

# REPORT

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## Needs Assessment of Liberian women in the arts (Liberian Camp in Ghana)

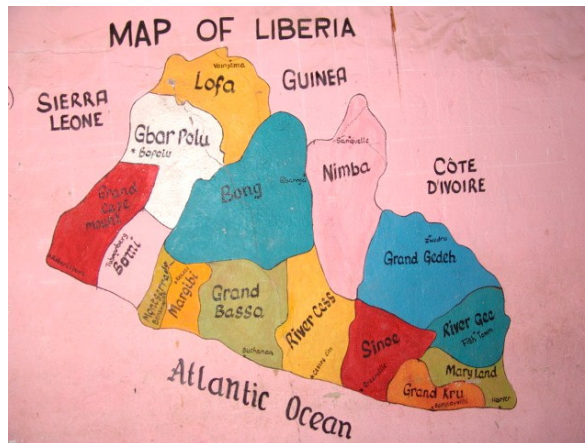
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Skills training and capacity building  
for Liberian women in the arts



## Introduction

The Women's Arts Institute Africa (wAi Africa) partner of Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa) located in Accra, Ghana are collaborating to organise a skills training and capacity building for Liberian women<sup>1</sup> in the arts. The project was propelled by the recent demonstration by Liberian women in the Liberian Buduburam Camp in Ghana.



The project is facilitated by previous trainings that have been carried out by the Foundation for Female Photojournalists (FFP) and Sumoyaya Image.

The reports on the situation on the Buduburam camp and the ensuing protests by the Liberian (in many cases visibly led by women) refugees opposed to what they view as an unfair repatriation policy implemented by the UNHCR has resulted in two sets of conflicting positions and perspectives from the Ghanaian community and wider West African. One side of the argument states that the Liberian refugees are ungrateful and unappreciative of the support given by the Government and People of Ghana during the years of asylum. The opposing view is that repatriation is a voluntary action as stipulated in the UN Refugee Convention and that the funds provided to refugees upon their return to Liberia by UNHCR are inadequate. These diverging views have yielded intolerance between both sides and raised threats of violence.

The numbers of occupants have increased to over 35,000 and is composed not only of [refugees](#) who fled their country during the first and second [Liberian Civil War](#) from [1989–1996](#) and [1999–2003](#) respectively, but also of refugees from other countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Togo which have used the Buduburam camp to transit.

The increasing numbers of refugees is largely responsible for the deplorable state of infrastructure, facilities and sanitation on the camp; and coupled with unemployment and high cost of living, have been the cause of distress and agitation among camp residents. To address this situation, the UNHCR has since the 1990s resettled Liberian refugees in the United States and other Western countries; and with the election of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and on-going reconstruction programme in the country, started repatriating refugees back to Liberia in 2006. Efforts were also made to reintegrate refugees into the host country, Ghana. However as the recent situation has shown, the last two efforts have not been satisfactory to Liberian refugees

<sup>1</sup> At the Ghanaian refugees campaign Ghana

who are opposed to being locally integrated into Ghanaian societies and demand the following<sup>2</sup>:

- The repatriation program should be extended over a two year period from January 2008-2010.
- The repatriation program should be run in collaboration with post-conflict reconstruction and development projects to provide financial support to returning refugees.
- Each refugee (per UNHCR Registration Number) should receive monetary payment totaling One Thousand United States Dollars (US \$1,000) as grants to rebuild their homes and start their lives when they get back home.
- Liberian refugees should be given compensation for homes built through their own efforts.
- The repatriation program should be further structured to recognize the distinct needs of rural and urban refugees.
- UNHCR adds the following to the repatriation package: A set of pots, two large tubs five blankets, five mats, three lamps, a set of eating utensils.
- Returning refugees be given the following upon arrival in their home country: feeding rations for six months, six months supply of sanitary pads for females aged 12 to 45.
- Stakeholders create scholarship programs for junior and senior high school and tertiary leavers.

The protest and demands have largely generated resentment and anger among the Ghanaian community who are of the opinion that the Liberian refugees are ungrateful for the years of asylum granted by the Ghanaian Government over the last two decades. There are also those who have condemned (e.g. human rights organizations) and detention of the refugees at the Kodeabe Voluntary Training Centre on the grounds that it contradicts Article 14 of the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution “right to liberty” and the UN Convention on Refugees, to which Ghana is a signatory; and have brought up a litigation against the Ghanaian Government. All these have implications for the sub-region at large which has to deal with similar situations of integration.

There have been a number of diplomatic efforts to address the problem at different levels; between the Governments of Ghana and Liberia on the one hand, and at the level of the UN Refugee Agency on the other. A tripartite committee made up of UNHCR and representatives of the Governments of Liberia and Ghana was also established to facilitate dialogue on the possible way forward and oversee the repatriation process.



<sup>2</sup> Culled from the Liberian Women Communiqué of 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008

On Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2008 the decision of the committee was published; and it stated that:

1. Voluntary repatriation remains the preferred option.
2. The repatriation of Liberian refugees should be carried out over a six months period commencing 18<sup>th</sup> April 2008.
3. A technical working group should be established to operationalize, monitor and assess the implementation of the Tripartite Committee's decision.
4. A comprehensive communication strategy which provides information on available reintegration assistance be developed.

These developments transcend the more overt positions being articulated by both groups and further analysis is required given the potential of the situation to adversely impact on security concerns and relations in Ghana and West Africa. Furthermore, it has the potential of undermining efforts at enhancing regional integration, community harmonisation and rebuilding of Liberia.



### **Skills training and capacity building project**

The meeting started with Abel Gayvolor introducing the purpose of gathering to the participants after which Mardey Ohui Ofoe gave a short summary of the entire program. She told the women that in the event where the camp will be folding up there is the need for them to acquire skills as tools for self empowerment and a contribution to re building of their country, Liberia. Mardey Ohui Ofoe advised participants to be committed to take every bit of the training very serious and be determined to make a difference back home.

#### **Needs Assessment Objectives:**

- Introduction of the skills training and capacity building project
- Categorization of groups
- Individuals and group needs assessment.

#### **Training Curriculum**

The training will take 2-6 months depending on the individual's ability to learn and understand and practice what has been taught.

Based on feedbacks from the participants, the following were agreed. There will be two classes; full time session and the part time session. The pending week will be used for planning, meet the lecturers and draw up the time table for all the sessions.

Available Speciality

- **Photography** – still photos, motion photography, video editing, photo essay, etc.
- **Painting** – visual painting, sign post, consume painting, painting buildings etc.
- **Sculpture** – using metal, glass, stone and wood to design an image or a human figure.
- **Modelling** – marketing dresses or clothing for designers
- **Video Editing** – editing of videos, etc.

Theatre

- **Dancing** – cultural dance, popular dancing, free style etc
- **Drama** – performing on the stage, filming acting,
- **Music** – composition, video training and pronunciation



**Approach and Methodology**

wAi Africa carried the needs assessment through a strategic meeting. The meeting was a final convergence of series of meetings with groups of women in the camp and other key stakeholders. Information was derived from participants by general open discussions, groups discussions and one on one discussion.

**Enrolment**

Area of Speciality	Number of participants
Photography	10
Video Editing	2
Acting	9
Cultural dance & Music	1
Painting	0
Sculpture	0

**Expected outcomes of the Needs Assessment**

- An inventory of training needs for librarian women in the arts
- Identified possible ways of commercial engagement for the participants
- Identified opportunity for a vibrant women in the arts in Liberia
- Training and capacity building for Liberian women in the arts

**Training Materials and Equipment Needed:**

- Professional still cameras(digital and film) 15
- Sculpturing tools
- Motion cameras digital and analogue (5)
- Computer – 2.0 and above processor speed (20)
- Video Editing software (pinnacle and adobe premier)
- Teaching materials (books, CD's)
- Human resource – available
- Transportation cost – ( for resource person to travel o the camp and back)
- Communication for coordination (phone credits)

**Other Resources**

Participants were encouraged to create email addresses as means of communication with lectures and also as a way of establishing long contacts.

**Conclusion and Recommendation:**

The needs assessment affords the participants and wAi Africa an opportunity to foster a long relation with Liberian women in the arts and to build Liberian women in the arts movement in Liberia. There were very high expectations from the participants about the realisation of the training. Project.

wAi Africa was expected to raise funds for the project and to identify more women to be trained. wAi Africa was mandated with the responsibility to monitor the establishment of the participants in their chosen profession in Liberian.



**Appendix:****Drama Participants Lists:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age (yrs)</b>	<b>Time for class</b>	<b>Reparation Status</b>
Odell	15	Friday & Saturday, 3pm – 6pm	Leave in July
Dearest	16	Friday & Saturday, 3pm – 6pm	Leave in August
Judy	21	Monday – Saturday, full time	Not leaving now
Rosetta	19	Monday – Saturday, 2pm – 4pm	Leave in July
Juliet	20	Monday – Saturday, 2pm – 4pm	Leave next year
Regina	17	Monday – Saturday, 2pm – 4pm	Leave in June
Patience	24	Monday – Saturday, 9am – 12pm	Not ready to leave now
Krubo	18	Monday – Saturday, 3pm – 5pm	Parents have not decided yet.
Precious	-	Monday – Saturday, in the morning	Not registered

**Photography and Video Editing Participants List:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age (yrs)</b>	<b>Time for class</b>	<b>If registered for Liberia</b>
Watta	26	Monday, Wednesday & Friday – will be free in the morning	Not leaving now
Linda	23	Free at all time	Not ready to leave
Nadia	17	Monday - Friday	Have registered, will leave when parents are ready
Elaine	28	Free at all time	Have registered but doesn't know when to leave
Sisawu	36	In the evenings	Haven't registered
Dilliner	28	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, the whole day	Not registered
Shetha	-	Morning sessions	Not registered
Tote	16	Have time through out the week	Not registered
Rukie	26	In the morning, through out the week	Not registered
Patience	23	Have the time, all day	Not registered
Celestine	24	Through out the week in the morning	Not registered
Florence	30	Morning, 9am – 11am	Not registered

**NAME AND ADDRESSES OF LIBERIAN WOMEN FOR DRAMA.**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>MOBILE NO.</b>	<b>GHANA ADD.</b>	<b>LIBERIAN ADD.</b>
ODELL JACKSON	0243 823 976	ZONE 4/184	-
DEAREST NYENPAN	0242 543 805	ZONE 4/184	-
JUDY CHULU	0245 530 113	ZONE 11/705	-
GIFTY BAIDOO	0274 144 227	ZONE 6/196	-
ROSETTA RHADES	0248 207 770	-	-
JULIET MOORE	0242 925 438	ZONE 11	-
REGINA A. CLEAMIE	0249 449 931	ZONE 4/601	00231 7771 7455
PATIENCE WEAH	-	-	-
KRUBO ZAKAMA	0244 977 917	ZONE 9/099	-
PRECIOUS N. TOE	0249 386 942	ZONE 6	00231 663 2762

**NAME AND ADDRESSES OF LIBERIAN WOMEN FOR PHOTOGRAPHY**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>MOBILE NO.</b>	<b>GHANA ADD.</b>	<b>LEBERIAN ADD.</b>
WATTA KIABOLU	0242 724 333	ZONE 12/117A	PAYNESVILLE E,L,W,A MONROVIA
LINDA N. DENNIS	0246 870 067	ZONE 7/208	-
NADIA NYENPAN	0242 543 805	ZONE 4/388	-
ELAINE	0244 161 627	ZONE 1/184	-
SISAWU S. MORRIS	0249 109 681	ZONE 1/123	-
DILLINER MARYORN NYENAPO	-	-	-
TOTE WAHYON	0248 225 844	ZONE 4/3291	-
SHETHA K. KARMAH	0246 304 551	ZONE 7/033	-
RUKIE N. SHERIF	0242 966 335	ZONE 12/001A	-
PATIENCE LAVELAH	0249 440 138	ZONE 7/350	-
CELESTINE HARDING	0249 773 327	ZONE 11/882	-
FLORENCE M. HOWZARD	0246 812 754	ZONE 1/122	-

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