

Liberia

February 2019

First convoy of 2019 leaves from PTP Camp to Cote d'Ivoire

WFP School Feeding Programme resumes in Little Wlebo School Elementary School (Maryland County)

9,139
Total number of Persons of Concern in Liberia

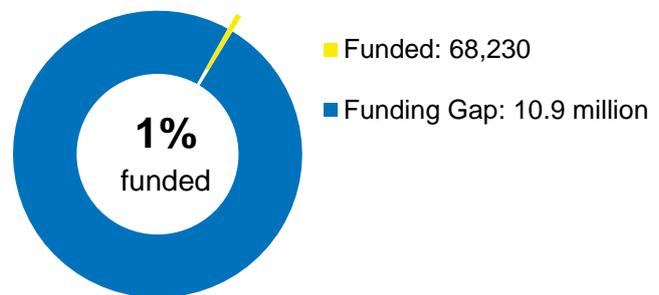
POPULATION OF CONCERN: 9,139

By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	9,030
Various nationality refugees	71
Asylum seekers	38
TOTAL:	9,139

FUNDING (AS OF FEBRUARY 2019)

\$11 million requested for the Liberia Operation



UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS USD

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MAJOR DONORS OF UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Sweden 90.4 million | Denmark 54.9 million | Norway 44.5 million | Netherlands 37.5 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 27.3 million | Switzerland 15.1 million

Algeria | Austria | Belgium | Canada | Estonia | Indonesia | Monaco | Montenegro | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | 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

43 National Staff
 7 International Staff

CONTACTS

Fatima Mohammed-Cole, UNHCR Liberia Representative, mohammef@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 and child protection and education.

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

CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS

US embassy releases report on allegations of the disappearance of new Liberian Dollar banknotes. Several arrests take place in connection to the report.

- On 28 February 2019, the US embassy released the independent report carried out by investigative auditing firm Kroll associates. The document looks into the alleged disappearance of more than \$100m worth of newly printed Liberian banknotes in 2018.
 - Related arrests, yet to be formally charged, include that of Charles Sirleaf, who is son of Liberia's former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and deputy governor of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) at the time of the alleged disappearance of banknotes in March 2018. Milton Weeks, former head of CBL, and Dorbor Hagba, CBL official, were also arrested.
- It can be recalled that the banknotes, ordered in November 2017 and intended for CBL, allegedly vanished from containers which arrived in the country in March 2018, two months after Mr Weah became president. The notes amounted to approximately US\$100 million (L\$16 billion).
 - In September 2018, President George Weah ordered an investigation and more than 30 former bank officials were barred from leaving the country.
- Despite the allegations, Kroll's report did not find any proof that the shipping containers full of banknotes had vanished.
 - Kroll's report found that CBL had acted unlawfully by printing and importing into Liberia three times the amount of banknotes it had been authorised to print. According to the document, CBL was not able to properly account for the money nor to present proper documentation on how the money was infused into the Liberian economy. The report also points to widespread inconsistencies at CBL and suspects shortcomings in the country's fiscal and monetary management processes continue to this day.
- The Government of Liberia also released its own report, which similarly said that it had found no evidence of the existence of containers full of banknotes.

Former President of Cote d'Ivoire remains in Belgium on conditional release.

- On 1 February 2019, the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague ordered the conditional release of former Ivorian president, Laurent Gbagbo. Their release remains pending a possible appeal against the acquittal announced by the ICC on 15 January 2019.
 - It can be recalled that although ICC announced his acquittal on 15 January 2019 and ordered his immediate release, on 16 January 2019 prosecutors challenged the decision.
- As a result, judges ruled that Mr Gbagbo was requested to live in an ICC member state. Belgium, where Gbagbo's wife currently resides, has agreed to host him.
- Gbagbo has spent seven years in ICC detention centre after his arrest on charges including ordering murder and gang-rape during 2011 post-election violence in Cote d'Ivoire, which left more than 3,000 people dead and 500,000 displaced.

MAIN ACTIVITIES



Protection

Monrovia (Montserrado)

- On 22 and 26 February 2019, UNHCR participated in the UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) Liberia workshops to develop outputs for Pillars I (Social) and II (Economic). UNHCR focused on outputs addressing access to services for vulnerable and rural people, part of the Persons of Concern to UNHCR. The outputs issued are in line with those included in the Local Integration Strategy.
 - It can be recalled that the current UNDAF (2013-2017) in Liberia was extended to December 2019 to allow alignment with the Liberian government's macroeconomic strategy, the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), launched in October 2018. A new UNDAF (2020-2024) is under formulation.
- As part of the local integration of Ivorian refugees, UNHCR facilitated the issuance of two work permits by the Ministry of Labour. While LRRRC and UNHCR assess the requests for work permits and UNHCR supports refugees with the fees needed to issue the work permit, refugees are then responsible for finding the job themselves.



VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION

Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- On 14 February 2019, the first voluntary repatriation convoy of 2019 left PTP Camp with 66 Ivorian refugees (25 families).
- Registration of candidates for repatriation is ongoing in all locations.
- It can be recalled that in 2018, 953 Ivorian's refugee returned home from Liberia.



(L) Ivorian refugees get on the convoy to return home.

(Bottom) UNHCR Liberia and UNHCR Cote d'Ivoire at the border.

© UNHCR



 **Education****Harper (Maryland)**

- Resumption of World Food Programme (WFP) School Feeding Programme (SFP) at Little Wlebo School Elementary School. The first food ration is for February and March 2019, benefitting refugee and Liberian students from the host communities.

**Community services****Monrovia (Montserrado)**

- On 6 February 2019, UNHCR attended the Observance of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, at Monrovia City Hall, under the theme “End female genital mutilation”. The National Chairman for the National Council of Chief & Elders of Liberia stated that the Council is willing to end FGM in Liberia but the process will be piloted.

**Local integration - Livelihoods****Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)**

- In PTP Camp, UNHCR continues the monitoring of the poultries and the piggeries, previously managed by SEARCH (Special Emergency Activity to Restore Children's Hope).
 - **Agriculture activities:** Participants running poultries received training on vaccines management. Local CBO LARO (Liberia Agriculture and Relief Organization), which implements a poultry project with funds from the Julia Taft Fund (US Embassy), LRRRC and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) continue to support UNHCR in the regular follow up livelihoods activities. These take place around PTP Camp (poultries and piggeries) and in three host communities, Karla Village, Seven Houses and Youbor, which received seeds and tools in 2018 under the local integration approach.



(L) LARO Agriculture Field Technician shares, together with UNHCR, techniques to plant their crops in Karla Village to host community members. (R) Interior of one of the five poultry structures ran by refugees in PTP Camp. © UNHCR

Nimba County

- UNHCR and partners have observed a regular increase in savings in the communities in the area. The culture of using Village Savings & Loans Associations (VSLA) is well established and participants save on a weekly basis.

- The MoA poultry expert conducted a poultry management training for refugees and host community members. Advocacy continues to enable participants to receive technical coaching from MoA.



Local Integration - Shelter

Nimba County

- UNHCR and AIRD technical teams are supporting refugees in the construction of the kitchens of 12 durable housing units in Bahn settlement.
- The construction of two permanent classrooms in Bahn Extension School continues.



(L) Kitchen construction site briefing meeting with all key stake holders: UNHCR, LRRRC, AIRD and Beneficiaries. (R) Ongoing construction of 2 class rooms at Bahn camp at foundation stage. © UNHCR

Programme

Monrovia (Montserrat)

- On 26, 27 and 28 February 2019, UNHCR provided support the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), LRRRC and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with assorted office stationery and computers. The needs were identified during the local integration retreat in November 2018.
- The support aims to strengthen the relationship with the agencies towards the implementation of the local integration strategy and joint advocacy towards the revision of the 1973 Alien and Nationality Laws (ANL), which restricts Liberian women passing their nationality to their children, who then are at risk of becoming stateless.



(L) The MIA receives the items from UNHCR. (R) LRRRC ED receives the items from UNHCR. © UNHCR