

# Guinea

## Main Objectives

- Ensure the protection of Sierra Leonean refugees; provide the refugees in camps with basic humanitarian assistance; and initiate income-generating activities (including agricultural projects) to enhance their self-reliance.
- Disseminate information on aspects of repatriation and conditions in areas of origin to enable refugees to make informed decisions on their future; and facilitate the repatriation of refugees who opt to return.
- Complete the transfer of Liberian refugees to new sites and continue to ensure their protection; provide refugees in camps with basic humanitarian assistance; and organise the registration of all refugees.
- Facilitate the repatriation of Liberian refugees on an individual basis, security permitting.
- Focus assistance to urban refugees on projects which increase their self-reliance (income-generating activities and skills training) and provide support to the most vulnerable.
- In co-operation with the Government and development agencies, reforest areas affected for more than a decade by the presence of large numbers of refugees.



## PLANNING FIGURES

Population	Jan. 2002	Dec. 2002
Sierra Leonean Refugees <sup>1</sup>	100,000	69,000
Liberian Refugees <sup>2</sup>	82,000	75,000
Urban Refugees	1,500	1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,500</b>	<b>145,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> Depending on developments in Sierra Leone, up to 30,000 Sierra Leonean refugees may decide to repatriate in 2002. Some 1,000 refugees will be assisted with resettlement.

<sup>2</sup> Security permitting, some 5,000 Liberian refugees are expected to repatriate from Guinea to Liberia in 2002 with or without UNHCR's assistance. UNHCR also plans to organise the resettlement of some 2,000 refugees.

## TOTAL REQUIREMENTS • USD 24,591,972

established camps and settlements in Forecariah, Macenta and Guéckédou districts (including the Guéckédou strip, known as the Parrot's Beak, which juts into Sierra Leone). At the beginning of 2001, as the security situation started to improve, UNHCR gradually re-established its presence and resumed activities in the area. To ensure the protection of refugees and provide them with assistance, UNHCR worked closely with the Guinean Government and local authorities to transfer refugees to newly-established camps some distance from the border areas. Between February and June, some 58,000 refugees were moved to four new sites further north, in the districts of Albalaria (Kountaya, Boreah and Telikoro) and Dabola (Sembakounya).

## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### Recent Developments

Since the early 1990s, Guinea has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees mainly from Sierra Leone and Liberia. In September 2000, following repeated cross-border attacks from Sierra Leone and Liberia, many refugees were forced to flee from



Registration for voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees in Conakry. UNHCR/L. Taylor.

Since UNHCR resumed its activities in the first quarter of 2001, the attacks in Guinea have subsided and the situation has stabilised. Since March 2001, the Guinean authorities have tasked a mixed brigade of police and *gendarmerie* to ensure security in and around the refugee camps. UNHCR has provided ad hoc support to the brigade by providing communications equipment, transport, office space and monthly allowances. To formalise this arrangement, UNHCR signed an agreement with the Ministry for the Administration of the Territory, Decentralisation and Security in late October 2001. This agreement, and the establishment of permanent security posts near the camps, are important steps towards improving the security of refugees and humanitarian aid workers. This arrangement also aims to maintain the civilian nature of the refugee camps.

### Constraints

The situation in Guinea is influenced by developments in neighbouring countries and following the repeated cross-border attacks of last year, the Government has had to deal with the issue of internally displaced persons. This represents a considerable burden for a country that already hosts large numbers of refugees and has reduced its capacity to focus on economic development. The need is therefore even greater for

international support for the improvement of basic social services and the mitigation of environmental degradation. Funding must be sufficient to simultaneously address the needs of both refugees and host communities, as any disparity could rapidly become a source of tension.

As UNHCR remains concerned about the security and safety of refugees and staff in Guinea, the security arrangements initiated with the authorities in 2001 will be continued and joint police and *gendarmerie* posts will be maintained close to the camps.

Although the situation in Sierra Leone has significantly improved, it still does not permit mass repatriation in safety and dignity. UNHCR will continue to facilitate voluntary repatriation on an on-going basis for refugees who choose to return. If peaceful elections in May 2002 demonstrate generalised nationwide stability, UNHCR will begin to promote mass voluntary repatriation.

The intensified conflict in the northern part of Liberia, particularly in Lofa county, has resulted in large displacements within the country and has also forced populations to seek asylum in neighbouring countries, including Guinea. Political and other developments will dictate whether or not voluntary repatriation to Liberia can be organised.

# STRATEGY

## Sierra Leonean Refugees

In 2002, UNHCR will continue to provide protection to approximately 100,000 refugees of whom approximately half are sheltered and will receive assistance in the newly-established camps in the districts of Albadaria and Dabola. As relocation came to a conclusion in 2001, UNHCR organised the registration of refugees in the new camps. All of them will receive identification cards. In 2002, UNHCR plans to undertake the registration of refugees residing outside camps.

Voluntary repatriation remains the preferred durable solution for this group of refugees and UNHCR will continue to facilitate the return of refugees who indicate a powerful desire to return and/or have begun doing so on their own initiative. UNHCR will however only promote repatriation if: i) a careful assessment of the situation in Sierra Leone suggests that stability will persist throughout the country, and ii) overall improvements permit a return in safety and dignity. UNHCR estimates that some 30,000 refugees will choose to repatriate, of whom 20,000 will benefit from transport convoys organised by UNHCR. To ensure that refugees who choose to return are well informed about the conditions and situation in Sierra Leone, and to avoid encouraging premature return and mass internal displacement of returnees, UNHCR will expand its mass information campaign. Refugees need to be in a position to weigh up all the pros and cons of the options available to them. The campaign will also focus on the modalities (practical details) of the UNHCR repatriation and reintegration operations.

The voluntary repatriation movements will be organised according to precise guidelines that will cover the registration of refugees with UNHCR, signature of a Voluntary Repatriation Form (that will serve as a travel and identification document entitling the beneficiary to UNHCR protection) and detailed arrangements concerning the departure and transit centres. Refugees will undergo a medical examination and all children under five years of age without proof of measles immunisation will be vaccinated before departure. UNHCR will ensure that the special protection needs of vulnerable groups, including separated minors, households headed by children/adolescents, the elderly, and women, are duly taken into consideration at all stages of the repatriation operation. In addition to a reference to their vulnerability on their Voluntary Repatriation Forms, specific forms will be prepared including information

about the nature and degree of vulnerability. The forms will then be handed over to the relevant agencies and authorities upon return. Refugees will be provided with transport assistance either to Conakry port for onward travel to Freetown or, depending on developments in Sierra Leone, through land border points by road.

Refugees who remain in Guinea will continue to benefit from UNHCR's protection and assistance. UNHCR will also continue to provide support to the Government to ensure the security of the camps under an agreement initiated in 2001 (see above). UNHCR will prolong its information campaign to sensitise local communities to refugee protection issues as well as to urge refugees to respect the laws of the host country.

Under the programme of assistance in the camps, UNHCR will work closely with its implementing partners, reviewing all planned interventions to prevent any duplication of activities. The programme will be largely one of care and maintenance, but will also include projects to enhance the self-reliance of refugees. Elements of protection will be taken into account in the planning and implementation of all activities. For example, UNHCR will ensure that latrines and showers can be accessed by women at night without danger. Permanent lighting will be installed in certain areas of the camps as necessary. Significant numbers of the refugees are physically and/or mentally disabled, victims of violence, unaccompanied children or the elderly. They will be the main beneficiaries of individual counselling and community-based support projects.

Health care, including local ante- and post-natal health services, will be provided to all refugees living in the camps and nutritional, mortality and morbidity rates will be closely monitored. Vulnerable refugees living outside the camps will also benefit

Transfer of Sierra Leonean refugees from Gueckedou border region to a safer refugee site.  
*UNHCR/L. Taylor.*



from these services. In the camps UNHCR will ensure that refugees have access to drinking water (a minimum of 16 litres per person per day) and that the water points are within reasonable walking distance. Committees responsible for the maintenance of water points will be re-established, with the deliberate inclusion of committee members who have received training in the past (when they resided in the former camps). UNHCR will ascertain that its operational partners maintain sanitation facilities, fumigate public spaces on a regular basis, and collect refuse.

With support from its operational partner in the education sector, UNHCR will offer primary and secondary education to all refugee children in the camps. Intensive French language classes will be part of the curriculum. This should enable refugee children to enter the local education system in due course. Professional training centres will also be established for teenagers and young adults to allow them to acquire specific technical skills (carpentry, tailoring, plumbing, and engineering). To enhance refugees' self-reliance, agricultural projects will be developed and basic agricultural tools and seeds will be distributed. UNHCR will also initiate income-generation projects. In the first phase, training will be provided to beneficiaries on the basic business and accounting skills required for the running of projects and revolving funds.

For more than ten years, Guinea has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees. In certain prefectures in the south-eastern part of the country their presence has had a marked effect on the environment. Deforestation is the most obvious impact, but soil erosion, and the loss of wildlife and non-timber products have also become evident. The main objective of UNHCR's programme will be to mitigate environmental damage and prevent further deterioration. UNHCR will tighten up the monitoring of sanitation, shelter, and forestry projects implemented by operational partners to ensure that they follow environmental guidelines. In cooperation with local authorities, UNHCR will also initiate a pilot project focusing on the management of natural resources and energy saving, as well as on environmental protection as applied to the selection and development of camp

sites. The main activities under this programme will include: the procurement and distribution of heating fuel (in place of firewood); the maintenance of wells and latrines; the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure (schools, health centres); the clean-up of old camp sites and reforestation of affected zones; and the implementation of environmental education programmes. Refugees and local communities will be involved at all stages of the programme, from the prioritisation of interventions to their actual implementation.

Sierra Leonean refugee child in Sainte-Marie Transit Camp, Conakry. *UNHCR/L. Taylor.*



### **Liberian Refugees**

UNHCR will continue to protect and assist Liberian refugees in Kouankan camp as well as in the newly-established camps

including Kola. UNHCR established Kola camp in co-operation with the Government of Guinea in the latter half of 2001 for refugees who had fled from Macenta and Guéckédou to N'zérékoré and refugees living in the immediate proximity of the Liberian border. If necessary, and should the security situation deteriorate, refugees presently living in Kouankan camp (in the Macenta area) or other zones close to the border will also be moved further inland to the new camps.

As in the camps sheltering Sierra Leonean refugees, UNHCR will ensure that all the basic needs of refugees in terms of food, water, shelter, health, sanitation and education are adequately covered. Under all programmes UNHCR will ensure that women and men are equal beneficiaries. Women will also receive the same identification documents (birth and marriage certificates) as their spouses. In addition to the regular entitlements to assistance, women will be the main beneficiaries of hygienic kits and security kits (lamps, torches).

To allow refugees to become less dependent on the distribution of food assistance, agricultural projects will be developed. Through its operational partner in the agricultural sector, UNHCR will organise the procurement and distribution of agricultural tools (large and small hoes, machetes and axes) as well as seeds. In addition, beneficiaries will receive any technical guidance required.

Refugees living in the N'zérékoré area, but outside the camps will receive limited assistance focussed on the health sector. All extremely vulnerable refugees will benefit from access to free health services. In 2002, UNHCR will also undertake a registration and verification exercise to update the current statistics and issue identity cards to all Liberian refugees. The majority of Liberian refugees in Guinea are from the Lofa and Nimba counties in Liberia. Should the security situation in Liberia improve, particularly in these counties, UNHCR will facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees who opt to return on an individual basis.

### Urban Refugees

There are presently some 1,500 refugees in Conakry, the majority of whom originate from Liberia and Sierra Leone. The status of asylum-seekers will be determined by the *Comité d'éligibilité*. UNHCR will continue to provide support to the Government to cover per diem and training costs of their staff.

Some 1,000 refugees with no source of income will receive a monthly allowance to cover their housing and medical costs as well as education fees. In addition, funds will be made available for income-generating activities to increase refugees' economic independence and chances of local integration. Interviews will be carried out to identify the best durable solution (including resettlement) for each refugee family.

UNHCR will maintain an updated database with basic information on each individual case.

UNHCR's plan of action for urban refugees will be developed in close co-operation and collaboration with Government authorities as well as with other governmental and non-governmental humanitarian and development organisations.

UNHCR will submit for resettlement special protection cases, including victims of violence, women-at-risk and refugees with severe health problems.

## ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Management Structure

In 2002, the UNHCR office in Guinea will reinforce its monitoring capacity and will ensure that best practice is maintained. In this context, the office will seek advice and expertise from technical specialists at the Regional Directorate for West and Central Africa in Abidjan as well as from the Department for Operational Support in Geneva. This support will cover various sectors including health, income-generating activities, registration, procurement and mainstreaming of policy priorities into the country programme (women/gender, children, adolescents, and environment). The expertise will be sought during the initial planning phase as well as for the delivery of training for operational partners. The office will continue to report to the Regional Directorate on general programme co-ordination and policy setting. Regular meetings at the regional level will also be organised. As the situation in Guinea is closely bound up with that in the two other countries of the Mano River Union (Liberia and Sierra Leone) these meetings will be essential and will allow UNHCR to prepare for any new refugee movements. In this context, UNHCR will maintain regional stocks of non-food items.

For the year 2002, 225 posts in total (comprising 45 international, two JPOs and 178 national staff) have been approved for Guinea. At the time of writing, however, the staffing level in Guinea is being reviewed. The Office will also benefit from the support of 13 United Nations Volunteers and two consultants.

UNHCR's office in Conakry will ensure the co-ordination of programmes and monitoring of activities in the whole country. UNHCR's office in Kissidougou will cover the camps of Kountaya, Boreah and Telikoro while the office in Dabola will be responsible for Sembakounya camp. The camps of Kuankan and Kola, as well as additional sites in N'zérékoré, will be covered from the UNHCR office in N'zérékoré.

## OFFICES

Conakry
Dabola
Kissidougou
N'zérékoré

## Co-ordination

In 2002, UNHCR plans to work with 14 international and five national NGOs. UNHCR has initiated consultations with its partners with a view to rationalise its partnership arrangements in the post-emergency phase of the year 2002. Regular meetings will be held with all partners in Conakry and in all the field offices to ensure information-sharing and operational co-ordination. Similar meetings will take place at camp and sector levels.

To improve performance and harmonise existing technical norms and standards, UNHCR will organise training for implementing partners. In 2002, UNHCR will call for an external evaluation of progress made, especially with regard to technical standards and norms. UNHCR will also focus on training of partners to improve their capacity to respond to emergencies. The specific content of the training activities will be discussed and agreed at joint meetings. UNHCR will invite NGO staff to take part in seminars on international protection to enhance their knowledge of issues related to the protection of refugees.

Weekly meetings will take place with WFP in Conakry to share information and plan joint activities. Every six months joint missions will also be organised to assess the nutritional status of refugees in the camps. UNHCR will take part in meetings with the UNDP, WB, IMF, UNICEF and UNIDO to discuss longer-term development projects. Collaboration with IOM will continue in particular in relation to the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees. UNHCR will be a member of the Committee on the drafting of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Guinea. Regular contacts will also be organised with UNDP and UNEP to review environmental rehabilitation projects. UNHCR will participate in strategy and operational meetings and the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) facilitated by OCHA.

As Guinea hosts refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia, bi-monthly meetings will be attended by staff from both those countries, and operational partners, to ensure consistency in the assessment of the situation and activities organised. UNHCR will ensure that all actors involved in the assistance programme for refugees in Guinea are actively involved in all strategic planning meetings.

## PARTNERS<sup>1</sup>

### Government Agencies

<i>Bureau national de coordination pour les réfugiés</i>
<i>Direction nationale des eaux et forêts</i>
<i>Ministère de l'administration du territoire, de la décentralisation et de la sécurité</i>

### NGOs

<i>Action contre la faim</i>
Action of Churches Together
American Refugee Committee
<i>Association pour le développement de la riziculture et du palmier</i>
<i>Centre canadien d'études et de coopération internationale</i>
Centre for the Victims of Torture
Concern Universal
<i>Croix rouge guinéenne</i>
<i>Enfants réfugiés du monde</i>
Handicap International
International Rescue Committee
<i>Médecins du monde</i>
<i>Médecins sans frontières</i>
<i>Organisation catholique pour la promotion humaine</i>
<i>Organisation pour le développement intégré communautaire</i>
<i>Première urgence</i>
<i>Radio rurale de Guinée</i>
Search for Common Ground

### Others

<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>
IFRC
IOM
UNVs

<sup>1</sup>The rationalisation of partnership arrangements is still ongoing.

## BUDGET (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	6,559,706
Community Services	713,976
Crop Production	233,512
Domestic Needs	1,692,089
Education	968,959
Food	24,991
Forestry	291,310
Health	734,931
Income Generation	135,080
Legal Assistance	429,488
Operational Support (to Agencies)	3,334,142
Sanitation	129,737
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	489,605
Transport/Logistics	5,121,467
Water	208,513
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>21,067,506</b>
Programme Support	3,524,466
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,591,972</b>