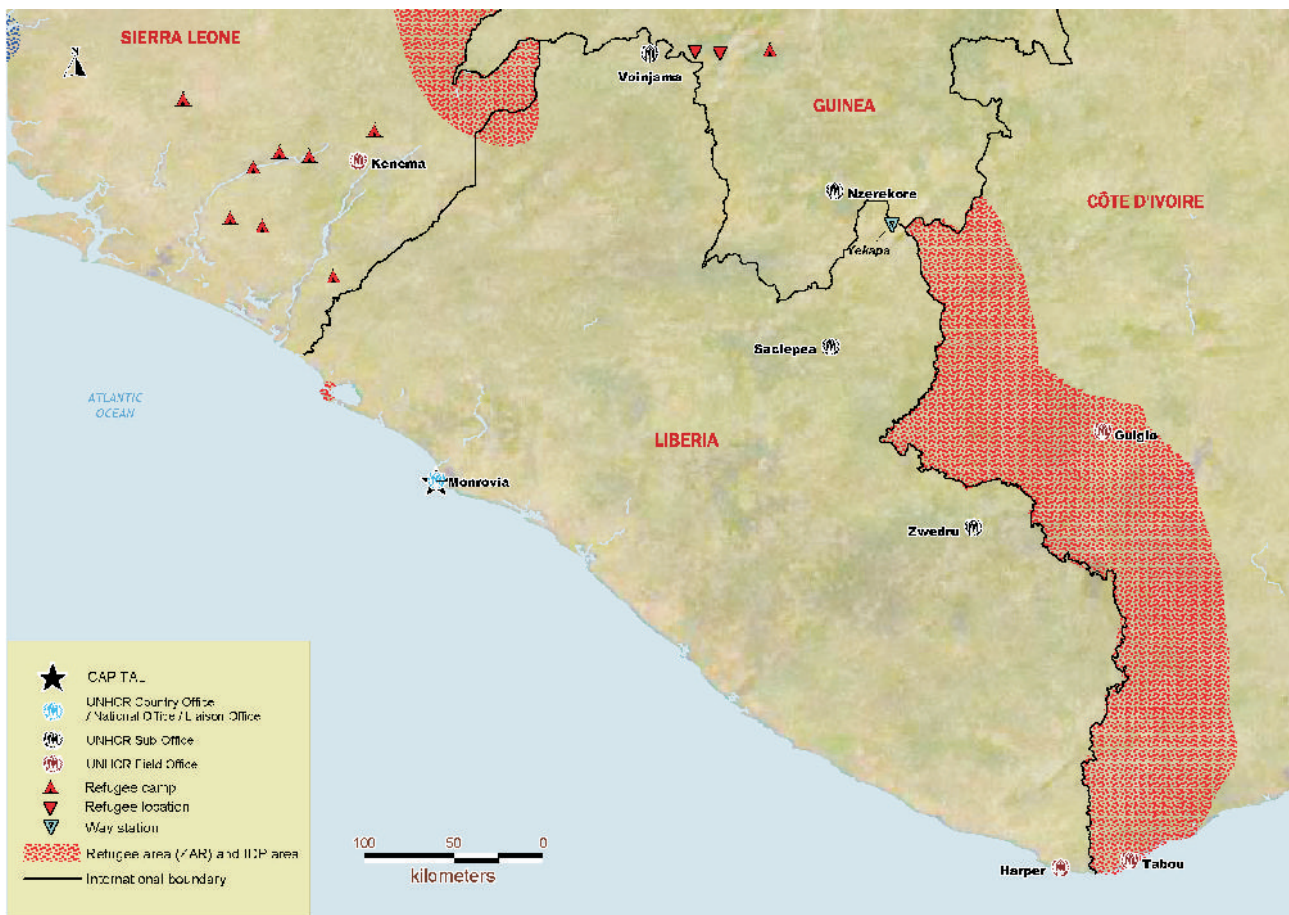


LIBERIA



Operational highlights

- UNHCR strengthened the Government's capacity to identify and protect refugees through support, training and coaching.
- Former Sierra Leonean refugees affected by the invocation of the cessation clause were provided with shelter and legal documents.
- The self-reliance of Ivorian refugees was improved through income-generating activities, food production, agricultural support, shelter rehabilitation and construction and livelihoods assistance.

- UNHCR helped the Ministry of Justice to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and participated in a joint Government/UN programme to address the issue.
- The Office strengthened Liberia's health sector through the transfer of various health clinics to the Government and by contributing to its Health Pool Fund.
- UNHCR used an innovative approach aimed at transitioning efforts from emergency relief to development, through five Peacebuilding Fund projects.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Côte d'Ivoire	6,400	6,400	50	53
	Sierra Leone	500	500	48	42
	Various	30	30	27	13
People in a refugee-like situation	Various	10	10	13	25
Asylum-seekers	Sierra Leone	500	500	45	-
	Various	30	30	7	-
Others of concern	Former refugees from Sierra Leone who are assisted for local integration	2,500	2,500	48	-
Returnees (refugees)*	Ghana	700	700	60	-
	Various	700	700	60	-
Total		11,370	11,370		

* Demographic breakdown of returnees refers to all returnees.

| Working environment |

Despite facing economic and social challenges in 2009, the Liberian Government continued to protect persons of concern, generally respecting the provisions of the 1993 Refugee Act. During the year, a Commission made up of a few ministries and UNHCR worked together to propose amendments to the Refugee Act.

Participatory assessments which targeted refugees, returnees and former refugees in various counties highlighted the lack of support mechanisms to promote community and individual self-reliance, especially in urban areas. The assessments also noted the inadequacy of shelter in rural communities, a lack of employment opportunities, a paucity of seed banks for agricultural production, and the high incidence of domestic violence, underage marriage and teenage pregnancy. The need to support the education of refugees, especially those at the secondary level, was also highlighted, as was the continuing weakness in the application of the rule of law.

| Achievements and impact |

● Main objectives

UNHCR's main objectives were to assist the Government of Liberia in the development and maintenance of an international refugee protection regime, and to ensure international standards in the protection of refugees. It also

aimed to promote the reintegration of refugees in urban areas while strengthening partnership with the UN country team and other stakeholders.

Among the other main priorities for 2009 were promoting self-reliance for Ivorian refugees and helping them to achieve durable solutions. In addition, UNHCR worked with new partners to facilitate the social and legal integration of former refugees from Sierra Leone, promote the rule of law and enhance the capacity of local populations to prevent and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner.

● Protection and solutions

The Government continued its active engagement in refugee protection but remained heavily reliant on UNHCR for administrative and logistical support. An additional constraint was the State's limited capacity to protect persons under its jurisdiction, especially in rural areas, despite significant progress since the end of the civil conflict in 2003.

Regular border monitoring was conducted in counties bordering Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, where political instability created a high risk of population movements into Liberia. Various sensitization campaigns on refugee issues were conducted in relevant counties by UNHCR, the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) and other partners.

A joint Government/UNHCR committee worked on the draft amendment to the 1993 Refugee Act governing refugee protection in Liberia. The Government took on additional



Returnee settlement in Voinjama, the capital of Lofa County.

responsibilities in refugee status determination (RSD) and completed the review of more than 100 appeals related to Sierra Leoneans who were affected by the 2008 invocation of the cessation clause. Staff members of the LRRRC and other governmental agencies, such as the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN), were trained and coached in undertaking refugee protection and RSD-related activities.

By the end of 2009, some 1,300 Liberian refugees had been assisted in returning home voluntarily, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Guinea. Plans to assist Ivorian refugees to return could not be implemented due to the continuous delay of the presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire. UNHCR nonetheless conducted a profiling exercise of the entire Ivorian refugee population and shared the results with Côte d'Ivoire in preparation for reintegration activities. Training for UNHCR and partner staff in the identification and submission of eligible cases revitalized the use of resettlement as a protection tool as well as a durable solution.

○ *Activities and assistance*

Community services: Out of a total of 600 Liberian returnees targeted for assistance, some 490, or 82 per cent, received training in various marketable skills and were provided start-up packages. Sensitization and counselling reduced domestic violence affecting Ivorian and Sierra Leonean refugees. Sanitary kits were distributed to all eligible women and girls in rural and semi-urban areas. Regular awareness sessions on HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, as well as sexual and gender-based violence, were conducted in all refugee-hosting areas. Refugee women and affected partners were treated free of charge. Condoms were distributed in refugee-hosting areas.

Crop production: Liberian returnees received support in forming farming cooperative groups. Some 1,000 farmers received assorted seeds and tools, while 300 were trained in improved methods of vegetable farming, resulting in good harvests.

Agriculture and home gardening support also contributed to the improvement in living conditions for former refugees from Sierra Leone. Among Ivorian refugees, some 130 refugees (90 men and 40 women) participated in farming and had sufficient training and means to fulfill their livelihoods needs. Additionally, eight refugee farming groups received tools and seeds for gardening and were able to harvest their crops.

Education: All refugee children had access to free primary education. Among Ivorian refugees, student enrolment increased from 75 to 90 per cent and the percentage of girls increased from 46 to 50 per cent. More than 1,000 refugee students were provided with uniforms and stationery in Saclapea and Grand Gedeh areas. French-language courses were provided to all Ivorian refugees in Saclapea, Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties.

Five Ivorian refugees received support for university studies. Some 230 Liberian returnees were trained in tailoring, baking and computer studies. Approximately 170 former refugee children from Sierra Leone were enrolled in community schools, with approximately 100 receiving school supplies and 80 receiving uniforms.

Health and nutrition: All refugees had access to basic primary health care, with some referred to Monrovia for further treatment. The Government-led Health Pool Fund received substantial support, with funding as well as a logistical contribution in the form of vehicles for NGOs running health clinics. More than 200 persons were helped to obtain medical treatment in Saclapea, Grand Gedeh, Harper and Monrovia during the year.

Income generation: Among Ivorian refugees, some 330 families in Nimba County and 140 in Grand Gedeh County were trained in small business management and received income generation packages. Among Liberian returnees, small business grants were distributed to more than 80 vulnerable families in Nimba County, while small loans were granted to some 30 returnees in Montserrado, 25 in Lofa and 18 in Nimba Counties.

Legal assistance: All asylum-seekers and refugees received valid documents, and refugee identity cards were renewed. The access of refugees to free legal services was ensured through implementing partners. The Ministry of Justice's ability to respond to sexual and gender-based violence and provide victims of the crime with access to justice was strengthened by the recruitment and deployment of County Attorney Clerks in nine County Attorney offices.

Operational support to agencies: Implementing partners received financial and logistical support. Technical support was emphasized in view of UNHCR's progressive disengagement from Liberia. Some operational partners also received logistical support from UNHCR.

Sanitation: Community hygiene awareness campaigns were conducted and some 250 family latrines constructed for vulnerable Ivorian refugees, in tandem with the building of shelters. All shelters built for former refugees from Sierra Leone included sanitation facilities.

Shelter and other infrastructures: About 360 structures were constructed in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount Counties for some 1,600 former refugees from Sierra Leone who opted for local integration. Another 90 shelters were constructed for Ivorian refugees in Nimba County.

Transport and logistics: A total of 12 trucks, 45 other vehicles and 50 motorcycles were used to support the monitoring of activities by UNHCR and its partners, including the construction of shelter and transportation of goods for refugees dispersed in more than 100 communities.

Water: Some 15 wells were constructed or rehabilitated in communities receiving former refugees from Sierra Leone. Ivorian refugees in the south-east also benefited from water management and well rehabilitation.

○ *Constraints*

Drastic reductions in resources and staffing constituted some of the major constraints in 2009. A shortage of vehicles and bad road conditions limited access to refugees dispersed in more than 100 communities. The cost of fuel to implement the shelter construction project in Montserrado and Grand

Cape Mount used up a large part of the annual budget. Another constraint was the heavy reliance of partners on UNHCR support.

Financial information

Due to budgetary limitations, UNHCR's operation in Liberia could not implement all self-reliance activities, especially in urban areas. Support to some secondary level students and construction of sufficient shelter for integrating refugees were not possible. However, additional contributions helped fill some of the needs for shelter for former refugees from Sierra Leone.

Organization and implementation

UNHCR operated in Liberia through a country office in Monrovia; three field offices in Saclapea, Zwedru and Voinjama; and a field unit in Harper. Ninety-three staff members, comprising 8 international (including one UNV and two consultants) and 85 national (including 15 UNVs and two consultants) employees ran the operation.

The plan to close the field office in Voinjama could not be implemented due to the need to monitor five ongoing projects in the area as well as the necessity of preparing for a possible influx from Guinea in light of increasing instability in that country.

Working with others

UNHCR continued strengthening the capacity of its implementing partners in preparation for its disengagement from Liberia. Ties with other UN agencies were further strengthened through participation in the UNDAF and One UN joint activities, programming and office sharing.

Overall assessment

People of concern, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, benefited from UNHCR services and assistance. However, certain needs, especially for self-reliance programmes, could

not be addressed for many refugees in urban areas. Programmes in 2010 will target this group as well as refugees who could not benefit from assistance packages in the past.

Partners	
Implementing partners	
Government:	Cooperative Development Agency, Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, Ministry of Justice
NGOs:	Caritas, Catholic Justice and Peace Commission - JPC, Childfund, Environmental Foundation for Africa, Liberia Islamic Union for Reconstruction and Development (LIURD), Liberia Opportunity Industrialization Center (LOIC), Special Emergency Activities to Restore Children's Hope (SEARCH), The Carter Center and Tiyatien Health
Operational partners	
NGOs:	Africa Humanitarian Action, Innovation for Poverty Action Liberia, Medical Emergency Relief Cooperative International
Others:	FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNMIL, WFP, WHO



Budget, income and expenditure in Liberia (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Annual budget	12,192,492	5,431,426	6,988,971	12,420,397	11,068,199
IDP Operations in Liberia	0	0	274,660	274,660	0
Total	12,192,492	5,431,426	7,263,632	12,695,058	11,068,199

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Liberia (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current years' project			Previous years' project
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,674,621	0	1,674,621	0
Community services	196,833	0	196,833	53,138
Crop production	117,526	0	117,526	53,400
Education	167,099	0	167,099	167,971
Forestry	0	0	0	3,863
Health and nutrition	556,478	0	556,478	145,102
Income generation	262,934	0	262,934	25,176
Legal assistance	1,712,263	0	1,712,263	177,244
Operational support (to agencies)	482,550	0	482,550	291,332
Sanitation	23,185	0	23,185	26,149
Shelter and infrastructure	857,297	0	857,297	65,180
Transport and logistics	974,267	0	974,267	209,696
Water	7,213	0	7,213	36,840
Instalments to implementing partners	1,861,058	0	1,861,058	(1,255,091)
Subtotal operational activities	8,893,324	0	8,893,324	0
Programme support	2,174,876	0	2,174,876	0
Total expenditure	11,068,199	0	11,068,199	0

Cancellation on previous years' expenditure

(172,660)

Instalments with implementing partners

Payments made	5,300,266	0	5,300,266
Reporting received	(3,439,207)	0	(3,439,207)
Balance	1,861,058	0	1,861,058

Previous year's report

Instalments with implementing partners:			
Outstanding 1st January			2,417,542
Reporting received			(1,255,091)
Refunded to UNHCR			(193,708)
Currency adjustment			22,917
Outstanding 31st December			991,661