

UNHCR Liberia

January to December 2019

In 2019, a total of **1,501** Ivorian refugees have **voluntary repatriated** home from Liberia.

The Minister of Internal Affairs hands over the first **13 permanent refugee housing units** in Bahn Settlement at an official ceremony in support of the local integration of Ivorian refugees in Liberia.

8,254 Total number of Persons of Concern in Liberia

POPULATION OF CONCERN

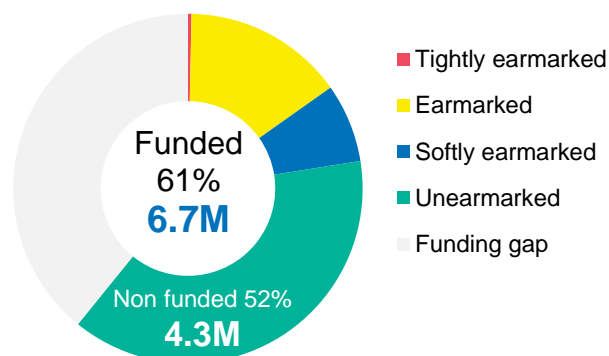
By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	8,152
Various nationality refugees	86
Asylum seekers	16
TOTAL:	8,254

* FUNDING (AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2019)

USD 11M

requested for the Liberia situation



* For detailed information, [please see the funding update](#).

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

4 International Staff
 37 National Staff
 Affiliate Workforce =15

Offices:

1 Branch Office in Monrovia
 1 Field Offices in Zwedru (PTP Settlement)
 1 antenna presence in Harper (Little Wlebo Settlement)
 1 antenna presence in Saclepea (Bahn Settlement)

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LINKS: [Regional Portal](#) – [Facebook](#)



Highlights

PROTECTION > ASYLUM REGIME

- In 2019, refugees in Liberia continued to enjoy safe and secure asylum; no report of refoulement was received.
 - As of 1 January 2019, there were 38 asylum seekers whose cases needed to be adjudicated. Following the review of their cases by the Eligibility Committee, as of 31 December 2019, there were 16 cases pending review.
- In line with the Capacity Development Plan to improve the national asylum system, UNHCR has continued to build the capacity of the Government of Liberia through several trainings.
 - Participants to these sessions have included the Ministries of Justice, Internal Affairs and Finance and Development Planning, as well as UNHCR's government counterpart the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC). The meetings have focused on the role of members of the asylum committee, as per the Liberia Refugee Act 1993, and equipping them with an understanding of the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process and case review.

PROTECTION > STATELESSNESS, CRRF AND GCR

- On 4 November 2019, UNHCR and LRRRC joined Church Aid Inc. in the celebration of the IBelong Campaign mid-point in Klay Town (Bomi County). The indoor programme included the handing over of several birth certificates.



LRRRC Executive Director (L) and UNHCR Senior Durable Solutions Officer (centre) handed over several birth certificates, provided with the direct support of Church Aid. Photo: UNHCR/A. Biurrun Ruiz/November 2019.

- In June 2019, the SG wrote to the President of Liberia to welcome Liberia's commitment to the ECOWAS Abidjan Declaration for Eradication of Statelessness and to recommend that Liberia could announce any achievements or pledges in respect of law reform resulting into gender equality. At the High-Level Segment on Statelessness, Liberia announced three pledges aiming to prevent or reduce statelessness. These pledges include revision of the Aliens and Nationality Law to address gender discrimination in passing the nationality to the children; inclusion of questions on statelessness in the 2021 census; and follow up on domestication of the two statelessness conventions through National Plan of Action.

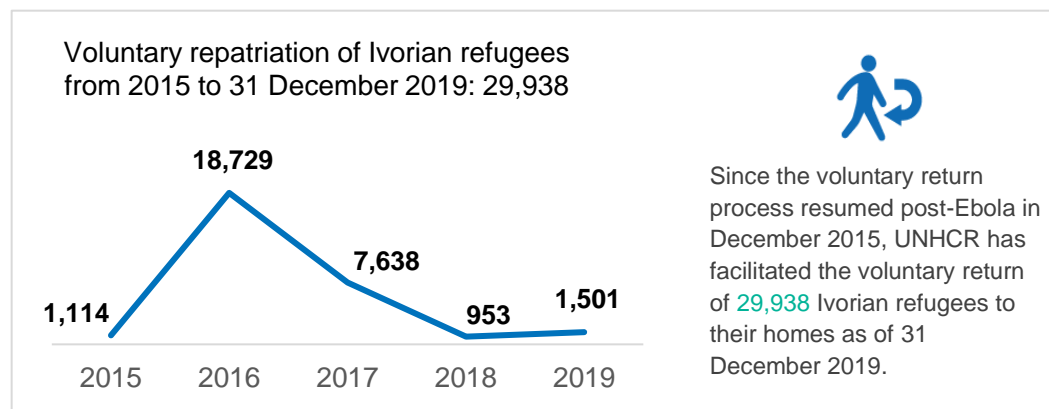
- In support of the mainstreaming process of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), the Government of Liberia (GoL) made pledges to implement MYMP Local integration strategy for full realization of legal and socio-economic rights by Ivorian refugees, access to land for some 5,000 Ivorian refugees expected to remain in Liberia at the conclusion of voluntary repatriation; and expansion of Liberia's Education Policy to include refugee children.
- The government made commitment to integrate the social services into government structures and systems as well as provision of agriculture land for economic integration of refugees. 315 acres of land have already been provided at Bahn Refugee Settlement while the negotiations are underway for additional 700 acres of land at PTP Refugee Settlement

DURABLE SOLUTIONS > VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION

- In 2019, a total of 1,501 Ivorian refugees (479 from the settlements and 726 from the host communities) returned voluntarily to Cote d'Ivoire from Liberia. The target for voluntary repatriation for 2019 was 1,500 Ivorian refugees.
- To support Ivorian refugees to make an informed decision several go and see and come and tell visits were organized to and from PTP Settlement (Grand Gedeh) and Little Wlebo Settlement (Maryland).



Ivorian refugees in PTP Settlement get on the convoys to return home. Photo: UNHCR Liberia.



- To facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees in their country of origin in 2019, UNHCR supported the government in the rehabilitation of 10.4km of road in Grand Gedeh

DURABLE SOLUTIONS > LOCAL INTEGRATION

1. SOCIAL ASPECT > Health

- Several structures completed last year were handed over to the government authorities and the local communities. In Bahn Health Centre, UNHCR turned over a waiting hall, female & male wards, an incinerator and an ambulance; in Bahn High Extension School, UNHCR handed over the two newly built classrooms, and at Bahn Police depot, a newly built block of latrines was handed over.
- All three primary health care facilities in the settlements in Grand Gedeh, Maryland and Nimba, are now included on the Ministry of Health (MoH) Health Management Information System (HMIS). Little Wlebo Camp Clinic (Maryland) was the last to be included in the system, in March 2019.
- Throughout 2019, UNHCR has continued to support health facilities in all locations, including payment of allowances of the staff (until they are fully absorbed by the government), ensured that both refugees and Liberians have equal access to health services.

2. SOCIAL ASPECT > Education

- Out of more than 2,870 refugee children in Liberia, not all are in schools. The current enrolment rate varies from 67-93% among the schools in the settlement, host communities or urban areas.
- With the objective to achieve 100 per cent school enrolment and retention rate in all locations, multi-functional teams comprised of UNHCR, LRRRC, of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP), the Partners Teachers Association (PTA) and refugee block leaders, carry out regular physical verification of refugee children not enrolled in school as well as information campaigns on education as an inalienable right of children.
- The commitment of the government towards the education of refugee children has resulted in the provision of stationary and education materials, including assorted curriculums (grade 1–9 and ECCD) and text books for grades 1-2.

3. LEGAL

- As part of the local integration process, UNHCR Liberia, through LRRRC, processed 3 resident permits for urban refugees who opted to naturalize in Liberia. The 3 refugees are from Rwanda, South Sudan and Sudan.

4. ECONOMIC

a. Livelihoods, CBI approach

- As part of the assistance provided to Persons of Concern in Liberia, livelihoods support is provided in order to enhance their self-reliance whether they decide to integrate in Liberia or to return to Cote d'Ivoire. Refugees interested in carrying out livelihoods activities take part in the Small Business Management Training (SMBT), develop and improve their business plan, after which they receive their corresponding seed capital. Livelihoods cash support is provided to refugees through the Cash Based Intervention (CBI) approach.

- In line with the local integration strategy and to foster peaceful coexistence processes, 20 per cent of the most vulnerable host community members can access this support.
- In 2019, UNHCR Liberia supported over 900 refugee and host community households with cash for livelihood and subsistence amounting to USD344,000.



Blio Sela Youdi Charles fled violence in Cote d'Ivoire and arrived in Liberia in 2006. He is now focused in working to send his children to school while teaching others in PTP Settlement (Grand Gedeh County). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.

(L) Madeline Gouet fled violence in Cote d'Ivoire in 2011. She cultivates cassava and corn with her son Patric (R) and other refugees in PTP Settlement (Grand Gedeh County). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.



Urban refugees in Monrovia (Montserrado) also received their seed capital aimed to improve their income generating activities (IGAs). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.

b. Shelter and NFIs

- On 11 September 2019, a local integration milestone was reached in Liberia with the official handover of 13 permanent refugee housing units in Bahn Settlement (Nimba County) for Ivorian refugees wishing to remain in Liberia. At the handover ceremony, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Varney Sirleaf, stressed the deep hospitality showcased by Liberians all over the country and reminded refugees to remain law-abiding. In 2018, Liberian host community members provided 315 acres of land to Ivorian refugees for their local integration in Bahn Settlement (Nimba County).



Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Varney Sirleaf hands over the keys to the new tenants and unveils the plaque commemorating the handing over of the shelters in Bahn Settlement. (R) From left to right, UNHCR Liberia Representative a.i. Zulqarnain Hussain Anjum (behind); MIA, Hon. Varney Sirleaf (front); Railey Myers, Development Superintendent of Nimba (behind); and LRRRC ED, Rev. Festus Logan (front right). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.



Some of the 13 durable shelter housing units handed over on 11 September 2019 in Bahn Settlement (Nimba County). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.

- UNHCR and partners are providing Ivorian refugees integrating in Liberia with 70 durable shelter units in Bahn Settlement, bringing up to 83 the total durable housing units envisaged in Bahn Settlement by the end of 2019.
- Under the UN Liberia Spotlight Initiative, a total of 25 additional units are planned over a period of three years. In 2019, INGO Plan International started the erection of 10 of these units, all of which are aimed for refugee female-headed households who are survivors of violence.
- UNHCR, LRRRC, AIRD and the MoG, have distributed Core Relief Items (CRIs) in all locations throughout 2019. CRIs included soap, used clothing, zinc roofing

sheets, nails sanitary kits, mats and buckets to vulnerable refugees. Following a vulnerability assessment, some beneficiaries received additional mats, buckets, jerry cans, blankets and sanitary pads.

In 2019, UNHCR built a concrete bridge in PTP settlement in Grand Gedeh. This facilitated the movement of school children coming from the host community and GTP1 to PTP2 where the primary school is located.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- In line with UNHCR's multi partner approach, the office convened several strategic meetings with various stakeholders throughout the year. UNHCR's work would not be possible without the tireless support of its partners and donors.
- UNHCR Liberia signed partnership agreements with LRRRC and AIRD for implementation of RSD, Livelihood, Shelter, Logistics/warehousing and protection of PoCs in Liberia in January 2019 covering January-December 2019. For year 2020, the agreement was signed in December 2019 for implementation of same activities.
- UNHCR Liberia is an active member of various UN working groups: Inter-Agency Programme Team (IAPT), Operations Management Team (OMT), UN Communication Group, UN Human Resources Group, SPOTLIGHT, UN Disaster Working Group (UNDWG), Gender Theme Group (GTG), Human Rights Working Group (HRWG) UN sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSCCF) and UNCT



Participants to the stakeholders meeting in November 2019 included LRRRC; AIRD; Ivorian refugees; Liberian host community members from Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Maryland counties; ministries of Internal Affairs, Education, Health, Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), Justice, Liberian Immigration Service; the Resident Coordinator Office and UN Agencies (UNDP, WFP, UNIDO and IOM). Photo: UNHCR Liberia.