



Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: **Humanitarian aid to refugees, returnees and vulnerable groups in Guinée and Liberia**

Location of operation: **WESTERN AFRICA**

Amount of Decision: **EUR 2,000,000**

Decision reference number: **ECHO/-WF/BUD/2006/04000**

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

The 14 years of civil war in Liberia ended in August 2003 with the signature of the Accra Peace Agreement, leading to the creation of a National Transitional Government. The United Nations Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) deployed 15,000 peace keeping troops to enforce the cease-fire, secure the country, and allow access for humanitarian assistance throughout the country. Over more than 100,000 former fighters have been disarmed and demobilized. On 16 January 2006, almost two and a half years later, the inauguration of democratically elected President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf marked the end of this political transition period.

The war in Liberia killed around 250,000 people and resulted in the displacement of a third of its population. At the height of the conflict an estimated 500,000 Liberians were displaced internally and took refuge in camps, spontaneous settlements, with families, in host communities and in public places, while hundred thousands of people fled into neighboring countries, mainly Guinée, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. Even though the security situation has significantly improved thanks to the presence of the peacekeeping troops, there is an increased wave of criminality reported in and around major cities in the country.

Guinée, the perpetual host country for refugees from the regions, is just managing to maintain an extremely fragile political and economic equilibrium. Guinée forestière in particular is a

region characterized by extreme poverty, malnutrition pockets, and is vulnerable to outbreaks of water borne diseases. Since the beginning of the organized voluntary repatriation to Liberia in November 2004, 80,274¹ out of the 340,000 Liberian refugees in official camps have returned from neighbouring countries with the assistance of UNHCR², while around 200,000 Liberian, including refugees unregistered in official camps, returned spontaneously.

Due to various constraints, the UNHCR could not stick to its planned figures, most of the targeted beneficiaries remaining skeptical on the outcome of the electoral process in Liberia, and/or did not want to lose the harvest period, nor the school year for their children by returning before the end of the rainy season. As of mid September 2006, another 140,793 refugees were still registered in camps, out of which 30,000 were in Guinée forestière. The organized repatriation process is expected to end in June 2007, and until that date, UNHCR plans to repatriate 60,000 more Liberian refugees.

Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado and Nimba counties in Liberia are receiving the highest numbers of returnees. The return process of 321,187 Internally Displaced people (IDPs) to their areas of origin in Liberia was declared finished in April 2006, and all camps were officially closed. The repatriation and reinstallation of those refugees and returnees still requires humanitarian assistance and support, since the majority of the country lacks adequate services including healthcare, drinking water and sanitation, shelter and livelihood opportunities. In addition, access throughout the country is difficult with many roads impassable and the sections rehabilitated rapidly deteriorating because of the heavy downpour of rains.

In Liberia, the bulk of the DG ECHO³ humanitarian aid was allocated to survival, and to start laying the foundations for structural developments. Pursuing this engagement in Liberia is a prime necessity, as the current allocations are not sufficient to address all of the humanitarian needs, particularly because financial assistance by other main humanitarian donors decreased considerably between 2004 and 2005⁴. In 2006, most of the other donors have been shifting their attention to longer-term development projects. Most of the outside funding is earmarked for governance issues such as the security sector and judicial reform, and very little funds are available for remaining purely humanitarian needs.

In Guinée, the Development Aid services of the European Commission plan to start implementing in July 2007 a 25,000,000 EUR project to support community rehabilitation, peace building and income generating activities in conflict-affected areas of Guinée forestière. Till then and in order to facilitate the *Link between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development* (LRRD), DG ECHO will maintain its support to the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees, to care and maintenance activities in the camps as well as assistance to vulnerable groups among the resident population.

1.2. - Identified needs:

¹ UNHCR, September 2006

² United nations Refugees Organization

³ EC Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid – DG ECHO

⁴ The financial support from OFDA to Liberia humanitarian crisis decreased from USD 24,5 million in 2004 to USD 9 million in 2005 and USD 2 million in 2006.

Liberia is no longer ranked on the Human Development Index due to lack of comprehensive data. However, according to the 2006 National Human Development Report, life expectancy at birth was 47,7 in 1999/2000 and the adult literacy rate is 44,6% for males and 18,8 % for females⁵; GDP per capita in 2003 was 131 USD. The precarious health situation is illustrated by the fact that in 2005, 90% of the existing medical services were funded through international aid, and one third of this alone was DG ECHO funding. 86% of households have been displaced since 1990 in Liberia, and on average they have been displaced twice⁶.

Due to the increased confidence in the stability of the country in early 2006, UNHCR turned to promote the return of refugees rather than just facilitating it. This accelerated the movement of thousands of people, leading to additional stress on the scarce existing basic social infrastructures in the areas of return.

Despite some economic activity returning to parts of Monrovia and the assistance being delivered in the country, only 32% of households have access to safe drinking water and 76% have no access to sanitary facilities⁷. Other basic facilities such as shelter and schools are not available; road networks and bridges are to be rebuilt. Government capacity to take over from international agencies is still very limited.

A Survey was conducted by WFP between February and June 2006 to gather baseline data on food security and nutrition. According to the preliminary results, only 8.6% of households have been found food secure with good food access and good food consumption. 41% of households estimate that the size of their land is smaller than before the war.

Returnees are amongst the most vulnerable as they came back too late for the main agricultural season. As most of them are returning with no or little assets, they will need to receive agricultural inputs to start their farms as well as other types of emergency food-security related support to improve their livelihood options.

In Guinée forestière, access to farming land, employment and social services, such as health, education, potable water and sanitation, remains limited within and outside the camps for both refugees and resident populations. In 2004, 2005 and 2006, isolated uprisings took place in Conakry as well as in various towns in all regions of the country including Guinée forestière. The rainy season brings every year outbreaks of diseases considered as almost eradicated – polio and yellow fever – or much more common epidemics, like cholera. The high mortality, morbidity and malnutrition rates are mainly the result of little or no access to primary health services, water, shelter and land. Illegal cross-border arms trade, traffic in small arms and light weapons and human trafficking have increased insecurity in Guinée forestière despite measures taken to reinforce the borders.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

⁵ National Human Development Report, 2006

⁶ WFP, Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS), September 2006.

⁷ WFP, Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS), September 2006.

Three main beneficiary profiles in need of significant and sustained assistance can be distinguished:

- 1) **Liberian refugees** as well as **vulnerable groups** among the resident population in Guinée forestière.
- 2) **Returnees households in Liberia** and particularly those headed by women, who are amongst the most vulnerable in terms of access to safe water and sanitation, health, shelter, and in terms of food security.
- 3) **Resident communities in Liberia** who were completely isolated during the conflict but who have to provide assistance to the returning population. Their number is not known with any precision.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

An important pre-condition to the stabilisation of return is that the security situation is maintained in Liberia. The major destabilization factors such as the movement of ex-combatants in the sub-region must therefore be controlled, and the reintegration of ex-combatants must be effectively concluded. The UNMIL peacekeeping mandate has been renewed until March 2007, but the envisaged down-sizing of its troops in certain counties in late 2007 early 2008 will be the first test case for the sustainability of the achieved stability. Reports on rising crime in Monrovia have also to be taken seriously as a factor of instability.

The problems of the return and reinstallation of returnees in Liberia are only a part of the bigger picture of relief and recovery where the challenge posed by reinstalling more than hundreds thousands of uprooted people is immense. The restoration of livelihood is the backbone of the return process and all support activities must be well coordinated among all of the parties involved: the humanitarian actors, the Government, the donors, the civil society and the local communities.

Another assumption is that the consolidation of the establishment of the new government in Liberia continues without major disruption and leads to an improvement of public financial and macro-economic management.

The rapid deterioration of the roads during the rainy season was a considerable obstacle to the implementation of humanitarian operations during the past two years, mainly in Lofa, Maryland and Nimba, where some activities were temporarily suspended as the target zones could not be reached. If the initial attempts to improve the roads and/or to maintain them are not followed up, this situation may well be repeated in 2007.

Taking into consideration the risks of social and political instability in the region as a whole and Guinée and Côte d'Ivoire in particular, humanitarian actors consolidated emergency plans in 2005 and 2006. Through the implementation of this decision, DG ECHO will keep monitoring closely the humanitarian situation and it may react to unforeseen needs through the regional epidemics decision or other appropriate tools.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:⁸

⁶ Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof
[ECHO-WF/BUD/2006/04000](#)

2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective:

To provide humanitarian aid to refugees and resident communities in Guinée forestière, and to returnees and vulnerable population in Liberia

Specific objectives:

1- To reinforce the reinstallation of returnees and refugees in local communities in Liberia through the provision of integrated humanitarian assistance

2- To facilitate the repatriation of Liberian refugees and to provide assistance to vulnerable groups among the refugee and local population in Guinée forestière

2.2. - Components:

The identified areas in need of humanitarian support have been identified as a complement to the operations already implemented through the ongoing decisions pertaining to Liberia and Guinée:

- **Food security:** Reduce the vulnerability regarding access to food with support to agricultural and livelihood activities; There have been several actors in this sector providing tools and seeds on a low scale in the most accessible communities, but a need for agricultural inputs as well as training to improve agricultural techniques and marketing remain necessary as the traditional household farm is the predominant production system in Liberia. Areas to be prioritized for Food aid and Food security actions are Lofa, Gbarpolu and River Gee, followed by Bomi and Grand Kru and then Nimba, Bong, Sinoe and Maryland.

Indicators of success will be related to the reduction in dependence on humanitarian aid, an increase of the share of self-produced food among the total food-basket of a family, a reduction in post-harvest losses and thus a shortened hunger gap.

- **Access to basic services:** Continue restoring access to clean water, sanitation systems and shelter to allow the return and reinstallation process. Continue restoring the healthcare system within a larger strategy including development actors.

(Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).

Rate of financing: In accordance with Article 169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.

Humanitarian aid operations funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) (in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation) and by United Nations agencies based on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). The standards and criteria established in DG ECHO's standard Framework Partnership Agreement to which NGO's and International organisations have to adhere and the procedures and criteria needed to become a partner may be found at http://europa.eu/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm

This will be achieved through the improvements of the abandoned infrastructures; the provision of inputs required to run the health and outreach activities and to respond to emergency situations; the provision of clean water through temporary or permanent structures; the construction of communal hygiene facilities in accordance with local customs. Whenever possible, beneficiaries are taking part in the implementation of these activities.

In general terms, key indicators of success include an increase in access to the basic services, and a reduction in the incidence of outbreaks of diseases related to poor sanitation and lack of safe water.

- **Care and maintenance in refugee camps and repatriation process:** The end of the assisted repatriation process is foreseen for mid 2007. International support remains necessary to ensure that refugees have access to basic social services and are repatriated in safety and dignity.

Humanitarian aid can provide some of the answers. There are a number of coordinated actions that can be taken in the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) context to alleviate the immediate suffering and provide the initial impetus for a resumption of economic and other normal activities.

In order to lead to development programmes, humanitarian interventions will have to start switching from being purely reactive to vulnerabilities, to being in line with national strategies. However, this will depend on the new government capacity to formulate policies and on the donors' confidence to make funds available.

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 12 months

Humanitarian operations funded by this decision must be implemented within this period.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 December 2006.

Start Date: 1 December 2006.

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this Decision is suspended due to *force majeure* or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the humanitarian aid operations.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. In this respect, the procedure established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

4 - Previous interventions/Decisions of the Commission within the context of the current crisis

List of previous DG ECHO operations in **GUINÉE/LIBERIA**

Decision Number	Decision Type	2004 EUR	2005 EUR	2006 EUR
ECHO/WF/BUD/2004/01000	Regional Global Plan	18,000,000		
ECHO/LBR/EDF/2004/01000	Non Emergency	4,300,000		
ECHO/WF/BUD/2005/01000	Regional Global Plan		25,000,000	
ECHO/LBR/EDF/2005/01000	Non Emergency		2,700,000	
ECHO/LBR/BUD/2006/01000	Global Plan			16,400,000
ECHO/LBR/EDF/2006/01000	Non Emergency			1,400,000
ECHO/GIN/BUD/2006/01000	Non Emergency			1,500,000
ECHO/WF/BUD/2006/02000	Regional Non Emergency			900,000
	Subtotal	22,300,000	27,700,000	20,200,000
	Grand Total	70,200,000		

Dated : 18/10/2006

Source : HOPE

5 - Overview of donors' contributions

Donors in **LIBERIA/GUINÉE** the last 12 months

1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria					
Belgium	500,000	ECHO	20,200,000	OFDA	2,000,000
Cyprus				US/PRM	17,000,000
Czech Rep.				USAID/FFP	21,000,000
Denmark	1,139,410	Other services	p.m.		
Estonia					
Finland	400,000				
France	219,834				
Germany	3,558,454				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	4,654,972				
Italy					
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg					
Malta					
Netherlands	3,842,545				
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain					
Sweden	7,384,358				
U.K.					
Subtotal	21,699,573	Subtotal	20,200,000	Subtotal	40,000,000
		Grand total	81,899,573		

Dated : 18/10/2006

(*) Source : ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://hac.cec.eu.int>

Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

6 - Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 2,000,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To provide humanitarian aid to refugees and resident communities in Guinée forestière, and to returnees and vulnerable population in Liberia</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners⁹
Specific objective 1: To reinforce the reinstallation of returnees and refugees in local communities in Liberia through the provision of integrated humanitarian assistance	1,600,000	Liberia	Support to the food security and nutrition situation ; Restoration and improvement of basic services; Protection of the vulnerable;	- ACF - ADRA Denmark - DRC - GERMAN AGRO ACTION - TEARFUND - UK
Specific objective 2: To facilitate the repatriation of Liberian refugees and to provide assistance to vulnerable groups among the refugee and local population in Guinée forestière	400,000	Guinée	Repatriation process; Care and maintenance activities in the camps; Targeted assistance to vulnerable groups among the resident population;	- ACH - MSF-CH - UN - UNHCR - BEL
TOTAL:	2,000,000			

⁹ ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE, (ESP), ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, (FR), ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY - DENMARK, DANSK FLYGTNINGEJAELEP, DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE / GERMAN AGRO ACTION, (DEU), MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES (CHE), TEARFUND (GBR), UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES - BELGIUM

7 - Evaluation

Under article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid the Commission is required to "regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations." These evaluations are structured and organised in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of DG ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Programme is established after a consultative process. This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial programme, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at:

http://europa.eu/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

8 - Budget Impact article **23 02 01**

-	CE (EUR)
Initial available appropriations for 2006	470,429,000
Reinforcement from emergency aid reserve	140,000,000
Transfers Commission	-
Total available appropriations	610,429,000
Total executed to date (17 October 2006)	577,317,000
Available remaining	33,112,000
Total amount of the Decision	2,000,000

COMMISSION DECISION
of
on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Union in

LIBERIA/GUINÉE (WESTERN AFRICA)

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid¹⁰, and in particular Article 14 thereof:

Whereas:

- (1) Liberia has been seriously affected by a protracted internal conflict that erupted in the late eighties and lasted for 14 years and caused the death of more than 250,000 people;
- (2) The conflict has led to the displacement of more than 900,000 people, out of which 340,000 were official refugees in neighbouring countries, and more than 500,000 were internally displaced;
- (3) Guinée forestière is still hosting an approximate 30,000 Liberian refugees at the end of September 2006. Most of them are expected to be repatriated by UNHCR before end of June 2007;
- (4) In Liberia, all these years of conflict and displacements of population totally deprived people of access to basic services that have been looted, destroyed or abandoned, which in turn is leading to high mortality and morbidity rates, and is slowing down the return process of Liberians to their area of origin;
- (5) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of **12** months;
- (6) It is estimated that an amount of **EUR 2,000,000** from budget line **23 02 01** of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 250,000 beneficiaries taking into account the available budget, other donors-contributions and other factors;

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total amount of EUR 2,000,000 for humanitarian aid operations to refugees, returnees and vulnerable groups in Guinée and Liberia by using line 23 02 01 of the 2006 general budget of the European Union.

2. In accordance with Article 2 (a) and (e) of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- To reinforce the reinstallation of returnees and refugees in local communities in Liberia through the provision of integrated humanitarian assistance

- To facilitate the repatriation of Liberian refugees and to provide assistance to vulnerable groups among the refugee and local population in Guinée forestière

The amounts allocated to each of these specific objectives are listed in the annex to this decision.

Article 2

The Commission may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, re-allocate the funding levels established for one of the specific objectives set out in Article 1(2) to another objective mentioned therein, provided that the re-allocated amount represents less than 20% of the global amount covered by this Decision.

Article 3

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 12 months, starting on 1 December 2006.

2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 December 2006.

3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended owing to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this Decision.

Article 4

1. This Decision shall take effect on the date of adoption.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

<p>Principal objective: To provide humanitarian aid to refugees and their host communities in Guinée forestière, and to returnees and vulnerable population in Liberia</p>	
<p>Specific objectives</p>	<p>Amount per specific objective (EUR)</p>
<p>To reinforce the reinstallation of returnees and refugees in local communities in Liberia through the provision of integrated humanitarian assistance</p>	<p>1,600,000</p>
<p>To facilitate the repatriation of Liberian refugees and to provide assistance to vulnerable groups among the refugee and local population in Guinée forestière</p>	<p>400,000</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>2,000,000</p>