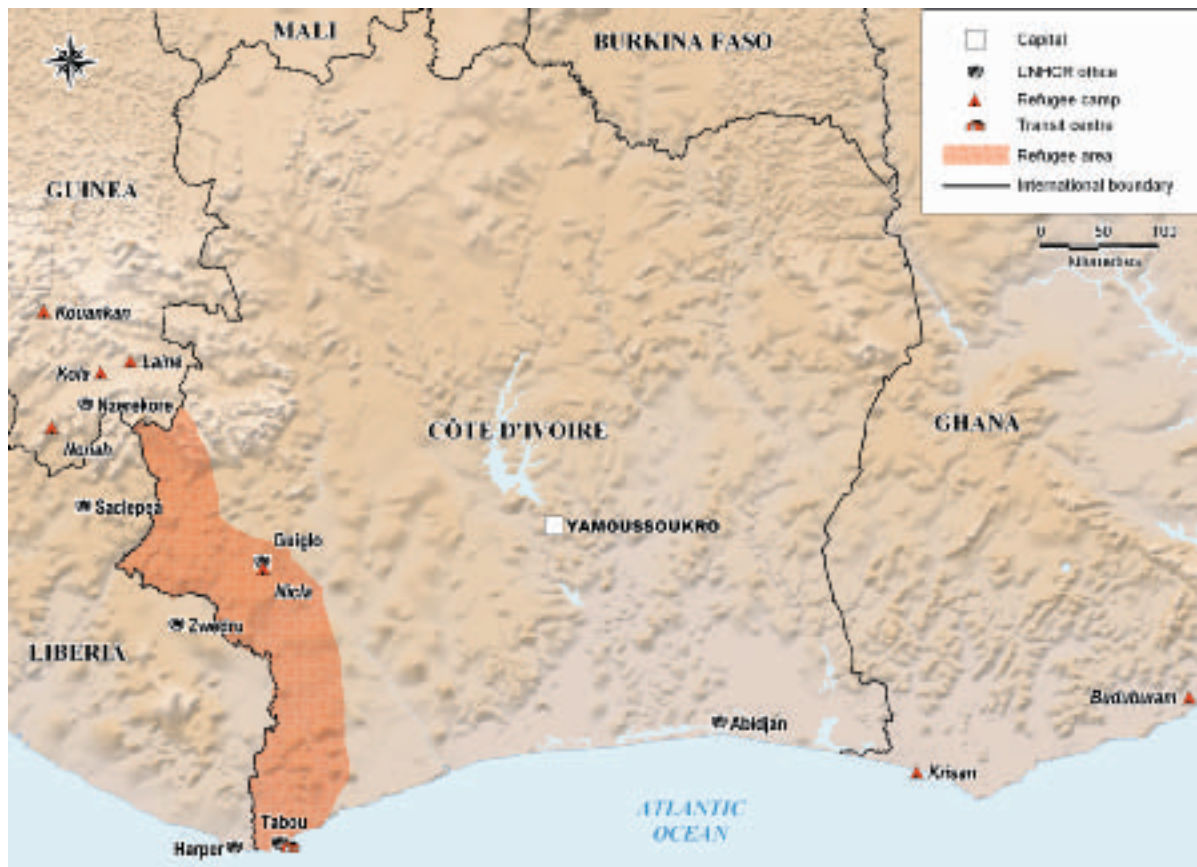


Côte d'Ivoire



Main objectives

- Provide continued international protection and appropriate assistance to urban refugees in Abidjan.
- Provide continued international protection and basic assistance to Liberian refugees settled in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire, in Niela camp, the transit centre in Tabou and among local populations in villages.
- Facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees.
- Support the spontaneous return and if possible facilitate the repatriation and reintegration of Ivorian refugees who opt to return.

Planning figures

Population	Jan 2005	Dec 2005
Liberia (refugees)	44,680	8,370
IDPs	38,039	0
Returnees	25,260	36,310
Other asylum-seekers	550	550
Other refugees	850	700
Republic of the Congo (refugees)	500	420
Republic of the Congo (asylum-seekers)	500	500
Sierra Leone (refugees)	175	15
Total	110,554	46,865

Total requirements: USD 10,915,922

Working environment

Recent developments

After two years of crisis, Côte d'Ivoire still has neither peace nor outright war. The country remains divided, with the north controlled by the *Forces nouvelles* (ex-rebels) and the south by the Government. In early 2004, there were firm expectations that a return to normalcy was imminent, with disarmament of combatants and reunification of the country. However, serious setbacks ensued, particularly on the political front.

In a renewed attempt to revive the peace process, all relevant parties met in July 2004 in Accra (Ghana). This meeting, which was also attended by thirteen African Heads of State and the United Nations Secretary-General, yielded an agreed framework of steps to be taken to achieve the disarmament and reunification of the country. However it is unlikely that these steps will be taken in the near future. Thus, it is expected that the political stalemate will persist in 2005, with adverse implications for displaced people.

The delay in the implementation of the peace process has hampered the return of civil servants needed to run health clinics, schools and other services, particularly in the west, where most of the refugees are settled. A series of recovery programmes cannot yet be implemented. Many businesses have closed down, downsized or relocated to other countries. Unemployment is rising. Thus many refugees, particularly in the cities, cannot become self-sufficient. In 2004, UNHCR provided them with basic material assistance, mainly in the education and health sectors.

UNHCR has been supporting the Government in its efforts to strengthen the National Eligibility Committee and to draft a national law on asylum. This law has not yet been adopted by the Parliament: nor have other outstanding laws on nationality, identification and the residence of foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire. In this context, UNHCR's efforts to provide refugees with recognized documentation have not yet borne fruit. It is very difficult for refugees, as it is for most people

in the country, to enjoy freedom of movement. The proliferation of security checkpoints on the roads has seriously hindered the movement of people and goods, reducing the viability of much economic activity for refugees, and thereby increasing their dependence on assistance.

In 2003, it was estimated that some 50,000 Ivorian refugees fled their country, mainly to Liberia, Guinea and Mali. It is believed that over 15,000 have since returned of their own accord. Due to security conditions in the areas of return, UNHCR limited its reintegration assistance to Ivorian returnees to the sectors of water and sanitation around Bolequin town.

Constraints

Security remains fragile in the areas held by the *Forces nouvelles* and in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire. UNHCR has had only limited access to the refugees in these areas due to stringent security restrictions aimed at ensuring maximum safety for humanitarian workers. Until recently, UNHCR did not have permanent access to large numbers of Ivorian refugees – neither in the eastern part of Liberia, nor in their areas of return in Côte d'Ivoire. From a regional point of view, the deployment of ONUCI troops in western Côte d'Ivoire and the concomitant deployment of UNMIL troops in eastern Liberia are expected to enhance security in the areas hosting refugees and ease access to Ivorian refugees in Liberia as well as to returnees in Côte d'Ivoire.

Strategy

Protection and solutions

It is anticipated that, after having experienced several unsuccessful repatriation attempts, some Liberian refugees will choose to remain in Côte d'Ivoire until after the 2005 presidential elections in Liberia. However, the improved security situation in Liberia may tempt a substantial number of Liberian refugees to return home sooner than that. UNHCR estimates that by the end of 2004, some 25,000 refugees will have returned to Liberia



Côte d'Ivoire

Refugees from Liberia - due to violence in Côte d'Ivoire, after the failed coup d'état in September 2002, many Liberian refugees were repatriated to the village of Pleebo, Liberia. Here, they are waiting for transportation. *UNHCR / M. Kamber*

(20,000 spontaneously and 5,000 with the assistance of UNHCR through a facilitated repatriation programme beginning in October).

UNHCR will pursue the reinforcement of the legal framework to protect refugees by further strengthening the capacity of the National Eligibility Commission and supporting the Government in its implementation of the national refugee law as soon as it is adopted by Parliament. Furthermore, when all administrative obstacles are removed, UNHCR will assist in the issuance of individual documentation to refugees.

UNHCR will continue to monitor the security situation in the north and the west in collaboration with other humanitarian bodies, ONUCI, and the Government. If conditions improve sufficiently, UNHCR will extend its assistance to Liberian refugees and Ivorian returnees in hitherto inaccessible areas.

UNHCR has planned a mass information programme, including go-and-see visits, to help

Ivorian refugees in Guinea, Liberia and elsewhere to make informed decisions regarding voluntary repatriation. This programme will go ahead if security and the political situation in the country improve sufficiently. UNHCR will only facilitate repatriation if key conditions are met, primarily the conclusion of a sustainable political settlement.

UNHCR will train government bodies and NGOs involved in the repatriation activities it will be coordinating. Together with these partners, UNHCR will monitor the return movements of Ivorians to Côte d'Ivoire and of Liberians to their country. In this regard, considerable emphasis will be placed on the cross-border movement of vulnerable groups, especially women, children, older persons and the sick. UNHCR will also encourage and facilitate the voluntary repatriation of urban refugees when conditions in their countries of origin permit.

In all locations hosting refugees, a systematic and proactive search for vulnerable cases will be undertaken and these people will be assisted. The

option of resettlement to a third country will be pursued for vulnerable refugees who meet resettlement criteria.

In collaboration with the Government, relevant United Nations bodies and NGOs, UNHCR will continue its efforts to promote and ensure the civilian character of asylum, particularly in Nicla camp, Tabou transit centre and in other refugee locations.

Assistance

Liberian refugees

Assistance to Liberian refugees will be provided in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire, where the majority of this group resides. UNHCR will aim to reduce their dependency on aid and prepare them for voluntary repatriation.

In order to promote good relations between refugees and the local populations in the west, UNHCR will continue to work with other development actors to support these populations. As a matter of policy, UNHCR assistance will be extended to local populations and IDPs whenever they live in the same areas as refugees and returnees. The assistance will include distribution of domestic household items, agricultural inputs, shelter construction materials, vocational training, and sanitary kits for women and girls aged 12 years and above. Community-based assistance will focus on increasing access to social services and reinforcing this group's capacity to help and protect themselves. UNHCR will also continue to support grassroots organizations and local NGOs involved in protecting children and women against exploitation and sexual violence.

As outlined in the regional UNHCR multi-year plan, some 36,000 Liberian refugees are expected to return home in 2005 (20,000 spontaneously and 16,000 assisted). Should conditions in Liberia allow, UNHCR would proceed to the promotion phase of the voluntary repatriation (which entails less reactive, more proactive intervention and encouragement).

Urban refugees

UNHCR will continue to ensure international protection for some 3,800 urban refugees and asylum-seekers of various nationalities residing mainly in Abidjan (from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone and elsewhere). Assistance to this group will focus on primary and secondary education, vocational training and self-reliance activities. The Office will also encourage and facilitate the voluntary repatriation of urban refugees when conditions in their countries of origin permit.

Ivorian returnees

Should access and security conditions in the return areas improve, UNHCR will support the reintegration of Ivorian returnees. In the context of the "4Rs" approach (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction) and where security conditions are favourable, the Office will work closely with the Government and development actors to implement quick-impact community based reintegration activities in the areas of return, aiming at empowering communities and consolidating the peace process. Rehabilitation and construction work (socio-economic infrastructure and services) will be undertaken to increase the absorption capacity of areas of return. A range of social services will be made available to assist victims of violence and other vulnerable groups upon return.

Desired impact

Through its 2005 programme, UNHCR aims to ensure that Liberian refugees return to their country of origin voluntarily, safely, and in dignity, and that the reintegration of Ivorian returnees is sustainable.

UNHCR will work closely with its partners on behalf of refugees who choose to remain in Côte d'Ivoire in 2005, particularly urban refugees, so that they continue to enjoy international protection and are able to engage in self-reliance activities.

The major assumption underlying these two desired impacts is that peace prevails during 2005 in the subregion, particularly in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

Organization and implementation

Management structure

In 2005, UNHCR in Côte d'Ivoire will have one main office based in Abidjan, one field office in Tabou and another one in Guiglo. It will employ 12 international staff members and 48 national staff.

Coordination

UNHCR's Côte d'Ivoire office will continue to work on Liberian repatriation in close cooperation with the Government and UNHCR offices in neighbouring countries. It will work closely with the Government and the UN peacekeeping troops (ONUCI) deployed in the ZAR (*Zone d'accueil des réfugiés*) in order to monitor the security situation in the areas hosting refugees, as well as in the areas of return for Ivorian refugees. It will also coordinate reintegration and monitoring activities in the areas of return of Ivorian returnees.

UNHCR will actively participate in the planning and coordination of activities with other humanitarian actors, such as through the Consolidated Appeals Process.

The office will continue to support the Government in coordinating and planning the work of the various Government organizations that will be involved in protection of and assistance for the populations of concern to UNHCR.

Offices

Abidjan
Guiglo
Tabou

Partners

Government agencies

Service d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides

NGOs

Association de soutien à l'autopromotion sanitaire et urbaine

CARITAS (Côte d'Ivoire)

International Rescue Committee

OXFAM (UK)

Save the Children (UK)

Solidarités (FR)

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

IOM

UNV

Budget (USD)

Activities and services	Annual Programme
Protection, monitoring and coordination	2,352,015
Community services	582,500
Crop production	224,000
Domestic needs	515,860
Education	626,640
Food	226,000
Forestry	36,000
Health	440,000
Income generation	464,000
Legal assistance	690,000
Operational support (to agencies)	603,000
Sanitation	187,000
Shelter/other infrastructure	550,000
Transport/logistics	1,080,000
Water (non-agricultural)	175,000
Total operations	8,752,015
Programme support	2,163,907
Total	10,915,922