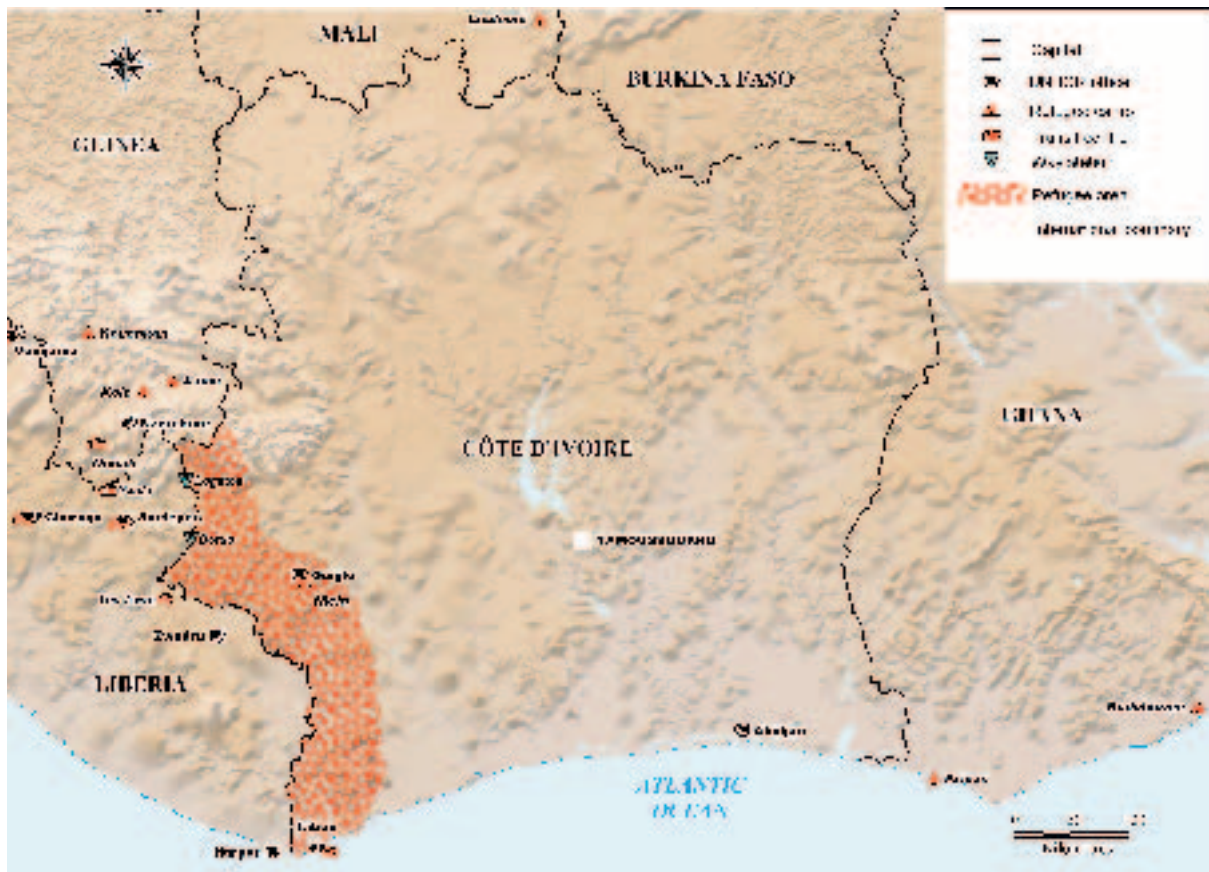


Côte d'Ivoire



Main objectives

Ensure the well-being of Liberian refugees and local host communities in western Côte d'Ivoire as well as that of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nationals of other countries living with them; provide international protection for urban refugees in Abidjan and ensure their well-being through the provision of essential services until lasting solutions to their plight are found; continue the promotion of voluntary repatriation for Sierra Leonean refugees; facilitate and, when appropriate, promote the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees; intensify collaboration with all stakeholders involved in helping to reintegrate Ivorian returnees who voluntarily came back home.

Impact

- The resettlement of refugees for security reasons continued for a second year, with over 4,400 refugees resettled to the United States (and three to Ireland for medical reasons).
- UNHCR provided humanitarian assistance to the refugees in Tabou Transit Centre and Nicla refugee camp who represent 15 per cent of Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as refugees residing outside camps. Areas hosting refugees benefited from the construction or rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities, health centres and schools: tangible benefits which facilitated cohabitation between the two populations.
- Reintegration activities for Ivorian returnees were conducted. Water projects and the rehabilitation of the drinking water supply improved the living conditions of 20,000 persons in 23 villages in need of water points and latrines.
- UNHCR strengthened the capacity of the National Eligibility Commission and the *Service d'Aide d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Apatrides* (SAARA).

- Urban refugees were provided with accommodation and primary and secondary education. Professional training and income-generating activities were proposed for refugees living in Abidjan.

Working environment

The context

In early 2004 hopes were raised by the participation in the Government of National Reconciliation of the former rebel group *Forces Nouvelles*. But security conditions soon deteriorated and outbreaks of violence in Abidjan in March and again in November aggravated the political and social situation. An international commission was set up by the United Nations to investigate these events. The Accra III summit in July 2004 reaffirmed the willingness of the parties to the conflict to pursue dialogue and maintain the *Linás-Marcoursis* agreement as the main framework

for the peace process. In November 2004, an air attack by Government forces on the *Forces Nouvelles* and the French military base in Bouake resulted in retaliation by the French military and the destruction of military equipment. More than 8,000 expatriates, mostly Europeans, left Abidjan shortly thereafter.

While the security situation gradually deteriorated in Abidjan, inter-ethnic and intra-community conflict broke out several times in the western sub-district of Guiglo. Insecurity in the area was exacerbated by militia activity. The country was extremely tense when in November the African Union (AU) charged the President of South Africa with mediating a solution to the crisis. The Mbeki initiative reaffirmed the *Linás Marcoursis* and Accra III agreements, but had made little headway by the end of the year.

Persons of concern

Main origin / Type of population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Liberia (refugees)	70,400	70,400	53	53
IDPs	38,000	-	-	-
Republic of the Congo (asylum-seekers)	800	800	53	-
Dem. Rep. of the Congo (asylum-seekers)	500	500	53	-
Republic of the Congo (refugees)	500	500	35	43
Sierra Leone (asylum-seekers)	400	400	53	-
Central African Rep. (asylum-seekers)	200	200	53	-

Income and expenditure (USD) Annual programme budget

Revised budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
15,156,896	4,186,684	11,119,534	15,306,218	15,151,919

¹ Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments. The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.



Côte d'Ivoire: UNHCR continues to provide protection and assistance to Liberian refugees settled in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire as they wait to be repatriated back home. *UNHCR/N. Behring*

Constraints

Volatile security conditions and sporadic displacements created significant challenges for humanitarian actors. UNHCR and its implementing partners had limited access to refugee and returnee hosting areas in the north-west due to security restrictions.

Close monitoring of Ivorian returnees in their areas of return (such as in Toulepleu) was thus obstructed. Preparations for voluntary repatriation were adversely affected and the registration of Liberian refugees planned for early November was postponed to 2005.

The November events shook an already fragile economy. The departure of the expatriates included many company directors, and the resulting closure of 125 companies represented the almost instant loss of 25 per cent of combined foreign and domestic investment, and the source of 50 per cent of income tax. Thousands of Ivorians thus suddenly found themselves jobless, and opportunities for the local integration of refugees dwindled further. The business pull-out dealt a heavy blow to Government efforts to reinvigorate social and economic services through the redeployment of administrative and civil service resources. Those in western Côte d'Ivoire, where the majority of the refugees resided, continued to encounter immense difficulties in attempting to access administrative and social services.

Funding

UNHCR received the necessary resources to cover the needs of its targeted beneficiaries as described in the Côte d'Ivoire Consolidated Appeal for 2004. UNHCR also received funding for the emergency resettlement of refugees outside Côte d'Ivoire.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

UNHCR continued to reinforce the capacity of the *Commission nationale d'éligibilité* (CNE) and its Government counterpart *Service d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides* (SAARA). In 2004, the CNE examined over 370 applications, and accorded refugee status to 80 persons. SAARA issued travel documents and attestations to Liberian refugees to facilitate their movement. Birth certificates were issued to over 1,900 refugee children born during the year. In conformity with the April 2004 law on the identification of foreigners, 340 identification cards had been issued by year's end to urban refugees aged 14 and above, by the CNE. However, this amounted to less than five per cent of urban refugees. The operation will be extended in 2005 to other urban refugees registered and recognized by the CNE. In order to safeguard the civilian and humanitarian character of the refugee camps and settlements, UNHCR entered in negotiations with the Government to train special police contingents for deployment to the Nicla camp and Tabou transit centre.

In 2004, some 20 urban refugees from Burundi, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone expressed the desire to return home and were assisted to repatriate. Over 4,400 refugees were resettled in the USA under the framework of the emergency resettlement programme. In addition, 83 Liberians were resettled in Norway, and three Togolese refugees in Ireland, the latter for medical reasons.

In 2004, of 493 separated children, almost a quarter were settled with foster families and 42 were reunited with their families. Child health programmes concentrated on immunization and combating malnutrition. UNHCR provided firewood to refugee women who risked sexual assault when walking long distances to fetch wood for cooking.

Activities and assistance

Community services: UNHCR encouraged community initiatives and involvement in the transit centres of Abidjan and Tabou and in Nicla Camp. Sectoral Committees with over 50 per cent female members were put in place in 40 villages and 21 others sites, including the transit centres in Abidjan and Tabou and in Nicla camp. These committees organized activities to deal with water, youth education, vocational training, food distribution, security, women's and children's issues, HIV/AIDS and general health and hygiene issues. Women's committees were given support to implement income-generating activities, organizing workshops on SGBV, managing school canteens at Nicla camp, and distributing sanitary material. Regular meetings were organized to discuss domestic education, human rights, HIV/AIDS, peace education and SGBV. The protection of children focused on education and family reunification.

Crop production: Assistance was given to refugees hosted in Tabou villages, who had access to land. Tools and seeds were distributed to over 400 families. UNHCR provided support to vulnerable refugees willing to undertake food production activities. In Tabou transit centre, 500 families were given tools, seeds and advice. In Nicla camp, where refugees received reduced WFP food rations, some 430 heads of families, half of whom were women, were helped to cultivate rice and others cereals on 37 hectares of land. In the other transit centres in Abidjan, where land was not available for agricultural

activities, the refugees received full WFP food rations. All those who wanted to farm in order to enrich their food baskets and generate income were supported to do so.

Domestic needs/Household support: Refugees received domestic items on arrival in Nicla refugee camp and Tabou transit centre. Worn-out or damaged mosquito nets, mats, and other household items were replaced and refugees received 400 grams of soap per person monthly. Domestic items were distributed to the 7,000 refugees living in 19 transit centres opened in Abidjan for the emergency resettlement operation. In the villages, such items were given to vulnerable refugees (due to limited supplies). This covered kits for pregnant women (baby clothes, soap), assistance for funeral services.

Education: Most Liberian refugee parents remained reluctant to enrol their children in Ivorian schools because of the French language barrier. Only 381 Liberian refugee children attended Ivorian schools in Tabou villages. At the same time, there were few functioning Ivorian schools in the *Zone d'Accueil des Réfugiés* (ZAR). UNHCR developed and implemented an informal education programme for 88 per cent of the 2,200 children living in the Tabou villages and Tabou transit centre and for two thirds of the 1,000 children in Nicla camp. Activities supporting primary education covered recruitment and teacher training, construction of classes, the purchase of furniture, teaching and learning resources as well as support to parents' associations. In the transit centres in Abidjan, UNHCR organized informal education for almost 2,000 children, as well as skills training for 1,000 adolescents. In urban areas, financial support was provided to enable all school-aged refugees to attend Ivorian primary and secondary schools. Three refugees received a DAFI scholarship and 20 technical students were enabled to attend two-year courses. Centres for technical education were opened in the Tabou Transit centre and in Nicla camp to provide Liberian refugees with practical skills in preparation for their return home. At Nicla camp, some 300 teenagers, almost half of whom were girls, registered for courses on agriculture, construction, computer basic skills and sewing.

Food: WFP provided dry food rations to refugees at Nicla camp (1,700 kcal/person/day) and at Tabou and Abidjan transit centres (2,100 k/p/d). Refugees in transit centres in Abidjan received basic food commodities supplied by WFP and complementary

food from UNHCR to meet their minimum nutritional needs. The joint food assessment mission of October 2003 recommended a shift to a dry ration distribution for refugees in Tabou transit centre. This recommendation was implemented in 2004. In addition, emphasis was put on the improvement of food habits and on nutritional training to reduce the impact of malnutrition due to bad food habits and poor access to health services. The refugees living in villages received agricultural tools to help them to grow their own food.

Health/Nutrition: Refugees in the transit centres and Nicla camp had access to clinics managed by UNHCR's partners and, if necessary, state hospitals in Abidjan, Tabou and Guiglo. Each of the 19 transit centres had a health centre staffed and equipped to provide preventive and curative primary health care. Complicated medical cases were referred to Abidjan hospitals. All refugees in the transit centres and Nicla camp received mosquito nets to guard against malaria. All refugee children in the transit centres were vaccinated against measles and other diseases. A system was put in place for evacuation to referral hospitals or specialized clinics. No epidemics were reported in 2004. UNHCR rehabilitated some hospitals in Tabou, constructed two health centres and provided additional support to the six health centres constructed in 2003. A supplementary mobile medical team was established. HIV/AIDS campaigns were intensified in coordination with other UN agencies.

Income generation: Income-generating activities targeted 390 women in Nicla camp and 600 at Tabou transit centre (grouped into cooperatives). They received sewing machines, bread ovens, utensils and funding for micro-credit projects. 50 micro-projects were funded for urban refugees (the beneficiaries included 30 women). The majority of the refugee men in the villages, Tabou transit centre and Nicla camp worked on plantations or as small-scale traders.

Legal assistance: No cases of *refoulement* were reported during 2004. UNHCR maintained contacts with the administrative authorities and the judicial system. In this way, cases concerning refugees were reported and solutions found, in conformity with the international conventions on the protection of refugees.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR's operational partners participated in workshops organized by UNHCR in Cote d'Ivoire as well as in France, Ghana and Switzerland on humanitarian law, international protection, education and programme management. UNHCR supported other public institutions whose services benefit the refugees such as Radio Guiglo, Radio Tabou and the Government hospital in Tabou, which serves almost 40,000 Liberians refugees, but is not well equipped and staffed.

Sanitation: In Tabou villages, 63 wells and 400 latrines were constructed benefiting over 63,000 people including 36,500 refugees. Access to water and to latrines increased: the average number of users per latrine fell to 106 persons in the Tabou Villages and to 59 in the other 23 ZAR villages covered (representing 35,200 refugees). Additional latrines and other sanitation infrastructure were built in the transit centres in Abidjan to respond to the arrival of refugees waiting to be resettled.

Shelters/Other infrastructure: In Abidjan, congestion was a major problem for refugees living in the transit centres. Under the US emergency resettlement programme, an additional 5,800 refugees came to Abidjan in convoys from Guiglo and Tabou, exceeding the capacity of these centres. As the selected persons were resettled and those rejected went back to their places of residence, all but one of the transit centres was gradually closed. Refugees living in Nicla camp and the Tabou villages built their own shelters but the most vulnerable families received support for the construction of their shelters. Recognized vulnerable urban families in Abidjan received a subsistence allowance to cover accommodation for at least six months. Subsistence allowances were provided to over 500 persons, whose applications for resettlement were rejected, who chose to remain in Abidjan to help them cover their needs for three months. Those who returned to the ZAR received non-food items and an allowance to meet their initial needs upon arrival.

Transport/Logistics: Trucks were required to support the activities of partners in Nicla camp, Tabou transit centre and in the villages as well as for transportation between Abidjan and ZAR. As UNHCR had limited trucking capacity, the Office resorted to hiring buses and trucks for the transportation of refugees and their belongings.

Water: The needs of 17,000 refugees in Abidjan, Tabou and Nicla were met. Indeed, the 19 transit centres in Abidjan were connected to the national water and electricity distribution networks and refugees had more than 20 litres of drinking water per day. In Nicla Camp, 13 boreholes and 25 pumps were maintained. Daily water provision was made available by tankers at Tabou transit centre. 38 water points and 554 domestic latrines were rehabilitated and constructed for some 20,300 inhabitants of 23 villages under the project for the reintegration of Ivorian returnees. Average water consumption increased from eight litres/person/day to 23 l/p/d in ZAR South villages hosting Liberian refugees and in the 23 ZAR North villages hosting Ivorian returnees.

Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR maintains three offices in Côte d'Ivoire, including the branch office in Abidjan and two field offices in Tabou and Guiglo. The regional international posts which were formerly part of the branch office have been redeployed to the Regional Hub in Accra, Ghana. The management of operations is centralized in Abidjan, while monitoring and the identification of needs fall within the remit of field offices. Supervision and monitoring were undertaken through regular missions to the field as well as the exchange of reports on activities.

Following the deterioration of security in March and November 2004, UN security phases 3 and 4 were triggered. Nevertheless, UNHCR maintained its presence in Côte d'Ivoire through national staff and continued to function in accordance with the Minimum Operating Security Standards.

Working with others

The bulk of UNHCR-funded assistance to refugees in Côte d'Ivoire is implemented by NGO partners. During 2004, UNHCR worked with seven local and international partners and three national organizations. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire and UNHCR both favour capacity-building of indigenous NGOs.

Contingency planning was regularly undertaken with the participation of OCHA, OIM, UNICEF, UNFPA and local and international NGOs.

Under the 2004 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Côte d'Ivoire, six UN agencies planned activities in the areas of health, education, hygiene, water and sanitation, food, nutrition, rehabilitation of social services and special protection measures for vulnerable children. The agencies requested USD 64 million for these humanitarian activities.

WFP is tasked with ensuring a supply of basic food commodities. In accordance with the MOU signed between the two agencies, UNHCR and WFP developed a joint work plan for Côte d'Ivoire on an annual basis, and regularly undertook Joint Food Assessment Missions.

UNICEF played a complementary role in water supply, while UNFPA occasionally provided reproductive health supplies for refugee camps.

Under the aegis of the UN Resident Coordinator, UNHCR participated in the UN Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes (CCA/UNDAF). Several UN agencies coordinated efforts to combat HIV/AIDS challenges.

Overall assessment

Despite the climate of insecurity that characterized the period under review, UNHCR pursued its humanitarian assistance and protection activities. The traditional hospitality shown towards refugees over the past few years by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire and the host communities has been strained by growing insecurity, and by the perception that the Liberian refugees played a part in the internal conflict. The socio-economic decline has affected refugees and much of the Ivorian population alike. Unfortunately, assistance and protection programmes were delivered in a more restrictive and politically charged atmosphere in 2004. The Government focused on temporary asylum with a view to early voluntary repatriation or resettlement. The combination of economic disintegration, political tension, and limited access to certain areas (owing to insecurity) effectively precluded any possibility of local integration and severely inhibited efforts to

promote self-reliance. However, the search for lasting solutions for refugees was not without promise. The improvement of political and security conditions in Liberia, with presidential elections scheduled in 2005, should enhance prospects for repatriation as a durable solution for a majority of the refugees.

Ivorian spontaneous returnees benefited from community-based water and sanitation projects aimed at facilitating their reintegration. However, access to their villages was not always possible due to insecurity. Areas hosting refugees benefited from construction or rehabilitation in and around refugee settlements or camps. As the political atmosphere improves, and subject to the availability of funding, more coordinated efforts with developmental partners is to be sought to reinforce the efforts started in 2004.

Offices

Abidjan

Tabou
Guiglo

Partners

Government agencies

Service d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides (SAARA)

NGOs

Association de soutien à l'auto-promotion sanitaire et urbaine

Caritas

IRC

OXFAM

Save the Children (UK)

Solidarités

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

IOM

UNV

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Prior years' project
	Annual programme budget	Annual and Supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,914,985	0
Community services	439,182	152,909
Crop production	31,089	1,194
Domestic needs / household support	459,104	93,601
Education	178,358	86,488
Food	339,037	113,768
Health and nutrition	931,168	367,749
Income generation	9,467	0
Legal assistance	1,007,444	218,844
Operational support (to agencies)	1,019,025	306,419
Sanitation	189,692	145,633
Shelter and infrastructure	1,345,774	769,528
Transport and logistics	1,118,067	339,429
Water	160,029	82,704
Instalments with implementing partners	2,801,059	(2,678,266)
Sub-total operational activities	11,943,481	0
Programme support	3,208,438	0
Total disbursements	15,151,919	0
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	9,231,227	
Reporting received	(6,430,168)	
Balance	2,801,059	
Prior years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1 January		2,550,850
Payments made		259,234
Reporting received		(2,678,266)
Refunded to UNHCR		(53,136)
Balance		78,682
Unliquidated obligations		
Outstanding 1 January		998,816
Disbursements		(559,613)
Cancellations		(439,203)
Outstanding 31 December		0