

# NUMBER OF PEOPLE INTERNALLY DISPLACED BY CONFLICT ACROSS AFRICA DOUBLES IN 2017

*Almost 15,000 people a day fled within their own their countries to escape conflict and violence*

**16 May 2018, London** - Sub-Saharan Africa, a continent which only makes up 14 per cent of the world's population, accounted for nearly half of the 11.8 million people displaced by conflict in 2017, according to a new report from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

Key findings from the Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID 2018) show that the Democratic Republic of Congo was hardest hit, with almost 2.2 million new displacements - more than the following three worst-affected countries combined - South Sudan, Ethiopia and Central African Republic which together accounted for 2.1 million.

"The scale of this displacement is dishearteningly familiar," said Alexandra Bilak, Director of IDMC. "This report shows why we need a new approach to address the huge costs of internal displacement, not only to individuals, but also to the economy, stability and security of affected countries."

The Boko Haram insurgency, ethnic violence and clashes over diminishing resources led to more than 415,000 new displacements in the Lake Chad Basin, 65 per cent of them in Nigeria's north-eastern states.

In Somalia, IDMC recorded 388,000 new displacements associated with conflict and an additional 892,000 due to drought. However, the complex situation in Somalia means that the causes of flight are closely interlinked and hard to disaggregate.

"The staggering number of people forced to flee from their homes due to conflict and violence must serve as an eye opener to us all," said Jan Egeland, NRC's Secretary General. "We are getting better at providing emergency aid, but we need to put a lot more effort into preventing displacement, protecting people, and finding long-term solutions."

Storms and floods forced an additional 2.6 million people to flee their homes across the region. Sub-Saharan Africa's population growth and urbanisation rate are predicted to increase in the coming decades, and unless this is carefully managed, more people are expected to become displaced by more frequent and intense disasters.

"Internal displacement often heralds the start of broader crises. While we have seen some useful policy progress since the adoption of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement 20 years ago, it is nowhere near enough to cope with, much less reduce, the scale of the problem," said Bilak.

Yet Sub-Saharan Africa is well placed to act. With a unique legal framework in the Kampala Convention, incomparable natural resources and huge economic capital and human potential, it has the potential to become a global leader in addressing internal displacement associated with both conflict and disasters.

However, Bilak added, "without renewed action, we risk failing millions of internally displaced people worldwide, and holding back the development of the countries which host them. It's time for an honest

conversation on the most effective ways to turn the tide on this global crisis. This conversation must be led by affected countries and receive full support from the international community.”

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

### About IDMC:

[IDMC](#) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement globally. We are part of the [Norwegian Refugee Council](#), an independent, non-governmental humanitarian organisation.

IDMC was set up in 1998 at the request of the international community to fill an important knowledge gap on the global scale and patterns of internal displacement. Since then, tens of millions of people become internally displaced each year as a result of conflict, violence and disasters. While the numbers are rising and the needs of millions go unaddressed, internal displacement continues to receive insufficient political attention and commitment.

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### Landing page:

Visit <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2018/> to access GRID 2018 and a media pack, containing all global and regional press releases, translations in French, Spanish and Arabic, a highlights document with facts and figures, and b-roll.

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