

# Cote d'Ivoire Situation

12 November 2020

As of 11 November 2020, a total of **10,087 Ivorians have fled Cote d'Ivoire**, and the numbers continue to rise amid persistent tensions despite validation of the election results by the Constitutional Court.

**Nearly 92%** of the new arrivals who have fled Cote d'Ivoire are in Liberia where an airlift of CRIs for 10,000 refugees is planned from Dubai. In the meantime, locally purchased core-relief items, food and cash-based interventions are being delivered.

UNHCR has set up **contingency plans** in the countries neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire and is engaging with national and local authorities, sister UN agencies and other partners.

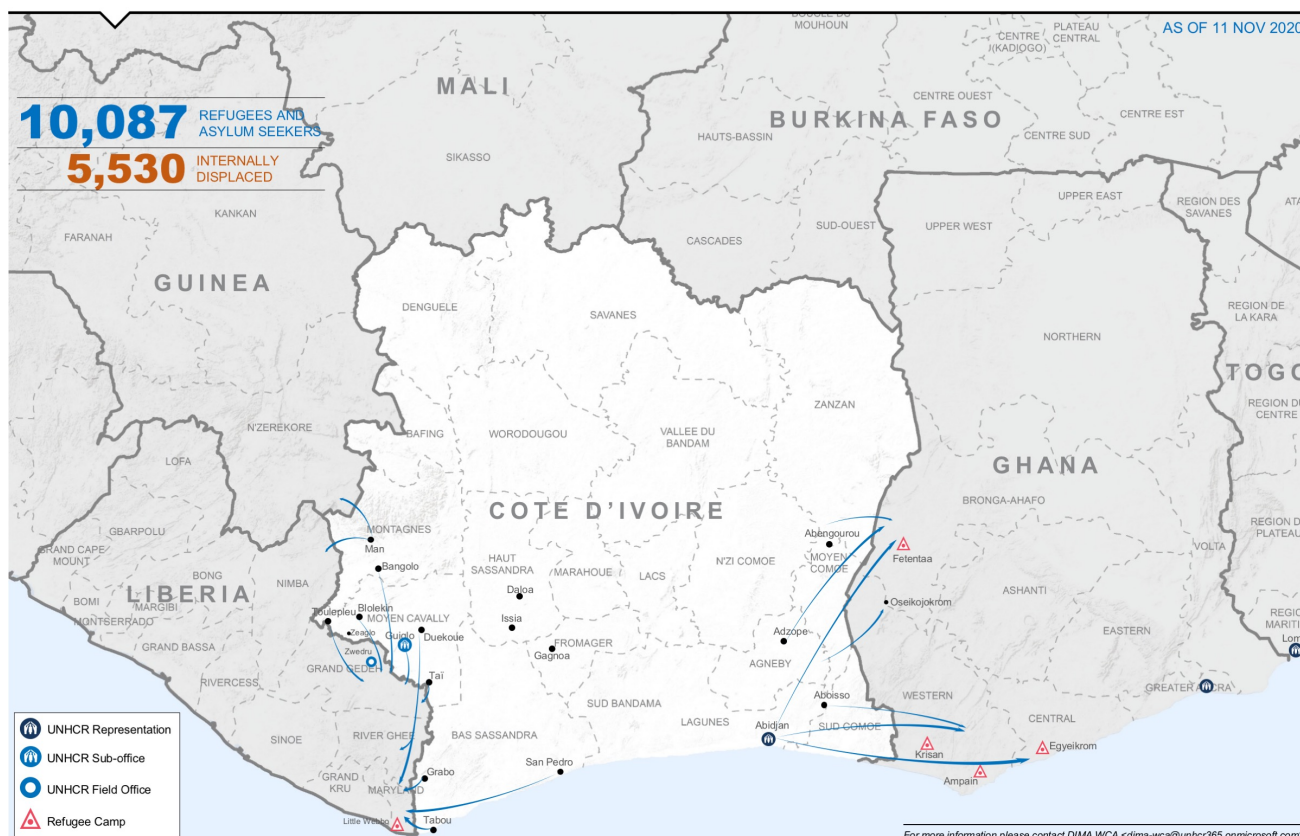
## POPULATION OF CONCERN

Host Countries	New arrivals
Liberia	9,255
Ghana	563
Guinea	249
Togo	20
Cote d'Ivoire (IDPs)	5,530
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,617</b>

\* Data as of 11 November 2020 as reported by UNHCR Operations.



New arrivals at Bhai border, Grand Gedeh. Credit @UNHCR



# Operational Context

## Political and security situation in Cote d'Ivoire

### Aftermath of the election

- On 9 November, the Constitutional Council validated the electoral victory of President Alassane Ouattara as proclaimed by the Independent Electoral Commission. The situation remains calm yet tense and the opposition, which announced the formation of a National Transitional Council, has yet to recognize the President's victory.
- Following the validations of the election of President Ouattara, a Government spokesperson declared that a total of 85 people were killed, including 34 before the election, 20 on polling day, 31 after the election. An additional 484 people were injured and 225 were arrested.
- On 11 November, President Ouattara and opposition leader Henri Konan Bédié met briefly. Speaking to the press, President Ouattara stated that the dialogue had "started well", that they had agreed on the importance of peace, he further noted the need to "restore trust". Opposition leader Bédié indicated the meeting "broke the ice wall". Further talks are planned in the coming days.
- On 11 November Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko also held the first ministerial cabinet meeting following the presidential election. The Prime Minister highlighted the need for "appeasement and reconciliation in order to strengthen security, stability and peace". He also called for better engagement with civil society, notably "traditional chiefs, community leaders, religious leaders, young people and women".

### Fear of violence as the main cause of flight

- As of 11 November, the total number Ivorian refugees stands at 10,087, with arrivals steadily increasing. According to UN estimates, there are an additional 5,530 IDPs within Cote d'Ivoire.
- Fear of violence remains the driver of the Ivorian refugee influx.
- There have been no reports of violence faced by new arrivals, although some stated that they were initially prevented from crossing and had to find alternative routes to enter Liberia.
- Many refugees are opting to stay around the border to observe the situation and go back home as soon as the situation returns to normal.

## Population movements and border monitoring

- Nearly 92% of the new Ivorian refugees fled to Liberia and it is expected that this country will continue receive the majority of the new arrivals.
- The Governments of Cote d'Ivoire's neighbouring countries, namely Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Togo, all guarantee access to asylum on their territory, despite the border restrictions due to COVID-19 and UNHCR teams have increased border monitoring activities in collaboration with these Governments to ensure new arrivals are assisted in a timely manner.

# UNHCR Emergency Response

## Liberia



### PROTECTION

#### Achievements and Impact

- As of 11 November 2020, a total of 9,255 persons have now crossed into Liberia. That represents an increase of 1,689 over a 2-day period. Around 57% of the new arrivals entered Gedeh County.
- Around 60% of the new arrivals are children, and 55% of the overall population are women. The majority of the newly arrived refugees continue to come from Western Cote d'Ivoire, including Bolequin, Man, Guiglo, Tai, Duekoue and Grabo, as well as from Tabou and San Pedro in the Southwest.

- Monitoring of Pleebo Axis border communities (including Dakay), Maryland County was undertaken on 6 November. Liberia immigration official accounts of border crossings do not exactly chime with those of recent arrivals. In Nimba County, border monitoring in the Behwally axis which has a high concentration of new arrivals.
- Registration materials have been sent from Monrovia to UNHCR units (Saclapea and Zwedru). A total of 43 individuals were registered via BIMs on 9 November, and 65 individuals were registered in Maryland County on 10 November. RO Dakar continues to provide technical support to use BIMs.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Arrivals include elderlies, lactating mothers, pregnant women, unaccompanied and separated children and others with special needs are reported as having little food and money.
- Many are reluctant to move to the PTP settlement. They prefer to stay in the border area and monitor the situation in their various places of origin, hoping for a swift return once the situation becomes clearer.
- A Congolese asylum seeker in Cote d'Ivoire has arrived in Liberia with Ivorian refugees. This is the first reported case of a third country national among the CIV arrivals. The operation is following up.



### SHELTER AND NFIS

#### Achievements and Impact

- Renovation activities (clearing etc.) started in Little Wlebo transit/overflow camp on 6 November and are on-going.
- All three refugee settlements in Liberia are now hosting new arrivals from Cote d'Ivoire.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- While reports indicate that most new arrivals prefer to stay close to the border with the hope to return shortly, the Grand Gedeh County Superintendent has raised security concerns and stated in a bilateral meeting with UNHCR on 4 November that new arrivals should ideally be settled at least 50km inland away from the border. UNHCR is following up with the authorities on this issue.



### HEALTH & WASH (WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE)

#### Achievements and Impact

- Efforts are now underway to address the water and medical challenges. Several WASH technical teams have now been deployed to conduct needs assessment and inform the response.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Limited sanitary facilities and poor hygiene practices are a major concern across several communities in all hosting areas. In B'Hai, Grand Gedeh only 2 out of 7 pumps are functioning, in Neeko 2 out of 4 and in Toe Town Transit Centre none of the two are working. In the Nimba County border region, all six water pumps in Zwedru, Kparblee District (Buutuo Axis) are also out of service while 25 water pumps and wells need repair.



### CORE RELIEF ITEMS, FOOD ASSISTANCE AND CASH-BASED INTERVENTION

#### Achievements and Impact

- The distribution of 250 bags of rice in Toe Town and B'Hai was completed on 8 November, which will cover 1,000 persons for two weeks. On 10 November, 289 individuals received food rations in Nimba County. In addition, 106 families in Nimba County received mattresses and 75 families received pots, blankets and mats. Rice and other food items are also being trucked to Zwedru and Saclepea.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There are not enough core relief items available on the local market to meet the needs of the growing number of incoming Ivorian refugees. UNHCR plans to airlift core relief items for 10,000 people from its Dubai stockpile to Monrovia in the coming days while local purchases continue. Supplies will also be shipped by sea from the Accra stockpile.

**EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT (INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION)**

- The UNCT has adopted the Refugee Coordination Model to coordinate its response and several UN Agencies have now pledged their support.
- A first multi sectoral joint assessment mission is underway in the areas hosting Ivorian new arrivals to take stock of the situation and define the resources needed for the response. The mission to be led by the Liberian Minister of Interior will include IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNDSS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. The UNHCR Representative and the Senior Durable Solutions Officer travelled to the field ahead of the UNCT joint assessment mission to prepare the ground.
- UNHCR is also in bilateral discussions with WFP to secure their support with food distribution considering the number of new arrivals has passed the 5,000-threshold set out in the UNHCR-WFP MOU.

## Burkina Faso

- As of 11 November, no arrivals from Cote d'Ivoire have been recorded. However, some Burkinabe nationals, mainly women and children, have returned to reunite with their families. The exact number is to be confirmed.
- Despite the closure of land borders due to the measures implemented by the Government of Burkina Faso to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the border point of Yendere (Niangoloko Department) remained opened for the import/export of merchandise. It closed two days prior to the elections in Cote d'Ivoire and reopened on 6 November, allowing trucks to cross into Cote d'Ivoire. So far, the situation in the border area remains calm.
- UNHCR has developed a contingency plan (CP) which has been shared with the UNCT and is ready to be activated if needed. So far, UNHCR has established a transit center, which is ready to receive the most vulnerable, and has stock of core relief items (CRIs) ready for distribution. The regional CRI stock in Accra could also be used. Additional measures, such as the registration of new arrivals, the identification and referral of people with specific needs to the appropriate services, the construction of shelters, in-kind or cash assistance, and the rehabilitation of WASH infrastructures, amongst others, are also planned for in the CP.
- The Agency has sensitized all partners on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire and the necessity to alert UNHCR in case there are any cross-border movements. According to community leaders living in cities close to the border and their contacts in Cote d'Ivoire, the population in Cote d'Ivoire is growing increasingly anxious as the opposition continues to contest the results after declaring the creation of a Transitional National Council.

## Ghana


**PROTECTION**

### Achievements and Impact

- As of 10 November 2020, there has been a total of 563 (222 families) new arrivals in Ghana, a majority of whom came from the town of Niable in the eastern part of Cote d'Ivoire, while a smaller number fled from Abidjan. In total, 312 are settled in Ampain camp, 78 in Egiekrom camp, 82 in Fetentaa camp and 91 in host communities along the OseiKojokrom border area.
- UNHCR conducted border visits in the Western Region (Elubo and Jaway Wharf) where immigration officers indicated that despite the border closure, unofficial border crossing points were currently used by the refugees entering Ghana from the Ivory Coast. The Ghana Refugee Board (GRB) assured UNHCR that the National Security Council instructed immigration officers not to prevent the entry of asylum seekers to Ghana. This will be further monitored.
- The Ghana Refugee Board and UNHCR deployed a team to the Western Region to support the registration of new arrival at the border entry points and in the camps of Ampain, Fetentaa and OseiKojokrom.


**HEALTH & WASH (WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE)**

### Achievements and Impact

- Children between the ages of 0-59 months were screened by the Nutrition staff in collaboration with Ghana Health Service staff in Ampain and Egyeikrom from 6 to 7 November, and in Fetenaa camp on 10 November.

**SHELTER AND NFIS****Achievements and Impact**

- In the Ampain camp, UNHCR is clearing a piece of land allocated by the local authorities for the construction of a reception center where new arrivals can be accommodated and assisted before they are provided with family shelters.

**CORE RELIEF ITEMS, FOOD ASSISTANCE AND CASH-BASED INTERVENTION****Achievements and Impact**

- In anticipation of growing needs, the delivery of core relief items for a total of 2,500 people is underway using contracted transport companies.
- In Ampain camp the distribution of core relief items, including hand sanitizer and face masks for COVID-19 prevention, started on 10 November, and wet food distribution started on 11 November.
- In Egyeikrom, UNHCR's partner, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) started wet food distribution on 10 November. UNHCR provided plates and cups, and further distribution of core relief items is scheduled for 12 November.

## Guinea

**PROTECTION****Achievements and Impact**

- As of 11 November, a total of 249 Ivorians are reported to have entered Guinea, arriving mostly from the regions of Abidjan, Man, Touba, Danané, Bouake and Soubre. The majority are currently residing in Lola Prefecture. To date, 230 persons have been identified as in need of international protection, and 19 have requested asylum. UNHCR's partner, BRISR is planning a registration mission.
- In line with the contingency plan, UNHCR is stepping up its border monitoring activities and established a network of local authorities and communities were equipped with phone to alert UNHCR in case of influx. The Office is also preparing to extend its registration capacity should it have to be deployed at the border.
- UNHCR has presented its Contingency Plan to the UNCT and organized a meeting on the coordination of activities with UN Agencies in case of influx.

## Togo

- A total of 20 persons have fled to Togo so far. All were received by the National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR), UNHCR's government partner.
- The draft contingency plan of UNHCR to deal with the potential influx of Ivorians is in the final stages of discussions and finalization with the civil society, UN Agencies and the Government.

## Cote d'Ivoire

- According to UN estimates, 5,530 people are internally displaced within Cote d'Ivoire. Nearly 44% of the estimated IDPs are in the Issia Department, and 26% are in the Gagnoa Department.