

**UPDATE # 7**  
**Bureau for Africa**  
**20 May 2005**

**Togolese refugees in Benin and Ghana**

**Number of refugees**

The number of refugees stands at 32,402 in total, which represents an increase of 4265 refugees compared to last week Friday. Refugees arrive on a daily basis in Benin at an average rate of 100/ 150 persons, bringing the total number to some 17,438 persons, whereas in Ghana most of the refugees registered in the last week are not new arrivals but are rather identified by joint mobile teams in remote areas in the Volta region, north of Aflao, bringing the total number of refugees to 14,964. Returns were hardly observed from Benin to Togo, while they continue, at a very low pace, from Ghana to Togo.

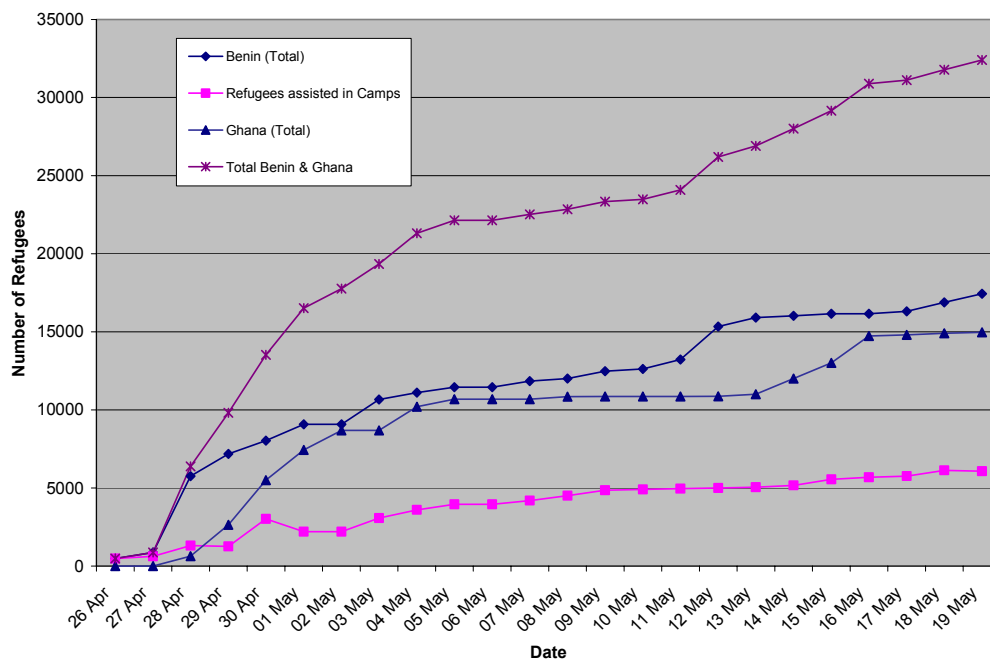
**Togo**

The situation in Togo is calm, but reports of Human Rights violations are reportedly persisting and the EU Parliament resolution issued this week has strongly called upon an

immediate stop to abusive and intimidatory acts against the civilian population and requested for the establishment of an independent fact-finding commission to be responsible for clarifying the abusive acts carried out. A meeting chaired by President Obasanjo with the Togolese Government and the opposition on Thursday 19 May in Abuja, with the participation of the Heads of State from the neighbouring countries, did not bring positive results to reconcile the two parties.

At the level of the UN, the SRSG for West Africa, Mr Ould Abdallah, travelled to Togo where he met with the Head of State, who agreed to designate a Humanitarian Focal Point in his Administration to facilitate the coordination with the humanitarian community on the current crisis.

**Refugee Influx**



The urgent need to address the situation of the young nationals leaving Togo for neighbouring countries was mentioned to the Head of State. The SRSG also met with the opposition, who reiterated that there was a need for some conditions to be fulfilled for them before joining a Government of National Unity, including the involvement of the international community in the reconciliation dialogue, the enquiry on massive violations against civilians after the elections and an immediate halt to the violent harassment of civilians by the current Government (confirmed by some humanitarian sources).

## Benin

### Refugee movements

As of Friday 20 May, the total number of refugees registered so far was 17,438, including 13,337 assisted in the Southern part of Benin, 3,142 registered at UNHCR Cotonou office and 959 in the Tchetti area. Most of the new arrivals are young men, who most probably preferred to flee to Benin (a French speaking country as Togo), where it will be easier for them to continue their studies and take their exams compared to the neighbouring English speaking Ghana.

### Registration and protection

New arrivals continue to be transferred by bus from Hilakondji to Lokossa, where registration is ongoing, and where some 4,681 refugees are assisted. It was noted that refugees continue to arrive spontaneously in Come upon invitation of family members already there. A thorough registration is being carried out in order to update figures. The road leading to the camp has become impassable and UNHCR has been asked by the local authorities to cover at least partial costs of its repair.

There are 171 unaccompanied minors registered in Benin and it was noted, in both Benin and Ghana operations, that many families split when they fled Togo. As a result, the need for a cross border family tracing system was identified and is currently being discussed among agencies involved in child protection to facilitate the reunification of minors with their relatives.

### Assistance and education

The Community Services staff visited the refugees staying in Akpakpa (Cotonou) in a public building. Their present most urgent needs are for food and NFIs.

In Lokossa UNICEF has started construction of temporary school classrooms for 271 primary school children, 189 secondary school children and 63 pre-school children, while in Come UNICEF staff and Togolese refugee teachers set up school schedules for next week. A first meeting was held yesterday between children and teachers.

### Inter-agency coordination and fund raising

The inter-agency appeal for Benin was launched in Cotonou last week Friday for a total amount of 5.9 millions.

Flash Appeal for Bénin 2005 Total funding requirements by sector as of 13 May 2005	
Information compiled by OCHA based on data provided by the organisations participating in the Flash Appeal	
Sector	Funding requirements (USD)
Shelter and NFIs	660 000
Food supply	1 640 932
Coordination	81 000
Water and Sanitation	325 000
Education	395 000
Protection/ Human Rights/ Legal support	1 002 398
Health	759 000
Multisectoral	1 088 450
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 951 780</b>

Source : OCHA May 2005, <http://www.reliefweb.int/fts>

## Ghana

### Refugee movements

As of 19 May, the total number of refugees registered in Ghana is 14,964, including 237 arrivals registered at Likpe-Todorme (Hohoe district) by a mobile registration team. Joint mobile monitoring and registration teams continue to assess the relevant operational

areas, including some of the very remote and inaccessible locations along the border, despite logistics constraints related to the limited availability of vehicles which have posed obstacles at a number of occasions.

### **Inter-agency mission in Volta region**

According to the preliminary conclusions of the joint UNHCR/ WFP/ UNICEF assessment mission, the inflow of refugees appears to be broadly presenting two different situations, mainly along north/south lines : in the central and northern districts, host communities live in remote areas far from road access and are predominantly rural, as are the majority of refugees who have fled there, bringing little or nothing with them.



*Togolese new arrivals in Ghana  
UNHCR / L. Quarshie / May 2005*

The situation in the southern districts of the Volta region, especially in and around the border town of Aflao, is quite different, as the majority of refugees appear to be of urban origin, and include many in semi-skilled professions, small scale traders, artisans, and students. A number of these refugees have been able to bring limited clothing and household items with them, in some cases through multiple border crossings. Integration seems less developed than in the northern part and there is clearly already considerable strain on the host community especially in the areas of sanitation, water supply and the ability of the host community to accommodate such large numbers of refugees.

In both areas hosting refugees, although it appears that many families have arrived together, cases of separated children have been reported. In addition there are numerous cases

of families which have been split, and are unable to determine the whereabouts of the remaining family members.

### **Vulnerable**

Over two thousand arrivals with special needs were supported through various targeted interventions. In Hohoe and surrounding districts, six unaccompanied minors and 16 separated children have so far been identified. These minors generally indicate that upon return from school they either came across groups telling them about the situation in the village, or could not find their parents at home and followed someone to Ghana. These minors generally stay in a foster care arrangement with a person from their village previously known to them.

### **Health**

A joint medical team (WHO, UNHCR Representation, UNHCR Regional Support Hub, Ghana Health Service) has visited the Volta Region for further consultations with the regional health authorities. Subsequently, operational missions are being fielded, with wider participation, including by UNICEF. A roving medical team is carrying out health screening and a range of targeted activities.

### **Shelter**

A comprehensive review of shelter options is currently being finalized. Similarly and related to this, a concept paper relating to Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) is being prepared. These measures intend to promote the host family option and will address the needs of communities hosting the refugees with a view to benefiting both the refugees and host families. In the meantime, a consignment of some 400 tents is expected to arrive from stocks in Liberia.

### **Other developments**

The ECOWAS humanitarian Unit deployed this week an assessment mission to Benin and to Togo.

The request for 4.7 million USD submitted to the Operations Review Board (ORB) for 50,000 beneficiaries in the three countries (40,000 refugees and host communities in Benin and Ghana and 10,000 IDPs in Togo) since the beginning of the operation until the end of the year was authorised, out of which one million has been disbursed this week.