



Responding to protracted refugee situations

*A case study of Liberian
refugees in Côte d'Ivoire*

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Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit

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Preface: The UNHCR protracted refugee situations initiative

UNHCR and other members of the humanitarian community have a natural tendency to concentrate their attention on situations where major changes and population movements are taking place: new refugee emergencies and large-scale repatriation programmes. But the majority of UNHCR's beneficiaries find themselves trapped in protracted refugee situations, unable to go home and without the prospect of a solution in the country where they have found asylum.

Such situations, which are often characterized by long-term care and maintenance programmes and the confinement of refugees to camps, are not in the interest of the refugees, local populations, host governments or donor states. And yet they have been allowed to persist. Why is this so, and what can be done to remedy this situation?

In order to address these issues, UNHCR has conducted a series of studies into protracted refugee situations (PRS), with funding provided by the Population, Refugees and Migration Bureau of the US State Department. The questions being asked in each case are: How have UNHCR and other actors responded to protracted refugee situations? Which of these responses have worked and which have not? And what elements of the successful responses can be applied to current and future protracted situations?

The findings from these case studies will feed into a broader, organization-wide examination of protracted refugee situations and are expected to lead to the development of a more vigorous policy and to practical guidelines for managing such situations.

The present report, on Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, is one of the case studies. Others in the series include Sudanese and Somalis in Kenya, Sierra Leoneans in Guinea, Liberians in Ghana, Sahrawis in Algeria, Sudanese in Uganda, Guatemalans in Mexico, and more.

This study has been prepared by Tom Kuhlman, an independent economist. While the report has been commissioned by UNHCR, and drafts have been circulated and commented upon by relevant UNHCR staff members, the opinions expressed herein are those of the author alone.

The case study component of the PRS initiative is managed by the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU) and has been advised by a steering committee comprising staff members from the Department of Operations (Reintegration and Local Settlement Section, Programme Coordination and Operations Support Section, Health and Community Development Section), the Department of International Protection and the Regional Bureau for Africa.

Summary of findings and recommendations

1. This report constitutes part of an EPAU project on protracted refugee situations, of which the situation of Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire is one case. This case study is aimed at drawing the lessons to be learned with respect to promoting local integration as a durable solution, through enhancing livelihood of both local population and refugees; as well as formulating recommendations regarding the current refugee situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

2. Liberians started fleeing to Côte d'Ivoire when the civil war in their home country broke out in December 1989. At the height of the war, over 700,000 people had fled their country, not counting those who had fled their homes without crossing an international border; perhaps 400,000 of them lived in Côte d'Ivoire. After 1996 a flawed peace led to repatriation of many, but not all: many Liberians live in fear of the present government, headed by a few warlords. Moreover, violence has flared up repeatedly, and in 2001 a renewed steady flow of refugees began, exceeding 6,000 over five months. An estimated 100,000 - 150,000 Liberian refugees are living in the country today. In addition, there are a few thousand Sierra Leonean refugees in the country. Finally, there are some 2,000 refugees (including asylum-seekers awaiting recognition) from a variety of other countries.

3. Unlike most African countries hosting refugees, Côte d'Ivoire has opposed the settlement of refugees in camps and instead has allowed them to settle freely among the local population, although restricted to a region in the western part of the country designated as the *Zone d'Accueil des Réfugiés* (ZAR). However, an unknown number of Liberians (believed to be in the tens of thousands) live outside the ZAR, in Abidjan and in the larger provincial towns. The Sierra Leoneans live mostly in the ZAR, the refugees from other countries mostly in Abidjan. Most refugees settled among ethnic kin in a zone adjacent to the Liberian border, whereas those who do not belong to ethnic groups that live astride the border have settled in the towns of the ZAR (particularly in Danané). Not only have the refugees been allowed to settle freely, they have also enjoyed considerable freedom in obtaining access to land, seeking employment (although not in the public sector) and starting small businesses. Only in 1995 was one camp established, after an armed incursion from Liberia; that camp is currently being promoted by UNHCR as the proper place to cater for new arrivals.

4. Whereas Côte d'Ivoire as a host country is a rather special case, UNHCR policies have not been significantly different from those in other, less liberal, countries in Africa. The emphasis of its assistance was on care and maintenance on which large amounts were spent until 1997; rather than integrating the refugees into the Ivorian social services, parallel systems were established to cater for the social needs of refugees, through operational partners (especially in education); fostering economic integration was done through supporting refugee farmers with part of the funds being used to assist Ivorian farmers who had made land available to the refugees; and by income-generating projects which however were meant to serve

mainly a social purpose: to generate funds for supporting vulnerable members of the community.

5. Since 1997 the situation has changed dramatically as a result of a number of factors. First of all, a sizeable proportion of the refugees have repatriated (over 70,000). This reduced the caseload as well as the burden on the host country. However, a large caseload remains, with little prospect of a speedy return or of resettlement in a third country. Secondly, funds available to cater for them decreased steeply; this was translated into reduced 'care and maintenance' handouts such as food and free medical care, and also in seeking local integration for what was then optimistically called the residual caseload. Thirdly, Côte d'Ivoire itself was coping with economic decline and with ominous ethnic tensions, strongly reducing its willingness to integrate refugees locally. The result of all this is that the outlook for local integration is far less favourable than before.

6. After 1999, things took a turn for the worse: funds were reduced even further and the tension in Côte d'Ivoire was now expressed in political instability and rioting against both foreigners and Ivorian migrants. In this situation, UNHCR decided to abandon the parallel education system following the Liberian curriculum and transfer the pupils to Ivorian state schools. A transition year was established during which UNHCR would still fund the refugee schools but now following the Ivorian curriculum; this did not work out as foreseen, and a second transition year had to be added. Currently, however, while no third transition year is taking place, the outlook for integration into Ivorian schools is hardly less bleak than before. And this is only for primary education: secondary-school students have been abandoned altogether. Meanwhile, funds for helping refugees to become economically self-sufficient are a pittance. Even identity cards are currently a problem: their issue has been suspended and they are often not recognized by local authorities.

7. At the outset of this case, the outlook for local integration was excellent. Although there have always been problems such as mistreatment of refugees and misbehaviour by refugees themselves, Ivorian government policy has remained favourable towards refugees, and it has so far always shown itself ready to fulfil its obligations under the 1951 Convention as well as other relevant conventions to which it is a signatory. UNHCR policy, however, has been unsuited to this state of affairs in two ways: firstly by continuing care and maintenance for too long and beginning to think seriously of economic integration only at a time when funds were already running out - whereas economic integration needs *more* money than care and maintenance for a given year; and secondly by setting up an unsustainable parallel education system which has now forced it to largely abandon refugee children. This will cause great harm not only to the refugees and their hosts, but also to the good reputation of UNHCR in being able to cope effectively with a protracted refugee situation.

8. Up to a point, it may be said that UNHCR's attitude in the early years was understandable, based as it was on the expectation that the civil war in Liberia would be of limited duration. In such a case, economic integration would have been less urgent and possibly even undesirable, whereas education should be aimed at successful repatriation. In the eyes of this consultant, this was another mistake, however forgivable. We should now have enough understanding of civil wars to

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avoid such mistakes in the future and design the best policies from the outset. For Côte d'Ivoire these are, or should have been:

- Support the host country government in its policy of spontaneous settlement, while maintaining UNHCR's own responsibility in doing its utmost to protect refugees where necessary.
- Keep care and maintenance programmes of limited duration, normally not more than one year, or for farmers one year from the time they have first been able to plant; while there is justification for extending care and maintenance for longer periods where vulnerable persons are concerned, even here they should not go beyond five years, and for the definition of who is vulnerable adherence should be sought to locally current criteria.
- Education programmes for refugees should from the outset be aimed at integration into the educational system of the host country. Only for those who have already reached secondary school could a temporary facility in the system of the country of origin be envisaged - to be phased out as the students complete secondary school and after the inflow of refugees has levelled off. The host country should be fully compensated for the additional cost for a fixed number of years - six years after the end of the mass inflow should be adequate.
- The support for agriculture has basically been correct, by assisting hosts as well as refugees in a way that may have contributed to agricultural development. There are, however, environmental effects that have not been beneficial, and for which further compensation is needed over an extended period. UNHCR should take the lead in encouraging other organizations to get involved in this.
- Vocational training has been another positive aspect of the UNHCR programme in Côte d'Ivoire; unfortunately it is now being undermined by lack of funds. The centres should also be gradually converted into Francophone facilities.
- Efforts towards economic integration other than the two mentioned already have met with only indifferent success, and there is little hope that they will contribute to self-sufficiency in the present situation. Apart from the fact that more funds would be needed for a successful programme than are now available, the programme needs more focus on the economic rather than the social aspects: the only criterion should be the potential profitability of the business to be supported - not the drive to make people work together, to make them contribute to the community, or to divide the funds over as many beneficiaries as possible. Furthermore, a credit system such as currently being propagated under the micro-projects programme is unlikely to be successful and should be deferred to a later stage and then implemented only on a pilot basis in areas where previous projects have been successful. Economic expertise among operational partners will be needed to select beneficiaries.

- Decision-making has been relatively top-down and in particular has not sufficiently involved refugees themselves. Yet, refugees are locally quite well organized. It is recommended that they be taken more seriously as partners, to the extent that they should be encouraged to develop structures at national level, which can be accepted as discussion partners in policy-making - together with UNHCR and the Ivorian government.

9. Further to the specific predicament in which UNHCR, the Ivorian government and the refugees now find themselves: it is as necessary as it is impossible with currently available funds. However, in order of priority the following proposals are made:

- Not to close the UNHCR offices in the ZAR; a protection presence at least should be maintained, with one international staff for each of the three.
- The decision to integrate into the Ivorian school system should be backed up by more substantial assistance, such as continued financial support for school inspectors in terms of their expenses, as well as a partial and temporary subsidy of school expenses for refugee parents. In addition, support for Liberian secondary schools should be revived and support to vocational training centres increased.
- UNHCR should support the government of Côte d'Ivoire in seeking funds for the implementation of two major programmes that would help it to cope with the burdensome aspects of the impact of refugees: environmental degradation and the shock of having nearly 20,000 additional pupils in primary schools imposed on it.
- Assistance in the field of health should be limited to providing support through the state health sector, to the extent that funds are available. No more individual support should be given.
- The issue of vulnerable cases should be discussed with the relevant Ivorian authorities (SAARA and the Ministry of Social Affairs), with the aim of handing the present caseload over to the latter with compensation for a fixed period of time.
- The entire refugee programme should be aimed at phasing out all assistance to refugees - except for protection - in six years' time.

Introduction

10. The present report is part of a project of UNHCR's Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU), aimed at formulating policies on protracted refugee situations. Such situations present special problems, as they consume a large part of UNHCR's resources while durable solutions remain elusive. The long-term consequences of such situations are serious for the host country as well as for the refugees themselves. The EPAU project is based on a series of case studies, which are aimed at providing the empirical underpinning of the new strategy - learning from the mistakes as well as the strong points of efforts in the past.

11. The situation of Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire presents an interesting case in point. Victims of a civil war which was unexpected and at first appeared to be of short duration, the refugees were forced to remain abroad for many years. When after seven years the war seemed finally to abate, a programme of repatriation was launched, but many refugees refused to go. Some returned, but renewed violence has led to fresh inflows. A large number of refugees remain in Côte d'Ivoire today, with little prospect for a speedy return home.

12. Côte d'Ivoire, in contrast to many other low-income host countries, has allowed the refugees to settle among the local population rather than housing them separately in camps. It is worthwhile to study how this has affected their chances for local integration and economic self-sufficiency.

13. UNHCR for a number of years financed 'care and maintenance' programmes for the refugees, as usual in cooperation with operational partners. One component of UNHCR's assistance was an education programme, under which the Liberians were provided with schools following the Liberian curriculum, in English. At present, however, it is faced with a dire shortage of funds, partly because of its general financial situation, partly also because it is increasingly difficult to find donors for a forgotten caseload - many feel the refugees should have returned home, as the war has ended. Care and maintenance must now be reduced to the most vulnerable cases only and cannot even be guaranteed then; whereas education must be integrated into the Ivorian system, notwithstanding the many problems in handing it over. Self-sufficiency of the refugees becomes an urgent requirement, while the funds to invest in income-generating projects are skinned to the bone. It is indeed urgent to find solutions.

14. This report is the result of a two-week mission to Côte d'Ivoire, especially to the border zone with Liberia where most refugees live, undertaken in August 2001. In such a short time it would not have been possible to collect the data presented here without the enthusiastic and loyal co-operation of many UNHCR staff, Ivorian government officers and refugees. Gratitude is hereby expressed to all of them, without naming anyone in particular. Mission details are provided in an annex.

15. The report consists, outside this Introduction, of three chapters. The first gives a general background on the refugees, their country of origin, and the host country in which they were given asylum. Next, the responses to the refugee

situation of the main actors are described: the host country government, its population, the international community led by UNHCR, and the refugees themselves. The final chapter attempts to analyse and comment on these responses, and draws conclusions both for policies to be followed in protracted refugee situations in future, and for the immediate situation of the Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire.

Background

Introduction

16. In this chapter we shall review the origins of the Liberian refugee problem, as well as evaluate the present situation and the prospects for a durable peace. Next, the refugee population itself is described, along with a brief introduction to the process of settlement - which is more fully discussed in the 'Responses' chapter. The final section discusses some relevant aspects of the situation in the host country and describes the area where most of the refugees have settled.

Liberia

17. A long period of political stability, during which Liberia had been ruled by an elite which descended from freed American slaves, came to an end with the military coup led by Samuel Doe in 1980. The coup brought indigenous Africans to power, but this soon led to conflict between Doe's ethnic group (the Krahn) plus their allies and those who were excluded from power. During the decade that followed, the economy went into accelerated decline. Both US aid, which Doe had diverted in large amounts, and foreign investment dried up. At the same time, Doe's associates who had been tied to the president by relationships of patronage, transformed themselves into local strongmen and rivals for power, using their private international trading networks for securing an economic power base. Thus the seeds for civil war were sown.

18. In December 1989, a rebel movement called the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) invaded the country from neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire. It was led by Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian who had occupied a high post in Doe's government, but had fallen out with him after embezzling government money. Taylor's movement rode on a wave of discontent with the Doe regime, and was supported by ethnic groups antagonistic to the Krahn, such as the Kpelle and the Gio. The rebels soon reached Monrovia (1990), but this turned out to be only the first phase of civil war as rival factions - all of them headed by former associates of Doe - began fighting one another as well as murdering Krahn in large numbers. Doe himself was also killed, and soon the country descended into chaos. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent a peacekeeping force known as ECOMOG which landed in Monrovia; it sponsored an interim government under Amos Sawyer, but neither ECOMOG nor its protégé were able to impose their authority.

19. Each of the rebel factions had its own business interests, founded on exporting Liberia's natural resources, but Taylor's movement was by far the most successful. Not only did Taylor have strong links with trading interests in Côte d'Ivoire (to which he exported rubber and timber), but he also fomented civil war in Sierra Leone, where he sponsored the creation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), in order to extract diamonds from that country. Diamonds (which are also

found in a small area in Liberia near the Sierra Leonean border as well as in the neighbouring part of Guinea) are believed to have been a principal source of income for Taylor, and probably still are. By comparison, the resources controlled by the interim government in its enclave of impoverished Monrovia were negligible, and ECOMOG support was scant compensation for this lack of an economic power base.

20. The civil war was a descent into hell. Out of a total pre-war population of 2.5 million, it is believed that 150,000 to 200,000 had been killed by 1996. Some 750,000 Liberians lived as refugees outside the country, and another 1 million or more were internally displaced. The infrastructure was virtually destroyed, industries had ceased operations, and national output declined by perhaps 80 per cent.

21. Almost from the start the war was accompanied by a 'peace process', well-intentioned foreign parties attempting to persuade the warring factions to lay down their arms. These efforts led to cease-fires from time to time, but these were only temporary; refugee flows would subside and some people even returned, until the fighting flared up again. Civil society was not involved in this process: only those with arms counted and their power depended not on popular support but on looting and trading. Liberia was at the mercy of the militias who during the war numbered some 60,000. Eventually, however, after Taylor had become reconciled to Nigerian president Sani Abacha (Nigeria was the leading force in ECOMOG), and an agreement was made that held - the fourteenth since the start of the peace process. This was the Abuja agreement of 1996, which provided for the demobilization of the various militias, elections and the withdrawal of the ECOMOG force from Monrovia. Taylor was easily returned as president in the ensuing elections in July 1997 - it was widely believed he would have returned to war had the outcome been otherwise. His control over the radio, his command over his former fighters, his ample financial resources plus Nigerian support helped to secure victory. Moreover, ECOMOG contributed by insisting that the elections be implemented in a hurry, before civilian political parties had a chance to organize themselves.

After the war

22. Thus peace of a kind returned to Liberia, if not democracy or respect for human rights. Although the various militias were disarmed, the new army was filled with Taylor's fighters and rival groups were suppressed. The year 1998 saw renewed violence in Monrovia as the new government's forces battled it out with one such group. There were many reports on harassment and intimidation by security forces against real or potential opponents. Although aid had been envisaged for reconstructing the battered country, donors soon became disenchanted with Taylor's regime, citing both human rights violations and corruption. In May 2001, sanctions were applied against Liberia for Taylor's involvement with the gruesome civil war in Sierra Leone. This barred what little development aid had been provided by donors rash enough to trust the regime; relief aid is still being provided to help returnees and internally displaced persons.

23. Meanwhile, the war in Sierra Leone reached new heights during 2000 and spread into Guinea during the second half of the year. Guinean opposition forces are assisted by Sierra Leonean rebels, which provoked large-scale violence against Sierra Leonean refugees for whom Guinea is the main country of refuge. Taylor is also believed to be involved here, and in retaliation Guinea is now supporting the

Liberian LURD rebel movement (based mainly on the former Ulimo-K militia led by Alhaji Kromah, like Taylor a former associate of Samuel Doe). In April 2001, fighting broke out between security forces and LURD in Lofa County in northern Liberia. This led to a renewed outflow of some 6,000 refugees (as of late September) and a halt to the repatriation movement. Most of the refugees come not only from Lofa County itself but from neighbouring areas, whose people did not wait around for a return of the atrocities of the 1990s; at the time of this mission (August 2001), this flow was still continuing.

24. The spread of the war into other countries bodes ill for the prospects of a durable peace in Liberia. Although in mid-2001 the war in Sierra Leone appeared to be waning, it is too early to proclaim peace. The return of stable and peaceful conditions - let alone democracy - to Liberia seems as distant as ever.

The refugees

25. The first mass inflow of refugees into Côte d'Ivoire began as early as December 1989 and lasted until March 1990; they numbered about 70,000. The Ivorian president at the time, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, stated that they should be regarded as 'brothers in distress' and, rather than being settled in camps, he encouraged local people to take them up in their midst. This was facilitated by the fact that most refugees came from the same ethnic groups that lived on either side of the border: the Gio in the area of Danané where the borders of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea meet; the Krahn in the area of Guiglo further south; and the Kru plus related groups. The area along the Liberian border, consisting (in today's administrative division) of the four *départements*¹ of Danané, Toulepleu, Guiglo and Tabou) was designated as the *Zone d'Accueil des Réfugiés* (ZAR), beyond which the refugees were not supposed to move but within which they were free to settle.

26. Most of the refugees were people of rural background, and in the villages of their Ivorian hosts they were provided with usufruct rights to land for cultivation. Some moved to the towns within the ZAR, and these also included those of ethnic background other than the aforementioned groups. International assistance was rapidly provided, both through UNHCR and through other organizations - international as well as non-governmental. Food, medical aid and emergency shelter were provided, later complemented by assistance in the fields of water, sanitation and education.

27. By the end of 1990, the Liberian refugee caseload in Côte d'Ivoire had increased to 272,000. In succeeding years, the numbers rose and fell as the civil war worsened or abated. The maximum may have been as high as 400,000 in the mid-1990s. Spontaneous settlement remained the norm, with one exception: in 1995, following armed clashes at Tai in southern Guiglo in which many Liberians as well as a number of Ivorians had been killed, the refugee population of that town was moved to a camp set up at Nicla, just outside the town of Guiglo and well away from the border.

¹Côte d'Ivoire is divided into 19 regions, each of which consists of several *départements* headed by a *Préfet*.

28. From 1996 onwards, many refugees returned home, well before UNHCR began its organized repatriation programme in 1997; by the end of 2000, 70,500 refugees had been repatriated with UNHCR assistance, but more had left of their own accord. Even as the repatriation was underway, the violence in Monrovia in 1998 provoked a new wave of 23,000 refugees towards Côte d'Ivoire; 10,000 of these were installed at Nicla, the remainder settled spontaneously. At 1 January 2001, the number of Liberian refugees and asylum-seekers was reported to be 118,700. UNHCR currently favours organized settlement: the new refugees coming in during 2001 as a result of the fighting in Lofa county are required to settle at Nicla if they wish to qualify for assistance.

29. Not all Liberian refugees live in the ZAR: the 1997 census estimated 50,000 of them in areas outside the designated zone. Most of them are believed to reside in Abidjan, but there are also sizeable Liberian populations in towns adjacent to the ZAR, such as San Pedro and Grand-Béréby on the coast and Man in the interior. Also Bouaké, the second largest city in Côte d'Ivoire, has a significant Liberian community. Those refugees who live outside the ZAR do not normally benefit from any UNHCR assistance, and their status is that of ordinary aliens - i.e. they have to be in possession of a residence permit.

30. Nor are all refugees in Côte d'Ivoire Liberians. There were, at the beginning of 2001, reported to be 2,000 Sierra Leoneans in the country, as well as 2,200 refugees (including asylum-seekers) from other countries - mostly from Central Africa. Among the former group are some Sierra Leonean citizens who were resident in Liberia as expatriate workers and fled to Côte d'Ivoire together with the Liberians; others had first fled from Sierra Leone to Liberia, and then found they were not safe there. Most Sierra Leoneans live in the ZAR alongside the Liberian refugees. The refugees from other countries, however, mostly live in Abidjan. This report restricts itself to discussing the refugees within the ZAR - both the Liberians and the small proportion of Sierra Leoneans there.

The numbers game

31. It is not easy to know the total number of refugees resident in Côte d'Ivoire. The main sources are the refugee census held in 1997 and the national population census of 1998, plus statistics kept on repatriates and new arrivals. The first reported the total number of Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire as 210,000, whereas the second returns a number of 78,000 Liberian nationals - regardless of whether they are refugees. A national population census is usually more reliable than a refugee count, the more so since host-country governments have frequently been seen to have an interest in inflating the numbers of refugees. Unsurprisingly, some United Nations officials are of the opinion that the 1997 census numbers are an exaggeration.

32. Yet, closer inspection of the modalities of the census plus interviews with persons concerned do not bear out that view. On the contrary, all indications are that the census *underestimated* the numbers of refugees. As the census report itself states, the methods used in enumeration were more adapted to a situation where refugees live in camps than to the spontaneous settlement prevalent in Côte d'Ivoire: many refugees live at considerable distances from the enumeration centres where they were supposed to report; communications in the area are poor, and insufficient time was allowed for communication by word of mouth. Moreover, there was a campaign

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among refugees for boycotting the exercise, for fear that the data would be transmitted to their enemies in Liberia. That campaign was not particularly successful, but it has certainly had some impact. Furthermore, there are reports of Liberians living in the ZAR who do not feel the need to report themselves to anyone, as they are self-sufficient by working in the plantations. In the opinion of this consultant, while there may be an incentive to present inflated *estimates* of refugee numbers (the estimate for the ZAR in 1997 was 327,000), this did not happen in the census. Why, then, would the number in the population census be so much lower? This cannot be due to repatriation, as the number of repatriates was not high enough. The only conclusion possible is that many Liberians reported themselves as Ivorians, perhaps for fear that they might be deported. Doubt, however, remains.

33. Official figures released after the 1997 refugee count are based on the enumerated number, from which those known to have repatriated are subtracted, and new arrivals are added. However, this does not take natural growth into consideration, and moreover it is reported that an unknown number of those repatriated have in fact returned to Côte d'Ivoire but are reluctant to report themselves as they believe they have no right to refugee status any longer. On the other hand, of course, there are likely to have been a number of repatriates who did not report to UNHCR. All this leads to the conclusion that the official number of 118,700 at the beginning of 2001 is not an overestimate, and the actual number may even be somewhat higher. Anywhere between 100,000 and 150,000 Liberians, but probably nearer the latter number, is the best estimate that can be given at present.

Characteristics of the refugee population

34. Although the refugee census report of 1997 does not show the ethnic groups to which refugees belong, Table 1 shows clearly how people from certain counties in Liberia had a strong tendency to settle in a particular *département* in Côte d'Ivoire. It is also noteworthy that Danané had the largest percentage of refugees from other than nearby counties; the town itself has a more cosmopolitan character than other parts of the ZAR.

Table 1. Liberian refugees by county of origin and area of settlement, 1997

<i>Département</i>	County of origin (percentages)			
	Nimba/Bong	Grand Gedeh	Maryland/Grand Kru/Sinoe	other
Danané	66.9	1.0	4.8	27.3
Toulepleu	25.6	66.4	2.1	5.9
Guiglo	2.1	89.2	5.6	3.1
Tabou	1.6	22.6	67.7	8.2
<i>Total</i>	20.7	33.8	33.7	11.8

35. The demographic structure of the refugee population is somewhat difficult to evaluate, because the age groups used are not the same as those in the national population census (Table 2). However, demographic tables allow an estimate of the age structure of the refugee population according to the standard classification: the proportion in the age group 0-14 would be 45.2 per cent and for the 15-59 bracket 50.0 per cent. These data clearly point to a population with a higher dependency ratio than the national one: more women, more children, and more old people. However, it must be borne in mind that the national figure is strongly influenced by the fact that so many residents of Côte d'Ivoire are foreign nationals, many of whom are temporary migrants and these are disproportionately male and working-age adult. The male: female ratio for Ivorian citizens is only 98.3. Furthermore, the rural areas also have a higher percentage of children and elderly (46.1 and 4.9 per cent, respectively). All this indicates that the age structure of the refugee population may not really be all that different from the Ivorian one; there remains, however, a noted preponderance of women, which may be due to the differential impact of the civil war on the sexes. The consequence of such a demographic structure is a somewhat lower capacity for economic self-sufficiency.

Table 2. Demographic structure

Liberians (1997 refugee census)		All residents (1998 population census)	
0-4 years old	14.8 %		
5-17	38.9 %	0-14	42.9 %
18-59	41.2 %	15-59	53.2 %
60 and over	5.1 %	60 and over	3.9 %
male: female ratio	88.9	male: female ratio	104.3

36. Table 3 tells us more about that self-sufficiency, by showing the present occupations of the refugees. Unfortunately, the refugee census has listed a very high proportion of occupations as 'other', which makes analysis more difficult. Also, the report does not show unemployment among refugees, as it makes no distinction between those who do not work because they are too young, too old, or disabled, and those who are actively looking for jobs. Still, comparing the percentage of people actually working with the proportion of working age in Table 2, it would appear that the vast majority of those able to work are actually gainfully employed - especially if we consider that a number of those must be numbers of students and housewives. It also brings out the high proportion of farmers, which may even be understated: many people cultivate land besides other sources of income.

37. The rate of urbanization is not easy to evaluate, since available statistics show only the numbers of refugees by sub-prefecture, not by type of settlement. We do figures on organized and spontaneous settlement, however: the only organized

settlement, at Nicla near Guiglo, has about 6,000 inhabitants at present². The others, at least 95 per cent, are self-settled.

Table 3. Refugee population by occupation, 1997

Occupation	Number	Per cent of total labour force	
Farmer	20,086	42.2	
Other manual occupations	3,059	6.4	
Intellectual	4,383	9.2	
Trader	8,212	17.3	
Other occupations	11,832	24.9	
Total econ. active	47,572	as % of total pop.:	30.1

The host country

38. While it cannot be the purpose of this report to give a general description of Côte d'Ivoire, there are some aspects to the economic, social and political situation which are of direct relevance to the refugee problem, and these will be highlighted here. A brief description of the ZAR will also be given, to the extent that this is directly relevant to the responses developed/to be developed by the host community/government and UNHCR.

Economic and social development

39. Côte d'Ivoire is a country rich in natural resources which made it into a focus for development in colonial times and even more after independence. These resources, plus the market-friendly policies applied in exploiting them, have made Côte d'Ivoire one of the richest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This has attracted large numbers of migrant workers from neighbouring countries since colonial times. While some of the migrants acquired Ivorian citizenship, most remained foreigners; however, they were accorded virtually equal rights with Ivorians, including even the right to vote. In 1988, 28 per cent of the total resident population of Côte d'Ivoire were enumerated as foreign citizens, which must be one of the highest proportions in the world - probably the highest of all but a few miniature states. Due to economic decline, the percentage of foreigners has been reduced somewhat, but in 1998 it was

²Another official source claims 7,500 for the end of 2000, to which must be added the new arrivals.

still 26 per cent - nearly half of them born in Côte d'Ivoire. In absolute numbers, we are talking about 4 million foreign citizens on a total population of 15 million.

40. The Malians, Burkinabé and others were welcome as long as rapid growth lasted. Moreover, president Houphouët-Boigny was mindful of the important role the foreign workers played in Côte d'Ivoire's development, and strongly promoted the openness of Côte d'Ivoire to both capital and migrants. This changed when the economic situation became less rosy, from the mid-1980s onwards: cocoa and coffee prices declined and the debt burden increased. Between 1984 and 1998, GDP per capita at purchasing-power parity declined from \$ 2,160 to \$ 1,730; by comparison, in 1984 Côte d'Ivoire was slightly more prosperous than Egypt and twice as well off as Senegal, whereas by 1998 its average purchasing power was only half that of Egypt and equivalent to Senegal's. In 1993, the government agreed to a structural adjustment programme, which brought debt relief and renewed growth for some years; but in 1999 and 2000 real GDP per capita declined again, by about 7 per cent compared to 1998. Worsening terms of trade are not the only cause of the bleaker economic performance since the 1980s: there is also an environmental problem. The growth in production of perennial cash-crops depends on the availability of virgin forest for clearing; Côte d'Ivoire has now cleared most of its forests, which has led to a shortage of land for cultivation as well as concerns about the sustainability of timber production.

41. These economic changes have undermined the position of the expatriate workers: not only did they suffer economically, but they now came to be seen as competitors for the sharing of a limited cake rather than as partners in baking that cake. That attitude was reinforced by political changes. Houphouët-Boigny had died in 1993, and his successor Henri Konan Bédié was much less secure in power. He needed support against his principal opponent Alassane Ouattara, a northerner who was accused of being a foreigner in order to exclude him from the presidential elections. This meant pitting southerners against northerners. Konan-Bédié and his supporters coined the concept of *Ivoirité*, an Ivorian cultural identity - meaning of course the ostracizing of anyone who did not fit that identity; in practice, this means not only foreign nationals (including those born in Côte d'Ivoire), but also those who belong to the same ethnic groups as the foreigners - i.e. northern Ivorians. As against Houphouët-Boigny's dictum 'the land to those who put it to use', Konan-Bédié's slogan was 'the land to its original owners'. A new electoral code was prepared, which abolished the right of foreign residents to vote in order to procure a decisive majority for southerners. These manoeuvres won Konan Bédié a new term as president in 1995, but also gave official sanction to xenophobia and ethnic rivalry. Opposition against his government grew, among southerners as well as northerners, not only due to tribalist policies but also because of corruption - the latter leading to a suspension of aid from the EU and the IMF in early 1999.

Recent events

42. That same year, major ethnic clashes broke out in the Tabou area in the southwest, the main parties being the indigenous Kroumen and the Burkinabé who had settled there as small farmers and labourers. Several dozens were killed, and part of the Burkinabé fled to other parts of the area. Tabou, it must be remembered, is part of the Zone d'Accueil for Liberian refugees, where the foreign nationals

(including refugees) actually make up more than half the total population. There were renewed clashes during July-September 2000, in other parts of the southwest.

43. When the government was overthrown in a military coup in December 1999, there was widespread rejoicing. The new leader, General Robert Guéi, at first claimed to be only a caretaker leading the country back towards democracy, and installed a government of national unity. However, he then decided to stand in the presidential elections of October 2000, barring both Ouattara's party and that of the former government. The main opponent was now Laurent Gbagbo, who had also opposed Houphouët-Boigny in the first multi-party election in 1990. When the vote count showed that Guéi had lost, he ordered counting to be stopped and declared himself the winner. That crude manoeuvre was thwarted by a popular uprising in which the general was abandoned by his soldiers; Gbagbo was installed as Côte d'Ivoire's next president, under what is called the Second Republic. Then Ouattara's supporters demanded a new election in which their candidate would also be allowed to run. Gbagbo refused, and violence broke out afresh. This time it was not a popular uprising against a dictator, but ethnic strife of north against south; 57 Muslims were massacred among other incidents. Fear of civil war prompted Ouattara to call off the demonstrations; instead, he would contest a seat in the parliamentary elections which were to take place in December. From that, however, he was banned too, even if his party was not. The result was more rioting, in which several hundreds are believed to have been killed. In the end, the parliamentary elections were held with a participation rate of only 30 per cent.

44. Since then, the situation has remained volatile. After several mutinies and attempted coups had taken place during 2000, another attempted coup was carried out in January 2001. There has been international criticism of ongoing human-rights violations by the security forces. Aid had been suspended by most donors since the 1999 coup, and by mid-2001 was being haltingly reinstated. Still, donor countries suspiciously watch how the government is handling the process of national reconciliation, to which it claims to be committed.

45. One of the results of the political turmoil has been the displacement of many foreign workers: tens of thousands have fled back to their home countries, while others have moved to safer places within Côte d'Ivoire. A certain degree of economic disruption has been the consequence, as is evident in, for instance, Tabou.

46. Such, then, is the context within which refugee policy must be developed. It will be understood that (a) the present socio-political setting for local integration of refugees is far less favourable than ten years ago; (b) refugees will hardly be a priority for the Ivorian government in the present state of affairs; and (c) at the same time, in its handling of refugees the government has an opportunity to show that it is not as xenophobic as its detractors have claimed.

The Zone d'Accueil des Réfugiés

47. The four *départements* making up the ZAR form a zone of 40 to 70 km wide parallel to the Liberian border, stretching for almost 400 km from north to south and occupying a total area of 21,000 km² (see Map 1). It is a region of tropical rainforest, gradually rising from the coast to the hilly plateau in the Danané area, until the Nimba mountains at the point where Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea meet.

48. The ZAR has a total population of some 800,000, as Table 4 shows. About one in six is a refugee, but these are not equally distributed over the zone: the *département* of Tabou has the highest proportion. It can also be seen that the *départements* of Danané and Toulepleu are relatively densely populated compared to Guiglo and Tabou. The main towns in the ZAR are the prefecture headquarters: Danané and Guiglo with over 60,000 people each, Tabou with 23,000 and Toulepleu with only 12,000. Recent population growth in the ZAR has been relatively high as compared to the national average of 3.3 per cent per annum, but not to the same extent everywhere: the *département* of Tabou has had the highest growth rate, having seen its population more than double since 1988. The refugees were not the only factor in this, as will become clear below.

Table 4. Population data for the Zone d'Accueil

<i>Département</i>	<i>area km²</i>	<i>pop. (1998)</i>	<i>density per km²</i>	<i>growth (per cent p.a. 1988-98)</i>	<i>refugees³</i>	<i>refugees as % of total</i>	<i>% of foreigners</i>
Danané	4,631	314,428	68	3.3	31,000	10	13
Toulepleu	829	50,592	61	4.4	15,000	29	27
Guiglo	10,404	260,094	25	6.1	20,000		43
Tabou	5,212	137,077	26	8.4	54,000	39	54
Total	21,076	762,191	36	5.1	120,000	16	32

49. The population in the various parts of the ZAR is quite different in ethnic composition: in the *département* of Danané the majority of the people are Yacouba, also known as Dan; they are identical to the Gio of Liberia. In Guiglo and Toulepleu the largest ethnic group is the Guéré, who correspond with the Krahn of Liberia; however, especially in Guiglo there are also many people belonging to various other ethnic groups. In Tabou, the Kroumen are the largest group; they are the same as the Kru of Liberia, but other Liberian groups are also closely related and are found in this area, such as the Grebo and the Bassa. However, this refers only to the ethnic identity of the Ivorian citizens, or those who reported themselves as such. As can also be seen from Table 4, a very significant proportion of the population in the ZAR are foreigners, and refugees make up less than half of their number.⁴ Tabou, it has already been noted, has a majority of foreign nationals.

50. Export-crop production developed relatively late in this part of Côte d'Ivoire. The reason was partly its remoteness: the more easily exploited areas lay further to the east, nearer Abidjan. In addition, the terrain here is less favourable: it has more

³ The numbers are those from the 1997 refugee census, reduced by 25% to take into account the reduction due to repatriation plus a correction due to the fact that not all refugees were counted as argued in section 2.2.

⁴ If the hypothesis that many refugees reported themselves as nationals is accepted.

relief, with many small swampy valleys interrupting the hillside forests. The flatter areas in the eastern and central parts of Côte d'Ivoire are cheaper to clear and plant. Until well into the 1960s, the indigenous people were left alone, living in small hamlets far apart, practising slash-and-burn agriculture for subsistence as well as living off what the forest produced. Along the coast, the Kru are famous as fishermen, but they also work as sailors for international shipping companies which used to come to Tabou for recruiting them.

51. Only in the 1970s did the rapid spread of cocoa and coffee cultivation reach this region. It was not the local people who were the principal agents of this development, but those who were attracted to this unexploited resource from other parts of the country and indeed from other countries: cutting the forest, harvesting the valuable tropical timber, and replacing the original vegetation with a planted forest of cocoa, oil palms and rubber trees. Since these new arrivals also needed to eat, subsistence agriculture increased concomitantly - especially the cultivation of cassava and maize on the hillsides. Rice cultivation also became popular: some of it on the slopes, but also in the valley bottoms; among the Yacouba in the north, irrigated rice cultivation in the swamps was traditionally known, but not among the Guéré and the Kroumen. Small administrative centres became major towns, and hamlets grew into large villages. The landscape changed from high-canopy forest to a patchwork of secondary forest, cultivated fields and vast plantations of perennial crops.

52. There are still virgin forests too, and a wide zone has been declared forest reserve and national park. In fact, settlements are mainly concentrated in a broad zone on either side of the main roads: the coastal road from San Pedro to Tabou, the unpaved north-south road from Guiglo via Taï to Tabou, parallel to the Liberian border; and the east-west road from Guiglo to Toulepleu and on to Liberia. Outside these strips are the protected areas, officially closed to settlement as they are some of the last remaining stretches of the rainforest that once covered more than half of the country.

53. The large extent of these reserves significantly reduce the area available for human settlement and cultivation; this means that the *net* population density in Guiglo and Tabou (i.e. discounting the areas under protected forest) is not really that much lower than in Danané and Toulepleu. The limited extent of land available for cultivation and the rapid growth of population in recent decades that land has to be utilized ever more intensively. In other words, fallow periods are shortening. This requires new techniques for maintaining soil fertility, such as the application of fertilizer and crop rotation systems; the alternative being accelerated land degradation. It will be clear that, since migration is such an important part of population growth in the ZAR, and since refugees have been such a large section of migrants into the region during the 1990s, they have significantly contributed to the pressure on land.

Responses

Introduction

54. This chapter discusses the responses to the refugee crisis by the various stakeholders: the local people, the host country government, UNHCR and other aid organizations, and the refugees themselves. This is followed by sections on specific relevant topics: the problems of vulnerable groups, the durable solutions pursued, and the impact of refugees on the host country. A separate section is also dedicated to the refugee education programme, which currently presents the most intractable problem facing UNHCR, the Ivorian government and the refugees themselves.

The host population

55. As has already been explained in the previous chapter, the vast majority of Liberian refugees settled among their ethnic kin in the ZAR and were hospitably received. Those who settled in villages - and many townsfolk as well - were given land to cultivate. The conditions under which this access was provided varied both from place to place and over time, and it is not always easy to identify them, as reports by refugees and hosts do not always coincide. Some general statements can, nevertheless, be made.

56. The most common situation appears to be where refugees are given usufruct rights over land that was not cultivated at the time. They are seen as 'borrowers', not owners. No formal counterpart contribution on the part of the borrower is stipulated, but he is expected to assist the owner by giving him some of the harvest. In some cases - especially around the towns - there are more formal arrangements, always in the form of sharecropping; some refugees complain that the share they have to give is exorbitant, others say they give nothing, or only when the owner himself is in need. In the case of the refugee camp at Nicla, which covers 18 hectares, the land has been donated by the nearby village, on condition that the infrastructure becomes theirs when the time comes that the refugees depart.

57. Since refugee access to land is regarded as temporary, they are not given permission to plant perennial crops, which means that cash crops like oil palms, rubber, cocoa or coffee are outside their orbit;⁵ they do, however, work as labourers on the plantations of Ivorians in order to supplement the subsistence crops they produce on their own fields. The fields traditionally used for slash-and-burn cultivation need long fallow periods to restore soil fertility, hence the refugees have increasingly resorted to growing rice in valley bottoms, a practice which has expanded enormously as a result. This has been a major impact of the refugees.

⁵In many African cultures, usufruct rights to land really mean ownership of the crops that grow on it. Hence, a refugee will be given a plot for the time it takes to grow a crop, and since this will be an annual crop, access to the plot will have to be renegotiated each year.

58. On the whole, relations between refugees and local people have been cordial, but there are also reports of tension. Ivorians tell stories of how refugees returned to Liberia when they thought conditions there had improved; before their departure, they burnt their houses and uprooted the rice they had planted. When, as appears to have happened in at least one case, the same refugees later had to flee again, the authorities had some difficulty in persuading village chiefs to readmit them. Moreover, the unexpected long duration of their stay plus the economic difficulties in which Côte d'Ivoire has found itself, and last but not least the rise in xenophobic sentiments from official quarters since 1995 have led to a certain deterioration of the climate - notwithstanding the fact that refugees are still widely accepted among their own ethnic groups.

59. Those refugees who do not belong to the same ethnic group as the Ivorians in the area where they settle normally cannot obtain land to cultivate. They settle in the towns, but they can also find work in the rural areas as plantation labourers.

60. A new land law was adopted in 1998, reflecting the official view that land ownership must be reserved to Ivorian nationals, and aimed at registering land so it may serve as a collateral for agricultural credit; this law is currently being put into effect. This is a major political issue, and it is not yet known to what extent this will affect access to land for refugees in the future.

The host government

61. It has already been mentioned that the government of Côte d'Ivoire not only welcomed the refugees, but allowed them to settle freely - a policy which is rare in Africa. Even rarer is the lack of restrictions on their economic activities: not only are they allowed to cultivate land (a right conveyed by local chiefs and landowners rather than by the authorities), but they may be employed and operate businesses without permits. A business in Côte d'Ivoire needs official registration, but this is obtainable for refugees as well as nationals. This remarkably liberal attitude is related to Côte d'Ivoire's traditional openness to non-citizens: the many foreign nationals need only a *carte de séjour* (residence permit) issued by the Ivorian government and a *carte consulaire* to show that they are registered with the representative of their country in Côte d'Ivoire.

The legal status of refugees

62. Initially, during the time of mass influx, all Liberians were accepted as refugees on a *prima facie* basis. Since 1999, however, refugee status must be applied for individually, to be decided by committees on which both UNHCR and government officials are represented.⁶ It is conferred by registration into a database and by the issue of a refugee identity card, which carries most but not all of the rights as a *carte de séjour*.⁷ The principal restriction is that the refugee card is valid only

⁶There are local Commissions of Agreement in the ZAR plus a National Eligibility Commission which decides on asylum applications in Abidjan.

⁷According to the UNHCR 1992 Annual Protection Report, lawful employment and the registration of businesses are not possible without a *carte de séjour*; however, the law to which the report refers does not appear to have been put into practice within the ZAR, as refugees

within the ZAR, the area designated for refugee settlement. Other than the *carte de séjour*, the refugee identity card carries no fee (the cost is borne by UNHCR). A refugee wishing to travel outside the ZAR needs to apply for a travel permit, and residence outside the ZAR is possible only with a *carte de séjour*; since for a refugee it is usually impossible to obtain the aforementioned *carte consulaire* (proof that the authorities in the country of origin are aware of and in agreement with his or her residence in Côte d'Ivoire), most of them are technically illegal aliens. A travel permit is in principle not difficult to obtain, but in practice it may cause problems depending on the issuing officials and the prevailing political atmosphere; moreover, officials outside the ZAR may have difficulties accepting it, as some of them are unfamiliar with the refugee statute.⁸

63. There are other, less irksome restrictions attached to the refugee identity card as compared with the *carte de séjour*. For instance, it does not convey the right to open a bank account or to obtain a driver's licence. UNHCR has been trying for some years to make the refugee identity card equivalent to the *carte de séjour* - so far without success.

64. The identity cards under the new system carry a photograph and have to be renewed annually, which has increased the administrative burden of handling them. It is not working well. In late 2000, the operation of issuing the new identity cards was suspended, for a combination of reasons: administrative problems in the exercise of issuing the cards, the poor functioning of the committees that are supposed to confer the status of refugees, lack of acceptance of the new cards by police officers, and ongoing discussions about changes in the validity of the cards - to extend the period of validity and to give the bearer the same rights as the *carte de séjour*. Hence, many refugees do not have the identity card; in Danané, for instance, which has an estimated refugee population of around 40,000, only 4,000 refugees (who have an added 2,500 dependants who do not need their own cards) have been issued with identity cards. Pending the solution of these problems, the refugees are now issued temporary documents as needed, and meanwhile get by with a variety of documents.

65. Notwithstanding the easy terms on which refugees - like other foreigners resident in Côte d'Ivoire - have been allowed to settle, they have not been offered naturalization; and in the changed political climate of today, that prospect is less likely than ever.

Refugee law

66. Whereas Côte d'Ivoire has subscribed to the 1951 Convention on Refugees (albeit by succession rather than accession) as well as to the 1967 Protocol and the OAU Convention on Refugees of 1969,⁹ and has faithfully abided by its obligations under those Conventions, it has not as yet translated its adherence to them into

have stated that they have not experienced any restrictions in this respect - except that, like other foreign nationals, they cannot be employed in the government.

⁸Restrictions on the freedom of movement of refugees are in contravention to Article 26 of the 1951 Convention on Refugees. However, such restrictions are common in African countries hosting refugees - in fact, many countries have more stringent restrictions than Côte d'Ivoire.

⁹Côte d'Ivoire ratified the OAU Convention only in 1998, but it has applied the refugee definition contained in it from the start.

national law. The new constitution adopted in July 2000 does, however, carry a provision securing the right to asylum in Côte d'Ivoire for all those "persecuted for their political, religious or philosophical convictions or because of their ethnicity" (Article 12). A refugee law was drafted in 1999, but no progress has yet been made on having it enacted.

Government institutions for handling refugee affairs

67. The government of Côte d'Ivoire initially set up an ad hoc National Committee for the Coordination of Refugee Aid in the Ministry of the Interior. Only in early 2000 was this replaced by a permanent office, the Service d'Aide et d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Apatrides (SAARA). Subsequently, that office was placed - somewhat to the consternation of international agencies - under the Direction of Civil Protection in the Ministry of Defence. It is led by a Director, and is represented in the ZAR by a legal assistant and a data manager in Danané and Tabou; these officers are based at the local prefectures.

68. SAARA is financed with UNHCR assistance. It operates a database on refugees, in which all the data collected during the 1997 census are kept, updated as required and supplemented with photographs.

Practical aspects of refugee protection

69. Many refugees complain of harassment by security forces, both within the ZAR and when they attempt to travel outside. The confusion around the different identity documents plus the lack of new identity cards at present translates itself into difficulties at the frequent roadblocks (which have multiplied since the 1999 coup d'état); often the *carte d'identité* is not recognized by police officers. Refugees are forced to pay bribes, or else are subject to arbitrary arrest and sometimes beatings. This has been one of the most frequent problems listed by refugees at the community meetings with the UNHCR consultant, and is confirmed by local UNHCR officials who are often called upon to intervene.

70. Such harassment has increased significantly over the last two years. Undoubtedly this is in part due to the heightened ethnic tension in Côte d'Ivoire, and reinforced by the ideology of *Ivoirité*. Another factor, however, has been the relative novelty of the present identity card, and the lack of awareness among security personnel - many of whom have been heard to claim that there are no more rightful refugees in Côte d'Ivoire as the war in Liberia has ended. This is aggravated by the rapid turnover of personnel: UNHCR does make efforts to sensitize them, but time and again officers are newly transferred to the ZAR and are ignorant of the refugee situation. It may well be that the situation is even worse for Liberians outside the ZAR, who are largely outside the reach of UNHCR.

71. There is certainly no official policy of harassing or victimizing refugees, but practical protection remains a pressing need especially in view of the current socio-political climate in the host country. Many government officers lament the burden which refugees impose on the country - with scant compensation from the international community which has even cut off much of the aid that used to flow in the past.

72. It may be noted also in this connection that, following the incident at Tai in 1995, the government has designated the ZAR as a military operational area, and significant forces have been stationed there in order to protect national security. The cost of this operation has been unofficially estimated at \$ 1.5 million per year.

73. We must conclude that, while the government of Côte d'Ivoire has never reneged on any of its obligations towards refugees, the political and economic environment today is considerably less favourable towards local integration than it was during the early years; this is a result partly of domestic events, but partly also of the poor compensation that the host country has seen from richer countries. As in other developing countries, the Ivorians see that the rich countries are becoming ever more restrictive towards far smaller numbers of refugees and wonder why they should be left to cope by themselves.

UNHCR and its partners

74. As mentioned above, UNHCR began to assist the Liberian refugees almost immediately. Protection was not a problem, and efforts could concentrate on material assistance. Already from March 1990, funds were made available from UNHCR's Emergency Fund, and an appeal from the High Commissioner led to additional donor contributions. A UNHCR branch office was opened in Abidjan and a sub-office in Danané, later followed by another one in Tabou. Field offices were set up in Guiglo, Toulepleu and Grabo (see Map 1). However, the number of refugees increased so rapidly that funds were insufficient and further appeals had to be made. It was only from early 1991 that the aid programme was fully operational and able to meet basic needs. Table 5 shows the evolution of expenditure from the beginning of the crisis until today.

Table 5. UNHCR expenditure on Côte d'Ivoire since 1989¹⁰
(in millions of US dollars)

1989	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	2000	'01
0.3	5.9	9.7	8.9	9.9	9.6	12.2	12.7	12.9	15.5	11.8	4.17	4.15

75. As usual, UNHCR cooperated with several other agencies as its operational partners, i.e. implementing the assistance programmes that UNHCR finances. Several agencies also provided assistance from their own resources: the World Food Programme (WFP) supplied food which was distributed by the Ivorian Red Cross; the Catholic relief agency Caritas, which as a local organization was already on the spot, was active from the start in emergency relief and soon became a major operational partner of UNHCR. Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) was active in medical assistance. The World Bank, the European Community, the International League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC) and others assisted in

¹⁰Total of general and special programmes, including programme delivery costs and administrative support; the figures show the amounts obligated in the years for which these amounts are known.

financing programmes through various implementing agencies. Over time, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), which implements the education programme, and Caritas for all other components, became the main partners of UNHCR.

76. From the annual reports it emerges that from the very start UNHCR believed that the refugees would stay only for a limited period and could soon return home. In early 1991, one year into the crisis, a contingency plan for mass voluntary repatriation was drawn up. There was actually a small operation of returning refugees by ship to Monrovia, in cooperation with the 'interim government', and in 1992 the annual report speaks of hope to launch a major operation by the end of that year. Instead the number of refugees increased, and continued to grow through 1993 and 1994. Every annual report laments the fact that previous peace accords have not been implemented, but expresses fresh hopes for the latest one. In 1996 a new plan of operation was made for large-scale repatriation, but renewed fighting broke out, and preparations for implementing the plan were suspended once again. It was only in 1997 that major repatriation could be undertaken, and even then, as we have seen, it had to be suspended when violence broke out again and a large part of the caseload remains in the host country. It is obvious that this temporary vision had a major impact on the programme of assistance and in particular on the effort towards local integration.

77. In 1992 the situation was seen as having moved beyond the emergency phase, and consequently the report for that year speaks of shifting assistance from care and maintenance to local settlement. Self-sufficiency now became an objective. By 1994, there was optimistic talk of half the refugees becoming self-sufficient within the next year. Care and maintenance assistance continued until 1999, however, when it was restricted to vulnerable groups and newcomers; self-sufficiency programmes did not undergo any major change until 1999, when drastic cuts became necessary (see Table 5). These cuts were not only the result of the difficulty of UNHCR in securing sufficient funding: they were also influenced by the vision in preceding years that refugees would repatriate voluntarily as soon as a peace agreement was functioning. It had been expected that the caseload in Côte d'Ivoire would dwindle. It turned out, however, that the term 'residual caseload' was a misleading expression.

78. Thus, at the time of this mission, UNHCR was faced with a situation where it still had over 100,000 refugees on its hands, but few funds to assist them with. Even protection, which was not a problem in the early years, has become difficult to guarantee: after field offices in Toulepleu and Grabo were closed in the late 1990s, Tabou and Danané are set to close in September 2001, with the last office, Guiglo, to follow by the end of the year.

Food and shelter

79. In the early stages of the crisis, household items and plastic sheeting for roofing were provided as well as food; this is still the case for new arrivals - as long as they are willing to settle at the Nicla camp. The food came from WFP, and its value exceeded the total cost of the UNHCR programme: in 1993, while UNHCR spent just under \$ 10 million, WFP aid was estimated at over \$ 15 million; to this must be added the cost of food distribution within the ZAR which was funded by

UNHCR, which in 1993 amounted to \$ 700,000 - meaning a total cost of food of \$ 16.2m (UNHCR and WFP combined) and \$ 9.2m for all other components of the UNHCR programme including personnel costs and other overheads. This shows clearly the extent to which refugee aid in those years was geared towards care and maintenance.

80. In 1999 the WFP discontinued food aid in the ZAR. UNHCR through Caritas still distributes food to certain specific needy groups (malnourished children, the 'extremely vulnerable), and in 2001 food was provided to the newly arrived refugees. UNHCR also provides shelter to a small number of individual refugees who because of their connection to defeated militias are not safe among the Liberian community in general.

Medical assistance

81. Until 1992 MSF-France was the main partner for the health programme, while other international NGOs were also active with their own funds. In 1992, however, MSF withdrew, considering that the emergency phase had passed and that health care for refugees should be integrated into the national system. The responsibility for the health component was transferred to Caritas. From then on, medical aid took two main forms: (1) assistance to the Ministry of Health to reinforce the existing infrastructure, and (2) arrangements to pay the medical costs of refugees; since the state health system operates on a cost-recovery basis, it was felt that UNHCR should cover the fees due for the treatment of refugee patients. A health survey in late 1992 showed that the nutritional status of refugees was similar to that of their hosts, meaning that on this point at least the refugees were well integrated. From 1999 medical aid was restricted to vulnerable groups; this is dispensed through health agents employed by Caritas and stationed at the major health establishments in the ZAR, who pay the medical fees of the approved beneficiaries when the latter present themselves for treatment.

Water and sanitation

82. Among the first activities to be carried out by UNHCR were the provision of water through the drilling of boreholes, the installation of hand-pumps and the improvement of springs; fortunately there is no shortage of water resources in this humid region. A large number of improved pit latrines was also constructed. This, of course, benefited local people as well as refugees. It was implemented through government agencies.

Agriculture

83. Since many refugees were provided with land by their hosts, UNHCR assisted them with tools and seeds from an early stage. Fertilizers and pesticides were added later, as were investments in constructing irrigation facilities for rice-fields. It is the second largest component of the UNHCR programme in terms of expenditure, after education.

84. It was soon decided that, since local people had sacrificed land to assist refugees, it was only fair to let them share in the benefits of refugee assistance.

Hence, 30 per cent of the latter is allocated towards assisting hosts in the same way as refugees. This policy has become quite popular, although it has the side effect of leading to increased demands for assistance on the part of hosts, who previously had been content to help the refugees without compensation. On the whole, however, the agricultural programme has worked well in the sense of assisting many refugees to become self-sufficient in food, while at the same time providing some compensation to their hosts not only through inputs but also through the investments made in swamp rice cultivation which expanded considerably since the arrival of refugees in the area.

85. Apart from the construction of irrigation infrastructure, the most beneficial items provided have been fertilizers, which compensated for the lack of fallow period due to intensive cultivation; and rubber boots, which protect farmers from diseases lurking in the swamps.

Other income-generating activities

86. From 1993 assistance to income-generating activities other than farming was provided. It was at first targeted principally at women, for small individual projects such as trading, cookshops, hairdressers and bakeries; sewing and batik are also especially popular. The funds earmarked for these projects remained small, only 1.5 - 2.5 per cent of the total budget. Moreover, control procedures were weak, with the result that the same beneficiary could acquire funds for several projects. Beneficiaries did not have to make any contribution of their own, other than labour.

87. After 1999, with the lower amount of funds available, a new system was initiated: the micro-projects scheme. The idea is that individual projects will no longer be supported, but instead beneficiaries must organize themselves in groups. For each area, a management committee has to be set up, to which a certain amount of funds is allocated. This amount must be managed as a revolving fund, i.e. it is provided to the committee as a grant, but extended to the groups as loans which are to be repaid to the committee. The idea is to foster the spirit of cooperation and of ownership: the groups will monitor each other as failure to repay a loan will mean that another group cannot get one. Furthermore, the system is designed to spread the limited funds as widely as possible.

88. So far, only a limited amount of funds has been disbursed as the programme only started in 2001. Most groups are still awaiting their loans, and refugees complain that the grants are insufficient to start profitable enterprises, and that repayment will be difficult.

Responses of the refugees

89. The Liberians, like refugees everywhere, have adapted to their new situation as best as they can. As we have seen, a large proportion are farming and - if the census information is correct - most of the others have some form of income-generating activity. However, incomes are low, both in farming and in non-farm activities. Access to land is for food production only - and any surplus quickly evaporates in assisting those who lack food, so refugee farms rarely generate cash. For that, the rural refugees have to depend on wage labour. Those not engaged in

farming rely mostly on employment or self-employment in the informal sector - the more so since the public sector is closed to non-Ivorians and the formal private sector is small in the towns of the ZAR which do not have any manufacturing industry - they are only trading and administrative centres. The employment situation is most difficult for the educated: their Liberian diplomas are not recognized, their knowledge of French is insufficient, and in any case they cannot get jobs in the public sector. Since it is these people who mostly act as leaders and spokesmen of the refugee community, the lack of employment opportunities is often overstated.

90. Since incomes are low and the outlook for improvement is bleak - especially with the decline of education documented above - refugees have to scout around for chances to get something extra and opportunities to escape their situation. Food and medical aid have been important supplements to low incomes during the time of the care and maintenance programme. Another supplement is remittances from Liberians living in the United States and other rich countries; most of these Liberians are themselves refugees who have been leaving the country since Doe took power in 1980. The size of these remittances is unknown, but an indication of its importance is the existence of a branch of Western Union in the town of Guiglo and the expected opening of another one in Danané, not long after a local bank branch had to close down for lack of business.

91. Crime is another potential response to a lack of alternative income opportunities. Indeed an increase in petty crime was noted after food aid was discontinued in 1999 - especially theft of food and theft of crops from fields, a sure sign of the difficult food situation some refugees are in due to low incomes. However, spokespersons among the host population and in the security forces have assured this consultant that the presence of the refugees has not led to banditry or other major criminal occurrences, or to a dramatic rise in petty crime. Yet risks remain, especially as a result of the enforced dropping-out of students from secondary school since 1999.

92. Education is seen as one of two keys to escape poverty. This is why Liberians have gone to great lengths and made considerable sacrifices to ensure that their children go to school. While free education with UNHCR financing was gratefully accepted, now that there is no longer any secondary education for them and primary education only in the Ivorian system, parents have set up their own schools, operated by voluntary teachers (often those laid off when UNHCR support ended), and usually located in the same temporary buildings set up by UNHCR.

93. The other key is resettlement to a third country. Even though only a small proportion of refugees will ever have a chance of making it to the United States, the possibility of resettlement tempts many. However much the lucky beneficiaries may profit, the community as a whole may suffer because of losing its potential leaders and because the incentive to integrate locally is much reduced.

94. Still not all leaders are lost, and efforts towards integration are made. As long as integration is not equated with assimilation, i.e. with losing one's own identity, self-organization must count as part of integration since it recognizes the present situation as one that is likely to be long-lived and that must be coped with. In all centres where this consultant visited, refugee committees (of both Liberians and Sierra Leoneans) were in evidence and their leaders articulate. This is a resource that can be utilized.

95. As for their attitudes towards the host country, very few refugees look with favour on long-term local integration. Nearly all of them, but for the prospect of resettlement in the United States, express the wish to return to Liberia if only conditions would permit. That attitude is also evident in the reluctance among Liberians to accept Ivorian-style education: they want to prepare their children for re-integration in Liberia while awaiting that moment - not for integration in Côte d'Ivoire, where they feel they will always be second-class citizens even if they have been treated relatively well. There is no justification for calling them economic migrants - unless economic migration is taken to mean a reluctance to return to a country which was wrecked by civil war and still subject to arbitrary violence. If there is local integration, it is only because people see no alternative, not because they have any desire to remain in Côte d'Ivoire.

Education

96. From the beginning, there was a small amount of money available for scholarships to assist refugee students in continuing their education. Regular schooling for all refugee children took some time to materialize. In 1991 a plan was drawn up to have refugee children taken up in Ivorian schools, and this included a provision to build classrooms so as to increase the capacity of local schools. However, that plan was abandoned before its scheduled date of implementation, and in 1992 another programme was started instead: primary schools under a Liberian curriculum, staffed by Liberian personnel and managed by ADRA. The schools were accommodated in rural areas in temporary structures built for this purpose, and in urban areas in existing buildings rented from their owners. Already in 1992 education became the largest single component of the UNHCR-funded aid programme, with about one-third of total expenditure not counting overheads.¹¹

97. Secondary education was also provided through ADRA, on a similar basis. The programme even organized exams providing officially recognized Liberian certificates. Like the primary schools, it was free of charge, with educational materials also provided through the programme.

98. In 1994 the education programme was complemented by vocational training: technical schools for refugees were set up in Danané, Guiglo and Tabou by the Germany agency GTZ in cooperation with UNHCR. Trades such as carpentry, masonry, agriculture, mechanics, electricity, road maintenance, baking and sewing are taught in these schools; girls are particularly interested in the latter two crafts, but are also found in other, traditionally male courses. After an initial period under GTZ, the schools were handed over to UNHCR to be administered through Caritas. The teaching is in English and the faculty are Liberian. However, the schools are also open to Ivorian students, and a modest number of those have availed themselves of the opportunity to enjoy free vocational training; the only Ivorian technical school is in Guiglo, and the students there have to pay fees. Recognition of certificates from these schools is not a problem. While the schools have no formal place in the Ivorian system, private-sector employers are interested only in whether skills have actually been acquired.

¹¹Food aid was far larger, but because it is provided by WFP, with UNHCR only providing transport for local distribution, most of its cost is not included in the figures presented here.

99. On the whole, the vocational schools are very popular and, as far as this consultant has been able to ascertain, functioning well and an important asset towards successful economic integration. However, they have suffered badly from the shortage of funds since 1999, which has translated itself into a shortage of equipment and training materials. This has had the result that the philosophy of 15 per cent academic education and 85 per cent practical training has become a dead letter: teachers must explain in class how to work, because they have no materials to provide the students with sufficient hands-on experience. The provision of food to students has also been stopped, which has led to a certain degree of absenteeism: some students have no other source of food and need to spend their time in its pursuit.

Integration into the Ivorian education system

100. In 1999, when the programme was faced with the need to scale down, it was decided to seek the integration of refugee children into the Ivorian education system. This presented some problems: the Ministry of Education objected that they already had a shortage of classrooms, which moreover are mostly built by parents; if the refugees were to be accommodated, this would necessitate prior construction of 450 additional classrooms to cater for over 18,000 children.¹² Other major problems were the need for additional teachers and the lack of familiarity of Liberian children with the French language. The latter problem would be even more serious in secondary education. In order to meet these problems, it was decided to embark on a transition year: the refugee children in primary schools would remain in the existing refugee schools, but taught the Ivorian curriculum by Ivorian teachers recruited for the purpose with UNHCR funding; there would be some teaching in English as well, to facilitate the transition. This would prepare them for entering Ivorian schools while UNHCR would look for funds to have new classrooms built at existing Ivorian schools. Prior to the transition year, a three-month course in French was organized for the refugee pupils. Support to secondary schools for refugees was discontinued.

101. This transition was fraught with difficulties. To begin with, the Liberian parents were not at all happy to see their children to receive French education: they retain the hope to return to Liberia or else to be resettled in the United States and want their children to be able to integrate there; secondly, they fear that they will always remain second-class citizens in Côte d'Ivoire, and that even a local school certificate will not get their children qualified jobs; thirdly, their children will be at a disadvantage vis-à-vis Ivorian children because of their lack of background in French and also their parents will not be able to help them with homework. Having had Liberian education for them all those years, they felt it was their right to have it continued; these attitudes were reinforced by the Liberian teachers who had to be laid off. Even worse for the parents, the children of secondary-school age were now left in the lurch which would not only jeopardize their future, but which left them with nothing to do at a dangerous age - with all the attendant risk that some of them might turn to undesirable activities. In response they set up private schools, both primary and secondary staffed by the former teachers who now work without a

¹²The ADRA system managed, until August 2001, 104 schools with a total of 18,400 pupils. Out of these, some 12,700 would qualify for proceeding to Ivorian schools. Another 4,700 are estimated to enter school in 2001.

salary. The result for the UNHCR-supported primary schools in the transition year was low enrolment, high absenteeism (in the vicinity of 40 per cent according to ADRA statistics) and low morale.

102. But this was not the only problem. Due to a variety of reasons related to starting a new system with little time for preparation, the new school year did not begin until January 2000. The 430 new teachers were untrained junior secondary school leavers, who were only given a crash-course of one week before starting teaching; in the Ivorian system there are many untrained teachers too, but they get three weeks training and moreover they are coached by seniors working at the same school. Ivorian inspectors (who were requested and sponsored by UNHCR to supervise the refugee schools) reported that morale and consequently the quality of teaching were low, which was worsened by the lack of facilities such as sports areas, water and sanitation at the temporary refugee schools. Moreover, no progress was made on construction of additional classrooms at Ivorian schools.

103. The only solution was to have a second transitional year, during which these problems would be addressed: 2000-2001. Unfortunately, the same problems were still in evidence, except that at least funds were found for the construction of a limited number of classrooms (90), and building began in August. Meanwhile, new primary-school entrants were already taken up into Ivorian schools. So, at the time of this consultancy, no third transitional year was envisaged, and the Ministry of Education was expected to accept all those enrolled in the refugee schools into its own facilities; this in spite of the shortage of accommodation (the new classrooms will become available only during the course of the year, and moreover fulfil only part of the need), the poor state of preparedness of refugee pupils for the classes they are supposed to enter - not to mention some other administrative problems, such as the lack of birth certificates among refugee children and the fact that many are above the maximum age for the particular class they are supposed to enter. The latter problem has been answered partly by the Ivorian authorities extending the age limit specially for the refugees by two years, whereas the others are referred to vocational training as an alternative.

104. A study was commissioned in late 2000 by the newly established SAARA to assess the situation and propose a solution. The report resulting from that study proposes investments in buildings, equipment, materials and human resources (training and salaries) for both the primary schools and for the additional secondary school places needed when the refugee children will graduate from primary school. These investments total FCA 9.7 billion over a period of six years, approximately \$ 14 million.

105. So far, such funds do not appear to be forthcoming. Nevertheless, the President of Côte d'Ivoire in a speech on World Refugee Day in June 2001 offered the acceptance of refugee children into Ivorian schools. In late August, this offer was translated into a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the UNHCR Representative and the Minister of Education, as well as by WFP and Unicef. It remains to be seen exactly how this agreement will be implemented in practice: what will happen when too many pupils register? It is possible, of course, that the number of refugee pupils presenting themselves for registration will be lower than estimated, because of the aforementioned reluctance among parents; that reluctance will be

increased by the fact that they must now pay not only for fees but also for stationery and textbooks.

Special problems of vulnerable persons

106. There are several groups within the refugee community which are regarded as having special needs. These include the physically or mentally handicapped, elderly persons who do not have relatives to take care of them, children who have lost or become separated from their parents, and female-headed households. In the 1997 refugee census, 44,500 such persons were identified, representing 28 per cent of the total. However, because of shortage of funds the number of those still entitled to care and maintenance was progressively reduced to a group identified as 'extremely vulnerable', at present numbering fewer than 1,000.

107. The main rationale for separating these groups from the community in general is their lower capacity for economic self-sufficiency. Hence, care and maintenance for them continues after it has been ended for other refugees.

108. For the unaccompanied children, there is a service in attempting to reunite them with their parents; in the meantime, foster homes are found for some of them within the refugee community. Foster parents are not compensated for this, their participation is purely on a charity basis.

109. Not all vulnerable persons are unable to earn a living: handicapped people may benefit from special training enabling them to exercise a profession in which their handicap is not an obstacle. Single mothers can help themselves through cooperative day-care for their children, which allows them to earn a living.

The search for durable solutions

110. UNHCR is mandated to promote 'durable solutions' to refugee problems, which is supposed to begin once the initial emergency is over. There are logically three such solutions: repatriation, integration in the host country, or resettlement in a third country.

111. We have already spoken of the eagerness with which UNHCR has been ready to help refugees return to Liberia almost from the very beginning of the Liberian crisis, and how this influenced the perspective on local integration. After the repatriation programme finally became operational in December 1997, about 70,500 refugees were assisted as was mentioned before. Some of this repatriation was 'organized', i.e. UNHCR gave the refugees a package of goods to help them through their initial period in Liberia and also provided transport; in 'semi-organized' repatriation, only the kit was provided, and the refugees went to Liberia by their own means. In Liberia itself, aid to the returnees was organized by UNHCR and other agencies. Organized repatriation came to an end in June 2000, while the programme was suspended altogether in May 2001, when a new influx of refugees was coming in. In addition to these repatriation programmes, there have been spontaneous repatriations almost throughout the period when Liberians have been in Côte d'Ivoire; in the years since the war calmed down, the number of these spontaneous repatriates is unknown, but in all likelihood superior to the assisted ones.

112. Resettlement has been an option for a limited number of refugees since 1992. The principal country of resettlement is the United States, which in recent years has significantly increased its quota, even if this is still far below the number of Liberians who would migrate to the USA if they could. However, the quota are not actually being filled: the number of those who qualify according to the criteria used by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is limited; this includes those who qualify according to the 1951 Convention and those who have close relations in the USA. The total number of those resettled during the two and a half years from the beginning of 1998 to the middle of 2001 was 2,153 - all but 23 of whom went to the USA.

113. For the large majority of those Liberians and Sierra Leoneans who reside in the ZAR today, local integration is the only realistic option. As we have seen above, the prospect for social and economic integration is relatively good, although much less so than when the refugees first arrived. The principal obstacles to successful economic integration at present are (1) the problems surrounding refugee education; and (2) the risk of environmental degradation (on which we shall speak in the next section). Legal integration in the sense of obtaining Ivorian citizenship is not a realistic option today, if it ever was.

Impact of the refugees on the host country

114. We shall consider in this section two aspects of the impact of refugees that raise most concern: on the economy of the host region and on the environment. Quantifying the former would require a major study, so we shall have to limit ourselves to some general remarks. In the agricultural sector, the settlement of refugee farmers has undoubtedly led to an increase in aggregate production. Whether that increase is proportional to their number is less easy to say. As mentioned before, their settlement has given a major impetus to swamp-rice cultivation. The yield per hectare there tends to be much higher than in the more traditional hillside subsistence production (based on shifting cultivation), but at the expense of a higher labour input - i.e. lower average productivity per worker. Refugees also work as labourers in the export-crop plantations, and in this they must have been a boon to that sector; this is especially the case in the Tabou area where plantations are particularly widespread and where part of the foreign labour force has fled during the recent insecurity; refugees have been able to take up some of the slack.

115. Outside agriculture, refugees contribute to the local economy both by their work - whether as employees or as self-employed, and as we saw most of them are economically active. At the same time, they contribute also to the level of economic activity by the demand they exert. The more they are allowed to participate in the economy, the less a burden on the region they will be.

116. A problem, however, is the carrying capacity of the land; this is not an exogenous factor, but depends on the technology used in agriculture. Thus, the reclamation of swamps leads to a higher carrying capacity. However, not all refugees cultivate swamp rice: some depend on growing food crops on hillsides, which require a very long fallow period if soil fertility is not to be irreversibly diminished. The UNOPS mission which investigated this problem in 1998 expressed the opinion that the pressure of population growth (of which the refugees are one important

factor) has already exceeded what the land can absorb: a density of 30 inhabitants/km² would be the maximum the land can sustain under shifting cultivation, which has already been exceeded in Danané and Toulepleu, and also in Guiglo and Tabou if we take into consideration that much of the land there is classified forest. The mission recommended a rehabilitation programme at a cost of \$ 22 million; no action has been taken on this so far. UNHCR has taken some limited action in funding the planting of trees on land cultivated by refugees and now left fallow, which would help to regenerate the fertility of these lands as well as yield timber and other forest products for the farmers; however, this programme was of modest extent and has now been discontinued due to lack of funds.

117. Another aspect of environmental impact is due to encroachment of classified forest by refugee settlers, thus diminishing the area of these important ecological reserves. This is particularly the case in the Goin-Débé forest as well as in the Cavally forest, where gold-mining is going on. The government tolerates this situation because of the lack of alternative land on which to settle these people.

Analysis

Conclusions

118. What stands out about the case of Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire is that while the local situation was remarkably favourable to the prospects of local integration as far as both the local population and host-country policies were concerned, UNHCR has not been effective in promoting this option, which now remains as the only one for most of the present caseload. The present circumstances are less favourable than they were in the early stages, while at the same time UNHCR has fewer resources available. In other words, an opportunity has been missed. What has caused this unfortunate state of affairs?

119. In the first place, local integration has always been seen as second best, by all parties involved: to the government of Côte d'Ivoire and the local people who welcomed the refugees in the beginning, the refugees were brothers in need and this need was assumed to be temporary. The refugees themselves have always been keen to return to their homeland as soon as possible, tempered only slightly by the chance that they might be resettled to the USA instead. UNHCR, like the international community in general, put its faith in the 'peace process' which would surely put an end to the war and allow the refugees to return. Some programmes of assistance were seen as useful to the host country also, and would be beneficial even if and when the refugees returned home. This was the case for the agriculture programme, and it need not surprise us that this programme has been successful in fostering integration. Since it was also one of the major programmes in terms of UNHCR expenditure, it can be counted as a real success.

120. Education, however, was the largest programme, and here the opposite applies. Although the Ivorian government was initially in favour of integrating the refugees into its schools and has consistently been opposed - in this field as in health - to the establishment of parallel systems, UNHCR decided to set up special schools for the refugees where they would be taught according to the curriculum in their home country, and in English. In this decision it was strongly supported by the refugees themselves. The rationale on both sides was, of course, that this would prepare refugee children for reintegration in their country of origin.

121. It is clear in hindsight that this decision was not the best, at least not for those refugees who are still in Côte d'Ivoire today. We must ask, therefore, whether it was the right decision at the time, and if it was not, whether this could have been foreseen. In the view of this consultant, the answers are no and yes, respectively. For the first question, the partial loss of the investment made in Liberian education (partial because it did, of course, produce some lasting benefits) and the difficulty of changing to a different system at this time compared to the ease with which it could have been done at the beginning weigh heavily against the Liberian curriculum, in addition to the argument of local integration. Those who have repatriated benefit, of course, from their Liberian education; but a few years of French education would not have put the students at a major disadvantage and might even help to get certain

jobs, the more so since in their own country at least they enjoy full rights; against this, refugees who may find it more difficult to get a job anyway should not be made to suffer the additional disadvantage of lack of language knowledge and the wrong kind of school certificate. Integration into the Ivorian school system - provided adequate compensation could be given to the Ivorian government would have brought the additional advantage of adding to local infrastructure. It must also be borne in mind that in the crisis which existed in the early 1990s - when for several years there was no schooling for refugees at all - it would have been relatively easy to decide either way; in the more settled conditions of today the transition to a different system is much more fraught with conflict. It could be held that refugees might be less likely to repatriate if their children have been educated in the host country, but the desire of refugees to return home is so great that this would have been unlikely to deter them. It might apply to a population which has been in the host country for a generation or so, but such a population would be unlikely to repatriate in large numbers anyway.

122. As for the second question, some of the above considerations could have been applied even at the time. They would have been strong arguments in case it was believed that refugees would remain in the host country for a long period, or even if it was uncertain how long they would remain. As we saw, it was generally believed that the refugee caseload would be of fairly short duration - a few years at most. It is contended here that such optimism was misplaced, based as it was on a simplistic view of the root cause of the refugee problem.

123. Looking at civil wars across Africa as well as in some other poor countries (Afghanistan and Cambodia spring to mind), we find that they have in common a surfacing of long-present tensions involving the breakdown of old-established patterns of dominance and a partial or complete collapse of the state. Traditional distribution of power through patronage is replaced by rival warlords fighting each other through militias, often on an ethnic basis and recruited partly from children. Without going into these things more deeply, it will be clear that such situations are complex and will not be resolved by a cease-fire. Nor do elections, monitored or not, offer any guarantee that a government will come to power that will follow 'good governance' practices and promote peace, justice, freedom or development. We so much want to see this happen that in the middle of the crisis we look out for positive signs, repressing our knowledge of who the partners in the 'peace process' are and willing them to be the democratic leaders they claim to be. We would do well in future to be less optimistic and to prepare for enduring refugee situations rather than short-lived ones. This would mean emphasizing local integration from an early stage.

124. There are other attitudes among the international community that have been less than conducive towards successful local integration. One such is an exalted sense of one's own capability in solving problems. This is expressed, for instance, in the phrase 'durable solution' which should be achieved, and which it is the High Commissioner's mandate to achieve. 'Local integration' would be one such solution. However, the word solution may be a misnomer here, even though in this report local integration would appear to be fairly successful. It must be borne in mind, however, that this integration has meant increased poverty for the refugees, both in comparison to their standard of living before flight and in relation to their Ivorian hosts; environmental degradation in the host country; rising disaffection with the refugees among at least sections of the host population and in circles of government

personnel - linked with the changed political climate in Côte d'Ivoire. Perhaps it would be more realistic to see a refugee situation not as a problem that can be solved, but as one that should be mitigated. That can be done only by looking at the effects of the problem on both the hosts and the refugees.

125. In that connection, it would be advisable for the international community to adopt a generous attitude towards a host country and its government, in seeking to help it compensate for the effects of the influx of refugees; even if the net effect on the host economy is not necessarily detrimental, there will always be major burdens on the host country, such as on its physical and social infrastructure at least in the early stages when it is faced with a mass influx of destitute people; or on its environment; or on social groups who compete with refugees for the same economic niche. In this connection, two major programmes now in the pipeline, the UNOPS proposal for \$ 22 million and the BNETD programme requiring \$ 14 million (each over a number of years) do not appear exorbitant for a region dealing with over 100,000 refugees.¹³

126. Another expression of the belief that an aid organization can solve a major social problem is the talk of 'making people self-sufficient'. Refugees cannot be made self-sufficient, they do this themselves - or not. As we saw above, the Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire are probably self-sufficient to a significant degree, if we include the assistance from members of their own community living in the United States as part of self-sufficiency. However, their self-sufficiency is at a very low standard of living even compared to the host country.

127. Yet another example is the emphasis on camps, where it is easier for organizations to cater for the needs of refugees, rather than where they live dispersed among the local population. In reality, we frequently find that the logistics and the financing of supplying these camps are fragile, and that livelihoods for refugees tend to be more secure where they do not depend on external aid. In this connection, it is regrettable that newly arrived refugees presently are required to settle at the Nicla camp - even if this is an open camp.

128. In the host country, the attitude that refugees are sharing a limited cake militates against their integration as well as to national development. One may also see human resources as the basis of economic growth, in which both refugees and nationals have a role to play. Historically, countries that have received immigrants have usually done well in terms of development - even if it is not always easy to say whether immigration led to development or the other way around.

129. In this connection, it must also be said that in fostering self-reliance, guaranteeing people's rights is more important than providing them with material aid - no matter how useful the latter can often be. In this respect, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire has been highly favourable, but there are nevertheless significant protection problems, and they are on the increase.

¹³At the time this report is being written, Australia is compensating Nauru with the sum of \$ 10 million for taking care of 522 Afghan refugees - presumably for a limited period. We may also compare the amount needed with the sums that have already been spent on Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire (cf. Table 5).

Recommendations

130. It will be clear from the foregoing which are the main practical lessons to be drawn from this case of a protracted refugee situation. The most important ones are two. Firstly, it is better to plan for a protracted refugee situation than for a short-lived crisis. Only if during the first year it already appears abundantly evident that the refugees will soon be able to return home can programmes aimed at local integration be abandoned. In most cases they will not yet have begun implementation during that time.

131. As a corollary of the first point, education for refugees should mostly follow the curriculum of the host country. Only those students who are already advanced in their schooling may be given a chance to pursue it in the system of their country of origin. It is suggested that this should be the case for all those who have completed primary school. This should be done only if the number of refugees is sufficient to justify the cost of a secondary school, and fresh entry to the school should be closed once there is no more mass influx; this will mean that special secondary schools for refugees would be carried on only for six years after the main influx comes to an end; in the case of the Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire, this would have meant that refugee secondary schools would have closed a few years ago; but instead of the closure being a result of lack of funds and resulting in the abandonment of the students, it would have been the planned outcome of a policy, and the students would have completed their education.

132. The second point is that increased recognition should be given to the sacrifices asked of the country of first asylum, and everything possible should be done to compensate it in such a way that the potential benefits of the new immigrants for development are realized and the inevitable burdens minimized. In view of the limitations of the High Commissioner's mandate, this cannot be ensured by UNHCR alone, but requires cooperation with development agencies such as the World Bank and the regional development banks, the United Nations family of agencies, bilateral donors, the EU and NGOs.

133. On the part of the host country, it will have to guarantee respect for the rights of refugees, not only that of *non refoulement* but the right of residence, of movement, the right to work, to operate a business, the right to education, and other rights as stipulated in the 1951 Convention and human rights treaties; UNHCR's role will be, of course, to monitor this. Funding agencies on their part will fund development programmes in the refugee-affected regions which will be designed to help the latter cope with the impact of refugees - both positive and negative. The highlights of such programmes will normally be in the field of infrastructure, upgrading health and education facilities, preventing and counteracting environmental degradation, and focusing on those sectors of the economy where refugees are most active; the latter will assist both the refugees themselves and those segments of the host population who most directly compete with them for jobs and resources. UNHCR's role in this process should be to appeal for this kind of cooperation, to provide emergency assistance in the early stages of the crisis, and to share in the financing of assistance - in particular those forms of aid that are specifically geared to refugees, such as secondary education following the curriculum in the country of origin.

134. The aim of present UNHCR policy is to keep care and maintenance of short duration (normally not more than one year, or one year from the time of planting for farming communities) is to be commended. However, this should not be the case for aid aimed at local integration: while this should - like all aid - be clearly limited in time, the timespan has to be a medium-term rather than a short-term one. Six or seven years after the completion of the relief phase would seem realistic - and it would be a great improvement on the present situation in Côte d'Ivoire, where refugees and the host country are still in need of assistance or nine years after the major inflow had ended.

135. Vulnerable persons are normally cared for by the community in which they live. In this respect, the policy of Caritas of not giving material incentives to foster families who care for unaccompanied children is to be recommended. However, refugees characteristically often find themselves outside the community that could provide such support. Therefore, there is a strong justification to provide care and maintenance for this category beyond the period when it is available to all refugees - possibly throughout the period of the overall assistance programme alluded to above. By that time, if appropriate policies have been followed, refugee self-sufficiency should have reached the point where vulnerable persons are no longer considered the responsibility of the international community.

136. The provision of aid specifically for income-generating projects is less necessary - and often less useful - than would appear at first sight. UNHCR's agriculture programme in Côte d'Ivoire is an example of how aid can contribute both to the wellbeing of refugees and to development of the refugee-affected area. The reason for its success was that it aimed at assisting in an activity which local people were already undertaking. In other projects, however, it was the donor who took the initiative in calling on people to submit project proposals, stipulating what kind of proposals would be entertained, etc. The micro-projects programme also calls on local people to organize themselves, which is much less straightforward than providing individual assistance; communal management capability is often a scarce resource. Vocational education is likely to be more effective in fostering economic self-reliance than income-generating projects. In short-term emergencies refugees may rely on the skills they brought from their country of origin; in protracted refugee situations, however, there is a new generation to be considered of refugees growing up in the host country.

137. The recommendation of following and supporting the solutions that people find for themselves rather than designing one for them even more usefully applies in the choice of organized vs. self-settlement. Côte d'Ivoire through its policy of allowing refugees to settle freely within the ZAR has enhanced the prospects of integration, where refugee camps would almost by definition have made it more difficult. It is also an option where the effectiveness of assistance tends to be much higher than in organized settlement.

138. Finally, in designing policies of refugee assistance there is scope for consulting refugees themselves to a greater extent than has usually been the case. This would not only help to arrive at better policies, but also make it easier to gain acceptance for policies that might otherwise be unpopular. This is because communication is improved, and because people participate in trying to find solutions in a given situation, rather than just call out for more funds. Among the

Liberians and Sierra Leoneans in Côte d'Ivoire there is a significant degree of local organization, and the forming of representation at national level could be encouraged; such encouragement should, however, be done by taking the refugee representatives seriously as discussion partners rather than by providing material incentives (e.g. financing office expenses or transport). Thus, policy formulation on refugees should be informed by a process of tripartite consultation: the host country government, UNHCR, and refugee representatives.

Recommendations on Côte d'Ivoire

139. The above recommendations are aimed at drawing the lessons from Côte d'Ivoire as a protracted refugee situation. In addition, some specific points may be made that will hopefully prove helpful to the difficult predicament in which UNHCR finds itself in Côte d'Ivoire at present. They have been listed in order of priority.

- i. Since protection of refugees is not only the primary responsibility of UNHCR, but also the most important determinant in successful integration, it should have first priority in the UNHCR programme. With this in mind, it is most regrettable that UNHCR should close its offices in the ZAR. Not only will this make it extremely difficult to protect the over 100,000 refugees in the region, but it will give the wrong message to the Ivorian authorities. Harassment will undoubtedly increase. It is recommended instead to reduce the staffing and facilities of the three offices and leave only the protection section in place. Since at the time of finalizing this report, the offices at Tabou and Danané will have been closed already, it is recommended that the office at Guiglo (which is due to close in December) remain open, and there should be an international officer in place.¹⁴
- ii. Such a move would help to create the right climate for promoting refugee rights in accordance with the 1951 Convention on Refugees, such as the right to free movement, to documentation such as identity papers, travel documents and civil registration, and to property; as well as the right of children to education, as guaranteed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Such rights ought to be reflected in the refugee law which has been drafted and to enact which is in the interest of all parties.
- iii. The integration of primary-school pupils into the Ivorian education system should be supported by more substantial assistance, such as continued financial support for school inspectors in terms of their expenses, as well as a partial and temporary subsidy of school expenses for refugee parents.
- iv. In addition, support for Liberian secondary schools should be revived, with a view to catering for those - and only those - who have

¹⁴Since the first draft of this report was written, it has been decided to keep the Guiglo office open for another year, and to re-open the office in Tabou.

completed primary school under the previous Liberian system. Newly arrived refugee children can be admitted to these schools as well, but with the proviso that in the second year there will be no Grade 7 any longer, in the third year no Grade 8, and so on. Barring a new mass influx, which would result in a wholly new situation, the secondary schools will close down completely after six years.

- v. Vocational training has been a successful component of the UNHCR programme in Côte d'Ivoire; unfortunately it is now being undermined by lack of funds. Support to these schools should be increased so that they at least have sufficient equipment and training materials. In order to ensure handing over in the future, the three technical schools in the ZAR should start asking modest school fees which ought to be raised gradually to the same level as in the Ivorian schools. Simultaneously, they should be gradually converted into Francophone facilities, by insisting that the instructors learn French and by assisting them to do so. This process should take five years.
- vi. The agriculture programme should be continued, with fertilizer and rubber boots the most useful inputs to be supplied to both refugee farmers and their hosts (*tuteurs*, as they are locally known). While fertilizer is a consumable rather than an investment, it helps to counteract the effect of a decreasing fallow period on soil fertility. High-tech inputs such as motor cultivators are difficult to sustain and are not cost-effective in subsistence farming.
- vii. Efforts should be made to procure funds from other donors in order to implement the UNOPS proposals on rehabilitation of the ZAR and the BNETD report on education. These two major programmes would represent a most necessary and welcome contribution to alleviate the burden of the refugees on Côte d'Ivoire, show the commitment of the international community, and therewith encourage the host country to continue to treat the refugees in accordance with international treaties.
- viii. It is doubtful that a long-term purpose is served by the micro-projects programme in its present form. Apart from the fact that more funds would be needed for a successful programme than are now available, the programme needs more focus on the economic rather than the social aspects: the only criterion should be the potential profitability of the business to be supported - not the drive to make people work together, to make them contribute to the community, or to divide the funds over as many beneficiaries as possible. Furthermore, a credit system such as currently being propagated under the micro-projects programme is unlikely to be successful and should be deferred to a later stage and then implemented only on a pilot basis in areas where previous projects have been successful. Economic expertise among operational partners will be needed to select beneficiaries. That is, if it is decided that income-generating projects ought to be funded. In the opinion of this consultant, it should have a priority below protection, education and environmental rehabilitation.

- ix. Assistance in the field of health should be limited to providing support through the state health sector, to the extent that funds are available. No more individual support should be given.
- x. The issue of vulnerable cases should be discussed with the relevant Ivorian authorities (SAARA and the Ministry of Social Affairs), in order to see whether there is any possibility to hand over the present caseload to the latter with compensation for a fixed period of time.
- xi. The entire refugee programme should be aimed at phasing out all assistance to refugees - except for protection - in six years' time.

Annex I – Terms of reference

Background: the protracted refugee situations initiative

UNHCR has launched an initiative designed to better meet refugee needs through improving the way in which the organization responds to protracted refugee situations. The first phase of this initiative consists of taking stock of UNHCR's experience with protracted situations with a view to analysing these experiences, and capturing any lessons that might be of general relevance.

Broadly speaking, the questions being asked are: how have UNHCR and others responded to protracted refugee situations, which of these responses have worked and which have not, and what elements of the successful responses can be applied to current and future protracted situations?

Details of the protracted refugee situations initiative are indicated in the annexed framework document.

Côte d'Ivoire as a protracted refugee situation

Côte d'Ivoire hosts some 117,000 Liberian refugees, most of whom have been in the country for over a decade. Until 1989, Côte d'Ivoire accepted the Liberians on a prima facie basis. The refugees are not in camps, but dispersed amongst the local population, mostly in the border *zone d'accueil*, and are in practice allowed to engage in agricultural and other economic activities. Over 70,000 Liberians have repatriated since 1997; for the remainder, UNHCR has been pursuing a local integration solution. However, owing to recent financial constraints, UNHCR has had to prioritize some activities, and is planning to reduce its field presence.

In view of the length of the programme, and the current disengagement plans, the proposed evaluation should, in addition to the issues outlined below, examine the following questions:

What does local integration entail in the Côte d'Ivoire context? Access to land? Employment opportunities? Legal integration?

What room for manoeuvre does UNHCR have in facilitating local integration?

To what extent has local integration been successful, i.e., is it possible to determine the degree of self-reliance that has been achieved in the *zone d'accueil*?

In the current context, what actions should UNHCR undertake, and what role should the host government and development agencies take?

Generic report elements

The report should not exceed 25 pages (excluding summaries and annexes) and must be accompanied by a summary of findings, and recommendations. A format guide may be obtained from EPAU.

Background

Historical context (reasons for flight, composition of caseload, size of caseload, initial responses, evolution of situation, characteristics of situation (e.g., encamped, dispersed, urban)).

Asylum climate (host government policies (theory and practice); host community attitudes): are refugees permitted freedom of movement? access to labour markets/agricultural land? are there tensions between refugees and local populations? are there vested interests in favour of, or against, the refugee presence?

In what way might the situation be termed protracted? Is it a function of time, or does it have to do with the status of the refugees, and the inability of UNHCR responses to keep up with essential refugee needs?

Responses

How have various groups – refugee, host communities, host governments, UNHCR, other UN and other actors responded to the refugees? Have the responses been successful? How does one define ‘successful’ in the absence of a durable solution?’

(More detailed elements of this important section are indicated in the framework document)

Analysis

What stands out about the situation under review (e.g. host government policies, the importance of ethnicity, the lack of handover options)?

What lessons may be derived for the experience, and which ones could be used in other contexts?

What are some areas that need further exploration?

Methodology

The study will be undertaken using standard EPAU procedures: literature review, extensive field visits and interviews, field-level debriefing. The evaluator will be expected to consult with large numbers of refugees, and to account for the views of refugee women.

The in situ debriefing is considered to be an essential element of a UNHCR evaluation. The evaluator is expected to present his or her preliminary findings and

recommendations to UNHCR stakeholders. This provides the evaluator with an opportunity to test the credibility of his or her findings, to assimilate new information where relevant, and to defend recommendations where appropriate.

Schedule

10 August 2001 : Briefings and interviews in Geneva

11 - 23 August: field visits (zone d'accueil), plus briefings and debriefing workshop in Abidjan (timing and location of field visits to be determined)

24 August: Debriefing in Geneva (provisional)

10 September: Circulation of first draft of report for comments

Evaluation team

An external consultant, Mr Tom Kuhlman, will undertake the evaluation (CV annexed). EPAU will provide guidance, administrative support and funding. BO Abidjan will facilitate the mission on the ground (including in-country transportation), and will provide substantive inputs during interviews, the debriefing, and in comments on the report.

Donor participation in this mission may be considered.

Principles

EPAU is committed to undertaking innovative research on UNHCR programmes in line with its Mission Statement objectives of transparency, independence, consultation and relevance. All evaluation reports are placed in the public domain upon finalization.

Annex II – Programme and persons met

Itinerary

14-31 August: Côte d’Ivoire (Abidjan, Danané, Guiglo, Nicla, Tabou, plus other field locations)

2-3 September: UNHCR Headquarters, Geneva

Persons consulted

UNHCR: Ursula Aboubacar, Sidonie Adioh (Tabou), Bernard Agneroh (Danané), Abdoulaye Barry (Guiglo), Ana Maria Canonica (Abidjan), Jeff Crisp (Geneva), Daisy Dell (Abidjan), Khassim Diagne (Geneva), Joseph Djitro (Guiglo), Marie-Louise Dzietham (Abidjan), Margarida Fawke (Abidjan), Bruno Geddo (Geneva), Antoine Glokohi (Danané), Jacques Gondo (Tabou), Arafat Jamal (Geneva), Soumahoro Lanciné (Danané), Christine Lin (Geneva), Brigitte Mukanga (Abidjan), Mukanga (Danané), Ndeye Mbaye Ndour (Geneva), Naoko Obi (Geneva), Dunn Scott (Tabou), Binod Sijapati (Geneva), Brahim Sylla (Tabou), Pia Paguio (Geneva).

United Nations: Trudy Bower-Pirinis (WFP Abidjan), Pascal Diro (WFP Guiglo), Annette Kirkebø (WFP Abidjan), Germain Akoubia Koffi (WFP Abidjan), N’Dri Bertin Niamke (UNICEF Abidjan), François Sonon (WFP Abidjan), Arnold Vercken (WFP Abidjan).

Non-governmental organizations: Ekra Assue (ADRA Guiglo), Bakary (Caritas Nicla), Seapo Botoe (D-TEC Danané), Joseph Bouady (ADRA Tabou), Mélanie Brou (Caritas Danané), Brou (Caritas Nicla), Wagui Diop (GTZ/MLP), Zoué Doh (Caritas Tabou), Gouly (Caritas Grabo), Narcisse Grahouan (Caritas Abidjan), Nemlin Hollo (Caritas Tabou), Terhondé Koupeur (ADRA Danané), Moïse Kramo (ADRA Guiglo), Machane (Caritas Nicla), Ouro-Nile Mangazi (Caritas Grabo), Gilchrist Metonou (ADRA Tabou), Roger N’cho (Caritas Danané), Hyacinthe N’Datien (Caritas Abidjan), Siguwlee A. Nugba (T-TEC Tabou), Antoine Seri (Caritas Tabou), Honoré Ouanda Seri (Caritas Tabou), Pierre Kia Sonde (Caritas Tabou), Gnénéman Soro (Caritas Danané), Frederike Teutsch (GTZ/MLP), J.M. Willie (Caritas Zouan-Hounien).

Government: Kaouadio Boni (Sub-Prefect, Bin-Houyé), Brouz R.E. Coffi (SAARA Abidjan), Drissa Coulibaly (SAARA Abidjan), Cpt Célestin Djaha (Guiglo), Lt Dje Bi Dje (Guiglo), Cpt Lassina Doumbia (Guiglo), Léon Doumun (SAARA Danané), Benjamin Effoli (Tabou Prefecture), Bitra Goati (Ministry of Education, Zouan-Hounien), Cpt Bi Téon Goh (Société de l’Exploitation des Forêts Guiglo), Cmdt Noël Yedesse Houle (Guiglo), Blaise Kadjo (SAARA Danané), Adj Joachim Kipre (Guiglo), Jean-Noël Kouria (Sub-Prefect’s office Zouan-Hounien), Logbo (Prefect, Danané), Gaston-Aimé Woï Mela (Sub-Prefect Bloléquin), Marcelle N’Douffou N’Gotta (SAARA Tabou), Kouan N’Guessan (Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, Guiglo), Lt Kakou N’zi (Guiglo), Paul Seu (Ministry of Education, Danané), Roland C. Sewa (SAARA Abidjan), Dominique Tchirffo (Regional Prefect Guiglo),

Mr Michel Yao (Tabou Prefecture), Bi N'Dri Yao (Tabou Prefecture), René Yetamasso (SAARA Tabou)

Refugees

Meeting with some 400 refugees at the Danané Town Hall, chaired by Willis Forte, President of the Liberian refugee community in Côte d'Ivoire, with the assistance of James Parker, his Consultant

Meeting in Danané with a group of Sierra Leonean refugees, who introduced themselves as official representatives of that community: Joseph K. Simbo, Chairman, Emmanuel Y. Tucker, Project Coordinator, Edward Conteh, Evangelist, Abu B. Sillah, Adviser, Idrisa M. Bangura, Youth Leader and Mohamed Kanu, Member

Visit in Danané to the Liberian Youth Wing offices and the Naomi Training Center for women, run by the Liberian NGO Naomi Preparing Youth for Christ: Josephine Shannon, President

Informal meetings with refugees in Danané: a disabled Liberian; Pee John Bull, former Sierra Leonean refugee community chairman, currently Project Director of the Sierra Leonean Women Welfare Committee as well as Chairman of the Joint Parents-Teachers Association, and Joe Yoko, Secretary of the Joint PTA; a group of Sierra Leonean refugees, led by Mohamed Vannah, an elder; and a former Liberian police detective

Community meeting in Nicla: Joe T. Wilson, chairman (about 35 people present)

Meeting with refugees in Grabo: Daniel Copeland, Chairman, and Mary Wilson, Chairlady of the women's section (about 60 people present)

Meeting with refugees in Tabou, chaired by Edward Nangwe, Secretary of the Liberian community in Tabou; the Chairman himself, Mr Gabriel Doboyou, was also in attendance.

Frederick Bohlen (Grabo), George Stewart (GO-TEC Guiglo)

Others: Mr Bruce F. Knotts (US State Department), Tchea Victor Tahoud (landowner Nicla)

Annex III - Sources

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