

JOINT IDMC-UNHCR PRESS RELEASE

A record 33.3 million now displaced by war worldwide, as one family flees inside Syria every 60 seconds - Report

Geneva, 13.05.2014 (UNHCR) – 33.3 million people were internally displaced at the end of 2013 due to conflict and violence says a new report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). This equates to a staggering increase of 4.5 million from 2012, signalling a record high for the second year running.

Today IDMC, part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), launched its Global Overview 2014 at the United Nations in Geneva, alongside the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). The report, which covers internal displacement in 2013 highlights that a full 63% of the record breaking 33.3 million internally displaced people (IDPs) reported worldwide, come from just five countries: Syria, Colombia, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan. Including figures for Nigeria for the first time, the report documents that an astounding, 3.3 million Nigerians have been displaced by conflict.

“This record number of people forced to flee inside their own countries confirms a disturbing upward trend of internal displacement since IDMC first began monitoring and analysing displacement back in the late 90s,” says Jan Egeland, the Secretary General of NRC.

“The dramatic increase in forced displacement in 2013 and the fact that the average amount of time people worldwide are living in displacement is now a staggering 17 years, all suggest that something is going terribly wrong in how we are responding and dealing with this issue,” says Egeland.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres added: “We should all be concerned about these numbers and the continuing upwards trend. We have a shared responsibility to act to end this massive suffering. Immediate protection and assistance for the internally displaced is a humanitarian imperative.”

By the end of 2013, 8.2 million people were newly displaced, an increase of 1.6 million compared to the year before. A shocking 43% of all the people newly displaced in 2013 were in Syria.

“The IDMC report reveals a frightening reality of life inside Syria, now the largest internal displacement crisis in the world,” says Egeland. “Not only do armed groups control the areas where internal displacement camps are located, these camps are badly

managed, provide inadequate shelter, sanitation and limited aid delivery.” Further to this, the IDMC report reveals how large concentrations of IDPs have been particularly targeted by artillery bombardments and airstrikes.

With 9,500 people a day (approximately one family every 60 seconds) being displaced inside Syria, the country remains the largest and fastest evolving displacement crisis in the world.

The three countries experiencing the worst levels of new displacement - Syria, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - together accounted for 67% of the 8.2 million people newly displaced in the year.

“That these three countries appear top of the IDMC list reveals an alarming reality,” said Alfredo Zamudio, Director of IDMC. “They account not only for those fleeing from relatively new crises, as in Syria and CAR, but are also reflective of the horrendous situations still faced by innocent people stuck in the midst protracted conflict, such as the DRC which has suffered persistent turmoil dating back to the mid 90’s.”

Egeland continues: “These trends do not bode well for the future – we have to sit up, listen up and act up by working more closely together to end this misery for millions; humanitarians alone cannot make this happen.”

“Global internal displacement is everyone’s problem, from politicians to private companies, development actors and lawyers – we all have a role to play,” said Egeland.

NOTE: The full report, IDMC media contacts, a summary, maps and charts can be downloaded by copying and pasting the following link into a web browser:

<http://www.internal-displacement.org/about-us/idmc-media-centre>

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