



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

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

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2002

October 3, 2001

Note: the last situation report was dated April 20, 2001.

BACKGROUND

Since 1990, sustained civil conflict in the Mano River basin has spread across borders and engulfed the region in a severe humanitarian crisis. Brutal civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1990's led to the exodus of more than one million refugees to Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea over the course of the decade. In addition to refugees, an estimated one to two million people in the region were internally displaced at the height of the various conflicts. 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. A struggle for control of diamond fields in Sierra Leone has been at the heart of the crisis in recent years. Several failed peace accords and peacekeeping efforts, collapsed economies, and some of the worst human rights atrocities in recent history have made this one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises.

During the past decade, Guinea has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone. While wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone raged, Guinea provided a relatively safe haven for refugees. With international donor support, relief agencies established refugee camps, food distributions, health care, and schools for an estimated 500,000 refugees. Until late 2000, most refugees were sheltered in camps and communities along Guinea's borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone. Beginning in September 2000, a series of armed incursions near Gueckedou, Macenta, and N'Zerekore resulted in substantial loss of life, destruction of property and crops, disruption of livelihoods, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Guineans and refugees. Sporadic violence severely hindered humanitarian assistance activities within the region, effectively isolating the area known as the Parrot's Beak from large-scale humanitarian assistance. In February 2001, the U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) reached refugees isolated in the Parrot's Beak for the first time in several months with emergency food aid. In May 2001, UNHCR completed the evacuation of more than 57,000 refugees from the Parrot's Beak to new camps in the interior of Guinea.

Civil war in Liberia from 1989 to 1997 led to the collapse of its economy and left its infrastructure destroyed. Sustained fighting and human rights abuses by warring factions led to an exodus of an estimated 700,000 Liberian refugees to neighboring countries and an estimated 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). In 1997, a democratically elected government was installed and small steps taken toward rebuilding Liberia's infrastructure and resettling returned refugees. Since 1999, however, the governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone, as well as much of the international community, have accused the Government of Liberia (GOL) of supporting anti-government forces in both Guinea and Sierra Leone. Beginning in early 2001, GOL forces engaged in battles with anti-government factions in northern Liberia leading to the internal displacement of thousands of Liberians, and causing thousands more to flee to Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. In May 2001, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC), in response to the GOL's alleged involvement with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone, imposed sanctions on Liberia restricting diamond exports and banning international travel by GOL officials. Continued fighting and a tenuous security situation severely restrict humanitarian assistance efforts in Liberia.

In Sierra Leone, the war has claimed at least 20,000 lives and, at its peak, forced almost half of Sierra Leone's 4.5 million inhabitants from their homes, including an estimated 400,000 to Guinea. In 1999, the anti-government RUF, notorious for their human rights abuses, and the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) declared a cease-fire and signed the Lome Peace Accord, officially ending the war. In November 1999, the United Nations deployed a peacekeeping force charged with providing security in GOSL-controlled areas. However, in May 2000, the peace process suffered a major setback when RUF fighters killed several U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) peacekeepers and took hostage approximately 500 more in a series of attacks in the northern and eastern parts of the country. The RUF eventually released these hostages, and since August 2000, the security situation remains generally stable in GOSL-controlled areas of the country. The GOSL and UNAMSIL representatives continue to negotiate the release of child soldiers, expedite the disarmament process, and allow relief agencies greater access to vulnerable individuals in areas previously controlled by the RUF.

NUMBERS AFFECTED AT A GLANCE. (source, date of estimate)

	Guinea	Liberia	Sierra Leone
IDPs:	190,000 (WFP, 8/20)	35,000 (NGO, 8/30)	323,000 (OCHA, 8/31)
Refugees:	191,000 (UNHCR, 8/30)	65,000 (UNHCR, 6/30)	12,000 (NGO, 8/30)

GUINEA - CURRENT SITUATION

- Security Situation.** The general security situation in Guinea remains stable, with the exception of the town of Kissidougou, where relief agencies reported sporadic skirmishes and incidents in August and September. While there have been no recent reported incidents along the border with Liberia, the security situation remains tenuous. Areas along the border with Sierra Leone, the Parrot’s Beak, and Gueckedou remain secure according to authorities of the Government of Guinea (GOG). Security in and around refugee camps remains tight, particularly in camps near Macenta and N’Zerekore. According to relief agencies, the GOG military continue to detain refugees, able-bodied men in particular, presumably for fear they may support forces hostile to the GOG.

- IDP Situation.** Although there are still an estimated 190,000 IDPs in Guinea, many returned to their homes. With improved stability and reconstruction efforts in the major market town of Gueckedou, many IDPs have returned to repair their homes and businesses in the area. Partial reestablishment of the Gueckedou market has enticed farmers to return to their fields in hopes of a renewed market demand for crops. However, relief agencies continue to target vulnerable IDPs and war-affected Guineans for assistance.

- Refugee Situation.** Since the evacuation of the Parrot’s Beak refugees was completed, those refugees have settled primarily in the Albadaria and Dabola Prefectures of Upper Guinea. There are three active camps in Albadaria: Boreah with 13,000 refugees, Kountaya with 26,000, Telikoro with 11,500; and one active camp in Dabola, Sembakounya with 7,500 refugees. The majority of these refugees are from Sierra Leone. In the southern Forest Region, near Macenta and N’Zerekore, there are two active camps: Kouanakan with 13,500 refugees and Kola with 2,500. The majority of these refugees are Liberian. Refugees in camps continue to be reliant upon humanitarian assistance, including food aid. However, thousands more unregistered refugees have established their own settlements or moved in with host Guineans.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO GUINEA

- USAID/OFDA Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1 million in

humanitarian assistance in support of ongoing agricultural programs, emergency non-food items, and humanitarian coordination programs for IDPs and war-affected Guineans.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) – Emergency agricultural assistance to IDPs \$196,000

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – Distribution of non-food items to IDPs \$279,000

U.N. Development Programs – Grant to support the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit for disseminating information and coordinating relief efforts \$545,000

Total USAID/OFDA FY 2001 \$1,020,000

- USAID/FFP Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/Office of Food for Peace/Emergency Programs (FFP/EP) provided \$7.6 million in emergency food assistance, including 13,770 MT of commodities, in support of the U.N. World Food Program’s (WFP) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) and Emergency Operation (EMOP) for refugees, IDPs, and war-affected Guineans.

Total USAID/FFP FY 2001 \$7,580,400

- USAID/AFR Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID Africa Bureau (AFR) provided an estimated \$9.5 million in support of humanitarian assistance programs including: child survival programs, democracy and human rights programs, and the special self-help fund for war-affected Guineans.

Total USAID/AFR FY 2001 \$9,482,000

- State/PRM Assistance.** In FY 2001, the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) provided \$22.8 million through UNHCR, other U.N. agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and NGOs in support of agriculture, education, health, nutrition, refugee relocation and repatriation, and other humanitarian assistance programs for refugees and IDPs in Guinea.

Total State/PRM FY 2001 \$22,819,966

TOTAL USG Humanitarian Assistance to Guinea in FY 2001 \$40,902,366

LIBERIA - CURRENT SITUATION

- **Security Situation.** The security situation in Liberia remains precarious. Fighting between GOL troops and anti-government forces continues to displace thousands of Liberians. Until August, fighting had been concentrated in the northern Liberian county of Lofa. However, in the past two months clashes have been reported in Gbarpolu, closer to the capital of Monrovia.

- **IDP Situation.** In late August, relief agencies estimated that the conflict has displaced 35,137 persons, mostly from Lofa County. Although fighting continues, many IDPs continue to move through lower Lofa county. Relief agencies reported that only women, children, and elderly men are being permitted to leave Lofa County. GOL forces are detaining young men for fear they may be dissidents or forcing them to join the ranks of the GOL military. Most IDPs are registered in camps in neighboring Bong and Grand Cape Mount Counties. Although not officially registered as IDPs, many more displaced are living with family members in Monrovia. According to relief agencies, camp IDPs are almost completely reliant upon humanitarian assistance at this point.

- **Refugee Situation.** Outbreaks of fighting in the last year has forced thousands of new refugees to flee to Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. UNHCR has registered an estimated 12,000 refugees in Sierra Leone and 4,563 in Cote d'Ivoire since May. Several thousand more have arrived in Guinea, but have yet to be registered. This is in addition to the estimated 80,000 Liberians living in Guinea and 120,000 living in Cote d'Ivoire before this year's conflict.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA

- **USAID/FFP Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/FFP/Development Programs provided 4,470 MT of commodities, valued at \$1.9 million, in support of food programs in Liberia. These commodities were used in support of emergency food assistance programs for war-affected Liberians.

Total USAID/FFP FY 2001 \$1,900,000

- **USAID/AFR Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/AFR provided an estimated \$1.9 million in support of humanitarian assistance programs including: child survival programs, democracy and human rights programs, and the special self-help fund.

Total USAID/AFR FY 2001 \$1,970,000

- **USDA/416(b) Assistance.** In FY 2001, the U.S. Department of Agriculture 416(b) program provided

4,800 MT of commodities, with a total program value of \$2.7 million, in support of WFP's PRRO in Liberia.

Total USDA/416(b) FY 2001 \$2,691,300

- **State/PRM Assistance.** In FY 2001, State/PRM provided \$3.1 million through UNHCR, ICRC, and NGOs in support of education, nutrition, and other refugee and IDP assistance programs in Liberia.

Total State/PRM FY 2001 \$3,124,481

TOTAL USG Humanitarian Assistance to Liberia in FY 2001 \$9,685,781

SIERRA LEONE - CURRENT SITUATION

- **Security Situation.** The security situation in Sierra Leone remains generally stable with no serious clashes reported in August and September. However, tensions along the Liberian border remain high as fighting in northern Liberia continues. Currently, there are more than 16,000 UNAMSIL troops throughout the country. On September 18, the U.N. Security Council extended the mandate of the UNAMSIL deployment for six months until March 31, 2002. On September 17, UNAMSIL troops deployed to the diamond rich area of Tongo, marking the first step in opening up the previously inaccessible area to humanitarian assistance. Crime and violence in Freetown and the provincial capitals continues to impede humanitarian assistance activities.

- **DDR Process.** The National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (NCDDR) continues to register ex-combatants, primarily in the northern and eastern parts of the country. Those disarming include: the RUF, the pro-government Civil Defense Forces, and the pro-government Kamajors. The disarmament process was completed in the Kono District in August, and is ongoing in Moyamba and Koinadugu. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that more than 16,000 ex-combatants have disarmed under the DDR process.

- **IDP Situation.** In early August, OCHA reported that 127,000 IDPs were sheltered in camps, while another 120,000 were living in host communities in Sierra Leone. Relief agencies continue to provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs while they await the stabilization of their home areas.

- **Refugee Situation.** Although thousands of Sierra Leonean refugees continue to live in neighboring Guinea, an estimated 75,000 returned to Sierra Leone since the beginning of 2001. Many of these returnees arrived in Freetown by boat from Conakry, while others walked across the border. Those returning to Freetown

are being accommodated in transit centers mostly in and around the capital. However, many of these centers are becoming overcrowded as returnees refuse or are unable to return to their home areas for security reasons. In addition to the returned Sierra Leonean refugees, southern and eastern Sierra Leone hosts an estimated 12,000 Liberian refugees.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SIERRA LEONE

- **USAID/OFDA Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/OFDA provided \$11.5 million in support of humanitarian assistance programs in agriculture, health, IDP resettlement, nutrition, shelter, and water/sanitation.

Action Contre la Faim (ACF) – Emergency nutrition and water/sanitation activities in Makeni, Magburaka, Mile 91, Lungi, and Freetown..... \$1,802,831

Africare – Agricultural and health assistance programs in the Northern and Eastern Provinces \$1,100,481

CARE – Rural resettlement projects in southern Tonkolili and northern Moyamba Districts... \$2,382,717

CRS – Agricultural, health, and housing programs in Tonkolili and Moyamba Districts \$2,043,295

Merlin – Health, water, and sanitation programs in Freetown, Kenema, and Port Loko..... \$656,861

International Medical Corps – Primary and maternal health care in Port Loko and Lungi \$420,101

UNICEF – Humanitarian appeal for women and children..... \$700,000

World Vision – Agriculture and housing activities in Sierra Leone..... \$1,950,592

WFP – Helicopter support for food assistance activities in Sierra Leone..... \$750,000

Total USAID/OFDA FY 2001 \$11,806,878

- **USAID/FFP Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/FFP/EP provided 51,930 MT of commodities, with a total program value of \$33.5 million, in support of CRS, CARE, World Vision, and WFP emergency food assistance programs in Sierra Leone.

Total USAID/FFP FY 2001 \$33,500,000

- **USAID/OTI Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) provided \$4.1 million in support of humanitarian assistance programs including: civil society programs, education and training programs for ex-combatants, and elections assistance to Sierra Leone. USAID/OTI also programmed an additional \$950,000 from the Development Fund for Africa (DFA) and \$950,000 in Economic Support Funds (ESF) on behalf of USAID/AFR.

Total USAID/OTI FY 2001 \$4,120,000

- **USAID/AFR Assistance.** In FY 2001, USAID/AFR provided \$3.9 million in support of humanitarian assistance programs. These programs included: the Leahy War Victims Fund and the Displaced Children’s and Orphan’s Fund, as well as reintegration assistance, electoral/political processes support, and support for the reconciliation process, including human rights. In addition to these programs, USAID/AFR transferred \$950,000 from DFA and \$950,000 from ESF to USAID/OTI for use in their program in Sierra Leone.

Total USAID/AFR FY 2001 \$3,892,600

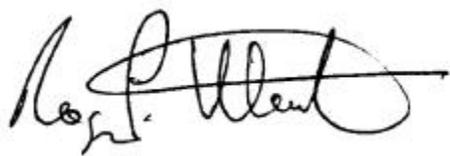
- **USDA/416(b) Assistance.** In FY 2001, the USDA/416(b) program provided 17,800 MT of commodities with a total program value of \$11.8 million, in support of WFP’s PRRO in Sierra Leone.

Total USDA/416(b) FY 2001 \$11,864,900

- **State/PRM Assistance.** In FY 2001, State/PRM provided \$9.8 million through UNHCR, other U.N. agencies, and NGOs in support of emergency environment, education, health, and other programs to assist returning refugees and their communities in Sierra Leone.

Total State/PRM FY 2001 \$9,846,581

TOTAL USG Humanitarian Assistance to Sierra Leone in FY 2001 \$75,030,959

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Winter". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish that extends to the right.

Roger Winter
Director
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

USAID/OFDA bulletins can be obtained from the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html