

**Humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains alarming, warns UN agency** UN News

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(...) More than three weeks after the end of the post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, the humanitarian situation in the country remains alarming for tens of thousands of civilians despite improved security, the United Nations refugee agency warned today.

“As our teams reach more displaced people we are seeing substantial needs,” Adrian Edwards, a spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), told a [news conference](#) in Geneva. (...)

(...) With security having improved in the past few weeks, UNHCR has regained access to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the commercial capital of Abidjan it had been supporting before the fighting had disrupted its operations.

While UNHCR welcomes the improved security throughout Côte d'Ivoire, it voiced concern about the large number of armed checkpoints.

“We urge the new Ivorian Government to reduce these checkpoints, as they intimidate people wanting to return to places of origin,” said Mr. Edwards. “We also call on the Government to reassure the civilian population by speeding up efforts to re-establishing the presence of local authorities.”

According to the agency, the number of IDPs in and around Abidjan has dropped from 35,000 at the end of March to 14,000 last week. At the same time, living conditions are “extremely precarious” as people have gone for weeks without adequate food.

The agency’s staff found a similar situation in north-western and central western Côte d'Ivoire, where virtually all of the IDPs they visited in at least 15 locations were living with host families who are themselves running out of resources and living on a single meal per day. (...)

(...) While humanitarian conditions are slowly improving in Duékoué with the return of aid agencies, UNHCR says there are still some 27,000 IDPs staying at the Catholic church compound.

The agency has resumed work on a campsite at a nearby village with the aim of easing the congestion at the church compound. It is hoped that the camp will be finished in two weeks, and then the first group of 8,000 people will be relocated there. (...)

(...) UNHCR said there are still an estimated 200,000 IDPs in western Côte d'Ivoire. Another 177,500 Ivorians are registered as refugees in 13 West African nations, including nearly 160,000 in Liberia where they continue to arrive at a rate of some 250 per day.

Ghana and Togo have also seen a rise in the number of arrivals since the capture of Mr. Gbagbo, the agency reported, noting that an increasing number of them are pro-Gbagbo youths claiming to have run away due to fear of reprisals.

UN aid agencies have been warning for several weeks that thousands of civilians are still suffering from the consequences of the four months of turmoil that engulfed the West African nation, with priority needs being health care, education, water, shelter and protection of those affected by the violence. (...)

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