



Benin
Burkina Faso
Cape Verde
Côte d'Ivoire
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Liberia
Mali
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo

West Africa



Refugees from Côte d'Ivoire learn about the **importance of sanitation** in Ampain camp in Ghana.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- At the end of 2011, there were over a million people of concern to UNHCR in West Africa, including some 754,600 in Côte d'Ivoire. Some 1,500 refugees were assisted to repatriate, mainly to Mauritania.
- UNHCR's local integration strategies in the subregion helped refugees in the Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone to obtain better access to land, shelter, education, health care, vocational training and protection.



- Throughout 2011, UNHCR led the subregional and national response to the humanitarian emergency that followed the disputed 2010 presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire. More than 250,000 refugees fled the country to Ghana, Guinea, Togo and Liberia, where they were recognized on a *prima facie* basis. In the second half of the year, UNHCR signed tripartite agreements with the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Liberia for the voluntary repatriation of some 135,000 Ivorians, including 96,000 from Liberia.
- UNHCR advocated with Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for the ratification of both the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, and for accession to the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

Working environment

The political and security situation in West Africa remained fragile for most of the year. Insecurity and violence persisted in Côte d'Ivoire, following the contested results of the elections in November 2010, that led to significant refugee movements into neighbouring countries in the first half of 2011. The total number of Ivorian refugees in Liberia leaped to some 224,000 at the height of the crisis. Ghana hosted more than 17,000 Ivorians, while other countries in the subregion accepted and recognized over 8,000 refugees fleeing Côte d'Ivoire.

By the end of the year, an estimated 281,000 refugees, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo, remained dispersed in urban and rural

areas in several West African countries. The number of asylum-seekers in the subregion rose to some 22,500 during the year, of whom approximately 30 per cent were non-ECOWAS nationals.

To a lesser extent, socio-political tensions in Nigeria and the food crisis in the Sahel region also caused some population displacement. While the economic slowdown and high unemployment rates in the subregion had a negative impact on efforts to enhance refugees' self-reliance in urban areas, there was remarkable progress in building asylum capacity. National refugee boards and government bodies became more involved in refugee status determination (RSD), while asylum systems and procedures grew in fairness throughout the subregion. No West African country refused to consider asylum applications from particular nationalities and, as in previous years, no cases of *refoulement*, expulsion or unjustified detention were reported in 2011.

Achievements and impact

To support the identification of durable solutions for refugees in protracted situations, UNHCR's counselling and profiling exercises in the subregion provided more accurate data on registered refugees and a better understanding of their needs. Training in skills as a means of creating livelihoods was strongly encouraged. In Ghana, some 1,500 refugees completed skills training and received a certificate from the National Vocational Training Institute.

Progress was also made in implementing the comprehensive strategy to bring closure to the Liberian refugee situation. This has enabled UNHCR in early 2012, to recommend the invocation with effect from 30 June 2012, of

the “ceased circumstances” cessation clauses for Liberian refugees who had fled the civil wars of 1989 and 2003. Some 60,000 Liberian refugees still remain in exile, mainly in West African countries.

Partnership for the protection of refugees was also improved in 2011, as illustrated by the Government of Ghana’s invitation to UN agencies to participate in the national coordination mechanism established to prepare for and respond to the Côte d’Ivoire emergency. This contributed to the effective protection of some 17,000 Ivorian asylum-seekers.

UNHCR intensified its discussions with ECOWAS and with the African Development Bank to explore possible further partnerships in the subregion. As a result, an agreement was signed with ECOWAS to implement activities promoting durable solutions for refugees in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In 2011, UNHCR’s advocacy efforts on statelessness were rewarded when Nigeria, Benin, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Togo ratified the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, boosting efforts to address such issues in West Africa.

There was also further tangible progress in the local integration of refugees. In Ghana, more than 11,000 Liberian refugees expressed their wish to integrate locally as ECOWAS citizens. Furthermore, access to primary health care for vulnerable refugees in Ghana was improved with the enrolment of 924 additional refugees in the National Health Insurance Scheme, and the renewal of the membership of more than 2,400 others.

Responding to specific protection needs was part of the strategy for refugees in urban areas in the subregion. To ensure a harmonized response based on the principles of UNHCR’s urban refugee policy, a regional assistance policy for refugees in urban areas was finalized. The policy sets out common standards designed to ensure that these refugees enjoy basic rights and have access to services.

Constraints

Durable solutions for refugees in protracted situations require both a secure environment and financial resources. The fragile socio-economic situation in West Africa remained a major constraint to local integration, particularly in urban areas. The absence of sufficient funding for the relocation of refugees from camps or urban sites to new communities also hampered local integration processes. Unstable political environments in many countries in the region affected repatriation and reintegration programmes, compelling many refugees to look to resettlement in third countries as their only hope.

Many UNHCR offices in the subregion experienced a high turnover of staff in 2011, mostly related to deployments to respond to the Côte d’Ivoire emergency.

Operations

UNHCR’s operations in **Côte d’Ivoire** and **Liberia** are described in separate chapters.

The Regional Office in **Senegal** strengthened its coordination and management capacity. With the exception of Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia, all other countries in West Africa now fall under the responsibility of the Regional Office. UNHCR recruited staff during the year to increase its capacity to oversee the response to the growing needs in the subregion.

In 2011, UNHCR focused its interventions in the **Gambia** on livelihoods, self-reliance and the local integration of some 7,000 Senegalese refugees in rural areas. Some 60 per cent of refugee households had access to land for housing and built their own houses. All had access to land for farming purposes. The Gambia Commission for Refugees issued 600 identity documents to adult refugees who arrived in 2011, and to those who had arrived in 2006, replacing lost cards or issuing new ones to those who had become of age. In 2011, with the new influx of some 1,000 Senegalese refugees due to fighting in Casamance between rebel and Government

Budget and expenditure in West Africa | USD

Country		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
Côte d’Ivoire	Budget	13,418,143	4,308,243	1,599,966	27,927,856	47,254,208
	Expenditure	4,746,018	1,555,958	1,297,236	5,370,679	12,969,891
Ghana	Budget	13,121,409	0	1,764,316	0	14,885,725
	Expenditure	8,263,404	0	462,017	0	8,725,421
Guinea	Budget	5,318,968	0	2,911,645	0	8,230,613
	Expenditure	3,433,963	0	2,010,580	0	5,444,543
Liberia	Budget	84,939,469	0	5,283,256	0	90,222,725
	Expenditure	46,564,552	0	4,551,843	0	51,116,395
Senegal Regional Office¹	Budget	56,513,304	734,910	7,888,856	1,144,719	66,281,789
	Expenditure	28,649,310	479,139	1,239,132	1,134,490	31,502,071
Total budget		173,311,293	5,043,153	19,448,039	29,072,575	226,875,060
Total expenditure		91,657,247	2,035,097	9,560,808	6,505,169	109,758,321

¹ Includes activities in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo.

forces, UNHCR and its partners responded to the emergency by providing food, non-food items (NFIs) and tools. In addition, four communities were supported with new hand pumps to increase the water supply for people of concern.

In **Ghana**, more than 17,000 Ivorian refugees were registered. UNHCR and its partners facilitated the transportation of asylum-seekers from border areas to camps to ensure their safety. UNHCR led the humanitarian emergency response to the influx of Ivorian refugees, providing multi-sectoral assistance, mainly within camp settings.

The profiling of more than 8,300 refugees in **Sierra Leone** was undertaken to determine appropriate durable solutions for them. Thirty-four refugees were repatriated, and UNHCR continued to facilitate the local integration of Liberian refugees in rural areas. In 2011, UNHCR provided some 400 shelters, benefiting over 400 refugee families (close to 1,000 individuals) in rural and urban locations. To promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, some 30 shelters were constructed for vulnerable host families. Almost 600 refugees received livelihood support in rural areas.

In **Guinea**, the registration of some 6,400 new Ivorian refugees brought the total number of Ivorian refugees receiving assistance from UNHCR to more than 16,600 by the end of year. The refugees benefited from food, NFIs, agricultural support and primary health care. Livelihood schemes to support local integration were focused on agricultural production.

At the end of 2011, there were some 3,200 refugees and 2,500 asylum-seekers in **Mali** from a range of African countries, mostly in urban areas. The establishment of the Appeals Commission for RSD was a landmark in terms of protection. UNHCR made further progress in registering and providing access to documentation for urban refugees, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire. During the year, all the Mauritanian refugees in the Kayes region were registered. UNHCR also provided educational assistance to over 100 refugee children, enabling them to attend primary school.

Although the socio-political climate in **Nigeria** was marked by unrest and terrorist attacks in 2011, Nigeria nevertheless succeeded in reaching an important milestone by ratifying the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. UNHCR provided assistance to more than 8,800 refugees, including some 5,300 Liberians. The office in Nigeria also published a joint UNHCR-IOM reference document, *Protecting Refugees and Other Persons on the Move in the ECOWAS Space*, which was disseminated in 15 ECOWAS countries. The publication contributes to the regional strategy to strengthen the rights of refugees in mixed movements, and to combat smuggling and trafficking.

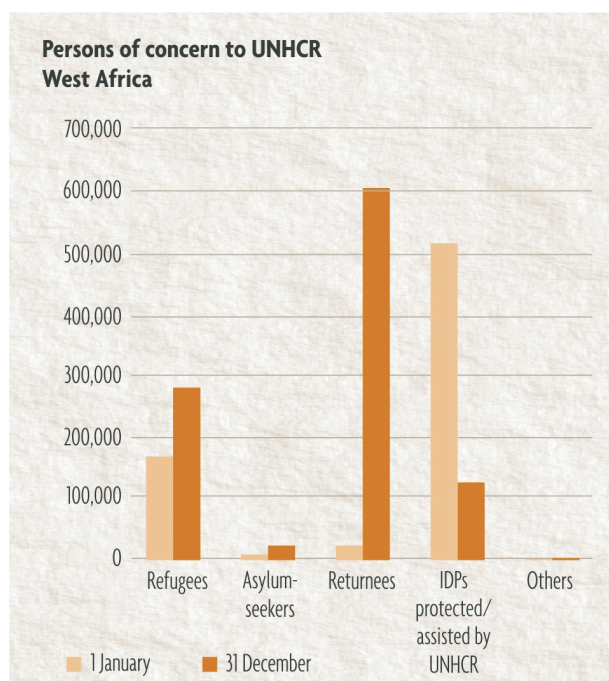
Some 1,300 Mauritanian refugees in **Senegal** repatriated voluntarily in 2011, bringing the number of those who have returned since January 2008 to almost 22,000. UNHCR continued negotiations with the Senegalese authorities on the modalities for granting identity cards to refugees residing in Senegal. An agreement was concluded by UNHCR, the Ministry of the Interior and other governmental partners formalizing the verification and registration of the refugee population in Senegal. Some 12,000 biometric refugee identity cards were issued to refugees aged five and above in 2011.

In **Liberia, Ghana, Togo and Guinea**, preparations for a strategy to facilitate the repatriation of Ivorian refugees included the signing of tripartite agreements with Liberia, Ghana and Guinea. The background paper and strategic documents drafted for the invocation of the cessation clause were subsequently updated, given the changing situation in Liberia, where the 2011 presidential elections gave rise to some unrest.

In **Togo**, more than 19,000 refugees, including some 5,000 Ivorians, enjoyed international protection, as well as social and community services, including health care and activities to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

In **Guinea-Bissau**, over 400 adults from 11 communities received training on conservation of products, compost preparation, sustainable agricultural activities, seed banks, organizational leadership and management and basic accounting mechanisms for women. The creation of gardens in four villages considerably improved knowledge of modern production techniques and nutritional skills, stimulating the creation of gardens by other households, and contributing to a more balanced diet for families. Organized exchanges between refugees and host communities allowed them to share experiences, promoting peaceful cohabitation. An informal microcredit scheme benefited over 500 people.

UNHCR in **Benin** focused on the local integration of over 400 urban refugees from Côte d'Ivoire. During the year, 18 refugees were resettled, while 64 were helped to repatriate voluntarily to their home countries. Four Rwandan refugee families and one Congolese refugee family obtained naturalization certificates in Benin. Twenty-two refugees received support for vocational training. Some 40 recently arrived refugees, including 28 women, received microcredit loans.



Financial information

Requirements in 2011 for the West Africa subregion initially amounted to USD 99.2 million, an increase from USD 80.8 million in 2010. The increase was with the view to prepare for the comprehensive strategy for Liberian refugees, including

voluntary repatriation. However, due to the Côte d'Ivoire emergency and the refugee movements into neighbouring Liberia, financial requirements increased even further to a total of USD 226.9 million by the end of the year. Total expenditure in West Africa stood at almost USD 110 million, more than double the amount spent in 2010.

Voluntary contributions to West Africa | USD

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
WEST AFRICA SUBREGION					
Australia				2,139,037	2,139,037
Australia for UNHCR				591	591
Canada				815,494	815,494
Denmark				3,828,572	3,828,572
Finland				1,373,626	1,373,626
HQ online donations				3,436	3,436
Liechtenstein				108,460	108,460
New Zealand				872,500	872,500
Norway				1,431,127	1,431,127
Private donors in China				1,487	1,487
Private donors in Italy				136,767	136,767
United States of America				7,500,000	7,500,000
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe				284,900	284,900
West Africa subtotal	0	0	0	18,496,000	18,496,000
CÔTE D'IVOIRE					
African Union			100,000		100,000
CERF			1,162,150		1,162,150
Charities Aid Foundation				2,905	2,905
España con ACNUR				1,996	1,996
European Union	348,909	43,615	274,143		666,667
Japan				1,231,072	1,231,072
Japan Association for UNHCR				3,270	3,270
Netherlands				2,500,000	2,500,000
OPEC Fund for International Development	118,732				118,732
Private donors in Canada			2,935	2,863	5,798
Private donors in China				1,081	1,081
Private donors in Italy				37,090	37,090
Private donors in Sweden				38,688	38,688
Private donors in the United Kingdom				15,833	15,833
Republic of Korea			100,000		100,000
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe				206,044	206,044
Côte d'Ivoire subtotal	467,641	43,615	1,639,228	4,040,842	6,191,325
GHANA					
CERF	552,120				552,120
European Union	1,335,868				1,335,868
Lebara Foundation	141,443				141,443
Ghana subtotal	2,029,430	0	0	0	2,029,430
GUINEA					
CERF	390,012				390,012
Guinea subtotal	390,012	0	0	0	390,012

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
LIBERIA					
African Development Bank	630,000				630,000
African Union	75,000				75,000
Australia	2,028,398				2,028,398
Belgium	1,430,615				1,430,615
Canada	1,519,868				1,519,868
CERF	2,255,737				2,255,737
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	500,000				500,000
European Union	4,226,023				4,226,023
France	549,452				549,452
Germany	1,027,413				1,027,413
Ireland	544,959				544,959
OPEC Fund for International Development	220,502				220,502
Republic of Korea	200,000				200,000
Switzerland	637,767				637,767
UN Fund for International Partnerships	383,250				383,250
UN Population Fund	119,840				119,840
United Kingdom	7,211,538				7,211,538
United States of America				15,800,000	15,800,000
USA for UNHCR	198,572				198,572
Liberia subtotal	23,758,934	0	0	15,800,000	39,558,934
SENEGAL REGIONAL OFFICE					
African Union	50,000				50,000
CERF	720,262				720,262
European Union	482,962				482,962
Finland			435,182		435,182
Senegal Regional Office subtotal	1,253,224	0	435,182	0	1,688,406
Total	27,899,242	43,615	2,074,409	38,336,841	68,354,107