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**Executive Board  
Third Regular Session**

**Rome, 20–24 October 2003**

## **PROJECTS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL**

**Agenda item 8**

*For information\**



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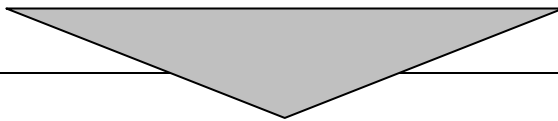
## **ADDENDUM TO WEST AFRICA COASTAL PRRO 10064.2: UPDATE ON THE LIBERIA SITUATION**

This document should be read in conjunction with the document “Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation—West Africa Coastal 10064.2” (WFP/EB.3/2003/8/1).

\* In accordance with the Executive Board’s decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board’s time.

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# Note to the Executive Board



**This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

Regional Director, West Africa Bureau Mr M. Aranda da Silva  
(ODD):

Senior Liaison Officer, ODD: Mr T. Lecato tel.: 066513-2370

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Supervisor, Meeting Servicing and Distribution Unit (tel.: 066513-2328).



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## CONTEXT

1. The Executive Board document for the 2004 West Africa Coastal protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) was written in June, when Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) had arrived at the outskirts of Monrovia, but had not yet made it inside the capital. The situation country wide was extremely chaotic at that time, with LURD fighting government forces in Lofa, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu and Bomi Counties, and MODEL fighting from Grand Bassa (near Monrovia) all the way to the Southeast (Maryland, Grand Kru and Grand Gedeh) and up to Nimba County.
2. At that time, a resurgence of fighting on the outskirts of Monrovia forced thousands of frightened, displaced people to flee the Montserrado IDP camps. Moving into Monrovia in search of relief aid and protection, they tripled the city's population, increasing it to more than 1.3 million. In anticipation of the looming humanitarian crisis, WFP introduced a contingency provision in its PRRO projections (in addition to the projections made for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) that would cover an additional 150,000 beneficiaries.
3. The purpose of this Information Note is to update the Executive Board on the evolution of the crisis since then and describe how it has affected WFP's humanitarian operation.

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## REBELS MOVE INTO MONROVIA

4. The West Africa Coastal region has been in a state of deep crisis for many years, but this crisis reached its peak last June/July in Liberia, when rebel forces finally closed in on Monrovia. The situation created significant new waves of internal displacement and an additional stream of Liberian refugees into Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.
5. All United Nations international staff were evacuated from Monrovia, leaving WFP only partially operational—national staff were still on the ground—when Monrovia was virtually besieged. According to an *Action contre le faim* (ACF) nutritional survey undertaken in Monrovia at the end of July, more than 30 percent of children under 5 were moderately malnourished and 5 percent severely. Another survey, carried out by World Vision two weeks later, confirmed the severity of the nutritional situation: 29 percent moderate malnutrition and 11 percent severe.
6. This alarming situation forced the population to resort to extensive looting of food and other supplies. It is estimated that 15,000 mt of food were looted, of which 7,800 mt were from WFP stocks and 7,200 mt from private/commercial sources.

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## PREPAREDNESS FOR RE-ENTRY

7. The following contingency measures were taken to prepare for the re-entry of WFP international staff into Monrovia:
  - A total of 6,400 mt of food was diverted to neighbouring countries (mainly Sierra Leone and Guinea), to be shipped or flown in as soon as it was possible to start operations.
  - Staff were on stand-by in Abidjan, ready to move in at any time.



- A total of 4,000 mt of food was identified as available for loan from the region and ready to be shipped or flown in at any time.
- A vessel was hired to serve as office space, in which staff could work offshore from Monrovia. The vessel, ready at any moment to move in and out of Monrovia, was designed to provide high-energy biscuits to the most affected population. It also contained vital information and communication technology (ICT) equipment and fuel for the daily running of the humanitarian operation.

## RE-ENTRY INTO MONROVIA ON 10 AUGUST

8. Since the return of its international staff on 10 August, WFP has been able to reach an average of approximately 480,000 beneficiaries in and outside of Monrovia. It is hoped that security conditions will improve with the increased deployment of United Nations peacekeepers, in which case WFP assistance may have to be enlarged in order for the Programme to reach beneficiaries in areas made accessible by the peacekeepers.
9. After a 12-day distribution in Monrovia at the end of August, WFP and humanitarian partners decided to shift to targeted interventions in the capital in order to encourage IDPs to go back to the camps in Montserrado. By mid-September, WFP and ACF had carried out the second phase of a targeted programme, covering 45,000 children under 5 with a pre-mix of vegetable oil, corn-soya blend (CSB) and sugar.
10. The WFP vessel has been key in providing a swift initial response to the crisis. It was extremely instrumental in bringing staff into Monrovia and in the provision of food and ICT equipment. The vessel proved to be crucial also for the entire humanitarian community in terms of providing fuel and helping carry out needs assessments to otherwise inaccessible areas such as Buchanan, Greenville and Harper (and through Harper, to Plebo and Fish Town).

## NEW PROGRAMME

11. Most of the IDPs who had been residing in the seven Montserrado camps and who fled into Monrovia when those camps were attacked have now returned to the camps (Wilson, Ricks, Blamasse, Plumkor, Perry Town/Voice of America, Sawegbeh, Jatondo). At present, WFP and humanitarian partners have finalized registration in the Montserrado camps. The caseload is estimated at 127,300 people, and distributions have been taking place since 20 September.
12. IDP registrations were also carried out in areas outside Monrovia, namely Totota (65,700), Salala (37,000), Buchanan (31,600), Harbel (24,000), Kakata (12,000), Fendel (5,000), Harper (3,000), Felela (2,000), Greenville (2,000) and Bensonville (1,000). The total number of IDPs registered up country is 183,300. Up to now, distributions have taken place in Totota, Salala, Kakata, Buchanan, Harbel and Bensonville. Therefore, the total number of registered IDPs in accessible areas of the country is 310,600. Since re-entry on 10 August, WFP has distributed approximately 7,000 mt of food.
13. In addition, WFP is assisting 52,200 individuals through curative interventions (45,000 children through supplementary feeding, 2,400 children with therapeutic feeding and 4,800 caretakers). WFP is also assisting 15,000 people through institutional feeding. As of November, 154,000 children will start being assisted through emergency school



feeding. As of December, 5,500 will be assisted through a demobilization programme and 5,000 through food for work.

14. **The total number of beneficiaries by the end of 2003 (including general distributions, curative interventions and safety-net programmes) is expected to be 542,300.**

## SUPPORT TO WFP OPERATIONS

15. Once full deployment of United Nations peacekeepers up country is carried out, WFP will open six sub-offices. As a first phase, WFP would open sub-offices in Zwedru, Gbarnga, Harper and Buchanan; as a second phase, in Tubmanburg and Voinjama.
16. As support to the food-distribution programme, WFP has four special operations:
- air support capacity (passenger and cargo) (US\$2,150,609);
  - trucking fleet (US\$2,547,270);
  - ICT and logistics capacity, including vessel operation (US\$1,823,847); and
  - United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (US\$799,536).

## SECURITY AND ACCESS

17. On 19 September, the United Nations Security Council approved the deployment of 15,000 United Nations peacekeepers and 1,100 international police to take over from the ECOMIL (Ecomog Mission in Liberia) forces, which had reached 3,500 troops. The contingent from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) will monitor implementation of the Accra Peace Accord and assist in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation of thousands of fighters roaming the villages of Liberia. UNMIL was given a 12-month mandate that started 1 October. However, full deployment will not take place before 2004.
18. Until full deployment of United Nations troops, security will remain very fragile throughout the country, especially in light of the departure from Liberia of United States troops on 1 October. The day the United Nations peacekeeping mission began and United States troops left, fighting erupted in Monrovia between LURD rebels and government forces. Sporadic skirmishes continue to take place up country.

## RESOURCES

19. The proposed tonnage for Liberia (47,114 mt) and the contingency provision (22,811 mt) in the PRRO document are enough to cover the needs of the present caseload described above. In the present circumstances, Liberia will need approximately 70,000 mt in 2004, i.e., 5,800 mt per month. **The Executive Board is therefore kindly requested to approve the activation of the contingency provision, to be used as soon as the PRRO begins, in January.**
20. Since new areas may open up and new beneficiaries become accessible when United Nations peacekeepers are deployed up country, the needs might exceed what is proposed in the PRRO document. In that case, **the Board may be asked to approve a budget**



**revision, either at the First Regular Session (in February) or the Second Regular Session (in May) in 2004.**

21. Donor support for the Liberia operation has been very good on the food side; WFP expects to meet food requirements until April 2004. However, since it takes five months from the time of a pledge to the time the food reaches Liberia, new resources need to be mobilized now.
22. A main concern is funding the special operations. Out of the US\$6.8 million required for these, there is a **shortfall of US\$2.5 million.**

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## OUTLOOK

23. With the deployment of UNMIL forces in accordance with the Accra Peace Accord, for the first time in ten years there exists a chance to achieve peace in Liberia. WFP's work in helping IDPs become self-reliant and resume normal lives will continue. In line with UNMIL's objectives, WFP will place a special emphasis on demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes.



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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ACF	<i>Action contre le faim</i>
CSB	corn-soya blend
ECOMIL	Ecowas Mission in Liberia
ICT	information and communication technology
IDP	internally displaced person
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia

