



**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) 2004

April 1, 2004

Note: The last situation report was dated February 3, 2004.

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. The main opposition group, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), which began fighting Taylor in 1999, grew from a northern-based insurgent movement to a force that controlled the majority of the country in 2003. 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. Taylor resigned on August 11, 2003, and, on August 17, GOL, LURD, and MODEL representatives signed a peace agreement in Accra, Ghana, allowing for a transitional government to assume power on October 14. The parties to the agreement chose Gyude Bryant as Chairman and Wesley Johnson as Vice-Chairman of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), which will remain in office until the election of a new government in October 2005. On October 1, the United Nations Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) was established. At full strength, UNMIL will be comprised of 15,000 peacekeeping troops and approximately 1,115 police officers. Despite these developments, years of conflict have resulted in widespread human suffering in Liberia and the longstanding internal displacement of approximately 500,000 of the country's three million inhabitants.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Internally Displaced	Total: 500,000 in Liberia 300,000 – IDP camps and irregular settlements in Monrovia 200,000 – Outside of Monrovia	U.N. Consolidated Appeal, November 2003
Refugees	140,000 Liberians in Guinea 66,000 Liberians in Sierra Leone 63,000 Liberians in Côte d'Ivoire 42,000 Liberians in Ghana 38,000 Ivorians in Liberia 13,000 Sierra Leoneans in Liberia	UN OCHA and UNHCR, October/November 2003 UNHCR, January 2004

Total FY 2004 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Liberia (To Date).....\$8,165,749
Total FY 2004 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Liberia (To Date).....\$23,165,749

CURRENT SITUATION

Security. Although security conditions continue to improve in some areas where UNMIL has deployed, security problems continue in Gbarnga, Buchanan, River Cess, and the southeastern counties of Sinoe, Grand Kru, and Maryland, according to USAID/OFDA program officers in Monrovia. Incidents of looting and harassment of civilians continue in all of the above-mentioned areas. On March 20, violence erupted in Buchanan, resulting in the death of one Liberian, the evacuation of some international and non-governmental organization (NGO) staff, and the suspension of some program activities in the area. According to the U.N. Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), River Cess is marked by

continued looting by combined elements of former GOL combatants and MODEL. Additionally, on March 2, UNSECOORD reported an increase in the number of both LURD and MODEL checkpoints. According to UNSECOORD, the factions repeatedly replace the checkpoints dismantled by UNMIL.

The humanitarian community has expressed considerable concern over the security ramifications of rice distributions to combatants. Misinformation surrounding the distributions of rice, purchased by the NTGL, has resulted in security incidents in and around Tubmanburg, Bomi County, according to USAID/OFDA program officers in Monrovia. Misinformation about the quantity of rice to be distributed and

cash payments accompanying distributions resulted in angry mobs threatening humanitarian workers in Tubmanburg. NGOs and other humanitarian organizations have requested advance warning of planned rice distributions from UNMIL, which is providing logistics and security for the operation. According to UNMIL, the NTGL views the rice distribution to combatants awaiting disarmament and demobilization as a security stabilization activity rather than a humanitarian assistance program. As of March 16, 1,600 bags of rice had been distributed to 6,600 combatants.

Disarmament and demobilization campaign. On February 20, UNMIL announced that cash payments to ex-combatants in exchange for weapons will not be part of the re-started disarmament program, which was suspended on December 17. However, according to UNMIL, former combatants will receive US \$150 after completing the demobilization process at one of the four cantonment centers (Monrovia, Tubmanburg, Gbarnga, and Buchanan). An additional US \$150 will be paid when the demobilized combatants return home, following the three-month program. According to UNMIL, 250 combatants will be disarmed per day at each of the four sites. After several delays, the disarmament and demobilization campaign is not expected to resume until the middle of April. UNMIL estimates that the number of ex-combatants entering the demobilization program will be between 38,000 and 53,000.

Status of UNMIL deployment. As of March 26, there were 13,900 UNMIL troops, out of the expected 15,000, on the ground in Liberia, according to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP). According to the force commander, UNMIL will be at full operational capacity by the end of April. In February, UNMIL deployed to northwestern Liberia, near the border with Sierra Leone. On February 22, a Nigerian battalion and a Pakistani battalion assumed positions in the towns of Sinje, Bo Waterside, and Robertsport. As of March 9, a second Ethiopian battalion arrived in Liberia for deployment to Zwedru.

Refugees. On March 2, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) resumed overland convoys to repatriate refugees to Sierra Leone following UNMIL deployment to the border area. Overland repatriation was suspended in April 2002 due to insecurity, but air and sea repatriation efforts continued through 2003. Between March 2 and March 21, 2004, UNHCR facilitated the return of approximately 414 Sierra Leoneans through Bo Waterside in five separate convoys. According to UNHCR, approximately 270,000 Sierra Leonean refugees have returned home since the end of 2000, of those, 160,000 were facilitated by UNHCR. Refugees in Liberia have been informed that the provision of UNHCR assistance will be suspended in June.

Returnees. Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone are spontaneously returning home in increasing numbers, according to UNHCR. Approximately 6,000 Liberians

reportedly returned countrywide during the second half of 2003. UNHCR plans to facilitate the return of 320,000 Liberian refugees living throughout the region once UNMIL is fully deployed throughout the country. According to UNHCR, more than 5,000 Liberian returnees from Sierra Leone have arrived in the Perry Town camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) since late 2003. Of that number, 2,000 arrived in recent weeks. UNHCR initial estimates indicate that more than 10,000 Liberians have returned to Grand Cape Mount County (near the Sierra Leonean border), 11,500 Liberians have returned to Bong County (near Guinean border), and a mix of 35,000 IDPs and returnees have moved into northern Lofa County.

Yellow fever outbreak. By March 9, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) had received reports of 39 suspected cases of yellow fever, including eight deaths, from eight counties in Liberia. The first emergency mass immunization campaign began on February 26 in the Totota IDP camps and surrounding communities in Bong County. The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF); Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Belgium, France, Holland, and Switzerland; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and other NGOs are coordinating with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to implement the immunization campaigns. Additional emergency mass immunization campaigns were planned to begin in Nimba County on March 20. According to WHO, the large-scale population displacement that has characterized Liberia has resulted in overcrowding in urban areas, creating conditions favorable for the transmission of yellow fever. The onset of the rainy season in April is expected to further exacerbate the situation, according to WHO. A total of 522,000 people will be targeted countrywide for immunization, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). In response to the outbreak, USAID/OFDA facilitated the deployment of a three person team from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assist efforts by UNICEF, WHO, and the MOH.

Measles campaign. On March 17, UN OCHA reported that more than one million children countrywide have been vaccinated against measles through a joint campaign launched by UNICEF, WHO, and the MOH in June 2003. Since September 2003, Save the Children-United Kingdom (SCF-UK) and the MOH have immunized 565,921 children between the ages of six months and 15 years against measles. According to SCF-UK, years of protracted conflict in Liberia prevented thousands of children from receiving immunizations, and vulnerability to disease has further increased as a result of poverty, frequent displacement, lack of health services, and overcrowded camp conditions. The NGO Equip Liberia is coordinating measles vaccinations in Nimba County, and, by February 27, more than 81,000 children in the northern section of the county had received the vaccination, according to UN OCHA. USAID/OFDA partner, Medical Emergency Relief International (Merlin) is conducting a mass measles campaign in Grand Gedeh County.

Support for the cold chain. UNICEF provided a new cold storage facility, with the capacity to store up to three million doses of vaccines, to the John F. Kennedy (JFK) hospital in Monrovia in early March. The new cold storage is part of a larger process of decentralizing the national cold chain system. The freezers replaced by the new facility at JFK hospital will be transferred to six regional centers in order to locate vaccines closer to beneficiaries, according to UN OCHA. UNICEF is currently training four MOH technicians to manage the new system.

Ongoing food distributions. By the end of February, WFP and implementing partners distributed approximately 5,570 metric tons (MT) of food commodities to 344,256 beneficiaries (320,871 IDPs, 14,000 refugees, and 9,385 ex-combatants.) According to UN OCHA, the total caseload of beneficiaries for all food assistance programs in Liberia is expected to reach 531,693 as programs are extended to the following counties: Montserrado, Bong, Margibi, Bomi, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, and Grand Bassa. According to WFP, the food pipeline for Liberia will sufficiently meet requirements through the end of June.

Emergency School Feeding (ESF) and Food for Work (FFW). By the end of February, 143,000 children in 422 schools received emergency school feeding through WFP and implementing partners. However, limited resources for the procurement of non-food items (NFIs) are hindering the launch of FFW programs to rehabilitate roads and schools in Liberia. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has completed the distribution of vegetable seeds and tools to 2,000 families in Montserrado, Margibi, and Bong counties. An additional 800 farmers will receive seed rice, cassava cuttings, or sweet potato cuttings, depending on the local season and personal preference, in the coming months.

Documenting sexual violence. The National Human Rights Center of Liberia is implementing a three-month project to document the extent and consequences of sexual violence perpetrated during the 14 year civil war. As part of the project, which is funded by the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) and World Vision International (WVI), 22 human rights monitors are interviewing 4,000 randomly selected individuals. Initial findings, based in interviews with 600 people, indicate that 40 percent of the civilian population were victims of some form of sexual abuse. The final results of the project will be released to the planned Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Non-food assistance. In FY 2003, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$5.5 million to support humanitarian needs in Liberia. In FY 2004, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$8.1 million. Of this total, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1 million to Oxfam to support water and sanitation and protection activities and more than \$400,000 to the

International Rescue Committee (IRC) to support measles immunization programs. USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1.5 million to Merlin for health, NFIs, shelter, and water and sanitation activities. In support of targeted feeding programs and water and sanitation activities, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$415,000 to Action Contre la Faim (ACF). In support of Unification Camp, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$455,000 to the American Refugee Committee (ARC) for camp management and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) activities. To support emergency agricultural rehabilitation, USAID/OFDA provided \$500,000 to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to purchase seeds and tools and implement agricultural programs in Grand Bassa County. USAID/OFDA provided approximately \$440,000 to Northwest Medical Teams International to undertake health activities in Liberia and \$500,000 for the International Medical Corps (IMC) to support health programs in Wilson Camp in Montserrado and Lofa County. USAID/OFDA has also provided \$600,000 to UNICEF to support water and sanitation and measles programs in Liberia and more than \$200,000 to WFP for nutrition activities. To support the coordination, logistics, and information activities of UN OCHA, FAO, and WFP, USAID/OFDA has granted more than \$1.8 million in FY 2004.

From August through the end of October, a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) was based in Monrovia to assess humanitarian needs and coordinate the provision of U.S. Government (USG)-funded assistance to vulnerable populations in accessible areas of Liberia. The DART has been replaced by a USAID/DCHA humanitarian team consisting of a full-time USAID/OFDA Field Officer based in Monrovia and regular regional support from the USAID/OFDA Emergency Disaster Response Coordinator and the USAID/Food for Peace (FFP) Officer, both based in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Emergency food assistance. In FY 2003 USAID/FFP provided a total of 24,480 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at \$16.7 million, to Liberia. To date in FY 2004, USAID/FFP has provided an additional 25,380 MT valued at approximately \$15.5 million. The commodities provided by USAID/FFP include a combination of cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil, and corn-soya blend (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 and CRS.

Refugee assistance. State/PRM has provided support for Liberian refugees since 1989 and for Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia since 1991. In FY 2003, State/PRM provided more than \$12 million to support programming in response to the Liberia crisis and approximately \$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 (\$54.6 million) and ICRC for Africa (\$52.6 million).

Under the FY 2004 Liberia Supplemental, State/PRM is finalizing the disbursement of \$19.5 million in humanitarian assistance: \$11 million for UNHCR, \$4.5 million for ICRC, \$2.4 million for UNICEF, \$1 million for IOM, and \$600,000 for UNDP. The funds will be used to provide humanitarian relief for vulnerable populations, including basic needs and shelter, protection, water and sanitation and hygiene services, essential medical services at the JFK hospital in Monrovia, family tracing and reunification activities, provision of non-food items, emergency livelihoods support, and return and reinsertion assistance for refugees.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
ACF	Nutrition, Water and Sanitation	Monrovia	\$415,873
ARC	IDP Camp Management, SGBV	Margibi	\$445,076
CRS	Agriculture (Seeds and Tools)	Grand Bassa	\$500,000
IMC	Health	Montserrado and Lofa Counties	\$500,000
IRC	Measles	Monrovia	\$413,003
Merlin	Water/Sanitation, Health, Non-food items, Shelter	Monrovia/Harbel	\$1,544,946
Northwest Medical	Health	Montserrado/Margibi	\$441,578
Oxfam	Water/Sanitation and IDP Protection	Monrovia	\$1,058,193
UN FAO	Coordination and Support	Countrywide	\$450,000
UNICEF	Measles and Water/Sanitation	Countrywide	\$600,000
UN OCHA	Humanitarian Information Center	Countrywide	\$660,000
UN OCHA	Coordination and Support	Countrywide	\$650,000
UN WFP	Nutrition	Countrywide	\$203,880
UN WFP	Joint Logistics Center	Countrywide	\$122,000
USAID/OFDA	Program Support	Countrywide	\$161,200
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$8,165,749
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
WFP ²	P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance – 25,380 MT	Countrywide	\$15,500,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$15,500,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2004			\$23,165,749
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA IN FY 2004			\$23,165,749

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of March 31, 2004.

² Estimated value of food assistance.



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