



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

**MANO RIVER COUNTRIES (GUINEA, LIBERIA,  
AND SIERRA LEONE) – Complex Emergency**

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

May 15, 2003

*Note: The last situation report was dated October 9, 2002.*

**BACKGROUND**

Since 1990, sustained conflict in the Mano River basin has spread across borders and engulfed the region in a severe humanitarian crisis. Civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1990's led to the exodus of more than one million refugees to Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea over the course of the decade. A struggle for control of diamond fields in Sierra Leone had been at the heart of the crisis in the late 1990's. In addition to refugees, sporadic fighting displaced an estimated one to two million people throughout the region. Although Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone formed the Mano River Union economic pact in 1973, the conflicts of the past decade severely strained political and economic relations between the three states that continue today.

Since 2001, the demobilization of fighters and sustained peace efforts in Sierra Leone has facilitated the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and improved access to vulnerable populations by relief agencies. However, continued instability in Liberia and the escalation of the civil conflict in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire has resulted in large-scale population displacement affecting the stability of all the countries in the Mano River Region. Since 1990, the United States Government (USG) has pledged or provided more than \$989 million in emergency assistance to those affected by war in the Mano River Countries.

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>		<b>SOURCE</b>
Liberian Refugees in the Region	200,000	UN OCHA, November 2002
Ivorian Refugees in the Region	50,000	UNHCR, March 2003
IDPs in Liberia	200,000	UN OCHA, April 2003

**Total FY 2003 USAID/OFDA Assistance to the Mano River Countries..... \$4,412,613**  
**Total FY 2003 USG Humanitarian Assistance to the Mano River Countries..... \$45,219,541**

**REGIONAL OVERVIEW**

The intensification of hostilities in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia in the past six months has resulted in continual population movements in the Mano River Region. In particular, the tri-border area of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Liberia has been the epicenter of clashes between government forces and several different anti-government factions during the first four months of 2003. Attacks on towns and settlements along the Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia border have resulted in the flow of IDPs, refugees, and third country nationals (TCNs) to other areas of Liberia and across the border to Guinea. While the resettlement of IDPs and refugee returnees in Sierra Leone continues in an environment secured by U.N. peacekeepers, the escalation of violence in Liberia has hampered the provision of humanitarian assistance and threatens the stability of the entire region. The continual movement of affected populations between camps, settlements and over international borders has caused their status as IDPs, refugees, or refugee returnees to fluctuate, further complicating the identification of vulnerable populations and the provision of humanitarian assistance.

**CURRENT SITUATION – GUINEA**

*Population Movements.* The flow of people from Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia into Guinea has involved three groups: returning Guineans, refugees, and TCNs transiting Guinea. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), between September 2002 and February 2003, more than 82,000 persons displaced by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire entered Guinea. Of these, 53,500 were Guinean evacuees, 16,953 were Ivorian and Liberian refugees, and 12,193 were TCNs in transit. Most of the displaced arrived at border points along the Guinea-Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Liberia borders.

*IDPs.* According to UN OCHA, there were an estimated 82,000 IDPs throughout Guinea as of March 2002. One year later, there have been no official IDP estimates, but many relief organizations believe the number is significantly less than a year ago. IDPs in Guinea have mostly integrated with resident populations and have generally not been the target of major humanitarian

assistance programs. There is a concern that the conflicts in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire could spill over to southern Guinea, once again causing major population displacements like those experienced in 2001.

*Refugees.* Since September 2002, tens of thousands more refugees have poured into Guinea as a result of the increased violence in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Côte d'Ivoire in September 2002, Guinea was hosting a U.N.-estimated 92,500 refugees in camps and another 70,000 integrated in with the local population. In addition to new refugees, UNHCR continues to aid the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees from Guinea. A new shortcut route through the Languette to Kailahun has helped expedite the process. UNHCR reports there are still 35,000 Sierra Leonean refugees living in camps in Guinea and hopes to repatriate all by 2004, security permitting.

*TCNs.* The increasing number of TCNs led to the closing of the Liberia-Guinea border to refugee and TCN crossings by local Government of Guinea (GOG) officials on February 7. The border has since reopened for refugees (Liberian and Ivorian), but TCNs (Malian, Burkinabe, Ghanaian, Senegalese, Nigerien, and Togolese) are having a difficult time gaining access. In March, the estimates of the number of TCNs trying to cross into Guinea varied between 12,000 and 34,000.

*Health.* In January, the GOG Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of yellow fever in the Macenta prefecture, and cases were also reported in Youmou prefecture. In response, the World Health Organization and NGO partners launched a vaccination campaign in Macenta. By March, WHO estimated 480,949 persons out of a targeted 605,000 had been vaccinated.

*Shelter.* With the increased flow of refugees, returnees, and TCNs across the Liberia border into Guinea in March and April, UNHCR has begun rehabilitation of the Baala reception center. As of April 9, the center had shelter and water and sanitation facilities to accommodate approximately 700 persons. U.N. agencies and NGOs are working to transfer refugees, returnees, and TCNs from the reception center to safer camps away from the border. One of these camps, the Laine camp, is currently at double its intended capacity and will also need to be expanded to accommodate the new arrivals.

## **CURRENT SITUATION – LIBERIA**

*Political.* On April 8, a joint press statement, on the humanitarian crisis in Liberia was issued by the U.N. Resident Coordinator, the U.S. Embassy, and the European Commission. The press statement was a call to the GOL and warring factions to participate in the peace process and allow humanitarian organizations access to vulnerable populations. In January, a delegation from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) convinced the anti-government LURD

representatives to agree to a dialogue with the GOL. President Taylor also agreed to the talks, but ruled out any power-sharing agreement. President Taylor is due to stand for elections again in October 2003, but the LURD has stated they believe the elections will be unfair and will continue to fight.

*Security.* The security situation in Liberia has steadily deteriorated in 2003 and conflict has enveloped 11 of Liberia's 15 counties. The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire has merged with the existing one in Liberia to create a lawless power vacuum along the border areas of both countries. In early February, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) attacks against Government of Liberia (GOL) troops increased, displacing tens of thousands and resulting in a surge of IDPs into existing camps. By late April, LURD forces had engaged in battles near the Ricks Institute IDP camp 20 km outside Monrovia, as well as along the borders with Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire, forcing IDPs and refugees south toward the Atlantic coast and north toward Guinea.

*Humanitarian Access.* Humanitarian access to vulnerable populations in towns and settlements along the Côte d'Ivoire border has been hampered by the insecurity. Since February, attacks on Zwedru, Ganta, and Toe Town by LURD and other anti-government forces included the abduction or killing of humanitarian workers. On April 3, UN OCHA reported that 114 of 192 aid workers in Zwedru were still unaccounted for after a March attack. Similar incidents have taken place on the Côte d'Ivoire side of the border. A UNDP mission in February described Grand Gedeh County as the most severely affected of the three Côte d'Ivoire border counties. The combination of receiving the highest influx of new refugee arrivals, the lack of significant ongoing humanitarian assistance programs, and its relative inaccessibility have all contributed to the problem. Food scarcity is becoming a more serious problem as well.

*IDPs.* The sporadic attacks on IDP camps and clashes between the GOL and LURD forces have resulted in an extremely fluid IDP situation throughout the country. In April, UN OCHA estimated there were 200,000 IDPs in the country. UN OCHA reports that IDP camps have increasingly become targets of the LURD forces. On March 25, the Ricks IDP camp was attacked and 25,000 IDPs were forced to flee. A GOL-estimated 1,000 IDPs were abducted during this raid. On April 20, UN OCHA reported that an unspecified number of these abducted IDPs were reported to be returning to the camps. Jartondo and Wilson IDP camps were also attacked in early April. There are also reports of forced conscriptions of young men and women under the age of 18.

*Refugees.* As of February 17, UNHCR reported that 90,987 refugees, returnees and third country nationals had crossed into Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire. However,

since an increase in population movements in March, the accuracy of these numbers is in question. On April 5, UNHCR reported that their refugee operations along the Côte d'Ivoire border have been severely hampered by the insecurity. UNHCR believes that thousands of these refugees, from UNHCR's transit centers in Toe Town and Zwedru, have fled toward Guinea and the Atlantic coast. Those reported fleeing include Ivorians, Malians, Burkinabe, as well as Liberian returnees.

*Health.* Health activities and the provision of medical care have been severely hampered by the conflict. Recent vaccination campaigns and surveillance of yellow fever and suspected cases of meningitis in Nimba and Grand Gedeh Counties have been disrupted according to UN OCHA.

*Nutrition.* In March, Action Contre la Faim (ACF) reported an increase in moderate malnutrition levels in IDP camps while severe malnutrition was stable. Save the Children (SCF) reports they have opened an additional supplementary feeding center in response to IDP needs. The recent reduction in the general food aid ration was feared to generate a further increase in malnutrition, but the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) expects a return to the standard ration as soon as supplies permit and commodities can be redirected through the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO).

## **CURRENT SITUATION – SIERRA LEONE**

*Political/ Security.* The U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) peacekeeping forces have reinforced their positions along the Liberia border and, thus far, the flare-up of violence in Liberia has not seriously spilled over into Sierra Leone. Humanitarian funding shortfalls are threatening to undermine the fragile peace in Sierra Leone as refugees increasingly turn to recruitment into various forces in the absence of employment or educational opportunities. On March 28, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted a resolution renewing the UNAMSIL peacekeeping force for another six months, until September 30, 2003. In addition to the mandate extension, the UNSC has requested the Secretary General present a plan for the continued draw down of forces, including options for a potential change in the security situation.

*Health.* Since February, more than 80 confirmed cases, including eight deaths, of Lassa fever have been recorded in refugee and IDP camps in Bo and Kenema districts, according to UNHCR and WHO. Children and pregnant woman are the most vulnerable. USAID/OFDA supports Sierra Leone's only Lassa fever ward in Kenema through the NGO Merlin. U.N. agencies and NGOs are working in refugee and IDP camps to address this recurrent disease, which peaks during the dry season and is spread by rodents.

*Refugees.* With attacks near the Sierra Leone-Liberia border areas in March, new refugees have made their way across the border to Sierra Leone. As many then return to Liberia when the situation stabilizes, it is difficult to estimate the number of new Liberian refugees living in Sierra Leone. However, as of the end of February, UN OCHA reported there were over 46,000 Liberian refugees in seven camps in Sierra Leone.

*Shelter.* With over 460,000 resettling IDPs and refugees returning to their areas of origin, there is an acute need for the reconstruction of housing, according to UN OCHA. Housing construction, seen as a priority in FY 2003, can only be carried out during the dry season between November and April. UN OCHA also reports that the Government of Sierra Leone and relief organizations have identified the need for the construction of houses for health workers, teachers and key district officials to facilitate their return to the provinces.

## **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

USAID/OFDA has provided \$4.2 million in support of emergency assistance programs in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to date in FY 2003. This assistance focuses primarily on internally displaced and other vulnerable populations. USAID/OFDA supports programs in the sectors of food security, health, nutrition, transport, and water/sanitation. In addition to program support, USAID/OFDA has deployed two staff to the region: an Emergency Disaster Response Coordinator and a Regional Advisor, both based in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Thus far in FY 2003, USAID/FFP has provided 36,800 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, with a total estimated program and commodity value of \$23.2 million. 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 Guinea and Liberia through WFP and in Sierra Leone by WFP and CARE.

To date in FY 2003, State/PRM has provided nearly \$13 million in emergency assistance for refugees in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. State/PRM has also provided \$2.75 million to UNHCR for assistance to Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire and \$850,000 to the International Organization for Migration to assist TCNs out of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Guinea. State/PRM also supports WFP through the provision of \$2 million for the West Africa Regional PRRO and \$400,000 for the Regional Special Air Operation. In addition to its

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ongoing country specific and West Africa specific assistance, State/PRM has provided \$30 million to UNHCR and \$10.3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in un-earmarked contributions for use in Africa, a portion of which is used in response to the Mano River crisis. State/PRM anticipates providing additional funding for refugee programs in the Mano River countries later in FY 2003.

**OTHER DONOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup>**

In addition to the USG's efforts, several other donors have made significant humanitarian contributions in the Mano River Region in 2003.

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>Guinea</b>	
Norway	\$642,911
Ireland	\$537,057
Sweden	\$118,064
Switzerland	\$109,489
Finland	\$86,356
Canada	\$83,892
Italy	\$5,300
<b>Liberia</b>	
Norway	\$1,654,267
Canada	\$384,833
Sweden	\$350,877
Netherlands	\$189,000
Italy	\$139,899
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	
Norway	\$2,009,454
European Commission	\$1,825,994
Switzerland	\$892,087
United Kingdom	\$793,651
Ireland	\$537,000
Netherlands	\$472,500
Canada	\$275,055
Sweden	\$116,960
France	\$104,384

<sup>1</sup> *As reported by UN OCHA's ReliefWeb Financial Tracking of donor contributions inside and outside of the U.N. Consolidated Appeal on April 18, 2003*

**U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE MANO RIVER COUNTRIES**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Sector</i>		<i>Amount</i>
<b>Guinea – FY 2003</b>				
<b>USAID Total .....</b>				<b>\$4,348,500</b>
<b>USAID/FFP .....</b>				<b>\$4,348,500</b>
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 6,690 MT	Country-wide	\$4,348,500
<b>STATE/PRM .....</b>				<b>\$4,793,950</b>
	UNHCR	Annual Refugee Operations	Country-wide	\$3,200,000
	ARC	Health, SGBV, Micro-enterprise	Country-wide	\$1,593,950
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO GUINEA IN FY 2003 .....</b>				<b>\$9,142,450</b>
<b>Liberia – FY 2003</b>				
<b>USAID Total .....</b>				<b>\$7,836,773</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA .....</b>				<b>\$517,773</b>
	ACF	Nutrition	Monrovia	\$517,773
<b>USAID/FFP .....</b>				<b>\$7,319,000</b>
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 11,260 MT	Country-wide	\$7,319,000
<b>STATE/PRM .....</b>				<b>\$3,100,000</b>
	UNHCR	Annual Refugee Operations	Country-wide	\$1,000,000
	UNHCR	Supplemental	Country-wide	\$2,100,000
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2003 .....</b>				<b>\$10,936,773</b>
<b>Sierra Leone – FY 2003</b>				
<b>USAID Total .....</b>				<b>\$20,040,318</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA .....</b>				<b>\$3,894,840</b>
	ACF	Water/Sanitation, Nutrition	Freetown, Kailahun, Makeni	\$1,189,800
	UN FAO	Food Security	Country-wide	\$200,000
	WFP	Food Security	Country-wide	\$35,000
	Merlin	Health, Water/Sanitation	Tonkolili, Kenema, Kono, Kailahun	\$761,964
	WorldVision	Health, Water/Sanitation	Kono	\$720,000
	ICI	Air Support	Country-wide	\$560,000
	USAID	Admin. Support	Freetown	\$428,076
<b>USAID/FFP .....</b>				<b>\$16,145,478</b>
	CRS	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 2,160 MT	Country-wide	\$1,954,880
	World Vision	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 2,890 MT	Country-wide	\$2,664,837
	CARE	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 7,250 MT	Country-wide	\$3,985,761
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 11,600 MT	Country-wide	\$7,540,000
<b>STATE/PRM .....</b>				<b>\$5,100,000</b>
	UNHCR	Annual Refugee Operations	Country-wide	\$4,400,000
	UNHCR	Supplemental	Country-wide	\$700,000
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SIERRA LEONE IN FY 2003 .....</b>				<b>\$25,140,318</b>

**TOTAL USG ASSISTANCE TO THE MANO RIVER REGION IN FY 2003**

<b>USAID/OFDA</b> .....	<b>\$4,412,613</b>
<b>USAID/FFP</b> .....	<b>\$27,812,978</b>
<b>USAID Total</b> .....	<b>\$32,225,591</b>
<b>State/PRM</b> .....	<b>\$12,993,950*</b>
<b>U.S. Government Total</b> .....	<b>\$45,219,541</b>

\* 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