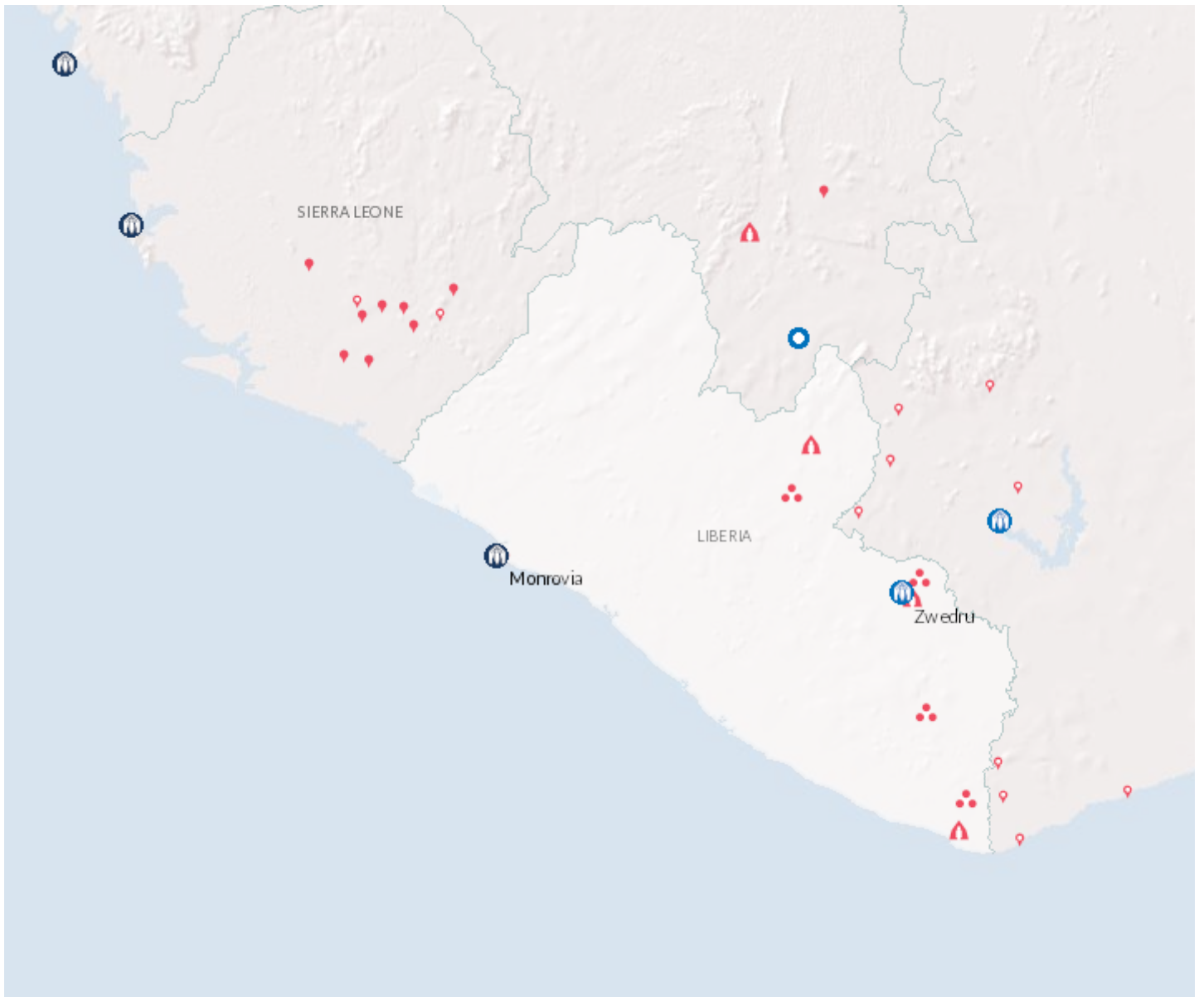


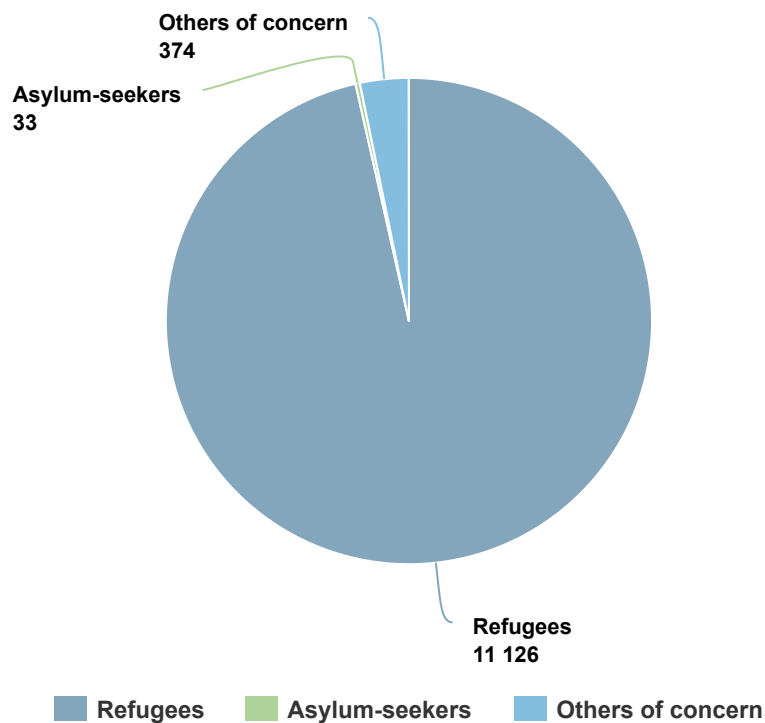
Operation: Liberia



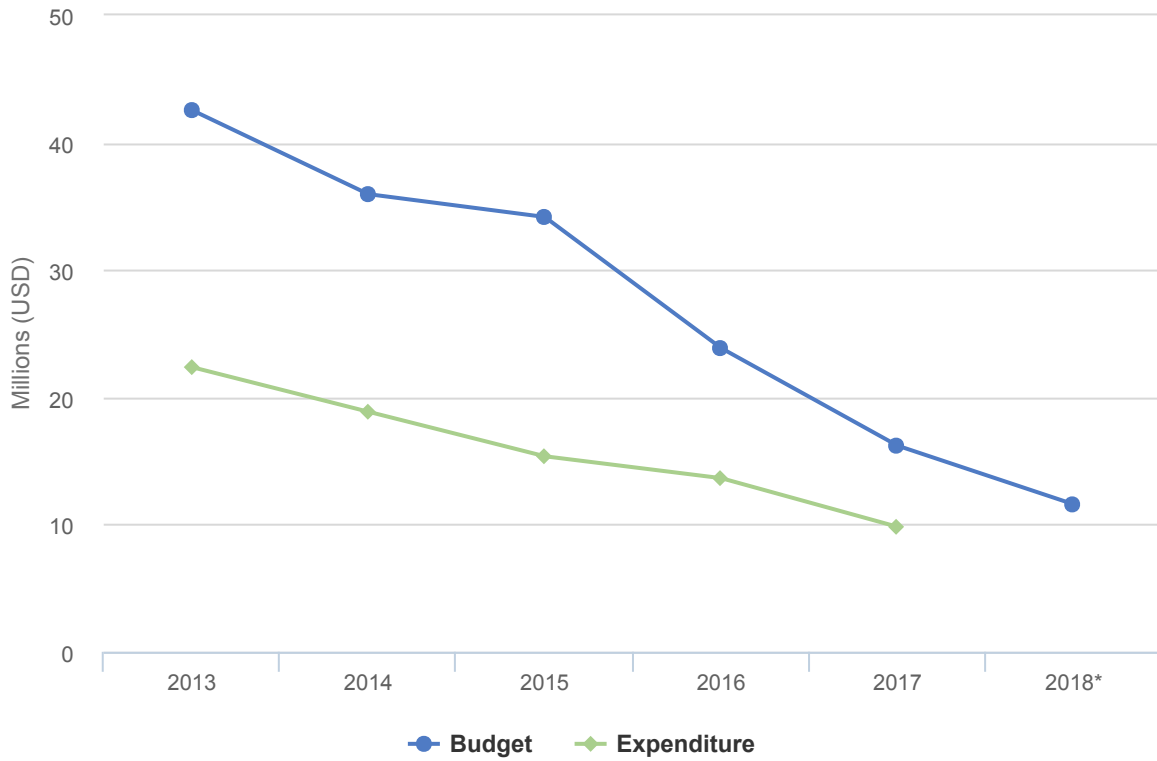
People of Concern

44% DECREASE IN
2017

2017	11,533
2016	20,486
2015	38,058



Budgets and Expenditure for Liberia



Operational context

The 2017 presidential elections in Liberia resulted in a peaceful transition from Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Unity Party), who presided Liberia for 12 years and led the country's transition from a 14-year civil war, to George M. Weah (Coalition for Democratic Change).

Due to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) drawdown, the Government had to increase its support in the security sector and on civil administration. The withdrawal of the UNMIL forces raised some concerns about the capacity of the police and military to face future security challenges. Despite the reduction of UN presence, the UN Security Council members have continued to emphasize their support for Liberia's peacebuilding efforts.

Rule of law is not enforced effectively across the country. Combined with weak property rights and lack of transparency in the legal system, these challenges seriously impeded private-sector development. Despite reform efforts, systemic corruption increases the cost of business and deters much-needed long-term investment.

UNHCR's operational environment was challenged by the discontinuation of services UNMIL was providing. Road repairs carried out by UNMIL engineers and air services to access Maryland and Grand Geddeh stopped and maintenance was not taken over by the Government of Liberia. This affected UNHCR's work significantly, especially the carrying out of repatriation programmes.

A favourable protection environment allowed 18 asylum-seekers to access asylum in Liberia in 2017. Sustained peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire enabled the operation to pursue voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees in Liberia.

Population trends

By the end of 2017, there were close to 11,200 refugees, of whom 99 per cent were from Côte d'Ivoire. These 11,100 Ivorians are the remaining population of the approximately 224,000 Ivorians who fled the generalized violence that occurred in Côte d'Ivoire in the wake of the presidential elections in 2010 and 2011. In follow-up to the resumption of voluntary repatriation in December 2015, the operation facilitated the return of more than 7,600 Ivorian refugees in safety and dignity in 2017.

Key achievements

- UNHCR facilitated the return of some 7,640 Ivorian refugees to Côte d'Ivoire, including 43 unaccompanied children who were reunited with their families.
- A resettlement mission to train staff and counsel refugees on managing expectations for resettlement took place from 25 June to 5 July 2017.
- As part of the local integration process for Ivorian refugees unwilling to return, the Ivorian school curriculum was replaced with a Liberian curriculum as of February 2017. Schools set up for refugees were included in the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and are now functioning as public schools. This integration would give refugee students a more sustainable and nationally recognized education platform, as well as opportunities to go beyond basic education.
- UNHCR started the mainstreaming of social protection cases into the national structures in consultation with the Ministry of Gender and Social Affairs.
- For Sierra Leonean refugees exempted from the cessation in 2008, local integration is also being considered as durable solution.
- Advocacy continued towards the reform of the Alien and Nationality Law (ANL) to remove gender bias and other discriminatory provisions. By the end of 2017, the draft of the amended law was adopted by stakeholders and shared with the Minister of Justice to be taken to the Cabinet. If approved, this draft will be shared with the National Legislature in the first quarter of 2018.

Unmet needs

- More funds were needed for a full integration of schools into the national system. With no financial support from the Government to run the refugee schools, UNHCR committed to paying salaries of 47 Liberian teachers until their inclusion in the Government payroll. Considering the limited resources available, other activities had to be deprioritized.
 - Limited access to secondary education in the camps continued to be a challenge. However, the Ministry of Education is expected to align grades 7 to 9 in the refugee schools with the Liberian education requirements.
 - Support for 28 foster families was reduced and, as a result, families were reluctant to continue fostering unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).
 - Funding allocated to PSNs was inadequate to cover their needs, and this resulted in a lack of sustainable material and livelihood support.
 - Due to inadequate funding, UNHCR was unable to assist adequately the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (<http://liberia.buildingmarkets.org/23306/tender/lrrrc-ncb-004-12-13-0>) (LRRRC) to improve its RSD and appeal capacities as well as issuance of machine-readable Convention Travel Documents (CTDs).
 - UNHCR was not able to provide adequate self-reliance support to ensure the local integration of 374 Sierra Leoneans.
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