

Liberia April 2019

Six Ivorian refugees from PTP Settlement travel to Cote d'Ivoire on a "go and see visit"

75 Ivorian refugees from Nimba County **return voluntarily** to Cote d'Ivoire

9,203
Total number of Persons of Concern in Liberia

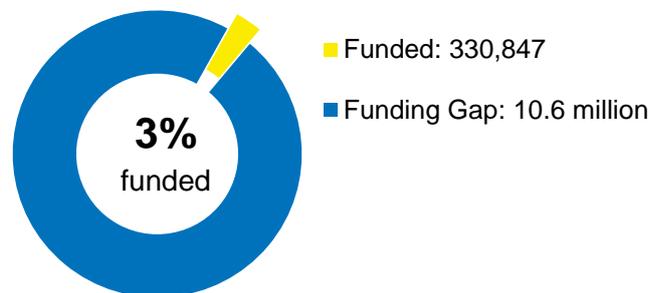
POPULATION OF CONCERN: 9,203

By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	9,087
Various nationality refugees	77
Asylum seekers	39
TOTAL:	9,203

FUNDING (AS OF APRIL 2019)

\$11 million requested for the Liberia Operation



UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS USD

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MAJOR DONORS OF UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Sweden 90.4 million | Norway 44.5 million | Netherlands 37.5 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 26.7 million | Private donors Spain 26.3 million | Denmark 24.4 million | Switzerland 15.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 10.4 million

Algeria | Argentina | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belgium | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Indonesia | Kuwait | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

Offices

- 1 Branch Office in Monrovia
- 1 Field Office in Zwedru
- 1 Field Unit in Harper
- 1 Field Unit in Bahn

Staff

- 46 National Staff
- 8 International Staff

CONTACTS

Mbaye Diouf, UNHCR Liberia Representative a.i., diouf@unhcr.org

Ana Biurrun Ruiz, UNHCR Liberia Associate External Relations & Reporting Officer, biurrun@unhcr.org

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

UNHCR works with the Government of Liberia through the **Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC)** in the provision of protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, including gender issues, child protection and education.

- On 5 April 2019, during a mission to Bahn Settlement, LRRRC Executive Director (ED) highlighted voluntary repatriation as the preferable durable solution for refugees. The ED also stated that LRRRC will liaise with Bahn Health Center to improve the management of drugs in the facility.

UNHCR provides funding to **African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)**. This INGO provides support in infrastructure; shelter; WASH; and livelihood activities.

CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS

‘Save the State’ protest, scheduled for 7 June 2019, demands reforms in Liberia.

- The Council of Patriots (CoP), the group organizing the ‘Save the State’ protest on 7 June 2019, cites lack of accountability, corruption, mismanagement of state resources and insufficient access to basic services as some of the reasons behind the protest. Meanwhile, President of Liberia, H.E. George M. Weah, issued an executive order to help stimulate economic growth, which some described as lacking substantive interventions.
- On 30 April 2019, CoP stressed at a press conference that the intent of their protest is non-violent and does not aim to call on George Weah to step down as President of Liberia.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Donation of office supplies to the University of Liberia, Monrovia (Montserratado)

- On 8 April 2019, UNHCR Liberia Representative Mme Fatima Mohammed-Cole presented several office supplies to the University of Liberia, including two laptops.
 - The donation aims to support the running of the University and express UNHCR’s appreciation for the work of the institution in promoting higher education in Liberia.
 - In the frame of the ongoing collaboration with the University, UNHCR has given lectures on refugee law and protection with the aim of building the capacity of students and for advocacy purposes.



UNHCR Liberia Representative and team during the donation of items to the University of Liberia. © UNHCR.

Donation of a tractor and zinc to Harper District Commission, Maryland

- UNHCR donated a tractor to the President of Tubman University, as well as 110 pieces of used zinc to Harper District Commission.
 - The donation aims to support the strengthening the involvement of host community in the local integration process.



UNHCR Head of Field Office Zwedru presents the donated tractor to the President of Tubman University. © UNHCR.

MAIN ACTIVITIES



Protection

Monrovia (Montserrado)

- UNHCR and LRRRC reviewed the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Standard Operations Procedures (SOP) and an SOP on Assistance to Refugees. Both documents are subject to validation.
- UNHCR provided funds to vulnerable individuals and families who are allocated a monthly subsistence allowance to allow them to cater for their basic needs.
- UNHCR held a meeting with Ivorian refugee women leaders in Monrovia. Issues raised related to livelihoods support and business registration. Follow up continues.

Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- UNHCR and LRRRC carried out a verification exercise of Ivorian refugees residing in host communities, including Toe Town, Zleh Town, Janzon Axis, Zwedru Axis and Tempo Axis.
 - Total targeted: 1380 individuals (675 families); total verified: 779 individuals (314 families).
 - Population increase: 151 persons (new births); population decrease: 60 persons (inactivation, death, Spontaneous Departures, and Hold).
 - A total of 740 refugees expressed their wish to repatriate to Cote d'Ivoire, while 39 refugees wish to locally integrate in Liberia.
- There are currently 284 refugees (90 families) registered for local integration In PTP Settlement.

 **VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION****Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)**

Go and see visit: a delegation travelled to Cote d'Ivoire for the first "go and see" visit of 2019.

- The delegation was comprised of UNHCR, LRRRC and six refugees from PTP Settlement.
- Participants visited areas of return in Cote d'Ivoire, including two regions (Cavaly and Guemon); five cities (Guiglo, Bolequin, Duekoue, Toulepleu and Bangolo); and eight villages (Diboke, Vaya, Bledy Goazon, Kaada, Diboke, Tauakea, Yoya and Zouhou).
- The refugees held meetings with Prefects, Sous-Prefects, Town Chiefs and returnees. The six Ivorians gathered first-hand information on the situation in those areas of return, restitution of properties, security and the amnesty granted by the Ivorian President, Alassane Ouattara.
 - It can be recalled that in August 2018 Alassane Ouattara granted amnesty to 800 people accused of or convicted of crimes related to the 2010-2011 post-electoral violence.

Nimba County

- On 30 April 2019, 75 Ivorian refugees from host communities in Nimba returned home to Cote d'Ivoire. In 2019, a total of 198 Ivorian refugees have returned home.
- Registration of candidates for repatriation is ongoing in all locations.

 **Education****Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)**

- **Challenges and gaps:** the lack of World Food Programme (WFP) School Feeding Programme (SFP) discourages school enrolment. Children whose parents are undecided on whether to return to Cote d'Ivoire or locally integrate in Liberia no longer attend school.

Saclepea (Nimba)

- A prospective female graduate of the DAFI programme scholarship at Nimba County Community College (NCCC) was sent to Bahn High Extension School for an internship.
 - It can be recalled that in 2018, a total of 19 students (10 M, 9 F) were supported through the DAFI Program.
- **Challenges and gaps**
 - Despite WFP SFP starting in Bahn High Extension School in October 2018, the school has not received supplementary food from WFP for the past months. WFP has informed school authorities that the money is expected to be in the school account in the coming days.
 - The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and the school administration request agriculture tools and seeds for school gardening.
 - The eight volunteer teachers assigned by Bridge, the Government of Liberia education partner, are threatening to leave if Bridge fails to put them on payroll in May 2019.

Following up UNHCR recent mission to Nimba County, it was agreed that UNHCR will liaise with the Ministry of Education to follow up on this.



Community services

Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- Nine SGBV cases were documented: seven Physical Assault and two Psychological-Emotional Abuse. Cases were investigated at the Police station or settled with LRRRC and the refugee leadership. Survivors received psychosocial counselling.
 - There has been no reports placed in the SEA complaint boxes placed in the settlement.
- UNHCR provided \$25.00 to each of the five refugee inmates at the National Palace of Correction in Zwedru for the procurement of toiletries and other essential materials.

Harper (Maryland)

- UNHCR and LRRRC distributed soap to refugees in LWC to last five months: July-November.



Local integration - Livelihoods

Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- Ongoing activities in PTP Settlement currently involve 72 refugees in several projects: six piggeries, five poultries and one project on fishponds.
 - Refugees' ownership of the activities has increased and are now strengthening the sustainability element, which will require an intensive monitoring despite staff limitations.
- UNHCR supported refugees to develop sustainability plans, cost analysis, and work plans and provided in-kind support, i.e. feeds for the animals and seeds for farming.
- Following a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) County Agriculture Team, UNHCR and MoA will implement jointly several activities such as an assessment on market opportunities, technical support and joint monitoring of production and support in commercialization.
- UNHCR, LRRRC and the MoA carried out a joint assessment on the availability of farming land in PTP Settlement.
 - The MoA observed that most soil in PTP Settlement could be used for small-scale farming, while other parts can be used for more intensive production (rice swamps and corn plantations). Some land is not fertile for specific crops and some areas are currently regenerating and cannot be used.
 - UNHCR encourages those refugees considering farming as an Income generating activity (IGA) to continue leading negotiations with the host communities to access larger parcels of land.
- In preparation for the scaling up of livelihoods activities, the team undertook an internal capacity building training on profiling households and on how to conduct rapid market assessments.

Nimba County

- AIRD conducted its regular follow up with the participants of the livelihoods process.
 - In Nimba, 189 households (161 refugees and 28 locals) are involved in the livelihoods process, representing 56 per cent of the total households opting for local integration (335 families).
 - Forty refugee families (227 individuals) received their second batch of cash support for their IGA.
 - A total of 45 refugees conducted the small business management training and finalized their business plan. It can be recalled that the small business management training and the creation of a business plan are the first steps in the livelihoods process.



Local Integration - Shelter

Nimba County

- **Durable shelters:** The 13 families allocated to the durable shelters have finalized the construction of their outdoor traditional kitchens with support from UNHCR and AIRD.
- **Classroom construction:** the construction of the two durable classrooms at Bahn High Extension School is in its final stages.
- **Borehole drilling:** UNHCR has finalized two of 5 shallow wells in Bahn Settlement.



(L) Durable shelter and the outdoor kitchen. (R) Kitchen constructed by the refugee families allocated the 13 durable shelters. UNHCR provided 10 zinc sheets per family and technical support. © UNHCR.