



AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (AJIRI)

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 (2022)



INDEXED IN



PUBLISHED BY: E-PALLI, DELAWARE, USA

Analysis of the Russia-Ukraine War's Consequences on Sustainable Livelihoods of Refugees in Africa

Rodgers Mwansa^{1*}

Article Information

Received: June 30, 2022

Accepted: July 07, 2022

Published: July 11, 2022

Keywords

Sustainability, Livelihoods, Refugees, Solidarity and War

ABSTRACT

The Russia-Ukraine War will leave behind unprecedented scars among the primary conflicting parties and the international community. One of such scars is already being felt – a surge of refugee influx into neighbouring countries with mounting humanitarian needs. As the world continue recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war will make the recovery process more complicated. While geopolitical relations are threatened, the global economy is also affected – prices of commodities have gone high. The livelihood is endangered and many other services such as education and healthcare have been heavily impacted. Many countries are realigning their financial policies to meet economic uncertainties. Support for the most vulnerable that includes refugees is likely to be threatened. Amidst these challenges, refugees, particularly those in low-income countries, Africa inclusive, are left in peril. With that in mind, this paper aimed at analysing the relational consequence of the Russia-Ukraine war on sustainable livelihoods of refugees in Africa. Secondary qualitative data was obtained through the exploration of relevant literature, reports, articles, and news. While imploring “social solidarity theory” of Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) and the African Solidarity perspective of “ubuntu”, the paper argues for a “re-envisioned collaboration” among African states in the context of global crises vis-à-vis the plight of refugees in Africa.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty first century has been challenged by one of the worst migration and refugee problem. Since the end of the World War II, millions of people have been displaced from their homes and livelihood (Bose, 2022, p. 375). At the end of 2021, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2021) estimated that the world refugee population stood at 26.6 million. With the uprise of the Russia-Ukraine war, the refugee population is likely to mount unprecedentedly, leading to a serious humanitarian crisis.

The UNHCR, a global organisation with a mandate to provide international protection, humanitarian assistance and to seek permanent solutions for refugees (1950 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, paras. 8c & b, 9 and 10), is entangled between continuing with support for older refugees and or limit it in order to respond to the new ones. Hence, there is need for countries, international bodies, organisations, and other institutions, to strategize approaches in response to the surge of refugee problems necessitated by the war.

It is undeniable that, as the war continues in Ukraine, addressing the global refugee crisis will see efforts divided. Refugees in Africa, Myanmar, Palestine, to mention but a few, are likely to experience dwindling in humanitarian support received from other states, international bodies, and organisations. This may be necessitated by divided efforts of European donors and international organisations, who are likely to experience a humanitarian dilemma between assisting existing refugees and those

being created due to the war in Ukraine. The situation may also prompt efforts shifted or reduced in other areas in order to face the problems of the refugees coming from Ukraine. At the time of writing, the UNHCR (2022) reported that more than 5 million refugees were created and increased the need for humanitarian assistance. See table 1 and 2 showing the distribution of refugees from Ukraine to countries neighbouring it and other European countries.

A close look at these numbers shows that refugees from Ukraine continue to increase on a daily basis. A reality that is likely to mount pressure on receiving countries and institutions charged with the mandate to protect refugees and provide humanitarian assistance such as the UNHCR. More to it, a demand for strategic planning and resource mobilisation to support refugees in this emergent situation will test the capacity of the UNHCR, European Union and other bodies working in humanitarian situations. The question to raise is: considering the fact that the end to the Russia-Ukraine war is unpredictable, what lays ahead of the refugees registered on temporary protection or similar national protection schemes? The prolongation of the war would perhaps determine specific interventions that could add to temporary protection. Within that context, humanitarian support of any kind, will have to continue. As of March 2022, the United Nations (UN) and its humanitarian partners launched what it called “coordinated emergency appeal” totalling 1.7 billion United States Dollars (USD) to provide humanitarian assistance to the people in Ukraine. By the end of April, about 70% of this appeal fund was collected. Again, the

¹ Society of Missionaries of Africa, Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation, Encounter and Dialogue (JPIC-ED), Uganda.

* Corresponding author's e-mail: mwansa41@gmail.com

Table 1: Countries neighbouring Ukraine

Country	Data Date	Individual refugee from Ukraine recorded across Europe	Refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes	Border crossings from Ukraine	Border crossings to Ukraine
Poland	7 June, 2022	1,152,364	1,152,364	3,817,564	1,675,446
Russian Federation	7 June, 2022	1,116,389	Not applicable	1,116,387	Data not available
Republic of Moldova	7 June, 2022	86,266	Not applicable	491,144	118,172
Romania	7 June, 2022	82,344	34,758	613,435	304,725
Slovakia	7 June, 2022	77,330	77,141	484,661	215,374
Hungary	7 June, 2022	24,091	24,091	731,098	Data not available
Belarus	7 June, 2022	8,027	Not applicable	16,650	Data Not available
Total		2,546,809	1,288,354	7,270,939	2,313,717

Source: Adapted from Operational Data Portal: Ukraine Refugee Situation, 2022.

Table 2: Other European Countries

Country	Data Date	Individual refugee from Ukraine recorded across Europe	Refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes
Germany	2 June, 2022	780,000	565,821
Czech Republic	7 June, 2022	366,632	366,490
Italy	31 May, 2022	125,907	97,314
Spain	5 June, 2022	118,199	118,122
Turkey	25 April, 2022	85,000	Not applicable
Bulgaria	7 June, 2022	78,291	113,030
Austria	7 June, 2022	70,153	69,760
Netherland	6 June, 2022	62,970	62,970
Lithuania	25 June, 2022	53,913	53,891
Switzerland	7 June, 2022	53,120	53,120
Belgium	6 June, 2022	45,882	45,300
France	27 April, 2022	43,300	43,300
Portugal	7 June, 2022	41,546	41,451
Estonia	25 May, 2022	39,802	25,693
Sweden	25 May, 2022	39,592	37,995
United Kingdom	3 May, 2022	37,400	37,400
Ireland	2 June, 2022	33,842	33,151
Denmark	22 May, 2022	29,191	27,208
Finland	25 May, 2022	26,196	24,455
Latvia	25 May, 2022	23,382	23,375
Georgia	29 May, 2022	20,030	Not applicable
Norway	25 May, 2022	16,708	16,708
Greece	5 June, 2022	14,887	14,887
Croatia	7 June, 2022	13,759	13,758
Cyprus	6 June, 2022	12,500	12,788
Serbia and Kosovo S/RES/1244(1999)	7 June, 2022	7,704	695

Montenegro	30 May, 2022	7,355	2,530
Slovenia	7 June, 2022	7,050	7,050
Luxembourg	3 June, 2022	5,300	5,300
Azerbaijan	31 May, 2022	5,062	Not applicable
Albania	2 June, 2022	1,479	Not applicable
North Macedonia	7 June, 2022	1,097	Not applicable
Iceland	25 May, 2022	997	997
Malta	25 May, 2022	994	922
Bosnia and Herzegovina	30 May, 2022	362	Not applicable
Armenia	7 June, 2022	300	Not applicable
Liechtenstein	1 June, 2022	212	212
Total		2,270,114	1,915,693

Source: Adapted from Operational Data Portal: Ukraine Refugee Situation, 2022.

UN doubled the emergency appeal to 2.25 billion USD (United Nations, 2022). Donners support only, amounted to 980 million USD – which was serviced for assistance to at least 3.4 million people in Ukraine (United Nations, 2022).

With the increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance, the World Food Program (WFP) has been tirelessly scaling up its efforts. Some of which has been providing cash transfers, and where need be, distribute in-kind food (World Food Program, 2022). On the one hand, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2022) has warned that Ukraine could “freefall into poverty”. Thus, needing a serious

A close look at these numbers shows that refugees from Ukraine continue to increase on a daily basis. A reality that is likely to mount pressure on receiving countries and institutions charged with the mandate to protect refugees and provide humanitarian assistance such as the UNHCR. More to it, a demand for strategic planning and resource mobilisation to support refugees in this emergent situation will test the capacity of the UNHCR, European Union and other bodies working in humanitarian situations. The question to raise is: considering the fact that the end to the Russia-Ukraine war is unpredictable, what lays ahead of the refugees registered on temporary protection or similar national protection schemes? The prolongation of the war would perhaps determine specific interventions that could add to temporary protection. Within that context, humanitarian support of any kind, will have to continue. As of March 2022, the United Nations (UN) and its humanitarian partners launched what it called “coordinated emergency appeal” totalling 1.7 billion United States Dollars (USD) to provide humanitarian assistance to the people in Ukraine. By the end of April, about 70% of this appeal fund was collected. Again, the UN doubled the emergency appeal to 2.25 billion USD (United Nations, 2022). Donners support only, amounted to 980 million USD – which was serviced for assistance to at least 3.4 million people in Ukraine (United Nations, 2022).

With the increase in the number of people in need of

humanitarian assistance, the World Food Program (WFP) has been tirelessly scaling up its efforts. Some of which has been providing cash transfers, and where need be, distribute in-kind food (World Food Program, 2022). On the one hand, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2022) has warned that Ukraine could “freefall into poverty”. Thus, needing a serious humanitarian intervention. This situation is likely to destabilise the balance of operation for many humanitarian organisations globally. Hence, weakening efforts to respond to refugees in other continents such as Africa.

With this unprecedented global challenge, a puzzle on humanitarian assistance is created. Firstly, it has to be understood that Africa has received and is receiving a lot of support from European foundations, organisations, states and of course, the European Union. For example, the European Union alone, according to the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection Humanitarian Aid Operation (2022), a total of 499 million Euros was allocated to Sub-Sahara Africa for the year 2022. The funding was aimed at supporting those suffering from food and nutrition crisis exacerbated by conflict in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Accordingly, the fund was also meant to help those displaced by violence in Central Africa Republic, Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria, South Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia. Despite these efforts, the international community is likely to face many challenges that might slow down the efforts due to the Russia-Ukraine war.

Secondly, humanitarian responses may also be affected by the global economic threat. The recovery from the economic impact of COVID-19 is far from complete. Thus, the Russia-Ukraine war is likely to make the recovery process slow and, to some extent, create new challenges around geopolitical interests as well as the global financial distribution chain. This in turn, has the potential to push the world into a global economic recession that could affect people’s livelihoods and increase the level of poverty.

The war is challenging existing geopolitical relations and may require some form of diplomatic therapy

(Henrikson, 2022, pp. 15-18). The global economy is also vulnerable – prices of commodities have gone high (The World Bank Group, 2022, p. 6). The livelihood is endangered and many other services such as education and health have been heavily impacted (Lava et al, 2022; Uwishema et al, 2022, p. 2).

As the situation of war prolongs, countries are realigning their economic policies and tightening financial conditions to meet economic uncertainties (The World Bank Group, 2022, p. 6). This has the potential to weigh the capacity of support given to other countries and the most vulnerable population. With these challenges, refugees, particularly those in low-income countries, Africa inclusive, are left in peril and exposed to vulnerability in their efforts to uplift their livelihoods.

Africa hosts a population of approximately 30 million forcibly displaced people – including nearly 7 million refugees and asylum seekers with challenging humanitarian needs (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2022). Despite the support from international organisations and states, most of them remain vulnerable to the impacts of world crises – pandemics and conflicts inclusive. It is therefore for this reason that this paper aimed at analysing the relational consequence of the Russia-Ukraine war on sustainable livelihoods of refugees in Africa while extending to the trickle-down effect on education and healthcare systems. For an in-depth analysis, organisationally, the article articulates its methodology while giving a perspective on the Russia-Ukraine war, the refugees crisis – treating old, new, and repeating challenges, African states on conflicts and refugees, and finally, giving recommendations based on social solidarity theory and ubuntu to promote a “re-envisioned collaboration” among African states in the context of global crises vis-à-vis the plight of refugees in Africa.

METHODOLOGY

Data sources

Secondary qualitative data was obtained through the exploration of relevant literature, reliable reports, policy briefs, articles, and current news reports. The literature was carefully selected using google scholar, the main google research engines for various reports and recommendable news outlets and institutional websites such as that of the UN, World Bank, FAO, and other reliable institutions on the subject matter.

Theories and approach

The “social solidarity” theory of Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) and the African worldview of “ubuntu”, were implored to guide the analysis. As a French sociologist, Durkheim perceived society as a unity of “communication, interrelation, contact between individuals and as well as between groups, institutions and functions” (see Gofman: 2014). Explained in what he called “mechanical solidarity” and “organic solidarity”, he contends that all societies presuppose some form and degree of group solidarity, or

cohesion (see Gofman, 2014, p. 45). While the mechanical solidarity presupposes individual consciousness being dissolved in the “collective consciousness”, organic solidarity brings in the sense of promoting mutual interest and division of labour (Gofman: 2014, 48). Profound to this understanding is the fact that the later, is centered on mutual interdependence of rational relations and profound exchange of roles between different actors, institutions, and organs in a particular environment.

Despite prioritising organic solidarity to mechanical solidarity, as it works well in larger and organised societies, Durkheim believes that the two forms of solidarity exist in any social context. They are mutually significant to the realisation of social unity and execution of functions. Durkheim’s conception of solidarity, to a better extent, resonates well with the African worldview of “ubuntu” – a philosophy whose notion of interdependence and solidarity is stressed.

Among the buntu speaking people of Southern and Eastern Africa, ubuntu worldview is widely shared and to some extent, communicates similarities. Christian Gade (2012) observes that the notion behind ubuntu emanates from a Nguni proverb, *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* – laterally translated as “a person is through others” (Gade, 2012, p. 487). Adding to the above, John Mbiti (1869), more emphatically, suggested that the meaning of ubuntu can be well expressed in a statement: “I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1969, pp. 108-109). Considering this, ubuntu can consequently presuppose and go beyond individual unity in a society to what could be termed as ‘cooperate coexistence’ (Mwansa, 2022) and ‘promotion of institutional unity’. In this case, the mechanical and organic solidarity expressed in Durkheim’s social solidarity theory are unified in ubuntu’s philosophical perspective.

In their dimensional complexity on solidarity, social solidarity and ubuntu could compliment to academic dialogue that consists of efforts oriented towards reducing Africa’s internal conflicts and enhancement of functional unity in Africa. Through dialogue, recognition of an intrinsic social unity, and functional interdependence, response to current pressing issues – refugee crisis inclusive, could be improved. Therefore, Social solidarity and ubuntu stand relevant to the refugee discourse and contribute to reimagining responses to the challenges of the refugees in Africa amidst the Russia-Ukraine war.

Russia Ukraine War in Perspective

The world was left in awe on 24th of February 2022 when Russia launched what it called a “military operation on Ukraine” (Green et al., 2022, p. 4). This military launch, according to Think tanks and other International Law Scholars, threatened the foundation of the world’s international peace and security system as contained in the United Nations (UN) Charter (Global Geopolitical Lead, 2022 1; & Hague, 2022, p. 159). Chapter one of the UN Charter, article 2(4), contends that “members shall refrain in their international relations from the use

of threat or force against the territorial integrity of any state". This is in view of maintaining international peace as one of the core purposes of the UN.

Despite the above charter provision, Russia went ahead to launch military operations backed by reasons of 'individual and collective self-defence' (Hague, 2022, p. 155). As Green, Henderson and Ruy (2022) point out, on the one hand, the individual self-defence claim by Russia was induced by the following:

1. A perceived encroaching threat posed by North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)'s eastward expansion.

2. A claim that Ukraine posed a threat to Russia itself as a territorial entity.

3. A claim that Ukraine posed a threat to Russian nationals – Russian speakers within the Dombas.

The collective self-defence on the other hand was backed by the idea that the territory of Dombas, Donetsk and Lugansk – self-proclaimed independent states from Ukraine, and recognised by Russia as such, asked for military assistance from Russia in order to protect them from Ukrainian forces (Green et al., 2022, pp. 8-10). These claims were well detailed in President Vladimir Putin's Television address, and effectively led to Russia's invasion of Ukraine (see address by the President of Russian Federation: 24th February 2022).

The above claims must not be understood in isolation. They have a context through which they are supported. Indeed, there are complex strings of reasons to the cause of the Russia-Ukraine war. Putting the crisis into perspective, Zambakari (2022) argues that the 24th February invasion on Ukraine ought to be seen with a geopolitical and historical lens. For example, since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian leaders staunchly opposed the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe, and particularly into countries bordering Russia (Zambakari, 2022).

Furthermore, Zambakari (2022) insists that the strategic geopolitical concern during Russia's actions on Ukraine are not hard to understand simply because, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the assurances made by western powers, of which one important pronouncement was to limit the further eastern expansion of NATO, has not been met. From the 12 founding member states of NATO since 1949, NATO has 30 members today, and the alliance has managed to penetrate eastern boundaries (Zambakari, 2022). Russia is aware of the intention of Ukraine and other Eastern Europe states such as Sweden and Finland to Join NATO and the European Union. Hence, raising what Russia claims to be "security concerns on its territory" (see address by the President of Russian Federation: 24th February 2022).

In December 2021, Russia made critical security demands on the United States administration. A list of demands including 'a promise to stop the expansion of NATO in Eastern Europe and commit to not admitting any new members including Ukraine (Reevel, 2022) were made. Russia also demanded an effective prohibition of any

NATO military activity in Eastern Europe and most of the former Soviet Union (Reevel, 2022). These demands were rejected by the US (Roth, 2021; & BBC, 2022). Making the tensions between Ukraine, NATO and the West tighten.

Within that context, the conflict experienced today in Ukraine seems to be one engulfed with many interpretations. They may include a) Kyv's desire for some sort of self-determination and the freedom to align its social, political and economic affairs with an international body of its interest, b) a presupposed changing world order and the geopolitical contest between Russia with its allies and the West. This to some extent, has destabilized the world order and peace. In any case, peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine is needed. In addition to that, an extensive dialogue and diplomatic engagement between Russia, countries in Eastern Europe, European Union and the United States is fundamentally indispensable for world peace to prevail. This is due to the fact that the human population globally is affected. Both civilians and combatants are dying amidst the conflict. Displacements continue to be the order of the day. The humanitarian needs are constantly increasing, threatening the most rapid and grievous refugee crisis.

Refugee Crisis: Old, New and Repeating Challenges

Refugees either in historical context or in the current situation experience diverse but closely related challenges daily. Neither geographical nor nature of conflict can fundamentally change the basic challenges faced by refugees across the globe even though dynamics of response and magnitude of the crisis may vary. As a result of conflicts, violence, human rights violation, persecution, and other human security threats, today we are experiencing the most rapid forced displacement crisis (FDC). For the first time in the history of FDC, the total population of displaced persons crossed the milestone of 100 million globally (Siefied, 2022). Of these, more than 26.6 million are refugees hosted in many countries of the world. This number may be surpassed once the UNHCR officially updates its data in relation to the Ukraine crisis, conflicts in Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Ethiopia, the Sahel region, Central Africa Republic (CAR), and many other conflicts.

As the numbers continue to mount, refugees continue to face many challenges related to social, political, economic and cultural dimensions. These, among others, have been the reality in the past but, are becoming more dynamic and challenging in the context of our time and the current events. While acknowledging the multifaceted dynamisms of the refugee context, this discussion focusses its analysis on understanding refugee challenges, particularly, in the livelihood dimension with trickle-down effect on education and healthcare. This is envisioned to highlight how refugees, particularly those in Africa, could be impacted by the Russia-Ukraine war.

The War and Sustainable Refugee Livelihoods

In every emergency crisis, meeting basic needs of the most

affected has been the most difficult part. In the context of the refugee regime, while providing security and protection of the vulnerable civilians is at the center of every action, ensuring that they are provided with basic needs such as food, water, shelter, health and education, among others, guide the responses. Humanitarian workers throughout history have dedicated their efforts to providing relief in conflict zones and refugee camps. However, as early as 2000s, efforts to provide alternatives to resilience refugee responses saw the focus on Sustainable Livelihood Programs (SLPs) as essential. Generally, SLPs “seek to increase the capacity of households and individuals to provide for themselves by protecting or enhancing their income, skills, and assets in ways that support their own priorities and goals” (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2022, 4). Most importantly to SLP is fostering sustainability of refugees and reduce dependence upon governments, Humanitarian organisations and host communities. Thus, reducing the gap between relief and development (Horst, 2006, p. 8). To that cause, most of the SLPs, as outlined by Jacobsen and Fratzke (2022) seem to serve many purposes including but not limited to:

1. Promotion of self-reliance.
2. Sustainable repatriation.
3. Stimulation of local economy – while generating benefits for local population and potentially increasing their inclination to continue hosting refugees.
4. Restoration of personal dignity and independence of refugees.

For these efforts to materialize however, a substantial financial resource is required. Since most refugees are hosted in countries with limited financial resources such as those in Africa, Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Islam et al., 2022; P. 9-12), among others, the distribution of such resources by projects funders, the UNHCR, and other states become a challenge. Although this maybe the case, the desire to see that sustainable livelihood – one that supports self-reliance, viable repatriation (in instances where it is applicable), stimulation of local economies and uplifting human dignity among refugees is achieved, remain paramount. However, deep rooted world crises such as conflicts and pandemics, have the capacity to retard the many efforts done so far in the refugee management systems.

The Russia-Ukraine war could prove the above point. Firstly, the crisis has the potential to destabilize international food security and the global financial distribution chain. Secondly, the gradual implication would lead to increased pressure on sustainable livelihood of refugees, particularly those hosted in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (2022), “the Ukraine crisis has not only created unprecedented humanitarian crisis but a looming increase in food insecurity in countries both close and far from the theatre of the war”. Comprehensively, this must be understood from the perspective of the recent world health crisis in the name of COVID-19. Many countries

were economically strained due to the pandemic. Thus, the crisis in Ukraine, would add deepening global economic shocks and volatility.

FAO (2022) reports that Russia and Ukraine are among the most important producers of agricultural commodities in the world. For example, in the year 2021, both countries ranked among the top three (3) global exporters of wheat, maize, rapeseed, sunflower seeds and sunflower oil (FAO, 2022, p. 1). Russia also stood as the world’s top exporter of nitrogen Fertilizer and the second leading supplier of both potassic and phosphorous fertilizer (FOA: 2022, p. 1). The conflict situation has thus led to all these commodities particularly in the agricultural sector and foodstuffs scarce and expensive. Several restrictions in the form of sanctions placed upon Russia (Russel, 2022) and limited exportation of these commodities by big producers that include Russia and Ukraine have had an impact. As is always the case, agriculture and production of foodstuffs are part of the SLPs to the management of refugees. Hence, change in the world market and global increase in commodity prices also impact refugees. Those refugees engaged in some form of agriculture and microeconomic activities, are likely to face the pressure of limited fertilizers and financial resources to support their endeavours.

As the global economy is heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the continuous conflict between the two countries will as well impact the global market, and so will be the case with refugees who are struggling to sustain their livelihood. The UNHCR, in order to move from emergency response to resilience creation mechanisms, adopted “Cash-Based Intervention” (CBI) way back in the 1990s (United Nations High Commissioner for refugees, 2012). The system recommends giving financial support to refugees and reduce the supply of “in-kind foods”. CBI in the UNHCR operation system is used “to provide access to food, water, health care and other services, build and support livelihoods, support shelter needs, and facilitate return and reintegration” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2012, p. 5). On this note, it could be assumed that CBI would work well in an environment where the global economy strives well.

Since the eruption of COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war, the global economy has been struggling to recover. According to the World Bank Group Report (2022), “the COVID-19 pandemic sent shock waves through the world economy and triggered the largest global economic crisis in more than a century”. The available evidence shows that global economy has experienced several crises. However, the COVID-19 pandemic indicates a much deeper impact compared to World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Global Financial Crisis (World Bank Group, 2022). Consider the crises historical depiction of the global economy experiencing negative growth per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth as in figure 2.

The economic impact of COVID-19 is being deepened



Figure 1: Economic impact of COVID-19 historical perspective.

Source: cited in the World Bank Group, *World Development report*, 2022.

by the war. Most importantly, the war is increasing the financial stress across emerging markets and developing markets (EMDMs) (Guénette et al, 2022, p. 4). Similarly, economies in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) have been hit hard because of linkages with Russia and, to a lesser extent, Ukraine (9). For example, the euro is grappling with 400 percent increase in gas prices and doubling oil prices (Guénette et al, 2022, p. 11). Knowing very well that Russia is a bigger exporter of oil, earlier geopolitical tensions between Russia, Ukraine and Europe had begun showing indications of oil prices rising. For instance, “after trading at \$80/barrels (bbl) at the start of the year, the prices of Brent crude oil surpassed \$100/bbl in the late February, rising to nearly \$130/bbl in March – its highest level since 2008” (World Bank Group: 2022, 6). A warning that the crisis was likely to have serious economic effects.

Cementing these economic forecasts, Liadzi et al. (2022), using their Global Economic Model, estimate that “the conflict in Ukraine could reduce the level of global GDP by 1 per cent by 2023, which is about \$1 trillion, and up to 3 per cent global inflation in 2022 and about 2 per cent in 2023”. Indeed, these economic ramifications resulting from the war have a direct or indirect implication on the funding of the CBI of the UNHCR operation system. This is because, affected countries and funding institutions, are likely to tighten financial policies due to global economic uncertainties. Hence, rendering the management of refugees, particularly those in Africa and other low-income countries, to serious humanitarian challenges. In extension, the economic impact has also the potential to limit the financial support in other important areas such as education and health care services.

The War and Refugee Education Care

The Refugee Education 2030 prioritised education in all refugee management systems. Looking at the educational challenges that come with refugeehood status, the agenda aimed to ensure that children (boys and girls inclusive) and youth, who are affected by conflict, are included in equitable quality national education system of host

countries (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019, p. 6). Certainly, education contributes to resilience, prepares children and youth participation in cohesive society, and in many ways, prepares learners towards sustainable future (7). As enshrined in sustainable development goals (SDGs), no. 4, promotion of lifelong learning opportunities (United Nations: 2016) should be the concern of everyone. Agenda 2030 called for addressing gender gap in school enrolments, building, and upgrading of educational facilities and ensuring substantial supply of teachers (United Nations: 2016, SDG4).

These aspirations have already been affected by the pandemic and more so, the Russia-Ukraine war would add to the magnitude of the consequences. Children particularly are affected. As Lava et al. (2022) argue, “war affect children of attacked countries, children of attacking countries, and even children of countries not actively involved in the conflict”. Their education and the whole educational operation system is put in jeopardy. For example, increase in the number of dropouts, and limited supply of funds and other services in the education sector are likely to be experienced.

As the war continues the livelihoods of many people across the world including refugees in Africa would be under pressure. As a result, sending children to school will be difficult. Parents will find it hard to provide necessary educational materials and paying of school fees thus, leading to many school dropouts. The COVID-19 pandemic already increased the number of dropouts in schools – due to financial constraints and school closures. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2020) estimated that about 5.3 million learners in Sub-Sahara Africa where at risk of not returning to school. Most importantly, UNESCO warned that students in poverty and marginalisation and those affected by conflict and migration are the hardest hit (UNESCO, 2022). Therefore, the war in Ukraine may simply increase children dropouts in schools. This will have an impact on achieving the 2030 agenda of closing the gender gap and maximizing enrolment levels,

particularly in the situation of refugees.

The fact that the war has impacted the global economy, education is likely also to be underfunded. This in turn has the potential to limit the efficiency of educational operation in the most affected areas such as refugee settlements in Africa. The supply of educational materials, building and upgrading of educational facilities will be hampered. Most schools in Africa have insufficient number of teachers too. The 2030 agenda, under SDG4 envisioned the recruitment of more teachers to provide quality education. With the emerging global economic uncertainties, this may be hindered with limited funds possibly to be experienced in the education sector.

The War and Refugee Healthcare

Just like education, the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war was preceded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps, the most hit sector of human society. Although the pandemic took time to be reported and African countries had ample time to prepare, the continent was not spared to its effects. Many countries on the continent felt the gravity of the impact of the pandemic on the health system. The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2022) reported that about 91% - 39 out of the 43 countries in Africa measured experienced disruption in at least essential services in the year 2021. Similarly, the pandemic has had long reach effects on women and the elderly (WHO, 2022, p. 15). WHO 2022 Report indicated an increase of 11% in maternal deaths in 2021 of some 11 countries of Africa. Older people remained vulnerable as the incidence of noncommunicable diseases hindered the response to the pandemic (WHO, 2022, p. 15).

The healthcare systems in most African countries experience unworkable conditions with very poor health outcomes (Olierebi et al., 2019, p. 399). For example, those operating in rural areas (refugee settlements inclusive) are underfunded. They lack sufficient medicines, essential laboratory equipments, and even more, health personnel. The pandemic also showed disparities in global response, especially in the area of vaccines distribution. 'Vaccine nationalism' was strongly observed – wealth countries hoarding vaccines from manufacturers to increase supply in their own countries at the expense of underprivileged countries mainly those in the 'Global South' (Riaz et al., 2021). Part of these challenges and actions in the world system, in most cases, begin to manifest when the world is exposed to global crises such as pandemics and wars.

As the economic pressure necessitated by war in Ukraine continues to humper COVID-19 economic recovery, so will the health sector in Africa continue to suffer. The economic impact faced now will make the supply of essential health material limited – thus, leading to poor service delivery. African countries will therefore have to come up with economic resilient strategies that could cushion the pressure that comes with world crises. This will in turn help to respond to healthcare systems especially, those in vulnerable conditions such as refugee settlements and other rural areas. In extension, amidst

world conflicts, African states, and the continent at large, will need to re-envision its strategic position through strong solidarity.

African States on Conflicts and Refugees: Re-envisioned collaboration

In the face of world crises, Africa remains vulnerable in many ways. Neither economic, political, education nor healthcare systems are spared. The most vulnerable population, refugees inclusive, bear the consequences of these impacts. They cannot sustain their daily livelihoods, support child education, and access to proper medical care. These challenges, amidst the Russia-Ukraine war, could also be increased by protracted internal conflicts within African states. As such, the pressure on humanitarian institution and other organisations to support affected communities is increased. In the face of the Russia-Ukraine war therefore, Africa is challenged to re-envision its future with more purposeful collaborative actions. This will help to devise mechanisms that support solidarity among states and institutions in situations of world crises. This will be difficult to achieve unless the following challenges are addressed:

Addressing Internal Conflicts

From the Sahel region, the horn of Africa, Central, and down to Southern Africa, internal conflicts have destabilized the economic functioning. This has left the delivery of services such as livelihood, education, and healthcare difficult. In anticipation to the Russia-Ukraine war, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) Report of December 2021 gave a glimpse of wars to watch in Africa for the year 2022. The report indicated that "Libya, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Northern Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Cameroon's north-west and south-west regions are six African conflict hotbeds to watch in 2022" (ISS: 2021). The report called for urgent action to avoid disaster in Africa's worst-affected countries (ISS, 2021). The Russia-Ukraine war may not necessary be the direct consequence to the escalation of Africa's internal conflicts. However, its economic and political impacts, have the potential to escalate them and limit service delivery. Therefore, a purposeful action, among political actors and regional bodies such as the African Union (AU), will have to prioritize social solidarity and elite collaboration, as embodied in the African ethos of ubuntu, to resolve internal conflicts. This will reduce displacements of refugees. Thus, making receiving countries and humanitarian support to refugee settlement less burdened in the context of other world crises such as the war in Ukraine.

Social solidarity and functional interdependence

The support received from international organisations such as the UNHCR, EU, and other humanitarian institutions has helped refugee in many ways. The AU has also regional frameworks such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – 1969 Convention Governing

Specific Aspects of Refugee Problem in Africa, the Kampala Convention (African Union, 2012), and many other Refugee Response Frameworks for regional bodies and member states. For example, the Intergovernmental Organisation on Development (IGAD) (2017) has come up with the Djibouti Plan of Action on Refugee Education in IGAD member states. One that intends to strengthen collective responsibility on the education of refugees and host communities. The Comprehensive Refugee Response Frameworks that various countries are implementing, paves way for more strengthened efforts to the protection and management of displaced persons in the spirit of solidarity.

It is cognisant that African countries are generally generous, tolerant, and have open-door policy to asylum seekers and refugee (Directorate of Information and Communication: 2019). Throughout history, many countries on the continent have shown the capacity to offer refugees “access to natural resources, make use of institutions such as schools, hospitals, clinics, and universities” (p. 14). This in a way, has helped to share the burden of responding and caring for forcibly displaced persons in Africa.

Despite these efforts, Africa through the spirit of social solidarity and interdependence, would need to take charge of the management of refugees on the continent. The UNHCR has remained instrumental in Africa and its efforts cannot be undermined. However, looking at world trends such as pandemics and wars, that affects refugees in many ways, there is need for the AU to come up with a refugee commission – an organ that would be sanctioned, funded, and supported by member states, and cooperate with other international organisations in the management of displaced persons. By so doing, African will have a definitive cause of action whenever world crises threaten economic, political, and social life of refugees.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, it is observable that the Russia-Ukraine war has consequences on the refugees in Africa. while these consequences may not be directly felt, there are significant ramifications on the life of refugees that could arise from the economic impact necessitated by the crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic already made the world economic setbacks. Most countries including the LDCs – who participate in hosting refugee, are likely to have a long stretch of years for economic recovery. The war in Ukraine will contribute to this phenomenon. As a result, important services such as sustainable livelihoods, education, and healthcare in the refugee management system will experience interruptions.

Since the war has created millions of refugees, the efforts to manage world refugees is likely to be divided. Substantive funds will be needed to support refugees from Ukraine. This will cause other institutions supporting refugees in Africa face divided efforts as they would wish to support those created from the crisis in Ukraine. The world economic status is also stressed. This is also likely

to reduce the support given to humanitarian actors by other economic institutions and states. This is because countries and other institutions would be watching world economic trends and align their financial operations to meet economic uncertainties in the world.

It could therefore be deduced that countries in Africa and institutions managing refugee will be burdened. Refugees whose livelihoods were improving through various economic resilient activities such as small-scale farming and business, would be hampered by the consequences of the war. Other internal conflicts on the continent will also continue affecting and creating new problems to the life of refugees. For a more strengthened efforts, firstly, there is need to address internal conflicts in Africa through elite-collaboration and prioritising cooperate co-existence and acknowledging the need for interdependence. Secondly, at the AU level, using existing frameworks and policies governing issues relating to refugees, there is need to promote “re-envisioned collaboration” in the form of institutional and functional unity. This could be possible by instituting a commission for the management of forcibly displaced persons in Africa. It is true that African states have been generous, tolerant, and open to refugees. However, these efforts are limited by lack of a definite institution for the management of refugees at the AU. Just as there is “The African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR)”, Africa, through the AU, would need to take charge of refugees in Africa by establishing a commission for refugees that will further partner with other bodies such as the UNHCR and humanitarian agencies. This will re-invigorate the solidarity spirit embedded in ubuntu and inspire a solid support for refugees and other displaced persons on the continent.

REFERENCE

- 1950 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, paras. 8(c) & (b), 9 and 10. <https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c39e1.pdf>.
- Address by the President of the Russian Federation. (24th February 2022). Office of the President of the Russian Federation. (Official English Translation, as Published by the Kremlin) <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67843>. Обращение Президента Российской Федерации, Президент России (24 февраля 2022 года) <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843> (original Russian text, as published by the Kremlin).
- African Union. (2012). Kampala Convention: African union convention for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons in Africa. https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36846-treaty-kampala_convention.pdf.
- BBC. (2022). Ukraine conflict: what is Nato and how can Finland and Sweden Join? *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18023383>.
- BBC. (2022). Ukraine crisis: US rejects Russian demands to bar Ukraine from NATO. *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18023383>.

- bbc.com/news/world-europe-60145159.
- Bose, S. P. (2022). The shifting landscape of the international resettlement: Canada, the US and Syrian Refugees. *Geopolitical*, 27(2), pp. 375-401.
- Charter of the United Nations and statute of the international court of Justice. (1945). Chapter 1, article 2(4). <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/uncharter.pdf>.
- Directorate of Information and Communication. (2019). Perspectives from Mr. Cosmas Chanda. AUECHO, Anula Magazine. https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/37555-doc-auecho_2019_digital.pdf.
- Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid. (17th January 2022). EU at the forefront of global humanitarian response: 1.5 billion Euros for 2022. European Commission.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (2022). Response to the Ukraine crisis: Social protection for food security and nutrition. <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9448en/cb9448en.pdf>.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (2022). The importance of Ukraine and Russian Federation for global agriculture markets and the risks associated with the current conflict. https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/2022/Info-Note-Ukraine-Russian-Federation.pdf.
- Gade, C. N. B. (2012). What is ubuntu? different interpretations among Southern Africans of African descent. *Southern Africa Journal of Philosophy*, 31, pp. 485-503.
- Global Geopolitical Lead. (2022). The geopolitical impact of the war in Ukraine. KPMG International. <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2022/03/russia-ukraine-geopolitical-impact.pdf>.
- Gofman, A. (2014). Durkheim's theory of social solidarity and social rules. In Jeffries, V. (ed) *The Palgrave Handbook of Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 45-70.
- Green, A. J., Henderson, C., and Ruy, T. (2022). Russia's attack on Ukraine and the jus ad bellum. *Journal on the use of Force and International Law*, 9(1), 4-30.
- Guénette, D. J., Kenworthy, P., and Wheeler, C. (2022). Implication of the war in Ukraine for the global economy. World Bank Group – Equitable Growth, Finance and Institution Brief Policy
- Hague, A. A. (2022). Symposium on Ukraine and the international order: an unlawful war. *Ajil Unbound*, vol 116, pp. 155-159.
- Henrikson, K. A. (2022). The trauma of territorial break-up: the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its international management – geopolitical strategy and diplomatic therapy. *Geopolítica(s)*, 13(1), pp. 11-36.
- Horst, C. (2006). Refugee livelihoods: continuity and transformations. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 25(2), pp. 6-22.
- Institute for Economics and Peace. (2022). *Ukraine Russia crisis*. <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Ukraine-Russia-Terrorism-Briefing-web.pdf>.
- Institute for Security Studies. (2021). African conflicts to watch in 2022. PSC Report. <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/african-conflicts-to-watch-in-2022>.
- Intergovernmental Organisation on Development. (2017). Djibouti Plan of Action on Refugee Education in IGAD member states. <https://igad.int/download/djibouti-plan-of-action-on-refugee-education-in-the-igad-member-states/>.
- Islam, M., Barman, A., Khan, I. M., Gobinda, G., Siddigi, B., and Mukul, A. S. (2022). Sustainable livelihood for displaced Rohingya and their resilience at Bhashan Char in Bangladesh. *Sustainability*, 14 (6374), pp. 1-14.
- Jacobsen, K., and Fratzke, S. (2022). Building livelihood opportunities for refugee population: lessons from past practices. Migration Washington, DC; Migration Policy Institution.
- Lava, G. A. S., Luca, D., Milani, P. G., Leroy, P., Ritz, N., and Winter, P. (2022). Please stop Russian – Ukrainian War – children will be more than grateful. *European Journal of Paediatrics*, 180, pp. 2183-2185.
- Liadze, I., Macchiarelli, C., Martimer-Lee, P., and Juanino, S. P. (2022). The economic impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. National Institute of Economic and Social Research – Policy paper 32. <https://www.niesr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/PP32-Economic-Costs-Russia-Ukraine.pdf>.
- Mbiti, J. (1969). African Religion and Philosophy. Heinemann
- Mwansa, R. (2022). Relational implication of education on socio-economic integration of refugees in Zambia: a case of Mantapala. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 12, pp. 276-298.
- Oleribe, O. O., Monoh, B., Uzochukwu, S. C. F., Adebisi, A., Williams, R., and Robinson, T. D. S. (2019). Identifying key challenges facing healthcare systems in Africa and potential solutions. *International Journal of General Medicine*, 12, pp. 395-403.
- Organisation of African Unity. (1969). Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36400-treaty-0005_-_oau_convention_governing_the_specific_aspects_of_refugee_problems_in_africa_e.pdf.
- Reevel, P. (2022). Russia makes sweeping demands for security guarantees from US amidst Ukrain tensions. ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/International/russia-makes-sweeping-demands-security-guarantees-us-amid/story?id=81821816>.
- Riaz, M. M. A., Ahmed, U., and Moham, A. (2021). Global impacts of vaccine nationalism during COVID-19 pandemic. *Tropical Medicine and Health*, 49(101).
- Roth, A. (2021). Russia issues list of demands it says must be met to lower tensions in Europe. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/17/russia-issues-list-demands-tensions-europe-ukraine-nato>.

- Russel, M. (2022). Europeans sanctions and Russia: what are they? Do they work? European Parliament Research Service. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2022/698930/EPRS_IDA\(2022\)698930_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2022/698930/EPRS_IDA(2022)698930_EN.pdf).
- Sefied, K. (2022). The Report brief. UNHCR. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugeebrief/latest-issues/>.
- The World Bank Group. (2022). Finance for an equitable recovery: World Development Report. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/36883/9781464817304.pdf>.
- United Nations Development Program. (2022). The development impact of the war in Ukraine: Initial projections. <https://www.undp.org/publications/development-impact-war-ukraine-initial-projections>.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (2020). How many students are at risk of not returning to school? Advocacy paper. UNESCO COVID-19 Educational Response. <https://rb.gy/>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). Refugee education 2030: A strategy for refugee inclusion. <https://www.unhcr.org/5d651da88d7.pdf>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). Refugee education 2030: a strategy for refugee inclusion. <https://www.unhcr.org/5d651da88d7.pdf>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2021). UNHCR's Refugee Population Statistics Database. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022) Africa. <https://www.unhcr.org/africa.html>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022). Introduction to Cash-base intervention. <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/515a959e9.pdf>.
- United Nations. (2016). Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. A/RES/70/1. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.
- United Nations. (2016). Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, A/RES/70/1. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.
- United Nations. (2022). Humanitarians seek \$ 2.25 billion for Ukraine response. *UN News – Global Perspective Human Stories*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1116882>.
- United Nations. (2022). The UN and the war in Ukraine: Key information. United Nations in Western Europe. <https://unric.org/en/the-un-and-the-war-in-ukraine-key-information/>.
- United Nations. (2022). Ukraine: \$1.7 billion appeal launched to help refugee exodus, host countries. *UN News – Global Perspective Human Stories*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1113052>.
- Uwishema, O., Sujanamulk, B., Abbass, M., Fawaz, R., Javed, A., Aboudib, K., Mohmoud, A., Oluymisi, A., and Onyeaka, A. (2022). Russia-Ukraine conflict and COVID-19: a double burden for Ukraine's healthcare system and a concern for global citizens. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, pp. 1-3. <https://pmj.bmj.com/content/postgradmedj/early/2022/06/01/postgradmedj-2022-141895.full.pdf>.
- World Bank Group. (2022). War in the Region: Europe and Central Asia Economic Update. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/europe-and-central-asia-economic-update>.
- World Food Program. (2022). World Food Program set to assist people affected by the conflict in Ukraine. <https://www.wfp.org/stories/world-food-programme-set-assist-thousands-refugees-ukraine>.
- World Health Organisation. (2022). Report on the strategic response to COVID-19 in the WHO African region. <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/354543/023-WHO-AFRO-SPRP-COVID-19-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.
- Zambakari, C. (2022) Warforetold: Ukraine crisis, 30 years in the making. The Zambakari Advisory. <https://rb.gy/8zyshgrb>.