

OUR WORLD. VIEWS FROM THE FIELD.

LIBERIA

OPINION SURVEY AND IN-DEPTH RESEARCH, 2009



Our world is in a mess.
It's time to make your move.

Ipsos



ICRC

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December 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research was undertaken in eight countries that were experiencing or had experienced armed conflict or other situations of armed violence. These were: Afghanistan; Colombia; Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); Georgia; Haiti; Lebanon; Liberia and the Philippines.¹ The aim was to develop a better understanding of people's needs and expectations, to gather views and opinions, and to give a voice to those who had been adversely affected by armed conflict and other situations of armed violence.

This research was commissioned by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) within the framework of the **Our world. Your move.** campaign. Launched in 2009, the campaign's goal was to draw public attention to the vulnerability and ongoing suffering of people around the world. The intention was to emphasize the importance of humanitarian action and to convince individuals that they had the ability to make a difference and reduce suffering.

2009 was an important year for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, with three significant anniversaries (the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Solferino, the 90th anniversary of the founding of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the 60th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions).

In 1999, the ICRC had undertaken a similar survey entitled *People on War*, which served as a basis for comparison and as a means of highlighting trends in opinions 10 years on.

This report encompasses two types of research: an opinion survey and in-depth research.

OPINION SURVEY

The Impact of Armed Conflict

Forms of violence/suffering and their consequences

Very few people in Liberia have escaped unscathed by the 14 years of internal armed conflict, and events are still very vivid in their minds. Fully 96% of respondents claim to have personal experience of the events.

Of those with direct experience, a very high proportion were forced to leave their home (90%), lost contact with a close relative (86%), had their homes looted (83%), had food taken away by combatants (76%) or had serious damage inflicted on their property (74%).

A high proportion of them had even more harrowing experiences – such as losing a family member (69%), being humiliated (55%), being tortured (45%), or having somebody close to them fall victim to sexual violence (51%).

Their greatest fears include displacement (37%), loss/destruction of property (35%), the inability to earn a living (29%), the loss of a loved one (23%) and sexual violence (22%).

Needs and assistance

People in conflict areas need, most of all, 'basics' such as food (90%), medical treatment (69%) and shelter (58%). Which groups or organizations should meet these needs?

Help and support come from a variety of entities, led by the parents and families of those affected, and followed by organizations such as the ICRC, the Liberia National Red Cross Society (hereafter the Liberian Red Cross) and the UN.

¹ Respondents in seven of the eight countries were asked about 'armed conflict'. Please note that respondents in Haiti were asked about 'armed violence'.

These organizations have a good reputation for understanding people's needs. Most of those who have received help from them say they understood their needs 'completely'.

Obstacles to receiving help

The main barriers to receiving aid are corruption (81%), the black market (52%), discrimination (51%) or geographical inaccessibility (41%).

Sometimes people are simply unaware that help is available (26%) – but only 5% say that it is declined because it is not needed.

Reducing suffering

To 'reduce suffering during armed conflict', people look to international organizations. The UN comes first to mind for 40% of Liberians, the ICRC and the Liberian Red Cross combined for 15% of Liberians, and other humanitarian organizations for 11%. Other local organizations appear to play a more marginal role.

Half the respondents (52%) say the ICRC or the Liberian Red Cross play some role.

The international community

Liberians often seek a direct role for the international community. Most (65%) support peacekeepers, and many want emergency aid (40%) or military intervention (37%).

The population is also seeking a more long-term commitment having an impact on armed conflict (for example, political pressure or by organizing peace talks/negotiations).

People living outside the conflict zone (i.e. citizens in other countries) are encouraged to donate money (61%), apply political pressure (48%), support an aid organization (47%) or become volunteers (43%).

Behaviour during Armed Conflict

Acceptable behaviour

The majority of Liberians (88%) say combatants should not be allowed to do whatever they like in armed conflict.

Without prompting, 73% of respondents specified behaviour they find unacceptable. The 'killing of civilians and the innocent', sexual violence, stealing and torture were mentioned most.

Virtually everyone (98%) says that civilians should be spared in armed conflict either in all circumstances or 'as much as possible'.

Similarly, most people (around 90%) are opposed to several specific actions: depriving civilians of food/medicine/water, attacking religious and historical monuments, attacking enemy combatants in populated villages/towns, taking civilian hostages, and planting landmines that would endanger civilians. However, when civilians voluntarily transport ammunition for the enemy, they are widely seen by 75% of respondents as acceptable targets.

Health workers, ambulances and the right to health care

Health workers and ambulances are never an acceptable target for combatants, according to over eight persons in 10 (88% and 84% respectively). Any attempt to justify viewing them as legitimate targets usually involves situations where their role is not clearly identifiable, they are seen to lose their neutrality/to take sides, or they help enemy combatants as opposed to civilians.

However, nearly everyone (93%) agrees that ‘everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict should have the right to health care’. Similarly, the vast majority (90%) want health workers to take care of the sick and wounded from all sides in an armed conflict.

The Geneva Conventions

Most people (65%) have heard of the Geneva Conventions. Of those, 85% feel the Geneva Conventions have some effectiveness in limiting civilian suffering in times of war.

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

The Impact of Armed Conflict

The armed conflict in Liberia has had a number of profound and long-lasting negative effects on its people and infrastructure that it will take a long time to overcome.

However, regardless of the cause of the conflict, there is some concern that it will lead to a cycle of revenge, thus ensuring that war will be a part of people’s future as well as their past.

Personal experience of armed conflict

Given the nature of their experiences, many of the respondents found it difficult to discuss the impact of the conflict on them personally.

However, when this was explored in more detail, most speak about how the war has affected them in two main ways. In the first instance, they report physical and emotional suffering from the violence experienced and the grief that resulted.

Respondents also speak about displacement. This not only means losing one’s home, possessions, livelihood and community but, additionally, some speak of how it could negatively affect them and their country as a whole in the future by, for example, disrupting their education and thus hampering their cultural and intellectual development.

Civilians’ needs

Spontaneously, respondents speak about how they simply required the very basics during armed conflict in order to help them survive. Many say that they needed food, shelter, medical assistance and water.

Respondents also speak of how they needed to carry on as normal as far as they could and, therefore, needed to be able to access educational programmes so they could continue to develop in spite of the armed conflict.

Despite the cessation of hostilities, respondents still suggest that they require assistance to meet these needs, as the conflict has damaged the country to such a great extent.

Humanitarian assistance

Given that respondents required assistance in ensuring that their most basic of needs were met, all report being extremely grateful for the efforts of the humanitarian organizations working in Liberia during and after the conflict. Furthermore, all respondents have received some form of assistance from these organizations.

Among the organizations working in Liberia, the ICRC and the Liberian Red Cross are the best known and most respected. It is felt that the ICRC offered a wide range of help and support to civilians which was appreciated, as is the fact that it has remained in Liberia after the end of the conflict to help with the reconstruction.

However, there is a sense that the work of humanitarian organizations could be improved in the future. Some suggest that they should have the power to help broker negotiations between warring factions and could work to bring about peaceful resolution to the conflict. Others feel that humanitarian organizations should concentrate more on providing educational programmes in order to inform people about what to do in time of conflict, as well as ensuring that normal schooling is not too badly disrupted.

Alongside the work of humanitarian organizations, respondents report individual acts of kindness and humanitarian gestures. Such behaviour is thought to be rooted in the cultural and religious traditions of the country.

Behaviour during Armed Conflict

Rules of conflict

While the enforcement of rules and regulations governing conflict is seen to be difficult, many believe that the key to these is that innocent civilians should be spared.

In addition to this, there is a strong sense of agreement with the fact that medical personnel and those providing humanitarian assistance should not be harmed in any way as a result of the conflict.

Right to health care

Respondents believe that all should be entitled to health care – be they civilians or combatants. Because of this, and as mentioned above, the protection of health-care workers is believed to be essential. The view is that anyone might need such assistance at some time and thus health workers should be left to do their job effectively.

In order to ensure that health-care workers are protected, first responders speak of how the red cross emblem identifies them clearly in the field and, to a degree, grants them protection. Beyond this, carrying identification papers and wearing uniforms to distinguish people as health-care workers are thought to be helpful steps to take to ensure that medical personnel are not accidentally targeted.

The Geneva Conventions

With the exception of first responders, few are aware of the Geneva Conventions and what their remit is. Because of this, first responders suggest that efforts ought to be made to ensure that knowledge and awareness are increased.

However, when the Geneva Conventions are discussed with respondents there is some scepticism about how effectively they could be enforced. Indeed, several respondents refer to them simply as a set of guidelines rather than rules which had to be adhered to.

Conclusions: priority actions

The messages that respondents would like people outside of Liberia to hear are:

- that the international community should use its power to limit the negative effects of armed conflict on civilians;
- that the principle of caring for one's fellow man should be promoted, to ensure that people treat others as they would expect to be treated in return;
- that the memories of the consequences of armed conflict should be kept alive so that people learn from the experiences of the past.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Solferinos of today

To raise awareness of the impact of armed conflict or other situations of armed violence on civilians, the ICRC decided to launch a vast research programme. This research focused on some of the most troubled places in the world – the Solferinos of today – which are either experiencing situations of armed conflict or armed violence or suffering their aftermath:

- Afghanistan
- Colombia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
- Georgia
- Haiti
- Lebanon
- Liberia (covered in this report)
- The Philippines

Research

The ICRC commissioned Ipsos, an international research agency, to conduct an opinion survey (statistical, quantitative research) and to design and analyse in-depth (qualitative) research in eight countries.

For the **opinion survey**, a broadly representative sample of the adult general public was interviewed, either in person or by telephone, in each country. Fieldwork was conducted by Ipsos and its international partners. The specific sampling methods and any groups/areas excluded are described in the Appendices. The questionnaire was designed to determine whether the respondents had personal experience of armed conflict/violence and, if so, the specific impact it had on them. Questions also explored respondents' views on what conduct was acceptable for combatants, the effectiveness of various groups and organizations in helping to reduce suffering during armed conflict or armed violence, the actions expected of the international community, awareness of the Geneva Conventions, and the role of health workers during armed conflict or armed violence.

The **in-depth research** was conducted through focus groups and one-to-one in-depth interviews in each country. Ipsos designed, analysed and reported on the findings, with ICRC staff conducting the qualitative fieldwork. The discussion guide was designed to complement the opinion survey and to enable the ICRC to deepen its understanding of the values, motivations, fears and aspirations of those who have been direct victims of armed conflict or armed violence. These included people separated from their families, internally displaced persons, first responders and others directly affected by armed conflict or armed violence.

Further details of the coverage and scope of the research in Liberia are given in the section on 'Research Methodology'. The questionnaire used in the opinion survey (marked-up with overall results) and the discussion guide used in the in-depth research are included in the Appendices.

Background and objectives

The year 2009 had great significance for the ICRC and the entire International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement ('the Movement'), as two major anniversaries in the history of humanitarian work took place:

- The 150th anniversary of the Battle of Solferino. On 24 June 1859, Henry Dunant, a Swiss businessman, happened to witness the aftermath of one of the most brutal battles of the 19th century – at Solferino, in what is now northern Italy – and the carnage left on the battlefield. The suffering he saw there prompted him to take the first steps towards the creation of the Movement. His book *A Memory of Solferino* led to the founding of the ICRC in 1863. In recognition of his work, Dunant was the joint first recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1901.
- The 60th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions (12 August 1949). The four Geneva Conventions are the cornerstone of international humanitarian law. They protect, respectively, wounded and sick members of armed forces on the battlefield; wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea; prisoners of war; and civilians in time of war.

To mark these anniversaries, as well as the 90th anniversary of the founding of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Movement launched a campaign – **Our world. Your move.** – to remind everyone of their individual responsibility to relieve human suffering.

The campaign was based on the premise that **Our world** faces unprecedented challenges, from armed conflict and mass displacement to climate change and migration; and it contends that **Your move** reminds us of our collective responsibility to make the world a better place. Like Henry Dunant, we can all make a difference, even through the simplest of gestures.

Throughout 2009, the ICRC undertook various activities to mark these historic milestones by highlighting the ongoing plight of people – particularly the most vulnerable – caught up in armed conflict or armed violence around the world.

Liberia – research methodology

OPINION SURVEY

A total of 500 people aged 18 or over were interviewed in person (face-to-face) in the month of February 2009. Random probability sampling was used to ensure that the final sample would be broadly representative of the Liberian population (aged 18 years or over) as a whole in terms of geographic province. In addition, the results have been statistically 'weighted' by sex and province to correct for any slight differences between the sample profile and that of the equivalent population.

According to 2009 estimates, Liberia's population was around 3,500,000. It was skewed towards younger people (the median age was 18, and those aged 14 or below made up 44% of the population). By contrast, those aged 65 and over made up 3% of the population. Liberia had the sixth highest mortality rate and the 11th highest birth rate in the world. Life expectancy was 41 years for men and 43 years for women.

Because a sample was interviewed – not the whole population – the results are subject to 'sampling tolerances'. These show how accurately a result from the sample reflects the result that would have been obtained from the whole population had it been interviewed.

Please see the appendices for details on sampling tolerances.

On the charts, a ^{*} sign refers to a percentage of less than 0.5%, but greater than zero.

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

The purpose of the research in each country was to understand the deeper values, motivations, fears and aspirations of those who had been direct victims of armed conflict or armed violence. The research was carried out through focus groups and one-to-one in-depth interviews, carried out by ICRC staff. The combination of these qualitative research methods was used to allow both interactive debate and personal narrative to emerge from the conversations.

The sample was organized according to a number of groups who were particularly affected in times of armed conflict or armed violence, namely:

- **Internally displaced persons.** At the time of writing, it was estimated that more than 26 million people around the globe were displaced within their own countries owing to armed conflict, violence and persecution. The internally displaced make up what has been described as the single largest group of vulnerable people in the world. Internal displacement is one of the most serious consequences of armed conflict; people are forced from their homes and suffer extreme hardship.
- **Members of separated families.** War, disasters and migration lead to many thousands of families being separated. The suffering created by such situations is not always visible to others. This global problem is mostly a silent tragedy. Needing to know what happened to a loved one is as great a humanitarian need as food, water or shelter. Too many victims of armed conflict and armed violence around the world remain without news of missing family members.
- **First responders.** A 'first responder' is most often considered as the first health worker to arrive at the scene of an emergency. However, a first responder is much more – it is anyone who provides a helping hand or a shoulder to cry on.

These groups were used to recruit participants in seven of the eight contexts to be able to draw some comparisons on a global level. In Haiti these groups were first responders and victims of violence, including sexual violence.

In addition, a specific group was selected for each country to cover an issue particular to that country. In Liberia several **civilians remained in their specific areas during the long drawn-out conflict**, and as such a number of interviews were conducted with these people.

It should be noted that:

- All respondents were civilians (i.e. not combatants) and were selected based on the ICRC's on-the-ground knowledge of the areas most affected by the conflict in Liberia.
- Respondents' comments, in their own words, have been included throughout the in-depth research chapters of this report, accompanied by a brief indication of their backgrounds. In order to protect identities, the names used in this report have been changed, but other facts about individuals are real. Respondents' ages are sometimes omitted when they could not be verified, but have generally been provided. These respondents' comments were selected by Ipsos and do not reflect the opinions of the ICRC.
- Respondents were often affected in multiple ways by the armed conflict. As such, for example, someone who was invited to share their experiences of being an internally displaced person may also have commented on their experiences of having been a cluster munitions victim.
- Likewise, the division between first responders and other types of civilian is not always easy to define. First responders included: ordinary civilians thrust into giving humanitarian assistance because of the conflict affecting their town, community or family; health workers; and members of humanitarian organizations, including the ICRC. Comments in this report sometimes reflect this range of experiences by individual respondents.

- Interviews were conducted and group discussions moderated by ICRC staff in Liberia. Although the interviewers were trained in qualitative research, the fact that they were from the ICRC introduced the possibility of bias in what respondents were prepared to share and how they expressed it. However, interviewers were working to an interview guide designed by Ipsos and the analysis was also undertaken by Ipsos.

In Liberia, four group discussions were carried out, lasting between 90 and 120 minutes each, one with each of the following groups:

- **Internally displaced persons.** This group was made up of three men and one woman. Three of the respondents have returned to their communities, while one respondent was still internally displaced.
- **Relatives of missing persons.** This group was made up of three men and one woman, all aged 30+. All respondents in this group interview were benefiting from the ICRC's Restoring Family Links programme.
- **First responders.** This group consisted of three men and one woman, all aged 30+.
- **Victims of the armed conflict.** This group consisted of one woman and two men, two of whom were over 30. All had stayed in Liberia during the conflict and had been personally affected by it in some way (such as losing a family member).

In addition, 10 in-depth qualitative interviews were carried out, lasting 45 minutes to one hour each:

- 2 interviews with internally displaced persons, both men;
- 1 interview with a relative of missing persons, a woman aged 30+. She had witnessed many atrocities, ranging from the murder of children to the death of her father and the decapitation of friends;
- 4 interviews with victims of the conflict, including one man aged 30+ who now works for an international organization but had received no aid from the Red Cross, two men, one of whom also did not receive aid, and one woman aged 42;
- 3 interviews with first responders, all men, and one who had been working for an international humanitarian organization since 2001.

Report structure

An Executive Summary with the key findings is followed by the main body of the report, covering each broad subject area in turn. The results of the opinion survey among the general public are reported on first, followed by the findings of the in-depth research among victims of armed conflict/armed violence.

The Appendices contain the sample profile and full questionnaire used in the opinion survey, marked-up with the overall country results (including the 1999 trend comparisons where applicable) and the discussion guide used in the in-depth research.

Please note that no country comparisons are made in this report. These can be found in the separate Summary Report covering all eight countries.

Liberia in context

Liberia was founded by freed slaves from America and the Caribbean, called Americo-Liberians, in 1820, and thus became the first African republic. Liberia is mostly made up of indigenous Africans, with the slaves' descendants comprising around 5% of the population.

The West African nation was relatively calm until the late 1980s, when arbitrary rule and economic collapse culminated in armed conflict. In April 1980, Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe, from the Krahn ethnic group, staged a military coup and seized power. Doe's rule was challenged in December 1989 by President Charles Taylor, plunging the country into an armed conflict that would later be known as one of Africa's bloodiest, claiming the lives of more than 200,000 people and further displacing a million more into refugee camps in neighbouring countries. Fighting intensified as rebel groups splintered and battled each other, the Liberian army and West African peacekeepers. In 1995 a peace agreement was signed, leading to the election of Mr Taylor as president. Anti-government fighting broke out in the north of the country in 1999. Under intense US and international pressure President Taylor stepped down in 2003 and went into exile in Nigeria. This move paved the way for the deployment by ECOWAS of what became a 3,600-strong peacekeeping mission in Liberia (ECOMIL). Leaders from the Liberian government, the rebels, political parties, and civil society signed a comprehensive peace agreement that laid the framework for a National Transitional Government of Liberia. In September 2003, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1509 establishing a peacekeeping operation under Chapter VII authority (UN Mission in Liberia, UNMIL). In November 2005, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected the first female president of Liberia and in Africa. She took office on 16 January 2006, ending two years of transitional government. The conflict left the country in economic ruin and teeming with weapons.

Liberia at the time of writing had not been spared by the worldwide increases in prices of basic commodities. These had jeopardized the positive effects of debt relief and poverty reduction measures.

The country still depended heavily on international support to overcome economic problems and the legacy of its violent past. Over 8,000 UNMIL civilian and military personnel provided security. The potential for unrest remained, given rampant unemployment, corruption, lack of basic social and economic services and the limited success of the programme for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of former fighters, which was officially concluded by the Liberian president in July 2009. Violent disputes over land ownership also continued to take place. The humanitarian landscape was changing as aid organizations and NGOs left or cut back their activities and development agencies moved in. Despite progress towards recovery, much remained to be done to improve the population's still limited access to basic services.

The ICRC in Liberia

At the time of writing, the ICRC had worked in Liberia since 1970. It opened its operational delegation in Monrovia in 1990.

Since the onset of the first war in 1990, the ICRC adopted a public health approach to the situation. To help avert epidemics in the besieged city of Monrovia, it had engineers and medical personnel work hand in hand to restore infrastructure, such as the urban water supply and electricity, and support the health system. During the war of 2003, ICRC surgical teams treated the war wounded at JFK Hospital, where the organization also provided medication and specialized medical equipment.

The ICRC endeavoured to carry out extensive health-care and water and sanitation programmes in Liberia, combined with shelter and income projects to provide people with better access to health facilities and clean water.

In 1991, the ICRC's first tracing activities were conducted in Liberia. The ICRC arranged family reunifications and distributed Red Cross messages enabling family members to stay in touch with each other. Hundreds of Liberian Red Cross volunteers collected and distributed messages between people displaced within Liberia and between Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The ICRC also carried out regular visits to people detained in Liberia in connection with the civil war with the aim of monitoring and improving their treatment and conditions of detention.

The year 2009 was a turning point for the ICRC in post-conflict Liberia, as it switched its focus from protection and assistance to activities promoting the inclusion of international humanitarian law and human rights law in the training programmes of the newly established Liberian armed, police and security forces. The ICRC was also working with the authorities to enhance their understanding and acceptance of international humanitarian law and to press for its national implementation. Priority was also to be given to helping the Liberia National Red Cross Society fulfil its responsibilities in the changing context and strengthening the image of the Red Cross in the country.

Over the course of 2009 the ICRC was to phase out its assistance projects involving health care, water and sanitation, economic security and shelter in areas where large numbers of returnees were now residing. Priority was to be given to helping communities and authorities to assume their responsibility for basic services and to sustain community facilities constructed or repaired by the ICRC. ICRC projects had given a major boost to the resumption of staple food production and to efforts to help returnees and residents restore their livelihoods.

The ICRC provided support for the Liberia National Red Cross Society and promoted international humanitarian law among the armed forces present in Liberia.

OPINION SURVEY

OPINION SURVEY

The Impact of Armed Conflict

Personal experience of armed conflict

Virtually everyone (96%) in Liberia had experienced – and hence had been affected in some way by – armed conflict. Very large numbers report having to face issues such as:

- having to leave their homes, having their homes looted, serious damage to their property or combatants taking food away;
- loss of contact with close relatives, or a member of a person's immediate family having been killed during the armed conflict.

The overall experiences reported are almost identical among men and women, with exceptions in just a few cases (see below), while the Christian population seems to have been more exposed to the armed conflict than the Muslim population (98% vs. 86%).

Understandably, older people are most likely to report such experiences (close to 100%) – but 18-24-year-olds follow very closely (95% report personal experience).

Respondents who have been personally affected by conflict report a wide range of traumatic experiences covering either personal loss or issues relating to homes or possessions.

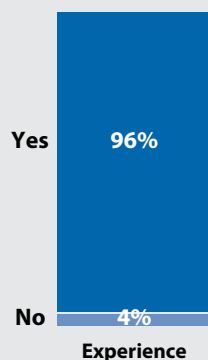
- Nine out of 10 (90%) had to leave their homes to live elsewhere; nearly as many had their homes looted (83%).
- Three-quarters (76%) had food taken away by combatants, and around the same proportion experienced serious damage to their property (74%).

Significant numbers of people report even more harrowing situations.

- Almost nine out of 10 (86%) lost contact with a close relative.
- Almost seven in 10 had a member of their immediate family killed during the armed conflict (69%).
- About half of the respondents had been humiliated (55%), tortured (45% – predominantly men 50% vs. women 39%) and/or claimed somebody they knew well was a victim of sexual violence (51%).
- Two in every five say they were wounded by the fighting (40%).
- Nearly one-third report being imprisoned (30%) and over a quarter being kidnapped or taken hostage (26%).

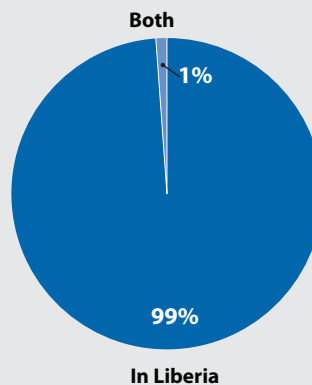
Personal experience of armed conflict

Q1. Have you personally experienced armed conflict, or not?



Base: All respondents (500)

Q2. Was this in Liberia or was it somewhere else?

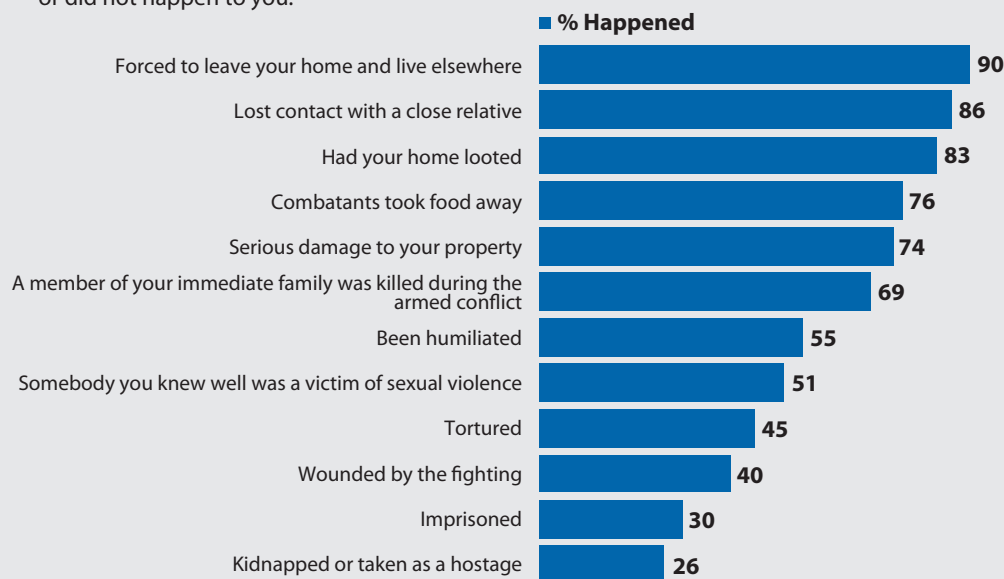


Base: All experiencing armed conflict (477)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Personal impact of armed conflict

Q3A. I'm going to ask you about your actual experiences during the armed conflict in Liberia. Please tell me whether any of the following things happened to you personally or did not happen as a consequence of the armed conflict in Liberia. For each one, please indicate whether it happened or did not happen to you.



Base: All who have experienced armed conflict (477)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

And when were people most recently affected by the conflict?

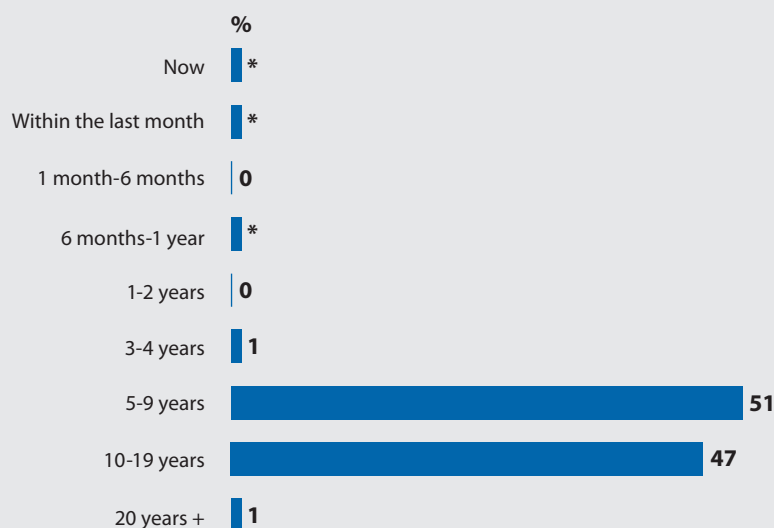
For the vast majority it was some time ago: 5-9 years ago (51%) or 10-19 years ago (47%).

Liberians were mostly affected by the armed conflict some time ago – either 5-9 years ago (51%) or 10-19 years ago (47%) – in line with the two major armed conflicts affecting the country. The first Liberian armed conflict occurred between 1989-1996 and the second between 1997 and 2003.

This also suggests that the situation has improved in the country since the two peaks of armed conflict.

Recent experiences

Q5. And when were you personally most recently affected by this armed conflict in Liberia?



Base: All who have experienced/been affected by conflict in any way (478)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

People's greatest fears

In Liberia, people's 'greatest fears' relate to their being undermined or losing control of their lives – rather than to direct physical harm.

For women, sexual violence is one of the greatest fears (33%).

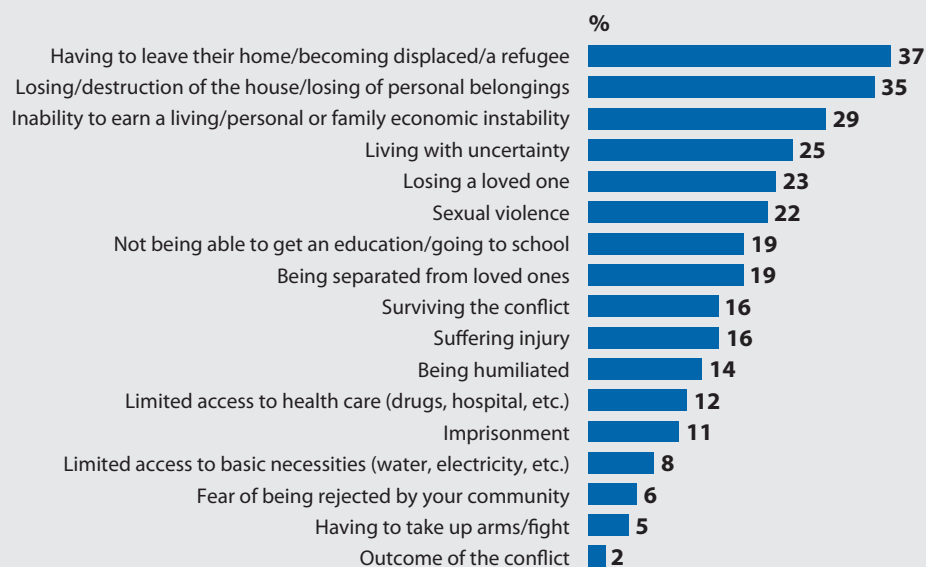
For Liberian people:

- 37% fear having to leave their home/becoming displaced/a refugee;
- 19% fear being separated from loved ones;
- 35% fear losing/destruction of their house or the loss of personal belongings;
- 29% (36% of young adults aged 18-24) fear not being in a position to earn a living – in other words are concerned about personal or family economic stability and hence living with uncertainty (25%);
- losing a loved one (23%) and sexual violence (22%) represent other significant fears;
- there does not appear to be much fear of limited access to basic necessities (such as water, electricity) and to health care (8% and 12% respectively). These are of even less concern among women.

The fear of sexual violence (33%) represents the second most important fear for women – second only to the fear of having to leave home, becoming displaced or becoming a refugee (36%). At the other end of the spectrum, concerns such as limited access to basic necessities and to health care are more commonly cited as important by men than women (12% vs. 3% and 15% vs. 8% respectively).

People's greatest fears

Q6. What do you think are the two or three greatest fears people are facing in a situation of armed conflict in Liberia?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Feelings as a consequence of armed conflict

How does armed conflict change people's state of mind?

Greater wisdom and heightened sensitivity appear to result from armed conflict (83% and 70% respectively).

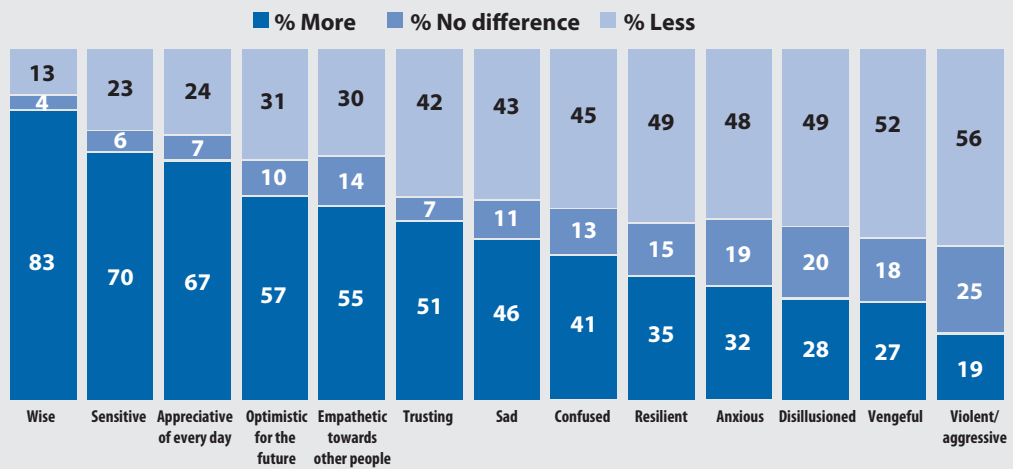
The top three responses as to how armed conflict changes people's state of mind are that conflict makes people wiser, more sensitive and more appreciative of every day. In addition, people claim that conflict has made them feel personally less violent/aggressive and less vengeful.

In addition, more than half of the respondents (57%) say they are more optimistic about the future (outnumbering the 31% who are less so) and hence less disillusioned (49%, as opposed to 28% who are more so).

The experience of armed conflict has also engendered more empathy towards other people (55%).

Feelings as a consequence of armed conflict

Q8. Now I would like to ask you about whether the armed conflict has changed the way you feel. For each description I read out, please say whether the armed conflict has made you feel more this way, less this way, or has it made no real difference. First [...], would you say it has made you more [...], less [...], or has it done neither?



Base: All who have experienced/been affected by conflict in any way (478)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Civilians' needs in armed conflict

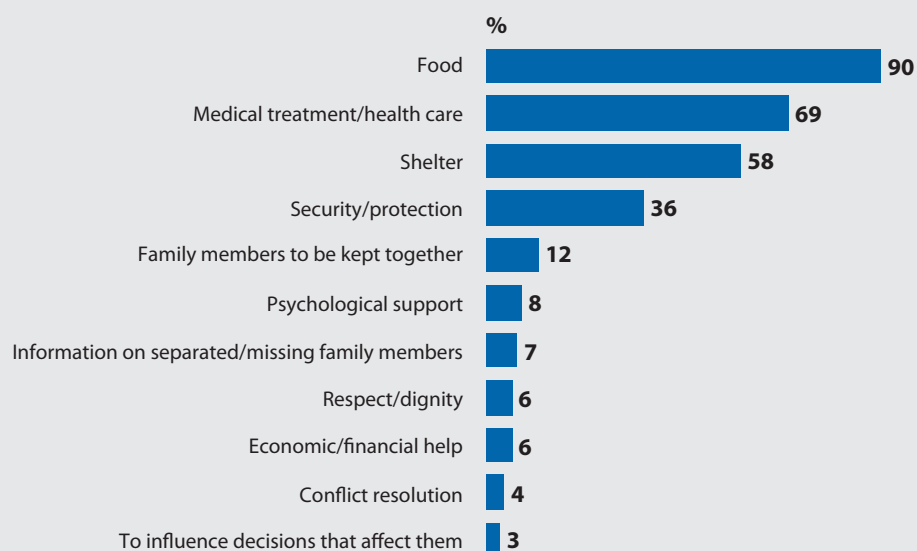
First and foremost, people need 'the basics'. Nine in 10 refer to food as the greatest need (90%), whilst over two-thirds mention medical and health care (69%), and over half see shelter as a basic and immediate need (58%).

- Food represents by far the number one need as 90% of the people choose this as one of the most important requirements for civilians living in areas of armed conflict.
- In addition to food, medical treatment/health care (69%) and shelter (58%) are the two other basic and immediate needs that civilians living in areas of armed conflict have.
- Protection/security (36%) is also mentioned by a significant proportion of people, but still by far fewer than mention basic needs. This is in spite of the high proportion of people who claimed to have suffered torture, sexual violence or humiliation.

Other, non-basic needs, mentioned by around one in 10 Liberians or fewer, include the need for family members to be able to stay together, and the need for information about separated/missing family members. The need for psychological support and for respect and dignity elicits a similar level of response.

Civilians' needs

Q7. What do you think civilians who are living in areas of armed conflict need the most? Please select the three most important to you.



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Help and support from entities/institutions

Where do people turn for help during armed conflict?

Help comes from a variety of sources, including parents and families (76%), the UN (75%) and the Liberian Red Cross and the ICRC (combined 67%). These groups – in the same order – are also seen to be the best at understanding people's needs.

Whilst people report help coming principally from parents and families, the UN, and the Liberian Red Cross and the ICRC, respondents also report receiving help or support from NGOs (63%), from the individuals living in their community (47%) and religious entities (47%).

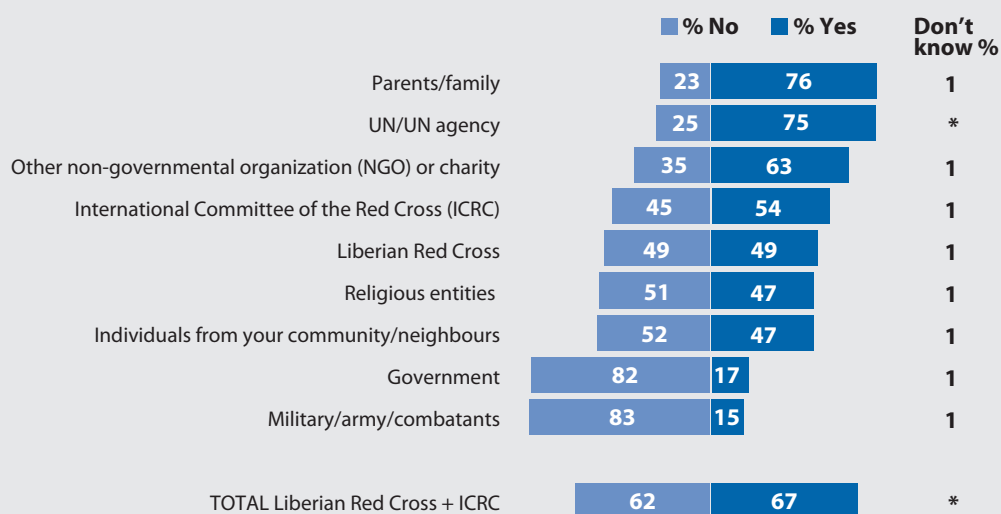
However, the help and support received from the government appears to be relatively minimal (17%) – at the same level as military/army/combatants.

Regardless of who delivers help and support, it usually appears to be in line with people's needs. A high proportion of people (about 50% or more) say that the groups/organizations delivering aid completely understand people's needs. Parents and family are seen to best understand the needs of those affected (87% completely understand people's needs), followed closely by the Liberian Red Cross and the ICRC (72% combined).

It is most often men who are the recipients of support (perhaps on behalf of their families) from the ICRC, the Liberian Red Cross and the government. Men and women are equally likely to receive help from other entities, including parents/family and religious entities.

Help and support

Q9. During the time you experienced or were being affected by armed conflict, did you receive help or support from any of the following?

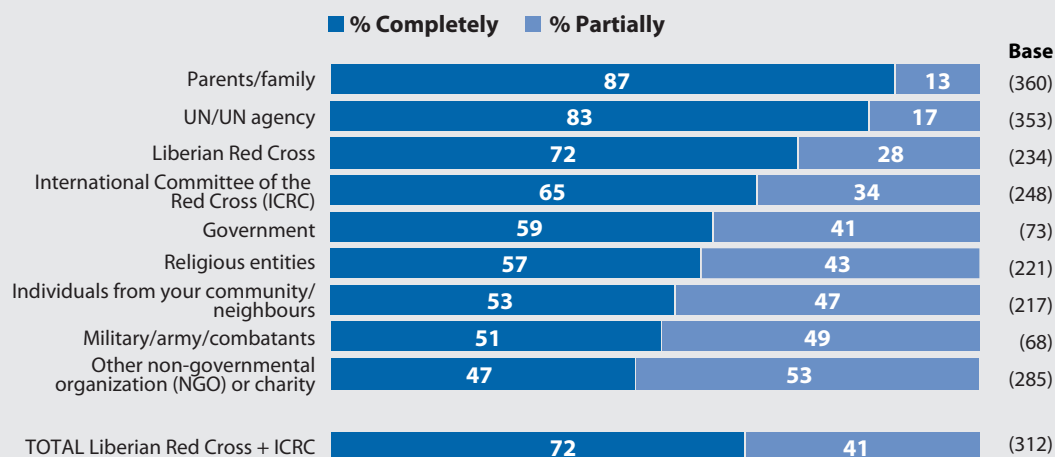


Base: All who have experienced/been affected by conflict in any way (478)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Help and support

Q10. For each of the types of organizations or people you mentioned receiving help or support from, I would like you to tell me how well you felt they understood your needs. First, the [type of support at Q9]...do you feel your needs were completely understood, partially understood, or not understood at all?



Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Barriers to receiving help

When people do not receive support during periods of armed conflict, it is due to a variety of obstacles. Corruption is the obstacle encountered most (81%). Only 5% say that help and support has been refused because it is not needed.

Respondents cite the most significant barriers to receiving/accepting help and support as being corruption (81%), the black market (52%), discrimination (51%) and geographical inaccessibility (41%).

Although less prominent, lack of knowledge is mentioned by a quarter of the people (26%) – suggesting some potential for improvement in this area.

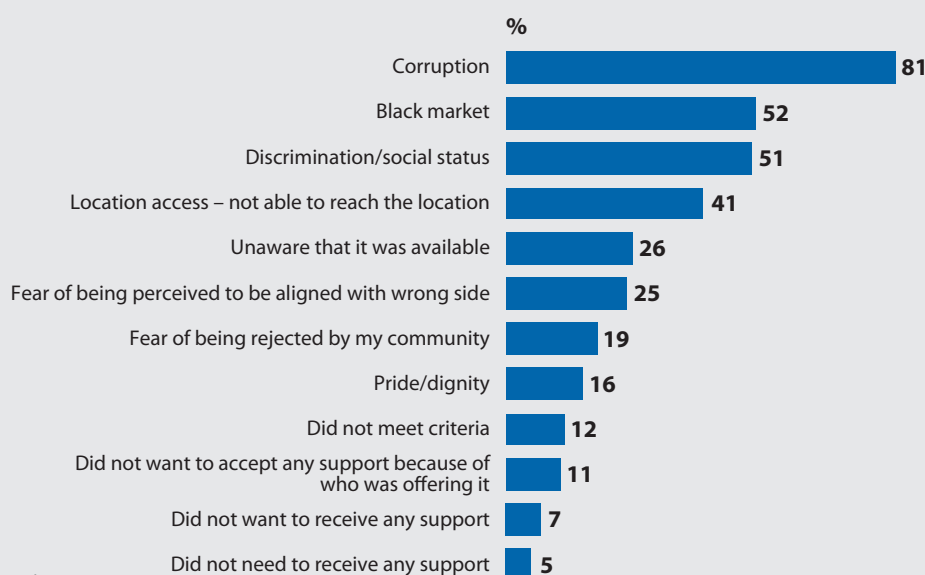
When people decide not to receive help, it is usually a decision to some extent forced on them – whether for fear of being perceived to be aligned with the wrong side (25%) or of being rejected by their own community (19%). Pride and dignity (16%) also play a role.

Overall, men and women share similar views regarding the barriers to receiving or accepting help and support.

People seldom decide not to receive any help/support. When they do, it is because of those who were offering it (11%), the fact that they did not want to receive any support (7%) or that they did not need any support (5%). The low proportion of people not accepting help is of course a reflection of the fact that a very high proportion were in need of such support.

Barriers to receiving help

Q11. Which, if any, of the following reasons do you think may have prevented people in Liberia receiving or accepting help or support during armed conflict?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Reducing suffering

In terms of reducing suffering during armed conflict, people clearly consider the international organizations to be the most effective.

A range of groups and organizations can provide support to people in times of armed conflict. In terms of specifically reducing suffering in these circumstances, external and international organizations appear to play the biggest role.

The UN is the entity that comes to mind first for the people of Liberia (40%), followed by other international organizations (including the ICRC (12%)).

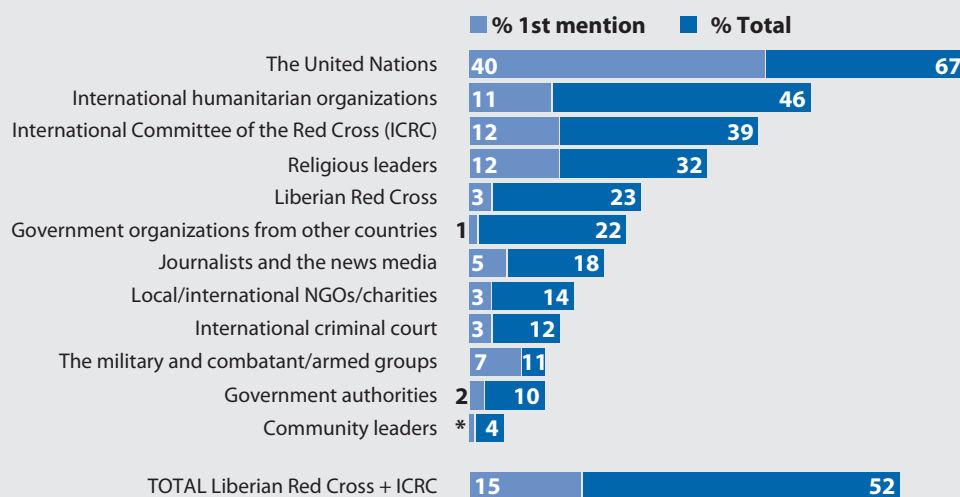
This predominance of international organizations is also reflected at the Red Cross level, where more people consider the ICRC (12% first mentions) than the Liberian Red Cross (3%) to play a big role.

With the exception of religious leaders (12%), local entities appear to play a marginal role. For example, just 2% mention government authorities first, and less than 1% think of community leaders first.

Men and women share very similar views on this.

Reducing suffering

Q20. I'm now going to describe different kinds of groups and organizations. Please tell me which three of these play the biggest role to help reduce suffering during armed conflict.



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

The role of external actors

People in Liberia want the international community to make its presence felt directly in the country, by various means.

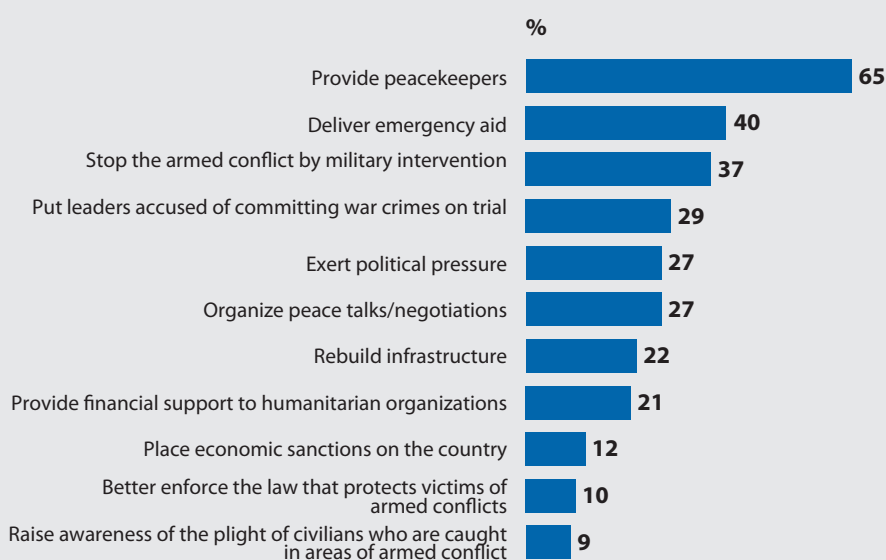
- By providing peacekeepers (65%);
- by delivering emergency aid (40% – 45% of men);
- by stopping armed conflict through military intervention (37%).

Beyond these three very tangible and immediate actions, people are also looking for more long-term engagement to:

- influence the armed conflict itself – including by exerting political pressure (27%), organizing peace talks/negotiations (27%) and ultimately bringing leaders charged with war crimes to trial (29%);
- address the consequences of the armed conflict – for example by rebuilding infrastructure (22%) or by providing financial support to humanitarian organizations (21%) to ultimately alleviate the impact of the conflict.

The role of external actors

Q21. What do you think the international community should do to help civilians who are living in areas of armed conflict?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

And what should the role of people living outside the conflict zone (in other words citizens in other countries) be in helping victims of armed conflict?

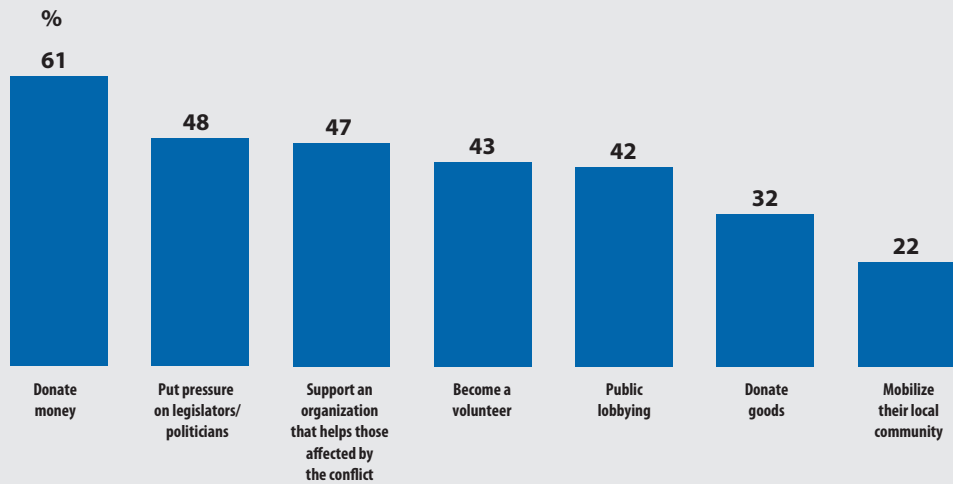
Their role should be to donate money (61%) to help meet the population's basic needs (food, shelter, medical) and, secondarily, to donate goods (still a sizeable 32% – 36% among men).

In addition, social/individual involvement is perceived as a source of help/support that people living outside the conflict zone can provide. Applying political pressure (48%), supporting an aid organization (47%) or becoming a volunteer (43%) are examples of such involvement.

Just 22% of Liberians see the mobilization of the local community as something for people living outside the conflict zone to help with.

Support from the wider world

Q22. What, if anything, do you think people living outside of conflict zones can do that would most help victims of armed conflict in Liberia? Please select the three you feel are most important.



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Behaviour during Armed Conflict

Limits to behaviour

The majority of Liberians feel that there should be limits to what combatants are allowed to do in the course of fighting enemies – around three-quarters (73%) mention at least one act which they feel is unacceptable. That said, a minority of Liberians (12%) feel there need be no limits on what combatants can do. About 14% say they do not know what should be considered acceptable.

The vast majority would impose clear limits on violence of all kinds including rape, torture and killing. Obeying the law and acting in accordance with international human rights rules form the basis for people's views on what is and is not acceptable.

When asked a completely open question where respondents were unprompted and free to say whatever came to mind, one in eight said that 'there is nothing that [combatants] should not be allowed to do' (12%). However, a clear majority (73%) do identify actions which they feel should be completely forbidden. The remaining 14% are unsure.

The behaviour most frequently mentioned as unacceptable is that of 'killing civilians' (cited by 32% of all respondents). Many people also feel that sexual assault (22%), stealing/robbing (8%) and torture (6%) should not be allowed.

What do respondents mention as the basis for imposing limits?

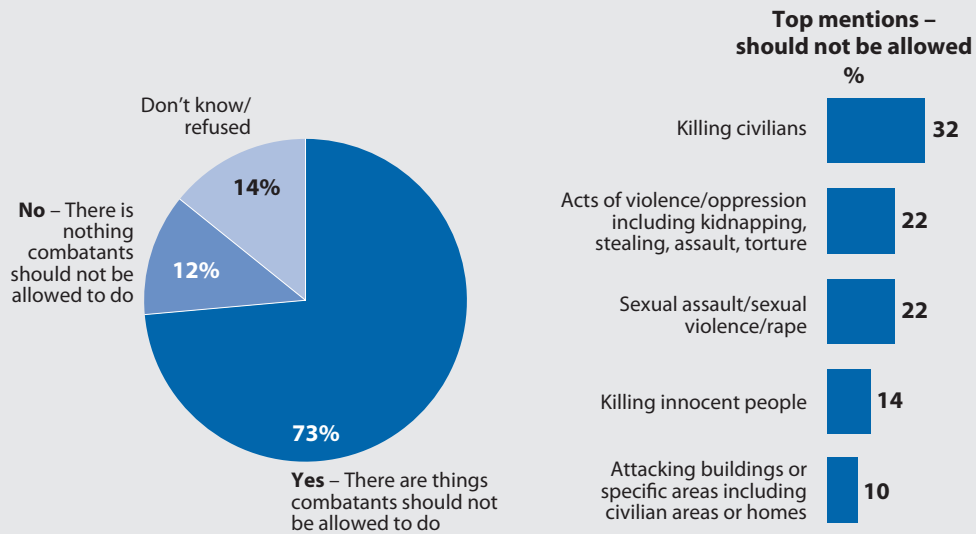
People most often rely on human rights (77%) and on what is specifically covered in the law (70%).

Personal codes or ethics are mentioned by 53% of respondents, religion by 48% and culture by 38%.

Some people feel that certain kinds of behaviour are unacceptable on the basis of the harm they cause. For example, because certain behaviour produces too much destruction (47% say this is a suitable yardstick for actions deemed to be unacceptable), or because it produces too much hate and division (45%).

Limits to behaviour

Q12. Is there anything that combatants should not be allowed to do in fighting their enemy?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Threats to civilians

Liberians feel that civilians should not be seen as acceptable targets except when they actively help enemy combatants.

People were asked how they feel about combatants attacking civilians in order to 'weaken the enemy'.

Nearly all Liberians (over 98%) feel that civilians and enemy combatants are not equally legitimate targets. Most (64%) believe that it is only acceptable to target enemy combatants, and that civilians should be left alone. Nearly all others (34%) feel that combatants should avoid civilians 'as much as possible'. Fewer than 1% feel civilians should be attacked in the same way as enemy combatants.

To further understand what people feel combatants should or should not be allowed to do, people were asked about the acceptability of specific actions by combatants fighting an enemy.

Only in instances where civilians voluntarily support the enemy are they then seen as legitimate targets:

- 75% say it is 'OK' to attack civilians who voluntarily transport ammunition for the enemy;
- 49% say it is 'OK' to attack civilians who voluntarily give food and shelter to the enemy.

It is felt by nearly all that neither civilians nor religious or historical monuments should ever be targeted by combatants. For 90% or more, it is simply 'not OK' to:

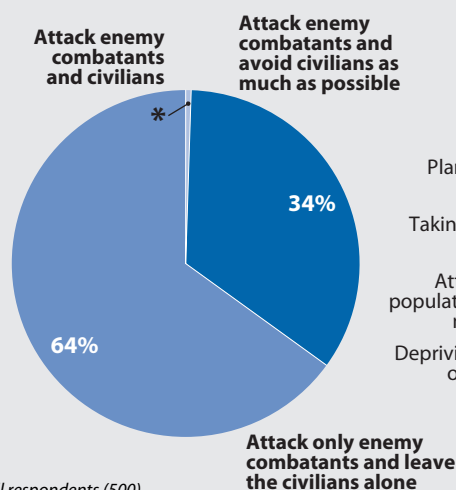
- deprive civilians of food, medicine or water to weaken the enemy;
- attack religious or historical monuments;

- attack enemy combatants in populated villages or towns;
- take civilian hostages in order to get something in exchange.

The vast majority (87%) of Liberians are also opposed to planting landmines where civilians may step on them.

Threats to civilians

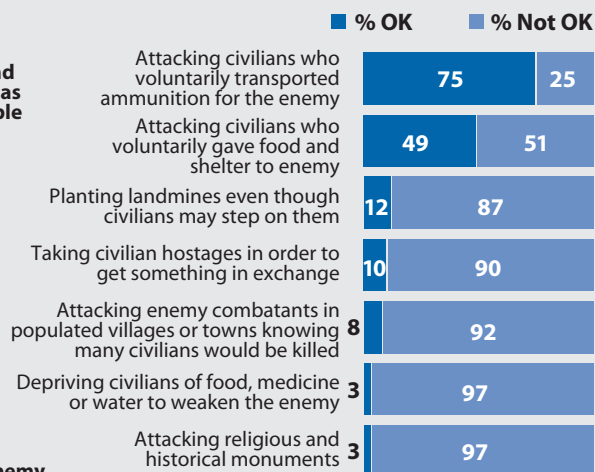
Q14. Now I would like to ask you some general questions about how, in your view, combatants should behave in times of armed conflict. When combatants attack to weaken the enemy, should they:



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Q15. Is there anything that combatants should not be allowed to do in fighting their enemy? For each one, please indicate whether is it OK or not OK to do that in fighting their enemy.



Base: All respondents (500)

Health workers and ambulances

The vast majority of Liberians say that it is never acceptable to target health workers or ambulances. At least one in eight Liberians, however, think there are circumstances in which health workers and ambulances are sometimes an acceptable target (12% and 16% respectively).

The majority of people see health workers (88%) and ambulances (84%) as unacceptable targets for combatants.

Of the very few people who condone attacks on health workers and ambulances, 80% mention the three following circumstances:

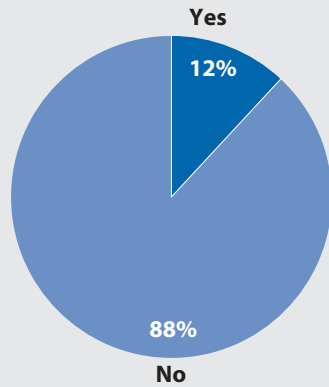
- when health workers and ambulances are not clearly identified as such;
- when health workers and ambulances are involved in treating enemy combatants;
- when health workers are perceived to take sides or when ambulances are used for hostile purposes.

These findings are based on small numbers of people, so must be treated with caution.

Even those who feel that attacks on health workers and ambulances can be justified in some circumstances distinguish clearly between combatants and civilians: most still feel that it is not justifiable to target health workers and ambulances when they are caring for civilians.

Targeting health workers

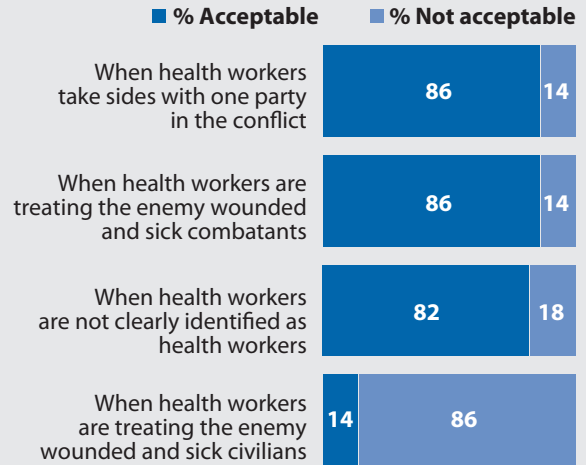
Q16. In a situation of armed conflict, are there any circumstances in which you think it is acceptable for combatants to target health workers?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

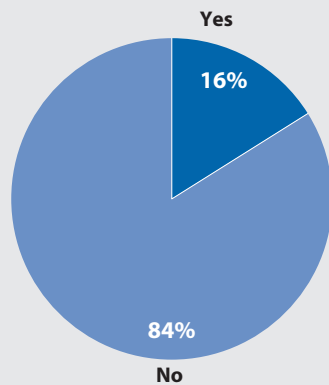
Q17. In which, if any, of the following circumstances do you think this is acceptable?



Base: All who think that some circumstances are acceptable to target health workers (64)

Targeting ambulances

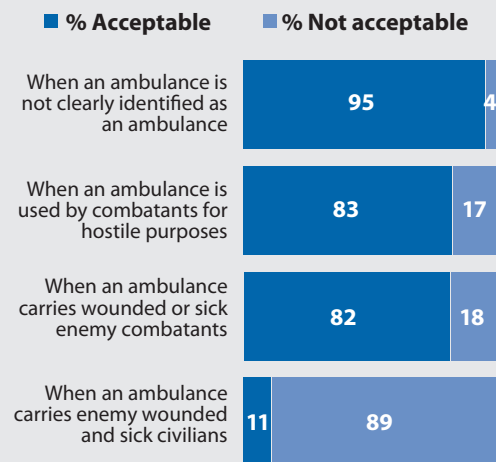
Q18. In a situation of armed conflict, are there any circumstances in which you think it is acceptable for combatants to target ambulances?



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Q19. In which, if any, of the following circumstances do you think this is acceptable?



Base: All who think that some circumstances are acceptable to target ambulances (88)

Health workers and services: the right to health care

The vast majority (93%) agree that ‘everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict should have the right to health care’.

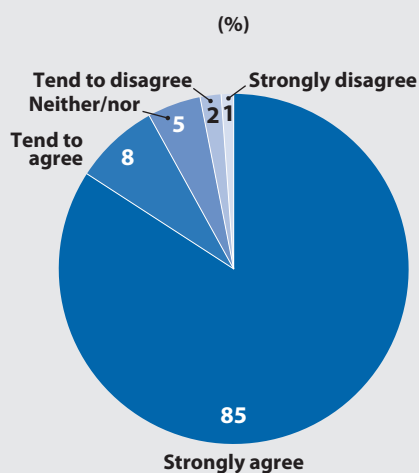
Similarly, almost all respondents (90%) agree that health workers should treat ‘wounded and sick civilians from all sides of the conflict’.

A high majority of respondents (85%) ‘strongly agree’ that everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict should have the right to health care.

The view that health workers should take care of the sick and wounded from all sides is held by 90% of respondents. However, there is still a small minority (9%) who believe that health workers should treat only the wounded and sick civilians from their side.

The right to health care

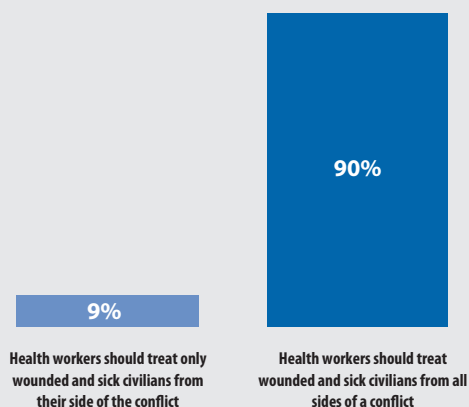
Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict should have the right to health care”



Base: All respondents (500)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of “don’t know” responses

Q26. In the context of an armed conflict, what best describes your personal views:



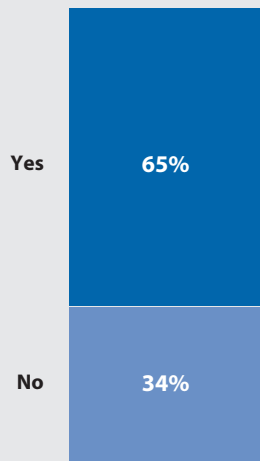
Base: All respondents (500)

The Geneva Conventions

Two-thirds of Liberians have heard of the Geneva Conventions; of these, the vast majority (85%) believe that the Geneva Conventions are effective in limiting the suffering of civilians in war time.

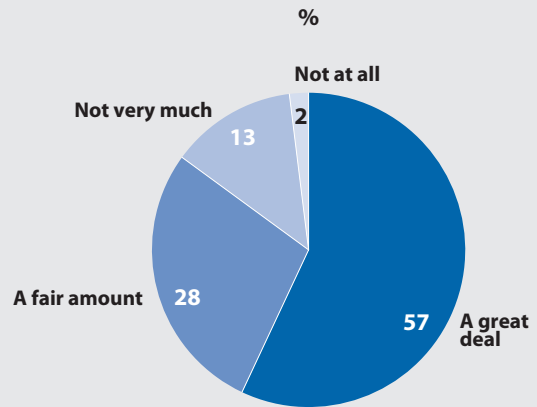
Awareness of the Geneva Conventions

Q23. Have you ever heard of the Geneva Conventions?



Base: All respondents (500)

Q24. To what extent do you think the existence of the Geneva Conventions limits the suffering of civilians in war time?



Base: All who have heard of the Geneva Conventions (326)

Where total does not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses, computer rounding or to the exclusion of "don't know" responses

Eighty-five per cent of the respondents who are aware of the Geneva Conventions believe the treaties limit the suffering of civilians in war time at least 'a fair amount'. Only around 13% say that the Geneva Conventions do not limit suffering very much; a mere 2% say that they have no impact at all.

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

The Impact of Armed Conflict

The armed conflict in Liberia has had a number of profound and long-lasting negative effects on its people and infrastructure that it will take a long time to overcome.

However, regardless of the cause of the conflict, there is some concern that it will lead to a cycle of revenge, thus ensuring that war will be a part of people's future as well as their past.

The armed conflict in Liberia has had a number of long-lasting and wide-reaching negative effects on civilians. Indeed, many respondents state that their experiences have shaped the person that they have become and affect how they respond in certain situations and relate to others.

However, while all respondents were directly affected by the armed conflict in some way, many still report feeling confused as to why it began in the first instance. Some, for instance, believe it was because of political differences in government while others think it stemmed from tribal differences.

I believe the war started as a tribal thing and then it took various dimensions, they killed each other because of different tribal backgrounds. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Regardless of the root cause, all feel that the potential gains from the conflict did not warrant the toll taken on the people of Liberia. Indeed, there is a strong sense that the fighting should have been limited to the parties involved and should not have affected innocent civilians – many of whom were not even aware of the fighting until it erupted around them.

However, because of the wide-reaching nature of the conflict and the fact that it involved civilians there is a worry that the fighting would be perpetuated in the future as various parties seek revenge for how they were treated and the impact that the war has had on them. This worry is particularly relevant for respondents, given that they have been through a number of different conflicts in the past. As a result, respondents are keen not to experience anything similar again and, therefore, urge for peaceful resolution wherever possible.

There are better ways to resolve these kinds of issues than using armed conflict and ruining the lives of innocent people. (Sam, internally displaced person)

Personal experience of armed conflict

Given the nature of their experiences, many of the respondents find it difficult to discuss the impact of the conflict on them personally.

However, when this is explored in more detail, most speak about how the war has affected them in two main ways. In the first instance, they report physical and emotional suffering from the violence experienced and the grief that resulted.

Respondents also speak about displacement. This not only means losing one's home, possessions, livelihood and community but, additionally, some speak of how it could negatively affect them and their country as a whole in the future by, for example, disrupting their education and thus hampering their cultural and intellectual development.

All respondents openly discussed their experiences of armed conflict and the ways in which the Liberian armed conflict has affected them and those around them.

Physical and emotional suffering

When discussing the conflict, many respondents initially speak of the physical suffering they, and those they are close to, have experienced. Some of them have even witnessed the murder of family members as a result of the armed conflict.

Such events understandably cause great pain and suffering to the respondents – particularly when they know the victims. Indeed, their grief is so strong that it is often reported as a physical as well as an emotional pain. This is due not only to the immense trauma of witnessing a murder but also to the closeness of the communities in which the violence occurred.

They killed my son when they found us. It was a really great pain on me. (Maka, 42, victim of armed conflict)

They made her sit down in front of the dead body and look at the dead body's head. The whole day she had to look at the head. Then they killed her boy, the baby was two months old. (Margaret, 30+, member of separated family, first responder)

Respondents also report how threats of violence were used as weapons of war and a means of encouraging compliance among the local population. Indeed, the psychological impact of this on respondents is often felt to be as great as if actual violence had been used.

One time a guy came to me and said because of my size I must be eating all the food, so he put knife to my stomach to open it... Another time a guy came and he said he wanted a woman, but nobody could give in to him, so he pointed the gun straight at me to scare us. I was praising God that when he shot, the bullet did not come out, only gunpowder landed on me. (Jodie, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Sexual violence, including rape, is also acknowledged as being used against the people of Liberia during the conflict. However, while this fact is recognized, respondents are reluctant to discuss this issue in more detail in view of the stigma that is attached to the victims of such assaults.

Being witness to and experiencing such violence has a great emotional effect on respondents and many report feelings of grief and guilt. In addition, some state that the things they saw as a result of the conflict were so terrible that they have had to disconnect from their emotions in order to survive. Consequently, there is a sense among some (particularly those more closely involved in the conflict) that the war has changed their character by, for instance, making them more negative or pessimistic.

The conflict did change me in a negative way because it dehumanized my personal self. The conflict dehumanized me. (Jameson, 30+, first responder)

Displacement

In order to survive, many respondents report that they have had to leave their homes to flee from armed parties. Displacement was also forced on respondents in other ways. For instance, respondents tell us that kidnapping and abduction were common. Furthermore, some respondents who were kidnapped were also forced to join an armed group and fight against their people.

They took me away from there, away from my people. They wanted me to join them and I couldn't, I could not join because I said I am from a family of good children. (John, 30+, internally displaced person)

Regardless of the causes of displacement, however, this has a number of knock-on effects on respondents themselves, their families and the wider communities in which they live.

In the first instance, displacement has a psychological effect on those who have had to leave their homes. Many express uncertainty about the action they have taken, where they would end up, whether they would survive and how they would cope financially. Furthermore, they were fearful about what would happen to them if they were caught trying to flee, with many suspecting that the punishment for this would be death.

We heard word that they were coming, so we fled. We hid in the bushes and hoped they would not come looking for us. The words that come to my mind are either survival or death. If they catch you then it can be either, but most likely death. (Fado, member of separated family)

More broadly, respondents are concerned about the fate and wellbeing of those left behind, with some mentioning that they feel guilty for having left. Indeed, displacement has fractured communities and established networks of support so that those who were once cared for are left to fend for themselves. This is often the case for children who have become separated from their parents as a result of the armed conflict.

Our parents became refugees in Guinea and we were left alone. We depend on our parents for every other support. So because of the war our parents left the country and we had no support. We had to find means for ourselves. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Displacement also has a number of physical effects on those forced to leave their home. For instance, respondents report having to travel very long distances often over very unforgiving terrain. This, coupled with the fact that access to drinking water and food was limited, means that there was often a great physical toll on those forced to leave their homes.

Leaving home also affects respondents both financially and materially, as they are forced to leave behind their possessions and livelihoods. Those who stayed behind report how this in turn gave rise to looting, theft and vandalism, as abandoned properties were ransacked for food, clothing, utensils and livestock. This, of course, then affected those who remained in the area, as they then lacked the necessary means to get by.

They come and take all the food and the clothes, they even take the cattle. We have no food. (Fado, member of separated family)

Finally, there is evidence to suggest that displacement will affect individuals financially, not only for the duration of the conflict but, potentially, for the remainder of their lives. The reason for this is that in leaving home, many respondents have had their education interrupted – often for long stretches of time.

When will I continue my education? Because of the war, I went to the interior and the bush and stopped my education... I became a bushman. (Fado, member of separated family)

Respondents tend to believe that education is an important catalyst for overall growth and development – both of the individual and society as a whole. They therefore believe that this interruption in their, or their child's, education will hamper both their own personal development and Liberia's growth and future prosperity.

I had to go away, and that was not a good thing, as even as I speak now, my educational process has gone backwards... It deprived people from attaining a higher echelon of their moral, social, and mental satisfaction. (Hugh, internally displaced person)

Civilians' needs in armed conflict

Spontaneously, respondents speak about how they simply required the very basics during the armed conflict in order to help them survive. Many say that they needed food, shelter, medical assistance and water.

Respondents also speak of how they needed to carry on as normal as far as they could and, therefore, needed to be able to access educational programmes so they could continue to develop in spite of the armed conflict.

Despite the cessation of hostilities, respondents still suggest that they require assistance to meet these needs, as the conflict has damaged the country to such a great extent.

All respondents express, above all else, a need for armed conflict to cease in Liberia. It is felt that peaceful conditions are a prerequisite for the country to regroup and move forward, and for its people to come to terms with the past and live 'normally' again. However, respondents also recognize that this wish is optimistic and, perhaps, a little naïve, given all they have experienced in the past.

Nevertheless, they still feel there was a real need for the international community to involve itself in the affairs of Liberia. It is believed that only through the involvement of other nations will they be able to broker a sustainable peace deal. Indeed, respondents say that it was only the intervention of foreign powers that brought the second civil war to a close.

We needed the international community to take things in hand, the superpower, and immediately put a stop to the conflict. (Landon, 39, member of separated family)

Generally, though, respondents speak in terms of needing the real basics to enable them to survive: food, water, shelter and clothing. There is a sense that given the extreme situation they were in during the armed conflict, as long as they had what they needed to live then nothing else mattered and they did not 'need' anything else.

It terms of times of conflict, the most important concerns were for food, shelter, and clothing. (John, 30+, internally displaced person)

Respondents state that the impact of the armed conflict was so severe that they still need assistance in ensuring that their most basic requirements in life are addressed.

Furthermore, respondents speak in terms of needing education. As a result of displacement, respondents who were at school or college have had their education interrupted by the fact that they have had to leave home in search of a safe area. It is thought that this, in turn, not only hampers their own personal intellectual and social development but, more broadly, threatens the future economic and cultural progress of Liberia.

Humanitarian assistance

All respondents are grateful for the efforts of the humanitarian organizations working in Liberia during and after the armed conflict. Furthermore, all respondents have received some form of assistance from these organizations.

The ICRC and the Liberian Red Cross are the best known and most respected organizations working in Liberia. It is felt that the ICRC offered a wide range of help and support to civilians and is praised for remaining in Liberia after the end of the armed conflict to help with the reconstruction.

However, there is a sense that the work of humanitarian organizations could be improved in the future. Some suggest that they should have the power to help broker negotiations between warring factions and could work to bring about peaceful resolution to the conflict. Others feel that humanitarian organizations should concentrate more on providing educational programmes in order to inform people about what to do in time of conflict, as well as ensuring that normal schooling is not too badly disrupted.

The importance of assistance

Respondents feel they required assistance in meeting their most basic needs to enable them to survive. Consequently, all report being extremely grateful for the help afforded to them by the various humanitarian organizations working in Liberia during and after the armed conflict. As an illustration of the far-reaching extent of respondents' needs, it is telling that all of them received external help at some point during the conflict.

I will applaud everyone who came to our assistance and helped us victims in this time. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Those working for the organizations responsible for delivering the assistance recognize the importance of what they were doing and the fact that, for some, their ability to offer assistance could mean the difference between life and death. Because of this, first responders speak of how they did everything within their power to help as many people as they could. They did state, though, that in view of the severity and longevity of the conflict, while they tried to help everyone in need of assistance, this was not always possible. Nevertheless, first responders recognize the constraints under which they were working and, given the circumstances, feel they did the best that they could.

All in all I think we helped the majority of people so at least that is good. (Lance, first responder)

Humanitarian assistance from organizations

Respondents note that there were a wide range of organizations working in Liberia which were responsible for delivering assistance to those affected by the armed conflict. They believe that each of these organizations focused on helping them meet a specific need – such as the provision of food, improving sanitation or health care – rather than offering a full range of services.

This system has both advantages and disadvantages, according to respondents. While some organizations were able to fulfil very specific needs that respondents had, there is a sense that it was more complicated than it needed to be for people to access the full range of assistance that they needed. That said, respondents are extremely grateful to all those organizations working in Liberia and acknowledge the different contributions made by all.

We receive aid from here, we receive aid from there. It comes from many places, and each can offer certain things. Sometimes it is the same, and some have unique things to offer. Because they each have what they can offer, so they try together to offer everything. It is always good, but we wanted more in time of conflict. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Of the range of humanitarian organizations involved in Liberia, the ICRC and the Liberian Red Cross are the most frequently recognized and mentioned by respondents. Unlike the point mentioned above about the majority of organizations they encountered, it is felt that the ICRC provided a full range of assistance activities designed to meet the needs of those affected by armed conflict. To illustrate this, respondents speak of how the ICRC provided food, shelter and medical supplies and ensured that those who had left their home as a result of the conflict had access to basic sanitation.

ICRC play very good role, they build shelter, they give food, they give clothes, they give water, they build latrine. They give people to help us, they give drugs, they give medical workers, they help many people. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

In particular though, the ICRC is praised for helping those who had become separated from their families to find their loved ones again. Of course, the outcome of this process was not always what the respondents had hoped for and often resulted in them being informed of the deaths of family members. However, respondents are often relieved simply to know for certain what has happened to their loved ones, and such information helps them to rebuild their lives and move forward.

I lost my sister...she died in Cote d'Ivoire and left behind two of her children and it was through ICRC that we were able to get them. (Landon, 39, member of separated family)

Finally, when discussing the work of the various humanitarian organizations, many note how important it is that they are still in Liberia. Respondents state that the impact of the conflict was so great that the population is still recovering and rebuilding from the destruction caused by armed conflict and, consequently, still needs assistance in accessing the basics for daily existence. Additionally, there is the sense that humanitarian organizations are having more of a positive effect in the country now, as their work is not hampered by fighting

Desired improvements to assistance

Given the effects of armed conflict on respondents, it is perhaps not surprising that many state that the humanitarian organizations should endeavour to work with political parties and warring factions to help bring about a peaceful resolution. While some recognize that this is outside the remit of such groups, others feel that they have the necessary power and authority to act in this way.

As I said, they have the power, they have legitimate power. They should put an end to the war and other wars. (Fado, member of separated family)

Indeed, some believe that this would lighten the burden on humanitarian organizations in the future. This is because by working to end or prevent conflicts, less time would be required to deal with the aftermath of such occurrences.

It is good we get the help that we got, but the fighters and rebels come and do the same thing again, so then we need more help. If they stop them at the beginning then no need to keep giving help for so long. (Hugh, internally displaced person)

While all are grateful that the organizations they encountered have helped meet their basic needs during and after the armed conflict, there is a sense among some that more could be done to ensure the disruption to their life is minimized. While respondents mention a number of issues that could help them in this regard, prime amongst them is the provision of education.

In the first instance, respondents state that it would be useful to be educated on how to behave in a conflict; how they should protect themselves and their families, where they should go if they need to find shelter and how they should cope with the emotional problems caused by war.

*I wanted to know what to do. When the rebels come what must I do, what is best.
(Brise, victim of armed conflict)*

Additionally though, many respondents urge that, in future, humanitarian organizations should work to ensure that those whose lives have been disrupted by conflict do not suffer by missing out on their education. Respondents are concerned that as a result of so many citizens' schooling being interrupted, Liberia will not grow as successfully as it otherwise might have done, ensuring that the legacy of the conflict lasts for a long time. Therefore, in the interests of post-war reconstruction and development, many suggest that humanitarian organizations make more of an effort to either keep educational institutions operational during a conflict or to replace them with functional alternatives for as long as necessary.

If we stop education then what are we to do after the conflict? It will not be possible to continue the life we were having. Conflict should not negatively impact civilians and the worst part is to stop us from learning. Institutions can help us keep learning. (Hugh, internally displaced person)

This point is particularly mentioned by those who have been displaced by the conflict. Essentially, they feel that they have already sacrificed a great deal by giving up their homes and livelihoods and leaving the communities in which they had roots. Because of this, they believe that the organizations should work harder to help them settle into their new homes, almost compensating them for their losses.

I expected more from them because when you are in war you are disturbed and you are like a child... see, they should have opened a school for us, for our children, but they never did while we were displaced. They should have opened clinics and schools and those sorts of things. (Fred, 42, member of separated family)

Humanitarian gestures

Alongside the work of humanitarian organizations, respondents report individual acts of kindness and humanitarian gestures. Such behaviour is thought to be rooted in the cultural and religious traditions of the country and often helped provide civilians with the essentials they needed to survive.

While respondents are extremely grateful for the work of the humanitarian organizations based in Liberia, they also speak frequently and with gratitude about the acts of kindness afforded them by their fellow citizens. These gestures took many forms, ranging from sharing food to helping those in need of medical attention, providing shelter and offering emotional support.

Humanitarian gesture is when we help each other in the community. If somebody gets hurt then you take them to the hospital, if you find a child then you take them to the parent. It is helping each other. (Kyan, 30+, member of separated family)

Respondents are not surprised that such help was offered by their fellow Liberians – even though they too were often negatively affected by the conflict and have lost a great deal as a result of it. However, they believe that helping their neighbours is in accordance with their religious and civic duty and thus welcomed the chance to help people as and when they could.

Maybe I am being Biblical, but you must extend to a person the kind of help or assistance they need, and by showing that yes we are all human, and with this situation let's fix it. (Hugh, internally displaced person)

Just as respondents mentioned that the work of the humanitarian organizations is still required to help with the post-war reconstruction, they also mention that individuals continue to help their neighbours deal with the various effects of the armed conflict to this day. It is thought that acting in this way is a means for the communities to come together again and rebuild the societal links which have been lost during the fighting.

Finally, there is some discussion about whether the work of the international organizations present in Liberia, such as the ICRC and Médecins Sans Frontières, could be classed as a 'humanitarian gesture' in the same way that an act of kindness from an individual could. Many were of the opinion that it could not and felt that bodies such as the ICRC were 'expected' to undertake such work and that they have a specific remit to operate in this way. However, others disagree and believe that such organizations do not have to help them but, in the same way as individuals did, afforded assistance as and when they could to those in need simply because it is the right and humane course of action to take.

They come and they give food, and mosquito nets to help stop malaria. These humanitarian organizations are here for humanitarian gestures. (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Behaviour during Armed Conflict

Rules of conflict

While the enforcement of rules and regulations governing conflict is seen to be difficult, many believe that the key to these is that innocent civilians should be spared.

In addition to this, there is a strong sense of agreement with the fact that medical personnel and those providing humanitarian assistance should not be harmed in any way as a result of the conflict.

Given their experiences of war, it is perhaps not surprising that all respondents feel that armed conflict should be avoided at all costs. Indeed, there is a strong sense that most issues could be resolved by simply respecting existing religious/ethical principles and laws.

Are we all not brothers? Are they not human beings like you? Must we kill friends only because we want something? If we believe we are all created in the image of God, then why are we enemies? (Hugh, internally displaced person)

However, respondents do recognize that achieving this would be impossible and believe it to be in man's nature to try and acquire more than necessary, thus making situations of conflict more likely. Given this, they believe it to be important to have a set of rules in place to try and limit the negative effects of war on the wider population.

First and foremost among these rules, respondents believe it imperative that civilians are protected from any armed conflict and, as far as possible, are allowed to continue with their lives as normal. Essentially, respondents believe that the civilian population are the innocent victims of war and, furthermore, do not have the means to protect themselves from warring factions. Consequently, they should be afforded protection from the fighting.

You should not trouble any civilian population. You should not take their things away from them. You should not kill them. You should not burn their belongings, you should not loot their house. Fight only the man who is facing you with arms. (Jess, 20s, victim of armed conflict)

Few are confident that this rule could be enforced, however. This is because, in the first instance, few think it could be grounded in law but, more generally, there is a strong sense that war can dehumanize those who participate in it, thus making it less likely that they would act in accordance with such rules.

Taking this further, many respondents also note the importance of protecting health-care workers in time of conflict. Encouragingly, the evidence given by respondents suggests that this is one rule which was abided by, at least when the red cross emblem was displayed. This is reiterated by the first responders, who state that they rarely encountered any obstruction when providing assistance, even though they did feel unsafe most of the time.

If they see the signs on the people that were helping, or the uniform, or the cars, then they would leave them alone. (Charles, internally displaced person)

When we arrived they were fighting with each other. But because we come to help they stop the fighting. They let us get the injured and we can take them and get them medical aid. They stop so we can help. (Lance, first responder)

Right to health care and protecting health workers

Respondents believe that all should be entitled to health care – be they civilians or combatants. Because of this, and as mentioned above, the protection of health-care workers is believed to be essential. The view is that anyone might need such assistance at some time and thus health workers should be left to do their job effectively.

In order to ensure that health-care workers are protected, first responders speak of how the red cross emblem identifies them clearly in the field and, to a degree, grants them protection. Beyond this, carrying identification papers and wearing uniforms to distinguish people as health-care workers are thought to be helpful steps to take to ensure that medical personnel are not accidentally targeted.

Right to health care

All respondents agree that everyone, civilians or combatants directly involved in the conflict, should have the right to access health care as and when they need to.

If someone, even the enemy, was in an ambulance, then they would leave them alone. Think if they were in the ambulance instead, then they would not want to be attacked. Also inside are the medical helpers. (Charlotte, 30+, member of separated family)

Driving this opinion at least partially is the uncertainty of war. Respondents mention that they never knew whether or not they would need medical assistance as a result of the armed conflict and, therefore, feel it wise to suggest that everyone should be able to access help just in case they need to one day. Beyond this though, being able to access medical assistance is seen as being one of the most basic of needs and an essential prerequisite if people are to survive. Therefore, all support the right to health care.

This principle is also supported by those who acted as first responders throughout the conflict. They do, however, elaborate on some of the issues that can arise as a result of providing everyone with health care – even those who are responsible for the fighting and could be classed as the ‘enemy’. For instance, they speak of how in these circumstances the identity of the patient needs to be kept confidential so as to ensure that they are not targeted for revenge on being released from hospital.

We keep their information secret so there is no trouble. (Lance, first responder)

Protecting health workers

The protection of health-care workers is viewed as paramount by all respondents. Through their provision of medical help in the most trying of circumstances, such professionals are seen as helping those affected by the conflict to survive. Therefore, harming health-care workers is believed to be damaging to the population of Liberia as a whole and, consequently, something that should be avoided.

They were taking care of the wounded, and the vulnerable who are sick and need help. So if you harm them, you will also be harming the entire population, because Liberia already has a shortage of health workers, so it is important to protect these people. (Decland, first responder)

To ensure their safety in the field, first responders speak about a number of steps they took to guarantee their protection. In the first instance, the recognition of the humanitarian organizations they work for went some way to ensuring their safety and that they were not targeted by the fighters. The red cross emblem used by both the ICRC and the Liberian Red Cross is the most recognized symbol of protection in this regard and it is believed that personnel or vehicles which displayed this sign were left alone.

The ambulance, you know, we have this Red Cross sign that was agreed upon, you know, in Geneva. Because if you are driving an ambulance, you have to have a sign that this is an ambulance. And the duty of the ambulance is to go and carry victims. So if you see that, if you see that sign, you should not touch that ambulance. You should not touch it. (Fado, member of separated family)

In addition, some speak of how carrying formal identification was a means of ensuring their safety in the field. It is thought that this was of particular use when in contact with fighters who, at times, questioned the role of the medical workers and what they were doing there.

The Geneva Conventions

With the exception of first responders, few are aware of the Geneva Conventions and what their remit is. Because of this, first responders suggest that efforts ought to be made to ensure that knowledge and awareness are increased.

However, when the Geneva Conventions are discussed with respondents there is some scepticism about how effectively they could be enforced. Indeed, several respondents refer to them simply as a set of guidelines rather than rules which have to be adhered to.

While most respondents are aware that a set of rules and regulations to govern conduct in war is available, very few have any specific knowledge of the Geneva Conventions. When asked to elaborate on this, some suggest that the Geneva Conventions are related to a country's ability to defend itself from attack. Aside from this though, there is very little understanding about what the Geneva Conventions might cover and what actions might fall under their remit.

There is a sense, however, that the Geneva Conventions are more guidelines than strict rules which have to be enforced and are backed up by law. This is because of the effects of war on people; given that respondents feel that conflicts can dehumanize those who participate in them, they feel it is difficult to govern behaviour in such situations.

The only exception to this viewpoint is those who were interviewed in their capacity as first responders. Given their line of work, they have a greater level of knowledge and awareness about the Geneva Conventions. However, they do recognize that they are something of an exception in this regard and, therefore, suggest that there is a need to educate civilians and fighters in order to increase their level of awareness about the Geneva Conventions. It is also thought that this would help change behaviour and make people more reluctant to engage in violations in the future.

Conclusions: priority actions

The messages that respondents would like people outside Liberia to hear are:

- that the international community should use its power to limit the negative effects of armed conflict on civilians;
- that the principle of caring for one's fellow man should be promoted, to ensure that people treat others as they would expect to be treated in return;
- that the memories of the consequences of armed conflict should be kept alive so that people learn from the experiences of the past.

Respondents have four main messages they suggest should be communicated with the rest of the world about the impact of armed conflict and how it could be avoided in the future:

- International governments should work to limit the impact of armed conflict on civilians. All respondents question why foreign intervention was lacking during the conflict and believe that this could have made a difference for them. Consequently, they urge that in future, foreign powers should, in the first instance, help with negotiations to try and bring about a peaceful resolution. However, should this not be possible then they should instead offer assistance to the people of that country and, in particular, ensure that they can be transferred to a safe area where they will not be harmed by the fighting.

I was expecting the other governments or the international community, or any other group to come and say, you are here and you are causing conflict to these people, and then do away with them, take them away. Or create a safe corridor where they can place us, you know, out of the whole armed conflict. They have the power to do that so why didn't they? (Fado, member of separated family)

- Treat others as you would hope to be treated in return. The impact of the conflict on Liberian civilians is wide reaching and long lasting. They not only suffered physically but also emotionally, culturally and economically. What is more, respondents also feel that Liberia as a nation has suffered as a result of the conflict and that its people have lost their dignity and sense of national pride. Such effects are thought to be so damaging that respondents urge that armed conflict should only ever be a last resort and that, instead, civilians should try where possible to help others, show decency and afford others their basic human rights.

I would just tell the world that people should have heart. People should think about one another. People should treat one another the way they expect to be treated. The people in arms need to be made to understand that we are all human beings. We all deserve our right to life, or right to movement, our right to peaceful coexistence, our right to go to school, our right to our parents, and everyone has rights! Our basic rights should be respected by one another! (Bernard, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

I believe that when we are fighting, what should be done is for instance go beyond the fighting. If you happen to capture your enemy, you don't have to treat him bad. We are educated people, you don't have to kill him. I believe you should rescue him. Speak with him and see how you can help. (Landon, 39, member of separated family)

- Preserve the memories of the impact of armed conflict and learn from past experiences. While respondents find discussing the conflict difficult, there is also a strong sense that what they have been through should not be forgotten but, instead, used as an example that people across the world can learn from. It is felt that by preserving the memories of what they have experienced and communicating them to others, similar mistakes would be less likely in the future.

For us now we have a little bit of relief since the guns are silent, but we are afraid. We are afraid if anything should happen again and people might go back to conflict, and given the experience, the experience that we went through, we are afraid that if those things happen again we must remember the pain and that we did not have pride anymore. (Barry, 30+, victim of armed conflict)

Specific trends for different groups

Internally displaced persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displacement is viewed by respondents as a common experience for the Liberian people. In large part it is thought that individuals were forced into displacement to avoid being in areas where hostilities were ongoing and to escape the suffering. • While initially displaced, the respondents speak of trying to meet their physical needs, such as water, food and shelter. Particularly, fetching drinking water was a cause for great concern, as some became ill if they were not careful about what they drank. • On being displaced, respondents speak specifically about the hard times they faced and the heavy toll on their self-esteem and dignity. • Overall, while respondents speak of harsh and inhumane living conditions such as hiding in the bushes amongst decaying bodies, on the whole they say they suffered less direct physical harm than they expected when they came into direct contact with those fighting in the conflict. Yet they experienced high levels of anxiety and fear of such occurrences, thus never really felt safe. • Amongst the respondents, displaced persons seem to be the most satisfied with the aid they have received, as overall they are the ones who predominantly benefited from the assistance provided by humanitarian organizations. At the same time they have the most to say about all their needs not being met and as such offer more recommendations for improvements.
Relatives of missing persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key concern for the relatives of missing persons is in relation to the younger generations that have been separated from their families. Specifically, they are concerned that young people would lack moral and social guidance. • Respondents also speak of the impact of coercion on family members to join armed forces or rebel groups. Concern is raised in particular about the young people who may have been abducted for this reason. • This group greatly appreciate the assistance they have received from humanitarian organizations. This assistance ranged from providing basic essentials, such as food, to reuniting people with their families.
First responders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For many of the first responders, the assistance they provided is largely seen as being a simple human duty. • Many respondents also acknowledge, however, that they receive several benefits from the work that they do, from receiving a salary to being able to access medical care and being afforded a certain level of protection. Because of this, they feel their work enabled them to enjoy a certain standard of living which other Liberians were not able to have during the armed conflict. • They have witnessed many horrific occurrences and have often suffered themselves as a result of the conflict. Nevertheless, they still feel strongly that all people deserve the right to medical care and are committed to working to ensure this in the future. • They attribute many of the acts committed by the warring parties to a lack of education, including limited knowledge about the rules of armed conflict. Therefore, they suggest that designing an educational programme to raise awareness of the Geneva Conventions would be helpful.
Victims of armed conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims of the armed conflict typically suffered from the most violence and had witnessed the most horrific occurrences. • Many have lost loved ones and were fearful of being victimized by the warring parties, being caught in the cross-fire or being hit by a stray bullet. • Respondents focus on the aid they gave to their fellow Liberians, or the aid they received in return. This varied from providing food to receiving shelter. Humanitarian organizations are acknowledged as assisting but there is less mention of them. Education is a particular focus for this group, as it is seen as being vital for the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

OPINION SURVEY

Sample profile

Liberia (Weighted profile)		
	Number	%
Total	500	100
Gender		
Male	253	51
Female	247	49
Age		
18-24	146	29
25-29	109	22
30-34	84	16
35-39	56	11
40-44	44	9
45-49	21	4
50-64	34	7
65 or over	6	1
Province		
Bomi	20	2
Bong	53	9
Grand Bassa	38	6
Grand Cape Mont	21	4
Grand Gedeh	17	6
Grand Kru	7	2
Lofa	62	10
Margibi	39	6
Maryland	13	4
Montserrado	149	33
Nimba	60	13
Rivercess	7	2
Sinoe	14	3

Liberia (Weighted profile)		
	Number	%
Cities		
Tubmanburg	20	2
Gbarnago	42	7
Buchanan	28	5
Robertspport	21	4
Wwedru	17	6
Barcleyville	7	2
Voinjoma	41	7
Kakata	31	5
Harper	13	4
Monrovia	109	24
Greenville	14	3
Kolela	7	1
Davidslema	8	1
Palela	4	1
Fairgrown	6	1
Loysville	4	1
Foyah	21	3
Firestone	28	6
Ganta	60	13
Bushrod Island	12	3
Cesstos City	7	2
Religion		
Christian	392	80
Muslim	92	17
Area		
Urban	410	83
Rural	90	17

Sampling details

Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample and the percentage figure concerned. For example, for a question where 50% of the people in the full sample of 500 give a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary by more than 4 percentage points plus or minus (i.e. between 46% and 54%) from the result that would have been obtained from a census of the entire population (using the same procedures).

Some examples of the tolerances that may apply in this report are given in the table below.

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)			
Unweighted base (500)	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Size of sample on which survey result is based (unweighted)			
500 (All respondents)	3	4	4
243 (Men affected by armed conflict)	4	6	6
149 (Montserrado people affected by armed conflict)	5	7	8

Source: Ipsos

Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results between different elements (sub-groups) of the sample. A difference must be of at least a certain size to be statistically significant. The table below shows the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons of sub-groups within the research.

Differences required for significance at the 95% confidence level at or near these percentages			
Unweighted base (500)	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Size of 2009 sub-groups (unweighted)			
243 (Men affected by armed conflict) vs. 235 (Women affected by armed conflict)	5	8	9

Source: Ipsos

Marked-up questionnaire

Questionnaire		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interviews with 500 people ● Aged 18+ ● Conducted face-to-face, from 22 February to 28 February 2009 ● Results are weighted ● An asterisk (*) indicates a result of less than 1% (but not zero) ● A 'n/a' denotes 'not asked' ● Base for each question is all (500), unless shown otherwise 	
INTRODUCTION		
	Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am from RMS, an independent social research agency. We are conducting interviews in this area and would like your help with this. The interview will last around 15 minutes and is about your experiences of and opinions on the armed conflict in Liberia	
AA) ON CONFLICT IN GENERAL		
ASK ALL ↴	Q1. Have you personally experienced armed conflict, or not?	
		%
	Yes	96
	No	4
	Don't know	0
	Refused	0
ASK IF 'YES' AT Q1 ↴	Q2. Was this in Liberia, or was it somewhere else?	
	<i>Base: All experiencing armed conflict at Q1-477</i>	%
	In Liberia	99
	Somewhere else (specify)	0
	Both	1
	Don't know	0

ASK IF 'YES' AT Q1 ↴	Q3A. I'm going to ask you about your actual experiences during the armed conflict in Liberia. Please tell me whether any of the following things happened to you personally or did not happen as a consequence of the armed conflict in Liberia. For each one, please indicate whether it happened or did not happen to you				
	Base: All experiencing armed conflict at Q1-477	Happened	Did not happen	Don't know	Refused
		%	%	%	%
Forced to leave your home and live elsewhere		90	10	0	0
Imprisoned		30	70	*	0
Kidnapped or taken as a hostage		26	73	1	*
Tortured		45	54	1	0
Been humiliated		55	43	1	*
Lost contact with a close relative		86	13	0	*
A member of your immediate family was killed during the armed conflict		69	30	0	*
Serious damage to your property		74	25	*	0
Wounded by the fighting		40	58	1	0
Combatants took food away		76	21	3	0
Had your home looted		83	16	*	0
Somebody you knew well was a victim of sexual violence		51	47	2	*
ROTATE STATEMENTS BELOW HERE SEPARATELY AFTER OTHERS					
No or very limited access to basic necessities (water, electricity, etc.)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
No or very limited access to health care		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lost all my belongings		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lost my means of income (e.g. job, revenue, farm land, etc.)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
The area where I lived came under enemy control		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

ASK IF NOT 'YES' AT Q1 ↴	Q3B. I'm going to ask you about how you yourself have been affected by the armed conflict in Liberia. Please tell me whether any of the following things happened to you personally or did not happen as a consequence of the armed conflict in Liberia. For each one, please indicate whether it happened or did not happen to you.			
<i>Base: All not experiencing armed conflict at Q1-23**</i>	Happened	Did not happen	Don't know	Refused
	%	%	%	%
Forced to leave your home and live elsewhere	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imprisoned	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kidnapped or taken as a hostage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Tortured	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Been humiliated	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lost contact with a close relative	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
A member of your immediate family was killed during the armed conflict	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Serious damage to your property	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wounded by the fighting	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Combatants took food away	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Had your home looted	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Somebody you knew well was a victim of sexual violence	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
ROTATE STATEMENTS BELOW HERE SEPARATELY AFTER OTHERS				
No or very limited access to basic necessities (water, electricity, etc.)	4	96	0	0
No or very limited access to health care	4	96	0	0
Lost all my belongings	0	80	20	0
Lost my means of income (e.g. job, revenue, farm land, etc.)	0	100	0	0
The area where I lived came under enemy control	0	100	0	0
** Very low base				
ASK ALL ↴	Q4. And have you been affected by armed conflict in Liberia in any other ways? What ways were those?			
SINGLE CODE				
				%
Yes – specify				4
No				96
Don't know				*
Refused				0
YES – SPECIFY: TOP MENTIONS (> 5% of respondents)				YES
<i>Base: All who have been affected by armed conflict in any other ways at Q4-20**</i>				
				%
TOTAL MENTIONS - PERSONAL SUFFERING				78
I couldn't continue my education				68
I was injured				10
TOTAL MENTIONS - DETERIORATION IN THE STANDARD OF LIVING				16
No job/couldn't work				11
TOTAL MENTIONS - FREEDOM RESTRICTION				6
Movement was restricted/couldn't freely move				6
** Very low base				

ASK ALL WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED CONFLICT – ‘YES’ AT Q1 AND ‘YES’ AT Q2/ CODE 1 (IN LIBERIA) OR ANY ‘HAPPENED’ RESPONSE AT Q3, OR ANY ‘YES’ RESPONSE AT Q4 ↴	Q5. And when were you personally most recently affected by this armed conflict in Liberia? SINGLE CODE	
	<i>Base: All who have experienced/been affected by conflict in any way, as defined above-478</i>	%
	Now/currently experiencing	*
	Within the last month	*
	More than one month ago, but less than six months	0
	Six months ago to within the last year	*
	1-2 years	0
	3-4 years	1
	5-9 years	51
	10-19 years	47
	20 years +	1
	Don't know	*
	Refused	0
	ASK ALL ↴	Q6. What do you think are the two or three greatest fears people are facing in a situation of armed conflict in Liberia? DO NOT READ OUT. INTERVIEWER TO CODE A MAXIMUM OF THREE RESPONSES
		%
Inability to earn a living/personal or family economic instability		29
Losing a loved one		23
Being separated from loved ones		19
Losing/destruction of the house/losing of personal belongings		35
Living with uncertainty		25
Having to leave their home/becoming displaced/a refugee		37
Imprisonment		11
Surviving the conflict		16
Suffering injury		16
Sexual violence		22
Not being able to get an education/going to school		19
Fear of being rejected by your community		6
Having to take up arms/fight		5
Being humiliated		14
Limited access to basic necessities (water, electricity, etc.)		8
Limited access to health care (drugs, hospital)		12
Outcome of the conflict		2
Other (specify)		0
Nothing	0	
Don't know	0	
Refused	0	

<p>ASK ALL ↴</p>	<p>Q7. What do you think civilians who are living in areas of armed conflict need the most? Please select the three most important to you</p> <p>ROTATE STATEMENTS. READ THE LIST AND ASK RESPONDENTS TO SELECT ONE ANSWER. REPEAT THE LIST IF NECESSARY. THEN READ THE LIST AGAIN WITHOUT MENTIONING THE FIRST ANSWER AND ASK THE RESPONDENT TO SELECT ANOTHER ANSWER. REPEAT AGAIN.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="659 331 1444 837"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Food</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>Shelter</td><td>58</td></tr> <tr><td>Medical treatment/health care</td><td>69</td></tr> <tr><td>Family members to be kept together</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>Information on separated/missing family members</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Security/protection</td><td>36</td></tr> <tr><td>Respect/dignity</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>Psychological support</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>To influence decisions that affect them</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Conflict resolution</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Economic/financial help</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>Other (specify)</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>Don't know</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>Refused</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		%	Food	90	Shelter	58	Medical treatment/health care	69	Family members to be kept together	12	Information on separated/missing family members	7	Security/protection	36	Respect/dignity	6	Psychological support	8	To influence decisions that affect them	3	Conflict resolution	4	Economic/financial help	6	Other (specify)	0	Don't know	0	Refused	0																																																												
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BB) HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE/NEEDS						
ASK ALL WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED CONFLICT – ‘YES’ AT Q1 AND ‘YES’ AT Q2/ CODE 1 (IN LIBERIA) OR ANY ‘HAPPENED’ RESPONSE AT Q3, OR ANY ‘YES’ RESPONSE AT Q4 ↴	Q9. During the time you experienced or were being affected by armed conflict, did you receive help or support from any of the following? READ OUT.					
	<i>Base: All who have experienced/been affected by conflict in any way, as defined above-478</i>					
		Yes	No	Don't know	Can't remember	
		%	%	%	%	
	UN/UN agency	75	25	*	0	
	Liberian Red Cross	49	49	1	*	
	ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross)	54	45	1	*	
	Other non-governmental organization (NGO) or charity (local or international)	63	35	1	*	
	Government	17	82	1	*	
	Individuals from your community/neighbours	47	52	1	*	
	Religious entities	47	51	1	*	
	Military/army/combatants	15	83	1	*	
	Parents/family	76	23	1	0	
Other (specify)	*	0	100	0		
Combination: Liberian Red Cross / ICRC	67	62	*	*		
ASK IF ‘YES’ AT Q9 ↴	Q10. For each of the types of organizations or people you mentioned receiving help or support from, I would like you to tell me how well you felt they understood your needs. First, the [type of support at Q9]...do you feel your needs were completely understood, partially understood, or not understood at all? SINGLE CODE FOR EACH SOURCE OF SUPPORT MENTIONED AT Q9					
	<i>Base: All who did receive support/help from each organization at Q9</i>					
		Completely	Partially	Not at all	Don't know	Refused
		%	%	%	%	%
	UN/UN agency (Base = 353)	83	17	0	0	0
	Liberian Red Cross (234)	72	28	0	0	0
	ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) (248)	65	34	*	0	0
	Other non-governmental organization (NGO) or charity (local or international) (285)	47	53	*	0	0
	Government (73*)	59	41	0	0	0
	Individuals from your community/neighbours (217)	53	47	0	0	0
	Religious entities (221)	57	43	1	0	0
	Military/army/combatants (68*)	51	49	0	0	0
	Parents/family (360)	87	13	0	0	0
Combination: Liberian Red Cross/ICRC (312)	72	41	*	0	0	
* Low base						

ASK ALL ↴	Q11. Which, if any, of the following reasons do you think may have prevented people in Liberia receiving or accepting help or support during armed conflict? READ OUT LIST. ROTATE ORDER. MULTICODE OK	
		YES
		%
	Corruption	81
	Black market	52
	Discrimination/social status	51
	Location access – not able to reach the location	41
	Unaware that it was available	26
	Fear of being rejected by my community	19
	Fear of being perceived to be aligned with wrong side	25
	Pride/dignity	16
	Did not meet criteria	12
	Did not want to receive any support	7
	Did not need to receive any support	5
	Did not want to accept support because of who was offering it	11
	Other (specify)	0
	Nothing	0
Don't know	0	
Refused	0	
CC) WARFARE/COMBATANTS		
ASK ALL ↴	Q12. Is there anything that combatants should not be allowed to do in fighting their enemy? And what else? OPEN-ENDED QUESTION. DO NOT PROMPT – BUT PROBE FULLY.	
	TOP MENTIONS (> 5% of respondents)	YES
		%
	TOTAL MENTIONS - KILLING/TARGETING CERTAIN KIND OF PEOPLE	52
	Kill civilians	32
	Kill the innocent (unspecified)	14
	TOTAL MENTIONS - TYPES OF WEAPONS	24
	Sexual assault/sexual violence/rape	22
	TOTAL MENTIONS - TYPES OF VIOLENCE/OPPRESSION	22
	Killing (unspecified)	8
	Steal/rob	8
	Should not torture people	6
	TOTAL MENTIONS - ATTACK BUILDINGS/DESTROY SPECIFIC AREAS	10
	Loot homes	5
	TOTAL MENTIONS - NOT RESPECT CIVIL SOCIETY/CULTURE/SOCIETY/LAWS	5
		%
	There is nothing they should not be allowed to do	12
	(Any answer indicating that some action/s should be allowed)	73
	Don't know	14
	Refused	*

<p>ASK ALL WHO ANSWER SOMETHING AT QUESTION 12 ↴</p>	<p>Q13. And why do you think that combatants should not be allowed to do this? Is that because it...? READ OUT. ROTATE ORDER. MULTICODE OK</p>				
<p><i>Base: All who identify some action/s that combatants should not be allowed to do-364</i></p>					%
<p>Is against your religion</p>					48
<p>Is against your personal code/ethics</p>					53
<p>Is against the law</p>					70
<p>Is against your culture</p>					38
<p>Is against human rights</p>					77
<p>Produces too much hate and division</p>					45
<p>Produces too much destruction</p>					47
<p>Other (specify)</p>					0
<p>Don't know</p>					*
<p>Refused</p>					0
<p>ASK ALL ↴</p>	<p>Q14. Now I would like to ask you some general questions about how, in your view, combatants should behave in times of armed conflict. When combatants attack to weaken the enemy, should they: READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.</p>				
					%
<p>Attack enemy combatants and civilians</p>					*
<p>Attack enemy combatants and avoid civilians as much as possible</p>					34
<p>Attack only enemy combatants and leave the civilians alone</p>					64
<p>Don't know</p>					1
<p>Refused</p>					*
<p>ASK ALL ↴</p>	<p>Q15. Is there anything that combatants should not be allowed to do in fighting their enemy? For each one, please indicate whether it is OK or not OK to do that in fighting their enemy. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE EACH STATEMENT</p>				
		OK	Not OK	Don't know	Refused
		%	%	%	%
<p>Depriving civilians of food, medicine or water to weaken the enemy</p>		3	97	*	0
<p>Attacking religious and historical monuments</p>		3	97	*	0
<p>Attacking civilians who voluntarily transported ammunition for the enemy</p>		75	25	0	0
<p>Attacking enemy combatants in populated villages or towns knowing many civilians would be killed</p>		8	92	*	0
<p>Taking civilian hostages in order to get something in exchange</p>		10	90	*	0
<p>Attacking civilians who voluntarily gave food and shelter to enemy</p>		49	51	*	0
<p>Planting landmines even though civilians may step on them</p>		12	87	*	0
<p>ASK ALL ↴</p>	<p>Q16. In a situation of armed conflict, are there any circumstances in which you think it is acceptable for combatants to target health workers? SINGLE CODE ONLY</p>				
					%
<p>Yes</p>					12
<p>No</p>					88
<p>Don't know</p>					0
<p>Refused</p>					0

ASK IF 'YES' AT Q16 ↴	Q17. In which, if any, of the following circumstances do you think this is acceptable? READ OUT EACH STATEMENT. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE EACH STATEMENT				
	<i>Base: All who think it is sometimes acceptable to target health workers-64*</i>	Yes, acceptable	No, not acceptable	Don't know	Refused
		%	%	%	%
	When health workers are treating the enemy wounded and sick civilians	14	86	0	0
	When health workers are treating the enemy wounded and sick combatants	86	14	0	0
	When health workers are not clearly identified as health workers	82	18	0	0
	When health workers take sides with one party in the conflict	86	14	0	0
* Low base					
ASK ALL ↴	Q18. In a situation of armed conflict, are there any circumstances in which you think it is acceptable for combatants to target ambulances? SINGLE CODE ONLY				
					%
	Yes				16
	No				84
	Don't know				0
	Refused				0
ASK IF 'YES' AT Q18 ↴	Q19. In which, if any, of the following circumstances do you think this is acceptable? READ OUT EACH STATEMENT. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE EACH STATEMENT				
	<i>Base: All who think it is sometimes acceptable to target ambulances-88*</i>	Yes, acceptable	No, not acceptable	Don't know	Refused
		%	%	%	%
	When an ambulance is used by combatants for hostile purposes	83	17	0	0
	When an ambulance carries wounded or sick enemy combatants	82	18	0	0
	When an ambulance carries enemy wounded and sick civilians	11	89	0	0
	When an ambulance is not clearly identified as an ambulance	95	4	0	1
* Low base					

DD) HUMANITARIAN GESTURES				
ASK ALL ↴	Q20. I'm now going to describe different kinds of groups and organizations. Please tell me which three of these play the biggest role to help reduce suffering during armed conflict.			
	READ OUT LIST AND ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT ONE ANSWER. THEN READ LIST AGAIN AND ASK RESPONDENT FOR TWO MORE ANSWERS. REPEAT IF NECESSARY.			
		First mention	Other mentions	TOTAL
		%	%	%
	The military and combatants/armed groups	7	3	11
	Religious leaders	12	20	32
	International humanitarian organizations	11	35	46
	Journalists and the news media	5	13	18
	The United Nations	40	27	67
	The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	12	27	39
	Liberian Red Cross	3	20	23
	Government authorities	2	8	10
	Government organizations from other countries	1	20	22
	International criminal court	3	9	12
	Local/international NGOs/charities	3	11	14
	Community leaders	*	4	4
Other (specify)	0	0	0	
None of these	*	0	*	
Don't know	*	1	1	
Refused	0	0	0	
Combination: Liberian Red Cross/ICRC	15	43	52	
ASK ALL ↴	Q21. What do you think the international community should do to help civilians who are living in areas of armed conflict?			
	ROTATE STATEMENTS. READ THE LIST AND ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT ONE ANSWER. THEN READ THE LIST AGAIN WITHOUT MENTIONING THE FIRST ANSWER AND ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT ANOTHER ANSWER(S).			
	REPEAT IF NECESSARY. MULTICODE THREE.			
				%
	Stop the armed conflict by military intervention			37
	Exert political pressure			27
	Deliver emergency aid			40
	Provide peacekeepers			65
	Provide financial support to humanitarian organizations			21
	Put leaders accused of committing war crimes on trial			29
	Place economic sanctions on the country			12
	Raise awareness of the plight of civilians who are caught in areas of armed conflict			9
	Rebuild infrastructure			22
	Organize peace talks/negotiations			27
	Better enforce the law that protects victims of armed conflicts			10
	Other (specify)			0
Nothing			0	
Don't know			1	
Refused			0	

ASK ALL ↴	<p>Q22. What, if anything, do you think people living outside of conflict zones can do that would most help victims of armed conflict in Liberia? Please select the three you feel are most important.</p> <p>ROTATE STATEMENTS. READ THE LIST AND ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT ONE ANSWER. THEN READ THE LIST AGAIN WITHOUT MENTIONING THE FIRST ANSWER AND ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT ANOTHER ANSWER(S). REPEAT IF NECESSARY. MULTICODE THREE.</p>																								
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EE) GENEVA CONVENTIONS																									
ASK ALL ↴	<p>Q23. Have you ever heard of the Geneva Conventions?</p> <p>SINGLE CODE ONLY</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td style="text-align: right;">65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td style="text-align: right;">34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Refused</td> <td style="text-align: right;">*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		%	Yes	65	No	34	Don't know	2	Refused	*														
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No	34																								
Don't know	2																								
Refused	*																								
ASK IF 'YES' AT Q23 ↴	<p>Q24. To what extent do you think the existence of the Geneva Conventions limits the suffering of civilians in war time?</p> <p>SINGLE CODE ONLY</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Base: All who have heard of the Geneva Conventions-326</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A great deal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">57</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A fair amount</td> <td style="text-align: right;">28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not very much</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not at all</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Refused</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		%	<i>Base: All who have heard of the Geneva Conventions-326</i>	%	A great deal	57	A fair amount	28	Not very much	13	Not at all	2	Don't know	1	Refused	0								
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FF) MEDICAL MISSION																									
ASK ALL ↴	<p>Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?</p> <p>READ OUT STATEMENT. SINGLE CODE ONLY</p> <p>Everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict should have the right to health care</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strongly agree</td> <td style="text-align: right;">85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tend to agree</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neither agree nor disagree</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tend to disagree</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know</td> <td style="text-align: right;">*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Refused</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		%	Strongly agree	85	Tend to agree	8	Neither agree nor disagree	5	Tend to disagree	2	Strongly disagree	1	Don't know	*	Refused	0								
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ASK ALL ↴	Q26. In the context of an armed conflict, what best describes your personal views? READ OUT STATEMENTS. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY.	
		%
	Health workers should treat only wounded and sick civilians from their side of the conflict	9
	Health workers should treat wounded and sick civilians from all sides of a conflict	90
	Don't know	*
	Refused	*
Demographics		
ASK ALL ↴	Respondent's gender	
		%
	Male	51
	Female	49
ASK ALL ↴	Respondent's age	
		%
	18-24	29
	25-29	22
	30-34	16
	35-39	11
	40-44	9
	45-49	4
	50-64	7
	65 or over	1
ASK ALL ↴	Cities	
		%
	Tubmanburg	2
	Gbarngo	7
	Buchanan	5
	Robertsport	4
	Wwedru	6
	Barclayville	2
	Voinjoma	7
	Kakata	5
	Harper	4
	Monrovia	24
	Greenville	3
	Kolela	1
	David slema	1
	Palela	1
	Fairgrown	1
	Loysville	1
	Foyah	3
	Firestone	6
	Ganta	13
Bushrod Island	3	
Cestos City	2	

ASK ALL ↴	Province	
		%
	Bomi	2
	Bong	9
	Grand Bassa	6
	Grand Cape Mont	4
	Grand Gedeh	6
	Grand Kru	2
	Lofa	10
	Margibi	6
	Maryland	4
	Montserrado	33
	Nimba	13
	Rivercess	2
	Sinoe	3
ASK ALL ↴	Area	
		%
	Urban	83
	Rural	17
ASK ALL ↴	Religion	
		%
	Christian	80
	Muslim	17
	Don't know	3

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

Discussion guide

This guide was used for the group discussions. A very similar guide was used for in-depth interviews.

Introduction	
1. Your own experience of armed conflict/violence (armed violence, urban violence if necessary)	• What experiences have you had of armed conflict/violence?
	– When was it?
	– Where?
	– What happened?
	• How you were/are – personally – affected? Your family/friends?
	• What were/are your feelings and thoughts about this armed conflict/violence?
	– How much did you understand about the armed conflict/violence? Why did it happen the way it did?
	• How do you feel (now) about what happened? How are you affected today, if at all?
– What, if anything, has changed about you as a result of the armed conflict/violence?	
2. On armed conflict/violence in general	• We've talked about armed conflict/violence – can we go further into that. So when we say armed conflict/violence... can you describe to me in detail what you mean by this.
	• Associations: what words come to your mind when I say 'armed conflict/violence'... Which words best describe armed conflict/violence for you?
	• During times of armed conflict/violence what would you say are/were your greatest concerns? (E.g. losing a loved one, your own security, surviving the conflict/violence, etc.)
	• Do your concerns change over time? (E.g. are some concerns immediate and others only occurring later on? Are some concerns short term, and others longer term for the future?) How would you divide these concerns we talked about up into immediate concerns and longer-term ones? Persistent ones and ones which fade or are resolved?
	• So when you/others are confronted with these situations what do you feel are the things you/they need the most help for/with. Why do you say that?
	• If you could, what would you like to communicate to the world?
	– What would you like to tell people about your needs? What is most important?
	– And what would you like to tell people about the way you feel?
– And to help prioritize these messages in the minds of others, which are the most important issues in terms of your needs? Are there some things you can deal with on your own during these times? And are there some things you just cannot manage on your own without help?	
3. On international community/humanitarian support	• During these times – when you have faced these kinds of situations – have you received any support?
	– Have you ever received any support from any international organizations?
	• IF YES – RECEIVED HELP FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO DATE: What kind (s) of help did you receive? How did they help you? Were they able to address any of your key areas of concern in any ways – which ones?
	• IF NO – NOT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO DATE: Do you have any views on why you may not have received any support from international organizations to date?
	• Who played the biggest role (amongst different kinds of people and organizations) to help reduce your suffering (e.g. religious leaders, UN, local NGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent, ICRC, other international NGOs, neighbours, etc.)?
	– Why would you say their role (s) were biggest?
	– Who else played biggest roles?
	• What do you think the international community should do to help victims?
• If there is something that an international humanitarian organization could do better, what would it be?	

<p>4. On humanitarian actions/gestures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And what is a 'humanitarian action', for you? Can you give me some examples? • Thinking of the armed conflict/violence you witnessed, can you recall any gestures or acts of kindness/humanity that made a difference in yours or others lives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Could you tell me about them? – What difference (s) did this (these) make? – Who was responsible for this (these) act (s)? • Were you, yourself, able to help someone? If so, how? • If you could have done something to help what would it have been? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do you think you could have made a difference in someone else's life? If so how? – Thinking back, would you have done anything differently? What could others have done differently? • More generally, what, if anything, do you think individuals can do to help other people (civilians) who are living in areas of armed conflict/violence?
<p>5. On warfare/combatants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to ask you what you think the rules of conflict should be, ideally, to control what combatants can do in war: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there anything that combatants should not be allowed to do in fighting their enemy? What and why? – Is it ever OK for combatants to involve civilians in conflicts? In what circumstances?
<p>6. On Geneva Conventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before now, had you ever heard of the Geneva Conventions? • Could you tell me what your understanding is of what the Geneva Conventions are about? • Do you believe the Geneva Conventions do adequately protect persons in war time? Why?
<p>7. On health/medical mission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think that ambulances operating in situation of armed conflict/violence should always be spared? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How do you identify an ambulance in a situation of armed conflict/violence? – How do you identify a health/medical worker in a situation of armed conflict/violence? • Do you think everyone wounded or sick during an armed conflict/violence should have the right to health/medical care? Both civilians and combatants? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do you think there is anyone in particular who should not have access to health/medical care? Why? • Do you think that in a situation of armed conflict/violence health/medical workers should be protected in all circumstances? In what way... Why? Why not?
<p>8. Wrapping up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your experiences of living in armed conflict/violence? • What would have been useful for you to know in order to alleviate your suffering/improve your situation during armed conflict? Do you think stronger laws would have helped? • What are the main things which helped/would have helped alleviate suffering/improving your situation? • To sum up: what does your experience tell you about the value of humanitarian work in conflict situations? • What are the main messages you would like us to spread in order to try to make this world a safer place for civilians living in situations of armed conflicts/violence?

MISSION

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance.

The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.

Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

ABOUT IPSOS

Ipsos is a leading international research agency, with offices in over 60 countries worldwide and global reach.

Established in 1975, it conducts qualitative and quantitative research with the private, public and voluntary sectors. One of its key areas of specialization is in social and opinion research. This includes extensive work with a wide range of national and international NGOs, charities and aid organizations.

This study was coordinated by Ipsos Switzerland, with fieldwork on the opinion survey in Liberia conducted by RMS (Research Marketing Services) and Ipsos Markinor, both working across Africa.

