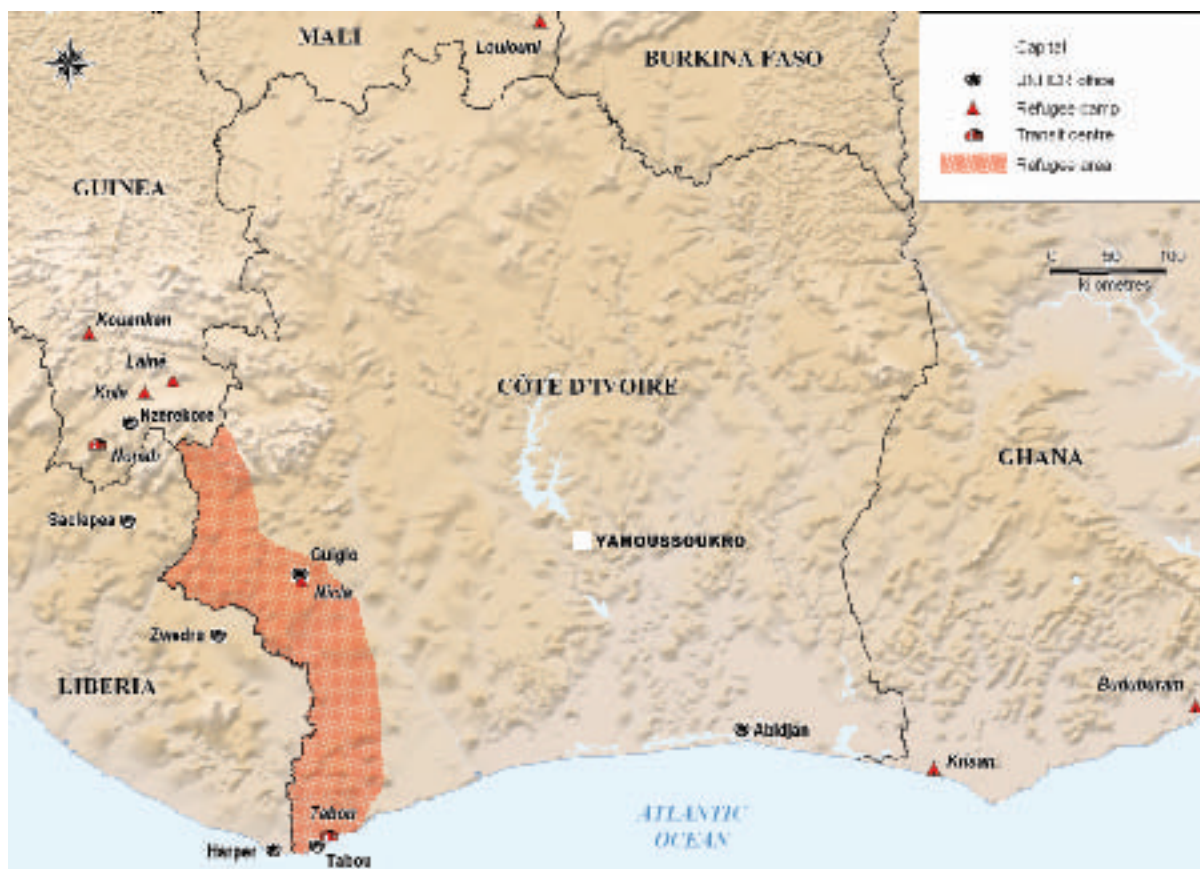


Côte d'Ivoire



Main objectives

Provide international protection and appropriate assistance to all refugees in Côte d'Ivoire; intensify efforts to promote respect for the rights of refugees, through advocacy and public awareness programmes; coordinate activities with all humanitarian actors to ensure that the needs of affected populations can be addressed effectively.

- Through emergency measures 1,680 refugees, who could neither remain in Côte d'Ivoire nor return to their countries of origin for security reasons, were resettled to third countries.
- A vigorous mass-information campaign helped to dispel negative attitudes towards refugees so that they could continue to live in harmony with host communities.

Impact

- UNHCR evacuated 2,354 Liberian refugees by boat to eastern Liberia during an emergency operation in the first quarter of the year. Subsequently, UNHCR provided emergency assistance to 36,467 newly registered Liberian refugees who fled to Côte d'Ivoire in May when the situation deteriorated in eastern Liberia.

Working environment

The context

In Côte d'Ivoire, the optimism that followed the signing of the Linas-Marcousis peace agreement in January 2003 and the formation of a National Government of Reconciliation was obscured by a climate of mutual mistrust between members of the President's party and former rebel groups, called *Forces nouvelles*. In September the *Forces nouvelles*

suspended their participation in the government in protest to what they described as obstruction by the President's party to implementation of the peace agreement. Since then, the political climate has been tense, punctuated by civil unrest. The country remains divided, with the north under the control of the *Forces nouvelles*.

In 2003, the humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire was adversely affected not only by the political crisis that dates back to September 2002, but also by the security situation in eastern Liberia. Early in the year, the spread of the war to the west of the country precipitated the flight into eastern Liberia of thousands of Ivorian nationals alongside Liberian refugees and third country nationals. Shortly afterwards, the emergence of a new armed rebellion in eastern Liberia produced renewed population displacements into Côte d'Ivoire. The country still hosts

some 74,000 refugees, mainly of Liberian descent. Some 8,500 of them are in Niela refugee camp (Guiglo District) and the surrounding area, while 60,000 live in villages in the *Zone d'accueil des réfugiés* mainly in the Districts of Tabou, Guiglo, and Danane. Another 1,300 are in transit centres in Abidjan while 700 urban refugees live outside the transit centres.

Constraints

Volatile security conditions and sporadic population displacements created significant challenges for humanitarian actors in Côte d'Ivoire. UNHCR had limited access to refugee-hosting zones in the north due to stringent security restrictions aimed at ensuring maximum safety for humanitarian workers. There were reports of human rights violations committed against civilians by both sides of the conflict

Persons of concern				
Main origin/Type of population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Liberia (refugees)	74,200	74,200	53	47
Côte d'Ivoire (IDPs)	38,000	-	-	-
Returnees (from Liberia)	15,000	15,000	-	-
Returnees (from Guinea)	1,500	1,500	-	-
Republic of the Congo (asylum-seekers)	600	600	-	-
Republic of the Congo (refugees)	600	600	48	49
Central African Rep. (asylum-seekers)	200	200	-	-
Dem. Rep. of the Congo (asylum-seekers)	200	200	-	-

Income and expenditure (USD)					
Annual programme and Supplementary programme budgets					
	Revised budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
AB	10,157,037	2,985,854	7,160,800	10,146,654	10,146,654
SB	5,122,745	666,584	4,535,648	5,202,232	5,130,973
Total	15,279,782	3,652,438	11,696,448	15,348,886	15,277,627

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. The above figures do not include costs at headquarters.

Note: The Supplementary programme budgets do not include a 7 per cent charge (support costs) that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

including random killings, harassment, exploitation, and the recruitment of men, women and children – including refugees. The involvement of Liberian fighters in the Ivorian conflict helped fuel popular animosity towards refugees. Communities that had coexisted peacefully with Liberian refugees for many years turned against them. Sadly, for many Liberians this amounted to widespread rejection by a country that had shown exemplary hospitality towards them for over a decade. Their integration into Ivorian society, which had reached an advanced stage, was thus compromised.

Funding

UNHCR achieved full funding for its programme in Côte d'Ivoire. USD 10.1 million were allocated under its Annual Programme and USD 5.1 million under the Supplementary Appeal.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

After 49 urban refugees expressed the desire to return home (26 Sierra Leoneans, 13 Congolese (RoC), 6 Rwandans, 3 Burundians and 1 Cameroonian) UNHCR provided the means for them to do so. The 1,243 refugees who became homeless following the destruction of shantytowns in Abidjan in September 2002 continued to be accommodated, protected and assisted in eight transit centres in the city. UNHCR also provided emergency assistance for 36,467 newly registered Liberian refugees who fled to Côte d'Ivoire in May when the situation deteriorated in eastern Liberia. Early in the year UNHCR organized the evacuation of 2,354 Liberian refugees to their country, when the war spread to the west of Côte d'Ivoire. Meanwhile, 1,646 refugees (1,625 Liberians including 850 who were living in Abidjan, and 21 from the Great Lakes Region) who could not return to their countries of origin and were facing risks from infiltration of refugee settlements or hostility from host communities were admitted for resettlement through emergency measures.

UNHCR collaborated with the Government and other partners to counter negative public sentiment towards refugees through a mass-information campaign. UNHCR supported the Government in its

efforts to strengthen the National Eligibility Committee and to draft a national law on asylum that has been submitted to Parliament.

Birth certificates or attestations were issued for 414 refugee babies born in Nicla camp and transit centres. Of the 292 unaccompanied or separated children living with foster families, 14 were reunified with their natural parents. Training was provided in family tracing and reunification as well as in protection of children associated with armed forces. The trainees included 215 refugee representatives, 53 implementing partner employees, and 12 representatives of local communities. Informal classes were organized to occupy refugee children and thereby protect them from recruitment by armed groups.

Activities and assistance

Community services: UNHCR and its partners assessed the need for community services in transit centres, Nicla camp and villages in the Tabou area. Representatives of refugees were elected and community initiatives were reinforced. These included the protection of refugee women and children, the organisation of nurseries for preschool aged children kindergartens, informal education for the other children and adults, and vocational training on a small scale. Regular gatherings of women, men and adolescents were organized to discuss HIV/AIDS, peace education, human rights and SGBV. UNHCR identified 1,695 vulnerable cases in the transit centres and Nicla camp comprising separated or unaccompanied children, single parents, and elderly, so that they could be the first to receive food being distributed. They also received non-food items, and other types of assistance including financial support where necessary.

Crop production: In Nicla camp and the transit centres in Tabou and Abidjan (where land was not available for agricultural activities) refugees relied on food and condiments provided by WFP and UNHCR, respectively. Some 180 refugees (over 60 per cent women) in Nicla camp received technical support, seeds and tools to cultivate small gardens around their shelters. Assistance for refugees in the villages started with a general food distribution in August. Towards the end of the year, seeds and agricultural tools were distributed to 2,000 refugee families and 1,000 families in host communities.

Domestic needs/Household support: There was 50 per cent participation by refugee women in management, leadership and distribution committees at Nicla camp and transit centres. Refugees living in the transit centres in Abidjan received buckets, kitchen sets, blankets, mats, jerry cans, impregnated mosquitoes nets and 400 grams of soap per person per month. Due to the limited supply of items, distribution in the villages targeted only vulnerable people (refugees and local villagers alike). Sanitary supplies provided to women and girls of menstruating age covered 90 per cent of needs in transit centres but 20 per cent in Nicla camp owing to delays in shipment.

Education: Due to the war and to the resistance of some parents, the integration of Liberian children in Ivorian schools was compromised. UNHCR developed and implemented an informal education programme for 22 per cent of the 16,318 children living in the villages and for all of those in the transit centres and Nicla camp. Only 381 children were enrolled at the school. All 133 urban refugee children attended primary school; 70 per cent of the 130 urban adolescents were enabled to attend secondary school. Four refugees were awarded DAFI scholarships. For lack of appropriate structures and resources, few Liberian refugees are enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education, or vocational training.

Food: Throughout the year, WFP provided the refugees in Nicla camp and the transit centres in Abidjan with dry food rations of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day. Condiments were provided by UNHCR. Meals were served in Tabou transit centre until a joint UNHCR/WFP mission in October 2003 recommended a shift to distribution of dry rations at the transit centre for more equality. A single general food distribution took place in August 2003 to refugees living in villages. The other refugees received regular rations in the transit centres. The nutritional surveys conducted in these villages to assess food needs concluded that the nutritional status of the refugees was acceptable and that they have the necessary coping mechanisms.

Health/Nutrition: Malaria and respiratory tract infections are the main diseases. Refugees in the transit centres and the Nicla camp have access to clinics managed by UNHCR's partners and, if necessary, state hospitals in Abidjan, Tabou, Guiglo (all fees paid by UNHCR). All refugees in the transit

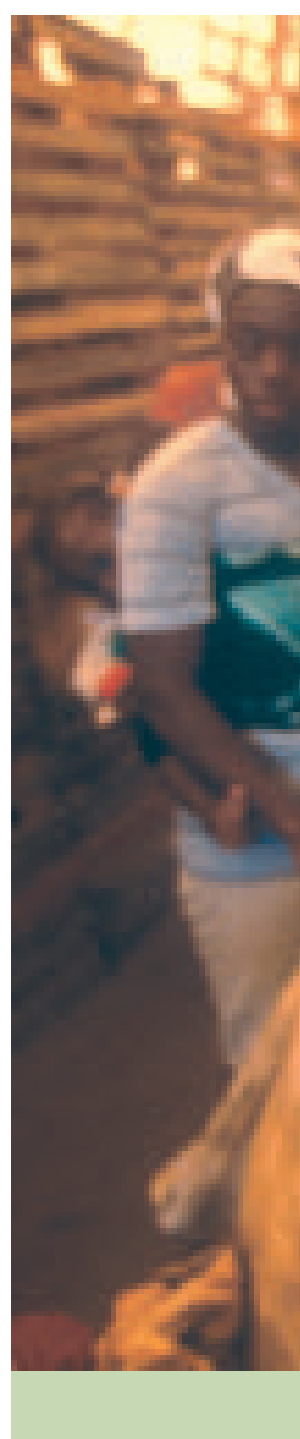
centres and Nicla camp received impregnated mosquito nets. All refugee children were vaccinated against measles and other diseases. UNHCR's partners set up mobile clinics to cover six villages in Tabou. They staffed and equipped health posts in six other villages, enabling them to reach a total of some 35,000 people (refugees and host populations). UNHCR assisted Tabou Hospital, which admits refugees and local residents.

Income generation: UNHCR supported 25 micro-projects for urban refugee families. The permanent movement of refugees in connection with the resettlement operations did not allow the implementation of income-generating activities in the Nicla camp nor in the transit centres. In the villages, assistance measures were at the initial stage and the focus was put on meeting urgent needs.

Legal assistance: UNHCR collaborated with governmental and other partners to counter negative public sentiment, especially against Liberians, through a mass information campaign. Registration and verification exercises were conducted and temporary documents issued in September to 7,030 families (18,738 persons) and assistance tokens were issued to 12,100 newly arrived families (36,467 refugees). All the 5,769 urban refugees were verified in October and individual documents issued by the *Office national d'identification* to 4,476 of those aged 15 and over, to facilitate their freedom of movement. UNHCR supported the Government in reinforcing the National Eligibility Committee and in drafting a national law on asylum that has been submitted to Parliament. No cases of *refoulement* were reported. Of the 429 pending applications for asylum, 209 were reviewed by the National Eligibility Committee which granted refugee status to 112 people.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR's partners were given support to implement activities in the field. Also, UNHCR supported some public structures, such as Radio Guiglo and Radio Tabou, which benefit refugees.

Sanitation: In most of the villages, people only had access to unsafe water from swamps, rivers or unprotected wells and there were very few latrines.





Liberian refugees at a transit camp in the Tabou area waiting for transportation to go home. *UNHCR/N. Behring*

Therefore, 57 wells and 191 latrines were rehabilitated or constructed, benefiting 26,253 refugees and 8,950 local residents. Water and sanitation committees were established to manage the infrastructure and educate the end-users.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: While refugees in Nicla camp have been provided with adequate shelter, congestion remains a major problem for those in transit centres in Abidjan and Tabou. The refugees living in the Tabou villages built their own shelters or stayed with host populations. The most vulnerable received plastic sheeting to build their houses. 90 urban vulnerable families received one-time assistance to cover six months' rent in Abidjan.

Transport/Logistics: UNHCR needed trucks and light vehicles for operational purposes. Very few good trucks were available. For the transport of the refugees from Nicla to Abidjan, private buses and trucks (for luggage) were rented. UNHCR's stockpile in Accra, Ghana provided additional capacity to transport food and other goods.

Water: The needs of the 10,095 refugees accommodated in the Nicla camp and in the transit centres in Abidjan and Tabou were met in terms of water, sanitation and shelter. The transit centres in Abidjan are connected to the national water and electricity networks. Nicla camp has 13 boreholes equipped with 25 regularly maintained pumps for a population of 5,289 people. The transit centre in Tabou was supplied with potable water by truck.

Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR operated from a Branch Office in Abidjan and two field offices in Tabou and Guiglo. There were 78 members of staff: 22 international and 56 national. UNHCR's Côte d'Ivoire staff met regularly with other UNHCR offices in the subregion for planning purposes.

Working with others

UNHCR worked closely with its government counterpart, three national and five international NGOs. UNHCR was fully involved in the UN Consolidated Appeals Process and participated actively in coordination meetings organized by OCHA and the UN system. The Office also coordinated the work of the multisectoral group on refugees and attended the meetings of other groups set up by OCHA. UNHCR coordinated humanitarian activities in Guiglo District in the north-west at the request of other humanitarian agencies.

Overall assessment

UNHCR was constrained to shift the focus of its durable solutions objectives for Liberian refugees from local integration to emergency response (including evacuation of Liberian refugees), and resettlement. The Office maintained its management structure, which was boosted through deployment of emergency teams at the height of the crisis. In spite of difficult circumstances, every effort was made to maintain a positive asylum environment and ensure the protection of refugees. The mass information campaign mounted by UNHCR with the Government and other partners to counter anti-refugee sentiment brought positive results. A considerable number of the "old" Liberian refugees and 36,467 new arrivals were re-admitted into villages alongside the host population. Health and education services were maintained in villages in the Tabou area to which the majority of government staff who fled the war had not yet returned. Unfortunately, the integration of refugee children into the Ivorian education system was severely compromised. Assistance was not

provided to Ivorian refugees who remained in Liberia or returned to Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, for most of the year UNHCR had access neither to eastern Liberia, where they fled, nor to their areas of return in Côte d'Ivoire.

Offices

Abidjan

Guiglo

Tabou

Partners

Government agencies

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

NGOs

Ananda Marga Universal Relief

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

Caritas

OXFAM

Save the Children-UK

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

IOM

IRC

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Prior years' projects	
	Annual programme budget	Supplementary programme budget	Total	notes	Annual and Supplementary programme budgets
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	1,369,590	382,579	1,752,169		3,446
Community Services	107,410	143,475	250,885		52,452
Crop Production	9,111	0	9,111		5,494
Domestic Needs/Household Support	82,249	131,819	214,069		71,689
Education	12,008	0	12,008		291,974
Food	49,878	142,608	192,486		137,806
Health/Nutrition	276,158	326,831	602,988		328,757
Income Generation	0	0	0		4,920
Legal Assistance	839,779	603,839	1,443,618		584,724
Operational Support (to Agencies)	301,901	550,779	852,680		289,119
Sanitation	17,665	29,365	47,030		4,082
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	163,833	680,946	844,779		190,564
Transport/Logistics	259,437	503,647	763,084		194,838
Water (non-agricultural)	(17,287)	10,399	(6,888)		0
Instalments with Implementing Partners	1,578,347	972,503	2,550,850		(1,528,308)
Sub - total Operational	5,050,081	4,478,790	9,528,871		631,557
Programme Support	4,527,933	222,007	4,749,940		35,790
Sub - total Disbursements / Deliveries	9,578,014	4,700,797	14,278,811	⁽³⁾	667,347
Unliquidated Obligations	568,640	430,176	998,816	⁽³⁾	0
Total	10,146,654	5,130,973	15,277,627	^{(1) (3)}	667,347
Instalments with Implementing Partners					
Payments Made	2,800,519	3,429,733	6,230,252		769,237
Reporting Received	1,222,172	2,457,230	3,679,402		2,297,545
Balance	1,578,347	972,503	2,550,850		(1,528,308)
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		1,687,319
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		257,399
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		115,662
Outstanding 31 December	1,578,347	972,503	2,550,850		17,274
Unliquidated Obligations					
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		1,007,443
New Obligations	10,146,654	5,130,973	15,277,627	⁽¹⁾	0
Disbursements	9,578,014	4,700,797	14,278,811	⁽³⁾	667,347
Cancellations	0	0	0		340,096
Outstanding 31 December	568,640	430,176	998,816	⁽³⁾	0

Figures which can be cross-referenced to the Accounts:

- (1) Annex to Statement 1
- (3) Schedule 3
- (5) Schedule 5