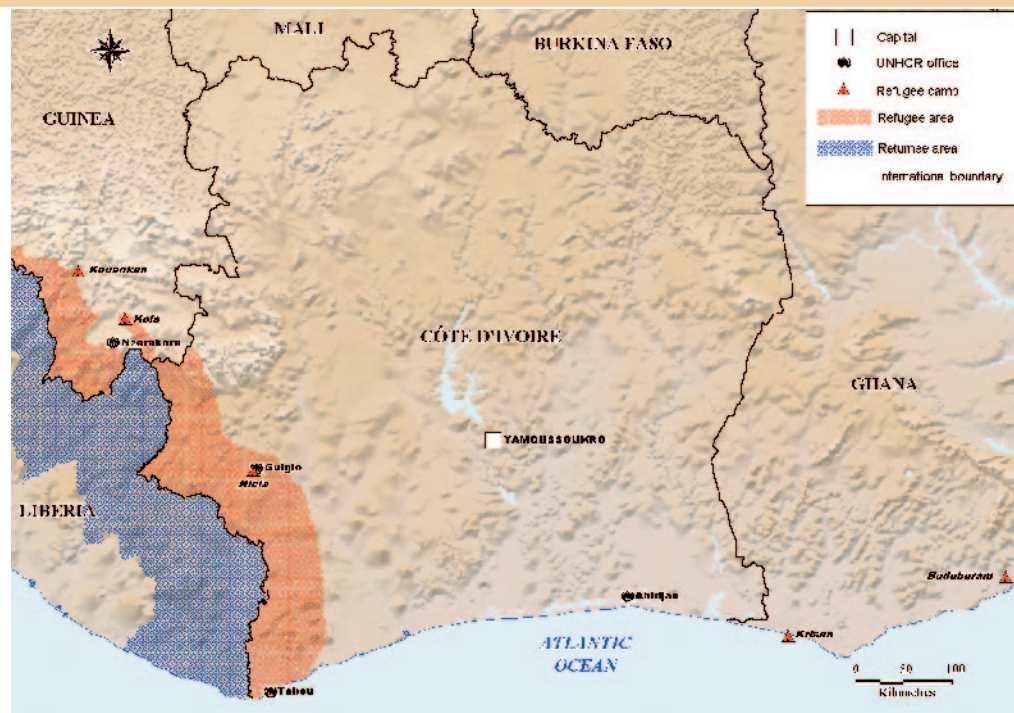


Côte d'Ivoire

Main Objectives

- Increase support for local integration in the *Zone d'accueil des réfugiés* (ZAR), using a refugee/host community participatory approach. Emphasise micro-finance projects as well as formal and non-formal education.
- Help the Government to pass the refugee law and issue identity cards to all refugees aged 15 and over.
- Assist newly arrived Liberian refugees to meet their basic needs through either local integration or camp-based assistance in the already established Nicla camp and new sites scheduled for construction in 2003.
- Enhance the self-sufficiency of urban refugees displaced as a result of the attempted *coup d'état*, by providing business grants for approximately 500 families who lost their livelihoods.
- Improve attendance at public primary schools in the ZAR. Seek to ensure refugees' access to secondary and higher education on the same terms as citizens of ECOWAS countries.
- Increase awareness of HIV/AIDS among refugees and host communities through a focused campaign of education and empowerment.



Working Environment

Recent Developments

In the midst of active planning for eight prospective refugee-hosting sites in the ZAR for a total of 20,000 Liberian refugees, an unexpected *coup d'état* attempt on 19 September 2002 effectively sidelined all further action. At the time of writing, the outcome of the ongoing conflict is difficult to predict. Significant population shifts countrywide are expected by Ivorian nationals, refugees and foreigners, amid a climate of strong nationalistic sentiment as neighbouring countries are blamed for the coup attempt. The destruction of densely populated shanty towns in the capital has already displaced thousands of persons, including urban refugees and those who had moved to the city from the ZAR in search of better employment opportunities. UNHCR's office in Abidjan made an emergency appeal for assistance on behalf of the urban refugees who were forcibly evicted from their shelters and temporarily housed in selected

Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2003	Dec. 2003
Liberian Refugees	71,000	50,000
Sierra Leonean Refugees	540	100
Other Refugees	560	500
Total	72,100	50,600¹

¹ The projected decrease in figures is derived from the voluntary repatriation of Sierra Leoneans, spontaneous repatriation of Liberians and unforeseen population shifts to surrounding countries in the aftermath of the 2002 attempted coup d'état.

Total Requirements: USD 8,930,023

centres. Income-generating solutions are still being sought for these refugees so that they can find affordable accommodation, re-enrol their children in school and provide sufficient food for their families.

Other significant developments in 2002 include the mid-year refugee census, which revealed a considerable drop in total figures (from 128,500 to 72,000), despite the fact that approximately 25,000 new refugees had arrived in Côte d'Ivoire since 2001. The difference can be attributed to spontaneous repatriation or movement to other countries, as well as to a low turnout during the census.

In the second half of 2002, UNHCR re-opened discussions with the Government with a view to assisting with the adoption of the national refugee law. A draft text is to be presented to the National Assembly by year's end, but this may be delayed given the prevailing security situation.

Since September 2002, UNHCR has provided support to its governmental counterpart, the *Service d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides* (SAARA), to enable the Government to assume responsibility for individual status determination. Likewise, the newly revitalised National Eligibility Committee will be supported by UNHCR to enable it to carry out status determination procedures.

Constraints

The current instability has an immediate impact upon UNHCR's programme implementation, as travel is restricted, certain activities are suspended and long-term planning has become difficult. Local integration and education activities in the ZAR are jeopardised by the continuing insecurity, as refugees and hosts may be forced to flee. The domestic unrest also threatens the continuation of the *Projet de réhabilitation de la Zone d'accueil des réfugiés* (PR-ZAR). This international aid framework under government auspices has focused on development projects to mitigate the impact of the long-term concentration of refugees in the area. A derailing of the PR-ZAR would adversely affect the success of UNHCR's local integration programmes.

The most significant impact of the crisis, however, will be the change of attitude on the part of the host communities. For many years, local integra-

tion benefited from the open Ivorian environment. Future progress in this direction is now in doubt, given the prevailing anti-foreigner sentiment following the attempted coup d'état.

Site identification has become increasingly difficult when trying to meet both UNHCR and government criteria. While the Government wishes to confine non-urban refugee activities to the ZAR, the narrow boundaries of this zone restrict the availability of suitable land at an appropriate distance from the border. When the situation stabilises, it will be necessary to persuade the Government to look beyond the ZAR.

In addition, staff shortages are restricting refugee monitoring activities in the ZAR as well as the processing of pending resettlement cases.

Strategy

Protection and Solutions

UNHCR will seek to strengthen the legal framework for refugee protection by supporting the Government in its efforts to pass the Refugee Law. As the Government has agreed that all refugees will receive an identity card which will have the force of a residence permit, UNHCR will provide material support for the manufacture and completion of the cards. Enhancing refugee protection will involve raising awareness among officials in order to ensure implementation of the new legislation and acceptance of the refugee identity cards.

Assistance

Liberian Refugees: The majority of refugees in Côte d'Ivoire originate from Liberia, a country whose civil war shows no signs of abating. Resettlement opportunities will be available for a number of Liberian refugees in 2003, particularly through the US government quota system. UNHCR will seek to ensure that refugees have access to such opportunities. Additional staff have been requested to clear the backlog of resettlement applications.

As voluntary repatriation is unlikely for Liberian refugees, local integration is the best durable solution available for the majority of this group. In order to improve employment opportunities and



Farming land is not always available to refugees. Here, Liberian refugees work on a UNHCR-funded rice growing project.
UNHCR / W. Van Hovell

economic self-reliance, refugees will have access to micro-credit projects and vocational skills training in the ZAR. UNHCR's local integration activities in the refugee-hosting area will aim at benefiting not only the refugees, but also their host communities. Efforts in this direction will be augmented by the *Projet de réhabilitation de la zone d'accueil des réfugiés*, providing that the security situation improves and the PR-ZAR can be continued.

To assist the new Liberian refugees who entered Côte d'Ivoire in 2002 and may continue to arrive in 2003, albeit in lower numbers, UNHCR will develop refugee-hosting sites to cater to the needs of the most vulnerable, who are not able to integrate locally. The sites will be designed for a maximum of 2,500 refugees each and will be located near a village to encourage integration. The sites will provide access to the basic necessities such as food, water, shelter, health and education. With the participation of various government entities, refugees and host communities, an effective exit strategy will be developed so that UNHCR assistance can be gradually withdrawn as the refugees become more self-reliant.

In addition, UNHCR will train its implementing partner on income generation and community services for vulnerable groups in both the ZAR and urban settings.

In 2002, enrolment levels for primary school-aged refugee children were far below average, partly due to differences between the anglophone and francophone education systems. Together with its

partners and the Ministry of Education, UNHCR will develop a new approach to school enrolment and intensify its efforts to integrate refugee children into Ivorian schools. The progress of these integration activities will continue to be monitored throughout the school year. When deficiencies are identified, appropriate action will be taken, such as intensive French language courses and accelerated learning programmes.

Regarding its other objectives in the education sector, UNHCR will continue its negotiations with the Government to ensure that young refugees have access to secondary and post-secondary public education institutions on the same terms as citizens of other ECOWAS countries.

UNHCR's programme in Côte d'Ivoire will continue to support HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, particularly in the ZAR. The Office will launch several intensive HIV/AIDS sensitisation campaigns for refugees and their receiving communities.

Sierra Leonean Refugees: Before the events of September 2002, the Sierra Leonean refugees in Côte d'Ivoire expressed no desire to repatriate. However, since then, their view has changed, and as UNHCR in the sub-region has recently decided to begin to promote voluntary repatriation to Sierra Leone, the option will be given to refugees who are prepared to return home. Repatriating Sierra Leoneans will receive transport assistance to their places of origin, as well as a standard repatriation kit of food and non-food items.

Other Refugees: Of the approximately 560 refugees of various origins in this category (mainly from the Great Lakes Region), most live in the urban areas of Abidjan and Bouaké. UNHCR will continue to seek local integration for this group through ensuring their access to education, healthcare and income-generating activities. Income generation activities and the provision of shelter will probably continue until early 2003 for those who received UNHCR assistance following their abrupt displacement in September 2002.

Organisation and Implementation

Management Structure

Sub-regional meetings with participants from UNHCR's offices in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia will continue on a regular basis, as the rapidly changing events in the region necessitate a combined approach. For 2003, UNHCR in Côte d'Ivoire will engage 74 staff: 24 international (13 of whom are regional and based in Côte d'Ivoire), 45 local, two JPOs and three UNVs. Offices include the branch office in Abidjan and field offices in Guiglo and Tabou.

Co-ordination

UNHCR will provide assistance to the various refugee groups with support from four international NGOs, one local NGO and three UN agencies. In addition, UNHCR will continue to participate in various inter-agency co-ordination bodies, including the CCA, UNDAF and a special committee for the integration of refugee children in Ivorian primary schools.

In addition to providing food in Niela Camp and the new proposed sites, WFP will continue to support UNHCR activities as needed, in transit centres as well as through the Food for Work and School Feeding Programmes. In the education sector, there will be further collaboration with UNICEF for the provision of school materials. IOM will probably co-ordinate the transportation of Sierra Leonean refugees to their country of origin. UNHCR will continue to work closely with OCHA, especially if the effects of civil unrest continue to be felt in Côte d'Ivoire.

Offices

Abidjan

Guiglo

Tabou

Partners

Government Agencies

Bureau national d'études techniques

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

NGOs

American Refugee Committee

Association de soutien à l'autopromotion sanitaire et urbaine

Caritas

Olympic Aid

Save the Children UK

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

UNVs

Budget (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	1,069,468
Community Services	145,153
Crop Production	371,830
Domestic Needs	240,273
Education	698,116
Food	10,000
Health	425,124
Income Generation	221,226
Legal Assistance	646,358
Operational Support (to Agencies)	382,090
Sanitation	200,000
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	306,460
Transport / Logistics	511,570
Water	305,100
Total Operations	5,532,768
Programme Support	3,397,255
Total	8,930,023