

Working environment

The context

A peace agreement between the Government and the rebel *Forces Nouvelles* (FN) in March 2007 resulted in the appointment of FN leader Guillaume Soro as prime minister. This event marked a turning point in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. All the signatories to the accord, signed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, confirmed their commitment to peace and stability, a development welcomed by the international community.

The Ouagadougou Agreement included provisions for a joint military command, a new government, the disbanding of militias and armed groups, assisted returns of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and elections within 10 months. The agreement also included the gradual removal of the *zone de confiance*, a buffer strip set up by international peacekeepers to separate government troops in the south from the FN in the north, and the resumption of the *audiences*

foraines, or public hearings related to the granting of birth certificates, identity papers and settlement of nationality issues.

Notwithstanding the delay in implementing some of the major aspects of the agreement, including the disarmament and demobilization of armed factions, key groups in the country have agreed that the first round of presidential elections should be held on 30 November 2008.

The needs

Self-reliance projects are required for the remaining Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire to help with their local integration. Persons with specific needs who do not benefit from local services need assistance. Urban refugees, who are affected by the current economic crisis in the country, need help to maintain minimum living standards. Women and children at risk need educational programmes and income-generating activities. Ivorian refugees in neighbouring countries require assistance to return to Côte d'Ivoire and to reintegrate into their areas of origin.

Main objectives

- Promote the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Ivorian refugees.
- Protect and assist urban refugees in Abidjan.
- Facilitate the local integration of some 24,000 Liberian refugees through self-reliance projects, support local structures and help individuals with specific needs.
- Provide community-based assistance in the health, education, social services, sanitation and water supply sectors.
- Prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.
- Pursue third-country resettlement for eligible cases.

Key targets

- Some 24,000 Liberian refugees are locally integrated in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Approximately 8,000 Ivorian returnees are successfully reintegrated.
- Gaps in the water, sanitation, health, education and social services sectors are bridged with the assistance of the Government and humanitarian and development actors.
- Former refugee sites in Guiglo and Tabou are rehabilitated.
- All urban refugees, especially those with specific needs, receive adequate assistance.
- Fifty graduates from the UNHCR-assisted secondary school obtain technical and professional diplomas.
- Some 600 persons gain access to education and skills training.
- Income-generating activities benefit some 300 refugees.

Strategy and activities

The programme in Côte d'Ivoire is part of UNHCR's regional strategy to find durable solutions for Liberian refugees in West Africa. UNHCR will channel local integration assistance through communities while ensuring that refugees have access to local services. The Office will help the Government to improve services in health, education, sanitation and water supply. Furthermore, refugees are issued identity cards as well as residence permits as stipulated in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocols. UNHCR will also work with the Government to rehabilitate former refugee sites in Tabou and Nicla in Guiglo.

In 2009, UNHCR will gradually transfer the responsibility for managing urban refugees to the Government. The Office will promote respect for the fundamental rights of urban asylum-seekers and refugees while helping them to attain self-reliance and find durable solutions. Resettlement as a durable solution will be pursued for eligible cases.

Despite the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, few Ivorian refugees have returned in 2008. It is expected that the majority of them who still remain abroad will repatriate in 2009. UNHCR will monitor the conditions of return and facilitate reintegration; support water and sanitation services; and address the specific needs of the most vulnerable individuals. The Office will work closely with its counterparts in host countries to organize the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees.

UNHCR will monitor the returnee identification process, including the *Audiences Foraines*, undertaken pursuant to the Ouagadougou Accord. It will collaborate with the relevant government ministries, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society partners to seek and implement solutions to the problems related to nationality which could arise

Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2009		Dec 2009	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Liberia	23,820	23,820	23,530	23,530
	Various	530	530	560	560
Asylum-seekers	Various	1,930	1,930	2,130	2,130
Returnees (Refugees)		3,200	3,200	4,700	4,700
IDPs		209,230	209,230	59,230	59,230
Returnees (IDPs)		300,000	-	150,000	-
Total		538,710	238,710	240,150	90,150



Digital fingerprints are taken in Abidjan to provide identity cards for refugees.

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during this process. In particular, UNHCR will provide information and legal assistance to individuals who are seeking birth certificates and help them to establish their nationality, thereby contributing to efforts to prevent statelessness. The Office will provide training on the prevention of statelessness, targeting all parties involved, particularly the Government. UNHCR will also advocate for Côte d'Ivoire's accession to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions.

Constraints

Despite the Ouagadougou Agreement, there has been no action on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former rebel groups and militias, or the registration of returnees and issuance of identity cards. Security in the main area of refugee returns remains fragile. The absence of a national refugee law hampers the protection of urban asylum-seekers and refugees.

There are currently more than 700,000 IDPs in Côte d'Ivoire. The protection cluster, led by UNHCR, continues to prepare for the safe and dignified return of IDPs to their places of origin. These activities include monitoring and referral of individual cases to partners for resolution.

Organization and implementation

UNHCR presence	
Number of offices	3
Total staff	47
International	7
National	40

Coordination

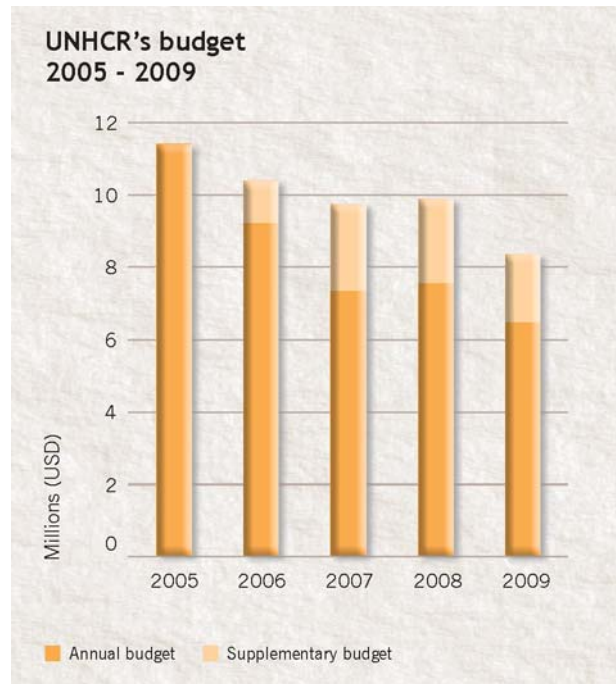
UNHCR will work with other UN agencies to ensure that their assistance and development programmes benefit refugees. UNHCR has supported UN and Government development planning efforts under the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The Office supports the activities of the wider UN system, national authorities, NGOs and civil society partners.

Financial information

The Annual Programme Budget for Côte d'Ivoire has been gradually decreasing since 2005 as the number of refugees has declined mainly due to successful voluntary repatriation. UNHCR began working with IDPs in Côte

d'Ivoire in 2006 and the supplementary programme budget for protection and assistance of IDPs peaked in 2007 and 2008. In 2009, mainly due to decreased number of IDPs, UNHCR's supplementary programme budget has been adjusted downwards.

Partners	
Implementing partners	
Government: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <i>Service d'Aide et d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Apatrides (SAARA)</i>	
NGOs: <i>Afrique Secours et Assistance (ASA)</i> , <i>Association de Soutien à l'Autopromotion Sanitaire et Urbaine (ASAPSU)</i> , Caritas Côte d'Ivoire, International Rescue Committee	
Operational partners	
Government: Prefectures of Tabou and Guiglo	
NGOs: CARE, Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children Fund (UK, Sweden)	
Others: IOM, OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOCI, WHO	



Budget (USD)						
Activities and services	2008			2009		
	Annual budget	Supplementary budget IDPs	Total	Annual budget	Supplementary budget Local integration of Liberian refugees	Total
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,696,816	459,151	2,155,967	1,475,391	488,042	1,963,433
Community services	194,480	459,150	653,630	114,527	221,213	335,740
Crop production	216,000	80,000	296,000	100,722	0	100,722
Domestic needs	146,480	0	146,480	107,486	0	107,486
Education	523,151	0	523,151	295,130	168,763	463,893
Food	12,000	0	12,000	9,138	0	9,138
Forestry	54,000	0	54,000	23,063	32,197	55,260
Health	332,864	0	332,864	247,907	151,227	399,134
Income generation	412,142	0	412,142	262,183	155,764	417,947
Legal assistance	218,576	1,036,655	1,255,231	596,651	136,790	733,441
Operational support (to agencies)	160,345	50,850	211,195	129,497	264,772	394,269
Sanitation	102,000	0	102,000	66,127	0	66,127
Shelter and infrastructure	30,000	0	30,000	20,000	184,000	204,000
Transport and logistics	441,963	250,643	692,606	149,912	0	149,912
Water	156,000	0	156,000	77,658	0	77,658
Total operations	4,696,817	2,336,449	7,033,266	3,675,392	1,802,768	5,478,160
Programme support	2,544,795	0	2,544,795	2,818,406	79,819	2,898,225
Total	7,241,611	2,336,449	9,578,060	6,493,798	1,882,587	8,376,385

Note: Supplementary programme budgets exclude 7 per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.