

Working environment

The context

Political uncertainty and social strife persist in Guinea. Martial law and a government crackdown on mass protests in early 2007 resulted in the deaths of nearly 200 people. The immediate crisis was resolved by the appointment of a moderate reformist prime minister, Lansana Kouyaté, who was subsequently replaced by Ahmed Tidiane Souaré in May 2008. The regime is beset by rising food prices and the decline of basic services, which have enhanced popular resentment and the risk of a slide into violent confrontation.

Legislative elections are planned for December 2008. Progress on improving human rights and bolstering economic reconstruction remains a priority. Given the dismal basic living conditions in the capital, Conakry, lack of progress on reforms could renew the risk of mass protest.

The needs

After ending the voluntary repatriation programme for Sierra Leonean refugees and facilitating the voluntary

repatriation of more than 51,000 Liberian refugees, UNHCR and the Government have agreed to give priority to local integration. This is seen as the most viable durable solution for the refugees remaining in the country (80 per cent from Liberia and the remainder from Sierra Leone) who are unable or unwilling to return to their countries of origin. UNHCR's self-reliance programmes are designed to help some 12,000 refugees opting for local integration.

Refugees remaining in camps will be encouraged to move to neighbouring communities, although the option to stay in or around existing camps is also open. Community-based projects will help with the absorption of the new residents. These programmes will also target the geographical areas where the Government claims that some 50,000 unregistered Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees have settled in the past decade. In addition, areas surrounding refugee camps will be environmentally rehabilitated.

UNHCR will lobby the Government to grant all the remaining refugees a progressively wider range of rights and entitlements. These include freedom of movement; access to education, labour markets, public services and health facilities; the right to buy and sell property; and valid travel and identity documents. Over time the process should lead to the right to permanent residence and, ultimately, citizenship.

Main objectives

- Develop local integration as the main component of the exit strategy for refugees who have not availed themselves of voluntary repatriation programmes.
- Inform Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees of the modalities and implications of the cessation clause and help the Government to deal with an increase in refugee status determination (RSD) activity.
- Pursue efforts to provide a harmonized and long-term legal status for refugees remaining in Guinea, in cooperation with other UNHCR offices in the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) region.
- Use inter-agency coordination, high-level meetings, and public information activities to promote economic recovery and peacebuilding in Guinea (particularly by rehabilitating the environment and offering peace education in refugee-impacted areas).
- Protect and assist Ivorian refugees and ensure their safe and dignified voluntary return within a framework established with the Governments of Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

Key targets

- Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees who have opted to integrate locally with UNHCR's assistance are granted a wider range of rights and entitlements similar to those enjoyed by Guinean citizens, such as freedom of movement; access to education, labour markets and property; access to valid travel and identity documents; and family unity.
- Areas surrounding refugee camps are rehabilitated in line with the needs of those who live there.
- The Government acquires the capacity to manage asylum-seekers and undertake more refugee status determination.
- Some 2,000 Ivorian refugees repatriate voluntarily with UNHCR assistance.
- Refugees of various nationalities repatriate to their country of origin through the Dakar based regional repatriation project for West Africa.

Strategy and activities

Local integration will be the main durable solution for Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees who have not opted for voluntary repatriation. The Government is embracing this strategy, which links support for

individuals and families to community-based programmes. Camp-based refugees can either remain in and around the camp sites or move into host communities. Refugees and host communities will be able to decide on issues such as self-reliance, transformation of camp facilities for community use, and management of the environment. Age, gender and diversity considerations will be taken into account.

In coordination with other agencies in West Africa, UNHCR will promote broader application of the ECOWAS free movement protocols. The Office will also lobby for the adoption and application of the new refugee legislation that was submitted by the Government to the National Assembly in April 2008. This legislation will facilitate the local integration of refugees and their access to Guinean citizenship.

UNHCR will push to address the specific needs of some 2,000 urban refugees who lack documentation and opportunities. In *Guinée Forestière*, the Office and its partners will provide food and basic services to Ivorian refugees in Kouankan camp. At this camp, there is access to fertile land where many households farm and have reached self-sufficiency. UNHCR will provide logistical and financial help to Ivorian refugees wishing to repatriate.

Repatriation of refugees from Guinea will continue to be facilitated on a case by case basis through cash grants and transport allowances—or free transportation arranged by UNHCR.

Constraints

Political instability adds to difficulties in coordinating with the Guinean authorities on refugee matters. Insecurity and poor road conditions in the isolated and poverty-stricken region of *Guinée Forestière*, UNHCR's main area of operations, hinder access to people of concern. The Office will also need to manage expectations among urban refugees seeking third-country resettlement.

Coordination

UNHCR's main national counterpart on all refugee issues is the *Commission Nationale pour l'Intégration et le Suivi des Réfugiés* (CNISR). This body leads the inter-agency working group on local integration and coordinates with donors, UN agencies and NGOs. UNHCR also works closely with the European Union on its recovery programme in *Guinée Forestière*, which focuses on rehabilitation of infrastructure, income generation and peacebuilding in refugee-affected areas.



Children in front of a school built by UNHCR.

UNHCR 2008

UNHCR's initiative for the local integration of refugees is in line with national priorities on poverty reduction which, in *Guinée Forestière*, are implemented through the Joint Programme (2007-2011) of the UN Country Team. This seeks to mitigate tensions among communities and achieve strategic objectives in areas such as food security, health, HIV and AIDS prevention, water, sanitation and education.

Organization and implementation

| UNHCR presence | |
|-------------------|----|
| Number of offices | 2 |
| Total staff | 70 |
| International | 8 |
| National | 53 |
| UNVs | 8 |
| JPOs | 1 |

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 | Côte d'Ivoire | 4,400 | 4,400 | 2,400 | 2,400 |
| | Liberia | 13,000 | 13,000 | 9,500 | 9,500 |
| | Sierra Leone | 6,400 | 6,400 | 740 | 740 |
| | Various | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| Asylum-seekers | Côte d'Ivoire | 750 | 750 | 500 | 500 |
| | Liberia | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| | Sierra Leone | 1,900 | 1,900 | 900 | 900 |
| | Various | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total | | 28,120 | 28,120 | 15,210 | 15,210 |

Partners

Implementing partners

Government agencies : *Commission Nationale pour l'Intégration et le Suivi des Réfugiés, Radio Rurale de Guinée*

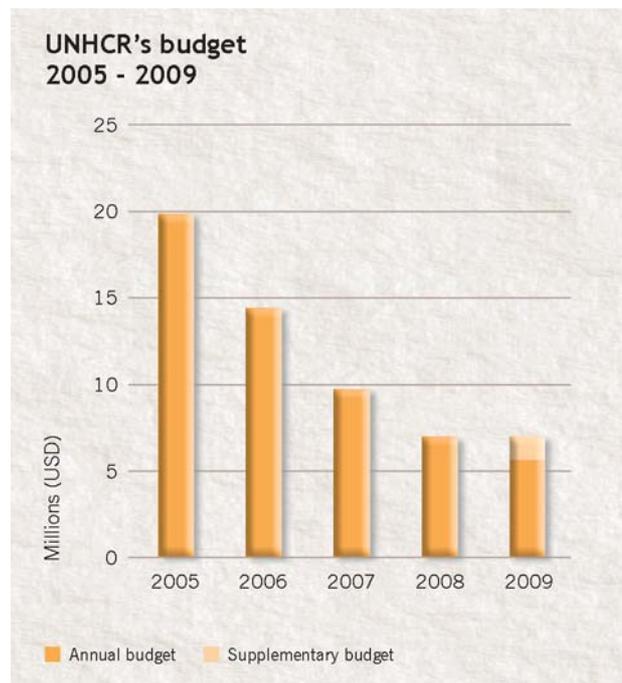
NGOs : *Association de Coopération et de Recherches pour le Développement, Catholic Relief Services, International Rescue Committee, Organisation pour le Développement Intégré Communautaire, Danish Refugee Council*

Others: UNV, WFP

Operational partners

Others: ICRC, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF

Regional Supplementary Programme for local integration (described in the West Africa sub-regional chapter of this Appeal).



Financial information

The overall budget, which reached USD 25 million at the peak of the refugee operation in Guinea in 2003, is set at USD 5.5 million in 2009, a 39 per cent decrease as compared to 2007. The annual budget will be complemented by a supplementary budget of USD 1,450,000 for local integration in Guinea, under the

| Budget (USD) | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|---|------------------|
| Activities and services | 2008 | 2009 | | |
| | Annual budget | Annual budget | Supplementary budget Local integration of Liberian refugees | Total |
| Protection, monitoring and coordination | 1,525,505 | 1,819,970 | 137,760 | 1,957,730 |
| Community services | 185,000 | 85,000 | 200,000 | 285,000 |
| Crop production | 140,000 | 80,000 | 130,000 | 210,000 |
| Domestic needs | 190,000 | 75,000 | 50,000 | 125,000 |
| Education | 305,000 | 140,000 | 105,000 | 245,000 |
| Food | 10,000 | 5,000 | 0 | 5,000 |
| Forestry | 130,000 | 80,000 | 80,000 | 160,000 |
| Health | 490,000 | 225,000 | 55,000 | 280,000 |
| Income generation | 180,000 | 135,000 | 70,000 | 205,000 |
| Legal assistance | 250,000 | 170,000 | 35,000 | 205,000 |
| Operational support (to agencies) | 550,000 | 295,000 | 121,020 | 416,020 |
| Sanitation | 165,000 | 60,000 | 25,000 | 85,000 |
| Shelter and infrastructure | 210,000 | 110,000 | 275,350 | 385,350 |
| Transport and logistics | 690,000 | 410,000 | 140,000 | 550,000 |
| Water | 165,000 | 80,000 | 30,000 | 110,000 |
| Total operations | 5,185,505 | 3,769,970 | 1,454,130 | 5,224,100 |
| Programme support | 1,824,391 | 1,789,446 | 0 | 1,789,446 |
| Total | 7,009,896 | 5,559,416 | 1,454,130 | 7,013,546 |

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