

Liberia

May 2018

265 Ivorian refugees voluntarily repatriated to Cote d'Ivoire.

2 Verification exercises finalized in PTP Camp and Little Wlebo Camp

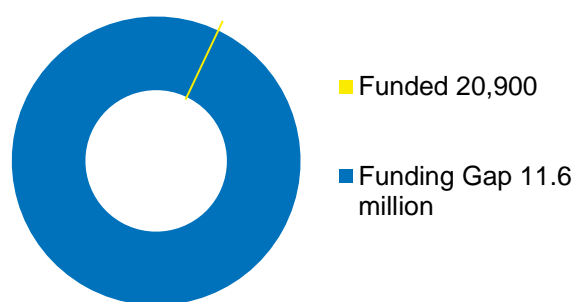
9,524 Total number of refugees remaining in Liberia

POPULATION OF CONCERN: 9,931

By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	9,461
Various nationality refugees	63
Asylum seekers	33
Others of Concern (protracted Sierra Leonean refugees)	374
TOTAL:	9,931

FUNDING (AS OF MAY 2018) requested for the Liberia Operation



UNHCR PRESENCE



Offices

1 Branch Office in Monrovia
 1 Sub Office in Zwedru

Staff

50 National Staff
 13 International Staff

CONTACTS

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BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS USD

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MAJOR DONORS OF BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

United States of America 56.2 million | Private donors Australia 6.2 million | Canada 3.3 million | Norway | Sweden | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS USD

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MAJOR DONORS OF UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Sweden 98.2 million | Norway 42.5 million | Netherlands 39.1 million | Private donors Spain 37.8 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Denmark 25.5 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 19 million | Switzerland 15.2 million | France 14 million | Italy 11.2 million | Private donors Italy 10.2 million

Algeria | Argentina | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Canada | China | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Germany | Iceland | India | Indonesia | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Police admit rise in crimes**
 - Police authorities in Monrovia admit a rising crimes in the city, describing the high wave of armed robbery and other criminalities in Monrovia and parts of the country as alarming.
 - On 15 May 2018, Police Spokesman Moses Carter told a press briefing that there was no specific reason for the increase but cited people taking the law into their own hands as a factor of this high wave of robberies. In a police crimes report, the spokesman listed armed robbery cases; accident cases which in some ways were countered by mob actions; and murder cases.
- **No Ebola in Liberia**
 - On 24 May 2018, the Director for the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), Tolbert Nyenswah, stated that there is no Ebola outbreak in Liberia. Speaking at the Ministry of Information's regular press briefing, Nyenswah indicated that the outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is at a low risk and has not posed threat on international travels.
 - The assurance comes after a resurface of the deadly virus in DRC with 51 cases reported, including 28 confirmed. The Ebola virus outbreak in Liberia in 2014 took over 5,000 lives.
- **School Attendance in South-eastern Liberia Decline Due to Pause on School-feeding Program**
 - A strong decline in school attendance has been reported in the South-eastern counties of Liberia due to a long pause on the supply of food for education in the schools in the area. The school meal programme is a decisive factor to increase enrolment, attendance, retention and completion rates of students.
 - The Ministry of Education (MoE) has been collaborating with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Mary's Meals International to run the school feeding programs across the country. However, the school meals have recently been stopped.
 - This situation has also affected the schools at the three refugee camps (Bahn, PPT and Little Wlebo). In Zwedru (Grand Gedeh), the MoE is expected to advocate for the inclusion of Tchien Public School (PTP Camp) in Save the Children's feeding programme.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

UNHCR works with the Government of Liberia through the **Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC)** and provides funding to **African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)** and **Special Emergency to Restore Children's Hope (SEARCH)**.

These two NGOs provide protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, including gender and child protection; education; infrastructure/ shelter, WASH; and livelihood activities.

- UNHCR in collaboration with LRRRC, AIRD and SEARCH, carried out the second and third round of the verification exercise in Harper and Zwedru.
- UNHCR in collaboration with LRRRC and the Ministry of Education led a mission to assess the education programme and facilities in PTP Camp (Zwedru) and Bahn Camp (Nimba).
- A UNHCR-LRRRC joint mission to Bahn and Saclepea camps (Nimba) was carried out to sensitize Ivorian refugees on the social, economic and legal aspects of local integration.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

■ Monrovia (Montserrado)

- On 17 & 18 May 2018, UNHCR, UN agencies and donors, attended a two day Cabinet 100 day stock-taking retreat. The President of Liberia, George M. Weah, his cabinet and other government officials attended both days.
 - Items discussed included the government first 100-days performance, the government Pro-Poor Agenda (Development Priority Areas) and outlook of the national economy.
- On 1 May 2018, UNHCR participated in the validation workshop for 2013-2017 UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) evaluation report.
 - The UNDAF was extended for another 2 years (2018-2019) to give the newly elected government time to shape their own vision.
 - On 2 May 2018, UNHCR participated in the common country assessment (CCA) report presentation for Liberia, which will be used to programme the 2018-2019 Annual Work Plan and the next phase of UNDAF.

■ Verification exercise in Harper (Maryland) and Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- UNHCR, LRRRC, AIRD and SEARCH, carried out the second and third round of the verification exercise in Harper and Zwedru. There were no incidents and the turnout was high. Information on occupation/skills, vulnerability and education level was gathered.
 - On 20-23 May 2018, the verification exercise in Maryland County targeted approximately 1,004 individuals (382 families) in Little Wlebo Camp (LWC).
 - On 25-31 May 2018, the third round of the verification exercise targeted 5,469 individuals (1,726 families) in PTP Camp (Grand Gedeh). Soap was also distributed, covering four months rations.
 - A question and answer session took place with Ivorian refugees in order to provide information on the implications of local integration in Liberia.
 - The first verification exercise took place in Nimba County in 5-8 March 2018.



Verification exercise and distribution of soap in PTP Camp (Grand Gedeh). Similar distributions of soap are planned for Little Wlebo Camp and Bahn Camp. ©UNHCR

LOCAL INTEGRATION



EDUCATION TRANSITION

- **Zwedru (Grand Gedeh) and Saclepea (Nimba)**
 - As a prelude to the handover of school facilities, the Ministry of Education (MoE), on 14-17 May 2018, UNHCR in collaboration with LRRRC led a mission to assess the education programme and facilities in PTP Camp (Zwedru) and Bahn Camp (Nimba).
 - It can be recalled that UNHCR turned over the refugee schools in the camps to the Government in 2017, and now the MoE, LRRRC and UNHCR are working together towards the final handover of all education facilities to accommodate final additional requests.
 - Advocacy continues towards the inclusion of teachers in the government payroll.



LIVELIHOODS AND CASH BASED INTERVENTIONS

- **Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)**
 - UNHCR Regional Livelihood Officer came on mission to support the development of livelihood strategy for Liberia and met with the county authorities and key line ministries.
 - The officer advocated for the Ministry of Finance and Commerce to provide tax waiver regarding business registration and other related taxes for refugees integrating in Liberia. He encouraged the ministry to support those refugees who may be involved in business for at least the first year of the process, in view to support them to become self-reliant before having to pay taxes.
 - UNHCR distributed seeds a hoe and cutlass to 68 registered refugee farmers residing in PTP Camp. The refugees' farmers association is expected to follow up on the refugee farmer.
- **Harper (Maryland)**
 - The Regional Livelihood Officer met with refugees and local government officials, including the Acting Superintendent, County Planner, County Agriculture Coordinator and officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Development and Finance Planning.
 - In support of agriculture livelihood activities, UNHCR provided 54 refugee farmers with 1kg each of three types of seeds. LRRRC has also received tools for the tools bank for refugees to use.
 - More than 100 refugee families are filling project design forms with guidance from AIRD.
 - **Challenges:** Lack of ID cards for refugees, which prevents them from opening savings accounts and at times their freedom of movement. The County Authorities urge UNHCR to issue IDs refugees.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Protection

Monrovia (Montserrat)

Law Reform: On 16-17 May, Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), in collaboration with UNHCR, organised a 2-day validation exercise of the 1973 Aliens and Nationality Law (ANL) of Liberia.

- The resulting validated copy will be shared with the Minister of Justice for submission to the President of Liberia. A technical team from LIS, Ministry of Justice, Law Reform Commission and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) will revise the the document under the guidance of the Ministry of Justice. Follow up continues.
- It can be recalled that UNHCR has been advocating towards the reform of the 1973 ANL and working with the government to assess the law in view to remove the gender bias which restricts Liberian women passing their nationality to their children, who become at risk of being stateless. This restriction is in conflict with Article 28 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia.



Participants to the exercise included the Acting Justice Minister, the Commissioner General of the Immigration and LRRRC Executive Director. Other participants were representatives of stakeholder agencies, such as the Law Reform Commission; ECOWAS; MoFA; UN Women; UNDP; UNICEF; the Office of the Speaker (Legislature) and Senior Immigration Officers. ©UNHCR

Voluntary repatriation

- In May 2018, 265 Ivorian refugees returned voluntarily to their country of origin in safety and dignity: 3 from LWC in Maryland; 110 from PTP Camp in Grand Gedeh and 2 from the host communities in the area; and 150 refugees from Bahn Camp in Nimba.
 - With the support of the Ministry of Health, parents of 26 refugee children born in Liberia and returning to Cote d'Ivoire travelled with their corresponding birth certificates.
- Since the voluntary return process resumed post-Ebola in December 2015, UNHCR has facilitated the voluntary return of 27,903 refugees to their homes as of 17 May 2018. Throughout 2018, 422 repatriations were facilitated. The total 27,903 number of repatriated refugees includes 41 Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children who were reunified with their families in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- Mobilisation and registration of refugees for voluntary repatriation continues and interest is expected to grow after the information sessions on local integration.