



PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : GUINEA

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PROFILE SUMMARY

Guinea: new displacements poorly monitored

Overall security situation in Guinea remains calm, although volatile areas have emerged at the border with Liberia causing new displacements due to the increase in fighting in Liberia (UN OCHA, 3 June 2003). Since the beginning of 2003 the humanitarian situation in the Forest Region of Guinea remains difficult to monitor. The various conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia have led to waves of forced displacement, affecting tens of thousands of civilians in Guinea during 2003. Little information on the current humanitarian situation of IDPs in Guinea is available. However, in May the WHO reported that there were still some 100,000 IDPs in the Forest Region of Guinea (WHO Guinea, 31 May 2003, p. 4).

Background of displacement

Before the emergence of internally displaced persons in Guinea, civil wars in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone had already turned Guinea into one of the safest havens for refugees in the West African region, accommodating some 100,000 refugees as of July 2003. This situation resulted in further intensifying border attacks (UNHCR Guinea, 5 August 2003).

The crisis inside Guinea itself escalated in September 2000, when fighting broke out in the Parrot's Beak area (Languette) bordering north-eastern Sierra Leone and northern Liberia, and thousands of Guineans became internally displaced. The main reason for this crisis was that Guinea became the base for Liberian dissidents (many of them refugees), who later formed the main armed rebel group currently fighting Charles Taylor's army in Liberia.

Some signs of improvement of the security situation for vulnerable groups - including IDPs - at the border with Sierra Leone came with the official end of Sierra Leone's civil war at the beginning of 2002. As a consequence, thousands of internally displaced Guineans returned to their home areas during 2002. According to a government census in February 2002, the total number of IDPs was 82,000 – indicating that up to 240,000 displaced had returned to their areas of origin since the security situation in Guinea stabilized in 2001 (UN, Nov 2002, p. 8). The USCR estimates that at the end of the year 2002 there were some 20,000 Guineans internally displaced, although it could be much higher (USCR, 29 May 2003).

Newly displaced by the crisis in Liberia

Hopes for IDPs to return peacefully in their areas of origin at the border with Liberia were dashed with renewed armed conflict in northern Liberia throughout 2002 and since

the beginning of 2003. The crisis in Liberia created security concerns for IDPs in Guinea. Cross-border incursions into Forest Guinea by unidentified armed assailants, and the presence of rebels in the town of N'Zérékoré continue to give rise to security concerns (WFP, 18 June 2003).

The escalation of combats in Northern Liberia in March and April 2003 caused more displacement. Indeed, the Guinean authorities evacuated civilians from the areas around the Diecke-Ganta border point with Liberia. They declared the surrounding area a 'no-go' zone for military and security reasons (UN OCHA, April 2003). There are serious risks that as a result of the increased fighting and the spreading of the conflict to Monrovia since June 2003, more civilians will be ordered to evacuate their villages from the areas bordering Liberia.

Uncertainty remains around the number of IDPs in Guinea. In April 2003, WHO reported that there were some 150,000 IDPs in the Forest Region (WHO Guinea, April 2003, p. 4). WHO also gave the figure of 100,000 IDPs in need of humanitarian assistance in the same region as of May 2003 (WHO Guinea, May 2003, p.4).

What is the fate of the Guinean returnees?

In addition to the conflict in Liberia, the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire that broke out in September 2002, resulted in an influx of Guinean returnees who often arrive by the same means and in the same condition as refugees and third country nationals. These returnees are potential IDPs because as of July 2003, it is unknown whether they have remained displaced within Guinea or have returned to their areas of origin (UN OCHA Guinea, July 2003).

Between September 2002 and 14 April 2003, the Guinean authorities, the UN agencies and the Guinean Red Cross have registered 98,479 persons arriving in Guinea due to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. Of these, 58,436 were Guinean returnees (UN OCHA, April 2003). The entry points for these groups were the prefectures of Lola, Beyla and Yomou in the N'Zérékoré region.

Protection and humanitarian needs are to be fully assessed

There has been a general lack of specific information on the humanitarian situation of IDPs in Guinea, since the last government census report on IDPs in February 2002. Some humanitarian organizations estimated that the majority of the 82,000 people who originated from the Forest Region of Guinea, and fled as a consequence of the cross border attacks in 2000-2001, have by now either returned to their area of origin or fully integrated into host-communities (ICRC, 19 June 2003, p. 81) However, WHO says that at least 40% of these IDPs still live in precarious conditions in the préfectures surrounding the N'Zérékoré region (WHO Guinea, April 2003, p. 2).

The crises in Liberia and in Côte d'Ivoire have placed a great peril on the humanitarian situation of IDPs in the prefectures in the Forest Region of Guinea. Already suffering great instability from the large presence of refugees, IDPs, illicit LURD presence and border instability with Liberia, the new influx of civilians fleeing the crisis in neighbouring countries add another burden on the limited humanitarian capacities available in the Forest Region of Guinea (UN OCHA, March 2003, p. 3).

Often fully dependant upon humanitarian aid, IDPs women and children in Guinea are exposed to risks of exploitation and sexual abuses. In fact, UNICEF has identified nearly 600 unaccompanied minors currently being economically exploited in illicit diamond mines, plantations and in homes in Forecariah about 40% of whom are from Sierra Leone and Liberia, and the rest are children of IDPs (UN OCHA, May 2003, p. 3).

Inadequate response

At the national level, the government's National Service for Humanitarian Action (SENAH) is responsible for the coordination of humanitarian response for displaced persons (and natural disasters). This was consolidated in 2002 to better assess needs, and four regional bureaus were opened through UNDP (UN, Nov 2002, p11).

Very few international organisations and NGOs are present to monitor the situation and to provide assistance to IDPs in Guinea. Throughout 2002, in Macenta, Kissidougou, Guéckédou and the Faranah region, the ICRC brought aid and helped 55,500 returnees/IDPs to resettle in their home regions. The ICRC provided aid for over 17,000 residents in host communities (ICRC, 19 June 2003, p. 82). USAID, through its partner NGO Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OICI), helped ensure greater overall food security among the displaced communities (USAID, 9 June 2003).

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal (CAP) 2003 for Guinea aims at assuring assistance and protection in order to reduce vulnerability of displaced populations, host communities and refugees, reduce tensions between refugees, displaced persons and host communities through promotion of a culture of peace and balanced assistance. As of July 2003, the 2003 CAP had received 40.8 percent funding. In addition, the UN country team also appealed for a total of US\$ 7.1 million in the *Côte d'Ivoire plus five* Appeal, aiming at addressing requirements not covered by the Guinea 2003 UN appeal (April-December 2003). It is estimated that 88,000 Guinean nationals in host communities expected to be affected by the crisis, are targeted for humanitarian assistance (UN, April 2003, p. 2-3).

However, some critical programmes within the UN appeal targeting IDPs were ignored or received very little funding. The education sector received no financial support. In this area, lack of supplementary funds to support emergency activities, made the impossible return to normalcy in education for crisis-affected children. "Hence, tens of thousands of returnees and IDP children were now without access to education in Guinea and with 0%

of requested resources available, UNICEF will not be able to support education needs of school-aged children in Guinea” (UN OCHA, May 2003, p. 7).

The delayed confirmation of contributions, made WFP’s planning difficult. This could result to pipeline break, and reduction of cereal rations. As a consequence, WFP’s effort in assisting government to strengthen its capacities in emergency preparedness and vulnerability will be jeopardized (UN OCHA, May 2003, p. 7).

The IDP issue in Guinea suffered further neglect as a result of the crisis in Cote d’Ivoire. The focus of both the government of Guinea and humanitarian partners turned very much towards the new influx of refugees and Guinean evacuees.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

Background to the conflict

Relations between Mano River Union countries remain strained, despite attempts at mediation (1999-2002)

- Rebel incursions from Sierra Leone in May and September 1999 were not taken lightly by Guinean government
- Ambush at Macenta in September 1999 resulted in broken relations between Liberia and Guinea
- Guinea closed border with Sierra Leone in August 2000 for fear of further RUF incursions
- In early 2002, tripartite talks take place in Morocco and in West Africa, aimed at joint protection of common borders
- Ongoing fighting in Liberia in 2002 continues to undermine prospects for peace and stability

"Political relations between Guinea and Liberia worsened following a deadly ambush at Macenta in September 1999 in which Liberian soldiers were blamed for the death of 27 Guineans. Calm was only restored on the Guinean-Liberian border following negotiations at an extraordinary summit of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja. Sierra Leonean rebel incursions into Guinea's Forécariah region in May and September 1999 have not been taken lightly in Conakry due to the human casualties and material damage. In July 2000, a third dissident incursion into Liberia was launched from the border with Guinea. The Liberian government has registered serious concern and threatened to pursue the dissidents into Guinea. All three governments within the Mano River Basin believe that the situation has degenerated beyond the management capacity of ECOWAS alone and sustained intervention will be urgently needed to avoid a full-scale war between Liberia and Guinea." (FEWER 19 September 2000, sect. 4)

"In early August [2000], Guinea closed its borders with Sierra Leone, fearing further incursions by RUF rebels. By mid August as many as 10,000 refugees trying to flee into Guinea to escape RUF atrocities in Sierra Leone were trapped on the Sierra Leonean side of the border – most of them women and children. Conditions on the border were appalling and UNHCR reported that at least one pregnant woman and three children died while waiting to cross into Guinea." (HRW 3 October 2000)

"The Guinean and Liberian defence ministers are due to meet in the Guinean capital Conakry on March 25 to buttress regional peace efforts, following top level talks with Sierra Leone in Freetown this week.

'The meeting in Conakry will determine how to guard and protect (our) the common borders in the light of prevailing circumstances,' Liberian Justice Minister Eddington Varmah said after the Freetown meeting.

Relations are strained between the three West African neighbours, who accuse each other of supporting rebels groups who launch attacks across their common borders in the diamond-rich Mano River basin.

Varmah, who heads a joint security committee made up ministers from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, said the talks in Freetown on Wednesday and Thursday had been 'successful'.

The talks involved the three nations' ministers for foreign affairs, internal affairs, security, defence and justice.

In a statement issued on Friday the joint security committee said legal experts from their three countries would hold parleys in Freetown on March 13, ahead of the Conakry defence ministers' meeting.

The committee pledged to deploy a joint border security force along their troubled common frontiers, where years of armed insurgencies have exacerbated a refugee crisis sparked by civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The heads of state of the three countries met last month at a summit in Rabat brokered by Moroccan King Mohammed VI, at which they pledged to promote 'peace, understanding and good neighbourliness' and called for an end to hostilities.

The three presidents jointly condemned the activities of 'non-governmental armed groups in the region'.

Relations are particularly strained between Guinea and Liberia which have accused each other of backing rebels trying to topple their respective regimes.

Sierra Leone, sandwiched between the two, has accused Liberia of backing rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) who waged a 10-year war against the government that ended last May.

The UN estimates that 1.1 million of the 15 million inhabitants of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone are either internally displaced persons or refugees." (AFP, 8 March 2002)

"... the foreign ministers from the three Mano River Union (MRU) countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone met in the Moroccan capital, Rabat, on 5 April to review progress towards ensuring peace in the subregion and to plan a heads of states summit. The three presidents, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone, Charles Taylor of Liberia and Lansana Conte of Guinea last met in Rabat in late February.

The MRU was set up in 1970 to promote economic and trade activity between the three countries but it has been inactive in recent years." (IRIN-WA, 12 April 2002)

"Liberian President Charles Taylor on Tuesday failed to travel to the Guinean capital, Conakry, where he had been invited by President Lansana Conte for a meeting that would have eased tension between them, a diplomatic source in the capital, Monrovia said.

An advance party led by the Foreign Minister, Monie Captan, that had traveled to Conakry over the weekend to prepare for Taylor's visit returned to Monrovia on Tuesday, the source told IRIN. 'It is not clear why Taylor skipped the visit,' the source said.

Liberia accuses Guinea of supporting the rebels of the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) who have been fighting to topple Taylor since 1999. In August, the Liberian army pushed back the LURD and reports said the rebels had crossed into Guinea.

Taylor had been expected to propose a new Mano River Union summit, news agencies quoted officials as saying. The leaders of the Union, which comprises Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, last met in Rabat, Morocco in February to discuss ways of restoring peace and stability in the sub-region. Liberian officials say they see the Rabat strategy as the best option for bringing peace back to the sub-region.

Parallel initiatives have also been started by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which has proposed a summit between the three Presidents in Dakar, Senegal, to discuss continuing instability which has displaced hundreds of thousands of people in the region." (IRIN, 8 October 2002)

Intense cross-border raids from Liberia and RUF-controlled Sierra Leone were carried out during period from August 2000 to May 2001 (December 2000-March 2001)

- Liberia and RUF accused of aiding and participating in incursion attacks
- Guinean army deserters are also said to be involved
- Some 1000 persons thought to have been killed since fighting started
- Guinea and Liberia have traded accusations that each harbours men seeking to overthrow the other's government

General:

"The nature and intensity of recent attacks are characterised by destruction of villages, displacement of both refugee and Guinean residents, and human rights abuses. **Efforts by UN Agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement to supply food and medicines to the refugee camps and to IDPs, have been severely hampered by the fighting and general tightening of security in high-risk border areas.**" (UN 23 March 2001, pp. 13-14)

"Before September [2000], cross-border incursions in the sub-region consisted of limited hit-and-run raids by marauding rebel groups or other local people with guns settling scores. Assailants would typically retreat back across the border within hours, leaving limited numbers of civilian casualties behind. However, the most recent attacks into Guinea indicate a more sophisticated military operation and a more ambitious aim: political and economic destabilization. For the first time, armed combatants have attacked major provincial capitals. More than 500 Guinean civilians have been killed, according to government officials. Tens of thousands have been displaced. Hundreds of thousands of refugees remain at risk." (USCR 12 January 2001)

"In August and especially September [2000], a series of cross-border raids were staged from Sierra Leone and Liberia into Guinea (in and around Macenta and Yomou, east of Guéckédou, and in the Forécariah and Kindia regions), and for the first time against villages at some distance from the frontier, prompting forceful reactions by the Guinean military and political authorities. Guinea accuses Liberia of aiding attacks launched across its borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone in Guinea's porous borders with Sierra Leone (around Forécariah, Pamelap, Benty, Kindia, Dar Salam and Madina Voula) and Liberia (Guéckédou, Nzérékoré and Macenta) remain extremely volatile and sporadic cross border raids by insurgents are continuing. At the same time, cross-border attacks in the Yèndè region of *Guinea Foréstièrè* have recently been followed by major assaults deeper and further into Guinean territory against Guéckédou and Kissidougou." (ICRC 15 December 2000, Introduction)

Reports of different attacks:

"Guinea's government has blamed Liberia and Sierra Leonean Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels for a cross-border raid that killed scores of people in the Guinean town of Guekedou on Wednesday [6 December 2000], although independent confirmation of the attackers' identity has been hard to come by.

It was the biggest battle the Guinean army had fought at home since fighters first invaded Guinea in September [2000] near the town of Forecariah, some 75 km south of Conakry. The BBC quoted aid workers in Guinea as saying hundreds of people had been killed in the latest battle. The government said 48 died, 36 civilians and 12 rebels.

Red Cross official Umar Issa Damagaram told the BBC at least 1,000 people were wounded. The rebels burnt homes, public buildings, businesses, vehicles and cut telephone lines. Thousands of civilians have fled, underpinning an assessment by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata that the region was 'on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe.'

The United States, which condemned the attack, said the insurgents came from Liberia and RUF-held territory in Sierra Leone.

'We regard these attacks on Guinea as an expansion of hostilities at a time when the Revolutionary United Front supposedly remains committed to the November 10 Abuja cease-fire agreement with the government of Sierra Leone,' Deputy State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said on Thursday [7 December 2000].

At one time or another, Liberia and Guinea have traded accusations that each harbours armed men seeking to overthrow the other's government. Similar charges have flown back and forth between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

[...]

Taylor has been accusing Guinea of being behind rebel efforts to overthrow him. That assertion got some support from an unlikely source: inhabitants of Guinea's forest region last month asked their government to expel Liberian ULIMO-K fighters who, they said, had attracted the cross border raids from Liberia.

[...]

The Guinean government insists that it has never harboured camps on its territory for Liberian rebels." (IRIN-WA 8 December 2000)

"More than 900 people, including hundreds of civilians, have been killed, on conservative estimates based on official government figures, since armed bands launched a major insurgency in border territory at the beginning of September [2000].

The fighting pits Guinean army deserters and insurgents against government troops, according to Conakry, where authorities also blame Liberia, Burkino Faso and Sierra Leone rebels of the Revolutionary United Front for aiding efforts to 'destabilise' it." (AFP 18 December 2000)

Gueckedou region, and in particular Parrot's Beak, was primary site of clashes during height of fighting (January 2000-April 2001)

- Parrot's Beak – southwest of Gueckedou – is main "theatre" of fighting
- Humanitarian agencies have been forced to pull back repeatedly
- Thousands of refugees and displaced persons trapped by the fighting

General:

"The Parrot's Beak has been largely cut off by fighting since last September [2000], leaving thousands without regular humanitarian assistance. The impending onset of the rainy season also adds to the urgency of the relocation effort." (UNHCR 6 April 2001)

"The situation in Guinea has become increasingly volatile over the past few months. The southwestern region of Gueckedou, Languette (security phase four) and Kissidougou (security phase three), where approximately 150 UN staff and partners work, is especially a concern to the Security Management Team (SMT). In this region, there are approximately 1,000 untrained Guinean soldiers mixing with 400,000 refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and UN humanitarian workers.

In addition, there are approximately 2,000 to 5,000 aggressors (RUF, Ulimo-k, Kamajor and Liberian/Guinean rebels) just over the border in Sierra Leone. No more than 20 kilometers separate these aggressors from UN staff and partners." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 158)

Reports from 12/13 January 2001 attacks:

"Heavy fighting between government troops and insurgents in southeastern Guinea has claimed 93 lives and forced thousands of civilians to flee their homes, the security services said Tuesday [16 January 2001].

Renewed clashes broke out on Saturday [13 January 2001] when the army launched an offensive against rebels who are accused by the Conakry government of infiltrating the forested border areas from Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Security officials said 83 rebels had been killed since then, with two regular soldiers, two retired veterans, two conscripts, a customs inspector and three civilians.

Many huts belonging to local villagers have been razed to the ground and thousands of people were fleeing the combat zone either eastward to the town of Macenta, near the Liberian border, or north towards Kissidougou, officials said." (AFP 16 January 2001)

"In recent weeks, MSF has witnessed increased levels of instability and insecurity in the Guekedou area of Guinea, which for the time being hosts around 250,000 Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees.

The region of Parrot's Beak in particular, located south west of Guekedou, has faced several incidents of attacks by armed groups which has put approximately 180,000 refugees and the Guinean resident population in the area (around 70,000) at severe risk. Following the last attack on January 12th, several thousand refugees have fled their camps trying to reach the Nyaedou camp north of guekedou, which is supported by MSF.

The Nyaedou camp itself has also recently been threatened by armed groups and cannot be considered safe. In this camp, MSF staff talked to several refugees who reported both the harassment and killing of civilians.

[...]

A large part of the refugees in Parrot's Beak seem now to be trapped in the fighting and have, as such, no access to safer areas. In addition, and due to the insecurity in the area, humanitarian assistance to the refugees is permanently hampered and intermittently impossible." (MSF 19 January 2001)

Reports from 23 January 2001 attack:

"Four people were killed and two wounded Tuesday [23 January 2001] when fresh clashes broke out in southern Guinea along the border with Sierra Leone and Liberia, sources here said.

The fighting in Guekedou sparked fear among some 23,000 Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees in the Nyaedu camp some 15 kilometres (9 miles) north of the city, military and humanitarian officials told AFP.

[...]

It was unclear who was behind the attacks Tuesday [23 January 2001] in Guekedou, however.

Some sources claimed rebels from outside Guinean territory were responsible, but others blamed the fighting on Liberian factions in Guinea." (AFP 23 January 2001)

"La ville frontalière du sud-ouest de la Guinée, Guekedou, a été mardi [23 janvier 2001], l'objet d'une nouvelle attaque armée, a-t-on appris auprès de sources non officielles.

Les mêmes sources ont indiqué que la gendarmerie de la ville, située non loin de la préfecture, a été prise par les assaillants.

Des sources humanitaires contactées, ont rapporté une panique généralisée au sein de la population du camp de réfugiés de Nyaedou, situé à 15 km au nord de Guekedou.

Suite aux attaques de début du mois de décembre, des milliers de réfugiés dont des guinéens, avaient convergé vers ce camp, portant sa population à 20.000 personnes, contre 13.000 auparavant. La zone de Gueckedou avait été l'objet d'attaques le 13 janvier dernier, rappelle-t-on." (PANA 24 January 2000)

Arms and diamond smuggling play major role in the destabilization of the region (November 2000-March 2001)

- Instability in Guinea and elsewhere in the sub-region fuelled by trafficking of diamonds and arms
- UN report submitted to Security Council in December 2000 detailed involvement of Liberia and Burkino Faso in attacks on Guinea and war on Sierra Leone
- Charles Taylor, President of Liberia, is major player in sub-regional illicit trade

"Underlying the Sierra Leone conflict and its spread in the sub-region is the trade in its illegally mined diamonds, and the proliferation of small arms in the entire region. Instability in Sierra Leone and Guinea is fuelled by armed support being provided from outside the country to the RUF in Sierra Leone and the related insurgents who attack Guinea. Recent reports have confirmed that trafficking in diamonds and gun running are used to finance war efforts in West Africa. In the recent past, some important steps have been taken to curb the contribution of the diamond trade to the instability in the region, including the certificate-of-origin regime for rough diamonds, established by the Government of Sierra Leone." (UN 23 March 2001, pp. 7-8)

"Freetown, Conakry, Britain, the United States and some West African governments have either accused or suspected Liberia – and to some degree Burkino Faso – as being the bogey man [in the illicit trade of diamonds and arms]. Both nations have vehemently and repeatedly denied these charges.

But behind these accusations lies Liberian President Charles Taylor's close ties to the imprisoned RUF leader, Foday Sankoh. Although Taylor admits this, he has consistently denied controlling or supplying the RUF with arms, and smuggling diamonds out of Sierra Leone. Britain and the United States say they have proof to the contrary. Taylor says they must table the evidence, but through association, his 'fingerprints' appear wherever the RUF surfaces." (IRIN-WA 8 December 2000)

"The principal support for the cycle of violence that has spread from Sierra Leone to Guinea comes from neighboring Liberia. Liberian President Charles Taylor reportedly continues to plunder the region's natural resources – particularly diamonds and timber – in order to foment instability, settle old scores, and pay off personal debts. The United States, United Kingdom, and other world powers have warned President Taylor to stop his 'diamonds-for-guns' trade with Sierra Leone's RUF rebels. However, according to observers in the region – and at last week's [mid January 2001] well-coordinated attack on southeastern Guinea suggests – Taylor's relationship with the RUF has continued unabated. Liberia has some legitimate grievances against Guinea, but they do not justify further appeasement of Taylor." (USCR 12 January 2001)

For full details of regional arms and diamond smuggling in West Africa, see Report of the Panel of Experts appointed pursuant to Security Council 1306 (2000), para 19, in relation to Sierra Leone (S/2000/1195) [\[External link\]](#).

Security situation in Guinea has stabilised since 2001 - but fighting in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire poses ongoing threat to stability (2002)

- Peaceful presidential elections in Sierra Leone in May 2002 have positive repercussions for Guinea
- In Guinea, various peace initiatives have helped open up areas of the country

- However, fighting in northern Liberia is once again creating insecurity along the Guinea-Liberia border, with unidentified armed elements appearing inside a Liberian refugee camp in Guinea
- Fighting in Cote d'Ivoire, following an attempted coup in September 2002, is also creating political and security concerns for Guinea and other countries in the sub-region

“Though the security situation has greatly improved on the Guinean borders, waves of Liberians have continued to cross into Guinean territory since January 2002, increasing fear of renewed instability. The humanitarian community has had cause to halt food distribution (June, July and partially in September) because of the situation and has had limited access to refugee populations entering through some border points. In Sierra Leone, the transition to lasting peace is progressing since the peaceful presidential elections in May, which have helped the country to embark on a path of economic and social reconstruction.

In terms of peace initiatives, actions are being taken in the field, via activities carried out by civil society organisations such as the Mano River Women Network and through the creation of the United Nations Office for West Africa.

Prospects for a sustainable solution to the conflict are increasing if achievements, such as the reopening of the western borders, the resumption of traffic between Guinea and Sierra Leone, or the relegation of the Prefecture of Forecariah to Phase One on the UN security scale, are taken into account.

However, the deterioration of the situation in northern Liberia and the resumption of fighting in Lofa county has turned the forest areas of Guinea into a volatile and fragile zone. The situation is exacerbated by the consequences of the 2000-2001 rebel attacks, which further weakened already devastated social and economic infrastructures in Guinea. In turn, this engendered added costs for the host families and put additional pressure on scarce available resources.” (UN, November 2002, p6)

“The pressure exerted on dissidents groups in the northern Liberian county of Lofa is once again translating into unstable security situation along the borders with Liberia including recent incursions into Guinean territory (sub-districts of Koyamah, District of Macenta) by unidentified groups.

The presence of unidentified armed elements in one of the Liberian refugee camps of Kouankan in Guinea and the security concerns for humanitarian staff and refugees have been publicly shared by the UNHCR Representative to Guinea during a meeting held with the donors community on 24th October.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire is sending waves of political and security concerns within the sub-region and may constitute an unexpected trigger to further sub-regional instability in neighboring countries (Guinea, Liberia) including possible new emergencies in Mali and Burkina Faso.” (UN OCHA, 1 October 2002)

Main causes of displacement

New displacements due to increased fighting in Liberia (July 2003)

- In 2003, civilians were newly displaced as a result of the escalation of combats in Northern counties of Liberia

- Civilians could possibly be ordered to evacuate their villages in the border regions of Liberia for military and security reasons

“With the deterioration of security in many of the border regions of Liberia due to increased fighting and the spreading of the conflict to Monrovia in June 2003, it is estimated that more civilians could possibly be ordered to evacuate their villages in these areas for military and security reasons.

Furthermore, as a result of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire that broke out in September 2002, Guinea has been faced with an influx of Guinean returnees who often arrive by the same means and in the same conditions as refugees and Third Country Nationals.

As of July 2003, it is unknown whether Guinean returnees remain displaced within Guinea or have returned to areas of origin.

While overall figures for these groups are vague, some 10,500 Guinean returnees were registered by local authorities at Liberian and Ivorian border points in the prefectures of Lola, Beyla and Youmou in the Nzérékoré region during the first half of 2003 and reported to the UN System through an interagency monitoring mechanism that covers this area.” (UN OCHA Guinea, 24 July 2003).

Cross-border incursions from Liberia and Sierra Leone during August 2000-May 2001 period caused major displacements (August 2000-May 2001)

- Rebel incursions from Liberia and Sierra Leone have resulted in death, physical injury and material destruction in southeast Guinea
- Continued attacks from August 2000 to May 2001 forced thousands of Guinean inhabitants to flee north with refugees

Reports of displacement from August-December 2000 (in chronological order):

"Fighting between Guinean forces and fighters from Sierra Leone has displaced at least 1,000 Guineans in the past week and angry Guinean civilians have attacked humanitarian workers assisting Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees." (IRIN-WA 14 September 2000)

"Guinea, bordering the war-ravaged countries of Sierra Leone and Liberia, has suffered 15 insurgent attacks that have killed some 360 people during the past year [2000], according to the Guinean government. The attacks are believed to have come from Liberia and Sierra Leone. Uncounted numbers of Guineans have become internally displaced in the widening violence, and the number of uprooted people could grow if attacks continue." (USCR 19 October 2000)

"The town of Gueckedou was attacked by suspected rebel groups from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea in early December [2000], ending a one-month lull in hostilities. Fierce clashes ensued between the rebels and Guinean government troops. The situation deteriorated further when rebels raided Kissidougou to the north.

The IRC and other NGOs evacuated staff members from Gueckedou and Kissidougou amid the spate of attacks. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of refugees are fleeing the region, most moving north by foot, away from Guinea's volatile borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia. Thousands of Guineans have also been displaced by the latest fighting." (IRC 15 December 2000)

"The attacks against Guinean villages close to the borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia continue to result in deaths and injuries, material destruction and the displacement of local residents and refugees (estimated 50,000 people), who are forced to flee their villages to seek refuge in regions away from the borders and stay mainly in host communities. According to UNHCR, there are some 400,000 refugees still living in Guinea, concentrated in the *Guinea Forestière* and Forécariah regions. These include 340,000 refugees from Sierra Leone, 5,000 of whom have arrived since the renewal of violence in May 2000, and 60,000 Liberian refugees." (ICRC 15 December 2000, Humanitarian situation)

Reports in January 2001 (in chronological order):

"Les attaques perpétrées par des groupes armés rebelles, dans le sud-est de la Guinée, au début du mois de décembre [2000], ont suscité un vaste mouvement de panique parmi la population guinéenne et les quelques 350,000 réfugiés sierra-léonais et libériens présents dans cette zone frontalière. La plupart ont dû fuir vers l'intérieur du pays, ou ont trouvé refuge dans des villages et camps environnants. D'autres tentent de retourner en Sierra-Léone, en se dirigeant vers Kabala (enclave gouvernementale au Nord du pays), ou vers Freetown, via Conakry." (ACF 5 January 2001)

"A la suite d'incursions militaires de rebelles venant du Libéria et de Sierra Leone en Guinée forestière, plus de 300 000 réfugiés et environ 100 000 habitants ont été dispersés par une série d'attaques contre plusieurs camps et localités dans le sud-est du pays. Médecins du Monde lance une mission d'urgence pour venir en aide aux populations guinéennes et réfugiées de la région." (MDM 11 January 2001)

Since January 2001, fighting has continued in the border areas of the country. Most recently, Guinean security forces were criticized by Amnesty International for indiscriminate attacks on villages in Sierra Leone. See full report dated 4 May 2001 [in list of sources].

Ethnicity may be a factor in complex population displacement at regional level (March 2001)

- Existing ethnic affinities which transcend national boundaries are such that instability in the border areas could spread quickly
- Mandingo and Kran groups in Guinea have strong ethnic affinities with identical groups in Sierra Leone

"The existence of identical ethnic groups across the four countries and beyond contributes to the prolongation of the conflicts and to complex population displacements. In Liberia, the Mandingo and Kran ethnic groups from Lofa county which form an important part of the current dissident group in the country, have strong ethnic affinity with identical groups in Guinea and Sierra Leone. There is also an ethnic affinity between the same groups in the southwest of Côte d'Ivoire and the eastern part of Liberia.

[...]

The nature of the existing ethnic affinities which transcend national boundaries is such that instability in the border areas between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, involving Liberian Malinkes, Mandingos and Krans, spreads quickly into Guinea." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 7)

Floods in September 2001 have affected approximately 200,000 persons in Upper Guinea (October-November 2001)

- Overflow of Niger river in August/September 2001 causes worst flood damage in 30 years
- 200,000 persons affected to varying degrees
- Worst-hit areas are Kankan, Mandiana and Kouroussa prefectures in eastern region of Kankan

"The Niger river and its tributaries overflowed in August/September 2001 causing the worst flood damage in 30 years.

Government authorities report 9 dead and more than 200,000 people affected in varying degrees, including some 40,000 children under the age of 5.

Flood waters have destroyed rice paddies and subsidiary crops, lead to a wide spread pollution of drinking water sources, compromised health and sanitary conditions and damaged a number of classrooms.

Upper Guinea is the poorest region in the country (62% of the population lives under the poverty level). To make matters worse, it is also host to thousands of IDPs who fled border conflicts last year." (OCHA 5 November 2001)

"In Guinea, the worst affected areas are Kankan, Mandiana and Kouroussa, three prefectures in the eastern region of Kankan, according to the OCHA report for that country.

It said an assessment carried out on 20 to 30 September by OCHA and the Guinean National Service for Humanitarian Action indicated that 1,226 huts and 99 houses had been destroyed in the three prefectures, while 20,531 ha of farmland were destroyed. OCHA said many areas were still inaccessible except by boat.

The Faranhah region, west of Kankan, was also affected." (IRIN-WA 8 October 2001)

POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

General

Global figures

Uncertainty remains about how many civilians are still displaced in Guinea (July 2003)

- As of July 2003, there are new unspecified numbers of IDPs.
- IDPs who fled the cross-border attacks in 2000-2001, have by now either returned home or fully integrated into host-communities, UNDP says.
- At the end of 2002, 20,000 civilians were IDPs in Guinea although some estimates ranged higher, USCR says.

“It is currently estimated by humanitarian organizations that these IDPs, who originated from the Forest Region and fled their homes as a result of the cross-border attacks in 2000-2001, have by now either returned home or fully integrated into host-communities.

In 2003, new groups were displaced from some of the same areas along the Liberian border. In view of the escalation of combats in Northern counties of Liberia in March and April 2003, unspecified numbers of civilians were evacuated from the areas around the Diecke-Ganta border crossing in the Nzerekore region on the Liberian border and the surrounding area was declared a “no-go zone” (UNDP, 24 July 2003).

“An estimated 20,000 Guineans remained internally displaced at year’s end, although some estimates ranged much higher. About 5,000 Guineans were asylum seekers in industrialized countries. Some 30,000 Guinean citizens who had immigrated to Côte d’Ivoire in previous years returned to Guinea during 2002 because of violence in Côte d’Ivoire.

[...]

Tens of thousands of Guineans became internally displaced in 2000–2001 when Sierra Leone’s civil war spilled into Guinea’s border areas. The violence left several border villages heavily damaged. The overwhelming majority of uprooted Guineans fled to the homes of friends and relatives in nearby towns or in other regions of the country, where many of them have settled permanently.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that it provided reintegration assistance to 40,000 Guineans who returned to their homes in relatively quiet border areas during 2001–2002. ICRC distributed blankets, soap, seeds, and tools to some 12,000 persons who remained displaced during 2002.

“The lack of agreed figures on the number of internally displaced persons, combined with the lack of precise information on [their] needs...in host communities and in the areas of origin, have constrained donor community support,” a UN report concluded in May.” (USCR, 29 May 2003)

“According to UN OCHA, there were an estimated 82,000 IDPs throughout Guinea as of March 2002. One year later, there have been no official IDP estimates, but many relief organizations believe the number is significantly less than a year ago.

IDPs in Guinea have mostly integrated with resident populations and have generally not been the target of major humanitarian assistance programs. There is a concern that the conflicts in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire could spill over to southern Guinea, once again causing major population displacements like those experienced in 2001.” (USAID, 15 May 2003)

In Guinea forestière there are 100,000 IDPs, WHO says (May 2003)

- The situation of IDPs in Guinea forestière is not well known.
- The security situation at the Liberian border forced civilians to flee during May 2003.

“La population déplacée est mal connue en Guinée forestière. Des efforts sont en cours avec le services social et la CICR pour élucider cette question.

Plusieurs déplacements internes de populations ont été constatés pendant le mois suite à l’aggravation de la situation dans les localités frontalières. Les populations déplacées internes sont estimées à 100,000 personnes nécessitant également un appui de la communauté humanitaires.” (WHO Guinea, May 2003, p. 4).

“[...] Plusieurs déplacements internes de populations ont été constatés depuis la détérioration de la situation sécuritaire aux frontières libériennes et ivoiriennes.

Plusieurs sinistrés déplacés ont été répertoriés également suite aux vents violents dans la préfecture de Yomou ayant détruit plusieurs habitations. Les populations déplacées internes sont estimées à 150,000 personnes nécessitant également un appui de la communauté humanitaire.” (WHO Guinea, April 2003, p.4).

Overall number of internally displaced is just over 82,000, according to government census (May 2002)

- Of the 82,000 IDPs counted in government census, 44 percent are located in seven prefectures of Guinea Forestière
- 63 percent of the displaced come from a rural setting
- Various constraints on IDPs becoming self-sufficient create continued dependance on humanitarian assistance
- Urgent need to prepare and implement a National Action Plan for the displaced, as well as returnees and host communities
- In January 2002, the government reported 359,000 IDPs - although it was expected that the census would show the real figures were much lower

“The last statistics provided in May 2002 by the National Census Bureau (BNR) of the State Secretariat for Planning, with UNFPA financing, put the overall number of displaced to 82,031.

According to the survey conducted by UNFPA and the BNR in collaboration with the Government and the OCHA Office, the prefectures of Forest Guinea are the most affected with 44% of the total burden carried by 7 prefectures. The eight prefectures of Upper Guinea attract 37% of the displaced. In Middle and Lower Guinea the presence is less significant with the exception of Mamou. In general, most IDPs were received and provided assistance by relatives in host villages where, in an act of solidarity, the scarce resources available have been shared.

The survey also established that 63% of the displaced come from a rural setting, against 37% from a urban setting. A withdrawal from agricultural activities and difficulties faced by some social classes (such as traders and craftsmen) in resuming their activities in host areas partly explain the pressure put on the capacity of basic services (shelter, food, health, education, water, sanitation and environmental protection) in the host areas and on access by vulnerable populations to these services.

Another finding of the survey indicated that, despite the fact that the displaced populations tend to adapt to new realities by resolutely turning to agriculture in the host areas, lingering constraints (lack of experience, seeds, small tools and access to land) cause continued dependence on humanitarian assistance. The survey has shown that 50.6% of women returning to their areas of origin are married but do not benefit from support which would allow them to contribute effectively to the reconstruction efforts.

In conclusion, there is an urgent need to prepare and implement a National Action Plan for the displaced, for returnees and for host communities in order to identify unmet needs and to better coordinate support activities. In this regard, it is important to point out the importance of updating the survey (qualitative and quantitative) as the dispersal of displaced families, the return to areas of origin and survival dynamics specific to these families have created new situations that need to be taken into account. This effort must be accompanied by the reinforcement of vulnerability monitoring mechanisms, notably to grasp more effectively the lot of the returnees." (UN, November 2002, p7)

"The issue of IDP figures is subject of controversy. Whereas humanitarian agencies give estimates in the region of 100,000 IDPs, the government maintains a figure close to 300,000. Furthermore, in meetings with government officials the Mission noted significant differences in the estimates provided from one interlocutor to the other.

With the support of UNFPA, the Bureau National de Recensement has conducted an IDP census in host communities, based on a methodology discussed with other governmental partners. The exercise was carried out with the support of the district administration, local NGOs and national Red Cross. According to the Head of the Bureau the analysis of data should be completed by mid-May and more accurate IDP figures should then be available. However, during a meeting with the Secretary-General of the MATDS in charge of IDPs he aired his dissatisfaction about the lack of consultation by the Bureau National de Recensement with his Office when preparing the methodology for the IDP census, implying that the MATDS may not validate its results. The newly arrived HC should address this issue with all concerned parties within the Government in order to ensure the release of the census results.

As soon as the report is issued by the Bureau National de Recensement, the HC may wish to convene a meeting of the Country Team to jointly analyse the report and agree on a common standing vis-à-vis the Government on this critical point. Information from the survey conducted by ICRC in Guinea Forestiere and from the UNICEF survey on living conditions in host communities should also be taken into account. This would be the first step in the pursuit of an agreement with the Government on IDP figures, which will consequently enhance the credibility of the IDP program with the donor community." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

"The Government of Guinea reported that the official number of IDPs in the country is 359.000. The newly created Service National d'Action Humanitaire (SENAH) has supplied humanitarian organizations with a map indicating number of IDPs by prefecture ([see map](#)).

Largest concentrations of IDPs remain in the area of Parrots Beak (Languette), in and around towns of Kissidougou, Gueckedou, and Macenta where more than 140.000 IDPs are present. Organizations such as WFP and ICRC roughly estimate the total number of IDPs in Guinea to be in the area of 200.000 to 250.000." (UN OCHA, 31 January 2002)

See map of 'Number of IDPs by Prefecture' (BNR/SENAH, 2002) in Maps Section

Government estimates close to 300,000 IDPs in Guinea, while agencies' figures are nearer 100,000 (May 2002)

- Government IDP census expected to remove wide disparity in IDP figures
- In January 2002 the government reports 359,000 IDPs - mostly in the Parrot's Beak region - although real figures are expected to be much lower

"The issue of IDP figures is subject of controversy. Whereas humanitarian agencies give estimates in the region of 100,000 IDPs, the government maintains a figure close to 300,000. Furthermore, in meetings with government officials the Mission noted significant differences in the estimates provided from one interlocutor to the other.

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Geographic distribution

IDPs from September 2001 floods primarily concentrated in north of country (September-October 2001)

- Persons displaced by floods have been identified in Kankan and Mandiana prefectures of Upper Guinea region

"As soon as it was announced that water levels were rising, the volunteers identified the displaced people in Kankan, in the north of the country. Most of the supplies distributed came from ICRC stocks, although some were provided by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Similar assistance will be distributed to 125 families in Mandiana, near the border with Mali." (ICRC 4 October 2001)

"(a)...WFP in collaboration with Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humaine (OCPH) and Première Urgence (PU) is currently assisting 27,000 flood victims, including 2,000 IDPs in the **Mandiana** prefecture." (WFP 26 October 2001)

Civilians dispersed by fighting have congregated in various cities and villages throughout the country (May-November 2001)

- There are high concentrations of conflict-induced displaced in the following areas: Dabola, Dinguiraye, Gueckedou, Macenta, Forecariah, Kissidougou, Kindia, Kankan, Kerouane, Faranah, and Mamou
- Government assessment of IDPs in August 2001 concludes that 46% of displaced are in prefectures of Gueckedou, Nzérékoré, Kissidougou and Macenta

"Les statistiques du Gouvernement guinéen après la caravane de solidarité nationale menée au cours du mois d'août 2001 font état d'un total de 359 077 déplacés sur l'ensemble du territoire, dont 46% (165 122) dans les préfectures forestières (Gueckedou, Nzérékoré, Kissidougou et Macenta). Les préfectures de Kindia et Forécariah, qui ont subi des destructions lors des attaques, abritent également un nombre important de déplacés." (UN November 2001, p. 13)

"(e) ...Finally, 13,500 IDPs received WFP assistance in the **Kerouane** prefecture (Kankan region)." (WFP 9 November 2001)

"(e) WFP in partnership with the Dinguiraye Red Cross completed food distribution to over 8,400 IDPs in **Dinguiraye** (Dabola region)." (WFP 26 October 2001)

"Following the outbreak of border attacks last September [2000], UNICEF responded by addressing the immediate needs of the refugees, internally displaced people and host communities in the most affected areas – **Forecariah, Kissidougou, Kindia, Gueckedou, Faranah** and **Kankan**." (UNICEF 27 July 2001)

"In southwestern Guinea, repeated attacks on **Forecariah** and **Kindia** in September and October [2000] temporarily displaced as many as 10,000 to 15,000 civilians. In southeastern Guinea's Forest Region, attacks on **Macenta, Gueckedou,** and **Kissidougou** in November and December increased the number of internally displaced persons." (USCR 19 June 2001)

"b) WFP completed the distribution of 165 tons of food to 14742 IDPs hosted in the region of **Mamou**. These beneficiaries were identified as vulnerable among a list [of] 32310 originally proposed by the local authorities. Of the persons assisted, 89 percent were women, elderly and children." (WFP 4 May 2001, Guinea)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

IDPs ordered to evacuate areas around the Diecke-Ganta border crossing along the Guinea-Liberia border (April 2003)

- Diecke-Ganta border with Liberia is declared a 'no-go' zone by the Guinean military.
- An unspecified number of civilians were forced to flee.

"An unspecified number of civilians have been ordered by the Guinean military to evacuate the areas around the Diecke – Ganta border crossing along the Guinea – Liberia border, now declared a 'no-go' zone. It is unclear how long this situation will persist, but with allegations that the LURD currently holds Ganta town, it has been speculated that the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) will attempt to cross into Guinean territory to launch a two-sided counter attack on the town.

With the security situation in many of the border regions of Liberia continuing to deteriorate due to increased fighting between LURD and AFL forces, it is predicted that more civilians could be ordered to evacuate their villages in these areas for military/security purposes." (UN OCHA, April 2003)

Distinction between 'long-distance' and 'short-distance' IDPs (2000-2002)

- Guinean IDPs hosted by relatives or friends, not in camps
- Many 'short-distance' IDPs from Guinea Forestière began returning home in 2001
- 'Long-distance' IDPs from Upper and Central Guinea largely remain in their host communities

"The main IDP movement took place during the last quarter of 2000 following the outbreak of a conflict in the Parrot' s Beak area bordering Sierra Leone and Liberia. As a result of military clashes in the region, thousands of Guineans (over 300,000 according to government sources) fled their hometowns and villages in the bordering prefectures seeking safe-haven in host communities.

The phenomenon of displacement in Guinea presents the following two main characteristics that differentiates it from the situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia: a) all IDPs are hosted by relatives or friends, and not in camps; b) there are two distinct IDP groups, namely 'short-distance', IDPs natives of Guinea Forestiere who remained not far from their home villages, and 'long-distance IDPs', who went back to their communities of origin in Upper and Central Guinea.

During 2001 the situation stabilised gradually and scores of the so-called short-distance IDPs slowly begun to return to their homes. Many IDPs however remain in their host communities, either hoping for a return home in the near future or preparing for a resettlement in their communities of origin in Upper and Central Guinea." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

Many of the displaced have reportedly integrated with resident populations (November 2000-March 2001)

"Over 150,000 Guineans have been forced to flee their homes in Gueckedou, Macenta and Nzerekore in the Forest area and in Forecariah. In some cases, the IDPs are mingled with the refugee population, while in other instances they have fled to their hometowns, as the Forest region attracted Guineans from all over the country. The majority of Guineans are being hosted by relatives." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 14)

"For the most part, internally displaced persons are not residing with refugees. Instead, they are finding accommodation with family and friends." (Timothy Bishop, IRC 30 January 2001)

"Ethnic affinities and cultural tendencies across the sub-region lead to significant displacements in host communities. While this is considered a healthier approach for displaced people, it also makes targeting difficult and blurs the line between displaced and resident local populations." (UN November 2000, sect. E, 2)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

Guinea Forestière still a risky area (September 2002)

- Humanitarian activity in the Koyama sub-prefecture is suspended following incidents between the Guinean army and what appeared to be Liberian assailants
- A number of incidents at Kouankan's Liberian refugee camp cause great concern for local populations and aid agencies; WFP calls for the relocation of the refugee population

“(a) Two separate incidents have occurred in the Koyama sub-prefecture (N'Zérékoré region), near the Liberian border, between the Guinean army and unidentified armed assailants, apparently from Liberia. All humanitarian activity in that area has been suspended until further notice. The overall security situation in the rest of the country is stable and seems not to have been directly affected by the recent events in Ivory Coast.

(b) During the last two weeks, a number of incidents were reported at Kouankan's Liberian refugee camp and are reason for great concern for the local populations and humanitarian personnel security. WFP is taking a strong position within the UN to relocate the Liberian refugee population from the Kouankan camp, which has reached 33,000 (13,000 above capacity), to the Kissidougou camps. With the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees, there is increasing space to host refugees there. However all transfers from the Koyama/Fassankony area have been suspended due to the insecurity in the area. Since the beginning of the year, approximately 20,000 Liberian refugees have been transferred to the Kouankan refugee camp.” (WFP, 27 September 2002)

Physical security

Protection needs of IDPs, as well as refugees, remain acute (2002)

- Despite largescale return of IDPs, numerous obstacles prevent final return to areas such as the Sierra Leone border
- Widespread abuse of women and children becomes even worse
- Separated children (Guineans and refugees) are highly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation
- Reintegration into society of young ex-combatants is another serious cause for concern

“Some families displaced by the armed attacks in 2000 and 2001 have been able to return to their place of origin. However, the final return of more than 1,000 families has been hindered by the demolition of border towns and villages such as Pamelap on the Sierra Leone border, the destruction of the basic social amenities as well as the non-clearance of mines planted in some areas. Families have been subsisting in unstable huts,

each accommodating several families under tough living conditions, and many children have not attended school for more than two years.

This situation has both saturated the labor market with an abundance of cheap labor and further exacerbated the already widespread abuse of children and women. The vulnerable population includes children of 8 to 15 years left to their own devices and forced to survive by their own means. This situation has contributed to the increase in child trafficking and abuse in the illegal mines and quarries.

Separated children, be they refugees or Guinean, are even more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking, at times by their host families or religious teachers claiming to take responsibility for them. The return of Sierra Leonean families might increase the number of separated children, as host families may opt not to take children with them who have been in their care during the stay in Guinea, or the child itself may decide not to follow its host family due to expectations of a possible reunification with its original family. The refugee population consists mainly of children and women (68 %) and is thus particularly vulnerable to exploitation, sexual abuse, trafficking, abduction and forced conscription by armed groups infiltrating the camps. Often fully dependent upon the assistance received to satisfy their needs, women and girls are exposed to sexual abuse as stated in the UNHCR/Save the Children report and the investigation led by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services, or forced to go into prostitution to earn money in order to cover needs that are unmet by the humanitarian agencies. Cases of rape and sexual abuse are frequently reported, and are all the more alarming when they relate to very young girls (7 to 12 years). Furthermore, this situation seriously exposes these populations to HIV/AIDS, the frequency of which is higher in the camps than in Guinean society, although the numbers are increasing for the latter as well.

Finally, reintegration into Guinean society of young ex-combatants who voluntarily enlisted during the 2002 attacks now poses a serious problem, as the Government has no intention of integrating them into the regular armed forces." (UN, November 2002, p15)

Increasing violence by former child army volunteers is reported (May 2002)

- UNICEF cites demobilisation and reintegration of young armed people as a priority concern

"Increasing incidents of violence and intimidation by former young army volunteers are beginning to be reported. Neither the destabilising effect of these incidents nor the possible danger of further violence against women and children should be underestimated. The demobilisation and reintegration of these young armed people are an immediate and priority concern of UNICEF Guinea. The CAP 2002 funding to combat this problem was underestimated and a review is currently underway." (UNICEF, 29 May 2002)

Extensive abuse of West African refugee and IDP children reported (February 2002)

- Joint UNHCR/ SC-UK team assesses nature and extent of sexual violence and exploitation of refugee and IDP children in three Mano River countries
- Interviews reveal wide-ranging sexual abuse of vulnerable children
- Exploiters are said to include humanitarian aid workers

"This assessment was initiated by UNHCR and Save the Children-UK (SC-UK) due to growing concerns, based on their field experience, about the nature and extent of sexual violence and exploitation of refugee children and other children of concern to UNHCR (1) in the countries of the Mano River Sub Region (2) in West Africa.

The purpose of the assessment was primarily to gather further information, primarily through consultations with children, about the scope of the problem in the countries concerned and the responses of the different actors: UN agencies, governments, NGOs, refugee and internally displaced person (IDP) communities and the children themselves. This would inform the development of an action plan for UNHCR and the child protection agencies to better address the problem.

The report of the assessment is not yet finalised. However, given the serious nature of the findings and in the interest of the protection of the children themselves, UNHCR and SC-UK are releasing this summary of the draft assessment report in advance in order to inform the humanitarian community about the problem and to allow agencies to review their own practices in this area.

The general findings of the assessment team indicate high levels of risk and vulnerability, with respondents reporting incidents of sexual abuse within family settings and the wider context of the camp and surrounding communities. In addition, from the interviews and group sessions conducted with 1,500 adults and children, the team also received allegations of abuse and exploitation against 67 individuals based in a range of agencies responsible for the care and protection of refugee and IDP communities. The agencies that are possibly implicated in some way include UN peacekeeping forces, international and local NGOs, and government agencies responsible for humanitarian response. The assessment mission was not intended as an investigation and was therefore not conducted with the methodology that would have been required if this had been the purpose. Further evaluation of the overall findings is required in order to clarify the extent of the problem and UNHCR has assumed responsibility for following up on investigatory issues." (UNHCR/ SC-UK, February 2002)

Widespread human rights abuses particularly against women and children (2000-2001)

- Women and children suffered wide-ranging human rights abuses in the wake of the 2000-2001 border attacks
- Many children aged 8-15 are forced to fend for themselves
- One result of weakened family structures is increased trafficking in children
- UN's strategy is aimed at providing special protection measures for IDPs, as well as refugees and host communities

"Context

The attacks on border districts in 2000-2001 weakened traditionally vulnerable groups: Many women and girls suffered violence including murder, rape, sexual and physical abuse, slavery and abduction by rebels, and unwanted pregnancies. These weakened and separated families among displaced people and refugees, in particular households headed by women. This crisis also resulted in an abundance of cheap labour and increased exploitation of children and women. Among the vulnerable populations are many children between 8 and 15 (including girls and single young women) forced to fend for themselves and meet their own daily needs. This has led to a new phenomenon: the trafficking in children. Finally, the reintegration of young volunteer fighters into civil society after they joined up in response to attacks last year is a growing problem, likely to be aggravated by a Government decision not to integrate them into the national army.

Strategy

The strategy aims to ensure respect for fundamental rights with special protection measures, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, women and children. It is based on general principles of international law that guide international humanitarian work for displaced people, host communities and refugees. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, the 1951 and 1969 Conventions relating to refugees, and the African charter on human rights, the Guiding principles on Internal Displacement. Guinea is signatory to each of these instruments. UNICEF, UNHCR and specialised NGOs are members of the Guinean committee for the protection and

defence of children's rights (Ministry for Social Affairs, Promoting Women and Children's Rights), whose role deserves to be strengthened. Specific measures to help displaced people and host communities are to be implemented by UNICEF and partners, and UNHCR in the case of refugees." (UN, November 2001)

IDPs subject to human rights abuses in Guinea (June 2001)

- IDPs along with refugees have suffered human rights abuses related to the crisis
- Guinean towns and villages have been occupied and have been the sites of protracted fighting

"The situation for refugees and internally displaced people in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone is a human rights crisis. Thousands of civilians, including large numbers of refugees and internally displaced people, have suffered serious human rights abuses, particularly since September 2000 when incursions by armed political groups resulted in fighting along the borders between the three countries.

In Guinea, Sierra Leonean refugees and Guinean civilians have been killed, beaten, raped and abducted by armed political groups, including the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in cross-border attacks from Sierra Leone. Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees have been killed, tortured, ill-treated, arbitrarily arrested and intimidated by Guinean security forces and harassed by Guinean civilians. More than 80,000 Liberian refugees in Guinea are in urgent need of protection and humanitarian assistance and others fleeing ongoing fighting in northern Liberia are being prevented by Guinean security forces from entering Guinea. Hundreds of thousands of refugees and as many as 300,000 Guineans have been displaced within Guinea as a result of the violence.

[...]

Guinean civilians have suffered similar grave abuses during attacks by armed political groups. Towns and villages in southern Guinea have been occupied or have been the sites of protracted fighting between these groups and Guinean security forces. This has forced tens of thousands of Guineans, perhaps as many as 300,000 at one point, to flee their homes in search of safety. Most remain internally displaced within Guinea and in need of protection and humanitarian assistance. (AI 25 June 2001)

For Amnesty International's May 2002 report on Guinea, 'Maintaining order with contempt for the right to life' (AFR 29/001/2002), [click here](#)

IDP children comprise a particularly vulnerable group (July 2001)

- Displaced children suffer from psychological stress related to the conflict
- IDP children along with refugee children have been separated from their families

"To protect children from exploitation, violence, abuse and from being enrolled into armed groups, UNICEF is conducting sensitisation campaigns and training for the Guinean armed forces, traditional healers, local authorities and host communities. HIV/AIDS education and FGM are also included in these campaigns.

In partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and IRC, local protection committees have been established to address the psychological needs of displaced and refugee children and to trace families of separated children. To date, some 300 separated children have been reunited with their families. UNICEF is also supporting an assessment of children enrolled in armed groups, including regular armed forces." (UNICEF 27 July 2001)

Freedom of movement

Large number of check-points hinders free movement of refugees as well as IDPs (July 2001)

- Security forces have established a large number of checkpoints in response to threat of cross-border attacks

"Responding to the threats of cross-border attacks and heightened regional tensions, the Guinean government has increased the deployment of military personnel in the border areas and established a large number of checkpoints within the country with the primary purpose of screening refugees to prevent rebel infiltration into Guinea from neighboring countries. There are fewer checkpoints than there were several months ago on main roads in Guinea, but they are still plentiful. There are always checkpoints between any refugee camps and the nearest town. In the Kissidougou region, which refugees enter after leaving the border area, the checkpoints are numerous and often close together. At the end of April 2001, Human Rights Watch counted thirty-four checkpoints on the approximately eight hour drive between Kissidougou and Conakry – a route well traveled by refugees seeking to get to Conakry in order to get the boat to return to their country of origin. Checkpoints are often manned by police or army personnel, but many are either partially or entirely run by civilian defense groups." (HRW July 2001)

IDPs of Kissi minority ethnic group forced to pay fines and move from Kissidougou during course of heaviest fighting (March 2001)

"Following the September and December 2000 border attacks and skirmishes, some 150,000 persons are displaced within Guinea. UNDP and IOM will cooperate closely with UNHCR in an effort to fund activities that contribute to the easing of tensions between communities and the refugee population. IDPs without sufficient funds to pay for transport were forced to walk from areas such as the 'Parrot's Beak' to the relative safety of Kissidougou. Since Guinea is a country where ethnic divisions and boundaries are of paramount importance, IDPs who are not from the Kissi ethnic group were forced to pay 50,000 Guinean Francs and move to their own ethnic areas further north." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 81)

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

General

IDPs and other vulnerable groups are exposed to risks of economic and sexual exploitation and sexual abuses (May 2003)

- UNICEF has identified nearly 360 internally displaced unaccompanied minors currently economically exploited in diamond mines, plantations and homes in Forecariah.
- Special measures need to be implemented to protect these vulnerable groups

“Often fully dependant upon humanitarian assistance women and children are exposed to risks of exploitation and sexual abuse.

The strategy for this sector therefore aims to ensure observance of basic human rights through the implementation of special measures for these vulnerable groups.

UNICEF has identified nearly 600 unaccompanied minors currently being economically exploited in illicit diamond mines, plantations and in homes in Forecariah 40% of whom are from Sierra Leone and Liberia, and the rest are children of IDPs” (UN OCHA, May 2003, p. 3).

IDPs and other vulnerable groups have wide-ranging humanitarian needs (2002)

- Already impoverished host populations have borne the greatest burden of arriving IDPs
- The majority of areas receiving IDPs have lacked sanitary infrastructure
- Family separation is a significant issue for IDPs
- Food aid, while still needed, has been ad hoc

“A survey conducted in early January - February 2002 by the Direction des Statistiques (Statistics Department), at the request of UNICEF, has concluded that the Guinean population has suffered from the effects of this sub-regional military and security crisis. The findings of this study show that, nationwide, the impact of the crisis is profound and is likely to be long-lasting. The economic and social consequences have been significant, as the host populations were already living in chronic poverty characterised by a lack of household income and very limited access to basic social services. The survey revealed, that events had further aggravated poverty and caused a deterioration of the living conditions in affected areas, as the most destitute families were also the ones carrying the burden of the arriving IDPs. In 59 % of cases, the areas that received the displaced lacked sanitary infrastructure and in 74 % of cases, no latrines were available.

The survey further indicated that more than 78 % of the host communities interviewed considered that the most significant deteriorations were the fall in revenue, access to food and access to health facilities, water supply and children’s education. Family separation was a significant issue for IDPs, more than 16 months after the rebel attacks; nearly 20 % of the families were still separated from their fathers and husbands. The survey revealed as well that despite *ad hoc* food assistance (54 % of the host families received food relief from the Government, through a national showing of solidarity and WFP), food aid remained weak.” (UN, November 2002, p3)

Food

While self-sufficiency is increasing, need for food aid continues (2002)

- Distribution of food, seeds and tools to some 20,000 IDP households helped to increase self-sufficiency in 2002
- Food insecurity and vulnerability remain in parts of the Parrot's Beak area and along the border with Liberia
- The gap in food and non-food assistance to refugees and to local populations (hosting IDPs) is causing tensions
- One focus of 2003 CAP is food security for IDPs and host populations in the border areas with Liberia
- Needs of IDPs in Central and Upper Guinea will be addressed through development projects rather than the 2003 CAP

“Distribution by WFP, ICRC and other NGOs in May-July 2002 of seeds, food and tools to nearly 20,000 IDP households, and a promising harvest are expected to make families more food self-sufficient by the end of 2002. Nonetheless, pockets of food insecurity and vulnerability remain in parts of Gueckedou and Macenta and along the border area with Lofa County, where continued civil strife has hampered agricultural activities and food availability is still problematic for the most vulnerable. Local populations living by present or former refugee camps have suffered from the protracted refugee presence, which has affected the environment through excessive deforestation (for agricultural and construction purposes as well as firewood) and land over-exploitation. Remarkable efforts are necessary with regard to re-forestation, environment rehabilitation and the introduction of improved agricultural practices for better land management. Some local communities face extreme poverty. The existing gap in assistance (food and non-food) provided to refugees and local host populations is causing tensions.

The food security and nutritional status of the refugee population in the camps is considered stable. Reported rates of acute malnutrition in refugee camps indicate a better situation for refugees than for local children. On the other hand, the condition of some newly arrived refugees from Liberia is alarming amongst children and, in some cases, also amongst adults. Emergency distributions are necessary in the border areas and at the transit camps whenever transfer to permanent camps cannot be accomplished within the required timeliness.

Refugees in the camps have developed various coping strategies and are involved in a variety of income-generating activities, mainly contracts for daily labor and petty trade. Gardens and farms provide additional food and income for some, particularly for those that have been in Guinea longer. Access to agricultural inputs was provided in 2002 through seeds and tools distributions by FAO and key NGOs. While it is certain that both participation and earnings vary according to location and length of stay in the camp, as well as among the various socio-economic groups within the camps, it is also certain, from visual assessments, that the October 2002 harvest will be good, also for the refugees. Results from a WFP-Africare assessment of the impact of seeds, tools and food distributions to IDPs and refugees are expected by end November 2002. The study is being conducted with the active participation of FAO and in consultation with key NGOs and UNHCR. It will be followed by an evaluation of refugees' self-reliance by FAO, in coordination with WFP, UNHCR, key NGOs and donors. The outcomes of this evaluation will enable the structure of a coordinated strategy for consolidating the self-reliance of refugees in 2003. Allegation of abuses related to food aid have triggered intense debate and action by the international community. Enhancing beneficiaries' self-reliance is seen as the best way to prevent such problem.

Sectoral Strategy

Support to food security under the 2003 CAP will focus on IDPs and host populations in the border areas with Liberia and the refugee camps so that, assuming stable security conditions and a positive impact of economic recovery, they can be expected to achieve self-sufficiency by the end of 2003. The same is anticipated for the refugees in the camps, in which case their dependence on relief food would decrease, and a reduction in the basic ration (from the current 2.100kcal/day), together with a shift to more targeted food aid, would be feasible. School feeding and self-reliance schemes targeting in particular women and vulnerable groups would then be introduced thereby assisting these groups and contributing to the prevention of abuse. Security conditions in Liberia will determine food aid needs and agricultural inputs for new refugees. A contingency food aid stock will be maintained. Agricultural inputs will also be assured and coordination with key NGOs and UNHCR will be strengthened to support self-reliance from the very moment refugees settle in the camps. VAM and collaboration between WFP, FAO, UNHCR, NGOs and local authorities will be strengthened further to guide the effective implementation of this strategy. Monitoring at distribution sites and post distribution monitoring will further maintain a strong focus on preventing and detecting abuses. IDPs who are still in Central and Upper Guinea have integrated in the host communities and face similar structural food security problems as the host populations. Their needs are better addressed through development projects and will therefore not be covered under the 2003 CAP. The activities related to emergency food security and nutritional follow up will be carried out by WFP and those related to strengthening of agriculture production by FAO. The specific interventions for the refugees will be carried out in accordance with the past agreement between UNHCR and WFP, and FAO for the refugees production.” (UN, November 2002, p18)

Health and nutrition

Basic health care provision still inadequate (2002)

- The crisis in 2000-2001 devastated the health structure
- Insufficient funds have been raised to rehabilitate the health sector
- While there has been some improvement in access to healthcare, effective coverage remains inadequate
- IDPs and refugees have wideranging physical and mental health needs

“The crisis from September 2000 to February 2001 resulted in extensive damage to the health structure, with the destruction of health centres and facilities triggering a shortage of equipment and drugs. Furthermore, these events exposed shortcomings in terms of preparedness by the health teams, as the existing health services were repeatedly unable to cope with the needs engendered by the crisis, in conflict areas as well as in the host communities. Consequently, the population’s access to healthcare was affected, and a sharp rise in diseases and malnutrition was observed. In addition, the crisis erupted at a time when the health services were already faced with major yellow fever outbreaks affecting 14 of the country’s 33 prefectures. Only due to funds raised by the 2001 Consolidated Appeal, the UN agencies and NGOs were capable of boosting the provisions of basic health services, thereby contributing to reducing the major health hazards (cholera, measles, malnutrition) in affected areas.

Even so, the 2002 Consolidated Appeal failed to raise sufficient funds for this sector, to the extent that the coping abilities of the local structures remained in a precarious state. The influx of refugees from Liberia therefore only underscored the need for vaccination campaigns, as well as the distribution of essential drugs and protein biscuits by UNICEF and WHO through their implementing partners.

An inter-agency study carried out in association with ACF and MSF recorded malnutrition rates of up to 32% among children under the age of 5 who had recently arrived in Guinea, thereby underscoring the need to ensure the nutritional surveillance and recovery of the newcomers.

Evaluations conducted in 2001 among refugees and IDPs determined a population with a high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. A situation only aggravated by conditions of insecurity and poverty affecting all adults and children, while particularly exposing the vulnerability of women and forcing many into prostitution as a means of survival. Lack of privacy and the generally dire living conditions in the camps further increased the risk of rape and sexual abuse. Related to this, a national study on HIV/AIDS prevalence established that already between 2-4% of the Guinean population are HIV/AIDS seropositive (UNICEF).

With assistance from the Guinean authorities and development partners, through refurbishing the facilities destroyed or plundered, the health infrastructure has been restored, the early warning system reactivated and routine prevention activities restarted.

However, the improvement in accessibility to healthcare notwithstanding, effective coverage remains inadequate. With deficits in the supply of both essential drugs and basic reagents to diagnose illnesses, the health infrastructure continues to necessitate improvement.

Epidemic-management mechanisms have been implemented but they remain inadequately equipped to respond swiftly to emergencies. Cases of sexual abuse and harassment in the refugee camps are still being reported and the cargo of physical and social exactions (trauma, separated families, unattended children, loss of family members and property) usually accompanying displaced persons have caused mental, social, and functional disorders within the affected population. It is therefore essential to enhance the existing coordination mechanisms. The nutritional situation in the refugee camps at Albadariah has improved, while the displaced people at Gueckedou together with new refugees arriving from Liberia are facing a food insecurity situation that only increases their vulnerability.” (UN, November 2002, p16)

Water and sanitation

Water-borne diseases threaten both resident and returning populations (2002)

- IDPs living in border areas continue to have poor access to clean water and sanitation facilities

“In the prefectures affected by the September 2000 to February 2001 conflict, IDPs displaced in and around the areas of fighting continue to encounter problems with access to sanitation and availability of drinking water. Several streams and traditional wells serving as key water sources are reported to having been polluted, a situation constituting a health hazard to both residing and returning populations.

Despite the sinking of wells, an increase in the supply of drinking water in the areas of intervention and the use of chemicals to treat 759 traditional water taps, due to the low level of financial resource mobilisation by the sector has seen needs consistently exceed the available means. Currently, this situation is even more alarming in N’Zerekore, which has received more than 26,000 new refugees since January 2002.” (UN, November 2002, p18)

Shelter and non-food items

In Garafiri, IDPs are still in precarious shelters (June 2003)

- Civilians forced to move 5 years ago by the construction of the Garafiri Dam sit in their houses with umbrella over heads when it rains, since the roofs leak badly.
- Contractors funded by the Guinean government mishandled the money and built poor-quality housing structures for those displaced.

“Garafiri Dam, located outside of Mamou on the Konkouré River is in the spotlight in Guinea right now since a draught year has rendered the dam that would normally supply Conakry and other areas of Guinea with electricity inoperable.

City dwellers and rural residents alike have had electricity on and off for months now, and are hoping that the dam will function as expected by the beginning of July when the rainy season swells the rivers throughout Guinea, the Konkouré included, allowing the dam to function properly.

While the Government of Guinea is currently working to resolve this knotty problem, city goers and rural folks alike continue to complain.

Their gramblings, however, might seem awfully petty when considering the plight of those displaced from the area of Garafiri five years ago when the dam was built. What happened, and what is happening to those displaced communities since they were forced to move?

Says Aissata Lamarana, member of the women's agricultural cooperative of Falekalé village, one of the new settlements of displaced people: "After we moved, we had trouble simply eating and clothing ourselves and our families. We also had no seeds or tools, and even now when it rains, we often sit in our houses with umbrellas over our heads since the roofs leak so badly - we don't yet have the means to fix them. We left land that was ours to come to a strange place where we had absolutely nothing."

With Guinean Government funding, several contractors built housing for those displaced by the dam, but the money was mishandled, resulting in poor-quality housing structures.

Those whose orchards were affected by the construction of the dam were given indemnities in cash by the Guinean Government, but few of them understood how to invest this money wisely, and many quickly fell into ruin. To make matters worse, a flood season in 2001 followed by severe draught conditions in 2002 left the displaced communities with neither crops to eat nor seeds for planting, making it difficult if not impossible for them to fend for themselves.” (USAID, 9 June 2003)

Urgent need for shelter assistance (2002)

- Displacement during 2000-2001 attacks resulted in deterioration in living standards for host populations as well as IDPs
- Populations returning to home areas often find their homes completely or seriously damaged, thus requiring emergency assistance

“The massive influx of IDPs into host regions in the wake of the September 2000 – February 2001 attacks resulted in the overstraining of the existing accommodation facilities in the host communities, leading to a general deterioration in living standards not only amongst the displaced persons but also within the host communities. Furthermore, though the security situation in affected areas is likely to improve in the short term, it should be expected that many will find their homes completely or seriously damaged, thus requiring emergency assistance.

Sectoral strategy

The strategy adopted aims to improve the general housing conditions both in the host areas and in the home areas. It thus aims to reduce the burden of the IDP presence in the host communities and to support the efforts at rehabilitating the houses of the populations returning to their home regions. This strategy is in line with the wider strategy of mitigating the vulnerability of the IDPs/returnees as well as the host communities." (UN, November 2002, p23)

IDPS living in abandoned buildings unfit for human survival (March 2001)

- Female-headed households and unaccompanied elderly people are most vulnerable
- Many IDPs being accommodated in overcrowded households

"The recent attacks in Guinea have displaced up to 150,000 Guineans, mostly women and children. These innocent civilians have had to abandon their homes and properties in a desperate search for safety and security. Most have taken refuge with relatives or friends, in already overcrowded homes, or are occupying public buildings, such as school or abandoned buildings, where conditions are unfit for human survival. Female-headed households and unaccompanied elderly people are the most vulnerable and destitute. The need for temporary shelter assistance in the affected areas is therefore considerable. Recent access to the forest region by humanitarian agencies for instance, has revealed the squalid conditions in which the IDPs exist.

[...]

Housing is one of the sectors most severely hit by the crisis that has been unfolding in the southern border region of Guinea since September 2000. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) numbering **150,000** have lost everything, from crops, food reserves, seeds, clothing to their homes, due to the scorched earth policy implemented by the rebels. Hundreds of houses have been burnt down sometimes with the occupants still inside. Localities such as Pamelap, Madina-Oula and Gueckedou have been completely destroyed. Many IDPs are being accommodated in overcrowded households, which has raised a number of health and sanitation concerns." (UN 23 March 2001, pp. 161-164)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Fighting has resulted in ruined education system (March 2001)

- Up to 60 schools reportedly destroyed in conflict zone
- Teachers have been forced to flee fighting and basic materials have been destroyed
- Massive population increase in interior country put a heavy strain on existing education facilities

“The attacks in 2000- 2001 resulted in the destruction of more than 300 classrooms in 60 primary and secondary schools, and caused a massive population displacement from the affected areas to the interior of the country where they exert a heavy strain on the environment and the existing resources. These population movements caused both a sudden increase in the school population in the host communities, and the mass-abandonment by pupils of their education in the affected areas.” (UN, November 2002, p21)

"The average literacy rate in Guinea is 56%. However, as a result of conflicts rates along the border regions of Liberia and Sierra Leone are even significantly lower. Fighting since September of last year has resulted in mass displacement along these border regions and the education system is now in ruins.

Reports indicate that 58 schools have been destroyed in this conflict zone. Schools are being turned into temporary shelters and teachers have had to flee fighting and become part of the displaced. Many schools lack basic materials and are unable to cope with the influx of refugees and IDPs. Large numbers of children are therefore without access to any education, in addition to being denied other basic rights. In sum, the insecurity has devastated the education system in this part of Guinea. Despite the presence of UNHCR and other partners, the situation for emergency education is still critical. If this project is not implemented, UNICEF and UNESCO fear that many of these children will fall into dangerous activities, will be recruited as child soldiers, and the delinquency rate will increase." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 91)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Self-Reliance

IDPs and other vulnerable populations require substantial assistance to achieve self-sufficiency (2002)

- Large numbers of IDPs have returned to villages of origin
- Returning IDPs face numerous difficulties in restarting agricultural activities
- UN strategy aims to help vulnerable populations to increase self-sufficiency

“Due to re-established security, IDPs have, by and large, returned to their villages of origin. The majority of these populations comes from rural areas now trying to reorganise their lives by rebuilding the facilities destroyed during the armed attacks. They face the difficult task of having to restart agricultural activities without seeds, farming tools, and or sufficient manpower, as many youths have remained in their host areas or left for the urban centres. In the short term, these populations may not be able to resume their already low original standards of living without a substantial amount of assistance.

On the other hand, the situations in the old refugee camps and the overcrowded villages in the Gueckedou prefecture are characterised by the extensive deforestation of the hillsides, the overexploitation of the lowlands and the clearing of camp areas for agricultural production. The construction of shelters will require revitalising efforts and the adoption of a new “land management scheme” for agricultural production.

Sectoral strategy

The strategy proposed is aimed at helping the vulnerable population (refugees, IDPs and host) to enhance self-reliance to better prevent famine and malnutrition, as well as minimising dependence on food assistance. The enhancement of these productive capacities will be achieved under the auspices of FAO in collaboration with all the partners involved in the development of this sector (UNHCR, WFP and the NGOs).” (UN, November 2002, p20)

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Up to 240,000 IDPs have returned to their areas of origin (November 2002)

- According to government figures, between 200,000 and 240,000 IDPs returned to their areas of origin between 2001 and 2002
- Populations returned either to poor areas or to areas completely destroyed by rebel forces
- UN highlights need for a strategy to resume self-reliance activities

“On the basis of the census carried out by the National Bureau for Census of the State Secretariat for Planning, which estimated that the total number of displaced persons was 82,000 in February 2002, and taking into account the estimated IDP numbers of the National Service for Humanitarian Action at the beginning of the crisis in 2001 (320,000), it can be estimated that between 200,000 and 240,000 displaced have returned to their areas of origin.

Nevertheless, it is important to underline that, before the crisis, the areas of origins for the largest part of the IDPs (notably Upper Guinea) were already areas of endemic poverty before the crisis characterised by low revenues, poor availability of basic social services, poor quality of public services and insufficient basic infrastructure. In some cases, populations have returned to poor areas but in other cases to areas entirely destroyed by rebel forces (particularly in Forest Guinea) between 2000 and 2001.

This precarious situation coupled with the vulnerability of the population having returned for survival remain cause of concern and highlights the need for a strategy of coverage for the restoration of production capacities and the resumption of self-reliance activities.” (UN, November 2002, p8)

Return hampered by still-fragile security situation and massive levels of destruction (2002)

- OCHA IDP Unit recommends two-pronged approach to IDP return
- Community-based approach supporting vulnerable populations could be used to reintegrate IDPs in Upper and Central Guinea
- Individual reintegration packages could be used to assist returning IDPs in Guinea Forestière
- Obstacles to return remain - particularly continuing security concerns and the massive scale of destruction

"Building upon the results of the mid-term review exercise and based on the road map to be completed at the Government/CT [Country Team] workshop on IDP (see section D. below), the CT can proceed in formulating a comprehensive strategy in favour of IDPs. The strategy and its resulting plan of action should take into account the needs of the two distinctive IDP groups in Guinea by means of a two-pronged solutions approach aiming at: a) facilitating the local integration of IDPs in Upper and Central Guinea through a community-based approach in support of vulnerable populations and; b) assisting IDPs willing to return to their home villages in Guinea Forestiere through individual reintegration packages and modest but increasing community rehabilitation projects.

In relation to the latter group, the Mission was informed of an ICRC project currently under implementation in the Guinea Forestiere region in support of the local reintegration of IDPs, who returned spontaneously to their home villages. So far, ICRC has provided reintegration packages to 40,000 IDPs. The identification of beneficiaries has been carried through a case-by-case basis verification system. It is recommended that the project and its implementing mechanism be shared with the CT through OCHA to evaluate whether to extend it to other areas.

A sensitive issue is the extent and pace of support from the CT in the rehabilitation of infrastructure and social facilities in the border areas with Liberia. The Government is naturally eager to speed up this reconstruction process to revitalize the economy of a region fundamental for the economic growth and expansion of the whole country. At the same time, major intervention in the area will likely attract many IDPs and accelerate their return to a region, which is still facing a fragile security situation, not least in view of the growing conflict in Liberia and its spill over effects on Guinea Forestiere.

In this connection, the Mission welcomes the forthcoming interagency, multisectoral assessment in return areas. This exercise will include an assessment of the security situation and of infrastructure and services as compared with the situation prior to 2000. This initiative may lead to the adoption of a system similar to that adopted in Sierra Leone to give the green light for rehabilitation interventions in specific district based on a set of criteria jointly agreed by the Government and the CT." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Access still limited by volatile security situation in border regions (May 2002)

"Guinea as a whole remains stable but the border regions, especially with Liberia, remain dangerous and unpredictable. Gueckedou and Macenta remain at security phase 4, although UN staff are now able to remain 24 hours a day in these areas, increasing access and efficiency. The security situation in the camps has shown signs of deterioration with recent reports of looting. Violence by former child army volunteers has also been reported." (UNICEF, 29 May 2002)

Despite improved security, access to needy populations remains problematic (November 2001)

- Poor infrastructure and logistical problems, as well as dispersal of IDPs into host communities, hampers access to populations requiring humanitarian assistance

"Management of the humanitarian crisis in Guinea is complex. Added to asylum and refugee protection are needy internally displaced populations and host communities, and simmering tensions and insecurity at the border. The spread of displaced populations into host communities across the country has also complicated their identification and their targeting for assistance, especially in the absence of solid socio-economic and demographic data. Finally, the poor state of transport and communication infrastructures in the country poses logistical and access problems for getting aid to beneficiaries." (UN, November 2001)

Humanitarian agencies were only able to provide intermittent assistance in most affected areas during height of emergency (September 2000-March 2001)

- Pull out of UN and other humanitarian agencies from southeast Guinea in September 2000, December 2000 and January 2001
- Thousands of refugees and displaced persons remain cut off from humanitarian assistance and international protection
- UN security phase four declared in southeast Guinea at end of 2000

"The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today [30 January 2001] announced that it was once again scaling down its operations in southern Guinea because of fresh outbreaks of violence.

The renewed clashes and the withdrawal of UNHCR staff from the area around Gueckedou has left an estimated 250,000 refugees in a very precarious situation, the Geneva-based agency warned. Most staff operating in Kissidougou have been withdrawn northwards, with only several dozen international and national staff remaining.

[...]

The refugee organization had resumed food distributions on 15 January [2001] in Nyaedou, a camp situated 15 kilometres north of Gueckedou, when tensions in the area subsided...

Despite the problems around Guinea's borders, UNHCR continues to work at tow sites north of Kissidougou – Borea and Kuntaya." (UN DPI 30 January 2001)

"Relief agencies have been able to resume work in some regions of southern Guinea after scaling down briefly earlier this week in the wake of fresh attacks. But the situation remains tense across the region, making it one of the most dangerous areas for humanitarians worldwide." (UNHCR 19 January 2001, Guinea)

"Heavy fighting between government troops and insurgents took place in south-east Guinea, claiming 93 lives and forcing thousands to flee to safer areas. These fresh clashes forced WFP and other humanitarian agencies to temporarily suspend their operations in Gueckedou, pulling back staff to Kissidougou, only a week after returning to the area. Consequently, more than 200,000 refugees are once again out of reach." (WFP 19 January 2001, sect. D, 1)

"Recent attacks in southeastern Guinea targeted UN offices and threatened aid workers. The repeated incursions, and resulting mobilization of Guinean civilian militias, have created a security vacuum in which relief workers can no longer operate. Consequently, hundred of thousands of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees are cut off from humanitarian assistance and international protection." (USCR 12 January 2001)

"The IRC and other NGOs evacuated staff members from Gueckedou and Kissidougou amid the spate of attacks...

The instability [in September 2000] forced the IRC to suspend its Gueckedou-based programs and leave the region. But when violence quelled two months later, the IRC began establishing a new logistics and staffing base in Kissidougou. Those plans have now been put on hold. Preparations for reopening IRC schools will likely be superseded by emergency camp construction, health, water, sanitation, and child-tracing and reunification." (IRC 15 December 2000)

"Phase four of the UN Security plan was declared in Forecariah, Guekedou, N'zerekore and Macenta areas, while UN and NGO staff were evacuated from the border areas. The Government subsequently issued a more reassuring statement, indicating that it would continue its tradition of hosting refugee populations. However, it stopped short of requesting that Sierra Leonean and Liberian city dwellers be housed in camps, and that UNHCR relocate the refugee camps further away from the border." (UN November 2000, sect. C, 2)

Parrot's Beak area, southwest of Gueckedou, was the most volatile area (January-April 2001)

- Hundreds of thousands of refugees and IDPs trapped in dangerous Parrot's Beak region
- Guinean military tells aid workers to stay out of Gueckedou and Parrot's Beak

"The Parrot's Beak has been largely cut off by fighting since last September, leaving thousands without regular humanitarian assistance. The impending onset of the rainy season also adds to the urgency of the relocation effort." (UNHCR 6 April 2001)

"The situation in Guinea has become increasingly volatile over the past few months. The southwestern region of Guekedou, Languette (security phase four) and Kissidougou (security phase three), where approximately 150 UN staff and partners work, is especially a concern to the Security Management Team (SMT). In this region, there are approximately 1,000 untrained Guinean soldiers mixing with 400,000 refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and UN humanitarian workers.

In addition, there are approximately 2,000 to 5,000 aggressors (RUF, Ulimo-k, Kamajor and Liberian/Guinean rebels) just over the border in Sierra Leone. No more than 20 kilometers separate these aggressors from UN staff and partners. Given the increasingly precarious situation today in Guinea, it is essential that the UN reinforce its security so as to ensure the safety of its humanitarian workers. If security cannot be enhanced, the SMT fears that UN staff and partners could be put at risk." (UN 23 March 2001, p. 158)

"Access to the affected areas of southwest Guinea has been greatly limited by bad roads and continued insecurity. The heavily forested region does not allow for airdrops of humanitarian aid. The rainy season is expected to begin in April [2001], which will further complicate the logistics of accessing the region by road." (CRS 26 February 2001)

"a) The situation in Forest Guinea remains tense. In the past week, fighting continued in Gueckedou town. This resulted in a closure of all public institutions such as dispensary, hospital, schools and police station. In addition, two-thirds of Gueckedou population has fled. WFP operations have been temporarily suspended.

b) In Kissidougou District, the Guinean army carried out air raids on 27/28 January. UNHCR security officers, who also evacuated some of their staff, from Kissidougou to Kankan in Upper Guinea, have declared the region inaccessible." (WFP 2 February 2001)

"A large part of the refugees in Parrot's Beak seem now to be trapped in the fighting and have, as such, no access to safer areas. In addition, and due to the insecurity in the area, humanitarian assistance to the refugees is permanently hampered and intermittently impossible.

[...]

An assessment in Parrot's Beak conducted by MSF on January 11 [2000] – just one day before renewed fighting occurred – confirmed the lack of basic humanitarian assistance such as medical care and food in some, but not all, of the visited camp sites." (MSF 19 January 2001)

"UNHCR and other relief agencies suspended operations in Guinea's volatile 'parrot's beak' area and the neighbouring Gueckedou region on Monday [15 January 2001], amid fresh reports of fighting in south-eastern Guinea. The move represents a setback for UNHCR's effort to supply urgently needed aid to an estimated 250,000 people in a string of encampments in the 'parrot's beak' – a thumb of Guinean territory jutting into Sierra Leone.

UNHCR staff on Monday [15 January 2001] traveled from their base in the relatively safe town of Kissidougou to the more volatile Gueckedou and Nyaedou areas, further south. They encountered heavy military presence in Gueckedou town, which they described as virtually deserted. The military told aid workers to keep out of the northern Gueckedou and the 'parrot's beak' areas, which they said had been the scene of major military operation since an attack on Gueckedou last Saturday [13 January 2001]." (UNHCR 15 January 2001)

"L'axe Kissidougou-Guéckégou ayant été réouvert fin décembre, les organisations humanitaires, qui avaient été contraintes d'évacuer la zone pour des raisons de sécurité, ont pu y retourner, et porter assistance aux populations dispersées. Une zone sensible reste cependant inaccessible: la région dite du 'Bec du Canard', au sud-ouest de Guéckédou, où de nombreux camps de réfugiés sont privés d'assistance depuis plusieurs semaines." (ACF 5 January 2001)

UNHCR staff members have been particularly vulnerable to attack (September 2000-January 2001)

- UNHCR staff member killed in 17 September 2000 raid

- Another staff member kidnapped in same attack and later released
- Guinean radio operator abducted in December 2000 and later freed

"A UNHCR staff member was killed Sunday [17 September 2000] and another was reported missing following a raid by unknown gunmen in the southeastern Guinea town of Macenta, near the border with Liberia. He was the fourth UNHCR staff member murdered in less than two weeks.

UNHCR officials in the Guinean capital, Conakry, said the slain staff member had contacted them at 6 a.m. Sunday to report that armed men had attacked and burned Macenta's military garrison at 4:30 a.m. He remained in contact until approximately 8 a.m., when UNHCR Conakry lost contact. Local UNHCR staff were later sent to his house, where they found his body. He had apparently been shot by the retreating gunman. His house had been burned, as well as a UNHCR vehicle parked outside. Witnesses said there were several bodies in the streets of the town. The identity of the victim is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Witnesses also reported that UNHCR staff member Sapeu Laurence Djeya, a Cote d'Ivoire national, had been abducted by the attackers." (UNHCR 17 September 2000)

"The security of humanitarian organizations, particularly in the *Guinea Forestière* area, is a worrying issue. Aid agencies assisting refugees have been accused of supporting rebels and several humanitarian convoys have been attacked. Recent tragic events have demonstrated the dangerous working environment only too clearly. On 17 September [2000], during an attack on the town of Macenta, east of Guéckédou, 10 people were killed, including a Togolese expatriate working for UNHCR." (ICRC 15 December 2000, Humanitarian response)

"A radio operator for the UN refugee agency in the West African state of Guinea was freed Monday [22 January 2001] in neighbouring Liberia, 47 days after he was abducted by gunmen, the UN spokesman said.

Joseph Loua, a 51-year-old father of five, was seized December 6 [2000] as his home town of Guekedou was overrun by rebels in a border area packed with hundreds of thousands of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone.

[...]

After the attack on Guekedou, UNHCR pulled its staff out of the surrounding area, a part of Guinean territory that protrudes into Sierra Leone and is known as 'parrot's beak'." (AFP 22 January 2001)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National response

Government conducts IDP census in host communities (2002)

- Government IDP census has support of the UN, local NGOs, Red Cross and local authorities
- Results of census apparently delayed due to in-fighting about methodology used

"With the support of UNFPA, the Bureau National de Recensement has conducted an IDP census in host communities, based on a methodology discussed with other governmental partners. The exercise was carried out with the support of the district administration, local NGOs and national Red Cross. According to the Head of the Bureau the analysis of data should be completed by mid-May and more accurate IDP figures should then be available. However, during a meeting with the Secretary General of the MATDS in charge of IDPs he aired his dissatisfaction about the lack of consultation by the Bureau National de Recensement with his Office when preparing the methodology for the IDP census, implying that the MATDS may not validate its results. The newly arrived HC should address this issue with all concerned parties within the Government in order to ensure the release of the census results." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

For census results, see 'Global Figures' in the 'Population Profile and Figures' section

National Service for Humanitarian Action (SENAH) is responsible for coordination of IDP response (2002)

- Government consolidates body (SENAH) responsible for coordinating IDP response, with the creation of five sectoral sub-groups
- SENAH is decentralised through the establishment of four regional bureaus

"The Government of the Republic of Guinea took advantage of financial assistance from the Government of the United States to consolidate the National Service for Humanitarian Action (SENAH) responsible for the coordination of humanitarian response for displaced persons and natural disasters. In addition, 5 sectoral sub-groups (food security, health/nutrition, water/sanitation, education and protection) have been created under the stewardship of SENAH in order to better assess needs and to coordinate the various activities. This reinforcement of capacity has notably led SENAH and UNDP (implementing agency) to decentralise SENAH through the installation of Regional Bureaus for Humanitarian Action (BRAH) in four regions of the country. This *rapprochement* between the SENAH and the beneficiary populations has equally allowed the reinforcement of collaboration with the National Bureau for Refugee Coordination (BNCR) and its branches in the field. This reinforcement of governmental capacities fit into the wider framework of a national strategy for humanitarian coordination developed with the assistance of OCHA and other agencies of the United Nations System, adopted by the Government in December 2002." (UN, November 2002, p11)

International funding

UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2003 for Guinea requests US\$ 42,740,007million (2003)

- CAP 2003 aims at assuring assistance, protection and to address the needs of refugees, IDPs and host communities in Guinea
- Some progress made towards CAP's stated goals and objectives.
- However, the limited funding results in very limited support provided to scores of civilians in distress.

As of July 2003, the 2003 CAP had received 40.8 percent funding. Up-to-date the mid-year review of CAP achievements and contributions can be accessed on the financial tracking system of the UN OCHA ReliefWeb [<http://www.reliefweb.int/fts/>]

“As Guinea continues to be regarded as a sub-regional safe haven for refugees and third country nationals in transit, the strategic orientations for the CAP 2003 remain the following:

Assure assistance and protection in order to reduce vulnerability of displaced populations, host communities and refugees;

Continue the consolidation of refugee sites, pursue the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees and implement sustainable solutions for Liberian and Ivorian refugees;

Reduce tensions between refugees, displaced persons and host communities through promotion of a Culture of Peace and balanced assistance.

Reinforce consultative coordination and information management mechanisms between the operational strategic partners in charge of humanitarian action;

Implement inter-agency monitoring of the situation, early warning and rapid response mechanisms.

[...]

PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS STATED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The humanitarian response strategy for the 2003 CAP for Guinea proposes to deliver targeted quality assistance particularly focusing on the physical, psychological and material protection of vulnerable groups as well as the implementation of an early warning and rapid response system.

An outline of the overall progress made to reach these goals set by the UN Country Team includes:

Delivery of food aid to all refugees in Guinea in a timely manner;

Intensification of protection activities;

Continuation of voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees;

Enhancement of the national response capacities in crisis situations through the adoption of a national humanitarian coordination strategy and the creation of a Humanitarian Information Centre with free Internet access to national NGOs and civil society organizations.

Enhancement of preventative measures against yellow fever, measles, and cholera amongst all vulnerable people including refugees, IDPs and host communities through an early warning information system.” (UN OCHA, 3 June 2003, p. 1-2)

[...]

“...the UN has provided basic but efficient humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable populations targeted in the CAP 2003. Life-sustaining services have furthermore been provided to many of the over 100,000 persons arriving from Côte d’Ivoire since September 2002. With funding levels already at a low, however, this additional strain has stretched the capacities of the UNS in Guinea, resulting in very limited support provided to scores of civilians in distress, in particular Guinean returnees and TCNs.

Most critical impacts of funding levels include the following:

Protection: In the area of protection UNICEF’s demobilisation of child volunteer soldiers project urgently requires further funding and has an immediate shortfall to achieve its objective of ensuring the economic reintegration of the 350 young people already enrolled on the project. If these funds are not raised, 350 young people will have been demobilised, trained in various trades, and then left abandoned and frustrated. There are currently another 7,000 young volunteers who need the same assistance in order to be prevented from joining armed groups in neighboring countries or to be involved in violence and conflict in case the situation deteriorates in Guinea. The family reunification and the protection of children from gender-based violence projects also need further funding.

Health and Nutrition: Several infectious diseases have begun to appear with increasing regularity in Guinea. Measles and Yellow Fever are both on the increase and MoH and its partners (UNICEF, WHO and NGO) are combating them with available resources. Though the whole country needs to be targeted, only certain regions and populations are reached with the resources presently available. Though WHO CAP projects were not funded, bilateral support from USAID, Italy and core budgetary resources, were utilised. Due the acute influx of refugees in Nzerekore zone, a second sub office was opened in April 2003 with the same objectives as the Kissidougou sub office. Drugs to assist 40,000 people during three months were provided by WHO and distributed by MSF Switzerland and other partners in health posts and referral hospitals receiving refugees. The greatest challenge now is to secure resources to continue current activities. The impact of lack of funding is felt in project areas such as training of health providers for crisis situations; setting up of community-based services; training of peers educators in IEC/RH as carried out by UNFPA.

Water Sanitation and environment: Combined with the sector for health and nutrition, the programmes for water and sanitation have a shortfall of over USD 3.5 million against estimated needs for those arriving from Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia, and the existing refugee population. This has a serious impact not only in terms of limited access to drinking water and lack of public sensitisation campaigns on issues of sanitation in areas hosting vulnerable populations, but also on higher risks and occurrences of waterborne diseases.

Food Security: In 2003 WFP experienced delays in the confirmation of contributions towards the PRRO for the Western Africa Coastal Region and Guinea. This has made planning difficult and may result in a pipeline break in the early summer, meaning that cereal rations would have to be reduced in June. As of April WFP received nearly USD 34,000,000 or 83% of revised requirements for the West Africa Coastal PRRO (now reflected under the Sierra Leone Appeal). Additional resources will be required to fully cover emergency food needs in the second half of 2003. Lack of funding for repatriation of third country nationals has increased the need for emergency assistance and food aid in 2003. Efficiently organized and safe transit of third country nationals would help contain humanitarian and protection needs. Lack of funding has also been critical in the area of self-reliance activities. Resources for seeds and tools have, for

example, been insufficient in the first half of 2003, which has made implementation of self reliance activities more difficult, leading to an increased and protracted need for food aid.

In January 2002 the WFP Guinea office established a VAM (Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping) unit to improve access to accurate food security data, improve targeting and identify appropriate ways of supporting vulnerable groups' return to self-reliance. In the 2003 CAP, funding of USD 283,514 was requested for the VAM unit. To date, no contributions have been made. This may jeopardize WFP's efforts in assisting the Government to strengthen its capacities in emergency preparedness and vulnerability.

Agriculture and Land Management: Due to a complete lack of funding in this sector for 2003, the level of agricultural output for the vulnerable populations will be moderate. If funding is not obtained, seed requirements for the next cropping season will be even higher in the host areas as the stocks of seed are used for consumption, as well as to support the populations arriving from Côte d'Ivoire.

Education: The education and protection programmes are lacking supplementary funds to support emergency activities and it has therefore not been possible to ensure the return to normalcy in education for children in the crisis-stricken areas. Hence, tens of thousands of returnee and IDP children are now without access to education in Guinea and with 0% of requested resources available, UNICEF will not be able to support education needs of school-aged children in Guinea.

Culture of Peace: Projects directed at supporting initiatives of Culture of Peace under the CAP 2002 received no funding, and to date no funding has been received to cover these crucial initiatives under the CAP 2003. The projects are crucial to assist the fostering of a sustainable peace for the sub-region and to overcome the chronic state of violence, which has marked the region for more than a decade. This condition of underfunding also impacts the ability to properly follow and analyze developments in the subregion as part of the early-warning role OCHA has been mandated to perform.

Shelter and Non-food assistance: Insufficient funding for assistance to TCNs in need of transportation led IOM to halt its assistance to the evacuees from Côte d'Ivoire on 15 January. The closedown of IOM operations has resulted in widespread frustration, not only among TCNs, but also local authorities and agencies assisting refugees and evacuees in the border region since basic shelter and food assistance had to be provided, whereas transport to the respective countries of origin would have resolved the issue.

Rehabilitation and Economic Recovery: The chronic lack of funding of this sector must be addressed in view of the sub-regional context. While Sierra Leonean refugees continue to be repatriated, Guinea is again facing a new influx from Liberia, as well as from Côte d'Ivoire. Therefore, it remains of utmost importance to acknowledge and promote the positive asylum environment provided by Guinea so far by concretizing efforts that reflect the solidarity of the international community to the Guinean population.

Coordination and Support Services: Some of the challenges in this sector require immediate attention such as strengthening of the humanitarian capacity of the Government at all levels, reinforcing information management, and improving preparedness and response of the humanitarian community.

However, if funding response for this sector stays as its current low, the work of OCHA will be impeded in critical domains such as coordination of protection responses; monitoring of the situation and adequate preparedness; advocacy for the most vulnerable groups; and support to peace initiatives through civil society organizations.

Given the size of the Guinea refugee operation and the need to ensure timely support to staff working in Conakry and in the three UNHCR field offices, the management of the UNHCR aircraft has to be ensured through adequate funding. An amount of US\$ 1,680,800 has been budgeted for such purpose under project GUI-03/MS05

The WFP regional air-operation continues to provide safe and cost effective transport to the international community in Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The availability of the aircraft has been instrumental in responding to the evolving humanitarian crises in the region. Recently, Harper in Liberia and Man in Ivory Coast were added to the flight schedule. With the start of the rainy season, the need for the aircraft will increase, as many destinations will be difficult to access by road. Additional funding is therefore required to ensure the running of the aircraft until the end of 2003.” (UN OCHA, 3 June 2003, p. 6-8).

The UN country team appealed for a total of US\$ 7.1 million in the Côte d’Ivoire plus five Appeal (April-December 2003) (April 2003)

- The UN additional appeal aims at addressing requirements not covered by the Guinea 2003 CAP
- It is estimated that 88,000 Guinean nationals in host communities are expected to be affected by the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire are targeted for humanitarian assistance

“ [The appeal] focuses exclusively on the needs created by the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire. In particular, affected populations will be assisted in the following sectors: food security, transport and coordination, health and nutrition, protection, emergency education, shelter, and multi-sectoral assistance. Guinea’s Country Appeal, which was launched in November 2002, remains valid for addressing the non-Côte d’Ivoire emergency/rehabilitation needs.

[...]

Humanitarian action will be concentrated in the region of Kouankan, Kankan, N’Zerekore and Siguiri. Special attention will be paid to N’Zerekore, Lola and Mandiana as they are the main entry points for populations leaving in Côte d’Ivoire.

In view of the above, an estimated 176,000 people will be targeted for humanitarian assistance including:

- 20,000 Ivorian refugees;
- 10,000 Liberian refugees;
- 8,000 nationals mainly from Mali (4,000), Burkina Faso (3,000) and Senegal (1,000);
- 50,000 Guinean evacuees;
- 88,000 Guinean nationals in host communities;

It is anticipated that 88,000 Guineans nationals will be affected by the crisis acting as host populations in areas designated to provide temporary or long-term shelter facilities to the populations seeking assistance in Guinea. It is envisioned.” (UN, April 2003, p. 2-3)

Disparity between assistance for refugees and assistance for IDPs and host communities (2002)

- Refugee programmes receive more financial support than those aimed at IDPs and host communities
- Food aid is the only sector where funding is evenly balanced between the beneficiary groups

“...according to the assessment made at the CAP 2003 workshop held in Conakry in June 2002, there was insufficient coverage of host populations in sectors facing to the return of populations, rehabilitation and the revival of the economy. Sectors such as assistance to refugees received more financial support than those directed toward internally displaced persons and host communities, with the exception of food aid for

which the level of financing was sufficient to cover the needs of both groups. Government representatives highlighted the need to design a CAP 2003 which addresses emergency relief as well as stimulating the return to development dynamics in the affected areas, reinforcing the mechanisms of coordination/decentralisation of humanitarian assistance and improving the CAP as an advocacy tool.” (UN, November 2002, p7)

Lack of IDP-related information has constrained donor support (2002)

- Disagreement over IDP figures and inadequate information on IDP needs has hampered funding
- OCHA IDP Unit recommends measures to improve information flow and raise donor interest

"The lack of agreed figures on the number of IDPs combined with the lack of precise information on the needs of IDPs, both in host communities and in the area of origin, have constrained donor community support. As of end of April, around 25% of the CAP for Guinea was funded.

The review of the humanitarian strategy based on the revised agreed figures on IDPs, the outcomes of the need assessment missions, the data from the UNICEF survey on the living conditions of IDPs and the ICRC survey in Guinea Forestiere, should lead to streamlined projects and requirements to be presented to the donor community. In addition, information on the impact of under funding on the IDPs and the host communities would also contribute to raise donor interest. In that regard, the coming mission of the UNTV could be an opportunity to develop messages on the IDP and host communities critical needs in Guinea.

Finally the role of OCHA will be invaluable in providing the required information to all actors on the flow of assistance to Guinea, the unmet needs, the impact of under-funding, the identification of opportunities to initiate a transition to development and the different activities being implemented by the humanitarian actors. To perform this critical task efficiently OCHA office should be provided with adequate staff and facilities." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

Funding shortfalls hamper UNICEF projects (2002)

- UNICEF projects in the protection and education sectors are casualties of under-funding

"The project designed to combat abuse of women and children has received no donor funding thus far in 2002. Activities that were carried out to protect these vulnerable groups in 2001 have been discontinued due to this complete lack of funding and violence has continued to progressively increase over the past 6 months. The existence of the UNHCR/SC UK report demonstrates some aspects of the potential for abuse. A focused, properly financed and well coordinated approach is needed to combat and negate violent and abusive practices and tendencies.

Many children receive no schooling due to the shortfall in shelter, classrooms and teachers. The already weak education infrastructure has further deteriorated in face of the war and the influx of displaced and refugee populations. At least 20 000 children still require facilities and access to education." (UNICEF, 29 May 2002)

US Government supports post-conflict transition in Guinea Forestière (2002-2003)

- USAID program for assistance will target three prefectures of Guinea Forestière where IDPs are returning, aiming to benefit some 750,000 people

- Program activities will focus on economic regeneration, re-establishing key social services, and building a culture of peace to encourage the return and reintegration of IDPs
- Program is designed as a transition between the previous emergency situation and a resumption of USAID's development assistance

“USAID/Guinea seeks to implement a two-year Special Objective to address the post-conflict situation in three targeted prefectures within Guinea's Forest Region. The crisis resulting from the 2000-2001 cross-border attacks from Sierra Leonean and Liberian territory and to which USG agencies responded with humanitarian assistance has ended. Displaced persons are now returning to the three prefectures most severely affected by the conflicts - Gueckedou, Kissidougou and Macenta - where public and private infrastructure has been demolished, social services no longer function adequately, and the means to earn a livelihood have been destroyed. The current climate of relative peace in the Mano River sub-region presents an opportunity to provide transitional assistance to restore the basic conditions for a progressive resumption of USAID's assistance program while optimizing synergies with the USAID/Sierra Leone transitional program and the proposed USAID/WARP Mano River Peace Building Initiative. The program will positively affect the lives of approximately three-quarters of a million inhabitants of the targeted prefectures.

Only once basic operating conditions - public infrastructure, essential supplies and equipment, and a viable level of security - have been restored, can USAID/Guinea's development assistance program resume. Activities will therefore focus on stimulating economic activity, re-establishing key social services, and building a culture of peace to promote the return and re-integration of inhabitants who were displaced by the conflicts.

Community-level conflict prevention activities and a community-driven approach to program delivery will help off-set past and prevent future conflicts. The cross-border attacks raised internal political, socio-economic and ethnic tensions already present in this weak democracy, between inter alia, refugees and residents, Liberian dissidents and Guineans, Guinea dissidents and nationalists. These unresolved tensions and the continued presence of the military, armed civil defense volunteers and Liberian dissidents illustrate the extent of the social dislocation of the Forest Region.

II. FY-2003 Program Objective

The overall goal of USAID's program for assistance to the Forest Region of Guinea is to assist those prefectures that were most severely affected by the cross-border conflicts of 2000/2001 to move from an emergency situation to conditions conducive to sustainable development and a progressive resumption of USAID's assistance program. This goal will be achieved through the implementation of two principal activities (or Intermediate Results) that fall under USAID/Guinea's management control and a third one that will be accomplished primarily through the West Africa Regional Program's (WARP) Special Objective for conflict prevention.

This Intermediate Result will stimulate the local economy and protect livelihoods by supporting the re-establishment of productive enterprise in the three prefectures. Local NGOs, community-based organizations and local government services will be involved in the design and implementation of activities aiming to increase food security through food crop production for the most vulnerable groups in the prefectures. Activities will be targeted at former civil defense volunteers, farmers, small entrepreneurs, and at-risk youths in order to secure positive and immediate outcomes for the security situation in the Forest Region. Small grants or in-kind assistance are envisaged to re-start agricultural production and businesses such as hairdressing, carpentry, metal working, fishing, clothes manufacture, soap making and tie dying. Attention will be given to the transmission of market information to wholesalers by utilizing the cross-border radio services proposed under the Mano River Peacebuilding Initiative. This will facilitate the reintegration of the Forest Region into the national and regional economies.

Illustrative activities include:

short-term vocational training for former civil defense volunteer youth in identified skills for which there will be a short-term demand, such as brick-making to rebuild public and private infrastructure destroyed or damaged during the attacks;
the supply of micro-credit to entrepreneurs and farmers identified as in need;
the supply of tools, seed, farming inputs, and other means of production on a grant basis to those identified as in need; and
the establishment of small garden demonstration plots for training of the groups most vulnerable to malnutrition.

The other principal activity or Intermediate Result will focus on the areas of health and education. Assistance here will require careful coordination with other donors and the local government authorities for health and education so that efforts are not duplicated. Implementing partners will work with local community-based organizations to access their priorities and needs in a participatory manner that simultaneously develops leadership capacity and skills in advocacy, networking and communication while rebuilding social relations.

Illustrative activities include:

the pooling of funds to supplement total resources for the rehabilitation of selected health and educational infrastructure and the replacement of equipment;
support to Health Management Committees and Parent/Teacher Associations through the provision of matching grants or a sweat-equity deal to replace other health and educational infrastructure and equipment, such as school furniture, and/or to meet other needs identified by these groups;
the supply of essential drugs and contraceptives to health centers;
the development of STI/HIV/AIDS messages in local languages targeting paramilitary and military personnel;
the supply of learning materials to schools; and
the limited start-up of social marketing activity for oral rehydration salts.” (USAID, 8 November 2002)

European Commission supports continuing relief efforts in Guinea as part of regional aid package (2001-2002)

- Targeted beneficiaries for Mano River region plan are refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and local populations
- Aid earmarked for health care, water and food aid activities

"On 23 Jan, ECHO announced that the European Commission has adopted a Euro 17 million, or US \$ 15 million, humanitarian aid package for the Mano River Countries. The funding has been earmarked for continuing relief efforts targeting refugees, internally displaced people and the local population in areas affected by the conflict." (UN OCHA, 31 January 2002)

"The European Commission (EC) has adopted a global plan worth euro 5.1 million (about US \$4.7 million) for victims of the 'continuing humanitarian crisis' in the countries of the Mano River Union, the EC Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO, reported.

The targeted beneficiaries are refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Guinea and Sierra Leone which, together with Liberia, make up the Mano River Union." (IRIN-WA 10 October 2001)

"The European Commission is providing humanitarian aid worth €4.5 million to help victims of the fighting in frontier areas of Guinea adjacent to Sierra Leone and Liberia. The aid is earmarked principally for health care, water and food. It is being channelled by the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) through partner organisations working in the region.

A significant proportion of the new funding has been earmarked for health care, targeting both refugees and resident populations. Health facilities in the affected area have been damaged or destroyed in the fighting and the incidence of serious diseases including malaria, respiratory infections and diarrhoea is increasing. Integrated relief operations are also envisaged focusing on the provision of water/sanitation and of non-food items, including shelter. A third component of the decision involves support for food distribution to refugees and internally displaced people.

Since September 2000, there have been a series of incursions and rebel attacks on Guinean territory, emanating from Sierra Leone and Liberia. These have profoundly destabilised the Guékedou/Kissidougou area in South West Guinea, provoking movements of Sierra Leonean refugees living in camps and forcing local people to leave their homes.

The Commission plans to continue supporting both the internal relocation and repatriation exercise organised by the humanitarian community in the region.

ECHO gave over €4 million in 2000 to tackle the regional crisis. This included funding a major vaccination campaign against yellow fever." (ECHO 8 May 2001)

Selected UN humanitarian activities (2002-2003)

UN agencies and partners in Guinea achieve a 'range of accomplishments' in 2003

- Mid-year CAP 2003 review lists various UN activities during the first half of 2003 in the fields of education, shelter, non food assistance that have benefited large numbers of IDPs, among others

"With regard to the population affected by the September 2000 attacks in the Languette, living conditions continue to normalise thanks to efforts made by WFP to support agricultural production in 2001 and 2002 (food, seeds and tools distributions).

[...]

EDUCATION

The key operational objective for the education sector outlined in the CAP 2003 was to restore the conditions of access to basic education for the crisis stricken population by undertaking activities to rehabilitate school buildings and facilitate training courses for pupils and teachers. The majority of the 60,000 Guineans currently returning home from Côte d'Ivoire and Ivorian refugees are however, women and children who are fully dependent on international humanitarian aid for food and basic services, including education. This influx from Côte d'Ivoire has not only deprived refugee and displaced children of their right to education, but also has stretched the school infrastructure in camps and host areas.

UNICEF support in this sector has so far allowed the restoration of access to education for children (displaced and host children and refugee children) through:

- Provision of educational (school in a box) and recreational kits;
- Construction and the equipping of 14 classrooms and 3 pre-school centres for 720 IDPs and refugee children and rehabilitation and equipment for 12 classrooms, 6 pre-school centres and 8 playgrounds;
- In a joint project with WFP, UNICEF has provided school supplies for 10,000 IDP and returnee children in N'Zerekore. School attendance rates in Dabola are up 33% (from 2,538 to 3,300) since the construction of classrooms was completed at the end of 2002. In January, hygiene kits were

distributed to 25 schools in the prefectures spearheading the accelerated girls' education initiative, which has considerably improved the physical environment.

This support allowed 20,000 refugee children and 15,600 IDPs to finish their education in satisfactory conditions, and 2,000 new refugee children to be enrolled in school. The enrolment and the schooling rates in the beneficiary localities have increased, and the dropout rate has been reduced. In addition, 800 young IDP children were enrolled in pre-school.

SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE

The strategy in this sector for 2003 aimed to improve the general housing conditions both in host areas and home areas. It thus aims to reduce the burden of the IDP presence in the host communities and to support the efforts at rehabilitating the houses of the populations returning to their home regions.

With the arrival of Guinean evacuees and TCNs from Côte d'Ivoire, the humanitarian community was faced with waves of vulnerable groups in need of transportation. Within the context of the integrated interagency response, IOM was designated as the lead agency for the assisted return and protection of TCNs and assigned responsibilities in the registration, direct assistance, transport and relocation of IDPs in Guinea under the coordination of OCHA and the Humanitarian Coordinator.

A total of nearly 3,200 persons (Guineans, Malian, Burkinabé, Ghanaians and Senegalese) have been transported back to their country of origin or to the designated transit centres, as it was the case, for example, with Guinean evacuees who arrived by boat from Abidjan. (UN, April 2003, p. 4-5)

Support to food security has been focused on IDPs and host communities (May 2003)

- Under CAP 2003, support for food security targeted IDPs and host communities in the border areas with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.
- It is expected that assuming stable security IDPs and host communities will achieve self-sufficiency by the end of 2003.

“Support to food security under the 2003 CAP has been focused on IDPs and host populations in the border areas with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire so that, assuming stable security conditions and a positive impact of economic recovery, they can be expected to achieve self-sufficiency by the end of 2003.

As a result of regular distributions by WFP and its partners in the different refugee camps ensuring that the food security and the nutritional status of the refugee population remains stable, malnutrition rates for children under 5 in the refugee camps are currently below 4 percent.” (UN OCHA, May 2003)

UNICEF provides psychological support to IDP children and women (May 2003)

- The psychological support is accompanied by awareness campaigns regarding prevention of Gender Based Violence, child labour and family separation.

“Psychosocial support for children and women affected by armed conflict has also been provided, and awareness campaigns regarding prevention of Gender Based Violence, child labour, and family separation have been launched, targeting local and religious leaders, families and communities.

UNICEF has furthermore provided immediate emergency response on a number of occasions as the situation merited: lighting was, for example, provided at the Lola transit centre for 1,500 evacuees from Cote d'Ivoire to reduce vulnerability of women and girls to sexual and gender based violence.

Psychological counseling centres for adults and children, among whom 15% are ex-combatants, were established in Kouankan, Lainé and Kola camps, in partnership with Action by Churches Together (ACT). 500 adults and 455 children and teenagers, most of them female suffering from trauma and depression caused by paralysis due to injuries, rape, separation and murder of parents have benefited from activities and services offered here.” (UN OCHA, May 2003, p. 3)

UN agencies and partners in Guinea achieve a ‘range of accomplishments’ in 2002

- 2003 CAP lists various UN activities during 2002 in the fields of health, food, water/ sanitation and protection that have benefitted large numbers of IDPs, among others

“Thanks to the 300 basic medical kits provided by UNICEF, nearly 200,000 persons have benefited from regular and correct access to health services. The creation of a monitoring system by UNICEF has insured the nutritional surveillance of displaced children in 50 localities.

Despite the aforementioned constraints, thanks to the collaboration between agencies and partners, humanitarian assistance activities have permitted a range of accomplishments in 2002. Some key achievements were:

- A vaccination drive conducted by the Guinean Ministry of Health in conjunction with WHO and UNICEF reached 164,646 persons in Gueckedou and Macenta (polio, June-July 2002) and 1,742,826 persons in Conakry and Coyah (yellow-fever, August-September 2002);
- The opening of a WHO office in Kissidougou. This has notably supported the resumption of health care activities, the improvement of the health care situation (12,424 refugee children vaccinated against poliomyelitis in Gueckedou and Macenta), and the establishment of a system for preparedness and response to epidemic diseases;
- UNICEF has reinforced its field presence by opening a sub-office in N’Zerekore in August 2002, thus reinforcing its sub-offices in Kissidougou and Kindia for monitoring of programmes and developments in the situation;
- A meeting of all WHO representatives for the Mano River Union countries in Freetown from 18-20 September 2002, defined a minimum set of activities in crisis situations for public health activities and medical care, the response to HIV/AIDS, trans-border activities and to encourage the promotion of peace in the sub-region;
- Support by UNICEF for access to drinking water, which has essentially targeted displaced populations. UNICEF has conducted 62 drillings in 53 host villages of displaced populations increasing by 30% the rate of access to drinking water in the areas of activities. In addition, more than 1,650 modern water points and 759 traditional water points were chemically treated, resulting not only in the reduction of the rate of bacteriological pollution but , most importantly, in a diminished risk of cholera and diarrhea, especially in the host areas of displaced populations;
- Distribution by UNICEF of 200 recreational and educational kits, and the construction and equipping of 150 school classes, allowing 15,000 refugee children to pursue their schooling in 2002;
- Agricultural counseling of host populations and refugees in the prefectures of Dabola, Kissidougou and N’Zerekore by FAO, which has carried out rehabilitation activities in former refugee camps with the support of WFP (Food for Work Programmes);
- Continued assistance by UNHCR to former and new refugees, as well as the support provided for voluntary repatriations of Sierra Leonean refugees;
- Family reunification of 1,182 unaccompanied children out of the 4,842 children identified by the IRC, supported by UNHCR/UNICEF funding;
- The establishment of local protection committees in the cities of Kissidougou, Gueckedou, N’Zerekore and Kindia, and the strengthening of capacities of local authorities and the security forces to ensure the protection of displaced and local children in their towns;

- The reinforcement of the four WFP sub-offices has enabled the coverage of basic food needs of 80,000 refugees on the average per month, the specific nutritional needs of refugee women and their children and the displaced. Stocks of enriched biscuits have been airlifted to satisfy the urgent needs of newly arrived Liberian refugees and food relief has been distributed in border zones whenever required and possible. No major breakdowns in the supply of food were reported. Food for work and seed for protection schemes targeted some 75,000 internally displaced and resident persons. 4,500 school children in areas of high concentration of internally displaced persons have benefited from school feeding. The VAM unit of WFP was started and regular meetings of the Coordination for Food Security were held each month with administrative departments and leading partners in Conakry as well as at the level of sub-offices. Training workshops with partners in monitoring and evaluation of emergency food needs have been carried out to reinforce local capacities to respond to natural and/or human generated disasters;
- The promotion of a culture of peace through joint actions by UNESCO and OCHA, particularly in collaboration with the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network and the Secretariat of the Mano River Union;
- The elaboration of an inter-agency strategy (Action Plan, Code of Conduct, services matrix, etc.) to fight sexual abuse against beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance, and the undertaking of specific sectoral activities by the specialised agencies (including UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and others) and their partners;
- UNDP undertook a series of studies on economic reconstruction projects in the areas targeted by rebel attacks in September 2000;
- Reliable, regular and safe air transportation was provided by WFP and UNHCR from November 2001 to September 2002, including during medical evacuations. For example, WFP transported 4,500 passengers during that period, all of whom worked for humanitarian agencies. UNHCR transported 1,347 persons working in the framework of food assistance, between January and the end of August 2002;
- Collaboration between UNHCR and IRC, leading to the deployment of a security resource person responsible for ensuring the training of humanitarian staff as well as improving security conditions in the camps in the region of N'Zerekore;
- Collaboration between UNFPA and UNHCR for the placement of a Reproductive Health Coordinator for refugees and displaced persons, which facilitated consideration of problems of reproductive health of refugees in the camps and displaced populations in areas of conflict.
- Specific efforts conducted by various agencies during 2002 are contained in Annex 12 of this document." (UN, November 2002, p4-5)

UN Humanitarian Coordinator plans to focus on IDPs and other vulnerable groups (May 2002)

"The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Guinea, Kingsley Amaning, recently headed a mission including OCHA and UNHCR officials to various parts of southern Guinea that were plagued by cross-border attacks in late 2000 and early 2001. The attacks prompted the relocation of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

In an interview with IRIN on 12 May in the southern town of Nzerekore, Amaning pointed to the need for closer links between members of the humanitarian community in the three Mano River countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

He also spoke of his plans to focus attention on vulnerable groups such as displaced persons and host communities, in addition to refugees, and stressed the importance of ensuring a smooth transition from humanitarian activity to development. " (IRIN, 16 May 2002)

[Click here for full text of interview](#)

UN coordination in Guinea is strengthened (2002)

- In 2002, UN agencies improved internal coordination through the appointment of a Humanitarian Coordinator and the creation of an informal contact group
- Field operations were strengthened with the opening of regional offices in various areas of Guinea by UNICEF, OCHA, WHO and WFP

“Within the United Nations System, the various agencies have reinforced their internal coordination mechanisms, most notably with the appointment of a Humanitarian Coordinator and the creation of an informal contact group between the leading agencies concerned by humanitarian actions, meeting roughly on a weekly basis.

Regarding field operations, in Forest Guinea UNICEF has reinforced its presence by opening a sub-office in N’Zerekore in August 2002, and OCHA will open a field office in the same location by mid-October 2002. For the Kissidougou area, WHO was able to finance the opening and operation of an office in Kissidougou, which will ensure monitoring of the epidemiological situation, the reinforcement of the health care system and the implementation of targetted actions (inter-agency and inter-governmental) such as vaccination campaigns in all Kissidougou camps. In addition, WHO has developed and implemented a project to support the treatment and prevention of malaria in the refugee camps. To that effect, a national consultant has been hired to support implementing partners and local authorities.

As requested by the partners, a consulting mission was conducted by the WHO Regional Bureau for Africa, to support efforts for the prevention and response programme aimed at abuse and sexual exploitation.

WFP has opened offices in Dabola and Kankan in order to pursue more effectively food assistance activities for refugees and displaced populations, with the help of its partners. This presence of WFP in Upper Guinea was extremely useful in the establishment of an inter-agency response to the heavy floods in September 2001.” (UN, November 2002, p12)

UN OCHA to prepare inventory of IDP-related activities in Guinea (May 2002)

- OCHA in the process of preparing an 'aide-memoire' of IDP-related activities in Guinea
- Main activities identified so far include the fields of food distribution, health services, education services and water/ sanitation

"OCHA has been asked by the UN Country Team to prepare an aide-memoire of the activities addressing the needs of IDPs in Guinea. This document is underway and findings will not only serve to better document these activities, but also towards construction of a database for mapping and planning purposes. According to information gathered so far, UN activities addressing the needs of IDPs in collaboration with Government agencies and NGOs include but are not limited to:

Food distribution in areas of Kissidougou, Guéckedou, Dabola, and Macenta is ensured by WFP in collaboration with UNICEF, UNHCR, as well as a wide range of NGOs including Action Contre la Faim, Centre Africain de Formation pour le Développement (CENÀFOOD), Africare, Centre Canadien d'Etude International (CECI), and Guinean Red Cross.

Health Services in Guéckedou and Kissidougou such as distribution of medical kits, vaccinations and other medicines, logistics and technical assistance are provided by UNICEF and OMS in collaboration with organizations such as Medecins du Monde, International Federation of Red Cross, and Medecins sans Frontières.

Education Services are provided in Kissidougou, Kindia, and Forecariah by UNICEF in collaboration with Entre Aide Universitaire pour le Développement (EUPD), Ecoliers du Monde and Fraternel pour le

Développement (FRADE). UNICEF and WFP furthermore undertake Emergency School Feeding programmes in the Languette and Dabola.

Water & Sanitation services include installation of water pumps and latrines by UNICEF and Aide & Action in Kindia, Forecariah, and Kissidougou." (UN OCHA, 13 May 2002)

UN OCHA IDP Unit visits Guinea (April 2002)

- OCHA IDP Unit visits Guinea as part of tour of Mano River region
- Primary objectives of trip are aimed at strengthening UN response to the IDP situation in the countries concerned

"The IDP Unit visited Guinea at the request of the Humanitarian Coordinator and OCHA team primarily to obtain a better understanding of the IDP situation in the country, to assist in developing a common strategy for response and to examine ways of strengthening interagency coordination.

In addition to the HC, OCHA and UNCT, the Mission met the Minister of Social Affairs, senior officials from the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Security (MATDS), the Ministry of Planning, USAID Director, MSF, ICRC and a large group of local NGOs. Given time constraints the Mission could not visit IDP communities up country." (OCHA IDP Unit, 21 May 2002)

For the full mission report, [click here](#)

UN country team follows up on allegations of sexual abuse in camps (2002)

- UN Country Team in Guinea forms inter-agency working group in response to sex abuse scandal in refugee and IDP camps in West Africa
- At headquarters level, a UN team of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is dispatched to Guinea as part of investigation of charges of sexual abuse and exploitation

"Pursuant to the recommendations of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), the UN country team in Guinea has formed an inter-agency working group to develop a system-wide response to address issues related to sexual and gender based violence as well as other forms of exploitation and abuse. The working group is due to submit its first progress report to the UN country team with specific recommendations on 10 April.

[...]

On 15 March 2002 in New York, in a briefing to the Security Council on Protection of civilians in armed conflict, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mr. Kenzo Oshima remarked on the allegations of sexual exploitation of children in refugee camps in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. In addition to immediate measures taken by the Secretary General he urged humanitarian agencies to develop and implement - in close collaboration with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Humanitarian Coordinators - relevant policies and measures to prevent abuses by humanitarian actors.

A UN team of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) returned to West Africa in March to continue investigating charges of sexually exploitation in camps by aid workers and peacekeepers. In a statement released in New York, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) noted that the team was briefly recalled to UN Headquarters for consultations. The team composed of a paediatrician and expert on child abuse, a staff member of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Inspector General's office and two officers from OIOS is currently visiting Guinea.

The inter-agency working group on alleged sexual abuses has completed its first draft progress report on 9 April. The draft document to be submitted to the UN country team before wider discussion with other partners proposes four initial responses:

Strategic Framework for UN Response (strategic planning) to guide the process leading to a sound and sustainable system-wide response to addressing all forms of exploitation that may derive from the provision of humanitarian assistance.

A Plan of Action developed by HCR and a draft *Code of Conduct* for humanitarian agencies to form the backbone of the initial short-term response to this issue.

A Matrix of Humanitarian Aid Field Services to serve the purpose of precisely identifying the humanitarian aid services subject to a form of abuse or exploitation, and to constitute the main frame for implementing a policy-based and field-based system-wide coordinated UN response." (UN OCHA, 11 April 2002)

WFP provides food assistance to IDPs (2002)

- In April 2002, approximately 1,200 IDPs in Dabola were to receive WFP assistance in return for road construction/ rehabilitation activities
- WFP food assistance goes to IDPs and other vulnerable populations
- In April, a WFP food convoy is stopped at a military checkpoint in Gueckedou - with the result that all IDP-related rehabilitation and resettlement activities are temporarily suspended

"Approximately 1,200 IDPs will be involved in road construction/ rehabilitation activities and will receive WFP assistance early April in Dabola. WFP also reports having distributed 60 tons of food and kitchen utensils to approximately 2,500 schoolchildren under the School Feeding program in the Dinguiraye prefecture. This will cover the needs until the end of the school year." (UN OCHA, 11 April 2002)

"From 7 to 21 April, WFP assisted over 61,400 vulnerable people under various programmes, providing them with 850 tons of food. This includes assistance to refugees, IDPs as well as school children. In the Gueckedou prefecture (Kissidougou), a WFP truck convoy, on its way to deliver food for FFW and emergency school feeding activities, was stopped at a main military checkpoint, for no apparent reason. The WFP convoy was forced to return to its base without delivering the food. All rehabilitation/resettlement activities targeting over 1,700 IDPs and residents have been temporarily suspended in the Gueckedou prefecture, while WFP follows up on this incident with the local authorities." (WFP, 26 April 2002)

Experts assess women's experiences during and after war throughout Mano River region (January 2002)

- Independent experts visit Guinea, as well as Sierra Leone and Liberia, to assess impact of conflict on women and women's role in the peace-building process

"Independent experts Elisabeth Rehn, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, member of the Organization of African Unity Panel of Eminent Persons to investigate the genocide in Rwanda, today begin a mission to Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia to assess the impact of conflict on women and women's role in the peace-building process. This is the last in a series of field visits by experts to countries affected by conflict. Experts will publish their

findings in a global report, sponsored by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), scheduled for release in Spring 2002.

It is estimated that over 3 million people are currently displaced in the Mano River countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. Women and their dependent children are approximately 75% of those displaced and have suffered severe consequences to their health, nutrition, education and well-being.

'This is the first time a full-scale study on the impact of armed conflict on women and their role in peace-building has ever been conducted,' said Noeleen Heyzer, UNIFEM Executive Director. 'Women in conflict areas urgently need international support to protect their human rights and support their active participation in peace processes.'

During their week-long visit to the Mano River countries, experts will look closely at the issues of displacement, sexual violence and the exploitation of women. They will address problems such as unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, orphans and widowhood. Experts will visit women living in camps for refugees and internally displaced peoples and will speak to representatives of human rights and women's organizations, as well as with female ex-combatants. Meetings are also planned with high-level government officials, including H.E. Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

'Widespread human rights violations in the Mano River countries has fractured communities, displaced families and left people traumatized,' said Ms. Johnson Sirleaf, former candidate for the Liberian presidency. 'Women and girls have been the most affected by the conflicts and we want the world to know about it.'

For years, women's groups from Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia have been working to find peaceful ways to resolve conflict in their countries. In May 2000, they joined together to form the Mano River Women's Peace Network to lobby heads of state and advocate for women's participation in the peace processes that shape their lives. The UN Security Council recognized the efforts of the Mano Women's Peace Network in facilitating peace and dialogue in the region in a 31 October, 2001 presidential statement." (UNIFEM, 21 January 2002)

Selected ICRC humanitarian activities (2002)

Throughout 2002 ICRC provided assistance to IDPs in Guinea

- In Macenta, Kissidougou and Guéckédou and the Faranah region, the ICRC brought aid, helped returning IDPs to resettle in their home regions.
- The ICRC provided aid for host communities
- 55,500 returnees/IDPs and over 17,000 residents assisted.

“In the forest region, the ICRC brought aid to needy displaced people and residents in host communities where infrastructure and coping mechanisms were sorely strained by the long presence of the displaced. In addition, the ICRC helped returning IDPs to resettle in their home regions. The organization also provided aid for the residents most affected by the conflict in villages along Guinea's borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia, and tracing services for refugees. It continued its visits to people detained in connection with the conflict, promoted IHL and provided medical supplies for the wounded and sick.

[...]

In the forest-region prefectures of Macenta, Kissidougou and Guéckédou, and in the Faranah region, the ICRC provided IDPs with resettlement and agricultural aid. Over 2,150 leaders of farming groups and associations, representing nearly 14,000 members, benefited from ICRC cash-crop programmes. To ensure that the seed would be sown and not eaten, the ICRC twice distributed one-month food rations, provided by the WFP, to the displaced population. Residents of urban and suburban areas also benefited indirectly from the ICRC agricultural programmes, which generated an overall increase in agricultural production and thus a drop in prices.

[...]

With financial support from the ICRC and the International Federation, the Guinean Red Cross responded to the needs of civilians who had crossed into Guinea to flee the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. To provide assistance to the first wave of people arriving from Côte d'Ivoire, the National Society rapidly mobilized and deployed its volunteers in influx zones. New arrivals were registered and received emergency medical care as well as food and water (see National Society). An estimated 60,000 people crossed the border into Guinea.

- 55,500 returnees/IDPs and over 17,000 residents assisted
- return transportation arranged for 65 Guinean civilians abducted and taken to Sierra Leone by force during the fighting in 2000-01
- safe drinking water provided and sanitary conditions improved for over 100,000 beneficiaries (ICRC, 19 June 2003, p. 82)

Selected NGO humanitarian activities (2001-2003)

USAID and its NGO partner Opportunities Industrialisation Centers International (OICI) helps IDPs resettled around the Garafiri Dam (June 2003)

- They helped ensure greater overall food security among the displaced communities.
- The OICI has helped community members to better support their families.

USAID, through its partner non-governmental organization (NGO) Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OICI), understood the precarious situation in which the displaced communities found themselves and has since worked in collaboration with the Government of Guinea to help increase food security for the resettled communities around the Garafiri dam. Although Guinean Government sponsorship allowed for the building of small block houses to accommodate those who were displaced, OICI agents realized that the displaced communities would require more than basic shelter in order to adapt successfully--they required skills that would allow them to both enhance their new rural environment and make good use of the resources that were available to them.

Through community involvement in decision-making, including projects in improved agricultural techniques, reforestation and protection of water sources, education in health and nutrition, as well as basic literacy and math, OICI has helped ensure greater overall food security among the displaced communities, and helped community members to better support their families.

Says village chief Thierno Youssouf Kanté, "OICI sent us a dynamic field agent named Madame Camara who lived and worked with us. She brought us improved seeds and tools, and showed us better ways to plant them. She also showed us how to create a nursery and transplant both plants and trees, and now we men have done this work, including reforestation up in the hills that you see behind our houses. She would help us initiate our projects, and come back from time to time to see if what we were doing was working, and give us good advice."

In addition, the OICI field agent helped the community obtain a loan through OICI to buy rice, and we have stored the rice in improved silos that she helped the community to build. A system of creating a village cereal bank was created in which rice, peanuts, corn and fonio* was sold among villagers at a reasonable price during the food shortage period, allowing them to pay for the cost of the grains, but also to keep the profits in a community savings account to buy the seeds and other inputs they required for the coming year. Says Kanté, "The money that we now have in our community bank will allow us to give credit to those who will reimburse us with interest after their harvest." The profit from the cereal bank is designed to be a revolving fund for the agricultural co-op, benefiting the local community for years to come.

NGOs OICI, Africare and ADRA are all using micro-credit as a tool to further promote food security in Guinea. The profits from the micro-credit "loans" are always returned back to the community since the main objective of using micro-loans is to create a mechanism to promote greater food security. This system works better than handouts in that communities know that if the loans are well-managed, the community will benefit in the end - communities are then motivated to manage the funds well. Teaching beneficiaries how to manage a loan also has the benefit of conveying valuable money-management skills.

USAID is also working in collaboration with the World Food Program in and around Garafiri to ensure food security. The women's agricultural cooperative of Falékalé village, along with other well-organized women's co-ops in the Garafiri area have received funds in kind of rice, peas and vegetable oil which the women sell in predetermined rations. The profits from the sales are then managed by the women's cooperative to pay for seeds, tools, or other agricultural needs.

Although the community is still coming to terms with their new hardships, they are also looking to make the best of it. Says Chief Kanté, "We know that we will never get our land back, and that we have to consider this land as ours. OICI has helped us out considerably. We simply ask now that God give us the strength to do the rest." (USAID, 9 June 2003)

Concern Universal projects support IDP groups in Dinguiraye (2002)

- With local partners, Concern Universal assists IDP groups in Dinguiraye with income-generation and agricultural activities
- In Dabola, Concern Universal, with a local partner, plans to oversee the rehabilitation of primary schools

"Concern Universal (CU), together with its local partner Association pour le Développement Economique et Social de Dinguiraye (ADESD), is continuing its project of support to IDP groups in Dinguiraye. In January eight groups received training and start up materials for small income generating activities such as soap making, tie and dye, baking and fishing. In April, work began with a second wave of nine groups many of whom will receive support in agricultural activities. It is planned that by the end of the year, a total of 25 groups will have received support in start up materials and technical and management training modules. During the month of May, Concern Universal with its partner, Secours Rapide Rural hope to begin a project which will oversee the complete restoration and improvement of all the primary schools in the Urban Commune of Dabola. This project will be funded by UNICEF and will complement construction of two classrooms in Dabola funded by the British Consulate." (UN OCHA, 13 May 2002)

Jesuit Refugee Service establishes regional office in Guinea (2001-2002)

- JRS sets up regional office in Kolouma in late 2001
- JRS team carries out food distribution and reconstruction projects in war-affected areas

"Late last year JRS re-launched its activities in Western Africa, a region that has experienced widespread violence and forced displacement in recent years. The first part of the project was the establishment of a presence in Guinea, though in the near future JRS plans to extend its activities to both Sierra Leone and Liberia. Since November 2001, a team has been on the ground in Guinea, installing the regional office, and carrying out a food distribution project in a zone that has suffered much from the consequences of war, though virtually abandoned by humanitarian agencies. This first team (composed of two Guinean Sisters, one Spanish volunteer and one Jesuit) has already distributed 158 tonnes of rice and nearly 25,000 litres of palm oil, all purchased locally. Currently the team is preparing to embark on a new project of reconstruction, which plans to help 500 families rebuild houses that were destroyed during the conflict.

The regional office is provisionally located in the forest at Kolouma, near a catholic mission, and half way between the 'Sous-préfecture' of Daro and the town of Guéckédou. It is clear that this operation is only the first step in an overall regional project. If all goes according to plan, a fact-finding mission in Sierra Leone will take place at the end of September. The 400,000 refugees who recently fled to Guinea are in the process of returning home and will need aid and support in the process.

The team in Guinea report: 'At the moment we have the impression that a wind of peace is blowing throughout West Africa. The meeting that took place recently in Morocco between the presidents of the three countries involved in the latest conflict (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) resulted in a commitment to work for peace in the region. The presidents agreed to rein in the various rebel groups who have been acting to destabilise the border areas between the three countries. Now it is up to the leaders to translate these commitments and declarations into deeds, so that the people who have suffered so much these last few years can find and consolidate peace.'" (JRS, 16 April 2002)

Caritas appeals for new funds to provide emergency assistance to displaced families (2001-2002)

- Ongoing relief activities under the umbrella of the Caritas Confederation are handled by parish networks - but the needs of IDPs as well as refugees continue to be great
- Funds from new appeal will be used to provide displaced families with food, medical supplies and services, educational support, and agricultural inputs

"Caritas Internationalis has launched a new appeal to help member organisation Caritas Guinea provide emergency assistance to families displaced by armed conflict.

Since late 2000, cross-border conflicts involving Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia have provoked a massive wave of refugees into Guinea and have forced tens of thousands of Guineans from their homes.

A serious humanitarian crisis has emerged due to the disruption of the nation's agricultural production. At the onset of the conflict, the Caritas Confederation launched an initial appeal to provide emergency relief to refugees and displaced persons affected by the fighting.

Distribution was handled by parish networks which enabled aid to reach people in the most remote areas of the country.

Despite ongoing relief activities, the needs of refugees and displaced persons continue to be great, especially as winter approaches.

Funds from this new appeal will be used to provide 22,000 families with rice and cooking oil for a five-month period. Efforts will also focus on improving medical supplies and services, providing educational

support to around 4,000 refugee and displaced children, and distributing seeds and tools to around 12,000 farmers.

The Caritas Confederation is one of the world's largest humanitarian networks. Its 154 relief, development, and social service organisations are present in 198 countries and territories." (Caritas, 12 November 2001)

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- Other references to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
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The Guiding Principles are available in French [internet]

Training on the Guiding Principles

None known

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACF	Action contre la Faim
AFP	Agence France Presse
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GNP	Gross National Product
GoG	Government of the Republic of Guinea
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGO	Inter-governmental organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
MDM	Médecins du Monde
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
MTs	Metric tonnes
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations)
RCSG	Red Cross Society of Guinea
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SECADOS	Evangelical Protestant Church of Guinea (Development Branch)
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
USCR	United States Committee for Refugees
WHO	World Health Organisation

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