

COTE D'IVOIRE, GUINEA, LIBERIA, SIERRA LEONE: RELIEF, REPATRIATION, RESETTLEMENT

25 August 1999

Special Report on refugees in Guinea-Conakry

***appeal no. 01.05/99;
situation report no. 5
period covered: May - July 1999***

Despite efforts to facilitate talks between opposing groups, the region remains extremely unstable and volatile. Given this element, the rate of voluntary repatriation is expected to remain very low. The Red Cross Society of Guinea (RCSG) and the Federation are focusing on providing immediate assistance to refugees and vulnerable groups, and in collaboration with UNHCR updating contingency plans in the event of further influxes.

The context

The civil wars which have been raging in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau have forced some 600,000 refugees to seek asylum and assistance in Guinea (Conakry), 480,000 of whom are accommodated in camps managed by the international community (under the auspices of UNHCR as lead agency). While voluntary repatriation is the preferred option for these refugees, the situation in Sierra Leone and Liberia have not been conducive to an organised return.

With the evolving situation in the region, reporting on this Appeal has necessitated a flexible approach to reflect significant programme changes. Separate sitreps have therefore been issued for Guinea-Conakry and Liberia (2). A separate Emergency Appeal (14/99) was issued on 31 May for Sierra Leone. The field is in the process of preparing a complete sitrep covering the entire region summarising the budget revisions and programme changes in each country, compared to the original objectives established.