

Liberia

November 2017

Voluntary Repatriation
Resumed after
three months of halt

1,233
Birth certificates
issued in 2017

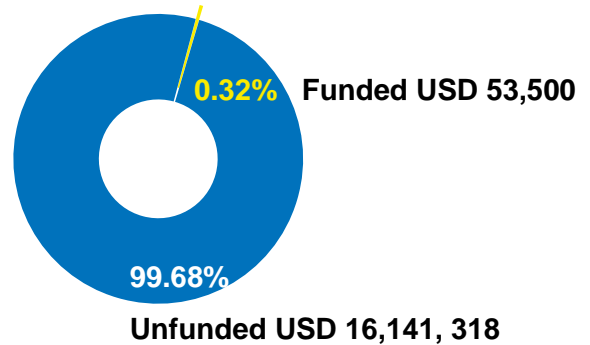
11,904
Ivorian refugees
remaining in Liberia

POPULATION OF CONCERN: 11,949

By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	11,904
Various nationality refugees	63
Asylum seekers	27
TOTAL:	11,994

FUNDING (AS OF NOVEMBER 2017) requested for the Liberia operation



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

UNHCR works with the Government of Liberia through the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) and provides funding to the following NGOs to provide protection and assistance in favor of refugees and asylum seekers:

- Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)
- African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)
- Special Emergency Activity to Restore Children's Hope (SEARCH).

Liberia Reference map

as of 06 Apr 2017



Offices

- 1 Branch Office in Monrovia
- 1 Field Office in Harper
- 1 Sub Office in Zwedru

Staff

- 60 National Staff
- 14 International Staff

CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS

■ 2017 Presidential and Legislative Elections

- On 1 December 2017, Liberia's Supreme Court began hearing a bill of exception filed by opposition Liberty Party (LP) and ruling Unity Party (UP). The hearing process follows the appeal from LP and UP to the rulings made by the National Elections Commission (NEC) Board of Commissioners on 24 November 2017, when it denied both parties their quest of to conduct a rerun of the 10 October 2017 presidential and legislative elections due their allegations of fraud and irregularities. Both NEC Hearing officer and NEC Board of Commissioners ruled that LP and UP allegations lack evidence and did not affect the overall outcome of the elections. Some of the irregularities raised by LP and UP include the late opening of polls and poll officers allegedly in possession of pre-marked ballots.
- Through its ruling, the Supreme Court can nullify the two parties' complaints and therefore a runoff will take place between Senator George Weah (Coalition for Democratic Change) and Vice President Joseph Boakai (UP); or the court can rule that NEC committed fraud and therefore a rerun of the elections of 10 October 2017 will be held.
- The electoral impasse has delayed the selection of a successor of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for weeks, as the runoff was slated on 7 November 2017. As a result, businesses remain slow while the exchange rate increases. Liberia has two legal currencies: the Liberian dollar and the US dollar. Due to the holding back of some investors, the rate has climbed to up to 130 Liberian dollars to 1 USD in a nation hugely reliant on informal trading. President Sirleaf urged a speedy resolution to the dispute for the sake of the economy. "Our country's reputation is under assault, our economy is under stress," she said in a radio address.
- There have been no political incidents reported in any of the three refugee camps in Liberia: PTP Camp (Grand Gedeh), Little Wlebo Camp (Maryland) and Bahn Camp (Nimba).

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Voluntary Repatriation

- Voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees resumed after three consecutive months without any convoys leaving Liberia. The halt follows the low intent to repatriate shown by refugees, along with the technical maintenance undergone by the ferry used to cross the Cavalla River from Harper (Liberia) to Tabou (Cote d'Ivoire).
- On 30 November 2017, one convoy departed from PTP Camp to Cote d'Ivoire with 67 refugees (33 families). The convoy faced some challenging spots near B'hai border.
- As of 30 November 2017, 26,523 refugees have been repatriated since the resumption of the repatriation programme on 18 December 2015. This number includes 40 Unaccompanied Minors who returned home in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Local Integration

- Local integration forms and informative brochures are being distributed in all locations. The material, developed by UNHCR in collaboration with LRRRC, enables refugees to make an informed decision on whether to repatriate or to integrate in Liberia.
- In line with the Alternative to Camps approach, negotiations continue with LRRRC and local authorities in view to transform the camps into settlement villages, which will then be under the leadership of the township.

Education transition

- The 2017/2018 academic year continues in the schools in the three camps, all of which are part of the national education system, as well as a recipients of the School Feeding Programme (SFP) of the World Food Programme (WFP).
- In support of the education transition for Ivorian children who now attend school and use the Liberian curriculum (taught in English), distribution of school supplies is ongoing, including a uniform, a bag, and one pair of shoes. Teachers also received from UNHCR several chairs, beds and mattresses, amongst other material.
- **Harper (Maryland)**
 - On 24 November 2017, UNHCR and Maryland County Education Team (CET) conducted a refresher training for the 13 Liberian teachers of Little Wlebo Camp Extension Elementary School, including one principal and vice principal. CET focused on lesson planning, classroom management, and reporting. UNHCR topics included legal recognition of refugees; the Convention of the Rights of the Child; and prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and Gender Base Violence (GBV).

Health transition and infrastructures

- To ensure a smooth transition into local integration, UNHCR continues to support the Liberian government. This is done through the construction and renewal of several infrastructures for the benefit of refugees and host communities; the temporary payment of staff until they become part of the government payroll; provision of drugs, etc.



©AIRD

Progress on the construction works at Bahn Health Center

- Some of the facilities included in the ongoing renovation and construction works are the living quarters for nurses and teachers in the three camps; registration center and VIPs toilets at Bahn Health Center (Nimba County); and durable shelters for Persons with Specific Needs.
- Both refugees and Liberians access all health facilities, including those in the refugee camps, which will be soon fully handed over to the government.
- **Harper (Maryland)**
 - On 17 November 2017, all WASH facilities in Little Wlebo Camp were officially handed over to the Ministry of Public Works. The ceremony was attended by the Development County Superintendent, County WASH coordinator from the Ministry of Public works, AHA, UNHCR, LRRRC, refugee community, host community members and the CHT. Handed over material include pumps, bathhouse, tool kits, spare parts, protective personal equipment and environmental cleaning tools. WASH mobilizers and pump repair technicians also received their certificates of achievements.



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WASH handover ceremony and technicians with their certificates

Protection

- **Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)**

- UNHCR, UNMIL Human Rights section, the Liberia National Police (LNP) and LRRRC conducted a training on *Refugees' Rights and Responsibilities* aimed at the new refugee leadership for PTP camp. UNHCR is also providing the refugee leadership with assorted stationaries and visibility vests.

- **Third anniversary of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024**

- On 4 November 2017, Church Aid Incorporated, in collaboration with UNHCR and partners commemorated the #IBelong campaign in Sinje (Grand Cape Mount County).
- Students, local authorities, the church, the mosque and former Sierra Leonean refugees integrated in Sinje participated in the celebration, which included a parade and a symbolic registration exercise. Grand Cape Mount is one of the counties with the lowest records on birth registration due to bad traditional practices.



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Celebration of the #IBelong Campaign in Grand Cape Mount County and symbolic registration exercise

Community Services

- 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender Violence

UNHCR, LRRRC and partners launched the 16 Days of Activism Campaign under the global theme “Together We Can End GBV in Education” and the national theme “Let’s embrace our diversities for Safe Education and a Violent Free Society”. Local authorities, representatives of government line ministries, operational partners and host communities participated in the celebration in all locations and enjoyed parades, indoor programmes and drama.



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Celebration of 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender Violence in Maryland.



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Celebration of 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender Violence in Nimba.

- In Zwedru (Grand Gedeh), a team led by the Ministry of Gender (MoG) visited Tchien School as part of the 16 Days programme of the MoG. Interactive discussions were held on topics such as sexual exploitation of children and reporting incidents.



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The Ministry of Gender visits Tchien School in PTP Camp

■ Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- In support of Community Watch Forum (CWF) in PTP Camp, 80 torch lights and 80 reflective vests were procured in Monrovia to support of community policing in PTP Camp.
- PTP Refugee Camp Central Leadership also benefited from assorted manual tools, including shovels, axes, lamps, ropes, and used clothes.
- On 8 November 2017, UNHCR led a Community Policing workshop for refugees. Other facilitators were the Regional Commander of Community Policing, Grand Gedeh County Detachment of the LNP and the Commander of PTP Refugee Camp LNP detail. Participants included 60 members of the CWF, 3 Community Police from the local community and members of LRRRC incentive security guards. The roles and responsibilities of the CWF were discussed, along with the relationship with the LNP and the refugee population.
- Through the Mosquito Nets Distribution Exercise, almost 6,000 Pieces of Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Mosquito Nets were distributed in PTP Camp and Little Wlebo Camp.
- UNHCR distributed used clothes to 1,738 heads of family, including Persons with Specific Needs (PSN).



A PSN refugee receives a coat.



1,738 refugees benefitted from the distribution.

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CONTACTS

Ndeye Ndour, UNHCR Liberia Representative, ndour@unhcr.org

Ana Biurrun Ruiz, UNHCR Liberia Associate External Relations & Reporting Officer,

biurrun@unhcr.org, Tel: +231 886 524 530, Cell +231 880 823 283

LINKS

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