

MONTHLY DISPLACEMENT REPORT

February 2025



CRISIS ANALYSIS
DR CONGO



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Displacement trends in February 2025

- There was a drop in displacement in February 2025 compared with the previous month, with a recorded 158,615 displaced households in the five provinces of eastern DRC.
- The M23 continued its offensives in North and South Kivu, leading to major population movement. In South Kivu, the M23 took control of several towns, including Bukavu (16 February), Walungu centre (25 February) and Mwenga centre (3 March).
- The M23 crisis has significantly affected populations in the provinces of North and South Kivu, with movement of 65,540 and 59,547 households respectively, followed by Ituri (21,948 households) and Tanganyika (8,600). No displacement was reported in Maniema in February.
- The majority of movement in North Kivu were returns (63%) following the opening up of the RN2 routes (Goma-Sake; Goma-Kibumba) and the evacuation of IDP camps around Goma in January.
- Other displacement was caused by violent activity, in South Kivu by the Ebuella Mai-Mai in Fizi and by the Gumino-Twirwaneho in Mwenga, in Ituri by CODECO-URDPC and Zaire combatants in Djugu and Mahagi and by the ADF in Mambasa.

Note: all visuals are produced by CAT-DRC using data from UNOCHA displacement alerts, the Event Horizon Tool (EH Tool).



Overview of displacement

In February 2025, 158,615 displaced households were registered in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a fall of 54% compared with the previous month. The province of North Kivu was the most affected in terms of the movement of populations, hosting 65,540 households, followed by South Kivu (59,547 households), Ituri (21,948 households) and Tanganyika (8,600 households). While there was a sharp fall in displacement in North Kivu (-70%) and South Kivu (-49%), Tanganyika saw a marked increase, from 500 displaced households in January to 8,600 in February. Unlike January, when no movements were reported in Ituri, 21,948 newly displaced households were recorded. No displacement was recorded in Maniema in February.

The territories of Rutshuru, Nyiragongo and Lubero (North Kivu) and Kalehe (South Kivu) are home to the largest number of households that moved and/or returned between November 2024 and February 2025 (Map 1). Displacement was mainly linked to offensives by the M23,¹ ADF and Mai-Mai.

The M23 crisis remained the main cause of displacement in February 2025, with almost 74,123 households forced to flee in the territories of Kabare, Kalehe and Uvira (South Kivu), Rutshuru and Walikale (North Kivu) and Kalemie (Tanganyika). This figure, which is still provisional and probably underestimated, represents half as much movement as in January 2025.

In North Kivu, returns account for 63% of movements, mainly in Masisi territory. This trend can be explained by the reopening of roads on Route Nationale (RN) 2, in particular the Sake-Mubambiro-Goma and Kibumba-Goma sections after the fall of Goma, and by the evacuation and dismantling of IDP camps around the city. These returns continue.

In South Kivu, the primary recorded displacement was in Uvira territory (25,619 households), as a result of clashes between Wazalendo combatants and the FARDC, as well as fighting between the M23 and the FARDC in the Ruzizi plain. The M23's advance towards Walungu and Mwenga continues to cause new displacement, which is still being assessed.

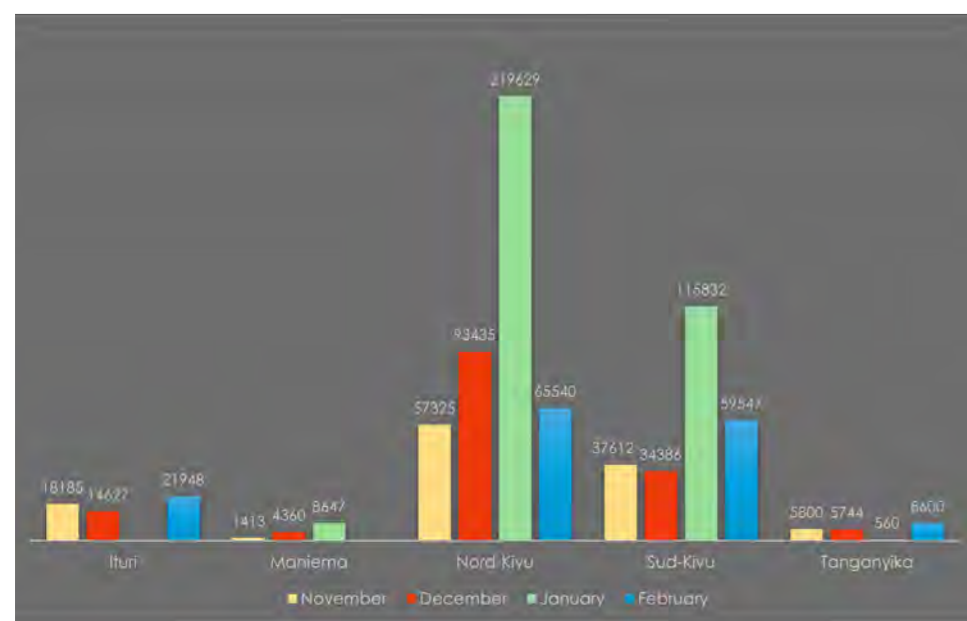
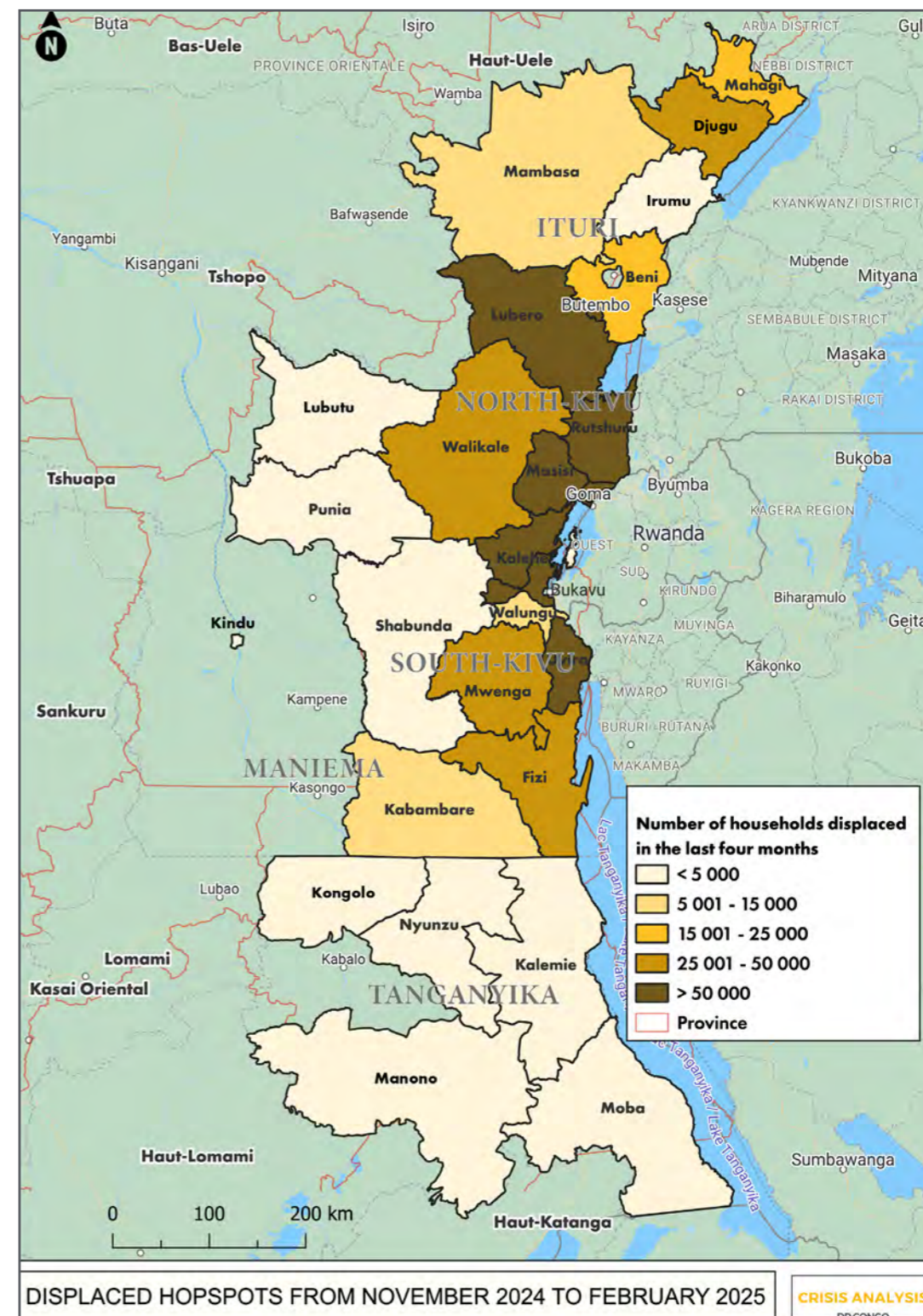


Figure 1. Displacement trends over the last four months by destination province (November to February 2025).

¹ Acronyms and descriptions of the armed groups are expanded at the end of the report.

In Ituri, after a relative lull in January, the situation deteriorated again in February. Almost 21,948 households were displaced, particularly in the Mahagi and Djugu territories, due to the activism of the CODECO-URDPC and Zaire armed groups, as well as attacks by the ADF in Mambasa. These new displacements illustrate the continuing volatility of the security situation in the province.

Across all the territories affected by the crises in February, 51% of the movement recorded (81,563 households) were new displacements, while 23% were repeat displacements and 27% returns. At the end of the month, 46 alerts had been reported, three of which were the subject of detailed humanitarian needs assessments, according to the OCHA EH Tool, covering around 10% of households displaced over the period.



Map 1. Displacement hotspots in eastern DRC, November 2024 to February 2025.

Ituri province

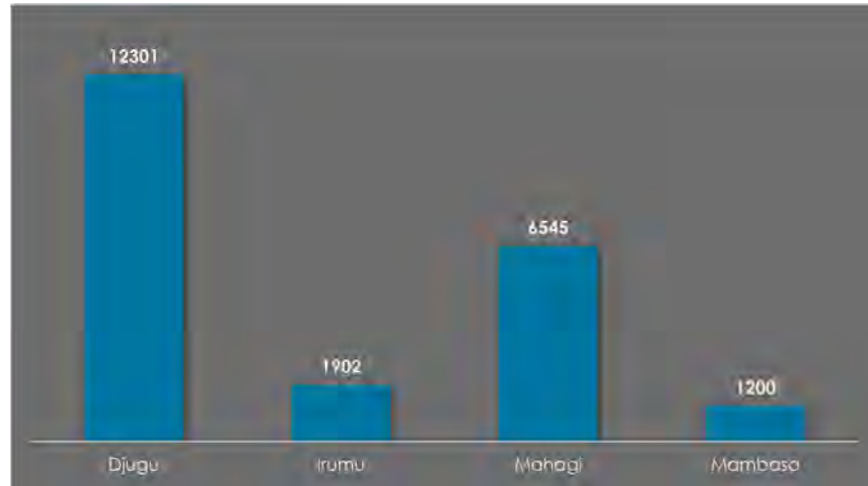
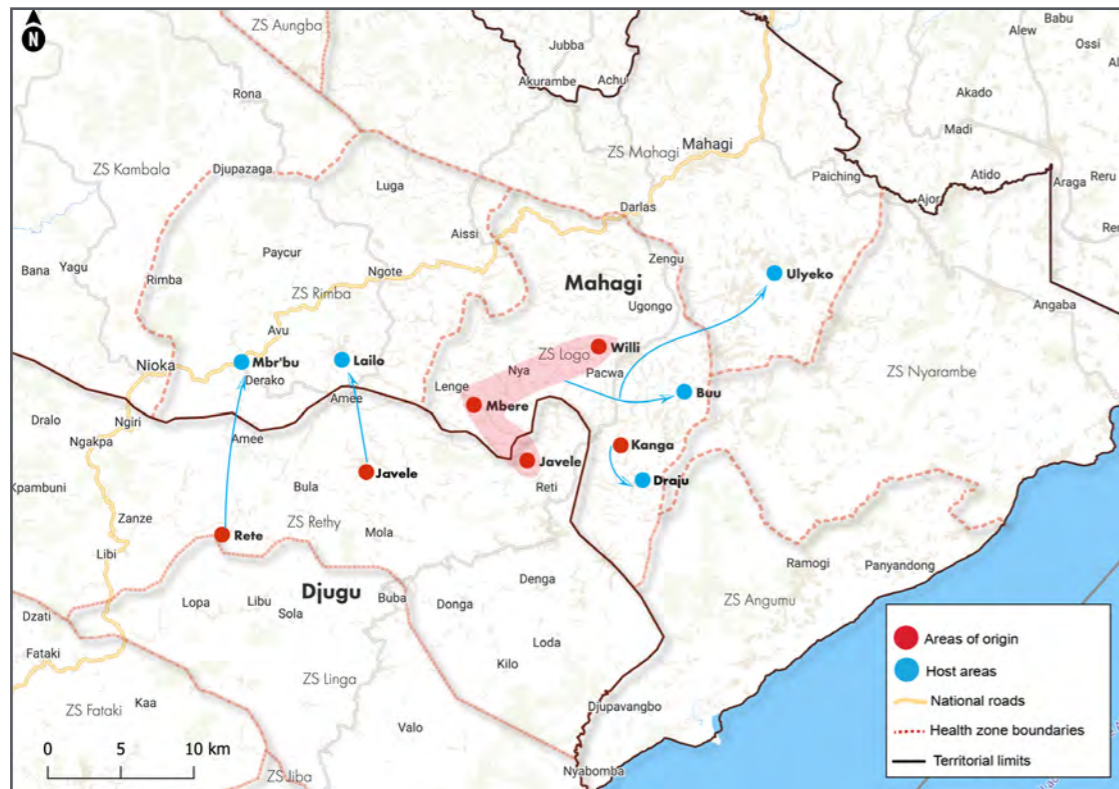


Figure 2. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Ituri province.

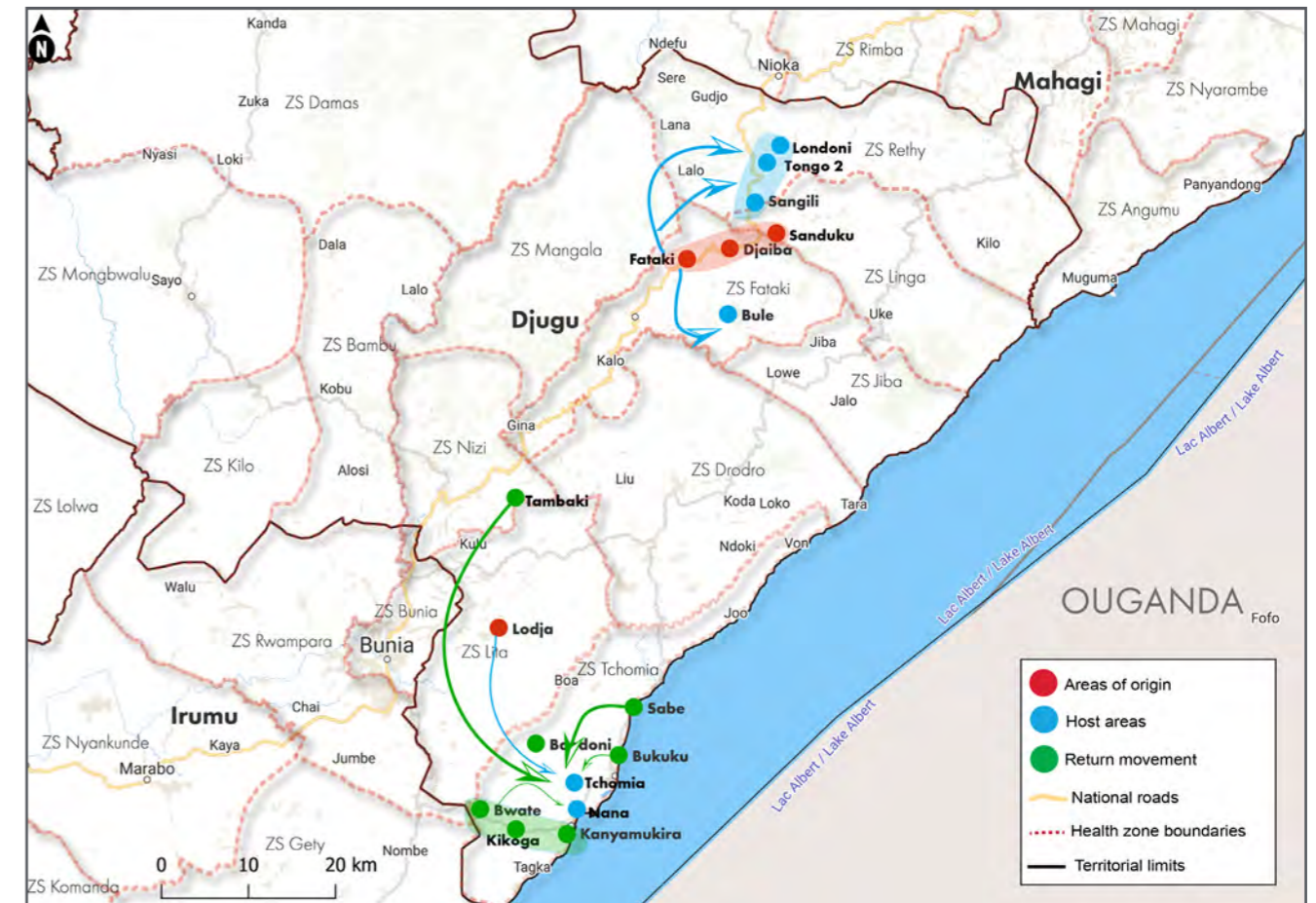
Mahagi territory

In February, a recorded 6,545 households were displaced in Mahagi territory, between the Rimba health zone (3,389 households) and the Logo health zone (3,156 households). This recent displacement was the result of clashes between two factions of the CODECO-URPDC in central Bali, Rete and Javele (Rethy health zone in Djugu territory) and an attack by the CODECO-URDPC against civilians in Mbere (Logo health zone in Mahagi territory). These displaced people were taken in by host families and public sites (schools and churches).



Map 2. Movement of populations in Mahagi territory, February 2025.

Djugu territory



Map 3. Movement of populations in Djugu territory, February 2025.

A total of 12,301 households were displaced in the health zones of Fataki (1,015 households), Rethy (4,454 households) and Tchomia (6,832 households). These population movements included 8,853 newly displaced households and 3,448 households returning from Uganda, Mahagi territory (Angumu and Nyarambe health zones) and the interior of the Tchomia health zone. These newly displaced populations were fleeing attacks by the CODECO-URDPC against civilians, as well as the threat of an attack by the Zaire armed group in reprisal for incursions by CODECO into the Djaiba site and the villages of Lindu and Lodja (Djaiba groupement, Bahema Badjere chiefdom).

In addition, returns to Uganda, in Mahagi territory and inside Djugu territory, were encouraged by an observed lull in fighting in Tchomia and by a return awareness campaign run by local authorities.²

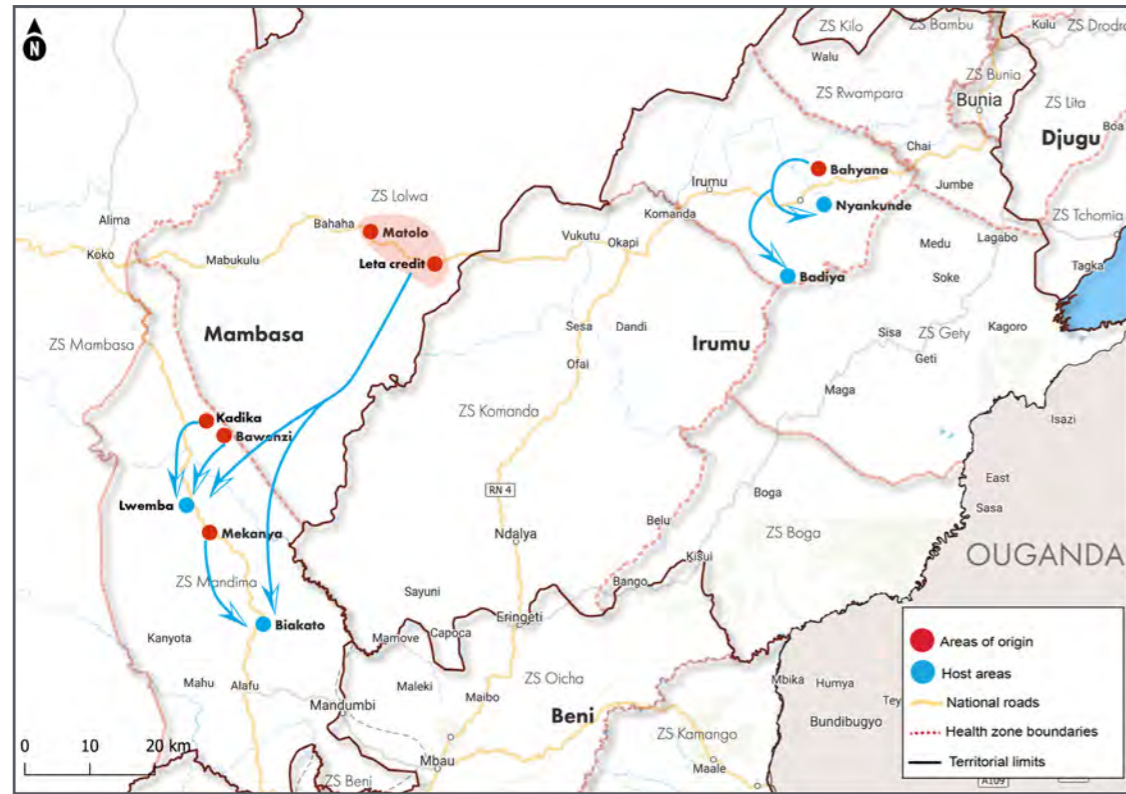
Irumu territory

A recorded 1,902 households have been displaced in Irumu territory (Map 4), specifically in the Nyakunde health zone. These new displacements are the result of clashes between two Mai-Mai factions (Hérode and Saddam) in the Bahyana groupement. These displaced people have been taken in by host families in Badiya and Nyakunde.

² EH Tools, alert of 21 November 2024

Mambasa territory

Attacks by the ADF on civilians in the Lolwa health zone have displaced 1,200 households in the Mandima health zone in Mambasa territory. These displaced people are living with host families in Lwemba and Biakato centre.



Map 4. Movement of populations in Mambasa and Irumu territories, February 2025.

North Kivu Province

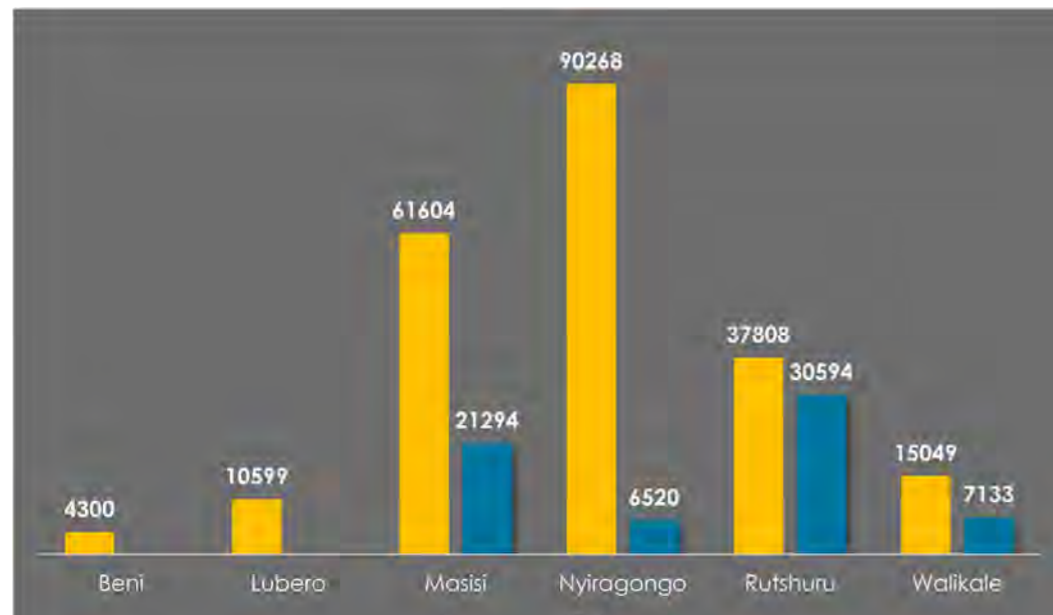


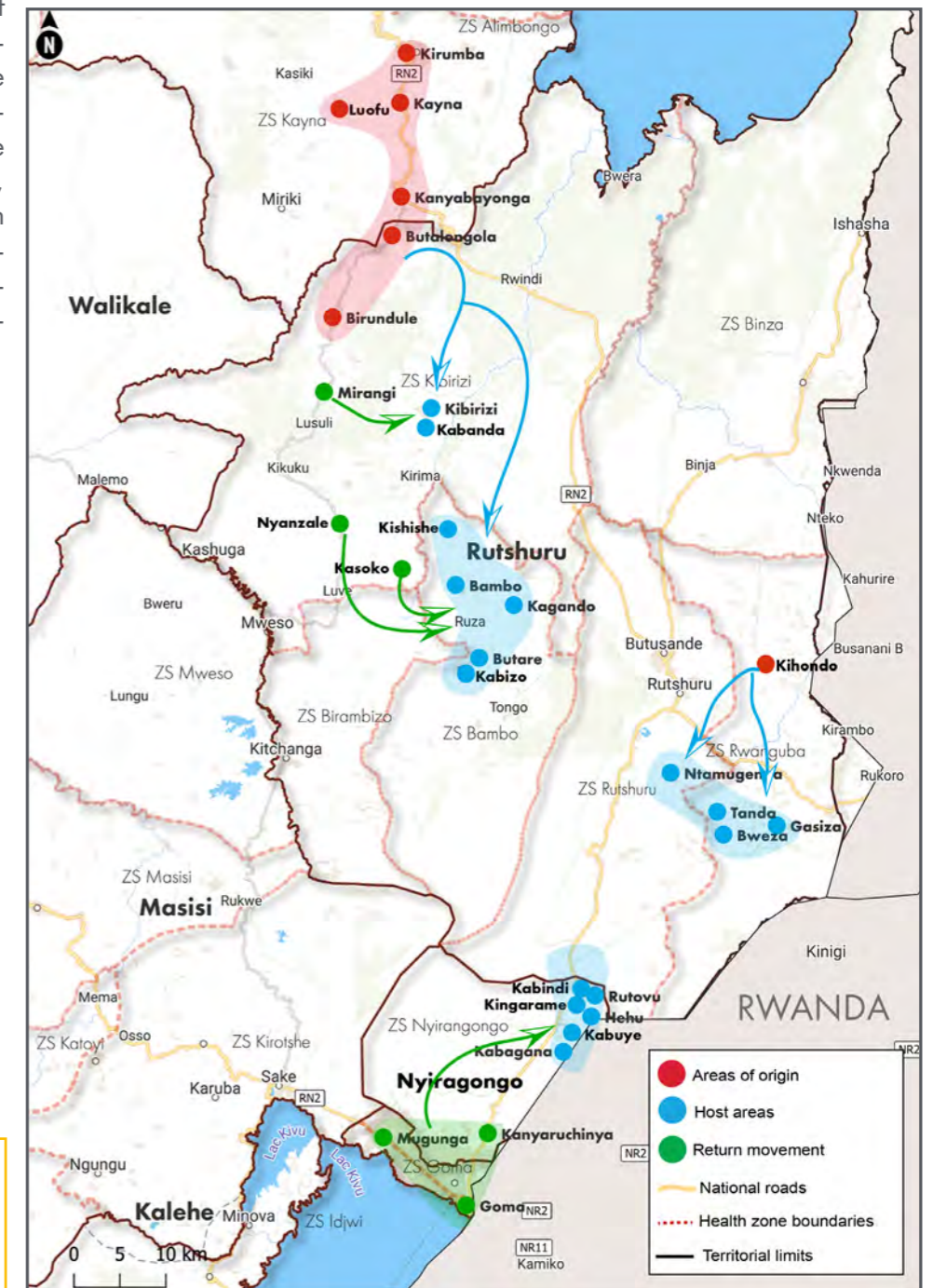
Figure 3. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in North Kivu province.

Rutshuru territory

In Rutshuru territory, the displacement of 30,594 households was reported in February (Map 5). This movement included new displacement in the Bambo health zone (4,946 households), repeated displacement in the Rwanguba health zone (15,793 households) and returns to the Bambo health zone (9,855 households). The new displacement is directly linked to clashes between the M23 and Nyatura CMC combatants in Kibirizi and Kishishe. The returns reported consist mainly of households from IDP camps around the town of Goma.

Nyirangongo territory

Around 6,520 households have returned to their places of origin (Kabindi, Kingarame, Rutovu, Hehu, Kabagana and Kabuye) in the Buhumba and Kibumba groupements in Nyirangongo territory. These people had fled to Goma at the end of January because of clashes between the M23, the FARDC and the trained Volontaires pour la Défense de le Patrie (VDP). In the end, the capture of Goma on 27 January and the opening of the RN2 on the Goma-Kibumba route facilitated their return.



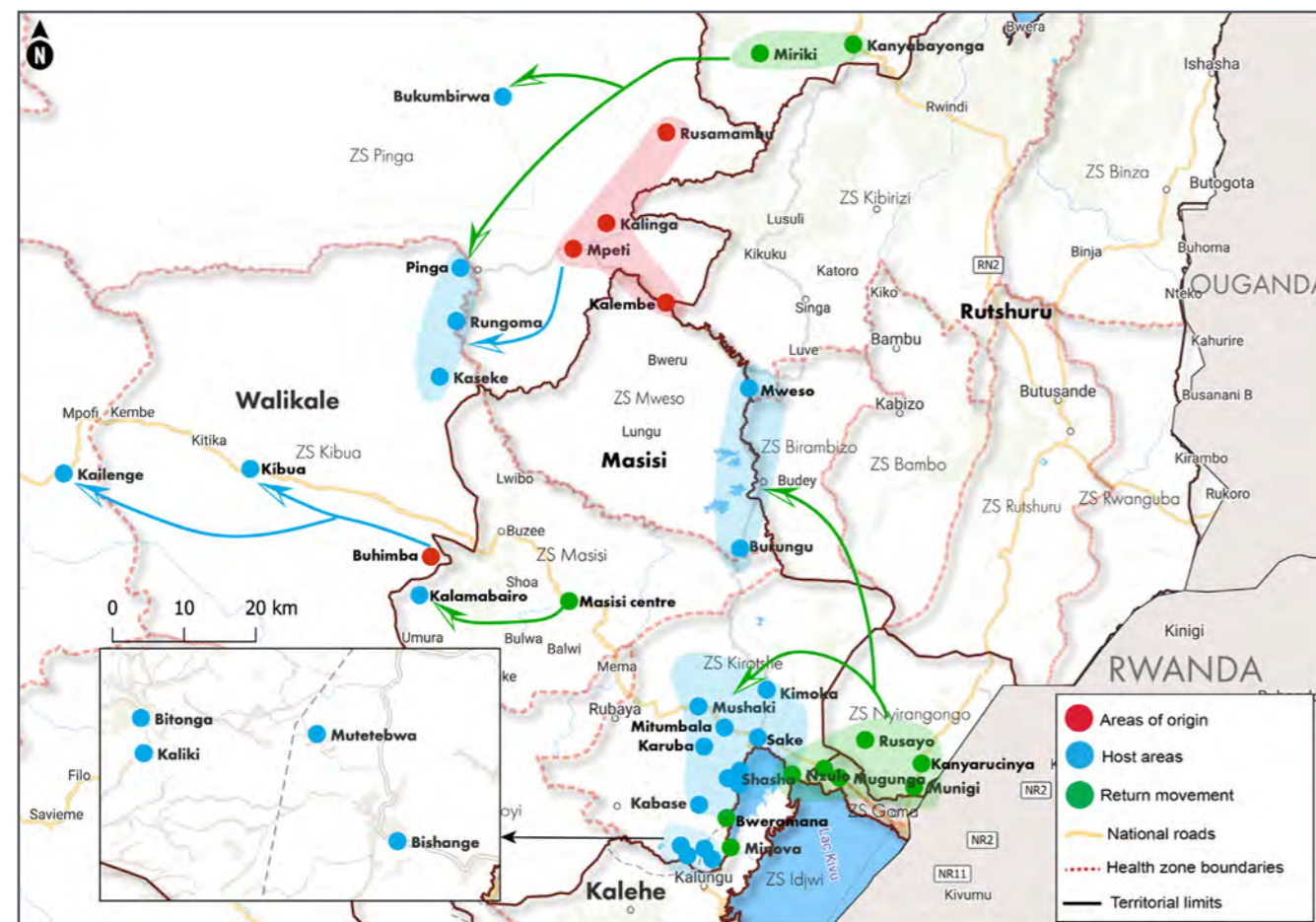
Map 5. Movement of populations in Rutshuru and Nyirangongo territories, February 2025.

Walikale territory

The movement of populations in Walikale includes 3,424 newly displaced households in the Kibua and Pinga health zones and 3,729 households that have returned to Pinga. New displacement is linked to clashes between the M23, the FARDC and Mai-Mai combatants in localities on the edge of the Masisi and Walikale territories. Recent developments show a tendency for the M23 to advance towards Walikale, while the other neighbouring territories of North Kivu are already mostly under its control (Map 6).

Masisi territory

In February, 21,294 households returned to the Kirotshe and Mweso health zones in Masisi territory. These households returned from the Goma, Nyiragongo and Kirotshe health zones, where they had been displaced by the M23 crisis. These returns were particularly motivated by the evacuation and dismantling of IDP camps around Goma (Nzulo 1 and 2, Rusayo, Mugunga, Kanyaruchinya and Munigi) and by a relative improvement in security conditions in the areas of origin. Other returns have been noted within Masisi territory, from Masisi centre to Kalamabairo.



Map 6. Movement of populations in Masisi and Walikale territories, February 2025.

South Kivu Province

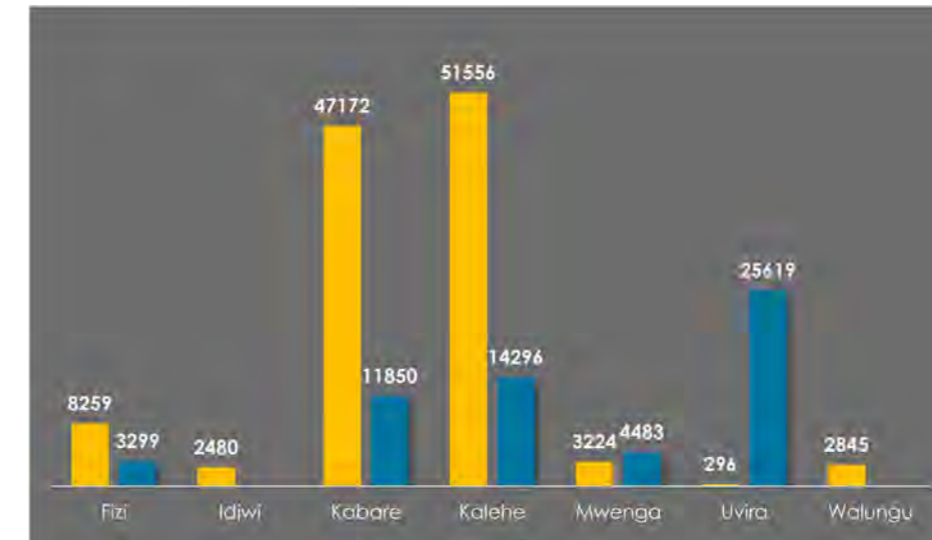
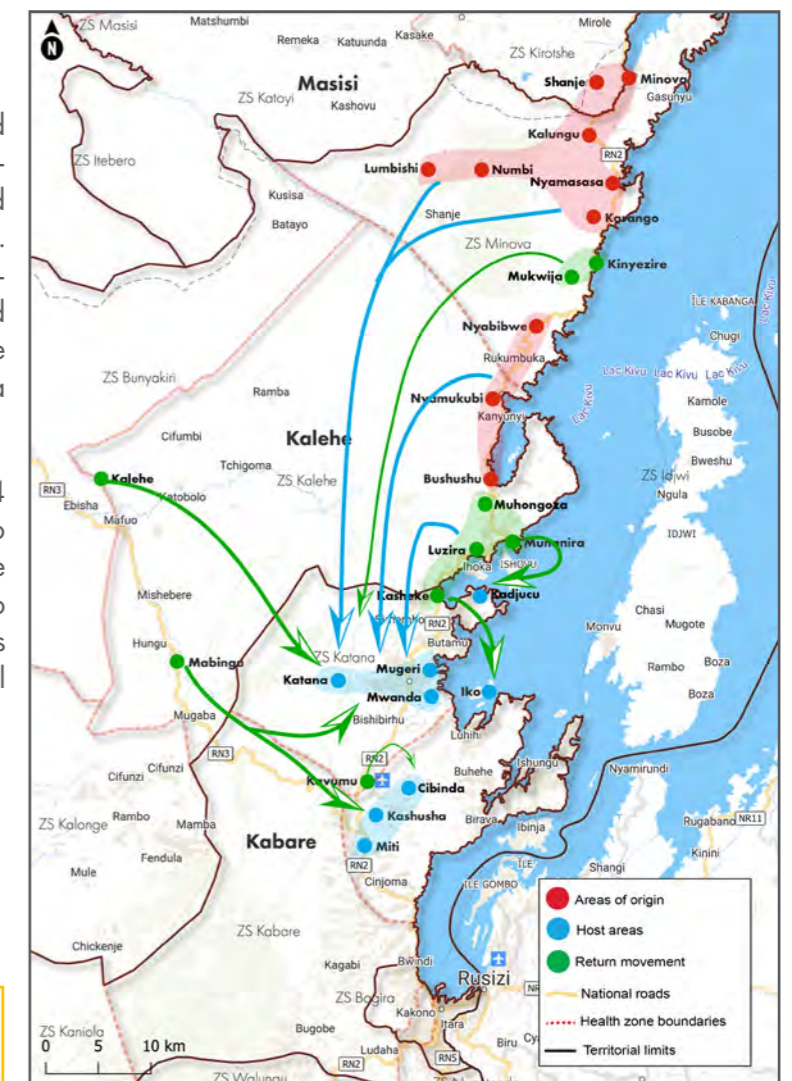


Figure 4. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in South Kivu province.

Kabare territory

A total of 11,850 households were displaced within the Katana health zone. These population movements show 8,528 newly displaced households and 3,322 return households. Between 11 and 14 February 2025, the newly displaced population fled the attacks and clashes between the FARDC supported by the VDP against the M23 in the Katana, Minova and Kalehe health zones.

Following the M23's capture of Katana on 14 February, households from the locality, who had moved to Mugeru, Kabuhwa and the parish of Mwanda for protection, began to return gradually after the city of Katana was taken over by M23 forces, following the lull observed.³

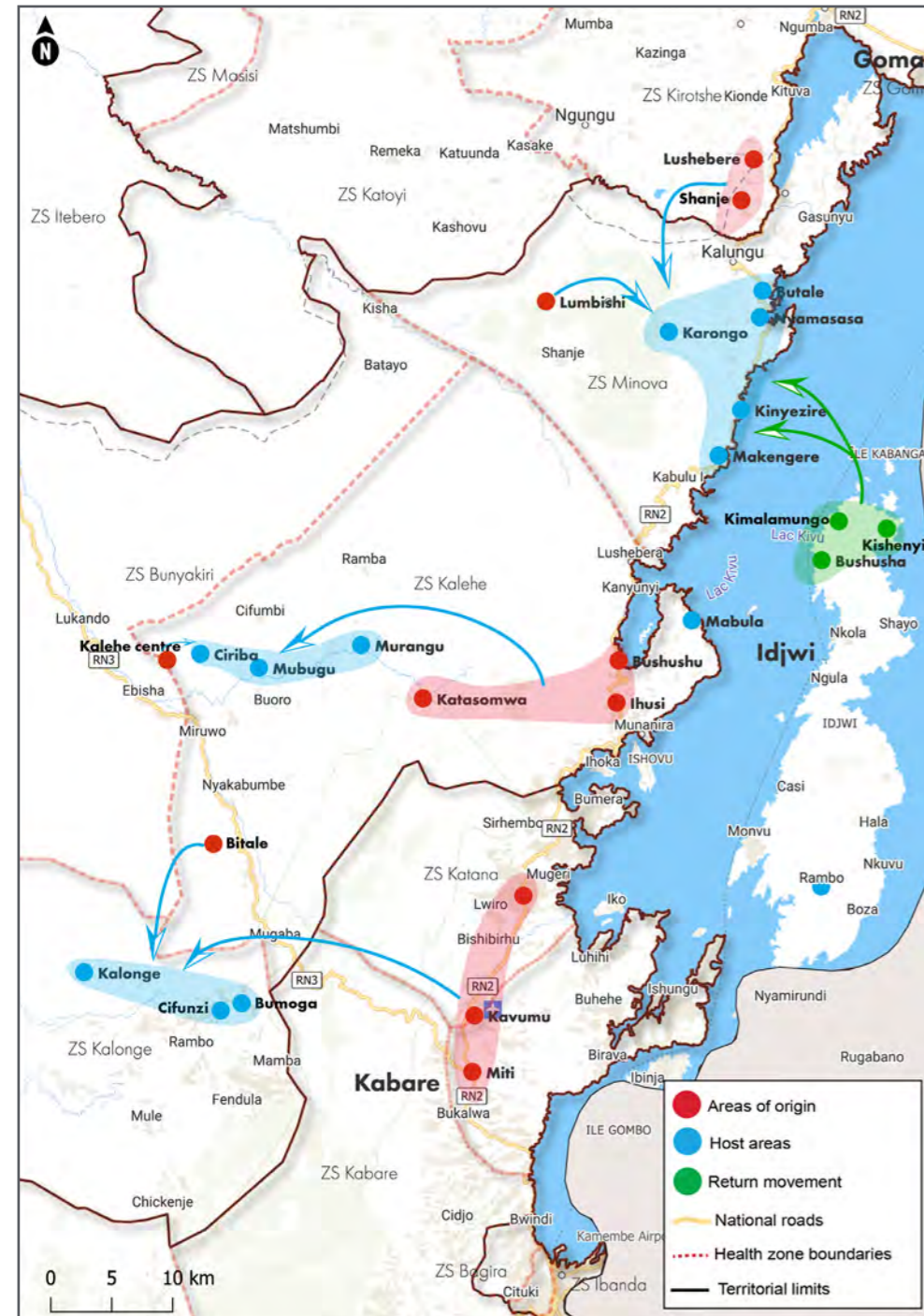


Map 7. Movement of populations in Kabare territory, February 2025.

3 EH Tools, alert of 23 February 2025

Kalehe territory

The displacement of 14,296 households was recorded in the territory of Kalehe in February (Map 8). These population movements included 10,083 newly displaced households and 1,200 returnee households. These populations are divided between the Minova health zone (8,364 households), Kalonge (2,919 households) and Bunyakiri (3,013 households). They are the result of clashes between the FARDC, supported by the VDP, and the M23. At the same time, a REACH assessment of the dynamics of displacement and needs in the Kalehe and Kabare territories shows that the majority of displaced people are with host families.⁴



Returning households are mainly motivated by a relative calm observed in the Ruhunde, Karongo, Nyamasasa and Kinyezire areas, following the M23's control of these zones.

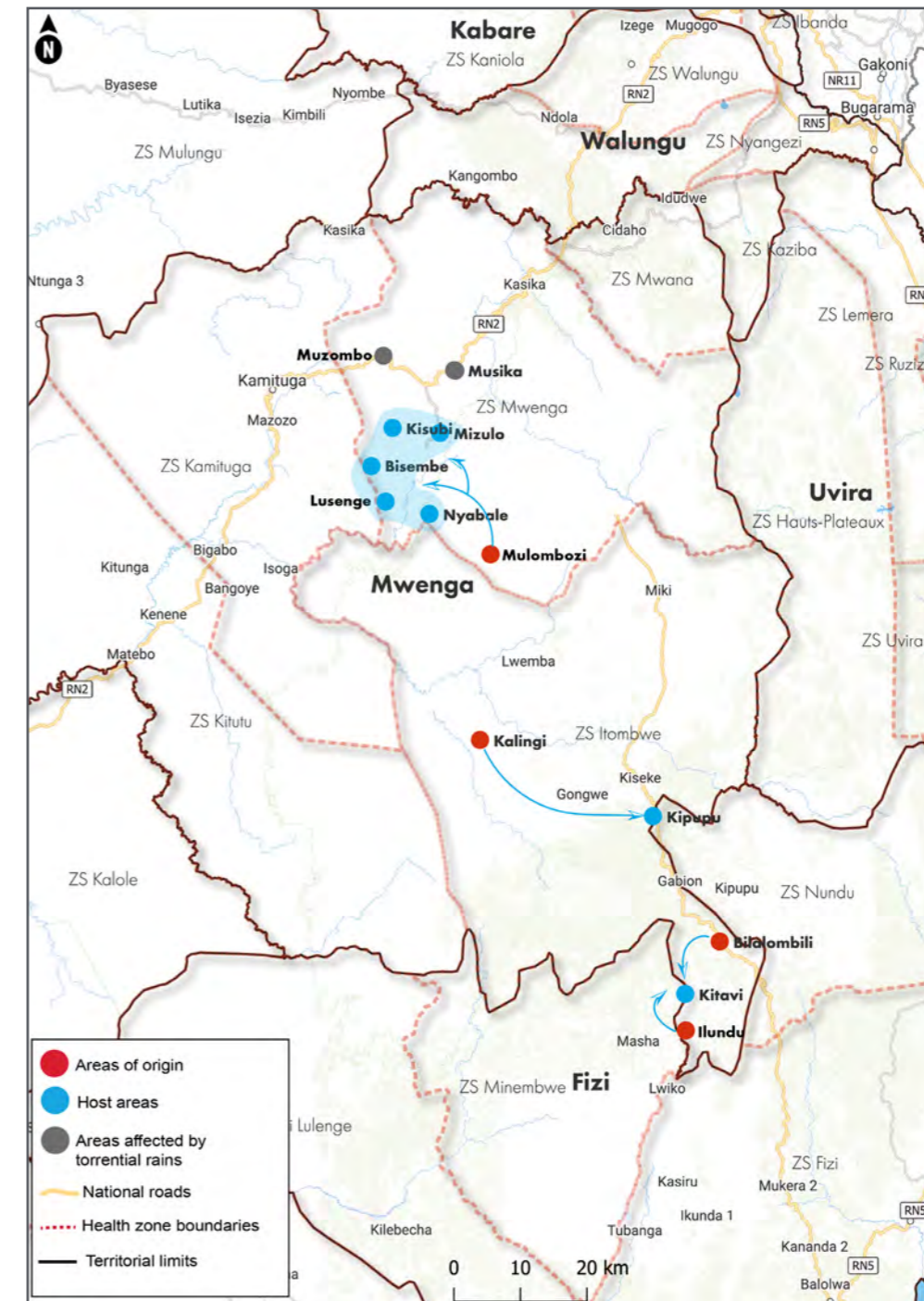
Map 8. Movement of populations in Kalehe territory, February 2025.

4 REACH DRC, Movement dynamics: Kalehe and Kabare (South Kivu) 13 - 15 February 2025

Mwenga territory

The displacement of 4,483 households was recorded in Mwenga territory in February, arriving in the Mwenga health zone (3,293 households) and the Itombwe health zone (1,190 households). These households fled clashes between the FARDC and the Gumino-Twirwaneho in Kalingi and Mukenge (Itombwe sector) and clashes between the Mai-Mai Natho and Ibanda factions against the Mai-Mai Nyakiriba in Mulombozi (Basimwenda I groupement).

In addition, 734 households were affected by torrential rain in the Bamunda and Bamulinda groupement in the Basile chiefdom. This natural disaster forced these households to move within the Mwenga health zone to households not affected by the disaster. Significant material damage, including the destruction of homes, was reported.

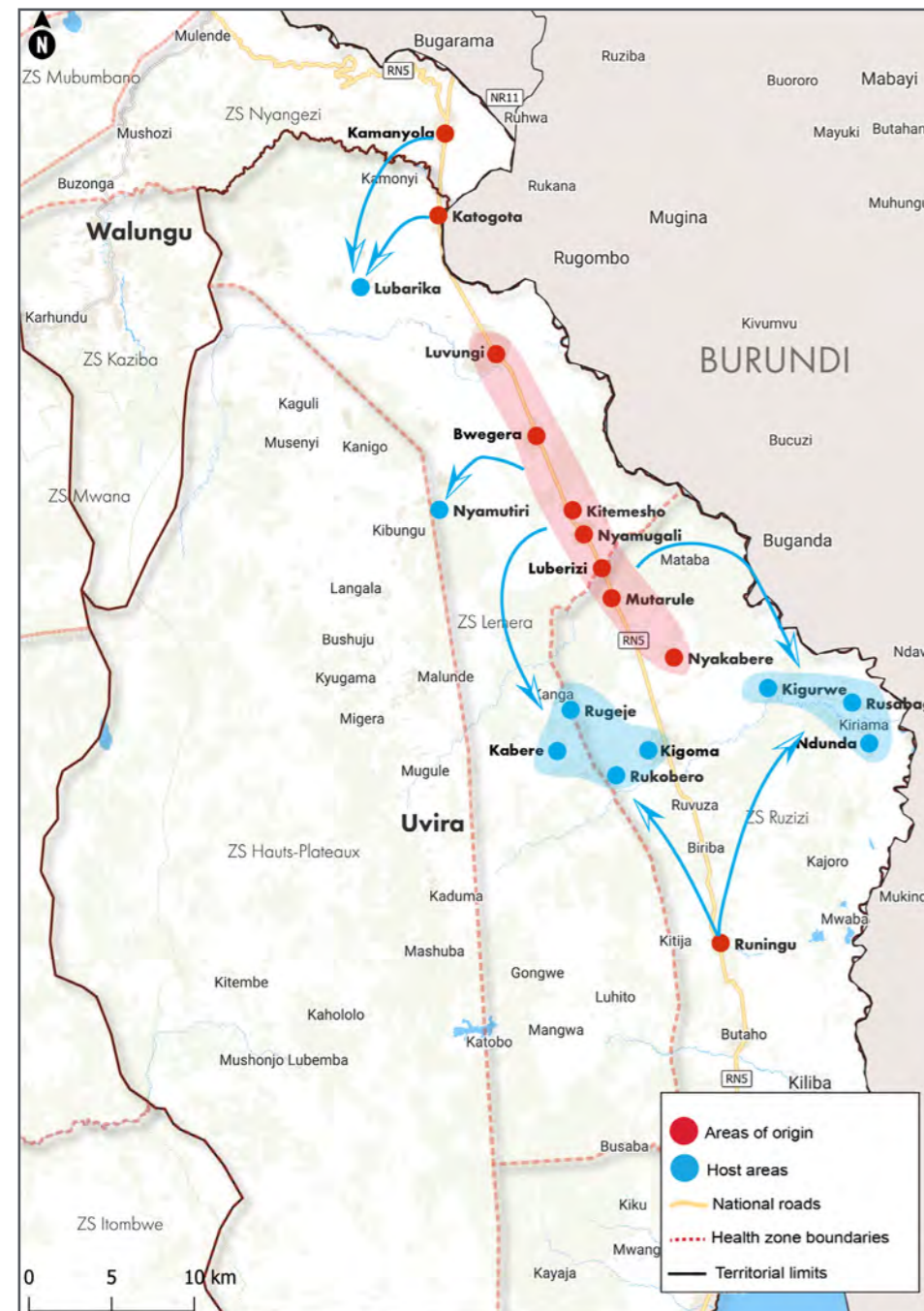


Map 9. Movement of populations in Mwenga territory, February 2025.

Uvira territory

The displacement of 25,619 households was observed in Uvira territory in February 2025, divided between the Ruzizi health zone (13,607 households) and the Lemera health zone (12,012 households). These displacements are directly linked to the clashes between the Wazalendo and the FARDC in the Ruzizi plain, which took place between 15 and 17 February 2025.

According to an assessment carried out by REACH on the dynamics of displacement and needs in Uvira territory, the majority of the displaced were taken in by host families, while others are staying in public spaces (schools, churches, etc.) or spontaneous sites.⁵ The study also indicates that some of the displaced have travelled to neighbouring Burundi; Burundian authorities reported the arrival of 10,000 people as of 17 February.



Map 10. Movement of populations in Uvira territory, February 2025.

5 REACH DRC, Movement dynamics: Nyantende, Ruzizi and Uvira (South Kivu) 17 - 19 February 2025

Fizi territory

There were a recorded 3,299 displaced households in Fizi territory. The displaced households arrived in the Minembwe (2,150 households) and Nundu (1,149 households) health zones. These displacements were attributable to three factors:

1. Clashes between the FARDC and Gumino-Twirwaneho in the Balala Nord groupement (Tanganyika sector) and Basimunyaka Sud groupement (Lulenge sector)
2. Clashes between Mai-Mai Ebuela and Gumino-Twirwaneho in the Basimunyaka Sud groupement (Lulenge sector)
3. Clashes between the Mai-Mai Masompo faction and the Mai-Mai Mayele faction in the Babungwe groupement (Tanganyika sector).

Most of these displaced people are staying with host families.⁶



Map 11. Population movement in the Fizi territories, February 2025

6 EH Tools, alert of 28 February 2025

Tanganyika Province

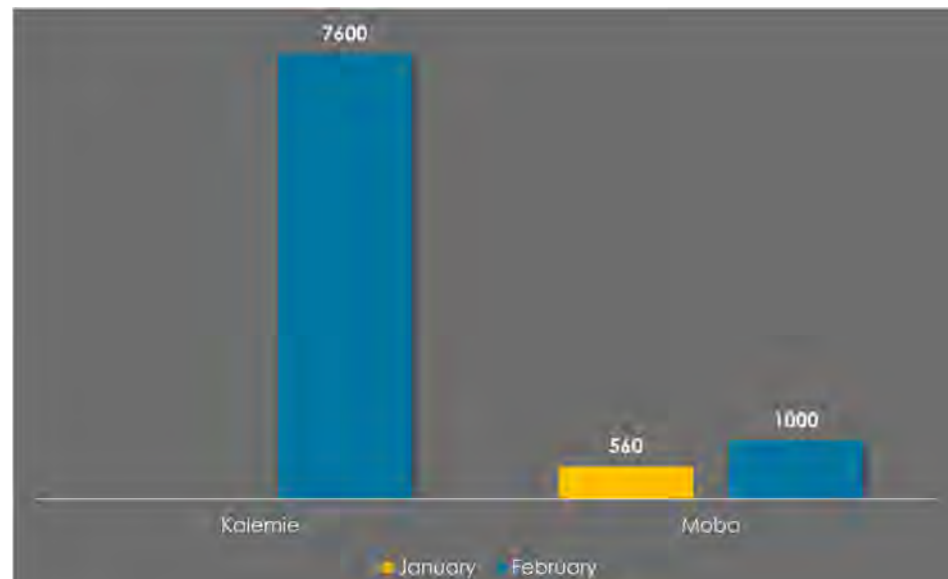


Figure 5: Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Tanganyika province.

Moba territory

In February, the movement of populations in Moba territory involved 1,000 newly displaced households within the Kansimba health zone. The recent displacement was caused by attacks on civilians by unidentified armed persons in the Mambwe locality (Kansimba health zone)

Kalemie territory

In February, a population movement of 7,600 households was reported in the Nyemba health zone, in Kalemie territory. This displacement was directly caused by the M23 crisis in South Kivu, with people fleeing the M23 advance from the Uvira and Fizi territories. They have found refuge in assembly sites and with host families along the Kalemie-Kabimba and Kalemie-Bendera routes.



Map 12. Movement of populations in the territories of Kalemie and Moba, February 2025.

Methodological approach

The researchers and analysts of the Crisis Analysis Team in the Democratic Republic of Congo (CAT-DRC) collect, triangulate and analyse information gathered from primary and secondary sources.

Every week, researchers conduct interviews with key informants to gain a better understanding of the events contributing to the humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC (violent incidents, epidemics, natural disasters, etc.) and analyse their possible impact on humanitarian operations. CAT-DRC also uses several secondary sources made available by humanitarian partners (e.g., OCHA, INSO) and the community. For this monthly report, OCHA alerts (EH Tools) mentioning displacement were used. All information undergoes a triangulation process before being analysed and disseminated. However, the information presented in this report is subject to change at the time of publication due to rapidly evolving situations in the region.

The aim of displacement analysis is to (i) document and understand new movement of populations, i.e., those which occurred during the month covered by this report, and (ii) assess and map the areas which have received the highest number of unassisted displaced persons over the last four months.

Acronyms & presentation of armed groups

ADF (Allied Democratic Forces): Founded in the 1970s as a Ugandan Islamist group opposed to the Ugandan government, they fled to the DRC in the 1990s where they were supported by President Mobutu against Uganda. They arrived in Beni territory around 1996 after the Ugandan army moved into eastern Congo to overthrow Mobutu. In 2003, they began to adopt more extremist interpretations of Islamic scripture. In April 2019, they declared themselves the Central African Wilaya under the Islamic State, along with the Islamic State branch in Mozambique.

CODECO (Coopérative de Développement Économique du Congo): An armed group active in the Djugu territory of Ituri province, made up of members of the Lendu community. The region has long been plagued by inter-community violence and tensions, mainly between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups, and rooted in earlier colonial divisions that saw land ceded to Hema pastoralists at the expense of Lendu farmers.

CODECO-URDPC (Union of Revolutionaries for the Defence of the Congolese People): The most active and prolific faction of the CODECO group. Originally formed as a self-defence group for the Lendu community, it has evolved to include broader demands, including defence against foreign aggression and the fight against the balkanisation of the DRC. The faction's strongholds include Linga, Laudjo and Godya, and its combatants often hide among civilian communities, making it difficult for the FARDC to distinguish between civilians and combatants.

EH Tool (Event Horizon Tool): A tool developed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to support humanitarian response. It is an integrated platform that contributes to humanitarian crisis management through data analysis and risk visualisation.

FARDC (Forces armées de la République Démocratique du Congo): The official armed forces of the DRC.

FPAC (Le Front populaire d'autodéfense en Ituri): Better known as Zaïre-FPAC, this is a decentralised Hema militant group operating in the DRC. It was formed in response to the expansion of CODECO and the ongoing conflict in Ituri

M23 (Mouvement du 23 mars): An armed group operating in eastern DRC, mainly in the province

of North Kivu. Founded in 2012, the group takes its name from the agreement of 23 March 2009, signed between the DRC government and the ex-rebel Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP).

MONUSCO (UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo): A peacekeeping mission established by the UN Security Council in 2010, succeeding MONUC (UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo), which was set up in 1999.

Nyatara CMC (Coalition of Movements for Change): A movement that groups together mainly Nyatara groups and Congolese Hutu militias that may have become local partners of the FDLR

OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs): Created in 1991, its mandate includes coordinating the international humanitarian response to crises, including armed conflicts, natural disasters and protracted crises.

VDP (*Volontaires pour la Défense de la Patrie*): Created to support the national armed forces (FARDC) and MONUSCO to control certain territories, which are often vast and difficult to access.

Zaire: A decentralised self-defence movement based mainly in Djugu territory in Ituri. Initially formed to protect themselves against violence by CODECO, it recruited mainly from the Hema, Mambisa, Nyali, Ndo-Okebo and Alur communities. The group, also known as the Front Populaire d'Autodéfense au Congo (FPAC) or the Mouvement d'Autodéfense Populaire de l'Ituri (MAPI), has a decentralised structure but a more or less unified military organisation, with headquarters in Nyaka, in the Bahema-Badjere chiefdom. Zaire exercises territorial control in certain areas of Djugu, imposing rebel governance and maintaining order through the use of force.

CRISIS ANALYSIS

DR CONGO

Crisis Analysis Team - DRC

We provide timely, accurate and inclusive data-based analysis to help teams and programs make informed decisions. We identify, explore, and analyze the links between socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics in crisis and conflict zones of eastern DRC. Our aim is to inform the humanitarian and development community on how to better adapt programming to the needs of the population.

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