

Liberia: Mapping of International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles

The below information seeks to map the International Disaster Response Law Framework (IDRL) in Liberia as provided in law, policy and agreements. It is intended to contribute to a regional analysis of strengths and gaps in the institutional architecture for the coordination and facilitation of regional disaster response in Africa.

This document is the result of a desktop review of information either publicly available or shared by the Liberia National Red Cross Society. This document was prepared by Candela Nicole Navarro, under the supervision of María Martínez. The document was reviewed by Oniel Bestman, Communications and Reporting Officer, and Christopher Johnson, Head of Programmes & National Society Development of the Liberia National Red Cross Society. The information is up to date as at December 2020.

IFRC Disaster Law wishes to express its gratitude to the persons who took the time to review and provide input to this country profile. Nevertheless, the challenges surrounding desktop legal research in the region means that errors may remain. IFRC Disaster Law would therefore welcome further feedback on the contents of this document.

Question 1: Does your country have a clear legal framework for disaster risk management which includes procedures relating to international disaster assistance?

Summary	Source
<p>The Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA or the Agency) of 2012 (The Act or the NDMA Act) provides the general provisions for the establishment of the NDMA, its functions, immunities, organizational structure and the National Disaster Management Trust Fund. More specifically, the Agency is established in Section 2.1 with the purpose of implementing the National Disaster Management Policy, coordinating the national disaster management system incorporating state and nonstate actors at national, county, district and chiefdom levels, and handling disaster-related issues to ensure reduced vulnerabilities to natural and human induced hazards. Note that only a draft version of the Act is available online.</p> <p>In terms of international disaster assistance, Section 1.3 of the Act makes provision for the declaration of a state of emergency pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, stating that the President of the Republic of Liberia may, in consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro-temp of the Senate, the Cabinet and the National Disaster Management Agency proclaim and declare the existence of a “state of emergency” in the Republic or any part thereof. Only the President shall declare a national state of emergency including by way of proclamation in the Government Gazette. The President’s declaration may warrant international humanitarian assistance as deemed necessary. The lifting of the state of emergency shall also be issued by the President upon the recommendation of the National Disaster Management Agency based on the results of damage assessment and needs analysis. As per Section 3.5 (c), where the functions of the Board (the Agency’s governing body) are defined, it is stated that during the Disaster Phase the Board shall be responsible for, among others, making appeals for assistance from regional and continental bodies, the international community including cooperating partners for assessments and coordination. These appeals of international and national assistance shall be assisted by a National Disaster Management Technical Committee (NDMTC), as highlighted in Section 3.8.</p> <p>The National Disaster Management Policy of 2012 establishes the institutional and operational framework for a successful implementation of DRR activities. More specifically, the NDMA Act identifies in its Preliminary Provisions, Section 1.1, that the National Disaster Management Policy shall be to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) enhance national and local capacity to minimise vulnerability and disaster risks; b) prevent, mitigate and prepare for adverse impacts of hazards within the context of sustainable development; c) create a foundation for the development of an effective and functional legal, institutional framework and good governance; d) provide the basis for sound disaster risk management by local and national organizations, capacity enhancement and clear allocation of roles and responsibilities; e) provide overall direction for integrating disaster risk reduction into development recovery and humanitarian response policy and plans; f) contribute to national risk management applications for sustainable national development; 	<p>An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency</p> <p>National Disaster Management Policy</p>

- g) strengthen disaster preparedness for effective, efficient and timely emergency response;
- h) establish systems for and improve risk identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning of disaster risks;
- i) enhance information and knowledge management for disaster risk management; and
- j) contribute to local and national risk management applications for poverty reduction.

Section 6.1.4 of the NDM Policy indicates that policies regarding the soliciting, acceptance and use of international assistance, including international personnel shall be established and reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the NDMA Board. These reviews shall include specifications on the kinds of personnel, food and other commodities, which are appropriate and acceptable as donation and those which are not. Furthermore, Section 6.3 of the Policy identifies the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors in supporting government efforts in the area of strengthening capacities for DRM and supplementing efforts in mobilizing resources for DRM. The collaborative relationship shall be carried out comprehensively at various levels. Some of the relevant actors include United Nations Agencies, Development Partners, international NGOs and the Red Cross Movement. The Policy does not provide further specifications on procedures to report emerging hazards to the United Nations.

[National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 – 2021](#)

The National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 – 2021 is the current operational plan for disaster response in Liberia, providing a clear vision, objectives and areas of action. The Action Plan is clearly based on the framework established in the National Disaster Management Policy. It recognizes the need for meaningful relationships between national and international agencies to coordinate disaster response activities. Chapter 7 of the Action Plan provides the structure of the Plan, dividing the Objectives into Outputs and identifying the responsible agencies, the time frame for these actions, the resources required and the approximate budget up to 2021. International assistance is mentioned in Objective 2 (To strengthen disaster preparedness for effective emergency response) where it is stated that regional institutions shall help improve coordination and cooperation among all relevant sectors and actors in early warning chain, in line with recommendations from the Third Conference on Early Warning held in Germany; and in Objective 4 (To strengthen risk management applications at national and local levels) where it is highlighted the need for strengthening the socio-economic status at national and local levels with the assistance from UN Agencies, FAO, WFP, EU, WB, INGOs and the Private Sector (among others), which can contribute in turn to higher preparedness when responding to a disaster. No specific procedures are provided for effective coordination among these actors.

[ECOWAS Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2006](#)

Liberia is also a member of ECOWAS. The Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2006 (the Policy), which aims to reduce vulnerability and build resilience of communities provides in terms of section 1.3, that one of its objectives is to provide an inter-governmental framework for collaboration and partnership for ECOWAS Member States in Disaster Risk Management. The Policy also calls to attention the need for sub-regional information sharing on disasters (section 2.2.3). Furthermore, section 2.2.5 highlights the major challenge of enhancing the capacity for sub-regional emergency response and contingency planning. Under section 4.5 Principles of the Policy the importance of awareness of the need to utilize existing disaster management capabilities, including ECOWAS supporting international capacities and efforts in disaster risk reduction and management and the promotion of partnerships between ECOWAS and the international community are recognized. Lastly, the Policy comprises five areas of focus and associated strategies and priority actions. Of relevance to international assistance is that Strategy 2.3 states that the Policy will facilitate balanced and coordinated development of the major international drought and food security warning systems in operation in the sub-region; and Strategy 5.2 urges international assistance in the management of comprehensive recovery programmes which involve rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Question 2: Do your country's laws and regulations clearly set out a focal point for coordinating international disaster assistance?

Summary

Source

As established in the NDMA Act as well as in the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, Chapter 7, Output 1.4, the coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction and disaster response are delegated to the NDMA. More specifically, the NDMA Act states in Section 2.3 that the NDMA shall promote institutional development to include co-ordinating resource mobilization for preparedness, risk and vulnerability reduction programmes among Government, Donors, NGO's and other implementing partners, maintaining and operating an Emergency Operations Centre, and establishing and operating a Disaster Management Trust Fund; liaising with UN agencies, the donor community, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations; on the possibility of partners' support for assessment and coordination; notifying and initiating cooperation with disaster management authorities in neighbouring countries in the event of a disaster that has cross-border effects; and ensure timely delivery of relief assistance to the disaster affected communities.

[An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency](#)

[National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 – 2021](#)

The National Disaster Management Policy highlights in Section 4.3 that there shall be a shift towards disaster risk reduction. While the NDMA is the focal point for coordinating the input of different stakeholders before, during and after emergencies, its motto of 'prevention is better than cure' underlines the paradigm shift from emergence response to risk reduction. The NDMA should be strengthened not as a reactive but proactive system from national to local institutions. At all levels, policies and strategies need to be implemented with a twofold aim: to enable communities to be resilient to natural hazards and ensuring that development efforts do not increase vulnerability to hazards.

[National Disaster Management Policy](#)

Question 3: Do your country's laws and regulations outline the roles and responsibilities of different institutions relating to international disaster assistance?

Summary	Source
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The NDMA Act outlines the functions of the Agency in Section 2.3. The functions of the Agency which relate to international disaster assistance are listed below.

(a) During the Non-Emergency (Pre-Disaster) Phase:

- 1. promoting institutional development to include coordinating resource mobilization for preparedness, risk and vulnerability reduction programs among Government, Donors, NGO's and other implementing partners, maintaining and operating an Emergency Operations Centre, and establishing and operating a Disaster Management Trust Fund;*
- 2. taking steps to establish efficient emergency response and preparedness including undertaking resource mobilization activities for timely emergency response throughout the country, procuring and maintaining critical levels of essential disaster relief items for immediate response during a disaster, and facilitating integration of risk reduction into emergency response/relief plans.*

[An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency](#)

(b) During the Emergency/Disaster Phase:

- 1. facilitating rapid disaster assessments of the impact of a disaster within 24 hours and document impacts, produce situation reports, recommend necessary actions, and communicating information to all stakeholders;*
- 2. setting up an emergency coordination center in Monrovia and disaster affected areas manned by experienced persons with clear roles;*
- 3. liaising with UN agencies, the donor community, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations; on possibility of partners' support for assessment and coordination;*
- 4. notifying and initiating cooperation with disaster management authorities in neighboring countries in the event of a disaster that has cross-border effects;*
- 5. holding meetings to discuss necessary interventions with Committees; and*
- 6. ensuring timely delivery of relief assistance to the disaster affected communities.*

(c) Post Disaster Phase:

- 1. evaluating the disaster and relief operations;*
- 2. carrying out a detailed needs assessment and risk assessment rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction activity plans and implementation;*
- 3. initiating and coordinating rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction programs implementation;*
- 4. taking necessary steps to ensure that recommended follow-up actions are undertaken within short-term, medium-term, and long-term interventions for risk reduction.*

Chapter III of the NDMA Act establishes in Section 3.1 the Board of Directors, which shall be the governing body of the Agency. Chapter III also establishes, in Section 3.8, the National Disaster Management Technical Committee (NDMTC) to provide technical support to the Agency in its operations and, among others, recommend disaster risk reduction policy direction to the Agency; undertake disaster risk and vulnerability assessments and mapping of hazards in the country; assist the Agency in resources mobilization for disaster risk reduction programs carried out by line ministries and other agencies including those by UN agencies, non-governmental agencies and community based organizations; advise the Agency in the development of disaster risk management plans; Assist the Agency in soliciting international and national assistance; direct through the Agency the national or localized disaster relief efforts upon declaration of a disaster.

Sections 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11 of the NDMA Act provides the framework for the establishment of disaster management committees at local levels. First, the County and City Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) shall be established by the Agency at the County and City levels, and shall be headed by local coordinators and chaired by the County Superintendent and City Mayor. Their main functions shall be institutional development, emergency preparedness, risk identification and early warning, coordinating the logistical arrangement for movement of relief materials from source to end users, coordinate resource mobilization at the local level and evaluating the disaster relief operations. Second, a District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) shall be established by the Agency at the district level, comprising representatives from the private sector, non-governmental, community-based and religious organizations, and shall be chaired by the District Superintendent or District Commissioner. The DDMC shall always report to the CDMCs as its functions are generally the same as the ones from the CDMCs, however, at the district level. Third, the Borough, Township, Chiefdom, Clan, General Town and Locality Levels Disaster Management Committees shall, before, during and after disasters be established with the same functions of the District Disaster Management Committee but shall perform functions at the community level. Such committees shall remain functional at all times and undertake training programs provided by the Agency.

The National Disaster Management Policy provides in Section 6.2 a comprehensive presentation of the structure of the national disaster management system in Liberia. Apart from the aforementioned institutions, the Policy also identifies lead government agencies on specific hazards. As stated in Section 6.2.4, these are agencies whose sectoral mandate is within the context of that particular hazard. They will provide information, conduct surveys and research, prepare recommendations and take all necessary measures that could assist the NDMA and the NDMTC in organizing DRR programs. These lead agencies work with UN agencies, NGOs and private sector in their day to day activities. The lead government agencies will primarily be responsible for organizing and conducting training programs in their specific fields and in preparing and implementing a program of intervention based on previously prepared sectoral DRM plans. The sectoral DRM plans are components of the National Disaster Management Plan. Among the main agencies, the Policy includes the Ministry of Internal Affairs as lead agency in flood incidents; the Ministry of Agriculture as lead agency in pest or droughts; the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as lead agency in epidemics or other health hazards; the Ministry of Lands Mines and Energy as lead agency in desertification, environmental degradation or landslides.

As per Section 6.3 of the Policy, meaningful relationships are necessary with other stakeholders and development partners, which are set out as follows:

- a) United Nations Agencies and other Development Partners: shall continue to play a pivotal role to support government efforts in the area of strengthening capacities for DRM and supplementing efforts in mobilizing resources for DRM. The collaborative relationship shall be carried out comprehensively at various levels.*
- b) International Non-Governmental Organizations: Cooperation with INGOs is crucial to strengthening capacities for disaster risk management. It is therefore important to adopt an interagency approach integrating the individual mandates of the INGOs in implementing DRM in Liberia. The policy recognises the need*

to coordinate the influx of international NGOs in the country in times of emergencies in order to effect a fair distribution of capacities and resources to have an optimum input in disaster risk management. The INGOs shall provide high end policy advice, technical and programmatic and financial resource management support to the government.

- c) *National Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations: The role of NGOs, CSOs and CBOs is paramount in the achievement of DRM activities in the country. NGOs can make an important contribution at the grass roots level particularly in remote areas as they are flexible, rapid, effective and appropriate to respond to the urgent needs of the community.*
- d) *Private Sector and Institutions: Within the overall context of the public/private sector partnership, the private sector plays a vital role in addressing DRM, especially through the availing of resource mobilization and technical input, implementing safe work practices, conducting risk and vulnerability assessment as well as mainstreaming DRR into all new development projects. For example, logistics private companies can assist in developing capacity to ease airport logistics in crises while telecommunications firms can support in field-based emergency communications.*
- e) *The Red Cross Movement: The Liberian National Red Cross Society (LNRCs) shall continue to play its role to support the government social welfare program in the areas of strengthening capacities for DRM. In times of emergency, the LNRCs receives support from its movement partners and Participating National Societies (PNS) with financial, material and human resources for immediate intervention. The Red Cross Movement has global and regional tools, such as Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT), Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) that can be deployed within 48 hours during emergency. The LNRCs through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) can mobilize funds through its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).*

The role of the Liberian National Red Cross Society (LNRCs) in providing support to government efforts is established in the Liberian National Red Cross Society (establishment) Act. Article 1.4, provides that in addition to rendering assistance to the medical services of the armed forces in times of armed conflict, the objective of the National Society is to prevent and alleviate human suffering with complete impartiality, making no discrimination as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, language, class or political opinions. However, the Act does not provide any provisions on the role of the LNRCs in disaster management in particular.

It is also worth noting that the Defense Act of 2008 recognizes in Section 2.3 that the primary mission of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) shall be to defend the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Liberia, including land, air and marine territory, against external aggressions, insurgency, terrorism and encroachment. In addition thereto, the AFL shall respond to natural disasters and engage in other civic works as may be required or directed. The AFL shall provide command, communications, logistical, medical, transportation and humanitarian support to the civil authority in the event of a natural or man-made disaster, outbreak of disease or epidemic. Such assistance shall be authorized by the President of Liberia.

[National Disaster Management Policy](#)

[Liberia National Red Cross Society \(Establishment\) Act](#)

[Defense Act of 2008](#)

Question 4: Do your country's laws and regulations outline a process for requesting/welcoming offers of international disaster assistance, and for terminating international assistance?

Summary

Source

<p><i>As stated above, the NDMA Act provides in Section 1.3 that pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the President of the Republic of Liberia may, in consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro-temp of the Senate, the Cabinet and the National Disaster Management Agency proclaim and declare the existence of a “state of emergency” in the Republic or any part thereof, and that the President’s declaration may warrant international humanitarian assistance as deemed necessary.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, Section 3.5 states that one of the functions of the Board of Directors of the Agency during the disaster phase is to make appeals for assistance from regional, continental bodies, the international community including cooperating partners for assessments and coordination. As per Section 3.8, the National Disaster Management Technical Committee shall assist the Agency in soliciting international and national assistance, provide support to making appeals for relief resources including finances to various partners as directed by the Agency.</i></p> <p><i>The National Disaster Management Policy adds to this point that the need for an international appeal and the types of assistance needed shall be determined by the NDMA Board on the basis of the recommendation of the NDMA and National Disaster Management Technical Committees (NDMTC). The NDMA Board shall periodically review policy issues regarding international appeals. Policies regarding the soliciting, acceptance and use of international assistance, including international personnel shall be established and reviewed case by case by the NDMA Board. These reviews shall include specifications on the kinds of personnel, the kinds of food and other commodities, which are appropriate and acceptable as donation and those which are not.</i></p> <p><i>Although international disaster relief shall be coordinated by the corresponding agencies, no further specifications are provided in current law regarding procedures for terminating international assistance.</i></p>	<p>An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency</p> <p>National Disaster Management Policy</p>
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Question 5: Do your country’s laws and regulations provide for necessary legal facilities to be provided to international assisting actors?

Summary	Source
<p>i. Landing rights and general customs arrangements</p> <p><i>In terms of International Law, and as stated above, Liberia is a State party in the Convention of Civil Aviation of 1944 (Chicago Convention), which includes, in Annex 9, provisions and recommended practices for the facilitation of international emergency assistance (relief flights and relief personnel), and the implementation of public health and quarantine measures at international airports.</i></p> <p><i>The Civil Aviation Act of 2005 is the national legal framework to implement the Chicago Convention of 1944, to create an independent Civil Aviation Authority, to provide for the regulation and promotion of civil aviation in Liberia, to foster its safe and orderly development, and for other purposes incidental thereto. However, the Act is silent on procedures for legal facilities to be provided to international humanitarian flights, such as customs duties, simplified paperwork or priority landing.</i></p> <p>ii. Customs arrangements for specialised goods and equipment</p> <p><i>The ECOWAS Customs Code provides in Chapter 2, Article 271 that the importation or exportation free of duties and taxes may be granted to some goods without prohibitions nor restrictions of an economic nature. These include goods such as food, medicine, clothing and blankets that are sent as donations to approved charitable or philanthropic organizations that are intended to be distributed free of charge by those agencies to persons in need. Furthermore, Chapter 3 sets the provisions related to relief consignments. "Relief consignments" are defined as: goods, including vehicles and other means of transport, foodstuffs, medications, clothing, blankets, tents, prefabricated houses, water purifying and water storage items, or other goods of prime necessity, forwarded as aid to those affected by disasters; and all equipment, vehicles and other means of transport, specially trained animals, provisions, supplies, personal effects and other goods for disaster relief personnel in order to perform their duties</i></p>	<p>Chicago Convention 1944 (Annex 9)</p> <p>Civil Aviation Act 2005</p> <p>ECOWAS Customs Code</p>

and to support them in living and working in the territory of the disaster throughout the duration of their mission.” Clearance of relief consignments for export, transit, temporary admission and import shall be carried out as a matter of priority.

Furthermore, in the case of relief consignments, customs shall provide for: a) lodging of a simplified Goods declaration or of a provisional or incomplete Goods declaration subject to completion of the declaration within a specified period; b) lodging and registering or checking of the Goods declaration and supporting documents prior to the arrival of the goods, and their release upon arrival; c) clearance outside the designated hours of business or away from Customs offices and the waiver of any charges in this respect; and d) examination and/or sampling of goods only in exceptional circumstances.

Lastly, the Chapter provides that clearance of relief consignments should be granted without regard to the country of origin, the country from which the goods arrived, or country of destination. In the case of relief consignments, any economic export prohibitions or restrictions and any export duties or taxes otherwise payable should be waived. Relief consignments received as gifts by approved organizations for use by or under the control of such organizations, or for distribution free of charge by them or under their control, should be admitted free of import duties and taxes and free of economic import prohibitions or restrictions.

Communications equipment

The only direct reference to disasters in the Telecommunications Act of 2007 is Article 70, which establishes that:

(1) In case of a public disaster or state of emergency, service providers shall comply with any directions relating to telecommunications services issued by the government ministry responsible for disaster co-ordination to alleviate problems faced by the public or the Government related to such disaster or emergency.

(2) Service providers may apply to the Government of Liberia through the appropriate Ministry responsible for disaster co-ordination for compensation or other assistance with the demonstrated costs of complying with Section 70 (1), but not for loss of revenues during any period of service suspension. The Government of Liberia shall consider any such application in accordance with the LTA regulations, rules and order; this Act and other applicable laws of Liberia in approving compensation regarding the recovery of such costs by service providers.

Although Article 16 of the Telecommunications Act establishes the General Provisions Related to Licences, the Act is silent on simplified procedures for license requirements for international assisting actors, nor for customs arrangements for imports/exports of telecommunications equipment.

The Telecommunications Corporation Liberian Act establishes an Interim Regulatory Authority, to be known as the Liberia Telecommunications Authority, which is established to exercise certain responsibilities, functions and powers for an Interim Period. As per Article 4, two of the functions of the Interim Regulatory Authority are to prescribe service requirements or other obligations relevant to public emergency and national security, and to prescribe procedures for the approval of telecommunications equipment for attachment to telecommunications networks in Liberia, using the least onerous method available, such as approval of equipment previously approved for attachment in specified countries or regions. No specifications are provided in this law as to how these procedures shall be executed.

Food, medication and quarantine

The Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority Act of 2010 provides some provisions in Part V, Section 7 about donations of medicines and health products. Although no direct mentions are made to international assisting actors, these provisions could apply to donations of medicines by international partners in a disaster or public health emergency. The provisions include the following:

- 1. Donated medicines and health products must respond to national needs identified or established by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.*
- 2. Donated Medicines and health products are subject to the provisions of Part V, as applicable. Part V contains provisions on, amongst others the registration; import, export and transit; supply, storage, distribution and sale; manufacture of medicines and health products.*

[Telecommunications Act 2007](#)

[Telecommunications Corporation
Liberian Act](#)

[Medicines and Health Products
Regulatory Authority Act 2010](#)

3. In the case of emergency or disaster, the Authority may expedite or, as necessary, waive the registration of donated medicines or health products.

The Public Health Law establishes in Chapter 17 the procedures and sanitary measures for prevention of introduction of communicable diseases from foreign countries mentions quarantine procedures for aircraft and vessels at point of entry. Section 17.4 states that vessels and aircraft entering Liberia from a foreign port or airport, upon arrival at the first port of entry in Liberia, shall undergo quarantine inspection prior to entry. A vessel shall fly a quarantine flag and anchor in the designated quarantine anchorage and wait inspection unless the Port Health Officer in charge is of the opinion that proceeding to another designated point would not be likely to cause the introduction of communicable disease, in which case he may direct the vessel to such a point to wait inspection. When an aircraft is subject to quarantine inspection the aircraft commander shall be responsible for the detention of Its crew and passengers at the place of first landing of the aircraft until they are released by the Port Health Officer in charge; any baggage, cargo or other contents on board shall also be held at such place until released by such officer. Therefore, persons, animals, articles and things, including conveyances, shall not enter the Republic at its inland borders by land transit except at established ports of entry and after such inspection by a health officer assigned thereto as he considers necessary to prevent the introduction, transmission or spread of the communicable diseases. However, Section 17.5 states that vessels and aircraft belonging to or operated by the armed services of any foreign nation may, in the discretion of the Port Health Officer in charge, be exempted from quarantine inspection if a commissioned medical officer of such service certifies that (a) any person on board who is infected or suspected of being infected with a communicable disease will be isolated until it is determined whether or not he is infected with cholera, plague, relapsing fever, smallpox, typhus or yellow fever and that (b) the vessels or aircraft are from ports where at the time of departure there was not present or suspected of being present any of such communicable diseases. Although these provisions are very specific on the procedures of scrutiny, examination, inspection and detention if necessary, there are no direct references to international disaster assistance in this law.

[Public Health Law](#)

Vehicles

The Vehicle and Traffic Law provides in Chapter 3, Section 3.2 exemptions from vehicle registration requirements, stating that a non-resident owner, except as otherwise provided, owning any foreign vehicle otherwise subject to registration hereunder may operate or permit the operation of such vehicle within the Republic of Liberia without registering such vehicle in, or paying any fees to, the country subject to the condition that such vehicle at all times when operated in the Republic is duly registered in and displays upon it a valid registration plate or plates issued for such vehicle in the place of residence of such owner. Non-residents are required, however, to register the following types of vehicles and pay the same fees as are required with reference to like vehicles owned by residents of the Republic of Liberia: (a) any vehicle owned by a non-resident and operated within Liberia for a consecutive period exceeding 30 days; (b) any vehicle owned by a non-resident and entering Liberia regularly according to a schedule in order to transport persons or property for compensation or to transport merchandise; (c) any vehicle owned by a non-resident, including any foreign corporation, carrying on business within Liberia and regularly being operated in such business. Motor vehicles having registrations and displaying plates issued by the armed forces of the Republic of Liberia for vehicles owned by military personnel. The Vehicle and Traffic Law does not establish any specific provisions for vehicles imported for relief operations.

[Vehicle and Traffic Law](#)

iii. Immigration

All those entering Liberia must first acquire a visa (except ECOWAS citizens who require a valid passport only). This can be done prior to arrival through a Liberian Embassy, or upon arrival through the facilitation of someone already in the country. However, there do not appear to be procedures in place for processing expedited visas or work permits for international relief personnel. According to our focal point in the LNRCs, there are some ad-hoc procedures to grant visas and work permits for expatriates on an expedition based on the level of emergency, such as the Ebola and now the COVID-19.

[Labor Law](#)

In terms of taxation, as stated in the Revenue Code, Section 9, foreign Agencies, i.e. foreign governments, foreign diplomatic representatives, foreign consular officials, international organizations and officials of international organizations that are exempt from taxation under international agreements and conventions are exempt from tax to the extent required by those agreements or conventions. Furthermore, registered charities are also identified as exempt from tax to the extent provided by the Code. A private charitable or not for profit organization qualifies for registration as a registered charity if it is a non-commercial organization established for the purpose of carrying out charitable activity. However, an organization does not qualify as a registered charity, or if registered is subject to loss of its approved and registered status, if it pursues

[Revenue Code](#)

political goals or performs political activities, including direct or indirect participation in the election campaign of any political party, public organization or movement, or person; or the revenue or property of the organization is used in a way inconsistent with the charitable purposes for which the organization was established.

If a registered charity engages in activity inconsistent with its charitable purposes, or has income from business activity (whether or not consistent with its charitable purposes), the charity is subject to tax with respect to those activities and, under conditions as specified in regulations, may lose its approved and registered status.

The Foreign Relations Law establishes the provisions on Diplomatic and Consular Services, the general arrangements for salaries and the working conditions. This law is silent on the role of diplomatic and consular officials in disaster management, nor does it specify any procedures for visa granting for foreign officials. The ECOWAS Customs Code recognizes privileges to diplomatic and consular officials in Chapter 2, Article 271, highlighting that consignments intended for ambassadors, diplomatic and consular services and foreign members of certain official international organizations serving in the Member States on condition of reciprocity in accordance with the provisions of Article 47 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations are exempt of taxes and customs duties.

[Foreign Relations Law](#)

[ECOWAS Customs Code](#)

iv. Registration of international assisting actors

The National Disaster Management Policy mentions in Section 2.4.2 that one of the functions of the NDMA during the emergency/disaster phase is to liaise closely with the international community (NGOs, UN) represented in Liberia in coordination of relief assistance such as registration, importation, manning of warehouses, identification of target beneficiaries, relief distributions and relief quality control and monitoring including strengthening of capacity in disaster affected areas. However, current law on disaster management does not include any procedures in force for the registration of international assisting actors or the eligibility requirements for such registration.

[National Disaster Management Policy](#)

The National Policy on Non-Governmental Organizations in Liberia establishes that all NGOs and community-based organizations shall be registered in order to operate within Liberian territory. More specifically, Section 3 provides the eligibility requirements for NGO Status in Liberia, stating that an organization wishing to operate as an NGO in Liberia must fulfill the following basic requirements:

[National Policy on Non-Governmental Organizations in Liberia](#)

- it must fall within the definition of an NGO as contained in Section 2.1.;*
- it must have a mission statement containing clearly defined objectives, target beneficiaries, sector(s) of operation, constitution and by-laws;*
- it must obtain accreditation from the MPEA, following formal registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as required by law (Article of Incorporation); and*
- it must submit annual NGO reporting requirement as stated in Annex 3*

v. Recognition of professional qualification of foreign personnel

As per Chapter 65 of the Public Health Law, health personnel in Liberia shall always have a registered license to practice. However, there are some cases of persons exempt from license requirement such as the practice of nursing in Liberia during an emergency or disaster by any legally qualified professional or practical nurse of another country recruited by governmental authority for such emergency or disaster service, provided such person does not represent or hold himself or herself out as a professional nurse or practical nurse licensed to practice in the country.

[Public Health Law](#)

Section 62.6 also provides the exemptions of other medical personnel exempt from license requirement to practice in Liberia. Among the exemptions they include any physician who is licensed in another country, and who is meeting a physician licensed in the country for purposes of consultation, provided such practice is limited to such consultation; any physician who is authorized by a foreign government to practice in relation to its diplomatic or consular staffs, provided such practice is limited to such staffs; any registered professional nurse or paramedical worker who, because licensed physicians are unavailable in the area served by them, have been authorized by the Minister to engage in specified outpatient procedures and are supervised by a licensed physician.

Current law on disaster management does not include any further provisions for simplified procedures on the recognition of other professional qualifications of foreign personnel.

vi. Tax and currency exchange for disaster relief activities

The supply of goods for the relief of distressed persons in the case of natural disasters or other humanitarian emergencies, to the extent the Minister shall specify by notice at the time of the disaster or emergency, is exempt from goods tax in terms of section 1001 of the Liberia Revenue Code.

Furthermore, registered charities are also identified as exempt from tax to the extent provided by the Code. A private charitable or not for profit organization qualifies for registration as a registered charity if it is a non-commercial organization established for the purpose of carrying out charitable activity. However, an organization does not qualify as a registered charity, or if registered is subject to loss of its approved and registered status, if it pursues political goals or performs political activities, including direct or indirect participation in the election campaign of any political party, public organization or movement, or person; or the revenue or property of the organization is used in a way inconsistent with the charitable purposes for which the organization was established. In addition, if a registered charity engages in activity inconsistent with its charitable purposes, or has income from business activity (whether or not consistent with its charitable purposes), the charity is subject to tax with respect to those activities and, under conditions as specified in regulations, may lose its approved and registered status.

[Liberia Revenue Code](#)

vii. Freedom of movement of international assisting actors during a disaster response

From the information available online, there do not appear to be explicit provisions guaranteeing the freedom of movement of international actors during a disaster response.

viii. Safety and security of international assisting actors

From the information accessible online, there do not appear to be specific provisions on the safety and security of international assisting actors in Liberian law.

[Defense Act of 2008](#)

As stated above, the AFL shall respond to natural disasters and engage in other civic works as may be required or directed, as established in the Defense Act of 2008, and shall provide command, communications, logistical, medical, transportation and humanitarian support to the civil authority in the event of a natural or man-made disaster, outbreak of disease or epidemic. Such assistance shall be authorized by the President of Liberia. In addition, Chapter 4 of the Act defines the role of the Coast Guard of Liberia, which shall collaborate and work closely with other Ministries and Agencies of the Republic of Liberia to ensure that the national interest of the Republic is protected at sea. The collaboration shall be made in the areas of saving lives at sea, enforcing marine safety regulations, prevention of crimes, terrorism or illegal movement of protection of marine resources, including persons, assisting in the fisheries and undersea minerals, assisting with hydrographic survey and the protection of hydrocarbon resources, aid in dealing with the effects of natural disasters and pollution and help maintain a national marine search and rescue organization.

ix. Additional facilities for international disaster relief

There are no additional facilities for international disaster relief operations. However, during emergencies and acute disaster events, the President uses existing legislations to announce special regulations/restrictions based on expert advice, which may foreseeably include facilities for international assisting actors.

Question 6: Do your country's laws and regulations set out quality standards for international assisting actors?	
Summary	Source
<p><i>The laws and regulations of Liberia do not appear to set out quality standards for international assisting actors. There are, however, a number of instruments which set out values and standards related to DRM generally which are relevant.</i></p> <p><i>The National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016-2021 provides in the introductory section a clear vision and core values for action in Liberia. The core values include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pro-activeness: The Motto is prevention before cure;</i> • <i>Impartiality: equity, neutrality, fairness, even handedness, objectivity and unbiased;</i> • <i>Efficiency and effectiveness;</i> • <i>Integrity: accountability, transparency, honesty and confidence;</i> • <i>Innovation: creativity, visionary, energetic and inspirational;</i> • <i>Professionalism: high quality, reliability, flexibility and timeliness; and</i> • <i>Participation: value ideas, inclusive, non-judgmental.</i> <p><i>Section 2.6 of the NDMA Act establishes the Guidelines for minimum standards of relief, stating that the Agency shall issue guidelines for the minimum standards of relief to be provided to persons affected by disaster which shall include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>the minimum requirements to be provided in the relief camps in relation to shelter, food, safe drinking water, healthcare, care and hygiene and sanitation;</i> b) <i>the special provisions to be made for vulnerable groups;</i> c) <i>ex gratia assistance on account of loss of life and also assistance on account of damage to houses and for restoration of means of livelihood; and</i> d) <i>such other relief as may be necessary.</i> <p><i>Chapter 4 of the National Disaster Management Policy provides that its objectives and strategies shall be supported by the following fundamental principles: protecting the people's fundamental rights, adopting a gender-based strategy in disaster risk management, working towards sustainable development and prioritizing resource mobilizations for DRM.</i></p> <p><i>Protection of fundamental rights: Consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the National Disaster Management Policy will seek to reduce disaster risks at national, regional and local levels irrespective of gender, creed or race. The policy will be implemented in full compliance and respect of fundamental human rights and freedoms of Liberian people.</i></p>	<p>National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 – 2021</p> <p>An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency</p> <p>National Disaster Management Policy</p>

<p><i>Sustainable development: Gender and disaster risk management: The important role played by women in development and the burden they carry and suffer during disasters. Consequently, all activities implemented by the government and all its partners before, during and after disasters, will proactively and consciously include participation of women and other vulnerable groups.</i></p> <p><i>Capacity development, national ownership and stakeholder's participation: The Liberian Government has the primary responsibility to protect people and their properties before, during and after any disaster. It is vital to give priority to DRM in national policy and resource allocation and mobilization. While humanitarian assistance/relief is important, the focus should be to contribute to sustainable development and not to make people dependent on handouts. Humanitarian assistance programs should therefore be implemented within the sustainable development framework/agenda of the country.</i></p>	
<p>Question 7: Do your country's laws and regulations set out eligibility requirements for international assisting actors to receive legal facilities?</p>	
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Source</p>
<p><i>Liberian laws and policies on disaster management in Liberia do not set out specific eligibility procedures or requirements for international assisting actors other than NGOs to receive the legal facilities, and no information could be accessed online relating to this topic.</i></p> <p><i>In general, and as stated above, the National Policy on Non-Governmental Organization provides in Section 3 the eligibility requirements for NGOs in Liberia, and the accreditation requirements in Section 4 as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Section3 Eligibility Requirements for NGO Status in Liberia:</i></p> <p><i>An organization wishing to operate as an NGO in Liberia must fulfill the following basic requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It must fall within the definition of an NGO as contained in Section 2.1;</i> • <i>It must have a mission statement containing clearly defined objectives, target beneficiaries, sector(s) of operation, constitution and by-laws.</i> • <i>It must obtain accreditation from the MPEA, following formal registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as required by law (Article of Incorporation).</i> • <i>It must submit annual NGO reporting requirement as stated in Annex 3 of the Policy.</i> <p><i>Section 4 Accreditation Requirements for NGOs in Liberia:</i></p> <p><i>An organization wishing to obtain accreditation as an NGO in Liberia must submit a letter of request for accreditation to the MPEA and additionally fulfill the following requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>it must obtain Articles of Incorporation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an entity confined in the definition in section 2.1;</i> • <i>it must have office space with a visible signboard exhibited and, where feasible provide postal address and email addresses and telephone numbers ;</i> • <i>it must have a bank account in the organization's name in Liberia that concurs with the rules and regulations of the Central Bank Authority and Financial Institution Act of Liberia;</i> • <i>it must have not less than 3 full-time staff. The staff should be employed within 60 days of the first accreditation;</i> • <i>it must have a board of directors or its equivalent policy making body whose composition is not dominated by a family group. The NGO should make available the contact information of this body upon request; and</i> 	<p>National Policy on Non-Governmental Organizations in Liberia</p>

- international NGOs should have legal status in their own country of origin. Such organizations, where applicable, must show proof of their activities in other countries. International NGO's must present copies of their certificate of incorporation in the country of origin and other constitutive documents of the parent NGO. (i.e. Memorandum, Articles of Association and By-laws), in English and in original language.

Question 8: Do your country's laws and regulations establish a specialized unit for expediting the entry of international disaster assistance?

Summary

The NDMA is the lead agency responsible for coordinating disaster management operations, especially during and after a disaster, as established in the NDMA Act. This includes relief operations, as well as handling disaster-related issues to ensure reduced vulnerabilities to natural and human induced hazards (Section 2.1). However, current law in Liberia does not appear to provide a consolidated "One-Stop Shop" approach to international disaster response, nor does it establish a specialized unit for expediting the entry of international assistance as the current framework involves the engagement of many different lead agencies for which there do not appear to be clear coordination procedures in place.

Source

[An Act to Establish the National Disaster Management Agency](#)

Question 9: Do your country's laws and regulations provide adequate transparency, safeguards and accountability mechanisms governing international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance?

Summary

As established in the National Disaster Management Policy, all the National Disaster Management structures in Liberia shall always abide by the core values mentioned above. One of the core values is integrity, which involves accountability, transparency, honesty and confidence in disaster management operations. However, current laws and policies do not appear to provide specific procedures to prevent misappropriation or fraud, although normal criminal laws will be applicable in such circumstances.

Source

[National Disaster Management Policy](#)
[Penal Law](#)

Question 10: Do your country's laws and regulations outline procedures for international disaster assistance sent from, and transiting through your country?

Summary

The Revenue Code of Liberia provides in Section 1107 that excisable goods, except alcohol, tobacco and tobacco products, imported as humanitarian aid in cases of natural disasters are exempted from export tax.

With regards to specific relief items, a permit is sometimes required for the transit of certain goods. For example, the Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority Act states in Part IV, Section 2 that one of the duties of the Authority is to issue licenses or permits for premises and personnel to engage in the manufacture; import, export, transit in or out of the Republic of Liberia, supply, storage, distribution, or sale of medicines and health products, excluding retail pharmaceutical outlets. Part V, Section 2 of the Act highlights that no person/organization shall import, export, or transit into or out of the Republic of Liberia any medicine or health product, unless the product is duly registered by the Authority and the person/organization has been issued a license or permit by the Authority for the same; and the conditions of issuance of a license or permit for the import, export, or transit of medicines or health products shall be stipulated in regulations promulgated by the Authority that shall provide for the issuance,

Source

[Revenue Code](#)
[Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority Act 2010](#)

renewal, suspension, cancellation and revocation of such licenses or permits. However, the Act does not provide any specific procedures for exported or transiting goods as part of international disaster assistance.

In terms of sub-regional agreements, the ECOWAS Customs Code provides in Article 274 that clearance of relief consignments for export, transit, temporary admission and import shall be carried out as a matter of priority; and that any economic export prohibitions or restrictions and any export duties or taxes otherwise payable should be waived.