

Liberia



Operational highlights

- The Office assisted some 43,000 Liberian refugees to repatriate voluntarily and more than 51,300 internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their places of origin.
- Returnees and IDPs benefited from UNHCR's community-based reintegration assistance.
- More than 16,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, received protection and some assistance.
- Following the official closure of IDP camps in April, UNHCR spearheaded a successful multi-agency effort to assess the conditions in former IDP sites and to rehabilitate them.
- Due to the tensions in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, the Office helped the Government of Liberia to prepare a contingency plan to address possible refugee influxes into the country.

Working environment

In 2006, Liberia faced many post-war challenges with the support of the international community. The adverse

effects of prolonged economic and social collapse lingered, as the majority of Liberians had to survive without adequate health care, safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter and education. At the end of the year, many international NGOs began to leave the country as their humanitarian assistance programmes ended. The human rights situation has improved significantly since the end of the war. However, State institutions remained handicapped by the effects of long-term conflict; this frequently resulted in the denial of justice for victims of crime.

Achievements and impact

Main objectives

UNHCR's objectives in Liberia were to promote the safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees and IDPs to their communities of origin; foster partnerships with other humanitarian actors to ensure the sustainable reintegration of former refugees and IDPs; provide adequate support for all refugees in Liberia; and seek durable solutions through local integration, repatriation or resettlement. The Office also

aimed to help the Government assume primary responsibility for protecting refugees, returnees and IDPs; maintain up-to-date contingency plans for new emergencies; and lead the inter-agency humanitarian response in protection, camp management and emergency shelter.

Protection and solutions

UNHCR began discussions with the newly appointed leadership of the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission and the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding the country's obligations as a party to international refugee law instruments.

The Government established a task force on the local integration of refugees. UNHCR continued to pursue local integration for more than 3,500 Sierra Leonean refugees after a recent survey revealed that many of them would like to remain in Liberia. However, the voluntary repatriation option remained open to them throughout the year.

The multi-agency IDP Protection Cluster, led by UNHCR, established a comprehensive monitoring framework in areas of return and ensured systematic information gathering and follow-up. The special protection needs of children were identified and addressed through the network of child protection agencies. UNHCR and UNICEF jointly funded a programme for separated and unaccompanied children. The task force on sexual and gender-based violence set up medical, psychosocial and legal referral mechanisms in priority counties.

Activities and assistance

Community services: Ivorian refugees took part in peace education and programmes on the empowerment of

women, prevention of HIV and AIDS and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, 84 Ivorian refugee women participated in seven age and gender mainstreaming workshops. Ivorian refugee women also received training in soap making, baking, tailoring and hair dressing, and 84 urban refugee women completed a computer course at the UNHCR-sponsored training centre in Monrovia.

Crop production: Nearly 600 Ivorian refugees (38 per cent of them women) received tools and more than 20,000 kg of rice seeds to farm 70 acres of land. UNHCR also distributed seeds and tools in Lofa County to support 72 small-scale agricultural projects.

Domestic needs and household support: Nearly 95,000 returnees received household items to facilitate their reintegration. All returnee women and some 700 Ivorian refugee women of reproductive age received sanitary kits.

Education: Some 300 camp-based Ivorian refugee children were enrolled in school. Thirty-seven Ivorian refugee women participated in adult literacy classes. In areas of return, 17 schools were constructed, 15 rehabilitated and 12 provided with furniture and basic equipment. UNHCR sponsored teacher-training sessions for some 100 participants and supported the integration of peace education into the national curriculum. Furthermore, 144 teachers received human rights training.

Food: All returnees received four-month food rations from WFP, distributed in two tranches, one on arrival and another one after two months.

Forestry: To rehabilitate former IDP sites, UNHCR established 25 oil palm tree nurseries with a total of 60,000 seedlings and five rubber nurseries with 39,000 seedlings.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Côte d'Ivoire	12,600	1,200	50	17
	Sierra Leone	3,600	3,600	45	49
Returnees (refugees)	From Guinea	54,200	25,500	-	-
	From Sierra Leone	33,100	11,300	-	-
	From Côte d'Ivoire	14,900	3,500	-	-
	From Ghana	4,700	2,100	-	-
	From Nigeria	900	900	-	-
Returnees (IDPs) ¹		237,800	237,800	51	-
Total		361,800	285,900		

¹ The number of IDP returnees shown as assisted by UNHCR includes some who returned to their communities of origin before 2006.



UNHCR/A. Mahetic

UNHCR-funded Suakoko Women's Centre in Gong County.

Health and nutrition: UNHCR supported 49 primary health-care facilities which also contributed to the prevention of HIV and AIDS. One million condoms and HIV and AIDS awareness materials were distributed countrywide. In refugee-hosting areas in the east of the country, UNHCR supported ambulance services and helped to reduce maternal mortality rates.

Income generation: Seventy Ivorian refugees, of whom 56 were women, received training and microcredits to start small businesses. Refugee farmers harvested rice and vegetables to augment food rations and earn income. In Monrovia some 500 returnees were trained to manage small businesses and given start-up loans.

Legal assistance: More than 3,800 Ivorian refugees received identity cards. More than 42,000 returnees were screened by immigration authorities upon their arrival in Liberia. UNHCR monitored this process and assisted those with special needs. A total of 560 monitors recruited in local communities, 24 supervisors and 12 data-management staff were deployed to gather protection information in areas of return. Two hundred copies of a handbook describing services and protection risks were printed and distributed to returnees. Three police stations were rehabilitated.

Operational support to agencies: UNHCR covered the administrative costs of all 20 of its implementing partners.

Sanitation: Family latrines were constructed and hygiene awareness activities carried out in 20 refugee-hosting villages and in areas of return.

Thirty-four former IDP sites were rehabilitated, with abandoned shelters demolished, debris disposed of and latrines and garbage pits filled. Non-degradable materials were recycled.

Shelter and infrastructure: Seventy-five Ivorian refugee families were relocated from Saclepea transit centre after shelters were constructed for them. Ivorian refugees in Barraken village constructed 26 shelters. Two recreation centres were constructed in Saclepea and Barraken for refugee and local children. In areas of return, local community members roofed 670 houses for returnees with special needs, while UNHCR distributed 600 shelter kits. In addition, 240 kilometres of road were reconditioned, five feeder roads and nine feeder-road bridges rehabilitated. This kept repatriation routes open and allowed access to areas of return for protection monitoring and reintegration activities.

Transport and logistics: Nearly 95,000 refugees and IDPs received transport assistance. UNHCR carried out its activities through a network of 13 transit centres, eight way stations, four warehouses, four mechanical workshops and a fleet of 129 vehicles. One hundred bicycles were procured for protection monitors.

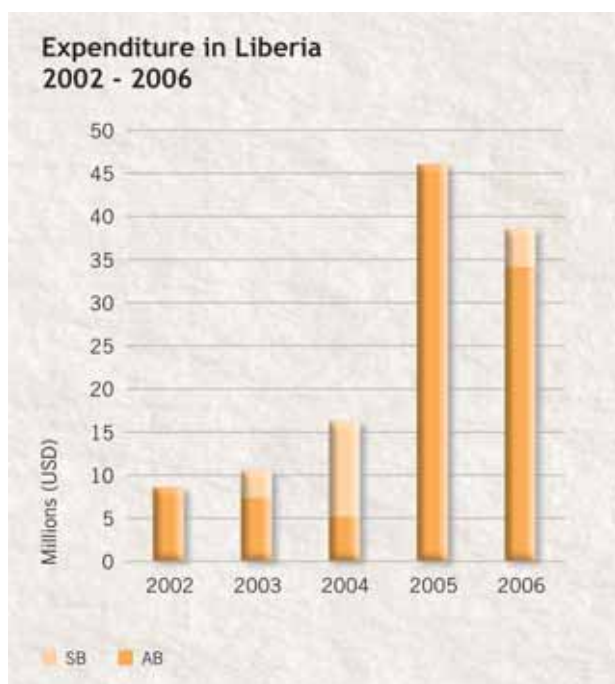
Water: To reduce the risk of water-borne disease, 97 water points were constructed and 306 rehabilitated in areas of return. In refugee-hosting villages 16 water points were constructed and 380 people trained to maintain water pumps. More than 70 wells in former IDP sites were classified as unsafe for human use and sealed.

Constraints

Six months of heavy seasonal rains hampered operations and restricted the time available for effective work on wells and latrines. Inexperienced local partners needed training and support to improve their capacity.

Financial information

UNHCR's annual budget increased from USD 5 million in 2004 to USD 45 million in 2005 in order to finance voluntary repatriation and reintegration activities. In 2006, nearly 70 per cent of the annual programme requirements of USD 39 million were funded through earmarked contributions. The supplementary programme, established in support of IDP-related activities, was fully funded by the end of the year. Timely contributions afforded the Office the flexibility to respond to changing needs and circumstances under the cluster approach, which came into effect after 90 per cent of IDPs had received assistance to return home.



Organization and implementation

Management

In 2006, there were 46 international and 170 national staff, seven international and four national UNVs, three consultants and three secondees working in UNHCR's operations in Liberia. Besides supporting field operations, the representation office in Monrovia

coordinated its activities with the Government, the UN Country Team, NGOs and others. There were two sub-offices in Voinjama and Saclepea, and four field offices in Gbarnga, Harper, Tubmanburg and Zwedru.

Working with others

UNHCR worked closely with its main government counterpart, the Liberia Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, and 19 other implementing partners. Under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, UNHCR participated in all inter-agency activities for IDPs, including county support teams that worked alongside local authorities at field level. UNHCR chaired multi-agency protection core groups in 11 of 15 counties, and participated in the UNDP-led sub-cluster which assisted law and order institutions with technical and logistical support.

Overall assessment

Effective collaboration with UNHCR offices in countries hosting Liberian refugees smoothed repatriation operations. The cluster approach helped to improve coordination and forge stronger partnerships among the Government, donors, NGOs and other UN agencies. UNHCR played a major role in improving social conditions in rural areas - underscoring the critical contribution of humanitarian interventions in post-conflict areas where infrastructure and services are virtually non-existent. No major violations of the rights of refugees and returnees were registered.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government agencies: Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission.

NGOs: Africa Humanitarian Action, African Concern International, American Refugee Committee, CARITAS, Christian Children's Fund, Danish Refugee Council, Environmental Foundation for Africa, Foundation for Africa Development Aid, International Medical Corp, International Rescue Committee, Liberia National Red Cross Society, Medical Emergency Relief Cooperative International, Norwegian Refugee Council, Peace Winds Japan, Smile Africa International, ZOA Refugee Care.

Others: *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, FAO, UN-Habitat.

Operational partners

Others: UNDP, UNICEF, WFP.

Budget, income and expenditure (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
AB	39,962,706	24,233,962	10,010,171	34,244,133	34,099,419
SB ³	12,886,542	12,896,626	(868,524)	12,028,102	4,443,181
Total	52,849,248	37,130,588	9,141,647	46,272,235	38,542,600

¹ Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

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

³ The SB figures apply to the IDP operation. The budget does not include a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Previous years' projects
	AB	SB	Total	AB and SB
Protection, monitoring and coordination	10,954,596	555,858	11,510,454	0
Community services	1,169,425	6,492	1,175,917	563,661
Crop production	293,866	0	293,866	35,362
Domestic needs and household support	733,366	123,786	857,152	0
Education	427,752	3,550	431,302	278,011
Food	0	0	0	164
Forestry	0	106,676	106,676	39,987
Health and nutrition	1,120,431	0	1,120,431	727,358
Income generation	46,038	0	46,038	61,503
Legal assistance	1,706,057	459,004	2,165,061	662,750
Livestock	0	0	0	425
Operational support (to agencies)	2,253,940	103,016	2,356,955	762,477
Sanitation	93,653	95,535	189,188	1,412
Shelter and infrastructure	330,363	332,461	662,825	191,056
Transport and logistics	5,634,531	1,290,169	6,924,700	2,071,860
Water	233,069	24,725	257,794	53,978
Instalments with implementing partners	3,742,909	1,311,244	5,054,153	(5,450,004)
Sub-total operational activities	28,739,995	4,412,517	33,152,512	0
Programme support	5,359,424	30,664	5,390,088	0
Total expenditure	34,099,419	4,443,181	38,542,600	0
Cancellation on previous years' expenditure				(179,768)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	11,670,455	2,886,537	14,556,991.74	
Reporting received	(7,927,546)	(1,575,293)	(9,502,839)	
Balance	3,742,909	1,311,244	5,054,152.96	
Previous years' report				
Instalments with implementing partners				
Outstanding 1st January				6,254,659
Reporting received				(5,450,004)
Refunded to UNHCR				(424,871)
Adjustments				0
Balance				379,784