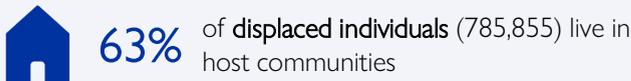
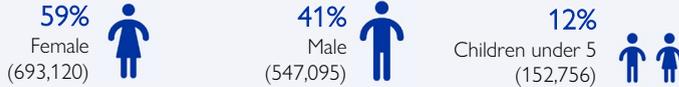
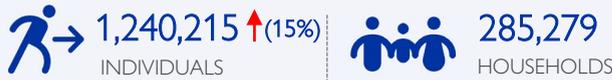


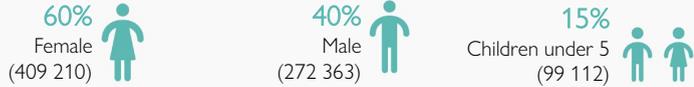


The DTM has identified **1,240,215** IDP individuals as of 15 December 2023 and an estimated returnee population of **681,573** individuals

Key displacement data



Key data on returns



CONTEXT

Since 2022, the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly the province of North Kivu, has experienced a devastating conflict which has intensified and become increasingly complex over time, with the potential to reach unprecedented levels in the province. This crisis is characterized by a multitude of armed actors in conflict, a large displaced population and an even larger population in need of humanitarian aid. The ongoing conflict between the M23 rebel group and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) and their allies has been a major source of violence and instability in the region. The situation has deteriorated further since the withdrawal of several East African Community (EAC) force bases from affected territories. The conflict has not only led to the loss of human lives and the displacement of millions of people but has also hampered efforts to bring peace and stability to the region.

At the beginning of December 2023, the conflict between the M23 and government and self-defense forces intensified, particularly in Masisi territory along several axes: the Sake-Mweso axis, the Muheto-Busihe-Lushebere axis and the Sake-Masisi-centre axis. This upsurge in armed violence in Masisi territory led to the capture of the localities of Mweso in the Bashali-Mokoto *groupement* on 20 November 2023, and Mushaki in the Mfuni-Matanda *groupement* by M23 rebels. On 7 December 2023, access was cut off on the Masisi-Sake road, a major route to the city of Goma, forcing a new wave of displacement of the host communities, secondary displacements and former returnees.

Through these actions, the M23 armed group has been able to extend its control over certain localities already occupied and has advanced into other areas not previously held, with the aim of merging its influence in the province. This territorial expansion continues to worry regional and international actors, fearing that the conflict could spiral out of control and lead to further instability. In response to this violence, a ceasefire was declared to reduce hostilities between armed groups and the M23, and ultimately create a more stable and secure environment by reducing fighting and easing tensions caused, particularly during the ongoing national electoral process.

Since the beginning of the crisis, IOM, through its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) continues to conduct a series of rapid assessments, including emergency monitoring (EET/ERM), crisis analysis and registration with a priority to respond to immediate information needs with a view to understanding displacement dynamics and needs.

This report presents the results of assessments carried out in the various displacement and return areas from 20 November to 15 December 2023.

DISPLACEMENT

The displacement data collected in this eleventh crisis analysis shows a further increase in the number of displaced people compared with the previous publication (see report [here](#)). The total number of IDPs rose from 1,076,261 to 1,240,215 as of 15 December 2023 (detailed data [here](#)). DTM estimates the total number of newly displaced individuals by the upsurge in conflict at the beginning of December at 163,954. This increase is due to multiple clashes between government and M23 forces, in particular those which have taken place in the territories of Masisi and Nyiragongo, seeing the extension of the M23 group's area of control.

Although the majority of displaced persons reside in host communities, displacement sites continue to host significant numbers of displaced persons. While some of these sites offer temporary shelter and emergency assistance, most are not able to respond adequately to the needs of the affected population. Sites are often overcrowded and struggle to provide basic services such as drinking water, food and sanitation, exacerbating the difficulties faced by IDPs. As a result, the vulnerability of displaced persons has increased, particularly for those already facing difficult living conditions.

Types of location	HH	IND	Male	Female
Host community	152,474	785,855	343,822	442,033
Sites outside the CCCM mechanism	37,093	173,615	77,172	96,443
Sites under the CCCM mechanism	95,712	280,745	126,101	154,644
<b>Total</b>	<b>285,279</b>	<b>1,240,215</b>	<b>547,095</b>	<b>693,120</b>

On 20 November 2023, clashes in and around Mweso triggered a massive displacement of local inhabitants towards Kashuga and Kalembe in the territory of Rutshuru. On 29 November 2023, clashes between the M23, FARDC and allies on the Muheto-Kausa, Kanzenze, Kibuu and Mumba axis in the Kalonge locality led to the displacement of the population towards Busihe and the surrounding area in the Bashali-Kahembe *groupement*. On 7 December 2023, violent clashes reported in and around Mushaki set off preventive population movements towards Katale, Lushebere and Masisi-Centre, while populations on the Kalonge-Bihambwe axis moved towards Bihambwe, Rubaya in the Rubaya *groupement* and Mupfunyi-Matanda. The Ngingwe hill is also occupied by the armed group, prompting the populations of Mitumbala, Busheka, Karuba, Kisisi, Shasha, Kirotshe and Kihindo to move to Bweremana and Sake in Masisi territory, Goma, as well as to Minova and surrounding areas in Kalehe territory, in the Buzi *groupement* in South Kivu.

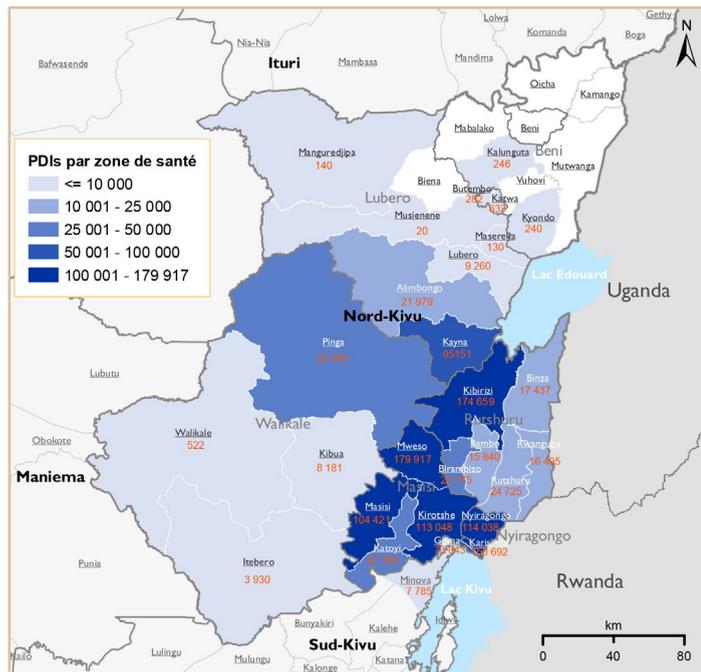


**ACCESSIBILITY AND MAPPING OF M23 CONTROLLED AREAS**

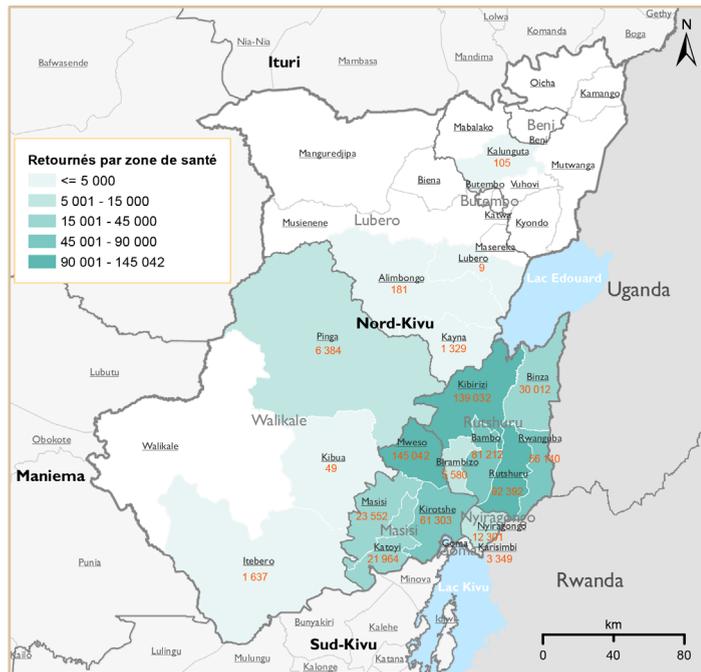
Since the M23 armed group took control of Mushaki on 7 December 2023, access on the Goma-Masisi road, the eastern capital of Masisi territory, has been paralyzed. This is the third major road to be cut off by M23, following their capture of the roads connecting Goma-Rutsuru and Sake-Kitshanga. The blockage of these main roads can have a major impact on access to basic essentials for vulnerable populations in need, as well as on food prices in and around Goma.



**MAP – DISPLACEMENT**



**MAP – RETURNS**



**RETURN OF AFFECTED POPULATION**

The results of the M23 crisis-related displacement assessment conducted between 20 November and 15 December 2023 identified a total of 681,573 returnee individuals (138,294 households). This represents an increase of 19% percent during this assessment cycle, compared with the number recorded at the last assessment on 19 November 2023.

This increase from 10 December onwards could be explained by the ceasefire, which led to a significant reduction in the intensity of fighting, allowing a degree of stability to return to some areas. In addition, returns are also motivated by the desire of displaced populations to re-establish their lives given the lack of resources in areas of displacement. This factor is present alongside the belief by some that the situation has improved in their areas of origin despite the ongoing conflict, and that the areas in question are under the control of M23.

**PERCEPTION OF PRIORITY NEEDS**

Access to essential resources such as food, housing and healthcare are the main needs expressed by displaced persons. They are often limited or non-existent in areas where displaced populations seek refuge. The basic needs of vulnerable populations are generally not met, making it difficult for them and their communities to survive.