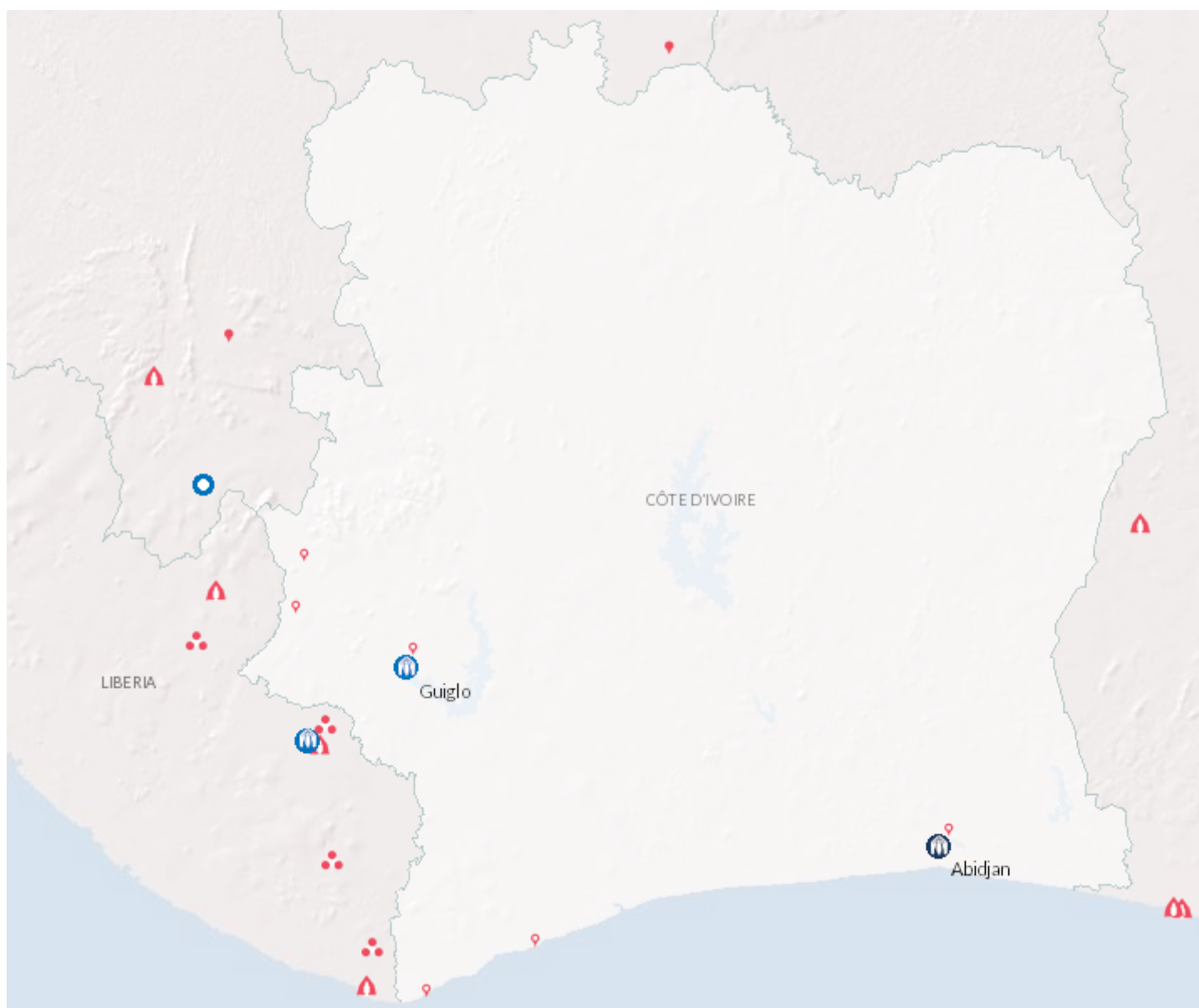


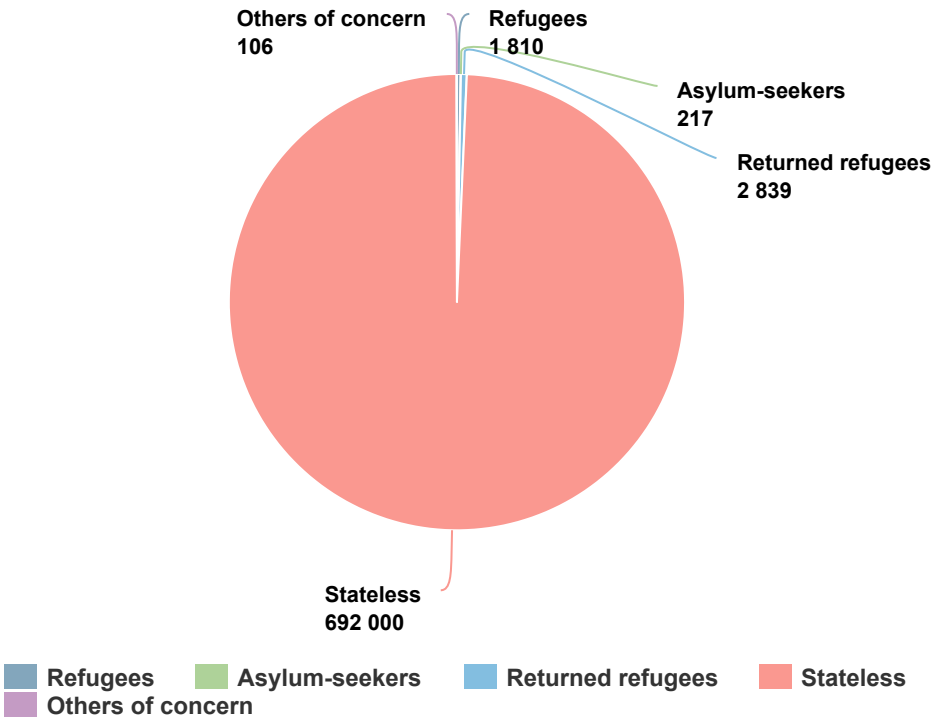
Operation: Côte d'Ivoire



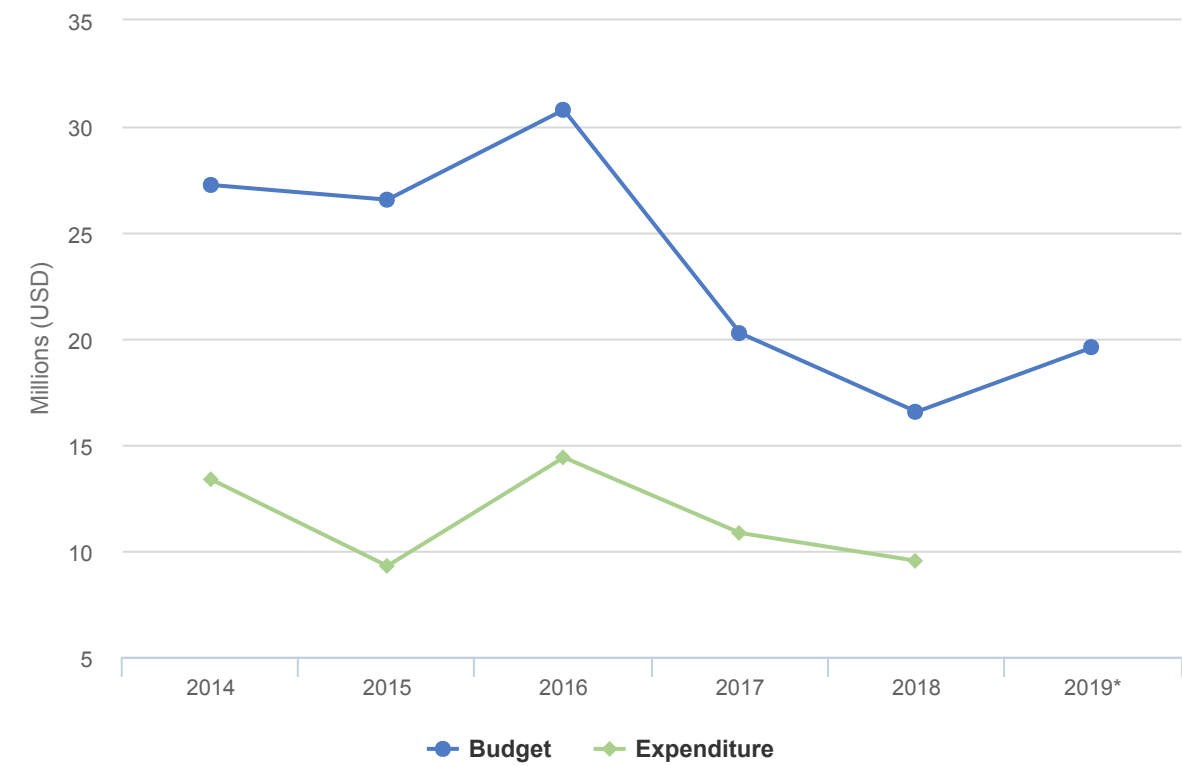
People of Concern

DECREASE IN
1% 2018

2018	696,972
2017	702,415
2016	715,353



Budgets and Expenditure for Côte d'Ivoire



Operational context

In 2018, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire took steps toward reconciliation with granting amnesty to 800 prisoners accused or convicted of crimes relating to the 2010-2011 crisis. The recent decision of the International Criminal Court to conditionally release the former Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo will likely encourage further return of the 23,330 Ivorian refugees who remain in Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali and Togo. However, increasing political tensions ahead of the 2020 presidential elections, lack of progress with national reconciliation and increasing social and community conflicts remained in Côte d'Ivoire.

Towards the end of 2018, UNHCR organized an inter-ministerial, regional meeting on the Comprehensive Solution Strategy for Ivorian refugees in Abidjan. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a detailed action plan. The plan will start being implemented in 2019. The focus is on finding durable solutions, repatriation or local integration, for the remaining Ivorian refugees.

A strategy for local integration of refugees was finalized in 2018. In line with this strategy, UNHCR will continue to assist the Government to look into durable solutions in 2019-2020 for refugees from various nationalities residing mainly in urban areas.

The National Action Plan to Eradicate Statelessness has yet to be adopted, despite continuous advocacy from UNHCR and its partners. While the reasons for the delay are unclear, and most likely linked to political considerations, some of the plan's actions have been implemented by the Government. The major achievements in 2018 include the promulgation of two laws on civil status and the recognition of 11 stateless foundlings, children born to unknown parents, as Ivorian citizens.

Population trends

At year end, Côte d'Ivoire continued to host some 1,800 refugees from various nationalities, mainly in urban areas.

UNHCR and partners repatriated and provided assistance to 2,780 Ivorian refugees over the course of the year, bringing the total number of voluntary returns facilitated to more than 71,920 since 2011. Some 23,330 Ivorian refugees remain in countries in the region.

The size of the stateless population remained uncertain. UNHCR's planning figures for the past few years were achieved by subtracting from the total number of stateless persons recognized and communicated by the government since 2012 (700,000 persons) those who benefitted from the Special Declaration Program (a little over 8,000 stateless persons). This amounted to approximately 692,000 persons still considered as stateless or at risk of statelessness. However, in light of the new mapping exercise conducted in 2018, these figures will most likely change in 2019, when the results of the study are made available.

Key achievements

Efforts for realizing the potential for voluntary return remained a key objective of UNHCR and its partners in 2018. Come-and-tell visits for refugees were conducted in Ghana and Togo, while two go-and-see visits also took place in for refugees from Ghana and the Guinea in Côte d'Ivoire.

In 2018, close to 2,780 refugees repatriated to Côte d'Ivoire under the assisted repatriation programme with the support of UNHCR and its partners. Safe and dignified transport and hot meals were provided to all 2,780 returnees and 57 people not of concern.

Upon arrival to Côte d'Ivoire, all returnees received return packages, comprising of a 3-month food ration from WFP,

a cash grant for NFIs and, for those returning to urban areas, an allowance for transportation to their final destination. All returnees also benefited from cash grants. Special assistance was provided to 123 people with specific needs. Three transit centres were maintained.

Permanent shelter, including a household latrine, was provided by UNHCR and its partner to a total of 924 returnees in 198 households. All 198 households received training and 31 shelter committees were formed. The 31 shelter committees received shelter materials and maintenance tool kits.

UNHCR also worked on improving the self-reliance and livelihoods of Ivorian returnees. To ensure access to agricultural/livestock/fisheries production, production kits or inputs were provided, and cooperatives and production units were formed and supported. Access to self-employment or businesses was facilitated through entrepreneurship and business trainings, coupled with the formation of small business associations.

In 2018, a nation-wide statelessness mapping exercise was conducted with the support of the National Institute of Statistics (INS) to provide in-depth qualitative and quantitative data on statelessness and to map statelessness trends across the country. The data was collected and the different preparatory activities conducted in 2018, while the final report will be published in early 2019.

Concerning reduction of statelessness, the three decisions, and the precedent created by these decisions will now support future advocacy efforts to ensure that foundlings are no longer stateless in Côte d'Ivoire. Additionally, two important civil status laws were adopted and promulgated in late 2018 one reforming the 1964 Civil Status Law and the other creating a special procedure for late birth registration. While the first law reforms and modernizes the current civil status system, the latter, once in place, will create a temporary procedure to promote late birth registration, free of cost, for those who have not been registered. Both application decrees are currently under adoption.

Unmet needs

- While the social security system remains pending due to lack of funds, UNHCR is providing assistance to many people with special needs.
 - Due to internal issues, the Office National de l'Identification has stopped the production of identity documents, making free movement and access to services by refugees with no identity documents difficult.
 - Refugee students could not be enrolled in high schools, due to being subject to higher fees than nationals.
 - Due to funding constraints, only the health care costs of people with specific needs could be covered.
 - The number of late birth registration documents produced for persons at risk of statelessness was lower than what had originally been planned, since the overall cost was higher than expected.
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