

Guinea



Main objectives

In 2005, UNHCR aimed to provide international protection to refugees and improve the quality of asylum by ensuring prompt access to refugee status determination procedures; provide continued basic assistance for camp-based refugees and targeted assistance for vulnerable urban refugees in Conakry; facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees; facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees whenever feasible; promote the local integration of remaining Sierra Leonean refugees through a self-reliance programme; integrate age and gender considerations into all refugee planning and programming activities; rehabilitate the environment in refugee-impacted areas and act as a catalyst in seeking funds for further remedial work; strengthen mechanisms already in place for the prevention of and response to gender-based violence; and strengthen the coordinated response to HIV/AIDS.

Impact

- Some 45,100 names were deleted from the refugee database after verification of the physical presence of refugees in all the camps of *Guinée Forestière*. The

exercise, using Project Profile software, resulted in more streamlined assistance to the remaining 56,000 camp refugees in Guinea (some 43,000 in Nzérékoré and 13,000 in Kissidougou).

- Refugee camp security was enhanced through the appointment of qualified police and *gendarmes* officers to serve in the newly established *Brigade Mixte de Sécurité*. These units received training on UNHCR's mandate and Code of Conduct.
- Information broadcasts on *Radio Rurale* gave large numbers of listeners an insight into refugees' rights and responsibilities, and helped to reduce tensions in the camps and local communities. The broadcasts also helped Liberian refugees to make an informed decision on whether or not to repatriate.
- UNHCR assisted over 18,500 Liberian refugees to go home despite the suspension of all movements during the rainy season and during the October presidential elections in Liberia.
- More than 200 Sierra Leonean refugees were assisted to integrate in Guinea, in urban or rural areas of their choice, following extended sensitisation efforts.
- More than 1,900 refugees were resettled in third countries.

- In December, UNHCR organized the relocation of over 3,200 Ivorian refugees from Nonah to Kouankan, a camp set up further away from the border with Côte d'Ivoire. This gave refugees access to agricultural land as well as shelter and various services.
- The registration of urban refugees in Conakry enabled them to obtain proper documentation. They included 232 unaccompanied or separated children. At the end of the year, the urban refugee population comprised almost 4,000 Sierra Leoneans, over 3,000 Liberians, 225 Ivorians, and 59 others of different nationalities.

Working environment

The context

The country's protracted political crisis flared up twice: in January, in the aftermath of armed attacks on a presidential motorcade, and again in May, following attacks on Conakry's central prison. The continued and rapid depreciation of the local currency, coupled with the sharp rise in fuel prices, caused further widespread hardship and led to demonstrations against the Government, amid fears of violent reprisals.

However, the general security situation in the country was better than in 2004 and remained under control despite recurrent ethnic and religious tensions. The year ended on a positive note following the participation in December of opposition parties in local municipal elections for the first time in five years. UNHCR's close relationship with the authorities helped to ensure the smooth running of the refugee programmes. For their part, the refugees continued to benefit from the Government's generous asylum policy.

Constraints

During the year, the 57 per cent rise in fuel prices inevitably led to inflation in all sectors of the economy. In *Guinée Forestière*, UNHCR's transport and logistics costs increased considerably, especially for repatriation activities.

Large stretches of the roads used for the repatriation of Liberian refugees became impassable at the peak of the rainy season, from July to September. As a result, repatriation movements had to be reduced to a minimum during that period.

Still hoping for resettlement in a third country, the residual group of Sierra Leonean refugees was not keen to engage in the local integration projects specifically designed for them. After months of sensitization efforts, the refugees reluctantly accepted that resettlement was no longer a viable option and that the project could start in August, nearly a year after the initiative had begun.

The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire remained unresolved in 2005, and this affected UNHCR's operations. As a result, the Office was not able to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees.

Funding

The devaluation of the national currency by some 60 per cent over the course of the year put a further strain on the national economy. UNHCR's operational budget for Guinea, planned in local currency, was equivalent to nearly USD 13 million at the beginning of the year. By mid-2005 it diminished in value by USD 2 million. This made resource planning and management extremely difficult, and several implementing partners threatened to suspend their activities for lack of adequate financial support.

Achievements and impact

Protection and durable solutions

UNHCR contributed to building government capacity by offering training in international protection to members of the *Comité national d'éligibilité* (CNE) and providing technical and material assistance to the *Bureau national de coordination des réfugiés* (BNCR). UNHCR and the Government approved a revised procedure for the issue of Convention Travel Documents, which were granted to ten eligible refugees in 2005.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Liberia	54,800	54,800	54	58
	Sierra Leone	5,400	4,100	44	39
	Côte d'Ivoire	3,200	3,200	52	61
Asylum-seekers	Sierra Leone	1,700	-	46	42
	Liberia	1,400	-	44	41
	Côte d'Ivoire	700	-	39	-



Liberian refugees starting their journey home from Albadariah camp. *UNHCR / Y. Camara*

Over the course of the year, over 66,000 new refugee attestations, serving as identification documentation, were issued to all registered refugees irrespective of age and sex (some 8,500 in Conakry, 12,500 in Kissidougou and 45,000 in Nzérékoré). This was an important step forward for camp-based refugees, whose only documentation until then had been their ration cards.

More than 18,500 Liberian refugees benefited from voluntary repatriation assistance; this was much less than the initial target of 45,000. The momentum of repatriation was not regained after the suspension of movements during the rainy season, as refugees preferred to wait for the outcome of Liberia's presidential elections in October and the formation of a new Government in January 2006.

Local integration of the residual population of almost 1,400 Sierra Leonean refugees began when an initial group of 223 finally overcame their reluctance, and accepted support to integrate in various regions of Guinea.

More than 1,900 refugees (mainly Liberians and three Sierra Leoneans) were resettled in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States. In 2005, group resettlement was phased out in favour of individual resettlement.

Activities and assistance

Community services: Several training sessions on the prevention of SGBV and HIV/AIDS were organized in Nzérékoré refugee camps for a wide audience ranging from humanitarian staff to teenage refugee girls, refugee committees, and camp security and health workers. About 500 refugees and humanitarian workers (69 per cent of them women) participated in SGBV prevention initiatives in Kissidougou. In Nzérékoré, 1,000 Liberian and 200 Ivorian refugee children benefited from the special training for adolescents at risk.

Crop production: Some 18 tons of rice seeds and close to three tons of fertilizer were distributed to some 2,400 Liberian camp-based refugees. However, the scope of assistance was strategically scaled down in order to limit the risk of generating a pull factor, which could affect

repatriation objectives. Although the relocation of Ivorian refugees from Nonah to Kouankan disrupted agricultural activities, the new site has considerable potential for agriculture.

Domestic needs and household support: Registered Liberian, Ivorian and Sierra Leonean refugees received non-food items in an effort to help maintain their basic living standards. Large quantities of mosquito nets, mats, blankets, buckets, jerry cans, lamps, kerosene and hygiene kits were distributed directly to the beneficiaries. This was closely monitored by UNHCR and implementing partners.

Education: Some 15,000 refugee children (92 per cent Liberians) were attending primary and secondary school at the end of 2005 (49 per cent of them girls). This total was 42 per cent less than the previous year, owing to return movements to Liberia. Nearly 90 per cent of almost 2,000 students enrolled for the West Africa Exams Council successfully graduated, and 87 per cent of the 495 refugee teachers undertaking certificated teacher training successfully completed the course. At the end of the 2004-2005 academic year, UNHCR decided to discontinue the support to secondary education in line with the policy of accelerated return to Liberia. Meanwhile, 66 Liberian and Ivorian camp-based refugees (including 15 girls) enrolled in the vocational training scholarship programme run by a partner, which offered courses on computer science, accounting, beauty care, tailoring and secretarial courses in Conakry.

Food: Over 8,000 metric tons of WFP food products (bulgur wheat, maize, salt, peas and vegetable oil) were distributed to 41,000 Liberian and 3,000 Ivorian refugees living in camps. The food pipeline was reasonably well maintained and the target food basket level, set at an average of 1,600 kilocalories per person per day for the camp-based Liberian refugees who have access to additional food through crop production, and 2,100 kilocalories per person per day for the Ivorian refugees hosted in transit centres, was reached throughout 2005. All Liberian refugees opting for assisted repatriation received an additional one month food ration (from WFP) as well as hot meals in transit centres and snacks for the journey (from UNHCR).

Forestry: Protection of the environment was reinforced through tree planting, tree marking and training on environmental protection in the camps. Seedlings of various species of trees were produced in Kouankan, Lainé and Kola camps and reforestation programmes covered 25 hectares of land in Nzérékoré. Environmental education campaigns were also organized in the camps.

Health and nutrition: Health standards were maintained in all camps, with no outbreaks of epidemics in

2005. A mobile clinic for pregnant women was set up in Kissidougou. Nearly 700,000 condoms were distributed and HIV/AIDS tests were made available to refugees. Films on the prevention of risks associated with HIV/AIDS were shown in the camps as part of an intensified collaborative campaign. In collaboration with UNFPA, 20 health workers were trained on clinical management of rape survivors; and post-exposure prophylaxis services were introduced in camp health centres.

Income generation: Since the microcredit scheme was instituted in Nzérékoré in 2002, 60 per cent of the allocated funds were recovered from the Liberian beneficiaries and reinvested into the system. Some 729 groups (almost 3,000 individuals) were provided with training and technical advice to help improve their capacity to manage projects. A group of 60 Ivorian refugees also entered the microcredit scheme, and the 223 Sierra Leonean refugees who finally opted for local integration received cash grants to start income-generating activities.

Legal assistance: There were 44 per cent fewer refugees in detention in 2005 than the previous year. UNHCR was able to intervene and facilitate the release of those detained arbitrarily or for lack of identification documents, and minors detained in sub-standard conditions. Regular visits to the prisons ensured that the rights of detained refugees were respected. UNHCR continued to support efforts to return 164 unaccompanied minors to their families in Nzérékoré and 145 to Kissidougou. In Conakry, Kindia and Forécariah, UNHCR also registered and documented 215 unaccompanied and separated children, and 75 Sierra Leonean children were able to repatriate in the course of 2005.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR allocated five per cent of the budgets for international NGOs as headquarters overhead costs to support coordination between the partners and their respective headquarters. Vehicles, generators, fuel, telecommunication equipment/network, computers and other office equipment were made available for the smooth operation of UNHCR-funded projects. UNHCR also contributed to the payment of salaries of implementing partner staff involved in the implementation of UNHCR projects. In 2005, all NGOs benefited from training on standards and indicators in UNHCR operations and also attended sessions on the Code of Conduct. UNHCR built the capacity of the Government to offer protection to refugees through a series of training programmes.

Sanitation: Latrines, bathrooms and other facilities were maintained in all the camps, with designated structures for men, women and vulnerable refugees, thus mitigating risks and gender-based violence. In Nzérékoré,

UNHCR supported the construction of new latrines, bathrooms, toilet slabs, rubbish bins, refuse dumps and over 1,000 metres of drainage canals in the camps. The camps were also fumigated twice a month throughout the year.

Shelter and infrastructure: In addition to routine maintenance and repair of camp infrastructure, UNHCR supported the construction of 810 new shelters and ten community kitchens. Transit and distribution facilities were constructed for the transfer of Ivorian refugees from Nonah to Kouankan.

Transport and logistics: A fleet of 33 trucks, 47 light 4x4 vehicles and 83 motorbikes served a wide range of activities, mostly relating to camp assistance and repatriation. UNHCR also funded the rehabilitation of 126 km of roads linking *Guinée Forestière* and Liberia.

Water: Potable water was provided to all camp-based refugees, with quantities ranging from 17 litres per person per day in Kissidougou to 23 in Nzérékoré. In most places, water points are situated less than 200 metres from refugee shelters.

Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR maintained a representation in Conakry, a sub-office in Nzérékoré and a field office in Kissidougou. The number of staff in Guinea was 192, including 32 internationals, 148 locals and 12 UNVs. In addition to the monthly senior management meetings at country level, team meetings were held on a weekly basis to exchange information, monitor progress and adjust strategies.

In February 2005, the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services audited the 2003/2004 programmes and rated the Guinea operation as below average. However, towards the end of the year, all but one of the audit recommendations had been implemented.

Working with others

UNHCR worked with international and national implementing and operational partners. A UN Consolidated Appeal was prepared and formally launched in 2005. Within the framework of the UN Country Team, strategies and policies were developed, including contingency measures relating to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

Overall assessment

The successful registration of urban refugees in Conakry and the physical verification of all refugees living in the camps provided UNHCR with very reliable statistics. UNHCR achieved 40 per cent of its target for repatriation to Liberia, the highest rate among countries hosting Liberians. The voluntary, safe and dignified nature of the repatriation was rigorously maintained.

As the situation in Côte d'Ivoire was not conducive to repatriation, longer-term arrangements were made for Ivorian refugees in Guinea, including the transfer to a new site.

UNHCR and the Government managed to persuade the residual group of Sierra Leonean refugees to consider local integration as a viable solution. For the first time, refugees were assisted to integrate in urban or rural areas of their choice.

Offices

Conakry
Kissidougou
Nzérékoré

Partners

Government agencies

Bureau national de coordination des réfugiés
Radio rurale de Guinée

NGOs

Association des animateurs communautaires de Guinée
Action contre la faim
Action by Churches Together
African Humanitarian Action
American Refugee Committee
Catholic Relief Services
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge
International Rescue Committee
Service jésuite des réfugiés
Organisation pour le développement intégré communautaire

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
FAO
IOM
UNAIDS
UNDP
UNFPA
UNICEF
UNOCHA
WFP
WHO

Budget, income and expenditure (USD)
Annual programme budget

Final budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
19,811,872	6,127,636	12,276,357	18,403,993	18,403,993

¹ Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Prior years' projects
	Annual programme budget	Annual and supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	5,676,517	0
Community services	382,860	283,605
Crop production	31,201	35,222
Domestic needs and household support	128,727	0
Education	701,015	463,453
Food	29,261	1,770
Forestry	66,101	19,622
Health and nutrition	488,405	292,599
Income generation	64,504	81,013
Legal assistance	412,945	56,607
Operational support (to agencies)	1,192,382	324,739
Sanitation	72,981	34,866
Shelter and infrastructure	230,078	203,218
Transport and logistics	3,628,108	991,490
Water	130,254	48,454
Instalments with implementing partners	2,107,413	(2,836,658)
Sub-total operational activities	15,342,752	0
Programme support	3,061,241	0
Total expenditure	18,403,993	0
Cancellation on prior years' expenditure		(540,318)
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	6,330,899	
Reporting received	(4,223,486)	
Balance	2,107,413	
Prior years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1st January		2,899,336
Reporting received		(2,836,658)
Refunded to UNHCR		(145,278)
Adjustments		131,396
Balance		48,796