

Liberia

October 2017

All three schools in the camps
Registered in the Education Management Information System & recipients of the School Feeding Programme of the World Food Programme

11,949
Ivorian refugees remaining in Liberia

POPULATION OF CONCERN: 11,949

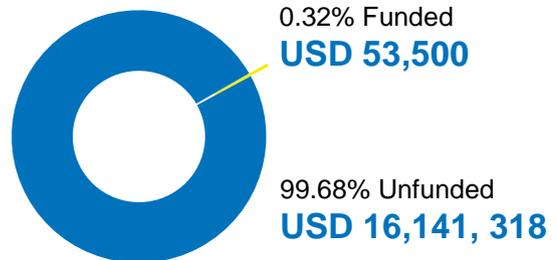
By country of origin

Cote d'Ivoire refugees	11,949
Various nationality refugees	63
Asylum seekers	27
TOTAL:	12,039

FUNDING (AS OF OCTOBER 2017)

USD 16,194,818 M

requested for the Liberia situation



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

UNHCR works with the Government of Liberia through the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) and provides funding to the following NGOs to provide protection and assistance in favor of refugees and asylum seekers:

- Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)
- African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)
- Special Emergency Activity to Restore Children's Hope (SEARCH).



Offices

- 1 Branch Office in Monrovia
- 1 Field Office in Harper
- 1 Sub Office in Zwedru

Staff

- 59 National Staff
- 14 International Staff

CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS

- **2017 Presidential and Legislative Elections**
 - On 19 October 2017, the National Elections Commission (NEC) announced the Final Results of the presidential and legislative elections in Liberia, which took place on 10 October 2017. The Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) of Senator George Weah won the first round of Liberia's presidential election with 38.4% of the vote. Vice President Joseph Boakai, representing Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's ruling Unity Party (UP), won 28.8% of the vote. The results put CDC and UP at a large distance from the remaining candidates. The legislative elections also show a similar trend as the presidential elections: CDC won 21 of the 73 parliamentary seats, followed by UP, who won 18 seats in the House of Representatives.
 - Since none of the 20 presidential candidates obtained the constitutional requirement of 50 percent plus one vote to be declared a winner in a first round of voting, a presidential runoff was slated for 7 November 2017.
 - However, on 31 October 2017, the Supreme Court in Liberia suspended the presidential election runoff in order to consider allegations of fraud by a candidate, the Liberty Party (LP) standard bearer Charles Brumskine, who came third in the first round of voting. On 3 November 2017 afternoon, the High Court will hear LP legal arguments versus NEC for a Writ of Prohibition. Following that hearing, the Supreme Court is expected to decide whether or not the runoff takes place on 7 November 2017.
 - The Supreme Court decision follows a complaint filed by LP on 24 October 2017, alleging 'Constitutional Breaches' in October 10 polls.
 - On 29 October 2017, UP also joined opposition parties LP and All Liberian Party (ALP) in calling for a rerun of the October polls. In a joint statement, the three parties (UP, LP, ALP) reaffirmed their support for legal action. They declared being aware that President Sirleaf met Election Magistrates in her residence, long before the elections, which they describe as "unprecedented in election history" and as an "interference with the electoral process and has no legal basis or justification whatsoever".
 - On 30 October 2017, President Sirleaf's spokesman denied allegations from her own party that she meddled in this month's presidential election and clarified that all meetings, interactions or exchanges of the office of the president and NEC were consistent with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's constitutional role to ensure that the electoral process was supported and that such interactions were initiated at the request of the Elections Commission and were never held secretly.
 - Both local and international observers described the October 10 polls as being peaceful but cited few irregularities which they said could be improved upon in subsequent elections. The peaceful run of the elections was hailed by the United Nations Secretary General, who congratulated the people of Liberia and commended the efforts of the NEC, as well as those of the Liberian women's groups for their active and important role in the electoral process. The African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) election observers' missions have also applauded Liberians across the country for allowing the holding of peaceful elections.
 - These are the first elections secured by Liberian security forces themselves. UNMIL has maintained peace in Liberia for the past 14 years following the outbreak of the civil war from 1989, and then began a gradual drawdown on 2016 ahead of its complete withdrawal in March 2018.
 - Liberia has an estimated population of 4.5 million with 2.18 million registered voters out of which, 1.64 million people voted at the 5,390 Polling Places/stations nationwide, amounting to an average turnout of 75% of the population registered to vote.

- There were 20 candidates contesting the Presidency: 17 political parties/coalition candidates and three independents. Meanwhile, nearly 980 candidates contested the 73 parliamentary seats on the legislative elections.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Voluntary Repatriation

- During the reporting period, there were no convoys departing from Liberia to Cote d'Ivoire. Sensitization to mobilise more candidates is ongoing, as well as registration of interested candidates who want to return.
- In Zwedru (Grand Gedeh), there are currently 14 individuals (8 families) who have expressed their wish to return to Cote d'Ivoire. The next convoy will be scheduled when a good number of refugees are registered.
- In Harper (Maryland), UNHCR registered and screened 74 candidates (17 families) out of the 217 refugees who expressed their intent to return home on the latest survey (August 2017). The resumption of voluntary repatriation is pending due to the ferry, used to cross the Cavalla River from Harper (Liberia) to Tabou (Cote d'Ivoire), undergoing technical maintenance since September 2017.
- As of 31 October 2017, 26,456 refugees have been repatriated since the resumption of the repatriation programme on 18 December 2015. This number includes 40 Unaccompanied Minors who returned home in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Local Integration

The integration process of those refugees who wish to remain in Liberia remains a key operation priority for the second half of 2017. Progress continues in sectors including Education, Health, WASH and Shelter, as well as in Livelihoods.

Education transition

- As part of the process of integrating refugee education services into the national structures, the school in PTP Camp was included into the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The school has been named Tchien Public School, taking the name of the district where the school is located.
- As of October 2017, all schools in the three camps are now part of the national education system, as well as a recipients of the School Feeding Programme (SFP) of the World Food Programme (WFP).

Name of the school	Location	Included in EMIS	Recipient of WFP SFP
Tchien Public School	PTP Camp	✓	✓
Little Wlebo Extension Elementary School	Little Wlebo Camp	✓	✓
Bahn High Extension School	Bahn Camp	✓	✓

- In an effort to increase enrolment and attendance to school, sensitization continues in all locations in collaboration with stakeholders including the teachers, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), LRRRC and peer educators. Refugee parents are ensured that their children will not lose their Ivorian nationality by attending school.
- On 27 October 2017, Tchien Public School teachers and students conducted a clean-up campaign of the campus to provide a safe learning environment for the campus (pictures below).

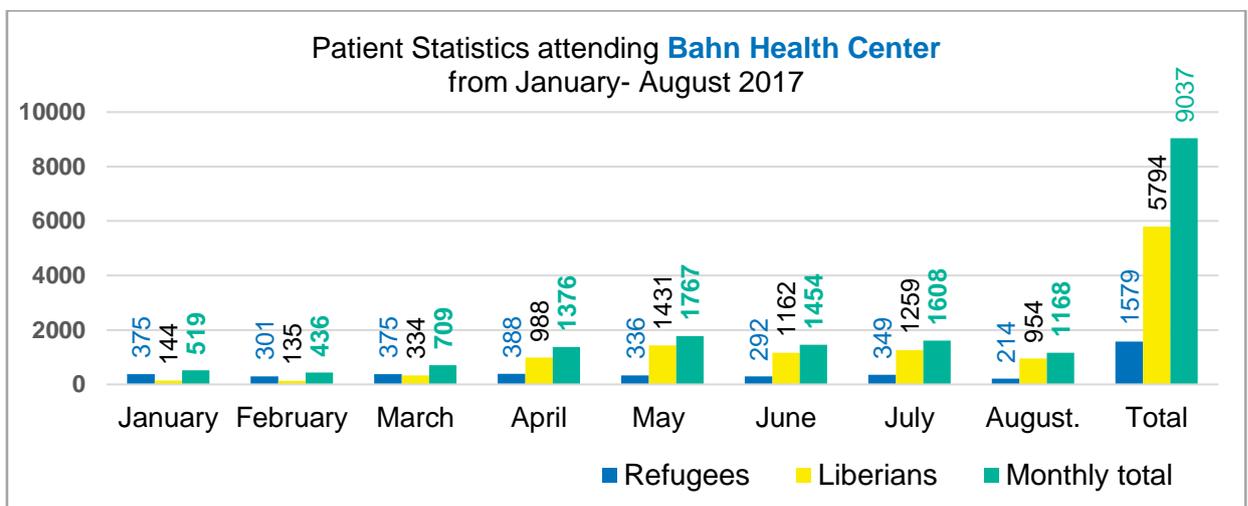
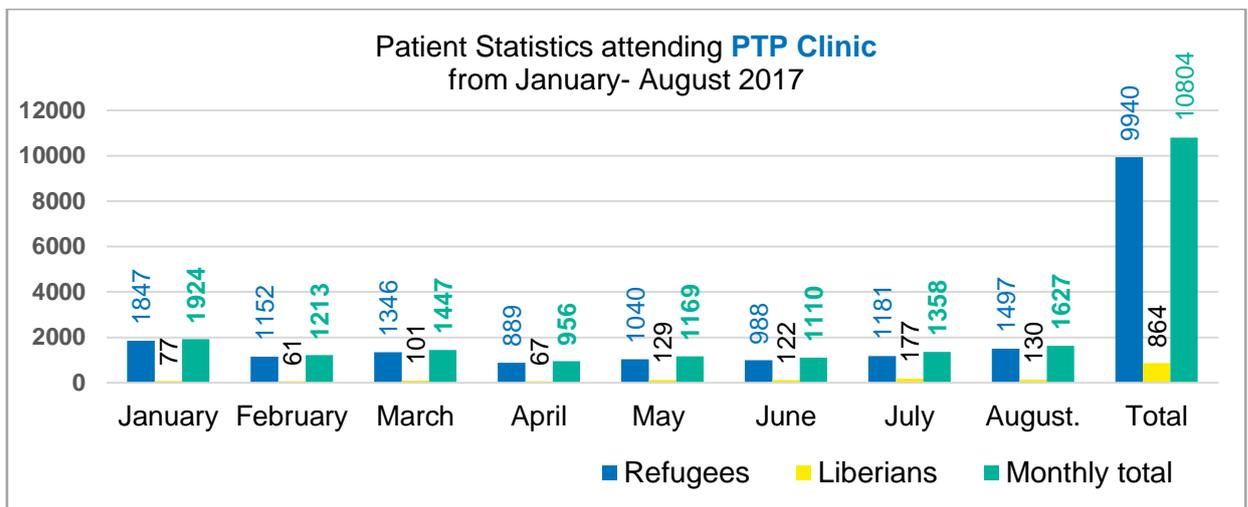
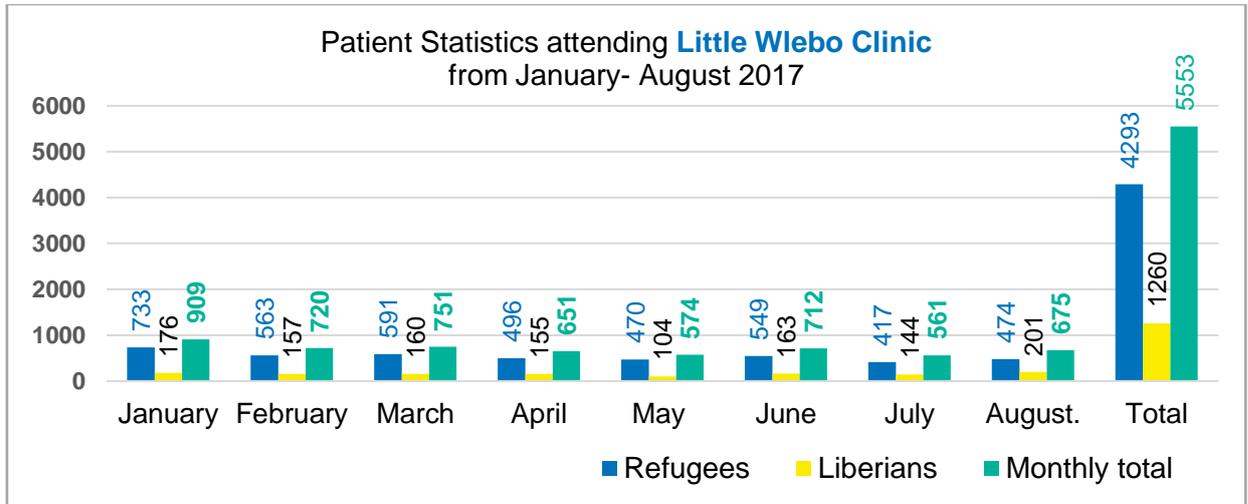


Health transition

- In line with supporting the government in strengthening its health care delivery capacity to refugees and host communities, medical items were provided to the government hospital Martha Tubman Memorial Hospital in Zwedru (Grand Gedeh), Bahn Health Center (Nimba), and the government hospital JJ Dossen hospital (Maryland, picture below) and Fish Town Hospital (River Gee).



- As part of the local integration process, Ivorian refugees currently in Liberia continue to access national health structures (Bahn Health Center), while Liberians are also accessing facilities in the camps (PTP and Little Wlebo camps).
- The clinics in PTP Camp and Little Wlebo Camp (LWC) serve an average of 10-20% Liberians and 90-80% refugees, while patients of the national health center in Bahn (Bahn Health Center) are 80% Liberians and 20% refugees from Bahn Camp.

Patient statistics from January 2017 to August 2017 by location


Social Cohesion

- In line with the local integration process, the promotion of social cohesion continues to be carried out among refugees and the local community through a community based approach. UNHCR and partners encourage the sharing of resources between refugees and Liberians from the host communities.

Harper (Maryland)

- AHA, LRRRC, UNHCR and Refugees Central Committee distributed assorted used clothes to refugees in LWC, benefitting 1,245 refugees (437 families).
- Refugees and locals living in Maryland and River Gee communities also benefitted from the distribution (pictures below). These clothes are part of a donation to UNHCR Liberia from the Japanese company UNIQLO.



Protection

■ Monrovia (Montserrado)

Law Reform

- UNHCR continues to work with the government to ensure the Alien and Nationality law is amended and therefore includes gender parity for both male & female to pass their nationality to their children.
- Following the first review session on the Alien and Nationality law, held on 2 October 2017, the second session took place on 16 October 2017. Attendees included representatives from the Government and line Ministry, as well as citizens from the ECOWAS Union (Nigeria, Guinea, etc). In the next weeks the document will be finalized and presented to the Ministry of Justice to be submitted to Cabinet. This is the Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programming initiative to prevent and respond to SGBV and harmful traditional practices in Liberia, funded by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Community Services

■ Zwedru (Grand Gedeh)

- On 15 October 2017, PTP Camp participated in the Global Hand Washing Day, with the theme “*hand washing prevents diseases*”. Awareness raising activities on hygiene and hand washing techniques took place, including the distribution of hand washing buckets and 250 pieces of soap in the context of the campaign (pictures below).



- The final soap distribution for this year was conducted at the PTP camp. 5,190 refugees received soap aimed to be used for a period of three months, up to December 2017. Each beneficiary received 3 pieces of soap. 919 individuals which is 15% of the population did not turn up for soap distribution.
- The fourth quarters of sanitary pad distribution was conducted at PTP camp with a target population of 1,417 women of reproductive age. A total of 1,369 (96.6%) women benefited from the sanitary distribution package which included 3 sets of sanitary pads, 3 pieces of soap and 2 female underwear per person. The distribution was headed by Central and block chairladies in collaboration with the SGBV Female Committees and was monitored by SEARCH and UNHCR at the PTP women Center.

- **Harper (Maryland)**

- UNHCR partner AHA carried out Hygiene Promotion/Domestic Hygiene promotion with 321 refugees, including information on food preservation and personal and environmental hygiene. LRRRC distributed soap to refugees for the months of October-December 2017. Out of the targeted 1,245 beneficiaries, 1,008 benefitted of the distribution.
- UNHCR partner AHA in collaboration with UNHCR, LRRRC and Refugee Central Leadership carried out a distribution of assorted sanitary materials to 392 refugee women of reproductive age from 13 -49 years. The items distributed during the exercise included sanitary napkins, soap and under wears/pants (pictures below).

**CONTACT**

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