



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE ELECTION OF REFUGEE EXECUTIVE IN REFUGEE CAMP**

### **General provisions**

1. The duration of tenure of a term of office for Refugee Executive shall be one year from the date of inauguration.
2. There shall be an Electoral Commission with the responsibility of conducting election of Refugee Executive.
3. The electoral list is prepared by UNHCR and camp management.
4. The formation of refugee executive shall be done through secret ballot.
5. The winner of any positions is by simple majority vote cast.
6. The Council of Elders, the Grievance Committee and the refugee wardens shall be neutral bodies in all the electoral process.

### **Formation/existence of the Refugee Executive Committee**

1. The Refugee Executive Committee comprises the following positions :
  - Camp Chairperson;
  - Deputy Camp Chairperson;
  - Camp Chairlady;
  - Deputy Camp Chairlady;
  - Male Youth Leader;
  - Female Youth Leader;
  - Secretary;
  - Assistant Secretary;
  - Public Relations Officer (PRO)

2. Nomination procedures :
  - The Camp Chairperson (either a man or a woman) shall be elected with his/her running mate (Deputy Camp Chairperson), who shall be from a different tribe.
  - The Camp Chairlady shall be elected with her running mate (Deputy Camp Chairlady), who shall be from a different tribe.
  - The Secretary, Assistant Secretary and PRO will be chosen by consensus by the elected Refugee Executive members (ie : Camp Chairperson, Deputy Camp Chairperson, Camp Chairlady; Deputy Camp Chairlady, Male YouthLeader, Female YouthLeader) upon the approval of the Council of Elders by simple majority vote.
3. No refugee is allowed to run for an office after serving in that capacity for his/her second consecutive term.
4. Any executive member dismissed from his/her position before the expiry period of the tenure of office due to fraud, malpractice, subversion or any criminal act shall be forbidden from assuming a position of responsibility within the refugee community in the camp or any other refugee camp.
5. Any refugee transferred/moved from one camp where he/she was known to have been involved in fraud, malpractice, subversion or any criminal act shall not be allowed to be nominated in the camp where he/she is transferred.
6. A standing committee comprising NaCSA, UNHCR and Camp Management shall investigate any allegations of misconduct or unlawful activities by any executive member and may take punitive measures including recommendation for dismissal from executive position if found wanting for misdeed.
7. During the election process, the Council of Elders will act as interim executive. The interim executive will comprise of maximum six members, depending on the total number of members in the Council of Elders. The interim will be functional from the starting date of the election process, which is officially announced by the Chairperson of the Electoral commission until the day of inauguration of the new refugee executive committee.
8. In the situation where an Executive Committee member is dismissed from the Executive Committee as in paragraph 6 above, or resigned or incapacitated to act in his/her position, the Deputy/Assistant will automatically assume that position.

9. In a situation where the whole Executive is dismissed for misdeed, the interim arrangement as in paragraph 7 above would be put in place by NaCSA, UNHCR and Camp Management until elections are held.

### **Electoral commission**

1. Electoral commission shall comprise NaCSA, UNHCR, Camp Management, IPs (2), Host and 6 refugee representatives.
2. Selection of the refugee representation is supervised by the outgoing Council of Elders and the outgoing Grievance Committee, in collaboration with NaCSA, UNHCR and Camp management.
3. NaCSA shall chair the electoral commission.
4. Criteria for selection of refugee representatives on the electoral commission
  - i. Must be a registered Liberian refugee resident in the camp of the said election.
  - ii. Must be 25 years and above.
  - iii. Must remain impartial during the campaign and election. H/She shall be immediately dismissed from the commission and possible punitive measures imposed if found interfering to distort the free and fair nature of the electoral process. The dismissal and any punitive measures will be decided by the standing committee described above.
  - iv. No two persons from the same ethnic group shall be in the commission.
  - v. The religious composition shall be 3 Christians and 3 Muslims.
  - vi. The gender composition shall be 3 males and 3 females.
  - vii. Must be literate enough to comprehend and translate electoral guidelines and procedures.
5. Roles of the Electoral Commission.
  - i. The electoral commission shall ensure that the elections bye-laws are enforced.
  - ii. Dissemination of information about the elections to the refugees.
  - iii. Sharing of information between the refugees, NaCSA, Camp management and UNHCR.

- iv. Announcement to the refugee electorate of the dates according to the following election process:
  - deadline for the application of candidates to the electoral commission;
  - date for display of voters list and candidates list;
  - date for contestation of/comments on candidates list and voters list;
  - date for manifesto;
  - date for election day;
  - date for inauguration of the refugee executive committee;
- v. Preparation and announcement of voter education programmes and schedule.
- vi. Display of list : the voters and candidates list shall be displayed at the same time and at strategic locations for electorate to have access.
- vii. Reception of comments about the voters list and recommend for correction if necessary. Reception of comments shall be accepted within 3 days after the list has been displayed, after which no more comments on/contestation of candidates and voters lists will be accepted .
- viii. Reception, assessment and recommendation of nomination of candidates for approval/rejection.
- ix. Identification and preparation of polling stations.
- x. Liaise with the SLP and the refugee wardens for the maintenance of queue during polling.
- xi. Safeguarding and issuing ballot papers to voters during polling.
- xii. Monitoring the conduct of candidates and supporters.
- xiii. Counting of votes after polling.
- xiv. The Chair of the Electoral Commission announces the result of the election and declares the winner of the polls.
- xv. Supervises the transfer of office from the outgoing executive to the newly elected executive and the inauguration of the newly elected executive.

### **Candidates selection criteria**

To be a candidate for the election of refugee executive position;

- 1) One must be a registered refugee with a ration card and be a resident in the said camp.
- 2) One must not have been convicted of any crime.
- 3) One must be 25 years and above for the position of Camp Chairperson, Camp Chairlady and their deputies.
- 4) One must have dependants residing in the said camp.
- 5) One must not be in any other position whether elected, appointed, employed or receiving any emolument for the said position/assignment. Candidates must have resigned from such position before vying for executive position.
- 6) One must apply to the electoral commission accompanied by two nomination letters and passport size photograph of the candidate.
- 7) Nominations must come from people of two different ethnic backgrounds from that of the candidate and one of the nominators must be a female.
- 8) The running mate for each candidate must not be of the same ethnic background of the candidate.
- 9) Women are at liberty to vie for Chairperson.

### **Voters**

To be eligible to vote for the election :

- 10) One must be a registered refugee with a ration card and be a resident in the said camp.
- 11) One must not have been convicted of any crime.
- 12) One must be at least 18 years.
- 13) One must be sane.

### **Polling**

- 1) Polling shall start at 09:00hrs and end at 14:30hrs.
- 2) Whenever possible, different coloured ballot papers shall be used for each position voted for (i.e. different coloured papers for chairman, chairlady, youth chairman and youth chairlady.).
- 3) A token shall be provided to every voter before being issued the actual ballot papers. Every voter is required to present this token

before been issued the ballot papers. In addition, indelible ink will be sprayed on the finger of every voter before voting.

- 4) Photos of candidates, and the color of the ballot paper to be used, shall be used on ballot boxes instead of symbols.
- 5) Queuing at the polling station must be orderly, supervised and maintained by the SLP and the refugee wardens. REFUGEE WARDENS MUST NOT CAMPAIGN/CANVASS OR TAKE SIDE IN THE ELECTION. Refugee wardens will be the first refugees to vote, to have time to carry out their duties.
- 6) All electorate/candidate must not stay around the polling station after H/She casts his/her votes.
- 7) Counting starts at most thirty minutes after closure of polling.

#### **Formation of the Refugee Executive Committee's sub-committees, Grievance Committee and Council of Elders**

The Refugee Executive Committee's sub-committees are as follows :

- food and NFIs
- Shelter, water and sanitation
- health and reproductive health
- education and skills training
- agriculture and income generating activities
- child protection
- youth
- SGBV Committee
- Women's Wing

The Chairperson, after being elected and inaugurated into office, shall appoint leaders of the sub-committees above-mentioned, with the following specific provisions :

- the appointments shall be gender, religious and tribal balanced.
- The position of Youth sub committee will be filled by either the Male Youth Leader or the Female Youth Leader, which are elected positions of the Refugee Executive Committee.

- the leader of the Women's Sub Committee shall be a woman appointed by the Camp Chairlady.
- The appointment and dismissal of Sub-Committee leaders shall be approved by the Council of Elders on simple majority basis.
- Members of the Sub-Committees shall be appointed or dismissed by the Sub-Committee leaders and approved by the Refugee Executive Committee based on the criteria to appoint Sub-Committee leaders.

#### Formation of the Grievance Committee and the Council of Elders

The Grievance Committee and the Council of Elders are **independent** bodies from the Refugee Executive Committee. For both bodies, the Camp Chairperson will formally announce the composition of the two bodies after the proposed selection has been accepted by the Standing Committee (NaCSA, UNHCR and Camp Management).

- the Grievance Committee (four members) is appointed by the Refugee Executive Committee and must reflect the ethnic and religious composition of the camp.
- for the Council of Elders : each ethnic group will be responsible for appointing one member to the Council of Elders. The role of the Refugee Executive Committee is to facilitate the nomination process and to ensure that the Council of Elders reflects the ethnic, gender and religious composition of the camp.

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