

# West Africa



In Vossa, Benin, flooding displaced women and children who found refuge on the sidewalks in makeshift shelters.

**Benin**

**Burkina Faso**

**Cape Verde**

**Côte d'Ivoire**

**Gambia**

**Ghana**

**Guinea**

**Guinea-Bissau**

**Liberia**

**Mali**

**Niger**

**Nigeria**

**Senegal**

**Sierra Leone**

**Togo**





## | OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- At the end of 2010, there were near 720,000 people of concern to UNHCR in the subregion, including some 565,000 in Côte d'Ivoire. Some 2,800 refugees were assisted to repatriate, mainly to Mauritania and Liberia. Another 650 refugees, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Togo, were resettled in the course of the year.
- UNHCR's local integration strategies in the region helped all refugees in the Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone to obtain better access to land, housing, education, vocational training and protection.
- In the wake of the political upheaval that followed the 2010 presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire, some 18,000 refugees fled the country to Ghana, Guinea and Liberia. UNHCR led the regional and national response to the humanitarian emergency.
- UNHCR advocated with governments for the wider application of the Protocol on Free Movements, Right of Residence and Establishment adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). As a result, ECOWAS issued residence permits for 185 Liberian refugees. In addition, formalities were initiated in various countries to issue passports for Liberian refugees. UNHCR's advocacy also led to the accession of five West African States to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.
- UNHCR participated in the launch of the *AUCOMMIT Campaign Against Human Trafficking* in West Africa, as well as in international consultations on the role played by regional and subregional mechanisms in countering human trafficking. The Office conducted regional workshops on trafficking issues in cooperation with IOM and ECOWAS, and issued a publication on the protection of refugees and other persons on the move in the ECOWAS area.





## | Working environment |

The political and security situation in West Africa remained fragile for most of the year. Tensions in the north of Ghana and violent confrontations over the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire led to outflows of refugees. Togo registered over 3,600 new Ghanaian refugees in 2010, increasing the total number of refugees from this country to more than 13,600. In the end of 2010, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire forced more than 18,000 Ivorian refugees to flee to Liberia, as well as to Ghana and Guinea. In parallel, some 19,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were registered and assisted in Côte d'Ivoire. The number of asylum-seekers in the region rose to nearly 9,000 during the year, some 44 per cent of them non-ECOWAS nationals.

Although the economic slowdown and high unemployment rates in the subregion had a negative impact on efforts to improve urban refugees' self-reliance, there was progress in building asylum capacity. National refugee boards and government bodies have become more involved in refugee status determination (RSD), and asylum systems and procedures have grown fairer throughout the subregion. No country is refusing to consider asylum applications from particular nationalities and, as in previous years, no cases of *refoulement*, expulsion or unjustified detention were reported in 2010.

## | Achievements and impact |

There was tangible progress in the local integration of refugees. More than 120 Liberian refugee families in Sierra Leone gained access to land and housing support, while in Ghana the local Government of Gomoa East and traditional

leaders committed to provide 100 acres of land for Liberian refugees at the Budumburam camp opting for local integration.

In Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, social-development projects strengthened host communities' ability to absorb refugees. This accomplishment is the result of an agreement with ECOWAS, whereby the regional economic community provides UNHCR with financial support to implement community-based projects to reinforce durable solutions for refugees in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The integration of the refugee population into national development policies and programmes remained a priority. In Ghana, some 2,000 refugees were included in the national health insurance scheme, and in Sierra Leone all extremely vulnerable refugees benefited from free medical services. Access to education was emphasized and UNHCR integrated projects in areas such as sexual and gender-based violence, public health and HIV and AIDS into regional strategies for local integration.

To aid the search for durable solutions in situations of protracted displacement, UNHCR's counselling and profiling exercises in Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo provided more accurate data on registered refugees and a better understanding of their needs.

UNHCR worked closely with governments, UN agencies and NGOs to ensure a protection-sensitive response to the humanitarian situation arising from the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, and played a leading role in coordinating emergency preparedness and response in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ghana, Liberia and Mali.

## | Constraints |

Seeking durable solutions for refugees in protracted situations requires a secure environment and financial resources. The absence of funds to relocate refugees from camps or urban sites to new communities hampered local-integration processes. Similarly, volatile political environments in most countries in the region hindered repatriation and reintegration programmes. Under these circumstances, many refugees looked to resettlement in third countries as their only option.

UNHCR offices in the region continued to be affected by a lack of technical expertise and training in the use of *proGres* software, resulting in delays in providing accurate information on refugees.

In spite of the political goodwill demonstrated by governments, lengthy procedures hindered the issuance of passports and identity cards to refugees in support of local integration.

## | Operations |

UNHCR's operation in **Côte d'Ivoire** is described in a separate chapter.

The Regional Office in **Senegal** continued to strengthen its coordination and management capacity. Except for Côte d'Ivoire, the rest of the countries in the subregion came under the structure of the regional office. UNHCR enhanced its presence with the establishment of offices in Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau and Niger.

In the **Gambia**, the Government's capacity to assume full responsibility on refugee matters was strengthened with the establishment of the Gambia Refugee Commission. All refugees in the Gambia have been registered and issued with individual identification cards. Livelihood schemes for around 770 Senegalese refugee families in rural areas improved their self-reliance and food security.

More than 11,000 Liberian refugees in **Ghana** have expressed an interest in local integration. Some 150 refugees

departed from the country to be resettled, and a similar number were assisted to repatriate, mainly to Liberia. Access to primary health care for vulnerable refugees improved, with more than 920 people newly enrolled in the national health insurance scheme.

More than half of the over 3,200 Liberian refugee families registered for local integration in **Sierra Leone** received housing assistance in 2010. Some 500 refugees aged between 18 and 39 were provided with opportunities to promote their self-reliance through training in vocational skills and small-businesses management. Over 100 refugees were resettled and some 40 assisted to repatriate.

In **Guinea**, the registration of some 120 new Ivorian refugees brought the total number of Ivorian refugees receiving assistance from UNHCR to nearly 4,100 by the end of year. The refugees benefited from food, non-food items (NFIs), agricultural inputs and primary health care. Livelihood schemes to support local integration focused on agricultural production and included some 1,400 Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugee heads of household, as well as host populations.

In **Liberia**, the self-reliance of some 6,400 Ivorian refugees improved through income-generating activities such as food production, agriculture and shelter construction. Seventy-five shelters were constructed for some 380 former refugees from Sierra Leone who opted for local integration, and almost 90 shelters were built for Ivorian refugees.

UNHCR trained Government officials in **Mali** in asylum procedures to improve their refugee status determination (RSD) capacity. As a result, decisions of the national eligibility board were faster and fairer. In collaboration with ILO, some 30 refugees benefited from training to help them manage their enterprises better.

In **Nigeria**, 130 refugees departed for resettlement and 34 were repatriated. The capacity of the National Commission for Refugees was enlarged by the addition of staff. Two training sessions on RSD procedures were conducted for eligibility and immigration officers. ECOWAS residence

## Budget and expenditure in West Africa | USD

Country		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	Budget	9,967,876	2,120,000	0	3,385,000	<b>15,472,876</b>
	Expenditure	4,281,895	1,080,737	0	1,909,716	<b>7,272,348</b>
<b>Ghana</b>	Budget	8,547,044	0	0	0	<b>8,547,044</b>
	Expenditure	4,831,161	0	0	0	<b>4,831,161</b>
<b>Guinea</b>	Budget	7,450,443	0	0	0	<b>7,450,443</b>
	Expenditure	5,209,754	0	0	0	<b>5,209,754</b>
<b>Liberia</b>	Budget	8,084,051	0	1,900,000	0	<b>9,984,051</b>
	Expenditure	6,564,897	0	1,839,742	0	<b>8,404,638</b>
<b>Senegal Regional Office<sup>1</sup></b>	Budget	35,561,032	380,000	5,426,248	2,950,545	<b>44,317,825</b>
	Expenditure	23,848,061	265,721	0	2,297,008	<b>26,410,790</b>
<b>Total budget</b>		<b>69,610,446</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>	<b>7,326,248</b>	<b>6,335,545</b>	<b>85,772,239</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>44,735,768</b>	<b>1,346,458</b>	<b>1,839,742</b>	<b>4,206,724</b>	<b>52,128,691</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes activities in Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo.

permits were issued to 185 Liberian refugees and socio-economic packages were given to 280 Liberian refugee families. Some 130 individuals were enrolled in various skills courses to aid their local integration.

Some 1,400 Mauritanian refugees in **Senegal** repatriated voluntarily in 2010, far fewer than the 12,000 who repatriated in 2009, but bringing to some 20,500 the number of Mauritanian refugees having returned since January 2008. UNHCR continued negotiations with the Senegalese authorities on the modalities for granting identity cards to refugees residing in Senegal.

In **Togo**, more than 14,000 refugees, including some 13,600 Ghanaians, enjoyed international protection and social and community services, including health care and systems to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. A verification exercise registered some 9,900 rural refugees, allowing them to benefit from protection and assistance activities, including HIV and AIDS prevention.

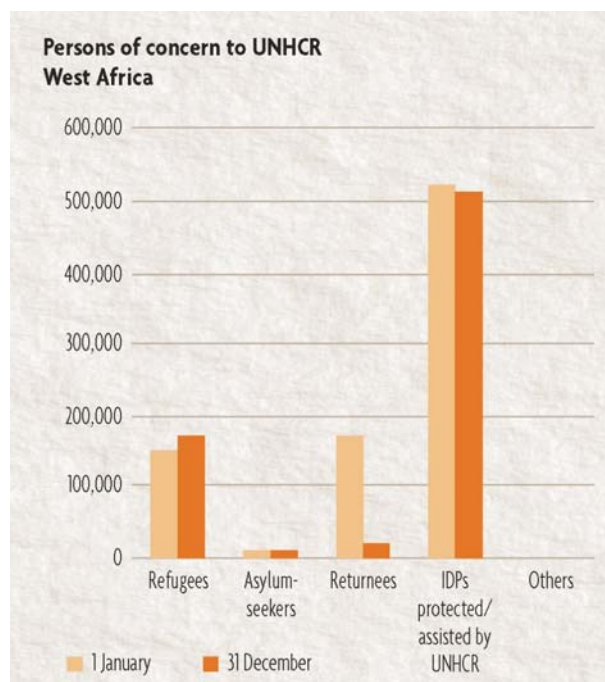
In **Guinea-Bissau** a profiling exercise showed that the refugee population was down to just under 7,700, from more than 8,000 in the previous year. Refugees' access to primary health care was enhanced by the construction of health centres, and refugee livelihoods were improved by the supply of agricultural inputs. During the registration of Senegalese refugees in the rural areas, residents of a village indicated their interest in naturalization as citizens of Guinea-Bissau. The Government agreed to naturalize some Senegalese refugees.

In **Benin**, self-reliance support through microfinance was given to more than 90 refugees, including some 50 women and 25 people living with HIV and AIDS. The repayment rate was a record 88 per cent. Some 110 refugees left on resettlement and 20 were repatriated with UNHCR assistance. UNHCR also submitted 18 applications for naturalization to the authorities on behalf of Togolese refugees. In October, violent floods affected an estimated

680,000 people. UNHCR contributed to the relief effort by distributing NFIs, including 3,000 tents.

**Financial information**

The overall budget for West Africa totalled USD 85.8 million in 2010. This represents an increase of more than USD 22 million over 2009, following the introduction of the new budget structure based on the comprehensive needs of people of concern. However, expenditures were lower in 2010 than in 2009, decreasing from USD 54.7 million to USD 52.1 million. UNHCR welcomed the expansion of its donor base in the subregion, as indicated by a substantial contribution from ECOWAS and the African Development Bank.



**Voluntary contributions to West Africa (USD) | USD**

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>WEST AFRICA SUBREGION</b>				
Australia			2,622,378	2,622,378
Canada			750,469	750,469
Economic Community of West African States	268,564			268,564
Finland			721,501	721,501
Liechtenstein			97,087	97,087
<b>West Africa subtotal</b>	<b>268,564</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,191,435</b>	<b>4,459,999</b>
<b>BENIN</b>				
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)		1,499,980		1,499,980
<b>Benin subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,499,980</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,499,980</b>
<b>CÔTE D'IVOIRE</b>				
Luxembourg		87,015		87,015
Spain	685,838			685,838
United States of America			2,700,000	2,700,000
<b>Cote d'Ivoire subtotal</b>	<b>685,838</b>	<b>87,015</b>	<b>2,700,000</b>	<b>3,472,853</b>

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>GAMBIA</b>				
Spain	155,831			155,831
<b>Gambia subtotal</b>	<b>155,831</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>155,831</b>
<b>GHANA</b>				
United States of America	1,000,000		850,000	1,850,000
<b>Ghana subtotal</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>850,000</b>	<b>1,850,000</b>
<b>GUINEA</b>				
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	300,000			300,000
Economic Community of West African States	793,821			793,821
Spain	507,858			507,858
United States of America			700,000	700,000
<b>Guinea subtotal</b>	<b>1,601,679</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>700,000</b>	<b>2,301,679</b>
<b>LIBERIA</b>				
Economic Community of West African States	875,000			875,000
UN Peacebuilding Fund	665,374			665,374
UN Population Fund	117,700			117,700
United States of America			750,000	750,000
<b>Liberia subtotal</b>	<b>1,658,074</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750,000</b>	<b>2,408,074</b>
<b>SENEGAL</b>				
Economic Community of West African States	1,452,313			1,452,313
<b>Senegal subtotal</b>	<b>1,452,313</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,452,313</b>
<b>SIERRA LEONE</b>				
Economic Community of West African States	715,500			715,500
United States of America			400,000	400,000
<b>Sierra Leone subtotal</b>	<b>715,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>1,115,500</b>
<b>TOGO</b>				
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	944,220			944,220
<b>Togo subtotal</b>	<b>944,220</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>944,220</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,482,020</b>	<b>1,586,995</b>	<b>9,591,435</b>	<b>19,660,449</b>

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities – mandate-related" (NAM) reserve.