



**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 #12, Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

September 24, 2003

*Note: This Situation Report updates USAID/OFDA Liberia Situation Report #11, dated September 17, 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	<b>Total : 500,000 in Liberia</b> 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) ..... \$30,813,645**

**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. Unconfirmed reports estimate that this outbreak of the fighting killed approximately 1,000 people.

**Transition of power within the government.** 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. On August 17, GOL, LURD, and MODEL participants at peace negotiations in Accra, Ghana signed a peace

agreement allowing for an interim government to assume power in October 2003. The parties to the agreement chose Gyude Bryant as Chairman and Wesley Johnson as Vice-Chairman of the country's interim government.

**Peace-keeping troop deployments and movements.** On August 4, the vanguard Nigerian troops of the Economic Community of West Africa Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) peace-keeping force began to arrive in Liberia. Since then, ECOMIL troops have expanded to include contingents from Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Senegal, Mali, Benin, Gambia, and Togo, for a total of 3,500 troops. ECOMIL will become part of a much larger United Nations (U.N.) military mission to Liberia that will be established in October 2003.

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

On September 17, a West African Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) composed of U.N., European Union (EU) and West African Economic Community (ECOWAS) representatives began verifying the cease-fire positions of GOL and opposition forces. The team met with representatives of the GOL and MODEL in Monrovia, who promised to report to the team within a week regarding the exact location of their respective positions. LURD representatives did not attend this meeting.

On September 19, the U.N. Security Council voted to establish a peace-keeping force for Liberia consisting of approximately 15,000 troops. The force will assist in implementing the August cease-fire and peace agreement that aims to have national elections by the end of 2005. The U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) will also consist of approximately 1,115 police officers, along with a civilian component. ECOMIL will transfer authority to UNMIL on October 1. UNMIL's mandate, which was established for a period of 12 months, will also include protection of U.N. staff and civilians, as well as support for humanitarian and human rights initiatives. Assistance for national police training and the formation of a new, restructured military is also mandated.

On September 19, the U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone announced that it was preparing an 850-troop battalion from Bangladesh for deployment to Liberia on September 23. On September 23, the Government of Canada announced that it will contribute as many as four Canadian Forces officers to UNMIL from late September until early November 2003.

## **INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS**

***Relocation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Monrovia to Montserrado County camps.*** 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. On September 18, UNHCR temporarily suspended the relocation of IDPs to the Montserrado camps until September 24, in order to re-assess the situation.

According to the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), since the relocation operation began, 2,328 IDPs have been transported to the Montserrado camps, and many more IDPs have returned by other means. Montserrado camp conditions are crowded and services are reportedly unable to keep pace with the rate of return. Camp management non-governmental organizations (NGOs) indicate that the camps, including

the three refugee camps that also house IDPs, are reaching full capacity and cannot continue to receive either returning IDPs or new arrivals unless structures are upgraded.

***New IDP camps along Kakata road.*** There are currently two new IDP settlements under construction between Kakata and Monrovia, one in Mount Barclay and another near Careysburg. IDPs are constructing approximately 600 shelters in Mount Barclay with USAID/OFDA implementing partners Oxfam and Medical Emergency Relief International (Merlin) conducting water and sanitation activities and health services, respectively.

***Expansion of humanitarian corridors.*** After a September 12-16 inter-agency visit to Harper, the U.N. decided to resume full-scale relief efforts in southern and eastern Liberia after the country's new transitional government is sworn in on October 14. Relief workers will extend operations from Harper to four MODEL-controlled counties—Maryland, River Gee, Grand Gedeh and Nimba—along the border with Côte d'Ivoire.

## **REFUGEES**

***Assessment of land repatriation conditions.*** On September 17, a UNHCR team returned to Monrovia from the Zimmi way station in Sierra Leone after a two-day mission to assess conditions for the land repatriation of some of the approximately 14,000 Sierra Leonean refugees still in Liberia. The team reported that the roads from Monrovia to the border are in good condition, but those from the border to Zimmi way station in Sierra Leone are in need of major repairs, especially a five km stretch between Zimmi and Bo Waterside. UNHCR estimates that repairs could require at least four weeks, depending on weather conditions.

***Refugee flows into Guinea.*** The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) reported that recent fighting between GOL and LURD forces south of Gbarnga forced 5,500 civilians to flee into Guinea between August 29 and September 18. UNHCR reported on September 22 that approximately 2,000 of those individuals fleeing Liberia into Guinea had recently arrived in the southern Guinean town of Fassankony. The new arrivals in Fassankony are reportedly from the Loma ethnic group and apparently fled Liberia's Lofa County fearing ethnic reprisal after the GOL army pulled out from their hometowns and LURD forces announced that they would take over these communes. The influx appears to be comprised of children, women, and the elderly who are in dire need of food and health care. UNHCR has sent missions to Fassankony and surrounding areas to visit schools and public buildings where the new arrivals are being hosted.

There have also been reports of a LURD presence in the Guinean town of Macenta, causing insecurity and anxiety among refugees and the local population.

## PROTECTION

**Reports of forced labor.** UN OCHA indicated on September 22 that LURD and MODEL forces are subjecting civilians, particularly women, to forced labor, such as harvesting rice from local farms. There are also reports of food shortages in the LURD-controlled town of Gbarnga, and some civilians have reportedly died of starvation. Relief agencies indicated to UN OCHA that MODEL forces were also using civilians as forced labor in Buchanan, where MODEL has restricted the freedom of civilians to leave the city.

## COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

**Joint coordination meetings in Monrovia.** According to the USAID 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 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

**Malaria.** According to the USAID DART, to date, the number of malaria cases has increased to 1,679 clinical cases in Paynesville, and an overall total of 4,572 cases in the greater Monrovia area.

**Cholera.** According to the USAID DART, during the week of September 8, the number of cases of acute watery diarrhea/suspected cholera decreased slightly to 2,143 from 2,200 during the week of September 1, with a case fatality rate below one percent.

**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 International Rescue Committee (IRC).

## WATER AND SANITATION

**Well chlorination.** In response to the cholera outbreak in Monrovia, the Liberian Ministry of Health, WHO, and UNICEF planned to chlorinate 5,372 open wells in the Monrovia area. To date, during the fourth round of mass well chlorinations in Monrovia, over 6,000 wells were

chlorinated. In the third round, 5,039 wells were chlorinated. During the first and second phases of well chlorination, 4,865 and 5,318 wells were chlorinated respectively. In Buchanan, Merlin and UNICEF have chlorinated all wells and established three clean water points in each of the 12 sectors of the city.

**White Plains Pumping Station.** According to the USAID DART, the White Plains station's 16-inch line continues to function with approximately ten days of USAID/OFDA-funded fuel remaining. To provide greater access to the White Plains station, an ECOMIL engineering battalion along with a European Union contractor is erecting a Bailey bridge provided by the U.N., with an expected completion date of September 23.

## FOOD

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

The Motor Vessel (MV) Skybird berthed at the Bong Mining Company (BMC) pier in Monrovia on September 19 with 2,517 MTs of mixed commodities from Freetown. The sugar and salt on the MV Skybird complete the food basket for IDP rations and for specialized nutrition programs. The MV Maersk Constellation departed on September 19 after discharging 6,623 MTs of bulgur wheat, lentils, and Corn Soy Blend (CSB).

According to the USAID DART, on September 20 and 21 emergency food assistance arrived at the four Totota camps for the first time since May 2003. WFP and Lutheran World Federation (LWF) distributed 64 MTs of bulgur wheat, lentils, vegetable oil, and CSB to 4,146 beneficiaries on September 20 and 90 MTs to 5,659 beneficiaries on September 21. Rapid IDP registration and verification were completed in the four camps prior to the food distribution.

The USAID DART reported that a warehouse near the ECOMIL peacekeeping post in Totota was identified and prepared for short-term food storage, and WFP indicated that it would begin to deliver food to this warehouse on September 23. This is expected to expedite the food distribution process and result in a larger number of beneficiaries reached per day.

## **SHELTER**

*Substandard living conditions for IDPs.* According to the USAID DART, many IDPs in the Monrovia area continue to live in conditions below accepted international humanitarian standards for shelter. Entire families are often limited to one mat and have far less than the accepted minimum of 3.4 square meters per person of covered living space. Open cooking fires are common in these enclosed spaces, a condition that exposes those present to high smoke levels and carbon monoxide. This situation contributes to the elevated rates of acute respiratory infections seen among IDPs.

## **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

### *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 Action Against Hunger (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 provided more than \$1 million to Catholic Relief Services (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 provided 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.

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 Medical Emergency Relief International (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 \$14.9 million, to Liberia. The commodities provided by USAID/FFP include a combination of cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil, and CSB 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>
<b>LIBERIA – FY 2003 (TO DATE)</b>				
<b>USAID Total</b> .....				<b>\$20,753,886</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA</b> .....				<b>\$5,853,886</b>
	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
<b>USAID/FFP</b> .....				<b>\$14,900,000</b>
	WFP	P.L. 480 Title II Food Assistance – 23,840 MTs	Country-wide	\$14,900,000
<b>STATE/PRM<sup>∞</sup></b> .....				<b>\$10,059,759</b>
	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
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2003 (TO DATE)</b> .....				<b>\$30,813,645</b>

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

\*\* Included in this figure is \$113,208 provided by USAID’s Bureau for Global Health.

<sup>∞</sup> 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.



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**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](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/help/index.html)
  - The Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org) or 703-276-1914
  - InterAction: [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org) → “Guide to Appropriate Giving”
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.org](http://www.reliefweb.org).