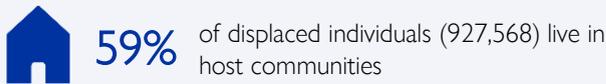
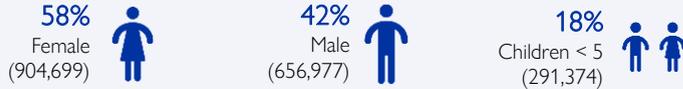
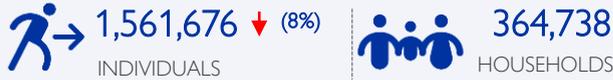
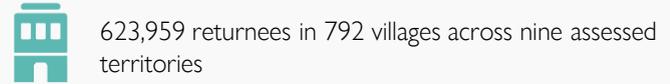
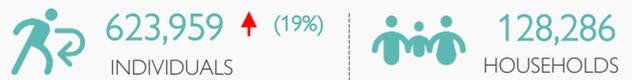


The DTM has identified **1,561,676** IDP individuals as of 29 March 2024 and an estimated returnee population of **623,959** individuals.

Key displacement data



Key data on returns



CONTEXT

In the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly in North Kivu province, a prolonged and increasingly complex conflict persists, characterized by the presence of numerous armed groups, including the M23 group and the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) and their respective allies. Since the beginning of this year, the M23 has been advancing in the eastern part of the DRC, particularly towards Goma, which serves as the capital of North Kivu. Recent actions by the M23 suggest their intention to take control of Goma, potentially marking their second occupation of the city after a brief period of control in 2012.

The rise in violent activity in the region has seen a dramatic increase in the use of explosives, tactics of remote violence and direct engagements. This alarming escalation has resulted in the continuous large-scale displacement of civilians and an increase in casualties attributed to shelling and various forms of attack. In particular, the ongoing conflict has led to a significant number of displacements, with civilians bearing the brunt of this growing violence. In addition, allegations of Rwandan support for the M23 rebellion have further complicated the already delicate regional dynamics. These accusations have not only heightened diplomatic tensions but have also strained relations between the neighbouring countries. Despite widespread calls for a peaceful resolution to the conflict from regional and international actors, the efforts of peacekeepers and local leaders to facilitate dialogue and negotiate a ceasefire have unfortunately been regularly flouted.

From 15 to 28 March 2024, there was a lull in some areas, while the M23 armed group stepped up their efforts to extend their area of control, capturing territories such as Sake and Kibirizi. The group launched strategic offensives near Goma, extending their sphere of influence northwards into the Rutshuru and Masisi regions. This escalation of conflict has led to a mass exodus of thousands of people, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the east of the DRC and adversely affecting the economic stability of Goma and the surrounding areas.

Since the onset of the crisis, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), through the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) continues to conduct a series of rapid assessments, including Emergency Tracking (EET/ERM), Crisis Analysis and Registration activities, addressing 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 14 to 29 March 2024.

DISPLACEMENT

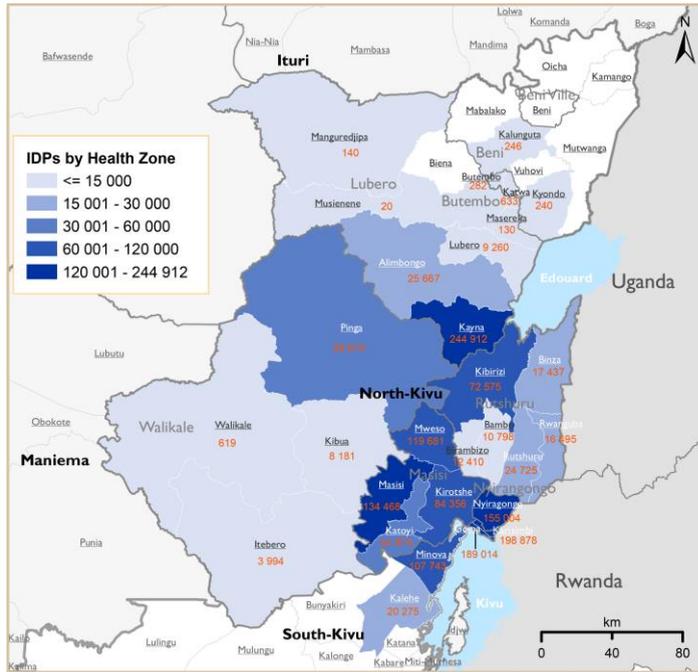
The displacement data collected in this seventeenth crisis analysis shows a decrease in the number of people displaced by the M23 crisis compared with the previous publication ([see report](#)). The number of displaced people decreased from 1,689,260 on 13 March to 1,561,676 on 29 March 2024 ([detailed data here](#)). This decrease of 8 per cent can be linked to the clashes that took place in the villages already emptied of their populations in the Kamuronza *groupement* in Masisi territory and those in Nyiragongo territory. Although the majority of displaced people reside in host communities, displacement sites continue to host a significant proportion (41%) of displaced people.

While some of the sites offer temporary shelter and basic assistance, but most fail to respond adequately to the needs of those affected. These sites are often overcrowded and struggle to provide essential services such as security, drinking water, food and sanitation, adding to the hardship of the displaced. As a result, the vulnerability of the displaced people has increased, particularly for those already facing difficult living conditions.

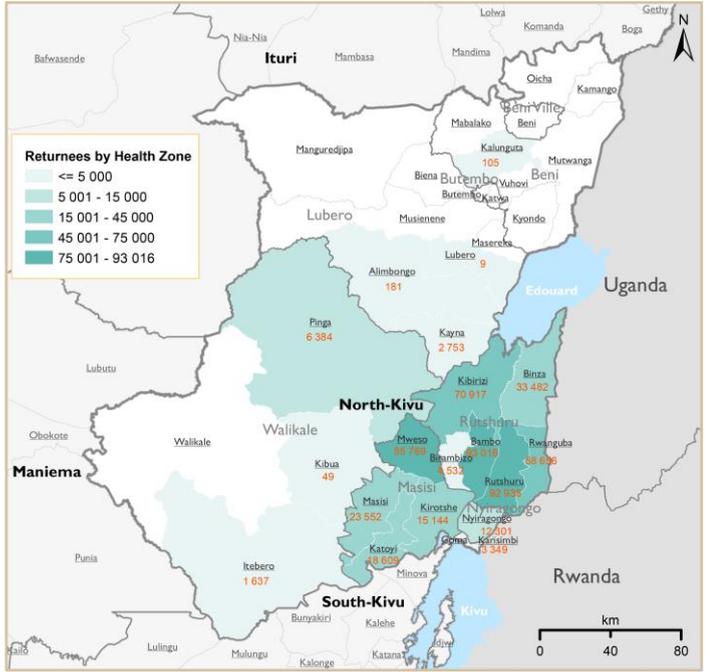
Type of Location	Households	Individuals	Male	Female
Host Community	180,606	927,568	389,130	538,438
Sites - Non CCCM	38,481	189,040	76,713	112,327
Sites - CCCM	145,651	445,068	191,134	253,934
Total	364,738	1,561,676	656,977	904,699

From 15 to 28 March 2024, clashes intensified in Masisi territory, in the Kamuronza *groupement* and the villages surrounding the town of Sake (Kimoka, Rutobogo, Kanve and Vunano), on the Sake-Kirotshe axis and on the Rutobogo-Mushaki axis, leading to a massive displacement of the population towards Kashenda site in the Mufunyi-Shanga *groupement* in Masisi territory, North Kivu. The displaced population were accommodated in collective sites and centres such as Nyamashali in Bulenga, EP Emmanuel in Minova, EP Nyarubuyi in Buhumba and EP Vahe in Kalehe, in the province of South Kivu. Between 23 and 24 March 2024, an offensive by the M23 group led to a new wave of displacements. Residents of the villages of Kirumbu, Mpati, Kivuye and Nyange were forced to move to Kamonyi, Bibwe, Goliba, Luhanga, Ronga, Hembe and Rwankeri in the Bashali-Mokoto *groupement*. During the same period, clashes were reported in Nyiragongo territory, Kanyamahoro/Kibumba. These clashes pitted the FARDC and its allies against the M23 group and caused pendulum movements.

MAP - DISPLACEMENT



MAP - RETURNS

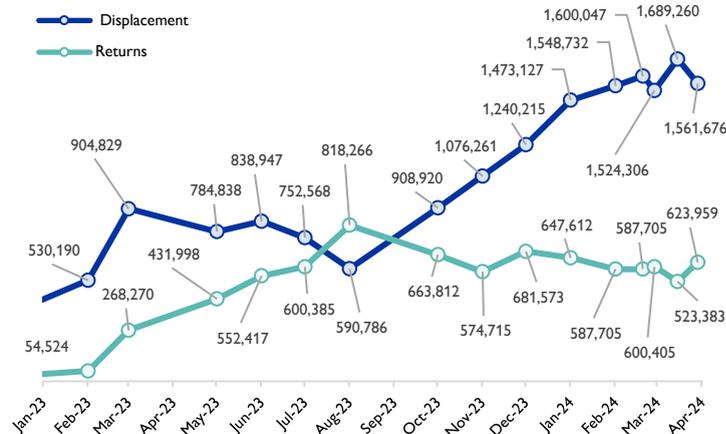


RETURN OF AFFECTED POPULATION

The findings of the M23 crisis-related displacement assessments carried out during the period March 14 to 29, 2024 identified a total of 623,959 returnees from 128,286 households. The number of returnees has increased by 19% compared with the number recorded at the last assessment. Returnees are mainly concentrated on two axes: the Nyanzale-Kibizi axis in the Kibirizi health zone (Rutshuru territory) and the Kashuga-Kalembe axis (Mwezo health zone) in Masisi territory.

Meanwhile, the population of Katsiru and surrounding areas in Rutshuru territory, as well as Mwezo and surrounding areas in Masisi territory, have returned in small numbers since the M23 group took control of Kashuga, Nyanzale, Katsiru and Kikuku and surrounding areas. Poor living conditions, the lack of assistance in the areas of displacement, relative calm observed in villages of origin, as well as the consequences of continuous displacement are the reasons for their return.

Changes in the displaced and returnee population (individuals) since the beginning of the crisis



PERCEPTION OF PRIORITY NEEDS

Access to essential resources such as food, shelter and healthcare are the main needs reported and are often limited or non-existent in areas where displaced populations seek refuge. Large numbers of new arrivals exacerbate the basic needs of vulnerable populations, which are generally not being met, making it difficult for them and the affected communities to survive.



ACCESSIBILITY

The ongoing conflict in the region has severely affected the main roads surrounding Goma and its neighbouring areas, making them impassable. Such obstruction has severely hampered the movement of civilians, the transport of goods and the delivery of crucial humanitarian aid. The recent capture of the town of Shasha by the M23 group on 3 February 2024 has further exacerbated the situation. As a result, traffic along the route connecting Goma and Bukavu has ground to a halt. This is the fourth blockade of the main food supply route from Goma, following previous blockades on the Goma-Rutshuru axis, the Sake-Kitshanga Mwezo axis and the central Sake-Masisi axis. This situation continues to restrict access to essential services for the population affected by the violence, creating a dangerous environment for civilians and humanitarian workers in Goma.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Men and women make up 42 and 58 per cent, respectively, of the displaced population assessed. Displaced children aged between 0 and 5 account for around 19 per cent. The average size of displaced households assessed is 4.3 individuals.

Male and female returnees make up 40 and 60 per cent, respectively, of the returnee population. Children aged between 0 and 5 account for around 15 per cent.