

Refugee crisis in Africa purposefully neglected by media

Image not found or type unknown



The world is paying too little attention to a slew of mass displacements of people across Africa, risking starvation deaths and prolonging conflicts, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has warned.

Oslo, June 2 (RHC)-- The world is paying too little attention to a slew of mass displacements of people across Africa, risking starvation deaths and prolonging conflicts, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has warned.

“With the all-absorbing war in Europe’s Ukraine, I fear African suffering will be pushed further into the shadows,” the aid group’s chief Jan Egeland said in a statement published Wednesday.

The countries with the most neglected crises according to the NRC are, in order: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burkina Faso, Cameroon, South Sudan, Chad, Mali, Sudan, Nigeria, Burundi and Ethiopia... all in Africa.

It is the first time that all 10 crises on the Council’s annual list – based on shortfalls in the international political response, media coverage, and the amount of aid pledged — are on the African continent.

In the DRC, the most-neglected country on the list for the second year running, approximately 27 million people went hungry last year, equivalent to one-third of the population. Meanwhile, 5.5 million people were internally displaced and one million more fleeing abroad, the aid group said.

But there were no high-level meetings or donor conferences about the DRC’s hunger crisis or the conflict in the country’s east, and only 44 percent of the \$2bn requested by the UN for humanitarian aid was received.

By contrast, the NRC highlighted that it took just one day this March for a humanitarian appeal for Ukraine to be almost fully funded. “The war in Ukraine has demonstrated the immense gap between what is possible when the international community rallies behind a crisis, and the daily reality for millions of people suffering in silence within these crises on the African continent that the world has chosen to ignore,” Egeland said.

In other countries on the Council’s list, climate shocks such as droughts and floods have exacerbated food crises, while conflicts or endemic violence both put civilians to flight and made it harder for aid groups to reach them.

In April, the World Food Program raised an alarm that 20 million people are at risk of starvation this year as delayed rains worsen an already brutal drought in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. The Horn of Africa region where all four countries are situated is experiencing its worst drought in decades.

Experts and aid workers also say the war in Ukraine has contributed to rising costs of fuel and food in many countries across Africa. Wheat imports make up 90 percent of Africa’s \$4 billion trade with Russia and almost half of the continent’s \$4.5 billion trade with Ukraine, according to the Africa Development Bank (AfDB).

“If we don’t manage this [food crisis] very quickly, it will actually destabilise the continent,” AfDB president Akinwumi Adesina warned.

The NRC noted that seven of the 10 countries on its list had made repeated appearances in recent years. “This points to a vicious cycle of international political neglect, limited media coverage, donor fatigue, and ever-deepening humanitarian needs,” the report said.

The aid group called for “adequate attention” from the UN Security Council and other international bodies, with measures like assigning one or more members to “champion” specific displacement crises and support for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on the ground.

It also suggested steps to address donor fatigue, such as governments committing steady funding flows rather than one-off pledges.



Radio Habana Cuba