

# Guinea

## AT A GLANCE

### Main Objectives and Activities

Continue to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance to Sierra Leonean refugees including support to survivors of atrocities and sexual violence; relocate refugees from dangerous areas; embark on organised voluntary repatriation as soon as conditions in Sierra Leone permit; support the Brookings Process through activities geared towards confidence and capacity-building; resume and complete voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees and determine the status of those refugees who opt to remain in Guinea; gradually phase out assistance and facilitate the local integration of Liberian refugees; assist refugees from Guinea-Bissau to repatriate; continue capacity-building of governmental counterparts and encourage the Government of Guinea to adopt a national law on refugees.

### Impact

- Some 6,400 Liberian refugees repatriated with UNHCR's assistance in 2000. Close to 9,400 Liberian refugees were transferred from the Daro region to the newly established camp at Kouankan.
- 1,750 refugees from Guinea-Bissau repatriated and the Boké camp was closed in June.
- About 309,100 Sierra Leonean refugees benefited from basic assistance both in the camps and urban areas. UNHCR's activities helped to reduce tensions between refugees and the local populations.
- In May, a national law on refugees was adopted in conformity with the 1951 Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention and later came into force.
- UNHCR's environment project led to the planting of about 250 hectares and the maintenance of another 490 hectares of plantations in and around the refugee camps. The project offset much of the impact on the environment caused by the refugee settlements.



Persons of Concern				
Main Refugee Origin/Type of Population	Total in Country <sup>1</sup>	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Sierra Leone (Refugees)	309,100	309,100	53	63
Liberia (Refugees)	124,000	18,100	53	62

<sup>1</sup>These figures do not take into consideration refugee movements between September and December 2000 when UNHCR had no access to the camps in Guinea.

Income and Expenditure (USD)					
Annual Programme, Trust Funds and Supplementary Programme Budgets					
	Revised Budget	Income from Contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other Funds Available <sup>2</sup>	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
AB/TF	26,407,469	14,363,419	12,965,508	27,328,927	24,665,234
SB	2,326,402	0	2,307,278	2,307,278	2,307,278
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,733,871</b>	<b>14,363,419</b>	<b>15,272,786</b>	<b>29,636,205</b>	<b>26,972,512</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

<sup>2</sup>Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### The Context

With a refugee population of over 433,100 (including some 309,000 Sierra Leoneans and some 124,000 Liberians), Guinea harboured the second largest refugee population in the African continent. Of these, some 14,000 Sierra Leonean refugees arrived in Guinea between April and July as a result of the collapse of the Lomé peace agreement and continued insecurity in Sierra Leone. Most refugees in Guinea were hosted in the camps or other refugee sites while others resided in urban areas such as Conakry, originating mainly from Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Throughout the latter part of the year, Guinea endured recurrent cross-border attacks linked to the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. In September, the border region - which had been home to most of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees since the early 1990s - was the scene of increased combat, shelling and military check-points. Resentment towards Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees mounted, often violently, with the perception that they were responsible for security problems in Guinea. In Massadou, for example, during an armed attack which also killed 70 local inhabitants, several camps were burned down and 16,000 refugees fled on foot to Faranah, further north. Many refugees

were detained and sexual violence towards refugee women became frequent. The freedom of movement of refugees was severely curtailed: in Forecariah, refugees were not, for a period of time, allowed to leave their camps and later were only allowed to go from the camps to their fields. In addition, the local authorities demanded that all refugees living in towns be relocated to camps. As a result, many refugees felt there was no other option but to flee to their embassies in Conakry, which organised transport by sea to Freetown or Monrovia. Many fled into the forest, while others made their own way to Sierra Leone or Liberia. These were dangerous journeys during which they had no access to food assistance or health services for several months. The situation further deteriorated in December when the camps hosting some 300,000 refugees in Guéckédou and Forecariah were attacked.

### Constraints

The prevailing insecurity in the refugee-hosting areas had tragic consequences for UNHCR. The head of the office in Macenta was murdered and a staff member was kidnapped on 17 September. Security Phase IV (programme suspension) was declared by the UN in virtually all of UNHCR's operational areas and most UNHCR staff were evacuated to Conakry. The delivery of humanitarian assistance, including food distribution by WFP, to refugees living in border areas was virtu-

ally suspended. Furthermore, on 6 December, the Guéckédou field office was looted and burned down and another staff member was kidnapped during a rebel attack in the area. This posed another serious setback for humanitarian activities. Refugees were left to fend for themselves. Plans to relocate some 125,000 refugees from unsafe border areas did not materialise before the end of 2000, mainly due to the prevailing security situation.

The repatriation of Liberian refugees was affected by the closure of the border between Guinea and Liberia until 20 May. The resumption of fighting in some main areas of return, particularly in Lofa county, and the closure of the border between Guinea and Liberia in July precluded any organised repatriation for the remainder of the year.



Several projects, such as environmental education, refresher courses for teachers, and re-training of health workers, were planned in the context of the Brookings Process, but then the deterioration of the security in Guinea effectively put all of them on hold - except for one: the project on mass information for refugees undertaken with *Radio rurale de Guinée*.

## Funding

The serious lack of funding experienced by UNHCR in 2000 led to several reviews of the programme in Guinea. The negative impact of the funding shortage was somewhat offset by the need to withdraw from the border region in September. However, several planned activities had to be cancelled; for example, psychosocial activities for victims of violence could not be held. The works on Kalako camp in Forecariah (due to receive recent Sierra Leonean refugees and others moved to a safer distance from the border) were delayed due to lack of funds. The transfer of refugees was not possible before the rainy season and later became impossible because of cross-border attacks. It was estimated that only 65 per cent of needs in Guéckédou were met, mainly because of lack of funding.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

### Protection and Solutions

At the beginning of 2000, UNHCR had planned the organised repatriation of some 170,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in safety and dignity from Guinea. However, the renewal of the conflict in Sierra Leone in May precluded the implementation of the initial plan. After repeated armed border incursions exposed refugees to human rights abuses, including the looting and burning of their homes and property, Sierra Leonean refugees were forced to flee their camps. Some 23,000 of them opted to return to Sierra Leone spontaneously. In late December, UNHCR facilitated the return of over 1,500 Sierra Leonean refugees by sea from Conakry to Freetown. They had arrived in large groups at their embassy in Conakry. UNHCR placed monitors at the port to co-ordinate with the office in Freetown.

Some 2,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Conakry became targets of harassment and attack. To protect them from arbitrary arrest and detention, the Office prepared and delivered individual letters of attestation to urban refugees confirming that the bearer was a refugee known to UNHCR. This helped guarantee their safety, especially that of students living alone in the capital while their families remained in the refugee camps. In the last quarter of

the year, UNHCR worked with the Government to ensure continued respect for the rights of asylum in Guinea as well as to identify new camp sites in secure areas in the interior of the country, to which about 125,000 refugees could be moved. In parallel, UNHCR appealed to the international community to support the regional initiatives to stabilise the border areas, particularly through the establishment of border monitoring mechanisms.

The organised voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees from Guinea was planned for completion in 2000. A total of 14,050 individuals (of whom some 6,400 were assisted by UNHCR) repatriated to Liberia during the year. This fell short of the target figure of 27,000, due to the prevailing security situation in some of the major returnee areas (such as Lofa county in Liberia) and the closure of the border between the two countries. The local integration of Liberian refugees, some of whom had lived in Guinea for ten years or more, faced setbacks as rebel incursions into Guinea increased. During the latter part of 1999 and early 2000, some 9,400 Liberian refugees were transferred from the Daro camp to the newly established camp in Kouankan for security reasons. The Office worked to dissuade the Government of its belief that all urban refugees ought to move to the refugee camps.

The long-awaited repatriation of refugees from Guinea-Bissau took place in June. UNHCR airlifted 468 out of some 1,750 refugees from Guinea-Bissau back to their homes; the remaining left spontaneously. By the end of June, the Boké camp was closed.

In May, the National Assembly adopted a national law on refugees, which is based on the principles of the 1951 Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention as well as the conclusions of a special OAU/UNHCR consultative meeting in March. The achievement was unfortunately swiftly overshadowed by abuse of the rights of refugees in Guinea, including physical assault. UNHCR continued to negotiate with the Government to provide individual identity cards to all refugees living in Guinea. The National Eligibility Committee, which is responsible for status determination, was sensitised to the vulnerability of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. At UNHCR's behest, a national co-ordinating commission was established by decree, its aim being to promote and protect children's rights and preventing further separation of the family. One important protective measure under consideration by the commission, jointly with local authorities and the judiciary, is the systematic issuance of birth certificates.

## Activities and Assistance

**Community Services:** Some 2,600 individuals were identified as being extremely vulnerable (2,330 Sierra Leoneans and 270 Liberians). More than 400 disabled people were supplied with orthopaedic aids. A programme was established to provide medical care, counselling and support to over 700 survivors of sexual and domestic violence in 11 camps in Guéckédou. Another ten camps were selected for similar activities when the cross-border attacks began. Community centres known as “safe places” were established in the camps so that victims of sexual violence could receive special care. Over 860 meetings were organised in 35 camps in order to sensitise refugees to various issues related to sexual violence. Some victims were also assisted with income-generating activities. In 2000, 6,423 children and 578 adults benefited from psycho-social activities. UNHCR registered 1,350 separated children, 90 per cent of them Sierra Leoneans living in Guéckédou and Forecariah, the remaining being Liberians in the N’Zérékoré area. Among those, 15 were re-united with their families and 520 placed with foster families (20 per cent of them in Guinean households). Ten former child soldiers were enrolled in schools in the camps.

**Crop Production:** Implementing partners provided seeds, tools and technical advice to 13,169 refugee farmers to enable them to grow rice and vegetables. Overall, 30 per cent of the project’s beneficiaries were Guineans. In order not to deter voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees, the project had been suspended when repatriation resumed. Nevertheless, refugees who had already begun to cultivate their plots continued to receive technical advice from agricultural experts.

**Domestic Needs/Household Support:** Repatriation packages included not only food rations but also travelling bags, jerry cans, agricultural tools and seeds, tarpaulins, kitchen utensils, mats, blankets and buckets. Liberian refugees were provided with full repatriation packages prior to their journey home; by contrast, the 468 (air-lifted) refugees from Guinea-Bissau only received travelling bags and jerry cans prior to departure. Household items such as soap, tarpaulins, kitchen utensils and hygienic kits were given to vulnerable groups on a case-by-case basis. Meanwhile, 8,097 ecological stoves were distributed in Forecariah.

**Education:** UNHCR supported 145 schools in Guéckédou and Forecariah serving roughly 50,000 Sierra Leonean pupils. Some 30 schools in the eastern part of Forest area provided education to 20,000 Liberian refugee children. UNHCR provided

incentives for more than 1,200 primary and secondary school teachers in schools for Sierra Leonean children and supported 115 school canteens. In addition, 659 Sierra Leonean and 538 Liberian students were assisted with vocational training. The Office worked towards the eventual integration of these pupils into the Guinean educational system by increasing such activities as French language classes. Extra-curricular activities such as sport, theatre and reproductive health sessions were successfully implemented in the camps. Training of trainers on Peace Education, which started at the end of 1999, continued until June and a seminar on the subject was held in April for refugee teachers in Guéckédou.

**Food:** Basic food assistance by WFP was given to vulnerable groups. Some 222,500 Sierra Leoneans were issued with food rations in Guéckédou and Kissidougou, and some 12,500 in Forecariah. In the Kouankan camp, some 10,000 Liberian refugees, who had arrived in May 1999, also received food assistance. In addition to two months’ food rations, given to each voluntarily repatriating refugee prior to departure, hot meals were served for 1,684 Liberian refugees who transited through the Baala transit camp on their way to Liberia, as well as dry rations for the 468 refugees who were repatriated by air to Guinea-Bissau. In addition, more than 4,600 refugees benefited from food-for-work projects and 86,730 schoolchildren in 115 canteens received food from WFP during the school year. Food security remained a key issue of concern in the refugee camps.

**Forestry:** Various activities were undertaken in order to repair the damage caused by large numbers of refugees over a protracted period. UNHCR organised the planting of trees and the rehabilitation of plantations covering a total of over 250 hectares in the Bossou, Boola, Sowadou, Nyaedou, Katkama, Koonin, and Kouankan camps and designated areas in Massadougou and Forecariah. In addition, new projects provided about 36 hectares of palm trees in Guéckédou and 20 hectares in south-eastern Guinea. A further 490 hectares of plantations were maintained in and around various refugee settlements. A three-year environmental project was launched, aiming at minimising the impact of refugee populations on the environment.

**Health/Nutrition:** Health assistance was given to all Sierra Leonean refugees and to 1,350 vulnerable Liberian refugees. Health posts run by various agencies in the camps or the local hospitals received medicines from UNHCR. The Office also provided some additional support in kind, such as fuel, generators and ambulances (through the Department of Public Health). Some 1,300 Liberian refugees, including 315 children, were vaccinated prior to their repatriation.

**Income Generation:** In Forecariah, about 140 projects were initiated in order to reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance for 175 heads of families (including 103 women). Roughly 90 per cent of the loans were repaid. In Guéckédou, 505 groups were formed and given loans to set up agricultural and other small businesses. Some 2,200 individuals (79 per cent of them women) and their dependants benefited from this project.

**Legal Assistance:** A protection workshop was organised for 170 officials in Guéckédou: military and civilian personnel participated alongside NGO and UNHCR staff. Meetings on protection and refugee rights were organised in 20 camps for 900 refugees representing various refugee committees. In collaboration with other agencies and line ministries, UNHCR organised training on children's rights (Action for the Rights of Children) for members of the governmental counterpart as well as other relevant authorities.

**Operational Support (to Agencies):** Twenty-two implementing partners were provided with the necessary resources and equipment. Material assistance was also provided to the governmental counterpart. In addition, UNHCR ensured appropriate media coverage of its activities on Women's Day and Refugee Day, in cooperation with the Guinean media.

**Sanitation:** In the camps in Forecariah, in addition to providing more than 22 km of drainage, 12 washing areas, 50 waste collection/incineration points, 88 latrine blocks and some 550 concrete slabs for family latrines were constructed and 859 old latrines were closed. In the camps in Guéckédou, 17 washing areas, 362 waste collection points and 874 pit latrines were built and more than 1,000 concrete slabs were distributed. Committees were formed in each camp to ensure cleanliness at water collection points.

**Shelter/Other Infrastructure:** The Baala transit centre in N'Zérékoré was renovated. Shelter assistance in the new refugee camp in Kuankan was limited to communal infrastructure and support in the construction of individual shelters to vulnerable refugees, while others constructed their own shelters. Necessary construction materials (plastic sheeting, nails and tools) were given to refugees according to individual needs. In the old camps, building materials were given on a case-by-case basis, after a thorough assessment.

**Transport/Logistics:** In Guinea, the Office undertook transportation of food (provided by WFP) from various points of delivery, to distribution centres in refugee

camps, transit centres, hospitals and schools. Non-food items were transported by an implementing partner. Forty-two motorcycles, 56 light vehicles and 27 trucks were added to the transportation pool in 2000.

**Water:** Altogether, 34 new boreholes and 21 wells were sunk, providing ten litres of water per person per day in the Guéckédou area and up to 20 in Forecariah. Seven water tanks were provided for additional water in Sierra Leonean refugee camps. In 2000, maintenance was carried out on over 200 water pumps. In the Guéckédou area, the water supply remained insufficient in some locations. The local inhabitants were also able to access the water facilities provided for refugees, thus encouraging cohabitation between refugees and host populations.

## ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Management

UNHCR's operation in Guinea is under the direct supervision of the Regional Directorate for West and Central Africa in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire). During the year, seven offices were opened, with the main office in Conakry and another six offices in Forecariah, Guéckédou, Kissidougou, Macenta, N'Zérékoré and Ouende Kenema. Although the offices in Macenta and N'Zérékoré were scheduled for closure by June, this did not materialise given the fact that the repatriation of Liberian refugees was suspended, leaving a significant number of these refugees in the area. The office in Kissidougou was set up in July, in efforts to enhance protection monitoring of Sierra Leonean refugees. Although the office in Ouende Kenema was also officially opened in July, it could not become operational because of the security situation. Thirty-six international staff, two JPOs, 12 UNVs and 111 national staff worked for UNHCR in Guinea. Harsh living and working conditions in field locations in Guinea caused a large number of posts to remain unfilled for long periods, seriously impeding programme delivery and monitoring.

### Working With Others

A total of 22 implementing partners worked with UNHCR in Guinea, 11 of which were international organisations. The *Bureau national de coordination pour les réfugiés* (BNCR) is UNHCR's direct governmental partner and counterpart on protection-related matters and co-ordination of the assistance programme. UNHCR has observer status on the Eligibility Committee of the BNCR.

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The increased instability in the sub-region, particularly the attacks and counter-attacks on the refugee-hosting border areas, had adverse effects on the safety of refugees and UNHCR's operations. The murder of a staff member and two abductions in the border region resulted in a situation where almost no systematic protection or assistance could be given to refugees in this region. These incidents once again illustrated a high degree of dangers and dilemmas encountered by humanitarian agencies in complex emergencies.

Guinea has offered protection to a refugee population equivalent in number to ten per cent of its own population; however, the strain of hosting such large numbers along the border areas became apparent in 2000. The deterioration of security in Guinea sadly led to widespread violations of the refugees' rights. In order to ensure the protection of the refugees, UNHCR embarked on sensitisation of both local and refugee populations, through the media and public meetings. Insecurity in the region also affected the refugees' livelihood. In the camps, formal education suffered, as primary and secondary schools were unable to reopen for the new academic year. Prospects for the integration of 8,300 Liberian students in the Guinean school system were very bleak, and at year's end some 54,000 Sierra Leonean children were still awaiting the resumption of classes. Spontaneous returns to Sierra Leone and Liberia triggered by unexpected events in Guinea led to new family separations. Attacks on refugee areas raised concerns about the forced recruitment of children by the various armed groups and the possibility of child trafficking. Many women suffered sexual and other forms of violence. The local integration programme for Liberian refugees did not progress.

In co-operation with the Guinean authorities, UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations continued to provide humanitarian assistance to those refugees in need. Following escalation of military confrontations in the border areas in September, many refugees were scattered all over the Forest region, making it difficult, if not impossible, for UNHCR and other organisations to reach them with life-saving emergency assistance. Tireless efforts were made, however, under extremely difficult working conditions, to assist refugees whenever they were reachable. Given the worrying situation in Guinea, UNHCR also began assistance for the return of Sierra Leonean refugees to their homes towards the end of the year, even though the situation in Sierra Leone was considered less than ideal for voluntary repatriation. The instability in the region rendered exit strategies premature.

## Offices

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### Conakry

Forecariah  
Guéckédou  
Kissidougou (opened in July)  
Macenta  
N'zérékoré  
Ouende Kenema (opened in July)

## Partners

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### Government Agencies

*Comité national d'hospitalité et de secours*  
*Direction préfectorale de la santé*  
*Direction nationale des eaux et forêts*  
*Inspection régionale de l'agriculture, des eaux et forêts*  
*Inspection régionale de la santé*  
*Ministère du plan et de la coopération internationale*

### NGOs

*Action contre la faim*  
*Association pour le développement de la riziculture intensive et du palmier*  
American Refugee Committee  
CARE International  
*Centre canadien d'études et de coopération internationale*  
*Croix-Rouge guinéenne*  
*Enfants réfugiés du monde*  
Handicap International  
International Rescue Committee  
*Médecins Sans Frontières (Belgium)*  
*Organisation pour le développement intégré communautaire*  
*Radio rurale de Guinée*  
*Service chrétien d'animation pour le développement des œuvres sociales et de secours*

### Other

*Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*  
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
United Nations Volunteers

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Financial Report (USD)						
Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects			Prior Years' Projects		
	AB/TF	SB	Total	notes	notes	
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	3,574,053	0	3,574,053		11,309	
Community Services	957,486	36,710	994,196		597,215	
Crop Production	320,310	0	320,310		227,548	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	247,737	23,226	270,963		35,514	
Education	1,824,561	0	1,824,561		1,383,775	
Fisheries	0	0	0		86	
Food	4,743	0	4,743		35,646	
Forestry	19,138	0	19,138		133,578	
Health / Nutrition	613,895	0	613,895		1,018,182	
Income Generation	313,222	0	313,222		287,278	
Legal Assistance	457,263	2,330	459,593		301,841	
Livestock	0	0	0		20,050	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	2,540,691	1,435	2,542,126		1,014,704	
Sanitation	130,806	0	130,806		132,657	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	452,565	0	452,565		178,069	
Transport / Logistics	5,019,117	1,538,540	6,557,657		4,610,955	
Water	319,049	0	319,049		456,141	
Transit Accounts	23,201	0	23,201		0	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	2,361,187	28,311	2,389,498		(7,155,058)	
Combined Projects	52,543	0	52,543		(52,543)	
<b>Sub-total Operational</b>	<b>19,231,567</b>	<b>1,630,552</b>	<b>20,862,119</b>		<b>3,236,947</b>	
Programme Support	1,923,952	0	1,923,952		223,496	
<b>Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries</b>	<b>21,155,519</b>	<b>1,630,552</b>	<b>22,786,071</b>	(3)	<b>3,460,443</b>	
Unliquidated Obligations	3,509,715	676,726	4,186,441	(3)	0 (6)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,665,234</b>	<b>2,307,278</b>	<b>26,972,512</b>	(1) (3)	<b>3,460,443</b>	
<b>Instalments with Implementing Partners</b>						
Payments Made	11,737,253	28,311	11,765,564		8,284,220	
Reporting Received	9,376,066	0	9,376,066		15,439,278	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>2,361,187</b>	<b>28,311</b>	<b>2,389,498</b>		<b>(7,155,058)</b>	
Outstanding 1 January	0	0	0		7,525,214	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		298,427	
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		7,008	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>2,361,187</b>	<b>28,311</b>	<b>2,389,498</b>		<b>78,737</b>	
<b>Unliquidated Obligations</b>						
Outstanding 1 January	0	0	0		6,180,413 (6)	
New Obligations	24,665,234	2,307,278	26,972,512	(1)	0	
Disbursements	21,155,519	1,630,552	22,786,071	(3)	3,460,443 (6)	
Cancellations	0	0	0		1,659,064 (6)	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>3,509,715</b>	<b>676,726</b>	<b>4,186,441</b>	(3)	<b>1,060,906</b> (6)	

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

(1) Annex to Statement 1

(3) Schedule 3

(6) Schedule 6