliers of food aid. UNHCR appears to be funding almost all refugee activities. In summary, a unified structure for the management of refugee relief operations is in place. However, this structure for coordination does not address cross-border operations.

ADRA, the primary logistics NGO for relief activities in Guinea, does not currently participate in cross-border activities but wishes to do so, security conditions permitting. Logistics also presents a considerable constraint. There is a concern that in-country commitments might not be met if trucks diverted to cross border operations are lost. ADRA has therefore made a request to the US Government for a fleet of 30 trucks for cross-border operations. This proposal has received preliminary approval. ADRA also noted that while arrangements were being made for the trucking fleet, airlift operations should be considered to reach inaccessible populations in both Sierra Leone and Liberia. Such cross-border operations would be beyond the scope of current coordinating mechanisms.

Observations and Recommendations on Sub-Regional Issues

The sub-region is facing a humanitarian crisis of major proportions, **that seems of little interest to the international community**. At least 5 million people in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire have been directly affected. A large proportion of them are living in conditions of extreme poverty, characterised by constant exposure to indiscriminate violence, total disruption of social, economic and cultural life and sporadic, minimal access to food supplies and basic social services such as primary health care and basic education. Human rights abuses occur with alarming frequency. The persistence of

the crisis has placed acute strain on social and economic coping mechanisms. There is an urgent need to draw international attention to the situation.

- A culture of violence has engulfed the region. Easy access to powerful firearms has given the faction and bandit leaders the capacity to disrupt or destroy basic infrastructure and social and economic institutions. At the same time, the widespread availability of arms has made it increasingly difficult to limit the spread of violence and impose discipline on uneducated, marginalised fighters who have no stake in a stable society.

Insecurity is the major obstacle to effective humanitarian relief operations. It has spread across a wide belt covering much of Liberia and Sierra Leone, where approximately one million people are currently unreachable. The nutritional status of these people is steadily declining.

- The persistence of the sub-regional crisis has led to humanitarian operations of more than five years duration. The chronic nature of the crisis has led to familiar problems of aid dependency, and disparities between refugee, internally displaced and local host populations.
- The countries of the sub-region are closely linked. Events in one country have implications for the political, economic and security situation in other countries. Population movements and epidemics cross national boundaries. Routes of access are constantly affected by changing conditions.
- The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea have displayed considerable determination and commitment to meeting the needs of refugees seeking asylum in their territories. In both countries, however, the continued presence of large numbers of refugees has led to tension with the host population that is subject to political manipulation.
- Given the above context, the effectiveness of the international humanitarian effort in the sub-region would be enhanced by a strengthening of the regional approach. **No such approach, strategy or framework exists.** All agencies working on the sub-regional crisis would benefit from improved information sharing, joint strategic planning and flexible, facilitative coordination at both country and sub-regional level.
- It is unlikely that an effective sub-regional approach will be possible in the absence of strong country-level coordination efforts.
- In general, NGOs and International Organizations have taken the lead in attempts to gain access to isolated populations.
- WFP's current approach to the delivery of food aid is effective in overcoming some of the constraints specific to sub-region. Similar approaches need to be adopted in non-food sectors.

Recommendations

Country level coordination mechanisms should be strengthened in Sierra Leone (see above) and in Liberia. Specific recommendations for Liberia will be elaborated in the forthcoming appeal.

Country level strategies should be developed in order to facilitate the development of a sub-regional strategic approach.

The regional bureaus of UN Agencies should play a more active role in sub-regional humanitarian assistance efforts. The adoption of this policy will complement ongoing regional approaches of ICRC, LWS, MSF, CRS and WFP.

Use of the Regional Focal Point for Coordination in developing a UN capability to act collectively at the sub-regional level. The Focal Point's primary responsibility should be to collect, collate and analyse information. Proposed terms of reference are at Annex VIII. To carry-out these responsibilities, the Regional Focal Point will require the support of minimum human and material resources, as outlined at Annex IX.

In order to increase the visibility of the sub-regional crisis, mobilize additional resources, engage in humanitarian advocacy, and bolster sub-region coordination efforts, the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs should undertake a visit to the sub-region. This mission should coincide with a subregional consultation of UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators and other humanitarian actors.

The United Nations system should follow up on the proposal by the Government of Guinea to host a Regional Conference on the humanitarian situation in the region.

In order to develop greater consistency in operational approaches, the United Nations should encourage and facilitate technical exchange visits between officials of the national coordinating bodies of countries involved in the crisis.

Annex I

Mission Composition

Mr. Thomas Franklin	UNICEF
Mr. Michael Gaouette	UN - DHA
Mr. Mahadev Jalem	UNDP
Ms. Dula James	Catholic Relief Services
Mr. Kevin Kennedy	UN - DHA (Team Leader)
Mr. Malomin Sonko	ACTIONAID
Dr. Idrissa Sow	WHO

Annex II

Inter-Agency Mission to Sierra Leone and the Sub-Region

Terms of Reference

Background: At the 2 June meeting of the IASC, it was agreed that an inter-agency mission would be dispatched to assess the status of coordination arrangements made in response to the humanitarian emergency in Sierra Leone; and to examine the possibility of addressing the current crisis affecting Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire within a regional framework.

Composition

1. The mission will be undertaken by an inter-agency team. The team will travel to Sierra Leone where it will carry out an assessment of the coordination arrangements established in response to the humanitarian emergency there. The team will then travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Cote d'Ivoire to examine humanitarian assistance issues of regional significance. The team will be led by a representative of DHA and will be composed of the minimum number of persons required to carry out activities described below. The mission will be approximately three weeks in duration.
2. Upon completion of its tasks, the team will coalesce its findings and finalize a preliminary report for submission to the USG for Humanitarian Affairs.

Phase I - Within Sierra Leone

3. The inter-agency team will meet with representatives from the Government, UN Programmes and Agencies, major national and international NGOs operating in Sierra Leone, donor representatives, the ICRC and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.
4. During meetings and its field visits the team will assess the context within which humanitarian assistance organizations are operating and will examine the status of coordination arrangements, relating to:
 - existing coordination mechanisms (including the DMT and broader inter-agency fora; & the emergency unit of the office of the UNDP Resident Representative);
 - coordination of activities between the Government and the relief community, including actions taken by the Government to facilitate the delivery of relief supplies;
 - the general re-orientation of in-country UN Agency Programmes to address the emergency requirements for further clarification of contingency planning activities;
 - determination of the location and status of internally displaced persons and actions taken to meet their needs;

- emergency information management processes and their impact on programming (including the compilation and analysis of assessment information, estimation of numbers and location of those in need of assistance and presentation of resource requirements);
 - the status of the existing UN system-wide security plan; and
 - resource mobilization requirements and strategies.
5. During its meeting with both the ICRC and the Special Envoy of the Secretary General, the team will discuss the status of negotiations with rebel groups regarding access for humanitarian assistance organizations to populations in need.
 6. The team will also examine issues of regional significance, through application of those activities elaborated in paragraphs 9 and 10 below.
 7. Security permitting, the team will also visit areas sustaining large concentrations of internally displaced persons in order to examine execution of field level coordination arrangements.
 8. Based on information gathered, the team will make recommendations aimed at strengthening coordination arrangements within Sierra Leone.

Phase II - The Regional Context

9. The Inter-Agency team will travel to Monrovia, Abidjan and Conakry. At each location, the team will meet with representatives from UN Programmes and Agencies, major national and international NGOs operating in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia, donor representatives and the ICRC delegations in those countries. The inter-agency team will attempt to identify issues of regional significance. Meetings should focus on initiatives relating to the cross-border delivery of aid, and in particular:
 - the ease of cross-border movement for relief goods and the impact of security constraints on cross-border activity;
 - the status of current population movements across borders;

- the status of functional, field-level coordination arrangements among UN Agencies, NGOs and local structures in the context of cross-border activities; and
- the linkage and complementarity between cross-border and cross-line initiatives.

10. Time permitting, the team will travel to border areas to observe the implementation of field level humanitarian activities.

11. Based on information collected during the mission, the team will identify those mechanisms available to facilitate information sharing and consultations on a regional level; and make recommendations for the introduction of further mechanisms to improve information sharing and consultations on a regional level.

Annex III

Mission Itinerary

Saturday 29 July Arrival at Lungi International Airport

Sunday 30 July Initial Team Meeting and Preparations

Monday 31 July

0830 Meeting/Briefing with UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga

1000 Meeting/Briefing with UNDP Security Officer, Mr. G. Ganz

1100 Meeting/Briefing with the Special Envoy of the Secretary General in Sierra Leone, The Honorable B. Dinka

1200 Meeting/Briefing with the Disaster Management Team

Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga (UNDP/UN)

Dr. D.V. Nsue Milang (WHO)

Mr. Tilak Abeysinghe (UNHCR)

Mr. Benedict Mboya (UNICEF)

Mr. John (UNFP)

Mr. George Mashinkila (FAO)

Mr. Phillip Ward (WFP)

1430 Meeting/Briefing with Chairman of the Interim National Electoral Commission, Dr. James Jonah

1545 Meeting/Briefing with the UNDP Emergency and Reconciliation Team and the UN Resident Coordinator

Mr. A. Multi-Kamara

Mr. S. Bangura

Mr. James Rogers

Ms. E. Lwanga (UN Resident Coordinator)

1730 Meeting/Briefing with WFP Representative, Mr. M. Diab, and staff (team delegation)

1730 Meeting/Briefing with UNHCR Country Representative, Mr. T. Abeysinghe (team delegation)

Tuesday 1 August

0900 Meeting with the Deputy Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council and Chairman of the National Relief and Rehabilitation Committee - Brigadier J. M. Bio

1000 Meeting/Briefing with Coordinator of NARECOM and staff - Col. K. I. S. Kamara et al.

1145 Meeting/Briefing with International and Local NGOs

Ms. A. Kobba (Methodist Church Sierra Leone)
Mr. R.C. Hedley (Council of Churches Sierra Leone)
Ms. Martha Carey (Medecins Sans Frontiere)
Mr. S. Sesay (Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone)
Mr. B. Moran (CARITAS)
Mr. W. Ibrahim (Africare)
Mr. J. Tenga (CAUSE Canada)
Mr. W. Lynch (Catholic Relief Services)
Mr. E.T.R. Konlie (ACTIONAID)
Mr. P. Truding (German Agro Action)
Mr. F. Mousseau (AICF)
Mr. E. Torrence (Africare)
Ms. I. Osborne (Red Cross of Sierra Leone)
Mr. K. Singh (Plan International)

1400 - 1800 Freetown/Western Area site visits:

Jui Refugee Camp
Tower Hill School for displaced children

Clay Factory Displaced Camp
Cholera Treatment

Wednesday 2 August

0830 Meeting/Briefing with Ministry of Health Official, Dr. M. Kamara (team delegation)

0830 Team Meeting and Discussions

1000 Meeting/Briefing with UNICEF Country Representative, Mr. B. Mboya and Senior Programme Officer, Mr. F. Shah

1345 Team trip to Bo and Gondoma Camp by Helicopter

1430 Meeting with WFP Bo staff and NGOs Operating in Bo
Rev. S.B. Karmanda (Council of Churches Sierra Leone)
Mr. Peter Batty (Catholic Relief Services)
Mr. I.B. Kamara (Bo-Pujehun Development Project)
Mr. M. Sheriff (Council of Churches Sierra Leone - Bo)

Mr. K. Shaw (Action International Contre Le Faim)
Mr. S. Kuroma (Children Affected by War)
Mr. T. Mberwa (WFP - Bo)
Mr. S. Gando (NARECOM)
Mr. M. S. Jallah (NARECOM)

1500 Meeting with Paramount Chiefs and Provisional District Official (team leader and UN Resident Coordinator)

1530 - 1730 Visit to Gondoma Camp and Meeting with Camp Leaders

Thursday 3 August

0830 Meeting/Briefing with Country Representative, Catholic Relief Service, Mr. W. Lynch

0900 Meeting with Nigerian High Commissioner, Mr. Alhaji M.C. Abubakar (team leader)

0945 Meeting/Briefing with Plan International Programme Officer, Mr. K. Singhe and staff

1030 Meeting/Briefing with General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone, Mr. C. Cole

1030 Meeting/Briefing with UNICEF Country Representative, Mr. B. Mboya

1100 Meeting with Donor Ambassadors and Representatives (team leader)

Mr. I. McCluney, UK High Commissioner
Mr. C. Ray, Charge d'Affaires & USA Deputy Chief of Mission
Mr. N. Meyer, Charge d'Affaires, Federal Republic of Germany
Mr. John McClintock, EU Representative

1130 Meeting/Briefing with Head of Mission, Action International Contre Le Faim, Mr. F. Mousseau

1300 Meeting with Deputy Chairman of the NPRC and Chairman of NARECOM, Brigadier J. Maada Bio (team leader)

1400 Meeting with Head of Officer, International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. P. Corvaro

1545 Meeting with the Chief Secretary of State, Government of Sierra Leone & Secretary of State for

1700 Meeting with Country Director, CARE International (team delegation), Ms. K. Moore

Friday 4 August

- 0830 Team meeting and discussions
- 0830 Meeting/Briefing with Country Representative of Africare, Mr. E.B. Torrence (team delegation)
- 0930 Meeting with Head of Delegation, International Federation of Red Cross, Mr. T. Buruku (team delegation)
- 1130 Meeting/Briefing with WHO Country Representative, Dr. D. N'sue-Millang
- 1300 Lunch for team, hosted by the Deputy Chairman of the NPRC and Chairman of NARECOM, Brigadier J. Maada Bio.
- 1500 - 2000 Team Meeting and Drafting

Saturday 5 August

- 0830 - 1600 Team meeting, discussion and drafting
- 1600 - 1730 DMT debrief

Sunday 6 August

- 1000 Depart Lungi International Airport
- 1100 Arrive Monrovia
- 1130 Introductory Briefing by UNDP Res Rep a.i., Mr. Paul Koulen
- 1800 Reception in Honor of Team

Monday 7 August

- 0900 Meeting/Briefing with UNDP Resident Representative a.i., Mr. P. Koulen, DHA Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Mr. D. Shearer & UNDP Security Officer, Mr. U.D. Waqa
- 1000 UN/NGO/UNOMIL weekly information meeting (team delegation)
- 1100 Meeting/Briefing with the Special Representative of the Secretary General in Liberia, Amb. Anthony Nyaki & UNOMIL Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer Mr. P. Tingwa
- 1200 Meeting/Briefing with Expanded UN Country Team
- Dr. A. Odero (FAO) Mr. A. Everest (UNICEF)
Mr. P. Koulen (UNDP) Ms. C. Mathias (UNDP)

Mr. A. Schiff	Dr. J. Kamara (WHO)
Mr. G. van Dijk (WFP)	Mr. K. Kaluma (UNHCR)
Mr. M. Abriga (UNHCR)	Mr. J.P. Nikolo (IOM)
Mr. D. Shearer (DHA)	

1330 Meeting/Briefing with USAID Representatives, Ms. M. Martins and Mr. B. Ritchie

1430 Meeting/Briefing with EC Representative, Mr. M. Sayer

1530 Meeting/Briefing with Access Committee

Mr. T. Lokowga (WFP)	Mr. M. Sayer (EC)
Mr. C. Brunner (ICRC)	Ms. L. Marroum (CRS)
Mr. A. Schiff (UNOPS)	Mr. R. Burge (SCF-UK)
Mr. J. Mason (LWS)	Mr. A. Everest (UNICEF)

1630 Meeting/Briefing with WFP Representative Mr. G. Van Dijk (team delegation)

1630 Meeting/Briefing with UNOPS Representative, Mr. A. Schiff (team delegation)

1730 Meeting/Briefing with UNHCR Representatives Messrs. K. Kalumiya and M. Abiriga (team delegation)

1730 Meeting/Briefing with IOM Representative Mr. J.P. Nikolo (team delegation)

Tuesday 8 August

0800 Depart by road for Gbarnga

1130 Arrive Gbarnga - Meeting with NPFL Officials (team delegation)

Mr. G. Kuoh	Mr. J. Gray
Mr. P. Flomo	Mr. J. Mulbah
Mr. J. Sayeka	Mr. A. Ross
Dr. K. Gbokolo	Mr. J.T. Richardson

1130 - 1145 Site Visits

Phebe Hospital Feeding Centre

1315 Helicopter Flight to Buchanan

1400 - 1645 Site Visits in Buchanan

Abused Women & Girls (AWAG) Project	Therapeutic Feeding Centre
School for displaced children	Displaced transit Centre
White House Displaced Camp	UNOPS Buchanan Office
Government Hospital	

Wednesday 9 August

0800 Meeting/ Briefing with UNICEF Representative, Mr. A. Everest & UNICEF Senior Programme Officer, Ms. Esther Guluma (team delegation)

0800 Meeting/Briefing with WHO Representative Dr. J. Kamara (team delegation)

0900 Meeting/Briefing with local NGO Peace and Justice Committee Representative, Mr. S.K. Woods

1000 Meeting/Briefing with Representatives from local NGOs Liberians United Against Drug Abuse, (Mr. S. Gibson), Movement Against Drug Abuse (Mr. L. Abanobi), Humanitarian Emergency Relief Builders (Ms. A. L. Akinselure and Ms. T. D. Kla), Man United to Save Humanity (Mr. S. K. Massalley & Mr. A. M. S. Manobah) and United Liberians to Provide Assistance for Humanity (Mr. S. N. Jarleh)

1100 Meeting with Government Officials

1500 UN/NGO coordination meeting, including representatives of :

LWS	MSF-F	MSF-H	UNDP
AICF	USAID	EU	DHA
SCF-UK	LUSH	UNICEF	FAO
WHO	CRS	UNOPS	UNHCR

1600 Meeting/Briefing with UNDP Resident Representative a.i., Mr. P. Koulen.

1700 Meeting/Briefing with FAO representative, Dr. A. Odero

Thursday 10 August

0800 Team meeting

1000 Depart for Abidjan

1200 Arrive Abidjan

1600 Meeting/Briefing with WFP Country Director Mr. J. Wickens

1800 Team Meeting

Friday 11 August

0830 Meeting/Briefing with UN Agency Team

Ms. J. Bazille-Finley (UN Resident Coordinator)
Mr. J. Wickens (WFP Country Representative)
Mr. A. Girod (WFP Deputy Director)
Ms. N. Fadiga (FAO Officer in Charge)
Dr. B. Lala (WHO Representative a.i.)
Mr. El Hadj A.R. Issaka (UNHCR Country Representative)
Mr. C. T. Sakho (UN ODI Representative)
Ms. F. Achio (ILO Representative)

Mr. S. Katsu (World Bank Representative)
Mr. B. Sarr (UNICEF Representative)
Mr. D. Leclercq (WFP Officer)

1030 Meeting/Briefing with the CNCARL (National Committee for the Coordination of the Assistance to the Liberian refugees in Cote d'Ivoire).

Mr. Y. N'Goran (Chair)	Mr. A.A. Bile (CRCI)
Mr. B.S. Koffi (CRCI)	Mr. Hermant (MSF-B)
Mr. I. Leukwemere (UNHCR)	Mr. J.P. Halkin (EU)
Col. A. Mercier (Min Def)	Mr. Girod (WFP)
Mr. E. Gerard (SCF-UK)	Mr. S. Gouk (MSF-F)
Mr. P. Vial (MSF-F)	Mr. C. Sewa (ICRC)
Mr. El Hadj A.R. Issaka (UNHCR Country Representative)	

1130 Meeting with UNHCR Representative, Mr. Elhadj A.R. Issaka.

1400 Depart for Yamasoukro

Saturday 12 August

0730 Depart for Guiglio

1200 Meeting/Briefing with Prefect of Guiglo, Mr. B. Ziadre

1400 Visit Guiglio refugee camp

1500 Visit of IFRC and WFP warehouse

1600 Departure to Man

1800 Visit to LWS warehouse, meeting/briefing with LWS Field Officer, Mr. D. Thah

Sunday 13 August

0730 Departure to Dananae

0830 Meeting/Briefing with Prefect of Dananae, Mr. Kone Di Bonan.

0930 Visit to refugee sites at Loghouata

1030 Visit to Liberian border

1130 Visit to Dananae logistics transit centre

1230 Meeting with Representatives of the UN Agencies and NGOs

1400 Departure to Abidjan

Monday 14 August

0730 Depart for Conakry

1400 Meeting/Briefing with UN/NGO/Donor Representatives

Mr. T. Park (USAID)

Mr. Jacques Sanpeqio (ADRA)

Mr. P. Bourneau (Canadian Mission) Mr. S. Ursino (UNDP)

Mr. A. Fontaine (MSF-B)

Dr. Si (WHO)

Mr. N. Ngokwey (UNICEF)

Mme. Barde (RCG)

Japanese Embassy

Mr. Sombe (UNHCR)

Mr. E. Ould Elhadj

EU

Mr. N. Nikolaise (LWS)

1630 Team Meeting

Tuesday 15 August (National Holiday)

1000 Meeting/Briefing of Mr. N. Nikolaise (LWS)

1100 Meeting/Briefing with WFP Development Representative, Mr. E. Elhadj (team delegation)

1100 Meeting/Briefing with UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Mr. S. Ursino (team delegation)

1300 Meeting/Briefing with UNICEF Representative, Mr. N. Ngokwey (team delegation)

1300 Meeting/Briefing with WHO Representative, Dr. Sy (team delegation)

1400 Meeting/Briefing with MSF-B Representative, Mr. A. Fontaine (team delegation)

1400 Meeting/Briefing with ADRA Country Director, Mr. J. Wegmuller (team delegation)

1700 Team Meeting

Wednesday 16 August

0900 Meeting/Briefing with the Secretary General to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

1100 Meeting/Briefing with the Secretary-General to the Ministry of the Interior,

1300 Team Meeting (drafting discussion)

1630 Meeting/Briefing with USAID-Guinea Representative, Mr. T. Park

Thursday 17 August

0900 Depart for Forecariah

1100 Arrive at Forecariah

1130 Meeting/Briefing with Prefect of Forecariah, Representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, Mr. A. Kara and Mr. M. Trure, Representative of the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. O. Diao Balde.

1230 Visit to Faramoriah Transit Camp

1330 Visit to Mola Refugee Camp

1600 Depart for Conakry

1800 Arrive Conakry

1945 Meeting with OXFAM Forecariah Representative, Mr. P. Crichton (team delegation)

Friday 18 August

0900 Team Meeting, UNDP Conakry

0930 - 1900 Drafting

1130 Meeting/Briefing with Government Officials (Messrs. Kennedy and Jalem)

Mr. M. A. Thiam, Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères
Mr. M. Kande, Directeur national des Affaires pol. du ministère de l'Int. et de la Sécurité
Mr. A. Loua, Directeur Nat. des Aff. juridiques et consulaires au min. des Affaires étrangères
Mr. R. Toure, Chef de la Division Etudes politiques
Mr. M. Diao, Chef de Section (Refugie) au Ministère des Affaires étrangères

Saturday 19 August

0900 Team Meeting, UNDP Conakry

1100 Meeting/Briefing with Deputy Representative, UNHCR, Mr. G. Cooseman

1130 Television interview with Guinea national television (Mr. Kennedy)

0930 - 2100 Drafting

Sunday 20 August

0900 - 2100 Drafting

Annex IV IDP and Refugee Caseload Figures in Sierra Leone

WFP Resources

Location	Implementing Partner	WFP Resources			Total
		Verified Receiving Food	Verified Not Receiving Food	Registered Not Verified	
Bo Town	CCSL	62235	82053	10689	154977
Taiama Camp	CCSL	8400	-	-	8400
Sub Total		70635	82053	10689	163377
Makeni Camp	SLRC	3387	-	220	3607
Makeni Town	SLRC	42775	15055	31000	88830
Magburaka	SLRC	17915	-	8997	26912
Mile '91	SLRC	-	3908	-	3908
Sub Total		64077	18963	40217	123257
Kenema Town	SLRC	77050	40428	20310	137788
RTI Camp	SLRC	20284	-	-	20284
Segbwema Town	SLRC	80400	45138	26110	151648
Segbwema Camp	SLRC	23617	-	-	23617
Daru Town	SLRC	23256	15000	25800	64056
Daru Camp	SLRC	36850	-	-	36850
Sub Total		261457	100566	72270	434293

Location	Implementing Partner	WFP Resources			Total
		Verified Receiving Food	Verified Not Receiving Food	Registered Not Verified	
Western Area	CCSL	20945	-	18000	38945
	MCSL	18314	-	3000	21314
	EFSL	6000	-	-	6000
	ADRA	1490	-	2000	3490
	CW&Y	212	-	493	705
	CAW	54	-	-	54
Sub Total		47015	-	23493	70508
CAUSE Canada (Liberian Refugees)		4634	-	-	4634
WFP Implementing Partners		447818	201582	146669	796069
Grand Total					

CRS Resources

Location	Caseload
Gondama Camp	45498
Gerihun Camp	26894
Kenema Town	125000
CRS Total	197392

Annex VI

Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer

Draft Terms of Reference

Reporting to the UN Resident Coordinator and working closely with NARECOM, the primary function of the Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer is to facilitate the quick, effective and well-coordinated provision of humanitarian assistance to those seriously affected by the emergency.

The Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer will be based in Freetown and will:

- work closely with UN Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International Organizations and NARECOM to facilitate the implementation of all relief and rehabilitation projects;
- establish viable mechanisms for information exchange among humanitarian assistance agencies;
- facilitate the development of unified humanitarian assistance strategies in consultation with NARECOM;
- coordinate joint UN agency-NARECOM-NGO assessments at the local level to establish the areas of greatest need and recommend necessary actions;
- promote the need for further humanitarian assistance where necessary and facilitate the expansion of UN and NGO presence where required;
- ensure the collection of pertinent data and information and report to the UN Resident Coordinator on developments in the humanitarian assistance situation, including populations movements;
- establish strong communications links between Freetown and the field;
- work towards improving security conditions for humanitarian assistance personnel operating in the field through, *inter alia*, improving information flows and coordination of interventions;
- facilitate humanitarian assistance missions;
- facilitate the maximization of resources through information exchange and development of joint/unified strategies; &
- manage the day to day activities of the UN Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Cell

Annex VII

Humanitarian Assistance Principles and Protocols for Operation in Liberia

Introduction

The complex war in Liberia has, over the last five years created an environment in which the delivery of humanitarian assistance has been difficult to plan and sustain throughout the country. Security for relief staff, supplies and assets has rarely been guaranteed; programs commence only to close again due to factional fighting; humanitarian assistance has been predominantly confined to "safe havens" created by ECOMOG.

All humanitarian agencies have mandates or charters which compel them to react to situations in which populations are in distress. Thousands of civilians are living in areas of Liberia where it is assumed that the need for assistance is high. Thus UN agencies and NGOs are continually investigating ways of accessing these populations without undue risk to staff or property.

The complexity of the Liberia situation does not nevertheless diminish the responsibility of the international community to uphold certain principles of humanitarian action. These principles have evolved through experience in crises elsewhere and are important to respect so that the concept of humanitarianism does not become compromised and diluted.

The following principles and protocols aim to reinforce the ideals of humanitarian assistance and provide cohesion to the international efforts. If all agencies apply the same principles and base their operational activities on them, a much stronger front for negotiating and maintaining access to populations would be created.

Principles

- Impartiality:** helping without discrimination as to ethnicity nationality, religious belief or political opinion. Efforts are made to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
- Neutrality:** not taking the side of any of the parties to the hostilities nor supporting any aspect of the conflict.
- Independence:** to act on humanitarian considerations according to the principles outlined here without military, political or economic interference.
- Transparency:** Operations should be conducted with complete openness to allay any suspicion .
- Consent:** The consent of the parties to the conflict is the only guarantee for sustainable action and for the safety of all involved.

Targeted Assistance:

Assistance must be based on evaluated needs. This means to engage in a credible and transparent operation which is not subject of pressure from parties to the conflict, nor from donors or the media.

Humanitarian assistance must be closely monitored. Assistance should be postponed and negotiations started if the monitoring shows that aid is being diverted. This means that there must be the possibility to return to the area of assistance.

It is not easy to work according to these principles. The approach is based on continuous negotiation and confidence-building. It needs patience, tenacity and hard and sustained work.

An argument is often forwarded that because of the apparent chaotic nature of the factions, it is impossible to hold strictly to principles; that they need to be flexible to cope with the situation. However, if all agencies apply the same principles to humanitarian aid and base their operations on them, a much stronger front for negotiating access to populations would be created in the long term.

When confronted with the realities in the field - with aggressive armed groups and checkpoints - for example, the principles need to be translated into a code of practice specific for the operating conditions in Liberia.

Protocols

In light of the general principles above, there are essentially four main criteria in a practical sense on which we should be constantly evaluating our work:

1. Our work should be guided according to need.

We should work where the need is greatest. These needs should be able to be assessed accurately and action not be undertaken on the basis of vague media reports. While factions or even donors or other political bodies may pressure agencies to work in particular areas, the humanitarian agencies have a responsibility to work where the plight of civilians is most severe.

2. Our work should have independent access - i.e., it should be neutral in respect to political and military concerns.

Negotiations to enable access to work in an area - and maintain that presence - involves three components:

- a. The general humanitarian principles for humanitarian operation should be circulated to faction leaders to be understood as a general template on which humanitarian assistance will be based.
- b. Negotiation for access to particular areas is the responsibility of each agency. Where requested, the UN can negotiate access on behalf of particular agencies in a broad sense i.e., the negotiation of the opening of a particular road. However, it is still the responsibility of individual agencies make personal contact with the factions, particularly when present in the areas under their control.

- c. Recognizing the interdependence between humanitarian agencies, they should adhere to standards and protocols of working and agree to discuss problems when they arise.

Retaining independence from the military inevitably raises the question of armed escorts including those from ECOMOG. The following should guide the use of military escorts:

Escorts:

- a. Unarmed escorts should be minimized and only used where the agency feels they will assist their work. They should not be agreed as a pre-condition for entry into an area. This will contravene the independence of the agency.
- b. Armed personnel should not be carried in or on humanitarian vehicles.
- c. The use of armed escorts, including ECOMOG, to accompany humanitarian vehicles should be used with extreme caution. They should **never** be used without questioning the nature of the humanitarian action, the increased threat to personal security and any distortion of humanitarian neutrality. It will necessarily involve prior discussion between humanitarian agencies. (See appendix 1).

The use of armed escorts will, necessarily lower the risk of property being looted **but** is likely to increase personal risk for the following reasons:

- by the humanitarian agency being perceived by the faction as being allied with the escort and therefore a legitimate target - either at the time or even later;
- by humanitarian personnel being caught in any crossfire which may occur.

3. There should be no payment for access to any area

The importation of relief items into an area is a tempting target. A principle is that no payment should be made to bring relief to civilian populations. This means both at all levels from the faction leadership to the level of the checkpoint.

Demands from factions for a "cut" of relief aid should be refused. At all times compensation should only be given for a legitimate service, not as a pre-condition to working or access. Therefore, should international organizations require implementing partners - either local NGOs, or on occasion, the political wing or "ministry" of a faction - reimbursement for services should be considered carefully keeping in mind the principles above.

Payments in cash or kind should not be made at checkpoints to enable passage through. Payment will inevitably be followed by further demands.

- Persistent demands for payment will inevitably result in delays and inconvenience. It may be necessary to turn a vehicle or convoy around and abort the mission to avoid payment and return to negotiations.

- These demands should not be resisted where there is a threat of injury. However, such a situation should be treated as armed robbery and the incident reported to their "commander" to take action. Other members of the humanitarian community should also be informed.

Humanitarian vehicles should avoid carrying any passengers with exception of those who are legitimately injured and needing hospitalization or those concerned with the work of the organization.

4. **The safety of staff and property should be ensured.**

The safety of staff is a self-evident pre-requisite. It should also be recognized that the looting of vehicles and property ultimately enriches the factions and contributes to the economy of war. Questions should be continually asked as to whether the current form of humanitarian assistance benefits the factions and as a consequence prolongs the fighting.

Safety in the Liberian context depends on:

- the image and integrity of the humanitarian community as a whole;
- the manner it conducts itself in the field; and
- the process of obtaining consents and permission which in Liberia will necessarily involve personal contacts.

5. **Solidarity**

Too often in conflict, agencies take unilateral action which violate agreed humanitarian principles or protocols of operation often jeopardizing another agency's work or even safety. This type of action will inevitably reduce the credibility of the humanitarian community and threaten its long term effectiveness, despite any short term success it might seem to produce.

The upholding of an agreed code of behavior will strengthen the position of **all** agencies. Where lapses occur, the lack of consistency will provide a "chink" in which further demands will be made.

The agreement to the above principles lie at the heart of a humanitarian agency's professionalism. They should not be subverted for reasons such as:

- competition between agencies to access an area before another;
- pressure from donors willing to "pay" for a quick humanitarian action;
- responding to the media which demand or are expectant of some form of action or to gain headlines for being first;
- a party offering some advantages to an agency if it is willing to work according to certain conditions;
- to speed up the passage at checkpoints by agreeing to some payment;
- high stock levels in an agency warehouse which encourages a rapid "distribution".

Solidarity relies on two things:

- agreement on the principles by the humanitarian community before action is taken;
- adherence to them during the operation and, should any departure from the principles occur, a full disclosure of details of the extenuating circumstances.

Should conditions worsen considerably and a departure from the principles be thought expedient in the face of a massive life saving situation, that the proposed humanitarian action be discussed with other humanitarian agencies and where possible agreement be gained.

Appendix 1

Criteria for armed escorts

The exceptional decision to agree or refuse to take an escort should take **all** of the following criteria into account:

- The party occupying and/or controlling the territory through which the convoy will pass and in which the humanitarian assistance will be delivered, must give its full approval to the principle and modalities of an armed escort;
- The humanitarian needs must be great enough (e.g., direct life saving on a large scale - without it the victims would undoubtedly die) to justify the use of an armed escort - on each occasion;
- The deterrent effect of the convoy must be enough to discourage any attack. An escort should be refused if it is probable that the escort might actually become involved in violence;
- The protection afforded by the escort must be against unaffiliated bandits and common criminals, not against organized armed groups or parties to a conflict.

Annex VIII

Regional Focal Point for Coordination

Proposed Terms of Reference

Under the overall supervision of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, the Regional Focal Point for Coordination will carry-out consultations with UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators and, where appropriate, the Disaster Management Teams (DMTs) and major International and Non-Governmental organizations in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, in order to:

- facilitate complementarity of country-specific policy on sub-regional humanitarian assistance issues, including, where appropriate, standardization of agreements governing cross-border operations;
- ensure full transparency of humanitarian assistance activities at the regional level through collection, collation, and analysis of emergency related information, including the production regular reports on humanitarian assistance issues and activities in the sub-region, focusing on emergency needs and identification of gaps;
- provide the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators in the affected countries with a regular reports on the humanitarian assistance situation for further distribution to DMTs, International and Non-Governmental Organizations;
- convene and chair meetings of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators from Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and, where relevant, members of the respective country DMTs and representatives of the International and Non-Governmental community;
- identify and provide logistics support for sub-regional coordination initiatives, including sub-regional coordination meetings;
- assist UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators in resource mobilization;
- inform the IASC, through the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, of the results of sub-regional consultations.

Annex IX

Outline Proposal for Support for UN Regional Focal Point for Coordination

1. Background

The UN Regional Focal Point for Coordination is charged with facilitating humanitarian assistance at the sub-regional level (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea) as described in the Regional Focal Point's Proposed Terms of Reference. The Regional Focal Point's primary responsibility will be the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of information concerning humanitarian assistance efforts which impact throughout the sub-region. In order to carry out these duties, additional support to the Regional Focal Point is required. This support will take the form of an Information Unit working directly for the Regional Focal Point.

The proposal envisions an Information Unit based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. The Unit will work closely with information sources in the sub-region to develop an information capacity which would bridge current sub-regional information gaps, promote a wider perspective and facilitate humanitarian action on a sub-regional, cross-border basis. Monthly reports will be produced and made available to UN agencies, NGOs, governments and other relevant parties. In addition to the monthly reports, more frequent reports would be produced as major issues or crisis require.

The Information Unit would also assist the Regional Focal Point, as required, in facilitating regional consultations to discuss specific issues and appropriate responses.

2. Objectives of the Unit

- a. Improve the overall understanding of problems affecting the sub-region by increasing the flow of information to include the production of regular reports on humanitarian assistance efforts in the sub-region, focusing on emergency needs, identification of gaps, cross-border activities and access issues.
- b. Enhance early warning and mitigate repercussions of events which affect the the delivery of humanitarian assistance or humanitarian operations in neighbouring countries.
- c. In conjunction with DHA's Financial Tracking Unit in Geneva, monitor the overall flow of donor contributions to the region and to provide regular updates on the gaps between anticipated needs and available resources.
- d. Support the Regional Focal Point in preparing for and convening regional consultations.

3. Staffing

The Unit will need the following staff in order to carry out its responsibilities and provide appropriate support to the Regional Focal Point:

One Information Officer who would be responsible for the collection, collation analysis, drafting and dissemination of reports and briefing papers.

One Assistant Information Officer (UNV) to assist the Information Officer in his/her work. The Assistant Information Officer should also have skills in desktop publishing.