



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

LIBERIA – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #11, Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

September 17, 2003

Note: This Situation Report updates USAID/OFDA Liberia Situation Report #10, dated September 10, 2003.

BACKGROUND

Liberia has been marked by intermittent civil war since Charles Taylor launched a rebellion against the military regime of Samuel Doe in 1989. More than 200,000 people were killed during the ongoing conflict in Liberia in the 1990s. In 1997, Taylor emerged as the dominant power, winning the 1997 presidential election. Two opposition groups, controlling between 60 and 80 percent of the country, launched attacks on Government of Liberia (GOL) forces in attempts to oust Taylor from power. Taylor resigned on August 11, 2003. The main opposition group, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), which began to fight former President Taylor in 1999, has grown from a northern-based insurgent movement to a force that now controls the majority of the country. The second opposition group, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), based in southern Liberia, began incursions into Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire in April 2003, resulting in large-scale population displacement. LURD now controls the north and center of the country, while MODEL controls the south and east. Years of conflict have had devastating consequences for the humanitarian situation in Liberia.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Internally Displaced	Total : 500,000 in Liberia 300,000 – IDP camps and irregular settlements in Monrovia 200,000 – Outside of Monrovia	UNHCR, September 2003 UNHCR, September 2003 UNHCR, September 2003
Refugees	73,000 Liberians in Guinea 53,000 Liberians in Sierra Leone 50,000 Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire 40,000 Liberians in Ghana 38,000 Ivoirians in Liberia 13,500 Sierra Leoneans in Liberia	UN OCHA, September 2003 UNHCR, June 2003 U.S. Committee for Refugees, Aug. 2003 UNHCR, September 2003 UNHCR, September 2003 UNHCR, August 2003

Total FY 2003 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Liberia (To Date) \$5,853,886
Total FY 2003 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Liberia (To Date) \$31,413,645

CURRENT SITUATION

(New information is in blue.)

LURD offensive in Monrovia. On July 19, following the complete breakdown of a June 17 cease-fire agreement, LURD launched its third major offensive since June in Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia. Heavy fighting between LURD and GOL forces continued in and around Monrovia following the July 19 attack, as LURD gained control of strategic areas of the city, including Bushrod Island and the Free Port of Monrovia. Unconfirmed media reports estimate that this outbreak of the fighting killed approximately 1,000 people.

ECOMIL troop deployments. On August 4, the first Nigerians, the vanguard of the Economic Community of West Africa Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) peace-keeping force, began to arrive at Roberts International Airport (RIA), located 50 km east of Monrovia.

On September 11, an ECOMIL peacekeeping force, including 650 soldiers from Guinea-Bissau and a company from Nigeria, fully deployed along the road from Kakata to Totota. ECOMIL troops established checkpoints around camps in the area to ensure the security of returning IDPs. According to international news reports, ECOMIL checkpoints along this route have replaced all GOL checkpoints manned by militias.

On September 13, 550 ECOMIL peacekeepers from Nigeria, Benin, and Togo deployed to the outskirts of Buchanan. The ECOMIL force attempted to negotiate with MODEL forces to move into Buchanan and its port, but was refused permission to deploy further than the St. John's River, approximately 12 km from town.

As of September 13, there are 3,500 ECOMIL troops in Liberia with contributions from Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Senegal, Mali, Benin, Gambia, and Togo. However, the ECOMIL force commander General Festus Okonkwo has stated that the peacekeeping force lacks the capacity to deploy throughout the north and east of the country and will focus on strengthening its current positions nearer to the capital. According to the commander, ECOMIL troops will not establish bases north of Totota, 109 km north of Monrovia, or beyond the St. John Bridge, near Buchanan, 120 km southeast of the capital.

A West African Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) will arrive in Liberia on September 17 to begin verifying the exact position of GOL and opposition forces. If there are any violations of the cease-fire, the JMC will inform ECOMIL and punitive measures will be taken against the parties involved in such violations. ECOMIL will become part of a much larger United Nations (U.N.) military mission to Liberia which will be established in October 2003.

Resignation of former President Taylor. On August 11, former President Charles Taylor resigned from office, transferred power to Moses Blah, Taylor's former Vice President, and departed the country for exile in Nigeria.

U.S. Government troop deployment. The U.S. Government has positioned 2,300 U.S. Marines off the coast of Liberia to assist the ECOMIL peace-keeping troops.

Peace Negotiations. On August 17, GOL, LURD, and MODEL participants at the peace negotiations in Accra, Ghana signed a pact granting free and secure access throughout the country to humanitarian workers and organizations. On August 18, the three parties signed a comprehensive peace agreement allowing for an interim government to assume power in October 2003. The agreement grants LURD and MODEL equal status in the transitional government.

Interim Chairman and Vice-Chairman Chosen. On August 21, Gyude Bryant, a Liberian businessman, was chosen to lead the country's next interim government that will take power in October. Wesley Johnson, an accounting lecturer, will be vice-chairman. Bryant is a member of the Liberia Action Party, and was picked from a list of three candidates proposed by 18 political parties and other civil groups attending the peace talks in Ghana. The final decision was made by the LURD, MODEL, and the administration of President Blah.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

New Internally Displaced Person (IDP) Movements.

Numerous recent movements of IDPs throughout areas northwest and southeast of Monrovia have been reported by the humanitarian community. These movements appear to be caused by the actions of GOL soldiers, and LURD and MODEL troops located in and around those areas. A number of non-governmental organization (NGO) and U.N. convoys have nonetheless traveled to areas such as Salala to the northwest, and Buchanan to the southeast. Participants in the humanitarian mission to the Totota/Salala area during the week of September 8 reported that not all of the populations displaced from Salala IDP camps have returned.

Attacks on civilian populations in the Todi district area as well as clashes between armed militia groups in the Totota-Kakata corridor during the week of September 8 have generated new IDPs. ECOMIL has since deployed to the area, encouraging populations to return. Humanitarian groups have mobilized to both respond to the new movements and prepare for the return of the recently displaced to their camps of origin.

IDPs in Montserrado County. On September 11, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ECOMIL began a relocation operation to transport approximately 30,000 IDPs from 56 schools and a clinic to camps in Montserrado County. The operation will continue for several weeks. UNHCR has been working closely with the camp managers of the eight IDP camps in the Montserrado area to improve services and ensure that the camps are in an acceptable condition to receive the IDPs.

UNHCR has also been working closely with ECOMIL to improve security in and around the Montserrado camps. The ECOMIL security cordon has now extended as far north of the city as the Ricks IDP camp, and patrols occur three times a day between the different camps, with checkpoints set up in several locations. Approximately 60,000 IDPs have returned spontaneously to their home towns and villages due to the deployment of ECOMIL peace-keeping troops, and it is hoped that the enhanced security, followed by the return of so many IDPs, will encourage others to return spontaneously.

IDPs return to Totota. During the week of September 8, thousands of IDPs fled southward from Totota because of renewed fighting in the Kakata-Totota area. UNHCR staff reported that increased security and ECOMIL patrols after these events have led to the return of 90% of Totota camp populations.

Expansion of Humanitarian Corridors. On September 10, a humanitarian mission led by the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) visited the Kakata-Totota area to assess the impact of the recent fighting on IDP conditions. The humanitarian mission plans to recommend to U.N. security leadership in Liberia the lowering of the security alert phase ranking for the Totota-Kakata area from Phase V to Phase IV due to the deployment of ECOMIL.

On September 12 an inter-agency team traveled by charter boat to the southeastern Liberian port of Harper on an assessment mission. The team is evaluating potential entry points for humanitarian assistance to the southeastern region of the country. According to UNHCR's Senior Emergency Officer, there are currently fewer than 700 people living in Harper, where until the most recent hostilities, the population of Harper was approximately 20,000. The security situation is relatively good in Harper and the surrounding region, and local MODEL commanders have assured the inter-agency team that they would guarantee the safety of staff, and ensure access to all areas under MODEL control. The humanitarian delegation is expected to return to Monrovia on September 17.

COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Joint coordination meetings in Monrovia. According to the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), UN OCHA, NGOs, and other humanitarian organizations have been holding regular coordination meetings in Monrovia. Sectoral committees have been established at the coordination meetings in the following five areas: food, health, water and sanitation, protection, and shelter and non-food items (NFI). Sectoral lead organizations are, respectively, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO), the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), the U.N. Development Program (UNDP)/Country Team, and UNHCR and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

SECURITY

Ongoing security concerns. Despite the presence of ECOMIL forces in Monrovia, the security situation remains poor in much of Liberia, limiting the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

During the week of September 8, ECOMIL forces from Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria were deployed in Todee, Kakata, Salala, and Totota to stabilize security. However, on September 12, a GOL militia unit, The Wild Geese, abducted more than 14 civilians in Todee, a village 40 km northwest of Monrovia, for alleged support of LURD activities. The whereabouts and condition of these persons is unknown.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Responses to malaria. The Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) organizations are collectively reporting an increase in malaria cases seen at their Monrovia area facilities. MSF estimates that malaria accounts for over 50 percent of their caseload, and many of the cases are children under the age of five. The Johns Hopkins Malaria Emergency Technical and Operational Response (MENTOR) initiative, which USAID/OFDA funds, is assisting in the coordination of malaria prevention and control activities and distributing insecticide-impregnated sheeting and bed nets.

Responses to cholera. On September 10, WHO released updated surveillance data on diarrhea/suspected cholera. The number of reported cases of diarrhea/suspected cholera decrease slightly from 2,268 during the week of August 25 to 2,200 during week of September 1. Most of the reported cases are from the central Monrovia area.

USAID/OFDA implementing partner Medical Emergency Relief International (Merlin) is operating a cholera treatment center at the government hospital in Buchanan. The number of cases of diarrhea/suspected cholera at the clinic increased from 87 during the week of August 25 to 213 during the week of September 1, with eight deaths. UNICEF, in cooperation with Merlin, will start water chlorination in 36 central key locations, and a hygiene education strategy is being developed with local partners.

Responses to measles. With USAID/OFDA support, Save the Children Fund-UK (SCF-UK) began a mass measles immunization campaign for Monrovia-area IDP settlements and the Monrovia community on September 10, with USAID/OFDA partner IRC. MSF-Belgium will organize a mass measles campaign in the Montserrado camps. One case of measles was reported in the Harbel/Firestone area. Merlin is organizing a second mass measles immunization campaign for the area in response to this reported case.

Since September 11, SCF-UK has immunized 28,579 children against measles in the Monrovia area and is also administering Vitamin A. SCF-UK's target population for its measles campaign is 292,103. IRC has immunized 44,615 children against measles since it began an immunization campaign on August 10. On September 17, IRC will also launch a three-month campaign to vaccinate approximately 180,000 children between six months and 15 years of age in IDP sites and their host communities in Montserrado, Margibi, and Bong Counties. Children under the age of five will also receive Vitamin A supplementation.

UNICEF in collaboration with WHO and the Liberian Ministry of Health (MoH) supported the training of vaccinators for a measles campaign in Buchanan. An

estimated 10,000 children between the ages of six months and 15 years of age will be vaccinated in the September 15-19 campaign. Vitamin A supplementation will also be administered.

NUTRITION

Nutritional Screenings. World Vision, in collaboration with the MoH, UNICEF, and WHO completed a rapid nutrition screening in the Tubmanburg area between September 8 and 9. The screening data revealed a global malnutrition rate of 16.5 percent, and 6.5 percent of children were considered severely malnourished. Fifty-eight percent of the children showed signs of chronic malnutrition.

FOOD

WFP and USAID/FFP operations. WFP indicated that on August 15 it began food distributions in several areas of Monrovia.

USAID Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) reported that 15,700 metric tons (MTs) of USAID/FFP food commodities arrived in the region in early September. These commodities were donated to WFP for the West Africa Coastal Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) that includes Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia.

On September 9, WFP transferred four MTs of mixed commodities to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for delivery to the Catholic Convent and the hospital in Buchanan. Due to the success of this distribution, CRS plans to conduct a general distribution to approximately 32,000 beneficiaries in Buchanan. On September 16, WFP transported 96 MTs of food to Buchanan for distribution by CRS on September 17 to a target population of approximately 6,325 IDPs.

WFP has suspended food distributions in Monrovia as it prepares for the return of IDPs to the Montserrado camps. WFP and NGOs developed a temporary registration method for food distributions in IDP camps with the assistance of a registration specialist from UNHCR. This procedure, which encourages local accountability, is currently underway in the Montserrado camps and in camps in Bong County. USAID/OFDA implementing partner Action Against Hunger (ACF) reports distributing WFP-donated supplementary food to 25,000 children under five years of age in Monrovia under its targeted blanket distribution for this age group.

On September 11, the Motor Vessel (MV) Maersk Constellation started discharging operations and a total of 885 MTs was offloaded. On September 12, another 956 MTs was discharged. In order to accelerate the discharge of commodities in the port, WFP organized night shift operations that began September 14. WFP expects to double the discharge rate and reduce the lay time for the

vessels to three to four days. The discharge rate has already more than tripled compared with the rate achieved by the MV Skybird which berthed at the Free Port of Monrovia earlier in the month.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

(New information is in blue.)

Non-food Assistance

In FY 2003 to date, USAID/OFDA has approved more than \$5.8 million to support humanitarian needs in Liberia. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$517,000 to ACF in support of emergency nutrition needs in Monrovia and provided more than \$751,000 to Merlin to address emergency health and water and sanitation needs throughout Liberia. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$580,000 in funding to IRC to support water and sanitation activities and the provision of non-food items to IDPs in Monrovia. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$330,000 in funding to Oxfam to support multi-sector IDP response activities in Monrovia. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$320,000 to UN OCHA to support coordination and protection of IDPs. USAID/OFDA also approved \$310,000 in funding to UN OCHA for a Humanitarian Information Center, and provided \$500,000 in funding to WFP for a Joint Logistics Center. USAID/OFDA approved more than \$546,000 in funding to Johns Hopkins University (JHU) for malaria control and prevention. USAID/OFDA approved more than \$1 million to CRS for food distribution to non-registered IDPs with World Vision and Africare. In support of a measles campaign in Monrovia and IDP Health and Protection, USAID/OFDA approved more than \$739,000 to SCF-UK.

USAID initially deployed a three-person DART, including a Team Leader, Program Officer, and Information Officer, on August 6. This team has since expanded to include a Security Officer, a USAID/FFP Officer, a USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) Abuse Prevention Officer, an IDP Protection Officer, a State Department Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) Refugee Officer, and a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Epidemiologist.

On August 15, USAID/OFDA airlifted 26,470 kg of relief commodities to Monrovia in support of emergency water, shelter, and health needs. The commodities included 300 rolls of plastic sheeting, 5,000 wool blankets, 5,000 10-liter jerry cans, and five 3,000-gallon water bladders. The relief items benefited approximately 15,000 people. In addition, the airlift included a WHO emergency health kit that had basic medical essentials for 30,000 people for one month. The total value of the commodities, including transport, was \$224,352.

The commodities were assigned to humanitarian organizations including the IRC, ACF, SCF, ICRC, and Merlin, and were distributed to targeted clinics, orphanages, therapeutic feeding centers, and IDP centers in Monrovia and the Harbel and Firestone rubber plantation area.

Emergency Food Assistance

Including its latest \$10 million contribution provided in response to the U.N. Appeal, USAID/FFP has provided a total of 23,840 MTs of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at \$15.5 million, to Liberia. The commodities provided by USAID/FFP include a combination of cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil, and Corn Soya Blend for therapeutic and supplementary feeding. USAID/FFP emergency food assistance is provided to vulnerable populations through direct distribution, food for work programs, emergency school feeding, maternal and child health programs, and supplementary and therapeutic feeding programs. USAID/FFP programs are implemented in Liberia through WFP.

Refugee Assistance

State/PRM has provided support for Liberian refugees since 1989 and for Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia since 1991. To date in FY 2003, State/PRM has provided more than \$10 million in response to the Liberia crisis. This funding includes \$2.2 million to UNHCR for assistance to refugees in Liberia, \$4.4 million to ICRC for assistance to conflict victims, \$826,164 to WFP in support of WFP's trucking capacity in Liberia, nearly \$1.6 million to UNICEF for water and sanitation efforts in support of populations in Liberia, \$298,000 to UNDP and the Office of the U.N. Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) in support of its field security offices, and \$738,095 to support WHO's water and sanitation efforts as well as disease monitoring and assistance.

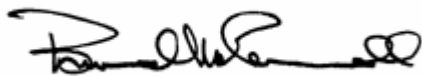
State/PRM has also provided nearly \$13 million to UNHCR and more than \$13 million to various NGOs to support Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. This is in addition to unearmarked funding for UNHCR for Africa (\$55.1 million) and ICRC for Africa (\$52.6 million).

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
LIBERIA – FY 2003 (TO DATE)				
USAID Total				\$21,353,886
USAID/OFDA				\$5,853,886
	ACF	Nutrition	Monrovia	\$517,773
	Merlin	Health and Water/Sanitation	Monrovia, Harbel	\$751,011
	IRC	Water/Sanitation and non-food items	Monrovia	\$580,281
	Oxfam	Multi-sector IDP response	Monrovia	\$330,662
	UN OCHA	Coordination and protection of IDPs	Country-wide	\$320,000
	OFDA	Logistics and relief commodities	Monrovia	\$224,352
	WFP	Joint Logistics Center	Country-wide	\$500,000
	UN OCHA*	Humanitarian Information Center	Country-wide	\$310,000
	Johns Hopkins	Malaria Control and Prevention	Country-wide	\$546,713
	CRS	Food distribution to unregistered IDPs	Montserrado County	\$1,033,522
	SCF-UK	Measles campaign, IDP health and protection	Monrovia	\$739,572
USAID/FFP				\$15,500,000
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 23,840 MTs	Country-wide	\$15,500,000
STATE/PRM[∞]				\$10,059,759
	UNHCR	Annual Refugee Operations	Country-wide	\$2,200,000
	WFP	WFP Support	Country-wide	\$826,164
	UNICEF	Water/Sanitation	Country-wide	\$1,597,500
	UNDP/ UNSECOORD	Field Security Office Operations	Country-wide	\$298,000
	WHO	Water/Sanitation, disease monitoring and assessment	Country-wide	\$738,095
	ICRC	Emergency health and relief distribution	Country-wide	\$4,400,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2003 (TO DATE)				\$31,413,645

* Funding is in process; award to be made shortly.

[∞] State/PRM figures include funding within Liberia. State/PRM also provides additional Africa-wide and regional assistance not reflected in this total. Please see the USG Humanitarian Assistance section for further details.



Bernd McConnell
 Director
 Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

Public Donation Information

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for their response efforts in Liberia can be found at: <http://www.interaction.org/liberia/index.html>. USAID encourages cash donations because they: allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed; reduce the burden on scarce resources; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information on making donations and volunteering services can be found at:
 - http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/help/index.html
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or 703-276-1914
 - InterAction: www.interaction.org → “Guide to Appropriate Giving”
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.org.