Refugee Camps and Settlements" (14 January 1999), a "ladder of options" approach was proposed by UNHCR as a possible means to address insecurity within refugee camp environments. In the first rung are the so-called 'soft' options, which include preventive measures and cooperation with national law-enforcement authorities. The upper end or 'hard' options include military deployment. The 'medium' options include the possible utilization of private security firms, the direct hiring of armed security personnel, the deployment of civilian or police monitors and the deployment of an international police force. In the course of the workshop, participants suggested that the ladder did not adequately reflect the need for certain steps to occur simultaneously. Instead, they proposed that options contained within the ladder be considered as a matrix, where decision-makers could 'mix and match' options as required on a case by case basis.

Security Threats

Security threats encountered by refugee camp populations are numerous and diverse. Examples of security threats include, but are not limited to: external attacks against refugee camps from the sending country, particularly in situations of conflict; external groups who infiltrate camps to create disorder, aimed at forceful repatriation of refugees; intimidation and military activities by different political factions in the camps who use the camps as a base for rebel activities; ineffective camp security management; a high level of violent crime within the camps; a lack of host government and law enforcement presence; a breakdown in relations between the refugee society and the local population; and camp location and size. Other sources of insecurity may include health issues, food distribution, and language or cultural barriers.

Although the host country has the principal responsibility for the safety and security of refugees, in reality no one individual, group, or organization is solely responsible for security. A security plan must take into consideration the full range of threats and the security practitioners must possess the whole range of skill sets to respond to those threats. **Workshop participants emphasized the need for a multi-disciplinary, integrated approach to refugee security and suggested utilizing a "security team" concept.** Team composition may vary from camp to camp and situation to situation, but could include the following skill-sets: camp management; local and national police of the host state; inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations providing services to refugees; possibly international police and private security firms and, most importantly, the refugees themselves. It is critical to ensure that all members of the security team have clear lines of authority as well as a well-defined concept of their roles and responsibilities.

Because security is central to humanitarian efforts, it was felt that training for members of the multi-disciplinary security teams and humanitarian agencies should include familiarization with the mandates and appropriate roles for international organizations, NGOs, military, police, and others who may be active in the camps. Each group should understand the capabilities and limits of the others, to promote cooperation and communication.

Actors involved in Refugee Camp Environments

There are a number of actors who may be involved in addressing the specific challenges and possible responses to insecurity in refugee camps. Key players include: