

SIERRA LEONE



Operational highlights

- The Government established a National Refugee Authority Secretariat to manage refugee issues and conduct refugee status determination (RSD).
- UNHCR-sponsored community projects enhanced the capacity of host communities to absorb locally integrating refugees.
- UNHCR trained its government counterparts to enable them to take over key sectors in refugee-hosting districts.

Working environment

Sierra Leone remained peaceful in 2008, and a second round of elections was held during the year. The Government continued to fulfil its obligations to international treaties on human rights and refugee protection. UNHCR's country operation focused on building the capacity of government counterparts to assist in the local integration of Liberian refugees. Participatory needs assessments were conducted in September and October 2008 in all communities hosting refugees.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Liberia	7,800	7,800	56	46
	Various	50	50	35	31
Asylum-seekers	Liberia	160	-	60	41
	Nigeria	150	-	9	13
	Various	20	-	24	12
Returnees (refugees)	Various	320	320	41	51
Total		8,500	8,170		

| Achievements and impact |

○ Main objectives

In 2008, the Office aimed to promote and support local integration for the remaining Liberian refugees; adopt and implement durable solutions for refugees with specific needs; and strengthen the national capacity to assume full responsibility for the protection of refugees.

○ Protection and solutions

All refugees and asylum-seekers enjoyed a favourable protection climate, and no *refoulement* or detentions were reported to UNHCR. More than 1,100 Liberian refugees were assisted to repatriate voluntarily. In addition, UNHCR facilitated the resettlement of some 140 Liberians in third countries.

The National Refugee Authority Secretariat was set up by the Government. Protection and RSD training sessions were organized for all partners.

○ Activities and assistance

Community services: Three cases of child abuse were reported, documented and the victims counselled. Twenty-one unaccompanied minors were assisted, and all women with specific needs received sanitary materials.

Crop production: Some 400 farmers, mostly women, were provided with seeds and tools. Eight grain stores were equipped with rice mills, and cassava-grating machines were provided to eight refugee-hosting communities.

Domestic needs: UNHCR provided assistance to extremely vulnerable refugees as well as repatriating refugees.

Education: Three classrooms were built and furnished in host communities. This improved the learning environment for refugees and local children.

Food: Some 430 extremely vulnerable refugees received complementary food packages. WFP provided Food for Work to some 250 refugee families.

Forestry: Some 93 hectares of land in three former refugee camp sites were cleared and unwanted facilities decommissioned. Community tree and cash-crop nurseries were set up to facilitate reforestation.

Health: Three health clinics were upgraded, and two government hospitals were provided with ambulances. The Government is gradually taking over UNHCR-funded clinics. Thirty persons living with HIV and AIDS received support. Sensitization programmes on HIV and AIDS were conducted in schools and nearly 5,000 condoms distributed.

Income generation: Nearly 700 persons received support for income-generation activities. Twenty-five urban refugees received loans of USD 100 per person for income-generation projects. More than 200 graduates of vocational skills-training programmes in 2007 were provided with starter kits and USD 80 per person as seed money to establish small businesses. Furthermore,

small-business grants were provided to more than 300 rural refugees and host-community members.

Legal assistance: UNHCR continued to provide legal assistance to refugees. Training in international protection was organized for governmental and non-governmental partners.

Operational support (to agencies): All implementing partners received financial and technical support.

Sanitation: UNHCR constructed some 190 family latrines and 380 bathing facilities.

Shelter and other infrastructure: Out of 340 newly constructed family shelters, 70 were given to extremely vulnerable refugees. In addition, 50 shelters were rehabilitated for extremely vulnerable refugees in Kissi.

Transport and logistics: Trucks and other vehicles were used to transfer beneficiaries and goods.

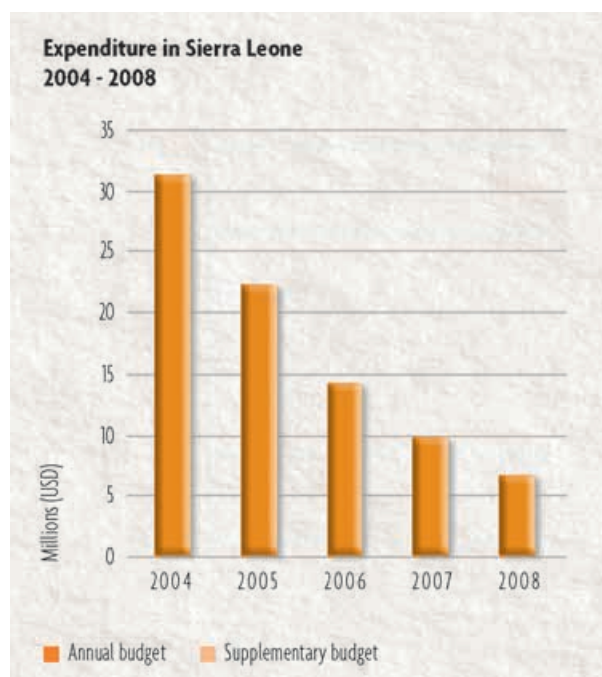
Water: Sixty-four wells were constructed or rehabilitated. Wells in 26 host communities were periodically chlorinated to ensure the availability of clean drinking water.

○ Constraints

Prices increased during the reporting period, particularly for imported building materials, putting a strain on the budget. In addition, frequent breakdowns among an ageing fleet of trucks delayed project implementation. Bad roads and heavy rains hampered shelter construction.

| Financial information |

With an increase of USD 396,000 during the year, the Annual Programme Budget came to USD 3,196,000. Additional resources allowed for projects totalling USD 150,000 for water and sanitation activities. The local-integration programme was largely implemented.





Provision of live stock contributes to the local integration of refugees in Sierra Leone

UNHCR

Organization and implementation

In 2008, UNHCR maintained its main office in Freetown and a sub-office in Kenema.

Staff levels were reduced as the number of refugees decreased by 49 per cent as compared to 2007. There were 59 staff (nine international, 46 national and four UNVs) working in UNHCR offices in Sierra Leone.

Working with others

In 2008, UNHCR had four national implementing partners, including the National Commission for Social Action (NACSA), UNHCR's governmental counterpart. Key operational partners were WFP, FAO, MSF Belgium, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNIPSIL. In addition, UNHCR collaborates closely with the National Refugee Authority Secretariat, the National Police, the Bureau of Immigration, the National AIDS Secretariat and the ministries of Health, Education, and Agriculture.

Overall assessment

The launch of the National Refugee Authority Secretariat, which will be responsible for RSD, was a major success in 2008. The Secretariat will also spearhead the provision of legal documents for refugees. The major needs are for the empowerment of locally integrating refugees to help them attain self-reliance in food, health and education and to help key ministries to take over assistance in sectors such as health, agriculture and water.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government: National Commission for Social Action

NGOs: CARITAS – Kenema ; Hands Empowering the Less Privileged-Sierra Leone (HELP-SL), Network Movement for Justice and Development

Operational partners

NGOs: MSF Belgium

Others: WFP, FAO, MSF, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIPSIL

Budget, income and expenditure in Sierra Leone (USD)					
	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available ¹	Total expenditure
Annual budget	6,523,966	1,660,140	4,812,343	6,472,483	6,472,269
Water and sanitation SB	150,000	0	147,973	147,973	147,973
Total	6,673,966	1,660,140	4,960,316	6,620,456	6,620,242

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.

¹ Total funds available include currency adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Sierra Leone (USD)				
Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Prior years' project
	Annual programme budget	Supplementary programme budget	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,626,538	0	1,626,538	0
Community services	118,702	0	118,702	11,652
Crop production	93,725	0	93,725	15,498
Domestic needs and household support	19,539	0	19,539	0
Education	126,414	0	126,414	0
Food	77,475	0	77,475	0
Forestry	89,657	0	89,657	0
Health and nutrition	284,355	0	284,355	0
Income generation	127,852	0	127,852	2,035
Legal assistance	208,190	0	208,190	9,670
Operational support (to agencies)	612,778	0	612,778	(41,711)
Sanitation	116,077	110,473	226,550	1,186
Shelter and infrastructure	289,803	0	289,803	24,743
Transport and logistics	278,559	0	278,559	1,166
Water	248,929	37,500	286,429	11,032
Instalments to implementing partners	536,311	0	536,311	(35,271)
Subtotal operational activities	4,854,904	147,973	5,002,877	0
Programme support	1,617,365	0	1,617,365	0
Total expenditure	6,472,269	147,973	6,620,242	0
Cancellation on prior years' expenditure				(124,688)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	2,280,799	147,973	2,428,772	
Reporting received	(1,744,488)	(147,973)	(1,892,461)	
Balance	536,311	0	536,311	
Outstanding 1st January				138,341
Reporting received				(35,271)
Refunded to UNHCR				(18,585)
Currency adjustment				4,449
Outstanding 31st December				88,934