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Analytic Framework: Resettlement vs Upgrading

A research report on the motivations for young people
volunteering in urban slums of Freetown, Sierra Leone



Magdalena Gatica Montero

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The full academic research is available in UCL Library and includes a review of Freetown policies and programmes implemented in slum upgrading and resettlement, and a deeper analysis of the assessment areas of the national and international frameworks. Further comments and discussion are most welcome and can be sent to magdalena.montero.15@ucl.ac.uk.

List of Acronyms

| | |
|------------------|--|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| CODOHSAPA | Centre of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisations |
| DRA | Disaster risk approach |
| DRR | Disaster risk reduction |
| FCC | Freetown City Council |
| FEDURP | Federation of Urban and Rural Poor |
| GoSL | Government of Sierra Leone |
| HFA | Hyogo Framework for Action |
| IFC | International Finance Corporation |
| IFRC | International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies |
| MLCPE | Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment |
| MSWGCA | Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affair |
| MWHI | Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organisation |
| ONS | Office of National Security |
| RAP | Resettlement Action Plan |
| RNA | Rapid Needs Assessment |
| SALHOC | The Sierra Leone Housing Corporation |
| SLURC | Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. |
| UPP | The Urban Planning Project 2011-2014 |
| VCA | Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment |
| YCI | Y Care International |
| YMCA | Young Men's Christian Association |

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Executive Summary



Figure 1: A Freetown informal settlement

This report emphasises the relevance of the discussion on ‘resettlement or slum upgrading’ and its pertinence for the specific case of, Sierra Leone. Freetown, the capital city, is facing a complicated scenario due to the contingency of political decisions associated with slum upgrading or relocation. The constant flooding that affects the communities also causes social problems and this has led to significant public debate among various actors. From a political perspective, some of them advocate for relocation of residents of informal settlements, while other civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) support the idea of remaining in their current locations. The lack of qualitative and quantitative data, and the absence of public policies focused on slum upgrading and the development of low-cost housing, makes it a difficult task for the decision maker.

Firstly, this study aims to review the international methodologies or frameworks that could be beneficial for the decision makers when developing a suitable strategic plan, specifically one that could facilitate dialogue between the various actors involved in the slum upgrading or relocation processes. Secondly, the aim is to investigate the particular options the Sierra Leonean government (GoSL) has already considered when designing appropriate policies, plans or frameworks. Finally, an analytical comparison between those frameworks will be developed, highlighting those elements that have been overlooked by the GoSL and which might be important to consider when designing appropriate frameworks.

Key recommendations

- Resettlement action plans should incorporate a humanitarian approach and social impoverishment variables, such as loss of the source of income and the cost of transport, when assessing future locations.
- Future resettlement action plans should ensure they take livelihood restoration into consideration,

including participation and process of monitoring and evaluation.

- NGOs should continue supporting the dialogue between slum dwellers and the government by incorporating the resources and the capacities of the communities for slum upgrading interventions.
- Slum upgrading interventions could involve mitigation projects that transform an area from being inhabitable to being residential area.
- The discussion about slum resettlements is based on the people affected by flooding or those who live in high-risk prone areas and, it is therefore not possible to assess slum upgrading versus resettlement without considering how to assess disaster risk.
- Disaster risk approach should continue working in the line of rapid need response. However, more attention should be paid to initiatives of reduction of risk, mitigation and prevention strategies.
- NGOs should continue to work with the communities and the GoSL to develop strategies and plans to identify high-risk prone areas and prepare flooding maps in the informal settlements.

1. Introduction



Figure 2: Drainage system in Freetown

According to the Census,¹ Freetown has experienced a steady increase in demographic growth. Several factors explain the proliferation of slums in Freetown, of which a crippled housing market, explosive internal migration to the capital from rural areas after the civil war, unemployment rates and general political instability are the most immediately significant.² The spread of informal settlements in Freetown, especially in high-density, congested areas, represent a difficult task for the authorities who are generally unable to provide the necessary basic services.³

Furthermore, the GoSL has faced several critical social issues in the last decade. Besides the explosive proliferation of slums, and correspondingly, an increased demand for improved sanitation and public services, they have also had to tackle other social and public health issues relating to constant flooding, unemployment, and epidemic outbreaks of ebola and cholera.

This report seeks to review the central concepts of the discussion on slum upgrading or resettlement in Sierra Leone. There are several international agencies, NGOs, and developmental actors designing different methodologies and tools that could help decision makers and politicians make more accurate and fair choices between slum upgrading and resettlement. These methods or frameworks suggest principles, assessment areas, key concepts and guidelines or toolkits designed to evaluate different stages of a planning process, including designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The frameworks can be used in developing countries, as their contexts are usually characterised by a lack of regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, these methods could also be valuable because they may serve as a means to seek international funds.

Two main research questions were formulated:

1. How could various international methodologies or frameworks on resettlement or slum upgrading contribute to the development of a governmental strategy to support decision making in Sierra Leone?
2. To what extent has the government of Sierra Leone put into practice the various international methodologies incorporated in their reports, in the design of appropriate policies, plans or frameworks

1. Central Statistics Office (2016).

2. UNDP (2006).

3. ILO (1991).

regarding resettlement and slum upgrading?

Expected outcomes

This report seeks to generate evidence that could contribute to developing a more collaborative approach, involving urban stakeholders, including the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), Y Care International, Sierra Leone YMCA, and Centre of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation (CODOHSAPA). Consequently, this research will be the first step in a wider plan oriented towards the development of tools capable of generating a common language to facilitate discussion between the government, the local communities, NGOs and SLURC.

The research attempts to provide guidelines and standards that can be used in the future to develop a framework for critically evaluating the implementation of public policies on slum upgrading and resettlement in Sierra Leone. It will identify and classify international methodologies that can be used as tools or guides to develop suitable strategies for resettlement or slum upgrading projects. Using these methodologies, the research will recognise the critical assessment areas that, in the context of Freetown, would be relevant for a resettlement or slum-upgrading plan.

Y Care International will endeavour to use the findings and recommendations of this research to inform future project design and continue to support the role of local young people in slum upgrading. Y Care International believes in empowering young people to improve their own lives and those of their peers, families and communities across the world.

2. An overview – key concepts⁴

4. More information about the international frameworks analysed could be found in the Annex

2.1 Resettlement

The term ‘resettlement’ includes the physical movement of houses and public infrastructures; this is often framed as ‘relocation’. It also includes the restoration or improvement of livelihood and quality of life of the inhabitants.⁵ Commonly resettlements are led by governments or other developmental institutions after natural disasters or wars. In the case of non-agreement between the policy makers and the communities involved, it can be framed as involuntary displacement, eradication or even evictions. Public health or preventive measures for hazards are among the main political justifications put forward by the government when these involuntary displacements occur.

The resettlement approach can be analysed according to three categories: a) Resettlements and disaster risk, focusing more on a human rights-based framework (UNHCR), and the vulnerability of the phenomenon of migration due to the effects of climate change; (b) Measuring the impact of social impoverishment,⁶ acknowledging the negative consequences of the social and cultural impoverishment when communities are forced to leave or displacement is induced; and less theoretically, various financial institutions have recommended guides for a (c) Resettlement action plan (RAP). The RAP has various activities or inputs for different stages. Starting from previous evaluation, census taking and mapping, and following on from implementation, feasibility assessment and restoring of livelihood, some monitoring and evaluation strategies have been proposed to measure the impact of the plan or project.

2.2 Slum upgrading

The idea behind the word ‘slum’ tends to vary depending on the continent, the region or the country where these settlements are located. Some might prefer to call such places informal housing/settlements, squats, illegal settlements, shantytowns or unplanned/high-density areas, among others. Those who prefer to define them as informal settlements or informal housing, highlight their conditions of being separate from formal institutions and services. Furthermore, some authors argue that the term slum often has a negative connotation⁷ and a perception of insecurity interwoven with the concept of poverty. The UNDP (2006) characterises five aspects of the main issues of informal settlements: (1) lack of public infrastructure; (2) low quality housing construction; (3) location in disaster-prone areas; (4) high density populations; and finally (5) the insecurity of land tenure. An informal settlement can have all or just some of these aspects.

Over the past few decades, there has been a vast trajectory of slum upgrading initiatives in the international context. For example, ‘The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP)’ and the ‘Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF)’ led by the UN are programmes initiated to align with the adoption of the ‘Millennium Development Goals (MDG)’. The slum upgrading approach analysed could be divided into two main categories: a) design and planning, and, b) evaluation.

a) Design and planning with the introduction of practical guides, for example, a list of outcomes based on the three scales including community, household and individual levels of improvement.⁸ UN-Habitat (2014) detailed a list of approaches that can include piecemeal sectoral upgrading as well as integrated upgrading. Commonly, they include physical, environmental, social, economic, and organizational assessment areas. Others, by contrast, focus on developing strategies for (b) Evaluation of built slum upgrading projects. Some might prefer to apply a cost-benefit analysis or SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) or an impact evaluation approach.

5. World Bank (2004); MacAdam & Ferris (2015).

6. World Bank (1999, 2004); Downing (1996); McDowell (1996); and Cernea (1997a, 1997b).

7. Through the fieldwork conducted in Sierra Leone, it was perceived that most of the development actors refer to ‘slums’ rather than informal settlements; consequently, I decided to maintain that concept.

8. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB 2013); Cities Alliance (2006); UN-Habitat (2014).

2.3 Disaster risk

There is a broad range of academic literature focused on natural disasters and disaster risk assessment, including the review of three intertwined concepts; vulnerability, capacities, resilience. The vulnerability is commonly related to a lack of power or incapacity to react to hazards, risks or natural or human disasters. The capacities (or lack thereof) of individuals or communities 'to anticipate, cope with, resist, and recover from the impact of a natural hazard'.⁹

In the international arena, several organisations have been developing tools and strategies to assess disaster risk. For the purpose of this analysis, such strategies are divided into a) Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (VCA) and resilience, of the communities exposed to natural disasters. Secondly, (b) Disaster risk reduction (DRR) prevention and mitigation, the strategies in this category have different focuses, depending on the phase, the preventive measures available, the mitigation, the potential for rapid response and recovery ability, among others. 'The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005–2015' and 'The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction' had a prominent impact on the international community in terms of consolidating strategies for DRR.

Analysing the international tools, multiple assessment areas can be identified. For the purpose of this study they have been categorised into eight main areas: rapid response, risk assessment, mitigation and prevention, participation, monitoring and evaluation, policies and legal framework, socioeconomic information, planning and future actions, and financing and resources.

9. Blaikie et al. cited in IFRC (1996 p5).

3. Sierra Leone, Freetown



Figure 3: Houses on the edge of the sea at the Colbot informal settlement

Located on the Freetown peninsula, the capital's model of growth is determined by the geographic and topographic conditions in between the hills, where there are several valleys with seasonal streams. Settlements at sea level, a weak drainage system, erosion, severe deforestation, mining, and landslides all contribute to the severity of floods. These specific characteristics of the capital increase the impact of floods that occur over a short period of time in the rainy season. One of the most serious concerns is that the number of water and sanitation facilities is insufficient for the population. The presence of waste and dump sites also contribute to unhealthy living conditions.

There is no conclusive data on the number of slums, nor is there any certainty about the population living in these slum areas. In 2006, the Freetown City Council (FCC) recognised 27 slums in Freetown and its surroundings¹⁰ while the Federation of Urban and Rural Poors (FEDURP) and CODOHSAPA (2011) have mapped more than 80 slums in the city. Among the different factors influencing the increased number of slum dwellers are unemployment and high rents in the city, due to the limited housing market and the reduced availability of plots of land in the peninsula.¹¹

A considerable number of slum dwellers in Freetown do not have land titles because they are located on public land, and therefore the inhabitants are considered illegal residents. Most of the coastal slums have been reclaiming Ministry of Land's property, and they have extended into the sea banks. The GoSL consider these locations unsuitable for residential purposes, because they are prone to natural disasters.

10. Johnson (2009).

11. UNDP (2006).

3.1 Colbot Community

Colbot - located on the east coast of Freetown- is a community prone to disasters, and it was one of the areas most affected by the 2015 flooding which led to a substantial number of people being relocated. By 2014, it is estimated that Colbot's population was around 13,700 people in an area of 28.81 acres.¹² The main economic activities of the inhabitants of Colbot are fishing, sand mining and small business 'petty trading' within the community and others nearby; some sell their products in local markets or in the city centre. Regardless of the disaster risks, some other threats in the area are the bank zone, the geographic condition of landslides and the lack of retention walls against the main drainage.



Figure 4: Map of general context of Freetown showing research locations

Source: based on www.mappery.com and author's contributions

Additionally, Colbot represents a good case study due to its potential for implementing slum upgrading programmes, and its very well-organised community. Moreover, it is a relevant case because it is located near the Queen Elizabeth Quay seaport where the government has openly expressed its intention to approve the extension of Bollore Freetown Terminal¹³ with unknown consequences for the community. The tension between the slum dwellers and the Government, about upgrading the communities is not new in Freetown. Some recent experiences in Aberdeen Creek and Kroo Bay, have shown that the government is also reticent to upgrading slum communities because they seek to boost the city's economy through private development projects in those areas. Even though the government's main justifications for evictions or intended displacement were (1) unsafe conditions for the slum dwellers (2) health concerns for the population and, (3) illegal use of the land, the press and civil society adopted a sceptical position about the real intentions of the government. In both cases, it was claimed that the government's apparent justification for the evictions was largely a disguise for a future plan to develop a private project in the area.¹⁴

12. YMCA-SL & CODOHSAPA (2015).

13. AFDB (2012).

14. Bradlow & SDI (2011); Benjamin (2015); Campbell (2015). The community of Aberdeen Creek is one of the more recent cases of involuntary displacement in Freetown (Crab Town). By contrast, Kroo Bay in 2009, was an example of an unsuccessful attempt of eviction.

3.2 Colbot Community that moved to six-miles

After the flooding in September 2015, President Ernest Bai Koroma announced the Relocation Plan.¹⁵ The plan involved an inter-ministerial special committee for relocating flood victims, and a move to a government land property in the northern district rural area, six miles north of Waterloo, providing temporary accommodation and future permanent houses. In November 2015, after the flood, fifty-one temporary zinc houses¹⁶ were built for the 121 families as a result of the relocation plan. When they arrived, the families were told that they would remain there until the government built them new houses. However, after eight months, there is no indication that they will obtain their homes anytime soon. It is also unclear how much they will be expected to pay for the permanent houses, and how they will manage to do this.

The pros and cons of living at the six-miles location as opposed to remaining in their previous location were mentioned by the focus group participants (June 2016). Some of the advantages are described as follows: (1) they prefer to stay independent rather than ask for shelter from relatives because that tends to harm family relations; (2) they consider their lives to be better, in terms of security, from risks such as flooding, landslides and boulders. Some of the negative aspects mentioned were: (1) lack of services (2) the additional cost of transport, (3) difficult access to supplies and (4) losing their source of income. They argue that due to the relocation they have been challenged by having to change their jobs from being petty traders to becoming farmers. It is due to this that some of the focus group participants said (June 2016) that the majority of the work force of the relocated families remains in the city, where they are seeking job opportunities.

On the one hand, when considering the evaluation of relocation plans it is very complex to measure, some assessment areas that should be included such as: qualitative aspects such as stress levels, generated by living in a risk prone area, the loss of support networks, the loss of social networks and the sense of belonging. But there are other indicators such as transportation costs, loss of employment, or access to public services (schools and healthcare centres), which might be considered in future evaluations.

On the other hand, many of the more risk-prone areas can be mitigated through different interventions. In the interviews with Colbot community leaders (June 2016) it was mentioned that few of them needed to be relocated. It was clearly expressed by them that the construction of retention walls in the main drainage could significantly alleviate the risk of flooding, but it would probably imply a high cost.

3.3 Methods and tools applied in Sierra Leone

The tools used by the GoSL to make political decisions regarding resettlement and slum upgrading will now be presented, following the classification of the international methodologies and frameworks proposed in Section 2. The tools are divided into:¹⁷ (a) resettlement, and (b) disaster risk approach (DRA).

a) Only one document directly discussed the issues of resettlement: the report 'Resettlement Manual: A Guide to the Resettlement of Communities Living in Risk-Prone Areas of Freetown'¹⁸ aims to demonstrate that international guidelines can help to plan resettlements, minimise negative impacts and assist with planning along with the international requirements of donors. The manual incorporates some of the international resettlement standards, such as those recommended by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Finance Corporation (IFC).

15. Pratt (2015); Turay (2015).

16. The temporary houses in Six-miles have two rooms, where each family unit consists of seven to eight members living in one room.

17. Acknowledging the limitations of the study, there was no particular tool found to assess slum upgrading.

18. FCC (2014).

b) There are several tools in the DRA category which can be further differentiated into three different groups:

(i) Rapid need assessment; The Freetown WASH Consortium published 'Rapid Needs Assessment and Freetown WASH Consortium Response Update'.¹⁹ The document briefly assessed the priorities of the people affected, considering their basic needs, shelter, water supply and public health, among other factors. Moreover, the Office of National Security (ONS) published 'The National flood preparedness response plan for Sierra Leone'²⁰ to outline the national and local responsibilities when flooding occurs. For example, the National Strategic Situation Group is accountable for national responsibilities, while at a local level the District Disaster Management Committee has the main duty of coordinating the efforts to provide and distribute resources.

(ii) Vulnerability and capacity assessment, The GoSL, through the ONS, assigned the Red Cross (IFRC) with the task of developing the 'Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Report: Tonkolili, Western Rural and Western Urban Districts of Sierra Leone'²¹ in order to strengthen its strategies on DRR with the support of UNDP. The idea was to create a pilot programme in three districts that could later be replicated in another 11 districts. The report aimed to assess the nature of these risks and the resulting vulnerability; to, identify the local capacities, beliefs, values, behaviours and attitudes; and to plan and design an action plan for the GoSL.

(iii) DRR prevention and mitigation: Since the FCC committed to the Hyogo Framework and the campaign for resilient cities, launched by UNISDR, the municipality has considered the 'Toolkit for Local Governments – The 10 Essentials'²² as part of its methodology for DRR. Additionally, in the context of 'The Urban Planning Project', Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment (MLCPE) and FCC published the report 'Environmental Assessment and Evaluation of Natural Disaster Risk and Mitigation in Freetown'.²³ The publication reviewed the main environmental policies and the relevant institutional and legislative frameworks, such as 'The National Environmental Action Plan 2004 Report', and analysed the diversity of environmental risks while following recommendations and mitigation strategies.

19. WASH (2015).

20. ONS (2016).

21. IFRC (2013).

22. UNISDR (2013).

23. MLCPE & FCC (2014).

4. Methodology

Using a qualitative approach, this research has been developed from two main sources: the fieldwork experience and interviews with key informants and the literature review. The study design has included a field trip to Freetown to collect primary data. The methods chosen for this study were participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group discussion.

In order to comprehend the debate around slum upgrading and resettlement, eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with: NGO project managers and members, Ministerial authorities of Sierra Leone, local government officers and low-cost housing entities.²⁴ Finally, a focus group was conducted with nine residents of the Colbot community who were relocated, in order to explore how the conditions of the community had changed.

Secondary research was undertaken including methods described as follows: A narrative review of the literature following a search strategy based on the key terms: slum upgrading, resettlement, and disaster risk assessment. The international frameworks analysed in this research were studies conducted by financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Development Bank, among others; reports by multilateral agencies as the UN, and NGOs, related to slum upgrading, resettlement and disaster risk assessment.

24. Ministries: ONS, MLCPE, MWHL, MLSW, and housing institutions (SALHOC, Home Leone). NGOs: YDM, FEDURP, CODOHSAPA, SLYMCA, Restless development.

5. Results



Figure 5: Houses on the edge of the sea at the Colbot informal settlement

Through the literature reviewed the frameworks were categorised using different approaches: resettlement and slum upgrading. Disaster risk was included as an essential part of the other two. Through the analysis it was identified that each approach has subcategories as shown in Table 1. The Resettlement guide, VCA and resilience, DRR, mitigation and prevention were among those that the government is most seriously considering. The frameworks for a humanitarian approach on resettlement and the possible strategies for slum upgrading are less considered. In what follows, the discussion turns to some of the critical assessment areas for each approach.

Table 1: Three approaches and subcategories

Source: Personal elaboration

| Resettlement | Slum upgrading | Disaster risk |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Resettlement and DRR | a. Design and planning | a. VCA and resilience |
| b. Impact of social impoverishment | b. Evaluation | b. DRR prevention and mitigation |
| c. Guide for a resettlement plan | | |

5.1 Key assessment areas for a resettlement action plan

When comparing both the international and national frameworks for a RAP, (as seen in Table 1) it can be noticed that the subcategories (a) resettlement and DRR, with its human rights-based approach supported mainly by UNHCR, and (b) the variables of social impoverishment supported by Cernea were not fully considered. However, if a relocation is not considered along with a fully developed resettlement plan, it might have considerable negative consequences for the inhabitants. In this sense, most of the international literature reviewed regarding RAP agrees with the World Bank's view (2004)

that resettlement should consider the livelihood restoration of the residents, the source of income, infrastructure, services, housing, etc.

Interestingly, the local government FCC²⁵ has included most of the assessment areas proposed by ADB (1998), IFC (2002) and the World Bank (2010). However, when comparing the Six Miles relocation plan with the assessment areas suggested by the international and national frameworks, only two areas were fully considered, namely 'land acquisition' and 'measures to assist with transfer and establishment at new sites'. It is shown there as well, that the least considered assessment areas were 'the design of livelihood', 'participation', and 'monitoring and evaluation'. Based on the fieldwork, the interviews, and the focus group, these three areas seem to be some of the weakest points. Indeed, confusion exists about what is implied in this case as a relocation plan, and how the communities are getting involved. The third critical assessment area is the feasibility of the low-cost housing project as a constitutive element of the livelihood restoration. The government has shown its intention to privatise the low-cost housing market in Six Miles. However, based on the interviews with the ministries and the housing institutions and trying to understand how slum dwellers can obtain their definitive housing, it appears that there is no certainty about the processes, loans, mechanisms, targets, and the unit cost of the housing prototypes designed, and the role of the government and private banks in this process.

5.2 Key assessment areas for a slum upgrading project

The slum upgrading approach has many international frameworks that can be useful tools to design, plan or evaluate the impact of slum upgrading intervention. The tools mentioned and reviewed in section 2 include complex assessment areas such as: integration to the formal city, the labour market or the compound indicator of wellbeing. However, acknowledging the limitations of the study, there was no one particular tool found to assess slum upgrading.

Nevertheless, the slum upgrading approach has not been absent from the political discussion in Freetown. 'The slum initiative', UPP and FCC have encouraged further debate, in a context where '60% of the Freetown families live in neighbourhoods, which have to be renovated and upgraded'.²⁶ But, how does the government want to incorporate the informal settlements into the city? Who has the financial duty for slum upgrading interventions? This political discussion regarding economic progress versus social welfare has contradictions and opportunities. Among the divergent visions of the city, some actors claimed that the consolidation of slums goes against the development of urban strategies which aim to improve the competitiveness of the city. For instance, The State House expressed an interest in the extension of the seaport terminal project, something that might affect or displace the communities of Colbot and Moe Warf. Although there are supporters and detractors, this could represent an opportunity to integrate both pro-poor development strategies and economic development.²⁷

5.2 Key assessment areas for a slum upgrading project

As explained earlier, the other two approaches cannot be understood without considering some of the assessment areas arising from DRA. The international frameworks for disaster risk could support the GoSL to develop more accurate strategies to support decision-making on slum upgrading or resettlement if they considered some of the assessment areas that were not included in the local tools. It is detailed through a comparison between the national²⁸ and international²⁹ tools proposed.

25. FCC (2014).

26. FCC (2014 p6).

27. Under the light of the integrated vision of the city exposed by Cities Alliance (2006).

28. National tools analysed: UNISDR (2013); IFRC (2013); FCC (2014); MLPE & FCC (2014); Wash (2015); ONS (2016).

29. International tools analysed: IFRC (1996); UNEP (2008); UNISDR (2005); Peri Peri (2008); World Bank & UN (2010); UNISDR (2013); Wash (2015); UNISDR (2015); emBRACE (2015).

Both sets of tools were grouped as it was mentioned in section 2 into eight categories and, as it shows in two bar charts in Figure 6. From left to right; a) rapid response, b) risk assessment, c) mitigation and prevention, d) participation, monitoring and evaluation, e) policies and legal framework, f) socioeconomic information, g) planning and future actions and h) financing and resources. The bar chart on the right highlights in red the assessment areas that could be considered and were not integrated into the national tools applied by GoSL.



Figure 6: Comparison between national and international tools in disaster risk approach

Source: Personal elaboration

Some of the key elements are highlighted here, showing what it may be worth the GoSL taking into consideration. As depicted in the figure, a deeper analysis could be carried out in terms of:

a) Rapid Response, in the areas of ‘capacities and strengthening early warning systems and disaster preparedness’, ‘data collection’ and ‘communication and dissemination mechanisms’.

b) Risk Assessment, the subjects of ‘environmental health risks in informal settlements’, ‘making disaster risk reduction a priority’, and ‘allocating appropriate resources’ might also be further studied.

c) Mitigation & Prevention, the international tools include a distinction between prevention by individuals and governments. The main questions are: ‘How much should governments spent on disaster prevention?’ ‘Which entity should decide how much should be spent on mitigation measures?’ The reduction of risk includes the need to ‘protect key activities’ in production and service sectors to increase infrastructure resilience. This is especially relevant given the coastal location of SL and the impacts that climate change has been having on these slum areas to date.

d) Participation, monitoring & evaluation indicates that more attention could be paid to the issues of ‘developing programmes to raise awareness of disaster risk reduction’ and ‘training, compilation and dissemination of disaster risk reduction information’. This emphasises the role of international cooperation and global partnership enabling local stakeholders.

e) Policies and Legal Framework, there could be greater emphasis on ‘strengthening of governance

to manage disaster risk', at the national, regional and global levels, making clear the administrative and logistical arrangements with key stakeholders, and assessing and developing the institutional basis for disaster risk reduction.

g) Planning and Future Actions, the following aspects could be reviewed: 'means of implementation', 'follow-up actions for disaster preparedness', 'establishing measures to incorporate disaster risk reduction in urban and land-use planning'. Finally, regarding 'Financing and Resources', the aspects that need more attention are: 'strengthening financial capacity for resilience and expediting recovery' and 'creating opportunities for the inclusion of public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures'.

Some of the critical assessment areas identified referred to DRR are 1) inhabitability and 2) mitigation and prevention. To determine whether an area is uninhabitable or not is an extremely complex issue. The UN reinforces the idea that even at a scientific level it is hard to reach a consensus about which areas should not be considered habitable.³⁰ How is the GoSL labelling high-risk prone areas? Freetown WASH consortium,³¹ for example, has developed risk maps that cover all the districts, with no internal subdivisions. However, the question that remains is whether these maps are accurate enough to make political decisions on a small scale to decide whether a household within a community must be relocated or not. But also whether maps can capture the complex dimensions that need to be taken into consideration before making any decision on relocation.

Furthermore, considering that 'uninhabitability may be a bi-directional continuum rather than an end-state'.³² This means that the Government land's label as uninhabitable can be shifted into residential areas if they address some of the risk problems with measures of prevention and mitigation. For example, in the case of Colbot, the mitigation measures appear to be very clear, excluding those inhabitants that are banking into the sea, most of the people affected by flooding are caused from the main drainage that cross the settlement. Thus, a retention wall in the main drainage could mitigate most of the consequences of the flooding. UNHCR claims that before resettlement, it is necessary to 'explore (and if reasonable, exhaust) potential mitigation and other adaptation options'.³³ Has the GoSL fully exhausted the possibilities of mitigation? It is known that the GoSL has been tackling the deforestation, and the general drain system. However much more could be explore in terms of irrigation and cleaning drain systems, construction of retention walls, etc, incorporating in different ways the social capacities to improve their own livelihoods.

30. UNHCR (2012).

31. WASH (2015).

32. UNHCR (2012 p25).

33. UNHCR (2014 p21).

6. Conclusion

It is undeniable that informal settlements in Freetown face many challenges due to the environmental problems and constant floods, which are expected to worsen, during the rainy season in the capital. The GoSL is facing social pressure to make political decisions and to bring about necessary solutions for their inhabitants. Slum upgrading and resettlement are among the possible alternatives. This political debate is not a novelty; many other developing countries have similar political discussions. For this reason, there are a considerable number of developmental actors designing tools to address these issues. The use of the international tools is relevant as they provide a framework in a context which lacks public policies and norms. Moreover, they generate a common language between the different governmental agencies and civil society. The adoption of international standards may also help negotiating donors' support for such urban development interventions.

Among the limitations of this study it is worth mentioning, (i) difficulty in accessing data collection; (ii) the bias of the information selection; the inclusions from those views of institutions and people interviewed, and the missing information from those institutions that were not contacted, moreover the bias of the selection of the case of study. Concerning the methodological limitations (i) the partiality of the methodologies and tools selected, (ii) the study did not evaluate the use of a local tool for a slum upgrading approach; therefore, it is unknown how the GoSL might assess this option.

6.1 Recommendations

One of the purposes of the current study is to determine how the GoSL is making its political decisions in regards to slum upgrading versus resettlement, and which tools they are implementing. Firstly, with the so-called relocation plan implemented in 2015, the findings suggested that, surprisingly, there was no one particular document or policy available that established a plan or procedure. Neither was there any concrete plan, programme or project for slum upgrading at the central government level apart from 'the slums initiative' and what is suggested by The Urban Planning Project 2011-2014 (UPP).

At a Government level, in order to evaluate one option against the other, both alternatives need to be further developed. For example, in the case of resettlement, it should follow each of the stages mentioned in the RAP, incorporating the humanitarian approach and the social impoverishment variables. If the Government initiative of resettlement restarted, it would need to clarify how the families could obtain their houses, the options for livelihood restoration, possible sources of income, public services, schools, health care available, etc. In order to fulfil a successful RAP, it is important that the actors involved in the discussion all participate, at least in some key stages of the process. This would be followed by a process of monitoring and evaluation.

Moreover, with the standstill of the Six-Miles relocation plan, there is no concrete Resettlement Action Plan and at present, the only alternative available for the informal settlements inhabitants is the upgrading of their current locations. NGOs need to work as bridging institutions to facilitate dialogue between slum dwellers and the government. They would also be required to coordinate the communities to maximise the resources, skills and human capacities of the different slums. NGOs need to bring together the different instances, initiatives or projects that allow the improvement of the quality of life of the slum dwellers. Whether or not these initiatives were resulting from the government's project, the local CBOs or international support, the synergies among the actors could certainly add value to the end result.

Furthermore, the discussion about slum resettlements is based on the people affected by flooding or those who live in high-risk prone areas and, it is therefore not possible to assess slum upgrading versus resettlement without considering how to assess disaster risk. Moreover, most of the tools that were analysed and implemented by GoSL focus on the DRA more than on the other two approaches relating to slum upgrading and relocation. These disaster risk tools mainly concentrate on rapid response

and environmental assessment. In the resettlement approach, this research was only able to identify the 'Resettlement Guide' document, whereas the frameworks for a humanitarian approach, social impoverishment and slum upgrading as previously mentioned, were less considered by the GoSL.

By exploring the possible contributions of the international methodologies to the GoSL, this research identified through the case of study some of the critical assessment areas that must be analysed and compared in both contexts. From those tools and assessment areas, that were considered by the GoSL in DR, some weaknesses were recognised when determining some key components such as; high-risk prone areas, flooding maps, mitigation and prevention measures. The international methodologies define strategies to transform determining high-risk prone areas into habitable areas through mitigation and preventive measures. They focus on proactiveness more than a reactive approach and assume that a high percentage of risk – prone areas are not an end-state and can be transformed, with political will and financial resources.

The GoSL might continue developing strategies for rapid need response in case of disasters, but they should focus more on reduction risk, mitigation and prevention. NGOs should continue working with the GoSL and the communities to develop strategies for the most common risk; the flooding and landslide during the rainy seasons. For this reason, it is highly relevant for NGOs and CBOs to be actively involved in the discussion of plans to identify high-risk prone areas and prepare flooding maps in the informal settlements, If there is the politic will and the resources, some high-risk prone areas may, with mitigation project, even shift from being inhabitable to being a residential area.

6.2 Areas of further research

This research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. More research is required to determine why some local tools have more power or political relevance than others at the point of political decision-making.

1. In the resettlement approach, further research should be undertaken to explore (1) participation (eligibility criteria), (2) monitoring and evaluation, (3) restoration of livelihood and all it involves.
2. For slum upgrading interventions, both communities and government resources are needed to add value to the efforts made by CBOs and NGOs.
3. Moreover, it should be considered how a relocation plan located outside of the urban area, and without a clear social housing proposal might affect a human rights-based approach or social and cultural impoverishment, measured by indicators and mathematic models.
4. Further research needs to accurately examine the demarcation of high-risk areas or flooding maps, as it is a transversal component for any public decision-making.

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ABOUT SLURC

The Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), based in Freetown, is a globally connected research centre created through a partnership between the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (University College London) and the Institute of Geography and Development Studies (Njala University).

The centre aims at building the research and analysis capacity of urban stakeholders in Sierra Leone; making urban knowledge available and accessible to those who need it, prioritising the residents of informal settlements and their organisations; and delivering world-leading research in order to influence the country's urban policy and practice.

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ABOUT Y CARE INTERNATIONAL

Y Care International is the YMCA's international relief and development agency. We work in partnership with YMCAs and other local partners across the developing world to respond to the needs of the most disadvantaged young people.

The needs of disadvantaged young people in developing countries are often neglected, making the transition into adulthood difficult. We help young people develop alternatives to a future of poverty and empower them to contribute to the development of their communities. <http://www.ycareinternational.org>

ABOUT YMCA SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone YMCA (SLYMCA) is one of the country's oldest youth serving organisations, established in 1912. SLYMCA's vision is a society where young people are empowered to be responsible and productive within their communities and Sierra Leone at large, providing opportunities for young people to fulfil their potential through developing innovative and participative programmes addressing young people's needs.

SLYMCA presently has 24 branches in all regions across the country, and through its work, SLYMCA is considered a leading NGO in the country, delivering socially relevant programming for young people and their communities.

ABOUT CODOHSAPA

The Centre of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation (CODOHSAPA) emerged from the Sierra Leone Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) 4-yr Slums Livelihood Project titled "Transforming Young People's Lives in Slum Settlements in Freetown". One key activity of this project was "to establish a local association of slum dwellers" based on the Slum Dwellers International (SDI) model. SDI is a loose transnational network of NGOs and slum dwellers federations supporting slum improvements in various developing countries. This local association has grown tremendously and now positions itself as a national civil society group representing the voice of the poor, which has been constituted as the women-led Federation of Urban and Rural Poor (FEDURP) and belongs to the SDI network.

