

MONTHLY DISPLACEMENT REPORT

March 2025





04

Displacement overview

06

Ituri Province

08

North Kivu Province

10

South Kivu Province

14

Tanganyika Province

15

Maniema Province





Displacement trends, March 2025

- There was a drop in the number of displaced households in March 2025 compared with the previous month, with a total of 156,742 displaced households across the five provinces of eastern DRC.
- In North Kivu, the M23 armed group made strong gains in Walikale territory, taking several towns along the Nyabiondo-Kibua-Mpofi-Mutakato-Ishunga route.
- The provinces of South Kivu and North Kivu, because of the M23 crisis, were the most affected by displacement, with 91,788 households and 23,421 households respectively, followed by Maniema (19,900 households), Ituri (16,033 households) and Tanganyika (5,600 households).
- In South Kivu, almost half of the total recorded population movements were returns (46.7%), concentrated in the territories of Kabare (21,448 households) and Kalehe (21,476 households), made possible by a relative lull following the M23 takeover
- Other displacements in South Kivu were caused by Gumino-Twirwaneho Fizi and Mwenga fighters. In Ituri, new displacements were linked to attacks by the ADF (Irumu and Mambasa territories) and the CO-DECO and Zaire-FPAC armed groups (Djugu and Mahagi territories).
- Heavy rains caused local displacement, affecting 4,800 households in Maniema and South Kivu.

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

Displacement overview

In March 2025, 156,742 displaced households were recorded in eastern DRC, a drop compared to the previous month. The province of South Kivu was the most affected in terms of population movement, with 91,788 displaced households, followed by North Kivu (23,421 households), Maniema (19,900 households), Ituri (16,033 households) and Tanganyika (5,600 households). With the exception of Maniema all provinces recorded a drop in movement: very marked in North Kivu (-88%), moderate in Tanganyika (-35%) and relatively low in South Kivu (-20%) and Ituri (-20%). Unlike February, when no population movements were reported in Maniema, the dynamic in March was different, with 19,900 households newly displaced.

The territories of Masisi, Nyiragongo (North Kivu), Kalehe and Kabare (South Kivu) are home to the largest number of displaced persons (over 90,000 households each) who moved and/or returned between December 2024 and March 2025 (Map 1). These displacement dynamics are linked to the M23 crisis,¹ which remains the major factor causing new displacement in March 2025. According to the CCCM Cluster, on 27 March, 52 collective centres were still housing 14,339 people in Goma and the surrounding area.² In addition, 83,017 displaced people were staying with host families in Goma, while 58,973 others were staying in Nyiragongo territory.³ By March 2025, the total number of displaced people in North and South Kivu had risen to almost 1,157,090, a drop of 40% compared with December 2024.⁴

The M23 crisis forced 28,000 households to flee in the territories of Lubero, Walikale (North Kivu), Fizi, Kalehe, Kabare and Walungu (South Kivu) and towards Lubutu (Maniema). Continuing its offensives in North Kivu against the FARDC supported by the VDP, the M23 briefly took control of the capital of Walikale territory on 19 March before withdrawing. This withdrawal was presented as a gesture of good faith aimed at encouraging direct negotiations begun in Doha between the M23 and the DRC government. Elsewhere in South Kivu clashes between the Gumino-Twirwaneho armed groups, the FARDC and the Mai Mai Biloze Bishambuke have led to new displacements in the Haut-Plateaux of Fizi and Itombwe.

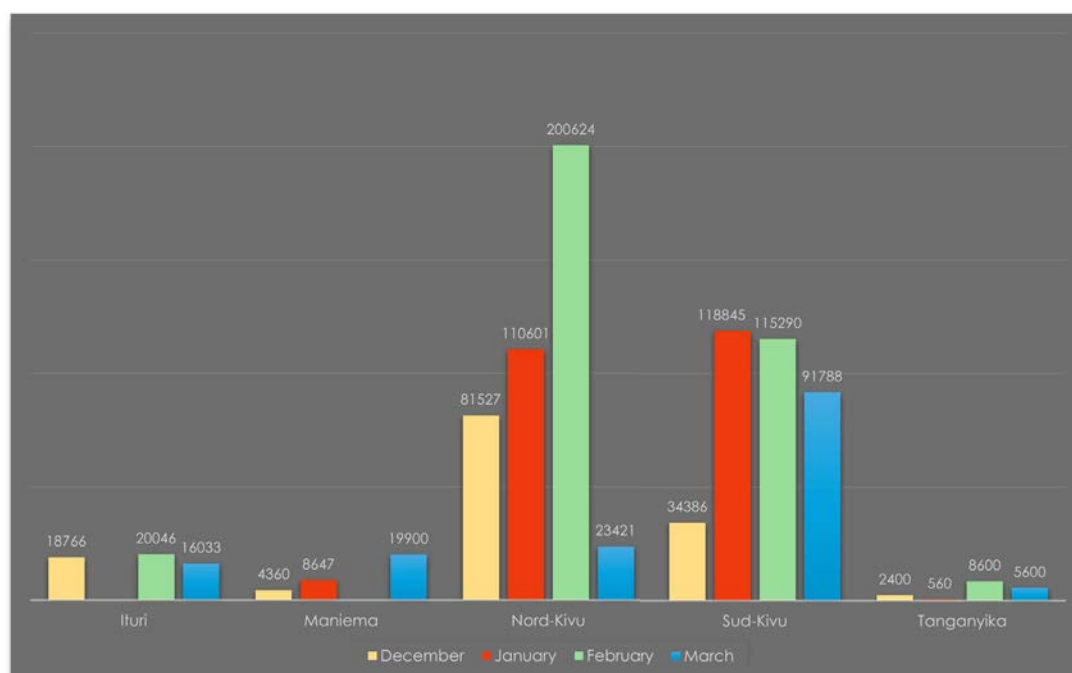


Figure 1. Number of displaced households by province of destination - December 2024 to March 2025.

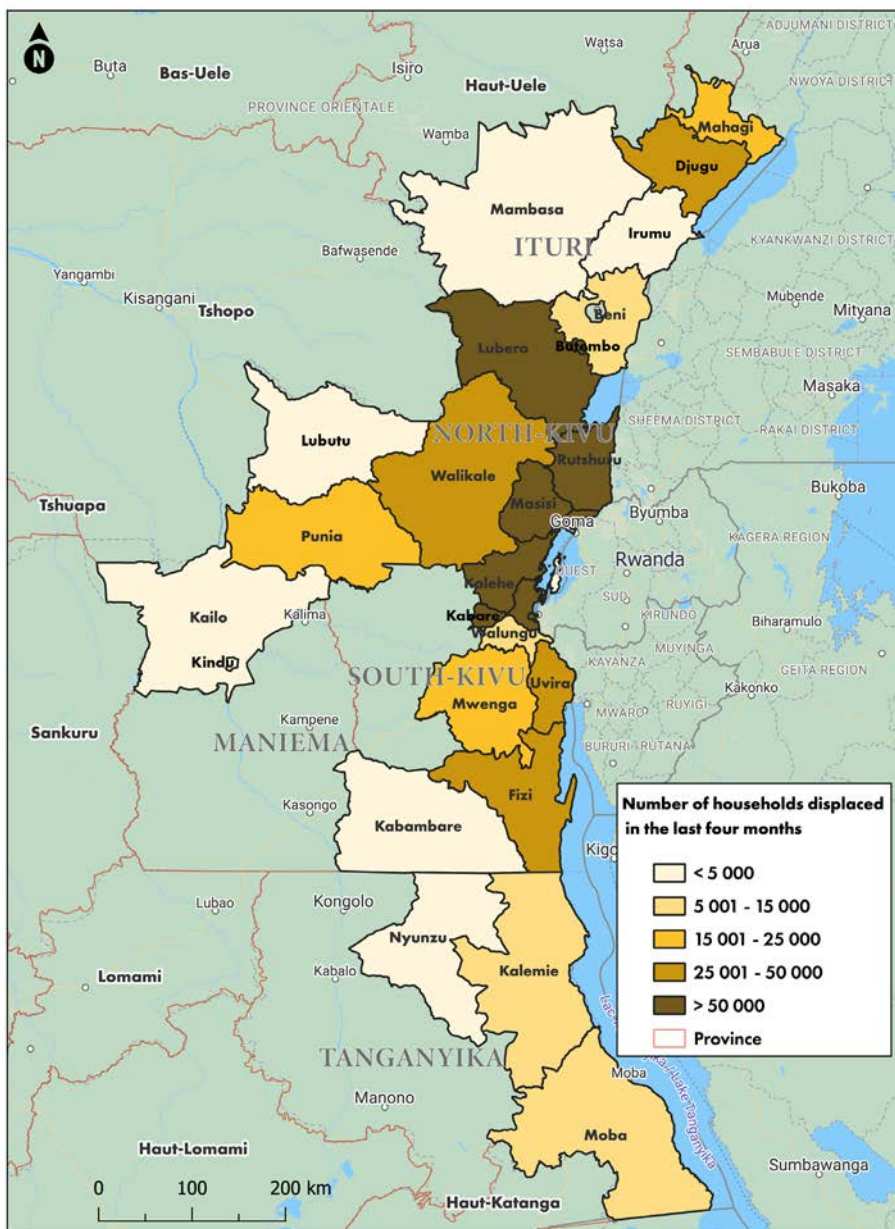
1 The acronyms of the armed groups and their presentation are presented at the end of the document.
 2 North Kivu CCCM Cluster, statistics on IDPs in new collective centres as at 27 March 2025
 3 Source: CMP North Kivu 04 April 2025
 4 DRC - Rapid Displacement Analysis #24, North and South Kivu (3-11 March 2025), IOM

By March, the total number of people returning to North and South Kivu had risen to almost 1,787,298, 130% up on December 2024.⁵ In March alone, almost half (46.7%) of the population movements recorded in South Kivu were returns and resettlements, particularly in Kabare (21,448 households) and Kalehe (21,476 households). These returns were encouraged by the relative calm following the M23 takeover of these territories. Similarly, returns accounted for 53% of population movements in North Kivu (12,506 households), mainly in the territories of Lubero, Masisi and Nyiragongo. The humanitarian needs of people returning to their places of origin are significant. Returnees also remain highly exposed to protection risks, including gender-based violence (GBV), forced recruitment, land expropriation and exposure to improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The humanitarian situation also remains volatile in Ituri. New displacements were observed in the territories of Djugu, Irumu, Mahagi and Mambasa, due to ADF attacks on civilians and clashes between CODECO and Zaïre-FPAC, illustrating the instability of the humanitarian situation in the province. In addition, the presence of the Ugandan army in Ituri has created instability among the population and led to community clashes, complicating local dynamics. The fear of a possible advance by the M23 towards Maniema province and the fear of

looting attributed to certain units within the FARDC have also led to anticipatory displacements in Punia (Maniema). In Tanganyika, population movements were provoked by clashes between the FARDC and Bakata-Katanga Mayi-Mayi fighters, supported by armed actors from the Twa community.

Across all regions, 59% of population movements recorded in March (92,737 households) were new, compared with 41% returns or repeat displacement. At the end of the month, 43 movement alerts were reported. However, none had yet been the subject of a detailed humanitarian needs assessment, according to OCHA's EH Tool.



Map 1. Displacement hotspots in eastern DRC, December 2024 to March 2025.

Ituri Province

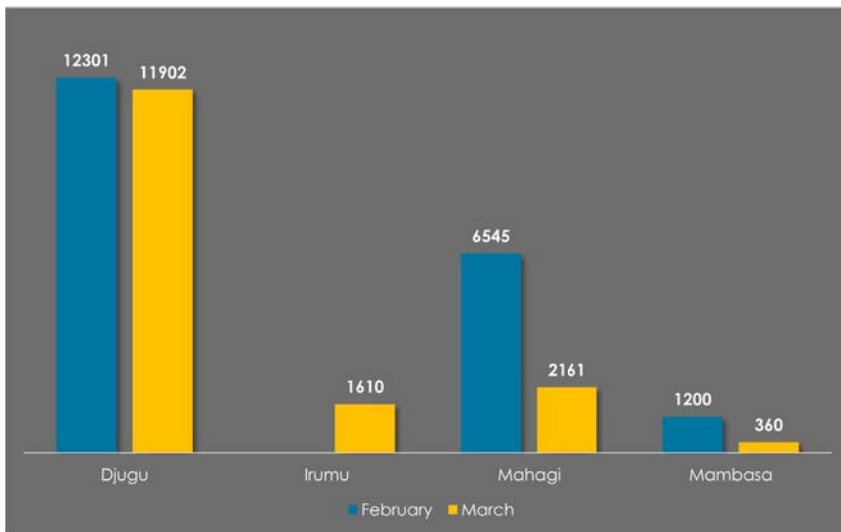


Figure 2. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Ituri province.

Mahagi territory

In March, a recorded 2,161 households were displaced in Mahagi territory, in several waves, within the Aungumu health zone. These recent displacements were the result of clashes between FARDC soldiers and the Zaïre armed group in Nyamamba (Ngbavi groupement).

Djugu territory

A total of 11,902 households were displaced in the Drodro (2,182 households), Tchomia (3,280 households) and Fataki (6,440 households) health zones. These people fled because of attacks by the Zaïre armed group against civilians and the FARDC, clashes between the Zaïre and CODECO armed groups, and



Map 2. Population movements in Djugu and Mahagi territories, March 2025.

rumours of attacks and deployment of CODECO between the areas to the east and west of Route Nationale 27 (RN27). A REACH assessment of the dynamics of displacement and needs in Djugu territory shows that the majority of displaced people are hosted by host families.⁶

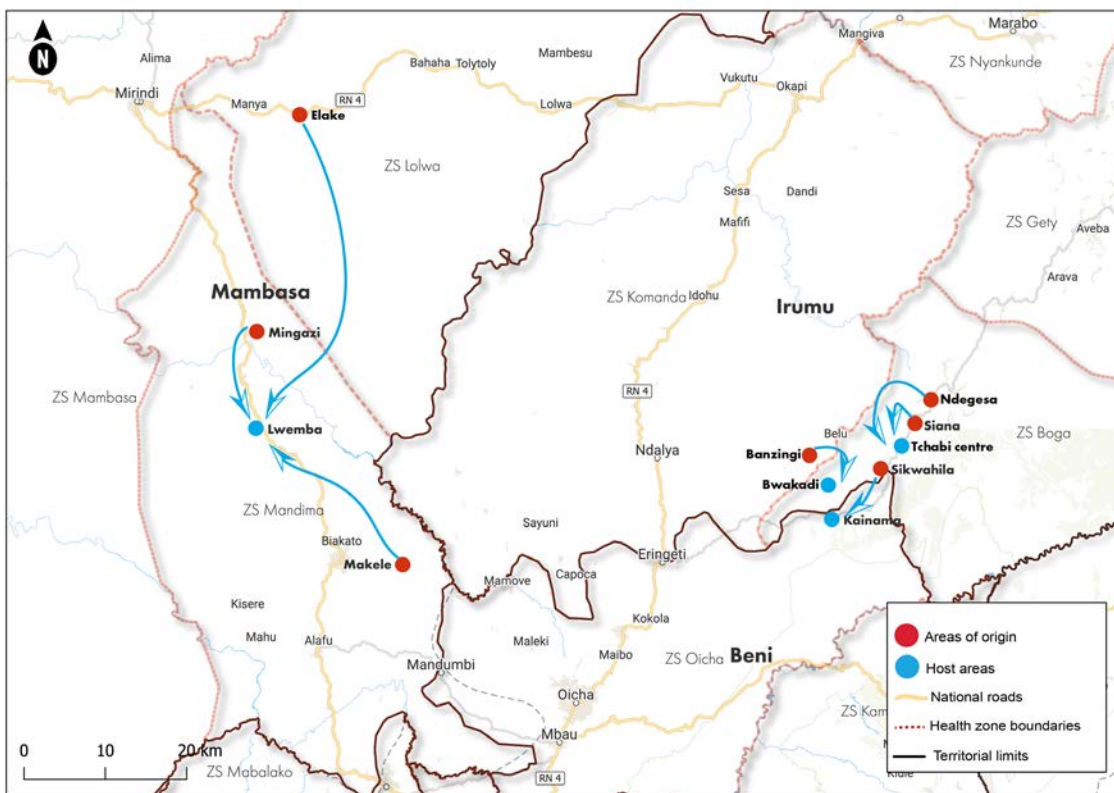
Shortly after the M23 took control of Goma on 27 January, the Ugandan army stepped up its presence in Ituri, creating fear among the population and exacerbating community tensions, particularly between CODECO (pro-Lendu) and the Zaïre armed group (pro-Hema). Suspicions of M23 support for the Zaïre armed group fuel fears of a military offensive against CODECO.⁷

Irumu territory

A recorded 1,610 households were displaced in Irumu territory (Map 3), specifically in the Boga health zone. These new displacements were the result of an ADF attack on civilians at Ndegesa 2 (Baley groupement). Despite interventions by the Ugandan army (UPDF), the presence of the ADF in the Banyari Tchabi chiefdom has led to sporadic attacks on civilians and the FARDC in the Baley groupement.

Mambasa territory

Rumours of an imminent attack by the alleged ADF in the Elake health area in the Lolwa health zone prompted the preventive displacement of 360 households in the Mandima health zone in Mambasa territory. These displaced people are living with host families in Lwemba.⁸



Map 3. Population movements in Mambasa and Irumu territories, March 2025.

6 REACH DRC, Monitoring the humanitarian situation - Djugu-Ituri Territory - March 2025
 7 Mid-term report by United Nations experts on the DRC - December 2024
 8 EHtools, Alert 5780 of 10 March 2025

North Kivu Province

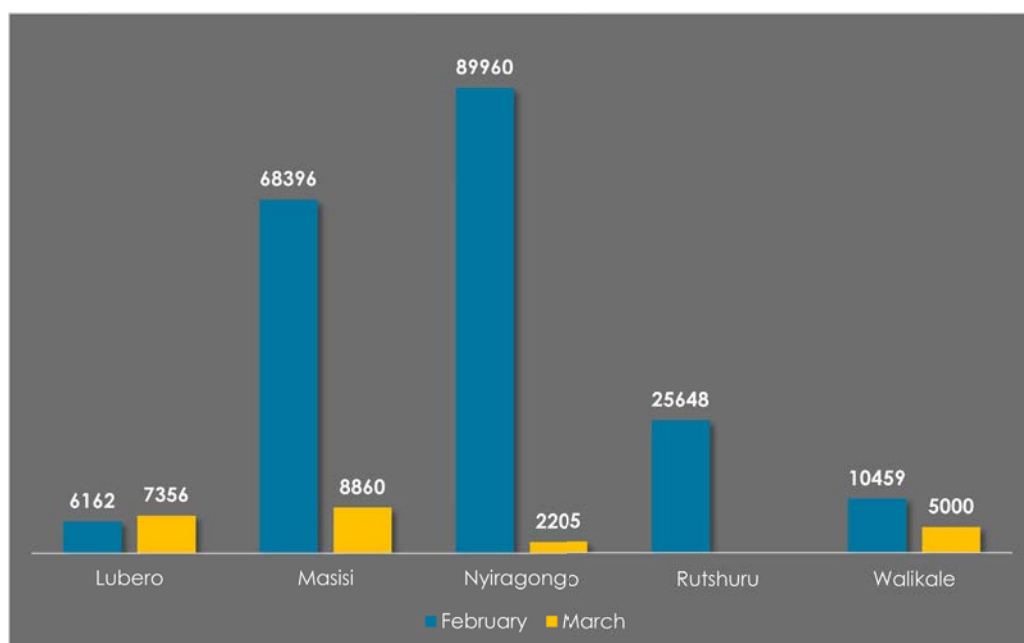


Figure 3. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in North Kivu province.

Nyiragongo territory

A total of 52 collective centres are still housing 14,339 people displaced by the M23 crisis, according to data from the CCCM Cluster, in the city of Goma, its surroundings and Nyiragongo territory.⁹ These centres are home to 2,783 households, moving between these sites and the Karisimbi neighbourhood in Goma. However, many displaced households have been threatened with eviction, particularly in Nyiragongo territory, following several ultimatums issued by the new authorities.

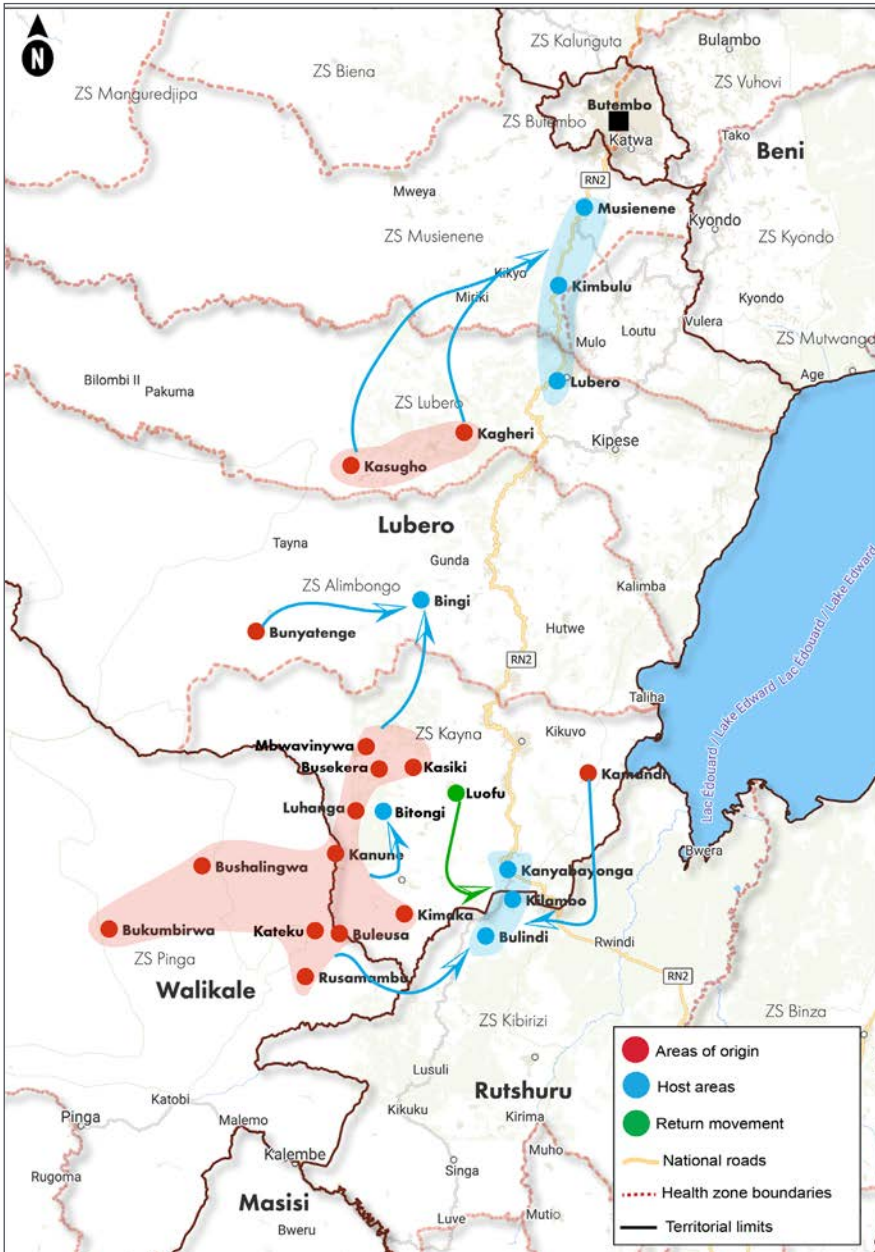
According to the Commission for Population Movements (CMP) in North Kivu, 83,017 displaced people were staying with host families in Goma and 58,973 in Nyiragongo territory.¹⁰

Lubero territory

In Lubero territory, the movement of 7,356 households was reported in March. This movement included new displacements in the Musienene (3,800 households) and Kayna (603 households) health zones, and returns to the Kayna health zone (2,953 households). The new displacement was directly linked to clashes between the M23 and the FARDC and its allies in Kasugho and Kagheri (Lubero health zone) and those between the Mai-Mai Kabido supported by the FARDC and the M23 in Walikale.

The returns reported included households that fled the clashes between the FARDC and the M23 in Luofu (Lubero territory) between November 2024 and January 2025 and households from IDP camps around the town of Goma.

⁹ North Kivu CCCM Cluster, statistics on IDPs in new collective centres as at 27 March 2025
¹⁰ CMP North Kivu 04 April 2025



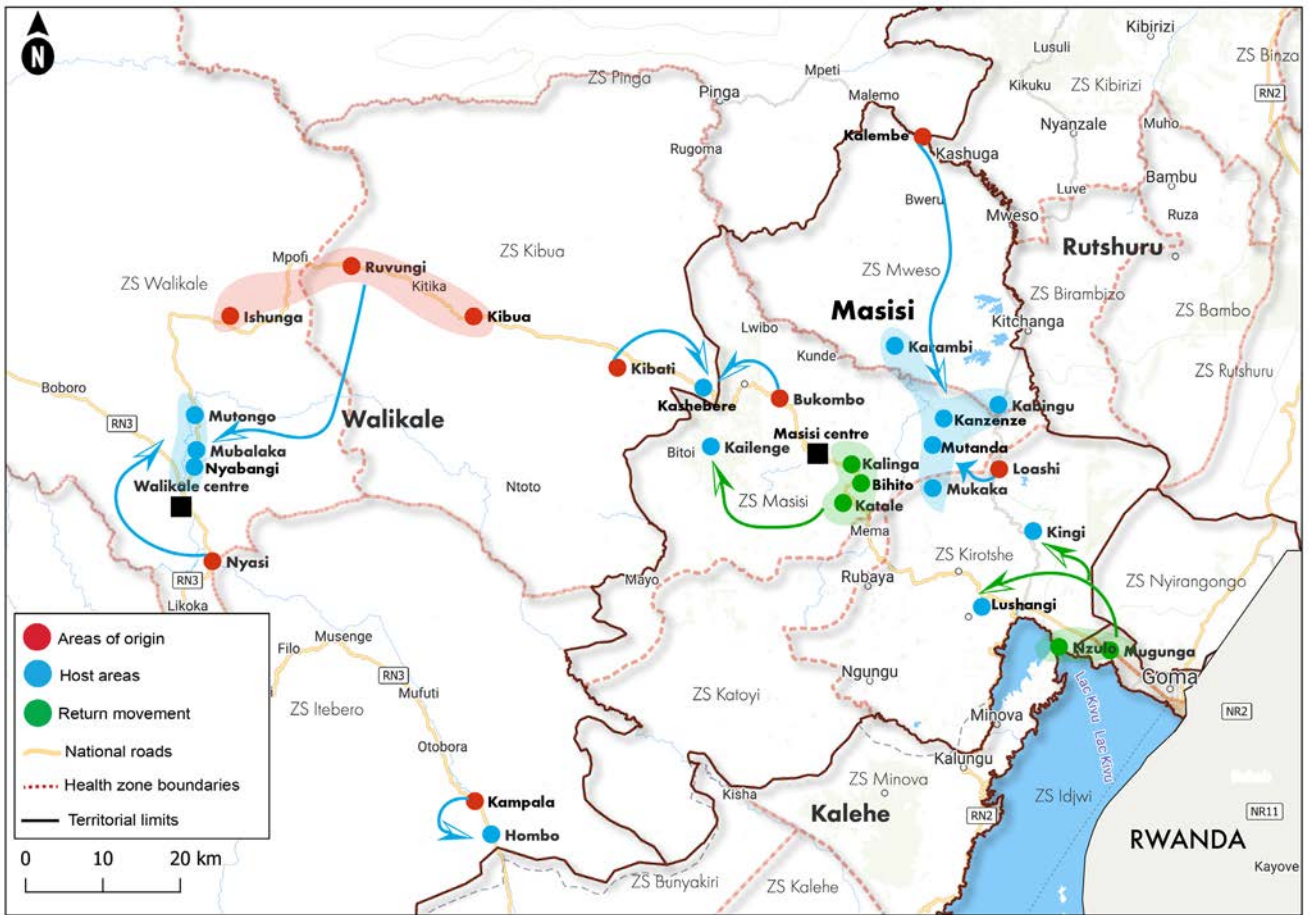
Map 4. Population movements in Lubero territory, March 2025.

Walikale territory

Around 5,000 households have been displaced in the health zones of Kibua (1,200 households), Itebero (700 households) and Walikale (3,100 households) in Walikale territory. Displacement was linked to clashes between the FARDC/AFD and M23 in the villages between Masisi-Nyabiondo (Masisi territory) and those on the RP529 (Route Provinciale, Walikale-Mutakato) and the RN3 (Route Nationale, Walikale-Osokari). Recent developments show a voluntary withdrawal of the M23 from Walikale centre, in a move towards dialogue, respecting the decision to reposition their troops outside Walikale and the surrounding area.

Masisi territory

In March, 8,860 households returned to the Kirotshe and Masisi health zones in Masisi territory. These households returned from the Karisimbi and Masisi health zones, where they had been displaced by the M23 crisis. These returns were particularly motivated by the dismantling of IDP camps around Goma (Bushagara, Don Bosco, LV Bulengo and Cinquentaire) and in other Masisi localities such as Katala.



Map 5. Population movement in Masisi and Walikale territories, March 2025.

South Kivu Province

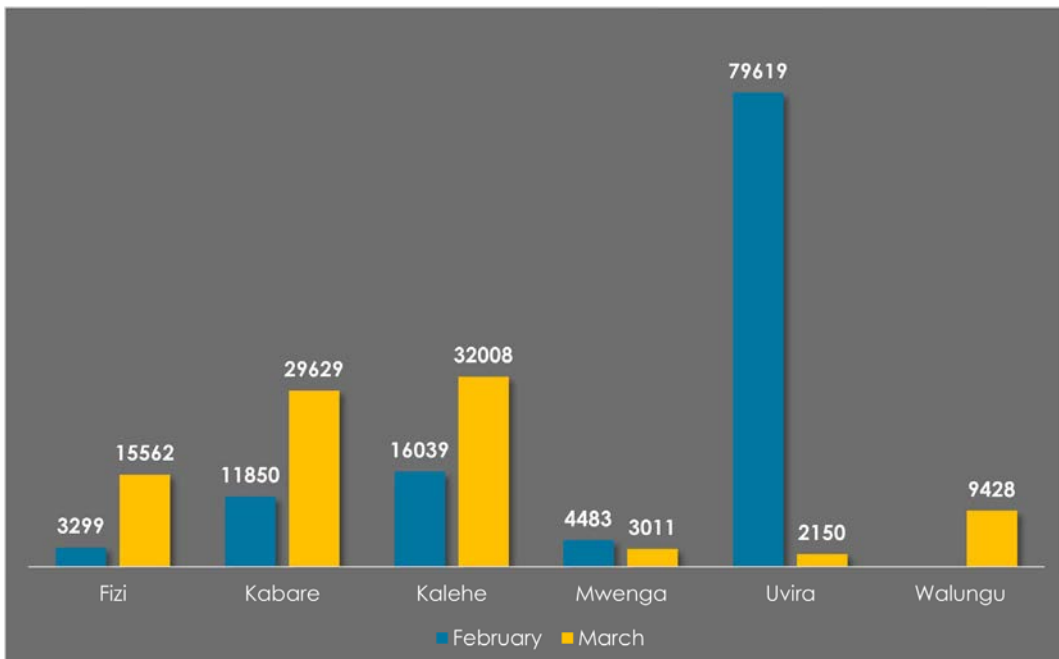


Figure 4. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in South Kivu province.

Kabare territory

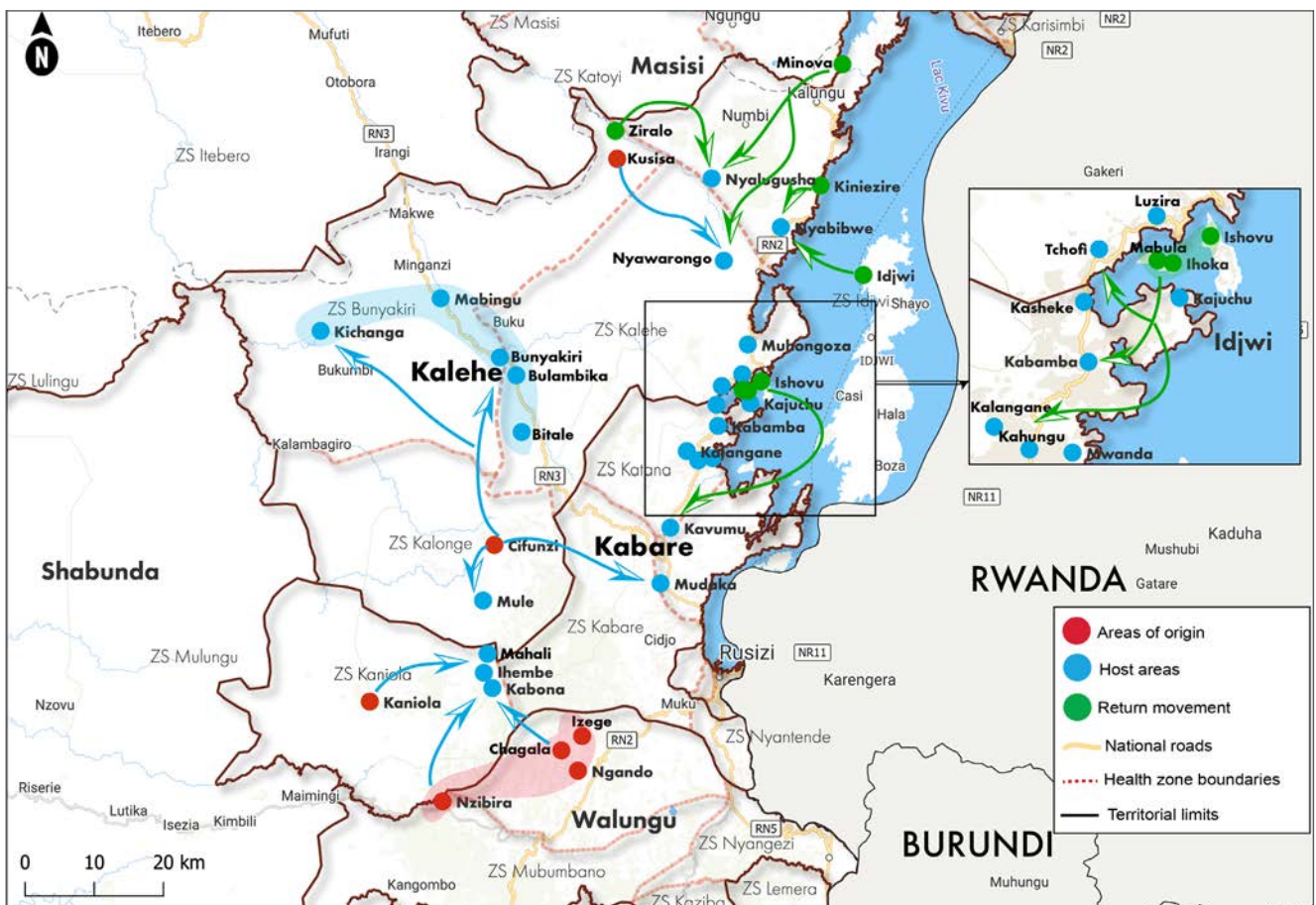
A total of 29,629 households were displaced in Kabare territory, between the health zones of Kaniola (2,275 households), Katana (25,254 households) and Kabare (2,100 households). These population movements include 8,181 newly displaced households and 21,448 returnee households. These newly displaced populations fled the sporadic clashes between the Wazalendo and the M23 in Kaniola (in Walungu territory) and the villages around Masisi in North Kivu (Kiorirwe and Ngungu).

Returnee households are mainly motivated by relatively stable security in their areas of origin, notably Kavumu, Miti, Kahungu, Mabungu, Kalangane and Mwanda, following the M23 taking control of these areas.

Kalehe territory

A recorded 32,008 households were displaced in Kalehe territory in February (Map 8). These population movements included 10,432 newly displaced households and 21,476 returnee households. These populations were displaced between the health zones of Kalehe (26,246 households), Kalonge (816 households) and Bunyakiri (4,946 households). The displacement was caused by clashes between Wazalendo and M23, as well as heavy rains in the Bunyakiri health zone, which caused erosion and landslides.

Returning households were mainly motivated by relative stability observed in the areas of Kabamba, Kasheke, Tchofi, Luzira, Kajuchu, Chibanja, Munanira, Muhongoza and Nyabibwe, following the M23 taking control of these areas.



Map 6. Population movements in Kalehe and Kabare territories, March 2025.

Walungu territory

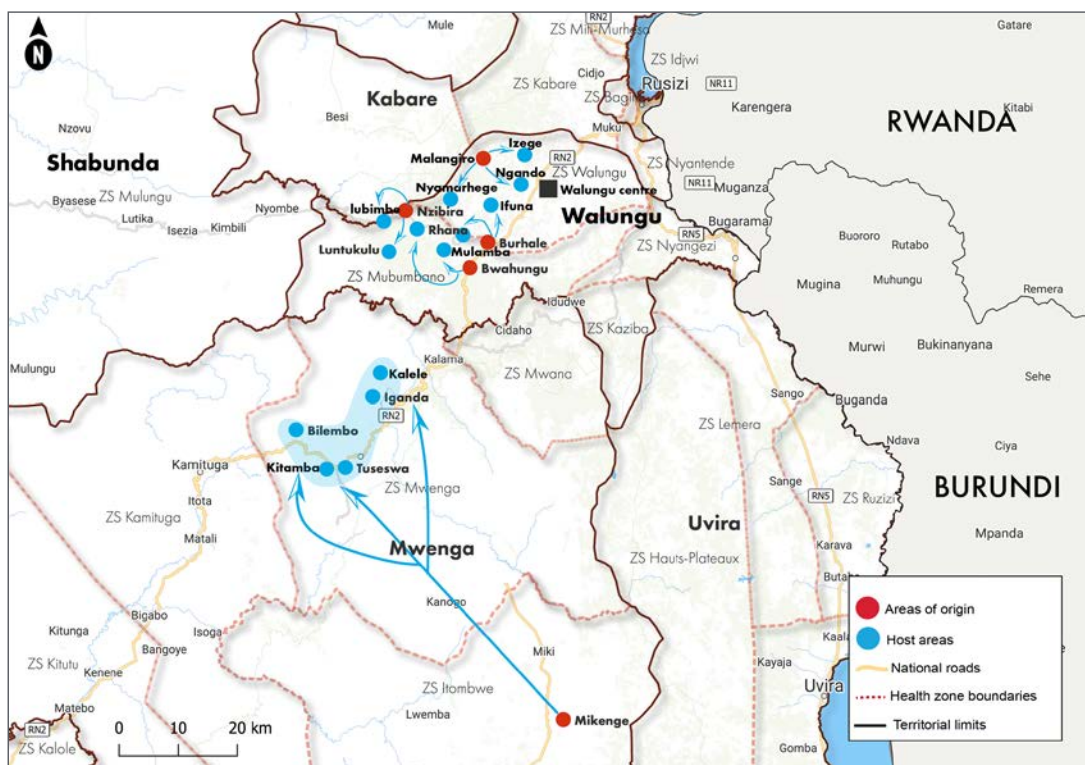
In March, a recorded 9,428 households were displaced in Walungu territory, between the health zones of Walungu (5,132 households) and Mubumbano (4,296 households).

These recent displacements were the result of clashes between the Wazalendo and M23 in Walungu centre and Kaniola, as well as the M23’s continuing offensives towards South Kivu, with the aim of extending their areas of control.

Mwenga territory

A recorded 756 households were displaced in Mwenga territory in March, arriving in the Itombwe health zone. These households fled clashes between the Wazalendo and the Gumino-Twirwaneho in Mikenge 1 (Itombwe sector).

In addition, 2,255 households were affected by torrential rain in the chiefdoms of Burhinyi, Lwindi, Basile and Wamuzimu. Significant material damage was reported, including the destruction of schools and homes, as well as fields and fisheries washed away by erosion and rainwater.¹¹



Map 7. Population movements in Mwenga and Walungu territory, March 2025.

Uvira territory

A recorded 2,150 households were displaced in Uvira territory in March, toward the Hauts-Plateaux health zone (880 households) and the Lamera health zone (1,270 households). These displacements were directly linked to the clashes between the Wazalendo and Gumino-Twirwaneho in Muramvya and the clashes between Burundian soldiers supported by the Wazalendo against the M23 in Rurambo.

11 EHtools, Alert 5800 of 17 March 2025

Fizi territory

Recorded 15,562 households were displaced in Fizi territory in March. The displaced people arrived in the Minembwe (2,400 households), Fizi (2,432 households), Itombwe (850 households) and Nundu (9,880 households) health zones. Displacement was attributed to two factors:

- Altercations between the Wazalendo and the FARDC in the town of Uvira
- Clashes between Wazalendo and the Gumino-Twirwaneho coalition allied to the M23 and supported by Red Tabara in the Lulenge sector of the Fizi and Mwenga Hauts-Plateaux .



Map 8. Population movement in Fizi and Uvira territory, March 2025

Tanganyika Province

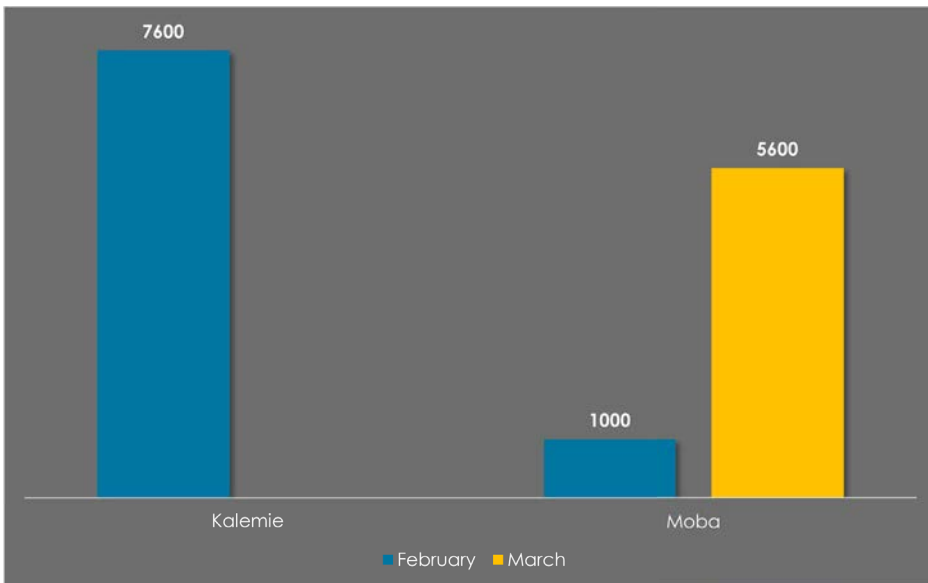
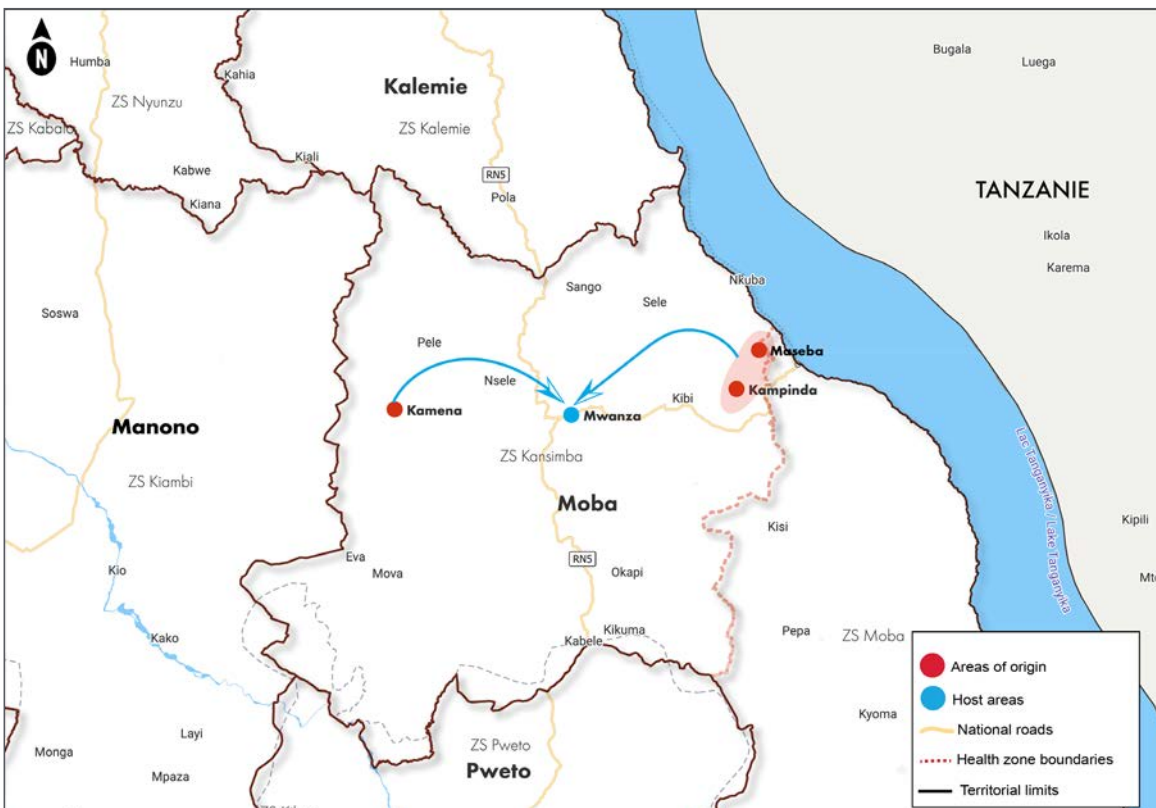


Figure 5. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Tanganyika province.

Moba territory

Clashes between FARDC soldiers and Mai-Mai Bakata-Katanga, allied with the Twa militia, caused the displacement of 5,600 households in the Kansimba health zone in Moba territory.



Map 9. Population movement in Moba territory, March 2025

Maniema Province

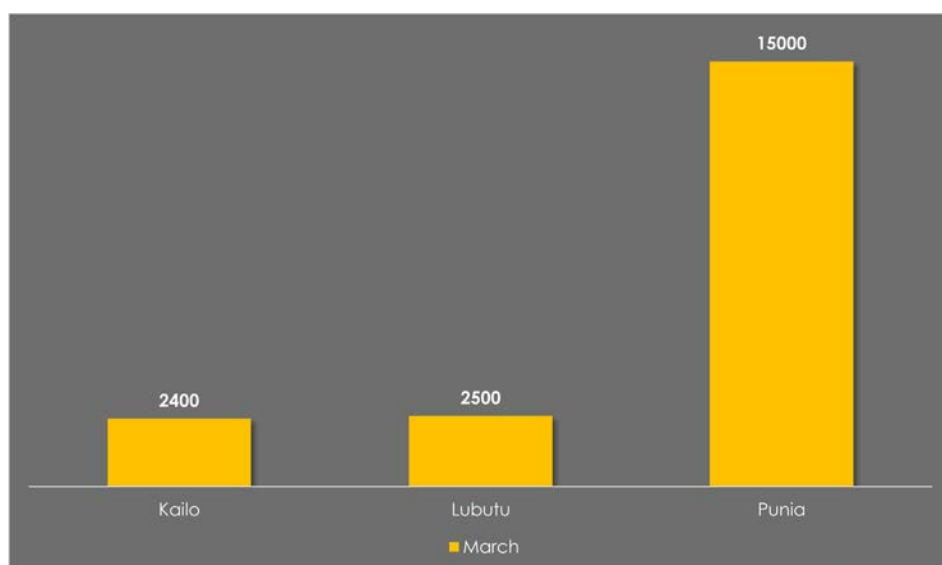


Figure 6. Number of newly displaced households by destination area in Maniema province.

Kailo territory

On the night of Wednesday 5 March 2025, torrential rain accompanied by violent winds hit several villages in the Ambwe sector of Kailo territory, affecting almost 2,400 households. Some of those affected took refuge with relatives, while others temporarily occupied public places such as schools and churches. Significant material damage was recorded, including the destruction of schools and homes, as well as the loss of food stocks for families.¹²

Lubutu territory

Clashes between the M23 and the FARDC and their allies in Walikale territory led to the displacement of 2,500 households in the Lubutu health zone in Maniema territory. These displaced people were taken in by host families.¹³

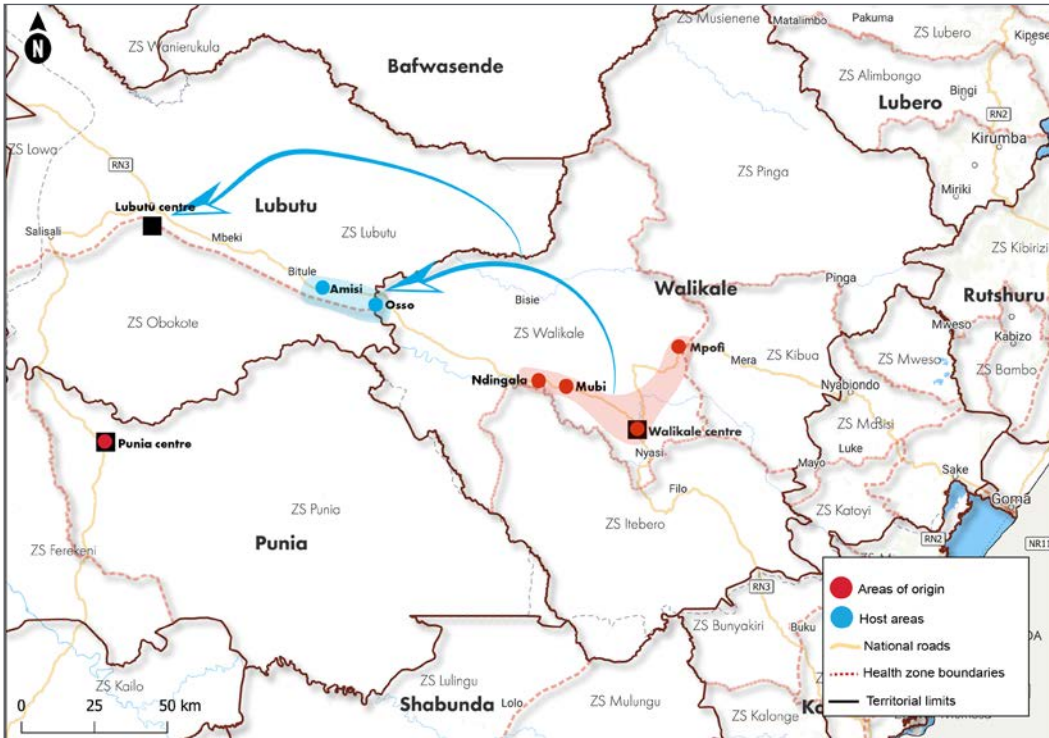
Punia territory

A recorded 15,000 households were displaced within the Punia health zone (Punia territory). These new displacements are the result of alleged acts of vandalism, looting and rape committed by fleeing FARDC forces, as well as fears of a possible advance by M23 towards Maniema, following the fall of the town of Walikale in North Kivu province. These displaced people have taken up residence in schools and churches.¹⁴

¹² EHtools, alert 5771 of 08 March 2025

¹³ EHtools, alert 5793 of 14 March 2025

¹⁴ EHtools, alert 5810 of 20 March 2023



Map 10. Population movements in the territories of Punia and Lubutu, March 2025

Methodological approach

The researchers and analysts of the DRC Crisis Analysis Team (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-RDC also uses several secondary sources made available by humanitarian partners (e.g., OCHA, INSO) and the community. For this monthly report, OCHA displacement alerts (EH Tool) are 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 the displacement analysis is to (i) document and understand new population movements, i.e., those that occurred during the month covered by this report, and (ii) assess and map the areas that have received the highest number of unassisted displaced persons over the last four months.

Acronyms & 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 armed 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 fighters often hide among civilian communities, making it difficult for the FARDC to distinguish between civilians and fighters.

CCCM Cluster (The CCCM Global Camp Coordination and Management Cluster): An Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination mechanism that helps internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in safe, dignified and appropriate conditions. The group also works with affected populations, communities, local stakeholders and other humanitarian and development actors to identify, facilitate and implement long-term solutions for IDPs living in informal settlements and sites.

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.

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 Congolese 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 United Nations Security Council in 2010, succeeding MONUC (United Nations 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 (UN Mission for the Stabilisation of the Congo) to control certain territories, which are often vast and difficult to access.

Zaire/FPAC: The Zaire armed group is a decentralised self-defence movement based mainly in the Djugu territory in Ituri. Initially formed to protect itself against violence by CODECO, it has 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. Zaïre 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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