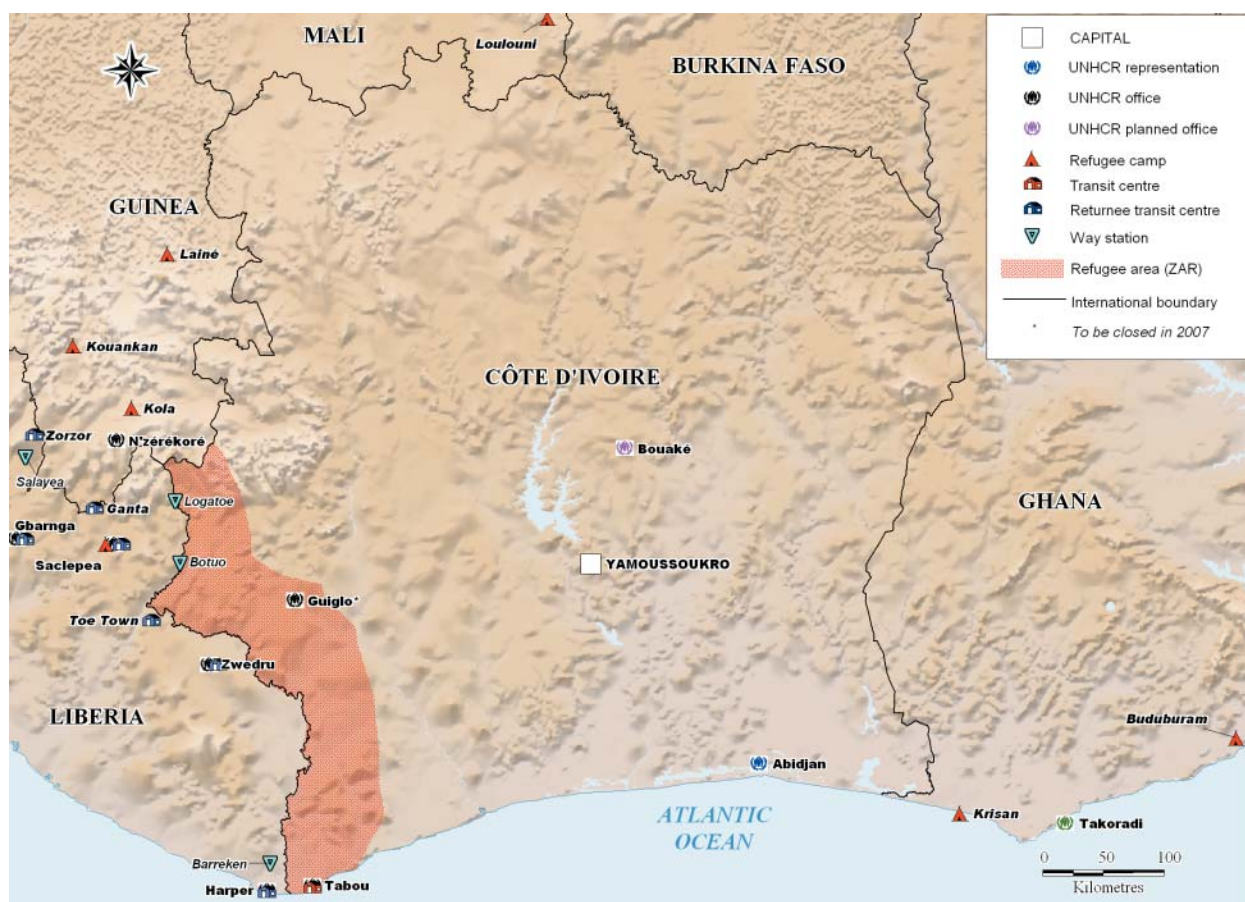


Côte d'Ivoire



Working environment

The context

There has been no resolution to the political crisis which began in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002. The peace agreements signed by the Government and the rebel *Forces Nouvelles* since January 2003 have been ineffective. Elections scheduled for 30 October 2005 were cancelled and rescheduled for 31 October 2006 under a plan established by the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire, set up under the aegis of the United Nations. As per the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 1633 (2005), elections were to follow the disarmament of both rebel and militia groups, the establishment of nationality for some 3.5 million people and the reunification of the country. A prime minister was installed in December 2005 with the aim of advancing the peace process.

However, in 2006 elections have been postponed once again. Côte d'Ivoire is still split between the Government-held south and the north, with the latter controlled by the former rebels. French and UN peacekeepers maintain a fragile buffer zone between the two sides. One flashpoint is Guiglo, in the west of the

country, where in January 2006 UN peacekeepers shot dead five Ivorians when they repelled attackers trying to overrun the UN compound. Humanitarian staff and UN peacekeepers were targeted by armed gangs and had to be evacuated from the area. Some UN personnel have since returned, although the situation in the west remains volatile.

As a result of the ongoing conflict, some 709,000 Ivorians have been displaced in the central, southern and western parts of the country. Many are former refugees returning from Liberia and Guinea who have not been able to reach their villages of origin. Amidst mounting concern over threats to the human rights of civilians, and of IDPs in particular, in March 2006 a protection cluster was set up under UNHCR leadership.

At the time of writing, based on a decision of the African Union (AU), the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1721 (2006) giving more powers to the Prime Minister to organize elections by 31 October 2007.

The needs

Following consultations with its main humanitarian partners, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and

representatives of the international community, UNHCR will focus on the provision of international protection and material assistance to persons of concern, including the IDPs under the Protection Cluster, while pursuing the search for durable solutions for refugees.

The economic and sexual exploitation of women, the lack of community-based child protection mechanisms and limited freedom of movement are among the major protection challenges. The living conditions of urban refugees in the different suburbs of Abidjan have deteriorated steadily. Many are unable to meet their most basic needs, such as food and shelter. The situation of this very heterogeneous and dispersed group needs to be assessed more accurately, particularly with regard to women, children and those with special needs. Alternative solutions, such as local integration, will be sought for an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Liberian refugees who will not opt for voluntary repatriation.

Total requirements: USD 7,013,640

(Annual programme only. The financial requirements for the IDP supplementary programme are being finalized.)

Main objectives

UNHCR's 2007 strategy in Côte d'Ivoire is two-pronged. The first component is to address the needs of urban and camp-based refugees, including the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees and the local integration of those unable or unwilling to return home. The second aspect is to assist more than 700,000 IDPs (see box).

Overall objectives

- Continue to provide international protection and assistance to urban refugees in Abidjan.
- Continue to promote voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees in safety and dignity.

- Facilitate the local integration of Liberian refugees opting to remain in Côte d'Ivoire through self-reliance projects.
- Provide community-based assistance in the water, sanitation, health and education sectors, with particular focus on the prevention of, and response to, sexual and gender-based violence.
- Implement income generation projects to promote self-reliance for approximately 22,000 refugees.

Key targets for 2007

- The residual group of Liberian refugees are locally integrated and naturalized.
- Gaps in the sanitation, water, health and education sectors are addressed with the help of the Government, as well as other humanitarian and development actors.
- Two former refugee-hosting sites in Guiglo and Tabou are rehabilitated.
- All urban refugees are assisted.
- 60 secondary school graduates are helped to obtain technical and professional certificates.
- 100 refugees are granted microcredit loans.

Strategy and activities

Liberian refugees

The ongoing voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees will continue. UNHCR will provide legal and technical expertise to the local and central authorities in order to ensure the successful local integration of those refugees wishing to remain in Côte d'Ivoire, in accordance with national legislation and international standards.

As Nicla camp in western Côte d'Ivoire is scheduled for closure in December 2006, UNHCR will work with the Government to ensure the relocation of the residual

Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2007		Dec 2007	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Liberia	21,620	21,620	8,520	8,520
	Various	1,680	1,680	1,630	1,630
Asylum-seekers	Various	750	100	750	100
IDPs ¹		709,380	709,380	709,380	709,380
Total		733,430	732,780	720,280	719,630

¹ This figure only refers to those displaced in the southern part of the country.



In anticipation of repatriation and local integration, UNHCR has provided skills training at a centre in the soon-to-be closed Niela Camp. *UNHCR / S.Kpandji*

group of refugees to surrounding villages. The Office will continue community-based assistance in villages hosting refugees until mid-2007.

UNHCR will also assist the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to rehabilitate refugee-affected areas and refurbish basic infrastructure to ease the local integration of refugees. The Government will also be helped to find transitional and long-term solutions by mobilizing UN and other humanitarian agencies. UNHCR will support self-reliance initiatives and advocate for the inclusion of refugees in national programmes. Resettlement will be used as a protection tool in special cases.

Ivorian returnees

Although the present situation in Côte d'Ivoire is not encouraging Ivorian refugees to return home, a sizeable number have returned and become part of the

internally displaced population. In addition to providing country-of-origin information to Ivorian refugees in asylum countries, UNHCR will prepare to receive any who may return spontaneously.

Refugees of other nationalities

Very few refugees in the urban area have opted to return to their countries of origin, despite the deteriorating conditions in Côte d'Ivoire. The remaining groups will continue to receive protection and basic material assistance.

The UNHCR office in Côte d'Ivoire, in close collaboration with the office in Conakry, is monitoring the volatile situation in Guinea. The current contingency plan envisages that a few thousand Guinean nationals may flee to the north-western part of Côte d'Ivoire, where access may be difficult.

Internally displaced people

A comprehensive plan has been designed with governmental and other partners to respond to the protection needs of more than 700,000 IDPs. The protection of women, children and people with special needs remains a high priority. Most, if not all, IDPs will be unable to return to their places of origin in the immediate future. Therefore, they will need to be protected and assisted in their current places of residence.

The inter-agency strategy is to provide short-term assistance while seeking to address the longer-term needs of IDPs. For a start, UNHCR will undertake to assess the exact number of IDPs in the north of the country. It will also help the national authorities build their capacity to deal with IDPs.

In the longer term, the strategy is to ensure and monitor voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin in safety and dignity while pursuing sustainable solutions for their reintegration. UNHCR will equally assist IDPs in the recovery of the properties they lawfully owned before their flight and ensure that they have access to fundamental rights such as access to public services, freedom of movement, recognition of Ivorian citizenship or legal status as foreigner, appropriate documentation.

The main strategic objectives for UNHCR's IDP programme are to:

- Promote the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*.
- Contribute to the creation of adequate conditions for IDPs' return to their places of origin.
- Develop a comprehensive response plan with the Government to ensure that human rights violations, including those related to property, are reported and acted upon.
- Advocate for an adequate response by the humanitarian community to the assistance needs of IDPs, both when they are displaced and once they are back in their homes.

Constraints

The lack of security is a major concern and continues to affect UNHCR's operations, especially in the west, where militias and different armed groups are active. Meanwhile, the lack of refugee legislation has made the protection of urban refugees increasingly difficult.

The disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation of rebel and militia groups and the process of documentation and provision of identity cards, due before the presidential elections, are still pending.

Organization and implementation

UNHCR presence

Number of offices	4
Total staff	92
International	17
National	69
UNVs	3
JPOs	3

Coordination

UNHCR coordinates its humanitarian interventions with the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Solidarity and War Victims, NGOs and civil society partners. The IDP Protection Cluster includes UNICEF, OCHA, UNFPA, IOM, IRC and CARE. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), SCF-UK and SCF-Sweden are also partners. Even before the convening of the Protection Cluster, UNHCR had led an inter-agency process which resulted in funding proposals to the newly established Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Partners

Implementing partners

Government: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Solidarity and War Victims, *Service d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides*.

NGOs: *Afrique Solidarité Assistance*, *Association de soutien à l'autopromotion sanitaire urbaine*, Caritas, International Rescue Committee, Search For Common Ground.

Others: *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*.

Operational partners

Government: Prefectures of Tabou and Guiglo.

NGOs: CARE, Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children Fund (UK, Sweden).

Others: IOM, OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOCI, WHO.

Budget (USD)		
Activities and services	Annual Programme Budget	
	2006	2007
Protection, monitoring and coordination	2,808,360	1,932,891
Community services	266,235	267,500
Crop production	261,663	131,250
Domestic needs	279,783	110,000
Education	281,940	462,500
Food	149,409	101,250
Forestry	0	110,000
Health	336,836	280,000
Income generation	110,762	0
Legal assistance	405,792	293,750
Operational support (to agencies)	547,200	293,750
Sanitation	181,247	106,250
Shelter and infrastructure	150,900	100,000
Transport and logistics	962,335	575,000
Water	565,895	168,750
Total operations	7,308,357	4,932,891
Programme support	2,374,456	2,080,749
Total	9,682,813	7,013,640

