

# Liberia



## Working environment

### The context

By June 2007, more than 160,000 Liberian refugees had returned home from Guinea, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. The UNHCR-assisted voluntary repatriation programme for Liberian refugees in West Africa has now been wound down. The approximately 72,000 Liberian refugees who remain in asylum countries in the region will benefit from a multi-year local integration plan.

Liberia has enjoyed stability since the end of civil conflict in 2003. The Government is working to reform the public sector, consolidate national reconciliation and mobilize international assistance for the country's recovery. But governmental institutions are under-equipped to manage the formidable tasks ahead of them. These include rebuilding public infrastructure, reviving economic production, creating employment and reducing poverty, in addition to providing social services to repatriating refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Combating public-sector corruption and resolving longstanding land and

property disputes are also crucial if Liberia is to move towards sustainable development.

In August 2007, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf launched the Poverty Reduction Strategy, a new policy, effective July 2008. This initiative and Liberia's overall recovery agenda have the full support of the UN Country Team through the UN Development Assistance Framework for 2008-2012. Meanwhile, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has announced that it will reduce the size of its current 15,000-person force to possibly 9,000 starting in 2010. The reduction is linked to the achievement of set benchmarks to ensure that it does not jeopardize post-conflict gains. UNMIL's Civilian Police force will be maintained at full strength beyond 2010. Recruitment and training programmes for a national police force and army have begun.

The human rights situation in Liberia has improved significantly with the return of peace. However, the Government continues to encounter challenges in rebuilding the legal system and in law enforcement. While the legal institutions handling refugee issues have not been formally reactivated, refugees are treated fairly and with dignity.

## The needs

The Government, non-governmental stakeholders and UN agencies have made collective assessments of the situation in Liberia. They have concluded that the main needs are for basic educational facilities and health care; safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter, roads and bridges; and employment opportunities in areas where returnees and former IDPs are settled.

### Total requirements

2008: USD 20,627,460

2009: USD 5,415,452

(Annual programme only. The financial requirements for the supplementary programme for IDPs are being finalized)

## Main objectives

- Provide international protection to Ivorian, Sierra Leonean and other urban refugees while seeking durable solutions, with special focus on the legal, economic and socio-cultural aspects related to the local integration of Sierra Leonean refugees.
- Continue care and maintenance activities for Ivorian refugees in the Saclepea camp; provide community-based assistance for those living among Liberians; and promote self-reliance until durable solutions are achieved.
- Help the Government build its capacity to assume primary responsibility for the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers, especially by reactivating asylum and appeals committees.
- Promote the sustainable reintegration of all returnees and former IDPs by helping to re-establish basic social services and supporting self-reliance.
- Strengthen partnerships with government institutions and development actors to sustain reintegration.

## Key Targets for 2008 and 2009

- More than 1,000 camp-based Ivorian refugees receive protection, assistance and support for voluntary repatriation.
- Agriculture and income generation activities enhance the self-reliance of Ivorian refugees.
- The Government of Liberia agrees to the local integration of 3,600 Sierra Leoneans. Refugees in camps benefit from protection and emergency medical assistance.
- Local Liberian communities have the capacity to absorb returning refugees and make reintegration a success.
- Local integration is promoted as the most viable durable solution for urban refugees.
- Reintegration activities carried out in collaboration with local communities, government authorities, UN agencies and operational and implementing partners ensure the sustainability of returns. These measures focus on education, health care, agriculture and livelihoods. Existing structures and services are reinforced to encourage skilled workers to return to rural areas.

## Strategy and activities

UNHCR will work with its partners in government, humanitarian and development organizations and civil society to sustain the reintegration of returnees and IDPs. As lead agency for protection, UNHCR will support the national institutions responsible for human rights and the rule of law. It will help the Government to reactivate Liberia's asylum and appeal committees and restore social services. Schools, clinics, hospitals and sanitation facilities will be refurbished to create conditions conducive to the sustainable settlement of returnees and former IDPs in their areas of return.

## Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2008		Dec 2008 - Jan 2009		Dec 2009	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Côte d'Ivoire	15,000	2,000	15,000	2,000	15,000	2,000
	Sierra Leone	3,000	3,000	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000
	Various	30	10	20	20	10	10
Asylum-seekers	Various	150	-	100	-	50	-
Returnees (refugees)		60,000	60,000	-	-	-	-
Others of concern	Various	30	30	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>78,210</b>	<b>65,040</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>3,520</b>	<b>16,060</b>	<b>3,010</b>



UNHCR/A. Mahesi

UNHCR-funded Suakako Women's Centre in Bong County, where returnees can attend literacy and tailoring classes.

### Ivorian refugees

Positive developments in Côte d'Ivoire have improved prospects for the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees. Pending their return, UNHCR will continue to ensure the protection of and assist Ivorian refugees in Liberia.

### Sierra Leonean refugees

UNHCR sees local integration as the appropriate durable solution for some 3,600 Sierra Leonean refugees who have opted to remain in Liberia. This forms part of a Regional Local Integration Plan for Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in West Africa.

### Urban refugees

For this small group of refugees from various countries, UNHCR will pursue local integration as their best durable solution.

### Sustainable reintegration of Liberian returnees from abroad

Until the end of 2008 UNHCR will work with local communities, government authorities, UN agencies and operational and implementing partners to ensure that returns are sustainable. Based on Liberia's poverty reduction plans and United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UNHCR will focus on sectors where gaps have been identified. The emphasis will be on reinforcing existing structures rather than building new ones.

### Constraints

The lack of national capacity to take over and sustain reintegration is a primary constraint. Poor road conditions, particularly during the rainy season, and an ageing UNHCR vehicle fleet hamper the monitoring of programme activities.

## Organization and implementation

### UNHCR presence

	2008	2009
Number of offices	5	2
Total staff	166	63
International	29	4
National	125	50
UNVs	12	9

### Coordination

The Government, UN agencies and humanitarian and development organizations are UNHCR's key partners in Liberia. The Office will form part of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's team in the re-integration efforts. As the lead agency for the Protection Cluster, UNHCR will identify gaps and solutions in the areas of child protection, human rights, rule of law, the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, and land, property and housing rights. UNHCR also works closely with other UN agencies in their areas of specialization.

### Partners

#### Implementing partners

**Government agencies:** Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission.

**NGOs:** Africa Concern International, Africa Humanitarian Action, American Refugee Committee, Christian Children's Fund, Cooperative Development Agency, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, International Alert, International Medical Corp, Liberia National Red Cross Society, Liberia Opportunities Industrialization Centre, Medical Emergency Relief Cooperative International, Norwegian Refugee Council, Peace Winds Japan, Special Emergency Assistance to Restore Children Hope, ZOA Refugee Care.

#### Operational partners

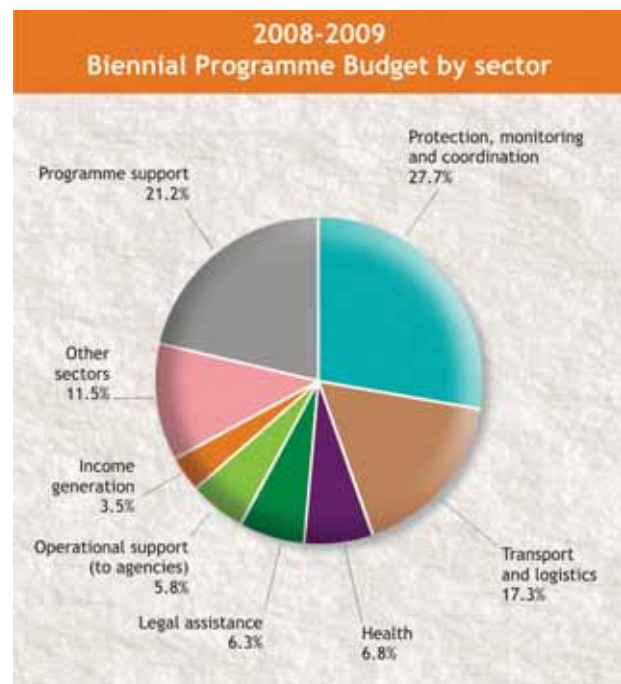
**Others:** FAO, UNOPS, WHO.

### Internally displaced persons

Since 2004, UNHCR has assisted more than 320,000 IDPs to return to their places of origin. As lead agency for the protection cluster, the Office has participated in the rebuilding of national institutions such as the police and judiciary.

The restoration of basic services in health, education, water and sanitation are key priorities, both to sustain returns and reduce the pressure on facilities exerted by returning populations. UNHCR supports nearly 50 primary health care facilities and has rehabilitated or built some 280 schools in areas of major refugee and IDP returns over the past three years.

During the first quarter of 2008, UNHCR will scale down its Supplementary Programme for IDPs. However, some IDPs living in communities receiving returning refugees will continue to benefit from UNHCR's support for basic services.



Budget (USD)					
Activities and services	2007			2008	2009
	Annual Programme Budget	Supp. Programme Budget	Total	Annual Programme Budget	Annual Programme Budget
Protection, monitoring and coordination	10,813,712	1,413,681	12,227,393	6,249,762	961,744
Community services	1,345,000	250,000	1,595,000	400,000	70,000
Crop production	0	720,000	720,000	300,000	300,000
Domestic needs	1,226,000	0	1,226,000	50,000	50,000
Education	500,000	200,000	700,000	390,000	140,000
Food	112,000	0	112,000	20,000	20,000
Forestry	0	650,000	650,000	0	0
Health	1,239,000	1,200,000	2,439,000	1,650,000	120,000
Income generation	660,000	750,000	1,410,000	600,000	300,000
Legal assistance	2,032,600	2,110,000	4,142,600	1,000,000	650,000
Livestock	0	20,550	20,550	0	0
Operational support (to agencies)	1,142,000	1,200,000	2,342,000	1,250,000	250,000
Sanitation	631,000	170,000	801,000	150,000	120,000
Shelter and other infrastructure	1,054,000	1,593,888	2,647,888	380,000	130,000
Transport and logistics	6,011,000	545,000	6,556,000	4,000,000	500,000
Water	747,400	200,000	947,400	350,000	120,000
<b>Total operations</b>	<b>27,513,712</b>	<b>11,023,119</b>	<b>38,536,831</b>	<b>16,789,762</b>	<b>3,731,744</b>
Programme support	4,751,489	0	4,751,489	3,837,699	1,683,708
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,265,201</b>	<b>11,023,119</b>	<b>43,288,320</b>	<b>20,627,460</b>	<b>5,415,452</b>

Note: The Supplementary Programme Budget excludes a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.