

Nairobi, Kenya, January 29 (Infosplusgabon) - The number of people displaced by violence in Burkina Faso increased tenfold to over 560,000, a humanitarian organization has warned.

Worse still, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said in a news dispatch that the figure is predicted to skyrocket to 900,000 people by April as horrific violence continues to force families from their homes.

Burkina Faso needs more than bullets and bombs. Military engagement alone is failing to protect vulnerable communities, the organization says.

"Donors supporting military efforts to quell the extreme violence have not yet responded to the enormous humanitarian needs with equal emphasis," warned NRC Secretary General Jan Egeland, who is visiting the country this week.

France and states from Africa's Sahel region have increased the predominantly security-oriented response to the indiscriminate violence of many armed militants in northern and eastern Burkina Faso.

But some of the large-scale military operations against armed groups have had dire humanitarian consequences, forcing communities to flee their homes in thousands.

The country is now on the brink of a hunger crisis. A staggering one in ten people in Burkina Faso will need food assistance by June.

The violence is also storing up problems for future generations, as some armed groups deliberately target schools and teachers, leaving over 330,000 children without access to education.

"In the northern town of Barsalogho, I heard horrific stories from some of the 70,000 people who recently fled to camps where there is an acute need of water, sanitation, food and education," said Egeland.

Insecurity and a lack of funding is severely hampering NRC's work. Donor governments have not understood that this is the world's fastest-growing displacement crisis, added Egeland.

Last year, less than half of the money required to meet humanitarian needs was received.

He underscored to the global community the need to urgently scale up its presence to provide the assistance and protection the families deserve.

FIN/INFOSPLUSGABON/OUP/2020

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