



RESPONSE TO IVORIAN REFUGEE CRISIS IN LIBERIA

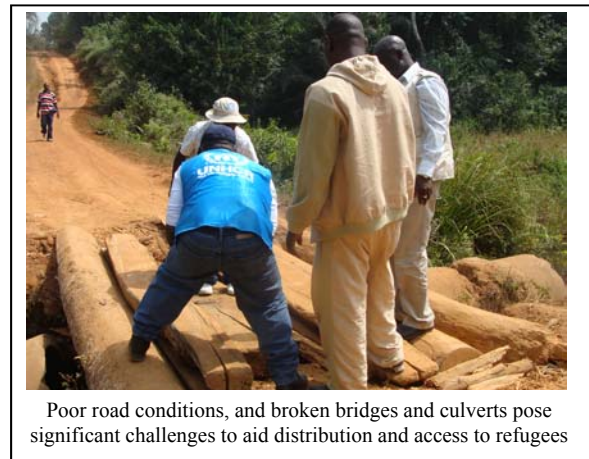
Weekly Sitrep No 5 : 20 – 26 February 2011

HIGHLIGHTS AND SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

- **An estimated 22,000 Ivorian Refugees crossed into Liberia between 24-26 February 2011, more than half the total number of refugees registered between 29 November 2010 and 19 February 2011.** Approximately 1,000 Ivorians had also crossed into Zwedru in the same period. The newly arrived refugees claim they fled to Liberia following the recent clashes in Touleupleu (border with Zwedru), Zouan Houye and Bin Houye (border with Butuoto) areas of Cote d'Ivoire.
- **The total number of Ivorian refugees registered in Liberia topped 61,000 on 26 February 2011.**
- A large number of refugees continue to live with host communities in border areas of Liberia. The influx of refugees is straining the capacities of host communities, and the already inadequate health and other facilities. 2,450 refugees (593 families) from the 39,784 previously registered refugees have opted to move to the Bahn camp, while 148 others (29 families) from the same caseload opted to move to one of the relocation villages.
- The distance of host villages from main cities and towns, as well as extremely poor road conditions continue to hamper access to refugees and host populations, and pose serious challenges to the provision of assistance. Several kilometers of roads and dozens of bridges and culverts first need to be reconstructed before food and other items can be transported to all areas along the border, and refugees safely transported to the camp or relocation villages. This would require urgent funding and quick response ahead of the six month long rainy season, which is likely to make road conditions and access more challenging.
- As of 21 February 2011, only US\$ 9,555,234 million had been committed to the US\$ 55 million Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan (EHAP) for Liberia.
- Following consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team and the Donor Community in Liberia, the Humanitarian Coordinator has requested that the EHAP be revised to reflect the current and projected humanitarian situation

Response

- A multi-agency task team is updating a refugee response plan to reflect the projected influx of some 150,000 refugees by end March 2011.
- Following information of the latest influx of Ivorian refugees into Liberia, assessment missions were conducted in Butuoto, Loguato, Gborplay axes in Nimba County, and Zwedru in Grand Gedeh County to assess needs of new arrivals. Seventy additional border monitors have been deployed to gather more information and provide a more accurate assessment of the situation in Nimba County.
- Way stations and transit sites have been identified in order to provide temporary shelter to the new arrivals.
- It was agreed at a meeting convened by UNHCR that the primary priority is the need to move new arrivals away from the border and to provide them with basic assistance such as food, water, non-food relief items, and dry rations.
- Food security and nutrition, health, water, sanitation, hygiene, protection, shelter, logistics, interventions continue to be provided to refugees and host communities.



Poor road conditions, and broken bridges and culverts pose significant challenges to aid distribution and access to refugees

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

- Additional health workers, drugs and medical supplies are required to provide adequate support to the new influx of refugees, as well as continuation of health services for refugees residing along the border in Gbehley-Gey, Zoe-Gey districts in Nimba County.
- Food, as well as water, sanitation and health services continue to be urgent needs.

RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

Protection

- Border and protection monitors are carrying out emergency registration of the new refugee influx, with special attention given to identifying vulnerable persons. Seventy additional border monitors from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) have been deployed in Nimba County to gather information and provide a more accurate assessment of the situation.
- Given that a majority of refugees crossing into Nimba County are of Yacouba and Djula ethnic groups, it has been recommended that this is taken into account when relocating refugees.
- During a regular monitoring visit, social workers from SEARCH identified 54 new refugees (32 families) in Saclepea Refugee Camp, which hosts some of the old caseload of refugees from 2004. A team will be registering this group of refugees in the coming week.
- 24 experienced LNRC volunteers and ICRC tracing staff continue to raise awareness on tracing and to offer services to restore family links in all border communities and in the refugee camp in Bahn, in cooperation with the Red Cross tracing networks in Ivory Coast and Guinea. Out of 47 separated children referred to the Red Cross tracing network by border communities, 18 cases have been closed, nine unaccompanied children have been registered, while follow up work is taking place on the remaining cases.

Food Security and Nutrition

- In response to the latest influx of refugees, UNHCR is transporting water to the various locations and distributing non-food items including plastic sheeting, jerry cans, buckets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and blankets. WFP is distributing high protein biscuits at the various influx locations.
- With support from UNICEF, IRC and ANDP screened 207 children 6 – 59 months from six Outpatient treatment sites in Gbelegheh District (Dulay, Gogatuo, Logatuo, Teahziegplay, Karnplay, and Blemieplay); 76 children (46% are refugee children) were admitted into the Outpatient Treatment Programme.
- Forty-seven severely malnourished children were admitted to Bahn, Buutuo, and Gblarlay health facilities in Zoegheh District through the ACF and EQUIP Outpatient Programmes; 29 children were from refugee families and 18 were Liberian children.
- PlumpyDoz (High-energy micronutrient ready-to-use complementary food) distribution is starting this week in 17 villages (Gbanwea, Dinplay, Gblarlay, Glarlay, Buutuo, Dubuzon, Nyordiaplay, Buehlay, kissiplay, kenlay, Duoplay, Old Logatuo, New Logatuo, Kentogborgplay, Gbanplay, Yeahplay and Younlay) to all refugee and host community children (6- 59 months) with moderate acute malnutrition. The distribution is also taking place in the Bahn camp, and 15 villages identified for relocation of refugees.
- Five additional Outpatient Treatment sites are being set up at Bahn Beoyoolar, Blemieplay, Dulay and Teahzieplay in Gbelegheh and Zoe-geh districts; 200 children will benefit from nutrition services at these sites.
- Two Special Nutrition Units (SNU) will be operational this week in Buutuo and Beoyoolar and will treat severely malnourished children with medical complications.

Shelter

- As of 18 February, 429 refugees from 127 households had been transferred to the Bahn Refugee Camp

Logistics

- UNHCR will on March 1, add ten trucks, which are being airlifted from Germany, to its existing fleet.
- UNHCR is working with the the UN Mission in Liberia's Bangladeshi Battalion (BanBatt) in Nimba County to plan and rehabilitate roads and bridges that require priority work.

Health

- Malaria remains the leading cause of outpatient visits. One refugee death related to malaria was reported from Zoe-gey district.
- A total 2020 outpatient consultations were conducted in the existing health facilities and during community outreach services. Approximately 46.6% of those seeing outpatient treatment are refugees.
- Provision of health services has commenced in the Bahn health center to serve refugees who have been relocated to the camp. A doctor is to be assigned to the health center in the coming week.
- Nine health partners are providing curative, preventive and health promotion services under the coordination of the County Health Team in 40 health facilities, and through community outreach services.
- Mobile clinics have been established in 3 of the 6 LRRRC designated relocation villages with no health facilities. The remaining 3 villages have no refugees at present. Mobile clinics will be deployed as soon as the number of refugees in each of the villages reach 1000.
- Drugs and medical supplies donated by UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA are being distributed by the County Health Team in the existing public health facilities.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- UNICEF is supplying equipment for the installation and management of temporary water systems to meet the needs of the most recent influx of refugees in Nimba County.
- WASH activities are on-going in 42 communities along the border. Non-Food Relief Items (point-of-use water treatment products, jerry-cans and soap) have been distributed to an estimated 10,000 people.
- 41, 500 people will benefit from the restoration of 83 wells. In addition 114 latrines have been completed, benefiting an estimated 5,700 people.
- UNICEF sector partners are mobilising in the 15 designated relocation villages to supply water and sanitation facilities to a planned 15,000 people.
- In the Bahn camp, treated water sufficient for 4,000 people and sanitation facilities for 1,600 have been completed. For the second camp, a technical team is being mobilised for a WASH site assessment.
- UNHCR through Child Fund has commenced construction of four blocks of four units of shallow trenches (emergency latrines) at the school compound in Buutuo, as well as the rehabilitation of one block of latrines - in separate blocks for males and females.
- Child Fund hygiene promoters have been deployed to raise awareness on hygiene issues, while 18 medical promoters from EQUIP are focusing on public health messages.
- The Red Cross Movement has constructed 23 latrines in 5 communities: 10 in Kentorgborglay, 8 in Dulay, 1 in Zualay, 2 in Gorgartuo and 2 in Nyantuo.
- There is a high potential for an outbreak of diarrhoea and other diseases as the number of latrines is insufficient to meet the needs of the new arrivals, host communities and previously registered refugees.

Education:

- 214 school-age children (6-12 years) have been registered at Bahn camp and 10 Ivorian teachers are assisting with developing a schooling plan based on the Ivorian Education System. UNICEF will provide basic furniture and school materials once the construction of the first school is complete.
- Mass reproduction of the Ivorian primary school curriculum and teachers guides have been completed and distribution within the 15 designated communities and the Bahn camp will be carried out by Save the children, IRC and Plan.
- UNICEF will continue sensitization activities and provide psychosocial support services to children in host communities, 15 relocation villages, and the camp.

CHALLENGES

- Urgent funding is required to be able to respond effectively and immediately to the needs of refugees, including the provision of food and non-food relief items, health related assistance, water and sanitation, shelter, and rehabilitate access roads.
- While some work has taken place on access roads to the camp, and other routes, many of the roads remain in poor condition, while a number of bridges and culverts need urgent rehabilitation before the onset of the rainy season.

FUNDING

- According to the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), US\$ 9,555,234 million had been committed to the US\$ 55 million Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan for Liberia.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE REFUGEE RESPONSE

1. Website of the United Nations in Liberia: www.unliberia.org
2. UNHCR Information Portal: info.unhcr.org/liberia

REGULAR COORDINATION MEETINGS – MONROVIA *(for a list of all meetings, please refer to Annex 1)*

1. Humanitarian Action Committee (HAC): every Thursday, 11.00 a.m. – 12 noon

Venue: Jordan Ryan Conference Room, Bryant building, Mamba Point (opposite UNICEF).

Contact: Nyenetue Romeo Bloh, HCSO, UNMIL. **Email:** bloh@un.org. **Mobile:** 05319860

2. Operations Coordination Meeting: every Friday, 09:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Venue: UNHCR Conference Room, Mamba Point (opposite US Embassy Gate 3)

Contact: Dokie Nah, UNHCR **Email:** Nahd@unhcr.org **Mobile:** 06870817

3. Sectoral meetings

- The Interagency Coordination Meeting, led by LRRRC and UNHCR, have been moved from Ganta to Sanniquellie. It meets every Thursday at 10:00 am.
- Weekly sectoral meetings: Education (led by MOE) every Tuesday in Sanniquellie; Protection sector (led by UNHCR) every Wednesday at UNHCR in Saclepea; Health and WASH sector (led by the County Health Team) every Wednesday in Sanniquellie. New sub-sector working group on child protection and SGBV, meets every Wednesday in Saclepea.

CONTACTS

1. For submissions to this sitrep, and general information: **Humanitarian Coordinator's Office:** Manzoor Khoso.
Email: khoso@un.org. **Mobile:** 05319901
2. **UNHCR:** Sulaiman Momodu (Communications Officer) **Email:** Momodu@unhcr.org **Mobile:** 06 493862
3. **UNICEF:** Miraj Pradhan (Communication Officer) **Email:** mpradhan@unicef.org **Mobile:** 06282074
4. **WFP:** Aaron Sleh **Email:** aaron.sleh@wfp.org **Mobile:** 076500248
5. **WHO:** Dr. Clement Peter **Email:** clementp@lr.afro.who.int
6. **LRRRC:** Edward Kemokai **Mobile:** 06-670822