

Guinea



Main objectives

Provide international protection and material assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in Guinea (Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Ivorian refugees); continue to promote and complete the organized voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees; pursue durable solutions such as resettlement to third countries and local integration especially for urban refugees in Conakry, where appropriate; monitor developments in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia, facilitate the voluntary return of refugees as soon as conditions are conducive.

Impact

- A verification exercise was carried out in all the camps in Kissidougou and Nzérékoré using the new Project PROFILE software; at the end of the year, some 85,000 refugees in camps were registered and the number of urban refugees in Conakry stood at some 5,700.
- The mass information programme on *Radio rurale* helped some 12,000 Sierra Leonean refugees to make informed decisions to repatriate. It gave the general public an insight into refugee issues and gave refugees detailed information on their rights and responsibilities. The net effect was a reduction in tension and misunderstandings within and between camps and local communities.
- A local integration programme started for over 2,000 Sierra Leonean refugees who opted to stay in Guinea.
- Following the improvement of the security situation in Liberia from October, UNHCR assisted almost 1,400 Liberian refugees to go home.
- Five hundred refugees were resettled in third countries (496 Liberians and four Sierra Leoneans).
- The civilian and humanitarian character of asylum was maintained in the camps as a result of the continued deployment of officers of the "brigade mixte" consisting of Guinean Policemen and Gendarmes, trained by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers.

- Protection of the environment was reinforced through tree planting, tree marking, the manufacture and widespread use of fuel-efficient stoves, as well as sensitization of all groups regarding environmental issues.

Working environment

The context

In 2004, governance issues led to a deterioration of the socio-economic, political and humanitarian situation in Guinea. Massive unemployment among the youth remained a pressing problem, and there were fears that the poor economic climate, aggravated by an increase in the price of petroleum products, would cause a deterioration in the security situation. The fragile peace in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire also led to tension, especially at the borders. UNHCR and its partners enjoyed excellent relations with the Guinean authorities, the refugee communities and the hosting population. Incidents of xenophobia against Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees were minor and isolated.

Constraints

In 2004, the overall security situation was marred by internal disorder and Guinea remained vulnerable to external factors. The dramatic escalation of prices of goods and services resulted in a series of strikes by public servants. All aspects of Guinean life were affected by the deteriorating economic situation, including the loss of almost 30 per cent of the value of the Guinean franc.

According to the study carried out by *Action contre la faim* (ACF), the consequences of unexpected cuts in food rations (due to insufficient funding of WFP programmes after September 2004) included increased protection risks (SGBV, prostitution and criminality), and conflict within families, as well as lower school attendance. The decreased food ration was also interpreted by the Liberian refugees as an incentive for them to repatriate, albeit a dismal one, throwing into doubt the voluntary nature of repatriation and thereby threatening to vitiate the facilitated phase of the exercise.

Added to these internal constraints, external factors, including fragile peace in Liberia and permanent tension in Côte d'Ivoire, prompted all the

Persons of concern

Main origin / Type of population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Liberia (refugees)	127,100	70,100	50	60
Sierra Leone (refugees)	6,900	2,100	44	59
Côte d'Ivoire (refugees)	4,800	3,800	54	64
Sierra Leone (asylum-seekers)	2,900	-	25	59
Liberia (asylum-seekers)	2,000	-	55	59
Cote d'Ivoire (asylum-seekers)	1,400	-	34	55

Income and expenditure (USD) Annual programme budget

Revised budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
20,949,474	9,014,456	11,924,647	20,939,103	20,931,916

¹ Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments. The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

stakeholders in the refugee programme to factor security elements into the performance of their duty. In Côte d'Ivoire, the socio-political situation remained fragile throughout the year, culminating in a renewed eruption of violence in November. Even though this did not lead to an influx of new Ivorian asylum-seekers in Guinea, it dashed all hopes of UNHCR being able to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees before the end of the year.

Funding

After several adjustments, UNHCR's programme for Guinea was adequately funded to meet the basic needs of the refugee population. The budget for the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees nearly doubled due to the extension of the period envisaged from three months to six months. This was solved by transfers from projects planned for the facilitated repatriation of Ivorian refugees, the implementation of which was stalled due to the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

Only 68 per cent of the revised requirements published in the 2004 Consolidated Appeal Document were met; 90 per cent of this was for refugee assistance, and 10 per cent for other programmes. At the end of the year, the draft inter-agency strategy to stabilize Guinea Forestière was still waiting for confirmation of funding by the EU.

Achievements and impact

Protection and durable solutions

During the 1990s Guinea hosted almost a million refugees fleeing the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In 2004, Guinea maintained its policy of unrestricted admission to refugees. Movement of urban refugees was also not restricted.

UNHCR monitored movements of refugees at all border entry points, conducting regular missions to assess the reception of new arrivals, and provide training for authorities on the principle of *non-refoulement*. There were no reports of *refoulement*, except for a mixed group of Liberian migrants and Liberian returnees from Ghana, who were denied access at the Malian border with Guinea, while trying to pass through Guinean territory by road to Liberia.

Between May and July 2004, with a view to planning and implementing assistance projects, a camp population survey (verification exercise) was conducted in all the refugee camps in Nzérékoré and Kissidougou to ascertain the actual number of refugees in the camps, and correct any flaws in the earlier registration database. The total number of refugees living in camps at the end of the year was over 84,500. By the end of the year, UNHCR had introduced new standard operating procedures for a registration system and an electronic file management system.

Government policy on urban refugees in Conakry improved. It was agreed that urban refugees could remain in Conakry as long as they were provided with refugee identity documents. In Conakry, UNHCR and its Government counterpart, the *Bureau national de coordination des réfugiés* (BNCR) conducted a registration of urban refugees in March and April 2004 using the new ProGres database application. Anomalies in the refugee database were corrected, increasing the accuracy of refugee figures and assistance planning. Of 10,000 individuals identified in the pre-registration phase, some 5,500 urban refugees were individually registered and provided with individual documentation. Temporary identity cards were also issued to all registered heads of families.

The procedures for Refugee Status Determination and for registration of new arrivals and asylum-seekers were reviewed and updated. For Sierra Leonean refugees, UNHCR advocated that the Government undertake individual RSD for any new arrivals from Sierra Leone, after the end of organized voluntary repatriation.

For Ivorian and Liberian refugees, the Government had adopted *prima facie* recognition in accordance with the refugee definition outlined in the 1969 OAU Convention. Some 1,000 new asylum-seekers from Liberia were admitted to Nzérékoré (Guinea) following outbreaks of violence in Lofa county (Liberia) in January 2004. UNHCR facilitated the transfer of 400 of these refugees from the border areas to Kouankan camp.

The facilitated voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees started in October 2004 in the sub region and by the end of the year, almost 1,400 Liberians refugees had repatriated from Guinea. However, many more repatriated spontaneously from the camps and elsewhere. The organized voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees, which started in late



Guinea: One of the refugee women at a water well at Kountaya camp in April 2004. C. Farnsworth

2000, was completed by the end of 2004. Over 90 per cent of camp-based Sierra Leonean refugees in Kissidougou had expressed the wish to return, and had voluntarily repatriated to Sierra Leone. However, a group of 2,000 Sierra Leonean refugees opted not to return and a local integration project is underway for these refugees, who were re-grouped in Boreah camp near Kissidougou, in order to facilitate their local integration.

During the year, some 2,800 resettlement cases were processed, leading to the departure of 500 refugees for resettlement in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

UNHCR registered 49 unaccompanied minors and separated children living outside the camps in Forecariah and Kindia.

A revised and more efficient procedure was agreed upon by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BNCR and

UNHCR for the issuance of Convention Travel Documents, reintroduced in October 2004.

In order to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS, a number of refugee school children as well as refugees were trained on preventive measures and participated in awareness raising programmes.

Activities and assistance

Community services: Over 15,000 refugee women took part in activities to combat Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Nzérékoré camps, and 705 refugees, well over half of whom were women, participated in workshops on SGBV in Kissidougou. Groups of refugee girls and health workers in the camps were also trained on how to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS among refugees. During the course of the year, 148 of the 832 registered unaccompanied minors were reunified with their families; 110 new cases were also identified in the course of the year.

With the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees, the registered number of vulnerable refugees in Kissidougou camps fell from over 5,500 to around 5,000. These refugees were provided with supplementary food (rice, sugar, oil, fish and milk) in addition to other material assistance provided to all refugees.

Crop production: Some 4,500 (including 529 Guinean) households benefited from agricultural assistance in and around the refugee camps of the Nzérékoré area. This assistance comprised land preparation, tools and fertilizers. Some 90 hectares of new rice swamp fields were developed. A total surface area of 1,220 ha was devoted to rice cultivation (with yields ranging from 2,258 kg/ha on developed swamp fields to 797 kg/ha in upland fields).

Domestic needs/Household support: Mats, mosquito nets, blankets, household and toilet soap, cooking utensils, hygiene kits, cotton underwear, plastic buckets, lamps, travel bags and jerry cans were distributed to camp-based refugees.

Education: Over 23,000 school-aged children in Nzérékoré and some 7,800 students in Kissidougou benefited from primary and secondary education in the camp schools. The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) conducted examinations for Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugee students. The WAEC examinations offered the opportunity to acquire regionally accepted certificates, and contributed to the increase in school attendance in the camps. In 2004, 1,500 refugees, half of whom were women, enrolled in and completed skills training in masonry, tailoring, soap-making and catering.

Food: WFP distributed food to refugees in the camps. In September, as a result of limited availability of food, rations dropped to 1,600 k/p/d for the refugees. An analysis of the impact of the reduction of food rations indicated that there was a noted increase in protection problems among camp residents, there was increased conflict within families, a decrease in the level of hygiene within households and a reduction in the regularity of school attendance by refugee children.

Forestry: Over 100,100 seedlings were produced in the local nurseries and planted in areas surrounding the Albadaria camps.

Health/Nutrition: HIV/AIDS tests were made available to refugees and information campaigns on the disease were intensified. More than 270,000 condoms were distributed among the refugee population; over 25,000 camp residents were shown video film projections on the dangers of HIV and ways to combat the disease.

UNHCR provided medical assistance to urban refugees in Conakry. Camp-based refugees also benefited from primary healthcare in the clinics/health posts in the camps with the additional possibility of referral to the Teaching Hospital in Conakry. Mental health care was provided to refugees in Kissidougou and Nzérékoré camps. This included trauma counseling for affected refugees and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

In addition, over 5,000 vulnerable refugees in camps were provided with oil, fish, rice, sugar and milk, as well as baby kits, used clothing, soap and mosquito nets.

Income generation: Some 800 refugees in the Laine and Kola camps received credits, in line with the strategy of increasing refugees' self-sufficiency. Income-generating projects were made available to camp-based refugees in Nzérékoré and Kissidougou which included start-up grants for small groups of vulnerable women, notably single heads of families.

Each woman in the group received about USD 40. Proper use of the start-up grants qualified them for a second cycle of financial assistance (refundable loan) to develop their small businesses. In 2004, 64 groups as well as two individual women received the second cycle of these grants. They included interest free loans and interest-bearing loans the latter being provided to refugees with successful repayment histories and positive credit ratings. Twenty-four groups of 10 persons who benefited from such loans were provided with skills training in the Albadaria camps in Kissidougou.

Legal assistance: Urban refugees were registered and provided with individual ID cards. A more efficient procedure on the issuance of Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) was agreed upon by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BNCR and UNHCR. Of the eight requests for CTDs, six CTDs were issued.

UNHCR monitored the Central Prison and police stations in most urban areas, and intervened to

secure the release of refugee detainees where possible. UNHCR also facilitated the provision of birth, death and marriage certificates by the Government. Refugees were assisted to obtain educational equivalency certificates and SGBV victims were provided with legal counselling/support in the clinics operated in the camps by UNHCR's implementing partner.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR strengthened the capacity of the BNCR, rehabilitated its office premises and provided computers and office equipment. UNHCR provided an X-ray machine and rehabilitated the paediatric unit of the regional hospital in Nzérékoré. Used vehicles and generators were given to local government authorities in Nzérékoré.

Implementing partners were provided with accounting software packages and financial and programme counselling and their administrative costs and staff salaries covered. UNHCR also covered travel expenses for the participation of government officials in the Pre-EXCOM and EXCOM meetings in Geneva as well as for their participation in meetings in Liberia on voluntary repatriation of Liberians.

Sanitation: At the Kouankan and Kola camps in Nzérékoré latrine slabs were distributed to refugee families to enable them to construct private latrines. Latrines, bathrooms and laundry areas were constructed for vulnerable refugees. Fumigation and spraying machines were provided in the camps. Most families in the camps in Kissidougou have private latrines. However, improvements are still needed in Nonah transit centre, which hosts Ivorian refugees.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: At the end of the organized voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees living in Kissidougou and given the number of empty houses in the Boreah and Kountaya camps, the remaining Sierra Leonean refugees were regrouped in Boreah camp to rationalize the level of services being provided and help to reduce the operational costs of some partners. Shelters and structures were rehabilitated during the regrouping of the Sierra Leonean and Liberia refugees in these locations. Maintenance of damaged or leaking shelters was carried in all the camp sites.

Transport/Logistics: Transportation of refugees for relocation between camps prior to repatriation was undertaken by UNHCR's implementing partner GTZ. UNHCR trucks were used for the transportation of non-food items to warehouses in Kissidougou and Nzérékoré. Rehabilitation of routes used for repatriation of Liberians from Nzérékoré to Liberia was undertaken and thus benefited the local population as well.

Water: The supply of water was generally adequate in the camps. Refugees in the Albadaria camps (Kissidougou area) received an average of 17-45 litres/person/day, as compared to 38-43 litres/person/day in Nzérékoré. Two submersible pumps were installed in Kouankan and Kola camps. Five boreholes were drilled at Kouankan and Kola camps and 10 wells were rehabilitated. The water supply was extended a further 900 meters within the Kouankan camp to make water more accessible to the refugee population.

Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR maintained a Branch office in Conakry and two sub-offices in Kissidougou and Nzérékoré covering the area of Guinea Forestière. The number of staff in Guinea was 178, including 27 internationals, 139 nationals and 12 UNVs.

Management team meetings were held on a weekly basis to exchange information, monitor progress and adjust strategies.

Working with others

UNHCR continued to work with the Government of Guinea on implementing arrangements with international and national partners. In addition, regular meetings were held with UN counterparts to exchange information and analyse, to devise strategies, and to promote joint planning. Close collaboration among humanitarian and development actors resulted in a Consolidated Appeal document and the preparation of a contingency plan in relation to the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

Overall assessment

With the repatriation of 12,000 persons, the year 2004 saw the successful completion of the organized voluntary repatriation, which began in 2000, of almost 93,000 Sierra Leoneans from Guinea. As an exit strategy, UNHCR set up an 18-month project for the relatively small residual group of some 2,000 Sierra Leonean refugees regrouped in Boreah camp in order to facilitate them becoming self-sufficient before and eventually to integrate into Guinean society.

Facilitated voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees started in October 2004 in the subregion. However by the end of the year, only a portion of the refugees had been assisted to return to their places of origin. The number was less than expected, partially due to security incidents and the fact that not all the counties in Liberia were declared safe and ready to receive the returnees, particularly Lofa, the home county of a large number of Liberian refugees in Guinea. Repatriation of Ivorian refugees did not take place in 2004 due to the fragile security situation in Côte d'Ivoire. UNHCR will continue its efforts to secure Government approval for an appropriate site for Ivorian refugees, who are still accommodated at a transit site in Nonah.

Offices

Conakry

Kissidougou
N'Zérékoré

Partners

Government agencies

Bureau national de coordination pour les réfugiés
Direction nationale des eaux et forêts
Ministère de l'administration du territoire et de la décentralisation
Radio rurale de Guinée

NGOs

Action by Churches Together
Action contre la faim
African Humanitarian Action
American Refugee Committee
Association des animateurs communautaires de Guinée
Catholic Relief Services
Centre canadien d'études et de coopération internationale
Center for Victims and Trauma
Croix Rouge guinéenne
ICRC
International Rescue Committee
Jesuit Relief Services
Médecins sans Frontières (Belgium, France, Switzerland)
Olympic Aid
Organisation pour le développement intégré communautaire
Première Urgence
Save the Children (USA)

Others

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

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Prior years' project
	Annual programme budget	Annual and Supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	5,837,867	0
Community services	513,217	341,634
Crop production	190,711	28,200
Domestic needs / household support	674,880	0
Education	644,860	210,317
Food	36,539	16,015
Forestry	128,925	55,353
Health and nutrition	419,426	309,877
Income generation	107,523	65,852
Legal assistance	555,256	0
Operational support (to agencies)	1,760,455	331,887
Sanitation	120,442	41,719
Shelter and infrastructure	665,562	256,853
Transport and logistics	3,202,880	513,433
Water	121,346	77,567
Instalments with implementing partners	3,071,126	(2,248,707)
Sub-total operational activities	18,051,015	0
Programme support	2,880,901	0
Total disbursements	20,931,916	0
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	8,390,264	
Reporting received	(5,319,138)	
Balance	3,071,126	
Prior years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1 January		1,754,610
Payments made		482,030
Reporting received		(2,248,707)
Refunded to UNHCR		(159,723)
Balance		(171,790)
Unliquidated obligations		
Outstanding 1 January		1,927,055
Disbursements		(1,375,262)
Cancellations		(551,793)
Outstanding 31 December		0